‘Lights Out’ — drawing near to Christ at Advent

Most Rev. John Iffert
Bishop of Covington

I recently met a family who introduced me to a new Advent practice. They call it “Lights Out Friday.” They are still devoted to the longstanding traditions. They begin each day opening Advent calendars. They light the Advent wreath at each evening meal. They make homemade ornaments for the Jesse tree and hold off on the Christmas decorations and music for as long as they can resist. Still, they felt the need for something that would point them even more toward the encounter with Christ in their family.

Each Advent Friday last year, as they put the evening meal on the table, their little ones ran through the house yelling “Lights Out Friday!” As they did, they turned off every electric light. Televisions and radios are turned off. Phones and screens are silenced and placed face down on a kitchen counter.

This family eats dinner by candlelight. They wash the dishes together. They pray a family rosary. Then, with flashlights and solar powered lanterns, they play games in the shadowed dark until it is just about time for bed.

At the end of the night, they add something more to the growing manger scene. Rocks and greenery join the empty manger. Animals follow and are eventually joined by shepherds and angels. Mary and Joseph arrive on the Friday night before Christmas, urgent in their expectation for Jesus. The family prays around the manger.

To emphasize the excitement, each Friday they sing one Christmas carol quietly. As they do, they playfully shush one another with a finger on their lips, smiles and giggles, as if they were securely getting away with something that’s not quite allowed. Christmas is still to come and Jesus, who is the light shining in the darkness, will arrive again with the gift of His Kingdom fulfilled.

As I think about this young family and their playful waiting for Jesus, I can’t help but be caught up in amazement at what Jesus has done for us. I can’t help but realize that Jesus is even now fostering holy love in this family (and in me as they recount these little, holy joys). I can’t help but long for the day when our Advent prayer, “Come Lord Jesus,” will be completely fulfilled and the Kingdom, of which these little domestic thrills are a foretaste, will come in its fullness. Then, Jesus will be all in all.

Wonder at the loving self-emptying of Jesus’ first coming, recognizing His indwelling even now, longing for the fulfillment of our prayer “Thy Kingdom Come,” all wrapped in awe, hope and bound with the bow of growing charity — this is Advent. It is the season of hope. The season of longing. The season of dawning love.

I encountered this year in Covington — the candlelight Mass and Eucharistic adoration for young adults. In candlelit praise I recognize the same pattern of growing amazement, reception of grace, and recognition that Christ comes to us even now body and blood, soul and divinity with every reception of the Eucharist. With awe we recognize that each coming of Christ in the Eucharist sends us out to be Kingdom family to one another. Recognizing Christ’s coming even now, helps us to long for his ultimate coming to draw his people to himself with bonds of love. This, too, is Advent. Jesus draws near to set us free and be our joy.

Happy Advent! This year we will have an Advent season that is a full four weeks. We have 28 days to grow in amazement at what Christ has done, is doing, and has promised to do for those who love him. Our friends will have all four “Lights Out Fridays.” May the fullness of the season remind us of the fullness of gift we receive when Christ arrives in every Eucharist. May each reception direct us toward our proper end — life forever with Christ.

Come Lord Jesus!

Sunday November 27th marks the beginning of Advent and a new liturgical year.

“Hear the word of the Lord, O nations; declare it to the distant lands:
Behold, our Savior will come; you need no longer fear.”

—Roman Missal first Monday of Advent, Entrance Antiphon
‘With One Heart’ continues with focus groups and strategy sessions, working towards pastoral plan

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

Since its announcement at Bishop Iffert’s first year anniversary this September, the With One Heart project in coordination with the Catholic Leadership Institute is well underway. The last of the public Deanery Strategy Sessions is planned for Dec. 6 at the Curia’s Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington.

After Dec. 6, every deanery in the Diocese of Covington will have held a session where members of the community have shared their joys, expectations and desires for the diocese and its future.

Focus groups have also been held to discuss similar topics among lay leaders, young people, deacons and priests in the diocese. The gathered data will contribute to a pastoral plan to be presented next fall at Bishop Iffert’s second anniversary, along with reports on the Disciple Maker Index, a survey about the needs of the diocese.

“We’re on target and things are going well,” reports Carla Molina, relationship manager with the Catholic Leadership Institute who has been working alongside diocesan leaders these past months on the With One Heart project.

Additionally, the project is adding and looking towards more sessions in the upcoming months, including a leadership orientation for priests, and a Spanish session for lay leaders in January (date TBA).

Pastors will also be working with their parish communities to assign an individual as the “primary point of contact” for their parish, who will lead the upcoming initiatives of the Disciple Maker Index, said Ms. Molina, and whose responsibility will be to “drum up interest” and publicize the survey.

“We’re listening for trends across all groups,” said Brendan Menney, leadership consultant and diocesan planning leader with the Catholic Leadership Institute, “So we can look at what areas for growth.

Brendan Menney, leadership consultant and diocesan planning leader with the Catholic Leadership Institute, leads the Deanery Strategy Session for Campbell County on October 19 at St. Joseph parish, Cold Spring.

Thanksgiving and Eucharist mean the same thing

John Burger

It has been pointed out many times in the past, but it doesn’t hurt to reflect on it once again, as we celebrate Thanksgiving Day: the Greek-derived word for thanksgiving is “eucharist,” the same word that refers to both the Catholic Mass and the sacrament of Holy Communion.

It’s no surprise, then, that many Catholics make a point of beginning their Thanksgiving Day with a visit to church, even though it is a civil holiday and not a religious day of obligation.

“The whole liturgical life of the Church revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments,” the Catechism of the Catholic Church explains. It is called Eucharist “because it is an action of thanksgiving to God. The Greek words eucharistein and eulogein recall the Jewish blessings that proclaim —especially during a meal— God’s works: creation, redemption, and sanctification.”

“The name ‘Eucharist,’ or thanksgiving, is to be explained either by the fact that at its institution Christ gave thanks, or by the fact that this is the supreme act of Christian gratitude to God,” writes Jesuit Fr. John A. Hardon in his Catholic Catechism. “Early instances of this title occur in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, in the letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch, and in the Apologies of St. Justin.”

“Christ Our Pascha,” the Catechism of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, puts it this way: ‘The mystery of the Eucharist takes its name from this prayer of thanksgiving in which we express gratitude for all that we have received from God. We thank God for all things which we have received from God and for all who have been good to us.”

“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. Dec. 6 Covington Deanery Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Diocesan Curia, Covington

Official assignments
Effective January 1, 2023
Rev. Stephen M. Bankemper
To: Diocesan Finance Council
Term: Five years
Continues other duties

Sister Margaret Stallmeyer, C.D.P.
To: Diocesan Finance Council
Term: Five years
Continues other duties

By order of the Most Rev. John C. Iffert
Bishop of the Diocese of Covington

(Continued on page 17)
Retired religious women dedicate their lives to serving God’s people

Laura Keener

Editor

As a young girl growing up at Holy Cross Parish, Latonia, Benedictine Sister Dorothy Schuette always knew she wanted to be a religious sister. Her aunt and teachers were Benedictine Sisters, so it was natural that she gravitated to the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery, Villa Hills.

“I guess I just have always felt like that was such a good option to be a sister because that was held in such esteem by my family,” Sister Dorothy said.

Sister Dorothy is one of over 180 retired women religious in the Diocese of Covington who have dedicated their lives to serving God’s people. In the United States there are over 24,000 religious past the age of 70, many of whom worked for little to no pay and with no 401(k) or pension plans. In 1988, Catholic bishops in the U.S. launched the annual Retirement Fund for Religious to address the significant lack of retirement funding for Catholic sisters, brothers and priests in religious orders.

Last year, the people of the Diocese of Covington donated over $317,000 to the Retirement Fund for Religious. This year, parishioners will again be able to show their financial support for retired religious women — former teachers, healthcare workers and social service advocates — by making a donation to the Retirement Fund for Religious.

Looking back now she realizes that what was really striving for is holiness. “At this point in my life, I know that that’s what I’ve always been searching for, but it was like, too cool to admit that sort of thing,” back then she said.

Over her 60 years of consecrated life, Sister Dorothy never did get to teach high school Science. Meeting the needs of the Benedictine community, Sister Benedict, the prioress when Sister Dorothy first made vows, sent Sister Dorothy to study to become a dietician. The community had four hospitals — two in Kentucky and two in Colorado — and needed a dietary administrator.

Sister Dorothy fondly remembers the people who supported her during those early years. “So many of the situations were very hard on me because I was young and didn’t know much, but so many people were supportive and loving at the time, that definitely stood out for me,” she said.

When she returned to Northern Kentucky, religious communities were no longer assuring staffing at schools or hospitals. Sisters were asked to find paying jobs on their own. “That was the first, oh my gosh, I’m on my own,” she said.

