

Envy torments afflicted, pope says

VATICAN CITY — Jealousy and envy are ugly sins that grow like weeds in one's heart, Pope Francis said at his morning Mass.

A heart that is envious is not only tormented, but can even "lead one to kill," the pope said Jan. 21 during the Mass in the chapel of Domus Sanctae Marthae.

The pope focused his homily on the day's first reading (1 Sm 18: 6-9; 19: 1-7) in which Saul plots to kill David out of jealousy for his growing fame. Although Saul heeded his son's advice to not murder David, the pope said, his jealousy returned like a "sickness" that opened the door to envy.

"Envy is an ugly thing! It is an attitude, an ugly sin," he said. "And jealousy or envy grows in the heart like a bad weed: It grows, but does not let the grass grow."

One who has an envious heart, he continued, cannot find peace and is tormented. (Catholic News Service)

Abuse list shows transparency

SEATTLE — The Archdiocese of Seattle has published a list of clergy and religious accused of sexual abuse of a minor who have served or resided in Western Washington.

The individuals on the list posted to the archdiocesan website — www.seattlearchdiocese.org — have allegations that are either admitted, established or determined to be credible, according to a news release.

"I express my deepest apologies for the actions of those who were in positions of trust and who violated that sacred trust by abusing the vulnerable in their care," Seattle Archbishop J. Peter Sartain wrote in a letter accompanying the list.

In announcing publication of the list Jan. 15, the archbishop said the document builds on the Archdiocese of Seattle's long-standing efforts at transparency, accountability and urging victims to come forward. (CNS)

Manger story proof of 'culture of life'

WASHINGTON — A baby in a manger is proof enough for Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York that Americans can express a culture of life.

And it wasn't the Christ child. Instead, it was a newborn infant left by his mother in the crib of a manger scene at Holy Child Jesus Church in the New York City borough of Queens.

In his homily during the opening Mass Jan. 21 of the National Prayer Vigil for Life at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, Cardinal Dolan called it "a sad but gripping tale."

"True story," Cardinal Dolan said, "and I submit it to you, the jury, this evening, as Exhibit A in our case for promoting the culture of life." (CNS)

Mana'olana

FOR THE
YOUNG ADULT
CATHOLIC

Movie review | Room

A parable, somber but ultimately hopeful

By John Mulderig

Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — "The mind is its own place, and in itself / Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." These words from poet John Milton's 17th-century epic "Paradise Lost" capture at least one theme of the poignant, multifaceted drama "Room" (A24).

As a tale of confinement and isolation with far-reaching and universal implications, director Lenny Abrahamson's somber but ultimately hopeful parable might also be said to recall Daniel Dafoe's novel "Robinson Crusoe," published a little over 50 years after Milton's classic work.

In lieu of the shipwrecked sailor Crusoe, screenwriter Emma Donoghue's script, adapted from her 2010 novel, gives us two characters caught in a more modern form of exile: a 5-year-old named Jack (Jacob Tremblay) and his unnamed mother, known to him — and to us — simply as Ma (Brie Larson).

Two years before Jack was born, Ma was kidnapped by a sexual predator they both refer to as Old Nick (Sean Bridgers) who has kept her locked in a backyard shed equipped with an elaborate security system ever since. Born and raised within this confined space, Jack — whom Ma loves deeply, despite the circumstances of his conception — is confused by tales of an outside world he has only experienced through television.

When an opportunity for escape presents itself, however, Jack must rally his courage to seize the moment.

Donoghue and Abrah-



Jacob Tremblay and Brie Larson star in a scene from the movie "Room."

CNS photo/courtesy A24

mson successfully render everyday life as an alien environment for their youthful, bewildered protagonist, who also narrates. Additionally, their film subtly examines human adaptability, the power of imagination and the ironies underlying what appears, on the surface, to be an all-too-straightforward situation.

Viewers of faith will particularly appreciate the movie's biblical overtones. Besides the fact that the villain's moniker has traditionally been used as a nickname for Satan, they'll notice the implicit parallel drawn between Jack's never-barbered hair and the

unshorn, strength-conveying locks of Samson as described in the Book of Judges.

The ruse by which Jack and Ma hope to obtain their freedom, moreover, involves a form of death, burial and resurrection. But if ordinary reality is, in one sense, the heaven to which they both aspire — a point reinforced by Ma's quiet rendition of the traditional folk song "Big Rock Candy Mountain" — it also represents the fallen world into which they are in danger of passing should they abandon the safe parameters of the titular space.

This skillful interplay of

apparently contrary ideas — a redemption and liberation that is also, at some level, the surrender of the main characters' shared Eden — sets "Room" far above ordinary movie fare. So, too, does the emotional wallop it delivers, thanks in no small measure to Larson's outstanding performance as well as the deep appeal Tremblay evokes.

