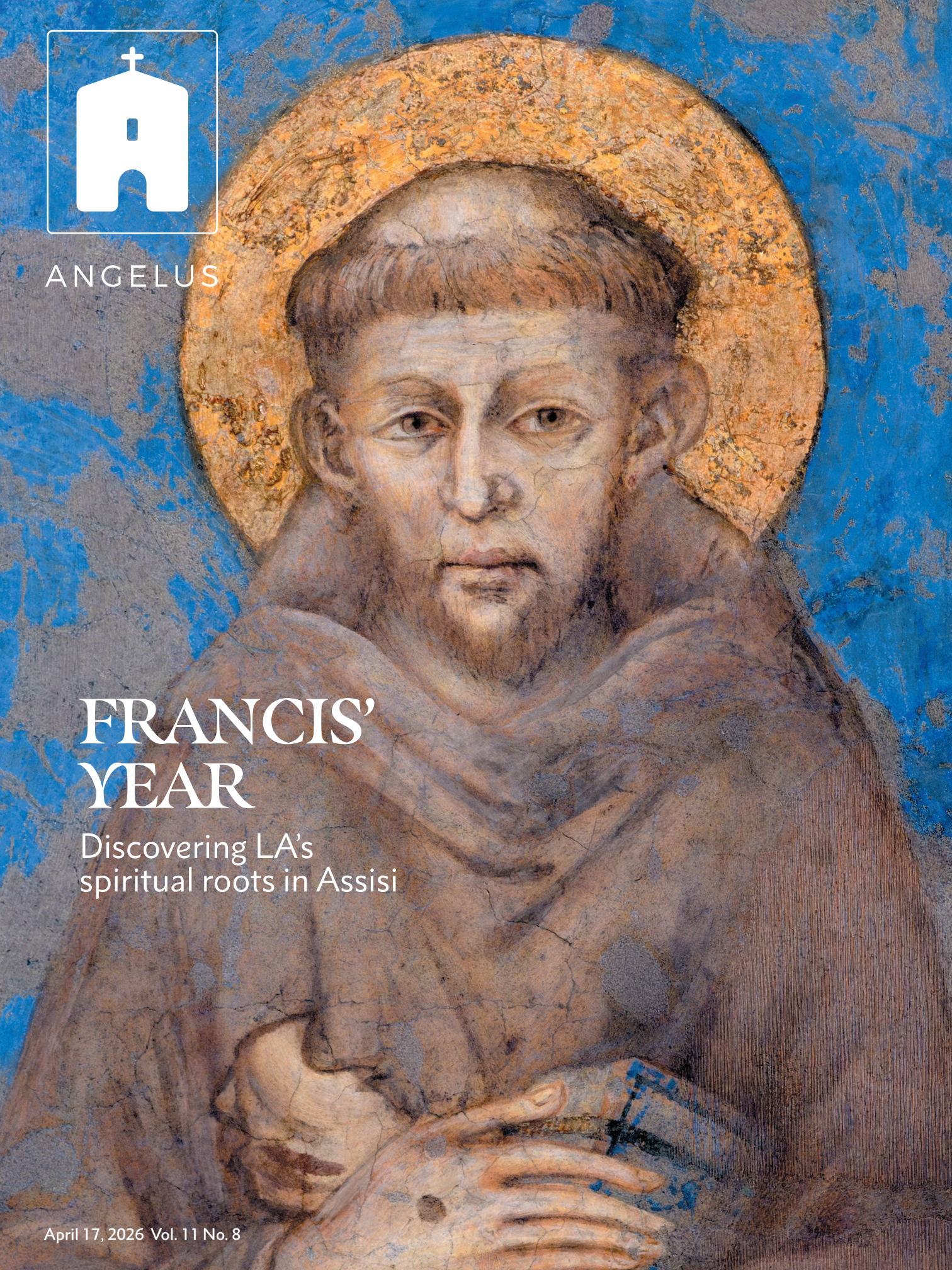


ANGELUS

FRANCIS' YEAR

Discovering LA's spiritual roots in Assisi

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ON THE COVER

DIMA MOROZ/SHUTTERSTOCK

Medieval artist Cimabue's depiction of St. Francis in Assisi, Italy. Eight hundred years ago this year, St. Francis of Assisi died in a small room at the *Portiuncula*, the church he helped rebuild and the birthplace of his Franciscan religious order. Starting on Page 10, we look at how St. Francis' spirit has shaped the Faith in Southern California, and at the special opportunities for LA Catholics who visit a new list of pilgrimage sites during Pope Leo's "Year of St. Francis."

THIS PAGE

CALIFORNIA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

Students in an elective class on civic advocacy at St. Genevieve High School in Panorama City hold signs during the Catholics at the Capitol event in Sacramento March 25. During their visit, the students spoke to legislators as they called on Gov. Gavin Newsom to opt into the Federal Tax Credit Scholarship, which would benefit all 5.8 million school-age children in California. For more information on the event, see Page 6.



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

16 Photos from LA Archbishop Gomez's Silver Jubilee Mass
18 Retired LA Bishop Ed Clark celebrates 25th anniversary Mass
20 How a 1970s Italian novel best describes the dangers of AI
24 A single Catholic on praying for a spouse — and not hearing back
26 Greg Erlandson recalls the Catholic mystique of Lawrence Welk
28 Msgr. Antall tries to relay how awful the 'Wuthering Heights' film is
30 Heather King: Two different 'silent treatments' in Philadelphia

Be a companion to others on their spiritual journey.

The Art of Spiritual Direction (ASD) program trains individuals for the fulfilling ministry of spiritual direction. This certificated program is offered 10 Saturdays per year at St. Joseph Center in Orange, CA and includes topics like theology, spirituality, skills developments, psychology, Scripture and supervision.

Sé una compañera/o para otras en su viaje espiritual.

El Arte de la Dirección Espiritual (ADE) es un programa que forma a personas para el ministerio de la dirección espiritual. Las clases se realizan martes, de septiembre a junio, en el St. Joseph Center en Orange, CA, incluye contenido formativo, reflexión, discusiones en grupo, lecturas y escritura personal. El programa también ofrece sesiones de práctica para adquirir experiencia directa y recibir supervisión individual.

Center *for* Spiritual Development

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TheCSD.org

POPE WATCH

War, peace, and idols

The following is adapted from the Holy Father's homily at Mass on Saturday, March 28, in Louis II Stadium in Monaco during his one-day visit to the city-state.

As the prophet Ezekiel proclaims, God's work begins with the liberation of a people who are on a journey of conversion, much like our own Lenten journey.

Liberation takes the form of a purification from the "idols" that defiled the people: all those things that enslave our hearts, deceiving and corrupting them. The word "idol" means "small idea," that is, a diminished vision, which undermines not only the glory of the Almighty by transforming him into an object, but also the human mind.

Idolaters are thus narrow-minded people who look at what captivates their gaze, ultimately darkening it. And so, the great and wonderful things of this earth become idols and bring about forms of slavery — not for those who lack these things, but those who gorge themselves on them, leaving their neighbor in misery and sorrow.

God does not abandon us when these temptations come, but reaches out to those who are weak and sorrowful, to those who believe that the idols of the world can save them. As St. Augustine taught, "man is liberated from their dominion when he believes in him who has given an example of humility" (*De Civitate Dei*, VII, 33).

This example is the very life of Jesus, God made man for our salvation. Rather than punishing us, he destroyed evil through his love, thus fulfilling the solemn promise: "I will purify them; they shall be my people, and I will be their God" (Ezekiel 37:23). The Lord changed the course of history by calling us from idolatry to true faith, from death to life.

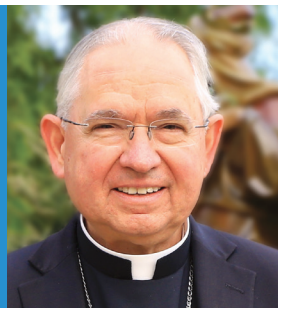
Therefore, in the face of the many injustices that afflict peoples and the wars that tear nations apart, the words of the prophet Jeremiah resound with strength: "I will turn their mourning into joy, I will gladden them, I will comfort them after their sorrow" (Jeremiah 31:13). Idolatry makes people slaves of each other, but purification from idolatry sanctifies them. It is a gift of grace that makes people children of God, and brothers and sisters to one another.

This gift sheds light on our present, for the wars that stain it with blood are the fruit of the idolatry of power and money. Every life cut short wounds the body of Christ. Let us not grow accustomed to the clamor of weapons and images of war! Peace is not merely a balance of power; it is the work of purified hearts, of those who see others as brothers and sisters to be protected, not enemies to be defeated.

In the world's prolonged Lent, when evil rages and idolatry makes hearts indifferent, the Lord prepares his Easter. Human beings are the sign of this event: Lazarus, for he was called from the tomb; we, who are forgiven sinners; the Risen Crucified One, who is the author of salvation. He is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), sustaining our pilgrimage and the Church's mission in the world, which is to give God's life.

This task is sublime and seemingly impossible, unless we give our lives to our neighbor. It is an exciting and fruitful task, and the Gospel shines a light for our steps.

Papal Prayer Intention for April: Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.



NEW WORLD OF FAITH
» ARCHBISHOP JOSÉ H. GOMEZ

For you a bishop, with you a Christian

On March 26, Archbishop José H. Gomez celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination as a bishop with a Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. The following is adapted from his homily.

I'm very happy to be with all of you and offer this holy Mass on the 25th anniversary of my ordination as a bishop.

Just before Mass, I received a beautiful "spiritual bouquet" — a gathering of prayers, sacrifices, and acts of charity that people from across the archdiocese have pledged to mark my anniversary.

Thank you to all of you. It is an honor to serve you and all the people of the archdiocese, and the people of the other dioceses where I was before coming to Los Angeles.

I have been reflecting on what St. Augustine said on the anniversary of his episcopal ordination. He told his people: "For you, I am a bishop, with you I am a Christian."

This is how I feel. It is a privilege to serve you on our walk with Jesus and our journey to heaven. We are walking together, and your faith inspires me every day. And again, I am so grateful to all of you.

We are nearing the end of our Lenten journey and Jesus tells us in today's Gospel: "Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever keeps my word will never see death."

This is the promise of our Catholic faith.

Each one of us can tell our own story of how we have met Jesus and been changed by the encounter with his mercy and love. How we have heard his voice in our hearts, calling us to believe and to follow him. Each of us, in our own way, has taken his hand and answered his call.

In a sense, we are like Abraham in the first reading today.

Abram believed in God and followed his call, and in our reading today we see his reward. God gives him a new name and makes a covenant with him that will last for all ages.

We are the children of God's promise. We, too, are following the road of faith that Abraham walked, the road that countless believers before us have walked, down through the centuries.

Faith is a journey that we walk in friendship — friendship with Jesus, and friendship with one another in the Church. Jesus gave the Church a mission, and he makes each one of us a part of this mission.

Our mission is to tell the world the Good News — the beautiful truth that Jesus Christ is alive!

He is not some figure from history. He is present in our lives, walking with us. And he wants to live in friendship with every single person.

> **Mary and Joseph lived the words of the prayer that Jesus taught us: "Thy will be done." I pray that I will do the same.**

The world needs his light, the world needs to hear his voice! And he gives this task, at this time, to each one of us.

Our faith is a gift, the most precious gift that we could ever receive!

Today, once again, Jesus is calling to share his gift with others. In the simplicity of our daily life, in the joy of our daily life. And to fill the world with faith and love.

There is nothing more beautiful than this friendship that we have with Jesus, and nothing more beautiful than to tell others about him and to make new friends for Jesus.

This is why he puts us here. This is the reason for our lives.

As I was reflecting on my anniversary, I was thinking about our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph. We celebrated the solemnity of the Annunciation yesterday and heard Our Lady's great profession of faith: "May it be done to me according to your word." And last week we celebrated the feast of St. Joseph.

My parents encouraged my devotion to Mary and Joseph and my whole life I have felt a closeness to them.

My parish growing up was Our Lady of Lourdes, so I felt close to the love and presence of our Blessed Mother. I am named, of course, after St. Joseph, so I always felt close to him.

I still feel that they are walking with me every step of the way.

And I was reflecting that they both had such profound humility. They lived to serve God and the Church. They lived the words of the prayer that Jesus taught us: "Thy will be done."

I pray that I will do the same, and that we all will do the same.

So, as we meet Jesus today in this holy Mass, let us ask him to increase our faith in him, and to give us a new desire to bring his love to the world today.

