

# LAY WITNESS

June 9, 2019

The Solemnity of Pentecost

Vol. 37, No. 3

to unite the faithful from all walks of life in order to support, defend and advance the efforts of the teaching Church

### **A Letter from the President**

Dear Friends,

"Grace to you, and peace from Him Who is, Who was, and Who is to come" (Rev. 1:4).

I write this letter after having traveled for two weeks straight. During my travels, I met with priests and laity across North Texas (the real North Texas, not Ohio) and spoke about our common baptism in Christ; which is our consecration in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Many had forgotten—or did not know—that their baptism made them sharers in the tri-fold office of Christ as priests, prophets and kings. Most of my discussions focused on this point. And, I encouraged apostolic action by them to fulfill their baptismal promises. Most did not understand that, by virtue of baptism, we are commissioned to pursue apostolic initiatives by our own undertaking (cf. *Lumen gentium 37*; *Apostolicam actuositatem 24-25*; *et al.*). This is the great role of the laity, to bring the world into subjection to Jesus Christ. The Mission of Catholics United for the Faith (CUF) is directed to that baptismal commission.

The lead article in this issue of *Lay Witness* begins to explain an essential element of CUF's Mission: "to unite the faithful from all walks of life...." The Church recognizes Three Visible Bonds of Unity, all originating from God, Who is the source of all unity. It is written by one of CUF's treasures, our President Emeritus, Jim Likoudis. The article is derived from a talk he prepared for CUF's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The next two issues of *Lay Witness* will focus each on the remaining two visible bonds of unity. For CUF members, maintaining these visible bonds of unity assure us of purity in our apostolic initiatives.

This issue of *Lay Witness* is also the last issue you will receive **unless you** have identified yourself as a CUF member or associate. As explained in our last two issues, being a CUF member is not about having a subscription; it's about being engaged in an effort to pursue our baptismal commission.

Enclosed with *Lay Witness* is a reply card. **If you have not completed** a reply card in 2019, please complete and return it, even if you are a lifetime member. If you cannot make a donation at this time, that is ok. Please send us the reply card anyway. We are counting members and correcting our mailing list. Here's what you can expect.

If you mark your reply card as a member and send it back, we will send you a member welcome packet that includes, among other things, a

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#### Prayer of Catholics United for the Faith

O God our Father, who sent Your only-begotten Son to suffer and to give His life for the life of His Church, rule, protect, and nourish her continually, we beseech You. Teach us of Catholics United for the Faith to direct our zeal first of all to the renewal of our own hearts. Then, if it be Your holy will to allow us to be in any way Your instruments in the wider renewal of Your Church, give us the grace to know what services, small or great, You ask of us, and let the Holy Spirit teach us to perform them in obedience, patience, and charity, leaving entirely to You what fruits they may bear. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,

forever and ever. AMEN.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. Holy Mary, Mother of the Church, intercede for us. St. Joseph, Head of the Holy Family and Patron of the Universal Church, pray for us.

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membership card (doubles as an emergency contact card) and a refrigerator magnet to remind you of our toll-free hotline to our Information Services department. If you mark your reply card as an associate, you will continue to receive *Lay Witness*, but you will not receive the membership packet.

If you do not wish to be a member or associate, please return your card with a note stating that you do not wish to be a member. We will take you off our mailing list.

If we do not hear from you by July 15th, we will remove you from the mailing list and send you a personal letter asking your intentions. At that point, only a response from you will put you back on the mailing list. **Please respond.** We do not want to remove anyone from our mailing list who wants to receive *Lay Witness* or otherwise benefit from membership in CUF. We also need a clean list after the three years of inactivity by the International Office. If you have any questions, please call us.

Know that I keep you in my daily prayers. God bless you; St. Joseph keep you.

Peace, Philip C. L. Gray

### CUF's 2019

# MEMBERSHIP DRIVE!

See your response card for details

# Apostolic Succession and the Apostolic Activity of the Laity

By: Jim Likoudis, CUF President Emeritus

As the name indicates, Catholics United for the Faith exists to unite the faithful in the Catholic Faith. We are united in order that we might better defend the teachings of the Church. As with all spiritual realities, we do not possess the initiative. Before we can unite *for* the Faith, we are united *by* the Faith. We are united in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church that Christ established during His earthly ministry. The unity of His Church finds expression in three bonds, the Profession of one Faith, unity in worship, particularly the Mass, and Apostolic Succession. The focus of this article is to demonstrate how this third bond, Apostolic Succession is lived out by all members of the Church.

