Faithful invited to join pope on synodal path to Jesus

NEW YORK (CNS) — Pope Francis is inviting the faithful to pray, listen, discern and examine themselves personally and the Church community to determine how to better follow the path of Jesus, New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan said in opening the two-year churchwide synodal process.

The pope’s call to synodality — listening to the wide community of voices within the Church “in the art of encounter” to discern a path forward — will help remind the faithful of Christ’s essential teaching, the cardinal said in a homily delivered Oct. 17 at St. Patrick’s Cathedral.

In the Diocese of Covington, Bishop John F. Efft will open the synodal process Nov. 7 with Mass at 10 a.m. at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington.

Pastors in the Diocese of Covington will join Bishop Efft by offering a petition for the success of the synod at each Mass that weekend at their parish.

Pope Francis opened the synodal process at the Vatican Oct. 9-10, leading to the launch of the listening process in dioceses worldwide Oct. 17. The pope has described the synodal path as a “journey of the Synod of Bishops in fall 2023 as a journey in which the entire church must be invited to participate.

For his part, Cardinal Dolan described the process as one in which the pope “has asked us all to commence an examination of conscience on the way we, a Church are living up to the model of the Church given us by Jesus.”

The cardinal said that everyone in the Church — clergy at all levels, men and women religious, all laypeople and communities of faith — bring gifts to the Church. Such gifts, or charisms, ranging from worship and prayer to teaching, healing, social service and administration, can be used to teach the world about Jesus, he explained.

In his homily, Cardinal Dolan detailed several “non-negotiables” that have been part of the Church’s 2,000-year history. Specifically, he said, the “energy and direction driving the Church” is rooted in the Holy Spirit rather than individuals. In addition, he added, the principles that guide the Church are rooted in the Gospel and “the patrimony of the Church’s settled teaching.”

In addition, the innate dignity of every human person and the inherent sacredness of all human life “are the towering moral lighthouses on our path,” Cardinal Dolan said.

He also noted that the return to God after earthly life “is most effectively accomplished precisely as a journey as we walk with and accompany each other, with Jesus as our guide.”

The earthly journey requires the faithful to “pay special attention” to people on the margins of society, particularly the sick, poor and weak, Cardinal Dolan said. Wealth, he continued, “only comes from faith, trust, prayer, the sacraments” and God’s grace.

Finally, he said, “mercy, love, invitation, humility joy, selflessness, generous service and good example are our only tools, never harshness, condemnation or pride.”

That seems to be synodality in a nutshell. We are loyal Catholics. The Holy Father has asked us to help him keep the Church always under the direction of Jesus, our good shepherd, intends,” he said.

The launch in dioceses begins a two-year process that culminates in the Synod of Bishops in October 2023.

The synod is expected to present a final document that will guide the continuing development of a synodal church going into the future.

Dioceses and parishes will be engaged in nearly six months of discussions, or consultation, in which people from across the church will be invited to participate.

Each diocese is being asked to submit a summary of local discussions by August 15 to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, which will then take a month to synthesize in a final written presentation for the Vatican.

Once the Vatican receives the synthesized reports of diocesan meetings from bishops’ conferences around the world, the Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops will draft the “instrumentum laboris,” or working document, to guide continental or regional ecclesial assemblies that will take place by March 2023.

Those assemblies will produce another set of documents that will help in the drafting of a second working document for the Synod of Bishops in October 2023. The synod is expected to produce a final document on synodality throughout the Church.
Bishop Iffert celebrates Red Mass and White Mass for judicial and healthcare workers

Laura Keener

Bishop John Iffert recently celebrated Mass for both the legal and healthcare professions.

The twenty-third annual Red Mass, sponsored by the St. Thomas More Society of Greater Cincinnati, was held Oct. 26 at Mother of God Church, Covington. The annual Mass, which welcomes justices, judges, lawyers and others who use the law to uphold the dignity of the human person, was held in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati on the alternate years. Then, on Oct. 28, Bishop Iffert celebrated a White Mass for those ministering in the healthcare profession. The White Mass is sponsored by the Diocese of Covington Sts. Teresa of Calcutta and Faustina Guild of the Catholic Medical Association and was held at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington.

For the first time, the St. Thomas More Society of Greater Cincinnati presented one of its members the St. Thomas More Award. Justice Donald Wintersheimer received the honor posthumously. The award recognizes those persons who the Society determines uphold the values of being a devout Roman Catholic and has exhibited a life of service to the Church, the community and the legal profession.

In his homily, Bishop Iffert shared deeply moving personal experiences demonstrating God’s goodness through the ministries of justice and healing.

At the Red Mass, Bishop Iffert shared that, when he was a young boy, he neglected to properly perform his farm chores, which led to the suffering and near loss of one of the cows in his family’s herd. His dad led him to not only admit his mistake but also to restitution by allowing him to help rescue the cow. In the end, his dad thanked him for his help, assured him that he had made things right, and then never mentioned the incident again.

“I learned something from him that night about justice, and how it affects us,” Bishop Iffert said. “I learned that a just response should help us understand what we did wrong. Should give us the opportunity to correct our errors as best we can; should never devastate the individual who has offended, should, as much as possible, be geared toward rebuilding relationships that have been devastated and reuniting the person who has done wrong with the community.”

Bishop Iffert ended his homily emphasizing with judges for the agonizing decisions they are required to make every day.

“Man’s justice can’t always be like God’s,” Bishop Iffert said. “You operate in a world of severe restrictions. You must operate within the law as it is established. You have constraints in the world you are functioning in and sometimes seeking that transcendental type of justice isn’t always there. Justice flows from the Divine Creator. The systems in which we live and work must take their lead from the law of God written on our hearts. Thank you for the work you do. Thank you for the time you take to protect the dignity of the human person in everything you do, in every judgment you make.”

At the White Mass, Bishop Iffert shared in his homily how, 25 years ago, his mother was diagnosed with leukemia. Her prognosis and resulting treatment left him terrified.

“Those good people made all the difference for us; our family, our faith and the support of those medical workers who saw us through the time when all we could do is groan,” Bishop Iffert said. “I doubt any of those doctors or nurses are here today. But I know that all of the men and women who work in our hospitals, work in our clinics, who work in our doctors’ offices, who work in our oncology treatment centers, who work in our surgical centers — all of them have helped someone through that kind of struggle, through that kind of journey. And I want you to know, that when you have done that and you have tended to the body and you have tended to the anxiety and you have tended to the fear and you have walked alongside all that — what you have done is build up the Body of Christ.”

Bishop Iffert ended his homily in gratitude.

“Thank you for your service, to my family and to the many, many families you serve every day. And of course, in this dire situation — the pandemic — which has cost so many of you so dearly — thank you. Together let us keep our eyes on Jesus. Let us love one another. Let us accompany one another. And let Jesus and his Spirit build us up into an editor, an organism, a body of faith, following in his way.”
The annual cemetery visitations were held Oct. 30 in the Diocese of Covington. Bishop John Iffert visited the three diocesan cemeteries — St. John and St. Mary cemeteries in Ft. Mitchell and St. Stephen Cemetery, Ft. Thomas — greeting and praying with the family and friends of those who are interred there.

During the prayer service, Bishop Iffert read aloud the names of those who died from October 2020 to October 2021 and are buried at each of the cemeteries. At St. Mary Cemetery, Bishop Iffert visited and prayed at the graves of the former Bishops of Covington.

In his comments before the prayer service Bishop Iffert referred to a letter written by Pope Francis on the significance of Catholic cemeteries and how praying for the dead not only helps the dead to achieve heaven but also reminds the prayer of their own mortality.

"Cemeteries are places where we are buried so that others who come after us can come to the place where we’re buried and be reminded to pray for us," Bishop Iffert said. “To gather and to pray for those who have gone before us, helps us to remember our own mortality. If we remember that we are not created for this world, then maybe it will remind us that we are created for life with God. If we remember that we are created for life with God, maybe it will improve the way we live in this world.”

In a related story Catholic News Service is reporting that the Vatican has again extended the period of time when people can earn a plenary indulgence for visiting a cemetery and praying for the souls of the faithful in purgatory.

Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, head of the Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican tribunal dealing with matters of conscience, said the indulgences traditionally obtained during the first week of November can be gained throughout the entire month of November, the Vatican announced Oct. 28.

Traditionally, the faithful could receive a full indulgence each day from Nov. 1 to Nov. 8 when they visited a cemetery to pray for the departed and fulfilled other conditions, and, in particular, when they went to a church or an oratory to pray Nov. 2, All Souls’ Day.

Because of the pandemic and the popularity in many cultures of visiting cemeteries for All Souls’ Day, some local governments and dioceses closed cemeteries in the first week of November to prevent crowding. That led Cardinal Piacenza to issue a decree in 2020 extending the period for the indulgences.

The decree for 2021 renewed those provisions. Indulgences are granted when a Catholic visits a cemetery to pray for the dead, goes to confession, attends Mass and receives the Eucharist and prays for the intentions of the pope.

An indulgence is a remission of the temporal punishment one deserves for one’s sins; people often will seek the indulgence on behalf of a loved one who has died or, especially in early November, for an unknown soul in purgatory.
Call Kim at the Messenger for information on placing your ad in the Fall Fix-Up Advertisements.
(859) 392-1500
Diocesan COVID protocols updated to allow ‘mask recommended’ at schools with low case activity, add Test to Stay option

Laura Keener
Editor

In a letter to parents, which was sent to principals Nov 3, Kendra McGuire, superintendent of schools, announced a new matrix that will be used to determine when teachers, students and school personnel will be required to wear masks in schools.

The updated guidance was developed and reviewed by a committee of diocesan employees and is approved by Bishop John Ilfft. It will go into effect Nov 8. It affirms the Northern Kentucky Health Department and Kentucky Department of Health’s recommendation for all students and school personnel to wear face mask indoors. It also allows schools to offer parents the option of not having their child wear a mask during those times of low case activity both in the county and in the school.

“As shared in previous communications, our office reviews the daily case data reported by the Kentucky Department of Public Health,” Mrs. McGuire said in the letter to parents. “We also look at national and international case trends. We are able to compare this data to our own COVID-19 data from this school year as well as the 2020–2021 school year. This information has given us great insight to help make decisions moving forward that are best for our students, staff and schools.”

Under the updated Diocese of Covington Return to School protocols, anyone in a school is required to wear a mask whenver community spread is high — or in the Red Zone — as determined by the Kentucky Department of Health. The same is true if there are five or more COVID-19 cases in the school.

