From its scenic location high atop the hill, the Newport Central Catholic High School community is accustomed to looking down at the incredible view of the Ohio River, Cincinnati skyline and surrounding area. Now, school leaders are shifting their view and are inviting alumni, family and friends to do the same with the official launch of its “Looking Up” capital campaign.

In a letter to Kenny Collopy, principal, Bishop John Iffert recently approved a $13 million capital campaign that will bring updates and improvements to the school’s campus and programs — including a long-prayed for multi-purpose athletic complex.

“Recently I met with leaders from Newport Central Catholic High School to learn the early fundraising results from their silent campaign,” said Bishop Iffert. “During my review of the silent campaign results, I see strong support for the campaign needs that were presented. Therefore, I am happy to approve NCC’s request to begin a $13 million capital campaign. This campaign can begin immediately. Please join me in unity of prayer and effort to strengthen our beloved Newport Central Catholic High School and the mission of Catholic education in the Diocese of Covington.”

Mr. Collopy said that during the silent phase of the “Looking Up” campaign

―Laura Keener, Editor

Newport Central Catholic High School launches ‘Looking Up’ capital campaign

Moving? Wrong address?
Call the circulation desk, (859) 392-1570

Missed an edition? Current and back issues of the Messenger are available online at covdio.org/messenger.

(below) A statue of Mary overlooks the city skyline at the Mary Grotto on Newport Central Catholic’s campus. (below) A rendering demonstrating the proposed STEM wing to be built.

―Roman Missal second Friday of Advent, Entrance Antiphon

“Behold, the Lord will come descending with splendor to visit his people with peace, and he will bestow on them eternal life.”

―Roman Missal second Friday of Advent, Entrance Antiphon
December 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

On the weekend of December 10 and 11, 2022, the Diocese of Covington will be conducting the Retirement Fund for Religious Collection, an annual appeal that benefits nearly 25,000 elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests. Our senior religious are a treasure — both for their service to our Church and for the ways their prayer and witness enrich our faith. “Planted in the house of the Lord, they shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bear fruit even in old age.” (Ps 92:14-15)

As I reflect on the ministry of women and men religious — past and present — I am grateful for the ways they have shaped my own faith. I also value the tremendous service they have offered our diocese. Perhaps you, too, recall an older religious who made a positive difference in your life.

Most senior religious worked many years for little pay, leaving their religious communities with a shortage of retirement savings. Rising health-care costs and decreased income compound the challenge to meet day-to-day needs for medications, nursing assistance and other necessities. Donations to the Retirement Fund for Religious provide financial support that helps religious communities care for aging members while ensuring younger ones can continue the good works of their elders.

I understand you are asked to support many worthy causes. I invite you to give what you can. Most importantly, please pray for God’s continued blessing on all our women and men religious. Rest assured that they are praying for you.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

+ John C. Iffert
Bishop of Covington

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An Advent meditation
Deacon Larry Kleisinger
Messenger contributor

Wherever St. Joseph traveled with his pregnant wife, his home became an Adoration chapel and Mary was the tabernacle. Nazareth, Bethlehem and Egypt are all chapels where St. Joseph stopped and contemplated the divine presence of Jesus Christ in the “tabernacled” womb of the blessed Mother.

“When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.” Luke 1:45

“Words cannot express the perfection of his adoration. If St. John leaped in the womb at the approach of Mary, what feelings must have coursed through Joseph during those six months when he had at his side and under his very eyes the hidden God? If the father of Origen used to kiss his child during the night and adore the Holy Spirit living within him, can we doubt that Joseph must often have adored Jesus hidden in the pure tabernacle of Mary? How fervent that adoration must have been: My Lord and my God, behold your servant. No one can describe the adoration that must have been: My Lord and my God, behold your servant. No one can describe the adoration that must have been: Mary pregnant with the Christ Child and St. Joseph is from St. James the Greater Church, Charles Town, West Virginia. The photo has been provided by Father Lawrence Lee, O.P. through Flickr.

Under the veil of the Sacred Species your faith must see our Lord. Ask St. Joseph for his lively, constant faith.” — St. Peter Julian Eymard, founder, Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament

“The tabernacle is to be situated in churches in a most worthy place with the greatest honor. The dignity, placing and security of the Eucharistic tabernacle should foster adoration before the Lord really present in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar.” Catechism of the Catholic Church 1381

A sculpture of Our Lady pregnant with the Christ Child and St. Joseph is from St. James the Greater Church, Charles Town, West Virginia. The photo has been provided by Father Lawrence Lee, O.P. through Flickr. The Curia office will be closed on the feast day, Assumption, Covington. The photo has been provided by Father Lawrence Lee, O.P. through Flickr. The Curia office will be closed on the feast day, Assumption, Covington.

