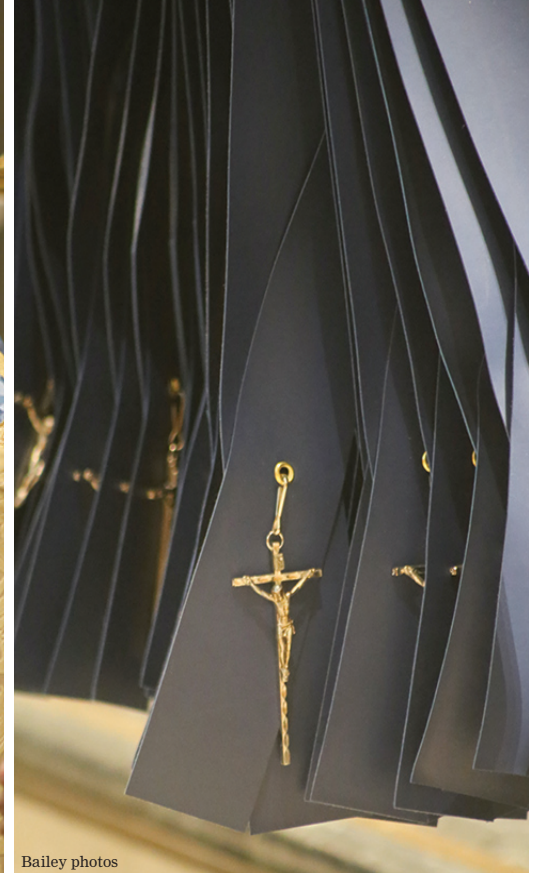


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Bailey photos



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(top, left) Bishop John Iffert and Father Ryan Maher (bottom, left) place the blue sashes around altar servers who are being recognized for their service to the Church.

(top, right) The Serra Server Awards are each affixed with a small silver crucifix. These sashes are able to be worn by altar servers when serving, denoting their recognition as an outstanding altar server.

(bottom, right) Bishop John Iffert blessed the Serra Server Awards before they were given to the altar servers.

Altar servers are a key piece of the Church's constant prayer, recognized with annual Serra Club server awards

Bella Bailey
Multimedia Correspondent

Altar servers from around the Diocese, along with their families, gathered for the celebration of Solemn Vespers and awards at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, with Bishop John Iffert, Father Ryan Maher, rector, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption and Deacon Scott Folz.

The Serra Club of Northern Kentucky welcomed the servers for the annual award ceremony, which celebrates the service of middle school altar servers, who volunteer their time and talents in the assistance of liturgies across the Diocese. This year, more than 150 altar servers were recognized for their outstanding service, with each server present receiving a blue sash, affixed with a silver crucifix. A symbol of excellence, the sash is worn while serving on the altar, denoting the wearer as an outstanding altar server.

In his message to the servers and their families Bishop John

Iffert shared that their work, in service to God at the altar, envelops them into the Church's "constant routine of worship, constant routine of prayer, of living with the Scripture, of letting the word of God sink into our lives and our hearts," he said.

Bishop Iffert explained that every hour, of every day, the faithful of the Church are "carrying out the commandment of the Lord to pray always, carrying out the command for the knee of every believer to bend at the Lord's name." There is not a moment, said Bishop Iffert, which God's name is not being exalted in thanksgiving and lifted in glory.

Speaking directly to the altar servers gathered, some of whom were wearing their cassocks and others in their Sunday best, Bishop Iffert said, "you are part of that great offer by your service at the altar and your service in all the other liturgies you might be asked to be part of. Whether that's Good Friday liturgy, or whether

(Continued on page 13)

ACUE donor appreciation luncheon spreads joy through the mission of Catholic schools



Bella Bailey

Multimedia Correspondent

The Alliance for Catholic Urban Education (ACUE) hosted its annual donor appreciation luncheon, April 23, at Holy Cross Elementary School, Covington, one of the five urban grade schools served by ACUE. The luncheon brought together donors to see first-hand the impact of their donations on the lives of students.

ACUE's mission is to provide children in urban, inner-city areas, access to Catholic schooling, where they will learn more than just math, science and reading, but they will learn the love of God, and the role of faith in each of their lives.

Superintendent for Catholic schools, Kendra McGuire, spoke to the donors gathered, and the students who sat with them, saying "your ACUE support helps our families in our urban areas give one of the greatest gifts to their children, a strong, faith-filled, Catholic education. Your support helps to keep the tuition affordable, allowing families to pay the tuition they can afford, while also supporting their families."

Bishop John Iffert echoed the sentiment of Mrs. McGuire, in support of the ACUE mission to keep Catholic education accessible. Referencing one of Pope Leo XIV's earliest apostolic letters, *Drawing New Maps of Hope*, Bishop Iffert said, "whenever access to education remains a privilege, the Church must push open doors and create new pathways. Because, to lose the poor is to lose the very meaning of the school. If the poorest among us do not have access to Catholic education, we lose the meaning of our Catholic School."

"To educate is an act of hope," he said. "Education is not merely the transmission of content, but an apprenticeship in virtue. It forms citizens capable of serving and believers capable of bearing witness."



Two ACUE school graduates and current students at Holy Cross District High School, Aubrey Schoettle and Kyndall Ruebusch, were invited to speak at the ACUE appreciation luncheon. Ms. Schoettle recalled her experience at the former Holy Family Elementary School, Covington, when, thanks to donations from ACUE supporters, they were able to purchase new technology for students.

"The donations from everyone here ... it really mattered a lot; our technology was increased. We were able to learn a lot more. I felt more confident in my studying, I felt more confident in everything that I was doing. It definitely shaped me to come here to Holy Cross, and helped me be prepared," said Ms. Schoettle.

Ms. Ruebusch praised the small class sizes at her ACUE



(above) Bishop John Iffert speaks to the friends of ACUE at the ACUE donor appreciation luncheon.

(left) Students sing and dance as a way of saying thanks to the donors and friends of the ACUE mission.

(below, left) An ACUE donor smiles as she reads a student-made decoration fitting the luncheon theme, "What a Wonderful World." Inside of each paper flower are handwritten notes by students at Holy Cross Elementary School.

(below) ACUE donors smile joyfully as they watch the children sing and dance.

Bailey photos



elementary school, St. Anthony, Taylor Mill. "I had a lot of one-on-one time with teachers. They got to know who I was as a person and also what I struggled with in school, and how to help me better my education."

As a way of thanks for their support, K-5 students performed an array of songs for the donors. Each with accompanying hand movements to match the lyrics of the song. Donors watched on, with bright smiles and warmed hearts, reaffirmed in the mission of ACUE schools, to provide every student an opportunity to attend Catholic school.

"Every child who enters our ACUE schools will also be taught about Jesus. They will learn how God created them for a purpose and they are loved in our schools," said Mrs. McGuire.

Catholic Charities Commission to discuss new evangelization through service

Bella Bailey

Multimedia Correspondent

The Diocese of Covington is embarking on a new strategic planning process, looking to guide the Diocese through 2030. The planning process will be focused on four key aspects to the ministry of the Diocese of Covington: Catholic schools, Catholic Charities, the Catholic Foundation, and diocesan governance. Faithful from across the Diocese of Covington have been invited to participate in commissions and subcommittees, with the goal of advising Bishop John Iffert on the best path forward in these ministries.

The meeting of the Catholic Schools Commission, April 14, began the process of commission and committee meetings, with the Catholic Charities Commission meeting April 15. The Catholic Charities Commission meeting brought together approximately 50 people, said Deacon Jim Fortner, chief operating officer, Diocese of Covington, all of whom are vested in the success of Catholic Charities.

Chris Goddard, executive director, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington, said about the crowd, "I was really pleased with the enthusiasm, the diversity of representation in terms of the breadth and depth of professionals, men and women, different careers and people that

came who are very interested in programs and services."

Deacon Jim Fortner called the group of participants, "prayerful people."

Their role will be to meet and discuss the future of Catholic Charities in the Diocese in terms of ministry services and how to reach people in need. Mr. Goddard said, "the greatest thing that I heard was that Catholic Charities could expand its reach and scope across the Diocese ... there's a tremendous opportunity to increase awareness across the community, that a lot of people don't know who we are."

