

Archways



SAINTS/ HEROES OF NEW YORK

Then and Now

Historic Saints Who Blessed Our Region
And Heroes Who Follow in Their Footsteps

Vows of Distance

A Contemplative Nun on the Virtues of Isolation

Art's Consolations

Art, Essay and Poetry Selections from the CYO



Plus:

Inspired by Adversity: Innovations in Faith

The Greatest Loss: End-of-Life Decisions

Culture Corner: Books to Lift Us Up



Blessed Mother Mary by Arianna Chin, a sixth-grader at St. Augustine School in Westchester. | On the cover, Mother Cabrini. Illustration by Vinny Bove.

OUR BETTER ANGELS

No question about it: 2020 has been a tough year so far. So many deaths, so much suffering. It took a lot of tears, hard work and prayer to get through the “first wave” of the coronavirus pandemic in New York – and health experts say, there may be more to come.

As a people of faith, we will keep working to help those in our own region still suffering the direct and indirect effects of the pandemic: the sick, the unemployed, the hungry, the displaced. Then there are the people in the regions where Covid-19 is still raging; they, too, need our help and our prayers.

Even as we endure this health crisis, the country struggles to come to terms with centuries of racial injustice in the aftermath of the senseless, sickening death of George Floyd and other incidents of discrimination and bigotry directed toward Black Americans because of the color of their skin. We pray that, at last, significant changes will be made to address this issue – and we know we need to do our part in creating those changes.

As Catholics, of course, we try not to be focused on doom and gloom. We know that our travails on this Earth are a prelude to eternal happiness in heaven with our God. We have a responsibility to do what we can to help our fellow humans, but that’s not a burden. At the end of the day, it’s an occasion for joy.

For me and my brother priests, it has also been a joy to welcome you back

to Sunday Mass. St. Patrick’s Cathedral, glorious though it may be, is incomplete without the presence of the faithful. As difficult as it was to suspend public Masses, it was the right thing to do to protect the congregation and the community. And now it’s the right thing to reopen – carefully, with a slew of precautions to keep ourselves and our neighbors healthy.

How do we move forward in these challenging days?

We can take our lead from some of our saints. New York has been blessed to be home to more than our share. “*Saints of New York*” begins with St. Isaac Jogues, one of the North American Martyrs, who lost his life carrying the message of Christ to the Indians of upstate New York and Canada, and St. Kateri Tekakwitha, a young woman of the Mohawk whose intense devotion to Christ and the Blessed Mother still inspires us. Mother Seton. Bishop Neumann. Mother Cabrini. They’re all here, along with lists of venerables and blessed and servants of God. There’s been a lot of sanctity in this neck of the woods.

In “*Heroes of New York*”, we recognize a few of the many selfless Catholics who have stepped up to help us through the Covid-19 crisis. Those profiled here would be quick to point out that they are not alone; had we listened every deserving person, ordained and lay, Catholic and non-Catholic, we could have filled the entire issue in tiny

print like a telephone book. (Remember telephone books?) I’m pretty sure we would have needed extra pages, too.

I can’t overstate how proud – and thankful! – I am for the priests, deacons, religious women and men, and laypeople who have made such sacrifices, not just caring for the sick but also feeding the hungry, helping the poor and homeless, teaching our students, and finding exciting new ways to deliver the love of Christ at a time when our tried-and-true practices became too risky to continue. Our *News and Notes section* is full of their work. I thank you all warmly. I also thank the archdiocesan students who shared their thoughtful and beautiful work with us through the *CYO Art and Essay Contest*.

Elsewhere in the issue, we speak with *Fr. Thomas Berg of St. Joseph’s Seminary about the ethics of end-of-life medical choices*. We learn *why sacraments can’t be received remotely* and consult with some *contemplative sisters whose cloistered life of prayer* offers the ultimate lesson in how to find joy in social distancing.

As we return to our new everyday routines, then, let us try to embody the lessons we have learned. Let us emulate our saints and heroes, be kind to our neighbors, tolerant of those who disagree with us, and loving toward all, especially those who are different from us.

The days to come will bring new challenges. Let us rise to them with joyful goodwill and humility.

Yours in Christ,

Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York

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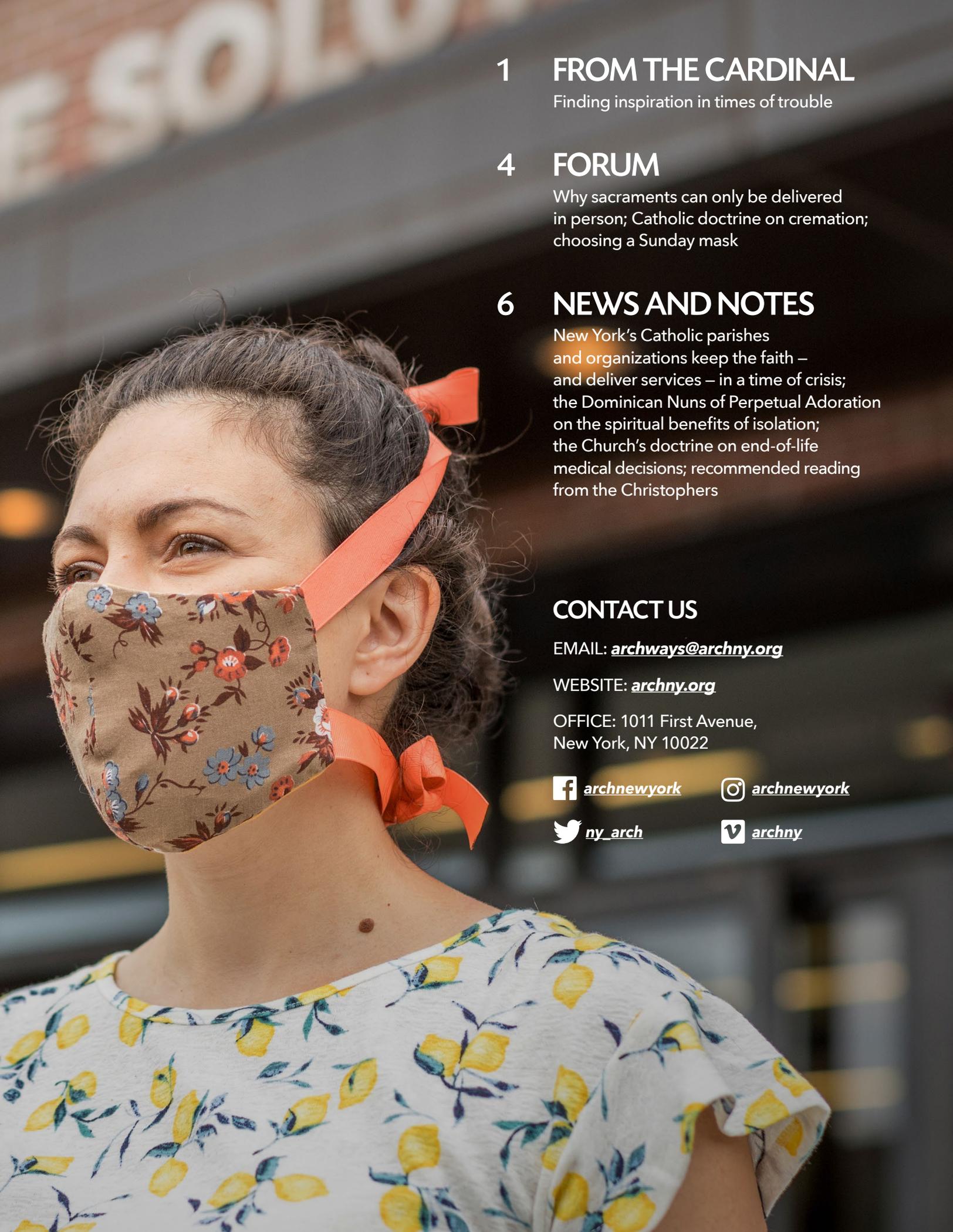
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challenged young people to send us art and
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here's a sampling



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ASK A PRIEST

Why can't we receive sacraments remotely or virtually?

This question has bubbled to the surface gradually. With the technological revolution occurring in our midst – first slowly and then with greater and greater velocity – it was only a matter of time before we would have to contend with questions about sacramental participation and technology. Fortunately, we are not lost at sea here. Our answers lie in long-standing Church teachings.

To begin, let us be clear about what takes place when the sacraments are celebrated. We say of the sacraments that they are encounters with Christ and His Body, the Church. These encounters are personal in nature, and when we speak of personal encounters, we mean that presence is a requirement. I do not have an encounter with you unless we are in each other's company. We may have contact by phone or by correspondence, but that kind of contact does not constitute an encounter.

Next, we must take into account the nature of our sacramental encounters. In every sacramental encounter, there is what theologians call a *mediation*. Someone is there in the sacraments to facilitate our encounter with God: a guarantor, if you will, to ensure that we have a genuine meeting with the Lord. We know from the New Testament that Jesus is the Mediator between God and the human race, "For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). In turn, this encounter with Jesus through the sacraments is also a mediated encounter. That is, there is someone there who brings about Jesus' Real Presence in the Holy



A hand sanitizer station at St. Ignatius Loyola parish on the Upper East Side of Manhattan.

Eucharist, who absolves sinners and who anoints the sick and dying. That someone, of course, is a priest.

But how is it that we have the Eucharist, the sacrament of penance, the anointing of the sick in the first place? We have them only because the Son of God became incarnate. The Incarnation made possible personal, sacramental encounters. In the words of the distinguished American Catholic theologian Fr. Thomas Weinandy, "The Incarnation sets the framework for the sacramental order. Sacraments . . . are incarnational signs that affect what they symbolize and symbolize what they affect. One must be a part

of that sign and reality to participate in the sacrament."

