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May Crowning at the Cathedral

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

The morning of May 7 marked the celebration of the May Crowning ceremony at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington.

Since Medieval times, May has been celebrated as the month of Mary and the May Crowning ceremony, in which a statue of Mary is crowned with a tiara or wreath of flowers, occurs within the month— while the exact date varies between parishes, the first Sunday of May or Mother's Day are popular choices. The ceremony symbolizes Mary's role as Queen of Heaven and Mother of God.

This year, the crowning of Mary was done by a first communicant at the Cathedral, who also received the sacrament during that Mass. In his homily, Bishop John Iffert, who celebrated the Mass, addressed her directly.

Coming from rural Illinois, the closest major city to Bishop Iffert growing up was St. Louis, Missouri— “probably the thing people know best about St. Louis, is the St. Louis Gateway Arch,” he said in his homily.

When building an arch, the final and most important piece of the puzzle is the keystone, Bishop Iffert continued, “the way the arch stands is that it channels that force of gravity

that's pushing down on those parts that are made to build the arch ... it uses the power of compression between the stones to channel the downward force and move it out along the sides so you get a nice, strong arch.”

“It's really important that you pay attention to each stone as you put it together,” he said, “It's important that each stone is set squarely, in the right order and straight and that you have good alignment—and then, you very carefully put that keystone in place.”

In the second reading during the liturgy of the word, St. Peter calls us “living stones,” Bishop Iffert said, “and he advises us that we need to be built up into a house, into a building, into a temple.”

“He says we are living stones with Jesus as the cornerstone, the cornerstone who other people had discounted.” The stone that the builder's rejected, “is actually the cornerstone of the temple, where God is truly worshipped ... just like in that arch, it's very important that you pay attention to the laying of each stone.”

“Come to him a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God,” Bishop Iffert said, “and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house.”



(top left) After processing into the Cathedral, a first communicant settles into the pew with her father, holding the crown for the May Crowning ceremony.

(top right) A first communicant 'crowns' Mary as part of the May Crowning Mass.

(above) Bishop Iffert gestures with his hands as he preaches his homily to a first communicant.



With praise and thanksgiving to the eternal Triune God, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington requests the honor of your presence at the ordination of

Michael Kenton Elmlinger

to the sacred Priesthood of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit and the imposition of hands by the Most Rev. John C. Iffert, Bishop of Covington

Friday, June 2, 6 p.m.

Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption,
1130 Madison Avenue, Covington



You are cordially invited to a Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving for Priestly Ordination Celebrated by

Father Michael Elmlinger

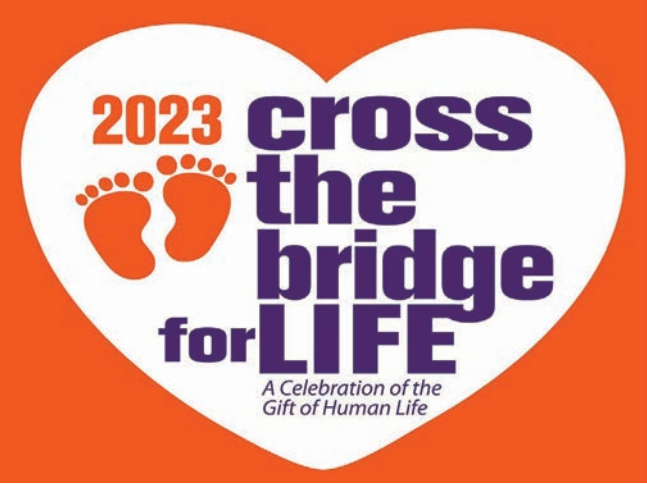
Saturday, June 3, 5 p.m.

St. Paul Parish,
7301 Dixie Hwy., Florence



Deacon Michael Elmlinger

Cross the Bridge for Life returns for first run post Roe v. Wade



Maura Baker
Staff Writer

With the month of May underway, the 2023 Cross the Bridge for Life is quickly approaching. This year, the event will take place June 4, at Festival Park, Newport. Festivities are set to begin at 1 p.m., with the namesake walk across the Purple People Bridge to begin at 2 p.m. Festivities for the 2023 Cross the Bridge for Life will include live music by Lee Roessler, face-painting and hot dogs donated by Bluegrass Meats.

The first Cross the Bridge for Life was held in 2005. Despite missing a few years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event returned last year.

“Every year it seems to get bigger, and we’re kind of rebuilding since COVID,” said Faye Roch, director of the Pro-Life Office for the Diocese of Covington and one of the event’s coordinators, “It did well last year, but we were in

the midst of awaiting the Supreme Court decision (regarding the overturning of Roe v. Wade), so I think there was some fear with people attending last year; and it was a little bit harder to promote it.”

This year, however, now that Roe v. Wade has officially been overturned and abortion legislation has been returned to the states, Cross the Bridge for Life is hoping to see if the “decision made a difference in the attendance of the event.”

“We are trying to reach out ecumenically to a lot of the Christian protestant churches,” said Mrs. Roch, “to let them know about this event — because this isn’t about being Catholic. It’s not just a Catholic event. It’s about bringing our entire community together in support of the gift of life, at all stages.”

Benedictine Oblates — a community connected in love and prayer and the Rule

Laura Keener
Editor

There are few things that make a person prouder than sharing pictures of people they love. Pride is born of love. Think of a grandmother sharing photos of her children and grandchildren; with each face comes a story.

Benedictine Sister Mary Tewes, director of the Benedictine Oblates of St. Walburg Monastery, exudes that same pride and love as she shares photographs and talks about the Benedictine Oblates.

“This is Joan McKellen ... she’s here all the time. She comes on Sunday for evening prayer and tends to the gardens,” Sister Mary said. “This young lady is from Venezuela, she’s an inquirer ... she wants to find a Latino-friendly community and warmer climate. And here’s Gail and her husband, Dick. She helped in the infirmary, sitting down with the sisters and helping in the kitchen, reading to sisters and things like that. And Jessie, too, would come up and help with the sisters in the infirmary.”

Currently, there are 39 Benedictine Oblates of St. Walburg Monastery. (See related article page 10, where some Oblates share their thoughts on being an Oblate.) They are men and women of various backgrounds and vocations who share a common spirituality with the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery. With the help of the Benedictine Sisters, Benedictine Oblates become familiar with the Rule of St. Benedict.

“Our Oblates aren’t as much doing with us as they are

incorporating the Rule into their lives,” said Benedictine Sister Dorothy Schuette, assistant director of the Oblates. “So, it’s a sense of your own spirituality and how they can support each other with that and how they find support from the Benedictine community.”

As a community, Oblates meet once a month for a prayer meeting, but there is no obligation to attend. Each October the Oblates celebrate a day of renewal. In Spring and Fall a spiritual day of reflection is held and an annual community retreat in August. In June the Oblates host an ice cream social for the Sisters. But mostly Oblates grow in their relationship with God and others through private prayer. They are encouraged to spend time in daily prayer, especially the Divine Hours, and Lectio Divina — a meditative way of reading Scripture.

“Lectio Divinia is Benedict’s way of praying Scripture, not just studying Scripture ... Benedict really stresses that we need to take quiet time to do that each day,” said Sister Mary.

Last year the Benedictine Community of St. Walburg Monastery celebrated the 35th anniversary of the Oblates of St. Walburg. (See a related article on a brief history of the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery on page 11.)

“It’s very affirming for the community to have people interested and joining us in sort of a permanent way — it makes a big difference,” said Sister Dorothy.

The Oblate community started and continues because,

Sister Mary said, people were looking for a spirituality and seeking out a community whose spirituality fit their gifts. “Our charism is living community life and praying together,” said Sister Mary.

“It makes a difference to be a part of a group, even if you don’t ever come to the group,” said Sister Dorothy.

Several Oblates live away from the area or have health conditions or work schedules that do not allow them to be physically present with the Sisters and fellow Oblates. However, they are still connected in a very real way through prayer.

“A lot of times, individual Oblates feel more connected to the community than the community knows about,” said Sister Dorothy.

“The connection of prayer” is there, said Sister Mary.

Sister Mary also helps the Oblates stay connected by e-mailing event notices and sending pictures and updates on what’s been going on.

Two candidates will make their oblation in October. An oblation is an offering of self to God as a Benedictine Oblate by signing a formal document. They then receive the Oblate pin that they can wear as an outward sign of that commitment. Additionally, two inquirers are discerning if they are being called to be an Oblate. More are always welcome to call anytime. “There’s always interested people,” Sister Mary said.

If you are interested in learning more about Benedictine Oblates, contact Sister Mary Tewes at marytewes@gmail.com or Sister Dorothy Schuette at dorothisosb@gmail.com, or call the monastery at (859) 331-6324. You can find the Benedictine Oblates of St. Walburg Monastery online at www.stwalburg.org/our-community/benedictine-oblates.

Register now for lottery to purchase discounted 2024 Eucharistic Congress tickets



WASHINGTON (OSV News) – The Diocese of Covington has opened a lottery for its 250 discounted tickets to the 2024 Eucharistic Congress, July 17–21, at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The congress is expected to draw more than 80,000 people, and organizers have compared the event to World Youth Day, with prayer and liturgies, catechesis for individuals and families, and a festival-like atmosphere. Registration is expected to fill quickly, Tim Glemkowski, executive director of the National Eucharistic Congress, told OSV News

in an interview.

In the Diocese of Covington, the cost of the discounted tickets is \$100 each. Households may now go online — www.covdio.org — to register their name and the names of household members for an opportunity to purchase tickets. Tickets are non-transferrable. Children under two do not require a ticket, so their names would not be required. Single adult households may include the name of a guest. Registering households must be located in the Diocese of Covington.

Launched last year, the National Eucharistic Revival is a three-year campaign by the U.S. bishops to increase the Catholic understanding of and devotion to Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist. The Year of the National Eucharistic Congress and Missionary Sending 2024-25 is the third and final year of the U.S. bishops’ National Eucharistic Revival.

Part of the impetus for the campaign was a Pew Research Center study in the fall of 2019 that showed just 30 to 40 percent of Catholics understand and believe in the Real Presence. A more recent study conducted by the

Center For Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University found that 50 percent of Catholics know the teaching on the Real Presence in the Eucharist and only 40 percent believe this teaching. The study also showed that only 15 percent of Catholics attend Sunday Mass on a weekly basis.

The revival opened June 19, 2022, on the solemnity of Corpus Christi, a feast that celebrates the Body and Blood of Christ. Many dioceses marked the day last year with Eucharistic processions.