St. Francis Xavier Parish welcomes 23rd pastor
St. Francis Xavier Parish, Falmouth, celebrates, Nov. 19, the installation of its 23rd pastor, Father Britton Hennessey. Msgr. Gerald Reinersman, pastor, St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring and dean, Campbell County Deanery, celebrated the installation Mass. During the rite of installation, the celebrant leads the new pastor to sacramental areas of the Church. Above, Father Hennessey incenses the ambo after Msgr. Reinersman instructs him, “Here Father Hennessey, you will proclaim Christ the way, the truth and the life, in this way feeding the faithful of Christ from the table of His word. Believe what you read here, teach what you believe and practice what you preach.”

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Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Dec. 8

(above) Flowers surround an image of Mary at the base of a tall Marian statue overlooking the Spanish Steps in Rome Dec. 8, 2021, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Pope Francis prayed at the statue before daybreak, continuing the papal tradition of visiting the Spanish Steps on the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The feast commemorates the Church’s teaching that “The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception … preserved immune from all stain of original sin.” (Pope Pius X, Ineffabilis Deus)

This year the feast of the Immaculate Conception, a holy day of obligation, is Thursday, Dec. 8. Bishop John Iffert will celebrate the Vigil Mass, Wednesday, Dec. 7, 5:30 p.m., at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington. The Curia office will be closed on the feast day, Dec. 8.

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Most Rev. John C. Iffert
Bishop of Covington
A message of gratitude from Lexington

In late July we experienced terrible flooding in parts of the Diocese of Lexington, Ky. But even before people had a chance to clear the mud and ruined belongings from their homes, gifts to Catholic Charities Lexington began to arrive from every part of the country. Catholic Charities USA and other dioceses were among the most generous donors — several began taking up second collections, while others sent support from their reserves. And there were hundreds of families and individuals who sent gifts on their own.

Now, with the arrival of snowflakes and cold temperatures, HVAC systems are being replaced and building supplies have been made available for repairs through our cooperation with Home Depot. Working with the St. Vincent de Paul Disaster Services Corporation’s “House in a Box” program, we are delivering basic household goods like beds, couches and kitchen tables to people who lost everything. With all of your help, we can provide financial assistance to those in need. The chronic poverty of Appalachia already affects a disproportionate part of the population, and these are the folks who are least able to resist a natural disaster.

The Catholic community, well beyond the borders of our diocese, has demonstrated solidarity and has helped our people on the scene to make a substantial impact in the lives of the people devastated by this flooding.

Thanksgiving with all the trimmings

Catholic Charities — Diocese of Covington was provided with over 100 Thanksgiving meals from parishioners at St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood; St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger; and many individual donors. Through their generosity Catholic Charities was able to make the Thanksgiving holiday a little less stressful for those struggling financially. Pick-ups took place at Catholic Charities in Latonia and, for the first time at the Mobile Food Pantry site at St. Edward Mission, Owenton. Father Joseph Rielage, parochial vicar, St. Pius X Parish, blessed the meals before they were sent over the highways and through the byways to the homes of families in need. Volunteers from St. Pius X Parish, Erlanger, helped distribute Thanksgiving dinners at St. Edward Mission, Owenton, as part of the Food for Friends mobile food pantry. Pictured are: (front row, seated) Mary Ann and Dale Turner; (from left, standing) Mary Jane Day, Barb Jones, Jan Bledsoe, Jerry Dressman and Cathy Holland.

In August, parishes in the Diocese of Covington took up a flood relief collection for the people of the Diocese of Lexington. In total, $331,420.96 was collected and sent to Bishop John Stowe to aid in recovery efforts.

It seems most appropriate at this time when our nation pauses to give thanks and as we enter the joyous anticipation of the Advent season, to offer a heartfelt thanks to all of you whose support has been lifelong. We in the Diocese of Lexington pray that God will bless you and your families with a grace-filled Advent and Christmas Season, and a Happy 2023.

Peace and all good,

Most Rev. John Stowe,
Bishop of Lexington

Most Rev. John Stowe, OFM Conv.

Plan to Attend —

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 4</td>
<td>Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 10 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 4</td>
<td>Advent Festival Lessons and Carols, Cathedral Basilica, 3 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 5</td>
<td>Permanent Deacons Christmas celebration, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington, 3–7 p.m.</td>
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<td>Dec. 5</td>
<td>St. Elizabeth Healthcare Christmas dinner, Metropolitan Club, Covington, 5:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Dec. 6</td>
<td>Advisory Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>Dec. 8</td>
<td>Diocesan Curia offices closed in observance of the Feast Immaculate Conception</td>
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<td>Dec. 9</td>
<td>Religious Superiors meeting, 10:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>Dec. 9</td>
<td>Religious Superiors Christmas luncheon, Metropolitan Club, 12 p.m.</td>
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<td>Dec. 10</td>
<td>Mass, 10th anniversary Mary, Seat of Wisdom Chapel, Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, 5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Dec. 10</td>
<td>Mass followed by lunch, Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker motherhouse, Walton, 10 a.m.</td>
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<td>Dec. 10</td>
<td>Vigil Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 4:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Dec. 10</td>
<td>Diocesan Christmas Tree lighting and Bambinelli blessing, St. Mary’s Park, Covington, 6–8:30 p.m.</td>
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Grab the Baby Jesus from your home nativity scene and bring your family to join Bishop John Iffert for blessings, hot chocolate, homemade cookies, live Christmas choirs and more!