In opening remarks made via video at the commission meeting, Bishop John Iffert told the crowd, "It's time for us to engage in strategic planning. That is, planning that is really directed towards building the capacities of Catholic

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Charities and our Diocese, to be able to respond to the needs of our neighbors who rely on us and our spiritual need to be able to serve others and to give charitably.”

Moving past just increased volunteerism in the commu-

nity, Deacon Fortner hopes to evangelize through service, a callback to the With One Heart Campaign of Mercy.

“I would love to see then, obviously, by us serving we strengthen the body of Christ through more people, stronger people, fully participating into the works, the

spiritual and corporal works of mercy; not just going to Mass, but going to Mass and serving.”

The Campaign of Mercy, a process of evangelization through practice of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, is instrumental and a natural fit for Catholic Charities in the Diocesan strategic planning process.

“This campaign of mercy was fundamental to evangelization,” said Deacon Fortner. “We need to get out there and really do something, break through, as a form of reaching those that are unchurched, those that may not feel the love of Christ’s hands.”

While Catholic Charities has many ministries that meet the physical needs of a person, Mr. Goddard emphasized the importance of inviting people into a life with Christ; emphasizing the need for ministry to be not only “transactional” but “relational.”

“I think equally important,” he said, “is people knowing that they’re loved by God and sharing the good news.”

(far, left) Executive director of Catholic Charities, Chris Goddard, addresses the attendees at the Catholic Charities Commission kickoff event.

(left) During the event there was small group discussion on big dreams for ministries of Catholic Charities.



Members of the Immigrant Neighbors Network share successes, challenges, at April meeting

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

The Immigrant Neighbors Network (INN) held a meeting, April 23, in Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium at the Diocese of Covington Curia, Covington. Established by the Intercommunity Sisters Peace and Justice Committee, the INN consists of individuals and agencies dedicated to supporting and uplifting immigrant neighbors in the diocesan community.

Joining the women religious present were representatives of agencies such as Esperanza, Kentucky Refugee

many workers who provide direct care to horses are immigrants themselves, with Sister Kay reporting 600 of these workers, employed by the owners of the horses, living on Turfway Park’s premises during the last racing season.

“It’s what’s called the ‘backside,’” Sister Kay explained, describing inhumane and unfavorable conditions — with many of these workers, both at Turfway Park and other tracks, staying in “cinderblock buildings” with limited access to non-processed food and other necessities, such as running water:

The INN have been supporting these workers since the season began — cooking meals for them twice a month and providing clothing and hotplate heaters for cooking their own meals.

“We are finally at a point where we’re able to have Mass there,” Sister Kay said, “because that was recognized early when we started there, that they wanted to have Mass in Spanish and the ability to go to confession — so we’re really grateful that we’re making some progress, there.”

Violetta Coleman, who works with Esperanza Latino Center, Covington, spoke also of her ministry’s efforts — which includes services to the local Latino community such as a health clinic and an in-house immigration lawyer. They also collaborate with the Mother of God St. Vincent de Paul conference, which provides clothing vouchers and food necessities — with members additionally offering to pray with individuals whom they support.

Most recently, Esperanza, as Ms. Coleman reported, met with the mayor of Covington. Having previously expressed the agency’s concerns, Esperanza “expressed their needs” — forming as a result “a very smooth connection” with the Kenton County Jail.

“It’s important because we have seen that in many cases, when people are detained (for immigration reasons), it is only one member of the family while the others are left behind,” said Ms. Coleman. “The families are separated, and the children are born mostly in the US.”

A “complex situation,” according to Ms. Coleman, Esperanza’s relationship with the jail helps to bridge a gap that helps the agency to work to overcome challenges of authorization and paperwork that keeps families separated.

Non-profit Fiesta, who describes its goal as to help families by supporting self-sufficiency and “uplifting and

advancing the Hispanic community of Northern Kentucky,” according to founder Teresa Cruz — who was also present at the meeting — gave updates on its outreach efforts.

“We’ve grown,” said Ms. Cruz, “and we are very blessed to have had the capacity to grow. We’ve expanded our service and expanded our programs for the families,” which included an added “diaper program,” which is supported by the Diocese of Covington, and provides diapers and wipes to families with infants.

Fiesta was also able to recently open a health clinic, in partnership with the UK School of Medicine, which serves an average of 20-24 patients a month. Ms. Cruz also described the success of Fiesta’s “culturally relevant” food pantry, which provides cultural necessities such as rice, lentils, familiar proteins and beans.

The INN also heard from Jared Lopez, of the refugee resettlement agency Kentucky Refugee Ministries. With funding cut and the government-contracted program of resettlement within the ministry ending in January, KRM is now focused on supporting the 800 clients that they were able to resettle during the programs run, according to Mr. Lopez.

“We’re still dedicated to our clients that are here in Northern Kentucky,” Mr. Lopez said, “offering employment services and case management.”

At the meeting’s conclusion, Sister Kay spoke again to those gathered regarding the context given by the attending ministries. “Hopefully,” she said, “we’re all going to leave just feeling grateful that so many good things are happening in our community ... gratitude helps us stay hopeful, too — and we have to stay hopeful in the midst of everything that’s happening now.”



(above, left) Tom and Desiree Delziel, Spanish speaking members of the St. Vincent de Paul Conference at Mother of God Parish, Covington, listen in at the April 23 meeting. The Mother of God St. Vincent de Paul conference provides aid upon request — offering clothing vouchers, food and prayers to families in need.

(above, right) Divine Providence Sister Kay Kramer, a member of the Intercommunity Sisters Peace and Justice Committee, began the meeting of the Immigrant Neighbors Network (INN), April 23. The INN consists of individuals and agencies dedicated to supporting and uplifting immigrant neighbors in the Diocese of Covington.

Agencies, Fiesta, and the Mother of God St. Vincent de Paul conference. These agencies provided updates of its individual ministries, including current outreach efforts.

Divine Providence Sister Kay Kramer, a member of the Intercommunity Sisters Peace and Justice Committee, began the evening. She started by sharing recent successes — including the recent Community Baby Shower hosted by the Diocese of Covington’s Pro-life Office, which offered necessities and resources to expecting mothers, including immigrant families.

Sister Kay also shared news of the committee’s most recent efforts. As Kentucky horse racing season continues,



Bishop’s Schedule

- May 3**
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 10 a.m.
- May 5**
Sacrament of Confirmation, St. John Parish, Carrollton, 7 p.m.
- May 6**
Sacrament of Confirmation, St. Philip Parish, Melbourne, 7 p.m.
- May 7**
Men’s and Women’s breakfast, Queen City Club, 8 a.m.
- Deans meeting, Curia Boardroom, 11:30 a.m.
- Presbyteral Council, Curia Boardroom, 1:30 p.m.
- Sacrament of Confirmation, St. William Parish, Williamstown, 7 p.m.
- May 9**
Vigil Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 4:30 p.m.
- May 12**
Priest Formation Day, St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger, 10 a.m.
- Crosier Guild welcome event, St. Barbara Parish, 7 p.m.

Papal trip put spotlight on local injustices, joy of Christian faith

Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Pope Leo XIV wanted his journey to Africa to highlight the serious injustices continuing there and propose a message of peace to a world marred by conflict and violations of international law, he said in his April 29 general audience.

“At the same time, the apostolic journey gave people in Africa a chance to make their voices heard and to express the joy of being God’s people,” he said.

As had been customary by his predecessors, Pope Leo used his first general audience after his April 13-23 trip to four nations in Africa to tell people about the purpose of his visit and what struck him most about his travels.

Addressing thousands of people in St. Peter’s Square April 29, Pope Leo said in English that his time there “was meant to offer the world a message of peace at a moment marked by conflicts and frequent violations of international law.”

“Along with the call for peace, I also denounced the grave injustices that exist in those countries that are so rich in natural resources, urging the international community to overcome neo-colonial attitudes and engage in authentic collaboration,” he said.

On his journey, the pope visited Algeria, Cameroon, Angola and Equatorial Guinea.

“From the very beginning of my pontificate, I have thought about a journey in Africa,” he said in his main address in Italian. “I thank the Lord for granting me the opportunity to undertake it, as shepherd, to meet and encourage the people of God.”

