Seventeen men to be admitted as candidates for Permanent Diaconate

FALL RIVER — Seventeen men will be admitted to candidacy for the Permanent Diaconate of the Diocese of Fall River, on October 27 at 7 p.m. at Holy Trinity Parish, 951 Stafford Road in Fall River.

Bishop Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., will celebrate the Mass during which the admission ceremony will take place.

Assisting Bishop da Cunha, will be Father Robert A. Oliveira, co-director of the diocesan Permanent Diaconate Office. Deacon Frank R. Lucca, co-director of the Permanent Diaconate Office, will serve as the deacon of the Mass.

The prospective candidates are the 10th class for the permanent diaconate of the diocese and have been in the formation program for more than one year.

Admission to candidacy occurs when the prospective candidates have reached maturity of purpose and have demonstrated other necessary qualifications along with their completion of the required preparatory steps.

During the ceremony, candidates publicly express their desire to be ordained as deacons and the bishop accepts their declaration.

The families of the candidates will be present to join in prayer at this Mass. Due to gathering restrictions, attendance will be limited to invited guests only.

The candidates have completed a period of Aspirancy during which they were advised of the role of the deacon, expectations for formation and the ministry to which they have been called. Father Oliveira and Deacon Lucca, as well as other deacons formed a team with the purpose of evaluating them and their applications.

Diocesan schools partner with ‘Glove Cleaners’ for all PPE needs

FALL RIVER — When Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker announced the closing of all schools on Mar. 13, 2020, the extent and impact of the COVID-19 virus was yet to be fully realized. As the weeks turned into months, it became very clear that the “Back to School” planning for fall 2020 would be very different from any other year. Moreover, as the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) of Westport to provide meal packages to sponsors on the night of the event so folks can enjoy a delicious meal in the comfort of their home while watching the event online.

This year, the foundation is thrilled to welcome guest speaker and performer Matt Maher — for more information about Matt please visit: www.mattmahermusic.com.

Visit the FACE website to learn more or to register: www.FACEfalldinner.org

Like them on Facebook: www.facebook.com/FACEhelpskids
FALL RIVER — As of the beginning of September, students have returned to full in-person learning for the majority of Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Fall River. An immediate concern of school administrators has been to identify learning gaps as a result of the sudden remote learning from March through June.

Despite Catholic schools' immediate ability to pivot to robust remote learning in March, research shows that students may have some residual learning gaps due to the fact that in-person learning provides the optimal learning environment for elementary school-age children.

Three years ago, the Diocese of Fall River launched Measure of Academic Progress Growth Testing, or MAP® Growth Testing, which is the most trusted and innovative assessment for measuring achievement and growth in K–12 math, reading, language usage, and science. It provides teachers with accurate, and actionable evidence to help target instruction for each student or groups of students regardless of how far above or below they are from their grade level. In a typical school year, students are assessed at the beginning, middle and end of the school year in order to chart progress or identify individual student learning gaps that can be immediately addressed.

Now that Holy Name School in Fall River has been in school for a month, the leaders have already started to test the students using the MAP® Growth Testing tool. Students in K through grade eight have been working through each of the subject testing modules for the past week. The teachers receive each student's results within 24 hours, so that specific skill learning gaps can be identified and augmented with extra help, tutoring, or computer-assisted instruction. Never has this testing been more important as students will have varying degrees of learning loss due to remote learning in the spring compounded by summer vacation.

David Flanagan, principal of Holy Name School in Fall River indicated, “Our school community is blessed with the ability to measure and identify each student's learning strengths as well as challenges. With the unusual end of the school year this past spring, it is imperative that our teachers know exactly where each student needs additional help so that we can address these learning gaps sooner than later.”

"The MAP® Growth Testing tool has been instrumental in the ability..."
Father Gerald Shovelton dies days short of his 90th birthday

LADY LAKE, Fla. — Father Gerald Shovelton, a beloved priest of the Fall River Diocese, died October 3, two days shy of his 90th birthday. He was the brother of the late Father William J. Shovelton, also a priest of the diocese.

Father Shovelton was born on Oct. 5, 1930 in Fall River to Mary Margaret (Meagher) and Albert Shovelton. He had two brothers, Albert F. and Father William J. Shovelton.

He attended St. Joseph’s Elementary, Fall River; Msgr. James Coyle High School, Taunton; St. Charles College Minor Seminary, Cantonville, Md.; and St. John’s Seminary in Brighton.

In an interview for Father Shovelton’s 60th anniversary of priesthood, he remembered being brought up in a very Catholic family, with much support for his decision to enter the priesthood. He was especially influenced by the example of his parents and brothers. While the decision to enter the priesthood was ultimately God’s, his Catholic education played an important part in his vocation. Father Shovelton tried very hard to recognize and follow God’s path for him.

He was ordained to the priesthood on Feb. 2, 1956 at St. Mary’s Cathedral by Bishop James L. Connolly and celebrated his first Mass at Sacred Heart Convent in Fall River the following day.

He served in several parishes in the Diocese of Fall River, including St. Patrick’s, Fall River; Our Lady Star of the Sea, Oaks Bluff, Martha’s Vineyard; St. Mary’s, Taunton; St. Thomas Moore, Somerset; and St. Rita’s, Marion.

He served as pastor of St. Ann’s in Raynham for 17 years, and pastor of Holy Trinity, West Harwich. While serving in the Taunton area, Father Shovelton began an Hispanic Apostolate (St. Mary’s), a Pro-Life Ministry (Holy Trinity), established Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration (Holy Trinity), and was a founder of Birthright of Greater Taunton (St. Ann).

Father Shovelton retired and moved to The Villages in Lady Lake, Fla. in June of 2000, where he assisted at St. Timothy Parish, celebrating Mass for many years.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Timothy Church in Lady Lake on October 13.

