Healthcare professionals and their supporters from across the diocese gathered for a White Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, on the evening of October 27.

A “White Mass,” so named after the white coats typically associated with doctors, is typically held annually in October around October 18, the feast of St. Luke— the patron saint of physicians and surgeons. This year’s Mass was coordinated by the Sts. Teresa of Calcutta and Faustina Guild of the Catholic Medical Association.

According to the website of the Catholic Medical Association, “The White Mass gathers health care professionals under the patronage of St. Luke to ask God’s blessing upon the patient, doctor, nurse and caregiver alike.”

The celebrant and homilist for the Mass was Father Raymond Enzweiler, priest in residence and faculty of Thomas More University.

“Over half of the miracles reported in the gospels were healing. That reality is so important to us,” said Father Enzweiler in his homily. “As medical professionals, it’s important for us to remember that we share in that great ministry,” he said.

“As we go forward from this night, go thinking about our ministry, and thinking in particular in the context of how to seek out the blessings. Thanking God that has given us the gift to be able to be cooperators in this ministry of healing,” he said.
A stained-glass window at Sts. Boniface and James Parish depicts a scene of Jesus pointing to his Sacred Heart standing between a nun and the Blessed Sacrament. The nun is Visitation Sister Margaret Mary Alacoque, who lived in the 17th century, and the scene depicts visions she experienced, which developed into a very popular devotion — the nine First Friday devotion to the Sacred Heart.

According to Sister Margaret Mary, Jesus revealed to her: “In the excess of the mercy of My Heart, I promise you that My all powerful love will grant to all those who will receive Communion on the First Fridays, for nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance: they will not die in My displeasure, nor without receiving the sacraments; and My Heart will be their secure refuge in that last hour.”

In many parishes a Holy Hour is celebrated on the First Friday of each month.

At the October 23 celebration of the Sts. Boniface and James parish 150th anniversary, the Knights of Columbus presented Father Lawrence Schaeper, pastor, a set of Knights of Columbus vestments for his long-term service as Knights of Columbus chaplain for Father Kehoe Council in Ludlow. Pictured (left to right) is PGK Greg Sketch, Grand Knight Carl BERRY, PGK Eric Oberschmidt, Father Larry Schaeper, Bishop John C. Iffert and PGK Tom France.

Father Lawrence Schaeper presented with Knights of Columbus vestments

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‘Melchizedek Project’ encourages and informs vocations to the priesthood

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

The “Melchizedek Project” — a discernment and prayer group aimed towards young men, will be coming to diocesan high schools in the near future. High school chaplains will be charged with organizing the projects and discussions in their schools.

The project, which is based around the book “To Save a Thousand Souls” by Father Brett A. Brannen, aims to educate young men regarding a vocation to the priesthood through prayer and organized discussion. The project tries to answer some of the questions prospective seminarians might have about the priesthood, said Father Conor Kunath, vocations promoter for the Diocese of Covington. Questions like, “how do I actually discern a vocation? What do I need to be able to authentically see God’s will for my life?” he said.

The project also gives them information on what the life of a priest is like, their day to day and their schedule.

“It tries to give them concrete information about the priesthood, so that they can make an actual discernment and know if it’s something they could or could not do,” said Father Kunath.

‘Melchizedek Project’ encourages and informs vocations to the priesthood

All Saints Day

Bishop Iffert stops for a photo with college students from Northern Kentucky University’s Newman Center following an All Saints Day Mass, November 1.
Curia celebrates All Souls Day Mass

Staff report

The Diocese of Covington Curia held Mass for All Souls Day, November 2. The Mass was celebrated by Father Jordan Hainsey, rector of the Oratory of St. Paul in the Curia, Covington.

In order to honor and remember passed friends and loved ones, small candles were available for Curia employees to light at the foot of the altar before the Mass, and the Book of the Dead was placed outside the Oratory for the names of loved ones to be written down for prayer and remembrance. The book will remain outside the Oratory for the month of November.

All Souls Day is a day of prayer for the faithful departed celebrated by Catholics, and the final day of the "Allhallowtide" triduum, following All Souls Day. The modern date celebrated as All Souls Day was established by St. Odilo, Abbot of Cluny, who set aside the day for his abbey to pray for souls in purgatory, and the date has later standardized throughout the Church.

The Cathedral Concert Series continues its 46th season

This Advent Festival, modeled after the tradition at King’s College (UK) has been an annual favorite on the Cathedral Concert Series for over 30 years. Bishop John Iffert will be the presider of the concert, which will feature the Cathedral Bishop’s Choir led by Gregory J. Schaffer, basilica principal organist and choirmaster.

All Cathedral Concerts are open to the public with no admission charge.

Plan to Attend — Deanery Strategy Sessions

The With One Heart pastoral planning process will begin by listening to needs and hopes of clergy, religious and lay faithful. Everyone with a heart for the Diocese and their parish are encouraged to participate in a Deanery Strategy Session. Sessions are open to everyone, not just parishioners of the host deanery. All sessions are from 7–9 p.m.

Nov. 7 Northern Kenton County Deanery
St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright
Nov. 9 Southeast Deanery
St. Patrick School, Maysville, gym
Dec. 6 Covington Deanery
Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Diocesan Curia, Covington

What is Amendment #2 and where is it on my ballot?

Your “Yes” vote on Kentucky Amendment #2 establishes that nothing in the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Kentucky can be interpreted to include a right to an abortion or state funding for abortion. Proposed Constitutional Amendment #2 is the very last item on the ballot. To vote on Amendment #2, go to the very bottom of the ballot — below all of the candidates in contested races and any other local issues. You might have to turn over the ballot. If you typically vote a straight party ticket, whether all Democrat or all Republican, you are not finished until you go to the Constitutional Amendments.

There are two amendments on the Nov. 8 ballot. Amendment #2 is the pro-life amendment — “Vote Yes for Life.”

VOTE YES on #2

Bishop’s Schedule

Nov. 4 Mustard Seed Community lunch, Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, noon
Nov. 5 Religious Jubilee Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 10 a.m.
Nov. 6 Vigil Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 4:30 p.m.
Nov. 7 Mass, Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, California, 11 a.m.
Nov. 7 Northern Kenton County Deanery strategy session, St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright, 7–9 p.m.
Nov. 8 Election Day — Vote ‘Yes’ on Amendment 2
Advisory Council, 9:30 a.m.
tomorrow’s. So leave them in the future and come home to the present, where you will find Me waiting for you. Since I am your Strength, I can empower you to handle each task as it comes. Because I am your Song, I can give you Joy as you work alongside Me. Keep bringing your mind back to the present moment. Among all My creatures, only humans can anticipate future events. This ability is a blessing, but it becomes a curse whenever it is misused. If you use your magnificent mind to worry about tomorrow, you cloak yourself into dark unbelief. However, when the hope of heaven fills your thoughts, the Light of My Presence envelops you. Though heaven is future, it is also present tense. As you walk in the light with Me, you have one foot on earth and one foot in heaven.”

Somehow, someway, Charlie took the other step that special morning. Love you, Brother!

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

A tribute to Charlie (Continued from page 6)
In the Gospel of John 8:12, we hear Jesus say, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” Each day our Catholic schools are teaching students how to be followers of Christ. We do this not only through the lessons in the classroom but also through our words and actions.

In today’s world, the culture is telling us and our children to follow all sorts of people and groups — especially online and on social media. But we are called to follow Jesus first and to be wary of others who may lead us astray.

This school year, we invite you to journey with our students and staff to see all the ways we are following Christ. And we encourage you to join with us in following Jesus each day through your words, actions, and prayers.

