Alleluia! With COVID cases leveling, some Mass protocols loosened — peace be with you

Laura Keener
Editor

With the decrease and continued leveling off of COVID-19 cases in the 14 counties comprising the Diocese of Covington, and with the loosening of protocols by the State of Kentucky, Bishop Roger Foys, in consultation with the diocesan COVID-19 Task Force, has eased restrictions for the celebration of liturgical services and for parish meetings and gatherings.

In an e-mail to pastors, April 14, Bishop Roger Foys announced the changes, which take effect immediately, as well as the two mandatory protocols that have not changed — mask wearing and maintaining six feet social distancing between family groups and individuals.

“I hope that our new protocols will be helpful in gradually returning to some semblance of ‘pre-COVID-19 life,’” said Bishop Foys in the e-mail to priests.

Three Mass protocols that have been loosened — which pastors and parishioners have been eager for — are the return of congregational singing, the sign of peace and greeting the pastor after Mass. As these integral parts of the Mass are reintroduced, precautions are in place to ensure safety.

Congregants must wear masks at all times, even while singing. At the pastor’s discretion, the sign of peace may be offered; 6-feet social distancing must be maintained between family groups during the sign of peace and the gesture should be in a contactless form, for example, a simple bow. It is recommended that pastors greet worshipers outside, when possible, as they exit the church. There is still no congregation before or after Mass.

Other protocols that have been lifted are:

— hymnals may be returned to the pews.
— up to three servers may be utilized.
— processions may resume (six feet spacing must be maintained).
— congregants must wear masks at all times, even while singing.
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Additionally parishes may resume in-person meetings and prayer groups with just three protocols — attendees must wear a face covering, the number of participants is limited by how many people can safely maintain a minimum of six feet distance in the gathering space, and no food may be served. Parish leaders are encouraged to sanitize the room after the gathering.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who have been fully vaccinated may resume ministry to homebound parishioners. They must wear a mask while completing their ministry.

Fully vaccinated adult parishioners may resume ministry to homebound parishioners, but are encouraged to sanitize the room before and after the gathering.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who have been fully vaccinated may resume ministry to homebound parishioners. They must wear a mask while completing their ministry.

Parish leaders are encouraged to sanitize the room after the gathering.

Once again, for the safety of parishioners and employees, all can gather but must wear a face covering and maintain six feet social distancing. Though groups are limited to the number that can safely maintain a six-foot distance, no food may be served.

With the loosening of protocols, parishes are encouraged to resume activities, but must continue to practice COVID-19 safety precautions.

All other protocols remain in effect. The updated diocesan guidance is available online at www.covdio.org/public-health-concerns.
Generous grant keeps Society of St. Vincent de Paul on track to open its fourth location

Monica Voamans  
Editorial assistant

On an overcast day the ribbon cutting ceremony took place, April 14, inside the new St. Vincent de Paul store at 3972 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring.

St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky executive director Karen Zengel welcomed attendees and thanked the community for its support of the growing ministry of St. Vincent de Paul in Northern Kentucky.

“Thanks to our Vincentians, our supporters, our customers and our staff, we are now able to open this new location to serve our neighbors living in Campbell County,” said Mrs. Zengel. This location provides “a choice food pantry for those in need of food, a thrift store for those in need of basic necessities and a convenient location for donors who bless us with their gently used material donations.”

Sales from the thrift store helps to support the continuing work of the Vincentian volunteers, who bring hope to those in need through home visits.

Casey Gillespie, St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky council president, spoke about the blessings the organization has had over the past three years in order to fulfill its plan culminating in the day’s opening. Beginning with a generous grant from the St. Therese Conference from a bequest by Robert and Mary Besse to cover most of the seed money to start and plan this project.

Mrs. Gillespie was grateful to the committee under the leadership of Mrs. Zengel to have found the “perfect location” for both the thrift store and the food pantry right next door to each other.

“We are also grateful for all the hard work of our existing and new staff that kept this opening on track despite a pandemic,” said Mrs. Gillespie.

She gave special thanks to Mrs. Zengel for helping to keep everyone on track and moving forward; thanks also to their retail operations director, Jamie Hahn; and thanked the community for its support of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and its supporters and thanked the community for its support of the growing ministry of St. Vincent de Paul in Northern Kentucky.

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The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Northern Kentucky and its supporters celebrated, April 14, the blessing and opening of its fourth Northern Kentucky store. Pictured (from left) are: Lori Hazelwood, ChaseTek-NKY Chamber ambassador; Jamie Young, Re/Max Affiliates-NKY Chamber ambassador; Msgr. Gerald Reinersman, pastor, St. Joseph Parish, Southgate; Jamie Hahn, St. Vincent de Paul; Becca Gerding, St. Vincent de Paul; Laurie Iglesias, St. Vincent de Paul; Karen Zengel, St. Vincent de Paul executive director; Notre Dame Sister Judith Newhouser, St. Vincent de Paul Cold Spring store manager; Joe Schlimm, Heritage Bank-NKY Chamber ambassador; and Shannon Schumacher, HORAN-NKY Chamber ambassador.

Serra Club for Vocations ask pastors to distribute Server Awards at parishes this year

Messenger staff report

Bishop Roger Foys blessed the Serra Club for Vocations Server Awards, April 16, following Mass at St. Paul Oratory at the Curia. This year’s server award vespers has been suspended. Paul Manning, chair, Serra Club Server Awards Committee, is working with fellow Serrans to have the awards distributed to parishes by the end of April. Pastors will then determine the best date, time and manner to distribute the awards to the servers.

This year’s Serra Club for Vocations Server Awards honorees are:

All Saints Parish, Shelby: Reece Ackerman, Noah Blair, Cooper Chaplin, Owen Fisk, Lynndsey Meredith and Gwendolyn Whelan.


Holy Cross Parish, Latonia: Madelyn Ritchie.

Immaculata Heart of Mary Parish, Burlington: Stolia Bitinafe, Kelley Bollman, Maria Dusting, Tucker Evans, Jacob Flagg, Ryan Haas, Anna Catherine Kalamann, Julia Moore, Evan Parhoud, Brady Schira, Ian Schausf, Paige Vandyke and Matthew Woolf.

Mary Queen of Heaven Parish, Erlanger: John Battaglia, Benjamin Brewer, Morgan Conley, Jackelyn Fernandez, Bradie Fishery, Kaden Hoelken, Ty Hoejleen, Elizabeth Kietler, Sam Skelton, Collin Smith and Donal Tucker.

St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright: Wright, Gunnar Dittrick, Jacob Duk, Charlie Lik, Rebecca Lik, Eika Kruse, Maria Moore, Megan Quandt, Piger Ramsey, Lizzie Ruwe, Jade Wachs and Elizabeth Wormald.

St. Augustine Parish, Augusta: Cora Bradford, Jacob Lang, Grayson Miller, Emily Schellenberger, Isabella Schenertz, Hayden Taylor and Nolan Venn.

St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger: Cole Bunch, Christopher Fulmer and Isaiah Reinhardt.

St. Benedict Parish, Covington: James Brier Schottel.


St. John The Evangelist Parish, Carrollton: Stephanie Amaro, Lily Freye, Stephanie Fuentes, Cesar Gomez, Jose Gonzalez, Yarely Gonzalez, Angel Guzman, Heidi Guzman, Alexis Hilario, Gustavo Hilario, Adara Hon, Edwin Rodriguez, Selma Rubio, Ashley Santiago, Jacqueline Santiago and Azul Valade.

St. Edward Parish, Cynthiana: Kathryn Gasser, Camille Reinhart, Julia Sayles, Andrew Smith and Scott Swales.

The four honorees are:


St. Joseph Parish, Southgate: Jamie Young, Re/Max Affiliates-NKY Chamber ambassador; Msgr. Gerald Reinersman, pastor, St. Joseph Parish, Southgate; Jamie Hahn, St. Vincent de Paul; Becca Gerding, St. Vincent de Paul; Laurie Iglesias, St. Vincent de Paul; Karen Zengel, St. Vincent de Paul executive director; Notre Dame Sister Judith Newhouser, St. Vincent de Paul Cold Spring store manager; Joe Schlimm, Heritage Bank-NKY Chamber ambassador; and Shannon Schumacher, HORAN-NKY Chamber ambassador.

Bishop Roger Foys blessed the Serra Club for Vocations Server Awards, April 16, following Mass at St. Paul Oratory at the Curia.
Class of 2021 to celebrate graduation in-person with safety measures

Laura Keener
Editor

In the Diocese of Covington, the Class of 2021 will celebrate their graduation in-person with parents present, Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Schools, announced the good news earlier this week, after several conceptualization meetings with the principals of the diocese’s nine Catholic high schools and President Joseph Chillo and his staff at Thomas More University.