Annual diocesan Pro-Life Mass will be live-streamed on Facebook

FALL RIVER — Each October the Church in the United States celebrates Respect Life Month. During the month of October, the Church asks faithful to reflect more deeply on the dignity of every human life.

On October 17 at 10 a.m., Bishop Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., will celebrate a special Mass for the October Respect Life month at the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption. The Mass will be live-streamed from the Pro-Life Apostolate Facebook page (Pro-Life Apostolate & Project Rachel for Diocese of Fall River).

All are encouraged to virtually join for this special occasion.

Recognize & Honor your parish clergy in The Anchor’s Special GRATITUDE ISSUE on November 13th!

Place an ad of thanksgiving and show your appreciation & support by contacting the Advertising Department at (508) 675-7151 or waynepowers@anchornews.org for information and rates.

Deadline: Friday, October 30
Fraternity and stewardship

I smiled at the memories evoked by the LinkedIn congratulatory update message. A former student was doing well. I had watched the student grow from a boisterous freshman to a focused, yet animated senior. His farew ell letter touched my heart deeply. He wrote, “Thank you Dr. Flavin for allowing me to express my opinion. It allowed me to realize I was wrong.”

Shorn of identifying details, the story behind that letter was his (and some friends of his) being absolutely disrespectful during a presentation I gave to the senior class. I later spoke privately with him. In typical adolescent fashion, his opening was an inquiry as to just how many days detention I was assigning. I offered more time. He replied, “Nope” and just walked away.

That educator’s intuition told me to let it go. Months later, he sent me the farewell letter during Senior Week.

It isn’t just teachers who have the responsibility to invite others to search within to find the truth. That is a responsibility we each have towards all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The disciples asked Jesus who was greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Lord placed a child in their midst. Jesus replied, “I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. And whoever receives one child such as this in My name receives Me” (Mt: 18:3-5). I believe with the image of a child, Jesus is reminding us of our call to fraternity and to be stewards. We are called to live in community loving our neighbor as ourselves remembering we are pass ing on this world to future generations.

How to recognize and accept such opportunities for stewardship? Let’s explore the details of our calling with some visual imagery. Have you seen the Foundation for a Better Life’s commercial with pianist David Helfgott? If not, here is a link to one-minute YouTube of the commercial https://www.passion.com/inspirational-stories-tv-spots/100-concert. The audience is expecting a concert from a professional musician. The curtain rises to a little boy pecking out a two-key song. David walks up behind the boy. He pauses. He frowns deeply.

That is the moment of decision. Our neighbor (the little boy) has crossed the line. We have a right to be distressed. That feeling within demarks a point of decision. As one feels the emotion, it is the time to ask what am I going to do about this? As one calms the initial distress, one can ask who do I wish to be? That really is the test question. It allows us to filter our response choices. When we catch ourselves feeling this choice isn’t the best, I wish to pass on to such innocent children, then it is time to search within for a better alternative. The secret is that challenges are always opportunities for compassion and kindness.

The pianist whispers to the little boy to keep playing. He then plays a complimentary melody. All along he is whispering encouragement to the little boy. At the end, both share a smile. The commercial’s message is “Encouragement: Pass it On.”

Whether the situation had been handled that way, or the pianist had had the little boy forcibly removed, one result would have been the same. The concert by the experienced pianist would then have commenced. Success as measured by the concert outcome would have been the same regardless of the pathway. Yet, deep down we know the pathway that led to that shared smile is the better one not only for the little boy, but also for the concert pianist.

Can you imagine a world where we gauge and appreciate success as such shared smile moments? If so, you appreciate that stewardship is an amazing opportunity to live each day in the peace and joy of God’s kingdom.

Anchor columnist Dr. Helen J. Flavin, Ph.D., is a Catholic scientist, educator and writer.
Coming to know the original three-dimensional Carlo Acutis

Last Saturday in Assisi, Carlo Acutis was beatified. On Monday, the Church celebrated his feast for the first time, on the 14th anniversary of Carlo’s 2006 death of acute leukemia. The time between Carlo’s birth into eternal life and his being raised to the altars was almost as brief as his 15 years of life on earth. In that short span, however, Carlo not only experienced the “life to the full” (Jn 10:10) that Christ came into the world to bring, but became a teacher to his parents, peers, the poor and now the whole Church.

He may already be the most famous 15-year-old to die of all time. While the beatifications of Padre Pio, Mother Teresa, John Paul II and John Henry Newman were bigger than the pandemic-reduced crowds in Assisi, none had 15 days of preparation and veneration, or a vigil of prayer the night before, like his did. The others were all quite famous during their life, while few outside of Milan and Assisi would have known Carlo.

But now, just 29 years after his birth, Carlo is perhaps touching far more people than any of those great saints did when they were 29. And he’s just getting started. Pope Francis penned three paragraphs about him in his 2019 exhortation to young people Christus vivit and now thousands of articles and hundreds of websites tell his story.

When I first learned about him, I was impressed by his precocious hunger for God: he prayed the Rosary every day from a young age; made his first Holy Communion a year early and then attended daily Mass thereafter; cared for the homeless each night; traveled regularly to Assisi; loved the saints; learned computers to develop websites to spread his love of the Eucharist and Mary and to teach about angels and the four last things. I figured, frankly, that he must have come from a home similar to the one that produced, for example, St. Therese.

Instead he came from a home that, as his garrulous mother Antonia has humbly said in various interviews, wasn’t even lukewarm. By the time Carlo was born, Antonia had only been to Church three times in her life, the days she was baptized, confirmed, and married. Carlo, through his questions and zeal, eventually got her to take her faith more seriously, and she was just one of many converts.

While Carlo’s grandparents practiced the faith and he attended Catholic schools, it seems pretty clear that Lord interacted with Carlo much like He did the young prophet Samuel.

Several things strike me about his life.

