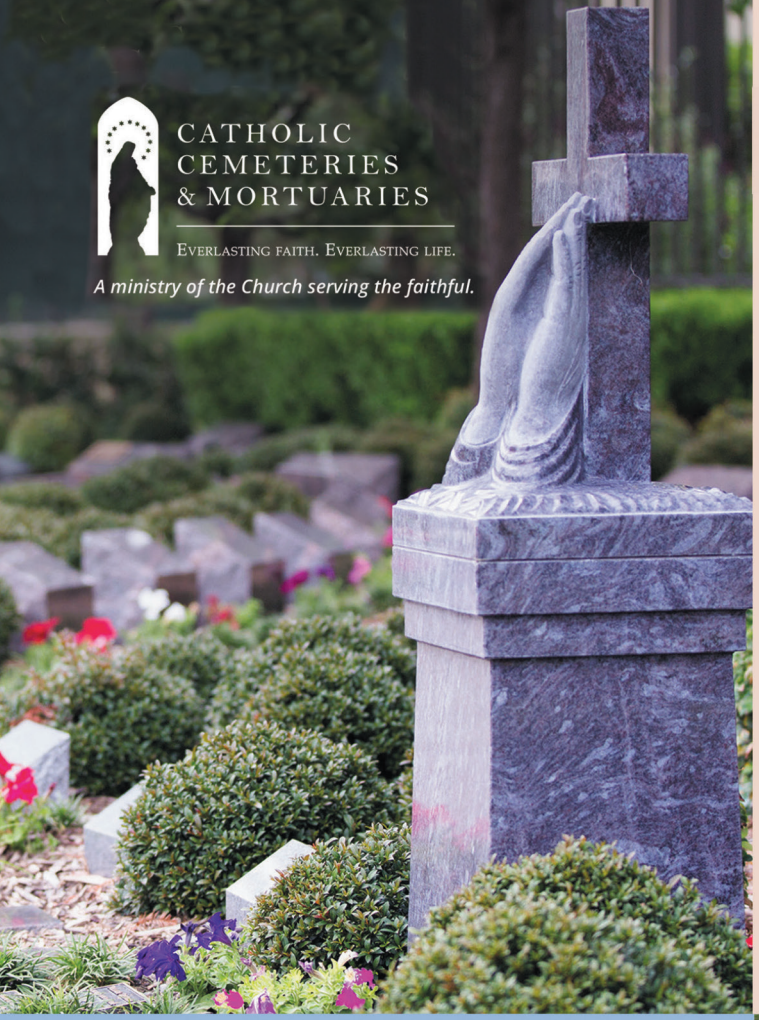
ANGELUS



IT TAKES A COMMUNITY

How Catholics are helping rebuild Pacific Palisades

October 16, 2026 Vol. 11 No. 21



What Will You Do?

If you've ever wondered what will happen when a loved one dies or how to plan for your own passing, then don't miss this informative, FREE online seminar:

My Father's House
What to expect When a Loved One Dies,
How to Prepare for Your Own Final Needs...
From a Catholic Perspective

We'll walk you through the steps you'll take when a family member passes and explain why preplanning for yourself is so important.

Tuesday, November 10, 2026 *7 p.m. *Q & A to follow

Pre-registration required at: **CatholicCM.org/webinars**

Questions?
Please contact **Outreach@CatholicCM.org**
or call **213-637-7810**

¿Y Tu Que Harías?

¿Haz pensado alguna vez qué pasaría si alguno de tus seres queridos muere y además cómo planearías tu propio funeral? Si es así, no te pierdas este próximo taller informativo, llamado:

La Casa de mi Padre,
Que esperar cuando un ser querido fallece
y como preparamos nuestras necesidades del funeral
desde una perspectiva Católica.

Te mostraremos paso a paso que hacer cuando tu familia se enfrenta a una situación así.

También explicaremos la importancia de planear con anticipación.

¿Cuándo? Jueves, 12 de noviembre, 2026 *7 p.m.

*Continuaremos con una sesión de preguntas y respuestas.

El curso es gratuito pero requiere registrarse en:
catholicCM.org/webinars

¿Preguntas? Email: **Outreach@CatholicCM.org**
o llama al **213-637-7810**



October 16, 2026
Vol. 11 • No. 21
4311 Wilshire Blvd.,
Los Angeles, CA 90010-3708
(213) 637-7360 • FAX (213) 637-6360
Published by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles by The Tidings (a corporation), established 1895.

ANGELUS

Publisher
ARCHBISHOP JOSÉ H. GOMEZ

Vice Chancellor for Communications
DAVID SCOTT

Editor-in-Chief
PABLO KAY
pkay@angelusnews.com

Associate Editor
MIKE CISNEROS

Multimedia Editor
TAMARA LONG GARCÍA

Production Artist
ARACELI CHAVEZ

Managing Editor
RICHARD G. BEEMER

Assistant Editor
HANNAH SWENSON

Advertising Manager
JIM GARCIA
jagarcia@angelusnews.com

Circulation Specialist
BEATRIZ GARCIA
begarcia@angelusnews.com

ANGELUS is published biweekly by The Tidings (a corporation), established 1895. Periodicals postage paid at Los Angeles, California. One-year subscriptions (26 issues), $30.00; single copies, $3.00
© 2021 ANGELUS (2473-2699). No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. Events and products advertised in ANGELUS do not carry the implicit endorsement of The Tidings Corporation or the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: ANGELUS, PO Box 306, Congers, NY 10920-0306. For Subscription and Delivery information, please call (844) 245-6630 (Mon - Fri, 7 am-4 pm PT).

FOLLOW US

facebook.com/AngelusNews
info@angelusnews.com
Angelus News
@AngelusNews
@AngelusNews
angelusnews.com lacatholics.org

Sign up for our free, daily e-newsletter
Always Forward - newsletter.angelusnews.com

ON THE COVER

MIKE GOULDING

Volunteers with Habitat for Humanity LA's Catholic Coalition clear undergrowth at the site of a home destroyed in the Palisades Fire. As Pacific Palisades continues to rebuild, the coalition is stepping in to help survivors unable to rebuild on their own. Our coverage begins on Page 10.

THIS PAGE

DAVID NG

Archbishop José H. Gomez received an award from the Catholic Association for Latino Leadership (CALL) during the organization's 14th annual Angel Awards at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels on Sept. 26.



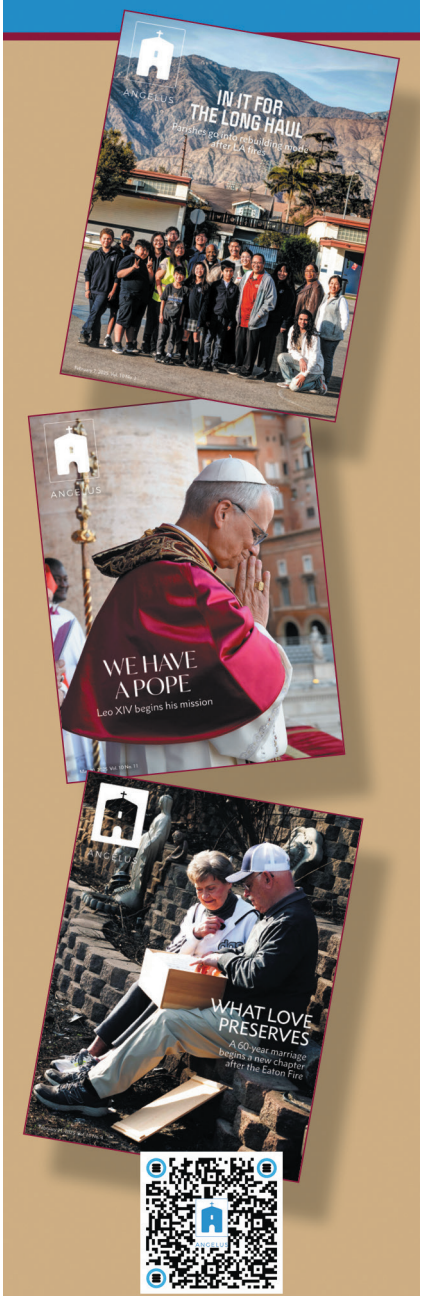
CONTENTS

Pope Watch 2
Archbishop Gomez 3
World, Nation, and Local News 4-6
In Other Words 7
Father Rolheiser 8
Scott Hahn 32
Events Calendar 33

14 LA Catholics embrace Fulton Sheen's 'grandpa' appeal at beatification
18 Silicon Valley priest talks all things AI at LA's Presbyteral Day
20 Reporter's notebook: What I saw during Pope Leo's trip to France
24 Elise Ureneck on Lindsay Clancy and what 'mercy' means nowadays
26 Grazie Christie receives a pro-life lesson from ... veterinarians?
28 Getty exhibit shows how the Holy Family changed (and grew) in Christian art
30 Heather King on the Gospel meaning of 'taking nothing for the journey'

ANGELUS

Try your first year for just $24.95



Angelusnews.com/Subnow
844-245-6630

POPE WATCH

Lourdes and repentance

The following is adapted from the Holy Father's homily during Mass with 150,000 people in the prairie of the Sanctuary of Lourdes in France on Sept. 27.

Jesus himself is quite direct in calling us to repentance. But he also extends our horizon beyond this earthly life to the horizon of eternal life. For while happiness in this world is fleeting and relative, and sadly sometimes out of reach for some, true happiness is promised to everyone in hope. Did not the Virgin Mary say to St. Bernadette, "I do not promise to make you happy in this world but in the next"?

In an age and society that seeks progress and material well-being, Mary comes to remind us of the greatness and richness of our calling to life, to eternal life. In the face of current trends that seek to redefine the value of human life in illness, suffering, and old age … here in Lourdes, no one is turned away due to their frailty. Your crutches, your wheelchairs, and your hidden tears are not obstacles; instead, they are the very place where you are fully respected and welcomed, and where you can experience a transforming encounter with the infinite love of God.

"I promise you!" Indeed, eternal life is a firm and certain promise that the Lord makes to us. He has already won it for us by his death on the cross and his resurrection, and through the grace of baptism he is bringing it to fulfillment in us each day. It is within our reach, but we must freely welcome it, take hold of it and not stand in its way.

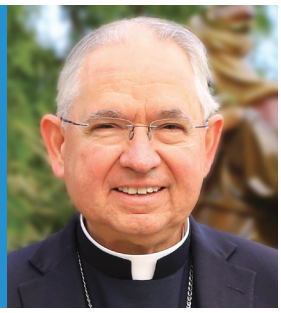
For the obstacle to grace and eternal life is sin, whereby we turn in upon ourselves, refusing God and shutting ourselves up in our own darkness. Our personal responsibility therefore comes into play, and a great responsibility it is. God has made us free, since freedom is necessary for love; no one can be forced to love. We must therefore use our freedom to say yes to Christ, relying on his grace, like Mary.

We hear the same urgent call to conversion in the words which Mary spoke right here, "Penance! Penance! Penance!" Why? Are we slow to understand? Do we too easily think of ourselves without sin? Do we not practice penance enough? The Virgin asks us to do penance not only for ourselves, because we too need it, but also "for sinners," for a world that is going astray. How can our hearts not be moved by the conflicts that are spreading and destroying so many innocent lives? Yet the evil of our time comes from the human heart. God is not responsible for it.

Penance is an act of love for God, because we want to make amends for the wounds our sins have dealt to his heart. It is also an act of love for those brothers and sisters of ours who do not heed this call to conversion, and whose sins lead them toward death.

Our Mother's reminder of our duty to pray and repent fills us with great hope, because she shows us that the way to change the course of things is by uniting ourselves to the passion of Christ. Do not be afraid of the storms of the world, for the holy Mother of God watches over your journey.

Papal Prayer Intention for October: Let us pray that the mental health ministry be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma and discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.



NEW WORLD OF FAITH
» ARCHBISHOP JOSÉ H. GOMEZ

Rediscovering Vatican II and the Mass

At the start of the year, Pope Leo XIV launched a series of general audience talks on the Second Vatican Council. He plans to talk about each of the 16 documents the Council issued.

He is doing that for a reason. It has been 60 years since the Council, and that generation is passing. Here in America, about 70% of all Catholics were born after Vatican II.

For most Catholics, Vatican II is all they have ever known. But it is probably also true that most Catholics today do not know very much about Vatican II.

That is why Leo says we need to rediscover the Council, "to get to know it again," not by listening to what others say about it but by reading the documents again ourselves.

In the background is the continuing debate over the changes in the liturgy made after the Council. Some Catholics continue to prefer the earlier, pre-Vatican II form of the liturgy.

But all the popes since the Council agree that the Council was "great grace," and a work of the Holy Spirit.

St. Pope John Paul II said, "the Council has made the Spirit newly 'present' in our difficult age," and that its documents "need to be read correctly, to be widely known and taken to heart as important and normative texts of the Magisterium."

The popes also agree that Vatican II's liturgical reforms are an authentic development that has grown organically from the Church's living tradition.

That does not mean that all these reforms were always carried out with proper care. We need to continue the work of purifying the liturgy. But as Catholics, we can never be tempted to think that Vatican II is somehow not legitimate or that we can choose what we want to believe or how we want to worship.

I love the Mass that we have been given, especially since the new English translation of the Missal we began using in 2011. What a gift to be able to pray in a language that we know and understand. I find that the words of the liturgy go with me during the day — the prefaces, the collects, the Eucharistic prayers. I realize the truth that what we pray becomes how we live.

