October 9, 2026

In This Issue

2 Messenger Mic'd
Podcast now available

2 Webinar from Rome
Don't be sorry you missed it

2 Celebrating Bishop Iffert

3 Pilgrims return from Mexico

3 Curia Services survey

4 Cathedral Concert Series
50th anniversary Part 1

4 First vows

14 St. Henry District High
Launches capital campaign

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

Bishop's Schedule 3
Commentary 5
People and Events 7
Shopper's Guide 15
VIRTUS 15
Classifieds 16
News Briefs 19

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

MESSENGER

Serving the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky since 1926





(above) Thomas More University students smile as they proudly handle a trio of Eastern hellbender salamanders — Kentucky's state amphibian and North America's largest amphibian. The TMU Biology Field Station is dedicated to the conservation of this keystone species, which serves as an apex predator in freshwater ecosystems and an indicator of clean water. Photo courtesy of Thomas More University

(right) A chalkboard welcomes visitors to the Thomas More University Biology Field Station.

Bailey and Baker photos

TMU Biology Field Station receives national recognition and grants towards conservation of Kentucky's state amphibian

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

Thomas More University's Biology Field station has been awarded two grants for its ongoing conservation efforts and research along the Ohio River. These grants — provided by the National Science Foundation, National Wildlife Federation and Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom — will help to fund and support the field station's efforts to protect the eastern hellbender, a vulnerable species native to the Eastern United States, from the Ozarks to Appalachia.

The eastern hellbender is the largest salamander and amphibian native to North America. The species, described as "charismatic" by Kristy Jones, wildlife and nature education director for the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), is a keystone species in its environment — serving as an apex predator in nocturnal freshwater stream ecosystems and an important indicator of clean, healthy waterways.

When choosing programs to fund, the NWF aims to support a wide variety of species — from insects, to birds, to mammals — and the charismatic hellbender caught the NWF's attention as a unique species that "a lot of people are not even aware of," according to Ms. Jones.

"It's a species that I really felt needed attention," she said, complimenting TMU's "strong student engagement" and "hands-on learning" with their conservation programming.

Chris Lorentz, the field station's director, says that the grants will help to "elevate the field station's ability to raise these animals from eggs," allowing them to expand their facilities to raise, and eventually release, eastern hellbenders — with the population having declined by 77 percent in their native range.

Renovations to the field station to allow for this expansion will begin in October, with hopeful completion by the end of the year. Thomas More University anticipates receiving larvae for the program from Kentucky Fish and Wildlife in January 2027.

These grants and expanded programming tie in well with this year's special Jubilee of St. Francis, patron of ecology, but also to the late Pope Francis's encyclical "Laudato Si'," according to Mr. Lorentz, emphasizing the "care for our common home," which includes care for both humans and the environment. "All are connected," Mr. Lorentz said.

"It's important for animals to have a healthy environment," Ms. Jones commented on the importance of conservation. "What's healthy for animals is healthy for humans — clean air, clean water, thriving native species. There's a balance within the ecosystem."



A quick favor for our *Messenger* newspaper

For 142 years, the *Messenger* has been your trusted source for local, national and international Catholic news. To ensure that we keep delivering the news in a way that is most beneficial to our readers, we need your feedback. Whether you've been receiving the *Messenger* for decades or just recently started getting the paper, we want to hear from you.

Scan the QR code with your phone camera or visit covdio.org/messenger to share your thoughts.

Messenger Mic'd — news beyond the news, available now

Staff report

The Diocese of Covington's *Messenger* office has launched its latest effort in a growing digital enterprise designed to share and highlight the news of the Diocese. "Messenger Mic'd," a weekly podcast diving into the stories of the *Messenger*, was released on Spotify, Oct. 3, with the first episode entitled "Baby Boxes, Blessings, Beatifications," covering the top local and national stories of the week.



Messenger Mic'd is hosted by Laura Keener, editor of the *Messenger* and diocesan director of communication; Bella Bailey, multimedia correspondent; and Maura Baker, staff writer, and is recorded at Thomas More University's, Crestview Hills, podcasting studio.

"I sort of see the podcast as an extension of the *Messenger*," said Ms. Baker. "We're not replacing the work that we do … it allows us an opportunity to share information that might not necessarily go in the story on the surface level. It's conversational, it allows us to go into more detail about the people and places of the Diocese that we talk about weekly in the paper."

Messenger Mic'd is the result of a growing effort of the *Messenger* office to produce more digital content, which began at the request of Bishop Iffert upon his arrival five years ago and was spurred on "in ernst," said Laura Keener, with the hiring of Mrs. Bailey in 2024.

"The idea of a podcast has always kind of been circulating between Bella, Maura and myself," said Mrs. Keener. "There's wisdom in knowing that people today have lots of options, lots of different ways that they can receive information and receive news, and it's really important for the Catholic Church to be where the people are," she said. "We understand that people like to get their news and information in various ways; some people like print, some people like their social media feed, some people like to listen to things," she said.

"The podcast is an opportunity for a personalized approach to the news of the Diocese," said Mrs. Bailey, whose podcasting experience at Thomas More University provided the expertise for in-house production. "It allows all of us in the *Messenger* office to share more about our experience in the field beyond the constraints of objective, neutral, journalistic reporting," she said.

Ms. Baker said, "In these podcasts, we're going to be able to talk a little bit more about the specific details and the very funny, whimsical sort of things that happen at events, or happen while we're interviewing people."

"There's something fun about it," she continued, "the conversational idea and attitude will just make it more engaging to listen to."

Messenger Mic'd is currently available on Spotify and can be listened to without an account. A link to the newest episode will be available through the Diocese of Covington's Facebook page every Saturday morning. Soon, Messenger Mic'd will be available on Amazon Music and Apple Podcasts.

Scan the QR code to listen to the first episode of Messenger Mic'd and hear the news behind the news.

Roman Curia Apostolic Penitentiary to host worldwide webinar on the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Bella Bailey
Multimedia Correspondent

Penitenzieria Apostolica

The Roman Curia's Apostolic Penitentiary is hosting a global webinar, October 23-24, celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation. The webinar will consist of presentations by Cardinals, members of the clergy and professors, providing a well-rounded commentary on the sacrament. There will be six presentations total including a time for testimonies. The topics include the biblical foundations of contrition, a clarification on guilt, regret, repentance and contrition, the steps of true repentance and the sacramental and pastoral dimensions of the sacrament of reconciliation.

The Apostolic Penitentiary is the first among the "organisms of justice," within the Roman Curia. Specifically, it handles matters of indulgences, absolutions from censures, dispensations, commutations, sanctioning, pardons and other graces. It's primary purpose "is to facilitate the faithful as much as possible on the path to reconciliation with God and the Church." The late October webinar is in effort of this mission, and is not the first of its kind, with a similar webinar focused on the examination of conscience being hosted in late October of 2025.

A study conducted by the Pew Research Center released in 2025 found that 47% of United States Catholics never go to confession, while only 23% go at least once a year – despite confession being "a sacrament that's part of our daily path to holiness," said Jamie Schroeder, chancellor of the Diocese of Covington.

Often, it is a feeling of guilt or shame over the sins committed which will keep Catholics away from the confessional. But, Notre Dame Sister Marla Monahan, vicar for religious in the Diocese, said, "I realize now that God,

(Continued on page 4)



Bishop Iffert celebrated first of two anniversary Masses, visiting the diocese's southernmost deaneries

Maura Baker and Bella Bailey
Staff Writer and Multimedia Correspondent

Bishop John Iffert gathered with the people of the Diocese of Covington's two southernmost deaneries, Sept. 29 and Oct. 1, to celebrate his fifth anniversary as Bishop of the Diocese of Covington.

His first Mass was celebrated with the people of the Southwest Deanery at All Saints Parish, Walton, with the second Mass celebrated for the Southeast Deanery at St. Patrick Parish, Maysville. Both parishes welcomed Bishop Iffert with their own receptions and celebrations following the services, and people from across each deanery — including clergy, religious and laity — joined in the festivities.

After greeting those gathered, Bishop Iffert spoke in his homilies about vocations and his experience becoming bishop five years ago.

"I know how terrified I was five years ago when I was standing, waiting for my brother bishops to lay hands on me and to share with me the gift of the Holy Spirit that they had received in their Episcopal consecration," he said. "I remember how nervous I was at the idea of taking on the leadership of the diocese and trying to be the chief pastor of 90,000 people. I kept thinking to myself, 'How do you do that? How do you pastor 90,000 people?'"



Bishop Iffert recalled the commandment of Jesus to his disciples, where he told them to go and make disciples of all nations, fashioned in the image and likeness of himself, Jesus.

"Can you imagine how nervous they were, can you imagine how overwhelming it felt to be given that mission," he asked the congregation. "The only reason anyone takes up that kind of life is because of the promise of God, that God himself will be the shepherd, that God will use the gifts of so many in a wondrous way to call others to follow after Christ. To be the community where we can form one another as disciples," he said.

"A disciple is a person who has spent time at the feet of Jesus, listening to his teaching," he said. "A disciple is one who has encountered the Lord and who knows what it is to have a relationship with Jesus and to be called by him. A disciple has heard

(Continued on page 10)

Pilgrims return with 'moments full of grace' from Marian journey to Mexico

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

More than 33 pilgrims from around the diocese joined Bishop John Iffert on a pilgrimage to Mexico, Sept. 21–26. This pilgrimage brought pilgrims to the most visited Marian site in the world — the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, where the Blessed Virgin famously requested St. Juan Diego to build a church — as well as other Marian sites within the North American nation.

The pilgrimage was described as "moving," "amazing," and "inspirational" among pilgrims as they reflected on the week-long experience.

"We visited many churches and holy places where we learned about the history of Mexico and the Church, and the faith of its people," said one pilgrim, Kira Lodge Kruer, who experienced the pilgrimage alongside her sister, Kaylee Kanning.

"It was especially meaningful to visit the site of the apparition of the Virgen de Guadalupe, and to witness how her presence transformed and continues to transform the hearts of so many. We loved our fellow pilgrims and were so grateful to share this experience with each other," she said.

For some pilgrims, such as Ceil Dorger, visiting Mexico's Marian sites, and especially viewing St. Juan Diego's tilma, was a desire of "many years."

"It did not disappoint. The shrine was a holy place, and we were able to see the Tilma several times. It was utterly moving," Ms. Dorger said. "The beauty of the pilgrimage, though, was the people we were with on the trip and the lovely Mexican folks we encountered. Their devotion was incredibly inspiring."

This sentiment is shared by Ms. Dorger's fellow pilgrim, Michael McGreevy, who was especially touched by another international pilgrim who raised her arms in prayer while the pilgrims were visiting the Capilla del Cerrito de los Angeles (literally the Chapel of the Little Hill of the Angels), a chapel built on the site where the Blessed Virgin first appeared to St. Juan Diego.

"I was so moved by the people in Mexico," Mr. McGreevy said, "their faith is so deep."

This deep devotion was also visible in the very decorative architecture of the church buildings themselves, with many pilgrims commenting on the interiors — some decorated floor to ceiling with artwork, carvings, gold filigree and decorative titles.

"The churches we visited were adorned with gorgeous flowers and banners as these celebratory people got ready for upcoming feast days," said Ceil Dorger. "Such deep devotion for our faith was on display … I was humbled by this outpouring of devotion on display and delighted by peoples' kindnesses and moments full of grace bestowed on us visitors — something valuable to take home with us!" *More Photos on page 8.*



Bishop John Iffert celebrates Mass for pilgrims inside a local Mexican church during their pilgrimage to the North American nation, Sept. 21–26.