High school graduations are an important event in the lives of our students and I am thankful for all the time and hard work that Thomas More University and our high school principals put in to ensure we could provide safe, in-person graduations,” said Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Catholic Schools.

Each school will return to its pre-pandemic venue with a few protocols for the safety of everyone in attendance and to mitigate the spread of the virus in the community. These protocols include: socially distancing graduates, academic staff and family groups, mask wearing, and no congregating indoors before or after the ceremony. The venues are large enough so that capacity restrictions recommended by the CDC and the State of Kentucky will be observed.

As in years past, five high schools — Bishop Brossart High School, Covington Catholic High School, Holy Cross District High School, Newport Central Catholic High School and St. Henry District High School — will celebrate graduation ceremonies at Thomas More University. Connor Convocation Center, Covington Latin School will hold its ceremony at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington. Notre Dame Academy at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center, Covington. St. Patrick High School at St. Patrick Church, Maysville; and Villa Madonna Academy at Mother of God Church, Covington.

“The class of 2021 has approached the difficulties of this pandemic and its impact on their lives with patience and understanding,” Mrs. McGuire said. “After this past year, I am so happy that they will get to experience a traditional graduation ceremony to recognize their educational achievements.”

Bishop Roger Foys is planning to present each graduate with his or her diploma. Much of the pomp and circumstance typical of a traditional graduation — processions, academic staff, family groups, mask wearing, and no congregating indoors before or after the ceremony. The venues are large enough so that capacity restrictions recommended by the CDC and the State of Kentucky will be observed.

In the Diocese of Covington, the Class of 2021 will celebrate its graduation in-person with parents present.

“I am so pleased we are able to do in-person graduations this year,” said Bishop Foys. “Our students have sacrificed a great deal in this past year and I am very grateful to them for their cooperation. I am likewise grateful to the parents of our students and the administration, faculty and staff of our Catholic School System. Special thanks to our superintendent of Schools, Kendra McGuire, and Laura Keener, our COVID-19 coordinator, for their leadership during these challenging times, as well as to our COVID-19 prevention committee. Gratitude also to our priests for their cooperation and leadership.”

This year in the Diocese of Covington, 470 graduating seniors make up the Class of 2021.

Coronavirus Report
(as of Monday, April 19)

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: 4
Recovered positive cases: 859
Total ever positive cases: 863

Currently Self-quarantined
Close Contacts: 10
Close Contacts with COVID case in household: 9

Adult Faith Formation

University of Notre Dame Coach Lou Holtz is credited with saying, “In this world you’re either growing or your dying — so get in motion and grow!” The same can be said of faith. The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization is offering virtual classes to help you grow your faith and get in motion. Here are some of the topics that are being discussed this spring.

Theology of the Body — virtual course
What does it mean to be a person created in the image and likeness of God? Join Father Ray Enzweller on Wednesday, May 5, 12, and 19 from 6 to 7 p.m. for a virtual course on the Theology of the Body. Discuss the famous teachings presented by Pope St. John Paul II on what it means to be made in the image and likeness of God. Learn how sin distorts us and, most importantly, discuss the personal fulfillment that can only come from unconditioned, self-giving love.

Catechetical Process — virtual course
Are you a catechist, religion teacher, or parent who wants to get better at teaching the Catholic faith? Join Father Andrew Young on Thursday, May 6 from 6 to 8 p.m. for a virtual course on Catechetical Process. Learn about the history and development of catechesis. Discover the primary role of the catechist and discuss best practices for teaching the faith effectively.

Jesus (Christology Part 1) — virtual course
Who is Jesus? What can we really know about Him? Who was the historical Jesus? How have we Christians developed our understanding of Jesus over the 2000 year history of the Church? If you’re interested in learning more about the person of Jesus, join Father Michael Barth on Saturday, May 8, and Saturday, May 15 from 9 to 10 a.m. for the virtual course “Jesus” (Christology Part 1).

To register visit https://covdio.org/catechesis-and-evangelization/

Official Assignments
Effective April 7, 2021
Deacon Brian Cox, Sr.
To: Chaplain, Knights of Columbus Council, Northern Kentucky University
Term: Two years
Continues other duties

Seminarian Parish Assignments
Effective June 1, 2021
Deacon A.J. Gedney
To: St. Henry Parish, Elsmere
John Baumann
To: St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring
Michael Elminger
To: St. Paul Parish, Florence
Justin Schwarz
To: St. Augustine Parish, Covington
Joshua Heskamp
To: St. Timothy Parish, Union
Bradley Whitliss
To: St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright
Michael Schulte
To: Blessed Sacrament Parish, Pt. Mitchell
Henry Bischoff
To: St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood
Zacharias Schoen
To: Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Burlington

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

April 23 COVID-19 briefing, 9:30 a.m.
April 24 Confirmation for Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 10 a.m.
Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 4:30 p.m.
April 25 Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.
April 26 COVID-19 briefing, 9:30 a.m.
Confirmation for Holy Spirit, Divine Mercy and St. Bernard Parishes, Cathedral Basilica, 7 p.m.
April 27 Diocesan staff directors meeting, 9:30 a.m.
Confirmation for Cristo Rey Parish, Cathedral Basilica, 7 p.m.
“Whatever energy we don’t transform, we will transform. That’s a phrase I first heard from Richard Rohr and it names a central challenge for all mature adults. Here’s its Christian expression:

Central to our understanding of how we are saved is the reality that Jesus is a truth expressed by the phrase: “Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” How are we saved through Jesus’ suffering? Obviously, that’s a metaphor. Jesus is not a sheep, so we need to tease out the reality beneath the metaphor. What prompted the first generation of Christians to use the image of a suffering sheep to explain the work of Jesus in our world, and how does Jesus’ suffering take away our sins? Was there a debt for sin which only God’s own suffering could cancel? Was the forgiveness of our sins some kind of private, divine transaction between God and Jesus?

These questions have no easy answer, but this much must be said — while some of this mystery none of it is magic. Admittedly, there’s mystery here, something that lies beyond what we can adequately explain by rational thought, but there’s no magic here. The deep truths that lie beyond our rational capacities do not negate our rationality; they only supersedes it, analogous to the way that Einstein’s theory of relativity dwarfs school mathematics.

Thus, allowing for some mystery, what can we tease out of the metaphor that presents Christ as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world? Moreover, what’s the challenge for us?

Here’s the historical background to this image. The time of Jesus, within Judaism, there were a number of atonement (reconciliation) ritual practices around lambs. Some lambs were slaughtered in the temple as an offering to God for our sins, and some others were employed as “scapegoat” lambs. The scapegoat ritual worked this way. A community would gather with the intention of participating in a ritual to ease the tensions that existed among them because of their weaknesses and sin. They would symbolically invest their tensions — their sins — on to the lamb (which was to become their scapegoat) with two symbols: a crown of thorns pushed into the lamb’s head (making it feel their pain) and a purple drape over the lamb’s back (symbolizing its corporate responsibility to carry this for them all). They would then chase the lamb out of the temple and out of town, banishing it to die in the wilderness. The idea was that by investing the lamb with their pain and sin and banishing it forever from their community, their pain and sin were also taken away — banished to die with this lamb.

It is easy to see how they could easily transfer this image to Jesus after his death. Looking at the love that Jesus showed in his suffering and death, the first generation of Christians made this identification. Jesus is our scapegoat — our lamb. We laid our pain and sin on him and drove him out of our community to our sin left with him.

Except, they did not understand this as some magical act where God forgave us because Jesus died. No. Their sins were not taken away because Jesus somehow appeased his Father. They were taken away because Jesus absorbed and transformed them, akin to the way a water purifier takes the dirt, toxins and poisons out of the water by absorbing them.

A water purifier works this way. It takes in water contaminated with dirt, impurities and poisons, but it holds those toxins inside itself and gives out only the purified water. So, too, with Jesus. He took in hatred, held it inside, transformed it, and gave back only love. He took in bitterness and gave back graciousness; curses and gave back blessing; jealousy and gave back affirmations; murder and gave back forgiveness. Indeed, he took in all the things that are the source of tension within a community (our sins), held them within and gave back only peace.

Thus, he took away our sins, not through divine magic, but by absorbing them, by eating them, by being our scapegoat.

Moreover, what Jesus did, as Kierkegaard so wonderfully notes, is not something we should admire; it’s something we need to imitate. N.T. Wright, in his recent book "Broken Signposts," sums up the challenge this way: "Whether we understand it or not, which most of us don’t and won’t — what love has to do is not only to face misunderstanding, hostility, suspicion, and even violence and murder, but somehow, through that whole horrid business, to draw the fire of ultimate evil onto itself and to exhaust its power... Because it is love that takes the worst that evil can do and, absorbing it, defies it."

