Prayer and penance for life to be celebrated locally

**March for Life and Day of Prayer and Penance for Life**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, pilgrims from the Diocese of Covington will not be traveling to Washington, D.C. for the annual March for Life. Instead, all students in the diocese will participate locally, Friday, Jan. 29, in the Day of Prayer and Penance for Life.

Bishop Roger Foys will celebrate Mass, Jan. 29, 9 a.m., at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington. The Mass will be live-streamed from the cathedral website, www.covcathedral.com, into all Catholic schools in the diocese so that all students — especially those who would have traveled to the March for Life — can participate. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to begin this day of penance by joining the livestream from their homes.

In conjunction with the March for Life, the Diocese of Covington will pray for an end to legalized abortion in our country. This year, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 10 Holy Hours throughout the Diocese will not be held. However, parishioners are encouraged to observe the day with prayer and an act of penance.

Deacon Joseph Rielage looks forward to bringing others to Christ in his priesthood

**Allegre Thatcher**

Assistant Editor

Joe Rielage had few inklings growing up that he would one day be a priest. As Deacon Rielage prepares for his ordination Jan. 29, he reflects on the fact that most of the significant events in his life involved priests from the Diocese of Covington.

“Even before I moved to the Diocese of Covington from Cincinnati, Ohio, there was such a connection between me and the presbyterate,” said Deacon Rielage. Before his parents met, his mother took a tour in Europe in the 1960s, led by a group of priests from the Diocese of Covington. Upon befriending several that keeping the established protocols is one way of being pro-life: “Certainly on this day we recall the horrific Supreme Court decision in 1973 of legalizing abortion, but also, life at all stages is important and the protocols have been issued as a way of protecting life also. We can’t take it any less seriously.”

New this year, diocesan schools will involve all students in the Day of Prayer and Penance by watching the Mass during school. While in the past, some students traveled and some remained behind, now all can be united in prayer simultaneously. Parents and others can also join by streaming Mass online. Additionally, anyone can watch it afterwards on the cathedral website.

One week prior to the March for Life, President-elect Joe Biden will be sworn in as the 46th president of the United States. With the recent elections, the Democratic party has taken control of both the House and the Senate. For many in the pro-life movement the change in political leadership is unsettling as the stated Democratic

(Continued on page 7)

**Deacon Joseph Rielage**

Age: 50

Parish: Mary, Queen of Heaven, Erlanger

Seminary: St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, PA

Mass of Thanksgiving: Sunday, Saturday, January 30, 2021 6 p.m., St. Henry Parish, Elsmere

(Continued on page 2)
**Messenger staff report**

As schools in the Diocese of Covington returned to the classroom Jan. 4, small family gatherings and sports remained the biggest challenge and threat to sustained in-person instruction.

Just after the first day of school, Jan. 4, an entire classroom of students at St. Thomas School, Ft. Thomas, was quarantined. Two students who play basketball at the school and at a local recreation center tested positive for COVID-19 after returning to school. During the first week, St. Joseph School, Crescent Springs, also quarantined an entire class due to two COVID-positive students who were exposed at family parties. Cases and quarantines of teachers became problematic at St. Edward School, Cynthiana and St. Mary School, Alexandria, sending the entire school back to virtual learning.

"A lot of this was expected after coming back from the long holiday break," said Laura Keener, COVID coordinator for the diocese. And while reports are slowing down a bit now that schools have been back in session for over a week, counties in the Diocese of Covington are still experiencing significant increases in cases.

"Everyone is reminded to do what is necessary to mitigate the spread of the virus — stay home as much as possible, wear a mask when out in public and stay at least six feet away from anyone," she said.

**Coronavirus Report (as of Monday, Jan.11)**

- Positive Cases: 155
- Recovered positive cases: 363
- Total ever positive cases: 518
- Currently Self-quarantined: 382
- Close Contacts with COVID Case in household: 223
- Close Contacts: 382
- Contacts with COVID Case in household: 223

"We are asking that our families make in-person instruction a priority and to limit or eliminate any activities at home that would threaten that priority," Mrs. Keener said.

**The National Prayer Vigil for Life will be virtual this year**

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Each year on the night before the annual March for Life, at least 10,000 people have filled the Great Upper Church of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington for the National Prayer Vigil for Life.

This year, due to local restrictions on attendance sizes because of the pandemic, the prayer vigil will be virtual.

Catholics across the country are instead being encouraged to take part in a nationwide prayer vigil from Jan. 28 through Jan. 29, marking the 48th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton decisions legalizing abortion.

The vigil will begin with a live broadcast at 8 p.m. EST on Thursday, Jan. 28 from the basilica, starting with the praying of the rosary followed by Mass. Bishops from across the country will lead Holy Hours throughout the night in the livestreamed vigil.

The service can be viewed on EWTN or livestreams from the basilica or from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The principal celebrant and homilist for the opening Mass will be Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, USCCB's chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities. The vigil will end at 8 a.m. Jan. 29 in a closing Mass celebrated by Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore.

"Now, more than ever, our nation is in need of prayer for the protection of the unborn and the dignity of all human life," Archbishop Naumann said in a statement. "I am happy to be joined by bishops in dioceses across the country who are hosting pro-life prayer events including during the overnight hours of Eucharistic adoration. I invite all Catholics to spend time with our Lord and join in this nationwide vigil for life."