Schroeder photo

Curia Services Survey Description and Details

The Diocesan Governance Planning Commission is seeking feedback from parishioners and from those who support the Diocese of Covington through their gifts. We want to understand how well the diocesan offices — known as the Curia — serve the parishes, schools and people of our diocese, and how well the diocese communicates about its work and its use of the gifts entrusted to it. You do not need to have worked directly with a diocesan office to take part; your impressions matter. (Pastors and parish, school, and ministry staff are invited to complete a separate staff survey.)

What is the Curia?

The Curia is the group of diocesan offices that help the Bishop serve the Church across Northern Kentucky. These offices support Catholic schools, faith formation, youth and family ministry, Hispanic ministry, marriage and the Tribunal, safe environment programs, vocations, communications (including The Messenger), stewardship, and the financial and administrative work that keeps parishes running. Their work is funded in part by the annual Diocesan Mission Appeal.

Your feedback will help us understand:

— How familiar parishioners are with the work of the diocesan offices.

— Which diocesan ministries matter most to you and your family.

— How clearly the diocese communicates about its work and its finances.

— What would strengthen your trust and your confidence in supporting diocesan ministries.

— What you hope to be able to say about the diocese five years from now.

Please answer candidly. There are no wrong answers, and you do not need detailed knowledge of how the diocese is organized. If a question does not apply to you, choose "Not sure" or skip it.

Confidentiality

This survey is anonymous and confidential; no names will be collected. Diocesan leadership, Curia staff, and the Commission will receive only combined results, and no results will be reported for any group small enough that an individual could be identified. The background questions in Section 1 are used only to group results.

Curia Services Survey

Scan the QR code to participate in the Curia Services Survey and share your feedback on the work of the Curia.





Save the Date

Vatican II Workshop: Proclaiming the Joy and Hope of Christ to the Modern World

The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization of the Diocese of Covington warmly invites all adults throughout the diocese to attend a special day of formation:

Vatican II: Proclaiming the Joy and Hope of Christ to the Modern World

Saturday, Nov. 14, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.
Ziegler Auditorium, Academic Center
Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, Kentucky

This engaging workshop will be presented by Professor Lucas Pollice, chief mission officer for the Diocese of Colorado Springs and a gifted speaker known for making the teachings of the Church both accessible and inspiring.

Participants will explore the enduring vision of the Second Vatican Council, discover its profound impact on the life of the Church, and learn how its teachings continue to shape evangelization, catechesis, parish life, and Christian discipleship today.

At a time when many people are searching for hope, purpose, and spiritual direction, Vatican II reminds us that Christ is the answer to the deepest longings of the human heart.

Registration is required by Friday, Oct. 23.
To register, please visit: https://tinyurl.com/56vtzdx2

For information, contact: Isaak A. Isaak, iisaak@covdio.org or (859) 392-1529.

Bishop's Schedule

Oct. 10
Diocesan Pastoral Council meeting, Curia Boardroom, 10 a.m.

Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 4:30 p.m.

Life Learning Center Gala, MegaCorp Pavillion, 7 p.m.

Oct. 12
Pro-Life Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 7 p.m.

Oct. 13–15
Evangelization Summit, Indianapolis

Priest Monthly Holy Hour, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 3 p.m.

Oct. 16
Seminary Ball, Receptions, Erlanger, 6 p.m.

Oct. 17
Concelebrate Mass prior to the Men's Eucharistic Procession, Archdiocese of Cincinnati, 8 a.m.

St. John Cemetery visitation, 10 a.m.

St. Mary Cemetery visitation, 11 a.m.

St. Stephen Cemetery visitation, 12:30 p.m.

Fifty Seasons of Music, Open to Everyone — The Cathedral Concert Series celebrates its 50th season in 2026-2027

Dr. Gregory Schaffer
Contributor

This is part one of a two-part series celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Cathedral Concert Series.

In 1970, an organ built more than a century earlier began a new chapter at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington. The Historic Matthias Schwab Organ, built in 1859 for Old St. Joseph Church at 12th and Greenup Streets (2 blocks east of the cathedral), had been rescued from destruction. Its rededication in 1974 would help set in motion a musical tradition now celebrating its 50th Season.

The beginnings were modest. Informal organ recitals were held periodically on Sunday afternoons, drawing respectable but small audiences. Local church organists and friends of Robert and Rita Schaffer performed for little or no compensation. Members of the Schaffer family also frequently appeared, particularly their oldest son, Mark, who had become an organist of extraordinary ability while still in his teens.



Robert and Rita Schaffer, c. 1970, at the Wicks console with the choir stalls in the background.

Rita handled promotion, often creating hand-lettered flyers reproduced on ordinary 8½-by-11-inch sheets of paper. There was little money for advertising, but organ enthusiasts came to hear the historic instrument and discovered its remarkable setting. Word gradually spread.

Those attending the early recitals encouraged Robert to establish a formal concert series. In 1975, the Cathedral Concert Series began its first official season. The cancellation of the remaining half of the season in 2020 explains the anniversary count: that interrupted season was not

(Continued on page 9)

Webinar on Reconciliation

(Continued from page 2)

one professor I had said, 'God could care less about your sins. God cares about you,' It means that God's love and God's mercy is greater than our guilt and our sin."

Mrs. Schroeder said, "I've never been one to think that guilt was necessarily a bad thing. It's when we let guilt keep us away from the mercy and love and forgiveness of God, that's when it's bad."

Frequent use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation can help the faithful reconcile their own guilt, but also their own personal shortcomings. "I think as adults, we get older and we kind of feel like we have it all together, and it helps me to remember that I don't have it all together and that I need God, or that I need someone stronger, more powerful, bigger, in my life and that I'm not perfect, that I stumble when I fall, and I need forgiveness," said Mrs. Schroeder.

"I think it goes back to what Jesus told us is the greatest commandment, to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourself" said Sister Monahan, "and this, the sacrament of reconciliation, can be a way for us to receive the help and support to be able to do that."

Go to penitenzieria.va to learn more and register for the webinar on celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation.







Diocesan daughter makes First Profession of Vows

On the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene, July 22, Sister Olivia Marie Gethsemane Staverman, HMSS, professed First Vows as a Mercedarian Sister of the Blessed Sacrament in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Sister Olivia is a lifelong parishioner of St. Henry Church, Elsmere, graduate of St. Henry District High School and Thomas More University. She is the daughter of David and Kris Staverman, sister to Kaitlin, Jessica and the late Bryce Staverman.

A Mass for the First Profession of Vows is where a young woman publicly professes, for the first time, the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. These vows conform her to Christ within a Religious Institute. Vows are renewed each year until professing Final Vows.

While professing her vows at the altar, Sister Olivia also shared her new name "Marie Gethsemane," which reveals the deepening of her identity and call in Christ.

Please keep Sister Marie Gethsemane, HMSS in your prayers as she begins to live faithfully her vocation as a Mercedarian Sister of the Blessed Sacrament, while serving in the Diocese of Baton Rouge. A livestream of the First Profession of Vows Mass is available on the Mercedarian Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament YouTube Channel.

To can learn more about the Mercedarian Sisters, including an upcoming discernment retreat Jan. 15–17, in Cleveland, Ohio, visit www.mercedariansisters.org.

CDI Electric Inc.
Quality Service Since 1997
859-291-9189

CHEF BARONE'S CATERING
•Parties •Weddings
•Company Picnics •Lunches, Dinners
•25 To 1000 People
"Our Foods Taste Good"
Serving Greater Cincinnati
Call Jill
491-6391
1640 Dixie Highway Park Hills, Ky.

FOSTER. ADOPT.
MENTOR. VOLUNTEER.
DCCH CENTER
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
DCCHCENTER.ORG 859-331-2040

VOL. 96 **MESSENGER** NO. 34
Official newspaper of the Diocese of Covington
Cathedral Square • 1125 Madison Ave. • Covington, Ky. 41011-3115
Telephone: (859) 392-1500 E-mail: messenger@covdio.org
www.covdio.org

(UPS-403-650) Published by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, Ky.; 44 issues a year (weekly except from June 1 to mid-August, when published every other week; not published the week after Easter and two weeks at Christmas/New Year's). Subscription rate: $19 per year; $40 foreign. Periodical Postage paid at Covington, KY 41012 and additional mailing office Cincinnati, Ohio 45203. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to MESSENGER, 1125 Madison Ave., Covington, KY 41011-3115.
Advertising deadline: Wednesday noon, 9 days prior to publication date.
Editorial deadline: Friday noon, 7 days prior to date.
Subscriptions, address changes: Contact Circulation Dept. at above address.

Bishop John C. Iffert ..... Publisher
Laura Keener ..... Editor, General Manager
Laura Gillespie ..... Production Coordinator/Designer
Maura Baker ..... Staff Writer
Isabella (Bella) Bailey ..... Multimedia Correspondent
Tony Zilliox ..... Sales Manager

COMMENTARY

A wedding garment of mercy

The readings for the Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time — Cycle A — are: Isaiah 25:6–10a, Philippians 4:12–14, 19–20 and Matthew 22:1–14.

The parable we hear this Sunday is one of the most challenging in the Gospels —about an extravagantly generous king who throws a large wedding feast for his son. He invites anyone and everyone, only to take offense when one guest shows up improperly dressed.

There's a lot to unpack here — about the king and, really, about ourselves.

Peel back the layers of this parable and you understand it's about more than just fashionable wedding apparel. (Spoiler alert: Don't go leafing through Modern Bride to decipher the meaning here!)

GUEST



Deacon Greg Kandra

Commentators will tell you: the king in this story — God — is less interested in what we choose to wear; he is more concerned with how we choose to live and how we respond to his invitation, his call. Do we ignore him? Shrug him off? When God invites us to the feast, do we show up clothed with the very best we have to offer? Are we willing to make the effort?

I can't help but be reminded of St. Paul's advice to the Colossians, who used a garment metaphor to describe the Christian journey: "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another … And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection."

So the real question here is: What do we choose to "wear" when we go into the world? Do we don righteousness a desire to live with holiness and humility and justice? Or do we just throw on indifference? What do we "put on" when God invites us to his feast? Do we clothe ourselves with the best we have, and offer the best we can be? Do we strive to wrap ourselves in holiness and faithfulness, compassion and mercy?

Pope Francis once described it this way, as a matter of grace: "The wedding garment," the pope said, "symbolizes the mercy that God freely gives us, namely, grace. Without grace we cannot take a step forward in Christian life. Everything is grace. It is not enough to accept the invitation to follow the Lord; one must be open to a journey of conversion, which changes the heart. The garment of mercy, which God offers us unceasingly, is the free gift of his love; it is precisely grace. And it demands to be welcomed with astonishment and joy: 'Thank you, Lord, for having given me this gift.'"

I think there is one more lesson to take away from this parable. It's about the one who is extending the invitation. What kind of a king is this? How should we think of our God?

Jesus has described a ruler with limitless generosity. The king tells his servants, "Go out into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find." And the servants do just that, gathering "all they found, good and bad alike, and the hall was filled with guests."

Here is a king willing to share the best of everything he has to offer with every soul in his kingdom. He does it with patience and, as Pope Francis said, mercy.

It may seem like this king has a stringent dress code. But what he really has is a code for living the spiritual life — a life spent working daily to make ourselves worthy of the invitation we've been given. That means extending to others the generosity and mercy our king offers us, and to show up at the feast with a spirit of faithfulness, gratitude and love.