Thus, when it comes to personal, sacramental encounters, physical presence is required – which means that you cannot have sacraments remotely or virtually. For all the very real spiritual comfort that can be had through indirect communication – from the old technology of a letter written on paper to the wonders of video calling – the sacraments can only be received in person.

*Msgr. Robert J. Batule
Diocese of Rockville Centre
Faculty, St. Joseph's Seminary*

What is Catholic Doctrine regarding cremation?

From the earliest days of the Church, Christians buried the bodies of the dead in imitation of Jesus' burial and as a sign of hope that we will share in his resurrection. To be human is to have both body and soul, and we believe that our bodies will be raised, glorified and reunited with our souls for all eternity. Our Lord himself invoked the imagery of nature to make this point: A grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies in order to rise up and bear fruit (John 12:24). The practice of burying the dead (inhumation) distinguished Christians from pagans, who burned their dead and did not believe in a bodily resurrection.

Since the early 1960s, the Catholic Church has permitted cremation, recognizing that factors such as trans-

portation, space limitations and costs sometimes make bodily burial difficult or even impossible. It is important to keep in mind, however, that inhumation remains the strongly preferred norm. As the *Code of Canon Law* states, "The Church earnestly recommends that the pious custom of burying the bodies of the deceased be observed; nevertheless, the Church does not prohibit cremation unless it was chosen for reasons contrary to Christian doctrine."

In other words, the Church permits cremation, but hardly encourages it. Cremation remains forbidden if it is motivated by a contempt for the body or a disbelief in the resurrection. This is the risk against which the Church cautions us: When we see a body reduced to ashes, it can be more difficult

to believe that "the dead will be raised imperishable" (1 Corinthians 15:52).

To forestall such disbelief, cremated remains (cremains) must be treated with the same reverence and respect as an intact body and must be interred in a cemetery or mausoleum. We would not keep the body of a loved one on a mantelpiece, divide it among relatives or scatter it from a mountaintop – and we should not do so with their cremains, either. Rather, Christians must lovingly bury those remains, knowing that the Lord will raise up the body, though now reduced to ashes, at the last day (John 6:40).

Rev. Brian A. Graebe, S.T.D.
Pastor, Basilica of St. Patrick's
Old Cathedral

SUNDAY MASK



Put on a Holy Face

Now that we've received the all clear – with safeguards – to return to church for Sunday Mass, each of us has some adjustments to make. Among other things, we must resist the urge to run up to our friends and hug them, be prepared to stay home if we're feeling poorly, and, after weeks of attending on the couch in pajamas, we have to figure out what to wear.

The biggest apparel challenge is that new item we didn't have to worry about before the virus: the face mask. Of course, you can't leave home without it, for your own health and that of

all your neighbors. You also may not want to show your face at church – or *not* show your face, actually – in the same bandanna you've been using for the supermarket or the hardware store. Think ahead: If your only option is that black face cover with the old Rolling Stones logo that your son gave you weeks ago, you probably won't feel comfortable lining up for Communion in full view of the whole congregation. Same goes for the skull and crossbones kerchief.

Fortunately, some smart Christian entrepreneurs were busy solving this problem before you knew you would

have it. *Faith and Fabric* offers an array of handmade masks adorned with images (Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Michael the Archangel) or liturgy and prayer (Bible quotes, the Hail Mary, the names of Christ) that are perfect for worship. For more options, check out *the various makers offering Christian face masks on Etsy*. For images of the Blessed Mother, search the *Etsy selection of Virgin Mary masks* (mostly based on Our Lady of Guadalupe).

These items are handmade, so stock may be limited and prices may be slightly high. Your new mask will conceal your face while revealing your faith. ✱



Fr. Richard Gill, pastor of St. Lawrence O'Toole Parish in Brewster, takes the Eucharist on the road.

OUTSIDE THE BOX

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

For New York Catholics, it has been a year like no other. We who are called to join in the Mystical Body of Christ, to worship as a community and give care and sustenance to our neighbors, were given a new duty: to keep our distance. With the virus among us, proximity became peril.

For now, the worst seems past. Indoor public Masses are back – with masks, social distancing and other restrictions. In the meantime, the parishes, agencies, offices and leaders of the archdiocese have found some new ways to spread the message and the mercy of Christ.

No one knows whether the next few months will bring further reopening or a second wave of Covid-19. Either way, it seems certain that many of these new ideas will endure even in the post-pandemic world.

MASSES AND SACRAMENTS

Televised and *livestreamed Mass from St. Patrick's Cathedral* and various other parishes existed before the pandemic, but during the shutdown it became *the* way to attend. While not a full-on substitute for the in-person Mass, it allows Catholics to experience the service when it is not safe to gather indoors – and remains a lifeline for many who are high-risk.

Not all solutions were virtual, and some were centuries old. The *Act of Spiritual Communion*, a prayer to be said when a Catholic is unable to receive Communion in person, was not invented during this crisis, but it was unfamiliar to many. Though not a substitute for the actual sacrament, it was a godsend for a population suddenly cut off from the physical host.

It's also not new to have Mass outdoors when churches are off limits. Centuries ago, priests and parishioners gathered secretly for Mass in the Irish countryside when English law made it a crime to practice the Catholic faith. This spring, there was no need to hide in the fields, but indoor gatherings were prohibited. Solution: the parking lot Mass, with each family keeping to its own car and the celebrants' voices carried over car radios.

The use of our motor vehicles was also central to two other innovations: the drive-through confession (the one sacrament that everyday parishioners could receive in the early weeks of the crisis) and the mobile Eucharistic adoration, in which pastors transported the monstrance on the back of a truck in a slow procession through neighborhoods where the faithful lined the

sidewalks to pray and witness the gift of Christ's sacrifice. In other parishes, the monstrance was placed in a window so that adoration could take place safely from outside.

CORPORAL MERCY

While Mass and the Eucharist are at the core of Catholic life, the work of the Church in the community is far-reaching and critical for the many who are hurting, hungry or homeless. When the pandemic hit the tri-state area in March, organizations like Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York and ArchCare, the health- and senior-care ministry of the archdiocese, swiftly switched gears to protect the health of staff, volunteers and clientele while also ensuring that services would continue. Local parishes kicked in as well, retooling their food pantries and other outreach efforts.

For *Catholic Charities* – whose programs address a wide spectrum of needs including poverty, hunger, homelessness, underemployment, addiction, and immigration and mental health issues – the challenge was to find safe ways to deliver services even as the needs were growing.

Not all services could be made safe through the use of technology. Pantries and other services switched to an outdoor distribution model where food and other necessities were delivered to clients' homes or set out for pickup on

sidewalk tables. At homeless shelters and residences for the developmentally disabled, workers continued to assist residents in person, but with added precautions. "Sites are staffed and sanitized," says Msgr. Kevin Sullivan, Catholic Charities' executive director. "Meals are provided, and social service workers coordinate care on behalf of the residents." The most significant change has been the impact of social distancing at meals and in support group programs.

At the nursing homes, eldercare programs and specialized medical centers run by *ArchCare*, the challenges were similar. When necessary, staff from the PACE senior centers made house calls to care for clients.

ArchCare's nursing homes and medical centers became frontline facilities in the fight against Covid-19. In some cases, *chaplains went into isolation for the duration*. Family visits were conducted through windows or via tablets and smartphones.

Our churches have now reopened for Sunday Mass – but in reality, the Church never closes. Yes, the pews were empty for several weeks, but the faithful were present in spirit (and in attendance online). They prayed and grieved for those who were suffering, said a special intention for families and loved ones, then got to work. The Mystical Body of Christ carried on. ❖



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: A family visit at ArchCare's Carmel Richmond Nursing Home, Staten Island; a van full of food ready to roll at Catholic Charities of Orange, Sullivan and Ulster; business as unusual in St. Lawrence O'Toole's food pantry, Brewster.

UPDATE

BRIDGING THE ARCH

When New York shut down, the offices of the Archdiocese of New York remained very active. Here's a snapshot of what they've been up to; for a list of upcoming events (virtual and in person), [click here](#).

ADULT FAITH FORMATION: All services went virtual in March and will remain so through 2020. Enlighten online class registrations tripled. New online features, including Divine Mercy Chaplet every Friday, Sunday Reflections and a digital version of the Christlife: Discovering Christ series, were received enthusiastically.

YOUNG ADULT OUTREACH: All in-person events moved online, including monthly Young Adult Masses and Holy Hours – followed by Zoom socials. The popular CatholicNYC Presents interview show ran nightly for 40 episodes and featured luminaries ranging from Cardinal Dolan to Jeannie and Jim Gaffigan. This fall, watch for a careful return to in-person events – with everything still available online, too.

SCHOOLS: Our Catholic schools had another year of outstanding academic achievement in 2020–21, despite the recent announcement that 20 schools would close due to the economic downturn. That still leaves almost 180 schools in the archdiocese – cautiously opening for in-person classes this fall!

HISPANIC MINISTRY: After weeks of online-only services, key in-person events – such as Marian celebrations and special Masses at St. Patrick's Cathedral – are now being offered again. To serve the disabled, the office also plans to continue to offer these events virtually well into the future.

SHEEN CENTER: Beginning Easter weekend with the online premiere of *The Gospel of John*, all Sheen Center programming went online. The Faith, Hope & Love series featured daily talks and performances on the Sheen Talks YouTube channel from May through July. All fall 2020 events will be virtual.

RESPECT LIFE: Pro-life pregnancy centers continued to serve women, delivering food and goods to their homes. When the 40 Days for Life vigil switched to “pray-from-home” mode, the Manhattan campaign was able to have 24/7 prayer coverage for the first time. It will be back in person this fall.

