At Catholic Schools Week Mass and Candlemas students encouraged to be light to the world

Laura Keener
Editor

On the Wednesday before freezing rain and snow would close schools and businesses for two days, Bishop John Iffert and student representatives from all the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Covington gathered at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Feb. 2, for the annual diocesan Catholic Schools Week Mass. Three themes collided on this day — the celebration of Catholic Schools Week, the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple and Candlemas.

The themes were threaded together both in Bishop Iffert’s homily and the liturgy, as Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Schools, and two students joined the opening procession carrying candles. Mrs. McGuire placed her candle on the altar. The students placed their lighted candles before an icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

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The day’s Gospel reading recounted the story of when Jesus and Mary returned home, Jesus “grew and became strong, filled with wisdom.” Bishop Iffert said. “Jesus, born as an infant, grew. God entered into even greater things, the formation of a human being.”

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The Diocese of Covington is making plans to attend the 2023 World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal. Partnering with the travel agency JMJ Youth, the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization has put together a spiritual and cost effective travel package for pilgrims wanting to travel to this historic event.

"Make the choice of a lifetime to spend nine days away seeking to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ more deeply and intimately by joining our Holy Father, Pope Francis in Lisbon, Portugal," said Isaak A. Isaak, associate director, Office of Catechesis and Evangelization. "We will travel through the beautiful countryside of Portugal, visiting the villages and cities of Lisbon, and will also dedicate a day trip to the sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima."

World Youth Day will be held August 1–6, 2023. Pilgrims from the Diocese of Covington will depart July 30 and return August 7. Anyone ages 16 and up are welcome to join the pilgrimage to Lisbon. The Cost is $3,700 per person with an initial payment of $300 due March 31. For more information, please visit covdio.org/youth.

Married couples are a witness to God’s love

Bishop John Iffert and the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization honored couples who have been married for 1, 25, 50, and 60-plus years at vespers, Feb. 6, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington. Each couple was individually recognized and received a blessing from Bishop Iffert.

In his homily Bishop Iffert said he found himself thinking, “this is a tough situation to preach, because here I am trying to say something to the professionals about what marriage is.”

Bishop Iffert centered his homily around several couples’ stories that reflected on marriage being a symbol of God’s love. The couples mentioned in the homily found love, beauty, and grace in one another, witnessing the love God bestows upon us.

Every marriage faces difficulties, hardships, and adversities, but the ability to find grace, beauty and forgiveness is a reminder of that love and commitment to each other. Accompanying one another through the lifelong commitment of marriage is not easy, but the greatness of marriage comes in trusting each other enough to take this lifelong journey together, he said.

“‘No one when standing on these steps at the church has any idea what God has in store, the good or the difficult; but together you declare your love and your gift of self, and you say, no matter what comes, we are better together than we are separate,’” Bishop Iffert said. “God takes that gift that you offer, and He blesses it. He makes it plenty so we may all witness the commitment of love, so that we can see that God has made it with all of us. Nothing worthwhile in life is easy. When God looks at us, he doesn’t see the moments when we betrayed him, the moments we lied, our limitations or our approaching death. He sees beauty, grace, love and is forgiving.”

Bishop Iffert closed by thanking the nearly 50 couples in attendance for their commitment to each other and example they set for the Church.

Arise and make plans to attend 2023 World Youth Day

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especially during these times when the culture seems to be throwing everything at us to knock us off course... the DPAA is our way of standing firm in support of all the ministries, programs and services of our diocese," Mrs. Riegler said.

In addition to the ministries and programs, the DPAA also assists parishes with their rebate program, Mrs. Riegler pointed out. With the rebate program, 100 percent of funds collected over a parish's goal is rebated back to the parish to support parish projects and ministries.

The DPAA also assists those in need in the community by providing service grants to local organizations that provide material goods and services to the most vulnerable – organizations like Be Concerned, the Parish Kitchen and Pregnancy Counseling, care for retired priests and the formation of seminarians.

He also asked solicitors to encourage donors to give at one of the Leadership Gift Club's levels: Luc Christi Guild, $10,000 or above; Bishop’s Society $5,000-$9,999; Messenger Society, $1,500-$4,999; Monogrammers Society, $500-$1,499; and Crusader Society, $250-$499.

In his closing remarks Bishop Iffert thanked the gift solicitors for their willingness to serve and do the work.

"I can’t think of anything harder than going to somebody and asking them for money," Bishop Iffert said. "Thank you for doing that hard thing and inviting people to invest themselves in the life and mission of the Church."

"We always mean it by works of prayer and charity... It's also the way we practice stewardship," Bishop Iffert said. "We enter into prayer, giving our gift of time. We become invested in the programs that we love, giving our gift of talent. We fund those programs and services and people's needs with our gift of treasure. That's how we work for this. It is what it means for us to be a disciple, to be a crusader for the faith, to be the defender of the faith. It means that we invest our whole selves. I thank you for your doing that in this process."
Along with many other cultural commentators, I have been tracing for the past many years the phenomenon of religious disaffiliation, the sobering fact that armies of people, especially the young, are leaving institutional religion behind. It is simply no good denying the statistics, which have been borne out in study after study and the truth of massive disaffiliation is evident to any priest, minister or rabbi who looks out, week after week, to see ever dwindling congregations.

However, I wonder whether the insistence upon the existence of so many “nones,” the stranger, more variegated, and oddly religious they seem.

My thoughts on this matter have been prompted by a remarkable book I just read called “Strange Rites: New Religions for a Godless World,” written by Tara Isabella Burton. Herself a millennial and in possession of a doctorate in theology and having made her own journey through this world on her back becoming a Christian, Burton is particularly qualified to explore the rather dense jungle of religious and spiritualities proliferating especially among those under 40.

She observes that, actually, very few of the religiously disaffiliated would identify as atheists or strict materialists. In fact, a large number of them would fit neatly into the category of “spiritual but not religious” (SBNRs, to use the preferred acronym). Most SBNRs, though they disdain the traditional churches, remain hungry for four things: meaning, beauty, community and ritual. And they have found these values in some odd places.

For instance, there is Burton shows a vibrant community that has grown up around the common love for the Harry Potter stories, which they treat as practically sacred texts and with whose characters they deeply identify. She makes the incontestable but still startling observation: “Given that 6 percent of Americans have seen at least one Harry Potter film, it is very likely that more Americans can name the four Hogwarts houses than can name the Gospel” (p. 69).

Still others find the four religious values in that farra- ge of beliefs and spiritual practices that goes by the name “New Age.” Think of the communities and rituals that have formed around “UFOs, Reiki, acupuncture, crystal healing, and the kind of creative visualization ubiquitous in the New Thought movement” (p. 120).

Others discover meaning in their shared commitment to social justice and their consequent disdain for those individuals and institutions that betray the cause of social justice, in areas of race, class, and gender. Political and religious activism in the United States is vibrant and remains unquenchable, especially in the wake of the events of September 11, 2001.

In the course of her well-written and fascinating study, Burton gives many more examples of the sometimes wacky contemporary quasi-religions that have supplanted the traditional institutional faiths. Though it might surprise my readers a bit, this Catholic bishop would like to say something positive about all of this. The secularization hypothesis, first proposed by atheists and skeptics in the nineteenth century and reiterated in the twentieth century, has already lost several friends, acquaintances and loved ones this year and our mealtime prayer list of those facing the grave or with an urn of ashes will grow. Then he strongly points out that, “this is one area where common sense has never lain down to brass tacks when he writes, “Socialists were exploring the Cheops pyramid in Egypt not long ago and stopped on yet another dead pharaoh. Beside him, his black-shod funeral boat still waited to take his soul to the afterworld. Such transport has always been popular, whether crossing the river Styx, the river Jordan, or some other shortcut home. I myself always take it personally when singers sing Michael, row, row your boat ad infinitum. "We are now seven billion souls on earth and count-"

Our author Mr. Farrell goes on, “and even if our fin- gerprints are unique, imagine our wide variety of beliefs and spiritual practices that goes by the name ‘New Age.’ Think of the communities and rituals that have formed around ‘UFOs, Reiki, acupuncture, crystal healing, and the kind of creative visualization ubiquitous in the New Thought movement’” (p. 123).