Let us especially ask the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary, our Lady Queen of the Angels — asking her to pray for us!

WORLD

In Poland, John Paul II was 'exemplary' on abuse response

Two investigative journalists reported that St. Pope John Paul II's actions were "exemplary" regarding clerical abuse while he was archbishop of Kraków.

The reporting draws on firsthand access to the archdiocese's archives, which were opened after a 2023 TV documentary accused the future pope of covering up abuse.

"There is no evidence that Wojtyla transferred priests from parish to parish because he learned that a person was sexually abusing children," Tomasz Krzyzak, who reported alongside Piotr Litka, told OSV News. "However, there is evidence that when he did learn about it, he took decisive — very decisive — actions consisting in simply suspending one priest or another, sending him to a place of isolation."

"In general, he made all the decisions that he should have taken," he said.



Time for a day trip — Pope Leo XIV holds a child as he arrives at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception of Monaco during a nine-hour apostolic trip to the city-state March 28. It was Leo's first international journey of 2026, the second of his pontificate, and the first visit by a pope to Monaco in almost 500 years. | OSV NEWS/SIMONE RISOLUTI, VATICAN MEDIA

Jerusalem cancels Holy Week amid Iran conflict



An Ethiopian Christian woman prays at the locked doors of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem March 4. | OSV NEWS PHOTO/DEBBIE HILL

Israel and the U.S.'s war with Iran forced the cancellation of Catholic Holy Week celebrations in Jerusalem.

The most notable cancellation was the traditional Palm Sunday procession, which retraces Jesus' route from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem. However, when Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, patriarch of Jerusalem, attempted to enter the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for a private Mass, he was blocked by Israeli police, sparking international outrage.

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu later said that Pizzaballa was blocked out of concern for his safety, but that he'd since told authorities "to enable the patriarch to hold services as he wishes."

The moment marked the first time in centuries that Palm Sunday Mass could not be celebrated at the church, which contains the sites of the resurrection and crucifixion of Christ. It had been closed by Israeli authorities since Feb. 28, when the war started. In mid-March, fragments from an Iranian missile that exploded over Israel fell near the church.

Belgian bishop promises married priests by 2028

A Belgian bishop has made headlines with an eyebrow-raising claim.

"I will make every effort to ordain married men as priests for our diocese by 2028," Bishop Johan Bonny of Antwerp said in a March 19 pastoral letter. "I will approach them personally and ensure that by then they have the necessary theological training and pastoral experience, comparable to that of other priest candidates."

Bonny framed his push for married priests as a potential solution for declining numbers of priests in his diocese. While he did not explain how he would overcome the canonical hurdles, he did say he would be "communicating with the Belgian Bishops' Conference and with the Vatican, as we can learn from each other's experiences and insights."

While the Eastern Catholic Churches and some limited exceptions in the Roman Catholic Church allow for married priests, the norm in the west is for a celibate priesthood.

The New York Times takes on wave of Catholic conversions

The nationwide surge in adult conversions to Catholicism has not gone unnoticed, even by The New York Times.

In an article published March 26, the paper gathered data from more than 20 U.S. dioceses and found that every single one reported a "significant jump" in people set to enter the Church this Easter. Detroit will receive 1,428 new Catholics (the most in 21 years), for example, while Des Moines, Iowa, and Galveston-Houston also reported big jumps.

Why the surge? Many bishops have noticed an event that represents a landmark.

"I think technology has isolated us from one other. I think that COVID just really magnified that isolation," Archbishop Mitchell Thomas Rozanski of St. Louis told the Times. "We are realizing many of the ills of our society, particularly anxiety and depression, come about from that isolation."

Bishops are trying to understand what's behind the wave. People joining the Church described their reasons as highly personal.

Sheen beatification (finally) set for Sept. 24

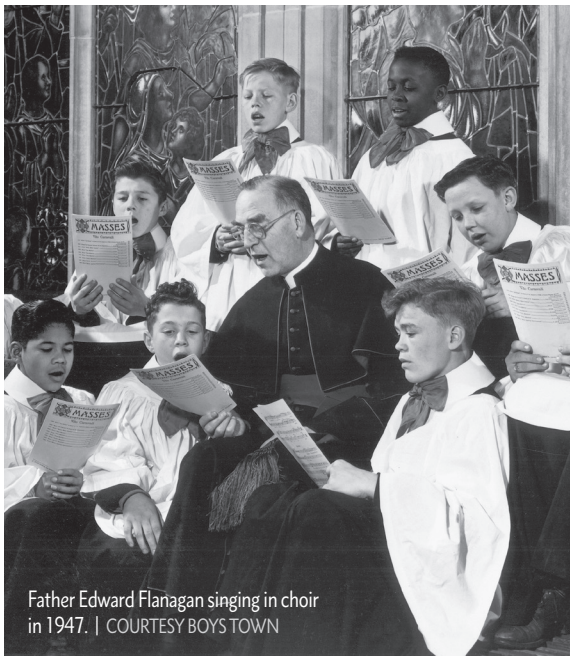
Weeks after the Holy See gave the green light for Archbishop Fulton Sheen to be declared blessed, a date has been set for his beatification Mass: Sept. 24 in St. Louis.

The Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, which Sheen considered home, announced March 26 that the Mass will be held at "The Dome," a former NFL stadium that could fit nearly 100,000 people for the celebration. The diocese is also planning other events in Peoria leading up to the beatification.

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, pro-prefect for the Dicastery for Evangelization, will represent Pope Leo XIV at the Mass.

"With anticipation of a great number of people wanting to participate, we chose this location because of availability, being indoors, and the close proximity to the Diocese of Peoria," Bishop Louis Tylka of the Diocese of Peoria said in a statement.

Father Flanagan of Boys Town declared Venerable



Father Edward Flanagan singing in choir in 1947. | COURTESY BOYS TOWN

The priest who founded Boys Town, a home for disadvantaged youth in Omaha, Nebraska, has been declared "Venerable" by Pope Leo XIV.

The Vatican's March 23 announcement puts Flanagan at the final step before beatification, which precedes sainthood.

Born in Ireland in 1886 and immigrating to the U.S. in 1904, Flanagan founded Boys Town in 1917 to serve homeless and challenged youth in the Diocese of Omaha. Since then, it has expanded into a nationwide network of child and family services, crisis services, a research hospital, and outpatient behavioral care.



Someone must be speaking — A religious sister gestures during the annual National Catholic Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C., March 19. This year's event drew speakers that included actor Jonathan Roumie, known for his role as Jesus Christ in "The Chosen," and Hallow CEO and co-founder Alex Jones. U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., a Southern Baptist, also spoke at the breakfast. | OSV NEWS/ LESLIE E. KOSSOFF



Sanctifying St. Joseph — St. Bede the Venerable Church in La Cañada Flintridge was among several parishes in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to host a traditional St. Joseph's Table event. St. Bede's gathering on March 20, put on by Italian Catholic Federation Branch 374, included a pasta lunch, decorative breads, and a fundraising silent auction. | ST. BEDE

California Catholics rally in Sacramento for 'Capitol' event

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles' Office of Life, Justice and Peace was represented at the Catholics at the Capitol event in Sacramento March 25.

The day included a public rally outside of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by a rosary procession to the nearby Capitol building and Mass back at the cathedral. Individuals and groups later held visits and sessions with state lawmakers to advocate from a Catholic perspective.

"We're here today so we can give that testimony of who we are as a Catholic people to our leaders in the Capitol," Sacramento Bishop Jaime Soto, one of seven bishops at the event, told the crowd. "But also that we continue to provide that witness to one another and to our brother and sister Catholics that we have a lot to share, we have a lot of good news, and we bring the hope and joy that only Jesus can do."

New 'Camino' pilgrimage route opens in San Francisco

A new pilgrimage route modeled after the renowned Camino de Santiago in Spain, named the Camino de San Francisco, was unveiled Feb. 20-21 in the Bay Area in honor of the 800th anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi's death.

The walking route connects Mission San Rafael Arcángel in San Rafael to Mission San Francisco de Asís, also known as Mission Dolores, in San Francisco, with stops in between at Catholic landmarks, including St. Patrick Church in Larkspur, the National Shrine of St. Francis of Assisi, and the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption in San Francisco.

The Camino de San Francisco is one of only three pilgrimage routes in the United States affiliated with the Camino de Santiago.

"A pilgrimage on foot is a great aid for rediscovering the value of silence, effort, and simplicity of life," said San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone. "Pilgrims seek a greater sense of life, and it is precisely in this that we discover what is essential so that we can be prepared for the good things God wants to give us in reaching that destination."

Information: caminosanfrancisco.org.

South Bay Knights honor religious leaders at annual dinner



Alan Engler, left, and Mike Dorn, right, present a recognition to Sister Veronica Maldonado, OCD, during the Knights of Columbus' event on Feb. 17. | SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Knights of Columbus Council #3744 serving the Westchester/Playa del Rey area hosted its 34th annual Religious Appreciation Dinner on Feb. 17. The event annually recognizes religious men and women in the area who dedicate their lives to serving the Lord and others. More than 30 religious leaders accepted invitations to the dinner, which was attended by more than 100 people.

The Knights gave special recognition to the Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles, which operates the Marycrest Manor in nearby Culver City, among other services.

Gerardo Romero, who is discerning his vocation at the Queen of Angels Center for Priestly Formation in Torrance, also received financial support from the Knights through their Refund Support Vocations Program.

IN OTHER WORDS...

Letters to the Editor

A '*soudarion*' expert responds

Bishop Slawomir Szkredka's spiritual thoughts on the "*soudarion*" in the April 3 issue beautifully brought together the connection between Moses, Jesus, and the glory of God.

It is the bishop's reference to St. Maria Faustina Kowalska's painting that brought to mind a memory of a study regarding the crucifixion. First, "in Faustina's image, the risen Lord looks downward." Then the words of Jesus follow, which she recorded: "My gaze from this image is like My gaze from the cross."

The image of the man of the Shroud of Turin which has been compared to the Divine Mercy shows the same tilt of the head. In doing a study of the effect on the body position in crucifixion I noted the following: "During the day, after a volunteer accumulated well over two hours of being on the cross, it was observed that he could bend his head forward only slightly due to the muscle tightness of his upper back and neck."

Like a bow of the head, the volunteer's tilted position was what we see on the Divine Mercy and the Shroud image. Indeed, the glory of God is also reflected in the face, in the gaze, of the Shroud image of the risen Lord, which is a work of God.

— Gilbert Lavoie, M.D., Author of "The Shroud of Jesus: And the Sign John Ingeniously Concealed"

Editor's note

Due to Holy Week and Easter, this April 17 issue of Angelus was published a week early. The following issue, dated May 1, will arrive to most subscribers the weekend of April 24.

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.

Double feature



Archbishop José H. Gomez celebrated a Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels for the 25th anniversary of his episcopal ordination on March 26, while retired Bishop Ed Clark celebrated his 25th anniversary at St. Maria Goretti Church in Long Beach on March 28. Both were ordained bishops on the same day in 2001. | ISABEL CACHO/PETER LOBATO

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.

"Love keeps the heart young."

~ Sister Anna Maria, an Italian nun, in a March 21 Catholic World Report article on the 106-year-old continuing to serve in the cloister and sharing the Gospel on YouTube.

"I call him our General MacArthur that we need."

~ Peter Howard, founder of the Fulton Sheen Movement, in a March 26 National Catholic Register article on the upcoming beatification of Archbishop Fulton Sheen.

"When life hurts, what is truly human is to care for, accompany, and sustain — not to kill."

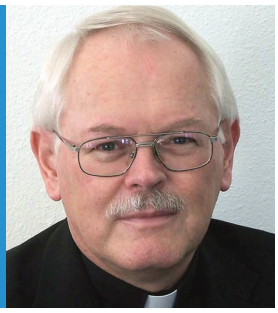
~ Elena Postigo, a member of the Pontifical Academy for Life, in a March 25 X/Twitter post on a 25-year-old woman euthanized in Spain over her parents' objections.

"Why are we allowing people to live like this, like rats? It makes me sad. It makes me mad."

~ Juan Naula, founder of the nonprofit Clean L.A. With Me., to the L.A. Times after discovering people living in a storm drain at 88th Street and Grand Avenue in South LA.

"To lose your ring after seven days of being married is quite a shock."

~ Leonard Beukman, a newlywed, in a March 24 Wall Street Journal article on the man who can find your wedding ring anywhere, even in the ocean.



