A Mass was celebrated, April 22, in commemoration of the 10-year anniversary of Spiritual Motherhood of Priests in the Diocese of Covington. The Mass, celebrated by Bishop John Iffert, was held at Blessed Sacrament parish, Fort Mitchell.

Established during the papacy of Pope Benedict XVI, the ministry of Spiritual Motherhood involves women “adopting” priests as their sons, whom they will pray for, for the rest of their lives, even if the priest precedes them in death. In the Diocese of Covington today, about 300 women have committed themselves to Spiritual Motherhood.

Bishop Iffert began his homily at the Mass with gratitude for the Spiritual Motherhood of Priests, thanking them “for keeping me and my brother priests in prayer and for encouraging each other in prayer.”

Using the Rose Garden Home Mission in Covington as an example of a “chaotic,” outward ministry — where the love of Christ is freely and abundantly given to those in need and that everyone is excited and loves to be a part — he asked the Spiritual Mothers to “focus” their prayers.

“If we want people to be excited to be Catholic Christians; to be excited about the life of the Church, let’s allow a little more of that mad devotion to others … Pray for me, that I can integrate that energy in my own life. Pray for our priests that they can make that turn to be directed in the person of Christ, to reach out and touch the people Christ reached out to and touched. To feed the people that Christ fed. To live that way, pray for us diligently … that we may become the Church that submits ourselves to God’s mercy.”

As part of the Mass, a commitment ceremony was held to welcome new “mothers” into Spiritual Motherhood. During the ceremony, which begins with a prayer prayed by all the mothers for the protection and sanctification of their priest-sons, each new Spiritual Mother is given a rose to represent her priest-son. The rose is placed before the Blessed Mother’s altar as the new Spiritual Mother offers prayers for her priest-son. Following, she adds her name to a list of all the Spiritual Mothers in the Diocese of Covington as a written commitment, as well.

Women interested in Spiritual Motherhood may contact Mary Anne Gronotte at (859) 468–4732.

Spiritual Motherhood celebrates 10 years of praying for priests, their protection and sanctification

Maura Baker
Staff Writer
2022 DPAA comes to a close with record-breaking contributions

Maura Baker  
Staff Writer

With the 2023 Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal underway, the 2022 appeal comes to a close in the Diocese of Covington. As the largest fund-raising and stewardship endeavor in the diocese, the DPAA helps to fund important ministries across the diocese. The 2022 DPAA brought in a record breaking $4 million dollars in donations, all of which will be used to fund the diocese and its community. Additionally, all but two parishes in the diocese managed to reach their collection goal this year—and any parishes that raised any extra money above their goal will have those funds returned to them for their own projects and growth. Matt Hollenkamp, leadership gifts chair for the 2022 appeal, notes the “incredible impact” that will be felt in the diocese following the 2022 DPAA’s success. “It’s very rewarding knowing our Diocesan ministries and parishes are receiving the benefits of making this happen. This is such a big accomplishment. I’m so grateful to the commitment of our donors,” he said, attributing the campaign’s success to “our generous faith community and the dedication to our Catholic Church.”

“I think we collectively did a wonderful job telling our story. I also can’t thank Bishop John enough for his leadership and support. None of this happens without him,” Mr. Hollenkamp said.

The 2023 DPAA seems to likewise be on track for success, with Mr. Hollenkamp returning as general chair this year. As of the time of this article, the 2023 DPAA has raised over $300,000 more than the amount gathered this time last year.

Rosarian Monastery moves from Melbourne to Ft. Wright

Laura Keener  
Editor

The Rosarian Monastery has relocated from its location at St. Anne Retreat Center, Melbourne, to the former convent at St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright. The move was completed the weekend of April 15.

The Rosarian Monastery in the Diocese of Covington is home to four Rosarian priests — Father Anil Baa; Father Susairaj Jesurajan, Father Georg Mathew and Father Berdinand Nicholas, superior. The Rosarians first came to the Diocese of Covington in June 2019 as the diocese’s first order of contemplative men religious.

The Congregation of Rosarians was founded in 1928 by Father B.A. Thomas, O.M.I. and is the first indigenous contemplative and penitential congregation in Asia. According to its website, Rosarians “(w)itness Christ with the charism of Marian contemplative life of love and reparation rooted in humility … Rosarian spirituality is based on the Marian contemplation of the mysteries of the rosary centering life on the Holy Eucharist.” The congregation prays unceasingly for the needs of the world and in reparation for the sins of the world.

Likewise, in the Diocese of Covington, their primary ministry is prayer. The Rosarian priests spend three to four hours each day before the Blessed Sacrament praying for Bishop John Iffert and for the needs and people of the diocese. And while they are a contemplative order they are not cloistered and can, therefore, serve as confessors and spiritual directors and preside at Mass for sick or vacationing parish pastors.

“In February, Bishop John Iffert welcomed two Rosarian priests — Father George Mathew and Father Susairaj Jesurajan — who have come to join the Rosarian Monastery in the Diocese of Covington. Pictured (from left) are: Rosarian Father Anil Baa; Father Mathew; Bishop Iffert; Rosarian Father Berdinand Nicholas, superior; and Father Jesurajan.
St. Anne Retreat Center closes while diocese considers options for the building

Laura Keener  
Editor

Two high school retreats and a men’s Cursillo retreat held between January and March of this year, marked the final retreats at St. Anne Retreat Center. Melbourne, St. Anne Retreat Center officially stopped operating in December and retreat staff have either retired, were able to continue employment at a parish, school or organization within the diocese or found employment outside of the diocese. Organizers of the high school and Cursillo retreats held earlier this year chose to forego the hospitality and amenities usually offered at a retreat center — like cooked meals — rather than find an alternative available retreat center.

The retreats, however, may not be the last retreat to be held at St. Anne’s.

“The future of the retreat center is being studied right now,” said Bishop John Iffert in an interview April 20.

“We are looking at all the options and whether that building can be used for another purpose.”

The building, the former provincial house for the Congregation of the Sisters of Divine Providence, was constructed in 1939. In an effort to right-size their building with current needs, the Sisters sold the building and much of the surrounding property to the Diocese of Covington in 2012, and the diocesan retreat center began. As the diocese continues to contemplate the future of the building and property, the welfare of the Sisters, whose administrative office, the Providence Center and retirement home, Holy Family Home, as well as the Sister’s cemetery are located directly adjacent to the St. Anne Retreat Center, will also be respected.

“We can’t use or sell that building for a use that would impact their daily lives or threaten their cemetery,” said Bishop Iffert.

The decision to close St. Anne Retreat Center was large.

“The economic obstacles are huge,” said Bishop Iffert.

