DPAA celebrates 2023 campaign with reception; distributes service grants

Maura Baker  
Staff Writer

Supporters of the Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal (DPAA) gathered for a reception in the Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington, Aug. 24, to celebrate the success of the 2023 campaign.

Service grants were also awarded as a component of this reception, wherein schools, parishes and charitable organizations within the Diocese of Covington received the funds to continue to serve the people of the Diocese of Covington.

In attendance at the dinner were donors and grant recipients, but also DPAA leaders such as Jim Hess, director, Office of Stewardship and Mission Services; Bishop John Iffert of the Diocese of Covington; Matt Hollenkamp, 2023 DPAA general chair and Linda Rawe, 2023 DPAA leadership gifts chair.

“Our goal for the 2023 DPAA campaign was $2,650,000,” Mr. Hollenkamp said at the reception, “but, when you look at the back of the Messenger, you’ll see that the dollars total raised is over $3.8 million, so far… we had a record setting year last year, and we are on pace to exceed that,” Mr. Hollenkamp added, “I’m very blessed with what we’ve achieved here.”

As of the night of the reception, there have been 7,730 donors to the 2023 DPAA campaign, and 44 out of the 53 diocesan parishes have already exceeded their goal — that extra money goes back to the parishes at the end of the campaign.

“This is a celebration that points out that when we live that life dedicated to prayer, and we bring all our needs of our neighbors and ourselves to God in prayer, God motivates us to let all of that pour out of us into the world around us,” Bishop Iffert said about the DPAA campaign and the reception during his closing remarks.

“We offer these grants because we’re Catholic, and God invites us to that kind of response to our neighbors in need.”

For a full list of grants awarded at this year’s DPAA reception, see page 9.

SUMMIT returns for 2023 retreat, celebrating the Eucharist Revival

Maura Baker  
Staff Writer

SUMMIT, a yearly Eucharistic retreat for youth held in the Diocese of Covington, returns for its 2023 session this October. The retreat this year has been restructured, now geared exclusively for high school students across the diocese to have their own encounter with the Eucharist and engage with their peers.

“We’re taking away some of the barriers that make it hard to come to the retreat,” said Angie Poat, diocesan Youth Minister; about SUMMIT23, the full name of this year’s retreat. “We’re restoring it to its original vision and making it a place only for high school students. All they have to do is show up, they don’t have to bring a chaperone, they can leave and come back if need be… we’re trying to make it as accessible as possible.”

“It has a new approach, a new paradigm,” Ms. Poat continued. “There’s a joy and excitement to bring people from all over the diocese together, so we’re really reaching out to Campbell County and Boone County and inviting them to climb the summit of their faith with the whole diocese.”

Ms. Poat views this year’s retreat as a ‘kickoff’ for youth for the (Continued on page 14).
With One Heart progresses Parish Envisioning Teams and priest coaches/mentors meeting

Laura Keener
Editor

The With One Heart campaign is quietly making behind the scenes progress as coaches and teams continue to meet.

Carla Molina, leadership consultant for the Catholic Leadership Institute; Deacon Jim Fortner, diocesan chief operating officer; and Jamie Schroeder, diocesan chancellor, met with a dozen potential coaches, Aug. 22, via Zoom. These volunteers were asked to discern if the Holy Spirit was inviting them to be a coach or mentor to priests, as part of the Called For More initiative, as priests implement their self-created, individualized growth plan.

Volunteers have until Sept. 1 to confirm their participation. Parish pastoral plans are due to Bishop John Iffert by mid-December.

All parishes are required to submit a pastoral plan. Next Generation parishes will have the in-person assistance of a CLI consultant for the next three years—not only with the creation of the pastoral plan but also with the implementation, assessment and revision of the plan.

The Envisioning Team at All Saints Parish, Walton, met with their consultant, Ximena DelBroeck, for the first time Aug. 24. It was a reunion of sorts as Father Matthew Cushing, pastor, and Dr. DelBroeck were classmates at St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, Penn.

The role of the Envisioning Team is to prayerfully consider the responses parishioners shared when completing the Disciple Maker Index survey last Lent. Then, using that data and with a mutually shared vision, create a parish pastoral plan that is exciting, engaging and challenging. The Envisioning Team has three-and-a-half months to complete the plan. Then, the plan will be passed off to the parish’s Implementation Team.

Dr. DelBroeck reminded the Envisioning Team that the parish pastoral plan is “not something that is dropped out of the air but is informed by data. Then your job is to successfully pass the plan on to the next team, which is the Implementation Team.”

Eight parishes have chosen to be Next Generation parishes, with each being assigned a CLI consultant for the three-year process. Ten parishes have chosen to be Virtual DMI parishes, meeting virtually with a CLI consultant over the next three months to develop a parish pastoral plan. The remaining parishes are independently using CLI tools and the data collected from the Disciple Maker Index to develop a parish pastoral plan.

“Our hope is that you learn this process so that you can do it periodically,” said Dr. DelBroeck. “Just like it happens in our homes and our lives, we’re never finished, we are in the process of continuous growth towards flourishing as people, as individuals in our relationship with the Lord, in our relationships with each other and our families and also in our communities.”

Workshops on the Prophets

The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization will host “Workshops on the Prophets” presented by Father Timothy Schehr. The workshops will be held in Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium (Curia building), 1125 Madison Ave., Covington.

Workshop on the Prophet Isaiah — Sept. 25, 9-11:30 a.m. Children have a very special place in the oracles of the prophet Isaiah, including the familiar Emmanuel prophecy: “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Emmanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14) For this reason, Isaiah is our Advent prophet. Let’s spend some time enjoying his wonderful message.

Workshop on the Prophet Jeremiah — Oct. 28, 9-11:30 a.m. We can think of Jeremiah as a potter prophet. When called to serve as a prophet, Jeremiah was entrusted with the Word of God to build up the people, just as an artisan builds up a lump of clay on a potter’s wheel.

Father Timothy Schehr leads the workshops. He is a retired biblical scholar and former professor at Mount St. Mary’s School of Theology at the Athenaeum of Ohio. He has a B.A., M.Div. and an M.A. from the Athenaeum of Ohio. He also has a Ph.D. from Hebrew Union College.

