"The sign of an active parish, that the parish is indeed alive with Jesus Christ, is bringing in new members, assisting people to hear God’s voice," said Bishop Roger Foys at this year’s Rite of Election.

"COVID-19 has affected the lives of everyone and every institution, including our parishes, but despite this pandemic you are here. My congratulations to the parish priests and all the people in the parishes you represent, for not only keeping the faith but sharing the faith."

In two services at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Feb. 21, 46 candidates and 32 catechumens from 23 parishes were presented to Bishop Foys for the Rite of Election. Candidates are baptized Christians seeking full communion with the Catholic Church. Catechumens are unbaptized persons converting to Catholicism. During the Rite of Election Catechumens are accepted as this year’s “elect” — God’s chosen people — and are enrolled in the Book of the Elect. Both the elect and the candidates will enter into full communion with the Church during the Easter Vigil, April 3, at their parish.

During his homily, Bishop Foys explained that the word “election” as it is used in the Church, is quite different from what is familiar in the United States and politics.

“When we hear ‘election’ we think of opposing candidates vying for the same position. One will be a winner. That is not how we mean election in the context of what we do,” he said. “You have been chosen by God, you have been elected for a new life.”

Bishop Foys acknowledged that on this day, in cathedral churches all over the world, the chosen come together with their sponsors and pastors to “answer God’s call and be enrolled in the body of believers.”

“You have been chosen by God, you have been elected for a new life.”

"Each of you has your own story about what it was that you recognized as the call from God — what it was that has led you to this time, to this place, on this day to answer that call to join the community of believers in the Catholic Church,” Bishop Foys said. “We thank God you are being chosen and for you answering God’s embrace now for a new life."
Lent — a time to go into the desert, to grow closer to God and others

Laura Keener

As the season of Lent began Ash Wednesday, some were questioning, “Why do we need another season of Lent, we’ve been living Lent for an entire year?”

“Yes, we’ve had a Lent this last year where our lives have been upset, when we have been deprived of things we have taken for granted; everyone has had to make sacrifices in one way or another,” said Bishop Roger Foys in his homily Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17. “We need another Lent, because at the end of Lent we are supposed to be better than when we went in. I think that’s a question we can all ask ourselves, are we any better, are we any different, now than a year ago March? Has anything good come from this pandemic in our own lives — in our spiritual lives?”

Lent is the penitential season of prayer, sacrifice and almsgiving — 40 days leading up to Holy Week when the Church commemorates the final days of Jesus’ suffering and death on the Cross, culminating in the salvation of mankind with Christ’s resurrection at Easter. During Lent, the faithful are to examine their lives and to determine what they can give up doing or begin doing that will make them a more faithful follower of Christ. During the Second Vatican Council the Church fathers decided to allow the faithful to determine what sacrifice they would make during Lent, instead of the Church prescribed 40 days of fasting and partial abstention.

“The Church says you know what will be a sacrifice for you, you know what will make you a better person at the end of the Lenten season,” Bishop Foys said. “That’s the whole purpose of Lent, to work on our relationship with God, to at the end of Lent be closer to the Lord than we were at the beginning, to enter the desert, to focus on the Lord and not on ourselves.”

In recent years Bishop Foys has turned to the internet searching for sacrifices people are “giving up.” Here are some of the popular finds that he found noteworthy this year.

“Some will surprise you. They surprise me,” he said.

1. Guilt: I’m loved by Jesus and he has forgiven my sins.
2. Doubt: Believe that God has a plan for you that is beyond anything that you can imagine — doubting God is a sin.
3. Pride: Scripture says pride goes before the fall — blessed are the humble.
4. Envy: I am blessed, my value is not found in my possessions but in my relationship with my heavenly Father.
5. Comparison: ‘There is no one else like me.”
6. Fear: God is on my side. In him I am more than a conqueror.
7. Blame: I am not going to pass the buck, I am going to take responsibility for my actions.
8. Gossip and negativity: Gossip is a great sin in our society; avoid those who are negative.
9. Worry: God is in control and worrying will not help.
10. Pride: Scripture says pride goes before the fall — blessed are the humble.

Envy: I am blessed, my value is not found in my possessions but in my relationship with my heavenly Father.

Today is a new day and the past is behind us.

Fear: God is on my side. In him I am more than a conqueror.

The need to please everyone: There is only one we need to please — God.

Envy: I am blessed, my value is not found in my possessions but in my relationship with my heavenly Father.

Impatience: God’s timing is the perfect timing.

Sense of entitlement: The world does not owe me anything — I should live in humility and grace.

Bitterness and resentment: The only person I hurt by holding on to bitterness and resentment is myself.

Blame: I am not going to pass the buck, I am going to take responsibility for my actions.

Gossip and negativity: Gossip is a great sin in our society; avoid those who are negative.

Comparison: ‘There is no one else like me.”

Fear of failure: You don’t succeed without failure; just make sure when you fail you fall forward.

Spirit of poverty: Believe that with God there is always more than enough.

Feeling of unworthiness: How often do we not volunteer for something because we feel we aren’t good enough, you are fearfully and wonderfully made by your creator.

