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Phase 2 adds a new building that will be home to four new classrooms and a multipurpose space and gym.

As the groundbreaking began, students wearing t-shirts bearing the image of a construction crane and the slogan “Building God’s Kingdom” excitedly processed out to the portion of the parking lot that will soon be transformed into a new building. Bishop John Iffert, Father Joseph Gallenstein, pastor; Father Edward Brodnick, Father Albert Ruschman; Deacon Timothy Britt; Kendra McGuire, diocesan superintendent of Schools and Don Knochelmann, diocesan director, Buildings and Properties; joined Jennifer Geiman, principal, for the groundbreaking ceremony.

Thanking the members of the parish’s Future Needs Committee and the Cultivating Legacy Capital Campaign co-chairs, Father Gallenstein said, “We are very fortunate to see a vision become a reality.”

Quoting his history professor, Msgr. John Tracy Ellis, Father Gallenstein said, “Bishops get books written about them while the nuns do all the work.” Similarly, pastors often get the accolades, while the laity do all the work. We simply would not be here today.

Students at St. Mary School, Alexandria, show their excitement, May 10, as Bishop John Iffert and the parish community celebrate the groundbreaking of Phase 2 of its Cultivating Legacy Campaign.

St. Mary’s Parish and school working together, ‘Building God’s Kingdom’ one phase at a time

Laura Keener

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(Continued on page 10)
Father Quill and Father Ruschman celebrate their 70 year ‘Platinum’ Jubilee

Staff report

Six priests celebrate jubilees this year, two of which notably celebrating 70 years of service to the Diocese and its people. Bishop John Iffert said of the service of Platinum jubilarians Father James Quill and Father Albert Ruschman:

Father Albert Ruschman was born near the beginning of 1929. Father James Quill was born just before the end of the same year. Between their birthdays, the stock market crashed, marking the beginning of the Great Depression, Vatican City gained its independence from Italy, and the Academy of Motion Pictures awarded the first Oscars. They were ordained together in 1953. That same year saw the end of the Korean War, the inauguration of Dwight D. Eisenhower, the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, the polio vaccine, and the discovery of the double-helix structure of human DNA. Just ponder everything these two incredible priests have witnessed in their years; the technological and social change they have seen. Through it all, the Gospel of Jesus Christ remains their guiding light.

I see Father Ruschman just about as often as I see any priest in the diocese. Whenever the people are gathered for a celebration, Father Al Ruschman is there. That is especially true if the celebration is in one of the rural parishes in the Diocese of Covington. Father Ruschman knew what it was like to “smell like the sheep” long before Pope Francis every popularized that phrase.

Father Quill was appointed the Director of Radio and Television Activities for the Diocese of Covington in 1960. This was the time between Constant Prayer of St. Catherine of Siena to the Precious Blood of Jesus as Corpus Christi approaches

Bishop John Iffert is returning to pastors the decision to distribute the Precious Blood. Distribution of the Precious Blood may resume on the solemnity of Corpus Christi, June 10–11. In the weeks leading up to this momentous occasion in the life of the Diocese of Covington, the Messenger will focus on the Precious Blood in its Eucharistic Revival offerings. This week the Messenger turns to St. Catherine of Siena, doctor of the Church, whose feast day is April 25.

Constant Prayer of St. Catherine of Siena to the Precious Blood of Jesus

“Precious Blood, Ocean of Divine Mercy: Flow upon us!”

Precious Blood, Most pure Offering: Precure us every Grace!

Precious Blood, Hope and Refuge of sinners: Alone for us!

Precious Blood, Delight of holy souls: Draw us!

Amen.”

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 exposed for 8:30 a.m. Mass on both Monday and Tuesday.

Private Adoration 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.
Deacon program aims to provide a more fulfilling experience for candidates

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

Formation to the permanent diaconate is a five-year process; the first two years consisting of an “aspirancy” program focusing on discernment, with three years of formation to follow:

In preparation for the upcoming new class of aspirants to the diaconate, the aspirancy program has been revised — with three primary goals in mind:

— Bring men and their wives together to help them in the discernment process.
— Enhance interaction of Aspirants and their wives with current deacons and wives.
— Deepen a man’s spiritual life through enhanced prayer, sacramental experiences and faith-sharing.

For the past few years, aspirancy consisted of 10 catechism classes, according to Deacon Brian Cox, president of the Diaconate Assembly. “What we’re doing now is joining forces with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati in their LPM” (Lay Pastoral Ministry Program.)

The previous program left aspiring deacons unprepared for the master’s level courses required of them in the deacon formation program.

Some men becoming deacons, “haven’t been in school for 30 years,” said Deacon Cox, “and then, all of a sudden, we’re jumping into master’s level classes. So, with this program, our guys will be more prepared to be on an equal playing field with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.”

Taking the classes together will also help to build important comradery between future deacons, said Deacon Cox, both within the Diocese of Covington and neighboring Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

This two-year schooling certificate is a rigorous program, two to three nights a week through the school year, in order to “better prepare” aspirants for the diaconate formation program. All classes will be held at the Athenaeum, Cincinnati, Ohio.

It’s been a fast process, said Deacon Cox, with talks about revising the aspirancy program beginning only late last year. “Gearing up,” he said, began in January, and with a due date in the Fall, “myself and several other deacons are getting together and steamrolling through this” to revise the program, he said.

The Turf Athletic Complex is a $34 million, 34,000 square foot Academic Center is planned to open in the summer of 2024. The 34,000 square foot Academic Center is home to a 375-seat auditorium, a technology and prototype lab, the Zembrodt Center for Leadership, Entrepreneurship & Innovation, the Center for Faith, Mission and Catholic Education, and the College of Business.