"Apostolic Succession" has been handily defined in Fr. Peter Stravinskas' *Catholic Dictionary*:

Bishops of the Church, who form a collective body or college, are successors to the Apostles by ordination and divine right; as such they carry on the mission entrusted by Christ to the Apostles as guardians and teachers of the deposit of faith and as principal pastors and spiritual authorities of the faithful. The doctrine of Apostolic Succession is based on New Testament evidence and the constant teaching of the Church, reflected as early as the end of the first century in a letter of Pope Clement to the Corinthians. A significant facet of the doctrine is the role of the Pope as the successor of St. Peter, the Vicar of Christ and head of the college of bishops. The doctrine of Apostolic Succession means more than continuity of apostolic faith and doctrine; its basic requisite is ordination by the laying on of hands in apostolic succession.<sup>1</sup> (emphasis added)

The venerable Fr. John Hardon, S.J. is perhaps the most distinguished American theologian of our time. He wrote and lectured extensively to motivate the laity to undertake their proper role in the Church and society. He gave

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<sup>1</sup> Our Sunday Visitor, 2002.

this definition of Apostolic Succession in his useful *Pocket Catholic Dictionary*:

The method by which the episcopacy has been derived from the Apostles to the present day. Succession means successive consecration by the laying on of hands, *performing the function of the Apostles*, receiving their commission in a lineal sequence from the Apostles, succession in episcopal sees traced back to the Apostles, and successive *communion with the Apostolic See*, i.e., the Bishop of Rome. The Eastern Orthodox and others share in the apostolic succession in having valid episcopal orders, although they are not in collegial union with the Catholic hierarchy. <sup>2</sup> (emphasis added)

In its glossary of terms, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines Apostolic Succession as:

The handing on of apostolic preaching and authority from the Apostles to their successors the bishops through the laying on of hands, as a permanent office in the Church.

In order that the full and living Gospel might always be preserved in the Church the apostles left bishops as their successors. They gave them 'their own position of teaching authority'. Indeed, 'the apostolic preaching, which is expressed in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved in a continuous line of succession until the end of time.' (emphasis added)

From these various articulations three main points should be highlighted. Apostolic Succession: 1) ties today's bishops to the Apostles in a direct, unbroken lineage; 2) is dependent on union with Peter for its fullest expression; and, 3) allows for the extension of the mission Christ gave to the twelve Apostles, that of teaching, ruling, and sanctifying. It is this threefold ministry that extends the three bonds of unity through time by safeguarding and teaching the one faith, ruling by the unbroken authority of the Apostles, and sanctifying us with the celebration of the Mass, our unified act of worship.

Apostolic Succession is one of the means by which the true Church is rightly called 'apostolic' as professed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (381 AD) recited during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass<sup>4</sup>: "I believe in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church." It should be observed that this One and Holy and Catholic Church which constituted a visible communion of believers also declared itself to be

"Apostolic." That is to say, it is the Church which teaches all the truths contained in the Deposit of Faith transmitted to the Apostles by Christ the Lord. What this singularly One "Apostolic" Church teaches and what it will always teach is the exact doctrine taught by the Twelve Apostles chosen by Christ for the salvation of souls. The same doctrine, moreover, would be taught by those who succeeded the Apostles in their office of teaching, ruling, and sanctifying the faithful in the many churches they would establish until the Second Coming of Christ. Thus, from the beginning of the Catholic Church we see recorded in the New Testament and afterwards, it was the bishops of the Church, spread throughout the world, headed by the Bishop of Rome, who were regarded as the successors of the Apostles chosen to govern the Church.

These bishops were distinguished from priests and deacons who would also be appointed by the Apostles to an official sacramental ministry in the Church. United to their head and visible center of Unity, the successor of Peter sitting in his Cathedra at Rome, the bishops of the Catholic communion received by ordination in an unbroken historical transmission the episcopal powers that distinguished them as the exclusive rulers of the Church of God. In the writings of Clement of Rome to the Church of Corinth,5 30 years after the death of St. Paul, founder of that church, and while the Apostle John was still alive, Apostolic Succession of bishops as rulers of the Church was an indisputable fact of life in the Church. This is confirmed in the writings of St. Ignatius of Antioch (107 AD), St. Irenaeus of Lyons (202 AD), Tertullian, (220 AD) St. Cyprian (258 AD) and Hippolytus (222 AD) who all regarded bishops as Christ's appointed guardians of the apostolic doctrine and the Church's doctrinal purity. St. Irenaeus had this magnificent testimony regarding the need to have recourse to the Apostolic tradition retained in the succession of bishops of the Catholic communion in order to refute the multiple heresies of the Third Century confusing the faithful:

Anyone who wishes to discern the truth may see in every church in the whole world the apostolic tradition clear and manifest...This Apostolic tradition has been brought down to us by a succession of bishops in the greatest, most ancient, and well-known [Roman] church, founded by the two most glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul...For with this church, because of its more effective authority, all churches must agree, that is to say, the faithful of all places, because in it the Apostolic tradition has been always preserved.<sup>6</sup>

In other words, it is the presence of the Apostolic Succession of Bishops united to their head and center of

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<sup>2</sup> Image Books, 1985.

<sup>3</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1997, 77.

<sup>4</sup> In the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Sacrifice of the Mass is referred to as The Divine Liturgy and the Creed recited within it begins "*We* believe".

<sup>5</sup> Circa 96 AD

<sup>6</sup> Adversus Haereses III,1 and 3.

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unity in the Church which guarantees that the Catholic Church of today is identical with the Church of the Apostles founded by Christ. The reality of Apostolic Succession assures the historical and doctrinal continuity of the present Catholic Church with the Church encountered in the Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of St. Paul. Moreover, when Christ declared He was founding His Church on the Rock of Peter, He, in effect, identified His "one and only Church" as that unique communion of bishops united to their visible head, the Bishop of Rome, the successor of Peter and heir to Peter's prerogatives as read in the Gospels.<sup>7</sup> In addition, Our Lord was assuring that His Church would be both indefectible (ever secure in faith and incorruptible) and infallible (unerring) in teaching that faith by solemn definitions and doctrinal judgments.

Though the various separated Eastern Churches have an appreciable measure of apostolicity since they retain the Sacrament of Holy Orders and have a valid Episcopate, possession of the fullness of Apostolic Succession is alone the heritage of the Catholic Church. This is because according to Christ's will, communion with the Apostolic See of Rome is a necessary element for the bishops of local churches to remain a part of the visible Unity of the Church. Moreover, the indefectibility and infallibility of the Church are intimately connected to the Petrine ministry of the Pope who serves as the visible head of the whole Church Militant. Those seeking truth and unchanging Orthodoxy of belief and doctrine amidst the trials and storms of history, which often set patriarchs and bishops at odds with one another, will find it in the Rock of the

7 Matthew 16: 18-19; Luke: 22: 31-32; John 21: 15-17

## Member Drive!!!

Be sure to fill out the reply card and claim your membership if you haven't already.

# Member Drive!!!

Papacy upholding the entire structure and belief of the visible Church. In the immortal words of St. Ambrose, facing in the 4<sup>th</sup> century heretical Arian bishops and others besetting the Church, "Where Peter is, there is the Church." As Vatican II explained: "[It was] in order that the episcopate might be one and undivided, Christ put Peter at the head of the other Apostles, and in him He set up a lasting visible source and foundation of the unity of faith and communion." The documents of Vatican II are especially rich in its teaching on Apostolic Succession which serves as the indispensable Bond linking the Church of the present in dogmatic integrity to the Church of the Apostles.9

# The Dual Mission of the Laity: Its spiritual mission in the Church and accompanying mission to transform the temporal order according to the Natural and Revealed Law of God

No Ecumenical Council in the history of the Church has treated the role of the laity with such great detail and expansiveness than did the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). It did so in such documents as its Dogmatic Constitution of the Church,<sup>10</sup> the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World,11 and Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People.<sup>12</sup> Pope St. Paul VI wrote on the distinctive character of the lay apostolate in his Evangelii Nuntiandi calling upon lay people to also evangelize. Pope St. John Paul II did the same in his Christifideles Laici. The Catechism of the Catholic Church summarizes handily the place, role and duties of lay people in articles 897-913. It notes the Mission of the Laity as having been called "to have an everclearer consciousness, not only of belonging to the Church, but of being the Church, that is to say, the community of the faithful on earth under the leadership of the Pope, the common Head, and of the bishops in communion with him. They [all] are the Church."13

Sharing in their own way the priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of Christ, the laity possess a Dual Mission of activity 1) in the Church and 2) in the temporal order of the states and societies in which they live.