The KHDB reports community spread daily School administrators will be required to check the KDH report once a week — on Thursdays. If the county in which the school resides is not in the Red Zone on Thursday, masks will be recommended, not required, for the upcoming week.

Additionally whenever a school reports its fifth case of COVID-19, masks will be immediately required, returning to recommended once case activity drops below five cases in the school community.

A more burdensome problem for administrators, teachers and students has been the quarantining of healthy students that are determined to be close contacts to a classmate that has developed COVID-19. Students learn best when they are in the classroom with their teacher and other classmates. Also, the isolation students experience during a seven to 10-day quarantine is having a negative mental health effect.

“Our school principals and counselors have reported a significant increase in the need for mental health services for our students over the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school year,” Mrs. McGuire said.

Currently there are two ways for students to avoid a quarantine: students that are fully vaccinated and students that are masked do not need to quarantine if a nearby classmate develops COVID-19.

The updated protocols offer parents a third option — Test to Stay. With the Test to Stay option, students that are determined to be a close contact to a classmate will need to immediately have a negative PCR test to remain in the classroom. Testing will not be available at the school. Instead parents will need to have their child tested at one of the local testing sites. Many of these sites offer free testing, with results available in 24 hours.

As long as the student does not develop symptoms, he or she can remain in the classroom, wearing a mask. The student will need to have a second PCR test on or after the fifth day of exposure. If the second test is negative, the student can return to normal protocols on day eight.

“During the 2020-2021 school year, our anecdotal evidence was clear that the majority of students quarantined from a close contact at school did not end up testing positive for COVID-19,” said Mrs. McGuire. “This school year, we tracked the students quarantined due to a close contact in the school setting.” The results, she said, remained the same: over 94 percent of the students quarantined did not develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19.

“According to our data, the likelihood of testing positive from a close contact exposure at school was uncommon and nearly the same whether students were masked or unmasked,” Mrs. McGuire said.

Additional data the committee reviewed which has led to the updated protocols has been provided to parents include:

Current Case Activity – Diocese of Covington Schools (data gathered by the Diocese of Covington as of Nov 1, 2021)

— 33 of 37 schools have no active COVID-19 cases among students or staff.
— There are a total of 4 positive COVID-19 cases, 3 students and 1 staff member; one case each at four different schools.
— During the month of October, on average, 26 schools had no positive cases.

Mrs. McGuire said that after gathering and reviewing a variety of data over the last few weeks, the COVID Committee has concluded the following:

— The transmission of COVID-19 in the school setting remains uncommon.
— Children are primarily getting COVID-19 in their homes or from family/social gatherings.
— Children are not spreading COVID-19 to adults in the school setting.
— The majority of exposing children exposed to COVID-19 in the school setting will not develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19.
— We are not seeing COVID-19 transmission at large events. These have included homecoming, full Masses, sporting events — both indoor and outdoor — festivals, retreats and overnight trips which were held during this recent rise in cases.
— This information is a snapshot of some of the data we have gathered and reviewed to help make decisions on COVID-19 protocols in schools,” Mrs. McGuire said. “We will continue to gather and analyze various data points to inform school procedures and promote the health and well-being of all our students and staff.”

Mrs. McGuire’s letter along with the data sent to parents is available online at www.covdio.org/public-health-concerns/.

Serving the Seniors of Northern Kentucky for 60 years!
Lodge Senior Living Apartments with Services & Homestead Personal Care Suites.
(859) 331-3224 www.stcharlescommunity.org

BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR LIFE.
Advocates & Mentors Needed.
Help save unborn babies and guide their parents.
Training provided.

CARENET
Pregnancy Support of Northern Kentucky
859.431.9178 • volunteer@carenetnky.org
Florence • Williamsburg • Cold Spring

November 5, 2021
Hannah Arendt, totalitarianism and the distinction between fact and fiction

“Man is an island.” John Donne wrote those words four centuries ago and they are as true now as they were then, except we don’t believe them anymore.

Today more and more of us are beginning to define our nuclear families and our cared-for circle. Beyond the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so for example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.

We might define totalitarianism as the controlling of every aspect of life by the arbitrary will of a powerful individual or group. If this is accurate, we see why Arendt worried about the blurring of distinctions between the real and the unreal, between truth and falsity.

The objective good and the objective truth have their own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command, by their very excellence, the obedience of the receptive mind and the respective will. For, so example, in the presence of mathematical truths, scientific data and philosophical arguments, the mind surrenders, and its own intrinsic authority — that is to say, they command their particular arguments.

It is drawn from the writings of Hannah Arendt, the twentieth-century German-Jewish scholar most famous for her contributions to the phenomenon of totalitarianism, and it is of remarkable relevance to our present culture.
All for the Lord

The readings for the thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time — Cycle B are: 1 Kings 17:10-14, Hebrews 9:24-28, Mark 12:41-44.

This coming weekend, we will hear proclaimed in the Gospel according to St. Mark, in which a poor widow "has contributed all she had." This lesson, known as the widow's mite, speaks to the relationship we are called to have with the Lord.

In my own reflections and thoughts, I am reminded of last week's Gospel when the Lord Jesus announced to us the "Greatest Commandment." He was referring to the great Jewish prayer from the Book of Deuteronomy, the Shema:

"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone! Therefore, you shall love the LORD, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength."

"Love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."

May we all follow the example of the widow in this opening week — Nov. 7 – 13 — also, National Vocation Awareness Week in the United States. As many of you know just a couple weeks ago, we had a wonderful celebration at the Seminary Ball in support of our seminarians and their education. In his remarks, Bishop John Brott reflected on the singing that the seminarians performed that evening. Paraphrasing he said: What they have done tonight, looked easy; but it wasn't. Some of them did not want to be up here singing in front of a crowd of over 600 people; they didn't like it...but they did it! They did it because the Church asked them to.

That statement of our bishop really hit home with me. "They did it because the Church asked them to." The Church is the Body of Christ, where Jesus is the head. So, in many ways, when the Church asks something of us, we believe that it is Christ asking us.

Men who are called to the priesthood are called, like the poor widow, "to contribute all they have." Let us pray for these men, in the same novitiate and those who will and should be in the seminary in the future.

But, the gift of the entirety of oneself does not belong just to those with a religious vocation — it belongs to all of us. We are to give all that we have to the Lord — our heart, mind, soul, strength and understanding. Or put another way all that we are for the Lord, to the tip of our toes and everything in between — the good, the bad and the ugly; the visible and the invisible.

May we all follow an example of the widow in this weekend's Gospel and tangibly express in our lives "love of God and love of neighbor."

Father Daniel Schumaker is pastor, St. Augustine Parish, Covington and vicar general for the Diocese of Covington, Ky.

Finally, as Bishop Dorsonville reminds us: "We as Catholics are called to this ministry of welcome and encounter, through which we express the fullness of the church's universality.

Sam Lucero is news and information manager for The Compass, newspaper of the Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin. His commentary has been provided by Catholic News Service. The views or positions expressed in this or any guest editorial are those of the individual publication and do not necessarily represent the views of Catholic News Service or of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.
Court rejects Catholic hospital's appeal of transgender patient's lawsuit

Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service
WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court Nov. 1 turned down an appeal from a Catholic hospital in California that was sued for refusing to perform a hysterectomy on a transgender patient.

The court’s decision, issued without comment, sends the lawsuit back to state court and avoids examining whether the hospital can be sued for refusing to provide treatment it said would violate its religious beliefs.

Justice Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito and Neil Gorsuch said the court should have taken the case.

In 2016, Ryan Minton sued Mercy San Juan Medical Center near Sacramento for refusing to allow the doctor to perform a hysterectomy on Minton as part of gender transition from female to male. Minton said the treatment denial was a violation of California law that bars discrimination.

The hospital said it does not discriminate against transgender patients, but does not allow its facilities to be used for abortion, sterilization and euthanasia, which are contrary to Catholic teachings.

The hospital called the procedure, which surgically removes the uterus, “elective sterilization” that goes against its ethical and religious beliefs. It also said being required to perform this would go against the Constitution’s free exercise clause.

A trial court sided with the Catholic hospital in the suit, saying the three-day delay in the procedure was not a denial of full and equal access to health care under state law.

An appeals court reversed that decision, rejecting the hospital’s defense in light of the Supreme Court’s ruling in its Smith decision, a 1990 case that has been interpreted as giving state and local governments broad power over religious practices.

The hospital said it does not discriminate against transgender patients, but does not allow its facilities to be used for abortion, sterilization and euthanasia, which are contrary to Catholic teachings.

The hospital called the procedure, which surgically removes the uterus, “elective sterilization” that goes against its ethical and religious beliefs. It also said being required to perform this would go against the Constitution’s free exercise clause.

Minton received the surgery three days later at a non-Catholic hospital.

A trial court sided with the Catholic hospital in the suit, saying the three-day delay in the procedure was not a denial of full and equal access to health care under state law.

An appeals court reversed that decision, rejecting the hospital’s defense in light of the Supreme Court’s ruling in its Smith decision, a 1990 case that has been interpreted as giving state and local governments broad power over religious practices.

The hospital said it does not discriminate against transgender patients, but does not allow its facilities to be used for abortion, sterilization and euthanasia, which are contrary to Catholic teachings.

The hospital called the procedure, which surgically removes the uterus, “elective sterilization” that goes against its ethical and religious beliefs. It also said being required to perform this would go against the Constitution’s free exercise clause.

Minton received the surgery three days later at a non-Catholic hospital.

Catholic hospitals have to follow the church’s “Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services,” a document that provides moral guidance on health care practices from the theological and moral teachings of the church.

The brief also noted that it is “not the role of the courts — in California or in any forum — to mandate the policy and structural reform to Catholic hospitals that Minton seeks. That policy-setting role resides with the Catholic Church alone.”

Black Catholic History Month — Venerable Pierre Toussaint

Katie Schloeder
Edited by John L. Allen Jr.
November is designated as Black Catholic History Month by the National Black Clergy Caucus of the United States on July 24, 1990 at Fordham University in New York (“Black Catholic History Month,” The Catholic University of America).

Black Catholic History Month is a good opportunity to highlight several African American men and women being formally considered by the Catholic Church for canonization. These people led inspiring, honorable lives and are great role models for Catholics around the world; they had a great commitment to the Catholic Church and prioritized taking care of others in need, despite their own struggles in life.

One of these people on the path to sainthood is Venerable Pierre Toussaint (1796-1816). According to the National Black Catholic Congress’ website, Toussaint was born a slave in Haiti and died as a well-known Catholic and free man in New York City.

