



# CENTRAL WASHINGTON CATHOLIC

*El Católico de Washington Central*

Pāchu Washintin Chmuk Tātpas

AUGUST 2018 *Letter*

## Father Thomas Aquinas Pickett Begins Life as a Dominican Priest

By Christine Corbett Conklin

He was called to the priesthood when he was still in middle school. Then, after graduating from Ellensburg High School, he “worked for a decade” to complete his seminary training. So, when ordination day finally arrived on June 22 of this year, “it was pretty surreal,” for Father Thomas Aquinas Pickett.

The momentous day was “kind of a big, holy, beautiful blur,” recalled the 29-year-old Ellensburg native, son of John and Barbara Pickett. The new Dominican priest now serves as Director of Evangelization and Faith Formation at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Seattle.

Father Pickett was ordained in an impressive ceremony with hundreds of attendees, including his parents and numerous other family members, at St. Dominic’s Church in San Francisco as a priest of the Western Dominican Province.

Although he began his seminary training at Bishop White Seminary at Gonzaga University in Spokane, as a seminarian of the Diocese of Yakima, he found his ultimate calling with the Dominicans.

“What drew me to the Dominicans (was) the mission of preaching,” he explained. He has an intense interest in “researching and contemplating the reality of the Faith and sharing that with others ... in a meaningful way.”

Father Pickett had much time to discern his choice and to become well prepared for the priesthood through his extensive studies, which included two years at Bishop White Seminary, one year in the Dominican novitiate in San Francisco, two years in Oakland, a year in Anchorage, two more years in Oakland, and a year in Toulouse, France.

The new priest already holds Bachelor’s degrees in Philosophy and Theology, a Master’s degree in Theology and a Master of Divinity degree, and has begun work on his license in Sacred Theology. He also hopes to pursue a doctorate in Theology.

Ordination was “a very easy, natural transition,” he observed.

“Even though I left studying for the Diocese of Yakima, my heart still remained in Central Washington,” he added. “There are great opportunities for evangelization



(L to R) Fr. Bradley Thomas Elliott, O.P., Fr. Christopher Wetzel, O.P., Bishop Robert Christian, O.P., Fr. Thomas Aquinas Pickett, O.P., Fr. Pius Youn, O.P.

here. My hope is that the Faith continues to grow and thrive!”

We wish Father Pickett great happiness and fulfillment in his priesthood. Please keep him in your prayers.

To see more photos of the ordination and to learn more about the work of the Dominicans, visit [www.opwest.org](http://www.opwest.org).

## Celebrations in Diocese of Yakima Honor Longtime Marriages



Couples celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversaries gathered at Christ the King Church in Richland.

“What therefore God has joined together, let man not separate.” (Matthew:19:6)

Longtime marriages are receiving special recognition this summer in two celebrations held in the Diocese of Yakima.

Bishop Joseph Tyson invites all married couples marking significant anniversaries in 2018 to a Celebration

of Marriage on Sunday, September 9. The event will begin with 11 a.m. Mass at St. Paul Cathedral, to be followed by a reception with heavy hors d’oeuvres in the Cathedral Assembly Place.

Designed to honor and uphold the dignity of marriage, the festivities will recognize couples who have been married for 25, 50, 60 or 70 years, for example.

Please inform the Cathedral staff by September 5 if you plan to participate, so that adequate refreshments and mementos of the occasion may be provided. Mail information to St. Paul Cathedral at 15 South 12th Avenue, Yakima, WA 98902, or email [parish@stpaulyakima.org](mailto:parish@stpaulyakima.org), noting your name, anniversary you are celebrating and telephone number.

In Richland, 16 couples celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversaries this year were honored on July 14 at Christ the King

Church. A special Mass, concelebrated by Monsignor Tom Champoux and Monsignor Robert Siler, included a renewal of wedding vows.

Those honored included: Sandee and Mike Brooks; Cardee and Robert Brydon; Rose and Dor Collado; Rita and Gerald Frey; Kathy and Mike Grygiel; Helen and Rick Guerra; Eileen and Kenneth Johnston; Jacque and Graham Loynd; Maria and David Schwegel; Alice and Bob Suyama; Judy and Dennis Sweeney; Nancy and Mike Valentine; Ann and Berwick Voisin; Linda and Richard Wickline; Diane and Jim Young; and Winnie and Carl Zeamer.

