Bishop Roger Foys ended the Triduum of Prayer to end the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects, especially the fear and division among God’s people with Mass Aug. 22, the feast of the Coronation of Mary. After three days of prayer, fasting and sacrifice Bishop Foys celebrated Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, and then traveled around the city of Covington to bless it with a relic of St. Rocco, protector against pandemics.

In his homily, Bishop Foys emphasized the importance of trusting in Mary’s intercession “in this time of darkness.”

“God brought light into a darkened world and the vessel that brought that light into the world was none other than the Blessed Virgin Mary,” he said. “We place our trust in her because she is not only our queen, but she is our mother, entrusted to us by Jesus as he hung on the Cross.”

This is a time for learning from Mary’s example, Bishop Foys said, such as at the annunciation and the crucifixion. “She had total trust in God even though she didn’t understand anything. And yet she accepted. Her heart was broken as she held his broken body … and yet not a word of complaint. She didn’t understand and yet she believed. That’s what faith is.

“We end this Triduum of Prayer looking to the Blessed Mother as our example of how to live life not understanding, but accepting, believing, confident that the Lord will hear our prayer.”

Following Mass, Bishop Foys traveled with the relic of St. Rocco to the parishes in Covington. He began with St. Elizabeth Medical Center on 12th Street, and continued to St. John the Evangelist Parish, St. Ann Masson, Mother of God Parish, Our Savior Parish, St. Benedict Parish, Holy Cross Parish, St. Anthony Parish and St. Augustine Parish. Outside each parish, he prayed to St. Rocco and blessed the people gathered and the church with the relic.
Cross the Bridge for Life sponsors fund grant program

Allegra Thatcher
Assistant Editor

When the 15th annual Cross the Bridge for Life was cancelled this June, organizers already had a contingency plan, but they didn’t know what a significant impact it would make. To celebrate 15 years, the Steering Committee planned a grant program to support some members of the Life Coalition — pregnancy centers and organizations from the Greater Cincinnati Area that support the pro-life movement.

Karen Riegler, chair of the Steering Committee, said they had originally planned to give about $5,000 to the treasury to support the event or one of two. However, after that, everything changed. The grant program was created.

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With schools opening for in-person instruction last week, Bishop Roger Foys called all high school and elementary school principals to a meeting, Aug. 21, to share information and to hear from each principal their experiences as they begin to navigate the school year during the pandemic. The four bishops of Kentucky will meet Sept. 6 to evaluate each diocese’s experiences and make any necessary changes.

To streamline the avenue of communication from the schools to Bishop Foys and the Department of Catholic Schools, Bishop Foys has appointed Laura Keener the COVID Coordinator. With this streamlined process, principals call Mrs. Keener whenever an exposure to or case of COVID-19 is confirmed or assumed. Mrs. Keener documents the details surrounding the case and discusses the case with Kendra McGuire, associate superintendent of Catholic Schools.

Mrs. McGuire has been working closely with the Northern Kentucky Health Department and has provided principals with information on what details the NKHD will need to make a recommendation on each case. Mrs. McGuire has also scheduled contact tracing training for principals and the diocesan COVID-19 task force.

With the information provided from the principals, including the recommendation from the NKHD, together Mrs. Keener and Mrs. McGuire make recommendations to Bishop Foys on actions needed to best maintain the safety of the school. Mrs. Keener then relates the recommendations to the principal along with any communications that are to be sent to the school community.

Bishop Foys has also appointed a Compliance Office who is monitoring implementation of the COVID-19 Return to School Requirements.

Education during a COVID school year — week one

Messenger staff report

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For related story, see page 10.

Holy Hour

The monthly Holy Hour for Victims of Sexual Abuse and the Sanctification of Priests was held at 3 p.m. Aug. 20 at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington on the first day of the Triduum of Prayer to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Priests had the opportunity to go to confession and to venerate a relic of St. Rocco, protector against pandemics. The next holy hour will be Sept. 17 at 3 p.m.

Bishop Roger Foys met with all the diocesan school principals at St. Henry District High School’s Drees Homes Auditorium, Aug. 21 to discuss and make necessary changes after the first week of in-person instruction. Covington Latin School headmaster John Kennedy, who missed the commissioning due to quarantining upon arrival in Kentucky, was commissioned as well.

For related story, see page 10.

Bishop’s Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 28</td>
<td>Thomas More University Executive Committee conference call meeting, 8 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 29</td>
<td>COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 30</td>
<td>Mass and installation of pastor, Father Benton Clift, St. William Parish, Williamsport, 4:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1</td>
<td>Individual meeting, 8 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 2</td>
<td>COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 3</td>
<td>Episcopal Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 4</td>
<td>COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 5</td>
<td>Final profession of vows, Franciscan Daughters of Mary, Cathedral Basilica, Covington, 10 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 6</td>
<td>Installation of pastor, Father Joseph C. Shelton, St. Augustine Parish, Augusta and St. James Parish, Brooksville, at St. Augustine Church, 10 a.m.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
‘Social sins which cry to heaven’... St. John Paul II

Since the 1970s, Catholic social doctrine has explicitly introduced the concepts of “social sin” and “structures of sin” into its lexicon of social moral analysis. While the concepts may be unfamiliar to many, the reality described is as ancient as biblical religion. Social justice encompasses the moral principles and norms to identify “structures of sin” or “social sin” embedded in policies, institutions, and social structures.

In particular, the prophetic tradition in the Bible forcefully condemned unjust economic and political structures that had violated fidelity to the ethical demands of the covenant.

In its teaching on the nature of the human person in society: “Gaudium et Spes” (The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, 1965) (GS, n. 25) affirms the presence of undeniable structural evil, i.e., that men and women are “often diverted from doing good and spurred toward evil by social circumstances.”