LITURGY OFFICE: The office was a central resource on new and developing liturgical questions during the unfolding of the pandemic and in preparing parishes to reopen safely. The fall lineup of seminars and workshops will be offered exclusively online.

ST. JOSEPH'S SEMINARY: All classes went online in the spring, but this fall the seminarians are back in person for the seminary's 150th anniversary!



A kindergartener from Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scarsdale, crafting in the virtual classroom.

MARRIAGE PREP

Get Me to the Church Online

For hundreds of couples in the archdiocese who had weddings planned this year, the pandemic presented tough choices: Postpone? Trim the guest list? Move the event outdoors?

There was one question that Dr. Kathleen Wither and the staff of the Family Life Office of the Archdiocese of New York did not want couples to worry about: how to complete the Church's marriage prep requirements.

At first, in lieu of in-person Pre-Cana days canceled due to Covid-19, the office offered registered couples an off-the-shelf digital program. As it became clear that restrictions would



Recording the online Pre-Cana presentations at the studios of Catholic Faith Network.

extend indefinitely, however, the Family team decided to create a brand-new tool. Working with the Catholic Faith Network, they developed half-day English and Spanish Virtual Pre-Canas, including videos, talks and 10 couple exercises via a Zoom webinar.

From June through August, more than 500 couples participated, and the response was overwhelmingly positive. While some missed the in-person experience, “Many couples appreciated doing the exercises at home on the couch instead of on hard seats in a crowded room,” Dr. Wither observed. We may just be looking at the Pre-Cana format of the future.

For more information, [click here](#). Couples should meet with their priest or deacon before beginning marriage preparation.

A BRONX PRAYER

There's something out of place about a monastery of contemplative nuns in the South Bronx. **Sr. Maria Pia, of the Dominican Nuns of Perpetual Adoration on Lafayette Avenue,** remembers a time when there were several such establishments. "All the contemplative communities have moved elsewhere over the years," she says. "This is the poorest place in New York. But we decided to stay and continue our life of prayer here, as witness to the people around us."

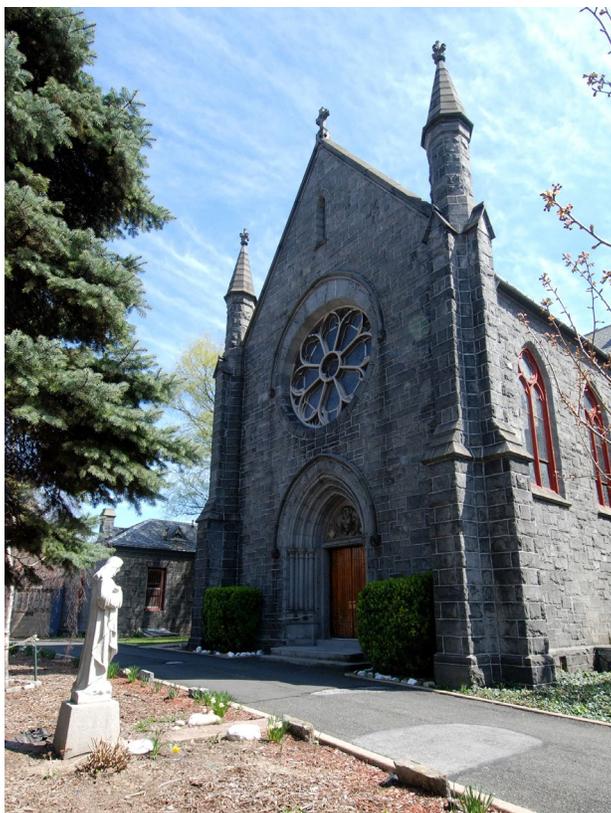
In this urban setting, the sisters' life is one of constant prayer. "Basically, our life is adoration of the Eucharist. We also chant the liturgy of the hours. We recite and contemplate the rosary as a community. We study the Sacred Scriptures. And we have a procession every evening in honor of the blessed Virgin," says Sr. Maria Pia, who has resided here for 40 years.

Back in March, when Covid-19 was a gathering storm on the horizon, the nuns received a visit from Fr. John Maria Devaney, OP, a Dominican priest and hospital chaplain in Manhattan. "He was really concerned about us," recalls Sr. Maria Pia, the superior of the congregation. "He gave us guidelines to protect our monastery, because we have elderly sisters here."

The first change they had to make was to close the monastery to the public. Contrary to the outsider's notion of the cloistered life, this was a significant shift in practice. In ordinary times, Sr. Maria Pia says, "Our gate is always open for people to come for adoration." Others come to the door to ask for food. "There is a shelter across the street from us, so there is always someone coming," she says. "It's the city. We

are not a monastery in the country, where it's very, very quiet. It's absolutely different for us."

The sisters also had to ask their small staff to stay home to prevent the risk of their bringing the virus into the cloister. "We continued to pay them for about two months, and now we cannot afford to hire them back," Sr. Maria Pia says. From March 22 through April 8, there was no dai-



Corpus Christi Monastery in the Bronx, home of the Dominican Nuns of Perpetual Adoration.

ly Mass and no Communion at the monastery. After that, the Dominicans sent a priest to live in isolation at the monastery every day for a month, then the archdiocese began sending in a celebrant who would say Mass while a nun would distribute Communion.

But perhaps the most unexpected change, during the height of the crisis, was the sudden silence of the city. "Now we are like a contemplative

community in the mountains or in the country," Sr. Maria Pia observed in June. "More silent, more away from the world, really. It's positive and negative." Looking west to the nearby Bruckner Expressway, the absence of traffic was magical; to the east, on the other hand, the sight of the deserted playground where neighborhood children used to play was heartbreaking.

What didn't change was the sisters' life of prayer. Sr. Maria Pia sees this as a solution for laypeople looking for relief in the isolation of social restrictions: "To have a relationship as a person with our Heavenly Father, and with the Son and the Holy Spirit – this time could be spent really paying attention to the intimate, to the invisible. We are not alone. God lives within us," she says.

"And we have to pray for peace. Peace in families. This is the perfect time to ask the Lord to be present and bless all people, each person, because we are all precious in His eyes, and to also pray for those who lack the necessities of life, even in our own country. And I don't mean only the temporal needs. I also mean people who live in darkness. In darkness, they don't see the reason for suffering like this."

Then there is what Sr. Maria Pia calls "the most beautiful prayer of all": the Prayer of the Heart. "To adore, praise and thank Him for the gifts we receive each day and also tell Him about ourselves, about all our desires and needs, and to ask for help and His blessing. It's like communicating heart to heart with God."

Who knows? If you follow Sr. Maria Pia's lead, you might just learn to stay better connected to God even after your life returns to normal. ✠

ISSUE

END-OF-LIFE ETHICS

With the onset of serious illness and death on a mass scale during the coronavirus crisis, many Catholics faced urgent life-or-death decisions regarding medical treatments. While the virus has subsided in New York (at least for now), these issues are not going away. We asked **Fr. Thomas Berg, professor of moral theology at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers**, to help us clarify the Catholic approach to the end of life.

Archways: What is the difference between secular medical ethics and Catholic teachings?

Fr. Thomas Berg: The comparison hinges on distinct ways of reasoning about moral problems. Although the Hippocratic oath sworn by doctors includes the promise to “first, do no harm,” the ethical reasoning employed in health-care institutions can often have the opposite effect. An end-justifies-the-means approach, for instance, can lead health-care professionals to intentionally and directly harm, damage and destroy human life.

Catholic medical ethics uses a different kind of reasoning, anchored in the natural moral law. Among other things, it affirms that some actions (such as abortion or physician-assisted suicide) are always incompatible with the good of persons and the love of God. It offers a way of arriving at medical determinations that prevents us from intending direct harm, damage or destruction of human life and authentic human goods.

Archways: Many people create living wills to communicate how they want to be treated in case of an extreme medical situation. Is this a good idea?

Fr. Berg: Living wills are almost always problematic precisely because they offer



signers options that are not compatible with Catholic faith. For example, a Catholic should never just check off a box indicating: “I do not wish to receive assisted nutrition and hydration.”

In fact, **Catholics should avoid living wills and instead designate a loved one as their health-care proxy – someone who would make decisions based on Catholic teaching.** Decision-making in these situations is seldom black and white. There are often many prudential determinations that need to be made in light of Catholic principles. In most cases, the health-care proxy will not be thoroughly educated in those principles and how to apply them, and that’s all right. A good Catholic proxy must be committed

enough to reach out to someone who has the appropriate training in Catholic medical ethics (usually a priest or deacon) and can give them guidance in accordance with Church teaching.

In New York State, Catholics should be especially cautious about MOLST forms, which convert a patient’s preferences into immediately actionable medical orders. They should be used only with great care.

Archways: Is it ever permissible to let a patient die instead of making every effort to save their life?

Fr. Berg: This touches the issue of what constitutes an excessive burden for the patient and the concept

of morally obligatory versus morally optional care. *Now and at the Hour of Our Death*, a booklet published 10 years ago by the New York bishops, states: “Even if death is thought imminent, ordinary care owed to a sick person cannot be legitimately interrupted. On the other hand, discontinuing medical procedures that are burdensome, dangerous, extraordinary, or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be legitimate.”

It can get complicated. To again quote the New York bishops’ handbook: “Sometimes the very same medical intervention can be morally obligatory (ordinary) in one case, but morally optional (extraordinary)

in another. For example, a relatively healthy person recovering from a bout with pneumonia may need to be on a ventilator for a few days to restore him to his optimal condition. But for a patient in the final stages of lung cancer, being placed on the same ventilator may be painful, burdensome and only prolong the patient’s dying process without any reasonable benefit.”

Archways: *Once a patient has been placed on life-sustaining treatment, when is it permissible to pull the plug?*

Fr. Berg: In simple terms, life-sustaining treatment can be ethically removed when it has become futile

(simply delaying the inevitable) or when it is properly judged that continuing life-sustaining treatment constitutes an unreasonable burden to the patient.

