Pope prays for pastors to find ways to minister amid pandemic

Juno Aracho Esteves  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis urged people to pray for parish priests so that they may find ways to accompany their people while the coronavirus pandemic continues to restrict movement around the country and the world.

The pope offered his intention at the beginning of his livestreamed morning Mass March 13, the seventh anniversary of his election to the papacy.

A day earlier, Cardinal Angelo De Donatis, papal vicar for the Diocese of Rome, announced that all churches, which had remained open for private prayer, would be closed to prevent the spread of the virus. He modified the order the next day, allowing parishes to make the choice to open, but only if people maintain a safe distance from one another.

Diocese responds to COVID-19 — where we are now, continual updates are online at www.covdio.org

Laura Keener  
Editor

Last week, information and recommendations concerning COVID-19 (coronavirus) have been changing and spreading, it seems, as quickly as the pandemic itself. Governor Andy Beshear is taking a dynamic approach to stop the spread of the disease, which, as of this writing, has claimed the life of one Kentuckian who died, as complications of the illness due to several underlying medical conditions.

Here is a timeline (from latest to earliest) of instructions issued and actions taken by Bishop Roger Foys, and other diocesan leaders, in efforts to protect the faithful of the Diocese of Covington. It is important to note that diocesan staff is continually monitoring the changing conditions and updates are frequently made. For the latest diocesan communications visit www.covdio.org.

On Friday, March 13, Bishop Foys instructed that, effective immediately, any nonessential meetings, events or gatherings scheduled to be held from now through April 3 at any parishes, Catholic schools, diocesan offices, religious houses and other diocesan institutions are to be postponed or canceled.

This action, he said, is being made: “In the interest of the health and safety of our faithful and to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.” That instruction was part of a document that includes preventative measures and operational responses for parishes, schools and the Curia that were developed and recommended to Bishop Foys by the newly created Coronavirus Task Force.

The 16-member task force, operating under the direction of Father Ryan Maher, vicar general, includes three pastors, Curia directors and the directors of St. Anne Retreat Center and Catholic Charities, Diocese of Covington. The report was sent via e-mail to all members of the Curia and to all priests, deacons, principals and religious houses of the diocese and includes information on what parishes, schools and Curia personnel could expect in the event of closing as well as preventative measures to be taken.

“In light of the coronavirus situation in the Commonwealth and the Governor declaring a state of emergency, it is necessary for us to be prepared with a plan of action,” Bishop Foys instructed the task force via e-mail.

On Thursday, March 12, at 6:30 p.m., Michael Clines, superintendent of schools, sent a letter to principals announcing that Catholic schools will cease in-person instruction beginning Monday, March 16 through March 27. Additionally, all school extracurricular activities are suspended through March 27.

Earlier that day, Mr. Clines had sent a letter to parents urging them to prepare for extended school closures and encouraging them during this time of uncertainty. (Continued on page 19)
Two pro-life bills put on hold as General Assembly pauses session

The Kentucky General Assembly suspended its session March 13 and 14 to allow for the spread of COVID-19 and minimize social interaction. Here are some updates to some of the bills the Catholic Conference of Kentucky (CCK) was tracking this session. All information is up-to-date as of this print.

Two pro-life bills have passed the Kentucky House of Representatives and are head- ed to the Senate, though further action might depend on other matters that will have a real legal impact on the situation.

House Bill 451, the Abortion Neutrality Constitutional Amendment, would amend the state constitution to clarify that there is no right to an abortion in the Kentucky Constitution. It passed 71-21 and is headed to the Senate.

CCK executive director Jason Hall said it’s possible that all bills that are non-essential will get de-railed just because of the crisis with the virus. However, he is hopeful that these bills will pass soon.

House Bill 47, the Abortion Neutrality Constitutional Amendment, would amend the state constitution to clarify that there is no right to an abortion in the Kentucky Constitution. It passed 71-21 and is headed to the Senate.

Andrew Vandiver, CCK assistant director, said it’s a necessity because with the Supreme Court in flux… “we don’t know if Roe v. Wade is going to be upheld at the federal level. If it’s not, these issues are going to be kicked down to the states more often and there are other states where the state supreme court has found the right to an abortion.”

Mr. Hall said he was very excited to see the bill move forward.

“We’re receiving conflicting signals over the course of the session so we were very relieved that it moved through the House,” he said. “Of course we still have to get it down to the Senate. … I think this is one they’d definitely be interested in putting on the ballot as a House proposal.”

He explained that HB 47 and Senate Bill 9 were priority pro-life bills this session.

Senate Bill 9 has already passed the Senate in January, is out of committee and is ready to be voted on with a House amendment. It only remains to be cleared by the Senate and then will go to the governor for approval.

“The Born Alive Infant Protection Act, as it’s also named, is backed by Senator Whitney Westerfield and has been introduced for a few years in the Kentucky courts.

“It’s at the last step of the House process,” said Mr. Hall. He said the bill’s clear language is well-drafted.

Representatives Damon Thayer and John Schickel co-sponsored the bill. Mr. Hall said these two bills are essential because they “keep a focus on a very meaningful legisla- tion that will have a real legal impact on the situation.”

“The General Assembly has passed a lot of pro-life legis- lation in recent years,” he said. “These bills aren’t for show, they really have a legal importance to them.

House Bill 451, the other pro-life bill from this week, passed by a 70-23 vote and is heading to the Senate.

It would expand the definition of the attorney gen- eral to regulate abortion facilities, including bringing civil or criminal penalties for violations beyond just seeking injunctive relief.

Essentially, it applies to regulation of abortion clinics and making sure they’re complying with the law that has typi- cally been the governor’s responsibility for regulating facili- ties for more of that to the power of the attorney general.

House Bill 350 — the bill that would establish scholar- ship tax credits — has stalled. In recent days a group of House Republicans are fighting hard to prevent HB 350 from getting a vote in 2020, said Mr. Vandiver.

Particularly concerning is that two Northern Kentucky representatives have told constituents who have called in support of the bill that Catholic church day-to-day group leaders are not prepared to accept the students that qualify for scholarships — because of poverty or special needs — and would be mandated to take them. Both of these concerns are unfounded.

“The mission and ministry of Catholic schools has always been to educate children so as to break the cycle of poverty for families,” said Kendra McGuire, associate superintendent of Catholic schools.

In the Diocese of Covington three schools qualify for the Community Eligibility Provision of the National School Lunch Program, which means that a majority of stu- dents are considered to be eligible for free meals.

(Continued on page 21)
Catholic schools to adopt non-traditional instruction

As concerns about the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, continue to rise, Governor Andy Beshear mandated, March 13, that public and private schools in the state of Kentucky close for two weeks, effective March 16.

In cooperation with the directive, Michael Clines, superintendent of Catholic schools, issued a statement March 13

"Catholic schools will cease in-person instruction Monday, March 16 through March 27. All school extracurricular activities will also be suspended through March 27.

Education will continue during this time by at-home instruction, which is to be determined individually by schools according to resources and locale.

According to Mr. Clines, this Non-Traditional Instructional approach will employ both digital and printed materials, and students are expected to complete their tasks for academic credit in the same way as if they were physically present at school.

Students at most schools are receiving a daily e-mail with the day’s work, which includes lessons from paper packets they receive weekly from the school as well as online classes using Google Classroom, Schoology, and other resources.

These include a multitude of resources for students and their parents to foster continual learning while physical schools are closed.

Each school determines what its students need based on available resources. St. Joseph School, Cold Spring, for example, has e-mailed a recommended daily schedule from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., including how much time should be allocated for studying, breaks and exercise. This works in accordance with the number of subjects St. Joseph students are current-

ly taking and how much time they should dedicate to each class.

During normal school hours, teachers will be online to correspond with students and answer questions by means of email. Most teachers are working from home, rather than in school buildings.

Mr. Clines said that the School Lunch Program offered by the diocese will not be serving lunches from March 16-20. Mr. Clines and his staff will reevaluate the situation at the next general assembly to be held in accordance in March 2020.

For communications and any updates, which can happen quickly, visit www.covdio.org and click on the link to the Public Health Concerns page.

Catholic News Service and Messenger Staff Report

WASHINGON — A reporting system accepting sexual misconduct allegations against U.S. bishops and archbishops is in place.

Called the Catholic Bishops Abuse Reporting Service, or CBAR, the system became operational March 17.

The mechanism incorporates a website and a toll-free telephone number through which individuals can file reports regarding a bishop.

The website is ReportBishopAbuse.org. Calls can be placed at (800) 276-1562. A link to the ReportBishopAbuse.org is also available on the Safe Environment page of the diocesan website, www.covdio.org.

The nationwide system is being implemented by individual dioceses under the direction of each respective cardinal, archbishop or bishop. The information gathered will be protected through enhanced encryption. This reporting service may be used to report the actions or inactions of living Catholic bishops who are active, retired, or deceased, of U.S. dioceses or archdioceses.

Denver-based Convoy developed the reporting system under a two-year contract with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The company specializes in ethics and compliance management for businesses and organizations.

Under the system, the company gathers information and reports to the appropriate church authority consistent with canon law. It does not conduct any investigations.

Approved by the U.S. bishops in June at their spring general assembly, the reporting mechanism meets the requirements set by Pope Francis in his “motu proprio” Vos Estis Lux Mundi (“You are the light of the world”) to have a central reporting mechanism at the fall general assembly in fall 2019.

Catholic Bishops Abuse Reporting Service has been established to receive reports of sexual abuse and related misconduct by bishops, and to relay those reports to proper Church authorities for further investigation and action. A case includes a sexual abuse of a minor, sexual abuse of an adult, or a sexual offense committed by a cleric in the course of a clerical employment.

If you have any other kind of complaint about a bishop—such as parish assignments, church closings, or financial matters—please address those directly to your diocese or episcopal conference.

For more information on the reporting service and its operations, visit: ReportBishopAbuse.org.