In Algeria, a predominantly Muslim country, the pope said he wanted to “show the world that it is possible to live together as brothers and sisters, even of different religions, when we recognize ourselves as children of the same merciful Father.”

The northern African country is also the birthplace of his “spiritual father,” St. Augustine, and by “revisiting the roots of my spiritual identity,” it offered a way to highlight his legacy, he said. “He is a master in the search for God and for truth. A testimony that is more important than ever today for Christians and for every person.”

The other three countries were predominantly Christian, he said, and “I, therefore, found myself immersed in an atmosphere of celebration of the faith.”

It was also a bit similar to “what happened to Jesus with the crowds in Galilee: He saw them thirsting and hungry for justice and proclaimed to them: ‘Blessed are the poor; blessed are the meek, blessed are the peacemakers,’” the pope said, “and, recognizing their faith, (Jesus) said, ‘You are the salt of the earth and the light of the world.’”

In Cameroon, he told the crowds in St. Peter’s Square, he reinforced the call to work together for reconciliation and peace.

Like the rest of the continent, Cameroon is rich in natural and human resources, he said, but there needs to be: “a fair distribution of wealth”; more opportunities for young people; an end to “endemic corruption”; the promotion of integral and sustainable development; and a stop to “the various forms of neo-colonialism with far-sighted international cooperation.”

In Equatorial Guinea, he said, the people “have weathered the vicissitudes of their history” and “renewed with great enthusiasm their determination to walk together towards a future of hope.”

“I cannot forget what happened in the prison in Bata,” he said, saying he “had never seen anything like it.”

“The prisoners sang at the top of their voices a song of thanksgiving to God and to the pope, asking him to pray ‘for their sins and their freedom,’” and then “they prayed the ‘Our Father’ with me in the pouring rain. A genuine sign of the Kingdom of God!”

Remarking on Angola overcoming its troubled period of civil war, the pope said, “God has guided and purified the Church, increasingly converting her in the service of the Gospel, human promotion, reconciliation and peace. A free Church for a free people!”

Seeing the joy and unity of the different generations and vocations of the Catholic faithful, the pope said he witnessed “the foundation of a hope that withstands the disappointments caused by ideologies and the empty promises of the powerful.”

“This hope demands concrete commitment, and the Church has the responsibility, with the witness and courageous proclamation of the Word of God, to recognize the rights of all and to promote their actual respect,” he added.

Whenever a pope visits a country, it is a chance for the people to have their voices be heard and for Catholics to “express the joy of being God’s people and the hope for a better future, of dignity for each and every one,” he said. “I am happy to have given them this opportunity, and at the same time I thank the Lord for what they have given me, an inestimable treasure for my heart and my ministry.”



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Leo XIV greets a baby as he rides in the popemobile before the start of this weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican April 29, 2026.

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The way, the truth and the life

The readings for the Fifth Sunday of Easter — Cycle A — are: Acts 6:1-7, 1 Peter 2:4-9 and John 14:1-12.

“Ego sum via, veritas, et vita.” These words we hear in the Gospel for the Fifth Sunday in Easter: “I am the way, the truth and the life” should bring great comfort to all of us. When I’m traveling, I have two great fears: One, breaking down in the middle of nowhere, and two, getting lost. I

GO AND GLORIFY



Very Rev. Daniel Schomaker

find those of you out there who like the “adventure of getting lost in a new place” odd — and a bit nuts!

Sadly, it is too easy to break down and get lost in this life — and I’m not talking about traveling. I’m speaking of the spiritual life. The burdens of life can sometimes feel overwhelming. The stresses we experience and the anxiety they bring can unfortunately lead to depression and even despair. That is, unless we maintain that spiritual

engine. And we do this with Jesus! Jesus has to be everything in our lives. It is the truth that no matter how difficult a day has been, or the stresses we have endured are, or even the sins we have committed, God still loves us. Our lives are valuable and precious. The great deceiver is the one who places doubts of this truth in our minds. We have been intentionally made in love, by love, to be loved and to love! Saint Augustine reminds us that: “God loves each of us as if there were only one of us.”

It is this love of God, which we encounter in the very person of Jesus Christ who brings about authentic life. Jesus is life — in him and through him — we have all been made. And to live in him, to live in love, brings eternal life — that for which we have been made!!!

But, sin is a reality of being human. It is true, none of us has to sin, but in my experience we all do. We turn inward. We allow the ego to take over; we place all our confidence and effort and trust in ourselves. When this happens (even if its just through “tiny” sins) we get lost, because we have stumbled and veered off the path which is Jesus who leads us on the way to Heaven.

My friends, we don’t walk in darkness, because Jesus is also the light. In himself he dispels the darkness of error and of death; and illuminates the path of the righteous.

Jesus is the WAY and the TRUTH and the LIFE. We don’t have to find him, we have to allow ourselves to be found. He is always there to guide and to teach and to experience abundance of life!

Father Daniel Schomaker is pastor, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell and director, Office of Worship and Liturgy for the Diocese of Covington, Ky

Reporting Misconduct in the Diocese of Covington

Anyone who has experienced sexual misconduct by a cleric, employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Covington is asked to contact Ms. Julie Feinauer, diocesan victims assistance coordinator (859) 392-1515. Professional assistance and pastoral support will be provided in confidentiality and with respect.

A copy of the “Diocesan Policies and Procedures for Addressing Sexual Misconduct” is available by contacting the Chancery, (859) 392-1510 or visiting www.covdio.org and going to “Sexual Misconduct Policy.”

Informando sobre conducta inapropiada en la Diócesis de Covington

Cualquier persona que haya experimentado conducta sexual inapropiada por parte de un clérigo, empleado o voluntario de la Diócesis de Covington está invitada a ponerse en contacto con Ms. Julie Feinauer, coordinadora diocesana para dar asistencia a las víctimas. Teléfono (859) 392-1515. Asistencia profesional y apoyo moral serán ofrecidos de una manera confidencial y con respeto.

Una copia de “Normas y Procedimientos sobre Conducta Sexual Inapropiada” está disponible poniéndose en contacto con la Cancillería, Teléfono (859) 392-1510, o visitando www.covdio.org y marcando “Sexual Misconduct Policy.”

Living in thy divine will

As the world has learned of the private revelation to St. Faustina about Christ’s Divine Mercy, we are beginning to learn of the Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta’s message of living in God’s Divine Will.

Luisa was the 81-year-old lady from southern Italy. Padre Pio referred to her as “that angel from Corato” and predicted the world would be full of Luisa and see her light.

VIEWPOINT



Ronald M. Bertsch

Luisa was born on Divine Mercy Sunday and died in March 1947. Starting at age 12 she received visions and apparitions from Jesus and Mary. She closely identified with Jesus’ passion and sufferings but did not have the physical stigmata, hers was invisible. For 65 years she could not eat food and lived solely on the Eucharist. Each morning to be roused awake, she

required a priest to bless her. Jesus gave her 36 volumes of writings over a 40-year period and Luisa was bed-ridden for most.

I had never heard of Luisa or her path to sainthood, nor any of her messages from Jesus until recently a fellow pilgrim from my trip to Italy shared a book assembled by Susanne James. The Church archived her writings and scrutinized them before declaring them without error and made them public with some cautionary notes.

I’ve only begun the research and reading of Luisa’s writings and I find them interesting and inspiring. Jesus told Luisa that people who conform their will to his will complete the glory and honor of creation and it will represent the full fruition of redemption. His desire is to bring all mankind into the wonderful gift of sanctity by living in his divine will. Jesus said his love so desires it;

his glory demands it!

The Our Father prayer takes on a deeper meaning when we recite “Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.” We must strive to align our freewill to that of God, always seeking and accepting his will for our lives, thereby thy divine will can find a home in our hearts.

For starters maybe we come to recognize the infinite love that he has for us, his infinite mercy and to place our trust in him. He once said to Luisa how it pains him to see his children fear or mistrust him. He asks us to come to him with an open heart.

Jesus showed Luisa the universe and told her he created everything and placed an “I love you” in all things directed to each of us individually. Every ray of sunshine, every drop of rain, every flower, every bird, every breath of air we inhale — He created all with love. Luisa asked him why so many bugs? His response, “I could not stop saying, I love you.”

