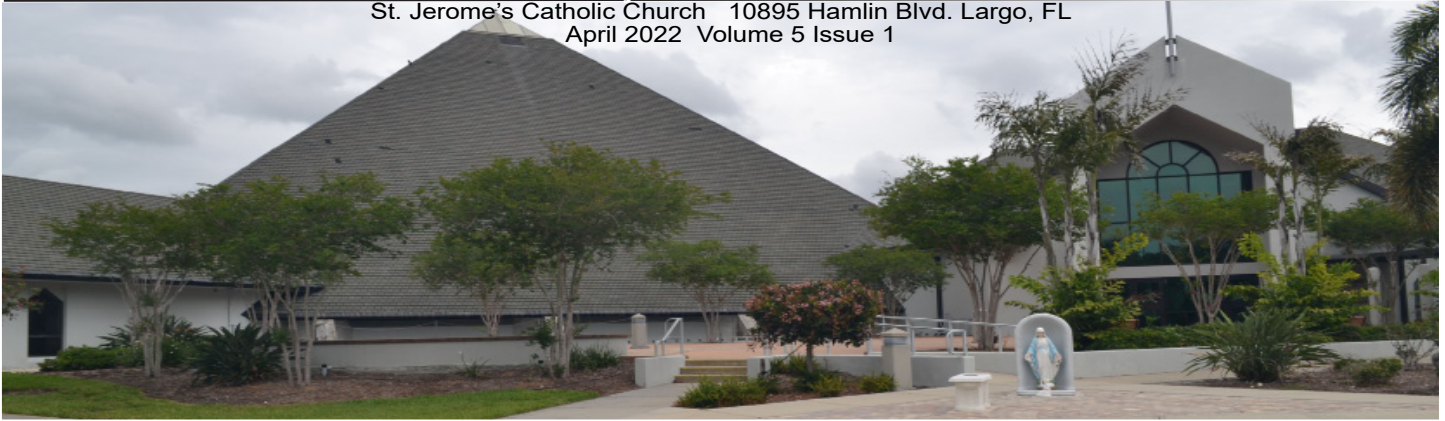


# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

*Divine Mercy of Jesus* Council 17249

St. Jerome's Catholic Church 10895 Hamlin Blvd. Largo, FL

April 2022 Volume 5 Issue 1



## FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND KNIGHT



Bill McClelland

Brothers,  
First, I would like to thank all of you for your thoughts and prayers during a very difficult time. My wife Claudia was involved in a

freak accident on March 20th, which was exactly one week after our dog passed. Claudia was packing for a trip when she slipped on the floor and hit her hip on the wood platform of the bed. She snapped her femur at the neck of that bone, which required hip replacement surgery. She is home from the hospital and walking as much as she can to speed the healing process.

This month marks the beginning of the

northern migration of "snow birds". I think we will find attendance at mass and breakfast continuing to drop over the next month, so I think we should consider serving breakfast during a different week in April. Since the third Sunday is Easter Sunday, I would like to propose serving on the second Sunday (Palm Sunday, April 10). I think our attendance will be greater than the following week and we have plenty of bacon and eggs on hand that will still be good to serve at that time, reducing the supplies we will have to buy.

If you haven't already signed up for the Kimberly Home Walk for Life on Saturday, April 9, please consider doing so. The Knights have sponsored a team, so all you have to do is register to join the team and indicate your shirt size.

