



April 30, 2020

## Catholics Work to Meet Needs of Latin America's Poor Amid Pandemic

~ by Eduardo Campos Lima, National Catholic Reporter (NCR)

As many countries in Latin America enforce social distancing measures in order to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, many are deprived of basic subsistence. From Mexico to Argentina to Chile, Catholic institutions have been pointedly active in offering support to the most disadvantaged social segments during the pandemic.

Two social groups have been strongly impacted, among others. More than half the population in Mexico and in the Dominican Republic, for instance, work in unregistered menial jobs, street vending and other precarious activities – without government protection or labor rights. With the establishment of partial or full quarantines, those people have seen their income suddenly disappear.

Large Latin American cities such as Mexico City, have significant homeless populations, numbering in the tens of thousands.

“The homeless population is much more marginalized now. Many groups that used to distribute food among them left the streets out of fear of the disease,” said Fr. Diego Melo, a Franciscan priest. “We realized the new situation required a reconfiguration of our work and we did so,” he said. They set up a tent in front of one of their houses and started to serve at least 2,500 hot meals each day.



In Mexico, the church has launched an effort to coordinate several assistance initiatives taking place in the country.

“We’ve been trying to coordinate our works in order to help poor people in urban and rural areas,” Fr. Sergio Cobo, director of the Society of Jesus’ Loyola Foundation to the NCR. “We’ve been giving assistance to hundreds of thousands of people this way.”

Beyond the most visible face of the crisis, there’s a political layer determining the course of events in Latin America.

“Our preferential option for the poor compels us to accompany them in this moment of emergency but our work can’t be limited to that. Our faith leads us to recognize the need for structural changes in a social system that keeps generating poverty,” said Fr Cobo. To read the entire article click [here](#).

# Federal Relief Leaves Out DACA Students

~ by Rhina Guidos,  
*Catholic News Service*

The U.S. Department of Education said federal financial relief for Coronavirus for higher education is meant for U.S. citizens, prompting protests from students enrolled in colleges and universities under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program or DACA.

DACA students, brought to the U.S. illegally as children, do not qualify for emergency aid Education Department officials said on April 21, the same day U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced an additional \$6.2 billion in federal funds to higher education institutions.



The U.S. Department of Education said that federal financial relief for coronavirus for higher education is meant for U.S. citizens, prompting protests from DACA students. Photo: CNS/Reuters/Mike Segar

Some of it is slated to help students in the form of grants, but groups such as United We Dream, a national network of DACA students and immigrant youth, said in an April 21 statement that the funding leaves out immigrants who “play an essential role in our society and now they serve as front-line workers responding to COVID-19.”

One estimate says that of the approximately 700,000 beneficiaries of the DACA program – some 27,000 serve as health care workers or are on the front lines offering services during the pandemic.

“Yet immigrants have been largely left out of COVID-19 relief efforts,” said the statement from United We Dream.

Luz Chavez Gonzales, a DACA recipient who attends Trinity Washington University, a Catholic university, said, “I’m completing my junior year at Trinity Washington, an institution that has a large undocumented student population. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19, I’ve become the sole provider of my household since my parents and younger siblings lost their jobs. DACA allows me to work, and with a health crisis and the uncertainty of an upcoming DACA Supreme Court ruling, my family could lose their only source of income.”

She expressed disappointment with the administration’s stance to limit the funds.

To read the entire article click [here](#).



Tutoring continues at Bethany House through on-line learning.

## Virtual Life

In these challenging times of stay-at-home orders, Bethany House of Hospitality in the Chicago area provides an essential service and so its staff continues to accompany the young women (and children) staying there. It is, after all, “home” for them and every effort is being made to keep them safe and healthy.

Many of Bethany’s volunteers have been forced to stay away—for their

safety and the safety of the residents. But for some, especially our English tutors, that has not stopped the valuable service they offer. English tutoring and conversation classes for the women take place four days a week through Zoom videoconferencing. Counseling is also being done in this way and there was actually an art class given over Zoom. In this day and age, this is a very familiar way for this age group to communicate, so it’s not foreign (no pun intended) to them.

During this time, board meetings are also held through Zoom with all participants safely in their own homes.

