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Missed an edition? Current and back issues of the *Messenger* are available online at covdio.org/messenger.



(top left) Vincentians Kevin Stanton (left) and Janice Wurtz (right) stand for the Annual Commitment Ceremony. Mr. Stanton will serve as St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky’s new Eastern District President, and Ms. Wurtz will serve as Council Treasurer.

(top right) Bishop John Iffert preaches the homily at the September 23rd Mass celebrating the feast day of St. Vincent de Paul, as well as the 100 year anniversary of the Northern Kentucky Vincentians.

(bottom left) Two Vincentians, Patty Enzweiler and Bob Hebbeler, carry the gifts to the altar. The society’s blue banner bearing the St. Vincent de Paul logo is seen in the background.

(bottom right) Members on the congregation, some with blue lanyards representing the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, sing along to the opening hymn.

On 100-year anniversary Mass, Vincentians strive to be one with Jesus’s spirit of mercy, said Bishop Iffert

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

Vincentians came together alongside family and friends, September 23, to celebrate a Mass commemorating both the feast day of St. Vincent de Paul, but also the 100-year anniversary of St. Vincent De Paul Northern Kentucky.

The Mass was celebrated at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, by Bishop John Iffert, and concelebrated by Father Ryan Maher, rector of the Cathedral, and Father Mark Keene, vicar general of the Diocese of Covington. Deacons Mike Lyman, spiritual advisor of St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky, and Jerry Franzen of the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, assisted.

In his homily Bishop Iffert began by sharing the story of a Vincentian from his home diocese in Illinois who made a “great impression” on him. A leader of the local council in Bishop Iffert’s first parish, Steve was born in Yugoslavia in 1940 behind the Iron Curtain, Bishop Iffert said.

“He was born to a devout Catholic family who, because of their faith, suffered persecution.” Steve’s father was imprisoned and died in prison, Bishop Iffert continued, and his mother decided to get

herself and her children out of Yugoslavia.

As they were crossing the border, a young soldier came around to check the trunk of the vehicle where Steve and his family were hidden inside, “and the young soldier opened the trunk and looked right at the three of them,” Bishop Iffert continued, “and his mother was trembling with fear; grappling those rosary beads as fast as she could pray. The young soldier saw them, and started to speak, and then something caught his attention. Steve said he looked at the rosary in the good woman’s hands and he shut his mouth. He didn’t call out. Steve said he reached up to the collar of his uniform, and from under the collar pulled out his own crucifix. He showed it to Steve’s mother and her two boys. He kissed the crucifix, tucked it back under his collar, closed the trunk, and waved them through.”

Bishop Iffert then went on to explain how the the Society of St. Vincent De Paul sponsored Steve and his family as they came to the United States — to Belleville, Illinois.

“He had received the care and love of the Catholic community through the Vincentians and so it was easy for him to identify with those who sought help,” Bishop Iffert said.

“We were empowered by family and friends and teachers who

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Updated speakers policy aims for widespread implementation

Laura Keener
Editor

In an e-mail to priests, Bishop John Iffert shared the updated Verification of Good Standing policy for the Diocese of Covington. The policy, which segments the process for screening speakers and ministers into three groups, went into effect Sept. 15. The policy applies to bishops, priests, deacons, men and women religious and the laity.

The Verification of Good Standing (VOGS) policy, including the updated policy, has a three-fold purpose:

- to ensure fidelity to Church teaching;
- to safeguard the Catholic identity of the Diocese;
- to ensure and maintain a safe environment for all God’s people, especially those who are vulnerable.

“Really there are two priorities that a speakers policy should try to achieve,” said Bishop Iffert in an interview with the *Messenger* Sept. 22. “First is, of course, to protect young people and vulnerable persons ... to make sure that we’re complying with our own Safe Environment policies. And the other is to assure that speakers who come in adequately represent the Catholic faith, especially if they’re speaking about the Catholic faith, that they’re orthodox believers and teachers and can be trusted not to lead folks astray. Those are the two priorities — safety and orthodoxy.”

Bishop Iffert sought wide consultation before amending the VOGS policy, receiving input from priests, the

Presbyteral Council, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Diocesan Review Board and the Safe Environment Office, among others.

The updated policy addresses concerns from parish and school administrators who were having difficulty complying with the former policy due to the vast and varied speakers and presenters invited to their institutions for matters unrelated to the topic of faith and morals.

“If you think of every time someone comes in to teach students in our schools how to brush their teeth or a Dare Officer (speaking about the dangers of drugs), these kinds of things. It was getting very difficult for people,” said Bishop Iffert. “And so, we tried to think of a way that we could preserve those values and still make the administration of the policy a little bit easier.”

With the former VOGS policy all speakers and ministers were processed through the Chancery. Organizers completed and submitted a form to the chancery for all speakers and ministers.

Under the updated policy, speakers and ministers will be cleared using one of three processes, depending on who is presenting and what is being presented.

The first group are “local people who we know,” said Bishop Iffert. Under the updated policy “we pastors could talk to pastors” to approve these speakers and ministers.

The second group are those not speaking on matters of faith and morals — the dental hygienist, the local fireman, parents and community members presenting at a career

day. With the updated policy, these speakers would not need to be vetted but would need to be supervised by two people who are in full compliance with the Safe Environment Policy.

The third group are those outside of the diocese who are being brought into the diocese to speak about issues of faith and morals, “who really need to be vetted,” said Bishop Iffert. Examples include a priest from another diocese coming to celebrate Mass or a wedding; speakers coming to share a witness talk, lead a retreat, etc. The process to clear this group of speakers and ministers remains unchanged.

As with any policy, the policy is only effective when it is faithfully implemented.

“The most important thing is, even if you’re inviting someone from the school down the street or parish down the street, make sure that your Safe Environment Coordinator is calling their Safe Environment Coordinator in making sure that person is in good standing, making sure that they’re fully compliant with the Safe Environment Policy,” said Bishop Iffert. “That’s the most important thing, to make sure that people really are taking that step and making sure that we don’t have anyone falling through the cracks.”

The updated Verification of Good Standing Policy along with the procedures in implementing the policy are available on the diocesan website covdio.org/chancery

‘Jesus and the Eucharist’ series launches nationwide to foster love for holy Eucharist

SueAnn Howell
OSV News

The National Eucharistic Congress, in partnership with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Augustine Institute, has released a seven-part video series to help parishes nationwide launch small group communities to grow in faith and love for the holy Eucharist.

The guided series is hosted by Montse Alvarado, president and chief operating officer of EWTN News, and Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, chair of the USCCB’s Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis. The initial small group series released Sept. 14 titled, “Jesus and the Eucharist,” is the first of seven weekly sessions available on the revival’s online “LEARN” platform.

Each session opens with an exhortation from a different bishop; includes teaching from prominent theologians and influential figures in the church today; and highlights personal testimonies from everyday Catholics who have experienced the transformative power of Eucharistic love in their own lives.

The four pillars that uphold the movement of the National Eucharistic Revival are reinvigorating worship, personal encounter, robust faith formation and missionary sending. The “Jesus and the Eucharist” series was created as a tangible underpinning to the third pillar of formation.



“Our hope is that the fire which burned in the hearts of the first Christians begins to burn in our hearts in a new and powerful way, so that we can’t help but share with others what is burning within us,” Bishop Cozzens said in introducing the series. “When that happens, when we become missionaries to the whole of the Good News of our salvation in Christ, then we fulfill in our time the Great Commission which Jesus has given to us: ‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.’”

Each of the lessons lasts about two hours, and the format consists of both a video and table discussion component with shared testimonials along the way and designated times for prayer.

“This study is a great ‘out-of-the-box’ solution for parishes,” explained Joel Stepanek, chief operating officer for the National Eucharistic Congress. “Parishes simply need to train table facilitators and a core team to imple-

ment the study, set up a hall with tables that can seat roughly eight people, and press play.”

Session 1, called “Our Story,” offers initial background with the story of God, creation and our place in it. Sessions 2, 3, and 4 key in on the themes of Jesus, salvation and the church, and explore why God chose to establish the Christian Church. Sessions 5 to 7 focus on the sacraments of the church, specifically the transformative power of the Eucharist and its biblical roots.

“Jesus and the Eucharist” was developed specifically for the revival’s parish year by a team of Catholic experts working closely with the National Eucharistic Revival, and every parish in the country is encouraged to begin using the study. New lessons are now available for download every Thursday through Oct. 26 on the Eucharistic Revival website, eucharisticcongress.org.

Individuals also may access the free online series if unable to participate in a parish program.

The National Eucharistic Congress website is <https://www.eucharisticcongress.org>. The LEARN platform, with access to the “Jesus and the Eucharist” video series, is listed under the REVIVAL section.



‘To Heal, Proclaim and Teach’

A presentation by Jared Dees, **Oct. 14, 8:30–11:30 a.m.**, at the Curia’s Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington.

Mr. Dees is an author, speaker, teacher and creator of the popular website The Religion Teacher, which provides practical resources and effective teaching strategies.

Sponsored by the diocesan Office of Catechesis and Evangelization. The presentation is open to everyone. No cost to attend. RSVP at covdio.org/register or call David Cooley at (859) 392-1592.

Cemetary Visitations

Families and friends of our beloved dead are invited to join Bishop John Iffert for a prayer service, Saturday, Oct. 21, at the following diocesan cemeteries:

10 a.m., St. John Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell

11 a.m., St. Mary Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell

12:30 p.m., St. Stephen Cemetery, Ft. Thomas

At each cemetery, the names of those interred from October 2022 through September 2023 will be proclaimed.

“Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.”

History in the making — EOHSJ Covington-Lexington Section invest North Central Lieutenancy first group of Squires

Laura Keener
Editor

The Diocese of Covington is home to the first group of Squires of the North Central Lieutenancy — the United States — of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. Msgr. Gerald Twaddell and Sir Nelson Rodriguez serve as co-vice chancellor of Squires for the Lieutenancy. They, together with Sir Stephen Enzweiler and Dame Patricia Enzweiler, co-section presidents, presided at the Squires investiture, Sept. 14, at Mary, Seat of Wisdom Chapel on the campus of Thomas More University.

During the ceremony each Squire candidate recited the Squire's Promise and received the Squire's cape. The inaugural group of Squires are: Heather Konerman, Madison Light, Esteban Munguia, Jeffrey Noe, Juan Pablo Francisco and Houston Watson.

"As members of this fellowship, Squires promise to pursue the purposes, namely, to participate in a formation program that will prepare them one day to become candidates for full membership in the order; to strengthen their Christian life in faithful adherence to the beliefs and tenets of the Catholic Church; and to assist the members of the Order in fulfilling its fourfold mission," said Sir Enzweiler as he addressed the Squire candidates at the investiture.

The principal mission of the EOHSJ is to reinforce the practice of Christian life by its members in absolute fidelity to the pope; to sustain and assist the religious, spiritual, charitable and social works and rights of the Catholic Church and the Christians in the Holy Land, particularly of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

After reciting the Squires promise in unison, each candidate was called by name and was accepted as a Squire of the North Central Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem and received a cape.

The cape that the Squires received is fashioned after the French Squires cape. The deep navy-blue cape bears the red Jerusalem Cross on its right breast side with a black

velvet Peter Pan collar trimmed in red.

The Squire candidates participated in a six-month discernment and formation period before making formal promises and a commitment to remain a Squire for at least one year and to share in the life and spirituality of the Order. There are no dues or financial obligations asked of a Squire.

In an e-mail interview with the *Messenger*, Sept. 19, Squire Munguia and Squire Watson shared their thoughts on being part of an historical moment in the life of the EOHSJ.

"It's a mixed feeling since it's trying to see how the world has changed and in turn what has to be updated to better help the people of the modern age," said Squire Munguia. "No longer is jousting used to help figure out who is friend or foe and in turn what lies among the communication towards others. Yet above all it's a great honor to be apart of this Order since, hopefully, this may help inspire an insurrection towards the horrors of the violent works and injustice happening all over the world but especially in the Holy Land."

Squire Munguia learned about the EOHSJ as a student at Thomas More University. "I would see the Knights and Dames occasionally for Mass or meetings. It was also through going to various Masses at the Cathedral and seeing the reverence they gave and received through the procession," he said.

He learned providentially about the Squire fellowship while attending Mary, Seat of Wisdom Chapel. Msgr. Twaddell and Sir Nelson encouraged him to pursue discerning a call to be a Squire and his family supported him as well.

"They supported any questions I had and with some doubts I had as well," said Squire Munguia. "It was also the other Squires, since we all were going through this together. Worries and burdens are easier to carry when others are supporting you on the journey."

Squire Munguia said that, as a Squire, he is looking forward to "increasing my spiritual wellness. Being given Squire formation about the various virtues and historical background, really resonates with how the Order would serve and aid others."

Squire Watson is also a student at Thomas More



(above) Msgr. Gerald Twaddell, co-vice chancellor of Squires for the North Central Lieutenancy Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, celebrates Mass, Sept. 19, after the Order's first investiture of Squires.

University and was encouraged by Msgr. Twaddell to consider the opportunity. The witness of the Knights and Dames of the EOHSJ made an impression.