As a young man, he ran away from his master and joined a small community of Catholic slaves who had been gathered by Pierre Poussaint in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City. In his early 20s, Toussaint, along with his aunt, his sister, and two other house slaves, accompanied their master’s son to New York City due to political unrest at home.

There, he worked as an apprentice to a local hair stylist, and after gaining skill in this trade, eventually became the most sought-after hairdresser by the women of high society according to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ website, “On the Road to Sainthood: Leaders of African Descent.” Toussaint gained his freedom upon his master’s death, and became quite wealthy and successful as one of the United States’ first black entrepreneurs.

Instead of spending this money on himself, Toussaint used his earnings to support the Church and the poor. He raised funds to build St. Vincent de Paul Church and the original St. Patrick’s Cathedral, and he attended 6 a.m. Mass every day at St. Peter’s Church. Toussaint’s wife, Marie Rose Juliette, opened their home to orphans and educated them. They also adopted Toussaint’s orphaned niece, Eugénie. People who were abandoned and suffering from yellow fever, an epidemic which struck the United States repeatedly during this time, were nursed by the couple as well.

Toussaint donated to many charities throughout his life, assisting both blacks and whites who were in need. When asked why he wouldn’t just retire and enjoy the money he had earned, Toussaint responded, “I have enough for myself, but if I stop working I have not enough for others” (“Noteworthy”).

In order to recognize the virtuous life of Pierre Toussaint, Cardinal Terence Cooke, former Archbishop of New York, introduced Pierre’s cause for canonization in 1968. In 1989, Pierre Toussaint’s remains were transferred to St. Patrick’s Cathedral from Lower Manhattan, where he is currently the only lay person buried beside the previous cardinal archbishops of New York. Pope John Paul II declared Pierre Toussaint Venerable on Dec. 17, 1997. Pierre Toussaint, declared “Venerable” in 1996, is depicted in a stained-glass window in the manseum chapel at Holy Rosary Cemetery in Westbury, N.Y. Toussaint is among the U.S. Black Catholic sainthood candidates who receive special recognition during National Black Catholic History Month, observed every November.
Faith cannot be reduced to suffocating ‘bureaucracy,’ pope says

"Protecting God's Children for Adults

Virtual Safe Environment Trainings

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

Step 1: Contact Sister Margaret Mary Denise Perez, S.J.W. at (859) 392-6106 or system@pub.virtus.org.

- Choose your training
- Click on Live Training on the left column
- Complete your account and to request a new account or to request a registration process.
- You will sign the Acceptance Forms.

Step 2: Access your account, contact Marylu Steffen at (859) 392-6106.

- Login and enter your user id and password.

Step 3: Join the virtual VIRTUS session.

The day before the session, you will receive an e-mail with the instructions 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 e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletin

- October bulletin: posted Sunday, Oct. 3; due Tuesday, Oct. 5.

If your Virtus account is inactivated please contact your primary location for assistance.

To login: protectedgodchildren.org

- Enter user id and password.

- Click on Live Training on the left column.

- Click on pre-register for an upcoming session.

- Choose your training tab.

- Note: If your Training Tab is missing or you cannot access your account, contact your parish, school or institute.

For other difficulties, contact Marylu Steffen at (859) 392-6106 or system@pub.virtus.org.

"Protecting God's Children

Virtual Safe Environment Trainings

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

Step 1: Contact Sister Margaret Mary Denise Perez, S.J.W. at (859) 392-6106 or system@pub.virtus.org.

- Choose your training
- Click on Live Training on the left column
- Complete your account and to request a new account or to request a registration process.
- You will sign the Acceptance Forms.

Step 2: Access your account, contact Marylu Steffen at (859) 392-6106.

- Login and enter your user id and password.

Step 3: Join the virtual VIRTUS session.

The day before the session, you will receive an e-mail with the instructions 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 e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletin

- October bulletin: posted Sunday, Oct. 3; due Tuesday, Oct. 5.

If your Virtus account is inactivated please contact your primary location for assistance.

To login: protectedgodchildren.org

- Enter user id and password.
High School Open Houses

Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria
Sunday, Nov. 7, 1–3 p.m.
Covington Catholic High School, Park Hills
Sunday, Nov. 7, 1–4 p.m.
Covington Latin School, Covington
Sunday, Dec. 5, 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.
Holy Cross District High School, Covington
Wednesday, Nov. 10, 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 19, 6:30 p.m.
Note: Goodることが

Newport Central Catholic High School, Newport
Wednesday, Oct. 27, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
St. Patrick School, Maysville
Contact the school to schedule a tour
Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills
Sunday, Oct. 24, 1–3 p.m.
Tuesday, Nov. 17, 7 p.m.

Shelter for ghosts
St. Pius X kindergartens organized a “spooktacular” time making houses to protect their ghost from the witch after reading “Ten Timid Ghosts” by Jennifer O’Connell.

The 19th annual Bishop Brossart High School Emerald Gala
is Nov 13, Seither Sports Center, 7 p.m.–12 a.m. The theme for the night is "Totally 80s." For information, visit BBSHISalta@GivelSmart.com or e-mail gala@bishop-brossart.org.

St. Bernard and Divine Mercy parishes 14th annual Women’s Tea, Nov. 10, 11 a.m.–2 p.m., Garvey Hall, St. Bernard Church, Dayton. Private tickets $10; $15 at the door. Call (513) 325-1259 or (513) 702-4456.

Men’s Retreat, Nov. 12–14, “Go To Joseph: Life Lessons for Modern Men” led by Mggr. Daniel Vogelpohl. Doors open, Friday 4 p.m., retreat begins 5:30 p.m., concludes Sunday following 11 a.m. Mass. Cost: $75. Registration deadline, Oct. 20. Call 441-2033 or e-mail csmah@covdoo.org.

Women’s Day of Reflection, Nov. 13, 9 a.m.–3 p.m., St. Joseph Church, Crescent Springs. Keynote speakers Sister Emerita McGaum, CDP and Mother Seraphina Marie, FJMD, on the theme “Trust in God.” $35 cost includes lunch.

St. Peter’s Catholic Order of Foresters Court 1492 annual matching funds turkey raffle will be Nov 13, 6–10 p.m., Sts. Peter and Paul Parish social center, California. Bingo, raffles and food. Proceeds benefit new church windows.


Villa Madonna Academy open house, grades 7–12, Nov. 16, 7–8 p.m. Contact admissions@villamadonna.net.


St. Pius X kindergarten students had a “spooktacular” time making houses to protect their ghost from the witch after reading “Ten Timid Ghosts” by Jennifer O’Connell.

The 19th annual Bishop Brossart High School Emerald Gala is Nov 13, Seither Sports Center, 7 p.m.–12 a.m. The theme for the night is "Totally 80s." For information, visit BBSHISalta@GivelSmart.com or e-mail gala@bishop-brossart.org.

Saint parade

Second graders at Blessed Sacrament School, Ft. Mitchell, paraded around campus in their annual “Saint Parade” after an all-school Mass on Oct. 27.

Family baptismal gown
Rowan Ainsley Hicks, daughter of Shea and Maggie (Biedenharn) Hicks, was baptized at St. Henry Parish, Elsmere. Rowan was baptized in a simple cotton and lace gown that dates back 118 years. The two-piece gown was sewn by Rowan’s great-great-grandmother and has been worn by 30 other relatives. After the family celebration last Sunday, the gown traveled to Columbus, Ohio, for the baptism in November of Jemma Biedenharn. Jemma will be number 32 and the first of the fifth generation to be baptized in the heirloom gown.

being more than a decade overdue and way overbudget, the James Webb Space Telescope is finally des-
tined to be launched Dec. 18. Learns about the space-
craft’s troubled history as well as its immense promise for the future of astronomy. Free and open to the pub-
ic. Note: attendees must wear a face mask indoors.
The first words that St. Joseph heard in a dream were an invitation not to be afraid, because God remains ever faithful to his promises: “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid” (Matt 1:20).

Do not be afraid: these words the Lord also addresses to you ... They are words you will hear anew, at every step of your vocation, as you return to your first love. They are a refrain accompanying all those who — like St. Joseph — say yes to God with their lives, through their fidelity each day.

May St. Joseph, protector of vocations, accompany you with his fatherly heart!

NO PRESSURE!

Most Rev. John C. Iffert

I have been accompanyng young people making life decisions since I was a young person making life decisions. The advice that I offer is simple. RELAX. Be gentle. Pay attention to your joy.

I am always amazed at how permanent and high stakes every decision can feel for a young person. It can seem like life will pass by if you don’t do everything just right — just now.

A countercultural decision like entering seminary or consecrated life can seem especially fraught. The implications — for relationship, career, and even our religious life — appear to be immense. Surely listening for God’s call is serious business, but sometimes the best way to go about this serious work is to relax and pursue the things that give you holy joy.

If you are thinking about priest- hood or religious life, first consider if you are in a habit of committing serious sin; the kind that makes us feel deeply ashamed, like we are liv- ing a lie that we can’t tell our family and Christian friends about. If you are in this state, do not even think about seminary or a religious vocation right now. Don’t make any other big life decisions either. Sin keeps us from thinking clearly about all vocations — career and marriage, too.

Start going to confession regularly. Turn to Jesus and pray to be set free from that sin. Find a compassionate spiritual advisor who can accompany you. Then, when you are free from the slavery of grave sin, ask yourself if your desire for religious vocation has grown or lessened. Trust me, entering seminary or the novitiate will not make temptations go away. And you can’t stay for those sins by trying to fit your- self into a life that is not yours.

If, to the best of your knowledge, you are free of serious sin, then begin pray- ing about and contemplating what is important to you and where you find joy and spiritual comfort.

Do you cherish your time in prayer? When you go to Mass, do you think about how you would preach or teach the Gospel?

Is there a work of mercy that makes your heart go pitter-patter: caring for the sick, accompanying the elderly, teaching the young, feeding the hungry, welcoming the homeless? Do you look for opportunities to share your faith with others?

Are others telling you that you ought to think about being a priest or a sister?

Do you long to be surrounded by people who share your faith commitment?

Do you feel a hunger to study the Scriptures or the Catechism of the Catholic Church?

When you pray before the Blessed Sacrament, do you feel at home, loved, inspired?

If a few of these questions have you saying, “Yes! That’s me!” you should be actively considering that God might be calling you to priesthood or consecrated life. Reach out to a priest or religious sister who you know, or Father Conor Kunath, our diocesan Vocation Promoter, or to me. We will help you connect with someone who will walk this journey with you.

Do not worry if you are not ready to say with 100 percent confidence that God is calling you. We are not going to let you drop out of your life and into seminary tomorrow. You will have years of formation to “court” the idea of priesthood or religious life.