The National Prayer Vigil for Life is hosted by the USCCB's Pro-Life Secretariat, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, and The Catholic University of America's Office of Campus Ministry.

The closing Mass for the vigil, Jan. 29 will be open to the public but because of attendance restrictions allowing only 100 people inside the basilica, admission will be allowed on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Deacon Rielage**

(Continued from page 9)

fire that was burning inside of me, when I received the call on Pentecost Sunday of 2014,” he said.

Over the course of his time in seminary, Deacon Rielage has come to know and appreciate the value of serving others and being present with them. “It gives me comfort, but also enjoyment even in the hardest of situations, that I can be there to share sad times, to share good times with people, to bring comfort, to bring joy and hope as needed,” he said. “Although it’s not an easy time, it’s a fulfilling time that’s worthwhile. It gives me the energy and stamina to go forward, to be like Christ to other people, to be an example of Christ in the world.”

He has also enjoyed his summer assignments during seminary, particularly the last two summers at St. Henry Parish, Elsmere. The support from Father Gregory Bach and Carmelite Father Aby Thampi, he said, was unparalleled. “They made me feel welcome, they made me feel like I was a part of the presbytery,” he said.

Deacon Rielage also credits Father Kevin Kahmann, pastor at Mary Queen of Heaven Parish, Erlanger during his preseminary days, with having an incredible influence on his decision to pursue priesthood. Father Kahmann will vest Deacon Rielage at the ordination.

What he’s most excited for, he said, is confecting the Eucharist and bringing Christ to people in the Mass on a daily basis. If he can help people along their journeys and bring them to Christ and their eternal reward, he’ll be happy.

He’s looking to two saints for assistance in this endeavor. St. Alphonsus Rodriguez, S.J., was a porter in the monastery in the 16th century who is an example of humility. “He just did (his work) with such joy, such happiness, and to me that just shows that even in the most mundane tasks, you can find joy in serving other people,” said Deacon Rielage.

He’s also turned to Blessed Carlo Acutis as an example of Eucharistic devotion. “Especially in the time of the pandemic, I understand that people are not always comfortable coming to church,” said Deacon Rielage. “But we need to get young people to come back to church. Through his example of devotion to the Church, the Eucharist and the rosary, hopefully the young people can look upon him and get encouragement that God is the center and giver of all.”

Deacon Rielage was ordained to the transitional diaconate April 8, 2020 in an empty cathedral in Covington. His last year in seminary hasn’t gone as he anticipated due to COVID-19, but Deacon Rielage has made the most of it. Last spring when classes went virtual only, he realized in a new way that “anything can happen at any time.”

“We may have everything planned out in our minds, but God works in mysterious ways to make us realize that we’re not in control,” he said. “Going back in the fall, with the guidelines at the seminary, there was less time for extra-
CCK promotes education opportunity accounts for school choice in General Assembly

Allegra Thatcher
Assistant Editor

This year could see changes for educational choice in the Commonwealth of Kentucky if the Catholic Conference of Kentucky and others can garner enough momentum for bills promoting Education Opportunity Accounts.

Rather than focusing on scholarship tax credits, as in past years, House Bill 149 and Senate Bill 25, favor Education Opportunity Accounts. If the bills are passed, individuals and businesses can donate to non-profit Account Granting Organizations (AGO’s), who are authorized to receive donations under the program and will provide financial assistance for educational services. This will allow those who apply to the program an opportunity to make choices that wouldn’t otherwise be accessible to them.

Andrew Vandiver, associate director, CCK, said they took feedback last year from families, policy makers and educators to craft a bill that would be “more inclusive and addressing the needs of the specific moment we’re in.”

“If the General Assembly had passed educational choice bills in the past, there would be a resource for families that are struggling right now,” said Mr. Vandiver. “With COVID-19, families really need more flexibility than ever, and this would help address that. But because there is no educational choice program in Kentucky, there’s very few additional resources right now for families who are struggling.”

In the first week after the bills were released, an unprecedented number of sponsors provided their support. House Bill 149 was filed by Rep. Chad McCoy and is co-sponsored, from counties in the Diocese of Covington, by Rep Kim Banta (Kenton and Boone Counties), Rep. Kim Moser (Kenton and Campbell Counties), Rep. Joe Fischer (Campbell County), Rep. Adam Koenig (Kenton and Boone Counties), Rep. Savannah Maddox (Grant and Kenton Counties), Rep. Felicia Rabohour (Carroll and Gallatin Counties) and Rep. Sal Santoro (Boone County).

Senate Bill 25 was filed by Senator Ralph Alvarado and co-sponsored by Senator Damon Thayer of Scott, Kenton and Grant Counties.

The House and Senate are set to vote on the bills in February. The big difference in this bill, compared to school scholarship tax credits in the past, is it’s much more flexible and inclusive, said Mr. Vandiver. Rather than donations given to non-profits merely providing tuition assistance, donations could provide many different types of educational services.