Vivat Jesus,

Bill

## Words OF WISDOM

"The teacher who is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your mind." - Kahlil Gibran

"I do not think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday." - Abraham Lincoln

"Good people are good because they've come to wisdom through failure. We get very little wisdom from success." - William Saroyan

"It is unwise to be too sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err." - Mahatma Gandhi

"It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer." - Albert Einstein

"I am the wisest man alive, for I know one thing, and that is that I know nothing." - Socrates

"A loving heart is the truest wisdom." - Charles Dickens

## FROM THE DESK OF OUR PASTOR



Fr. Tom Morgan

Dear Friends:  
I have enclosed below our Holy Week schedule. It is my hope that the Knights will lead the way by being present at these Holy liturgies and

Masses.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



### Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday - Blessing of palms.  
Solemn Entrance at the church doors before all weekend Masses - Weekend of April 9 - 10, 2022

Seven Last Words - Wednesday, April 13, 2022, 8:15 pm

### Church Triduum Holy Thursday, April 14, 2022

9:00AM - 10:00AM – Confessions - Chapel  
7:00PM Mass of the Lord's Supper – Church  
9:30PM Tenebrae - Tent  
Adoration follows until Midnight - Tent  
11:45PM - Night Prayer – Tent

### Good Friday, April 15, 2022

9:00AM - 10:00 am - Confessions – Chapel  
3:00PM - Good Friday Liturgy -Church  
7:00PM - Good Friday Liturgy -Church

### Holy Saturday, April 16, 2022

9:00AM - The Seven Sorrows of Mary - Chapel  
12:00PM - Blessing of Easter Food and Baskets - Church  
8:30PM - Easter Vigil Mass - Church

### Easter Sunday

Masses Sunday, April 17, 2022

7:00AM - Tent  
7:30AM - Church  
9:00AM - Church  
9:00AM - Parish Center  
9:00AM - Tent  
10:45AM - Church  
10:45AM - Parish Center  
10:45AM - Tent  
12:30PM – Church

\*Please note: On Easter Sunday, there will not be a 5:00PM Life Teen Mass

Divine Mercy Sunday, April 23/24

All Weekend Sunday Masses are Divine Mercy Masses

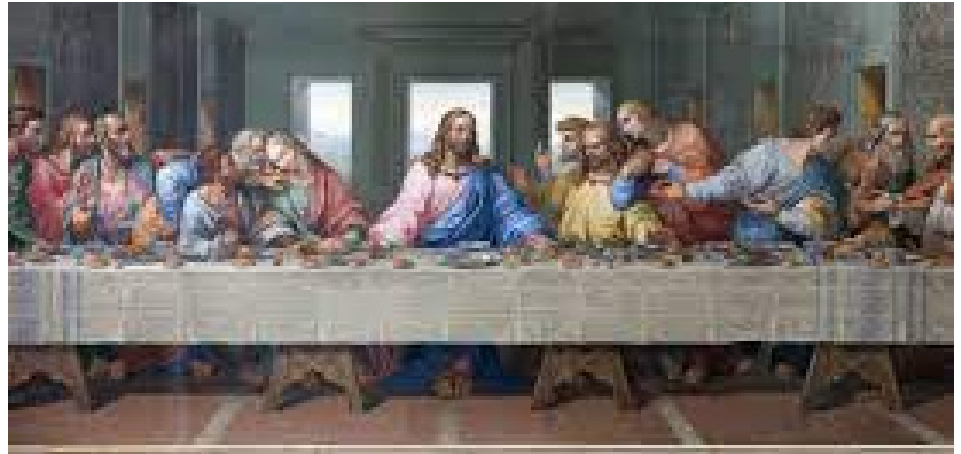
3:00PM - Divine Mercy Sunday Holy Hour April 24

## HOLY THURSDAY: THE EUCHARIST ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Holy Thursday is the commemoration of the Last Supper of Jesus Christ, when He established the sacrament of Holy Communion prior to His arrest and crucifixion. It also commemorates His institution of the priesthood. The holy day falls on the Thursday before Easter and is part of Holy Week. Jesus celebrated the dinner as a Passover feast. Christ would fulfill His role as the Christian victim of the Passover for all to be saved by His final sacrifice.

The Last Supper was the final meal Jesus shared with His Disciples in Jerusalem. During the meal, Jesus predicts His betrayal.

