See you soon gargoyles — Cathedral prepares for ‘Restored in Christ’ maintenance and safety project

Laura Keener
Editor

The Covington skyline will soon be void of some familiar faces. Beginning around March 14, the gargoyles — as they are popularly referred to, chimera is the more accurate term — adorning the parapet atop the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption will be removed for replacement. Their removal is the first project of a $6 million “Restored In Christ” campaign to preserve and restore the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption.

After more than a century, the Cathedral Basilica’s masonry and stonework, lovingly built and fashioned by early immigrants and master craftsmen, is in desperate need of repair to preserve it for future generations, said Bishop John Iffert.

Bishop Iffert has referred to the “Restored In Christ” project as a major maintenance project to the outside of the Cathedral. No accoutrements for liturgical services and no renovations to the Cathedral interior are a part of this project. In 2001, the Cathedral underwent major restorations and refurbishments to its interior; with the exterior receiving a good cleaning and new glass shields to protect the stained-glass windows. The singular goal of the “Restored In Christ” project is to prevent water from further damaging the Cathedral.

The project coincides with the 170th anniversary of the Diocese of Covington and the 130th anniversary of the inception of St. Mary’s Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, which began with a simple drawing by architect Leon Coquard in 1893 at
The Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal season is underway, with the second DPAA kickoff dinner held at the Marriott in Hebron, March 2.

Bishop John Iffert, Matt Hollenkamp, general chair, and Linda Rawe, leadership gifts chair, welcomed guests to the dinner in preparation for the appeal’s next phase. The theme for this year’s DPAA is “Rise, Do Not Be Afraid.”

The DPAA is a key fundraising endeavor within the Diocese of Covington, with the money raised going to support diocesan ministries such as care for retired priests, vocations, pro-life, Catholic Charities, religious education, campus ministry, Cristo Rey Parish and Thomas More University. Ten percent of the appeal is also awarded to ministries serving the poor and vulnerable in diocesan communities as grants. This year, the goal for the DPAA is $2.65 million. Like in years past, amounts raised past that total will go back to benefit the parishes that collect more than their individual parish goals.

The results of Phase 1 of the leadership gifts phase were announced at the dinners, where a record-breaking $544,280 was raised for the appeal thanks to solicitors reaching out to select donors across the diocese. The guests at the first kick-off dinner in Cynthiana, Feb. 28, donated or pledged an additional $27,000, while guests at the March 2 event donated or pledged a total $85,658.

“I love our diocese,” said Matt Hollenkamp, general chair for the 2023 DPAA, “Such a special place we have, our community here … I just feel very fortunate to be a part of this, and I can’t thank you all enough for all that you do as part of this campaign.”

“It is wonderful to be here with you, and thank you all for accepting the invitation to come out and join us,” Bishop Iffert said to the dinner guests. “The Church is the living mission of Jesus Christ. That’s who we are. And so everyone who is baptized under the body of Christ has some unique contribution to make. And so, for everyone here, just look around you for a moment and think about the diversity of the gifts that God has entrusted to this Church. Every one of you, as a part of that, I want to thank. Thank you all so much.”

Last weekend, pastors in all parishes of the Diocese of Covington played the DPAA video at Mass. This weekend, March 11-12, is Commitment Weekend. Parishioners will have the opportunity at Mass to make their donation or pledge. The DPAA video can also be viewed and donations and pledges made online at www.covdio.org.

Children and teens need adults to moderate, monitor and discipline their digital world

Laura Keener
Editor

Stephen Smith, author and founder of A Wired Family, made two presentations in the Diocese of Covington for parents, grandparents, teachers and pastors — anyone who has responsibility for the health and wellbeing of a child or children. The first presentation was held at St. Henry District High School, Erlanger, Feb. 27, and the second at Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria, March 7. Over 100 people attended the presentations, which were hosted by the diocese’s Safe Environment Office.

At Bishop Brossart High School, Julie Feinauer, director for the Safe Environment Office, introduced Mr. Smith and his presentation “Social Media & The Adolescent Digital Tribe: Navigating the Teen World State.” The heart of the presentation was to demonstrate to adults the depth and breadth social media has on the life and mental health of children and teens so that they can better help the children they love navigate the digital world.

Mr. Smith illustrated the dangers of social media by sharing quotes from top executives — like Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple; Sean Parker, co-founder of Napster and first president of Facebook; and Bill Gates, co-founder of Microsoft — who do not allow or strictly limit their own child’s use of the devices and apps they themselves have created.

(Continued on page 6)
Eucharistic meditation 3: I thirst

USCCB/Eucharistic Revival Team

This Eucharistic Meditation is designed to help you spend 35 minutes to an hour in meditation and silent prayer with Jesus during Eucharistic adoration. Even if you cannot be physically present in a church or adoration chapel with the Blessed Sacrament, you can unite yourself spiritually to the Eucharist as you spend this time in prayer.

The grace I seek: To quench my thirst for eternal life.

Pray: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Jesus, the Lord of Life, has given himself to you in the Eucharist. He is gazing upon you, his beloved child, with great love at this very moment. Pause for a few moments and wonder at his gift for you. Allow yourself to rest in his loving gaze. Thank Jesus for the gift of himself in the Eucharist.

Ask for the grace: Jesus, help me believe that you will quench my thirst for eternal life.

Scripture Meditation

“in those days, in their thirst for water, the people grumbled against Moses, saying, ‘Why did you ever make us leave Egypt? Was it just to have us die here of thirst with our children and our livestock?’” (Exodus 17:3)

Reflection Questions

Are there any ways you find yourself thirsting for healing, conversion or belonging, and doubting the Lord wants his help? Honestly share that experience of unmet desire or disappointment with the Lord when you sought his help? Honestly share that experience of unmet desire or disappointment with the Lord when you sought his help?

Scripture Meditation

“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (John 4:13-15)

Reflection Questions

Jesus has a gift like none other — he offers living water. This is the water that washes our wounds, cleanses our sins and draws us into new life as a beloved child of God. It was first offered to us through the waters of baptism, welling up from Jesus and flowing from his side on the cross. Gazing upon Jesus in the Eucharist, ask him to help you open your heart to this life-giving water.

Closing Prayer

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness, who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving have shown us a remedy for sin, look graciously on this confession of our lowliness, that we, who are bowed down by our conscience, may always be lifted up by your mercy. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit. God, for ever and ever. (Collect, Third Sunday of Lent)
Don’t give up on the Liberal Arts

It has just come to my attention that Marymount University, a Catholic institution in Arlington, Virginia, has announced its intention to cut ten traditional majors from its program, including philosophy, religious studies, theology, art, history and sociology. It will also apparently eliminate a master’s degree in English literature. The president of the university has explained that this move is designed to make her school more marketable: “Competitive: “Students have more choices than ever for where to earn a college degree and MU must respond wisely to the demand.”

Well, okay, but one wonders why she bothers remaining competitive, for she has effectively under mined the purpose of her university. What is especially tragic is that this is far from an isolated case, for a number of religiously affiliated liberal arts schools are, anomalously, eliminating religion and the liberal arts. And we should get this attention of the entire society, for the loss of the liberal arts is tantamount to a loss of soul. Why do we refer to religion, philosophy, history, literature and art as “liberal”? We do so because they are free, <i>liber</i>- in Latin—precisely from utility. And this is to say that they are the highest sorts of knowledge, for mankind, they are subordinated to nothing outside of themselves. They exist for their own sake, endowing objects with intrinsic value. In this, they are to be differentiated from the practical arts and sciences, which exist for the sake of something else. So, one studies engineering in order to construct buildings; or one studies architecture in order to erect buildings; or one studies mathematics in order to get a car to run, etc.

But one reads Shakespeare because it is beautiful so to do, and one watches a baseball game because baseball is good, and one gazes at the Sistine Chapel ceiling because it elevates the soul. Our machines and computers and cars and iPhones are great, but they are designed ultimately to make the experience of intrinsic value more readily available. One should never, of course, denigrate the practical sciences, but one should have the sense to subordinates them to those disciplines that are properly liberal. Much of our suffering is caused by the effects of turning this hierarchy on its head. In light of these clarifications, I hope it is clear why so many Catholic colleges and universities were dedicated to the liberal arts. Though Catholic institutions of higher learning have always been willing to offer the practical subjects, they stress the higher disciplines because their founders were in the meaning business.