We can return this unending love story by asking for clarity in seeing his will in our lives. We should be cleansed from sin, go to confession and simply say, Lord, I am sorry for my sins, please help me to think and act in your holy will. We can begin our day by saying thank you with each heartbeat, with each breath, with each footstep, I want to be in your divine will. In all our daily work, encounters with others, and decisions to be made, we can pray simply that it be done in thy divine will. At night pray, Lord, may I sleep in your divine will.

Luisa says it does not have to be difficult. Jesus does not want to put impossible burdens upon us. He said to her, I come because I want your will, your miseries, your weaknesses, all your evils ... I want all that upsets you, so I can hide it within my love and burn it all away.” Consign one’s will to join God’s divine will, not voiding our own freewill but yielding to his divine will.

This new revelation for the Church is so exciting to learn. I am not even finished with the book but had to

(Continued on page 13)

In the midst of life

On a warm day they were simply walking to the next village, Emmaus. Downcast. No greater disappointment than the loss of our dream of the future.

MUSINGS



Sister Fidelis Tracy, C.D.P.

It has happened to most of us — the big unfulfilled dream of a life filled with joy, success, a world of peace, security all around. Let’s not kid ourselves. At some point we believed in the dream of peace and security. Then we awoke and found that it had not happened as we had envisioned it. Our future is not what we expected. Well, at least not completely.

There have been unexpected twists and turns. Eventually we landed

where we are and it is a good place. It is the place from which we are commanded to “Go” with a life-giving message.

It was the morning after the terrible events of Friday. Those who were close to the crucified man were in various states of emotional confusion. One group was on the way to Emmaus. They were clearly trying to process the event of yesterday. They knew Jesus as one who had raised their hopes for the future. It is a kind of love — the trust in someone held close and trusted.

Another group was hiding in an upper room. They were close friends of the one who was crucified. They had left all to follow him. They did love him. At the same time, they counted on him to change their world, give them freedom from foreign domination and bring about what they heard promised in their scriptures.

Now they hide out of fear that their friendship with

the crucified one might bring them the same horrible fate. Their crushed hopes for a future freedom filled them with disappointment. So, they hid.

Some women who loved him were preparing to visit the tomb where he had been laid. Their closeness to him grew out of the kind of honor he offered them. He had forgiven them, treated them with respect they had never felt. They knew that the burial place was guarded and it would be dangerous to go to the tomb. Yet the body had not been anointed for burial and love demanded that this be accomplished. They had not been able to lay a soothing, comforting hand on him as he breathed his last.

Love longed to comfort him, to offer healing even now that he has died. Love cast out fear and they left their homes early in the morning to go find his body. The last touch would not be lashes or hammered nails. The last touch would be a loving touch anointing his cherished presence.

Great love, as well as fear, filled them as they moved in the light of the rising sun. They would deal with what they found — guards with weapons, blockades, lashes. They trusted their love to overcome fear; they trusted his love to carry them through. He had loved and forgiven them. That was enough. No loss of a future free from foreign domination clouded their pure love for one who had been their friend and protector. So they went to the tomb that morning. They would touch the body with anointing oils and tenderly see that he was laid to rest.

When they arrived, they found angels instead of guards, angels propelling them forward. The time for anointing is past. It is time to go and announce the message of who he is.

He came to them all — those gathered in fear, those walking in confusion, those going to anoint him. He would come to those who have returned to their boats and the comfort of the familiar. He was there on the shore with a meal prepared. He came to all of them with

(Continued on page 13)

William Burleigh of the Covington Diocese honored at annual Good Shepherd Dinner, Columbus

Staff report

The 2026 Good Shepherd Dinner at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus on April 20 provides essential support for the seminary's mission to form future priests.

William Burleigh of Cincinnati, Ohio, was presented with the Pope Leo XIII Award. Named for the pontiff who granted the Josephinum pontifical status in 1892, the award recognizes an individual for exemplary support of the Church, the priesthood, vocations, and the mission of the Josephinum.

fast supporters of the Josephinum and its mission. Their daughter, Sister Anne Catherine Burleigh, OP, Vicarress General of the Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia in Nashville and a current Josephinum Board member, was present at the dinner to offer words about her father, whose life, she said, "has always been focused on faith and family."

"Mr. Burleigh's professional accomplishments are matched only by his fidelity to the Church and his love for the priesthood," said Then-Father Steven P. Beseau, Josephinum Rector/President. "His steadfast support,

tributed significantly to diocesan leadership through service on numerous boards and committees.

First conferred in 2009, the Good Shepherd Award honors a member of the clergy whose life and ministry exemplify the qualities of the Good Shepherd, particularly in fostering vocations and supporting the mission of the Josephinum and its seminarians.

Msgr. Lane's steadfast commitment to priestly vocations has been a hallmark of his ministry. He joined the Josephinum faculty in 1992 and served the seminary for 15 years, guiding and mentoring hundreds of seminarians in their vocational discernment. He has also led retreats for priests and seminarians nationwide and served as a spiritual director at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati.

"Msgr. Lane is a humble, unassuming man of many remarkable gifts," said Then-Father Steven Beseau. "As a pastor, scholar, professor, spiritual director, and chaplain, his nearly 60 years of priesthood embody what the Good Shepherd Award is meant to honor—a life laid down in love for others."

In accepting the award, Msgr. Lane spoke of the gratitude he has for his life as a priest, which he called "an adventure," and for the time he spent at the Josephinum. As he concluded,

Bishop Fernandes returned to the stage to announce Msgr. Lane as a recipient of the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Cross, a decoration conferred by the Holy See for distinguished service to the Church. Present to bestow the cross was His Eminence, Christophe Cardinal Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States and Chancellor of the Josephinum.

This was not the only honor bestowed by Cardinal Pierre; his own remarks of gratitude for having served as chancellor and words of encouragement for seminarians concluded with the unexpected announcement that Then-Father Steven P. Beseau has been named by Pope Leo XIV as a Chaplain to His Holiness.

After much congratulating of Msgr. Beseau, there was one more announcement. Most Rev. Shawn McKnight, Archbishop of Kansas City in Kansas and Josephinum Board Chair, read aloud a formal resolution on behalf of the trustees, recognizing and thanking Cardinal Pierre for his 10 years of service as Josephinum Chancellor.

The evening of support for the Josephinum and its mission to form future priests concluded with a blessing from Cardinal Pierre and a communal singing of the Salve Regina.



(above left, from left) Bishop Earl Fernandes of Columbus and vice chancellor of the Pontifical College Josephinum with Bishop Iffert of Covington.

(above right) Honoree Bill Burleigh with Rev. Msgr. Steven P. Beseau, rector/president, Pontifical College Josephinum.

Mr. Burleigh is a media executive and journalist, best known for his long leadership at The E.W. Scripps Company. He served also as vice chair of the Associated Press, chair of the American Press Institute, and as a Pulitzer Prize juror.

A lifelong Catholic, Mr. Burleigh is a Knight in Obedience of the Order of Malta, a fourth-degree member of the Knights of Columbus, and member of the Dominican Lay Fraternity. In 2020, he received the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Cross in recognition of his distinguished service to the Church.

Mr. Burleigh served for nine years (2009-2018) on the Josephinum's Board of Trustees, making invaluable contributions to seminary governance and administration. He and his wife, Anne, have remained generous and stead-

commitment to vocations, and wise counsel have been extraordinary gifts to the Josephinum and will continue to strengthen the seminary's mission for future generations of seminarians."

As the awards portion continued, Most Rev. Earl Fernandes, Bishop of Columbus and Vice-Chancellor of the Josephinum, gave a testimonial to Good Shepherd Award recipient Rev. Msgr. Frank P. Lane, a priest of the Diocese of Columbus.

Ordained in 1967, Msgr. Lane has devoted nearly six decades to priestly ministry in Ohio and beyond. A respected historian and educator, he has taught at many high schools and colleges is a long-time host of Foundations in Faith on Saint Gabriel Catholic Radio. Msgr. Lane served as pastor of several parishes and con-

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Students to participate in 2026 Governor's Scholars programs

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

In 1983, Kentucky government leaders came up with a plan, rising from concern that Kentucky's brightest youth were leaving the state to take their talents elsewhere, not realizing the potential of utilizing their talents within their home state. From this idea, the Governor's Scholars Program was born as a three-week residential program where high school students statewide could engage in a co-curricular community of peers, honing skills in leadership, civics and economics.