"I saw what kind of character they had and their passion for the Church and for Christians in the Holy Land. I wanted to be a part of this community of men and

(Continued on page 4)




(left) In their first official act, the newly invested Squires lead the procession for Mass, Sept. 19. The Squires pictured (from left) are: Juan Pablo Francisco, Esteban Munguia, Jeffrey Noe, Madison Light and Houston Watson.



Bishop's Schedule

- | | |
|---|--|
| Sept. 29–Oct. 1
Permanent Deacons and wives retreat, St. Meinrad Seminary, Indiana | Oct. 6
Mass followed by tour and lunch, Carmel Manor, Ft. Thomas, 10 a.m. |
| Sept. 30
2nd anniversary of the Most Rev. John C. Iffert's episcopal consecration and installation as the 11th Bishop of the Diocese of Covington | Mass Summit '23, Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, 7:30 p.m. |
| Oct. 3
Pontifical College Josephinum, Board of Trustees meeting, Josephinum, Columbus, 8:30 a.m.–2 p.m. | Oct. 7
Mass for the DCCH 175th anniversary, 10 a.m., followed by lunch, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell |
| Oct. 4
Mass with Bishop Brossart High School at St. Mary Parish, Alexandria, 9:45 a.m. | Vigil Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 4:30 p.m. |
| Oct. 5
Covington Deanery meeting/lunch, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington, 12 p.m. | Oct. 8
Mass and building blessing, St. Timothy Parish, Union, 11:30 a.m. |
| Vespers with Permanent Deacons, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 5 p.m. | Oct. 9-13
Priest retreat, St. Meinrad Archabbey, St. Meinrad, Indiana |



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Join the Diocese for the 2023 Seminary Ball!

An evening of drinks, dinner and dancing in support of our seminarians.

Oct. 27, 6–11 p.m.

Northern Kentucky Convention Center, Covington

RSVP's available until Oct. 13 at <https://covdio.org/seminaryball/>.



SUMMIT 23

Eucharistic retreat for high school students

Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills

October 6–8

More information and registration available www.covdio.org/Summit23.

EOHSJ squires invested

(Continued from page 3)

women,” Squire Watson said.

Squire Watson deflects any personal honor of being a part of the first group of Squires in the United States, turning the focus instead to the Church and the mission of the EOHSJ.

“Even things which are ancient can be continuously renewed and revitalized, and this is what is happening through the Squires program. Really this is the story of the Church,” said Squire Watson. “The Order is dedicated to a very sacred mission — to work for the interests of the Church in the Holy Land — and this mission will always remain sacred. Given the circumstances of the Holy Land today, it is vital that a group exists within the Church to assist Christians, fund Christian organizations, and promote unity and peace in the area.

“The Squires program helps to accomplish this mission in a variety of ways. For the Order, the Squire program raises awareness of the Order, gets young people involved who may eventually become Knights and Dames, and opens the door to greater diversity of gifts and talents within the Order that can be used for its ministry. For those who are Squires, the program, is a way to build relationships with other young people, take on a real role in the life of the Church both locally and internationally, and be built up spiritually by those who are further along in their pil-

grimage here on earth.”

Both Squires expressed their gratitude to Msgr. Twaddell and the Knights and Dames.

“I would just like to thank all the Knights and Dames, especially those who have invested their time and money into this program,” said Squire Watson. “I am blessed to become a part of the Order, and I am very hopeful about the future of the Squires and of the EOHSJ.”

For information on the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem and the Squires visit eohsjcovington.org.

A highlight of the investiture is presenting each Squire with a cape that each will wear at official ceremonies and functions. (left) Sir Stephen Enzweiler and Dame Patricia Enzweiler, co-section presidents, invest Squire Heather Konerman with the Squire’s cape.



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Special thanks to Mike Lenihan and Shannon Kurtzner for their energy, resourcefulness and hard work to make the outing's silent auction and raffles such a success.

Be Witnesses

*“Wake up the world!
Be witnesses of
a different way
of doing things,
of acting, of living!”*
— Pope Francis

Religious Communities in the Diocese of Covington

- Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery www.stwalburg.org
- Brothers of the Poor of St. Francis www.brothersofthepoorofstfrancis.org
- Passionist Nuns www.erlangerpassionists.com
- Sisters of Divine Providence www.cdpkentucky.org
- Sisters of Notre Dame www.sndusa.org
- Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker www.ssjw.org

Public and Private Associations

- Franciscan Daughters of Mary www.fdoofmary.org
- Missionaries of St. John the Baptist www.msjb.info

In mission to Christ

Karen Kuhlman
Correspondent

Sister Anita Marie Stacy and Sister Maria Francine Stacy are members of the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame of the United States — and twins. They are cradle Catholics whose religious and faith-filled mother attended Mass regularly.

Sister Maria Francine said: “Whenever Mom was anxious or worried, she turned to her faith. She couldn’t have survived without her faith. Every afternoon at 3, she said the rosary. Dad was not a practicing Catholic but supported his wife and children in their faith. He drove us to church and since he was already there, he stayed to usher!”

The sisters see their parents as different dimensions of the faith.

Sister Anita Marie explained, “We saw our mother as a ‘vertical’ Catholic who participated directly with the faith through prayer, attending Mass, and participating in the sacraments. And though Dad wasn’t a practicing Catholic, he had a reverence for God. He was more of a horizontal Catholic committed to social justice issues. He fought for freedom and workers’ rights.”

The sisters attended Catholic schools and appreciated the ability of the women religious who were their teachers to integrate faith and life. They influenced the way the sisters lived their lives. The young girls often stayed after school to be with the Sisters, converse with them, and help out in the classroom. The Sisters strongly affected the girls’ high school years. They strove to live the Gospel daily, but, neither discerned a call to religious life.

They had always wanted to become teachers, a goal set in motion when they were children playing school, as the young often do. The twins attended Thomas More University, where Sister Anita Marie studied Math and Science, while Sister Maria Francine studied Spanish and English. Neither entertained thoughts of a religious vocation.

While in college, Sister Maria Francine came across a quiz to assist young women discerning a religious calling. She answered “yes” to every question but wasn’t ready to answer the call and put it out of her mind. She wanted to be a Spanish teacher in a co-ed high school and inspire students with her spirituality. She started a prayer group for her students, went on a weekend retreat, and enjoyed the prayer experience. But she still wasn’t convinced of a religious vocation. She decided to make an independent retreat in Mexico.

Sister Anita Marie taught science in a co-ed school and didn’t feel called to a religious vocation. Later, while she was enjoying her work in the Science Lab at Thomas More, she began to consider the possibility. Was God calling her to religious life? Was Jesus asking her to leave her family and follow him? She turned to prayer, earnestly seeking the answer. Unbeknownst to her, her sister was asking herself that same question.

The sisters prayed individually and separately for guidance and were happy to discover that both had made the same decision. They joyfully embraced a vocation to religious life as Sisters of Notre Dame.

They were a bit concerned about the effect their decisions would have on their parents. Their mother was fine with their choice, but their father was taken aback. Ultimately, he said, “I want you to do what makes you happy.”

The sisters said, “When you become a religious, you become a missionary to Christ, commissioned by God.”

Sister Anita Marie used her skills as a teacher to minister to

the students at the school founded by the Sisters of Notre Dame in Uganda. She had never felt drawn to missionary work until God drew her to work among the poor in Buseesa, the town in which the Sisters of Notre Dame founded Notre Dame Academy, a boarding school for girls

Sister Maria Francine never felt a call to work in Africa but wanted to be a teacher to the poor. She found her mission working in service to the people of Guatemala as a teacher.

Through their mission in service to the poor, the Sisters discovered the brutal lessons of poverty and became changed people.

“You learn so much from working with the poor. We have so many layers of security to assist us, but the poor have noth-



Sister Anita Marie (left) and Sister Maria Francine, (right)

ing to fall back on. The poor have no voice and are powerless. Their only security is their dependence on God and their trust in his care.

During a particularly trying time, a Guatemalan reassured Sister Maria Francine, saying “Don’t worry, Sister. God will take care of us; God will help us.” She was strengthened by the faith of this Guatemalan and explained, “When there is nothing we can do but accept the situation, we can know that God is at the end of the road. We can trust in him, in spite of violence, frustrations and disappointment.”

The Sisters say their vocations gives them the freedom to be missionaries, not activists. Immersing yourself in the mission of Jesus allows you to detach from the culture and form a radical attachment to God and his people.

Mary is ever-present in the lives of Sister Marie Francine and Sister Anita Marie, and they note that the presence of Mary is so heartfelt by the Hispanic population among whom they have worked. “We always go to Mary. She is the backdoor to Jesus; she is a real presence, not a symbol. She will take you to Jesus.”

The Sisters said, “When we entered the convent, we knew there would be times when we could not be there for our parents, and we asked God to care for our family. There was another patient in Mom’s hospital room, so she was not alone when she died. Dad died on the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary before we could get to the hospital, but we know that Our Lady took him under her mantle. She is always walking with us, always a presence.”

In sports, too, the goal is heaven

The leaves are beginning to change and cooler mornings have arrived. These changes mark the beginning of fall and it usually brings excitement about other seasonal things like sweaters, pumpkins, campfires and football.

VIEWPOINT



Kendra McGuire

Football, one of the fall sports many gather around to enjoy, is just one of the many sports happening this time of year. And in America, our love of sports goes on all year long.

It seems most people have been impacted by sports in some way. You may have played sports as an athlete, coached your child's team or enjoyed watching and cheering on your favorite team. For me, athletics have been part of

my life since I started playing softball in kindergarten. When I reflect on the significance athletics have had in my life, I can't help but think about the many gifts I received from participating. As a student-athlete I learned new skills and made new friends. I learned the importance of working hard because your actions impact your team. I learned how to win and lose gracefully. I learned the importance of commitment, because a team can't improve if you aren't working toward the same goal. I learned to balance and manage my time, to never quit, and I loved the competition and pushing myself to be the best I could be.

Today, I am no longer the athlete on the field (except for backyard games with my children). But I am the coach on the sidelines, helping the next generation of children fall in love with sports. Unfortunately, what I see

from the sidelines today in youth sports gives me great pause. When you take a step back and look at the sports landscape for children today, you begin to wonder if they are getting the same enjoyable experiences we had growing up. Are they still learning the same valuable lessons that can help them throughout their lives?

In this fall sports season alone, I have witnessed fans harassing the referees for perceived bad calls and coaches who get so angry during a game they lash out at the referees, the other team's coach or their own players. I have seen athletes ridicule the opposing team's players and their own teammates. Many days it seems that emotions are too high, good sportsmanship is an afterthought, and more than anything there is a clear lack of Christian behavior on the fields today.

As followers of Christ, it is well past time for us to reflect on this area of our lives. We can begin by listening to the words of St. Paul, "So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." (1 Cor 10:31) St. Paul's words should be a constant reminder that God must be first in our lives and our actions each day should glorify him — even in sports.

St. John Paul II, an avid sportsman himself, spoke about sports many times throughout his pontificate. He reminds us that our participation in sports prepares us for the rigorous challenges of being followers of Christ. In a homily, Oct. 29, 2000, he said, "Every athlete is called to become a strong athlete of Christ, that is, a faithful and courageous witness to his Gospel. But to succeed in this, he must persevere in prayer, be trained in virtue and follow the Divine Master in everything."

Our children's participation in sports should be for the glory of God. We need to remind them that God created them mind, soul, and body. Through sport, and the exercise that goes with it, they learn the physical meaning of suffering. They come to understand that the temporary

pains of conditioning oneself leads to an ability to perform and get closer to the goal.

They learn that sometimes, despite all your hard work, you may still lose. But in these short-term losses you do not quit. You persevere and go back out on the field the next day and train harder. And together with your team, you keep working and practicing for the championship win.

When our children learn these lessons through sports, we must teach them how it relates to life as Catholics. St. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 9:25 that, "Every athlete exercises discipline in every way. They do it to win a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one."

In the sports that go on around the world, the first-place win may be the most exciting, but it is also temporary. Ultimately, we as Catholics, are training for the reward of eternal life. The one true prize that we can all work toward and attain if we listen to Jesus and follow his guidance.

Just like a coach, Jesus has already laid out the game plan for life. Each day we are called to train, to persevere during the difficult times, to get up when we have been knocked down, and to never give up until we are celebrating in heaven with him.

It is time to restore the true purpose of athletics and ensure Christian charity pervades every practice and game. As adults, we need to be models for our children, teaching them how to give glory to God in all they do.

Our children need to know that the greatest celebration of their hard work will not be at the awards ceremony or on the podium receiving the trophy, but at the banquet of heaven where they will hear their heavenly Father tell them, "Well done, my good and faithful servant." (Matt 25:21)

Kendra McGuire is superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Covington, Ky.

What is required?

told her, "Teaching the baby to self soothe." She didn't buy it. Even when I told her that self-soothing is a valuable life skill that the child would use frequently as an adult, she was still not convinced.

Anyway, the point I'm trying to make is that sometimes what we think is the best response to a situation is not the response that is required. Maybe the situation with the crying baby requires that I, somehow, make the baby be quiet; or the situation requires that I allow the baby to cry it out and learn to self-soothe. I don't know. I'm not a baby expert. Please, don't write letters.