March 22

Mass for the 150th anniversary of the parish, St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, 11:30 a.m.

March 24

High school principal meeting, 7:30 a.m.

Diocesan directors meeting, 9:30 a.m.

Deans meeting, 1:30 p.m.

March 25

High school principal meeting, 7:30 a.m.
The readings for the fourth Sunday of Lent - Cycle "A" are 1 Samuel 16:1 - 41; 10:7 - 13; Ephesians 5:8 - 14; John 9:1 - 41.

George Weigel

A case of the blind leading the blind

Of course, I was amazed at how well my blind guide could "see." She did not permit me to make one false move. All obstacles were easily traversed as she warned me of every little approaching variation in the path we walked. It was a literal demonstration of the meaning of Jesus' words at the end of today's Gospel: "I came into this world to divide it, to make the sightless see and the seeing blind." Though an experience I realized that the blind really could "see," in a way different from those of us who are gifted with sight. In short, those without sight are not really blind; they just "see" in a different way. We find this same sort of variation on what it means to really "see" in today's first reading from the First Book of Samuel. There we are told: "Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance but the Lord looks into the heart." Today's liturgy is an invitation to the "Elect," those chosen for initiation at Easter, to begin to see in a different way to see the world and the meaning of life as God sees. Because we all share in the Lenten journey of the "Elect," we too are invited to share in this new type of vision. We receive our sight, our new vision, through the process of conversion. The man born blind (today's Gospel) undergoes this process. He receives his physical sight rather quickly; the vision of faith comes in stages. He first refers to Jesus simply as "that man they call Jesus." Later he offers his opinion that "he is a prophet." Finally, he affirms that Jesus comes from God. The man born blind is contrasted with the Pharisees who question him. As the story begins, the Pharisees see, because man sees the appearance but the Lord looks into the heart." The man blind does not. As the episode progresses, not only is physical sight restored to the blind man, but he also becomes more and more enlightened in faith. All the while the Pharisees, who had always enjoyed sight, are shrouded in deepening darkness by their stubborn refusal to grow in faith. By the time today's Gospel ends, we all know who the blind ones are! The whole scenario frightens me a bit. I wonder if I'm not a bit like the Pharisees, content with my faith and religion just the way it is, convinced that I have no need to grow; blind to God's gentle call to conversion. Perhaps I've become so comfortable with my little niche in the world that I can no longer see the new things to which the Lord calls me. Is Paul speaking to me in today's reading or a bit too late? Lent is the annual call of the Church to conversion, to see as God sees, not as the world sees. On this fourth Sunday of Lent we celebrate the second scrutiny with the candidates from the falsehoods that surround and blind them in these words: "Father of mercy, you helped the blind man see, because man sees the appearance but the Lord looks into the heart." Indeed, it is a prayer we offer for ourselves as well. Father Daniel Vogelpohl is pastor of Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell.

Perseverance on a difficult but noble path is a virtue. Stubbornness when confronted by irresistible evidence of a grave mistake is a vice. The latter would seem an apt characterization of a letter sent on Ash Wednesday to the entire College of Cardinals by its new Dean, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re. In that letter — his first official act as Dean — Cardinal Re reprimands the redoubtable Cardinal Joseph Zen, SDB, emeritus bishop of Hong Kong, for his criticisms of the agreement the Vatican made with the People's Republic of China in 2018.

The bloom is off the Chinese rose just about everywhere in the world. So it is more than disturbing that the Holy See should be doubling down on what everyone (except those directly involved in cutting it) thinks is a very bad deal: bad, because it allows the Chinese Communist Party to nominate candidates for bishop, which the Holy See can then approve or reject.

Why is the bloom off the Chinese rose? Why are China and its "model" no longer lauded in the global community? The initial Chinese mishandling (and worse) of COVID-19, the coronavirus, has had an impact. Before anyone had heard of COVID-19, however, there was mounting concern about the intentions and brutality of the Chinese regime.

...the Vatican-China deal because it does precisely that.

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

Doubling down on a bad deal

Father Daniel Vogelpohl

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FACES OF CHOICE
Who are the faces of “choice”? Could it be the children placed in loving adoptive homes? Their birth parents were brave when, realizing they weren’t ready to be parents, chose an adoption plan.

Conversely, more often we see faces who are children who learned that they survived an abortion attempt. Their parents — or in some cases their grandparents — made a choice to seek an abortion.

For sure we are all faces of Jesus, as we are all the choice and creation of God, made in his image and likeness. While with fellow pilgrims from the Diocese of Covington at the 47th annual March for Life in Washington D.C., this past January, two abortion survivors addressed the crowd at the rally First was Melissa Oliden. She said, “I am more than a choice, I am more than someone’s reproductive rights, I AM A HUMAN BEING.”

Her birth mother, at age 19, was forced to seek an abortion. Melissa was bathed in a saline-infused solution for five days, meant to poison and scald her to death. She survived!

Her life is what providential as a newborn, now married with two daughters. She has a relationship with her birth mother. Her life is what providential for healing, forgiveness and for love.

Clair Culwell also spoke. Her mother was just 13 when she was forced to have a D&E (dilation and evacuation) second trimester abortion. It was unknown that her mother was pregnant with twins. The abortion killed her twin, but not Clair. She was a miracle.

Clair said, “You look at my face and you see my twin, look at my limb and you see the almighty hand of God.”

Growing up, she only knew of her adoption, not that she was a survivor of abortion. Now, she is so appreciative of her adoptive family and what they gave her. As an adult, she sought and found her birth mother. Hearing the story unfold and seeing the terrible pain of her mother as she recounted her secret was unforgettable. Now, she too has been offered forgiveness and healing.

Choice is a powerful word in today’s society. We value freedom, independence and self-determination. Let us pray that this young woman and those who tell us their stories hear the voice of the Father telling us to listen to Jesus. But with our senses constantly being bombarded we have no opportunity to hear him.

How Catholics should respond to COVID-19
The coronavirus, designated COVID-19, has spread to over 100 countries, infected at least 121,000 people and killed at least 4,996 worldwide. Even as the spread of the virus has slowed in China, the epicenter of the outbreak, the World Health Organization considers restrictions on affected countries and countries and for returning citizens.

The coronavirus poses a public risk; no individual or country is immune. So can we always, it requires a proactive, public response centered on the common good.

This response has both individual and structural elements. On the individual level, each person must decide how they can best protect their own health without jeopardizing the well-being of their neighbors. This means neither over-reacting nor underreacting. Hoarding goods, especially face masks and hand sanitizers, may provide healthy individuals with the illusion of safety, but it does so by potentially putting health care workers and other caregivers at greater risk if they are unable to access these supplies.

On the other hand, not taking appropriate precautions can also hurt high-risk populations. The COVID-19 is not a life threatening to the vast majority of people (according to one U.S. expert, 80 percent of cases are mild and patients are expected to recover), but the risk for those with certain underlying medical conditions the mortality rate can be as high as 15 percent. Otherwise healthy individuals are targeted by the virus: for hygiene practices, social distancing or voluntary quarantine orders must realize that what might feel like the common cold to them could pose a serious threat to their neighbors. They should act accordingly.

There are members of our communities, however, for whom missing work or keeping a sick child home from school to minimize the risk of spreading the virus is not just a temporary inconvenience. Just as some of these people work in the service sector — restaurants, hotels, retail, home care — where they are regularly in contact with the public. Enabling a sick employee to take time off to get medical care without fear of losing their job or being unable to pay rent is not only a matter of justice and for solidarity with that employer — it is also a proactive defense of public health for the entire community.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended that employers encourage employees to stay home and that they develop “nonpunitive leave policies” in response to the coronavirus outbreak. While in the present crisis, workers may have no choice but to choose between paying their bills and keeping their children home, a safe foster or adoptive family to “choose” them. For all who ill or facing financial hardship and our actions toward those who ill or facing financial hardship and our actions toward those who are on the front lines of the COVID-19 response to the coronavirus outbreak will come at the state, community and individual levels.

In the United States, it will entail relatively small disruptions the 27 million people in the United States who workers did not have to choose between paying their health for the entire community .

As urgent as such longer-term structural reforms are, for now, the primary response to the coronavirus outbreak will come at the state, community and individual levels. For most U.S. Catholics, it will entail relatively small disruptions such as scrapping travel plans or not receiving Communication from the cup at Mass.

Just as our Lenten penance is meant to deepen our relationship with God and our solidarity with all who suffer as the Lord did, we can allow these sacrifices and inconveniences in our daily lives to direct our prayers toward those who have died and their loved ones, our attention toward those who ill or facing financial hardship and our actions toward the common good. The coronavirus poses a threat that knows no borders. As Catholics, neither does our love and concern for our neighbors.

This unsigned editorial appeared online March 5 in the Catholic News Service, a weekly Catholic publication. It has been provided by Catholic News Service. The views or positions presented in this or any guest editorial are those of the individual author and do not necessarily represent the views of Catholic News Service or of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Do nothing
Recall the Old Testament Scripture reading from First Kings chapter 20 where Elijah is trying to hear God’s voice. Scripture tells us that God’s não is in the wind, he isnot speaking through the earthquake or even the fire. Rather he is heard in a whisper. Rather he is heard in a whisper.

We don’t hear many whispers in our world today do we?

Pope Benedict XVI said in commenting on the account of the Transfiguration that it “is an invitation to take a distance from the multitude of everyday life in order to be united in Christ’s prayer.” And this is an account in the March 6th edition of the Messenger the Holy Father comments on. Its basic content was to describe dishes to place to dine, that is “teaching us how to seek the Father, who speaks to us in silence.”