She worked as a dietary manager at Good Samaritan Hospital and Longview State Hospital both in Cincinnati. She soon discovered that she was doing quite a bit of counseling work with employees, and she liked that. She asked

Why we ask

— Religious communities are financially responsible for the support and care of all members. Income, earnings, and expenses are managed separately from the parish and diocesan structures of the Catholic Church.
— Today, religious past age 70 outnumber religious under age 70 by nearly three to one.
— There are 24,924 religious past age 70 living in the United States. In 2021, the average annual cost for their care was roughly $50,000 per person; skilled care averaged $78,000 per person.
— Since 2009, the annual cost to support senior women and men religious has exceeded $1 billion.
— In 2021, 70 percent of the religious communities providing data to the National Religious Retirement Office had a median age of 70 or higher.
— The average annual Social Security benefit for a religious is $7,326, whereas the average US beneficiary receives $19,896.

ACUE donors celebrate success

Staff report

Early this fall, the Alliance for Catholic Urban Education’s major donors gathered to celebrate the success of the most recently completed annual appeal ending June 30 and chaired by Joe Mayer, ACUE’s major donorrecipient, the Yung Family Foundation.

ACUE is a consortium of six diocesan urban elementary schools: Holy Cross Elementary, Lakeside Holy Family School, Covington, Holy Trinity School, Bellevue; Prince of Peace School, Covington; St. Anthony School, Taylor Mill, and St. Augustine School, Covington.

The Faith Hope and Inspiration Award is ACUE’s only award and is presented annually by the Bishop to a donor demonstrating both longstanding and outstanding support of the ACUE mission. The Yung family has long provided charitable support to ACUE and in fact has been the most generous of ACUE’s Cornerstone donors — those providing $50,000 or more annually toward the tuition assistance needs of the ministry’s tremendous number of economically disadvantaged students.

ACUE’s Cornerstone donors: Catholic Social Service leaders.

2022 — The Yung Family Foundation
2019 — Lois and Steve Rosenberger
2018 — Al and Esther Kevkel
2017 — St. Elizabeth Healthcare
2016 — R. C. Durr (posthumously)
2015 — Bill and Sue Butler (The Butler Foundation)
2014 — Ralph and Imamleen Drees

The average annual Social Security benefit for a religious is $7,326, whereas the average US beneficiary receives $19,896.

Why we ask

— Religious communities are financially responsible for the support and care of all members. Income, earnings, and expenses are managed separately from the parish and diocesan structures of the Catholic Church.
— Today, religious past age 70 outnumber religious under age 70 by nearly three to one.
— There are 24,924 religious past age 70 living in the United States. In 2021, the average annual cost for their care was roughly $50,000 per person; skilled care averaged $78,000 per person.
— Since 2009, the annual cost to support senior women and men religious has exceeded $1 billion.
— In 2021, 70 percent of the religious communities providing data to the National Religious Retirement Office had a median age of 70 or higher.
— The average annual Social Security benefit for a religious is $7,326, whereas the average US beneficiary receives $19,896.

Pictured (top, right) Bishop John Iffert addresses ACUE’s major donors with gratitude for their financial contributions and also offers an invitation to become dedicated volunteers.

Also pictured, (above) the family of William and Martha Yung whose family foundation received not only ACUE’s most significant award to a standing ovation that night, but also celebrated the couple’s 60th wedding anniversary.

(Continued on page 17)
Stay awake!

The readings for the First Sunday of Advent

Stay awake! Surely it is the mission of the Church to make us aware of the reality and presence of God. This is our call to be watchful, to be on the lookout, to be ready, like the wise virgins in the Gospel of St. Matthew, “Revelation, we must never forget, either includes us — wherever we are — in its targeted audience, or it is devoid of all meaning. Revelation is always addressing, not just the people of the ancient times or the people of Jesus’ era, but us.”

In one way that is a wonderful truth, that the voice of Christ is a present reality. It is another that it is a fearsome truth that the voice of Christ is a present reality, precisely if we are not hearing that voice or ignoring it.

There is a dictum associated with the spiritual teaching of the early Fathers of the Church, which states “the voice of the Church is the voice of Christ crying out in the world.”

Now there are many ways to understand that dictum, but the simplest is this: When the Church proclaims and preaches the Word of God and celebrates the holy liturgy, the Church is calling us to prepare for the day of judgement and the final coming of Christ into the world, which for the disciples of Jesus, the day of redemption and salvation.

It is easy to ignore the voice of Christ and misrepresent what is happening in our lives, the lives of the Church, the Church’s mission, or the lives of the world.

The whole point of the reality and ministry of the Church is so that we can live a life that is in the service of our saving — transforming Holy Communion with Jesus. In the profane of the First Sunday of Advent we pray, “for he assumed at his first coming the lowliness of our human flesh,” we are confronted with the mystery of Divine lowliness and the Divine condescension. It is precisely through the mystery of the lowliness of God who manifests himself in our human nature, and extends himself to all creation that we are able to transcend the limits of our own being and participate in the mystery of salvation. In the profane of our daily lives, the Church invites us to participate in the liturgy of salvation. The whole point of the reality and ministry of the Church is so that we can live our lives in the service of our saving—transforming Holy Communion with Jesus.

In our 174-year history the DCCH mission is to reconnect hundreds of children and families. Each year about 10,000 children enter the foster care system. Of those children, 3,562 do not count November or December yet. Hundreds of children wait in Kentucky for a forever family. We at DCCH believe that if folks can take small steps, big things can happen, many doors can be opened for the child and family.

Small steps open doors

At the recently held diocesan Seminary Ball, Bishop Iffert shared part of his personal priestly discernment story. While listening, I felt the connection between a person discerning a religious vocation and that of a person considering becoming a foster or adoptive parent. Both decisions are huge, life altering and sacrificial. Both require much prayer and preparation. Barriers need to be overcome, done best by taking small steps to begin the process. It is my hope that someone is listening and is, by virtue of someone else’s story, inspired to become a foster or adoptive parent.

Bishop Iffert announced, financial donations for the seminary fund relieve one barrier. Thanks for all who support this fundraising effort.

Choirs must be diligently promoted

Father Phillip DeVos

The typical model of a parish choir is becoming less and less sustainable.

A good look at what a choir can and should be does not necessarily matter. Father Anthony Ruff, GSL, professor of liturgy and music at St. John’s School of Theology and Seminary in Collegeville, Minn., is a frequent contributor to the blog “PrayTell” and wrote a fine article on the matter: “I think choirs need to focus more on their solo choral singing and less on leading the congregation and encouraging the congregation’s singing with harmonies.”

He explains his reasoning for saying this, “As I see it, […] the congregation gets more bang for the buck — they get to hear more choral music that is polished and done well for their edification. And the choir members have a more rewarding experience of offering artistic music.”

His article explains parts of the Mass may be enhanced by having an organist accompanying the choir.

Missalette, like Breaking Bread, Today’s Liturgy or Magnificat, include the texts of the Entrance and Communion Antiphons. The antiphons are verses from Scripture (often from the book of Psalms) that are meant to be sung to accompany a ritual action. In Second Vaticum Council in which is the vision for liturgical reform. The document includes many musical texts relating to the liturgy and those who minister in it. Of unique importance is what is said about sacred music.

For the purpose of sacred music is for “the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful.” (SC 112)

Because of this purpose, the typical model of a choir does not work for many busy Catholics. When someone has incredible access to products and services within just a few clicks on their phones, it’s easy to forget that the Church needs faithful volunteers to do specialized work in various ministries. Music ministry is no exception to this great need and choirs are central to the success of a vibrant music program.

The typical model of a parish choir is to meet once a week for a rehearsal in the evening and to sing at a Mass the following Sunday. This weekly commitment can be hard for some who work odd hours or have family commitments each week. The life of volunteers is busy and the typical model of a parish choir is becoming less and less sustainable.

A good look at what a choir can and should be does not necessarily matter. Father Anthony Ruff, GSL, professor of liturgy and music at St. John’s School of Theology and Seminary in Collegeville, Minn., is a frequent contributor to the blog “PrayTell” and wrote a fine article on the matter: “I think choirs need to focus more on their solo choral singing and less on leading the congregation and encouraging the congregation’s singing with harmonies.”

He explains his reasoning for saying this, “As I see it, […] the congregation gets more bang for the buck — they get to hear more choral music that is polished and done well for their edification. And the choir members have a more rewarding experience of offering artistic music.”

His article explains parts of the Mass may be enhanced by having an organist accompanying the choir.

Missalette, like Breaking Bread, Today’s Liturgy or Magnificat, include the texts of the Entrance and Communion Antiphons. The antiphons are verses from Scripture (often from the book of Psalms) that are meant to be sung to accompany a ritual action. In Second Vaticum Council in which is the vision for liturgical reform. The document includes many musical texts relating to the liturgy and those who minister in it. Of unique importance is what is said about sacred music.