Speaking to the media in November about the revival, Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, said the beauty and diversity expressed in those processions “capture what is at the heart of this movement, which is a movement that we seek to invite people to a transformative encounter with Christ in the Eucharist that they might be healed, unified and sent on mission.”

For additional information about the Eucharistic Congress and Revival or to purchase non-discounted tickets visit the Eucharistic Revival website, www.eucharistic-congress.org. The Messenger contributed to this article.

2023 Jubilarians

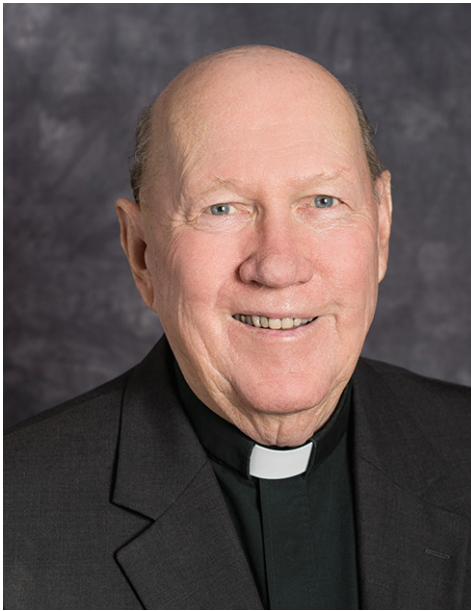
Platinum Jubilee
70 years
Father James Quill

Father Albert Ruschman
Public celebration
June 4, Mass, 10:30 a.m.,
reception following
St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas

Sapphire Jubilee
65 years
Father Robert Reinke

Golden Jubilee
50 years
Bishop Roger Foy, D.D.

Ruby Jubilee
40 years
Msgr. William Neuhaus
Father Richard Bolte



Father James Quill



Father Albert Ruschman



Father Robert Reinke




Bishop Roger Foy, D.D.




Msgr. William Neuhaus



Father Richard Bolte



DIOCESE of
COVINGTON



CORPUS The Solemnity of CHRISTI

Correction: The May 5 edition of the *Messenger*, mistakenly listed Adoration and confessions following 10 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral, June 11. That is incorrect. **Adoration will begin after 5 p.m. Mass, June 11.**



The Solemnity of Corpus Christi

Bring the family
Sunday, June 11, 2 p.m.
Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption,
Covington

Schedule of Events
Sawdust carpet making
Saturday, June 10, 5:30 p.m., Cathedral garden
Liturgy of the Word service and Eucharistic Procession
Sunday, June 11, 2 p.m.
40 Hours Devotion
Sunday, June 11, following 5 p.m. Mass through 6 p.m., Tuesday, June 13
Note: The Blessed Sacrament will be reposed for 8:30 a.m. Mass on both Monday and Tuesday.
Private security detail will be present at the Cathedral during the overnight hours, 9 p.m. to 6 a.m., Sunday and Monday.

Confessions
Monday, June 12, 6–9 p.m.

More information including a parish digital and social media kit is available online at <https://covdio.org/CorpusChristi>.



Bishop's
Schedule

- May 12**
Baccalaureate Mass, Mary, Seat of Wisdom Chapel, Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, 2 p.m.

May 13
Commencement, Thomas More University, Thomas More Stadium, Florence, 10:30 a.m.

May 14
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 5:30 p.m.

May 16–18
CCK/Province Meeting, Archdiocese of Louisville

May 17
Newport Central Catholic High School graduation, Thomas More University, 7 p.m.
- May 18**
Priest Holy Hour, Cathedral Basilica, 3 p.m.

May 20
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 4:30 p.m.
Covington Latin School graduation, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 7 p.m.

May 21
Mass and May Crowning, St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs, 10 a.m.
Bishop Brossart High School graduation, Thomas More University, 2 p.m.
Vespers/Sacred Heart dinner, All Saints Parish, Walton, 5 p.m.

St. Anselm and polishing the diamonds

There is a regrettable interpretation of the cross that has, unfortunately, infected the minds of many

WORD ON FIRE



Bishop Robert Barron

Christians. This is the view that the bloody sacrifice of the Son on the cross was “satisfying” to the Father, an appeasement of a God infinitely angry at sinful humanity. In this reading, the crucified Jesus is like a child hurled into the fiery mouth of a pagan divinity in order to assuage its wrath.

But what ultimately refutes this twisted theology is the well-known passage from John’s Gospel:

“God so loved the world, that he sent his only Son, that all who believe in him might have eternal life.”

John reveals that it is not out of anger or vengeance or in a desire for retribution that the Father sends the Son, but precisely out of love. God the Father is not some pathetic divinity whose bruised personal honor needs to be restored; rather God is a parent who burns with compassion for his children who have wandered into danger.

Does the Father hate sinners? No, but he hates sin. Does God harbor indignation at the unjust? No, but God despises injustice. Thus God sends his Son, not gleefully to see him suffer, but compassionately to set things right.

St. Anselm, the great medieval theologian, who is often unfairly blamed for the cruel theology of satisfaction, was eminently clear on this score. We sinners are like diamonds that have fallen into the muck. Made in the image of God, we have soiled ourselves through violence and hatred.

God, claimed Anselm, could have simply pronounced a word of forgiveness from heaven, but this would not have solved the problem. It would not have restored the diamonds to their original brilliance. Instead, in his passion

to reestablish the beauty of creation, God came down into the muck of sin and death, brought the diamonds up, and then polished them off.

In so doing, of course, God had to get dirty. This sinking into the dirt — this divine solidarity with the lost — is the “sacrifice” which the Son makes to the infinite pleasure of the Father. It is the sacrifice expressive, not of anger or vengeance, but of compassion.

Jesus said that any disciple of his must be willing to take up his cross and follow the master. If God is self-forgetting love even to the point of death, then we must be such love.

If God is willing to break open his own heart, then we must be willing to break open our hearts for others. The cross, in short, must become the very structure of the Christian life.

Bishop Robert Barron is bishop of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota. Article originally published at WordOnFire.org.

Quiet prophecy

ideology, as political correctness, and thus justify their rejection of the truth it carries.

Sincere people often walk away from Greenpeace, from Feminism, or Liberation Theology, from Critical Race Theory, and many other ideologies which in fact carry a lot of truth because those truths are wrapped inside an ideology.

Sincere people will not walk away from Jesus. In our struggle for justice and truth, we must be ever vigilant that we are drawing our truth from the Gospels and not from some ideology.

Third, a prophet is committed to non-violence. A prophet is always seeking to personally disarm rather than to arm, to be, in the words of Daniel Berrigan, a powerless criminal in a time of criminal power. A prophet takes Jesus seriously when he asks us, in the face of violence, to turn the other cheek. A prophet incarnates in his or her way of living the eschatological truth that in heaven there will be no guns.

Fourth, a prophet articulates God’s voice for the poor and for the earth. Any preaching, teaching, or political action that is not good news for the poor is not the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus came to bring good news to the poor; to “widows, orphans, and strangers” (biblical code for the most vulnerable groups in society). As Pastor Forbes once famously said: Nobody goes to heaven without a letter of reference from the poor. We are not meant to be the church compatible.

Fifth, a prophet doesn’t foretell the future but properly names the present in terms of God’s vision of things. A prophet reads where the finger of God is within everyday life, in function of naming our fidelity or infidelity to God and in function of pointing to our future in terms of God’s plan for us. This is Jesus’ challenge to read the

signs of the times.

Sixth, a prophet speaks out of a horizon of hope. A prophet draws his or her vision and energy not from wishful thinking nor from optimism, but from hope. And Christian hope is not based on whether the world situation is better or worse on a given day. Christian hope is based on God’s promise, a promise that was fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus, which assures us that we can entrust ourselves to love, truth and justice, even if the world kills us for it. The stone will always roll back from the tomb.


Seventh, a prophet’s heart and cause are never a ghetto. Jesus assures us that in his Father’s house there are many rooms. Christian prophecy must ensure that no person or group can make God their own tribal or national deity. God is equally solicitous vis-à-vis all people and all nations.

Finally, a prophet doesn’t just speak or write about injustice, a prophet also acts and acts with courage, even at the cost of death. A prophet is a wisdom figure, a Magus or a Sophia, who will act, no matter the cost in lost friends, lost prestige, lost freedom or danger to his or her own life. A prophet has enough altruistic love, hope and courage to act, no matter the cost. A prophet never seeks martyrdom but accepts it if it finds him or her.

This last counsel is, I believe, the one most challenging for “quiet” prophets. Wisdom figures are not renowned for being on the picket lines, but in that lies the challenge. A prophet can discern at what time to park the placard and bring out the basin and towel — and at what time to lay aside the basin and towel and pick up the placard.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author.

IN EXILE



Father Ron Rolheiser

ence, public demonstrations and the picket lines, as were Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Daniel Berrigan and other such prophetic figures. All are asked to be prophetic, but for some this means more wielding a basin and towel than wielding a placard.

There is a powerful way of being prophetic that, while seemingly quiet and personal, is never private. And its rules are the same

as the rules for those who, in the name of Jesus, are wielding placards and risking civil disobedience. What are those rules, rules for a Christian prophecy?

First, a prophet makes a vow of love, not of alienation. There is a critical distinction between stirring up trouble and offering prophecy out of love, a distinction between operating out of egoism and operating out of faith and hope. A prophet risks misunderstanding, but never seeks it, and a prophet seeks always to have a mellow rather than an angry heart.

Second, a prophet draws his or her cause from Jesus and not from an ideology. Ideologies can carry a lot of truth and be genuine advocates for justice. But, people can walk away from an ideology, seeing it precisely as an

Reporting Misconduct in the Diocese of Covington

Anyone who has experienced sexual misconduct by a cleric, employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Covington is asked to contact Ms. Julie Feinauer, diocesan victims assistance coordinator (859) 392-1515. Professional assistance and pastoral support will be provided in confidentiality and with respect.

A copy of the “Diocesan Policies and Procedures for Addressing Sexual Misconduct” is available by contacting the Chancery, (859) 392-1510 or visiting www.covdio.org and going to “Sexual Misconduct Policy.”

Informando sobre conducta inapropiada en la Diócesis de Covington

Cualquier persona que haya experimentado conducta sexual inapropiada por parte de un clérigo, empleado o voluntario de la Diócesis de Covington está invitada a ponerse en contacto con Ms. Julie Feinauer, coordindora diocesana para dar asistencia a las víctimas.