We need to rediscover the Council, not by listening to what others say about it but by reading the documents again ourselves.

A few weeks back, the Prayer after Communion was this: "May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord, we pray, take possession of our minds and bodies, so that its effects, and not our own desires, may always prevail in us."

This is an example of the power and beauty in our liturgy, the noble simplicity! If we pray the words we are given, with reverence and sacred attention, we can celebrate in any of our native tongues, and these words will lift our hearts to heaven, and bring Jesus into our lives here on earth.

And we should not forget: there were strong reasons for the Council's reforms.

The liturgical reform movement had begun decades before the Council. There was great concern that people were like spectators at the Mass and did not understand the worship they were offering. The old rite could be profound and beautiful, but the reality was often that the priest was doing one thing at the altar and the faithful were disconnected.

Pope Benedict XVI said that in the old rite, it often seemed as if "there were two parallel liturgies: the priest with the altar-servers, who celebrated Mass according to the missal, and the laity, who prayed during Mass using their own prayer books."

The Mass belongs to the Lord and not to us.

We need to always be rediscovering the beauty and the mystery of the liturgy, in which the heavens are opened and our worship here on earth participates in the liturgy that goes on around the throne of God.

In our worship, the Word becomes flesh once again at the altar, the living God comes to be our food and drink, to dwell within us and make our lives his own, and to give us courage and light for our journey.

What the liturgy demands is our reverence, our submission, our service to the sacred mysteries we celebrate. The words we say, the gestures that we make, are holy and filled with sacred power.

This is Vatican II's vision for the liturgy.

Leo recently devoted eight public audiences to the Council's "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy." I recommend reading what the Holy Father has to say and also reading the document, too. If you have not read it, I think it will surprise you.

Pray for me and I will pray for you.

And let us ask holy Mary, Mother of the Church, to help us keep being renewed in our own reception of Vatican II.

Brazilian bishops spar with president over clerical comments

Two Brazilian bishops pushed back against the country's president for his remarks on priestly celibacy and the ordination of women.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who is currently running for re-election, shared in a Sept. 16 meeting with evangelical Christians that "as long as the Catholic Church doesn't end celibacy and allow women to be priests, to be bishops … we're going to see the Catholic Church face difficulties."

Da Silva also stated his belief that priestly celibacy is why the Catholic population has dropped to 57% from 90% in 1970.

"We are seeing politicians trying to tell the Church what it should do … when they ought to be looking after the country," Bishop Devair Araújo da Fonseca of Piracicaba said in a filmed homily. "And they are doing a very poor job of it."

"The Catholic Church is not something just anyone can understand," Bishop Adair José Guimarães of Formosa said. "It is an institution of divine right, over 2,000 years old, with its incredibly rich tradition, its magisterium, and sacred Scripture."

Da Silva and his opponent, Flavio Bolsonaro, each received just under 50% of the vote in Brazil's Oct. 4 nationwide election. They are headed for a runoff Oct. 25.



A clergyman prays over the casket of a 13-year-old victim of the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka. | CNS/ATHIT PERAWOMGMETHA, REUTERS

Sri Lanka: Former police chief gets death sentence in Easter bombing

The High Court of Sri Lanka has issued its first sentences in the nearly five-year trial of the perpetrators of the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings that killed 279.

Fifteen defendants were convicted and nine acquitted in connection to the attacks on three churches and three hotels. The minimum sentence was 200 years in prison, with one defendant receiving 260.

In July, former police chief Pujith Jayasundara and Hemasiri Fernando were sentenced to death for failing to act on intelligence sources that the attacks were to take place. While Church leaders condemned the sentence of death, they did continue to call for investigations into who ordered the attacks and whether state intelligence agencies could have prevented them.

Father Jude Krishantha Fernando, director of communications for the Archdiocese of Colombo where the attacks took place, said the ruling "represented only one part of the case."



Father Adrian Mantykiewicz, still bearing bandages and bruises from the Sept. 24 knife attack, preaches at Mass two days later. | OSV NEWS/ COURTESY RADIO FARA

Polish priest preaches forgiveness for knife attacker

A Polish priest who survived a knife attack that killed a fellow priest and injured four, returned to the pulpit Sept. 26 with a message of forgiveness.

"As a disciple of Jesus Christ, in my own name, in Father Marek's name, and in Father Stanislaw's name, I want to say very clearly that we forgive," Father Adrian Mantykiewicz, said at Mass, celebrated at the Benedictine abbey in the town of Jaroslaw, Poland, where the attack had taken place two days prior.

Police have arrested a 31-year-old Ukrainian man in connection to the stabbings, which killed Father Stanislaw Zbojniewicz, 67. The alleged attacker is currently being held in a hospital ward with enhanced security due to diagnoses from psychiatric experts.

Mantykiewicz asked the faithful to pray for his attacker and "the grace of conversion for him."

"Whatever happened, the evil that took place here in our abbey, we must overcome with goodness, love, and forgiveness," he said.



A campus on its knees — Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, consecrated the University of Notre Dame for the first time to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Sept. 25, after an evening Mass on campus. Students processed with the Eucharist to a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the center of the campus for a prayer of consecration, where the bishop and university leaders prayed for an end to divisions and strength to love selflessly like Jesus. | OSV NEWS/MICHAEL CATERINA, UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

American theology professor wins Ratzinger Prize

John C. Cavadini, theology professor at the University of Notre Dame, will be awarded the 2026 Ratzinger Prize, the Vatican announced Sept. 22.

Sometimes described as the "Nobel Prize of Theology," the Ratzinger prize is personally approved by the pope upon the recommendation of the Scientific Committee of the Joseph Ratzinger-Benedict XVI Vatican Foundation.

Cavadini is a patristic theologian with an emphasis on St. Augustine, and has taught at Notre Dame since 1990. In 2000 he became the founding director of the McGrath Institute of Church Life, which he led until earlier this year.



Professor John Cavadini. | MATT CASHONE, UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME VIA THE RATZINGER FOUNDATION

Cavadini said in a statement that he hopes "this award redounds, with gratitude, to the credit of Our Lady, the patroness of our university, under whose protection we have flourished for the last 183 years, and may it be so for the next 183 years."

Relevant Radio's 'Father Rocky' to run Wisconsin Marian shrine

Father Francis J. Hoffman — better known as "Father Rocky" — has been named as the next director of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in Wisconsin.

According to the Oct. 2 announcement from Bishop David Ricken of Green Bay, Hoffman will maintain his role as chairman and CEO of Relevant Radio. As the shrine's director, he will oversee its strategic planning while spreading the message of Our Lady of Champion "throughout North America and the world."

Before joining Relevant Radio, Hoffman worked as a school chaplain and a missionary in Mexico.

Champion is the only Church-approved Marian apparition site in the U.S., where the Virgin Mary is believed to have appeared three times in 1859 to Servant of God Adele Brice, a Belgian immigrant to Wisconsin who dedicated her life to religious education.

Peoria bishop renames Sheen's home parish, brings relics to NY and Rome

The Illinois church where Blessed Fulton Sheen grew up will become part of the first parish in the world named after him.

St. Mary Church in El Paso, Illinois, where Sheen was baptized in 1895, will merge with St. John Church in nearby Benson, Peoria's Bishop Louis Tylka announced Sept. 26. The new parish will be named Blessed Fulton J. Sheen on Dec. 9, the first observance of Blessed Sheen's feast day.

Days later, Tylka traveled to New York to bring a Sheen relic — a bone from his left hand — as a gift to St. Patrick's Cathedral, where it will be permanently displayed. Sheen was buried in the cathedral's crypt before his remains were transferred to Peoria.

On Oct. 5, Tylka gave another relic of Sheen to Pope Leo XIV during a private audience at the Vatican. "To place a relic of this son of the Diocese of Peoria into the hands of the first American pope, both of whom are from Illinois, was an especially moving moment," said Tylka after the audience.

San Buenaventura mission receives federal preservation funding

The historic Mission Basilica San Buenaventura in Ventura is one of 26 nationwide projects to receive a portion of the $11.9 million in semiquincentennial grants from the National Park Service, announced at a press conference on Oct. 1.

The grants were awarded to preserve structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places that are associated with the founding of the United States, to coincide with the country's 250th anniversary.

Mission Basilica San Buenaventura, founded in 1782, received $750,000 to repair plaster that makes up the entirety of the structure, including the bell tower damaged by storms in 2025. Church officials have said that the structure's integrity could be compromised if the plaster was not repaired.

The restoration will include stripping the existing plaster, strengthening the adobe interior walls, then adding a more breathable plaster, said David Bolton, executive director of the California Missions Foundation, which helped write and submit the grant proposal.



Walk the walk — San Diego Bishop Michael M. Pham, center, leads more than 4,000 people who gathered in Balboa Park on Sept. 27 for World Day of Migrants and Refugees. Dozens of faith leaders participated in the event, including, left to right, Jesuit Father Eduardo Samaniego, San Diego Auxiliary Bishop Felipe Pulido, Rabbi Mike Rothbaum, and Deacon Carlos Morales. | OSV NEWS/DAVID MAUNG, DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO

Clayton Kershaw to speak at national March for Life

Former Dodgers pitcher Clayton Kershaw will be the keynote speaker at the annual March for Life rally in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 22, 2027.

Organizers announced Sept. 29 that the theme for the 2027 march is "The Truth Is Pro-Life."

Kershaw, a three-time Cy Young Award winner who retired after the Dodgers won the World Series in 2025, operates the nonprofit group Kershaw's Challenge, which partners with other charities to help children in need living in Los Angeles, Dallas, Zambia, and the Dominican Republic.

The former pitcher is married with five children and has been an outspoken proponent of his Christian faith.

The national march marks the anniversary of the legalization of abortion nationwide in the 1973 Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*, even after its reversal in 2022.

Kershaw remains with the Dodgers as a special assistant in the baseball operations department while serving as an analyst during NBC's "Sunday Night Baseball" games.

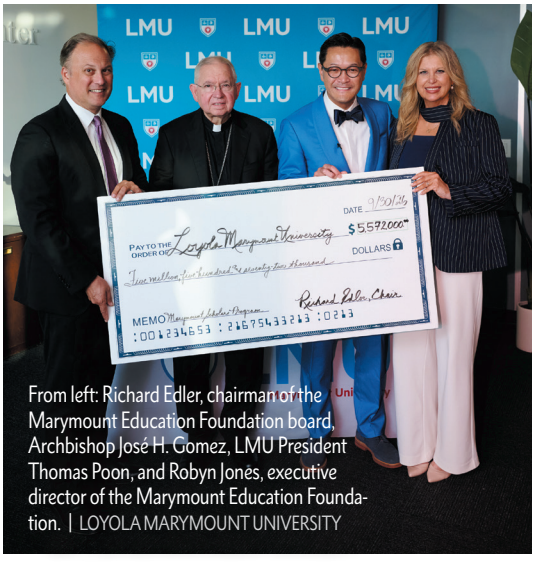
LMU receives $5M gift to help LA Catholic students go to college

Loyola Marymount University received a $5.57 million gift from the Marymount Education Foundation on Oct. 1 to expand the program, allowing Catholic school students from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to attend the college.

The funding is expected to support LMU's Catholic High School Promise Program, a partnership created in 2025 with the archdiocese's Department of Catholic Schools, which guarantees admission to Loyola Marymount and offers financial and academic support for up to 18 students at six participating archdiocesan high schools.

"I am delighted by this new partnership, which will make Catholic education more affordable and more available to young people in our archdiocese," said Archbishop José H. Gomez.

Separately, Loyola Marymount is also partnering with Verbum Dei Jesuit High School in Watts for the Leadership Fellows Program to give early admission to up to five students and provide undergraduate research opportunities, mentorship, and career preparation.



From left: Richard Edler, chairman of the Marymount Education Foundation board, Archbishop José H. Gomez, LMU President Thomas Poon, and Robyn Jones, executive director of the Marymount Education Foundation. | LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

IN OTHER WORDS...

Letters to the Editor

The consequences of the 'right to reproduce'

I salute Angelus and writer Theresa Farnan for the sensitive yet unequivocal approach to the "right to reproduce."

I am not very familiar with the effort described in The New York Times article Farnan references. But one of my close friends is a practicing Catholic who was conceived through IVF. She has struggled most of her life with the Church's teaching, and wondered if she was a real person in God's eyes.

But with the help of priests and a strong Catholic community around her here in Denver, she is overcoming her sense of shame and finding a sense of belonging. She considers IVF wrong and, because of her experience, wouldn't wish it on any family. But she also considers this a "cross" in her life that helped her look for God.

I'm sure there are many people like her today, including children delivered via surrogate, who struggle with the same identity problems. We need to think more about the consequences of technology on the human person.

— *"Avery," Denver, Colorado*

Correction

Heather King's column "Chavez Ravine and the archives of 'The Uprooted'" in the Oct. 2 issue referenced the story of a 66-year-old evicted from Chavez Ravine on May 8, 1959. The correct spelling of her last name is Arechigo.

Continue the conversation! To submit a letter to the editor, visit AngelusNews.com/Letters-To-The-Editor and use our online form or send an email to editorial@angelusnews.com. Please limit to 300 words. Letters may be edited for style, brevity, and clarity.

