

- 2 Holy Week at the Cathedral
- 2 Meet Father Aby Thampi
- 2 Dine in or Drive Thru Holy Cross's fish fry
- 3 Pilgrimage to Greece Introducing the sights
- 3 Business managers meet Meetings resume after 12-year hiatus
- 4 CRS Rice Bowl
- 5 Sharing Divine Mercy
- 5 OSV Kids
- 8 RCIA Introducing a catechumen
- 9 Fish Frys
- 10 High school theatre
- 23 Obituary Sister Martha Ellen Cheevers
- 26 Eucharistic Revival

Moving? Wrong address?
Call the circulation desk,
(859) 392-1570

Bishop's Schedule3
Commentary6
People and Events9
Shopper's Guide23
Classifieds24
News Briefs27

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



Youth from across the diocese gather for YCET orientation, March 8, on Thomas More University's campus.

Baker photo

YCET welcomes new members, encourages Catholic youth leadership

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

Members of the Youth Commission Evangelization Team (YCET) met on Thomas More University's campus, March 8, for an orientation welcoming and introducing the new members to the team.

YCET is a high school leadership team consisting of youths, nominated by adult mentors (such as teachers, priests, parents, older peers or campus ministers), tasked with serving as peer ministers within the Diocese of Covington. Members are tasked to "give witness to the joy of the Gospel" in their communities and to assist in local church youth ministries — including retreats, prayer services and other aspects of community life in the Church.

After being nominated, high schoolers are invited to apply and interview for YCET, and the commitment lasts for a renewable one year.

Starting with March 8's meeting, the new members will spend three months in training and formation under the YCET directors, including Angie Poat, diocesan youth minister; Mark Johnson, youth minister; St. Thomas Parish and Hannah Ublhor, youth min-

ister, Jesuit Spiritual Center. After these three months, which includes a retreat and regular meetings, members engage in a year of missionary service.

Including being a part of a community of Catholic peers, team members are granted a leadership certificate and can earn service hours by participating in YCET.

Eva Rousseau, a parishioner of All Saints Parish in Walton and a homeschool student in co-op with Divine Mercy school, said that she is "excited to share (her) faith with others and help them to know God like I do now. Youth ministry is important because who else will teach the faith if we don't? We have to make it cool to be Catholic again."

"Youth ministry affects our culture and environment," said Adam Bill, a student at Covington Catholic High School, "it spreads awareness of the Church and morality, especially in a time the world needs it most."

YCET is still accepting new nominees and applicants until April 2. Questions can be directed to Angie Poat, diocesan youth minister, at apat@covdio.org, or to the YCET co-directors Mr. Johnson and Ms. Ubelhor at ycet@covdio.net.

Candidates from both the Diocese of Covington and the Archdiocese of Cincinnati instituted as acolytes

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

Men studying for the permanent diaconate were instituted to the Ministry of Acolyte by Bishop John Iffert, March 10, during Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington.

In addition to seven men from the Diocese of Covington, candidates from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati were instituted as acolytes as well.

The inclusion of these cross-diocese candidates is in-line with the new program for permanent deacon formation in the Diocese of

Covington, which has men from both dioceses studying and going through the discernment process together.

"We're collaborating with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati," Msgr. Gerald Reinersman, director of the Diocese of Covington's diaconate program explains, "and the Athenium of Ohio. That's providing a good synergy for us," for both the seven men in formation in the Diocese of Covington, and those in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati as well.

"It provides a bit of a broader perspective," said Msgr. Reinersman, "but also allows us

(Continued on page 25)



(above left) Bishop Iffert (front, center) stands with the candidates of the Diocese of Covington recently accepted as Acolytes for the permanent diaconate.

(above right) Bishop John Iffert welcomes the congregation at Mass, March 10, during which candidates to the permanent diaconate were instituted to the Ministry of Acolyte.



Baker photos

Make time to enter into the passion, death and resurrection of Christ during Holy Week

Messenger Staff Report

Catholics throughout the diocese are invited and encouraged to participate in the liturgical celebrations of Holy Week. These celebrations remember the events leading up to, and include Christ’s passion, death and resurrection.

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday (Sunday, March 24). In addition to the blessing and distribution of palm fronds, the Gospel reading on Palm Sunday includes the recitation of Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper and the passion and death of Jesus.

Chrism Mass (Tuesday, March 26) — During the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption all the priests of the diocese will gather with Bishop John Iffert as he carries out the ancient custom of preparing and distributing the holy oils that are used in the Catholic Church’s sacraments and rites.

Mass of the Lord’s Supper (Thursday, March 28) — Focuses on Jesus’ Passover meal with his disciples and the institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood. At most parishes the priest will wash the feet of parish members.

Good Friday of the Lord’s Passion (Friday, March 29) — the only day of the liturgical year where Mass is not celebrated. The readings of the Good Friday service focus on the passion and death of Jesus. The congregation is offered the opportunity to venerate the cross.

Holy Week ends and the Easter season begins with the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday (Saturday, March 30).



Holy Week at the Cathedral

Bishop John Iffert will be the celebrant at the following Holy Week services at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington:

Sunday, March 24, 10 a.m. Palm Sunday Mass	Holy Saturday, March 30, 8:30 p.m. Easter Vigil , blessing of the fire, blessing of the water, reception of the Elect and Candidates into full communion with the Church, Mass of Easter
Tuesday, March 26, 7 p.m. Chrism Mass with distribution of Holy Oils	
Holy Thursday, March 28, 6 p.m. Mass of the Lord’s Supper and the washing of feet	Easter Sunday, March 31, 10 a.m. Easter Mass — Resurrection of the Lord
Good Friday, March 29, 3 p.m. Liturgical service, reading of the Passion, veneration of the Cross, distribution of Holy Communion	Divine Mercy Sunday, April 7 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after 10 a.m. Mass thru Vespers beginning at 3 p.m.; confessions available during that same time

From India to the United States, Father Aby Thampi finds the best place to be is where God leads

Bella Young
Multimedia Correspondent

Growing up, Father Aby Thampi, pastor at St. John the Evangelist Parish and St. Ann Mission, Covington, had no shortage of religious influence.

“The social system in India is totally different ... If the family is Catholic, the whole family is Catholic.”

Father Thampi grew up in a large, Catholic family where five of his aunts were nuns and two of his uncles were priests.

“They all had a very good influence on me,” he said. But even more so than his family, his Catholic schooling had a very large influence on his decision to join seminary. He recalled a moment in a boarding school run by the Carmelites, the religious order he would end up joining, that had a profound impact on him.

“In the evenings we used to sit in the courtyard, and we could hear the chant. The prayer from the monastery close by. It was very much a divine and heavenly experience, hearing that while the sun was setting,” he said.

While Father Thampi was certain of his calling to join seminary after the customary tenth grade, his father was not quite as sure.

“My father did not permit me to join seminary after the tenth grade because he thought I was too young to make that discernment.”

Father Thampi speculated that another factor in his father’s hesitance was the Indian custom of the father putting his children all the way through their education. Father Thampi explained that, had he joined the seminary, the Carmelite order would have paid for his schooling. His father requested that he finish a college education before joining seminary and that is what he did. In 2000, Father Thampi enrolled.

“I think he gave me more time to really reflect upon what my call is ... I think that helped a lot,” he said.

Father Thampi was ordained in 2009 and was sent to be an associate pastor for a large parish in Bangalore. He served in that role until 2011 when he was sent by his order to get his master’s degree in business administration. He said that he did not particularly enjoy business, but the Carmelites needed someone to teach business at their college, so they sent him to get his masters. Father Thampi taught at the college for a few years, and while he enjoyed

his time there, he said he enjoys pastoral ministry more.

His last assignment before coming to the United States was to a remote village in the country where the Carmelites sent him to develop a school. The school in that area was in its infancy he said, and they wanted him to help build it up and start a college. He spent four years in that village, two teaching at the school and two teaching at the college.

“Both the school and the college are doing very good now,” said Father Thampi. In fact, one of his close friends is still the principal at the school.

Eventually his time in India came to a close and it was time to start a new assignment, this time in the United States. Father Thampi, at the time, however, was not so excited about this change.

“I did not say no to superiors ... But I was not that positive either,” he said.

He says now though, the United States is a second home to him, and he enjoys his work here.

Father Thampi’s first assignment was at St. Cecilia Parish, Independence, where he worked with Father Mario Tizziani as parochial vicar. During his tenure at St. Cecilia Parish, himself and Father Mario were tasked with taking care of St. Matthew Parish in Morningview as well. While serving St. Cecilia Parish as parochial vicar he was simultaneously providing pastoral services to St. Matthew Parish. He said he enjoyed his time with both parishes.

In June of 2019, he was assigned to St. Henry Parish. Erlanger. In his four-year tenure at St. Henry Parish, he served with two pastors — first with Father Gregory Bach and then with Father Joshua Lange. Father Thampi says he enjoyed his time at St. Henry Parish saying it was helpful to work with two different pastors, with different pastoral styles. Now, as a pastor, he

finds himself thinking back asking himself how his previous pastors might have done things.

Father Thampi is currently the pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish and its mission, St. Ann, Covington. He celebrates Mass every Wednesday morning for the school children at Prince of Peace School.

“Many of our students are not Catholic, I consider it a really great opportunity to evangelize. I encourage them, and I am happy they come for Mass,” Father Thampi said.

Father Thampi has taught and provided pastoral care on two different continents, he speaks six languages, has a master’s degree and has built a school from the ground up, but his love for pastoral ministry reigns above all he says. His love of community and faith is evident not only at St. John the Evangelist Parish but throughout his ministry.

“I am saying with my heart, that wherever I have been and where I am now is the best place I could be,” he said.



Father Aby Thampi



Dine in or Drive Thru a Fish Fry: Episode 4

Check out episode number four of Dine in or Drive Through a Fish Fry! In this episode Bella and Maura go to Holy Cross District High School to see what makes their fish fry one of a kind!



www.covcathedral.com/restored-in-christ

Pilgrimage visits sites of biblical history

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

This October, Bishop John Iffert, accompanied by Father Eric Andriot and Father Aby Thampi, will be leading the Bishop’s first ever pilgrimage to Greece, “In the Footsteps of Paul the Apostle,” inviting people from across the diocese to join along the journey. The 11-day trip takes pilgrims across Greece and parts of Turkey, visiting locations relevant to the biblical journey of St. Paul the apostle. Here are some of the highlights of the journey:



Corinth

One of the first locations to be visited during the pilgrimage is Corinth, not far from modern Athens to be seen the morning of day 3 of the journey. St. Paul the Apostle lived in Corinth for two years, during which he wrote two epistles. (1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians)

Corinth is also the location where St. Paul was brought before the tribunal as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. A guided tour will lead pilgrims through this historic site.



Ephesus

Ephesus, or the ruins of, is in the modern port of Kusadasi, Turkey. St. Paul spent three years of his ministry in Ephesus, where he wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians. The House of Mary, where the virgin mother spent her last days, is also a part of ancient Ephesus and will be included along in the journey.



Bishop’s Schedule

- March 17**
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 10 a.m.

March 17-21
St. Vincent Seminary Board of Regents meeting, St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, Penn.
- March 21**
Priest Holy Hour, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 3 p.m.

March 24
Palm Sunday Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 10 a.m.

March 25
Catholic Charities Advisory Board meeting, 5:30 p.m.



Philippi

The coastal town of Kavala, in northern Greece, is near to the town of Phillipi, where it is said that St. Paul held his first sermon in the European continent. During a guided tour through this historic town, pilgrims will see history of both the Roman and Byzantine eras. The dungeon where St. Paul was held prisoner can also be found in Philippi, as is the site where Lydia, the first European Christian, was baptized.

Bookings to join on this pilgrimage are still available, with the \$150 “book now” discount available until April 22. Interested parties can contact Collete at 1 (800) 581-8942, referring to booking #1221094.

Greece: In the Footsteps of Paul the Apostle

with Optional 3-Night Journey to Rome Post Tour Extension

Join Bishop John Iffert, Father Eric Andriot and Father Aby Thampi

Dates
October 22 to November 1, 2024

Spiritual Reflection
On this journey, feel the spirit of the New Testament as you walk in the footsteps of the great apostle St. Paul, patron of the Diocese of Covington. Experience the places where Paul lived and preached, gaining a deeper understanding of the biblical narrative.

Highlights include
Daily Mass
3-night Greek Islands and Turkey cruise
Tours of Athens, Corinth, Ephesus and Philippi

Cost
Base per person rates: Double \$5,490; Single \$6,490; Triple \$5,440. (Price locked-in until April 22)

Information contact
Collette
1-800-581-8942
Refer to booking #1221094

All photos courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.



Business Manager meetings resume in diocese

After a 12-year hiatus, the Finance Office welcomed parish and school Business Managers for a meeting, March 6. Organized by Andrea Pappas, diocesan internal auditor, the meeting was an opportunity for business managers to get to know each other and for the diocesan Finance Office to gain a better understanding on how they can be a resource for them. “There’s so much work to do as a business manager,” said Mrs. Pappas, who worked as a parish Business Manager for decades before assuming the internal auditor position in July 2023. With Business Managers having to navigate the many local, state and IRS regulations — at the risk in some cases of significant penalty — Mrs. Pappas assured the business managers that in her role as internal auditor she is a resource for them. She intends to host a similar meeting in the Fall with the goal of two gatherings each year.

Rebecca

A story of hope from Kenya

Turkana, Kenya is very hot and dry. Temperatures reach the mid-90s year-round. Most people in this area raise livestock such as goats and camels, and a few are farmers. But the climate makes this work difficult — and climate change is making it even harder.

Rebecca and her husband, Lotiang, have farmed and raised goats for years. They rely on rain and river water to irrigate their crops and feed their animals. But it is raining less and less in Turkana, and when it does rain it can be unpredictable and intense, leading to floods that wash away the seeds.

“We struggled to water our farms,” Rebecca says.

Rebecca and Lotiang have worked hard so their family can thrive. Their determination — and hope for their children’s futures — helped them overcome the challenges they faced.



Pilau (spiced rice)

- 1 t ground cumin
- 1 ½ t all spice
- ½ t black pepper
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons ginger, minced
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 large potato, peeled and cut into 1 inch chunks
- 4 c water
- 2 c basmati rice

In a medium bowl, combine the cumin, all spice, and black pepper. Set aside. Heat a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the oil and red onion and sauté for 10-15 minutes, until dark brown. Add the garlic, ginger, cinnamon stick, and spice mix. Cook for 1-2 minutes. Add the potatoes and the water. Bring to a boil and cook for 10 minutes. Add the rice, stir, and cover. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook for 20 minutes, until the rice is cooked, and the liquid is absorbed.