Doubt: Believe that God has a plan for you that is beyond anything that you can imagine — doubting God is a sin.

Self-pity: God comforts us in our sorrow.

Pride: Scripture says pride goes before the fall — blessed are the humble.

Worry: God is in control and worrying will not help.

“If we gave up even half of these, think of how much better all of us would be at the end of Lent,” Bishop Foys said. “We would be different people. We would be more open to God and the Spirit in our lives and more open to others.”

Time on social media, cell phones and other digital devices is another sacrifice Bishop Foys encouraged. “Too much of anything is not good.”

“Lent is a time to be about someone else other than the ‘I,’” Bishop Foys said. “It is a time to go out into the desert with the Lord and to do something during Lent that will benefit someone other than myself.”
Catholic school personnel receive second ‘shot of hope’ and more vaccination sites open in NKY as next tier approaches

Messenger staff report

As the state of Kentucky anticipates opening up, March 1, vaccinations to its third tier — tier 1C — school personnel in the Diocese of Covington received a second “shot of hope.” Tier 1C includes anyone age 60 or older, anyone age 16 or older with highest C19 risk conditions and all essential workers.

Last weekend, Feb. 20-21, nearly all Catholic school personnel in the Diocese of Covington who had received a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, received their second dose. School personnel in Mason County and Harrison County received their second doses on Wednesday, Feb. 17 and Friday, Feb. 19, respectively. The vaccinations were administered by staff from their local health department.

School personnel in Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties received their second dose on Saturday or Sunday, Feb. 20 or 21, at St. Elizabeth Healthcare Training and Harrison County received their second dose on Tuesday, Feb. 23, at the nursing home.

The vaccinations were administered by staff from their local health department.

Based on this information, over 90 percent of Catholic school personnel in the Diocese of Covington will be fully vaccinated by the second week of March.

Additionally, on Monday, Feb. 15, Governor Andy Beshear announced that child care workers have been moved to tier 1B for vaccinations and could immediately begin scheduling vaccinations. Staff members at parish preschools or childcare can now schedule individual appointments. They will need to provide an ID and proof of employment.

Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Schools, shared this information with pastors and principals, Feb. 22, in an e-mail. She also offered the following updated information from John Stanton, director of External Affairs for Kenton County Health Care:

New daily COVID-19 cases in Northern Kentucky continued to decline this week. Average daily case rates in all four counties (Boone, Campbell, Kenton, and Grant) remain in the “red” (critical) zone, however rates are very close to being downgraded to the “orange” zone. Currently there are:

— 1,960 cases who are infectious and in isolation (almost a thousand fewer than the Friday before).
— 35,229 cases who are no longer infectious.
— 230 deaths (10 more deaths since last Friday).
— 37,644 total cases of COVID-19 in Northern Kentucky since the beginning of the pandemic.

There are now four cases of the UK variant strain in NKY. All of these cases are connected through close contact, which reinforces the importance of isolation of cases and quarantining time of close contacts in preventing the spread of the virus.

The NKY vaccination infrastructure grew the week of Feb. 15-19 to include multiple vaccination sites operated by NKY Health, St. Elizabeth Healthcare and HealthPoint Family Care, along with the Kroger clinic: at the NKY Convention Center, 13 Walgreens sites and three independent pharmacies. For a full list of sites in Northern Kentucky offering vaccinations, visit: https://nkyhealth.org/individual-or-family/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19-home/covid-19-vaccination/.

While Kroger and the pharmacies focused on first doses for Phase 1B individuals age 70 and over, the other providers administered 1st and 2nd doses for this group as well as continued to provide 2nd doses to healthcare workers, first responders, and K-12 personnel (St. Elizabeth).

In coming weeks, as Phase 1B begins to slow down, some sites will be scheduling individuals from Phase 1C, with people age 60 and over being prioritized. It was also announced that the federal government will be doubling its vaccine doses to the Walgreens and independent pharmacies (to approximately 200 doses per site per week) and increasing allotments to the state by 20 percent. Kentucky will start receiving 87,560 doses per week starting next week.

Through Feb. 18, the following progress in vaccinating Northern Kentuckians has been made:

— 53,377 doses of vaccine have been administered to NKY residents (over 17 percent of the eligible population ages 16 and over), which is 11,000 more doses since last week.
— 49,427 (12.3 percent) of NKY residents have received both doses - an increase of approx. 7,000 since the week prior. 16,930 (5.1 percent) of NKY residents have received both doses - an increase of approx. 5,000 since the week prior.

Demand for vaccinations in NKY continues to be high. Vaccine supply is increasing from both the federal and state levels to our region, although there are still not yet enough doses coming in to meet the demand. However, this should continue to improve over time.

This past week, Feb. 22-26, two new sites — Walmart in Alexandria and Kroger Little Clinic in Walton — started providing vaccinations.

Vaccination clinics will continue focusing on residents age 70 and over and childcare workers, and some sites may be able to begin scheduling individuals age 60 and over. Walgreens/CVS will finish vaccinations for long-term care residents and staff. In addition, NKY Health will be sending nurses to vaccinate low-income elderly residents in senior living settings as part of its vulnerable populations outreach.