Kendra McGuire
Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Diocese of Covington

For more information about the Department of Catholic Schools, call (859) 392-1500 or e-mail asmorey@covdio.org.
In Exile

Father Ron Rolheiser

6

What was drilled into me in my formation was the phrase, ‘The truth will set you free,’ and I believed that it was my responsibility to challenge people to protect that. That’s good, but I fear I’ve been too hard on people. They have pain enough in their lives without me and the Church adding基础上的one more thing.

"It doesn’t cease to amaze me how closely Charlie’s song lyrics strangely predict what will happen in all of our lives. I wish you could hear the haunting melody of this amazing prediction, penned in 1992. Before I forget, as far as I can tell, most of his songs were arranged by the gifted instrumentalist and vocalist, Steve Barnes. These words have a dual meaning. They joyfully anticipate Christ’s resurrection and our own "new day" at the end of Life. Please listen.

"Dawn of a new day, the church bells ring. Praise to our creator, God’s glory we sing. It’s the dawn of a new day, the church bells ring. Praise to our creator, God’s glory we sing.

"Thank you again, Charlie. "Pancreas."

"These lyrics, written by Charlie in 1990, are an amazing part of a homily I heard years ago. A teacher noticed a name plaque on a seminarian’s desk and requested the part of the homily I heard years ago. A teacher noticed a name plaque on a seminarian’s desk and requested the meaning of this inscription, I am Third. The seminarian replied, “It means God is first, others are second and I am third.”

"That is so Charlie-like! We love you, Brother!”

So ended the Words of Remembrance, which seemed to me, stop seeing in my mind Charlie’s meeting with the Lord. Charlie was a generous, high-sounding with God, the under-serving with the deserving, the unanimous with the divided, because it is always free, undeserved, unconditional, universal, in embrace, reaching beyond all religion, custom, rubric, political correctness, mandatory program, ideology, and even beyond sin itself.

For our part then — especially those of us who are parents, ministers, teachers, catechists and elders — we must risk proclaiming the prophetic character of God’s mercy. We must not spend God’s mercy, as if it were ours to spend, dole out God’s forgiveness as if it were a limited commodity, put conditions on God’s love as if God were a narrow tyrant or a political ideology or cut off access to God as if we were the keepers of the heavenly gates. We are not! We link God’s mercy to our own assessment of things, we then link it to our own limits, wounds and biases. It is interesting to note in the Gospel how the apostles, well-meaning of course, often tried to keep certain people away from Jesus, as if they weren’t worthy and with virtual no and without virtue, come everyone, drink freely of God’s mercy.

What holds us back? Why are we so hesitant in pro-claiming God’s inestimable, prodigal, indiscriminate mercy? Partly our motives are good, noble even. We have a legitimate concern over some important things: truth, justice, orthodoxy, morality, proper public form, proper sacramental preparation, fear of scandal and concern for the church community that needs to absorb and carry the effects of sin. Love needs always to be tempered by truth, even as truth must be moderated by love. However, sometimes our motives are less noble and our hesitancy arises out of timidity, fear, jealousy and legalism — the self-righteousness of the Pharisees or the hidden jealousy of the older brother of the prodigal son. No cheap grace is to be dispensed on our watch.

Nevertheless, in doing this, we are misguided, less than good shepherds, out of tune with the God that Jesus proclaimed. God’s mercy, as Jesus revealed it, embraces indiscriminately, without any prejudice or judgment, the good, the under-serving with the deserving, the unanimous with the divided, because it is always free, undeserved, unconditional, universal, in embrace, reaching beyond all religion, custom, rubric, political correctness, mandatory program, ideology, and even beyond sin itself.
God is the God of the living!

Since becoming a priest, especially a parish priest, I have had the great privilege of accompanying souls from this life to the next, and the great joy, although difficult, of caring for the family and friends who mourn.

Death is hard! It is an evil... which means, it is an absence of the good. When God created us, humanity, death was not part of the plan... for God can only will the good, which is the definition of love (willing the good of the other as it is). It was through the sin of our first parents that death entered the world.

How does one confront death without faith? I really don't know! If this world is all there is, what's the point? In our Gospel today Jesus calls us to hope... to long for the good, which we can only glimpse. The Sadducees are told, “deny that there is a resurrection.” And they attempted to mock Jesus with an impossible scenario. Seven brothers marry the same woman, in accord with Mosaic law after their immediate older brother dies... in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be?

Personally, I think Jesus was very kind in his response... he was willing to enter into dialogue. My response would have gone something like: “Who told you that the Sadducees are the ones who have something against the resurrection?”

As Lord, Jesus comes to teach, to sanctify and to govern. He draws the Sadducees and us into the truth... our God is the God of the living, not the dead! The Church over the centuries has incorporated this beautiful belief into the Sacred Liturgy: In “Prayers for the Dead” we pray, “In him the hope of blessed resurrection has been sealed.”

Campaign signs have been scattered across neighborhood lawns and mailboxes filled with literature for weke weeks, if not months. And more often than usual, we have seen and heard two words that have come to signify the division that exists in our country. These words, as one might guess, are “conservative” and “liberal.” Unfortunately, the terms have migrated even into our religious vocabulary as division has grown in our Church.

The end of another election season is near. Only a few days remain until the big day when the winners of political races and the fate of ballot issues will be decided.

The conservative and liberal Christian

The words “conservative” and “liberal” will continue to be part of our vocabulary long after Election Day. Taking another look at their original meaning and applying the wisdom of our faith will help us rediscove the truth in our country and more importantly in our Church. As Jesus prays to the Father in the Gospel of John, so we also pray... “that they may all be one.”

Jamie Schroeder is chancellor for the Diocese of Covington, Ky.
Pioneer priests brought Eucharistic tradition to Kentucky

Part 3

At the beginning of the 19th century, the turbulent and deadly effects of the French Revolution had finally begun to subside across most of Europe. During the decade of the 1790’s, the Catholic Church had been subjected to a level of brutality and systematic persecution that hadn’t been seen since Roman times. In ten short years, the Church that had enjoyed a privileged bond with kings and empires in the moral governance of societies, had been reduced to little more than a hollow shell. The 1801 Concordat, brokered by Napoleon Bonaparte, was meant to usher in a period of reconciliation and renewed cooperation between the Napoleonic regime and the shattered Catholic Church. It was a beginning, but the damage had been done.

According to historian De Franks Taillet, more than 30,000 priests had been forced out of France during the Revolution. About 20,000 more had been forced to land over their letters of ordination, and up to 9,000 had been forced to marry. Thousands who did not recant or leave were guillotined. Gone was the once proud and influential Gallican Church of France, with its centuries old rituals and religious traditions, its beauty and its liturgy. Gone, too, were its priests who alone had the faculty to consecrate bread and wine into the Holy Eucharist and bring the real presence of Jesus Christ to people for the nourishment and salvation of their immortal souls.

Like seeds scattered in the wind, thousands of clergy fled the darkness westward across the Atlantic to a bright, new land of hope. With them brought their theological training, their priestly faculties, and their unquenchable desire to save souls, all fueled by their Lord’s great commission to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:19). And, like seeds do, they found fertile soil. In a new land, Maryland and the newly established Diocese of Baltimore, led by the energetically pragmatic and optimistic Bishop John Carroll (1735-1815).

Born in Maryland in 1735, John Carroll joined the Jesuits in 1757 and studied in Liège, Belgium until his ordination in 1761. He remained in Europe until he was almost 40, gaining a reputation as a learned and influential clergyman. But when Pope Clement XIV suppressed the Jesuit order in 1773, he returned to Maryland. At the time, English laws discriminated against Catholics and prevented the establishment of any public Catholic Church in colonial Maryland. For a time, Carroll became a missionary priest visiting the rural mission stations bringing the Gospel and sacraments to Catholic settlers along the Maryland-Virginia frontier. As the American rebellion began, his sympathies were with the revolution which he saw as possible, more extraordinary, than our political one. Unlike the French Revolution, the American Revolution employed the Enlightenment ideal of separation of church and state, permitting Catholicism in the United States to develop and grow on its own without political interference. It was Benjamin Franklin, a close friend of Fr. Carroll, who had argued for complete religious freedom for Catholics in the new United States, and his close association with Franklin made Carroll the de facto ambassador of all American Catholics.