Saturday, Dec. 10, 6–8:30 p.m.
at St. Mary’s Park, Cathedral Square, Covington.

December 2, 2022

Messenger
God’s anger and our feelings of guilt and shame

In Exile

Father Ron Rolheiser

My early religious training, for all its strengths, placed too heavy an emphasis on fear of God, fear of judgment, and fear of never being good enough. When you please God. God told the biblical texts about God being angry and displeased with us literally. The downside of this was that many of us came away with feelings of guilt, shame and self-hatred and understood those feelings religiously with no sense that they might have more of a psychological or a religious origin. If you had feelings of guilt, shame and self-hatred, it was a signal that something was wrong. Well, as Hegel famously taught, every thesis eventually spawns its antithesis. Both in the culture and in many religious circles today, this has produced a bitter backlash. The current cultural and ecclesial ethos has brought with it a near feverish acceptance of the insights from contemporary psychology vis-à-vis guilt, shame and self-hatred. We learned from Freud and others that many of our feelings of guilt, shame and self-hatred are really a psychological neurosis, and not an indication that we are doing anything wrong. Feelings of guilt, shame and self-hatred do not of themselves indicate that we are unhealthy religiously or morally or that God is displeased with us. With this insight, more and more people have begun to blame their religious training for any feelings of guilt, shame and self-hatred. They have coined the term “Church psychology” and began speaking of “being in recovery” from their churches.

What’s to be said about this? In essence, some of this is healthy, a needed corrective, though some of it also suffers from its own naiveté. And, it has landed us here. Today, religious conservatives tend to reject the idea that guilt, shame and self-hatred are mainly a neurosis for which our religious training is responsible, while religious liberals tend to favor this notion. Who is right? A more balanced spirituality, I believe, combines the truth of both positions to produce a deeper understanding. Drawing on what is best in current biblical scholarship and on what is best in contemporary psychology a more balanced spirituality makes these assertions.

First, that when our biblical language tells us that God gets angry and unleashes his fury, we are dealing with anthropomorphism. God doesn’t get angry with us when we do wrong. Rather, what happens is that we get angry with ourselves and we feel as if that anger were somehow “God’s wrath.” Next, most psychologists today tell us that many of our feelings of guilt, shame and self-hatred are in fact unhealthy, a simple neurosis, and not at all an indication that we did something wrong. These feelings only indicate how we feel about ourselves, not how God feels about us.

However, that being admitted, it is too simple to write off our feelings of guilt, shame and self-hatred as a mere neurosis. Why? Because even if these feelings are completely or partly ungrounded, they may still be an important voice inside us, that is, while they don’t indicate that God is displeased or angry with us, they still can be a voice inside us that won’t be silent until we ask ourselves why we are displeased and angry with ourselves.

Here’s an example. There is a wonderfully enlightening exchange in the 1996 movie, “City Slickers.” There are men having a conversation about the morality of having a sexual affair. One asks the other: “If you could have an affair and get away with it, would you do it?” The other replies: “No, I still wouldn’t do it.” “Why not?” he is asked. “nobody would know.” His response contains a much neglected insight in rejecting the notion of an affair and getting away with it. There is the notion of asking God’s reaction and shame and self-hatred. He replies, “I would know, and I would hate myself for it.”

There is such a thing as Christian “guilt neurosis” (which incidentally is not limited to Christians, Jews, Muslims and other religious persons, but is universal among all morally sensitive people). However, not all feelings of guilt, shame and self-hatred are neurotic. Some are expressions of a deep moral and religious truth, that is, while we can never do a single thing to make God angry with us for one minute, we can do many things that make us hate ourselves. If you did anything to make God hate us, we can do things that have us hate ourselves. And, while we can never do anything to make us be afraid of God, we can do things that make it difficult for us to forgive ourselves. God is never the problem. We are.

Feelings of guilt, shame and self-hatred do not of themselves indicate whether we have done something wrong but they do tell us how we feel about what we have done — and that can be an important moral and religious voice inside us.

Not everything that bothers us is a pathology.

Oh Darn! is a theologian, teacher and award-winning author.

Along the Way

Ray Smith

“Thank you, Lord!”

Somehow along the way writing on this year’s Thanksgiving Day, I decided to go out for a walk or, rather, a hike and myself up and through for so many personal lifelong blessings. This morning, it would take a book to fully accomplish this, but I shall spare you that experience and stick with remembered highlights. But first, why give thanks at all? One can learn as I did, from trying to follow a good example set by others — parents, teachers, friends, fellow workers, everyday heroes, religious leaders, clergy and fellow writers. Once again, I’ve looked to a “Jesus Calling” meditation, this one penned by Sarah Young for Thanksgiving Day: “Thankfulness is the sting of outaturn. That is why I have instructed you to give thanks for everything. There is an element of mystery in this transaction: “You give Me thanks (regardless of your feelings) and I give you joy (regardless of your circumstances). This is a spiritual act of obedience — to Me and to obedience. To people who don’t know Me intimately, it can seem irrational and even impossible for heartrending hardships.

