Seminary Ball returns for 2023 event with new program and updates

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

The Seminary Ball, hosted annually in the autumn by the diocesan Office of Stewardship and Mission Services, returns Oct. 27 for its 2023 event.

Hosted at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center, the event includes live string music, cocktail hour, dinner and dancing. The Seminary Ball is a major event promoting vocations in the Diocese of Covington and is the Office of Stewardship and Mission’s primary fundraiser for seminarian education.

This year, changes have been made to the event’s program to “make the ball more enjoyable for everyone involved,” said Jim Hess, director of the Office of Stewardship and Mission.

Changes to the evening include an extension of the open bar to be open the whole event instead of until after dinner, hors d’oeuvres will be served during cocktail hour and the cocktail hour ballroom is to be open all evening so that guests who do not want to dance may still enjoy the ball and socialize.

In addition to these changes are changes to the event’s program itself. In years past, the diocese’s seminarians would sing a choral song together to the attendees of the ball. This year, however, the participation of the seminarians will be a little different.

“In place of the singing, we’re going to do live interviews with the seminarians with Bishop Iffert,” said Mr. Hess, “and he’ll be conducting those interviews and asking them questions about themselves, their time at seminary and maybe their vocation story.”

In addition to this, the video typically played for Seminary Ball attendees will feature a “day in the life of a seminarian” as opposed to the usual interview format.

“I think it’ll give people a great opportunity to hear directly from the seminarians and to see them engaging with each other and with the bishop,” Mr. Hess said.

All are invited to attend the Seminary Ball, with RSVP’s available until October 13. More information on attending the ball and on sponsorship can be found online on the diocesan website, https://covdio.org/seminaryball/.
Pam McQueen, principal, and the faculty, staff and students of Villa Madonna High School welcomed Bishop John Iffert to campus, Sept. 1, for Mass opening the 2023–24 school year. Students led the music, and filled the roles of servers, lector and cantor.

The Gospel reading from Matthew (25:1–13), has Jesus telling the parable of the five wise and five foolish bridesmaids. The wise bridesmaids had brought extra oil for their lamps in case the bridegroom was delayed. The foolish bridesmaids did not.

The bridegroom was long overdue, and the foolish bridesmaids’ lamps burned out; they had to leave to get more oil. When the bridegroom arrived, the foolish bridesmaids were not there to enter the celebration. When they returned, they banged on the door and begged to be allowed in. The bridegroom looked at them and replied, “I do not know you.”

“This doesn’t mean that he doesn’t recognize their voices,” Bishop Iffert said in his homily. “This means he doesn’t recognize himself in them. He doesn’t see the friendship that should be there. He doesn’t see the devotion.”

Bishop Iffert equates the situation to a couple that in the heat of an argument declares, “I don’t even know you anymore.”

“This is what Jesus is saying to them. The image of Christ that should be there to correspond to the call of holiness, just, is missing because we failed to live for others. We failed to live life for Christ. He warns us against that failure and calls us to faithfulness. ... Jesus invites us to be attentive, most of all to growing in his image but also in loving the people he sends our way to serve ... Let us stay awake together, being sensitive to Christ wherever we see him, judging correctly what is needed and acting for goodness and holiness in the world.”

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.
The Equestrian Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem Diocese of Covington held its annual Bishop’s Mass and dinner, Aug. 31, with Bishop John Iffert. The social event is a time for Knights and Dames of the order to express their gratitude to the bishop.

After dinner, Msgr. Gerald Twaddell, prior of the Covington section of the Order, announced the establishment of the order’s first Squires, not only for the local Lieutenancy but in the United States. Squires are young Catholics, ages 20 to 35, and are an auxiliary of the Order in the Diocese of Covington. “They were established to provide a path for young Catholic men and women to engage in a deeper spiritual life experience through association with the Knights and Dames so that they may grow in the virtues that lead to a true following of the Lord,” said Msgr. Twaddell in an April Messenger article.

Five of the six Square investees attended the dinner. The Squires will be formally invested Sept. 14 at Mary, Seat of Wisdom Chapel on the campus of Thomas More University.

In his comments at the dinner Bishop Iffert said, “I love to see that you are making it very intentional to encourage young people to participate in the spirituality of the Equestrian Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. I think that’s an incredible gift to share with them.”

At the dinner, Sir Stephen Enzweiler and Sir Nelson Rodriguez unveiled the cape that the Squires will receive at the investiture. To keep costs down for the Squires, Sir Enzweiler handmade the capes. The Squires will wear the cape at all official liturgical events.

On behalf of the Order, Sir Enzweiler presented Bishop Iffert a check for the diocese’s Seminary Education Fund, saying “It’s important for us to have good priests, well educated, well formed. Men who step forward out of the world to devote their lives to the holy priesthood, to dedicate their lives to the one true faith, and to the one Lord and Savior of all — Jesus Christ.”

Knights and Dames welcome Squires at annual Bishop’s Dinner

Thomas More University announces Kentucky’s first Dyslexia Institute

Staff report

A truly one-of-a-kind initiative, Thomas More University’s School of Education launches the commonwealth’s first Dyslexia Institute. The institute supports students and the greater community through sharing resources that are intentionally designed to promote awareness and create change by highlighting the dyslexic profile. Programming through the institute includes assessment clinics, teacher training, direct family support and more.

“Thomas More is the first university in the commonwealth to have a dyslexia specific resource for our students and our community,” said Kayla Steltenkamp, Ph.D., assistant professor in the School of Education. “Dr. Steltenkamp is a renowned expert in the field of literacy.”

(Continued on page 14)
The work is hard, the reward is great

Karen Zengel

I’ve just returned from World Youth Day in Lisbon, my fourth experience of this unique gathering. I had attended the celebrations in Madrid (2011), Krakow (2016), and Panama (2019), but in many ways this was, for me, the most memorable. First, a few general remarks. I believe that World Youth Day is one of Pope John Paul II’s greatest gifts to the Catholic Church, its appeal continuing unabated, some 40 years after it was launched. Though nay-sayers have consistently predicted, or even called for, its demise, this international confab of young Catholics shows no signs of running out of steam.

As is always the case, this World Youth Day in Lisbon featured armies of kids from practically every nation on earth, simultaneously celebrating their nationalities and their common Catholic affiliation, effortlessly resolving the potential tension between those identities. And as always before, this one centered around the presence of the successor St. Peter; the visible sign of the Church’s unity.

