



December 2, 2021

## Pope Francis Pained at Migrant Deaths

*~ by the Associated Press via National Catholic Reporter*

Vatican City – This past Sunday, Pope Francis expressed pain and sorrow at the deaths and suffering of migrants crossing the English Channel, at the border between Poland and Belarus, and the Mediterranean Sea.



**Photo above:** Pope Francis addresses the crowd in St. Peter's Square on Sunday praying for the migrants.

**Photo below:** Adults and children being rescued from the English Channel.



The Pope asked the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square for the traditional Sunday blessing to pray "for migrants and their suffering."

"How many migrants, let's think about this, how many migrants are exposed to very serious dangers in recent days? How many lose their lives at our borders?" the pontiff said.

"I feel pain at the news of the situation in which many find themselves. Of those who died in the English Channel, of those at the border of Belarus, many of whom are children. Those who drown in the Mediterranean. How much sorrow, thinking of them."

The deaths of the 27 migrants in the English Channel have shocked both Britain and France. Still, shipwrecks of that scale are not uncommon further south in the Mediterranean Sea as migrants flee poverty, natural disasters and authoritarian regimes for a better life in Europe. UN officials estimate that as many as 1,600 people have died or are missing in the Mediterranean this year alone.

Overnight on Sunday, the Italian Coast Guard rescued 244 migrants off the coast of Calabria, the toe of the Italian boot, in difficult sea conditions. Those rescued included 41 minors, among them an infant born on the packed wooden fishing boat.

The pontiff also remembered migrants who are sent from Europe back to northern Africa, "where they are captured by traffickers and enslaved. They sell the women and torture the men.

Francis expressed closeness to the migrants and called on civil and military institutions to find solutions to help those who undertake dangerous journeys "that respect the humanity of these people."

# ADVENT

~ A Reflection by Sr. Terezinha Esperanca Merandi, MSC originally written for the *Global Sisters Report*.

Advent is a coming, an awaiting, expectation. It involves emptiness, an openness, eyes, heart and spirit awake! Wanting to be filled, looking for something more and better.

It spells H-O-P-E and b-e-y-o-n-d the here and now of all around.

In South Sudan, in this fragmented country of conflict and shattered dreams, having completed a decade of independence and yet living in the constant, haunting shadow of war, ambush, kidnappings, torture and brutal killings, this youngest and newest country in the world can choose!

Choose what? Choose to “put pain to purpose”!<sup>1</sup> There is so much pain and trauma here in this “adolescent of a country”, whose dreams waver on nightmares when faced with everyday threats and obstacles. Where is God? Where is change? Where is hope? How to “feed” hope? Teach our hearts to hope, dream for the future, hope in impossible times of sadness and tragedy? How?



First and foremost: to stay with; not cloud, abandon or mystify reality. Join hands (hearts and spirits), even in this time of Covid; defy mistrust and fear to find energy, that can be renewed, in a community of believers who know that Emmanuel is on the horizon.

Relationship and sharing enable a unifying process, beyond revenge, separation, hatred and exclusion. Is this not what the promises of the Incarnation, of God’s Advent into our human history brought about? Hope! And hope in abundance feeding our life in need (Jn 10,10). Mustering up a maturing in growth for mindful re-evaluation: God is light, His light has come into the world (Jn 1,4-5,9). Reaching out, willfully, in dialogue, going towards encounter: exercising a freedom, true and deep, which breaks down barriers (Jn 4,10). Making love real, tangible, present in the situation here and now: affectively not withdrawing and being inclusive of all ailing parties (Jn17,21.26). Where there is great suffering, only great love can endure,<sup>2</sup> to give meaning and motivation for the struggle ahead, forging the pathway forward with purpose: accompanying/building/ encouraging the newness of life being born, strengthening faltering and slumping hope, be-ing a bridge in the breach for reconciliation and peace.

Advent of Jesus’ Incarnation in South Sudan: Come, Lord Jesus, Come! Oh Wisdom, oh Adonai, oh Stem of Jesse, Radiant Star, David’s Key, King of all Nations, Emmanuel,<sup>3</sup> Come! Walk with us through tragedy into the joy and hope of your ever-coming Advent Presence! Christmas Peace on South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Nicaragua and All!

~ Terezinha Esperanca Merandi, MSC November 27, 2021 Kit, South Sudan

To read a related article in the *Global Sisters Report* please [click here](#)

<sup>1</sup> Jane “Nightbirde” Marczewski, CNN interview, Chris Cuomo Prime Time, June 23, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Rohr develops this theme at length in “The Universal Christ”, p.83.