Sisters and brothers, our challenge as we continue on our Lenten journey is to make an effort to take time to do nothing, to sit in silence and quiet place and just feel God’s presence. And then to try to keep a quiet mind, to turn down the noise in our lives and just be quiet. While in the present crisis, workers may have no choice but to choose between paying their bills and keeping a sick child home from school to minimize the risk of spreading the virus is not just a temporary inconvenience. Just as some of these people work in the service sector — restaurants, hotels, retail, home care — where they are regularly in contact with the public. Enabling a sick employee to take time off to get medical care without fear of losing their job or being unable to pay rent is not only a matter of justice and for solidarity with that employer — it is also a proactive defense of public health for the entire community.

Today we are busy from the time we wake up until we go to sleep each night. Today we are constantly “on,” always doing something. We are constantly checking e-mail, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and more on our devices — even while eating for service in a restaurant. Have you noticed how many people are on their devices in a restaurant, even when they have a choice? And then when you order in a restaurant, you have a choice whether to sit in or stand in line in line is almost painful. We have headphones or earbuds so we can always resist the temptation to ignore guidelines for hygiene practices, social distancing or voluntary quarantine orders must realize that what might feel like the common cold to them could pose a serious threat to their neighbors. They should act accordingly.

There are members of our communities, however, for whom missing work or keeping a sick child home from school to minimize the risk of spreading the virus is not just a temporary inconvenience. Just as some of these people work in the service sector — restaurants, hotels, retail, home care — where they are regularly in contact with the public. Enabling a sick employee to take time off to get medical care without fear of losing their job or being unable to pay rent is not only a matter of justice and for solidarity with that employer — it is also a proactive defense of public health for the entire community.

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CRS Rice Bowl — a story of hope from Kenya

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

Catholic social teaching inspires and guides how we are to live and work in the world. In this principle, Life and Dignity of the Human Person, Jesus reminds us that we are all made in God’s image and likeness. That means that every human being has a special value and a purpose. We need to care for each other so we can be the people God calls us to be.

Jina langa ni Yvone.

My name is Yvone.

Ambitious and intelligent, Yvone is 11 years old. She lives with her grandparents, her aunt, three siblings and three cousins in Konjiko, a village in Kenya. Her community is located near Lake Victoria, the largest lake in Africa. The village is also close to the Equator, so it is very hot there. Yvone and her family speak Kiswahili and English.

In Kenya, chores are one way Yvone helps her family. Each morning she washes dishes, sweeps the house, prepares lunch for the younger children and washes their school uniforms.

Yvone’s family has a hut where the family eats and sleeps, a stable for the animals and a separate kitchen hut. During the rainy season, the family collects water from a system on the roof. When it’s dry, they borrow from neighbors or walk to a community water point to fetch water.

Yvone’s family life has changed for the better thanks to a CRS program that teaches families about healthy food.

“CRS has changed my life — and the life of my family,” says Gaudencia, Yvone’s aunt. “Before, I could tell Yvone wasn’t healthy. But now, she’s active.” Gaudencia is proud of what she’s learned from the CRS program about healthy eating habits. She has taught her family to vary what they eat and include vegetables with every meal.

Yvone’s grandfather, Eliakim, suffers from diabetes. The improved diet has helped make him healthier. “What I have learned is really good, and I have seen positive changes in my health,” says Eliakim. “I have benefited a lot from Gaudencia’s participation with CRS.”

Eliakim also thinks the improved diet gives his grand-children more energy for school and play. If the family is ever short an ingredient or has extra food, they borrow from and share with neighbors in the spirit of community. It’s that spirit — and good nutrition — that gave Yvone, her family and friends a strong foundation from which to pursue their dreams and live a healthier life.

Yvone’s family works hard to send her to school. Her grandparents believe that having an education is an advantage in life and want all of their grandchildren to have the opportunity to go to school. Her grandfather, Eliakim, sold 42 heads of cattle to pay for his children’s education.

Yvone’s grandmother, Patricia, says: “I have a dream for my children to study and to be able to do anything possible to earn a living.”

Yvone wants to be a hairdresser so that she can earn money to help her family. She dreams of one day being able to buy a car and give rides to her family, so they won’t have to walk far distances.

Yvone and her family are some of the many participants in the CRS Rice Bowl, which provides food and education about living healthily to those in need.

Pilau (Spiced Rice) — Kenya

1 tsp. ground cumin
1 ¼ tsp. all spice
½ tsp. black pepper
¼ cup vegetable oil
1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 tbsp. ginger, minced
1 cinnamon stick
1 large potato, peeled and cut into 1 in. chunks
4 c. water
2 c. basmati rice

In a medium bowl, combine the cumin, all spice and black pepper. Set aside. Heat a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the oil and red onion and sauté for 10-15 minutes, until dark brown. Add the garlic, ginger, cinnamon stick and spice mix. Cook for 1-2 minutes. Add the potatoes and the water. Bring to a boil and cook for 10 minutes. Add the rice, stir and cover. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook for 20 minutes, until the rice is cooked and the liquid is absorbed. Makes 6-8 servings.
VATICAN CITY — Amid a nationwide lockdown due to the coronavirus epidemic, Pope Francis soldiered on with his weekly general audience and called on people to not forget those who suffer from war and violence.

During a live broadcast from the library of the Apostolic Palace March 11, the pope said he did not want “this sorrow, this epidemic, to make us forget the poor Syrians who are suffering on the border of Greece and Turkey.”

“Thousands of men, women and children have crowded the Turkish side of the Greek border after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan opened the border to refugees and migrants until the European Union meets his demand to add some $3.5 billion in funding for the refugees’ stay in Turkey in addition to the approximately $6 billion Turkey has already received.

The action violates a deal Turkey struck with the EU to close its borders after 1 million migrants flooded into Europe from Turkey during the 2015-16 migrant crisis. Critics have accused Erdogan of weaponizing the Syrian refugee humanitarian crisis.

The Syrian refugees are “people who have suffered for years, fleeing war, hunger and sickness,” the pope said.

“Let us not forget our brothers and sisters, so many children suffering there.”

Far from the crowded and festive atmosphere of the general audiences in St. Peter’s Square, the setting in the papal library was formal. The pope was flanked by two aides sitting a yard away from him on either side; eight translators also were present to read summaries of his main talk in a variety of languages.

But the pope still took time, as he often does during the audience, to remember the sick, especially those infected with the coronavirus.

“In this moment, I would like to greet the sick who are infected with the virus, those who suffer illness and the people who suffer uncertainty with their illness,” he said.

He also thanked the countless doctors, nurses and health care volunteers who “are close to the people who suffer,” as well as those who are close to the afflicted through prayer.

“I thank all the Christians, all the men and women of goodwill, who are praying in this moment,” the pope said.

“All who are united no matter their religious belief, thank you for this effort.”

The pope continued his series of talks on the Eight Beatitudes by reflecting on the fourth beatitude, “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.”

Hunger and thirst, he explained, are not a mere “generic desire but a vital and daily need.”

Jesus’ words, he added, aren’t addressed to those who seek revenge because “the hunger and thirst for justice of which the Lord speaks to us is even deeper than the legitimate need for human justice, which every man and woman carries in their heart.”

“In every heart, even in the person who is most corrupt and far from good, there is a hidden yearning for the light; even if he or she is under the rubble of deception and error, there is always a thirst for truth and goodness, which is the thirst for God,” the pope said.

For this reason, he continued, the Church is called to proclaim the word of God to all because “the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the greatest justice that can be offered to the heart of humanity, which has a vital need of it, even if (humanity) is not aware of it.”

“It is the Holy Spirit who arouses this thirst,” Pope Francis said. “He is the living water that has shaped our dust; he is the creative breath that gave it life.”
**People and Events**

**Newsworthy**

Happy Birthday to Father Trinity Knight, parochial vicar, St. Paul Parish, Florence; March 24; Father Jeffrey VonLohmen, pastor, St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill; March 28; Mgr. William Neuhau, retired, March 29; Father James Schaepfer, parochial vicar, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Burlington; March 30.

Villa Madonna Academy Junior Jackson Bond, Hebron, earned a perfect score of 38 on the ACT. Less than two-tenths of 1 percent of students who take the college entrance exam get a perfect score.

The following seniors from the Diocese of Covington Catholic Schools qualified as National Merit Scholarship Finalists:

- Bishop Rosecrans High School — Troy Spoonamore
- Notre Dame Academy — Becky Hammill
- Neltner and Maddie Prospero
- Holy Cross District High School — Grace M. Martin
- Covington Latin School — Joseph Sodergren.

As the response to the COVID-19 virus evolves, events published here may have been cancelled. It is advisable to call the event sponsor before attending.

The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption will be broadcast on Sunday, 5-6 p.m. on station WTVL-WJRT, on channels: over the air 5-2; Spectrum 188 in Kentucky and Cincinnati Bell 23 or 29.

- Have something to list in “People and Events”? The deadline for event notices is nine days prior to the desired publication date. Email messenger@covdio.org no later than the Wednesday before we would like the information to appear.

Planning an event featuring a speaker or minister from outside your parish? In the Diocese of Covington, before contracting the services of a priest or deacon, man or woman religious, or lay person, a request for verification in good standing must be submitted to the Chancery office no later than four weeks before the desired date of service.

In the Diocese of Covington, before contracting the services of a priest or deacon, man or woman religious, or lay person, a request for verification in good standing must be submitted to the Chancery office no later than four weeks before the desired date of service. Screening applications and instructions can be found at www.covdio.org/chancery.

There will be a Holy Hour on the third Thursday of every month, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 3-4 p.m., to pray for victims of sexual abuse by clergy and to pray for the Church. All priests of the diocese will be in attendance; the lay faithful are invited to join. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed, concluding with the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and benediction. The sacrament of reconciliation will be available during the Holy Hour. The next Holy Hour will be held Thursday, April 16.