*Since October 2017, Bethany House of Hospitality has housed more than 40 women and 7 children from Central America, Africa and the Middle East. The average length of stay has been 6 months.*

*~ submitted by Sr. Cathy Fedewa, CSFN, Cabrini Retreat Center*

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## Spring in Radnor Brings Forth New Life and Hope

As the world struggles to cope with the complexities of the coronavirus, the season of Spring unfolds unabashedly in the northern hemisphere. Many have commented that this spring, especially in the Northeast and Middle Atlantic regions of the United States, has been particularly spectacular in its vibrancy and duration. Flowering trees have burst forth with intense color and azalea buds are just about ready to pop.



Those familiar with Cabrini University know that the campus in spring is glorious. Inside the front gate, just opposite the Gatehouse, is a pond that welcomes visitors. Among the visitors each spring is a pair of Canadian geese who settle in at the water’s edge to await the arrival of their goslings. Missionary Sisters Christine Marie Baltas and Grace Waters delight in watching this rite of spring unfold. And yesterday, the Sisters announced that the first gosling has arrived! What a hopeful antidote to the unsettled, daunting days of COVID-19.

## Prayer is Powerful - It Fills the Earth with Mercy



Cabrini Retreat Center has been unable to welcome guests on site since March 16th. Guests scheduled to make a retreat are feeling the loss of their time away with God and their faith community. Especially impacted are the high school seniors who plan and prepare all year for their four-day Kairos Retreat.

However, the spiritual ministry of Cabrini Retreat Center continues at this time through our Sister Prayer Partners.

Sr. Grace Waters, MSC began coordinating the Sisters' Prayer Partner ministry in 2006. She assigns a willing Missionary Sister to be a "prayer partner" for each group who spends time at the Retreat Center.

When groups arrive, the name of the "Sister Prayer Partner" and her photo are posted near their meeting space. When the group is welcomed they are told about their partner. Groups are delighted by the connection with the Sisters. Returning groups will often check the bulletin board for their Sister Prayer Partner even before she is "introduced" at the welcome.

In the past 14 years, the Missionary Sisters have been "missioned in prayer" to over 800 groups; their prayers can truly be felt by staff and guests alike.

Prayer Partners continue to be assigned for the groups that had planned to be at the center for retreat. Prayer Partners have been added for the staff, housekeeping and food service vendors waiting for on-site-ministry to resume.

When in contact with groups, Retreat Center staff assures the leaders they have a "Prayer Partner" supporting them through this uncertain time until they are able to return. The staff is grateful to the Sisters for their prayers and are united with Mother Cabrini in her belief that "prayer is powerful".

*~ submitted by Nancy Golen, Executive Director, Cabrini Retreat Center*



In a photo taken prior to the Coronavirus pandemic, a group gathers at the Cabrini Retreat Center for their Kairos Retreat. Here they are checking the bulletin board to become better acquainted with the Missionary Sister Prayer Partner who will be especially mindful of and holding them in prayer during their retreat.

From the Province Vocation Promotion Team...

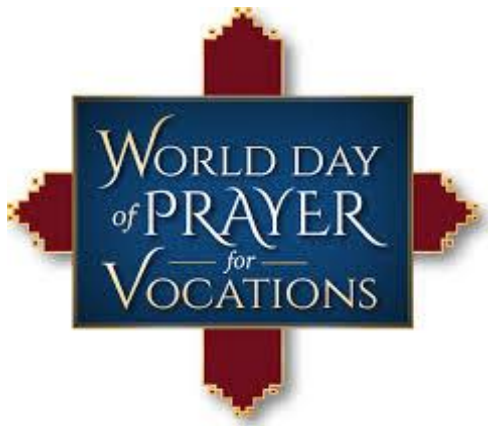
## World Day of Prayer for Vocations

Sunday, May 3, 2020

*Dear friends, on this day in particular, but also in the ordinary pastoral life of our communities, I ask the Church to continue to promote vocations. May she touch the hearts of the faithful and enable each of them to discover with gratitude God's call in their lives, to find courage to say "yes" to God, to overcome all weariness through faith in Christ, and to make of their lives a song of praise for God, for their brothers and sisters, and for the whole world. May the Virgin Mary accompany us and intercede for us.*

- Pope Francis, World Day of Prayer for Vocations, 2020

The purpose of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations is to publicly celebrate vocations to ordained ministry and religious life in all its forms. Many parishes and religious institutes commemorate this day with prayer for vocations and vocation promotion events. Considering that 73 percent of women and men professing final vows participated in one or more parish activities and 88 percent served in one or more parish ministries *before* entering religious life, presence and participation in activities that mark this special day is essential. ~*National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) website*



### Prayer for World Day of Prayer for Vocations

Holy Spirit, stir within us the passion to promote vocations to the consecrated life, societies of apostolic life, diocesan priesthood, and permanent diaconate.