<sup>3</sup> “O” antiphons of the Advent Evening Prayer Magnificat, December 17 - 23.

## Playwright Finds Inspiration from Mother Cabrini's Life

~ by Paula Katinas, *The Tablet*

FOREST HILLS, NY – Of the numerous stage productions being performed across New York City as the pandemic eases, perhaps only one will star...a saint.

“Happening Woman,” a musical based on the life and times of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, better known as Mother Cabrini, the beloved Patron Saint of Immigrants, [was staged] on November 13 and 14 in the auditorium of Our Lady of Mercy Church in Forest Hills.

Featuring 15 songs and a cast of 24, the play spotlights the founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who spent much of her life tending to immigrants and the poor.



The graphic for the program cover for “Happening Woman”.

It's the brainchild of AnnaMarie Prono, a parishioner at Our Lady of Mercy, who recalls the point in time when she developed an interest in the Italian-born luminary. During a chat, she asked a friend, “What do you know about Mother Cabrini?”

Her friend answered, “She was a happening woman when women weren't happening.”

That comment became the inspiration for “Happening Woman,” which Prono has co-written with composer Bob Kaufmann. The show is co-produced with Milini Singh McDonald.



The play features a variety of musical genres – including a traditional Italian tarantella, marching band music inspired by John Philip Sousa, rock and roll numbers and music with a Mexican flavor.

Kaufmann, who said the score is “unapologetically spiritual,” added that his goal was to make the songs “as upbeat and catchy as possible.”

The plot of “Happening Woman” jumps back and forth in time between the past and the present. It depicts Mother Cabrini's life but also tells the parallel present day story of a 13 year old girl struggling with multiple sclerosis (MS). Prono has MS as does McDonald. They're both inspired by the legacy of Mother Cabrini who was “sickly her entire life,” Prono said. “And yet she just did so much. She never stopped. People told her no. She didn't care. She just kept going.”

Prono is hoping “Happening Woman” inspires people, just as she was by St. Cabrini.

The creators wanted the show to bring Catholics closer to their faith.

~ submitted by Sr. Christine Marie Baltas, MSC

*Sr. Christine Marie Baltas, MSC and Cabrini University Library Director Anne Schwelm recently traveled to Forest Hills, NY to enjoy this play for which they served as resource persons.*

# Heartfelt Congratulations Are in Order!

Sandra Gaynor, Certified Nursing Assistant at Cabrini of Westchester, was presented with the 2021 Employee of Distinction Award from LeadingAge New York, part of a national association of 5,500 not-for-profit organizations. Ms. Gaynor graciously accepted the award on November 10<sup>th</sup> at a celebration held in her honor. This prestigious award is given to an employee who excels in their profession and who has served with distinction and made significant contributions to the betterment of services for the aged and infirmed.

James Clyne, President and CEO of LeadingAge New York, although not able to be present for the occasion, sent a pre-recorded video message extending his congratulations to Ms. Gaynor. In his message, he shared, “The Employee of Distinction Award recognizes the extraordinary dedication of staff who have positively affected the quality of life of those who are served. The award enables member organizations to recognize and express appreciation to those who have dedicated themselves for the caring of others. I am pleased to present this 2021 Employee of Distinction Award for your dedication and commitment to the field of aging services.”



Employee of Distinction Award winner Sandra Gaynor shares a big smile as she displays her Certificate of Congratulations.

In addition to Mr. Clyne’s comments, Winonah Josephs, Director of Nursing shared, “When Leading Age asked us to nominate an employee for this award, we had no doubt that it would be Sandra Gaynor. Sandra has been an outstanding employee since she started at Cabrini of Westchester in 2007. During last year’s COVID-19 Pandemic, Sandra went above and beyond her duties by willingly accepting the challenge to work on the COVID-19 wing and caring for the residents that were infected with the virus. She demonstrated compassionate care while following safe work practices and came to work ready to face the challenges of what the day might bring. Sandra values her strong relationships with the residents, their families, and her team. She is highly respected and appreciated and her performance is beyond measure. Her dedication to her work and to Cabrini is truly inspiring. When asked to share her thoughts about Sandra, one of the residents in her care stated, ‘Sandra is an angel. She is always there when I need her.’” ~ submitted by Susan Herceg, Cabrini of Westchester

*Best wishes, Sandra, on your well-deserved recognition!*

## Cabrini Cavaliers for Life Stand Up for Life



Cabrini University students from left: Manny, Adriana, Kenzi and Rodrigo attended the Pennsylvania Pro-Life Union Stand up for Life event in Philadelphia.

