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(above top) A recent tradition of the Seminary Ball, Bishop John Iffert asks questions to seminarians provided by the ball's guests. Seminarian Will Fuller (center) smiles as he answers one of these questions.

(above left) Seminarian Evan Callahan smiles in front of the Seminary Ball photo wall with family members.

(above right) Concluding the evening, guests of the Seminary Ball dance to music played live by the Mix Band. Student volunteers from Thomas More University and the Northern Kentucky University Newman Center took to the dance floor among other couples, young and old.

(right) Guests of the 2025 Seminary Ball partake in conversation, food and drink during the cocktail hour at the beginning of the evening.

(bottom right) A sign reading "You were chosen! We are praying for you!" is displayed on the walls at the 2025 Seminary Ball. These signs were drawn and designed by diocesan grade school students preparing for their Confirmation and First Communion.

This year's Seminary Ball video follows the soon to be ordained Father Joshua Heskamp in the days leading up to and following his ordination. It is a powerful message of God's grace working in Father Heskamp as he answers God's call to the priesthood. Scan the QR code to watch.



Seminary Ball invites diocese to ‘come together and pray’ for an evening in support of seminarians

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

Perhaps the most important fundraiser in support of the Diocese of Covington's seminarians, the Seminary Ball, was held Oct. 17, among a record crowd of nearly 700 guests — all present in support of seminarian education.

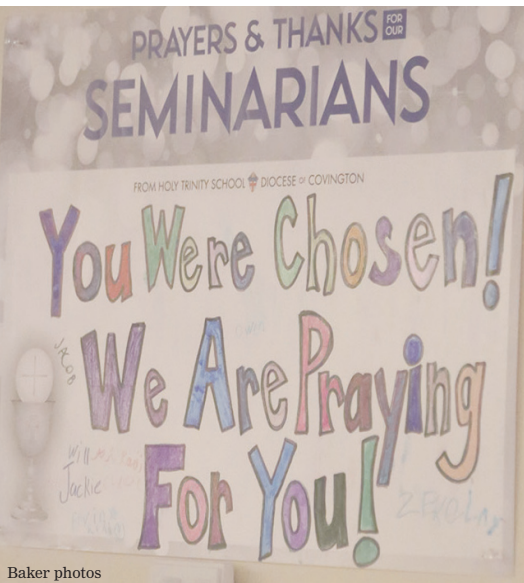
The Diocese of Covington currently supports six young men in priestly formation, who attend seminary thanks to the Seminarian Education Fund, which the ball directly supports.

The evening, held this year at the

Receptions event center in Erlanger, included a cocktail hour to string music, a program including a “Q&A” with the seminarians and the premiere of a new video promoting vocations through the lens of Father Joshua Heskamp's ordination last year; and a conclusion of music and dancing.

Jim Hess, director of the Office of Stewardship and Mission Services, which plans the Seminary Ball, thanked those in attendance for their support of seminarians, saying that through sponsors alone

(Continued on page 11)



Baker photos

Father Ryan Maher invites congregation to ‘ponder’ the love of oneself in the Lord at annual Pro-Life Mass

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

In commemoration of Respect Life Month, celebrated yearly in October, the Diocese of Covington celebrated its annual Pro-life Mass, Oct. 14, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington.

The Mass was celebrated by Bishop John Iffert and concelebrated by various priests from across the diocese — Father Ryan Maher, the Cathedral’s rector, was this year’s homilist, with a different priest chosen each year.

Recalling an experience he had at a recent priest retreat, Father Maher invited the congregation to ponder. Sharing the example of the Annunciation, he commented on “how Mary shares with us the way to ponder — to be in awe of God’s goodness, the grace, the identity of who we are.”

“Mary spent her whole life pondering,” Father Maher said, “the mysteries of her son’s life as they happen in real time ... Luke says at the very end of that little passage (depicting the Annunciation) that Mary, returning to Nazareth, treasured all these things in her heart. That’s what is means to ponder God’s goodness, to treasure in our heart, to keep it alive every day ... to spend time pondering with the Lord.”

“There are lots of things that keep us from ponder,” he continued, “Distractions, the endless livestreaming, scrolling, noise — those things keep us from pondering with the Lord.”

Father Maher said, “At this holy Mass, we give thanks to God for the gift of life, beginning with our own life. When Jesus gave the command to love, he said, ‘Love one another as you love yourself.’”

Father Maher asked those gathered if they ponder the words of that command, or if they live each day without “pondering the love of oneself in the Lord, and what that means.”

He listed the “many threats” against the gift of life in today’s world, including abortion, assisted suicide, politi-

(right) Bishop John Iffert accepts offertory gifts from students. The white and blue vestments worn by priests during the Pro-life Mass represent innocence and Marian ties. The Blessed Mother as a patroness of the pro-life movement is derived from the Annunciation, where she said “Yes” to God’s plan for her, despite the unplanned pregnancy and motherhood of Christ.

(below left) Father Ryan Maher, rector of the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption and homilist at the 2025 Pro-life Mass, addresses the congregation.

(below center) A statue of Mary, dressed as Our Lady of Guadalupe, sits among flowers on the sanctuary during the 2025 Pro-life Mass.

(below right) Prior to Mass, a young man and young woman join for a rosary prayed in respect of all human life.



cal violence and the ill treatment of immigrants, refugees, prisoners, the elderly and those with disabilities — all things that “erode the gift of human life.”

“We are all meant to be holy,” said Father Maher, “and that is our call. And there is only one who is holy — God. Any holiness is derived from him and flows back to him through those who love him. We are what we are in the eyes of God.”

Quoting St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Father Maher remarked that “if every baptized person could say with Mother Teresa, ‘I am what I am in the eyes of God, I know

who I am before God’ — if every baptized person received the healing graces the Lord desires for the heart, there would be less violence in the world. There would be less hatred in the world. There would be less assaults against the gift of human life in the world.”

“Today,” he said, “We pray for that grace. We pray that we look into our own hearts ... We ask Mary, our mother, to accompany us. To help us to learn how to treasure the things of our daily lives, the movements of grace, the sufferings, the difficulties, the joys — to ponder them, to be in awe of what the Lord is doing.”

Cemeteries connect all members of the Church, living and the dead

Laura Keener
Editor

Bishop John Iffert led prayer services, Oct. 18 and 19, at four diocesan cemeteries — St. John Cemetery and St. Mary Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell; St. Stephen Cemetery, Ft. Thomas and the priests’ cemetery — at St. Pius Cemetery, Erlanger.

In his homily, Bishop Iffert emphasized the purpose and importance of burying the dead on consecrated ground.

“Unlike Hollywood, we don’t bury on consecrated ground to try to preserve our dead from vampires or anything like that ... we bury on consecrated ground to call the Church together to pray for those who have gone before us,” Bishop Iffert said.

The Church, Bishop Iffert said, “includes those who have died, includes those who are saints in heaven and live in the presence of God, it includes those who have died and might be suffering in that stage that we call purgatory.

(Continued on page 4)



As part of this year’s cemetery visitations, about 25 people joined Bishop John Iffert, Oct. 19, at the priests’ cemetery — St. Pius X Seminary Cemetery, Erlanger — for evening prayer.

Seminary Education Fund allows seminarians to focus on discernment, not finances

Bella Bailey
Multimedia Correspondent

“I think it’s one of the best things we do,” said Father Conor Kunath, vocations director for the Diocese of Covington, about the Seminary Education Fund. The fund directly supports the formation of seminarians in the Diocese of Covington, helping them focus solely on discernment without the stress of financial strain.

There is an annual collection weekend for the Seminarian Education Fund, this year it is October 25-26; however the fund takes donations all year.