“Whatever we don’t transform, we will transform.” There’s a profound truth here regarding how we need to help take tensions out of our families, communities, churches and societies.

Oh, Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author.

Turn to the real source of truth: Jesus Christ

As I write this, it is Easter Monday and I’ve been reflecting on the readings from the past few days. By chance we were able to gather in Church for the Triduum and Easter this year, I was also reflecting on everything that has happened over the past year and where we are still today.

Without recapitulating all that has happened (you don’t need that), I want to mention that what has bothered me the most is how so many of us have turned on each other and just want to point fingers and argue. Everyone has something that they believe is the truth about any topic — from the pandemic to politics and everything in between.

“What is truth?” In John 18:37, Jesus asks this question of Jesus in response to a statement that Jesus makes to him. “For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to me.” (John 18:37)

Our society today wants truth but is seeking it in all the wrong places. It is seeking it in politicians, the news media, social movements and public opinion. Moral relativism has become the norm. It’s the belief that morality which differs from person to person, is all equally valid and no one’s opinion of “right” or “wrong” is really any better than anyone else’s. Your truth is no better than mine.

The seeking of truth in secular things, has led to a decline in those who say they are members of any type of religion. A Gallup poll published on March 29 shows that only 47 percent of Americans today indicate any type of religious membership — Christian, Jewish or Muslim. Catholicism has seen the greatest decline in the past two decades.

It is time to stop seeking truth in the secular world, put aside the left-wing and right-wing ideologies, and stop listening to the media and so-called “influencers” in social media and turn back to the real source of all truth — Jesus Christ.

Jesus tells us, “I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). Part of the problem of the last year is that we want our lives to go back to “normal” (whatever that means). We want our “lives” back. However, no matter what is happening out in the secular world, the life we need to be focused on every day is the spiritual life that God has waiting for us with open arms.

To get “THAT” life, we need to find our truth in Jesus. No one gets to that eternal life except by following all of Jesus’ teachings. To belong to the REA “REAL” truth, we need to listen to Jesus’ voice always, at all times. When asked what the two greatest commandments are, Jesus told us, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” (Matt 22:37-40)

This is Jesus’ truth for us to follow: First, we need to obey and love God with all our hearts, minds and souls. Everything we say and do should honor him. And, if you want to know what the truth is for all of the social issues today it’s “love your neighbor as yourself.” Are you really showing as much love and care for those around you as you did you would to your own? Do your words and actions really reflect the love and care that Christ would have had for others? They should. It’s the second greatest commandment that Jesus gave us — and he is the truth.

How do we live out loving our neighbor as ourselves? “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me” (Matt 25:35-40). This is Jesus’ truth, Jesus says, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me.”

Guess what? EVERYONE is a member of Jesus’ family. All of us. Every race, every immigrant, is a member of Jesus’ family. Every pandemic, social and political related issue that our country faces today should be dealt with in the light of these verses.

And, as far as moral relativism, in the rest of Matthew chapter 25, Jesus tells us what will happen if we don’t do what he says. If you feel that there is no right or wrong, I strongly suggest that you read Matthew 25 before it’s too late.

Like many I am often overwhelmed and discouraged by what’s happening around me in the world and even in our Church. But, I work hard on focusing on the real truth to live by — the words and life of Jesus Christ. No one else has — or is — the truth.

Jesus says to us, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” (John 8:31-32)

Deacon Peter Freeman is director, Worship and Liturgy, Diocese of Covington and is assigned to St. Philip Parish, Melbourne.
Be children of God and not of this age

The readings for the fourth Sunday of Easter are:

I began my homily with the belief that St. John’s reminder that “we are God’s children now” is something more than the Hallmark card sentiment with which often treat it. As a matter of fact, properly understood, it is a command, especially if we pay close attention to what follows after… “we shall be like him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

It puts me in mind of something Father Joseph Rutzinger wrote. “In the early days of the Church, it appeared as if we were self-evident that Christians must also be holy in the fullest sense of the word.” I think “holiness in the fullest sense” of the word is key to understanding what it means to be God’s children, because holiness IS being like him, Jesus Christ.

This is a point so important, we must not miss it. Holiness is being like Christ. And we become like Christ following, imitating, and living his way, the roadmap of which is his truth. There is, however, a diabolic spirit of doctrinal, moral and spiritual mischief loose in the Church and in the world that would have us think that “modern holiness” is somehow achieved by pretending the plain words and example of Christ mean the opposite of what Christ says and what the magisterium of the Church has always taught them to mean.

Many prefer not “to see Him as He is,” but rather see him as they want him to be according to the materialistic, hedonistic norms of the twenty-first century America that paradoxically proposes us as a “New Faith” of neo-pagan carnal atheism, served up with a side dish of cultural calamity. Now, in one sense this is not surprising. We live in a sick, aimless culture that exerts extraordinary centrifugal cultural, economic, political and spiritual force on us at a rate faster than any of us or anyone can comprehend.

The poisonous ideas powerful enough to make this centripetal fury is the notion that all claims to moral truth, as the philosopher Charles Taylor notes, are expressions of personal emotional preferences. Furthermore, our “liquid society” to borrow a description from the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, feels that all truth claims are really expressions of personal and religious fury is the notion that all claims to moral truth, as the philosopher Charles Taylor notes, are expressions of personal emotional preferences. Furthermore, our “liquid society” to borrow a description from the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, feels that all truth claims are really expressions of personal and religious

The consequence is that we end up belonging to the Church and the larger community over and above membership in the parish. Money and membership is often life-long and in some cases is considered a membership in the parish. Money and membership is often life-long and in some cases is considered a

In addition, the identification of two other factors that we believe make a huge difference in a person’s journey — continuous formation in the Catholic faith and participation in a small faith community over and above membership in the parish.

Formation in the faith is more than religious education. Religious education — the academic study of the faith — is an important part of formation, but formation goes much further. Formation builds on learned knowledge, moving us from the head to the heart. It also provides the framework, enabling a person to grow in relationship with God. It demonstrates how to put faith into practice and fosters a way of living that shapes people into disciples. Formation is a lifelong process.

Personally, I believe formation is “caught and taught,” originating from lived example and from study. I think of my parents who made sure our family practiced faith in all aspects of our life. The daily prayer, weekly prayer meetings, monthly readings of reflection, regular spiritual direction and yearly retreats helped me grow tremendously in my faith and love for God. They have formed and sustained me in my vocation as wife and mother and prepared me for my role in service to the Church. Perhaps best of all are the friends God has given me in this community — my sisters in Christ — who not only teach and support me in my journey to him.

This is not something that can be accomplished by remembering and relationship with him and that we will willingly respond to the invitation of the Holy Spirit in our lives. How glorious it is to have our churches open in the United States this Easter. How glorious it is to have our churches open in the United States this Easter.

As the winter days of cold and darkness give way to the warmth and light of spring, we find ourselves called once again to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord within their parish communities.

Easter, the Catholic Church teaches, is “not simply one feast among others, but the ‘Feast of the Resurrection’ of our Lord within their parish communities.”

In my position as chancellor of the Diocese, I collect and record diocesan statistics. When I see the yearly trends in the reception of the sacraments, Mass attendance, etc., I often think of that conversation and am convinced more than ever of the “keys” that my fellow parishioner and I agreed were so helpful to us.

Prayer and the sacraments — especially the Eucharist and reconciliation — are obvious means.

In addition, we identified other two factors that we believe make a huge difference in a person’s journey — continuous formation in the Catholic faith and participation in a small faith community over and above membership in the parish.

Formation in the faith is more than religious education. Religious education — the academic study of the faith — is an important part of formation, but formation goes much further. Formation builds on learned knowledge, moving us from the head to the heart. It also builds on learned knowledge, moving us from the head to the heart. It also...
Chosen by their founder, Blessed Jean Martin Moye, as a special patron for the Sisters of Divine Providence, St. Joseph has interceded for numerous personal and congregational intentions. A statue of St. Joseph sits on a pedestal in Immaculate Conception Chapel where a vigil light burns daily in thanksgiving and in petition for particular intentions. It's presence in the chapel and the intercession of St. Joseph has been sought over many years. With a loaf of bread in one hand and a pitcher in the other, it depicts St. Joseph the Provider.

When the sale of the St. Anne Convent property was first discussed, Divine Providence Sister Mary Joan Dohmen composed a special prayer which the Sisters prayed daily through the intercession of St. Joseph for a successful and appropriate use of the convent and land. St. Anne Retreat Center was the answer to those prayers.