The cost is $15 per workshop. To register visit https://evdio.org/bible-workshops/ or call Isaac A. Issak, Office of Catechesis and Evangelization, at (859) 392-1288. Walk-ins welcome!
Notre Dame Academy installs its fourth president, Trish Miller

Laura Keener

Editor

In a small but august celebration, Notre Dame Academy installed its fourth president, Trish Miller, Aug. 26, at the school’s Mary, Mother of the World chapel. Bishop John Iffert, Jack VonHandorf, principal, Dr. Laura Koehler, director, Sisters of Notre Dame USA National Sponsorship and Network Office and former NDA president; Notre Dame Sister Mary Lynnette Shelton, second NDA president; Notre Dame Sister Maria Francine Stacy, faculty; and Mark Hausfeld, chair, NDA Board of Directors, were in attendance and gave remarks. The NDA PandaTones — a student choir — sang the opening and closing hymns.

“Today we gather not only to celebrate the installation of Mrs. Trish Miller as the new president of Notre Dame Academy but also to celebrate our visionary founders, the Sisters of Notre Dame and their commitment to an enduring spirit of NDA and dedication to our values and tradition. This academy is in a very real way built on them — on their life, on their blood … You can now embrace of the values we all hold so dear,” said Bishop Iffert. “This academy is built on their witness they’ve given. You’ve seen where their lives touch the life and witness of Jesus Christ and made Christ apparent to you.”

Speaking directly to Mrs. Miller, Bishop Iffert said, “We transfer this leadership to you, Mrs. Miller. You’ve been selected because those responsible for the selection see in you a person whose life is very marked by those values and is capable of growing in those values and virtues so that we can see the long history of those who have served, we can see the future of the women going forth here at Notre Dame, we can see the love of Jesus Christ and the Holy Trinity. These values and virtues must be incarnated. They only exist in the world when they exist in our lives. If not, they’re abstractions … Congratulations today. Welcome to the team.”

Mrs. Miller addressed those present with confidence and in gratitude.

“This moment is not just a personal milestone but a collective celebration of the enduring spirit of NDA and dedication to our values and tradition,” Miller said. “This academy is not merely a title it is an embrace of the values we all hold so dear.”

The search for a new president was necessitated by the resignation of Dr. Koehler in February 2021 as she accepted a position with the newly formed SND USA. For the last two years, Mr. VonHandorf has held the dual role of principal and president as Notre Dame Academy searched for its next president.

At the ceremony, the Board recognized and thanked him for his leadership. In his remarks, Mr. VonHandorf thanked the Board, “it’s huge to have such a supportive board. The faculty and staff, we put in a team effort” to get through these last two years, he said.

In his remarks, Bishop Iffert said that values, like numbers, are abstractions. “We name our values, they are abstractions. We only know them because we have seen them in the lives of others. We know them because we have seen them, specifically in this situation, in the lives of the Sisters of Notre Dame,” said Bishop Iffert. “This academy is built on their values and tradition. This academy is in a very real way built on them — on their lives, on their blood … You can now identify these values that drive the future of Notre Dame Academy because you have reflected on their lives and the witness they’ve given. You’ve seen where their lives touch the life and witness of Jesus Christ and made Christ apparent to you.”

Call for testimonials

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky is celebrating 100 years of service to the people of the Diocese of Covington.

To share your story on how the Society has impacted you and/or your family, e-mail messenger@covdio.org with the subject line: Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Your story may be featured in the upcoming Messenger supplement highlighting the Society’s centennial. The deadline for submissions is Sept. 14.
Spiritual grandparenting

As a kid I always associated two things with the first day of school — getting new shoes and having to write about what I did during summer vacation.

My siblings and I never really had exceptional summer adventures, but I have fond memories of beach outings, camping trips, museum visits, swimming lessons and hours spent playing with the other kids in the neighborhood.

It’s been many years since I got new school shoes or wrote about my summer vacation, but this summer, I did something exceptional. Although I have been a Little Sister for over 30 years, in July I went away to camp for the very first time.

Along with another member of my community and 15 other women religious, I volunteered to help run a camp for high school girls sponsored by the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia.

Our days at camp were filled with sports activities and team challenges, crafts and plenty of fun. We also had daily Mass, rosary, Eucharistic Adoration and lively spiritual talks given by the sisters.

Along with college-age volunteers, each pair of women religious was responsible for a dozen or so high school girls throughout the week.

Our days were jam-packed with activities and the heat was scorching but I thought I was doing pretty well keeping up with the girls. Then towards the end of the week, one of the young women — a very lively, outgoing teen — called me our team’s “grandmother”! That was a blow to my ego — “Not an older sister or your mother, but your grandmother!” I asked. “Real?”

“Grandmothers are so kind and supportive,” she replied. “They try to make each person feel special. That’s what you’ve been doing for us.”

This young woman’s insight was a real consolation to me.

Later, during adoration, I reflected on this conversation, a bit ashamed of myself. I realized that the anger that infects our society has also affected me.

As someone who has devoted my life to the priesthood, I should have been honored to be identified as grandmother.

I thought about our foundress, St. Jeanne Jugan, who identified completely with the elderly. She wanted to be known as a grandmother.

My spiritual life is much like Ignatius’s. When Ignatius read stories of knights and heroes or Legends of Loyola unlocked the doors of the spiritual life and set down simple rules for people to follow in their spiritual lives.

St. Ignatius was a great saint of the post-Reformation era in Spain. He spent his last years at the motherhouse when he was no longer recognized as the foundress.

This young woman’s insight touched the hearts of all; we were at ease with her. In fact, many years later, I still remembered her kindness, many testifying for her canonization process.

Ahh! If you only knew how good she was! She was so gentle… She spoke firmly when necessary but she thought no more about it afterwards… Her charity touched the hearts of all. We were at ease with her, like a mother in her family, and each one could say to herself: “How kind she is; she loved me!”

As I continued to reflect on the life and example of our foundress, I felt honored to be identified by a young person as “grandmother.” Realizing I would never make my mark on either the soccer field or the volleyball court, I really had been trying to take an interest in each young person and lead each one a listening ear and I was grateful to know they had appreciated my efforts.

This is what young people are really looking for as they mature into adulthood; one seeks to discern their vocation in life. We can do them and the Church a great service by honing our skills as wise elders, spiritual grandmothers and grandfathers.

When Ignatius wrote 22 rules to help us understand how consolation and desolation are to be understood, but coming to grips with consolation and desolation in our lives is foundational to understanding every other experience we have in our spiritual lives.

I invite you to reflect on your day through the lens of consolation and desolation and, as scotists would suggest, really begin to live an examined life.