Unlike some of my fellow chimera, I look quite different from the Cerberus designed by Eugène Viollet-le-Duc for the Notre Dame — my cousin is sleeker, with thinner snouts on three heads, while I have only two!
The importance of generativity

Somewhere along the way, I was taking a walk with the little daughter of a dear friend. Her mother was visiting my aunt and, to give them a chance to spend some time together and recall old times, I offered. They accepted, so off we went for several walks around the block. Not long into our stroll, the little one—age six or seven—stopped in her tracks, looked up to me and said, “Tell me about God.” That was the day I began to learn about “generativity”—the act of passing down stories, experiences and yes, even wisdom, at times, to the younger generation. That incident took place about 60 years ago. All these years, without really knowing what it was that I was doing, I have done my best to listen carefully to questions and to share information, stories, experiences and even opinions with youngsters who display a curiosity and an interest in “listening back.”

The strange thing about generativity is it’s working place. It usually happens between youngsters and older adults not related by blood. It happens between neighborhood children and some grandparent figure who lives up the same street, between teacher and student or between coach and athlete. It sometimes happens between parent or grandparent and child, but that seems to be quite rare. You know the story—“They just won’t listen to me.”

Our parish priest at the time I was thinking again about this on the one time he looked a shared personal experience in his homily He was asking a group of small children about what family members give them. The discussion quickly centered around what they receive, specifically, from their grandparents. One child said her grandmother took them fishing. Another couldn’t wait to tell Father about the wonderful cookies received from his grandmother. Finally, another little boy answered this way: “Every week I go over to my grandfather’s house and he gives me history.”

“Really,” Father replied, and must have put on a very curious face because the young man gave a full report about stories told to him, experiences shared with him, and family memories passed down during those wonderful visits.

Father was so enthralled by the boy’s revelation that he built this homily around the privilege of, and the need for family sharing—generativity. It reminds me of a magnificent futuristic fantasy call Fahrenheit 451 penned by the famous science fiction author, Ray Bradbury.

Somewhere in the future, books had to be hidden in television sets with false fronts, under radiator covers or even in the slots of electric toasters. Houses and commercial buildings were completely fireproof. Firemen were the “fire men” who carry blowtorches and who seek and find books to be burned on the owner’s front lawn. They like it best when children are made to watch the travesty.

The hero, Montag, is a futuristic: “St. Paul” who poking through our society unseen for many years. In an essay in the New York Times in April, Dr. Murphy asserts, “We need to acknowledge the loneliness and isolation that millions are experiencing and the grave consequences for our mental health, physical health and collective well-being.”

Dr. Murphy warns that loneliness is “more than just a bad feeling.” It often leads to anxiety and depression—and that is not all. It is also associated with increased risk of heart disease, dementia and stroke. Loneliness carries with it a more significant risk of premature death than either smoking or obesity. Dr. Murphy also noted that social disconnection is linked to reduced performance in the workplace and at school as well as diminished social engagement.

To combat this epidemic of loneliness, Dr. Murphy proposes a three-pronged national framework aimed at rebuilding social connection and community and child, but that seems to be quite rare. You know the story—“They just won’t listen to me.”

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The blessing of reaching out to the elderly

The first point in Dr. Murphy’s plan is to strengthen our familial structure in the next generation. That requires creating strong bonds of love, trust and policies that support healthy relationships.

The second point is to renegotiate our relationship with technology— we need to learn to put down our devices in order to be more present to each other. Third, each of us needs to reach out and rebuild relationships in our personal lives. Although all three elements are important, I’d like to focus on the third point in this framework—our personal relationships—and I suggest that we begin by reaching out to the elders in our families and neighborhoods, many of whom suffer from a lack of meaningful relationships, though they have many gifts to share with others. Summertime brings with it many opportunities for family-centered events—graduations, weddings, reunions, picnics and vacations—but we do always make the effort we should to include our elders, especially if they have mobility, communication or memory issues.

The summer months can be a dangerous time for seniors, especially those below the poverty line who are left alone. It varies quickly become deadly for seniors who lack air conditioning as well as those who have chronic conditions that make it difficult for their bodies to acclimate to heat temperature fluctuations.

For example, rising temperatures can cause renal failure in persons with kidney problems and they exacerbate dehydration from medications like diuretics, which are commonly prescribed to older persons.

Twenty years ago, hundreds of seniors died in Paris and other French cities during a summer heat wave, seemingly forgotten by family members who were away on vacation.

French society was criticized for this obvious neglect of the elderly but similar incidents have recently occurred in our country with seniors dying in their own homes in a lack of air conditioning during periods of extreme heat.

Many U.S. cities have now set up public cooling centers and regulations for air conditioning in public housing.

But the first line of defense for vulnerable seniors should be the attentiveness of family members and kind neighbors.

For many years Pope Francis has been challenging us to live in a greater spirit of solidarity by reaching out to those both near and far, especially those on the periphery of society.

He often directs our attention to the needs of seniors, commemorating neglect of the elderly and calling on us to strengthen bonds between the generations.

The first time he spoke publicly about the elderly was at World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro in 2013. This summer Pope Francis will join young people for World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal.

He has intentionally linked this celebration, whose theme is focused on the Virgin Mary in the Visitation, to the third World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, which falls just a few weeks prior to the celebration.

As we prepare for these two celebrations this summer, let’s stay close to the seniors in our lives, strengthening our emotional and practical bonds with them and remaining attentive to their welfare.

We will be so blessed as we reach out to them, just as Mary was blessed in her encounter with her elderly cousin Elizabeth.

Sister Constance Vesut is the communications director for the Little Sisters of the Poor in the United States and an occupational therapist.

The Columbian public health emergency has officially ended and summer promises happier times ahead. And yet our surgeon general, Dr. Vivek H. Murphy, has just issued an advisory signaling a new public health threat in our country.

The issue is loneliness. It’s actually not a new problem at all but an invisible epidemic that has been spreading through our society unchecked for many years.

In an essay in the New York Times in April, Dr. Murphy asserts, “We need to acknowledge the loneliness and isolation that millions are experiencing and the grave consequences for our mental health, physical health and well-being.”

The coronavirus pandemic has amplified this problem at all levels, from the national to the global. And yet, even as restrictions ease, millions are continuing to experience the stress of isolation.

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To combat this epidemic of loneliness, Dr. Murphy proposes a three-pronged national framework aimed at rebuilding social connection and community.
How does Jesus leave and remain?