For the purpose of sacred music is for “the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful.” (SC 112)

Because of this purpose, the typical model of a choir does not work for many busy Catholics. When someone has incredible access to products and services within just a few clicks on their phones, it’s easy to forget that the Church needs faithful volunteers to do specialized work in various ministries. Music ministry is no exception to this great need and choirs are central to the success of a vibrant music program.

The typical model of a parish choir is to meet once a week for a rehearsal in the evening and to sing at a Mass the following Sunday. This weekly commitment can be hard for some who work odd hours or have family commitments each week. The life of volunteers is busy and the typical model of a parish choir is becoming less and less sustainable.

A good look at what a choir can and should be does not necessarily matter. Father Anthony Ruff, GSL, professor of liturgy and music at St. John’s School of Theology and Seminary in Collegeville, Minn., is a frequent contributor to the blog “PrayTell” and wrote a fine article on the matter: “I think choirs need to focus more on their solo choral singing and less on leading the congregation and encouraging the congregation’s singing with harmonies.”

He explains his reasoning for saying this, “As I see it, […] the congregation gets more bang for the buck — they get to hear more choral music that is polished and done well for their edification. And the choir members have a more rewarding experience of offering artistic music.”

His article explains parts of the Mass may be enhanced by having an organist accompanying the choir.

Missalette, like Breaking Bread, Today’s Liturgy or Magnificat, include the texts of the Entrance and Communion Antiphons. The antiphons are verses from Scripture (often from the book of Psalms) that are meant to be sung to accompany a ritual action. In Second Vaticum Council in which is the vision for liturgical reform. The document includes many musical texts relating to the liturgy and those who minister in it. Of unique importance is what is said about sacred music.

For the purpose of sacred music is for “the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful.” (SC 112)

Because of this purpose, the typical model of a choir does not work for many busy Catholics. When someone has incredible access to products and services within just a few clicks on their phones, it’s easy to forget that the Church needs faithful volunteers to do specialized work in various ministries. Music ministry is no exception to this great need and choirs are central to the success of a vibrant music program.

The typical model of a parish choir is to meet once a week for a rehearsal in the evening and to sing at a Mass the following Sunday. This weekly commitment can be hard for some who work odd hours or have family commitments each week. The life of volunteers is busy and the typical model of a parish choir is becoming less and less sustainable.

A good look at what a choir can and should be does not necessarily matter. Father Anthony Ruff, GSL, professor of liturgy and music at St. John’s School of Theology and Seminary in Collegeville, Minn., is a frequent contributor to the blog “PrayTell” and wrote a fine article on the matter: “I think choirs need to focus more on their solo choral singing and less on leading the congregation and encouraging the congregation’s singing with harmonies.”

He explains his reasoning for saying this, “As I see it, […] the congregation gets more bang for the buck — they get to hear more choral music that is polished and done well for their edification. And the choir members have a more rewarding experience of offering artistic music.”

His article explains parts of the Mass may be enhanced by having an organist accompanying the choir.

Missalette, like Breaking Bread, Today’s Liturgy or Magnificat, include the texts of the Entrance and Communion Antiphons. The antiphons are verses from Scripture (often from the book of Psalms) that are meant to be sung to accompany a ritual action. In Second Vaticum Council in which is the vision for liturgical reform. The document includes many musical texts relating to the liturgy and those who minister in it. Of unique importance is what is said about sacred music.

For the purpose of sacred music is for “the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful.” (SC 112)

Because of this purpose, the typical model of a choir does not work for many busy Catholics. When someone has incredible access to products and services within just a few clicks on their phones, it’s easy to forget that the Church needs faithful volunteers to do specialized work in various ministries. Music ministry is no exception to this great need and choirs are central to the success of a vibrant music program.

The typical model of a parish choir is to meet once a week for a rehearsal in the evening and to sing at a Mass the following Sunday. This weekly commitment can be hard for some who work odd hours or have family commitments each week. The life of volunteers is busy and the typical model of a parish choir is becoming less and less sustainable.
Advent — renewing our desire for salvation

Archbishop Fulton Sheen begins his book “Life of Christ” by pointing out that there has only been one person in human history who was the true Son of God. The words we sing in the ancient hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” are just as true for us today as they ever were in history. We are “captive” — the Church — “in lonely exile” — the world. We are lost, and we cannot save ourselves.

In those words, Father Dwight Longenecker once wrote: “In the liturgy we are rooted in the timeless cycle of redemption. Beginning with Advent and Christmastide and moving through Lent and Eastertide, we connect our lives with sacred Scripture and the symbols, signs and stories of the faith. As we celebrate the events of salvation history, we connect our lives in a living sacramental way with the work God has been doing in the world for thousands of years, and as we do, the rhythm of worship roots our daily lives deeply in the wisdom and love of the ages.”

The word Advent comes from the Latin adventus, which means “coming” or “arrival.” The Catechism of the Catholic Church stresses the two-fold meaning of this season: “When the Church celebrates the liturgy of the Catholic Church stresses the twofold meaning of this season: “When the Church celebrates the liturgy of the Catholic Church stresses the twofold meaning of this season: “When the Church celebrates the liturgy of the Church, all to prepare for the celebration of the Incarnation. And, finally, we are invited to renew our desire for the Lord more deeply into our lives, and to renew our confidence for Christ’s triumphant second coming into the world.

Let us make the most of this Advent. Let us prepare for Christ to be born into our lives, to welcome him with a renewed faith, and to commit to living in his presence each day. Only then will we truly have a merry Christmas.

(Continued from page 4)

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

Giving thanks for Mike Pence at Thanksgiving

I’ll confess to some exasperation when, during the 2016 campaign, Republican vice-presidential nominee Mike Pence described himself as an “evangelical Catholic.” Three years earlier, I had published a book on the Catholic faith entitled “Evangelical Catholicism,” and what Mr. Pence meant by being an “evangelical Catholic” — a cradle Catholic who had really come to know the Lord Jesus through evangelical Protestantism — was not what I meant by the term.

Nor did I vote for Mr. Pence in either 2016 or 2020, having written in my choic- es for president and vice- president in both elections. And while two years is a virtual eternity in these highly unstable political times, I don’t expect to vote for Mr. Pence in the 2024 Republican primaries, should he choose to run.

This Thanksgiving, however, I’m happy to give thanks for Mike Pence, whose new book, “So Help Me God” (Simon & Schuster), explains how this man of Christian faith and conscience stood between the United States and an unprecedented constitutional crisis on January 6, 2021.

Between Election Day 2020 and early January 2021, President Donald Trump and his supporters filed more than 46 legal challenges to the rectitude of the vote count in several states Trump had lost. Vice President Pence had supported that effort, believing that the public deserved an honest account of what had transpired in the election. None of the legal challenges succeeded.

Undeterred, constitutionally ignorant members of Congress began to claim, that as vice-president and the Senate’s presiding officer when the Electoral College votes were counted, Mr. Pence could nullify certain states’ reports of their electoral votes by unilaterally rejecting those reports. The former Indiana governor now drew a bright line, telling President Trump that the Constitution did not give him that authority — which it manifestly did not.

The president’s response: “You’re too honest. Hundreds of thousands are gonna hate your guts… People are gonna think you’re stupid.”

On January 5, Vice President Pence was called to the White House and asked by the president’s lawyers to simply reject certain states’ electors, and thus their electoral votes. Pence later learned that one of the president’s attorneys, John Rastani, had told Pence’s own general counsel that unilaterally rejecting electors was wrong and that doing so would be immediately overturned by a unanimous Supreme Court — which is to say that one of the president’s principal legal advisers didn’t believe what he was telling Trump. That same day, in another lie, Trump denounced as “fake news” a newspaper story accurately reporting that Pence did not believe he had the constitutional authority to block certification of the 2020 election.

Mike Pence’s actions on the day of infamy that saw an unbefitting, vicious mob storm and ran amuck the U.S. Capitol were correct, courageous, informed by conscience and fortified by prayer. When his Secret Service detail urged the vice president to leave the Capitol after rioters had broken through the ranks of the ill-prepared and overwhelmed Capitol police, he refused, although it was clear that some of the rioters were out for him.

When he agreed to go to a safer location, the garage beneath the building, Pence insisted on walking, not running, much to the aggravation of his detail. When the head of the detail asked Pence to take cover in a car that had been prepositioned near an exit ramp, the vice presi- dent refused, concerned that someone would order the car’s driver to hustle Pence away from what he regarded as his post — and his duty Meanwhile, as the Capitol was being pillaged and maniacs were chanting “Hang Mike Pence!” the president was tweeting away calling Pence a co-conspirator — although 14 minutes later, the volatile Mr. Trump switched gears, urging the mob to “Stay peaceful!”

Rather too late, that.