The liberal arts are situated above the practical sciences, but among the liberal arts themselves, there is a sort of hierarchy, for all of them are reflective of and finally serve the supreme good, who is God. The most use less and therefore highest discipline of all is that which speaks of the source of meaning, that which treats of God. Do you see why it is so regrettable, therefore, that Catholic institutions are turning themselves voluntarily into STEM academies and marginalizing the very subjects that touch upon purpose and meaning?

Yes, science, technology, engineering and mathematics will facilitate our movement and give us newer homes to live in and generally make our lives easier — but they won’t get us where we want to go. To get to our destinations or how to live in our comfortable houses or how to fill up the time that ease of life provides. To find answers to those questions, we read Plato, Jeremiah, St. Paul, Shakespeare, Dante and Eliot; we look at Michelangelo, Picasso and Rembrandt, and we listen to Mozart, Bach and Stravinsky. In a word, we do the liberal arts.

I don’t want to overset this case, but I wouldn’t want to understate it either. I believe there is a correlation between the disappearance of the liberal arts and the demonstrable rise in anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts — especially among the young today.

When we push the subjects that treat of meaning to the side, we are surprised that people are finding life less and less meaningful!

When we put a hyper-stress on technology, we are surprised that we have a generation of youngsters spending large parts of their days staring listlessly and sadly at screens.

One reason for the attack on the liberal arts is wokenism, which tends to sully whatever it touches. The reduction of society to the simplistic binary of oppressor and submissive speaks of the source of meaning, that which treats of love, purpose, justice, right government, God and eternal life? What an impoverishment if we permit the wake mob to denounce these purveyors of value. So, may I utter a <i>cri de coeur</i> to the professors and administrators at Catholic institutions of higher learning: for the sake of our young people and indeed of the entire society don’t give up on the liberal arts! Bishop Robert Barron is the current Bishop of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota. Article originally published at WordOnFire.org.

Frequent deposits are the key to happiness

This story is not about my dear friend, Paul, but it sure could be, except that he is not blind and needed no nursing home. He passed away a few years ago. In the short time we were blessed with his friendship, he shared with me his deep love of the happy memories and reflected the same healthy attitude of our unknown “Mr. Jones.” He was the youngest, most pleasant 90-year-old man I ever met. He had a way of making those around him feel younger and happier. It’s a gift he eagerly shared and I gave thanks daily for it and for him.

As for happiness, Dr. Wayne Dyer might have said it best, “Everything you need to have total happiness, fulfillment, and love in your life you already have right now; wherever you are, wherever you are.”

Sometimes, when I read my “Jesus Calling” book, Sarah Young’s masterpiece of daily meditations, I ignore the date at hand and imitate a piano player by just running my finger across the pages filled with 365 days of wisdom, as I did today while writing this piece. That exercise produced a true “Oh yes” experience because I have been trying to “let go and let God” take the wheel during these Lenten days and beyond.

The front and center lesson garnered from today’s random page-picking flowed me and then quickly picked me up: “Stop judging and evaluating yourself, for this is not your role. Above all, stop comparing yourself with other people. This produces feelings of pride or inferiority.”

(Continued on page 15)
The greatest actor on her favorite stage

The readings for the Third Sunday of Lent — Cycle A — are: Exodus 17:1–3; Romans 5:1–2; 5:8 and John 4:42.

I held the privilege of seeing a wonderful actor whose name was Ruth. Ruth was in a nursing home and had been there for several years. I dropped into her life one day when I was visiting some parishioners.

As I sat close to the lobby checking my phone, Ruth took the stage. It was a one woman show about her life. The first day I saw her she was telling me, and whoever was listening, about her childhood growing up poor. She talked about how difficult it was for her parents to provide for her and her four siblings. She spoke at length about the struggles she had in school and growing up.

I had to leave before her show concluded. I knew I would be back and hoping that Ruth would be on stage again. I repeated my usual pattern of visiting parishioners from one room to the next. As I finished up, I was once again checking my phone in the lobby. There she appeared. Ruth was continuing her performance.

She was telling us how she fell in love with her husband and about their courtship. She talked about her wedding and from her description it must have been marred by a lack of love, family and friends. Again, I was impressed by Ruth, a great actor on her favorite stage.

The next time I went to visit the nursing home I couldn’t find her, I wanted to hear about some other part of her life. I never found her that day or in the weeks to come. I wasn’t sure if she had moved to another nursing home or had died. I was able to witness someone who made an impression on my life. It was as if I was dropped into her life.

So, the woman at the well was dropped into the life of Jesus Christ. She had no idea who was coming. She was intrigue by Jesus. They spoke to each other, even though they shouldn’t have. That didn’t stop either one from continuing.

As she sat there Jesus was talking about the life-giving water that can save. Jesus says, “go get your husband.” She admits her previous marriages and she can see how wonderful it was to be dropped into the life of Jesus. “Go tell the others.” She runoff and leaves her water jug behind.

She came to the well seeking water to quench her thirst. Oh, but she found something more important, Jesus and his life-giving water. She runs and tells everyone about her experience. She was so convincing that those threats got to him. Here is one of her diary entries.

“One night towards the end of January, I settled into bed, after a strenuous day. Coretta had already fallen asleep and just as I was about to close the telephone rang. An angry voice said, ‘Listen, nig., we’ve taken all we want from you, before next week you’ll be sorry you ever came to Montgomery.’ I hung up, but I couldn’t sleep. It seemed that all of my fears had come down on me at once. I had reached a saturation point.

“I got out of bed and began to walk the floor. Finally, I went to the kitchen and heated a pot of coffee. I was ready to give up. With my cup of coffee sitting untouched before me, I tried to think of a way to move out of the picture without appearing a coward.”

In this state of exhaustion, when my courage had all but gone, I decided to take my problem to God. With my head in my hands, I bowed over the kitchen table and prayed aloud. The words I spoke to God at that moment are still vivid in my memory.

“I am here taking a stand for what I believe is right. Now I am afraid. The people are looking to me for leadership, and if I stand before them without strength and courage, they too will falter. I am at the end of my power. I have nothing left. I’ve come to the point where I can’t face it alone. At that moment I experienced the presence of the Divine as I had never experienced Him before.”

(Stride Toward Freedom)

Notice at what point in these stories the angel makes its appearance — when human strength is fully exhausted. Why not earlier? Because up to the point of exhaustion, we don’t really let the angel in, relying instead on our own strength. By the time we finally call for help, often we have, after we have let the desert do its full work in us will angels finally come and minister to us.

Obate Fon, Ron Rollheiser, is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author.

Waiting for the angel to come

The night before he died, Jesus struggled mightily to accept his Father’s will. The Gospels describe him in the Garden of Gethsemane, prostrate on the ground — “sweating blood” — and begging his Father to save him from the brutal death that awaited him. Then, after he finally surrendered his will to his Father, an angel comes and strengthens him.

This begs a question: where was the angel when, seemingly, he most needed it? Why didn’t the angel come earlier to strengthen him?

Two stories, I believe, can be helpful in answering this.

The first comes from Martin Luther King Jr. In the days leading up to his assassination, he met angry resistance and began to receive death threats. He was courageous, but he was also human. At a point, those threats got to him. Here is one of his diary entries.

“One night towards the end of January, I settled into bed, after a strenuous day. Coretta had already fallen asleep and just as I was about to close the telephone...”

By performing as many good works as possible, we, too, show the Father’s love by the way we live our lives. By the good works we do we spread that love to all we meet. Do not let what benefits only ourselves and what benefits too. By performing as many good works as possible, I think we can all agree that Jesus lived the good life.

Deacon Michael Keller is an assistant director of seminarians for the Diocese of Covington and pastor, St. Benedict Parish, Covington, Ky.
“If it’s (an app) free, then you or your child are the product,” Mr. Smith said about how applications track not only a person’s likes and clicks while using the app but also the places visited, the games played and the purchases made — both in the physical and virtual world — to understand how to engage and manipulate adults and children.

“They know how the brain works to the absolute core. These apps have been developed by psychologists and behavioralist to keep your child or you on that app as long as possible,” he said.