Like Franklin, Fr. John Carroll was a forward thinker. He favored saying the Mass in English, proposed that papal power extend only to spiritual matters, fought taxes against the Church and its clergy, and demanded equal rights for Roman Catholics. He founded parishes, and in 1783 he led a series of meetings with fellow clergy which resulted in the organization of the Catholic Church in the United States. His work did not go unnoticed. On June 9, 1784, Fr. John Carroll was appointed by Pope Pius VI as provisional “Superior of the Missions in the thirteen United States of North America.” In 1790, he became the first Bishop of Baltimore.

With independence in 1783, Fr. Carroll he wrote to a friend in Rome that “our Religious system has undergone a revolution, if possible, more extraordinary than our political one.” Unlike the French Revolution, the American Revolution employed the Enlightenment ideal of separation of church and state, permitting Catholicism in the United States to develop and grow on its own without political interference. It was Benjamin Franklin, a close friend of Fr. Carroll, who had argued for complete religious freedom for Catholics in the new United States, and his close association with Franklin make Carroll the de facto ambassador of all American Catholics.

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the spirit of religion amongst the Catholics, but in addition, he has gained a great increase for the Church of Jesus Christ.”

Rev. William de Rohan was another sent by Carroll to assist Whelan. De Rohan had served in the Carolinas and had been granted permission by Bishop Carroll to administer the sacraments in Kentucky. For four years he brought the Eucharist to whomever needed it. In 1798, he build a log structure, which became the first Catholic church built west of the Allegheny Mountains. Unfortunately, both Whelan and de Rohan encountered personal problems that made their stays in Kentucky short-lived.

Then on September 3, 1793, Bishop Carroll sent the newly ordained Fr. Stephen Badin (1750-1833) west into Kentucky. It was the same Stephen Badin who had escaped revolutionary France with Fr. Benedict Joseph Flaget and Fr. John Mary David, and it would be Badin who would become the guiding light that transformed the face of Catholicism in Kentucky. Badin was stern and rigid, but his care for the spiritual lives of his charges and for bringing the Eucharist to them was famous among Kentuckians. He taught young catechumens with strictness and exhorted families to have morning and evening prayers. His opposition to dancing was legendary. Like a bloodhound, he could sniff out dancing schools and private parties wherever they may be. One contemporary remembered: “He sometimes arrived unexpectedly while dancing was going on… he glided into the room before anyone knew it and told them smiling, that it was time for night prayers.” Writing to Bishop Carroll, Badin remarked, “No clergyman is fit for Kentucky who seeks for his own interests more than for those of Jesus Christ.”

In 1805, Badin was joined by Rev. Charles Nerinckx (1761-1824), another survivor of the French Revolution. Badin and Nerinckx liked each other from the beginning and went on to become close, lifelong friends. Short and slender, Nerinckx was an opponent of dancing, putting great emphasis on piety among Kentucky Catholics. They also approved of the strict pastoral style of Badin and Nerinckx. Guided by the deft hand of leaders like Rev. Edward Fenwick and Rev. Stephen Montgomery, the Dominicans became popular, were more lenient, and fostered kindness, tolerance and piety amongst Kentucky Catholics. They also approved of dancing.

Yet as more immigrants arrived from the east, Bishop Flaget struggled to provide priests to minister to the growing Catholic communities. One of those was in Covington, where almost a quarter of the 947 residents in 1830 were Catholics. A frustrated Flaget turned to Cincinnati’s Bishop Purcell and asked for help, and in response, Purcell sent Dominican Fr. Stephen Montgomery, then rector of the Cathedral of the Assumption, to minister to the Catholics in northern Kentucky on Fifth Street in Covington. They named it “St. Mary’s Mission.”

Next time: “When America Hated All Catholics.”

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High School Open Houses
The Catholic high schools in the Diocese of Covington invite all interested eighth-grade students and their parents to this year’s Open House — meet faculty and staff, hear from current students and get a feel for the spirit of the school.

Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills
Nov. 8, 8:30-9:30 a.m. (grades 7-12)
Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills
Nov. 6, 1-3 p.m.
Holy Cross District High School, Covington
Nov. 9, 6:30 p.m.
Jan. 29, 6:30 p.m.
St. Henry District High School, Erlanger
Nov. 13, 1-4 p.m.
Covington Latin School, Covington
Dec. 4, 1 p.m. & 3 p.m.
St. Patrick High School, Maysville
Contact school for information and a tour.

The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW Sundays, 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

Eucharistic Procession
Mary Queen of Heaven parish, Erlanger, held a Eucharistic Procession celebrating the National Eucharistic Revival in their parish. Each of their clergy, Fr. Kevin Kahmann, Fr. Jim Schaeper, Deacon Rick Dames and Deacon Larry Kleisinger, took turns carrying the monstrance under a Processional Canopy around the parking lot.

New Manna Eucharistic Retreat — in unity with the USCIO’s three-year Eucharistic Revival efforts all parishes and all ages are invited to attend a retreat on the Eucharist led by Father Thomas Pochillo, Nov. 12, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., St. Agnes Parish hall, Ft. Wright. Lunch will be provided. No fee to attend, free will offerings accepted. Reservations highly recommended at: https://bit.ly/NewMannaRetreat2022, or by calling the parish office 859-1802.

Come one, come all to sing! National Association of Pastoral Musicians Archdiocese of Cincinnati, in conjunction with the Cincinnati Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, is sponsoring a tri-state wide St. Cecilia Hymn Festival. Nov. 15, 7 p.m., Cathedral Basilica of St. Peter in Chains, Cincinnati. Everyone is invited. Pipe organ, a brass quartet plus timpani and a small choir directed by Matthew Geerlings, will lead the singing of many favorite hymns. No cost, no reservations.

Father Conor Kunath will lead a Morning of Reflection, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Nov. 19, St. Pat’s X Parish, Edgewood and Dec. 17, St. Timothy Parish, Union. No charge. No sign up.

The Book of Proverbs Bible work shop with Father Timothy Schehr, Nov. 19, 9-11:30 a.m., Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium (Curia building), Covington. The book of Proverbs offers advice about how to live as a servant of God. What qualities identifies someone as God’s servant? Join the workshop and find out. Cost $35. Register online cov dio.org/see/catholic-bible-study or contact Isaak A. Isaak, Office of Catechesis and Evangelization, 392-1529.

The 30th Annual Eight Grade Pro-Life Essay Contest is open to all 8th graders in the Diocese of Covington. Winners will be awarded Scholarships to Diocesan High Schools: 1st Place $1000, 2nd Place $700 and 3rd Place $500. Entry forms and guidelines are available on the pro-life webpage (https://coves.org/pro-life/) or by emailing Peggy Piccola at ppiccola@covdio.org.

Notre Dame Urban Education Center (NDUEC) is seeking adult and high school volunteers to tutor children in grades K-10 for its Homework PLUS program from 3-5 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Come and make a difference in the life of a child. Call NDUEC at 261-4487, or e-mail Sister Maria Therese at amtherese@nduec.org. Volunteers 18 and older must be VIRTUS compliant.

The St. Joseph Padre Pio Prayer Group meets on the 4th Thursday of each month, 7 p.m., St. Joseph Church, Crescent Springs, for the recitation of the rosary and discussion. To be added to the Padre Pio Prayer Group e-mail distribution list, e-mail a request to bsmaracko@fuse.net.

