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MESSENGER

Serving the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky since 1926



Father Elmlinger celebrates First Mass of Thanksgiving in gratitude for God’s people

Laura Keener
Editor

Father Michael Elmlinger, a newly ordained priest for the Diocese of Covington, celebrated his first Mass of Thanksgiving, June 3, at St. Paul Church, Florence, his childhood parish.

Father Michael Barth, the same priest who baptized Father Elmlinger, was the homilist. Attending in choir were Bishop John Iffert and Bishop Emeritus Roger Foys. Several diocesan priests concelebrated with Deacons Scott Folz and Celestine Xu assisting.

The church was filled with family, friends, parishioners and joy as the new priest and celebrants processed in while the Blessed Sacrament Choir, led by Matt Spencer, sang the majestic hymn, “Lo He Comes with Clouds Descending.”

The day was the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity. Father Barth acknowledged that it is difficult to preach on theological feast days, especially considering the volumes of writings from the some of the greatest minds of the Church on that which is truly a mystery — the three, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is one God.

“This is a good day to give thanks and praise for the action that began with the Father, continued with the Son and is being brought to completion by the Holy Spirit,” said Father Barth. What we are celebrating in addition to Trinity Sunday, “...is the great gift of a priest for us. Father Elmlinger was called to the priesthood ultimately by God. That calling began with the Father, continued with the Son and is being brought to completion by the Holy Spirit.”

Acknowledging that the vocation of a priest is lived out through the outpouring of grace over a lifetime and not only through the grace of a single act, on a single day, Father Barth said, “Father Michael, be thankful that God will be stirring the Spirit in you and giving you more gifts of grace as you endure through the priesthood.”

Father Barth talked about the symbiotic relationship of God’s priests and people.

“God knows that we, the Church, the pilgrim people of God, we have need of priests to offer sacrifice for us, to express God and give us God’s forgiveness in the sacrament of penance ... and so he provides for our needs through the vocation of the priesthood.

“As the Church, we have a responsibility ... to support, to nurture this vocation that God has called Father Michael to, the vocation that Father Michael has said yes to,” he said.

And like the Trinity — a community of persons, yet one God — the Church also is a community, a community of believers, Father Barth said.

“It is good that we are all companions along the journey, the journey of holiness, the journey of salvation ... as a community.”

At the end of Mass, as is tradition, Father Elmlinger presented his mother with the manutergium, the cloth that Bishop Iffert wrapped around his newly anointed hands during the ordination Mass the previous day. The manutergium will be buried with Mrs. Elmlinger as witness to God that with her love and sacrifice, her son answered the call to the priesthood.

During a deeply emotional moment, Father Elmlinger also presented his mother with the purple stole he wore earlier that day while administering the sacrament of reconciliation. Traditionally, the stole is presented to the ordinand’s father, but Father Elmlinger’s dad died two years ago after a battle with cancer.

Father Elmlinger’s closing remarks were filled with gratitude — to Bishop Iffert, Bishop Foys, the priests of the diocese and the seminaries he studied, his fellow seminarians, the choir, his mother, siblings, friends and everyone present.

“I’m grateful for every single one of you,” said Father Elmlinger. “All of you have helped to support me to get to this point in my life. You have helped to nurture my own vocation. Without every single one of your prayers, I would not be here and I am truly grateful.”

Feast of Corpus Christi — a celebration of Christ with us

Laura Keener
Editor

In celebration of the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, June 11, Bishop John Iffert presided at a prayer service, which included adoration and a Eucharistic procession at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington.

The forecast of an afternoon thunderstorm dampened the course but not the spirit of the procession. Instead of a public procession through the streets of Covington, the procession was held inside the Cathedral, with Bishop Iffert thrice circumnavigating the Cathedral carrying the Eucharist encased in a monstrance.

The Cathedral’s stained-glass windows offer a catechesis on the Eucharist and Eucharistic processions. In his homily, Bishop Iffert referred to three windows, located in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, that concentrate the catechesis on the Body and Blood of Jesus.

The first window, The Feast of Corpus Christi, depicts the establishment of the feast, an event that occurred June 6, 1247 at St. Martin Church, Liège, Belgium, where the local bishop was persuaded by St. Juliana to place a feast dedicated to the Holy Eucharist on the liturgical calendar of the Diocese of Liège. That bishop eventually becomes Pope Urban IV and extends the feast to the entire Universal Church.

The second window depicts Moses and the people of Israel receiving mana from heaven and water from the flinty rock.

“God directs Moses to strike the rock ... and water flows forth to cleanse, to refresh and to give life,” said Bishop Iffert.

The church fathers, Bishop Iffert said, refer to that rock as a type of Christ, who cleanses, refreshes, gives new life – the eternal waters that well up within.

The right panel of that same window depicts God’s people receiving mana from heaven and the cloud of God’s glory, “the sign of God’s dwelling with his people, God’s constancy in guiding their pilgrimage through this fallen world,” he said

The third window depicts the Passover supper. “In the center of that beautiful window the lady of the household is presented with a roasted lamb. The lamb has been sacrificed, its legs are bound ... Jesus is the Passover lamb, slain, bound, led where we all fear to go. Slain to free us from the slavery of sin and from death,” said Bishop Iffert. “The Gospel reports to us how Jesus speaks about his own body and blood, he commands that we consume his body, that we consume his blood ... Jesus is the lamb that was slain, he is our food and drink. The food and drink that leads us from our animalistic competition to the banquet of eternal life.”

Quoting from the Catechism, Bishop Iffert said that the Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life ... the real substantial presence of Christ among us. The Body and Blood together with the soul and divinity of

(Continued on page 27.)



(above right) A window in the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, depicting the Passover supper. (below) With the monstrance raised, Bishop Iffert leads the Corpus Christi procession through the cathedral. (below right) Deacon Jerry Franzen sets the Eucharist into the monstrance. (bottom right) Bishop John Iffert prays before the Eucharist contained in the monstrance.





June 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On August 14, 2021, a powerful earthquake measuring 7.2 on the Richter scale struck within 100 miles of the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince. More than 2,000 people were killed, 12,000 were injured, and 300 were missing. Then widespread damage to houses and other structures was worsened by a tropical storm that hit the island shortly afterward. In responding to the urgent needs of the victims of these disasters, Pope Francis donated €200,000 through the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development to support immediate emergency relief efforts in the most affected dioceses in Haiti.

The annual Peter’s Pence Collection will be conducted throughout the Diocese of Covington on the weekend of June 24 and 25, 2023. Your contribution to the Peter’s Pence collection helps fund not only all the activities of the dicasteries of the Roman Curia that assist the pope in the exercise of his ministry but also a number of solidarity projects that aid those most in need. To learn more about the ways in which this collection supports the Holy Father’s ministry of mercy, please visit <https://www.obolodisanpietro.va/en/cos-e-l-obolo.html> (English) or <https://www.obolodisanpietro.va/es/cos-e-l-obolo.html> (español).

Please prayerfully consider supporting this year’s collection as an act of mercy and charity. Join our brothers and sisters in faith from around the globe to help Pope Francis carry out his ministry to the Universal Church and reach out to the most marginalized in our world.

Thank you and may God bless you abundantly.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

John C. Iffert

Bishop John C. Iffert

Be a sign of
mercy.

For more information, visit www.usccb.org/peters-pence.

Mike Murray retires

After 14 years of service to the diocese as director of Stewardship and Mission Services, Mike Murray has retired from his role. In his time at the Curia, Mr. Murray has led the diocese through 14 Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal campaigns as well as reestablished the annual Seminary Ball. He also instituted the CRS Rice Bowl kickoff luncheon, which brought together junior high and high school students in solidarity with the world’s poor and acted as the diocese’s Catholic Relief Service liaison. In addition, Mr. Murray has led several special projects for the diocesan retreat center and the Cathedral. In partnership with the Serra Club of Northern Kentucky, Mr. Murray helped to create the annual Women Religious Picnic and Catholic Faith Night at the Florence Freedom, where the infamous Bishop Roger Foys bobblehead were distributed. In addition to his work leading the Office Stewardship and Mission Services, Mr. Murray has been a member of the ACUE Development Advisory Board, Villa Madonna Academy Capital Campaign Committee, Friends of the Rose Garden Home Mission Board and chaired their annual fundraising dinner “Partners in Hope for the Poor” and is chair of the St. Vincent de Paul Development Committee. Curia staff celebrated his retirement with a Skyline chili luncheon — Mr. Murray’s favorite food, and he was gifted with a cheese coney hat as part of the festivities.



Baker photo



Bishop’s
Schedule

- June 20**
Advisory Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.

June 21
Serra Club’s Picnic for Women Religious, Ryland Lakes Country Club, 11:45 a.m.

June 22
Diocesan Review Board meeting, 10 a.m.
Deans meeting, 1:30 p.m.

June 24
Vigil Mass (recognizing World Youth Day), Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 4:30 p.m.
- June 25**
Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.

June 27
Advisory Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.


June 29
Serra Club for Vocations, Catholic Faith Night at Florence Freedom, Thomas More Stadium, Florence, 5:30 p.m.

Official Assignments

- Effective July 11, 2023*
- Rev. Jason M. Bertke**
To: Chaplain, St. Henry District High School, Erlanger
Term: One year
Continues other duties
- Rev. Michael A. Black**
To: Chaplain, St. Patrick High School, Maysville
Term: One year
Continues other duties
- Rev. Eric L. Boelscher**
To: Pastoral Administrator, Covington Catholic High School, Park Hills
Continues other duties
- Rev. Richard G. Bolte**
To: Pastoral Administrator, St. Henry District High School, Erlanger
Continues other duties
- Rev. Edward J. Brodnick**
To: Chaplain, Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria
Term: One year
Continues retirement
- Rev. Michael K. Elmlinger**
To: Chaplain, Covington Latin School, Covington
Term: One year
Continues other duties
- Rev. Alexander J. Gedney**
To: Chaplain, Newport Central Catholic High School, Newport
Term: One year
Continues other duties
- Rev. Michael C. Hennigen**
To: Chaplain, Covington Catholic High School, Park Hills
Term: One year
Continues other duties
- Deacon Barry J. Henry**
To: Assistant Chaplain, Newport Central Catholic High School, Newport
Term: One year
Continues other duties
- Rev. V. Ross Kelsch**
To: Pastoral Administrator, Newport Central Catholic High School, Newport
Continues other duties
- Very Rev. Baiju Kidaagen, V.C., V.F.**
To: Chaplain, Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills
Term: One year
Continues other duties
- Rev. A. Conor Kunath**
To: Chaplain, Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills
Term: One year
Continues other duties
- Rev. Msgr. Gerald L. Reinersman, V.F.**
To: Director, Permanent Deacon Formation
Continues retirement
- Rev. Thomas P. Robbins**
To: Chaplain, Holy Cross District High School, Latonia
Term: One year
Continues retirement
- Very Rev. Ryan L. Stenger, J.V.**
To: Pastoral Administrator, Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria
Continues other duties
- Rev. Jeffrey D. Von Lehmen**
To: Chaplain, Holy Cross District High School, Latonia
Term: One year
Continues other duties
- Assigned by the
Most Rev. John C. Iffert
Bishop of Covington
- Jamie N. Schroeder*
Jamie N. Schroeder
Chancellor

How to bring the 40 Hours devotion to your parish

Rebecca W. Martin
OSV News

Imagine that Jesus Christ knocked on your door and asked to stay with you for the better part of two days. How would you welcome him? What conversations would you have around the kitchen table? What transformations might occur; as you drew close to him in friendship and rested together in the living room? What incredible grace would be available to you?