Thankfulness opens your heart to My Presence and your mind to My thoughts. You may still be in the same place, with the same set of circumstances, but it is as if a light has been switched on, enabling you to see from My perspective. It is this Light Of My Presence that removes the sting from adversity.”

For your writer, it is that “Oh, I get it” moment after things have not gone right or seemingly are not going right. It is the 300th anniversary of the birth of Ballads about “Oh Darn!,” “Oh Why?” or “Oh My!” Used as emotional cries — close calls, car crashes, explosions, Beverly Hills. I have found myself at times saying, “I can’t believe this! Even the best laid plans go awry.” I can honestly say that I’ve felt like the banner child for that one many times. But, I must confess that many of those times turned out to be “blessings in disguise” for which I gave sincere thanks.

The idea that God may develop a heart for you, Lord! In the eighth grade, Father Charles, a mission priest, spoke to our class about their local seminary. Every week, he would bring a small life of service in Africa. I already wanted to be a priest, so I entered their seminary in the ninth grade. Within one month, I was homesick, back home and enrolled in high school as a freshman at age 13. Thank you Lord! All through high school, I wanted to study journalism in college. After graduation, I worked full time and spent four years in night school to qualify as a junior in journalism school at the University of Kentucky. I had turned down a full-time position in a local savings and loan. I must say that I was a “fish out of water” at UK, in classes that made no sense to me. After graduation, I went back home, I was informed that the job I had been offered was open again. I took it and was advised to enroll in the local branch of the American Savings and Loan Institute. I eventually earned every diploma it offered, and earned an undergraduate degree from Thomas More and a Master’s degree from Xavier, all at night and on Saturdays. Thank you Lord!

Dear reader, you have frequently asked the Oh My! in this more than 60-year journey. Here it is. My first savings and loan class was “Customer Relations.” During a class break one night in March, 1969. I glanced across the break room and saw a beautiful young woman and asked my friend Karen to introduce us. She! My first date with Peggy was on March 8, 1969. We were married on Thanksgiving Day, November 22, 1962. Our 60th wedding anniversary happened a few days ago on November 22. Thank you Lord!

May we and our blessed family forever give thanks! “The best thing to hold in life is life itself.” Thank you Lord! — Audrey Hepburn

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

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We were challenged to dress as a poem for the Halloween party. Suddenly an old title popped into my head: *To a Louse, on Seeing One on a Lady’s Bonnet at Church.* I figured all I needed was a long skirt, a prayerbook and a fancy hat (loose somewhat enlarged).

I couldn’t remember what work had read the poem as an English major or in my mother’s book of poems. When I found it online, I was amazed at how little I knew; having recalled only the humorous title.

Sister Constance Veit, L.S.P.

To see ourselves as others see us

Our motherhouse is located on a large property in a tiny village in rural France. With its old stone buildings, expensive pastures, flower gardens and shaded pathways, it’s a gorgeous bucolic setting and the most peaceful place I’ve ever been.

During the year that I lived there I didn’t think I heard a single airplane overhead, an emergency siren or even a car horn. The nighttime silent and dark skies were especially striking. Looking up at the stars I felt the deep security of knowing I was enveloped by God’s love.

The memory of those starry Breton skies still quiets my soul and fills me with a sense of peacefulness in the midst of life’s inevitable difficulties.

What a contrast this is to the darkness enveloping our Ukrainian brothers and sisters this winter as their country continues to be bombarded on a daily basis. This darkness is not a blanket of security or prayerful serenity — although cries to God no doubt rise from it — but an insurmountable cloud of fear and dread.

As I think of the people of Ukraine during this Advent season, I am reminded of the words of the prophet Isaiah about the people dwelling in darkness (Is 9:2ff). This passage speaks of a burdensome yoke, a taskmaster’s rod, boots tramped in battle and cloaks rolled in blood.

This is harsh military imagery.

The people living in darkness are wounded and oppressed, like our Ukrainian brothers and sisters today. They desperately need someone to shine a light into the cold cellars and imprisoned bunkers in which they huddle. They need a savior.

It is just after the winter solstice, the darkest point of the year, that we celebrate the coming of our Savior at Christmas. Isaiah proclaims, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Upon those who lived in a land of gloom a light has shone. For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. Forever, Prince of Peace.”

Very Rev. Daniel Schomaker

From darkness into light this Advent

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This passage speaks of a burdensome yoke, a taskmaster’s rod, boots trampled in battle and cloaks rolled in blood.

This is harsh military imagery.

The people living in darkness are wounded and oppressed, like our Ukrainian brothers and sisters today. They desperately need someone to shine a light into the cold cellars and imprisoned bunkers in which they huddle. They need a savior.

It is just after the winter solstice, the darkest point of the year, that we celebrate the coming of our Savior at Christmas. Isaiah proclaims, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Upon those who lived in a land of gloom a light has shone. For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. Forever, Prince of Peace.”