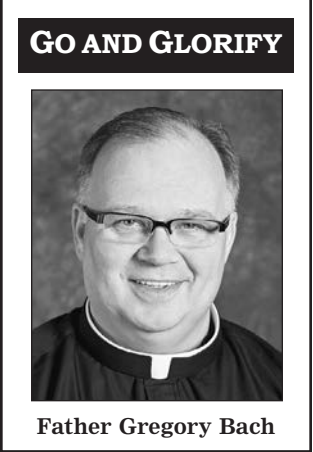
Teléfono (859) 392-1515. Asistencia profesional y apoyo moral serán ofrecidos de una manera confidencial y con respeto.

Una copia de “Normas y Procedimientos sobre Conducta Sexual Inapropiada” está disponible poniéndose en contacto con la Cancillería, Teléfono (859) 392-1510, o visitando www.covdio.org y marcando “Sexual Misconduct Policy.”

Reach out in love

The readings for the sixth Sunday of Easter — Cycle A — are: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17; 1 Peter 3:15-18 and John 14:15-21.

One of the earliest memories I have as a child was riding my tricycle back and forth on a small sidewalk where we lived. I’m not for sure, but I think the sidewalk originally led to an outhouse since it dead ends. I rode my tricycle to the far end and turned around and there, before my eyes, was a big black snake that stretched across the sidewalk.



Father Gregory Bach

I began to scream and cry. My mother came out of the house and started my way and she stopped. She saw the snake. She was afraid of snakes. She hesitated to come to me. The snake slithered off and my mother came running to me.

The unconditional love of a mother leads her to run to her children when they are afraid or feel lonely. The unconditional love of a mother whose heart pours out when they cry for help is mirrored in the love of our Blessed Mother Mary.

Mary, as we know so well, said “yes” when the angel came to her. She was to be the mother of Jesus and she accepted it with open arms. One of the scenes in the movie, The Passion of the Christ, was so moving that it showed us the love of a mother for her child. Jesus was carrying his cross, with many people surrounding him, and at one point Jesus makes eye contact with his mother and stretches out his hand to Mary. Mary stretches out her hand and for a split second their hands touch and their eyes meet, and her heart went out to him.

We hear in the Gospel, “And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him.”

Jesus loves us with an unconditional love, a love that knows no bounds, a love that stretches to the heart of every person, a love that calls us to know him, to love him and to serve him. When we respond to that love of Jesus our hearts will overflow so that the world around us will feel that love by what we say and do.

As Mary stretched out her hand to Jesus let us do the same. In prayer let us reach for the hand of Jesus who loves us unconditionally.

Father Gregory Bach is assistant director of seminarians for the Diocese of Covington and pastor, St. Benedict Parish, Covington, Ky

Mother’s Day petitions

For all mothers: That they be supported and encouraged in their special vocation of love for others; We pray to the Lord.

For the gift of motherhood: that all might treasure and support God’s plan for life and love; We pray to the Lord.

For all mothers: that their children will honor their many sacrifices by lives of service and virtue; We pray to the Lord.

For all mothers who await the birth of a child, especially those present here today: that the Lord protect all unborn sons and daughters and bring them to a safe delivery; We pray to the Lord.

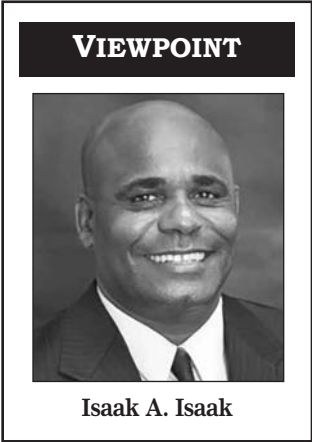
For all married couples who are struggling with infertility: that the Lord grant them peace as they hope for the gift of a child; We pray to the Lord.

For mothers who grieve and mourn, especially those who have lost a child before birth: that they find consolation in God’s promise of life; We pray to the Lord

Alleluia (praise the Lord) — Jesus is Risen!

Happy Easter!

It has been five weeks since we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus, the King of all kings, and the Lord of all lords, and the Easter Season continues.



Isaak A. Isaak

Therefore, I wish you a Happy Easter! And it is appropriate to say Happy Easter and share this exciting message to the ends of the Earth.

Remember that after his resurrection, Jesus the slain lamb, risen to new life, appeared to his disciples until his ascension to his Father. Then the promised Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost to guide them in their mission — which became our mission.

John, the Evangelist, in the Book of Revelation, equates Jesus to the Easter sacrificial lamb, the ultimate sacrifice for salvation.

Growing up in Eritrea, East Africa, as a little boy, my dad would get us up early on Easter Sunday and take us to the nearest village for Mass. Following Mass, we would return to our village where my dad would select a spot-

less lamb for our Easter meal. My dad, though he was not a theologian like John, would help us better equate Jesus with our Easter lamb. This tradition impacted my life immensely in understanding the fulfillment of the Mosaic Law and the prophets in the passion, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Also, the New Testament accounts clearly point to Jesus as the one who fulfills the law and the prophets, example of these are: the Sermon on the Mount (Jesus like Moses on the Mount) Matt 5-7; the transfiguration (Moses is subordinate to Jesus) Matt 17:1-13; and Matt 19:7-8, Divorce was permitted by Moses only because of hardness of heart.

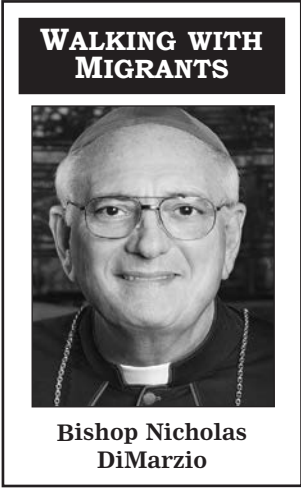
Jesus, the lamb of God, is still truly alive and present in his Precious Body and Precious Blood, and we live in God, and God lives in us through the sacrament of the holy Eucharist. Knowing and understanding this mystery is FORMIDABLE!!!

Jesus rose from the dead so that you and I, and this lost and dying world, may rise and live free from sin, guilt, shame, sickness and every other bondage that would enslave our lives. We are an Easter people, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to continue the mission of Jesus Christ and his Church.

Again, Happy Easter! Jesus is truly risen — Alleluia! Isaak A. Isaak is co-director of the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization, Diocese of Covington, Ky

Migrants: To move or not to move, that is the question

A statement titled “The right not to have to migrate” was recently issued by the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. But what does the right not to migrate actually mean?



Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio

This basic principle of Catholic social teaching regarding migration sometimes causes confusion because it seems contradictory. Some would say: “Of course you have the right to remain in your home country.”

But the decision to leave is not always a free or easy one because circumstances impinge on people’s free will. Violence, conflict, endemic poverty and climate change influence people’s decisions to move from their homeland.

Consistent with Catholic teaching, the goal of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development is to support improving conditions in countries so that its citizens don’t feel like there is a need to leave. This means promoting human rights, liberty and security in these countries. There is often a conflict involving the right to life, liberty and security versus the right to the freedom of movement.

The Church’s social teaching on migration, beginning with “Exsul Familia,” the apostolic constitution on migration by Pope Pius XII, makes it clear that the right to migrate is a basic human right.

This decision was reaffirmed by Pope John XXIII, Vatican II, and more recently by Pope Benedict XVI, who stated: “There is a need to reaffirm the right not to emigrate, that is to remain in one’s homeland.”

St. John Paul II said: “It is a basic human right to live in one’s own country. However, this right becomes effective only if the factors that urge people to emigrate are constantly kept under control.”

Pope Francis has spoken often about the right people have to raise and support their family in a safe environment, in their home country.

The social teaching of the Church is based on the principle of the dignity of each human person. Each individual has the right to remain in their homeland, but that right is conditioned by the ability to access other basic human rights. If these rights are not available, then the person is free to migrate in search of better living conditions, or more importantly, to escape death.

Once the Church’s social teaching is understood, it cannot be claimed that it foments or encourages migration from one country to another. It is always better to improve the living conditions in each country, so that people do not need to migrate.

Migration for humans holds innate challenges, some of which can be very detrimental if they are not controlled in a proper manner. Displacement and separation from one’s family, language and culture always has deleterious effects.

It is the teaching and hope of the Church that people should flourish where they were born. Consequently, the Church’s work is to support acceptable living conditions in all countries, so that people do not have to exercise their right to emigrate.

For this reason, recent criticism of Catholic Charities organizations and other social groups who assist migrants, no matter what their legal status, need to be understood in the light of the constant and wise social teaching of the Church.

Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio is the retired bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York. He writes the column “Walking With Migrants” for The Tablet and OSV News.

Bishop Sheldon gave witness to his episcopal motto ‘Strong In Faith’

Dino Orsatti
Editor

STEUBENVILLE — The Diocese of Steubenville’s third bishop, Gilbert I. Sheldon, died April 24 at the age of 96. Bishop Sheldon served as a bishop for 26 years, 16 as an auxiliary in Cleveland and 10 as Diocesan bishop in Steubenville.

Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton said, “Bishop Sheldon personified a shepherd’s generosity and compassionate heart. His love for the people of God was evident in his travels throughout the diocese as he shared the good news of Jesus Christ in the Ohio Valley. As his episcopal motto illustrated, he was strong in the faith.”

Bishop Sheldon was born Sept. 20, 1926, in Cleveland, one of 12 children of the late Ignatius P. and Stephanie J. Olszewski Sheldon. He is survived by sisters, Susan (Hans) Gossler of Munster, Indiana, and Nancy A. Sheldon of Rocky River, Ohio, and nephews and nieces.

Bishop Sheldon received his early education at St. Philip Neri Elementary and Cathedral Latin High School, Cleveland. He then went on to receive degrees from John Carroll University and St. Mary Seminary, both in Cleveland, and the Ohio Consortium of Seminaries, Columbus, Ohio. In addition, Bishop Sheldon has been awarded honorary degrees from Wheeling Jesuit University, Wheeling, West Virginia, and Franciscan University of Steubenville.

A member of the U.S. Army Air Force, 1944-45, (having enlisted immediately after high school, at the age of 17) he was ordained to the priesthood Feb. 28, 1953, by Archbishop Edward F. Hoban.

During his priestly ministry in the Diocese of Cleveland, Bishop Sheldon was an associate pastor, St. Rose, St. Clare and Sts. Philip and James; diocesan director and national board member of the Society for the

Propagation of the Faith, traveling to 23 countries on five continents; chaplain, Magnificat High School; pastor, Sacred Heart; episcopal vicar, Lorain County; notary, diocesan Tribunal; prosy nodal judge, diocesan Tribunal; academic board, St. Mary Seminary; board of trustees, Borromeo College; instructor, St. John College; chaplain, Serra Club West; chaplain, West Park Knights of Columbus; diocesan consultant; and member of Catholic Charities Board.