During the Passover meal, Jesus breaks bread and gives it to His Disciples, uttering the words, "This is my body, which is given for you." Subsequently, He passes a cup filled with wine. He then says, "This is my blood..." It is believed those who eat of Christ's flesh and blood shall have eternal life. During the Mass, Catholics rightly believe, as an article of faith, that the



unleavened bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ through a process known as transubstantiation.

The Last Supper is celebrated daily in the Catholic Church as part of every Mass for it is through Christ's sacrifice that we have been saved.

On the night of Holy Thursday, Eucha-

ristic Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place where the faithful remain in the presence of the Eucharist just as the Disciples kept a vigil with Christ.

Following the Last Supper, the disciples went with Jesus to the Mount of Olives, where He would be betrayed by Judas.

## Why is Good Friday called Good Friday?

It is the day when Christians commemorate Jesus Christ's crucifixion. So why is it called Good Friday?

According to the Bible, the son of God was flogged, ordered to carry the cross on which he would be crucified and then put to death. It's difficult to see what is "good" about it.

Some sources suggest that the day is "good" in that it is holy, or that the phrase is a corruption of "God's Friday".

However, according to Fiona MacPherson, senior editor at the Oxford English Dictionary, the adjective traditionally "designates a day on (or sometimes a season in) which religious observance is held". The OED states that "good" in

this context refers to "a day or season observed as holy by the church", hence the greeting "good tide" at Christmas or on Shrove Tuesday. In addition to Good Friday, there is also a less well-known Good Wednesday, namely the Wednesday before Easter.

The earliest known use of "guode friday" is found in The South English Legendary, a text from around 1290, according to the dictionary. According to the Baltimore Catechism - the standard US Catholic school text from 1885



to the 1960s, Good Friday is good because Christ "showed His great love for man, and purchased for him every blessing".

## HOLY SATURDAY

Holy Saturday is the day in the Christian liturgical calendar that celebrates the 40-hour-long vigil that the followers of Jesus Christ held after His death and burial on Good Friday and before His resurrection on Easter Sunday. Holy Saturday is the last day of Lent and of Holy Week, and the third day of the Easter Triduum, the three high holidays before Easter, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday.

As on Good Friday, the modern church offers no Mass for Holy Saturday. The Easter Vigil Mass, which takes place after sundown on Holy Saturday, properly belongs to Easter Sunday, since li-

turgically, each day begins at sundown on the previous day. That is why Saturday vigil Masses can fulfill parishioners' Sunday Duty. Unlike on Good Friday, when Holy Communion is distributed at the afternoon liturgy commemorating Christ's Passion, on Holy Saturday the Eucharist is only given to the faithful as viaticum—that is, only to those in danger of death, to prepare their souls for their journey to the next life.

The modern Easter Vigil Mass often begins outside of the church near a charcoal brazier, representing the first vigil. The priest then leads the faithful into the church where the paschal candle is lit and the Mass is held.

dle is lit and the Mass is held.



# Judge Thwarts Mayor's Attempt To Remove Historic Columbus Monument

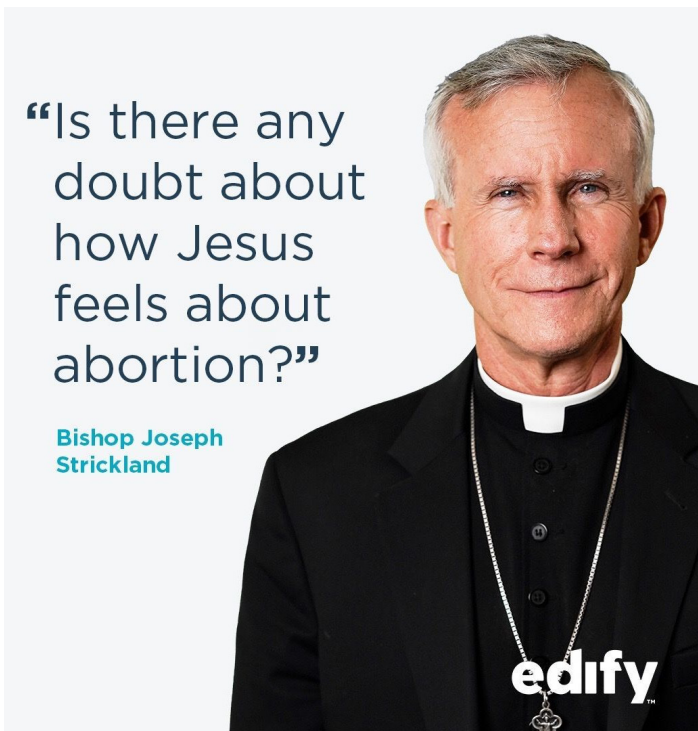
A judge has ruled that a historic Columbus monument in Syracuse, New York, can remain in its current location after Mayor Ben Walsh tried to take it down and move it.