FATHER CONOR KUNATH is parochial administrator, Sts. Boniface and James Parish, Ludlow and vocations director for the Diocese of Covington, Ky.
The mystery of humanity

The readings for the twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time, calls us to reflect on discipleship with a rather striking statement from the Lord Jesus: “Get behind me Satan!”

Satan is the father of lies, he is the liar of distortion of the true, the good, and the beautiful, which is what makes him evil. Peter is being called out by the Lord for trying to limit or stop these “transcendental” which are ultimately brought to completion through the passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus.

And this can be very confusing to our humanity. Although I don’t know I could “rebuke” the Lord, I get where Peter is coming from — how can the humiliation of the cross, which brings with it so much physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual suffering, bring about something beautiful and good and true? In my own life I try to avoid pain and I pray often that the pain of others would be taken away.

What we (myself included) need to remember is that we are called to conform our way of thinking to that of the Lord. “Just not the other way around (as wonderful as that might sound). You are thinking not as God does...”

Pope St. John Paul II reminds us in his Apostolic Letter “Salvifici Doloris” that the mystery of humanity, including suffering, can only truly be discovered or understood in the mystery of the Incarnate Word. In order to understand ourselves, our lives, our hopes, our dreams, our difficulties, our sufferings, we have to look to the Lord, who is the disciple of his disciples — students of his ways. Not just learning, but by imitating. Jesus places two conditions on those who wish to be his disciples: 1. They must deny themselves; 2. They must take up the cross.

I think many of us get the idea of denial, but we don’t quite understand the meaning of “take up his cross.”

(Continued on page 13.)

Spiritual direction — it works!

Twenty years ago, I was introduced to the Christian practice of spiritual direction through the Catholic lay movement of which I had become a new member. Spiritual direction was one of the commitments members agreed to take up on a regular basis.

At the time, I was not acquainted with this practice and thought it was something reserved for clergy and religious. I soon learned that spiritual direction is for anyone who is seeking God. In my case, growth has been painfully slow, but within the last 10 years or so, I have begun to see the fruits.

Spiritual direction, for those who are not familiar with it, is practice of meeting regularly with a spiritual director to form and cultivate a relationship with God. It involves three persons, the director, the directee, and most importantly, the Holy Spirit. Over time, it helps one deepen his/her prayer and become more aware of God’s presence and action in daily life.

This practice has ancient roots going back to the early Church. Spiritual direction is not the Sacrament of Reconciliation, psychological or pastoral counseling, self-therapy, or self-discovery. Instead, it is an ongoing conversation about discerning God’s voice.

The spiritual direction I receive is greatly influenced by the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola. I have been learning about the discernment of spirits (recognizing good or evil impulses) that cause consolation (feelings of love, praise, gratitude, inspiration, etc.) or desolation (feelings of hopelessness, turmoil, doubt, anxiety, etc.). Being able to discern the spirits makes it possible to respond to God’s presence and action in our lives.

A recent experience demonstrated the fruit this training has begun to bear in my life. During our latest monthly meeting, my spiritual director asked me how I was doing. I shared with her what a good summer my family and I had been having. We celebrated the college graduation of a son, the wedding of a daughter and had been blessed to take a family vacation. Everyone in my immediate family has been so happy.

There were the usual crosses, things that had been going on for some time with jobs or with extended family. But, overall, we had been experiencing several months of consolation. Reflecting on that experience prompted me to say to my director, “It makes me wonder what’s coming.”

She reminded me that the spiritual life typically consists of consolation and desolation that come and go in cycles. When desolation comes, I need to stay the course in my prayer and sacramental life and to recall the times of consolation until they return.

Sure enough! The following weekend, literally days after spiritual direction, I received several pieces of very distressing news, all within a matter of hours. Normally, this would have had me in an emotional tailspin: despair, anger, judgement, blame, even despair.

However, because of the knowledge gained through spiritual direction and with the help of the Holy Spirit, I was aware of what was happening spiritually and was prepared to respond. I felt sadness and concern, which were perfectly normal emotions given the circumstances. But I was less likely to allow those feelings to drag me into desperation, anxiety or hopelessness. Rather, I was able to turn more readily to God in prayer and to ask others to pray.

I recalled that “God’s got this,” and that I do not need to worry. A sense of peace and stability returned much more quickly than in times past. I found myself giving thanks to God, in a kind of “aha” moment, that “spiritual direction actually works!” — a moment of consolation in itself.

Spiritual direction requires effort and dedication. Perhaps the most difficult part is getting started. The first step is to seek God’s will in this area and ask the Holy Spirit to show the way.

The second step is to find a spiritual director that is a good fit. This can be a challenge as the number of qualified spiritual directors is somewhat limited, though a greater number of lay people are becoming trained in this ministry.

Thankfully, there are resources that can help in the meantime. One good, free resource is the Discerning Hearts digital apostolate available at discerninghearts.com, on YouTube, and through the Discerning Hearts app.

Is spiritual direction right for you? God bless you as you discern!

Jamie Schroeder is chancellor for the Diocese of Covington, Ky.

60 years after the march, Martin Luther King’s dream lives on

Sixty years is a very long time — a life-time for many people. Yet the event that occurred 60 years ago and that we commemorate this week, the March on Washington, has to be experienced as a turning point in history, a time of courage and hope that has shaped American history in ways that we are only beginning to understand.

Today’s young people, in a special way, need to recapTURE the hope that was electric during the March on Washington in 1963. Theirs will be the challenge of work to achieve what remains incomplete from the words of Dr. King.

Much of Dr. King’s oration was dedicated to the young and referenced them. His oratorical skill painted an amazing image of our nation, citing places and monuments that captured the imagination of his listeners.

I have been blessed to have met many of the places to which he referred and to have seen glimmers of the fulfillment of his dream. However, for far too many people, Dr. King’s vision for America remains “a dream deferred” [Harlem, by Langston Hughes].

Nevertheless, I know, as does every honest person, that we have not thus far reached the final victory of our nation’s promise. Still, we cannot lose hope because all has not yet been accomplished.

The great men and women of every race, culture and creed who have stood since the Lincoln Memorial 60 years ago deserve our allegiance to the principles that inspired them — and can and should inspire us as well. His dream is still alive!

Cardinal Wilton Gregory is the archbishop of Washington, D.C.
Like St. Kateri Tekakwitha, the first native North American woman to be canonized, all Christians must embrace their unique call to service of God and neighbor as well as the personal crosses that come with it, Pope Francis said.

