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 con-celebrated with Deacons Scott Poizl 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.

Father Michael has said yes to this vocation that God has called Father Michael to, the vocation that provides for our needs through the vocation of the priesthood.

“God knows that we, the Church, the pilgrim people of God, 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 of believers, Father Barth said.

“it is good that we are all companions along the journey, the jour-ney 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 draped 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 pre-sented 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, sib-lings, friends and everyone present.

“I am 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, Liége, 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 Liége. 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 manna 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 manna 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.)
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,

Bishop John C. Iffert

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 kick-off 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 Satellite. 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 junior high and high school students in solidarity with the world’s poor and acted as the diocese’s Catholic Relief Service Satellite.

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Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop John C. Iffert

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. Boolscher
To: Pastoral Administrator, Covington Catholic High School, Park Hills
Term: One year
Continues other duties

Rev. Richard G. Bolte
To: Pastoral Administrator, St. Henry District High School, Erlanger
Term: One year
Continues other duties

Rev. Edward J. Brodnick
To: Chaplain, Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria
Term: One year
Continues retirement

Rev. Michael K. Emlinger
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

Deacon Barry J. Henry
To: Assistant Chaplain, Newport Central Catholic High School, Newport
Term: One year
Continues other duties

Rev. V. Roel Kosch
To: Pastoral Administrator, Newport Central Catholic High School, Newport
Term: One year
Continues other duties

Very Rev. Rajiju 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
Term: One year
Continues other duties

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
Term: One year
Continues other duties

Rev. Jeffrey D. Von Lahmen
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
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, visible 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.”

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 turn takes 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 holy mass. 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 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 parishioners 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 18th-century America, as a way of uniting 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, it reminds us that good disciples and stewards do the following:

1. Made humble and in your love for us — see that you also excel in this grace of giving.'

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.

Requests in a will, charitable gift annuities, trusts, insurance and gifts of appreciated stock come 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 retained.
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 experience 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.-Mexican 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, 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.

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Mrs. Davis, currently streaming on the Peacock net-
work, is my favorite show. It is quirky as all get out, featur-
ing the idols that we construct inevitably turn on us. Those Dodgers also gave birth to the astounding Sandy Koufax, who declined to pitch Game One of the 1965 Series against the Cincinnati Reds. He was the master of the brushback pitch in Don Drysdale. But they were also a mean, intense ball club, and with the underdog Orioles completing a four-game sweep of the World Series against the mighty Los Angeles Dodgers. That victory was made all the sweeter by the fact that the Dodgers, even after their 1959 translation from Brooklyn to Lala Land, remained the class act of major league baseball — the franchise everyone tried to emulate. (The Yankees were always the dirtiest players in baseball.) 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 “42,” at first base on Opening Day 1947. It was the Dodgers, Lala Land, remained the class act of major league baseball Dodgers, even after their 1958 translation from Brooklyn to 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 and then ask yourself honestly how much of your thinking and behavior was determined by that little machine.

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To say we have had a rough year has been an understatement. Our intelli-
gent, 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 scream-
ing at home or, if he 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 recom-
dendation talk show) there was little we could do but heed the recom-
dendations of the doctors. We prayed and asked for prayers from everyone we knew. We reviewed the 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 revision 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 cry. 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 visits. She pulled up a chair close to him and said “It’s just so, like a puzzle, in order to make our son’s big mir-
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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 priest-
hood I could become aggravated and impa-
tient at the actions of God in the wilderness. I have to admit to myself, I was envious of the wilderness.

The amazing part of this story is how little miracles fit toget-
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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 me 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. The doctors kept in touch with him and the detailed notes on his way to research, just to be kind? Another minor miracle!

The specialist was in Chicago, we were literally willing to go anywhere for help for Hudson. When I called, the (Continued on page 21)

seeing and understanding

The understanding of what it means to be a human per-
son in light of Scripture helps us 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’s 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 TikTok videos and stay up to date on the latest trends, even more worrisome is how young people are being pigeonholed and written off. The line between what is real and what is not is real or continually becoming more and more blurred.

Since all of our children are to tell, it is impor-
tant 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 see creating the human body as a second to not see others the way they were meant to be seen, and to not see others the way they are meant to be seen. What is going to be a reality for our children is that the world we are seeing is not the world we were meant to see and not becom-
ing the people we were meant to become.