In his nearly two-hour presentation, Mr. Smith covered six ways social media apps are having a “disturbing” impact on children. The two most concerning for him as a father and grandfather are its effects on brain chemistry and the loss of academic and career opportunities on otherwise healthy and talented teens.

Apps, Mr. Smith said, are developed to continuously provide dopamine-producing stimuli — scrolling videos, likes, suggestions, notifications. Dopamine is the brain chemical that makes a person feel good. The constant production of dopamine — whether through drugs or stimuli — can cause addiction.

“With all the dopamine in particular, the brain is constantly on alert,” Mr. Smith said.

Sleep deprivation in children and teenagers is on the rise. Mr. Smith said it is “incredibly important” that parents keep phones and devices out of a child’s bedroom at night because the temptation to constantly be on social media is just too great.

Mr. Smith gave several examples of sexting and sextortion has caused much embarrassment for teenagers. “But embarrassment isn’t the worst of it,” he said. Through his work, he has seen very talented athletes and others not even be offered college scholarships or careers because of what they have posted or shared on their social media site and liked or commented on a friend’s social media account. And isn’t just sexual in nature. Posting or liking photos of guns or violence or misogynistic comments or racist content are equally damaging.

“This is the first generation whose character is being judged by people who they have never met personally but who do have some authority over them,” he said.

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Staff Report

Thomas More University welcomed local media to campus, March 2, for a celebration of the success seen in the first 24 months of the Second Century Campaign: It’s time for More, the funding mechanism for the University’s strategic plan: Lighting the Way represents the University’s vision to shape the ethical business leaders of tomorrow.

“Founded in 1921 as Northern Kentucky’s first college, we continue to be the regional leader of a quality Catholic liberal arts education, providing students an experience that develops character, a sense of purpose, and an understanding of responsibility to others,” said Mr. Chillo.

Mr. Chillo alluded to coming initiatives stemming from the strategic plan. An innovative education model will soon be unveiled to address the need for more highly qualified teachers in PreK-12 classrooms throughout the Commonwealth. The University launches the Center for Faith, Mission, and Catholic Education in summer 2023, leaning into the Catholic values that have been a cornerstone of the institution. Mr. Chillo also shared that on Friday, March 24, a ceremony is planned celebrating the official name the College of Business, one of the first gifts to the Second Century Campaign and a vision to shape the ethical business leaders of tomorrow.

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje

June 12-22, 2023

with Priest Chaplain

Package price from Cincinnati is only $2,795.

Price includes transportation, tours, accommodations, and daily breakfast and dinner.

e-mail: lpifher@hotmail.com or Call Lisa Pifher at (615) 577-6780

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL NKY
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Join us as we recognize the Centennial Birthday for the Diocesan Council and parish conferences at Holy Cross, Mother of God, and Blessed Sacrament.

March 18, 2023
4:00 PM Mass
Most Reverend John C. Iffert, Celebrant
Blessed Sacrament Church
Ft. Mitchell, KY

Scan the QR code to participate in our rare 100th Birthday Bash Bourbon Raffle.

You could win one of four prize packages including Pappy Van Winkle, Weller, Blanton’s, and more!

ONLY 500 TICKETS SOLD. $100 PER TICKET.
To be Christian is to share God’s love, pope says at audience

Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

The mission to spread the Gospel message of God’s love and of salvation in Christ is entrusted to all the baptized who are called to work together and never set out alone, Pope Francis said.

The “ecclesial” dimension of evangelization “is binding and guarantees the authenticity of Christian proclamation,” the pope said at his weekly general audience March 8 in St. Peter’s Square, the first audience held outdoors in 2023.

At the end of the audience, Pope Francis noted the day’s celebration of International Women’s Day, thanking women “for their commitment to building a more humane society through their ability to grasp reality with a creative gaze and tender heart. This is a privilege only of women.”

The pope not only offered “a special blessing for all the women in the square,” but asked the crowd to join him in “a round of applause for women. They deserve it!”

Continuing his series of audience talks about evangelization, Pope Francis said the support and confirmation of the church in mission work is necessary “because the temptation of proceeding alone is always lurking, especially when the path becomes impassable, and we feel the burden of the commitment.”

But it also is tempting “to adopt the worldly logic of numbers and polls” or to rely on one’s own ideas and programs rather than on the Holy Spirit, he said. Having a plan and analyzing what is working can be helpful but is always “secondary” to “the strength the Spirit gives you to proclaim the truth of Jesus Christ.”

That truth, he said, is that “God’s love is not just for a little group, no, it’s for all, everyone, no one excluded.”

Quoting from the Second Vatican Council’s Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity, Pope Francis said the task of the church is “to continue the mission of Christ, who was ‘sent to preach the Gospel to the poor,’” a task for which all the baptized are responsible.

Within the church there cannot be “active” members and “passive” members, he said. “There are not those who preach, those who proclaim the Gospel in one way or another and those who keep quiet. No.”

Pope Francis imagined a conversation:

“You are Christian?”

“Yes, I’ve been baptized.”

“Do you evangelize?”

“What’s that mean?”

“If you do not evangelize,” he said, “if you do not give that witness of the baptism you have received, of the faith the Lord gave you, then you are not a good Christian.”

Faith is a gift that must be shared with others, “with a sense of responsibility” and a commitment to journey together with the rest of the church even when the going seems rough, the pope said.

Pope Francis greets Ukrainian refugees after his weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican March 8, 2023. As he has done for more than a year, the pope asked people at the audience to pray for peace in Ukraine and for the victims of the war.

Here to lend a hand.

Charlie’s Club, Adult Day Health Program

Monday - Friday
8am - 5:30pm

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Students at St. Joseph School, Crescent Springs, gathered for a fun game of volleyball during Catholic Schools Week as the Teachers took on the 8th graders.

**School Events**

**Channels:**
- Antenna 12.2; Spectrum 117 or 25; Cincinnati Bell 17
- Noon to 1 p.m.

**Local Broadcast:**
- Viewers can tune in to The Assumption on The CW, Sundays, 10 a.m.-noon.
- Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW, Sundays, 10 a.m.-noon.
- Bump, set, spike for Catholic Schools

**Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW, Sundays, 10 a.m.-noon.**

**Local Events:**

- **Assumption:**
- March 15, 10 a.m.; Holy Hour, confession 11 a.m.; Everybody is welcome.
- March 12, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell, beginning at 5 p.m. with Sunday Vespers, after which dinner is provided. Parents and family members are encouraged to attend as well. The next dinner is March 19, noon-4;
- **Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria, Art Gallery:**
- March 3, 10, 17, 4–7:30 p.m.
- **St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood,** March 10, 24, 31, 5–8 p.m.
- **St. Augustine, Augusta, every Friday through March 31, 5 p.m. until fish run out.**
- **St. Augustine Parish, Covington, 4–7 p.m.**
- **St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger,** 4:30–8 p.m.
- **St. Bernard Parish, Dayton,** 5–7 p.m.
- **St. Catherine of Siena Parish,** Ft. Thomas, 4:30–7:30 p.m.
- **St. Edward Parish, Cynthiana,** 11 a.m.–1 p.m.; 5–7 p.m., (859) 298-5932
- **St. Francis Xavier Parish, Falmouth, Knights of Columbus, 4–7:30 p.m., (859) 321-9733
- **St. James, Brooksville, 4:30 p.m.–6:30 p.m.**
- **St. Joseph Academy, Walton,** 4:30–8 p.m.
- **St. Joseph Parish, Camp Springs, 4–7:30 p.m.**
- **St. Matthew Parish, Morning View,** 4:30–7 p.m.
- **St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill,** 4:30–7:30 p.m.
- **St. Timothy, Union, drive-thru, credit card only, 4:30–7 p.m., Dine-in 5–7:30 p.m.**
- **St. William Parish, Williamstown, drive-thru only, 4:30–7 p.m.**

**Fish Frys**

- **Holy Cross District High School, Covington,** 5–8 p.m.
- **Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish,** Erlanger, 4–8 p.m.

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**Learning more:** Please contact St. Henry parishioner Michael PORTWOOD, (859) 766-6855 or e-mail pamartin@ndad@yahoo.com.