Then, he gets down to brass tacks when he writes, “You may wonder what will happen to your own sense of self after death. If you sometimes feel nervous about the concept of eternal life.” He notes that “human logic can ignore. The variety of our visions of afterlife reflect the modern experience of life. It is simply no good denying the statistics, which have been borne out in study after study and the truth of massive disaffiliation is evident to any priest, minister or rabbi who looks out, week after week, to see ever dwindling congregations.

However, I wonder whether the insistence upon the existence of so many “nones,” the stranger, more variegated, and oddly religious they seem.

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**COMMENTARY**

**Two families and the communion of saints**

Despite being immersed for over 30 years in the study of modern Polish history, I must confess that I’d never heard of the heroic Ulma family until recently. I get to the circumstances of my being introduced to these 20th-century martyrs in a moment. But first, consider their story.

Józef Ulma was a prominent personality in Markowa, a village in southeastern Poland. Born in 1900, he had a more extensive education than many of his neighbors and was a farmer, a librarian, and an accomplished photographer at a time when that art form took imagination and great skill. His wife Wiktoria, 12 years younger, was the mother of three girls (Stanisława, Barbara, and Maria) and three boys (Władysław, Franciszek, and Antoni). When the Ulmas’ trial of conscience came in 1944, the children ranged in age from eight to two, and Wiktoria was pregnant with a seventh child.

In mid-1942, the Nazi occupying Poland began to implement the diabolical “Final Solution to the Jewish Question,” which had been planned at the notorious Wannsee Conference on January 20 of that year. As part of the extermination of European Jewry, Polish families in the Markowa area began to be deported to the death camps. Eight Jews from two local families were sheltered by the Ulmas. Hidden at night in the Ulmas’ attic, they helped during the day with the work of the Ulma farm. A local collaborator denounced the Ulmas to the German police and on March 24, 1944, a squad of Nazis surrounded the farmhouse where the eight Jews were hidden. Each was shot in the back of the head, and then, as the local villagers were forced to watch, Józef and Wiktoria Ulma were summarily executed. The six Ulmas, and the seven Ulma children were then shot. When the bodies of the Ulma family were eventually exhumed from a mass grave to be buried properly in a local cemetery, it was discovered that Wiktoria had begun to give birth to the Ulma’s seventh child as she and her husband were being killed.

In 1965, Józef and Wiktoria Ulma were enrolled as “Righteous Among the Nations” by the Holocaust Memorial at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. The cause for their beatification was introduced in 2003, and in 2015 the Ulma Museum of Poles Saving Jews was opened in Markowa. Eleven years earlier, a memorial to the Ulma family had been erected in Markowa, bearing this moving inscription: “Saving the lives of others, they laid down their own lives. Hiding eight elder brothers in faith, they were killed with them. May their sacrifice be a call for respect and love to every human being! They were the sons and daughters of this land, they will remain in our hearts. It was thanks to my Ethics and Public Policy Center colleague Ian Lindquist and his wife, Kelly that I learned about this extraordinary story of family faith and sacrifice. Ian Lindquist is a leader in the campaign for school reform in the United States, having worked for years in classical education at the secondary level as well as writing extensively on education policy.

Some months ago, Ian was diagnosed with an aggressive form of leukemia and the Lindquists began praying, through the intercession of the Ulmas, for Ian’s healing. Like Józef and Wiktoria Ulma, Ian and Kelly are the parents of seven. Like the Ulmas, the Lindquists are a family of deep faith. The Lindquists’ identification with the Ulmas, and their dedicating their prayers for Ian’s healing to the success of the Ulmas’ beatification cause, is one of the most compelling examples I’ve ever encountered of that familiar (and unadorned) phrase from the Creed, the “communion of saints.”

As I’ve noted before, Christians live in a different time zone because, thanks to the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, Christians are the people who know how the world’s story is going to turn out; God’s purposes will be vindicated in what the Book of Revelation calls the Wedding Feast of the Lamb. Christians also live in a different time zone because of the communion of saints: our spiritual solidarity, in this world, with those Christians who now live in the presence of the Triune, Holy God and those Christians who are being purified that they, too, may do so.

In the communion of saints, which is a communion of faith and charity, the Ulmas and the Lindquists know and support each other. May the intercession of the Ulmas continue to be a grace for the Lindquists who are helping make the story of these modern martyrs better known as they live their own dramatic trial.

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

**Joy amid the storm**

When trying to solve our problems, we most often turn to internet searches. One answer that comes up seems simple compared to others — gratitude. Research in recent years has found that people who practiced gratitude and consciously counted their blessings tended to be happier and less depressed.

As followers of Christ, we have already been taught to be grateful and to look for God’s blessings in our daily lives. Yet too often we forget. We get caught up in the day-to-day tasks and being too busy for God. If we truly want to lead lives that are not stressful and more joyful, we need to get back into the practice of daily prayer, gratitude and counting our blessings.

Recently, we had a round of winter weather that closed mass to be burdensome for the schools, but the staff in our schools too. Unfortunately, these challenges are not just for our students, but the staff in our schools too.

Our already busy lives are added stress and constant changes brought on by the pandemic have only made it worse. There were times when it seemed things were starting to improve only to be thrust back into the chaos of some new and dire issue or problem. We had to deal with this stress for a just few days or weeks, but years. And it is a toll on our well-being.

It is not healthy for us to continue living this way. We need to restore peace and order in our lives. Living in a constant state of stress impacts our work, relationships and our overall happiness. Recognizing this is a challenge; the next question is how can we go about restoring our joy?

When dealing with these storms, we can turn to good friends, families, and faith. But we can also turn to internet searches. One answer that comes up seems simple compared to others — gratitude. Research in recent years has found that people who practiced gratitude and consciously counted their blessings tended to be happier and less depressed.

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Recently, we had a round of winter weather that closed school, but the students in our schools still had a year of winter weather that closed schools and most businesses. While these events can stress us in our lives, we can consciously focus on the blessings we did this in my house by first setting down the phones, turning off the TV’s and video games and healing outside into the snow and cold.

My family had had an enjoyable time. My younger children marveled at the little ice pellets coming down from the sky. We walked through woods and explored the creek in our yard. We filled the bird feeders and watched the different birds, observing their beautiful colors. We spent time outside enjoying the sights and sounds of winter. All during a storm.

During Catholic Schools Week, students and principals from each diocesan school came to the Cathedral to celebrate the annual Catholic Schools Week Mass. It was such a joyful celebration and a blessing to gather as one faith community. Many schools came early or left late to explore the beauty of the Cathedral. One pastor, who can play the organ, took his students to the choir loft to show them this incredible instrument that is the center of music. The music from the organ is a moment to be grateful. The schools took time to look in wonder and awe at the beauty that surrounds us.

On routine days, when nothing special seems to be happening, we can find God’s blessings. From a beautiful sunrise on the way to school or work, the smiling greeting from a friend or coworker, or even just a warm meal on a cold winter day, the key for most of us is being more mindful of these daily gifts.

Researchers tell us that to be more conscious of gratitude we can keep a journal and write down the things we are thankful for each day. We could also take a moment when praying before meals to name some blessings that we experienced the last few hours. And as always, we can begin our prayers with God to give thanks for the many gifts he gives us even during life’s storms.

Today, let’s start by thanking God for his wisdom and guidance in our lives. And then challenge yourself to look for the blessings that fill your days. After all, this is just a small task that can help restore joy and happiness in our lives.

Kendra McGuire

**VIEWPOINT**

Kendra McGuire

This past November, principals and counselors from the diocesan elementary and high schools gathered together for our annual leadership conference. One of the challenges discussed among these school leaders was the stress and anxiety facing not just our students, but the staff in our schools too.

Unfortunately, these challenges are not just for our students, but the staff in our schools too. And it is a toll on our well-being.