The Governor's Scholars Program, alongside its sister programs, Governor's School for the Arts and Governor's School for Entrepreneurs, provide students with opportunities to grow academically, meet peers their age from across Kentucky, and eventually earn scholarships to universities and colleges, both in the state of Kentucky and beyond.

This year, 33 students from the diocese were accepted to participate in Governor's Scholars (GSP), Governor's School for the Arts (GSA) and Governor's School for Entrepreneurs (GSE).

2026 Governor's Scholars

Bishop Brossart High School

- GSP — Lillian Drees
- GSP — Abigail Kress
- GSP — Max Leuderalbert
- GSP — Adam Tarvin

Covington Catholic High School

- GSA — Phineas Holbrook
- GSA — Benjamin Liedel
- GSA — Evan Stinson
- GSE — William Buckner
- GSP — Joel Barczak
- GSP — John Dusing
- GSP — Andrew Long
- GSP — Levi Sybert

Covington Latin School

- GSP — Nehemiah Caudill

Holy Cross District High School

- GSP — Christopher Coutinho
- GSP — Isabella Lachmann

Newport Central Catholic High School

- GSP — Hailey Ryan
- GSE — Otto Hansbauer

Notre Dame Academy

- GSA — Neveah Carpenter
- GSP — Olivia Browning
- GSP — Brooklyn Kelly
- GSP — Ruth Maier
- GSP — Isabella McElwee
- GSP — Erin McGraw
- GSP — Sabrina Scroggins

St. Henry District High School

- GSA — Kate Quinn
- GSP — Kayleigh McCormack
- GSP — Gwendolyn Ogonek
- GSP — McKenna Hartwig

Villa Madonna Academy

- GSA — Maximus Antrobus
- GSA — Kate Bertoli
- GSA — Carmen DeAtley-Rosales
- GSA — Olivia Landry
- GSA — Ndeye Ndaw
- GSE — Elijah Driver

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/>.

St. Mary Parish, Alexandria, Millions of Monicas group will have its first gathering Monday, May 4, 6:30–7:30 p.m. Join Catholic women called by the Holy Spirit to imitate St. Monica in praying for our children to return to or stay close to the practice of their Catholic faith. This is not a support group. For information, contact Carol at (859) 653-5638.

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Thomas More University Nursing presents "Learn More with Nursing", for any prospective students interested in the field. The event will be May 12, 4:30–6 p.m. at the Thomas More University's Nursing Department. Try nursing for yourself with hands-on simulations, real skills and real conversations. Sign up now at <https://apply.thomasmore.edu/>.

The Catholic Men's Group of Divine Mercy Parish, Bellevue, will be having a Northern Kentucky Catholic Men's Rosary Procession from Divine Mercy to St. Bernard on May 16. There will be a breakfast afterward at Garvey Hall. The event will begin at 6 a.m. with Adoration at Divine Mercy. The Catholic Men's Rosary Procession from Divine Mercy to St Bernard will begin at 7 a.m. All are welcome.

Notre Dame Urban Education Center, Covington, needs volunteer tutors for its Education Center's Summer Academics Program (Grades 1-9) during the month of June. Volunteers work alongside students to reinforce math, reading and English skills, helping to prevent summer learning loss. Contact Brandi at (859) 630-9475 or blenihan@nduec.org.

"Prayer Is Listening to the Heart of God", presented by Sister Marla Monahan, SND will be May 20 from 7-8 p.m. in the St. Barbara Sterling Event Center, Erlanger. Hosted by the Faith and Fellowship Committee. No RSVP needed.

The Diocese of Covington is offering 63 FREE in-person adult Catholic faith formation workshops, June 8–11, 2026, at Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, Administration Building (Library classrooms). All workshops are broken into two parts and scheduled for two consecutive days, 1.5 hours per day. Instructors will provide topical information, video content, and time for open discussion. Create a free account under your parish or school to access these and 200+ additional workshops at <https://franciscanathome.com>. The workshops are open to everyone who wants to learn more about their Catholic faith. There is something for everyone. Visit <https://covdio.org/register> or contact Isaak A. Isaak at (859) 392-1529 or iisaak@covdio.org.

There will be a Summer Marriage Encounter Weekend July 24–July 26 at Towneplace Suites by Marriott in Lexington-Keeneland. Sign up at <http://esharing.org> or <http://wwme.org>. You can also register by calling Andy and Melanie Reinersman at (859) 653-8464. Come join us for an experience that can change your marriage, and your life!

The Thomas More University Biology Field Station third annual "Raisin' Hellbenders on the River: Concert for Conservation," July 25, 3–9 p.m. Listen to live bluegrass music from local bands, enjoy a guided hike, explore laboratories, purchase raffle tickets for a brand-new kayak and paddle on the river. Visit tmuky.us/bfsconcert for more information; purchase at tmuky.us/concertrsvp (case sensitive).

New Beginnings, a support group for separated and divorced, begins Aug. 18. The 8-week program provides the opportunity to heal and move forward. Led by facilitators who have been through their own personal losses. The next session, held on consecutive Tuesdays, is Aug. 18 – Oct. 6, 7- 8:30 p.m. at Catholic Charities, Covington. Registration is required. Visit <https://covdio.org/new-beginnings-2/> or call (859) 392-1529.

World Youth Day 2027, Seoul, South Korea, July 30 to August 10, 2027. The Diocese of Covington is coordinating a pilgrimage to World Youth Day 2027 for young adults ages 18 to 35. Experience the universality of the Catholic Church in the presence of our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, alongside millions of young adult Catholics from around the world. Bishop John Iffert hopes to join the pilgrims along with a few priests and deacons from the diocese. Estimated cost is \$5,500 per person and includes round-trip airfare, transportation, lodging, meals (from WYD) and tours. To reserve your spot, the initial payment of \$800 is now due. The full amount must be paid by Monday, March 15, 2027. For more information, go to covdio.org/register/



Saints Serve — take two

Thomas More University celebrated its sixth Saints Serve Day, April 21, a tradition that unites the University community through service and connection. This marks the first time the University has had two service days in one academic year. More than 1,100 Thomas More students, faculty, staff, alumni, and trustees who opted to take the "day on, rather than a day off" to give back to 52 community nonprofits and civic organizations across Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati. "This spring's Saints Serve Day came about thanks to a student suggestion and we're excited to expand our reach even more by adding another day," said President Joe Chillo.

Benedictine abbot warns of Holy Land becoming 'Christian Disneyland'

Junno Arocho Esteves
OSV News

In the Holy Land, the Christian population that has borne the brunt of war and economic hardship is slowly diminishing, warned Benedictine Father Nikodemus Schnabel.

Father Schnabel, abbot of Dormition Abbey on Mount Zion in the heart of Jerusalem and of Tabgha, the community's priory on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, told national directors and representatives of Aid to the Church in Need his fear is that "Holy Land could become a kind of 'Christian Disneyland'" where holy places, monks and priests remain while there "may be no Christian families, no young Christians, no ordinary Christian life."

"If you think this is an Eldorado of Christianity, the reality is different. All Christians together are less than 2%," he said. "For us, dreaming of reaching 5% or 6% would already be a lot. If you think of the most secularized regions in Europe — like the Czech Republic or the former East Germany — even there, Christians are many times more numerous than here," he told ACN April 24.

In his address, the Benedictine abbot noted that while there are 13 historic Churches, both Catholic and non-Catholic, the diversity presents a paradox, in that the places "where the most important events of our faith occurred



OSV News photo/Debbie Hill

Benedictine Abbot Nikodemus Schnabel, head of the Dormition Abbey on Mount Zion in the Old City of Jerusalem, speaks to an OSV News reporter Oct. 17, 2023, during a day of prayers and fasting for peace. In the Holy Land, the Christian population that has borne the brunt of war and economic hardship is slowly diminishing, Father Schnabel warned in address to Aid to the Church in Need April 24, 2026.

of migrants who hail from Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

"They are, in many ways, the most vulnerable," he said, adding that many live in "a form of modern slavery" and often have their passports confiscated, and "have very limited freedom." At times, women who become pregnant or choose not to have an abortion — are penalized.

risk losing its indigenous population."