“The life of Kateri Tekakwitha shows us that every challenge can be overcome if we open our hearts to Jesus, who gives us the grace we need,” the pope said during his weekly general audience Aug. 30. Continuing a series on zeal for evangelization, he centered his talk on the example of the Native American saint canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012.

A 17th-century Algonquin Mohawk born in present-day New York State, St. Kateri converted to Catholicism at 19 after her family died in a smallpox epidemic that left her face scarred and her vision impaired. In addition to her physical challenges, the “misunderstandings, persecutions and even death threats she suffered following her baptism” gave St. Kateri a “great love for the cross, the definitive sign of Christ’s love,” the pope said.

“Bearing witness to the Gospel does not only concern what is pleasing,” Pope Francis said. “We must also know how to carry our daily crosses with patience, faith and hope.”

“Patience is a great Christian virtue; one who is not patient is not a good Christian,” he said, underscoring the need for “patience to tolerate challenges, but also to tolerate others who are sometimes tedious or put you in difficulty.”

After seeking refuge in a Jesuit mission in nearby Montreal, St. Kateri participated in the spiritual life of the community while teaching children and caring for the sick and elderly.

“Faith is always expressed in service,” the pope said. “It is not meant to be makeup for oneself or for the soul; no, it’s for service.”

St. Kateri realized her desire to serve the church by resisting efforts to force her to marry, and eventually making a vow of perpetual virginity in 1679, the pope said.

“Of course, not all are called to make the same vow as Kateri; still, all Christians are called each day to commit themselves with an undivided heart to the vocation and mission entrusted to them by God, serving him and neighbor in a spirit of charity,” Pope Francis said.

St. Kateri’s life, he said, shows that “apostolic zeal entails both a vital union with Jesus nourished with prayer and the sacraments and a desire to diffuse the beauty of the Christian message through fidelity to one’s particular vocation.”

“Let us not forget each of us is called to sainthood, to everyday sainthood, to the sainthood of ordinary Christian life; each one of us has this calling,” he said.
The prayer intention for September, as recommended by Pope Francis, is for people living on the margins of society, in inhumane life conditions; may they not be overlooked by institutions and never considered of lesser importance.

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

St. Mary’s hillhedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, offers Veneration of a relic of the True Cross, on the first Friday of every month, from noon-1 p.m. Confessions are offered concurrently. The monthly veneration is held in silence and con- cludes with a blessing and the opportunity for the faithful to come forward to personally venerate the True Cross relic. The monthly veneration is sponsored by the Knights and Daughters of the Covington Lexington section of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

Notre Dame Urban Education Center, Covington, is seeking adult and high school volunteers to tutor children in grades K-9 in reading, English and math. For information, call (859) 361-4467 or e-mail Sister Maria Therese at stmary@nduec.org. Volunteers 18 and older must be Virtus compliant.

The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization in collaboration with the Angelic Project invite all to attend a candlelight Mass the first Friday of every month, 7 p.m. The next is Sept. 1, St. Joseph Parish, Camp Spring. Confessions available at 6 p.m.; a social for young adults ages 16-35 follows at 8 p.m.

The Class of 1963, St. Thomas School, Ft. Thomas, is celebrat- ing its 60-year reunion. There is a luncheon planned for Sept. 10, 2023, 1 p.m.; Summit Hills Country Club, Edgewood. Contact Carol Cleary Combs at: cleargirl1008@aol.com or (513) 253-9273.

Bishop John Hoft 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.

Newport Central Catholic High School invites families up to the school hill, Sept. 3, for its 29th Family Fireworks Fest. Food, drinks, and games begin at 5 p.m. and will continue until the big blast. No cars, bottles or coolers will be permitted. Then watch the Western & Southern WEIN Labor Day fireworks from one of the best views in Northern Kentucky. Admission is $5; tickets can be purchased online at ncchs.com. Children age 6 and under are free. Limited $10 parking passes guaranteeing you a parking on the hill are on sale. Select handicap space if needed. There are 20 handicap spaces available. Contact Tressy Krebs at (859) 282-0000 ext. 650 therbs@ncchs.com.

Join the Sisters of Divine Providence on Sept. 10, 12:30 p.m., for a hike, either in the woods or on the pavement/level ground. The hike begins in front of St. Anne Penitence Center. At 2 p.m., we will gather in the Mary Garden for a prayer service to celebrate the Season of Creation. Refreshments to follow. All are welcome — children, young people, and not so young people for any or all of the activities. No RSVP required.

St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs, welcomes all parents to attend its inaugural Family Faith Formation Speaker Series, Sept. 13, 6:30-7:45 p.m., in the church. The first topic is “Why Belong? The Importance of a Church Community.” Speaker is Msgr. William Cleves, Kathy Kramer and Jessica Mushleinkamp. 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 holylistening4god@gmail.com.

A Marriage Encounter Experience will be held on September 29—October 1 at the Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Center in Norwood, Ohio. Sign up at esharing.org or call Andy and Melanie Reinersman at (513) 661-8464.

St. Joseph Church, Camp Springs, will be hosting their Oktoberfish Fish Fries, October 6, 7, and 8, 4–7:30 p.m. Dine-in and carry-out available, more information at www.stjosephcampsprings.org.

The Institute for Religious Liberty wel- comes Stephanie Barclay, director, Notre Dame Law School Religious Liberty initia- tive, as the keynote speaker for its fall event, Oct. 18, 7 p.m., Stegerwald Hall in the Saint Center of Thomas More University’s campus. Guest commentators include Holly Handley Lesan, International Center for Law & Religion Studies at Brigham Young University (BYU) Law School and Gary Greenberg, retired principal in the Cincinnati law office of Jackson Lewis P.C. and president of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati. For information visit thomasoner.edu/religious-liberty.

DCCH Children’s Home Flea Market, Ft. Mitchell, year-round, 8:30 a.m.–noon, Monday, Thursday and every 3rd Saturday). Donation drop-off during Flea Market hours or at drop-off box anytime.

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 relation- ships and gain courage to discover new life. Registration is required. Visit https://covdio.org/new-beginnings/ or call (859) 282-1200, ext. 1092. The next session will be held on consecutive Tuesdays, Aug. 29 – Oct. 17, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Elementary School, Bellevue.

Save the date — Sept. 23, a day of recollection and explo- ration into the interconnectedness of the mind, body and soul at St. Joseph Heights, Park Hills, featuring speakers Msgr. William Cleves, Kathy Kramer and Jessica Mushleinkamp. 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 holylistening4god@gmail.com.