Syracuse's monument to the explorer, was dedicated in 1934 and sculpted in Florence, Italy. The statue was put up in large part through the efforts and funds of Italian immigrants who wanted to honor their heritage as Italians and new Americans.

Judge Neri said in the ruling that the city of Syracuse had, "no legal right to alter the piece of art known as the Christopher Columbus Monument or remove same or any part of it from its present place on St. Mary's Circle, commonly known as Columbus Circle, in the city of Syracuse."

Efforts to save the statue were led by the Columbus Monument Corporation, a group dedicated to preserving the monument and honoring the memory of Columbus.

Columbus monuments across the country have come under fire in recent years as some allege that the explorer represents the evils of Western imperialism. However, groups like the Columbus Monument Corporation have fought to maintain monuments to the Italian explorer.





# APRIL BIRTHDAYS



Deacon Fred Kunder  
April 7



Wayne Nuñez  
April 10



Fr. Tom Morgan  
April 16



## CHURCH STATUE STOLEN

A statue depicting the Holy Family was stolen from outside a parish in San Antonio, Texas, and parishioners are praying for its safe return.

The concrete statue depicting Joseph, Mary, and Jesus was missing from outside St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church. The statue weighs over 300 pounds, and was likely taken by a team of multiple people.

our doors are always open and that they are a part of this community. We love them and we just want the statue back.”



Father Jimmy Drennan, the church’s pastor, told KSAT news that the statue was given to the church four decades ago by parishioners Jack and Theresa Fohn, who have since died.

The last major vandalism incident against a Catholic building in San Antonio was in September 2020, when an unidentified man who held a baseball bat was observed walking up to the dormitory building of Assumption Seminary. The man hit the glass doors several times. Though law enforcement was notified immediately, the suspect fled the area before police arrived, according to the Archdiocese of San Antonio’s statement.

Drennan told the news station that the absence of the statue is a tragedy for everyone.

As of late November 2021, the U.S. bishops logged at least 100 instances of vandalism, arson, and destruction of Catholic property nationwide since May 2020.

“It represents a great deal to the community,” Drennan said. “The image of the Holy Family represents the unity of the community as one family.”

“We must first pray for those who have stolen the statue, and then do whatever we can to have it returned,” the priest continued.

“We want them to know



### OUR MISSION

Knights are Catholic men who build a bridge back to faith. There is much good and necessary work to be done in this world, and that's what Knights do every day.

YOU ARE BORN  
A MAN.  
YOU BECOME  
A KNIGHT.



Join today. Visit [KofC.org/join us](http://KofC.org/join-us)



**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**  
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

Sign up!

Check us out on [St. Jerome online.org](http://St.Jerome.online.org)



# OFFICER ELECTIONS AROUND THE CORNER

Our council will soon have an election for new officers for the next fiscal year. If you are a present officer and no longer wish to keep that position, please let our Grand Knight Bill McClennand

know. If you are a present Knight at least at the 3rd Degree and desire an office, you too should let Bill know. Officers are elected for 1 year. Some are appointed and presented below so

you will know which to apply for. We have a very lively council and hope that you will give this opportunity some serious consideration. It is an honor and privilege to serve.

## OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

### Elected Positions

**The grand knight** is the council's chief executive officer. He is responsible for setting council goals and ensuring that all officers fulfill their duties in reaching these objectives. He presides over all meetings; appoints program and committee directors as needed; fills officer roles in the event of vacancies; countersigns checks and orders for payment; and oversees the council's degree team.

**The deputy grand knight** serves as the grand knight's right-hand man and fills in for the grand knight when he is not present. Some deputy grand knights serve as their council's program director. Ultimately, he assists the grand knight in leading the council and reaching council objectives.

**The chancellor** assists both the grand and deputy grand knights in the leading of the council by engaging and strengthening the council's membership. His primary responsibilities include recruiting and retaining members and to this end he should set up events that display the values and principles of the Knights of Columbus.

**The treasurer** is responsible for managing the council funds. He receives money from the financial secretary and deposits funds into council accounts. He is also responsible for paying all council expenses. He also balances and verifies the ledger and keeps the updated budget approved by the council.

**The advocate** acts as council parliamentarian. He should be knowledgeable in Robert's Rules of Order and Methods of Conducting a Council Meeting. He may seek legal assistance from the state advocate, should issues arise. The advocate should be able to take on additional responsibilities as the council deems necessary.

**The recorder** has the responsibility of recording all meetings and events held by the council. He should record minutes, conversations and other information helpful to the council and

prepare them to be distributed to the membership in a timely manner. Additionally, he should help with council event notifications, council meeting reminders, and assist with council social media responsibilities.

**The warden** is responsible for the property owned by the council. He is also in charge of setting up meetings and leads both the inside and outside guards.

**The inside and outside guards** carry out tasks given to them by the grand knight and follow the warden's orders. They are responsible for checking membership cards and allowing entrance to meetings.

**The three trustees** advise the grand knight, supervise the council's financial matters, and conduct the semi-annual audits. Usually the immediate past grand knight will serve as a trustee.

### Appointed Positions

**The chaplain** is the spiritual leader of the council. He nurtures the faith in council members particularly through the sacraments but also through spiritual direction, retreats and other events and support.

**The financial secretary** is chosen by the trustees and the officers of the council for a three-year term and approved by the supreme knight. He provides continuity in the council and has the responsibility of collecting dues as well as ensuring that the council's financial recordings are kept up to date. Additionally, he ensures that membership records are current, issues membership cards, files regular reports to the district, regional, state and supreme offices and submits the annual 990 to the IRS.

**The lecturer** provides brief spiritual discourses and reflections during business meetings for the "Good of the Order".

**The program director** is appointed by the grand knight and oversees

the Faith in Action areas of Faith, Family, Community and Life.

**The faith director** is appointed by the grand knight and reports to the program director. Responsible for all faith-based council programs.

**The family director** is appointed by the grand knight and reports to the program director. Responsible for all family-based council programs.

**The community director** is appointed by the grand knight and reports to the program director. Responsible for all community-based council programs. He directs programs that support and encourage service to the community

**The life director** is appointed by the grand knight and reports to the program director. Responsible for all life-based council programs. The individual appointed to this position should be comfortable discussing and planning efforts within the context of supporting and affirming life in all stages and in all conditions.

**The membership director** serves as the head of the Admission Committee and works to grow the council's membership through new and transfer members. He should actively identify potential recruits, plan recruitment programs, host informational meetings and encourage council members to seek candidates. In addition, the membership director should ensure that a council has access to frequent degree exemplifications (whether its own or local councils) and should work that each member reaches at least the third degree in a timely manner.

**The retention chairman** works to keep the council's members active. Implements programs and practices that provide mentors for new members and regularly communicates with the members to encourage their participation. At times when a council wishes to suspend members, they must have the retention chairman reach out to members and ask them to keep their membership or to transfer to another council.