Coronavirus Report (as of Monday, Feb. 22)

The information below includes reported cases from the Curia, schools, parishes, organizations and religious houses in the Diocese of Covington. There are over 8,000 students in diocesan schools, not including administrators, faculty and staff and hundreds of priests, employees and volunteers at the Curia and in parishes, organizations and religious houses.

Positive Cases

Active positive cases: 47

Recovered positive cases: 781

Total ever positive cases: 828

Currently Self-quarantined

Close Contacts: 119

Close Contacts with COVID case in household: 68

DPA makes progress as video nears completion

The 2021 Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal continued its progress, Feb. 22, with the recording of the DPAA video. Mark Czarnik and the crew from A1 Professional Video were on site at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption recording Bishop Roger Foy. Mr. Czarnik said that several of the other people who will be sharing their life stories will have materials in the mail to support the video. The DPAA video will be shown in all parishes on Announcement Weekend, March 20–21, and will be available for viewing on the diocesan website, www.covcatholic.org. This year’s theme is “For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the World, but that the World might be saved through Him.” (John 3:17) is taken from the Gospel reading that weekend.

Police investigation finds Holy Trinity School ‘not in danger’

Messenger staff report

Holy Trinity School, Bellevue, received through its website a threat of violence, Tuesday, Feb. 16. Katie Jacobs, principal, immediately called Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Catholic Schools and the Bellevue Police Department, who opened an investigation into the threat and increased security at the school. Parents were notified via e-mail that evening.

The next day, Wednesday, Feb. 17, the investigation led to a Boone County juvenile being taken into custody by Bellevue City Police in a cooperative with Boone County Police. At the school, Bellevue Police and Mayor Charlie Cleves made a protective presence around the school campus while students and teachers went about the school day.

Based on the details of the investigation it was determined that Holy Trinity School was not in any danger and everything returned to normal, Thursday, Feb. 18.

“We thank our law enforcement officers for taking serious any threat against our school and pray that God will continue to protect them as they work to keep our school community a safe place to learn,” said Ms. Jacobs.

COVID-19 vaccination sites

As of February 26, 2021

1st dose – an increase of approx. 6,000 since the week prior.

Currently 154,060 doses have been administered.

2nd dose – an increase of approx. 5,000 since the week prior.

Currently 95,485 doses have been administered.

NKY residents (ages 16 and older) have received 1st and 2nd doses for this group as well as continued to provide 2nd doses to healthcare workers, first responders, and K-12 personnel (St. Elizabeth).

In coming weeks, as Phase 1B begins to slow down, some sites will be scheduling individuals from Phase 1C, with people age 60 and over being prioritized.

For a full list of sites in Northern Kentucky offering vaccinations, visit: https://nkyhealth.org/individual-or-family/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19-home/covid-19-vaccination/.

Bishop’s Schedule

Feb. 27
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 4:30 p.m.

Feb. 28
Mass followed by baptism, Cathedral Basilica, Covington, 10 a.m.

March 1
Individual meeting, 10 a.m. (virtual)

March 2
Funeral, St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, 10 a.m.
The Good Samaritan… ‘the image of Jesus Christ’

From a narrative perspective, the parables of Jesus engaged the hearer in a dynamic of “imaginative shock.” In the encounter with the divine love disclosed in such “stories of God,” mistakes and assumptions about one’s relationship to God and to others are shattered and turned upside down. The parables are a “horizon that then opens up calling for an ensuing moment of conversion enabled to reframe life and the world in a radically new way. Now reality can be seen in the light of the kingdom of God.

Of all the parables of Jesus, the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) illustrates that parable’s revolutionary teaching on the meaning of “neighbor.” Until that time, the concept of “neighbor” was understood as referring essentially to one’s countryman or to nationals of the same nation, race, or nationality (as in the case of the Levite), or to fellow Israelites in the community of the people of Israel. In the parable of the Samaritan, Jesus subverts this expectation. He introduces a new definition of “neighbor” that is based on the love of God and the power of divine compassion. The love of God is the true measure of “neighbor.”

Pope Benedict XVI offers a succinct summary of the meaning of “neighbor” in his comprehensive study “Parables for Preachers” (2009), in which he discusses the parables of “The Good Samaritan” (cf. Luke 10:30–37) and upheld by his strength, the Church has always been in the front line in providing charitable help so many of her sons and daughters, especially for the weak and needy. These deeds strengthen the bases of the “civilization of love and life”…

—in his theological study “Jesus of Nazareth” (2007), Pope Benedict XVI engaged in a lengthy reflection on the Parable of the Good Samaritan. His exegesis of the text highlights the conventional religious viewpoint in Jesus’ time which limited the circle of concern by defining “neighbor” as “a fellow member of one’s community.”

But, after his exegetical interpretation of the biblical meaning of the text, Pope Benedict XVI explains how the Christological standpoint was one such accommodation of the text developed by the ancient Christians. The great patristic writers identified the victim in the ditch as “The image of Everyman” and the Samaritan as “the image of Jesus Christ himself, who for us foreign and distant, has set out to take care of his wounded creature.”

Through the prism of the redemptive incarnation, the Church Fathers envision God as seeing “man alienated and helpless by the road of history and God himself becoming man’s neighbor in Jesus Christ.”