Archways: *Does the Church provide us with doctrinal guideposts to help us make end-of-life decisions?*

Fr. Berg: “*Now and at the Hour of Our Death: A Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decision-Making*,” which I quoted earlier, is still one of the most reliable documents out there. It is clear, concise and covers the most pressing issues on end-of-life care and decision-making. It also includes a sample health-care proxy form. ✱

CULTURE CORNER

FATHER KELLER’S CANDLES

Fr. James Keller, the Maryknoll priest who founded the Christophers in 1945, believed each of us should use the talents God gave us to shine a light in the world. In its 75th year, the organization’s motto remains, “It’s better to light one candle than to curse the darkness.”

The annual Christopher Awards, which recognize writers and other media artists whose works “affirm the highest values of the human spirit,” are usually presented in New York every spring. This year’s ceremony has been tentatively postponed to October – but the book winners were announced on April 15. We can wholeheartedly recommend the adult titles, listed here.

Grace Will Lead Us Home: The Charleston Church Massacre and the Hard, Inspiring Journey to Forgiveness by Jennifer Berry Hawes
It’s been five years since a racist gunman murdered 12 members of the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston. Hawes, a Pulitzer-winning journalist, examines the community’s struggle toward healing. (St. Martin’s Press).

No Surrender: A Father, a Son, and an Extraordinary Act of Heroism That Continues



Fr. James Keller, founder of the Christophers.

to Live on Today by Christopher Edmonds with Douglas Century | An American pastor uncovers the true story of his father’s courageous and compassionate actions in a Nazi POW camp. (Harper Collins)

The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life by David Brooks | The *New York Times* columnist reflects on the personal transformation of people who turn away from the pursuit of individual achievement and seek a more meaningful life in their community. (Penguin Random House)

What is a Girl Worth? My Story of Breaking the Silence and Exposing the Truth about Larry Nassar and USA Gymnastics by Rachael Denhollander | One of hundreds of female athletes sexually assaulted by the USA Gymnastics team doctor recounts her fight for justice. (Tyndale)

When Life Gives You Pears: The Healing Power of Family, Faith and Funny People by Jeannie Gaffigan | The comedy writer, mother of five and wife of comic Jim Gaffigan recounts her battle with brain cancer, the removal of a pear-sized tumor and the lessons it taught her and her family. (Grand Central Publishing)

saints HEROES OF NEW YORK

SAINTS

ASK THE AVERAGE AMERICAN about the saints of New York, and you're likely to elicit a puzzled look.

In popular culture, the region is more commonly associated with sinners on a grand scale: organized crime bosses, corrupt political machines, rapacious robber barons.

Ask a New York Catholic, on the other hand, and you can expect a smile of instant recognition, followed by a list of local favorites: Mother Seton. Mother Cabrini. Kateri Tekakwitha.

In the following pages, we profile some of the saints (and candidates for sainthood) associated with our region. Of course, that doesn't mean they "belong" to us in any way; all of these holy figures can also be claimed by localities outside the Archdiocese of New York. Which is hardly a surprise: It's not in the nature of sanctity to be delimited by geographic boundaries.

A saint's light shines for all. Still, blessings reside in the places where they lived or worked or died. Many of us feel a deep connection to God when we visit the physical location where a saint walked or prayed. A strong local association with a saint is wonderful, and any association is cause for joy.

For New Yorkers, there's a lot of joy to be had in our own backyard.

MISSIONARY MARTYR



In 1646, a century and a half before the founding of the Diocese of New York, Fr. Isaac Jogues was martyred near what is now the town of Auriesville, in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains. Jogues, a Jesuit missionary, was born in Orleans, France, and first came to North America in 1636 to join a handful of other Jesuits ministering to the Huron at what is now Georgian Bay in Ontario.

At their wilderness outpost of Ste. Marie, the Jesuits carved a settlement out of the forest, clearing farmland and building a fort for protection and a church where they could invite the Hu-

ron to join them on Sundays and feast days. In general, they presented a model of Christian living to the local population while witnessing to the Gospel and the teachings of Christ. Jogues worked tirelessly at Ste. Marie and was also dispatched on missions to the Potun and Ojibway tribes, venturing as far as the shores of Lake Superior.

In 1642, Jogues led a canoe expedition to Quebec, nearly 1,000 miles away, to bring back supplies and some new recruits for the mission. On the return journey, he and his 40 companions were attacked by a Mohawk war party, who killed many of the Huron and took the rest prisoner along with

Jogues and two lay Jesuits, transporting them south to a settlement known as Ossernenon. The two other Europeans were soon killed. For the next year, Jogues survived harrowing torture and near starvation at the hands of his captors, while continuing to evangelize and even baptize anyone he saw who was near death. He lost two fingers and all his fingernails in the torture, but he did not yield in his faith and his determination. In 1643, with the aid of Dutch protestants in a settlement where the Mohawk brought him, Jogues was able to escape on a ship to New Amsterdam – now New York City – where he was the first Catholic priest to visit, and may have said the first Catholic Mass.

Back in France, Jogues found himself famous, invited to meet with royalty and admired by many for his courage and perseverance. For all that, he wanted only to return to North America and continue his missionary work. By 1644, he was back in Canada, in Quebec and Montreal, helping to negotiate peace between the French and Iroquois. His missionary work took him back to Ossernenon, where he had been held captive and tortured for so long. His courage, forgiveness and piety won over a number in the tribe. The Mohawk gave him the name Ondessonk, meaning “the indomitable one.”

When he returned the following year, however, he was again taken captive. Many Mohawk blamed the missionaries for an epidemic that had occurred the previous winter. A violent faction attacked and killed him and his fellow Jesuit Jean de LaLande, threw their bodies in a ravine and mounted their heads on pikes to warn other “Black Robes” to stay away.

Jogues was canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1930, along with LaLande and six other Jesuits who were martyred in the wilderness of New York State and Canada in the 1600s. The Shrine of the North American Martyrs in Auriesville is dedicated to the memory of these Jesuits and the Native Americans they converted.

/ BORN IN THE U.S.A.

In 1774, nearly 100 years after St. Isaac Jogues visited Manhattan – then the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam – a girl named Elizabeth Ann Bayley was born on the island. By the time of her birth, the city was called New York and the American Revolution was two years away.

Elizabeth Ann Bayley did not take

the direct route to Catholic sainthood. Born an Episcopalian, she was married in 1794 to William Magee Seton, lived at a fashionable Wall Street address and had five children by the time she was 28 years of age. She was a prominent member of the Trinity Episcopal Church and the treasurer of the Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children.

In the early 1800s, however, the family's fortunes waned amid political upheavals and economic setbacks. When William's tuberculosis took a turn for the worse, his doctor suggested that Elizabeth should travel with him to Italy, where he died. It was during her mourning for William that friends of the family residing in Italy introduced Elizabeth to Catholicism. Impressed by their kindness and good works, Elizabeth became a convert when she returned to New York the following year. In 1805, she was baptized at St. Peter's Church, then the only Catholic church in New York City.

In the 16 years between her baptism and her death, Seton built a religious career that places her among the most important and influential American Catholics in history. She began by teaching in New York before being invited to start a school for Catholic girls in Emmitsburg, Maryland. There she founded the Sisters of Charity, the first congregation of women religious founded in America, and went on to found a network of Catholic schools in locations around the country – all while raising her five children. The Sisters of Charity were asked to send some sisters to New York City as teachers, which marked the inception of a robust New York congregation of the order. The many institutions created by the Sisters – in the Archdiocese of New York and around the country – include schools, hospitals, children's centers and community-supported farms.

Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton died in 1821 at the age of 46 and was canonized in 1975 by Pope Paul VI. The Sisters of Charity remain a profound force in American Catholicism. Deeply loved by New York Catholics, Seton is memorialized at the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg and at the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Shrine on the site of a home where she lived in lower Manhattan.



AUTHENTIC BROTHERLY LOVE

St. John Nepomucene Neumann was born in Bohemia (now the Czech Republic) in 1811. At the age of 24, in 1835, having attended seminary and as he prepared to complete his studies in theology, Neumann learned that the Catholic Church in Bohemia had declared a moratorium on new ordinations because they had more priests than assignments for them. Determined to become a priest, he set sail for New York, where he arrived with no money and a single suit of clothes.

In June 1836, Bishop John Dubois ordained Neumann at St. Patrick's

Cathedral (now the Basilica of Old St. Patrick's Cathedral, in SoHo). He assigned the young priest, who spoke eight languages, to minister to German immigrants at the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Williamsville, near Buffalo, which at the time was part of the Diocese of New York.

For four years, Neumann rode his large rural parish on horseback, building community, visiting the sick, educating children and training teachers to carry on as catechists in his absence. Then, in 1840, he applied to join the Redemptorist Fathers, was accepted, and moved to Baltimore to study. The first Redemptorist candidate in the

Americas, he took his vows with the order in 1842, then served parish assignments in Ohio and Maryland, tirelessly developing religious education and strengthening communities. In 1849 he became the provincial superior for the Redemptorists in the United States, and three years later, he was named bishop of Philadelphia.

With his many languages and understanding of diverse cultures, Neumann was an ideal choice to lead the Church in the so-called City of Brotherly Love, a growing urban region that was attracting Catholic immigrants from all over Europe. It was no easy task, as anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant factions, urged on by organizations like the Know Nothing Party, were rioting regularly against the Germans, Italians and Irish who were streaming into the Philadelphia area. Against this backdrop, Neumann worked to help immigrants find a footing in the city and to establish sound finances for many church communities. More than 90 new churches were built in the diocese under his watch, and nearly 200 parochial schools. He invited European religious orders to establish ministries in Philadelphia, including the School Sisters of Notre Dame, who provided religious instruction in the many new schools, and supported the Oblate Sisters of Providence, an order of African-American women religious. A humble man, he also eschewed material comforts; legend has it that he owned only one pair of shoes during his decades in America.

