



IT'S BACK-TO-SCHOOL TIME AND our firm is here to help!

By Attorney Michael T. Gibson

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Our firm is proud to be partnering with local churches in the area to donate back-to-school supplies to children and families in need. For many children, back-to-school means more than just new backpacks, crayons, and pencils. For some, it is a lack of basic necessities. Barriers to learning come in different forms and are wide-reaching.

Costs for everyday goods and services have been on the rise. Inflation and high interest rates are making parents think twice about their spending, and back-to-school supplies are no exception. Prices for school supplies have risen 25% since 2020, according to a 2024 Deloitte Back-to-School Survey.

Another study by Intuit Credit Karma says around 50 percent of parents will pause essential purchases for a household such as groceries and bills to keep up with the cost of school supplies. The number is greater for Generation Z parents, at 60 percent, and millennial parents, with 56 percent giving up essentials to afford back to school items their children need.



Brady and Eme wish everyone a happy and healthy school year.

At the Law Firm of Michael T. Gibson, we believe in contributing to the welfare of our community, and helping our local communities thrive. This month, we sponsored a back-to-school drive at Iglesia De Dios Pentecostal M.I. Nuevo Horizonte in Davenport, FL, pastored by Rev. Eliud Morales and his wife Wanda. They welcomed us like family. Enclosed are some pictures from this event.

We pray that God continues to bless this church, the community, and its pastors, and we pray for a healthy and successful school year for all students returning to school. ■



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inteligencia artificial

¿POR QUÉ ES UN TEMA QUE AUN LAS IGLESIAS NO PUEDEN IGNORAR?

Por Juan José Rodríguez, Abogado de Enlace

Recientemente tuvimos el privilegio de asistir a una Cumbre de Liderazgo en Bogotá Colombia, auspiciada por la Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal, MI. Como ocurre en todas las convenciones y congresos que he asistido, una de las razones principales para asistir a estos eventos, es para tener la oportunidad de ver de nuevo a pastores y amistades de otros países. Sin embargo, me quede atento al escuchar los conferencistas sobre el tema de la Inteligencia Artificial.

Además de la información obtenida, he buscado información y encontré que varias organizaciones eclesíásticas, entre otros a los Episcopales, y católicos ya han estado abordando este tema, inclusive el Vaticano anunció una asociación con Microsoft para promover un premio internacional sobre ética en la inteligencia artificial o IA.

Es interesante como las organizaciones eclesíásticas se han envuelto en este tópico que aparentemente no tiene que ver en nada con la fe.

Uno de los conferencistas, El Juez Erick Kolthhoff, expuso el siguiente comentario: *"Existe una línea de pensamiento bastante fuerte que entiende que de desarrollarse la inteligencia Artificial general de la manera en que está proyectada sería justo y necesaria concederle el que se convierta en un sujeto con personalidad (capacidad) jurídica propia."*

¿Un robot podría estar dotado de una personalidad jurídica por el hecho de ser autónomo? Crearía varias preguntas y asuntos éticos. Por ejemplo, con todo el conocimiento, ¿Podrían Predicar? ¿Podrían Ser pastores? Y que les parece si asisten a las iglesias y desean tomar la decisión basada en la ideología de ser miembros en plena comunión de las congregaciones. ¿La iglesia podría impedir que se hagan miembros oficiales de las congregaciones? ¿Hasta dónde llegarán sus derechos?

Y que les parece que un ministro utilice la inteligencia artificial, no como una de las herramientas de referencia, sino para preparar todo su sermón. En resumen, son muchas las incógnitas que este tema controversial trae, y desde el punto de vista eclesíástico, moral y ético, puedo vaticinar con exactitud, que serán muchos los escritos sobre la Inteligencia Artificial, ya que está aquí para quedarse. Que Dios les continúe bendiciendo. ■

A RETURN TO OUR favorite summer spot

By: Attorney Michael T. Gibson



In the waning days of summer vacation, our family finally made it to our Summer Vacation. This year's vacation was delayed from our normal Fourth of July get away, due to Emery's National Championship dance competition, and Spring travel hockey for Brady. We did not complete those obligations until after the Fourth had passed. We were also delayed as for the second year in a row, our Sanibel timeshare was not open on our week. In fact, the timeshare reopened just a week before our scheduled week. With the dance competition, we could not adjust our schedule. So, Jen went to work and found a different rental on the island, and on a Friday in late July, we returned to Sanibel Island for the first time since Hurricane Ian two years ago.

Driving in to the island, the changes left by the Hurricane were immediately apparent. There is a small outlet mall right before the causeway. We always would frequent this spot and load up on clothes at the Nike outlet for the kids. As we approached the mall, it was readily apparent that it was destroyed. In fact, it still looks like it did the day after the storm. There is no mall. All that is left are piles of wood debris, scattered everywhere. Then, as we crossed the bridge, we immediately noticed that the beaches that surrounded the bridge on both sides are almost completely gone. You would always see these beaches packed with cars and people, enjoying the

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water and the beach. There were no cars, and there were no people. This sight immediately brought tears to Jen's eyes. Jen has been traveling to and vacationing on Sanibel since she was just two years old.