Makes 6–8 servings

Lenten Recepte Provided by CRS (Catholic Relief Services) Rice Bowl, this recipe is meat-free for Lent.



They participated in a Catholic Relief Services program that installed a water well in their village and trained them in new farming techniques. With the well and solar-powered pump, they can irrigate their fields regularly and take care of their goats. Their children love to help with the goats. Lotiang learned to grow kale, which provides nutrition for his family and can be sold for a high price at the market. Rebecca is grateful that her children can eat healthy food every day. She is also happy that she can send them to school using money from the produce Lotiang sells at the market.

Rebecca and Lotiang have become leaders in their community and teach others what they learned so that everyone can benefit. “I learned much in CRS’ program,” Rebecca says. “It is a program that has changed my life. I am trying to show my community what I am able to do so that they can emulate it for a better future. Through that I will change my community.”



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Kissells to share Divine Mercy devotion and witness of faith in suffering

Laura Keener
Editor

For as long as he can remember Carson Kissell has been bathed in Divine Mercy. Carson was born with a rare skin disease, Epidermolysis Bullosa. At the least amount of friction, the disease causes painful blisters and sores. There is no cure. Treatment consists of keeping the skin clean and bandaged — from neck to toe.

Kristy Kissell, Carson's mom, said that when Carson was three, she learned about the indulgences that are granted on Divine Mercy Sunday and the graces of praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet.



(above, right) Laura Keener, editor of the *Messenger*, has a Zoom interview with the Kissell family, (above, left) David Kissell and (right, from left) Carson, Charlie, Kristy and Kolbe.

“I just started praying the chaplet with Carson when we were doing bath. We would just repeat together ‘For the sake of your sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world,’” she said.

Carson and his father, David, invite you to join them live and in-person, Sunday, March 24, 7 p.m. at St. Catherine of Siena Church, Ft. Thomas, for the return of the St. Catherine Parish speaker series. The topic is,

“Learning to Trust in God While Living a Life of Suffering.”

The speaker series had shut down during the pandemic. Having the series return with the Kissell’s sharing their story of faith and praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet — the same prayer that Carson prayed for the end of the pandemic — could not be more appropriate, said organizer Terri Babey.

David and Kristy Kissell have three sons. Carson, their oldest, will turn 17 on April 7 — Divine Mercy Sunday this year. Their youngest son, Kolbe, also has Epidermolysis Bullosa. Charlie does not. Mrs. Kissell said that the process

to bath and rebandage Carson and Kolbe takes about five to six hours. The bandages need changing every other day.

St. Catherine speaker series welcomes the Kissell family
“Learning to Trust in God While Living a Life of Suffering,”

March 24, St. Catherine Church, Ft. Thomas, 7 p.m.; doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Bring a rosary, Carson Kissell will lead the Divine Mercy Chaplet.

on Facebook live and I figured why not do something, too,” said Carson. The family chose the Divine Mercy Chaplet since they already had a devotion to that prayer.

For the first couple of weeks friends and family — primarily grandma and grandpa — would join Carson on his mom’s Facebook page to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet. But then something incredible happened. As Pope Francis gave his Urbi et Orbi (To the City and the World) address in a deserted and rainy St. Peter’s Square, March 27, 2020, Carson, too, was online praying the Chaplet and views started to pick up.

“In my mind at least, we just happened to go live on the right day, the day of Pope Francis’ address to the world. Everyone was on the internet that day and my view was shared over 10,000 times all across the world,” Carson said.

In Ireland, the father of an EWTN reporter saw that recording and encouraged his son to do a story. Since the airing of that story, the recording of Carson’s Divine Mercy Chaplet has racked up over one million views. The Kissells also moved the Facebook live event from mom’s personal page to its own page — “Praying with Carson.” The page has nearly 10,000 followers and each member of the family takes a turn at praying the chaplet live. Sometimes the entire family together.

Carson said that there are differences to praying alone and praying with others.

“Praying alone is more meditative,” he said, noting that in his personal prayer he has been working on praying the rosary more. “But doing it together gives that sense of community ... praying with your fellow Christians, just knowing you’re all there for each other ... just knowing that there are others out there like you and that you all are striving for one goal — to get to heaven

— brings a sense of being together as one Catholic Christian family.”

There is no charge to attend the presentation at St. Catherine Church, March 24. Admittance is first come first seated. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. The Kissell’s will begin their presentation at 7 p.m. Bring a rosary, Carson will lead the Divine Mercy Chaplet.

OSV

kids

March

March 24 — Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord (Mk 11:1-10 or Jn 12:12-16 (procession) and Mk 14:1-15:47 or 15:1-39)

Today we begin the liturgy with the blessing of the palms, hearing the Gospel of Jesus entering Jerusalem. Jesus is greeted enthusiastically by the people as they wave palms, a sign that they saw him as someone very special. During the Liturgy of the Word, we hear the events of Holy Week and the Passion of Jesus; the Last Supper; Jesus praying in the garden; Jesus suffering as he is beaten and crowned with thorns; Jesus carrying his cross; his death.

— Think of all the people in this Gospel passage. Who are you most like? Who are you least like?

Henriette Delille (1813-1862) is the first native-born American Creole whose cause for canonization has been accepted. Henriette’s mother and father never married, but they lived together in a relationship called placage, which was common in former slave colonies. In placage, a

white man lived with a woman of African, Native American or mixed-race descent. Henriette wanted to join either the Ursuline or Carmelite Sisters, but was refused because she was of mixed race. She therefore founded the Catholic order of the Sisters of the Holy Family in New Orleans for free women of color. She and her sisters operated an orphanage, worked in nursing and with the elderly, and even taught at a time when providing an education for people of various ethnic backgrounds could be punished by prison or even death.

She was declared Venerable by Pope Benedict XVI on March 27, 2010.

In her memory pray the following:

Prayer for the Beatification of Venerable Henriette Delille

O good and gracious God, you called Henriette Delille to give herself in service and in love to the slaves and the sick, to the orphan and the aged, to the forgotten and the despised.

Grant that, inspired by her life, we might be renewed in heart and in mind. If it be your will may she one day be raised to the honor of sainthood. By her prayers may we live in harmony and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

CNS photo/courtesy Clarion Herald

This is a painting of Mother Henriette Delille, a free Black woman born in New Orleans around the 1810s. Her sainthood cause is currently before the Vatican.



Did Mary suffer from loneliness?

Pope Francis has focused our attention on one of his familiar themes — the problem of loneliness in our contemporary culture.

The pope has written about this issue in his messages for the World Day of the Sick, for Lent and for this year’s World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly, to be cele-

GUEST



Sister Constance Veit, L.S.P.

brated on July 28, in conjunction with the feast day of Jesus’ grandparents, Ss. Joachim and Anne.

“It is not good that man should be alone,” he wrote for the World Day of the Sick, citing the Book of Genesis. “From the beginning, God, who is love, created us for communion and endowed us with an innate capacity to enter into relationship with others. Our lives, reflecting in the image of the Trinity, are meant to attain fulfillment through a network

of relationships, friendships and love, both given and received. We were created to be together, not alone.”

Precisely because communion is so deeply rooted in the human heart, Pope Francis wrote, “...the experience of abandonment, solitude, vulnerability and insecurity associated with serious illness can be frightening, painful and even inhuman.”

In his Lenten message Pope Francis spoke of Lent as a time to pause in prayer and in the presence of a wounded brother or sister.

“Love of God and love of neighbor are one love,” he

wrote. “Not to have other gods is to pause in the presence of God beside the flesh of our neighbor.”

“Prayer, almsgiving and fasting are not three unrelated acts,” he said, “but a single movement of openness and self-emptying, in which we cast out the idols and attachments that imprison us, enabling our atrophied and isolated hearts to be revived.”

“In the presence of God, we become brothers and sisters, more sensitive to one another: in place of threats and enemies, we discover companions and fellow travelers. This is God’s dream, the promised land to which we journey once we have left our slavery behind.”

On the second day of Lent, the Vatican announced the theme for this year’s celebration of Grandparents and the Elderly. Drawn from Psalm 71, the theme is “Do Not Cast Me Off in My Old Age.”

The Holy See Press Office announcement noted that in choosing this verse it was the Holy Father’s desire “to call attention to the fact that, sadly, loneliness is the bitter lot in life of many elderly persons, so often the victims of the throwaway culture.”

“By cherishing the charisms of grandparents and the elderly,” the press release reads, “and the contribution they make to the life of the church, the World Day seeks to support the efforts of every ecclesial community to forge bonds between the generations and to combat loneliness.”

During the first days of Lent, I’ve been following the traditional devotion of the seven sorrows of Mary and I’ve been struck by how alone Mary must have felt in her sufferings.

Her vocation was so singular, and her life so unique, that no one with whom she shared her earthly journey could have fully understood her life experiences, no matter how empathetic they strove to be.

Consider how alone Mary must have felt after the angel’s announcement that she had been chosen from among all women to bear the Savior.

Or, how fearful she must have been as she and Joseph hastily packed up their belongings and their newborn baby to flee to Egypt.

Imagine Mary’s anxiety when her son was suddenly missing during their journey home from Jerusalem, how confused she must have been when her neighbors in Nazareth chased Jesus out of the synagogue and tried to throw him off a cliff, how sorrowful and lonely she must have felt after the death of her husband, Joseph, and then how lonely she must have been when her Son had left home to pursue his mission.

Finally — although there are many other examples that could be cited — imagine Mary’s heart-wrenching sorrow and her sense of abandonment as her Son suffered a hideous death on a cross.

During this Lenten season, pause, as our Holy Father suggests, to reflect on Mary’s sorrows as they are portrayed in Scripture.

If you are experiencing loneliness or feel abandoned — no matter the cause — ask Our Lady to help you use your suffering to draw you closer to her Son, who suffered for love of us.

And if someone you know is experiencing pain or isolation, ask for the grace to know how to pause in the presence of this wounded brother or sister and to offer them the consolation of Christ who is always with us.

Our Lady of Sorrows, pray for us.

Sister Constance Veit is the communications director for the Little Sisters of the Poor in the United States and an occupational therapist.

Looking at the Oscar nominees for best picture through the lens of human dignity

Awards season is particularly exciting for a film reviewer. I enjoy talking about the stunning work of actors, editors, directors, writers, make-up artists, composers and others. But as a Catholic film critic, I tend to

GUEST



Sister Hosea Rupprecht

focus more on the human quality of the story, while not neglecting the quality of the filmmaking that brings that story to life.

My number one criterion when reviewing a film is how the story upholds the dignity of the human person. As the first principle of Catholic social teaching, depiction of human dignity needs to be taken into account when judging (which is always subjective) whether a film is “good” or not. Is the human person respected

and shown with their God-given dignity? If so, then I can usually forgive other less desirable aspects of a film.

With the Academy Awards right around the corner (note: this column was written before the Academy Awards aired March 10), here’s my take on how the 10 nominations for best picture hold up in the human dignity department.

— American Fiction

When his editors encourage him to write “Black” books, struggling author Thelonius “Monk” Ellison (Jeffrey Wright) writes a stereotypical Black story as a

joke. But when the book becomes popular, he wonders what Black culture is coming to. I found this film fascinating as Black filmmakers (with Cord Jefferson as writer/director) explore the perception of what is “Black,” and why African-American stereotypes seem to be so popular with white people.

I was pleased to see that Monk, and some of the people around him, resent common stereotypes, even though Monk chose to profit from those stereotypes (through the success of his mock-book) because he needed money fast to care for his ailing mother. The character of Cliff (Sterling K. Brown) was challenged by his brother, Monk, to rise above his limitations and engage with the family. Overall, an interesting look at racism, family dysfunction and holding on to one’s ideals.

— Anatomy of a Fall

This French-language film is basically a courtroom drama. When Sandra (Sandra Hüller) wakes up from a nap and hears her blind son, Daniel (Milo Machado-Graner), yelling for her, she discovers her husband’s body outside in the snow below their fixer-upper chalet. What follows, as she is put on trial for her husband’s murder, is the laying bare of every aspect of their relationship.

The film is exquisitely put together. The judge’s decision to let 11-year-old Daniel stay in court, especially as testimony about the couple’s troubled marriage became more explicit, was most interesting, especially given that Daniel had argued with the judge to be allowed to stay. As Daniel listened, he was able to better understand some of his own experiences with his father. His newfound understanding propels him into insisting on speaking to the court — an action which leads to the film’s conclusion. It was refreshing and joyful to see a child’s perspective

taken seriously in film as, let’s face it, we adults often don’t give kids enough credit for their insights.

— Barbie

When I heard a movie about Barbie was coming out, I admit that I groaned — but I actually was pleasantly surprised at this film. The film depicts the perfect “Barbieland,” inhabited by every version of Barbie dolls living an ideal life. But when one Barbie (Margot Robbie) has thoughts of death, she is sent to the Real World to find out what’s wrong. Ken (Ryan Gosling) goes with her only to discover the Real World is run by men. He then takes this newly found power back to Barbieland.

When plastic meets real flesh-and-blood, Barbie learns about the pains and joys of real living. She discovers that relationships take work but that joy can be found amid pain. Returning to Barbieland, she leads the revolt against Ken’s power-grab, and all the dolls learn something about what it means to have a true purpose. Pretty good for a movie about dolls.

— The Holdovers

When an irascible teacher (Paul Giamatti) at a prep school is forced to stay on campus over the holidays with a few students and the grieving cook (Da’Vine Joy Randolph), he forges bonds he never thought possible.

This film is in my top favorites for this year. The human connection that each of the characters make over the holiday break transforms them into better people, even people willing to make sacrifices they would have never imagined before spending quality time together. A tribute to the tenacity of the human spirit.

— Killers of the Flower Moon

In the first half of the 20th century, the Osage Tribe

(Continued on page 10)

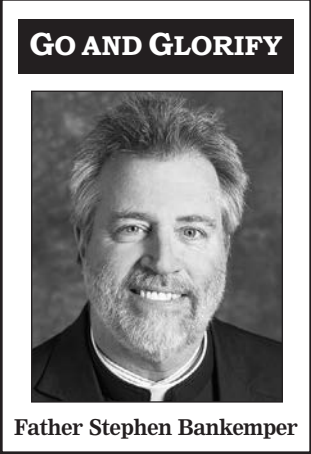
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The sin we know and don’t know

As most of you know, on this Fifth Sunday of Lent we may hear the readings of this liturgical year — Year B — or, if there are elect in the parish, the readings from Year A. I have chosen for this article to reflect on aspects of readings from Year A, particularly the Gospel of John, the raising of Lazarus, and the responsorial psalm, Psalm 130.