Others who have experienced this life will walk with you. In the end, you will not have to rely on yourself to make that decision. The Church, in the person of the bishop or in a community of professed religious, will be dis- cerning right along with you about whether you are being called. So relax. It’s not all on you. Be gentle, but don’t procrastinate. If you think God might be calling, take the next step. It is a joyful and blessed life. You do not want to miss the invitation!

Most Rev. John C. Iffert is Bishop of the Diocese of Covington, Ky.

Seek to find holiness and you will win the vocation war

There can be at times a dizzying pressure on Catholics to figure out our vocations. The pressure begins to build in grade school. Teachers and priests talk about a vocation, and how it is a calling from God that determines the course of our entire lives.

Immediately the stakes are raised. Our vocation is lifted to this seemingly unreachable height, and students are asked to think about the rest of their lives nearly as soon as they can begin to think about anything. I think this pressure is unnatural and unnecessary. A vocation is cer- tainly a call from God — the word itself comes straight from the Latin verb meaning to call — but I want to suggest that we reconsider the way we approach the idea of voca- tions.

There are two different ways that we can talk about “vocations.” The first way is to conceive of it as a job — what we are called to do with our lives, with the freedom we may have. Certainly this is true, but I think that concept of vocation has to be subordinated to a much broader under- standing.

“Lumen Gentium” is a dogmatic constitution of the Church published by the Second Vatican Council. This constitution lays out the Council’s vision of the Church and how she exists in the modern world. In the fifth chap- ter of this beautiful document the Council expounds that every person is called to holiness. It says, “Thus it is evi- dent to everyone, that all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity; by this holiness as such a more human man- ner of living is promoted in this earthly society.” Every per- son is called to absolute holi- ness. This is the call, the vocation, of the entire Catholic Church. We must strive to be holy just as Christ himself is holy. This is the awesome vocation to which we have each been called. This call to holiness should be the source of all our earthly endeavors. This call should frame our entire existence.

It is within this overarching call to holiness that we can begin to understand the idea of vocation in a more partic- ular and familiar sense. If all of us are called to perfect holiness, then each of us is given a unique path to holiness that conforms to the unique person that we are.

This unique call specifies our path to holiness. Some of us are called to holiness through marriage and parent- hood; others are called to holiness through priesthood or religious life; still others are called through the single life. Regardless, this unique vocation is our path to holiness and must be understood through that lens.

(Continued on page 13)
I think if we begin to view our lives and our vocations as first and foremost a move toward holiness, then suddenly so many anxieties and concerns can fade away. I am certain that if we all pursue holiness wherever we find ourselves at this very moment, then we would all certainly find the specific vocation that God has called us to. The all good God would not let one of his saints go astray.

There are many saints who exemplify this view of vocation, but Joan of Arc is perhaps one of the best examples. Joan of Arc was born in Domremy, France in the early part of the 15th century. She was born into a troubling historical situation for France. The English kings had made claims to the French throne and had occupied large parts of France with a mighty army. This war over the French throne was waged for over a century and came to be known as the Hundred Years War.

By the time Joan of Arc arrived on the historical scene, France had not known victory in decades. They had suffered a devastating rout at the battle of Agincourt; and the English kings fully expected to claim the French throne. France had not known victory in decades. They had suffered a devastating rout at the battle of Agincourt; and the English kings fully expected to claim the French throne. The English kings and his army had lost all confidence in their ability to ever win again. Then, suddenly this young woman, only 17 years old, presents herself to the king and asks for an army to raise the siege at Orleans. And she does it. She wins victory after victory and is instrumental in having the French king crowned.

What is striking about Joan of Arc is that she is 17, has no formal education at all, was not trained to be a soldier or to live in the royal court. Yet, she is able to achieve all of this. What Joan seeks to accomplish is not her own will, it is not even a victory for France. The only thing that Joan of Arc cares about is her own holiness and doing the will of God. That is the central motivation of her entire life, and she, without any regard, the conciliar decree notes: “For by the saving Word of God faith is aroused in the heart of unbelievers and nourished in the heart of believers.”

The lesson that we must learn from Joan of Arc is that with God all things are possible, that if we choose to do his will, nothing will stand in our way for long. If we choose to fight, we will win. If we choose to seek holiness we will find it and so much more.

Father Conor Kunath is vocation promoter for the Diocese of Covington, Ky.

Personal reflections reveal God’s continual grace

What is it like experiencing a call to the priesthood or religious life? Is living out God’s call to the priesthood or religious life personally fulfilling? Answers to these questions and more can be found in the following reflections in celebration of Vocations Awareness Week, Nov. 8-14.

The priest — ‘A minister and teacher of the Word’

Msgr. Ronald Ketteler

The year 1961, the year of my ordination to the priesthood, marked the threshold of the convening of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). The Council’s Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (1965) reflected a vision of priesthood that had emerged from the patristic, liturgical and historical sources of renewal.

One of the key insights into the conciliar teaching on the ministerial priesthood focused on the place of the ministry of the Word in the life and ministry of the priest.

In addressing the theme, “Priests as Ministers of God’s Word,” the bishops at the Council stated: “... (it is the first task of priests as coworkers of the bishops to preach the Gospel of God to all men.” In this regard, the conciliar decree notes: “For by the saving Word of God faith is aroused in the heart of unbelievers and nourished in the heart of believers.”

The decree also noted that “the ministry of the Word is exercised in many different ways according to the hearers and the spiritual gifts of preachers.”

A decade later in 1971, the Second General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops issued “The Ministeral Priesthood.” That synodal document reiterates the teaching of the conciliar decree on the priesthood under the heading, “Mission: Evangelization and sacramental life.”

The ministry of the Word stands at the heart of the mission of priests, a ministry that “leads to the sacraments and the Christian life, as it is practiced in the visible community of the Church and in the world.”

Again, in “I will Give You Shepherds,” the 1992 post-synodal apostolic exhortation, St. Pope John Paul II linked “the intimate bond between the priest’s spiritual life and the exercise of his threefold ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral charity.”

As a minister of the Word, the priest is “consecrated and sent forth to proclaim the good news of the kingdom to all, calling every person to the obedience of faith and leading believers to an ever-increasing knowledge of and communion with the word of God.”

St. John Paul II stressed that the priest “needs to approach the word with a docile and prayerful heart so that it may deeply penetrate his thoughts and feelings and bring about a new outlook in him — the mind of Christ (I Cor 2: 16) — such that his words and choices and attitudes may become ever more a reflection, a proclamation and a witness to the Gospel.”

The ministry of the Word must be rooted in a spirituality wherein the priest ought to be the first ‘believer’ in the word, while being fully aware that the words of his ministry are not ‘his’, but those of the One who sent him. Thus the priest stands in continual need of being evangelized.

“The Priest and the Third Christian Millennium: Teacher of the Word,” a 1999 circular letter issued by the Congregation for the Clergy, discusses role of priests as “Teachers of the Word.” It incorporates the thought of “I Will Give You Shepherds.”

The ministry of the Word stands at the heart of the mission of priests, a ministry that “leads to the sacraments and the Christian life, as it is practiced in the visible community of the Church and in the world.”

Again, in “I will Give You Shepherds,” the 1992 post-synodal apostolic exhortation, St. Pope John Paul II linked “the intimate bond between the priest’s spiritual life and the exercise of his threefold ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral charity.”

As a minister of the Word, the priest is “consecrated and sent forth to proclaim the good news of the kingdom to all, calling every person to the obedience of faith and leading believers to an ever-increasing knowledge of and communion with the word of God.”

St. John Paul II stressed that the priest “needs to approach the word with a docile and prayerful heart so that it may deeply penetrate his thoughts and feelings and bring about a new outlook in him — the mind of Christ (I Cor 2: 16) — such that his words and choices and attitudes may become ever more a reflection, a proclamation and a witness to the Gospel.”

The ministry of the Word must be rooted in a spirituality wherein the priest ought to be the first ‘believer’ in the word, while being fully aware that the words of his ministry are not ‘his’, but those of the One who sent him. Thus the priest stands in continual need of being evangelized.

“The Priest and the Third Christian Millennium: Teacher of the Word,” a 1999 circular letter issued by the Congregation for the Clergy, discusses role of priests as “Teachers of the Word.” It incorporates the thought of “I Will Give You Shepherds.”

(Continued on page 14)
Referring to “The Directory for the Ministry and Life of Priests” (1994) the letter affirms an integral relationship between prayer and preaching that calls for a “primacy of witness of life which discovers the power of the love of God and makes his word convincing.”

In his article “Priest and Poet,” Jesuit Father Karl Rahner (d. 1984) articulated the integration of prayer, spirituality and the ministry of the Word when he wrote: “The word of God in the mouth of a priest wants therefore, if it is to be spoken rightly, to absorb and subject to itself the life of the priestly individual.”

Praying the hours is time well spent

Father John Sterling

A life of ministry begins with personal holiness and personal relationship with Christ. As a priest it took me awhile to learn this. I now begin every day with a Holy Hour. I begin with meditation and then go to Office of Readings and Morning Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours. This time is separate from any homily preparation. It is when I get filled with the Spirit of Christ to do God’s work and God’s will. Bishop Foys helped me to realize the importance of these practices when I was dealing with some problems a few years back.

The temptation is to get so busy in the ministry that we put the prayer on the back burner, when it really needs to be just the opposite. Before the seminary, Father Ray Holtz taught me the importance of personal prayer and relationship with Christ. I also find this connection while hiking in the woods and finding God in nature.

Moving like a glacier

Benedictine Sister Colleen Winston

For some people, awareness that they may have a vocation hits them like a lightning bolt. For me, it was more like being on a glacier unaware it was moving.

Beginning with first grade at Holy Cross, I was exposed to Benedictine sisters, but my consciousness of their influence on my spiritual life didn’t surface until I was older. Frequent visits to church seemed normal; playing the organ for Masses now and then beginning in fifth or sixth grade was just something I could do to earn a little money. After all, since the third grade I’d been sure I was going to be a doctor like Elizabeth Blackwell, whose bio I had read.

When I got to high school, Benedictine Sister Teresa Wolking, along with Father Ted Keller, taught me about liturgy, which fit in with my organ playing. All these factors were quietly shaping my inner self as I was thinking and preparing to be a doctor.

Thru grade and into high school my teachers, all Benedictines, spoke to me off and on about entering the convent. Most of the time I fully rejected the idea; once in a while I gave it some thought. These were times I periodical-ly sent for information from Maryknoll, Medical Mission sisters, and others who had doctors as members.