Currently, the Diocese of Covington has six men in seminary formation. One is in the second year of his configuration stage, two are in the discipleship stage and three are in their first year of formation — the propaedeutic year.

The propaedeutic year of seminary formation was introduced widely across the United States for the 2023-2024 school year after the Vatican identified an issue. “Young Catholic men aren’t as well formed coming out of

high school and college as they had been in past generations,” said Father Kunath.

The Diocese of Covington has three seminarians studying in their propaedeutic year: Aaron Batson, Mother of God Parish, Covington; Evan Callahan, Sts. Peter and Paul, California; and Evan Ihrig, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Burlington.

“The idea of the propaedeutic year was to set aside a whole year in which guys could do intensive, human formation work. It’s more like a yearlong retreat that they go on where they’re really focused on deep self-reflection and deep human and spiritual formation,” explained Father Kunath.

Those in the propaedeutic year take almost no classes for credits, the whole year is set aside for personal and spiritual formation, ensuring that the seminarians are prepared for the “discipleship stage,” of seminary.

This stage, following the propaedeutic year, is where, “they’re going to enter more seriously into the intellectual formation that they need to do philosophy. You’re going to continue going on the stuff you did in the propaedeutic year, lots of human formation, a lot of spiritual formation

in there as well,” said Father Kunath.

Two of the six seminarians for the Diocese of Covington are in the discipleship stage: William Fuller, Holy Cross Parish, Latonia, is in his second year of the discipleship stage, and Joseph O’Bryan, Immaculate Heart of Mary, is in his first year of this stage. During this point in formation, the seminarians will typically study to receive a college degree, in turn the discipleship stage will take 3-4 years to complete.

Following the discipleship stage is the configuration stage. Where a seminarian will do 3.5 years of study and formation before being ordained a deacon and ministering at a parish for the final six months.

In this stage, “your discernment is going to move from, ‘Am I called to be in seminary to Am I called to be ordained,’” said Father Kunath. “Now we have to give you the practical skills that you need for ministry as a priest in the diocese. How to be a confessor, how to do some level of parish administration. You’re also able to dive deeply into the theological life of the Church,” he said. The Diocese has one seminarian in the configuration stage, Michael Schulte, St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood, is in his second year of configuration.

The Seminary Education Fund raises money in support of all the seminarians in formation for the Diocese of Covington. “It’s an expensive ministry that we have,” said Father Kunath. “It really does show just how much we as a diocese love our seminarians and love our priests and I don’t think that you can really put a value on that.”

Father Kunath installed as pastor of Sts. Boniface and James Parish in centuries old tradition

Bella Bailey
Multimedia Correspondent

Father Conor Kunath was officially installed pastor at Sts. Boniface and James Church, Ludlow, October 19, after two years of ministry as parochial administrator. Bishop John Iffert installed Father Kunath to his pastorate during a Mass celebrating the Rite of Instillation of a Pastor.

This rite has roots in the early fourth-century Church where the Latin verb “installare” can be found in the medieval apostolic constitution. However, the formal, liturgical rite was not formalized until the sixteenth-century Council of Trent. Now, the rite is practiced according to the modern Roman Missal.

Many pastors choose not to participate in the formal Rite of Instillation of a Pastor, as the Code of Canon Law 527 outlines that a pastor’s responsibilities begin, “from the moment he takes possession.” However, Father Kunath welcomed the opportunity to celebrate the beginning of his pastorate with the parish.

“I have wanted to be a priest since I was seven years old,” said Father Kunath. “I looked forward to days exactly like this. I prayed for the people I would minister to my entire life.”

and three months of which as pastor, Father Kunath said, “I got here and I got to meet this wonderful parish here in Ludlow ... a place that I can truly call my own, a place where my flock lives. So, it has been one of the greatest blessings of my life that I get to be your pastor here.”



(above) Father Conor Kunath renews the promises he made at his priestly ordination.

(left) Father Kunath incenses the ambo where he, “will proclaim Christ the way, the truth and the life, in this way feeding the faithful of Christ from the table of his word,” said Bishop Iffert as part of the Rite of Installation of a Pastor




As part of the rite of installation, Bishop Iffert said to Father Kunath, “remember to always be a loving father; a gentle shepherd, and a wise teacher of your people, so that you may lead them to Christ who will strengthen all that you do.”

Together, Bishop Iffert and Father Kunath processed from the altar to each of the sacramental stations of the Church, where Father Kunath will confer to his parishioners the sacraments of the Catholic faith. The baptismal font, confessional, ambo, presidential chair and tabernacle were all incensed by Father Kunath, blessing them ahead of his pastoral ministry.

In a parting message to Father Kunath at the conclusion of Mass, Bishop Iffert said, “If you continue to carry with you the openness and standard of Christ wherever you go, I’m confident that will be your experience.”

Reflecting on his time already spent at Sts. Boniface and James, two years of which were as pastoral administrator



Bishop’s Schedule

Nov. 1	Return from Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to Rome	Nov. 4	The Center for Faith, Mission and Catholic Education team, Thomas More University, 11:30 a.m.
Nov. 2	Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 5:30 p.m.		Parish Council meeting, Cristo Rey Parish, Florence, 3 p.m.
Nov. 3	Confirmation, St. Agnes Parish, Ft. Wright, 7 p.m.		Confirmation, St. Therese Parish, Southgate, 7 p.m.

Cathedral Concert Series

The Cathedral Concert Series is pleased to announce the opening of its 49th season. **On Sunday, Oct. 26, 3 p.m.,** Musica Sacra Cincinnati celebrates their 60th season and with Haydn’s “*Harmoniemesse*” and a world premier choral piece.

The pristine acoustics of the Cathedral Basilica, along with its inspiring gothic architecture and sacred art, provide lovers of music and the arts an opportunity to hear large-scale sacred choral music in the setting for which it was intended.

All Cathedral Concerts are open to the public with no admission charge.

Freewill offerings gladly accepted. Visit www.cathedralconcertseries.org for information on this concert and the current season.



Cemeteries connect all members of the Church, living and the dead

(Continued from page 2)



“It’s a very comforting belief to know that in our prayers and in our sacrifices we can assist them (those in purgatory) and we can urge them on,” Bishop Iffert said. “Perhaps through our prayers they might receive some comfort. Perhaps through our prayers they might receive some encouragement. Perhaps through our prayers they might receive even entry into the kingdom of God.

“So, it’s very important. These cemeteries connect us to all the members of the Church who have gone before us. They remind us of our duty to pray for them and to hold them with honor in our hearts.”

As part of the annual cemetery visitation, (above) at each cemetery Bishop Iffert sprinkles attendees with holy water and (above, right) offers them a blessing.

(right) At St. Stephen Cemetery, Ft. Thomas, Bishop Iffert reads the names of loved ones buried there in the last 12 months. The reading of names was repeated at St. John Cemetery and St. Mary Cemetery both in Ft. Mitchell.



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Atheism, idolatry and the remedy of radical humility

The readings for the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time — Cycle C — are: Sirach 35:12–14, 16–18, 2 Timothy 4:6–8, 16–18 and Luke 18:9–14.

One rarely hears much anymore about the “New Atheists”, or from other professional atheists in the public square. Given the relative silence of this previously influential contingent, it would be lovely to think they were successfully rebutted by the arguments for faith in Jesus Christ and defeated by the evidence supplied by lives of faith. While such arguments are not absent and such lives are present among us, I sense that atheism has largely triumphed, at least, socially, as the lingua franca of cultural life. In other words, their ideas were successful, and public opinion simply absorbed their notions as the default norm.

This gives us an opportunity to properly examine the true nature of atheism. Contrary to the common understanding, atheism is not simply a rejection of belief in God or the idea of God. Upon closer examination, one can see that atheism is a form of idolatry, of self-sufficiency, and a radical belief in oneself and in one’s own power to make oneself “good.” We see this phenomenon illustrated in the figure of the Pharisee when he prays, ostensibly to God, but really to himself: “O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity — greedy, dishonest, adulterous — or even like this tax collector.”