So, don't worry about what's in your closet. In God's kingdom, a desire to live a holy, faithful and loving life — a life of righteousness — is always in fashion.

Deacon Greg Kandra is an award-winning author and journalist, and creator of the blog "The Deacon's Bench."

Welcome the children

Sunday, Sept. 27, was designated "World Day of Migrants and Refugees" by Pope Leo XIV. The specific focus was to show love and support for migrant and refugee children.

GUEST



Sister Dorothy Schuette, OSB

This occasion stirred up memories of my powerful experience with migrants in 2019 when, for eight weeks, I walked with the asylum seekers on the Texas/Mexican border in 2019. I assisted Benedictine Sister Ursula Herrera with her long-term ministry of hospitality at Casa Caridad de Corazon (Charity of the Heart Home).

At that time, Eagle Pass/Piedras Negras was one of very few legal border crossings. It was a highly secured bridge over the Rio Grande. Those without papers waded through the dangerous waters of the Rio Grande. If they got caught most applied for asylum. No one crossed without a good reason.

I remember the children. Almost every family that came to Caridad came with one or two, sometimes three. They were unbelievably quiet, probably from weeks and months of surviving the trek, mostly on foot and accepting rides when offered, from Honduras, Guatemala or other southern regions.

Caridad was able to shelter people who had begun their asylum application with ICE. We offered meals — dinner and breakfast — a shower, change of clothes, sometimes shoes, toiletries, overnight sleeping. The single bedrooms at the house were great for a family with small children. The former master bedroom was a dorm for 10. Sister Ursula put cots in many nooks and crannies to accommodate what was needed.

The families were grateful to be at a safe haven. They had passed through dangers from bandits, the terrain and the probabilities of getting caught by Mexican authorities if they did not already have documents before they reached the border. Children had witnessed the atrocities of rape, mutilation and kidnapping, of suffering through illness without medical care, of drowning and broken limbs.

One mother with two small children arrived at Caridad in a state of immense grief — in crossing the Rio Grande just two days before her husband lost his footing and drowned; one of his children held onto his floating body and made it across with her and the other child.

Another family came to us after several months of running from the mob that had assassinated the father's business associates back in their home country. They miraculously got away for the time being, but "word was out" and gangs have transnational connections. The father was detained and the mother and two sons came to Caridad to work through a plan to reunite. This wound-up taking months. The mother and sons continued to live with Sister Ursula at least a year after I left. Mom helped with the housework and the boys started school. We exchange greetings at Christmas. I am glad they are doing well but their father is still incarcerated (the last I heard) and their mom is working three jobs, living in a major city where they feel safe.

"Let us entrust migrant and refugee children to the maternal protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary who, together with St. Joseph and the child Jesus experienced the cruelty of Herod's violence and the tragedy of exile in Egypt. May she accompany their steps and help our communities to become living and credible signs of the Gospel," wrote Pope Leo XIV in his 2026 message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

Sister Dorothy Schuette is a Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery, Villa Hills.

Cast judgement aside — we are all children of God

Human dignity is the inherent, sacred and inalienable worth possessed by every person because they are created in the image and likeness of God.

A video I watched recently featured a young woman who had suffered unthinkable abuses. At the tender age of 20, she had lived a life of suffering. Her small body had been used and battered for so long that she did not remember a time when she had ever felt safe, much less loved.

VIEWPOINT



Julie Feinauer

When interviewed about her life on the streets, the interviewer focused on the "choices" she had made. She spoke of her "choice," at 11-years-old, to sell herself on the street, her "choice" to give up numerous children, her "choice" to take the drugs her trafficker proffered. What struck me about her while I listened to her story was her positivity. She radiated joy. She was dirty, scantily clad, and yet, had a beauty that compelled viewers to keep watching. It wasn't an external, aesthetic beauty; it was innate.

As she told tales of others mistreating, maiming and monetizing her very existence, her resilience and strength were the real message. When asked what she wanted out of life, she said, "I just want to make people smile."

This broke me. Here was a woman who society would tell us is of low character. Is unworthy. Yet, her goal in life was for others to be happy, if just for a moment.

Her story affected me profoundly. As someone who has had the gift of loving parents, the support of friends and family, the comfort of growing up in my small church community, and so many other advantages too numerous to mention, I realized that because of my blessed life, I could not fathom the difficulty of hers. Nothing I did afforded me the life I had been given; I did not deserve it more than she. Why then, when I had first seen her, saw her story was titled, "A Life on the Streets" did I cast judgement?

I expected her to express sorrow for how she had lived, and to want to be better. After listening, I realized she just wanted to survive. My moral compass told me that what she had done, literally who she was, equated to someone unworthy. My judgement came from a place of privilege, of a life where daily choices were not life and death decisions. Imagine never knowing the love of Christ, experiencing little but pain, and wanting nothing more than the happiness of others.

Human dignity is not earned, not something we bestow on others. It is the foundation of who we are — a child of God. We forget this and allow the world to dictate how we see others rather than through the lens of our Christian faith. Jesus chose the most lowly, the sinner rather than the saint, to sit at his table. He knew they needed him the most. With them, he could make the most impact in the world. If you are constantly surrounding yourself with those who already know the Lord, how are you growing your soul? How are you growing his kingdom?

The dignity of the human person also means that we value the individual even when they make decisions of which we don't agree or put themselves in positions of vulnerability. We are supposed to defend others when they cannot stand up for themselves. We should not become a part of their pain by joining-in to harm or exploit another for our own pleasure or personal gain. As Christians we must "Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them."(Eph 5:11)

When we hear that someone is being harmed or abused in any way, we cannot expect someone else to intervene. Ignoring the pain and suffering of another does not make it go away. We must act in accord with the teachings of Jesus and defend the powerless.

The world would tell us that some people are more worthy than others. That those who do not follow our views, or make choices we would not make for ourselves, are not as deserving as those that do. Our Catholic faith tells us differently. We must acknowledge their innate human dignity. See in their face, the countenance of Jesus. Then, we must do for them, as we would do for him.

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matt 25:40)

Julie Feinauer is director of the Safe Environment Office, Diocese of Covington, Ky.

Faithful cannot accept oppression, injustice, pope says

Josephine Peterson
Catholic News Service

Christians "cannot accept the oppression of the weak and the poor, nor the unjust structures that perpetuate conditions of dependence and injustice," Pope Leo XIV said at his weekly general audience.

By worshipping Christ, "the Righteous One who died for the unrighteous," the faithful are called to work for justice, peace and fraternity, the pope said Oct. 7 in St. Peter's Square.

"The Church, therefore, 'has no fiercer desire than that in pursuit of the welfare of all she may be able to develop herself freely under any kind of government which grants recognition to the basic rights of person and family, to the demands of the common good,'" he said, quoting from the conciliar constitution, "Gaudium et Spes," as he continued his series of talks on documents from the Second Vatican Council.

Just as Christ was incarnated to reconcile the world with God, the Church exists within the world as a "sign of the incarnation of God, in order to manifest His plan to make us all His children in one great human family," Pope Leo said.

Journeying through history alongside different peoples and cultures helps the Church understand more clearly the scope of its mission, he said. That mission begins with helping people "be attentive to the profound questions of life: those concerning our origin and our destiny, as well as those concerning the meaning of love and suffering."

"The logic of profit at all costs and the manipulation of information risk exerting undue pressure on people to conform to a lifestyle centered on the consumption of material goods, but our hearts are made to look upwards," Pope Leo said.

The Church's mission also includes contributing to building the "earthly city," he said, although its methods and aims are not primarily political. Rather, the Church bears witness to "faith and charity, together with commitment for justice, peace, and fraternity."

To live the Gospel fully, Catholics must cooperate with the grace of the Holy Spirit so that their professed faith is reflected in their daily lives, the pope said, continuing his reflections on the constitution "Gaudium et Spes."



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Leo XIV greets a child at the conclusion of his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Oct. 7, 2026.

The discrepancy between professed faith and daily life, the council wrote, "deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age."

Living the faith in contemporary society also requires pastors, theologians and the faithful to discern what in modern cultures is worthy of consideration without "watering down" Christianity to make it more attractive, Pope Leo said.

"This requires a balanced mind, free from cultural trends, capable of viewing the world in a positive light whilst remaining steadfast in preserving and presenting the Gospel message in its entirety," he said.

The Church is not "above" or "beside" the world, but rather "grafted into it," Pope Leo said, and its ultimate purpose is that God's kingdom may come and "the salvation of the whole human race may come to pass."

"She strives towards this end above all through personal holiness and fraternal love," he said.



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/.

Extraordinary Ministers are needed, especially on Sundays, at St. Elizabeth hospital in Edgewood. If you are a Eucharistic minister, or are interested in becoming one, contact the Pastoral Care office or the Volunteer office at St. Elizabeth for more information, (859) 301-2000.

Notre Dame Urban Education Center, Covington, is seeking adult volunteers to tutor children in grades K-8 one day a week in the Homework Plus Program, Monday–Thursday, 3–5 p.m. The program runs Sept. 8, 2026–May 13, 2027. Volunteers must be Virtus trained and compliant. Contact Brandi at (859) 630-9475 or blenihan@nduec.org for information.

St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky is in urgent need of Call Center volunteers to answer calls for assistance. On average, we receive over 1,700 calls each month. Shifts are available M-F, 10 a.m.–noon and noon–2 p.m. Training and initial shifts at our Erlanger location, with remote volunteering possible after. Must be 18+ years old. Background check (provided) required. Visit www.svdpnky.org/volunteer to register.

Volunteers needed at St. Vincent de Paul NKY's Erlanger Food Pantry. Volunteers assist neighbors as they shop and keep the shelves stocked. More than 300 families are served each month. Shifts are: Tuesdays, 9 a.m.–noon and 4–6 p.m.; Wednesdays, 9–11 a.m. (stocking only); and Thursdays, 9 a.m.–noon. Visit www.svdpnky.org/volunteer to register.

Medical volunteers are needed at the Rose Garden Center for Hope & Healing. They are looking for medical professionals to volunteer at their free medical clinic. Needed are Doctors, Nurses and Nurse Practitioners to volunteer once or twice per week or once or twice per month. Interested parties can reach out at tfrosegarden@gmail.com.

Mother of God Church, Covington, is a BLINK site this year. The exterior of the church will be illuminated each evening 7–11 p.m., Oct. 8–11. During this time, Mother of God Church will be offering free tours of the interior. During the day, the stained-glass windows dominate, as visitors take in the architecture and artwork that has decorated the church since the 1860s. Additionally, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Meg Booker, the church organist, will play the organ from 7–7:20 p.m. and 9–9:20 p.m.

St. Timothy Parish, Union, will host a series of interactive workshops Oct. 14, Oct. 21, and Oct. 28, 7–9 p.m., Brodnick Hall, designed to provide tools to help you share your faith. Parish Missionary Disciples offers a way to deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ, transforming believers into disciples, and empowering disciples to witness to Jesus. Since 2024, over 200 members of the Diocese of Covington have participated in this program. All are welcome! Register at https://tinyurl.com/sttimothyPMD.

Mercedarian Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament discernment retreats for women 18–35 years old interested in learning more about religious life. Retreats are free and meals are provided. Housing accommodations are limited. Day retreats: Oct. 17, Baton Rouge, La. and Feb. 27, Gainesville, Fla. Weekend retreats: Jan. 15–17, Cleveland, Ohio and March 5–7, Baton Rouge, La. Contact sisterjeanette@mercedariansisters.org to attend.

Our Savior Parish, Covington, will host its annual homecoming and Mass with celebrant and pastor Father Michael Comer, Oct. 18, 9:30 a.m. Everyone is welcome.