At the age of 48, in 1860, Bishop Neumann collapsed and died while out walking in Philadelphia. He was canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1977. "His love for people was authentic brotherly love," the pope said in his homily for the occasion. "He was close to the sick; he was at home with the poor; he was a friend to sinners. And today he is the honor of all immigrants."



/ PATRON OF IMMIGRANTS



A SAINT'S LIGHT
SHINES FOR ALL.
STILL, BLESSINGS
RESIDE IN THE
PLACES WHERE
THEY LIVED.

Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini arrived in New York in 1889, accompanied by six other sisters of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Nineteen years earlier, at the age of 20, she had been deemed too frail and sickly to join the Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the rural Italian region where she was born. Now, having founded the Missionary Sisters in Italy, she arrived in one of the world's most tumultuous cities with a mission to serve the thousands of immigrants arriving from Italy and

elsewhere in Europe – to help them survive in the New World and stay strong in their faith, and to protect and educate their children.

Cabrini had not planned to come to New York. In 1887, she had petitioned Pope Leo XIII to establish missions in China. The pope, however, concerned about the plight of the immigrants in America, sent her to New York instead, telling her, “Go west, not east.” Without hesitation, she devoted herself to the needy masses of the New World with great resourcefulness. Starting with few resources, she proved adept at securing donations of funds and labor to enable her congregation to begin delivering services. Housed at first with the Sisters of Charity and using a donated apartment as a refuge for orphaned girls, Cabrini soon secured a property in West Park, in Ulster County, formerly owned by the Jesuits, where she opened the Sacred Heart Orphan Asylum in 1890.

All around the New York metropolitan region, she established schools and orphanages for immigrant children and offered language and religious education to adults. In all, Cabrini and the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred heart went on to found 61 institutions around the United States as well as in Europe and Latin America, including schools, orphanages, hospitals and training convents for new sisters.

Cabrini died in 1917 at Columbus Hospital in Chicago, which had been founded by the Missionary Sisters. She was canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1946. There are a number of shrines to Mother Cabrini in the United States, including the St. Frances X. Cabrini Shrine in northern Manhattan, symbolically located with breathtaking views over the Hudson River to the west and, to the east, a sprawling neighborhood of busy streets and apartment buildings filled with working-class immigrants and their families.

BUMPING INTO HEAVEN

In 1656, a decade after the death of St. Isaac Jogues, Kateri Tekakwitha was born in Ossernenon, the village near present-day Auriesville, where Jogues was martyred. Her father was a Mohawk chief, her mother an Algonquin Catholic who had been captured and assimilated into the Mohawk people. Her Mohawk name, Tekakwitha, means “she who bumps into things”; the name Kateri, a form of Catherine, was given to her when she converted to Christianity.

When Tekakwitha was 4, a smallpox epidemic swept through Ossernenon. Tekakwitha survived, but the disease killed both her parents and left the girl in poor health, her face scarred and her eyesight significantly impaired. Raised in the family of her aunt, Tekakwitha learned about Christianity from Jesuit missionaries who visited the settlement, and was quickly drawn to the faith.

Through years of upheaval in the region, amid tribal wars and invasions abetted by French and Dutch fur traders, Kateri remained quiet and humble, helping with harvesting and caring for the sick. Despite pressure from her aunts, she insisted that she would not marry. Surrounded by violence and facing her stepfather’s disapproval, she moved steadily toward a devotion to the Christian faith, and at the age of 18 began catechesis with Fr. Jacques de Lamber ville, a Jesuit missionary who visited the settlement of Caughnawauga. She was baptized during Holy Week of 1676, taking her baptismal name from St. Catherine of Siena.

Six months later, accused of sorcery by some who opposed her conversion, Tekakwitha journeyed to Kahnawake, a Jesuit mission on the St. Laurence River near Montreal established for the conversion and religious instruction of native people.

There Tekakwitha lived in a longhouse with other converted Mohawk, including some she had known in her settlement. Her life of extraordinary devotion to prayer, penance and purity inspired all around her during the few remaining years of her life; she and a friend wished to form a congregation of native women religious, but Tekakwitha did not live long enough to see this through.

Kateri Tekakwitha died at the age of 24 in 1680. Her last words, according to Fr. Claude Chauchetière, were “Jesus, Mary, I love you.” She was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012, and is beloved throughout the New York region as patron saint of peace and ecology. The St. Kateri Tekakwitha National Shrine and Historic Site at Caughnawauga, near Fonda, New York, was dedicated to her in 1980.



State of Holiness

LOOKING for more local holiness? Wait 20 years and New York may be awash in sanctity.

The process of declaring a saint in the Catholic Church usually takes decades, sometimes centuries. Along the way, a candidate must first be certified as a *servant of God*, then *venerable*, then *blessed* before canonization can be considered.

These titles aren't just milestones on the way to sainthood; each is a mark of glory in itself. We can pray to them, honor them - and as New Yorkers, we can be humbly thankful that our region has been blessed by the presence of even more great Catholics, listed below.

SERVANTS OF GOD



Dorothy Day

Dorothy Day 1897-1980

Co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement who tirelessly fought for the poor, the hungry and the homeless. Her cause was launched by John Cardinal O'Connor in 1990.

Terence Cardinal Cooke 1921-1983 Archbishop of New York from 1968 until his death in 1983, known for his work to protect the unborn and provide educational opportunities to the underprivileged. The Cardinal Cooke Guild was formed to promote his cause for sainthood in 1984.

Fr. Isaac Hecker 1819-1888

A native New Yorker and founder of the Paulist Fathers. In 2010, Cardinal Edward Egan launched his cause for sainthood.

Rose Hawthorne Lathrop (Mother Mary Alphonsa, OP) 1851-1926 A Catholic convert and founder of the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, known for her devotion to the care of people with terminal cancer. The movement for her canonization was begun in 2003.

Fr. Vincent Capodanno 1929-1967

A Staten Island native and Maryknoll missionary who became a Marine chaplain in Vietnam and was killed while assisting soldiers in the heat of battle. His cause for sainthood was initiated in 2010.

VENERABLES AND BLESSEDS

Venerable Pierre Toussaint

1766-1853 A prominent Black New Yorker and businessman of the 19th century whose charitable work and contributions supported orphans, immigrants and schools - and helped fund the construction of the original St. Patrick's Cathedral in SoHo. Declared venerable in 1996.

Venerable Mother Mary Angeline Teresa McCrory 1893-1984

An Irish-born religious sister who founded the Carmelite Sisters of the Aged and Infirm in New York in 1929. Declared venerable in 2012.

Venerable Rev. Fulton J. Sheen

1895-1979 An auxiliary bishop in the Archdiocese of New York in the 1950s and '60s, later bishop of Rochester, who is widely known for his pioneering work in the use of radio and television for evangelization. Declared venerable in 2012.

Venerable Felix Varela y Morales

1788-1853 A Cuban priest and advocate for Latin American independence who went on to



Venerable Felix Varela y Morales

become vicar general of the Archdiocese of New York and a powerful supporter of immigrants. Declared venerable in 2012.

Blessed Solanus Casey 1870-1957

A Capuchin friar known for his speaking and counseling skills; served in Yonkers and New York City for two decades. Beatified in 2017.

AND A FEW MORE SAINTS

THOUGH their connection to the Archdiocese of New York is less direct, these saints too had ties to our region.

St. Marianne Cope 1838-1918

A Franciscan sister from way upstate (Syracuse) who became legendary as Mother Marianne of Molokai, overseeing the care of people suffering from leprosy in Hawaii for three decades. Canonized in 2012.

St. Jean de LaLande 1616-1646

and **St. René Goupil 1608-1642** Jesuit lay missionaries who worked alongside St. Isaac Jogues. Both canonized in 1930.

St. Pope Paul VI 1897-1978

St. Pope John Paul II 1920-2005

Both popes visited the Archdiocese of New York - John Paul II visited three times! Canonized in 2018 and 2014, respectively.

HEROES

OF NEW YORK

ON MARCH 14, faced with mounting evidence of a growing health emergency, the Archdiocese of New York suspended public Masses in all 10 of its counties, from Staten Island to Sullivan, Ulster and Dutchess. The news took many Catholics by surprise. How were they to remain connected to their faith? How long would it be before they could safely receive the Eucharist again?

It didn't take long for the faithful to make adjustments. Pastors, parishes and the many ministries of the archdiocese sprang into action, devising new ways to deliver the liturgy and the rituals of the Church to those who thirsted for them. And wherever there was a need, Catholics delivered services despite the obstacles.

Sr. Mary Catherine Redmond, an emergency room physician assistant who served on the front line of the pandemic in the hardest-hit part of the Bronx (see next page), summed it up this way: "It wasn't that the Church closed. The Church just went to the streets. Whether it was people handing out sandwiches ... taking care of their neighbors ... [or] taking care of the sick, the Church went to the streets."

In the next few pages, you'll meet a number of those people - priests, sisters, friars, deacons and lay Catholics - who would not let the health crisis stop them from living out the message of Christ, sacrificing to help their neighbors at a time when the needs have only been growing more urgent. They are not looking for credit or praise; they just want to help their sisters and brothers, and they represent hundreds of others, Catholics and non-Catholics, who deserve our thanks.

Since 1999, **Sister Mary Catherine Redmond** has worked as a physician assistant in the emergency department of a small city hospital in the Bronx, part of New York's Health and Hospitals Corporation. A Presentation Sister, she resides in a Bronx convent with four other members of her congregation. This spring, when New York became the epicenter of the Covid-19 pandemic, the hospital where Sr. Mary Catherine works – like many in the region – saw a massive influx of cases.