Congratulations and blessings to all of these special couples who are living out the Sacrament of Matrimony! Please keep them and all of our married couples in your prayers.

## A Message from Bishop Tyson...

Dear Friends:

For whom do I vote, given my Catholic Faith? That's a question that comes up often in conversations and e-mails this time of year.

The famous Dorothy Day – cited by Pope Francis in his address to the United States Congress as an outstanding American – never voted, even though she once was arrested while publicly protesting in favor of women receiving the right to vote.

This was obviously before the passage of the 19th amendment of the United States Constitution. She was among the women arrested in what would come to be known historically as the “Night of Terror” on November 15, 1917. Newspapers reported the sensational beatings of the women protesters – including Dorothy Day.

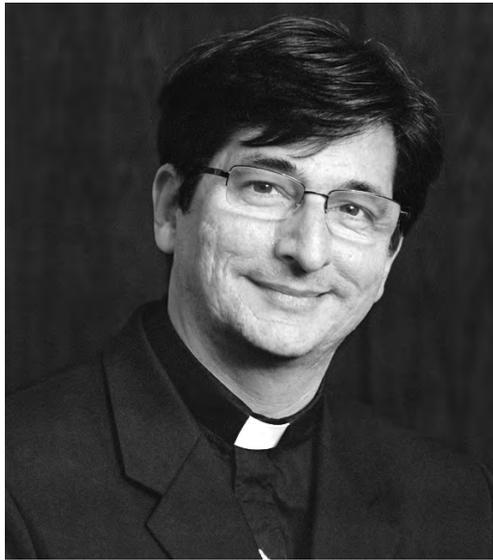
Her granddaughter, Kate Hennessy, notes in her biography “Dorothy Day: The World Will Be Saved by Beauty,” that Dorothy never took on the “privilege” of voting. Indeed, the Catholic Worker movement she co-founded with Peter Maurin eschewed voting.

Why? Because Dorothy Day believed that prayer and fasting along with protest and civil engagement were more effective ways of bringing about social change.

Does this mean we should all refrain from voting? No, not necessarily. Voting is a privilege we share as Americans. We ought to be grateful for this right to vote – a right that Dorothy Day advocated in a personal way even though she never voted.

The lesson from the life of Dorothy Day is that the starting point of our civic engagement is not the ballot box. Rather, it's the confessional box. Making our decision starts with prayer and fasting, rather than sectarian campaigning. We begin by following the “works of mercy” from Jesus rather than a political program.

Indeed, if we have the privilege to vote as Americans, then it may be even more incumbent to remember those in public life must **earn** our vote. Candidates who lead immoral lives or leave a whiff of corruption may also not be worthy of our vote. Candidates in public life who denigrate the unborn, who categorize Mexicans as “rapists,” who dismiss



*Bishop Joseph Tyson*

white voters as “deplorables,” who call for the wholesale deportation of all the undocumented in our parishes without any reference to the natural moral law obligations they may be trying to fulfill to support their families, may not be worthy of our vote.

Obviously not all issues of public policy receive the same moral weight. As the Church has consistently taught, the beginning- and end-of-life issues in public policy – the right to life for the unborn and the dying – are bookends for all other public policy issues. Why? Without the right to life there are no other rights.

At the same time, a candidate who is against abortion does not get a free pass to denigrate the human dignity of the undocumented through public policies that fail to measure up to the natural moral law – a law that is apparent to all people through use of right reason. Pope Francis made this abundantly clear in paragraph 102 of his recent apostolic exhortation “*Gaudate et exsultate*.”

“We often hear it said that, with respect to relativism and the flaws of our present world, the situation of migrants, for example, is a lesser issue. Some Catholics consider it a secondary issue compared to the “grave” bioethical questions. That a politician looking for votes might say such a thing is understandable, but not a Christian, for whom the only proper attitude is to stand in the shoes of those brothers and sisters of ours who risk their lives to offer a future to their children. Can we not realize that this is exactly what Jesus

demands of us, when he tells us that in welcoming the stranger we welcome him (cf. *Mt 25:35*)?”

