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NATIONAL CATHOLIC

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Pope Francis greets at the Canadian Olympic National Stadium before meeting with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on July 25 at Parliament Hill in Ottawa.

Gay woman wins battle against US bishops to become foster parent

By BRIAN FRAGA
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Ruby Baker was in legal battle to become a foster parent to welcome children. But Baker still feels like she's "on trial."

"I don't know what to make of it," Baker said of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' opposition earlier this year that "is incomprehensible" given the fact that the federal government in 2017 to deny her approval to become a foster parent because she is gay.

Baker and one of her sisters told NCR that they expect to find out how that mislabeling happened. They also arranged to learn if the bishops' opposition would mean to write her sister, Lisa, if Baker, who is single, begins dating or marries a woman.

"We never did get answers to those questions," said Kenneth Upton, an attorney with Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, Americans United and Lambda Legal, a civil rights organization that supports the LGBTQ community represented Baker.

"I am sorry," said Francis. "I am sorry for the bishops." *Continued on Page 8*

NEWS

REPORTER
Pope Francis made an historic speech during a week-long trip to Canada in late July, saying he was "deeply sorry" for the Catholic Church's "colonialist" involvement in remaining abusive residential schools for Indigenous children.

"I humbly beg forgiveness for the environment by former Catholics against the Indigenous peoples," Francis said on July 27 during a solemn meeting with Indigenous representatives, while visiting the former residential schools.

Pope apologizes to Canada's Indigenous

By CHRISTOPHER WHITE
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HONOLULU — Pope Francis made an historic speech during a week-long trip to Canada in late July, saying he was "deeply sorry" for the Catholic Church's "colonialist" involvement in remaining abusive residential schools for Indigenous children.

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NEWS

REPORTER
Catholic hospitals struggle to aid collapsing Zimbabwe system

Catholic hospitals struggle to aid collapsing Zimbabwe system

By THANDWA KAROVIC

HARARE — Public hospitals in Zimbabwe have experienced significant labor shortages in recent months, with staff at many hospitals going on strike to protest pay cuts in a country where the rate of currency inflation has reached a record 100 percent.

Staff at Catholic hospitals in the southern African nation are trying to pick up the slack, but are also struggling with the workload and the nation's worsening economic conditions.

Dr. Thebe Sibilo, a physician at the Cathedral of St. Anne's Mission Hospital in Zimbabwe's southeast, has been treated in all kinds of life-saving medical practices. But lately because of more frequent electricity outages, he has had to adapt to providing aid under candle or kerosene light.

"We are struggling," Sibilo told NCR of the staff at his hospital. "We have to keep going to work even when the conditions are very difficult to keep working."

In June, Sibilo's colleague and others at government-run health centers embedded on a scale-downing concession in U.S. dollars. The job *Continued on Page 10*

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Is this threat of reform real?
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Priest and author reflects on his life
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Voters in Marietta, Georgia, line up to cast ballots in the U.S. Senate runoff election on July 5, 2021.

Climate-concerned voters ready to bring faith to midterm polls

By BRIAN ROYCE

With less than 90 days until the midterm elections, a national network of state-based environmental faith groups is gearing up for a final push to register their communities to vote and their own faith with voting the crucial final weekend.

Since the spring, Interfaith Power & Light has mobilized its state chapters to engage their local congregations through its Faith Climate Justice Voter campaign. The effort seeks to increase the number of registered voters and to educate communities of all religions traditions about the importance of voting and what's at stake in the coming elections for the environment, climate change and democracy.

"The reality is that in order to create the world that we built on our values, we have to vote," said Rev. Susan Strickerhoff, president of Interfaith Power & Light. "Voting is a way that we can create the world that we want to live in, and a world in which we're voting for our neighbors and voting for the environment, climate change and democracy."

"The reality is that in order to create the world that we built on our values, we have to vote," said Rev. Susan Strickerhoff, president of Interfaith Power & Light. "Voting is a way that we can create the world that we want to live in, and a world in which we're voting for our neighbors and voting for the environment, climate change and democracy."

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NEWS

REPORTER
Napa Institute conference focuses on banning abortion nationwide

Napa Institute conference focuses on banning abortion nationwide

By BRIAN FRAGA
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On the evening of July 18, former U.S. Attorney General William Barr addressed a friendly audience that once three days at the Napa Institute's annual summit on the state of the nation. The summit's annual conference had been more than two decades in the making, but an event that was more than just a gathering of conservative Catholics and other business leaders to discuss the prospects for getting and staying in the White House, that Barr said in his address.

"If I had known earlier that I think Lafayette Park would have been a lot easier," Barr said with a smile as he reflected on the gathering. He also mentioned his upcoming federal law enforcement duties in June 2020's clear protesters outside the White House as then-President Donald Trump could walk across the street to pose with a Bible at St. John's Episcopal Church.

The audience at the Napa Institute and Spa in Napa, California, laughed at Barr's comment regarding the incident at the White House.

