Catholic schools to reopen August 17

In a letter to Catholic School leaders Bishop Roger Foys and Mike Clines, superintendent of Catholic Schools, announced that schools would begin in-person instruction the week of August 17 in the Diocese of Covington.

The decision was made after much consultation, including with the Kentucky bishops of Lexington, Louisville and Owensboro, and after hearing from our Catholic school communities. The schools have created various models for beginning the school year under the guidance of the Diocese of Covington's Department of Catholic Schools “COVID-19 Return to School Requirements,” including an option for at-home learning if a parent decides that would be the best option for their student.

At each school implementation of the requirements will be monitored. During the week of Sept. 6, our experience to date will be evaluated and needed changes will be made at that time.

Many factors were considered in making this decision including:

— Pastors, administrators, faculty and staff have been working diligently throughout the summer with their local COVID-19 task force to prepare schools for strict adherence to the COVID-19 requirements. Their commitment to the students is evidenced by the excitement, seriousness and creativity in creating environments that meet the educational and safety needs of their students.

— A desire among the community — priests, principals, parents and students — to be given an opportunity to implement the plans that have been scrupulously developed, and their stated confidence in the plans.

— The understanding that education includes formation of the entire student — mind, body and soul — and is preferably accomplished in a face-to-face setting.

10 August 2020

My dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

I received a request from one of our parishioners recently asking that I encourage three days of fasting, praying and sacrificing “for an end to COVID-19 and for all the effects of COVID-19, including an end of fear and division among God’s people.” I find this to be a truly inspiring and inspired request and am pleased to respond to it affirmatively.

Therefore, I am designating Thursday, 20 August to Saturday, 22 August as a triduum of prayer, fasting and sacrificing for an end to COVID-19 and for all the effects of COVID-19, including an end of fear and division among God’s people. I ask that parish priests offer the Mass for Any Need on Thursday, 20 August and Friday, 21 August. I also ask that every church in the diocese be open throughout these two days and that the Blessed Sacrament be exposed for at least an hour of adoration on each of those days.

On Saturday, 22 August I ask that each parish offer Mass at 10 a.m. to conclude our triduum. Saturday is the feast of the Queenship of Mary. What better way to end our triduum of prayer than to invoke the name of our Mother Mary and ask her to intercede for us with her Son, Jesus!

After the 10 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral on Saturday, 22 August, I will drive through the city of Covington blessing it with the relic of St. Rocco, protector against epidemics.

These months have been difficult for everyone for the pandemic has touched all our lives. Let us together pray for an end to the pandemic, for all those directly affected by it, for those who have died as well as for those who have lost loved ones, and for all health care personnel. Let us also pray for an end to civil discord, remembering that we are one nation under God.

Be assured always of my prayers. Please, pray for me.

Yours devotedly in the Lord,

Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, D.D.
Bishop of Covington
Pastor installations

Two parishes recently celebrated the installation of new pastors. At St. Paul Parish, Florence, August 2, Bishop Roger Foys installed its newest pastor, Father Jason Bertke. At Blessed Sacrament Parish, August 9, a parish son, Father Damian Hils officially became its seventh pastor.

Normally at a pastor installation, the new pastor is escorted through the church to the sacramental stations. In order to help mitigate the spread of the virus by observing proper social distancing, symbols of the sacramental rites were distributed to the new pastor from the presider’s chair.

Teachers open school year with Mass

Bishop Roger Foys celebrated the fifth annual opening of the school year Mass for teachers, Aug. 7 at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption. Michael Clines, superintendent of Catholic Schools, delivered a welcome to the representatives from the Catholic schools of the diocese, saying “We gather today as a caring community engaged in the education and ministry of Jesus Christ. Let us walk the path he has set… May we see everything in our lives in light of our faith, and help one another walk in that light.”

In his homily, Bishop Foys emphasized service and self-denial for the teachers. “Denying one’s self is putting one’s self second, and putting the Lord first in every aspect of our lives… spending ourselves in the service of the Lord,” he said. “I think it’s providence that the reading matched up with this Mass. "Try to remember that the primary reason for the existence of a Catholic school system, whether it’s Pre-K or university, is to transmit the Gospel message and to transmit the faith. If we are not doing that, then we have no business being called Catholic. It applies not only to religion class, that’s only a tiny bit… the message of the faith has to permeate every subject, every teacher. Students have to see in their teachers and in administration and staff the image of Jesus.”

Diocesan schools are scheduled to open the week of August 17 with a mixture of in-person and Non-Traditional Instruction (NTI).
Bishop Foys accepts candidate for seminary

Zacharias Schoen, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Aug. 9, in a ceremony known as the Rite of Candidacy, declared his intention to discern a priestly vocation as a seminarian for the Diocese of Covington. Bishop Roger Foys, on behalf of the entire Church, accepted his candidacy. Mr. Schoen has completed his philosophical studies at the Pontifical College Josephinum, Columbus. He will begin his theological studies that will lead to ordination at St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe.

“It gives me joy to welcome our seminarian Zacharias Schoen to this Rite of Candidacy,” said Bishop Foys. “He has listened to the voice of the Lord. It is the Lord who has begun this good work in him, and it is the Lord who will bring it to completion.”

This fall 12 men will be studying for the priesthood for the Diocese of Covington. At the end of his homily, Bishop Foys said: “It is a good time for our seminarians and all seminarians to remind themselves about keeping focused on the Lord. The journey to the priesthood is not always easy… I encourage our seminarians today to renew their commitment, to listen carefully to the voice of the Lord and never take their eyes off of him.”

Seminarians from the Diocese of Covington attended the Rite of Candidacy Aug. 9 at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, before beginning the new school year. There are four new seminarians this year. They will begin or continue their studies at the Pontifical College Josephinum, Columbus and St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe. (From left to right) Top row: Michael Elmlinger, William Pikar, Bradley Whittle, John Tarvin, Henry “Hank” Bischoff, Michael Schulte, Joshua “Josh” Heskamp, John Bannum. Bottom row: Justin Schwarz, Deacon Joseph Rielage, Bishop Roger Foys, Andrew Joseph “A.J.” Gedney, Zacharias Schoen.

Bishop Foys calls the candidate, Zacharias Schoen, to accept him as a seminarian for the Diocese of Covington after the completion of his first four years of philosophy. Bishop Foys vests Mr. Schoen in an alb to signify him joining the ranks of those discerning the priesthood as he begins his 4-year theological studies.

Official assignments

Effective July 1, 2020

Rev. Msgr. Roger P. Cooney
To: Diocesan College of Consultants
Term: Five years
Continues in retirement

Very Rev. Matthew A. Cushing, V.F.
To: Diocesan College of Consultants
Term: Five years
Continues other duties

Rev. Thomas F. Pichchioni
To: Diocesan College of Consultants
Term: Five years
Continues other duties

Rev. Michael D. Barth
To: Judge, Diocesan Tribunal
Term: Five years
Continues other duties

Sister Margaret M. Stallmesyer, C.D.P.
To: Judge, Diocesan Tribunal
Term: Five years
Continues other duties

Rev. Barry Windholtz
To: Judge, Diocesan Tribunal
Term: Five years

Rev. Msgr. William B. Neuhaus
To: Promoter of Justice, Diocesan Tribunal
Term: Five years
Continues in retirement and other duties

Rev. Gregory E. Osburg
To: Defender of the Bond, Diocesan Tribunal
Term: Five years
Continues other duties

Rev. Msgr. John R. Schulte
To: Defender of the Bond, Diocesan Tribunal
Term: Five years
Continues other duties

Rev. Msgr. Gerald E. Twaddell
To: Defender of the Bond, Diocesan Tribunal
Term: Five years
Continues other duties

Sister Mary Catherine Wenstrup, O.S.B.
To: Defender of the Bond, Diocesan Tribunal
Term: Five years

Betsy Djordjevic
To: Ecclesiastical Notary, Diocesan Tribunal
Term: Five years

Karen Guidugli
To: Ecclesiastical Notary, Diocesan Tribunal
Term: Five years

Effective August 1, 2020

Rev. Msgr. William B. Neuhaus
To: Board of Directors, Diocesan Catholic Children’s Home
Term: Three years
Continues in retirement and other duties

By order of
the Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, D.D.
Bishop of the Diocese of Covington

Jamie N. Schroeder,
Chancellor
**Holy Church ... ‘the mystery of the moon’**

On Christmas Eve 1999, in the Bull of Indiction "Incarceratio Mysteriorum" ("The Mystery of the Incarceration"), St. John Paul II announced the beginning of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. Among the signs of God’s mercy at work in the Jubilee, "the purification of memory" played a central role in the late Holy Father’s summons preparing the Church over a period of three years for crossing the threshold of the Third Millennium. Conversion becomes a sign of God’s mercy at work during the Jubilee calling “everyone to make an act of courage and humility in recognizing the wrongs done by those who have borne the name of Christian.” (IM, n. 11)