This is what one strain of atheistic idolatry looks like—praying to a god we have made in our own image and likeness. As the late Pope Benedict XVI noted in his deeply insightful book, *Jesus of Nazareth*:

“At the heart of all temptations . . . is the act of pushing God aside because we perceive him as secondary, if not actually superfluous and annoying in comparison with all the apparently far more urgent matters that fill our lives. Constructing a world by our own lights, without reference to God, building on our own foundation; refusing to acknowledge the reality of anything beyond the political and material, while setting God aside as an illusion — that is the temptation that threatens us in many varied forms.”

Jesus is beckoning us to recognize the reality that even believers can be tempted to the corruption of atheistic-idolatry, even as they call on the name of the Lord in prayer and worship. We treat God as secondary, ourselves as first. We construct a god that suits our purposes and we end up worshiping the false gods of politics and material pursuits, which is to say, worshiping ourselves under various guises. In our age where materialism is regnant in every sphere of life, and deeply influences our understanding of the human person, this temptation is ever-present.

What then is the remedy to this powerful and often subtle temptation? Radical humility and an awareness of our poverty of spirit. As the Holy Gospel teaches, “for whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.” Humility does not come easily to us, as self-will and a refusal to acknowledge our relationship of dependence on God and others is a consequence of original sin, intensified by our personal sins. That is why we pray in the opening collect of the Holy Mass, “make us love what You command.” Left to our own devices, living according to our lights, we tend to “love” only what we want. If our wants are untutored by Gospel truth and untouched by grace, we end up in a state of unbelief and idolatry.

When we allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to us our

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This is really good — thanks to God’s gifts and your hands

Every Sunday, my parents host “dinner” after Mass. It’s a tradition that my grandparents started and my mom and dad have continued. It brings everyone together — my mom and dad, my sister’s family and ours — to

enjoy a hearty home-cooked meal and uninterrupted time together. They take care of everything. No commitments of bringing a side dish or dessert. They won’t even let us help with the dishes when it’s all said and done.

Although they won’t admit it, my parents make a fantastic cooking team. Dinners are never fancy, just homecooked favorites like meatloaf and mashed

potatoes, pulled pork or spaghetti and meatballs. But, every meal is so good. As such, it’s a much-anticipated event, complete with running bets on what’s for dinner as we make the drive to New Richmond.

The other element we’ve come to expect is my youngest daughter’s gratitude for the meal and the effort that goes into it. Every week, right after grace and as we all take that first bite, Nora says, “Thank you Pappy and Grandma for making this. This is really good.” She’s been saying this for as long as we can remember. That simple acknowledgement sets the tone for the dinner time conversation. She’s right — we are all truly grateful for that skillfully prepared meal and the deep love that made it. Now, we can eat.

We just wrapped up the end of our fiscal year at St. Vincent de Paul. As I look back, I am overcome with grat-

The hillsides inspire awe during car trips in October and November. Majestic colors call out the message that letting go is beautiful. The lush green of the spring leaves is past. It is replaced with a new glorious array of color: Life goes on. The scene changes but beauty remains. A new beauty, a different feast for our eyes, but beauty just the same.

Even as the colors delight, they remind us that soon the trees will be bare. The colors are a final call to see the glory of nature before all is barren. The hours of sunlight decrease. Night and darkness move into our lives.

The hummingbirds are gone. Cooler air refreshes as I disappointingly look for them to come to the feeder. Every season has an appeal. Fall’s appeal is the call to let go. I must let the hummingbirds go to warmer climates if I am to enjoy them again next year. The leaves are giving a last blast of beauty as they prepare to become the source of fertile ground for a new season. The new season with its beauty cannot come until the old is allowed to become fertilizer for the new.

The longed-for independence of adulthood requires us to let go of the carefree days of childhood. We move from infancy to taking care of some of our own needs — to feed ourselves and move to the objects we desire. We grow from listening to loving parents as they read fairy tales to exploring the adventures of Dick and Jane (or so they were in my first readers) on our own. As we mature, we take on greater responsibilities. But each stage involves letting go of the carefree stage that preceded it. How dull life would be if we were not letting go and moving to

itude for all the people who came together and ultimately shared so much hope with thousands of neighbors who were navigating significant challenges. Although they would never admit it, there are many heroes who have been part of this movement of love and compassion for our neighbors in need:

Our material donors who share gently used items that fill our thrift stores, giving those we serve — at no cost — the dignity of choice in a time when so much feels out of their control. Sales of these items to other customers help fund essentials like beds, food, and shelter, expanding their impact well beyond the stores.

Our financial supporters who give joyfully and generously. These gifts provide funds for the resources we can offer to our neighbors in their times of crisis. These gifts enable SVdP to provide a menu of basic needs, things that we may take for granted. Our Vincentians can draw upon these resources when visiting with a friend struggling to make ends meet.

Our volunteers who field calls on our help line, work in our food pantries, staff our special events, help with material donations, and offer their professional expertise when it comes to running a business. Each task and every hour that is dedicated to service make our ministry possible.

Our Vincentians who have made the commitment to grow closer to Christ through service to our neighbors in need. Vincentians share their time, their life experiences, and their love for Christ as they visit with those in need of hope for a brighter future.

I often describe our Vincentians as a “humble bunch.” I think this is true of everyone I’ve met through my experience at St. Vincent de Paul. Not one of our supporters, our volunteers or Vincentians would ever describe themselves as anything other than ordinary. But, in that, there is beauty. The work we do is not complicated, but it takes

(Continued on page 12)

Autumn leaves

greater and greater maturity.

Discipleship, like every adventure in life, involves letting go. The first apostles let go of their nets and boats as they followed Jesus. Matthew left behind the tax collector role. A mature disciple is active, takes risks for the Gospel, follows Jesus both when he feeds the hungry and when he suffers because his ministry is rejected. Ministry sometimes is greeted with gratitude and praise. But it is also criticized. Only the one who ministers even when there is no acclaim can be a true disciple. Like the leaves in autumn, ministry is a precarious pursuit.

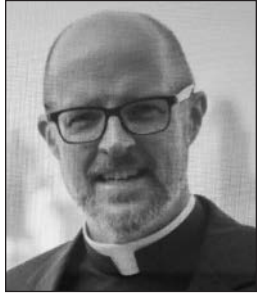
The climate changes with the seasons. Sometimes it is hard to appreciate the dying aspect of the life cycle — the moments when there is darkness. There is a time when life is about forgiving hurts, accepting the failure of our efforts, finding no consolation in prayer. There is a time to let go of the need for success and acclamation. This is the autumn time — the time to let go, to provide the fertile ground for something we do not see and cannot foresee. Resurrection only follows the dying. The falling leaves teach us to let go.

I wonder how hard it will be to let go hurts, to respond to the call to forgive, to be patient with the slowness of healing. Do the leaves teach me beauty can only remain if I accept hardship, barren times, failure, death?

Autumn is a reminder that there is much to let fall from our lives if we are to experience the other seasons. Winter will have its role. Spring will be beautiful because it will have received the fallen leaves. Autumn calls us to have a light grasp on all the gifts we are experiencing, all the successes we are glad to celebrate, all the lightness and joy. Embrace all of life and be ready to let go of each moment and receive the call of the next moment. There are times to let go of success and acclamation and times to let go of failure and hurt. Autumn is always calling. I hear the call of autumn and ask what it is I need to allow to fall away.

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

GO AND GLORIFY



Father Phillip DeVos

VIEWPOINT



Karen Zengel

MUSINGS



Sister Fidelis Tracy, C.D.P.