The process of certifying the electoral vote count even- tually centralized and was concluded in the wee hours of January 7. There had been death and destruction, and a mob of crazies had made the world’s greatest democracy look like a banana republic. But the constitutional order had been preserved. And Mike Pence deserves the thanks of every genuine patriot for playing an indispensable role in doing so.

Meeting President Trump the day after his second impeachment, Vice President Pence told the president that they would have to continue to disagree about Pence’s actions on January 6, but that he would still pray for Trump. Whatever the efficacy of Mr. Pence’s prayers in the ensuing two years, his approach was that of a true statesman and a Christian. At Thanksgiving 2021, I would like to thank him for being both.

David Cooley is the co-director and office manager of the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization.
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.

Covington Latin School, Covington
Dec. 4, 1 p.m. & 3 p.m.

Holy Cross District High School, Covington
Jan. 25, 6:30 p.m.

St. Patrick High School, Maysville
Contact school for information and a tour.

The universal prayer intention for December, as recom-mended by Pope Francis, is for volunteer not-for-profit organizations that volunteer non-profit organiza-tions committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CNL Sundays, noon to 1 p.m. Viewers can tune in on the following channels: antenna 12.2; Spectrum 117 or 25; Cincinnati Bell 117 or 317; and DirectTV 25.

Parish Kitchen, Covington, is in need of new sleeping bags and new twin blankets for their guests, many of whom spend long winter nights in unheated spaces or outdoors. Your gift will not only warm body and soul but may even save lives. Donations can be dropped off at Parish Kitchen from 8 to 10:30 a.m., Monday thru Friday Drive is from Nov. 1–30. Contact Parish Kitchen at 581-7745.

Thomas More University Winter Wonderland. Dec. 1, 6:30–9 p.m. Thomas More University student clubs join forces to offer winter and holiday activities that are family friendly and focused on engaging younger children. There will be a petting zoo, food trucks, arts and crafts, and more. Reservations not required. For information call 344-3544.

First Friday Mass followed by a healing service. Dec. 2, St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs. The evening begins at 7 p.m. with music by the Sacred Heart Praise Band.

First Reconciliation
The students, faculty and staff at St. Pius X Parish wore purple shirts to support the second grade students who will be receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In the Catholic Church, the color purple signifies penance, preparation and sacrifice — the hallmarks of the sacrament.

Mass 7:30 p.m., followed by an opportunity for individual healing prayer sponsored by the Mustard Seed Catholic Charismatic Community of the Diocese of Covington. For information call 341-5932.

The Comboni Missionaries are once again hosting Breakfast in Bethlehem, Dec. 3, 8:30–11 a.m. Families are invited to the Comboni Mission Center, Cincinnati, for a pancake breakfast, activities and a chance to see the animated nativity. Call (513) 474-4997, or e-mail nolan@combonimissionaries.org.

The Cathedral Concert Series continues its 46th season with the Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols. Dec. 4, 11 a.m.–1 p.m., Dec. 4; Bishop John Iffert will be the presider.

Choral pieces, sung by the Bishop’s Choir, and Advent hymns echo the seven readings which foretell of the coming nativity. All Cathedral Concerts are open to the public with no admission charge. A freewill offering is gladly accepted. Visit cathedralconcertseries.org for more information on the current season.

Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria, 9th annual International Nativity Display. Dec. 4, 11, 17, 18, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. and Dec. 24, 9 a.m. noon. The display features over 160 nativity sets made by artists and craftsmen from 78 different countries. Free and open to the public.

“12 Dates of Christmas” presented by the Thomas More University Villa Players in conjunction with the American Legacy Theatre. Dec. 5–18, Thomas More Theatre, Crestview Hills. This heartwarming, one-woman play offers a hilarious and modern alternative to the old standards of the holiday season. Bring a gift to donate to Toys 4 Tots. A portion of the proceeds benefit the 8th Mirtech ’37 Scholarship fund at Thomas More. Show times vary; tickets available at americanlegacytheatre.org.

The High School Placement Test (HSPT) is an assessment used to determine high school placement and awarding of scholarships. The HSPT will be administered in the Diocese of Covington Dec. 10. Newport Central Catholic High School is offering a two-hour HSPT preparatory course, Dec. 4 and 10, 8:30–9:30 p.m. This course is available to all 8th grade students in the Diocese of Covington, regardless of where they plan to take the exam on Dec. 10. Cost $20, includes printed course materials for further test prep. Payment can be made the day of the session by cash or check. Registrations will be accepted the day of the event, pre-register at ncchs.com.

Advent Mission with Father Michael Hennigen, St. Agnes Church, Ft. Wright, Dec. 7, 14 and 21, 7–8 p.m. Father Hennigen will offer reflections on the theme, “The Musical of the First Two Chapters of the Gospel of Luke,” followed by Eucharistic exposition and adoration. Confessions will be offered during adoration. Benediction will close the mission each evening.

School Counselor Holiday Brunch. Dec. 9, 11 a.m.–1 p.m. Thomas More University, Steigerwald Hall – Saints Center. School counselors, principals, superintendents and community advocates, this fun event celebrates you and your work contributing to students’ college dreams. Join TMU for traditional brunch fare, games and Christmas-themed fun. RSVP at tmuuc@com/schoolcounselorbrunch.

Rorate Mass, Dec. 10, Divine Mercy Parish, Bellevue, followed by breakfast. Dec. 10, 7 a.m. Rorate Mass is a day-long offering of the Divine Office and the nativity scene. This will be a candlelight. Advent Mass at dawn in honor of Our Lady, celebrated at Mary’s altar. Rosary 7:10 a.m., candlelight Mass 7:30 a.m. Breakfast will be sponsored by the parish Knights of Columbus Council, Catholic Men’s Group, and Young Adults.

St. Augustine Parish, Augusta, winter bingo. Dec. 11, beginning at 1 p.m. There will also be pull tabs, split the pot, raffle, food and refreshments. Proceeds benefit the Bracken County St. Vincent de Paul Society and the St. Augustine Benevolent Emergency Fund.

Harp of Christmas Peace concert with Diane Schneider, Dec. 11, 3 p.m., St. Benedict Church, Covington. Everyone invited, freewill offering accepted.

St. Anthony Parish, Taylor Mill, will have a penance service, Dec. 13, 7 p.m.

50+ years ... serving Northern Ky. and greater Cincinnati

“Voted #1 in plumbing customer satisfaction” 859-441-4400 www.dupontplumbinginc.com 2606 Alexandria Pike Southgate KY 41071
‘...To my words be attentive, to my sayings incline your ear; Let them not slip from your sight, keep them within your heart; For they are life to those who find them, bringing health to one’s whole being.’

Proverbs 4:20–22
HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

When the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in 2020, St. Elizabeth Healthcare’s Ft. Thomas location became Northern Kentucky’s primary facility for patients of the infectious disease — the hospital only to be inhabited by patients of COVID-19. Father Paul Berschied was chaplain of the hospital at the time, but was deemed a “vulnerable, non-essential” worker as all hospital chaplains were.

“I kept appealing to try to remain for the sake of the patients, and Bishop Foys was supportive of that,” said Father Berschied. “It was okay with him, but I still had to leave.” At the time, Father Berschied took to helping other hospitals as a chaplain, but continued to appeal to return to the Ft. Thomas hospital to minister to the COVID patients there.

“I don’t really know how it finally came about,” he said, “as I got a call from the vice president of Pastoral Services at the time, and he said I’d been cleared to return to the hospital.”

After receiving the proper training, Father Berschied would, in fact, return to the hospital to continue his ministry to patients at St. Elizabeth, Ft. Thomas. At the time, there were no vaccines for COVID-19 and the highly infectious disease was still in its early days, and Father Berschied reported a “twinge” for a moment, wondering if he was doing the right thing. “I just told God that if he wanted me to do the work, and it was important, he needed to keep me alive,” said Father Berschied.

Having a chaplain present at the hospital was also very important to the employees, Father Berschied said, having supported the rest of the hospital staff during those difficult times, where shifts would sometimes last 12 to 18 hours. “When I finished with the spiritual work that I was supposed to do, I did simple things for the nurses,” he said.

One example he cited would be rolling and preparing the single-use gowns, which had been sterilized for the staff to use and had to be changed every time an individual entered and left a room. Straightening and rolling the gowns allowed the nurses and doctors to put them on “quickly,” he said.

In addition to the gowns, equipment like face shields, goggles and gloves all had to be worn and switched out when moving between rooms. Even personal items, such as the little book Father Berschied used for Anointing of the Sick, had to be sterilized after every room. The chemicals were “very effective,” he said, and the book had begun to deteriorate due to the chemicals on the cleansing wipes. As a result, Father Berschied “would spend time very much in the beginning to memorize all the prayers that were absolutely necessary,” along with a few others.