The Church’s “history of holiness” attests to “the truth of the Gospel” and is a “visible sign that perfection is possible.” Yet history also must face events that constitute a “counter-testimony to Christanity” Solidarity in the Holy of Christ engages “all of us, though not personally responsible ... bear the burden of the errors and faults of those who have gone before us.” In closing this section St John Paul II made a frank admission: “Yet we too, sons and daughters of the Church, have sinned and have hindered the Bride of Christ from shining fully for her beauty. Our sin has impeded the Spirit’s working in the hearts of many people. Our meager faith has meant that many have lapsed into apathy and been drawn away from a true encounter with Christ.” (IM, n. 11)

Nonetheless, the “Mystery of the Incarnation” identifies the history of the Church as “a history of holiness.” Holiness is an essential attribute of the Church as the People of God is constituted in Christ. Thus, the ancient creeds profess belief in the “holy church.” Accordingly, “Tertio Millennio Adveniente” (“On the Coming of the Third Millennium”), the message of the Second Millennium of Christianity to be an appropriate moment when the Church “should become more fully conscious of the sanctity of her children.” (TMA, n. 33)

Forms of counter-witness and scandal! stem from sinful thinking and behavior which contradicts “the spirit of Christ and of his Gospel,” a countersign which fails to offer a witness to the world of “a life inspired by faith.” (IM, n. 33)

Holiness is a gift of God, not earned by human striving and achievement. As a saving institution, the Church in its formal principles of sacraments, doctrine and apostolic action testifies to the history of the Church as “a history of holiness.” Holiness is an essential attribute of the Church as the People of God is constituted in Christ. Thus, the ancient creeds profess belief in the “holy church.” Accordingly, “Tertio Millennio Adveniente” (“On the Coming of the Third Millennium”), the message of the Second Millennium of Christianity to be an appropriate moment when the Church “should become more fully conscious of the sanctity of her children.” (TMA, n. 33)

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The holiness of the Church notwithstanding, Father Tavard commented that “the faithful on earth are still prone to sin and stand in constant need of forgiveness.” Again, in his “Sacerdotal Theology” (1988), Franciscan Father Kenan B. Osborne explored the mystery of the Church, calling “everyone to make an act of courage and humility in recognizing the wrongs done by those who have borne the name of Christian.” (IM, n. 11)

From a existential standpoint, Father Osborne infers that the assertion “I am part of the church” should be completed with a clause “— only when I reflect Jesus.” By the same token, that identity marks a parish or a diocese — “only when the parish or the diocese reflects Jesus the light of the world.”

**Msgr. Ronald Ketteler** is a director of eccumenical, episcopal liaison to the Messenger and professor of theology at Thomas More University

Msgr. Ronald Ketteler

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**Holy Church ... ‘the mystery of the moon’**

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*“Christ is the sun of justice, the only source of light. The Church (like the moon) at all times depends on the sun for her brilliance.*


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*“Holy Church ... ‘the mystery of the moon’*"
Bringing others to Christ

The readings for the 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time — “Cycle A” are: Isaiah 56:1-6, 7; Romans 11:13, 29-32 and Matthew 13:21-23.

Modern Scripture study identifies three authors in what we call the book of Isaiah, and today’s first reading begins the third section, called “Third Isaiah.”

To put this part of Isaiah in its historical context, these oracles pertain to the years after the return from exile and offer hope for Israel to begin again in its walk with God. What is surprising in this section of Isaiah is that so much of the offer to Israel to begin again, but the statement that others will be welcome in the temple.

There are five verses excised from the section we hear today, and they give examples of this new promise: even eunuchs and foreigners — formally excluded from participation in the assembly of Israel — will be welcomed. Indeed, all who follow the moral code laid out in the Covenant and acknowledge Israel’s God as the true God will be welcomed into the temple.

The Gospel shows this principle being lived out. The woman who comes to Jesus asking for help is not of the house of Israel, and is therefore, according to Jesus, not part of his mission. Her resoluteness, though, in the face of Jesus’ dismissal of her; compels Jesus to exclude, “O woman, great is your faith!” Faith such as hers also compels Jesus to admit her to the benefits of being part of Israel.

The best news of all comes in the second reading: not only does this principle apply to the Gentiles — that faith in Jesus and willingness to follow his commandments are the only prerequisites for belonging to his Church — but now Gentiles are being sought out. Not only is the Church open to these Gentiles, who seek to belong to it, but Jesus has also appointed certain men — called Apostles — whose mission it is to bring the Church to the Gentiles and invite them in.

What has this to do with us? I believe it was Pope Emeritus Benedict who asked this question: “Noah, Moses, Abraham, David — what did the Divine Word do with them?” and then answered it with a quote from the well-known 20th-century rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel: “It lifted them up, delighted them, terrified them and then sent them on mission.”

We must, especially at this time, remind ourselves that there is a reason we are called into Christ’s Church, a reason beyond our own salvation. Just as Jesus chose Paul into the Church, illuminated him and then sent him out to the Gentiles, so we are each called into the Church, not just to enjoy the benefits of membership, but to be sent out again into the world, sowing seeds of the Gospel, transforming the culture, and especially inviting others to come in.

The readings for this Sunday uplift us and move us to think about what it means to be called into God’s Church. What has this to do with us? I believe it was Pope Emeritus Benedict who asked this question: “Noah, Moses, Abraham, David — what did the Divine Word do with them?” and then answered it with a quote from the well-known 20th-century rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel: “It lifted them up, delighted them, terrified them and then sent them on mission.”

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THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

George Weigel

Eucharistic fasting may be a providential moment to do something about that.

Why isn’t pre-pandemic “Sunday normal” the norm to which we should aspire? Because too few Catholics take the Sunday Eucharist seriously enough to participate in it weekly. And because too few Catholics understand just what the Eucharist is.

Never let a good crisis go to waste” is a maxim that applies beyond politics. Applied to the Church, it suggests this in between time is a privileged time to rects the Church to the pulpit to those in church and those participating through live-streaming, crisis may be transformed into opportunity such that the new “Sunday normal” is something better than the old.

A good way to jolt a diocese or a parish into paying attention to this subject is to cite a marvellous passage from a 1965 letter of Flannery O’Connor’s, describing a New York dinner party at which the aspiring young novelist George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

What’s killing you?

Father Stefa Bankemper is pastor, St. Catherine of Sienna Parish, Ft. Thomas, Ky.

ALONG THE WAY

Ray Smith

This is a time of B.C. — before COVID. How are you doing? What have you learned from fearfulness, from the New York illegal fireworks explosion one year after Beverly Hills, the anxiety of the severe economic recessions of 1987 and 2009 and now, the life-threatening recession of 1987 and 2009 and now, the life-threatening pandemic we all face. Each has engraved dual flashpoints behind my forehead that constantly warn, “Dread!” of February 2020 isn’t “Dread!” returns this year or more quickly, once they are in place.

I hoped that people’s hunger for the Eucharist would bring them back more quickly once they concluded that it was reasonably safe, for themselves and others, to do so. But whether “Sunday normal” returns this year or next year, the “Sunday normal” of February 2020 isn’t something for which we should easily settle. Because “Sunday normal” isn’t what it should be.

This extended moment of Eucharistic fasting may be a providential moment to do something about that.

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In order to keep everyone Healthy at Home this year, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Covington is converting its fundraiser “Cassba 2020” to a virtual experience. The event starts Monday, August 24 and concludes with a live, on-line event Sunday, August 30 beginning at 4 p.m. To learn more about the event, and watch the live event visit www.cassba.com. Proceeds from the event support the clients of Catholic Charities and Parish Kitchen.

The Solemnity of the Assumption

The Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary celebrated August 15 is usually a Holy Day of Obligation in the Catholic Church. Since it falls on a Saturday this year, the celebration is incorporated into the Sunday liturgy and will be celebrated at vigil Mass Saturday evening and Sunday, August 16, in the morning. This removes the obligation from the faithful to attend Mass earlier in the day on Saturday. The feast of the Assumption recognizes that Mary was free from sin, including original sin, and was taken body and soul to heaven. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son’s Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians.” (CCC 966)

Bishop Foy ordains son of the diocese

On Saturday, August 1, Bishop Roger Foy ordained Father Christopher Gronotte, LC to the office of the priesthood. Father Gronotte had planned to be ordained in Rome this May with the Legionaries of Christ, but had to change plans because of the pandemic. He was ordained in his home diocese of Covington, vested by his brother, Father Andrew Gronotte, LC and distributed communion for the first time as a priest to his mother.