For the 2022-23 fiscal year, the diocese was projecting a subsidy of over $66k. That is over and above revenues received from retreats. These funds would come directly from the diocesan budget, which is assessed on parishes and is used to fund the work and ministries of the diocese. Historically the subsidy has been over $40k a year since the opening of the retreat center. This financial gap persisted even though the Retreat Center and its staff were operating at capacity.

“We were not going to be able to work our way out of this,” Bishop Iffert said.

Additionally a 2015 study revealed that the building was structurally sound and sturdy but needed $15m in maintenance updates — electrical, plumbing, HVAC — just to continue operating.

As an example, Don Knochelmann, diocesan director for Buildings and Properties, shared that the electrical panel at St. Anne Retreat Center is so outdated that it no longer meets Duke Energy’s standards. If the electrical system were to become damaged, the entire electrical system would need to be updated before service could be restored. The boiler system has similar age related issues.

“So there were these, I call them ticking time bombs, that are out there,” Bishop Iffert said. “We were not making good headway in catching up to the needs of the building.”

That estimate was for maintenance updates only; he said, and did not include any renovations to update and convert the space into a modern retreat center.

“It doesn’t include anything to create ensuite bathrooms or individual thermostats or any of those kinds of things that we regularly get in the feedback that people want in a retreat center,” said Bishop Iffert. “Those millions that we’re talking about don’t even touch that.”

And, that estimate is now eight years old. Over these last eight years construction costs have risen dramatically across the board.

“You would expect those costs to increase nine percent a year. In our economy the last four years, it has probably doubled,” said Bishop Iffert.

While the dollars and cents are part of the economic equation, a significant part that Bishop Iffert simply could not reconcile is the opportunity costs — the much needed ministries and opportunities that were left unfunded or underfunded — like Hispanic ministry or youth and family ministries — because of the large subsidy needed to keep the retreat center functioning.

“This is very important to me. When I talk about this being an economic decision, I’m not saying that I value money itself is not very meaningful to me. It’s what the diocese is giving up, the opportunities that are there,” said Bishop Iffert.

“To put that in perspective, our diocesan budget is a little over $8 million. So, the subsidy for the retreat center; above what people were paying for the retreats, was $1 out of every $15 we collect from parishes,” he said.

Bishop Iffert said that he does value retreats. In fact, retreats were a significant part of his vacation story. Currently he is the episcopal moderator for Teens Encounter Christ in New Orleans, Louisiana, a retreat center that had a significant impact on him when he attended them as a teen. The goal, he said, would be for the diocese to find a way to offer a retreat experience “in a less expensive way.”

He said he is grateful that there are several retreat centers close by — like the Jesuit Spiritual Center in Milford, Ohio and the Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Center in Norwood — that offer good options for parishes, Cursillo and personal retreats.

For now, the St. Anne Retreat Center awaits the Holy Spirit to inspire and enlighten what its next use will be for the Diocese of Covington.
After Jesus rose from the dead, his first appearances were to women. Why? One obvious reason might be that it was women who followed him to his death on Good Friday, while the men largely abandoned him. As well, it was women, not men, who set off for his tomb on Easter morning, hoping to anoint his dead body with spices—so it was women who were in the garden when he first appeared. But there is, I believe, a deeper and more symbolic reason. Women are the midwives. It is generally women who tend to new birth and women who are more paramount in initially nurturing new life in its infancy.

In any birth a midwife can be helpful. When a baby is born, normally the head pushes its way through the birth canal first, opening the way for the body to follow. A good midwife can be very helpful at this time, helping to ease that passage through the birth canal, helping ensure that the baby begins to breathe, and helping the mother to immediately begin to nurture that new life. A midwife can sometimes mean the difference between life and death. She makes the birth easier and healthier for both mother and baby. She cares for the infant in the days to come, and in its infancy that life had to be specially midwifed, both in its emergence and in the initial breaths it took in this world. The resurrection birthed many things, and these had to be midwifed. Initially by the women to whom Jesus first appeared, then by the apostles who left us their eyewitness accounts of the risen Jesus, then by the early Church, then by its martyrs, then by the lived faith of countless women and men through the centuries, and sometimes, too, by theologians and spiritual writers. We still need to midwife what was born in the resurrection.

And many things were born in that event—an event as radical as the original creation in what it gave birth to. The resurrection of Jesus was the “first day” a second time—the second time light separated from darkness. Indeed, the world measures time by the resurrection. We are in the year 2021 since it happened. (Christianity was born with that event. New time began then. But scholars calculated that Jesus was 33 years old when he died and so they added 33 years so as to begin new time with the date of his birth.)

Pronounce within what the resurrection gives birth to and what needs still to be midwifed, is hope. The resurrection gives birth to hope. The women in the Gospels who first met the resurrected Jesus were the first to be given a true reason for hope and were the first to act as midwives of that new birth. So, too, must we. We need to become midwives of hope. But what is hope and how is it given birth in the resurrection?

Genuine hope is never to be confused with either wishful thinking or optimism. Unlike hope, wishful thinking isn’t based on anything. It’s pure wishful thinking. Optimism, for its part, takes its root either in a natural temperament (“I always see the bright side of things”) or in how good or bad had the evening news looks on a given day. And we know how that can change from day to day.

Hope is the antidote to wishful thinking. It is the deeper and more symbolic hope. It is the hope that never gives up hope. It is the kind of hope that is based on God’s promise to vindicate good over evil and life over death, no matter the circumstance, no matter the obstacle, no matter how awful the news might look on a given day, no matter death itself, and no matter whether we are optimistic or pessimistic. They were the initial midwives helping to give birth to that hope. That task is now ours.

An agnostic colleague challenged him to this effect: “But, Teilhard, Aren’t you the one that says that life has to be specially midwifed, especially at the moment of conception? That’s biological, isn’t it?” Teilhard went on to suggest, in line with Ephesians 1, that the resurrection “fills the whole universe with an atomic bomb, that will be a set-back, perhaps for millions of years. But what I propose is going to happen, not because I wish it or because I am optimistic, but that it will happen because God promised it—and in the resurrection God showed that God has the power to deliver on that promise.”

What the women who first met the risen Jesus experienced was hope, the kind of hope that is based on God’s promise to vindicate good over evil and life over death, no matter the circumstance, no matter the obstacle, no matter how awful the news might look on a given day, no matter death itself, and no matter whether we are optimistic or pessimistic. They were the initial midwives helping to give birth to that hope. That task is now ours.

“The fight of the Church,” Teilhard said in a letter to his wife, “will no longer be the fight of a Church, but the fight of hope. It is the fight of hope which will be the fight of glory.”