**All Fridays of Lent — Mar 10-Mar 31**

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Catholics concerned as U.S. child labor violations increase and lawmakers seek to weaken laws

Kimberley Heatherington
OSV News

Not all children filling many vacant U.S. jobs are working the drive-thru window, pushing carts or helping on the family farm — jobs typically associated with teenagers learning responsibility along with useful business and personal skills.

According to recently published reports and investigations, minors are toiling in some of the most dangerous conditions in American industry, such as construction, slaughteringhouses and assembly lines.

Catholics and labor leaders OSV News spoke with voiced concern that children are all too easily exploited in the U.S. economy, where some lawmakers are looking to loosen further restrictions on child labor in response to companies clamoring for workers to fill vacancies.

"Even responsible adults who have been trained period-ically are at risk of injury in this kind of environment," shared Clayton Sinyai, executive director of the Catholic Labor Network. "Certainly children do not belong there."

Sinyai referred to the U.S. Department of Labor's Feb. 17 announcement that an investigation found more than 100 children were working for a contractor cleaning back saws, brisket saws and head splitters. The companies it investigated had employed more than 3,800 children in violation of labor laws, the department said.

In one of the largest child labor cases in its history, the Labor Department's Wage and Hour Division discovered 102 children ages 13 to 17 were employed by Kieler, its client facilities in the states of Arkansas, Colorado, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Tennessee and Texas. According to the department, the children worked overnight shifts, and at least three suffered injuries while cleaning back saws, brisket saws and head splitters.

While Packers Sanitation Services Inc. is an illustrative example, it is hardly isolated. The Labor Department says it has 600 ongoing child labor investigations.

"Since 2018, the U.S. Department of Labor has seen a 69 percent increase in children being employed illegally by companies. In the last fiscal year, the department found 835 companies it investigated had employed more than 3,800 children in violation of labor laws," the department said Feb. 27.

U.S. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh emphasized that child labor "is a today problem" and called on Congress and states to "come to the table."

"This is a problem that will take all of us to stop," Walsh said in a Feb. 27 statement. The Labor Department called for Congress to increase violation penalties; an interagency task force; a strategic enforcement initiative and increased enforcement funding; and additional outreach services to unaccompanied refugees and migrant children who are vulnerable to labor exploitation.

"The church, in these recent times, has become alarmed by the increasing number of children involved in the labor force," Father Christopher Mahar, an official in the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, told OSV News. "It is essential for society to concentrate on the root causes of poverty and not attempt to solve the economic crises by turning to child labor. Employers frequently cite an ongoing worker shortage among their challenges, which has motivated some state legislatures to introduce bills that would weaken child labor law age regulations and safety protections.

In Minnesota, Sen. Rich Draheim, R-District 22, is the sponsor of SF 375, a bill that would make it easier for con-struction companies to hire 16- and 17-year-olds.

"My bill simply conforms Minnesota law to the existing federal standards," Draheim asserted in a statement to OSV News. "Eliminating work opportunities for youth just because of their age will make it even harder for business-es to find reliable employees. Businesses teach these youth workers skills that will prepare them for their future, and maybe even attract them to their industry for life."

Draheim's office noted that Minnesota's unemployment rate is among the lowest in the country, with an exception-ally skilled labor market. The Minnesota Catholic Conference indicated it had "no comment on the bill as we have not vetted it fully." The bill is currently in committee.

In Iowa, SF 167, a bill introduced by Sen. Jason Schultz, R-Brookfield, would extend work hours for 14- and 15-year-olds; allow six hours of work a day during the school year; allow 17-year-olds to work the same hours as adults; elimi-nate work permits; and limit employer liability.

There also is the possibility of exceptions for previously prohibited industries, allowing teens 14-17 to take part in "work-based learning or a school or employer adminis-tered, work-related program."

Schultz's office did not respond to OSV News' request for comment.

The Iowa Catholic Conference said it "has not taken a position on the bill to date." The Iowa Senate Workforce Committee approved the bill March 6, renumbering it SF 542, with the Iowa House Commerce Committee advancing its companion bill March 7.

"When I hear an employer say that there's a worker shortage, what they're actually saying is there are no workers available to work at the price I'm willing to pay," Clayton Sinyai noted. "They don't like the current labor market, and would like to pay people less. And children will work for less."

Mary Leary, professor and senior associate dean for academic affairs at The Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law in Washington, agreed.

"It's a cost-cutting measure for global companies to not do what the market would normally say they have to do — which is increase costs, decrease risk, and make this job more attractive to the workforce," she told OSV News.

Kevin Cassidy, director of the U.S. office of the International Labor Organization, told OSV News the problem is that in the U.S., "People are not being offered good pay for those dirty, dull and dangerous jobs."

The ILO is a Geneva, Switzerland-based specialized agency of the United Nations, and has confronted the issue of child labor since its 1919 founding. It sets international labor standards, and advises the U.S. government concerning policy. The Vatican delegates a permanent observer to the U.N. and its agencies, and Pope Francis has offered messages to ILO gatherings.

"Uncorruptible employers take advantage of the fact that the children are not aware of that," Cassidy said. "At the end of the day, it's an exploitation of their vulnerabil-ity, and that is absolutely unacceptable from a human rights point of view."

Benjamin Smith, the ILO's senior child labor specialist, told OSV News that for economic growth, "decent work for parents is critical, so labor markets don't respond to short-ages by plugging the gap with children."

Pope Francis has made the same argument. At the Vatican's 2021 conference "Rethinking Child Labor, Building a Better Future," the pontiff said, "We must encourage states and actors in the business world to create dignified jobs with equitable salaries which allow families to satisfy their needs without their children being forced to work."

Ultimately, child labor will persist until the national willpower is summoned to end it.

"We can't turn a blind eye to this. We do have an obliga-tion — whether it's morally, spiritually, or economically — to ensure that we do our part," said Cassidy. "When we see these things happening around us, we have to call it out. It's not somebody else's problem. It's society's problem."

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WASHINGTON — Marking the first anniversary of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine and praying that God will “have mercy and save us” and “convert those who foster aggression and war,” Washington Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory and Metropolitan Archbishop Borys Gudziak, the Ukrainian Catholic Archbishop of Philadelphia, led a March 7 ecumenical prayer service for peace at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

As one human family gather this evening to pray as we mark the sorrowful occasion of one year of war in the country of Ukraine and Ukraine’s courageous resistance to the Russian invasion,” Cardinal Gregory said. “We pray this evening and each day for comfort and wisdom as well as for the continued strength to endure. Our prayers are for all war and conflict to cease in every part of the world — that we may experience God’s healing and live in peace.”

The prayer service was held 11 days after the first anniversary of the start of the war. On Feb. 24, 2022 Russian forces invaded Ukraine after a massive military buildup at the border. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine last year is actually a continuation of hostilities that began in 2014 when Russia annexed Crimea and supported pro-Russia separatists who seized the Donetsk region in eastern Ukraine.

For these 12 months of devastation and destruction, we have joined in prayer with Pope Francis to reiterate our desire that everything possible be done to foster dialogue and a pathway to cooperation and peace,” Cardinal Gregory said, adding that “we remain committed to work for justice and the wellbeing of all God’s people in every circumstance and country.”

Among the churchmen joining Cardinal Gregory and Archbishop Gudziak at the service were Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the U.S.; Archimandrite Bogoli of the Archdiocese of the Military Services, USA, and president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; and Cardinal Donald Wuerl, the archbishop emeritus of the Archdiocese of Washington. Orthodox clergy members also participated in the prayer service.

More than 150 lay and religious attended the service in the basilica’s Crypt Church. The ecumenical prayer service for peace in Ukraine was chanted in both English and Ukrainian. Those gathered prayed that God would “grant the people of Ukraine the grace of faith and victory to your faithful people over their enemies” and “bless the Ukrainian and those who mourn them, those who have been displaced from their homes. At one point, nearly 20 million Ukrainians were displaced, but nearly 11 million have since returned. The U.N. has declared the exodus the largest refugee crisis in Europe since the end of World War II.”

“In this tragic year, the world has witnessed the faith and resilience of the Ukrainian people as they have defended their God-given dignity and freedom,” Cardinal Gregory said. “We stand in solidarity with all who suffer and with those who defend the innocent.”

The UNHCR also estimates that about 8.1 million Ukrainians, approximately 20 percent of the population, have been displaced from their homes. At one point, nearly 20 million Ukrainians were displaced, but nearly 11 million have since returned. The U.S. has declared the exodus the largest refugee crisis in Europe since the end of World War II.