St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger, hosts a presentation "Pope Leo and the Challenge of Artificial Intelligence" with Msgr. William Cleves, who will explore what the pope's encyclical means for us as AI can be a great benefit to us as well as a real threat. The event will be Oct. 21, 7 p.m. at St. Barbara's Sterling Event Center, Erlanger. No RSVP needed.

Join St. Paul School PTO at The Blue and Gold Bash on Oct. 24 from 7–11:00 p.m. at Braxton Brewing, 25 W 7th Street, Covington, KY 41011. The evening will include an online silent auction, Blue & Gold Game, live music, appetizers, beverages for purchase and a Split the Pot Grand Raffle! It is an adult only event and is $20 per ticket. For more information and to purchase tickets, go to https://stpaulnky.org/school/

Holy Guardian Angels Cemetery, Sandfordtown (Edgewood), will hold its annual visitation day, Oct. 25, 2 p.m. Deacon Thomas Kissell will lead the prayer service.

St. Henry District High School Craft Show Oct. 24, 9 a.m.–3 p.m., St. Henry Athletic Complex, 35 Cavalier Blvd., Florence. Over 100 local craftsmen display unique handmade items — wooden toys and carvings, home décor, holiday décor, specialty coffees and nuts, homemade spices, pastry items, and more. Free face painting and a fall display photo opp. Adult admission $5. Overflow parking at Boone County High School. Contact Cathy (859) 341-3135.

"Vatican II Workshop: Proclaiming the Joy and Hope of Christ to the Modern World," an engaging and informative workshop presented by Prof. Lucas Pollice, chief mission officer, Diocese of Colorado Springs, Nov. 14, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m., Thomas More University's Ziegler Auditorium. Register by Oct. 23 online registration form: Register Here. Again, everyone is welcome to attend. Contact Isaak at iisaak@covdio.org or (859) 392-1529.

6-8th grade students are invited to attend the fall edition of CONNECT26 on Nov. 20, from 4–9 p.m. at Thomas More University. CONNECT is a dynamic evening filled with games, food, small groups, worship and opportunities to grow in faith and friendship with other Catholic students from across the diocese. Cost: $30 (early-bird $20 if registered before 11/9). Register at https://covdio.org/youth/.

Join Father Timothy Schehr, of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, for an inspiring seven-session Scripture study series. Each session will be held at the Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, 10 a.m. and includes a 90-minute presentation and a 30-minute group discussion. The Book of Psalms, Nov. 21, 28 and Dec. 5; The Gospel of John, March 13, 20 and May 8, 15. Registration required, visit https://forms.gle/XsrspfqFVAWHWnzRA or call Isaak A. Isaak at (859) 392-1529 and leave your name and phone number. Hosted by the Diocese of Covington, Office of Catechesis and Evangelization.

TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) 3-day overnight retreat for high school juniors/seniors and all college-age students, Nov. 21-23. Attend the very first TEC retreat in the Diocese of Covington. Bishop Iffert invites all students to discover TEC, an important part of his own discipleship journey. Applications are now open. Space is limited — sign up early at https://covdio.org/youth/.

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/

Millions of Monicas prayer group, St. Mary of the Assumption Church, Alexandria, the first Monday of each month, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Women are invited to gather for one hour of guided prayer for the intention that our children and youth will return to or remain active in the faith. For information call Carol, (859) 653-5638.

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

The Holy Face of Jesus devotion, every Tuesday 6 p.m., St. Cecilia Church, Independence, with Benediction 7 p.m., for reparation of sins against the first three commandments: denial of God, blasphemy and the profanation of Sundays and Holy Days; includes praying the Litany of the Holy Face of Jesus, the Holy Face Chaplet, prayers of petition and silent devotion, all during Exposition.

Parents of Addicted Loved Ones, (PAL) is a support group that meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 6:30–8 p.m. at Catholic Charities, Latonia. It provides continuing education and support, at no charge, for parents with a son, daughter or spouse suffering from addiction to alcohol or drugs. No cost. Just come — 3629 Church Street, Latonia. For more information contact Client Care at (859) 581-8974.

A Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group begins at Mother of God Parish, Covington, for family members and friends of persons who have ended their own lives. Group meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of each month at the parish office in the St. Aloysius Conference Room. Contact Jeff Duell at (859) 801-8213.

Zoom Support Group for family, relatives and friends of victims of clergy sexual abuse, second Monday of the month, 6:30–8 p.m. CST; 7:30–9 p.m. EST. These meetings are confidential and no one is forced to contribute unless they want to. For information contact Paula Kaempffer, coordinator of Restorative Practices and Survivor Support, for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, at kaempfferp@archspm.org or call (763) 688-3978.

St. Mary's Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, offers Veneration of a relic of the True Cross, on the first Friday of every month, from noon–1 p.m. Confessions are offered concurrently. The monthly veneration is held in silence and concludes with a blessing and the opportunity for the faithful to come forward to personally venerate the True Cross relic. The monthly veneration is sponsored by the Knights and Dames of the Covington-Lexington section of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

Dickman photo



St. Agnes Oktoberfest

The St. Agnes Parish Oktoberfest committee gathered, Sept. 27, in front of the new giant arch that framed the entrance to the parish's popular German-inspired celebration. The three-day celebration brought together parishioners and community members for fun and fellowship.

(Continued from page 3)



Schroeder photo



Schroeder photo



McGreevy photo



McGreevy photo

(top) Pilgrims, including Bishop John Iffert, stand together for a photo inside of Templo de Santa María Tonantzintla (Temple of St. Mary Tonantzintla), Puebla, Mexico. Schroeder photo

(left) A mural depicting Our Lady of Guadalupe can be seen from the sidewalk in Mexico City, Mexico.

(above, left) Inside The Capilla del Cerrito de los Angeles (literally the Chapel of the Little Hill of the Angels), a chapel built on the site where the Blessed Virgin first appeared to St. Juan Diego, a woman prayerfully raises her arms.

(above, right) St. Juan Diego's tilma, still fully intact, hangs in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico City, above the nation's flag.

The Cathedral Concert Series celebrates its 50th season

(Continued from page 4)

counted as a full season.

Robert and Rita established two guiding principles: to present music rooted in the great tradition of Western sacred music, and to make it available to the general public without an admission charge. They also intended the Series to support itself, without drawing upon the operating funds of the Cathedral parish or the Diocese.

The enterprise depended on their complementary talents. Robert and Rita both supplied the artistic direction. Rita created the promotional materials and brought a gift for communication and hospitality to the work. Guests, visitors and benefactors found in her a warm and welcoming face of the Series. The family also remembers her as the person who would have attended to banking and business details.

It was very much a family undertaking. The Schaffer dinner table was a familiar setting for spirited discussion about the best path forward, or if that Bach fugue was being played too fast. The decisions behind the music grew from a partnership in which ideas were explored and debated with conviction.

Admission remained free, with a freewill offering received at concerts. But basket offerings alone could not sustain the programming or maintain the Schwab. A handful of generous benefactors, including donors who chose to remain anonymous, provided essential support over the years. Their generosity has helped make music at a high level possible while keeping the doors open to everyone.

That commitment has endured through fifty full seasons, even as the costs of presenting professional musicians and major works have continued to rise.

Throughout its history, the Series has enjoyed the blessing, support and attendance of five Bishops and six Cathedral Rectors. Their encouragement has helped sustain its place within the musical and cultural life of the Covington Diocese.

Numerous volunteers, parishioners and friends, and the third generation of the Schaffer family, have also contributed their time and talents. Their work has helped make the Cathedral a welcoming place for visiting artists and audiences. Behind every program stand people whose contributions may never appear on the concert flyer, but whose presence has been essential to the Series.

With that foundation of artistic purpose, generosity and welcome, the Cathedral Concert Series grew beyond its modest beginnings. The Sunday-afternoon recitals opened the way to visiting artists, young musicians and ensembles, and to annual traditions that audiences would come to cherish. Part Two will explore that expanding musical life — and the responsibility of preserving the historic organ that helped inspire it.

Dr. Gregory Schaffer is principal organist and choirmaster for the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, Ky.

Cathedral Concert Series
50th Season Schedule
2026–2027

Sunday, Oct. 25, 2026, 3 p.m.
Musica Sacra Cincinnati
Chorus and Orchestra
L. Brett Scott, Music Director

Sunday, Nov. 22, 2026, 3 p.m.
University of Cincinnati
College-Conservatory of Music
Organ Studio
Remembering Maurice Duruflé

Sunday, Dec. 6, 2026, 3 p.m.
Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols
Basilica Bishop's Choir
Very Rev. Ryan Maher, presider
Gregory Schaffer, Organist and Conductor

Sunday, Jan. 10, 2027, 3 p.m.
An Epiphany Epilogue
LeeAnn Kordenbrock, Soprano
Brass Quintet
Gregory Schaffer, Organ and Synthesizer

Sunday, Feb. 21, 2027, 3 p.m.
Heri et Hodie
Krista Cornish Scott, Artistic Director
Early Church Music from France

March 7, 2027, 3 p.m.
A Musical Celebration of
Johann Sebastion Bach's 342nd Birthday
Michael Unger, organist
In the Company of Bach

All concerts are held at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, and are open to the public with no admission charge. Freewill offering gladly accepted.

NEWPORT CENTRAL CATHOLIC EST. 1996
WED. OCT 21st
6-8PM
DROP-IN
Faith, Family, Academics, Character, & Stewardship
WE BELIEVE.

OPEN HOUSE
COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN PRIVATE EDUCATION
BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

NCCHS.COM/ADMISSIONS

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!

Bishop Iffert celebrated first of two anniversary Masses

(Continued from page 2)

that call and taken it to heart. A disciple has begged Jesus to teach him how to pray, and has received that instruction, and has a life of prayer to sink into and to rely on. A disciple is a person who knows that they are called to be Jesus' healing hands in the world, and who are so converted by the Gospel, of love of neighbor, that it oozes out of them in the corporal and spiritual works of mercy that Jesus invites us to."

"This is the life of disciple," Bishop Iffert said. "It's nothing less than the life of laying down one's own life's breath for one's friends. It is picking up the cross and following Jesus."

Remembering his consecration, and Jesus' great commandment, he said, "That's what I'm doing here in Northern Kentucky [making disciples], that's what I'm sent here to accomplish."

Elaborating more on his time as Bishop of Covington, Bishop Iffert said that "after five years with you, I continue to be awed, and I continue to be amazed. Not simply by that Cathedral Basilica and by its beauty, but after five years of getting to know you and living with you and learning to love with you, I am awed in the same way by the goodness of the people of God here in this diocese, by your hospitality, your warmth, your devotion to care for your neighbor, the movements of love among us, and I still think to myself, God, I can't believe that you allow me to celebrate in the midst of this holy Church!"

"I am blessed, and so I thank you for journeying with me," he said.

Bailey photos











(far, left) Bishop Iffert delivers his homily from the pulpit of St. Patrick Parish, Maysville, during the Southeast Deanery anniversary Mass.

(top, left) Ann Poe, former longtime St. Patrick School, Maysville, principal helps deliver the gifts to Bishop Iffert.

(top, right) Father Hennessey, on behalf of the priests of the Southeast Deanery, presents Bishop Iffert with a gift — a replica of the pectoral cross worn regularly by Pope Leo XIV, with a first-class relic of St. Augustine.