Continued in this great feast of Ascension is one of the great paradoxes in our faith. On the one hand, we cel- ebrate Jesus leaving his life on earth and returning to the realm of heaven. At the same time, Matthew reports Jesus’ last words as, “And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

How does Jesus leave his apostles/us and yet remain with them/us?

Part of the reason Jesus’ leaving and remaining seem paradoxical to us is because we are used to speaking of heaven as a physical place, as if Jesus is going somewhere; and because our idea of heaven is so different from our experience of earth, we often have the unconscious thought that it is also far away. Pope Benedict XVI addresses this in Part Two of his book on unconscious thought that it is also far away. At the same time, Matthew reports Jesus leaving his life on earth and returning to the realm of heaven. But the Mass also perpetuates the joyful mysteries of Easter through its liturgy, specifically the “joyful” sequence. It is good to understand all this intellectually, but it is also possible to have some feelings about leaving us.

The upmost teaching of Pentecost gives us another way to understand Jesus’ absence and presence. In John’s Gospel, Philip says to Jesus, “Lord, show us the Father, so that we may believe in you.” Jesus replies, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father, for there is no one who has seen the Father except him who is from the Father and who has told us.”

Jesus answers, “He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?” (John 14:9b-10a)

In the same way, in whose name the Spirit resides, Jesus resides. We profess this in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed: “I believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son.”

The doctrine of the Trinity tells us that the presence of the Spirit also brings the presence of Jesus. It is good to understand all this intellectually, but it is also important that it have some impact in our lives. The Ascension Day is one of the key moments to understand the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The Ascension is a mystery that reveals the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It is a moment of transformation that transforms us and the world into a new creation that is characterized by love and peace.

Eucharistic heart of Mary: Tabernacle, Monstrance and Minister

Catholics who want to grow in holiness and virtue can’t do much better than focusing on the two pillars of our spiritual treasure — the Eucharist and Mary — which anchor us as little else can.

The Eucharist teaches us the value of presence, self-sacrifice and communion, and reveals the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Mary gives us the model of Christian discipleship. She is the portrait of what it looks like to fully embrace God’s love and his will wherever we are.

One could spend a lifetime contemplating these two gifts, but we usually don’t get around to considering how they are connected. The year Eucharistic Revival in our country begins to ramp up, taking time to meditate on the eucharistic heart of Mary can enrich us.

We Catholics have done a bang-up job of linking what happens on the altar at Mass with the sacrificial death of Jesus that won our salvation. Mass is a persevering of Calvary: Through it, we stand at the foot of Christ’s cross and receive the life-giving fruit of his total gift of self. But the Mass also perpetuates the joyful mysteries of Nazareth and Bethlehem. By the power of the Holy Spirit, called down at every Mass, bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. The Word becomes flesh in Eucharist; the Incarnation is entered into us. In this sacrament, the Son of God’s “pitches his tent” with humankind (cf. John 1:14). Only now do we see how Jesus can be “conscientious Catholic” things: shopping, a wedding gift, an image to get to know him better.

I had to take an honest look at myself and realize I was doing very little of the “conscientious Catholic” things: shopping, getting married, getting a wedding gift, an image to get to know him better. It wasn’t until I was reminded that it’s not about the things, “every day” or “conscientious effort.”

What makes a Catholic home the souls that reside within. When we walk into our homes and the homes of other Catholics, we know exactly what to see and how to speak and how we act.

It’s not an easy task. We will succeed some days and feel that we failed miserably on others. All we can do is start with where we are and work to build up the Spirit and peace within so that, hopefully, people who come into our home will say, “they are Catholic.”

Sarah Torres is the archivist for the Diocese of Covington, Ky.
When you sign up for Respect Life Prayer and Action, you will receive:

- Prayers;
- Action alerts to contact Congress and government leaders;
- Ways to strengthen a culture of life in your community and more;
- Join thousands of Catholics as we seek to transform our culture.

https://www.respectlife.org/prayer-and-action

We Choose Life

Pro-Life Office
of the Diocese of Covington

Mission Statement
The Pro-Life Office of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, guided by our bishop, promotes the sanctity and legal protection of human life from conception to natural death through prayer, pastoral care, public policy and education.

Prayer for Life
Only with prayer — prayer that stirs the heavens for justice and mercy, prayer that cleanses our hearts and souls — will the culture of death that surrounds us today be replaced with a culture of life.

— U.S. Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities

Pro-Life Office

Three reasons why teens and young adults are important in the fight for life

Marina Mason
Contributor
Young people drive culture and have been vital to the success of almost every major social movement throughout history. In our current digital age — where information, news and opinions can spread across the entire world in mere seconds — it is more important now than ever for Gen Z and Gen Alpha to get educated about the crisis of abortion and take a courageous stand for life.

By the numbers, abortion is one of the largest scale human rights atrocities in the world today. Over the past 50 years, based on numbers reported for 1973-2020 by the Guttmacher Institute (a pro-abortion policy research organization) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, there have been more than 60 million human beings killed through abortion in the United States. In 2020, the CDC reported 198 abortions per 1,000 live births. That's approximately 1 in 5 pregnancies ending in abortion every year, which means around 20 percent of the U.S. population is currently missing because of abortion.

We know that every abortion elimi- nates a unique, unrepeatable human being. It is not enough to simply con- demn the practice in private; we must support women so that abortion becomes unthinkable. Great strides have already been taken to protect life in Kentucky but we must continue this momentum to turn the tide in our lifetime, and that starts with recognition of the unique role and gifts of every young person.

Young adults and teens offer three crucial things to the pro-life movement:

1) They naturally drum up excitement and enthusiasm about the life issue. Whether in-person or online, young people are seemingly always advocating for social causes or issues about which they feel passionate. Whether it's a button on their back- pack, their favorite pro-life shirt, or a petition link in their Instagram bio, young people are especially adept at spreading the word on the things they care about — effortlessly persuading others to care, too.

