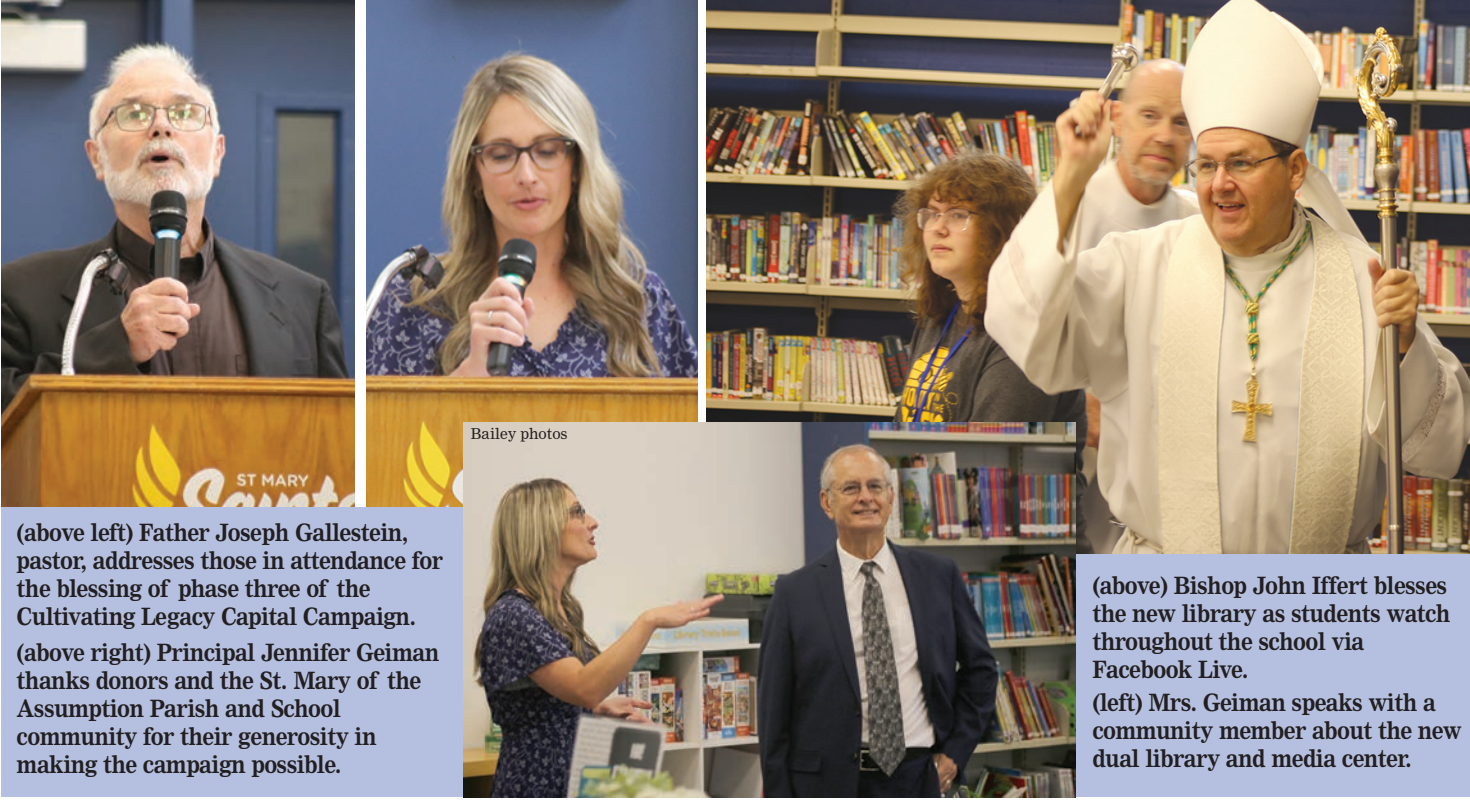


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Missed an edition? Current and back issues of the *Messenger* are available online at covdio.org/messenger.



(above left) Father Joseph Gallestein, pastor, addresses those in attendance for the blessing of phase three of the Cultivating Legacy Capital Campaign. (above right) Principal Jennifer Geiman thanks donors and the St. Mary of the Assumption Parish and School community for their generosity in making the campaign possible.

Bailey photos

(above) Bishop John Iffert blesses the new library as students watch throughout the school via Facebook Live. (left) Mrs. Geiman speaks with a community member about the new dual library and media center.

Alexandria community comes together as Bishop Iffert blesses the final phase of the Cultivating Legacy Capital Campaign

Bella Bailey
Multimedia Correspondent
St. Mary of the Assumption Parish and School, Alexandria, welcomed Bishop John Iffert for the blessing of a new library, STEM and art classrooms, upon the completion of the third and final phase of its Cultivating Legacy Capital Campaign. With three phases, the capital campaign was able to add a new

church elevator, larger church parking lot, four new classrooms and parish center, the expansion of the school cafeteria and the renovation of the old gymnasium into three new classrooms. It was this final piece of the campaign which Bishop Iffert blessed on August 22, surrounded by students, faculty, staff and campaign donors.

(Continued on page 12)



Bailey photos

(left) Bishop John Iffert sprinkles the building and new signs with holy water. (right) Rob Knox, principal, addresses the students of Holy Cross District High School and guests as he welcomes them to the National Blue Ribbon School sign blessing.

New National Blue Ribbon School sign is ‘symbol of the traditions ... beacon to the future’ at Holy Cross District High School

Bella Bailey
Multimedia Correspondent
Holy Cross District High School, Covington, was recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School in 2024, making them one of only 356 schools selected in the 2023-2024 school year. This tremendous accomplishment is now permanently affixed to the face of two buildings on the campus of Holy Cross District High School, serving as a beacon of academic excellence for all who drive

down Church Street. Bishop John Iffert joined the students, faculty and staff of Holy Cross for Mass and a blessing of the new signage. In his blessing of the sign, Bishop Iffert said, “It will be an open invitation to all who pass by it to come inside and hear the good news of Christ, to see through our actions, our witness to Christ and be welcome as members of the Body of Christ.” “For over 100 years,” said Rob Knox, principal of Holy Cross, (Continued on page 12)

After 17 years, diocesan CFO retires — former controller to take over as his successor

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

In 2008, Bishop Roger Foys hired Dale Henson as the Diocese of Covington's Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Now, 17 years later, Mr. Henson will be retiring from the role.

A mandatory position according to the 1983 Code of Canon Law, the financial officer is responsible for the administration of diocesan monetary assets. An important role that Mr. Henson took to well, according to Bishop Foys, allowing Mr. Henson to become a good friend to the retired bishop. "We've carried us through our difficulties, and we've bonded closer," Bishop Foys said at a Curia luncheon celebrating Mr. Henson's retirement.

"Thank you, we're grateful to you," Bishop John Iffert also said, congratulating Mr. Henson on his retirement, "We welcome you back anytime — you are not gone from our lives. We will continue to be connected, and we are very grateful for your service."

Mr. Henson also took the time to thank the bishops and the other Curia staff in turn — saying that when he joined the Curia, he "felt at home immediately. This is where I was supposed to be."

"My mother told me one time that, as she got older and looked back on her life, she saw the hand of God in so many places that pushed her in the direction that she went," Mr. Henson tearfully said. "As I look back over my career, I see the same thing ... so, it's been a pleasure, and,



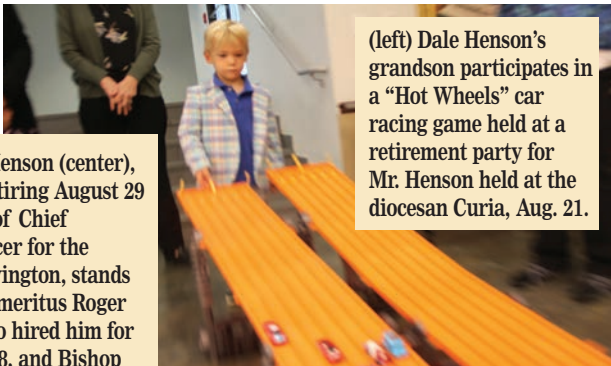
Bob Hagedorn, who will be taking over as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Diocese of Covington. Mr. Hagedorn previously served as the diocese's controller.

Hagedorn told the *Messenger*. "I'm looking forward to working more directly with the pastors and the principals and everything. It (CFO) is a more front-facing position than the back-office position of controller I held previously — and that's scary, but also exciting. I'm looking forward to that and getting to have relationships with all of these people and build trust with them."

as I said to Bishop in my resignation letter, being the CFO has been the honor of my career. I feel very blessed that I could use my talents in this capacity for the Church."

The successor to Mr. Henson's role will be Bob Hagedorn — who previously served in the diocese as the controller under Mr. Henson's leadership.

"I'm very grateful for Dale, of course, because he mentored me basically for eight years," Mr.



(left) Dale Henson's grandson participates in a "Hot Wheels" car racing game held at a retirement party for Mr. Henson held at the diocesan Curia, Aug. 21.

(below) Dale Henson (center), who will be retiring August 29 from the role of Chief Financial Officer for the Diocese of Covington, stands with Bishop Emeritus Roger Foys (left), who hired him for the role in 2008, and Bishop John Iffert.