Palestinian Christians in the Latin-rite Church, he noted, face significant hurdles. Those in Jerusalem have full citizenship but without political rights, while in the West Bank, Christian residents face movement restrictions. In Gaza, the small community of Catholics is "particularly vulnerable, living under a 'double occupation': the external pressure of war and blockade, and the internal oppression of the Hamas regime."

He also said that the number of Hebrew-speaking Christians, while small, is growing. However, the largest group of Latin-rite Christians is comprised

"In the eyes of the system, the most 'criminal' act can be to say yes to life," Father Schnabel said.

As the continued conflicts caused a sharp decline in tourism, many Christians who depend on it have no choice but to flee the country in search of employment.

"People leave because they don't see a future," the abbot said, adding that even with a concrete future on the horizon, "they often have the feeling that it doesn't matter whether they are there or not."

"Pray that there is a future for Christians here," the abbot told ACN representatives.

Father Schnabel also denounced increasing hostility against Christians from extremist Jewish groups. According to a 2023 report by the U.S. State Department, Christian clergy and pilgrims face increasing harassment, including incidents of spitting and verbal assault by ultra-Orthodox extremists.

The abbot said the attacks, which have also included vandalism, arson, desecrations and hate graffiti, "can no longer be considered marginal," and noted that ultranationalist figures in the Israeli government have legitimized or encouraged anti-Christian actions.

He also echoed concerns expressed in January by the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches of the Holy Land regarding the harm caused by Christian Zionism — a theological and political movement, primarily within Protestant evangelicalism — that asserts the return of the Jewish people to the Holy Land and the establishment of the state of Israel as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy.

Christian Zionism is "incompatible with the Gospel when it is used to justify violence, ignore the suffering of Palestinians, or remain silent about attacks against Christian communities," he said, according to ACN.

Patron saints named for World Youth Day 2027

Junno Arocho Esteves
OSV News

Organizers in Seoul, South Korea, announced five patron saints for World Youth Day 2027 that reflect the themes of truth, peace and love that are at the heart of the youth gathering.

The five saints selected by the WYD Organizing Committee include: St. John Paul II, who founded the World Youth Day celebration; St. Andrew Kim Taegon, the first Korean Catholic priest, and companions who were martyred; St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, patron saint of immigrants; St. Josephine Bakhita, patron saint of victims of human trafficking and modern slavery; and St. Carlo Acutis, the millennial saint known for his use of technology to evangelize.

According to the Asian Catholic news site Licas News, organizers said the lives of the patron saints reflected on issues relevant today, including persecution, migration and social struggle, making them appropriate guides for the global event.

The process of choosing the event's patron saints began in late 2024, including a survey of young people, youth ministers and pastoral workers, followed by deliberations by the organizing committee, Licas News reported.

Volunteers also studied the lives and spirituality of the saints chosen to prepare prayers and their respective symbolic representations. Among the symbols chosen were a crozier for St. John Paul II and a computer for St. Carlo Acutis.

Commenting on the announcement, Cardinal Kevin Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, said the patron saints "play a fundamental role in the preparation" of every WYD.

"They invite young people, formators, and pastors to reflect on the gift of God's call, on our baptismal, priestly, religious, and marital vocations, encouraging us to respond to it with generosity and courage in following Christ, who has conquered the world, as the theme of the upcoming WYD reminds us," he said, according to Licas News.

Cardinal Farrell expressed his hope that the lives and



witness of the five patron saints "inspire young people around the world, especially in contexts marked by difficulties and persecution, to see that holiness is not a distant ideal, to fix their gaze on Christ and to respond generously to His call."

Korean Archbishop Peter Soon-Taick Chung of Seoul, president of the WYD organizing committee, noted that each saint "offers a concrete path for living out the faith amidst the realities that young people face today."

"I hope that young people will discover in these saints examples for their own lives and, through the journey of preparation for World Youth Day, forge a deep spiritual bond with them," he said.

The official website for World Youth Day 2027 was updated with biographical information on each saint. Organizers also launched an interactive site, titled "Meet Your Patron Saint," where users can take a short quiz to match with one of the five saints.

The Diocese of Covington is going to World Youth Day Seoul in 2027!

Young adults ages 18 to 35 are invited to join the diocesan pilgrimage to World Youth Day, July 30 to August 10, 2027. Experience the universality of the Catholic Church in the presence of our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, alongside millions of young adult Catholics from around the world. Bishop John Iffert hopes to join the pilgrims along with a few priests and deacons from the diocese. Estimated cost is \$5,500 per person and includes round-trip airfare, transportation, lodging, meals (from WYD) and tours.

Reserve your spot. For more information, go to covdio.org/register/

US, Japanese bishops warn 9 nuclear powers are killing non—proliferation treaty

Gina Christian
OSV News

Several U.S. and Japanese Catholic bishops seeking nuclear disarmament are expressing both urgency and wariness, as the United Nations hosts a conference on a non—proliferation treaty at a time when the U.N. head himself admits “arms control is dying.”

In an April 27 statement, the archbishops of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Seattle joined their fellow bishops from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, in warning that as “nuclear threats are escalating,” the world is “sliding backwards with massive modernization programs to keep nuclear weapons forever.”

Signing the document were Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Seattle; Archbishop John C. Wester of Santa Fe, New Mexico; Archbishop Peter Michiaki Nakamura of Nagasaki and his predecessor, Archbishop Joseph Mitsuaki Takami; and Bishop Alexis Mitsuru Shirahama of Hiroshima.

The bishops’ message comes at the opening of the Eleventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non—Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is taking place April 27—May 22 at U.N. headquarters in New York.

The conferences have been held every five years since the NPT — the core legal instrument for nuclear disarmament — entered into force in 1970.

Extended indefinitely in 1995, the NPT has in recent years “been eroding,” said U.N. Secretary—General António Guterres in April 27 remarks at the conference. He lamented that “for the first time in decades, the number of nuclear warheads is on the rise” and “nuclear testing is back on the table.”

“The drivers of proliferation are accelerating,” said Guterres. “We need to breathe life into the treaty once more.”

In their message, the bishops noted they had formed the Partnership for a World without Nuclear Weapons in 2023 as they commemorated the 78th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings of Japan.

“Our four dioceses represent the birthplace of nuclear weapons, the most deployed nuclear weapons in the United States, and the only two cities that to date have suffered atomic bombings,” they said.

The bishops said they “follow in the footsteps” of Pope Francis, who on multiple occasions — including his 2019 apostolic visit to Japan — declared the possession of



OSV News photo/Eduardo Munoz, Reuters

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres speaks to delegates during a meeting on Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty at U.N. headquarters in New York City April 27, 2026.

nuclear weapons “immoral.”

They also quoted Pope Leo XIV’s 2026 message for the World Day of Peace, in which the pope observed that “the idea of the deterrent power of military might, especially nuclear deterrence, is based on the irrationality of relations between nations, built not on law, justice and trust, but on fear and domination by force.”

That statement “gets into the heart of the matter,” said the bishops in their message.

The bishops blamed chiefly “the never—ending refusal of the nuclear weapons states to enter into serious negoti-

ations leading to nuclear disarmament” for putting the non—proliferation treaty at risk of collapse.

The nuclear powers’ rationale of deterrence “deflects the blame from their own possession of immoral, genocidal weapons.”

“Why is it that Russia and the United States have always rejected the minimal deterrence of just a few hundred nuclear warheads in order to keep thousands of warheads for nuclear warfighting?” they said. “Why is it that all nine nuclear weapons powers are now spending enormous sums on so—called ‘modernization’ programs to keep nuclear weapons forever?”

The U.S., Russia, China, France, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, India, Israel and North Korea are the nine countries known to possess nuclear weapons.

Out of the 12,331 nuclear warheads in the world, Russia currently has an estimated 5,420 warheads and the U.S. some 5,042 warheads as of 2026, according to the Federation of American Scientists.