Take that spiritual encounter and renewal and multiply it by the number of people in your parish. Young and old, singles and families, lay and clergy, each experiencing the Lord’s love through his physical, tangible presence — it’s a lovely dream, and more than a dream.

In the words of Pope St. John Paul II in his encyclical “Ecclesia de Eucharistia”: “The Eucharist is a priceless treasure: by not only celebrating it but also by praying before it outside of Mass we are enabled to make contact with the very wellspring of grace. A Christian community desirous of contemplating the face of Christ ... cannot fail also to develop this aspect of Eucharistic worship, which prolongs and increases the fruits of our communion in the body and blood of the Lord” (No. 25).

How do we “develop this aspect of Eucharistic worship” in our parishes, inviting each member to “make contact with the very wellspring of grace”?

One immediately available method is the ancient tradition known as 40 Hours. It’s a straightforward practice: expose the Blessed Sacrament publicly in the parish church for 40 hours, during which parishioners take turns keeping watch so that Jesus is never alone. Typically, the devotion begins and ends with Masses, and might include the Liturgy of the Hours, a procession or a homily series. Many parishes combine 40 Hours with a parish mission, drawing the community together for prayer and preaching.

40 Hours has been part of the parish life of the Church for well over 500 years. It flourished under the promotion of saints like St. Charles Borromeo, St. Anthony Maria Zaccaria, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis de Sales, St. Philip Neri, St. John Neumann and many others. In 16th century Milan, Italy, Eucharistic adoration would move from church to church every 40 hours, with parishes working together to keep the devotion running throughout the entire year.

In the Middle Ages it was celebrated as supplication in times of crisis; during the Catholic Counter-Reformation, as an effort at the renewal of popular devotion; in 19th-century America, as a way of unifying persecuted Catholics. In our own day, when so many Catholics don’t understand or believe in the True Presence, 40 Hours is the natural next step for our National Eucharistic Revival.

Why 40 hours? Scripture gives us repeated symbolic instances of the number: Moses’ years in Egypt, the years the Israelites wandered in the desert, the days of Jonah’s preaching in Nineveh, Jesus’ days of fasting in the desert and many more. We spend 40 days in prayer, fasting and almsgiving during Lent. Most importantly, from the crucifixion on the afternoon of Good Friday to the Resurrection on Easter morning, Our Lord lay in the tomb for roughly 40 hours.

Crisis, persecution, exile, penance, death — what do all these dark themes have to do with Eucharistic adoration? The thread which binds them together is metanoia, that turning of the heart toward God which we also call conversion.

Those 40 years in the desert were an opportunity for the Israelites to be strengthened in faith. Jonah spent weeks pleading with the Ninevites to lay aside their sins and turn to God. Jesus’ own fasting prepared him to go out and bring souls to his Father; calling them to conversion. His death and resurrection opened the door for us not only to convert once, but to have an ongoing relationship with the God who loves us.

And that’s exactly what the 40 Hours devotion offers. In every era, in every cultural struggle, Christ comes in the Eucharist to be the heart of our communities. Made humble on the altar, he invites us to bring our troubled souls to him, and through him to the Father.

Pulling off the 40 Hours requires us to believe not only in the Real Presence, but in the power of that Presence. It’s all well and good to believe that Our Lord is there in the bread and wine at Mass. What do we do with that? How do we let that belief change us? I would argue that one concrete and effective way is this ancient tradition of the 40 Hours.

How do we make this daunting exercise in faith actually happen? To be sure, it requires commitment, buy-in from parish staff and parishioners alike, eager to share Christ’s welcome. That is the first requisite. (Though I use “parish” for brevity, the 40 Hours also works well for Catholic high schools, colleges and Newman Centers, parish groups, etc.) Assuming willing volunteers, the effort would look something like this:

—Assemble a core team, including a cleric, the music director, someone concerned with hospitality, and one or more with communication and marketing skills.

—Well in advance — 3-6 months, preferably — plan the dates of the celebration. You could start with Mass on a Thursday evening and finish at the anticipation Mass on Saturday evening; or begin on Sunday evening and run through Tuesday; any number of options are available.

—If preaching is desired, make arrangements to bring in a priest or lay speaker.

—Share a “save the date” with the parish and even the whole diocese.

—Start getting groups and organizations involved. You might ask the local Catholic schools to commit to an hour or

(Continued on page 25.)

*‘But just as
you excel
in everything
– in faith,
in speech,
in knowledge,
in complete
earnestness
and in your
love for us –
see that you
also excel
in this grace
of giving.’*

(2 Cor 8:7-9)

From the Office of Stewardship and Mission Services



Planned Giving and the Diocese of Covington

In their pastoral letter, *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, the U.S. Bishops remind us that good disciples and stewards do the following:

*“As Christian stewards, we receive
God’s gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly,
share them lovingly in justice with others,
and return them with increase to the Lord.”*

Each generation of Catholics is given an important mission: how do we pass on the faith to the next generation? Foremost is evangelization — knowing our faith well and sharing it with others. As important is the careful and prayerful sharing of our God-given resources. One of those resources — our assets — includes the things we have accumulated over our lifetime.

As Catholic Christians, we believe that our assets and our ability to accumulate them are gifts from a loving, generous God. We have a responsibility to use these gifts wisely and prudently — as well as to share them with others — our family certainly, but also with those institutions devoted to spreading God’s reign on earth.

Bequests in a will, charitable gift annuities, trusts, insurance and gifts of appreciated stock are all planned gifts, or gifts that come after much thought and consultation with professional advisors. These important gifts will ensure that our lives will touch the lives that come after us to build the faith for generations to come.

For more information on planned giving opportunities with the Diocese of Covington or one of its ministries, please call the Office of Stewardship and Mission Services at (859) 392-1500 or email stewardship@covdio.org.

Office of Stewardship and Mission Services — Diocese of Covington
1125 Madison Avenue, Covington KY 41011-3115
(859) 392-1500 — (859) 392-1589 FAX — www.covdio.org

The Diocese of Covington does not provide advice on tax or legal matters. State and federal laws govern many types of planned giving, and the services of an attorney, accountant or other professional advisor should be attained.



About Thomas More University

For 100 years, Thomas More has created a university for the student who wants to

**Be More,
Do More,
Seek More,
Win More,
Achieve More, and
Create More.**

Since its founding in 1921, Thomas More has provided a mission-driven, liberal arts education that is based in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. Students learn to harness the power of human reason to solve problems and discover truth, which allows them to begin the journey to become the person they were created to be.

Entering into the second century, it's time for More. Serving more than 2,000 students, Thomas More aspires to be the premier Catholic university in the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky region, to build upon the #1 ranking for long term gain in Kentucky (2019 Georgetown study) and share with this generation the transformative power of the Thomas More experience.

For more information about Thomas More University, visit www.thomasmore.edu.

Mission and service — part of a Thomas More education

Contributed by
Thomas More University

For more than 100 years, Thomas More has been committed to Catholic values and traditions. Through service projects, students engage in the principles of Catholic social teaching, as well as maintain the University's long-standing history of selfless commitment to others. Providing service opportunities for students is an important step in nurturing a culture of social responsibility that benefits our region and beyond. Below are a few examples of students lending a hand to those in need.

Thomas More Border Studies Program celebrates 25 years



The border studies program, headed by James Camp, Ph.D., professor and chair of the sociology and criminal justice department at Thomas More University, celebrates 25 years during the 2024 spring semester. This long running program offers students a multi-faceted view of United States foreign policy, specifically at the U.S./Mexico border.

Students first spend time in the classroom studying the history, culture and economy of the border region. At the end of the semester, they see theory put into practice as they travel to the border. Students work and stay in the Annunciation House, an almost 100-year-old building located blocks from the border. This sanctuary has been home to thousands of refugees and migrant poor since opening its doors. While at the border, students help by assisting with intake of migrants, getting them in contact with families, providing toiletries and assigning rooms.

Spring 2023 saw a second-generation participant in the program. Andrew Bailey, a Thomas More senior double majoring in political science and history, participated in the class this year, while his father, Christopher Bailey '02, participated in the second year of the program in spring of 2001. Originally from Texas, Christopher came to Thomas More to play football, and became interested in the border studies program when learning he could use that opportunity to make a difference. "I wanted to go and help the people down there," he recalls.

The Bailey's both speak of the culture shock they faced when arriving at the U.S./Mexico border.

"When you see the abject poverty within Juarez, especially concentrated right on the border, it's kind of a shock," Andrew said.



Andrew and Christopher Bailey.

Both noted, however, the magnificent way the Annunciation House supports the community.

"Basically, if you show up at the door and you need help, they'll take you in no questions asked," said Andrew of the experience.

"They accepted everybody as a family, and they accepted us," adds Christopher.

This experience eventually led Christopher to his current career where he works with juveniles in the community facing arrest.

Cru Organization offers Student Ministry and Mission trip experiences



Henry Driscoll is a Thomas More criminal justice major with big plans for summer 2023. On May 25, Driscoll left to spend three weeks in Zagreb, Croatia as a member of a summer mission with Cru. Cru, founded in 1951, offers a variety of spiritual guidance, resources and programs specifically tailored to people from all cultures and walks of life. One of those programs is campus ministries.

Cru campus ministries are found in 2,300 locations, engaging more than 101,000 students and faculty members in the U.S.

Driscoll spent a week in December 2022 in Croatia with this group and was so enthusiastic about the experience and the work that was accomplished, that he knew he must go back.

As Driscoll tells it, "My service has always been tied to my faith and a duty to my community. I've always thought growing in my faith was important and assisting others on their path is important work, but I didn't believe it was something for me. I stuck to volunteering for things tied to my high school, Holy Cross in Covington. ... After joining Cru, I made the decision to go on a mission trip with other Cincinnati area students. The experience was an absolute blessing, I was able to speak with dozens of students about their faith at the largest university in the nation (Croatia)."

He says stepping out of his comfort zone during mission trips led him closer to his faith.

"The whole time I thought, 'Okay this is great and all but what have I gotten myself into? Am I even making an impact? Who am I, to talk to these people? Am I fit for this task?'" he recalls. "I started to find that the more uncomfortable you get, the more you start to lean on God, and that really makes the uncomfortableness feel fantastic."

COMMENTARY

‘Mrs. Davis’ and getting off the grid

Mrs. Davis, currently streaming on the Peacock network, is my favorite show. It is quirky as all get out, featuring a quest for the Holy Grail, an imprisoned pope, a journey inside the intestines of a whale, an exploding head (don’t ask), and a roller coaster of death. The lead character is a committed religious sister who regularly communes with Jesus and who manages, more or less, to save the world.

Now if you’re looking to Mrs. Davis for theological precision, you will be severely disappointed (and please don’t write me letters reminding me of how weird its theology is; I know), but there is indeed a spiritual motif of supreme importance that stands at the very heart of the show, and it is well worth plowing through all of the intense oddness to grasp it. It has to do with idolatry and, more precisely, with our tendency to create idols.

The heroine of the story is Sister Simone, a member of a community of nuns who have purposely endeavored to live off the grid, very much in the manner of anchorites and monks from the ancient Church who fled the corrupt civil society of their time.

The grid in question is Mrs. Davis, who is not a person but rather a massively powerful internet algorithm, an artificial intelligence that basically knows all that can be known and that can order and manipulate human beings at will. So pervasive is Mrs. Davis and so typically helpful that practically the entire human race has succumbed to her influence, gratefully doing her bidding and, with child-like affection, referring to her, depending on the country, as mother, mum, Madonna, and Mama.

She has most of the qualities that one classically associates with God — virtual omnipotence, omnicompetence, and omniscience, even the capacity for providential guidance — and hence it is no surprise that nearly everyone reveres her.