“What is happening here today, no matter what is going on outside of us, whether the civil unrest or the pandemic... it is what is going on in here at this moment that is important,” said Bishop Foy. “It is what is in our heart that matters. No one, nothing outside of us can change that.

“Christopher, the Lord has called and chosen you,” he said. “Thank you for answering that call. As priests, as ordained ministers, we do not preach ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord. We don’t preach so that we can be popular and people will like us. If you spend yourself preaching Jesus Christ and not yourself, you will have a fulfilling and happy priesthood. That will be enough.”
‘Endless and bottomless sand’ nearly doomed Cathedral construction

Stephen Enzweiler, KHS
Messenger Contributor

When Bishop Camillus Paul Maes sank the blade of his shovel into the earth in 1884 to break ground for Covington’s new St. Mary’s Cathedral, he had high hopes that construction would commence quickly and proceed without incident. He and architect Leon Coquard had spent the previous two years meticulously planning the project, with Maes purchasing properties upon which to build the cathedral structure and Coquard pumping out the existing pits to test the soil. After a sketch made by Bishop Maes...

plans called for them to dig down 25 feet along the foundation perimeters, where piers could be sunk that would support the massive weight of the cathedral structure. But as larger and larger buckets of earth were scooped out, superintending civil engineer Willis Kennedy noticed a problem. While hoping to find stable ground for construction, he found instead only a wet, marshy soil with layers of sand and clay. He knew immediately it was the type of soil upon which no cathedral could be built.

Kennedy broke the news to a stunned Bishop Maes as he hoped to build. The ground was what engineers called a “compressible” soil, one that was not uniform throughout and could never support the weight of a massive building. Kennedy tried to reassure the bishop that there were a few things he could still try in hope of resolving the problem. Yet, even he could not guarantee that any of them would work.

A frustrated Maes wrote to Leon Coquard and explained what Kennedy had found. “It is impossible for me to say just what should be done,” the puzzled architect penned in reply. “I have allowed about 2 ½ tons per square foot of footing. Of course, this will not do if you have the bottom which you describe.”

“The whole lot is endless and bottomless sand!” the good bishop lamented. “The men who worked it … assure me it is the same all over, for blocks and blocks.” For the first time, it seemed that a new site, though a less favorable location, may have to be selected.

In the weeks that followed, engineers and workmen began surveying and excavating the ground according to the architect’s plans to make way for construction of the foundation. Steam shovels and heavy equipment moved in, transforming the site into a beehive of activity.

Construction of the façade in spring 1909. Bouscaren’s load test had been conducted in a pit dug beneath the north tower at left. The towers were not added because Bishop Maes judged that ornamentation took priority over their construction.

The only “fix” was an engineering method called “preloading and vertical drain.” This method essentially consisted of squeezing the soil with a fill material so that residual ground water could be drained away. By eliminating the water, the soil could be strengthened.

For this, Bishop Maes contacted Gustave Bouscaren, a Paris-trained civil engineer working in Cincinnati, whom he deemed “the reputation of being one of the great civil engineers of America.” He worked for Cincinnati Southern Railway for 25 years, held patents for dozens of inventions, and built most of the bridges spanning the Ohio River. He also was a consulting engineer for large-scale projects in Texas and New York and was once appointed by President Cleveland to evaluate the Brooklyn Bridge. “He was very conscientious of his work,” the Enquirer went on to say, “and was noted for his strictness in requiring contractors to live up to the specifications.”

After inspecting the cathedral site, Bouscaren sent his report to Bishop Maes: “The material at the bottom of the pits … is fine sand with a thin stratum of clay. It is a compressible formation which should not be loaded more than one and a half tons to the square foot.” The load capacity turned out to be about half of what Coquard had originally calculated. Bouscaren further recommended that borings be made to a depth of 25-30 feet below the bottom of...
**True Compassion and Mercy**

Euthanasia and PAS are often mistakenly called acts of compassion or mercy. Looking at the true meaning of these words helps us understand why this is not the case. “Compassion” literally means “to suffer with.” It involves entering into another’s suffering and taking it on as one’s suffering as one’s own, not ending a person’s suffering through illicit means that violate her dignity. “Mercy” comes from the Latin word misericordia, whose root words are miserable (meaning “pitiful” or “misery”) and cord (meaning “heart”). To have mercy is to have one’s heart moved by the plight of another and to act to help relieve their suffering. But again, to genuinely “help” another, we must act in ways that respect her dignity and rights.

**The Principle of Double Effect and Palliative Care**

Terminally ill patients sometimes desire euthanasia because their pain is not adequately managed. The Church advocates for good palliative care (comfort care). In some cases, this can include pain medication with serious side effects, including hastened death, but these can still be licit because of the doctrine of double effect.

This doctrine is rooted in the fundamental moral principle that one can never intentionally choose evil in order to try to achieve good (“the end cannot justify the means”). However, a person can choose a good action that has a bad effect if three factors are met:

1. She does not directly will (i.e., “intend”) the bad effect; she does not desire it. But even if she does, it’s not an act of will.
2. The bad effect is not the direct means to the good achieved; it is an incidental and unintended consequence.
3. The good achieved is proportionate to the bad effect.

If someone presents the “suffering is meaningless” argument, you can share such examples and tell personal anecdotes to bring them to life.

The most basic human right is the right to life, for without this basic, most fundamental good, we can enjoy no other right. Intentional killing of an innocent (even with consent or for a seemingly good purpose) violates, rather than protects, that person’s right to life. Further, because life is a radical gift from God and a sign of his infinite love for us, rejecting my own life or anyone else’s rejects God and his love. Euthanasia/PAS constitute false mercy because they trade the person’s ultimate good for the sake of temporary relief.

We Choose Life

**Pro-Life Office**

of the Diocese of Covington

Mission Statement

The Pro-Life Office of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, guided by our bishop, promotes the sanctity and legal protection of human life from conception to natural death through prayer, pastoral care, public policy, and education.

**Part 2 — How to talk about euthanasia: is suffering meaningless?**

Caitlin Dwyer
Contributor

In Part 1 of this series, we discussed tips on having a conversation with someone who supports euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide (PAS) because she thinks that consent alone makes an action good. (See July 3 issue at www.covdio.org/messenger.) We demonstrated that consent is not enough to make an action a true act of love. It also needs a good moral object, end, and circumstances.

Here we will explore another common reason people support these practices: false mercy. If intense suffering is meaningless, particularly if it is not relievable and death is imminent, giving lethal drugs seems to them a good act that respects the sufferer’s rights.

To assess the validity of this position, we will look at whether suffering is meaningful, then discuss the goodness of relieving the suffering of others in the context of human rights.

Personal experience shows us how suffering can be meaningful. There are times in our lives when suffering helps us reach a goal. Athletes hear, “No pain, no gain.” But in every field success requires intense training and sacrifice. Just ask an artist, writer, teacher, healthcare worker or expert of any kind.

In a similar vein, suffering can help form our character — we develop patience and perseverance in the face of adversity. Suffering also draws forth compassion. When I am sick, it gives my husband an opportunity to care for me. My neighbor loses his job, it gives me the opportunity to share what we have with him and his family. The friend who is suddenly widowed witnesses our extra efforts to express love and concern.

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Again, appealing to personal experience is powerful. Who has never faced some form of suffering that seemed to have no purpose? This type of suffering can open us up to awareness of others' suffering as the mystique of suffering can make us oblivious to the suffering of others.

The mysterious nature of suffering can rid us of the illusion that we control every aspect of our lives and help us experience what is always true — we are not directors of our own destinies; rather, we are fundamentally dependent creatures, reliant on God and in need of others.

Endurance of unbearable suffering also testifies to the greatness of the human spirit. Viktor Frankl, a Jewish concentration camp survivor, made this clear in his best-selling work “Man’s Search for Meaning.” We may not be able to conquer suffering, but we can “go the distance” and bear it to the end, despite desperate moments, rough days and sleepless nights. The nobility of such endurance is easily seen when we consider men and women who have borne extreme adversity well. Point your listener to Frankl, John Paul II (Painkurssis), Helen Keller (sighted and deaf), Lauren Hill or Jim Valvano (cancer) or another inspiring person with whom she might connect.

None of this diminishes our duty to alleviate suffering when we can. People instinctively want to stop suffering. Christians embody the faith when we practice the works of mercy, such as feeding the hungry and visiting the sick (Matt 25). The question is not whether we should lovingly alleviate suffering, but how.