On June 11, 1976, he was ordained a bishop by Bishop (later named Cardinal) James A. Hickey. As an auxiliary bishop for the Cleveland Diocese, Bishop Sheldon was the vicar, Marriage and Family Concerns; vicar, Summit County; and vicar, Southern Region.

On April 2, 1992, he was installed as the bishop of the Diocese of Steubenville. During that time, he served on U.S. bishops’ committees for Latin America, Administration, National Advisory Council, Missions and Nominations, as well as was a board member of the Pontifical College Josephinum, Columbus.

While in Cleveland, and as bishop of the Steubenville Diocese, Bishop Sheldon also, was active in civic and community affairs, including holding membership in the Knights of Columbus, Serra Club, Order of Alhambra, Catholic War Veterans, American Legion and Rotary Club.

As he celebrated 25 years as a bishop in 2001, Bishop Sheldon attributed his vocation to the faith he inherited from his parents, which was re-enforced by parish priests and high school teachers. His episcopal motto is “Fortes in Fide” (Strong in the Faith).



Bishop Gilbert I. Sheldon

He began to nurture the faith of those he shepherded in the Diocese of Steubenville with a series of articles, which were published in *The Steubenville Register*. His columns appeared in the diocesan newspaper from 1993 through the last edition April 14, 2023.

Church law dictates that a bishop must submit his resignation as a bishop to Rome on his 75th birthday. His resignation was accepted Aug. 5, 2002.

Following retirement, Bishop Sheldon continued to reside in Steubenville. He was chaplain to the Brothers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, with whom he lived, from the time he arrived in the diocese until entering a nursing home a few years ago.

For several years, he was also an adjunct instructor in theology at Franciscan University in the area of medical ethics.

When Bishop Sheldon celebrated his 65th anniversary of his ordination in 2018, he told *The Steubenville Register*, “I have served in a variety of capacities in the last 65 years, any one of which has produced fond memories, as well as challenges ... I would say that the one thing that I treasure most in all of it is the people with whom I have been privileged to work for and with. They were and are there with me in every assignment that I have had.”

Bishop emeritus Roger Foys served as Bishop Sheldon’s vicar general for the Diocese of Steubenville from 1992 until Bishop Foys was called to the Diocese of Covington in 2002. Bishop Foys considers Bishop Sheldon both a mentor and friend. Bishop Foys was the homilist at Bishop Sheldon’s funeral Mass, May 2 at Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville.

“His motto for his coat of arms, ‘Strong In Faith,’ fit him perfectly. He was strong, he was steadfast in the faith,” said Bishop Foys. “In the 31 years that I’ve known him, and worked so closely with him, I never once saw his faith waver no matter whether it was a good day or a bad day or whether there was success or failure, in any undertaking his faith never ever wavered.

“He was very cognizant and conscious of the times in which we live and the attacks on our faith and the weakness on the part of some or of groups, but he remained steadfast his entire life. His whole way of life imaged that. He was humble. He was always exceptionally grateful for the slightest kindness or favor anyone showed him. He was proud to be Catholic, and he was proud to be a priest and a bishop, but that never showed itself in any kind of arrogance. He was kind. He was kind to everyone he met, and he was patient. He taught me that — to be kind and to be patient and to give people the benefit of the doubt.”

Laura Keener, editor, Messenger, Catholic newspaper for the Diocese of Covington, Ky, contributed to this article.



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Poll shows a majority of Americans say abortion drug should stay on market

Kate Scanlon
OSV News

WASHINGTON — A majority of Americans say the abortion drug mifepristone should remain on the market in the U.S., according to a Washington Post-ABC News poll, as the drug remains at the center of an ongoing legal battle.

The poll found that 66 percent of U.S. adults said mifepristone should remain on the market, while 24 percent said it should be taken off. Just under half — 47 percent — said access to mifepristone should remain status quo; while 12 percent say it should remain on the market but with additional restrictions in place, while 11 percent offered no opinion.

The U.S. Supreme Court said April 21 it would block a lower court’s restrictions on an abortion pill, leaving the drug on the market while litigation over the drug proceeds. The high court froze a lower court’s ruling to stay the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s approval of the drug. The Justice Department and Danco Laboratories, a pharmaceutical company that manufactures the abortion pill mifepristone, previously asked the U.S. Supreme Court to intervene in the case after an appeals court allowed portions of an earlier ruling by U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk in Texas to take effect.

A coalition of pro-life opponents of mifepristone, the first of two drugs used in a medication or chemical abortion, had filed suit in an effort to revoke the FDA’s approval of the drug, arguing the government acted in violation of its own safety standards when it first approved the drug in 2000. But proponents argued mifepristone poses statistically little risk to women using it for abortion early in pregnancy, and claim the drug is being singled out for political reasons. A study by the Guttmacher Institute, which supports legal abortion, found that more than half of U.S. abortions in 2020 were medication abortions.

The Supreme Court’s decision maintains the status quo

for the drug while the case plays out.

But Kristi Hamrick, vice president of media and policy for Students for Life Action, found cause for optimism in the results of the new poll, telling OSV News that “if you break down the poll, the concerns over chemical abortion pills are growing.”

“When Students for Life first prioritized chemical abortion pills, people knew little about them and couldn’t see the threat to young women,” Hamrick said. “Today, that poll says that less than half want the pills on the market while a large number want them gone or restricted.”

Hamrick argued that even those who are pro-abortion could still have concerns about an “online, no-test distribution of a deadly cocktail that exposes women to injury, infertility, death, and abusers,” which she said is “worrying more and more women.”

An April poll conducted by CRC Research for Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America found that “62 percent feel not very confident (26 percent) or not at all confident (35 percent) in the claim that the abortion pill is safe after being on the market for two decades, when they know that the FDA tracks no side effects other than death,” the pro-life group said.



OSV News photo/Nathan Howard, Reuters

Pro-life activists hold a prayer vigil and news conference to call for the U.S. Supreme Court justices to “affirm the decision of Federal District Court Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk who suspended the Food and Drug Administration’s approval of Mifepristone,” in front of the Supreme Court in Washington April 21, 2023.

Also in April, GenBioPro, which makes the generic version of mifepristone, sued the FDA seeking to block it from complying if the courts ultimately pull the drug off the market, an additional layer to the case.

Additional lawsuits in other states may also impact whether the drug remains available as well. Washington State has sought to block the Texas ruling. GenBioPro has also sued West Virginia over its state ban on mifepristone, arguing it violates the commerce clause of the Constitution.

The Supreme Court’s action returned the case to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which is scheduled to hear arguments on May 17.

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New Barbie seen as affirmation of children with Down syndrome even while abortion claims more of them

Kimberley Heatherington
(OSV News) — When Mattel announced the release of a Barbie doll portrayed with Down syndrome April 25, the global toymaker explained the addition to its product line is intended “to allow even more children to see themselves in Barbie.”

But a corresponding awful and certainly unintentional irony is that — due to elective abortion — the doll has fewer potential lookalike playmates than ever before.

While estimates vary, elective abortions of children whose Down syndrome is detected in prenatal tests are as high as 67-75 percent in America. In Denmark, the figure is 98 percent, while other European nations report rates exceeding 90 percent. In England, Wales and Scotland, the rate is 90 percent, as it is in mainland China. Virtually no children are born with Down syndrome in Iceland.

Mattel’s products are available in more than 150 countries.

Speaking with OSV News concerning the new Barbie doll, Mark Bradford — founding president of the Jérôme Lejeune Foundation USA — said, “I think we have to see this as a positive development, and use it to point out the contradiction of promoting individuals with disabilities, and using Down syndrome as the symbol of that, against the push — and there is a push in many areas of this country — for prenatal diagnosis and the termination of individuals with Down syndrome.”

Bradford also is now the Venerable Jérôme Lejeune fellow at Bishop Robert E. Barron’s Word on Fire Institute. Lejeune, the French scientist who identified the genetic cause of Down syndrome, is a candidate for sainthood. In January 2021, his “heroic virtues” were officially recognized by Pope Francis, who declared him “venerable.”

Bradford has a son with Down syndrome and five daughters. “When our daughters had Barbie dolls 20 years ago and more, Barbie was pretty much white, and you could either get brown hair, blonde hair or red hair,” recalled Bradford. “Eventually, skin tones became more varied, and ethnicities became more varied, and so they began to open up, and appeal to more of what the United States looks like nowadays.”

The Barbie line currently features dolls with 35 skin tones, 97 hairstyles and nine body types. A Barbie with Down syndrome is, Bradford said, “a natural and positive extension of that, because it’s beginning to include individuals with disabilities.” More than just a toy, the doll becomes “an affirmation of who they are. It’s an acknowledgment that a major toy company has created a doll that



OSV News photo/Radek Leski for Mattel, handout via Reuters

Model and influencer Enya from the Netherlands holds Barbie’s first doll with Down syndrome, in Haarlem, Netherlands, in this undated Mattel handout image.

looks like them,” Bradford said, “and represents who they are.”

Lisa McKnight, executive vice president and global head of Barbie & Dolls, noted in a Mattel press release that the new Barbie also is meant to encourage “children to play with dolls who do not look like themselves. Doll play outside of a child’s own lived experience can teach understanding and build a greater sense of empathy, leading to a more accepting world,” McKnight said in the statement.

The doll quickly sold out online at major retailers such as Amazon and Target, leaving scrambling parents to complain in Mattel’s website comment boxes that it could only be found on eBay selling at \$85 instead of the \$10.99 retail price. “Additional product will be available this summer,” Aly Lloyd, Mattel’s senior PR associate for Barbie & Dolls, told OSV News.

To reflect someone with Down syndrome, the doll features a body shape and face sculpt different than a traditional Barbie; Mattel notes these “physical features were reviewed by a medical professional.” Its blue and yellow outfit highlights the colors of Down syndrome awareness, and it sports a pendant necklace representing both the Down syndrome community and chromosome symbols

genetically associated with Down syndrome. It also wears ankle foot orthotics for support, as do some children with Down syndrome.

“As parents — and consumers — we get to choose the culture we want,” Daniel Schreck, current president and chairman of the Jérôme Lejeune Foundation USA, said in a statement to OSV News. “That means supporting companies and causes that align with the values we teach at home. As a result, I’d welcome anything that highlights the essential contributions that persons with Down Syndrome make to our culture: their positivity, accomplishments, determination, purity, and the like. There’s so much to celebrate.”