Hope has a different basis.

Here’s an example: Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a deeply faith-filled scientist, was once challenged by an agnostic colleague after making a presentation within which he tried to show how the story of salvation history fits perfectly with the insights of science regarding the origins of the universe and the process of evolution.

Teilhard went on to suggest, in line with Ephesians 1, 3:10, that the end of the whole evolutionary process will be the union of all things in one great final harmony in Christ.

An agnostic colleague challenged him to this effect: “That’s a wonderfully optimistic little schema you propose. But suppose we blow up the world with an atomic bomb. What happens to your optimistic schema then?”

Teilhard answered in words to this effect: If we blow up the world with an atomic bomb, that will be a set-back, perhaps for millions of years. But what I propose is going to happen, not because I wish it or because I am optimistic, but that it will happen because God promised it—and in the resurrection God showed that God has the power to deliver on that promise.

The resurrection birthed many things, and these had to be midwifed. Initially by the women to whom Jesus first appeared, then by the apostles who left us their eyewitness accounts of the risen Jesus, then by the early Church, then by its martyrs, then by the lived faith of countless women and men through the centuries, and sometimes, too, by theologians and spiritual writers. We still need to midwife what was born in the resurrection.

And so they added 33 years so as to begin new time with the date of his birth.)

Pronounce within what the resurrection gives birth to and what needs still to be midwifed, is hope. The resurrection gives birth to hope. The women in the Gospels who first met the resurrected Jesus were the first to be given a true reason for hope and were the first to act as midwives of that new birth. So, too, must we. We need to become midwives of hope. But what is hope and how is it given birth in the resurrection?

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**Good Shepherd Sunday**

The readings for the fourth Sunday of Easter — Cycle A — are: Acts 2:14a, 36-41; 1 Peter 2:20b-25 and John 10:1-10.

“I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my sheep and mine know me.” (John 10:14)

Today we celebrate what has come to be known as Good Shepherd Sunday. The readings today highlight the Lord as the Good Shepherd who knows his sheep and whose sheep know him. In modern times people oftentimes are offended by being referred to as sheep. They seem to think this is an insult and claim that they are not sheep but they blindly follow any shepherd. After all, they can think for themselves and they — and they alone — can decide what is best for them.

People who feel this way are often missing the point in Jesus referring to himself as the Good Shepherd. In the culture of Jesus’ day, his listeners would hardly have been offended by being called sheep who were cared for by the shepherd.

The shepherd in Jesus’ time was wholly committed to guarding the sheep under his care. So much so, that the sheep would recognize and respond to the voice of their shepherd.

The shepherd protected the sheep from thieves and from wild animals — with his own life. He would gather the sheep at nightfall and sleep at the gate of the fold to prevent anyone from harming the sheep. That, my friends, is commitment. That is caring. That is devotion. Looking at sheep and shepherd from that perspective should keep at bay any resentment at being referred to as sheep.

The beautiful Psalm 23 is a great comfort to us: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want … he refreshes my soul. He guides me in right paths … Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for you are with me …” (Ps 23:1b-5a)

Today on this Good Shepherd Sunday, we also celebrate World Day of Prayer for Vocations. The Lord has promised that he will give us shepherds after his own heart. (Jeremiah 31:10) On this Good Shepherd Sunday we pray especially to the Lord that he provides us with good shepherds — shepherds who will both lead and walk with God’s people, who will care for them, who will suffer for and with them, and even die for them. We have the Lord’s promise and the Lord’s promises are always kept. To be sure, the Lord continues to call shepherds, but there are so many voices contrary to the voice of the Lord that his voice oftentimes gets drowned out. Let us therefore pray to “the master of the harvest to send good shepherds to care for his people.” (Matt 9:38)

The Lord is indeed our shepherd — the Good Shepherd! And for that, let us be grateful. — Bishop Roger J. Foys, D.D.

**VIEWPOINT**

**Alan Pickett**

The gift of liminal space

A friend asked me recently how I was handling my “liminal space.” I must have given him a quizzical look, because I had no idea what he was talking about, so he quickly explained:

Have you ever been through a liminal space? Now that I know what he meant, I suspect you have. Liminal refers to (1) “occupying a position at or on both sides of a boundary or threshold,” and (2) “relating to a transition or initial stage of a process.”

In my case, I am preparing to retire because of circumstances outside of my control, my retirement has been delayed — just a little — from March 31 to May 31. No big deal, but actually a gift. With one foot in and the other foot out, I am sometimes torn, blessed. A liminal space is a good place to take stock, reflect back and plan ahead. I am enjoying these moments.

For my entire career I have always given 100 percent to my work, and for the past 8-and-a-half years, I have been privileged to lead our ministry at Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington. I thought when I started at Catholic Charities that I would not be able to retire more gradually. As it turns out, I was as committed as ever to my work, and I continued to give it all I had 100 percent. Is that because I always blindly jumped in, or was God’s call more clear?

During this liminal time, especially over the past few weeks, I have been trying to process all the emotions, feelings and plans that have washed over me as I consider what has come to be my work.

It is easier to go with the flow of things than to challenge or resist whatever comes our way. It is easier to go with the expectations or habits of the culture. The guests demand wine. They gather and admire. He orders her to come so that they might admire him for her beauty bejeweled crown.” They gather and admire. He orders her to come so that they might admire him for her beauty bejeweled crown.” They gather and admire. She dwells freely in the dungeon called rebellion or is unslaked in a desert called defiance. Do not believe them. She is not what they say. She is not what they do. She is not what they demand. She is what she is: a powerful queen, uninvited, to demand life for her people (Esther 4:1-20).

She is Queen Vashti. Some say she died beheld, perhaps, or stoned. Some say she was banished to a dark dungeon or uninvited as queen lest all the wives in the land find any incentive to rival her. Her name is nowhere mentioned in the Bible, yet her refusal to one who could thwart her to one who is powerful to say “no.” Then it happened unannounced, uninvited. Slipping through a fissure in the wholeness of the culture, its static skin attracted bits of reason. No. It is not easy to say “no” to one who is powerful to one who can thwart or harm us. It is difficult to say “no” when the culture or society in which we reside is challenged by our refusal. And it is difficult to say “no” to deeply ingrained habits or to conventions to which we have become accustomed.

The author of Esther, I believe, said, “no.”

There are biases that are part of my upbringing that have become accustomed. There are times I have said “no.”

In modern times people are offended by being referred to as sheep who were cared for by the shepherd. The shepherd in Jesus’ time was wholly committed to guarding the sheep under his care. So much so, that the sheep would recognize and respond to the voice of their shepherd. However, people who feel this way are often missing the point in Jesus referring to himself as the Good Shepherd. In the culture of Jesus’ day, his listeners would hardly have been offended by being called sheep who were cared for by the shepherd.