We intuitively understand that not all ways of alleviating suffering are good. We cannot try to systematically end hunger in our community by stealing from grocery stores to give food to struggling families. We cannot try to end abusive foster homes by terminating the lives of foster children. It is obvious that the ends do not justify the means in those cases. But with end-of-life issues and chronic pain, many people find the issues less clear-cut.

What makes euthanasia and PAS problematic? A human rights framework can help clarify the ethics of all our choices, but especially those affecting human life.

Most people recognize that all people have basic rights that flow from our identity as human beings (meaning they are innate, not earned or granted). Each right comes with a corresponding responsibility to uphold the rights of all others, including ourselves. For Christians, these rights stem from our identity as the only beings made in the image and likeness of God. When we deprive someone (including ourselves) of a basic right, our action is wrong.

The most basic human right is the right to life, for without this basic, most fundamental good, we can enjoy no other right. Intentional killing of an innocent (even with consent or for a seemingly good purpose) violates, rather than protects, that person’s right to life. Further, because life is a radical gift from God and a sign of his infinite love for us, rejecting my own life or anyone else’s rejects God and his love. Euthanasia/PAS constitute false mercy because they trade the person’s ultimate good for the sake of temporary relief.

As we seek to alleviate an afflicted person’s suffering, we must always choose ways that are truly merciful. We can lessen physical suffering through effective palliative care — pain medicine and comfort measures. We can soften emotional distress by living faithfully and joyfully in solidarity with the sufferer, praying with and for her, and constantly assuring her that she is not a burden but a beautiful, worthy child of God.

Those who reject such humane measures in favor of euthanasia/PAS denounce human life. They embrace a logic which deems the “quality of life” of certain persons lacking in a way that opens a Pandora’s box of ethical, societal and behavioral problems that we will explore in Part 3.

Prof. Caitlin Shaughnessy Dwyer is assistant professor of Theology, Thomas More University. She and her family are members of St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood.

**For more information about the Pro-Life Office or to be added to our e-mail newsgroup, visit us online at www.covdio.org/prolife/ or call (859) 392-1500.**
Bishop Maes. They showed the same mix of sand, gravel, yellow and blue clays as everywhere else. Maes complained to Coquard it was "too deep to reach it for foundations and unfit for draining." But Gustave Bouscaren wasn't about to give up on the site.

In the bottom of an excavated pit, Bouscaren erected a wooden apparatus designed to measure how much a given weight would sink into the soil. It was an eight-foot high oak timber, spiked at the bottom and topped with thick oak plates one foot square capable of holding up to 12,000 pounds. Bouscaren established a reference elevation and placed 3,500 pounds of weight on the top plate. The idea was to see how much the oak timber sank over time, which would tell him how much weight the soil could support per square foot. This information would in turn tell Leon Coquard how he needed to adjust the pier design to correctly account for cathedral weight and avoid potential shifting or sinking of the structure.

Bouscaren put Kennedy in charge of taking the readings. After five hours he observed the oak timber barely sank at all. Then he put an additional weight on it until it reached 6,470 pounds. That night, a heavy rain fell over Covington, saturating the pit where Bouscaren's apparatus was and completely filling the pit with water. For two more days, Kennedy continued to take readings until the timber stopped sinking. In the end, under more than three tons of weight, the platform had depressed only 0.05 inches over a four-day period.

Bouscaren, however, was not satisfied with the numbers. "The settling of the soil under a load … is somewhat more favorable than I had anticipated, but the result is not yet conclusive." He directed Kennedy to increase the weight to 8,000 pounds and take another series of readings the following day. In his final determination, Bouscaren wrote Bishop Maes that "the result of the test only justifies a maximum allowance of three thousand pounds per square foot."

Leon Coquard had proposed to simply increase the size of the piers to accommodate any additional weight. But Bishop Maes replied that he felt "perfectly satisfied" that there was no need of increasing their size. "My advice is to figure it to the full 3,000 pounds allowed by Bouscaren. We are perfectly safe in doing so..." Coquard agreed, and set about redesigning the piers. The redrawn plans arrived in the bishop’s hands not too long after and construction was able to resume by the end of July.

On January 27, 1901, the finished St. Mary's Cathedral was dedicated by Bishop Maes to his great relief and to the delight of the people of Covington. Eight years later, the weight issue came up again when architect David Davis was contracted to erect the cathedral's façade and bell towers. It was judged that the façade with the planned towers could be constructed safely under the known soil conditions. However, after the façade was finished, Maes decided that ornamentation — statues and sculptures — were more important than finishing the upper bell towers, which could be left to a later date.

It has been 126 years since Bishop Maes over-turned that first shovel full of dirt and was confronted by the “endless and bottomless sand.” Since that day, St. Mary’s Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption has undergone many periodic maintenance and restoration efforts, but the structure itself remains essentially as square and plumb as the day it was built. The faith of Bishop Maes, the diligence of Gustave Bouscaren, and the genius of Leon Coquard are a testament to the ingenuity of men who had the faith, drive and creative vision to construct a Gothic masterpiece that will last for centuries to come.

Stephen Enzweiler, KHS, is the historian for the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington.
The Church celebrates St. Maximilian Kolbe August 14. He was a Franciscan friar and founder of the Militia Immaculata movement, which sought to consecrate the entire world to Mary. He proclaimed the message of the Gospel and total consecration through a daily newspaper and radio station. He also led several mission trips to Asia, where in Japan he founded a monastery near Nagasaki.

At the outbreak of World War II, St. Maximilian continued to publish religious works through his press, and converted part of his German monastery to a hospital. When the monastery was shut down by the Nazis in 1941, he was arrested and eventually transferred to Auschwitz concentration camp. He’s known as a “martyr of charity” for sacrificing his life in place of another man, who was sentenced to death by starvation. When some prisoners escaped from the death camp, the guards chose 10 men to be placed in a starvation chamber as punishment. When one man began to cry in fear of his family’s well-being, St. Maximilian stepped up and took his place. He spent the horrific weeks that followed ministering to his fellow cellmates — singing hymns, praying and doing what he could to ease their pain of starvation and dehydration. He was the last of the men alive in the cell, eventually given an injection of carbolic acid to die. It was the vigil of the Assumption of Mary.

St. Maximilian is one of the few saints whose cause for canonization opened shortly after his death in the 1940s, in a speedy process similar to that of Pope St. John Paul II. He was declared a Servant of God in 1955, a mere 14 years after his death, and venerable in 1969. He was beatified in 1971 by Pope Paul VI as a confessor 30 years after his death, and canonized as a martyr in 1982.

St. Maximilian was originally beatified as a confessor, much like St. John Vianney and St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcino. The early Church referred to saints as “confessor” as a title of honor for those who publicly confessed their faith and suffered for it, but not to the point of martyrdom and death. Later, the term came to designate men of remarkable virtue and knowledge expressed in writing, preaching and heroic virtue. However, there is still a connotation that a confessor is not one who dies for his faith. There was considerable controversy in the Church surrounding the title “martyr of charity,” since St. Maximilian was not killed out of hatred for his faith. However, his arrest and entrance to the concentration camp was because of a systematic hatred of the Christian faith by the Nazi party, and John Paul II took up the case with the explanation that St. Maximilian’s death equated to earlier examples of religious martyrdom. He is denoted a martyr of charity because out of love he chose to be the victim of the Nazi’s hatred of whole people groups.

St. Maximilian is also known as the patron of the 20th century, families, prisoners, journalists, political prisoners, drug addicts and the pro-life movement.

**Did you know?**

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**What is the path to canonization in the Church? Why are some saints canonized so quickly after their deaths and some take hundreds of years? And what does it mean to be called a confessor or a martyr?**

**Server awards blessing**

Bishop Roger Foys (center, right) blessed Server Awards July 29 in the Oratory of St. Paul, with Mike Muran, (left) director of stewardship; Father Jordan Hainsey, (right) administrative assistant to the Bishop and rector and Father Michael Norton (center, left), vocations promoter, attending. Each year, Northern Kentucky Serra Club for Vocations distribute the awards to seventh-grade servers to honor their dedicated service at the altar for their parish. Due to health concerns, this year’s awards will be sent to parishes to be distributed there.

**Hands-on learning for teachers before students arrive**

Back to school began at Covington Catholic High School, Park Hills in early August. The teachers were the students during two days of professional development. After a Q&A with a local pediatrician about safe procedures in the pandemic environment, they received hands-on learning on the technology, which will enable high quality instructional flexibility this year.

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My dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus Christ! After our schools closing somewhat abruptly in the spring of this year we are now ready to welcome our students back to the classroom. To be sure, this has been a year like no other. It has turned many of our lives upside down and inside out. Still, we are prepared now, having taken every precaution necessary, to begin another school year.