Though Pope Francis is, by any measure, an old man, he, by virtue of his office and his personal charisma, drew young people to him like a magnet. By some estimates, a million and a half people showed up for the closing Mass. I took the privilege of speaking on five separate occasions in Lisbon. My first engagement was with a huge crowd of young people from France. Because I had studied in Paris for my doctorate and hence had some facility in the language, the French bishops had asked me to address this group.

When I arrived at the venue — an expansive area near the Tagus River — the French kids were dancing to and singing with a very energetic band. Then, they were regaled by a video presentation from a very popular French footballer, who evidently lives his Catholic faith with enthusiasm. Judging from their boisterous reaction, I gathered that they were delighted that this sports hero was on their own spiritual team.

Next, I came out, clutching my prepared text more than a little nervously since I hadn’t spoken French in public for nearly 40 years. But the kids seemed able to tolerate my American accent. I spoke to them of their own marvelous spiritual heritage, expressed so richly in the great cathedrals of Amiens, Reims, Notre Dame de Paris, and Chartres, buildings that had sung so powerfully to generations of young people from France.

As I was clear, I am a Jesuit and theology professor at the University of St. Mary-of-the-Plain, a Jesuit teaching institution in Lisbon. At the invocation of the Vatican Dicastery on Education and Culture, I was asked to address a group of teachers, professors, and administrators on the topic of Catholic education.

Toward my cums from St. Bonaventure and St. John Henry Newman, I argued that the Church must stand at the heart of the circle of university disciplines and that he do so noncompetitively, not compromising the integrity of the other subjects, but rather making them more luminous and beautiful. I was particularly moved by the eagerness and enthusiasm of the young scholars and aspiring teachers who listened to me that afternoon.

Then, that evening, I gave an extended homily at the Benediction service offered to over 12,000 young Americans who had assembled in a large park in the northern section of Lisbon. The weather was perfect, the mood was festive and yet prayerful, and when the Eucharist was brought forth, a very moving silence fell over the massive throng.

I spoke to the young people about proclaiming the real Christ and not a watered-down simulacrum. When the real Jesus is declared, I said, hearts are set on fire. I concluded my remarks that night with the reminder that, though our culture is obsessed with safety, a religion that places before our eyes on a regular basis the image of a man nailed to a cross is not a religion that puts a high premium on safety. The Church is not interested so much in keeping us safe as preparing us for spiritual adventure and the embrace of our mission.

(Continued on page 14)
If today you hear his voice

The readings for the twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time — Cycle A are: Ezekiel 33:7-9; Romans 13:8-10; and Matthew 18:15-20.

"If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Romans 13:8-10

"This is what I am calling you to do." John 6:35

After grade school, that’s when the noise entered my life. The noise of the world surrounding me trying to drown out the voice of God. 

Even in the loudest moments, in the shouting of our culture could not completely drown out the voice of God. In those moments when I wanted to hide from my vocation, or run away from the call, the voice of God kept getting stronger, calling me to the priesthood. I finally entered the seminary and was ordained when I finished my studies.

There are many songs, readings, and prayers that speak of surrendering to the will of God. In surrendering I found peace. “If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”

Father Gregory Bach

Who taught Abraham to be a great man of faith, the patriarch of Israel? Who taught Moses to lead his people out of Egypt to the Promised Land? Who taught Joshua and Caleb to be the great military leaders of their people Israel? Who called and taught the great Prophets, like Elijah and Elisha, to minister to the people of Israel?

It was God himself.

This is called the Divine Pedagogy (teaching).

Jesus himself, who is God in the flesh, taught his disciples and the people of his time in person. It isawe-some! Yes indeed, it is awesome to learn from the divine mouth of Jesus about God and his mission on earth. Jesus’ teaching of his disciples and His people of His time is also called the “Divine Pedagogy.”

Today are you able to sit down with God and in the old days you learn the words of Jesus and tell us of his time. The same is true of the Gospel of John 14:18. “No, I will not leave you, nor forsake you as orphans – I will come to you.”

How does Jesus come to you and me? In the same Gospel of John 14:6-18, Jesus says “And I will ask the Father and He will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads to all truth.”

The secular world cannot receive him because it is not looking for him and does not recognize him. But you know him because he lives in you. He will not abandon you as orphans – he will come to you.

When does a person truly become an orphan? When he or she does not know God or does not have a relationship with God. When he or she does not participate in the divine food — Jesus, the Eucharist.

Jesus said, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” (John 6:35). “…unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you cannot have eternal life within you. But anyone who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life...” (John 6:63).

Even though the election for President of the United States isn’t until November 2024, today’s political climate has moved everything up. It seems that as soon as a politi-
cian is elected to office, his or her first act of business is to start running for office in the next election — no matter how far off it is.

If you are like me and many other Catholics I talk to, you are not happy with our current govern-
ment’s actions and not happy with what seems to be our options for voting in the future. Maybe at times you are considering not even voting.

However, while we are faithful Catholics, we are also citizens of this great country we live in. It’s hard not to be a part of it or to just give up on voting for anyone.

There are too many objectionable platforms, issues and personalities in the upcoming elections. In addition to that, too many candidates just want to attack their opponents and not even coherently state what their platforms are. Special interest groups do their best to muddy the waters as well.

It’s not too early to start looking at all the candidates for office and their positions on issues and try to form an informed decision as to who to vote for. What is a faithful and moral Catholic to do? How do we vote and at the same feel comfortable that we have made a good moral choice?

Fortunately, we have help in our decision making that has been provided by the Bishops in the United States. It is called “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.” I have always believed that it should be every Catholic’s vote’s guide as to what the Church teaches and how to make moral decisions when voting.

Here is what “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship” has to say about making our decisions as to who to vote for:

Catholics often face difficult choices about how to vote. This is why it is so important to vote according to a well-informed conscience that perceives the proper rela-
tionship among moral goods. A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who favors a policy promoting an intrinsically evil act such as abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, deliberately subjecting workers or the poor to subhuman living conditions, redefining marriage in ways that vi-
late its essential meaning, or racist behavior; if the voter’s intent is to support that position. In such cases, a Catholic would be guilty of formal cooperation in grave evil. At the same time, a voter should not use a candi-
date’s opposition to an intrinsic evil to justify indifference or inattentiveness to other important moral issues involving human life and dignity.

Some candidates who are not free from the intrinsic evil described, we can’t really vote for anyone, right? i think it’s important to note the wording in the last para-
thraph, “if the voter’s intent is to support that position.” It is possible to vote for a candidate but not support the candidate’s policies or position on a certain issue.