Pilgrims ready to depart seek spiritual renewal and hope in Rome



Bailey photos

Bella Bailey
Multimedia Correspondent

As part of the 2025 Jubilee Year, Pilgrims of Hope, a record-breaking number of Catholic faithful have flocked to Rome, in fulfillment of that titular pilgrimage. Joining them will be Bishop John Iffert along with more than 70 pilgrims from the Diocese of Covington, who will travel to Rome, October 22-30.



The Diocese of Covington’s representative group is seeking that which many pilgrims before them have sought, a deepening of their faith with Christ and a time of spiritual growth and renewal.

“A pilgrimage to me is, you’re doing it to become closer to the Lord, you’re doing it so that you can deepen your faith. The entire trip is spiritually oriented,” said pilgrim Marybeth Bosko, parishioner at St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger.

Greg Herzog, also a St. Barbara Parish parishioner, echoed Ms. Bosko’s sentiment saying, “It’s a spiritual journey. It’s not just to travel and see buildings ... but it’s to see everything that you’ve been taught your whole life.”

Brother and sister duo, Michael and Christina Weller, parishioners of St. Augustine Parish, Covington, are the youngest pilgrims of the group at just 23 and 20 years old. However, the pair felt a calling to visit Rome during the Jubilee year.

“I’ve never been out of the country before. I feel like going to the epicenter of Catholicism seems like a good first start,” said Ms. Weller. Her brother followed up, “I think it’s an opportunity to capitalize on my faith, to learn more to deepen it. I felt called,” Mr. Weller said.

Each of these four pilgrims is involved in the Church at the parish level. Ms. Bosko is a volunteer Vincentian, co-director of St. Barbara’s Walking with Purpose chapter, and a member of the Diocesan Pastoral Council and Northern Kenton County Deanery. Mr. Herzog attends Mass regularly and participates actively as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. The Wellers

are OCIA instructors for teenagers, Ms. Weller participates in the churches women’s group and Mr. Weller helps plan retreats for seniors at Holy Cross District High School, Covington.

The four pilgrims each share the hope that the opportunity for spiritual renewal in Rome will help them to better live out their mission of evangelization at their parishes and in the Diocese.

“I’m hoping that this pilgrimage will give me a broader perspective and recognize the need to spread the love of Christ. It goes even beyond just me and what I do here. It’s necessary all over the world, it’s a calling from all over the world,” said Ms. Bosko, “Let that grace pour into me, into us, so that as I’m going out, I’ll be able to pour more of that grace into whatever it is that I’m doing.”

Mr. Herzog said, “I think this pilgrimage will kind of help that and open my horizons, open my eyes a little bit more, to be more compassionate, to see other people and give them hope and inspiration.”

“People are converting to Catholicism because they appreciate the tradition of it all. I feel like understanding on a deeper level the tradition and where it all started would only further help,” said Ms. Weller.

The theme of the 2025 Jubilee Year, Pilgrims of Hope, is modeled after the theological virtue of hope, which for Bishop John Iffert is, “a radical trust in God. It’s a gift from God to be able to trust that God has a future for me,” he said.

For Ms. Bosko, “focusing on the pilgrimage as a pilgrim of hope is extremely uplifting. I want to come out of that with a stronger hope in our faith, a faith-based hope,” she said.

All those traveling with Bishop Iffert to Rome will pursue through their spiritual renewal a faith-based hope in the Lord, as they travel as Pilgrims of Hope.



(above top) Bishop Job Iffert addresses the group of pilgrims at their final information meeting prior to departure, October 15.

(above) Michael and Christina Weller listen to Bishop Iffert and Jim Hess, director, Office of Stewardship and Mission Services, as they review travel itineraries and instructions.



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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/>.

Notre Dame Urban Education Center, Covington, needs volunteer tutors for its Education Center’s Homework Plus Program (Grades K-8). Contact Brandi at (859) 630-9475 or blenihan@nduec.org.

St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood, is hosting a Pro-Life Resources Fair, Oct. 26, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Come meet representatives from these local life-affirming organizations: Care Net Pregnancy Services of NKY, Madonna House of NKY, New Hope Pregnancy Center, Rose Garden Home Mission and St. Vincent de Paul, learn services and support and discover meaningful ways to volunteer in support of the precious gift of life. Questions? Contact Diane at (859) 380-6435.

Holy Cross District High School open house, Oct. 26, 1 p.m., at the high school gym. Highlights: faith-based education, A. P., dual-credit, internship opportunities, student-centered curriculum, diverse student experience and highly qualified faculty and staff. Call (859) 431-1335. Visit www.hchscov.com.

“Sexual Abuse By Clergy And Others Among Indigenous People,” a webinar for survivors and those who care for them, presented by Father Gerard Mcglone, S.J., Ph.D., Oct. 27, 6:30–8 p.m. CDT. These stories will highlight the colonial theology and colonial concepts of God that often perpetuate the abuse suffered by those in the Global South and those who are on the peripheries. This webinar is made available through the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. To register visit https://archspm-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MgHug3JTOGARPP19F4ELA#/registration.

St. Augustine Parish, Covington, warmly invites all, Oct. 28 immediately following 8 a.m. Mass, to its rosary procession and preparation for an outdoor Mary statue. The morning will include blessing of personal statues of Mary brought by participants, reflection on bringing Mary into homes as at the Wedding at Cana and prayers for life causes during Respect Life Month, promoting the protection and dignity of all human life.

St. Thomas parish, Ft. Thomas, is honored to welcome The Gesualdo Six, an award-winning British vocal ensemble praised worldwide for their impeccable blend and imaginative programming. The concert is Oct. 29 at 7 p.m. Tickets available at stthomasnky.org/concert.

St. Peter’s COF #1492 will host their annual Matching Funds Turkey Raffle, Nov. 1, in the Social Center of Sts. Peter & Paul School in California, KY after the 5 p.m. mass. There will be BINGO, raffles and plenty of food to enjoy. The proceeds of this event will go to The Needs of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish.

Holy Cross High School Athletics presents the Pat Taney Night at the Races on Saturday, Nov. 1, at the Holy Cross Gym-Monsignor Finn Center, 36th & Church Sts. in Covington, KY. Doors open at 6:30 PM with races starting at 7 p.m. There will be 10 races with a 10-horse field and pari-mutuel betting, silent auction, horse auction, raffles and prizes. Admission is \$15 each and includes 2 beer tickets and water and soda are free. Everyone 21 or over is invited to attend. All proceeds benefit Holy Cross High School.

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., TMU’s Ziegler Auditorium, Academic Center. Register for the FREE Workshop by Oct. 29, at covdio.org/register/. Questions? Contact Isaak Abraham Isaak: iisaak@covdio.org or (859) 392-1529.



Nine men studying for the priesthood from four dioceses and two abbeys were instituted into the Ministry of Acolyte on Oct. 1 by Most Rev. Mark Bartchak, Bishop of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown in the Saint Vincent Archabbey Basilica. The seminarians are from the dioceses of Charleston, Covington, Pittsburgh and Steubenville; Saint Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe and Saint Benedict Monastery in Nigeria. A seminarian installed in the ministry of Acolyte can assist the deacon and the priest in liturgical celebrations, especially the Eucharistic Liturgy. From the diocese of Covington, on the right, is seminarian Michael Schulte.

Campus Ministry night, Thomas More University, Oct. 30, 6–7:30 p.m., where you can meet campus ministers, find out about the Bishop Foys Ministry & Service Scholarship, and discover the many opportunities for service, fellowship, and spiritual development. RSVP at: tmuky.us/ministry25.