- **Big Blue Bash** March 27, 6-8 p.m. — midnight, Cincinnati Club Benefits St. Agnes School, Fr. Wright.
- **Teen Pro-Life Apologist** March 20, 5 p.m., Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Burlington. Mass, interactive lecture and social. RSVP at www.marysprolifebootscamp.com.
- **Art of the Passion of Christ,** April 5, 7 p.m., St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Ft. Thomas. Sacred art and sacred music presented by art historian Ceil Dorger, Ph.D.
- **Women’s Faith Sharing Group** April 15, 29, May 6, 13, 20 and 27, 7 p.m. Join other young adult women for meaningful conversations about life, faith and women of the Bible. Holy Spirit Parish Center, Newport. To sign up contact Divine Providence Sister Leslie Keener at vocation@cdpkentucky.org.
- **Holy Cross District High School is selling 3 kinds of mulch ($4.25/bag) and pine straw ($8/bale) with free delivery to addresses in Kenton, Boone and Campbell Counties. Deliveries April 24 – May 9. All proceeds benefit Holy Cross St. Thomas Travelers. Call Shirley Murray 441-8567.
- **39th Annual 2247 ext. 3.**
- **Pink Day** April 26.
- **NKU Catholic Newman Center Women’s Group,** April 26. Workshop and discussion, accountability partners. Email Kathryn at russellk14@nku.edu.

The Cathedral Ladies Society will lead the praying of the rosary May 4, 11, 18, 8:30 p.m. in the Cathedral gardens, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington.

- **“Walking with Purpose” women’s Catholic Bible study information session,** May 5, 7 p.m., St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas.
- **Walzboy family honoree,** May 8, 11:30 a.m. The Covington Catholic High School 2020 Northern Kentuckians of the Year will be honored at Northern Kentucky Convention Center. For reservations visit www.covcath.org; NKYH, or call 448-2247 ext. 3.
- **St. Thomas Travelers, St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas,** are planning the following trips: May 14, Carillon Park trip to Dayton’s Heritage Center of Manufacturing and Entrepreneurship. Lunch included. Depart 9:30 a.m. Cost $72. May 28, Derby Dinner Dearly Beloved, cost $65. Call Shirley Murray 441-8567.

**Observing the judicial action**

The seventh-grade students in Patty Schlabach’s social studies classes at St. Joseph School, Cold Spring, recently visited Campbell District Court, Newport, to witness the judicial branch in action. Judge Karen Thomas welcomed the students to her courtroom to observe the arraignment docket.

**Muffins with Mom**

Third-grade boys at Blessed Sacrament School, Ft. Mitchell, showed their mothers some extra love in the classroom this week during “Muffins with Mom.”

**Dr. Seuss Week**

Second-grade students at St. Pius X School, Edgewood, spent a day at Camp Read-A-Lot to celebrate the end of Dr. Seuss Week.
**PEOPLE AND EVENTS**

**Fish frys 2020**

St. Augustine Parish, Covington, 4-7 p.m., April 3 and 10, in the gym. Call 431-3943.

St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger, 4:30-8 p.m., April 3 and 10. Drive thru available.

St. Benedict Parish, Covington, 4:45-7 p.m., April 3. Carryout available.

St. Bernard Parish, Dayton, 5-7 p.m., April 3. Carryouts available, 838-4513.

St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Ft. Thomas, 4:30-7:30 p.m., McCrystal Hall, March 20, 27, April 3.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, Burlington, March 20, 27 and April 3. 4:30-7:30 p.m., drive thru.

St. Joseph Academy, Walton, 4:30-8 p.m., March 20, 27, April 3, drive thru.

St. John the Evangelist Parish, Carrollton, 4-7 p.m., April 3.

**PrimeWise at St. Elizabeth Healthcare** offers adults, age 50 and over, a free network of valuable services especially suited to their needs and interests. It's not a club and there are no membership dues or meetings; just lots of benefits, information, programs and special discounts. PrimeWise can provide information on topics like advance directives and living wills, Medicare and many health-related concerns. Call 301-5999 or e-mail primewise@stelizabeth.com.

**St. Photina**
The Samaritan woman at the well recounted in St. John’s Gospel. According to tradition, she preached the Gospel and was imprisoned and martyred.

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**Red fish, blue fish**

Preschoolers at St. Timothy School, Union, celebrated Dr. Seuss Read Across America Week. They had a photo booth where they posed as Thing 1 and Thing 2.

**St. Patrick puppets**

First-grade students at St. Henry School, Elsmere, made St. Patrick’s Day puppets and held a parade in school on March 13.
New students learn about community, religion and recycling

This year on the first day of school we witnessed the “first step” of approximately 650 kindergarteners to our Catholic elementary schools and 740 freshmen to our Catholic high schools. Now their journey is well underway and they are counting their steps.

In Catholic schools we have the unique privilege of being able to connect with students, each other and the entire community in a faith-filled environment that nurtures a sense of belonging. We do this most simply by how we treat the person in front of us. We celebrate our newest students to our K–12 grades and their new beginning of spiritual formation, academic advancement, social development and physical growth.

Yours in Catholic education,
Michael Clines
Superintendent
of Catholic Schools
Diocese of Covington
St. Timothy parish provides reliable support to homebound and hospitalized

Allegry Thatcher
Assistant Editor

Parishioners at St. Timothy Parish, Union, know they can count on their parish community to support them in times of physical hardship. For over 15 years, the community has organized home and hospital visits, working with outreach ministry and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to provide just about anything their parishioners need.

Deacon Tom Nolan has led the hospital branch for approximately 11 years, and for him it’s a daily ministry. Every morning he checks in with three locations at St. Elizabeth Healthcare – Ft. Thomas, Edgewood and Florence – to see who is in from the parish. He then gets their room numbers and coordinates who will visit.

Deacon Nolan said he, his wife Jeanne Nolan and parishioner Jerry Auton are the primary hospital visitors, but he makes contact with members in the group according to who would be the best to visit. Meanwhile, over 20 other parishioners pray for the hospitalized and agree on follow-up visits.

Deacon Nolan follows up every single visit with a group e-mail detailing how the person is doing, how long he or she will be in the hospital and how the community can help the person moving forward.

“The whole point is to go to the people in the hospital, to have extraordinary ministers of holy Communion bring Communion to the homebound and hospitalized, whether they are short term or very sick. Some have been receiving Communion at home for a year or longer. They also visit rehabilitation hospitals such as Gateway and Villa Spring, or hospitals further north such as Cincinnati Children’s Hospital if the family tells them someone is there.

There is a training process for St. Timothy’s volunteers, but it’s fairly simple. Deacon Nolan said the group meets and explains what the new volunteers will experience when they come into the hospital room and what to do. “We give them the training as needed,” he said. “All the people who help out are very open to praying with people.”

St. Timothy Parish also mentions each of the sick by name in the prayers of the faithful during weekend Masses.

Often, Deacon Nolan said, for elderly parishioners they end up hospitalized more than once. “What happens often is that the person gets back in the hospital and knows we’ll come,” he said. “They love it.”

Other parishes in the diocese with similar ministries include:
- blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell: Home-bound ministry;
- St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood: Ministers of the Sick and Homebound, Meal Preparation for the Sick;
- St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger: Hearts and Hands.

The empty nest: one family’s reflections

Allegry Thatcher
Assistant Editor

When a close-knit family became an empty nest, one couple took steps to make the most of the experience.

Faye Roch, director of the Pro-Life Office of the Diocese of Covington, and her husband Paul have been married 34 years. The last of their four children, ages 19-32, left home last year and they’ve discovered the challenges and joys of living alone again.

“First of all you go through a grieving period because there’s a loss,” said Mrs. Roch.

“There’s a loss as a parent that your presence isn’t right there all the time with them, knowing everything that’s going on. But it’s also a loss of your companionship.”

Mrs. Roch said she experienced this with all of her children, probably more so with the oldest and youngest. Her youngest daughter, a sophomore at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, was very present with her during her last years of living at home. From a young age, she was involved in pro-life ministry, such as the annual March for Life that Mrs. Roch leads for the diocese.

“We had a very close relationship,” said Mrs. Roch. “When she left I was at a loss.”

But Mrs. Roch explained how she and her husband “realized this is an opportunity for us to have time just for us. We did things just the two of us that we haven’t been able to do.”

She advises maintaining a balance of family visits and just enjoying your spouse and your time together.

“I think a lot of parents fall into … putting more priorities on other things, going to sporting events or activities and family dinners,” she said. “Now it’s just the two of us, it’s been really good … we fell into the old routine of having dinner and watching our shows.” Where they watched “Jeopardy.” But we also are able to do different activities with our parish, like the Cursillo community, or to volunteer or go to visit my mom. We have a lot more freedom to do things with each other.”

She said she wouldn’t call it a “honeymoon phase” because it’s different than when they were first married. But there’s still something special.

“We’re a bit older and more relaxed and we’re reliving that early romantic part of our relationship, creating special memories, making dinner for each other,” she said.

To keep the balance, Mr. and Mrs. Roch maintain a family tradition of dinner every week and their children know it, whether they come home or not. Especially for those closer to the Rochs who want to continue making family memories.

One of the biggest comforts in sending children out into the world, said Mrs. Roch, is knowing they’ve been brought up in a faith community.

“Our faith has played a very important part of grounding them. It’s been security for us, hoping that they make good choices. … We have to realize that it’s what we as parents do … we prepare our children to go off and to be independent adults who make good decisions.”

For a family who raised their children attending Catholic school, it’s difficult to send their children to public college where they’re faced with decisions that may not align with how they’ve been brought up.

But Mrs. Roch said they know that “they have our support as a family and the support of their faith.”

Another great comfort for the Rochs was the news, as their youngest was headed to college, that they would be grandparents.

The addition of a grandchild has helped in that transition greatly. “And makes the girls come home more often,” smiled Mrs. Roch.
St. Charles offers free consults for seniors and their families

Joe Jacobs
Messenger contributor

Seniors and their families face no more daunting task than to determine the proper care options for life’s latter stages. St. Charles Community offers a free service to the community through its Resource Center for Aging. The free consultation service is available for seniors and their families looking for answers and options for seniors’ care.