Very Rev. Daniel Schomaker

From darkness into light this Advent

Our little house is located on a large property in a tiny village in rural France. With its old stone buildings, expensive pastures, flower gardens and shaded pathways, it’s a gorgeous bucolic setting and the most peaceful place I’ve ever been.

During the year that I lived there I didn’t think I heard a single airplane overhead, an emergency siren or even a car horn. The nighttime silent and dark skies were especially striking. Looking up at the stars I felt the deep security of knowing I was enveloped by God’s love.

The memory of those starry Breton skies still quiets my soul and fills me with a sense of peacefulness in the midst of life’s inevitable difficulties.

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From darkness into light this Advent
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

(above) Eighth-grade students at Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Burlington, spend time in adoration during their retreat at Camp River Ridge in Oldenburg, Indiana.

(above) Children at St. Patrick School, Taylors Mill, are eager to answer Father Jeffrey VonLehmen’s questions at the First Friday prayer service.

(above and above right) First-graders at St. Agnes School, Ft. Wright, celebrate the Solemnity of Christ the King by creating crowns to remind them that Christ is the king of all things. As the change of seasons approaches outside, students are taught the different seasons in the liturgical year. The Solemnity of Christ the King is celebrated on the last Sunday of Ordinary Time and marks the change to the season of Advent.

(right and far right) St. Henry District High School, Erlanger, celebrates an all-school Mass on the first Friday of every month. Students participate in the Mass as they prepare and celebrate following Christ.

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

St. Henry Parish, Elsmere, had the Rite of Acceptance and welcoming for RCIA candidates, Nov. 13. Pictured are the candidates and catechumens with their sponsors and RCIA coordinators.

A baby shower for the Rose Garden Mission

The students of St. Joseph School, Cold Spring held a baby shower. The beneficiaries are mothers seeking assistance at the Rose Garden Mission, Covington. The eighth grade students decided that as a service project they would like to help the mission continue its work in helping moms make good choices in their pregnancies by assisting them with the materials they need to take care of their selves and their babies. The donated gifts filled Mother Scarpina’ s van from the Rose Garden Mission. 

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 weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The OM, 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 317, and DirectTV 25.

The Cathedral Concert Series continues its 46th season with the Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols, 3 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 cathedralconcert.org for more information on the current season.

United in Prayer, the women religious of the Diocese of Covington invite all to join in a gathering of prayer at the Bell Tower at Goebel Park, Covington, Dec. 6, 6 p.m. to offer prayers of peace in response to the violence in our country and around the world.

The High School Placement Test (HSPT) is an assessment used to determine high school placement into honors and advanced courses 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 6, 4:30-6:30 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. Registrations will be accepted the day of the session by cash or check. 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 nchs.com.

The Newport Central Catholic Theatre Department presents "Noises Off," Dec. 9, 10 and 11, at its Ciafardini Family Blackbox Theatre. "Noises Off" is a slapstick farce about actors rehearsing for their upcoming play. Tickets are $8 adults; $5 students and may be purchased on GoFan.co or at the door.

"12 Dates of Christmas" presented by the Thomas More University Villa Players in conjunction with the American Legacy Theatre, Dec. 9-18, Thomas More Theatre, Crestview Hills. This heartwarming, one-woman play offers a hilarious and modern alternative to the old standards of the holiday season. Filling a gift to donate to Toys 4 Tots. A portion of the proceeds benefit the Ron Mielech ’57 Scholarship fund at Thomas More. Show times vary tickets available at americanelegacystheatre.org.

Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria, 9th annual International Nativity Display, Dec. 11, 17, 19, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. and Dec. 24, 9 a.m.–noon. The display features over 180 nativity sets made by artists and craftsmen from 76 different countries. Free and open to the public.

Advent Mission with Father Michael Henning and St. Agnes Church, Ft. Wright, Dec. 7, 14 and 21, 7-8 p.m. Father Henning 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. - Santa 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 tmuky.counselor brunch.

Rorate Mass, Dec. 10, Divine Mercy Parish, Bellevue, followed by breakfast and set-up of our outdoor 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 afterwards in Charity Hall limited to the first 80 people who RSVP by Dec. 5, e-mail dmasherry@gmail.com or call 231-6172. No cost, freewill offerings accepted. Sponsored by the parish Knights of Columbus Council, Catholic Men’s Group, and Young Adults.
Sts. Peter and Paul Parish welcomed Bishop John Iffert, Nov. 6, for Mass and the blessing of its new access road. Father Jacob Varghese, pastor, concelebrated Mass and led the blessing.

In 2012 Sts. Peter and Paul Parish purchased the Brossart Estate property adjacent to the parish, which allowed for expansion and construction of a 900-foot long driveway to the back of the school with access to the church by driving through the school parking lot. Prior to this new driveway there was only one access road — a steep one — to the parish. The steep incline was difficult to navigate, particularly during snowy and icy weather. Bishop Emeritus Roger Foys approved the project three years ago and it has been funded by donations from within and outside the parish. Once a month the parish held a second collection to help fund the new road.