Down syndrome advocacy benefits society as a whole, Schreck asserted. “Being vocal about our loved ones is important for everyone. In upholding and promoting the intrinsic human dignity of those with Down Syndrome, we are upholding the dignity of all persons. Doing that will begin to bend the culture, including corporations, back to humanity. That’s the legacy of Dr. Lejeune that we now advance at our foundation,” Schreck shared with OSV News.

Schreck also had a special request for Mattel: “I hope part of the toy’s proceeds will go directly toward advancing world-class health care for the medically underserved population we serve,” he said.

“Mattel is proud to continue its partnership with NDSS by donating 2,500 Barbie Fashionista dolls, inclusive of the Barbie doll with Down syndrome, to the NDSS flagship New York City Buddy Walk® on September 9,” Lloyd said in a statement. Launched in 1995 by the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS), the Buddy Walk is a fundraiser that promotes acceptance and inclusion for those with Down syndrome. The Times Square and Central Park version — among 200 Buddy Walk events across the U.S. and abroad — attracts more than 2,000, including celebrities.

The U.S.-based National Down Syndrome Society partnered with Mattel on the Down syndrome Barbie project, and its logo is displayed on packaging.

Mattel did not comment on the question of whether or not the Down syndrome elective abortion rate entered into product development discussions, with respect to consumer demographics. The Global Down Syndrome Foundation states that while “the population of people in the U.S. with Down syndrome is currently unknown ... 38 percent of Americans know someone with Down syndrome.” Worldwide, the estimated population of people with Down syndrome is 6 million.

Reaction to the doll has been decidedly positive, including from high-profile Down syndrome advocates. Ellie Goldstein — the first Down syndrome model featured on the cover of British Vogue, who has also modeled for Gucci — told the TV hosts of “This Morning” UK that, upon seeing the Barbie with Down syndrome, she felt “really happy and emotional.”

Actress and model Sofia Sanchez — who can be seen in ads for LEGO, Target and Old Navy, and who co-wrote the book “You Are Enough” (Scholastic, 2021) — told NBC News Now that, “Kids can have this doll that looks like them. It’s special.”



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PEOPLE AND EVENTS



Holy Trinity students salute you

Vern Nieporte volunteers every week at Holy Trinity School, Bellevue. Being a retired Army Colonel, he has been teaching Kindergarteners how to properly salute. While on vacation to a historical military base, Mr. and Mrs. Nieporte purchased Army t-shirts for the class and gathered together for a proper salute.

Newsworthy

Newport Central Catholic High School sophomore, **Madison Wolf**, for will represent NCCHS in the 2023-2024 Regional Youth Leadership Program this Fall. Regional Youth Leadership, sponsored by the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, provides participants the opportunity for intellectual, creative, social and personal growth.

The prayer intention for May, as recommended by Pope Francis is that ecclesial movements and groups might daily rediscover their evangelizing mission. Pope Francis is dedicating his May prayer intention to ecclesial movements and groups, which says are a “gift” and a “treasure” in the Church.



Learning about Mass

Father Gedney stopped by classrooms at Holy Cross Elementary, Latonia, this week to teach students more about Mass.

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.

Newport Central Catholic High School Summer Youth Camps: boys and girls basketball, baseball, drama, football, boys and girls soccer, softball and volleyball. For camp dates and to register go to <https://gofan.co/app/school/KY6479>. For information e-mail jschulkens@ncchs.com.
The Sisters of Notre Dame need items for its 101st Annual 4th of July Festival, including services, sports items, jewelry, gift certificates and antiques. Call Margie at (859) 392-8229 or, e-mail mschnelle@sndusa.org. Items can be dropped off during the day at 1601 Dixie Hwy. in Park Hills or arrangements can be made for pickup.

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.

St. Anthony Parish, Taylor Mill, Ladies’ Spring Tea, May 13, 2:15–4:30 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) 394-74720 or e-mail Theresa@bluearmy.org.

Sisters of Notre Dame Furniture Sale Dressers, tables, desks, shelves, recliners, chairs, & more! Any donation. All must go! Located behind St. Joseph Heights at garages. 1601 Dixie Highway, Covington, KY. Friday, May 19 and Saturday, May 20, 2023, 8am – 2 pm. For information, call 859-291-2040

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.–4pm, May 29, 10 am.–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 athenaeum.edu.

Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky day at the Florence Y’Alls Thomas More Stadium, June 29, 6:30 p.m. Vouchers are \$10 with half going to support the Serra Club. Tickets available online <https://www.ticketreturn.com>; use

2023 Parish Festivals

St. Anthony Parish, Taylor Mill, June 2–3, 6–11 p.m.

St. Augustine Parish, Covington, June 9–10, 5–11 p.m.

St. Paul Parish, Florence, June 9–10, 6–11 p.m.; June 11, 3–7 p.m.

St. Joseph Parish, Camp Springs, Saturday, June 10, 4–11 p.m.

St. Joseph Academy Pigfest, Walton, June 16–17, 5–11 p.m.

St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood, July 14–15, 6 p.m.–12 a.m.; July 16, 4–10 p.m.

St. Therese Parish, Southgate, June 15, adult night 6–10 p.m.; June 16–17, 6–11 p.m.

Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish, Erlanger, June 23–25

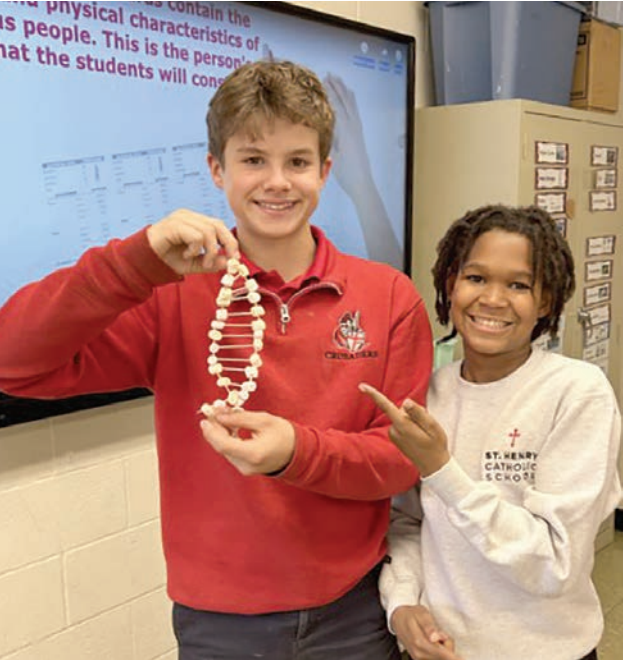
Holy Cross Parish, Latonia, July 21, 6–11 p.m.; July 22, 5–11 p.m.

St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas, July 28, 6–11 p.m.; July 29, 5–11 p.m.

St. Joseph, Cold Spring, August 4–5, 6–11 p.m.

Blessed Sacrament School Boosters Corn Roast, Ft. Mitchell, August 11, 5:30–11:30 p.m.

St. Philip Golf Ball Drop and Festival, Cold Spring, August 19, 5–11 p.m.



DNA Day learning

To celebrate DNA day, April 25, St. Henry School, Elsmere, junior high students used marshmallows to build physical traits of made up characters.

the code “SerraClub” in the special offer code field. The Y’Alls will be playing the Trois-Rivières Aigles from Canada. Contact Mike Murray at (859) 630-4228 or mmurray@covdio.org.

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’ foot-steps. 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.

In their own words — Benedictine Oblates share what it means to be an oblate

“I have been a Benedictine oblate of St. Walburg Monastery since 2008. During that time, my spiritual journey has been greatly enhanced by my participation in our monthly meetings and discussions, Liturgy of the Hours, retreats, conferences and other events. The kindness and hospitality of the sisters and other oblates have helped me through difficult times, reflecting the caring community that we are. Upon entering the monastery grounds, I have, in fact, come to feel a sense of peace and comfort.”
— Louise Jewett, Hamilton, Ohio

“Being a Benedictine oblate is a privilege and grace that offers an opportunity to grow in faith and participate in new areas of service. I feel that I receive so many blessings from this group: friendship, support, accountability and a sense of home.”
— Gayle Underdown, Villa Hills, Ky.

“In 1985 Dick and I moved to Northern Kentucky from Wisconsin. We often spoke to friends we needed to leave behind that we would find a new family through our Church. It wasn’t long before we became aware of a new program the Diocese of Covington was offering, The Lay Ministry Program. We applied and were accepted into the two-year program. In the process we were assigned mentors, ours were Sisters from St. Walburg and we began to understand the charism of the Benedictine Sisters. Neither of us were raised around religious communities and we felt this was an answer to our prayers for community and family. Sister Justina Franxman became my spiritual director. Over time we felt we wanted to become Oblates and did so in 2001. The foundation of prayer, community, liturgy, Lectio and monthly meetings became the foundation of our growing faith. Through involvement in many aspects of faith formation we went into volunteer

and paid ministry. Dick spent 18 years visiting jails through the Exodus program and I became a hospital chaplain. The steady hand of support the Sisters gave us cannot even be underrated ... Whenever we find ourselves driving down the beautiful driveway to the monastery we know how deep the community of the Benedictines has been the center of our lives and the path to facing our aging years in prayer and love of dear friends found in the support of the Sisters. We not only found new friends but a deeper friendship of our God and foundation to our faith.”
— Dick and Gail Michalack, Ft. Wright, Ky.

“To the staff of the *Messenger*, I was happy to read about the new St. Cosmos Deanery of Benedictine Oblates being established in the diocese. I have been an Oblate with the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg since 2019, but our Oblates have been in existence since 1988. It has been a joy to learn about and share in the Benedictine charism with this faith-filled community of men and women, and of course to be associated with the Sisters of St. Walburg who have been living out their call to the Gospel in the City of Covington since 1859. I will look forward to following the progress of the new deanery and certainly trust that our combined presence in the diocese will grow the spirits of Saints Benedict and Scholastica into the future.”
— Margie Hardebeck, Covington, Ky.
(Note: for information on the St. Cosmos Deanery and St. Walburg Oblates visit www.covoblates.org.)