Even on routine days, when nothing special seems to be happening, we can find God’s blessings. From a beautiful sunrise on the way to school or work, the smiling greeting from a friend or coworker, or even just a warm meal on a cold winter day, the key for most of us is being more mindful of these daily gifts.

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Kendra McGuire is superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Covington, Ky.

**GO AND GLORIFY**

Father Gregory Bach

We are afforded the opportunity to return over and over to receive grace from the holy Eucharist. For many people, celebrating the Eucharist every Sunday is the main source of grace. I often hear people saying that Mass on Sunday is what carries them through the week.

Amidst all the problems, worries and anxieties that we have in our life, Jesus Christ and our participation in the divine mysteries, gives us the life-giving stream of grace that we so desperately need.

Our prayer, our service, our participation in the other sacraments continue to build upon the grace we have received. In the ordinary events of life, we seek out Christ in our lives and in seeking out Christ we can find the path he lays before us, the path to eternal life.

When our path on this earth leads us to a moment of life, let us rise up filled with joy for that joy! Behold, your reward will be great in heaven.

Father Gregory Bach is pastor St. Henry Parish, Elsmere, Ky.

**Life-giving stream of grace**


I was on a swing next to a mountain stream in Tennessee. I was reading from Jeremiah when this text jumped out at me, it came alive in front of me. “Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose hope is the Lord. He is like a tree planted beside the waters that stretches out its roots to the stream. There I was, near running water, and I was able to see the tall trees with their roots reaching out to the stream. It forced me to look at my life and see how I was reaching out to the life-giving stream of Jesus Christ and how I could do better.

The Eucharist that we celebrate contains the life-giving stream of grace.

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.
For their family members in Afghanistan, life is lived in fear, for they are being targeted by the Taliban. Communication within family members is difficult since they must live in remote areas, often without Wi-Fi, and many move weekly to avoid detection. While KRM is doing their best to offer hope for a happy reunion, Ms. Sievering said, it will take a long time — and in many cases, will never happen. “We’re really realistic and upfront with them,” she said.

Every day, the news brings the compelling plight of Afghan refugees to our attention. The Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery took a good look at what Afghan families had been experiencing: life under an oppressive regime where there was no religious freedom; a regime that refused to allow girls to attend school; a regime that has citizens fleeing the country their families have lived in for generations, risking everything to escape the tyranny of the Taliban, seeking safety for their children in a country at war with their own. Sister Nancy Kordenbrock said the Benedictines heard their plea for help and knew they had to respond.

With the advice and assistance of the Kentucky Refugee Ministry, they began to formulate a plan to welcome the stranger. There is a large home on the Monastery grounds which sometimes stands unoccupied. The Benedictines see it as a place of peace for an Afghan refugee family exhausted by their experiences and concerned for their future. The sisters are hard at work, learning all they can about the families they hope to meet. They are learning about their customs and their needs. They offer their hospitality with the same care and concern with which they would welcome Christ himself — just as St. Benedict instructed.

The home the Benedictines offer sits in a tranquil setting, the perfect place for a refugee family to recover from the trauma it has suffered, to take a deep breath, and begin to get their feet on the ground again. A chance to enjoy family life in America, finally free of the oppression that had been part of their daily lives.

Sister Kay Kramer is a member of the Congregation of Divine Providence, which provides comfort to another family that fled Afghanistan for the safety of America. As a sponsoring group of the Kentucky Refugee Ministry, the Congregation is committed to providing financial assistance and a personal presence to an Afghan family of five who has settled into a home in Northern Kentucky.

The Congregation’s sponsor group consists of six sisters and two associates who shepherd the family. Their focus is on helping the family become acclimated to life in their new community. They take the refugee grocery shopping and help them locate the services they need. The group checks in with the mother and father to see if they or their children need additional assistance.

The family has only been here for a few weeks and is just getting their bearings. Soon, KRM will help them with the employment process. Already, several area employers have expressed a willingness and an eagerness to hire the newcomers.

The Sisters face some challenges: Group members go on shopping trips with the family but finding sources for the food the family eats can be difficult. The husband and wife are taking English language classes, but the language barrier can still be problematic.

The Sisters of the Congregation of Divine Providence have received valuable training. The KRM is working hard to ensure that each volunteer group has the tools to assist each family — learning about the reality of the refugees’ experiences is one of those tools. The groups receive training in cultural awareness, understanding how to communicate, and understanding what may be appropriate or inappropriate to discuss. It is difficult to understand what it is like to accept that there are people you will never see again, to have your entire world upended.

Sister Kay Kramer said, “I am grateful that we in Northern Kentucky are now welcoming Afghans to our area. I feel very grateful to be part of an area where people can hopefully feel safe and accepted, a place where there will be no animosity towards the newcomer. I am so grateful that KRM has set up a Northern Kentucky Office so that we can become involved and participate in this work. Catholic social teaching about immigrants compels us to be involved and welcome the immigrant. We are impelled by our faith to do as Jesus instructed: ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’

For more information about consecrated life in the Diocese of Covington, contact Sister Fran Moore at (859) 862-1300.
Fostering Catholic imagination

Tom Ziegler  
Staff Writer

If somebody walked into your home, would they acknowledge that you were Catholic based on your home?

“One of the elements of the new religion series, that we all use, is to foster the Christian imagination of children,” said Betsy Greenwell, assistant principal, St. Pius X School, Edgewood.

For Mrs. Greenwell, the idea of fostering Christian imagination originated from a presentation Father Baiju gave to the school’s parents. The presentation described the importance of Christian art, sacramentals, images and rituals in the home, like praying before meals and bedtime, that help to instill the Catholic faith in children. Mrs. Greenwell and other parents read more on this subject, studying its relationship to theology of the body and how to make the Catholic faith connect not only with a child’s intellect but also his or her imagination.

“In our new religion series every lesson starts with a piece of artwork; this faith-based artwork is studied by the students. The idea behind fostering Christian imagination is that the home, workspaces and things around us should be filled with things that remind us of God, not distract us from him,” Mrs. Greenwell said.

“Often times we are bombarded with all these images around us in the world and they pull us away from God,” said Greenwell. The goal of the Christian imagination is to build and market the Christian faith like Disney, showing children that saints are superheroes and helping families to realize that their home is the first school of faith — the domestic church. The challenge presented in Father Baiju’s message was to put things in the home that sparked the imaginations of children, helping them come to know the truth, beauty and goodness that is God.

Mrs. Greenwell said, “because of our imagination we can embrace faith, because faith requires believing in something we do not see.” Our imaginations are a gift from God that can help us understand the mysteries of the faith. These works of art and different stories can help make the mysteries real and accessible to us in a different way than logical arguments, by allowing us to encounter them holisti- cally rather than in the abstract.

In an article entitled “G.K Chesterton and the Use of the Imagination,” Dale Ahlquist states, “Art, like love, is not of ourselves alone. It is first for God, and then for our neighbor. The greatest art helps lift our neighbors to God… It is not a passing thrill, but inspiration for the ages.”
The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW, noon to 1 p.m. Viewers can tune-in on the following channels: antenna 12.2, Spectrum 117 or 25, Cincinnati Bell 17 or 517, and DirectTV 25.

Catholic Courses for Adults — the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization offers courses for teachers, parish and school catechists, diocesan aspirants, and all adults who would like to expand their knowledge of the Catholic faith. Cost $35. Call Isaac A. Isaac at 582-1500, ext. 1529.

Bishop Brossart High School 23rd annual Jack and Pat McGarr Memorial Euchre Tournament. Feb 8. Register online at McGarrBuchcfst.givesmart.com. Questions, e-mail jackmgarrenuchre@gmail.com or text/call 219-8804.

The New Manna Retreat, Feb. 26, join Father Matthew Cushing and Father Conor Kunath for Ignatian Spirituality and the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Doors open Friday, 5:30 p.m., retreat begins 6:30 p.m. and concludes Sunday after 11 a.m. Mass. Cost $175, registration deadline Feb. 4. www.stannercatholiccenter.org. Call 441-3003, ext. 301 or e-mail csmith@covdio.org.