After the blessing, Bishop Iffert cut the ribbon and rode in a golf cart to bless the entire length of road, joining the parishioners for a reception following the event.

“We extend our heartfelt thanks to both our bishops and pray our blessings on all the contributors either by their generous donations or by voluntary works,” said Father Varghese.
Overcoming Christian divisions would give world hope, pope tells patriarch

Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

While formal dialogue about the theological and historical causes of the splits in Christianity are essential, so, too, is a recognition that "sinful actions and attitudes" have contributed and continue to contribute to divisions in the body of Christ, Pope Francis said.

"We are called, then, to work toward the restoration of unity between Christians, not merely through signed agreements but through fidelity to the Father's will and discernment of the promptings of the Spirit," Pope Francis wrote in a letter to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople Nov. 30, the feast of St. Andrew.

"We can be thankful to God that our churches are not resigned to past and current experiences of division, but, on the contrary, through prayer and fraternal charity are seeking instead to achieve full communion that will enable us one day, in God's time, to gather together at the same eucharistic table," said the pope's letter, which was read publicly at the end of a Divine Liturgy in the patriarchate's headquarters in Istanbul.

Pope Francis included in his letter condolences over the Nov. 13 Istanbul bombing that killed six people and wounded more than 80 on a busy street lined with shops and restaurants.

"I entrust to the mercy of Almighty God those who have lost their lives or have been wounded by the recent attack in your city and pray that he will convert the hearts of those who promote or support such evil actions," the pope wrote.

"The full restoration of communion among all the believers in Jesus Christ is an irrevocable commitment for every Christian," the pope wrote, because "the 'unity of all' is not only God's will but an urgent priority in today's world," so often marked by violent divisions.

Catholics and Orthodox, he said, must acknowledge that their divisions "are the result of sinful actions and attitudes which impede the work of the Holy Spirit, who guides the faithful into unity in legitimate diversity. It follows that only growth in holiness of life can lead to genuine and lasting unity."
We are overwhelmed and blessed by the generosity of our benefactors who have committed investments in the silent phase of this campaign and are so excited for our students and community,” Mr. Collopy said. “We are making improvements to more than just facilities, and these updates will go a long way in enhancing the NCC experience by providing great resources for our students, teachers, staff, and families. Based in Erlanger, Dynamic Catholic Institute offers a plethora of books, videos and programs for individuals of all ages and parishes designed to educate, engage and inspire faith life.

“We don’t know what that looks like yet, but we are working with Dynamic Catholic to develop that relationship,” said Mr. Collopy noting that, outside of the “Looking Up” campaign, the school is working on a five-year strategic plan for faith development. “We want to bring everyone in not just the students but staff, alumni parents, because the parents are really the key to that.”

With the funds that have already been committed to the “Looking Up” campaign, NCCHS will begin work hopefully as early as Spring 2023 on the new Science Learning Center and STEM Labs.

“Obviously, the science labs are the number one priority for a number of reasons,” said Mr. Collopy. “We want to support our students and our staff as much as we can academically so people are very excited about that.”

School leaders also felt that the Science Learning Center was a good project to “get the ball rolling” because its projected cost of $2.1 million is significantly less and more attainable than the $7.9 million projected to complete the athletic complex. Also, he said, there has not been any major upgrades to the current facility in nearly a decade.

“Our facilities currently don’t match what we offer,”

“Looking up” (Continued from page 1)

A rendering of the proposed athletic complex.
said Charles Marks, development director, NCCHS, as he praised the quality of education and the caliber of educators at NCCHS. “Our students are interested in those fields of science, engineering and math and I think that’s going to grow when we have the facilities that showcase that field a little bit better.”

Speaking of fields. Having a home field for its championship football team has been a longtime rallying cry for the NCCHS community. Erosion on the hill has been a stumbling block. Building a wall to fortify the hill is part of the new athletic complex plan.

“The athletic complex is not just a field for football, it’s boys and girls soccer; track and field, our baseball team and softball team will practice there, and it’s also a community gathering space,” said Mr. Collopy. “We could have true homecomings here, class reunions where we invite classes back and they’re able to go down to football games. It’s all about bringing our community back to campus.”

Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Covington has both a professional and personal interest in NCCHS. Her father and uncles as well as many of her cousins are alumni.

“Since the ‘School on the Hill’ first opened its doors in 1955, Newport Central Catholic High School has been a beacon of faith and education for families in northern Campbell County,” Mrs. McGuire said. “I am thrilled that the school community is coming together ‘Looking Up’ in praise and thanksgiving as they begin this investment not only in its facilities but also in its academics and community. I thank Kenny Collopy for his faith and enthusiasm in leading this campaign and look forward to celebrating with the entire NCCHS community as their vision becomes reality.”

For information on Newport Central Catholic High School and its “Looking Up” capital campaign visit www.ncchs.com.
OPPORTUNITIES AT CATHOLIC CHARITIES

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 calm and pleasant demeanor; able to use back service needs assessments and assign or refer inquirers based on knowledge of our resources and 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 outlying area of our diocese where there are limited resources and is considered a food desert. This is a part time hourly 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 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 will 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 as few as 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 https://www.covingtoncharities.org/news-events/job-opportunities.