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NEWS

REPORTER
Black Catholic groups gather for in-person meeting

Black Catholic groups gather for in-person meeting

By DAN STOOKMAN
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MIAMI, FLA. — The new president of the National Black Sisters' Conference closed the group's annual gathering with a message, praising its members and encouraging them to stand with her as a witness that Black lives do matter.

Dr. Adèle Lorraine Walker of the School Sisters of Notre Dame was elected to lead the 26-year-old conference at the group's annual meeting with three other Black Catholic groups and also presided over the conference's Sacred Tables Award, which honors inspirational leaders.

In her remarks accepting the award on the gathering's final evening July 21, she returned repeatedly to one of the conference's themes: "Solidarity." A South African greeting meaning "I see you."

"Solidarity," Walker cried. "We see you. I see you. I love you. I respect you. I stand with you."

Walker said she would only accept the award if those in the banquet hall would accept the responsibility that comes with being Black in a white-dominated American Catholic church.

"If we can stand together, then I accept this award," she said. *Continued on Page 8*

The front pages of two recent issues of the National Catholic Reporter (NCR graphic)



by Bill Mitchell

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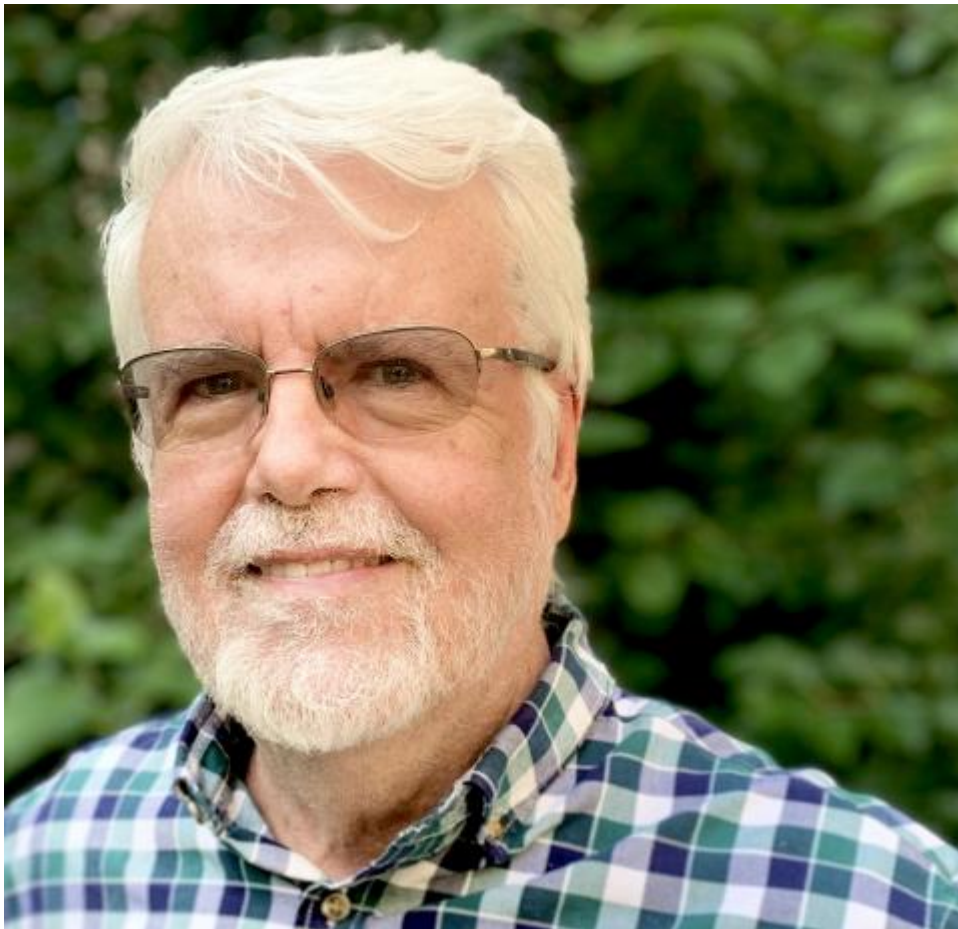
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August 26, 2022

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When I wrote my first story for the National Catholic Reporter as a college freshman in 1967, I certainly had no idea I'd end up as its publisher and CEO a half century later.



Bill Mitchell

When I accepted the position two years ago, I told the board I would serve until my 75th birthday, with the goal of helping the board identify a longer-term publisher to lead NCR into the second half of its first century. Although my 75th birthday is a year off, NCR is on a positive trajectory and now is the time to begin the search for that next leader.

I spent the vast majority of my career in secular journalism, but the mission is fundamentally the same as what we do at NCR: to probe the issues that matter most to the communities we serve and to rely on our independence to hold the powerful accountable.

As readers and donors tell me every week, though, NCR does something more. It provides an inspirational vision of a church rooted in the Gospels and committed to values of faith and justice.

If you know of someone you believe would be the right fit, please direct them to ncr.media/pubjob for the job description and instructions on how to apply.

As ever, I thank you for your support and look forward to hearing from you.

All the best,

Bill Mitchell

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