We are so blessed in our Diocese of Covington with a Catholic School Apostolate that spans the entire 167 years of our existence. For well over a century we have provided and continue to provide a thoroughly Catholic school education system for all who desire it. Countless people have benefitted from this education and have gone on to do great things for our community and for our Church.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all who continue to make our Catholic school system possible. Thanks to our parents, our faculty, staff and administration, our entire Catholic Schools Department, and our many, many benefactors without whose generosity we would not be able to provide a Catholic school education.

I welcome all our returning students as well as students who will be attending one or another of our schools for the first time.

As our schools open for the 2020-2021 school year let us all pray for the safety and well-being of all those involved in the education of our children and for the students themselves.

There are alternatives to a Catholic School education, but there are no substitutes.

Be assured of my prayers. Please, pray for me.

Yours devotedly in the Lord,

Bishop of Covington
Superintendent: Strength in community

Michael Clines
Messenger Contributor

When I think of the 2020-2021 school year, many thoughts race through my mind. From how the last school year ended, what to expect in March, to the preparation over the summer for the healthy and safe return of our administrators, faculty and staff, the uncertainties that lie ahead.

I really cannot write a typical back to school welcome because these are just not typical times, and it saddens me. However, our Catholic school community is at its best when it’s a circle centered on the life-giving teachings of the Church. A circle that, as Pope Francis states, is “life giving in thought to the serenity and incredible power of Jesus. He simply commands and his word is stronger than the fury of the wind and the sea. He dominates the powers of death and he guarantees life.

Accepting the call of Jesus and knowing that his life does not lead to a comfortable and tranquil existence. Jesus leads his disciples into grave danger where they are confronted with their own weakness and powerlessness, with the power of Jesus and his request for faith, with the mystery of Jesus. The disciples experienced great fear. This situation moved them towards a real knowledge of Jesus and faith in him. As we are confronted with this distractive pandemic, we need to place all our trust and trust in Jesus Christ.

The disciples were afraid and cried out when they felt their lives threatened and experienced their weakness and powerlessness. God is more powerful than all the forces that can threaten us. Therefore only God can say in an absolute way: “Courage! It is I, do not be afraid!” (Mark 6:50). God is worthy of an absolute trust and all fear is an absolute way: “Courage! It is I, do not be afraid!” (Mark 6:50). God is worthy of an absolute trust and all fear is an indication that the person does not understand God’s power. Jesus expects us to follow the faithful following of the monies of the disciples preserved, lived and transmitted in our holy Mother Church, especially in the lives of the saints. Our holy Mother Church is not an institution devised and built by men, but a living reality. It lives still throughout the course of time. Like all living realities it develops, it changes... and yet in the very depths of its being it remains the same; its immutest nucleus is Christ. To the extent that we look upon the Church as an organization, as an association, we have not yet arrived at a proper understanding of it. (La Chiesa del Signore, Morcelliana, Brescia, 1967, p160)

Taking these testimoni of the disciples and applying them to our experiences, we can gather all the good we have learned to carry into a new school year. We should feel ready to be back in touch with God as well as friends. We should feel ready to transform our knowledge into kind- ness, good deeds, caring, friendships, helping others and becoming better people – true treasures of God’s life in the world.

This year the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization is offering many catechetical and biblical courses. You can find them out by going to our website: https://covdio.org/catechesis-and-evangelization/

Isaak A. Isaak
Messenger Contributor

Welcome back to school!

Isaak A. Isaak
Messenger Contributor

Catechists, teachers, parents, families, parish catechet- cal leaders and faith formation building groups—welcome back to the beginning of another school year! The 2020 – 2021 school year presents the uncertainty at best. What will we meet as we return during this COVID-19 pandemic? Principals, teachers and catechists have been busy working out “social distancing” strategies, learning new virtual tools, adjusting to new protocols, and listening to the parents and parents worrying about the health and safety of their children for this new school year is to keep everything centered on Jesus. As Catholics, our guide for all the decisions and conversations when in doubt, we should always return to the thought of Jesus and listening to their concerns. We should provide strategies to cope with anxiety and reassure them that things will be okay. One of the first areas to practice this will be wearing face masks. Do not think of them as just masks, they are required for school. So find the mask that your child prefers, practice wearing it, talk about it and provide them with positive guidance to help them adjust to this new rule.

The most important thing we can do to prepare our children for this new school year is to keep everything centered on Jesus. As Catholics, our guide for all the decisions and conversations when in doubt, we should always return to the thought of Jesus and listening to their concerns. We should provide strategies to cope with anxiety and reassure them that things will be okay. One of the first areas to practice this will be wearing face masks. Do not think of them as just masks, they are required for school. So find the mask that your child prefers, practice wearing it, talk about it and provide them with positive guidance to help them adjust to this new rule.

This year, try to stay involved in what they are learning by asking questions and always extend that learning beyond their classroom experiences. As many of us learned in the spring, being flexible is an important skill. Helping our children improve in this skill will be valuable for the new school year. We have experienced many changes during this pandemic: and this will likely continue. Change can be difficult. As parents, we are not able to control changes around us, the thing we need to control is our response. Being flexible will make changes easier to handle. As parents, we can support our children through the changes happening by talking to them and listening to their concerns. We should provide strategies to cope with anxiety and reassure them that things will be okay. One of the first areas to practice this will be wearing face masks. Do not think of them as just masks, they are required for school. So find the mask that your child prefers, practice wearing it, talk about it and provide them with positive guidance to help them adjust to this new rule.

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Preparing our school children for uncertainty

Kendra McGuire
Messenger Contributor

Michael Clines
Messenger Contributor

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Meet the new principals in the Diocese of Covington

The Diocese of Covington is pleased to announce the appointment of two new principals. She grew up in Kansas City, Missouri as the second of eight children. In 1978, she left home to enter the religious community of Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker in Walton. Since then, she has been a teacher for many years and was assigned as principal of St. Joseph since before, from 1996 to 2005. "This will be round two for me!" she said.

Her goal for St. Joseph Academy this year is "to help the teachers and students grow deep in their relationship with Our Lord."

As a principal, Sister Patricia said you don’t have much “free time.” However, she enjoys gardening in the summer months and quilting in the winter months. She also loves spending time with family and friends. All her brothers and sisters have married, except one. Father Matt Cushing, pastor of All Saints Parish in Walton. She said she is blessed with 25 nieces and nephews, three grand nieces and one nephew so far.

Father Ross Kelch is stepping in as school administrator at St. Thomas School, Ft. Thomas for the 2020-2021 school year, in addition to his other duties.

“I hope that this year is a calm transition year into the bright future of St. Thomas School,” said Father Kelch. “We have a lot to be proud of, including a beautiful renovated building to welcome our students back.”

Father Kelch said administration is easy with such a wonderful faculty and staff. “I look forward to helping St. Thomas School shine as the beacon of light that it is in the Northern Kentucky community.”

Father Ross Kelch

John Kennedy is taking the reins at Covington Latin School, Covington. He’s excited to return to the Catholic school world, with which he’s very familiar. He grew up in North Carolina, attending parochial and diocesan schools, before studying English at the University of Dayton as an undergraduate and a graduate assistant teacher.

After some years teaching in a Chicago Catholic high school, he and his wife, Christin, taught in El Salvador and Egypt, where he began his doctorate at the University of Minnesota. He has two sons, both of whom attend DePaul University in Chicago.

“I have always wanted to return to Catholic education, and I am looking forward to working with the community to help create students of sound morals as well as sound minds,” he said. “I hope to get to know each student as I have in my past positions and to have a safe, healthy school year.”

In his free time, Mr. Kennedy enjoys reading, cooking, running and traveling.

St. Paul School in Florence welcomes Joanne Nesmith as its new principal. She grew up in Florence, her family belonged to St. Paul Parish and she attended school there from first through sixth grades.

After graduating from Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, Ms. Nesmith earned all of her degrees from Northern Kentucky University: a bachelor of science with a major in mathematics, a master of arts in secondary education and Rank I with principal certification in 2004.

“Before coming to St. Paul, she taught mathematics at Conner High School for 16 years, was the assistant principal at Camp Ernst Middle School for nine years and the principal of Walton Verona High School for six years.

Ms. Nesmith is thrilled to be returning to the halls of the place she called home in her childhood.

“When I learned of the opening at St. Paul, the immediate draw for me was that this is where I went to school,” she said. “I thought it was a unique opportunity to be the principal of the school that I attended. I have fond memories of growing up at St. Paul and have maintained many of the friendships that started in elementary school.”