What's interesting is that every situation requires us to react or respond or reply in some way or other. Let's say that I'm going to see the doctor; I've got an appointment, but the doctor isn't ready to see me. I am required to wait. I don't choose to wait, I would not choose to wait but the circumstance requires that I wait.

Now I'm in a room that's been designated for waiting. There are many chairs and I am considering those that are unoccupied for myself. Some unoccupied chairs are in a long row of unoccupied chairs while others are flanked, on the right and left, by other waiters. I am free to sit wherever I like and if I choose a seat next to one or in-between two other waiters that still doesn't mean that I must engage in conversation.

I am in a situation and options have been placed before me. What is required? You say, "well, nothing. You sit down and wait."

Yes, but, no. See the other waiters. Some are just sitting there, looking straight ahead, some are looking at old magazines, and many are looking at their phones, playing games or, whatever. All are doing what they chose to do, what they see as being (and indeed, what is) acceptable in this circumstance.

But this isn't about those others, it's about me. Am I going to choose to do something just because it is acceptable in this circumstance? Something that I'm more comfortable with, less threatening? Maybe. Or maybe I recognize that when I sit next to or in-between one or two others, I'm putting myself in a circumstance where conversation can happen and where there is conversation there could be evangelization and maybe that is what I'm required to do.

Because at this time, in this circumstance, with these people — it's not about what I WANT to do — but what I am REQUIRED to do.

I don't see the question as being, "what does God require," because God requires (or needs) absolutely nothing. But, what I'm required to do is something that would please him — maybe even the one thing that would please him most.

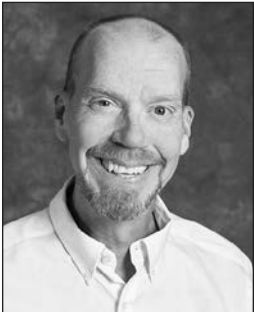
What would most please him is the one thing that has the greatest probability of leading me and the person or people I'm interacting with, ultimately, to heaven. It is not what God requires of me; it is what my baptism requires of me.

"What is required?" In the case of the crying babies what was required was holding, rocking, singing, bouncing, pacifying, changing, and feeding until their parents returned from date-night.

"What is required?" I think that we are required to ask that very question, "What is required?" of ourselves, always and everywhere. And then to do that which would be most pleasing to him.

Deacon Timothy Britt is assigned to St. Mary Parish, Alexandria, Ky.

BELIEVE, TEACH, PRACTICE



Deacon Timothy Britt

the two responsible adults in the house, one of my responsibilities is quieting one of the babies.

You know the drill. Hold the baby, rock the baby, sing to the baby, bounce the baby, give the baby the pacifier, change the baby's diaper, feed the baby...

It's a mystery. Why is the baby crying? What can I do? What does the baby need? What is required of me in this situation?

And then, like my dearly departed mother speaking to me from beyond the grave, a thought came to mind: Maybe he just needs to cry it out. Brilliant! And then I remembered the term from the days when my kids were young: "self-soothe." The baby needs to learn how to self-soothe. So, I took the baby into the spare bedroom where the cribs were set up, laid the baby down, turned on the little video monitor, turned out the light, shut the door and turned on the TV in the family room.

When my wife came in, still bouncing and singing to her little noisemaker, and asked me what I was doing, I

A bent over woman (Luke 13:10-17)

Sometimes I notice my reflection in windows as I pass by stores. As I age, I find that I am a bit bent over. That’s what leads me to occasionally muse about that bent-over woman in Luke’s gospel.

Her knowledge of rocks, stones and pebbles is extensive. She studies them. The way the water travels after a storm and during the rainy season is no mystery to her. The little gullies in the path that the waters take on the way to the lakes and rivers have drawn her a map.

Any Sower might seek her advice about the most fertile places to cultivate. She claims to be surefooted and that is a blessing. But what of the sight of the plump fruit hanging from the trees in the ripening season, the white cumulous clouds scurrying across the deep blue sky, the abundant stars lighting the midnight sky? She is unfamiliar with these favorite views of mine. Her familiarity with the path is small consolation for this deprivation. Contemplate these beautiful scenes with reverence and be grateful.

Most people interpret the messages of friends during conversation by facial expressions. The mood that accompanies and completes the words is in eyes and the tone of the voice. Sometimes those are more significant than the words. Her attempts to see faces involves a painful twisting of the neck and even with that effort she is lucky to catch only a glimpse of facial signals. She listens carefully to changes in tone. Sometimes, she can detect a shifting of the feet, the tightening or loosening of the toes, but her way of picking up attitudes relies mostly on the tone of voice. Maybe the greatest loss for her is the ability to see the faces of her friends as they converse. Cherish the ability to interpret facial clues during discussions. Contemplate the faces around your table.

Of course, she is aware of how others see her — most reach out to help her, but some judge her and question

what sin of hers caused this affliction. All this she receives with grace and humility. Even when children ape her walk and laugh, she is not angry but shares their amusement. Simplicity and humility are her distinguishing qualities.

She has only heard of Jesus and his miracles, not seen him or been close to him as he traveled. She heard he singled out individuals who suffer and called to them, healed them, sent them on their way or invited them to follow. Her humility prohibits her from seeking recognition. It is not her intent to place herself in his line of vision. Unlike Bartimaeus she will not shout out to him, plead, or beg for healing. Her manner is to be little, to be unnoticed, to find her way on the path without fanfare.

As she considers that this holy man could straighten her back, she does not anticipate maneuvering to be noticed in the crowd. She will not climb a tree. It is her way to approach in a simple, lowly fashion, to touch what is within her sight, near the ground. “If only I touch the hem of his garment...” Perhaps, he will not even notice the healing that she anticipates. She can slip away, healed but unnoticed. Truly, God’s healing and blessing is not in lofty, distant regions. It is within our reach and invites us to reach out and touch what is near.

The noise of the gathering announces his arrival in her town. She merges into the mob. The crowd is unruly, and she is jostled as they all push to get near the teacher. Feet overlap, push against each other; trip, try to wedge into the few empty spaces. The way the toes point helps her determine the direction the throng will move. Some of the feet are shod in the finest shoes, other bare feet are worn with labor and show signs of hunger. There are persons from every social status and every walk of life. Elbows jab her but she persists. Just get near enough to touch the garment, the hem of it.

Her faith is profound. She believes his power extends to the very edge of his garment. His mercy is even for those so lowly they are unseen. Then it happens. A way opens between two strangers, she sees his feet and the hem of his garment. Reaching out she touches it. She is healed and he knows her. Her hiddenness unveiled. He knows her, loves her, heals her.

Divine Providence Sister Fidelis Tracy is a retired theology professor at Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, Ky.

Put on the mind of Christ

The readings for the twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time — Cycle A — are: **Ezekiel 18:25-28; Philippians 2:1-11 or 2:1-5; and Matthew 21:28-32.**

When I was in the seminary, I took a class entitled: “The Mind of Christ.” That title was taken from the second reading at Holy Mass for this 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

In the second chapter of St. Paul’s letter to the Philippians we hear, “Have in you the same attitude that is also in Christ Jesus...” However, it can also be translated

“Put on the mind of Christ...”

As a man studying for the priesthood, I was struck by this very simple statement because I had come to realize that I was being called by Almighty God and the Church to be an Alter Christus — another Christ.

But what does it mean to “put on the mind” or to have the “same attitude” as the Lord Jesus?

I think it is the call to not just know academically what the Lord teaches; but

to know internally/intuitively what the Lord teaches — to incorporate into one’s very life everything that comes from “above.”

Jesus, who is in the form of God (equal to the Father in being... there has never been a time when he has not been), emptied himself (entered into human history), coming in human likeness (without losing any part of his divine nature) so that he might suffer death on a cross (destroying sin and death forever).

In other words, he united to his very divine personhood our human nature, so that through his divinity, humanity might be saved and brought back into the right and proper relationship with the Creator. St. Athanasius describes it thus: “For the Son of God became man so that man might become God.”

So, this is what God has done in the person of Jesus. How does this then affect my life? What difference does it make in my life now? St. Augustine writes: “Do not follow any road, but that which Christ trod. This road seems hard, but it is safe.”

In the Incarnation we are taught that Jesus “humbled” himself. In Greek we say: “Tapeinophrosune,” specifically meaning the “topping off of lowliness” or “getting close to the ground.”

As God, Jesus could have taken any position in human society, but he chose the lowest. This is because of his nature as “love” — he desired (and desires) the good of the other (us). Our lives are not about ourselves — they are to be about the other!

To “Put on the mind of Christ” is to “will the good of the other” always before yourself, and to do so joyfully. God desires that we experience the fullness of joy, here and now — place Jesus first, Others second, and Yourself last.

Father Daniel Schomaker is pastor, St. Augustine Parish, Covington and director, Office of Worship and Liturgy for the Diocese of Covington, Ky.

Most people think they’ve turned and that’s that. But it’s more like ascending in concentric circles, because we have to keep turning.

We turn and turn in the hopes that — as with encircling a mountain — each turn brings us closer to the goal. St. Francis’s radical transformation of life reminds us that synodality calls us to ongoing conversion (ongoing “turning,” ongoing surrender) and growth in faith.

“But as St. Francis did not love humanity but men, so he did not love Christianity but Christ,” writes Chesterton. In the end, the most important consideration for synodality is that it would help us become saints: men and women who love not their own ideas, but the Lord Jesus.

Father Patrick Briscoe, OP, is a Dominican friar of the Province of St. Joseph. He is the editor of Our Sunday Visitor.

Five reasons why St. Francis is a model of synodality

Chesterton once wrote, “Newspapers not only deal with news, but they deal with everything as if it were entirely new.” There’s a lot of new talk surrounding synodality. But, insofar as synods have been an ancient model for Church governance, there’s something quite old there.

Which is why I propose an old model for us to emulate: St. Francis of Assisi. The October Synod of Bishops will open on St. Francis’ feast and there’s much from the life of this beloved man of God that can inspire how we approach the synod.

First, consider St. Francis’ humility. At the heart of synodality is the recognition that our traveling together in faith requires putting up with one another as we carry our raggedy faults and dear sins in our slouch toward the Truth we seek. St. Francis epitomized humility, stripping away worldly attachments to embrace a life of poverty.

In his “Admonitions,” he writes, “Blessed is the servant who does not regard himself as better when he is esteemed and extolled by men than when he is reputed as mean, simple, and despicable: for what a man is in the sight of God, so much he is, and no more.” In a synodal Church, humility opens the door to genuine dialogue, with preconceived notions and politics being cast aside.

St. Francis also has a remarkable vision of fraternal charity. He writes, “Blessed the servant who loves and

respects his brother as much when he is far away from him as when he is with him, and who would not say anything behind his back that he would not say with charity in his presence.”

A synodal Church acknowledges the struggles and joys of our fellow Christians, recognizing their unique perspectives. With respect and charity, we move as brothers pursuing the Lord’s will; if we can remember that none of us are getting it all just right, humility and charity are with us.

St. Francis was humble and charitable because of his vision of Christ. St. Francis taught, “Let all of us, brothers, consider the Good Shepherd Who bore the suffering of the cross to save His sheep.”

St. Francis’s life was entirely centered on following Jesus Christ. The synodal way must be the way of Christocentric discipleship. We should be disciples like St. Francis, striving our best to imitate our master, he who was poor and willing to lay down his life in reparation for our sins. And who loved the people we’d probably dislike.

St. Francis’ spirituality was fundamentally Eucharistic. St. Francis says: “As He revealed Himself to the holy apostles in true flesh, so He reveals Himself to us now in sacred bread.”

By embracing the Eucharist as the Real Presence of Jesus, St. Francis emphasized not symbolic ritual but an encounter with the living Christ. This is what it means to be a synodal Church: to have met the living Christ and fervently long to share that experience with others.

Finally, having met the Risen Christ, St. Francis underwent an extraordinary conversion. Conversion means “to turn.” Francis himself modeled what it meant to continually turn.

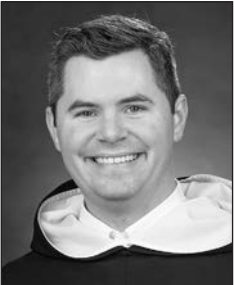
Conversion is circular in that respect, and never ending.

MUSINGS



Sister Fidelis Tracy, C.D.P.

GUEST



Father Patrick Brisco, OP

U.S. Border Patrol records sharp increase in arrests; situation of migrants in Mexico deteriorates

David Agren
OSV News

A surge in migration through Mexico during the month of September has provoked a “migratory crisis,” according to Catholics who are working with migrants, as shelters strain to handle increasing flows of people heading for the U.S. border — with even more continuing to pour into the country from points south.

“We’re experiencing a new migration crisis, a new humanitarian crisis,” Scalabrinian Father Julio López, executive secretary of the Mexican bishops’ human mobility ministry, told OSV News.

“The southern border is saturated. The north is saturated. Mexico City is saturated. The spaces that most welcome migrants are the Catholic Church’s spaces and we’re overwhelmed,” he said.

Scenes of migrants crossing from Mexico into the United States in large numbers have played out along the length of the U.S.-Mexico border: An estimated 10,000 migrants crossed the Rio Grande daily into the Texas town of Eagle Pass within a week, prompting the mayor to declare a state of emergency, The Wall Street Journal reported Sept. 21.