The Madonna House of NKY is looking for Thursday evening babysitters from 6-8 pm., all four Thursdays in a month or just one Thursday a month, whatever works for you. Call 344-1191.

Year-Round Flea Market, the Diocesan Catholic Children’s Home (DCCH) Center from 8:30 a.m. –noon. Mondays, Thursdays and every third Saturday through the winter months. Open to the public, 50 percent off the first Thursday of each month. Proceeds benefit children living at DCCH Center. Donation box available anytime. 75 Orphanage Road, Fort Mitchell.

PAL “Parents of Addicted Loved Ones,” a free support group for families of adult children dealing with substance addiction, meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at Catholic Charities, Covington. PAL provides continuing education and support, at no charge and no judgement. Just come! For information call 760-8064 or e-mail hope4kypals@gmail.com.
"God’s loving gaze always meets us, touches us, sets us free and transforms us, making us into new persons.

That is what happens in every vocation: we are met by the gaze of God, who calls us. Vocation, like holiness, is not an extraordinary experience reserved for a few. Just as there is a “holiness of the saints next door” (cf. Gaudete et Exsultate, 6-9), so too there is a vocation for everyone, for God’s gaze and call is directed to every person."

Will your son be lonely?
Bishop John Iffert
Published

My sister sometimes worries that I am alone. She said as much on the telephone one evening, “I just wish,” she said, “that you had someone you could talk to at night before you go to sleep.” I assured her that by the time I get home at night I am usually all talked out.

It occurs to me, however, that if you have a brother, son or grandson who is considering life as a priest you might have the same concern.

Will he be lonely as a priest? Like most important questions, there is more than one answer.

First, yes. The priest you love will sometimes be alone. At times, he may even be lonely. Being alone is a good and healthy way of being. We each must come to terms with being alone. In fact, if a priest is to be a priest he must learn to be by himself and have the life of prayer that will sustain the loneliness. In fact, if a priest is to be a priest he must learn to be by himself and have the life of prayer that will sustain his vocation, he will certainly need to learn to be by himself and to embrace silence in a prayerful and grateful way.

Loneliness is something different. It is not just being alone. Loneliness is an emotional reaction. It is marked by a dissatisfaction with one’s lot in life. Your priest friend or loved one will probably be lonely at times.

People are often lonely in crowds. You may have noticed how many television scenes revolve around people being at parties, on busy streets, at ballgames and concerts and being miserable because they have no genuine human connection. People are sometimes lonely in families. People are sometimes lonely even in marriages.

Yes, your priest will sometimes be lonely. It is the human condition. His path to sanctification depends on his being able to humbly accept his situation, attend to the human condition. His path to sanctification depends on his being able to humbly accept his situation, attend to the human condition. His path to sanctification depends on his being able to humbly accept his situation, attend to the human condition. His path to sanctification depends on his being able to humbly accept his situation, attend to the human condition. His path to sanctification depends on his being able to humbly accept his situation, attend to the human condition. His path to sanctification depends on his being able to humbly accept his situation, attend to the human condition.

And then, of course, there is Jesus. When we are dissatisfied, isolated and hurt, Jesus draws near. The priest you love is literally schooled to foster a life of prayer that invites Jesus into the moments of sadness and dissatisfaction, offering these weighty emotions along with the elements of the Mass and inviting Jesus to transform them and pour them out in loving support to the people. We never walk alone. He is the Balm of Gilead. He will save your priest’s wounds (and yours), ill him with love and unite him to fellow believers.

If your young man tells you that he might be called to the priesthood, pray for his vocation to be in as well. One of my favorite stories from the desert fathers illustrates why.

In the early years of the Church, people seeking holiness would go out into the desert and live as hermits. They would spend their days in prayer and penance cut off entirely from the outside world. Once there was a young hermit who struggled mightily against the sins of the flesh, especially lust. So he spent months and months praying and fasting and begging God to relieve him of...
these temptations. Finally, after many months of intense prayer and penance God granted him complete freedom from these temptations. The young hermit was overjoyed at the miracle that God had performed for him. He rushed from his cave to tell his master what had happened. As he exuberantly explains all of this to his master, he notices that his master is more disappointed than pleased. The master explains that he has lost out on such great graces because those struggles against the flesh and lust were tremendous opportunities to prove himself in the service of God, and to win great battles against the evil one.

This story perfectly illustrates the attitude that we must have as we approach our own fight for holiness. All of those sins, faults and situations that we think hold us back are, if viewed correctly, really opportunities for us to win great victories in the service of God. They are moments when we enter into battle with the evil one, and if we can persevere and hold out against them, then we will win. We will advance the kingdom of God. There is a great passage from the book “Abandonment to Divine Providence” that puts this all into perspective: “All these monsters come into the world only to stimulate the courage of the children of God, and when they have finished their training, God allows them to slay the monster. Heaven receives the victors and hell engulfs the vanquished.”

A new monster appears and God summons fresh warriors into the arena. Our life here is a spectacle which makes heaven rejoice, mars up saints and confounds hell. And so all that opposes the rule of God only succeeds in making it more worthy of being adored. All the enemies of justice become its slaves, and God builds the heavenly Jerusalem with the fragments of Babylon the destroyed.”

The monsters that we face in our own lives are not meant to win. God is summoning you and me as warriors to fight in this spiritual arena. We have to realize that these battles to win. God is summoning you and me as warriors to fight in this spiritual arena. We have to realize that these battles can be won, and will one day be won; but we have to go out and fight them.

Going out into this spiritual battle is the fundamental vocation that each and every one of us shares. We are all called to be great saints, and the victories that we are called to win in our march towards holiness are part of that journey. Whether we go into battle as priests, religious, married couples, parents or single people all of us have our own unique role to play battles to fight and victories to win. So go out and be a hero! Father Conor Kunath is vocation promoter for the Diocese of Covington, Ky.

Seminary reflection
Deacon Michael Elmlinger
I remember when I first heard the call to priesthood when I was around eight years old. My parents had just come back from Mass at St. Paul in the evening during Lent, and when they walked through the door, I remember my dad saying to all of the boys in the family; “You know? It would be really nice if we had a priest in the family.” There are four boys in the family, but for some reason, that stuck with me through high school.

When I was in high school, I attended a Steubenville Youth Conference, where I was able to go to Adoration for the first time. It was at Adoration that I believe the Lord was telling me, “Trust in me. I will be with you the whole time.” This gave me the courage to apply to seminary with the Diocese of Covington in 2016. However, when I first started in seminary, I was looking for any reason to try to leave, but whenever I came close to leaving, it would be in Adoration that I would hear the Lord telling me, “Give it a little longer.” Every time I would hear those words, I would get this feeling of peace that I was exactly where I needed to be. When I got to St. Vincent Seminary for theology in 2019, after more discernment, I believed completely that this was the path that God was calling me on.

About five months before my dad passed away from lung cancer in 2021, he told me that at that Mass that he and my mom had attended on that Lenten evening when I was eight, he was asking God during the Eucharistic Prayer, “Who of my children could do this?” He said that immediately, I was the one who came to mind, with no idea as to why, and that was what drove him to tell all of his sons that, knowing whom God was going to call. I still to this day do not know what God sees in me that He has chosen to call me, and I never will. However, I do believe He has called me. The only response that I could possibly hope to give is the same response that the Blessed Virgin Mary gave when Gabriel announced to her that she was to give birth to the Son of God, “Let it be done to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38).