On social media, young pro-life advocates know what is funny, what is trending and how to reach their peers in a relatable way. Especially when engaging with pro-abortion messages online, there is genuine value in knowing whether to write a full essay in the comments section or to just post a funny reaction meme which conveys your point more quickly (and humorously).

2) They are the hands and feet of the movement. Literally.

Young people have natural energy and vitality because of their youthfulness that allows them to do creative kinds of activism. From knocking on innumerable doors for a pro-life candidate, to going straight to the March, they join hundreds of thousands of other pro-life advocates on a trek through our nation’s capital. These trips are a ton of fun, but let’s be honest, sleeping on a cramped bus to then immediately march outside in the winter? It takes grit. But that is something young people naturally have in spades.

3) They are the future of the Pro-Life movement.

This is common sense. Any movement that does not continuously recruit or evangelize new members will eventually die out. This is why Students for Life of America fills such a crucial role within the pro-life movement.

Our organization honors the hard work of our predecessors in the pro-life movement by making sure their efforts aren’t going to waste. To be good stewards of their sacrifices, we make it possible to pass the baton on to the next generation — the Post-Roe Generation. And what does taking that baton look like?

In states like Kentucky, much of the hard work has mostly been done. Pro-life legislation — created and passed while most of us were still too young to vote at all — is currently in effect and saving thousands of preborn lives within the Commonwealth. However, the battle isn’t over yet.

If we allow ourselves, our friends or our communities to grow complacent in advocating for the preborn, we could see these protections undone in the not-so-distant future by abortion sup- porters. Just as a nation should not dissolve its military in times of peace, neither should pro-life efforts cease in states with legal pro- tections for the preborn. Just as a nation should not dissolve its military in times of peace, neither should pro-life efforts cease in states with legal pro- tections for the preborn. We must continue to be alert and change hearts and minds in a life-affirming manner.

To learn more about how young people can get involved, go to studentsforlife.org — and remember these words from Proverbs 31:“Speak up for those who can’t speak for themselves. Speak up for the rights of all those who are poor.” Let’s all use our voices (our time, talents and resources) to speak up for the voice- less.

Marina Mason is the Appalachian Regional Coordinator for Students for Life of America, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that serves more than 1,300 pro-life student groups in all 50 states. Her work involves training, mentoring, and mobilizing pro-life students in Kentucky and Tennessee to abolish abortion in our lifetime. She can be reached at mmason@studentsforlife.org.

For more information about the Pro-Life Office or to be added to our e-mail newsgroups, visit us online at www.covdio.org/prolife/ or call (859) 392-1500.
Foster parenting has 'a lot of challenges and difficulties, but there's also a lot of joy'

Andrew Vandiver
Correspondent

May is National Foster Care Awareness Month, and the Diocesan Catholic Children’s Home (DCCH), Ft. Mitchell, will be honoring local foster parents with a special dinner and recognition ceremony on May 22 at The Gardens of Park Hills.

Two local foster parents, Tobias and Rachel Nathe, will be in attendance. Mr. and Mrs. Nathe are parishioners at St. Anthony Parish in Taylor Mill and are currently serving as foster parents. At a time of great need for Kentucky’s children, they are encouraging others to consider doing the same.

“There is a desperate need for these children to find homes and it’s one way to really live out your Christian call,” said Mr. Nathe.

Of course, the idea of serving as a foster parent might be intimidating for many families. Nevertheless, that shouldn’t discourage them from finding a way to help. “I think everybody’s called to do something to help these kids, it could be respite, it could be making a meal when they (a foster family) take in a new placement, it could be babysitting, it could be donating to organizations,” said Mrs. Nathe.

When Mr. and Mrs. Nathe were first considering serving as foster parents, they were advised to start with respite care. Respite care is a form of short-term care provided to children in the foster care system. It provides relief for foster parents from their obligations as caregivers in instances where they must be away overnight or for a weekend.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Nathe emphasized the importance of prayer in discerning whether to serve as foster parents. “There are going to be a lot of challenges and difficulties, but there’s also a lot of joy” said Mrs. Nathe.

One challenge is the uncertainty that comes with fostering. Some families go into fostering with the mindset that they will eventually want to adopt a child. Others are only hoping to provide short term relief to needy children and their parents. The goal is always reunification, but a lot can happen along the way.

“There is always the grace of God there to get you through,” said Mrs. Nathe as she reflected on common concerns she hears from potential foster parents.

“We came into this with the idea of surrender from the beginning,” responded Mr. Nathe. “If something unexpected or difficult happens, we’ve already surrendered that over… it’s not nearly as difficult as people think it’s going to be.”

Mr. and Mrs. Nathe also emphasized that there is support for foster parents. DCCH offers continuing training, mentoring and family gatherings. “It’s a supportive environment,” said Mr. Nathe.

Ron Bertsch is director of Therapeutic Foster Care/Adoption at DCCH. According to Mr. Bertsch, DCCH received 4,694 referrals for children needing a foster home last year. As of early May, DCCH had already received 1,854 referrals during this calendar year.

Anyone interested in learning more about DCCH’s foster care program, or other opportunities to help children in need, may contact Mr. Bertsch at (859) 331-2040.

On June 1st, DCCH will be starting its free training program for those interested in foster or adoptive parenting and respite care.
Maura Baker
Staff Writer

The Rose Garden Home Mission, Covington, is a primary mission of the Franciscan Daughters of Mary — women religious who operate within the Diocese of Covington. The mission itself provides food, clothing, medical and pregnancy care and other necessities to those in need within its community, operating primarily through donations and volunteers.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, “donations have increased,” said Mother Seraphina, mother superior of the Franciscan Daughters. “Even the lobby, where we invite our friends to come in and hang out with us, has become like a staging area.”

A need for additional space was identified and, the Friends of the Rose Garden Mission, an organization that “financially assist the Franciscan Daughters of Mary in their work of providing assistance, hope and dignity to the poor of Covington by purchasing and maintaining the building that houses the Rose Garden Home Mission,” agreed that the Franciscan daughters needed more room to conduct their work in the facility — thus starting the project to build a new addition onto the pre-existing building.