Given its moral significance, which also includes an essentially pro-life message affirming Jack's inherent worth, despite the criminal and tragic nature of his parentage, the picture is probably acceptable for at least

some mature adolescents, the elements listed below notwithstanding.

The film contains brief abusive violence, mature themes including serial rape and suicide, an overheard but unseen sexual encounter, a couple of profanities and several rough terms. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R — restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

Mulderig is on the staff of Catholic News Service.



Erick Rommel
COMING OF AGE

Valuing the friendships that shape us

In life, we are continually on the move. Sometimes the move involves a new home or new town. Sometimes it means graduation or a new job.

Regardless of the type of change, every time we make a move, we naturally assess where we were, where we're going and what we need for the next part of our journey.

We evaluate what we own, eliminate what we no longer need and plan for new additions that match our new lifestyle. Leaving college may mean an end to trendy posters of movies and musicians, but also the start of a professional clothing collection to make us look like successful adults.

We also take a similar assessment of the people in our lives, often without realizing it. In high school, we see the same people every day for four years. There's an undeniable connec-

tion. Then, when our four years are over, we toss our graduation caps into the air and never see some of those people again.

After they meant so much, for so long, those people are gone. It's not because we're forgetful, but the bond we had no longer exists. Our relationship is reduced to nothing more than a broken connection.

This occurs often as we grow older. People we thought we could never live without become less prominent as others enter our lives. Sometimes, some of those people disappear from our lives, and sometimes they don't.

Sometimes the bonds we make are more than where we went to school, where we worked or the neighborhood where we lived. Sometimes our connections are much deeper and refuse to fade, while others are easily forgotten.

I have friends from high school and college whom I rarely have seen since graduation. We're separated in many ways, but I know a connection still exists. I feel it. If we randomly meet, it feels as if no time has passed. If they needed help, I'd give it.

Those are the people with whom our bond is the strongest, those we refuse to forget.

Sometimes the effect on each others' lives is mutual. Sometimes the connection only goes in one direction. What if what they mean to us is far greater than what we mean to them? Should that matter?

Relationships are rarely equal. Think back to the days when you and your friends discussed the person who was your best friend and the one who was your third-best friend. We all wanted to be number one on every

list. As a child, those determinations meant something. As an adult, what's important is to be true to oneself.

Every time we make a move, we naturally assess where we were, where we're going and what we need for the next part of our journey. Through that process, we continually create the person we want to become.

It's important, however, to remember those who made us the person we are presently. Their role in creating our identity should never be overlooked.

Fortunately, it's easy to know who those people are. Even when they're gone, they're the ones we can never forget. In our hearts, we know we will see them again. If we remember the lessons they taught us, we'll be precisely where we need to be, no matter where life takes us.

Quote

“Prayer is our only weapon. As in other circumstances, may all the faithful redouble the ardour of this prayer, so our common plea for national unity will always remain our source of strength.” | Msgr.

Matthias Kamm, secretary-general of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Burkina Faso and of Niger, in a Jan. 20 statement signed by the Catholic bishops of Burkina Faso after a terrorist attack in the capital, Ouagadougou, killed 29 people, including six humanitarian workers from Quebec. (Catholic News Service)

IN THE NEWS

Enforcing truth about marriage

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis said there can be no confusion between God's plan for marriage as an indissoluble bond between one man and woman who are open to life, and other sorts of unions.

“The church, in fact, can demonstrate God's unwavering merciful love toward families, especially those wounded by sin and life's trials, and at the same time proclaim the essential truth of marriage according to God's plan,” the pope said Jan. 22, in a meeting with members of the Roman Rota. The pope holds the annual meeting to inaugurate the Vatican court's judicial year.

Pope Francis said the court, which hears requests for marriage annulments, helps support families and the truth about the sacred bond of marriage.

“The family, based on indissoluble, unitive and procreative marriage, is part of God's 'dream' and the church's for the salvation of humanity,” he said. (CNS)

SAINTS UNDER 40

Walking with Christ

Born in 1913, Blessed Jose Sanchez del Rio was a Mexican boy who followed his older brothers in the Cristero movement during the late 1920s. The rebellion came



in response to severe religious persecution in Mexico; many faithful who felt impotent against the authorities took up arms with their faith in God as their primary support.

In 1928, at age 14 Jose was captured and imprisoned in a church sacristy. After several days, the soles of his feet were mutilated and he was forced to walk through town to a cemetery; urged by the government soldiers to renounce his faith, Jose instead proclaimed it despite being in great pain. He was shot and killed once he reached the cemetery — where for one last time he refused to deny his faith. (www.ewtn.com)



CNS photo/Lisa Johnston, St. Louis Review

People hold signs during a prayer and protest rally outside of the new Planned Parenthood building in Washington Jan. 21, the day before the annual March for Life.