Only when I got to college and enrolled in pre-med did I realize the total expenses to become a doctor were beyond my ability to handle; I switched to lab technology. By the time I was a sophomore, the idea of religious life was still lingering, and I began to think about it more seriously.

For some reason the information about medical communities hadn’t really grabbed my imagination, and I started thinking closer to home, namely the Benedictines. Since they didn’t have doctors, I decided to change my major to another love, namely English. I always enjoyed both science and literature. I tucked second-
ary education into my revised curriculum so I'd have an occupation I could follow with an English major.

During this directional shift I was talking with a few priest and nun friends — all were encouraging. I finally got the courage to tell my folks what I was thinking about. My mom was not happy and my dad said “No” so I decided if I went, I should wait until I was 21. By the time I turned 21 I had decided to enter St. Walburg’s, but in less than a year I’d be finished with college, so I would wait. I graduated June 1, 1959 and two weeks later I entered.

Looking back I see that all the educational, scholarly and friendly interchanges and all the Masses I played over a 16 year period laid a solid foundation for my Benedictine life with its focus on liturgy and community. The hand of God had been moving the glider and holding me all those years.

The hand of God had been moving the glider and holding me all those years.

The occasion of my 60th jubilee of religious profession is an opportunity to reflect on my life as a Sister of Notre Dame and the precious gifts I have received. God’s call to consecrated life as a vowed religious is a gift that I have come to treasure more as I grow older. When I think back and wonder how it all began, I feel quite sure of who planted the seed of vocation, who nurtured it and the many helps that brought me to my profession of vows as a Sister of Notre Dame and now to the milestone of my 60th anniversary of profession.

It was God in boundless love who called me to religious life. My dear parents, family and relatives nurtured the seed of vocation. I was formed and helped not only by their strong faith and love, but also by my teachers, pastors and good friends.

I entered the Sisters of Notre Dame after high school at the age of 19. Little did I know what my life would be like. Recalling my early years of formation, I feel so very grateful for the sisters who guided and directed me and for my community for the support and help given to me through all the years. I was given an education and prepared for ministry in education as teacher and administrator. What a privilege and gift it was to teach and work with children and teachers in large and small schools in both Kentucky and Ohio. In 1995 I was missioned to begin our mission in Uganda, East Africa. It was a big challenge to go 7,000 miles from home to a place where there was no electricity, where a safe water supply and adequate food was questionable. We were to help with education in a place known as “the lost coun-

(Continued from page 14)

(Continued on page 16)
“BE NOT AFRAID: JUST HAVE Faith
Mark 5:36

Diocese of Covington 2021-2022 Seminarians

Deacon A.J. Gedney
4th Year Theology
St. Vincent Seminary

Michael Elmlinger
3rd Year Theology
St. Vincent Seminary

Joshua Heskamp
1st Year Theology
St. Vincent Seminary

Justin Schwarz
1st Year Theology
St. Vincent Seminary

Hank Bischoff
2nd Year Pre-Theology
St. Vincent Seminary

Brad Whittle
2nd Year Pre-Theology
St. Vincent Seminary

Michael Schulte
1st Year Pre-Theology
St. Vincent Seminary

John Baumann
Pastoral Year

Please Pray for Vocations
For more information on priestly vocations
Father Conor Kunath - 859-392-1500
Most Reverend John C. Elliott
Bishop of Covington
ties” because it was a very lacking in development and it seemed that the government had little concern for the people or the area. Three other Sisters of Notre Dame and I were returned home to a life that was different and again faced the challenge of adjustment and transition. In my retirement years, I am finding much joy in volunteer work at our Notre Dame Urban Education Center El Centro, and with an after-school program at City Heights. A very life-giving activity is my participation in a mission sewing project. We make clothing and other items for the poor in Uganda and other places where there are needs. Now I pause and with much gratitude reflect. Who in my life has inspired me? Certainly it was my dear mom and dad, my family, and grandparents. Who has seen me through difficult times? I vividly recall the day a boy and his younger brother, with their belongings sat on the curb for hours waiting for their mother to permanently take them home as a family. They had no communication except snail mail. We were faced with many daunting challenges, yet we were blessed with God’s constant presence in the Eucharist. How lovingly our good God has provided for me all through my life! Now, each day at our convent home we have special time each afternoon to be with our Eucharistic Lord during an hour of exposition. How I wish that I could help everyone know the love and goodness, the support and help so available to us in the Eucharist. I know without a doubt that Jesus in his gift of Eucharist is my source of life, peace and joy. For 60 years as a Sister of Notre Dame, for all the overwhelming blessings of my life, I praise and thank my good God! How lovingly our good God has provided for me all through my life! Now, each day at our convent home we have special time each afternoon to be with our Eucharistic Lord during an hour of exposition. How I wish that I could help everyone know the love and goodness, the support and help so available to us in the Eucharist. I know without a doubt that Jesus in his gift of Eucharist is my source of life, peace and joy.

CARMELITE SISTERS FOR THE AGED AND INFIRM

Carmelites are committed to love and care compassionately for all who make one of their 20 nursing facilities their home. The Carmelite Sisters emphasize each resident’s personal worth and dignity. We live a vowed life of obedience, poverty, and chastity. We share our lives with one another, open ourselves to one another and influence one another’s life journey. We pray, work and live as a Community, and are united in a common mission. We are a part of the Province of Cincinnati.

Visit our web page – www.carmelitesisters.com
or email vacation@carmelitesisters.com

Carmelite Sisters for the Aged & Infirm, Vocation Office
600 Woods Road, Germantown, NY 12526

I would like to learn more about the Carmelite Sisters and your ministry. Please send me your illustrated Introduction to The Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm.

Name: _____________________________
Address: __________________________
City: __________________ State: ______ Zip: ______
Phone Number: _____________ Email: __________

St. Ignatius’ ‘Examen’ a daily discernment exercise to discover God’s presence and will

Katie Schroeder
Editorial assistant pro tem

St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuit Order, wrote “The Spiritual Exercises,” a compilation of prayers, contemplations, and meditations for Christians. Within this text is the examen, a prayerful reflection which has become a central part of Jesuit life (“The Examen”). It involves setting time aside every day (twice a day for St. Ignatius and the Jesuits, at midday and the end of the day) to reflect on what happened that day and how God was present in those moments.

The examen not only helps with one’s attentiveness to the present experience, but with discernment as well. Discernment is the willful perception of God’s presence in the events of one’s life and the resolution to cooperate with his calling. In order to discern God’s calling, the examen has five steps to follow each day:

— Examination: Review the moments of the day. Where he has been present during the day what has troubled you, what has challenged you, and whether you noticed God’s presence and will in your life, your actions and your thoughts. In this step, you look back on your life in the past, present and future.

— Ask for light: Ask for the ability to see your own heart (twice a day for St. Ignatius and the Jesuits) and discern God’s calling. In order to cooperate with his calling, you must become attuned to his presence and will.

— Acknowledge the gifts that you have received…such as love and support from another, a moment of courage, or a positive event.

— For light. Ask for the ability to see yourself as God sees you, showing you the needs of other people, giving you insight into their lives and what God would wish for them.

— Thanksgiving: Determine what you are especially grateful for during this day. Acknowledge the gifts that you have received…such as love and support from another, a moment of courage, or a positive event.

— Blessing: What do you want to say that you have experienced during this day? What do you want to give to the world?

St. Ignatius’ ‘Examen’ a daily discernment exercise to discover God’s presence and will
St. Henry District High School

OPEN HOUSE
For middle school and high school transfer students

Sunday, November 14, 2021 | 1-4 pm
Register for specific time (space is limited)
www.SHDHS.org

Holy Cross District High School
"Born of the Spirit"
John 3:16

OPEN HOUSE
Wednesday
November the 10th
2021 INCOMING FRESHMEN SIX-THIRTY IN THE GYMNASIUM

www.hchscoy.com
Soul's well-being and their relationship with God is crucial. To achieve this, one needs to engage in the practice of the Spiritual Exercises, which are designed to help individuals examine their lives and connect with God.

The examen is a simple exercise that involves reflecting on the day and examining one's experiences with God. It consists of five steps:

1. **Thanksgiving**: Acknowledge and express gratitude for the good things that happened today.
2. **Consolation and Desolation**: Recognize the sources of comfort and the challenges one faced throughout the day.
3. **Assessment**: Evaluate the day's experiences and determine how one might improve.
4. **Petition**: Request guidance from God for the next day.
5. **Resolution**: Decide on actions to take tomorrow.

By following these steps, one can cultivate a deeper understanding of their spiritual journey and grow closer to God. This practice not only helps in discerning God's will but also fosters personal growth and transformation.

Say Yes!

To serve as a Deacon in the Diocese of Covington

We invite men age 35 and over to consider a vocation to be a PERMANENT DEACON

For information contact the Office of Deacons and Diocesan Service, 1125 Madison Avenue, Covington, KY 41011-3115
(859) 392-1500

Join us in a ministry of service to God and His People

Whom to call

For in-depth information about religious life, permanent diaconate, lay pastoral ministry or priesthood, please contact the following individuals.

**Priesthood**
Father Conor Kunath
Vocation Office, 1125 Madison Ave., Covington, KY 41011-3115
(859) 392-1566 E-mail: ckunath@covdio.org

**Permanent Diaconate and Lay Pastoral Ministry**
Msgr. William Neuhaus
Pastoral Ministry Formation Office, 1125 Madison Ave., Covington, KY 41011-3115
(859) 392-1564 E-mail: wneuhau@covdio.org

Deacon Paul Yancey
Pastoral Ministry Formation Office, 1125 Madison Ave., Covington, KY 41011-3115
(859) 392-1568 E-mail: pyancey@covdio.org

**Religious Communities of Women**
Benedictine Sisters of Covington, www.stwalburg.org
Sister Cathy Rauer, O.S.B.
St. Walburg Monastery
2000 Amsterdam Rd, Villa Hills, KY 41017-5386
(859) 301-6324 E-mail: bauseros@yahoo.com

St. Joseph the Worker Sisters, www.sjworg
Sister Patricia Jean Cushing, S.J.W.
St. Joseph Convent
140 South Main St., Walton, KY 41094
(859) 485-4914 E-mail: sjwvocations@gmail.com

Congregation of Divine Providence of Kentucky, www.cdpkentucky.org
Sister Leslie Keeney, C.P.
(859) 641-0760 ext. 32 E-mail: vocation@cdpkentucky.org

Nuns of the Sacred Heart, www.snkky.org
Sister Mary Ruth Lubbers, S.N.D.
431 Lookout Ct., Ft. Wright, KY 41011 (859) 570-8190 E-mail: vocation@ SNDKky.org or smrubbers@gmail.com

Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ, www.elrangerpassionists.com
Sister Mary Catherine Thomas, C.P.
1151 Donaldson Hwy, Erlanger, KY 41018
(859) 371-6560 E-mail: sistermarycatherine@outlook.com

**Public Association of the Faithful**
Franciscan Daughters of Mary, www.fdmfmary.org
Sister Clare Marie Beecher, F.D.M.
336 East 16th St., Covington, KY 41014-1303
PO Box 122070, Covington, KY 41027-0705
(859) 323-5755 E-mail: fmsisters@email.com

**Ways to support vocations**
Become a prayer partner. Prayer partners are individuals and families who agree to pray for a specific seminarian as he discerns his call. Call Father Michael Norton at (859) 392-1566 or e-mail mnorton@covdio.org.