CDI Electric Inc.
Quality Service Since 1997
899-291-9189

Chef Barone’s Catering
Parties • Weddings
Company Picnics • Luncheons, Dinners
“Our Foods Taste Good”
Serving Greater Cincinnati
Call Jill
491-6391
1640 Dixie Highway
Park Hills, Ky.
For more information about the Department of Catholic Schools, call (859) 392-1500 or e-mail asmoney@covdio.org.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Grant Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACUE</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Net Pregnancy</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Charities</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covington Latin School</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diocesan Catholic Children’s Home</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divine Mercy Parish</td>
<td>$5,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelter of NKY</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith Community Pharmacy</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Cross Parish</td>
<td>$15,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Cross District High School</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Cross Elementary School</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Trinity School</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ION Center for Violence Prevention</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Learning Center</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Queen of Heaven School</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport Central Catholic High School</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notre Dame Urban Education Center</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Savior Parish</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Kitchen</td>
<td>$3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Garden Mission</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Environment Office</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Ann Food Pantry</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Anthony Parish</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Anthony School</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Augustine Parish, Covington</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Augustine Parish, Covington</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Augustine School, Covington</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Bernard Parish</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Boniface and James Church</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Cecilia School</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Edward Parish</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James Parish</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John the Evangelist Parish, Carroll</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Patrick Church and Schools, Mays.</td>
<td>$16,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Philip Parish and School</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Vincent de Paul Society, NKY</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome House</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ION Center for Violence Prevention</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Learning Center</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary, Queen of Heaven School</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport Central Catholic High School</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notre Dame Urban Education Center</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Savior Parish</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Kitchen</td>
<td>$3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Garden Mission</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Environment Office</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Ann Food Pantry</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Anthony Parish</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Anthony School</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Augustine Parish, Augusta</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IGNATIANS SILENT RETREATS**

“Come and See” - John 1:46

Come and “see” our Lord again and again as you immerse yourself in the silence of an Ignatian retreat.

**Upcoming Retreats**

- **September 22 - 24 | Men’s Retreat with Fr. Nathan Wendt, SJ**
- **October 6 - 8 | Personally Directed Retreat for Men and Women**
- **October 19 - 21 | Men’s Retreat with Fr. Harry Geib, SJ**
- **October 26 - 28 | Men’s Retreat with Fr. John Predmore, SJ**
- **October 27 - 29 | Men’s Retreat with Fr. Michael Graham, SJ**
- **November 3 - 5 | Women’s Retreat with Fr. Tom Krettek, SJ**
- **November 24 - 26 | 12-Step Men’s Retreat with Fr. Del Stajers**
- **December 1 - 8 | Personally Directed Retreat for Men and Women**

Visit our website at jesuspiritualcenter.com or call Mary Ellen at 513.448.3500, ext. 10
This is the way: The Eucharistic pilgrimage of the Mass

Will Peterson
OSV News

We have the Bread of Life. What more could we desire? And yet, our Lord presented this supreme gift to a community of apostles, so we also give thanks for the body of Christ that is the community of the Church. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul writes, “And he (God) put all things beneath Christ’s feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way” (Eph 1:22-23).

Our Church is the community in which, to quote St. Augustine, “we become what we receive.” Thus, there is nowhere more fitting for us to express our gratitude for the body of Christ than in Mass.

As someone who leads an apostolate for Catholic pilgrimage, I often get asked which one pilgrimage journey is my favorite. Easy answers recount long, arduous pilgrimage between California missions, or through the Wisconsin farmland that leads us to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion, where the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to a local girl.

My favorite pilgrimage, however, is the one I make each time I attend Mass. The pilgrimage is not only spiritual but a true physical pilgrimage toward Christ. As I walk up from my pew to participate in Communion, I pray with my whole being — I give praise with each step I take, for God made me, body and soul.

I come forward, publicly demonstrating my belief in the Real Presence. During the brief journey from my pew, I lift my intentions, my struggles, my desires to God. God receives them and lifts his Son before me, allowing me to receive the Eucharist, the Bread of angels, the Bread of Life.

That movement is crucial. As the 20th century Trappist and spiritual writer Thomas Merton once wrote, “The geographic pilgrimage is the symbolic acting out of an inner journey … One can have the one without the other. It is best to have both.”

Our physical journey to receive Christ during the Mass teaches and prepares us to spiritual journey toward the heavenly Jerusalem. I pray first and foremost that in this time of National Eucharistic Revival we all might mindfulfully make the crucial pilgrimage of thanks and praise to receive the Eucharistic Christ at Mass.

Then go out into the world, becoming what we have received.
Church environmentalists worry about oil drilling in the Amazon

Eduardo Campos Lima

OSV News

SÃO PAULO — Church activists in the Amazon are worried about the Brazilian government’s plan to exploit oil in a marine area close to the mouth of the Amazon River.

Oil drilling, an issue discussed in different meetings over the past months by ecclesiastical movements and environmentalists, has been a problem in several regions of the Amazon.

While there was relevant progress recently in the struggle to restrain the oil companies’ operations in the rainforest, the pressure from those corporations is immense, and it will take too much effort from Catholics inspired by Pope Francis’ “Laudato Si’” encyclical to secure the protection of the common house their “common home” in the Amazon, activists say.

The project of exploiting oil about 300 miles northeast from Amazon River’s mouth has put top government officials on opposite sides: On one side is Environment Minister Marina Silva, who argues that technical studies showed that the operation would have a huge impact on the environment and local communities, and on the other is most of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s cabinet.

Lula is himself among the ones who think that it is possible to go on with the project without harming the environment. The plan was among the topics discussed by Lula and the presidents of the other nations of the Pan-Amazon region during an Aug. 8-9 summit in Belem, in Brazil. The region consists of nine countries: Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Suriname, Guyana and French Guyana.

“The summit’s final document failed to address key elements concerning extraction in the Amazon. All decisions should be unanimous and there was no consensus on those issues,” explained Father Dario Bossi, a member of the Integral Ecology and Mining Commission of the bishops’ conference.

While Colombian President Gustavo Petro argued that oil drilling should be forbidden in the Amazon, the other leaders avoided discussing the issue.

Social movements and church groups had campaigned since January to gather as many members of the civil society as possible in parallel activities held during the summit. About 40,000 people gathered in Belém, according to Father Bossi, and were able to hand their demands to the presidents.