Baker photos



Keener photo

ACUE solicitors

The Schools Office and Alliance for Catholic Urban Education welcomed solicitors to its annual appeal kickoff breakfast meeting, Aug. 21. Led by appeal chair, Karen Riegler, this year 60 solicitors will reach out asking for support of the 2025-2026 ACUE Annual Appeal. ACUE helps fund the Diocese's five urban elementary schools — Holy Cross Elementary, Latonia; Holy Trinity School, Bellevue; Prince of Peace School, Covington; St. Anthony School, Taylor Mill and St. Augustine School, Covington. "We extend our sincere gratitude to our ACUE solicitors for their unwavering dedication not only to the mission of our urban Catholic schools but also to the children who attend them," said Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Schools. "Every family should have the opportunity to choose a Catholic education for their children and finances should not be a barrier to that choice. The diligent efforts of our solicitors and the substantial contributions received from our generous donors during the ACUE annual appeal are the largest source of support for our urban schools and open the doors for countless children to benefit from an excellent Catholic education."



Keener photos

Our Savior Parish celebrate Sister Janet Bucher

The Our Savior Parish, Covington, community gathered, Aug. 24, to celebrate Divine Providence Sister Janet Bucher. Sister Janet has served the parish as its pastoral administrator for the past 34 years, retiring from that position July 14 of this year. The celebration began with Mass with a reception following. Near the end of Mass, parishioners expressed their gratitude to Sister Janet, especially for her commitment to African American celebrations — such as the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. discussion breakfast and the recognition of Kwanzaa. They presented her with a plaque. Most recently, Sister Janet championed the



dedication of a Kentucky State historical marker recognizing Our Savior School and Parish for being a center of spiritual, educational and civic life during segregation. The Brotherhood Singers, a local a cappella soul and Gospel group with roots at Our Savior Parish and a favorite of Sister Janet's, were in attendance to sing a song. Scan the QR code to watch a short video of the celebration.



Major donors to Restored in Christ capital campaign spend evening with ‘Gargoyles and Gratitude’

Laura Keener
Editor

The “Restored in Christ” Cathedral restoration project began in 2018 when Father Ryan Maher, rector, was taking his dog on her morning walk. There, on the sidewalk, lay a piece of masonry — maybe from a gargoyle, maybe from a chimera, maybe a piece of tracery — that had fallen from the Cathedral.

“He (Father Maher) raised the question, ‘What’s going on with our Cathedral building?’” Bishop John Iffert told the nearly 100 donors, May 22, at the “Gargoyles and

Gratitude” event.

Jim Hess, director, Office of Stewardship and Mission Services, has been leading the “Restored in Christ” \$7 million capital campaign. To thank major donors of the project, Mr. Hess hosted Gargoyles and Gratitude, an evening of small plates and socialization, which included eight special guests — eight of the newly crafted 26 chimeras.

Restoration of the Cathedral began just as the capital campaign began. Due to safety concerns, the deteriorating chimeras, popularly referred to as gargoyles, were removed from the Cathedral roof in March 2023, the same month of the launch of the capital campaign. True to the biblical saying, “The first shall be last,” returning the chimeras to their rooftop home, anticipated for late October or early November, will mark the completion of the restoration project.

The name, details and photo of the Covington Cathedral and its Notre Dame, France, cousin accompanied each of the chimera. Mr. Hess introduced the benefac-

tors to “The Goat,” one of the chimeras on display at the event with an explosive past. In 1985, lightning struck The Goat, and he lost his head. A local craftsman created a replacement head, but in 2015, lightning struck again, rendering The Goat headless until its removal in 2023. To recreate The Goat for the restoration project, artisans at Boston Valley Terra Cotta, New York, modeled it from its French cousin. The other 25 chimera were digitally scanned and recrafted.

“It’s been such a privilege getting to know these chimeras,” said Mr. Hess. “I wanted to, at least, have an evening like this where we could spend some time with these before they’re on top of the Cathedral forever.”

In his comments to the benefactors, Bishop Iffert expressed his gratitude, calling the restoration a very practical project. “It was about safety for people in and around the building, and it was about preserving what had been

(Continued on page 14)



Restored In Christ

The Restored in Christ campaign has raised \$7.31 million for the Cathedral restoration project. Yet, due to rising construction costs and an increase in scope of necessary work, the new goal is \$7.56 million — a gap of \$250k.

Every gift helps. To help close the gap by making a gift to the Restored in Christ campaign visit <https://cov-cathedral.com/restored-in-christ/> or scan the QR code.

Thank you!



RESTORED IN CHRIST

Father Ryan Maher, rector of the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, was joined by Brian Walter and Rob Davis of Trisco Systems for an **update on the Cathedral Restoration Project**. To hear about what the crew on the ground was up to this week scan the QR code.

(Above top) Bishop John Iffert thanks donors for their gift to restore the Cathedral, keeping its message of Jesus’ love firmly alive in the Diocese of Covington.

(above) Jim Hess, director, Stewardship and Mission Services and host of the Gargoyles and Gratitude event share an update on the project.

(above far right) Details on the Pelican In Her Piety chimera show her feeding three baby pelicans in a nest. The pelican symbolizes Jesus our redeemer who is salvation for humanity through his passion and death.

(right) An attendee points to The Goat, a chimera with an explosive past that disproves the saying “lighting never strikes twice.”

(below) Donors get an up-close look at eight of the Cathedral’s restored chimera, learning their names and their French cousins, at the Gargoyles and Gratitude event, Aug. 22



Bishop’s Schedule

- Sept. 1**
Diocesan Curia offices closed in observance of the Labor Day holiday

Sept. 7
Wedding Vespers, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 2 p.m.
- Sept. 9**
Presbyteral Council meeting, 1:30 p.m.
Mass, FIRE Foundation, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 6 p.m.

Celebrity chef comes to diocese to share food and miracles at the table with Knights of Columbus event

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

“Miracles happen all the time at the dinner table.” This quote, attributed to celebrity chef and founder of PlatingGrace.com, Father Leo Patalinghug, is the cornerstone of his ministry — one to be shared within the diocese in an upcoming event held by the Knights of Columbus St. Michael the Archangel Council this September.

“Miracles at the Table” features a special presentation from Father Patalinghug, along with a meal cooked by the priest famous for both his food and his preaching.

At the dinner table, miracles come from “people forming families, values, character — to bonding over shared successes and challenges they’re facing,” said John Carey, the council’s Grand Knight promoting the event. “We are having him in because it dovetails so nicely with his mission ... which is the transformative power of the dinner table conversation, where you have an opportunity to talk about things and to share ideas.”

Father Patalinghug is an “excellent speaker,” according to Mr. Carey, with fellow Knights having seen him speak previously — which served as inspiration for inviting him to come speak.

“This is open to the diocese,” Mr. Carey said, “anyone in the diocese is welcome to come and hear him — and he delivers a great message.”

Hosted at the Receptions hall in Erlanger, on Sept. 10, tickets are available for only \$20 per person — which includes the meal and a cooking demonstration, as well. “It’s a very lively event,” according to Mr. Carey, “and families are welcome.”

Father Leo Patalinghug is a member of a community of consecrated life, Voluntas Dei (The Will of God). He is an award-winning chef, radio and TV host and founder of PlatingGrace.com.



Hope is knowing that God is near and that love will win, pope says

Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

Christian hope is not about avoiding pain and suffering but about knowing that God gives people the strength to persevere and to love even when things go wrong, Pope Leo XIV said.

When Jesus allowed himself to be arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, he showed that “Christian hope is not evasion, but decision,” the pope told thousands of people gathered in the Vatican audience hall Aug. 27 for his weekly general audience.

“The way that Jesus exercised his freedom in the face of death teaches us not to fear suffering, but to persevere in confident trust in God’s providential care,” the pope said in his address to English speakers.

“If we surrender to God’s will and freely give our lives in love for others, the Father’s grace will sustain us in every trial and enable us to bear abundant fruit for the salvation of our brothers and sisters,” he said.

A person of faith, the pope said, does not ask God “to spare us from suffering, but rather to give us the strength to persevere in love, aware that life offered freely for love cannot be taken away by anyone.”

Jesus lived every day of his life as preparation for the “dramatic and sublime hour” of his arrest, his suffering and his death, the pope said. “For this reason, when it arrives, he has the strength not to seek a way of escape. His heart knows well that to lose life for love is not a failure, but rather possesses a mysterious fruitfulness, like a grain of wheat that, falling to the ground, does not remain alone, but dies and becomes fruitful.”

Naturally, Pope Leo said, Jesus “is troubled when faced with a path that seems to lead only to death and to the end. But he is equally persuaded that only a life lost for love, at the end, is ultimately found.”

“This is what true hope consists of: not in trying to avoid pain, but in believing that even in the heart of the most unjust suffering, the seed of new life is hidden,” he said.

After spending more than 90 minutes greeting people in the audience hall, including dozens of newlywed couples, Pope Leo went into St. Peter’s Basilica, where hundreds of people who did not get a place in the hall had been watching the audience and waiting for their turn to see the pope.

The pope thanked them for their patience, which, he said, “is a sign of the presence of the Spirit of God, who is with us. So often in life, we want to receive a response immediately, an immediate solution, and for some reason God makes us wait.”

“But as Jesus himself taught us, we must have that trust that comes from knowing that we are sons and daughters of God and that God always gives us grace,” the pope said. “He doesn’t always take away our pain or suffering, but he tells us that he is close to us.”



CNS photo/Lola Gomez

Pope Leo XIV greets visitors and pilgrims as he arrives in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican for his weekly general audience Aug. 27, 2025.

COMMENTARY

Job’s suffering

Our Scriptures and the words of Jesus challenge some of our familiar adages. We see people suffer and if their actions trouble us, we might say, “You get what you deserve.” Or we say, “What goes around comes around.”

MUSINGS



Sister Fidelis Tracy, C.D.P.