Send cards and notes either directly to our seminarians or through Father Daniel Schomaker, assistant director of seminarians, 1125 Madison Ave., Covington, KY 41011-3115. Join a group that supports vocations. Many parishes have vocation committees. If your parish doesn’t, consider starting one.

**Serra Club of Northern Kentucky** is part of an international organization dedicated to supporting vocations. Contact Michael Murray at (859) 982-1000 or e-mail mmurray@covdio.org. Visit www.serranky.org or www.serrainternational.org.

Our diocesan Knights of Columbus send each seminarian an annual financial contribution for personal expenses. Call Dustin Reed at (859) 886-2122 or visit kokf.org/jms.

Make a financial contribution to the diocesan Seminarian Education Fund, 1125 Madison Ave., Covington, KY 41011-3115 or online at www.covdio.org.
The Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky, is a group of Catholic men and women who pray and work to foster vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life. Club members are also committed to growing in knowledge of the Catholic faith and to becoming better Catholics through prayer and acts of stewardship.

The Serra Club was originally founded in Seattle, Washington in 1934 by a group of business men who wanted to learn more about their faith. The Club was named after Father Junipero Serra y Ferrer, O.F.M., a Franciscan priest who founded a number of missions along the west coast of California. Because of his evangelistic and ministerial work in Mexico and California, Father Serra was beatified by Pope John Paul II on Sept. 25, 1988 and canonized by Pope Francis on Sept. 23, 2015.

Those founding members of the Serra Club gathered regularly for a meal and a program featuring some aspect of Catholicism. Eventually, they decided to include the mission of praying for and fostering vocations to the priesthood and religious life. In the years since the Serra Clubs’ founding, clubs have been formed throughout the United States and in most countries around the world.

In due time, their work was recognized by Church leadership. In 1951, Serra International became aggregated to the Sacred Council for Catholic Education and the Pontifical Work for Priestly Vocations. In 1986, Serra International voted to welcome women to membership in the organization. Today, there are more than 1,120 Serra Clubs in 46 countries with a total membership of more than 23,000 men, women and permanent deacons. Each Serra Club is a member of both a national council and Serra International. Serra International, which has an office located in Chicago, links Serra Clubs around the world.

At the local level, the Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky, was chartered in 1961 to assist the Diocese of Covington with the promotion of vocations. Throughout its 60 years of service in the diocese, the Serra Club has worked to foster and promote vocations, as well as to support priests, deacons and religious in their sacred ministry. They also encourage members to recognize and respond in their own lives to God’s call.

The Club holds meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. These business meetings begin at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast. On the third Tuesday of the month, the Club meets for lunch and invites an outside speaker such as a seminarian or leader in a Catholic ministry.

The local Serra Club also sponsors the Servers Award Ceremony every April, the Picnic for Women Religious and Seminarian Cookout in the summer months, and a Priest Appreciation Dinner every November. Fundraisers for the Club include an evening at the Florence Y’alls baseball game every June and the annual Serra Club Golf Outing in September. Club members celebrate the July 1 feast day of St. Junipero Serra with a Mass and reception that is open to the public.

In a modern world that grows increasingly secular in nature, it is now more important than ever to foster and promote religious vocations in the Church. People with a deep level of faith who wish to serve the Lord by committing themselves to religious life and accepting Holy Orders, serve God and their community in a very unique and most loving way. Serrans believe that vocations to serve God are special and every effort should be made to assist these men and women by providing them with access to spiritual and other resources as necessary to support them during formation.

For additional information about the Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky, contact membership chair Mike Murray by phone, (859) 392-1500, or by e-mail mmurray@covdio.org.
Seminarians share their thoughts on pursuing a vocation to priesthood

How does a man recognize God’s call to pursue a vocation to the priesthood? What’s it like to discern a priestly vocation? The diocese’s eight seminarians share their experiences and invite others to join them on the journey.

Priestly joy
John Baumann
My discernment process toward the priesthood began when Father Michael Hennigen, then a seminarian himself, was assigned to my home parish, All Saints Parish in Walton. I was 17. Before then, I never really thought of being a priest. I then started coming to Wednesday night basketball early, and staying late, so I could ask more about the life of a priest, and the formation of the seminarian. Father Hennigen started to catch on, and finally asked me if I was thinking of being a priest.

What influenced me most, I think, wasn’t what Father Hennigen said or explained. I was drawn to the priesthood because he spent time with me and my friends, kind of like an older brother. Not only that, but he had fun and shared his joy with us. This joy comes from sincerely following the will of the Father. I was jealous of Father Hennigen’s confidence and happiness in the best way I wanted to know the Father like he did. He had something that the world couldn’t offer—something gifted by God.

Having answered God’s plan for my life, I can now feel that same peace and happiness, and it only follows that I allow it to shine through me for the next man who is discerning.

“Jesus, I trust in You.” Often in life just knowing that we do not have to do something alone can be enough to give us the courage to take the first step. This certainly was the case for me.

We have to keep our eyes constantly upon him, trusting that he is the one who is truly in charge. He is the one who will fight the battle for me when I am being invaded by the temptations of the devil. It is when, by his grace, I keep my eyes on him, when I am able to surrender myself to his grace that I am able to withstand the temptations and do only what he wants me to do. Thanks be to God that this is his fight and not just mine.

With eyes fixed on the Lord
Michael Elmlinger
In the Book of Chronicles (2:28) we read about King Jehoshaphat of Judah being invaded by the Moabites, Ammonites and Moznites—he was greatly outnumbered. In response to the invasion, the king prays one of the most powerful prayers in the entirety of not just the Old Testament but also of all Sacred Scripture. It concludes with such a profound placement of trust in the Lord that the practice still is used today. He says to God,

“For we are powerless against this great multitude that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you!” (20:12).

God responds to the king’s prayer through the prophet Jahaziel by saying, “Fear not, and be not dismayed at this great multitude; for the battle is not yours but God’s...” (2:15). With that, the Lord routed the enemies of Judah and brought victory to Jehoshaphat.

Vocational discernment for me is very similar to this great battle. It can be very easy to think that you are out of your depth in this vocation, to fall into the traps that the devil and his demons lay around us, surrounding us constantly. However, God does not speak to us in this way; he does not tell us not to do something by tearing us down and telling us we are not worthy. None of us are worthy, and there is no one else for the Lord God to call to the priesthood than those who are unworthy.

We have to keep our eyes constantly upon him, trusting that he is the one who is truly in charge. He is the one who will fight the battle for me when I am being invaded by the temptations of the devil. It is when, by his grace, I keep my eyes on him, when I am able to surrender myself to his grace that I am able to withstand the temptations and do only what he wants me to do. Thanks be to God that this is his fight and not just mine.

With eyes fixed on the Lord
Michael Elmlinger
In the Book of Chronicles (2:28) we read about King Jehoshaphat of Judah being invaded by the Moabites, Ammonites and Moznites—he was greatly outnumbered. In response to the invasion, the king prays one of the most powerful prayers in the entirety of not just the Old Testament but also of all Sacred Scripture. It concludes with such a profound placement of trust in the Lord that the practice still is used today. He says to God,

“For we are powerless against this great multitude that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you!” (20:12).

God responds to the king’s prayer through the prophet Jahaziel by saying, “Fear not, and be not dismayed at this great multitude; for the battle is not yours but God’s...” (2:15). With that, the Lord routed the enemies of Judah and brought victory to Jehoshaphat.

Vocational discernment for me is very similar to this great battle. It can be very easy to think that you are out of your depth in this vocation, to fall into the traps that the devil and his demons lay around us, surrounding us constantly. However, God does not speak to us in this way; he does not tell us not to do something by tearing us down and telling us we are not worthy. None of us are worthy, and there is no one else for the Lord God to call to the priesthood than those who are unworthy.

We have to keep our eyes constantly upon him, trusting that he is the one who is truly in charge. He is the one who will fight the battle for me when I am being invaded by the temptations of the devil. It is when, by his grace, I keep my eyes on him, when I am able to surrender myself to his grace that I am able to withstand the temptations and do only what he wants me to do. Thanks be to God that this is his fight and not just mine.

Peace in silence
Joshua Heskamp
My vocation is inspired and sustained by my relationship with Jesus Christ. This relationship, in turn, grows through personal prayer and the sacraments. It is daily prayer and reception of the Eucharist that keeps me focused and steady amid the various storms that arise in my life.

Some of the most impactful moments in my spiritual life have happened during Eucharistic adoration. I particularly remember spending early morning hours in front of the Eucharist in
Vocations

Michael Schulte
1st Year Pre-Theology

(Continued from page 21)

my home parish and feeling the first stirrings in my heart of a possible vocation to the priesthood. The more I learn to depend on his grace, the more I realize that I need him and that I can do nothing without him. Then, it becomes all the more important for me to come back to him in prayer, particularly to spend time with him in silence so that I can bring any of the deep anxieties of my heart to him. From there, he can bring his peace into difficult situations and help me to persevere through them.

Without prayer, I am sure that my vocation would foun-
der and fail. With prayer, I am sure that I can do whatever Christ is asking me to do, not because I am strong, but because he is my strength. As I continue to grow in my spiritual life, I recognize that this growth occurs precisely because he is my strength. As I continue to grow in my weakness. When I recognize my own weakness, and my need for him, I also find the opening required for his grace to guide my heart.

In this way, my spirit can remain, more or less, calm and find the opening required for his grace to guide my heart. From there, he can bring his peace into difficult situations and help me to persevere through them.

With prayer, I am sure that I can do whatever Christ is asking me to do, not because I am strong, but because he is my strength. As I continue to grow in my spiritual life, I recognize that this growth occurs precisely because he is my strength. As I continue to grow in my weakness. When I recognize my own weakness, and my need for him, I also find the opening required for his grace to guide my heart.