St. Mary Catherine grew up in Kingston, where she was educated by the Presentation Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary at St. Mary's/Kingston Catholic School. She entered the Sisters of the Presentation in 1987 and made final vows in 1996. "When I entered religious life, I was actually an audiologist," she recalls. "I went back to school at the Catholic Medical Center in Queens to become a physician assistant ... because I really felt called at that point to provide medical care to the underserved."

When the Covid-19 crisis struck, she says, "It felt like a tidal wave. And as the crisis evolved, it became clearer and clearer that we were dealing with something way beyond our control.

"In the beginning, when we were working with Covid-positive patients, we were worried about where they had traveled and what contacts they had, et cetera. Then all of a sudden it was a whole slew of Uber drivers who were very sick, which meant that it was person-to-person contact. ... Patients started showing up with all different symptoms, and everyone had Covid. First we were looking for respiratory symptoms and the ground-glass opacities on the chest X-ray. The next thing, it was gastrointestinal symptoms. Then all of a sudden it was 'I can't smell' and 'I don't taste anymore.' They were all Covid."



The need for personal protective equipment (PPE) was problematic in more ways than one. "We ordinarily would use PPE for going into the room of one person maybe once a week. For a staff of around 60 people now to have to use that equipment on a daily basis was just beyond the capacity of what we had. So early in the crisis, we were wearing our protective wear [which is meant to be used once and discarded] five days in a row, unless there was some sort of compromise."

Then there was the disconnect of relating to patients from behind layers of protection. "How do you communicate with somebody, how do you reassure somebody with just your eyes? How do they know I'm smiling underneath my

mask?" It wasn't just the smile that was eliminated; it was also physical touch. "Now we had rubber gloves on, we had these gowns on. It was something we never imagined."

Like her colleagues, Sr. Mary Catherine did the best she could for patients despite the difficulties. When her family members told her "Please be careful," she recalls, she downplayed the risks. She worried about potentially infecting the older sisters she lived with in the convent.

And at the hospital, the number of deaths was staggering. "It was death like we've never seen death before. The number of body bags. The last minutes that families had with each other, which we knew were potentially the last they

would ever see of their loved one. That was heart-wrenching. And when we put people on ventilators ... to realize that only 20 percent of the people were ever going to make it off the ventilators was really overwhelming.”

As it turned out, some of the hardest things were also some of the largest blessings. “As part of the palliative care team,” she says, “I had some of the most deeply moving conversations with family members about the end of life, about the loss of their loved ones.”

One of the nurses suggested placing “a little story” of each patient at the bottom of the bed beside the patient chart. Then, though the intubated patients were unable to speak, the caretakers would be able to talk to them with some knowledge of their lives. “I spent an afternoon calling the families of all the patients in that unit,” Sr. Mary Catherine recalls. “I asked them questions, and they talked about their family member. That was a blessing ... just listening to the families talk about their loved ones. I think they felt comforted that someone wanted to know all this information about their family member.”

Sr. Mary Catherine also felt blessed by the prayers of her congregation. “I remember once early on in religious life, one of the sisters said to me, ‘Where one of us is, we all are.’ And I would always think, every day, when I walked into the Emergency Department, *We are all here.*” Supportive colleagues and her own rich prayer life also helped get her through the crisis.

“I’ll always remember the names of the patients that died. It’s like a litany,” Sr. Mary Catherine says. “I still have contact with some of their families. The intensity of the time made connections that will last.”

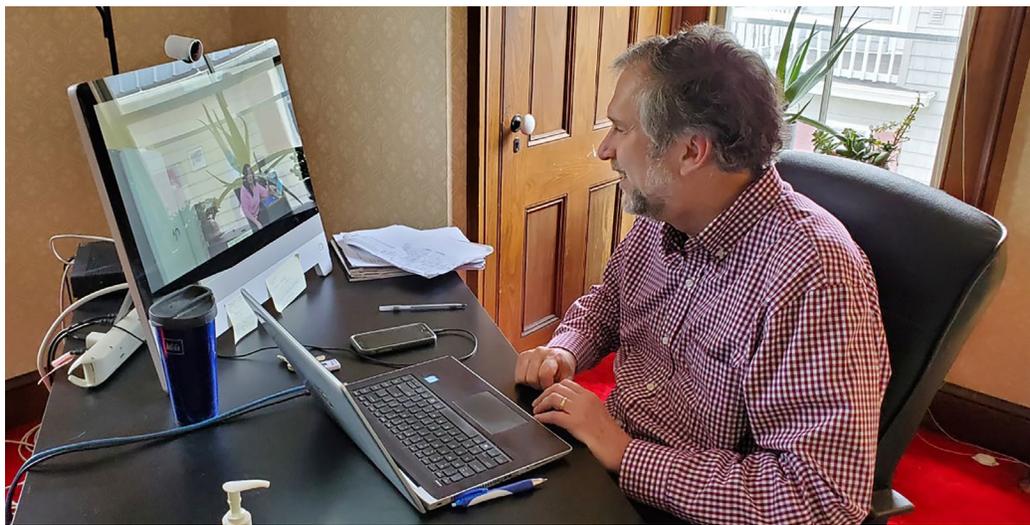
And she adds a point of hope: “I know for sure that an awareness of the health care needs of the poor has been brought into the light. There’s been great insight into the disparity of care.”

Click here for the full Archways interview with Sr. Mary Catherine Redmond. To read Sr. Mary Catherine’s blog posts about her experience of the Covid-19 crisis, ***click here***.



**BEYOND THE CALL ** Dr. Helen Fernandez (above), a geriatrician and palliative care specialist at Mt. Sinai Hospital (and a parishioner at St. Francis de Sales on East 96th Street), became infected in the early days of the crisis. Sidelined as she quarantined and recovered, she secured a donation of iPads from Facebook to help patients on her ward at Mt. Sinai stay connected to family and friends who could not come to visit.

BUSINESS NOT AS USUAL ** Non-Covid medical needs did not go away in the pandemic – and some were exacerbated. In Sullivan and Ulster counties, the Catholic Charities substance abuse services were more urgently needed than ever. In the words of one dedicated rehab counselor, “Addiction doesn’t take a day off, so neither can we.” Where possible, services were delivered remotely. Below, **Dr. Mike Weddel, medical director of the program, conducts a telehealth session.



/ SPIRITUAL CARE

It was Good Friday when **Fr. Antonio Maria Diez de Medina** came to the Bronx to serve as a hospital chaplain. A Franciscan Friar of the Renewal who lives in community at St. Mary of the Assumption Friary in Newburgh, he stepped up when the community's superior, Fr. John Paul Ourlette, CFR, asked for volunteers to help some of the many coronavirus patients facing the illness alone, without sacraments or visits from loved ones.

"When I first started at the hospital," he recalls, "there was some apprehension about going into the Covid rooms. The doors would be closed. As a chaplain, I didn't really have to go in – I could pray long-distance, but there's a divide there." To close that divide, Fr. Medina had to conquer fear. "I was a little nervous, but seeing the doctors and nurses putting on the full PPE, I followed their example. If they're taking the risk to do that, then as a priest I decided I should do the same."

Even inside the room, Fr. Medina found communication was not always easy when patients were on ventilators. "The ones who were conscious would look at me and not be able to speak but they could nod their head yes or no," he says. "Others maybe had their eyes open but weren't really responsive – and others had their eyes closed. I would just continue to speak to them and presume that they were hearing me. They couldn't show that they heard me, but I know that they did. For somebody very ill, if I was there to do the anointing, and even just saying the words, I think there's grace flowing for them. ... The soul is there, and even though a person's body is not able to respond, you should treat them with dignity and love them."

A chaplain's first duty is to the patients, but he also serves an important function in helping families and even the health-care workers. "Part of it is to

be a spiritual presence, to remind them of God's care and love for them," Fr. Medina says. "Sometimes there would be nurses who would come up to me and say, 'I need a prayer.' And I would pray with them right there and give them a priestly blessing. That's helpful for them, to strengthen them to continue on." In the early days of the crisis, it was especially intense. "There was that fear that was kind of crippling to people. Sometimes I had to pray with people, even the staff, against that fear that was robbing them of peace and joy."

Despite the many challenges and the tragedy of so much suffering, there are also many blessings for the hospital chaplain. One simple one is the joy of seeing a patient get better. "There was a Covid-19 patient who had the respirator and was not responsive," Fr. Medina recalls. "I went in and prayed with him, and the next day I came back and he was awake and talking. The nurse was really happy, she was just thanking God."

And perhaps the greatest joy is found in the prayer itself. "Sometimes when



you're praying with people, you can see that the Lord is really touching them. Or even oneself," he says. "Part of it, too, is just accompanying. Like when the families requested prayer for their loved one. Just accompanying them in that. That's been a blessing as well.

"It's been a joy I'll always remember to be able to serve in this capacity, to be a loving witness," Fr. Medina says. His days of chaplaincy in the Bronx are ended for now, but if there's a second "wave" of the virus and the call goes out, he says he'll volunteer all over again.



Stepping Up

IN EARLY MARCH, regional Church leaders realized that they were going to be needing more chaplains than usual in the weeks ahead. Working with ArchCare, which runs the region's hospital chaplaincy program during normal times, the Archdiocese of New York put out a call for five additional priests from parishes and monastic communities to leave their home base and take up residence in isolation near the hospitals where they would be needed. Dozens of priests answered the call.

Among the volunteers, Fr. Antonio Maria Diez de la Medina (see previous page) served in the Bronx. In Dutchess County, Fr. Michael Connolly of St. Columba in Hopewell Junction and Fr. Louis Masi of St. Mary in Fishkill resided at a disused retreat house while serving hospitals and nursing homes.