The U.S. Border Patrol recorded more than 177,000

marked a sharp increase from the nearly 100,000 detentions in June – the month following the end of Title 42, the pandemic-era health policy providing for the immediate expulsion of migrants to Mexico.

Some 1,400 appointments daily for entering the United States are available for migrants through a mobile app known as CBP One.

Scalabrinian Father Pat Murphy has guests at his migrant shelter in Tijuana waiting for appointments made through the app — mostly families fleeing drug cartel violence in southern Mexico. But most people arriving in Tijuana, he said, “they’re going right to the border,” rather than shelters.

“The coyotes (smugglers) are arranging (travel) packages: Sign up with us and we’ll bring you right to the border and you can cross,” Father Murphy told OSV News. “People are paying tremendous amounts of money for that.”

Many of the migrant smugglers operate in conjunction with drug cartels, which often charge migrants a fee for passing through territories under their control. Mexican authorities also extort migrants and often act in cahoots with groups smuggling or committing crimes against migrants such as kidnapping.

“Mexico has turned into an ordeal for the transit of migrants and refugees. Robberies, extortion, kidnappings, forced disappearances and grave human rights violations continue,” the bishops’ human mobility ministry said in a statement issued Sept. 22 to mark World Day of Migrants and Refugees Sept. 24.

“Our priority, as the church, is preserving and defending human rights, and always being willing to welcome, protect, promote and integrate all persons, migrants and refugees, without distinction and without leaving anyone on the outside,” Bishop Guadalupe Torres Campos of Ciudad Juárez, head of the human mobility ministry, said in a Sept. 24 letter.

Mexico regularly strikes deals with the United States on enforcement issues and has allowed for the return of migrants to dangerous border cities. Immigration officials convinced bus companies not to sell tickets to migrants, which prompted them to steal rides atop freight trains instead.

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador insisted at a Sept. 20 press conference that “migrants must be protected,” and said the country protects the rights of migrants.

“It’s a double discourse,” Father López said of the government’s statements on migration.

Mexican rail operator Ferromex temporarily suspended service due to safety risks to migrants — six of whom suffered severe injuries, according to the company. The move — which was done in conjunction with Mexican immigration officials, according to Father López — drew questions from López Obrador, who has ongoing disputes with the railway’s owner.

“This really wasn’t about avoiding accidents rather avoiding that people transit” the country, Father López said of suspending rail service.

Reports from Central America point to a continued flow of migrants heading toward that region’s border with Mexico.

Panama has registered more than 390,000 migrants crossing through the treacherous Darién Gap — the thick jungle separating the country from Colombia — so far in 2023. That represents some 57% more than the total for all of 2022.

More than 57,000 migrants have passed through the Darién Gap so far in September; the country’s Public Security Ministry reported Sept. 23.

At least 7 million Venezuelans have fled poverty and political oppression since 2015. Many Venezuelans continue to leave and others who had settled in other South American countries are now heading north, analysts say. Joining them are large numbers of Colombians, Ecuadorians and Haitians, along with migrants arriving from other continents.

“The lack of employment, generalized violence, climate

(Continued on page 19)



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arrests in August, according to The Washington Post. It



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PEOPLE AND EVENTS


The prayer intention for October as recommended by Pope Francis is for the Synod. We pray for the Church, that she may adopt listening and dialogue as a lifestyle at every level, and allow herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the peripheries of the world.

The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW, Sundays, noon to 1 p.m. Viewers can tune-in on the following channels: antenna 12.2; Spectrum 117 or 25; Cincinnati Bell 17 or 517; and DirectTV 25.

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 concludes 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 Dames of the Covington-Lexington section of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.


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 859-653-8464.

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



Vincent de Paul
1581-1660
September 27

Born in southwestern France, Vincent began priestly studies in 1595 and was ordained in 1600. In 1605, he was taken off a ship attacked by pirates. After two years as a slave in Tunisia, he escaped and returned to France, taking up parish work outside Paris. From about 1615, he dedicated his life to serving the poor. To that end, he founded the Confraternity of Charity, the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentians) and, with St. Louise de Marillac, the Daughters of Charity. In 1885 Pope Leo XIII named him the patron of all works of charity.

 **CNS Saints**

The 6th Annual, international Rosary Coast to Coast event will be October 7 at 1 p.m., at the Grotto of the Two Hearts at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Burlington. Please join us as we pray to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary all four sets of mysteries, on the actual feast of the Holy Rosary, in reparation for the sins of our fallen world. Fr. Joe Rielage will be our main leader. This event will happen rain or shine. Please bring a chair. (And any priests who are able to join us please contact Fr. Joe). Questions: Jeanette at jmlandenwitch@yahoo.com, Joann at jodugan66@gmail.com



Thomas More University’s theater program welcomes new director Phillip Webster. Originally from the Northern Kentucky area, Webster brings a fascinating and diverse background to the role. He served in the U.S. Air Force and in 2021, founded SouthBank Shakespeare in Bellevue. The first show of the season at Thomas More is Shakespeare’s “Twelfth Night,” Oct. 13-15 and 20-21; Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. For information, visit www.thomasmore.edu/program/theater/.

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., Steigerwald 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, retired principal in the Cincinnati law office of Jackson Lewis P.C. and president of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati. For information visit thomasmore.edu/religiousliberty.

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,


Welcome Saints
Thomas More University welcomed new and returning Saints with an official convocation ceremony the morning of Aug. 30. The incoming class of 403 students marks a four percent increase over last year and is the second largest first-year class in five years. The new Saints represent 18 states and nine countries in addition to the U.S., as residential numbers continue to climb with 472 students living on campus, a new record.

student formation, and scholarship. More details to come. Visit thomasmore.edu/religiousliberty for more information.

St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, PTO Craft Show accepting vendor applications for its craft show Nov. 4, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Table prices include 8-foot tables and two chairs. One table: \$30; two tables: \$50, electric available for an additional \$2.50 per table. Set up the evening before the craft show available. Contact Rebecca Stidham at fawn.stidham486@gmail.com.

A faith-based support group, New Beginnings provides separated and divorced individuals the opportunity for healing and growth. In this group, participants find new understanding of themselves and their relationships and gain courage to discover new life. Registration is required. Visit <https://covidio.org/new-beginnings-2/> or call (859) 392-1500, ext.1592. The next session will be held on consecutive Thursdays, Oct.12 – Dec. 7, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Elementary School, Bellevue.

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



October

In October, the church celebrates the Most Holy Rosary. Find a rosary and do these steps to learn more about it — and, most importantly, to pray!

Prepare for Mass

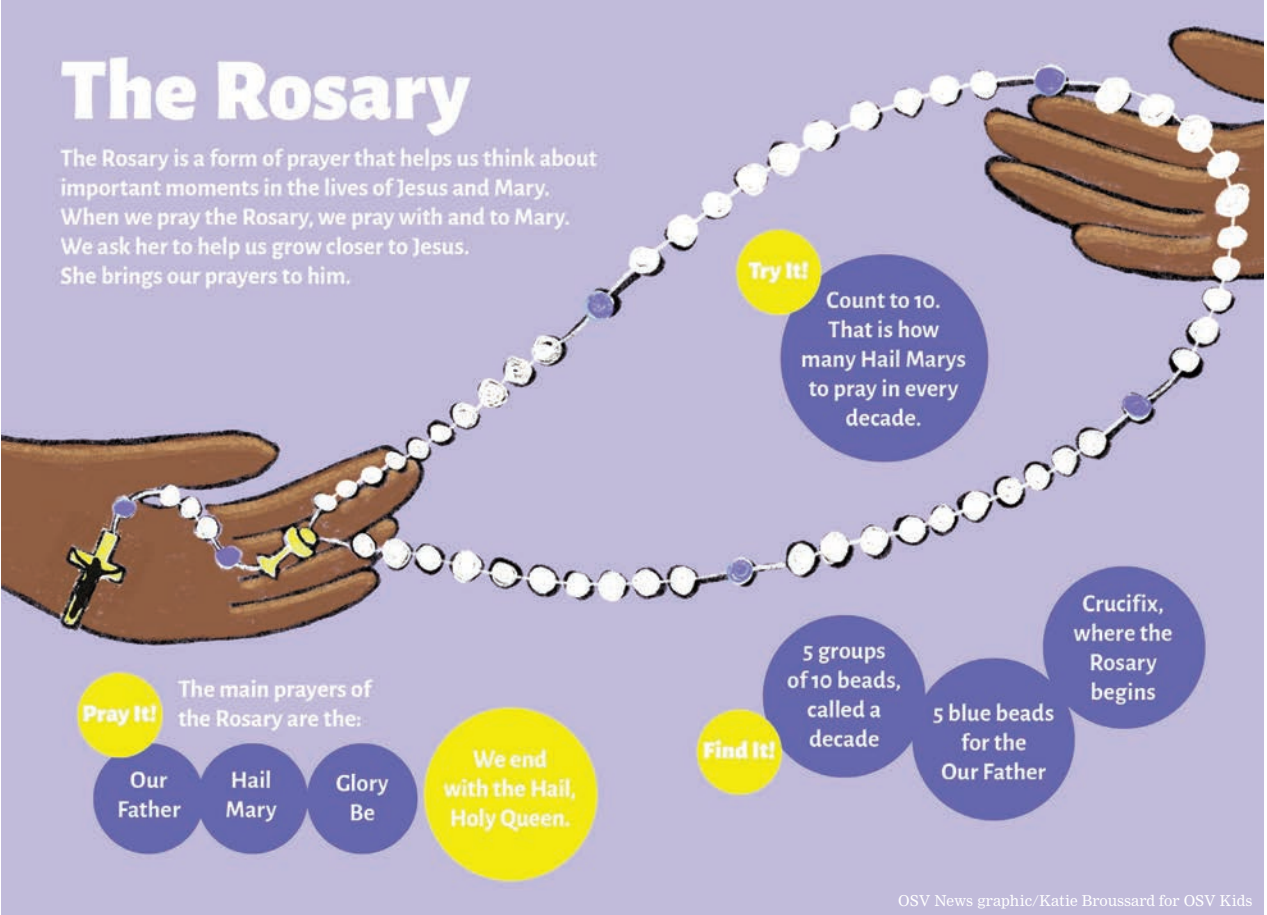
Oct. 1 — Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Matt 21:28-32)

Jesus tells a story. He wants the religious leaders to figure out which of the two sons did his father’s will: the one who said yes but never showed up, or the one who said no but later repented and did what his father asked? Jesus was teaching that a life of holiness is both what we do as well as our attitude and intentions.

— Can you think of times when you’ve seen people say one thing and do another?

The Rosary

The Rosary is a form of prayer that helps us think about important moments in the lives of Jesus and Mary. When we pray the Rosary, we pray with and to Mary. We ask her to help us grow closer to Jesus. She brings our prayers to him.



Try It! Count to 10. That is how many Hail Marys to pray in every decade.

Pray It! The main prayers of the Rosary are the: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be. We end with the Hail, Holy Queen.

Find It! 5 groups of 10 beads, called a decade. 5 blue beads for the Our Father. Crucifix, where the Rosary begins.

OSV News graphic/Katie Broussard for OSV Kids

Hope must be restored in communities, young people, pope says

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Hope and fraternity must be kept alive, organized and coordinated into concrete action so every crisis can be read as an opportunity and dealt with positively, Pope Francis said.

“Hope needs to be restored to our European societies, especially to the new generations,” he told people gathered in St. Peter’s Square for his weekly general audience Sept. 27.

“In fact, how can we welcome others if we ourselves do not first have a horizon open to the future?” he said.

The pope followed his usual practice of speaking about his latest trip at the first general audience after his return. The pope went to Marseille — an ancient port city on the Mediterranean Sea and France’s second-largest city — Sept. 22-23 to highlight the challenges and opportunities across the entire Mediterranean region and to focus on the plight of migrants crossing its waters.

“We know the Mediterranean is the cradle of civilization and a cradle is for life! It is not tolerable that it become a tomb, neither should it be a place of conflict,” war and human trafficking, he said, referring to the thousands of men, women and children who fall into the hands of traffickers offering them passage into Europe and to those who die from unsafe conditions on the sea or in detention.

The Mediterranean bridges Africa, Asia and Europe and their people, cultures, philosophies and religions, he said. But a harmonious connection “does not happen magically, neither is it accomplished once and for all. It is the fruit of a journey in which each generation is called to travel.”

The pope explained he went to Marseille to take part in the conclusion of the “Mediterranean Meetings,” which brought together bishops, mayors, young people and others from the Mediterranean area to look toward the future with hope.

“This is the dream, this is the challenge: that the Mediterranean might recover its vocation, that of being a laboratory of civilization and peace,” the pope said.

Otherwise, he said, “how can young people, who are poor in hope, closed in on their private lives, worried about managing their own precariousness, open themselves to meeting others and to sharing?”

Communities, which are so often “sickened by individualism, by consumerism and by empty escapism, need to

open themselves; their souls and spirits need to be oxygenated, and then they will be able to read the crisis as an opportunity and deal with it positively,” he said.

What came out of the Marseille event, he said, was an outlook on the Mediterranean that was hopeful and “simply human, not ideological, not strategic, not politically correct nor instrumental.”