A tail-wagging blessing



Father Chidi Ekpendu, pastor at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Silver Lake, celebrates the parish patron's feast day with a special "Blessing of the Animals" after a special Mass and parish potluck on Oct. 4. The blessing capped a weekend of special events marking the 800th anniversary of St. Francis' death in 1226. | JOHN GERONILLA

View more photos from this gallery at AngelusNews.com/photos-videos

Do you have photos or a story from your parish that you'd like to share? Please send to editorial@angelusnews.com.

"I think Catholicism is basically going to be irresistible."

~ Noah McKay, a doctoral student at Princeton University, in an Oct. 4 EWTN News article on being a philosopher and converting to Catholicism.

"It's not that we disagree. It's that we've stopped seeing each other as neighbors in the first place."

~ Simran Jeet Singh and Mary Ellen Giess, in an Oct. 2 Religion News Service commentary on how only 34% of Americans say most people can be trusted.

"We pray this is the needed wake-up call for Gov. Lee — in fact, for everyone — to recognize the barbarism of capital punishment."

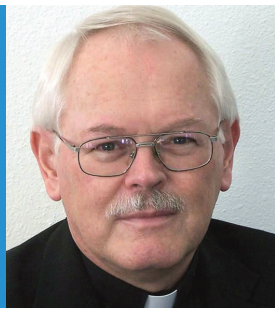
~ Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy, executive director of Catholic Mobilizing Network, in an Oct. 3 National Catholic Reporter article on reacting to the failed execution of inmate Christa Pike in Tennessee.

"We were hungry — hungry literally and hungry for success."

~ Travan Jasper, a doctor, in a Sept. 25 CBS News article on how he and his twin brother grew up in poverty but returned to their Virginia hometown to co-run an emergency room.

"There's a kind of being gobsmacked, or awe-struck, at the power of these models. I'm thinking more soberly and carefully."

~ Catholic bioethicist Charlie Camosy, in a Sept. 29 New York Times story on Anthropic's quest to consult religious leaders in its quest to instill morality in AI models.



IN EXILE

» FATHER RONALD ROLHEISER, OMI

Oblate of Mary Immaculate Father Ronald Rolheiser is a spiritual writer; ronrolheiser.com

An anniversary

In telling his faith story, C.S. Lewis shares that, at the moment of his conversion, he was "the most reluctant convert in the history of Christianity," but that he gave himself over to Christ because "God's compulsion is our liberation."

That phrase spoke to me recently when, on Sept. 8, I celebrated the 60th anniversary of making my first vows as a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate. I was 18 years old then, far too young by today's assessment to be making that kind of commitment.

But I wasn't too young. Intuitively, I knew what I was signing up for. I wasn't starry-eyed and unaware that taking religious vows is a serious business. The decision I made to enter religious life with the hope of becoming a priest was the most difficult decision I have ever made in life and wasn't predicated on a natural attraction to that vocation. The opposite. That was something I didn't want, but something I felt called to and not morally free to resist. I was a reluctant novice, but there because of God's compulsion. Here's the story.

Until one month before I entered the novitiate as a novice, I resisted the call, planning instead to go to university to become a psychologist. I made the decision to pursue religious life and the priesthood during the summer immediately after my high school graduation. During that summer, I worked on a farm and spent long hours alone on a tractor working in fields. During those long hours alone, a tension that I had long suppressed began to build up in me, namely, one between my natural desire regarding my choice in life and a call, a compulsion, inside me that simply would not go away, calling me to the priesthood. Eventually I gave in. I said yes to that call.

So, at the tender age of 17, I made the most difficult (but paradoxically, the clearest, freest, and most life-giving) decision I have ever made. And as I look back on it now, 61 years later, I see it as pure grace. There have been some difficult times, but there have been no regrets. From day one, I knew that this was right for me. All these years later, I have only deep gratitude for the grace to have made that decision and the ocean of grace that has surrounded me throughout these 60 years.

The renowned novelist Morris West published his autobiography sometime after his 70th birthday. It's a slim little volume entitled "A View From the Ridge" (HarperOne, $28.70) and begins with these words: "When you reach the age of seventy there should only be three phrases left in your vocabulary: *Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!*"

I'm over 70 years of age now and were I to write an autobiography, like West, I would begin with the words: *Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!*

And I remember clearly that day of my vows, 60 years ago. My mother and father were there, proud of me. I have a cherished photo of them with me, made even more precious because both of them, still young, died within the next six years. As well, I have 60 years of cherished friendship with some of my fellow novices — a couple of them who were even younger than I was.

And so, in celebrating this anniversary, I want to say thank you.

First, to the Oblates of Mary Immaculate for accepting me and, through 60 years, providing me with support, good community, friendship, exceptional educational opportunities, and grace-filled, life-giving ministries. In these 60 years, I estimate that I have lived in community with more than 400 different men. That wasn't always without its tensions, but it was always supportive and life-giving — and full of the kind of healthy banter that breathes oxygen into a room.

As well, a huge thanks to my family, a large amorphous tribe, now spanning three generations. We have managed to stay close, despite distance, and I have always felt their unfailing support. They are still an anchor, *a home*, which helps steady me when things get confusing.

Next, and no superlative is up to the task here, a huge thank you to the untold number of people, friends and others, whom I have met in ministry through these 60 years. I was ordained sacramentally by a bishop but have been continually re-ordained by the people in my life. They've shown me what priesthood means. The highlights in my priesthood have been hearing the words "thank you" from people with whom I have had the privilege of being with.

Finally, the biggest thank you of all to God. Thank you for calling me. Thank you for the compulsion and the persistence in that call, for knowing what was best for me. Thank you for sustaining me during some difficult, obsessive, and depressive periods in my ministry. Thank you for staying with me all these years.

Indeed, God's compulsion is our liberation — and pure grace.



ONE IN CHRIST, *United in Mission*

100 YEARS OF WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY 2026
October 18

With our daily prayer and our generous donation on World Mission Sunday, we all bear witness to the compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ, making Him present in every continent, country, city, family and heart.

-Msgr. Terrance Fleming
Executive Director
The Pontifical Mission Societies of Los Angeles

The Pontifical Mission Societies in Los Angeles invites you to join this year's World Mission Sunday. It's the 100th anniversary of this global day of prayer and donations.

World Mission Sunday is an annual global celebration within the Catholic Church, observed on the second to last Sunday of October. This special day is dedicated to the support of the missionary work of the Church through prayer and sacrifices.

On Sunday, October 18, 2026 unite with all Catholics by praying for our brothers and sisters around the world. At any Archdiocese of Los Angeles parish, prayerfully consider giving a donation for the missions.

On January 25, 2026, Pope Leo XIV declared "One in Christ, United in Mission" to be the theme for World Mission Sunday.

Find more information about World Mission Sunday in our website.

https://missionsla.org/worldmissionsunday

DONATE TODAY

RISING WITH ANGELS



A coalition of Catholic parishes is stepping in to help Palisades Fire survivors unable to rebuild on their own.

BY KIMMY CHACÓN AND PABLO KAY / PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE GOULDING

Nearly two years since a historic wildfire leveled most of Pacific Palisades, signs of a comeback are on the horizon.

Several restaurants and stores are open for business, an estimated 10% of homes have been rebuilt, and friends are playing bocce ball at the park again.

But ordinary residents still face steep challenges.

About three in four Palisades Fire survivors remain displaced. While some have been able to rebuild, the typical homeowner in the Pacific Palisades and Malibu faces a "gap" — the amount between the cost of rebuilding and what insurance covers — of more than $1 million.

Now, Habitat for Humanity is working to fill it.

The week of Sept. 22-25, some 500 volunteers from across LA pitched in at a four-day community build event organized by Habitat to benefit wildfire survivors who want to return home but lack the resources to rebuild on their own. Many were from Habitat for Humanity LA's "Catholic Coalition," which includes members of 16 Catholic parishes, local Knights of Columbus councils, and Loyola High School.

"We just felt it would be great for LA to have a space to rally together to support the ongoing wildfire relief efforts," said Chris Untiet, faith relations director for Habitat LA. "So, we decided to do something big for this fall."

Untiet said the Catholic Coalition played a "big part" in making the build possible.

"It's still kind of soaking in," Untiet said of the number of people who showed up to help, many of them parishioners of Corpus Christi Church, which was destroyed in the Palisades Fire, and St. Monica Church in nearby Santa Monica.

As temperatures rose throughout the week, camaraderie at the build sites was on full display. Volunteers powered through, clearing overgrowth at the sites of now empty lots so that foundations can be laid. Others helped serve food. More than 100 people framed walls in the parking lot of Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Church, which was lost in the fire.

The morning of Saturday, Sept. 25, a few celebrities, including members of the Clippers and Rams, were on hand to help. Msgr. Lloyd Torgerson, pastor of St. Monica, led more than 100 volunteers in a group blessing.

Carmen Kahlberg, a parishioner at Corpus Christi, said Torgerson's presence on Saturday — and that of her pastor, Msgr. Liam Kidney, for a



Msgr. Lloyd Torgerson, center, with volunteers from Habitat for Humanity's local Catholic Coalition on Sept. 26 at the site of Corpus Christi Church in Pacific Palisades. Torgerson led the workers in a special blessing and prayer before they got to work.



Volunteers cleared undergrowth from residential lots in the Palisades where burned down homes will be rebuilt by Habitat for Humanity.



Msgr. Torgerson's parish, Saint Monica in Santa Monica, rallied dozens of parishioners to help with the community build.

similar blessing on Tuesday — gave the volunteers "a lot of hope."

While helping volunteers park at Will Rogers Beach, Kahlberg met a 70-year-old woman who worked for the city and wanted to participate in the effort.

By the end of the day, Kahlberg ran into the woman again on the shuttle back to the parking lot.

"I've never done anything like this before. Everybody was so nice to me," the woman told Kahlberg, who has been a member of the Catholic Coalition since 2017 and participated in the Palisades event for all four days.

Habitat LA currently has 160 Pacific Palisades and Malibu households approved for rebuilds, with another 167 "in the pipeline" that meet eligibility criteria, according to Barry Smith, who belongs to the Catholic Coalition. Several homes being rebuilt by Habitat LA since the wildfire are already nearing completion.

Residents who will benefit from the new homes include "longtime residents, seniors, renters, and households with modest or fixed incomes who face significant barriers to returning home."

Funding for the new homes comes from private donors, among them Palisades residents, and a long list of corporate sponsors that includes Airbnb, the American Red Cross, Samsung, and NBC.

PLANS TO REBUILD CORPUS CHRISTI MOVING AHEAD

The effort to rebuild Corpus Christi Church after it was destroyed in the Palisades Fire is in the planning stage.

"The Archdiocese of Los Angeles is currently evaluating the vision, scope, financial requirements, and overall approach for rebuilding the church," the archdiocese's construction department told Angelus Oct. 5.

The archdiocese expects to break ground on a new church in early 2028, with a targeted construction duration of less than two years.

"Additional information regarding the church design, project scope, schedule, fundraising, and construction plans will be shared as the planning process advances and formal decisions are made," stated the archdiocese.

Construction to restore Corpus Christi School, which was partially damaged in the fire, is approximately 35% complete with a scheduled completion in January 2027. The school has not announced a reopening date.

Corpus Christi pastor Msgr. Liam Kidney expects the new church to serve a mix of longtime parishioners and new arrivals to the Palisades. While many of his former parishioners have permanently relocated elsewhere since the fire, Kidney is surprised by how many have chosen to stay and rebuild.

"There's more of our people around than I thought would be," said Kidney. "And we already have many new people, including young families having babies. Thanks be to God!"

— *Pablo Kay*

Smith said the project is not just about rebuilding homes.

"Recovery is about restoring stability, community, and hope," said Smith, a parishioner of American Martyrs Church in Manhattan Beach.

In the Palisades, Habitat has already completed work on Casa Gateway, an affordable housing development with condos for seniors and qualifying families.

"There was some damage from the fires at one of those apartments that we were able to help with some basic repairs," explained Untiet.

Kidney believes the kinship at the building projects is helping bring the scattered community back together.

"They are literally trying to create a humanity that lives in the same home, and that is we take care of each other," said Kidney, whose church was destroyed in the fire. "We love each other. We respect each other, and we're there for each other. And Habitat for Humanity has succeeded in doing this."

As volunteers gathered at the site of Corpus Christi, they drew inspiration from a physical symbol of hope that was hard to miss: a blue angel sculpture — one of several from a citywide public art installation in 2000 — that had been decorated by parish school students. It had once faced the crosswalk where kids walked on their way to school, and was one of the few objects from the church that survived the fire.



The blue angel structure that stood next to Corpus Christi and survived the Palisades Fire watches over volunteers near a worksite.

Carol Sanborn, longtime co-chair of the Catholic Coalition and also Corpus Christi's director of pastoral ministry, remembers the day a landscaper called her over to point out the word "hope," which was written on the angel's lips. On the wing was a painted image of longtime former Corpus Christi Principal Sister Patricia McGann, whose funeral was held just days before the Habitat build.

"We just all felt like we had a guardian angel who was looking over us," said Sanborn, who lost her family's home of 40-plus years in the fire.

"That word, hope … we felt that that was very much a theme of these last four days."

Kimmy Chacón is a freelance journalist and graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. She lives in Los Angeles and works in education.

Pablo Kay is the editor-in-chief of Angelus.

STILL HOPING FOR HOPE

Catholics prayed for legislative action and changed hearts at this year's annual Mass in Recognition of All Immigrants.