‘State of Abortion’

Both the number and rate of the procedure is down, according to a National Right to Life Committee report

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Both the number of abortions and the rate of abortion is dropping, according to figures released in the third annual “State of Abortion in America” report issued by the National Right to Life Committee.

The number of abortions, which had peaked at about 1.6 million in 1989, is now down to 1 million, according to federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention statistics quoted in the report, which was issued Jan. 14.

The abortion rate for all women of child-bearing age is now down to 210 abortions per 1,000 live births.

The number of abortions performed at Planned

Parenthood clinics, though, is up 250 percent in the same time period, according to Carol Tobias, NRLC president. The rate, Tobias added, has remained “relatively steady the last three years,” although the numbers have dropped for other services Planned Parenthood provides at its clinics.

Tobias characterized Planned Parenthood's revenues as “steady abortion income and a cool half-billion in income from state and federal governments.”

One of NRLC's priorities is government defunding of Planned Parenthood. President Barack Obama vetoed a bill that would have eliminated Planned Parenthood's eligibility to receive federal grants.

“This is the first time now that the Congress has actually

approved legislation to defund Planned Parenthood,” said Douglas Johnson, NRLC's legislative director. “The procedural pathway has been set. The only thing lacking now is a pro-life president.”

Johnson said the current Congress is “a pro-life Congress.” He cited 10 House roll-call votes and four Senate roll-call votes, all of which had garnered a majority of pro-life votes. He added none of the Senate votes met the threshold to override a presidential veto of the defunding measure.

That would apply to a scheduled Jan. 26 vote in the House to override Obama's veto. “That veto is going to be sustained,” Johnson predicted.

The “State of Abortion” report noted that for 2012, the

last year for which statistics are available, “more than one in five ... abortions performed at eight weeks gestation or earlier were listed as ‘medical’ abortions by the CDC.” “Medical,” the report added, “is code for chemical,” frequently “morning-after” drugs.

In the 36 states that report the marital status of women undergoing abortions, “married women accounted for just 14.7 percent of abortions,” the report said, “with 85.3 percent of aborting women being unmarried.”

One exception to the 2012 statistical overview is the number of women dying from a legal abortion, the last year for which statistics are available is 2011. That year, two women died, compared to 10 in 2010. Since the 1973

Supreme Court decisions permitting abortion virtually on demand, 424 women have died in abortions, according to “The State of Abortion.”

The biggest toll, though, Tobias said, is the number of babies aborted, which she put at 58 million since the joint Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton rulings. In addition to the unborn children, Tobias cited “the lasting impact the abortion had on the mothers of these children.”

Even with lower rates, about 1 million abortions are still performed annually in the United States, Tobias said. That reflects a 4.2 percent drop from year-before levels.

“We know ultimately we will be successful,” she said. “The immutable truth: Killing unborn children is wrong.”



LISA'S CATECHISM CORNER
Church teaching explained to you

What are the corporal works of mercy?

YOUCAT*: To feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick and the imprisoned, and bury the dead. [2447]

The corporal works of mercy are actions we do to help others with their material and physical needs.

Pope Francis made a surprise visit to a retirement home in early January — how cool is that? It was the first of monthly works of mercy that he plans to do on Fridays during this holy Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Blessed Mother Teresa, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Damien and St. Marianne served the poor and those in need. Their example is a great witness for us as we journey through this #YearofMercy.

“The revolution of tenderness is that which, today, we must cultivate as a fruit of this Year of Mercy: the tenderness of God toward each one of us.” (Pope Francis)

*Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church

Lisa Gomes is the director of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry



MAKANA'S HELPFUL HINTS
Exciting ways to enhance young adult ministry

They're coming

Today's tip: Use Ash Wednesday as an opportunity to reach out to “new” people. Pass out ministry and/or event brochures and invite them to the next parish gathering.

This statistic always comes up ... the most well attended Mass of the year is Ash Wednesday. Regardless of why this is, the big take-away should be, THEY'RE COMING. Use this as an opportunity to reach people you can't at any other Sunday liturgy or parish gathering.

Part of the vision that the U.S. bishops have for ministry with young adults is “accepting God's invitation.”

God invites us to be transformed into holy people, to participate and find support in a community of believers, and to make this transformation happen by continually saying “yes” to Jesus' invitation to “come, follow me” (Luke 18:22).

This “yes” means, in the words of Aida Salgado, a young adult from Texas, “to share with others the Christ that came down from the cross to make his dwelling inside each of us.” It is becoming people of great faith — “sons and daughters of the light.” Give these people you meet an opportunity to respond to God's invitation by extending it to them. Be Christ's welcoming hand.

Makana Aiona is the diocesan coordinator for Young Adult Ministry.