Immaculate Conception Chapel was dedicated shortly after the Holy Family Retirement Home was completed in the late 1950s. Since the sale of St. Anne Convent, Immaculate Conception Chapel now serves all of the Sisters of the Province when they return “home” for celebrations, funerals or daily Mass. The statue of St. Joseph the Provider stands guard in the chapel’s sanctuary area.

During this year honoring St. Joseph, a special prayer (below) was composed and shared with the Sisters to be used during morning and evening prayer.

Prayer to St. Joseph

“Joseph, with Jesus and Mary, you knew doubt, hunger, uncertainty and illness. You turned your heart to God to lift up your needs and those of your family. In faith you accepted God’s response as events unfolded. We pray through your intercession for an end to the pandemic. May God continue to heal and bless the sick and their caregivers and families. We pray through your intercession for our Congregation. May Providence guide us into our future and if it is God’s will bring new vowed members and associates to join us in our mission. We rely on your continued protection and in gratitude we pray in the name of Jesus, the Son you nurtured and loved. Amen.”

Divine Providence Sister Barbara Rohe
Messenger Contributor

This statue of St. Joseph sits on a pedestal at the Sisters of Divine Providence Immaculate Conception Chapel, Melbourne. With a loaf of bread in one hand and a pitcher in the other, it depicts St. Joseph the Provider.
After 25 years, Villa Madonna Academy principal finds ‘opportunities for growth’ for students/school community

Laura Keener
Editor

While Pam McQueen, principal, Villa Madonna Academy High and Junior High School, was off campus at a principals meeting, April 16, the faculty, staff and students, led by secretary Julie Dickman, waited for the code setting off “Operation Chuck Norris.”

Operation Chuck Norris was a surprise celebration recognizing Mrs. McQueen for her 25 years as principal of the school. As Mrs. McQueen and her red Camaro turned onto the long driveway into Villa Madonna Academy, students, faculty and staff lined the drive waving pom-poms, holding signs and cheering for their beloved leader.

Many people know of Mrs. McQueen’s love for the novel “The Great Gatsby,” by F. Scott Fitzgerald. For well over a decade she has sent VMA graduates off into the world waving lines from the novel. For well over a decade she has sent VMA graduates off into the world waving lines from the novel, “The Great Gatsby,” by F. Scott Fitzgerald. For well over a decade she has sent VMA graduates off into the world waving lines from the novel. For well over a decade she has sent VMA graduates off into the world waving lines from the novel, “The Great Gatsby,” by F. Scott Fitzgerald. For well over a decade she has sent VMA graduates off into the world waving lines from the novel.

“Villa is home,” said Mrs. McQueen in an e-mail interview with the Messenger. “It is the school from which my two children graduated; my family knew from the first day that Villa is family too.”

The hallmark of VMA is its Benedictine values — community, hospitality, respect and love of learning — and is what Mrs. McQueen appreciates most.

“The entire Benedictine community is simply a joy,” said Mrs. McQueen. “From the moment one sets foot on campus, one can feel the hospitality and respect. I enjoy seeing the Benedictine values that are truly lived by the students, faculty and staff. Our connection with the Benedictine sisters further enhances this way of life, so I truly enjoy this environment of acceptance and hospitality.”

During her 25 years as principal, Mrs. McQueen said that educating during the pandemic has been her greatest challenge.

“But it challenged us to discover new ways of teaching, new ways of learning, new ways of seeing the ‘silver lining’ in even the most dismal of situations. Challenges present opportunities for growth, and we viewed this challenge as an opportunity to stretch and grow,” she said.

Mrs. McQueen said that some things a principal does will never change: “Administrators must focus on mentoring teachers, communicating with parents, listening to students, and driving for continuous improvement. It is what we do.”

But throughout the years, new technologies, cultural ideas and educational expectations demand new techniques and strategies in order to keep students on or above par.

“Each day is an opportunity to discover ways to see Villa grow,” she said. “We have created exchange programs with our Benedictine high schools, developed new courses that challenge students to collaborate and apply their knowledge, established mentoring programs for teachers and students, and even created a National Alumni Advisory Board. We continue to see an increase in enrollment each year, and the excitement of each new day at Villa is simply invigorating.”

VMA’s appreciation for Mrs. McQueen is not purely sentimental; it is also pragmatic. Under Mrs. McQueen’s leadership, VMA has three times been recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education and has been recognized by The Washington Post as one of America’s most challenging schools. And, Mrs. McQueen has been a recipient of the Diocese of Covington “Outstanding Principal Award” from the Office of Catechesis and Faith Formation.

“I join so many others in congratulating and thanking Pam McQueen for her 25 years of service at Villa Madonna Academy,” said Bishop Roger Foys. “Pam has been a true educator in the truest sense of the word, educating not only by words but even more so by her actions and her life. She is always cooperative with our Office of Catholic Schools striving always to provide what is in the best interests of our students. This has been abundantly evident especially during this past year as we have addressed the COVID-19 pandemic. How blessed Villa Madonna is and how blessed our Catholic School System in the Diocese of Covington is, to have someone of the caliber of Pam McQueen onboard. Congratulations!”

“And as we deal with new challenges for our students — challenges that include increased pressure for college scholarships and navigating the negative aspects of social media — we are called upon as educators to think in terms of a real focus on the whole student— physical, spiritual and emotional,” said Mrs. McQueen. “We are called upon to transmit the faith in everything we do and everything we say.”

Mrs. McQueen keeps things in perspective by seeing challenges as opportunities.

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Hatfield, Resa Heimlich, Madison Jones, Addison Perraut and Spencer Sayo.
St. Henry Parish, Erlanger: Matthew Bier, Brian Bechard, Trey Fedders, Christina Majrouh, Addison Mann, William Miller, Jada Porrill, Roman Bobles and Hunter Strasinger.
St. John the Evangelist Parish, Covington: Nick Bocek, Benjamin Goller and Chance Martin.
St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring: Dakota Burton, Aidan Combs, Sarah Ebert, Reid Rood, Joach Foucher, Nathan Geiman, Joseph Gilbert, Jonathan Green, Kaitlyn Haigis, Sadie Hartig, Evan Herget, Sam Lang, Andrew Lesaly, Ethan Martin, Jesse McCoolkey, Riley McCoolkey, Delaney Menier, Kate Nolte, Cody Simon, Shane Willko and Madison Wolf.
St. Mary Parish, Alexandria: Issac Amin, Madeleine Bartman, Maddie Brook, Sammy Broening, Sophia Geyer, Emily Grosser, Chloe Haynes, Olivia Hildebrand, Audrey Loores, Liah Roe, Colson Sacher and Ava Waters.

Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, California: Emma Callahan, Casey Green, Holden Schiffner and Will Wyrick.
St. Philip Parish, Lebanon: Emma Begley, Savannah Begley, Will Dunn, Riley Orne and Samantha Tewhues.
St. Timothy Parish, Union: Alexa Anderson, Erin Beckner, Lydia DiVita, Davie Evans, Xavier Spreeman and Alex Towner.
Scholar urges Catholics to have courage to speak out against Equality Act

Tony Gutiérrez
Catholic News Service

PHOENIX — Catholic scholar and legal expert Ryan T. Anderson warned that if the Equality Act is passed by the Senate and signed into law, it would significantly impact women’s privacy and safety, genuine equality medical practices and religious liberty.

He also warned that it would negatively affect Catholic schools, shelters, charities and hospitals, not to mention individual educators, social workers and medical professionals who practice their faith, Anderson said.

He made the remarks in the keynote address for the recent annual virtual fundraiser for the Diocese of Phoenix’s John Paul II Resource Center for Theology of the Body and Culture.

The Center focuses on forming youth, equipping adult leaders and evangelizing the culture through St. John Paul II’s teaching on human sexuality and the body.

The Equality Act would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations, public education, federal funding, the credit system and jury duty.

On Feb. 23, the U.S. House passed the bill in a 224-206 vote. Now it will be taken up by the Senate; the first hearing on it was March 17 by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Anderson, who is president of the Washington think tank Ethics and Public Policy Center, said the bill also would force access to women’s only locker rooms, restrooms and shelters to any body who identifies as a woman, regardless of biological difference.

He quickly noted that while people experiencing gender dysphoria aren’t predisposed to violence, because anyone can become a woman, “there will be abuses of that law.” It also would create disadvantages for female athletes by forcing them to compete against men identifying as women.

“Actual equality requires us to treat men and women equally as persons,” Anderson said. “In order to treat them equally, we created equal athletic opportunities … so our daughters can compete at the highest levels of athletics against people with bodies like theirs.”

The act also would require medical professionals to provide sex-change therapies and procedures that would violate not only their conscience and religious beliefs, Anderson said, but also their best medical judgment.

“People who feel that sense of discomfort and alienation, they’re not taking it, and they aren’t actively choosing it, but they’re getting the healing that they deserve,” he said.