BY KIMMY CHACÓN



Representatives from Loyola Marymount University process into the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels for the Mass in Recognition of All Immigrants on Sept. 20. | PONCHO ROMERO

More than a year since ICE raids overwhelmed immigrant communities last summer, hundreds gathered inside the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels on Sept. 20 for the annual Mass in Recognition of All Immigrants to pray for the undocumented families still feeling pain and uncertainty across Southern California and beyond.

Archbishop José H. Gomez welcomed immigrants and supporters from across the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, as well as those from the Dioceses of Orange, San Diego, and San Bernardino, to "celebrate the truth that we are a Church of immigrants, a family of families who have come here from almost every nation on earth," he said.

"We pray that once again, America will see herself as a light of freedom for peoples of all nations, a home for all peoples, races, and languages," Archbishop Gomez said in his homily. "And we pray for ourselves, that we commit ourselves to continue to be good neighbors, good parishioners, to continue working with gratitude for the common good of this country we have come to call our home."

While immigration enforcement and deportations continue both locally and nationwide, Archbishop Gomez stressed that there were "words of hope" in Jesus' address in the Gospel that "the last will be first, and the first will be last."

"Jesus knows that sometimes when we look around us in the world, things don't always look good, seem fair," he said.

"We ask him to stay near to us in this time of fear and uncertainty. We ask him to change the hearts of our leaders, to give them compassion, new eyes to see the humanity of our brothers and sisters who are suffering under our broken immigration system."

As part of the Mass, relics of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini and other immigration-related saints were displayed on the altar. Also displayed was a "Ribbons of Prayer" exhibit where visitors could write the name of a person affected by recent immigration enforcement on a ribbon and tie it to a stand. Prayers were offered during the Mass for each person on a ribbon.

As she approached the relics, Rosa Miriam Sánchez from St. Agatha Church in Mid-City had intentions to ask for. But the Mass itself, she said, was already something to be grateful for, leaving her with a sense of hope and reassurance.

"Being involved in something like this with the Church, and knowing that we have even stronger support from the cathedral … makes us realize how strongly we need to fight," Sánchez said.

Guadalupe Alemán, who migrated to the United States from Mexico about 40 years ago, said her experiences shaped her commitment to support other immigrants.

"We have to understand that we are brothers and sisters in Christ, and when one of us hurts, we all hurt," Alemán said.

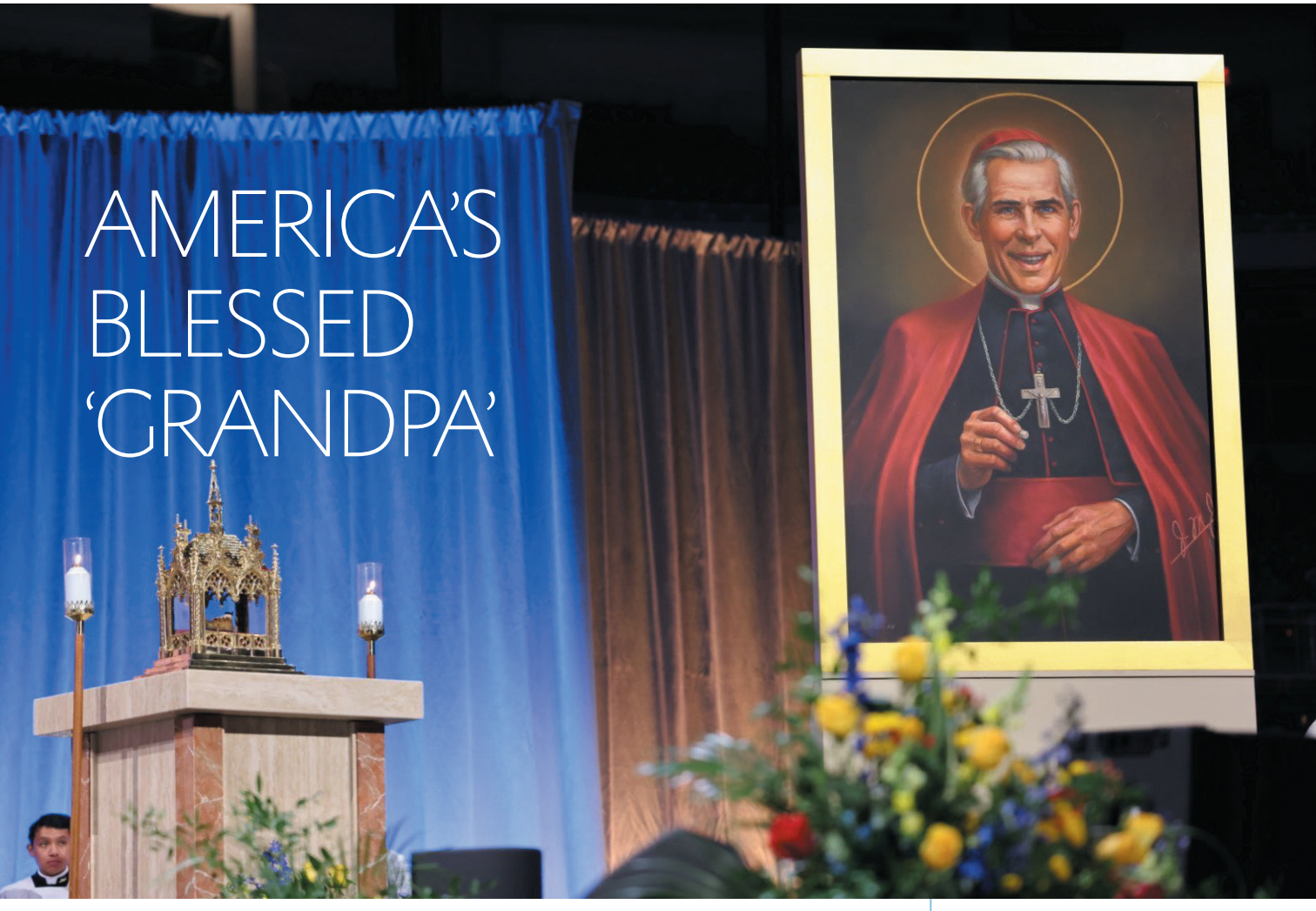
Mayra Velarde, a parent leader at a school in the San Fernando Valley, said families remain afraid, but that there is hope in faith communities gathering and supporting one another.

"Sometimes staying isolated, alone in a house, without talking about what you're feeling, makes things feel even harder," Velarde said.

"Even though the problem doesn't go away, you feel like it's more manageable because you know you're not alone."

Kimmy Chacón is a freelance journalist and graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. She lives in Los Angeles and works in education.

AMERICA'S BLESSED 'GRANDPA'



A major relic of Blessed Fulton J. Sheen is displayed next to his official portrait at his beatification Mass Sept. 24 at The Dome at America's Center in St. Louis. | OSV NEWS/ MARGARET MURRAY

Fulton Sheen's staying power was on full display in St. Louis, where LA pilgrims joined 50,000 Catholics for his beatification.

BY PABLO KAY

Like so many Americans of her generation, Rosemary Serna used to tune in with her mother to watch Bishop Fulton Sheen on TV during the 1950s.

Then Serna left the Church for 60 years. She got married, had children, and worked for several decades as a Los Angeles County deputy probation officer. Yet the faith of her youth seemed forgotten.

But after her husband's death in 2020, something began to stir inside. She remembers sitting at home one night, thinking about going out to buy cigarettes and something to drink.

"And in my head, I heard, 'It's time,' " Serna recalled. "And for some reason I thought maybe I should go back to my Church."

That led Serna to make her first confession in decades and start attending Sunday Mass. Now a parishioner at Holy Family Church in South Pasadena, Serna has embraced pilgrimage opportunities lately, including one to Turkey and Greece. When a brochure from the Archdiocese of LA for a pilgrimage to St. Louis for Archbishop Sheen's Sept. 24 beatification landed in her inbox this summer, the timing felt right.

Serna believes the televangelist of her youth had been waiting for her all these years.

"I felt like God rewarded my journey by allowing me to be there," said Serna after the Mass inside The Dome at America's Center, where Sheen was officially declared by the Catholic Church "Blessed," the final step before sainthood. "Witnessing that ceremony,



Rosemary Serna of Holy Family Church in South Pasadena prays at the Old Cathedral of St. Louis, King of France during the Sept. 22-25 pilgrimage for Fulton Sheen's beatification. | PABLO KAY

I knew I was home."

Serna's group of 35 pilgrims from the archdiocese was accompanied by Auxiliary Bishops Marc Trudeau and Slawomir Szkredka, and five priests. Over four days, they visited shrines and landmarks, including St. Louis' two cathedral basilicas, the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in neighboring Belleville, Illinois, and St. Mary's Cathedral in Peoria, Illinois, where Sheen is buried.

One of the LA pilgrims had a particularly special connection to Sheen. Now a parishioner of St. Peter and Paul Church in Wilmington, Regina Murphy grew up between Brooklyn and Long Island. She watched Sheen as a child, but also met him several times through her grandfather, Jimmy Murphy, a Brooklyn sportswriter who knew Sheen through New York Catholic media circles.

"Being here was personal for me because of the way I was raised," said Murphy of the Mass. "It was beautiful to see the outpouring of love."

The love for Sheen in St. Louis wasn't just from Catholics of Murphy and Serna's generation. Certainly, of the 50,000 people at the beatification presided by papal representative Cardinal Luis Tagle, many were drawn by fond memories of the man who appeared weekly in their living rooms. But that contingent was in the minority inside the arena that day.

Instead, the event was dominated by droves of couples with small children, teenagers in Sheen-themed shirts, and a few thousand priests and seminarians — most of whom were born after 1979, the year of Sheen's death.

What explains the cross-generational appeal of a Midwestern cleric who used a chalkboard to talk about Jesus and challenge Catholics to resist the temptations of consumerism, communism, and modernity?

"For the older generations, he spoke the truth with love, and he was very dashing and charming," pro-life activist and Live Action founder Lila Rose, who helped host EWTN's live coverage of the beatification. "But for the younger generations, there's grandpa."

For Rose, who is based in Los Angeles, the turnout was a testament to the power of evangelization through media and Sheen's "timeless" message.

"The truth he spoke, he did with so much humility and love," said Rose.

Even in the age of TikTok and shortening attention spans, Sheen's TV spots — and his more than 60 books — have shown surprising staying power.

Kester Nucum, 25, drove from Huntsville, Alabama, with his wife, Catherine, and infant son to attend the beatification. He got hooked on Sheen videos in high school after discovering him while scrolling through YouTube. Nucum credits reading Sheen's book "Three to Get Married" before his wedding last year with helping him be a better husband and father.



Pilgrims from the Archdiocese of LA began their trip with Mass at St. Louis' Old Cathedral Sept. 22. | PABLO KAY



Kester and Catherine Nucum of Huntsville, Alabama, with their infant son following the beatification Mass in St. Louis. | PABLO KAY

"Yes, he writes in kind of a pre-Vatican II, more Thomistic kind of fashion," said Nucum. "But the truth is not old-fashioned. The truth is still true even to this day."

Father John Schiavone, one of the five priests in the LA pilgrimage group, was familiar with Sheen as a celebrity priest on TV growing up. Yet reading Sheen's books after his ordination in 1973, he believes, proved "foundational" for his ministry.

"He had an immense influence on priests," said Schiavone, now retired at 79. "I think of all the priests whose prayer life improved because of his encouraging them on retreats to do the Holy Hour."

One teaching that Schiavone said stuck with him was how Sheen identified the link between the crucifixion of Christ and his resurrection: "You can't have the resurrection without the cross, and the cross without resurrection is despair.

"That was one of the things that stuck in my craw," said Schiavone, a noted liturgical composer who remembers singing at an Easter Mass at St. Basil's in Koreatown in the early 1970s in which Sheen gave the homily.

Although too young to know Sheen from his TV days, Matt Dhillon of Fullerton has become something of a Sheen "superfan" over the years. While he's read most of his books and watched hours of video clips, he believes Sheen's ability to avoid the pitfalls of fame spoke more loudly than anything else.

"He never walked around with self-importance," said Dhillon, who flew to St. Louis with his wife, Kirsten. "He understood St. Paul's message that I carry in my body the cross, that I am nothing."

For Dhillon, one of the most telling episodes of Sheen's life was his relationship with New York's Cardinal

Sainthood next for Fulton Sheen?



James Engstrom, then 15, is pictured with an image of Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen at his home in Washington, Illinois, Jan. 23, 2026. | OSV NEWS/DARYL WILSON

Now that Archbishop Fulton Sheen has been declared "Blessed," anticipation has turned to the final step of the sainthood process: canonization.

For beatification, the Catholic Church requires the approval of one confirmed miracle attributed to the person's posthumous intercession.

Sheen's approved miracle involved the 2010 case of a stillborn child from Sheen's hometown of Peoria, Illinois. Found without a heartbeat upon delivery, James Engstrom's parents prayed to Sheen for a miracle. Sixty-one minutes later, he took a breath and his heart rate stabilized. He was given the middle name of "Sheen" and today is a healthy 16-year-old teenager.

Now, a second approved miracle is required for Sheen to be declared a saint. At a press conference in St. Louis the morning of Sheen's beatification, Msgr. Jason Gray, executive director of the Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Foundation, said that six possible miracles are being investigated as part of the process that could lead to St. Fulton Sheen.

One of them, Gray said, was a "potential healing from Stage 4 cancer," while another involved a newborn child with "hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy."

"It's premature to say anything more than that," said Gray. "We'll investigate and leave it in the hands of the Holy See."