But Simone has intuited that Mrs. Davis, in point of fact, robs people of their independence, saps them of their

energy and creativity, controls them ruthlessly, and finally dispenses with them when they no longer suit her purpose. She has come to see, to state it bluntly and simply, that the algorithm is an idol, a pathetic simulacrum of the true God, something that we have made that has come, like Frankenstein’s monster, to terrorize us. And so she lives happily with her rural community, venturing out into the world only to save hapless victims of Mrs. Davis’ machinations.

When colleagues express their dismay that the nun would stand athwart “her,” the benevolent mother, Sister Simone grimly replies, “Not she, it.”

At the core of the drama is Sister Simone’s quest to destroy Mrs. Davis, to turn it off, and to set people free. This is where the Holy Grail, the incarcerated pope, and the whale come in, but I’ll let you watch the program to understand just how.

One of my favorite moments in the adventure was when Sister Simone tracks down the woman who invented Mrs. Davis. It turns out that she was a computer programmer who was pitching a new advertising system to Buffalo Wild Wings, convinced that her algorithm would not only increase their sales but revolutionize the world. It was precisely this sort of hubris, Sister Simone discovers, that made Mrs. Davis’ eventual tyranny possible. Once again, the idols that we construct inevitably turn on us.

Now you might be thinking: Well, isn’t this all a bit exaggerated? After all, every technological advancement — electricity, movies, telephones, televisions, computers — had some people speculating that civilization was being threatened. Aren’t the internet and AI substantially the same — just tools that will help us live more comfortably and accomplish our ends more efficiently?

Maybe. But I believe that Mrs. Davis is a prophetic warning that something qualitatively different is in play when we’re talking about artificial intelligence and the pervasiveness of the internet. For as study after study has

revealed, the algorithms of social media are, in myriad ways and in a manner largely unbeknownst to us, manipulating us, getting us to think and desire in such a way as to foster the economic and political interests of others.

In a word, we’re not using them; they’re using us. And their scope is so widespread that, before we know it, we might well find ourselves completely under their thrall. At least this seems to be what Mrs. Davis is warning us about.

When the monks and hermits of late antiquity took to the hills, escaping from the dying civilization of Rome, respectable people thought they had lost their minds. Most of the denizens of the Mrs. Davis universe feel the same way about Sister Simone and her community: Why would anyone want to operate outside the ambit of a force so benevolent?

Could I make a suggestion? Take a look at your phone and find out how much screen time you put in last week, and then ask yourself honestly how much of your thinking and behavior was determined by that little machine.

Next, compare how much time you spent supplicating the internet with how much time you spent praying to God. If the answers are disturbing — as I would guess they are for most of us — ask yourself whether it might be time to think seriously about getting off the grid.

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

WORD ON FIRE



Bishop Robert Barron

A pride too far

Barber and Vin Scully

Over the decades, the Dodgers remained the consistently successful team no one loved to hate (unlike the gang in the Bronx). Can any serious baseball fan’s spine not tingle when watching replays of Kirk Gibson, barely able to walk, hitting a pinch-hit home run off the great Dennis Eckersley in the 1988 World Series? Or, to revert to unmitigated joy, how about the look on Dodger manager Tommy Lasorda’s face when he charged out of the dugout to embrace Gibson? This was the national pastime at its best. This was Dodger baseball, and, as the psalmist said, we rejoiced and were glad in it.

No longer.

Over the past several weeks, the Dodgers have demonstrated a cringe-inducing cravenness in the face of woke pressures. The team that once defied racists has now caved in to anti-Catholic bigots. In the name of “inclusion,” of course, and, be it noted, the first and greatest of capital sins, Pride.

Like virtually every other professional sports team, the Dodgers sponsor a “Pride Night” during June, “Pride Month.” This year, “Pride Night” in Dodger Stadium was to include special recognition of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, an “LGBTQ+ advocacy group” (in the *Washington Post*’s anodyne description) whose actual modus operandi is the obscene mockery of consecrated women’s religious life and its ridicule of the chastity that is one of Christ’s three evangelical counsels. As Matt Hennessey reported in the *Wall Street Journal*, “Members of the group go by names like Sister Jezebell of the Enraptured Sling and Sister Shalita Corndog. At Easter, they host ‘Foxy Mary’ and ‘Hunky Jesus’ contests.” In a word, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence are blasphemers.

Protests to the Dodgers from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and others led to the “Sisters” invitation to Pride Night at Dodger Stadium being rescinded. But then came the inevitable tsunami of woke pushback and the Dodgers caved, issuing a groveling apology that included a pledge to “work with our LGBTQ+ partners to better educate ourselves, find ways to strengthen the ties that bind, and use our platform to support all our fans who make up the diversity of the Dodgers family.”

Branch Rickey, the crafty general manager and devout Methodist who signed Jackie Robinson, must be spinning in his grave, as his heirs in the Dodger front office emulate the “confessions” extracted at Stalin-era show trials in the Soviet Union.

The Dodgers’ kowtow to the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, and to the corporate and political forces that support them, is a blatant illustration of the sorry fact that anti-Catholicism is the last acceptable prejudice in American elite culture.

Imagine, if you can, special recognition at a major league baseball game being given to groups that obscenely mock Evangelical Protestant ministers, Jewish rabbis and cantors, or Muslim imams. You can’t, can you? But it remains open season on consecrated Catholic religious life because elite culture, deluded by the idea that freedom is sheer willfulness, has abandoned any pretense of respect for the sensibilities of devout Catholics.

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. His column “The Catholic Difference” is syndicated by the Denver Catholic, the official publication of the Archdiocese of Denver.

THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE



George Weigel

When I dip into life’s memory bank for moments of unalloyed joy, the afternoon of October 9, 1966, quickly surfaces.

On a brilliant autumnal Sunday, I was sitting with my Grandfather Weigel behind first base in Baltimore’s old Memorial Stadium, which erupted in jubilation when Lou Johnson’s fly ball settled into the glove of center fielder Paul Blair and the underdog Orioles completed a four-game sweep of

the World Series against the lordly Los Angeles Dodgers. That victory was made all the sweeter by the fact that the Dodgers, even after their 1958 translation from Brooklyn to Lala Land, remained the class act of major league baseball — the franchise everyone tried to emulate. (The Yankees were, and are, an empire, not a franchise).

It was the Dodgers who had broken baseball’s infamous “color line” by playing the immortal Jackie Robinson, “42,” at first base on Opening Day 1947. It was the Dodgers, “Dem Bums,” who inspired what is arguably the best book ever written about a baseball team, Roger Kahn’s “The Boys of Summer.” True, those 1966 Dodgers had a mean master of the brushback pitch in Don Drysdale. But they also had silken shortstop Maury Wills and the noble Sandy Koufax, who declined to pitch Game One of the 1965 Series because it fell on Yom Kippur. Those Dodgers also gave baseball two of its most elegant radio wordsmiths, Red

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Laura Keener Editor, General Manager

Chuck BrinkmanAdvertising Manager

Laura Gillespie.....Production Coordinator/Designer

Maura Baker.....Staff Writer

All I need is a miracle

VIEWPOINT



Julie Feinauer

To say we have had a rough year has been an understatement. Our intelligent, articulate, sarcastic 13-year-old son, Hudson, had a medical issue that had him in daily high-level pain, sometimes so bad that he would spend the night crying and screaming at home or, if it got too bad, in the emergency room. After nearly a year of surgeries, procedures, medicines and therapies we were no better off than we had been when the pain began. He couldn't even walk down the stairs most days. Medicines made it difficult to stay awake or to interact with people.

It was crushing to see how it was affecting him both physically and mentally. Hudson's brightness was slowly fading, and we wanted our son back.

As parents, you want to do the best you can. With limited medical knowledge (I do watch an occasional medical drama) there was little we could do but heed the recommendations of the doctors. We prayed and asked for prayers from everyone we knew. Our prayers centered on his team of doctors and that they would come up with a procedure or medication that would work.

To be honest, I was looking for a miracle, for him to just "take up his mat and go home," if you will. I sprinkled him with water from Lourdes, prayed novenas and anointed him with Padre Pio oil my aunt had given me. I just knew he would be healed.

One night at about 11:30, we could foresee that it was inevitable that we would be headed to the hospital. Tears were running down his flushed cheeks and he was trying so hard not to scream. I prayed that God would relieve Hudson's pain for at least a few hours so that he (and I) could sleep. He was crying, I was sobbing so eventually the registrar moved us from the emergency waiting area and put us in a separate room and administered Fentanyl. He said the pain was still not gone, but for a few moments bearable. It's all I could ask for, a little bit of time where he wasn't crying.

At around 4:30 a.m. a pain doctor came in that we had not met in our many visits. She pulled up a chair close to my son and in a no-nonsense tone said, "You're going to have to learn to live with the pain." Her discourse seemed to center more around him being able to control the pain, than figuring out what was causing it.

My stomach dropped. Did this person just tell my child who is living in agony that learning to live with the pain was their "final answer"? Not only that, but she also wanted to admit him to an inpatient bootcamp with children with chronic (diagnosed) issues for 4-6 weeks. "To learn techniques to cope," she said.

They had no answer to what was going on with him, but quickly decided that his only option was to accept it. We were devastated, but we were not willing to give up.

God does his greatest work in the background. The amazing part of this story is how little miracles fit together just so, like a puzzle, in order to make our son's big miracle happen.

I had recently learned about severe post operative nerve pain from a friend who had suffered for years. I believed that I just needed to find the right person to treat Hudson because his diagnosis checked all the boxes. My dear friend asked her husband to share his condition and the details with some doctors that he would encounter at a trade show. Incredible, and I consider a miracle, that God gave us access to someone who would encounter multiple people in the field.

One of those doctors went home and later, from Texas, contacted my friend's husband to let him know that after some researching he might know of someone who specialized in Hudson's condition. Someone went out of his way to research, just to be kind? Another minor miracle!

The specialist was in Chicago; we were literally willing to go anywhere to get help for Hudson. When I called, the

(Continued on page 21.)

Seeing and understanding

In the 13th chapter of the Gospel of Matthew Jesus' disciples ask him why he speaks to the people through parables. He answers: "... because they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand." (Matt 13:13) He goes on to explain that the people he is talking about fulfill an ancient prophecy of Isaiah: "You shall indeed hear but never understand, and you shall indeed see but never perceive." (Isaiah 6: 9-10)

Jesus' parables are always fascinating but what's striking in the passage above is how he refers to those who aren't following him. What does it mean to be a person that looks but does not see, or a person that hears but does not understand? And how can disciples of Jesus today be sure to be people who truly see and understand?

I often think of Pope St. John Paul II and the world in which he grew up. Observing the horrible ways that so many human beings were treated in the first half of the 20th century had a profound impact on him. He realized early on how important it is that we understand who we are and how we ought to act in the world. His teachings on the Catholic understanding of the human person are often referred to as the Theology of the Body.

The understanding of what it means to be a human person in light of Scripture, helps us to understand how we were created, our identity in Christ and our gifts so that we may see ourselves and others the way God intended.

Today, children are growing up immersed in social media. While it's bad enough that traditional childhood activities are set aside in order to digitally "follow" others, create Tik Tok videos and stay up to date on the latest trends, what is even more worrisome is how young people are learning to perceive themselves and others. The line between what is real and what is not real is continually becoming more and more blurred.

Since all of creation has a message to tell, it is important that we pay attention. Since part of the mystery of God is revealed through the human body, it is important that we have a proper understanding of human sexuality. In today's culture, young people are being formed to not see creation the way it was meant to be seen, to not see their bodies the way they were meant to be seen, and to not see others the way they are meant to be seen.