Anderson cited a 2011 Swedish study that found individuals who had undergone sex reassignment surgeries were 19 times more likely to commit or attempt to commit suicide, although the study’s authors’ proposed solution was to offer more psychological care in addition to hormone therapy and surgery.

He said children are being encouraged to go through gender transition, citing a Children’s Hospital Los Angeles study of doctors who perform double mastectomies on 13-year-old girls. Treatments for such transitions include puberty blocking drugs and hormonal therapies and, eventually, surgery.

“It’s one thing if an adult says, ‘It’s my life, I’m free to make mistakes.’ It’s a whole other thing if adults tell a child that they’re actually trapped in the wrong body,” he said.

“All of us would agree that if there was an individual who was being denied COVID treatment because they identify as LGBT that would be unjust discrimination, and it shouldn’t be allowed to take place,” he said.

“What’s happening is that they’re using a nonexistent hypothetical to then pass a law that actually says those hospitals have to do sex reassignment procedures,” he continued. “They’re pulling on the heartstrings of American people, and then they’re saying all sorts of reasonable and true beliefs will now be treated as unjust discrimination.”

St. John Paul said the crisis of the 20th century was one of a false anthropology, Anderson said.

“Men thought that if we get rid of God, we’ll be elevating man,” he said. “When you get rid of God, you debase the creature made in the image and likeness of God.”

Anderson said there are two extremes that must be rejected: One is the idea that there are no differences between men and women, and the other relies on “radical stereotypes” that parallel women

“John Paul wants to reject both of those extremes and say men and women are equal, but they’re different. They’re complementary and that the full image of God is both, that it takes both a man and a woman to fully be the ‘image’ (image of God)”.

The late pope serves as a model for us to bear witness to the truth, Anderson said.

“We have to have the courage to speak out on this,” he said. “If this is going to be done, it’s going to come from the Church — both the institutional Church and the lay members of the Church.”

A book Anderson wrote to address these issues, “When Harry Became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Moment,” was recently removed from Amazon’s website.

Brian Husseyman, Amazon’s vice president for public policy, wrote in a letter it was removed because he said it “frames LGBT identity as a mental illness.”

In a response issued through the book’s publisher, Encounter Books, Anderson said there is consensus that those dealing with gender dysphoria experience “great suffering,” but there is debate, he said, “about how best to treat patients who experience gender dysphoria. No good comes from shutting down a debate about important matters on which reasonable people of goodwill disagree.”

In his presentation, Anderson said Amazon’s more provided publicity for his book and helped increase sales, but it has negative consequences for authors and book publishers and for those looking for helpful resources.

For fear of being de-platformed by Amazon, Anderson said authors and publishers could begin self-censoring.

“This is going to have a chilling effect on our ability to communicate the truth,” he added.

Amazon controls 50% of print book sales and 75% of eBook sales, according to the Association of American Publishers.

In introducing Anderson at the March 6 fundraiser, Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix recalled his own time working with St. John Paul while serving in the Vatican Secretariat of State.

Among his duties was translating the late pope’s Wednesday audiences for English-speaking pilgrims, including the series that would come to be known as the theology of the body.

“In the face of communism and unrestricted capitalism, John Paul II proclaimed the dignity of the human person, the importance of the common good and the need for religious freedom,” he said.

“In the midst of widespread confusion over marriage, family and sexuality” Bishop Olmsted added, “he proclaimed the inherent goodness and exalted meaning of man and woman, the conjugal union between husband and wife and the gift of children for us.”

What happened to Pontius Pilate after the crucifixion?

**CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA**

The story of Pontius Pilate, as told in the New Testament, is but one part of a much larger narrative involving the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The New Testament accounts of Pilate’s role are often overshadowed by the central events of the Crucifixion, but they provide important context for understanding the events that led to Jesus’ arrest, trial, and execution.

**The Appointment of Pontius Pilate**

The appointment of Pontius Pilate as Prefect of Judea was a matter of political expediency and convenience, rather than a divine or prophetic choice. Pilate, a member of the Pontius family of the Samnite clan of south-central Italy, was likely born in A.D. 18, according to the record of his wife's birth by Caesar Augustus for office holders of the equestrian order. By the age of 18, Pilate would have been schooled in riding, use of the sword, and the wearing of armor. He was probably enrolled in the Roman army by Caesar Augustus, as was expected for young men from noble families.

The earliest Pilate could have joined the Roman army was A.D. 36, when he was appointed to the rank of centurion, the lowest rank in the Roman military. From there, Pilate would have progressed through the ranks, eventually reaching the rank of tribune, the highest rank he could attain before he was appointed to the position of Prefect of Judea.

**Pilate’s Tenure in Judea**

Pilate served as Prefect of Judea from A.D. 26 to A.D. 36. He was appointed by King Herod Agrippa I, who was the governor of Judea at the time. Pilate’s tenure was marked by both success and controversy. He was able to quell a rebellion in Galilee in A.D. 30 and was praised by the Romans for his effective administration.

Yet Pilate’s rule did not come without its troubles. When the Galilean teacher, Jesus of Nazareth, was arrested and crucified, Pilate was a key figure in the process. Pilate’s role in the crucifixion of Jesus is a matter of historical and theological debate, with different interpretations offered by various sources.

**The Crucifixion**

Jesus was arrested by the Jewish authorities and brought before Pilate. According to historian Josephus, Pilate took Jesus before the Jewish leaders and asked them about Jesus, but they could not agree on a verdict. Pilate then asked the crowd to decide the fate of Jesus. The crowd chose to crucify him, and Pilate sentenced Jesus to death.

**Pilate’s Fate**

Pilate’s real fate was that of a man who suffered the quiet persecution of history. It is difficult to think of him in this way, but it is most likely that Pontius Pilate retired to his estate at Caesarea after his term as Prefect of Judea. Whether he was dismissed or simply retired remains unknown. What is certain is that Pilate was no longer involved in public affairs, and his name was quickly forgotten by history.

Despite the controversy surrounding his role in the crucifixion of Jesus, Pilate was remembered by the Church as a man who had played a significant role in the spread of Christianity. The early Church fathers, such as Tertullian, Eusebius, and Suetonius, wrote extensively about Pilate, and his name has been preserved in the annals of Christian history.

**Conclusion**

What happened to Pontius Pilate after the crucifixion? The story of Pilate is one of mystery and ambiguity. What we do know is that Pontius Pilate was sent back to Rome after the crucifixion, and whether he was dismissed or simply retired remains unknown. What is certain is that Pilate was no longer involved in public affairs, and his name was quickly forgotten by history. However, his role in the crucifixion of Jesus has been a subject of much debate and speculation, and his legacy continues to shape the way we understand the events of the Crucifixion and the impact of Christianity on the course of world history.
Newsworthly
Bishop Brossart High School announced scholarships to the following eighth grade students for earning top scores on the High School Placement Test at BBHS:
St. Mary School, Alexandria — Luka Bertsch, Corrine Blackburn, Ethan Haudner, Cameron Rauen; St. Joseph School, Cold Spring — Evan Herget, Noah Koetting; Home School — Basil Reddish.

The following students were inducted in the Newport Central Catholic chapter of the National Honor Society:
Juniors — Jessica McDonald, Grace Parnell, Jonah Prost, and Jerrod Watts; Sophomores — Kayla Ahlbrand, Jocelyn Bin, Madelyn Dou, James Doepker, Karly Enginger, Christopher Gavin, Kailley Gerdinger, Thomas Kraffman, Emma Krebs, Leah Meyer, Kiley Murphy, Grant Powell, William Rapier, Garrett Schoulties, and Alyssa Smith.

Jonah Prost, junior, Newport Central Catholic, has been accepted to the 2021 Kentucky Governor’s School for Entrepreneurs — a three-week, residential summer program where young entrepreneurs, working in teams, take an idea and utilize STEAM and enterprise skills to create a service or product and build a feasible business model.

Villa Madonna Academy seniors Annabelle Sunday, California, Ky., has been recognized by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards as a President’s Volunteer Service honoree. The award recognizes Americans of all ages who have volunteered significant amounts of time in their community. Annabelle has served nearly 200 hours at St. Elizabeth Healthcare since her sophomore year. Most recently, Annabelle has volunteered assembling COVID-19 kits. She’s also volunteered in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and in the Outpatient Lab.

One sock, two sock — 1,000 sock
(right) Did you know that socks are the number one requested item at homeless shelters? For a week during Lent, students at St. Henry Catholic School, Erlanger, collected new socks in all sizes. At the end of the week, more than 1,000 pairs of socks were donated to Henry Hosea House in Newport.