Just as goodness tends to spread, the tolerance of evil, which is injustice, tends to expand its baneful influence and quietly to undermine any political and social system, no matter how solid it may appear. If every action has its consequences, an evil embedded in the structures of a society has a constant potential for disintegration and death. It is evil crystallized in unjust social structures, which cannot be the basis of hope for a better future. — Pope Francis, “Evangelii Gaudium” (2013): n. 59

In this commemoration of Pope St. Paul VI’s encyclical “Pacem in Terris” (The Development of Peoples, 1963), St. John Paul II attributed such structures of sin to “the thirst for power” and the “all-consuming desire for profit” at “in reality both of these sinful dispositions and behaviors are ‘indissolubly united, with one or the other predominating’ and are opposed to God’s will. (SRS, n. 37) Both individuals as well as political and economic blocs are subject to these morally disabling powers. As a result, the impact of such ‘structures of sin’ on economic and political decisions establishes new forms of idolatry — idols of ‘money,’ ideology, class, technology.”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church sums up the ecumenical tradition on the matter of “sin that cry to heaven...” the blood of Abel (cf. Gen 4:10), the sin of the Sodomites (cf. Gen 18:20), 13:1), the cry of the people oppressed in Egypt (Ex 3:1-5, 10), the cry of the foreigner, the widow, and the orphan (cf. Ex 20:22-23) injustice to the wage earner (cf. Deut 24:14,15; Jas 5:1), “(GCC, n. 1087)
The Catechism then emphasizes that sin renders others accomplices in violence and injustice and undergirds social structures that contravene the moral order of God. Nonetheless, “social sin” is categorized as sin only in an analogous sense since “structures of sin” emanate from personal sin. (GCC, n. 1089)

In exploiting contemporary Church teaching on “social sin,” “The National Directory for Catechesis” (2005) offers a concise description of “social sin.” “The Church’s emphasis on the social dimension of morality has led to the development of the concept of social sin.” The consequence from sin “over time in society that causes society to create structures of sin is, by analogy called ‘social sin.’”

Earlier, in “Reconciliatio et Paenitentia” (“Reconciliation and Penance,” 1984) St. John Paul II had likewise identified the analogous meaning of “social sins.” Social sin stems from “the accumulation and concentration of many personal sins...” causing, supporting, and exploiting evil. Failures to avoid or eliminate social evils on account of “business, fear or the conspiracy of silence, through secret complicity or indifference; of those who take refuge in the supposed impossibility of changing the world” (RP, n. 16).

But, since a social structure in itself is not the subject of a moral act, the late Holy Father wrote that “(a) the heart of every situation of sin are always to be found sinful people.”

The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church (2003) interprets the mystery of sin as a reality that is both personal and social. (CDDC, ns. 115-118) The moral object of “social sins” constitutes “a direct assault on one’s neighbor” and violates “the command to love one’s neighbors” — causing, supporting, or benefiting evil, failures to avoid or eliminate social evils on account of “business, fear or the conspiracy of silence, through secret complicity or indifference; of those who take refuge in the supposed impossibility of changing the world.”

In 1976 the National Conference of Catholic Bishops’ published “To Live in Christ Jesus,” a pastoral reflection on the moral life. While the bishops affirmed the personal duties of love of neighbor, their statement noted that deeds of Christian love have “consequences for the structures of society.”

From that standpoint, the challenge of pursuing justice in the public order does not exempt Christians from the personal expression of love of neighbor. Nonetheless, Christian love of neighbor “impels us to work for laws, policies, and social structures which foster human goods in the lives of all persons.” (TCLF, n. 62)

For instance, with regard to the destructive evils of racism and discrimination, “To Live in Christ Jesus” stated, “but the absence of personal fault for an evil does not absolve all responsibility. We must seek to resist and undo injustices we have not caused, lest we become bystanders who tacitly endorse evil and so share guilt for it.” (TCLF, n. 71)

In this regard, “Gaudium et Spes” reflects contemporary Church social doctrine in its teaching on conscience: “Personal evil, evil related to the private and personal life of a single person, is rightly an urgent concern that no one, ignoring the trend of events or drugged by laziness, content himself with a merely individualistic morality.” The Pastoral Constitution stipulates that “the obligations of justice and love are fulfilled, only if each person contributes to the common good, according to his own abilities and the needs of others, also promotes and assists the public and private institutions dedicated to the betterment of human life.”

The prophetic biblical tradition indicts the “guilty bystander” — Church social doctrine stands squarely in that tradition.

Msgr. Ronald Ketteler

Bishop Roger P.姨、Joyce Marie, and Richard J. Rehberg

Msgr. Ronald Ketteler

Ronald Ketteler is director of ecumenism, episcopal liaison to the Messenger and professor of theology at Thomas More University.
We need each other

I am sure you are familiar with the story of Jesus healing a paralyzed man. You’ve probably most often heard it in the context of Jesus’ miracles that included a man walking, but even more miraculous, Jesus’ ability to forgive sins. However, last week I was reminded of another part of that story that emphasizes the importance of friendship in our journey to know Christ.

Every Thursday evening for the last several months, I am part of a small Zoom group of friends who read that day’s Gospel and discuss what it means for us. What stands out in the reading? How do we interpret the message? What does God want us to take from these lessons and apply in our own lives? We’ve been able to share what we each see in the passage, to ask questions for one another to reflect upon, to wait in quiet contemplation, provide encouragement to each other: These talks have been so helpful to me as I have found myself doubting and worrying during this stressful time. The leader of our group calls us the GPF’s — Grace Filled Friends. I imagine the Apostles looking back on their experiences and to discuss the needs within their community. Our mission is to be a network of friends, growing in holiness through personal relationships with and for God, especially in a time of crisis. I see the face of God, the love of God, the reality of God’s love. They could find themselves to this world and this world only without a thought to the world to come, the world that lasts forever, the world that really matters. They formed a small group of people, and ever the years we have an earth with a thought to the life to come. Life eternal.