IN EXILE

» FATHER RONALD ROLHEISER, OMI

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

On not being stingy with God's mercy

Shortly after my ordination, doing replacement work in a parish, I found myself in a rectory with a saintly old priest. He was over 80, nearly blind, but widely sought out and respected. One night, alone with him, I asked him this question: "If you had your priesthood to live over again, would you do anything differently?"

From a man so full of integrity, I had fully expected that there would be no regrets. So, his answer surprised me. Yes, he did have a regret, a major one, he said: "If I had my priesthood to do over again, I would be easier on people the next time. I wouldn't be so stingy with God's mercy, with the sacraments, with forgiveness. You see what was drilled into me in the seminary was the phrase: *The truth will set you free.* So, I believed it was my responsibility always to give a hard challenge, and that can be good. But I fear that I was too hard on people. They have pain enough without me and the Church laying further burdens on them. *I should have risked God's mercy more!*"

This struck me because, less than a year before, as I took my final exams in the seminary, one of the priests who examined me gave me this warning: "Be careful," he said, "never let your feelings get in the way. Don't be soft, that's wrong. Remember, hard as it is, the truth sets people free!" Sound advice, it would seem, for a young priest.

However, after 50 years in ministry, I'm more inclined to the old priest's advice: We need to risk more of God's mercy. The place of justice and truth should never be ignored, but we must risk letting the infinite, unbounded, unconditional, undeserved mercy of God flow more freely. The mercy of God is as accessible as the nearest water tap, and so we, like Isaiah, must proclaim a mercy that has no price tag: *Come, come without money, without virtue, come, drink freely of God's mercy!*

What holds us back? Why are we so hesitant in proclaiming God's inexhaustible, prodigal, indiscriminate mercy?

Partly our motives are good, noble even. The concern for truth, justice, sound orthodoxy, proper morality, public form, proper sacramental preparation, and fear of scandal are not unimportant. Love needs to be tempered by truth, even as truth must be moderated by love.

But sometimes our motives are less noble and our hesitancy arises more out of timidity, fear, legalism, the self-righteousness of the Pharisees, and an impoverished understanding of God. Thus, no cheap grace is dispensed on our watch!

In doing this, we are, I fear, misguided, less than good shepherds, out of tune with the God that Jesus incarnated. God's mercy, as Jesus revealed it, embraces indiscriminately, like the sun that shines equally on the good as well as the bad, the deserving and the undeserving, the initiated and the uninitiated.

One of the truly startling insights that Jesus gave us is that the mercy of God *cannot not* go out to everyone. It's always free, undeserved, unconditional, universal in embrace, reaching beyond all religion, custom, rubric, political affiliation, mandatory program, ideology, and even sin itself.

For our part then, especially those of us who are parents, ministers, teachers, catechists, and elders, we must risk proclaiming the prodigal character of God's mercy. We must not dispense God's mercy as if it were ours to dispense; dole out God's forgiveness as if it were a limited commodity; put conditions on God's love as if God needs to be protected; or cut off access to God as if we were the keepers of the heavenly gates. We aren't. If we tie God's mercy to our own timidity and fear, we limit it to the size of our own minds. A bad game.

It is interesting to note in the Gospels how the apostles, well-meaning of course, often tried to keep certain people away from Jesus as if they weren't worthy, as if they were an affront to his holiness or would somehow taint his purity. So, they tried to send away children, prostitutes, tax collectors, known sinners, and the uninitiated of all kinds. Always Jesus overruled their attempts with words to this effect: "Let them come to me. I want them to come."

Things haven't changed. Perennially, we, well-intentioned persons, for the same reasons as the apostles, continue trying to keep certain individuals and groups away from God's mercy as it is accessible in Christian word, sacrament, and community. Jesus managed things then; I suspect that he can manage them now. *God doesn't need our gatekeeping.*

What God wants is for everyone, regardless of age, religion, culture, personal weakness, or lack of Christian practice, to come to the unlimited waters of divine mercy.

The renowned naturalist John Muir once challenged Christians with these words: *Why are Christians so reluctant to let animals into their stingy heaven?*

We are also, I fear, stingy with God's prodigal mercy.

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The *Portiuncula*, the small church where St. Francis founded the Franciscan order, in the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi, Italy. | SHUTTERSTOCK



Mission San Gabriel Arcángel in 2015. | CNS/NANCY WIECHEC

NOT FAR OFF

The faith of St. Francis centuries ago in Assisi, Italy, is paying spiritual dividends for LA Catholics as the archdiocese announces local pilgrimage sites for the saint's Jubilee Year.

BY ANGELUS STAFF

When God told St. Francis in the early 13th century to "go and repair my house" — the *Portiuncula* chapel near Assisi, Italy, that had fallen into disrepair — who could have guessed that the ripples caused by that action would one day reach Southern California.

Francis, a rich man who embraced poverty and had a heart for the poor, begged and sold items for materials to rebuild the *Portiuncula*.

But that's not all of what was refurbished.

The saint asked God and Pope Honorius III for a special indulgence for those who visited the chapel. It was also there that St. Francis founded the Order of Friars Minor and later died in a small room that still exists today.

Now, as Pope Leo XIV has proclaimed 2026 as the Jubilee Year for St. Francis, Archbishop José H. Gomez has declared 15 sites in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles as pilgrimage destinations, ensuring that LA Catholics don't have to travel all the way to Assisi to participate in the commemoration.

In a letter released on March 25, Archbishop Gomez encouraged local Catholics to take part in the archdiocese's official Jubilee events marking the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi, including pilgrimages to area Franciscan parishes and sacred sites, prayer services, and community activities throughout the year. The archdiocese set up a special site for the observance: lacatholics.org/year-of-st-francis.

"During this time of grace, the Holy Father invites us to reflect on the witness of St. Francis and to grow in holiness through prayer, conversion, and works of charity," Archbishop Gomez wrote.

"In this way, may this year deepen our love for Jesus Christ, strengthen our care for creation, and renew our commitment to peace."

As part of this observance, those who embark on the pilgrimages and meet certain spiritual conditions may receive a plenary indulgence, which removes the time a person might have spent in purgatory due to their sins, which have already been forgiven by God.

Full list of LA Archdiocese Jubilee sites

Santa Barbara Region

- St. Mark's University Church: 6550 Picasso Road, Isla Vista
- St. Francis of Assisi Church: 1048 W. Ventura St., Fillmore
- Old Mission Santa Barbara: 2201 Laguna St., Santa Barbara
- Mission Santa Inés: 1760 Mission Dr., Solvang
- Poor Clare Monastery: 215 E. Los Olivos St., Santa Barbara

San Fernando Region

- Poverello of Assisi Retreat Center: 1519 Woodworth St., San Fernando
- Provincial House & Chapel (Glory to God): 13367 Borden Ave., Sylmar
- Mother Gertrude Balcazar Home: 11320 Laurel Canyon Blvd., San Fernando
- Poor Clare Missionary Sisters: 13026 Angeles Trail Way, Kagel Canyon

Our Lady of the Angels Region

- St. Francis of Assisi Church: 1523 Golden Gate Ave., Silver Lake
- St. Lawrence of Brindisi Church: 10122 Compton Ave., Watts
- Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels: 555 W. Temple St., Los Angeles

San Gabriel Region

- Mission San Gabriel Arcángel: 428 S. Mission Dr., San Gabriel
- San Francisco de Asís Church: 4800 E. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles

San Pedro Region

- Our Lady of Guadalupe Church: 440 Massey St., Hermosa Beach



Old Mission Santa Barbara. | SHUTTERSTOCK

The Pardon of Assisi comes to LA

How to receive this extraordinary grace.

BY MIKE AQUILINA

This year, Catholics in Los Angeles have a rare opportunity to receive one of the Church's most beloved indulgences — the Pardon of Assisi — close to home.

In connection with the Jubilee Year of St. Francis proclaimed by Pope Leo XIV, Archbishop José H. Gomez has designated certain local churches where the indulgence may be obtained. What was once tied to a single small chapel in Italy is, for a little while, being extended in a special way to the faithful of Southern California.

The origins of this indulgence reach back to St. Francis of Assisi and the humble chapel known as the *Portiuncula*. In 1216, Francis asked for — and received — permission from Pope Honorius III to grant a plenary indulgence to all who would come there in repentance. It was a startling request in its simplicity. Francis wanted forgiveness to be not distant or difficult, but immediate and accessible.

That same spirit animates the Church's practice today.



"The Pardon of Assisi," wall painting in the *Portiuncula* in the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi, Italy. | WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

How to receive the indulgence

To obtain the Pardon of Assisi under the norms of the Catholic Church, the faithful should:

- **Visit one of the designated churches** identified by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles during this Jubilee period.
- **Pray there,** typically the Our Father and the Creed.
- **Receive sacramental confession,** within about 20 days before or after the visit.
- **Receive holy Communion,** preferably on the same day.
- **Pray for the intentions of the pope,** usually an Our Father and Hail Mary.
- **Be free from attachment to sin,** even venial sin.



Standing in front of the *Portiuncula*, Pope Leo XIV speaks to members of the Italian bishops' conference in the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi, Italy, Nov. 20, 2025. | CNS/VATICAN MEDIA

When these conditions are fulfilled with sincere devotion, the indulgence is *plenary*, remitting all temporal punishment due to sin.

What an indulgence means today

Modern Catholic teaching, clarified in *Indulgentiarum Doctrina* of Pope Paul VI and summarized in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, helps us understand what is happening spiritually.

Sin is forgiven in confession — but it leaves behind a kind of wound, a disorder that needs healing. This is what tradition calls "temporal punishment." An indulgence is the Church's application of the grace of Christ and the communion of the saints to bring that healing to completion.

In other words, the indulgence is not a substitute for repentance. It is the *fruit of repentance*, brought to fullness by grace.

Why this Jubilee moment matters

The extension of the Pardon of Assisi to local churches highlights something essential about the Church today: her desire to make God's mercy widely accessible.

What began in a tiny Umbrian chapel is now offered in parish settings, within reach of ordinary life. No long pilgrimage is required. No extraordinary penance is demanded. The path is simple: confession, communion, prayer, and a sincere turning of the heart.

In this way, the indulgence reflects the Church's modern emphasis on the *universal call to holiness* — the conviction that sanctity is possible for everyone, not just the few.

It also underscores the communal nature of the Christian life. We pray for the pope. We receive grace as members of the Church. We draw, mysteriously but truly, on the holiness of Christ and all his saints.

A grace close at hand

For Catholics in Los Angeles this Jubilee Year, the Pardon of Assisi is not a distant medieval practice. It is a present invitation.

And it carries the insight that St. Francis of Assisi grasped so well: that God's mercy is not scarce. It is abundant, ready, and — especially in moments like this — astonishingly near.



Pope Leo XIV and Franciscan friars pray before the tomb of St. Francis in the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, Italy, Nov. 20, 2025. | CNS/VATICAN MEDIA

Many of the pilgrimage sites were chosen because of their ties to St. Francis or his Franciscan order. Mission San Gabriel Arcángel, the oldest California mission in the archdiocese, was founded by St. Junípero Serra, the Spanish missionary priest who was a Franciscan.

The Monastery of Poor Clares in Santa Barbara is the religious order named after Francis' "spiritual sister," St. Clare of Assisi, while St. Lawrence of Brindisi Church in Watts is run by the Capuchins and named after the Franciscan saint.

The altar at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in downtown Los Angeles features a relic of Francis sealed into it.

In a recent Angelus column, Archbishop Gomez noted the "deep spiritual ties that connect us with St. Francis" and how he can still bring us peace in a divided world.

"St. Francis used to greet people with a little prayer: 'May the Lord grant you peace,' " Archbishop Gomez said. "As we reflect on his witness and teachings during this Jubilee Year, let us renew our commitment to bring the Lord's peace into all of our relationships and to work to promote reconciliation and understanding among our neighbors."

With a papal decree in January, Leo proclaimed a "Special Year of St. Francis" that will extend through Jan. 10, 2027. In his remarks, Leo hoped that the special Jubilee Year would promote a spiritual calm in a world currently tormented by war, starvation, and persecution.

"I wish to join spiritually with the entire Franciscan Family and with all those who will take part in the commemorative events, hoping that the message of peace may find a profound echo in the Church and society today," Leo wrote.

As part of the Jubilee, the remains of St. Francis were moved from his tomb and exposed for public veneration from Feb. 22 to March 22 at the basilica bearing his name in Assisi, Italy — a rarity considering the saint's bones have seldom been publicly displayed. Hundreds of thousands signed up and waited in lengthy lines to get an up-close and personal view of the saint.