“We understand the lasting effects of the trauma and horror of war that are affecting many,” Cardinal Gregory said at the March 7 prayer service. “We see in the news stories and social media the heartache and suffering that moves us to be responsive in all the ways we can to foster peace and an end to war.”

Archbishop Gudziak, who recently returned from a visit to Ukraine, said, “Catholics along with people of other faiths and children and grandparents and students and others have asked me to thank you for your prayers, your advocacy and your help.”

“Thank you for the solidarity you have shown,” he said. “The people of Ukraine are incredibly grateful,” he said. “It is important for people (around the world) to understand how grateful the people of Ukraine are.”

He said one product of the war is that “Ukrainians are turning to the Lord and relying on the Lord.”

With the grace of God, many are digging deep — and not just in the earth to dig trenches, but to the very depths of their souls,” the archbishop said. “We pray for peace. We pray for justice.”

Archbishop Gudziak also pointed out that because of the Internet and social media, “we can see almost minute by minute what is going on” as the war wages.

“Everybody who is on the front lines is doing what they are supposed to do,” the archbishop said. “And, they appeal to all people of goodwill to pray, to advocate and to do what you can to help. May God reward you a hundredfold for your generosity.”

Cardinal Gregory also said he was “extremely grateful” for the ways “our American hearts, hands and homes have been opened wide to embrace the Ukrainian people in countless ways,” including welcoming displaced Ukrainians “as they navigate their new reality as refugees.”

“Serving our brothers and sisters in their time of need is our demonstration of love in our modern society that has minimized — and in the case of war, completely disregarded — the value of life and the importance of family,” Cardinal Gregory said.

Among those at the prayer service were paracharisons of the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family, which is near the basilica. Father Robert Hitchens, pastor of the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine, told Catholic Standard, the Archdiocese of Washington newspaper, that his parishioners “are more intensified in our prayers in the face of these ongoing barbaric attacks.”

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“With our prayers, we are bearing witness and encourage our neighbors to keep up support for Ukraine, especially with prayers for peace,” he said.

O’na, a native of the Crimean region of Ukraine who asked that her last name not be used, told Catholic Standard she attended the prayer service because “with God’s help, there will be a victorious end for Ukraine to this war.”

“Ukrainian resilience is remarkable, but would not be possible without help from the West — military, financial and, of course, prayer,” she said. “We cannot forget to pray.”

Richard Szczepanowski is managing editor of Catholic Standard, newspaper for the Archdiocese of Washington.
Church must accompany people, tell truth about gender ideology

Andy Telli
OSV News

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Gender ideology has permeated the culture, rewriting society’s understanding of the differences of the sexes, and leading to a sharp increase in the number of people, particularly teen girls, who are seeking a gender transition.

The role of Catholics and the church is to accompany the people facing these issues to guide them to the truth and to the Gospel, said Mary Rice Hasson, the Kate O’Beirne senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington.

Hasson addressed a recent teacher in-service program sponsored by the Diocese of Nashville’s Catholic Schools Office. More than 600 administrators, teachers and staffers at the Catholic schools in the diocese attended the program held at the Catholic Pastoral Center.

“Accompaniment has a purpose. It’s loving the person. But because you love the person, you lead the person closer to God,” said Hasson, an attorney who directs the Catholic Women’s Forum, a network of Catholic professional women and scholars, and is co-founder of the Person and Identity Project, an initiative that equips parents and faith-based institutions to counter gender ideology and promote the truth of the human person.

“We need to love people enough to tell them the truth,” she said. “It’s not love to encourage someone to believe something that’s not true.”

Catholics can look to Pope Francis’ approach to gender ideology for guidance, Hasson said. The pope reaches out to people who identify as transgender to take care of their needs while also speaking forcefully against gender ideology as a false anthropology, she said.

In his apostolic exhortation “Amoris Laetitia,” Pope Francis wrote: “It is one thing to be understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life, and another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality. Let us not fall into the sin of trying to replace the Creator. We are creatures, and not omniscient. Creation is prior to us and must be received as a gift. At the same time, we are called to protect our humanity, and this means, in the first place, accepting and respecting it as it was created.”

From the perspective of gender ideology, Hasson said, “there is no God. I create who I am.”

From the Christian perspective, “the most fundamental thing … is we are created by God,” Hasson said. “He gave me my dignity because he created me in his image.”

Our sexual identity as a female or male is a gift from God, Hasson said in her Feb. 17 address. “Every person is my dignity because he created me in his image.”

One of the arguments for undergoing a gender transition is that without the treatment, the patient will be more likely to choose suicide, but the data does not support that conclusion, Hasson said.

“These are people who are struggling, are in pain,” Hasson said. “Giving someone cross-sex hormones and amputating their breasts is not how you help people experiencing suicidal ideation.”

Unless people address their mental health issues, they will persist “because you come face to face with the fact you can’t change your sex,” Hasson said.

For the vast majority of people, once they start the process of transitioning their gender they rarely reverse the process, Hasson said. “It’s a pathway once you get on, it’s really hard to get off.”

Puberty blockers, cross-sex hormone therapy, and the surgery to transition a person’s gender “can alter your appearance and destroy your natural function,” Hasson said. “It’s irreversible damage by the time you get to surgery.”

“We should celebrate individual differences … without denying the fundamental truth of whether they’re male or female,” Hasson said. Andy Telli is the managing editor of the Tennessee Register, newspaper of the Diocese of Nashville.
Women's way: Pope opens path for more women at Vatican, in church

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — At the end of his general audience in St. Peter’s Square March 8, International Women’s Day, Pope Francis led a round of applause for women. He thanked the world’s women “for their commitment to building a more humane society” through their ability to see and understand the world “with a creative gaze and tender heart.”

“It is right for them to be able to express these skills in every sphere, not just within the family,” he wrote in the preface to a book, “More Women’s Leadership for a Better World: Caring as the Engine for Our Common Home.”

In the preface, published by Vatican News on Women’s Day, the pope wrote that “the church can also benefit from the valorization of women” by allowing them to do more than just perform a particular function or job and actually transform the culture to be more caring.

In his 10 years as pontiff, Pope Francis has sought to include more women in the work and governance of Vatican commissions and Roman Curia offices.

According to the latest statistics, there has been a significant increase in the number and percentage of female employees the past decade, and the number of women in Vatican leadership positions has also grown.

Today there are 1,145 women working at the Vatican compared to 946 in 2013, making up 25.5 percent of the total workforce, according to Vatican News March 8. When it comes to roles in the Roman Curia, more than one in four employees is now a woman.

Within the Curia, five women hold the rank of undersecretary and one has the rank of secretary: Salusian Sister Alessandra Smerilli, whom the pope appointed to the No. 2 position at the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development in 2021. It is the highest post ever held by a woman at the Holy See.

The pope has said he intends to appoint the first female prelate now that it is possible for laypeople and, therefore, women, to lead dicasteries, according to “Praedicate Evangelium,” the pope’s constitution reforming the Curia.

Pope Francis also has, for the first time, appointed women as full members of Vatican dicasteries, when previously that role was reserved to cardinals and some bishops. Members play a key role and vote along with prefects and secretaries at plenary assemblies.

So, while the pope has been bringing more women to “a place at the table” in Rome, he also has opened up new ways for women’s voices to be heard.

His Synod of Bishops on synodality has inspired some groups to create surveys specifically for women and compile the findings to send to the synod. The synodal process is meant to be an ongoing exercise for the entire church to learn to come together, to listen more intently and discern what the Holy Spirit is saying.

The World Women’s Observatory’s of the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations (WUCWO) created a survey which is open until March 15, for women who held leadership positions during any phase of the synodal process to reflect on concerns regarding the role of women in the church.

Also, researchers from Australia’s University of Newcastle produced the International Survey of Catholic Women’s of the Catholic: Women Speak network as a way to contribute their voices to the synod. It received more than 17,800 responses from 104 countries and those findings with recommendations were sent to the synod in September. The complete report was presented at the Vatican March 8 by Tracy McEwan, a theologian and sociologist of religion affiliated with the University of Newcastle and a member of the research team.