—Pablo Kay



Young women pray while listening to Catholic musician Matt Maher perform ahead of Sheen's beatification Mass Sept. 24 at The Dome at America's Center in St. Louis. | OSV NEWS/BOB ROLLER

Francis Spellman during the early 1960s. Sheen, one of Spellman's auxiliary bishops in New York and the national director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in the U.S., was persecuted by Spellman over a dispute involving donated powdered milk to the Archdiocese of New York. Sheen refused to criticize Spellman publicly and even omitted the incident from his autobiography.

"He had an unbelievable humility, and showed us what it means to empty yourself in every way," said Dhillon.

Kirsten, meanwhile, doesn't share her husband's level of fandom. But like everyone else in St. Louis that week, she found the reach of Sheen's legacy — conversions, vocations to the priesthood, cheerful families — hard to deny.

"I don't personally care for his manner of speaking. It's very dramatic, et cetera," Kirsten said of Sheen. "But I have to admit, the man is a saint."

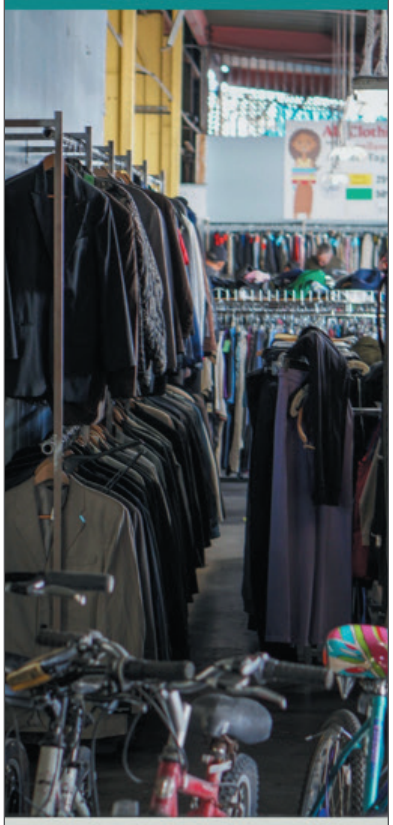
Pablo Kay is the editor-in-chief of Angelus.



LA pilgrims celebrated Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral in Peoria on Sept. 23, the eve of Fulton Sheen's beatification. At his tomb, located in the cathedral, inscriptions and a new portrait of Blessed Sheen were still covered. | PABLO KAY

Society of St. Vincent de Paul Los Angeles

Yesterday's outfits
Tomorrow's opportunities.



Shopping and donation drop off locations

Los Angeles Store
210 N Ave 21
Los Angeles, CA 90031

Long Beach Store
2750 Pacific Coast Hwy
Long Beach CA 90804

Come see where Good works.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul Los Angeles

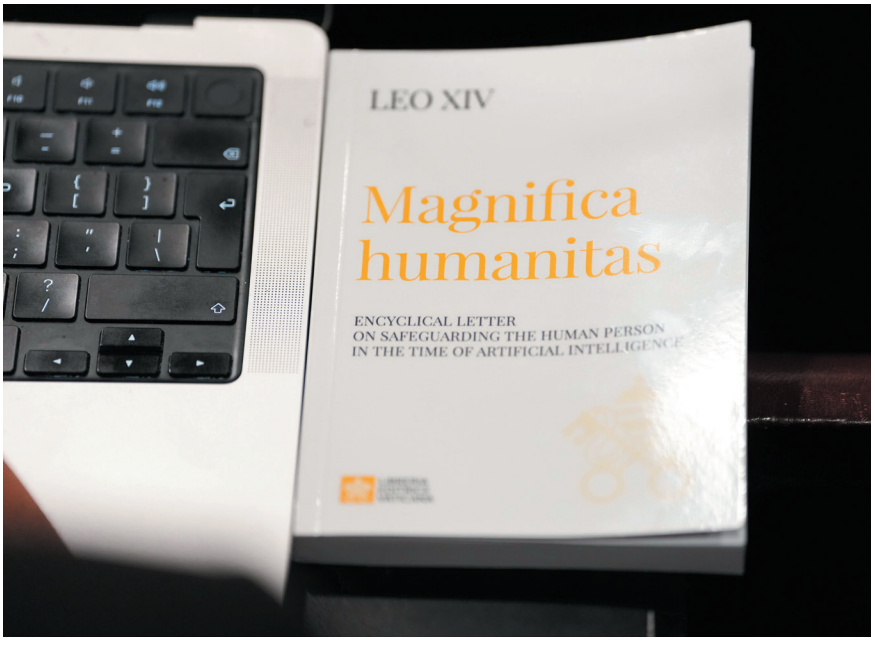
SVdPLA.org | @svdpla_thriftstore

‘NOT THE TIME TO REST’

A leading Catholic expert on AI encouraged LA’s priests to engage with it responsibly and advocate for better protections.

BY MIKE CISNEROS

Father Brendan McGuire speaks at the annual Presbyteral Day gathering at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels Sept. 28. | PABLO KAY



A copy of Pope Leo XIV’s first encyclical, *“Magnifica Humanitas:* On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence.” | CNS/LOLA GOMEZ

As the questions around artificial intelligence (AI) continue to swirl in our everyday lives, Father Brendan McGuire — a former Silicon Valley engineer and tech-executive-turned-priest — challenged priests in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to “not sit on the sidelines” and to prepare for the societal transformation through AI that is already underway.

“All of humanity is on the line,” McGuire told priests during the archdiocese’s annual Presbyteral Day gathering Sept. 28. “This is not a moment where we can fall. You, as the leaders in the Catholic world of LA, you need to be really struggling with this and work with this stuff. You cannot stand on the sidelines. This is not the time to rest.”



Father Michael Croghan, associate pastor at St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in Lomita, prays vespers with more than 500 other priests serving in the Archdiocese of LA at Presbyteral Day. | PABLO KAY

McGuire's wide-ranging presentation inside the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels' conference center touched on how AI models work, how and when they can be used effectively for ministry, and what to make of growing fears that AI may wipe out humanity.

"We can't ignore what they're saying," McGuire said of recent statements from Silicon Valley tech workers expressing alarm over AI safety. "Because what they're seeing, the emerging behaviors, is frightening them.

"I don't think it's probable. I don't think it's impossible. What I don't want to do is wait to find out what the percentage is. We need guardrails."

McGuire, a native of Ireland, worked as a tech executive in Silicon Valley before pursuing the priesthood for the Diocese of San Jose, where he now ministers as pastor of St. Simon Church in Los Altos.

McGuire has helped bring the Catholic Church's voice to the attention of tech companies, including helping shape Anthropic's Claude AI system's governing document. He's also one of the founders of the Institute for Technology, Ethics, and Culture at Santa Clara University, which partners with the Vatican's Dicastery for Culture and Education.

McGuire pointed to Pope Leo XIV's encyclical, "*Magnifica Humanitas*" ("Magnificent Humanity") — which he helped introduce to the global press last May — as a guiding document to bring the dignity of humans into the AI discussion.

"We have been serving technology, and [Leo] wants technology to serve us again," said McGuire.

In the encyclical, Leo invokes two contrasting biblical construction projects, the Tower of Babel of Genesis and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem described by the prophet Nehemiah, as the choice facing humanity today: "Between constructing Babel or rebuilding Jerusalem; between a power that claims to dominate the heavens and a people who work together in the presence of God to rebuild the walls of fraternal coexistence."

In finding that harmony between humanity and AI, McGuire believes there's still time for religious leaders to make a difference.

"If this is the wall that we're still building, the mortar is still wet," he said. "We can build this wall. But what I've seen developed in the last year alone, I can tell you that the mortar is drying out fast. That's not to frighten you, but to give you a sense of urgency for this moment."

McGuire was clear that AI development needed a "slowdown" and accountability, despite seeming evidence that the small handful of companies and investors don't seem interested in that.

"There is a handful of elites that are making decisions for all humanity," McGuire said. "That is not acceptable to us. We cannot allow that power. We need to engage, we need to get our people to engage and to demand guardrails, to demand transparency, to demand participation."

But the AI discussion wasn't all doom and gloom. "Now that I've scared you a little bit, I want to give you some hope," McGuire said.

Several times, McGuire asked the priests to reflect on questions about AI, including how they used it, where they've already seen AI in their parishes, and what reassurances or concerns they had.

The answers ranged from thoughtful to humorous to heartbreaking.

One priest shared that he asked ChatGPT to give him the liturgical calendar in a clear format, and it gave him the wrong date for Easter.

Another priest shared that he was surprised that he could argue with his chatbot and how easily it would concede.

Another priest said that while ministering on a major university campus, he met students who were already using AI as their therapist, asking it for emotional support, life decisions, and financial assistance.

The slippery slope of using AI to write homilies also came up. McGuire cautioned against simply prompting: "Write me a homily for tomorrow."

"The preaching of the word of God is the single most important part of our responsibility [in the liturgy]," McGuire said. "It's not just showing up.

"But make sure it's yours. Make sure it's not the machine. It has to be your stories. It has to be your people, in your pew, because if not, they're going to see it and they're going to feel it. And the pope is pleading with you to not do it."

Beyond the doomsday scenarios, McGuire told priests that an AI transformation was already taking place, and that they would have to be ready for the imminent ramifications.

"I'm asking you to discern," he said. "I'm asking you to make this part of your new vocabulary and discernment. I understand that's new work, it's hard work, and it doesn't feel pastoral. But it will be pastoral, trust me, because you will be dealing with people's problems in every aspect of society in the next decade.

"That's not a doomsday. That's reality."

Mike Cisneros is the associate editor of Angelus.

Leo conquers France

Big crowds, moving moments, and a forceful message: A reporter's chronicle of the pope's surprising visit to 'the eldest daughter of the Church.'

Pope Leo XIV greets young people during a prayer vigil at the *Stade de France* in Saint-Denis, France, Sept. 25. | OSV NEWS/SIMONE RISOLUTI, VATICAN MEDIA

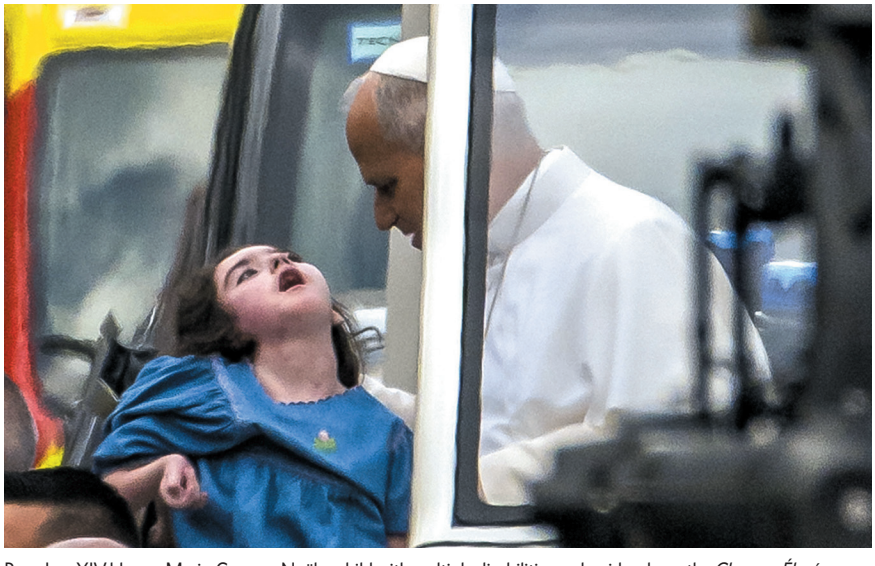
BY JOVEL ÁLVAREZ

The skepticism was palpable, but it was nothing new.

As far back as 1997, when St. Pope John Paul II held World Youth Day in Paris, there were fears that he would not be able to draw the kind of crowds he was accustomed to in other parts of the world. France was secularizing at a rapid pace, and its society seemed already impossible to penetrate with messages of faith.

Instead, 1.2 million young people from around the world filled the *Champs-Élysées*, a show of Catholic energy and strength that made headlines across Europe.

Pope Leo XIV's Sept. 25-28 voyage to France faced its own challenge: matching the kind of enthusiasm that



Pope Leo XIV blesses Marie-Garance Noël, a child with multiple disabilities, as he rides down the *Champs-Élysées* avenue in the popemobile on his way to the *Place de la Concorde*, central Paris, on Sept. 26, to celebrate an outdoor Mass, on the second day of his visit to France. | OSV NEWS/SIMONE RISOLUTI, VATICAN MEDIA

its southern neighbor, Spain, showed during his wildly successful visit in June. (Spain, after all, has conspicuously followed the path toward secularization charted by the French.)

When I arrived in Paris on the eve of the trip's start, I found a scene that reminded me of the pope's visit to Istanbul: nothing in the city indicated that a major event was about to take place. In Turkey, that was understandable, given that Catholics make up only 0.07% of the population.

In France, where 29% of the population still identifies as Catholic, that figure didn't lead me to expect streets decorated with welcome banners or Vatican flags, as in Spain or even Lebanon last December. The morning of the pope's arrival, life in Paris seemed completely normal; activities continued as usual, and it appeared that the state visit was not capturing the public's attention.

But when the pope left the UNESCO headquarters in Paris that afternoon, faithful turned out in droves on the streets to accompany Leo on his way to the Basilica of Notre Dame, the country's most famous cathedral. That was when the public's fervor began to yield some surprises.