The New Manna Retreat, Feb. 26, join Father Matthew Cushing and Father Thomas Pichciani to explore the four different faces of the real Manna come down from heaven. Cost $15, check in 8 a.m.; retreat begins 9 a.m. RSVP appreciated: e-mail sproutingstumpministries@gmail.com or call/text 801-8888.

New Hope Center’s Father Daughter Dance March 5 & 6. 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Fort Thomas Mess Hall. 6th -12th graders and their fathers, $45 per father-daughter couple – $15 each additional daughter. Semi-formal attire, scholarships available, dinner served. Reserve tickets at www.givesmart.com/royale2022 or call 859-760-4545.

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Students and staff at St. Anthony School, Taylor Mill, are excited about the Bengals. Students have been wearing black and orange every Friday throughout the playoffs. This week will include extra fun days like Joe Cool (shades), Wild McPherson Kicks (crazy socks) and Mixx’n Mix-up Day (crazy mismatch day).

Ready to roar

Students take-on teachers

The St. Joseph School, Crescent Springs, 8th graders challenged teachers to a volleyball game. This year, the 8th graders beat the teachers two games to one in this Catholic Schools Week tradition.
In your journey towards marriage, always trust in God’s providence.

-Pope Francis
You're Engaged!

Congratulations! Because the Catholic Church and your diocesan community wants couples to form strong, lasting marriages, all engaged couples within the Diocese of Covington are invited to attend the Couple to Couple League's website, and crowned king of Hungary. Karl and Zita enjoyed a relationship and the beauty and couple interaction and small group encounter. This program is held on two consecutive Saturdays with large group presentation, private couple interaction and small group discussion. The focus is on a couple’s relationship and the beauty and importance of the sacrament of marriage.

Time: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Cost per couple is $85.

September/October 2022 LMAS
09/24-2022 9:00 am
10/1-2022 9:00 am
20 couple capacity, 16 couple spots available
St. Timothy Church, Union
For any questions, please contact Eric and Lauri Nienaber at register@marriageoec.org.

Natural Family Planning
Natural Family Planning courses consist of three classes spaced one month apart. New courses are added frequently. For an up-to-date schedule or to register for a course, visit the Couple to Couple League’s website, www.ccli.org, or call (513) 471-2000.

CEE Local Community at Cincinnati-Covington
CEE Local Community at Cincinnati-Covington@engagecincinnati.org or call Ashley Altenau at (513) 479-1700.

The League of Prayer and Father Jordan Hainsey

On October 21, 1911, Karl, the House of Austria married Zita of Bourbon-Parma, and ascended the throne shortly thereafter in 1918 as the last emperor of Austria and crowned king of Hungary. Karl and Zita enjoyed a happy union for 10 years and — despite the ravages of war, hardship, and political strife — raised eight children together.

With Zita at his side, Karl worked tirelessly for true and lasting peace throughout his empire and became the only leader to subscribe to the peace initiatives outlined by Pope Benedict XV. In 1919, after the revolution of the Provisional National Assembly, the family was banished into Swiss exile and three years later to the island of Madeira, where they lived in poverty. On April 1, 1922, Karl died of an illness surrounded by Zita, pregnant with their eighth child, and nine-year-old Crown Prince Otto. From that moment onward, Zita wore black to signify mourning until her death on March 14, 1929.

In 1931 Karl’s cause for canonization was opened, and in 2004 he was bestowed the title Blessed by Pope St. John Paul II. Zita’s cause for canonization was opened in 2009, and is currently bestowed the title Servant of God. Karl and Zita experienced more than their fair share of trial in life through exile, disease, sickness and in health. “Karl and Zita experienced more than their fair share of trial in life through exile, disease and death, but their faith sustained them. They remained faithful to God and each other.”

As emperor and king, Karl mirrored in many ways the experiences of Christ the King: opposition, betrayal, banishment — apparent failure as the world judges. Even the physical sufferings of his final illness — not just the pneumonia itself but the succession of fruitless treatments — bore an uncanny resemblance to the suffering Christ. Karl suffered unbearable wounds, wounds from injections in all four limbs, a mass of blisters from the cupping, a frightening inability to breathe, and finally death at the age of 34. Zita, like Mary at the cross, stayed by him — her heart pierced with sorrow.

Karl always dismissed his sufferings as “nothing compared to what my Lord and Savior suffered.” Tenderly devoted to Christ in his passion, Karl was sometimes seen by an aide standing for hours before a single Station of the Cross.

What made Karl so ready to take up the heavy cross God sent him? Part of it was a total submission to the will of God.

At the tragic end of 1918, when aides suggested he might skip his usual Te Deum, he replied, “It we receive with thankfulness all the good things from God, how much Covington-Cincinnati Catholic Engaged Encounter

The weekend retreat offered by the Diocese of Covington’s Catholic Engaged Encounter (CEE) ministry offers couples a unique opportunity to look at their commitment to each other in a deeper way as they prepare for marriage. Free from the pressure and distractions of the outside world, couples are given 30 plus hours to honestly and intensively dialogue about their prospective lives together. Two married couples make up the presenting team and share brief stories about their marriages and the impact of the sacrament of matrimony on their lives, with the goal of encouraging participants to explore their own attitudes and expectations. The team also offers couples ideas on how to continue to love each other, even amid the pressures of the world. The engaged couples should anticipate discussing each other’s strengths and weaknesses, desires and ambitions, as well as their attitudes about money, sex, children, family and the role of the Church and society in their future marriages. Their motto is: “A wedding is a day; a marriage is a lifetime.” Most people spend huge amounts of money and many months planning for their wedding. CEE is about preparing for what most hope will last 50 or 60 years — your marriage.

2022 CEE Dates:

March 12 – 13, St. Anne Retreat Center (KY)
April 9 – 10, Our Lady Holy Spirit Center (Cincinnati)
May 21 – 22, St. Anne Retreat Center (KY)
Sept. 17 – 18, Our Lady Holy Spirit Center (Cincinnati)
Oct. 22 – 23, St. Antoninus Parish (Cincinnati)
Kentucky Location:
St. Anne Retreat Center
5275 St. Anne Drive
Melbourne, Kentucky 41059
Cincinnati Location:
Holy Spirit Center
5440 Moeller Ave
Cincinnati, Ohio 45212
Cost: $275 per couple

Registration:
Visit the Covington-Cincinnati Catholic Engaged Encounter website.

Phoebe and Patrick Neve are seen on their wedding day, July 31, 2020.

CEE Dates:

September 2022 LMAS:
09/24-2022 9:00 am
10/1-2022 9:00 am
20 couple capacity, 16 couple spots available
St. Timothy Church, Union
For any questions, please contact Eric and Lauri Nienaber at register@marriageoec.org.

Cost: $140 per couple

Note: CCE’s online course is not approved under any circumstances for couples being married in the Diocese of Covington.

The Couple to Couple League offers three programs: not all of these programs are approved to fulfill the Marriage Prep requirement in the Diocese of Covington. Before you register for an NFP course, please read the diocesan regulations at www.covdio.org/catechesis-and-evangelization/.

The Couple to Couple League offers instruction in Spanish. For information or to register for a class (in Spanish only), contact: Silvia Schmidt at (513) 471-2000, ext. 1031, or (859) 380-2814, or e-mail sschmidt@ccli.org.

Engaged Encounter is about preparing for what most hope will last 50 or 60 years — your marriage.

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Karl and Zita — a model for marriage today

The League of Prayer and Father Jordan Hainsey

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At the tragic end of 1918, when aides suggested he might skip his usual Te Deum, he replied, “It we receive with thankfulness all the good things from God, how much
more should we receive even the most painful things with thankfulness.” His resignation reflected total trust.

On board the Cardiff heading into exile to an unknown destination, Karl heard it might be far-off Ascension Island, so hot it was barely habitable. He cried out, “But there we will never see our children again!” but quickly added smiling, “How little faith I have! They cannot send us anywhere God has not already willed that we should go.”