In this way, my spirit can remain, more or less, calm and find the opening required for his grace to guide my heart. From there, he can bring his peace into difficult situations and help me to persevere through them.

My coworkers wondered where I was for the few days I was gone, so I told them where I was and why they started calling me Father Schulte. With that fruitful experience and the encouragement of Father Boyle and many other people, discernment of this vocation has been nothing but a huge win. The other seminarians at St. Vincent Seminary have been another key contributor to calming my spirit and increasing my faith. Both of my parish assignments so far have been tremendous. The pastors and the prayers of the parishioners have surely encouraged me to keep on going. I have been abundantly blessed!

Parent and pastor support

Justin Schwarz
1st Year Theology

What has been instrumental in my own discernment towards the priesthood is the first tremendous support of my parents since the beginning along with the encouragement of my parish priest back in Seattle, Father Ed White. Their support and encouragement was what led me to consider the idea of a vocation in the first place. That seed planted on my heart to discern the will of God grew all throughout high school and never left me.

Nothing else that I pursued or explored gave me the peace and the joy that I found in a vocation to the priesthood. My discernment out of high school lead to the Franciscan University of Steubenville where I studied philosophy and theology. My four years there were incredibly transforma-
tive in ways that I could have never imagined or expected. I was able to go all in with my discernment being sur-
rounded by many people who were on fire for their faith, develop real holy and authentic friendships, grow spiritu-
ally by the immense opportunities for constant prayer there and be formed intellectually by good and holy profes-
sors.

It was through one of these friendships that I was even-
tually lead to the Diocese of Covington. The liturgy and the Eucharist are what greatly inspired me today in my dis-
cernment and have become the foundation and bedrock of my prayer. I have found deep consolation and healing from devotion to Eucharistic adoration and silent prayer, well, to share the Gospel with people through music, which is a language that everyone speaks. There is something especially heartwarming about seeing someone’s face light up when they hear their favorite church song just after they have undergone some kind of major surgery, or after having been in quar-
tine for many weeks or months.

It has always been bringing Christ to others that has helped stir the fire within me to become a priest. A call to priest-
hood is a call to be a serv-
vant to those placed in your care, which can take many different forms given one’s assignment.

Above all, what has encouraged me most in my discernment of the priesthood is the constant consolation from God that what I am doing is pleasing to him. In other words, what has encouraged me most is that it seems that God wants me to be a priest.

I encourage everyone to follow the call that God has placed on your heart, and to never forget that you are called, above all else, to be holy.

Discernment retreat — taking time away

Michael Schulte
1st Year Pre-Theology

As I started living the Catholic faith again, there was a conviction on my heart concerning the priesthood, a conviction that staunchly avoided at first. Getting to know Father Boyle didn’t even bring up the question about a potential priesthood, a conviction that I staunchly avoided at first. Getting to know Father Boyle didn’t even bring up the question about a potential vocation to the priesthood. The more I learned about our faith, I saw how he lived out his priesthood with passion and determination.

I was able to go all in with my discernment being sur-
rounded by many people who were on fire for their faith, develop real holy and authentic friendships, grow spiritu-
ally by the immense opportunities for constant prayer there and be formed intellectually by good and holy profes-
sors.

It was through one of these friendships that I was even-
tually lead to the Diocese of Covington. The liturgy and the Eucharist are what greatly inspired me today in my dis-
cernment and have become the foundation and bedrock of my prayer. I have found deep consolation and healing from devotion to Eucharistic adoration and silent prayer.

As I started living the Catholic faith again, there was a conviction on my heart concerning the priesthood, a conviction that strongly avoided at first. Getting to know Father Boyle didn’t even bring up the question about a potential priesthood, a conviction that I staunchly avoided at first. Getting to know Father Boyle didn’t even bring up the question about a potential vocation to the priesthood. The more I learned about our faith, I saw how he lived out his priesthood with passion and determination.

I was able to go all in with my discernment being sur-
rounded by many people who were on fire for their faith, develop real holy and authentic friendships, grow spiritu-
ally by the immense opportunities for constant prayer there and be formed intellectually by good and holy profes-
sors.

It was through one of these friendships that I was even-
tually lead to the Diocese of Covington. The liturgy and the Eucharist are what greatly inspired me today in my dis-
cernment and have become the foundation and bedrock of my prayer. I have found deep consolation and healing from devotion to Eucharistic adoration and silent prayer.

Hitting all the right notes

Brad Whittle
2nd Year Pre-Theology

Music has always been an instrumental (pun intended) aspect of my prayer life. I used to be the music minister at Sts. Boniface and James Parish, Ludlow, and during that time I had the privi-
lege to be at multiple Masses every weekend. This allowed me the oppor-
tunity to pray the Mass more often and to dive more deeply into our Catholic tradition. This led me to perform-
ning music in retirement communities and the hos-
pital, where I was able to use my God-given talents in service of God by bring-
ing peace and joy to others through music. It always brought me so much joy, as
**CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS**

**SMALL ENGINE REPAIR**
Lawn and garden equipment, ATV’s, Chainsaw Sharpening. We also sell lawn and garden equipment and supplies.
ECHIO, TORO, Country Clipper
**STEEL’S OUTDOOR POWER** 859-415-4277

**GERDES CONCRETE & MASONRY**
CONCRETE – Driveways, sidewalks, steps, patios, stamped concrete.
MASONRY – Cultured stone, retaining walls, brick pavers, foundations, fireplace, brick & chimney repairs. MIRC – Mini-excavator, Bob-Cat & drainage work. Quality work & fair price. Call 859-214-0715

**St. Vincent de Paul NKY has the following opportunities available:**
- Human Resources Business Partner. Responsible for aligning our human resources initiatives with our mission, strategic plan and business needs. The HRBP provides a model for positive company culture, encouraging employee engagement, growth and development.
- Part-time Cashiers at our Erlanger location. Our cashiers greet and then help our customers at check-out, providing an experience that shares the kindness and compassion emblematic of our ministry.
- Part-time Donation Center Associates at our Erlanger location. Our donation center associates greet our material donors, sort and organize donations to prepare for the retail environment.
- Full-time Truck Driver. Our transportation team is responsible for delivering pick-ups, representing local and national clients.
- Full-time Automotive Technician. We are looking for an experienced automotive technician to support our dealership.

Interested candidates can apply online at https://www.svdpnky.org/employment-opportunities/

**Marco Island, FL**
3 bdrm. walk to beach, 1st floor fully furnished 2BR, 2 bath condo. Contact info@Floridaislandrental.com or (859) 801-4911 for pricing, pictures & availability.
View at: http://FaxPrintsFlooringFacebook.com

**Good Job Remodeling LLC**
and Handyman
Now accepting small to large jobs. Free Estimates. Licensed and insured.
Call Steven at (859) 801-9925

**CAREGIVER FOR HIRE**
Caregiver for your loved ones needs.
Graduate of Mount St. Joseph College with 17 years experience specializing in elder care. If you need a break from caregiving please contact Angie Garrison. $18 per hour / min. 25 hrs. week.
References and police check available
(859) 801-4344 / Agarrison1351@gmail.com

**Music Director**
St. Catherine of Siena parish in Ft. Thomas. 3 Masses per weekend and other occasional services such as holy days, penance services, etc. Must be a good general musician, have good vocal and keyboard skills (prefer organ and piano), and be able to direct our adult and children’s choir. Must be familiar with the Catholic liturgy, or be willing to be educated in it. Please direct inquiries or resumes to Fr. Stef Bankemper, at 1380 N. Ft. Thomas Ave., Ft. Thomas, 41075, or e-mail at sbankemper@stcattherineofsiena.org.

**HOUSE CLEANING**
Isn’t it time you come clean? We don’t cut corners, we clean them. Insured and bonded.
Discount for senior citizens and first-time clients
Call (859) 760-6408.

**FULL-TIME CUSTOMER SERVICE/ORDER FULFILLMENT POSITION**
MBA (international) is looking for a full-time motivated, reliable, detail oriented individual who has experience working in Customer Service, Packing, and Shipping. Must be able to lift up to 25 lbs. Job duties will include, but are not limited to: answering phones, receiving customer orders and resolving inquiries, order entry and invoicing, pulling, packing, shipping orders. Friendly, casual atmosphere. Quickbooks knowledge preferred but is not required. If interested please send your resume to Renee Murphy at Renee.Murphy@milulant.com.

**PART-TIME CUSTODIAN**
Notre Dame Academy (NDA) is searching for a part-time custodian to assist with facility cleaning, trash removal, event setups, and other routine housekeeping and maintenance tasks. Regular hours are from 6:30PM to 9:00PM, Monday through Friday, but schedule can be somewhat flexible.
This position requires the physical ability to walk and stand for long periods of time, as well as, the ability to lift and move equipment and supplies up to 50lbs. Custodial experience is preferred. A high school diploma or Ged equivalent, background check, valid driver’s license and Virtus training is required.
Please submit letter of interest, resume, and salary requirements to nrdhr@nfanet.org.

**ASSEMBLER**
A small company in Florence, KY with more than 30 years’ experience producing medical products for veterinarians is seeking workers for permanent part-time or permanent fulltime positions, up to 40 hours per week. This production position involves the assembly and packaging of lightweight items in a clean room environment. Candidate must be detail oriented, able to handle small parts, and dependable.
Please email resume or work history to Renee Murphy at Renee.Murphy@milulant.com.

**Music Director**
St. Catherine of Siena parish in Ft. Thomas. 3 Masses per weekend and other occasional services such as holy days, penance services, etc. Must be a good general musician, have good vocal and keyboard skills (prefer organ and piano), and be able to direct our adult and children’s choir. Must be familiar with the Catholic liturgy, or be willing to be educated in it. Please direct inquiries or resumes to Fr. Stef Bankemper, at 1380 N. Ft. Thomas Ave., Ft. Thomas, 41075, or e-mail at sbankemper@stcattherineofsiena.org.

Opportunities to Serve at Catholic Charities
Do you have a desire to find your purpose? Are you passionate about witnessing your faith by serving others? Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington has a few open paid positions that may be the perfect opportunity to fit your calling.

School-based Counselor is a master’s level position in our school-based counseling program, which works together serving 11 Northern Kentucky schools. If you enjoy helping teens, are positive, and enjoy working with a team, this is the career opportunity for you! We have an immediate opening in our School-based Counseling Program serving two Northern Kentucky High Schools. This is a Full or Part-time position during the academic year and could be extended over the summer.