Of course, the story has a happy ending. Jeremiah comes through, takes up the mantle of a prophet, fills his call. The world of the Lord has been brought to Jeremiah and reproach all the day I say to myself, I will not mention him, I will speak his name no more: But it then becomes like fire burning in my bones. God is in my bones, I gave my life holding it in, I cannot endure it... the Lord is with me like a mighty champion, my persecutors will stumble to their fall. (Jer 20:9, 11) And Peter, although he will go to deny knowing Jesus, weeps bitterly and repents and Jesus entrusts to him the key of the Kingdom. When we feel downtrodden, beaten down by the vagaries of life, near the end of our rope, crushed under anxiety and worry, we need to look to Jeremiah, to Peter and to the Apostles. They looked on life with eyes of faith and saw beyond the constraints of this world, of this life. They took up their cross, gave themselves to the Lord, and answered his call. May we, in all of our difficulties turn to the Lord, embrace our cross, and follow him. In doing so we will find the comfort and security that resides those who put all their trust only in the world. It is the good Lord who has begun every good work in us and those who will triumph over that world who will bring it to fulfillment. (cf Phil 1:6)

The annual diocesan Wedding Anniversary Vespers, scheduled for Sept. 27, has been cancelled due to COVID-19. The event honors couples celebrating significant anniversaries this year, such as one year, 25 years, 50 years or 50 plus. These couples will still receive a congratulatory certificate signed by Bishop Roger Foys. Certificates will be sent to parish office in September and the names of the couples will be published in the Messenger in late September.

In lieu of celebrating in person, the Messenger reached out to three anniversary couples to hear how their love has persevered over the years and flourished through lives of faith. They will be published in installments over the next three weeks.

The Moores’ love story starts with a classic tale of rejection, heartbreak and new hope. “Tom was dating my best friend when we were 18, and she eventually wanted to date someone else,” said Guyneth Moore. When that relationship didn’t work out, Mrs. Moore and Mr. Moore began talking. “We got together, liked each other and went from there,” she said. Many years later, they can say they made the right choice.

Guyneth and Tom Moore, who attend St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Flemingsburg, have been married 50 years this September. After dating for two years, the couple tied the knot on Sept. 6, 1970 in an inter-faith ceremony at a tiny Methodist Church in Ohio, across the river from Maysville. At the time, she was Methodist and he was Catholic.

Early in their marriage, every weekend would see Mr. Moore going to Mass first and then accompanying Mrs. Moore and their two children to the Methodist church. She converted 15 years later, when the children were in second and eighth grade.

“Our faith has influenced our life in every way,” she said. “It’s always been at the forefront. We always felt like we needed to go to church together. When the timing was right my son, daughter and myself went through RCIA and made our first sacraments together.”

Their faith is what ties the Moores together, and has for 50 years. It comforts them that their children, now 42 and 48, are active in their parish communities, even as far away as New York and Iowa.

“One of the things I always felt was my main goal as a mother was to take care of my children’s salvation,” said Mrs. Moore. “I just always felt like that was part of what mothers and fathers should do, to make sure that your kids are on the right path and know that there’s always the opportunity for forgiveness if things aren’t what they should be. We always put God and family first, and we did—mass Mass on Sunday. We taught our kids the faith. It’s a blessing to be able to know that they’re all in the Church.”

Mr. Moore and Mrs. Moore have been an example to their children throughout their marriage. Mrs. Moore said the children, after watching their parents, aspired to have families and pass that faith on.

“Praise God we had good children. I really feel blessed because it doesn’t always turn out that way. I don’t know if it’s anything that we did special that other people don’t, it’s just that circumstances change people’s lives sometimes and we got lucky.”

When asked the secret to their marriage success, the Moores agreed that it’s about taking the sacrament seriously and holding it in high esteem. “You’ve got to go into it and consider it a sacrament that is permanent,” said Mrs. Moore. “You can’t go into it saying, ‘If this doesn’t work out, we can get a divorce.’ That’s not how you can look at it.”

They also advised being on the same page as far as family goals and faith teachings, and admitting their own faults. “You can’t always be right. You have to give a little and take a little.”

Looking back over 50 years, the Moores know that it’s the little everyday things that have made their life together beautiful. “Pray together, go to church together, eat dinner together. All those things count.”

Anniversary couples: 50 years of faith in the everyday

Tom and Guyneth Moore celebrate 50 years together.
Be Witnesses

“Wake up the world! Be witnesses of a different way of doing things, of acting, of living!”
— Pope Francis

Religious Communities of Women

Benedictine Sisters of Covington
www.stwalburg.org
St. Joseph the Worker Sisters
www.ssjw.org
Congregation of Divine Providence of Kentucky
www.cdpkentucky.org
Notre Dame Sisters of Covington
www.sndky.org
Passionist Nuns
www.erlangerpassionists.com
Congregation of Divine Providence
www.cdpkentucky.org
St. Joseph the Worker Sisters
www.stwalburg.org
Benedictine Sisters of Covington
www.ssjw.org

Reason for Jubilation

Karen Kuhlman
Messenger Correspondent

Women religious have made countless contributions to the lives of the people of the Diocese of Covington, and those contributions are as varied as the personal sacrifices required to do so. They left the comforts of home and family behind to seek a closer relationship with God through prayer, living in community and ministering to God’s people by placing the needs of others above their own.

As Sister Mary Rabe looks back to her early days as a Benedictine, she said, “I had no clue what it was about. But, it has been a wonderful journey and has exceeded all of my expectations.” She found that professing stability, obedience and fidelity to monastic life also extends to the community in entirety. Faithfulness to God and one another assures that the women are in this together. Living a spiritual life with God at the center, they support one another and are thereby able to see the face of God in each other.

Benedictine has allowed her to participate in many diverse ministries in many countries. As a member of a Benedictine women’s monastery, she cherishes the Scriptures and the Rule of St. Benedict which have led her on a path toward fulfillment. The daily practice of Lectio Divina assists her in installing ownership of the actions and attitudes of Jesus as she strives to incorporate them into her interactions with others. Living with women committed to the same purpose and having the opportunity to serve God’s people in ministry add richness and fullness to her daily life.