“It’s going to be two stories, where the first floor will be mostly pregnancy care and all the material support will be on the second floor — all storage,” said Mother Seraphina. “This way, it’ll open more space in the main body of the mission.”

With the addition dedicated primarily to maternity and pregnancy care, Mother Seraphina hopes that this new construction will help to provide additional privacy to mothers in need. “This will give us the opportunity to give them more dignity by having it be a part from the whole thing, and so they don’t have to worry about their privacy being invaded — and they can talk about it openly.”

At the time of this article, permits have been obtained for the addition’s foundation, which has been laid out already — with permits for the remaining construction pending.

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**Rose Garden Mission lays foundation for new addition**

(left) A layout of the proposed addition to be constructed.

(above) Pavement outside of the Rose Garden Mission is broken up to make room for construction.

(right) Workers work to lay the foundation of the Rose Garden Mission’s new addition.
Excited to receive Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time, children from St. Anthony School, Taylor Mill, celebrate their First Communion.

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 317 or 21; Cincinnati Bell TV 17 or 517; and DirectTV channel 12.2; Spectrum 117 or 25; Cincinnati Bell TV 12.2, 859-392-8229; 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/36479. 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 Flea Market hours. Margie at (859) 392–8229 or , e-mail mschnelle@sndusa.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. 3911 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 Friday, May 27, 10 a.m.–4pm; May 28, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. or by Monday May 30th 10 a.m.–1 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 atheneum.edu.


Serra Club for Vocations: Northern Kentucky day at the Florence Y’Alls Thomas More Stadium, June 29, 6:30 p.m. Tickets available online: https://wwwticketreturn.com: use the code “SerraClub” in the special offer code field. The Y’Alls will be playing the “Troy-Rivieres Aigles from Canada. Contact Mike Murray at (859) 630-4228 or mmurray@covdia.org.
but for all of your hard work and all of your generosity. Thank you.

St. Mary Parish has been especially careful not to build more than it can finance with its Cultivating Legacy Campaign, which is why the project has been broken into phases. Phase 1 included the addition of a parking lot and an elevator connecting the church and the undercroft. It was blessed and dedicated in August 2021 and was completed under its $800k budget.

Phase 2 is a $3.7 million project, which will essentially build the housing for four classrooms and a multipurpose room/gym. Phase 3 will add functionality to the new building — bleachers, gym flooring, basketball goals, lockers and a concession stand as well as renovating existing classrooms and the cafeteria. As vision becomes reality in Phase 2, parish leaders anticipate that momentum will generate donations and pledges to complete Phase 3.

“Nearly every generation of Catholics here in Alexandria has been asked to rise to the occasion to respond to the pressing needs of the community of faith,” Father Gallenstein said, “not so that they may be self-satisfied or self-referential but so that the Gospel would be proclaimed, the faith would be taught, the sacraments would be administered and shared. That is what we are all called to do.”

(Continued from page 1)
be celebrated, the people of God would grow more like Christ himself—in humility and in service—so, in that Catholics would be an integral and vibrant part of the larger Campbell County community. Cultivating Legacy, he said, is “our challenge, our turn to assess the needs and respond with courage and trust.”

Mrs. Geiman also expressed her gratitude to the St. Mary Parish community and all those who have played a part in the campaign. “This phase will ensure we meet the growing needs of our parish and school,” she said.

Mrs. Geiman outlined how the new building will benefit students now and in the future, saying, “This building will not only transform our campus but also the opportunities we offer our students and parishioners. We will finally have a large gathering space to celebrate together. Our new preschool classrooms will ensure the successful program continues and thrives. Our students will benefit from up-to-date facilities such as a STEM lab and music room.”

Looking at the preschool students whose classrooms overlook the soon-to-be construction site, Mrs. Geiman said, “I know the preschool teachers are very excited about the demo tomorrow, especially during nap time,” drawing a chuckle from the crowd.

Bishop Iffert shared his gratitude and support of the campaign saying, “My role is to be a voice of caution in a lot of these projects … because I’m convinced that you all have put together the resources and can manage the resources to undertake this project … I’ve said ‘Let’s do this’! Let’s break ground today,” said Bishop Iffert. “Nothing we have, including our own life and our own talents, really belongs to us. It’s only been given to us to care for and to decide how to use to give glory to God … Thank you for the care that you have shown and for investing part of what God has entrusted to you — your time, your talent and your financial support — to get us to this time.”

In his closing remarks, Bishop Iffert also addressed the students. “You are going to face some very special temptations during the next year,” he said. “There’s going to be a lot of noise.” Bishop Iffert encouraged the students to resist the temptation to be distracted by the sounds and excitement of construction. “Be strong. Think about what it’s going to be like to be in those new spaces … think about the good that is to come.”
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 your user id and password. If your account is suspended contact your primary location where you volunteer or are employed. Your primary location contact information is found under your Contact Tab.

VIRTUS Training:
- Saturday, May 20, 9-11:30 a.m., St. Patrick Parish, Parish Hall, Taylor Mill
- 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
Prayer, love of Christ are source of strength to share Gospel, pope says

St. Francis Xavier offers the faithful, especially young people who are itching to make a difference in the world, a wonderful example of how to find courage in prayer and spread the joy of the Gospel, Pope Francis said.

“Look at Francis Xavier, look at the world’s horizon, look at people in so much need, look at so many people suffering, so many people in need of Jesus, and go, be courageous,” he told people at his weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square May 17.

As part of his series of talks about “zeal” for evangelization, Pope Francis spoke about the Spanish Jesuit missionary St. Francis Xavier, who is the patron saint of missions together with St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

St. Francis Xavier is sometimes considered to be “the greatest missionary of modern times,” the pope said. “But you cannot say who is the greatest, who is the least, because there are so many hidden missionaries who, even today, do so much more than St. Francis Xavier.”

What makes a missionary great is the act of going, of leaving one’s homeland to preach the Gospel, the pope said.

This is what apostolic zeal looks like, he said. “We have to nurture this so much and we learn by looking at these men, these women” who have been missionaries.