That evening, at the *Stade de France*, the prayer vigil with young people displayed a joy worthy of admiration. Some 80,000 young people — including some non-Catholics — gathered to hear Leo's message: an invitation to seek holiness, peace, and a living relationship with Jesus. Following a theatrical performance in which French saints were portrayed, the pope told the young people present that they themselves were "the saints of France."

"The saints changed the course of history, leading many from suffering to hope, because they first changed their own hearts, transforming them in the light of faith," the pontiff told them. "Dear young people, as you discern your vocation, be assured that the Lord does not speak to you in a confusing way, but addresses each of you by name and invites you to follow him because he loves you."

If the spectacle of that day had already dispelled fears of a lack of enthusiasm, the Mass in the *Place de la Concorde* was a true show of force, a quintessential demonstration of a Church still capable of drawing crowds from all over the country. Estimates put the total number of people at 800,000.



People gather near Paris' *Arc de Triomphe* to celebrate an open-air Mass led by Pope Leo XIV at the *Place de la Concorde* Sept. 26. | OSV NEWS/SIMONE RISOLUTI, VATICAN MEDIA



Pope Leo XIV leads a candlelight procession at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes Sept. 27. | OSV NEWS/REMO CASILLI, REUTERS

Among the faithful, we found people of all kinds: youths, families, and seniors. The sight of people going to confession in the street surprised even the most skeptical.

The next day, in Lourdes, the audience was different. The participants were almost all older adults, a scene dominated by wheelchairs and crutches. Here, Leo spoke out forcefully in defense of the dignity of those suffering physically, assuring them that in God's eyes, their worth remained intact.

Meeting with sick pilgrims in Lourdes, Leo's message that "medicine must never be servant of programmed death" came across as a not-so-subtle rebuke of the country's recent legalization of assisted suicide.

That afternoon, at the Notre Dame shelter, the pope once again lashed out against these laws, asserting that "not everything that is legal is necessarily moral."

Pope Leo strikes a cautious tone on AI

Returning from France to Rome, Pope Leo XIV told journalists aboard the papal plane that he believes that threats posed by the advance of artificial intelligence (AI) are not "fake news."

"If someone were to ask me, am I in panic mode? No, I'm not. I sleep at night," the pope replied when asked if he was worried that AI could pose catastrophic risks to humanity or even wipe it out entirely.

"I do think that the concerns raised by many of the experts, specialists in AI, should be taken seriously. I don't think that is fake news, as some have said, to try and cause ... financial or some other kind of benefit," he told the more than 80 journalists.

The question was prompted by alarm over recent claims from some tech experts. One of them, a top safety researcher at the AI company Anthropic, said he believed the chance of AI-powered human extinction within 10 years at greater than 10%.

Leo also noted that he had read that "the head of Nvidia claims that he has found some way of inserting into AI certain guardrails."

"He's the same one, however, that says there should be no limits placed and no government regulation," he added, referring to Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang without naming him.

Leo expressed hope that political leaders, the leaders of AI, social organizations, and associations could meet to discuss what is happening. He also noted the Vatican's efforts to study AI with the help of contacts in many different areas and fields."

"We are trying to continue to promote dialogue, study, investigation, to find ways to make sure that AI does not get to a point where it could destroy humanity or remove humanity from the conversation," the pope said.

Reporting courtesy of OSV News Vatican Editor Courtney Mares.

"It is impossible to regard causing death as something normal," said the pontiff.

While the pope celebrated Mass in a field outside the shrine, the grotto of the Lourdes apparitions was completely deserted. A few of us took advantage of this unusual opportunity to visit the place where Bernadette spoke with the Virgin Mary — a destination for pilgrimages, including by popes, for nearly two centuries. That night, Leo led a torchlight procession with some 150,000 faithful.

In Metz, the pope focused his message on reaffirming Europe's Christian roots amid concerns that the continent is seeing its cultural heritage give way to Islam and secularism. President Emmanuel Macron attended the Mass at St. Stephen's Cathedral and, despite their disagreements on issues like the assisted suicide law, maintained a cordial manner with Leo throughout the trip.

After a brief stop in the homeland of the Venerable Robert Schuman, one of the founding fathers of the European Union, the pope headed back to Rome aboard a plane with members of the press.

In his customary press conference aboard the plane, he notably chose to set aside Italian and answer questions solely in Spanish and English.

The topics included artificial intelligence, sexual abuse in the French Church, wars, and housing in Spain, among others. Regarding his future travels, the pope stated that only one trip is scheduled for next year: World Youth Day in South Korea. Everything else remains to be decided.

The next time Leo boards a plane, it will be returning to his beloved continent of South America in November. The pope will visit Peru, where he spent a greater part of his priesthood as a missionary; his predecessor's homeland of Argentina; and Uruguay, a country that has become secularized more quickly than most Latin American countries.

Jovel Álvarez is a Rome-based correspondent who reports for various Spanish-language outlets. Originally from Costa Rica, he spent years living and working in the Holy Land.



French President Emmanuel Macron and Pope Leo XIV shake hands while attending a meeting titled "At the Roots of Europe for Peace and Unity" at the Robert Schuman Convention Center in Metz Sept. 28. | OSV NEWS/REMO CASILLI, REUTERS

Our families need our prayers!



Family Rosary
ACROSS AMERICA®

TUNE IN NIGHTLY • 7 PM CT

Join **Rev. Francis Joseph Hoffman (Fr. Rocky)** and hundreds of thousands of listeners nationwide as we pray the only LIVE and interactive Rosary on air in the nation! Tune into the ***Family Rosary Across America*** nightly at **7 PM CT!**

relevant radio® 930AM

Bringing Christ to the world through the media



HELPERS TO CARRY THE CROSS

"The Way to Calvary," by Domenico Zampieri, 1580-1641, Italian. | J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM

In an age when grave threats to life are justified as acts of 'mercy,' real Christian charity proves otherwise.

BY ELISE URENECK

My female friends and I abide by an unwritten rule when one of us is expecting or nursing a baby: don't pass along the tragic stories — children dying, parents dying, anything horrible that befalls a family.

Mothers are wired to protect their young. The physiological and psychological changes of pregnancy produce a kind of sixth sense for danger, along with intense emotional responses to perceived threats. Avoiding the news is the first step to slowing those internal revolutions. It's also nearly impossible to do in 2026.

Since welcoming a baby in January, I have not followed the news as closely as before. But as I nurse my now 8-month-old, three stories keep surfacing. I have come to think of them as one story.

I think of Callan Clancy, who was 8 months old when he and his two siblings died by their mother's hands. His murder has been categorized as "altruistic filicide," when a parent believes a child is better off dead than left behind. Lindsay Clancy's trial ended last month in a mistrial, the jury deadlocked 11-1 in favor of finding her not criminally responsible.

I have been thinking of Anne Hathaway, 43, who is expecting her third child. That news sent a four-year-old clip back around the internet, in which she told the hosts of "The View" that in her experience, abortion "can be another word for 'mercy.' "

"We know that no two pregnancies

are alike," she said. "No two lives are alike … when you allow for choice you allow for flexibility." This was not a moral conversation about abortion, she insisted, but a practical one about women's rights and "the freedom we all need to choose and build our lives."

A third story resurfaced from Canada, where Dr. Louis Roy, testifying in 2022 on behalf of the Quebec College of Physicians, said "medical assistance in dying," what used to be termed "mercy killing," could be appropriate care for babies under a year old born with severe malformations and syndromes that leave little prospect of survival.

The federal minister for disability inclusion called the suggestion shocking and unacceptable. But being shocked is not much of a defense, and the college has not withdrawn the recommendation.

In each of these stories, mercy means the removal of the sufferer rather than closeness to the one who suffers. In each, a life that costs someone too much is a life that can be extinguished.

That is why I can't look away even as I try not to look. I will have to narrate this world to my children.

I do not want my daughter or sons to believe that children are incompatible with their dreams, or that a child who arrives unexpectedly cannot be received by adults who rearrange their own lives to make room for him.

Unfortunately, Western society has largely accepted the premise that children are modular, added, or subtracted as the plan requires, and that if a mother can't raise a child herself, no one else should.

It sustains a fertility market in which babies are custom-ordered, and surrogacy contracts are drafted so that a woman can be forced to abort the child she carries if the child falls short of the intended parents' expectations. It's a feature of the abortion industry writ large, where many mothers believe abortion to be a better alternative to adoption, which they consider akin to abandonment.

And it has produced assisted-suicide laws in 13 states and the District of Columbia, where death is available alongside palliative care, and cheaper.

None of this means the burdens people carry are imaginary. I have given birth four times and raised my children far from family, in a community where I am still finding my place. I would gladly advocate for less fractured reproductive medicine — health care that follows a woman from conception of a child through several years postpartum, takes her plummeting hormones seriously, and meets a mother at the brink with urgency, rather than a pamphlet or a voicemail box to call.

But I keep returning to what one of the Clancy jurors told CBS: the jury understood the case as "a turning point," something that could "make it better for other women in the future, for other families."

I wish someone had asked her what, exactly, would be made better. Postpartum care? Mercy for mothers at the edge? Or a legal culture in which killing one's children becomes something other than a crime?

When my children are old enough to ask what a life is worth when it is not productive, I will tell them about their grandmother.

My mother lived four years with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). At every clinic visit a neurologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, counselor, and nutritionist worked through each new loss with her and sent her home with exercises, medications, and small practical hacks to conserve her strength and keep weight on.

Then they prepared her, as gently as they could, for what she would likely lose before the next appointment.

My family used to wonder how they bore it. Most people enter medicine hoping to heal; every one of these patients was dying, most within five years. Yet they were mini-Simons of Cyrene, joyfully helping my parents carry a cross that would have been unbearable if carried alone. They were people who showed her mercy.

One meeting was different. New Jersey had just passed its Medical Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill Act, and the team was legally obliged to inform my mother that she qualified. They were offering her the exit: from the paralysis to come, from the expense, from the fear of being a burden.

When my children are old enough to ask what a life is worth when it is not productive, I will tell them about their grandmother.

My mother admitted she was afraid of being one. She told me she saw what her care was exacting from my father and from the rest of us.

But she said no. She let us carry her instead. Some might call that her choice, freely made, while others should be free to do otherwise. I call it the last gift she had to give.

Love is exchanged through sacrifice — not the sacrifice of the one who is ill or inconvenient, but of those who choose the one in need over their own time, comfort, and plans.

In the Gospel, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees with a line from Hosea: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice" (Matthew 9:13) — a warning against putting rules and rituals ahead of real people. Today the admonition might take on another meaning.

We have perfected a mercy that costs us nothing, that spares us the sight of suffering by removing the sufferer. But the mercy God desires refuses to sacrifice the most dependent to the idol of a burden-free life.

The juror was right. We have reached a turning point, just not the one she meant. A society decides, eventually, what it will do with the people who cost it the most. Mothers have a unique capacity to make room for others. I pray that we who have been given that responsibility bear its hardships with joy, perseverance, and hope for better days — and that we find people willing to help us along the way.

Elise Ureneck is a communications consultant writing from Rhode Island.



WITH GRACE
» DR. GRAZIE POZO CHRISTIE

The curious case of Poochie


SHUTTERSTOCK

I wish physicians shared the high standards of veterinarians.

This sounds like a bizarre statement, I admit, especially coming from a physician. But allow me to explain.

Some years ago we had a beloved pet called Poochie. She was a ragged little white mutt with a sterling character. The children were greatly attached to her. When already advanced in years, Poochie suffered a broken hip. After the veterinarian examined the dog as she whined and shook on the cold metal table, she recommended an expensive operation with a long and painful recovery. For weeks Poochie would have to be nursed, medicated, and carried out to relieve herself many times a day. At the end of it she would be an elderly dog with a limp, and probably chronic pain.

I did a rapid-fire calculation in my head, weighing the dog's pain, her age, and the hard work of nursing her that would fall on me, someone with a job and five children. I asked her veterinarian to euthanize her. I felt it was the compassionate and caring thing to do.

The veterinarian balked. She looked at poor Poochie and saw a valuable living creature that should be cared for until her natural death — even if it was difficult and expensive. In her office she saw herself, and acted, as her patients' advocate and ally. She argued strongly for Poochie and in the end, said that if I felt it was best to euthanize her, I would have to go somewhere else.

I learned that day to be ashamed of my own medical profession. We simply don't have, collectively, the same respect for some of our patients' lives that veterinarians do for theirs. If we did, elective abortion would be tremendously difficult to obtain. A woman seeking to electively end the life of her unborn child would find a thick and solid wall of allyship with the child standing between her and her goal. Just to bring up the subject would bring a gasp of disbelief from her obstetrician/gynecologist, who trained for years to learn how to bring the unborn safely through the dangers of pregnancy and birth.

The language of the two professional organizations that draw ethical guidelines makes the contrast stark. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) states: "A veterinarian does not have an ethical obligation to deliver care or perform procedures requested by a client that they believe would cause unnecessary pain and suffering for the patient."

They name the animal as the patient and the owner as merely a client. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), by contrast, says the only patient is the expectant mother. It tells clinicians to avoid using the word "baby" because that would "center the procedure on the fetus rather than on the pregnant person who is the clinician's patient." It says that the obligations of the doctor are toward the mother and her desires, not with the unborn child. It

Dr. Grazie Pozo Christie is a mother of five who practices radiology in the Miami area.

also calls all abortions "health care" and does not even recognize the idea of elective abortion, which are the great majority of abortions, and which are performed for the mother's convenience, not for health reasons.