Another reason was Karl’s strong belief in the expiatory value of suffering, that we can further Christ’s redemptive work by joining our sufferings to his. He felt a special urgency to atone for the sins of his people in order to intercede for their salvation. Zita described his coronation in Hungary as a defining moment in his spiritual ascent: “His people had been solemnly entrusted to him; he was responsible for them before God and must lead them, pray, suffer, and die for them,” she said.

Karl told Zita, “The prayer of a father pierces the heavens. Some of my children have lost the faith, others risk the same fate. So I must continually do battle before God to bring the first ones back and keep the others safe.” As death neared, after receiving the last rites he told the priest, “I forgive all my enemies. I want to continue to pray and to suffer for them.” As if in answer, God gave him another week of increasingly unbearable pain.

Karl said, “It is good to have trust in the heart of Jesus. Without that, all this could not be endured.” He died gazing at the Blessed Sacrament which the priest held before his eyes, as he whispered, “Jesus, Jesus come.”

As young couples embark on the journey of marriage, and as those already married continue to grow in love, it is good to take on the patronage of the saints, give example, intercede, and help the faithful here on earth. May devotion to these new saints give true witness to the bond of marriage and the vows a couple makes.

Enriching reads for engaged couples


“All To Get Married” (Catholic Insight) by Most Rev. Fulton J. Sheen D.D. Available at online bookstores including Amazon.

(Continued from page 10)
Choosing the music for your Catholic wedding

You have seen weddings on TV and in the movies, and you have likely attended a few yourself. Let’s get ideas for your own Catholic wedding music. But before you consider choosing a wedding coordinator, and priests use regarding music for choosing the music for your Catholic wedding ceremony.

You might save you a lot of headaches and time as you begin planning your Catholic wedding ceremony with the church staff where your wedding will take place.

Many misunderstandings and disappointments that sometimes happen when you’re working with the church wedding coordinator, priest, or music director can be avoided if you just remember this key point: Your wedding is first and foremost a church ritual that needs to follow the principles and rules of the official public rites of the Catholic Church, also called “liturgies.”

The church staff’s model for what your wedding should look like is not what you normally see on TV but what usually happens at Mass every Sunday. Remembering this point might save you a lot of headaches and time as you begin choosing the music for your Catholic wedding ceremony.

There are three basic guidelines that music directors, wedding coordinators, and priests use regarding music for Catholic weddings. These guidelines are based on standard principles that govern how music is chosen in the Catholic Church throughout the world.

Your local diocese or parish may have other, more specific guidelines that you will want to know and follow, but these are the most common. If you keep these guidelines in mind as you’re thinking about music, your liturgy preparation will go much smoother.

1. Catholic wedding music includes music that everyone can sing together. The Church values singing together because the liturgy is meant to express the unity of all the people gathered. Singing together shows and strengthens that unity.

Think of it like the national anthem. Whether it’s sung by a professional singer alone or by everyone together, the song expresses our patriotism. Yet there’s a subtle difference depending on who is singing it. When it’s sung well by a soloist, it elicits deep emotion and we’re moved by the singer and the song. However, when everyone sings it together, the focus is no longer on one singer or even on the song but on the group and what the group is doing, and can do, together.

Group singing says that each of us is necessary and we’re all in this together. Your family and friends are there to support you. Let them express it by choosing some music they can sing together.

2. Catholic wedding ceremony music is liturgical. The church music we use in church is different than what you hear on the radio because it is specifically written for Catholic liturgy; that is, it’s liturgical music. Not only does liturgical music have lyrics that fit the theme of the liturgy, but more importantly, liturgical music needs to fulfill the specified function of each part of the liturgy. Every liturgy has assigned words and actions that happen in a specific order. The music used during the liturgy must “serve the liturgy” so that the music fits the purpose, length, and assigned texts, if any, for each particular moment.

3. Catholic wedding music is rooted in Scripture, sacred writings, or Catholic Church teaching. Because your wedding is a ritual of the Catholic Church, the lyrics of your wedding songs need to represent the Catholic faith. Your best bet is to stick with words from the Bible or with songs you find in your parish’s hymnals. When you are at church next Sunday, look through your parish’s song book for Catholic hymns for weddings. Often, hymnals will group songs together by theme or purpose.

Look in the index or table of contexts for sections of hymns on “love” or “marriage.”

Can you use wedding music that does not fit these three principles? That is up to the parish liturgical staff where you will be married. The Catholic Church gives guidelines, but it is up to each parish, operating under the policies of the diocese, to implement those guidelines as they see most appropriate for each particular situation. Some parishes will be very strict about following rules; others will be more lenient. But all of them are trying their best to help you celebrate your wedding in a prayerful, joyful, and memorable way.

Your priest and parish musician are happy to answer your questions and guide you through the music selection process for your wedding liturgy. Also, it is more than likely they both have years of experience and expertise to help you with specific selections suited to a wedding. It is always a good idea to have an open mind about music suggestions which may be new to you. It could be that the perfect hymn or song is one you may not have heard before. With the help of your parish staff, the wedding music you select will enhance and beautify your special day, as well as it will leave a lasting and cherished memory for all in attendance.

Credit: TogetherForLife.com, edited by Dr. Gregory Schaffer, basilica principal organist and choirmaster.
Dear married couples throughout the world!

Rome, St. John Lateran
26 December 2021,
Feast of the Holy Family

In this “Amoris Laetitia Family” Year, I am writing to express my deep affection and closeness to you at this very special time. Families have always been in my thoughts and prayers, but especially so during the pandemic, which has severely tested everyone, especially the most vulnerable among us. The present situation has made me want to accompany you in all those situations in which you find yourselves.

We are being asked to apply to ourselves the calling that Abraham received from the Lord to set out from his land and his father’s home towards a foreign land that God himself would show him (cf. Gen 12:1). We too have experienced taint, loneliness, the loss of loved ones; we too have been forced to leave behind our certainties, our “comfort zones”, our familiar ways of doing things and our ambition to work for the welfare of our families and that of society as a whole, which also depends on us and our actions.

Our relationship with God shapes us, accompanies us and sends us forth as individuals and, ultimately, helps us “to set out from our land”, albeit in many cases with a certain trepidation and even fear in the face of the unknown. Let our Christian faith make us realize that we are not alone, for God dwells in us, with us and among us: in our homes, our neighborhoods, our workplaces and schools, in the cities where we live.

Like Abraham, all husbands and wives “set out” from their own land at the moment when, in response to the vocation to conjugal love, they decide to give themselves to each other without reserve. Becoming engaged already means setting out from your land, since it calls you to walk together along the road that leads to marriage. Different situations in life, the passage of time, the arrival of children, work and illness, all challenge couples to embrace anew their commitment to one another, to leave behind settled habits, certainties and security, and to set out towards the land that God promises: to be two in Christ, two in one.

To be sure, raising children is no easy task. But let us not forget that they also “raise” us. The family remains the primary environment where education takes place, through small gestures that are more eloquent than words. To educate is above all to accompany the growth process, to be present to children in many different ways, to help them realize that they can always count on their parents. An educator is someone who spiritually “gives birth” to others and, above all, becomes personally engaged in their growth. For parents, it is important to relate to children with an authority that grows day by day. Children need a primary environment where education takes place, where they can模具 a sense of security that can enable them to have confidence in you and in the beauty of your life together, and in the certainty that they will never be alone, whatever may come their way.

As I have already noted, we are becoming increasingly aware of the family’s identity and mission in the Church and in society. You have the mission of transforming society by applying to yourselves the call- ing that Abraham received from the Lord to set out from his land and his father’s home towards a foreign land that God himself would show him (cf. Gen 12:1). It is important that, together, you keep your eyes fixed on Jesus. Only in this way can your children grow in faith and trust in God.

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(Continued on page 14)
...and discovering solutions to many of your problems. Those problems, of course, will not disappear, but you will be able to see them from a different perspective.

Only by abandoning yourselves into the Lord's hands will you be able to do what may seem impossible. Recognize your own weakness and powerlessness in the face of so many situations all around you, but at the same time be certain that Christ's power will thus be manifested in your weakness (cf. 2 Cor 12:9). It was precisely in the midst of the storm that the apostles came to know the kingship and divinity of Jesus, and learned to trust in him.