Going into the 2020-2021 school year, Ms. Nesmith hopes to implement more technology into the school day, especially focusing on Chromebooks for each student, and to be a positive leader while keeping all students and staff healthy and safe. She’s excited to get to know students, staff and families.

Ms. Nesmith and her husband, Scott, were married in 2016, and together they have five children, one son-in-law and a granddaughter — Nicole (married to Michael), Ellin, Sara, Eric and Rachel.

Together, she and her husband visit one ballpark stadium a year in hopes of visiting all stadiums in the American and National Leagues. She’s especially partial to the Cincinnati Reds, of course, and attends games when she can. She also enjoys sewing and spending free time with family and friends.

David Gish

David Gish is the new principal at St. Henry District High School, Erlanger. He was born and raised in Newport, attending Corpus Christi School and Newport Catholic High School. He completed his Rank I in administration at Xavier University and earned both a master’s degree in education administration and bachelor’s degree in secondary business education at Northern Kentucky University.

Mr. Gish has served as a teacher, athletic director, baseball and basketball coach and assistant principal at SHDHS. He is now stepping up at the retirement of long-time principal David Oette.

Mr. Gish puts his family first and strives to create a faith-filled and supportive home for his four children and wife. His daughter is a graduate of Thomas More University and he will have three boys attending the University of Cincinnati in the fall. He said he is beyond thankful for them and grateful for the example his parents set by revolving their lives around their children.

This will be his 33rd year in education, all at St. Henry. While he said he’s not sure any of the past 32 years could have prepared him for the challenges presented with the COVID-19 pandemic, he is excited to be taking on these challenges and working with a truly amazing team of veteran educators at St. Henry.

“This will be the first time, in all my years as an educator, that I am confident each Crusader walking through our doors in August will be excited to be back in school,” said Mr. Gish. “The abrupt ending to on-campus instruction affected us all. I look forward to a full year on campus and engaging our students in their spiritual and academic growth while appreciating the gifts God has given each of them.”

In his free time, Mr. Gish enjoys going out to dinner and a movie with his wife. Spending time with his family will always be a priority, and he also loves remodeling projects around the house.

“I still have a real passion for being in the classroom so I stay up-to-date on personal finance trends and share with students in business classes.

Mr. Gish’s primary goal for this year is to empower his faculty and staff to accept the challenges of educating students through this fluid environment of change dealing with COVID-19.

Father Ross Kelch

Joanne Nesmith

John Kennedy

David Gish

Rachel Noll

Rachel Noll, the new principal of St. Patrick High School, Maysville, is excited to get back into the education field. She was born and raised in Edgewood, and attended St. Pias X School and Villa Madonna Academy. Villa Hills. She obtained her bachelors and masters degrees from Northern Kentucky University and a doctorate from University of Cincinnati.

“After I left teaching on the college level, I felt called to go back and make an impact on younger students,” said Ms. Noll.

She said she made a detour and worked in the corporate world for four years and learned a great deal about leadership, work culture and building relationships with internal and external clients.

“Those years were great, and at the same time, I was being called back into education. This position at St. Patrick will give me the opportunity to have an influence on younger students, build relationships with students and teachers, and create a strong, Catholic identity for the school,” she said.

Ms. Noll’s goal for this year is to have the best year possible for students and teachers, given the current pandemic situation.

She said Ms. Noll often spends her free time with her nine brothers and sisters, 14 nieces and nephews and two great nephews. She enjoys being an aunt. She also enjoys reading history and non-fiction books, playing and watching sports and making quality memories with friends.
Despite the unusual circumstances as Northern Kentucky, and indeed the world, struggles to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus, in the Diocese of Covington principals and teachers participated in the usual back to school rituals. Even though principals have been meeting weekly discussing and preparing safe protocols for opening the new school year under the cloud of a pandemic, all principals gathered, Aug. 4, for Mass with Bishop Roger Foys and the commissioning of five new principals.

“I’ve never been in a situation like this where we are opening school under a pandemic,” Bishop Foys said to the principals during his homily. “You know as well as I that it’s not going to be easy. We are going to open the best way that we can to keep our children safe, to keep our teachers safe. I thank you for taking on the mantle of Catholic school leaders. This year is going to be different for all of us. If we keep our eyes focused on Jesus, if we keep our eyes focused on the mission entrusted to all of us, we will be fine. We need to keep our eyes focused on the Lord and put our trust in him.”

The new principals (far left) are (left to right) David Gish, St. Henry District High School, Erlanger; St. Joseph the Worker Sister Patricia Jean Cushing, St. Joseph Academy, Walton; Joanne Nesmith, St. Paul School, Florence; Father Ross Kelsch, St. Thomas School, Ft. Thomas; and Rachel Noll, St. Patrick School, Maysville. Covington Latin School is also welcoming a new principal this year — John Kennedy — who, due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, was unable to attend the commissioning. Mr.

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Kennedy currently lives in Georgia and all travelers from outside of state are required to self-quarantine for 14 days after arrival. Mr. Kennedy is expecting to be in the Diocese of Covington and out of self-quarantine before the first day of classes.

About 65 new teachers met in two separate orientation sessions to accommodate COVID-19 capacity restrictions on gatherings. The sessions were held at Covington Latin School’s Forum. (below, left) Michael Clines, superintendent of Schools, welcomed the new teachers. Curia representatives walked the new teachers through practical matters like applying for benefits and getting set up on the payroll system. (page 14, right) Margaret Shack, director, Safe Environment Office, spoke to the teachers on the diocesan Code of Conduct and how to determine signs of abuse. The sessions ended with the official commissioning and welcome by Bishop Foys.

“I have to tell you that you could not have picked a worse time to get into teaching,” Bishop Foys jovially said to the teachers. “Life has changed. I firmly believe God calls each of us and places us at a certain time, in a certain place, for a certain reason. He has a plan for us. Why he chose to put us where we are at this time in history; under these conditions, we don’t know, but we do know he has a plan and he will help us. God has called you to this vocation as a teacher in a Catholic school. God will give you the grace that you need. If we cooperate with God’s grace — it doesn’t mean it will be easy or without difficulties but — you will get through it. What you are doing is really and truly God’s work, to spread God’s word.”

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For the last three years, the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization has been carefully evaluating its textbooks to make sure it provides valuable resources to teachers in the classroom. It has decided to implement the use of “The Spirit of Truth” from the Sophia Institute.

Mr. Isaak, co-director, said the process of selecting textbooks is very involving because there are hundreds of publishing companies in the United States that provide sound doctrinal work.

“The Catholic Church is very well organized in terms of all our formation guidelines, the doctrines are well written into books...so finding a very good textbook tailored to our needs in the diocese is a daunting task,” said Mr. Isaak.

He started a committee with representatives from schools and parishes, and they have spent three years sorting out publishing companies, determined by their priorities: the four pillars of the Nicene Creed as written in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

“One of the ways we compare the publishing companies is to determine which pillar is emphasized, and these pillars are the Creed, the Liturgy and the Sacraments, the Moral Life and the Prayer Life of the Church. They also asked the question: Is each explanation (of doctrine) superficial or is it deep enough?” Mr. Isaak.

“The Institute has committed to three goals for the Diocese during the next five years: to provide schools and parishes with the highest level of service, to demonstrate marked improvement in the growth of both student and teacher knowledge of the Catholic faith and to demonstrate increased confidence of educators in their vocation to serve as witnesses to Christ.”

Mr. Isaak presented the committee’s decision to the diocese in 2020 and Bishop Roger Foys approved the new curriculum for all the diocesan grade schools to implement.

The Sophia Institute was founded in 2014. “Being a catechist is a call, a vocation, and Sophia trains teachers to understand that call and prepare them for their vocation,” said Mr. Isaak. “What makes Sophia different from the other publishing companies is that they want to train the teachers...they have all kinds of webinars to orient teachers toward textbooks: retreat days, professional development days, very intensive spiritual formation, to form them as Catholic teachers.”

Mr. Isaak is excited to kick off the new curriculum, using the Sophia Institute’s assessment system, ARK (Assessment of Religious Education). It’s a national system that measures the success of each student yearly rather than every three years.

“Everything has to do with religious education,” he said. “Knowing Jesus makes a difference.”