Members of Cavaliers for Life (l to r, Manny, Adriana, Kenzi, Rodrigo) attended Pennsylvania Pro-Life Union's Stand Up for Life event in Philadelphia on Nov. 21. The students made new friends over dinner, learned about organizations that support women and children and were captivated by keynote speaker, [Patricia Sandoval's](#) moving testimony. ~ submitted by Anne Schwelm, Cabrini University

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## Climate Anxiety? This 30-day action plan may help

~ by John R. Platt, *Earth Beat*, National Catholic Reporter

A recent poll found that people today, [especially younger people](#) feel helpless when it comes to fighting climate change.

Here's the thing: That's exactly how polluting corporations *want* you to feel. The more people feel their actions don't matter, the more they find themselves rolling over and accepting the status quo.

Yes, solving the climate crisis requires bold action from governments and corporations, but that doesn't mean that individuals have to sit on the sidelines. Not only do our actions [add up and influence others](#) we also have the ability to push for – and demand – systemic change.



And that push, importantly, can help turn our individual feelings of hopelessness around. Psychologists and climate activists tell us we can go from feeling helpless or hopeless about the future and toward a more positive, productive attitude just by taking a few steps forward.

Done correctly, these steps we take can also create a momentum for the future. As scientist Katharine Hayhoe wrote last month: "If we wait for someone else to fix the problem, we'll never solve it. But when we raise our voices to call for change, when we take action together – that's when we find that hope is all around us."

With that in mind, we've created a simple action plan for the next 30 days. They include small steps we can take to advocate for bigger societal changes – and in the process remind us that the power for change lies within our ourselves. To access the action plan, please click [here](#)

## *From the Guadalupe Province Vocations Team...*

*Humor and play have a place in the serious business of vocational discernment. Over the next three weeks, we will explore the notion of:*

### **Taking Ourselves Lightly**

*~ by Sr. Michele Vincent Fisher, CSFN in HORIZON Journal of the NRVC*

Let's face it: life is serious. The realities facing our world today in this time of turmoil, violence, natural disaster, isolation and sickness can steal our joy. In the midst of it, healthy humor, laughter and play need a place on our community agenda if we are going to survive. As Pope Francis has repeatedly proclaimed, "The world doesn't need any more Christian sourpusses!" All the more, people in vocational discernment need to be in touch with the lighter side of life. Certainly the challenges that our next generation of men and women religious will face are daunting but not impossible. If people don't witness our individual and communal spirit of joy, they may see priesthood and religious life as emotionally demanding, energy-sapping, and lonely. We have the creativity to draw others into our way of life and help them to re-connect with a genuine joy in the Lord.

#### **Play together, stay together**

I recall a rather animated exchange with my college roommate's Italian mother when she discovered that I was planning to become a sister. With tears in her eyes, she muttered, "But you like to have fun! How are you gonna make it in the convent?" I assured her that I'd seen the lighter side of life in the convent and that the sisters I knew were actually quite full of fun.

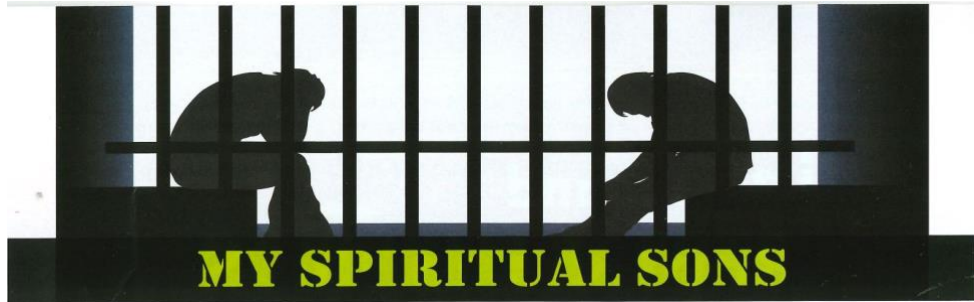
#### **Defuse tension, relax, and focus**

Fast forward 33 years. When I was vocation director for my congregation, I had the privilege of helping discerners tap into that same wellspring of joy and find a key to the door to peace and freedom of heart. Discerners frequently come to the discernment process carrying burdens. Resistance from family and friends, feelings of insecurity, anxiety about finding the "right" community, diverse theological or spiritual perspectives, concerns about debt and finance – these are just a few factors that add to the seriousness of someone discerning a religious life vocation. Finding healthy ways to defuse the tension helps discerners to relax and redirect their energy to create new perspectives and broaden their horizons.