(left) Joined by the priests of the Southeast Deanery – (left to right) Father Joseph Rielage, pastor, St. Edward Parish, Cynthiana; Father Joey Shelton, pastor, St. Augustine Parish, Augusta; Father Joshua Heskamp, parochial vicar, St. Patrick Parish, Maysville; Father John Paul, pastor, St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Flemingsburg and St. Rose of Lima, Mays Lick; Father Britton Hennessey, pastor, St. Francis Xavier Parish, Falmouth; Father Augustine Aidoo, pastor, St. Patrick Parish, Maysville – Bishop Iffert celebrates the liturgy of the Eucharist.

(right) Faithful of the Southeast Deanery gathered to celebrate five years of Bishop Iffert's leadership.

Baker photos





(left) Bishop Iffert shares his homily during the Southwest Deanery Anniversary Mass, Sept. 29.

(right) During the consecration, Bishop John Iffert raises the Eucharist while celebrating Mass with the people of the Southwest Deanery at All Saints Parish, Walton, in recognition of his five year episcopal ordination.

(below, left) Priests and deacons of the Southwest Deanery join Bishop Iffert in celebrating his anniversary.

(below) Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker, members of the Southwest Deanery's community who run the local St. Joseph Academy, stand to sing the opening hymn of Bishop Iffert's anniversary Mass.







Sisters of Divine Providence

Jubilarians (from left to right) 60 years: Sister Mary Carol Henggeler, Sister Carolyn Marie Betsch, Sister Grace Ann Schmersal, Sister Elizabeth Wehri, Sister Gladys Macke; Sister Claire Osburg (70 yrs); not Pictured, Sister Susan Baumann (60 Yrs)



Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery

Jubilarians (from left) Sister Rita Brink, sub prioress, 60 years: Sister Aileen Bankemper and Sister Christa Kreinbrink

Bishop Iffert celebrates with women religious

Laura Keener
Editor

Notre Dame Sister Marla Monahan, vicar for religious, welcomed Bishop John Iffert and the 2026 women religious jubilarians for a celebratory luncheon, Oct. 3, at St. Charles Community Center. The gathering honored the jubilarians for their life-long commitment to God in service to His people.

"What a blessing for our work, for our church, especially for our Diocese of Covington," said Sister Marla after introducing the jubilarians. "We're so very grateful and we're glad we can celebrate today."

After the meal, Bishop Iffert also thanked the Sisters, recognizing that their life of consecration is defined by total commitment to God's kingdom and performing sacrifices to draw others toward Christ.

"Thank you for your witness to the importance of consecration and how even the nature of thing that is of itself good is transformed by a life that is completely dedicated to the civilization of Christ's love," Bishop Iffert said. "I'm most grateful to you and I thank you all very much."



Sisters of Notre Dame

Jubilarians 60 years: (front row, from left) Sister Elaine Winter, Sister Cormarie Rebhan, Back Row: Sister Dennise Wagenlander and Sister Suzanne Rose.



Sisters of Notre Dame

Jubilarians 70 Years: Sister Ann Christine Kathman and Sister Karlanne Noehring









(above, left) After lunch, Bishop Iffert joins the jubilarians for a group photo.

(above, right) Notre Dame Sister Marla Monahan, vicar for religious, welcomes the 2026 women religious jubilarians for a celebratory luncheon, Oct. 3.

(left) Divine Providence Sister Claire Osburg and Notre Dame Sister Suzanne Rose chat before lunch.

(right) Divine Providence Sister Carolyn Marie Betsch enjoying lunch and conversation.



ALLIANCE FOR CATHOLIC URBAN EDUCATION

ACUE

THANKS OUR WONDERFUL LEADERSHIP DONORS

2025-2026 ACUE Annual Fund

Most Reverend John Iffert
Honorary Chair

Karen Riegler
General Chair

Mary Ann Pietromonaco
Past Chair



Christ the Teacher Society

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Able
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Andrzejewski
Anonymous
Mr. Kenneth Arlinghaus *
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Arlinghaus *
Mr. and Mrs. Terry Arlinghaus
Jeffrey and Melanie Arnold *
Ms. Linda Arnold
Theresa and Terry Averbeck *
Mr. and Mrs. Juan Aviles *
Dr. and Mrs. Gary Badarak
Mr. and Mrs. John Bankemper
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bartlett *
Mr. David Bauman
Mr. and Mrs. Norbert Baumann *
Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Berning
The Honorable and
Mrs. William Bertelsman
Joe and Ruthie Bessler
Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Birkenhauer
Mr. and Mrs. Matt Bischoff
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowers *
Charlie and Mimi Bradley
Mr. and Mrs. James Bradley
Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Brauley *
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Breitenstein
Lawrence Brennan and
Karen Enzweiler
Mrs. Carrie Brueggemann
Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Brunner
Dr. Eugene Burchell, Jr and
Mrs. Susan Burchell
Mr. and Mrs. Shawn Burkle
Mr. Tim Burks *
William and Catherine Burleigh *
Mr. Daniel Burr *
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Butler *
Tom and Tammy Butler
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Carl
Wayne and Frances K. Carlisle
Mr. Russell Carson and
Mrs. Sally Desmond *
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Chillo
Galen and Annie Chun *
Mrs. Mary Ciafardini
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Collins
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Collins
Susan and Garren Colvin *
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Colvin, Jr. *
Mr. and Mrs. Blaine Comfort
Congregation of Divine Providence
of Kentucky *
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Cook
Mr. Mike Corcoran
Mr. and Mrs. Bob Coughlin *
Mr. and Mrs. John Creed
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Curtis
Mr. James and Dr. Holly Danneman *
Dr. and Mrs. William Danneman
Dean Family Foundation *
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Dempsey
Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Depenbrock *
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Deters
Mr. and Mrs. William Di Grezio *
Tom and Patti Dietz
Mr. and Mrs. Barri Donaghy
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Dorger
Chase and Angela Dressman *
Mr. and Mrs. James Dressman, III
Mr. and Mrs. Terence Dunn
Mr. and Mrs. Chris DuPont
Ms. Deborah Jo Durr
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Dusing
David N. and Ann Early Foundation *
Mr. Andrew Eisner and
Dr. Molly Eisner
Mr. and Mrs. Louis Esselman
Michael and Ann Esselman
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Evans *
David and Kimberly Faeth *
Dr. Daniel Fagel
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fedders
Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Fedor
Dcn. and Mrs. James Fortner
Bill and Joy Fotsch Family *
Most Rev. Roger Foys, D.D. *
Dcn. and Mrs. Gerald Franzen *
Mr. and Mrs. Brian Fuller
Mr. Donald Gerrein *
Mr. Dan Gerrety
Mr. and Mrs. William Grady
Mr. Matt Grannen and
Ms. MaryAnn Pietromonaco
Ms. Elizabeth Grause *
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Griffith *
Mark and Susan Grimme Family
Foundation *
Dawn and Kevin Groneck
Dr. Robert Gronner
Dr. and Mrs. Paul Guenthner
Mark and Casey Guilfoyle *
Mr. and Mrs. David Haas
Dr. Joseph Haas *
Mike and Stacie Haas
Ms. Evelyn Habermehl
Dorothy and Larry Hafertepen *
Richard D. Hannan Family
Foundation *
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Hardcorn
Mr. and Mrs. Mike Hardig *
Mr. Michael A. and
Ms. Molly Q. Hartmann *
Mr. and Mrs. David Hauber
Mr. Robert Hauber
Mr. and Mrs. Derek Haught
Richard and Julie Heidrich Family
Joseph and Jane Heil
Mr. and Mrs. Tony Helton
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hentz *
Mr. and Mrs. Larry Hicks *
Amy and Ron Hoehn
Robert and Diane Hoffer Family *
Mrs. Virginia Holstein *
Mr. and Mrs. Mick Holtzleiter *
ESAP - The George Hubert Jr.
Family Foundation *
Ms. Bonnie Hugus
Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Huller
Jeff and Vicki Jehn
Mr. Joseph Jones
Ms. Mary Rose Kahmann
Very Rev. Mark Keene V.G.
Mrs. Diane Remmel Keller *
Rev. Msgr. Kurt Kemo
Al Kenkel Family Foundation *
Mr. and Mrs. Doug Kennedy
George Kingston and Rose McGuire *
Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Kirst
Mrs. and Mr. Theresa Kirst
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Klare *
Mr. and Mrs. Mathew Klein
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Klocke
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Kluesener
Kris and Lisa Knochelmann
Mr. Thomas Knox
William and Elaine Kohlhepp Family *
Jerry and Diane Kohlhepp
Dr. and Mrs. Mark Kolar
Dr. and Mrs. James Kolenich *
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Kolkmeier *
Mr. and Mrs. George Kreutzjans
Mrs. Geraldine Kreutzjans
Mr. Jerome Larmann *
Mr. and Mrs. Ryan Lauer
Dr. and Mrs. Keith Laws *
James and Mary Lazzari *
Mr. and Mrs. Hien Le
Dcn. and Mrs. John Leardon *
Mr. Richard Lehman
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Leis
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Lemberg
Guy and Marsha Linnemann
Melissa A. Lueke and
P. Scott Linstruth *
Mrs. Mary Lonneman
Dr. and Mrs. Ronald Lubbe
Mrs. Mary Luebbers
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Luebering
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Luegering *
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Mace
Mr. and Mrs. David Maher
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Maier
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Martin
Gary and Mary Massie
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Mayer

Recognition is based on leadership contributions to ACUE of $1,000 or more received from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

Mr. Gerald Mayerhofer
Ms. Peggy McCloskey *
Mr. Michael McLane
Ryan and Meghan McLane *
Kelly E. and Kelly A. McMahon
Steven and Anne Megerle *
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Meihaus
Mr. Louis Merkle
Mr. and Mrs. David Meyer *
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Meyer *
Timothy and Leila Meyer *
Dr. Stephen Meyers *
Mr. and Mrs. Keith Moellering *
Dr. and Mrs. M. Ryan Moon
Mr. Morgan Moore
The Muashsher Family *
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Muehlenkamp
T.J. and Sarah Mueller

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Remke
Mr. George A. and Dolores E. Renaker Foundation
Daniel and Karen Riegler *
Mr. and Mrs. Scott Ries
Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Robinson *
Mrs. Joan Robinson
Dr. and Mrs. James Roebker Family
Ken and Jan Roenker
Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Rohmiller
Kimberly and Michael Rohmiller
Mr. and Mrs. Chris Rose *
Rosenberger Family Foundation *
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Ruberg Family
Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Ruehl
Mr. Robert Ryan Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Saalfeld *
Dr. and Mrs. Gregory Salzman



Robert and Carol Munninghoff
Mrs. Janice Neltner
Marc and Susan Neltner Family
Dr. and Mrs. Scott Neltner
Mr. Sean Noll
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Noll
Mr. and Mrs. Steven Novak
Ms. Alice O'Neill *
Dale and Melanie Overmann
Ms. Katherine Papp
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Penn
Ms. Kathleen Perkins *
Blair and Jane Pohlman
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Pujol *
Mr. Thomas Purtell *
Mr. Stanley Raaker
Mr. and Mrs. J. Stephen Rankin *
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Ransdell Family *
Mr. John T. Rasp, Jr. *
Mr. and Mrs. Randy Rawe *
Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Rawe
Mrs. Charlotte Read *
Mr. David Rechtin