Nuclear weapons powers “have not upheld their end” of the NPT’s “essential bargain” by which they would negotiate nuclear disarmament, while all other nations would pledge to never acquire such weapons, said the bishops.

They pointed out the NPT “has been absolutely indispensable” in limiting proliferation to three nations not part of the treaty (India, Pakistan and Israel) and to North Korea, which withdrew from the NPT in 2003.

However, said the bishops, the previous two NPT review conferences “have utterly failed to outline any concrete steps toward nuclear disarmament.”

“We don’t see how this one will succeed where the others have failed,” they said.

“Clearly the nuclear threats are escalating,” they said. “The brutal practice of might makes right is ascendant, arms control treaties are gone, and we are sliding backwards with massive modernization programs to keep nuclear weapons forever.”

The bishops expressed hope for an upcoming November conference at the U.N. on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, a more comprehensive instrument adopted in 2017 to address additional aspects of nuclear weapons development and acquisition.

“The Vatican was the first nation—state to sign and ratify the TPNW, the bishops said. “We will be there to help witness its further implementation.”



Partners in Hope for the Poor Annual Dinner

“20 Years of Hope”

Thursday, June 4, 2026

6pm Social Hour | 7pm Dinner



Receptions EventCenter | 1379 Donaldson Road | Erlanger, KY

Keynote Speaker: REV. REYNALDO S. TAYLOR

Fr. Taylor was on fire with love of the Lord long before his ordination to the priesthood in 2007. As an elementary school student, he was accepted into The Third Order of Secular Franciscans. Later he joined The Brothers of the Poor of St Francis, and shared Christ’s love with the poor for more than 30 years. During that time, he was chosen to share his fire for the Lord at Franciscan missions located on 4 different continents. His all-encompassing love now extends to veterans in his role as Chaplain at the Cincinnati VA Medical Center.

Honorees: TO BE REVEALED AT THE DINNER

Go to partnersinhopeforthepoordinner.com for more information or to register today!



Please RSVP by May 15th!

“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.” Romans 12: 12



Obituary

Sister Kathleen Ryan, a beloved member of St. Walburg Monastery, entered eternal life April 23, 2026.

Sister Kathleen Ryan was born on Dec. 12, 1937, to Patrick and Margaret (Fleissner) Ryan and given the name Kathleen Marie. Kathleen was the oldest of seven, five sisters and one brother. Her sister Patricia died in 2003.

The Ryan family were members of St. Henry Parish, Elsmere. Kathleen was educated for 12 years there. After high school Kathleen entered St. Walburg Monastery in 1956. She became a novice in 1957, receiving the name Sister Patrick. First profession followed in 1958, perpetual in 1961, silver jubilee in 1983, golden in 2008, and diamond in 2018.

Sister Kathleen earned a BA in Elementary Education from Villa Madonna College in 1967, a master's in education from Xavier University in 1972, and a master's in theology from Xavier in 1985.

Sister Kathleen taught in elementary schools of the Diocese of Covington for 32 years plus one in La Junta, Colorado. She served as Religious Education coordinator or DRE for an additional 14 years in diocesan parishes.

Eighteen of Sister Kathleen's teaching years were spent at Mary, Queen of Heaven School, Erlanger. She developed

steadfast relationships there, inviting friends to "rocking-chair suppers." The sisters grew used to the sight of Sister Kathleen carrying rocking chairs to the elevator so that the group could relax in the lower level. Without a doubt she knew the location of the lightest and closest chairs.

In addition to education, Sister Kathleen's ministry was kindness and fidelity. She kept up with the people she met, if not in person, then by phone. One described her as having "such a kind sparkle in her eyes and [she was] so gracious..." Sister Kathleen enjoyed a lifelong friendship with Father Bob Henderson, whom she considered part of her family. She placed a high value on love and loyalty to family members, regardless of generation.

"Retirement" for Sister Kathleen meant moving from full-time to part-time, as a teacher, a sacramental coordinator, a chaplain, a Virtus coordinator; she provided communion services at Colonial Heights Senior Retirement Center. Sister Kathleen studied cosmetology for a few months to sharpen her skills as haircutter and perm-giver at the monastery. The tools of her trade remain for others to use.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Patrick and Margaret Ryan and her sister Patricia Di Rocco. Sister Kathleen is survived by her sisters Mary Ellen Funke,

Eileen Preston, Barbara Agee, Nancy Ryan and her brother Jim, nieces, nephews, friends and the Benedictine community.

Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated April 28 at St. Walburg Monastery, Villa Hills.



Sister Kathleen Ryan, OSB

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If you feel called to be part of something special, we would love to hear from you. Come lead. Come serve. Come grow with us. Interested candidates must be practicing Roman Catholics. Please mail or email a letter of interest along with a comprehensive resume, including compensation history and references with contact email addresses to Stephen Kopyay, SPHR, P.O. Box 15550, Covington, KY 41015-0550, or skopyay@covdio.org.

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Altar servers are a key piece of the Church's constant prayer

(Continued from page 1)

it's assisting at baptism, or marriage, or funeral Mass; you are an important part of this work offering thanks and praise to God constantly."

Bishop Iffert thanked the altar servers, for their tireless dedication to the work of the Lord in service at the altar

and assured them that they remain in the prayers of the faithful, during every liturgical celebration.

"Every time we pray one of these Hours, every time we lift our face and give thanks to God, every time we turn to the Scriptures, you are included in that prayer and the

whole Church in this great cycle of liturgical prayer: Praise for you, for your good, for your happiness, for your safety, for your continued growth in the spirit of God," he said.

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Living in thy divine will

(Continued from page 5)

share what I found. When I try to apply it to my life and my work at DCCH. I find myself altering my prayers and my advice to the children, foster and adoptive parents with whom I work.

There is wisdom by turning over all our struggles and worries to God and trying to live in his divine will. So much is out of our control, when looking at past trauma, stressful present times and an uncertain future, we can find comfort in praying with thanksgiving in all circumstances and knowing God loves us and wants to give us something better than we can imagine.

Allow God to work in our lives and trust in thy divine will. And when faced with hard times, we can offer and join this to the passion of Christ, as Luisa and other holy people did, with redemptive suffering.

If it is God's will for you to learn more about foster care, adoption or mentoring during May's National Foster Care Month, please contact DCCHcenter.org. A special Open House is planned for Thursday, May 21 between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m.

Ronald M. Bertsch is director of Therapeutic Foster Care/Adoption for the DCCH Center for Children and Families, Ft. Mitchell.

In the midst of life

(Continued from page 5)

comfort and hope and love and urged them to "Go!"

He comes to us as well. Those who are fearful, those who are confused, those who seek comfort in the unchallenging routine of the comfortable, those who move toward the helpless with care.

He comes to us today and every day and urges us to go forward with hope and joy and a message. Watch for him and know that he is risen and is among us. Go fearlessly with the message of love and life.

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

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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:
 ■ May bulletin: posts Sunday, May 3; due Tuesday, June 9.

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:

- Tuesday, May 19, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Tuesday, May 19, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, June 17, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

■ Wednesday, June 17, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

■ Wednesday, July 1, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

■ Wednesday, July 1, 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

■ Tuesday, July 28, 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

■ Tuesday, July 28, 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.

For other difficulties, contact Marylu Steffen at (859) 392-1500 or msteffen@covdio.org

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Looking for something to do?



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

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National/World

Pope Leo encourages death penalty abolitionists

CHICAGO — Pope Leo XIV sent a message of support to participants at a DePaul University event marking 15 years since the abolition of the death penalty in his home state of Illinois. In a two-minute video released April 24, Pope Leo addressed those on hand for the gathering, which featured anti-death penalty activist Sister Helen Prejean and former Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn, who in 2011 signed the state bill abolishing capital punishment. “The Catholic Church has consistently taught that each human life, from the moment of conception until natural death, is sacred and deserves to be protected,” said Pope Leo in his message. He summarized the Catholic Church’s position on the death penalty, the formulation of which Pope Francis clarified in 2018, revising paragraph 2267 in the Catechism of the Catholic Church — a move that built on St. John Paul II’s frequent and longstanding calls to abandon the death penalty. “In this regard, we affirm that the dignity of the person is not lost even after various serious crimes are committed,” said Pope Leo. On the same day as the pope released his message, the Trump administration Department of Justice announced plans to expand various forms of administering the federal death penalty, directing the Federal Bureau of Prisons to reinstate the use of the firing squad, the lethal drug pentobarbital and “additional manners of execution” including electrocution and lethal gas.