Art for the heart
Mary, Queen of Heaven fourth graders created chalk art with positive and uplifting messages on the sidewalks of their campus. Their hope is to brighten the days of their fellow students, staff members and visitors to Mary, Queen of Heaven School, Erlanger.

Students at work
After putting on hard hats and safety vests, and grabbing their tape measures, third graders at St. Catherine of Sienna School, Ft. Thomas, spent time during math class working together in small groups to measure geometric figures and solve for the shapes’ perimeter and area.

Evangelizing the world
Holy Trinity School, Bellevue, took a unique approach to bringing the Stations of the Cross to its students and community. Apart from the traditional Stations of the Cross held in church, Holy Trinity Students created artwork to hang in the classroom windows facing Taylor Avenue allowing the students and community to take part in praying the stations in a socially distant way.
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**HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**
Newport Central Catholic High School (www.nchsh.com), a coeducational Diocesan high school of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, KY, is seeking a Principal for the 2021-2022 school year. With diverse community roots reaching back to 1903, NCC today remains a testimony to the enduring faith and hope of all parents who want their sons and daughters to grow with the Church in soul, mind, and body. The school provides its 250 students (grades 9-12) with a diverse, comprehensive secondary school education, including general, college-prep, honors, and AP-level and dual-credit course offerings. The successful candidate must be a spiritually motivated practicing Roman Catholic in good standing, with excellent managerial skills. The Principal has primary responsibility for the overall operation of the school and must be committed to the mission and philosophy of the Diocese of Covington and NCC. Prospective candidates should show evidence of accomplishment or willingness to become skilled in the following activities: board relations; community and external relations; curriculum development; faculty/staff development; fiscal management; fundraising; parent and alumni relations; plant management; recruitment and professional development; student activities management; student recruitment; and teacher/staff evaluation. An advanced degree is highly preferred, and eligibility for Kentucky principal certification is required. Applicant inquiries will be accepted through Monday May 17, 2021. Interested individuals should email, fax, or mail a cover letter, a comprehensive resume or C-V, and general database software. Salary and benefits are competitive. To apply, or to nominate a candidate, email or fax a letter of interest, C-V or comprehensive resume with compensation history, and a minimum of five references with their contact e-mail addresses to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR at skoplyay@covdio.org, fax 859/392-1589.

**EDITORIAL ASSISTANT WANTED**
The Messenger, a weekly Catholic newspaper and maintaining an organized work environment. The Editorial Assistant helps update the diocesan database (Camino) and creates the weekly mailing list for the Messenger. The position requires an understanding of or aptitude for the U.S. postal bulk-mail regulations. The Editorial Assistant proofs each edition of the Messenger, maintains the office archives, prepares invoices for payment and assists editorial staff, when needed, with writing/photography assignments. The qualified candidate will be a practicing Roman Catholic and will be comfortable with local and Word (or comparable) office software with a solid foundation in writing skills and the ability to meet deadlines. Anticipated start date: June 2021. Interested candidates may submit a resume, references, and writing samples to Stephen Koplyay by e-mail: skoplyay@covdio.org. (859) 392-1500.

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**
The Diocese of Covington’s Catholic Charities is seeking to hire a full-time (40 hours a week, M-F) Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator is involved with all aspects of volunteer recruitment, training, appreciation, and retention. The Coordinator identifies, engages, cultivates, and maintains volunteer relationships so that volunteers have positive and meaningful experiences. Our ideal candidate will be a practicing Roman Catholic in good standing with the Church, with a Bachelor’s degree or the equivalent in a business or human services field, plus prior experience in program management. Other desired qualifications include experience with community outreach; demonstrated communication, organization, and human relations skills; and a familiarity with MS Office and general database software. Salary and benefits are competitive. To apply, or to nominate a candidate, email or fax a letter of interest, C-V or comprehensive resume with compensation history, and a minimum of five references with their contact e-mail addresses to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR at skoplyay@covdio.org, fax 859/392-1589.

**PART-TIME DRIVERS**
Morning and/or afternoon hours available Northern KY routes. Transport passengers to/from Day Activity Programs. CDL not required. Apply in person or mail resume to: BAWAC, Inc. Attn: Transportation Mgr., 9700 Kentucky Dr., Florence, KY 41042 Fax: 859.371.1726, Phone: 859.371.4140 Email: hr@bawac.org E.O.E.

Development & Community Outreach Coordinator
Use your fundraising, networking and marketing skills to help low-income families and individuals realize their dream of owning a home. Lead the execution, analysis, planning, control and evaluation of fundraising and special events; build strategic relationships within the community, and create/implement an outreach plan with a faith-based non-profit in KY. FT with flexible evenings and weekends as needed. Details at www.honkhomes.org/development

No phone calls please. Send cover letter, resume, and 3 professional references to: David Hastings at Housing Opportunities of Northern Kentucky (HONK), 502 Fry Street, Covington 41011 or via e-mail to d hastings@honkhomes.org.

**CUSTODIAN NEEDED**
St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Fort Thomas is seeking a full-time custodian. Duties would include all normal cleaning that is involved with a school and a church as well as light maintenance as needed. Hours during the school year are second shift and an early first shift during the summer. Applicants must pass a background check and have or obtain Virtus certification. Please send a resume to dbreamer@stcatherineofsiena.org or apply in person at the Parish Office.

**ADULT DAY TRAINING SUPERVISOR**
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FDA criticized for lifting in-person requirement to receive abortion drug

Julie Asher
Catholic News Service
WASHINGTON — The decision by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s acting commissioner to suspend enforcement of the agency’s in-person prescribing requirement for the abortion drug endangers women’s health and possibly their lives, pro-life leaders said.

On April 12, Dr. Janet Woodcock said the FDA will “exercise enforcement discretion” regarding its own requirement that is part of the risk management program for mifepristone as long as President Joe Biden’s declaration of a public health emergency for COVID-19 remains in place.

“The brand name for mifepristone is Mifeprex. Also called RU-486, it is used to end pregnancies during the first 10 weeks. Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City Kansas, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, said April 16 it was difficult to see the FDA’s decision as “anything other than callous capitulation to the requests of abortion activists without regard for the health and safety of the women involved.”

“With this decision, not only are women being sold the lie that abortion is safe and easy to get, but also that chemical abortion is a safe and easy way to get it,” he said. “By pushing women away from medical oversight, abortion advocates are luring women into isolated, unsafe and medically unwise decisions.”

“The inalienable dignity of women and their unborn child deserves so much more,” he added. Woodcock said making women pick up the drug may increase the risk of contracting COVID-19, FDA said, so it will temporarily allow clinics to distribute the drug via telemedicine, directly by mail or through a mail-order pharmacy.

FDA regulations also required patients to sign a form acknowledging risks associated with the drug before they could receive it in person.

“An in-person evaluation by a medical professional is necessary to accurately determine the age of the baby” because abortion pills are only approved for use in the first 70 days, Woodcock said.

This evaluation also is needed “to determine whether the pregnancy is ectopic,” which “the woman has no way of knowing on her own, he continued, and as well as “to test and treat for Rh incompatibility between mother and baby.”

Without this information and proper treatment, a woman’s health, future fertility and life are placed in serious jeopardy,” he said.

Rh incompatibility occurs when a woman who has Rh-negative blood becomes pregnant with a baby with Rh-positive blood. These antibodies help drive an immune system attack against the baby, which the mother’s body views as a foreign object. Rh immune globulin must be administered during the woman’s pregnancy to prevent this incompatibility.

“The FDA’s announcement yesterday that they plan to lift safety restrictions that govern the dispensing of medication abortions makes women’s health simply a pawn in the effort to push for more abortion,” Dr. Christina Franzin, chair of the American Association of Pro-Life OB/GYNs, said in an April 13 statement.

Franzin said her organization “represents approximately 7,000 women’s health care practitioners who will not allow our patients’ lives to be put in jeopardy in order to appease the abortion industry and their allies.”

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“A in-person evaluation by a medical professional is necessary to accurately determine the age of the baby” because abortion pills are only approved for use in the first 70 days, Woodcock said.

This evaluation also is needed “to determine whether the pregnancy is ectopic,” which “the woman has no way of knowing on her own, he continued, and as well as “to test and treat for Rh incompatibility between mother and baby.”

Without this information and proper treatment, a woman’s health, future fertility and life are placed in serious jeopardy,” he said.

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“The Trump administration appealed the ruling and on June 12, 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court overruled the federal requirement that women who are seeking abortion-inducing drugs must do so in person, not by mail.

A U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ news release with Archbishop Naumann’s statement noted the in-person requirement for receiving the abortion pill was first put in place by public health officials under then-President Bill Clinton.

These officials saw it “as a necessary precondition to ensure that pregnant women do not have contraindications that would make the abortion pills even more unsafe and possibly deadly for the woman.”