Alive in Christ — Men’s One-Day Retreat, Nov. 1, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Memorial Hall, St. Joseph Church, Cold Spring. \$25 registration fee includes continental breakfast, box lunch and retreat materials. Register by Oct. 26 at <https://stjosephcoldspring.com/church/view-only/adult-faith-formation-fall-retreats/> Questions? Contact Vicki Klocke at vklocke@stjoeparish.net or (859) 927-2291.

Newport Central Catholic High School will host “A Thoroughbred Affair” Winners’ Circle on Nov. 8, on the school campus. The evening features dinner, cocktails, silent auctions and raffles. Cost \$100. Reservations online by Oct. 22: <https://nccwinners2025.givesmart.com/>.

Candlelight Mass, Nov. 7, 7 p.m., St. Catharine of Siena Church, Cincinnati, hosted by the Angelico Project. Confessions start at 6 p.m. The First Friday experience will be extended with Angelico Pub Night. Stay for an evening of music, performances, talks, and fellowship over food and drink featuring Emma Fradd — Australian Catholic musician — sharing an intimate acoustic set of original songs that fuse alternative rock with stories of faith.

The Kenton County Veterans Memorial annual Veterans Day Memorial Service for the country, military and first responders is Nov. 9, 2–2:45 p.m., Lou Hartfiel Memorial Park, Villa Hills. Children and young adults including Scouts, athletes, etc. especially encouraged to participate in the patriotic and prayerful memorial service. Uniforms welcomed, yet optional.

Northern Kentucky Youth Choir (NKYYC), a regional choir serving people ages 7 (6 reading) to 17, welcomes new singers and families throughout the year. Programs: Nov. 11 (Holly Jolly Carolling at Behringer-Crawford Museum); and the Vatican initiated Pueri Cantores (“children sing”) Festival, Feb. 28 (all day). Autumn weekly rehearsals: Behringer-Crawford Museum. For information e-mail: nkyYouthChoir@gmail.com; text/msg/call: Rebecca Wells (859) 240-3738; Facebook: Northern Kentucky Youth Choir; website: nkyYouthChoir.org.

In celebrating 10 years as an institute promoting civil dialogue surrounding religious freedom, **the Wm. T. (Bill) Robinson III ‘67 Institute for Religious Liberty at Thomas More University presents “Where are we now, 10 years later?”** Nov. 19, 7–9 p.m., Ziegler Auditorium, TMU, Crestview Hills, featuring keynote speaker, Rabbi David Saperstein, and guest speaker, Msgr. William Cleves. Free and open to the public.

Women’s One-Day Retreat “Beloved by the Father, Rooted in the Son, Renewed by the Spirit,” Nov. 22, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Memorial Hall, St. Joseph Church, Cold Spring. \$25 registration fee includes continental breakfast, box lunch and retreat materials. Register by Nov. 16 at <https://stjosephcoldspring.com/church/view-only/adult-faith-formation-fall-retreats/> Questions? Contact Vicki Klocke at vklocke@stjoeparish.net or (859) 927-2291.

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 – 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.

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 National Catholic Youth Conference is a pilgrimage for Catholic high school students, Nov. 20-22, in Indianapolis. Teens spend three days at the nation’s largest Catholic youth gathering and experience the transformative power of the Church and God’s presence through music, talks, community and sacraments. The Youth Ministry Office coordinates the overall pilgrimage (conference ticket, transportation, housing and food). Parishes and schools register as a group. For individuals not identified with a group, contact Angie Poat, apoat@covdio.org. Bus space is limited.

The Diocese of Covington is coordinating a pilgrimage to World Youth Day 2027 in Seoul, South Korea, for young adults ages 18 to 35. Bishop John Iffert hopes to join the pilgrims along with a few priests and deacons from the diocese. The estimated cost is \$5,500.00 per person and includes round-trip airfare, transportation, lodging, meals (from WYD) and tours. To reserve your spot, the initial payment of \$350 is due Dec. 31, 2025. The full amount must be paid by March 15, 2027. If you are interested in attending, leading a group, or making donations to help the young adults of our diocese attend, contact Isaak Abraham Isaak at (859) 392-1529 or e-mail iisaak@covdio.org.

Son of local family blessed by Pope Leo XIV on a trip to Rome



Pope Leo XIV blesses Jack, the young son of Charles and Kaitlin Marks during the family's trip to Rome for the canonization of Pier Giorgio Frassati and Carlos Acutis. Kaitlin and Charles Marks carry a special devotion to St. Pier Giorgio Frassati, viewing him as the patron saint of their relationship.



Bella Bailey
Multimedia Correspondent

When Charles and Kaitlin Marks traveled to Rome with their six children for the canonization of Sts. Pier Giorgio Frassati and Carlos Acutis, their sights were set on a spiritually fulfilling trip. Their experience, however, far exceeded their expectations when, during a papal audience, Pope Leo XIV selected from the crowd the Marks' young son, Jack. Pope Leo had Jack lifted from Mrs. Marks' arms and brought to him, blessing him before returning him to his weeping parents.

"We knew, we knew we wanted to try to get one of our children blessed," said Mrs. Marks. "So when we got through security and we stepped into the square, we prayed, 'Holy Spirit, help us know where to stand.'"

Whether it was divine intervention through the Holy Spirit or the small American flag that Mr. Marks had given Jack, their hope of having a child blessed was fulfilled in, "such a joyful moment," said Mr. Marks.

The Marks made the decision to travel to Rome for the canonizations because of a deep devotion to St. Pier Giorgio Frassati, who has been the wedded couple's patron saint since they were dating.

"We just came up with this prayer consecrating our relationship to the Lord, and at the end of it, we would say, 'Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, pray for us.' That's where our devotion to him started," said Mrs. Marks.

In this way, the couple's devotion to the recently canonized saint has come full circle. From prayers of two college students to those of married parents with six children, St.

Pier Giorgio Frassati has provided them with spiritual nourishment.

"We felt like we just had to be there for the canonization of Pier Giorgio ... we felt from God asking us to do this for our children," said Mrs. Marks.

As for young Jack, the experience of his papal blessing can be summed up in just a few words. "Kaitlin asked him, 'Jack, how does it feel to be blessed by Pope Leo,' and he just says happy," recalled Mr. Marks.

St. Frassati was an Italian Catholic activist dedicated to social justice and a member of the Third Order of St. Dominic. He was an avid mountaineer and athlete. He died July 4, at the age of 24, of polio. His feast day is July 4. He is patron of young Catholics, mountaineers and Third Order Dominicans.

Honoring a year of transition, Our Savior Parish celebrates homecoming

Laura Keener
Editor

“Take me back, take me back dear Lord, To the place where I first received You; Take me back, take me back dear Lord, where I first believed.” Parishioners at Our Savior Parish, Covington, joyfully sang the refrain of the gospel song “Take Me Back,” written by artist Andraé Crouch, as the parish and its new pastor, Father Michael Comer, began the homecoming Mass and reception, Oct. 19.

The Brotherhood Singers joined the Our Savior choir for the special day. Sister Janet Bucher, who retired in July after 35 years as pastoral administrator, took a seat among the guests.

In his homily, Father Comer said that the best way to hand on the faith is to know the faith. And the best way to know the faith is to read Scripture, even just a little bit every day.

“Is it sometimes inconvenient to be a Christian? Is it sometimes inconvenient to share your faith with other people? Is that going to bring problems to you? Is that going to bring conflict to you? Yes, it does,” said Father Comer. “But (St.) Paul says, ‘Be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching.’ (2 Tim 4:2) How do we do that? By reading the Scriptures, making them more and more a part of ourselves so that we can be truly competent disciples of Jesus Christ, so that he can use us, then, to build up his Kingdom in this world.”

In an invitation for the homecoming, Father Comer and Philip Stowers, chair, Our Savior Parish Council, expressed gratitude “to our faithful families and friends who continue to support” Our Savior Parish.