He had an advanced awareness of the meaning of life and how to live well. “To be always united to Jesus is my program of life,” he declared. In contrast to contemporary narcissism, he said that happiness comes from keeping “one’s face turned toward God” and sadness from focusing your attention on yourself. “Not I, but God” was his mantra. “Find God,” he stated, “and you will find the meaning of your life.” He lived life with a certain urgency: “Every minute that passes,” he said, “is one minute less to become like God,” and to become like God was his desire. “What does it matter if you can win a thousand battles if you cannot win against your own corrupt passions?” he asked. “The real battle is with ourselves.” Right before he died, he said, “To have a long life doesn’t mean that this is a good thing [because] one can live a very long time and live badly.” He humbly confessed, “I am happy to die because I have lived my life without waiting a minute on those things that do not please God.”

He had an ardent love for Jesus in the Eucharist. He lived a Eucharistic life, calling the Eucharist “my highway to Heaven.” He attended daily Mass from the time he was seven and spent time each day in Adoration. “The more Eucharist we receive,” he believed, “the more we will become like Jesus.” He had a Eucharistic amazement, so fascinated by the Eucharistic miracles across the centuries that he went on an adventure to try to visit them all and to document them so that others could share his astonishment. It didn’t make sense to him that there would be huge crowds for soccer games and rock concerts but no lines before the Tabernacle where God is present and lives among us.

He had a deep love for Mary. “The Virgin Mary is the only woman in my life,” he said and called the Rosary, which he prayed daily, the “shortest ladder to climb to Heaven” and the “most powerful weapon,” after the Eucharist, “to fight the devil.” Like his inspiring 196-part series on the Eucharistic miracles that has posthumously traveled the world, he also had conceptualized a 156-part series on the Marian apparitions completed by his mother after his death. The apparitions were signs of maternal care that actualize the love of Mary seen in the Gospels.

He had a love for the Church and the saints. “To criticize the Church means to criticize ourselves,” he said, because “the Church is the dispenser of treasures for our Salvation.” We judge the Church not by those who don’t live according to her teachings but by those who do, which is why he drew near to the saints, like St. Francis of Assisi and various great young saints like Tarscius, Aloysius, Dominic Savio, Bernadette, and Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

He had a vibrant charity. He stuck up for classmates being bullied, invited to his home kids who were suffering because of their parents’ divorce or domestic problems, tutored classmates who were struggling with homework or computer problems, patiently rescued friends experimenting with drugs or addicted to porn, spent time with the elderly helping them with tasks, “hunted” for litter in parks or on the beach to beautify the world, brought warm drinks and food to the homeless and used his allowance to buy them sleeping bags or warm clothes. “Life is a gift,” he said, “because as long as we are on earth, we can increase our level of love.”

His greatest charity was to try to share the faith. From the time he was 11, he taught catechism and sought to inspire younger kids to choose to strive for sanctity. To make the faith practical, he made a “Holiness Kit” for them that involved nine steps that he himself practiced: to love God with all your heart; each day to try to go to Mass and receive Communion, pray the Rosary, read a passage of Sacred Scripture, and make a visit to Jesus in the Tabernacle each day; to go to Confession once a week; to help others as often as you can; and to rely on your guardian angel as your best friend.

He attracted people to the faith more by his example and friendship than by words. His mom said, “To live close to someone like Carlo means not to remain neutral in your faith.” His zeal led him to use his computer skills to try to design websites not only on the Eucharist and on Marian apparitions but also a 170-part series on the Last Things and a 131-part series on Angels and Demons in the lives of saints.

Despite all of this, there’s a danger in the devotion to him now growing very fast. It’s that, like Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, he might suffer from well-meaning but superficial caricature. Some reduce Frassati from a man of the beatitudes and heroic charity to a “holy hunk” who hiked and smoked a pipe. Similarly some are basically promoting Carlo as a Play-Station-competing, comic-book-loving, jeans-and-sneaker-wearing computer whiz. In trying to make holiness “cool,” they’re instead making it mundane by focusing on accidents rather than substance.

Like his beloved St. Francis, however, Carlo was an “influencer for God” not by his worldliness but by his ordinary other-worldly radicalness. His most famous quip was, “All people are born as originals, but many die as photocopies,” and some are unfortunately trying to make him two-dimensional, evidently believing that the depth of his originality in God’s image would repel rather than attract the young even more.

The world and the Church, however, are in need of the real thing.

Anchor columnist Father Roger Landry can be contacted at fatherlandry@catholicpreaching.com.
A SAINT FROM THE PAST AND A PRIEST FROM NOW

Many people speak about the time after the coming election as if it will be a time of great persecution and that we should do everything in our power to avoid that from happening.

St. Ignatius of Antioch, whose feast we celebrate tomorrow (Saturday, October 17), would seem to take a different approach. In a letter to the Romans (not to be confused with St. Paul’s letter to the Romans in the New Testament), tells his readers, “I am writing to all the churches to let it be known that I will gladly die for God if only you do not stand in my way. I plead with you: show me no untimely kindness. Let me be food for the wild beasts, for they are my way to God.”

St. Ignatius was not in favor of the Roman Empire’s persecution of Christians, since it was a horrific sin and crime, a grave violation of the Fifth Commandment. That being said, he also did not think that Christians’ primary aim was to rest control of the Empire away from the pagans. “No earthly pleasures, no kingdoms of this world can benefit me in any way. I prefer death in Christ Jesus to power over the farthest limits of the earth. He Who died in place of us is the one object of my quest,” Ignatius wrote.

Since our last edition of The Anchor was published another priest of our diocese has died, Father Gerald Shovelton. Father Shovelton did not die like this Father of the Church from Antioch (who longed to “ground by [the] teeth [of wild beasts] so that I may become Christ’s pure bread”), but he did share with the saint the object of the quest — Jesus Christ.