Sister Rita Brink sees her life as a Benedictine as a living kaleidoscope with a balance of bright colors and dark accents that have created a constant delight of surprising formations and transformations. As a member of a Benedictine religious community has been very rewarding and enriching because of the flexibility of the Rule of St. Benedict and also of our religious community.

Public Association of the Faithful

Franciscan Daughters of Mary
www.fdofmary.org

Jubilees are joyous celebrations of the anniversaries of when a sister entered or professed vows in her religious community. Typically celebrated with a Mass and festive meal, they are opportunities to gather together in honor of those sisters who have achieved milestones in community life.

Religious men and women look forward to these celebrations with the same anticipation as the laity look forward to weddings, anniversaries and baptisms. And just as the pandemic has forced the postponement of many of those celebrations for the laity, some of the religious have had to postpone jubilee events until better days come again.

Such is the case for three of the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery. Instead of celebrating 60 years of religious life this summer, they are looking forward to 2021 when they can be together with the entire congregation to celebrate their “60 plus 1” jubilees.

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Religious men and women look forward to these celebrations with the same anticipation as the laity look forward to weddings, anniversaries and baptisms. And just as the pandemic has forced the postponement of many of those celebrations for the laity, some of the religious have had to postpone jubilee events until better days come again.

Sister Andrea Vasquez currently resides in Pueblo, Colorado where she is the one person in a one-person office at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church. Sister Andrea said she is kept very busy by her position as an administrative assistant — especially now as plans for First Communions and Confirmations are underway.

Her vocation has provided her with opportunities to meet and work with many wonderful priests, religious and laity. Life as a Benedictine has allowed her to participate in many diverse ministries in many countries.

Jubilees are joyous celebrations of the anniversaries of when a sister entered or professed vows in her religious community. Typically celebrated with a Mass and festive meal they are opportunities to gather together in honor of those sisters who have achieved milestones in community life.

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Such is the case for three of the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery. Instead of celebrating 60 years of religious life this summer, they are looking forward to 2021 when they can be together with the entire congregation to celebrate their “60 plus 1” jubilees.
August 28 is the feast day of St. Moses the Strong. Who is he and what did he teach us about overcoming temptation and responding without violence?

St. Moses the Strong was born around 332 A.D. in Ethiopia. He is also called Moses the Ethiopian, Moses the Black or Abba Moses. He’s considered a Desert Father for his witness to the monastic, hermitical life in the deserts of Egypt.

As a child, Moses was sold into slavery in Egypt and grew up to be a passionate and discontented soul. He was dishonest and violent, and his huge form gave him the advantage over others when he turned to crime. As a young man, he was a slave of a government official in Egypt who dismissed him for theft and suspected murder. He then roamed the Nile Valley, spreading terror and violence at the head of a group of about 70 bandits. They marauded the countryside and became a public terror.

It’s uncertain how Moses encountered a colony of monks in the desert of Scete, near Alexandria, but some stories say he was searching for God and running from local authorities. He intended just to hide among the monks, but was touched by the peace of the brothers. He couldn’t understand their seeming passivity when he himself was so restless and violent.

Moses entered the monastic community of the desert, seeking this peace for himself and publicly confessing his sins to the men. His passionate nature made it difficult to adapt to the monastic way of life — he still struggled with temptation to act violently. He was a slowly reformed soul, moving from being the most violent to the most serene of the monks by the end of his life. Yet it took years of fasting, prayer and vigilance for Moses to root out his vices. He frequently prayed all night vigils standing up and fasted for days or weeks at a time. It was clear his heart was adapting severe habits to develop discipline of body and soul. He chose the latter.

Because of this act, as well as his peaceful legacy, Moses is considered by many to be an apostle of nonviolence. When given the opportunity to retaliate or to bear witness to Christ by turning the other cheek, he chose the latter.

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Happy Birthday to Father Samuel Owusu, parochial vicar, St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, Sept. 15; Father Mark Keene, pastor, St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright, Sept. 24; and Father Douglas Lauer, pastor, St. Therese Parish, Southgate, Sept. 25.

The pope’s universal prayer intention for the month of September is respect for the planet’s resources. We pray that the planet’s resources will not be plundered, but shared in a just and respectful manner.

St. Henry Families for Life invites you to join them on Saturday, Sept. 12, the National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children, at the 8 a.m. Mass to pray for aborted children. The Mass will be followed by praying the rosary for all those affected by abortion, especially the baby, parents and families of the aborted child. Social distancing and masks required.

All college-aged students in school or the work force are invited to join The Catholic Newman Center at Northern Kentucky University for virtual Bible Study, Tuesdays, at 7 p.m.; Book Study at 8 p.m.; and in-person Mass, Thursdays, at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Church, Cold Spring. E-mail Donna Heim, campus minister, at heimd2@nku.edu to receive weekly Newman information.

Students at St. Catherine of Siena School, Ft. Thomas, took advantage of the lovely weather to have class outside during their first week back.

Second grade students at Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills, have their beach towels and lunches ready to enjoy outside.

Mary, Queen of Heaven School, Erlanger, has students practice lining up with distance between them to stay safe and healthy.

On Friday, Aug. 21, St. Pius X School, Edgewood, celebrated the feast of Pope St. Pius X. Parents were invited to attend Mass at 8 a.m. and pray the rosary. Following Mass, Father Baiju Kidaagen, V.C. brought the Lord around the school hallways in a Eucharistic Adoration procession.

A student enjoys a snack break outside during the first week of school at St. Joseph School, Crescent Springs.

First grade students at St. Edward School, Cynthiana, use science tools to explore outside during the first week of school.
**Catholic schools and families persevere for in-person instruction**

**Messenger Staff Report**

As the first week ended and second week began of in-person instruction in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Covington three students have tested positive for COVID-19 necessitating self-quarantines at three separate schools. Currently these are isolated cases and the students are believed to have contracted the virus outside of the school community. In two of these cases the exposure is believed to have come from small family gatherings. In the third case the student is assumed positive because the student began experiencing symptoms after a family member had tested positive,” said Laura Keener, diocesan communications director and COVID coordinator.