Bishops go on to say:

“...When all candidates hold a position that promotes an intrinsically evil or the conscientious voter faces a dilemma. The voter may decide to take the extraordinary step of not voting for any candidate or after careful delib-
eration, may decide to vote for the candidate deemed less likely to advance such a morally flawed position and more likely to pursue other authentic human goods.

Since there are so many issues involved in the upcom-
ing election season, and so many candidates, believe it’s never too early to start reviewing what the Church teach-
es regarding moral issues versus the positions candidates are taking.

The issue of abortion and marriage rights will take
All high-school aged students in the Diocese of Covington are encouraged to attend this year’s SUMMIT 23. SUMMIT 23 is a weekend Eucharistic retreat of prayer, music, interactive activity zones that engage creativity and witness talks.

Paul Allison, a senior at the University of Kentucky and graduate of Covington Catholic High School, is one of the speakers that will be sharing a witness.

Mr. Allison has attended several SUMMIT retreats when it was known as YOUTH 2000 and just recently returned from World Youth Day in Lisbon. “I’m really excited to just share about my own experience of the faith and just share about my relationship with Christ,” said Mr. Allison in an interview about the upcoming retreat. “You can have all these different crazy things but when it comes down to it, like relationship and prayer is what matters.”

Mr. Allison said that he has been fortunate to have “incredible people” who have mentored, taught and invested in him. “Who have loved me, really,” he said.

“Prayer has been redefined for me,” he said. “It’s actually a relationship. It’s a time of growing in friendship and relationship with the God of the universe, with Jesus Christ the person and with the Holy Spirit living inside of you. I’m excited to break the box of what a lot of high schoolers might think of prayer as and show that prayer is actually exciting.”

SUMMIT 23 is organized and sponsored by the diocesan Office of Catechesis and Evangelization. The retreat will be held at Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, Oct. 6–8. Bishop John Iffert will kick-off the retreat Friday evening with a witness talk and will lead Eucharistic adoration. This year’s retreat is open only to high-school aged students. Chaperones are not required as supervision is being provided. Early bird registration is available until Sept. 20. Information and registration information is available online at www.covdio.org/Summit23.

SUMMIT 23 — breaking prayer outside the box

Paul Allison (center) and friends pictured here at Damascus, Centerburg, Ohio.

Mr. Allison will share his witness at the diocesan SUMMIT 23 Eucharistic retreat, Oct. 6-8, at Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills.

All high-school aged students are invited.
As Argentines prepare to elect their new president Oct. 22, a group of clergy close to Pope Francis launched an unprecedented intervention in the highly charged political atmosphere in the South American country.

The Archdiocese of Buenos Aires’ group of “curas villeros,” Spanish for “slum priests,” celebrated a reparation Mass for the insults targeting Pope Francis by the presidential candidate who won the primaries in August, Javier Milei, who has been quoted as calling the pontiff an “imbecile” and accused him of having poverty as a model.

Those ideas have been customarily accompanied with offenses may not have impacted the votes of many nominally Catholic at the time. Analysts say that most people do not relate the elections and the pontiff, so those offenses may not have impacted the votes of many Catholics.

But some people, especially in the poor neighborhoods, have been outraged, said Father Lorenzo de Veddia, known as Padre Toto, a longtime cura villero in a slum in the Barracas district of Buenos Aires who was one of the priests celebrating the Sept. 5 Mass.

“One can notice that many people have not liked so much aggressiveness, so many insults and so many lies,” he told OSV News.

The Mass in support of Pope Francis — and “of the poor in our country” — as the invitation said, was said at Padre Toto’s parish, one of the many which were accompanied with great interest by the then-Archbishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio.

The curas villeros’ movement was organized at the end of the 1960s to give special attention to the residents of the poor neighborhoods, which had a fast growth in the second half of the 20th century. The priests not only play a religious role among the poor, but also actively participate in the communities’ daily life, helping them to organize and fight for their rights to be respected.

During his tenure as a bishop and then as the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, the pope had a special connection with many members of that movement. Dozens of them took part in the reparation Mass.

(Continued on page 12)
“Is it possible to make my knee feel better without surgery?”

- Jason, Fort Thomas, KY

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Sports Medicine

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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 11.2, Spectrum 117 or 20; Cincinnati Bell 117 or 117, and DirectTV 35.

St. Mary's Cathedral 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 conclures 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-8 in reading, English and math. For information, call (859) 269-4487 or e-mail Sister Maria Therese at smtherese@nduec.org. Volunteers 18 and older must be VISIBLE compliant.

Notre Dame Urban Education Center is seeking to hire a part-time van driver to bring children from local schools to the Center from 9-4 p.m., Monday through Thursdays. Driver must be VISIBLE compliant. Call (859) 269-4487.

The Class of 1963, St. Thomas School, Ft. Thomas, is celebrating its 60-year reunion. There is a luncheon planned for Sept. 10, 2023, 1 p.m., Summit Hills Country Club, Edgewood. Contact Carol Clear Combis at: cleartl2000@cinc.oh.com or (513) 852-8273.

St. Patrick School, Mayville, Sept. 6-10 p.m.; Sept. 9, 6-10 p.m.; Sept. 10, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

St. Timothy Oktoberfest, Union, Sept. 15, 6-11 p.m.

St. Joseph Church, Camp Springs, will be hosting their Oktoberfest Fish Fries, October 6, and 13, 4-7:30 p.m. Drive-in and carry-out available, more information at www.stjosephcampsprings.org.

The Institute for Religious Liberty welcomes Stephanie Barclay, director, Notre Dame Law School Religious Liberty Initiative, as the keynote speaker for its fall event, Oct. 19, 7 p.m., Stenger Hall in the Saints Center of Thomas More University’s campus. Guest commentators include Holly Hinckley Lesan, International Center for Law & Religion Studies at Brigham Young University (BYU) Law School and Gary Greenberg, retard principal in the Cincinnati law office of Jackson Lewis PC, and president of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati. For information visit thomasmore.edu/religialiberty.

DCCH Children’s Home Flea Market. Ft. Mitchell, year-round, 8:30 a.m. - noon, Monday, Thursday and 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 relationships and gain courage to discover new life. Registration is required. Visit https://covid19.org/new-beginnings/ or call (502) 691-1300, ext. 1028. The next session will be held on consecutive Tuesdays, Aug. 29 – Oct. 17, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Holy Trinity Elementary School, Bellevue.

