

On Line On Point

MARY MOTHER OF JESUS INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

marymotherofjesus.org

CHRISTIANS AGAINST CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM—

As Christians, our faith teaches us everyone is created in God's image and commands us to love one another. As Americans, we value our system of government and the good that can be accomplished in our constitutional democracy. Today, we are concerned about a persistent threat to both our religious communities and our democracy — Christian nationalism. Christian nationalism seeks to merge Christian and American identities, distorting both the Christian faith and America's constitutional democracy. Christian nationalism demands Christianity be privileged by the State and implies that to be a good American, one must be Christian. It often overlaps with and provides cover for white supremacy and racial subjugation. We reject this damaging political ideology and invite our Christian brothers and sisters to join us in opposing this threat to our faith and to our nation.

As Christians, we are bound to Christ, not



by citizenship, but by faith. We believe that:

People are of all faiths and none have the right and responsibility to engage constructively in the public square. Patriotism does not require us to minimize our religious convictions. One's religious affiliation, or lack thereof, should be irrelevant to one's standing in the civic community.

Government should not prefer one religion over another or religion over non-religion.

Religious instruction is best left to our houses of worship, other religious institutions and families.

America's historic commitment to religious pluralism enables faith

communities to live in civic harmony with one another without sacrificing our theological convictions.

Conflating religious authority with political authority is idolatrous and often leads to oppression of minority and other marginalized groups as well as the spiritual impoverishment of religion. We must stand up to and speak out against Christian nationalism, especially when it inspires acts of violence and

Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community Mission Statement

We are a Christ-centered community of equals, consisting of women and men, ordained and non-ordained, empowered by the Spirit whose mission is to worship, to serve, to promote compassion, justice, peace and care for creation. Come join us.

Send articles/info by Wed to be published on weekend: rjbannerusa@gmail.com

intimidation—including vandalism, bomb threats, arson, hate crimes, and attacks on houses of worship—against religious communities at home and abroad. Whether we worship at a church, mosque, synagogue, or temple, America has no second-class faiths. All are equal under the U.S. Constitution. As Christians, we must speak in one voice condemning Christian nationalism as a distortion of the gospel of Jesus and a threat to American democracy.—this petition can be signed by going to FaithfulAmerica.org

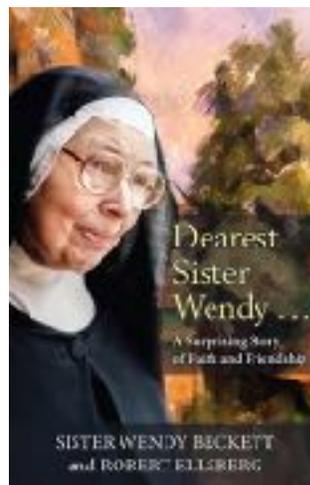
OFFERINGS— We are grateful to everyone who has been so generous in supporting our community. Thanks so much. Please remember to make your regular donations to MMOJ, by sending your check to MMOJ % St. Andrew UCC, 6908 Beneva Road, Sarasota, FL 34238.

OUTREACH—The current recipient of our offered financial support is **Meals on Wheels of Sarasota** [Oct-Dec]. This non-profit 501(c)(3) volunteer community service organization, has been providing nutritious meals and friendship to eligible clients. They include those 60 or older who are disabled, homebound, and who have no one available to aid with meal preparation, and are unable to leave home without the assistance of another person. Five hundred times a day, Meals on Wheels of Sarasota delivers nutritious meals that are cooked, prepared, packaged and hand delivered to members.

MOVIE CORNER

If you like a good disaster movie, **Into the Night** is one of the best we've

seen. It is another Netflix international series with 2 seasons so far. We found it to be very well acted and compelling although still having some of the classic disaster movie elements. Like other Netflix international offerings both the dubbing and subtitles are well done. —Beth Ponce. Send your suggestions of movies to watch, to ponce.beth@gmail.com



Dearest Sister Wendy ...: A Surprising Story of Faith and Friendship

by Sister Wendy Beckett and Robert Ellsberg, Orbis Books— Many people, as I did, first came to know Sr. Wendy Beckett

in the 1990s through her popular television program, "Sister Wendy's Odyssey." She was an unlikely celebrity: diminutive, dressed in a medieval-looking black habit of her own design, her lively and intelligent features offset by large spectacles. Yet countless viewers became entranced by her tour of famous galleries around the world, and by her incisive and empathetic commentary on the works of art she encountered along the way.

What made this public life all the more remarkable was that since 1970 she had lived as a consecrated virgin and hermit in a caravan on the grounds of the Quidenham Carmelite monastery

in Norwich, England. She had embraced that life, a modern version of the anchorhold of her hero, Julian of Norwich, after receiving a dispensation to leave Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the teaching order she had joined at the age of 16. Arguably, traveling around the world with her own television show was a departure from the spirit of her solitary vocation. But she accepted it, while it lasted, as a kind of ministry: an opportunity, as she put it, to talk about God to people who were perhaps uncomfortable with religious language. For Sister Wendy, all beauty pointed to the source of Beauty. And through art, she hoped to teach people in the modern, secular world how to see

reality in its inner depth. When this ministry faded, she happily returned to her solitary life of prayer.

I had come to know Sister Wendy through publishing U.S. editions of four of her books, and she had generously endorsed several of my own books about saints. Yet I would not have considered her a "friend." Sister Wendy avoided extended correspondence, and her own inscrutable handwriting served as an effective deterrent. And yet, in the last three years of her life I was witness and partner to something remarkable, a deep friendship that indelibly changed both our lives—as *related here by Robert Ellsberg, author and publisher.*

STAFF—*Russ Banner, editor; Joan Pesce and Dorothy Sadowski, text review; Beth Ponce and Dotty Shugrue, features*