Yet when the crowds see the man born blind and ask what sin he or his parents committed to cause the blindness, Jesus replies that it is neither (John 9:1-3). The situation of blindness is not the result of his parents or himself doing evil, rather it is that God may ultimately be glorified. Both the good and the bad in our lives are meant to lead to the glory of God. When tempted to say about an afflicted person whose deeds are repugnant to us, “Well it was bound to catch up with them,” think again.

We do not earn suffering. We do not earn love. I am always a bit disturbed when Leisle in the Sound of Music sings that finding herself loved must be because of some good that she did somewhere in her youth or childhood. Love is not earned. If it must be earned it is our wage. Love is not earned. It is a gift not a wage. Such an amazing gift can never be deserved. We are loved because we are God’s beloved. We just cannot earn either suffering or love.

The Book of Job intrigues me. The whole narrative begins by emphatically stating that Job is an exemplary human being who can be accused of no evil. Even God declares, “there is none like him on earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil.” (Job 1:7) Yet his suffering is unimaginable. His friends (if you want to call them friends) are certain that he has done evil. No way does a just person suffer. They keep urging him to examine his life to discover what evil he has done. But Job knows that he is innocent. At one point Job wishes he had a lawyer to argue his

case before God. (Job 9:33) Then he thinks better of it. He points out that he is not the only one who is suffering unjustly. He has looked around and seen that the wicked thrive while the faithful are hungry. So many questions arise for him about the supposed order of the universe. In a world where those who cheat and rob are healthy and wealthy while the just and upright are poor and sick, surely something is wrong with the order of things. Sounds as though he has seen the evening news!

And Job wants an explanation. Finally, God appears and in response to the question of suffering, God takes Job for a tour of the universe which is beautiful and essentially well ordered. But there are a couple of surprises, glitches in the order. While all the animals are majestically described, there is one foolish bird who leaves the spectator questioning the wonderful order. It is the ostrich. God notes that she “leaves her eggs to the earth, and lets them be warmed on the ground, forgetting that a foot may crush them and that the wild beast may trample them.” (Job 39:14-15) Yet God has created her and allows her folly to be part of creation.

Then there is the final creature that God sets before Job. The Leviathan (or sea monster) who personifies chaos. God describes the strength and viciousness of this creature. Yet God has put a hook and rope in his nose and leads him around like a toy. (Job 40:25-41:26) Job is invited to see that evil does exist, but God will never let it destroy Job or any of the created world. God has control over the Leviathan.

Evil exists but God can control it, not let it triumph. If God treats chaos and disorder like a toy and assures that it can never triumph should Job doubt God’s protection? Can Job trust God to control evil? Does Job know that God will not allow evil to destroy him. Evil cannot destroy Job’s relationship with God.

Suffering is part of the order of creation. It is not ours to judge those who suffer. Love is a gift of God. Neither love nor suffering are earned. Suffering is mysteriously embedded in the created world. Praise God for all we understand, all that we find as gift and all that we do not understand.

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

St. Gregory the Great

During the 2008–2009 school year I was an eighth-grade student at Mary, Queen of Heaven School in Erlanger, Ky, preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. Something of great significance during that preparation is the Saint’s name the confirmandi choose.

VIEWPOINT



Matt Spencer

As a musician I was very worried about what name I would choose because the only musical saint I knew at the time was St. Cecilia. After reading about numerous saints, I decided on choosing the name “Gregory” in honor of Pope St.

Gregory the Great. For boys, Pope St. Gregory is the typical patron saint of musicians as St. Cecilia is for girls. St. Gregory is the patron of musicians, singers, students and teachers. He is also considered a Doctor of the Church for his significant contributions to theology and doctrine. He is one of the four earliest of the doctors of the Church, the title having been bestowed on him in 1298 by Pope Boniface VII. The Church currently recognizes 38 saints as “Doctors.” In

2025, you may recall St. John Henry Newman was most recently named a Doctor of the Church by Pope Leo XIV. Gregory’s contributions to liturgical reforms were many. The contribution to the Church for which he is best known is codifying the Church’s official music books with Gregorian chant. To us Gregorian chant, to some extent, all sounds the same since we lump it all into one genre. Pope Gregory did something that Vatican II also calls us to, which is inculturation of music. It is believed, based on the biography written by John the Deacon, that Pope Gregory gathered chants from among as many regional traditions as he could manage.

There are many ways to evaluate and determine what music is appropriate for liturgy and every priest, every musician and every person who has an opinion thinks that their method is best. The Church encourages us to evaluate music for liturgy with three judgments: the musical, the liturgical and the pastoral. All of these must be looked at with one overarching judgement — the cultural. Does this music, at this time and place, express the faith of the people who are worshipping?

St. Gregory set the tone of inculturation back in the 600s. It is the responsibility of musicians and priests in 2025 to continue to be good stewards of the Church’s musical heritage but to also adopt new forms of music that the Church may call her own.

Pray for your priests and pray for your musicians who work tirelessly to facilitate worship. Neither job is easy,

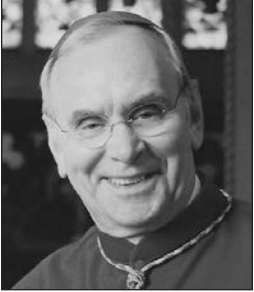
Practical lessons

The readings for the Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time — Cycle C — are: Deuteronomy 4:1–2, 6–8, James 1:17–18, 21b–22, 27 and Mark 7:1–8, 14–15, 21–23.

The Gospel passage for today presents us with two very important lessons which Jesus taught upon attending a dinner at the house of a leader of the Pharisees.

First, Jesus observed how the guests were vying for the places of honor at the table, the places that would have been reserved for the special guests of honor or at least for the more important among them. It gives Jesus

GO AND GLORIFY



Bishop Roger J. Foys, D.D.

the opportunity to present a little lesson on humility. Humility is an often-misunderstood virtue. Sometimes humility is perceived as an opportunity to degrade ourselves, to deny the gifts and talents the Lord has given us, to make ourselves less than we are. This is a negative perception of this virtue, and it is far from the truth. After all, the Lord created us, He gave us life. All that we have and all that we are, the sum total

of our gifts, our achievements, our talents — all these come from God. Ah, and there it is! Humility is not denying who or what we are but realizing that all these gifts come from God.

The pharisees in Jesus’ time were very conscious of the law, of every jot and tittle of the law. They prided themselves (there’s that word — the antithesis of humility — pride) on the fact that they not only knew every aspect of the law but that they scrupulously observed it. Unfortunately, they believed — or at least their actions lead us to believe that they believed — that this justified them. They didn’t need any help from anyone, including the Lord. They were self-made. They deserved the best place at table. They deserved to be held in high esteem because they were better than anyone and everyone else — or so they thought.

They exalted themselves — and what was the response of Jesus to that: “. . . all who exalt themselves will be humbled and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” (Luke 14:11) The lesson: acknowledge that every good gift we have comes from the Lord. We do not need to degrade ourselves, to deny our gifts, our talents — only to realize from whom they come and give God the glory! It is the Lord who saves us, the Lord who justifies us.

Second, Jesus gives his host a little lesson on who ought to be recipients of his generosity. Simply put, don’t invite those or give to those from whom you expect something in return. Give generously to those who cannot return the favor: Give from the heart not looking for or expecting something in return. Don’t give to be recognized or honored. Give because God has given to you. Give as God gives. Share your blessings with others.

Two very practical but important lessons for us. May the Lord give us the grace and fortitude to put them into practice.

Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, D.D. is Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Covington, Ky

but both wish for you to grow in holiness by the beautiful music used in liturgy.

Matt Spencer is associate director of Worship/Music director for St. Gregory the Great Family of Parishes/Guardian Angels Catholic Church, Cincinnati, Ohio; director of the Diocesan Choir, Diocese of Covington; and choir teacher/organist at Covington Latin School, Covington, Ky

Thomas More University to host Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, founder and CEO of Mary’s Meals

Bella Bailey
Multimedia Correspondent
Thomas More University’s Center for Faith, Mission and Catholic Education, Crestview Hills, will be hosting founder and CEO of Mary’s Meals, Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, Sept. 11, 7 p.m. in the Ziegler Auditorium. This event, which is free and open to the public, aims to further the culture of service that Thomas More University instills in its students, said Andrew Cole, director of Campus Ministry.

“It’s an event that characterizes the emphasis of service for the University,” said Mr. Cole, “We’re trying to promote service and demonstrate that to our students.”

Mary’s Meals, named in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, provides school meals to starving and malnourished children in 16 different countries. “It’s all about providing daily meals in places of education for the world’s poorest children. So often, children who are missing their education, they’re missing school, because they are begging, or working or doing what they need to get food,” said Mr. MacFarlane-Barrow in a telephone interview with the *Messenger*.

The company got its start in the early 90s when Mr. MacFarlane-Barrow and his brother were touched by the war waging around Medjugorje, and the refugees effected. Together, they collected local aid and drove four days across Europe to deliver the collected aid. “We felt in a very particular way that Our Lady wanted us to do this,” said Mr. MacFarlane-Barrow.

The mission of Mary’s Meals coincides with that of Thomas More University’s where they ask students of all



Mary’s Meals founder and CEO, Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, stands with a group of children in Tigray. This photo was provided courtesy of Mary’s Meals.

faith backgrounds to examine the ultimate meaning of life, their place in the world and their responsibilities to others.

“The number one goal is to give exposure to our mission as a university, as exemplified in Mary’s Meals and let

the Holy Spirit operate for those who would care to support Mary’s Meals ... It’s so that we can reach our objectives to integrate a culture of service at Thomas More,” said Mr. Cole.