Later in St. Ignatius’ letter, he wrote, “I no longer take pleasure in perishable food or in the delights of this world. I want only God’s bread, which is the Flesh of Jesus Christ, formed of the seed of David, and for drink I crave His Blood, which is love that cannot perish.”

Father Shovelton shared this great love for the Eucharist. While pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in West Harwich, he promoted devotion to the Most Blessed Sacrament and Adoration of Our Lord 24 hours a day. Ultimately, through the generosity of a donor, a permanent chapel for Adoration was built behind the parish church on Route 28.

Father Shovelton also was very devoted to the Pro-Life movement, so it is appropriate that he left this world during Respect Life Month, dying on October 3. He received the Diocese of Fall River’s first John Cardinal O’Connor Pro-Life Award in 2002 for his efforts on behalf of life.

Although he retired to Florida with his brother, Father William Shovelton, in 2000, Father Gerry continued to keep an eye on what was going on back here in Massachusetts. He wrote on Cardinal Sean O’Malley’s blog in January 2009, “Many thanks for your excellent website. I enjoyed reading the comments and seeing the photos from Mexico. Your interview in Spanish was wonderful, and it helped me brush up a little on my Spanish. Since I was unable to attend the Walk for Life in Washington, D.C. — because of family considerations — I also enjoyed the pictures and photos from there. Fortunately I was able to participate in the Pro-Life Mass here in the local parish and an ecumenical prayer service on the same day. Thank you again. God bless you. One of your old (and getting older) friends.”

Father Shovelton advocated for an end to abortion and worked tirelessly to help mothers and children in need, which led to the founding of the Greater Taunton Birthright office (It is always in need of our help, so that it can help others. Please consider contacting them to see how you can help, either by calling 508-822-2921 or by checking out its website, birthright.org/taunton/).

Standing up for the right to life was not always a popular thing to do and it required Father Shovelton to stand up to Catholic politicians in his own congregation. “You can’t change the teaching of the Church just to make people happy,” he told the Boston Globe in 2003.

Online, people have written about how they remembered him as a “gentle and loving pastor and friend” and “being an example, living the faith you believed in so well.”

St. Ignatius of Antioch, in a different letter (to the Christians in ancient Philadelphia, which is in Turkey, not Pennsylvania), praised a bishop who “obtained his ministry, which serves the community, neither by his own efforts, nor from men nor even out of vainglory, but from the love of God the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am deeply impressed by his gentleness, and by his silence he is more effective than the empty talkers. I call him blessed, then, for his sentiments toward God, since I know these to be virtuous and perfect, and for his stability and calm, in which he imitates the gentleness of the living God.”

Let us pray for the repose of Father Gerry’s soul, so that he can, together with St. Ignatius, can meet the object of his quest, the love of his life, Jesus Christ.

Daily Readings † October 24 - November 6

EASTON — Holy Cross Family Ministries is celebrating a relaunch of its visual identity with a new look and feel. The timing of the relaunch coincides with the international release of the exciting new documentary, “PRAY: THE STORY OF PATRICK PEYTON,” which opened in theaters October 9. The striking, modern branding demonstrates the unity among its family of ministries.

“Families have changed significantly since our first ministry was founded in 1942 by Father Peyton, said Father Willy Raymond, C.S.C., President of Holy Cross Family Ministries. “One thing that hasn’t changed is that families still have the same innate longing for a relationship with the living God.”

“As families seek to grow in faith in these challenging times, we offer them many new, relevant prayer resources to serve them in this growing digital world. We have evolved the better to meet the needs of the families and our new look and feel help them see and understand the unity among all our ministries and all we have to offer them.”

HCFM continues to share the same vibrant mission based on Father Peyton’s famous message, “The family that prays together stays together.” They have grown by welcoming Catholic Mom, creating the Museum of Family Prayer, developing the Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life, and are currently releasing the inspiring and hope-filled film on their founder’s life and mission, “PRAY: THE STORY OF PATRICK PEYTON.”

“We are honored to have been chosen to design the new visual identity for Holy Cross Family Ministries,” said Joel Grear, president of Malcolm Grear Designers. “The new visual identity is based on two key elements of the HCFM’s core mission, we help families pray: 1. HCFM is all about family, individual families as well as the universal family of faith — people of all ages, from all ethnic backgrounds, races, cultures, and a diversity of languages from all over the world; 2. Family Prayer is centered on the Rosary. The Rosary is the common bond and the continuous thread that connects and brings people together in prayer regardless of language and distance.”

The relaunched visual identi-
During Aspirancy, prospective candidates submitted required documentation and along with their wives, participated in psychological evaluation.

They have completed one year of study which included courses in Spiritual Theology, Christology and Ecclesiology. They will continue in three more years of academic and pastoral formation before ordination as deacons.

The prospective candidates and their parishes are:

- James Adams, St. Anthony Parish, East Falmouth;
- Jeremias Carranza, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish at St. James, New Bedford;
- Richard Fish, Christ the King Parish, Mashpee;
- David Gaspar, St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Swansea;
- Tyrone Gonsalves, Corpus Christi Parish, East Sandwich;
- Leonard Guyette, Corpus Christi Parish, East Sandwich;
- Philip Koch, St. Joan of Arc Parish, Orleans;
- David Laird, Christ the King Parish, Mashpee;
- Thomas Martin, Corpus Christi Parish, East Sandwich;
- Joseph Martino, St. John Neumann Parish, East Freetown;
- Daniel Merline, St. John Neumann Parish, East Freetown;
- Americo Miranda, Our Lady of Grace Parish, Westport;
- John O’Brien, St. Mary Parish, Mansfield;
- David Roderick, Corpus Christi Parish, East Sandwich;
- Shawn Seybert, St. Theresa of the Child of Jesus Parish, Attleboro;
- Scott Taveira, Our Lady of Immaculate Conception Parish, New Bedford;
- and Michael Wojcik, St. Andrew the Apostle Parish, Taunton.