Margie Volpenhein, St. Charles’ Community Liaison/LSW, has worked with seniors in the Northern Kentucky community for more than 30 years.

“St. Charles has always been mission-driven with the goal to serve not only those on our campus but in the community as well,” Ms. Volpenhein said.

St. Charles, which is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Notre Dame for 56 years in Covington, focuses on five areas for families facing decisions about seniors’ care.

The five areas are:

— explaining the different levels of senior care options;
— exploring the various supportive services available to seniors in the community;
— finding personal enrichment programs and support groups;
— answering questions about Medicare/Medicaid and Long Term Care insurance policies and;
— listening to a family’s particular situation and offering appropriate advice.

“Many who call don’t know where to begin or even what questions to ask at such an unexpected and often trying time in their lives,” Ms. Volpenhein said.

“Many who call don’t know where to begin or even what questions to ask at such an unexpected and often trying time in their lives,” Ms. Volpenhein said.

“The staff at St. Charles was a huge support when, as a family, we were facing many difficult decisions for our mom,” Staley said. “They provided us with much needed support in so many areas — information/resources, actual in-home care and emotional support. They truly helped make the last part of my Mom’s journey, which also included dealing with Alzheimer’s, as comfortable and secure as it could be.”

The Resource Center for Aging is available to inform, educate and empower seniors and their families who are in need of supportive services. Through information, education and empowerment, St. Charles assists families to start a conversation about the various topics of aging as today’s seniors get older, live longer and change what it means to age.

By empowering seniors and their families, St. Charles’ mission is to help them make informed decisions and discover the gamut of elder care services that can help alleviate worry and stress. St. Charles’ Resource Center for Aging is exclusively for seniors and their families.

“We understand the unique challenges that face the aging adult and how important it is to maintain safe independence in spite of obstacles that may exist,” Ms. Volpenhein said.

She added that families can be overwhelmed when it comes to care for their aging loved ones. That’s where St. Charles can help.

“Sometimes it’s as simple as a conversation about their family’s situation whether it be over the phone or face-to-face,” Ms. Volpenhein said. “We will listen. We will help.”

For more on St. Charles’ Resource Center for Aging, call (859) 331-3224, ext. 1440 or e-mail mvolpenhein@stcharlescommunity.org. The service is free.

This article was submitted by St. Charles Community.

Local shrines, pilgrimages to make in Kentucky

Allegria Thatcher
Assistant Editor

Northern Kentucky offers a number of little-known shrines and inspiring pilgrimages to be made by the faithful. Here are just a few to consider visiting once travel restrictions in response to the COVID-19 have been lifted. Until then, read up on these saints and find out what draws people to these devotions.

Our Lady of Knock Shrine, St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill

The parish is designated as a shrine to Our Lady of Knock and holds a large novena every year August 14-21 leading up to the feast day on Aug. 21. The message of Our Lady of Knock, when she appeared in 1879, is a certain sign of God’s love to a people in need and a statue of Our Lady of Knock faces the windows of the tabernacle in the adoration chapel. For nine days, pilgrims have a chance to attend Mass and pray the novena, light candles, write petitions and venerate a first-class relic of St. Faustina Kowalska’s bone. The intentions stay on the altar during the length of the novena and the parish also usually hosts informative talks on the weeknights of the novena. The last Sunday hosts the Ancient Order of Ladies Hibernian and the Hamilton County Ancient Order of Hibernian Color Guard.

Diocesan Shrine of the Little Flower, St. Therese Parish, Southgate

This shrine inaugurated a perpetual novena to the Little Flower on Tuesdays after morning mass. The reliquary also hosts a first class relic on public display of St. Therese presented by Mother Agnes, her sister, to the parish through Father Bogus Lehr in 1928, and the walls of the parish hold ten restored paintings by Leon Lippert.
Local shrines and pilgrimages (Continued from page 13)

of Newport depicting the life of St. Therese. The parishioners celebrate St. Therese’s October 2 feast day with 40 hours before the Blessed Sacrament the weekend before the feast and sing a few special hymns on the day itself to honor their patron. This weekend celebration often brings over 300 people to Southgate.

Shrine to Our Lady of Schoenstatt, Relics, All Saints Parish, Walton

The back of the sanctuary features a shrine to Our Lady of Schoenstatt, a devotion with origins in Germany and centered on the image of the Mother Thrice Admirable. Visitors can light a candle before her image and pray a consecration prayer or an exorcism prayer through her intercession. She is known for her intercession for the family and Schoenstatt youth movements exist across the world. The inside of the church is lined with statues of recent saints along the walls, such as St. Gianna Molla, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, St. Padre Pio, St. Faustina Kowalska and St. Teresa of Calcutta. Three of these have relics beneath the statue and all have the saint’s story written and framed below.

Abbey and Basilica of Our Lady of Gethsemani

Home to Trappist monks, this community is a place to remove oneself from the world. The abbey hosts retreats and day visits, providing meals (call ahead) and nature trails as well as a chance to attend services and pray with the brothers. The Welcome Center features a film about monastic life, books and products handmade by the brothers such as fudge, fruitcake and honey.

Kenton County Library has you covered

If you’re looking for a local and easy way to keep learning new hobbies, the Kenton County Library is the place to be. Whether you’d prefer to be active or just relax and talk about books, the library provides a community who shares your interests.

Weekly classes include health activities like Yoga Flow, Tai Chi and Sit & Fit or cultural activities like “Lunch and Learn” about Irish history, “Coffee and Conversation,” or an AARP Tax Aide class.

The craft club ranges from jewelry to gardening décor, and the cooking class will provide you with some new recipes to spice up your kitchen. They also host computer and technology classes. If you’re feeling a bit more relaxed, have some fun learning about your genealogy, watching a movie or discovering new music.

Kenton County Library is always looking for volunteers as well. If you’re an avid book lover, maybe you can put some love back into the place where you’ve spent so much time.

One form of volunteering is assisting with Homebound Delivery. This asset of the library serves the homebound and their caregivers with monthly deliveries. Once the homebound person shows proof of disability or medical condition, he or she can request books, magazines, audio books, movies, games and music to be delivered to their home. Volunteers can help select books based on the person’s interests, and there are never overdue fines.

Call 962-4062 for more information about this service or to arrange the service for someone you know.

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Photo for Keeping Warm or Unhealthy

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Kenton County Library staff report

SENIOR LIVING

March 20, 2020
Seniors at Madonna Manor share life experiences and enrichment opportunities with each other

CHI Living Communities Madonna Manor, a senior living community in Villa Hills, offers independent living, assisted living, and memory care as well as providing skilled nursing and rehabilitation. It is one of the few continuing care communities in the area. In a continuing care community as residents' age, seniors can stay in one location with their friends and have all the services they need to age gracefully on one campus.

One of Madonna Manor's biggest assets is its skilled nursing center. The skilled nursing center earned The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval for Nursing Care Center Accreditation. It is one of only a few Gold Seal centers in northern Kentucky. The Gold Seal of Approval is a symbol of quality that reflects an organization’s commitment to providing safe and effective patient and resident care.

Seniors are enjoying the new Francis Residence at Madonna Manor, its new independent living Brownstones. The 24-unit apartment building includes exceptional amenities that today’s consumers are looking for, such as underground parking and high-end kitchens. The first of five duplexes that will provide ten individual villa homes for seniors is also under construction and scheduled for completion later in 2020.

When the Madonna Manor campus was built in 2011, leaders studied what would be needed for the future for seniors in this area of Kentucky. First came the campus services needed for long-term care—assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing with rehabilitation services in the main building. The main building also features areas for activities, dining options and a beautiful chapel for Catholic Masses and religious services for all faiths.

Within the last few years, new amenities have included the Adelaide Center with a fitness facility and multi-purpose rooms, retention pond and relaxation garden area, a walking Prayer Path and expanded programming for vital senior living.

“We implemented the Body, Mind and Spirit Series that brings music, speakers and programming, fitness classes such as yoga, and other fun activities throughout the year such as car shows, bourbon and food tastings to our campus. We also have an extensive spiritual program. Many of the programs are open to the community and residents,” said Gretchen Aichele, executive director.

“Today’s seniors are looking for more than just living arrangements; they want to share life experiences and enrichment opportunities with each other. Fine dining, new hobbies, cultural opportunities, fitness classes, and of course, spiritual development where they can continue to grow in their faith. It’s everything we have right here on campus for seniors at all levels of care,” said Ms. Aichele.

Find out why we say home is here at Madonna Manor, located in the highly desirable Villa Hills, Kentucky area on 2344 Amsterdam Road. Contact Madonna Manor for more information: call 426-6400 or go to www.homeishere.org. Visit the website to learn more about independent living and the value of our continuing care community.

This article was submitted by CHI Living Communities Madonna Manor.

SENIOR LIVING

Linda Wihl
Messenger Contributor

Are you retired or an empty nester? Do you miss the sense of purpose you had when you were working, or when your kids were at home? Do you miss your coworkers, your kids, the companionship? Do you wonder: “Is God finished with me? Am I really over the hill?”

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps is a great response to these questions. They help you find a sense of purpose. (Continued on page 16)
Ignatian Volunteer Corps

(Continued from page 13)

through meaningful service with those in need.

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) provides men and women, age 50 or better, opportunities to serve others and to transform lives. IVC matches the talents of experienced volunteers with the critical social needs of our time. You’ll find companionship at your service site and at the monthly meetings with other volunteers.

IVC works in partnership with community organizations. Volunteers provide substantive work to serve individuals who have slipped through the safety net. Agency directors value our volunteers because of their level of commitment and experience.

Take Pat Borths, who volunteers a day and a half each week in the Clothes Closet at Brighton Center in Newport. She greets donors, manages donations, and helps customers fulfill their needs.