“Certainly, my perspective from my vantage point was that we’d (the hospital staff) learn very quickly,” said Father Berschied. “We learned best practices and what was working and what wouldn’t work… and we made really good progress in dealing with patients and COVID.”

A lot of the nurses had to leave because of their own physical health, which meant other nurses had to come and volunteer. “It’s all about that, really, how the community came together,” he said. “And the importance of the Catholic culture of spirituality that exists in the hospital system, which is a very good reason to go back to St. Elizabeth of Hungary, our (Saint Elizabeth’s) patroness,” and patron saint of hospitals and nurses, known for her charity, especially towards the sick. “Everybody’s welcome,” said Father Berschied.

“COVID didn’t matter if you were young, old, rich or poor. Everybody came together and had their own stories,” Father Berschied would conclude. “It’s all about Catholic spirituality and culture that, in the system, expressed itself to this pandemic. The priest is only one of many, many people — not even a central person. But, the priest becomes the visible presence of the Catholic Church in the midst of difficulty.”
Catholic hospital’s therapy dogs program provides many happy tales

Katie Peterson
Catholic News Service

It’s there where Judy, along with her handler Tammy Algood, came to visit Hopper last September while being treated for a blood clot after suffering a hemorrhagic stroke last August.

“The first time they came and saw me, you can’t describe the love and care that you feel from a dog and the people that bring them,” Hopper told the Tennessee Register, newspaper of the Diocese of Nashville.

When things were especially tough, “it was just wanting to feel her love and make me smile and know that there is something worth it to keep going for,” Hopper said. “She would come and give me her loving, and she’d come and visit, and I’d be ready to keep going for a couple more days.”

Hopper has gone back to work at the grocery store where the two first met, but she said she’ll never forget those visits she received when it was needed the most thanks to the Ascension Saint Thomas pet therapy program.

Judy and Algood are just one of several pet therapy teams in the program who are bringing that same joy to patients at the Ascension Saint Thomas west and midtown Campuses in Nashville, and the Rutherford campus in Murfreesboro.

The program kicked off in 2011, said Jan Brown, volunteer services coordinator at Ascension Saint Thomas Midtown.

“Interacting with a friendly pet can help many physical and mental issues,” Brown said. “It can help reduce blood pressure and improve overall cardiovascular health. It can also release endorphins that produce a calming effect,” she added. “This can help alleviate pain, reduce stress and improve your overall psychological state.”

Currently, six therapy dogs visit the campuses. Wheaten terrier Cher, Australian shepherd Dobson, and goldendoodle Nic visit both the midtown and west campuses. The midtown campus has Pixie, a mini Doberman pinscher. Judy and Magnolia “Maggie” Grace, a standard poodle, are part of the Rutherford program.

“It’s been wonderful for our patients,” said Bryan Lowe, volunteer services manager at Rutherford. “They love all (Continued on page 14)

Amanda Benson, a patient at Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford in Murfreesboro, Tenn., says hello to therapy dog Magnolia “Maggie” Grace March 16, 2022. “Maggie” is a 4-year-old standard poodle.
Therapists: Art can help people share feelings they can’t put into words

George P. Matyas Jr.
Catholic News Service

BALTIMORE — Penetrating blue eyes framed by thick brows are trained directly on the viewer in a recent painting by a patient admitted to the psychiatric department at the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center in Towson. The powerful image, crafted with oil pastels on black paper, shows fragments of a person’s cracked skull flying in the air. The artist, who told a therapist she doesn’t like to draw hair, instead painted an exposed pink brain.

The painting, which the patient named “Scatterbrain,” seems to convey a sense of vulnerability and maybe even speaks to the artist’s concerns for her own brain as she addresses mental illness while hospitalized.

Rita Singer, a licensed clinical professional art therapist in the department of psychiatry at the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center, said paintings and other forms of art are produced through art therapy sessions at the hospital to help treat patients dealing with a wide range of issues. That includes depression, suicidal thoughts, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and more.

Art has symbolic value, Singer said, and can help get at feelings and concerns that can’t always be expressed in words. Patients are sometimes asked to draw themselves in a symbolic way — as an amusement park ride, a landscape or a personal flag — during therapy sessions.

“The patient can then speak about the image — themselves — in a manner that feels safer, is more apparent to them as an observer and (in ways that) may not have occurred to them if using words alone,” Singer told the Catholic Review, news outlet of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Art therapy has greatly expanded over the past few decades and is used in a wide variety of settings, including hospitals, clinical offices, schools and special education programs.

In Maryland, a clinical art therapy license or a graduate art therapy license is required to practice art therapy when its program launched in 2018. Graduates become clinicians licensed by Maryland under the Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists.

Cathy Goucher, chairwoman of the art therapy department at Notre Dame and a former longtime educator at St. Elizabeth School in Baltimore, said 20 art therapists have graduated from Notre Dame’s program so far.

Singer supervises Notre Dame graduate students assigned to the University of Maryland St.

CNS photo/courtesy St. Joseph Medical Center
(above) Rita Singer is a licensed clinical professional art therapist in the department of psychiatry at the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center in Towson, Md. Seen in this Nov. 4, 2022, photo.

CNS photo/courtesy St. Joseph Medical Center
(left) A patient in the department of psychiatry at the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center in Towson, Md., recently painted this image during art therapy as seen in this Oct. 4, 2022, photo.
As referee, retired educator, 89, keeps in shape, helps players learn about sports and life

Cori Fugere Urban
Catholic News Service

BENNINGTON, Vt. — Robert Houle jumps at the chance to be a referee because it combines sports and working with youth.

A retired educator, Houle, now 89, was one of two referees on the court for a recent Bennington matchup between the School of Sacred Heart St. Francis and Twin Valley; there was a girls’ game followed by a boys’ game for the schools in Bennington and Wilmington, Vermont.

Houle calls the shots as he sees them, blowing his whistle when necessary. “He does a great job,” said Dan Sleeman, coach of the girls’ team from the Bennington Catholic school. “He’s absolutely amazing. He’ll not only make the call, he’ll explain it to the kid.”

Houle sported a referee’s black and white striped shirt, black pants and black sneakers as he made his way up and down the court, keeping his attention on the game, blowing his whistle when necessary.

On the court recently at the parish center of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales Parish — the parish to which he belongs — Houle sported a referee’s black and white striped shirt, black pants and black sneakers as he made his way up and down the court, keeping his attention on the game, blowing his whistle when necessary.

He played a little football and basketball at Northampton High School, but at 5 feet, 5 inches tall with a light build, he was more suited for gymnastics, which he participated in for four years.

He served in Germany during the Korean War, playing on the company basketball and touch football teams and on the division ski team.

After the war, he earned a bachelor’s degree in business from American International College in Springfield, Massachusetts, married and moved to Vermont in 1959 to accept a teaching position at the former Bennington High School.

He and wife Barbara had three children, and he became the vocational director for Mount Anthony Career Development Center, retiring in 1999 after 40 years as an educator.

In the early years of retirement, he refereed some 200 games a year, including in Florida during monthlong March visits.

A retired National Guard lieutenant colonel, Houle took up flying in 1964, earning a private pilot license along with his wife. They sold the last plane they owned — a well-equipped Piper 180 — two years ago.

He has been refereeing various levels of different sports since 1969. Now he focuses on football, soccer, basketball and lacrosse for middle school, junior varsity and youth league games. He’s a bit slower than he used to be, having had surgery on both hips and knee problems.

But that doesn’t stop him.

Refereeing keeps him in “good physical condition,” he said, adding that he enjoys working out at his home gym, and he used to be a ski patrol at the nearby Prospect Mountain.

On the court recently at the parish center of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales Parish — the parish to which he belongs — Houle sported a referee’s black and white striped shirt, black pants and black sneakers as he made his way up and down the court, keeping his attention on the game, blowing his whistle when necessary.

He does a great job,” said Dan Sleeman, coach of the girls’ team from the Bennington Catholic school. “He’s absolutely amazing. He’ll not only make the call, he’ll explain it to the kid.”

Houle sees some athletes with God-given talent while other players struggle with the game.

“It’s my job to help them play to the best of their ability,” he said. “I’m still a teacher out there.”
VATICAN CITY — Every year, for more than three decades, the Vatican tribunal dealing with matters of conscience has offered a course to help priests in their “ministry of mercy” as confessors.

The huge number of participants, from 500 to 800 ordained and soon-to-be ordained men, who attend the course sponsored by the Apostolic Penitentiary each year attests to the importance and need for adequate formation concerning the sacrament of reconciliation, particularly when confession, as well as “the sense of sin,” is in crisis, Pope Francis told participants in 2019.

Among the issues that need to be addressed, is a better understanding among laypeople of the importance and joy of confession, according to the Apostolic Penitentiary, which decided to respond by offering a special seminar specifically for laypeople. The seminar was held in Rome and online Oct. 13-14.