“Europe needs to retrieve passion and enthusiasm. And I can say that I found passion and enthusiasm in Marseille,” the pope said, thanking its archbishop, Cardinal Jean-Marc Aveline, the priests, religious, lay faithful and the many people who “showed great warmth during the Mass in the Vélodrome Stadium.”

He also thanked President Emmanuel Macron, “whose presence testified that all of France was paying attention to the event in Marseille.”

The pope prayed that the Mediterranean region may become “what it has always been called to be — a mosaic of civilization and hope.”

At the end of his main audience talk, the pope gave special

greetings to the diaconate class of the Pontifical North American College, together with their families and friends. “Upon all of you I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!”

Some 18 seminarians in their fourth year of studies in Rome were to be ordained to the transitional diaconate in St. Peter’s Basilica Sept. 28.

Pope Francis greets visitors from the popemobile as he rides around St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican before his weekly general audience Sept. 27, 2023.

CNS photo/Lola Gomez



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Rain or Shine!



The first official thrift store in Covington opened in 1946 on Greenup Street, Covington. Eleven parish conferences came together to contribute \$1,650 dedicated to opening this first store.

In the 50s St. Vincent de Paul NKY organized a drive for food and clothing to send to flood victims in Hazard, KY via a St. Vincent de Paul truck. More recently, Vincentians have extended help to Eastern KY neighbors after the horrific floods in July 2021, rebuilding continues today.

Bishop Richard Ackerman presides at the blessing and dedication of the St. Vincent de Paul NKY warehouse on Crescent Springs Road in Erlanger. The warehouse was purchased in 1969.

A Vincentian assists a guest as they shop in at one of St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantries.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul NKY — 100 Years

THE MESSENGER • SEPTEMBER 29, 2023

Society of St. Vincent De Paul — a friend to neighbors in need and each other

Most Rev. John Iffert
Bishop of Covington

Home visits are the foundational and characteristic practice of the Society of St. Vincent De Paul (SVDP). It is what sets Vincentians apart.



Bishop John Iffert

Members of this society assist their neighbor in myriad ways. As they say, “No work of charity is foreign to the Society.” The first gift its members give to a neighbor, however, is to treat each person like a neighbor. The most cherished gift the poor receive from SVDP members is the gift of self. Friendship is their calling card. Respect is their approach.

Just hours before writing this message, I celebrated a

Mass with the SVDPs and joined them in recognizing 100 years of their society in Northern Kentucky. Deacon Mike Lyman, the spiritual advisor of the SVDP council in the Diocese of Covington, noted that most people would assume that the purpose of their society is service to the poor.

“They would be wrong,” he said. He noted that the primary purpose of their way of life is the spiritual growth of both members and those they serve. The Society of St. Vincent De Paul exists for the salvation of its members and friends. They serve poor people so that those same poor people might know that God loves them. A Vincentian serves poor people, so that the Vincentian herself might recognize that God loves her and be grateful to God.

As a young man, I spent most of one summer working alongside members of the Society of St. Vincent De Paul in East St. Louis. I remember delivering a whole household of furniture, bedding, and more to a family in need. The children danced around me as I assembled a bed for each one. I grew aggravated, however, with one adult in the household who didn’t lift a finger to help and barely acknowledged our existence while we toted furniture, hung curtains, and stocked the fridge.

On the way home, I shared my aggravation with the SVDP member who was with me in the cab of the truck. He shared with me what he knew of the psychology of poverty. He said that poverty can leave people feeling embittered, angry and disempowered. He invited me to see that the person who annoyed me might be trapped with those feelings and not yet able to be grateful to God. He invited me to pray for that person. Then he gently asked me to reflect on whether I was giving my time because I was grateful to God, or because I expected gratitude from others. He was a spiritual friend to me that day. He helped

me grow in understanding.

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati joined the Society of St. Vincent De Paul at the age of 17. “Jesus comes to me every morning in Holy Communion,” he said, “and I repay Him in my very small way by visiting the poor.”

While we were still sinners, Jesus visited us and called us friends. Because of his gift of self, we are free to give ourselves to others. Thank you to the members of the Society of St. Vincent De Paul for your witness to this truth for 100 years in the Diocese of Covington.

Dear Friends,

We are blessed to celebrate 100 years of friendship, service, and spirituality within the Society of St. Vincent De Paul here in Northern Kentucky.



Karen Zengel

During a time with great challenges not unlike our own, our founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam and six friends accepted a challenge to put their faith into action through direct service to the poor living in Paris, France. Their simple acts of meeting and ministering to the poor allowed them to see the face of Christ in those they served and, consequently, lit the world on fire. Their legacy continues as the Society is now active in 150 countries, with 800,000 people worldwide committed to growing closer to Christ through service to those in need.

The Society began in Northern Kentucky with three parishes in 1923 and has grown to be present in 31 parishes with a membership of 640 dedicated Vincentians. Their common mission to help the poor and marginalized forges spiritual bonds and friendship between members. Together, these ordinary people do simple acts of kindness as a way to share the love of Christ with the less fortunate. However, the cumulative impact of these acts is an extraordinary outreach that shares hope with thousands of neighbors struggling to get by every year.

Our Vincentians are quiet evangelists, encountering those in need every day, living and working in the community to share the love of Christ with those who encounter them. In seeing the faces of those who are suffering, they see Jesus and the burdens he carried for us. Out of gratitude and the desire to know him more, they seek to relieve the burdens of our struggling neighbors.

It is an honor and privilege to witness firsthand this genuine community of Faith and Love, Prayer and Action. We are so grateful for all the Vincentians throughout the years who have been beacons of hope to our neighbors in need. We are equally grateful for our community that has offered support and encouragement, enabling this special ministry to grow and make a difference for not only those we serve, but also those who choose to serve.

Always serving in hope,

Karen Zengel

Executive Director
Society of St. Vincent De Paul Northern Kentucky



Bishop John Iffert
together with
Bishop Emeritus Roger J. Foys

and the Priests, Deacons,
Religious and Lay Faithful
of the Diocese of Covington

send prayerful best wishes
and congratulations to

St. Vincent de Paul
on their
100th Anniversary

*“In All Things
Give Thanks”*

SVDP parish conferences — 100 years and still growing

Laura Keener
Editor

While he Society of St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky can informally trace its beginnings to 1911 to a group of faithful men in Campbell County, Holy Cross Parish, Latonia, was, in 1923, the first parish to establish a formal parish conference. One-hundred years later, 15 active Vincentians at Holy Cross Parish continue to serve their neighbors need.

“We get a lot of support from our pastor, Father Michael Hennigan,” said Barry Hamlin, conference president.

Mr. Hamlin has been a Vincentian for about 20 years, most of those years with the conference at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Burlington. About three years ago, he and his wife joined Holy Cross Parish where he continued his work as a Vincentian.

With the increase cost of everything from toilet paper to utilities and rent outpacing any increase in salaries, Mr. Hamlin said, “we’re feeling it ... everybody’s feeling it,” about the needs of people in their conference boundary.

Mr. Hamlin said that with 100 years of experience Vincentians have creative ways and many programs to

make a dollar stretch. Many parishes, including Holy Cross Parish, have pantries full of hygiene products and non-perishable food items to take along on their home visits. For perishable food, families are given a Kroger gift card. Vincentians can even help with rent and utilities, paying directly to the landlord or utility company. And if a family is close to eviction or having their utilities turned off, Vincentians often act as advocates for families to see what arrangements can be made to keep a roof over head and the lights and water on.

“People call with electric bills and they owe \$2,000,” said Mr. Hamlin. When this happens, Vincentians reach out to partner charitable organizations like Brighton Center and the Salvation Army to pool resources.

Like many conferences, at Holy Cross the work of the Vincentians is financially supported by donations to the parish poor box in the back of Church and from donations dropped in a collection bucket on the fifth Sunday of the month — four times a year.

“It’s amazing, they seem to find the money,” Mr. Hamlin said about his Vincentians, “I don’t know where, but the good Lord supplies it.” Mr. Hamlin scoffs when he hears

saying that people are “taking advantage” of the Conferences’ generosity. “When people break down and cry because you’re bringing them a bag of groceries or beds for their children, (you know) it’s a great need,” he said.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul NKY has 31 parish conferences, with at least one conference in every deanery of the Diocese of Covington. (See box) St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood, is the newest SVDP parish conference. It was established in May 2023 and has 14 full members and about 20 associate members that help with special projects.

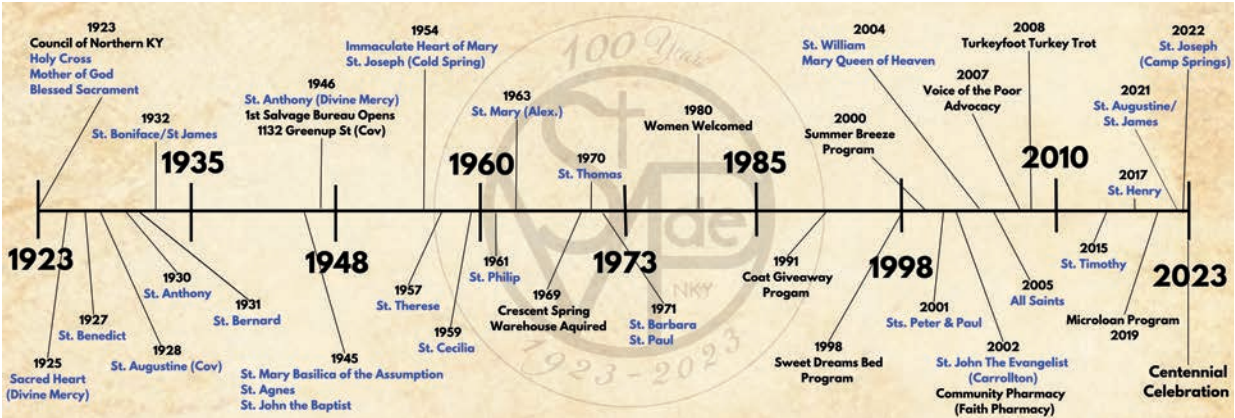
The SVDP St. Pius X Parish conference is just now putting the finishing touches on its parish pantry and have recently installed a big blue donation bin on the parish campus. They will also be having their first Bundle Sunday this weekend, where the SVDP truck will be onsite for parishioners to donate household items and clothing.

“St. Vincent De Paul is one of the best kept secrets around,” said Carol Hartlaub, president, St. Pius X SVDP Conference, about the many ways that SVDP assists neighbors with food, clothing, rent, utilities and spiritual needs. For Mrs. Hartlaub, the most overlooked program is the local councils clothing recycle program at its Crescent Springs distribution center. In addition to the gently used donations of clothing and shoes that find their way onto the store’s floor to sell, any clothes or shoes donated that are stained, ripped or otherwise unusable are baled and sold for recycling.

“That’s one of the ways that we make a lot of money. The Council here made \$400,000 last year on their recycle program from clothes that were stained or torn,” she said.

But the true mission of SVDP is to be friends to those in need and to bring the love of Christ to everyone they meet. This is most obviously accomplished during a home visit. Before a home visit, the parish conference will determine the temporal needs of the family. Then two Vincentians

(Continued on page 14)



DBL Law

Congratulations to St Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky on its one hundred year milestone.

DBL Law supports St Vincent de Paul’s Mission of growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to people in need.

This is an advertisement.

Congrats!

The Saint Thomas Conference of the Society of St. Vincent dePaul is proud to be a part of the 100 year tradition of serving our brothers and sisters in Northern Kentucky.

Here’s to 100 more!

We are so proud of the dedicated group of Vincentians at Saint Thomas Parish!

Thank you also to the parishioners of Saint Thomas for their continual financial support and material donations!

Parish conferences

(Continued from page 13)

will visit the family’s home bringing needed items. They always ask the family if they would like to pray together:

“We’re not here to judge ... and by doing the prayer at the end of it, it just kind of feels the fact that we’re bringing God into their lives and they appreciate it, whether they’re Catholic or non-denominational, they always are willing to say a prayer with us,” said Mrs. Hartlaub.

Margie Hardebeck, Vincentian at St. Benedict Parish, Covington, said her grandpa was active with the Cathedral conference in the 1960s. And she discovered a very personal connection when going through her father’s memoirs after his death in 2005.

“He left us many stories about growing up in Covington in the 1920s and 1930s,” said Ms. Hardebeck. Here is an excerpt from his essay entitled “Depression”:

“The Great Depression started following the stock market crash in 1929. However for my family it began after my dad died in 1927. We moved to Maryland Ave. and my mother began house-keeping for a widow with three boys next door. The neighbor went bankrupt and he and his family boarded with us and I presume we lived off the meager \$1000 insurance from my dad’s death. When we couldn’t pay the rent we were evicted and our families separated. We then moved to 16th St. behind Schreck’s grocery. My mother had a hard time financially, and the St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Benedict Church helped out for several years. Every Saturday one of the local groceries would deliver a basket of food. Mom made a lot of our clothes. We had very few luxuries. It was a tough life for her, making \$2 a day

washing, cleaning, etc. for different people. These experiences make me truly grateful for the well-being we enjoy today.”



The Hardebeck children circa 1926. Margie Hardebeck, current Vincentian, St. Benedict Parish Conference, learned how the SVPD society helped her dad (back right) after his father died leaving a young widow with four children.