Although they were disappointed with the final document — not only due to the oil theme, but also due to the absence of a collective goal of reducing deforestation — the simple fact that they were there is a reason to celebrate.

Social movements and church groups had campaigned since January to gather as many members of the civil society as possible in parallel activities held during the summit. About 40,000 people gathered in Belém, according to Father Bossi, and were able to hand their demands to the presidents.

While Colombian President Gustavo Petro argued that oil drilling should be forbidden in the Amazon, the other leaders avoided discussing the issue.

Social movements and church groups had campaigned since January to gather as many members of the civil society as possible in parallel activities held during the summit. About 40,000 people gathered in Belém, according to Father Bossi, and were able to hand their demands to the presidents.

Although they were disappointed with the final document — not only due to the oil theme, but also due to the absence of a collective goal of reducing deforestation — the simple fact that they were there is a reason to celebrate.

Social movements and church groups had campaigned since January to gather as many members of the civil society as possible in parallel activities held during the summit. About 40,000 people gathered in Belém, according to Father Bossi, and were able to hand their demands to the presidents.

Although they were disappointed with the final document — not only due to the oil theme, but also due to the absence of a collective goal of reducing deforestation — the simple fact that they were there is a reason to celebrate.

Social movements and church groups had campaigned since January to gather as many members of the civil society as possible in parallel activities held during the summit. About 40,000 people gathered in Belém, according to Father Bossi, and were able to hand their demands to the presidents.

Although they were disappointed with the final document — not only due to the oil theme, but also due to the absence of a collective goal of reducing deforestation — the simple fact that they were there is a reason to celebrate.

Social movements and church groups had campaigned since January to gather as many members of the civil society as possible in parallel activities held during the summit. About 40,000 people gathered in Belém, according to Father Bossi, and were able to hand their demands to the presidents.

Although they were disappointed with the final document — not only due to the oil theme, but also due to the absence of a collective goal of reducing deforestation — the simple fact that they were there is a reason to celebrate.

Social movements and church groups had campaigned since January to gather as many members of the civil society as possible in parallel activities held during the summit. About 40,000 people gathered in Belém, according to Father Bossi, and were able to hand their demands to the presidents.

Although they were disappointed with the final document — not only due to the oil theme, but also due to the absence of a collective goal of reducing deforestation — the simple fact that they were there is a reason to celebrate.

Social movements and church groups had campaigned since January to gather as many members of the civil society as possible in parallel activities held during the summit. About 40,000 people gathered in Belém, according to Father Bossi, and were able to hand their demands to the presidents.

Although they were disappointed with the final document — not only due to the oil theme, but also due to the absence of a collective goal of reducing deforestation — the simple fact that they were there is a reason to celebrate.

Social movements and church groups had campaigned since January to gather as many members of the civil society as possible in parallel activities held during the summit. About 40,000 people gathered in Belém, according to Father Bossi, and were able to hand their demands to the presidents.

Although they were disappointed with the final document — not only due to the oil theme, but also due to the absence of a collective goal of reducing deforestation — the simple fact that they were there is a reason to celebrate.
CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

THEDORE DAME URBAN EDUCATION CENTER
Is looking for Tutors and students. If you love seeing children learn and have a couple hours a week free, NDUEC is a great place to volunteer.
If your child struggles to get their homework completed each day NDUEC is the place for them.
Tutoring sessions begin September 5th, runs Monday-Thursday 3-5. If interested in either one please call 859-261-4487 for more information.

Moore’s Painting
The Company you feel safe with
Interior & exterior painting.
In business since 1988. Members of St. Augustine Parish.
Moore’s Painting — Union, Ky. — (859) 512-7398

CAFETERIA MANAGERS-DIOCESE OF COVINGTON SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM
The Diocese of Covington School Lunch Program is currently seeking dedicated Cafeteria Managers to join our team at Sts. Peter and Paul, and St. Joseph, Crescent Springs. The importance of Cafeteria Manager contributes to the successful operation of our school lunch program, ensuring the provision of nutritious meals to our students.
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.

I WANT TO BUY A CAR
Subcompact/compact car. Under 10,000 miles. Good condition. Local driving only
Contact Sarah (859) 640-5616 or segood03@gmail.com

GOOD JOB REMODELING LLC & HANDYMAN
Now accepting small to large jobs.
Free Estimates. Licensed and insured.
Call Steven at (859) 801-9925

GOESSLING LANDSCAPING
New installations, maintenance and tree removal. Find us at GoesslingLandscaping.com
Call Norb at (859) 912-0340

CALL CHUCK AT THE MESSENGER FOR INFORMATION ON placings your ad in the Classified Advertisements.
(859) 392-1572

Job Opportunities at Catholic Charities.
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington is adding services and growing, and this is an exciting time to serve in our local Church. If you have a desire to work in an environment where you can truly make a difference by serving others, Catholic Charities seeks candidates to fill the following positions:

Mental Health Agency Counselor
We are seeking a full-time counselor for our agency’s mental health program. The position includes general counseling services to individuals, couples and families. This is a 40-hour a week, evening hours. Necessary qualifications include MSW or Master in clinical counseling and State Licensed (preferred) or license eligibility, experience with assessment, diagnosis, and treatment and solid record keeping and organizational skills.

Jail Ministry Coordinator
We are seeking to hire a part-time (16 hours a week) Jail Ministry Coordinator. General responsibilities include: Develop and maintain resources that address needs of the incarcerated, the newly released, and their families; Provide a diocesan framework for the recruitment, certification and training of volunteers to participate in jail ministry program; coordinate and lead the jail ministry advisory committee and engage with members to provide support to jail ministry volunteers; participate in the Northern Kentucky Reentry Team; and monitor and support to the family support group. Necessary qualifications include bachelor’s degree in a human service field; Experience in pastoral ministry preferred; Ability to network and coordinate activities with community partners dedicated to working with prisoners, ex-offenders, and their families; Knowledge and understanding of community resources in Northern Kentucky; Strong boundaries, communication skills and excellent with details.

Additional details about each of the above opportunities can be found on our website at https://www.covingtoncharities.org/news-events/job-opportunities. Please contact Shannon Braun directly at sbraun@covingtoncharities.org if you would like to learn more about any of these opportunities.

CARE.NET
Join Care Net’s life-affirming team!

Part-Time RDMS Nurse Manager
Perform limited obstetric ultrasounds and STI testing. RN & RDMS licenses required. 12-18 hrs/wk, 1st shift, Mon-Thurs.