“There’s parts of the state that may not have a non-public school close by, and their educational needs are different in that community,” said Mr. Vandiver. “If you have students in that area who want access to college courses that they might not otherwise be able to afford it, you could set up this assistance for that, it could also do tutoring, special needs services, it’s really customizable as far as how the funds could be used, it depends on the needs of the family and also the mission of the non-profit organization.”

Mr. Vandiver said these are crucial bills for Kentucky in the school choice issue. “We have an opportunity to do something moving forward that’s going to help families,” he said. He thinks that the inclusivity of the bills will make them more likely to pass.

“We have champions in the legislature, we know the public wants this. We did a public opinion survey this fall and believe it was 77 percent of Kentuckians support educational choice. It’s bipartisan … so you really can’t go wrong by supporting this. … We strongly believe that the votes are there in the General Assembly. The biggest challenge is there is a lot going on this session and there’s a lot being demanded of the lawmakers. So we’re just asking people, if you have a student in your life, or you just have a desire to help students, make sure your voice is heard, because otherwise this issue just won’t get the attention it needs.”

Ultimately, it’s about children and not individual schools or organizations, said Mr. Vandiver. “We know it’s challenging, but we just hope that the legislators really take a look at how this could help families out, help kids succeed in the future,” he said.

Elementary school open houses

Open Houses will take place for primary schools in the Diocese of Covington during Catholic Schools Week. Schools are encouraged to create a virtual tour for families who are unable to attend in person. Schools may host an in-person Open House using the following requirements:

— In-person Open Houses may only be open to prospective students/families who are interested in transferring for the 2020-2021 school year or enrolling for the 21-22 school year.

— Schools have set up time slots for prospective families to attend and families must call in advance to reserve a slot. Time slots are staggered so families will not arrive or tour the school in large groups.

— Tours should be done individually or up to three families (up to 10 people as long as distancing can be maintained).

— Attendance must be limited to the parents/guardians and the prospective student only.

— All staff and prospective families must wear masks and maintain 6 feet distance throughout the tour.

— Temperature screenings will take place upon entry.

— Club and athletic presentations will not be available during Open House. A video or brochure can be provided with contact information for additional questions.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The week of January 18-25 is the annual observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The theme chosen for 2021 is “Abide in my love … you shall bear much fruit.” (John 15:1-17) Throughout 2021, join Christians everywhere in praying “that they may all be one” joining our prayer with that of the Lord Jesus Christ. For related columns on the theme and how it was chosen and on Christian unity see Msgr. Ronald Ketelleter’s column on page 4. Additional information is available online at www.geii.org.

The annual Catholic/Capitol event, which champions school choice in Frankfort, will be held differently this year due to COVID19, with virtual and limited in-person options. The CCK encourages citizens to stay in touch with the General Assembly by tuning into live video coverage of legislative meetings, contacting lawmakers to offer feedback, reading bills and resolutions, and signing up to receive notices when bills advance. The General Assembly’s web page provides all of the above information.

Official assignments

Effective January 12, 2021
Rev. Conor A. Kunath
To: Vocations promoter ad interim
Continues other duties

Effective January 27, 2021
Rev. Niby Kannai
To: Pastor, St. Edward Parish, Cynthiana
From: Parochial vicar, Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish, Erlanger and chaplain, St. Henry District High School
Rev. Harry A. Settle, Jr.
To: Pastor, St. Cecilia Parish, Independence
From: Pastor, St. Edward Parish, Cynthiana

By order of the Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, D.D.
Bishop of the Diocese of Covington
Rev. James N. Schroeder, Chancellor

Bishop’s Schedule

Jan. 15
Catholic/COVID-19 briefing, 9:30 a.m.

Jan. 16
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 4:30 p.m.

Jan. 17
Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.

Jan. 18
Presidential Council meeting (virtual), 1:30 p.m.

Jan. 18
Confirmation, St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, at the Cathedral Basilica, 7 p.m.

Jan. 19
Individual meeting, 10:15 a.m.

Jan. 20
Confirmation, St. Thomas, Ft. Thomas, at the Cathedral Basilica, 7 p.m.

Jan. 21
COVID-19 briefing, 9:30 a.m.

Jan. 23
Diocesan Pastoral Council meeting (virtual), 9 a.m. — noon

Jan. 24
Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 4:30 p.m.

Jan. 25
Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021

The “Week of Prayer for Christian Unity” is traditionally observed from January 18th through January 25th, eight days of intensified prayer culminating on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. The ecumenical directives for the Catholic Church single out the “Week of Prayer for Christian Unity” as a privileged time for common prayer for Christian unity, a practice which has been celebrated intentionally since the 1960s. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCCU) attaches symbolic importance to common ecumenical prayer during the week leading up to the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. However, there are alternative opportunities in the Church for prayer.

In continuity with “Unitatis Redintegratio,” the Second Vatican Council’s “Decree on Ecumenism” (1965), Pope St. John Paul II’s 1965 encyclical “Ubi Unum Sum” (“That They May All Be One”) (US, n. 24) as well as the Vatican’s 1986 “Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism” (DAPNE, n. 160) recommends the observance of and participation in the annual Week of Prayer.