The schools involved and the numbers of students self-quarantined are: St. Paul School, Florence, 24 students; St. Mary School, Alexandria, 17 students and Holy Cross District High School (HCDHS), 28 students.

The case at HCDHS was received late in the evening Sunday night, prompting the diocese and school officials to cancel in-person classes Monday, Aug. 24, to allow time to sanitize the school, review the student’s schedule and seat charts and begin contact tracing.

“We wanted to make sure we followed the process and took all necessary steps to keep our students and faculty safe,” said Mike Holtz, principal, HCDHS. “It was important for us take our time and do it the right way.”

By the close of the school day Monday, the parents of all 28 students determined to be close contacts in the case had been notified. Mr. Holtz transitioned the school to non-traditional instruction on Tuesday with in-person classes set to resume Wednesday, August 26.

“As the year progresses we expect these situations will occur in our school community. In the circumstances of this case, we have to transition to at-home instruction or students will need to quarantine — either because they are experiencing symptoms, have come in close contact with someone who has tested positive or have themselves tested positive for COVID-19. Our schools are prepared for this. No one, especially students, should feel afraid to admit that they may need to quarantine,” Mrs. Keener said.

Mrs. Keener said that this is a good time for families to recommit to reviewing and following the Diocese of Covington’s COVID-19 Return to School Requirements, the most up-to-date copy is available on the diocesan website, www.covdio.org.

Multiple counties in Dubuque Archdiocese affected by powerful derecho

Dan Russo
Catholic News Service

Sirens that usually warn people about approaching tornados went off about 15 minutes before the derecho storm struck the area of Cedar Rapids where St. Pius the X Church is located.

Michael Becker, pastor associate at the parish, real-

used eventually that what he was witnessing Aug. 10 was no tornado. He was at work when heavy rain and wind gusts of more than 100 mph pounded the area for upward of 45 minutes. After getting people in other parts of the parish complex to safety, he got a glimpse of the mayhem through windows.

It was a loud rush of sound that kept coming,” Becker said. “You’re watching trees fall down.”

The storm ripped the rubber covering on the church roof, sending a flood of water into the worship space and causing water to pour in for hours. A tree put a hole in the rectory roof and knocked out power. Still, amid the chaotic scene there was something for which to be grateful. “The altar was untouched,” Becker told The Witness, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Dubuque. “It was dry Everything else was drenched.”

A derecho is a widespread and usually fast-moving straight-line windstorm spanning hundreds of miles. This particular derecho was estimated at 40 miles wide and more than 700 miles long. It lasted for 16 hours from Nebraska to Minnesota. It swept from Dakota through Illinois and Ohio. At least four people were killed.

The storm affected nine counties in the Archdiocese of Dubuque, said Megan Stammeyer, public relations director for Catholic Charities of the archdiocese.

As part of the agency’s Disaster Relief Ministry, Stammeyer visited the affected areas. Countless homes, farms and businesses were damaged. Churches and schools also were affected including St. Wenceslaus Parish, also in Cedar Rapids, and St. Michael Parish in Norwegian. The disaster ministry focuses on connecting people with resources and social service agencies following a disaster.

“We expect this to be a long-term recovery,” Stammeyer said. “Once the trees are cleared away and the power restored, the deeper issues of poverty and inequality will only the worse to damage families across our state.”

With more than half the tree canopy in the Cedar Rapids region toppled, the scale of the event is unlike anything in recent history. “We sat down as a staff (Aug. 18) and everyone had dam-

age (at their homes),” Becker said. “I’m working on a plan to reach out to every one of our parishioners.”

Metro Catholic Outreach, a service agency supported by the Cedar Rapids area parishes, lost perishable food items used by its food bank because of a long-term power outage. Many residents also lost food while the power was out.

Executive Director Kate Getty is working with staff to support people who need food and have questions about applying for emergency grants and filing insurance claims.

“I am a born and raised Iowan. It is by far the worst dis-

aster I’ve ever seen,” Getty said. “We’re seeing people ask-

ing, ‘What do we do next?’”

About 1 million people in the affected states lost power. Around Cedar Rapids an estimated 28,000 were still with-

out electricity Aug. 18, Getty said.

She said hundreds of homes and apartments in her city are uninhabitable because of the storm. Getty felt blessed that the damage to her home was not as serious. “I am very grateful on many levels. We lost all the trees in our back yard.”

Getty hopes more will be done by elected officials to respond to the disaster. “We felt so neglected for five days,” she said. Getty stressed that people affected need prayers, clean-

ing supplies, food and other basics. She believes it will take months for the Cedar Rapids area to recover.

Catholic and public schools in the region, including the Xavier Catholic School System in Cedar Rapids have post-

dated their start dates.

“We have made the difficult decision to only place stu-

dents living more than 15 miles from campus in campus housing for the fall semester,” said Nate Klein, vice presi-

dent for student success, in a press release.

“Administrators and teachers have worked hard to implement the requirements necessary to bring students back in the class-

room. We believe our parents are equally committed to in-

person instruction and encourage them to make the sacri-

fices necessary to sustain in-person instruction.”

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person instruction on Tuesday with in-person classes set to resume Wednesday, August 26.

Currently, these are isolated cases and the students are believed to have contracted the virus outside of the school community.

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Other schools were more fortunate.

“There wasn’t damage to the school,” said Casey Kettmann, principal at St. Joseph School in Marion. “We just got power back (Aug. 18). We have two families displaced for at least six months.”

President Donald Trump signed a federal emergency declaration for Iowa, Aug. 17 in response to a request from Iowa officials for at least $4 billion in aid to deal with property and crop damage, the Cedar Rapids Gazette reported. An All-Stars grant funded only the public assistance portion of the full request for assistance. "The next day during his visit to Cedar Rapids, Trump was pressed by the mayor and other local officials to provide more disaster funds, and he said, "OK, we’ll take care of it, Mayor.”
Sixties after JFK, wait continues for the second Catholic president

The wait for the next Catholic president sits at 60 years — and could be longer; if former Vice President Joseph L. Biden Jr. fails to unseat the Republican incumbent, Donald Trump.