CAMPUS MINISTER

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington seeks faith-filled individuals who are interested in working with young adults to serve in the capacity of Campus Minister at Northern Kentucky University. The work week will be full time, nominally thirty seven and one-half hours. The Campus Minister and NKU’s Catholic Newman Center (www.nkunewmanclub.org) offer an evangelizing presence along with spiritual support and opportunities for a full living and development of the Catholic faith among Catholic students, especially the support of spiritual life and formation opportunities. Responsibilities include providing support, leadership, and spiritual guidance to participating students; proactively engaging prospective participants, especially freshmen; presenting an ongoing, visible presence on campus; facilitating timely and effective communications with students and parents, including regularly updating the website, Facebook page, and database; regularly interacting with Diocesan, local Parish, and University staff; and overseeing maintenance and upkeep of the Newman House. Requirements include a minimum of a Bachelor’s degree, preferably in Theology or Pastoral Ministry, and previous experience in young adult ministry and management.

Interested individuals may send a cover letter and resume, including compensation history and references with contact e-mail addresses, to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR, by email to skoplyay@covdio.org or by fax to (859) 392-1589.

CAREGIVER FOR HIRE - Daytime Only

Caregiver for your loved one’s needs. Graduate of Mount St. Joseph College with 17 years experience specializing in elder care. If you need a break from caregiving please contact Ange Garnett at $25 per hour / min. 25 hrs per week. References and police check available.

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PRINCIPAL – ST. ATHANASIUS SCHOOL, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

St. Athanasius Parish and School is currently conducting a search for the Principal position to be filled effective July 1, 2023. Led by our Pastor, Fr. Minh Vu, we are seeking a principal Roman Catholic with proven leadership skills that are focused on each student’s development in faith and academic growth. Our school has a current enrollment of 205 PreK thru 8th grade students. We have a trusted partnership with our teachers to be the best version of themselves. We have a 60+ history that welcomes all to our exciting programs in the classroom and specialty areas. Candidates must meet the Archdiocese of Louisville’s Principal Requirements. Salary and benefits will be based on education, experience and certification as established by the Archdiocese. Inquiries and resumes, including your philosophy of education and references should be sent by December 30, 2022 to: Search Committee, c/o Fr. Minh Vu, 5915 Outer Loop, Louisville KY 40219 or mvu@staparish.com.

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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 lhatfield@covdio.org or call (859) 392-1500.

CONGREGATION OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE

PART-TIME BOOKKEEPER

We are currently seeking a part-time Bookkeeper to join our Finance Department. This position reports to the Finance Director.

Key responsibilities of this position are:

- Preparing financial reports and various accounting statements.
- Prepares and post journal entries to general ledger.
- Performs account reconciliations.
- Receiving and depositing checks and paying vendor invoices.
- Coordinates automobile registration renewals for fleet of vehicles.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

The successful candidate will have:

- A thorough understanding of bookkeeping practices and procedures.
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Knowledge of spreadsheets and accounting software.
- Experience with QuickBooks preferred.

Interested candidates may submit a resume or contact Barry White by e-mail at bwhite@cdpkentucky.org or call (859) 441-0700 ext. 25.

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:

- Using 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.
  - 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 Koplay by e-mail: skoplay@covdio.org, (859) 392-1500.

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 charity 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 C-V, including compensation history and a list of references that includes contact email addresses, by email or by fax to Stephen Koplay, SFinH, at skoplay@covdio.org or 859-392-1589.
Senate passes Respect for Marriage Act; bill now heads to House

WASHINGTON — Ahead of the U.S. Senate's 61-to-36 vote approving the Respect for Marriage Act, the chairmen of two U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' committees reiterated the bishops' "firm opposition" to the "misnamed" measure legalized same-sex marriage.

"We echo the statement of our brother Bishop (James R.) Golka of Colorado Springs in condemnation of this senseless crime. "Our opposition to RMA by no means condones any hostility toward anyone who experiences same-sex attraction," Cardinal Dolan and Bishop Barron said. "Catholic teaching on marriage is inseparable from Catholic teaching on the inherent dignity and worth of every human being. To attack one is to attack the other. "In their joint letter, Cardinal Dolan and Bishop Barron said that measures "rejection of timeless truths about marriage is evident on its face and in its purpose. "The bill codifies the Supreme Court's 2015 ruling in Obergefell v. Hodges that found a constitutional right to same-sex marriage. It also codifies interracial marriage. "Employment decisions, employees' spousal benefits, eligibility for grants or contracts, accreditation, tax exemptions — it runs the full gamut, even in religious liberty conflicts arising out of state or local laws," it added.

"Unfortunately, a number of religious groups and senators are asserting that the amended text of RMA sufficiently protects religious freedom," Cardinal Dolan and Bishop Barron said in their letter.