In effect, the Week of Prayer becomes a worldwide invitation for Christians to engage in prayer for Christian unity by linking their prayers with that of the Lord Jesus Christ, “that they may all be one.” (John 17: 21). The spiritual theme for the 2021 Week of Prayer is taken from the Farewell Discourse in the Gospel according to John: “Abide in My Love . . . You shall Bear Much Fruit.” (cf. John 15: 5-9).

Graymoor Father James Loughran, director of the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute, stated: “To abide in his love reminds us that we live as a community celebrating our gift of unity. Jesus’ charge to his disciples to “abide” in his love is anchored in his predictive “I am” saying declared in the parable of the vine and the branches (John 15: 1-17) at the opening of the discourse. In John: “Stokes of the Word and Faith,” Franciscan Father Robert J. Karrus sums up Jesus’ teaching in this discourse: “Jesus truly represents the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, ‘You ＂ought, bad temper, factions and malice when he chided the apostles, shouting, and reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice. [And] be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.” (Eph 4: 32-32)

When a disciple does not abide in Jesus through love, the disciple will not produce fruit nor be a disciple at all. Thus, St. Paul declares: “All bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, and reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice. (And) be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.” (Eph 4: 32-32)

The movement towards Christian unity on the ecumenical agenda is ultimately a gift of the Spirit. When the negative or offensive connotations of the dialogue must be left in the hands of God, not to the preconceived agendas of the participants. Dialogue must be offered to God with the trust that the Lord will disclose the next step in the ecumenical undertaking.

In a paper on the purpose of ecumenical dialogue, Cardinal Kasper, president emeritus of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, curated the inseparable bond of “I am” with the “dialogue of truth:” “Love without truth is void and dishonest; truth without love is hard and repelling.” Authentic love can only originate in the matrix of truth.

Furthermore, Cardinal Kasper holds that disillusion about the lack of “finality in interchurch dialogues over years is not well grounded: “What we have achieved after centuries of fruitless polemics is brotherhood, and that is really not nothing.”

Since unity within churches and ecclesial communities themselves is crucial to ecumenical dialogue, divisive polarization which at times dots the eclesial landscapes of those very bodies contradicts the search for Christian unity.

For example, exhortations to unity amid diversity permeate the various epistles of St. Paul. A pastoral passage from the Epistle to the Ephesians can also provide a prime illustration of his pastoral zeal for internal unity.

Thus, St. Paul declares: “All bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, and reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice. (And) be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.” (Eph 4: 32-32)

Again, St. Paul addressed the scandal of quarrels, jealousy, bitter, bad temper, factions and malice when he chided the Galatians: “. . . rather serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ But if you go on sinning and devouring one another, beware that you are not consumed by one another” (Gal 5:13-15) (The translation of that warning in the Revised English Bible is equally poignant: “all you can expect is mutual destruction.”)

In “Loving the Church” (2005) Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher to the papal household, compares threats to unity in the Body of Christ with life-threatening embolisms in the human body. By analogy, just as blood clots obstruct circulation and, if not dissolved, can ultimately lead to paralysis and death, an unreconciled church community represents a spiritually lethal condition. Father Cantalamessa presents an examination of conscience for personal responsibility for “the refusal to forgive, lasting hostility and the bitterness, wrath, anger, slander, and malice.”

There are more and more leading cultural indicators that public conversation is becoming disproportionately confrontational, hostile, derisive and insulting. Regrettably, for some time, this cultural trend has been becoming visible in some quarters of church life. Such signs of diminishing civility in society which the late Cardinal Francis George of Chicago (d. 2015) once described in terms of “public irritation, undignified rage, raw ambition, lack of basic honesty and plain rudeness” have been making subversive inroads within the life of the church itself.

Acrimony, accusation, the impugning of motives, and name-calling for too often displace charity, humility and love for the truth as well as carrying a potential threat to the eclesial bonds of unity.

Consequently, instead of standing as a countercultural sign of unity and communion, the witness of the Church community itself can be seriously impaired and compromised.

“Unitatis Redintegratio” (“The Decree on Ecumenism,” 1965) identified Christian unity as a principal concern of the Second Vatican Council. Besides contradiction, Christian unity as the inherent scandal, a divided Christianity obstructs evangelization, the mission of “preaching the gospel to every creature.” (UR, n. 1)

The Decree notes that “the faithful should remember that they promote unity among Christians better, that indeed they live it better, when they try to live closer lives according to the Gospel.” (UR, n. 7) Love, forgiveness, reconciliation, peace, and communion are indispensable characteristics of the Church.

From the perspective of the search for unity, Pope St. Paul VI treated the deleterious impact of divisions among Christians on the power of evangelization in “Evangelii Nuntiandi.” (“On Evangelization in the Modern World,” 1975) “As far as the followers of Christ are the best of the credibility of Christians and of Christ himself.”

Evangelization entails an “image of people who are mature in the faith capable of finding a meeting-point beyond the real tensions, thanks to the shared, disinterested search for truth.” By contrast, evangelization is sabotaged by “the image of a people divided and separatist by unifying quarrels.” (EN, n. 77)

In this regard, “A People Made One,” the 1999 pastoral letter of the Catholic bishops of Kentucky on ecumenism, cautioned about the lack of unity in relationships among Catholics themselves. The will to have personal views dominate may at times undermine a vital principle endemic to the “Decree on Ecumenism”: “unity is necessary in essentials: “freedom in the various forms of spiritual life and discipline, in the variety of liturgical rites, and even in the theological school of one’s own and in all things that lie outside charity.” (UR, n. 4)

“A People Made One” stressed a sensitive area when it stated that “is sometimes spiritual ecumenism and the ecumenism of repentance find their greatest need within the churches themselves and not only between members of separate traditions.”