Save the date for Thomas More University’s fall interfaith event hosted by the Wm. T. (Bill) Robinson III ’67 Institute for Religious Liberty on Oct. 19, 2023. The event begins at 7 p.m. with Stephanie Barclay as keynote speaker. Barclay directs Notre Dame University’s Law School’s Religious Liberty Initiative, which promotes freedom of religion or belief for all people through advocacy, student formation, and scholarship. More details to come. Visit thomasmore.edu/religialiberty for more information.

Rextown has helped tens of thousands of couples at all stages of disillusionment or misery in their marriage. This program can help you, too. For confidential information or to register for the September 2023 program begin on stages 1-3, call (513) 486-6222, or visit www.HelpOurMarriage.com.

Free clinic again takes home the Gold
Franciscan Daughter of Mary Mother Seraphina and Sheila Carroll, APEN and executive director of the Rose Garden Center for Hope and Healing, proudly display the Center’s third Gold Standard award from the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics (NACFC). Gold represents the highest level of achievement for breadth and delivery of patient services, responsiveness, efficacy, policies and administration.

The Center, which is Northern Kentucky’s only free walk-in primary care clinic, is the health ministry of the Rose Garden Home Mission of the Franciscan Daughters of Mary of Covington. The Mission provides free healthcare, as well as food and family resources to all who ask, and its work relies entirely on donations and volunteers. To volunteer as a medical, psychological or dental professional, or as a receptionist, contact the Center for Hope and Healing at rghmclinic@gmail.com.

Allen Hunt. Mr. Hunt is a former mega church pastor and is now a member of the Dynamic Catholic Board of Directors. Mark your calendar for the next in the series, “Imagining the Divine in Parenthood in the Everyday,” with Jack Beans, Oct. 4, same time, same place.

You’re invited to the Notre Dame Urban Education Center, Covington, “Cheers to a New School Year” open house. Sept. 22, 5-7:30 p.m. Learn about its mission, tour the Center, enjoy good food and drinks, and meet the staff and Board of Directors. Save the date — Sept. 23, a day of recollection and exploration into the interconnectedness of the mind, body and soul at St. Joseph Heights, Park Hills, featuring speakers Mgr. William Cleves, Kathy Kramer and Jessica Muehleikamp. 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 holyslistenimg3@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 rghmclinic.org or call Andy and Melanie Reinersman at 859-653-8464.

Notre Dame Urban Education Center from 2–4 p.m., Monday through Thursdays. Driver must be VISIBLE compliant. Call (859) 269-4487.

St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs, welcomes all parents to celebrate the Season of Creation. Refreshments to follow. All are welcome. Sept. 17, 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.

To volunteer as a medical, psychological or dental professional, or as a receptionist, contact the Center for Hope and Healing at rghmclinic@gmail.com.
Pope Francis said he knows people wonder why he traveled close to 6,000 miles to Mongolia to visit a Catholic community of only 1,450 people. “Because it is precisely there, far from the spotlight, that we often find the signs of the presence of God, who does not look at appearances, but at the heart,” he told thousands of people gathered in St. Peter’s Square for his weekly general audience Sept. 6.

Following his usual practice of speaking about a trip at the first audience after his return, the pope said that during his Sept. 1-4 stay the country’s capital, Ulaanbaatar, he encountered “a humble and joyful church, which is in the heart of God,” but one that was excited to find itself at the center of the universal church’s attention for a few days. “I have been to the heart of Asia, and it has done me good,” the pope said. The missionaries who arrived in Mongolia in 1992 “did not go there to proselytize,” the pope said. “They went to live like the Mongolian people, to speak their language, the language of the people, to learn the values of that people and to preach the Gospel in a Mongolian style, with Mongolian words.”

Pope Francis said the joy, goodness, humility he saw in Mongolia

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia — Greeted with “aaruuul,” a dried yogurt cheese, which he tried, Pope Francis arrived in Ulaanbaatar for a four-day visit. After the nine-hour overnight flight from Rome, the pope’s arrival Sept. 1 was low key. Battsetseg Batmunkh, Mongolia’s foreign minister, met him at Chinggis Khaan International Airport and had a brief meeting with him in the airport VIP lounge. Afterward, the pope was driven into the city for a day of rest at the headquarters of the Catholic Church in Mongolia, the Apostolic Prefecture of Ulaanbaatar. During his flight from Rome, the pope, who had said he was going to the “heart of Asia,” told reporters traveling with him that Mongolia is a vast country with a very small population and a great culture that needs to be understood more with the senses than with the intellect. He also suggested they listen to the music of 19th-century Russian composer Alexander Borodin, who wrote “In the Steppes of Central Asia.”

To the Pope, the “heart of Asia,” said the missionaries, who had worked in Mongolia for decades, “is in the heart of God.”

Pope Francis and Mongolian President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh wave to a small crowd watching an official welcome ceremony in Sukhbaatar Square in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Sept. 2, 2023.

Pope Francis and a woman named Tsetsege leave a ger on the grounds of Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Sept. 2, 2023. The Mongolian woman, who uses only one name, found a statue of Mary in a garbage landfill and gave it to missionaries; it is now venerated in the cathedral as Our Lady of Heaven.

Pope Francis arrived in Mongolia, the ‘heart of Asia’
Francis told Mongolian leaders their country can play “a significant role in the heart of the great Asian continent and on the international scene,” particularly in peacemaking. After paying tribute to Mongolian history at a statue of Genghis Khan outside the State Palace early Sept. 2, the pope invoked the “Pax Mongolica” of the 13th and 14th centuries when peace reigned throughout the conquered lands of the vast Mongolian empire. In a country with only about 1,450 Catholics, just a few hundred people came to Sükhbaatar Square outside the State Palace to see the pope. After the formal welcome in the square, Pope Francis held a private meeting with Mongolian President Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh in a ceremonial ger, sometimes referred to as a yurt.

**Pope encourages little Mongolian flock in faith, unity, witness**

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia (CNS) — In a cathedral shaped like a ger, Pope Francis met leaders of Mongolia’s tiny Catholic community, offering them encouragement but also reminding them that faith and unity must be at the center of their lives. Without daily prayer and respect for the structure and unity of the church, “our strength will fail, and our pastoral work will risk becoming an empty delivery of services, a roster of duties that end up inducing only weariness and frustration,” the pope said Sept. 2. At the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul in Ulaanbaatar, the pope met with Cardinal Giorgio Marengo, apostolic prefect of Ulaanbaatar, and with the priests, religious and lay volunteers who minister to Mongolia’s 1,450 Catholics and offer education, health care, food, shelter and other social support to thousands of others. Pope Francis praised the churchworkers for making love for the poor their “calling card” but assured the government and those suspicious of the church that “the Lord Jesus, in sending his disciples into the world, did not send them to spread political theories, but to bear witness by their lives to the newness of his relationship with his Father; now our Father.’’