On Oct. 4, Francis' feast day will



The remains of St. Francis during the first public display for veneration at the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, Italy, Feb. 22, to mark the 800th anniversary of the saint's death. | OSV NEWS/ALESSIA GIULIANI, CPP

once again be a national holiday in Italy after lawmakers reinstated the celebration, which was repealed in 1977.

"It's an exciting year; I don't think any of us would have anticipated that Pope Leo would have declared this," Father Jonathan St. Andre, vice president for Franciscan Life at Franciscan University in Ohio, told OSV News. "We figured the pope would go to Assisi; there would be different events. But to make this a Jubilee, and to offer an indulgence ... is just remarkable."

America's land of St. Francis

Not just names: Franciscan missionaries from Spain brought the very spirit of St. Francis to California and its native peoples.

BY ANN RODGERS

The Spanish missionaries who in 1769 first christened California with the names of Christ, the Blessed Mother, and the saints, walked in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi. Many, including St. Junípero Serra, were scholars who renounced an easy life for extreme hardship and isolation because they wanted to follow Christ as St. Francis did.

They often named missions for Franciscan saints, including Mission San Francisco de Asis, Mission Santa Clara de Asis, Mission San Antonio de Padua, Mission San Buenaventura, and Mission San Juan Capistrano. "The City of Angels" was never a mission, however.

In 1781, the Spanish military government established Los Angeles as a civilian pueblo, located in Tongva territory. In 1769, Padre Juan Crespi had named the region *Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles del Rio Porciuncula* (Our Lady Queen of Angels of the *Portiuncula* River). The *Portiuncula* is a hallowed Franciscan site; the chapel where St. Francis lived and formed his community in the medieval town of St. Mary of the Angels.

Moral critiques have rightly been made of some Franciscan interactions with and views of Indigenous Californians, and consequent harm that Indigenous people endured. Some of those critiques drew on a faulty grasp of history, such as confusing abuse committed by civil administrators at secularized 19th-century mission buildings with the actions of friars.



"Father Serra Celebrates Mass at Monterey," by Léon Trousset, 1838-1917, French. | WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



A mural by Frank A. Martinez greets people entering the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles. The rendering depicts figures from early 18th-century California, including St. Junípero Serra (right) and native people building the missions and harvesting crops. The central figure at top is Mary. | CNS/NANCY WIECHEC

What becomes lost in these disputes is how Franciscan spirituality created connections between the missionaries and many Indigenous people they evangelized.

The California Franciscans imitated Francis by preaching in the local dialect, rather than Latin or Spanish. Shocked to encounter hundreds of California languages, none resembling tongues they had studied in what is now Mexico, they began to learn. At Mission San Antonio, for instance, Padre Buenaventura Sitjar translated a catechism into Telamé, including whistling and guttural sounds. Most friars defied government decrees to force Indigenous converts to learn Spanish, but tried to preach, teach, and converse in peoples' heart language.

Francis and his brothers evangelized with song in town squares. Music was likewise essential to Franciscan witness in California. On one hand, missionaries taught Indigenous Catholics an astounding array of European instruments and musical genres. Far more astonishing was that some friars adopted Indigenous instrumentation in liturgical music. Musicologist Craig H. Russell of Cal Poly discovered notations for Corpus Christi hymns at some missions indicating drum beats each time the word "love" was sung. Drums weren't heard in European liturgies until after Vatican II.

Peace-making and reconciliation are closely associated with Francis, and Serra and his brothers followed in that tradition. One example began in 1775, after hundreds of Kumeyaay warriors burned Mission San Diego, torturing and killing Padre Luis Jayme and six lay Spaniards. Despite what would now be called PTSD, the surviving friar immediately helped one of the perpetrators, a Catholic named Carlos, claim sanctuary. Serra attempted vigorously but unsuccessfully to stop brutal military reprisals. He declared that when he had embarked for California, "One of the most important requests I made . . . was that if the Indians, pagan or Christian, killed me then they should be forgiven."

After two years he secured the release of all 13 convicted insurgents and spent the last nine years of his life repeatedly rescuing Carlos, a serial rebel. After Carlos was complicit in killing an Indigenous Catholic, Serra gave him sanctuary at a mission — where he plotted the overthrow of the Spaniards until his next arrest. Serra intervened to stop both his execution and an effort to consign him to a coastal exploration ship — where he feared Carlos might die without the sacraments. Serra died in 1784 while campaigning to bring Carlos back from exile in Mexico, and his successor took up the cause. Carlos was sent north to Mission San Carlos, where he died in 1809, a quarter-century after Serra.

The greatest connections between Francis and his heirs in Indigenous California aren't tile roofs or saints' names. They are the witness of Christians willing to give up everything to serve Christ and lead others to him.



The archbishop smiles during a standing ovation before the final blessing. At the end of the Mass, officials from Los Angeles County and the City of Los Angeles presented the archbishop with congratulatory certificates for his anniversary.

AN APOSTLE'S JUBILEE

Scenes from the special March 26 Mass celebrating Archbishop José H. Gomez's 25 years as a bishop.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ISABEL CACHO

Archbishop José H. Gomez shows off a message and apostolic blessing from Pope Leo XIV presented at the end of the March 26 Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels celebrating his 25th anniversary of episcopal consecration. Before the Mass, the archbishop was also presented with a "spiritual bouquet" of prayer messages from LA Catholics.





Archbishop Gomez blesses a young man and his family after the Silver Jubilee Mass.



"He has fulfilled his ministry with integrity, guided people of God through both word and example," said Pope Leo XIV of Archbishop Gomez in a special message read at the end of the Mass.



Some 800 people, including nearly 100 priests, attended the Mass. Among them were staff from the Archdiocesan Catholic Center, women religious, and well-wishers from around the archdiocese.



Archbishop Gomez greets actress Brenda Lorena Garcia after the Silver Jubilee Mass.



The family of Rodrigo and Diana Gonzalez with Archbishop Gomez. The couple are actively involved with the Catholic Association for Latino Leadership (CALL), which Archbishop Gomez founded before coming to LA.



Bishop Edward Clark after his 25th episcopal ordination anniversary Mass at St. Maria Goretti in Long Beach March 28. Most of the guests were friends from LA parishes where he served, including Cathedral Chapel of St. Vibiana in Mid-City. | PETER LOBATO

A BISHOP'S 'GIFTS RECEIVED'

At his own Silver Jubilee, Bishop Ed Clark turned the focus to the people who've shaped his ministry in LA.

BY PABLO KAY

Celebrating his Silver Jubilee of episcopal ordination, retired LA Auxiliary Bishop Edward Clark credited his friends — and a deepened understanding of the cross of Christ — for helping him know "what it means to be a bishop" over the last 25 years.

"I offer this Mass to you, as my thanksgiving to you, for being with me, supporting me, carrying me over these years," said Clark to friends, family, and brother priests gathered March 28 at St. Maria Goretti Church in Long Beach.

"Most of all, I thank almighty God, who took this vessel of clay, crafted and shaped it, sometimes broken, and who healed it and found it useful," he added.

Clark was named an auxiliary bishop of Los Angeles by St. Pope John Paul II in 2001 and ordained on March 26 of that year by Cardinal Mahony the same day that then-Father José H. Gomez was ordained an auxiliary bishop of Denver.

Archbishop José H. Gomez, Cardinal Roger Mahony, and five other LA bishops concelebrated the anniversary Mass for Clark, which drew dozens of friends made by Clark in his different assignments, from his days as principal at Paraclete



Bishop Clark sits in the presider's chair emblazoned with his episcopal coat of arms during the Silver Jubilee Mass. | PETER LOBATO

High School in Lancaster in the 1980s to his current parish residence, St. Maria Goretti.

Two days earlier, Archbishop Gomez had acknowledged and congratulated Bishop Clark on their shared anniversary at his own Silver Jubilee Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady



Bishop Clark and Cardinal Roger Mahony, who ordained him a bishop 25 years ago, with women religious from the Lovers of the Holy Cross of Los Angeles after a March 26 Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. | ISABEL CACHO

of the Angels.

Clark presided the Mass from a presider's chair emblazoned with his episcopal coat of arms, set above his motto as a bishop: "The gift received, give as a gift."

In his homily, he reflected on his spiritual journey through his years as a priest and bishop, and on what looks different about the Church 25 years later.

Citing the famous words of St. Bonaventure, "Everything I know about theology, I learned from the Cross," Clark said he'd found the meaning of priesthood in the place where the cross' two beams meet: the vertical one oriented toward heaven, signifying man's relationship with God; and the horizontal one, representing man's relationship with mankind.

"It's the balance of the truth, serving God and serving one another," said Clark. "We have to keep those things in balance. And that's what the priests and bishops are called to do, to remind people that we serve God, and we serve our neighbor."

Clark noted that he became a bishop shortly before the outbreak of the clerical sexual abuse crisis of 2002, which he remembered cast "a cloud" over the Catholic Church, causing "the loss of its moral voice in the world."

"In some ways, it robbed me of the joy of being a bishop," said Clark. "We always had to be conscious to the people who were mistreated and suffered. We can never forget them."

To overcome the polarization that has emerged since the crisis, Clark said, the Church needs to regain the sense of balance that is found in the cross.

"We have to set aside the division," said Clark. "Set aside the angry voices, the lack of hospitality, the speaking of whatever comes to one's mind."

Guests at the Mass said they were grateful for the various sides of Clark that they'd come to know: the teacher, the administrator, the pastor, and especially, a friend with a sharp sense of humor.

"We loved him because he was one of us," said Caryl Hier, who was a secretary at Paraclete High School in the early 1980s when Clark arrived as principal, wearing a T-shirt, shorts, and an "afro" during his first visit.

"I had already been there a few years, but when he left, I could run that place," said Hier, who went on to take on multiple roles at the school.

Joseph and Betty Ng got to know Clark during his time as episcopal vicar for the Our Lady of the Angels Pastoral Region, which included their home parish, St. Bridget Chinese Catholic Church in Chinatown. Clark was always eager to visit, whether for Chinese New Year, wedding anniversary celebrations, fundraising events, or just ordinary Sunday Masses.

"We know that bishops are supposed to be intelligent and all that," said Joseph. "But the bishop we came to know is a very loving, caring person. He just loves his people, he's very approachable. When you have a problem, you go and talk to him."

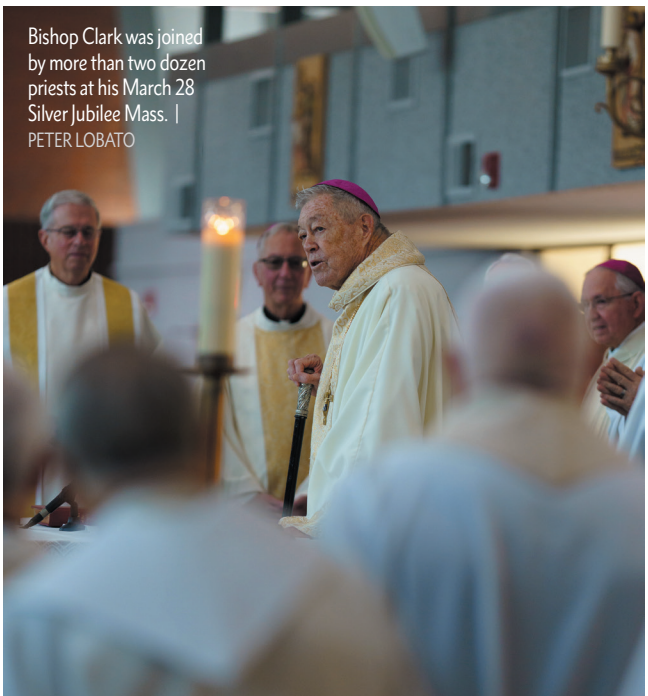
Fifteen years ago, Clark commissioned Yolanda Brown to become parish life director at Blessed Sacrament Church in Hollywood. She already had experience as a pastoral associate, but when she needed guidance, Clark's door "was open at any time."

"His advice was always focused on relationships with the people, and how to bring them closer to God. He was always available, and that surprised me."

Brown described Clark as a "bishop of social justice" who showed a deep formation and sharp intellect when addressing injustices.

"Not only is he a great theologian, but an educator who has inspired us to really understand the meaningfulness of life in God's relationship with us."