The sheep in Jesus’ time was wholly committed to guarding the sheep under his care. So much so, that the sheep would recognize and respond to the voice of their shepherd. The beautiful Psalm 23 is a great comfort to us: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want … he refreshes my soul. He guides me in right paths … Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for you are with me …” (Ps 23:1b-5a)

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We have the Lord’s promise and the Lord’s promises are always kept. To be sure, the Lord continues to call shepherds, but there are so many voices contrary to the voice of the Lord that his voice oftentimes gets drowned out. Let us therefore pray to “the master of the harvest to send good shepherds to care for his people.” (Matt 9:38)

The Lord is indeed our shepherd — the Good Shepherd! And for that, let us be grateful. — Bishop Roger J. Foys, D.D.
**Ever faithful**

**Karen Kuhlman**
**Messenger Correspondent**

The Sisters of the Congregation of Divine Providence (CDP) follow the example of their foundress Blessed John Martin Moye, and are guided by the fundamental virtues of poverty, simplicity, apostolic charity, and abandonment to Divine Providence. These attitudes give dynamism to their life of faith and are essential to their charism — according to the CDP community they are the virtues that Jesus himself embraced. The Sisters embrace that same trust in God's grace: they strive to do what depends on them and leave the rest to God — even in the face of difficulty.

Sister Janet Bucher has lived her life in that manner. Sister and her family were members of St. Aloysius Church, Covington, and she was a student in the parish school. She recognized the call to religious life in her teens and has been a Sister of Divine Providence for almost seven decades. Abandonment to God's Providence has been her guide and source of strength during difficult times.

Through the decades, Sister Janet taught in various Diocesan schools; but it was her 15 years of experience teaching the students at Bishop Howard School in Covington that led her to a ministry that continues today.

Our Savior Church, 246 E. Tenth Street, Covington, is traditionally an African American Catholic parish. Bishop William Howard established Our Savior as a mission of the Diocese of Covington to serve African American Catholics in 1943, and it became a parish in 1981. The Diocese founded Our Savior Schools in 1943; parish children attended those schools until integration finally allowed African American children to attend school with all of America's children. The high school closed in 1956; the grade school closed in 1963. Today, Our Savior Church remains a parish, tending to parish residents' spiritual and physical needs, until integration finally allowed African American children to attend school with all of America's children.

In those days, St. Elizabeth Hospital was still on 21st Street in Covington, and she was a student in the parish school. She visited the parishes of the Diocese of Covington to serve African American parishes. Bishop William Cleves on the 3rd Sunday, and Father Michael Cormer on the 4th Sunday faithfully bring the Mass and the Eucharist to the congregation. Two parishioners lead the congregation in hymns, and another provides piano accompaniment.

Sister Janet Bucher, CDP, 35-year resident of the parish house adjacent to the church. She wanted to live in the community to be nearby and accessible to parishioners whenever needed.

"When I arrived, many residents in the community lived in single-family homes, apartments, or Section II housing. That has changed along with the demographics of the population," said Sister Janet. "Most of the elders I got to know on my walks through the neighborhood have gone to heaven. Today, many young people no longer attend church. Many residents lost their homes to make way for new housing; multi-story apartments have replaced their homes. Though displaced residents received vouchers to assist with rental costs, many could not afford to remain in their former neighborhoods. Some elders moved to the Golden Towers, while others were scattered around the area, losing their sense of community. Many properties once available for rent to Covington residents have been converted to Airbnb. Those short-term rentals and other available properties are not affordable to low-income people."

The loss of those long-time residents has dramatically affected the community, but Sister Janet is ever faithful in her ministry. Her devotion to God and the people of God is unwavering, as is her dedication to bringing people together in God's name.

Every year, she hosts a celebration in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. with a breakfast on the Saturday morning before Martin Luther King Day. Sister Janet celebrates Kwanza (December 26 – January 1), the annual celebration of African American culture, with a reception but says of her efforts, "I might not get it quite right, but I keep on trying." Despite changes in the neighborhood, Sister Janet's ministry, the Catholic essentials remain at Our Savior Church: Sunday morning Mass is at 9:30 a.m. and is celebrated every Sunday of the month by priests in rotation; Father Robert Ross on the 1st, 2nd, and 5th Sundays, Mgr. William Cleves on the 3rd Sunday, and Father Michael Cormer on the 4th Sunday faithfully bring the Mass and the Eucharist to the congregation. Two parishioners lead the congregation in hymns, and another provides piano accompaniment.

Sister Janet wants those who usually attend Mass at their home parish to know they are also welcome to attend Sunday Mass at Our Savior Church. She says, "the Mass is celebrated in the traditional form at Our Savior, And, as permitted by the Catholic Church in churches around the world, touches relevant to the culture are reflected in the interior. Our Savior Church expresses some of that relevance with African cloth around the altar and paintings of a black Jesus and a black Mary." In addition to her ministry at Our Savior Church, Sister Janet has long been involved with issues of social justice in the Diocese of Covington, such as the 2008 founding of the Northern Kentucky Emergency Shelter and her participation in Jail Ministry. She was awarded the "The Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice" in 2021, the highest papal honor that can be awarded to the laity in recognition of distinguished service to the Church.
Happy Mother’s Day!

Join us May 14 for the Mother’s Day Brunch
10AM - 3PM

Brunch reservations are available from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

- Adults 12 & Up $44++, Kids 4-11 $9++, Kids 3 & Under N/C
- Family photos available until 1:30.
- The à la carte menu will not be available.
- Reservations are required, please call 859-491-2400 or email reception@metropolitanclub.net with member name, # in your party and your preferred time.

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PEOPLE AND EVENTS

The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW, Sundays, noon to 1 p.m. Viewers can tune-in on the following channels: antenna 12.2; Spectrum 117 or 25; Cincinnati Bell 17 or 517; and DirectTV 25.

Flea Market, Diocesan Catholic Children’s Home, Ft. Mitchell, year-round, 8:30 a.m.–noon, Monday, Thursday, and Saturday; (Dec.–April, Monday, Thursday and every 3rd Saturday). Donation drop-off during Flea Market hours.

The Thomas More University Observatory and Professor Wes Ryle invite you to a lecture/night sky viewing: “JWST: At Work At Last!” on April 29. Lectures are at lecture in Steigerwald Hall – Saints Center, with a 9 p.m. night sky viewing at the Thomas More Observatory. Event is free and open to the public; no reservations required.