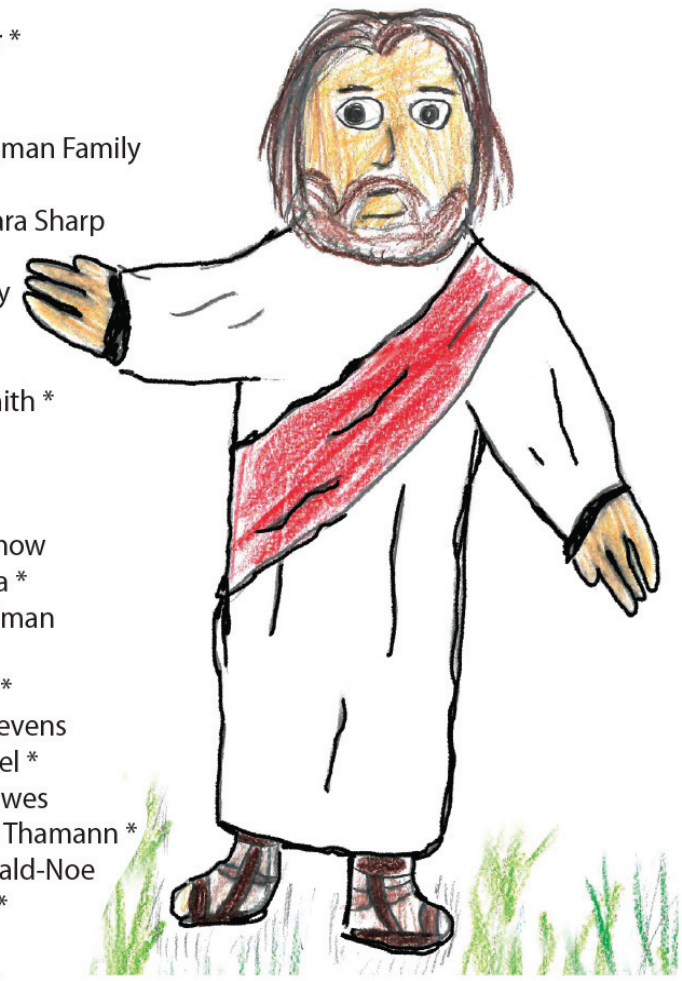
Mr. and Mrs. James Sander
Drs. Craig and Kimberly Sanders
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Sartori Family *
Peter P. and Mary Butler Sartori Fund *
Ms. Margaret Schack
Mr. and Mrs. John Schilling, Jr. *
Ms. Karen Schmidt *
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Schmidt *
Dr. and Mrs. David Schneider

Cornerstone Donors
($50,000 or more)

The Yung Family Foundation

Corporex/The Butler Foundation
Drees Homes Foundation
Al Kenkel Family Fund
Rosenberger Family Foundation
St. Elizabeth Healthcare

Mr. Gregory Schroeder *
Mr. Michael Schulte
Mrs. Mary Seiter
Charles and Ruth Seligman Family Foundation *
Mr. George and Mrs. Tara Sharp
Drs. Thomas and Nancy Shaughnessy
Mr. Jim Sholar
Mr. Paul Smith, Jr. *
Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Smith *
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Smith *
Mr. John Snow and Mrs. Paula Billiter Snow
Todd and Mary Jo Sova *
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Spellman
Mr. John Spille *
Diane and Jeff Steffen *
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Stevens
Mr. and Mrs. David Tavel *
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Tewes
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Thamann *
Mrs. Stephaney Theobald-Noe and Mr. David Noe *
Mr. and Mrs. Dave Thueneman Family
Dan and Wendy Tobergte
Mr. and Mrs. William Torbeck
Ms. Barbara Trauth
Dr. Laura Trice
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Vandiver
Mr. Jon and Dr. Shelly Voet
Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Vogelpohl
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Vollmar
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Volmer
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Von Handorf
Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Vonderhaar
Andrew and Barbara VonLehman
Mr. and Mrs. John Walcutt
Mrs. Maria Wartenberg *
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Weber
Dr. Gregory Weckenbrock *
Mr. William Wehrman III
Quin and Lisa Wichmann
Mr. Ransom Wick and Dr. Jennifer Wick
Dcn. Joseph Wiedeman
Patty and Steve Wilken Family *
Mark and Kathy Williams *
Stephen R. and Donna Wilmhoff
Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Winnike
Wolnitzek Family Foundation Inc. *



Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Wurtenberger *
Chris and Kelley Young *
Yung Family Foundation *
Michael F. Zalla Memorial Foundation *
Mr. and Mrs. Ted Zalla
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Zeck
Mr. and Mrs. William Zeck
Anthony and Geraldine Zembrodt *
Mr. Wilbert Ziegler *
Mrs. Barbara Zimmer

Leadership Organizations

Cardinal Engineering
CDI Electric, Inc. *
Charles H. Bilz Insurance
Christian Brothers Services
Corporex/The Butler Foundation *
Drees Homes Foundation *
Dressman, Benzinger and LaVelle (DBL Law) PSC*
DuPont Plumbing, Inc.
Fidelity Foundation Matching Gifts to Education *
Miramar Charitable Foundation
St. Barbara Church Holy Name Society
St. Elizabeth Healthcare *
The R.C. Durr Foundation, Inc. *
Thomas More University
TriState Water Works *
Verst Group Logistics
Western and Southern Financial Group *



***Indicates Adopt-A-Student Donor ($2,500 or more)**

St. Henry District High School launches capital campaign ‘Faithful to Our Roots, Fearless in Our Rise’

Noah Francis photos





(above, left) Jim and Robin Burrow, parents of Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow, speak at the public launch, Sept. 17, of the St. Henry District High School “Faithful to Our Roots, Fearless in Our Rise” capital campaign.

(above, right) Suzi Francis, campaign co-chair, speaks to attendees from the school’s state-of-the-art auditorium.



(above) Flanking an armored SHDHS Crusader (from left) are campaign co-chairs, Chris Cook and Suzi Francis; Grant Brannen, principal and Jim and Robin Burrow.

(below) SHDHS students serve hors’ doeuvres at the campaign launch.

(bottom) Renderings of the Fieldhouse Training Center were displayed at the event.





Laura Keener
Editor

St. Pope John Paul II was known for a great many things, not the least of which his athleticism and love of sports. Among his favorite sports that he played are soccer, hockey, skiing and swimming. During his papacy, he even installed a swimming pool at the papal summer residence, Castel Gandolfo, so that he could swim laps to stay in shape.

During the great Jubilee 2000, in a homily on the Jubilee of Sports People as he introduced his “Sport Manifesto,” he said, “May this examination offer everyone — managers, technicians and athletes — an opportunity to find new creative and motivating zeal, so that sport, without losing its true nature, can answer the needs of our time: sport that protects the weak and excludes no one, that frees young people from the snares of apathy and indifference, and arouses a healthy sense of competition in them; sport that is a factor of emancipation for poorer countries and helps to eradicate intolerance and build a more fraternal and united world; sport which contributes to the love of life, teaches sacrifice, respect and responsibility, leading to the full development of every human person.”

Pope John Paul’s message in 2000 encapsulates the motivation behind St. Henry District High School’s “Faithful to Our Roots, Fearless In Our Rise,” $4 million capital campaign.

“I think that it’s investing in the whole person, you know, definitely the four pillars of faith and scholarship and arts and leadership, but then also recognizing the fifth pillar of athletics,” said Suzi Francis, co-chair of the capital campaign.

The campaign, “Faithful to Our Roots, Fearless In Our Rise,” has three parts. The school plans to use $1.5 million to reduce its existing $6 million debt, $2 million to build an on-campus Fieldhouse Training Center and $500,000 to renovate the existing men’s and women’s locker rooms. St. Henry introduced the public phase of the campaign during a Sept. 17 event. Honored guests included Jim and Robin Burrow, parents of Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow. Principal Grant Brannen said they spoke about “investing in your student athletes” and in the wider community. “It was a great night,” he said.

The campaign theme joins St. Henry’s history with its plans for the future.

“We always want to stay with our tradition,” he said. “But we’re fearless in our rise,” he added, noting that the school is adapting, expanding its academic offerings, adding programs such as football and men and women lacrosse and preparing for what Mr. Brannen expects will be the largest enrollment in St. Henry’s 93-year history.

“Growing’s not easy,” Mr. Brannen said. He credited St. Henry’s administrators, teachers and chaplain, Father Matt Cushing, for helping the school move forward. “You can just kind of feel the sense of community right now,” he said.

The campaign also continues an earlier effort to educate the whole person. St. Henry’s 2020 building project added STEM labs, classrooms, a fine arts center, a black box theater and a state-of-the-art auditorium. At that time, more than 60 percent of students took part in fine arts. The project supported a well-rounded Catholic education that formed students in body, mind and spirit. It also added a hefty debt of $6 million for the school community.

Campaign co-chair Chris Cook said the debt from that work “was not an accident,” and should be viewed alongside what the improvements made possible.

“It was an intentional act,” he said. “We were able to build this great addition to the facility.” He highlighted the auditorium, STEM labs and fine arts center and asked, “How many more students have we been able to impact already?” regarding the project’s contribution to SHDHS growth.

Mr. Cook, a 2005 St. Henry graduate, said the school played an important role in his education and career. He started a business while he was still in high school and later became involved in improvements to the school’s turf field and in launching its football program.

“St. Henry meant a great deal to me through my education,” he said, noting that athletics can be part of education. Lessons from basketball, his coaches and teammates stayed with him as he led businesses and people. “When you’re part of a team,” he said, “some of those soft skills and life lessons are developing” beyond what happens in a classroom.

Today’s campaign has the same whole-person focus, but it responds to a different need. Today, more than 80 percent of St. Henry students participate in athletics, campaign leaders said.

The proposed Fieldhouse Training Center is the crown jewel of the campaign. Plans call for space where teams can train together, as well as locker areas, training space and coaches’ offices. Mr. Brannen said the Center is important “for the needs of our students.” It would also allow some teams to practice earlier instead of waiting until late in the evening for the weight room.

The fieldhouse is expected to include about 160 to 170 lockers, Mr. Brannen said. That would ease pressure on teams whose athletes now may have to change in other areas near the turf field.

“We want the students where they can go and have a place,” he said. “It’s part of investment in our student athletes.”

That investment in an overwhelmingly large portion of the student body was important to Mr. Cook. For him, the number of students and coaches impacted moved the project from what some might consider a luxury to a real need.

“One of the things that was important to me is that we could affect so many people, and in this situation, we’re touching 85 percent of the school. That’s a pretty high return,” said Mr. Cook. “I think that’s one of the things that makes this campaign special — it’s a real need.”

Mr. Cook said that the school’s current weight and training room is smaller than a typical classroom making it impossible for an entire team to train at the same time. With every team having to train in shifts, it not only puts a burden on students but also on coaches and trainers.

“Now in the off season, we’re not asking our coaches to be there for an hour or two hours for training; they’re having to stay for four, five, six, hours or longer in the off

(Continued from page 14)

season just to try to get their entire team through a proper training regimen," said Mr. Cook. "It's just honestly, it's not fair to the coaching staff, and it it's very burdensome on the student athletes and their families."

The $500,000 locker-room portion of the campaign will update the existing spaces rather than replace them. Mr. Brannen said the renovations are needed because St. Henry has added sports and athletes while the facilities have stayed the same for decades.

"The locker room space has been the same since 1998. It hasn't changed, and we have more athletes," Mr. Brannen said.

To make giving more manageable for donors, the campaign allows pledges to be paid over five years. Mr. Brannen said a $5,000 pledge can be considered as an $84 monthly payment rather than one large gift. "It's a different thought process," he said. "It's like, 'Okay, I can do this.'"

Mrs. Francis said the campaign's "fearless" message also asks people to act in faith.