Permanent diaconate candidates to be admitted

continued from page one
The smile behind the mask

By Elizabeth Lee
Special to The Anchor

Twenty-five years living as a consecrated virgin in the world — how swiftly the time has passed for me on this wonderful journey towards the Heavenly homeland! I remember imagining what 25 years later might look and feel like when I was consecrated in 1995 by then-Bishop Sean P. O’Malley, OFM, Cap., at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Fall River.

As we continue to live “COVID days,” however, my 25th anniversary celebration plans had to be changed, but omnia in bonum, all things for the good! Priests and friends couldn’t attend an anniversary Mass, yet God multiplied it 10- or 100-fold. Letters, emails, phone calls and cards came in, announcing Mass offerings and intentions in various dioceses. Priests called down blessings in the great act of thanksgiving that is the Holy Mass. Friends crafted Spiritual bouquets of Rosaries, chaplets, hours of adoration, Spiritual reading, and Liturgy of the Hours.

The anniversary day itself was one of prayerful gratitude and resting on His Heart in contemplation. I reflected on our new face coverings, and the apparent veiling of ourselves from one another. As we’ve “isolated” and “sequestered” and “quarantined,” becoming yet more alone, it paradoxically seems we uncover our deeper human need for connection to God and others that we may have taken for granted as our parishes closed down. In grocery shopping, at the bank, in pumping gas it seems eyes search for each other. We’ve witnessed the yearning for contact, glances of hope, the creases in the face showing a smile and a recognition of the other behind the mask — a shared sense of being in this odd situation together. Previously so many in the world moved past each other, hardly acknowledging one another in the haste, while toward union with Jesus — so that all may become one in Him.

Shortly after I was consecrated, I went on a retreat sponsored by the United States Association of Consecrated Virgins in Wisconsin, and our retreat master was then-Bishop Raymond Burke. I remember him saying to all of us consecrated virgins, “Your life is in imitation of Mary. You bring the broken world to Christ and then bring Christ to the broken world.” That has stayed with me throughout these 25 years. More than ever I see clearly my vocation — to strive to be close to Jesus with Mary — living in the world as she did — being with Jesus and giving myself fully to Him, then bringing that love, joy and assistance to those around me in my ordinary life — with that smile that slips around the mask and manifests His faithful and unrelenting love.

Elizabeth Lee was consecrated to the Order of Virgins in 1995 under Canon 604 of the Code of Canon Law by Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley, OFM, Cap. She is a graduate of Roger Williams University and works as a media manager at the National Catholic Bioethics Center. She has served as Secretary of the United States Association of Consecrated Virgins and has been a guest on the North American Catholic Educational Programming Foundation television network and featured on ABC’s “Nightline” discussing the vocation of consecrated virginity.
Faith Formation undaunted by pandemic limitations

FALL RIVER — Although this year brought challenges, it has not stopped parishes from engaging in a key part of their mission this fall: forming individuals in the Catholic faith. The months of September and October saw various parishes start their Faith Formation programs again, albeit perhaps with a new look. Directors of Religious Education, Faith Formation and Youth Ministers worked to retool and roll out programs, factoring in state and local safety standards and evolving family needs.

This is a process that took months of planning. “The past few months have certainly been a time for us to take a step back and really reflect on the vision of our parishes and our faith formation,” shared Jonathan Galo, who serves as the director of Faith Formation for the Catholic Community of Falmouth. “Our traditional classroom experience was not going to be possible this year due to the limitations of our physical spaces as well as the health concerns of our catechists.”

Lori Lavigne, who with Christine Gregorek forms the Evangelization and Formation Team at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Seekonk, echoed a similar sentiment. The biggest challenge we are facing this year is how to foster community as a parish in general, and how to offer support in the midst of restrictions due to the pandemic.”

Yet, as Beni Costa-Reedy shares, a parish’s mission must continue regardless of what challenges come. “The one thing that never changes is that our mission at St. Mary’s is always to welcome, live, share and serve all those we encounter.” In her work as director of Faith Formation at St. Mary’s Parish in Dartmouth, Costa-Reedy sees this means paying special attention to a parish’s encounter with families.

It’s this reality that led many parishes to shift to more family-based forms of catechesis, emphasizing the role of parents as primary catechists (“Catechism of the Catholic Church” 2223). “We recognize the important role that the Church plays in assisting these families, [and] are striving to help the parents realize their role in the domestic Church”, Lavigne shared. To this end, Lavigne, Gregorek and their pastor, Father Kevin Cook, put their heads together and ensured that families not only had the resources they needed to be “domestic Church”, but also the right support.

Families at the Seekonk Parish participated in a church “drive by” and received a “Catholic Family Gift Packet,” along with a blessing from Father Cook. To support them, Our Lady of Mount Carmel implemented the “Project Nazareth” program, which places special emphasis on the Holy Family. “Through a series of webinars, videos and in-person meetings”, Lavigne explained, “we have been communicating to the parents, encouraging them and offering support in their role as primary catechists.”

In a similar way, other parishes, like St. Mary’s, looked at how they can make contact with families meaningful. For instance, their August packet pick-up included a “Blessing of the Backpacks,” while their

Turn to page 14
Pope Francis’ message for World Mission Sunday 2020 places mission within the context of the Coronavirus pandemic.

By Sister Bernadette Mary Reis, FSP
Vatican News

Pope Francis’ message for World Mission Sunday 2020 has its theme taken from Isaiah: “Here am I, send me” (6:8). World Mission Sunday is celebrated on October 18 in 2020.

Call to mission in the current crisis

The pope began his message recalling the words he expressed on the occasion of the extraordinary moment of prayer on March 27. Even in the disorientation and fear provoked by the current international crisis, Pope Francis says the Lord continues to ask, “Whom shall I send?” Even as we touch our frailty in the pain and death we are experiencing, we are also reminded “of our deep desire for life and liberation from evil.” This is where the call to mission emerges as an “invitation to step out of ourselves for love of God and neighbor” through service and intercessory prayer,” he wrote.