(above left) Father Michael Comer elevates the Eucharist at Our Savior Parish during the homecoming Mass.



(above right) The Brotherhood Singers joined the Our Savior choir for the celebration.



(left) A lector reads the second reading.



(right) A young attendee patiently awaits the reception following Mass, which included donuts and other delicacies.



(below) Parishioners greet each other at the sign of peace.

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Thomas More University Honors Seven Community Leaders with 2025 Alumni Awards

Staff report

The Thomas More University Alumni Association recognized seven distinguished individuals during the 2025 Alumni Awards ceremony held Oct. 3 in Ziegler Auditorium. Sponsored by St. Elizabeth Healthcare, C-Forward, and Terracon, the event celebrated honorees in six categories for their personal and professional achievements and commitment to advancing the mission of the University.

Edward Schneider '68 received the Professional Achievement Award for his exemplary career in aviation and government service. A Dayton, Ky., native and graduate of Covington Latin School and Villa Madonna College, Mr. Schneider served as a naval aviator and NASA research pilot, logging more than 7,800 flight hours across 91 aircraft models. He is a Fellow and past president of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots, a Kentucky Aviation Hall of Fame inductee, and recipient of the NASA Distinguished Service Medal.

Joshua Vogel '10 was honored with the Citizenship Award for his impact on the welfare of the community through service and leadership. A senior associate at Terracon Consultants, Inc., Mr. Vogel co-founded Project Heart ReStart: AED Readiness for First Responders, a pro-

gram aimed at reducing cardiac arrest deaths in Greater Cincinnati. Since its launch in 2006, the initiative has distributed AEDs and raised awareness about sudden cardiac arrest across the region.

Charles McFadden '73 and Mary Jo (Volpenhein) McFadden '74 received the Thomas More University Service Award for their longtime service and commitment to the University. Both Chuck and Mary Jo McFadden have served on the board of directors for the Thomas More Alumni Association, supported campus initiatives like the Compassion Pantry, and have been active in the alumni community, organizing reunions and monthly alumni dinners. Their volunteerism extends to Parish Kitchen, St. Agnes School and other local organizations.

Theresa Behan earned the Lasting Influence Award for her decades of service as an athletic trainer at Thomas More. Since 1989, Ms. Behan has created a fun, professional environment for both athletic training students and student-athletes. Under her leadership, the program has grown from a single trainer to a team of seven, with countless students receiving careful mentorship from Ms. Behan along the way. Ms. Behan continues to shape the student-athlete experience with professionalism and care.

Greg Wilkins received the Honorary Alumnus Award

for his longstanding support of the University's Biology Field Station. A retired transportation logistics professional, Mr. Wilkins began volunteering in 2009 and has since contributed more than 150 hours annually, serving as a tour guide, educator and devoted friend of the field station. His commitment includes establishing an endowment to support the Station's educational and outreach programming.

Joseph F. Roesel '64 was posthumously awarded the Legacy Award for a lifetime of service and leadership. A Villa Madonna College graduate, Mr. Roesel served as vice president of finance at St. Elizabeth Healthcare before becoming business manager of Radiology Associates of Northern Kentucky and active in local government. Mr. Roesel served Thomas More as a trustee, a member of the Second Century Campaign steering committee, All Saints Club advisory board member, and is honored in the Thomas More Athletic Hall of Fame. He is remembered for his generosity, humor and unwavering dedication to family and community.

The Alumni Awards were established to honor outstanding alumni and community leaders whose talents and expertise have made a significant impact as they continue to live the Thomas More University mission — to examine the ultimate meaning of life, their place in the world, and their responsibility to others. For more information, visit <https://tmukyus/alumniawards>.



Photo submitted

The Thomas More University Alumni Association recognized seven individuals during the 2025 Alumni Awards ceremony, Oct. 3. Awardees are (from left): Edward Schneider '68, Ellen Roesel '66, Theresa Behan, President Joseph Chillo, Greg Wilkins, Mary Jo McFadden '74, Charles McFadden '73, Joshua Vogel '10, Alumni Association president Brian Ruschman '00



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Seminary Ball invites diocese to ‘come together and pray’

(Continued from page 1)

the ball had already raised over \$180,000 in support of the Seminarian Education Fund at the beginning of the night. “This year, as in years past, I’m extremely grateful for the generosity of all our sponsors,” Mr. Hess said.

Bishop John Iffert, who concluded the program with remarks of his own, also shared words of thanks, saying, “Thank you to all of our sponsors, who helped make this such a successful and joyful event. Thank you for coming out and enjoying being together tonight. It’s wonderful to see a room like this in our little diocese.”

Bishop Iffert, who joked about not preferring to wear his cassock, recalled a story in which a fellow bishop with similar sentiments referred to his cassock as his “begging clothes” — which he tied in to say that at the Seminary Ball, he was a beggar.

“What I’m begging for,” said Bishop Iffert, “I’m begging for your time. I’m begging for your attention. I’m begging for you to center your life around Christ Jesus ... The central truth that we proclaim is that you are so valuable that God becomes man for love of you, that God seeks you out

and draws you to himself ... Let that be the central truth that we cling to.”

Imploring those gathered, Bishop Iffert said to “help our young people to consider vocations and service to Christ in the Church that are outside the norm and let that flow from that central place of your love for Christ in your life. Make that who you are.”

“We look forward to this night all year long,” said Bishop Iffert. “To come together to pray, to be with one another, to encourage young people whose lives are so full of promise — we give you thanks for this night together.”

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This is really good

(Continued from page 5)

a lot of ingredients to make it really good. Like my parents, they may never speak openly about the time, effort or personal gifts they’ve quietly given to St. Vincent de Paul — but their generosity is felt in every life we’ve touched.

I hope they know that these seemingly ordinary things have had an extraordinary impact in our community. They have kept families safe in their homes, fed hungry bellies or provided clothing for a growing child. Most importantly, they have LOVED, using the gifts that God gave us to make this world a better place. They are the hands and feet of Christ and I get the opportunity to be among them every day. I am so grateful for that.

Thank you for making this. It is really good. Now, we can serve.

Karen Zengel is executive director, Society of St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky

Atheism, idolatry and the remedy of radical humility

(Continued from page 5)

poverty of spirit, our dearth of understanding about what truly matters, and what makes us whole as humans, we may well experience a profound sense of being brokenhearted. This is a natural consequence of recognizing where in our lives we have worshipped that which is unworthy, believed that which is false, and been made less than we are meant to be. This recognition, though painful, is the path to the highest good! As the psalmist proclaims, “the Lord is close to the brokenhearted; and those who are crushed in spirit he saves.”

This is the posture of radical humility that conquers the atheism which is really the idolatry of self and our state of possession by desires untutored by truth and untouched by grace. In faith, trusting that the Lord will

rescue us from every evil, we turn to the Lord who is alive to us in the Holy Sacraments, praying, “perfect in us what lies within them, that what we now celebrate in signs we one day possess in truth.”

Father Phillip W. DeVous is the pastor of St. Charles Borromeo, Flemingsburg, and St. Rose of Lima, May’s Lick.

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ARCHIVIST
The Diocese of Covington invites qualified, actively-practicing Roman Catholics to apply for the part-time (15 hours) position of Archivist. The Diocesan Archives contains instruments and written documents which pertain to the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Diocese, including specifically but not exclusively, non-current files from Diocesan offices, sacramental records, academic transcripts of certain closed schools, certain photographs, and other historical information of Diocesan archival significance. The Archivist maintains records of acquisitions, labels and houses files, updates inventory, responds to records requests, and performs research when requested by Diocesan or parish personnel. Qualifications include either a degree in history, archive certification, or archive or library experience. Interested candidates may send a letter of interest, resume or C-V with compensation history, and a list of references with contact email addresses to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR by email or by fax: skoplyay@covdio.org, 859/392-1589.