By comparison, 140 years had elapsed before a Catholic was part of the presidential ticket, from the time of Washington’s election in 1788 to the Democrats’ nomination of New York Gov. Al Smith to run for president in 1928. Smith, the first Catholic major-party presidential nominee, was hounded by charges of “rum, Romanism and rebellion” by his political opponents in Prohibition-era America. Smith lost in a landslide to Herbert Hoover.

The rum-Romanism-rebellion trope was a holdover from the 1884 presidential campaign. James Blaine of Maine, a Republican, was a Presbyterian as was his father, but his mother was a Catholic, and his parents agreed to raise their sons as Presbyterians and their daughters as Catholics. One of Blaine’s cousins was a nun who founded the first U.S. convent for the Sisters of the Holy Cross.

The last-week campaign slur by a key Republican energized Catholic voters in New York against Blaine, who lost New York and its 36 electoral votes by 0.10 percent. Had Blaine won New York, he would have had an advantage of 17 electoral votes — and the presidency.

JFK never got to serve his full term, being assassinated in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963 — the most recent president to be assassinated. It was not until 172 years later, when the Republic ticket, running on a platform of “carousing, Romanism and rebellion,” was swamped by the Richard Nixon-Spirou Agnew re-election bid.

JFK’s election as president, in which he squarely took on anti-Catholic bias, broke a WASP stronghold on the White House, and led political parties to consider candidates other than regional difference to balance a presidential ticket.

In the absence of a Catholic sitting in the Oval Office, a sizable-to-do was made over the election of Bill Clinton in 1992, as Clinton had attended Georgetown University in Washington and received a bachelor’s degree there. He became the first graduate of a Catholic college to make it to the White House. It was not until 2004, though, that another Catholic, John Kerry, captured the Democratic nomination.

In 1968, JFK’s brother, New York Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, ran as other U.S. bishops and even German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger — who became Pope Benedict XVI the following year — offered their views.

The cardinal, in a leaked memo, did not name Kerry but “I think the issues that Mr. Kerry and the other Catholic candidates have brought up are significant" and said Catholics who support legalized abortion should be advised by their pastor not to present themselves for Communion.

In 1984, Geraldine Ferraro, a Catholic, became the first woman on a presidential ticket, although she and presidential hopeful Walter Mondale lost badly to the re-election campaign of Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. In fact, Reagan became the first president to have been divorced before winning the White House, and Trump, in 2017, became the first twice-divorced U.S. president.

It took 24 more years following Ferraro before a woman was placed on a major-party ticket, when Republican standard-bearer John McCain made Sarah Palin his VP pick in 2008. The McCain-Palin ticket lost to the Barack Obama-Biden ticket, which made Biden the nation’s first Catholic vice president. Obama, of course, became the first African American major-party nominee — and president.

Biden, the presumptive Democratic nominee, has pledged to choose a woman has his running mate, and his choice Aug. 11 of Sen. Kamala Harris of California makes her the first Black vice presidential candidate. Her mother was born in India, making Harris the first majority nominee with a South Asian heritage.

In 2000, Joe Lieberman, a Democratic senator from Connecticut, became the first Jew on a major-party ticket when he ran as Al Gore’s running mate in a close-shave election that had to be decided by the Supreme Court.

In 2012, Mitt Romney of Utah became the first member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to win his party’s presidential nomination, losing to Obama.

Four years ago, Hillary Clinton, in a groundbreaking campaign as the first woman to run for the nation’s highest office — with a U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Virginia, a Catholic, as her running mate — lost the election to Trump. Although Clinton garnered about 3 million more votes in the popular vote, Trump won Electoral College vote 304 to 227.
Mexican parishes refocus aid responses as pandemic drags on

**David Agren**
Catholic News Service

MEXICO CITY — People started lining up shortly after noon outside the 16th-century Our Lady of the Assumption Parish in southern Mexico City. Most practiced social distancing as best they could on a bustling sidewalk; all were clutching empty food containers.

Upon entering the parish grounds, they washed their hands, registered with a volunteer and had their containers filled with pork and hominy soup prepared from a pig’s head donated the previous day.

“It’s something delicious and well prepared ... and made with love,” said Susana Álvarez, parish volunteer, after stirring a giant pot of posole with a wooden paddle.

Similar scenes of charity have played out at parishes around the country as church communities respond to the coronavirus pandemic, which has caused hardship in Mexico, where confirmed COVID-19 cases remain stubbornly high and the economy has cratered.

But as the pandemic drags on and the country reopens, priests and religious are rethinking their responses and adapting to realities such as unemployment and rising poverty, especially in places like the periphery of Mexico City, where many earn their livings in the informal economy and have not been able to shelter in place or work from home.

Many parishes, too, lack resources, having not received money in the collection basket because of suspended services.

“Many people lost their work. Many people spend their savings by sheltering at home. They’re now at the end of their tethers, and families can no longer bear it,” said Father Sergio Jorge García Llanos, pastor of Our Lady of the Assumption in Milpa Alta, a bustling borough famed for nopal cactus farming.

“We’re helping with what little we can, with food,” he said from his office in a church still under repairs from the 2017 earthquake, which toppled the belfry. “But now in the pandemic, we’re discovering families that we didn’t know before and need our help.”

The coronavirus pandemic has hit Mexico hard. The death toll topped 90,000 Aug. 30 — third-highest in the world — although health officials insist the pandemic is slowing and say they’ve succeeded in their goal of keeping hospitals from collapsing.

Priests see signs the pandemic may have peaked — testing is scant, so confirmed cases are low — but say the pandemic is not likely to end anytime soon.

The economic fallout also is not ending anytime soon, (Continued on page 14)
Making the poor a priority isn’t political, it’s the Gospel, pope says
Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Church teaching on giving priority to the well-being of the poor and marginalized is not a political or ideological choice; it lies at the very heart of the Gospel, Pope Francis said.