Missionaries with Jesus the Missionary

Just as Jesus completely accomplished His mission by dying on the cross, “we find ourselves precisely when we give ourselves to others,” Pope Francis continued. Our mission, our call, our willingness to be sent, originate in His own vocation as “the Father’s Missionary.” “Our personal vocation” is rooted in “the fact that we are sons and daughters of God in the Church.”

The Church as Missionary

Pope Francis explains that it is specifically the Church that “continues the mission of Jesus in history.” Thus, the baptized members of the Church are sent forth in her name. Through our witness and proclamation of the Gospel, God continues “to manifest His love.” This is how He is able to “touch and transform hearts, minds, bodies, societies and cultures in every place and time.”

Response to a relationship

“Mission is a free and conscious response to God’s call,” the pope reminds us. A call to mission can only be discerned “when we have a personal relationship of love with Jesus present in His Church.” That leads to the question of our preparedness to welcome the Holy Spirit’s presence and action in our lives. That call comes to married couples, consecrated persons and ordained ministers in life’s everyday events. Another question the pope says we should ask ourselves is if we are willing “to be sent forth at any time or place to witness to our faith” and relationship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. And the last question is if we are willing to respond as Mary did, always “ready to be completely at the service of God’s will.”

Coordinator of Youth Ministry

St. Luke Parish in Barrington, Rhode Island, is seeking an enthusiastic person to provide vision and coordination for the parish’s efforts in ministry to young people from 6th to 12th grades. This part-time position requires someone who is creative, organized, has been in leadership roles, and communicates well with others.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, development and oversight of programming, (e.g., formation, retreats, service, socials) recruitment and training of volunteers, all with the goal of forming disciples of Christ.

B.A. in theology or a related field and prior youth ministry experience preferred. Salary and benefits based on education and experience.

Please send resume with two references and cover letter to:
Rev. Eric Silva
St. Luke Parish
108 Washington Road
Barrington, RI 02806
or email to fr.ericsilva@gmail.com
The recent beatification of the renowned “teen-age tech whiz” Blessed Carlo Acutis by Pope Francis has many points of significance that should speak to the Church today. Carlo Acutis was not only a teen-ager, but also the first millennial beatified by the Church who used the Internet to evangelize, and witnessed to the transforming love Jesus in the Eucharist.

Young people of the millennial generation, those born approximately between 1981 and 1996, and who came of age with the new millennium, are often given a “bad wrap.” The caricature of the millennial is one who is unmotivated and would prefer to postpone their entrance into adulthood rather than face real commitment and responsibility. This unfair description also tends to ignore the very real challenges faced by this generation as they grew up with 9/11, terrorism, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the Great Recession of 2008.

Blessed Carlo Acutis, who died in 2006 of Leukemia at the age of 15, was firmly a member of this generation and experienced many of these challenges along with his fellow millennials. Rather than allow these challenges to make him unmotivated or uncommitted, he chose Jesus fully, and used his gifts in computer programming to spread the message of God’s love, and his own special love and reverence for Jesus in the Eucharist.

Blessed Carlo also showed how the Internet can be a place of goodness, grace and beauty. As we know, the Internet can often be a place of sin and darkness. Pornography, terrorism, the glorification of violence, scams, theft, racism and the spreading of hateful ideologies are some of the gravest misuses online in a way that they simply would not in person. How many broken friendships have happened as the result of the casual misuse of social media? And you could fill volumes about the rampant narcissism fostered and even encouraged online.

Blessed Carlo’s life online, conversely, stands in bold contrast. He used the Internet to catalogue and share Eucharist miracles with the world. Why? Because the Eucharist was the center of his life and his “highway to Heaven.” It was in the Eucharist that Carlo was united to Jesus. He was not interested in sharing information about himself online, as is so often the case today. Rather than use his considerable gifts in technology for his own aggrandizement, profit or popularity, Carlo used the Internet to be an instrument of Christ’s Salvation. Carlo is quoted as saying, “always to be united with Jesus, that is my life’s program” (https://www.carloacutis-en.org).

Eucharistic miracles, more so than even the most carefully crafted theological argument, can be especially powerful in drawing young people to Jesus. As a former high school teacher, I can often remember the interest that teen-agers always had in the mysterious, mystical and miraculous. At a moment in time when research indicates that belief in the Eucharist is fading, witnesses such as Blessed Carlo’s become even more essential to the life of the Church.

Blessed Carlo’s life also reminds us that holiness belongs to the ordinary and the young. Besides his genius for technology, Carlo was an ordinary kid in so many ways. Like many millennials, he loved video games. He was also known for joking around and his fondness for ice cream! Too often, holiness seems out of reach for young people, or a commitment to be delayed. And yet Blessed Carlo chose God above all else and found true happiness in the process.

He delayed nothing because he found the Person in Whom all love and truth resides, Jesus Christ. About his prioritizing God, Pope Francis remarked, “true happiness is found in putting God in the first place and serving Him in our brothers and sisters” (https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-10/pope-francis-beatification-carlo-acutis-millenials.html).

While Blessed Carlo’s life is a wonderful example for young people today, it is also an important witness for all, no matter our generation. Whatever our age, if we lose focus, it is easy to deprioritize God, and make false gods of work, money, entertainment, status or sex. Blessed Carlo teaches us all that it is Jesus in the Eucharist Who should be at the center of our life and exactly how and where we can find him!

Anchor columnist Peter Shaughnessy is president/principal of Bishop Stang High School in North Dartmouth. He resides in Fairhaven with his wife, Anabela Vasconcelos Shaughnessy (Class of ’94), and their four children: Luke (Class of ’24), Emilie (Class of ’25), Dominic (Class of ’27) and Clare (Class of ’30).
HCFM reveals new look
continued from page seven

The HCFM family of ministries around the globe is demonstrating how all can become renewed, dynamic instruments of grace for the Church and for society.