A number of priests were already serving in the ArchCare chaplaincy. One of them, Fr. Hugh Vincent Dyer, OP, a friar of the Dominican health-care ministry, went into residence at the ArchCare Mary Manning Walsh nursing home. There he provided pastoral care for residents alongside the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm, who have run the facility for decades. Via closed-circuit TV, Fr. Dyer offered daily Mass and rosary, along with occasional classic movies. He also administered sacraments to residents afflicted with Covid-19.

"The height of it all was really the month of April," he recalls. That was when New York state was requiring nursing homes to accept coronavirus patients from area hospitals. At the Walsh home, more than 50 died. "You would suit up with gloves and masks and robes. Early on, when we were still waiting for PPE, you might be administering from the door."

Fr. John Maria Devaney, OP, a Dominican from Fr. Dyer's community, was working nearby at a hospital



ABOVE: Fr. Hugh Vincent Dyer, OP, moved into ArchCare at Mary Manning Walsh nursing home as chaplain during the pandemic. TOP: Sr. Helena Therese Horan and Sr. Maureen Elizabeth Doonan, both Carmelite Sisters of the Aged and Infirm, worked tirelessly to ensure the comfort, safety and spiritual well-being of residents at Mary Manning Walsh.

on Manhattan's East Side. "For two and a half weeks, it was 12 hours on, 12 hours off," he says. "I was the overnight guy." He recalls "going into rooms where I had to help people say good-bye via tablets. Giving the last rites while I'm holding up a tablet for the family to see because they can't come."

As we wait to see whether the virus has a resurgence in the region this fall, most area chaplains have gotten a well-earned break, but all are prepared to jump back in. "It's the priest *in persona Christi* - in the person of Christ," says Fr. Devaney. "It's me, you know - the broken vessel, but nonetheless His priesthood."

/ COMMUNITY CARE



When the Covid-19 crisis swept through the New York region, overwhelming medical facilities and upending the economy, those directly affected by the virus were not the only victims. As Msgr. Kevin Sullivan, executive director of Catholic Charities of New York, observes, “The problems that existed before the virus didn’t go away. They got worse.” For those already in need, the pandemic is a crisis on top of a crisis.

In the three months after the pandemic started, Catholic Charities distributed half a million meals in the archdiocese. Part of the Solution (POTS), an affiliated social services agency in the Bronx, tripled its volume of prepared meals from 450 to more than 1,300 per day. The food distribution schedule at the Ulster Food Pantry in Kingston, run by Catholic Charities Community Services of Orange, Sullivan and Ulster, went from two days a week to five.

Programs supporting immigrants, day laborers, the homeless and people



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Food pantry associate Leomary Rodriguez and associate director of food and dignity programs Taina Rodriguez, behind the scenes at Part of the Solution (POTS); POTS program manager Christopher Minaya; Dominique Wallace Mills and Eline Martinez at the Catholic Charities Ulster Pantry.



struggling with substance abuse and mental health issues all had to respond to increased demand for services while also protecting the health of clients and staff. Nursing homes were especially hard hit when they were ordered by New York State to accept Covid-positive patients discharged from area hospitals without being provided with adequate protective equipment and resources.

Through all of this, thousands of caring staff and volunteers at hundreds of organizations kept on helping our neighbors, reaching out to clients electronically or through home visits, taking on new roles in organizations, improvising new ways to deliver help to those in need. To all of these giving souls, including the few pictured here, Archways offers a humble salute. ❄

For more information on how services are being delivered during the crisis, see [“Outside the Box.”](#)



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Emergency food program assistant Juan Nunez guides arriving clients at POTS; Janet Hernandez, an organizer at the Catholic Charities Community Services day laborers’ program in Yonkers, advises a client from a distance of six feet; staff at ArchCare’s Carmel Richmond Nursing Home, Staten Island; Chef Leroy Brown, the force behind the prepared meals program at POTS, which tripled its volume to 1,350 meals per day during the pandemic.



Photo by Mary DiBlase Blaiich.

A GIFT FROM *THE CHILDREN*

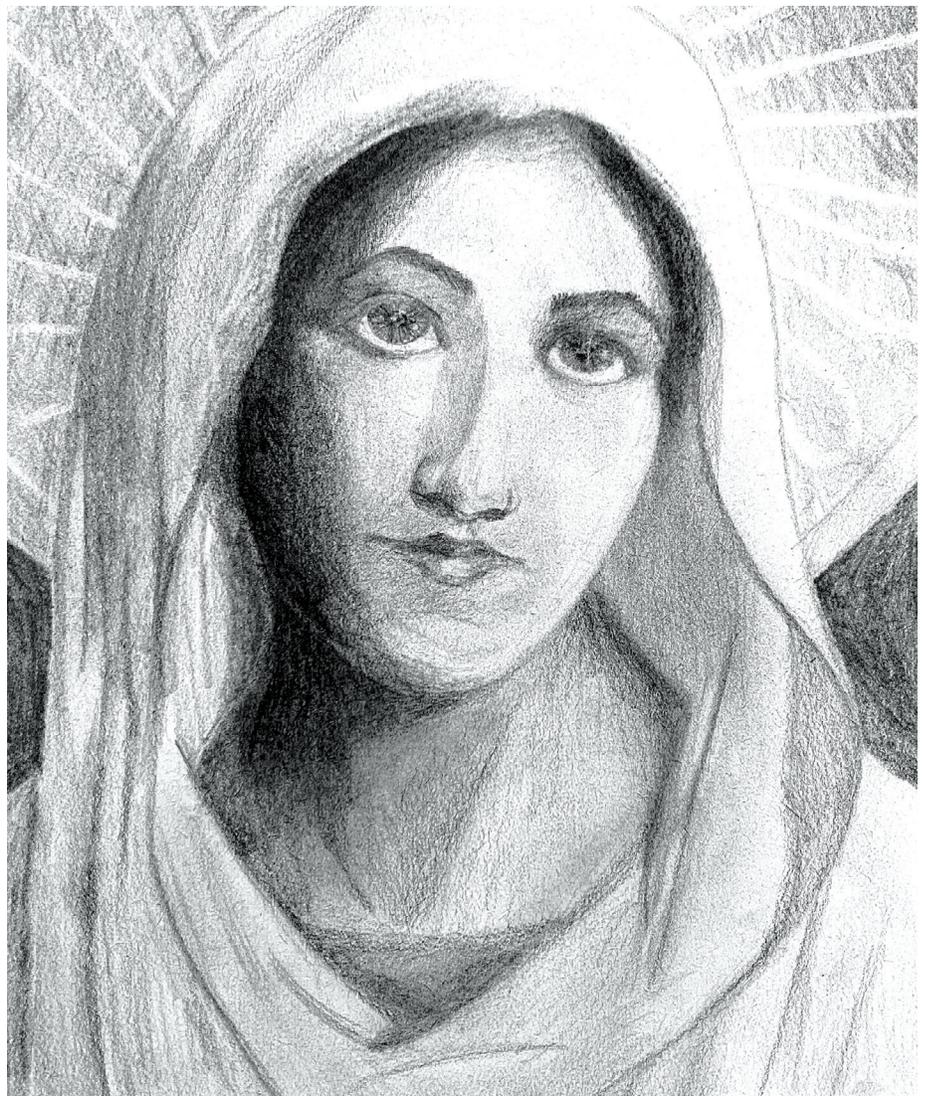
SOMETIMES, in the midst of stress and despair, we need to be reminded of the blessings that surround us. The beauty of art can be a powerful antidote to anxiety and hopelessness.

Artists, in the words of Pope Francis, “are called to shine beauty, especially where darkness or gray dominates.” They are “custodians of beauty, heralds and witnesses of hope for humanity.” His words, spoken in 2016, have a deep resonance for us now. “I invite you,” he added, “to cherish beauty, and beauty will heal the many wounds that mark the hearts and souls of the men and women of today.”

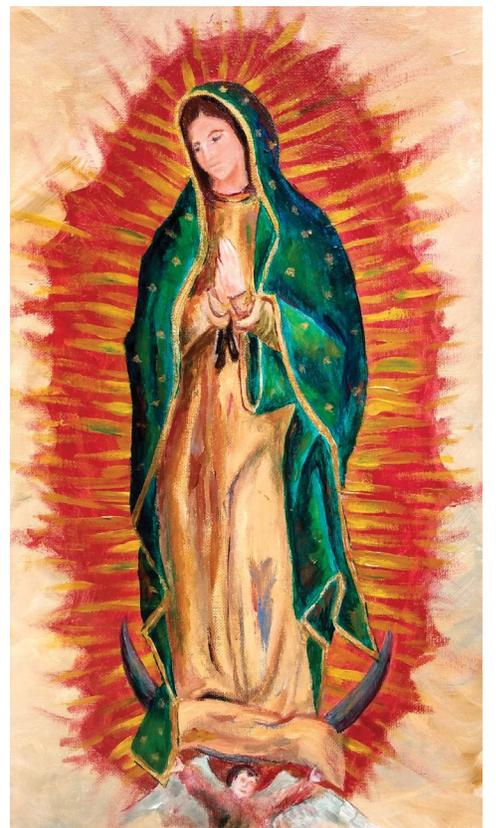
In this year’s **CYO Virtual Art and Essay Contest**, the students of the Archdiocese of New York offer us healing through the beauty of their works. With humor, insight and artistic talent, they have let their light shine on the love of God that lies at the heart of creation. Their entries also helped raise funds to feed hungry New Yorkers during the current crisis.

We hope you enjoy the sampling in these pages. Galleries of all the entries can be found [here](#) (art) and [here](#) (photography).

