

Pope says 2017 will be good if people do good; decries terrorism

By FRANCES D'EMILIO
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis in his New Year's greetings Sunday declared 2017 will be good to the degree that people do good and reject hatred, as he prayed for those courageously dealing with terrorism gripping the world in "fear and bewilderment."

"The new year will be good in the measure in which each of us, with the help of God, tries to do good, day by day, that's how peace is created," Francis told a crowd of 50,000 pilgrims, tourists and Romans gathered in St. Peter's Square for his noon blessing and New Year's Day remarks.

Francis advised people to "say no to hate and violence and yes to brotherhood and reconciliation." The Roman Catholic church dedicates the first day of the year to the theme of peace.

He also told those standing in the biting cold air that the new year had already begun badly.

"Unfortunately, violence has struck even on this night of well-wishes and hope," he said, referring to the attack on an Istanbul nightclub filled with New Year's revelers early Sunday that left 39 dead and dozens wounded.

"In sorrow, I express my closeness to the Turkish people, I pray for the numerous victims and



Pope Francis celebrates a new year's Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, Sunday, Jan. 1. Pope Francis has lamented in his New Year's homily societies become "cold and calculating" and bereft of compassion.

AP Photo/Andrew Medichini

wounded, and for all the nation in mourning," Francis said.

He then prayed that God will sustain "all men of goodwill who courageously roll up their sleeves to deal with the plague of terrorism and this bloodstain which is gripping the world in a shadow of fear and bewilderment."

Earlier, during his homily during New Year's Day Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, Francis lamented "narcissist hearts" in societies becoming "cold and

calculating."

"The loss of the ties that bind us, so typical of our fragmented and divided culture, increases this sense of orphanhood and, as a result, of great emptiness and loneliness. The lack of physical, and not virtual, contact is cauterizing our hearts and making us lose the capacity for tenderness and wonder, for pity and compassion," Francis said.

Francis says humility and tenderness are signs of strength, not weakness.

LIMEY PASTOR

Heart to Heart



COLIN BROWN
Faith

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Eastern Oregon, A couple of weeks ago my wife, Jeanne, came up with me to visit Good Shepherd Lutheran Church for Christmas Eve Service, which was well received by my flock. We stayed at the Knights Motel, which is right by the Sunrise Café, my regular watering hole. That evening I couldn't sleep, having an uneasy feeling in my chest — a feeling like heartburn. While my wife slept I paced around the hotel room until it subsided sufficiently for me to sleep. I thought little more of it.

Yesterday morning I had the same thing happen, and it felt more painful. I headed to the local Urgent Care and they ran an ECG (electrocardiogram) test, which gave them some interesting results, followed by lab work. Having peered into the mysteries, the answers came back. A test to reveal former problems came back positive, indicating that I had suffered a small heart attack in that motel room, and a test to reveal current problems indicated that I appeared to be suffering another attack right then.

It is fascinating to find how your status can jump from one state to another in the blink of an eye. One minute you are of unlimited age, and the next minute you are finite. My reliable ticker, no longer the well-loned and permanent atomic clock I thought it to be. Instead, more like the Samsung 7 Phone, unpredictable and likely to burst into flames when one least expected it.

These kinds of limits remind us of the usefulness of making use of the time we have. I am triply glad of my voyage to Eastern Oregon to preach the word of God. I am

honored to be my church's pastor. Like the altar candle, it appears that I have burned through more of it than I thought. But there are many candles still to light among us.

When I was a chaplain back in Santa Clara, California, I spent a great deal of time counseling people. I had a stroke many years before and,

being given that experience, I found I was able to provide comfort and advice to those suffering those afflictions. I take it now that I have a new weapon in my arsenal of comfort, and can share stories with people about the struggles of having a wounded heart, with a sense of our humanity and vulnerability. All of us are subject to time's afflictions and our graceful degradation. But we have an immortal core within the heart of Jesus Christ, whose vistas span from here to the kingdom beyond.

Many years ago I frivolously prayed for the heavenly father to give me another name I could use for him that would be one that he liked for our conversations. The name came back: "Heart" — the heart of the world. It's a kind of reminder. Whenever I am in a low place I have looked up and seen signage with hearts. Once, traveling through deepest fog and I felt lost, a giant hole opened in the fog that was perfectly a heart shape — and I drove through it. The Father's heart is always open to us, Jesus is always open to us, in the deepest night or the thickest fog.

Colin Brown is the pastor of Boardman's Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on Locust Road.

Transgender man suing Catholic hospital

By JOSH CORNFIELD
Associated Press

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — A transgender man sued a Roman Catholic hospital on Thursday, saying it cited religion in refusing to allow his surgeon to perform a hysterectomy as part of his sex transition.