Part-Time RDMS Advocate
Perform limited obstetric ultrasounds. Active registry status & sonography certification required. 12-18 hrs/ wk, 1st shift, Mon-Thurs.

Part-Time Business/Community Liaison
Help build financial support for Care Net. 15 hrs/wk, Mon-Thurs.

Visit carenetky.org/employment, scan the code or call (859) 431-9178.
ication of all the individuals who have shaped this jour- ney,” Mrs. Miller said. “As I step into this role, I am mindful of the legacy that has been entrusted to me — a legacy of excellence, empowerment, and a commitment to nurtur-
ing young women who will make an impactful difference in the world. I am deeply honored to be a part of an insti-
tution that has been a beacon of transformative education for over a century.”

Mrs. Miller began her presidency at Notre Dame Academy on July 1. She has both educational and business leadership experience. She began her career as principal owner of Brands Insurance and subsequently co-founded West Chester Permit and Transportation Marketing Services in West Chester, Ohio. After 20 years, Mrs. Miller joined Teach for America giving her the opportunity to develop as an educator, which she found to be both chal-

In an interview, Aug. 29, Mrs. Miller said that she is committed to Catholic, single-gender education because she, herself has benefited from such an education.

“The missi

The mission of this school resonates very deeply with me because I went to an all-girls school. It felt more like a calling,” she said.

Mrs. Miller said that, in her experience, an all-girls school environment offers girls greater encouragement and more leadership opportunities. Research, she said, shows that students educated at an all-girls school outper-

“it was the opportunity to really start to lean into the potential and power we as women and really embrace leadership roles,” she said about her high school education. “For me it really informed all my professional life, from a confidence standpoint and from competency stand-

Mrs. Miller and her husband, Howard, have been mar-
ried for 25 years. They have four children. Both Mrs. and Mr. Miller enjoy scuba diving and have been blessed to scuba dive at many places around the world. Yet, her

“At Notre Dame Academy she has inherited a really strong program from its very strong founding members — the Sisters of Notre Dame.

“A little help can make a big difference.

Listening.
Caring.
Helping.
Providing the tools for seniors and families to navigate aging services.
SUMMIT23
(Continued from page 1.)

Eucharistic Revival, as SUMMIT retreats are Eucharistic retreats at their core. A Sunday Mass, which the whole family is invited to, and adoration, are staples of the retreat and will be prominently featured as in years past.

In addition to this foundation, SUMMIT23 aims to form a more “interactive” experience, according to Ms. Poat, with different zones within the retreat. SUMMIT23 will feature “different stations to experience community (with other high schoolers), whether they’re outside playing games or walking.” Other zones include a zone for young people to “play their musical instruments and jam together,” and an art zone.

“This year’s retreat is set to be held at Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, October 6-8. Early bird registration is available until Sept. 20, with more information and registration available at www.covdio.org/Summit23.”

Reporting Misconduct in the Diocese of Covington

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

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

Informando sobre conducta inapropiada en la Diócesis de Covington

Cualquier persona que haya experimentado conducta sexual inapropiada por parte de un clérigo, empleado o voluntario de la Diócesis de Covington está invitada a ponerse en contacto con Ms. Julie Feinauer, coordinadora diocesana para dar asistencia a las víctimas. Teléfono (859) 392-1515. Asistencia profesional y apoyo moral serán ofrecidos de una manera confidencial y con respeto.

Una copia de “Normas y Procedimientos sobre Conducta Sexual Inapropiada” está disponible poniéndose en contacto con la Cancillería, Teléfono (859) 392-1510, o viendo www.covdio.org y marcando “Sexual Misconduct Policy.”
Pope urges young Russians to sow seeds of peace

WASHINGTON — Although Russia’s continuing war on Ukraine may make peace seem an impossible dream, Pope Francis urged young Russian Catholics to sow seeds of reconciliation and peace however they can. “I wish you, young Russians, the vocation to be artisans of peace in the midst of so many conflicts, in the midst of so many polarizations on all sides, which plague our world,” the pope said during an hour-long video call Aug. 22 with 450 participants in a Russian Catholic youth festival. “I invite you to be sowers, to sow seeds of reconciliation, little seeds that in this winter of war will not abate from the frozen ground for the time being, but will bloom in a future spring,” he told them. “Have the courage to replace fears with dreams. Replace fears with dreams. Replace fears with dreams.”

Pope says there is a ‘strong reactionary’ element in U.S. Catholic Church

ROME — The Catholic Church in the United States has “a very strong reactionary” element that is well-organized and refuses to see how Catholic doctrine can and must grow and mature, Pope Francis told Jesuits in Portugal. “I would like to remind those people that ‘fundamentalism’ (being backward-looking is useless, and we need to understand that there is an appropriate evolution in the understanding of matters of faith and morals),” the pope said in a response to a question about U.S. Catholics during a meeting in Lisbon, Portugal, Aug. 5. La Civitas Cattolica published the transcript of the Lisbon encounter in Italian and English Aug. 28. A Jesuit brother had told the pope to speak his habitual year in the United States and something that made “a great impression” on him was how many Catholics, including bishops, were “criticizing your leadership, and the position of the pope responded, ‘In the United States the situation is not easy: there is a very strong reactionary attitude. It is organized and shapes the way people interact with one another.’”

“Governing attitude. It is organized and shapes the way people interact with one another,” the pope responded, “In the United States the situation is not easy: there is a very strong reactionary attitude. It is organized and shapes the way people interact with one another.”

Mental health crisis demands church’s integrated response, says Virginia bishop

Arlington, Va. — With National Suicide Prevention Month approaching in September, Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia — just a few miles from the nation’s capital — is urging mental health discussion and engagement, rather than avoidance and evasion. “Who of us do not know someone — even in our own families or maybe our- selves — who are struggling with significant mental health issues,” said Auxiliary Bishop Jan Sobilo. “Every bishop in the U.S. will express concern about the mental ill- ness crisis.”

In 2022, at least 49,489 Americans took their own lives. Referring to a suicide prevention initiative and mental health awareness response, said Bishop Burbidge: “We recognize the whole person — we, body, soul, spirit — and mental health is part of who we are.”

As we look forward to the next year welcoming the 2023 Virginia bishop

“Beloved of God, Overcomer of Sin, and Friend of the King” is a Day of Prayer for Mental Health” — dedicated to solidarity with those experiencing mental health challenges.