Mr. MacFarlane-Barrow said about the connection between the mission of Mary’s Meals and Thomas More, “I think when we start to share, when we step out of our own comfort zone, we start to discover more fully who we are, who God made us to be, and we understand more deeply the meaning and purpose of our life.”



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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.

Festivals, prayer services, etc. Parishes, schools and Catholic organizations of the Diocese of Covington can now have their event featured on the Diocesan online calendar. Submit your event at <https://covdio.org/calendar/>.

New Beginnings, an 8-week program that provides opportunity to heal for separated and divorced adults, returns to session Tuesdays from Aug. 19 through Oct. 7. For more information or to register, visit <https://covdio.org/new-beginnings-2/>.

Registration is now open for the 2025-26 school year at Notre Dame Urban Education Center, Covington, Early Learning Program (for 4- and 5-year-olds) and Homework Plus Program (Grades K–8). Each program requires a one-time \$100 registration fee, with no additional monthly cost. Programs begin Sept. 2 and run through May 14. For information, call (859) 261-4487, visit NDUEC.org, or e-mail Sister Maria Therese at smtherese@nduec.org. Registration available online at NDUEC.org.

St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas, Seniors, upcoming events: social and game night, Sept. 25; luncheon and speaker, Oct. 21; dinner, Nov. 20. Find more details and online payment link: stthomasnky.org/seniors.

Newport Central Catholic High School 31st Family Fireworks Fest, Aug. 31. Food trucks, drinks, and fun will begin at 5 p.m. and will continue until the Big Blast. (No cans, bottles or coolers permitted.) Admission \$5; to purchase visit <https://gofan.co/app/school/KY6479?activity=Event%20School>. Limited parking passes guaranteeing you a spot on the hill cost \$10, purchase at <https://gofan.co/app/school/KY6479?activity=Event%20School>. Contact (859) 292-0001 ext. 528 or tkrebs@ncchs.com.

Do you have a bike no longer used? Donate it to Pickett’s Corner a ministry of Catholic Charities. Each bike makes a significant difference in the lives of those in need. Pick up available and all repairs are done at Pickett’s Corner. Simply e-mail Pickettscorner23@gmail.com and give your name, address and phone number.

The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization is offering workshops on Books of the Old Testament, presented by Father Timothy Schehr, retired biblical scholar and former professor at Mount St. Mary’s School of Theology at the Athenaeum of Ohio. Workshops are all held Saturday morning, 10–11:30 a.m., Diocese of Covington, Curia Office. 2025 Workshops – Psalms: Sept. 6 – Session 1 and Sept. 13 – Session 2. Isaiah: Nov. 1 – Session 1 and Nov. 15 – Session 2. Cost \$35 per session, cash or checks at the door. Register at covdio.org/bible-workshops.

Bishop John C. Iffert will celebrate Vespers at Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, to honor couples celebrating significant Wedding Anniversaries in 2025. Married couples celebrating their 1st, 25th, 50th, or 60+ Wedding Anniversary in 2025 are invited to a vespers celebration on Sunday, Sept. 7, 2025, at 2:00 pm. Anniversary couples RSVP by July 25, 2025, at covdio.org/wedding-vespers/ or contact Lisa Taylor at 859-392-1533 to register. Reservations are only required for anniversary couples; family members and guests are welcome to attend.

Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, presents: A Heart of Service: Simple Solution to World Hunger, Sept. 11, 7 p.m. in Ziegler Auditorium. “A Heart of Service: Simple Solution to World Hunger,” features Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, founder of the global school-feeding charity Mary’s Meals, alongside Catholic musician Steve Angrisano. This event is free and open to the public; no registration is required.

A Marriage Encounter Experience will be held on Sept. 19–21 at the Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Center in Norwood, OH. Sign up at wwme.org or call Andy and Melanie Reinersman at (859) 653-8464. Learn how to make your marriage better.

St. Thomas School, Ft. Thomas, Boosters golf outing, Sept. 27, Hickory Sticks Golf Club, 1 p.m. Shotgun Start. Register now, stthomasnky.org/golf.

Thomas More University Fall Preview Day, Sept. 27, Academic Center, TMU campus, Crestview Hills. The biggest fall event for college-bound high school students. Preview Day will introduce you to the vibrant academic and campus life that defines the Saints community. RSVP at <https://tmuky.us/preview25>.

On Saturday, Sept. 27, Bishop Brossart Boys Basketball Program will have a Euchre Tournament. Doors open at 5:30 and cards will begin at 7:00. Cost is \$25 if you pre-register by 9/26. Limited walkups may be available. Food included. There will also be a bourbon raffle, basket raffles and split the pots. E-mail bbhsboysbasketballeuchre@gmail.com or call (859) 760-8228. More information available on bmustangs.com website.

New Beginnings is an 8-week program that provides the 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 beginnings. Registration is required. To register, visit <https://covdio.org/new-beginnings-2/> or call (859) 392-1529. Next session will be held on consecutive Thursdays, Oct. 2–Dec. 4, 7–8:30 p.m. at Catholic Charities, Covington.

Notre Dame Urban Education Center, Covington, needs volunteers for its Education Center’s Early Learning Program. As a volunteer, you’ll be an extra set of hands to help with learning activities, guide little ones through their routines, and bring joy and encouragement to each day. Contact Brandi at (859) 630-9475 or blenihan@nduec.org for information.



Line workers prove the motto ‘Any storm, anytime, anywhere’ At Prince of Peace School, Covington, 7th and 8th grade students hoist and lower the American flag every school day. On the first week of school, a 7th grader was hoisting the flag for the first time. Nearby line workers saw him struggle, came to his aide and together they raised the flag.

Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, California, stagette, Sept. 28, doors open at 12:30 p.m.; bingo starts at 2 p.m.

Adult Spirituality Institute is once again presenting four separate sets of four classes with Father Tim Schehr, Father Jeffry Kemper and Msgr. Bill Cleves. Classes are throughout the school year and run for four consecutive Mondays per topic. First class begins on Oct. 6 at 10 a.m. at Mount St. Mary Seminary, Bartlet Center, on Beechmont Avenue and features Father Schehr on Praying with the Psalms. Cost is \$40 for four classes. Contact Adult Spirituality Institute at (515) 231-2223, ext 143 or <http://www.spirituality-institute.com> for additional information or to register.

Brady Webb, webmaster of the Catechetical Institute at Franciscan University, will present a hands-on workshop exploring Franciscan University’s Catechetical Institute’s website, Oct. 25, 9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Thomas More University’s Steigerwald Hall, Saints Center, Crestview Hills. This training is for everyone using the CI Website for learning the Catholic faith. Register by October 15, 2025, at covdio.org/register/. Questions? Contact Isaak A. Isaak at iisaak@covdio.org or (859) 392-1529.

An informative workshop on updates and resources on the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults/Children (OCIA/OCIC) will be presented by Dr. William Keimig, deputy director, Catechetical Institute at Franciscan University, Nov. 8, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Thomas More University’s Ziegler Auditorium, Academic Center. Register by Oct. 29, at covdio.org/register/. Questions? Contact Isaak A. Isaak at iisaak@covdio.org or (859) 392-1529.

The St. Henry High School Craft Show will be held Oct. 18, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. at the Athletic Complex in Florence. Local craftsmen display unique handmade items in many different mediums. Purchase raffle tickets on exciting themed gift baskets. There is a \$5 admission fee for adults. All proceeds support student activities at St. Henry District High School. Overflow parking is at Boone County High School.



Pre-school/Kindergarten transitional students at St. Paul School, Florence, smile during their first week back to school.

Parish festivals		
Aug. 30–Sept. 1 St. Cecilia Parish, Independence	Sept. 12–13 St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger	Sept. 21 St. Matthew, Kenton
Sept. 5–7 St. Patrick Parish, Maysville	Sept. 19–20 St. Benedict Parish, Covington	Sept. 26-27 St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright
Sept. 6–7 St. Anthony Parish, Taylor Mill	Sept. 19–21 St. Timothy Parish, Union	

Interests of workers to be protected by the State — part 4 of a 4-part series

Rev. Msgr. Gerald E. Twaddell, D.Phil., KCHS
Contributor

Once Pope Leo XIII had laid out the duties and responsibilities of employers, employees and the State he emphasized the foundations of his teachings in the dignity of the human person, and the importance of the social dimension of the persons needing to be affirmed.