This is all part of what it means to be spiritually blind, and Jesus is constantly inviting us to become people that see. In a fallen world we must train our eyes to see God's plan for creation and to see that God has a plan for all of us. Only then will we be able to explore the two fundamental questions from the Catechism of the Catholic Church — where do we come from? And where are we going?

The older generations must properly lead the younger generations. Adults have a perspective about life that young people lack. They can see the bigger picture simply because they have been around longer. It seems like every year more and more studies are coming out about the increases in depression and anxiety in young people. There is a direct correlation between these findings and the rise of social media. This makes sense because they are selling themselves short and not realizing that they are made for so much more.

Those of us who have been around for a little while need to make sure that we, ourselves, are close followers of Christ and reading the signs of the times in light of the Gospel. We cannot do that unless we are on our knees praying every day and making the sacrifices that we need to make.

Secondly, we need to lead by example. Children are always watching and learning from us — how are we spending our time? We also need to make sure that the line of communication is always open and that our young people know where to go for information when difficult questions arise.

Finally, we need to at least ask the question: Do young people need to be on social media at all? It is skewing their vision of the world and their vision of themselves. It's warping their ability to establish and grow real relationships that they will need later in life. Worst of all, it is plunging them into a society that is loud, showy, fake and often manipulative. Social media trains the person to look but not to see.

Our technology is growing so fast that we are all at risk of missing the world we were meant to see and not becoming the people we were meant to become.

David Cooley is co-director and office manager of the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization in the Diocese of Covington.

VIEWPOINT



David Cooley

A heart crying for help

The readings for the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus — cycle A — are: Deuteronomy 7:6-1; 1 John 4:7-16 and Matthew 11:25-30.

The Gospel passage we hear today is significant for me, but not for a comfortable reason. At the risk of being too personal, I must confess that in the beginning years of my priesthood I could become aggravated and impatient at the actions of God's people. I am sorry to say that I would complain to the Lord: "Does anyone know their faith?" "Look how late people are for Mass. See how few people even go to Mass." And so on.

One morning as I was complaining to the Lord about something, a passage from today's Gospel suddenly came to mind: "At the sight of the crowds, Jesus' heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd."

My mood began to change, but the Lord was not finished with me. I heard him say, "Why does what moves me to pity and mercy move you to aggravation and anger? I thought you were one of my priests."

I cannot describe the amount and depth of the shame I felt, shame that drove me to confession.

Part of the conversion of a priest, part of his spiritual growth, is to see a person's sins, failures, mistakes and weakness of faith, not in terms of how it affects the priest, but how it affects the person.

A human example of this attitude is expressed well by the great Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke. In his little

book, "Letters to a Young Poet," Rilke wrote, "Perhaps everything terrible [in us] is in its deepest being something helpless that wants help from us."

Perhaps everything sinful in us is at its core something lost and troubled that needs God's help. God must have thought so, because, as St. Paul puts it today, "While we were still sinners Christ died for us."

Jesus Himself said, "For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him." (John 3:17)

Jesus died, not just to save us from original sin and other's sin, but also to free us from our own slavery to sin.

These are words not just for the ordained priest. In the first reading, God promises Moses, "You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation."

That comes true for us in baptism, when we become part of Christ's mission of priest, prophet and king. We receive a share in the care of the world's salvation, become part of God's outpouring of mercy on a world that is troubled, abandoned and lost.

God's faithful need to remember, as priests need to remember, that we are, albeit in different ways, representatives of Christ in the world, and the evil you see in the world should stir your heart, not just to anger at the evil, but pity and mercy, to concern for the soul of the one doing the evil.

Father Stephen Bankemper is pastor, St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Ft. Thomas, Ky

GO AND GLORIFY



Father Stephen Bankemper



Celebrating 70 years sowing priestly seeds

On the solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, the community of St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas, hosted a reception, June 4, celebrating the 70th jubilee of Father Albert Ruschman. The celebration began with Mass with the reception following. Father Jeffrey VonLehmen, pastor, St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill, was the homilist. “I asked Father Al what was his reason for the celebration today and he said, “To celebrate what God has been doing through his priesthood these 70 years,” Father VonLehmen said as he began his homily. Father VonLehmen held up an icon of Father Ruschman that was designed especially for the occasion and gifted to Father Ruschman saying, ““Indeed, in the book of Acts, we see how St.Paul and St. Peter both paused to celebrate what God was doing THROUGH THEM in their outreach to the Gentiles. “Today I just want to celebrate with you what God has been doing through Father Al as an icon of Christ, an icon of the Trinity as we are all called to be,” Father Von Lehmen said. The icon, Father VonLehmen said, “Illustrates the three seeds — humble heart, missionary heart, heart for communion — Father Al has been planting to help us grow into the kind of family and kind of tri-unity God is. We honor Father Al and what Jesus has been doing through him by helping these seeds grow in us.” In the icon the images representing the three seeds are: humble heart — farm; missionary heart — church; heart for communion — family, God’s family.



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Helping youth ministers to grow a ‘thriving youth ministry’

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

The office of Catechesis and Evangelization in the Diocese of Covington is gearing up for a new youth ministry leadership retreat coming up this July, entitled ‘Thrive!’.

The Thrive! retreat is one of the first major initiatives by the newly hired diocesan Youth Minister, Angie Poat. Having been involved in youth ministry since 1987, when she was 20 years old, Mrs. Poat says that she feels “very adamant and compassionate about the young people coming to know the Lord through the Church.” She said, “I feel a responsibility to give back to the diocese, to the Lord and to the Church, because I have come to know the love of the Lord through youth ministry.



Angie Poat

Thrive! Retreat

July 20–21, 10 a.m.– 4 .pm.
Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
RSVP online at <https://covdio.org/oce/>, \$15 at door.

That’s where I’ve always thrived, and I want other people to thrive in their relationship with the Lord.”

According to Mrs. Poat, Thrive! is a “servant leadership retreat for high school, youth, young adult and adult ministers who want to help youth ministry to thrive in whatever setting they’re in.” Whether that’s in a school or parish, a retreat team or even sports or scouts, all are invited to come together for the retreat, which will teach “leadership skills, prayer skills and ways to interact and grow a thriving youth ministry that’s contagious.”

The Thrive! retreat will take place July 20 and 21, in Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium in Covington. The retreat both days will begin at 10 a.m. and end around 4 p.m. Those interested in attending are requested to RSVP by July 10 online; a \$15 fee for attendance is paid at the door.

More information and registration details for Thrive! can be found online at <https://covdio.org/oce/>.

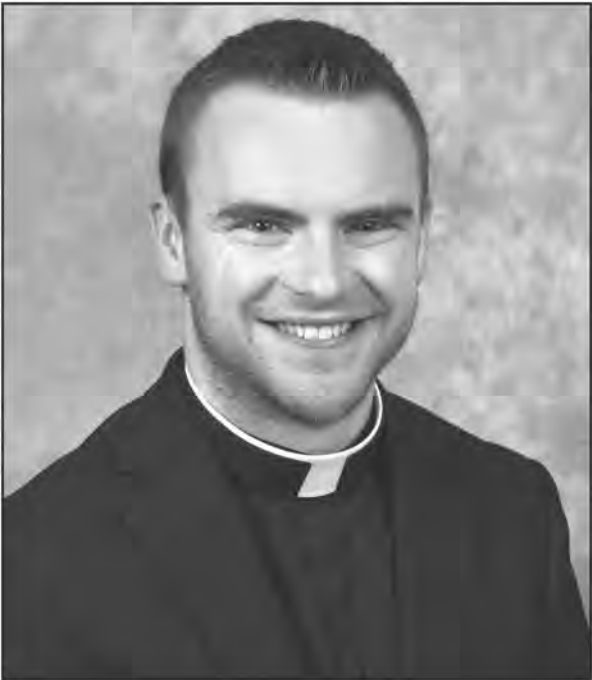


Annual dinner honors friends of the Rose Garden Home Mission

The Friends of the Rose Garden, a group that supports the mission of the Franciscan Daughters of Mary in the Diocese of Covington, held their annual Partners in Hope for the Poor dinner June 8. This dinner, described as a “family gathering for all who engage with the Rose Garden Home Mission and the Franciscan Daughters of Mary in their varied apostolates,” was attended by many of the Franciscan Daughter’s supporters and friends, including Bishop John Iffert and Bishop Emeritus Roger Foys. The evenings keynote speaker was Father James Sichko, with Dr. Margeurite Schabell and Father Robert Rottgers honored at the event.

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Notre Dame Urban Education Center has open registration for the Summer Academics program for students in grades K-9, June 5-29, Monday–Thursday. The Early Learning program for 4- and 5-year-olds is now accepting registrations. Early Learning begins Sept. 5 and ends May 16. For information, call NDEUC at (859) 261-4487 or e-mail Sister Maria Therese at smtherese@nduec.org.

St. Timothy Parish, Union, is hosting a **40th Jubilee Celebration for Father Rick Bolte**, June 25, Mass of Thanksgiving, 11:30 a.m. followed by a reception.

First Friday Mass followed by a healing service, July 7, St. Joseph Church, Crescent Springs, 6:30 p.m. with music by the Sacred Heart Praise Band; Mass at 7 p.m. Sponsored by the Mustard Seed Catholic Charismatic Community. For information, call (859) 341-5932.

Statistical evidence proves that parishes with an intentional vocational ministry bear the fruit of holy marriages and single life, priestly and religious vocations. Learn more Aug. 5, when the **Diocese of Covington and Archdiocese of Cincinnati Serra Clubs co-host "Ignite — a Vocation Conference,"** full of information and brainstorming for a personalized parish plan, Mass and food. No cost to attend. Register at nwinnike@gmail.com or donnakheim@gmail.com.

Bishop John Iffert will celebrate Vespers, Sunday, Sept. 17, 2 p.m. at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, to honor couples celebrating milestone wedding anniversaries — 1st, 25th, 50th, or 60+ — in 2023. Anniversary couples RSVP by July 18 at covdio.org/wedding-vespers/ or contact Lisa Taylor at (859) 392-1533 to register. Reservations are only required for anniversary couples; family members and guests are welcome to attend.

Save the date — Sept. 23, a day of recollection and exploration into the interconnectedness of the mind, body and soul at St. Joseph Heights, Park Hills, featuring speakers Msgr. William Cleves, Kathy Kramer and Jessica Muehlenkamp. This day will be one of growth and renewal. Cost is \$65, which includes the program materials, activities and a catered continental breakfast and lunch. For information e-mail holylistening24@gmail.com.

A faith-based support group, New Beginnings provides separated and divorced individuals the opportunity for healing and growth. In this group, participants find new understanding of themselves and their relationships and gain courage to discover new life. Registration is required. Visit <https://covidio.org/new-beginnings-2/> or call (859) 392-1500, ext.1592. The next session will be held on consecutive Tuesdays, Aug. 29 – Oct. 17, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Elementary School, Bellevue.

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

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

Sisters of Notre Dame
101st 4th of July Festival, Park
Hills,
July 4, 1–6 p.m.

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

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish,
Burlington, July 14, 6 p.m.–12 a.m.,
July 15, 5 p.m.–12 a.m., July 16, 4
p.m.–10 p.m.

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

St. Augustine Parish, Augusta, July 21-23

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

Sts. Peter and Paul July Picnic,
California, July 29, 2–7 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. Mary Parish, Alexandria, August
11, 6 p.m.–12 a.m.,
August 12,
5 p.m.–11 p.m.

St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs,
August 11-13

St. Bernard Parish, Dayton, August
18, 6–11 p.m., August 19, 5–11 p.m.