The one question (Continued from page 3)

have love for one another” (John 13:34-35).

And so, while many worthwhile books and programs exist to help us grow deeper in relationship with Christ and help us along the path of lifelong discipleship, there is one fundamental question that should be at the center of all we do as Christians: Have I loved enough?

This is a critical question for both individuals and parish communities, especially as we approach the end of this pandemic. More specifically, we might ask ourselves: Have I called the families of those who have lost loved ones from COVID-19, or in other ways, this year? Have I offered to support those who are ailing by bringing them food, medicine or other provisions? Have I reached out to my brothers and sisters in faith whom I have not seen recent- ly and invited them to reconnect with the community? Have I worked in tangible ways for justice for all, so that all human beings may know they have inherent dignity and worth? Have I sent cheerful cards or letters to those all human beings may know they have inherent dignity and worth? Have I sent cheerful cards or letters to those all human beings may know they have inherent dignity and worth? Have I sent cheerful cards or letters to those...
Unborn baby with Potter’s syndrome brought many people to God

Jennifer Willems
Catholic News Service

PEORIA, Ill. — Fulton Joseph Hood has gone home to God.

Royce and Elise Hood of Dunlap, Illinois, discovered that Fulton’s heart had stopped beating when an ultrasound was performed March 31, which was his due date. Labor was induced April 1, and Fulton was delivered at OSF HealthCare St. Francis Medical Center in Peoria at 12:50 a.m. April 2, Good Friday. He weighed 2 pounds, 14.4 ounces and was 12.5 inches long.

“Fulton had the cutest little nose and chubby little cheeks. He was so precious,” Royce said in a post on his website, fultonjoseph.com. He added that the nurses helped them to get footprints and make a clay cast from his feet.

The funeral took place April 10 at St. Jude Church in Peoria, where the Hoods are members. Royce and Elise and their five children were the pallbearers, carrying Fulton’s tiny casket into and out of church, continuing to surround him with love as they had throughout the pregnancy.

Fulton had Potter’s syndrome, which meant he didn’t have kidneys and there was very little, if any, amniotic fluid to surround him in the womb. Without that, the lungs don’t develop and there are other complications.

People around the world had been praying for a miracle for Fulton, who only had a 5 percent chance of surviving after birth.

“We didn’t get the miracle that we prayed for,” said Father Andre O’Brien, parochial vicar at St. Jude Church, who celebrated the funeral Mass. “The question that has been coming to my heart frequently is ‘Why?’ All of us, at some point in our lives, will ask that question — ‘Why did this happen? Why do bad things happen in general? Why couldn’t God have intervened and made everything perfect?’”

But asking “Why?” will not yield an answer, he said, reminding his listeners that God has a plan far greater than ours.

“We’ll see consolations along the way. We’ll hear stories of people whose faith was inspired by the life of Fulton. We’ll see in ourselves a deeper trust in God. But those don’t answer that deepest question of why this happened,” Father O’Brien said. “No. What does is the fact that God is with us.”

While those who love and have prayed for Fulton won’t get to know him in this life or hear his voice, the Lord is with him, just as the Lord is calling all to himself, Father O’Brien said.

“So we ask God to be faithful to his promise and we ask that Fulton may be brought into that place, the new heaven and the new earth,” he said.

Before taking Fulton to his final resting place, Royce Hood thanked everyone who had supported them in prayer and presence.

So many people have come forward and told us how Fulton brought them to prayer, brought them to God, and some said they prayed for the first time in years because of his story and his life,” Royce said. “What else could any parent ask for the life of their child?”

Gabriel and Augustine Hood stand before the casket of their little brother Fulton Joseph Hood before his funeral at St. Jude Church in Peoria, Ill., April 10, 2021. People around the world had been praying for a miracle for Fulton, who was diagnosed in utero with Potter’s syndrome and had only a 5 percent chance of surviving after birth. An ultrasound March 31, his due date, showed his heart had stopped beating. Labor was induced April 1 and he was delivered April 2.
‘Profound evil’ of abuse must be eradicated, Pope Francis tells symposium

Carol Giacoia
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — As religious leaders, scholars, experts and abuse survivors come together online to participate in a three-day international symposium on faith, healing and prevention, Pope Francis sent a message as part of a series of opening remarks for the event.

Pope Francis hopes that by bringing together people from “various fields in order to share research, clinical and pastoral experiences and best practices, the symposium will contribute to a greater awareness of the gravity and the extent of child sexual abuse and promote more effective cooperation at every level of society in eradicating this profound evil,” said the message, sent on behalf of the pope by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state.

The international and interreligious virtual “Symposium on Faith and Flourishing: Strategies for Preventing and Healing Child Sexual Abuse” was April 8-10. Hosted by Harvard University and its Human Flourishing Program, the symposium was also being sponsored by numerous organizations, including the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors and The Catholic Project at The Catholic University of America.

The pope’s message was read by Michael Hoffman, a child sexual abuse survivor from Chicago. Hoffman is active in his parish and community, raising awareness about abuse and supporting best practices for child safety as well as promoting survivor-driven initiatives nationwide.

Hoffman thanked the university “for hosting this landmark symposium and for listening to the voices of abuse survivors” and said, “I am honored, deeply honored to have the opportunity to read this message of support from our Holy Father.”

In the message, the pope expressed his “gratitude for the continuing efforts being made to ensure the welfare of all of God’s children and to restore the dignity and hope to the survivors of abuse.”

The pope sent his “prayerful good wishes,” thanked all members of the Church, including U.S. Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley of Boston, who are working so diligently to address the issue of child sexual abuse in the Church and the community at large, “the message said.

The online event was chaired by Jennifer S. Wortham, a research associate at Harvard University’s Human Flourishing Program and executive director of its initiative on Health, Religion and Spirituality.

She is seeking to establish April 8 as World Day for Child Sexual Abuse Prevention, Healing and Justice, a proposal she will be launching at the United Nations in September.

“The feeling I got was that it was not really just up to the Catholic Church to establish this day. If it was going to be a day for all survivors of abuse then we needed to work together with other nations and other faith leaders to establish it,” she told Vatican News April 8.

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Pope chooses theme for July 25 World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

VATICAN CITY — To express the closeness of God and of the church to every older person, Pope Francis has chosen: “I am with you always” from the Gospel of Matthew as the theme for the first World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. The theme for the celebration July 25 is especially appropriate “in these challenging pandemic times,” said the announcement from the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life. “I am with you always” is also a promise of closeness and hope that young and old can mutually share. Not only are grandchildren and young people called upon to be present in the lives of older people, but young people and grandparents also have a mission of evangelization, proclamation and prayer, and of encouraging young people in their faith,” the statement said. Pope Francis announced in late January that he was establishing the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, which is to be celebrated each year on the fourth Sunday of July to coincide with the feast of St. Joachim and Anne, Jesus’ grandparents.

Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the dicastery, had said the annual event would be “a moment to express gratitude to the church” and one that emphasizes the pastoral care of the elderly as a priority that can no longer be postponed “by any Christian community.”

Delegates with Ireland’s Catholic Grandparents Association take part in the opening ceremony of the 5th International Conference in Dublin in this June 16, 2012, file photo. Pope Francis has chosen the theme, “I am with you always,” for the first World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, which will be celebrated July 25.

Risks to life outweigh economic benefits of exploiting nature, cardinal says

VATICAN CITY — The costs of harming nature are greater than any economic benefits drawn from such exploitation, said Cardinal Peter Turkson. So many species and habitats are destroyed “when our conduct and treatment of nature gets absurd,” said the cardinal, prefec of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. “Far ethical, moral and theological reasons, it is incumbent upon us to safeguard nature from this.,” The cardinal and Anne Goodall, primatologist and anthropologist, were the two keynote speakers April 20 at a webinar on biodiversity organized by the dicastery and the Vatican COVID-19 Commission’s ecology taskforce and held in partnership with numerous other Church-based and nonprofit organizations. Coming ahead of Earth Day which is April 22, the webinar was meant to help inspire and point the way forward for parishes, individuals and communities in preparation for the 5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 15) in October. The U.N. Global Biodiversity Report for 2020 highlighted the importance of preserving biodiversity as part of addressing climate change, providing long-term food security and preventing future pandemics

Papal charity sees increased violations of religious freedom globally

VATICAN CITY — The religious persecution experienced by China and North Korea, restrictions on religious freedom in dozens of countries and the continuing threat of violence at the hands of religious fundamentalists belonging to a variety of faiths all have worsened since 2018, Aid to the Church in Need, a papal foundation and Catholic charity The problems have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. States have used the insecurity to increase control over their citizens, and militant actors have taken advantage of the confusion to recruit, expand and provoke humanitarian crises,” said an analysis published with ACN’s annual report. “Religious Freedom in the World.” The report, released April 26, said outright persecution exists in 36 countries which are home to 3.9 billion people or just over half — 51% — of the world’s population. In addition to China, North Korea and Saudi Arabia, the list includes a dozen African countries, as well as Somalia, Libya, Nigeria, Congo and Mozambique, as well as Myanmar because of its treatment of the Rohingya, a Muslim minority in the predominantly Buddhist nation. While the charity found the overall situation worsening globally, it did find a glimmer of hope, saying that from 2010 to 2020 there had been “significant progress, especially in interreligious dialogue, as well as the increasingly important role of religious leaders in the mediation and resolution of hostilities and war.”