The pope detailed the life of St. Francis Xavier, who was born into a noble family in Spain in 1506 and then met St. Ignatius Loyola, another Spanish nobleman, while studying in Paris.

He became one of the first members of the new Society of Jesus founded by St. Ignatius, and he wanted to become a missionary.

He was sent to still unfamiliar lands in Asia, embarking on a voyage full of hardship and danger, and encountering new languages and cultures, the pope said.

St. Francis Xavier spent 11 years in mission, spending more than three and a half of those years just traveling by boat, reaching India, Sri Lanka, Malacca in modern-day Malaysia, the Maluku Islands of Indonesia and Japan.

He baptized and cared for the sick and he taught prayers and the catechism to children; in the Maluku Islands, he translated the catechism into the local language and put it into verse so it would be easier to learn through song, Pope Francis said. The saint planted in Asia the seeds of Christianity that would bear great fruit.

“Francis Xavier had the apostle’s restlessness to keep going further,” and he dreamed of going to China, “with its culture, its history, its greatness,” he said. “Even today China is such a cultural center, with a very beautiful history” But the saint got sick and died at age 46 on an island off the coast of China in 1552.

His very intense missionary activity always was “combined with prayer, in union with God,” because he knew that was where he drew his strength, the pope said. Also, “he was not an ‘aristocratic’ missionary: he always went with the neediest, the children who were the most in need of education, catechesis, the poor, the sick.”

“The love of Christ was the strength that drove him to the farthest frontiers, facing hardships and constant danger, overcoming setbacks, disappointments and discouragement, indeed, giving him consolation and joy in following and serving (Christ) to the end,” he said.

Pope Francis asked that the faithful to look to the saint for inspiration to experience the same zeal for living and proclaiming the Gospel.

“To the many young people today who have some restlessness and don’t know what to do with that restlessness, I say, look at Francis Xavier” and the many people in the world who need Jesus, he said.

“May the Lord give us all the joy of evangelization, the joy of carrying this very beautiful message that makes us, and everyone, happy,” he said.
Labor Department finds hundreds of children illegally employed at McDonald’s restaurants

Kimberly Heatherington

OSV News

The family-friendly reputation of fast-food giant McDonald’s was recently spoiled when three franchises that own more than 60 Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland and Ohio locations were found by the U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division investigators to be in violation of federal labor laws.

The restaurants in Louisville, Covington and Dayton, Ohio, offered jobs to children as young as 10, according to the Labor Department.

The Labor Department said May 2 the adolescents worked “more than the legally permitted hours” and performed “tasks prohibited by law for young workers.”

“An employer who hires young workers must know the rules. An employer, parent or guardian of work that endangers them or employs them for more hours allowed must be in violation of federal labor laws,” the Labor Department added.

The division also learned that one of the two children was allowed to operate a deep fryer, a prohibited task for workers under 16 years old.

“Children belong in school, not operating the deep fryer in a restaurant,” Garnett-Civils added, “An employer who hires young workers must know the rules. An employer, parent or young worker with questions can contact us for help understanding their obligations and rights under the law.”

Father Christopher Mahar, an official in the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, told OSV News, “It is essential that families receive the integral support that they need, from states and social services, so that children are not even considered as a solution for financial difficulties.”

“Now is the time to eliminate all forms of child labor,” he added.

As Pope Francis has indicated, children have a right to play and to dream. Exposing them to the potential harms of the workplace cuts short that reality,” he said. “The way we protect the dignity of children today determines what the world of tomorrow will look like.”

Kevin Cassidy, director of the U.S. office of the International Labor Organization, told OSV News that “when children under the age of 18 work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or in difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night, this is considered hazardous work.”

Hazardous work for children is prohibited under the ILO’s “Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182),” which was ratified by the United States in 1999.

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

“Child labor deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and is harmful to their physical and mental development,” Cassidy explained. “Ending child labor in all its forms should be the goal of all countries.”
UK bishop denounces new IVF method resulting in first baby born with DNA of three people

Simon Caldwell
OSV News

LIVERPOOL, England — An English Catholic bishop has denounced the first reported births of “three-parent” babies in the UK as “deeply concerning.”

Auxiliary Bishop John Sherrington of Westminster said the creation of babies by mitochondrial donation treatment (MDT) was unethical because the process involved the destruction of two embryos to create a single new life.

His remarks came after The Guardian newspaper reported May 9 that “first U.K. baby with DNA from three people” was born after the new in vitro fertilization (IVF) procedure.

“It shows a further step in the technical manipulation of new life with the loss of human life as part of the technique,” said Bishop Sherrington, lead prelate for life issues of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.

“The technique depends on the destruction of two human lives who had inherent dignity and rights and must be protected from their creation as persons in order to create a third embryo and life,” he said in a May 11 statement published on the bishops’ conference website.

“It also fractures the child from biological parenthood,” he continued. “It steps into the unknown world of genetic engineering with manipulation of the human germline.”

“The gift of life, to be respected and treated with dignity from conception to natural death, is a mystery which cannot be reduced to technical manipulation,” the bishop added.

In 2015, the UK became the first country in the world to allow the technique in four cases where parents had mitochondrial disorders that could pass on inherited disease to offspring.

In 2022, five “three-parent” babies were born in the UK by this technique, with only one birth reported publicly. The first and only national center licensed to carry it out is in Liverpool.

The Anscombe Bioethics Center, an Oxford-based institute serving the Catholic Church in the UK and Ireland, in a May 11 email to OSV News, explained that in creating each baby, two embryos were “functionally destroyed by the removal of their pronuclei and parts of both used to create a third embryonic human.”

“The technique depends on the destruction of two human embryos which are destroyed before the maternal embryo is cloned and repackaged with parts from the donated embryo,” the center said.

“As with all IVF involving egg or sperm donors, this fractures parenthood and it is essential that the child is at least a legal person to have rights. It is also unethical for two other reasons: the fracturing of biological parenthood, and the potential for serious unintended consequences.”

Professor David Albert Jones, director of Anscombe, said: “Every child newly conceived is to be welcomed and we hope this new human life brings joy to his or her parents, but some ways of conceiving children involve risks or harms to the child.”