**Jesus is the answer to human longing, pope says at Mass in Mongolia**

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia — Like the land struck by a “zud,” the human heart has a thirst and longing that can be alleviated only by the God of love, Pope Francis told Mongolians gathered for Mass in Ulaanbaatar’s Strype Arena. Countless generations of Mongolians have feared the “zud,” an extreme weather event of drought or impenetrable ice that decimates herds and flocks. In his homily at the Mass Sept. 3, Pope Francis emphasized the day’s response to Psalm 63: “My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.” He said “We are that dry land thirsting for fresh water; water that can slake our deepest thirst. Our hearts long to discover the secret of true joy, a joy that even in the midst of existential aridity, can accompany and sustain us.” Every person thirsts for happiness, for direction and meaning in life, the pope said. But “more than anything, we thirst for love, for only love can truly satisfy us, bring us fulfillment, inspire inner assurance and allow us to savour the beauty of life.” Pope Francis told the estimated 2,000 people in the arena that “the Christian faith is the answer to this thirst; it takes it seriously, without dismissing it or trying to replace it with tranquilizers or surrogates.” The Mongolian Catholic community numbers only about 1,450, but hundreds of Catholics from throughout Central Asia traveled to Ulaanbaatar for the papal Mass. While the Chinese government refused to allow any Catholic bishop or priest from the mainland to attend, small groups of lay Catholics managed to cross the border to see the pope, and official church delegations arrived from Hong Kong and Macau. Bishops and pilgrims also came from South Korea and Vietnam.

**Pope, Mongolian religious leaders vow to promote harmony, shun violence**

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia — The 86-year-old Pope Francis and other religious elders gathered in a ger-shaped theater to speak of the earth and the divine, harmony and beauty, peace and the human family. In Mongolia, where all religion was brutally repressed for seven decades under communist rule, Pope Francis paid tribute Sept. 3 especially to Mongolia’s Buddhists, the largest religious group in the country; beginning in the late 1930s, thousands of Buddhist monks were condemned to death and hundreds of Buddhist temples were destroyed. The pope prayed that the memory of past suffering would give all Mongolians “the strength needed to transform dark wounds into sources of light, senseless violence into wisdom of life (and) devastating evil into constructive goodness.”

Leaders of the Buddhist, shamanist, Muslim, Evangelical, Seventh-day Adventist, Latter-day Saints, Hindu, Shinto, Baha’i and Russian Orthodox communities in Mongolia also spoke at the event in Ulaanbaatar’s Hun Theatre.

(Continued on page 12)
Father di Paola, Padre Pepe, a close friend of Pope Francis, said in an interview to radio La Patriada Sept. 3, that Milei’s attacks are not only against the pontiff, but against the Church as a whole.

“It is an attack on Catholic law, on the Church’s social doctrine. He is virtually saying that the Church’s social doctrine is bulls*** exactly because it points to social justice,” Father di Paola declared.

According to sociologist Marcos Carbonelli, a researcher of Argentina’s National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET) and an expert on the nation’s religious dynamics, said that although “the curas villeros are prestigious agents,” their ability to influence the election is “low.”

“The world of the poor in Argentina is very fragmented nowadays,” he stressed.

Milei received significant support in many villas in Buenos Aires, which have been historically connected to Peronism, a left-wing movement based on the ideas and legacy of Argentine ruler Juan Perón (1895–1974).

With its devalued currency, Argentina has triple-digit inflation and 40 percent of the population lives in poverty—which sparks anger toward traditional politics. The latest polls show that Milei remains ahead of challengers with at least 32 percent of support, while left-winger Sergio Massa is in second with 26 percent and right-winger Patricia Bullrich is behind with 20 percent.

Charity is motivated by love, not designed to win converts, pope says

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia — Pope Francis ended his four-day visit to Mongolia where Catholic missionaries began — with charity. Blessing the new House of Mercy in Ulaanbaatar Sept. 4, the pope insisted that while Catholic charitable and social service activities have attracted Mongolians to the church, the service is motivated by love alone. Pope Francis used his speech to the charity workers and volunteers “to reject certain myths,” including one about why Catholics offer education and health care, feed the hungry, shelter the homeless and care for widows and orphans. A big myth, he said, is that “the Catholic Church, distinguished throughout the world for its great commitment to works of social promotion, does all this to proselytize; as if caring for others were a way of enticing people to ‘join up.’”

“Né! Christians do whatever they can to alleviate the suffering of the needy because in the person of the poor they acknowledge Jesus, the son of God, and, in him, the dignity of each person, called to be a son or daughter of God,” the pope insisted.

Slum priests celebrate reparation Mass

(Continued from page 7)

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Slum priests celebrate reparation Mass

(Continued from page 7)
U.S. bishops’ delegation sees hard realities, pastoral needs of farmworkers

Ann Hess
OSV News

YAKIMA, Wash. — “The church doesn’t have a mission; the mission has a church,” said Bishop Joseph J. Tyson of the Diocese of Yakima. “Some might think this is true because the Yakima Diocese is the largest producer of apples, blueberries, hops, pears, sprinkled oil and sweet cherries, and the second-largest producer of apricots, asparagus, grapes, potatoes and raspberries, in the U.S. But the work is poorly paid, backbreaking, and low in status. Growers looking to hire have historically drawn to the Yakima Diocese’s Catholic parishioners, the oldest residents — its Indigenous people — and its newest arrivals from rural and disadvantaged parts of the United States, looking for labor and a chance to get ahead. According to one of the workers who stays at FairBridge Inn, about $108 is deducted weekly from each paycheck to cover the workers’ food, although the amount depends on the contract workers have with their employer. There are difficulties described by some of the workers. Hernandez was also touched by how the workers establish a community, especially Mass. One noted that it helps to have life be more than just work and the phone, and he enjoys taking English and guitar classes. Another said that it helps to have life be more than just work and the phone, and he enjoys taking English and guitar classes. There are difficulties described by some of the workers. They explained the men are locked in the grounds for security purposes once they return at the end of the workday; they must ask permission to go to the store and are not allowed out to just take a walk. The fence around the property shocked the delegation.