Our Lady of Light Ministries Youth Rosary and Mass. May 6, 11 a.m., Our Lady’s Farm, Falmouth. Sign up to be part of the rosary or Mass, call (859) 331-9823. Bring a picnic lunch and spend the day.

St. Anthony Parish, Taylor Mill, Ladies’ Spring Tea. May 15, 2:30–4:30 p.m., in the parish’s Fleming Hall. Tickets are $10 and available at parish office.

The World Apostolate of Fatima 33-day Fatima Consecration to Jesus through Mary starts April 10. Consecration Mass will be held May 13 at Our Lady’s Farm, Falmouth. Register at fatimaconsecration.org or call (859) 841-7430 or e-mail Theresa@bluarmy.org.

St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs, indoor flea market. June 2–3, 8 a.m.–3 p.m. in Noll Hall. Donations can be dropped off May 27, 10 a.m.–4 p.m., May 28, 10 a.m.–2 p.m, or May 30-June 1, 10 a.m.–8 p.m. NO adult clothing, mattresses, entertainment centers or china cabinets. Call (859) 341-6609.

Mount St. Mary’s Seminary & School of Theology will host a seminar, “Leading a Liturgical and Vocational Household” for parents and future parents June 3, 8:30 a.m.–1 p.m. Participants will receive insights about how to raise a vocationally aware family with consistent prayer routines; includes Mass, breakfast and lunch. Register online atthenaeum.edu.

Have you ever considered going on a pilgrimage? “Journey to Egypt, a special part of the Holy Land, where Abraham, Joseph, Moses and the Holy Family walked. Make your way through the Holy Land to follow in Jesus’ footsteps. Celebrate votive Masses in the very places where miraculous gifts became pages in the Gospel. If interested in learning more, please contact St. Henry parishioner Michael Portwood, (859) 878-6905 or e-mail pamarinedad@yahoo.com.

Officer Mike Brown of the Bellevue Police Department attended intensive training last summer to provide the D.A.R.E. program to fourth and fifth grade students at Holy Trinity School. On April 12, Holy Trinity received a plaque memorializing the first D.A.R.E. class to be graduated from the Bellevue Police Department. Pictured here at the plaque presentation is Paul Pelgen, fourth and fifth grade teacher at Holy Trinity, Michele Calle-Bosch, Principal, Officer Brown, Jacqueline Flores, a fifth grade student, and Bellevue Mayor Charlie Cleves.

Sgt. Mike Metzger of the Elsmere Police Department stopped by St. Henry Catholic School, Elsmere, for recess this past week. Sgt. Metzger is 2000 graduate of St. Henry School and a 2004 graduate of St. Henry District High School.

Learning about Baptism

First graders at St. Henry Catholic School, Elsmere, learned about the Sacrament of Baptism and pretended to “baptize” their favorite stuffed animal. The students made a baptismal garment and candle out of paper, and then promised to teach their favorite in the faith.
Pope decides women will be voting members of Synod of Bishops

At least three dozen women will be voting members of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October, Pope Francis has decided.

In a decision formalized April 17, “the Holy Father approved the extension of participation in the synodal assembly to ‘non-bishops’—priests, deacons, consecrated men and women, lay men and women,” the synod office said in a statement April 26.

Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, relator general of the synod, told reporters April 26 that about 21% of the synod’s 370 members would not be bishops and at least half of that group would be women.

Adding women and young people to the membership will make sure “the church is well represented” in the prayer and discussions scheduled for Oct. 4-29 at the Vatican, the cardinal said. “It will be a joy to have the whole church represented in Rome for the synod.”

“As you can see, the space in the tent is being enlarged,” Cardinal Mario Grech, synod secretary-general, told reporters, echoing the title that had been chosen for the working document for the just-completed continental phase of the synod. The document said that in local and national synod listening sessions there were consistent questions about how to promote greater inclusion in the Catholic Church’s growing understanding of the synodal dimension of the church and “the consequent understanding of the institutions through which it is exercised.”

Since the Synod of Bishops was reinstated after the Second Vatican Council, the voting members of the synod have all been men. The membership was primarily cardinals and bishops, except for the 16 priests — and recently one religious brother — elected by the men’s Union of Superiors General.

Now, rather than the Union of Superiors General selecting 10 voting members, the office said, it will elect only five priests or brothers. And the women’s International Union of Superiors General also will elect five sisters or nuns.

Past synods have included women as non-voting “auditors,” a group that included many women.

Pope Francis has done away with the “auditors” category of synod participant, the Vatican said. Instead, there will be a group of 70 non-bishop members representing “various groupings of the faithful of the people of God,” including priests, consecrated women, deacons and laypeople from every part of the world.

The pope will choose the 70 from a list of 140 people selected by bishops and organizers of six regional groupings of bishops and by the Assembly of Patriarchs of Eastern Catholic Churches. The six regional groups are: the council of bishops’ conferences of Latin America and the Caribbean, known as CELAM; the Council of Bishops’ Conferences of Europe; the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar; the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences; the Federation of Catholic Bishops’ Conferences of Oceania; and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops together.

Each of the seven bishops’ groups will nominate 20 people, the statement said, and “it is requested that 50% of them be women and that the presence of young people also be emphasized.”

In addition to the 10 religious elected by their groups of superiors and the 70 non-bishop members nominated by continental groups, Pope Francis may include “non-bishop members” among the members he appoints.

And, since the leadership of the synod secretariat will be full members, that includes Xavière Missionary Sister Nathalie Becquart, undersecretary of the Synod of Bishops, speaks to Iacopo Scaramuzza, a reporter for La Repubblica, in the Vatican press office April 26, 2023. The Vatican had just announced Pope Francis’ decision to have women and laymen as voting members of the synod.
The prayers of nuns and monks are like “oxygen” for all members of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis said. “Their prayer is the invisible force that sustains the mission,” he told people at his weekly general audience April 26.

As part of his series of talks about “zeal” for evangelization, Pope Francis spoke about nuns and monks. These are “sisters and brothers who renounce themselves and renounce the world to imitate Jesus on the path of poverty, chastity, obedience and to intercede on behalf of all.”

They are also great evangelizers, he said. People might wonder how men and women religious who live in monasteries and convents help the proclamation of the Gospel, the pope said. “Wouldn’t they do better to put their energies into the mission” by evangelizing outside a monastery and in the world?

“In reality, monks and nuns are the beating heart of the proclamation,” he said, and “their prayer is oxygen for all the members of the body of Christ.” In fact, he said, the patron saint of missions is a nun, St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Writing about discovering her vocation, she said, “I understood that the church had a heart and that this heart was burning with love.” “My vocation is love!” she wrote. “In the heart of the church, my mother, I shall be love.”