Inspire us daily to respond to Your call with boundless compassion, abundant generosity, and radical availability.

Help us to remember our own baptismal call to rouse us to invite the next generation to hear and respond to Your call.

Inspire parents, families, and lay ecclesial ministers to begin a conversation with young Catholics to consider a how they will live lives of holiness and sacred service.

Nudge inquirers and motivate discerners to learn more about monastic life, apostolic life, missionaries, cloistered contemplative life, and evangelical life.

Ignite our Church with the confident humility that there is an urgent need for religious sisters, brothers, deacons, and priests to live in solidarity with those who are poor, neglected, and marginalized.

Disrupt our comfortable lives and complacent attitudes with new ideas to respond courageously and creativity with a daily 'YES!' Amen. ~*NRVC website*

# May is the Month of Mary

Pope Francis asked Catholics to make a special effort in May to pray the rosary, knowing that by doing so they will be united with believers around the world asking for Mary's intercession in stopping the coronavirus pandemic.

"Contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary, our mother, will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial," the pope said in a letter addressed to all Catholics and released by the Vatican on April 25.

The month of May is traditionally devoted to Mary and many Catholics already are in the habit of praying the rosary at home during the month, he noted. "The restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to appreciate all the more this 'family' aspect, also from a spiritual point of view."



Pope Francis wrote two prayers to Mary that can be recited at the end of the rosary, prayers he said he would be reciting "in spiritual union with all of you."



Pope Francis' prayers also include specific intentions for those who are sick, for those who care for them, for those who have died and those who mourn for them, for scientists seeking cures and vaccines and for government leaders who must find a way to protect their people. ~ *America Magazine*

The text of the letter and prayers in English can be found [here](#).

The text of the letter and prayers in Spanish can be found [here](#).

**The month of May holds special significance for the Missionary Sisters because Mary, Our Lady of Grace, is the Foundress of the Institute:**

***I entrust the Institute to you (Mary). You are our Foundress: be also our Mother - protect this inheritance of yours. Mary, we are your daughters. Direct and guide us on the straight path, so that we may always fulfill the beautiful mission we have received on earth: to love Jesus with our whole heart and with all our strength...***

*~Journal of a Trusting Heart, July 1901, Buenos Aires  
~ with thanks to Sr. Catherine Garry, MSC*

# On May 1<sup>st</sup> - Renewing the Consecration of the United States to the Care of Our Blessed Mother



As the world continues to face the ongoing effects of the global pandemic of the coronavirus, Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles and president of the USCCB has announced that the U.S. bishops will join the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops on May 1 in renewing the consecrations of the two nations to the care of our Blessed Mother.

Through a collective dedication or entrustment of a nation to Mary, an act of consecration is meant to be a reminder to the faithful of the Blessed Mother's witness to the Gospel and to ask for her effective intercession before her Son on behalf of those in need.

**The consecration on May 1 follows a similar action of the bishops' conference of Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAM) who consecrated their nations to Our Lady of Guadalupe on Easter Sunday.** This prayer reaffirms and renews previous Marian entrustments, and it unites us in solidarity with our

Holy Father, who recently established the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, as a source of protection and strength.

Archbishop Gomez will lead a brief liturgy with the prayer of re-consecration on Friday, May 1 at 3:00 pm EDT and has invited the bishops to join in from their respective dioceses and asked them to extend the invitation to the faithful in their dioceses for their participation. ~ *USCCB website*

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## Prayer Requests

### ***Peggy Chehardy***

Kindly unite in prayer for Peggy Chehardy, an alumna of Cabrini High School, who is undergoing treatment for cancer. Pray that her treatment will be successful and that she will regain full health.