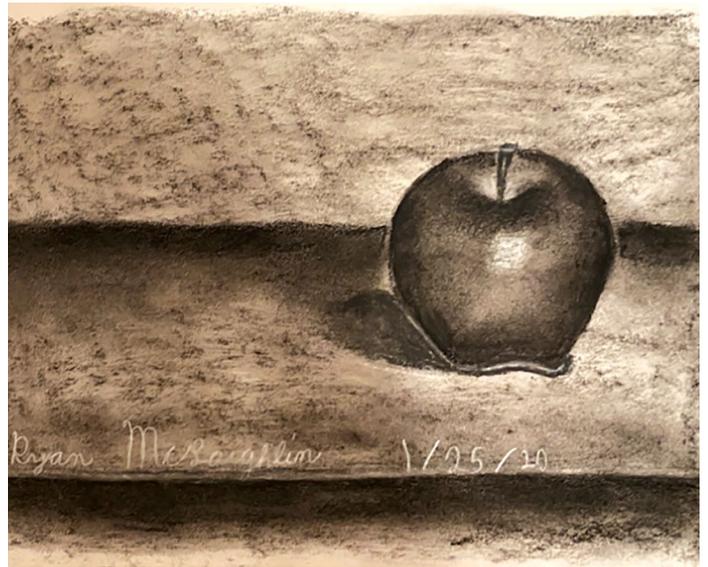
Editor’s note: Due to the success of the virtual format, CYO has announced a fall 2020 contest in addition to the traditional spring competition. For information, go to cyony.org.



Benjamin Muecke, Virgin Mary, 7th grade, St. Augustine School, Ossining



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Faye Ferrer, Psalm 91:11, 6th grade, St. Rita School, Staten Island; Cecilia Moreno, Our Lady of Guadalupe, 8th grade, St. Augustine School, Ossining; Mackenzie Fitzpatrick, You Are Not Alone, 4th grade, Notre Dame Academy, Staten Island (Archways Hon. Mention)



“

I LONG FOR THE TIME,
IN NEW YORK CITY

WHEN THE VIRAL
PANDEMIC ENDS,

EVERYONE STRONG
AND HEALTHY,

WE WILL ALL GATHER
WITH FRIENDS.

I LONG FOR THE TIME,
IN NEW YORK CITY

FILLED WITH PEACE
AND EQUALITY,

IN THIS MELTING POT
OF RACES,

I PRAY FOR UNITY
AND ONENESS.

”

Matthew Mendoza
“NYC Vision 2020”
(excerpt)



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Auden Kinahan, *Alone in the Field*, 7th grade, St. Denis – St. Columba, Hopewell Junction; Ryan McLaughlin, *Apple for the Teacher*, 4th grade, Sacred Heart School, Suffern; Faye Ferrer, *Pandemic Haircut*, 6th grade, St. Rita School, Staten Island (Archways Hon. Mention)

“

I LISTEN TO THEIR
CONVERSATIONS

AND READ
THEIR THOUGHTS,

THE SENIORS
ABOUT THEIR LOST YOUTH

AND THE YOUNG
ABOUT THEIR DREAMS,

THE SUN
STARTS TO SET

AND THE SKY
BEGINS TO DARKEN,

THE SUMMER IS OVER

FOR NOW.

”

Alexander Califano
“Centennial Field Speaks”
(excerpt)



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Maya Schnell, Flowers, 6th grade, St. Paul School, Valley Cottage (Archways Hon. Mention); Piya Goyal, Mother-Daughter at the Beach, 5th grade, St. Augustine School, Ossining; Hunter Moore, Lavender Friends, 11th grade, Montfort Academy, Mt. Vernon

2020 CYO Virtual Art and Essay Contest Winners

ART

Small Fries (1st and 2nd grades)

First Place: Abigail Bratt

Mother's Day Sunset | 2nd grade
St. Augustine School, Ossining

Second Place: Antonia Schnell

My Visit to the Dentist | 2nd grade
St. Christopher School, Staten Island

Third Place: William Muecke

Parrot | 1st grade
St. Augustine School, Ossining

First Place (Sculpture):

Luke Thengampallil

Pinecone Bouquet and Pollinators
2nd grade | St. Paul School, Valley Cottage

Second Place (Sculpture): Ale Vigna

Hot Dog with Bun | 1st grade
Our Lady Queen of Peace, Staten Island

Beginners (3rd and 4th grades)

First Place: Ryan McLaughlin

Apple for the Teacher | 4th grade
Sacred Heart, Suffern

Second Place: Vivianna Chin

Air Balloons in the Sunset | 4th grade
St. Augustine School, Ossining

Third Place: Freya Wouter

Self-Portrait | 3rd grade
Kingston Catholic, Kingston

Learners (5th and 6th grades)

First Place: Piya Goyal

Mother-Daughter at the Beach | 5th grade
St. Augustine School, Ossining

Second Place: Arianna Chin

Blessed Mother of Mary | 6th grade
St. Augustine School, Ossining

Third Place: Faye Ferrer

Psalm 91:11 | 6th grade
St. Rita School, Staten Island

Masters (7th and 8th grades)

First Place: Auden Kinahan

Alone in the Field | 7th grade
St. Denis-St. Columba, Hopewell Junction

Second Place: Cecilia Moreno

Our Lady of Guadalupe | 8th grade
St. Augustine School, Ossining

Third Place: Benjamin Muecke

Virgin Mary | 7th grade
St. Augustine School, Ossining

Experts (9th and 10th grades)

First Place: Brian Mahaney

The Charmer | 10th grade
Montfort Academy, Ossining

Second Place: Lucia Bautista

Angel in Disguise | 10th grade
Montfort Academy, Ossining

Elite (11th and 12th grades)

First Place: Natasha Pabon

Moon Eyes | 11th grade
Academy of Mt. St. Ursula, Bronx

Second Place: Hunter Moore

Lavender Friends | 11th grade
Montfort Academy, Ossining

Third Place: Christopher Elias

Skeleton in Catacombs | 12th grade
Salesian High School, New Rochelle

PHOTO

First Place: Jackson Murphy

Small Joys | 8th grade
Our Lady of Good Counsel, Staten Island

Second Place: Samantha Murphy

Dog at Work | 6th grade
St. Augustine School, Ossining

Third Place: Victoria Lewis

92 Daze | 9th grade
St. Joseph by the Sea High School,
Staten Island

POETRY

Middle School

First Place: Matthew Califano

"Shepherd's Respite" | 8th grade
Home school, Rockland

Second Place: Alexander Califano

"Centennial Field Speaks" | 8th grade
Home school, Rockland

Third Place: Matthew Mendoza

"NYC Vision 2020" | 5th grade
Our Lady of Good Counsel, Staten Island

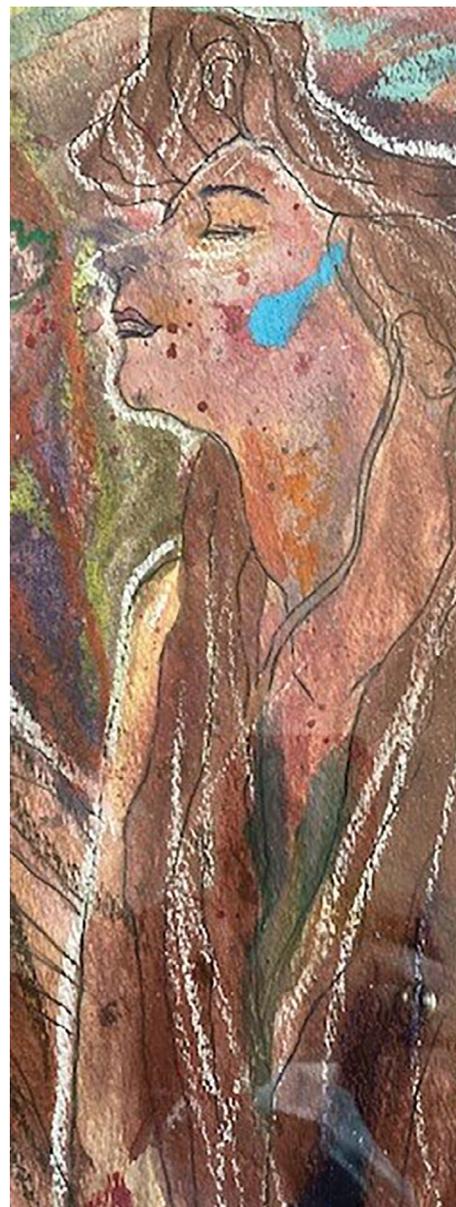
High School

First Place: Jean Cajamarca

"The Skin Is Not Wicked" | 12th grade
All Hallows High School, Bronx

Second Place: Alexandra Cordato

"The Waiting Room" | 11th grade
St. Joseph Hill Academy, Staten Island



Brian Mahaney, *The Charmer*, 10th grade,
Montfort Academy, Westchester

Third Place: Noah Barrett

"Darkness" | 11th grade
Our Lady of Lourdes High School,
Poughkeepsie

ESSAY

First Place: Alexander Califano

"Pandemic Dire Warning" | 8th grade
Home school, Rockland

Second Place: Matthew Califano

"Lessons from the Pandemic" | 8th grade
Home school, Rockland

Third Place: James Hook

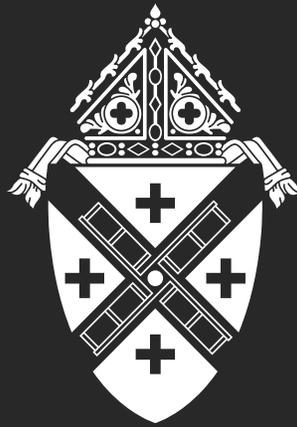
"Experience That Influenced
His Development" | 8th grade
St. Charles School, Staten Island



Archways ✦✦

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