"God doesn't call us to do things that we're comfortable with," she said. Supporting the project may require donors to "go out on a limb of faith," she said, but their gifts will invest in students who will become leaders in Northern Kentucky and beyond.

Mr. Brannen said the heart of the campaign is simple: "You're investing in our students." Asking for money is one of the hardest parts of his job, he said, but he believes the request serves the school and the community. "Whatever financial contribution you can make," he said, "it just goes a long way to helping out our current students and our future St. Henry students."St. Henry District High School launches capital campaign 'Faithful to Our Roots, Fearless in Our Rise'

Protecting God's Children for Adults Safe Environment Trainings

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

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

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

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

Bulletins:

- October bulletin: posted Sunday, Oct. 4; due Tuesday, Nov. 3.

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, Oct. 13, 6:30–9 p.m., Diocesan Catholic Children's Home, Ft. Mitchell, Miller Building Training Room
- Thursday, Oct. 15, 6–8:30 p.m., geared for Vincentians, St. Therese Parish, Southgate, School Cafeteria
- Tuesday, Oct. 20, 6–9 p.m., St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas
- Wednesday, Nov. 4 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Nov. 4 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Dec. 9 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Dec. 9 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Thursday, Jan. 7 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Thursday, Jan. 7 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Jan. 20 9–11:30 a.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington
- Wednesday, Jan. 20 6–8:30 p.m., Diocesan Curia, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

Note: If your Training Tab is missing or you cannot access your account, contact your parish, school or institution.

For other difficulties, contact Lynn Weisgerber at (859) 392-1565 or lweisgerber@covdio.org

SHOPPER'S GUIDE

Hancock Drain Service Inc.
#1 in the #2 Business

Residential and Commercial
- All Types of Drains
- Problem Lines
- Preventive Maintenance
- Sump Pump Lines
- Jetting, Filming and Locating

(859) 743-9669
hancockdrainservice.com

859.371.7444 www.GraniteWorldNKY.com


YOU DREAM IT, WE BUILD IT

TOM Rechtin
Heating & Air Conditioning
www.tomrechtin.com
(859) 261-8269
Master HVAC #MO4784

PLUMBING · HEATING · AIR CONDITIONING · ELECTRIC
INDOOR AIR QUALITY · SEWERS · DRAINS
Over 95 Years of Family Owned Service!
Schneller Knochelmann
Plumbing · Heating · Air · Electric


Call 859.203.7230 · www.skpha.com

America's Choice in Homecare
Visiting Angels
LIVING ASSISTANCE SERVICES
Caregivers with character!
Reliable caregivers provide up to 24 hour non-medical care in your home. Hygiene assistance, meals, light housework, companionship. Affordable rates. Top Background Checks.
Cindy Sesher-Director
1099 Burlington Pike, Florence KY ▪ (859) 647-6770

ARC ELECTRIC
AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING,
24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE
Since 1953
ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS • HEATING SYSTEMS • AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS
- New installations • Repair all makes and models
- Clean & Service • Humidifiers
- Oil or Propane • Radiant or Gas Heat
- Electronic Air Cleaner • Hot Water Heat Systems


YORK® INSTALL CONFIDENCE
www.arcelechvac.com

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!

SMITH MUFFLER®
Complete Automotive Care
Family owned and operated since 1924
Trusted for complete auto repair
Smithmuffler.com
859-431-5728
Located at the corner of 5th and Main Streets, Covington

Call Tony at the *Messenger* to place your ad in the SHOPPER'S GUIDE.
(859) 392-1572

BLAU MECHANICAL, INC.
Heating & Piping
Hot Water Steam Vapor
1532 Russell St., Cov. 291-3159

TOP QUALITY SERVICE REALTY
Making Your Dreams of Owning a Home Come True
Call Today for Excellent Real Estate Service
859-282-8427
John Vincent
Need assistance selling your home or buying a home?
www.TopQualityServiceRealty.com

Serving all of Northern Kentucky. Call today.
We are here to serve you.

Classified Advertisements



Gulf Shores, AL Beachfront Condominium Rentals

1-2-3 bed beachfront units and 4 bed beach resort house. Owner direct rates save you $$!! Call or text Chris or Larry Ashley at 1 (502) 396-2287.
B.A. Beach Properties–Your Kentucky Condo Connection!

GERDES CONCRETE & MASONRY

Concrete – Specializing in concrete replacement, driveways, sidewalks, steps, patios, stamped concrete

Masonry – Cultured stone, retaining walls, brick pavers, foundation repairs, free standing wood burning fireplace

Quality work & ref. **Call Bill (859) 331-4733**
Messenger advertiser since 1993

All American Painting
Interior – Exterior Painting
Call Joe at (859) 609-2513

BEACHFRONT PARADISE FT MYERS BEACH

2 Bedroom, 2 Bath Condo. Walking distance to the Square. Call for more info.

859-250-4185

CURIA ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

The Diocese of Covington invites qualified, actively practicing Roman Catholics to apply for the position of Curia Administrative Assistant. This full-time position will support both the Chancery office as well as the Benefits function in the Finance office, fulfilling vital logistical and operational functions in an active environment and requiring a motivated self-starter with a love for the Church, an interest in service, and a demonstrable history of maintaining confidentiality. Other requirements include experience and comfort with using Microsoft 365 software, familiarity with or willingness to learn benefits software and Camino Church Management software, strong communications skills regardless of the medium, and exceptional organizational ability and attention to detail. Interested candidates may send a letter of interest along with a comprehensive resume, including compensation history and at least five appropriate references with email contact information, by email or fax to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR, skoplyay@covdio.org, fax 859/392-1589.

Moore's Painting
The Company you feel safe with
Interior & exterior painting.
In business since 1988. Members of St. Timothy Parish.
Moore's Painting — Union, Ky. — (859) 512-7398

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

The Diocese of Covington is accepting applications for the full-time Curia position of Administrative Assistant. The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization facilitates ministries such as adult formation, catechist and religion teacher certification, marriage preparation, wedding anniversary vespers, divorced or separated ministry, family ministry, young adult ministry, and Catholic scouting. The Administrative Assistant provides a range of support to the program staff including data collection and management across a wide area; project logistics, coordination, and timelines; maintenance of the office master calendar; regularly updating the office web page; religion teacher certification status updates; etc. The position requires a detail-oriented practicing Roman Catholic with exceptional interpersonal and general office skills, including MS Office experience. Interested individuals are asked to send a cover letter, resume with compensation history, and at least five references with contact email addresses to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR at skoplyay@covdio.org

BUILDING AND PROPERTY CUSTODIAN

The Diocese of Covington, KY is accepting applications for the full-time position of Building and Property Custodian at the Offices of the Diocesan Curia. Our building and the surrounding property requires the attention of an individual who will develop a sense of personal responsibility for its appearance and well-being. The position will involve a regular daily, weekly, and monthly schedule of routine cleaning and upkeep duties within the building and the chapel; setup of conference rooms; regular as well as seasonal upkeep of walkways and other exterior features; and other duties as needed. The successful candidate will be a personable self-starter who is dependable, trustworthy, and capable of prioritizing duties as circumstances require. Please contact Stephen Koplyay, SPHR to begin the application process: skoplyay@covdio.org, or call 859-392-1500.

HOUSE CLEANING

Isn't it time you come clean? We don't cut corners, we clean them. Insured and bonded.
Discount for senior citizens and first-time clients.
Call (859) 760-6408.

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

CARE NET
Pregnancy Services of Northern Kentucky

Join Team Pro-Life!

Care Net seeks a **part-time center assistant** (Williamstown, 18 hrs/wk) and a **part-time nurse advocate** (Florence/Williamstown, 18 hrs/wk). Go to carenetnky.org/employment or scan the code.

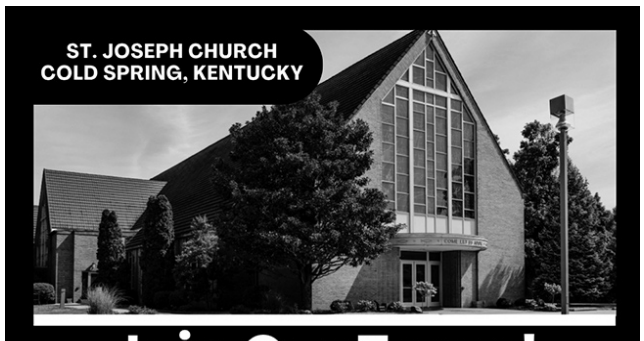
CATHOLIC CHARITIES – USE YOUR GIFTS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Catholic Charities is seeking compassionate, mission-driven individuals who want their work to reflect their faith while serving our community with dignity and respect.

Counseling Program Supervisor (Full Time) Lead our outpatient counseling program through clinical supervision, program leadership, and direct counseling services. LCSW required. Enjoy outstanding benefits including fully paid single health insurance, defined-benefit pension, generous paid time off, Catholic school tuition assistance, and more.

Parish Kitchen Weekend Coordinator (Part Time) Help provide meals, hospitality, and hope to our neighbors in need. Join a team of dedicated staff and volunteers serving in a welcoming, faith-inspired environment. Flexible weekend scheduling with an average of 3-6 shifts per month.

If these opportunities are not for you, please consider sharing them with someone who may be called to this work. Apply by emailing **sbraun@covingtoncharities.org** or learn more at **www.covingtoncharities.org/news-events/job-opportunities**.



Join Our Team!
Business Manager

St. Joseph Church is seeking a collaborative and detail oriented Business Manager to oversee the day to day financial, administrative, and operational functions of our parish and school. Working closely with leadership, staff, volunteers, and vendors, this position helps ensure the smooth operation of our mission driven community.

Join our team and help support the ministry and mission of St. Joseph. Apply today.

For a full job desciption please visit our website and our social media pages.

For questions or to apply please email:
Fr. Andrew Young
ayoung@stjoeparish.net

St. Joseph
Gather. Connect. Encounter Christ. Cold Spring, Kentucky
stjosephcoldspring.com



A quick favor for our *Messenger* newspaper

For 142 years, the *Messenger* has been your trusted source for local, national and international Catholic news. To ensure that we keep delivering the news in a way that is most beneficial to our readers, we need your feedback. Whether you've been receiving the *Messenger* for decades or just recently started getting the paper, we want to hear from you.

Scan the QR code with your phone camera or visit covdio.org/messenger to share your thoughts.

Obituary



Sister Martha Walther, OSB

Sister Martha Walther was born on Aug. 25, 1934, to George A. and Rosalie Kathman Walther of St. Benedict's Parish and given the name Martha Anne. She was the fifth of six children, with two sisters and three brothers.

Martha graduated from Villa Madonna Academy in 1952 and entered St. Walburg Monastery as a postulant on Aug. 15 of that same year. She became a novice in 1953 and received the name Sister Janine. First profession followed in 1954, perpetual in 1957, silver jubilee in 1979, golden in 2004, her 60th in 2014 and her 70th in 2024.

Sister Martha began teaching in 1954 and took the first steps toward a college degree. After 11 years of summers and Saturdays she completed her BA in Spanish in 1965 at Villa Madonna College (now Thomas More University). During those years she taught elementary school at St. Paul and Holy Cross Schools and Spanish, Latin and Social Studies at St. Henry High School. She served as moderator for Student Council and YCS (Young Christian Students).

In 1965 Sister Martha was one of four Benedictine Sisters to travel to Pomata, Peru for mission work in religious education and English. She returned to teach Spanish and Social Studies at Villa Madonna Academy from 1967 to 1976. Martha completed work for her MEd in Secondary Ed at Xavier University in 1973. In 1981 she received an MA in Theological Studies from the University of Dayton.