As members of the Church, the laity participate in its apostolic character. They have an obligation to know Catholic doctrine and bear witness to it in their life and actions. By these means, the laity participate in the safeguarding and promulgating of the Faith handed down by Christ to His Apostles. They are called by God to carry on the

- 8 Lumen Gentium, 18.
- 9 See Lumen Gentium Chapters II and III.
- 10 Lumen Gentium, Chapter IV.
- 11 Gaudium et Spes, September 7, 1965.
- 12 Apostolicam Acutuositatem, November 18, 1965.
- 13 Catechism of the Catholic Church, 899.

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mission of the whole Church to the world and help defend it from the attacks of unbelievers. Parents especially have the obligation to see to the Christian education of their children and to protect them from the moral evils of the day.

It is only by remaining obedient to the authentic Magisterium of the Church that the laity possess the apostolic Deposit of Faith which they must in turn offer to the world as family members, friends, coworkers, and citizens of their nation:

By reason of their special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will...It pertains to them in a special way so to illuminate and order all temporal things with which they are closely associated that these may always be effected and grow according to Christ and may be to the glory of the Creator and Redeemer.14

As a leavening agent, they are to permeate the social, political, economic, and cultural realities of their society with the demands of Christian doctrine and life.<sup>15</sup> The Church's Magisterium clearly teaches that the laity take on their own distinctive role, not to retreat from secular concerns which impact life both in the Church and society at large, but rather to Christianize the temporal order. Bringing the spirit of the Gospel into secular affairs is the apostolate specific to the laity.

The Second Vatican Council could not be more clear:

Laymen should also know that it is generally the function of their well-formed Christian conscience to see that the divine law is inscribed in the life of the earthly city. From priests they may look for spiritual light and nourishment. Let the layman not imagine that his pastors are always such experts, that to every problem which arises, however complicated, they can readily give him a concrete solution, or even that such is their mission. Rather, enlightened by Christian wisdom and giving close attention to the teaching authority of the Church, let the layman take on his own distinctive role.16

Laymen are not monks or cloistered religious who have their own vocations in the Church. The apostolate specific to the lay faithful is to give prophetic witness to the Social Reign of Christ the King. Christ as King wishes his laity to "build up the Body of Christ" (of which they are members) and to spread his Kingdom among men, that

Kingdom which has its beginnings in the Church on earth and was commissioned by Christ to "make disciples of all nations." We laity are called to evangelize for the good of souls and their salvation, always remembering that Christ's Kingdom is:

...a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love, and peace. In this kingdom, creation itself will be delivered out of its slavery to corruption and into the freedom of the sons of God...the faithful, therefore, must learn the deepest meaning and the value of all creation, and how to relate it to the glory of God. They must assist one another to live holier lives even in their daily occupations. In this way the world is permeated by the spirit of Christ and more effectively achieves its purpose in justice, charity, and peace. The laity have the principal role in the universal fulfillment of this purpose.<sup>17</sup>

As Vatican II insisted, "The Church can never be without the Lay Apostolate: it is something derived from the Layman's very vocation as a Christian."18 As part of their vocation, the laity must strive to influence the secular spheres in which they operate whether it be family, work, science, art, politics, media, etc. with the spirit of the Gospel. Every effort is to be made to evangelize the secular order with whatever talents, abilities, and gifts God has granted lay people.

It is an Ecumenical Council that warns us: "...a member who does not work at the growth of the body (the Body of Christ) to the extent of his possibilities must be considered useless both to the Church and to himself."19 In his individual capacity, a layman can do much to be useful to himself and the salvation of others in pursuing the holiness to which he is called by Our Lord. Participating devoutly in the worship of the Church and in the Sacraments of the Church, and in constant prayer and penance as called for by Our Lady of the Rosary at Fatima to meet the many needs of the Holy Church. Every layman can thereby manifest his love of the Church, especially in this period of an unprecedented crisis in the history of the Church and the Papacy. The lofty ideal of the layman and lay woman envisaged by that great servant of God, Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman is there to inspire us:

I want laymen, not arrogant, not rash in speech, not disputatious but men who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold; who know their creed so well that they can give an account of it; who know so much history that they can defend it. I want an

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Catechism of the Catholic Church, 898. 14

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 899. 15

Gaudium et Spes, 43.