Once across the bridge, we immediately headed for our timeshare location. Even though we were not staying there, we wanted to see the place and its condition. As soon as we pulled up, you immediately notice the lack of trees and vegetation. There used to be so many of the trees that you could not see to the complex from the road. Now, it is wide open. There is still sand everywhere in the driveways and parking lot, a byproduct of the sixteen-foot storm surge that engulfed the island during the storm. The building unit itself looks back to normal, and actually looked pretty good. But the once beautiful courtyard and pool area are completely gone. The pool is still there, but not much else. The property used to have 4-5 boardwalks, where you could cross over to the beach. All of them are gone.

We spent the next two days driving around and trying to find our favorite spots, and surveying what was still around. Thankfully, our favorite pizza spot was open, and both golf courses were open. But we were shocked at how much was gone. An entire shopping center, which housed one of the largest grocery stores on the island is completely gone. Our two favorite lunch spots, also gone. The Dairy Queen, where we took the kids for ice cream time and time again, was in pieces. There is a famous hotel near the far end of the island, called Casa Ybel. It was Jen and I's date night spot when we were there. It is completely boarded up, and destroyed.

All in all, the island is about twenty percent in terms of functioning compared to what it was before the storm. In talking to folks down there, an estimated 150 wild animals died in the storm. That was noticeable as well. I remember one golf course I frequent, where every hole had iguanas, gators, and countless rabbits. One lake also used to house a crocodile, that was rumored to be over 100 years old. He was so big, he took up most of the lake on the fourth hole of the course. He was gone. Even the famous birds that were outside of Jerry's grocery store, and had been there since Jen was a kid, they too were gone.



As we went about the week, and as we visited place after place, it was very bittersweet. There was the realization that so much of this place that we have come to love as a family is gone, and forever changed. Yet, for as much devastation and heartbreak, there is the courage and the spirit of those that remain. When you go into one of these businesses, they are so very grateful that you are there. I was shocked at how many of these business owners remember Jen and the kids and I, and were so happy to see us there. One of the golf course owners remembered Brady and I from ten years ago, when I brought him out on the course for the first time. Everywhere we went, you could tell that people appreciated you being there and supporting them. I went out of my way to tip extra, and to support as many of these places as we could.

All in all, it was great to get back to a place we love and that is special to our family. And while we are sad to see so much destruction and devastation, we were also inspired by those working to rebuild the island, and to bring it

back. Sanibel is truly one of the most beautiful places I have found. And even though the Hurricane has forever changed it, it will always be a part of our family, and our home away from home. We will continue to pray for all affected by the storm and their continued recovery. And I look forward to watching the island come back in full over the next couple of years.

I have included some pics from our trip. On a sidenote, I almost got my first hole-in-one on one of the golf courses. Since I injured my elbow two years ago, I don't play a lot of golf. But I got in a few good shots this year. ■



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EGGPLANT AND TURKEY BAKED meatballs

Yield: 8 meatballs; prep time: approx. 60 min.; cook time: 20-25 min.

These Mediterranean diet-inspired eggplant and turkey baked meatballs feature roasted eggplant, ground turkey, fresh herbs, and parmesan.

Ingredients

- 1 large eggplant
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and roughly chopped
- 1/4 cup Italian flatleaf parsley, chopped
- 2 tbsp. dried oregano
- 1 pound ground turkey
- 1/3 cup panko-style breadcrumbs (or regular breadcrumbs)
- 1 egg, large
- 1/3 cup parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 tbsp. olive oil (optional, see note below [#7])*
- 4-5 fresh basil leaves, chopped (for garnish, optional)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F and line a baking sheet with aluminum foil.
2. Using a fork, pierce the eggplant multiple times, and then place on the lined baking sheet. Roast in the oven for 45 minutes, until the eggplant is fork tender.
3. Remove from oven and reduce oven temperature to 375°F.
4. Once cooled slightly, use a spoon to scoop the inside of the roasted eggplant into a food processor.
5. Add the garlic, parsley, and dried oregano to the food processor, and purée until smooth.
6. In a large bowl, combine the eggplant purée, ground turkey, panko breadcrumbs, egg, and parmesan cheese. Mix until well combined (whether by hand, spatula, or spoon).
7. Form the mixture into 8 large, even-sized meatballs. *Optional – If you desire a more browned crust to your meatballs, heat 1 tbsp. of olive oil in a large pan over medium heat, and lightly brown the top and bottom of each meatball (about 2 min. each side) before getting ready to bake in the oven.
8. Place meatballs into a large baking dish or parchment-lined baking sheet.
9. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes.
10. Garnish with fresh basil (if desired) before serving.

Recipe courtesy of thedomesticdietitian.com. ■



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