The preferential option for the poor, which includes feeding the hungry and drawing close to the excluded, “is the key criterion of Christian authenticity,” he said Aug. 19 during his weekly general audience.

The principle also would include making sure that any vaccine developed for the novel coronavirus helps everyone, he added.

“It would be sad,” he said, if priority for a vaccine were to be given to the richest. “It would be sad if this vaccine were to become the property of this nation or another, rather than universal and for all.”

During his audience, livestreamed from the library of the Apostolic Palace, Pope Francis continued a series of talks on the principles of the church’s social doctrine as a guide for healing and building a better future, particularly as the world is struggling with a pandemic and its negative effects.

In fact, he said, a proper response to the pandemic is twofold: “On the one hand, it is essential to find a cure for this small but terrible virus, which has brought the whole world to its knees. On the other, we must also cure a larger virus, that of social injustice, inequality of opportunity, marginalization and the lack of protection for the weak.”

“It would be a scandal if all of the economic assistance we are observing — most of it with public money — were to focus on rescuing those industries that do not contribute to the inclusion of the excluded, the promotion of the least, the common good or the care of creation,” the pope said.

These are the four criteria that should be used for choosing which industries should be helped; those which contribute to the inclusion of the excluded, to the promotion of the least, to the common good and the care of creation.

Pope Francis said the COVID-19 pandemic “has exposed the plight of the poor and the great inequality that reigns in the world and it has made those inequalities and discrimination even worse.

One of the responses that must not be missing is the preferential option for the poor, he said.

This key element of the church’s social teaching “is not a political option, nor is it an ideological option,” he said; it is “at the center of the Gospel.”

Jesus “stood among the sick, the poor, the excluded, showing them God’s merciful love,” he said.

The preferential option for the poor is a duty for all Christians and communities, he said, and it means doing more than providing needed assistance; it requires remediying the root causes and problems that lead to the need for aid.

“Many people want to return to normality and get back to business, the pope said, but this ‘normality’ must not entail ongoing social injustice and the degradation of the environment.

“The pandemic is a crisis, and we do not emerge from a crisis the same as before: either we come out of it better or we come out of it worse,” he said. “We must come out of it better and build something different.

“The world needs an economy and remedies that do not poison society, such as profits not linked to the creation of dignified jobs, but rather profits that benefit the general public.

“We must act now to heal the epidemics caused by small, invisible viruses and to heal those caused by the other, he added.

Pope Francis leads his general audience in the library of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican Aug. 19, 2020. The pope said that the Church’s preferential option for the poor includes making sure any vaccine developed for COVID-19 helps everyone.

Great and visible social injustices, he said. By “starting from the love of God, placing the peripheries at the center and the last in first place,” he said, “a healthier world will be possible.”

Recovering from the pandemic will require action rooted in tangible love, “anchored in hope and founded in faith,” he said, “otherwise, we will come out of the crisis worse.”

The pope concluded by praying: “May the Lord help us and give us the strength to come out of it better, responding to the needs of today’s world.”
We need each other
(Continued from page 5)

nity But, before any discussion even takes place, these meetings always include a spiritual reflection. This reflection sets the tone, encourages sharing and brings our Vincentians together in understanding how those we serve can help us grow in our own faith.

Establishing a rapport with those we serve is also important — it is a building block to form meaningful relationships. We may not have the opportunity to become true friends in the same sense as those we see on a regular basis. However, during this time of isolation, we realize more and more than ever that having a conversation, the two-way kind of listening and offering encouragement, is much more fulfilling than the transactional nature of helping someone simply pay their rent. Being part of a parish conference offers friendship and reflection, serving others puts our faith in action and enables us to see and feel God’s presence among us. While there are certainly exercises you can do to grow in your faith independently, the experience of our Vincentians and my GPF’s indicate that we need people in our lives to do it better — to inspire us to know God more fully.

Many of our Vincentians volunteer initially join the Society because they want to help the poor — they may see themselves as the friends who are fighting through Society because they want to help the poor — they may see themselves as the friends who are fighting through

by Jesus. However, we soon learn that we need to hold on tight to that rope because the relationships we encounter are actually bringing us closer to Christ. There is no way I could lower myself through that ceiling to see Jesus. I am thankful for those friends who help get me there.

Karen Zangel is executive director, Society of St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky

Parishes refocus aid
(Continued from page 12)

they say Mexico’s economy contracted more than 17 percent in the second quarter, after not growing in 2019. It also lost 1.1 million formal jobs between March and July, with a slight uptick in employment in August, according to the government.

“There’s a lot of informal activity to make ends meet,” said Father Robert Coogan, an American priest in the Diocese of Salt湖. “Everybody who goes by (the house) wants to cut the grass, wants to wash the car. A lot of houses have a sign out front: autolavado (carwash). On week-ends, people want to sell food.”

The Mexican government, meanwhile, offered only modest pandemic relief in the form of loans of roughly $1,100 for small businesses and pushing forward payments for social programs.

“The government is overwhelmed,” said Father Rogelio Narvaez, executive secretary of Caritas Mexico. Both the Mexican bishops’ conference and the Jesuits recently met with the Interior Ministry to provide details of its pandemic response, said two priests involved in the discussions. One such program, run by the Jesuits, helps parishes organize local communities.

Father Narvaez said the government sought alliances with churches “to be able to get into places where they can’t get to.”

Early in the pandemic, Caritas partnered with the private sector and foundations to deliver care packages, something Father Narvaez described as “rapid response.” He said Caritas is now focusing on “livelhoods” by establishing a job bank, which also includes partnerships to teach skills and provide microcredit.

Those who have contacted us require modest jobs … bricklayers, painters, people who want to work as domest- ical employees,” Father Narvaez said. “Almost 70 percent of the requests have been from women.”

Elizabeth Rosas, 27, closed her business selling fruits and vegetables in Milpa Alta, saying the pandemic sent sales crashing.