The presentation, sponsored by Chiara Perro, Australia’s ambassador to the Holy See, also included Maria Lía Zervino, a sociologist and president of WUCWO, who gave the preliminary findings of their survey of more than 400 women who played a leadership role during the synodal process.

Zervino said 26 percent of respondents said they experienced no obstacles during the synodal process, while 41 percent of respondents said their “main obstacle” was an ordained minister and 38 percent said other members of the community were obstacles. Smaller percentages felt a lack of experience or difficulty speaking before a formal audience of church hierarchy was their main obstacle.

Some 9 percent of respondents felt “effectively involved in decision making” during the synodal process while 20 percent said they did not. Asked if their opinion had been listened to: 23 percent said “always,” 41 percent said “usually,” 12 percent said “several times,” while 23 percent responded “rarely” or “no.”

Both surveys had overlapping findings, one of the most important being that women’s views are not a “monolith” and it is the diversity of their experiences, challenges and hopes that can enrich everyone.

Some common threads when it came to findings and recommendations in both surveys were: the women surveyed were enthusiastic and deeply identified with their faith, they desired more inclusion, especially of those who have been marginalized, there is a need for greater formation for everyone, including male members and leaders of the church. Both surveys found the desire for ordained ministry for women was more predominant in North America and some European countries.

The women they surveyed were “deeply concerned” about transparency and accountability in church leadership and governance, McEwan said, and concerned about abuse, racism and sexism in church environments.

McEwan said she handed Pope Francis their report at the end of his general audience, where he met them as well as some of the 29 resident women ambassadors to the Holy See. Zervino, who is also one of the three women members the pope appointed to the Diaconate for Bishops, said she hopes all the “words” contained in these findings have an impact. The pope has said that “the church cannot and should not remain just with words,” she added, adding that she believed the time for concrete action has come.

“I am convinced this synodal process will have many concrete results that will change a bit the way things work in the church, perhaps in the structure, perhaps in daily life,” in reaching out to others and other faiths — all areas where women are, in fact, already active, she said.

The pope has opened a “fantastic” new road, she said, so “let’s go” and forge ahead because “we can do concrete things because we are women are concrete.”

Stewardship and Mission Services

Due to a planned retirement, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, KY (www.covdio.org) seeks candidates for the position of Director of the Office of Stewardship and Mission Services. The message of stewardship has been part of the salvation history of the Church. All of the teachings of stewardship come directly from the Gospels, the Old Testament, and the letters of the New Testament. Stewardship is the way God expects us to live, with gratitude and with awareness that everything we have is a gift. The goals of this office are straightforward and include: stewardship formation and education; research and planning; development of diocese-wide support for parishes, ministries, and schools in areas of programs; and business and fund development, especially the Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal which makes so many diocesan services possible. This office also works to spread the message of Mission through prayer, education, works of justice, and providing financial support to activities and organizations such as the Seminarian Education Fund; Religious Retirement; International and Domestic Needs; Peter’s Pence; and Operation Rice Bowl. The Director represents the Bishop of Covington and the Office throughout the Diocese and the community at-large to develop relationships and support. S/he provides a wide variety of services to pastors and parishes, including stewardship conferences, programs for school children, and estate planning seminars. We seek an outgoing, creative, faith-filled Catholic individual with a servant’s heart and the expertise and experience to lead, manage, and inspire others to support diocesan initiatives. We require an individual with significant experience in comprehensive fundraising at a senior level, including experience with planned giving, major gifts, and annual giving programs. Those interested in this opportunity may submit a letter of interest along with a comprehensive resume or CV, including compensation history and a list of references that includes contact email addresses, by email or by fax to Stephen Koplay, SPHR, at skoplayay@covdio.org or 859-392-1589.
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PRINCIPAL, K-8TH GRADES AND PRESCHOOL
St. Joseph School, Bardstown Ky., is a nationally recognized Blue-Ribbon school. We are seeking a principal who can carry forward the strong leadership of our retiring principal. Applicants must be practicing Catholic and meet the requirements as outlined by the Archdiocese of Louisville. The principal oversees our K-8th grades and Preschool. There are a total of 415 students and 42 faculty and staff. Applicants are asked to submit their letter of interest and resume by March 22, 2023 to: St. Joseph Search Committee, PO Box 548 Bardstown Ky. 40004 or by email: tbradshaw@stjoechurch.com

PLEDGE COORDINATOR
The Diocese of Covington’s Stewardship and Mission Services Office invites qualified individuals to apply for the support position of Pledge Coordinator. This role requires an individual who takes pride in performing detailed work with an absolute minimum of errors. Primary responsibilities include recording financial pledges, gifts, payments, etc., for the Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal, and also fundraising campaign reporting, implementation, monitoring, and follow-up. Ideally, we are seeking Catholic candidates who relate well to others, are extremely detail- and confidentiality-oriented, are comfortable with a team approach to projects, and can manage deadlines under a steady workload. Interested individuals may send a resume, with a cover letter, compensation history, and at least three references with contact email addresses to Stephen Koplyay by email or by fax at skoplyay@covdio.org, or by fax to 859/392-1589.

DENTAL ASSISTANT
Dental Assistant for small, laid back dental office replacing a part-time dental assistant. 2 Working Operators. Team approach. 20 to 27 hours a week. Active Ky license required. Contact Dr. Messmer (859) 431-5234.

GROUNDKEEPER
St. Stephen Catholic Cemetery in Ft. Thomas, KY, has an immediate need for a full-time Groundskeeper. Primary responsibilities include labor-intensive tasks associated with interments, maintenance, repair, construction, cleaning, and operation of the Cemetery’s facilities and grounds. Experience operating backhoe equipment would be helpful. Interested individuals should contact Stephen Koplyay, 859-392-1589, by email or by fax at skoplyay@covdio.org or by phone: 859-392-1589.

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The Diocese of Covington invites individuals with a degree and background in Accounting to apply for the position of Internal Auditor. This position reports directly to the Chief Financial Officer. This position updates/maintains the existing Parish and High School audit programs, schedules and performs parish/high school audits, writes audit reports, as well as other duties in the Finance Office. Minimal requirements include a degree in Accounting with at least two years of experience, including auditing. CPA licensure is preferred. Submit cover letter, resume, salary history, and five references with email address to: Stephen Koplyay by email or fax, SKoplyay@Covdio.org or 859-392-1589. E.O.E.

The Messenger, the Diocese of Covington’s official weekly newspaper, is seeking a full-time Staff Writer to join its editorial team. This position requires a broad range of abilities including excellent writing, proof-reading and digital content development. Must be a practicing Roman Catholic. If you enjoy meeting people and desire to draw others to the Catholic faith through your creative work submit a resume, references, and writing samples to Stephen Koplyay by e-mail: skoplyay@covdio.org, (859) 392-1500. EOE

We’re expanding our life-affirming medical team!
Care Net is now hiring:
Nurse Manager RN with RDMS experienced in obstetrics to provide limited OB ultrasounds. 12-18 hrs/wk, 1st shift, Mon-Thurs. Active Ky license required.
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Nurse Advocate RN to enter training for limited obstetrical ultrasounds. 12-18 hrs/wk, 1st shift, Mon-Thurs. Active Ky license required.
Send resume: info@carenetky.org or scan code

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Larry’s Tree Service
(859) 635-8528 or 240-4563 Reasonable Rates — Free Estimates
FIREWOOD — Senior Citizen Discounts Available

The Diocese of Covington, a Blue Ribbon School in Springfield, KY, is seeking a principal for the 2023 – 2024 school year who possesses leadership and communication skills necessary to promote dynamic educational growth and staff development. Our school has an enrollment of 220 PreK – 8th students, along with a dedicated, highly motivated and experienced staff. The town of Springfield has strong enrollment growth potential, as well as strong parental and community support. Candidate must be a practicing Catholic, have teaching experience and be certified or working toward administrative certification. Competitive salary commensurate of qualifications and on the diocesan salary scale. Applicants are asked to submit a letter of interest and resume by March 15, 2023 to: St. Dominic Church Attn: Principal Search Committee 303 West Main Street Springfield, KY 40069

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DENTAL ASSISTANT
Our family dental practice is seeking an assistant to join our team. Full time Mon-Thur. No experience necessary but preferred. Benefits available. 401K. Please email resume to drdansheridan2@gmail.com or Call 859-635-1756.