“This is a new and unnecessary technique that does not add to the safety of IVF involving an egg donor, but adds further risks,” Jones added.

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**CUSTODIAN - MAINTENANCE PERSON**

St. Joseph School located in Cold Spring, Kentucky, is seeking a custodian / maintenance man. The position can be full or part time but requires a minimum of twenty hours per week, 11 am to 3 pm, Monday through Friday. Responsibilities include school janitorial duties as well as basic repair and general maintenance of the school facilities, buildings and equipment under the supervision of the Maintenance Manager. Interested candidates may submit a letter of interest and resume to the parish office at: jruwe@stjosephparish.net.

**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 mkkeene@stagnes.com.

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SACRED HEART PRAYER. Dear Heart of Jesus — In the past I have asked for favor. This time I ask you for this very special one (mention favor). Take it, dear Jesus, and place it past I have asked for favors. This time I ask you for this very merciful eyes it will become your favor, not mine. Amen.

Eucharistic heart of Mary
(Continued from page 5)

Benedict put it, “The children exulted, the mothers exult-ed ... imbued with the joy of the Holy Spirit ...” — “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” Mary didn’t keep Jesus to herself; she gave him to the whole world. Shepherds visited the stable where she gave birth. Crowds, disciples, religious leaders, pagan soldiers — Jesus lived among them all. Mary gave her son to all of us, placing his body into our hands. In a way, the Mother of God is the most extraordinary of all extraordinary ministers of holy Communion.

Of course, all this doesn’t end with Mary. By God’s grace, we are all tabernacles, monstrances and ministers. Like her, every baptized Christian is a tabernacle of God’s indwelling presence. Our bodies and our lives hold the hidden presence of God himself. And this is not figu-rative. As St. Paul writes, “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own?” (1 Cor 6:19).

The choices we make and the purpose that guides us reveal this reality. We are monstrances when we choose self-sacrifice over self-interest, and when we accept our own suffering as a gift and willingly accompany others in theirs. We reveal the face of God by recognizing his image in every human being and by answering the call to follow him, to become more like the Master every day.

And more, we are sent to bring Jesus into the world as Mary did. We are not to keep Christ for ourselves or merely show him to others. We are told to give freely what we have freely received (cf Matt 10:8) — our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ.

Jaynie Stuart Wolfe is a Catholic convert, freelance writer and editor, musician, pet-aholic, wife and mom of eight grown children, living life in New Orleans.

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Marian library seeks to show Mary through ancient eyes, new perspectives

Gina Christian
OSV News

A research library at an Ohio university houses what it calls “the largest dedicated collection of materials on Mary in the world” — and its doors are as open as the Blessed Mother’s arms.

“We are here for everyone, including people with a personal devotion, artists looking for inspiration, academics and theologians,” Sarah Cahalan, executive director of the Marian Library at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio, told OSV News.

Founded in 1943, the Marian Library lives up to its motto of “De Maria numquam satis” (“Never enough about Mary”). Its books, periodicals, articles, prints and religious artifacts — combined with resources in an array of disciplines, including patristics, biblical studies, church history, spirituality, hymnography and iconography — represent 100 languages and form an impressive repository that only one institution can match, said Cahalan.

“It’s not a competition, but obviously the Vatican had a significant head start,” she admitted.

The library, which supports a number of Marian studies programs offered by the school, led to the creation of the International Marian Research Institute, which hosts the online Marian Forum to promote academic research on Mary.

Currently, the Marian Library is hosting the two-part art exhibit “East Meets West,” which features a private collection of Ukrainian works by women icon makers of the Lviv School in Ukraine, along with selections from the library’s own Ukrainian Marian Collection, which was established in 1981 by Marian Library employee Helen (Halyna) Nkolyshyn.

For Nkolyshyn, who died in 2000, assembling the Ukrainian Marian Collection was a “passion project,” said Cahalan. “Her family had to leave Ukraine because of religious persecution, and her work has become increasingly relevant again.”

The Lviv School women iconographers have brought a contemporary vision to the genre, employing “distinctive styles, color schemes and really interesting (techniques) that people have responded well to,” said Cahalan.

Seeing Mary through fresh eyes is a goal of the Marian Library, one that informs its acquisitions policy, she said. Cahalan and her colleagues seek to incorporate “more geographic diversity” in the library’s materials by adding pieces from African, Indigenous and other cultures. “We are actively working to acquire materials that demonstrate the global reach of devotion to Mary and give a more comprehensive overview of what that devotion looks like today,” she said, pointing to Our Lady of Kibeho, Rwanda — the only Vatican-approved Marian apparition in Africa — as one example.
It’s unfair, humiliating if only the rich can build a family, pope says

ROME — Starting a family and having children has become a kind of Herculean task when instead it should be valued and supported by everyone, Pope Francis said at a meeting in Rome on Italy’s severe decline in population growth. Today’s culture “is uninformed, if not hostile, to the family centered as it is on the needs of the individual, where individual rights are continually claimed and the rights of the family are not discussed,” the pope said at the meeting May 12. Women face “almost innumerable constraints,” he said, especially as they are often forced to choose between having a career and being a mother or caring for family members who are frail or need special care. Sponsored by the Foundation for Natality and the Italian Forum of Family Associations, the conference was being held May 11-12 in Rome. In his talk, Pope Francis said that bringing children into the world is often seen as a task the family should be dealing with on its own. The consequence of that, he said, is “only the wealthiest can afford, thanks to their resources, greater freedom in choosing how to shape their lives. And this is unfair, as well as humiliating.”