Jionni Conforti's sex and gender discrimination lawsuit comes as new regulations hailed as groundbreaking anti-discrimination protections for transgender people are under legal attack from religious groups.

Conforti had scheduled the surgery at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center in Paterson in 2015. He says a hospital administrator told him the procedure to remove his uterus couldn't be done because it was a "Catholic hospital."

"I felt completely disrespected," said Conforti, whose transition began in 2004. "That's not how any hospital should treat any person regardless of who they are."

The hospital said Thursday it follows ethical and religious directives from the U.S. Conference of Bishops in making decisions about care and treatment. The

directives say procedures judged "morally wrong" by the church don't have to be performed.

The lawsuit comes less than a week after a federal judge in Texas ordered a halt to new U.S. Health and Human Services regulations that had been set to go into effect Jan. 1 to bar certain forms of transgender discrimination by doctors, hospitals and insurers.

Civil rights groups had hailed the new health rules as groundbreaking, but five states, a Christian medical association and an Indiana-based network of religious hospitals sued. Judge Reed O'Connor ruled Saturday that religious hospitals would be forced to violate their beliefs or risk severe consequences if they didn't change their policies.

Another legal challenge to regulations that Catholic hospitals say would force them to perform gender transitioning procedures and abortions was filed in federal court last week in North Dakota by a group of Catholic businesses and organizations, including the Catholic Benefits Association and the Diocese of Fargo.

Opponents say the regulations create a moral problem for Catholic employers and religious groups. They say Pope Francis

has reiterated Catholic teachings oppose theories that a person's sex is alterable.

"While initiating a lawsuit is not something we take lightly, this new mandate represents a grave threat to religious freedom," said Bishop John Folda, of the Fargo diocese.

Conforti, who is represented by the nonprofit Lambda Legal, said a nurse in charge of surgery confirmed the procedure could be scheduled but his doctor was told later it wouldn't be allowed because it was for gender reassignment.

An email cited in the lawsuit from the hospital's director of mission services, Father Martin Rooney, said it couldn't allow the surgery because it's a Catholic hospital.

But the hospital's patient bill of rights guarantees medical services without discrimination based on "gender identity or expression," the lawsuit said.

Conforti, of Totowa, said he felt betrayed and became depressed after the hospital's decision. Although he had the procedure performed three months later at a different hospital, he said he's suing so no one else has to go through what he did.

BRIEFLY

Milton-Freewater church back on regular schedule

MILTON-FREEWATER — With the holiday season passed, the Milton-Freewater First Christian Church is resuming its regular schedule.

The public is invited to Sunday breakfasts, which are served from 8:30-9:15 a.m. Donations are accepted. The church is located at 518 S. Main St., Milton-Freewater. Other Sunday activities include Kids Klub, which offers arts, crafts and music for all children at 9:30 a.m. Also, Bible classes are available for all ages at 9:30 a.m. Junior worship is at 10:45 a.m.

The regular worship service, which is at 10:45 a.m., recently began "The Story," a 31-week chronological Bible story. Sermons are based on the book, which is available at the church for a recommended \$5 donation. Individuals can join any time during this series.

Valet parking is available by entering the ramp from the south side of the church. An elevator is located

on the south entrance (parking lot side) of the church.

For more information, call 541-938-3854 Monday through Thursdays from 8 a.m. to noon.

Service features singing of hymns

HERMISTON — The public is invited to start off the new year with a song in your heart.

A Hymnspiration is set for Sunday from 5-6 p.m. at Victory Baptist Church, 193 E. Main St., Hermiston. Join new and old friends in singing old hymns. The event features food, fun and fellowship.

For more information, contact Chris Finley at johnchris_1@msn.com.

Friday's faith page features local, national and international faith-related news. Send information about local faith-related news and events to community@eastoregonian.com. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