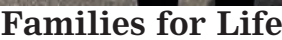
St. Philip Golf Ball Drop and Festival,
Melbourne, August 19,
5-11 p.m.

St. Cecilia Parish, Independence,
Sept. 2, 5–11:30 p.m.; 3, 4–11:30 p.m.;
4, 1–10 p.m.

St. Barbara Rocktoberfest,
Erlanger,
September 8–10

St. Agnes Parish,
Ft. Wright, September 22-24

St. Benedict Parish, Covington,
September 22–23



St. Henry Families for Life participated in the annual Erlanger/Elsmere Memorial Day parade, representing not only St. Henry, Elsmere, but life.

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were not made for comfort, you were
made for greatness"*

—Pope Benedict XVI

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(top left) A family pauses for a selfie on their way to the cross the bridge at the 2023 Cross the Bridge for Life.

(top right) A mother and her daughters smile at the camera while crossing the Purple People Bridge from Cincinnati to Newport

(bottom left) Bishop Iffert speaks on stage at the Cross the Bridge for Life. During his speech, he thanked those gathered for the event for coming out to “stand with our neighbors to give a witness of love and to stand up for life at every stage of development.”

(bottom right) Before crossing the bridge, a young girl applies a temporary tattoo of the Cross the Bridge for Life logo — a heart with the event's title and a pair of footprints within.

Families come together to give a ‘witness of love’ at 2023 Cross the Bridge for Life

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

A wave of tangerine shirts gathered to the Newport Riverfront, June 4, to participate in the 2023 Cross the Bridge for Life.

Since its first run in 2005, the event has grown so that it moved to Newport’s Festival Park Riverboat Row from its original starting location at the World Peace Bell. The event, which celebrates life at all stages and abilities is conducted under the auspices of the Diocese of Covington and the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, along with a Steering Committee of various pro-life agencies and organizations from across the Greater Cincinnati Area.

This year’s event started in the afternoon with music, face-painting, food and celebration, before a program of

speakers began and those gathered marched across the Purple People Bridge to Cincinnati and back.

The event participants have extended past the Catholic Church and into the community, having First Baptist Church, Cold Spring, Pastor Ric Frazier lead the opening prayer to the event.

“We bow our heads and our hearts today knowing, Lord, that it is our privilege to value what you value and love what you love ... as we stand here today, we honor the unborn, and for every mother that carries these little ones ... we ask the Lord today that he might bless them to full term,” Pastor Frazier encouraged the crowd to pray.

Also speaking at the event was Bishop John Iffert of the Diocese of Covington, who thanked those gathered for the event for coming out to “stand with our neighbors to give

a witness of love and to stand up for life at every stage of development.”

“We don’t want to gather here in some kind of protest to make enemies of our neighbor,” said Bishop Iffert, “we want to gather here so that those who disagree with us understand that their lives are as important to us as our own, that the lives of their children are as important to us as our own children. That is the testimony we want to give.”

Archbishop Dennis Schnurr of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati also led the crowd in prayer minutes before they departed to cross the bridge itself, saying, “Give us courage to speak with truth and love and with conviction in defense of life ... we ask you to bless our walk as we Cross the Bridge for Life.”

Pope continues recovery from surgery

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

ROME — Approaching his first week at Rome’s Gemelli hospital after undergoing abdominal surgery June 7, Pope Francis’ days were dedicated to working, reading, resting, praying and respiratory therapy, the Vatican said.

The pope has been sleeping well at night and his recovery was going smoothly, according to daily updates from Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office.

“The morning was devoted to work activities alternating with reading texts,” he said June 13.

“Before lunch he went to the small chapel in the private apartment where he gathered in prayer and received the Eucharist,” Bruni added.

His blood tests were normal and “he is continuing respiratory physiotherapy,” he said.

In a statement June 12, Bruni said Pope Francis’ post-operative recovery “continues to be normal.”

“Pope Francis continues to feed himself normally,” Bruni wrote, adding that the pope received the Eucharist that morning and started the day “devoted to work.”

The day before, June 11, the pope “was able to walk a few steps,” Bruni wrote. He spent a few hours working throughout the day, taking breaks to rest and to pray, he added.

The pope also had some “respiratory physiotherapy” and continued to move around, he added.

That Sunday morning, “he watched the Holy Mass live on television and received the Eucharist. He then went to the small chapel in the private apartment, where he gathered in prayer for the recitation of the Angelus,” Bruni had said June 11.

He then had lunch in the hospital’s papal apartment with some of the people assisting him during his recovery: doctors, medical assistants, nurses, support staff and personnel from the Vatican gendarmes.

On the advice of his doctors, Pope Francis did not publicly pray the Sunday Angelus from the balcony of Rome’s Gemelli hospital. While his recovery was proceeding normally, the pope’s medical team had strongly advised him to skip the public event to reduce as much strain as possible on his abdominal wall.

The pope underwent a three-hour surgery under general anesthesia for a hernia June 7. The procedure included placing a surgical mesh to prevent the recurrence of a hernia and the removal of several adhesions, which were bands of scar tissue formed after previous surgeries decades ago, according to Dr. Sergio Alfieri, the chief surgeon operating on the pope.

He explained in a news conference at Gemelli hospital June 10 that too much strain on the muscles caused by excessive movement could tear the mesh, which would require another operation to repair.

“We’ve asked him to make this sacrifice; for him it is a sacrifice not to (publicly) recite the Angelus,” Alfieri had said.

Also speaking at the news conference, Bruni had said that Catholics were invited to join the pope spiritually in prayer.

While the pope did not appear on the balcony, a small group of people gathered to pray outside the hospital June 11, according to Vatican News.

The Vatican also released a copy of a letter from Pope Francis in response to a note sent to him by nurses and staff who work in the hospital’s pediatric neuropsychiatry ward.

In the typewritten letter, dated June 10, the pope told them they were “saints next door” and an example of the church as “field hospital.” He recognized the trauma they experience — and wrote to him about — in seeing some of their young patients die and the suffering it causes the deceased child’s loved ones.

“You are witnesses of life as well as death, and so you are called to give comfort and consolation during those last minutes, accompanying these little ‘angels’ to the threshold of their encounter with the Lord,” he said.

The pope invited them to continue to be “good Samaritans,” who carry the burdens of life and the pain of others, and to “cultivate a culture of closeness and tenderness.”



CNS photo/Lola Gomez

A statue of St. John Paul II is seen outside of Rome’s Gemelli hospital June 10, 2023, where Pope Francis is staying after undergoing surgery to treat a hernia June 7. Because of his frequent visits over his three-decade pontificate, the Polish pope affectionately called the hospital “the third Vatican” after his second “home” at the papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo outside of Rome.



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Ordination to the Sacred Priesthood

Laura Keener
Editor

With joy and thanksgiving, the priests, deacons and people of the Diocese of Covington celebrated the ordination, June 2, of its newest priest — Father Michael Kenton Elmlinger.

The event was especially dear as Father Elmlinger is a diocesan son, growing up as a member of St. Paul Parish, Florence, and a graduate of Covington Latin School.

Father Elmlinger's mother, Polly, and siblings — Chris, Mary and Patrick and sister-in-law, Kelsey — were a part of both his ordination Mass and First Mass of Thanksgiving (see related story page 1), lecturing and presenting the gifts. Father Elmlinger's dad died recently after a battle with cancer. The grief of his passing, however, did not exclude him from the celebration in both spirit and name.

"Polly in the name of the Diocese of Covington and the Church in Northern Kentucky, I thank you for the love and support that you have given to Michael that laid the foundation for his priesthood," said Bishop John Iffert as he began his homily. "You and your husband, Steven, who we know died just two short years ago — you two formed the household of faith in which Michael came to know and love his Lord. We are grateful to you. Please continue to offer Michael your love and support. Now, as a priest, he will need your support more than ever."

Father Elmlinger has been blessed with many gifts — he's exceptionally bright, he has become a leader among his peers, he is joyful and sincere. But these gifts, Bishop Iffert said, are not the reasons he chooses him for ordination.

Drawing on the First Reading Father Elmlinger had chosen, Jeremiah 1:4-9, Bishop Iffert said, "Jeremiah invites us to trust our life and our future to the hand of God. Michael, let us be clear about one thing today: Christ chooses you. Today in Christ, I choose you. I am choosing you in the name of Christ. I am choosing you in the name of the Church. I am relying on the Holy Spirit as I choose you for service to God and God's people ... Because I believe and have confidence that you are responding gen-

erously to an authentic prompting from God."

Bishop Iffert encouraged the new priest to trust in God and to remain close to God in prayer.

"God speaks, 'I am with you to deliver you,'" said Bishop Iffert. "Believe it, place your faith in that truth when you suffer for that belief. Endure. God's presence and accompaniment will preserve you."

Bishop Iffert cautioned Father Elmlinger to properly understand the priesthood as belonging to Jesus Christ for the benefit of God's people.

"Never forget that the priesthood in which you will have a share and it is my honor to share with you, is not our own. Neither is it for our benefit. It is for the benefit of Christ's people, those who by water and the Holy Spirit are in Persona Christi Corporis — the Body of Christ ... to stand in loving and trustworthy service to those Christ has called. This is the reason for our priesthood."

As Bishop Iffert finished his homily he implored Father Elmlinger to surrender to and pattern his priesthood after Christ Jesus.

"Christ is everything. Christ is the one who is with you to defend you. Christ is the high priest who chooses you to teach, sanctify and shepherd after the pattern of His life, death and resurrection. Christ is the merciful leader ... Christ is the one who calls us to live heroic lives and pours out His mercy when we fail. Christ surrounds us with companions and coworkers so that we may know His love and His care through them.

"Michael, you have put on Christ. His Holy Spirit will pour out on you the grace to successfully live this life and mission ... Michael, in the name of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, relying on Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, I choose you for the order of presbyter because Christ Jesus is our countenance. Choose Him as he chooses you."

At the end of the ordination Mass, Bishop Iffert announced that, effective July 11, Father Elmlinger's first assignment is to parochial vicar at St. Timothy Parish, Union. In this paper, page 3, Bishop Iffert has appointed Father Elmlinger chaplain of Covington Latin School.



(above) Through the laying on of hands by Bishop John Iffert and the praying of the prayer of ordination, the gift of the Holy Spirit is conferred on Michael Elmlinger.



(above) The soon to be ordained Father Elmlinger stands as he's presented to Bishop Iffert as a candidate for priestly ordination.



(above) Just prior to the laying on of hands, the candidate for ordination lays prostrate before the altar as the congregation chants the litany of supplication, pleading for God's grace for Michael Elmlinger.



(above) By the fraternal kiss the priests present welcome the newly ordained priest to a shared ministry in their Order.
(below) Father Elmlinger is invested with the priestly stole and chasuble. Father Michael Barth, the priest who baptized Father Elmlinger, presides at the investiture.



(above) Father Michael Elmlinger stops for a photo with Benedictine Father Edward Mazcih, rector of St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, the seminary where he studied.
(left) Daniel Elmlinger, Father Elmlinger's brother, lectors at the ordination Mass.
(below) Father Elmlinger's siblings and sister-in-law (from left) Mary, Patrick, Chris and Kelsey, prepare to bring up the gifts.



Just before the ordination procession is about to begin, Polly Elmlinger steals an emotional hug from her son who is about to become the diocese's newest priest.

Catholic Ministry Searches Out Hidden Poverty and Provides Relief to the ‘Invisible’ Poor

Anyone who has ever gone to the Caribbean on a cruise or beach vacation knows that the resort lifestyle found in many of those tourist destinations is a world unto itself. Venture out into the rural parts of those island nations and you typically find a completely different way of life.