With these biblical passages in mind, I would now like to reflect on some of the difficulties and opportunities that families have experienced during the current pandemic.

For instance, the lockdown has meant that there was more face to face time be certain that Christ's power will thus be manifested in your weakness (cf. 2 Cor 12:9). It was precisely in the midst of the storm that the apostles came to know the kingship and divinity of Jesus, and learned to trust in him.

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Pope talks about devotion to saints, prays for man who interrupted prayer

Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis said that when he was little, he thought the phrase “the communion of saints” in the Creed meant that the saints in heaven were receiving communion.

Instead, the communion of saints expresses how “every member of the church is bound to me in a profound way and this bond is so strong that it cannot be broken even by death,” he said Feb. 2 during his weekly general audience.

Concluding his series of audience talks about St. Joseph, Pope Francis invited a prayer he said he has recited every day for more than 40 years.

But while he was reading it, a man in the back of the audience hall began shouting, including about wearing masks. Vatican police escorted him out of the building.

“As soon as he finished his prayer, Pope Francis told the people in the room to ignore the person,” said Gabrielle Nolan, Knoxville’s diocesan newspaper. “I did not see anything else happen. I don’t know if it is physical, psychological or spiritual, but he is our brother with a problem. I would like to finish by praying for him, our brother who is suffering, poor man. If he’s yelling it is because he is suffering, has some problem. Don’t be deaf to the needs of this man.”

The pope then led the crowd in praying a Hail Mary for him.

In his main audience talk, Pope Francis said he wanted to be clear about the difference between devotion to a saint, even to St. Joseph or Mary, and superstition or idolatry.

“Sometimes even Christianity can fall into forms of devotion that seem to reflect a mentality that is more a mental thing than Christian,” he said. But “the fundamental difference is that our prayer and the devotion of the faithful people is not based on trust in a human being, or in an image or an object, even when we know that they are sacred.”

“The saints, whether canonized or not, he said, are part of the community of the church, a gathering not of the perfect but of ‘saved sinners.’

And just as a person

Bishop urges SEEK22 attendees to always remember Jesus’ invitation

Gabrielle Nolan
Catholic News Service

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Knoxville Bishop Richard F. Stika commented on the lack of fellowship during the 2022 SEEK conference held adjacent to the University of Illinois.

“The communion of saints holds together the community of the church, a bond that acts through them,” he said.

“I must admit, I’m a little partial to the Tennessee people over here,” he added, drawing a loud response from the crowd.

“Sometimes even Christianity can fall into forms of devotion that seem to reflect a mentality that is more a mental thing than Christian,” he said. But “the fundamental difference is that our prayer and the devotion of the faithful people is not based on trust in a human being, or in an image or an object, even when we know that they are sacred.”

“The saints, whether canonized or not, he said, are part of the community of the church, a gathering not of the perfect but of ‘saved sinners.’

And just as a person

"In Christ no one can ever truly separate us from those we love," he said. “Only the manner of being with them changes, but nothing and no one can break this bond. The communion of saints holds together the community of believers on earth and in heaven.”

Bishop urges SEEK22 attendees to always remember Jesus’ invitation

Gabrielle Nolan
Catholic News Service

February 11, 2022

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KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Knoxvilale Bishop Richard F. Stika urged attendees at SEEK22 to go forth from conference filled with Holy Spirit and the knowledge “Jesus invites us” to his sacrifice.

“We gather together to celebrate the fact that Jesus invites us to this sacrifice,” he said during Mass celebrated the morning of Feb. 6 before the conference’s final talks. “Jesus invites us to be here, one with him, as we honor God the Father, as we are filled with the Holy Spirit.”

“As you leave today,” he added, “you take that message with you, touched by the Holy Spirit.”

Bishop Stika celebrated Mass alongside FOCUS chaplains and other visiting priests and seminarians.

“It is a pleasure to welcome you, to be with you, to celebrate with you, to hold faith in you,” the bishop said. “Now I must admit, I’m a little partial to the Tennessee people here over,” he added, drawing a loud response from the University of Tennessee students.

The conference was one of several regional gatherings of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students. For the past two years, because of the pandemic, the organization has held its annual SEEK event as a hybrid event of smaller local events — with keynote speeches livestreamed to all — rather than as an in-person event in one location.

The Knoxville Convocation Center hosted 15 campuses from five states, including Tennessee, Alabama, Kentucky, Ohio and Illinois, and drew a crowd of about 1,100, most of whom were college students, joined by missionaries, benefactors and mission partners.

With the conference held adjacent to the University of Tennessee, Knoxville was a large showing of students clad in bright orange.

During his homily, Bishop Stika commented on the lack of fellowship in our culture at large and how the culture is often divided.

“Sometimes even Christianity can fall into forms of devotion that seem to reflect a mentality that is more a mental thing than Christian,” he said. But “the fundamental difference is that our prayer and the devotion of the faithful people is not based on trust in a human being, or in an image or an object, even when we know that they are sacred.”

“The saints, whether canonized or not, he said, are part of the community of the church, a gathering not of the perfect but of ‘saved sinners.’

And just as a person

Pope Francis passes near a small statue of himself as the greets the crowd during his general audience in the Paul VI hall at the Vatican Feb. 2, 2022.

“Pope Francis颂予 Nepalmь”

Messaging

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Broad effort to pass bill supporting pregnant workers focuses on Senate

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CLEVELAND — Amid all the political sniping in Congress, one bill has gained strong bipartisan support and is poised to become law.

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act has cleared all the hurdles and awaits a final vote in the Senate in the coming weeks.

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee advanced the measure in August by a 19-2 vote.

The bill would require employers with at least 15 workers to provide temporary and permanent accommodations to pregnant employees — steps such as more frequent breaks, reassignment of hazardous duties and schedule changes.

“IT lifts up human life and dignity. It’s pro-life. It’s pro-family,” said Anthony Granado, vice president of government relations at Catholic Charities USA, one of the Catholic organizations backing the bill.

“We see this as a pro-worker measure that’s pro-life and pro-family,” echoed Clayton Senay, executive director of the Catholic Labor Network.

“It’s Catholic social teaching at its core,” said Gina Kelley, a government relations specialist at Network, a Catholic social justice lobby.

The chairmen of three U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ committees joined the broad network supporting the legislation in an Aug. 9 letter to senators: Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, who chairs the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, then chair of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities; and Bishop David A. Konderla of Tulsa, Oklahoma, who chairs the Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage.

Their support was rooted in the shortcomings of existing law that do not protect pregnant workers. The bishops also cited the USCCB’s repeated calls “for circumstances of employment that better support family life, especially the challenges associated with having children.”

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 makes it illegal for an employer to fire a pregnant worker because she is expecting a child. But the bill’s advocates said gaps in the law still led to forced leaves of absence or terminations over issues related to a worker being unable to fully carry out assigned duties, not the pregnancy.

Ingrid Delgado, domestic policy adviser in the USCCB Office of Domestic Social Development, said the bishops’ support for the measure falls in line with long-standing Catholic social teaching.

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CLASSIFIED ADS

STAFF WRITER/ MEDIA CONTENT DEVELOPER

The Messenger, the Diocese of Covington’s official weekly newspaper, is growing its mission and is adding a full-time Staff Writer/Media Content Developer to its editorial staff. This position requires a broad range of abilities, including excellent writing, proofreading, organizational skills, photography and digital content development. The successful candidate will be a practicing Roman Catholic and will have a commitment to teamwork. The ideal candidate will be self-motivated and imaginative, with working knowledge of Photoshop and Illustrator. In addition to regular office hours, evening and weekend assignments do occur. Anticipated start date: immediate. Interested candidates may submit a resume, references, and writing samples to Stephen Koplyay by email: skoplyay@covdio.org. (859) 392-1500. EOE

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Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Crescent Springs is seeking talented keyboard musicians interested in the position of Music Director. The successful candidate will be proficient on the piano and/or organ, knowledgeable about the Catholic liturgy and sacred music, and capable of leading congregational singing and directing the choir. Must be available to lead three masses each weekend: 5 pm Saturday, and 9 am Sunday, plus availability to lead on major religious feasts and holidays. This is a creatively-focused part-time position. Interested candidates may submit a letter of interest and resume to the Parish office by emailing sacon@stjosephcrescentsprings.com.