The theme of love in this parable prepares us to realize “that we are all ‘alienated,’ in need of redemption.” Moreover, the parable creates a consciousness that “we are all in need of the gift of God’s redeeming love ourselves, so that we too can become lovers in return.”


The encyclical states: “In the Church’s liturgy, in prayer, in the living community of believers, we experience the love of God, we perceive his presence, and we learn to recognize that presence in our daily lives.”

The core of Christian love is rooted in the reality that God “has loved us first, and he continues to do so; we too can respond with love.” The initiative of God’s love “makes us see and experience his love, and since he has loved us first, love can also blossom as a response within us.”

Therefore, according to “Jesus Caritas Est,” what is central to Jesus’ teaching on love is the encounter with God’s agape that weaves “faith, worship, and ethics” into “a single reality.” Agape also becomes the “foundation on which the Eucharist in for the sacrament ‘God’s own agape comes to us bodily, in order to continue his work in and through us.’”

Here Pope Benedict XVI stresses that “[w]ithout love, its non-neighbor” who is excluded from the covenant solidarity. In effect, the concept of “neighbor” has been broadened beyond the traditional understanding of the Law that had limited covenantal responsibilities to Jews and resident aliens.

In the words of Benedictines Abbot Jerome Kodel a dimension of the after-shock emerges in the unimaginable awareness that a Samaritan, one who was excluded from the covenant solidarity. In effect, the concept of “neighbor” has been broadened beyond the traditional understanding of the Law that had limited covenantal responsibilities to Jews and resident aliens.

And, there’s the shock! Jesus’ parable stands in contrast to an anticipated story line of the time, a triad of travelers with a typical cast of a priest, a Levite and an Israelite. Yet, in Jesus’ parable, “the non-neighbor” who is not an Israelite acts as neighbor to one in desperate need. Expectations are reversed — the hero lives outside covenant solidarity. In effect, the concept of “neighbor” has been broadened beyond the traditional understanding of the Law that had limited covenantal responsibilities to Jews and resident aliens.

In her comprehensive study “Parables for Preachers” (2009), Dominician Sister Barbara R. Reit states that hermeneutic of the text developed by the ancient Christians is used in the Church. Thus, in the parable of the Good Samaritan the Old Testament, New Testament, and patristic writers identified the victim in the ditch as “The image of Everyman” and the Samaritan as “the image of Jesus Christ himself, who for us foreign and distant, has set out to take care of his wounded creature.”

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All lives are consequential, for every human being is an idea of God, and everyone is a someone for whom the Son of God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, entered history. Suffering, dying—and was raised from the dead to display within history a new, glorified humanity—thus to every life, as Mrs. Loman noted in “Death of a Salesman,” “attention must be paid.” Or as C.S. Lewis reminded us in “The Weight of Glory,” “there are no ordinary people,” for everyone you meet has an eternal destiny.

Still, while every life is fascinating, some lives leave a deeper impress on history than others, and they’re all the more fascinating for it. Over seven decades, it’s been my privilege to know many such men and women. Some, I’ve worked with closely; others, including more casual acquaintances, I’ve admired from a greater distance. During my early years as a practicing editor of the weekly newspaper column, I’d occasionally recollect a consequential life shaped by untimely offices or latenights. Times move far more rapidly as life goes on, however. And as time seems to accelerate, so do the number of deaths in one’s circle of contemporaries, colleagues and friends.

In any event, earlier this year it occurred to me that I’d been writing rather a lot of obituary columns in recent years and that a collection of them, suitably edited, might make an interesting book. I’ve compiled with similar pieces written in the more distant past. My friends at Ignatius Press agreed, and the result has just been published: “Not Forgotten: Elegies for, and Reminiscences, of a Diverse Cast of Characters, Most of Them Admirable.”

The 68 small essays in the book cover a lot of territory: geographically and in terms of human personalities. There are saints I’ve known (John Paul II and martyrs whose beheading causes me to try to help advance the cause of canonization), (Franz Jagerstatter and Francis X. Ford, M.M.). There are politicians and statesmen who bent the course of history in one direction or another (Lindy Boggs, Vaclav Havel, Henry Hyde, Scoop Jackson, Max Kampelman, Pat Moynihan, Anwar Sadat, and Sargent Shriver). There are

men whose books I once read in college and graduate school who later became friends and colleagues (Peter Berger, James Billington, Avery Dulles, S.J., Leszek Kolakowski, Richard John Neuhaus, Michael Novak, and James Schall, S.J.). There are rock’n’roll legends (Denny Doherty of the Mamas and Papas, George Weigel, one longtime communist and master of the five-string banjo (Petey Seeger), and three heroes in the National Baseball Hall of Fame (Frank Robinson, Jackie Robinson, and Earl Weaver). There are princes of the Church (Bernardino Gantos, Francis George, O.M.I., Lehmyr Hueser, M.S.I., and Aaron, Jean Marie Lustiger). There is a man I once loathed and then came to love (Charlie Colson). There are fellows, scarier, more talented than I (Pious Ajami, Bill Buckley, Charles Krauthammer, Tom Wolfe, and Herman Wouk). And then there are my parents and my late son-in-law.