“Being an Oblate at St. Walburg Monastery for over 22 years is foundational for my spiritual growth, anchors me in a community of friendship and support, and broadens my religious perspective. The Oblates of St. Walburg are a committed group with outstanding leadership. Sister Mary Tewes, OSB, continuously reaches out to potential persons

interested in St. Walburg Oblates. She also keeps the community informed of prayer requests, joys and celebrations, and opportunities for service and learning. As I live in Nashville, Tenn., I am grateful for the opportunity to attend meetings and services on Zoom as well as in person when possible. The Sisters at St. Walburg always greet me and make me feel welcome and at home. The welcome was there when I first arrived in 1997 and continues after 22 years as an Oblate. I am grateful to all Oblates and Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery.”
— Laura Flippen Tenzel, Nashville, Tenn.

“Being an Oblate allows me opportunities to grow in my faith and journey with others. We study the Rule of Benedict through his writings and other books about the Rule. We meditate on the Scriptures through Lectio Divina and allow God’s word to speak to us. I have a history with the Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery. I went to Thomas More College with several of the Sisters and started working as a nurses aid in the infirmary, after hearing of a need from one of the Sisters. The experience of working in the infirmary and meeting the Sisters was a very positive. I was humbled to be at the infirmary when one of the Sisters was dying and I thought it was such a beautiful experience to see the Sisters keep vigil until the Sister went to meet the Lord. I was happy when I inquired about becoming an Oblate that they welcomed me quickly. The other Oblates and Sisters that I have since met, inspire me and bring me joy as we share our faith journey.”
— Kathleen Ford Rosing, Highland Heights, Ky.

“Finding the Oblate program with the Sisters of St Walburg Monastery has been the answer to what I was searching for to become closer to God. I have found comfort
(Continued on page 11)



A group shot of St. Walburg’s Benedictine Oblates at one of their ‘renewal days.’ If you are interested in learning more about Benedictine Oblates, contact Sister Mary Tewes at marytewes@gmail.com or Sister Dorothy Schuette at dorothysosb@gmail.com, or call the monastery at (859) 331-6324. You can find the Benedictine Oblates of St. Walburg Monastery online at www.stwalburg.org/our-community/benedictine-oblates.

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A history of the Oblates of St. Walburg Monastery, Villa Hills

Benedictine Sister Mary Tewes
Contributor

The Benedictine Community of women was established in Covington, Ky., at the invitation of Abbot Boniface Wimmer, St. Vincent Abbey, Latrobe, Penn, at the same time that he sent Benedictine priests to Covington to set up a priory and provide priests for the new parishes.

The Benedictine Sisters were called to teach the children of the German immigrants coming to America. St. Walburga Monastery, Eichstat, Bavaria was the monastery contacted to request Sisters for the new mission.

While religious communities of men were permitted to welcome Oblates all along, this was not permitted to religious communities of women until after Vatican II — a century later.

In 1985, Benedictine Sister Martha Walther, with the approval of prioress, Benedictine Sister Justina Franxman, introduced to the community Chapter the first discussion of opening St. Walburg Monastery to the possi-

bility of building a relationship with lay people as Benedictine Oblates (at first called Associates).

Since many other women religious communities in the local area were building such relationship with the laity after Vatican II, there was much interest and support. The Benedictine Sisters set about inviting friends, relatives and former members to consider this possibility. Sisters prepared presentations on Benedictine promises and values. And a program was formed with regular meetings over a two-year period, with Sister Martha as the first director.

The first group of 28 prepared to make their promises as Benedictine Associates on the Feast of St. Benedict, March 21, 1987. Benedictine Sister Cathy Bauer was called

as director in 1990, and Benedictine Sister Mary Tewes in 1993, 30 years ago.

The title was changed to Benedictine Oblates in 2007 at the request of the Oblates, who had now become familiar with Benedictine Oblates all over the country.

Five members from the first group are still on this side of heaven. There are 39 active members who come to monthly gatherings in person or on Zoom, plus four Inquirers preparing for oblation next fall. Thirty-four Benedictine Oblates of St. Walburg Monastery have entered eternal life.

In November, an annual retreat led by Benedictine Sister Dorothy Schuette is held, followed by an annual Renewal of Oblation. The prioress along with a Coordinating Team of Oblates assist in the direction of St. Walburg Monastery Benedictine Oblates.



(Continued from page 10)

and solace in learning the Benedictine way. I fell calm in my spirit now and would appreciate the chance to officially become an oblate.”

— Inquirer Karen Bowe, Grayson, Ky.

“To become an Oblate with the Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery is to share more fully in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ and to share his life with others. It is to answer the call to a closer walk with Christ within community. It is to grow in virtue through the monastic practices of this community and to share those values in the larger community in which I live. It is to love.”

— Inquirer Carol Leonhart, Ft. Thomas, Ky.

What does having Benedictine Oblates mean to you as a member of St. Walburg Monastery?

“In a world where it’s very hard to stay true to a basic sense of values and integrity, joining with others who are seeking to live even higher goals as love of God and others equally, Oblates support each other, in the quest to seek God and live accordingly. Benedictinism is a simple but challenging way to live a life of faith, so flexibly. Its history stretches over 1,500 years and multiple cultures and faith traditions. It connects people of many backgrounds and traditions and ages to a common vision and goal. It is a very human and down to earth form of living lofty, God-centered life that has been practiced by literally countless people over its 1,500 plus years.”

— Sister Colleen Winston, OSB

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Pope to pope: Let our churches be united by Christ’s love

Justin McLellan
Catholic News Service

Two popes sat side by side before a crowd of rain-soaked pilgrims in St. Peter’s Square May 10.

Coptic Orthodox Pope Tawadros II, patriarch of Alexandria, Egypt, was at the Vatican to mark the 50th anniversary of a joint declaration signed by St. Paul VI and Pope Shenouda III in 1973 outlining the beliefs shared by their churches.



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis and Coptic Orthodox Pope Tawadros II read speeches in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican May 10, 2023. Pope Tawadros was at the Vatican to commemorate the 50th anniversary of a joint declaration signed by the heads of the Catholic and Coptic Orthodox Churches.

Before his general audience, Pope Francis embraced Pope Tawadros and kissed his encolpion, an icon Orthodox and Byzantine Catholic bishops wear instead of a pectoral cross.

During the audience, the two publicly exchanged greetings and took turns addressing the crowd.

“Despite the differences in our roots and affiliations, we are united by the love of Christ who dwells within us and the host of our apostle fathers and saints who guide us,”

Pope Tawadros said, speaking in Arabic. “Let us walk together in life bearing in mind the promise (God) has made to us — eternal life — accompanying and supporting each other with prayers according to this promise.”

Calling for Catholics and Copts to love one another, Pope Tawadros said that “even though we go against the tide of the greedy and selfish world, we have accepted the challenge of love that Christ asks of us, and we will be true Christians, and the world will be more human, because it will know that God is love and that this is his highest name.”

After congratulating Pope Francis on the 10th anniversary of his pontificate, celebrated in March, Pope Tawadros recalled his

trip to Rome and meeting with Pope Francis in 2013, which, he said, was “filled with brotherly love.”

Now each year on May 10, the anniversary of the 1973 meeting between their predecessors, the two popes speak over the phone and exchange greetings. That tradition, said Pope Tawadros, “embodies the Christian spirit and love that unites us in serving God and serving our brothers and sisters in humanity.”

Pope Tawadros also thanked Pope Francis for his visit to Egypt in April 2017, which he called a “great blessing for all of Egypt,” and recalling Pope Francis’ messages for their church communities to together become “a living image of the heavenly Jerusalem.”

Putting aside his typical weekly catechesis, Pope Francis thanked Pope Tawadros for his visit to Rome and commitment to the “growing friendship” between their churches.

He referred to the 21 Coptic Christian martyrs, who he said, “are also ours,” that were killed by the Islamic State in Libya in 2015, and he asked for their intercession in fostering communion between the two churches. The two popes then jointly blessed the crowd of visitors in St. Peter’s Square.

Pope Tawadros was scheduled to meet privately with Pope Francis May 11 before meeting with officials from the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity. He also was scheduled to meet with Rome’s Coptic Christian community and celebrate Divine Liturgy May 14 in the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the cathedral of Rome.

In a jointly written preface to a book about the 1973 declaration, the two popes expressed their desire for their churches to “journey toward full communion,” and gave thanks for “the steps already taken, and the distance already traveled, which are often much more important than we imagine.”

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Medals, scapulars are often part of jockeys’ uniforms; amid risks of horse racing, riders value prayer, devotion

Mary Rampellini
OSV News

HOT SPRINGS, Ark. — Jockey David Cabrera has had a special devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe since he was a child.

It’s something he’s continued to carry with him — literally.

Cabrera, who races at Oaklawn Park in Hot Springs, is one of many jockeys who wear Catholic sacramentals when competing in races. He has a scapular with an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

“It’s from Mexico,” said Cabrera, 30. “I wear it all the time. I never take it off.”

Other jockeys have a Miraculous Medal attached to the back of the helmets they wear each time they get on a racehorse. It’s an old-school tradition — one in place long before 25-year-old jockey Cristian Torres burst onto the scene at Oaklawn Park.

“I’ve seen it,” said Torres, who is the meet’s current leading jockey.

There are other traditions, too, noted jockey Jon Court, a 62-year-old veteran who rides at both Oaklawn Park and tracks in Kentucky.

“Through the years, I’ve seen some riders adamant they wear a certain saint medal or crucifix,” Court told Arkansas Catholic, Little Rock’s diocesan newspaper. “I’ve seen them down on their knees, kissing a medal.”

The profession of riding racehorses is fulfilling but also dangerous. The rules of the sport require an ambulance to follow jockeys around the track every time a race is conducted.

It’s a way of life that leads many to call on their faith for protection.

Before each program of races at Oaklawn Park, track chaplains Rich and Robi Heffington visit the jockeys’ quarters — where there are separate “locker rooms” for men and women.

“We have the chaplain in the jocks’ room, and he prays for everyone for safety, for everyone who works with the horses,” said jockey Francisco Arrieta, a 34-year-old native of Venezuela. “Every time I get on a horse in the post parade, I say, ‘God, please take care of my horse and take care of me, in Jesus’ name.’ I’ve been doing that a long time. I put my trust in God.”

Torres, who was born in Puerto Rico and later moved to Florida, said he does not wear any religious items on the racetrack, but he keeps a Bible in the jockeys’ quarters at Oaklawn Park.

“When I go into the (starting) gate, I always say to myself, ‘I’m in your hands in this race, God,’ and I feel I’m covered,” Torres said. “Every morning, my mom will text me a prayer, and she lets me know she’s always praying for me. I go peacefully to work.”

Cabrera, who won last season’s riding title at Oaklawn Park, is a native of Mexico who grew up Catholic.