Many biblical commentators have remarked on two odd sentences in the story of the raising of Lazarus: “Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was.”

Why would Jesus purposely wait two more days to leave for Bethany? The explanation given is that

the Jews believed that the soul definitively left a dead body after three days, so Jesus wants there to be no doubt that Lazarus is dead. (John makes it clear that Lazarus had been dead for four days.) Jesus wants there to be no doubt that he has the power to raise the dead.

This had certain implications for the Jews of Jesus’ time, and also for us. While we Christians do not believe in the shadowy world of Sheol, we still respond instinctively to the idea of going “down” into, or being “raised” from, the grave. And because death has such power over our imagination, we might unconsciously relate the first line of today’s Responsorial Psalm — Psalm 130 — at first to physical death. “Out of the depths” we cry to God, and like Peter sinking into the sea, beg God to save us from death.

As we continue in the psalm, though, we realize that it is not actually about physical death, but something else. “If you, O Lord, mark iniquities,” we say. “But with you is forgiveness,” we continue. “For with the Lord is kindness and ... plenteous redemption.” There is a “depths” that is deeper than physical death, the depths to which sin brings us.

The theme of the depths of sin goes well with this Sunday, as we also celebrate the last Scrutiny with the Elect. The three scrutinies, in the words of the Church, “are meant to uncover, then heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect ... [and] to deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan.” (The Rites, par. 141)

There are two kinds of sin that need to be uncovered: the sin that we know and try to hide, from both ourselves and others, and the sin that we do not know. The first is pointless. Trying to ignore our sins is like trying to ignore chest pains: they do not disappear. We are better off to acknowledge and attend to them. And other people usually know quite a bit more about us than we think they do. God, of course, who “sees in secret,” sees our good works and our bad. As we pray in Psalm 139, “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there!” Ask Adam and Eve how trying to hide our bad acts from God works out.

The sin we do not know needs to be uncovered as well, so it can be forgiven. As the psalmist prays, “But who can discern his errors? Cleanse me from my hidden faults.” (Ps 19:12) This process can be even harder than admitting our known sins, but it needs to be done if we hope to be brought “out of the depths.”

The raising of Lazarus indeed teaches us that death is not beyond the power of Jesus, but it should also remind us that the One Who has power over death also has power over that which brought death — sin. Let us learn not to hide from him, but instead call out to him from the depths of our sin and beg for his forgiveness and healing, that we might celebrate Holy Week fruitfully, and one day be raised to eternal life.

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

It’s not meant to be easy

One of my daily habits is to get up early in the morning and spend 30 minutes or so on the exercise bike. I like it.

While exercising, I watch YouTube videos on a variety of topics. One that I was watching recently really drew my attention. It was an exposé on aspects of the theological movement known as prosperity Gospel and some of the more well-known preachers involved. Having been a former Baptist, I thought it might be worth a watch and would pass the time. It certainly did.

It was quite disturbing to me that these well-known preachers are spreading a message that says if you give your money to them, God will multiply it back to you.

They prey on the poor and those in desperate situations who are looking for a miracle and will do whatever it takes to get through desperate times.

One of the more famous of the prosperity preachers has four private jet airplanes in his possession and lives in a house worth millions of dollars. It’s so sad that these folks are pouring out their last dollar in hopes of a miracle that will never happen.

Nowhere in the Gospels does Jesus say that a life of following him is going to be easy. I don’t know about you, but I find it a challenge every day to live out my faith in the current culture. We are the counterculture today; not the norm we used to be. But that’s to be expected and in fact embraced.

Jesus, in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 16, tells us that if we want to be his disciple, we must deny ourselves and take up our cross. That cross is life itself and it can be enormously heavy at times. Nowhere did he tell us that if we send our money to a church that he will take

that away. God does multiply our gifts when we live out the life we are called to live. But that multiplication doesn’t result in temporal gifts of the world. Instead, it is the grace and peace that he pours into our lives to be examples in the world of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

I think the thing that bothers me most is the idea that God loves us more when we do more, when we give more. Nothing could be further from the truth. God loves us as we are, where we are and for who we are. Nothing we do can cause God to love us any more or any less. His love is always perfect and present in our lives.

That means when I screw up, and I do so frequently, his love for me doesn’t change. Instead, it is an opportunity for me to get myself to the sacrament of reconciliation and get back up and try again.

As some of you know, my passion is around wellness and helping people live a better life through healthy practices. I’m certainly not perfect at it but every day I try to do something good for myself physically.

I equate faith in the same way. When muscles are not worked, are neglected, they grow weak. When faith is not worked, the same thing happens. We should try every day to spend some time in prayer and especially to spend some time in gratitude for the gifts God has given us. Believe me, when you start thinking about all the good God has done for you in your life, you’ll realize the great gift of the cross. Lifting that cross builds our faith muscles so that we can withstand the trials of life.

The prosperity Gospel being preached is a dangerous path. I don’t blame those who fall victim to the predatory practices of this type of cheap salvation. They’re just looking for some hope.

We need to be that hope, to be there for them in the fullness of our Catholic faith. We have so much to offer the world. Don’t let your faith muscles grow weak. Challenge yourself every day to live out the true Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Deacon David Profitt is a leadership consultant for the Catholic Leadership Institute and is assigned to Holy Spirit Parish, Newport.

Welcome home!

A kind young man saw me coming out of the Post Office struggling with an armful of mail and three packages. He asked if he could help me to the car and I gratefully accepted.

After thanking him, he asked if he could ask a personal spiritual question. He wanted to know when he would get over losing someone he loved. I helped him to understand that we never stop missing someone, but time can help decrease the pain and cause us not to recall it so often.

But I told him, death is not the end. None of us are meant for this world. The most important thing to know is why we are here, where we are going and how we can get there. When you come to understand that where your loved one has gone you will also one day go, providing that you both lead good lives, can actually help you to heal from the pain of loss.

We have an opportunity to use this time in life to get to know the One with whom we will be spending eternity, and doing all we can to “make our call and election permanent.” Then, our passage from this life to eternity is like a homecoming where we are greeted and told to, “come and share in your Master’s joy!”

Asking if he was Catholic, he said yes, but that it had been many years, maybe 10, since he was in a church. I

said that we all make mistakes, no one is perfect, but we can be reconciled with our heavenly Father by going to confession. While there, you have the choice to sit in front of the priest to confess or go behind the screen, so he doesn’t see who you are. But even though the priest is there, it’s Jesus with whom you are talking. The priest is there as Jesus’ minister and when he prays the absolution over you, it’s really and truly Jesus who is there, speaking through the priest, telling you that all is forgiven.

We clean our bodies every day or every other day, he nodded. Confession is like taking a bath for your soul. It’s something you can do often to stay clean and have a good relationship with the Lord. It gives you a greater opportunity to go to the right place at the end and maybe see your loved one again.

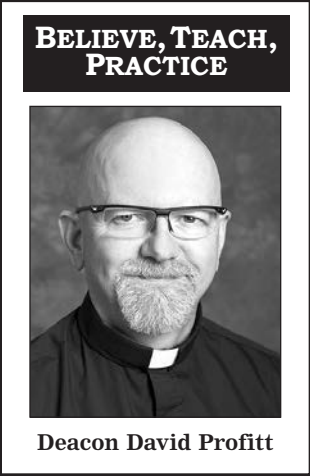
The last church that he said he was in was, “the big one down the street,” i.e. the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption. I thought, “Praise the Lord!”

I let him know that the Basilica has a piece of the actual True Cross of Jesus Christ and that Friday that week at noon was a special time when you could pray in front of that Cross and talk to the Lord and that priests would be hearing confessions.

The young man became very enthused, so I let him know that his Father misses him and that the church was open every day until 3 p.m. if he wants to just pop in for a visit. He gave me the impression that he would like to do that.

I’m not sure whether the young man ever made it to church, but I was grateful to God for giving me the opportunity to share the Good News of the Gospel with him.

Mother Seraphina Quinlan is mother superior for the Franciscan Daughters of Mary, Covington.



‘I think I’m Catholic and I just don’t know it,’ says catechumen

Bella Young
Multimedia Correspondent

Growing up in a Pentecostal home, Cash Burns, a catechumen at St. Patrick Parish in Taylor Mill, said he did not always believe everything his church taught. Mr. Burns said that, though he was 12 years old when he started attending Pentecostal services, he knew he disagreed with certain things.

“I started going there when I was 12 ... some beliefs I never adopted.” This led him to look elsewhere for God, and he found it in the form of a rosary.

“I started researching the prayers, the Hail Mary and the Our Father, and started to agree with it ... I texted my friends and said, ‘I think I might be Catholic and just don’t know it.’”

It was one of these friends that recommended he attend Mass at St. Patrick Church in Taylor Mill and see what he thought. Mr. Burns recalls his first Mass as a “culture shock.” Saying that everyone was very quiet and respectful, “it was very peaceful.”

At a service at his Pentecostal church Mr. Burns realized he needed to officially



Cash Burns, catechumen at St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill

convert.

“I did have a moment where I realized I was switching to Catholicism — it was in a Pentecostal church. I had been going to the service for weeks and weeks and weeks. Then, one Sunday night, I was invited up to play bass. Then he [the minister] started talking about money ... he just kept begging people for money, and finally I walked out.”

Once he started RCIA classes at St. Patrick Parish, he said it was RCIA coordinator Melinda Zickfoose and pastor, Father Jeffrey VonLehmen, that helped him sustain his faith journey. He even asked Mrs. Zickfoose to be his sponsor.

“Melinda and Father Jeff have always answered my questions, and if they don’t know, they have an answer by the time I come back next week,” he said.

Since beginning to attend Mass regularly, Mr. Burns said he is most looking forward to receiving the Eucharist. “To see people take it weekly and be happy. Just the peace and serenity. You can feel the love in the air,” he said. “No one’s looking at you, judging you ... there’s a certain peace around it.”

Saints are not ‘exceptions,’ but examples of humanity’s virtue

Justin McLellan
Catholic News Service

The saints are not unreachable “exceptions of humanity” but ordinary people who worked diligently to grow in virtue, Pope Francis said.

It is wrong to think of the saints as “a kind of small circle of champions who live beyond the limits of our species,” the pope wrote in the catechesis for his general audience March 13 in St. Peter’s Square. Instead, they are “those who fully become themselves, who realize the vocation of every person.”

“How happy would be a world in which justice, respect, mutual respect, the breadth of the spirit (and) hope were the shared norm and not a rare anomaly,” he wrote.

Just like at his general audience March 6, Pope Francis told visitors in the square that due to a mild cold an aide, Msgr. Pierluigi Girolì, would read his speech. However the pope had seemed recovered

when he read the entirety of his homily — adding plenty of off-the-cuff remarks and soliciting engagement from the crowd — during a Lenten penance service in a Rome parish March 8.

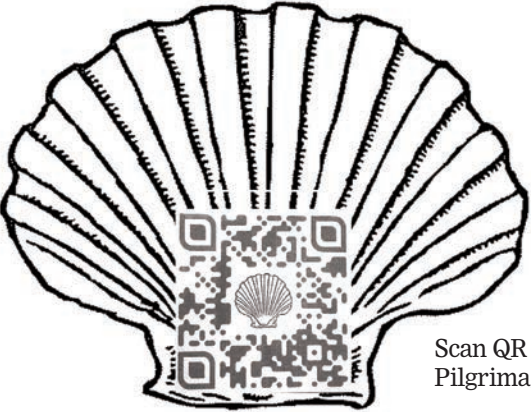
Continuing his series of catechesis on virtues and vices, the pope wrote that a virtuous person is not one who allows him- or herself to become distorted but “is faithful to his or her own vocation and fully realizes his or herself.”

Reflecting on the nature of virtue, which has been discussed and analyzed

(Continued on page 10)



Pope Francis gives candies to children before his weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican March 13, 2024.



Scan QR code for Pilgrimage Booklet

COVINGTON LENTEN PILGRIMAGE

Saturday, March 23

Covington KY

9:00am - 2:00pm

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St. Benedict

St. Augustine

St. John the Evangelist

Mother of God

Questions or to volunteer please email:
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PEOPLE AND EVENTS

The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW, Sundays, 10 —11 a.m. Viewers can tune-in on the following channels: antenna 12.2; Spectrum 117 or 25; Cincinnati Bell 17 or 517; and DirectTV 25.

Bishop Iffert and the priests of the Diocese of Covington will pray a Holy Hour for survivors of sexual violence and for the sanctification of priests, 3 p.m., every third Thursday monthly, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington. All are welcome.

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.

St. Philip Parish, Melbourne, Lenten speaker series, 7 p.m. in the Church, March 20, with featured speaker Father Ryan Stenger, diocesan judicial vicar and pastor, St. Joseph Parish, Camp Springs.

The Divine Mercy Choir from the shrine of Divine Mercy, Vilnius, Lithuania, will be live in concert at St. Patrick Church, Taylor Mill, singing the music of St. Faustina, March 21, 7 p.m. First class relics of St. Faustina and Bl. Father Michael Sopocko will be available for veneration. This will be an unforgettable event.

Covington Lenten Pilgrimage March 23, with five stational churches opening their doors to pilgrims 9 a.m.–2 p.m. Adoration will be held in each of the Churches, with benediction at 1:45 p.m. The churches are Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Mother of God Church St. Augustine Church, St. Benedict Church and St. John Church. You choose your starting and ending points and whether to walk or drive the route.

The Center of Spirituality at St. Walburg Monastery, Villa Hills, will host Sister Tonette Sperando who will speak on “Hospitality: A Gospel Way of Living,” March 23, 9:30–11:30 a.m. All are invited.

St. Catherine of Siena Church, Ft. Thomas, welcomes the Kissell family for a presentation on “Learning to Trust in God While Living a Life of Suffering,” March 24, 7 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., Carson Kissell will lead the Divine Mercy Chaplet, bring your rosary. Hear how Carson’s gesture of redemptive suffering went viral on social media and how the family’s suffering has transformed to peace and joy.

“Another Look at the Causes and Consequences of the Modern Pornography Epidemic,” a webinar for survivors and those who care for them, March 25, 6:30–8 p.m. CDT. This talk will look at the differences in patterns of porn use between men and women and related differences in patterns of male and female sexual offending. The talk will serve two purposes. First, many victims hold themselves responsible for their experiences of abuse. By discussing factors which contribute to a person choosing to sexually abuse someone will hopefully help people see that this is not true. Second, is a discussion on how the rapidly growing prevalence of pornography is a risk factor for increased rates of abuse in our society.