Of the more than half-dozen talks covering the usual biblical, theological and spiritual aspects of the sacrament, the most practical presentation was given by Msgr. Krzysztof Nykiel, regent of the Apostolic Penitentiary.

He gave a Top 10 rundown of the most common “good” reasons people give for not going to confession, followed by a faith-based response to each objection.

Highlights from the monsignor’s list of “I don’t go to confession because...” are summarized here:

1. “... I speak directly to God.” Speaking with God is “excellent,” he said, and it should be done throughout the day with prayer to know God’s will. While “it is not impossible to obtain forgiveness” from God this way, “we would never be sure.”

2. “... I don’t like talking about my personal life” with another person. A priest is not just any other person but is one upon whom God has conferred his power to forgive on earth, Msgr. Nykiel said.

Verbalizing and owning up to one’s sins can be difficult or frightening, he said, but “we feel truly loved when everything about us is loved, not just the good or nice things we display” or when the lies and partial truths are believed. When people present their true selves completely to God, they let themselves be loved fully and completely by God.

3. “... The priest may be a worse sinner than me.” It is true that priests are not God, and it is “certainly easier and more uplifting to confess to a holy priest, like St. John Vianney and St. Padre Pio,” he said.

But “the moral condition of the priest at the moment of absolution is wholly irrelevant to the validity of absolution,” because the one absolving the sin is God through the priest, he said. A parallel argument, he added, would be to refuse medical care from a doctor whose own health status is unknown.

4. “... I don’t know what to say.” This excuse is “the most prevalent,” but also the easiest to overcome, Msgr. Nykiel said. Just tell the priest, “I want to confess, but I don’t know what to say Can you help me?”

Learning how to do “a good examination of conscience is helpful,” he said, but what really counts is a sincere

(Continued on page 13)
desire “to think about the truth of one’s life before God.”
5. “... I’ll be embarrassed.” Feeling ashamed for one’s sins “is already the first healthy sign” of a conscience that has not grown numb or blind to evil, he said. It also should be seen as part of contrition and a form of penance that can strengthen the desire for conversion.
6. “... I always say the same things.” While it may be good there are no new sins to add to the list, confession is exactly what is needed, he said, to humbly plead with God for his mercy to fight and win the daily battle against one’s vices.
7. “... I’m not committing serious sins.” One may not be guilty of committing theft or murder, but there are still eight other commandments to keep, Msgr. Nykiel said. Believing only serious crimes count as sin can also be a kind of “self-justification” and DIY redemption.

The unworthiness one feels before God “is always directly proportional to one’s closeness to him,” which is why the greatest saints always felt like the greatest sinners. “If we don’t feel like we are sinners, then we still are not saints.”
8. “... I didn’t like it the last time I went.” Confessors might be distracted, unprepared, too “rigorous because he wanted to send me straight to hell” or too lax because “he wanted to almost canonize me despite my serious sins,” the monsignor said.

People can always seek out a different confessor, he said. But people also may be expecting more than the sacrament is meant for: to wipe away sin and experience God’s healing through forgiveness, he said. It is not meant to fix one’s problems or make feelings of guilt disappear.

Msgr. Nykiel concluded that every objection comes from the same root: “a resistance to love.”

“The sacrament of reconciliation is too important and too essential to give up for any reason,” he said. “Divine mercy is always waiting for us. Let us not run away like capricious children, making up excuses not even we believe.”

(Continued from page 12)
Therapy dogs program

Before a pet therapy team can join one of the programs, certification is required. Certification includes classes just for the handlers as well as training for the dogs to make sure they know basic commands and how to react to different potential scenarios including passing by another therapy dog, being swarmed by several people wanting to pet them and more.

Handlers also go through the volunteer onboarding process with Ascension Saint Thomas.

Ascension Saint Thomas Volunteer Services obtains veterinarian-approved health certificates, including the most recent vaccination documents, prior to the first visit, and all dogs are properly cleaned and groomed within 24 hours before each visit, Brown said.

Once all the certifications are done, all that's left is to have the visits, and I'm hoping to do something weekly as we grow the program and get more dogs. Before a pet therapy team can join one of the programs, certification is required. Certification includes classes just for the handlers as well as training for the dogs to make sure they know basic commands and how to react to different potential scenarios including passing by another therapy dog, being swarmed by several people wanting to pet them and more.

The Senior Resource Center is open Monday through Friday and is located at 2705 Winston Avenue, Latonia, Ky. The Center's services are free of charge. If you or your loved one has questions about these services, call (859) 261-0746.

It’s always a change of scenery to have the dogs come in, added Thomas Evans Baird, who was in the rehabilitation unit following back surgery. “I love dogs, so Cher can stay here with me permanently if she wanted to.”

The faces of the staff lit up with smiles, too, and those smiles are what Walters, who was overcome with emotion, said she loves to see. “This is our ministry, and it means everything,” Algood added. “And Judy loves it, too. When she puts this coat on, she knows where we’re going.”

Healing comes in many different forms,” she said, knowing the impact it has for so many, Algood said the therapy program had to be suspended when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Only within the past several months have the teams been able to return. But they came back first for staff, who needed a morale boost, Brown explained.

One nurse in the intensive care unit at the midtown campus became emotional about a visit with a volunteer and her dog, explained Brittany Lee, the midtown ICU’s nurse manager.

“She burst into tears and spoke about how grateful she was just to be petting the dog and how therapeutic it was,” Lee said.

She was one of our nurses who worked through the full COVID pandemic, and all the surges,” Lee added. “She spoke about how heavy the feelings were surrounding the loss of patients and how hard it has been to be in the hospital lately, and how just petting the dog made things feel lighter.”

Knowing the impact it has for so many, Algood said the program fits perfectly with the mission of Ascension Saint Thomas.

“Healing comes in many different forms,” she said, “and it just happens to come sometimes through a dog.”

Concluded

November 25, 2022

St. Charles Community expanded beyond its Farrell Drive campus with the establishment of a Senior Resource Center in Latonia in October of 2021.
SHOPPER’S GUIDE

2nd Chance
ST. CECILIA’S
Big Cash
For NEW YEAR’S Raffle
Grand Prize!
$50,000

Check out on
Scan QR code to purchase online.

Regardless of the number of chances sold, the drawing will be held on January 5, 2023 at approximately 12:00 pm in the checkout of St. Cecelia’s 513 Madison Pkwy, Independence, KY.

License: Call 859-356-4111 or visit www.stfest.com

A maximum of 1000 tickets will be sold!

This is a second chance raffle for the $500,000.00 Festival Big Raffle Grand Prize.

The winner of the Labor Day Festival Grand Raffle chose the Dodge. Subsequently, we’re offering a $50,000.00 cash New Year’s Day raffle.

Complete an entry and mail with payment to:
St. Cecilia Big Cash raffle
513 Madison Pkwy
Independence, KY 41051.

NAME:
PHONE:
ADDRESS:
EMAIL:

#TICKETS _______ AMT. ENCLOSED _______

3 Convenient ways to get ticket:
* Walks and at
* Shopper’s Guide.

SHOPPER’S GUIDE

Hancock Drain Service Inc.
81 in the #2 Business
Residential and Commercial
- All Types of Drains
- Problem Lines
- Preventive Maintenance
- Sump Pump Lines
- Jetting, Filming and Locating

(859) 356-6811
info@hancockdrainservice.com

PLUMBING • HEATING • AIR CONDITIONING
92 Years Of Family Owned Service!

Schneller Knouchelmann
Contracting Air

Call (899) 341-1200 www.schnellerair.com

Service 60-70% off
Commercial
St. Barbara Church
Fully Insured

America’s Choice in Homecare.