Otherwise, there is an alarming prospect to be faced—“Our own disunity aggravates the disunity found among all.”

Msgr Ronald Ketteler is director of ecumenism, episcopal vicar to the Messenger and professor of theology at Thomas More University.
Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit

The readings for the second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A: 1 Samuel 3:1b-10, 19:1 Corinthians 6:12c-13a, 17-20 and John 1:35-42.

As we begin Ordinary Time again, the Church gives us the opportunity to study St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, the epistle that opens the second cycle of the liturgical calendar. In this file from the 1969 translation, Paul (who bears the name of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, who grew up there as Edith Stein when the city was known as Breslau) challenges his Christian friends to understand that being baptized into the name of Christ means that the individual should be a witness, even if it means a sacrifice of personal freedom. That Paul Maciej Zi ba was a witness, even if it means a sacrifice of personal freedom, is clear from the spiritual reactor core of the Polish Dominican province. His witness will increasingly step forward to bring John Paul's vision come alive in Polish Catholicism. That was no small part by Father Zi ba.

Father Maciej Zi ba, O.P. (1954-2020)

Father Maciej Zi ba, O.P., died in his native Wroclaw, Poland, on December 31. The birthplace of Pope Francis, the Holy See had made a related announcement on the Feast of the Epiphany, Family Day. He is buried in the Holy See's booklet, Family and Life promulgated by Pope Francis on September 8, 2021: this one to “bear witness to family love.”

After surprising the Church only a few weeks ago with the announcement of a Year of St. Joseph, which began Dec. 8, Zi ba quickly became one of whose temples were reportedly a thousand priestesses — for instance the Polish pope's apostolic exhortation. “Amoris Laetitia” is not a controversy-free document. Much has been made of Pope Francis' seeming pastoral accommodation regarding the availability of the sacrament for the divorced and remarried in one of the document's footnotes, and there will be some who will immediately dismiss this year and its opportunities because of it. Yet the pages upon pages of analysis written about paragraph 133 and its accompanying annotation, to ignore a concrete opportunity to focus on, encourage and strengthen family life, especially during this time of pandemic, would be detrimental to the mission of the Church.

Indeed, while “Amoris Laetitia” may have its challenging passages, the exhortation is, as the Our Sunday Visitor Editorial Board wrote in 2016, practical, accessible and “highly relevant and inspiring coping families and families in the trenches of everyday life.” It is, we said, “rich in practical advice and conveys a real understanding of humanity in all its complexities and failings.” We added

Why we need to embrace the year on family love

(Continued on page 10)

Before the feast of St. Joseph on March 19 — which also happens to be the signing of “Amoris Laetitia,” a post-synodal apostolic exhortation on marriage and family life published in the wake of two synods that took place in 2015 and 2016 — the year on family love, technically called Year “Amoris Laetitia Family” begins and will conclude on June 22, 2022. It will culminate with the occasion of the World Meeting of Families 2022 in Rome.

According to the dicastery’s announcement, the family “deserves a year of celebrations, so that it can be placed at the center of commitment and care from every pastoral and ecclesial reality.” It added that the year “aims to reach families in every country around the world through various spiritual, pastoral and cultural proposals that can be implemented within parishes, dioceses, universities, ecclesial movements and family associations.

In celebration of the year, the dicastery is encouraging five approaches: that the content of “Amoris Laetitia” be more widely shared; that the sacrament of marriage be proclaimed as a gift that contains the “transforming power of human love”; that families be enabled to actively evangelize and care for their own members within; that young people are made more aware of “information on the truth of love and in the gift of self”; and that outreach be extended to all members of the family, young and old, in all walks of life. In all ways, it is seeking to extend and promote the message of family life found in Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation.

“Amoris Laetitia” is a controversy-free document. Much has been made of Pope Francis’ seeming pastoral accommodation regarding the availability of the sacrament for the divorced and remarried in one of the document’s footnotes, and there will be some who will immediately dismiss this year and its opportunities because of it. Yet the pages upon pages of analysis written about paragraph 133 and its accompanying annotation, to ignore a concrete opportunity to focus on, encourage and strengthen family life, especially during this time of pandemic, would be detrimental to the mission of the Church.

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Why we need to embrace the year on family love

(Continued on page 9)
Various outreaches served up a merry Christmas in the Diocese of Covington with plenty of platters and packages. Whether full-handed or full-stomached, those in need did not go hungry this year.