The Dominican Republic is a case in point. While it has a reputation as a tropical paradise with pristine beaches, many of the country’s rural areas — especially those along its border with Haiti — are home to subsistence farmers struggling to survive. In those parts of the country, many families live on a few dollars a day and without any basic infrastructure, including access to running water. Some are barely able to provide their families with “daily bread.”

The life of Haitian migrant workers is even more challenging. They come from the other side of the island of Hispaniola seeking greater economic opportunities, but usually become mired in a different form of abject poverty — one that draws them into the Dominican Republic’s sugar industry, where they must cut cane under a broiling sun to survive. It’s a life with many hardships.

“I feel for poor Dominican farmers because they are often ‘out of sight, out of mind,’ but the Haitian migrant workers face an even crueler fate. Their families are effectively invisible. They are ignored in terms of social services and are isolated from any opportunity to improve their lives,” explained Jim Cavnar, CEO of Cross Catholic Outreach, a respected Catholic ministry known for its service to the poor around the globe. “Most

of the Haitian families that cross into the Dominican Republic looking for work end up living in very poor communities called bateyes. They live in dirt-floor shacks adjacent to the fields, where they labor from dawn until dusk cutting cane by hand with machetes. The reward for their efforts — the equivalent of a few dollars for a full day’s work.”

With little income, infrastructure or resources, many of these families can afford to eat just one meal a day, Cavnar said, and without adequate nutrition, their children fail to thrive. Their growth is stunted, they fall behind in school, they suffer frequent illness and eventually they lose hope of escaping poverty.

“At Cross Catholic Outreach, our goal has been to find hidden pockets of poverty and reach the ‘invisible’ families living in these terrible conditions,” Cavnar said. “Fortunately, we have a great in-country partner helping us locate and serve struggling families, and our Catholic donors in the U.S. have been very generous in supporting the outreaches we have established in the batey communities. We’ve been working to provide these families with everything from food to diapers for the babies. There’s so much need there.” (See the related story on opposite page.)

Ultimately, Cavnar believes his ministry’s efforts to help these families will give them hope.

“We want them to know God loves them,” he said. “They aren’t invisible or forgotten in the eyes of our Lord.”

Cavnar said he also believes this mission of mercy can serve as a powerful example of how the Catholic Church transforms lives and



On a recent trip to the Dominican Republic, Cross Catholic Outreach CEO Jim Cavnar and Father Mike Seis, who leads social efforts in the Diocese of San Juan de la Maguana, attended the ribbon cutting of a new cheese factory funded by Cross Catholic Outreach. This factory will be self-sustaining and managed by the community, providing a new economic opportunity for women in the diocese.

communities for the glory of God.

“I have seen Catholic missions succeed where government programs and secular efforts have failed,” he said. “I’m convinced the watching world is becoming more aware of this too, and as they see Catholics come together to end suffering and solve problems, I believe they can be inspired to return to the faith and to be drawn back to the Church. I know our many donors feel inspired. As they become involved in works of mercy and see the wonderful fruit of their compassion and generosity, they want to do more. They want to have a positive impact on the

world.”

Readers interested in supporting Cross Catholic Outreach’s ministries to bless the poor can contribute through the brochure inserted in this issue or by sending a tax-deductible gift to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC02501, PO Box 97168, Washington DC 20090-7168. The ministry has a special need for partners willing to make gifts on a monthly basis. Use the inserted brochure to become a Mission Partner or write “Monthly Mission Partner” on mailed checks to be contacted about setting up those arrangements.

Cross Catholic Outreach Endorsed by More Than 115 Bishops, Archbishops

Cross Catholic Outreach’s range of relief work to help the poor overseas is being recognized by a growing number of Catholic leaders in the U.S. and abroad.

“We’ve received more than 100 endorsements from bishops and archbishops,” explained Jim Cavnar, CEO of Cross Catholic Outreach. “They’re moved by the fact that we’ve launched outreaches in more than 90 countries and have undertaken more than 1,200 projects — everything from feeding the hungry and housing the homeless to supplying safe water and

Catholic education for the poorest of the poor. Church leaders have also been impressed by our direct and meaningful response to emergency situations, most recently by providing food, medicines and other resources to partners in Haiti, El Salvador and areas of Belize impacted by natural disasters.”

Archbishop Thomas Rodi of Mobile, Alabama, supports the ministry, writing, “It is a privilege for me to support Cross Catholic Outreach. This organization funds ministries to our neighbors in need in Africa, Asia, Central and South America,

and the Pacific. Through the generosity of so many, the love of God is made visible to many who are coping with the most difficult of daily living conditions.”

In addition to praising Cross Catholic Outreach’s accomplishments, many of the prelates are encouraged that Pontifical canonical status was conferred on the charity in 2015, granting it approval as an official Catholic organization. This designation allows Cross Catholic Outreach to participate in the mission of the Church and to give a concrete witness to Gospel charity, in

collaboration with the Holy Father.

“Your work with the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development is a strong endorsement of your partnership with the work of the Universal Church,” Archbishop Cordileone of San Francisco said. “By providing hope to the faithful overseas by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, delivering medical relief to the sick and shelter to the homeless, and through self-help projects, you are embodying the papal encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*.”

Generous Catholic Donors in the US Are Delivering Food and Other Vital Resources to Dominican Republic’s Poor

When Cross Catholic Outreach was launched nearly a quarter century ago, it had two groups of donors supporting its international ministries to the poor. The first group was individuals and families who had learned about its work from a visiting priest during a Mass or through a newspaper feature like this one, and they gave financial gifts to fund the charity’s efforts. The second set of donors was businesses — many run by Catholic entrepreneurs — and they donated useful resources such as food, medicines and building supplies.

In the past 22 years, both of these supportive groups have had an incredible impact on the lives of the poor, according to Jim Cavnar, CEO of Cross Catholic Outreach.

“Actually, these two donor groups are often connected in ways that increase the impact of our ministry. That’s because the financial contributions we receive from donors allow us to accept and ship the valuable material gifts we are offered by companies and other charities,” Cavnar explained. “Without the cash donations we receive, we wouldn’t be able to distribute those large allotments of food, medicines, hygiene items, school supplies and construction materials. We would have to refuse them, and that would have a terrible impact on Catholic ministries and the impoverished children and families they support.”

Cavnar used a donated container of baby diapers as an example. In some developing countries, poor women leave hospitals after giving birth with their infant sons and daughters wrapped in newspapers — a fact that appalls local Catholic leaders. There is also an extreme need for diapers and other hygiene items in the poor batey communities of the Dominican Republic. If Cross Catholic Outreach is offered a container of diapers to address needs like these, it can only accept the gift if it is able to ship the container from its U.S. source to the ministries overseas.

“The financial contributions we receive from U.S. Catholics provide the funds we need to accept and ship containers of donated goods to those who need them most,” Cavnar said. “The concerned donors in America want to help the poor, and so do the companies offering us the diapers or other material aid. When one gift makes the other possible, both donors are able to have a big impact and serve families in need. It’s a win-win situation.”

The Catholic outreaches Cavnar



Thanks to support from Catholics in the U.S., Cross Catholic Outreach has been able to address the needs of desperately poor families in the Dominican Republic.

described in the Dominican Republic are particularly important because more than 20% of that country’s people live below the national poverty line, according to the CIA World Factbook. Poverty is even more severe in the country’s 230 bateyes — communities built on plantations to house Haitian migrant sugarcane cutters. Those families also face an even higher risk of malnutrition and often lack basic daily needs, including food, diapers and other important hygiene items.

“Thank God for the Catholic donors in the U.S. who contribute either material aid like diapers and food or cash contributions to help us ship those items or purchase them locally,” Cavnar said. “If it wasn’t for their compassion and generosity, the Church ministries we work with in the Dominican Republic would struggle to address local needs and hundreds of poor families would suffer as a result. There’s still a lot of need in many communities — and we hope to be able to provide more resources to those areas soon — but what we have accomplished so far has been a godsend and an answer to prayer.”

Cavnar hopes the success of his ministry’s current appeals on behalf of the Dominican Republic’s poor will allow the ministry to bless even more needy families in the months ahead.



How to Help

To fund Cross Catholic Outreach’s effort to help the poor worldwide, use the postage-paid brochure inserted in this newspaper or mail your gift to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC02501, PO Box 97168, Washington DC 20090-7168. The brochure also includes instructions on becoming a Mission Partner and making a regular monthly donation to this cause.

If you identify a specific aid project with your gift, 100% of the proceeds will be restricted to be used for that specific project. However, if more is raised for the project than needed, funds will be redirected to other urgent needs in the ministry.



Sales of hats Bengals player created raises money for Catholic facility that helps people with special needs

John Shaughnessy
OSV News

If you have ever needed a friend, or been a friend to someone in need, you will appreciate the beauty of what Ted Karras is doing.

You may even marvel at how a small yet meaningful token of his friendship — a hat — is making such a huge difference to a Catholic-inspired place in Indianapolis that fosters friendships and a sense of community to people who desperately need and want those gifts in their lives.

Through the sales of his personally designed hats in the past seven months, Karras — a 2011 graduate of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis and now an offensive lineman for the Cincinnati Bengals — has helped raise nearly \$400,000 for the Village of Merici, an organization that provides housing, support services and educational opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities.

Named in honor of St. Angela Merici, the Village holds a special place in Karras’ heart for the hope and the promise it gives people.

“It provides such a wholesome environment for these people to live in, and it provides independence which otherwise would be hard to achieve,” he told <<The Criterion>>, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. “These are adult men and women who want to be social, who want their independence, who want to have friends and activities. It does so much good, and it’s the honor of a lifetime to just be a small part of it.”

Still, there’s another reason that connects the 30-year-old Karras to the Village. That connection reflects a time in

his young life when he was longing for a community that would feel like home to him.

Karras has lived in 18 different communities across America in his 30 years of life — the result of growing up as the son of a football coach who has coached in many places and his career playing in the National Football League, which has led to two Super Bowl rings.

He learned two truths from always being “the new kid in town” growing up: You long to find a home with people who will welcome you, accept you and befriend you. And you will never forget the people who gave you that feeling.

That’s why Karras has such an appreciation for the Village and another community in Indianapolis.

A coaching move for his dad led Karras to St. Matthew the Apostle School in Indianapolis as an eighth-grade student. There, he was immediately embraced by a group of friends and their families.

“The Indianapolis Catholic community really welcomed me in and gave me the feeling of a hometown that I had yet to feel up to that point in my life,” he said. “One of the really unique factors of that community is the life-long bonds that people form with the friends they made in middle school and high school.

“I’ve yet to see another place in America where there’s such a tight-knit group of friends who have been

friends since they were 10 or so. We’ve been friends for 20 years now. Not only friends, but intimate confidants and buddies.”

One friend became his introduction to the Village of Merici and the difference it makes: Matt Renie, whom Karras calls “my best friend.” They became close at St. Matthew, and their bond grew even tighter during their four years at Cathedral, which included volunteering together at the Village, each for personal reasons.

Karras has family members who have a history of autism. Renie’s oldest sibling, Jason, has intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their mother, Colleen Renie, also is one of the founders and is now the executive director of the Village of Merici.

Colleen and her husband, Joe, brought Jason, now 44, into their lives as a toddler shortly after they were married 45 years ago. He’s the oldest of the couples four children.

When she was first out of college, she worked at Crossroads Rehabilitation Center and Jason was a patient of hers. He was a foster child who was not going to be

Cincinnati Bengals offensive lineman Ted Karras, pictured in an undated photo, has created a hat and T-shirt fundraiser to benefit the Village of Merici in Indianapolis, a Catholic organization that provides housing, support services and educational opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities.