<sup>17</sup> Lumen Gentium, 36.

<sup>18</sup> Apostolicam Acutuositatem, 1.

Apostolicam Acutuositatem, 2. continued on page 6



Calling of the First Apostles, by Ghirlandaio Domenico

intelligent, well-instructed laity who understand the bases and principles of Catholicism.

Vatican II not only encouraged every Catholic to further the Mission of the Church in the world but also to organize with other likeminded people to promote the truths of the Natural and Revealed Law of God and the values which flow from them to preserve peace and order in society and protect the dignity of the human person. Today there are countless Lay Apostolates motivated by love of Christ and His Church who have answered the call for organized efforts among the laity. These groups engage in pro-life work, study Holy Scripture and Church documents, facilitate spiritual retreats, Adoration, religious education, and countless other activities. Catholics United for the Faith's founding President, H. Lyman Stebbins, was right to encapsulate all these efforts within CUF's mission "to support, defend and advance the efforts of the Teaching Church."

It was CUF which first distinguished itself in defending Pope St. Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae* when it came under attack from the liberal establishment. Dissenting theologians, whose pernicious influence was felt in catechetics, sex education, and liturgy would lead millions of Catholics to abandon the practice of the Faith. To the further consternation of parents, such dissent would lead to the collapse of Catholic doctrine in Catholic universities and colleges. CUF was among the first to expose the infamous *Dutch Catechism* for its heretical errors resulting in a disastrous revision of the Faith. It was CUF's analyses of

another adult and heretical catechism which sold almost two million copies in the English-speaking world, *Christ Among Us*, that led the Holy See to withdraw the *Imprimatur*. Time does not permit to list the books, brochures, and pamphlets published by CUF and its many efforts to strengthen the faith of confused and troubled Catholics and to help them understand the nature of the dissent and disobedience that had become widespread in the Church.

This participation in religious education and teaching of the Faith embodied in the extensive activities of CUF and many other Catholic lay groups and associations today gives voice to the *sensus fidei* whereby the laity of the Church witness their adherence to the apostolic faith of the Church. As previously emphasized, the Church as Apostolic involves the whole body of the Church, hierarchy and laity together, always remaining faithful to the Deposit of Faith given to it. That Deposit of Faith necessary for belief and salvation is indefectibly safeguarded by the hierarchy of Pope and bishops in communion with him. The Bishop of Rome, as Peter's successor, and head of the College of Bishops, has the special help of the Holy Spirit in carrying out his part as the final criterion of unity, apostolicity, and orthodoxy.

The lay faithful also have the help of the Holy Spirit to be faithful in adhering to the doctrines taught by Peter and his fellow Apostles. It is the faithful of the Church, manifesting their obedience to the Magisterium of the Church, who represent the *sensus fidei* and *sensus catholicum*, and not the dissenting lay groups in the US, Latin America, and

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Europe, presently at odds with the Magisterium's teaching on contraception, abortion, same-sex-marriage, euthanasia, divorce-and-remarriage, the prohibition of Holy Communion to adulterers, and who have dared to deny or cast doubt on the articles of the Apostles' Creed.

In conclusion, it is a matter for profound meditation that when we declare our belief in the Church as Apostolic, we confess that the Apostolic Succession of Pope and Bishops keeps the Church unerringly faithful to the doctrine preached and taught by the Apostles. They alone teach the entire Faith with exclusive authority, but the faithful laity are also graced to transmit the apostolic tradition of faith and morals to their children and to all the men and women encountered in the pilgrimage of this life. In this way, confident in the Apostolic Succession of the Church, the laity are salt of the Earth and imbue the social order with the Gospel of Life.

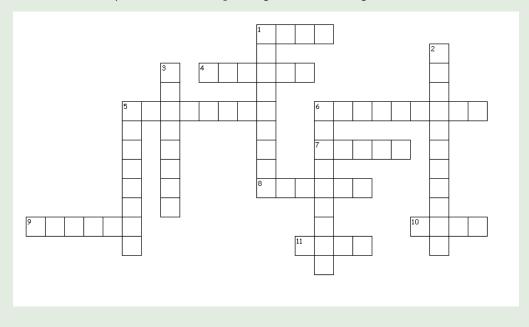
# Have questions about the catholic Faith? FAITH FACTS THE ANSWERS YOU NEED 1 (800) MY FAITH

#### **Morsels of Mirth**

How well do you know this Sunday's First Reading? Find the answers to the cross word in Acts 2:1-11.