1. The interests of the worker’s soul. Life on earth is not the final purpose for which a person is created. This life is only a means to attain truth and love goodness. It is in the soul, created in the image and likeness of God, that lies the sovereignty to rule and make use of creatures for the person’s advantage. All human beings are equal: there is no difference between rich and poor; ruler and ruled. “No man may with impunity outrage that human dignity which God Himself treats with great reverence, nor stand in the way of that higher life which is the preparation of the eternal life of heaven. Nay, more: no man has in this matter power over himself.” No person, then, has the right to consent to treatment incompatible with his human dignity. No one can yield his soul to servitude because what is at stake is not just human rights, but the sacred and inviolable rights of God. (§ 40)

a. The obligation to refrain from work on Sundays and certain holy days is not about idleness, and less still about spending money, especially for mere indulgences. It is a time to be hallowed by religion.

b. Rest together with religious observances allows the person to leave aside the tasks of daily life, opening a space to dwell on heavenly matters, and the worship due to God. (§ 41)

2. The Interests of the material life of the person.

Employees need to be kept safe from the cruelty of greedy employers who would treat them as no more than tools for money-making. It is neither just nor human to grind workers down by excessive labor that stupefies the mind and wears out the body.

a. Daily labor must not be extended longer than strength admits. How many and how long the periods of rest should be will depend on the nature and circumstances of time and place of the work. Consider, for instance, the particular demands of tasks such as mining or quarrying that call for shorter hours in proportion to the strain of the work and its effects on health. The season of the year also should be taken into account. Further what is suitable for a stronger person is not suitable for a weaker person. Particular care must be taken when the workers are children. The general rule for all is that workers ought to have leisure and rest proportionate to the wear and tear on their bodies and the rest needed to restore them.

b. Contracts between employers and employees must allow proper rest for soul and body. Anything less is a violation of what is right and just, contravening the duties a person has to God and to self.

c. Wages, according to liberal thought, are strictly a matter of free consent, so that as long as the employer pays what was agreed upon and the employee does the work specified there can be no other question of injustice. If one or other fails to fulfill their part of the contract, the public authority could intervene to correct the matter. Beyond that there can be no justification for action. (§43)

This notion, however, is incomplete because it leaves important considerations out of account. A person undertakes work to procure what is necessary for different activities of life, especially self-preservation. For that reason, labor has two aspects. First, it is personal since the energy used comes from the very person and is the exclusive property of the one who works. Such strength is given to the person by God. Secondly, work is necessary since without it the person cannot live, and natural law requires human beings to preserve their own life.

Even if these two aspects can be thought of separately, in reality they cannot be divided. Hence, it would be a crime for a worker to contract for a salary less than that needed to preserve life. (§ 44) Consequently, the natural law dictates that any free agreement must at minimum ensure that the wages will be sufficient to support a frugal, modest wage-earner. An agreement for anything less, extorted by force or fear by the employer, is unjust.

The same goes for excessive work hours or unhealthy work conditions, though these would be better addressed by



OSV News/Mihoko Owada, Catholic Standard photo

A family prays during Mass at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington. In his encyclical “Rerum Novarum” Pope Leo XIII writes that “The obligation to refrain from work on Sundays and certain holy days is ... a time to be hallowed by religion. Rest together with religious observances allows the person to leave aside the tasks of daily life, opening a space to dwell on heavenly matters, and the worship due to God.” (§ 41)

societies or boards that will be seen shortly; but, if necessary, the State should be called upon for its sanction and protection. (§ 45) Extending this line of argument, natural law urges, since marriage is a natural right of every person, that wages should be sufficient for the worker to support a family and even to put aside some savings for the future. Laws should therefore favor ownership of property and encourage as many workers as possible to become owners. (§ 46)

Excellent outcomes can be expected if these provisions are enacted. First, property will become more evenly divided. Civil changes and revolutions have divided people into two classes, one holding power over the whole of labor; trade, and sources of supply because of its wealth, giving it also major influence over the government, the other made up of the needy, powerless majority, always at the mercy of efforts to launch an uprising. This can be avoided if working people have a realistic hope for a share in the land.

A second consequence would be greater abundance of the fruits of the earth since people would be more eager to work the land they own. A third benefit is that people would have a greater desire to remain in the country of their birth that assures them a decent and happy life. These advantages suppose that people’s means not be drained by excessive taxation. (§ 47)

d. Associations and other organizations can also assist employees and employers in providing aid to those in distress. These include societies for mutual help, benevolent foundations created to provide for workers, their widows and children in case of some calamity, illness, or even death. (§ 46) Most important are workers’ unions. The artisans’ guilds of earlier times demonstrated the advantages that could be obtained from such association. In the present age, unions, adapted to the needs of more educated people, different habits and demands of daily life can supply similar benefits. It is desirable that they become more numerous and more efficient. (§ 49)

Scripture instructs us that: “A brother that is helped by a brother is like a strong city.” (Proverbs 18:19) This is the impulse that binds people together in civil society; it is also the motive that leads them to join in subordinate, but real, independent societies. (§ 50) Civil society exists for the common good, being concerned with the interests of all, and so is called a “public society.” But “private societies” have as their purpose plainly the advantage of their members, within, but not including all members of, the public society. As part of the commonwealth, they cannot be absolutely prohibited by the public authority.

The State must protect private societies, because to try to suppress or forbid their existence contradicts the very principle on which the existence of the State itself rests. (§ 51) Of course, if people join together to pursue unlawful purposes, the State may justly dissolve them, provided precautions are taken to avoid violating rights of persons by unreasonable regulations. “Laws only bind when they are in accordance with right reason, and, hence, with the eternal law of God.” (§ 52)

Private societies in the Church such as confraternities and religious orders should be independent of State control. However, in many places “State authorities have laid violent hands on these communities ...have taken away their rights

to corporate bodies and despoiled them of their property.” “Catholic societies, however peaceful and useful, are hampered in every way, whereas the utmost liberty is conceded to individuals whose purposes are at once hurtful to religion and dangerous to the commonwealth.” (§53)

Associations of workers are more numerous than in the past, but there is evidence that many are led secretly by persons whose principles are at odds with Christian beliefs. These organizers seek to command the whole field of labor and force Christians to choose between joining them or starving. In the face of such coercion, Christians must form their own associations and unite “to shake off courageously the yoke of so unrighteous and intolerable an oppression.” (§54)

Many Catholics have organized groups to better the conditions of families and individuals by infusing a spirit of equity in the mutual relations of employees and employers, to keep the precepts of

duty and the Gospel before their eyes, to inculcate self-restraint, and to establish harmony among divergent interests and classes in the body politic. Some have promoted mutual action to assist people in finding suitable employment. Others have used their wealth to found organizations to create insurance societies for workers. “The State should watch over these societies of citizens banded together in accordance with their rights, but it should not thrust itself into their peculiar concerns and their organization.” (§ 55)

Such societies also have the right to have rules and structures best suited to their purposes. (§ 56) The most important purpose is the true betterment of the members, beginning by helping them fulfill the duties of religion and morality. (§ 57) Next, their organization should foster harmonious interactions, with the offices arranged with clear responsibilities so that no member should suffer any harm. Further, common funds must be administered with strict honesty. Careful consideration and explicit expression must be given to the mutual rights and duties of employers and employees, so that if anyone has a complaint the dispute may be settled according to the rules of the society. Another purpose that must be addressed is the provision of “a continuous supply of work at all times and seasons.” Finally, a fund should be established from which members may be helped in their needs, whether of accident, illness, old age, or distress. (§ 58)

Pope Leo XIII expressed his conviction that if people would obey these rules and regulations that all the prosperity of society would result because the experience of the transformations that came about from the earliest ages of the Church through the centuries put to rest the criticisms and complaints that originally were made against Christianity. (§ 59) If workers will form such associations and pursue policies that contribute to the common good, even people whose prejudices and greed lead them to object will finally be won over when they see that the workers prefer “right dealing to mere lucre, and the sacredness of duty to every other consideration.” (§ 60) The pope even sees in these associations and unions rooted in Christian principles a hope to bring back those who had given up on religion to support and defend them. These associations should offer them “a haven where they may securely find repose.” (§ 61)

The remainder of the encyclical urges the bishops to take up the task of announcing the principles, duties, rights, and interests laid out in its pages not only to the rulers of commonwealths, but also to employers and employees (§ 63) as the way to bring the power of Christian charity to bear in combating the evils of recent times as the “surest antidote against worldly pride and immoderate love of self.” (§ 64)

As we listen to Pope Leo XIV address the same issues about workers and all the connected topics that are presented in “Rerum Novarum” we will hear substantially the same ideas. These are as timely as they were in 1891, or when Benedict XV celebrated the 40th anniversary with “Quadragesimo Anno,” and Pope St. John Paul II with “Laborem Exercens,” in 1981, as well as the hundredth anniversary encyclical “Centesimus Annus” in 1991. We look forward to the contributions that Pope Leo XIV will make to the application of Catholic Social Teaching during his pontificate.



Brother Abraham Reeder makes first vows

(above left) After a year of discernment as a novice at St. Vincent Archabbey, Abraham Reeder, now Brother Abraham, of Park Hills made first or simple profession of monastic vows on July 10 before Archabbot Martin de Porres Bartel, O.S.B., in the Archabbey Basilica, Latrobe, Penn. To become solemnly professed, Brother Abraham will spend three years discerning as a junior monk before being considered for vows for life. Brother Abraham attended Thomas More College and Franciscan University, from which he graduated in 2024 with a degree in theology. His parents (above right) are Michael and Kelly Reeder.

Vatican official warns of AI’s hidden costs to environment, work and society

Sarah Mac Donald
OSV News

Bishop Paul Tighe, a top official at the Vatican’s Dicastery for Culture and Education, is urging caution on artificial intelligence — warning that its hidden environmental costs, impact on jobs and broader social risks can’t be overlooked.

Speaking at a European theology congress in Dublin Aug. 23, Bishop Tighe, who is the secretary of the dicastery, highlighted AI isn’t the silver bullet — it comes with a price, starting with the environment.

Bishop Tighe highlighted more attention needs to be paid to the “actual environmental cost of AI” as he warned against “techno optimism” promoting AI as the means of tackling the environmental crisis.

Speaking to OSV News after his address, “Theology and Mission in an Age of Artificial Intelligence” to the Congress of the European Society for Catholic Theology at Trinity College, the Irish prelate said that “addressing climate change requires a human response and a change in our patterns of consumption and use.”

He said American professor of theology Noreen Herzfeld had drawn his attention to the fact that cloud technology “is not a metaphysical reality.”