Holy Cross District High School, Covington, 26th annual mulch sale. Students will deliver mulch to your home, business or rental property anywhere in Kenton, Boone and Campbell Counties and will put it anywhere on your property, starting March 30 and continuing for at least four weeks. Call (859) 392-8999 for information.

St. Augustine Parish, Covington, will celebrate Tenebrae, Spy Wednesday, March 27, 6 p.m. All are welcome.

New Beginnings is an 8-week program for separated or divorced individuals, which provides an opportunity to heal and move forward despite a complicated situation. Led by facilitators who have been through their own personal losses, this program invites participants to move toward their own new beginning. The next session will be held on consecutive Tuesdays – March 19, March 26, April 2, April 9, April 16, April 23, April 30, and May 7, 2024, Time: 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Catholic Charities – Diocese of Covington, 3629 Church St., Covington. Register at covdio.org/new-beginnings.

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.

Sisters of Notre Dame, Park Hills, Women’s Retreat Weekend, April 6–April 7, the theme is “Forgiveness.” Cost is \$50 for materials and meals. Commute only, no overnight stays left. For information call Margie Schnelle at (859) 392-8229.

Euchre Tournament April 12, doors open 6 p.m.; play begins 7:30 p.m., St. Paul Parish Carline Center, Florence. Cost \$30 to play; \$15 to observe. Proceeds benefit the St. Paul School 8th grade class trip to Washington D.C. Contact casdoering@hotmail.com or (859) 750-5085.

Covington Latin School will host a College and Career Fair for all Diocese of Covington high school students, April 23, 5:30–7:30 p.m. in the school courtyard and cafeteria. Come learn about careers, programs and scholarships from popular colleges and

local businesses.
It is time for Spring cleaning! **The Sisters of Notre Dame are in need of items for their 102nd annual 4th of July festival.** We are looking for services, sports items, jewelry, gift certificates, antiques, anything you can think of. Re-gift to the sisters. If you have items to donate call Margie at (859) 392-8229 or e-mail mschnelle@sndusa.org. Item drop offs during the day at 1601 Dixie Hwy., Park Hills or arrange a pickup.
Parents of Addicted Loved Ones, (PAL) is a support group that meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 6:30–8 p.m. at Catholic Charities, Latonia. It provides continuing education and support, at no charge, for parents with a son, daughter or spouse suffering from addiction to alcohol or drugs. No cost. Just come — 3629 Church Street, Latonia. For more information contact Client Care at (859) 581-8974.

Fish Frys

Fridays, Feb. 16–March 15

St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright, 5–8 p.m.

Fridays, Feb. 16–March 22

- St. Augustine Parish, Augusta, 5–7 p.m.
- St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger, 4:30–8 p.m.; drive-thru closes 7:30 p.m.
- St. Benedict Parish, Covington, 4:45–7 p.m.
- St. Bernard Parish, Dayton, 5–7 p.m.
- St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Ft. Thomas, 4:30–7 p.m.
- St. Edward Parish, Cynthiana, 5–7 p.m.
- Father Bealer Knights of Columbus, 605 Lytle Ave., Elsmere, lunch 11 a.m.–2 p.m., dinner 4:30–8 p.m.
- St. Francis Xavier Parish, Falmouth, Knights of Columbus, 4–7:30 p.m.
- Holy Cross District High School, Covington, 5–8 p.m.
- St. James Parish, Brooksville, 4–6:30 p.m.
- St. Joseph Academy, Walton, 4:30–8 p.m.
- St. Joseph Parish, Camp Springs, 4–7:30 p.m.
- Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish, Erlanger, 4–8 p.m.
- St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill, 4:30–7:15 p.m.
- St. Paul, Florence, 4:30–7:30 p.m.
- St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood, 5–8 p.m.
- St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas, 4–7:30 p.m.
- St. Timothy Parish, Union, dine in 5–7:30 p.m.; drive thru 4:30–7 p.m.

Fridays, Feb. 16–March 29

St. Augustine Parish, Covington, 4–7 p.m.

Fridays, March 8, 15 and 22

St. Matthew Parish, Kenton, 4:30-7:00 PM.

Friday, March 22

Our Savior Parish, Covington, starts at 12 p.m.



How to save a life

Eighth graders at St. Henry School, Elsmere, had the opportunity to learn CPR from the Elsmere Fire District. The training included adult, child and infant CPR, use of an AED and assisting a choking victim. Each student will receive their CPR certification card after completing the course.

Upcoming High School theatre performances

Covington Catholic High School and Notre Dame Academy

Present: "The Sound of Music"
April 19 and 20, 7 p.m.;
April 21, 2 p.m.
Location: Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills
Tickets can be purchased online and at the door.

Covington Latin School

Presents: "High School Musical"
April 19, 20 and 21, 7 p.m.
Location: Covington Latin School, Covington
Tickets can be purchased at the door.

Holy Cross District High School

Presents: "Shrek the Musical"
April 26, 27 and 28, time to be announced
Location: Carnegie Theatre, Covington
Tickets can be purchased online and at the door.

Newport Central Catholic High School

Presents: "SpongeBob the Musical"
April 21, 22, 26 and 27, time to be announced
Location: Newport Central Catholic High School, Newport

St. Henry District High School

Presents: "Willy Wonka"
March 22 and 23, 7 p.m.;
March 24, 2 p.m.
Location: Drees Homes Auditorium, St. Henry District High School, Erlanger

Villa Madonna Academy

Presents: "Beauty and the Beast"
March 15 and 16, 7 p.m.;
March 17, 2 p.m.
Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills

Saints are not ‘exceptions’

(Continued from page 8)

since ancient times, the pope said that virtue is not an “improvised” and “casual” good exercised from time to time. Even criminals, he noted, have performed good acts in certain moments. Virtue is rather a “good that is born from a person’s slow maturation until it becomes his or her inner characteristic,” he wrote.

“Virtue is a ‘habitus’ (expression) of freedom,” the pope wrote. “If we are free in every act, and each time we are called to choose between good and evil, virtue is that which allows us to have a habit toward the right choice.”

He encouraged people not to forget the lesson taught by ancient thinkers, “that virtue grows and can be cultivated,” and wrote that for Christians developing virtue depends primarily on the grace of God.

By developing open-mindedness, good will and the wisdom to learn from mistakes, he wrote, people can be guided toward a virtuous life in the face of the “chaotic forces” of passion, emotion and instinct to which humanity is susceptible.

Taking the microphone to greet pilgrims at the end of his audience, Pope Francis shared that he had been given a rosary and a Bible that belonged to a young soldier killed in combat, though he did not specify in which conflict.

“So many young people, so many young people go to die,” he said. “Let us pray to the Lord so that he may give us the grace to overcome this madness of war which is always a defeat.”

Oscar nominees

(Continued from page 6)

strikes oil, and they become the richest Native Americans in the country. Filled with greed, white men plan to steal the tribe’s wealth by first marrying Osage women and then killing them, thereby slowly siphoning off their riches.

Magnificently crafted by director Martin Scorsese, this film depicts the antithesis of human dignity and showcases the depravity that unadulterated greed can foster in the human heart. The conflicted moral compass of main character, Ernest Burkhart (Leonardo DiCaprio), gives the audience a needed glimmer of hope that he will be able to overcome the manipulation he experiences from his uncle (Robert De Niro) and choose to do the right thing.

— Maestro

Audiences get a glimpse into the complex relationships of legendary composer and conductor Leonard

Bernstein in this biopic, written and directed by Bradley Cooper. The private life of this amazing musician was complex and, honestly, quite sad. One of the film’s great accomplishments is the make-up job that renders Cooper almost unrecognizable as Bernstein ages.

Married to actress Felicia Montealegre (Carey Mulligan), Bernstein (Bradley Cooper) could be considered bisexual. Felicia initially tolerated his dalliances with other men but eventually the couple’s relationship became strained, and Bernstein lied to his children about his proclivity. The film remains morally ambiguous, allowing the audience to draw their own conclusions even as it shows that no one’s life is simple.

— Oppenheimer

Before it became part of the “Barbenheimer” phenomenon of last summer, this film was (and still is) a beautifully crafted biopic of physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer; often called the “father of the atomic bomb.” A brilliant scientist, Oppenheimer (Cillian Murphy) worked on the secret Manhattan Project to develop the weapon that

would ultimately lead to the end of World War II.

The film has already won numerous accolades and awards, and rightly so. It’s an amazing piece of filmmaking art. It challenges the audience to put themselves in the shoes of this controversial figure of American history. Can all the souls who lost their lives when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki be laid at his feet? Or does it belong to those who gave the order? It is a very human question that Oppenheimer himself wrestled with, as did those who persecuted him to escape their own guilt, as do we today.

— Past Lives

A childhood crush gets reignited between two best friends 12 years later. But Nora (Greta Lee) breaks

off the communication with Hae Sung (Teo Yoo). Another 12 years pass, and Nora is now married to Arthur (John Magaro) while Hae Sung has to come to grips that he let her slip away.

I can’t call this my favorite out of all the best picture nominees, but I really loved it. It’s a truly human story of people making choices in life and then having to deal with the consequences of those choices — something every human person experiences.

— Poor Things

A very unconventional doctor (Willem Dafoe) reanimates Bella (Emma Stone) after she dies, and under the doctor’s protection she is eager to learn — which she does.

With all due respect to the filmmakers’ creativity and to the actors for some brilliant performances, I felt like I needed to scrub my brain with soap after watching this film. Contrary to what human dignity dictates, the story centers on the selfishness and self-discovery that comes only through sexual exploits that are abusive rather than loving.

— The Zone of Interest

The Höss family is just like any other in the 1940s — except they live next door to Auschwitz. Husband and father Rudolf (Christian Friedel) is commandant at the camp. His family lives in the housing provided, and his kids go to school and play with their friends in the little backyard pool. Hedwig (Sandra Hüller), the wife, cultivates a beautiful garden. But one of the servants sneaks off at night to hide food for the unfortunates in the camp.

The film is poignant and upsetting as the audience wonders how the family could live such normal lives with the horrors happening beyond the garden wall. It challenges us with the thought of our own blindness to social wrongs happening within our sphere. Do we let the comfort of the status quo keep us quiet, or do we speak out, risking censure, or worse, to stand up for what is right?

Which of these 10 films will win the coveted statue on March 10? Nobody will know until that day. But which film would I like to win? “Killers of the Flower Moon” or “The Holdovers” — the most effective stories at capturing the essence of human dignity or the struggle to hold onto that God-given dignity against all odds. That’s why we live our lives. Some stories contribute nothing to it, but many do. And I hope those are the ones honored at the Oscars this year.

Sister Hosea Rupprecht, a Daughter of St. Paul, is the associate director of the Pauline Center for Media Studies. Her column has been provided by OSV News.



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“Old age is the phase in life most suited to spreading the joyful news that life is the initiation to a final fulfilment. And the best is yet to come.”

—Pope Francis



SENIOR LIVING

SPECIAL SECTION OF THE MESSENGER
MARCH 15, 2024

Daniele Levis Pelusi @ Unsplash

Local shrines and pilgrimages to make in Kentucky

Messenger Staff Report

Northern Kentucky offers a number of little-known shrines and inspiring pilgrimages to be made by the faithful. Here are just a few to consider visiting. Before you go, consider reading up on these saints and find out what draws people to these devotions.

Our Lady of Knock Shrine, St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill

The parish is designated as a shrine to Our Lady of Knock and holds a large novena every year August 14-21 leading up to the feast day on Aug. 21. The message of Our Lady of Knock, when she appeared in 1879, is a certain sign of God's love to a people in need and a statue of Our Lady of Knock faces the windows of the tabernacle in the adoration chapel. For nine days, pilgrims have a chance to attend Mass and pray the novena, light candles, write petitions and venerate a first-class relic of St. Faustina Kowalska's bone. The intentions stay on the altar during the length of the novena and the parish also usually hosts informative talks on the weeknights of the novena.

Diocesan Shrine of the Little Flower, St. Therese Parish, Southgate

This shrine inaugurated a perpetual novena to the Little Flower on Tuesdays after morning Mass. The reliquary also hosts a first-class relic on public display of St. Therese presented by Mother Agnes, her sister, to the parish through Father Borgias Lehr in 1928. The walls of the parish hold ten restored paintings by Leon Lippert of Newport depicting the life of St. Therese. The parishioners celebrate St. Therese's October 2 feast day with 40 hours before the Blessed Sacrament before the feast and sing a few special hymns on the day itself to honor their patron.

Shrine to Our Lady of Schoenstatt, Relics, All Saints Parish, Walton

The back of the sanctuary features a shrine to Our Lady of Schoenstatt, a devotion with origins in Germany and centered on the image of the Mother Thrice

Admirable. Visitors can light a candle before her image and pray a consecration prayer or an exorcism prayer through her intercession. She is known for her intercession for the family, and Schoenstatt youth movements exist across the world. The inside of the church is lined with statues of recent saints along the walls, such as St. Gianna Molla, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, St. Padre Pio, St. Faustina Kowalska and St. Teresa of Calcutta. Three of these have relics beneath the statue and all have the saint's story written and framed below.

Abbey and Basilica of Our Lady of Gethsemani

Home to Trappist monks, this community is a place to remove oneself from the world. The abbey hosts retreats and day visits, providing meals (call ahead) and nature trails as well as a chance to attend services and pray with the brothers.



The Welcome Center features a film about monastic life, books and products handmade by the brothers such as fudge, fruitcake and honey.

The Relic Shrine of St. Paul at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption



The relic collection of the Diocese of Covington is comprised of over 300 relics. The Relic Shrine of St. Paul, established in 2021, located beneath the Baldacchino of the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, displays a large selection of relics from the Diocesan collection. The heart of the collection are two skull relics taken from the 11,000 companion martyrs of St. Ursula donated by the Shrine in Cologne, Germany, to Bishop Maes in the early 20th century. Decades later, Bishop William T. Mulloy, would expand the collection further, obtaining dozens of relics from Rome. Many of the relics incased in small thecas (cases) came from Covington's former St. Pius X Seminary. Under Bishop Foys and through today, relic collection is expanding and includes some of the Church's newest saints and blessed: Pope St. John Paul II, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Bl. Solanus Casey, Bl. Stanley Rother, Bl. Miguel Pro, Bl. Carlo Acutis, St. Theresa of Calcutta, St. Damien of Molokai, Bl. Franz Jägerstätter, St. Oscar Romero, St. Katharine Drexel, Bl. Anna Maria Taigi, Bl. Clelia Merloni, Bl. Francis Xavier Seelos, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin, St. Edith Stein, Bl. Mariam Teresa Demjanovich and St. Conrad of Parzham. To the right of the relic shrine is a beautifully illustrated book explaining the relics on display.