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



Bishop Clark was joined by more than two dozen priests at his March 28 Silver Jubilee Mass. | PETER LOBATO

Chatbots and killer statues



SAULO FERREIRA ANGELO/SHUTTERSTOCK

How a 1970s Italian zombie novel can help us understand Pope Leo's views on artificial intelligence.

BY MAGGIE PHILLIPS

If various news reports are to be believed, Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical may come soon after Easter, and will address the subject of artificial intelligence (AI) and its challenges to human flourishing.

There is a lot of anxiety around what AI means for jobs, for human connection, for world peace. How can humanity even begin to figure out protection from innovations whose implications even their creators don't fully understand?

Until that encyclical arrives, his message on the 60th Day of Social Communications from January is probably the deepest look into Leo's views on AI to date.

Strange as it sounds, an Italian novel written in the 1970s gives allegorical shape to a specific problem with both AI and social media that Leo identifies.

Imagine this: A couple of winsome young people show up at your door. They're not selling anything, nor trying to convert you to their religion or their politician of choice. They want your support for a new kind of library, where instead of the standard literary fare, citizens submit their own writing.

"Is it possible that you've never written a diary, a memoir, or a confession of some problem that really worries you?" the cleancut, upbeat youngsters entice you. "Why don't you bring it along? There's definitely someone who'll read it and take an interest in your problems." They are optimistic about the impact it will have on the community: "It's an important thing we do, considering how hard it's gotten for people to *communicate* these days."

You think about the lack of person-to-person connection that seems to accelerate exponentially with every new convenience or technological innovation. Oh yes, you've got *thoughts.* So you jot them down and deposit them at the Library.

What you do not anticipate is the ensuing mass psychosis, the paranoia, and the wave of grisly murders that will follow.

This is the premise of "The Twenty Days of Turin" (Liveright, $18.99), written by Italian novelist Giorgio De Maria in the 1970s, a period of domestic terror and political turmoil in his country. "Turin" follows the investigative efforts of a nameless first-person narrator to reconstruct what precisely happened 10 years previously, when the Library was established and for 20 days, crowds of Torinese shuffled through the streets at night unable to sleep, and mangled corpses were discovered in the morning.

"Turin" is an ominous, symbolic vision of what may happen should we fail to address the dark side of innovation.

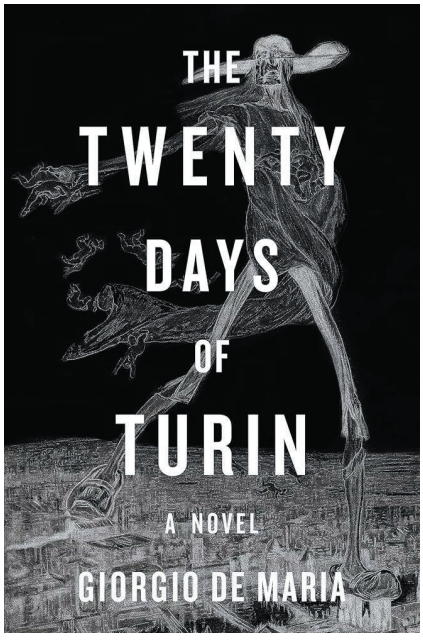
I am hardly the first reader to notice De Maria's eerie anticipation of toxic social media: Turin's citizens, suddenly free to anonymously share their personal thoughts, desires, and confessions, do not come together in brotherly understanding as the young men promised. Instead, they quickly become alienated from one another. Those who impulsively submit their intimate thoughts and personal experiences for anonymous popular consumption become paranoid. Much of the Library's content is downright disturbing. No longer able to trust one another, citizens wander the streets in a sleepless stupor. These enervated individuals describe their mental states with adjectives like "drained," "empty," and "dry."

Like De Maria's Torinese, we digital natives were also pitched a vision of social optimism by enthusiastic young people, in our case, tech bro wunderkind. And without much of a thought about what it might cost us, we started uploading our queries, thoughts, and original work to our own version of Turin's Library — social media platforms, and AI language learning models (LLMs) like ChatGPT.

Then we began to see mass murderers radicalized online who shot up schools and posted their manifestos for clicks. We saw acts of brutality play out in real time on our screens, and our children's mental health erode. With the dawn of AI, we became unable to trust our own eyes.

But Leo, who in his first days as pope declared addressing the challenges posed by artificial intelligence as a top priority, thinks we can yet reverse course. To safeguard ourselves from what he calls "naive and unquestioning reliance on artificial intelligence," we must, Leo said in January, "safeguard faces and voices."

The pope has warned of AI's tendency to transform us into "passive consumers" of "anonymous products" who lack "ownership or love," but he could have been describing De Maria's zombified Torinese: after consuming the lives of strangers at the Library, they collectively realize what they've given up and can't get back — themselves — and struggle to process it. When the murders begin, having unlimited access to the faceless and voiceless secrets of others' hearts, they are driven to paranoia.

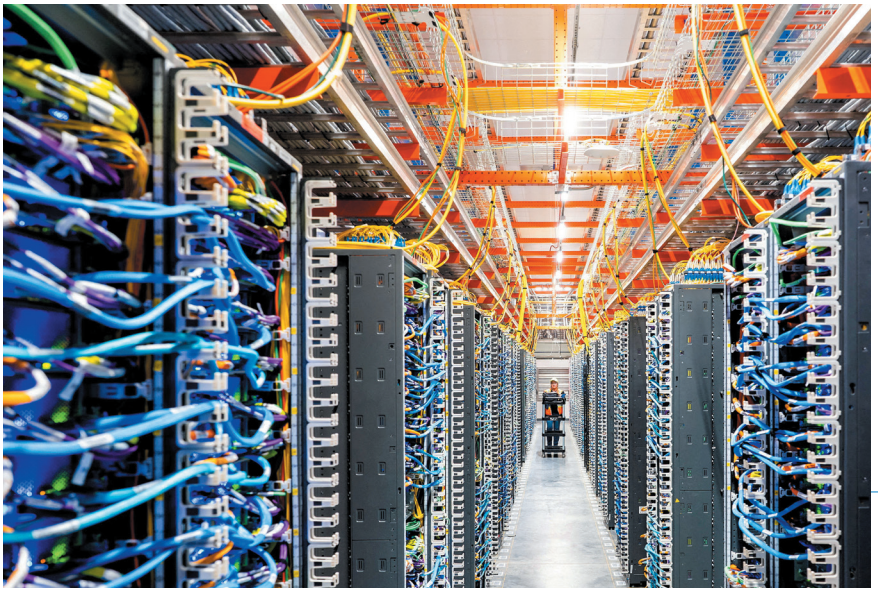


AMAZON

The ersatz intimacy De Maria's characters get out of contributing to and reading from the Turin Library sounds a lot like the modern attachment to social media. But it also recalls something else Leo has warned against: the uncanny familiarity of chatbots trained on human speech to sound like our buddies, and the addictive emotional feedback loop that isolates the AI user.

In a recent survey, 1 in 3 13-17-year-olds said they have used AI companions for "social interaction and relationships," which they insist are "as satisfying or more satisfying than those with real-life friends." Leo observes that unlike our human friends, chatbots are "always present and accessible," and this easy familiarity allows inanimate intelligences to become "hidden architects of our emotional states" who "invade and occupy our sphere of intimacy."

The fictional Library also inflicts other chilling harms during the 20 days. People begin to notice that the city's statues of historical figures are changing places. A monument that was



A technician works at an AI data center in New Carlisle, Indiana, Oct. 2, 2025. | OSV NEWS/NOAH BERGER, AWS VIA REUTERS

facing one direction yesterday is facing another way. One statue has switched places with another on the other side of town. We learn the statues come to life at night and kill the insomniacs, whose shattered corpses are also discovered each morning.

The relationship between killer statues and anonymous confessions is not as far-fetched as it sounds. In his January Social Communications address, Leo said the same thing De Maria seems to suggest in "Twenty Days": When we swap out real interpersonal relationships for what he calls "systems that catalog of our own thoughts" — in the novel, the Turin Library, in our world, LLMs, and social media — the result is "a world of mirrors around us, where everything is made 'in our image and likeness.'"

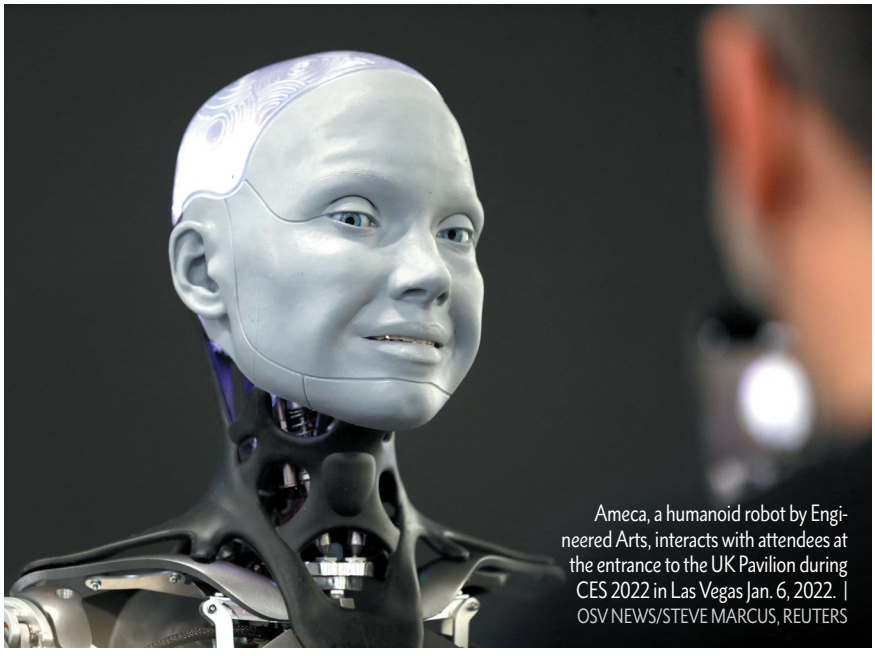
In a hall of mirrors, the image reflected back can be difficult to distinguish from the genuine article. And likeness can be distorted.

Public statues, of course, are made in our likeness, as well as representing shared values and historical understanding. Distracted and alienated, both from one another and from themselves, the Torinese' own past becomes unintelligible to them and they are unable to trust even their own memories: "I could swear the statues of Vincenzo Vela and Napoleon Bonaparte had swapped places. It isn't Vela with his back turned on us, is it?" one character asks, trying to recall the monuments' correct positioning. "I felt out of place myself, even if I didn't know enough to say what my rightful condition could be."

With a citizenry thus disoriented, the statues see an opportunity and the past becomes deadly.

In one of the novel's eeriest scenes, the narrator comes upon a cassette recording of the statues screaming threats to one another. Speaking in "metallic" voices, their language becomes increasingly florid (and as with LLMs, evidently derived from stolen intellectual property: "Sounds like Kipling to me," the narrator observes).

When the combative statues go on to duel one another, they use the bodies of the sleepwalking Torinese — the people who made the statues in the first place. Their humanity is gone now, having uploaded it into the Library. "There's not much life in them left to suck!" one statue remarks to another. Library users have failed, as Leo says, to safeguard their very selves. And it is those hollowed-out selves that malevolent forces weaponize and ultimately destroy.



Ameca, a humanoid robot by Engineered Arts, interacts with attendees at the entrance to the UK Pavilion during CES 2022 in Las Vegas Jan. 6, 2022. | OSV NEWS/STEVE MARCUS, REUTERS

Which forces? De Maria never actually tells us who the backers of the Library are or what they finally want. For Leo, there is a similar risk associated with mindlessly handing over individual and collective memory to opaque technologies. In getting our news (and thus, our history) from YouTube and ChatGPT, we don't always know *whose* version we're getting and what they want.

"A lack of transparency in algorithmic programming, together with the inadequate social representation of data, tends to trap us in networks that manipulate our thoughts," he said in January. AI models, Leo warned in the January statement, "are shaped by the worldview of those who build them," and can "impose these ways of thinking by reproducing the stereotypes and prejudices present in the data they draw on."

One troubling example that demonstrates the pope's point is the rise of online antisemitism. The number of social media posts advancing Holocaust denial claims and distorting the history around the Holocaust is growing at alarming rates. Antisemitic language is casually tossed around in X and Instagram replies in ways that would have been unimaginable even a few years ago.