“The cloud is wires, power, a huge energy consumption, so that AI itself has a very significant cost in terms of energy, in terms of water to cool the plants, and even in the use of some raw materials extracted from very vulnerable parts of our world. We need to be attentive to the actual environmental cost of AI itself.”

He told the gathering of theologians from across Europe that while the industry admitted that AI would result in reduced employment, insufficient attention was being paid to the commercial inequalities which are likely to emerge as AI becomes more pervasive and the social cost of fewer people in work.

“My concern is that a lot of people are saying there will be significant loss of employment. They say don’t worry about that because AI will generate such wealth that we will be able to share that wealth and give people benefits without them having to work,” he told OSV News. “But that is a very unilateral way of thinking about work.”

Work in Catholic tradition — and beyond it — Bishop Tighe said, is a “place where we find meaning, purpose, identity and value to express our dignity and creativity. I would be concerned that something could be lost there.”

Diocesan daughter among 10 celebrating 25 years as Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia

Staff report

Sister Maria Fidelis Gray, O.P., celebrated her Silver Jubilee, July 13. She was one of 10 Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia celebrating 25 years of religious profession.

A native of Ft. Wright, Ky., Sister Maria Fidelis is the daughter of Tevis and Theresa Gray, also of Ft. Wright. Sister Maria Fidelis made her first profession of vows on August 10, 2000. She has served in both teaching and administrative roles at schools in Nashville, Tenn.; North Beach, Md.; Denver, Col.; Carmel, Ind.; and Providence, R.I. Additionally, Sister served as Coordinator of Villagio Betania Retreat House in Bracciano, Italy. Sister Maria Fidelis is currently teaching second grade at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School in Kennesaw, Ga.



Sister Maria Fidelis Gray, O.P.

In 1860, the Congregation of Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia was established in Nashville, where its Motherhouse is located. The Sisters of St. Cecilia are dedicated to the apostolate of Catholic education. The community of over 300 sisters serves in 55 schools throughout the United States and abroad, with mission houses in Sydney and Melbourne, Australia; Vancouver, British Columbia; Rome and Bracciano, Italy;

Elgin, Scotland; Sittard, The Netherlands, and Limerick, Ireland. For more information on the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation, visit www.nashville.dominican.org.

Another factor he highlighted is that traditionally, work for many people is “the primary place of socialization, where you grow and learn with others in a community.” AI and digitalization, he underlined, are contributing to the fracturing of working relationships; people no longer have a job but a task and compete with others to do that task.

According to Bishop Tighe, who was ordained for the Archdiocese of Dublin in 1983, AI and the social issues that it gives rise to — will be a priority for Pope Leo XIV.

“He has very clearly put it at the top of the agenda in terms of his choice of name and the link with ‘Rerum Novarum,’ and he explicitly said that reading the signs of the times this is something that we need to engage with,” the bishop said.

He added that pontiff’s training as a mathematician gave him a feeling and a competence for these types of issues.

He revealed in his address that a dialogue between the tech companies and the Vatican has been taking place on

AI and other technological developments.

AI, he said, is forcing us to ask questions about the meaning and purpose of life, about the value of life, about where we want to go as a society, and what society is.

Bishop Tighe told OSV News that the dialogue with tech companies has been “intensifying” and that “an element of trust has emerged which means that people know we are trying to search together for the best outcomes and for the best possibilities. In that context, the trust itself permits a more open dialogue.”

There is “still a commitment and a desire to have that conversation” which has involved Vatican departments such as the Pontifical Academy for Life, the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, and the Dicastery for Culture and Education.

“But there hasn’t been a cohesive Vatican approach. I think it would be very helpful if Pope Leo were in a position to put a structure there for engagement internally and with external stakeholders.”

2025 DPAA a resounding success — \$270,000 in grants allocated to diocesan and community ministries at August reception

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

The 2025 Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal (DPAA) celebrated its conclusion, Aug. 21, in Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington, with a reception where more than \$270,000 dollars were allocated to diocesan and community ministries in grants.

Jeff Jehn, who served as the general chair for the 2025 DPAA, noted the success of this year’s campaign — with total numbers at \$3.98 million as of Aug. 20, which is around three percent over the amount raised at this time last year, according to Mr. Jehn.

Overall, this impressive total comes from 6,617 donors throughout the diocese — and 39 out of 53 parishes have met or exceeded their goal. Funds collected over the goal go

back directly to the parishes to serve parish needs. And, Mr. Jehn said, “I know in the coming days, more and more parishes will meet and exceed their goals. So, we’ve done very well — and it is wonderful not to only be part of this program, but also to watch the fruits of this program be disseminated.”

Lisa Knochelmann, who was the campaign’s leadership gifts chair, also comments on the DPAA’s “tremendous” success this year: “Truly, what a blessing,” said Mrs. Knochelmann, “My personal involvement with the DPAA this year has been eye opening and inspiring. At each ministry fair; I had the privilege of meeting representatives from missionary ministries and agencies supported through the appeal — their passion and commitment made me realize just how impactful this work truly is. This

evening, approximately 60 agencies will be receiving grants. What a remarkable testament to the generosity of his community.”

“People pitching in to help others when they have a need,” Bishop John Iffert spoke to attendees towards the end of the reception, “this, for me, is what it’s all about. Especially when we do that in the name Christ — well, then, my heart just sings! It’s great to distribute these checks and know that there are folks, both in some of our Catholic associations and parishes and schools and agencies, and in our community organizations, who are going to do good things for neighbors. We want to express a vote of confidence in you. This is where grace is manifest in our community.”

For a list of grants distributed, see page 11.



(above left) Jim Hess, who leads the Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal as the director of the Office of Stewardship and Mission, greets attendees to the 2025 grant allocation reception with a smile.

(left) Guests — most of whom represent organizations that benefit from the DPAA — pause for prayer to open the evening’s reception.

(above center) Lisa Knochelmann, who served this year’s DPAA as the leadership gifts chair, accepts a gift of appreciation from Bishop John Iffert. This upcoming year, Mrs. Knochelman will be stepping up as the general chair of the 2026 DPAA.

(above right) The Catholic Newman Center, which provides on-campus support, community and resources at Northern Kentucky University, was one of the beneficiaries of the 2025 DPAA grants. Deacon Brian Cox accepted the grant on the center’s behalf, throwing up a “Norse Up” signal which references the university’s Viking mascot.



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Check out the diocesan calendar online now
at <https://covdio.org/calendar/> to keep up
with what's happening in the Diocese of Covington!

2025 DPAA GRANT ALLOCATIONS

Organization	Grant Amount	Purpose
Action Ministries, Covington	\$ 5,000	Food for general and school programs
Care Closet, Newport	3,000	Diaper assistance program
Care Net Pregnancy	2,500	French-speaking translator
Catholic Charities, Covington	18,000	Enhance/expand school-based mental health program
Community Care of Mason County	5,000	Residential help for those in Mason County
Covington Latin School, Covington	4,000	Transportation for students to attend extra-curricular activities
Cristo Rey Parish, Florence	2,000	Food and clothing for growing number of immigrants
Diocesan Catholic Children's Home, Ft. Mitchell	7,500	Guardian Angel School specialized, trauma-informed academic support
Divine Mercy Parish, Bellevue		
/St. Bernard Parish, Dayton	9,000	Daycare, youth and young adult ministries
Emergency Shelter of NKY, Covington	10,000	Winter cold shelter program/shelter beds year round
Faith Community Pharmacy patients	9,000	Rural outreach RX program/delivery to 300+
Fiesta, Covington	5,000	General operations and Latino food distribution
FIRE Foundation of NKY	7,500	Diocesan Inclusive Education director
Harrison County Food Pantry	4,500	Purchase food to disperse weekly to families in need
Holy Cross District High School, Latonia	5,000	Spanish instructor/technology upgrades
Holy Cross Elementary School, Latonia	2,500	Music, art, literature and physical fitness classes
Holy Cross Parish, Latonia	5,000	Youth Minister, Communications Director, altar cloths
Holy Trinity School, Bellevue	3,500	Trained medical staff
ION Center for Violence Prevention (formerly WCC)	2,500	Green Dot and My Space prevention and training programs
Licking Valley Community Action Program	4,000	Tote Program emergency services (rent, fire, utilities)
Life Learning Center, Covington	1,000	Graduation celebration event
Madonna House of NKY, Ft. Mitchell	2,000	Replace old windows and screens
Mary Rose Mission, Florence	2,000	Bike program — tools and parts to fix bikes
Mary, Queen of Heaven School, Erlanger	5,000	Security cameras
Newport Central Catholic High School	2,000	Retreat programs
NKU Catholic Newman Center, Wilder	8,000	SEEK 26 Conference — 20+ students
Notre Dame Urban Education Center, Covington	1,000	Family Support program
Our Savior Parish, Covington	5,000	General operating expenses
Parish Kitchen, Covington	10,000	Food costs
Rose Garden Mission, Covington	3,000	RX for the poor — free medicine
St. Ann Mission, Covington	4,000	Treasures On Earth food pantry
St. Anthony School, Taylor Mill	3,000	Security upgrades
St. Augustine Parish, Augusta	5,500	General operating expense-utility & payroll costs
St. Augustine Parish, Covington	4,500	Upgrade school classrooms
St. Augustine School, Covington	3,500	Part-time art, music, life skills and healthy living teacher
St. Bernard Parish Food Pantry, Dayton	10,000	Utilities and maintenance
St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Ft. Thomas	4,000	Catechesis of the Good Shepherd/ Totus Tuus programs
St. Catherine of Siena School, Ft. Thomas	3,500	Pre-school
St. Edward Mission, Owenton	5,000	Replace lights in parish
St. James Parish, Brooksville	5,000	General operating expenses
St. John the Evangelist Parish, Carrollton	5,000	Hispanic ministry parish CCD program
St. John the Evangelist Parish, Covington	3,000	Enhance Mass experience for youth and adults
St. Joseph Academy, Walton	5,000	Replace outside glass doors with safe doors
St. Joseph Parish, Warsaw	4,000	Mold removal from parish hall
St. Patrick Parish, Maysville	3,000	Youth Ministry program
St. Patrick School, Maysville	5,000	Art program and field trips
St. Philip School, Melbourne	5,000	IT teacher, music/art teacher
St. Therese School, Southgate	1,000	Sensory items
St. Vincent de Paul Society, Bracken County	2,000	Freezer shelves
St. Vincent de Paul Society, NKY	5,000	Rent and utility assistance program
Sts. Boniface & James Church, Ludlow	5,000	Maintaining church building spiritual enhancements
Sts. Peter & Paul School, California	3,000	Sufficient, qualified staff/general operating expense
The Angelico Project	3,000	Speakers, candlelight Masses, operations for young adults
Thomas More University, Crestview Hills	8,000	Life and dignity of the person programs
Welcome House, Covington	3,500	Government certificates and bus passes, food pantry
Diocesan Youth Ministry	8,000	TEC retreat/Youth Ministry service day
TOTAL	\$ 270,000	