To learn more about Holy Cross Family Ministries, visit the HCFM.org or follow them on Facebook and all major social platforms.

Barbara J. (Ewald) Costa, mother of Father David A. Costa

TAUNTON — Barbara J. (Ewald) Costa, 91, of Taunton, passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on September 18. She was the wife of the late Horace J. Costa.

Mrs. Costa was born in Taunton, the daughter of the late Charles and Ella (Schieble) Ewald. Mrs. Costa worked at Reed & Barton Silversmith, raised her family and then was a babysitter for many families throughout the years.

Mrs. Costa was a communicant at the Annunciation of the Lord Parish in Taunton. Mrs. Costa also volunteered at the former Sacred Heart School in Taunton for many years.

She enjoyed playing cards and reading. Survivors are her son, Father David A. Costa, pastor of St. Patrick Church Somerset, St. Louis de France in Swansea, and St. Thomas More Church in Somerset; her daughters: Catherine A. Prinzo and her fiance Paul N. Caras of Taunton; and Lisa A. Costa of Taunton; two grandchildren: Brandon J. Prinzo of Taunton and Karleigh L. Prinzo of Fall River; a niece Cynthia MacCallum of Arizona;

George “Sandy” MacCallum of California and Michael Dragone of Carver. She was the sister of the late Gertrude MacCallum, Evelyn Dragone and Karl Ewald. She was the mother-in-law of the late Joseph “Jay” Prinzo.


Donations in her memory can be made to Kindred Hospice, 275 Martine Street, Fall River, Mass., 02723.

Elizabeth Ann (Blottman) McCormack, sister of Father William Blottman

RIDGEFIELD PARK, N.J. — Elizabeth Ann McCormack (Blottman), longtime resident of Ridgefield Park, passed away on September 2, at the age of 92. She was a retired elementary school teacher at Church of the Epiphany School, Cliffside Park, N.J., and Our Lady Queen of Peace School, Maywood, N.J.

Mrs. McCormack was a parishioner, lector, food pantry volunteer and CCD teacher for St. Francis Church, Ridgefield Park. She was past president of the Woman’s Club for many years, a Girl Scout leader and an ESL teacher at the Ridgefield Park Public Library.

She was the beloved daughter of Kathryn (Williams) and John Blottman. Mrs. McCarthy was the devoted wife to the love of her life, the late Charles McCormack, who passed away in 2014. She was the loving mother of Charles McCormack Jr. and his wife Sally; Christine Ciminino and her husband Ronn; John McCormack and his wife Barbara; Judith Vaughan and her husband Don; Jeani Seiler and her husband Jimmy; and Peter McCormack and his wife Lenka.

She was the cherished grandmother of Garrett, Rick, Simon, Mary, Nicholas, Kevin, Billy, Alec, and the late Joseph; and great-grandmother of Bradley, Jax, Caleb, and Peyton. She was the sister of Ruth Chippendale, Joan Kenton, Father William Blottman; and the late John Blottman and Sister Rosemary Blottman.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Francis Church, Ridgefield Park. Interment followed at Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery, Wrightstown, N.J.

Donations in Elizabeth’s memory may be made to the St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry, 114 Mount Vernon Street, Ridgefield Park, N.J., 07660.
September pick-up included a “Blessing of the Animals” as families drove by. This is coupled with new family-friendly media, such as Sunday Gospel videos for children, which St. Mary’s creates in-house.

While there is a higher emphasis on at-home learning this fall, parishes have also included hybrid and in-person options, especially for Sacramental preparation. This includes the inclusion of small groups. For instance, St. Mary’s “2:42” small groups bring four to six people together at a time to be mentored and discipled. Yet, to meet safety standards, this has meant extra work.

This is especially true when considering attending Mass, which is the focus of the new Faith Formation program in Falmouth. Entitled “Meet You at the Altar,” Galo and his pastor, Msgr. Stephen Avila, worked together to create a program that emphasized the importance of Mass. “Each week, students and families are asked to attend one of our many Masses that our collaborative offers — more than 10 options. If they are uncomfortable attending in person at this time, families may attend Mass virtually or sit in the parking lot and tune into a radio broadcast,” Galo shared. “After Mass, students complete a brief, age-appropriate journal entry. These questions focus on the readings, the homily message, and other aspects of the Mass,” which can be completed either through print copies that families receive or digitally via an online platform.

While the relational aspect of ministry can prove challenging, parishes are still working to be present to families in safe ways. For instance, following St. Mary’s 10 a.m. live-stream Mass, “Father David [Frederici] and Deacon Frank [Lucca] stay and chat with the families and children watching from home or sitting in the pews,” said Costa-Reedy.

“They answer questions regarding the cartoon, the Gospel and anything else families may want to know.”

The question becomes: how is this new shift going over with families? For Galo, so far so good. “Everyone I have talked to [has] been really positive about the ‘Meet You at the Altar’ program. I think people are really interested in the idea of getting back to Mass after having been away for so many months due to the pandemic.” Lavigne and Costa-Reedy have also seen positive responses from families. Lavigne shared, “We were greatly encouraged by not only the number of families that attended [the ‘drive by’], but also by their genuine enthusiasm and continued desire to ensure that their children would grow in their faith.”

To say that the work of parish evangelization is challenging is an understatement. Yet, parish catechetical and ministry leaders throughout the diocese, some of whom are part-time, volunteers, and juggle additional full-time jobs and families, have worked to pass on the Catholic faith and minister to families. While the future may be uncertain, the Church’s mission will continue thanks in large part to those working in the parishes. And, come what may, we can be sure that Jesus remains the same today and always (cf Heb 13:8-9).