This kind of ethical discrepancy is how the two professions have so greatly diverged. AVMA's code keeps centering the creature that can't speak for itself. ACOG's guidance tells clinicians *not to* center the creature that can't speak for herself. Veterinarians act nobly when they protect a patient who is someone else's property, and they have built a whole professional identity around advocacy for the patient even when it conflicts with the owner's convenience.

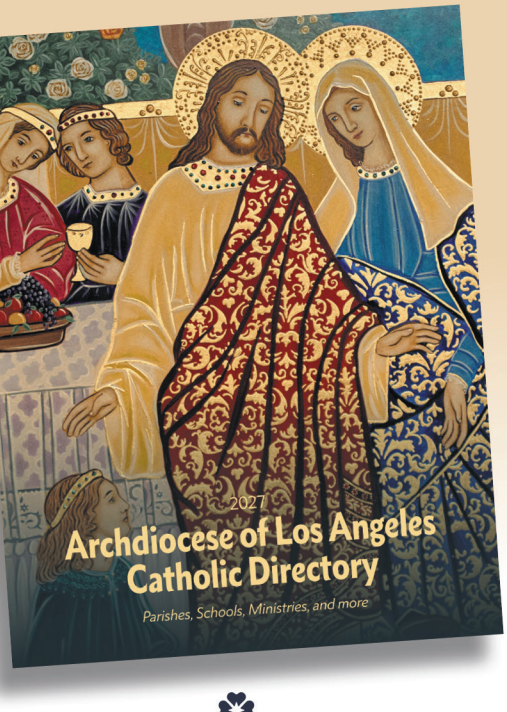
Obstetricians' professional ethics — as written by their own professional society — does the opposite: it takes away patient status from the dependent creature so that the decision-maker's motivations — including reasons that would look like convenience in the vet's office — won't be challenged.

Of course, the expectant mother is not an owner but the body through which the fetus can be treated. Bodily autonomy is important, but it does not explain why a specialty society should treat a class of people as morally weightless and why they would call a late-term abortion of a healthy baby "essential health care."

I felt the difference right there at the veterinarian's office. I knew that in my city a pregnant woman could obtain an abortion for any reason at any number of places, with no pushback or questions asked. I knew many obstetrician-gynecologists who treated a fetus as a valuable patient until the mother no longer wanted the child, and then would turn easily into "hired assassins," as Pope Francis so memorably put it.

But not my veterinarian, who argued strenuously for Poochie's life. She and her colleagues would not turn from patient advocate to hired assassin just like that.

It made me quite ashamed of my own profession, which has gone badly astray.



ARCHDIOCESE of LOS ANGELES

2027 Archdiocese of Los Angeles Catholic Directory

Featuring a streamlined format that makes information easier to find. The coil-bound Directory includes new assignments and an updated photo index of clergy serving in the archdiocese.

Pre-order your copy!

$35.00 (Shipping Included)

Please mail this form along with payment to:
THE TIDINGS DIRECTORY
4311 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010.

Send _____ Copies of the LA Catholic Directory at **$35.00 each $** _____

Name _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **State** ___ **ZIP** _____

☐ **Payment Enclosed** ☐ **Bill my Credit Card**

Card # _____ **Exp Date** ___/___ **Phone** _____

Signature: _____

ORDER THE LOS ANGELES CATHOLIC DIRECTORY BY PHONE AT **(213) 637-7360 EXT 4**
OR ONLINE AT **HTTP://STORE.LA-ARCHDIOCESE.ORG/PUBLICATIONS**.
QUESTIONS? EMAIL **BEGARCIA@ANGELUSNEWS.COM**

A FATHER ENTERS THE PICTURE



"The Holy Family," by Gerard David, 1455-1523, Netherlandish. | J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM

The Getty Museum's new exhibit on the Holy Family traces the appearance of St. Joseph in Christian art after the Middle Ages.

BY STEFANO REBEGGIANI

One of the themes in the summer blockbuster "The Odyssey," as I suggested in my review for Angelus, is paternity in times of crisis.

Since becoming pope, Pope Leo XIV has addressed the theme on various occasions, asking what role families should play in the face of contemporary challenges. His answer offers a more hopeful and constructive vision than, say, Christopher Nolan.

In his encyclical "*Magnifica Humanitas*"("Magnificent Humanity"), Leo draws on the biblical account of the reconstruction of Jerusalem's walls to entrust families with the task of rebuilding society, while rejecting a culture of power that treats war and violence as the only effective responses to mounting dangers.

And in his earlier meditation on the Gospel of the flight to Egypt, he suggests that families are the real antidote to the culture of power, embodied by the tyrant Herod:

"In the despotic and greedy world represented by the tyrant, it is the birthplace and cradle of the only possible answer of salvation, that of God who, in total gratuitousness, gives himself to men without reserve and without pretension."

This discussion makes "The Holy Family at Home," a rich exhibition at the Getty Center and on display through Jan. 10, 2027, especially timely.

Organized to celebrate the acquisition of "The Holy Family," a masterpiece by the Dutch painter Gerard David, the exhibition features Northern European paintings and illuminated manuscripts from about 1400 to 1530, drawn from the Getty Museum and local lenders.

The works selected set the newly acquired painting within the wider context of late-medieval and early Renaissance art, highlighting the renewed importance of Joseph after the Middle Ages.

Until the 15th century, Joseph remained largely peripheral in art. He seldom appeared even in key scenes from the life of the Holy Family. When depicted, he was usually shown as an elderly guardian rather than a husband. This was due to the influence of the apocryphal Gospels, which accentuat-

ed Joseph's advanced age to explain his chaste marriage to Mary. Joseph was portrayed as a mere spectator in the history of salvation.

"The Holy Family at Home" exhibition captures this earlier phase in the iconography of the saint through several illuminations and paintings.

In one medieval illumination of the Adoration of the Magi, for instance, Mary is accompanied only by female attendants.

Another highlight of the exhibition, Jan Gossaert's "Holy Family," has Joseph as an elderly man who looks perplexed at the Virgin Mary.

The depictions of the Virgin and Child by Rogier van der Weyden and Dieric Bouts provide important precedents for David's work. Their informal portrayals of the Virgin tenderly embracing her child bring the sacred figures closer to the viewer. In van der Weyden's version, the curious child opens the clasp of a book of Scripture, a reminder that he will be the fulfillment of whole Scripture. Yet Joseph remains absent from these paintings.

In the early 15th century, the work of French theologian and mystic Jean Gerson played a big role in transforming the perception of Joseph, profoundly affecting later depictions of the Holy Family.

Gerson rejected the picture presented by the apocryphal Gospels and affirmed that Mary and Joseph's marriage was a real union. Highlighting the daily life of the Holy Family, he set up Joseph as an exemplary model of a loving husband to Mary and a caring father to Jesus.



"Virgin and Child," by Rogier van der Weyden, 1399-1464, Netherlandish. | COURTESY OF THE HUNTINGTON ART MUSEUM

In the Getty exhibit, this new attention to the role of Joseph is reflected in a series of 15th-century illuminations depicting the Flight to Egypt. Joseph now participates in the redemptive work of his son by protecting him and Mary.

As Leo noted last December, "Being obedient to the voice of the Lord by taking his Bride and child to safety, the gesture of Joseph is revealed in all its redemptive significance. In Egypt, the flame of domestic love, to which the Lord has entrusted his presence in the world, grows and gains strength in order to bring light to the whole world."

The domestic love within the Holy Family is the hidden presence of God in the world. Stronger than armies and political power, unheeded by the powerful and the wise.

As the great novelist J.R.R. Tolkien put it, "the wheels of the world are often turned (…) but by the seemingly unknown and weak — owing to the secret life in creation, and the part unknowable to all wisdom but One."

David's painting reflects these theological developments. The Virgin and Child affectionately embrace, while nearby Joseph holds a wooden bowl with baby food (a milk soup, and two cooked apples).

The artist brings the Holy Family into the foreground, creating the impression that they share the room with the viewers. The realistic details present them as a real family immersed in the simple, practical concerns of daily life.

The Virgin is dressed in contemporary clothes, and the buildings in the background are from the painter's time, details which express that the Incarnation is still happening today.

Jesus holds an apple, a reminder that he is no ordinary child: he is destined to reconcile humanity with God after the fall of Adam. He is the new Adam, the firstborn of a new humanity.

By blending the ordinary with the supernatural, the painting captures the theological shock of the Incarnation: God became an ordinary child, in turn giving a supernatural dimension to the most menial tasks of parenting.

"In every child, in every husband or wife," Leo said in a speech last September, "God entrusts us with His Son, with His Mother, just as He did with Saint Joseph." He does so, Leo adds, "so that together with them, we may be a foundation, leaven, and witness of God's love among humanity."

Families participate in the history of salvation through their dreary everyday routines. Renaissance painters like David made this reflection visible in their work, and the Getty exhibit provides an unprecedented journey to appreciate their innovative approach.

Stefano Rebeggiani is an associate professor of Classics at the University of Southern California.



DESIRE LINES

» HEATHER KING

SHUTTERSTOCK

Take nothing for the journey

Recently I stayed in Dublin with a friend who, during the course of our visit, told how she'd once been seated during a transatlantic flight beside a nun from a Catholic religious order called The Little Sisters of the Lamb. When the sisters are out evangelizing, they walk from place to place and beg for food and lodging. They carry no money.

When the meal came, the sister ate a reasonable amount, then pushed her tray away. Noticing an uneaten roll, my friend urged her to take it. "You'll be hungry later!" she remonstrated. "Pack that up and put it in your pocket."

But the nun just smiled. "Thanks, but it's okay. I'm not hungry now."

The story was intriguing enough that my friend still remembered it years later — and I, too, was fascinated. My own way around food while traveling is the polar opposite. I save not only the bread, but the butter, the extra creamer, sugar, and Splenda packets, the crackers, the fake cheese in a tiny plastic tub, the recyclable utensils, the bottle of water, and the napkins.

"Regard the lilies of the field," said Jesus, and, "take nothing for the journey, neither walking stick, nor sack, nor food, nor money, and let no one take a second tunic."

I admire such trust. But I come from a working-class family of eight children and have never been able to shake the hard-wired impulse to stockpile, the fear that there won't be enough, no one will have your back, you're on your own, and if there's not enough, you'll die.

Then again, I've read way too many Holocaust memoirs. In "Cold Crematorium" (St. Martin's Press, $11.50), József Debreczeni describes lying on his fetid bunk at Auschwitz, hearing a weird crackling noise, and realizing that his cellmate, all but dead, was eating the lice off his own body. So to throw away a roll just seems wrong.

Heather King (heather-king.com) writes memoirs, leads workshops, and posts on Substack at "Desire Lines: Books, Culture, Art."

Or so I tell myself.

People often think religion is a choice, a philosophy, a set of rules. But religion isn't a formula.

That's why what's waste for one person won't necessarily be waste for another. What's pathological for one person will be sacrificial martyrdom for another. St. Maximilian Kolbe offered himself up to die in the starvation bunker at Auschwitz in place of a fellow prisoner, a husband and father. The anorexic and Kolbe both willingly starve to death, but their motives are totally different.

Religion is a relationship with Christ, a love for Christ. Without Christ, nailed to the cross, we couldn't sleep at night, knowing of all the people who are hungry, being trafficked, raped, tortured, killed at any given moment. Without Christ, resurrected, we would never dare to feel joy.

Recently I heard an interview with a woman who'd escaped a religious cult and was, understandably, profoundly traumatized. "Hell is a fiction!" she spat. "And if there is a hell, why aren't all the so-called religious people praying for the people there? Why don't they pray all day for the poor people who've been consigned to it!"

Oh but we do, we Catholics, I thought. That's exactly what we do. My friend's house was across from a convent of contemplative nuns who dedicate their whole lives to praying, among other things, for the salvation of souls. Every late afternoon they had adoration, then evening prayer, then 5:45 Mass.

I'd hosted a writing workshop the previous week, and not having to talk to anyone much now was a relief. I spent a lot of my time in Dublin at the National Botanic Gardens, one of my favorite places on earth. Silence, surrounded by living things. A heron standing stock-still on the path. Magpies. Flowers in shades of butternut gold, violet, russet, bronze. A touch of autumn.

On the first leg of the return trip, a 10-hour flight, I had an aisle seat next to an enormous guy who couldn't help taking up half my space. Why if you were that big, I wondered, would you sandwich yourself between two people? I guess if you were on the aisle you'd spill out, and if by the window you'd be trapped on one side, I decided — or maybe the dear man had just nabbed the last available space.

I helped him with his seat belt. He offered me some candy from a bag of fruit jellies (I took two reds). When our meals were delivered, I gave him my dessert (a piece of chemical frosted cake wrapped in cellophane), carefully stowing the crackers and water for later.

We smiled at each other.

Then I leaned back and reflected that there are different ways of not bringing an extra tunic. We suffer our ongoing compulsions, bewailing our weirdness and weakness even as we try to offer up our entire selves, like Kolbe. Perennially on the outskirts, we trust there will be enough companionship along the way, enough friends. Along with The Little Sisters of the Lamb, we know that Jesus is our deepest family, our deepest home.