The shrine to Our Lady of Schoenstatt at All Saints Parish, Walton, is one of many lesser-known devotions easily accessible to parishioners in the Diocese of Covington.

The St. Paul Relic Shrine located in the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, features an ever expanding collection of relics ancient and contemporary saints and sacred items.

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More than books — Kenton County Public Library is a place for community

Bella Young
Multimedia Correspondent

For some, the library is more than a place to find books — it is a place to build community as well. With 2000 events this year geared towards kids, teens, adults and senior citizens, there is no shortage of community at the Kenton County Public Library.

“We have so many events either geared towards seniors, or that seniors regularly attend and enjoy,” said Mary Burkey, program coordinator at the Erlanger Branch.

Every Thursday from 11a.m.–1 p.m. at the Erlanger branch, there is a “Device Advice” event, where seniors can stop by with their device — smartphones, tablets and laptops — and get advice from IT professionals.

Wes Morgan, the event coordinator, describes the event as an, “...open hour to stop in and ask questions.”

There is no registration required and the event is first come first serve, with advice sessions being limited to only 15 minutes. For those that may need more time, there is the option to e-mail and set up a one-on-one appointment, to ensure that everyone gets the chance to understand their device. For those that would like to schedule a one-on-one appointment, e-mail wesleymorgan@kentonlibrary.org.

At the Covington Branch, on March 25, there will be an arts and crafts event for seniors.

“We have lots of yarn and love to decorate, so of course we’re making yarn birds, and lovely floral perches for them to sit on! Yarn, perches and flower decor will be provided, all you have to do is make the bird and decorate!” per the online event description. To register for this event go to the Kenton County Public Library website, select the

Covington location, find the event, and click the button to register, or e-mail the Event Coordinator, Ellen Warning, ewarning@kentonlibrary.org.

For those looking to get up on their feet the Independence Branch is hosting a “Zumba Gold” event specially tailored to seniors on April 8, 15, 22 and 29 from 10–11 a.m. “Zumba Gold: Dancing to the Oldies!” At this event those in attendance will dance to popular songs from “back in the day” according to the event description. No registration is required for this event.

The Kenton County Public Library has other events for seniors and those looking to find a sense of community, or a space to meet others. To find a list of more events go to kentonlibrary.org and click on Events.

Discover Charlie’s Club — your solution for senior day care

St. Charles Community
Contributor

Are you or a loved one in need of compassionate care and engaging activities during the day? Look no further than Charlie’s Club, the premier adult day health program nestled in Covington, Ky.

Serving as a beacon of support for seniors and their caregivers since 1986, Charlie’s Club is designed to provide a nurturing environment where individuals can thrive socially, physically, and emotionally.

Charlie’s Club is the ideal solution for seniors who prefer to maintain their current living situation but require supervision and care during the day. Our program offers a welcoming space where participants can forge new friendships, partake in stimulating activities and receive personalized attention from our dedicated team of trained professionals. Moreover, Charlie’s Club offers caregivers respite from the demands of round-the-clock caregiving, allowing them to tend to other responsibilities while their loved ones are in good hands.

At Charlie’s Club, we specialize in caring for adults aged 60 and above, addressing not only their medical requirements but also their social and emotional well-being. Our comprehensive program includes:

- Program hours designed to accommodate working caregivers, operating Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:30 pm.
- Medication administration and nursing assessments overseen by our experienced staff in accordance with participants’ physicians’ orders.
- Nutritious daily meals prepared by our skilled chef, ensuring both satisfaction and nourishment.
- A diverse calendar of life enrichment programs and wellness activities to engage and uplift participants.
- Assistance with personal care and grooming to promote comfort and dignity.
- On-site physical, occupational, and speech therapy services available as needed, fostering holistic wellness.
- Optional podiatry services upon request.

We understand that navigating the costs of senior care can be daunting. That’s why Charlie’s Club offers financial assistance to eligible individuals, ensuring that our program remains accessible to those who need it most.

If you’re feeling overwhelmed balancing caregiving responsibilities with work and family obligations, Charlie’s Club is here to lighten your load. We have immediate openings available, so why wait? Take the first step toward peace of mind and companionship by contacting us today.

For more information or to schedule a visit, please call Misty Marcum at (859) 331-3224.

Experience the warmth and support of Charlie’s Club, a Sponsored Ministry of the Sisters of Notre Dame, where every day is filled with care, camaraderie and connection.

This article was submitted by St. Charles Community



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Alliance between young, old must be renewed, pope says

Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

The elderly, who are often cast aside, are a treasure trove of wisdom that can help one discover the true meaning of life rather than be consumed by the unrealistic goal of remaining forever young, Pope Francis said.

“Youth is beautiful, but eternal youth is a very dangerous illusion,” the pope said Feb. 23, 2022, during his Wednesday general audience.

“Being old is just as important — and beautiful — as being young. Let us remember this. The alliance between generations, which restores all ages of life to what is human, is our lost gift, and we must get it back. It must be found, in this culture of waste and in this culture of productivity,” he said.

The day’s audience talk was the first of a series dedicated to the meaning and value of old age, continuing well into the summer of that year. Noting that “there have never been so many of us in human history,” the 85-year-old pope said that now more than ever, the elderly face an increasing “risk of being discarded.”

“The elderly are often seen as ‘a burden,’” he said. “In the dramatic first phase of the pandemic, it was they who paid the highest price. They were already the weakest and most neglected group: we did not look at them too much when they were alive, we did not even see them die.”

The pope said that although the current demographic winter has led to a higher number of elderly than young people, the “dominant culture has as its sole model the young adult, that is, a self-made individual who always remains young.”

“The exaltation of youth as the only age worthy of embodying the human ideal, coupled with contempt for old age as frailty, decay, disability, has been the dominant image of 20th-century totalitarianism. Have we forgotten this?” he asked.

Instead of being “honored for the gifts they bring to everyone’s sense of life,” the pope said, old age, especially “in so-called ‘developed’ cultures,” is often disregarded “as an age that has no special content to offer, nor meaning of its own to live.”

Pope Francis warned that the world will be robbed of love if “old age is not restored to the dignity of humanly worthy life,” and he encouraged Christians “to invest their thoughts and affections in the gifts” old age brings to one’s life.

“Everything beautiful that a society has is related to the roots of the elderly,” the pope said. “For this reason, in these catecheses, I would like to highlight the figure of the elderly person, so people would understand the elderly are not something to be discarded; they are a blessing for society.”

In a later audience, Aug. 24 of the same year, Pope

Francis expressed how elderly men and women are called to pass on their wisdom and shine a path toward a better tomorrow for future generations/

As one approaches the final leg of their mortal journey, little details, such as “a caress, a smile, a gesture, an appreciated effort, an unexpected surprise, a hospitable cheerfulness, a faithful bond become more acute,” and what is most essential in life “becomes definitively clear to us.”

“This wisdom of old age is the place of our gestation, which illuminates the lives of children, of young people, of adults, of the entire community. We, the elderly should be this for others; a light for others,” he said.

“Yes, dear brothers and sisters — especially you elderly — the best of life is yet to come. ‘But we are old, what more is yet to come?’ The best, because the best of life is yet to come,” the pope said.

Death may cause “a little bit of fear, because I don’t know what this passage means, and passing through that



CNS photo/Paul Haring

Pope Francis greets an elderly woman as he meets with people in Asuncion, Paraguay, in this July 12, 2015, file photo.

door causes a little fear, but there is always the hand of the Lord that carries us forward, and beyond the door there is a feast,” he said.

This article has been edited by Messenger staff.



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Nonagenarian leads daily rosary saying ‘we all need to help each other’

Laura Keener
Editor

In a Ziplock bag tucked away in her quilted purse, Margie Klee carries extra rosaries and several copies of a booklet entitled “My Pocket Rosary.” These are cherished items. She uses both to lead the praying of the rosary around noon each day at Celebration Villa, an independent living facility in Ft. Wright.

“My Pocket Rosary,” a booklet of reflections on the mysteries of the rosary as well as instructions on how to pray the rosary, was written by French American priest, Father Joseph Lelen. With a five-star rating from over 1,000 reviewers, the booklet is still available on Amazon as well as through other booksellers.

Father Lelen was ordained at Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris on Sept. 24, 1898, came to America in 1899 and then to the Diocese of Covington from 1907–1954. He died May 23, 1964. Father Lelen was a prolific writer, penning over 25 books, including, most notably, one of the first English translations of St. Augustine’s “Confessions.” Additionally, he served as editor of the diocesan newspaper, *The Christian Year*; a precursor of the *Messenger*. Father Lelen was Mrs. Klee’s beloved childhood pastor at St. Francis Xavier, Falmouth (1918–1954).

“He married me and he baptized me. He was very meaningful to me,” said Mrs. Klee.

The 95-year-old said she has been leading and praying a daily rosary since 2006, when she made a consecration to Mary while a parishioner at St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright. Her daily rosary ministry continued when she and her husband, Paul, moved to Celebration Villa about five years ago. Her husband died in February, not long after the couple celebrated 75 years of marriage.

Each day several residents join her in the multi-purpose room that also serves as a chapel to pray the rosary. She likes praying the rosary as a group because it is a

longer prayer and allows everyone time to settle in and connect with Mary and God.

“We can always pray, that makes such a difference with a person. When you bless yourself it turns you to God. I think saying a prayer will give you a different feeling ... once you say a prayer for someone it changes people,” Mrs. Klee said.

Praying together as a community brings its own special blessings. The group prays for each other, other residents who they know are facing challenges or have asked for prayers and for their family members. Mrs. Klee raised 10 children (an 11th child died two weeks after birth). She has 26 grandchildren and 42 great-grandchildren.

“We all need to help each other and one way to help each other is by praying together ... I always pray for every family here, especially the ones that are sick,” she said.

Praying an entire rosary, Mrs. Klee said, can seem a lot, especially for mothers of young children. Her advice is to take it a decade at a time.

“Pray a decade when you wake up, and a decade at

breakfast, a decade at lunch and a decade after dinner and a decade when you go to bed and you will get it all in,” she said.

Keener photo



Margie Klee holds the booklet “My Pocket Rosary,” which was written by her childhood pastor, Father Joseph Lelen. Mrs. Klee leads the praying of the rosary every day at Celebration Villa, Ft. Wright.



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SENIOR LIVING

St. Charles Community: leaders in senior care and service

St. Charles Resource Center
Contributor

St. Charles Community, sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame, has been a leader in providing services for Northern Kentucky's seniors and their families for over 60 years. A major focus of St. Charles' ministry has always been to give back to the greater community and to identify and strive to meet the current and pressing needs of seniors and their families.

In keeping with this focus, two years ago, St. Charles Community expanded beyond its Farrell Drive campus, to establish a Senior Resource Center in Latonia to assist seniors and their families in navigating the maze of senior services and to help them access the services that meet their individual needs. The reality is that this is not something people think about until the need becomes personal and immediate.

Almost daily, Margie Volpenhein, LSW, and Brittney Landers, Senior Resource Liaisons, who staff the Center, have seen an increase in the number of persons seeking assistance. In these past two and a half years, the Senior Resource Center has served over 1,300 seniors and their families.

In addition to providing education and hands on assistance, the Center also supplies, free of charge, needed personal care

items and equipment that many cannot afford — the major requests have been for mobility and adaptive devices such as walkers, wheelchairs, shower chairs and safety bars.

Alarming, many persons come to us in need of food because they lack the knowledge or ability to access entities that could meet this need. In these cases, the Center helps to supply food while educating the person in need, how to access food banks, Meals on Wheels, etc.

The Center's staff says that although their role involves being confronted multiple times a day with the reality of great needs, they consider themselves very blessed to have the opportunity to minister to seniors through patient listening, timely assistance and most of all, through compassionate understanding.

The St. Charles Senior Resource Center's services are free of charge, and staff can be reached by phone, email or by stopping in at the Center, located at 3705 Winston Ave., Latonia, Ky. The Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. The resource center's phone number is (859) 261-0746, and their e-mail address is seniorresource@stcharlescommunity.org.

This article was submitted by St. Charles Resource Center.



Securing tomorrow today: the power of proactive estate planning

Chadwick Seiter, Attorney at Law
Contributor

In our life's journey, we are united by the principles of stewardship and community, reflecting on our commitment to care for each other. This deeply ingrained commitment inspires us to look ahead with com-

Northern Kentucky can reach up to \$15,000 monthly, might seem daunting. Yet, strategic planning enables us not just to aim for Medicaid eligibility but also to preserve assets for future generations. This aligns with our ethos of mutual protection and care, offering peace of mind and securing a legacy that reflects our communal values.

Leveraging the Medicaid Five-Year Look-Back Period is a strategic embodiment of our foresight and commitment to stewardship. This critical planning tool involves the careful and strategic transfer of assets well before the need for long-term care arises, aiming to secure Medicaid eligibility while preserving one's assets for future generations.

Importantly, this strategy requires thoughtful execution to ensure compliance with Medicaid rules, demonstrating a commitment to both ethical and effective planning. Keep in mind that even when unforeseen circumstances necessitate immediate long-term care, there are last-minute strategies designed to safeguard an individual's assets. These approaches reflect our dedication to upholding the community's welfare, ensuring that every person has the opportunity to prepare for the future with dignity

(Continued on page 17)



passion, protecting the interests of those we cherish.

As an elder law and estate planning attorney, it's my privilege to assist my clients, especially seniors, in thoughtfully considering their legacies. Deciding on medical preferences and how to distribute assets transcends mere legal documentation; it's an act of stewarding one's life story, ensuring that loved ones are cared for and personal values endure. The essential documents in this process — wills, powers of attorney and living wills—represent more than legal formalities; they are profound expressions of love, foresight and responsibility.

The concept of stewardship further extends to addressing the financial challenges associated with aging, especially through Medicaid planning. Facing the potential costs of long-term care, which in



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The gift of funeral pre-planning

Linnemann Funeral Homes
Contributor

While planning your funeral is not the easiest experience to consider or discuss, it can provide peace of mind both for you and your family. Below are five reasons why pre-planning for your funeral can be an incredible gift to both you and your loved ones.