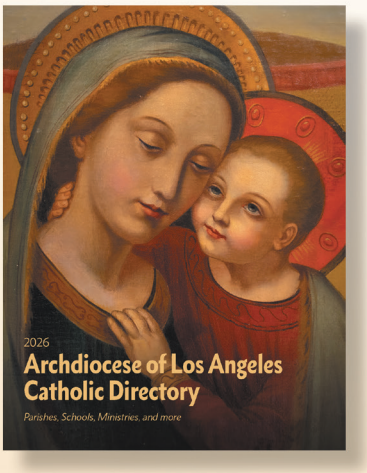
The window to address these issues is closing fast. Roughly two-thirds of U.S. teens ages 13 to 17 say they use an AI chatbot to search for information and get help with schoolwork. For current events, Pew reports that today's young adults are more likely than other generations to trust the news they get from our modern-day Turin Libraries: platforms like TikTok, X, and Instagram. It's often hard to know how much of this content is true, or even *real*, furthering the cycle of mistrust.

Like the Torinese, we've been pretty wanton with our humanity until now, mindlessly uploading our original creations, intimate thoughts, and deeply personal stories, without realizing the broader consequence: the human self is fast becoming a commodity put up for consumption.

Leo, meanwhile, says it's time for "faces and voices to speak for people again." He wants Catholics to proclaim still more loudly that the individual self is precious and not something to be mined for content, pleasure, or gain.

De Maria's novel asserts a peculiar irony: the more interested we become in the private self, the more we risk our own dehumanization.

Maggie Phillips writes about religion and culture. She's a contributor at Tablet, Arc Magazine, and The Dispatch.



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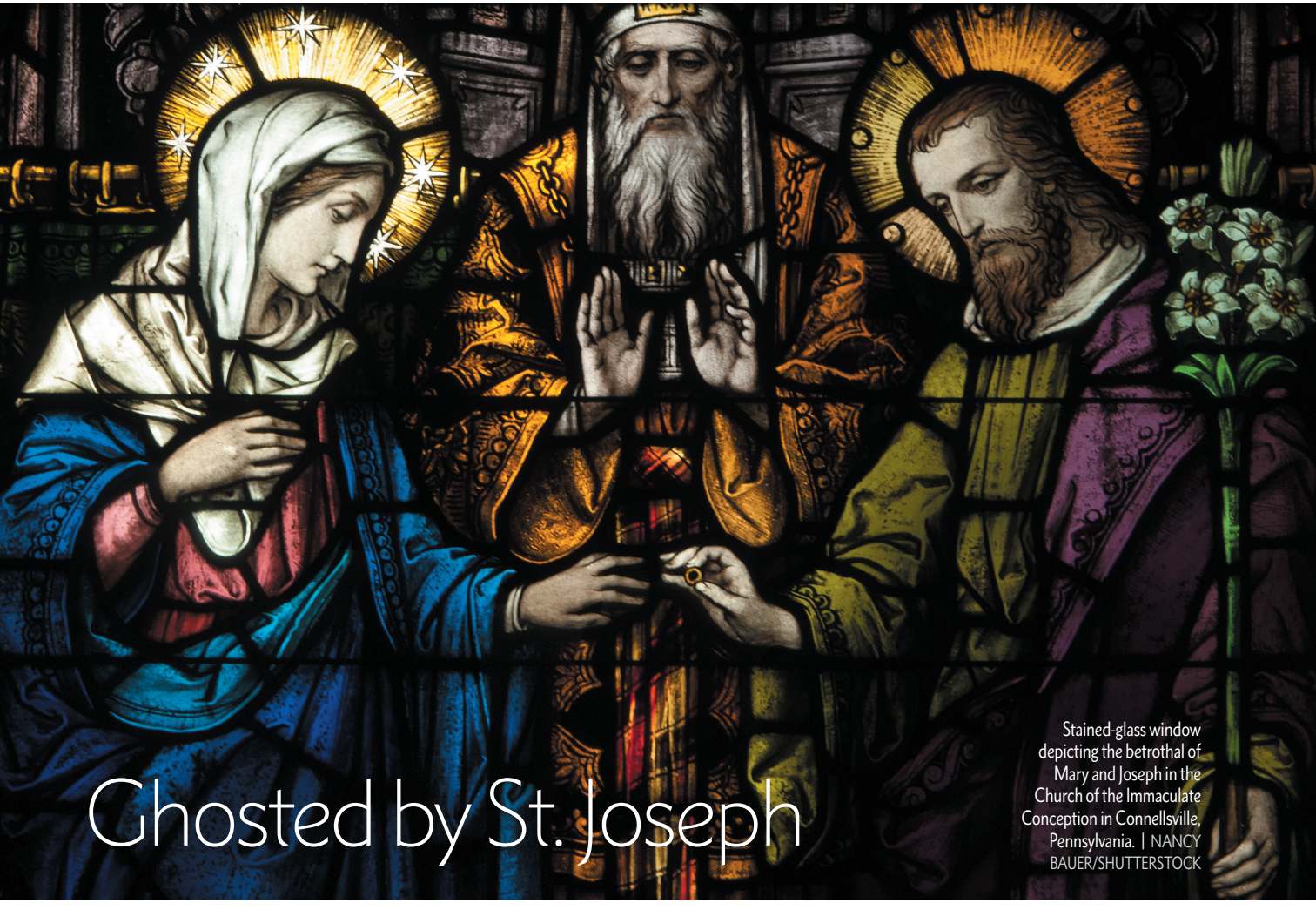
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Ghosted by St. Joseph

Stained-glass window depicting the betrothal of Mary and Joseph in the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Connellsville, Pennsylvania. | NANCY BAUER/SHUTTERSTOCK

The foster father of Jesus is known for helping end singlehood. After 21 years of novenas, why hasn't he answered?

BY SARA PERLA

One of the pieces of advice that married Catholics love to give single Catholic women who want to be married is to pray to St. Joseph.

The faithful, loving husband of Mary is thought to be the ideal intercessor for women who are looking for someone like him: the strong, silent type (kidding, kidding). I cannot tell you how many times I have been told, "Just do a novena to St. Joseph!" or "Have you tried asking St. Joseph?" Once, this happened on a live radio broadcast, and I found myself choked up as I responded, "That is not how prayer works. I have done the novena to St. Joseph so many times, and nothing ever happens. In fact, nothing ever happens when I do novenas, period."

I finally counted them up: 21. I have done the novena to St. Joseph, husband of Mary, ending on his feast day of March 19, every single year for 21 years. My novenas have reached legal drinking age.

While I have probably phrased it differently every year, depending on the state of my heart, one of my intentions for the novena has always been, "to find a man to share my life with." And about five years ago, I discovered a prayer to Joseph that I really love, so I started praying it every night when I had finished Night Prayer. So I declare: I have been ghosted by St. Joseph.

Prayer is a relationship. It is a conversation with someone real, whom you cannot see but whom you trust exists and listens. It can be wordy or wordless, tearful or joyful. Over these many years of my approaching St. Joseph, he has remained silent. He has left me on "read," and "in the blue" (sorry, non-iPhone users). But I still trust that when I ask, he listens. He prays to God for me, as a good friend would. He just does not tell me about it. He does not give me updates. He does not let me in on the secret.

The only reason I can keep trusting that Joseph lives in heaven and intercedes for me is that I have people in my

life who are a bit like him. People who do things silently but who mostly keep their thoughts to themselves. They mail packages to me when they know I've had a rough time. They text me funny memes or offer to pick up coffee for me. Their kids start calling me "Aunt Sara" even though no one told them to. They may not share a lot of what they are thinking or feeling at a given moment — apparently, I do enough of that for all of us — but they are present. They are there. And so is St. Joseph.

There is a long tradition in the Church of accepting the silence of God. I'm not talking here about the dark night of the soul — which is a specific suffering of saints who have reached a level of contemplation that I certainly have not. I'm talking about the normal, run-of-the-mill seeming lack of response from the Father.

St. Thérèse explained it as seeing herself as a little toy that belongs to the Child Jesus, a toy that he could take up or leave, as he willed. She said she did not mind being set aside, waiting to be chosen. I have found that really challenging, since I do want to be chosen — not only by Jesus but also by a good man. I am not a "pick me girl" because, if anything, I seek to build up and champion the many amazing women in my life. But we all want to be chosen. We all want someone to see us and say "That one." And so far, St. Joseph hasn't helped that happen for me.

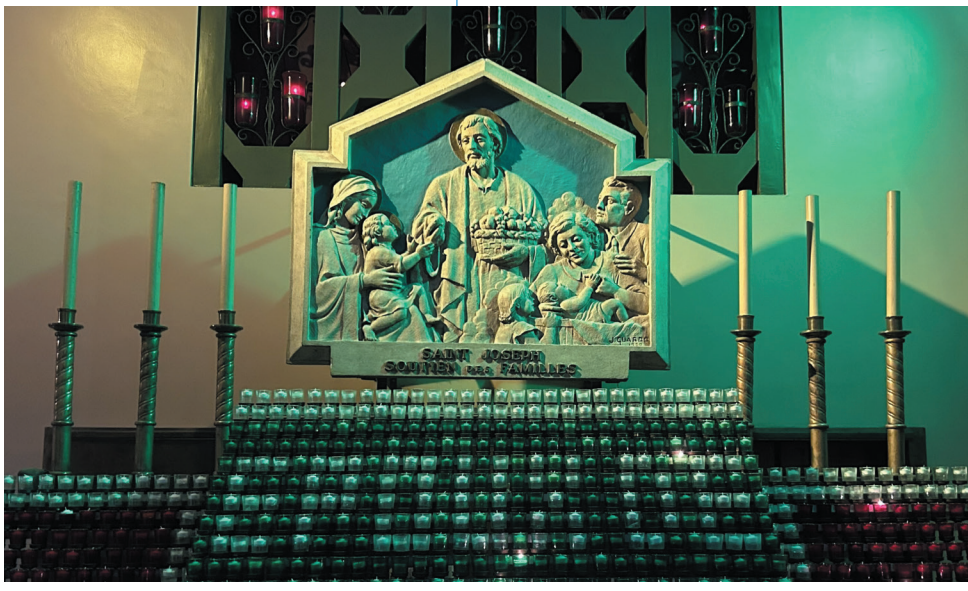
In the summer of 2023, I went to visit a friend in Montreal. As she worked during the day, I toured the city. One of the places that I made it a point to visit was the St. Joseph Oratory. This is one of the places that people liked to tell me to make a pilgrimage to, if I really wanted a husband. "My friend did that and she met her husband the next day!" they would say. Well, (spoiler alert!) I did not meet my husband at the oratory.

What did happen, though, is that in the crypt, where there are myriad candles flickering in front of St. Joseph under certain titles, I found myself lighting one in front of "patron of the dying," for my father. This did not make a lot of sense, since my dad was not dying (that I knew of), but I thought I would ask Joseph to help him anyway. This gave me some comfort when he died suddenly in January 2024.

St. Joseph has been silent when I have asked for his help in finding a husband, but he has not been entirely silent — he has supported me when I needed it, in ways that I did not know to ask. Just like any true friend.

St. Joseph, pray for us.

Sara Perla is the communications manager for The Catholic Project at The Catholic University of America in Washington.



Votive candles at a relief image of St. Joseph under the title of "Support of Families" at St. Joseph Oratory in Montreal, Canada. | PABLO KAY

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INTERSECTIONS
» GREG ERLANDSON

America's bandleader



Lawrence Welk with his accordion in 1956. | JAMES J. KRIEGSMANN/ WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

When I was young, my family's only television was controlled by my grandmother. This meant my TV fare consisted mainly of Ed Sullivan, "As the World Turns," and, once a week, "The Lawrence Welk Show."

Welk, a German-accented band leader, seemed a grandfatherly presence, overseeing a traditional type of music variety show popular at the time, with some comedy, some singing and dancing, and — to my young male mind — the compelling presence of the Lennon Sisters.

That is about all the thought I've ever given to Welk until meeting Lance Richey, the president of the University of St. Francis in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and, I can safely say, the foremost authority on all things Welk.

Since Richey is a professor with a Ph.D. in philosophy and religious studies, I could be forgiven for assuming that the last person in the world he might be interested in would be a Catholic North Dakotan farm boy with a fourth-grade education, an immigrant's son who did not learn English until adulthood.

Yet Richey sees Welk as a dominant, if underappreciated, figure in American popular musical culture in the mid-20th century. From the Big Band era to the Beatles and beyond, Welk drew thousands to his soldout concerts, had a long-running and highly successful television show on ABC, and extended his "brand" to investments in a Southern California resort community, a fast-food offering called a Squeezeburger, and a radio shaped as a champagne bottle (a nod to a description of his band's musical style as "light and bubbly as champagne").