Contemplative nuns and monks, the pope said, pray and work in silence for the entire church. “This is love: it is the love that is expressed by praying for the church, working for the church, in the monasteries,” he said. This love for everyone is “translated into their prayer of intercession.” “Among monks and nuns there is a universal solidarity,” Pope Francis said. Whatever happens in the world, it finds a place in their hearts, and they pray. Their hearts are like “an antenna,” he said. “It picks up what happens in the world and prays and intercedes for this. And in this way, they live in union with the Lord and with everyone.”

“They weep for their sins — after all, we are all sinners — and they also weep for the sins of the world, and they pray and intercede with their hands and heart raised up,” he said. “They are the true strength, the true force that carries the people of God forward,” he said, praying that God bless the church with “new monasteries” and “new monks and nuns to carry the church forward with their intercession.”

Nuns, monks are ‘beating heart’ of the church, pope says

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Pope Francis holds a portrait of himself while greeting visitors after his weekly general audience April 26, 2023, in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican.
A CUE schools — sharing the love of God

Andrew Vandiver
Messenger Correspondent

"Even if they just come out feeling the love of God, that is worth it," said Julie Dupont, the 2022-2023 Annual Fund Chair of the Alliance for Catholic Urban Education (ACUE), as she reflected on how Catholic education can bring the presence of God to children living in difficult circumstances.

According to the Diocese of Covington website, ACUE has spent decades working within the inner-city areas of the diocese to ensure local children have access to a Catholic education. ACUE includes six urban grade schools — Holy Cross, Covington; Holy Family, Covington; Holy Trinity, Bellevue; Prince of Peace, Covington; St. Anthony, Taylor Mill, and St. Augustine, Covington. It relies on the generous support of donors and volunteers, like Mrs. Dupont, who provide local families with much needed financial support in order to put a Catholic education within reach.

Mrs. Dupont recently recorded a video message with A-1 Professional video for the annual ACUE Annual Appeal major donor recognition reception. In telling her story, Mrs. Dupont hopes to encourage Catholics and non-Catholics alike to support ACUE. In the video, she describes how her six years of service on the board of ACUE was motivated, in significant part, by a personal experience with the ACUE schools.

Fourteen years ago, Mrs. Dupont met a woman and her five children through a local charity. The family was homeless and living in shelters throughout Northern Kentucky. This chance encounter led to a number of "God moments" according to Mrs. Dupont in her video message. Through the assistance of Mrs. Dupont's family, the mother was able to secure a more permanent housing situation which happened to be located within walking distance of Holy Family School.

When they visited Holy Family to consider enrolling the three older children, Mrs. Dupont immediately felt the power of the Holy Spirit. Through tuition assistance provided by ACUE, the mother was able to send the children to Holy Family.

The younger two children would later attend Holy Trinity, another ACUE school, located in Bellevue. "The teachers were amazing and compassionate, and the love they demonstrated to these kids was absolutely phenomenal," said Mrs. Dupont.

The impact of receiving a Catholic education was undeniable. One of the older children went through RCIA and was confirmed in the Catholic Church. Two of the boys were baptized and received the sacraments of reconciliation and first Communion.

Unfortunately, the family faced new challenges over the years that led to the children being separated from their mother. For a time, Mrs. Dupont and her husband fostered the children and later assisted with finding long term homes for them.

Two of the girls in the family were eventually adopted by a family that Mrs. Dupont met through ACUE. This was another "God moment" according to Mrs. Dupont.

This experience continues to inspire Mrs. Dupont as she helps families through ACUE. "The number of children who are currently experiencing trauma has significantly increased over the years. ACUE is committed to assisting these children within the diocese," said Mrs. Dupont. "Donations to ACUE have a big impact on the lives of children by exposing them to a safe place, strong Christian values, and a solid education."
Eucharistic concomitance and the Resurrection

Brother Linus Martz, O.P.

Contributor

“We know by faith that Jesus Christ, the eternal Word with his assumed human nature whole, resplendent, and never more alive, now dwells forever in the glory to which he calls us.”

When we speak about Jesus, the “Lord of glory” who “became flesh and dwelt among us” (1 Cor 2:8; John 1:14), we often use rare words or phrases specially crafted to express the mystery of his being. Hypostatic union is one of them: the two natures of Christ are united in his one person. ConsSubstantial appears every Sunday in the Creed: the Father and the Son are one in substance. We would also do well to restore concomitance to our collective vocabulary. The doctrine of concomitance, taught in 1551 by the Council of Trent, captures a marvelous truth about the Eucharist and thus about Christ who “being raised from the dead will never die again” (Rom 6:9).

During our nation’s Eucharistic revival, thinking through concomitance can and will inflame our devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. At first glance, concomitance may seem simple. The Son of God becomes fully present—Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity—under both sacramental species used at Mass. This body ascended into heaven and sits at the Father’s right hand. And it is this body that we often use rare words or phrases specially crafted to express the mystery of his being. Hypostatic union is one of them: the two natures of Christ are united in his one person. ConsSubstantial appears every Sunday in the Creed: the Father and the Son are one in substance. We would also do well to restore concomitance to our collective vocabulary. The doctrine of concomitance, taught in 1551 by the Council of Trent, captures a marvelous truth about the Eucharist and thus about Christ who “being raised from the dead will never die again” (Rom 6:9).

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Dioscian high school students accepted to Governor’s Scholars programs this summer

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

In 1983, Kentucky government leaders came up with a plan, rising from concern that Kentucky’s brightest youth were leaving the state to take their talents elsewhere, not realizing the potential of utilizing their talents within their home state. From this idea, the Governor’s Scholars Program was born as a three-week residential program where high school students statewide could engage in a co-curricular community of peers, honing skills in leadership, civics, and economics.

The Governor’s Scholars Program, alongside its sister programs, Governor’s School for the Arts and Governor’s School for Entrepreneurs, provide students with opportunities to grow academically, meet peers their age from across Kentucky and eventually earn scholarships to universities and colleges, both in the state of Kentucky and beyond.

This year, 52 students from the diocese were accepted to participate in Governor’s Scholars (GSP), Governor’s School for the Arts (GSA) and Governor’s School for Entrepreneurs (GSE).

2023 Governor’s Scholars

Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria
GSP—Ryan Callahan, Michael Conney, Alexandra Guillet Cecilia Phurman
GSA—Reagan Golden, Jackson Schabell
Covington Catholic High School, Park Hills
GSP—Parker McKinley, Alexander Moening, Andrew Worrall, Michael Zechella

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 diocesan-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 C-V, including compensation history and a list of references that includes contact email addresses, by email or by fax to Stephen Kopylay, SPHR, at skopylay@covdio.org or 859-392-1589.