Parish Kitchen Manager – Parish Kitchen in the heart of Covington, KY is open year-round serving a wholesome lunch to anyone who is hungry. The ideal candidate would have experience or aptitude for both food services and social services ministry. The Parish Kitchen Manager oversees the entire operation and supervision, 5 fulltime and part-time staff, and over 200 volunteers. You would immediately make an impact, and your heart will grow. This is a full-time position.

Client Services Specialist is on the front-line, assisting, serving and supporting clients and investigators seeking services and assistance at our office in Latonia, KY. Other duties include managing case files and providing customer service through the entire process.

Mental Health Counselor is a master’s level position in our Mental Health and Pregnancy Adoption Programs. Involves general counseling services to individuals and families, including pregnancy and adoption cases. Must be independently licensed or pursuing independent licensing.

Additional details about each of the above opportunities can be found on our website at https://www.covingtoncharities.org/news/events/job-opportunities.

Please contact Shannon Braun directly at sbraun@covingtoncharities.org if you would like to learn more about any of these opportunities.

**FACILITIES CLEANING TECHNICIANS**
TDG NOW HIRING - St. Mary Parish is in need of two cleaning technicians for our school. One position is full-time, the other position is part-time, both are 2nd shift. Great pay and full benefits.
Call or text Mike Jones at 859-512-6304.

**Immediate opening for a COLLISION TECHNICIAN**
Three — Five years experience. Must have tools.
Call (513) 221-5600, ext. 0241
Tomb of fallen soldiers are cry for peace, pope says on All Souls’ feast

ROME — The tombstones of soldiers killed in war cry out to people today to end all wars and to stop the production of weapons, Pope Francis said. “I am sure that all of those who went with goodwill (to war), called by their country to defend it, are with the Lord,” he said, celebrating Mass on the feast of All Souls, Nov. 2, at the French Military Cemetery in Rome. “But we, who are journeying (on earth), are we fighting enough so there will be no more wars, so there will be no more domestic economies fortified by the arms industry?” he asked. An easing of restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic allowed Pope Francis to resume his usual practice of celebrating Mass on the feast of All Souls in a cemetery — in Rome or nearby — but only about 250 people were in attendance. Last year he presided over a private Mass in a chapel and then visited and blessed graves in a small cemetery inside the Vatican. The Italian government established the French Military Cemetery to honor the French soldiers who fought against Nazi and fascist forces on Italian soil from 1943 to 1944. Nearly 2,000 French soldiers are buried here, many of them Moroccan soldiers who served under French officers. Among those present at the Mass was Cardinal Dominique Mamberti, prefect of the Vatican’s highest court, who was born in Marrakech, Morocco, to French parents.

Pope urges leaders at COP26 to be courageous in tackling climate change

VATICAN CITY — Education, a change in lifestyles and a model of development focused “on fraternity and on the covenant between human beings and the natural environment” are urgently needed to slow climate change and care for its victims, Pope Francis said in a message to world leaders at the COP26 summit. Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state and head of the Holy See delegation to the U.N. climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland, read portions of the pope’s message to the assembly Nov. 2. The cardinal was one of more than 50 speakers, most of whom were heads of state or government leaders, delivering three-minute “national statements” during the high-level segment of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The high-level segment will close Nov. 12, and negotiations will close Nov. 13. The Vatican released the full text of the pope’s message, which was submitted as part of the official record of the summit. Like other leaders who spoke of the concrete commitments their governments were making, Pope Francis briefly explained the action the Vatican had adopted; the first is to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. But the Holy See, with its influence over parishes, schools and universities around the globe, also is committed, he said, to promoting “education in integral ecology,” meaning a focus on both the needs of the earth and on the needs of the people who inhabit it.

Court rejects vaccine religious exemption for Maine health care workers

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court is allowing a COVID-19 vaccine mandate for health care workers in Maine to remain in effect, rejecting an emergency appeal from a group of the state’s health care workers seeking a religious exemption. Although the one-sentence order issued Oct. 28 did not give an explanation, justices expressed their views in separate writings. Justice Neil Gorsuch, in an eight-page dissent joined by Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito, said that he would have agreed to the request of the state’s health care workers, noting that many other states have religious exemptions in place for health care workers. He said the firing of workers and shutting down of health care practices for non-compliance with the vaccine mandate is “worthy of our attention” because those seeking a religious exemption are “adhering to their constitutionally protected religious beliefs.” He also said the state’s refusal to grant religious exemptions “borders on the irrational.” Justice Amy Coney Barrett, in a short statement of concurrence, joined by Justice Brett Kavanaugh, said the court’s emergency docket was not a suitable place to resolve the workers’ claims. New York and Rhode Island are the only other states with vaccine mandates for health care workers that do not have religious exemptions and both of these mandates are currently being fought in lower courts."
of my family. To my surprise, it has often been the person whom I would have least chosen to live with who has been a vehicle of grace and transformation in my life.

Moreover, this has been true for my life in general. I have often found myself graced by the most unlikely, unexpected, initially unwelcome sources. Admittedly, this has not always been without pain. What’s foreign, what’s other, can be upsetting and painful for a long time before grace and revelation are recognized, but it’s what carries grace. That is our challenge always, though particularly today when so many of us are retreating to our own islands, imagining this as maturity, and then rationalizing it by a false faith, a false nationalism, and a false idea of what constitutes maturity. This is both wrong and dangerous. Engaging with what is other enlarges us. God is in the stranger, and so we are cutting ourselves off from a major avenue of grace whenever we will not let the foreign into our lives.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author.
Family Owned and Operated

TOM Rechtin
Heating & Air
859-261-8269
www.tomrechtin.com

Proudly Serving You Since 1964.
“Antlers” (Searchlight) Set in an impoverished community in rural Oregon, this deeply unsettling horror film charts the efforts of a middle school teacher to discover what’s behind the strange behavior of a troubled student whose mysterious travels eventually turn out to be connected to a series of bizarre deaths that the educator’s brother, the local sheriff, is investigating. Based on a short story by Nick Antosca, who co-wrote the screenplay with director Scott Cooper and C. Henry Chaisson, the gothic tale abounds in disturbing sights many will wish to avoid and may consider offensive. Yet Cooper and his collaborators are at their best when relying on suggestion and crafting an eerie atmosphere. Their occasional lapses in more lurid material — scenes of bloodletting and shots of mauled corpses — though shocking, are relatively brief and designed to advance a dark fable about the dire consequences of environmental irresponsibility. Intense gory violence, numerous gruesome images, occult themes, partial nudity, sexual mimicry, about a half-dozen uses of profanity, a couple of milder oaths, frequent rough language, a few crude terms. CNS: L; MPAA: R.
Thank you for your generous support of the 2021 Seminary Ball.

Ordination Sponsor
Al Knefel Family

Acolyte Sponsor
Kentucky State Catholic Order of Foresters
St. Elizabeth Healthcare

Candidacy Sponsor
Fred Espenschied Plumbing, Inc.
Fourth Street Performance Partners, Inc.
St. Agnes Parish

Reception Co-Sponsors
Knights of Columbus Councils of Northern Kentucky
Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky

Table Sponsors
Diocese of Covington
Most Reverend John C. Iffert
Most Reverend Roger J. Foys
Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption
All Saints Parish
Anonymous (1)
Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery/Villa Madonna Academy
Matthew and Cindy Bischoff
Blessed Sacrament Parish
Catholic Order of Foresters
NYK Agency, Tom Kaelin
Century Construction
Covington Catholic High School
Covington Latin School
Cristo Rey Parish
Divine Mercy Parish/St. Bernard Parish

Dressman Benzinger LoVelle, psc
Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem
The Fagel and Winnike Families
Mark and Casey Guillfoyle
Holy Cross District High School
Holy Cross Parish
Holy Spirit Parish
The House of Hansen
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish
Tom and Patty Kissel
Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish
Mother of God Parish
Notre Dame Academy
Joseph and Reena Oka
Professional Fundraising Counsel/Scott Lubansky
St. Anthony Parish
St. Augustine Parish, Augusta
St. Augustine Parish, Covington (3)
St. Barbara Parish
St. Benedict Parish
St. Catherine of Sienna Parish
St. Cecilia Parish
St. Charles Borromeo Parish/St. Rose of Lima Parish
St. Francis Xavier Parish
St. Henry District High School
St. Henry Parish
St. James Parish, Brooksville
St. John the Evangelist Parish,
Carrollton/Transfiguration Mission
St. Joseph Parish, Camp Springs
St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring
St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs
St. Patrick Parish, Moysville
St. Patrick School
St. Philip Parish
St. Pius X Parish
St. Theresa Parish
St. Thomas Parish

St. Timothy Parish
St. William Parish
Stith Funeral Homes, Florence and Hebron
Thomas More University
US Bank, Northern KY Market
Robert and Stella Volmer
Western & Southern
Financial Group
Scott and Elaine Whittle

Gold Sponsors
Robert and Barbara Brown
Catholic Mutual Group
Midlandorf Funeral Home
Robert Ehrtem Hayes & Associates, PLLC
Dr. Mark and Mary Ann Zalla

Silver Sponsors
Anonymous, St. Patrick School, Taylor Mill
Bill and Cindy Biecker
Bishop Brossart High School
Janet Dee
Dobbling Mushelkamp Erscll Inc.
Fort Mitchell Garage
Earl Franks & Sons & Daughters
Michael and Donna Heim
David and Therese Heskamp
The Meyer Family
Paul and Tracy Neimer
Newport Central Catholic High School
David Palgen
Rick and Charlotte Reed
William Rice
St. John the Evangelist Parish,
Covington/St. Ann Mission
St. Mary of the Assumption Parish
Sts. Boniface & James Parish
Sts. Peter and Paul Parish
Thomas and Donna Schmoker
Joseph and Teresa Schulte
Andrew and Barbara Vonlehman
Greg White, Knights of Columbus Insurance

2021 Seminary Ball Planning Committee:
Rev. Conor Kunath
Mary Ankenheuser
Carl Berry
Keith Cahill
Eva Farris
Dennis Halflin
Caroline Kaelin
Joanne Kenner
Pam Ruchman
Donna Schmoker
Kathy Selby
Deacon Bill Thies
Debbie Wood
Office of Stewardship and Mission Services

Helped produce the 2021 Seminary Ball:
Mark Czarnik,
A-1 Professional Video
Paul Feuss,
ALLSTATE Signs and Printing
Diocese of Covington Curio Staff
Caroline Kaelin,
Graphic Designer
The Messenger Staff
The Hawthorne Quartet
The Mix Band
Northern Kentucky Convention Center