I deliberately chose the word “diverse” in my subtitle because “diversity” is getting a lot of attention these days. And I must confess that much of the “diversity” talk I hear strikes me as ideologically intoxicated: “diversity” means the preemptive and presumes categorization—better, pigeon-holing—of people by race, sex, nature of desire, or that fanciful and dangerous chimera, “gender.”

By contrast, virtually all the consequential lives remembered (and in most instances celebrated) in “Not Forgotten” are members of the same family: members of my own family. And the human condition and to support my family, I’ve been able to draw on the help of, among others, the religious family, the family of faith, the family of the saints, the family of the Church. And the affection I feel for those who have been so important to me is what I’m most interested in expressing in these essays.

Therefore, I’ve chosen to begin with a collection of lives of sacred influence. There will be saints in this volume, and some who were almost saints. There will be tears and joy in the stories I’m about to tell. But I’ve felt I should begin with prayer:

O Lord, I am YOUR servant.

For all their differences, the men and women in my alumnae of elegies and reminiscences all teach important lessons about what it means to live a worthy life. Some, admittedly, teach us to leave the old world behind — the road we couldn’t travel. But that is another reason why they, like those who are Lewis’s “immortal splendors,” should not be forgotten.

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

— Get to confession at least once during Lent after a thorough examination of conscience. Dr. D’Ambrosio’s book, “The Weight of Glory,” is a good place to start. (Continued on page 9)
A story of hope from Madagascar — meet Frankline and Labaladezy

Matthew’s Gospel invites us to remember that we are responsible for helping all our sisters and brothers, even those who are strangers to us. When we do this, we care for Christ. Through its Lenten “Stories of Hope” Catholic Relief Services invites us to reflect and make room in our hearts to welcome the stranger. This week we meet a couple from Madagascar.

What is your favorite show or movie? Why do you like it? Has it taught you anything new or interesting?

In Madagascar, families gather to watch puppet shows that entertain and teach. They love seeing the brightly colored puppets talk to each other, tell stories and ask the crowd questions. After each show, parents leave with new information to help their families.

Half of all children in Madagascar are undernourished, meaning they don’t have enough nutritious food to stay healthy. Parents want their children to grow up healthy and strong, and the puppet shows give them new knowledge they can use right away to make sure that happens. Community health workers trained by CRS use the puppets to teach families about how doctor visits, hand washing and rainbow foods — different colored foods like tomatoes and carrots that have important vitamins and nutrients — are necessary to stay healthy.

Frankline and Labaladezy have eight children. Their youngest child, Thorin, is almost a year old. While Frankline was pregnant with Thorin, she and her husband Labaladezy watched the puppet shows and learned new ways to support Thorin’s growth and development. When Thorin was born,

2 tbs. fair trade olive oil
1 small onion, diced
1 medium tomato, diced
1 clove garlic
1 tsp. fresh ginger, minced
3 cups packed collard greens or kale
1 cup rice
2 cups water
Salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil in medium-sized pot. Add onion, tomato, garlic and ginger, and sauté until just tender. Add collard greens or kale, and stir 1 minute. Add rice, water, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Cover and cook on medium heat for 25 minutes or until water is absorbed.

Serves 4-5

Greens with rice

REFLECT

What does Jesus’ teaching to “visit those who are ill” mean to you?

St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky has witnessed God’s glory through the good works of the Northern Kentucky community.

Your generosity has provided hope for a promising future for those experiencing crisis during this unprecedented time. Together, we have been able to help thousands in need remain safely in their homes in the past year. Your support ensures that those suffering are able to make ends meet and care for their families as they work toward a better tomorrow.

Thank you for being a neighbor we can count on.

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The prayer intention for March, as recommended by Pope Francis, is for the Sacrament of Reconciliation — that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God.

The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption will be broadcast on Sunday, 5:45 p.m. on station WTVL Channel 7; and on channels: over air 5-2; Spectrum 188 in Kentucky and Cincinnati Bell 21 or 291.

Bible study: The Book of Job with Father Timothy Schehr, March 8, 16 and April 6. Virtual stream from Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium through Google Meet. Cost for the study is $5. Register at covdio.org/catechesis-evangelization. Sponsored by the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization.

Catechist certification and Adult Faith Formation courses. Short instruction time online and independent study assignment. Cost is $35 per course. Open to teachers, parish catechists, diaconate aspirants and any adult who would like to expand their knowledge of the Catholic faith. Course details and online registration available at covdio.org/catechesis-evangelization.

Holy Cross District High School Mulch and Pine Straw Sale. Three kinds of mulch in 2 cubic foot bags for $4.25 per bag and pine straw for $8 per bale. All prices include free delivery and sales tax. CHCDS students will deliver mulch to homes, businesses or rental properties anywhere in Kenton, Boone and Campbell Counties starting April 15 and continuing for at least three weeks. All proceeds benefit Holy Cross District High School. To order, visit hcmulch.com or call 380-9996.

“The Eucharistic Miracles of the World Display.” St. Henry Parish, Elsmere, a display created by the work of of Blessed Carlo Acutis available for prayer and meditation through Lent; the church is open daily 9 a.m.–6 p.m.; masks and social distancing required.