“I pray a lot before the races and sometimes after the races, just to thank God for his blessings,” Cabrera said.

Cabrera said when he was an 8-year-old, he asked Our Lady of Guadalupe to intercede for him because he needed a miracle to help him through a difficult time at school.

“I prayed with all my heart,” he said. “That miracle that I needed, it came true. So, I always think, no matter what it is, if I ask with a lot of faith and with all my heart, eventually things come around, and things smooth out.”

Court is another jockey who keeps his faith life front and center during the races at Oaklawn Park.

“Throughout the day I meditate on certain Scriptures,” he said. “I guess my go-to is Psalms and sometimes Proverbs. I enjoy the Old Testament equally as well as the Gospels.

“It does a lot of things. It gives me confidence. It gives me a sense of presence and a sense of security. It’s very dangerous out there. We have to make split-second decisions.”

Arrieta, who has established himself as one of the top riders at Oaklawn, said his faith makes him step back and be rational when things don’t go the way he would have hoped in a race.

“He has a reason. He knows everything,” Arrieta said. “He has the last word.”



OSV News photo/courtesy Coady Photography

Jockey David Cabrera wins the Poinsettia Stakes aboard Pretty Birdie Dec. 17, 2022, at Oaklawn Park in Hot Springs, Ark.

Arrieta, who just a few years ago started coming to Oaklawn Park, said he and his wife are looking at buying a home in Hot Springs. The couple has been married 15 years and have three children.

“My family and I really like it here,” Arrieta said.

So does Cabrera, who takes part in some of the local church activities with his wife and daughter. In December, Cabrera was part of the Our Lady of Guadalupe proces-

sion down Central Avenue in Hot Springs from St. Mary of the Springs to St. John the Baptist for a special Mass.

“I always wanted to do something like this,” Cabrera said. “They were looking for volunteers to help carry the statue because there were not enough guys. It was heavy. It was a blessing to me, to be able to carry her.”

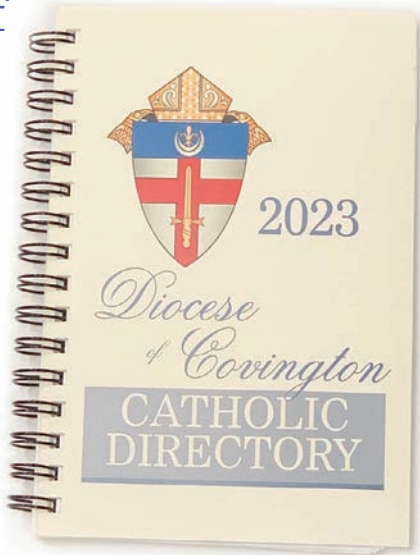
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Pope to safeguarding commission: Be kind, bring hope, heal broken lives

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service
VATICAN CITY — Safeguarding minors and vulnerable persons must be a priority for everyone in the church, Pope Francis said.

“The principles of respect for the dignity of all, for right conduct and a sound way of life must become a universal rule, independent of people’s culture or economic and social condition,” he said during an audience May 5 with staff and members of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors at the Vatican.

“All the church’s ministers must respect this rule in the way they serve the faithful and they, in turn, must be treated with respect and dignity by those who lead the community,” he said. “Indeed, a culture of safeguarding will only take root if there is a pastoral conversion in this regard among the church’s leaders.”

The commission — led by Cardinal Seán P. O’Malley of Boston, commission president, and Oblate Father Andrew Small, commission secretary — was holding its plenary assembly May 3-6 at the commission’s new offices in the center of Rome.

The plenary came several weeks after Jesuit Father Hans Zollner, a longtime member of the commission, resigned, citing among the reasons for his departure: “structural and practical issues” with the commission and a lack of “transparency, compliance and responsibility.”

Father Zollner had said there were already problems before Pope Francis put the commission within the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith in June 2022, but nearly a year after the new organization went into force, he said he still did not understand how the two bodies were meant to work together.

In his speech to the commission, the pope said that since it was the first papal audience since the commission was formally established within the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, “I would like to provide you with some suggestions.”

“The failure to act properly to halt this evil (of sexual abuse) and to assist its victims has sullied our witness to God’s love,” he said.

In fact, sins of omission, he said, “are very real, and they hurt the community as much as others, if not more so.”

However, he said, “we have not remained silent or inactive” in response to the failures.

For example, he said his document, “Vos Estis Lux Mundi” (You are the light of the world), on the responsibilities and accountability of leaders, “is now permanently in place” as a definitive and no longer “experimental” part of church procedures.

The document also sets standards for the pastoral support of victims and it “calls, in particular, for setting aside places for receiving accusations and caring for those who report that they have been harmed,” the pope said.

“To be sure, improvements can be made on the basis of experience, by episcopal conferences and individual bish-



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis poses for a photograph with staff and members of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors and its leadership, U.S. Cardinal Seán P. O’Malley of Boston, commission president, and Oblate Father Andrew Small, commission secretary, during an audience at the Vatican May 5, 2023. The commission was holding its plenary assembly May 3-6 at the commission’s new offices in Rome.

ops,” he added.
Commission members, he said, are “using your skills and expertise to help repair a terrible scourge in the church by working to assist the various particular churches” because “the importance of safeguarding minors and vulnerable persons must be the rule for everyone” from a diocese and “its parishes and seminary to the training of catechists, teachers and other pastoral workers.”

He said he was encouraged by the commission’s plans to help with training programs and assistance to victims in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

“It is not right that the most prosperous areas of the world should have well-trained and well-funded safeguarding programs, where victims and their families are respected, while in other parts of the world they suffer in silence, perhaps rejected or stigmatized,” he said.

“Efforts to improve guidelines and standards for the conduct of clergy and religious must continue,” he said, asking that he be informed about these efforts and receive an annual report “on what you consider to be working well or otherwise, so that appropriate changes can be made.”

The pope also outlined three principles that are “part of a spirituality of reparation.”

The first, he said, is wherever “harm was done to people’s lives, we are called to keep in mind God’s creative power to make hope emerge from despair and life from death.”

This means that no matter how difficult and demanding the task ahead, “I urge you not to get bogged down; keep reaching out, keep trying to instill confidence in those you meet and who share with you this common cause. Do not grow discouraged when it seems that little is changing for the better.”

The second principle, he said, is to seek to heal the consequences of abuse and the wounds, brokenness and division it has caused. “Our lives are not meant to remain divided” and “where life is broken, then, I ask you to help put pieces back together, in the hope that what is broken can be repaired.”

An example of this, he said, would be what happened recently with one group of survivors who were finally invited to sit down with the leadership of the religious institute that ran the school where they were abused decades ago.

These men wanted to “live out their remaining years in peace,” which meant “resuming their relationship with the church that had hurt them,” the pope said. They wanted to be heard and believed, and they wanted closure, especially regarding questions “that had haunted them.”

“Third, I encourage you to cultivate an approach that mirrors the respect and kindness of God himself,” he said, quoting Maya Angelou, poet and activist, who wrote that “people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

“So be gentle in your actions, bearing one another’s burdens without complaining, but considering that this moment of reparation for the church will give way to a further moment in the history of salvation,” he said.

“Now is the time to repair the damage done to previous generations and to those who continue to suffer,” the pope said, reminding them that a new time is being prepared by God, “made fruitful by the work and tears we share with those who have suffered.”

“That is why it is important that we never stop pressing ahead,” he said.

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Send cover letter, resume, and 3 professional references to: David Hastings at Housing Opportunities of Northern Kentucky (HONK), 502 Fry Street, Covington 41011 or via e-mail to dhastings@honkhomes.org

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SUMMER HELP NEEDED

St. Catherine of Siena Parish has two maintenance positions open this summer. Both are early morning to early afternoon. One is 40 hours per week and the other one is 25 to 30 hours weekly. The work entails general cleaning with very light maintenance, landscaping and painting. Perfect for college or older high school students. Must have or acquire Virtus certification if aged 18 or older. Please email info to dgrothaus@stcatherineofsiena.org or call Don at 859-441-1352.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES

St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright, is a vibrant and active Catholic parish, seeking a Director of Music Ministries (D.M.M). Candidate must be proficient in keyboard, organ, and vocals, have a working knowledge of Liturgical norms, as well as ability/willingness to work with volunteers of various ages and talents. Proficiency in additional instruments is helpful, but not necessary. Salary and benefits are commensurate with education, experience and schedule. Interested candidates please send inquiries and resume to Fr. Mark Keene at mkeene@saintagnes.com.

Protecting God’s Children for Adults Safe Environment Trainings

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.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 e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletins:

- May bulletin: posted Sunday, May 7; due Tuesday, June 6.

www.virtusonline.org, enter you 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 16, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, May 17, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, June 13, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, June 14, 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

SCHOOL BASED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR AT CATHOLIC CHARITIES



Catholic Charities
Diocese of Covington

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington has provided school-based mental health counseling in Northern Kentucky schools for over 40 years. We are expanding and looking for new qualified staff to add to the team. Therefore, we are seeking a full-time (40 hours per week) counselor for our School-Based Counseling Program for the upcoming school year from August 16th, 2023, through May 31st, 2024. The position is 40 hours per week or 100% FTE for 9½ months. Necessary qualifications include MSW or Master in clinical counseling and State Licensed (preferred) or license eligibility; experience with assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of youth; a demonstrated ability to engage with parents and school staff; and solid record-keeping and organizational skills. We offer an excellent benefits package, including weekly supervision for those working towards SW or LPCC licensure and reimbursement for approved expenses. Submit a cover letter, resume (including at least three references), and salary history by email to Shannon Braun at sbraun@covingtoncharities.org. For more information, please visit our website at www.covingtoncharities.org.

Holy Year 2025 website to go live; registration opens in the fall

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

The Vatican office in charge of coordinating plans for the Holy Year 2025 announced they are launching a new website and releasing an app to help people register and to guide them along their pilgrimage in Rome.

By registering online at iubilaeum2025.va or on the jubilee app, people will receive a free digital “pilgrim’s card,” which will be needed to participate in jubilee events, especially gaining access to the Holy Door at St. Peter’s Basilica, said Msgr. Graham Bell, undersecretary of the Dicastery for Evangelization’s section that is coordinating the Holy Year.

The jubilee website was to go live May 10 and be available in nine languages, he said at a news conference at the Vatican May 9.

People can begin registering online starting in September, he said, “by clicking on the ‘participate’ button.” After registering, people will be able to access a personal page on the site’s “pilgrim’s zone,” which will also go live in September.