OSV News photos/courtesy of Justin Sicking

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Bengals player’s hats raise money

placed for adoption. “He had developmental delays. For two years, he wasn’t talking and crawling,” she recalled.

“I told my husband there’s this little boy at work that they’re not going to try to place. I told him I think we could do him some good and be a great, loving family for him. We applied for adoption and were able to bring him into our family.”

As a teenager, Karras saw that same approach of love and care being shared with the residents of the Village, the impact of that stayed with him as he continued playing football at the University of Illinois and has carried through to his seven-year pro career, which has included seasons with the Bengals, the Miami Dolphins and the New England Patriots, earning two Super Bowl rings with that team.

“I heard people’s stories and how the Village was affecting them,” Karras said. “I really can’t think of a place that does more good than the Village.”

That belief led to his touching gift to the Village in the past year, a gift that had its start in a simple sharing of a small yet meaningful token of his friendship — a hat.

When Karras joined the Bengals last year, he wanted a way to make an immediate con-



Six residents of the Village of Merici in Indianapolis — a Catholic organization that provides housing, support services and educational opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities — showcase hats and T-shirts in an undated photo. The items are part of a fundraising effort led by Cathedral High School grad and Cincinnati Bengals football player Ted Karras that has raised nearly \$400,000 for the Village. The residents are Mary McClamroch, left, Jason Renie, Trese Mascari, Sarah Boyd, Angie Cain and Steve Mailloux. (OSV News photo/courtesy of Justin Sicking)

nection with his new teammates. So he personally designed a hat with “Cincy” emblazoned across its front.

“It was a token of my affection and friendship, and that I want to continue to grow our relationship,” Karras said. “The guys really responded to it. They wore the hats everywhere.”

Karras also gave one to Renie last summer when he came to visit him in Cincinnati.

“It was a really cool hat, and I said, ‘This is awesome,’” Renie recalled. “He said, ‘I made it. It’s just a sign of my friendship. If you’re my friend, you get a hat.’ I wore the hat to a Bengals’ game, and I got stopped by multiple people saying, ‘I’ve seen the players wearing that hat. Where can I get one?’ “

The word soon spread that Karras had made them, and the requests from fans about how to buy one increased dramatically.

The interest became so huge that beat reporters for the Bengals started asking Karras about the hats, just so they could pass along the information to their readers and followers. Wanting to focus on the Bengals’ push to the playoffs in November, Karras tired of questions about the hat.

“Almost out of a frustration, I said, ‘We are going to sell it, and it’s going to be for charity, and the only charity I support is the Village of Merici.’”

When Matt Renie, who works for a software startup company, heard about his friend’s out-of-the-blue plan, he told Karras that he would take over the sales and distribution of the hats.

The two created a business in about two weeks and the first night, “we sold about \$70,000 in hats,” Renie said. “It was like a true explosion. Up to the end of the Bengals’ season, we had sold just under 10,000 hats.


“This has brought a sense of pride to the villagers. They’ve helped a lot with the project, packing orders, helping us organize our inventory. It’s so much fun to see them involved, to see how much they care, to see how proud they are that people are rallying around them and supporting them. There’s a feeling of, ‘Ted’s taking an interest in us. That’s so cool.’ “

In all, the effort with the “Cincy” hat raised about \$380,000 for the Village, Colleen said.

It also inspired the creations of an “Indy” hat and T-shirts that Karras has designed to be introduced with the Indianapolis 500 this May.

The proceeds from both hats and the T-shirts will be used to expand the housing capabilities of the Village, Colleen said. Right now, the facility is able to accommodate about 80 people in its location on the east side of Indianapolis. A new facility scheduled to open in nearby Carmel this summer — and another facility planned on the east side to open in 2024 — will double the number of people who will benefit.

“My relationship with many of the villagers is like a shot of light for me,” Karras said.




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New director’s goal is to ‘spread the joyful message’ of Stewardship

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

The Diocese of Covington has hired a new director of Stewardship and Mission — Jim Hess, a parishioner of St. Catherine Parish, Ft. Thomas.

Coming from a similar role in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Mr. Hess said he is happy to now be “working in the diocese (he) lives in.”

A native of Dayton, Ohio, Mr. Hess grew up as the fifth of six children. As he got older, he double majored in Theology and Catechetics at the Franciscan University of Steubenville — it’s there he met his wife, Emily, and the two and their children now live in Ft. Thomas.

After graduating college, Mr. Hess took a role at the Dynamic Catholic Institute here in Kentucky, and worked with “a number of different things,” he said, including stewardship and helping to raise funds for their great mission.



Jim Hess

“I really fell in love with that work there and saw how it is truly a ministry — how people’s giving and people’s treasure is so intimately connected with their faith and how they view all the gifts that God has given them in their life.”

Being a theology major, Mr. Hess mentioned that he “didn’t have much of a financial background,” but it was through a job with the University of Cincinnati Foundation, where he was able to assist with a large campaign that helped him to learn some of the “nuts and bolts” of running a fundraising operation.

As the new director of Stewardship and Mission Services with the Diocese of Covington, Mr. Hess’s goal is to “spread the joyful and freeing message of stewardship across the diocese to increase individual’s involvement not only at a diocesan level, but also at a parish level and with our local ministries.”

“I believe strongly that a rising tide raises all ships,”

said Mr. Hess, “and so, that’s my goal — to increase the level of awareness of our call to stewardship in our lives, and I think that will have tremendous effects across the board for the Church in Northern Kentucky.”

Mr. Hess said that “we are blessed to have a very generous diocese. People are extremely generous, whether it’s to the DPAA (Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal), their own parishes or second collections like the Seminarian Education Fund. People are extremely generous and faithful, and so I hope to build on the work that Mike Murray has done.”

Mr. Murray is Mr. Hess’s predecessor who retired June 9 after 14 years serving the Diocese of Covington.

Mr. Hess wants to work with pastors, parishes and parish staff to help communicate the message of stewardship in a way that “showcases the joy and freedom of a life lived in Christ.”

Looking forward, Mr. Hess is particularly excited to lead the “Restored in Christ” campaign that will be coming down the pike this fall — to restore parts of the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption’s façade which have worn due to age and weathering.

Mr. Hess would also like to hear from the people of the Diocese on the good work they and their parishes are doing in the realm of Stewardship and Mission Services, and encourages individuals to reach out to him via e-mail at jhess@covdio.org.

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A miracle

(Continued from page 7.)

receptionist let me know quickly that the doctor didn't work with children. Our son was now 13, so I pleaded my case recapping the entire last year, the procedures, the surgeries, therapies and medicines and somehow — MIRACLE — she got us an appointment within a month with the very busy surgeon who didn't work with children.

We traveled to Chicago with hearts full of hope. The doctor was wonderful. Because of the outcome of the procedure he performed he believed that surgery would be successful. There would have to be two of surgeries, but he fully believed Hudson would be pain free. And guess what? He's the only surgeon that he knows of who does this specific surgery — hello MIRACLE.

Our son had a successful surgery in January. The second was not scheduled until June 15 and he was still in terrible pain. I begged for an earlier surgery date and another miracle occurred — they were able to fit our son in on April 6th. Instead of waiting for his upcoming surgery while I write this, I am asking Hudson if he remembered to grab his towel so we can head to the pool. That's kind of like taking up your mat, isn't it?

Miracles might not be the spontaneous healings we are hoping for. They might be the person who asks the right question, or that gets you to the right people, the right places at the right times. They might be the prayers offered by someone who heard about your situation but doesn't even know you or who sees you suffering and asks God to shine is light on you.

God has a way of knowing what we need more than we do. I wouldn't wish our experience on anyone. But our family learned a lot through this experience; I still don't know its entire ripple effect yet. I love to think about my son bathed in the prayers of so many amazing friends, loved ones and strangers who were all little miracles — pieces of the puzzle that helped make Hudson whole again.

Julie Feinauer is director of the Safe Environment Office, Diocese of Covington, Ky.

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We offer competitive compensation and benefits packages for eligible employees. Exact details will be discussed during the interview process.

To apply please go to www.covdio.org/employment, School Related Openings, Employment Application Non-Teacher, send completed application to: Diocese of Covington Attn: Laura Hatfield SLP Director, 1125 Madison Ave. Covington Ky. 41011.

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To apply, or to nominate a candidate, email or fax a cover letter, resume with the contact email address of at least five professional references, and compensation history to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR at skoplyay@covdio.org, 859/392-1589, or send by mail to 1125 Madison Avenue, Covington, KY 41011-3115.

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Please send your resume to pslagle@stagneslouisville.org no later than Friday, June 2nd.

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St. Benedict Church, Covington, is looking for a Volunteer Driver for their Festival Shuttle Bus. Dates are September 22nd & 23rd from 4 until 11 PM. Please call Greg for more information 859-743-0223.

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Pope’s message of hope launched into space to orbit Earth

Carol Glatz

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis’ message of hope for humanity encased in a small satellite blasted off into space June 12 and soon will beam his words back to Earth.

“The ‘Spei Satelles’ mission successfully launched from the U.S. base in Vandenberg, California, and in the coming days, it plans to deploy the CubeSat into orbit, carrying Pope Francis’ message of hope” contained in a nano version of the book, “Why Are You Afraid? Have You No Faith?” according to a press release June 13 from the Vatican Dicastery for Communication and agencies involved in the project.

Once deployed into orbit, the microsatellite was set to transmit papal messages of hope and peace in English, Italian and Spanish that any amateur radio receiver should be able to pick up. Its radio signals will be transmitted on the frequency of 437.5 MHz “with modulation GMSK at 9600 bit/s and protocol AX.25,” the press release said.

“At sunrise in different parts of the world, individuals will have the opportunity to receive words of comfort and encouragement along the paths of hope,” it said.

In addition to the papal nanobook, the “Spei Satelles” mission also carries a chip with the names and commitments of men, women and children on earth who requested a “boarding pass” to take part in the mission.

Since speisatelles.org was launched March 27, 2023, the press release said, “hundreds of individuals from all over the world have joined the project.”

By registering online, it said Catholics can symbolically “board” the mission by committing to carry out a corporal or spiritual work of mercy, and non-Catholics can perform a gesture or deed that fosters human fraternity.

“Given the success and the educational potential of membership, even though the launch has already taken place, it will still be possible to sign up, and names will be remotely written on the memory in orbit through the ground control station,” it added.

This way, the pope’s words will have symbolic significance “up there” in the heavens and concrete action “down here” on Earth, Father Luca Peyron, head of the Archdiocese of Turin’s apostolate for the digital world, said March 27.

The microsatellite was one of 72 CubeSats that took off from a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California June 12 with “microsatellites, hosted payloads and orbital transfer vehicles on the Transporter 8 rideshare mission” for customers from more than 18 countries, according to SpaceFlightNow.com.

The “Spei Satelles” space mission is promoted by the Dicastery for Communication and coordinated by the Italian Space Agency (ASI) and in collaboration with the Polytechnic University of Turin.

Researchers and students from the university’s department of mechanical and aerospace engineering built the CubeSat, which houses the nanobook created by Italy’s National Research Council (CNR). The lab converted the 150-page book — about 86 square feet of printed material — into

binary code that fit on a tiny 2 mm-by-2 mm chip, which is about the size of the tip of a crayon.

The project was unveiled at the Vatican March 27, the anniversary of the prayer service which Pope Francis led in an empty St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020. The pope’s words and images from that evening were shared worldwide first as a global livestream and then in the book.

Msgr. Lucio Adrián Ruiz, secretary of the Dicastery for Communication, said at a news conference unveiling the project, that the next step was to send the book literally around the world in a low Earth orbit satellite as a symbolic gesture of extending the pope’s loving embrace even farther.