Sisters of Notre Dame Women’s virtual retreat March 27-28, learn about various forms of prayer, discuss ways to integrate the prayers into your life, and meet other women interested in expanding their prayer life. Weekend retreat-298/https://www.sndky.org/newsfeed/entry/womens-retreat-298/

MISSED an edition? Current and back issues of the Messenger are available online at covdio.org/messenger. For other difficulties, contact Marilyn Steffen at (895) 390-1500 or msteffen@covdio.org.

For all employees and volunteers of the Diocese of Covington who in any way provide a safe environment for children.

Step 1: Contact parish/school institution leader to review the Policies and Procedures and fill out the application and Acceptance Form.

Step 2: Go to www.virtus.org and click on Registration. Follow the prompts to create an account and to request a background check. Selection.com is a secure site; the background check is posted on your account and you receive a copy if you request it during the registration process. You will sign up for a virtual VIRTUS class during the registration.

Step 3: Join the Virtual VIRTUS session. The day before the session, you will receive an e-mail with 4 documents attached to print. On the day of the session you will receive an invitation to join the session.

Step 4: Your account becomes active when your background check, VIRTUS session and Acceptance Form are posted on your account. You will receive 12 bulletins per year. You will receive e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletin: February bulletin: posted Sunday, Feb. 7; due Tuesday, March 2.

Virtual VIRTUS Training: Tuesday, March 2, 6:30-10 p.m.; Tuesday, March 16, 1-4:30 p.m.

How to access Virtual training: Go to www.virtus.org
- Enter id and password
- Click on Live Training on left column
- Click on pre-register for an upcoming session
- Choose your training

Note: If your training Tab is missing or you cannot access your account, contact your parish, school or institution.

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Protecting God’s Children for Adults
Virtual Safe Environment Trainings

Virtual VIRTUS Training:
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- Click on Live Training on left
- Enter id and password
- Click on pre-register for an upcoming session
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Respecting pieces of truth in every heart

Karen Kuhlman
Messenger Correspondent

Recent events in the United States have provided us with much to consider. We have a ready opinion on any topic and are often surprised to discover how strongly others disagree with our views. As Catholics, we value the solid foundation upon which our Church is built and use it for guidance when determining our positions on important issues. To our surprise, faithful Catholics, whom we know and love, rely on that same foundation to formulate positions we view as in opposition to our own. At times, it seems as if we have lost the ability to engage in civil discourse on critical issues — even with family or lifelong friends.

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

Sister Alice Gerdesman, a member of the Congregation of Divine Providence, has long taken an interest in Peace and Justice ministries. She is an advocate for victims of racism and abuse, the unheard, the hungry, the homeless, the sick, the imprisoned, the immigrant.

“Our may live in the same country,” said Sister Alice, “but we live in very separate societies and may not understand others’ lives. A commonality we share is that we all want something good to happen in our lives and those of our loved ones. If we can look at one another in that way and not as the enemy, we might see other things we have in common. People often feel that they are not heard. When we listen calmly, we might hear something with which we agree and acknowledge the pieces of truth in both of our hearts.”

Sister Alice tells us, “There are things we can do for others when we realize our role in making a situation better. God gives energy to different people to help us achieve common goals. Working together, we can weaken evil by doing good. And there is so much good. When we concentrate on that, we find good things are still the norm, even if not newsworthy.”

Sister Nancy Kordenbrock, subprioress for the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery, says it is important to remember that it is okay to have differences of opinion as long as we also have a compassionate view of people and what they have gone through.

“When discussing sensitive issues, we must be open to others’ suffering and not cut them off without knowing their troubles. Together, we may find the truth of the matter in the middle,” said Sister Nancy. Many issues are out of our control, but when the Benedictines take a look, they see many areas where they can be useful. For example, they are pro-life across the spectrum: they are pro-children, pro-elderly, pro-refugee. Sister Nancy said that the refugee situation is one that we should take a closer look at to understand why they are in refuge. Sister Nancy’s favorite Scripture quotation from Colossians lends itself to all of these issues, for it says in part, “Clothe yourselves with heartfelt mercy, kindness, humility, meekness and patience … Christ’s peace must reign in your hearts.”

Sister Shauna Bankemper, assistant provincial of the Sisters of Notre Dame of the Covington area, says that when addressing sensitive topics, we must first realize that we need one another to solve our problems.

“Whether conservative or liberal, we need that opposing view. Once we let our own strong opinions temporarily take a back seat, we can listen to another perspective and perhaps go deeper into the issue without becoming defensive,” she said. “What some call truth could be an opinion. Opinions will come and go, changing over time, but fundamental moral truths about human dignity will not change. We can always go to the magisterium of the Church for guidance and answers rooted in the Gospel, in those matters.”

For more information about consecrated life in the Diocese of Covington, contact Sister Fran Moore at (859) 392-1500.
“Who Needs Confession?” is designed for those who are not quite sure why confession is important.