1. You will reduce stress for your family.

When someone close to us passes away, grief often makes even the simplest tasks difficult. Because funerals tend to be planned immediately following a death, this often means that family members must dive immediately into planning a large event and making significant decisions while dealing with enormous grief. The more of your funeral that you plan out in advance, the easier it will be for your family to execute your instructions and wishes. Instead of calling

(Continued from page 16)

and peace of mind.

Our actions today indeed lay the groundwork for tomorrow's security. Engaging in proactive estate and Medicaid planning transcends the realms of finance and law; it is a meaningful act of stewardship, emphasizing community and care. By ensuring the preservation of our legacies and the well-being of our loved ones, we honor the deep bonds that define us, weaving our values and wishes into the fabric of our communities for generations to come.

Chadwick Seiter, in partnership with Matthew L. Darpel, is dedicated to serving the Northern Kentucky community at Darpel Elder Law in Crestview Hills. Mr. Seiter is a proud alumnus of St. Henry District High School, the University of Kentucky and Chase College of Law. This article was submitted by Darpel Law.

funeral homes and comparing caskets, services, etc., they'll be able to focus their time on supporting each other.

2. You will help prevent family conflict.

It is always a wise decision to plan and document your funeral arrangements in advance. If you pass away without outlining your funeral wishes, your family will have to make guesses regarding your preferences. When family members disagree about the arrangements, it can create tension during an emotional time. From choosing between burial or cremation to selecting meaningful details such as songs and flowers, every decision that you make and record beforehand is one less decision your family will have to make. This can help reduce family tension during a difficult time. Please note that power of attorney authority ends once the person has passed away.

3. You will help ensure your wishes are met.

Many individuals have specific preferences for what they want to happen after they pass away. Whether it is a religious requirement to have a burial or a desire to have a lively celebration of their life instead of a solemn event, planning funeral arrangements in advance can ensure that your wishes are fulfilled. It also allows you to personalize the event and reflect on how you want to be remembered, providing comfort in your final days.

4. You will be able to prepare financially.

Funerals can be quite expensive, even for savvy shoppers who opt for simple plans. By planning for your funeral in advance, you can get an idea of the total cost. Once you know the estimated cost, you can consider your financial options. This will help ensure that your funeral expenses

are taken care of without causing any financial burden on your loved ones. You may consider meeting with an elder law attorney to prepare for estate transition and processing after death.

5. It will encourage meaningful conversations with your family.

Discussing death with your family can be uncomfortable, but it can also lead to meaningful conversations about each other's values and wishes. Many people want to talk about end-of-life matters but feel awkward or unsure of how to start the conversation. By initiating it, you may find that others in your family have also been thinking about their own end-of-life preferences and are eager to share their thoughts.

With our experienced and knowledgeable directors at hand, we at Linnemann will make planning your arrangements as easy and comforting as possible. If we can help you with any questions about advance funeral planning, please reach out to us at 859-727-1250 or visit our website at www.linnemannfuneralhomes.com.

This article was submitted by Linnemann Funeral Homes.



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Paul Darpel will discuss which legal tools can help protect your family; Creating and Updating Wills, Power of Attorney, Living Wills and Probate



Debbie Vaughn will discuss Estate Planning, Financial Planning, Guardianship, Long-Term Care Planning



Mike Longland owner of No Mistake Medicare will discuss Medicare options and Medicaid Spin down



Pam Urley will discuss Advanced Funeral Planning

Emerald Trace — nationally recognized senior rehabilitation care in your own backyard

Julie Price
Contributor

Emerald Trace, Elsmere, has earned National recognition by U.S. News annual ratings for Short-Term Rehabilitation for the third consecutive year. To help put it in context, it is a status earned by only 19 percent of skilled-nursing facilities nationwide.



Administrator Tina Martin commented on the recognition, saying, “It feels great to be recognized nationally for the excellent care we provide in Northern Kentucky. It’s even more of an accomplishment when you consider that we have received this honor three years in a row.”

Most recent reporting by CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) ranks Emerald Trace on Turkeyfoot Road as the number one facility Medicare patients discharged to, from St. Elizabeth Edgewood Hospital for short-term Skilled Nursing and rehabilitation. Since opening in 2017, Emerald has helped hundreds of Northern Kentucky residents regain mobility and strength after a hospitalization to return to their homes.

Dedicated to respond to Northern Kentucky’s increasing aging population, Emerald Trace offers a next-generation option for older adults to receive customized, progressive, personalized short-term care and rehabilitation close to home, in order to return home. Whether you are planning to schedule an operation, or recovering from an event such as a stroke, heart attack or orthopedic surgery, and need quality care and supportive professionals who under-

stand the challenges of regaining your independence — Emerald Trace can support you.

Call (859) 342-0200. Emerald Trace’s admission team leader Lena Bohannon Shaw has over 20 years of experi-

ence helping NKY residents with short-term rehabilitation needs.

This article was submitted by Rosedale Green.



People matter, life is precious — make someone’s life better

Baptist Life Communities
Contributor

Baptist Life Communities’ (BLC) mission is defined as “using the ministry of Jesus Christ as a model and providing quality of life options to assist adults 55+ to remain active by maintaining a healthy lifestyle.”

BLC has been serving the senior adult population since

1952. BLC welcomes residents of all faiths. Our Chaplains are “Ecumenical,” which means they care for any and all traditions and faith groups from all walks of life.

BLC is a Continuum Care Retirement Community (CCRC). This gives you access to multiple levels of care throughout our campuses. We offer independent living, personal care, memory care, respite care, rehab, long-term

care, hospice care and much more.

BLC has two campuses one in Erlanger, KY and one in Alexandria, KY.

The Village, Erlanger campus includes:

— Village Care Center: short-term skilled nursing, rehab (includes outpatient), transitional care, long-term care, wound care, memory support, palliative and hospice care and more.

— Long House: Independent living apartments for ages 55-plus.

— Timber Woods: Independent living one- or two-story residences for ages 55-plus.

— Munro House: Income-qualified senior living apartments for ages 62-plus.

The Seasons, Alexandria campus includes:

— A full range of therapies (including outpatient), memory care, short-term skilled nursing, long-term care, personal care, respite care, clinical services, wound care, palliative and hospice care and much more.

Now is the time to start talking/planning for your retirement. We don’t know where life is going to take us so it’s a good idea to have a plan in place. Here are a few tips to help get started:

— Check out senior community websites to learn more.

BLCnky.com

— Have a family meeting and get input as to what’s most important for your loved one to ensure you find the right fit.

— Have a list of questions ready and make phone calls to different communities you might be interested in.

— Set up tours or just pop-in to a community so you can see everyday life for residents. It’s important to see that the staff is compassionate and friendly.

— Go to medicare.gov and they offer a Medicare/Medicaid checklist to finding a community. Get your finances in order: Will you be paying private pay? Medicare? Medicaid?

BLC is here to help (whether you choose us or not). Give us a call for any questions you might have. Call Michelle at (859) 835-3980 for questions on long-term care planning or Darlene at (859) 486-0121 for questions on independent living.



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Madonna Manor: a Catholic community of caring

Madonna Manor
Contributor

More than a senior living campus; Madonna Manor, Villa Hills, is a vibrant community that reflects the essence of Catholic values in every aspect of its residents' lives. Nestled on the banks of the Ohio River, the community is part of CommonSpirit Health and CHI Living Communities.

Madonna Manor stands as a testament to the belief that aging should be a holistic and fulfilling journey. Spanning multiple acres, the campus provides a serene backdrop to embrace their faith and connect with individuals who share a commitment to a meaningful life.

Denise Corrou, executive director, encapsulates the spirit of the community: "Madonna Manor residents experience the continuum of care in an atmosphere guided by Catholic values. We are not just a residence; we are a family, supporting each other through every stage of life."

The independent living brownstone apartments, nestled within a small neighborhood setting, are just one facet of the Madonna Manor experience. They offer freedom of choice in one or two-bedroom floor plans with patios, cre-

ating a perfect blend of spaciousness and intimacy. Yet, Madonna Manor's commitment to the full continuum of care ensures that residents can seamlessly transition to other levels of care as their needs evolve.

Madonna Manor's assisted living options embody the community's dedication to personalized care. Residents benefit from a supportive environment where their changing needs are met with dignity and respect. The community spirit is palpable, extending beyond individual living spaces to include shared activities, communal dining, and a vibrant social calendar.

For those requiring specialized care, Madonna Manor's memory care program provides a secure and nurturing environment. Guided by a team trained in dementia care, residents receive compassionate support tailored to their unique needs. The program is not just about managing symptoms but fostering a sense of purpose and connection for individuals living with memory challenges.

Amidst the array of care options, Madonna Manor ensures that the Catholic spirit remains at the forefront. Daily Mass, spiritual reflections and opportunities to interact with mission integration professionals are inter-

woven into the fabric of everyday life, creating an environment where residents can grow spiritually.

Madonna Manor's holistic approach to senior living is evident in the comprehensive wellness programs offered to all residents. From the 24-hour, 365-day fitness center to heated indoor pet wash facilities, the amenities are designed to cater to the physical, emotional and social well-being of each individual.

"The resident experience is at the core of success for Madonna Manor. As we continue to seek ways to enhance the lives of our older adults, it is imperative that we focus on creating positive, meaningful, and personalized experiences," explains Carrou. "The Catholic spirit is not just in the chapel; it's in every act of care and support."

Madonna Manor remains rooted in its mission to provide a haven where residents experience the full continuum of care in an environment shaped by Catholic values. To learn more about the opportunities awaiting you at Madonna Manor, please contact Mitzi Yelton or Mary Ann Johnson at (859) 426-6400, or visit our website at CHILivingCommunities.org/MM.

This article was submitted by Madonna Manor.

Combatting the winter blues

Colonial Heights Senior Living
Contributor

The winter blues affect nearly everyone, but they can especially impact our senior population and loved ones. As people age, their social circles tend to shrink. They have less contact with former coworkers, and the loss of family or friends can exacerbate feelings of isolation. On top of these factors, winter's shorter daylight hours make the days feel dreary and can lead to seasonal depression. There are steps that can be taken to improve the winter blues in seniors.

If you're noticing any of the following changes in your

parent or loved one, they may be experiencing the winter blues: losing interest in activities that were once a joy; feeling consistently listless and sad; day after day; worrying more than usual, with increased anxiety; being overwhelmed by feelings; depression, sadness, loneliness; having low energy and feeling sluggish; struggling to concentrate; experiencing appetite changes that lead to unwanted weight loss or gain.

To help your senior parent or loved one whose mental health may be impacted by the changing seasons, try taking the following steps and remember, Spring is coming!

The benefits of physical activity come into play when

addressing the winter blues. Seniors who keep their bodies moving can boost cognition and memory, alleviating stress and anxiety. Regular physical activity also strengthens muscles and bones, manages weight, keeps blood pressure low and maintains healthy cholesterol levels.

Staying sedentary can also lead to blood clots or an increased chance of diabetes. When the weather gets too cold to participate in outdoor physical activities, the resulting lack of exercise or movement can lead to feelings of anxiety and depression.

Your senior loved one's health may be good now, but no one knows what the road ahead will look like. This is an opportunity for senior living communities to play an especially positive and productive role.

Senior living communities offer numerous weekly activities and regular opportunities for socialization, and fitness and encouraging residents to maintain a healthy social circle. If your loved one is active but needs to make new connections, a senior living community could be the solution. Communities also provide delicious and nutritious meals as well as lots of activities to keep you engaged and participating.

The right senior living community can be the answer to helping your loved one overcome the winter blues. Colonial Heights Senior Living ensures a safe, happy and healthy environment in which to thrive and our residents are our best testimony.

This article was submitted by Colonial Heights Senior Living.



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78-year-old altar server passes on love of the Eucharist to the younger generation

Sean Gallagher
OSV News

Carl Bohman trains young people in his rural south-eastern Indiana parish how to assist at Mass as altar servers, much like adult volunteers do in parishes across the Indianapolis Archdiocese.

But Bohman doesn't just instruct them. He serves at Mass alongside them — and in the process shows them his deep love for the Eucharist, hopefully planting seeds of faith-filled devotion in them at the same time.

"He's just another server," said Andrew Ruf, 13, a new altar server at St. Peter Parish in Franklin County. "But he's wiser. He's been doing it longer."

A lot longer — 70 years longer.

Bohman, 78, started serving when he was 8 and growing up in the early 1950s as a member of the former St. John the Evangelist Parish in Enochsburg, now a campus of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Decatur County.

Married for 56 years to his equally devoted Catholic wife, Lois, and the father of five, grandfather of 17 and a new great-grandfather, Bohman knows he's in the home stretch of life and hopes in the time he has left to put the church in his small corner of the world on firm footing for the future.

"I tell these kids that I'm the past," he said about the altar servers he trains. "Their parents are the present. They're the future — of the church, of the community, of the country."

To help them grow in their love of the faith, Bohman leans on positive reinforcement.

"I compliment them every time they serve," Bohman said after a recent weekday Mass at St. Peter at which he served with three young parishioners. "That's what a teacher does. I'm trying to be a teacher here so they carry on (after me). They're the future."

He's proud when he sees his young charges learning the ropes and able to serve at Mass on their own.

"Except when they get in the rotation (of servers) and I don't get to serve so often," Bohman said with a laugh.

That love of serving during liturgies began on a summer day in the early 1950s when two of Bohman's older brothers who were supposed to serve for their pastor, Father Ambrose Schneider, couldn't make it. So, young Carl's mother sent him instead, even though he had never served at Mass.

"I rode my bicycle 2 miles to the church and went to serve for Father Schneider," he recalled in an interview with The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

With no experience of serving, young 8-year-old Carl mumbled through the Latin responses of the Mass.

Father Schneider was patient with him and helped form the youngster and the other young people of St. John when he taught religion class in the parish's school. Carl continued as an altar server until he graduated from high school in 1963 and entered the U.S. Army.

Looking back on his childhood and teenage years in Enochsburg, Bohman is grateful for the way Father Schneider nurtured in him a deep love of the faith and of the Eucharist in particular.

"Father Schneider was so good to the servers," Bohman said. "You didn't think much about it at the time. It was just there. It was just your life. If he's not in heaven, we don't have a chance. He was a super good priest."

After serving in the Army in Germany where he helped assemble atomic bombs, Bohman returned to southeastern Indiana, where he married Lois in 1968.

Today, Bohman continues his work as a farmer on a farm near St. Peter where he and Lois have lived for decades.

During much of that time, he was too busy raising his children to volunteer as an altar server.