Our technology is growing so fast that we are all at risk of missing the world we were meant to see and not becom-
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The specialist was in Chicago, we were literally willing to go anywhere for help for Hudson. When I called, the (Continued on page 21)
Diocesan Committee on Catholic Scouting

Under the direction of Bishop John Iffert a new Diocesan Committee on Catholic Scouting has been formed to support all Catholic scouting efforts in the Diocese of Covington. The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization held a meeting at St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas, June 6, where the officers of the committee were commissioned. Pictured are: Mark Ihrig, vice-chair; Tim Weber; Matt Bischoff; Wil Martin, chair; Cecilia Reynolds, secretary; Lisa Taylor and Isaak Isaak, Office of Catechesis and Evangelization.

Discussing ways to teach the faith

The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization held a networking meeting for the Directors and Coordinators of Religious Education in the Diocese of Covington, June 3, at Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium. The group, comprised of individuals who care deeply about their faith and passing it on to the next generation, discussed best practices for ministering to families in today’s Catholic Church.
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. 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 evening’s keynote speaker was Father James Sichko, with Dr. Margeurite Schabell and Father Robert Rottgers honored at the event.
The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW, Sundays, noon to 1 p.m. Viewers can tune in on the following channels: antenna 12.2; Spectrum 117 or 25; Cincinnati Bell 17 or 517; and DirectTV 25.

Notre Dame Education Center, Covington, is seeking adult and high school volunteers to tutor children in grades K-9 in reading, English and math in its Summer Academics program held in June. For information, call (859) 361-4917 or e-mail Sister Maria Therese at smtherese@nduec.org. Volunteers 18 and older must be VIR-TUS compliant.

Notre Dame Education Center has an open registration for the Summer Academics program for students in grades K-9, June 5-24, 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 NDUEC at (859) 261-4487 or e-mail Sister Maria Therese at smtherese@nduec.org.

The Mustard Seed Catholic Charismatic Community sponsors a monthly Third Tuesday prayer gathering, 7-8:45 p.m., Blessed Sacrament Parish Center, Pt. Mitchell. Join us June 30 and July 31 with praise & worship music, teaching, witnesses, and healing prayers. For information, call (859) 341-0892.

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.

Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky day at the Florence Y’Alls Thomas More Stadium, June 29, 6:30 p.m. Vouchers are $10 with half going to support the Serra Club. Tickets available online: https://www.ticketsreturn.com; use the code “SerraClub” in the special offer code field. The Y’Alls will be playing the Trus-Rivieres Aigles from Canada.

Contact Mike Murray at (859) 630-4228 or mmurray@covdio.org.

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) 343-0902.

Statistical evidence proves that parishes with an intentional focus on vocations, called “Vocation Promotion,” help grow the Church. Learn how 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 twainlite@gmail.com or donnakheim@gmail.com.

Bishop John Efft 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. St. Joseph Heights, Park Hills, featuring speakers Msgr. William Cleves, Kathy Kramer and Jessica Mooshikamp. This day will be one of growth and renewal. Cost is $50, which includes the program materials, activities and a catered continental breakfast and lunch. For information, e-mail holylistening@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://nduec.org/new-beginnings/ or call (859) 302-1369, ext. 1978. The next session will be held on consecutive Tuesdays, Aug. 23 – 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, 4-6 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.

**2023 Parish Festivals**

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 RocktheBosh fest, Erlanger, September 8-10
St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright, September 22-24
St. Benedict Parish, Covington, September 22-23

**Families for Life**

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

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.”

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.
Laura Keener

With joy and thanks to God, priests, deacons and people of the Diocese of Covington celebrated the ordination, June 2, of its newest priest — Father Michael Kenneth Elmlinger.

“This 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,” said Bishop Michael Iffert. “His father, Stephen, who we knew 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.

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 at the beginning of your ordination Mass. 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 be his heroic servants and pours out his mercy when we fail. Christ surrounds us with companions and counselors 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, ruling on Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, I choose you for the order of priesthood because Christ Jesus is our cornerstone. 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.

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. “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, Polly Elmlinger, Father Elmlinger’s mother, 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), serving 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.

“Choose him as he chooses you in the name of Christ. I am choosing you in the name of Christ Jesus is our countenance. Choose Him as he chooses you.”

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Baker and Keener photos

(below) By the fraternal kiss the priests present welcome the newly ordained priest to a shared ministry in their order. (below) Father Edward Mcnish, rector of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Florence, prays the ordination Mass. (below) Father Elmlinger’s siblings and sister-in-law (left) Michael Barth, the priest who stole and chasuble. Father Elmlinger is invested with the priestly Order.

(below) 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.

(below) 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.

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

(below) 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 priestly
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 plight 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 Cavanaugh, 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 barrios. They live in dirt-floor shacks adjacent to the lands, 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 cut just one meal a day, Cavanaugh said, and without adequate nutrition, their children fall 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,” Cavanaugh 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 outreach we have established in the barrio 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, Cavanaugh 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.”