Lenten prayer:
— Daily, spend your first minutes thanking God for the gift of life and offering your day to him.
— Make a decision to read some Scripture every day during Lent. If possible, plan a Lenten retreat.
— Pray the Stations of the Cross each Friday of the Lenten season by yourself or in a group.
— Make it a habit to stop (everything) up to five times a day raise your heart and your mind to God and say a short prayer: Relax with this, the words will come to you.

Lenten intercession:
— Pray each day for the intentions and health of the Holy Father for your bishop and all bishops of the Catholic Church and for your priests and deacons and for all priests and deacons.
— Pray for the millions of Christians suffering under persecution in various countries around the world.
— Pray for Christian unity — one flock and one shepherd.
— Pray for the evangelization of all those who have not yet heard and accepted the Good News about Jesus.
— Pray for your enemies. In fact, think of the person who has most hurt you or who most annoys you and spend several minutes each day thanking God for that person and asking God to bless him or her.
— Pray for an end to abortion on demand.
— Pray for pregnant women contemplating abortion.

Lenten fasting:
— Find a form of Lenten fasting that is appropriate for you, given your age, state of health and state of life. Some fast on bread and water on Wednesdays and Fridays. Others fast from sweets or alcohol throughout Lent. Some fast on one or more days per week from breakfast all the way to dinner, spending lunch hour at prayer or a noon Mass. Money saved from not buying various things may be given to an apostolate or ministry serving the physically or spiritually poor.

Lenten learning:
— Find a written biography of a saint that particularly appeals to you and read it during Lent.

Lenten intercessions:
— If married, it would be an awesome and appropriate Lenten idea to spend some special, focused time with your spouse strengthening your marriage and making praying together a more frequent occurrence.

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Lenten months:
— Pray each day for the intentions and health of the Holy Father for your bishop and all bishops of the Catholic Church and for your priests and deacons and for all priests and deacons.
— Pray for the millions of Christians suffering under persecution in various countries around the world.
— Pray for Christian unity — one flock and one shepherd.
— Pray for the evangelization of all those who have not yet heard and accepted the Good News about Jesus.
— Pray for your enemies. In fact, think of the person who has most hurt you or who most annoys you and spend several minutes each day thanking God for that person and asking God to bless him or her.
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ACCOUNT MANAGER
St. Joseph Academy, a private school operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker in Walton, KY is currently hiring a part-time Account Manager responsible for being full-time. The position requires accuracy, attention to detail, and a thorough understanding of basic accounting procedures. Competency with Quickbooks, the ability to create well-organized spreadsheets, knowledge of or a willingness to learn Donor Perfect, PayPal, and F.A.C.T.S. is also required. This position supports some administrative needs that are important to ensure we operate within budget and plan effectively for our future needs. Organizational skills are a must. A flexible work schedule will be considered. Interested applicants can submit a resume and cover letter to Sister Patricia Jean, S.J.W. Principal at principal@jwwalton.com.

CLINICAL DIRECTOR OF COUNSELING PROGRAMS
The Diocese of Covington’s Catholic Charities ministry is seeking to hire a full-time Clinical Director for our faith-based counseling programs. Fifty percent of the Clinical Director’s responsibilities involves the administrative and clinical supervision of our counseling programs, and supervising our mental health, pregnancy, and adoption programs. Duties include staff coaching, training, accountability and evaluation, programmatic quality, and quantity assurance measures. The remaining fifty percent of the Clinical Director’s responsibilities involve providing direct service outpatient counseling. Candidate requirements include:
- actively practicing Roman Catholic in good standing with the Church;
- a Master's degree in Social Work (preferred) or Counseling;
- a minimum of five years' clinical counseling experience;
- three years of management or supervisory experience;
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker certification (preferred), or Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor with supervision designation or supervisor certification eligible;
- previous experience with diverse populations, which may include children, adults, couples, families, those with mental illness and substance use disorders, life transitions, all income levels, which may include children, adults, couples, families, those with mental illness and substance use disorders, life transitions, all income levels, and various cultural backgrounds.
- experience with DSM 5;
- an ability to perform all the duties of an independent therapist, and to work either independently or collaboratively.

Salary and benefits are competitive. To apply, or to nominate a candidate, email or fax a letter of interest, a comprehensive resume, and a minimum of five references with their contact information to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR at skoplyay@covdio.org, fax 859-392-1589.

BUSINESS MANAGER
St. Henry District High School is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Business Manager. Responsibilities include cash management and accounts payable for multiple accounts, Virtus coordinator, payroll and human resources, tuition management, diocesan reports, and monthly/quarterly financial reports. Must be familiar with Quickbooks accounting software, Google apps including Docs and Sheets, spreadsheet creation, and data management. Applicants must have previous bookkeeping experience degree preferred. Send resume and cover letter to skoplyay@covdio.org.

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(859) 392-1589
skoplyay@covdio.org, fax 859-392-1589.

CARENET
Care Net Pregnancy Services of NKY seeks a full-time administrative assistant with advanced skills in Quickbooks and Excel. Part-time, Cold Spring, Ky. Email cover letter, resume & salary requirements to info@carenetnky.org.

MAINTENANCE HELP (PART-TIME)
Bentwood Hills Condominiums in Wilder is seeking an individual to fill a part-time maintenance position. For additional information call (859) 431-3764.