Migrant farmworkers share their experiences with the U.S. bishops’ delegation on August 28, 2023, as Father Jesús Mariscal (far right), parochial vicar at St. Paul Cathedral in Yakima, Wash., looks on.

Migrant camps house the families that follow the harvest as well as some H-2A workers. They may be a combination of tents, trailers, and other temporary structures. In Wenatchee, about a two-hour drive from the city of Yakima, Sandra Barros of St. Joseph Catholic Church, described how they carry out ministry there. “We bring food, and diapers for the families, but most of all, we bring the sacraments.”

Many of the young people are not in one place long enough to receive a conventional preparation for first communion or confirmation. Barros has built a mailing list of 100 families since 2019, and she communicates with them year-round. “They feel we are with them,” she said.

Hernandez was also touched by how the workers establish a sense of community especially through their faith. He added that the migrant ministry within the Yakima Diocese is a model for different areas of ministry because it centered on walking alongside migrants as brothers and sisters “to collectively build upon the kingdom of God on this land.”

The last stop of the pastoral visit was a migrant camp in Monitor; near Wenatchee, where the three bishops present — Bishop Tyson, and Bishop Rui E. L. Almeida and Bishop Frank R. Schuster, both auxiliary bishops of the Archdiocese of Seattle — concelebrated Mass and the workers shared a feast with the delegation.

Esther Morash, who has been organizing Wednesday night Masses at the migrant camp for 15 years, which was the seed of the ministry locally, said, “I’ve never met nicer people than these farmworkers. When they leave, they always turn around and say, thank you.”

Encompassing seven counties in Central Washington, the Yakima Diocese serves about 176,000 Catholics in 39 parishes and three mission churches, with about two-thirds being Hispanic. During the harvest, an estimated 100,000 migrant workers reside in the region, according to the diocese’s episcopal vicar.

The delegation visited an orchard in nearby Zillah, where pickers, elbows flashing, were harvesting apples. Later, the group toured a Fruit packing plant.

The most riveting encounter for many participants was a visit to FairBridge Inn. Formerly a hotel, it now houses about 1,300 H-2A workers.

The workers’ H-2A visas are for temporary work only; the employer is required to provide employment opportunities for at least three-quarters of the number of hours in the job offer. Employers must provide housing for employees.

According to one of the workers who stays at FairBridge, about $108 is deducted weekly from each paycheck to cover the workers’ food, although the amount depends on the contract workers have with their employer. At the hotel, a panel of four men who had left their families at home in order to work in Yakima described their lives. They get up early to catch a 5 a.m. bus that takes them to the orchards. They have two 15-minute breaks, a lunch period and are bussed back to FairBridge at 2:30 p.m., where dinner is served at 4:30 p.m.

Workers said they appreciate the evening activities organized by the church, especially Mass. One noted that it helps to have life be more than just work and the phone, and he enjoys taking English and guitar classes. There are difficulties described by some of the workers. They explained the men are locked in the grounds for security purposes once they return at the end of the workday; they must ask permission to go to the store and are not allowed out to just take a walk. The fence around the property shocked the delegation.

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Kentucky’s first Dyslexia Institute

(Continued from page 3)

eracy and dyslexia and leads the new initiative. “The Thomas More University Dyslexia Institute is a premiere source in Kentucky to disseminate the latest research, share practical resources with the community, and to transform the instruction and intervention for all dyslexic children and adults,” adds Dr. Steltenkamp.

All Thomas More education graduates are trained in identifying the characteristics of dyslexia and developing targeted interventions for student success. Further, they gain real world experience as they participate in the facilitation of the Dyslexia Institute’s programming. This gives pre-service teachers a solid foundation in content knowledge and effective instruction for all students.

Outside the School of Education, Thomas More university also has the Institute for Learning Differences, which offers continuous support to dyslexic college students while they are earning their degree.

The Dyslexia Institute is one aspect of a new suite of offerings from the School of Education called the Education VILLA. Transformational offerings from the Education VILLA are set to roll out in three phases, with the Dyslexia Institute being part of phase one, launching in the 2023-24 academic year.

“We are going to be taking a leadership role in shaping K-12 education in the commonwealth,” said University President Joseph L. Chillo. “The vibrancy of our communities in Northern Kentucky and throughout the commonwealth require stronger schools and the most important investment that we can make is to ensure that every student has access to high-quality education and excellent teachers who care deeply about the education of children.”

More about Dyslexia
— Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability.
— Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading.
— About 85% of students with a primary learning disability experience difficulty in reading and language processing in line with dyslexia.
— As many as 15-20% of the population have some of the symptoms of dyslexia, including slow or inaccurate reading, poor spelling, poor writing or mixing up similar words.
— Dyslexia runs in families; parents with dyslexia are very likely to have children with dyslexia.

Information provided by the International Dyslexia Association.

Synod assembly won’t be secret, but won’t be open to press

Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

The Synod of Bishops is not a television show or a parliamentary debate, and its discussions will not be open to the public or to reporters, Pope Francis said.

“We must safeguard the synodal climate,” the pope responded Sept. 4 when asked by journalists about access to the discussions at the assembly of the Synod of Bishops Oct. 4-25.

“This isn’t a television program where you talk about everything; no, it is a religious moment, a religious exchange,” he told reporters flying back to Rome with him from Mongolia.

The synod process began in October 2021 with a succession of listening sessions on the parish, diocesan, national and regional levels focused on creating a more “synodal Church,” where each person feels welcomed, valued and called to contribute and to share the Gospel.

After so many Catholics around the world devoted their time and their prayers to the process, an initial idea was to livestream the general discussions from the synod hall or at least allow reporters some access.

Pope Francis said it clear on the plane that would not happen. An official summary of the day’s discussions — without saying who said what — will be made by the synod’s communication committee, led by Paolo Ruffini, prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for Communication.

Beyond the anonymous, summarized points, journalists will try to interview participants to at least get individual points of view about the day’s synod work.

Pope Francis told reporters that each synod member — including women and laymen for the first time — would have three or four minutes to address the assembly. Each address will be followed by three or four minutes of silence “for prayers.”

“Without this spirit of prayer, there is no synodality, it’s just politics, parliamentarianism,” he said.

Having a committee summarize the discussions for the press is necessary “to safeguard the religiosity (of the synod) and safeguard the freedom of those who speak” but may not want to do so publicly, he said.