In my six years of seminary formation, I have gone from anxious and doubtful about my vocation to faithful. There have been many ups and many downs, but one thing that has helped me whenever I have doubted myself is remembering that it is not about me. It is all about God and His People. It is God’s vocation, not just my own; it is His calling. I cannot possibly hope to do this myself, no one can. It is only by the grace of God that I can ever hope to undertake this awesome ministry of the priesthood, a ministry where God encounters His People. It is not about me; it never has been. It is always about God, who has His own reasons for calling me and all the other priests in the world. He does not expect us to know those reasons. In fact, He will never tell us. He only asks one thing from us, “Will you follow me?” There is only one response we can give: “Yes, Lord, I will follow.”

Deacon Michael Elmlinger is a 4th Year Theology seminarian at St. Vincent Seminary.

Spiritual mothers pray for the protection, sanctification and happiness of their spiritual sons
Laura Keener

The Eucharistic Revival invites members of the Catholic faith to grow in understanding and devotion to the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The Spiritual Motherhood of Priests is an opportunity for women to experience Christ’s presence more deeply while also committing to pray for the protection, sanctification and happiness of a particular priest—her spiritual son.

In 2007 the Congregation of the Clergy invited lay women to adopt priests as their spiritual sons, and to pray for them regularly, particularly before the Blessed Sacrament. The vocation to be a spiritual mother for priests is largely unknown, scarcely understood and con-
"Every High Priest Is Taken From Among Men."

(Diocesan Vocations Office)

DIOCESE OF COVINGTON • 2022-2023 SEMINARIANS • ST. VINCENT SEMINARY
Called to serve

“Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe and practice what you teach.” These are the words the Bishop says as he puts his hands on the Book of Gospels with a deacon at ordination. Through an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a deacon is conformed in a special way to Christ, particularly Christ the servant. The Catechism states that he is given a strength to serve the people in a way he could not otherwise—in the liturgy in word and in charity. St. Polycarp referred to the deacon as “a specific sacramental sign in the Church of Christ the servant.” It is no longer about what he does, but about who he is.

When I was ordained, I am not sure I fully understood the depth and dimensions of these words and the promises we made. It is only over the course of my diaconal ministry that I have come to appreciate the graces poured out that day, which have led to transformation within my life. Many years ago, I received a note while I was on retreat from someone who said, “My prayer for you is each day a little more of Jesus and a little less of you.” This is our journey as a deacon—God’s graces are poured into us each day that we may be the presence of Christ the servant to those we encounter. When we receive the Gospel of Christ, we become its herald—not just to proclaim it, but to live it and make it a part of the very fabric of who we are.

Pope Francis reminded us at the Jubilee for Deacons in 2016, in Rome of our role and the depth of commitment. He told us “we must be available! We must train ourselves to appreciate the graces poured out that day, which have led to transformation within my life. Many years ago, I received a note while I was on retreat from someone who said, “My prayer for you is each day a little more of Jesus and a little less of you.” This is our journey as a deacon—God’s graces are poured into us each day that we may be the presence of Christ the servant to those we encounter. When we receive the Gospel of Christ, we become its herald—not just to proclaim it, but to live it and make it a part of the very fabric of who we are.

My formation and ordination changed my perspective. My promises call us to a disciplined prayer life—one led by the Liturgy of the Hours—the prayer of the Church. I have learned to embrace the beauty of God’s Word, particularly in the Psalms, so that I might enter more deeply into an intimacy with my Lord. Through adoration and gaze into his eyes as he gazes into mine.” It has led me over time to a ministry of surrender to God’s will, direction and presence in my life. Reflection upon God’s will in my ministry has led me in particular to the ministry of service in Saint Vincent DePaul (SVdP) which has softened my prejudices and made me a better person.

Several recent events stand the depth and importance of these words. It is no longer about what he does, but about who he is.

Deacon Mike Lyman

Reflecting on my vocation

Sister Dorothy Schuette, O.S.B.  60 years

I love my life. Can’t imagine any other way it could have turned out. Is vocation the end result, the calling or all the nudges-calls along the way? I am aware of so many influences that pointed me in the direction of St. Walburg Monastery from the time I was a little kid. By my junior high years at Holy Cross parish school, I was ready to talk about it out loud. That was practically a commitment by me at that age. What I felt was—I wanted to help people know that God loves them.

It was really in high school, first at Holy Cross, then at Villa Madonna, that my sense of mission was more clearly defined by participating in YCS, Young Christian Students. We gathered in small groups, read the Scriptures and followed a process: observe, judge and act. Instead of “just reading” the bible, I began to understand that the message of the bible was meant for me, for us, to reflect on God’s Word, judge how I lived it, how it was lived in society around us, and take note while I was on retreat from someone who said, “My prayer for you is each day a little more of Jesus and a little less of you.” This is our journey as a deacon—God’s graces are poured into us each day that we may be the presence of Christ the servant to those we encounter. When we receive the Gospel of Christ, we become its herald—not just to proclaim it, but to live it and make it a part of the very fabric of who we are.

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Deacon Mike Lyman

Deacon Mike Lyman is a member of the Diocese of Covington’s permanent diaconate.

Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker

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Vocation Director
Sister Patricia Jean
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Walton KY 41094
859-485-4256
www.ssjw.org

Sister Dorothy Schuette, O.S.B.
Junipero Serra, a Franciscan missionary who worked from 1768-1784 in Mexico and present-day California. Father Serra was beatified by Pope John Paul II on September 25, 1980, and Canonized by Pope Francis on September 23, 2015. The Serra Club was originally founded in Seattle, Washington in 1934 by a group of businessmen who wanted to learn more about their faith. Those founding members 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. At the time of the Club’s beginnings, dioceses throughout the nation did not have vocation offices. But 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 1961, 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 as well as men to membership in the organization. Today, there are more than 1,120 Serra Clubs in 46 countries with a total membership of more than 21,000, women and permanent deacons. Each Serra Club is a member of both a national council and Serra International, which has an office located in Chicago, links Serra Clubs around the world.

The Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky is one of the 1,100 Serra Clubs organized in more than 46 countries and is a member of the larger Serra International. Organized in 1981 as part of the Sacred Council for Catholic Education and the Pontifical Work for Priestly Vocation, Serra International today has more than 20,000 Catholic members worldwide.

The Club holds meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. These business meetings commence at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast and adjourn by 8:30 a.m. On the third Tuesday of the month, the Club meets for lunch and a presentation that helps Club members grow in their faith. Assembly for the lunch meetings begins at 11:45 a.m. and the meetings last until 1:00 p.m. The local Serra Club also sponsors the Servers Award Ceremony every April, the Picnic for Women Religious and Seminarian Cookout in June, the Seminarian Cookout Luncheon in August and a Priest Appreciation Dinner in 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.

The local Serra Club prays for vocations by means of Masses, rosaries, intercessory prayer and the Serra Prayer for Vocations. In addition, the Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky also differs from other Serra Clubs because it has a broader focus which includes the diaconate and religious vocations rather than just seminarians. Club members feel an obligation to pray not just for an increase in vocations to the priesthood, but for all religious vocations, including sisters, brothers, and permanent deacons. The Serra Club also encourages its members to live out their own vocation to service.

Pope John Paul II in his address to Serra International in December of 2000 said:

“The whole Church must become completely ministerial, a community of heralds and witnesses, rich in laborers for the harvest,” he said. “Prayer moves the heart of God.”

“The role of Serrans fits very well into the mission of the Church because they encourage pastors and laity alike to promote vocations,” the Holy Father concluded.

If anyone is interested in learning more about the Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky and its mission, please visit the Club’s website at www.serranky.org. For information on joining our Serra Club, please contact membership chair Mike Murray by phone (859-392-1500) or by email (mmurray@covdio.org).

Mike Murray is Director of the Office of Stewardship and Mission for the Diocese of Covington, and a member of the Serra Club.

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**What is Serra Club?**

Mike Murray  
**Contributor**

They don’t stand out regarding who they are, but what they do plays an important role in the mission of the Church. Their role is so important that they even have a special relationship with the Vatican. They are Serrans, members of the Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky.

The Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky is the only one of its kind in the Diocese of Covington. The members are men and women who meet twice a month to coordinate programs and pray specifically for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, and religious life. The Club holds meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. These business meetings commence at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast and adjourn by 8:30 a.m. On the third Tuesday of the month, the Club meets for lunch and a presentation that helps Club members grow in their faith. Assembly for the lunch meetings begins at 11:45 a.m. and the meetings last until 1:00 p.m. The local Serra Club also sponsors the Servers Award Ceremony every April, the Picnic for Women Religious and Seminarian Cookout in June, the Seminarian Cookout Luncheon in August and a Priest Appreciation Dinner in 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.

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**Executive Director**

Due to a planned retirement in early 2023, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, KY (www.covdio.org) seeks candidates for the position of Executive Director of its Catholic Charities ministry. As Christ “came not to be served, but to serve,” a primary focus of the social mission of the Church is mercy to the poor and the sick, works of charity, and mutual aid intended to relieve human needs of every kind. This is an exciting time in our local Church, and we seek a compassionate servant-leader with the professional expertise to manage, collaborate, and lead. The role of the Executive Director is to ensure clarity and fidelity to the Church’s mission and the Bishop’s vision for the diocese, by providing management and direction to this important human services ministry. A key function of this position involves day-to-day oversight of twelve different areas of service, including: Parish Kitchen, which has operated seven-days-a-week since 1974 and serves up to 150 mid-day meals daily; Mobile Food Pantry, providing 20-40 food items per visit at no cost to eligible residents of five rural counties within diocesan boundaries; Jail and Prison Ministry, which strives to meet the spiritual needs of all who are impacted by the criminal justice process; Counseling, including individual, child, family and marriage, pregnancy, and school-based services; and St. Joseph Supportive Housing, providing housing assistance, and intensive case management to eligible previously homeless families and individuals. The Executive Director’s role also involves supervision of and/or responsibility for twenty-two staff members and numerous regular and occasional volunteers; ongoing evaluation of current programs as well as potential new initiatives to address unmet needs; coordination and collaboration with other diocesan offices; and representing the Bishop of Covington and Catholic Charities throughout the diocese and the community at-large to develop relationships and support. Candidates must, first and foremost, be faithful and actively practicing Roman Catholics. Required qualifications include an advanced degree in a professional or human services field, prior experience in administration and leadership, and demonstrated competence in the practice of Catholic social service. Those interested in this opportunity may submit a letter of interest along with a comprehensive resume or CV, including compensation history and a list of references that includes contact email addresses, by email or fax to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR, at skoplyay@covdio.org or 859-392-1589.

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**Catholic Charities**

**Diocese of Covington**

**Executive Director**

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**Executive Director Mike Murray**

Mike Murray is Director of the Office of Stewardship and Mission for the Diocese of Covington, and a member of the Serra Club.
Notre Dame Academy welcomes all gradeschool girls to our 2022 Open House on Sunday, November 6, from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Potential Pandas and their families will be given personal tours by our NDA Ambassadors. Our faculty will be available to answer any questions you may have and our students will be on hand representing the many co-curricular opportunities offered at Notre Dame Academy.

Come see our beautiful campus and state of the art facilities. Learn about our curriculum, activities, student life, financial aid, admissions procedures and more. See what The Notre Dame Life is about and all that it has to offer!

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Spiritual mothers pray
(Continued from page 15)

sequently, rarely lived,” states the Congregation of the Clergy: “It is a vocation that is frequently hidden, invisible to the naked eye, but meant to transmit spiritual life.”

In the Diocese of Covington this lay apostolate was established in 2012, inviting women of the diocese to imitate the Blessed Mother “pondering all things in her heart,” by spiritually adopting a priest son, praying for him quietly and anonymously.

Spiritual mothers make five commitments, not vows. These commitments are: one hour of Eucharistic adoration per week; to pray three short prayers each day (one minute total); frequent confession; to adopt a priest as a son for the rest of her life and to remain anonymous to her spiritual son.

Pat Weber, a parishioner at St. Cecilia Parish, Independence, has been a Spiritual Mother for 10 years. Her sister encouraged her to join after the death of her husband. Mrs. Weber questioned whether she would be able to keep the commitment, since she knew that typically maintaining a daily routine is challenging for her.

“I’m not one to stick to something,” Mrs. Weber. “I decided that the Lord wanted me to do this” And, she said, there has not been many times in her life when she felt God calling her to do something. “It was really really hard for me to do this. I hoped that I could do this the way I’m supposed to. The more I did it, the easier I found it to do, and I became closer to God because of it,” she said.

Kris Elias Roehm, parishioner at Our Lady of Lourdes, Ft Wright, understands that doubt of taking on such an important and daily routine. That is why she appreciates that the women in her family support each other in the ministry. In 2017, they learned about the Spiritual Motherhood of Priests from a church bulletin. When her mother read the bulletin announcement she excitedly said to her daughters, “we should do this.”

“Mom, my sister, my niece and I ended up becoming Spiritual Mothers. We support each other for accountability,” said Mrs. Elias Roehm. Mrs. Elias Roehm, her mother and sister are bilingual and have translated the material to Spanish. They are eager to share the Spiritual Motherhood of Priests ministry with other Spanish-speaking communities and invite pastors to reach out to them if they would like them to present the ministry to the Spanish-speaking women of their parish.

“At Catholics we have tendency to take our faith for granted, but it’s a gift from God,” Mrs. Elias Roehm said. “We cannot have the Eucharist if it is not through the hands of a priest. Just supporting them and sending them our prayers to continue their mission and follow their vocation as God has revealed to them in their hearts,” is so important.

Clare Patterson, a parishioner at Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft Mitchell, has loved and embraced being a Spiritual Mother since the beginning. “It’s the first prayer I say in the morning because I know he’s going to be offering Mass soon,” she said.

And while she doesn’t really know her spiritual priest son or her spiritual deacon son, she said that through her prayers she feels a closeness to them.

“I just get that sense from my prayers of those things I need to pray for him,” she said.

She also enjoys sending her spiritual sons anonymous gifts and notes of encouragement.

“It’s a wonderful feeling to be able to do something special for these men who have given their lives. They don’t have a family and I know they experience loneliness and struggles and temptations,” said Mrs. Patterson. “I feel like it’s something God wants me to do.”

For any woman who might be feeling that God is calling her to be a Spiritual Mother, all three women encourage them to check into it.

“For any woman who might be feeling that God is calling her to be a Spiritual Mother; all three women encourage them to check into it.

“There’s really nothing negative about it,” said Mrs. Patterson. “Don’t be intimidated, don’t be fearful, accept it as another opportunity to get closer to God and to serve God’s shepherds.”

For information about the Spiritual Motherhood of Priests program call Mary Anne Gronotte, (859) 341-6214.
Reflecting on my vocation

(Continued from page 15)

action. I can see that this was “Lectio Divina” by a different name, but the same Spirit infusing the dynamic. And “taking action” for me meant getting serious about a life of ministry.

The Holy Scriptures have called me, anointed me, blessed me. They are the spinal column of the body of St. Walburg Monastery of which I have been a member since my entrance in 1960. All 29 of us sisters are gathered, energized and guided by the Word of God in our daily Liturgy of the Hours and other practices that are Christ centered. Our Benedictine vocation is to be the Presence of Christ for each other, our local church and the world. My call to this community has enabled me, over the years, to share God’s love with many people through various forms of ministry, including health care, parishes, jails and prisons, with the aged, poor and marginalized. More recently, my sharing of God’s love has been expressed in the ministry of Spiritual Direction and Retreats and through service to our guests, sisters and oblates. And, as always, the Word of God continues to call me deeper. It’s still quite an adventure.