Call David at the *Messenger* for information on placing your ad in the Classified Advertisements. **(859) 392-1572**

Rev. Terence E. Hoppenjans, age 94, a priest of the Diocese of Lexington, Ky., died Oct. 7, 2025



He was born in Covington, Ky. and moved to Ft. Mitchell, Ky. He graduated from Covington Latin School before entering the seminary, and was ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood in 1955. He briefly taught at St. Pius X Seminary, Erlanger, before moving to Eastern Kentucky in 1960. Father Hoppenjans spent the rest of his career at multiple churches in the Kentucky mountains, his latest in Paintsville, Ky.

He was instrumental in founding the Christian Appalachian Project with Father Ralph Beiting and worked tirelessly for the people of Eastern Kentucky until his retirement at the age of 90.

His vast legacy in the region cannot be underestimated. He will be greatly missed by the many people his ministry has touched and particularly by his sister, Joan (Jack) Chadwick of Thibodeaux, Louisiana and by his many nieces and nephews.

Mass of Christian Burial celebrated by Bishop John Stowe was held Oct. 16 at Cathedral of Christ the King, Lexington, with interment following at Calvary Cemetery, Lexington.

Father Hoppenjans requested that memorials be sent to the charity that he established to help his work continue: St. Joseph Mission Workers, 1310 West Main St., Lexington, KY 40508.

A CONCERT NOT TO BE MISSED!

THE GESUALDO SIX

WORLD CLASS CHORAL MUSIC

Wednesday, October 29 at 7 PM

Saint Thomas Parish in Fort Thomas, KY is honored to welcome The Gesualdo Six, an award-winning British vocal ensemble praised worldwide for their impeccable blend and imaginative programming.

The Gesualdo Six have performed at prestigious venues including Wigmore Hall, the Sydney Opera House, and the BBC Proms, and have toured across the world. With a repertoire spanning Renaissance masterworks to newly commissioned compositions, their concerts are known for both beauty and depth.

Join us for an unforgettable evening of world-class choral music in the inspiring setting of Saint Thomas. Joining The Gesualdo Six will be the Chamber Choir from Northern Kentucky University, under the direction of Katie Barton.

Tickets are \$25/each and can be purchased online at www.StThomasNKY.org/concert or at the Parish Office. Tickets are limited.

STTHOMASNKY.ORG/CONCERT



SVDP continues tradition of sharing warmth with Tri-State neighbors in need with 25th annual coat drive

Staff report

St. Vincent de Paul Cincinnati and St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky (SVDP) are proud to partner once again to launch the 25th annual Winter Coat Drive, beginning on Oct. 13. For a quarter century, SVDP has provided tens of thousands of winter coats to neighbors in need, including nearly 5,000 last year alone.

“Each day, we hear from families who are doing everything they can to make ends meet,” says Brad McMonigle, CEO of St. Vincent de Paul Cincinnati. “When parents are choosing between paying rent, keeping the heat on or putting food on the table, there’s often nothing left for winter coats. Donating a coat is a simple act that brings immediate warmth and comfort and it reminds our neighbors that they’re not alone.”

New and gently used coats can be dropped off at all SVDP Thrift Stores in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, or at SVDP Winter Coat Collection Bins at select locations until Jan. 31, 2026. Donations can also be made at Arlinghaus Plumbing, Heating, Air Conditioning & Electric or at any Boot Country/Work Country location through Christmas.

“For 25 years, this drive has shown us what hope in action looks like,” said Karen Zengel, executive director of St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky. “Every coat that is donated represents the care and compassion of one neighbor for another. That collective effort is what makes this mission possible and reminds us that generosity never goes out of season.”

Coats are accepted in all sizes from infant to adult, with a special need for larger adult sizes (XL-XXXL). We also welcome donations of other winter gear, including hats, gloves, and scarves. Local businesses, schools, churches and other community groups interested in hosting a coat collection drive can download a free toolkit at SVDPcincinnati.org/coats.

Thomas More University and Kentucky Community & Technical College System launch first-of-its-kind partnership

Staff report

Thomas More University and Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) launch Pathways to More, a groundbreaking dual-admission and transfer program that ensures students across the Commonwealth have a seamless and accessible path to complete both an associate and a bachelor’s degree.

Through Pathways to More, students at any of KCTCS’s 16 colleges can transfer to Thomas More with guidance and personalized support. A first-of-its-kind partnership between KCTCS and a private university, Pathways to More launches during National Transfer Student Week, an initiative that supports students who transfer from one institution to another and celebrates the diverse experiences transfer students bring to campus.

“Pathways to More breaks down barriers by easing the transfer process and ensuring students have a clear and supportive path to a Catholic liberal arts education,” says Thomas More University President Joseph L. Chillo, L.P.D. “We are proud to partner with KCTCS to empower more students to achieve their academic and personal goals with confidence and clarity.”

“KCTCS is pleased to expand our transfer partnership with Thomas More University, providing even greater opportunities for student success,” said Dr. Phil Neal, KCTCS vice president and provost. “This renewed collaboration enhances clear transfer pathways, concurrent admission, and a seamless transition to Thomas More after earning an associate degree. We value Thomas More’s continued partnership and shared commitment to helping KCTCS students reach their goals.”

Highlights of the Pathways to More program include:

- Dual admission: Qualified KCTCS students are admitted to Thomas More University as non-degree seeking students, giving them early access to advising, resources and campus opportunities at Thomas More while completing their associate degree at a KCTCS institution.
- Early access to Thomas More courses: Students may take up to four Thomas More courses at the KCTCS tuition rate before transfer.
- Guaranteed admission: Once students complete their associate degree in good academic standing, they are guaranteed full admission to Thomas More as degree-seeking students, with no additional application required. (Note: some academic programs may have additional requirements.)
- Guided pathways: The program launches with pathways in business administration, organizational leadership, psychology, elementary education, criminal justice, and nursing, with additional pathways planned.
- Shared advising and support: Students benefit from personalized advising from both institutions, access to a dedicated transfer coordinator, and resources to stay on track toward their goals.
- Affordable path to a Bachelor’s Degree: Those who transfer from a KCTCS institution to Thomas More full-time will receive a \$4,000 transfer scholarship, in addition to any academic scholarships or other financial aid for which they may be eligible.

For more information about Pathways to More, visit www.thomasmore.edu/kctcs.



In our catechesis on the Jubilee theme of “Jesus Christ our Hope,” today we will consider the transformative power of the resurrection. In our society, sadness and desperation are overwhelming countless individuals who struggle to find meaning in their lives. On the way to Emmaus, we see that the disciples were also disheartened, for they had just witnessed the apparent destruction of their hope. After breaking bread with them, the Lord disappeared from their sight, yet their souls were inundated with an unexpected and joyful realization: Christ is truly risen! The Lord wishes to do the same for us, by dispelling any sadness and desperation that we may be feeling. Let us contemplate, therefore, the glorious wounds of Jesus that attest to his merciful love for us and allow ourselves to be renewed by the joy of the resurrection.

VATICAN CITY — Pope Leo XIV will issue a document on Catholic education Oct. 28, marking the 60th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's declaration on education, a top Vatican official said. Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, also told reporters Oct. 22 that in the document Pope Leo will name St. John Henry Newman "co-patron" of Catholic education. St. Newman, whom Pope Leo will declare a "doctor of the Church" Nov. 1, will join the current patron, St. Thomas Aquinas. Cardinal Tolentino de Mendonça shared the news during a presentation about the Jubilee of the World of Education, which is scheduled for Oct. 27-Nov. 1. More than 20,000 people from 124 nations have signed up for the event celebrating the Catholic commitment to education from primary school through university, he said.