## Grotto's Altar used at Funeral Mass



Fr. Tom prepares communion at the grotto altar. Kim Kleiber and Joanne Biamente stand to his left.



Tom Kurt awaits his next song as Sheila Bright bears the cross. Family and friends patiently sit as the funeral proceeds.



### FROM AROUND THE WORLD OF INTEREST TO CATHOLICS

Evangelical Pastor claims Jesus hasn't returned yet because people aren't donating enough money

Rising sea levels alarm Philippine bishops

Mexico's Supreme Court Votes to Decriminalize Abortion

Stats show Irish women benefit from waiting period before abortion, observers say

Pope Francis: Governments must act urgently against child pornography

In 2021, it became obvious the US bishops and the pope are singing from different hymnals

New policy requires all Chicago clergy to get permission to celebrate Latin Mass

Ukraine: Nuns provide spiritual care for the wounded and their families

Pope laments discarding of human embryos

Patriarch Kirill links Russian invasion to gay pride parades

Cardinal Marx encourages homosexual groups in Germany

After supporting Ukraine invasion, Russia's Patriarch Kirill criticized worldwide

UK: Bill advances to allow at-home chemical abortion

Friday fish fries are starting to come back this Lent

Pope says elderly must be prophets, warning of world's 'self-destruction'

A top scientist in the Biden administration defended using taxpayer dollars for experiments with aborted babies' scalps, livers and other organs in a new leaked audio, claiming the research is "moral and beneficial."

The Daily Wire first reported about the leaked audio of Francis Collins, a former National Institutes of Health (NIH) director and current science adviser to President Joe Biden.

During a private Institute of Politics event Oct. 26 at the University of Chicago, a student in the audience asked Collins about the NIH using taxpayers' money to fund experiments like one at the University of Pittsburgh that involved grafting the scalps of aborted babies onto the backs of rodents, the report states.

Collins, who professes to be a devout Christian, said he feels "troubled" by abortion, but he believes it is ethical to use "fetal tissue" for scientific research. "After all, pregnancy termination is, at the present time, legal in the United States. Whether you're in support of it or not, it's happened ..." Collins said, according to the report. "The material from those elective abortions is discarded. There are aspects of fetal tissue that can be extremely valuable in understanding how life works, how development happens, and how to treat certain diseases like Parkinson's disease, for instance."

Other scientists say research with

aborted babies' organs has not been effective, and ethical alternatives exist.

But Collins argued in favor of continuing research with aborted baby body parts because they are in easy supply, saying, "Fetal tissue is being discarded in large quantities every day." Nearly 1 million unborn babies are aborted in the U.S. every year. He continued: "If there were a circumstance where, with consent of the mother, having been obtained after the abortion, not in any way as an inspiration to carry it forward, the abortion ... could ultimately help somebody. Which of those two choices is more ethical — discard all the tissue or use a small part?"

Then, Collins suggested that research with aborted baby body parts actually may redeem the act of abortion.

"Can you with actions that you consider immoral, derive something from it that might actually be moral and ben-



Biden Science Advisor Francis Collins

eficial?" he asked, the Wire reports. "That's the horns of the dilemma upon which I have been resting here for these 12 years as NIH director, trying to oversee human fetal tissue research, which is something that I have to make decisions about."

Under Collins' leadership in the Obama administration, the NIH spent tens of millions of tax dollars funding unethical experiments involving aborted babies' body parts.

### More on Fetal Tissue Harvesting....

Fetal tissue research involves cells from dead fetuses that are harvested for the purpose of establishing cell lines or for use as transplantation material and other purposes. There are two sources of such fetal tissue—elective (or induced) abortions and spontaneous (or natural) abortions. Cell lines are established by culturing fetal cells in such a way that they continue growing and multiplying in laboratory dishes. Such cells can be used to test a drug's ability to damage genetic material or to test the effects of specific viral (or other types) of infection. Because the cells multiply, a small number of cells harvested from a dead fetus can be greatly expanded and used either as a source of more cell lines or for transplants.