Simply put, the privilege of the vote works both ways. We have the right to vote. We also have a right not to vote. We have the right to refrain from voting for candidates who violate the deepest tenets of our faith with regard to the inherent dignity of the human person. Sometimes we may find that no candidate measures up to what we expect from those in public life. We have a right to “write in” a different candidate.

Indeed, George Weigel, the author of the definitive biography of Pope Saint John Paul II, “*Witness to Hope*,” wrote about this possibility during the last election cycle. Candidates can lose the privilege of our vote. In one of his columns, Weigel cited the poem written during the “Solidarity” trade union protests in Poland by the poet Artur Miedzyrzeczki:

What does the political scientist know?

The political scientist knows the latest trends

The current states of affairs

The history of doctrines

What does the political scientist not know?

The political scientist doesn't know about desperation

He doesn't know the game that consists

In renouncing the game

It doesn't occur to him

That no one knows when

Irrevocable changes may appear

Like an ice-floe's sudden cracks

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If you have been abused or victimized by a member of the Catholic clergy, please believe in the possibility for hope and help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out.

The Yakima Diocese has a sexual abuse hotline for those who wish to report some incident concerning that issue as regards a bishop, priest, deacon or diocesan employee or volunteer. (888) 276-4490

## A Message from Bishop Tyson... *continued from page 2*

And that our natural resources  
Include knowledge of the  
venerated laws  
The capacity to wonder  
And a sense of humor

How do we – in the poetic words of Artur Miedzyrzecki – play the game that “renounces the game?” This is where Dorothy Day is so very helpful. We start with prayer. We start with fasting. We start with works of mercy. We ponder scripture. We study Church teaching. Taken together, we rightly form our conscience and then – in light

of a rightly formed conscience – we decide for whom to vote or whether to vote for anyone. We consider the common good. We also acknowledge that those around us who engage in the same rigorous spiritual discipline may come to a different conclusion from our own.

Permit me to close with this final insight from Kate Hennessy’s biography. Dorothy Day went through a very hard spell in the 1940s with the Catholic Worker movement. She once turned to her mentor and co-founder Peter

Maurin and asked him, “Do you ever become discouraged when you see our failures?” “No,” he replied, “because I know how deep-rooted the evil is.”

All the more reason to root our lives – even our political choices – in prayer and the discipline that come from the works of mercy.

With every best wish and blessing,

Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson  
Bishop of Yakima

## Communicate All Safe Environment Concerns to Protect Children *Continued from page 4*

His life continued as normal for three decades until earlier this year when Ginny went public with her story. In fact, on her website, ToPrevail.org, Ginny shares some remarkable letters from her father in which he not only confesses to the crime, but in which we also get a rare glimpse inside the mind of a child molester.

As facilitators who relay the message of Protecting God’s Children to responsible adults committed to creating safe environments, it becomes our responsibility to explain that we should never ignore that instinct that tells us something is wrong – or alerts us to behavior that raises questions about an

adult’s motives.

At a recent presentation about child sexual abuse, a woman commented that we must never “polite ourselves” into letting go of our concerns about an adult’s behavior. This is a great description of what happens when adults let another adult’s grooming behavior continue in favor of being polite, or, as in the case of Ginny’s mother, of honoring the professional opinions you have been taught to respect and defer to.

One of the guiding principles of PGCA is to empower adults to communicate concerns. To do that we facilitators must relay the importance of

paying attention to those instincts that tell us something is just not right. Ginny’s story reminds us that as caring adults, we must always have our attention on protecting the children in our care and our environments. We must continue to work hard to learn to overcome that human tendency to overlook irresponsible, dangerous or risky behavior in favor of someone else’s opinions or objections to valid concerns. The well-being of children must come first!

*Note: Sharon Doty is a consultant to Virtus, which provides safe environment materials to the Diocese of Yakima and many other dioceses in the United States.*

### Champions of Catholic Education 2018

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Lisa Jacobs	Tri-Cities Prep High School	Pasco
Katie Crosby Ferguson	Christ the King School	Posthumous

Awards will be presented during the Celebration of Faith on October 13th. To register contact the Central Washington Catholic Foundation at [www.cwatholicfoundation.org](http://www.cwatholicfoundation.org) or call (509) 972-3732.