Visiting Angels
Affordable, Quality Services

Call Chuck at the Messenger
to place your ad in the
SHOPPER’S GUIDE.
(859) 392-1500

BLAU MECHANICAL, INC.
Heating & Piping
Hot Water Steam Vapor
1536 Russell St., Covington KY
581-0400

KELLY BROS.
LUMBER • DESIGN CO., EST. 1847
Complete Line of Lumber and Building Materials
Latonia Ave. at 35th St. • Covington KY • 581-0400

24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE

CALL TOLL FREE
844-7161
www.arcv theoretic.com

24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE
Since 1993

ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS • HEATING SYSTEMS • AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS
- New installations • Repair all makes and models
- Clean & Service • Humidifiers
- Oil or Propane • Radiant or Gas Heat
- Electronic Air Cleaner • Hot Water Heat Systems

Allstate
Insurance Company

Josh Carter, CIC
Agency Owner
859-341-2462
joshcarter@allstate.com
1838 Florence Pkwy
Burlington, KY

Allstate Financial

RAWE Financial

Randy, Linda & Eric Howe
859-415-0991
Guiding You Through Retirement
146 Bartlett Pike, Ste. 100
Covington Springs, KY 41027
www.rafewir Kentucky group.com
raiewe@southernlifeinsurance.com

Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member NAPD/SIPC. Commonwealth Financial Network is not responsible for the content of this newsletter. © 2023 Allstate Insurance Company. All rights reserved.
CAREGIVER FOR HIRE - Daytime Only
Caregiver for your loved ones needs Graduate of Mount St. Joseph College with 17 years experience specializing in elder care. If you need a break from caregiving please contact Angie Garrison. $25 per hour / min. 25 hrs per week. References and police check available.
(859) 801-4344 / AGararrison1351@gmail.com

STAFF WRITER/MEDIA CONTENT DEVELOPER
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 platforms. 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

Moore's Painting
In business since 1978. Members of St. Augustine Parish.
Moore's Painting — Union, Ky. — (859) 512-7398

PART-TIME ACCOUNTANT
Under the direction of the President, this position is responsible for performing a variety of accounting duties. The job duties will require administering financial functions such as Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, and General Ledger postings. Experience with automated financial management systems preferred. Serve as backup for client payroll completion. Benefits: Paid Time Off and Paid Holidays. Non-Profit experience a plus. To apply or for more information contact Director of HR at michelle.peek@bawac.org
BAWAC is an Equal Opportunity Employer

ST. PHILIP, MELBOURNE
FULL-TIME CAFETERIA MANAGER
St. Philip School is looking for a full-time Cafeteria Manager, Monday through Friday 6 hours daily. This position requires a general knowledge of preparation, cooking and serving food for students. Includes ordering, receiving, managing inventory, cleaning, and maintaining school kitchen. Must comply with health and safety standards. Prepare production records and necessary records and files.
Contact Diocesan School Food Service Director, Laura Hatfield at lhhatfield@covdio.org or call 859-392-1551.

PART-TIME DRIVERS
Morning and/or afternoon hours available. Northern KY routes. Transport passengers to/from Day Activity Programs. CDL not required. Apply in person or mail resume to: BAWAC, Inc., Attn: Transportation Mgr., 7575 Kentucky Dr., Florence, KY 41042 Fax: 859.371.2726. Phone: 859.371.4110 Email: hr@bawac.org E.O.E.
know and do not know, the benefits bestowed upon us, both manifest and hidden. This gratitude-thanking pre-
cedes all petitions for our needs. This is because we realize that, having given us his Son and the Holy Spirit, he has given us all for our salvation, by praying to God, the “ineff-
ble, incorruptible, invisible, incomprehensible,” we con-
fess that he is infinitely greater than all that we know or
can say about him or his deeds. We thank God for creation; “he brought us from nothingness into being,” and for sal-
vation: “After we felt [he] raised us up again [and] did not

cease doing everything until [he] led us to heaven and
granted us [his] future kingdom.”

St. John Vianney had a special devotion to the
Eucharist. In one of his meditations, he wrote of the spirit of
thanksgiving after receiving Communion: “When we
leave the altar rails we are as happy as the Magi would
have been if they had been able to carry off the Infant
Jesus.”

Another saint, St. Peter Julian Eymard, is known as
the Saint of the Eucharist. In fact, he founded a religious
order the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, whose
mission is to share the riches of God’s love manifested in
the Eucharist. St. Peter Julian gets to the heart of the mat-
ter when he writes that the highest form of thanksgiving
the devout Christian can make in response to the
Eucharist is a complete gift of himself:

“Belong entirely to God through love, entirely to your
neighbor through a gracious charity, entirely to the divine
Eucharist by the offering and sacrifice of your whole self;”
he wrote. “Bear with yourself in the patience of our Lord.”

And that can be done every day, not only on
Thanksgiving.

John Burger is a writer for Aletheia’s English
edition. This article is published on the Aletheia website,
www.aletheia.org.

Religious women

(Continued from page 2)

the process if she could pursue that ministry and was sent
to study at Fordham University in New York. There she
earned a degree in religious education and worked as
director of religious education in New York City.

“When working in New York City, I had become an inner-city
person,” Sister Dorothy said.

When she returned to Northern Kentucky she worked as
a DHR at two suburban parishes in Cincinnati, and
while she enjoyed working with people, she missed the
inner city. She really felt called to “helping people help peo-
ple”—advocating for the poor and ministering to people
who didn’t fit the “typical family” model. She set her sights
on Mother of God Parish, Covington—a parish known for
its social service outreach to the local poor and for its wel-
coming and inclusive nature—as a place where she would
like to be a part of, so she knocked on the rectory door. For
coming and inclusive nature — as a place where she would
be able, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible,” we con-

fess that he is infinitely greater than all that we know or
say about him or his deeds. We thank God for creation; “he brought us from nothingness into being,” and for sal-
vation: “After we felt [he] raised us up again [and] did not

reach out — evangelization, to be there for the for the poor,
to be there for each other, to welcome everyone.”

During that time Sister Dorothy helped to establish
what is now the Northern Kentucky Emergency Shelter.
She also began working with Exodus, a jail ministry pro-
gram, visiting inmates at the Kenton County Jail.

Through Exodus she met a man named Jeff. While he
was in jail she wrote him a couple times. Ten years later, she
ran into Jeff again at Kenton County jail.

“He said to me, ‘You saved my life. I thought I’d dreamed
you up. You were the only person who seemed to care,’” she
said. Unfortunately, Jeff was about to be transferred to
prison, this time for a felony he deliberately committed so
that he could go back to prison. He just couldn’t find a way
to survive outside of prison. He could not reestablish sup-
portive relationships with family and friends. Despite hav-
ing skills, he had difficulty finding a job. When he did find
a job, it was second shift. By the time he arrived at the
emergency shelter after work, it would be full and he
would have to spend his nights on the street. He just could-
’t find a way to survive. In prison, he knew how to survive.

Like the Scripture passages that called her to action,
Jeff’s story prompted Sister Dorothy to become a passion-
ate advocate for prisoners trying to re-enter society.

“When you can’t describe a problem if you tell the story,
people get it. I could tell Jeff’s story and people would get
it.” Sister Dorothy said.

Governor Steve Beshear invited her to be a part of the
Kentucky Re-entry Task Force. At about the same time, she
was hired to help establish a jail and prison ministry at
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Covington. She was also
appointed to the Social Concerns Committee and Pro-Life
Committee for the Catholic Conference of Kentucky.

“That may not be the most important thing I ever did,
but it certainly is a unique part of my ministry to have
worked on Kentucky’s reentry efforts, the task force and
the legislation that came from that,” she said.

The COVID pandemic brought an untimely end to
many outside ministries that Sister Dorothy may have
liked to have done. “I would have had to, you know, step
away eventually; it was just kind of premature,” she said.

Today she is busy with jobs at the monastery — caring
for the courts, cleaning and decorating the dining room
and taking care of the courtyard garden. She is also a spir-
itual director and the associate director for the Benedictine Sisters Oblate program.

“I just believe that there’s a general love for sisters. I
think people would want all of the sisters to be taken care
of well in their old age,” said Sister Dorothy. “And they
probably assume that we’ve got all the resources that we
need to do that. The truth is that different communities
each have different plans for the future.”

Call Chuck at the Messenger
for information
on placing your ad
in the Classified Advertisements.
(859) 392-1500

And Day/Health Care &
Medical Transportation
14 Lajud Dr., Berea, Ky.

We are HIRING!

As a medical model adult in our care, we also provide daily
respite care and for those who have barriers for community
level needs.

We have a part time position from 5 pm to 9 pm Monday
and Saturday. Call Chuck at the Messenger for more
information.

The Bill & Betty
Scheben
Care Center

Call Chuck at the Messenger
for information
on placing your ad
in the Classified Advertisements.
(859) 392-1500

Because of Chronic
Congestion,
infertility, or
Maintaining
Adequate
Blood Flow
We Can Help!

The Bill & Betty
Scheben
Care Center

Call Chuck at the Messenger
for information
on placing your ad
in the Classified Advertisements.
(859) 392-1500
Seventeen Chant begins” (138). This is a perfect oppor-
tunity for the choir to sing one of these beautiful
antiphon texts. Once the antiphon concludes a familiar
communion song could be sung by all. It may not be pos-
sible to learn a new antiphon every single week, so per-
haps the person in charge of music might pick one
antiphon, rich in Eucharistic imagery, and use it for the
duration of a liturgical season or for a month or so.
The typical model of a Church choir may struggle due
to time constraints of volunteers, however there are
ideas to streamline rehearsals, give priority to certain
parts of the Mass. Pastors and music directors must be
tireless in their work of promoting a beautiful and
vibrant liturgy in their parishes and the ministry of the
choir is one of the most effective tools in making a litur-
gy beautiful. Consider joining your parish’s choir. Talk to
your music director to find ways to contribute if you feel
called to the ministry but have issues with the time com-
mmitment. Let the gift and beauty of song lead you more
deeply into the celebration of the Eucharist.