Virginians march against extreme abortion amendment

RICHMOND, Va. — Virginia voters will weigh a high-stakes constitutional amendment on Nov. 3 that opponents say could expand abortion access with few limits. On April 22, pro-life advocates gathered in downtown Richmond for the annual Virginia March for Life to raise awareness about the proposal. At a rally on the state Capitol grounds, Bishop Barry Knestout of Richmond invoked the image of St. George, whose feast day follows the march, to frame the issue in stark terms. He warned of what he described as a threat to human life, urging attendees to stand firm in defense of the unborn. Pro-life advocates argue it could open the door to unregulated abortions, including late-term procedures, and weaken existing safeguards. Erica Banks, a March for Life volunteer and a parishioner of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Richmond, said the amendment would nullify laws that require parental consent for abortions and could make Virginia a hub for human trafficking. March participant John Curran, with a Knights of Columbus group from Williamsburg, called the measure one of the most significant issues facing the state. “I don’t think the public is aware of what’s in the amendment, and just how far it goes,” he said. “We need to bring awareness to it — to start waking people up.”

Msgr. Robert Coll, creator of Rice Bowl, dies at 95

NAPLES, Fla. — The priest who created Rice Bowl — which became Catholic Relief Services’ annual Lenten program of prayer, fasting and almsgiving for humanitarian aid — has

died at age 95. Msgr. Robert J. Coll, a retired priest of the Diocese of Allentown, Pennsylvania, died April 20 in Naples, Florida, according to an April 24 obituary published by Florida Catholic. Over the past five decades, Rice Bowl has raised “nearly \$350 million for poverty and hunger alleviation programs around the world and here at home,” said CRS president and CEO Sean Callahan in an April 27 statement. Callahan expressed “deep sorrow” over the loss of Msgr. Coll, describing him as “a visionary priest whose legacy of faith and service will endure for generations through CRS Rice Bowl.” “We give thanks for a priest whose life was a gift poured out in service,” Bishop Alfred A. Schlert of Allentown said April 28, adding that “countless lives” were “touched by his compassion, leadership, and unwavering faith.” Msgr. Coll told OSV News in a 2025 interview — following the Trump administration’s slashing of foreign aid — said that Rice Bowl was poised for “its strongest moment,” with “the idea of Operation Rice Bowl” an appeal “for the world.”

Church advocates for disappeared South Sudan priest

JUBA, South Sudan — A Catholic bishop in South Sudan is renewing calls for answers three years after a priest and his driver vanished without a trace. Bishop Eduardo Hiiboro Kussala of Tombura-Yambio marked the April 27 anniversary by urging prayers and asking Masses be offered for Father Luke Yugue Mbokusa and Michael Gbeko, his driver. Though the diocese declared the priest dead in 2024, no details have emerged, and their remains have not been recovered. The bishop told OSV News the pair likely disappeared in a rebel-controlled area still too dangerous to access. He also criticized authorities for inaction, noting no arrests or new information. Church leaders describe the case as a “national wound,” reflecting broader insecurity in South Sudan. More than 6,000 people remain missing nationwide, according to aid groups. Clergy continue to call for peace and accountability, warning that ongoing violence and political instability risk pushing South Sudan, the world’s youngest nation, back toward war. As of March, 2.6 million people were internally displaced due to renewed conflict and intercommunal violence, with another 2.3 million living as refugees in neighboring countries.

Maritime ministries urge prayer for seafarers trapped in Hormuz

WASHINGTON — As the U.S. and Iran face off over the Strait of Hormuz, Catholic maritime ministries are calling for prayer and support for some 20,000 souls trapped at sea. “Many of our chaplains are trying to reach out to see how we can advocate,” said Sister Joanna Okerke, the U.S. national director of Stella Maris, the Catholic Church’s maritime apostolate, the name of which invokes the Marian title of “Our Lady, Star of the Sea.” At times referenced as the Apostleship of the Sea, the century-old initiative has been endorsed by numerous popes, including Pope Leo XIV. International Maritime Organization

secretary-general Arsenio Dominguez described the stranded sailors’ situation as “terrible” in a recent media interview. Doreen Badeaux, secretary general of the nonprofit professional organization Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America, told OSV News those seafarers are under “tremendous stress.” Ukrainian Catholic priest Father Paul Makar, a former naval officer now in training for Stella Maris ministry, said it’s essential to give the sailors “with at least some sort of relief.” He said the maritime profession is “very dangerous,” and Stella Maris and other maritime ministries “always reach out” to let seafarers know “they’re not alone.”

Pope Leo XIV advances sainthood causes, including Missouri nun

VATICAN CITY — Pope Leo XIV has advanced the sainthood causes of five candidates, including a Dutch Carmelite nun who served in Missouri. Meeting April 27 with Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, the pope recognized the heroic virtues of Sister Teresia of the Most Holy Trinity. Born in the Netherlands in 1897, she entered the Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus at 19 and professed vows in 1919. That same year, she traveled to the United States to serve as a missionary sister. But after arriving, Sister Teresia developed severe kidney disease. Despite her illness, she continued to serve at her convent in St. Charles, Missouri. According to her congregation’s website, Sister Teresia “wanted to serve God in the order, working in silent union with Him.” She died March 10, 1926, at age 28. She died in 1926 at age 28. The pope also recognized martyrs of the Spanish Civil War, a Spanish lay missionary and two Italian religious women.

Peoria releases schedule of pilgrimage events for Sheen beatification

PEORIA, Illinois — The Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, has released a full schedule of events ahead of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen’s Sept. 24 beatification, inviting pilgrims to “go deeper” and “transform your trip into a sacred journey.” “The Sheen Pilgrimage is a spiritual experience centered around prayer, reflection, and celebration,” the diocese said. “Beginning in Peoria, IL, on September 15, this pilgrimage includes the anniversary of Sheen’s ordination, the historic Beatification Mass, and culminates in celebratory Masses and the Sheen Award Gala.” Events begin with a Sept. 15-23 novena at Peoria’s cathedral and include a Sept. 20 anniversary Mass. Celebrations then move to St. Louis for Sept. 23 Vespers and the beatification at The Dome at America’s Center. “With anticipation of a great number of people wanting to participate, we chose (The Dome) because of availability, being indoors, and the close proximity to the Diocese of Peoria,” Bishop Tylka said. “Whether you come for a day or the entire week,” the diocese said, “this is an opportunity to walk in the footsteps of a remarkable spiritual leader and grow in faith alongside pilgrims from around the world.”

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Senior Resource Center
Established by the St. Charles Community

The Senior Resource Center is designed to inform, educate, and empower seniors and their families as they navigate the complexities of aging services. Our compassionate professionals offer expert guidance and support in every aspect of senior services, including:

- Home Modifications
- End of Life Planning
- Medicaid and Medicare Assistance
- Memory / Dementia Care
- Support Group Connections
- Senior Living (Levels of Care) Options

Feeling Overwhelmed?
Don't be. That's where our dedicated team of professionals can help. Email, call or make an appointment to come in and talk to us. We will listen. We will help.

What does it cost?
✔ Consultation services are free of charge!

How do I make an appointment?
☎ (859) 261-0746
📍 3705 Winston Avenue, Latonia, KY 41015
🌐 seniorresourcecenterofnky.org

Scan the QR code for more information about the Senior Resource Center!

“I’ve been feeling lightheaded lately.
Could this be connected to my heart?”

- William, Taylor Mill, KY

“Yes, and you
shouldn’t have
to wait to have
it checked.”

Dr. Darek Sanford
Florence Wormald
Heart & Vascular Institute
at St. Elizabeth



At St. Elizabeth, we offer same day or next business day cardiology appointments for individuals who are experiencing non-emergency, but worrisome cardiac issues and need to be seen quickly. Our friendly staff is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to assess your concerns, discuss your symptoms and help you get the care you need when you need it.

To learn more about making an expedited appointment, please call **(859) 287-3045**.