“But more open than that, I don’t know,” he said. “The commission will be very respectful of the speeches of each person and will try not to gossip, but to recount things about how the synod is progressing that are constructive for the Church.”

Protecting God’s Children for Adults Safe Environment trainings

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<tr>
<th>VIRTUS Training: Sunday, Sept. 10, 1–3:30 p.m., St. Edward School, Cynthiana, Cynthiana</th>
<th>VIRTUS Coordinator meeting, Thursday, Sept. 21, Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, 3:30–5:30 p.m.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, Sept. 20, 1:30–4 p.m., Catholic Charities, Training Room, Latonia</td>
<td>Note: If your Training Tab is missing or you cannot access your account, contact your parish, school or institution. For other difficulties, contact Marylu Steffen at (859) 392-1500 or <a href="mailto:msteffen@covdio.org">msteffen@covdio.org</a></td>
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<td>Thursday, Sept. 20, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington</td>
<td>Tuesday, Oct. 17, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington</td>
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<td>Wednesday, Sept. 27, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington</td>
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World Youth Day in Lisbon

(Continued from page 5)

My fourth presentation was the next day at a gorgeous church in downtown Lisbon. Five hundred or so young people were packed into that space for one of the official dialogue-catecheses. This year, Pope Francis wanted the bishops not simply to speak to the youth but to enter into conversation with them. My formal discourse was on the true nature of freedom. In the presence of an eerily lifelike statue of John Paul II perched against the side wall, I told the crowd that authentic freedom is not doing what one pleases but instead the disciplining of desire so as to make the achievement of the good first possible and then effortless. As obvious examples, I laid out the process whereby one becomes a free speaker of a foreign language or a free player of the piano or a free golfer. In all of those cases, freedom is tantamount to the internalization of the relevant disciplines, laws, and practices — and most certainly not to more liberty or license. I very much enjoyed the subsequent discussion I had with a panel of young people. Our topic was social media, and I was not altogether surprised to hear that their assessment was decidedly more negative than positive.

The fifth and final talk was a session with a large group of well over a thousand. At the Pope’s request, this gathering was to be more contemplative than instructional. Thus, there was a Eucharistic procession and Benediction, and afterward, I spoke on the nature of prayer. I emphasized that prayer is best construed as a conversation between friends, involving both talking and listening, both words and silence. I made the practical recommendations that they should take up the rosary and the Jesus Prayer and should make a daily Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament a priority.

In the midst of my pilgrimage, I made a visit to the Shrine at Fatima, located about an hour and a half outside of Lisbon. I found it to be one of those curiously radioactive places — like Lourdes, like Chartres, like Jerusalem — a spot where heaven and earth seemed to meet. Particularly moving to me were the tombs of the two shepherd children — Jacinta and Francisco — that are located in the basilica, not far from the little grove of trees where the Mother of God spoke to them in 1917. I will admit that the week was a tad grueling: lots of speeches, lots of walking, enormous crowds of people everywhere. But it was exhilarating as well, and full of grace.

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

A Catholic conscience

(Continued from page 7)
center stage but, the Church makes it clear that these are only two intrinsically evil positions out of several. I can’t suggest strongly enough that all faithful Catholics in the United States download or read online the entire teaching of our Bishops found in “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.” It will help you make an informed decision about who to vote for and, possibly, make you feel more comfortable with your choice.


Join me in praying for our country and our Church. May God bless you always!

Deacon Peter Freeman is assigned to St. Philip Parish, Melbourne.

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

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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:

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Jail Ministry Coordinator
Include: Develop and maintain resources that address needs of the incarcerated, the newly released, and their families. Provide a discourse framework for the recruitment, certification and training of volunteers to participate in jailminnow 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; mentor and provide 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.

THE NOTRE 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 859-261-4407 for more information.
Family Faith Formation serves  
(continued from page 1)

field to talk with parents and to provide them with age-appropriate resources to go home and begin conversations with their children.

“Father Boelscher really wants to help families that are raising children,” said Sally Zeck, principal, St. Joseph School, Crescent Springs. “We want to make sure that everybody knows that they’re invited. We want to pack the church.

The first speaker in the series will be Allen Hunt, a member of the Dynamic Catholic Board of Directors and former pastor of a mega church. Mr. Hunt will be speaking on the topic “Why Belong: The Importance of a Church Community.” All presentations are from 6:30-7:45 p.m. and are held at St. Joseph Church, Crescent Springs.

Mrs. Zeck said that the speaker series has been organized by Father Boelscher and Jennifer Zumbiel, a parishioner and mother of four. An important part of the series is what happens after the talk, when the parents return home – that’s where the transformational conversations take place. To help parents implement these conversations, Father Boelscher and Mrs. Zumbiel have created resources to help guide the process.

These resources are especially important said Ellen Beiersdorfer, assistant principal. “When you get home you’re like, I’m not sure how to implement that. You can forget about what you’ve learned because you’re going back into your life. These resources will encourage you so that doesn’t happen.”

While the series is designed to help parents lead their families in faith, two of the topics focus on very practical challenges parents today are facing that their parents did not. On Nov. 8, Abby Schaber, a licensed clinical counselor and owner of Brightside Counseling, will speak about “Anxiety, Depression, Bullying and a Path to Prevention and Peace.” On Feb. 7, Chris McKenna, founder and CEO of Protect Young Eyes will speak on “Protecting Young Eyes and Creating Safer Digital Spaces.” For a complete list of topics and dates see the box at right.

“Growing in faith shouldn’t be optional for Catholics, it’s foundation to who we are,” said Mrs. Zeck. “This is your family. If you want to raise strong Catholic individuals, we want to help you. We’re bringing people to St. Joe’s that are going to be able to help you and give you guidance.”

There is no cost to attend, and reservations are not required. Simply show up with an open mind and open heart.
Eight years later, the comprehensive primary care clinic has a robust patient roster, serving people of all faith and no faith, Goldsmith said, with the tagline “Truly Excellent. Always Faithful.” But the move required courage — a virtue needed like never before, said Catholics in the medical profession.

“Be Not Afraid: Courageous Catholic Medicine” is the theme of the Catholic Medical Association’s 82nd annual educational conference Sept. 7-9 in Phoenix. This year’s conference chairman Dr. Timothy Millea said the theme was chosen in 2020, and in the short time since, ethical, ideological and legal issues have mounted.

“Courage is not really optional. If it was optional, we wouldn’t have a Catholic Church today,” he said, noting that all Catholics can find inspiration in the courage of the apostles and church fathers.