Federal appeals court says Ohio can enforce Down syndrome abortion law

CINCINNATI — A federal appeals court April 13 upheld a 2017 Ohio law that prohibits doctors from knowingly participating in performing an abortion because of a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome. In a 5-7 decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit, based in Cincinnati, overruled a 2019 decision against the state’s Down Syndrome Non- Selective Abortion Ban Act, saying the law “does not create a substantial burden on women’s ability to choose or obtain an abortion,” as its opponents contend. Ohio “has legitimate interests in ensuring each abortion ‘is good for the Down syndrome community and for those affected’” as well as the “interests are ‘protect[ing] the Down syndrome community and those affected’,” the ruling said. The 6th Circuit said that “under well-established Supreme Court precedent, if a state law ‘targets women who otherwise would have legal access to abortion — on the basis of the sex of the fetus or a genetic condition or defect’ and has a ‘purpose or effect’ of ‘deter[ring] women from choosing or obtaining an abortion,’ it would apply the ‘most exacting standard of scrutiny’ for such a law.” The appeals court found a “substantial burden” if the law “would effectively prevent women’s ‘unfettered right to choose the outcome of pregnancy that’s best for them,’ even if that outcome is a pregnancy with Down syndrome. The circuit court held that the law does not sufficiently narrow its reach to women’s “unfettered right to choose whether to terminate, or continue, a pregnancy, pregnancy predictability and therefore enjoined the defendants from implementing or enforcing” the law, also known as H.B. 24.

USCCB migration chairman urges Biden to raise cap on refugee admissions

WASHINGTON — The chairman of the U.S. bishops’ migration committee said April 19 he is disappointed that President Joe Biden announced he will increase the 15,000 cap on the number of refugees who can be resettled in the United States for the current fiscal year. The historically low cap was put in place by the Trump administration. “This is for fiscal year 2021, which is for the federal government began Oct. 1. “The number of refugees who will be welcomed this year is far short of what we can do as a country, and is not an adequate response to the immense resettlement need,” said Washington Archbishop W. Birth. Doreen K., chairwoman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’s Migration and Refugees Services, which among other U.S. non-governmental organizations helps resettled refugees in this country. “We expect the administration to recalibrate and raise this cap,” as it stated it would do,” Bishop Doreen K. “We further encourage the administration to build back the program to more normal and just levels by getting to an admission goal of 150,000.”

Archbishop prays for shooting victims, a stop to ‘senseless violence’

INDIANAPOLIS — Expressing sorrow for the loss of life in yet another mass shooting in the U.S., that time at a FedEx facility in Indianapolis, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson prayed for the victims and their families, and said that “these senseless acts of violence will stop. Once again our nation is mourning the loss of lives in a mass shooting and this time it is eight of our own neighbors who were killed at the Indianapolis FedEx Ground center.” Archbishop Thompson said, “We pray for the victims and loved ones of those who were murdered as well as those who were injured.” The facility is near the Indianapolis International Airport and the shooting took place the night of April 15. Eight people were killed and several others were wounded by a gunman who killed himself after his shooting spree. The shooter was later identified as 19-year-old Brandon Scott Hole of Indiana, a former employee who last worked for the company in 2020. “We again need prayer and concrete acts of charity for the families, and for all victims of violent crime,” said Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ domestic policy committees.

Head of Irish bishops calls new law on Mass attendance ‘draconian’

DUBLIN — The head of the Irish bishops’ conference said the government’s move to criminalize attendance at Mass as part of COVID-19 regulations was a “potential infringement of religious freedom and of constitutional rights. The precise provisions, to be provocative and formally enacting a potential infringement of religious freedom and of constitutional rights,” Archbishop Martin said.

USCCB pro-life chairman calls HHS proposed rule on Title X ‘terrible policy’

WASHINGTON — The U.S. bishops’ pro-life committee chairman has described it as a “terrible policy” to rescind the Trump administration’s proposed rule to rescind the Trump administration’s enforcement of a Title X provision that “dries up the bright line between abortion and family planning,” as the U.S. bishops’ pro-life committee chairman urged the Biden administration to “issue” the 15th meeting of experts and communities in preparation for the 15th meeting of the U.N. Global Biodiversity Assessment. “This is a clear win for the environment,” said Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, pro-life committee chairman. “It would protect the Down syndrome community and those affected” the law. The circuit court found a “substantial burden” if the law “would effectively prevent women’s ‘unfettered right to choose whether to terminate, or continue, a pregnancy, pregnancy predictability and therefore enjoined the defendants from implementing or enforcing” the law, also known as H.B. 24.

Police fire tear gas into Haitian bishops’ Mass for freedom

MIAMI — A Mass for the freedom of Haiti, led by Haitian bishops, turned violent at the end when police fired tear gas into the church. The Miami Herald reported that April 15 Mass in Petion-Ville, a suburb of Port-au-Prince, included the nation’s 11 bishops and a packed crowd that overflowed into the streets. The Mass was part of a national strike in response to recent kidnappings of clergy and religious in Haiti and growing anxiety in the Caribbean region. The Church and other entities had called for the strike. The Miami Herald said some members of the congregation made it out of the church, but some passed out in the pews. “The violence has reached a high point — we see that this is the deepest point ever reached in this country and we cannot go deeper,” Fiammetta Cappelletti, Haiti-based country representative for the Milan-based AVSI, told Catholic News Service. April 14, AVSI, said it is not joining the national strike due to its capacity as a humanitarian work, but Cappelletti said the church supports the spirit of the strike and helps bring attention and assistance to Haiti’s difficulties, which she said have been in steep decline since 2018.
Faith is bolstered by prayer, not money, power, media, pope says

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service
VATICAN CITY — Without prayer, everything crumbles and any initiatives for Church reform will just be proposals by some group and not the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Pope Francis said.

"Everything in the Church originates in prayer and everything grows thanks to prayer," the pope said April 14 during his weekly general audience.

If there is no prayer, the Church becomes "like an empty shell" that has lost its bearings and "no longer possesses its source of warmth and love," he said, and it ends up being made up of groups of "entrepreneurs of faith" that are well organized and busy with charitable activities but lack faith.

Continuing his series of talks on prayer, the pope reflected on the role of the Church as a school of faith and prayer.

"The breath of faith is prayer," the pope said. "We grow in faith inasmuch as we learn to pray" and over time, experiences after crises or difficult periods in life, "we become aware that without faith, we could not have made it through and that our strength was prayer."

That is why groups or communities that are dedicated to prayer "flourish in the Church" and can become "centers of spiritual light, small oases in which intense prayer is shared and fraternal communion is constructed day by day," breathing life into the Church and society itself, he said.

"Praying and working in community keeps the world going," Pope Francis said.

When the devil wants to attack the Church, he starts with sapping its strength by hindering prayer, he said.

For example, he said, "we see this in certain groups who agree to promote Church reforms, changes in the life of the Church" and they may be very well organized and have wide media outreach, "but you don't see any prayer."

The groups may have interesting ideas and proposals, but these only emerged from talking and through the media, not prayer, the pope said.

"Prayer gives people strength, he said, leading one's life "securely forward" no matter how lowly, imperfect or weak one's life may be.

"Holy women and men do not have easier lives than other people" since they have problems, too, and face opposition, he said. But with prayer, the saints "nourish the flame of their faith" and even though they often "count for little in the eyes of the world, they are in reality the ones who sustain it, not with the weapons of money and power, of the communications media and so on, but with the weapon of prayer."

Christians, he said, should ask themselves whether they pray and reflect on how they pray, for example, "like parrots or do I pray with my heart?" Do people pray with the Church or "do I pray a bit according to my ideas and then make my ideas become prayer? This is a pagan prayer, not Christian," he added.

The essential task of the Church, the pope said, is to pray and to teach people how to pray and to hand down the "lamp of faith and the oil of prayer from generation to generation."

"Without faith everything collapses; and without prayer faith is extinguished," he said. But as long as "there is the oil of prayer, the lamp of faith will always be lit on earth."