In keeping with this philosophy, the schedule for one of my community's "Come and See" days or discernment weekends included (in addition to prayer, quiet time, and small group discussion about vows and community life) singing, games, cooking together, watching movies, artistic expression, and community service. Occasionally, someone might ask why we would spend valuable time on seemingly "frivolous" things when the discerners are with us to learn about religious life. The benefits of these playful activities far outweigh the concern that the discerners will go away without receiving sufficient understanding of the ways of religious life. In fact, the opposite is true.



Discerners who are able to relax, laugh, use their creativity, and expend physical energy during a discernment experience are more willing to come back for a second look. If members of the religious community join with the discerners when possible, the positive effect doubles. Healthy, animated interaction and a spirited sense of humor among community members are attractive qualities for discerners to witness. They also increase the bonds of communion. **Next week: Defusing tension continued...**



~ by Sr. Renee Kittelson, MSC

While living in Melbourne, Australia, and working as the Director of Nursing at Cabrini Hospital, I was baptized in the Spirit on August 26, 1972.

Several years later while I was at prayer, I had a profound sense that the Lord was asking me to become the mother of many sons. How could that be since I am a religious sister with a vow of chastity? Little did I know that my spiritual sons would be inmates.

In 1978 two men escaped from a criminally insane prison in Sydney. I was led to pray for them. Three weeks later they were captured. I sensed the Lord asking me to write to them. I was hesitant to do so, but, finally, I wrote them a simple letter, assuring them of God's love. Two long months later, I received a letter from John one of the escapees. He wrote, "I honestly do not know if I believe in God or not... I pray occasionally, but not for myself, just for other people... I pray just in case God can hear." I was overjoyed to hear from him and wrote back immediately sending him several Charismatic books. It took another couple months before he wrote. He stated that he had been too depressed to read the books.

I decided to change my approach, writing, "I do not want to be a pushy nun. Just let me know what you need." He was not long in responding. "I don't need anything. What I need is what you are giving me – friendship."

A few months later he wrote, "You asked me if I wanted anything, I said, 'no', but now there is something you can get me, a Bible."

I was delighted with his request and sent him a New American Bible, just like mine. His 'thank you' letter was filled with gratitude, stating that before he took it out of the box he even washed his hands.

John wrote to me about Peter, a Jewish inmate, with whom he shared the yard. He said that Peter was anti-Christian, so he suggested that I not write to him. I decided to do so anyway. Peter responded promptly, stating that it was good to hear from someone outside the prison walls. In his second letter he asked me to send him a Bible, stating, "I would like to know Jesus but I don't know where to start."

A few months later I was able to visit my two new spiritual sons. Six months later, John was transferred to a larger prison in Sydney where Bill, who had escaped with him, was also being held. I enjoyed a visit with both men.

To read Sr. Renee's entire article which appears in PentecostTodayUSA, please click [here](#)



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*Sister Renee Kittelson, MSC is the author of three books—Practical Catholic Spiritual 0, Prayers for Such a Time as This and Unexpected Journeys (autobiography). She is a Missionary Sister of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the order started by St. F.X. Cabrini.*

*Join us!*

Wednesday,  
December 8, 2021  
3:30 PM



**[71 Pineapple Street, Brooklyn Heights, NY](#)**

The Dorothy Day Guild is delighted to inform its members and friends that in addition to the 7:30 pm Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Wednesday, December 8th, celebrating the send-off of the Cause for Dorothy Day's canonization to Rome, the Brooklyn Oratory Parishes (St. Boniface and Assumption) and the New York City Catholic Worker Community are sponsoring a Prayer Service at Dorothy Day's place of birth, [71 Pineapple Street, Brooklyn](#), at 3:30 pm in Brooklyn Heights and is near to the corner of Henry and Pineapple Streets and a short walk from the Clark Street station for the 2 and 3 subway lines.