“It’s really hard to make ends meet,” she said while queuing for food at the parish. “This (pandemic) is going to last a while longer. … Many people still say it isn’t true, many don’t wear masks, don’t use gel, head out like noth- ing is happening.”

Priests strike a more optimistic note, saying the pan- demic will positively change their pastoral approaches and priorities.

Father Garcia said, “In this pandemic we realize we have to change our way of seeing things, we have to be more sharply focused to know how to help.”

Father Narvaez added, “We touched bottom in the sense of exhausting the few resources that we had to be able to survive. So I think in that sense we need to re-educate ourselves to be a less ostentatious church, to be a church with fewer appearances … to be more austere. I think that’s what we learned.”

In the western state of Michoacan, Father Andres Larco said many people were receiving remittances from the United States — sent to Mexico in record numbers dur- ing the pandemic — or accepting handouts of food from drug cartels.

“What the other people (not receiving remittances) are doing is selling their clothes cheap to buy food or selling food,” said Father Larco, prior to the city of Apatzingán.

“This is how they’re surviving.”

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“This is how they’re surviving.”

September 4, 2020

Karen Zangel is executive director, Society of St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky

We need each other
(Continued from page 5)
At least 12 dead as tropical storm lashes Haiti, Dominican Republic

CLEVELAND (CNS) — Officials reported that at least 12 people had died as Tropical Storm Laura lashed Haiti and the Dominican Republic with strong winds and torrential rains, causing widespread flooding in low-lying communities.

The death included at least nine in Haiti, according to the country's civil protection agency. Three others died in the Dominican Republic with strong winds and torrential rains, causing widespread flooding in low-lying communities. The storm had moved over Cuba's southern coast by Aug. 24. Father Enrique Comacho, executive director of Caritas Puerto Rico, which is affiliated with Catholic Charities USA, said he was checking with parishes in southern coast by Aug. 24. The island had died as Tropical Storm Laura lashed Haiti and the Dominican Republic with strong winds and torrential rains, causing widespread flooding in low-lying communities.

Archbishop: church needs more aid to help refugees arriving in Greece

WORZBURG, Germany — Twenty-seven German bishops — including the archbishop of Athens, Greece, who said the Catholic Church cannot continue to help refugees sleeping on the street in Athens. “As long as there’s war and poverty in the Middle East, the refugees will keep arriving and the problems will continue,” said the archbishop, who leads the Greek bishops’ conference. “But our country will never abandon them, least of all in such circumstances, and that’s why we’re requesting greater support.”

Refugees flying through Turkey often take small boats to Lesbos, just a few miles from the Turkish coast, under EU law, the member state refugees first enter is responsible for processing their asylum claims, so from Lesbos they head on to cities in Greece.

Planned Parenthood drops suit against abortion law on ultrasounds

FORT WAINW, Ind. — Ruling three years of legal duelling, Indiana Attorney General Curtis Hill announced Aug. 20 that Planned Parenthood has conceded defeat in a lawsuit that challenged a state law requiring women to undergo an ultrasound at least 18 hours before having an abortion. After the Indiana Legislature passed the ultrasound bill in 2017, Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky was successful in getting a court injunction that prevented the law from being implemented. The organization claimed the law was unconstitutional and would prevent some women from getting abortions, especially low-income women who would be forced to travel to clinics located farther away because not all Planned Parenthood offices have ultrasound equipment. The concession on the suit was the result of Planned Parenthood’s decision to offer the ultrasounds required by law at a clinic in Fort Wayne that no longer offers abortion procedures. Planned Parenthood agreed to drop its lawsuit against the ultrasound requirement provided that Indiana refrain from enforcing it until Jan. 1, 2021 — giving Planned Parenthood time to train staff at its Fort Wayne clinic to operate ultrasound equipment.

German bishops’ council to meet; first time since Vatican parish document

WURZBURG, Germany — Twenty-seven German bishops — the Permanent Council of the bishops’ conference — will meet Aug. 24, the first time since the Vatican’s instruction on parish reform landed on their desks July 26; triggering furious reactions from some of them. The German Catholic news agency KNA notes the president of the bishops’ conference has so far been virtually the only bishop not to comment publicly on the document. Bishop Georg Bätzing, true to his role as mediator, appears intent on first waiting for the outcome of discussions in Würzburg. Bishop Bätzing’s deputy, Bishop Franz-Josef Bode, was among the first to criticize the instruction, calling it “a strong brake on the motivation and the appreciation of the services of laypeople.” He said he would have expected Bette to make itself more familiar with the realities of local parish life on the ground before issuing the statement. If the Vatican was excoriating laypeople from the management of parishes and emphasizing the role of priests to such an extent, it was carrying out a “reversal toward clericalization,” he said, adding that the norms outlined in the instruction had largely been overtaken by reality.

Archbishop: church needs more aid to help refugees arriving in Greece

OXFORD, England — The archbishop of Athens, Greece, said the Catholic Church cannot continue to help refugees unless it gets more aid. Archbishop Sotirios Voulgarakis told Catholic News Service Aug. 19 that the local Catholic parish on the island of Lesbos was feeding refugees with help from the Rome-based Sant’Egidio Community, but said Caritas, the church’s charitable agency, urgently needed more Western aid to help refugees sleeping on the street in Athens. “As long as there’s war and poverty in the Middle East, the refugees will keep arriving and the problems will continue,” said the archbishop, who leads the Greek bishops’ conference. “But our country will never abandon them, least of all in such circumstances, and that’s why we’re requesting greater support.”

Refugees flying through Turkey often take small boats to Lesbos, just a few miles from the Turkish coast, under EU law, the member state refugees first enter is responsible for processing their asylum claims, so from Lesbos they head on to cities in Greece.
For over 100 years, St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky has been providing emergency assistance to Northern Kentucky neighbors in need.

St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky is committed to helping neighbors in need during this critical time.

Thank you for your help in providing hope for those who are struggling to make ends meet.

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