World Mission Sunday continued from page 11

Mission responds to life

The challenge for the Church’s mission right now is that of “understanding what God is saying to us at this time of pandemic,” Pope Francis acknowledged. As people die alone or are abandoned, as others lost their jobs, with the necessity of social distancing or staying at home, the pope says that we are invited “to rediscover that we need social relationships as well as our communal relationship with God.” This situation can increase our awareness of the need to relate to others, he says. God will touch our hearts through prayer which will always open us to understand others’ needs. Those of us who have not been able to participate in the Church’s Liturgical life now understand “the experience of the many Christian communities that cannot celebrate Mass every Sunday,” the pope said.

Whom shall I send?

God’s question expressed by the Prophet Isaiah “is addressed once more to us and awaits a generous and convincing response: ‘Here am I, send me!’” (Is 6:8), Pope Francis said at the conclusion of his message. World Mission Sunday will be a day on which we will be able to reaffirm through prayer, reflection and material help our active participation in Jesus’ mission in His Church.

Pope Francis specifies that the collection taken up on October 18 will support “the missionary work carried out in my name by the Pontifical Mission Societies, in order to meet the Spiritual and material needs of peoples and Churches throughout the world, for the Salvation of all.”

In Your Prayers

Please pray for these priests and deacons during the coming weeks:

Oct. 24  
Rev. Marc Maurice Dagenais, O.P., Retired Assistant, St. Anne, Fall River, 1982

Oct. 25  
Rev. Reginald Chene, O.P., Dominican Priory, Fall River, 1935
Rev. Raymond B. Bourgoine, Pastor, St. Paul, Taunton, 1950
Rev. Henry J. Dauphinais, M.S., La Salette Shrine, Attleboro, 2018

Oct. 27  
Rev. Francisco L. Jorge, Assistant, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, New Bedford, 1918
Rev. Edmond L. Dickinson, Assistant, St. Mathieu, Fall River, 1967

Oct. 28  
Rev. Alfred E. Coulombe, Pastor, St. George, Westport, 1923
Rev. Stanislaus Kozikowski, OFM Conv., Pastor, St. Hedwig, New Bedford, 1956

Oct. 30  
Rev. Denis Sughrue, C.S.C., Director of Postulancy, Holy Cross Novitiate, North Dartmouth, 2002

Nov. 1  
Rev. William H. McNamara, Retired Pastor, St. Mary, Mansfield, 1924
Rev. Louis N. Blanchet, Assistant, St. Jean Baptiste, Fall River, 1927
Rev. Msgr. John F. Ferraz, Pastor, St. Michael, Fall River, 1944
Rev. Msgr. George F. Cain, Pastor, St. Mathieu, Fall River, 1933

Nov. 2  
Rev. Manuel T. Faria, Retired, Catholic Memorial Home, 1999

Nov. 3  
A memento for the repose of the souls of our bishops, priests and permanent deacons not on this list
Rev. Joseph S. Fortin, Founder, St. Jean Baptiste, Fall River, 1923
Rev. Michael V. McDonough, Chaplain, St. Mary’s Home, New Bedford, 1933

Nov. 4  
Rev. Jose M. Bettencourt e Avila, Retired Pastor, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, New Bedford, 1950

Nov. 5  
Permanent Deacon James M. O’Gara, 1990
Rev. Patrick S. McGee, Founder, St. Mary, Hebronville, 1933

Nov. 6  
Rev. Joseph Oliveira, Retired Pastor, Our Lady of Lourdes, Taunton, 1999

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A prime example of some people’s prejudicial views of others, they don’t really know, but only observe, spawns this column.

As I have expressed many times, music is such an important part of my being. My Facebook quote is “Music is the lifeblood of existence.” I love many genres of music; among which are Christian (obviously), more specifically Gospel, because that’s where joie de Dieu (joy of God) explodes; classical, jazz, the “Rat Pack” crooning, rock, folk, etc.

But there’s another genre that I’m sure will raise an eyebrow or two — punk and punk rock. Let me go on record and say, yes, there are some lyrics from this genre that are downright vulgar and obscene. But truth be told, with the exception of Christian music, that can be found in any genre. It is a personal matter or discerning what is right and what is wrong.

The reason I bring this up is because one of my favorite groups is Green Day, a band not known for its gentility. But the three individuals who make up this trio and whose extreme talents can truly get the blood pumping are, in fact, human beings. That should not be forgotten, no matter what opinion one has of them.

In 2010, Green Day front man Billie Joe Armstrong penned “Wake Me Up When September Ends.” Unless you’re a fan, you don’t know the meaning behind the song. Billie Joe, as a 10-year-old lad, lost his father on Sept. 1, 1982 — a man, also a musician, whom Billie loved dearly. “As my memory rests but never forgets what I lost, wake me up when September ends. Like my father’s come to pass 20 years has gone so fast. Wake me up when September ends.”

The lyrics stem from a conversation Billie Joe had with his mom in his room just after his beloved dad’s funeral. Go figure, a punk after the fact.

I can’t ever listen to the song without getting a lump in my throat. I think of this now because today, October 16, marks three years to the day my father’s come to pass. And you know what? September never ends.

Billie Joe Armstrong and his Green Day mates reached deep into their souls, not only for this song, but for other topics in which they feel deeply about.

They may express themselves in ways others find offensive at times, but they have a passion about what today’s youth are going through. Not the youth that we see every day, but the youth who are homeless and victims of some of life’s injustices.

In fact, Billie Joe took the pain he still feels for his dad, in a song he admittedly couldn’t write for a long time, and uses “Wake Me Up,” to help raise funds for COVID victims, and other disasters.

“Here comes the rain again falling from the stars. Drenched in my pain again becoming who we are.

“As my memory rests but never forgets what I lost. Wake me up when September ends.”

Like my father’s come to pass, three years have gone so fast.

Miss you Larry.

davejolivet@anchornews.org
World Mission
Sunday,
October 17-18

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