“In reading this again, I realize that my dad and his family were precisely those ‘neighbors in need’ who were assisted by the very same conference of which I am a part today,” said Ms. Hardebeck “I have no doubt that paying that forward through the years has affected who dad was and who I am. Thanks St. Vincent de Paul for being there, and thanks, dad, for reminding me of it!”

Keith Hill, St. Mary Parish Conference, Alexandria, has been a Vincentian for 30 years. He, too, credits the example of his father for passing on the Vincentian spirituality and mission of charity.

“I was drawn into their mission by watching my father, Ken Hill, serve those in need when I was young. His dedication to helping the less fortunate by visiting them in their home served as an inspiration,” Mr. Hill said. “My experience has been one of fulfillment. Meeting and praying with families in their home is rewarding both emotionally and spiritually. I have been able to help financially (keeping families in their home), spiritually (helping with burial needs and praying with them) and nutritionally (delivering food), with families in their time of need.”

Like with anything the Lord calls his faithful to do, much has been done but there is always more to do. To learn more about the St. Vincent de Paul Parish Conferences or about becoming a Vincentian, call Notre Dame Sister Mary Judith Niewahner, Conference Relations Manager at (859) 446-7721 or e-mail smjudith.niewahner@svidpnky.org or visit www.svidpnky.org.

With gratitude, the Covington Deanery extends

Congratulations



To the St. Vincent de Paul Parish Conferences of:

- St. Mary Parish, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington
- Divine Mercy Parish, Bellevue
- Holy Cross Parish, Latonia
- Mother of God Parish, Covington
- St. Anthony, Taylor Mill
- St. Augustine Parish, Covington
- St. Benedict Parish, Covington
- St. Bernard Parish, Dayton
- Sts. Boniface/James, Ludlow

“Charity is the cement which binds Communities to God and persons to one another.”

– St. Vincent de Paul

SVDP Parish Conferences

Covington Deanery

- St. Mary Parish, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington (1945)
- Divine Mercy Parish, Bellevue (1925 Sacred Heart) (1946 St. Anthony)
- Holy Cross Parish, Latonia (1923)
- Mother of God Parish, Covington (1923)
- St. Anthony Parish, Taylor Mill (1930)
- St. Augustine Parish, Covington (1928)
- St. Benedict Parish, Covington (1927)
- St. Bernard Parish, Dayton (1931)
- Sts. Boniface/James, Ludlow (1932)

Northern Kenton County Deanery

- Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell (1923)
- Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish, Erlanger (2004)
- St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright (1945)
- St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger (1971)
- St. Cecilia Parish, Independence (1959)
- St. Henry Parish, Elsmere (2017)
- St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood (2023)

Campbell County Deanery

- St. John Parish, Wilder (1945)
- St. Joseph Parish, Camp Springs (2022)
- St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring (1954)
- St. Mary Parish, Alexandria (1963)
- St. Philip Parish, Melbourne (1961)
- St. Therese Parish, Southgate (1957)
- St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas (1970)
- Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, California (2001)

South East Deanery

- St. Augustine Parish, Augusta (2021)
- St. James Parish, Brooksville (2021)

South West Deanery

- All Saints Parish, Walton (2005)
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Burlington (1954)
- St. John Parish, Carrollton (2002)
- St. Paul Parish, Florence (1971)
- St. Timothy Parish, Union (2015)
- St. William Parish, Williamstown (2004)

Society of St. Vincent De Paul — Neighbors You Can Count On

Year-round programs

Emergency Assistance
Rent and utilities, food, clothing, household items and furniture vouchers.

Homeless Assistance Program
This new program provides up to 3 nights in a hotel, food, bus passes and clothing vouchers to a person experiencing homelessness. This program also strives to connect these neighbors to one of our partners who specialize in helping individuals and families

find stable and permanent housing.


Sweet Dreams Bed Program
Many times during our Vincentian volunteers' home visits, they find children and seniors sleeping in chairs or on the floor. The impact of those conditions is devastating on the lives of children and the elderly as evidenced by the loss of dignity and the loss of the opportunity to develop normally in mind and body. Through the generosity of donors and foundation funding, St. Vincent De Paul NKY provides a twin size bed to children under the age of 16, the disabled, and seniors age 65 and over who do not have the

means to purchase a bed to sleep in.


Medical Equipment Loan Closet
The purpose of the Medical Loan Closet is to provide temporary assistance to individuals in need of medical equipment when other sources are unavailable. A variety of donated items are offered at no cost for use during your home recovery. Items for loan are shower chairs/benches, transfer benches, walkers, bedside commodes, canes, toilet seat risers, and wheelchairs. Please call the Assistance Office to check if an item is available.

(Continued on page 16)





Catholic Charities
Diocese of Covington



Congratulations to St. Vincent DePaul
on serving the Diocese of Covington
for 100 years

CONGRATULATIONS
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
ON 100 YEARS
OF SERVING
THE COMMUNITY



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Andrew Kordenbrock
Owner

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We congratulate
St. Vincent de Paul
on its
100th Anniversary



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Society of St. Vincent De Paul — Neighbors You Can Count On

(Continued from page 15)

Seasonal Programs

Summer Breeze Program

Many of our neighbors have to fight the heat of summer with no comfort of having a fan or air conditioner to help them. Neighbors may receive a new AC unit every 5 years with a doctor's note or a fan every year without a doctor's note. The annual Summer Breeze Program sponsored by St. Elizabeth Healthcare begins June 1st and runs through August 31. It is the only annual heat relief program in Northern Kentucky that provides new AC units and fans to neighbors of all ages suffering from a documented medical condition such as asthma or COPD. We could not offer this program without the financial support of generous donors and foundations like St. Elizabeth Healthcare and the Agnes Nordloh Charitable Trust.

Winter Coat Donation and Distribution Program

With the assistance of Channel 5 and other wonderful sponsors, every fall St. Vincent De Paul NKY promotes its coat donation program. The wonderful people of Northern Kentucky donate their gently used winter coats at one of the many drop-off locations. These coats are then distributed at our many distribution sites throughout Northern Kentucky.

Thanksgiving and Holiday Meal Programs

Through the generosity of NKY businesses and other donors, this program provides holiday meals to families in need during this special time of the year. Families and organizations can donate food items or make a monetary donation to the program.

Christmas Adopt-A-Family Program

Many generous NKY businesses and families participate in this Christmas program. We receive calls from families in need who are looking for assistance with

Christmas gifts for their family. We gather details on the children's age, gender, and interests from the family in need. Then we match the family in need with a generous NKY business or family who will "adopt" the family and shop for their Christmas gifts. This program brings an abundance of joy to families who typically go without gifts every Christmas season.

Vincent's Angels

Families who are in need of Christmas gifts for their children call into the St. Vincent De Paul Call Center starting in November and are put on a special list. Families are asked the age, gender, and a few interests of the children receiving the gifts. Generous donors provide new toys and/or gift cards for various ages. We make bags filled with gifts, wrapping paper and gift bags for the families in need. The families then are able to choose gifts for their children and wrap and personalize the gifts. Vincent Angel's is for those who are unable to be on the Adopt-A-Family list due to space and timing.



With gratitude, the South East Deanery extends

Congratulations

To the St. Vincent de Paul Parish Conferences of:

- St. Augustine Parish, Augusta
- St. James Parish, Brooksville
- St. Vincent de Paul Store

"Since God is satisfied with our good will and honest efforts, let us also be satisfied with the outcome He gives to them, and our actions will never be without good results"

– St. Vincent de Paul

With gratitude the Northern Kenton County Deanery extends

Congratulations

- To the St. Vincent de Paul Parish Conferences of:
- Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell
 - Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish, Erlanger
 - St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright
 - St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger
 - St. Cecilia Parish, Independence
 - St. Henry Parish, Elsmere
 - St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood

"I will always welcome joyfully any opportunity that comes my way to be of service to you"

– St. Vincent de Paul

SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL NKY CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

As early as 1911, local Vincentians have served neighbors in need

Karen Zengel
Contributor

The Society of St. Vincent De Paul was not actually founded by St. Vincent De Paul; rather, it was founded by a young college student named Frederic Ozanam in 1833.

Frederic was a devout Catholic and a committed scholar. He enjoyed a good debate and was known for his well-thought-out arguments for the problems of his time. Much of what Frederic talked and wrote about can be found in the basic social justice principles later introduced by Pope Leo in the 1890s. These tenets proclaim that it is our responsibility to build a just society and live lives of holiness amidst the challenges of our modern world.

As a young student at the Sorbonne living in the political, social, religious, and economic turmoil that encompassed early 19th century France, Frederic Ozanam was appalled by the conditions he saw in Paris. And he talked about it a lot. At a student meeting, another student challenged Ozanam and other practicing Catholics, acknowledging that while the Catholic Church had done good work in the past, he could not see what good the Church was doing currently.

What do you do besides talk to prove the faith you claim is in you?

Frederic took that challenge to heart. On April 23, 1833, his 20th birthday, Ozanam invited five other students to a meeting, where they founded the first Conference of Charity to assist the poor.

They later asked if this Catholic lay organization was intended to help members grow in holiness through loving service to those in need. The six students chose Emmanuel Bailly, a married layman, as their first president. Shortly thereafter, they changed their name to the Society of St. Vincent De Paul in honor of the patron saint of charity.

Twelve years after being founded in France, the Society established itself in the United States. On Nov. 20, 1845, the United States Society of St. Vincent De Paul was established in St. Louis, Missouri at the Basilica of St. Louis,



CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn

Bishop Donald J. Hying of Madison, Wis., blesses a mosaic of Blessed Frederic Ozanam at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington Jan. 26, 2020. Ozanam was part of a group of young Catholic intellectuals in the 19th century who founded the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

now known as “The Old Cathedral.”

The first documented evidence of the Society in Northern Kentucky can be traced back to 1911. In his letter to Bishop Maes, conference president John W. Heuver reported that a group of men had informally begun the Society of St. Vincent De Paul of Campbell County to serve the less fortunate. The letter stated that some of the men agreed it was important to continue the mission and that the best way to raise funds was through a Euchre tournament.

That year, these men served 90 Campbell County families, providing groceries, coal for heat, medicine, coats and shoes. A sewing machine was also purchased for \$4 to enable a mother to make clothes for her family. The total cost of assistance was \$666.50, providing a small surplus for that first documented year.

Twelve years later, three parish conferences were formally recognized by the Society of St. Vincent De Paul, marking the official beginning of the Society in Northern Kentucky.

Holy Cross earned its formal aggregation in January 1923, quickly followed by Mother of God in February, and then Blessed Sacrament in March. All three of these parishes continue to have active and vibrant conferences today.

With three active conferences, it was determined that a central governing body would benefit the conferences to encourage consistency in approach and provide resources for the conferences to use in their local ministries. On Nov. 23, 1923, the

Council of St. Vincent De Paul Northern Kentucky applied for formal recognition by the United States National Council. Edward Tracy of Ft. Mitchell was elected President. Henry Grote served as Vice President and C.C. Wolfe filled the roles of Secretary/Treasurer.

Karen Zengel is executive director for the Society of St. Vincent De Paul Northern Kentucky.

REPORT OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY FROM Oct. 1st 1911 TO Nov. 1st 1912.			
RECEIPTS			
Cash on hand		\$ 80.06	
Cash Donations-December		24.00	
Cash Donations-January		1.00	
Cash Donations-February		20.00	
Cash Donations-March		1.00	
Cash Receipts from Euchre		558.50	\$ 682.56
EXPENDITURES			
Postage		\$ 2.00	
Expressage		1.50	
1 Sewing Machine		4.00	
2 Coal Orders, October		3.30	
28 Grocery Orders, "		25.75	
7 Coal Orders, November		12.15	
39 Grocery Orders, "		37.00	
1 Coal Order, December		1.85	
111 Grocery Orders, "		103.25	
33 Medicine Orders, "		8.40	
3 Shoe Orders, "		4.50	
4 Medicine Orders January		.95	
11 Shoe Orders, "		12.75	
202 Grocery Orders, "		186.75	
10 Coal Orders, "		18.90	
3 Medicine Orders February		.55	
5 Coal Orders, "		8.25	
172 Grocery Orders, "		126.75	
1 Coal Order, March		1.85	
8 Shoe Orders, March		9.75	
92 Grocery Orders, "		53.50	
1 Coal Order, April		1.85	
10 Medicine Orders, "		4.40	
35 Grocery Orders, "		28.00	
15 Grocery Orders, May		11.25	
2 Shoe Orders, "		2.90	
9 Medicine Orders, June		2.80	
5 Grocery Orders, July		3.75	
5 Medicine Orders, August		2.10	
11 Grocery Orders, "		5.75	
7 Medicine Orders, September		3.50	
3 Grocery Orders, "		1.50	
		Balance on Hand	\$ 16.18

Total Grocery Orders	711	\$ 561.25	
Total Coal Orders	27	45.15	
Total Medicine Orders	71	22.70	
Total Shoe Orders	24	29.90	
Miscellaneous Expense		7.50	
	833	\$ 666.50	

Total Number of Families Assisted	90		
Total Number of Adults Assisted		133	
Total Number of Children Assisted		192	
		Total	325

A letter to Bishop Maes dated 1911, along with an accounting receipts and expenditures, is the first documented evidence of the Society in Northern Kentucky. Conference president John W. Heuver reported that a group of men had informally begun the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Campbell County.