One hundred and twenty-four years ago, on November 8, 1897, Dorothy Day was born at [71 Pineapple Street](#) in the Brooklyn Heights section of Brooklyn. There she resided with her family for a year or two before the family moved to the Bath Beach section of Brooklyn, from where the family would move to Oakland when Dorothy was six years old.

We come together with great joy to celebrate the send-off of the Cause for the canonization of DOROTHY DAY to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome



The prayer service will include a remembrance by her granddaughter Martha Hennessy, who will read from her grandmother's writings.

For any inquiries about this event, please contact Alex Avitabile: [eli.b.ativa@gmail.com](mailto:eli.b.ativa@gmail.com)

MASS in THANKSGIVING  
with the  
Archdiocesan Young Adult Ministry  
  
DECEMBER 8, 2021 7:30 PM  
Feast of the Immaculate Conception  
  
ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL  
NEW YORK CITY

Please remember that the mass at St. Patrick's will also be live-streamed (<https://saintpatrickscathedral.org/live>) for those who cannot attend in person and that a special novena of gratitude can be accessed via the Guild's website: (<http://dorothydayguild.org/deo-gratias-a-novena-of-gratitude>)





## You're Invited!

*The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus  
& Cabrini Mission Foundation Board of Trustees  
invite you to celebrate the Spirit of Christmas at the  
Flatiron Room Thursday, December 16th*

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**When:** December 16th, 2021  
(Thursday) 6:30-9:30 p.m.

**Where:** The Flatiron Room  
37 W 26th St, New York  
(Between 5th & 6th Avenues)

**Enjoy:** Food, drinks, dessert, open  
seating, and more!

*Tickets limited to 100 guests.*



*Each week, during the season of Advent, one of the Cabrini Lay Missionaries (CLM) will offer a reflection. This week's reflection is by Vicky Lucio, CLM.*

## Second Sunday in Advent

Sunday, December 5, 2021

### GRATITUDE

I think what connects Thanksgiving and Christmas is –  
Gratitude!

Living a life of gratitude makes one more optimistic with what Christmas would bring especially in the midst of this pandemic. It gives us hope and provides us a higher sense of purpose in spite of the turbulence around us. It doesn't mean though that optimists are happy on a daily basis. What it means is that they have a more positive perspective on life that motivates them to be more open to what lies ahead of them.



Beyond optimism, meditation and prayers help us strengthen our hopes and our purpose in life that can soar above the difficulties we are experiencing especially during this crisis. This Advent prepares us to have a more hopeful future, a life of gratitude, and to put Jesus as our focus in what is more important in our lives.

In connection with what is more important, I asked some of our residents what they wish this Christmas and I totally agree with their answers:



- Good health
- Happy and peaceful life
- Age is a gift from God
- World peace
- Peace, joy and contentment for all
- End of the pandemic



# Prayer Requests

## ***Tom McGowan***

Please pray for Tom McGowan, husband of Cabrini Lay Missionary Marianne McGowan, whose ability to walk continues to deteriorate.

## ***Deb Takes***

Former Cabrini (College) University Board Chair and Interim President Deb Takes recently sustained a nasty fall and broke her left shoulder. She is under an orthopedic doctor's care and will soon determine when she can undertake physical therapy. Please keep Deb in your prayers as she heals from this serious injury.

# In Loving Memory

## ***Sr. Gloria Alves da Silva, MSC***

On November 27, our dearest **Sr. Glória Alves da Silva**, 86 years old, of the Community ***Santa Francisca Cabrini, Sao Paulo, Brazil*** returned home to God. We pray for the repose of her soul.

We remember her through Mother Cabrini's words during her journey to Nicaragua, on October 10, 2021.

*“With humility, you will continue to grow from grace to grace, from virtue to virtue... your life will be a burning lamp in the community's midst. Finally, your death will be that of the just: placid, serene and tranquil, with an immense trust in Him whom you have imitated and who is your All, the center of your every aspiration”.*

## ***Dennis Dougherty***

The Cabrini University community mourns the passing of Dennis Dougherty, EdD, former Director of the Master of Science in Organization Leadership (MSOL) program, on November 13, 2021, after a courageous eight-year battle with cancer. Before leaving Cabrini in 2011, he also served as Interim Dean for Graduate and Professional Studies in 2009-2010. We send our deepest condolences to his family. A Mass will be offered in memory of Dennis on Wednesday, December 15, 2021, at 12:30 pm in the Bruckmann Memorial Chapel of Saint Joseph. Please keep Dennis and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