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Louisville, Ky. archbishop retires

Archbishop Kurtz turned 75 Aug. 18, 2021, and as required by canon law, he turned in his resignation to the pope when he reached 75. He has headed the Louisville Archdiocese since August 2007.

"I am delighted to welcome Archbishop-designate Shelton, whom I have admired and called friend for the past 15 years," said Archbishop Kurtz in a statement. "Archbishop Fabre comes from Louisiana and brings with him such outstanding gifts — a deep love of Jesus Christ, an abiding trust in Jesus’ care for His Church, a listening and very approachable spirit, a strength of character, and a desire to serve the people of God and all people as he humbly relies on the grace of Christ and power of the Holy Spirit. As I gave thanks for the privilege to have served as Archbishop of Louisville, I know in my heart that Pope Francis has given a great gift to the wonderful Archdiocese and Province of Louisville by appointing a true servant of Jesus Christ.

"Archbishop Fabre’s motto, ‘Comfort My People,’ drawn from the Prophet Isaiah, speaks to his desire to be a faith-ful instrument of Jesus Christ. I rejoice and welcome my friend, Archbishop Shelton, as he brings Louisiana Cajun flavor to our fine Commonwealth, and I pledge to support him fully in his ‘new Kentucky home!’"

In the Diocese of Covington, Bishop John Iffert offered words of welcome to Archbishop Fabre. "With joy and thanksgiving, I welcome Archbishop Shelton Fabre to the Province of Louisville," said Bishop Iffert. "His voice has been prophetic in the life of the Catholic Church in the United States, especially in calling us all to oppose the sin of racism and what’s a human unity in the Body of Christ and the human family. I pray that God will continue to grace and supply Archbishop Fabre in his new ministry to the Province of Louisville. I am eager to minister alongside him and to benefit from his leadership."

"As a recent arrival to Kentucky, I can bear witness that the people of the Commonwealth are welcoming and Holy Spirit-filled. May their giftiness be a constant joy and blessing for you, Archbishop Fabre."

Ray Smith is a commissioned Lay Pastoral Minister for the Diocese of Covington.

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"Home Team" (Netflix) — Suspended from his job as the result of a scandal, a previously work-obsessed NFL coach temporarily relocates to his Texas hometown where he ex-sits and preens son still live and, in an effort to bond with the alienated lad, joins the coaching staff of the boy’s Pop Warner football team. Under the direction of Charles and Daniel Kinnane, lame comedy morsels might have been a good-hearted fact-based drama about family reconciliation. Instead, viewers are left in the lurch by a range of gags that fall flat far more often than they succeed. Graphic, gross-out humor, a few mild oaths, several crass expressions. CNS: A-II; MP AA: R.

"Jackass Forever" (Paramount) — The latest extension of the debased comedy franchise that began as an MTV series continues its tradition of plotless and painful stunts involving sadistic cruelty and every form of excretory function. Presided over, but not often directed, if that’s the word, by Jeff Tremaine — involve what we’re directed, if that’s the word, by Jeff Tremaine — involve what we’re,Johnny Knoxville the antics — participated in, by ringleader Tremaine — involve what we’re,Johnny Knoxville the antics — participated in, by ringleader Tremaine — involve what we’re,Johnny Knoxville the antics — participated in, by ringleader Tremaine — involve what we’re,Johnny Knoxville the antics — participated in, by ringleader Tremaine — involve what we’re,Johnny Knoxville the antics — participated in, by ringleader Tremaine — involve what we’re,Johnny Knoxville the antics — participated in, by ringleader Tremaine — involve what we’re,Johnny Knoxville the antics — participated in, by ringleader Tremaine — involve what we’re,Johnny Knoxville the antics — participated in, by ringleader Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re.Tremaine — involve what we’re. By the numbers drama will fail to engage grown-ups. Brief stylized violence, a couple of instances each of profanity and written rough language, about a dozen, milder oaths, some crude and crass talk. CNS: A-III; MPAA: PG-13.

For full reviews of each of these films — go to catholicnews.com and click on “Extras,” then choose “Movies.” Catholic News Service (CNS) classifications are:

• A — general patronage;
• A-I — adults and adolescents;
• A-II — adults;
• L — limited adult audience;
• O — morally offensive.

Men must join fight against human trafficking, pope says

VATICAN CITY — Male-female relationships based on “discrimination and submission” lead to the exploitation and humiliation of thousands of women and girls each year, Pope Francis said. “Human trafficking, through domestic or sexual exploitation, violently robs women and girls to their supposed role of subordination in the prevention of domestic or sexual services and to their role as providers of care and dispensers of pleasures, which proposes yet again a model of relationships marked by the power of the male gender over the female,” Pope Francis said in a video message. Marking the Feb. 8 International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking and the feast of St. Josephine Bakhita, a former slave, Pope Francis insisted, “The violence suffered by every woman and every girl is an open wound on the body of Christ, on the body of all humanity; it is a deep wound that affects every one of us, too. The thousands of women and girls who are trafficked every year denounce the dramatic consequences of relational models based on discrimination and submission, and it is not an exaggeration — there are thousands of them!” Praising the women and women religious around the world dedicated to fighting human trafficking, coexisted prostitution, forced marriage and slave labor, Pope Francis said men must get involved as well, “opposing with all our might every form of exploitation in human trafficking.”

Laudato Si’ Movement wants East African oil pipeline stopped

NAIROBI, Kenya — The Laudato Si’ Movement, the global community of Catholics tackling the current climate change...
cress, is urging the International Union of Conservation for Nature to help stop a massive oil and gas project being imple-mented in Uganda and Tanzania. According to the movement, the international union has refused to take a stand against the extraction of oil resources in Lake Albert in Uganda and the construction of the pipeline to deliver the crude oil to Tanzania. The movement says the project, which involves the building of more than 800 miles of pipeline, poses a severe threat to environmental conservation, biodiversity protection, and climate change mitigation in East Africa. The International Union of Conservation for Nature says the proj-ect will contribute to economic development. In a Feb. 8 letter to the IUCN, Tomas Insua, executive director of the Laudato Si’ Movement, accuses the union of taking actions that are out of step with its words and fearing confrontations with powerful corporations and government leaders, while remaining silent when its members are intimidated and human rights violated. The Laudato Si’ Movement also wrote to the union in September. The movement wants the union to publicly declare its opposition to the project, which involves the Tilenga and Kingfisher oil fields in Uganda and the East African Crude Oil Pipeline. It urged the union to engage Uganda and Tanzania to promote a biodiversity protection policy with an ad hoc work-group to follow through on the policies. It also wants the union to reject any partnership with any fossil fuel company.

Retired pope asks forgiveness in response to Munich abuse report

VATICAN CITY — At the age of 94, retired Pope Benedict XVI said he knows he will soon stand before God’s judgment and he prayed that he would be forgiven for his shortcomings, including in handling allegations of sexual abuse.

“Even though, as I look back on my long life, I can have great reason for thankfulness, I am nonetheless of good cheer. I trust firmly that the Lord is not only the just judge, but also the merciful judge who has already offered me forgiveness for my shortcomings, and that is thus also my advocate,” he said.

In response to Feb. 9 a recent report on sexual abuse cases in the German Archdiocese of Munich and Freising, Pope Benedict also confirmed that an error in the testimony written on his behalf had been an oversight and was “not intentionally misled and I hope may be excused.” “To me it proved deeply hurtful that those words were used to convey my meaning, my truthfulness, and even to label me a liar,” he said in a letter released Feb. 8 by the Vatican. However, the retired pope, who headed the Munich Archdiocese from 1977 to 1982, emphasized his feelings of great shame and serves for the abuse of minors and made a request for forgiveness for all victims of sexual abuse. “There have been great responsibilities in the Catholic Church. All the great responsibilities of the Church and the errors that occurred in those different places during the time of my mandata,” Pope Benedict wrote.