Mercenary leader’s death stirs Russia-Ukraine tension

Skadovsk has been occupied almost since the beginning of the Russian invasion. Russian troops entered the city at the beginning of March 2022. “Therefore, I ask everyone for prayers, so that the good Lord does not take from the people the opportunity to offer life at the cost of their children,” emphasized the bishop. Parishioners previously gathered in the church for prayer, but now they no longer have such an opportunity. The chapel is closed and no one is allowed in, the bishop said, asking for prayers for Catholics, who are being persecuted by the Russian occupiers. Skadovsk has been occupied almost since the beginning of the Russian invasion. Russian troops entered the city at the beginning of March 2022.

Prigozhin’s death would significantly impact Russian attitudes. “Some viewed Prigozhin as an opponent of Putin, who wished to change the balance of power and engage in a brutal war,” the Catholic bishop said, describing the dramatic event. With determined forces, they “broke down the door and broke into the chapel and began a search.” Bishop Szyrokoradiuk said, Russians, who are occupying the region, declared that their actions constituted a clear elimination designed to counteract terrorist activities. “Fortunately, there were no people in the chapel at that time. Second, the situation would have been captured as a terrorist,” stated the bishop. “Therefore, I ask for prayers, so that the good Lord may help us today for the deacons’ actions and the days of suffering for our people,” the bishop emphasized. The Russian bishop’s observations are captured in his interview conducted during the U.S. Congress, Aug. 22. “Abused victims are precisely the people whom a just and compassionate nation should protect.”

Church teachings, and this Nation’s historical traditions demonstrate that people who are masters of their own lives are the only ones who can give true value to the peace of a country and the security of its citizens. “As the Church teaches, and this Nation’s historical traditions demonstrate that people who are masters of their own lives are the only ones who can give true value to the peace of a country and the security of its citizens.”

As the Church teaches, and this Nation’s historical traditions demonstrate that people who are masters of their own lives are the only ones who can give true value to the peace of a country and the security of its citizens.

Life must be priority in gun rights case before high court

WASHINGTON — Protecting the innocent “is a proper consider- ation” in the government regulation of firearms, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said an amicus brief filed with the Supreme Court in a case over whether the government can prohibit a person with a domestic violence restraining order from possessing a firearm. In the fall, the court will hear oral arguments in the case, which stems from an attempt in 2017 to ban anyone held in contempt of court for violating a domestic violence restraining order from possessing a firearm. In the fall, the court will hear oral arguments in the case, which stems from an attempt in 2017 to ban anyone held in contempt of court for violating a domestic violence restraining order from possessing a firearm.

Church teaches, and this Nation’s historical traditions demonstrate that people who are masters of their own lives are the only ones who can give true value to the peace of a country and the security of its citizens.

Catholic bishops, faith leaders appeal for debt relief to help African countries

NAIROBI, Kenya — Ahead of major meetings of world leaders in September, Bishop Kevin J. Farrell, G20 New Delhi Summit and the 78th session of the UN. General Assembly, Catholic bishops and faith leaders in Africa are calling for debt relief for the continent to give Africa a “life line” to escape the multiple crises plaguing its population. Amid disaster, frustration and growing debt, inflation in Africa, economic burdens have been frustrating development, swelling poverty, and triggering conflicts and protests in some of the countries, according to the leaders. The word for them to fix many pressing needs of African people is debt, or rather its reduction. External debt in Africa stands at a total of $1.1 trillion, with 25 of the countries hard hit by serious debt crises. “External debt is the portion of a coun- try’s debt borrowed from foreign lenders, including commercial banks, governments or international financial institutions. African countries have been borrowing to finance their national budgets (debt financing) but have been incurring an ever-increasing interest rate in the process of repayment, frustrating their efforts to achieve the global sustainable development goals and climate goals outlined in the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement.” The leaders are con- cerned that debt reduction would come as a relief and benefit millions of ordinary people.
Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis asked a group of Italian journalists to shun fake news and a love of scandal, including when covering the Catholic Church and the upcoming assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

“Help me to narrate this process for what it really is, leaving behind the logic of slogans and pre-packaged stories,” he asked the group Aug. 26 as he accepted the “È Giornalismo” prize, which recognizes outstanding contributions to journalism.

Pope Francis told the group he realizes how “speaking of a ‘synod on synodality’ may seem something abstruse, self-referential, excessively technical, of little interest to the general public,” but the whole process, which began in 2021 with listening sessions on the local, national and regional levels “is something truly important for the Church.”

At a moment in history “when there is much talk and little listening, and when the sense of the common good is in danger of weakening,” he said, “the Church as a whole has embarked on a journey to rediscover the word ‘together.’”

All the baptized must “walk together, question together, take responsibility together for communal discernment, which for us is prayer,” the pope told the group.

The synod assembly Oct. 4-29 at the Vatican, he said, will bring together bishops, priests, religious and laypeople from around the world with the purpose of “listening together, discerning together, praying together.”

With so much of the world experiencing a “culture of exclusion,” the pope said, the Church can model a better way, one in which everyone finds a welcome and no one echoes the prayer of the Pharisee in Luke’s Gospel who says, “I thank you, Lord, because I am not like this, I am not like that” rather than thanking God for his gifts.

Pope Francis explained to the group that St. Paul VI reinstated the Synod of Bishops at the end of the Second Vatican Council “because he realized that in the Western church synodality had disappeared, whereas in the Eastern church they still have this dimension.”

“Please, let us get used to listening to each other, to talking, not cutting someone’s head off over a word,” but rather learning “to listen, to discuss in a mature way.”

“This is a grace we all need in order to move forward. And it is something the Church today offers the world, a world so often so incapable of making decisions, even when our very survival is at stake,” Pope Francis said.

“The Catholic Church, he said, is trying to learn a new way of living relationships, listening to one another in order to hear and follow the voice of the Spirit.”

“We have opened our doors, we have offered everyone the opportunity to participate, we have taken into account everyone’s needs and suggestions,” he said. “We want to contribute together to building a Church where everyone feels at home, where no one is excluded.”

The Church is for everyone, he said. “There are no first, second or third-class Catholics, no. All together. Everyone. It is the Lord’s invitation.”

Pope Francis listens to Giancarlo Aneri, one of the founders of the Italian “È Giornalismo” prize, during an audience in the library of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican Aug. 26, 2023. Pope Francis asked Italian journalists to help him communicate effectively about the upcoming Synod of Bishops.