In "The Joy of Believing" (Sophia Institute Press, $19.95), French laywoman and lover of the poor Madeleine Delbrêl wrote:

"In each person there is something that will never be understood by anybody. This thing is the precise cause of our solitude, of this solitude which is intrinsic to us. Our first task is to accept this 'primordial' solitude."



A sculpture of St. Maximilian Kolbe in Niepokalanow, Poland. | SHUTTERSTOCK



LETTER AND SPIRIT

» SCOTT HAHN

Scott Hahn is founder of the St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology; stpaulcenter.com.

My saint of lost causes

Few parents in the early Church named their sons Judas. The name had once been honorable. It recalled Judah, son of Jacob, and Judas Maccabeus, the great defender of Israel against gentile domination.

But one man had gone and ruined it: Judas Iscariot, the apostle who betrayed Jesus with a kiss.

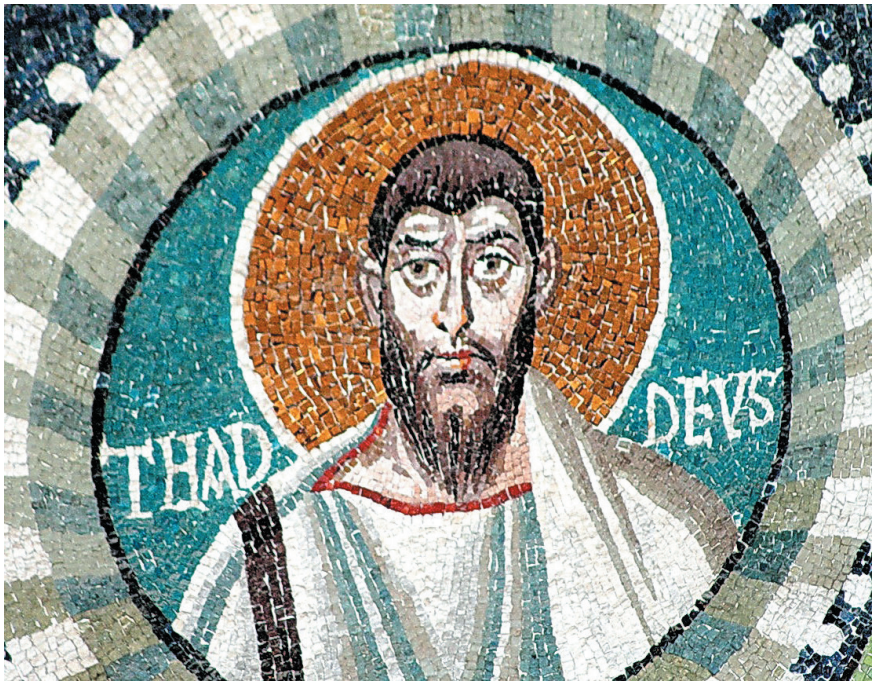
This helps us understand why the Gospel writers take such pains to identify another apostle with the same name. Luke calls him "Judas the son of James" (Luke 6:16). Matthew and Mark call him Thaddeus (Matthew 10:3; Mark 3:18). John, determined to prevent any misunderstanding, identifies him as "Judas (not Iscariot)" (John 14:22).

This Judas — also known as Jude or Thaddeus — is the saint whose feast the Church celebrates every year on my birthday, Oct. 28. Tradition remembers him as a missionary who traveled with the apostle Simon into Persia, where both suffered martyrdom.

The Gospels preserve only one sentence spoken by Jude. At the Last Supper, Jesus promises that he will reveal himself to those who love him. Jude asks: "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" (John 14:22)

It's a good question, and Jesus answers that God makes his dwelling with those who love him and keep his word. So Jude's question draws from Jesus a magnificent promise: a Christian's soul can become a home of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Jude may also have left us one book of the Bible. The brief Letter of Jude begins: "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James." Scholars debate whether this author was the apostle or another relative of Jesus. But there is good reason to believe the letter comes from the first generation of Christians.



"Jude Thaddaeus the Apostle." Detail of the mosaic in the Basilica of San Vitale. Ravena, Italy. | WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Some have suggested that it was written much later by an anonymous author using Jude's name. That seems unlikely. A forger hoping to give his work prestige could have chosen Peter, Paul, or John. Why choose Judas? After the betrayal, almost any Christian name would have carried more authority.

And why would the Church preserve this very short letter — only 25 verses — as sacred Scripture if it came from no one of consequence? Its exhortations resemble teachings found elsewhere in the New Testament. Its inclusion makes best sense if the letter came from a man whose authority the earliest Christians knew and revered.

Jude wrote to Christians endangered by corrupt teachers who twisted God's grace into an excuse for immorality. He urged believers to "contend for the faith" while showing mercy to those led astray. "Save some," he commanded, "by snatching them out of the fire" (Jude 23).

That verse may help explain his later reputation as the patron of lost causes. Jude does not abandon people who seem beyond recovery. He goes after those nearest the fire.

No cause is truly lost while God's grace is at work. And perhaps the apostle who bore the most dishonored name became the perfect saint to teach us that lesson.

And I'm pleased today that my youngest grandchild bears his name.

LA CATHOLIC EVENTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

Conejo Fall Fest. St. Paschal Baylon Church, 155 Janss Rd., Thousand Oaks. Runs Oct. 9-11, includes carnival rides, fun games and prizes, delicious food, free live entertainment, and more. Visit spbmensclub.org/conejo-fall-fest.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

20th Divine Mercy Congress. Christ the King Church, 624 N. Rossmore Ave., Los Angeles. Runs Oct. 10-11. Days include Mass, speakers, Divine Mercy Chaplet, reconciliation, and Eucharistic adoration. Auxiliary Bishop Slawomir Szkredka will speak and preside at Saturday's Mass. Auxiliary Bishop Matthew Elshoff, OFM Cap., will speak and preside at Sunday's Mass. Cost: $35/person, $50/couple, includes lunch on both days. Visit ctkla.org/congress.

Missionary Childhood Association Mass: Religious Education. Santa Rosa Church, 668 S. Workman St., San Fernando, 10:30 a.m.

Marriage Preparation Session. St. Peter Church, 1039 N. Broadway, Los Angeles, 8:45 a.m.-5 p.m. Engaged couples and those already in a civil union are welcome to attend. All sessions require in-person attendance of both bride and groom for the full eight-hour session. Cost: $150/couple. Visit evangelize.lacatholics.org/marriage-family

Journeying Through Grief Bereavement Retreat. St. Bruno Church, 15740 Citrustree Rd., Whittier, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Has it been at least four months since the death of your loved one? Are you stuck in your grief? Do you feel you are alone in your grief? Join us as we learn to incorporate our grief into life and find new meaning. Cost: $45/person, covers all materials and food for the day. RSVP to Cathy Narvaez at 562-631-8844 or email bereavement.ministry@yahoo.com by Oct. 1.

Day of Renewal. St. Jerome Church, 5550 Thornburn St., Los Angeles, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Led by Father Patrick Crowley, SSCC, the day includes reflection, teaching, healing service, and personal ministry. Lunch provided. Love offerings taken. Email dmuoneke@gmail.com.

Santa Barbara Celebration for Life. Chase Palm Park, 323 E. Cabrillo Blvd., Santa Barbara, 10 a.m. check in, 11 a.m. walk for life. 12:30 Chase Palm Park event. Visit celebrationforlife.com.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11

Health Care Professionals Mass. Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, 555 W. Temple St., Los Angeles, 3:30 p.m. Celebrant: Auxiliary Bishop Marc Trudeau. Reception to follow.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

Well-Read Mom: An Evening with Colleen Hutt. St. Augustine Academy, 130 S. Wells Rd., Ventura, 6:30-8 p.m. All women are invited to attend an evening with Hutt, director of literary evangelization for Well-Read Mom, an organization that accompanies women in the reading of great books and spiritual classics to encourage personal growth, friendship, and meaningful conversations. Free event. Register via email to colleen@wellreadmom.com.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

Women at the Well, reading "Learning to Walk in the Dark" by Barbara Brown Taylor. Holy Spirit Retreat Center, 4316 Lanai Rd., Encino, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Meets on the second Tuesday of every month through Feb. 9. Visit hsrcenter.com or call 818-784-4515.

Memorial Mass. San Fernando Mission, 15151 San Fernando Mission Blvd., Mission Hills, 11 a.m. Mass is open to the public. Limited seating. RSVP to outreach@catholiccm.org or call 213-637-7810. Livestream available at CathoicCM.org or Facebook.com/lacatholics.

Bible Study. St. John Vianney Church, 1345 Turnbull Canyon Rd., Hacienda Heights, 7-8:30 p.m., or Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Held Tuesday evenings or Wednesday mornings through May 19, 2027. Suggested donation: $25/person to help cover materials and outside speakers. For information on Tuesday evening Bible study, email biblestudysjv@yahoo.com. For information on Wednesday morning Bible study, call David at 626-423-2625.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

Missionary Childhood Association Mass: Catholic Schools. Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, 555 W. Temple St., Los Angeles, 10a.m.

Navigating Artificial Intelligence with the Mind of Christ. Pauline Books & Media, 3908 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City, 6:30 p.m. Part 2 in a 4-part series on digital discipleship, equipping people of faith to navigate technology with a Catholic vision of the human person. Food provided. Call 310-397-8676 or email culvercity@paulinemedia.com.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

Beyond the Politics: A Talk on Immigration, Leadership, and the Future of Our Communities. Holy Family Church, 1501 Fremont Ave., South Pasadena, 5:30-9 p.m. With Isaac Cuevas, Angelica Salas, Lisa Ramirez, and Father Brendan Busse, SJ.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

Our Lady of the Angels Regional Congress. St. Monica High School, 1011 7th St., Santa Monica, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

Alleluia Dance Theater: Amazing Grace Celebrating 50 Years. Holy Spirit Retreat Center, 4316 Lanai Rd., Encino, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., reception 4-6 p.m. Visit hsrcenter.com or call 818-784-4515.

Autumn Trees Let Go. Mary & Joseph Retreat Center, 5300 Crest Rd., Rancho Palos Verdes, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., optional lunch immediately following. Speaker: Mark Mitchell, LMFT. Retreat explores what season you are in and what God is inviting you to release. Cost: $50/person, $20 for lunch. Register to Jose Salas at jsalas@maryjoseph.org or call 310-377-4867.

Principles of Catholic Theology and Revelation. Zoom, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., breaks and lunch time included. With professor Matthew Ramage, Ph.D., the course will explain reasons for belief in the existence of God. Cost: $50/person. Visit lacatholics.org/events.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18

Margaret Aylward Center Fall Fundraiser. Pio Pico Women's Club, 9214 Mines Ave., Pico Rivera, 12-3 p.m. The Margaret Aylward Center is a ministry of the Sisters of the Holy Faith, which assists struggling families in neighboring areas with food distribution, ESL classes, citizenship support, etc. Western Round Up theme, casual dress. Sponsorships available. All are welcome. Cost: $50/person. Call Letty Solis at 562-695-6621 or email malywardctr@gmail.com.

Items for the calendar of events are due four weeks prior to the date of the event. They may be emailed to calendar@angelusnews.com. All calendar items must include the name, date, time, address of the event, and a phone number for additional information.

Los Cementarios y Funerarias Católicos les invitan a la
Catholic Cemeteries and Mortuaries invites you to a

Celebración del DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

OCTOBER 24, 2026

CALVARY CEMETERY & MORTUARY
4201 Whittier Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90023

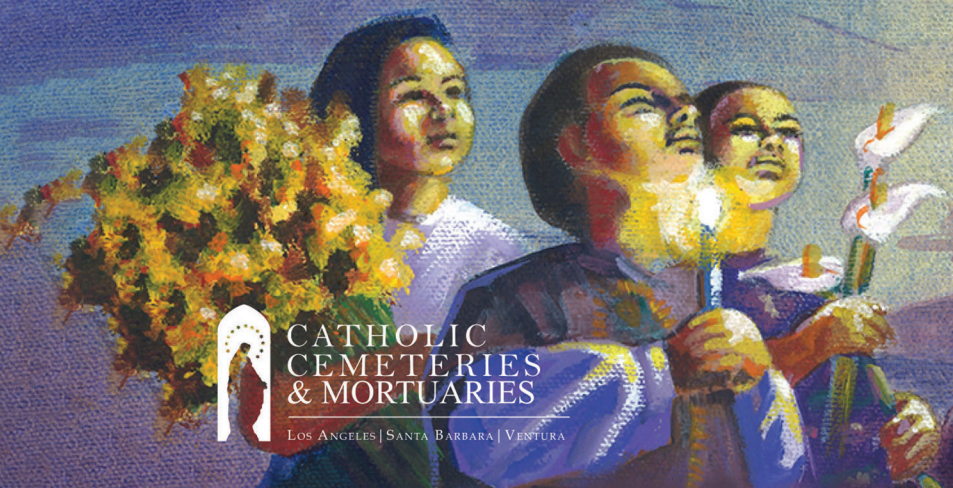
NOVEMBER 7, 2026

SAN FERNANDO MISSION CEMETERY &
MISSION HILLS CATHOLIC MORTUARY
11160 Stranwood Ave., Mission Hills, CA 91345

NOVEMBER 7, 2026

SANTA CLARA CEMETERY & MORTUARY
2370 N. "H" St., Oxnard, CA 93036

"Señor, concede eterno descanso a todos los fieles difuntos."
catholiccm.org/diadelosmuertos



CATHOLIC CEMETERIES & MORTUARIES
Los Angeles | Santa Barbara | Ventura