WASHINGTON — Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Army for the Military Services said Oct. 17 the U.S. Army has cancelled all religious support contracts for Army chapels, “including those for religious educators, administrators, and musicians,” which he argued placed “an insurmountable restriction on the free exercise of religion.” In a letter addressed to members of the military archdiocese, which he said will also be sent to all members of Congress Archbishop Broglio said, “For those who attend Mass, visit chapel offices, or participate in faith formation on a U.S. Army installation, you likely noticed, that beginning on Sunday, 5 October 2025, contract services and contractor offices were dark and music was absent during Mass.” The changes are not due to the government shutdown, he explained. A memorandum issued in March by the U.S. Army Installation Management Command “directed the cancellation of all chapel contracts” for coordinators of religious education, Catholic pastoral life coordinators and musician contracts “across the U.S. Army.” A spokesperson for the Department of Defense directed OSV News to the U.S. Army for comment. The U.S. Army did not immediately respond to an inquiry.

PORTLAND, Ore. — Catholics across the nation are being invited to publicly pray for migrants, with a coast-to-coast day of witness planned amid the Trump administration's continuing crackdown on unauthorized immigration. "One Church, One Family: Catholic Public Witness for Immigrants" will take place in multiple locations on Nov. 13. The date coincides with

the feast of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, an Italian immigrant who became the first U.S. citizen to be declared a saint, and who was named the universal patroness of immigrants due to her work on their behalf. The grassroots coalition is being spearheaded by the Jesuits West province, which is based in Portland and is one of the sponsors of the Kino Border Initiative, an organization based in the U.S. and Mexico that promotes border and immigration policies that affirm human dignity and binational cooperation. The project's day of prayer and witness will include vigils outside of immigration offices and detention centers, prayer services at the sites of immigration arrests, rosaries recited as individuals report for immigration court hearings, Masses and private prayer. For more information and resources, visit the effort's website at 1family.us.

ROME — “Allowing millions of human beings to live — and die — as victims of hunger is a collective failure, an ethical aberration, a historical fault,” Pope Leo XIV said on World Food Day. The pope drove across Rome Oct. 16 to address world leaders and government representatives at the headquarters of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. In addition to marking World Food Day, the delegates were celebrating the 80th anniversary of FAO’s establishment. In his speech, Pope Leo decried the fact that while humanity has made huge advances in technology, medicine, agriculture and transportation, 673 million people go to bed hungry each night, and 2.3 billion people cannot afford a healthy diet. The FAO statistics are not just numbers, he said; “behind each of these numbers is a broken life, a vulnerable community.”



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The People's Golf Outing

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IN-PERSON WORKSHOP *with the* FRANCISCAN UNIVERSITY'S CATECHETICAL INSTITUTE

at the THOMAS MORE UNIVERSITY, STEIGERWALD HALL, SAINTS CENTER

SATURDAY,
OCTOBER
25
9:30-3:30pm

Join catechetical leaders, mentors, and parish volunteers across the Diocese for an interactive day of formation, practical training, and community. Whether you're new to the Franciscan University Catechetical Institute (CI) or looking to better support your learners and mentors, this in-person workshop will equip you with the tools, tips, and vision you need to succeed.

- **Learn** how to onboard learners, leaders, and mentors
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- **Connect** with others building a culture of lifelong catechesis



presented by

Mr. Brady Webb, M.A.

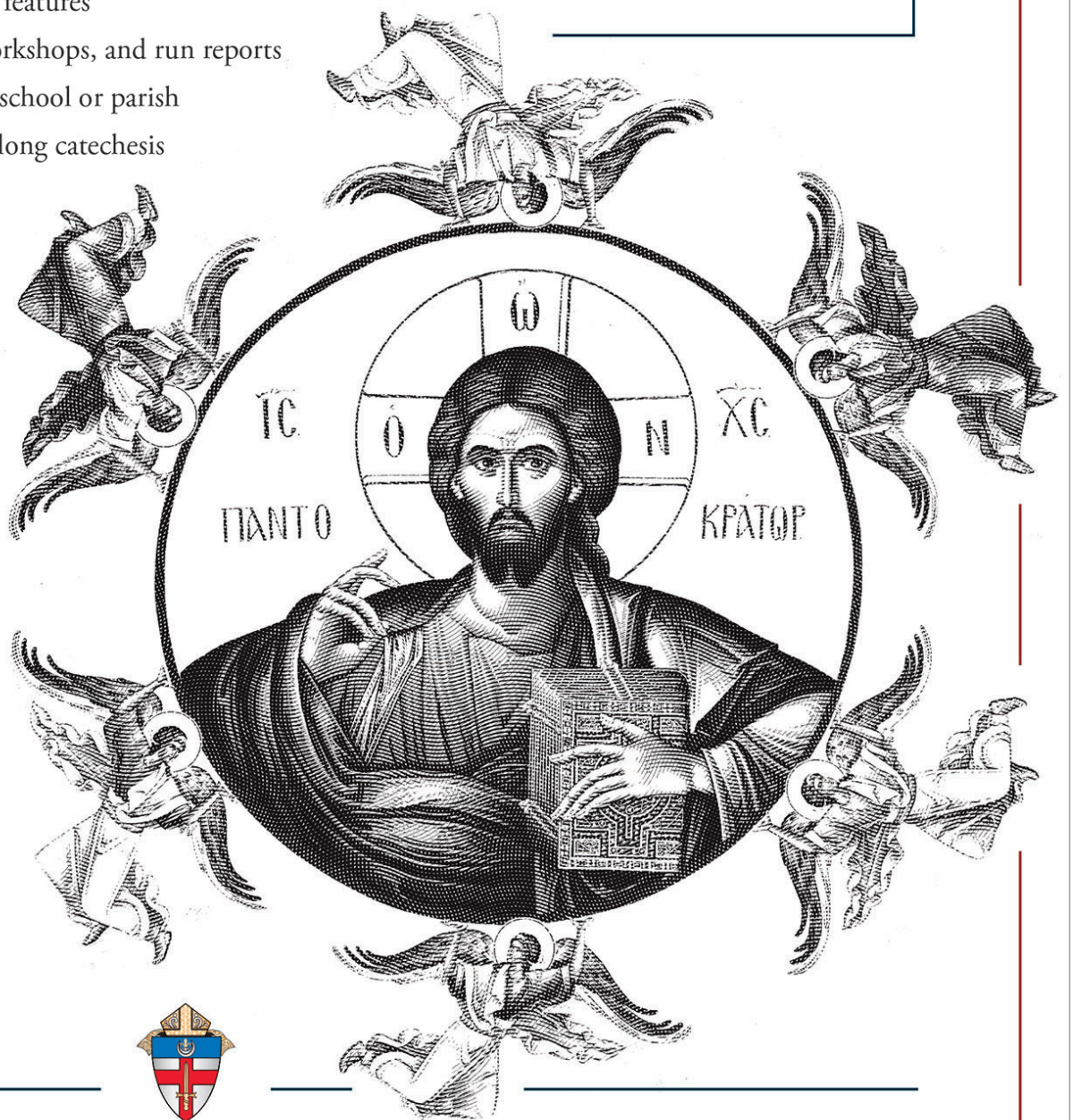
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Institute at Franciscan University

The Schedule:

9:30am	Welcome & Prayer
11:30am	Mass
12:15pm	Lunch
1pm	Onboarding Learners & Leaders & Mentors
2:45-3pm	Resources, Tips, Related Initiatives, & Conclusion
3:30pm	Closing Thoughts & Prayer

Please register by October 15,
at covidio.org/register/

Audience: This training is for everyone who uses the Franciscan University's Catechetical Institute Website for Learning the Catholic Faith!



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