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St. Vincent de Paul thrift stores are hallmark to community

Karen Zengel
Contributor

St. Vincent De Paul is probably best known to the general public for our thrift stores. The thrift stores are the physical representation of the Society. The stores serve two purposes for the Society:

— Provide a place for our struggling neighbors to choose clothing, furniture, and/or basic housewares at no cost to them by means of vouchers they received during a Vincentian visit; and

— Provide a place to purchase clothing, furniture, or housewares for anyone interested in shopping on a budget.

The money that is spent in a St. Vincent De Paul thrift store supports programming provided by our Vincentians, such as rent and utility assistance, food pantries, beds for children, the elderly and disabled, and homeless assistance.

The following excerpt shares a brief history of the thrift stores, published by the Kenton County Historical Society in 2009.

"It was a cold January day in 1946 as Andrew Lonnemann began a new job armed with a gallon of paint, a hammer, some nails, and some plywood. He was working at 1132 Greenup Street at the bidding of Rev. Edward Klosterman, then pastor of Mother of God Church, who asked Andrew to set up a salvage bureau for the St.

Vincent De Paul Society and operate it. The Society was interested in establishing a store where contributions could be sorted, displayed, and sold or distributed in an organized way. They needed a person who would devote his full time to the project. The priest offered Lonnemann the job and after much contemplation, Andrew accepted.

"I had an offer to become a tenor in a professional quartet," he said, "and I was real excited — until I found out I would have to be on the road about six months of the year!" He thought a long time before making the decision to accept Father Klosterman's request. Even though singing was his dream, a voice inside was telling him his place was at home with his young family.

"No one had any idea how the store would fare; I personally didn't think it would last a year," remembered Mr. Lonnemann.

"He started small and did much of the 'dirty work' himself. Within a year, he was able to repay the \$250 loan the Society advanced to start the project. More importantly, people were being helped. As general manager of the original store, Lonnemann saw some of the worst in life — yet he remained optimistic. The store — now with multiple locations — still enables people with modest means to shop with dignity. Andrew felt that nobody should have to find clothes and furniture in 'something that looks like a rummage barn.'

"The Salvage Bureau was financially independent after using only \$250 of the \$900 allotted by the Society for the initial start-up. This was due to Mr. Lonneman's dedication and through the kindness of the late Dr. Charles Farrell who allowed the use of his property rent-free.

"As the operation grew, so did the number of employees. A truck driver for pick-up and deliveries; a retired bookkeeper; and several salesladies were soon added."

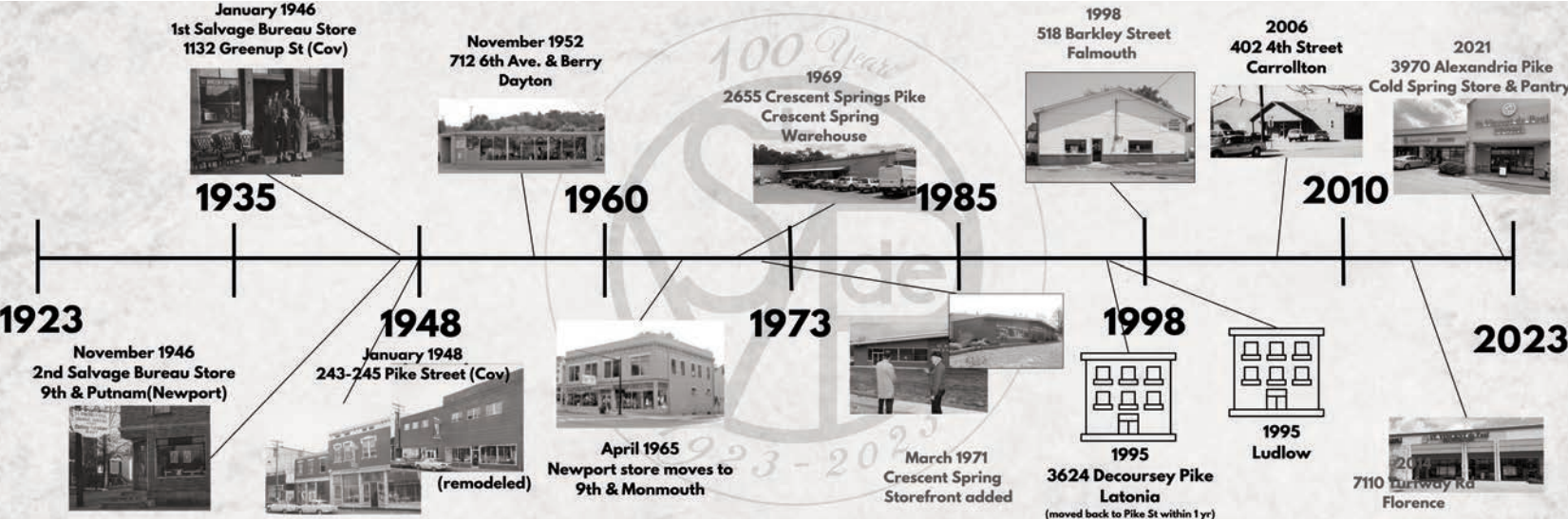
In 1969, St. Vincent De Paul NKY purchased a warehouse on Crescent Springs Road in Erlanger. At the time, it was intended to be a place to store the material donations provided by the public as the other smaller storefronts and parishes did not have the space.

In 1971, a store front was added to the warehouse, offering a new shopping location, and soon thereafter became the headquarters for the Council. In addition to being a warehouse and the ministry's most profitable retail store, this location continues to serve as the central office for the ministry, housing a call center, a choice food pantry, a free medical equipment closet, and office space for 16 employees who support the various programs Vincentians can access to meet the needs of those they serve.

During the history of St. Vincent De Paul thrift stores, there have been twelve different stores at various locations throughout Northern Kentucky. Today, St. Vincent De Paul operates four thriving locations — Erlanger, Florence, Cold Spring, and Falmouth. Roughly 12,000 customers each month visit these four locations.

Thanks to the patronage of those who donate to and choose to shop with St. Vincent De Paul, these four stores provide significant support for the outreach provided by St. Vincent De Paul.

Karen Zengel is executive director for the Society of St. Vincent De Paul Northern Kentucky.



Andrew Lonneman: SVDP's first director leaves charitable legacy

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

In 1945, Andrew Lonneman approached Father Klosterman, former pastor of Mother of God, Covington, to seek advice as to whether to accept a job as a tenor in a professional singing group. Father Klosterman, who was also director of Catholic Charities at the time, talked to Mr. Lonneman about how much traveling that would involve and thought it wouldn't be good for him to be away from his young family.

Father Klosterman then told him that St. Vincent De Paul Society was interested in starting a store to take donated items and make them available to the needy, but also to use the money from the sale of the items to help people in need of rent, utilities and other services that required money.

"He told dad that he thought he would be a good one to take on this project as general manager," said Andrea Lonneman, Andrew Lonneman's daughter, and in January of 1946 the first St. Vincent De Paul store was opened by Mr. Lonneman on Greenup Street.

In November of 1946 he opened the second store on Putnam Street in Newport, in 1948 purchased 243-245 Pike Street and expanded the facility over six years and in November 1952, he opened a store in Dayton Ky and in 1969 a warehouse was erected in Crescent Springs.

"During the period of time that he was manager, from 1946-1978, he at times drove the truck to take items to flooded areas, he met with people seeking help with items when they came to the store; at Christmas time, he dressed as Santa Claus and visited the hospital to cheer patients and hand out peppermint sticks that the Society provided," said Ms. Lonneman. "He was an equal opportunity

employer hiring some who had a developmental handicap and treating them with dignity and respect. Many times he was a 'father figure' to employees who needed counseling on saving money or securing a down payment for a home. It definitely was a vocation for him that he treasured," she added.

"Dad's work with St. Vincent De Paul had an effect on our whole family. My Mother helped Dad a lot whenever he needed a clerk in one of the stores as an emergency. She often helped by washing clothes that were donated, helped to sort clothes when there was an abundance of donations, and anything else that was needed. She definitely was a big support to him and the 'wind beneath his wings,'" Ms. Lonneman said. "My sister, my 2 brothers and I all got involved in doing volunteer things to help out whenever needed."

To this day, Ms.

Lonneman makes donations to St. Vincent De Paul, both material and monetary. "Dad was an inspiration to us about serving and caring for others."



Vincentians

(Continued from page 1)

inspired us and gave us opportunities, who mentored us and led us to see ourselves as the poor and everything that we have received has been from the hands of a generous God ... this is the beginning of charity,” he continued. “St. Vincent De Paul says, regardless of how charitable a person is, if he is not humble, he has not charity.”

At the end of his homily, Bishop Iffert congratulated the Vincentians on their 100-year anniversary, saying, “I congratulate you on 100 years in Northern Kentucky — of striving to be one with the mind of Jesus and one with Jesus’s spirit of mercy and friendship to those who are poor.”

As the Mass concluded, the Vincentians present participated in its annual Commitment Ceremony. The ceremony swore in Kevin Stanton as the society’s new Eastern District President, and Janice Wurtz as Council Treasurer.

The Vincentians prayed together, and, during the ceremony, reaffirmed their promise to “be a witness to (Christ)’s boundless love for the poor, the lonely, the suffering and the deprived, those without faith and those who are unloved.”

Migration

(Continued from page 8)

change and political persecution are only some of the causes for which people are forced to leave their places of origin, for starting on journeys for which they do not know the ending,” the human mobility ministry’s statement said.

Migrants, mostly from Venezuela, are seen from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, crossing the Rio Grande Sept. 21, 2023, with the intention of turning themselves in to the U.S. Border Patrol agents.



OSV News photo/ Jose Luis Gonzalez, Reuters

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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.

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‘Dare to love the weakest ... and to rediscover the Gospel’ Pope says during Marseille visit

Highlighting the Mediterranean as the sea that connects nations, cultures and religions across Europe, Africa and the Middle East, Pope Francis travelled to the southern French city of Marseille Sept. 22-23 for a meeting of bishops, civic leaders and young people from across the region. Some 70 bishops were expected to attend the meeting in addition to representatives from other churches, according to promotional materials for the meeting. Approximately 60 Mediterranean mayors were also invited as well as young people. Here is Pope Francis visit to Marseille in briefs as reported by Catholic News Service.

Arriving in Marseille, pope prepares to speak up for protecting migrants

Pope Francis arrived in the ancient port city of Marseille Sept. 22 for a two-day visit that was to focus on the plight of migrants and other opportunities and threats facing the Mediterranean Sea and the nations along its shores. Riding in a wheelchair, he was greeted by French Prime Minister Élisabeth Borne and by four children and a young man who gave him flowers and other gifts. He stood on the red carpet for the playing of the Vatican and French national anthems before he and Borne went into the airport for a brief meeting. Speaking to reporters flying with him, the pope said the trip was meant to bring the world’s attention to “a problem that worries me, which is the problem of the Mediterranean.” He had told reporters in August, “The exploitation of migrants is criminal” and “I am going to Marseille for this.”

People have a duty to save migrants in danger of drowning, pope says

At a moving ceremony at the edge of a cliff overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, Pope Francis led a moment of silence for the countless lives lost in its blue but treacherous waters. And he warned the world it was now at a crossroads: people must choose either to take the path of compassion, encounter and fraternity or veer off toward a track of indifference and conflict. Calling it “a duty of civilization,” he said that “people who are at risk of drowning when abandoned on the waves must be rescued. It is a duty of humanity.” “Let us not get used to considering shipwrecks as news stories” where the people who died are faceless and nameless numbers, he said. They are brothers and sisters who “drowned in fear, along with the hopes they carried in their hearts.” “We need deeds not words,” he said, and then led those gathered in a moment of

Pope Francis pauses before a memorial dedicated to sailors and migrants lost in the Mediterranean Sea in Marseille, France, Sept. 22, 2023.



silence in memory of those who died. Earlier, the pope joined bishops, clergy, seminarians and consecrated men and women for a Marian prayer service in the Basilica of Notre Dame de la Gard situated on top of the hill overlooking the sea and the memorial. The pope encouraged Catholics to be like Mary, “the Bonne Mère” depicted in the basilica’s statues, with her tender and loving gaze on Jesus, who, in turn, compassionately looks upon all of humanity.

Take leap of faith and dare to love your family, those in need, pope says

The world and the Catholic Church today need to take a leap forward “in faith, charity and hope,” Pope Francis said in his homily at a late afternoon Mass in Marseille’s open-air stadium. “We need to rekindle our passion and enthusiasm, to reawaken our desire to commit ourselves to fraternity. We need to once again risk loving our families and dare to love the weakest, and to rediscover in the Gospel the transforming grace that makes life beautiful,” he said at the final event of a two-day trip to the old port city of Marseille. Passion and enthusiasm were not lacking at the Vélodrome Stadium, which erupted into cheers the minute images hit the screens of Pope Francis making his way through the city in the popemobile. Officials estimated 100,000 people lined the route to the stadium while some 50,000 people nearly filled the stadium. French President Emmanuel Macron, Marseille Mayor Benoît Payan and other dignitaries were present. In his homily, he asked the faithful to reflect “honestly, from the heart: Do we believe that God is at work in our lives? Do we believe that the Lord, in hidden and often unpredictable ways, acts in history, performs wonders and is working even in our societies that are marked by worldly secularism and a certain religious indifference?”