Cavanaugh said he also believes this mission of mercy can serve as a powerful example of how the Catholic Church transforms lives and 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 a brochure inserted in this issue or by sending a tax-deductible gift to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC02561, PO Box 97168, Washington DC 20140-97168. 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 Cavanaugh, 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 Diocese 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 25 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, medications, hygienic 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 baray 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 US 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 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 barayes — 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 allocated 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 of Merici offers housing, support services and educational opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities.

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.

“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.”

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

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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 connection 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 a lot less 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 $300,000 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 capacities 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.
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.

“I really fell in love with that work 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, parishioners, and parish staff to help communicate the message of stewardship in a way that “dramatically increases 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.”

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.

**NCYC— Last Call!**

Registration for the 2023 NCYC: “Fully Alive” Conference must be completed by Friday, June 30.

National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) is a unique three-day experience of prayer, community, evangelization, catechisis, service, and empowerment for Catholic teens and their adult chaperones.

NCYC will be held Nov. 16-18, at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. Visit https://covdio.org/youth to learn more and to register.

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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 his 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.

-Jule Feinauer is director of the Safe Environment Office, Diocese of Covington, Ky.
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Pope’s message of hope launched into space to orbit Earth

Carole Glatt
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 nano book, the “Spei Satelles” mission also carries a chip with the names and comments of men, women and children on earth who requested a “board- ing pass” to take part in the mission.

Since specialsatellise.org was launched March 27, 2023, the press release noted, “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 Puyem, 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 design and vetted the 120-page book — about 86 square feet of printed material — into binary code that fits 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 event were shared worldwide first as a global livestream and then in the book.

Msgr. Lucas Adrian 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, “Spei 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 325 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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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 experience.” 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 theSacrament 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.
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 pay- ments 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 drum 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 culled 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” cau- tions a Nigerian proverb. It’s advice that the Catholic faithful of the Diocese of Makurdi — in Nigeria’s Benue state — are grumpily 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 Yunan Tombe Trille Kuku Andali of El-Obeid said he will stay with his flock in Sudan, until it becomes impossi- ble 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 a positive message” about the church’s view of sexuality, Bishop Andali told OSV News. These days it’s raining and we are able to collect some water,” said Bishop Andali. “But we also need to go indoors with the people. The city is surrounded by forces. The water, electricity and medicines, are cut off. “I am still keeping a positive message” about the church’s view of sexuality, Bishop Andali told OSV News. Sudan Catholic bishop shepherds his flock despite heavy artillery

EL-OBEID, Sudan — A Catholic bishop in Sudan is bearing aerial bombardments, heavy gunfire and artillery to stay with his people, even as other clergy, diplomats and ordinary citi- zens flee the deadly fighting in the northeastern African coun- try. Bishop Yousif Tobri-Telye Khidir Anagbe of El-Obeid said he will stay with his flock in Sudan, until it becomes impossi- ble 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 a positive message” about the church’s view of sexuality, Bishop Andali told OSV News. These days it’s raining and we are able to collect some water,” said Bishop Andali. “But we also need to go indoors with the people. The city is surrounded by forces. The water, electricity and medicines, are cut off. “I am still keeping a positive message” about the church’s view of sexuality, Bishop Andali told OSV News. Sudan Catholic bishop shepherds his flock despite heavy artillery

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, accord- ing to a June 12 Gallup poll. The new poll found that 68% of U.S. adults said transgender athletes should only be allowed to compete on sports teams that conform with their biological sex. The finding marks 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 2021. The findings come as more Americans reported to Gallup knowing a per- son 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 men from competing against athletes who were born female. ‘Non-man’? Johns Hopkins’ redefini- tion of ‘lesbian’ a moment for evan- gelization, says Catholic ethicist

BALTIMORE — A Maryland university has sparked con- troversy with its redefinition of the word “lesbian” using the term “non-man” instead of “woman.” — but the backlash has also 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 13, Johns Hopkins University updated its official defini- tion of the word “lesbian” in its “LGBTQ Glossary.” The updated text defined the term as “a non-man attracted to non- men. Previously, the university had said the term referred to “a woman who is emotionally, romantically, sexually, affection- ately, or relationally attracted to other women, or someone who identifies as part of the lesbian community.” After wide- spread outrage, from social media users in the LGBTQ+ com- munity to “Harry Potter” author J.K. Rowling, the university offlined the glossary June 13, telling OSV News in a state- ment 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 God’s goodness, how, and why are we created? That’s what we need to investigate.”
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.”
Be a sign of mercy.

www.usccb.org/peters-pence

JUNE 24 AND 25, 2023