But about 10 years ago, with his children grown and living on their own, Bohman started serving again at the invitation of Franciscan Father Humbert Moster, who was serving at the time as St. Peter's sacramental minister.

After the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic when Mass started to be celebrated publicly again at St. Peter, Bohman was serving Mass all the time at the parish.

"No one else volunteered or stepped up," he said. "And with COVID, everyone was so scared."

Lois appreciates seeing Bohman's devotion to the Eucharist in being an altar server. But it hasn't always been that way.

"At first, I didn't like it because I was sitting there by myself," she said. "But I really enjoy now him being up there. When he's up there, it's like it's supposed to be. I've always been really close to the Eucharist. It's Jesus. He's there. To see Bohman up there being close to it is awesome."



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OSV News photo/Sean Gallagher, The Criterion
Carl Bohman, a 78-year-old altar server, gives directions to altar server Andrew Ruf during a Jan. 24, 2024, Mass at St. Peter Church in Brookville, Ind. Bohman trains altar serves on how to assist at Mass. But he doesn't just instruct them: He serves at Mass alongside them and in the process shows them his deep love for the Eucharist.

Spending so much time in the sanctuary serving at Mass intensified his appreciation of Christ's gift of himself in the Eucharist and focused his attention on it.

"When you're serving there at consecration time, the priest brings God there to you — Jesus," Bohman said. "He comes there. That is the Creator of your body, the Creator of the world, the Creator of the universe. And I'm 3 feet away. There's no other honor like that. Three feet away."

Eventually after the pandemic, the pastors at St. Peter — currently Father Vincent Lampert, and, before him, Father Sean Danda — began encouraging young people to serve at Mass there.

Bohman has helped train them during the past few years.

"He's been showing us the basics," said Andrew. "He's been good to us."

"I like helping our church as much as I can," added Ethan Rauch, 11, another new server at St. Peter being trained by Bohman. "He's been teaching me what you need to do to serve. I learn a little bit more when he tells me about it."

Going through all of the details of serving at Mass — what needs to be done before it, during it and afterward — Bohman, like a man married for 56 years, likens it to life at home.

"It's no different than when I come in for supper and the supper table is set and I eat," he said. "But if I help prepare

it, I appreciate it more. With serving at Mass, it's the same thing. You light the candles. You put everything out. You appreciate the Mass more. You're involved in it."

According to Father Lampert, he's getting young people involved in serving at Mass who might not have done so otherwise.

"We have a couple of servers who told me that they would have never served on their own," he said. "But Carl's approach and demeanor kind of put them at ease. So, they were more comfortable volunteering in that role."

Father Lampert hopes that Bohman has an influence on all the parishioners at St. Peter; old as well as young.

"People can look at him and see his commitment and his love of the Mass," he said. "It can be a witness to invite people to think about their own relationship with the Eucharist."

"We're in the midst of the National Eucharistic Revival. Maybe at a time when a lot of Catholics fail to fully appreciate what the Eucharist is, his public witness is a way to invite people to ask themselves, 'What do I really think about the Eucharist? Here's a guy, at his age, and yet the Eucharist is such a vital and integral part of his life. Do I have the same kind of approach when it comes to the Eucharist in my own life?'"

For his part, Bohman is happy to see families with young children at St. Peter; much like what he and Lois had decades ago.

"I'm proud that they bring their children to church," he said. "Crying babies in church are a good thing. That's the future."

Sean Gallagher is a reporter at The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

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Coming to better-know my grandmother through her ‘medieval’ parish

Sean McLaughlin
OSV News

Since learning to drive, I had passed Our Lady of Hope church innumerable times. In a sense, though, I was driven by it, before then.

It was my grandmother’s parish. The church sits on a hill overlooking Philadelphia’s main north-south thoroughfare, its distinctive tower soaring above the low-roofed homes, a good distance from the downtown canyons of skyscrapers and visible for blocks in any direction.

Tracing its roots to 1909, the church — whose cornerstone was laid in 1928, after years of planning and fundraising — was, in its heyday, one of the area’s most prominent, receiving an architectural award in 1930 for its design, which was based on England’s medieval Durham Cathedral.

Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, the future Pope Pius XII, had once graced Our Lady of Hope’s sanctuary; Ven. Fulton Sheen had preached there during a visit to the city.

Despite its legacy, though, the church had never sparked my curiosity. The family connections were all well and good — my grandparents married there, and they had my father baptized there — yet I’d never cared to know anything further. I had certainly never considered what might be inside.

That changed a few years ago when I made a list of historic churches in the area that I wanted to visit, including Our Lady of Hope. In the spring, two friends and I — all fathers of young children — decided to visit three churches on Good Friday morning, in a kind of mini-version of St. Philip Neri’s “Seven Churches Pilgrimage” practice. I put my grandmother’s parish first on the itinerary.

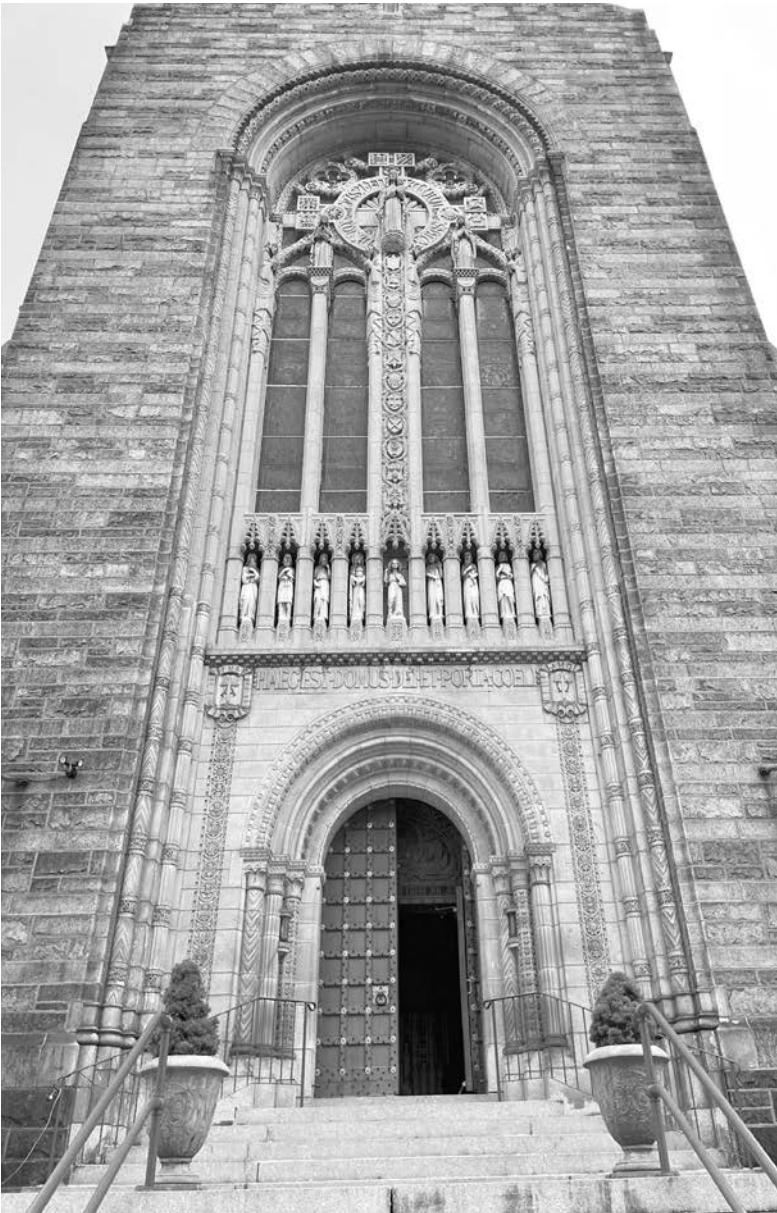
A volunteer who was mowing the lawn led us to the baptistry, which, as with older churches, stood in a dedicated space — in this case, between the rectory and the church. Our eyes were drawn to the font at the center of the octagonal room, lit by a single hanging lamp and a few simple stained-glass windows. The intricately carved stone incorporated text, images and gold mosaic tiles; everything about the space conveyed the gravity of the sacrament of baptism.

We continued from the baptistry into the nave which was almost completely dark; the church would not open until later that afternoon. The overcast sky shed very little light through the tall, and narrow stained-glass windows.

I could barely see. But smelling the damp stone I could suddenly feel the volume of air above; I could sense the magnitude of the church interior. As the lights flickered on, our mouths dropped and our necks craned to take in the magnificence before us.

We spent just half an hour wandering around through the church, praying silently and pointing out various details to one another, but it felt much longer. The profound beauty of the space was overwhelming — nearly every inch within glorified God in stone, statuary and stained glass.

It was only the soft sound of the subway rushing underneath that reminded us of the time, and that we had two more churches to



OSV News photo/Sean McLaughlin

A photograph of the front of Our Lady of Hope Catholic church, a historically vibrant and ethnically diverse parish in Philadelphia. The church building was begun in 1928, with a design based on England’s medieval Durham Cathedral.


see. We retraced our steps through the baptistry and into the rectory to thank our guide and got to chat with the choir director and the pastor, who shared some of the parish’s history with us.

My grandmother did more to hand on the faith to me than virtually anyone else in my life. After all these years of just passing by, I’d finally entered the sacred space that had hosted the sacramental milestones of her life: her first

Communion, her marriage — the baptism of her first child. Decades of my family’s history and formation, I realized, are compressed into those pews.

Had I visited Our Lady of Hope years earlier, it would not have had the same effect. Only now, as a husband and father, can I begin to appreciate it. It was in this church that my grandmother was fashioned in the faith, the woman who so lovingly guided me to know, love and serve Christ.


My children will never meet her on earth. But I will bring them there, in time, and give to them what I received from her.



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Obituary

Sister Martha Ellen Cheevers (aka Sister Mary Bonita) died peacefully at Holy Family Home, Melbourne, March 6, 2024. The last of eight children, she was born in 1927 to Francis Martin and Mary Josepha (Hagemeyer) Cheevers of Dayton, Ky. She was a professed member of the Congregation of Divine Providence for 71 years.

Following first profession (1952), Sister Martha Ellen was missioned to teach children at St. Aloysius, Covington, (1952-1953); St. Patrick, Mt. Sterling (1953-1959); St. Vincent dePaul, Newport (1959-1960); St. Gregory, Barbourville (1960-1963); St. Leo, Versailles (1963-1964); St. Michael, Ripley (OH, 1964-1966); St. Philip, Melbourne (1966-1967); Holy Family, Ashland (1968); and St. Francis de Sales, Newport (1968-1972). While at St. Michael, St. Philip, and St. Francis de Sales, she also ministered as principal. A graduate of Villa Madonna College (B.A.) and Xavier University (M.Ed.), she also served as principal at St.



Sister Martha Ellen Cheevers
(aka Sister Mary Bonita)

Joseph School, West Warwick, RI (1972-1978).

Divine Providence called Sister Martha Ellen into new areas of service beginning in 1978, when she was missioned to New York City as Administrator for the Jeanne d’Arc Residence, the congregation’s ministry of providing temporary housing for an international population of young women furthering their education and careers.

After a year’s sabbatical at Regina Mundi in Rome, in 1987 she returned to Melbourne and

served as Provincial Secretary for the next seven years. Subsequently, Sister Martha Ellen ministered as clerk for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati’s Media Center (1994-1997); local animator for Holy Family Home (1997-2000); office assistant at St. Joseph Church, Cold Spring, (2000-2006); and in finances and community service at Holy Family Home (2006-2018).

Sister Martha Ellen moved to Holy Family’s Health Care Center in 2019.

Kind, gentle, and soft-spoken, Sister Martha Ellen was a true woman of prayer and a woman of providence, who strived to be faithful to her life as a religious, faithful in her ministries, and faithful in meeting the challenges brought by each day. She will be missed by her religious community, the Sisters of Divine Providence; her nieces, nephews, and many friends.

Her brothers Thomas, Arthur, Roy, Matthew, and Francis, and sisters Alma and Dorothy, preceded her in death.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in Immaculate Conception Chapel, Holy Family Home, Melbourne, March 12, with burial in the convent cemetery following. Memorials to the Congregation of Divine Providence, 5300 St. Anne Drive, Melbourne, KY 41059.

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Job responsibilities for the Senior Accountant position include processing daily cash receipts, bank reconciliations, accounts payable, accounts receivable and credit card processing. Additional responsibilities include preparing and recording monthly journal entries, account reconciliation and analysis, supporting the budgeting process and managing the FACTS Database used to bill all students. Accounting experience and strong Excel skills are required. Experience with QuickBooks is preferred.

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Notre Dame Academy is a Catholic all-girls high school sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame. NDA has a rich tradition of success and excellence. Interested candidates should submit a cover letter, resume and salary requirement to Mrs. Marilyn Slaughter at ndahr@endapan-das.org. Resumes will be reviewed until the position is filled.

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PRINCIPAL

Notre Dame Academy (NDA) in Park Hills, Kentucky seeks a mission-driven, qualified professional to serve as the Principal directly reporting to the President of NDA to assume duties in July 2024. The Principal is a full-time position responsible for providing visionary leadership, fostering a culture of academic excellence and ensuring the holistic development of students in alignment with the school’s mission and values.

Notre Dame Academy is a Catholic all-girls high school sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame. NDA has a rich tradition of success and excellence. Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and resume to Mrs. Trish Miller at ndahr@endapandas.org. Upon submission, candidates will receive a search prospectus outlining further details about the position and the application process. This position will be posted until filled.

Baker photo



(above) Deacon candidate Terry Mason places his hands on a paten vessel while Bishop Iffert accepts him as an acolyte.

Acolyte candidates

(Continued from page 1)

to tap into the resources that the Archdiocese already established.”

In his homily during the Mass, Bishop Iffert talked about redemptive suffering, and the common phrase people are told to “offer it up” when experiencing hardship.

What is meant by “offer it up”, Bishop Iffert explained, “all of our own suffering can now be joined to the suffering of God — who loves us so much ... who gives his judgement from the Cross, offering himself in love for us.

Bishop Iffert addressed the candidates as well, saying, “Today you will dedicate yourself in a new way to that sacrament of redemptive love.”

“There will be days, there will be plenty to offer,” he said, “just remember this: you are loved, and all you are being asked to do is to respond to that love with loving hearts.”