Parish Kitchen, an outreach of Catholic Charities, served up the annual Christmas Day dinner that normally takes place at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center, courtesy of McHale’s Events and Catering. For over 35 years, Chuck McHale has provided the meal through The Sunday Morning Club of Kenton County, serving the homeless and poor in Covington. Due to COVID-19 restrictions this year, the club had to forgo the visit with Santa Claus, Christmas presents, take-home groceries and other festivities. However, they still decided to provide a meal. They reached out to the Parish Kitchen. Alan Pickett, director, agreed to have the Kitchen serve as a distribution point for a meal that McHale’s prepared. Volunteers from The Sunday Morning Club and various other organizations filled takeout containers, distributing from the regular walk-up window and a drive-through pickup in the front of the building. The kitchen remained open 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

After they served 400 guests and closed their doors, two full meals remained, which McHale’s donated for distribution at a later date in the kitchen’s daily cycle.

Mindy Garcia, Parish Kitchen associate, was present from the normal staff. She said she enjoyed “just being here, on Christmas, and being able to serve those who needed to be served.”

“It was cool to see a bunch of people work together to serve that need.”

The Rose Garden Home Mission in Covington also brought Christmas cheer to many local families, giving away toys to 925 children from 385 families. Each family also received a ham or turkey dinner, all donated to the Franciscan Daughters of Mary for distribution. Larger families came in a day or two ahead of time to prevent crowding, and the sisters held the event outside under a tent due to COVID-19 restrictions. Franciscan Daughter of Mary Mother Seraphina Quinlan said the setting worked so well that she plans to repeat it in coming years.

Toys, clothes and winter coats came in abundance to the sisters in the weeks prior to the giveaway, and Mother Seraphina said it was all by word of mouth rather than advertising.

“It seemed as if the Lord multiplied what we had, because in the beginning of the day it didn’t seem like we had enough, and yet we had 25 cases of leftovers at the end,” she said. The sisters gave the leftovers to a few churches for distribution.

“It was a great blessing, a beautiful event,” said Mother Seraphina.
Catherine Tizziani, mother of the late Father Mario Tizziani, dies just weeks after her son’s death

Monica Yoamans
Editorial Assistant

Just one day shy of two weeks after the death of her son, Father Mario Tizziani, Catherine M. ‘Katie’ (Gabriel) Tizziani, age 86, died in Toronto, Ohio on Jan. 8. Mrs. Tizziani was born March 23, 1934 in Apollo, Penn., the daughter of the late Antonio Gabriel and Sophie (Budzelik) Gabriel Carr. Mrs. Tizziani had been married to Lino John Tizziani who predeceased her in 1997. They had raised five children. She was a member of St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church in Toronto. Mrs. Tizziani had been a homemaker and in the past had tended bar at Margaret’s Café and at the Toronto American Legion. She was also a caregiver to many residents of Toronto. His mother had known he was going to be a priest before he did, noted Father Tizziani in a past interview. “You’re going to be a priest. I’ve known it my whole life,” she told Father Tizziani as he gathered the family to share his decision to enter the seminary.

In an interview about Father Tizziani’s ordination to the priesthood, Mrs. Tizziani told the Messenger, “Any dead bug or bird he would bury and make crosses out of popsicle sticks. It’s just meant to be. We couldn’t be happier.”

In an interview before his ordination to the transitional diaconate, Father Tizziani expressed that he knew of mother loved and supported his decision to become a priest. “The tears that my mother and my family will shed at my ordination — and like a good Italian family, I expect there will be some — will be out of joy,” he said. Surviving Mrs. Tizziani are daughters Gina (Joe) Motto and Esther Anderson of Toronto; sons, Daniel (Maggie) of Toronto and Anthony (Lisa) of Conklin, New York; a brother, Joe (Toni) Gabriel of Pawley’s Island, SC as well as 12 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Besides her husband and son, Father Mario, Mrs. Tizziani had been predeceased by a grandson, Jason Motto, a sister Ramona Werner, a brother Leonard Gabriel, her son-in-law Tom Anderson and a brother-in-law Gino Tizziani.

A funeral Mass took place January 13 at St. Joseph Catholic Church, Toronto, OH, with burial following in the Toronto Union Cemetery. Memorial donations in her memory may be sent to St. Cecilia Catholic School, 5313 Madison Pike, Independence, KY 41015 or to St. Joseph Catholic Church, 1225 N River Ave., Toronto, OH 43964.

During his ordination ceremony Father Tizziani presented his mother with a maniturgium, a cloth used to wipe the holy oils from the new priest’s hands after consecration by the bishop at ordination. Traditionally, the mother of a priest is buried with this cloth in her hands. Upon greeting the Lord in heaven, he will say “I have given you life, what have you given to me?” The mother then presents the cloth and replies “I have given you my son.”

Prayer and penance for life
(Continued from page 1)

platform seeks to protect and expand access to abortion. Bishop Foys encourages those in the pro-life movement to persevere in their peaceful efforts to protect the unborn and to focus not only on changing laws but also on changing hearts and minds. Much of that work is done in schools, homes and the sidewalks outside of abortion clinics.

“We have been fighting this fight for 48 years this year,” he said. “And in all that time, we still have not seen the Roe v. Wade decision overturned. No matter who is in office, we must be vigilant in our cause for life. No matter who is in office, we have to work no less seriously for the right to life in all its stages.”

Ultimately, he said, “…the life of an unborn child is not a political football. This is a life issue and a moral issue, not a political issue. It’s the difference between right and wrong. Abortion is morally wrong; to take anyone’s life is wrong, period.”