Welk was, it turns out, an American overachiever, and for the past 10 years, Richey has been researching and writing a magisterial three-volume opus, a 1,240-page biography of the man titled "Champagne Times: Lawrence Welk and His American Century" (North Dakota State University Press).

For Richey, Welk is a quintessential American success story. Welk was, by his own admission, not much of a farmer, but he had an accordion and a relentless drive to succeed. He was a bandleader who relocated to Los Angeles in 1950 in order to take advantage of new media technologies like television to extend his fame and his reach.

Richey told Angelus that Welk "died

Greg Erlandson is the former president and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service.

one of the wealthiest men in show business," and attributed his success to "a farmer's work ethic and willingness to work tirelessly to accomplish whatever he set his mind to." It was a long climb for a man who was at least as good at marketing and management as he was at assessing the musical tastes of his audience.

Richey said Welk was raised in a "fearsomely rigorous immigrant Catholic household." His father "was a stern man who never missed Sunday Mass," even when the North Dakota temperature was below zero. His father was about religious discipline and the fear of God. His mother "embodied the warmer, more moving side" of the Faith.

Like many pre-Vatican II Catholics, Welk did not make a public show of his faith but was an observant Catholic who, his wife said, missed Sunday Mass only once in his busy career, because of misinformation about the Mass time.

The tension in Welk's life, however, was the balancing of the personal and the professional. Traveling almost constantly for his band's nationwide performances, he was often an absent figure at home.

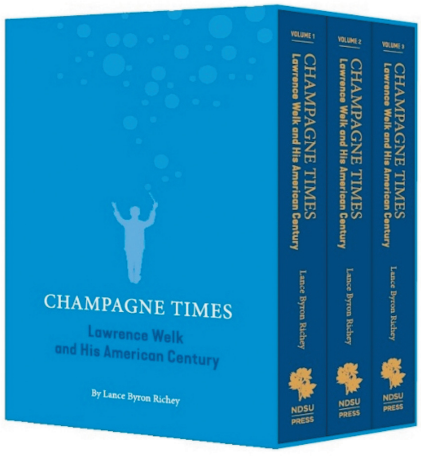
For Richey, one lesson of this driven and successful man is that "you cannot have it all."

"Life is a series of choices, and Welk's impoverished upbringing on the farm and deep psychological need to prove his father wrong about his decision to become a musician, drove Welk to sacrifice family relationships for the sake of his career," Richey said. Despite his long absences, Richey noted, "he was a very faithful husband for 61 years of marriage, and a good son of the Church."

His faith stood him in good stead during many crises, such as the time early in his career when his entire band quit on him. "He went to church," Richey said, "and prayed before the cross, coming to understand (as he later wrote) that only God can be relied upon perfectly and that we all hurt one another constantly, intentionally or not, so forgiveness is best."

Long after many big bands had come and gone, Welk had a television show that lasted till 1982 and continues today as reruns on public radio stations. His secret, Richey says, may be that he respected his listeners' tastes rather than trying to "improve" or "educate" them. He had "an innate sense of what an audience or customer wanted and a willingness to put that ahead of his personal preferences."

Richey said he came away from his decade of research understanding "more deeply what it meant to live through the profound cultural, political, economic, and religious changes of the 20th century as a person of faith. Welk did that and held on to his faith," Richey concluded. "We should be so lucky."



"Champagne Times" volume set. | NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Margot Robbie as Cathy, and Jacob Elordi as Heathcliff in the 2026 film adaptation of "Wuthering Heights." | IMDB

FIFTY SHADES OF EMILY BRONTË

The new film adaptation of "Wuthering Heights" is a poorly constructed tribute to modern decadence. Maybe its creators could use a chastity talk.

BY MSGR. RICHARD ANTALL

Somehow, I missed Emily Brontë's "Wuthering Heights" when I was in high school, but I can't say that I really felt that gap in my British Literature reading until now.

That is because, had I read the original novel, I don't think I would have bothered going to see the new movie titled "Wuthering Heights."

A tremendous box office success, the movie marks a new low point of popular culture.

The film is "based" on the 1847 novel (which I finally read) in the same way Monty Python's "Life of Brian" is based on Scripture, and "travesty" is too anodyne a word to describe what director Emerald Fennell did to poor Brontë's creation. One reviewer said the author died 177 years ago, and the movie is the worst thing that ever happened to her.

Meanwhile, USA Today's review of the movie said that it "takes some liberties" with the novel but nevertheless "crafts a sumptuous bad romance that's quite haughty, darkly hilarious, and ultimately heartfelt." I think that meant he liked it.

One of those liberties is starting the show with a public hanging which occasions an anti-Catholic and lascivious slur directed at women religious. That late 18th-century Yorkshire would have a nun in the crowd witnessing the execution and responding to it sensuously is problematic history, but a good signal of the coarse imagination that is exhibited for the rest of the movie.

The reviewers who praised the movie hardly make a case for the crass excess of Fennell's take on a classic story of love and obsession because they are part of the problem. David Sims in The Atlantic liked it although he also

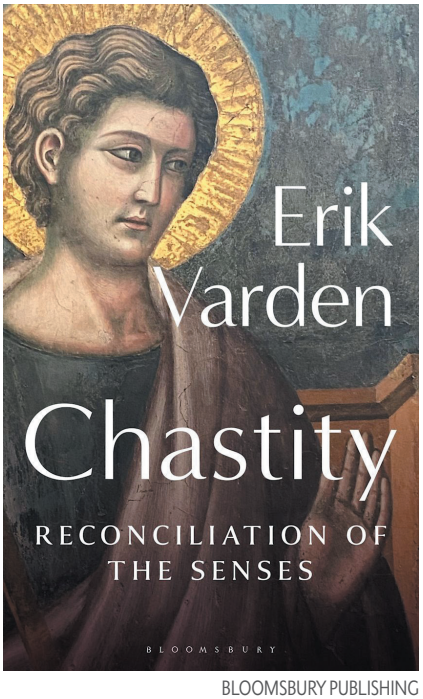
described it as a "gooey, grimy mess."

"The camera lingers on dripping egg yolks and squishy bubbling dough; the protagonist, Cathy Earnshaw must wade through pig's blood on her way to the moors near her home, leaving a trim of viscera on her gorgeously anachronistic dress. This is Fennell's aesthetic throughout: loudly stylish on top and just as loudly nasty right below the surface."

He's ready for more, apparently.

A colleague of Sims must have begged to differ, because her take on the movie was that it illustrates Patrick Cosmos' new unified theory of American reality, which is that everyone is 12 now. The director remembered reading "Wuthering Heights" and being moved by its romance when she was 14 years old. It was to recapture those feelings that she remade the movie as a sensuous extravaganza evidently inspired by soft porn books.

It is said that Brontë might have been inspired by Alexandre Dumas' novel "The Count of Monte Cristo," a long story of the revenge by a man whose love was taken away from him that was all the rage when she was writing "Wuthering Heights." Like Dumas' Edmond Dantes, Heathcliff loses his love to another man, becomes wealthy (although Brontë never tells us how) and plots revenge over years.



BLOOMSBURY PUBLISHING

I think that the story has been misinterpreted as a romance. Catherine "Cathy" Earnshaw and Heathcliff are passionately and sometimes ambivalently involved with each other, but it is a selfish passion on both sides. Faced with the choice between poverty and comfort, Cathy rejects Heathcliff, who is poor, for Edgar Linton, a wealthy suitor about whom she can never be as passionate as she was with the vindictive egomaniac who was her first "love." Frankenstein showed more humanity than Heathcliff. Rather than a romance, I would propose this is a tale of *Eros* gone terribly wrong. After the return of Heathcliff, Cathy loses control of herself just as her lover does. It is a *folie a deux*, two selfish people against the world and all for themselves.

Rather than a romance, I would propose this is a tale of *Eros* gone terribly wrong. Its popularity speaks a great deal of the analytical powers of the typical audience.

In a recent book titled "Chastity: Reconciliation of the Senses" (Bloomsbury, $17.60), Bishop Eric Varden of Trondheim, Norway, cites Pope Benedict XVI, who called erotic attraction a "kind of intoxication," which can become "warped and destructive." If *Eros* as a blind brute force is "absolutized," it is stripped of its dignity and dehumanized, said Benedict.

There is no better description of the relationship between Cathy and Heathcliff. He is intoxicated with his relationship with her even beyond the grave, which he has no trouble disturbing to see her remains. His passion after her death fuels his cruel revenge on all the Earnshaws and Lintons. Vengeance has generational dimensions in Dumas, too, but Dantes is not an irredeemable villain like Heathcliff, whose malice extends to the vulnerable, even to his own son.

The movie skips a great deal of the novel, for which I suppose we should be grateful. There is some degree of ambiguity even in Brontë's portrayal of Heathcliff. He has been called a Byronic hero and the passion of the two lovers, and is portrayed as a kind of force of nature. But the movie has no shades of characterization to make the two principals sympathetic. Anne Rice's vampires were more sympathetic than the movie's anti-hero, and Cathy's narcissism is almost infinite. The director who idolizes the insatiable passion of the two seems to imply that Cathy's servant and companion is really the guilty party in the downfall of the lovers.

What Varden writes in "Chastity" about Wagner's opera "Tristan and Isolde" applies especially to the movie. Heathcliff clings to the corpse of Cathy as Isolde dove into the arms of dead Tristan. The destructive force of what is miscalled "love" is the true message of the opera, says Varden, although, "we must really pay attention to note the sickness of erotic 'Wuthering Heights' inebriation in which there is no trace of romance." This might be a criticism of the original , but the perverse "Wuthering Heights" out-Herods Herod, and with a lot more blood and guts.

The popularity of the movie speaks a great deal of the analytical powers of the typical audience. But it's especially an index of the vulgarity of modern decadence. Vulgarity is having a good year at the box office. "Marty Supreme" is another example, for all of Chalamet's notable virtuosity, but that is for another essay. I am ready to reread "Last Days of Pompeii" to help my thinking about the corrupt imagination of our society. Do we need a Vesuvius?

Msgr. Richard Antall is pastor of Holy Name Church in Cleveland, Ohio, and the author of several books, including the novel "The X-mas Files" (Atmosphere Press, $17.99). He served as a missionary priest in El Salvador for more than 20 years.



DESIRE LINES
» HEATHER KING

The silence of prisoners and nuns



A hallway in the now abandoned Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia. | ZACK FRANK/SHUTTERSTOCK

Jane Brox's "Silence: A Social History of One of the Least Understood Elements of Our Lives" (Mariner Books, $23.96) opens with a description of Philadelphia's Eastern State Penitentiary.

Established in 1829 as an experiment in rehabilitation, each cell was essentially what we would today term a SHU (Special Housing Unit).

"[D]uring the period of their confinement, no one shall see or hear, or be seen or heard by any other human being," ran a portion of the prison's mission statement. The idea was to invite the prisoners to look inward and repent of their crimes, many of which consisted in petty burglaries, drunkenness, or vagrancy.

Inmates at Eastern State were not allowed to communicate with one another, to talk at all, ever, or to make any kind of noise for years on end at the threat of being publicly lashed, thrown into a lightless dungeon, or in one case having a metal bit thrust into his mouth with such force that the prisoner died within the hour.

Brox then juxtaposes punitive silence with the "silence" of monasteries, convents, and cloisters, peopled by those who for the most part have chosen to be there. Interestingly, she refuses to hold that all of the former is bad, and all of the latter good.

Eugenia Ginzburg (1904-1977), a mother, wife, and Communist journalist, for example, was caught up in the Stalinist purges starting in 1934. She spent two years in a tiny prison cell, some in solitary confinement, then 18 more at hard labor in the Siberian gulag.

In her memoir of that time, "Journey into the Whirlwind" (Mariner Books, $10.59), she wrote:

"When a human being is isolated from the 'rat-race' of the everyday life, he achieves a kind of spiritual serenity. Sitting in a cell, one no longer has any call to pursue the phantom of worldly

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

success. … One can immerse oneself in the lofty problems of existence, and do so with a mind purified by suffering."

Then again, many prisoners sentenced to extreme confinement and isolation went insane.

Is it possible that the two kinds of silence, I began to reflect, can overlap, or even "interact?"

In 1913, the Eastern State solitary confinement system collapsed due to overcrowding problems and Eastern State officials abandoned the punitive silence policies.