GSA—Dillon Cunn, Jonathan Ghazala (Alternate)
GSE—Freddie Caldwell, Adam Donovan, Owen Gontoleck, Alexander Moening
Covington Latin School, Covington
GSP—Isaia Bement, Monica Juerg, Karina Stankova
GSE—Coey Cheng
Holy Cross District High School, Covington
GSP—Ryan Ehlman, Gabriel Reed, Isabella Szabó, Jenna Szabó
Newport Central Catholic High School, Newport
GSP—Emma Beck, Tyler Kevill, Samuel Krebs, Christian Woods
GSA—Samuel Krebs
GSE—Ben Bucher
Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills
GSP—Lucy Bailey, Lydia Duster, Mia Kent, Hannah Ronaker, Clare Shaw, Gabrielle White
GSA—Nadin Asal, Chandulani Herath, Mary Cathrine Kelly, Keira Lazen, Molly Rave, Sophia Santos
GSE—Emma White
St. Henry District High School, Erlanger
GSP—Sydney Bullman, Morgan Bonini, Molly Krallman, Raymond Neihous
GSA—Alexandra “Ali” Decima
St. Patrick High School, Maysville
GSP—Madge Mount, Taylor Watts
Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills
GSP—Adam Brandstetter, Adam Hassoun, Adam Kolar
GSE—Xavier Thomas

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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.virtus.org and click on Registration. Follow the prompts to create an account and to 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 session and Acceptance Form are posted on your account. You will receive 12 bulletins per year. You will receive a e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletins:
- All bulletin will be sent Sunday, April 2; due Tuesday, May 2.
- May bulletin will be sent Sunday, May 7; due Tuesday, June 6.

www.virtusonline.org, enter your user id and password. If your account is suspended contact your primary location where you volunteer or are employed. Your primary location contact information is found under your Contact Tab.

VIRTUS Training:
- Tuesday, May 2, 6-8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, May 3, 9-11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

Note: If your Training Tab is missing or you cannot access your account, contact your parish, school or institution. For other difficulties, contact Marylu Steffen at (859) 392-1500 or msteffen@covdio.org

www.virtusonline.org, enter your user id and password. If your account is suspended contact your primary location where you volunteer or are employed. Your primary location contact information is found under your Contact Tab.

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www.virtusonline.org, enter your user id and password. If your account is suspended contact your primary location where you volunteer or are employed. Your primary location contact information is found under your Contact Tab.
**PRINCIPAL**

The Saint Agnes Catholic Community, Louisville, is presently conducting a search for a principal for the 2023-2024 school. The mission of Saint Agnes School is to embrace and educate students in a Catholic community, empowering them to lead faith-based lives. Candidates should be Roman Catholics active within their own parish and strongly committed to the mission of Catholic education. Excellent communication skills and proven administrative abilities are also essential requirements necessary to continue the strong academic program and Catholic tradition of our school.

Saint Agnes School is a four-time Blue Ribbon school and a recipient of the United States Department of Education’s Green Ribbon Award. Saint Agnes has a current enrollment of 507 students, comprising two classes of each grade Pre-K-8th. The principal will lead a dynamic staff that includes an assistant principal, counselor, resource teachers for elementary and middle school, an admissions coordinator, and special area teachers in Art, Music, PE, Spanish, STEAM, and Library.

Applicants must have both strong classroom and administrative experience and must meet the Archdiocese of Louisville requirements for principalship. Salary and benefits will be commensurate with experience and Archdiocesan guidelines.

Please send to: Principal Search Committee
Saint Agnes Catholic Community
1800 Newburg Road
Louisville, KY 40205
Or email to: apply@stagneslouisville.org

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The Parish is looking for someone who can lead the business aspects of the Parish, focusing on financial administration while leading the Parish Office staff. Strong organizational skills, financial savvy, ability to handle high volume and time sensitive requests, empathy and awareness of self and others will all play a role in success in this position. The position is designed to be fully in person, but a hybrid work schedule may be considered for the right candidate.

The position is a regular full-time job, exempt from any overtime. Offered benefits include:
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- Health benefits
- Retirement savings opportunities


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The full job description can be found on our website: https://www.svdpnky.org/employment-opportunities/

Interested candidates can apply online or send their resume to Lou Settle at lou.settle@svdpnky.org.

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St. Cecilia School, A National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in Independence, Kentucky, is seeking a part-time Spanish teacher to join our staff for the 2023-2024 school year. We are looking for someone who is energetic and passionate about working with students. Interested candidates should send a cover letter, resume, and references to Principal Jeanetta Kathman at jkathman@stcindependence.org and indicate Spanish in the subject line.

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Educational diversity, Eucharistic devotion are strong features of 2023 class of new priests, report says

WASHINGTON — Ahead of the 60th annual World Day of Prayer for Vocations April 30, a newly released report shows what one researcher called greater “consistency of age,” more diverse educational backgrounds and a commitment to Eucharistic adoration among men preparing for priestly ordination. On April 25, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University released the 2023 “Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood,” a report made directly to the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. CARA’s executive director, Jesuit Father Thomas Gaunt, told OSV News that the age of men set to be ordained this year has “started to level out,” with “more consistently younger men entering seminary and beginning their theological studies in their early 20s — basically after having finished college — and then being ordained four to five years or so later.” Overall, this year’s ordinands are on average 35 years old, with most having attained college or graduate degrees in a range of fields. Close to 75% said Eucharistic adoration had been part of their pre-seminary prayer life, with 86% regularly reciting the rosary. Hispanic ordinands are projected to increase in the coming years, and on balance, the 2023 report offers “hope” regarding priestly vocations as religious demographers continue to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on religious practice, said Father Gaunt.

Vashti said ‘NO’

(Continued from page 5)

others of their dignity or the earth of its resources? Can I say “no” when it entails giving up comforts or routine habits. Can I say “no” when I sense that I am judging others unfairly because of subtle racism in my heart?

Vashti dares us to move beyond our expectations of comfort, convenience and extravagance when it depletes our earth or deprives others of their needs, she invites us to move beyond engrained bias that resides in our hearts.

Vashti is alive in all who oppose the extravagant wants and needs that harm our planet, our fellow creatures, our neighbors. You will hear her voice in Greta Thunberg, Malala, and in Pope Francis’ “Laudato Si.” Let us join the chorus.

Divine Providence Sister Fidelis Tracy is a retired theology professor at Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, Ky.