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2 Floral Hills Cemetery plots and 2 vaults. In the popular Gethsmane section of the Cemetery or any available plots of your choosing. The plots and vaults together are selling for $3,500. A $9600 value if purchased from directly from Floral Hills. Call Daniel Dunn 859-630-6266

JOBS 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:

- Accounting Associate
  Catholic Charities is seeking to hire a part time Accounting Associate. This is a non-exempt, part-time, hourly position, 20 hours a week. Under the general direction of the Controller, assists with all activities in connection with financial and business matters, including budgeting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, financial reporting, external audit, policies, and procedures for transacting financial business.

- Administrative Assistant to Marketing and Fund Development
  Catholic Charities is seeking to hire a part time Administrative Assistant to the Marketing and Fund Development staff. This is a non-exempt, part time, hourly position, 24 hours a week. Under the direction of the Institutional Advancement Manager assists with ensuring accuracy of donor database by entering and updating information, sending acknowledgements, providing reports, assist with event implementation and in the production of print and electronic marketing materials.

- Parish Kitchen, Weekend Staff
  Parish Kitchen is a special ministry that serves a free lunch daily in Covington to anyone hungry. We are looking for one or more individuals to work part-time on weekends who feel a call to serve within the context of this ministry, and who are capable of working with the population we do. This is a paid position, working selected 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 clean up after closing. Ideally, two weekend staff work together to oversee all aspects of this operation. Prior experience in one or more 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 need.

To learn more details about any of these job opportunities, please visit our website at https://www.covingtoncharities.org/news-events/job-opportunities.

The key to happiness (Continued from page 4)

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

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

The key to happiness
sometimes a mixture of both. I lead each of My children along a path that is uniquely tailor-made for him or her. Comparing is not only wrong; it is also meaningless. Don’t look for affirmation in the wrong places: your own evaluations or those of other people. The only source of real affirmation is My unconditional Love. Many believers perceive Me as an unpleasable Judge, angrily searching out their faults and failures. Nothing could be farther from the truth! Died for your sins so that I might clothe you in My garments of salvation. This is how I see you: radiant in My robe of righteousness. When I discipline you, it is never in anger or disgust; it is to prepare you for face-to-face fellowship with Me throughout all eternity. Immerse yourself in My loving Presence. Be receptive to My affirmation, which flows continuously from the throne of grace."

Sounds like a plan to me. You, too?

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven.” (Luke 6:37)

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

CEMETERY PLOTS FOR SALE – ST. MARY
Three adjacent cemetery plots at St. Mary’s Catholic Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell, Section 9-B, Lot 254, for sale. $3000 for all three. Call Greg Reardon 1-205-706-0048 Leave message.

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Job opportunities at Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington

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“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven.” (Luke 6:37)

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IF YOU ARE DINING IN, PLEASE PARK AT SMDHS AND RIDE THE SHUTTLE BUS TO MQP.
‘Restored in Christ’ project
(Continued from page 1)

the behest of Covington’s Third Bishop, Camillus Maes.

Don Knochelmann, diocesan director for Buildings and Properties, said that three chimera that were in serious disrepair and causing a safety concern were removed from the Cathedral in 2019. “In fact, pieces had fallen on the ground, on the sidewalks.” Mr. Knochelmann went on.

At that time, Stephen Enzweiler, Cathedral archivist, completed a condition report on the Cathedral’s chimera and gargoyles. All 58 of the terra cotta figures had fallen into disrepair. Following up on that report, in October 2020, Mr. Knochelmann contracted with the Cincinnati architectural firm SHP to conduct an extensive survey. Using Truscan 3D technology, every inch of the exterior of Cathedral was painstakingly scanned. Overall, the Cathedral was determined to be in good condition with little signs of structural movement.

However, the decorative stone supports and ornamental elements have deteriorated extensively, requiring immediate attention. Among the survey’s report, SHP noted:

— Buttresses, piers and belt courses have eroded and split.
— Terra cotta gargoyles and chimera, limestone columns, finials and arcades are cracked and crumbling.
— Lintel, armatures and colonnades held together by iron pins have eroded from rust and water entrenchment.

“So much of the work included in the scope is just general masonry repairs, repairs that you would see at any church,” said Mr. Knochelmann as he described the ongoing work. “But because the Cathedral is so decorative and ornate... a lot of that is badly damaged from the freeze and thaw cycles” over the last 100-plus years.

To recreate the chimera and gargoyles — known collectively as grotesques — SHP has created 3D images. Like the original, terra cotta will be used to craft the grotesques. The new grotesques will be identical in design to the original creatures, which were fashioned after the chimera and gargoyles guarding Notre Dame in Paris. Over 100 years ago, popular wisdom was to fill the terra cotta chimera with concrete. Architects and engineers have since learned that it is better to leave the terra cotta hollow. In fact, it was the continual freezing and thawing of the concrete which exacerbated the deterioration of the Cathedral’s chimera.

Additionally, Indiana limestone sourced from the same quarry the Cathedral stone was taken a century ago, will be used in the restoration.

Mike Murray and the Office of Stewardship and Mission Services is reaching out to benefactors for the initial silent phase of funding for the project. In early Fall, parishioners throughout the diocese will be invited to make a gift to complete the “Restored In Christ” project.

“This campaign will ensure that our next 170 years begins with the same resolute commitment to stewardship for the many gifts God has given us,” said Bishop Iffert.

Bishop Iffert

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

Step 1: Contact parish/school institution leader to review the Policies and Procedures and fill out the Application and Acceptance Forms.

Step 2: Go to www.virtusonline.org and click on Registration. Follow the prompts to create an account and request a background check.

Selection.com is a secure site; the background check is posted on your account and you receive a copy if you request it during the registration process. You will sign up for a VIRTUS training class during the registration.

Step 3: Your account becomes active when your background check, VIRTUS section and Acceptance Forms are posted on your account. You will receive 12 bulletins per year. You will receive e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletins:
— March: posted Sunday, March 5; due Tuesday, March 8
— April: posted Sunday, April 23; due Tuesday, April 26
— May: posted Sunday, May 21; due Tuesday, May 24
— June: posted Sunday, June 18; due Tuesday, June 20
— July: posted Sunday, July 16; due Tuesday, July 19
— August: posted Sunday, August 20; due Tuesday, August 22
— September: posted Sunday, September 17; due Tuesday, September 20
— October: posted Sunday, October 22; due Tuesday, October 24
— November: posted Sunday, November 19; due Tuesday, November 21
— December: posted Sunday, December 16; due Tuesday, December 19

For other difficulties, contact Marylu Steffen at (859) 356-1135 or msteffen@covdio.org. E-mail notices can be turned off by e-mail notices at virtus.com.

For further information, contact Kathy Hair at (859) 728-3000 ext. 150 or Committee Staff at (859) 582-3411 x887.
March 10, 2023

National/World

Delaware bill would break seal of confession, require priest to report what penitent says

WILMINGTON, Del. — The Delaware General Assembly is taking aim at a basic tenet of the Catholic Church and wants to break the seal of confession between a priest and penitent. House Bill 74 would do away with the privilege between priest and penitent in a sacramental confession by requiring priests to report information relating to child abuse and neglect that is shared in a confessional. The Diocese of Wilmington said priests are prohibited from breaking the seal of confession and are bound to keep the confidences of penitents in the sacrament of reconciliation. “The sacrament of confession and its seal of confession is a fundamental aspect of the church’s sacramental theology and practice. It is non-negotiable,” the diocese said in a prepared statement March 4. In Vermont and Utah, state lawmakers introduced similar legislation, although in Utah, the proposal did not get a public hearing before the Legislature ended its 45-day session March 3. Two other states, Washington and Kansas, are advancing measures to require clergy to list mandatory reporters of child abuse or neglect. They are among a handful of states in the U.S. that do not already require this. However, the Kansas measure, introduced by Sen. Tom Holland, does not include protections for religious confessions.