Fetal tissue has been used for trans-

plantation for two reasons. First, certain fetal tissues lack cell-surface markers found in mature tissue that induce immune system reactions in transplant recipients and lead to tissue rejection and transplant failure. Thus, fetal tissue eludes these body defenses. In addition, groups of different kinds of fetal cells can be separated from one another in the laboratory to remove those cells that may trigger a recipient's immune system. Second, certain areas of the body do not regenerate after birth or after a few years of life, so the use of mature tissue for transplantation is not possible. Adult brain cells, for example, regenerate slowly if at all, but when fetal brain cells are transplanted they will grow readily.

It is interesting that fetal tissue research has produced one of the major medical

breakthroughs of our time, the development of polio vaccine through the use of fetal cell lines in the 1950s, but also some of greatest current controversy about the use of such cells for transplantation. The first use of fetal cells for transplantation occurred in 1982, when Swedish physicians transplanted fetal brain cells into a patient suffering from Parkinson's disease, a progressive degenerative disease in which cells containing the neurotransmitter dopamine begin to die. Since that time, animal and human experiments (many of the human experiments have been done outside the United States or with private funds) have examined the usefulness of transplanting fetal cells to cure or lessen the effects of diabetes, certain blood disorders, radiation poisoning, and a variety of neurological disorders



## Down Syndrome Organization Open to 'Termination' of Down Syndrome Kids

Early detection of cancer can save lives. Or maybe avoid all the hassle and plan for euthanasia. Openly promoting death in the above situation would be horrific on Cancer Awareness or New Parent websites. But for Down syndrome, the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS), which purports supporting and celebrating Down syndrome, includes ending their lives among the three reasons to get prenatal genetic testing. They speak with a forked tongue.

According to the Down Syndrome Fact Sheet:

The National Down Syndrome Society is the leading human rights organization for all individuals with Down syndrome. The National Down Syndrome Society envisions a world in which all people with Down syndrome have the opportunity to enhance their quality of life, realize their life aspirations, and become valued members of welcoming communities.

Some mothers choose to forgo all diagnostic testing because they know that they would continue their pregnancy no matter what and do not want to expose their pregnancy to even the small risk of miscarriage that come with CVS and amniocentesis.

Why put a child's life on the line to check for possible genetic anomalies? People are saying they are willing to risk ending the life of a potentially healthy baby to find out if the baby has genetic issues so that they could end that life. It has become a search and destroy mission with fatalities of otherwise healthy babies along the way.

Despite the slight risk of the baby dying, NDSS gives reasons why they think a

mother should undergo prenatal testing in case their baby has that extra number 21 chromosome which causes Down syndrome.

One is to do research and adjust to the new diagnosis. A second is that it gives parents time to plan to have their baby adopted. They point out, "There is a long waiting list of families in the United States ready to adopt a child with Down syndrome."

The third reason is what's most shocking:

**TERMINATION:** Some parents want to have a prenatal diagnosis so that they can discontinue their pregnancy.

Parents should discuss this option with their obstetrician.

Why did they list "termination" as a reason to test? Why should parents discuss termination with their doctor? Dr. Jérôme Lejeune, the geneticist who discovered the cause of Down syndrome as being an extra 21st chromosome, was vehemently against aborting these babies. He staked his reputation on it — with backlash. Yet, an organization claiming to support Down syndrome thinks it is okay to matter-of-factly list it as an acceptable option. They surely do not think people with Down syndrome are worthy of the same respect as others, since termination of their very lives is listed as an option simply for being who they were created to be. In the U.S., according to the NDSS, about 6,000 babies with Down syndrome are born each year. However, the United States also has an estimat-



boy with Down syndrome holds a placard while a crowd waits for the Pope's arrival at the Shrine of Loreto, near Ancona, Italy,

ed termination rate for Down syndrome of 67% (1995-2011). In France it's 77% (2015) and in Denmark, 98% (2015). For many years, Iceland has been shooting for a 100% termination rate.