Family is where faith begins

Sister Cindy Fehrenback, C.D.P.

My family is where my faith life began. Going to Sunday Mass with Mom or Dad, saying the rosary, lighting a blessed candle during a storm, are some of the memories of growing up. My three brothers, two sisters and myself went all eight years of Catholic grade school to Assumption School in Mt. Healthy, Ohio. This is where I first met the Sisters of Divine Providence.

In the second grade, I began thinking of becoming a sister. Sister Eileen O’Connor was my teacher. She struck me as being young and happy and living with other Sisters. That seemed interesting to me and the thought of being a Sister and a teacher remained in my thoughts through high school. Finally, it was time to make a decision on what would come next. I decided that I would never know for sure if I should or shouldn’t go to the convent unless I tried it. In August of 1969 I entered the Congregation of Divine Providence.

Celebrating fifty years now I can say that I’ve never regretted entering and living the life of a Sister. I have been very blessed and realize the education I have had, community experiences, the good times along with the difficult times and the opportunities I’ve had, all helped me to grow in so many ways to become the person I am now. I cherish the many experiences of living community in many different places and for my forty-four years in the classroom. I began teaching in 1974 at St. Thomas School in Ft. Thomas and retired from the classroom in 2018 at Sts. Peter and Paul in California, Kentucky. Community living is not always easy, but what a blessing it has been and is!

I’ve met so many people who became friends through my years in education, and learned and experienced things I never thought I would. Now I feel I’ve found my retirement niche and I continue to meet more people while I volunteer in the food pantry at Brighton Family Center in Newport, Kentucky. I love my job there.

I wonder at times, what my life would have been like had I not entered the community. I never would have had the experiences and opportunities to grow spiritually that I’ve had, traveling to our Motherhouse in France several times for events there, as well as to spend two weeks with our Sisters in Ecuador.

Praised be God who has already given me so many blessings through the Sisters of Divine Providence!
It was fully my intention to have all of the Winona-Rochester seminarians stand at one point during my installation Mass homily. I had told the people that, in the words of John Paul II, *ecclesia de eucharistia* (the Church comes from the Eucharist), and since the Eucharist comes from priests, it logically follows that if there are no priests, there will be no Church. So I wanted everyone to see and acknowledge the young men in our diocese who are actively discerning a call to this indispensably important way of life.

During the ovation, something came to me as an inspiration. I hadn’t planned to say it. It wasn’t in my text. But I blurted out, as the applause was dying down, “Let’s double their number in the next five years!” A confirmation that this was perhaps from the Holy Spirit is that people, at every stop I’ve made so far in the diocese, have, with enthusiasm, echoed those words back to me. In fact, the leader of one of the Serra groups has told me that she and her colleagues have decided to take up the challenge.

We have 20 seminarians, at both the college and major theology levels, which is pretty good for a diocese our size. And we have a wonderful coterie of priests, both active and retired, who are busily serving our nearly one hundred parishes. But those under retirement age number only around 60, and all of our priests are stretched thin. Furthermore, there will be no priestly ordinations in Winona-Rochester for the next two years. So, there is no question: We need more priests.

Now, bishops and priests do indeed have a key role to play in the encouragement of vocations. What draws a young man to the priesthood is, above all, the witness of happy, healthy priests. Some years ago, the University of Chicago conducted a survey to determine which professions were the happiest. By a rather large margin, those deemed most content were members of the clergy. Moreover, a variety of surveys have demonstrated that, despite the troubles of recent years, Catholic priests report very high levels of personal satisfaction with their lives. Given these data, one recommendation I would make to my brother priests is this: Let people see it! Let them know how much joy you take in being a priest.

But I believe that lay people have an even more important role to play in the cultivation of vocations. Within the Protestant context, sometimes the son of a great preacher follows in his father’s footsteps so that one minister effectively begets another. But this, for obvious reasons, can’t happen in a Catholic setting. Instead, priests, without exception, come from lay people; they come from families. The decency, prayerfulness, kindness and encouragement of parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles make an enormous difference in the fostering of a vocation to the priesthood. One of the most vivid memories of my childhood is of my father, kneeling in intense prayer after Communion one Sunday at St. Thomas More Parish in Troy, Michigan. I was only five or six at the time, and I considered my father the most powerful man on earth. That he was kneeling in supplication before someone more powerful shaped my religious imagination profoundly and, as you can tell, I’ve never forgotten the moment. Both of my parents loved and respected priests and made sure that we kids had steady contact with them. Trust me, their openness of spirit in regard to priests affected my vocation deeply.


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we thank you for calling men and women to serve in your Son’s Kingdom as priests, deacons, and consecrated persons.

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Through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen
Supporting our priests: A mission of the Knights of Columbus since 1882

If it were not for the idea, the will and the drive of a parish priest, the Knights of Columbus would not be here today.

Blessed Father Michael J. McGivney, the parish priest of St. Mary’s Parish in New Haven, Connecticut, through his own family experience and witness to the hardships of parish families, created in 1882 what is now the largest Catholic fraternal benefit society in the world to help the families of those whose sole provider had died unexpectedly, leaving families with no means to sustain their livelihoods.

Father McGivney himself experienced this tragedy firsthand, when his father passed away while he was in seminary. As the oldest child, he was obligated to return home to help support his family, placing his dream of becoming a priest in doubt. However, with the sacrifice and encouragement of his family, he was able to return to the seminary to complete his studies and was ordained in Baltimore in 1877.

The Irish and Catholic immigrants arriving in America during the mid-19th century faced discrimination for their ethnicity and their faith. They were left with jobs that were low paying and often hazardous, in some cases resulting in the death of the head of the household.

Father McGivney gathered the men of St. Mary’s Parish together to address the overwhelming need to make the lives of those suffering families better. In the beginning, the hat was passed among the members for donations to give to the families in need. Soon after, the idea of offering life insurance to its members, instead of passing the hat, took root and flourished.

Today the Knights of Columbus continues to support its parish priests through the charitable works each council performs in its parish. But it doesn’t start there. For the Knights of Columbus, support begins in the seminary.

The RSVP program created by the Knights of Columbus is a program that supports seminarians in every diocese, providing each seminarian monetary donations to help offset their educational and living expenses, as well as spiritual and prayerful support as he advances through seminary. We also keep in touch with each seminarian that we sponsor. Through birthday cards, letters, prayers and emails, our support is more than just money.

Annually, Knights of Columbus councils in Kentucky have provided nearly $20,000 in support to all seminarians in the Covington, Lexington and Owensboro dioceses as well as the Archdiocese of Louisville.

(Continued on page 22)
Vocations

(Continued from page 21)

This year, the Knights of Columbus councils in Northern Kentucky have supported all seminarians as they continue their path to priesthood. Over the past seven years, Knight of Columbus councils in the diocese have donated over $45,000 to support seminarians.

The Kentucky Council of the Knights of Columbus also provides support for seminarians through the Heavenly Pennies program that is implemented by each council. Heavenly Pennies jars can be found at fish frys, pancake breakfasts, spaghetti dinners and any other events where loose change is collected, and the proceeds are donated to each diocese to provide additional monetary support.

For seminarians not supported by a council, the Raffo Fund was established by the Kentucky State Charities of the Knights of Columbus to provide monetary support. The fund is named in honor of Father Charles Raffo, who was the first state chaplain for the Knights of Columbus.

The Raffo Fund was established by the Kentucky State Charities of the Knights of Columbus in the diocese to provide additional monetary support. Over the past seven years, Knight of Columbus councils in the diocese have donated over $45,000 to help support our priests, deacons and seminarians at Father Kehoe Council in Latonia with a dinner to show our appreciation for their commitment to their continued vocations.