Pope laments closing ports to migrants, fueling fears with false alarm

The real evil plaguing communities and countries is not the growing number of problems, but

the collapse of care, Pope Francis said at a major meeting discussing the challenges and opportunities of the dozens of countries circling the Mediterranean Sea. “Today the sea of human coexistence is polluted by instability, which even assails beautiful Marseille,” he said Sept. 23, on the second and final day of his trip to

(Continued on page 22)

Pope Francis arrives at the Basilica of Notre-Dame de la Garde in Marseille, France, for a Marian prayer service with diocesan clergy Sept. 22, 2023.



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Pope Francis is greeted by members of the Missionaries of Charity as he arrives at their house for a meeting with people who find themselves in a situation of economic hardship in Marseille, France, Sept. 23, 2023.

Pope in Marseille

(Continued from page 21)

the ancient port city. “Where there is instability there is crime. Where there is lack of work together with material, educational, cultural and religious poverty, the path is opened up for gangs and illicit trafficking.” It is not enough for institutions to make a commitment to resolving the problem. “We need a jolt of conscience to say ‘no’ to lawlessness and ‘yes’ to solidarity,” he told his audience, which included French President Emmanuel Macron, Marseille Mayor Benoît Payan, and most of the French bishops as well as dozens of bishops, young people of all faiths and civil association leaders from about 30 Mediterranean nations. He was met with a standing ovation when he came onto the stage to join other church leaders.

CNS photo/Vatican Media



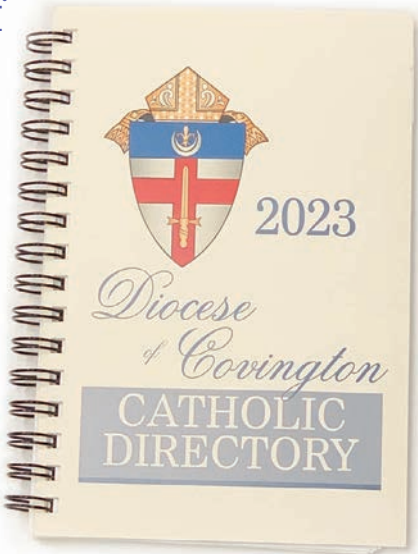
Pope Francis meets with French President Emmanuel Macron at the Pharo Palace in Marseille, France, Sept. 23, 2023.

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National/World

Pope says his new ecology document is titled ‘Laudate Deum’

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis said the title of his new letter on the environment will be “Laudate Deum,” (Praise God), a frequent refrain in several psalms, including Psalm 148, which tells the heavens and the angels and the sun and moon to praise the Lord. The new document, expected to be released Oct. 4, is what the pope has described as a follow-up to his 2015 encyclical “Laudato Si’, On Care for Our Common Home.” Pope Francis revealed the title of the new document during a meeting Sept. 21 at the Vatican with rectors of Catholic and public universities from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. He did not have a prepared text for the audience, but instead responded to questions. Vatican News in Spanish published a summary of his responses late Sept. 25. The new document, he said, is “a look at what has happened” since 2015 and a look at what still “needs to be done.”

Vatican at U.N.: Risk of nuclear war is ‘at its highest in generations’

VATICAN CITY — The international community must cooperate to advance disarmament rather than embrace the “false security” offered by nuclear weapons, the Vatican’s foreign minister said. Speaking Sept. 26 during a high-level meeting on the elimination of nuclear weapons at the U.N. General Assembly in New York, Archbishop Paul R. Gallagher, the Vatican foreign minister, called eliminating nuclear weapons a “moral imperative.” He said that “Regrettably, the risk of nuclear war is at its highest in generations, featuring unconscionable threats of nuclear use, while an arms race runs unabated.” The archbishop lamented how countries “squander resources needed for pressing development concerns on nuclear weapons,” and said countries have “abandoned much of the arms control and disarmament structure that underpins international security.” Archbishop Gallagher called for states to adopt disarmament measures including no-first-use policies,

treaties managing materials that can undergo fission and assurances that nuclear-weapon states will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against states that do not possess them.

Florida death-row inmate’s lawyers, bishops, advocacy groups urge stay on Oct. 3 execution

ORLANDO, Fla. — On Oct. 3, Florida might carry out its sixth execution of the year. The death-row inmate scheduled to die is Michael Duane Zack, whose lawyers and death penalty foes say has suffered from intellectual disabilities and carries a deep sense of remorse. He was sentenced to death for killing two women in 1996 during a nine-day crime spree near Tallahassee. Gov. Ron Desantis, on behalf of Florida’s citizens, has signed six warrants for execution since Jan. 24. Five men have died at the hands of the state since then. Less than two weeks before his execution, Zack’s lawyers have asked a federal appeals court for a stay of execution because they say he was “shut out” of a clemency process that could help spare him. Zack’s attorneys filed a 26-page emergency motion Sept. 19, at the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, after U.S. District Judge Robert Hinkle a week before rejected the clemency arguments. On Sept. 21, the Florida Supreme Court in a unanimous ruling also refused to block his execution. In a Sept. 11 letter to DeSantis on behalf of the bishops of Florida, Michael Sheedy, executive director of the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops, recognized that Zack’s “heinous and horrific crimes” have caused “untold suffering” to his victims’ families but urged DeSantis to commute his sentence to life without parole.

Kidnapped Nigerian priest has been freed

ABUJA, Nigeria — Nigerian priest Father Marcellinus Obioma Okide, who was kidnapped Sept. 17 has been freed, his diocese announced. He regained his freedom Sept. 21, according to the Catholic Broadcast Commission of Nigeria. The Diocese of Enugu confirmed the release, saying in a statement cited by Sahara Reporters it was glad that the priest had been released unharmed. “We are glad to inform you that our brother and priest, Fr. Marcellinus Obioma Okide, has been released

from the den of the kidnappers,” diocesan chancellor Father Wilfred Chidi Agubuchie said. “The Catholic Diocese of Enugu is grateful to the Almighty God for His protection over Fr. Okide, and thanks you for your prayers and Masses throughout this difficult period. “May Our Lady, Help of Christians, intercede for us and our country Nigeria,” the statement read. The priest was reportedly abducted on his way to St. Mary Amofia-Agu Affa Parish, where he serves as parish priest. Six other people who were traveling with him also were kidnapped. According to a January report by the research organization SB Morgen Intelligence, no fewer than 39 Catholic priests were killed by gunmen in 2022, while 30 others were abducted. The report also showed that 145 attacks on Catholic priests were recorded within the same period.

‘Heartbeat law’ ruling breathes new life into South Carolina’s pro-life movement

CHARLESTON, S.C. — When the South Carolina Supreme Court upheld life-affirming legislation Aug. 23 with a 4-1 decision declaring as constitutional the Fetal Heartbeat and Protection from Abortion Act, it breathed new life into the pro-life movement in the Palmetto State. Proponents of the heartbeat law, which bans abortion after six-weeks gestation with some exceptions, believe it has the potential to save thousands of unborn lives each year. In 2022, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control reported that nearly half of the 7,276 abortions performed in the state — 3,530 or 48.5% — were after six-weeks gestation. Reinvigorated by this victory, the Diocese of Charleston and state pro-life advocates are even more determined to accompany pregnant women, especially those facing unplanned or crisis pregnancies, by putting faith into action with a multipronged approach of advocacy and outreach. The diocese is exploring the possibility of constructing in other parts of the state more St. Clare’s homes, which serve women in crisis pregnancy situations experiencing homelessness, and encouraging the Catholic faithful to maintain their support through baby showers, collecting baby items, as well as providing housing, food and other resources to help mothers in need take care of their children.



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CARA study shows positive signs of Catholic belief in Eucharist, but underscores need for revival

OSV News

Almost two-thirds of Catholics believe in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, but only 17 percent of adult Catholics physically attend Mass at least once per week, according to a newly published survey from Georgetown University’s Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate. The survey also revealed a high correlation between belief in the Eucharist and weekly or even monthly Mass attendance.

The 2022 survey of self-identified Catholics published Sept. 26 and titled “Eucharist Beliefs: A National Survey of Adult Catholics” found 64 percent of respondents provided responses that indicate they believe in the Real Presence, that the Lord Jesus Christ is truly present under the appearance of bread and wine in the Eucharist.

That conclusion was drawn from both open-ended and closed-ended questions respondents were asked about their understanding of Church teaching about the Eucharist and additional questions to clarify their beliefs.

According to the CARA study, 49 percent of respondents correctly identified that the Church teaches that “Jesus Christ is truly present under the appearance of bread and wine.” The other 51 percent incorrectly identified the Church’s teaching as “Bread and wine are symbols of Jesus’ actions at the Last Supper, meaning that Jesus is only symbolically present in the consecrated bread and wine.”

“Results of this question indicate that there is substantial confusion about what the Church teaches about the

Eucharist with slightly more adult Catholics not knowing this correctly than those correctly identifying the teachings,” the report stated.

The survey report noted the data from the responses to the questions indicated “most who do not believe in the Real Presence are not rejecting the teaching, as they do not know this is what the Church teaches.”

The survey aimed to test or clarify the findings of a 2019 Pew Research Center survey that found one-third of U.S. Catholics agree with the Church that the Eucharist is the body and blood of Christ. According to Pew’s analysis published in August 2019, “nearly seven-in-ten Catholics (69 percent) say they personally believe that during Catholic Mass, the bread and wine used in Communion ‘are symbols of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.’ Just one-third of U.S. Catholics (31 percent) say they believe that ‘during Catholic Mass, the bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Jesus.’”

The 2019 Pew survey was part of the impetus for the National Eucharistic Revival that the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops launched last year, and which will include a National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis in July. The initiative aims “to inspire a movement of Catholics across the United States who are healed, converted, formed, and unified by an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist — and who are then sent out on mission ‘for the life of the world,’” its website states.

In a review of previous surveys asking Catholics about their belief in the Real Presence beginning with a 2008 American National Election Study, CARA indicated that the Pew Research Center’s phrasing for its question on the topic may have been confusing to respondents. CARA aimed to be as clear as possible with its survey’s approach, which is why

it opened with an “unaided and open-ended question”: “In your own words, what do you believe happens to the gifts of bread and wine after Consecration during Mass?”

The new CARA study, while showing more Catholics believe in the Real Presence than in the Pew study, still under-

scores the need for the Eucharistic Revival, said Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis, which is supporting the revival.

“It’s still not good news,” Bishop Cozzens, who also serves as board chairman of the National Eucharistic Congress nonprofit formed in 2022 to plan the national event, told OSV News. “What it reveals is that there’s ... people who say they believe in the Eucharist, but they don’t go to Mass. In that sense, they obviously haven’t had a real encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist.”

“This is what we’re about with the Eucharistic Revival, this encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist that lets me realize he’s a living person and that changes the way I live,” he continued. “That’s what we really need.”

The survey, however, “might actually show us we have more low-hanging fruit than we thought we did,” he said. “In other words, there are people who say they believe in the Eucharist, but they don’t go to Mass every week. ... How do we invite them into an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist so that their lives can be changed?”

The survey found that knowledge of the Church’s teaching on the Eucharist and belief that teaching is true is highest among Catholics who attend Mass at least once per week, at 95 percent. Among Catholics who attend less than weekly but at least once per month, it was 80 percent.

It also found that weekly Mass attendance has dropped seven percentage points during the COVID-19 pandemic from 24 percent in 2019 to 17 percent in 2022 — around 5 percent watch Mass on television or online due to the pandemic. An additional 18 percent attend less than weekly but at least once per month. Twenty-six percent attend Mass a few times per year and 35 percent rarely or never attend Mass.

“What we need is not just good catechesis — we do need that — but we also need to invite people to a relationship,” Bishop Cozzens said. “Helping people understand that it (lack of belief in the Real Presence) is not just an intellectual problem, it’s a problem of the heart in that sense of relationship with Jesus. What we’re really seeking is inviting people to an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist, because that’s what will have the biggest impact.”

The national study was commissioned by the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, “to better understand what the current Catholic population (self-identified) believes about the Catholic Church’s teaching on the Eucharist,” the report stated. The survey included 1,031 respondents ages 18 or older with a margin of error of 4.45 percentage points. It was offered in both English and Spanish, and administered through an online form or via telephone with a live interviewer from July 11 to Aug. 2, 2022.

The McGrath Institute commissioned the CARA study because of its collaboration with the National Eucharistic Revival and the importance of having clearer data on Catholics’ beliefs regarding the Real Presence, Bishop Cozzens said.

Affiliated with Georgetown University in Washington, CARA is a national, nonprofit, research center that conducts social scientific studies about the Catholic Church.



OSV News photo/Gregory A. Shemitz

A monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament is displayed on the altar during a Holy Hour at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City July 13, 2023. The liturgy was hosted by the Sisters of Life, who are sponsoring similar opportunities for Eucharistic adoration in Denver, Philadelphia, Phoenix and Washington during the ongoing National Eucharistic Revival.

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