“Her time dedicated to our agency has allowed us to concentrate staff time to directly working with customers,” said Beth Hodge of Brighton Center. “She is extremely reliable, has professional skills and is a very friendly face to our customers.”

Ms. Hodge said Ms. Borths and Brighton Center have proved a great match. “Brighton Center has benefited greatly from this resource,” Ms. Hodge said. “We appreciate our partnership with IVC.”

IVC volunteer Tim Boyle, of Cold Spring, has been men’s coordinator in Cincinnati for the Ignatian Spirituality Project for six years. In that role, he leads weekend retreats for men who are homeless and seeking recovery from addiction.

“It is heartrending to know some of the horrific struggles our retreatants have experienced,” he said. “Violence, abuse and neglect fuel the desire for the temporary comfort of drugs and alcohol. Once addicted, the force of the person’s illness is so strong that many have done heinous things to support it.” Once retreatants are ready to change their lives and realize they are in a safe place with people who have similar hopes and fears, they can reap great rewards from sharing their stories, he said.

From the Office of Stewardship and Mission Services

Planned Giving and the Diocese of Covington

In their pastoral letter, Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response, the U.S. Bishops remind us that good disciples and stewards do the following:

“As Christian stewards, we receive God’s gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.”

Each generation of Catholics is given an important mission: how do we pass on the faith to the next generation? Foremost is evangelization — knowing our faith well and sharing it with others. As important is the careful and prayerful sharing of our God-given resources. One of those resources — our assets — includes the things we have accumulated over our lifetime.

As Catholic Christians, we believe that our assets and our ability to accumulate them are gifts from a loving generous God. We have a responsibility to use these gifts wisely and prudently — as well as to share them with others — our family certainly, but also with those institutions devoted to spreading God’s reign on earth.

Bequests in a will, charitable gift annuities, trusts, insurance gifts and gifts of appreciated stock are all planned gifts, or gifts that come after much thought and consultation with professional advisors. These important gifts will ensure that our lives will touch the lives that come after us to build the faith for generations to come.

For more information on planned giving opportunities with the Diocese of Covington or one of its ministries, please call the Office of Stewardship and Mission Services at (859) 392-1500 or email stewardship@covdio.org.

Office of Stewardship and Mission Services — Diocese of Covington
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The Diocese of Covington does not provide advice on tax or legal matters. State and federal laws govern many types of planned giving, and the services of an attorney, accountant or other professional advisor should be sought.
Don’t let hearing loss ruin your retirement

Retirement often conjures up images of long days spent relaxing by the lake with no regard to a schedule. In reality, those enjoying retirement are often busier than ever. Retirement has become a time of great social activity with family and friends. In addition, new and lifelong hobbies are given more priority, which can turn busy weeks into busy months. Continuous healthcare also fits into the puzzle as the schedule becomes busier than before retirement.

As it turns out, the common denominator between these activities is communication. While it’s rare not to hear people at all, you may find that you have some difficulty in noisy situations, feeling that people are just not talking clearly.

Hearing loss is the third most common chronic health problem in older adults. By the time Americans reach their 70’s, two-thirds have hearing loss, affecting more than 48 million Americans.

Not being able to chat comfortably with your grandkids, neighbors and healthcare providers can increase daily stress and frustration, causing isolation and social withdrawal. According to the Hearing Loss Association of America, it may increase the risk of cognitive problems such as dementia.

“The general perception is that hearing loss is a relatively inconsequential part of aging,” says Frank Lin, an otologist and epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

But recent findings, he says, suggest that it may play a much more important role in brain health than we’ve previously thought. Once hearing loss begins to interfere with the ability to communicate, the risk for dementia increased, the study found.

Dr. Peele, the author of a recent study from the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, says, “Preserving your hearing doesn’t only protect your ears, but also helps your brain perform at its best.”

People with heart disease are 54 percent more likely to have hearing loss. Why? The inner ear is sensitive to blood flow and insufficient blood flow can cause significant trauma. According to researchers at Harvard University, the delicate nature of hearing nerves may cause them to be more susceptible to damage by cardiovascular disease.

Hearing loss is twice as common in adults suffering from diabetes compared to those without diabetes, a recent study by the National Institute of Health found. As the rate of diabetes increases, “the disease may become a more significant contributor to hearing loss,” reported study senior author, Catherine Cowie. Diabetes damages the nerves and blood vessels of the inner ear, which can cause hearing loss.

Hearing and vestibular function are closely linked and both systems reside in the inner ear. The vestibular system is responsible for controlling a person’s balance. A mild degree of hearing loss triples the risk of an accidental fall, with the risk increasing as the level of hearing loss increases. When needed, hearing aids can increase the ability to maintain balance twice as long as without. Other conditions that are often associated with difficulty hearing are falls, depression and ringing in the ears.

Common signs of hearing loss include misunderstanding words, turning up the television volume, and embarrassment in social situations from not being able to keep up with conversations. The inability to hear can cause isolation and withdrawal. Hearing loss not only affects the individual but everyone they come in contact with. Family members feel sad and frustrated when their loved one can’t communicate the way they used to.

Unfortunately, only 1 in 5 people with a hearing loss wears a hearing aid, according to the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communications Disorders. Today’s hearing instruments are lightweight and discreet, with cutting edge digital technology. A simple hearing test is the first step toward getting the answers that will set you on the road to enjoying retirement to its fullest.

Call today for a free consultation.

This article submitted by Luhn Hearing Care.

DO YOU HAVE AN ESTATE PLAN? DON’T LEAVE IT TO CHANCE...

What do Prince, Bob Marley, Sonny Bono, Martin Luther King, Jr., and James Brown have in common? As hard as it might be to believe they all died without a will. No matter how large or small your estate is, leaving it to chance is not the ideal option. A will and basic estate plan will ensure you protect the ones you love.

If you die without a will, it means you have died “intestate.” When this happens, the intestacy laws of the state where you reside will determine how your property is distributed upon your death.

For example, in Kentucky, if a married woman with two children dies intestate, half of her estate will pass to her spouse, and half will be divided equally between the two children (even if this is the third marriage and they were only together for a short time). An individual’s wishes may not match what state law requires for intestate succession. (Imagine your shock when you lose your spouse and have no children and find out that because there is no will half of your deceased spouse’s assets will pass to the parents).

Why have a Will?

• Legal protection – Do you want an officer of the court deciding who gets your money?
• Save time & money – At least with a will in place, the probate process can usually move more quickly and will be less costly than with no will at all.
• Assign guardianship – A will protects your choice of who takes care of your children and pets.
• Tax implications – You may have more assets than you think, and you’ll want to leave your heirs with as much as possible.
• Peace of mind – If you think family situations can get complicated around the holidays or when it comes to sibling rivalries, just add money, valuable assets, and no estate plan in place to the mix.

Your Wishes

The only way to ensure your wishes are carried out is to prepare a will and keep it up-to-date. When significant life changes—marriages, divorces, births, deaths, interstate moves—occur, you should review your will and make any necessary changes.

Don’t Delay: Get a Handle on Your Estate with the Help of an Attorney.

by Colleen Fausz
859-426-2169
cfausz@dbllaw.com

by Jim Dressman
859-426-2150
jdressman@dbllaw.com

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THIS IS AN ADVERTISEMENT • Other DBL Law attorneys may provide estate planning services.
Confined to your home? Archbishop recommends a prayer routine

Marnie McAllister  
Contributor

Times of uncertainty are times to stay especially close to Christ and one another — though not necessarily in close physical proximity, said Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz.

The Archbishop of Louisville has encouraged those who are sick or vulnerable to stay home from church and find other ways to be in communion with Christ.

First, he said, set aside time for prayer.

“We are at our best when we pray for one another — by specific name — others you know who may be in greater difficulty,” he suggested.

“When we have a lot of time on our hands, it’s easy not to know what to do with it. I urge people to take time each day to pray a devotion.”

Secondly, the archbishop recommended people establish a balanced routine.

“I think we need to have just the right amount of contact with news media. Just enough to know what’s happening and what needs to be done, but not so much that all 24 hours are consumed with reports,” he said.

“This is a very important part of establishing some routine.”

He suggested deciding on a particular time of day for certain prayers and reading sacred Scripture, as well as setting aside time for household chores, reading a book and doing creative activities.

“Often on retreat, I have the opportunity to do what I call journaling, he said, noting he puts pen to paper and “speak from my heart.”

“These writings can be sparked by a Scripture reading, a visit he’s had or even something he saw on television, he said.

“It allows the creative aspect of our spiritual life to have room and take root,” he said.

A similar schedule of activities, he added, is important for children, too, while school is suspended for the next few weeks.

Since “we don’t have the structure of schools, we have to be creative to come up with some life-giving routines that include reading and proper prayer,” Archbishop Kurtz and church workers helped compile a list of a variety of ways adults, children and families can use the next few weeks to grow spiritually and keep a healthy routine.

The list includes watching the Mass of the Air on Sundays and praying the rosary with Archbishop Kurtz, whose prayer is aired on WLCR 1040 AM Holy Family Radio at 8 a.m. weekdays and 5 p.m. on weekends.

Also, the Office of Multicultural Ministry has suggested Catholics pray the rosary as a family each day at 7 p.m. or 9 p.m. — a sort of prayer network for protection against the coronavirus.

Other suggestions range from traditional devotions to setting aside time for a conversation with God.

Some ideas use technology such as a smartphone app that helps you pray the Liturgy of the Hours.

Explore the list, below:

At Home:

• Watch Mass of the Air
• Pray the rosary with Archbishop Kurtz on WLCR 1040 AM (Weekdays at 8 a.m. and weekends at 5 p.m.)
• Organize via phone a novena to Saint Bernadine of Siena (patron saint of those with respiratory illnesses).
• Set aside simple quiet time for conversation with God, offering intentions and thanksgiving.
• Pray the Memorare for Mary’s intercession.
• Listen to or sing your favorite worship songs from Mass.
• Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet and other devotions.
• Pray the Liturgy of the Hours.
• Pray the Stations of the Cross (at home with a crucifix).
• Read The Lives of the Saints or other spiritual literature.
• Pray the Angelus at 6 a.m., noon and 6 p.m.
• Read Scripture for difficult times, such as Sirach 2:1-18.
• Find daily prayer and readings from givusthisday.org.