Some local councils partner with their parishes with a Vocations Cross program. Each week, a family will take home a cross and pray for vocations and return the cross the following week for another family to continue prayers.

Through our programs, we honor the legacy of Father McGivney and all who answer the call to vocations. Together with our parishes, we renew our commitment to our priests. Every August, the councils host an outing to support our priests, deacons and seminarians at Father Kehoe Council in Latonia with a dinner to show our appreciation for their commitment to their continued vocations.

Our founder, Father McGivney, was declared blessed in 2020 by Pope Francis as he continues his path to sainthood. Throughout our programs, we honor the legacy of Father McGivney and all who answer the call to vocations.

David White is a former district deputy for the Kentucky State Charities of the Knights of Columbus.

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: clknath@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: wneuhaus@covdio.org

Deacon Paul Yancey
Pastoral Ministry Formation Office, 1125 Madison Ave., Covington, KY 41011-3115
(859) 392-1560 E-mail: pyancey@covdio.org

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St. Walburg Monastery
2900 Amsterdam Rd, Villa Hills, KY 41017-5316
(859) 331-6324 E-mail: twbenedictines@yahoo.com

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Public Association of the Faithful
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Sister Clare Marie Borchard, F.D.M.
PO Box 122070, Covington, KY 41012-2070
(859) 512-5575 E-mail: fdmsisters@gmail.com

Ways to support vocations
Become a prayer partner. Prayer partners are individuals 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.

The Sierra Club of Northern Kentucky is part of an international organization dedicated to supporting vocations. Contact Michael Murray at (859) 382-1060 or e-mail mmuray@covdio.org.

Our diocesan Knights of Columbus send each seminarian a financial contribution for personal expenses. Call Dustin Reed at (859) 866-2122 or visit kofc.org/joinus.

Make a financial contribution to the diocesan Seminarian Education Fund, 1125 Madison Ave., Covington, KY 41011-3115 or online at www.covdio.org.

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For information contact the Office of Deacons and Diaconal Formation 1125 Madison Avenue Covington, KY 41011 (859) 392-1500
Chaplains say they’ll stay as long as needed in Thai camps for Myanmarese

BAN MAI NAI SOI REFUGEE CAMP, Thailand — Some 90,000 Myanmarese refugees live in nine camps on the Thai side of the border. At the height of displacement in the early 1990s, the camps held more than 130,000 refugees. People already in the camps have watched humanitarian groups come and go over the years, though in recent times aid workers have mostly moved on to newer crises, leaving a chronic shortage of assistance for the refugees. What hasn’t declined is the commitment of the Catholic Church to accompany people in the camps. Father Dominic Nyareh, a Burmese priest who serves as chaplain in Ban Mai Nai Soi, was appointed to his post by the bishop of Loikaw in 2008. He’s one of five priests assigned by the Myanmar church as chaplains in the camps. Thai officials won’t allow Father Nyareh to live in the camp, which is guarded by Thai soldiers, so he commutes every day from nearby Mae Hong Son. Another priest, Father Joseph Sureh, joined him in 2015, but he lives inside the camp. Thai officials won’t allow him to leave it. Two Burmese nuns also serve Ban Mai Nai Soi. Together, the pastoral team provides leadership to four churches within the camp, with a full gamut of parish activities from men’s retreats to a youth group to flute classes for children. They also run a boarding house for orphans and other children who have family in the camp but their home environment isn’t safe or conducive to study. Whatever happens in the camps, the church workers say they’ll stay as long as their bishop wants them to be present.
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington is adding services and growing, and this is an exciting time to serve in our local Church. If you have a desire to work in an environment where you can truly make a difference by serving others, Catholic Charities seeks candidates to fill the following positions:

Client Care Services Specialist
The primary purpose of this full-time position is to assist, serve and support clients and inquirers seeking services and assistance, and provide administrative support to the process. We are looking for a person who is client service focused; a compassionate listener and problem solver with a calm and pleasant demeanor; able to use background in human services to make initial human service needs assessments and assign or refer those in our community. A bachelor’s degree in a human services related field and strong attention to detail are also required.

Food Pantry Outreach Assistant Coordinator
We are seeking a dedicated and compassionate individual to help run the mobile food pantry program in the rural counties of the Diocese of Covington. This is a unique opportunity for someone to put their faith in action tangibly by helping to address hunger and be the hands and feet of Christ in the hungry area of our diocese where there are limited resources and is considered a food desert. This is a part-time position, averaging up to 20 hours a week.

Parish Kitchen, Weekend Manager
Parish Kitchen is a special ministry that serves a free lunch every day in Covington to anyone who is hungry. We are looking for individuals who feel a call to serve within the context of this ministry, and who are capable of working with the population we serve. We are currently in need of additional Weekend Managers to work on Saturdays and Sundays, from 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., to help prepare a meal, supervise volunteers who assist serving between 11:30 – 1:30, and cleanup after closing. Ideally, two Weekend Managers work together to oversee all aspects of this operation. Prior experience in one or more of the following would be a strong plus: food service, ministry and social work. You may be scheduled to work once a month, or up to 4 or 5 times per month, depending on your availability and others.

Catholic Charities offers excellent benefits including generous paid time off. To learn more details about any of these job opportunities, please visit our website at job-opportunities.

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The Messenger, is seeking a Staff Writer/Media Content Developer to join its media team. In this role, you will use your communication and web design skills to increase reader engagement, primarily through creating content for — the Messenger, the diocesan website, and diocesan social media pages. Duties and responsibilities include creating content for various print and social media formats; proofreading content before publication; attending, taking photographs and reporting on events; and recording and editing short videos. Knowledge of Adobe Creative Cloud software is preferred. Candidates must be practicing Catholics with strong organizational skills, and the ability to meet deadlines and handle stress is an absolute requirement.

Interested candidates may submit a resume, references, and writing samples to Stephen Koplyay by e-mail: skoplyay@covdio.org, (859) 392-1500. EOE

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South Korean church leaders want inquiry after stampede, offer prayers

SEOUL, South Korea — Catholic bishops in South Korea expressed sorrow and offered prayers after more than 150 people died in a stampede during Halloween celebrations in Seoul. They also called for a detailed investigation to identify the cause of the incident. Officials are concerned that the death toll could rise because at least 33 people remain in critical condition, reported ucanews.com. The tragedy occurred in Seoul Oct. 29, when around 300,000 people — mostly in their teens and 20s, wearing Halloween costumes — poured into its narrow, winding streets for partying.

“We entrust to God’s mercy the victims who unfortunately lost their lives in the tragedy,” the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Korea said in a statement. “In addition, we offer our deepest condolences to the bereaved families, and we also pray for the speedy recovery and peace of the wounded,” said the statement.

Asian bishops commit to work with nations, NGOs for better continent

BANGKOK, Thailand — Catholic bishops in Asia have committed themselves to engage with governments, nongovernmental agencies and civil organizations to respond to issues affecting the church and society in their work for a better Asia. “We believe that peace and reconciliation is the only way forward. We have envisaged new pathways for our ministry based on mutual listening and genuine discernment,” the bishops said in a statement issued Oct. 30, at the end of a two-week general conference.

Ucanews.com reported the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences organized its first general conference as a part of its golden jubilee celebrations that brought together 20 cardinals, 120 bishops, 25 priests, eight nuns, and 41 laypeople. The conference, with the theme “Journeying Together as Peoples of Asia,” sought to reaffirm the federation’s work of the past 50 years aiming to “revitalize the church and envision new pathways of service.”

One of the paths they identified was “bridging-building” among religious and traditions and also “principled engagement with governments” and nongovernmental agencies on issues of human rights, eradication of poverty, human trafficking, care of the earth, and other common concerns. “The escalating violence and conflicts” in Asia call for dialogue and reconciliation,” the bishops said without naming any issue or any nation.
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