Ultimately, Mr. Isaak said, these textbooks are tools to know about Jesus. “If the teachers know the content well, they will make a difference in the lives of the students. You don’t give what you don’t have. The company is walking in the shoes of the teachers, walking with them as they go.”
The Diocese of Covington Schools will be participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or the School Breakfast Program. As part of this pro-
gram, Bishop Brossart High School, Blessed Sacrament School, Covington Catholic High School, Covington Latin
School, Holy Cross High School and Elementary, Immaculatus Heart of Mary, Mary Queen of Heaven, Newport Central Catholic High
School, Prince of Peace, St. Agnes, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Cecilia, St. Edward, St. Henry Elementary, St. Henry District High School, St.
Joseph Crescent Spring, St. Joseph Cold Spring, St. Mary St. Patrick, St. Paul, St. Philip, St. Pius X, Sts. Peter and Paul, St. Timothy, St.
Therese, and St. Thomas will offer healthy meals every school day. Breakfast will cost $1.75, lunch will cost $2.90 for elementary and $3.15
for high school. Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Reduced price meals cost $.30 for breakfast and $.40
for lunch.

Students attending Holy Family Holy Trinity and St. Augustine - Covington will receive meals at no cost due to the implementation of
the Community Eligibility Provision for school year 2020-2021. Students will be able to participate in these meal programs without having to pay
a fee or submit a household application.

Qualifications for children to receive free or reduced price meals include: belonging to a household whose income is at or below the Federal Income Eligibility
Guidelines, belonging to a household that receives public assistance or if the child is homeless, migrant, runaway, foster care as household members
or if a child resides with a foster family if the foster family is not eligible for free or reduced-price benefits, if the household chooses to decline the free
meal benefits.

For more information, you may call Ms. Jackie Kaiser at 859-392-1500 (at no charge) or e-mail at jkaiser@covdio.org if the household chooses to decline the free
meal benefits.

In accordance with Federal civil rights laws and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability age or reprisal or retal-
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ity conducted or funded by USDA.

If you believe you have been discriminated against, you should contact the Agency (State or local) where you applied for benefits. Individuals with disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, pro-
gram information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-
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9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1)
mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-
7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Preparing schools for opening

Schools are taking measures to ensure a safe opening after August 17.

Pamela McQueen, principal of Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills, said she and her staff have carefully measured distances between desks, and students will be wearing masks all day. Additional classes will be held in the cafeteria, the theatre, and an outdoor classroom to help keep distancing and small class sizes.

Tony Barkley, principal, Prince of Peace Montessori, Covington, has had very thorough cleaning done to ensure that students are safe when they return.

Katie Boruske at St. Therese School, Southgate, said she’s turning the computer lab into the sixth grade classroom to provide more spacing options, and a team of moms is installing air conditioning to better ventilate the second floor.


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Notre Dame Urban Education Center provides educational response to COVID-19

**Messenger Staff Report**

Educational assistance, especially during this time of COVID-19, has become an alarming need for children in the urban setting. Knowing that children have been without traditional education since mid-March, Notre Dame Urban Education Center hopes to be an avenue of recovery for children to reclaim their education.

"Many children have limited to no access to the Internet or sufficient technology for online instruction. Some children do not have anyone at home to help them with their assigned learning packets from their schools," said Notre Dame Sister Mary Therese Schappert, director. "NDUEC will continue to offer in-person programs to help urban students and their families make the most of this school year — whether they are attending school online or in the classroom. Sister Mary Therese said that the COVID-19 has changed the way the center functions, but the success of the summer program shows that it’s still helping children grow.

"Our ‘normal’ must be redefined and embraced to move forward," she said. "This pause in action provided time to be creative, to think differently and to pinpoint priorities. Our July Summer Academics program proved the resilience of children as they smiled behind facial masks and engaged themselves in their assignments with renewed energy. At NDUEC, we are defining our ‘new normal.’"

Programs are offered from Sept. 8-May 13, Monday-Thursday.

**Early Learning:** NDUEC offers a Kindergarten readiness program for children who turn 4 years old by August 1. NDUEC’s goal is to prepare children for Kindergarten. Program times are 8-11:30 a.m.

**Homework PLUS:** Students will be assisted with classroom work via online and/or paper packets as initiated by the students’ respective schools. The Center will offer additional on level skill work as needed. Two session times are offered, Session I: Noon-2 p.m. or Session II: 3-5 p.m.

NDUEC will follow Kentucky’s Healthy at School and the CDC guidelines for everyone’s safety:

- Screening includes taking the child’s temperature and asking simple questions regarding COVID-19 symptoms
- Wearing masks and/or face shields
- Social distancing
- Building and materials will be sanitized after each session

For information regarding educational programs, e-mail Sister Maria Therese at smtherese@nduec.org.

For information regarding volunteering at the Center, e-mail Ann Haegele at ahaegele@nduec.org.
What’s killing you?
(Continued from page 5)
Mr. Klein states that when they finish reading, there is no reason to ask them how they feel because he could hear the despondency in their voices and see it in their faces. The first list uplifted them. The second did not.

He goes on to say that words are simply the same 26 letters of the alphabet rearranged in different ways. His main point? Words and the sentences they form are “powerful tools” which can either bring us down or lift us up. He then refers us to quotations in his book that will lift us up, and help us handle fear. He might add, he insists that all words like “quit, give up, it’s unfair, I was robbed, I can’t do it here or with Alan Klein. Finally, according to “the experts,” here are the top 10 worst fears:

1. Fear of getting old.
2. Fear of being poisoned.
3. Fear of being a coward.
4. Fear of bacteria and microorganisms.
5. Fear of going crazy.
6. Fear of intimacy.
7. Fear of spiders, rats, cockroaches, snakes, airplanes, monsters, demons, mirrors, high heels...
8. Social phobia (including the fear of public speaking) and agoraphobia (fear of open spaces).
10. Fear of loneliness.

Pick one or all that are trying to “kill” you. Then, simply say, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1:7)

Ray Smith is a commissioned Lay Pastoral Minister for the Diocese of Covington.

Catholic schools open
(Continued from page 1)

plished in a faith community. Our concern for the welfare of our students includes their educational, emotional, social and spiritual development.

“As we move forward, we thank our parents for their support,” Bishop Reys and Mr. Clines said in their letter to Catholic School leaders. “The health of our schools will depend in large part on the health of each individual student. We are depending on our parents to monitor their child’s health every day and to keep their child home when they are sick.”

Parents are expected to adhere to the “COVID-19 Return to School Requirements” (The document is available on the diocesan website, www.dncov.org) — frequently washing hands, wearing a mask, maintaining proper social distancing and eliminating unnecessary travel — so that together we can mitigate the spread of the coronavirus in our communities and sustain in-person instruction in our schools.

“We express our deepest gratitude to our school leaders for their selfless commitment to Catholic education,” they said.

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**SACRED HEART PRAYER.** Dear Heart of Jesus — In the past I have asked for favors. This time I ask you for this very special one (mention favor). Take it, dear Jesus, and place it within your own heart where your Father sees it, then in your merciful eyes it will become your favor, not mine. Amen. B.M.

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Call Kim at the Messenger for information on placing your ad in the Classified Advertisements. (859) 392-1500
AMMAN, Jordan — Hospitals in the Lebanese capital are overwhelmed with those suffering injuries from a massive explosion in Beirut's port, causing widespread damage to the city and rocking the tiny Mediterranean nation already devastated by the coronavirus and its worst financial crisis since the 1975-1990 civil war.

“People won't be able to rebuild their homes, businesses, livelihoods. There are reports of hospitals turning away patients because they don't have the capacity,” said Aya Majzoub, Lebanon researcher with Human Rights Watch.

“Even before this blast, there have been shortages of medical equipment, protective gear. The health care capacity was already overstretched. I don’t know how hospitals are going to be able to handle these additional injuries,” she added. Initial reports say the explosion was caused by highly explosive materials seized from a ship stored at the port.

Lebanon's dire economic crisis, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, is pushing people into a struggle for survival, Catholic and other humanitarian agencies warn, as growing numbers of families can no longer afford the basic food, electricity, hygiene, water and cooking fuel needed to live. On top of that, power cuts last up to 20 hours a day.

With Lebanon’s currency collapse by 80 percent of its value since last October, spiraling inflation and unemployment running about 55 percent, the Catholic Near East Welfare Association/Pontifical Mission's Michel Constantin explained that Lebanon does not have a social safety net, but the Catholic Church is reaching out to help the destitute.

“People have lost their jobs, are stuck at home with no employment and are getting hungry. We are distributing food, life-saving items such as medicines, food and milk for children for families who have lost jobs. Not to fight poverty, but to save lives,” Constantin told Catholic News Service by phone from Beirut.

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This crisis hits everybody — Lebanese families, Palestinian and Syrian refugees alike. We will start seeing children dying from hunger before the end of the year,” warned Jad Sakr, acting country director of Save the Children in Lebanon.