Pope to inaugurate Borgo Laudato Si’ during Season of Creation

Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

Two months after celebrating a new Mass “for the care of creation,” Pope Leo XIV will return to Castel Gandolfo to formally inaugurate Borgo Laudato Si’, a place of education, ecology and spirituality in the papal summer estate.

Famed tenor Andrea Bocelli and his son Matteo will sing during the late afternoon prayer service Sept. 5, the Laudato Si’ Center for Higher Education announced Aug. 25.

The prayer service and inauguration of the center take place during the ecumenical Season of Creation, a time of Christian prayer and commitment that runs from Sept. 1 through the Oct. 4 feast of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of ecology.

Borgo Laudato Si’ is dedicated to living out the vision of Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical, “Laudato Si’, on care for our common home,” an effort that he said must combine care for the earth with care for the poor.

In his own message for the Sept. 1 World Day of Prayer for Creation, Pope Leo wrote that for Christians, care of creation is “a duty born of faith, since the universe reflects the face of Jesus Christ, in whom all things were created and redeemed.”

“In a world where the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters are the first to suffer the devastating effects of climate change, deforestation and pollution, care for creation becomes an expression of our faith and humanity,” Pope Leo wrote. “Now is the time to follow words with deeds.”

Pope Leo celebrated Mass in the gardens at the papal estate July 9, using the new for-


mulary or prayers for Mass “for the care of creation.”

“The mission of safeguarding creation, of bringing peace and reconciliation” is “the mission which the Lord has entrusted to us,” Pope Leo said in his homily. “We listen to the cry of the earth, we listen to the cry of the poor, because this cry has reached the heart of God. Our indignation is his indignation; our work is his work.”

The Borgo Laudato Si’ press statement described the project’s mission as creating a model “where the care of creation and the defense of human dignity — especially for the most vulnerable — are not only taught but lived, rooted in the Gospel and open to all.”

The Borgo houses the Laudato Si’ Higher Education Center, which offers training in hospitality, livestock care, gardening and the processing of agricultural products. The courses are specifically designed for people living in vulnerable situations: migrants, refugees, unaccompanied minors, women victims of abuse, unemployed young and middle-aged people, people with special skills and former detainees, the center’s website said.

“Spread across 135 acres, the property includes historic gardens, villas, monuments and archeological sites, alongside farmland and new areas for education, organic farming and regenerative cultivation,” the center said. “It is a unique setting where spirituality, education and sustainability come together, offering an open and welcoming space for formation, prayer, reflection and deeper communion with God and creation.”



“There can be no separate Church for persons with disabilities. We are one flock that follows a single shepherd.”

Come Join Us!

A MASS OF BELONGING


September 9, 2025
6:00 p.m.
Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption

Bishop Iffert will preside over a special Mass to create a sense of belonging in our diocese, parishes and Catholic schools for those with learning differences and disabilities. Family ice cream social to follow.

Representatives from FIRE Foundation of Northern Kentucky will be in attendance. FIRE’s mission is to champion the inclusion of students with disabilities in Catholic schools by providing educational resources, fundraising and promoting a culture of belonging.

Questions or to request specific accommodations, email info@FIREfoundationNKY.org

FIREFoundationNKY.org



facebook.com/firefoundationnky

Bishop Iffert blesses the final phase of the Cultivating Legacy Capital Campaign

(Continued from page 1)

“Through these things,” said Father Joseph Gallestein, pastor of St. Mary Parish, “the Gospel would be proclaimed, the faith would be taught, the sacraments would be celebrated and the people of God would grow more like Christ himself in humility and in service.”

The campaign, launched in 2019, raised a total of \$6,380,000 from 971 unique donors. Throughout the Cultivating Legacy Capital Campaign, the parish incurred no debt, said Brett Ruschman, campaign co-chair and has no money left to raise. Something that, he says, is a true testament to the dedication of the parishioners and friends of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish and School.

“Whether your contribution was large or small, financial or spiritual, we couldn’t have done it without you. This was a team effort in the truest sense, and we are very hum-

bled by the outpouring of that support,” said Jennifer Geiman, principal, to those gathered in the newly renovated space.

She continued saying, “Our students now have access to a brand-new junior high science lab, inspiring art room and a spacious STEM and media center. These beautiful new spaces are more than just classrooms, but launch pads for imagination, discovery and growth. They are a true legacy built by our parish community that will serve generations to come.”

It is not about the physical spaces built as a result of the Cultivating Legacy Capital Campaign, said Mr. Ruschman, but rather, “it’s about vision, perseverance and faith. It’s about creating something that will serve not just us but generations to come. That’s what cultivating legacy truly

means.”

A sentiment echoed by Bishop Iffert, “The fact that you were able to accomplish all this is because so many people looked at the children in this school and saw them as Christ, saw them as one deserving of love, as those who needed to be loved and cared for and honored and respected — images of Christ.”

“Today is so much more than about dedicating this space,” said Father Gallestein, “...it is about community, family, and above all, faith. All of our working together, guided by the Holy Spirit, willing to say yes to the Spirit’s prompting, has made great things happen; in the far distant past, in the more recent past, today and in the days to come.”

Beacon to the future’ at Holy Cross District High School

(Continued from page 1)

“Holy Cross has stood for the opportunity of urban Catholic education in the Diocese of Covington. Holy Cross, I am beyond proud to say, received its blue-ribbon award as an exemplary achievement gap closing school.”

The recognition of being an exemplary achievement gap closing school sets apart Holy Cross as not only a model of secondary education, but one that meets students where they are and helps them rise above.

This achievement, says Mr. Knox, means that “we live up to our philosophy of being a place for all. We pride ourselves on the achievement and success of our students that some in society believe should succeed less. But we believe, with faith-filled hearts, that every student who walks through our doors deserves the best Catholic education we can give them.”

In his remarks, Bishop Iffert recalled a paper he wrote regarding the true value of a university education; howev-

er, the remarks remain true for the work of Holy Cross High School.

“To really know the value of a university education, you have to look at where the students coming in are and what they’ve managed to gain in those four or five years that they spend in university,” said Bishop Iffert.

He continued saying, “Holy Cross is carrying a vision that is so important to me, to know that schools help people achieve, help people overcome educational obstacles, and help them move from grade-level parity to a grade level ahead, that’s the goal.”

Mr. Knox highlighted that not only is this achievement the work of those students in the 2023-2024 school year, but it is the work also of all those who came before, “the

Blue Ribbon is a testament to our past, our present, but most importantly, our future, a future thriving, a Holy Cross community where students and families from all walks of life receive a world-class education, a call to be faithful servants and messengers of God, and a place they can call home.”

“These beautiful signs,” Mr. Knox continued saying, “are a symbol of the traditions of excellence at Holy Cross, but also a beacon to the future of our school and community.”



Bailey photo

Students clap at the conclusion of the event dedicating the new signs.

Covington Diocese Blue Ribbon Schools

Twenty Catholic schools in the Diocese of Covington have been designated National Blue Ribbon Schools. They are:	Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills 1996, 2012, 2019	St. Pius X School, Edgewood 2001, 2015
Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence	St. Agnes School, Ft. Wright 2009	St. Therese School, Southgate 2022
Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria 2018	St. Cecilia School, Independence 2018	St. Thomas School, Ft. Thomas 2006, 2019
Blessed Sacrament School, Ft. Mitchell 1994, 2007, 2015, 2021	St. Henry District High School, Erlanger 2012, 2021	Villa Madonna Academy Elementary, Villa Hills 2007, 2017, 2023
Covington Catholic High School, Park Hills 2007, 2016	St. Henry Elementary School, Elsmere 2016	Villa Madonna Academy High School/Jr. High, Villa Hills 2002, 2003, 2020
Covington Latin School, Covington 2003	St. Joseph School, Cold Spring 2018	National Blue Ribbon School Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing
Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Burlington 2006, 2018	St. Joseph School, Crescent Springs 2006, 2017	Holy Cross District High School, Covington 2024
	St. Mary School, Alexandria 2016	
	St. Paul School, Florence 2014	

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Protecting God’s Children for Adults Safe Environment Trainings

For all employees and volunteers of the Diocese of Covington who in any way provide a safe environment for children.