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Divine breadcrumbs lead to the Eucharist

Jeff Cavins
USCCB

As Christians, we profess that the greatest event in the history of the world, the one event that changed eternity, was the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. While this is a wonderful reality for us, the problem that

Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are Christocentric, meaning that they all find their ultimate meaning and fulfillment in Jesus, particularly in his Paschal Mystery. From creation to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; from the time when the children of Israel were enslaved in Egypt

in the “Real Presence” of Jesus in the Eucharist can be gained by combing through the Old Testament narrative. A trail of divine breadcrumbs in the Old Testament leads the reader to Jesus, the Bread of Life, in the New Testament. And in the New Testament, a clear body of teaching affirms and explains the benefits of the Eucharist.

Dedicating yourself to studying Sacred Scripture will better ensure that you can share this gift of life with others. Indeed, if we are going to teach about something that happened 2,000 years ago, and that something is the most important event ever, then we must be able to explain it to our contemporaries. It’s a matter of justice; they have a right to hear the good news, and they have a right to hear from us how the Eucharist is available in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

How many times have we, when asked about the Eucharist, had nothing of any substance to say regarding why we believe what we believe? Equipping our hearts with the Word of God and gaining a biblical understanding of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass is crucial if the people of God are going to provide a reason for the hope that the Eucharist has given us.

As we are on the eve of one of the greatest gatherings in Church history, the National Eucharistic Congress, July 17–21, 2024, now is the time to make the changes we have promised ourselves regarding our faith. How many times have we said, “This year, I’m going to study Scripture,” or “This year, I’m going to take the time to understand the Mass?” As Rabbi Hillel once said, “If not me, who, and if not now, when?”

With the many changes and troubles we witness and experience in our world today, now is the time to share with those in our sphere of influence the one thing that will not change — the one thing that will be the same yesterday, today, and forever — and that is Jesus Christ, who is truly present to us in the Eucharist.



we face as modern-day believers is that the greatest event ever happened 2,000 years ago in a small country called Israel.

What makes this so difficult to share in a modern setting is that we live within a culture that doesn’t always value the past as much as they value the present and, to a smaller extent, the future. The “now” is what is important to people, not what happened in an upper room and on a hill on the edge of a town back in 33 AD.

If you were a casual observer in the time of Jesus, his death, burial, and resurrection may have caught you off guard, and you would have said, “I sure didn’t see that coming!”

The truth is, most didn’t see it coming but once they immersed themselves into the Scriptures, they would have soon discovered divine breadcrumbs sprinkled throughout the narrative that, if followed, would have led them to the Upper Room and the Cross in the New Covenant.

In many ways, we could say that all the stories in the Old Testament were pointing to one person, the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, the Church has taught us that the

for 400 years and delivered from bondage in the Passover to the great Exile; and from King David all the way to the Maccabean Revolt, the Scriptures point to the most important moments when God would one day become one of us. He would offer his life for the sins of the world, and then, through the miracle of a sacrament, perpetuate the New Covenant meal with us today in the Eucharist.

Most of us who believe in and have experienced the sustaining power of the Eucharist want more than anything for our loved ones, friends and colleagues to experience the love of God the way we have. If the Eucharist is what the Church has always confessed — the body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus, the same Jesus who offered himself to the world 2,000 years ago — then it is incumbent upon us to make sure that every highway, every path, every bit of divine revelation is clear and carefully marked so that all, especially the broken, the bruised and the marginalized, can make a trek to the most valuable person on earth: Jesus.

While the reception of the Eucharist will always entail faith, a clearer understanding of why the Church believes





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National/World

Macron says euthanasia bill is 'law of fraternity'

PARIS — The French bishops' conference president rebuffed President Emmanuel Macron's comments on euthanasia as a 'law of fraternity.' 'It's a deception,' Archbishop Éric de Moulins-Beaufort of Reims said as issues worrying French Catholics only piled up. Macron wants to pass a law before summer that would open up the possibility of requesting an "aid in dying" under "strict conditions," before the summer. On March 10, the French president unveiled the content of the bill in a lengthy interview, given simultaneously to the left-wing daily *Libération* and to the Catholic daily newspaper *La Croix*. Macron made it clear that he did not wish to use the terms "assisted suicide" or "euthanasia," but rather "assisted dying," calling it a "law of fraternity." The next day, "*La Croix*" published a strong reaction from the president of the French bishops' conference. Archbishop de Moulins-Beaufort denounced the "rhetoric" of Macron's remarks. "Calling a text that opens up both assisted suicide and euthanasia a 'law of fraternity' is a deception," he said. Such a law will move the country's health care system "towards death as a solution, ... so much easier and less costly than everything else," the archbishop said. The president of the French bishops' conference also strongly deplored the fact that palliative care became "secondary" in Macron's bill.

Biggest kidnapping of pupils in Nigeria since Chibok girls' abduction

KURIGA, Nigeria — Recent kidnappings of hundreds of people in Nigeria, including almost 300 schoolchildren March 7 in Kuriga in central part of the country, have left church leaders and parents, including Catholics, speechless in the face of another wave of senseless violence. As kidnappings become a horrific new normal in Nigeria, church leaders have strongly urged the government to act. In broad daylight gunmen raided a government primary school and kidnapped at least 287 pupils in the biggest mass abduction from a school in a decade. The incident is the second mass kidnapping in the West African nation of more than 200 million in less than a week. “This is heartbreaking to all of us, and it’s now time for the authorities to act fast to stop the killings and abductions,” lamented Emmanuel Ayeni Nwogu, catechist from the Archdiocese of Kaduna, where the March 7 abduction happened. “We continue to pray for the children who have been kidnapped, and we hope they are still alive and under the mighty hand of God.” Africa’s most populous nation has faced an array of security challenges since 2009, when Boko Haram launched its Islamic uprising to overthrow Nigeria’s secular government and create an Islamic state. The primary target of the militants are Christians, although the terror groups target government schools as well as they lack fighters and abduct boys for military purposes.

Judge upholds program allowing some migrants to enter US

WASHINGTON — A federal judge March 8 dismissed a challenge from Republican-led states, allowing the Biden administration to continue operating a program permitting some migrants from four countries to enter the U.S. on humanitarian grounds. U.S. District Judge Drew B. Tipton said Texas, and the 20 other states that joined the suit, had not adequately shown they had suffered financial harm because of the program, which they would have had to demonstrate to have legal standing to challenge the policy. The program grants short-term legal status in the U.S. to up to 30,000 asylum-seekers each month from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela combined. The administration indicated that the program was intended in part to deter illegal border crossings amid a surge. It grants some asylum-seekers two years of parole, or temporary permission, to live and work in the United States, if they have a

financial sponsor. The move came in tandem with new Biden administration policies restricting asylum access, so it was praised and criticized in turn by Catholic immigration advocates.

Clergy urge attention to social problems as violence grips Argentine city

ROSARIO, Argentina — Catholic leaders in the city of Rosario comforted a terrorized population after a spate of random killings shocked the country and prompted promises of a heavy-handed security response. Archbishop Eduardo Martín of Rosario led Catholics in praying the rosary and celebrated a Mass for peace March 10 in Argentina's third-largest city. He also called for prudence in the federal response as President Javier Milei proposed changing laws to permit soldiers to assist with public security tasks. "This almost diabolical violence, I would say, wants to paralyze us, wants to make us stop, wants to spread terror not only in the city, to spread that terror in each resident of Rosario. But we have to find in Jesus the strength to move forward with certainty, that evil will not win, that evil does not have the final word," Archbishop Martín said in his homily.⁷ The random slayings of four innocent people, including two taxi drivers, a bus driver and a gas jockey over a 48-hour period provoked fear in Rosario, where residents stayed out of sight to avoid danger. Video of the murder of Bruno Bussanich, 25, who was shot in the chest as he worked by a young assailant walking casually to the crime scene, went viral. Observers attribute the recent violence to gangs rebelling against crackdowns inside prisons.

Haiti's prime minister resigns; nation's chaos impacts everyone

SÃO PAULO, Brazil — Amid the worst security crisis in Haiti in several years — one that has been particularly hard for church members — Prime Minister Ariel Henry resigned after weeks of mounting chaos in the Caribbean nation. The decision came after an escalation of violence made daily life almost impossible in Haiti, with at least 80% of the capital city Port-au-Prince in the hands of gangs and more than 300,000 displaced citizens. Henry said in a video address late March 11 that his government would leave power after the establishment of a transitional council. “Haiti needs peace. Haiti needs stability,” he said. Haiti stands on the brink of civil war; according to Archbishop Max Leroy Mésidor of Port-au-Prince, president of the Haitian bishops’ conference. Criminal groups have been coordinating attacks on police stations and were able to release more than 3,000 inmates from a penal institution over the past weeks, including murderers and kidnappers. Some gang lords, including former policeman and most-feared gang leader Jimmy “Barbecue” Cherizier, who heads an alliance of nine bands known as G9, affirmed that their goal was to provoke the prime minister’s resignation. Henry took office after President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated in July 2021. Gangs have been rapidly growing and expanding their reach in Haiti’s society since then, adding to an already chaotic situation in the North American continent’s poorest country.

Ukrainian Catholic bishops say Ukraine has 'no choice but to defend' itself

NEW YORK — Ukraine's Greek Catholic bishops, led by Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, have said their nation will continue to fight Russian aggression, "notwithstanding the suggestions for (the) need for negotiations coming from representatives of different countries, including the Holy Father himself," said the permanent synod of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in a March 10 statement, issued hours after the synod had concluded a week-long series of meetings in the U.S. with clergy, faithful and U.S government officials. "Ukrainians will continue to defend freedom and dignity to achieve a peace that is just." The statement was in response to comments made by Pope Francis during a recent interview

with Radio Télévision Suisse, in which he urged parties to the war in Ukraine “not be ashamed to negotiate before things get worse.” A portion of the interview, released March 9 ahead of its full March 20 publication, sparked international backlash, prompting a modest Vatican clarification. The Ukrainian Catholic bishops cited Russian mass atrocities in Ukraine, overwhelming Russian support for the invasion, severe religious persecution by occupying forces, and a legacy of international agreements broken by Russia as evidence that Ukrainians “feel they have no choice” except to defend themselves. Ukraine Ambassador to the Holy See Andrii Yurash similarly said, “For us, it’s not a matter of a victory — it’s just a matter of the survival of our existence as a nation, as a country.”

24 'perpetual pilgrims' eager to lead Eucharistic procession

DENVER — The National Eucharistic Congress March 11 identified the 24 “perpetual pilgrims” who will be traveling the full lengths of the four routes of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage ahead of the congress in Indianapolis. Most of the pilgrims are graduate or undergraduate students, and some work for mission-oriented apostolates and nonprofits. “A common thread for all was a profound encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist that they were inspired to share with others,” according to a media statement. In October, the National Eucharistic Congress issued a call for perpetual pilgrims and received more than 100 applications. Criteria included being a baptized and practicing Catholic between the ages of 19-29, be in good physical condition and capable of walking long distances, and be committed to upholding church teachings. The perpetual pilgrims will begin their treks May 17-19 from San Francisco; New Haven, Connecticut; Brownsville, Texas; and the headwaters of the Mississippi River at Lake Itasca in northern Minnesota. They will converge in Indianapolis for the July 17 opening of the five-day congress at the Lucas Oil Stadium.

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Papal preacher: Christians are ‘wounded healers,’ meant to help others

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service
VATICAN CITY — Jesus frees Christians from all fear because not only is he the Good Shepherd who protects his flock, but also because he has “conquered the world” and death, the papal preacher said.

People today “acutely sense their vulnerability in a violent world gone mad. What will become of the future of our planet if, despite the cries of alarm from the pope and the more responsible people in society, we continue, unbridled, to consume and pollute?” Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa told Pope Francis and members of the Roman Curia during a Lenten meditation in the Paul VI Audience Hall March 8.

Reflecting on Jesus’ words from St. John’s Gospel — “I am the good shepherd” — Cardinal Cantalamessa said that Jesus, like a good shepherd, knows his sheep who also know him, and he lays down his life for them.

A priest is like a shepherd for his parishioners, but with respect to Jesus, the supreme shepherd, a priest is also just another one of his beloved sheep, the cardinal said.

He said Carl Jung, the Swiss psychologist and psychoanalyst, defined the psychiatrist as “a wounded healer,” who must know “one’s own psychological wounds in order to heal those of others and that knowing the wounds of others helps to heal one’s own.”

This insight also applies to spiritual wounds, Cardinal Cantalamessa said. “The shepherd of the church is also a ‘wounded healer,’ someone ailing who must help others heal.”

The fundamental disease “we need to cure ourselves of in order to cure others,” he said, is fear.

Jesus says repeatedly, “Do not be afraid,” he said, and there are similar words from the Psalms with “The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack. ... Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.”

“Do not be afraid,” he said, is not “an empty, powerless” phrase but “is effective, almost sacramental.”

Christianity encourages those who work to alleviate people’s fears and neuroses in the field of psychology and



mental health, he said, but the Gospel adds something that no science can give.

The liberation of all fear, he said, is through Christ,

CNS photo/Vatican Media

Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher of the papal household, gives a Lenten meditation to Pope Francis, members of the Roman Curia and Vatican employees in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican March 8, 2024.

who told his disciples, “In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.”

Jesus laid down his life for his sheep and “by his wounds we have been healed,” Cardinal Cantalamessa said.

“Jesus is the true ‘wounded healer,’ of whom the psychologist spoke, the wounded one who heals wounds. He made fears and anxieties opportunities for growth in humanity and in understanding others,” he said.

“We — shepherds or the ordinary faithful — must likewise be wounded healers, poor ailing people healing others,” he said.

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7:10 CONCERT
8:45 Q&A
9:00 PRAYER
& DISMISSAL

MORE INFO

THE ORIGINAL
DIVINE MERCY
INSTITUTE
ORIGINALDIVINEMERCY.COM

FOR MORE INFO
PLEASE CONTACT
859-356-5151

JOIN US EACH FRIDAY DURING LENT

St. Barbaras Fish Fry

4:30 to 8:00

ADULT & KID DINNERS INCLUDE 2 SIDES
DRINKS/BEER • DESSERTS AVAILABLE FOR A DONATION

Bob Lee Special (Baked Tilapia & 4 Shrimp)	\$13
Shrimp Dinner (8 Shrimp)	\$13
Baked Tilapia Dinner	\$12
Cod Fish Dinner	\$10
Fish Sandwich ONLY (one Cod filet)	\$5
Kid's Fish Dinner	\$5
Cheese Pizza	\$2
Sides - Apple Sauce, Baked Potato, Cole Slaw, French Fries, Green Beans, Mac 'n Cheese, Tossed Salad	\$2

USE OUR

DRIVE THRU

DRIVE THRU CLOSES @ 7:30!