When the time for <u>6 Across</u> was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving <u>10 Across</u>, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of <u>11 Across</u>, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the holy <u>4 Across</u> and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

Now there were devout \_\_\_\_1 Across \_\_\_ from every nation under heaven staying in \_\_\_\_1 Down \_\_\_. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were \_\_\_\_5 Down \_\_\_ because each one heard them speaking in his own \_\_\_\_3 Down \_\_\_. They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, "Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? Then how does each of us hear them in his own native language? We are Parthians, \_\_\_\_7 Across \_\_\_, and Elamites, inhabitants of \_\_\_\_2 Down \_\_\_, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and \_\_\_\_6 Down \_\_\_, Egypt and the districts of Libya near \_\_\_\_9 Across \_\_\_, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and \_\_\_\_5 Across to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the \_\_\_\_\_8 Across \_\_\_\_ acts of God."



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# **CUF LINKS**

### **Chapter News**

- † Wish there was a vibrant Catholic community in your area? That desire is a call to action! Contact our office to learn more about how you can charter a CUF chapter.
- † St. Gregory VII Chapter of Milwaukee recently hosted Fr. John Del Priore to speak on why young people are the "Future of the Church!" The St. Augustine University Parish, of which Fr. John is the pastor, offers
- a robust sacramental life to the students of UW-Platteville, providing two Masses every weekday, three Masses on Sunday, and the opportunity for confession 6 days a week!
- † Want us to feature your chapter's activities and pictures? Keep us up to date by emailing:

administrativeassistant@cuf.org

#### **Information Services**

Information Services continues to be busy. This year to date, we've answered 71 research questions – not including those patient individuals waiting to hear back from me – in addition to sending out over 480 FAITH FACTS. Please keep those requests coming!

In the past month, we've received several questions about the Church's teaching on divorce and remarriage. Unfortunately, this seems to be an all too common occurrence in today's society. In fact, you probably know someone who has been divorced and remarried. So, if you are not familiar with what the Church teaches and you would like to learn more from the Church's wisdom on this matter, please contact us. At 1-800 MY FAITH. Brian

### St. Joseph Foundation

The majority of cases being processed has been and continues to be church closure and/or sale cases. As the clergy sex abuse scandal continues (it seems every day a priest is pulled from ministry), the diocesan purse strings are loosened to offer restitution to the victims. And the money must come from somewhere. It cannot be a coincidence. Churches in prime real estate locations appear to be the most vulnerable, regardless of how strong the parish is. Some dioceses have filed for bankruptcy protection as a forerunner to massive reconfigurations within the respective diocesan territory: *merge parishes* 

and close churches. As Parishes are merged the associated Parish Churches then outnumber the number of Parishes leaving the churches of higher value most vulnerable despite fiscal health and membership growth. Bishops cite clergy shortage as reason to close and sell churches. Vatican jurisprudence discourages this line of reasoning. According to decisions by the Vatican, a church cannot be closed due to a shortage of priests. The tragedy of these cases is the loss of souls. 20% - 50% of active Catholics will stop attending Mass if their parish closes. We are fighting for those souls. Best regards, Natasha

### **Yakin' About**

- † Great Catholic Music by Living Bread Radio is the only free streaming service of its kind offering nothing but the best and most beautiful music in the Catholic tradition 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You'll hear everything from Gregorian chant, to traditional hymns, to contemporary Catholic artists like Matt Maher and Audrey Assad. Download the Great Catholic Music app on your smartphone or other mobile device or listen live at GreatCatholicMusic.com
- † A suggestion from one of our readers: Next time you

- go to the post office to buy stamps, ask for Alabama's as a sign of support for their recent law defending unborn human life!
- † We want to showcase the spiritual life of our members in *Lay Witness*! Submit your original prayers, meditations, and articles with your reply card or email <u>administrativeassistant@cuf.org</u>. Thank you for sharing!
- † Got an announcement? If your event is CUF friendly, and we have space to spare, we will gladly post it here!

**Morsels of Mirth Answers:** Across) 1 Jews, 4 Spirit, 5 Converts, 6 Pentecost, 7 Medes, 8 Mighty, 9 Cyrene, 10 Wind, 11 Fire Down) 1 Jerusalem, 2 Mesopotamia, 3 Language, 5 Confused, 6 Pamphylia

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