They added that from the perspective of the USCCB, "whose bishops' ministries comprise the largest nongovernmental provider of social services" in the U.S., the provisions of the bill "religious objectors are likelier to be denied religious freedom," "That measure's "rejection of timeless truths about marriage is evident on its face and in its purpose," they repeated the cardinal's earlier point that it "would also betray our country's commitment to the fundamental right of religious liberty. "First, the bill will be used to argue that the government has a compelling interest in forcing religious organizations and individuals to treat same-sex civil marriages as valid," the analysis said.

An amendment to the bill says it "protects all religious liberty and conscience protections available under the Constitution or federal law, including but not limited to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, other federal laws, and conscience protections available under the Constitution or federal law, including but not limited to..." The analysis said.

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**National/World**

**Prefect of Vatican economy office steps down, citing illness**

**VATICAN CITY** — Three years after Pope Francis appointed him to speed up financial reforms, transparency and budget controls at the Vatican, Jesuit Father Juan Antonio Guerrero Alvarez has resigned for health reasons. The Vatican announced Nov. 30 that Father Guerrero was stepping down as prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy and Pope Francis had named Maximino Caballero Lode, the secretariat’s general secretary, to succeed him. Unusually, the announcement included “deep thanks” to Father Guerrero “for the dedication he has shown in serving the Holy See” and for succeeding with “a strong and challenging work that bore much fruit.” In a letter to staff of the secretariat, Father Guerrero said he had undergone surgery and was continuing medical treatment, which is “producing certain side effects that make it particularly difficult for me to fulfill such a demanding task” and that “requires better physical efficiency and mental concentration than I have at the moment.” While he said he was sad to be leaving, the Jesuit told staff that over the past three years they had “made a contribution to the economic reform called for by the Holy Father himself.” Father Guerrero’s successor, Caballero, joined the office in 2020 after having worked in finance at an Illinois-based health care company, Baxter International, for more than 13 years. Born in Merida, Spain, in 1959, Caballero is married with two children and is a childhood friend of Father Guerrero.

Catholics urged to focus on Holy Family, the Eucharist during Advent

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** — In the Diocese of Nashville, Bishop Frank R. Schuster noted that while “all the malls are filled with Christmas trees and lights,” Catholics “recognize there is another season in between, a forgotten season — the season of Advent.”

**Ukrainian archdiocese demands release of priests**

**IVANO-FRANKIVSK, Ukraine** — The Ukrainian Catholic Archdiocese of Donetsk is demanding the release of two priests it said were arrested illegally in the Russian-occupied city of Berdyansk. In a Nov. 26 statement, it said Father Ivan Levitsky, a hieromonk and rector of the Church of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos, and Father Bohdan Geleta, who works at the church, were detained by Russian troops Nov. 16, and the church was illegally searched the following day. The priests’ relatives do not know where the two men were arrested or where they are now. “We demand the speedy release from custody and imprisonment of our priests ... as well as ensuring their unhindered legitimate service to the spiritual needs of the faithful ... living in the city of Berdyansk,” said the statement from the Eastern archdiocese. “We ask for maximum dissemination of information in order to release the captured fathers. We appeal to the authorities and all people of goodwill to join the cause of the release of priests, as well as for increased prayer in this intention.”

Russian media reported the priests were detained because Russian troops searching the church and rectory found explosives and plans for “subversive” and “partisan” activities directed against the troops. However, the archdiocesan statement noted that the priests already were in custody when the search was conducted, so they “cannot bear any responsibility for the weapons and ammunition allegedly found in (the buildings). This is a clear slander and a false accusation.”

Young people tell bishops of their desire to grow in faith, in the church

**BALTIMORE** — If honesty is indeed the best policy, then two young people addressing the U.S. bishops about the joys and struggles of growing in faith became policymakers during a Nov. 18 session at the bishops’ annual fall general assembly in Baltimore. Rudy Dehaney and Cecilia Flores opened up about their own experiences and the stumbling blocks that can get in the way. The two were selected as delegates from their respective dioceses to attend a June 23-26 gathering in Chicago called “Alive in Christ: Young, Diverse, Prophetic Voices Journeying Together.” About 325 ministry leaders, young adults and bishops came together for the “Journeying Together” process. Dehaney, a campus minister at Notre Dame of Maryland University in Baltimore, recounted one episode that happened at the gathering. Known as “the music episode,” Dehaney, who is Black, said that on Sunday mornings, “gospel music could be heard at home, or at my parish.” On the first night of the Chicago gathering, some attendees were “speculating and anticipating would be sung at the next day’s Mass. You could hear ‘Total Praise’ or ‘All-Holy’ Salvation and Glory.’” As we remembered those songs we grew up on, there was joy in our hearts that night,” Dehaney told the bishops. “When we did not hear the songs that day, we felt disappointment and that it was a missed opportunity,” he said. “It was not the first time,” he added, yet “it is not unique to our culture. You say you get used to it, but you don’t.” Flores, a community organizer in Sacramento, California, and chair of the “Journeying Together” young adult multicultural advisory committee, told the bishops that “fostering interpersonal relationships and intergenerational dialogue is needed.”

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