Matt Spencer is the music director, Blessed Sacrament

Choirs must be promoted (Continued from page 5)

Pope tells patriarch Catholics are ready for a common Easter date

Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service
VATICAN CITY — Meeting the U.S.-born patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, Pope Francis expressed
his hope that Christians of the East and West could finally agree on a common date for celebrating Easter.

“Let us have the courage to put an end to this division that at times makes us laugh” with the ridiculous possibil-
ity that Christians could ask each other: “When does your Christ rise again?” the pope told Catholicos Awa III, the
patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East.
The Catholicos, who was born in Chicago, was elected head of the church in September 2021 and made his first
official visit to the Vatican Nov. 19, before Pope Francis left to visit his relatives in the northern Italian city of Asti.

“I wanted to share lunch with you,” the pope told him, “but I have to leave at 10:30. Please excuse me! I would not
want it to be said that this pope is a bit stingy and does not
invite us to lunch! I would love to share the table, but there
will be other opportunities.”

The Assyrian Church of the East, which is not in full
communion with any of the Orthodox or Oriental
Orthodox churches, began a theological dialogue with the
Vatican in the mid-1990s.

During their meeting, Catholicos Awa mentioned his
hope and the hope of many other Christians to find a way
to celebrate Easter on the same day.

Pope Francis thanked him and said, “I want to say — indeed, to repeat — what St. Paul VI said in his day: We are
ready to accept any proposal that is made together.”

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.

Pope Francis thanked him and said, “I want to say —
indeed, to repeat — what St. Paul VI said in his day: We are
ready to accept any proposal that is made together.”

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.

In 2025, the pope noted, Christians will celebrate the
1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, and the
Gregorian and Julian calendars will align that year so that
Christians of the East and West will celebrate Easter on the
same day.
Doing God’s will means working for peace, pope tells World Jewish Congress

VATICAN CITY — Christians and Jews are called to give witness to their faith “by working to make the word more fraternal, combatting forms of hostility and promoting greater justice,” Pope Francis told members of the World Jewish Congress. “Together we recognize that war, every war, is always and everywhere a defeat for all humanity,” the pope told the group Nov. 22. “Think of the conflict in Ukraine, a sacrilegious war that threatens Jews and Christians alike, depriving them of their loved ones, their homes, their property and their very lives!” Before meeting the pope, the executive committee of the congress held a special session with Vatican officials and diplomats accredited to the Holy See. The gathering focused on strengthening the bonds between the Vatican and the congress, which represents Jewish communities in more than 100 countries. Pope Francis spoke out against the Nov. 16 executions in Texas and Arizona as “a bad deal for the many courageous Americans of faith who continue to believe and uphold the truth about human beings in their own image and likeness.”

U.S. Catholic leaders speak out against three November executions

WASHINGTON — In the third week of November, three executions by lethal injection took place in the U.S. in just two days and a fourth execution was called off after lethal attempts happened close to the expiration of the prisoner’s death warrant. Catholic leaders spoke out against the Nov. 16 executions in Texas and Arizona as well as the next day’s execution in Oklahoma and the halted one in Alabama. In a 24-hour period, all four death penalty cases had last-minute appeals to the Supreme Court that were denied. Without mincing words, Sister Helen Prejean, a Sister of St. Joseph and long-time death penalty opponent, restated, “The U.S. Supreme Court is now functionally a rubber stamp for executions. Stays and injunctions issued by lower courts are routinely lifted without full briefing and without explanation from the justices, no matter how egregious the underlying legal issues.” The court’s fourth rejected plea, in an unsigned order Nov. 17, failed to block the execution of Oklahoma inmate Richard Fairchild, who had asked the justices to put his execution on hold to give him time to appeal a state court’s ruling on his mental competency. Shortly after the court’s morning ruling, Fairchild, who turned 63 that day, was put to death for the 1993 murder of his girlfriend’s 3-year-old son, Adam Broomhall. Fairchild’s attorneys said their client, who had been abused as a child, was psychotic but also remorseful for his actions. The state argued that Fairchild’s request was a delay tactic:

Group meets at State Department to seek release of Eritrean bishop

WASHINGTON — The familiar cadence of prayers of threeafaiths marked a Nov. 16 demonstration outside the State Department in support of Eritrean Bishop Främmendam Hagis Tadhim. Bishop Tadhim, ordained the first bishop of the Eparchy of Segheneity in 2012, was arrested by Eritrean security forces Oct. 15 at Asmara International Airport. Detained around the same time were a priest, Father Mikhail Stefano, and a priest identified as Capuchin Abbot Abraham. Fides, the news agency of the Pontifical Mission Societies, reported that the three are being held in the Adi Abeto prison. “We’re their children, we’re their voices,” Frewoini Zerai, one of the demonstration organizers, told Catholic News Service. “So we have to speak up for them. As Catholics, we believe that anything is possible.” Eritrea, a nation in the Horn of Africa, gained its independence from neighboring Ethiopia in 1991. Isaias Afwerki has been president since 1991. The country has no functional constitution or national elections. In 2019, the government closed all Catholic hospitals and schools there. Bishop Tadhim, 52, has been critical of the country’s contributions to the ongoing war in the Tigrai region of northern Ethiopia. Demonstrators in Washington also presented a letter to be given to U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken asking for his intervention to free the three clergy.

Cardinal Dolan says Senate’s marriage bill threatens religious liberty

WASHINGTON — A bill on same-sex marriage advancing in the Senate is “a bad deal for the many courageous Americans of faith and no faith who continue to believe and uphold the truth about marriage in the public square today” said New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan. “It is deeply concerning that the U.S. Senate has voted to proceed toward potential passage of the Respect for Marriage Act, which would essentially codify the Supreme Court’s ruling in Obergefell (2015) that found a constitutional right to same-sex civil marriages,” the cardinal said Nov. 17. The Respect for Marriage Act “does not strike a balance that appropriately respects our nation’s commitment to the fundamental right of religious libert-y,” said the cardinal, who is chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee for Religious Liberty. The Senate advanced the measure with a 43-57 vote Nov. 16. A final vote will take place after the Thanksgiving holiday. Every Democrat supported it and they were joined by 28 Republicans after they worked out an amendment they said would protect religious freedom. These senators “have claimed that their amended bill ‘respects and protects Americans’ religious liberties,’ but the provisions of the act that relate to religious liberty are insufficient,” Cardinal Dolan said. Obergefell “created countless religious liberty conflicts, but the act offers only limited protections,” he said.

Defend the country, defend your hearts, cardinal says at Mass for Ukraine

ROME — Ukraine, like any nation under attack, has a legitimate right to self-defense and to seek justice, but great care also must be taken to defend the hearts of Ukrainians from hatred and a desire for vengeance, said the Vatican secretary of state. When Jesus told his disciples to turn the other cheek, he was not ruling out self-defense, because “the Lord does not require unjust or impossible things,” Cardinal Pietro Parolin said in a homily Nov 17 during a Mass for peace in Ukraine. The liturgy at Rome’s Basilica of St. Mary Major marked the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Ukraine, but it could not ignore how “nearly nine months of extensive warfare have robbed parts of the country to ruins, emptied of people, filled with debris and shrouded in darkness,” the cardinal said. Unfortunately he said, “the reality of destruction and suffering that images and statistics put before our eyes every day feeds the temptation to give in to disappointment and distrust.” The first reading at the Mass was the prophet Isaiah’s promise that the desert would become a garden and justice would be restored. The prophet is not “naive or a hopeless optimist,” the car-dinal said. Instead, he saw how God has worked in history and trusts that God will bring justice and peace.

National/World
Erlanger, KY – St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky is hosting its second of two coat distributions Saturday, Dec. 3 at:

- Cristo Rey Catholic Church, Florence, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
- John G. Carlisle Elementary School, Covington, 9 a.m.–noon.

All coats distributed have been donated by generous donors in the community. St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky expects to distribute 2,000 coats to neighbors in need this year. Rising prices for everyday needs from food to rent leave many without extra room in their budget for a seasonal necessity such as a warm winter coat.

Neighbors who need a coat should bring an I.D. (driver’s license, social security card, medical card or birth certificate). Any household member not present that needs a coat will need to send proof of I.D. with another member of their household attending a distribution.

Volunteers are also welcome and needed to help make the coat distributions a success. To volunteer in Northern Kentucky, contact Mark Bradley at (859) 436-2649 or mark.bradley@svdpnky.org.

St. Vincent de Paul will continue to collect coats through the end of the year. New and gently used coats can be dropped off at any thrift store location and anywhere you might see a blue barrel throughout Northern Kentucky. There is a specific need for XL and XXL adult sizes.

A list of drop-off sites can be found on the St. Vincent de Paul NKY website: www.svdpnky.org.