The Latin name of the mission, “Spes Satelles,” can be translated as “satellite of hope” and “guardian of hope,” Msgr. Ruiz had said in March, to signify the satellite is also a guardian, keeping the pope’s message of hope alive for all of humanity.

The six-pound CubeSat, which will orbit approximately 326 miles (525 km) above the Earth’s surface, was blessed by Pope Francis during his general audience March 29.

In the June 13 press release, Msgr. Ruiz said that having Pope Francis’ message in space “serves as a sign and representation of tenderness and blessing for the world.”

“The vastness of space always sparks our imagination, and now we all need to dream together again, hoping that the much-awaited peace will return to the world by involving all of us,” he said.



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Bulletins:

■ June bulletin: posted Sunday, June 4; due Tuesday, July 4.

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:

■ TThursday, Aug. 3, 6:30 – 9 p.m., Diocesan Catholic Children’s Home, Ft. Mitchell

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For other difficulties, contact Marylu Steffen at (859) 392-1500 or msteffen@covdio.org

Choice ‘didn’t make me lose something, but someone,’ says Jane

LIVERPOOL, England — The reflections of a woman who regretted her abortion will form the key message of the 2023 “Day for Life” of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. The bishops say the message is unique because it is the first time they have given over the annual Day for Life “to a Catholic woman who has had an abortion to share her experiences.” The theme for the June 18 event is “Listen to Her,” and “post-abortion trauma and the impact of abortion primarily on women, but also men and others” will be examined, according to an undated statement posted on the website of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales. “Often the voices of women who have had an abortion are silent in Church and in society,” said the statement. “The hope is that this will help break this silence and offer further opportunities for healing and reconciliation.” The key message is from a woman who identifies herself only as “Jane” and who explains how she became pregnant at the age of 15 when “the culture spoke louder” than the Catholic morality that she was taught in school. “The option that was presented as a quick fix solution has eternal consequences, and I truly believe that if I’d have known the impact abortion would have had on my life, even as a teenager, I would have made a different choice,” she said.

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40 hours

(Continued from page 4.)

more of daytime adoration; the Knights of Columbus to keep watch over the night alongside any other adorers for security; the Legion of Mary to make rosaries for a basket at the back of church; the youth group to distribute flyers after Mass to get the word out.

—As the days draw closer, plan beautiful, solemn Masses for the opening and closing. Plan the other paraliturgical events like Liturgy of the Hours and a Eucharistic procession, continuing to get various parish groups involved.

—Consider organizing a potluck, reception or other community gathering after the closing Mass. 40 Hours should be an opportunity for the parish to worship as a whole body, and nothing gets people together like food.

In the words of Pope Benedict XVI in Sacramentum Caritatis, “In the Eucharist, the Son of God comes to meet us and desires to become one with us; eucharistic adoration is simply the natural consequence of the eucharistic celebration, which is itself the Church’s supreme act of adoration” (No. 66).

He continues: “The personal relationship which the individual believer establishes with Jesus present in the Eucharist constantly points beyond itself to the whole communion of the Church and nourishes a fuller sense of membership in the Body of Christ. For this reason, besides encouraging individual believers to make time for personal prayer before the Sacrament of the Altar, I feel obliged to urge parishes and other church groups to set aside times for collective adoration” (No. 68).

Pope Francis echoed this same enduring truth of the Church on Oct. 22, 2022, saying “It is good to adore in silence before the Most Blessed Sacrament, to be in the consoling presence of Jesus and there to draw the apostolic impetus to be instruments of goodness, tenderness and welcome in the community, the Church, and the world. ... Adore, immerse yourself in divine love and give it with full hands to those you meet on your path.”

Eucharistic adoration, whether personal or parish-wide through the 40 Hours, is never a solo endeavor. It is an outpouring of the Church’s efforts for the salvation of souls, and an invitation for us to enter into that effort. We rest with Jesus, spending time with him, and we are individually consoled and nourished. From him we receive the grace and strength to bring about renewal in our families, our workplaces, our parishes and our world.




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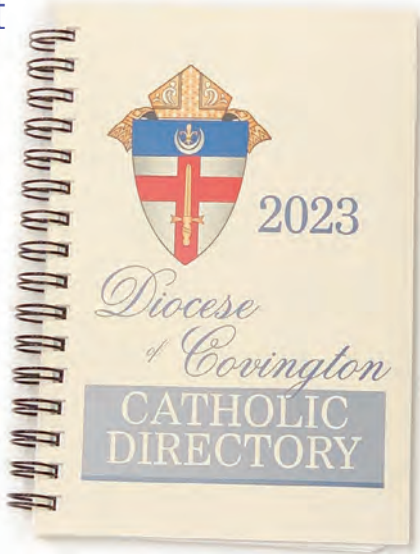
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NEWS BRIEFS

National/World

U.S. democracy faces ‘stress test’ as Trump faces criminal charges

MIAMI — Former President Donald Trump surrendered to authorities at the federal courthouse in Miami June 13, making his first court appearance after being indicted on 37 federal charges related to his alleged mishandling of classified documents. The indictment marks the first time in the nation's history that a former president faces federal criminal charges after his presidency. Trump also faces criminal charges under New York state law related to his alleged hush money payments to an adult film actress. Federal authorities have accused Trump of illegally retaining classified documents and storing them at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida after leaving the White House, and not cooperating with officials’ attempts to retrieve those documents. John White, a professor of politics

at The Catholic University of America in Washington, said the unprecedented indictments are “a drama that’s going to play out in multiple acts.” White argued that if Trump had “returned the documents and said, ‘Well, you know, we were packing up in a hurry, you know, here are these things mixed in with everything else, and we’re notifying you that we’re returning all of this stuff,’” he likely would not be facing charges. White said the tense political environment is a “stress test” on American democracy, and called on the U.S. bishops to make clear the church’s opposition to violence, including political violence, in the current environment where “democratic and constitutional norms” are now openly questioned.

Please hear us, and please help us,’ Nigerian bishop pleads

WASHINGTON — “Death does not announce any day,” cautions a Nigerian proverb. It’s advice that the Catholic faithful of the Diocese of Makurdi — in Nigeria’s Benue state — are grimly familiar with as they and their Christian neighbors endure a sustained campaign of terrorism now stretching into

a second decade. OSV News recently interviewed Bishop Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe of Makurdi, a Claretian, during a U.S. visit hosted by Aid to the Church in Need, a Catholic charity under the guidance of the Holy Father: Bishop Anagbe has an urgent message for Catholic Americans: Please hear us, and please help us. “In January 2018, we lost about 72 people in one night,” recalled Bishop Anagbe. “They came in the night, in an unprovoked attack. In April 2018, two of my priests and 17 worshippers were killed in a church during morning Mass. Gunned down. They died in cold blood; we gave them a mass burial. And so it has continued like that.” According to the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) in Sydney, Australia, Nigeria ranks eighth on IEP’s 2023 “10 Countries Most Impacted by Terrorism” index. The 2023 Watch List released by interdenominational foundation Open Doors indicates that Nigeria accounts for 89% of Christians martyred worldwide. Nigeria has the largest Christian population of any country in Africa — an estimated 49.3%, or more than 80 million, 21 million of whom are Catholic. Homes, schools, clinics, and hospitals have been destroyed. So for the sake of safety, “We are looking at the possibility of having a kind of a mobile clinic,” said Bishop Anagbe.

Sudan Catholic bishop shepherds his flock despite heavy artillery

EL-OBEID, Sudan — A Catholic bishop in Sudan is braving aerial bombardments, heavy gunfire and artillery to stay with his people, even as other clergy, diplomats and ordinary citizens flee the deadly fighting in the northeastern African country. Bishop Yunan Tombe Trille Kuku Andali of El-Obeid said he will stay with his flock in Sudan, until it becomes impossible to be there. Recently, heavy fighting and displacement of thousands have been reported in El-Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan state, where the bishop is based. According to reports, most of the essential services in the city, including water, electricity and medicines, are cut off. “I am still keeping indoors with the people. The city is surrounded by forces. The people are without water, electricity and internet connectivity. These days it’s raining and we are able to collect some water,” Bishop Andali told OSV News.

Biological sex should determine sports participation

WASHINGTON — A growing majority of Americans say athletes should compete on sports teams that correspond to their biological sex rather than their gender identity, according to a June 12 Gallup poll. The new poll found that 69% of U.S. adults said transgender athletes should only be allowed to compete on sports teams that conform with their biological sex. The findings represent an increase from the same poll in 2021, when 62% of U.S. adults said the same. Likewise, just 26% said athletes should be able to compete on teams opposite their biological sex, down from 34% in the 2021. The findings come as more Americans reported to Gallup knowing a person who identifies as transgender. Gallup senior editor Jeffrey M. Jones wrote in an accompanying blog post the data appears to show that “Americans view transgender sports participation more through a lens of competitive fairness than transgender civil rights.” The shift in public opinion comes as the issue has become increasingly controversial, and as 22 U.S. have enacted laws to ban transgender athletes who were born male from competing against female athletes.

‘Non-man’? Johns Hopkins’ redefinition of ‘lesbian’ a moment for evangelization, says Catholic ethicist

BALTIMORE — A Maryland university has sparked controversy with its redefinition of the word “lesbian” using the term “non-man” instead of “woman” — but the backlash points to a cultural “confusion and fluidity” where categories “just melt,” said Joseph Meaney, president of the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Broomall, Pennsylvania. On June 12, Johns Hopkins University updated its official definition of the word “lesbian” in its “LGBTQ Glossary.” The updated text defined the term as “a non-man attracted to non-Previously, the university had said the term referred to “a woman who is emotionally, romantically, sexually, affectionately, or relationally attracted to other women, or someone who identifies as part of the lesbian community.” After widespread outrage, from social media users in the LGBTQ+ community to “Harry Potter” author J.K. Rowling, the university offlined the glossary June 13, telling OSV News in a statement it was seeking to “gather more information” about the change. The incident offers Catholics “a key place to go with a positive message” about the church’s view of sexuality, Meaney said. Ultimately, “whether you’re a lesbian or a non-man is not the question,” he said. “The question is, what is a human being? What is our God-given nature, and how are we created? That’s what we need to investigate.”

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Corpus Christi

(Continued from page 2.)

our Lord Jesus Christ and therefore the whole Christ is truly, really and substantially contained in the Eucharist. “In making the Eucharist the center of our lives ... Christ becomes the center of our lives. We respond to his graces and he dwells with us,” he said. “Turning to the Eucharist in both reception and adoration unites us to Christ. Turning to the Eucharist in reception and adoration unites us to one another, calls us to live lives of service to one another ... when we gather, we gather with Christ.

When we are sent, we are sent with Christ. When we return, joyful or bruised, we return to be nourished by Christ — his whole and true self, his substantial presence ... when we gather here Christ feeds us, not just our bodily needs but our deepest and most significant hunger to be relieved of our isolation from God and our isolation from one another ... Christ forms us as a people. Christ makes us a body — his body.” Bishop Iffert closed his homily encapsulating the Church’s teachings on the communal and salvific nature of the Eucharist. “In this church and every church like it where we gather and allow Christ to be the center of our lives in the

Blessed Sacrament, where we make Christ’s substantial presence the source and summit of our lives, he makes us new, he strikes our hearts, he quenches our thirst, he responds to our hungers, he refreshes, he shares with us his special relationship with the Father; he calls us to be one with Him, he makes us one with one another in his body and blood. Surely that is worth a day, a memorial, a feast, a solemn proclamation — and for that we are gathered today.”

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