Worship Community

<p style="text-align: center;">St. Johns Episcopal Church</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Join Us On Our Journey With Jesus. Scripture, Tradition and Reason Family service 9am Sunday N.E. Gladys Ave & 7th, Hermiston Fr. Dan Lediard, Priest, PH: 567-6672 <i>We are an all inclusive Church who welcomes all.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Presbyterian Church (USA)- 201 SW Dorion Ave. Pendleton</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Service of Worship - 10:00 am Children's Sunday School - 10:20 am Fellowship - 11:00 am www.pendletonpresbyterian.com Open Hearted... Open Minded</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Salvation Army Center for Worship & Service</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday Worship Service 9:30 - Sunday School 10:30 - Worship Service Wednesday Bible Study 5:30 Family Fellowship Meal 6:00 Bible Study</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COME AS YOU ARE 150 SE EMIGRANT (541)276-3369</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Community Presbyterian Church</p> <p style="text-align: center;">14 Martin Drive, Umatilla, OR 922-3250</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Worship: 10 AM Sunday School at 11:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Faith Center Church</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Worshiping God Loving People 108 S. Main • 276-9569 Sunday Worship 10:30 am Sr. Pastor, Ray O'Grady pendletonfaithcenter.org</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Come meet Jesus at PENDLETON BAPTIST CHURCH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3202 SW Nye Ave Pendleton, OR 541-276-7590 Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 AM Sunday Bible Classes 9:45 AM Sunday Youth Group 6:00 PM Mon. Community Women's Study 9:30 AM & 6 PM Awana Kids Club (K-6th grade) Wed Men's Study 6 PM MOPS meeting the 1st Thur of the Month 6 PM</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>in Mission for Christ LCMC</i> Bible Study.....9:00 AM Sunday Worship.....10:30 AM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Red Lion Hotel (Oregon Trail Room) www.faithpendleton.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grace Baptist Church</p> <p style="text-align: center;">555 SW 11th, Hermiston 567-9497 Nursery provided for all services</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday School - 9:30 AM Worship - 10:45 AM 6:00 pm Wed Prayer & Worship - 7:00 PM "Proclaiming God's word, growing in God's grace"</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Seventh-Day Adventist Church</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Saturday Services Pendleton 1401 SW Goodwin Place 276-0882 Sabbath School 9:20 am Worship Service 10:45 am</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GRACE AND MERCY LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA OPEN HEARTS - OPEN DOOR www.graceandmercy.lutheran.org Sunday Worship 8:45 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. (Nursery Provided) Fellowship, Refreshments & Sunday School Check Out our Facebook Page or Website for More Information 541-289-4535 Tom Inchi, Pastor Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church, ELCA (First United Methodist Church) 191 E. Gladys Ave. / P.O. Box 1108 Hermiston, Oregon 97838</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PENDLETON FIRST CHURCH OF GOD</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FIRST SERVICE 8:30 AM SECOND SERVICE 10:30 AM 712 SW 27TH ST. 541-276-1894 www.fcogpendleton.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">a place to Belong Pendleton First INVITING ENRICHING INVOLVING EMPOWERING</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SUNDAY SERVICES AM Celebration-10:00am AM Kids Place -10:00am The Connection--6:00pm Groups for all ages: Adults, Children, Youth, & College</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thursdays Celebrate Recovery-6:00pm Celebration Place-6:00pm Other Groups Available Weekly</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For more info visit WWW.PENDLETONFIRST.COM 1911 SE Court Ave 541-276-6417 Assembly of God Church</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">First United Methodist Church Pendleton/Hermiston</p> <p style="text-align: center;">352 SE 2nd Street, Pendleton Sunday Worship 9am 541-276-2616</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Worship Broadcast on KUMA 1290 @ 11am 191 E. Gladys Ave, Hermiston Sunday Worship 11am 541-567-3002</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Worship Livestream at herfumc.com</i> <i>Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors</i> Rev. Dr. Jim Pierce, pastor</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Pendleton FREE METHODIST CHURCH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. Mid-Week Children & Youth • Weekly Adult Life Groups 1711 SW 44th St. • 541-276-8015 • www.pendfmc.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Peace Lutheran Church 210 NW 9th, Pendleton ELCA</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Join us Sundays 9:30 am Sunday Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Sunday School & Adult Class</p> <p style="text-align: center;">~Come and be at Peace~ on 1290 KUMA noon each Sunday</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Redeemer Episcopal Church</p> <p style="text-align: center;">241 SE Second St. Pendleton (541)276-3809 www.pendletonepiscopal.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday Holy Communion 9:00 a.m. Wednesday Holy Communion Noon Weekly Adults Spiritual Life Group All Are Welcome</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Living Word Christian Center</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday Worship 10:00am Wednesday Bible Study 6:00pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Youth Classes: Nursery - 6th grade Sun & Wed Jr & Sr High Discipleship Program Wed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Overcomer's Outreach Tuesday at 6:00pm - Annex A Christ-centered, 12-Step Recovery Support Group</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pastor Sharon Miller 401 Northgate, Pendleton 541-278-8082 www.livingwordcc.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ) 215 N Main • Pendleton, OR 97801</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Behind These Stone Walls Beat the Hearts of Some of the Warmest Most Sincere, Most Caring People in Pendleton We Invite You to Come Get Acquainted!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday Worship: 10:40am Sunday School: 9:30am Office 276-5358 M-F, 8:30-12:30 www.fccpendleton.org</p>					<p style="text-align: center;">Good Shepherd Lutheran Church LCMC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday worship at 11:00 AM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">420 Locust St. • Boardman, OR 541-481-6132 Colin Brown, Pastor</p>

To share your worship times call Terri Briggs 541-278-2678