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St. William Parish is seeking a Director of Religious Education. 15 – 20 hours per week. Pay is commensurate with experience.

Job duties include:

• To run the CCD program, Children’s Liturgy, VBS program
• Monitor / teach the RCIA / RCIC programs
• Monitor / run the adult faith program and Youth group
• Update religious section of St. William / St. John’s church website
• Monitor Virtus compliance
• Update Camino program regarding the sacraments
• Update the bulletin boards with educational information

Requirements for this position: MS Office (Word, Excel, Outlook). If interested, please contact Fr. Benton Clift at St. William Church 859.824.5381.

OFFICE STAFF

St. William/St. John Mission Parish is seeking Office staff. This is a part-time position of approximately 15 hours per week. Pay is commensurate with experience. Job duties include: Answering parish phone calls, sorting incoming mail and correspondence.

• Inventory of supplies and ordering
• Processing invoices and issuing payments
• Data entry/church records
• Participate in the preparation of scheduled reports to the Diocese
• Work with vendors
• Work with members of the Diocese when necessary/attend meetings
• Provide backup with other office staff as needed
• Assist with parish events (Fish Fry, Festival, etc.)

Requirements for this position: MS Office (Word, Excel, Outlook), Accounting software, answering phone calls professionally and being helpful to those who may stop in the office with questions or needing assistance.

If interested, please contact Fr. Benton Clift at St. William Church 859.824.5381.

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Michigan third grader launches 'Kid's Bible in a Year with Teddy' podcast

NEWPORT, Mich. — When he grows up, third-grader Teddy Howell, a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Newport, and wants to be a podcaster and a priest. At 9 years old, he already has achieved one of those goals with the recent launch of his podcast: “Kid’s Bible in A Year with Teddy.” In each 10-minute episode, released Sundays and Wednesdays, Teddy leads his listeners in prayer and through a series of Bible verses. Teddy has been given permission by Ascension Press to use the “Catholic Bible Chronicles” as his reference. Subscribers can listen to Teddy’s podcast on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and other podcast hosting platforms. If the younger’s podcast sounds familiar, that’s because it’s inspired by Father Mike Schmitz’s chart-topping podcast, “The Bible in a Year (with Fr. Mike).” The priest of the Diocese of Duluth, Minnesota, created the Bible podcast with Scripture scholar Jeff Cavins with the backing of Ascension. Teddy’s podcast is geared toward other children. Father Schmitz podcast addresses some adult themes not suitable for young children. “I like to read about the Bible, and I pray,” Teddy said. “If you want to follow me, you can subscribe if you want.”

Catholic bishops hail abortion ban that makes North Dakota ‘a sanctuary for life’

BISMARCK, N.D. — North Dakota has enacted a near-total ban on abortions, with limited exceptions in cases of rape and incest up until the sixth week of pregnancy. “We rejoice that North Dakota Catholic Conference led by Bishop David D. Kagan of Bismarck and Bishop John T. Folda of Fargo. The conference stated “banning abortion is not enough,” stressing that “everyone, including the state government, must respond with love so that women and families receive the support and care needed so that abortion becomes unthinkable.”

Pope names members of Dicastery for Evangelization’s first section

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has appointed 19 people as members of the Dicastery for Evangelization’s first section and has named another 15 as consultants. The first section, led by Italian Archbishop Rino Fisichella, formally is known as “Section for Fundamental Questions regarding Evangelization in the World,” and has responsibility for promoting evangelization, missionary discipleship, catechesis and Christian social engagement in countries where Christianity already is well established. Pope Francis also has given the section responsibility for planning the Holy Year 2025. Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York is among the new members, as is Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, pro-secretary of the second section of the dicastery, that is responsible for “the first evangelization and new particular churches,” what traditionally has been known as the church’s mission territories. The 19 new members include three women; the 15 consultants include nine priests, a religious brother, two women and three laymen. Among them are Salesian Sister Cettina Cacciato Insilla, a professor of catechetics in Rome; Chiara Amurri, founder and president of the New Horizons Community; Curtis A. Martin, founder and CEO of FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, and Petroc Willey, a professor of catechetics at Franciscan University of Steubenville.

DeSantis lowers Florida’s threshold to impose death penalty, signs legislation criticized by state’s Catholic bishops

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a bill April 20 that will eliminate the state’s requirement that jurors in capital punishment cases agree unanimously to recommend death sentences. The legislation, which has not criticism from the state’s bishops, lowers the number of jurors needed to hand down a death sentence to the lowest threshold of any U.S. state, from 12 to eight. In an April 20 statement on his approval of the legislation, DeSantis said, “Once a defendant in a capital case is found guilty by a unanimous jury, one juror should not be able to veto a capital sentence.” But in an April 13 statement after the Florida Legislature passed the legislation, Michael Sheehy, Florida Catholic Conference executive director, called it “stunning” that Florida lawmakers “would weaken a common-sense law passed just six years ago that required unanimous agreement by a jury in order to sentence someone to death.”

Judges block Texas executions in day hailed by Catholic leaders as victory for life

AUSTIN, Texas — Texas was without any scheduled executions April 21 after judges intervened in capital punishment cases to allow two men on death row a new opportunity to clear their names. A Texas judge on April 19 canceled the scheduled execution of a death-row inmate in the state after a new appeal in the case claimed he was wrongfully convicted on false testimony from two key witnesses in his 2001 trial. The same day, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of another Texas death-row inmate, Rodney Reed, in his efforts to seek DNA testing his appeal argues may prove his innocence. The Catholic Church teaches that the death penalty is morally inadmissible and that the church is committed to its global abolition. Jennifer Carr Allmon, executive director of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, told OSV News that “it’s the first time in my life and in my career that we have had a day in Texas where abortion is illegal and there are no scheduled executions or executions on the Texas Department of Criminal Justice website.” Allmon said she believed the mood on capital punishment is shifting in Texas, which has a reputation for being one of the biggest death penalty states. “We had a really exciting day,” she said. “It felt like life was winning, which was really encouraging.”
### 2023 Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal

#### THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

**Goal:** $2,650,000  
**Total Commitments as of 3/31/23:** $2,726,185.53  
**Number of gifts:** 4,209  
**Parishes over Goal:** 23

#### WAYS TO GIVE —
- Cash/Check
- Stock
- Matching Gifts
- Pledge (final payment due 3/31/24)
- Online at www.covdio.org

Numbers reflect pledges and gifts recorded as of March 31, 2023

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<th>Parish</th>
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*Please note these numbers are preliminary. As of April 23, 2023, they have not been reconciled with the Diocesan Finance Office. Questions, please call the Diocesan Stewardship Office at 859-392-1500.*