Despite the high abortion rate, hundreds of families in the U.S. are on waiting lists to adopt them, understanding what a gift they are. Results from a study published in the American Journal of Medical Genetics found:

99% said they were happy with their lives

97% liked who they are

96% liked how they look

86% indicated they could make friends easily

4% expressed sadness about their life.

How tragic that so many people are blind to the gift of Down syndrome. Even more tragic is that an organization claiming to celebrate them, would suggest "termination."



## Oscar-nominated 'The Hand of God'

### Explores How the Divine Finds Us through Most Unexpected Sources

On June 22, 1986, Diego Armando Maradona's performance during the quarter-finals World Cup became the stuff of legends. As part of the Argentinean team, Maradona scored two goals against England that not only secured his team's win but also started ripples felt across the planet.

The match's significance transcended the boundaries of sports. Argentineans and Latin Americans saw it as an opportunity to exact revenge on England after the 1982 Falklands War, in which the European monarchy battled the South American country to preserve control over territories 945 miles off the Argentine coast-land and 7,947 miles from England.

A civil war raged in Lebanon, where battling factions sabotaged each other's power supply in hopes of denying their enemies the joy of watching World Cup matches. Inversely, on occasion, ceasefires would occur so everyone could watch in peace. It's possible that the day Maradona scored what is called "the Goal of the Century," or "the Hand of God," was one of the days when soldiers laid down their arms. Argentina would go on to win the World Cup that year.



For a teenage Paolo Sorrentino, who watched the match in his native Naples, it was the beginning of a divine relationship. Watching Maradona, Sorrentino explained during a Zoom in early December 2021, he witnessed a man who "created awe and wonder," an "artifice de meraviglia." The following year, the 16-year-old received his parents' permission to go see Maradona, a member of the Napoli team, face Empoli in Tuscany. It was the first time he was allowed to attend a match by himself. His parents died in an accident while he was away. Sorrentino would go on to say Maradona saved his life.

In "The Hand of God," nominated at this year's Oscars for Best International Feature Film and streaming on Netflix, Sorrentino uses this tragedy to craft a profoundly moving memory piece, a tale of grief and loss, interspersed with joyful vignettes reminiscent of Federico Fellini's "Amarcord." Filippo Scotti plays Fabietto, a surrogate for the filmmaker who shares Sorrentino's passion for music, art and Maradona. The director

On the set of "The hand of God" by Paolo Sorrentino is Filippo Scotti, who plays Fabietto Schisa.

shared his experiences with the young actor to create a character with elements of both of them. "Paolo shared the music he loved during this time, His masterful performance won him the Marcello Mastroianni Award given to newcomers at the Venice Film Festival in 2021.

The two also discussed Maradona, who died suddenly at age 60 in 2020, yet remains very much "alive in Naples," according to Scotti. "Growing up I would listen to stories from my parents and their friends about what he meant to them. You will find older men who will explain to you about Maradona at the barber," added the young actor with a grin. When Scotti was offered the role of Fabietto, he felt the very same passion for the football player that Sorrentino did at his age. "I don't think there is another one as Maradona," expressed the actor.

Production began in September 2020, as Sorrentino explained he "strongly wanted to make a movie at that time to forget about the pandemic." Working on a film, he added, allows you to "live in a bubble where you are protected and sheltered from the rest of the world." When the film was first announced, Maradona's legal team threatened to take action against the producers for using the player's likeness without his permission. Little did they know that not only would Sorrentino barely use the player's likeness, but that he would go on to deliver a film that explores how the divine can find us through the most unexpected of sources.



On the set of "The hand of God" by Paolo Sorrentino are Filippo Scotti, Toni Servillo, Teresa Saponangelo and Marlon Joubert. The movie is set in Naples, Italy, in the 1980s. (Netflix/Gianni Fioriti)





“Hail, Mary, full of Grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mother, pray for us now and at the hour of our death.”