Just a couple of years later, six blocks south, the Convent of Divine Love opened, and the cloistered nuns of an order called the Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters began to devote themselves to lives of silent prayer.

"May the newly established tabernacle be an inexhaustible source of grace for the city of Philadelphia, the great archdiocese, and the whole world," said Mother Mary Michael to Archbishop Edmond Prendergast on July 2, 1915.

Today, the sisters' chapel is open to the public from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day.

On a recent trip to Philadelphia, I visited both the Eastern State Penitentiary Museum and the Divine Love Chapel. Behind the grille, on the altar, sits a golden monstrance containing a consecrated host. For more than 100 years, 24/7, at least one sister, dressed in her immaculate pink habit and veil, has been praying before the Body of Christ.

Dorothy Day, co-founder of the lay Catholic Worker movement, began her own single-minded determination to serve Christ by opening a soup kitchen during the Depression on the Bowery.

She once expressed the thought that because God transcends time, a person can pray for the dead as if they were still alive. It's possible to pray for God to be close to those who are suffering with problems or illnesses or crises they had when they were still alive, she opined, and the prayer somehow helps them with those problems when they were still alive.

It's interesting that silence was imposed for so long in a prison a mere quarter-of-a-mile away from a community of cloistered nuns who for over a century now have kept a very different kind of silence.

Could it be that the prayer, of the nuns and of the laypeople and others who have been visiting the chapel all these years, has somehow "redeemed" — is still redeeming — the terrible suffering of those who were subjected to the torture of imposed silence? In some other realm, could the silent, ongoing prayer of the faithful somehow be a comfort, a consolation to the inmates?

We can't know, of course. But in a culture where showy religious conversions now take place on X, where politicians use the name of God to advance their political power-mongering, where virtue-signaling faith "influencers" generate huge revenue, I prefer to think that the real work is done far, far away from the public eye.

On the other hand, let's not forget that the sisters came just after the solitary confinement practices had ended.

Maybe instead, the suffering undergone by the Eastern State prisoners has been sustaining the Sisters of Divine Love all these years.





LETTER AND SPIRIT

» SCOTT HAHN

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

The cathedral as home

"Your bishop presides in the place of God," said Ignatius of Antioch, around A.D. 107.

I remember reading that line and wondering about the phrase "the place of God." Did Ignatius mean "place" in the sense of location — meaning the presence or company of God? Or did he mean place in the sense of vicarious representation — meaning that the bishop is the agent of God's will?

My curiosity sent me back to the Greek text, where I learned that the answer is — both! It seems that the earliest documents disagree, due to an error in transcription. Where we read "place," some ancient manuscripts use the Greek word *topos* (location) while others say *typos* (representative). We will almost certainly never know which word St. Ignatius originally used, so we are left with a providential "typo," a happy fault of some anonymous copyist.

I say this because both senses of place are true, and the two are inseparable. The bishop presides as God's vicar in a particular diocese. And the bishop presides in God's house — his holy temple — which is the cathedral. It would be impossible to speak of the cathedral as God's house without speaking of the bishop as the image of God's fatherhood on earth.

Our word cathedral has a rich scriptural pedigree. It comes from *kathedra*, which means "seat of honor" and appears in the Greek versions of the Old Testament. Jesus uses the word in this sense in only one place, but his choice is significant: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat *(kathedra Mouseos)*; so practice and observe whatever they tell you" (Matthew 23:2–3).

Kathedra here is a seat of religious and moral authority, from which wise men teach and guide. Jesus distinguishes this "teaching chair" from other seats that were merely honorific; for these latter he used a different, though related, Greek word.

The apostles would occupy these exalted thrones, as were their successors — on whom they laid hands (1 Timothy 5:14) and made their successors. These men, called bishops, would, each in his own city, occupy the *kathedra* that was greater than the seat of Moses. They would, as Ignatius said, "preside in the place of God."

In your diocese, you have a cathedral. Thus it has been in every place in every generation since the primitive Church.

The cathedral is where the bishop presides — in God's place, as God's typic image.

Thus every bishop is a father, because "Father" is who God is and fathering is what God does (1 Corinthians 4:15). Whether a bishop is teaching from his *kathedra*, his throne, or standing as celebrant at the altar, he is presiding in God's place. And because we are God's children, we are the bishop's family, and the cathedral is our place too.



St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral nave in Parma, Ohio. | WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

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SATURDAY, APRIL 11

Freedom to Change: Alexander Technique. Holy Spirit Retreat Center, 4316 Lanai Rd., Encino, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. With Barbara and Seth Wegher-Thompson. Visit hsrcenter.com or call 818-784-4515.

Super Bloom Your Spirituality: Awakening the Soul in California's Season of Bloom. Mary & Joseph Retreat Center, 5300 Crest Rd., Rancho Palos Verdes, 9 a.m. The workshop invites participants to explore the symbolism of the super bloom and connect with their own cycles of dormancy, awakening, grief, hope, transformation, and its parallels with California nature. Cost: $50/person. Visit maryjoseph.org.

Archbishop's Awards Dinner. Beverly Hilton Hotel, 9876 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, 6 p.m. Honorees: Karla Ahmanson, David A. Fuhrman, Bob Graziano, Wendy Wachtell, Kevin Shannon, and Joseph "Pep" Valdes. Call Wendy Pagnone at 213-637-7504 or visit archbishopsawardsdinner.org/.

MONDAY, APRIL 13

Holy Mass and Healing Service. St. Rose of Lima Church, 1305 Royal Ave., Simi Valley, 7 p.m. Celebrant: Father Bob Garon. Sponsored by the Charismatic Prayer Ministry. Visit strosesv.com or call 805-526-1732.

TUESDAY, APRIL 14

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.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

"Is Your Faith Alive?" Weekly Series. St. Dorothy Church, 241 S. Valley Center Ave., Glendora, 7-8:30 p.m. Runs Wednesdays through May 13, 2026. Deepen your understanding of the Faith through dynamic DVD presentations by Dr. Brant Pitre, Chris Stefanik, the Augustine Institute, and Matthew Leonard. Free events, no RSVP required. Call 626-335-2811 or visit the Adult Faith Development ministry page at stdorothy.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18

Restored: A Journey to Wholeness Retreat. Mater Dolorosa Retreat Center, 700 N. Sunnyside Ave., Sierra Madre, 8:30 a.m.-5:15 p.m. One-day retreat of hope and healing for women whose lives have been touched by abortion. All registrations are confidential. Email hopeandhealing@rcbo.org.

Marriage Preparation Session. Holy Family Church, 18708 Clarkdale Ave., Artesia, 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 familylife.lacatholics.org.

Catechesis in the Lives of Persons Part 1. Zoom, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Prof. Daniella Zsuspan-Jerome will explore the intersection of social communication, digital culture, and pastoral theology. Cost: $50/person. Visit lacatholics.org/ongoing-formation-opportunities.

Marian Silent Retreat: Behold Your Mother! Fr. Kolbe Missionary Center, 531 E. Merced Ave., West Covina, 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Donation: $40/person. Register by April 11 to FKMs@kolbemissionusa.org or call 626-917-0040. Space is limited.

Divine Mercy and Healing Mini Retreat. St. Dorothy Church, 241 S. Valley Center Ave., Glendora, 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. With Father Michael Barry, SSCC, Father Ron Clark, Maria Velasquez, LMFT, and Dominic Bernardino, teaching, healing prayer, and general blessing with first-class relic of St. Francis of Assisi. Free admission, no registration. Visit events.scrc.org.

Mother Luisita Fundraiser Dinner. Casa Sanchez Restaurant, 4500 S. Centinela Ave,. Los Angeles, 6 p.m. registration and social hour, 7 p.m. dinner and program. Raising funds for repaving parking lots and within Marycrest Manor skilled nursing facility. Cost: $175/person. Sponsorships available. Hosted by Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles. Visit marycrestculvercity.com/dinner/ or call 310-838-2778, ext. 4004 (ask for Luisa) for more information and tickets.

SUNDAY, APRIL 19

Mass in Recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month. St. Francis de Sales Church, 13360 Valleyheart Dr., Sherman Oaks, 10 a.m. The five parishes with the Gardens of Healing are holding special Masses in April, dedicated to those harmed by sexual abuse. Visit lacatholics.org/healing-gardens.

TUESDAY, APRIL 21

Mass in Recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month. Our Lady of the Assumption Church, 3175 Telegraph Rd., Ventura, 8 a.m. The five parishes with the Gardens of Healing are holding special Masses in April, dedicated to those harmed by sexual abuse. Visit lacatholics.org/healing-gardens.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22

Mass in Recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month. Our Lady of Refuge Church, 5195 Stearns St., Long Beach, or St. Bernadette Church, 3825 Don Felipe Dr., Los Angeles, 8 a.m. The five parishes with the Gardens of Healing are holding special Masses in April, dedicated to those harmed by sexual abuse. Visit lacatholics.org/healing-gardens.

FRIDAY, APRIL 24

Contemplative Creativity Retreat Weekend. Holy Spirit Retreat Center, 4316 Lanai Rd., Encino, 5 p.m.-Sunday, 1 p.m. With Chantel Zimmerman. Visit hsrcenter.com or call 818-784-4515.

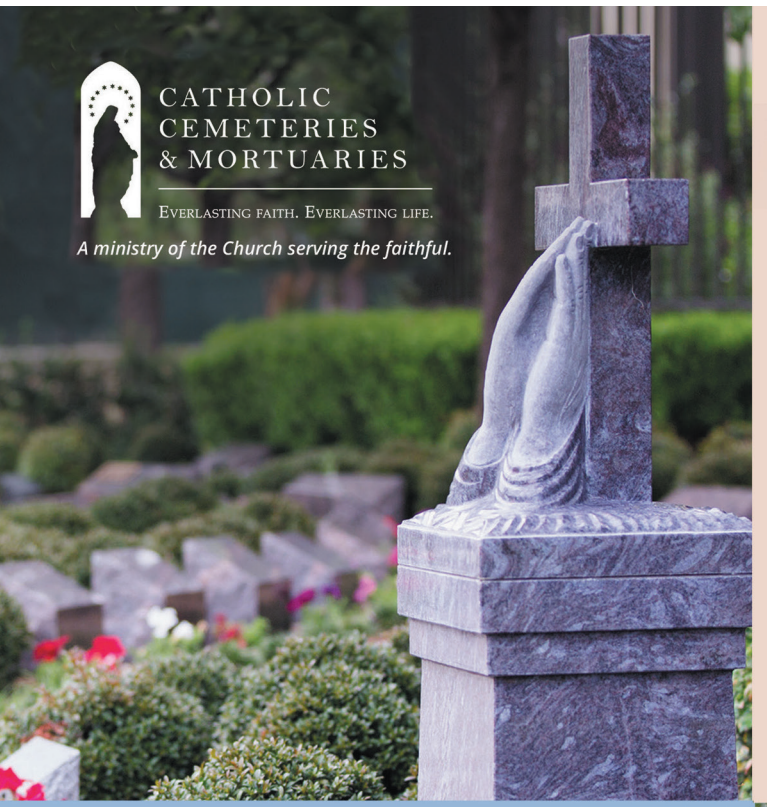
SATURDAY, APRIL 25

Emmaus Ministry for Grieving Parents. St. Bruno Church, 15740 Citrustree Rd., Whittier, 9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Retreat agenda includes prayer services, group presentations, spiritual reflections, breakout sessions, Emmaus Walk, and Mass. Light breakfast, lunch, dinner, and all materials included. Freewill offerings accepted to cover costs. Call or text Cathy Narvaez at 562-631-8844.

Father Pat Crowley: Day of Renewal and Healing. Mary & Joseph Retreat Center, 5300 Crest Rd., Rancho Palos Verdes, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. The day includes conferences and healing service. Cost: $75/person, includes lunch. Email Jose Salas at jsalas@maryjoseph.org or call 310-377-4867, ext. 250.

"I Treasure Your Word in my Heart: Liturgical Music as a Means of Biblical Interpretation": Catholic Bible Institute Talk Series. Zoom, 7-8:30 p.m. Presenter: Abigail Bodeau, Ph.D., assistant professor of sacred Scripture at St. Mary Seminary. Explores how Catholic liturgical music interprets biblical texts. Visit lacatholics.org/events.

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.



CATHOLIC CEMETERIES & MORTUARIES

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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:

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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, May 12, 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, 14 de mayo, 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**