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# NEWS

## *from Around the Diocese*

### **Students for Life Plan Meeting**

Are you a young person who's sad to hear about abortions going on in our area?

Do you know a young person who would like to make a difference in our communities? Spread the word about the next meeting of the Gregory Sherman Chapter of Students for Life!

Anyone between the ages of 13 and college age is welcome to join in at 7 p.m., Tuesday, September 18 at Pizza Hut on Kern Road (just off 40th Avenue) in Yakima. There will be free pizza and door prizes. Parents are invited, too.

Learn about life-affirming options available in Central Washington and how you can reach out to others with love and information. Anyone interested in starting a new chapter of Students for Life in YOUR community can call (509) 985-6248 for more information.

### **'Oktoberfest' to Benefit Housing**

You can support Catholic Charities' Young Adult Housing Program by attending the 31st annual Benefit Dinner and Gala on Saturday, October 6, at Anthology in Richland.

The Oktoberfest-themed fundraiser will feature a chef-prepared dinner, local beers, hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, desserts and more.

Individual seats or tables of 10 are available. Tickets are \$100 per person. Call (800) 246-2962, ext. 1133, for more information, to purchase seats, or to make a donation.

### **Church Mission Congress Is Scheduled**

The Yakima Diocese Church Mission Congress 2018 is coming soon!

This year's event, entitled, "Missionary Disciples – Witnesses of God's Love," is scheduled for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, October 13 at Holy Family Church in Yakima.

The Congress will feature speakers and networking of volunteers who can offer mutual support in passing along the Catholic Faith and building up the Church.

Registration is available through the Diocesan website at [www.yakimadiocese.org](http://www.yakimadiocese.org). Registration fees are \$20 per person and \$25 the day of the event; fees are due at the time of registration.

## **Two Catholic Charities Housing Services Properties Dedicated**



*(L to R) Bishop Joseph Tyson and Father Francisco Gutierrez.*

Bishop Joseph Tyson and Father Francisco Gutierrez, Pastor of Prosser's Sacred Heart Parish, officiated at the blessing and dedication of two Catholic Charities Housing Services properties in Prosser on August 9.

Rio de Vida (River of Life) is a 51-unit development that houses farmworkers and workforce personnel. The site will provide safe and affordable housing to about 200 people who are in need. St. Anthony Terrace is a 61-unit senior housing development for those who are 55 years of age and older, providing affordable housing to approximately

125 people.

Speakers at the event included Rick Evans from Senator Maria Cantwell's office; Eric Seibens from the USDA/RD; Emily Grossman from Housing and Community Services, Washington State Department of Commerce; Steve Zetz, Planning and Economic Development Director, City of Prosser; and Marty Miller, Executive Director, Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing for Washington State.



*Rio de Vida (River of Life) worker housing.*



*Artist rendering of St. Anthony Terrace.*

## **Communicate All Safe Environment Concerns to Protect Children**

*By Sharon Doty, J.D., M.H.R.*

For many participants, one of the challenges after attending a Protecting God's Children for Adults (PGCA) session is deciding whether one warning sign is enough to warrant action to intervene. Facilitators are often asked how many of the signs need to be present for them to raise concerns about an adult's behavior. The answer is easy. One is enough to raise concerns and inspire follow-through to make sure the concern is dealt with in a way that protects children.

Recently, I had the honor to meet with a woman who is on a mission to raise awareness about child sexual abuse and the cost of abuse to victims. She works unfailingly to share her story of abuse and create avenues for other women to speak up no matter their age or what happened to them.



*Don't let "politeness" interfere with speaking out if you believe that a child is in danger.*

She is committed to raising up the voices of victims for all of us to hear and for increasing the pathways to justice for victims in a variety of ways.

Ginny's story is unique in some ways and similar in others, but her molester, who was also her father, was not held accountable for his actions for

many, many years. He was a pillar of the community and a respected member of his profession, who remained in high esteem in his community until Ginny told her story publicly in 2016. However, in Ginny's world, having him for a father was a living nightmare from which it would take her years to escape.

For instance, even after the abuse was revealed, he was never arrested. Instead, he was simply allowed to work out a quiet deal with the District Attorney's office after he admitted to the crime.

*Continued on page 3*