Survivors ask for pope’s support for Nigeria’s persecuted Christians

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Finally free after nine years as a captive of a Nigerian jihadist militant group, Maria Josefa Joseph, a 17-year-old Christian from Nigeria, asked Pope Francis to do “whatever is in his means” to support the country’s persecuted Christians. Joseph and Jumada Marcuu, 22, are survivors of a Christian-targeted persecution by Boko Haram, a terror group aligned with the Islamic State that has been active in Nigeria since 2013. Both women received psychological treatment at a trauma center operated by the Diocese of Maiduguri, Nigeria, and met with the pope at the end of his general audience March 8. In 2013, when she was just nine years old, Joseph was abducted by Boko Haram and taken to a camp where she was tortured and enslaved until her escape in 2022. She said that like other Christians in the camp, she was forced to convert to Islam and keep it in a cage. “It was difficult because I was without my family then they forced me to relinquish my religion and I did not like it,” she told Catholic News Service through a translator March 7. Joseph said she was given a Muslim name and kept in a cage for an entire year after she refused to marry one of the group’s leaders. UN leaders hail pope’s South Sudan trip for its important message of peace

UNITED NATIONS — The recent trip of Pope Francis and two other prominent Christian leaders to war-torn South Sudan has sent a powerful message about the need for peace in the world’s newest nation, according to United Nations officials. Speaking at a U.N. Security Council briefing on South Sudan March 7, Joseph said she was given a Muslim name and kept in a cage for an entire year after she refused to marry one of the group’s leaders. UN leaders hail pope’s South Sudan trip for its important message of peace

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Cross Catholic Outreach’s Installation of Safe Water Wells Transforms Lives

Serving the poor in developing countries is often a challenge because locations are remote, access to electricity is unreliable, and modern systems are usually too complicated to provide practical solutions for the problems families are facing. Because of this, the missionary priests and religious sisters serving in these difficult conditions often turn to "old-fashioned methods" in achieving their goals.

"Sometimes, relying on old ways of doing things is best," admitted Jim Cavnar, CEO of Cross Catholic Outreach, a respected and successful Catholic ministry founded to serve the poor around the world. Very often, Cavnar’s teams work with Catholic ministries located so far from modern conveniences that age-old solutions must be used to overcome the challenges faced by struggling families and the ministries that serve them.

For example, Cavnar’s preferred solution to supplying safe water in a remote African village is to install a traditional deep water well with a simple, manual hand pump. This idea of tapping an underground source to supply families with clean water is nothing new. Jesus Christ’s encounter with the woman in the well is a case in point, and productive wells are mentioned in the Old Testament too. Much has changed since biblical times. Yet, in the world’s developing countries, accessing safe water has remained an ongoing struggle, and installing simple wells continues to be an excellent way to achieve successful results.

"Our ministry was founded to support Church-based efforts to benefit the poor, and we are often asked to help provide clean water sources," Cavnar said. "It’s a goal of the families that have had to travel long distances to find water — especially since many of the streams and ponds they draw their water from are used by animals and are often filled with bacteria and parasites."

Cavnar is familiar with the value of quality wells because his ministry has funded the construction of many water systems around the world. "One of the big projects we have going on now is focused on the Central Plateau of Haiti, an area where water scarcity and contamination have become serious problems," Cavnar said.

"Fortunately, our in-country partner enterprises are working to supplying safe water and supporting educational opportunities for the poorest of the poor. The bishops have also been impressed by Cross Catholic Outreach’s direct and meaningful response to emergency situations, most recently by providing food, medicines and other resources to partners in Haiti, El Salvador and areas of Belize impacted by natural disasters."

Archbishop Thomas Rodic of Mobile, Alabama, supports this mission, writing, "It is a privilege for me to support Cross Catholic Outreach. This organization funds ministries to our neighbors in need in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, and the Pacific. Through the generosity of so many, the love of God is made visible to many who are coping with the most difficult of daily living conditions."

In addition, many of the bishops and archdioceses are encouraged that Pontifical canonical status was conferred on Cross Catholic Outreach in September 2015, granting it approval as an official Catholic organization. This allows the ministry to participate in the mission of the Church and to give concrete witness to Gospel charity. "Your work with the Diocesary for Promoting Integral Human Development is a strong endorsement of your partnership with the work of the Universal Church," Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of San Francisco said. "By providing hope to the faithful overseas by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, delivering medical relief to the sick and shelter to the homeless, and through self-help projects, you are embodying the Papal Encyclical Deus Caritas Est."
Priest Renews His Commitment to Supply Safe Water to Haiti’s Poor — and Turns to U.S. Catholics for Support

Believing God has called him to be a source of love and hope to the poorest families in Haiti, Father Glenn Meaux is turning to U.S. Catholics for help in accomplishing his latest mission of mercy — an ambitious plan to provide safe water to those in greatest need.

To understand the passion and commitment of this dedicated missionary priest, it is essential to travel back to 1989, the year he arrived in Haiti’s Central Plateau and discovered the hardships families faced in the destitute village of Kobonal.

“There was no agriculture, there was no irrigation system, there was literally no hope at the time,” Fr. Meaux recalled.

To say he and his missionary team were deeply disturbed by the magnitude of the poverty in Kobonal would be an understatement. Hardly anyone in the village owned the land their fragile huts occupied. No one grew gardens or raised animals, and very few employment opportunities existed for the uneducated population, so very few families were able to earn enough money to buy food on a regular basis.

While all of these challenges were heartbreaking, Fr. Meaux immediately recognized that there was an even greater risk to local families — a lack of safe drinking water.

He noticed that women and children were gathering water from streams and rivers and that the water they collected was obviously tainted. During the dry season, the situation became even worse. People resorted to digging holes in dry riverbeds, and what seeped up was murky and unsanitary.

While Fr. Meaux has found ways to improve the situation over the years, his heart still breaks every time he discovers a mother or child living in a dilapidated shack and gathering water from a contaminated stream. When that happens, he turns to Cross Catholic Outreach and compassionate Catholics in the U.S. for help in solving the area’s water challenges.

“Fr. Meaux has already given years of his life to serving the people of Haiti, but he always has his eyes forward, looking for the next thing he can do to help relieve the people’s suffering and increase their opportunities in the world,” explained Jim Cavanar, CEO of Cross Catholic Outreach, a leading Catholic relief and development ministry supporting Catholic missions in Haiti and around the globe. “We have partnered with Fr. Meaux for more than a decade and a half because we believe in his visionary goals for Haiti. He wants to address the people’s most urgent needs, but his ultimate goal is to break the cycle of poverty in this part of Haiti forever.

“Fr. Meaux describes this vision and his objectives in an even more direct way: “As Catholics, we must extend our hands to help our brothers and sisters in need,” he said.

This year, Fr. Meaux aims to bring safe, abundant water to even more families living in and around Kobonal. The success of this project will end the collection of unsafe water from remote sources, benefitting both the health and well-being of local families.

“At Cross Catholic Outreach, we work on many projects like this, obtaining donations from U.S. Catholics to pay for the equipment and organize the construction efforts involved,” Cavanar explained. “Our current goal is to help Fr. Meaux install six new community water systems and repair five existing wells, so more than 2,000 children and adults in the Kobonal area will have access to an abundant supply of clean water.”

According to Cavanar, the new wells will have hand pumps and a cement wall for security and will open during set hours of the day. These measures will ensure that the well stations are safe and easy to use for all. Next, community members will receive training in proper sanitation and hygiene practices and will learn how to maintain the wells, ensuring well stations are operational for generations to come.

Families will be able to use the water for drinking and cooking and also to sustain the important gardens they rely on for food and income.

“Anticipation is mounting for this project, and volunteers have already stepped forward to offer their help with the construction of the wells. Now, all that’s needed are the funds for drilling, purchasing pumps, constructing a pump house to store supplies, and training community members to handle maintenance of the new facilities,” Cavanar said. “Our goal now is to make American Catholics aware of the project and gain their support.”

How to Help

To fund Cross Catholic Outreach’s effort to help the poor worldwide, use the postage-paid brochure inserted in this newspaper or mail your gift to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC02400, PO Box 97168, Washington, DC 20090-7168. The brochure also includes instructions on becoming a Mission Partner and making a regular monthly donation to this cause.

If you identify a specific aid project with your gift, 100% of the proceeds will be restricted to be used for that specific project. However, if none is specified for the project that needed, funds will be redistributed to other urgent needs in the ministry.
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This is your chance to get a head start on
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Reservations are required
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You can register by scanning
this QR code to the right:
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