Registrants will receive a digital “pilgrim’s card,” which is a personal QR code needed to access jubilee events and better facilitate the pilgrimage to the Holy Door, the monsignor said. There also will be an option to purchase a “service card” for a nominal fee to receive special discounts for transportation, lodging, food and museums during the pilgrimage.

The jubilee website and app will give news and information on the Holy Door of St. Peter’s and the other basilicas as well as offer the possibility of organizing one’s own pilgrimage within the city, Msgr. Bell said.

People can choose from three proposed pilgrimages: “the traditional pilgrimage of St. Philip Neri with the seven churches; the pilgrimage on the churches dedicated to the women doctors of the church and patrons of Europe; and the ‘Iter Europaeum,’ that is, the 28 churches



in 27 different European countries, plus the church that represents the European Union.”

“Tools are being prepared to better introduce pilgrims into these paths and to promote knowledge of the works of art in the various churches,” he said. It marks “an important effort carried out in agreement with the (Italian) Ministry of Tourism, which will encourage the discovery of many places often unknown to tourists themselves.”

“Rome has always been a cultural attraction and our aim is that the pilgrim may also become a tourist, just as the tourist may be fascinated by the pilgrim experience,” said Archbishop Rino Fisichella, pro-prefect of the section.

Starting in September, he said, they will open an exhibition “with works by the great Spanish Renaissance artist, El Greco.”

The pieces “have never left Spain and are being made available for this very occasion,” he said. The exhibit will be held in the church of Sant’Agnese in Agone facing onto Piazza Navona and will feature El Greco’s three masterpieces: “The Baptism of Christ,” “Christ Carrying the Cross” and “Christ Blessing.”

Other art exhibits will take place throughout the run-up to and during the jubilee, including ones that will rotate into places like hospitals and prisons, he said. “We want as much as possible for these events to have free access, in order to encourage the participation of citizens in the contemplation of beauty that allows a better relationship with the city and its people.”

Archbishop Fisichella said Pope Francis has asked Catholics worldwide to prepare for the next jubilee year by spending 2023 studying the documents of the Second Vatican Council, especially its four constitutions, which focused on: the liturgy; the church as the people of God; Scripture; and the role of the church in the modern world.

“In order to help local churches in their catechetical, human and especially Christian formation paths, and to give younger people the opportunity to know and rediscover the central contents of the council,” he said, the dicastery published a series of 35 small volumes titled, “Council Notebooks,” in December.

The “notebooks” have already been translated into Spanish in one hardcover volume titled, “Cuadernos del Concilio,” he said, and they are now being translated into English by ATC Publishers-India.

Since the pope wants 2024 to be dedicated to prayer in preparation for the jubilee, the dicastery will publish an in-depth series called “Notes on Prayer” to promote “the centrality of prayer, personal and communal,” the archbishop said.

“We are studying the possibility of a ‘school of prayer’ with pathways that would cover the vast world of prayer,” he added.

The opening and closing dates of the jubilee year will be announced in the pope’s “Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee, which will be published according to tradition on the feast of the Ascension, May 9, 2024,” Archbishop Fisichella said.

The ordinary jubilee will begin with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica in December 2024, he said, and there will be “major jubilee events” throughout 2025. For example, Jan. 24, 2025, will be dedicated to the World of Communications, May 30-June 1, 2025, will be dedicated to families, and July 28-Aug. 3, 2025, will be dedicated to young people.

The archbishop also announced that Italian composer Francesco Meneghello was the winner of the competition for an original score for the official hymn for the Holy Year 2025 that highlights its theme, “Pilgrims of Hope.” The lyrics were written by Msgr. Pierangelo Sequeri, an Italian theologian, composer and musician.

The city of Rome has estimated more than 30 million people will come to Rome for the jubilee year.

At least 87 public works projects are set to begin at an initial cost of 1.8 billion euro. Projects include revamping key areas, increasing accessibility and transport, and improving reception services and infrastructure.



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

Eucharistic Revival playbook offers direction, ideas for parish year

WASHINGTON — Parish leaders seeking guidance for the National Eucharistic Revival's upcoming parish-focused year now have a 24-page resource to assist their discernment. The "Leader's Playbook," released May 1, helps parishes answer the question "what are we being asked to do?" through four "invitations" for the Year of Parish Revival, which begins on the solemnity of Corpus Christi June 11. The playbook was created primarily for pastors and parish leaders. Based on the revival's four "pillars," the playbook's "four invitations" for the Year of Parish Revival are reinvigorating worship, personal encounter, robust faith formation and missionary sending. "Parishes can use this manual to strengthen their Eucharistic culture and share the gift of the Eucharist with all people, regardless of where they are on their faith journey," said Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, in the playbook. Bishop Cozzens is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Evangelization, and the chairman of the bishops' advisory group for the revival.

Supreme Court stays Richard Glossip's execution in Oklahoma

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court May 5 temporarily blocked Oklahoma from executing death-row inmate Richard Glossip after the state's attorney general said Glossip should have a new trial. Glossip was scheduled to be put to death May 18 despite arguments from Oklahoma's Republican Attorney General Gentner Drummond that he did not receive a fair trial. The now-blocked execution date was his ninth scheduled execution date, coming so close on prior occasions that he received three last meals, despite investigations resulting in doubts about his conviction. The high court put the execution on hold so it may consider whether to take up the case. Justice Neil Gorsuch recused himself. While no official reason was given by the court, Gorsuch previously dealt with the case when he was an appeals court judge. In a statement, Drummond said he is "very grateful to the U.S. Supreme Court

for their decision to grant a stay of execution.” Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy, executive director of Catholic Mobilizing Network, praised the stay in a statement. “We give thanks to God that Richard Glossip has been granted a temporary stay of execution, and we pray the Supreme Court decides to formally take up his case,” Vaillancourt Murphy said.

Brownsville vehicle crash indicative of 'corrosive tendency' to devalue vulnerable human life

BROWNSVILLE, Texas (OSV News) – A vehicle crashed into a crowd waiting at a bus stop outside a migrant shelter in the border city of Brownsville, Texas, killing at least seven people and injuring at least 10, authorities said. Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville called the crash indicative of a “corrosive tendency” to devalue vulnerable human life. Around 8:30 a.m. on May 7, a gray Range Rover crashed into a bus stop where a group of individuals were waiting for a bus, several of whom were sitting on a curb as the unmarked city bus stop lacked a bench, local police said. The driver, George Alvarez, 34, has been charged with eight counts of manslaughter, police said. The bus stop is outside the Bishop Enrique San Pedro Ozanam Center, where surveillance footage captured the incident. Many of the victims were Venezuelan men, local officials said, who were waiting for a bus back to downtown Brownsville after spending the night at the shelter. In a statement issued in both English and Spanish, Bishop Flores said, “We mourn and are shocked by the horrific loss of the lives of the seven immigrant men from Venezuela who were killed when a vehicle crashed into them this morning in Brownsville. And we pray for several others who were injured and are in serious condition.” He added: “Let us take extra steps as a local community to care for and protect one another.”

Hospital says government backs off ultimatum to extinguish candle in chapel sanctuary or risk funding

WASHINGTON — A Catholic hospital in Oklahoma said the federal government has backed off after presenting it with a choice to either extinguish a candle in its chapel's sanctuary or risk its ability to treat patients covered by Medicare, Medicaid

or the Children's Health Insurance Program, which would have jeopardized its ability to operate at all. The hospital was represented by a religious liberty law firm that says the government violated the First Amendment. Lori Windham, vice president and senior counsel at Becket, wrote on Twitter that the government "has seen the light and has abandoned its attempt to force an Oklahoma hospital to blow out a small candle or stop serving elderly, disabled, and low-income patients." The Department of Health and Human Services, Windham said, "has told Saint Francis that it can keep its living flame — a sacred candle housed in the hospital chapel." Prior to Becket's May 5 statement, the hospital said that following a February inspection on behalf of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, a federal agency under HHS, a surveyor said the flame was not in compliance with its regulations. The hospital said it follows every pertinent fire regulation, and the sanctuary flame is enclosed, away from any medical equipment and regularly passes annual reviews by the local fire marshal. If it had failed to comply with the government's demand, its accreditation and ability to operate could have been jeopardized, the hospital said.

Utah law requiring adult content websites verify user age takes effect

SALT LAKE CITY — A Utah law requiring websites with adult content to obtain age verification for users went into effect May 3. Pornhub, one of the world's most-visited adult websites, responded by blocking access to users in Utah in what it said was a protest of the law. In March, lawmakers in Utah passed SB 287 Online Pornography Viewing Age Requirements, requiring websites with adult content to verify each user is a legal adult in an effort to prevent minors from accessing the content. The bill was passed unanimously by the Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Spencer Cox, R, earlier this year. The law states that any website with adult content that "fails to perform reasonable age verification methods" could be held liable for "damages resulting from a minor's accessing the material." Federal law currently prohibits children from accessing pornography, but it is rarely enforced. Critics of the bill argue that the age verification requirement presents free speech and privacy concerns, while supporters say it protects children from adult content.

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(above) Father Michael Hennigen, chaplain of Covington Catholic High School, prays with donors to the Covington Catholic baseball field renovations and their families.
(left) Walking the bases of the newly turfed Jerry Collins Field, Father Hennigen sprinkles the field with holy water.

Covington Catholic High School celebrates blessing and dedication of newly renovated baseball field

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

The evening of Tuesday, May 2, was celebrated with a baseball field dedication and consecration at Covington Catholic High School, Park Hills.
The newly renovated Tom Berger Baseball Stadium and newly turfed Jerry Collins Field were blessed by Father Michael Hennigen, chaplain of Covington Catholic High School.
The renovations to the field were made possible by

donors, such as the Harold C. Schott foundation, and the job of preparing the field was done by Paul Michel's & Sons, a contracting company out of Covington, who donated hours of labor, equipment and expertise to the project.
During the blessing, donors and their families joined Father Hennigen on the field.
“God has given us our physical powers, in order that we may serve in a joyous way, help one another; and by discipline in accord with the role of God, make our body fit for good work,” said Father Hennigen during the blessing.

“God therefore approves of recreation, relaxation of the mind and exercise of the body. Care for our bodies fosters mutual well-being. We more readily establish friendly and equitable relations with other people.”
Father Hennigen thanked God for the gift of recreation in his blessing, saying, “By giving us rest and healthy recreation, you refresh our weary bodies and minds. We entreat your kindness that this field will contribute to activities that will renew the spirit and strengthen the mind and body.”

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