Step 1: Contact parish/school institution leader to review the Policies and Procedures and fill out the Application and Acceptance Forms.

Step 2: Go to www.virtus.org and click on Registration. Follow the prompts to create an account and to request a background check. Selection.com is a secure site; the background check is posted on your account and you receive a copy if you request it during the registration process. You will sign up for a VIRTUS training class during the registration.

Step 3: Your account becomes active when your background check, VIRTUS session and Acceptance Form are posted on your account. You will receive 12 bulletins per year. You will receive e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletins:
■ August bulletin: posted Sunday, Aug. 3; due Tuesday, Sept. 2.
Sept. bulletin: posts Sunday, Sept. 7; due Tuesday, Oct. 7
The monthly e-mail reminder of a new bulletin posted will come from system@pub.virtus.org.
www.virtusonline.org, enter your user id and password.
If your account is suspended

contact your primary location where you volunteer or are employed. Your primary location contact information is found under your Contact Tab.

VIRTUS Training:
■ Wednesday, Sept. 11, 9 –11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
■ Wednesday, Sept. 11, 6 –8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
■ Monday, Sept. 29, 9 –11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

■ Monday, Sept. 29, 6 –8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
■ Thursday, Oct. 9, 9 –11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
■ Thursday, Oct. 9, 6 –8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
■ Tuesday, Oct. 14, 6:30 –8 p.m., Diocesan Catholic Children’s Home, Miller Building Training Room, Ft. Mitchell
■ Wednesday, Oct. 22, 9 –11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

■ Wednesday, Oct. 22, 6 –8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
■ Tuesday, Nov. 11, 9 –11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
■ Tuesday, Nov. 11, 6 –8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
■ Thursday, Nov. 20, 9 –11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
■ Thursday, Nov. 20, 6 –8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

Note: If your Training Tab is missing or you cannot access your account, contact your parish, school or institution.
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Eucharist and charity: The traits that unite Pope Leo’s first saints

Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

Pope Leo XIV will preside over his first canonization Mass Sept. 7, declaring the sainthood of two young Italians whose devotion to the Eucharist nourished a deep involvement in the cultures of their day.

Pier Giorgio Frassati was born April 6, 1901, in Turin and died there July 4, 1925, of polio at the age of 24. Carlo Acutis was born to Italian parents May 3, 1991, in London and died in Monza, Italy, Oct. 12, 2006, of leukemia at the age of 15.

Pope Francis had been scheduled to canonize Blessed Acutis in April during the Jubilee of Adolescents and to canonize Blessed Frassati in early August during the Jubilee of Young Adults.

While Christine Wohar, founder and executive director of FrassatiUSA, initially was disappointed that the canonizations were delayed, she told Catholic News Service that Pope Leo declaring them saints at a Mass apart from the jubilees also sends a message.

Their lives “are not really a message for just teenagers or young adults. They are a message for every Catholic,” she said. “You do not have to be 15 or 24, you just have to be somebody who is serious about living your Catholic faith.”

For Father Primo Soldi, a Turin priest and author of a biography of Frassati, the two young men are united by “a deep faith firmly tied to real life who arrived at the perfection of Gospel living, that is, they lived faith, hope and charity and the other cardinal virtues in a heroic way.”

“Just think about how both of them lived the ordeal of their illnesses and death — like saints: Carlo with the joy and faith with which he faced his treatment and Pier Giorgio with the patience with which he endured the agony of those few days” between the onset of symptoms and his death, Father Soldi told CNS.

Frassati and Acutis both had a deep devotion to the Eucharist and went to Mass every day.

In 1905, just four years after Frassati was born, St. Pius X published the decree “Sacra Tridentina Synodus,” encouraging frequent, even daily reception of the sacrament at a time when many Catholics received only a few times a year.

One of his Jesuit high school teachers encouraged him to go to Mass each day, receive the Eucharist and spend time in adoration.

For Frassati, Father Soldi said, it was not simply Eucharistic devotion but the entryway into a real relationship with Jesus and, as Frassati himself said, one that became the nourishment he relied on as he helped the poor, discerned the path of his life and became involved in politics and the struggle against the growth of fascism in Italy.

The same could be said for Acutis, who is well known for the database on global Eucharistic miracles he compiled as a young tech-savvy student.

Cardinal Agostino Vallini, Pope Francis’ delegate at Acutis’ beatification in 2000, said the young man’s strength came from “having a personal, intimate and deep relationship with Jesus,” one in which the Eucharist was “the loftiest moment.”

Acutis “never withdrew into himself but was able to understand the needs of people, in whom he saw the face of Christ,” the cardinal said at his beatification. His was “a



CNS file photo/Carol Glatz

Images of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati appear beside and on his tomb at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Turin, Italy, in this file photo from February 2006. Alongside Blessed Carlo Acutis, Blessed Frassati will be canonized on Sept. 7.

luminous life offered completely to others as Eucharistic bread.”

Prayer and service to others went hand in hand for both Frassati and Acutis. Both also endured teasing and misunderstanding because of their devotion but gently challenged their peers to embrace faith.

Living a little bit longer and in the tumultuous period between World War I and the rise of fascism in Italy, Frassati had more time to prepare for his vocation — he wanted to be a mining engineer and work with miners, who were among the poorest workers in the region.

He was born when Pope Leo XIII was pope and he studied “Rerum Novarum,” the encyclical published in 1891 that launched Catholic social teaching and focused particularly on the rights of poor workers. And Frassati joined the Italian Popular Party, founded by Father Luigi Sturzo and based on Catholic social principles.

“What gave him a humanity that was so rich, alive, complete, full and happy ultimately was Jesus,” Carlo Tabellini, a 38-year-old lawyer in Turin and member of the Pier Giorgio Frassati Cultural Center, told CNS.

When Pope Leo XIV celebrated Mass with a million people attending the Jubilee of Young Adults Aug. 3, he urged them to follow Jesus and do something great with their lives, improving themselves and the world.

“Let us remain united to him, let us remain in his friendship, always, cultivating it through prayer, adoration, Eucharistic Communion, frequent confession and generous charity following the examples of Blessed Piergiorgio Frassati and Blessed Carlo Acutis who will soon be declared saints,” the pope said.

‘Gargoyles and Gratitude’

(Continued from page 3)

handed on to us, preserving that built tradition,” he said.

Bishop Iffert pointed out that the Cathedral restoration project also has a very spiritual significance, in preserving “that witness to the faith.”

Visting Covington’s Cathedral, he said, is usually listed second on many lists of “Things to Do in Greater Cincinnati,” just behind attending a Bengals or Reds game, depending on the season. And in a very real and awesome way, the Cathedral is “proclaiming the message of Jesus and His love for you. That’s why it’s so important that we preserve this building. It’s so important that this witness be preserved,” he said.

“When you walk into our Cathedral Church, two things happen. First, you are inspired and enthused ... your very posture begins to turn you toward the eschaton, the last things, the aim and goal of life. And all around you, in stone and in stained glass, are the stories of the Scriptures, the stories of the saints, the stories of the Councils, the stories of our Jewish forebears, the stories of those who’ve gone before us, trusting in God. It is a catechism in light ... It’s necessary to preserve this and to hand it on for generations so that they know of the love of Christ, that the faith of the apostles is planted firmly in the Bluegrass state, and what generations have handed on to us, we now have a responsibility to hand on to others.”

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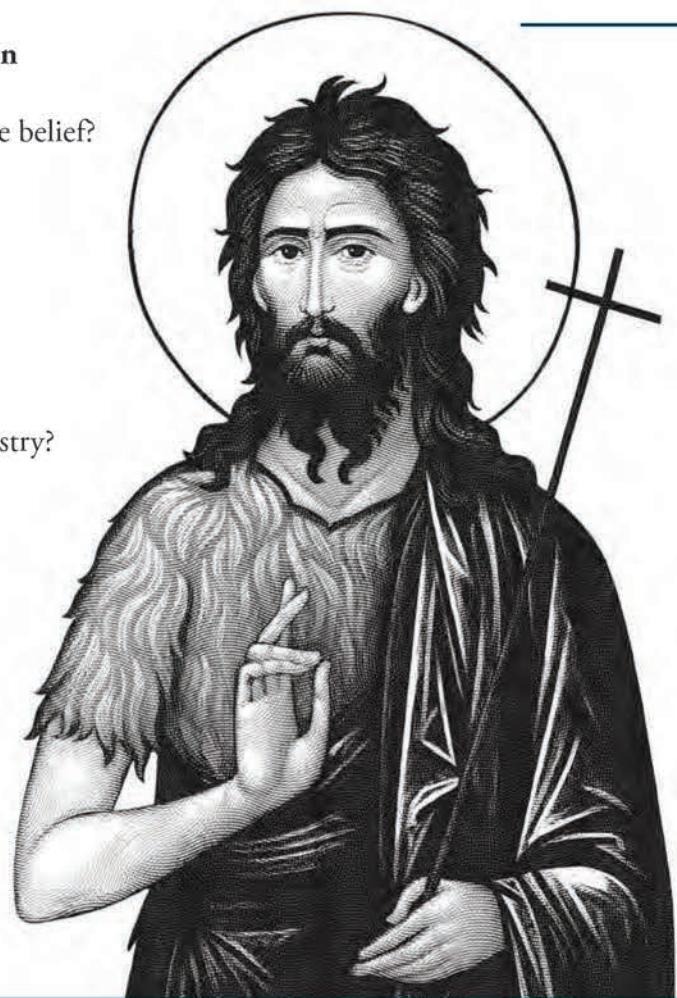
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