### ***Theresa Dabdoub***

Theresa, the niece of Jane Daboub Bartlett, alumna of Cabrini High School, is undergoing treatment for cancer. Please pray for her healing.

***Sr. Consolata Demma, MSC***

Please unite in prayer for Sr. Consolata as she continues to struggle with COVID-19. Our prayers and support are with Sr. Consolata during this time. Pray that she remains strong and gets well soon.

***Geraldine Flaherty's brother***

Kindly pray for John, the brother of Geraldine Flaherty, the administrator at Sacred Heart Convent in New York City. John is undergoing brain surgery today. We pray for John, for his surgeons and for a full recovery.

***Alison Hadden***

Please hold Alison in your prayers. She is recovering from major surgery. Pray that her recovery will be swift and that she will be restored to full health.

***Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus***

The month of May is special for the Missionary Sisters because Mary, Our Lady of Grace, is the Foundress of the Institute. Let us offer our prayers to Mary during this time of the coronavirus pandemic and ask her protection for all.

***Sr. Aloysia Morelli, MSC***

Your prayers are requested for Sr. Aloysia who, today, will be undergoing surgery with radiation at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in NYC. Please pray that all will go well with her procedure and that her recovery will be uncomplicated and complete.

***Father Frank Morrisey, OMI***

You are asked to continue your prayers for Father Frank, a good friend of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and an excellent canonist, who has been diagnosed with cancer. Please pray that he will soon be returned to full health.

***Jimmy Perrier***

Kindly pray for Jimmy, the husband of Yvonne Arbour Perrier, alumna of Cabrini High School, who is very ill.

## With a Grateful Heart

***Judy Brown***

Last week, we asked your prayers for Judy Brown, a good friend of Sr. Christine Marie Baltas, MSC and of many Missionary Sisters. Judy remains hospitalized but is recovering and is feeling much better. She is grateful for all the prayers that she has received.

## In Loving Memory

***Jack Abruzzo***

It is with sadness that we share that Jack Abruzzo died on April 20th after a short illness. He was a charter member of the Giuseppe A. Nigro Lodge #2234, which sponsored the Annual Feast of Mother Cabrini on Long Island. He also chaired and sat on the mission board of St Frances Cabrini Shrine in New York City. He was a generous benefactor to the Shrine for many years. Please pray for Jack and his family



### ***Sr. Susan Greene, RDC***

Sr. Susan Greene, RDC, (formerly known as Sr. Mary Theophane), a Sister of the Divine Compassion, died peacefully on April 17, 2020.

Susan was a resident at St. Cabrini Nursing Home and a good friend of many of the Cabrini Sisters in residence, especially Sr. Julie Toto. As Sr. Laura Donavan, President of the Sisters of the Divine Compassion said, *"Sister Susan was a nun without borders. So strong was her charity and dedication to God's work. She was in mission until her last breath."*

Many at the nursing home who knew Sr. Susan would be quick to remark that she was truly a woman that epitomized charity, compassion, and presence of the moment. Often, the Cabrini Sisters would consider Susan as an adopted MSC – and truth be told, she was our “go to” person who helped other sisters acclimate to their new environment at the nursing home. As many knew, Sister Susan was also an accomplished artist and occasionally would gift her beautiful works to others (Fr. Edwin’s retirement, Sr. Arlene’s 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee, Sr. Julie’s Special Birthday, etc.).



So now we bid “farewell” to our friend and thank you for the many gifts that you have shared with us over these years...your friendship, your artistic expression of God’s creation, and an example of a life well-lived in the compassionate heart of Jesus.

### ***Jody Settle***

Jody Settle passed away on Sunday, April 19, a victim of the coronavirus COVID-19. He was the loving friend and partner of Ed Koenig for thirty-three years. Jody lived with multiple sclerosis for more than thirty years, always positive that he would someday rise up from his wheelchair and walk again. Now he is running with the angels.

Jody's happy demeanor and wry sense of humor would always pick up peoples' spirits when they needed a little bit of cheer. Jody loved the St. F. X. Cabrini Shrine in NYC and had a special devotion to St. Frances Xavier Cabrini. He is greatly missed by his family and Ed’s, and their many friends and neighbors in New York. Please keep him and his loved ones in your thoughts at this difficult time.



*“Tis the month of our Mother, the blessed and beautiful days...”*