For children:

— Teaching Catholic Kids, from Our Sunday Visitor —
— TeachingCatholicKids.com
— Arts, crafts, and activities for home & school inspired by our faith — www.catholicinspired.com
— Marnie McAllister is editor of The Record, the Catholic newspaper of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Ky. This article originally appeared online at TheRecordNewspaper.org and has been reprinted with permission.

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Seven Minnesota couples have their civil unions convalidated

Dave Hrbacek
Catholic News Service

MACONIA, Minn. — There was a buzz before the 5:15 p.m. Mass Feb. 22 at St. Joseph Church in Waconia as seven couples with corsages and floral bouquets gathered for the processional with Father Stan Mader, the pastor.

After walking up the aisle to the sanctuary, Father Mader told the congregation that this Mass would be called “My Big, Fat Catholic Wedding.”

Playing on the title of the 2002 romantic comedy, Father Mader explained that seven couples who had been united in civil ceremonies would have their civil unions convalidated — celebrating the sacrament of marriage according to the rites of the Church — during the Mass.

He came up with the idea several months ago while talking with parish staff members about how to reach out to couples in civil unions. They searched their parish and school files to identify couples who had not gotten married in the Church, then invited them to have their unions convalidated during Mass. Nine couples accepted, with seven able to make the special event.

“My Big, Fat Catholic Wedding.” said Regina Treml, 48, owner of Belladonna Florist in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. Regina and her husband, Tony, were civilly united in 2003 and have a son, John, who is a sixth grader at St. Joseph School.

“They wanted to be married in the Church, especially with John going through the school and learning more about the sacraments,” Regina Treml told The Catholic Spirit, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

In addition to being married in the Church, Anthony Hauck became a Catholic during the Mass. He confirmed and received his first Communion, and in between those sacraments, had his 14-year marriage to Trishia clarified and received his first Communion, and in between those sacraments, had his 14-year marriage to Trishia clarified.

“I just thought that way we could make it more of a ceremony,” said Regina Treml, 48, owner of Belladonna Florist in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. Regina and her husband, Tony, were civilly united in 2003 and have a son, John, who is a sixth grader at St. Joseph School.

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“It’s very overwhelming,” said Anthony Hauck, 43. “It’s been a long time in the making... It feels great.”

Michelle and Patrick Borland join the recessional at the end of Mass at St. Joseph Church in Waconia, Minn., where they, along with six other couples, had their civil union convalidated Feb. 22, 2020.

Clerare Urbia said, “You want to be in that state of grace when you receive the Eucharist. I just really wanted to do that.”

For Justin and Amy Olivieri, the impetus for participating this was driven by her：“It’s very overwhelming,” said Anthony Hauck, 43. “It’s been a long time in the making... It feels great.”

“We weren’t doing our job in that. When we toured the campus and the school, she loved it. So, really, in the Church, then invited them to have their unions convalidated during Mass. Nine couples accepted, with seven able to make the special event.

“Behind it all is wanting to support sacramental marriage,” Father Mader said.

To prepare, couples were offered a three-hour session on marriage in the Church. Meanwhile, parishioners were notified of the event in the parish bulletin.

A parishioner donated money for an after-Mass dinner. Another parishioner, Dana Young, a professional photographer, volunteered to photograph the couples. And, one of the 14 involved in the ceremony, Regina Treml, a professional florist, provided bridal bouquets.

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“There were a lot of emotions,” said Anthony Hauck, 43. “It was closed and caged in a doctrine of laws.”

Through his parable, the pope continued, Jesus wanted to show that in this way, God’s promise “lost its nature as a gift” and ended up becoming a moralistic ideology that “was closed and caged in a doctrine of laws.”

“Clericalism isn’t something that’s just today; rigidity isn’t something just today; it was already there in Jesus’ time,” he said. “Let us ask the Lord today for the grace to receive the gift as a gift and to transmit this gift as a gift, and not as a property, not in a sectarian way, a rigid way, a ‘clericalistic’ way.”

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Nursing homes respond

(Continued from page 2)

restrictions have increased and for an unknown period, it is hard to know what lies ahead.

Underhill stressed that it is an “unusual situation” with final guidance requiring everyone to be flexible to stop the spread of the virus. She also mentioned the concerns for staff members, especially since many of them have school-age children. Schools in the state closed March 15 due to virus concerns.

“Every day is a new situation,” she added.

The Diocese of Covington is home to three Catholic nursing homes or senior living communities: Carmel Manor, Ft. Thomas; Madonna Manor, Villa Hills; and St. Charles Community Ft. Wright. All three facilities say that they are adhering to recommendations of Governor Andy Beshear; the Center for Disease Control and the Northern Kentucky Health Department and are currently operating under very strict restrictions. These restrictions include limiting access to the building to staff and medical personnel. Even immediate family members of residents are not permitted to enter.

“That’s not easy,” said Nichole Smith, administrator, St. Charles Community. “Everybody has been wonderful, but it’s emotionally hard for all of us.”

Additionally anyone coming into the facility receives a medical screening — their temperature is taken and they are evaluated for respiratory symptoms.

Inside the facility all group activities have been canceled, including congregating for Mass. At Madonna Manor, a priest resident celebrates Mass and the Mass is broadcast locally to residents on the TV in their rooms. At St. Charles Community, the staff makes sure that residents can watch Mass in their rooms.

“Having Mass is the big reason residents come to St. Charles,” said Ms. Smith. “Mass is very important so this is a real sacrifice.”

Ms. Smith said that residents who are aware of the pandemic appreciate the measures that have been put in place. But the staff is aware of the burden and loneliness that residents could be experiencing and are adjusting accordingly.

The Deacon Community staff has been helping residents communicate with their family via FaceTime or video chats — this is new for many residents.

“I am always in awe of our staff, they always rise to the occasion,” Ms. Smith said. “The safety of the residents always comes first and they want to be here for them and are doing extra little things for them.”

For community members or school children who now find themselves out of the classroom and would also like to do a little extra during this stressful time, Ms. Smith said, “We welcome cards and positive thoughts — we love mail.”

And, if you have a relative or a friend at one of the care facilities that you haven’t talked to in awhile, now would be a good time to give them a call.

“Residents can still accept phone calls,” Ms. Smith said. As of March 16, 29 residents from a Kirkland, Washington, nursing home at the epicenter of a Seattle-area outbreak had died from COVID-19 symptoms.

Diocese responds

(Continued from page 1)

“Our Catholic schools are such wonderful places to grow spiritually, educationally, emotionally physically and socially,” Ms. Clines said. “It is at times like this that we know our faith is more important than ever.”

In response, Bishop Foys’ first communication to priests, deacons, altar servers and extraordinary ministers of holy Communion must use an alcohol-based anti-bacterial solution before and after distributing Holy Communion.

This first communication also reminds priests to encourage the faithful who are sick or who are experiencing symptoms to stay home; they are not obliged to attend Mass. This is in response to Bishop Foys’ and NKU’s instruction necessary to fulfill their degree requirements.

And, on Sunday, March 15 in an e-mail to members, Donna Heim, campus minister, NKU Newman Club said that there are to be no meetings or gatherings (or hanging out) in the Newman Center for at least the next two weeks. This is in response to Bishop Foys’ and NKU’s instruction to cancel such meetings and gatherings.

“Blessings come from obedience,” wrote Mrs. Heim. “Absence makes the heart grow fonder and hopefully resolves the coronavirus quickly. Hope you make the best of this Lenten sacrifice.”

For all of these communications and any updates, which can happen quickly, visit www.covdio.org and click on the link to the Public Health Concerns page.
**Entertainment**

“Bloodshot” (Columbia) Vin Diesel plays a Marine whose macho dreams come true when a doctor uses nanotechnology to bring him back from the dead and endows him with superhuman fighting abilities in the process. He employs his new powers to track down and slay the crazed assassin who killed both his beloved wife and him. But, as the fellow patient for whom the widower rapidly falls and is not as it seems. Director David S.F. Wilson’s passable Valiant Comics adaptation mostly avoids gore but the warrior’s drive for revenge is hindered by the fact that his friend and professional mentor, an already established singer; also loves the young lady. So a much greater challenge arises later when she is diagnosed with cancer. In keeping with the song and book from which the movie takes its title, non-denominational affirmations of faith permeate the ups and downs of the tale as well as the musical interludes by which it is paced, making this congenial fare for Christians of various stripes while the absence of objectionable elements renders it suitable for all but the youngest moviegoers. Mature themes, brief medical gore, a couple of marital bedroom scenes. CNS: A-II; MPAA: PG.

“The Hunt” (Universal) Clever commentary on contemporary political and cultural divisions in the United States is lost amid an orgy of bloodletting as a group of elite fat cats hunt a dozen kidnapped red-state types for sport, only to discover too late that one of them is prepared to put the cats on the line. Damon Lindelof, director Craig Zobel’s parable is deliberately outrageous in its gruesome portrayal of characters hindered by the fact that his friend and professional mentor, an already established singer; also loves the young lady. So a much greater challenge arises later when she is diagnosed with cancer. In keeping with the song and book from which the movie takes its title, non-denominational affirmations of faith permeate the ups and downs of the tale as well as the musical interludes by which it is paced, making this congenial fare for Christians of various stripes while the absence of objectionable elements renders it suitable for all but the youngest moviegoers. Mature themes, brief medical gore, a couple of marital bedroom scenes. CNS: A-III; MPAA: PG.