It is up to the individual, Bishop Foys emphasized, to act and speak from the heart for this issue. “What have we done in the last 48 years to change hearts and to change minds, by our own witness and our own example?” he said. “We continue the fight.”
Remembering Patricia DeVous, universal mom and best friend

Patricia "Patty" M. DeVous, mother of Father Phillip DeVous, died Jan. 2, 2021 at the age of 66. She was a devoted Catholic, wife and mother, quilter, friend and outdoorswoman.

She was born Jan. 26, 1954 in Eldorado, Illinois to the late Charlie and Martha (Siebert) Kuhn. Family was very important to her, and remained so throughout her life. On Feb. 26, 1972 she married Bill DeVous, and moved to the country. They would have celebrated 49 years in February. The couple had three children: Father Phillip, of Flemingsburg, Ky; Rachel, who died of cancer in 2017 and Laura. She also had a niece and three grandchildren.

After she married Bill, Mrs. DeVous became an avid horsewoman, riding and owning horses for the last 30 years. She even owned a small cabin down in the Shawnee Forest in Illinois, where she hosted a riding camp.

A creative woman, she painted and cultivated skills on the piano and guitar. "She was everyone's universal mom and best friend," said her son, Father DeVous. "She created worlds within worlds and connections within connections." Many of these revolved around her quilting friends, horse riding friends and her parish community at St. Kateri Church in Ridgway, Illinois. She was very active in the ministry of charity around the parish as chairwoman of the annual carnival, member of the school board, Bible studies, prayer groups and server at many funeral dinners.

Hospitality was one of her key charisms, and Mrs. DeVous found joy in creating large and delicious meals. "She loved to have people over; and even when she was at your house, she loved to cook," said Father DeVous. "Your dad may build the house, but your mom makes it a home."

She was a devoted stay-at-home mother and hostess, working the occasional job here and there.

Mrs. DeVous loved to travel, and took many trips with her closest friends and Father DeVous. Some of her favorites included Tuscany, Italy and Santa Barbara, California, with Father DeVous and Vermont with her girl-friends. "She'd go just about anywhere," said Father DeVous. "If you were putting a trip together, she was quite likely to give it a try at least one time."

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Patricia DeVous
(Continued from page 9)

Father DeVous said he will cherish those photos from their adventures together, as well as all the quilts she gave him. “She would always give me her best quilts. I walk around the house, putting my hand on one of her quilts she made with her own hands, and say, ‘Eternal rest grant unto her’.”

Mrs. DeVous is survived by her husband Bill, son Father Phillip, daughter Laura Devous of Ridgway, grand-children Carrie, Elliott and Houston, son-in-law Danny Page, and sisters Karla, Ginnie and Michelle. She was preceded by her daughter, Rachel Page, and brother, Bill Kuhn.

Visitation and took place Jan. 5, 2021 at the Cox & Son Funeral Home in Ridgway, followed by a funeral Mass at St. Kateri Catholic Church in Ridgway. A graveside service was also held Jan. 8 at St. Joseph Cemetery in Ridgway.

The year on family love
(Continued from page 9)

that the document “will be effective in offering support to couples and families and in receiving and sustaining their efforts to live as Christ intends.”

Five years on, as the challenges facing family life have become more acute, these statements remain true. For decades now, the number of people getting married in the Church has become fewer and fewer, and the decline extends to the number of children who are baptized. Many of those who do get baptized are not well formed in the faith, and we know that by the end of high school, many of them will have left the Church. In recent years in this country, we also have seen the redetermination of marriage and the elevation of a cultural idea of gender over biological sex.

Faithful, well-catechized families are critical to the mission of the Church and can help to reverse these trends. Within the family, the Gospel is lived out and passed on in word and in deed. Vocations are introduced. Virtue is nurtured. This most basic cell of society is where the faith can flourish, if it is properly tended to. And if there’s anything the coronavirus pandemic has taught us about family life, it’s that most of the time, we’re not giving it proper attention. As COVID-19 has forced us to slow down and be together, we are reminded that building up our domestic churches should be a priority.

This is the potential that the Year “Amoris Laetitia Family” brings with it. May we allow it to be a blessed time.

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Our bodies are temples
(Continued from page 5)

Paul’s words: “You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”

“The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body . . . Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!”

“You do not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

Father Stephen Bankemper is pastor, St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Ft. Thomas, Ky.
**Bishops call for an end to the federal death penalty**

WASHINGTON — A joint statement from four U.S. bishops who head different committees of the U.S. bishops called for an end to the federal use of the death penalty as “long past time.” We renew our constant call to President Donald Trump and Acting Attorney General (Jeffrey) Rosen: Stop these execu-
cions,” said the Jan. 11 statement from Archbishops Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the bishops’ Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, and Joseph F Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities. “Following a year where the federal government, for the first time, executed more people than all 50 states combined, there are three more federal executions scheduled this week,” the two archbishops said. Federal executions resumed last year after a 17-year reprieve. Archbishop Coakley and Naumann also called on President-elect Joe Biden and Congress to “make this a priority One vehicle to accomplish this in federal law is the Federal Death Penalty Prohibition Act. In addition, we ask President-elect Biden to declare a moratorium on federal executions and to commute current federal death sentences to terms of imprisonment. It is long past time to abolish the death penalty from our state and federal laws,” they said.