Mother Seton shrine announces video series, other initiatives for 2022

EMMITSBURG, Md. — In the first episode of a series of short videos launched by the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, Sister Mary Catherine Conway, a Daughter of Charity, discusses her 40 years in Catholic education.

The series, titled “Stories from the Sisters,” features short interviews with sisters who, like Sister Consuelo are members of the orders that trace their lineage to the first native-born American saint. Sister Conway works at the shrine, which debuted its series Feb. 2, the World Day of Consecrated Life. The annual observance celebrates the contributions that religious sisters around the world make to the church and in society. The video series also begins on the same day Mother Seton founded the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph, the first community for religious women established in the United States, in 1809. Both the current day Sisters of Charity and Daughters of Charity stem from that founding.

“Mother Seton’s sisters have so much to offer to all of us in their everyday witness to our Lord,” said Rob Judge, the shrine’s executive director. “Their stories provide a glimpse of the sacrifiers they make to also their service to those experiencing poverty and the joy of life they experience as a religious. “They offer us love, good humor and a witness to holiness that is needed now more than ever.” The videos in the series will be available on the shrine’s social media channels and on its website, www.setonshrine.org. The first episode can be viewed at https://bit.ly/3HBFU91.

Fourth Anglican bishop in less than a year received into Catholic Church

MANCHESTER, England — The former Anglican bishop of Chester, England, has joined the Catholic Church. Peter Forster, 71, is the fourth Anglican bishop to be received into the Catholic faith in less than a year and the fifth to become a Catholic in the past two years. He served as bishop of Chester for 22 years until his retirement in 2019 and was received into the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, Scotland, where he now lives with his wife, Elizabeth. The private ceremony was understood to have taken place late last year, but Forster wished to make it move public. The Church Times, a London-based Anglican newspaper, learned about Forster’s reception Feb. 4. Before, when approached by Catholic News Service Feb. 6, declined to comment. Gavin Ashenden, a former traditionalist Anglican bishop and chaplain to Queen Elizabeth II, said Forster’s reception was significant. Writing in the Catholic Herald, he said that a decade ago, “people would have laughed” at the suggestion that high-profile Evangelical Anglican bishops would be joining the Catholic Church. Most bishops joining the Catholic Church have come from members of the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England.

Rector of Jesuit university critical of Salvadoran government questioned

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador — The rector of the Universidad de El Salvador’s ruling party face criticism and ridicule after questioning the rector of Jesuit-run Central American University, whose members have been critical of the president and the Nuevas Ideas party he founded. “It was vile, disrespectful, irreverent, and, above all IGNORANT in uppercase letters,” wrote Oscar Ricardo, a columnist and academic, in a Feb. 4 opinion piece in one of El Salvador’s national newspapers, referencing the line of questioning. In questioning Jesuit Father Andrea Olivia Feb. 3, members of the ruling Nuevas Ideas party insinuated that the rector, known in the U.S. for financially ben-efited from previous governments ruled by parties that oppose Nuevas Ideas and its founder, President Nayib Bukele.

Previous ruling parties were rife with corruption, but Nuevas Ideas has not escaped similar problems. Last year, the United States stripped some Salvadoran Cabinet members from privileges, including canceling their visas, the U.S. called them actors of corruption and anti-democratic. Father Oliva explained that the university had received funds to educate and train teachers in El Salvador on various subject matters as requested by the department of education. Other universities in El Salvador also received funds, but only the Jesuit universi-ty was questioned by a commission that says it’s seeking to root out questionable nonprofit.

School ‘Bus’: NFL Hall of Famer Bettis goes back to Notre Dame for degree

NOTRE DAME, Ind. — Jerome Bettis, in his football days, got the nickname “The Bus” because he was carrying would be tacklers along with him during his punting runs from scrimmage. Today, what Bettis is carrying is a full load of classes at the University of Notre Dame, as he strives to finish what he started in his college days more than 30 years ago — a bache-lor’s degree in business. Bettis, now 49, is on track to graduate this spring and get that coveted Notre Dame diploma. If he does, the Pro Football Hall of Famer will have made good on a promise to his mother: Gladys — you may remember your Campbell’s Chunky Soup commercial from 22 years ago — that he would get his degree. “I promised my mother that I would get my degree,” he said. “In my immediate family, I’ll be the first person to graduate from college.” Bettis told NBC’s “Today” show Jan. 28, “But most importantly I have two chil-dren. For them to see Dad finish a commitment that he set out some 27 years ago, for me to complete that, I think it says a lot to them.” And at commencement exercises in May, Bettis will getting a diploma means that all 21 Notre Dame football recruits from 1990 will have graduated.

Responding to wave of overdoses, Argentine bishop calls for action

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — The president of the Argentine bishops’ conference has called for action on addiction after the consumption of contaminated cocaine claimed at least 23 lives and hospitalized dozens more in the low-income suburbs of Buenos Aires. Bishop Oscar Oscar de San Isidro, conference president, tweeted Feb. 2, “I am deeply moved by the death of young people and adults due to the consumption of adulterated drugs. We pray to God for each one of them, especially for their families and for the entire community that suffers. We also pray for those who are hospi-talized in serious condition.” He later tweeted Feb. 3, “Illegal drug consumption) has to do with the most profound problems of our society. lack of life and labor options, deep family crisis, the enormous deficit of our education system, deep loneliness and the need for affection.” Bishop Oscar concluded, “The Church is with them, it is addressed by a larger poli-cy “as Pope Francis proposes in ‘Fratelli Tutti.’” Officials in Argentina say cocaine sold in Buenos Aires province had been cut with a synthetic opioid; victims responded favorably to an antidote. But Sergio Berni, provincial security minister, said officials urge people to discard any who had purchased cocaine to discard it immediately.

News Briefs

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Archbishop José H. Gomez of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati are taking an active interest in the Super Bowl game between the Cincinnati Bengals and the Los Angeles Rams. Both archbishops are enthusiastically rooting for their home team and have placed a friendly wager on the outcome, which was announced in a joint video post this morning.

Archbishop Schnurr is offering a case of Cincinnati’s own Graeter’s ice cream for his part in the wager; on his end, Archbishop Gomez is offering baked treats from LA’s beloved Porto’s Bakery.

“I look forward to celebrating the Rams’ victory with the delicious Graeter’s ice cream that Archbishop Schnurr will be sending my way,” commented Archbishop Gomez.

“One of the best parts of the Bengals’ triumph will be digging into the famous Porto’s pasteles and cookies provided by my friend Archbishop Gomez,” responded Archbishop Schnurr.

Catholics are encouraged to get involved in this friendly exchange. Donations are being accepted to benefit each archdiocese’s Catholic Education Foundation (CEF) in the spirit of the big game. Visit BishopsBigGame.com or follow #BishopsBigGame on social media to be a part of the excitement and donate to support Catholic school students in the name of your favorite team.

Unlike the Super Bowl, in #BishopsBigGame Catholic education in both archdioceses will be winners. The CEF of the “winning” archdiocese will receive 60 percent of the total fund and the CEF of the other archdiocese will receive 40 percent of the total fund. All proceeds collected will go directly to the respective CEFs, which provide needs-based tuition assistance for students attending Catholic schools. To get things started, each archbishop has made a donation of $1,000 to the joint fund.

“I am so proud of the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and the work of the Catholic Education Foundation. Through the generosity of the faithful the CEF is providing millions of dollars of financial assistance each school year,” said Archbishop Schnurr.

“We may disagree on the winning team, but on Catholic education, our bet is on our Catholic schools in both archdioceses all the way,” added Archbishop Gomez. “I’m proud of the great work of our students, teachers, staff, families and parish communities that make our Catholic Schools great, and for the generous support of the faithful through CEF so that our students have the opportunity to learn and grow to become the leaders of tomorrow.”

LA and Cincinnati Catholic schools win with #BishopsBigGame