“I Still Believe” (Lionsgate) Fact-based romantic drama tells the love story of future Christian music star Jeremy Camp and the fellow college student for whom he fell in love with at first sight. Their relationship is initially hindered by the fact that his friend and professional mentor, an already established singer; also loves the young lady. So a much greater challenge arises later when she is diagnosed with cancer. In keeping with the song and book from which the movie takes its title, non-denominational affirmations of faith permeate the ups and downs of the tale as well as the musical interludes by which it is paced, making this congenial fare for Christians of various stripes while the absence of objectionable elements renders it suitable for all but the youngest moviegoers. Mature themes, brief medical gore, a couple of marital bedroom scenes. CNS: A-II; MPAA: PG.

Onward” (Disney) Using a spell, two teenage elven brothers bring their father back from the dead for 24 hours. But the magic goes away so that he is only resurrected from the waist down. To acquire the mystical gem that can restore him fully, they embark on a hazardous quest, trailed by their fiercest protective mom, but BUFFERW lifecycle’s who’s a police officer; and a lion-like creature who has the ability to defeat the drags that, unknown to the boys, guard the jewel they seek. Though it reaches a heartwarming conclusion, director and co-writer Dan Scanlon’s animated adventure is loaded down with an overly detailed mythos, values focused primarily on self-emempowerment and a passing allusion to a same-sex relationship that, though brief, amounts to propaganda aimed at youthful viewers. Occult themes, considerable peril, a reference to homosexuality, one mild scatological joke. CNS: A-III; MPAA: PG.

**For full reviews of all of these films — go to catholicnews.com and click on “Extras,” then choose “Movies.”**

Catholic News Service (CNS) classifications are:

- • O — morally offensive.
- • A-III — adults; mature themes, brief medical gore, a couple of marital bedroom scenes.
- • A-II — adults and adolescents; excessive peril, a refer-
  ence to homosexuality, one mild scatological joke.
- • L — limited adult audience; moderately offensive.
- • M — mature audiences only; adult themes, extensive
gore, violence, sex, profanity, a few milder oaths, pervasive rough and crude lan-
guage, a bit of sexual humor. CNS:O; MP AA: R.

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**For full reviews of all of these films — go to catholicnews.com and click on “Extras,” then choose “Movies.”**

Catholic News Service (CNS) classifications are:

- • O — morally offensive.
- • A-III — adults; mature themes, brief medical gore, a couple of marital bedroom scenes.
- • A-II — adults and adolescents; excessive peril, a refer-
  ence to homosexuality, one mild scatological joke.
- • L — limited adult audience; moderately offensive.
- • M — mature audiences only; adult themes, extensive
gore, violence, sex, profanity, a few milder oaths, pervasive rough and crude lan-
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**Pro-life bills put on hold**

(Continued from page 2)

ends qualify for free and reduced lunches and therefore the entire school year qualifies for free breakfasts and lunches. Additionally 30 other schools also have students that qualify for the school lunch program.

Catholic schools in the diocese already educate over 1,000 students with diagnosed learning disabilities. “The majority of our schools have teachers dedicated to students with special needs. Many are certified in special education or have training related to various learning needs such as autism or ADHD,” Mrs. McQuire said.

Every parent — regardless of income or address — should be able to choose the school that meets their child’s educational needs, said Mr. Vandiver. And while no member of the General Assembly would accept sending their own child to a school that did not meet their needs, “certain members expect other families to watch their children fall through the cracks,” he said.

Polls show that 82 percent of Kentuckians support Scholarship Tax Credits. It is time to know where members of the General Assembly stand, said Mr. Vandiver.

“Contact your senator and representative today even if you have already done so, and demand that they put Scholarship Tax Credits to a vote. If they are going to oppose educational freedom for Kentucky families, they should at least be willing to do so in the light of day by voting on the bill.”

Under normal circumstances, Mr. Hall said, the public would see results from all these bills fairly quickly. With the closure of most public events, however, it will be a longer wait until these bills receive a vote. Updates will be posted in the Messenger as legislation makes further progress.
Pope entrusts world threatened by coronavirus pandemic to Mary

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis entrusted to Jesus’ mother the suffering and anguish of millions of people affected by the coronavirus pandemic. In a video message broadcast March 11, the pope prayed for those who are in ‘trial’ but to “deliver us from every danger. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross took part in Jesus’ pain, keeping your faith firm,” the pope prayed. “You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need, and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Casa di Gálibo, we may return to joy and to fasting after this time of trial.” The pope’s video message was aired on TV2000, the television channel of the Italian bishops’ conference, and the Diocese of Rome’s Facebook page. Cardinal Angelo De Donatis, papal vicar of Rome, celebrated a Mass of Rono’s Shrine of Divine Love that was aired live after the pope’s message. The Mass, according to the Diocese of Rome, was a prayer for the world, for humanity, for the city and for Italy, which has been under a government-mandated lockdown to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

Pope updates Vatican City State judicial system

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis updated the laws that govern the Vatican City judicial system in an effort to establish greater transparency and independence, particularly in financial and criminal matters. The pope said the new measures, issued “motu proprio,” on the pope’s own accord, March 16, are meant “to continue to respond to the twin crises in our Church, a crisis of abuse and a crisis of leadership failure,” said Kim Smolik, CEO of the Leadership Roundtable, which organized the gathering. The Catholic Church’s papal order, which organized the gathering. The Catholic Church has been criticized for its handling of abuse cases, particularly in the United States, where the Church has been sued for the sexual abuse of minors.

Supreme Court says ‘Remain in Mexico’ policy can be enforced for now

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday allowed the Trump administration’s request to continue to enforce its “Remain in Mexico” policy while it appeals the federal court’s decision. The court said it would hear an appeal of a lower court’s ruling that blocked the policy from being implemented.

Summit held to address Church’s ‘twin crises’ of abuse, leadership failure

WASHINGTON — A summit of U.S. Catholic leaders was centered around, faith, community and rural vocations. It also was expanded to include more people from Spanish-speaking countries such as Brazil. The Trump administration appealed to the Supreme Court for relief from a Feb. 28 decision by a panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco that upheld a lower court injunction on the policy.

Priest in Diocese of Yakima hospitalized with coronavirus

YAKIMA, Wash. — A priest of the Diocese of Yakima has been hospitalized for two weeks with COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus. Father Alejandro “Alex” Troy, pastor of Our Lady of the Desert Parish in Mattawa, Washington, is receiving care at Kadlec Medical Center in Richland, Washington, since March 1, according an announcement by the diocese. “Father Alex continues to recover well and we are appreciative of the prayers of many many parishioners and the excellent care of the hospital staff,” Bishop Teysen said in a statement. “We are also very thankful for the work of the Grant County Health District.” The diocese was working with health district staff to identify the people with whom Father Troy has been in close contact within the last month, the diocese said. The coronavirus was confirmed as the cause of Father Troy’s illness late March 15, following a third test by the health district. Two earlier tests were inconclusive, the diocese said.

Texas bishop offers prayers of gratitude for rural life, what farms provide

GANO, Texas — Catholic Rural Life ministry is nothing new, but it had gained a new energy in the past few years as new chapters of the organization emerge and more intentional outreach is provided to nurture the faith in rural vocations. That outreach was enshrined as Bishop Brendan J. Cahill celebrated the Diocese of Victoria’s first “Blessing of Seed and Soil” Mass in February at BH Genetics in Ganado. The Mass was a seasonal complement to the first harvest Mass celebrated this past fall. Not only was the outdoor Mass blessed with sunshine and mild temperatures, the business of rural life was evident all around — in the sight of the lined up rows of corn and tractors parked nearby and the sound of nearby crop dusters at work.

Hedba: Honor those who support life, not those ‘who purposefully end it’

ST PAUL, Minn. — Minnesota’s archbishop said he was “profusely saddened” that elected officials in St. Paul and Minneapolis declared March 10 Abortion Provider Appreciation Day. “Given that each human life is created in the image and likeness of God and has value no matter how purposefully and thus end such a life is an affront not only to our Creator but to the foundational values of civil society,” Archbishop Bernard A. Hebda of St. Paul and Minneapolis said in a March 10 statement. “There is no way around it — abortion kills children.” He continued: “What gives me hope, however, are the countless women and men of goodwill who tirelessly give of themselves to accompany women in crisis pregnancies, love and assist moms and babies, and work to create a culture of life in our communities and in our world. It is those people we should be honoring.” The day fell in the middle of 40 Days for Life Twin Cities, Feb. 24-April 5, during which pro-life advocates observed 24 hours a day to pray for abortion prevention.

El Salvador marks 43rd anniversary of Jesus’ martyrdom as beatification looms

WASHINGTON — Even as the government of El Salvador announced its plans to commemorate the March 12 anniversary of the Martyrdom of Father José Rafael Grande, the day fell in the middle of 40 Days for Life Twin Cities, Feb. 24-April 5, during which pro-life advocates observed 24 hours a day to pray for abortion prevention. Instead, the Archdiocese of San Salvador asked parishes to celebrate “our martyrs” in their respective localities. The three were murdered on route to a novena to celebrate the feast of St. Joseph, though the main target was Father Grande, killed because he helped the poor in his efforts to teach the poor to read using the Bible. Father Grande also organized them so they could speak against a rich and powerful minority: the coffee farmers and landowners, who oppressed them. On March 12, the Salvadorean Catholic TV station Televisión Catolica showed hundreds headed to the church where Father Grande was martyred, to celebrate the 43rd anniversary of his death. Bishop Trejo has been in close contact with the Garcia family in El Salvador, the excellence and is appreciated by the people with whom Father Troy has been in close contact within the last month, the diocese said. The coronavirus was confirmed as the cause of Father Troy’s illness late March 15, following a third test by the health district. Two earlier tests were inconclusive, the diocese said.

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“HOPE
DOES NOT DISAPPOINT...
THE LOVE OF GOD HAS BEEN POURED OUT INTO OUR HEARTS.”
ROMANS 5:8

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