**Pope says he was ‘astonished’ by violence at Capitol**

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis offered prayers for the peo-
ple of the United States “shaken by the recent siege on Congress” and prayed for the five people who lost their lives “in these dramatic moments” when protesters stormed the Capitol Jan. 6. The pope insisted that “violence is always self-destructive. Nothing is gained by violence and so much is lost.” The pope urged government leaders “and the entire population to maintain a high sense of responsibility in order to soothe tempers, promote national reconciliation and protect the democratic values rooted in American society.” And he prayed that “Mary Immaculate, patroness of the United States of America,” would “help keep alive the culture of peace, always self-destructive. Nothing is gained by violence and so much is lost.” The pope urged government leaders “and the entire population to maintain a high sense of responsibility in order to soothe tempers, promote national reconciliation and protect the democratic values rooted in American society.” And he prayed that “Mary Immaculate, patroness of the United States of America,” would “help keep alive the culture of peace, always self-destructive. Nothing is gained by violence and so much is lost.” He prayed that “Mary Immaculate, patroness of the United States of America,” would “help keep alive the culture of peace, always self-destructive. Nothing is gained by violence and so much is lost.”

**Federal appeals court continues hold on Arkansas laws restricting abortion**

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — A federal appeals court reaffirmed a hold on an Arkansas law that bans abortions 18 weeks into pregnancy and another banning an abortion from being per-
formed when a fetus is detected to have Down syndrome. The Jan. 5 ruling from a three-judge panel of the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals keeps in place a federal judge’s 2019 ruling that temporarily blocked the state from enforcing the laws. The court said the Arkansas statutes are governed under estab-
lished case law that restricts undue burdens on women to seek an abortion. Its decision cited outcomes of previous cases including those settled by the U.S. Supreme Court, Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge has defended the laws in court. She said she planned to seek further review of the deci-
sion. “The Supreme Court must limit and ultimately overturn Casey and I plan to do everything in my power to see that they do,” Rutledge said in a statement referring to the Planned Parenthood v. Casey decision in 1992 that prohibited regula-
tions that created an “undue burden” on women seeking an abortion.

**Federal appellate court blocks order on refugee resettlement**

WASHINGTON — A federal circuit court of appeals said a Trump administra-
tive order that would allow state and local government officials to reject refugees in their jurisdiction violated long-standing resettlement practices. The ruling came from the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals upholds a preliminary injunction granted by a federal judge in Maryland—a year ago who deter-
minated that the executive order could be seen as unlawful because it grants states and localities veto power that “has the fox in the box of clear congressional intent” established in the 1980 Refugee Act. The 28-page ruling came in a case filed by three faith-based resettlement agencies — HIAS, a Jewish organiza-
tion, Church World Service, and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service — that said their work would be directly impacted and harmed by the executive order. It means that resettlement agencies no longer must approach each individual government jurisdiction in which they help refugees put down roots. Overall, 42 governors and more than 100 local authorities had agreed to continue refugee resettlement. Refugee resettle-
ment agencies welcomed the ruling.

**Family ministry begins with listening, recognizing grace, cardinal says**

VATICAN CITY — Through baptism and the sacrament of marriage, Catholics families have a special grace and a gift to the Church even if, too often, that grace and gift have not been recognized, said Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life. Writing in the Vatican newspaper, the cardinal welcomed Pope Francis’ announce-
ment Dec. 27 that in March the Catholic Church would begin a special year dedicated to the family and to deeper reflection on “Amoris Laetitia,” the pope’s 2016 apostolic exhortation on fam-
ily life. During the COVID-19 pandemic, with its “very serious social, health, relational and spiritual difficulties,” he said, “the family has shown itself to be the fundamental and origi-
nal ‘glue’ that each of us needs and that must be taken care of with love, with solicitude and determination.” At the same time, in many places, the pandemic shining a light on “the weaknesses and the most urgent needs of families” and on situa-
tions that are “pastoral emergencies” calling for a response by the Church, he said. They include crises in marriages, vio-
ence in relationships, confusion about how to educate children at home, “a sense of loneliness, fear of entering marriage, poor understanding of the salutary meaning of the sacraments and, above all, an unperceived radical fracture between faith and practical life.”

**Pope amends canon law so women can be installed as lectors, acolytes**

VATICAN CITY — Recognizing “the gifts of each baptized person” — women and men — Pope Francis ordered a change to canon law and liturgical norms so that women could be for-
mally installed as lectors and acolytes. “A consolidation of practice in the Latin church has confirmed, in fact, that such lay mini-
strations, being based on the sacrament of baptism, can be entrusted to all the faithful who are suitable, whether male or female,” the pope wrote in his order changing canon law. The document, issued “motu proprio” (on his own accord), was published by the Vatican Jan. 11. It changes the wording of Canon 230, paragraph 1. In most discussions around the world — and at the Vatican as well — women and girls have been lectors at Mass and have served at the altar for decades. That service “has the faculty to confer priestly ordination on women” since Jesus chose only men as his apostles. But with “nonordained ministries it is possible, and today it seems opportune, to over-
come this reservation” of allowing only men to be formally and permanently instituted as lectors and acolytes.

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