In addition to policy concerns — especially safeguarding robust conscience protections amid pushback from members of Congress, federal courts and the Biden administration — CMA members are concerned that changes to federal agencies, he added the CMA is facing the push for “assisted suicide, state by state.”

“We’re here at this point in time, in history, for a reason,” said Millea, who also chairs the CMA’s health care policy committee. “Silence is basically surrender, and we’ve got to be in the game on this.”

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“We need to remember it’s time for us to show up, stand up and speak up, and that’s in a voice — as we’re all called to do — with charity and clarity, looking for the good of the others,” Millea said of medical professionals. “And they may vehemently disagree with us, they may attack us in so many different ways. But that doesn’t mean we don’t con- tinue bringing that message.”

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Across the nation, aborted children will be remembered and mourned

PHILADELPHIA — A continued observance this month will commemorate the souls of children lost to abortion. The National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children will take place Sept. 9, with services and gatherings at some 225 locations across the country. About 16 of those locations are graveyards for the remains of aborted children, while the majority are memorials. Now in its 55th year, the event — which is annually held on the second Saturday of September — is jointly sponsored by two Midwestern-based organizations. Citizens for a Pro-Life Society in Michigan and the Pro-Life Action League in Illinois. Tracing its origins to the 1988 burial of some 1,200 aborted babies at Holy Cross Cemetery in Milwaukee, the occasion — which was initiated in 2013 — has become “an important opportunity for healing from abortion,” Eric Scheidler, executive director of the Pro-Life Action League, told OSV News. Participants have “really appreciated” the chance to “put the focus on the children’s lives and express sorrow at their passing,” he said. For women who have had abortions, the chance to express their “regret and mourning” is cathartic, Scheidler said. He noted the events take place in “locations already set up for difficult emotional experiences: churches and cemeteries,” where “we expect people to shed tears.” “Whether you were pushed into that choice, or you made it yourself, the reality is that abortion is an incredible tragedy,” said Scheidler, noting that a willingness to face such pain offers a chance to “reconcile with our past and ... to ask for God’s healing, to come and infuse our memories and experiences, and transform us.”

“We will recover” after arson strikes historic Oregon church

SALEM, Ore. — Oregon’s Catholic archbishop joined some 300 faithful for Mass in the rain, hours after a devastating fire had broken out Aug. 31 destroyed the roof and interior portions of St. Joseph Catholic Church, the oldest Catholic parish in downtown Salem, Oregon. No casualties were reported. The fire was quickly ruled an arson and James James Sweeten, 48, was apprehended and charged with first-degree arson. “This is a sad day,” St. Joseph’s pastor Father Jeff Meeuwsen told local media, speaking just before he joined Archbishop Sample and faithful for an Aug. 31 afternoon Mass, celebrated in the church parking lot under pop-up tents and a huddle of umbrellas.

Polish family’s beatification highlights debate over church’s wartime role

WARSAW, Poland — When Józef and Wiktoria Ulma were beati- fied with their children Sept. 18, eight decades after they were shot by Nazis for sheltering Jews in their farmhouse near the village of Markowa in southeastern Poland, it will be a graphic reminder of the heroism shown by many Catholic Poles during the Holocaust. “Under communism, no public discussion was allowed about what really happened here during World War II — systematic research only started later,” explained Father Piotr Manurowski, a former secretary-general of COMCOP, the Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the European Union. “This lack of a Polish voice in post-War debates on the Holocaust generated false views about events in Poland,” the priest said. “In today’s secularized condi- tions, things are changing and there’s growing interest in why people risked their lives for others, very often in acts of religious witness.” The case of the Ulmas is just one of many brought to light by recent research. Wiktoria was pregnant with the couple’s seventh child, and villagers who buried the bodies report that Wiktoria had begun to give birth during the massacre. And while some experts have warned against exaggerating the extent of help given to Jews, others have welcomed the opportunity to establish a more accurate record of wartime events. Alina Petrowa-Waska, a Catholic journalist and author, told OSV News, “Proper work is now being done, taking Polish perspectives into account and the heavy price of assaults, including hundreds of priests and nuns who risked their lives to rescue persecuted Jews.”

As ‘hands and feet of Christ,’ Catholic aid workers are rolling up their sleeves to help tens of thousands after Tropical Storm Ian slams into the nation’s Southeast. “I just feel horrible for resi- dents, that they had to go through this,” Matthew Knee, president and CEO of Catholic Charities of NorthWest Florida, told OSV News. Initially a Category 4 hurricane, Ian made landfall Aug. 30, hitting Florida’s Big Bend area — where the state’s panhandle meets its peninsula — as a Category 3 tropical storm and the largest to touch down in the Big Bend area in more than 125 years. Although no fatalities or severe injuries have been reported, Ian caused flooding, wind damage and record-level storm surges, leav- ing more than 460,000 customers in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina without power. Knee, who spoke with OSV News by phone as he visited affected communities, said Catholic Charities was working to provide both immediate emergency assistance as well as long-term recovery, as part of “deepening” people in their homes and in their communities and “serving the poorest of the poor.” That work is “in our blood; it’s who we are and what we do,” said Knee. “We are the hands and feet of Christ.”

Excitement about 2024’s National Eucharistic Congress is growing

INDIANAPOLIS — Local and national organizers of the National Eucharistic Congress — which will take place in Indianapolis July 17-21, 2024 — have been meeting virtually for some time. But for the first time, scores of them met in person in Indianapolis Aug. 30 at Lucas Oil Stadium, where in less than a year tens of thousands of Catholics will gather for the closing Mass of the historic event — the first such event in 83 years. The congress will launch the third year of a three-year National Eucharistic Revival, an initiative of the US. Catholic bishops to renew devotion to the Eucharist. “The Holy Spirit is inviting the United States to find unity and renewed through a grassroots National Eucharistic Revival,” Alaine Beyea, event lead for the National Eucharistic Congress, said, quoting remarks from a let- ter written by executive director Tim Glemkowski. “This move- ment — discerned and approved by the bishops of the US. — is critical to rekindling a living faith in the hearts of Catholics across America, unleashing a new missionary chapter at this pivotal moment in church history.” The goal is to start a fire, not a program.” More than 25,000 have already registered for the event, said Beyea. “We just have a lot of people who are excited about gathering.”

September 8, 2023

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Seminary Ball

October 27, 2023
Northern Kentucky Convention Center

“The Almighty has done great things for me.” Luke 1:49

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