N.C. Legislature overrides governor’s veto of 12-week abortion ban

RALEIGH, N.C. — North Carolina’s Legislature, May 10, overrode the Democratic governor’s veto of a 12-week abortion ban, allowing the measure to be enacted. The bill, an outlier among states that have passed abortion restrictions since Dobbs, now becomes law despite a pressure campaign from Gov. Roy Cooper for lawmakers to reject it. The Care for Women, Children and Families Act (SB 20) would prohibit elective abortions after 12 weeks, as well as implement new safety requirements for abortion clinics and additional funding for resources, including adoption and foster care services, as well as some paid parental leave. Cooper made a pitch to voters to pressure Republican state lawmakers against overriding his veto. If just one Republican legislator had not backed an override effort, the state’s current 20-week abortion ban would have remained in place. The bill has been backed by the state’s Catholic bishops. In a joint statement on May 15, Bishops Peter J. Jugis of Charlotte and Luis R. Zarama of Raleigh said they “welcome the bill’s increased protections for unborn human lives.” Arguing that “while this bill is not perfect,” the bishops nevertheless “hope it will become law to advance protection for unborn children and support for mothers in need.”

FDA advisory panels back over-the-counter sales of birth control pills

WASHINGTON — A panel of federal advisers voted May 10 in favor of a pharmaceutical company’s request to sell a type of their birth control pills over the counter and without a doctor’s prescription, clearing the way for the Food and Drug Administration to approve such sales of oral contraception. Currently, a woman seeking to use birth control pills must do so with a doctor’s prescription. But in a unanimous vote following a two-day joint meeting of two FDA advisory committees, the federal advisers offered their support to selling the company Perrigo’s product, Opill, without a prescription. The vote will likely pave the way for the agency to approve the sale of birth control pills over the counter, which will impact ongoing debates about abortion policy post-Roe. While some have called for expanded access to contraception in the wake of the Supreme Court’s reversal of Roe v. Wade last year, others have argued that their misuse without medical supervision could cause more unintended pregnancies. In a guide about the church’s teaching on issues including contraception, the National Catholic Bioethics Center said that while contraception “is never to be directly intended,” its use for “therapeutic means needed to cure diseases is not illicit, even if it results in a foreseeable impediment to procreation — provided the impediment is not directly intended for any motive whatsoever.

Missouri lawmakers ban gender reassignment surgery, treatments for minors

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Missouri lawmakers passed a bill May 10 banning certain types of medical or surgical gender reassignment procedures for minors who identify as transgender, as well as a measure blocking transgender student athletes from competing on sports teams opposite their biological sex. The legislation banning some treatments for transgender minors would prohibit certain types of hormone or surgical gender reassignment procedures including puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones. The measure regarding transgender student athletes would apply from kindergarten through college at both public and private schools in the state, at the risk of the schools’ state funding. Both measures would expire in 2027. Supporters of prohibitions on medical interventions for minors who identify as transgender say such efforts will prevent them from making irreversible decisions as children they may later come to regret as adults. Critics of such measures argue that preventing these interventions could cause other harm to minors such as mental health issues. The bills will be considered by Republican Gov. Mike Parson, who previously indicated to local media that he supports the bills.

Ugandan church desperate to fight a plague of human trafficking

KAMPALA, Uganda — Government figures show that more than 24,400 Ugandans seek household jobs in the Middle East annually, driven out of the country by poverty, unemployment, domestic violence and family breakdown. Thousands of them become victims of human traffickers. In 2021 alone, up to 26 Ugandan migrant workers died in the Middle East, according to Uganda Human Rights Commission. The situation has compelled the Catholic Church to intensify awareness campaigns to end human trafficking in the country. Bishops, priests, nuns, catechists and other church leaders have been visiting homes, villages, churches, and public places to educate the people on the dangers of human trafficking. The church leaders want the government to strengthen and speed up efforts to reduce poverty and unemployment so that vulnerable Ugandans, especially girls and women, are not forced to travel overseas. Archbishop John Baptist Odama of Gulu in northern Uganda encouraged others, including human rights organizations, to join the church in tackling human trafficking, a plague of the country “of which we need each other to address this evil trade that is killing our people and subjecting them to inhumane conditions,” he said, urging the government to arrest anyone engaging in human trafficking. “I appeal to church leaders and other stakeholders to spread awareness about the dangers of human trafficking and report any evils that promote this illegal activity.” Archbishop Odama told OSV News.

National/World

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EWS BRIEFS

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Missouri lawmakers passed a bill May 10 banning certain types of medical or surgical gender reassignment procedures for minors who identify as transgender, as well as a measure blocking transgender student athletes from competing on sports teams opposite their biological sex. The legislation banning some treatments for transgender minors would prohibit certain types of hormonal or surgical gender reassignment procedures including puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones. The measure regarding transgender student athletes would apply from kindergarten through college at both public and private schools in the state, at the risk of the schools’ state funding. Both measures would expire in 2027. Supporters of prohibitions on medical interventions for minors who identify as transgender say such efforts will prevent them from making irreversible decisions as children they may later come to regret as adults. Critics of such measures argue that preventing these interventions could cause other harm to minors such as mental health issues. The bills will be considered by Republican Gov. Mike Parson, who previously indicated to local media that he supports the bills.

Ugandan church desperate to fight a plague of human trafficking

KAMPALA, Uganda — Government figures show that more than 24,400 Ugandans seek household jobs in the Middle East annually, driven out of the country by poverty, unemployment, domestic violence and family breakdown. Thousands of them become victims of human traffickers. In 2021 alone, up to 26 Ugandan migrant workers died in the Middle East, according to Uganda Human Rights Commission. The situation has compelled the Catholic Church to intensify awareness campaigns to end human trafficking in the country. Bishops, priests, nuns, catechists and other church leaders have been visiting homes, villages, churches, and public places to educate the people on the dangers of human trafficking. The church leaders want the government to strengthen and speed up efforts to reduce poverty and unemployment so that vulnerable Ugandans, especially girls and women, are not forced to travel overseas. Archbishop John Baptist Odama of Gulu in northern Uganda encouraged others, including human rights organizations, to join the church in tackling human trafficking, a plague of the country “of which we need each other to address this evil trade that is killing our people and subjecting them to inhumane conditions,” he said, urging the government to arrest anyone engaging in human trafficking. “I appeal to church leaders and other stakeholders to spread awareness about the dangers of human trafficking and report any evils that promote this illegal activity.” Archbishop Odama told OSV News.

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EWS BRIEFS
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<tr>
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