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PRINCIPAL
Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School (www.ihm-ky.org) located in Burlington KY, is seeking a new principal to begin July 1, 2021. We are a 2006 and 2018 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence, deeply rooted in our Catholic faith. Immaculate Heart of Mary School cooperates with parents in providing quality education to its students, regarding their religious, physical, emotional, social and educational development. Together we foster Catholic values that will guide students to become responsible citizens who embrace the Gospel Message of Jesus Christ.

We strive to develop a positive school climate that is built on a culture of safety, respect, trust and social and emotional support.

The successful candidate will be a practicing Roman Catholic who has Kentucky certification or can become eligible for certification. The principal will oversee a staff of 36 and a student body of over 400 in preschool and grades pre-K through 8.

Salary and benefits are competitive. To apply, or to nominate a candidate, email or fax Stephen Koplyay at skoplyay@covdio.org, (859) 392-1589. Candidates should include a letter of interest, a comprehensive resume, and a minimum of five (5) professional references. EOE
Word change in missal doxology takes effect on Ash Wednesday

WASHINGTON — A change in wording to the concluding doxology of orations in the Roman Missal, from “one God, for ever and ever” to “God, for ever and ever,” took effect on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17. A Feb. 4 memo to bishops from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Divine Worship said the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments wrote to the English-speaking bishops’ conferences in May 2020 to point out the current English translation that concludes “in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever” is incorrect. “There is no mention of ‘one’ in the Latin, and ‘Deus’ in the Latin text refers to Christ. Therefore, the correct translation is simply ‘in the unity of the Holy Spirit. God, for ever and ever’,” the memo said, adding that the prefect of the congregation pointed out the importance of affirming Christological truth amid the religious pluralism of today’s world.

A copy of the memo was provided to Catholic News Service.

House bill recognizes fetal pain, would bar most abortions after 20 weeks

WASHINGTON — Citing leading experts in the field of fetal pain, U.S. Rep. Chris Smith, R-New Jersey, said the proposed Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act would put an end to “abortionism.” Smith called for an end to the “suffering and physical pain” of unborn babies killed by abortion after 20 weeks and said he was “incredulous” after hearing a “false and immoral” story about the bill.

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For Lent, ask if one’s life is centered on God or oneself, pope says

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Lent is a time to reconsider the path one is taking in life and to finally answer God’s invitation to return to him with one’s whole heart, Pope Francis said.

“Lent is not just about the little sacrifices we make, but about discerning where our hearts are directed,” he said, “toward God or toward myself?”

The pope’s remarks came in his homily at Mass Feb. 17 for Ash Wednesday, which included the blessing and distribution of ashes, marking the beginning of Lent for Latin-rite Catholics.

Because of ongoing measures in place to reduce the spread of the coronavirus, the Mass and distribution of ashes took place with a congregation of little more than 100 people at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter’s Basilica.

Pope Francis did not do the traditional walk from the Church of St. Anselm to the Basilica of Santa Sabina on Rome’s Aventine Hill to prevent large crowds of people from gathering along the route.

In St. Peter’s Basilica, the pope received ashes on his head from Cardinal Angelo Comastri, archpriest of the basilica, and he distributed ashes to about three dozen cardinals, as well as the priests and deacons assisting him at the Mass.

In his homily, the pope said one must bow to receive ashes sprinkled on the crown of the head, which reflects the “humble descent” one makes in reflecting on one’s life, sins and relationship with God.

“Lent is a journey of return to God,” especially when most people live each day ignoring or delaying their response to God’s invitation to pray and do something for others.

It is a time to reconsider the path we are taking, to find the route that leads us home and to rediscover our profound relationship with God, on whom everything depends,” he said.

“The journey of Lent is an exodus from slavery to freedom,” he said, noting the easy temptations along that journey, including yearning for the past, or hindered by “unhealthy attachments, held back by the seductive snare of our sins, by the false security of money and appearances, by the paralysis of our discontents. To embark on this journey, we have to unmask these illusions.”

The way back to God, he said, starts with understanding, like the prodigal son, how “we have ended up with empty hands and an unhappy heart” after squandering God’s gifts “on paltry things, and then with seeking God’s forgiveness through confession.

The pope again reminded confessors that they must be like the father in the story of the prodigal son and not use “a whip,” but open their arms in a welcoming embrace.

“The journey is not based on our own strength. Heartfelt conversion, with the deeds and practices that express it, is possible only if it begins with the primacy of God’s work” and through his grace, the pope said.

What makes people just is not the righteousness they show off to others, “but our sincere relationship with the Father,” after finally recognizing one is not self-sufficient, but in great need of him, his mercy and grace.

The pope asked people to contemplate daily the crucified Christ and see in his wounds, “our emptiness, our shortcomings, the wounds of our sin and all the hurt we have experienced.”

“We see clearly that God points his finger at no one, but rather opens his arms to embrace us,” he said.

It is in life’s most painful wounds, that God awaits with his infinite mercy because it is there “where we are most vulnerable, where we feel the most shame” and where he comes to meet his children again.

“And now,” the pope said, “he invites us to return to him, to rediscover the joy of being loved.”

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