A recent report by the U.N. World Food Program said 50 percent of Lebanese citizens — along with 63 percent of Palestinians and 75 percent of Syrians in the country — had expressed doubts they would find enough food over the previous month.

Update: Cabinet resigns after Beirut explosions

After the explosions, grief-stricken and furious Lebanese took to the streets, battling rubber bullets and tear gas to demand their government’s dismissal over inaction and incompetence. A security official was killed as protesters stormed various government ministries.

In his Aug. 9 sermon, Lebanon’s powerful Catholic cleric, Cardinal Bechara Rai, Maronite patriarch, lent his voice to the popular rising tide against political leaders, many of whom were warlords from Lebanon’s 1975-1990 civil war. He called for the Cabinet to resign, saying it cannot “change the way it governs” the country, once known as the “Switzerland of the Middle East,” now ravaged by corruption, financial mismanagement, soaring poverty and hyperinflation.

On Aug. 10, Lebanon’s Cabinet resigned, the health minister said, a decision that was made under pressure as several ministers quit or expressed their intention to step down.

Vast areas of the capital have been destroyed, leaving 300,000 people homeless, including 80,000 children, according to UNICEF. It's estimated that $15 billion will be needed in the short term to fix damages and aid the homeless in a city now in tatters and turmoil. Pope Francis donated 250,000 euro ($295,000) as initial aid to assist the church in Lebanon’s difficulty and suffering.
VATICAN CITY — Everyone, including the pope, experiences trials that can shake his or her faith; the key to survival is to call out to the Lord for help, Pope Francis said.

“When we have strong feelings of doubt and fear and we seem to be sinking, and in life’s difficult moments when everything becomes dark, we must not be ashamed to cry out like Peter, ‘Lord, save me,’” the pope said Aug. 5, commenting on the day’s Gospel story in his Angelus address.

In the passage, Matthew 14:22-33, Jesus walks on the water of the stormy lake, but the disciples think they are seeing a ghost. Jesus reassures them that it is he, but Peter wants proof. Jesus calls him to walk on the water as well, but Peter gets frightened and starts sinking.

Peter cries out, “Lord, save me,” and Jesus takes him by the hand.

“This Gospel narrative is an invitation to abandon ourselves trustingly to God in every moment of our life, especially in times of trial and turmoil,” Pope Francis said.

Like Peter, he said, believers must learn “to knock on God’s heart, on Jesus’ heart.”

“Lord, save me” is “a beautiful prayer. We can repeat it many times,” the pope said.

And believers also should reflect on how Jesus responded: immediately reaching out and taking Peter’s hand, showing that God “never abandons us.”

“Having faith means keeping your heart turned to God, to his love, to his fatherly tenderness amid the storm,” the pope told his visitors.

“In dark moments, in sad moments, he is well aware that our faith is weak; all of us are people of little faith — all of us, myself included,” the pope said. “Our faith is weak; our journey can be troubled, hindered by adverse forces,” but the Lord is “present beside us lifting us back up after our falls, helping us grow in faith.”

Pope Francis also said the disciples’ boat on the stormy sea is a symbol of the church, “which in every age encounters headwinds, very harsh trials at times: we recall certain long and ferocious persecutions of the last century, and even today in certain places.”

“In situations like that,” he said, the Church “may be tempted to think that God has abandoned her. But, in reality, it is precisely in those moments that the witness of faith, the witness of love, the witness of hope shines the most.”
National/World

Knock shrine to close Aug. 15 to discourage crowds during COVID

The Marian shrine at Knock announced Aug. 10 that in addition to postponing the popular Knock Novena and pilgrimage because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the shrine and its church would be closed for the Aug. 15 feast of the Assumption of Mary to ensure pilgrims do not arrive anyway. The shrine will close at 8 p.m. Aug. 14 and not reopen until 7 a.m. Aug. 16. The feast of the Assumption traditionally is the counterpart of the Knock Novena and normally would draw 20,000 pilgrims to the shrine, the statement said. Over the course of the novena Aug. 14-22 as many as 150,000 people normally would go to the shrine for prayer and lectures.

Church leaders seek aid for Catholic students in coronavirus relief bill

WASHINGTON — Amidst appropriation bills approved by the House July 31 to fund a dozen federal departments and agencies, Catholic leaders are concerned with language prioritizing health care providers who do not want to participate in abortion, sterilization or assisted suicide on religious or moral grounds.


H.R. 7867 blocks implementation and enforcement of a rule implementing the Religious Freedom and Civil Rights Restoration Act of 2018, which allows health care providers to refuse to perform any health care services that violate their conscience. The original language in the act was removed by the Senate, which passed a competing version of the bill. The Senate’s version also removed the protection for religious conscience of health care providers. In both versions of the bill, the rules and regulations set forth in the Religious Freedom and Civil Rights Restoration Act were left in place.

It was to have taken effect July 22, 2019, but enforcement was postponed because of court challenges.

The decision is currently being appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit.

Eleven Philippine dioceses suspend Masses in effort to control COVID-19

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine government issued new orders restricting movement in an effort to control a spike in COVID-19, resulting in 16 dioceses suspending public Masses.

In addition, the Diocese of Balanga in Bataan province voluntarily suspended the public celebration of Masses, and Bishop Ruperto Santos dispensed Catholics from their Sunday obligations in order to help fight the pandemic.

The move came as medical workers asked for tighter restrictions because of the spike, reported CBCP News, official news agency of the Philippine bishops. CBCP News reported that from Aug. 4 to 18, the dioceses in Metro Manila and four provinces will not have public Masses. The decision was announced after President Rodrigo Duterte’s meeting with key Cabinet officials Aug. 2 as COVID-19 infections surged past 100,000.

CBCP News reported that before the government order, the Manila Archdiocese and the dioceses of Cubao and Paranaque had already announced the temporary suspension of public liturgical services for two weeks.

 Pope names six women to previously all-male Council for Economy

VATICAN CITY — Renewing the membership of the Vatican Council for the Economy, Pope Francis named six women to replace them Aug. 6 have a similarly high profile and background. The six are: Charlotte Knestreb-Kirchhefer, a German professor of law; Marija Kolak, president of the Croatian Association for the Protection of Parents; Maria Concepcion Osacar Garaicoechea, a Spaniard and founder of the Aroha Group and president of the Board of Aroha Capital and Aroha Investment; Eva Castillo Samu, former president of Merrill Lynch Spain and Portugal; Ruth Maria Kolly, a former banker, executive, former member of Parliament and former secretary of education in Great Britain, and Leslie Jane Ferrar, former treasure to Prince Charles.

Bishops: ‘The killings must stop’

LAGOS, Nigeria — Nigerian bishops appealed to the government to stop the killings in southern Kaduna state. An Aug. 6 statement signed by Archbishop Augustine Akinwunmi, conference president, said the bishops “continue to hear of increasing insecurity and unabated acts of terrorism in northern Nigeria. We are all tired of this situation.” The bishops warned that no politician should politicize the killing of Nigeria, and they asked Nigerians to also condemn the acts.

“There should be one response from everyone, and that is: The killings must stop. Our hearts are bleeding, and we are more troubled when we hear of the massacre presently going on in Southern Kaduna.” Media reported at least 41 people were killed July 23-24 and more than 170 people have been killed this year in southern Kaduna.

After election in Belarus, Catholic leaders urge restraint, dialogue

WARSAW Poland — Catholic leaders urged dialogue and restraint in Belarus, amid violent street clashes following a contested Aug. 9 presidential election. "The two sides clearly have to talk if this dangerous situation isn’t to deteriorate," said Father Yurii Sanko, spokesman for the Belarusian bishops’ conference. "Although it isn’t for us to specify what’s needed to defuse the tension, we’ll keep on appealing for every spoken word to be considered carefully to avoid making matters worse.” The Minsk-based priest spoke to Catholic News Service Aug. 10, after two days of violence between protesters and security forces left thousands injured and arrested.

CDC head sees need for schools to reopen but with strict health protocols

WASHINGTON — Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, thinks it is a good idea for schools to reopen for in-person classes with restrictions in place to protect teachers, staff and students against the coronavirus, including "wearing a mask, washing your hands, maintaining social distancing." Reopening "has to be done safely, and it has to be done with the confidence of the teachers," Redfield said. "It has to be done with the confidence of parents. And so I think each of the school districts will have to begin with this.

"It’s not the risk of kids opening versus public health. It’s public health versus public health," he said during a recent webinar with the Buck Institute for Aging, an independent biomedical research institute based in Novato, California. "I weigh that equation as an individual who has 11 grandchildren, that the greater risk to the nation is actually to keep those schools closed,” said Redfield, who is a Catholic. However, “local school districts are going to have to make these decisions,” he added.

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