Martha served as director of the Northern Kentucky Interfaith Commission 1976-85. She made many friends among the church people in the local area. She initiated the Exodus Jail Ministry while working at the Interfaith Commission.

Within the St. Walburg community Sister Martha served on the Formation Team for newcomers to the religious life from 1981 to 1990, Vocation Director 1983-94, Coordinator of the Benedictine Associates (now Oblate) Program 1985-90, and served at Villa Madonna Center, offering hospitality to those who used the building for day care and retreats 1988-96.

The N. KY Adult Reading Program (1996-2001) welcomed Martha as a coordinator of volunteer services. Her final employment was as secretary/notary for the Tribunal Office of the Diocese of Covington. Sister Martha retired in 2011.

The list of Martha's board and committee memberships is long and varied. She used her skills and assisted others to enhance their own. She taught, mentored, tutored, translated, wrote articles, planned, organized, spoke, lectured and chaired. Martha smiled easily, laughed readily, and worked hard. She was personable, kind and thoughtful — a good friend.

As Sister Martha reached her nineties, the years took their toll on health and memory. Martha died on Aug. 20, 2026. She is preceded in death by her parents, her sisters Mary Dusing and Carole Wichmann, her brothers George, Paul and Lou, many nieces and nephews, and her Benedictine community.

Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Aug. 31 at St. Walburg Monastery.

Memorials are suggested to St. Walburg Monastery, 2500 Amsterdam Rd., Villa Hills, KY 41017.

McHale's
EVENTS AND CATERING
Delivering exceptional catering and remarkable experiences throughout Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky.
The Cincinnati Club | Drees Pavilion | Music Hall
The Gardens of Park Hills | The Grand Ballroom

Call today or scan the QR code for info about these and other amazing local venues!
859.442.7776 | www.McHalesCatering.com

Why is St. Thérèse of Lisieux a patroness for missionaries?

Michael R. Heinlein
OSV News

There is an apparent contradiction, at first glance, between the fact that St. Thérèse of Lisieux never left her Carmelite monastery and yet is patroness of missionary activity.

As she related in her spiritual autobiography "Story of a Soul," St. Thérèse noted that charity was the "key" to her vocation. "I understood … that the Church has a heart, and a heart on fire with love," she wrote.

It was this heart ablaze that she desired to share with the world.

"Like the Prophets and Doctors, I would be a light unto souls, I would travel to every land to preach Thy name, O my Beloved, and raise on heathen soil the glorious standard of Thy Cross," she wrote. "One mission alone would not satisfy my longings. I would spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth, even to the most distant isles. I would be a Missionary, not for a few years only, but, were it possible, from the beginning of the world till the consummation of time."

Blessed Fulton J. Sheen, longtime promoter of the missions as national director for the Society of the Propagation of the Faith, summarized this desire in his book "Archbishop Fulton Sheen's St. Thérèse: A Treasured Love Story," saying: "This woman was in love, and she wanted her Beloved known all over the world. That's why she loved the missions! … Love makes one a missionary. When we cease to love, we cease to be a missionary."

With the approach of the 100th anniversary of World Mission Sunday Oct. 18, it is worth getting to know better this patroness of the missions.

Before becoming a Discalced Carmelite nun as a teenager, Marie Françoise-Thérèse Martin was simply Thérèse — the youngest daughter of two future saints. Her family was the context in which St. Thérèse of Lisieux began to discover her "Little Way" of holiness for which she's so well known. From an early age, Thérèse learned to accept all as grace and providence, and to rely solely on God's will to find her peace. St. Thérèse teaches us that holiness is found in doing little things consistently and with great love.

Thérèse was born the ninth child of Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin on Jan. 2, 1873, in Alençon, France. During her childhood, Thérèse was considered weak and unusual. At the age of 9, she became so sick that it appeared the end was near. Her father even requested Masses at Our Lady of Victories Church in Paris, and her family kept vigil at her bedside. As three sisters were leading prayers of intercession to the Blessed Mother in front of the family's statue of her, Thérèse experienced a miracle: The statue began to smile at her. She was healed.

Thérèse and her four older sisters (her other four siblings did not survive infancy), discovered God's call to the religious life. And Thérèse was quite insistent upon doing God's will as soon as possible, despite the many difficulties

(Continued on page 18)

JEFF & CHERYL SISKA 859-816-7910
AUCTIONEER – APPRAISALS – ESTATE & COLLECTIONS BUYER
WE HAVE AN IMMEDIATE NEED TO BUY THE FOLLOWING...
• JEWELRY
• JUKE BOXES
• SLOT MACHINES
• FENTON GLASS
• ADVERTISING SIGNS
• LICENSE PLATES
• STONE CROCKS & JUGS
• OLD SILVERWARE
• MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
• HADLEY & BYBEE
• COMIC BOOKS
• BEER & LIQUOR SIGNS & LIGHTS
• COINS & PAPER MONEY
• ROOKWOOD & ROSEVILLE POTTERY
• KY DERBY & RACING ITEMS
• OLD CHRISTMAS & HALLOWEEN DECOR
• REDS & SPORTING ITEMS BEFORE 1976
• TOYS & BANKS BEFORE 1980
• FIREKING & PYREX MIXING BOWLS
• BEER CANS
WE ARE PAYING FAIR MARKET PRICES—WE BUY COMPLETE & PARTIAL ESTATES AS WELL AS COMPLETE COLLECTIONS!

KW MECHANICAL, INC.
"A Wischer Family Company"
(859) 261-1100
KWMechanical.com
• Electric
• Plumbing
• Heating &
• Air Conditioning


LONNEMAN PLUMBING INC.
859-341-7755 Nick Lonneman
Owner, Master Plumber
Since 1960
Water Heaters, Repair, Remodel

St. Thérèse of Lisieux a patroness for missionaries

(Continued from page 17)



OSV News poto/copyright © Archives du Carmel de Lisieux

St. Thérèse of Lisieux is pictured in an undated photo. Two years after St. Thérèse became the first saint he canonized, and one year after he established World Mission Sunday, Pope Pius XI in 1927 formally declared "the Little Flower" the Patroness of the Missions, although she had never left the convent's cloister.

she encountered on that path.

Refused entry to the Carmelite convent in Lisieux because of her young age, Thérèse seemingly could not contain the zeal with which her soul desired total union with Christ. She even used a meeting with Pope Leo XIII during a pilgrimage to Rome as an opportunity to seek his assistance. The pope replied, "Well, my child, do what the superiors decide. … You will enter if it is God's will." The local bishop later gave his consent for her to enter the Lisieux Carmel when she was 15.

Life in the Carmel of Lisieux was taxing for Thérèse. Living with the other nuns was not always easy. She was maligned and mistreated. But it was there that Thérèse found her "Little Way." Entering the convent with a desire for spiritual greatness, her attitude slowly changed, writing in her diary: "I applied myself especially to practice little virtues, not having the facility to perform great ones."

In "Story of a Soul," published in 1898 about a year after her death, Thérèse explained the "Little Way" more: "But how shall I show my love, since love proves itself by deeds? … The only way I have of proving my love is to strew flowers before Thee – that is to say, I will let no tiny sacrifice pass, no look, no word. I wish to profit by the smallest actions, and to do them for Love." Among the names she's known by today is "the Little Flower."

Finding blood in her handkerchief, she experienced "joy," and awaited death as the final act in her complete union with Christ. Dying from tuberculosis, she taught of suffering's purpose: "I have reached a point where I can no longer suffer, because all suffering is become so sweet."

Thérèse experienced intense physical suffering and offered it all to the Lord, in union with his to the end — uttering as she breathed her last, "My God, I love you!" She died on Sept. 30, 1897. She was 24.

The simplicity and practical approach to the spiritual life of St. Thérèse of Lisieux make her among the most popular saints in the Church, and the universality of her message reached a pinnacle in 1997 when Pope St. John Paul II declared her a doctor of the Church.

Two years after St. Thérèse became the first saint he canonized — and one year after he established World Mission Sunday — Pope Pius XI in 1927 formally declared "the Little Flower" the Patroness of the Missions. Her feast day is Oct. 1.

THE TWELFTH ANNUAL CATHOLIC MEN'S

Eucharistic Procession

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2026

All men are invited to join in a spirit of reverence and prayer.



8 AM | Mass with Archbishop Robert Casey at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Peter in Chains.

Following Mass | A two-mile procession through downtown Cincinnati

11 AM | Final Benediction at Old St. Mary's Church led by Fr. Jon-Paul Bevak and the priests of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri.

For more info, contact David Willig at (513) 305-6719 or Doug Jaeger at (513) 417-2503 or visit CMEPS.org.

Rose Garden Center for Hope and Healing

Health Ministry / Free Clinic

Volunteer Medical Professionals Needed

The Rose Garden Center for Hope & Healing gives free primary care to uninsured and under-insured neighbors at our free medical clinic.

We are in need of volunteer Doctors, Nurse Practitioners and Nurses to help fill positions that have become vacant due to attrition and retirement.

Hours are half day on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

If you are interested in putting your God-given gifts at His service in our clinic, email: tfrosegarden@gmail.com

A quick favor for our *Messenger* newspaper

For 142 years, the *Messenger* has been your trusted source for local, national and international Catholic news. To ensure that we keep delivering the news in a way that is most beneficial to our readers, we need your feedback. Whether you've been receiving the *Messenger* for decades or just recently started getting the paper, we want to hear from you.



Scan the QR code with your phone camera or visit covdio.org/messenger to share your thoughts.

National/World

Catholic education leaders applaud proposed rules on tax credit

WASHINGTON — Catholic education leaders are applauding proposed regulations for the Federal Scholarship Tax Credit, which incentivizes private contributions to K-12 scholarships benefiting students in public, charter or private schools, including religious. On Oct. 1, the U.S. Treasury Department and the IRS jointly announced the proposed regulations for the program, also known as the Education Freedom Tax Credit, which was enacted in 2025 and is set to launch Jan. 1. The "transformative" tax credit "will create opportunities for families to access much-needed resources to expand their options for choosing the best tools and learning environment for their children," said Bishop David M. O'Connell of Trenton, New Jersey, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Catholic Education, in an Oct. 2 statement. The Oct. 1 announcement "provides additional clarity for states, donors, and scholarship-granting organizations," said Steven F. Cheeseman, president and CEO of the National Catholic Educational Association, in an Oct. 1 statement. Cheeseman highlighted the announcement's confirmation that married couples filing jointly will be able to claim up to $3,400 in tax credit for eligible contributions, "rather than the previously understood $1,700 household limit." With 30 states signed up, Cheeseman urged state governors to opt in quickly, saying, "The tax credit doesn't stop at state lines, but the scholarships do."

Hegseth announces 'Office of Religious Affairs' in speech on Pentagon policy

WASHINGTON — Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth announced the creation of a new "Office of Religious Affairs" during a speech Sept. 30 on Pentagon policy. Hegseth announced the new office during a speech at U.S. Marine Corps Base Quantico in Virginia. "The experts, our chaplains, will finally have an advocate at the highest levels," Hegseth said. "Policy and resources will serve the mission, not smother the mission." Elsewhere in the speech, Hegseth confirmed plans to cut the number of spots reserved for admirals and generals by 20%, doubling the 10% reduction he ordered last year. A statement from the Department of Defense, also using the Department of War moniker, said it "is elevating spiritual readiness as a core element of combat effectiveness with the establishment of the Office of Religious Affairs, a direct-report office to the Secretary of War charged with driving Department-wide policy, resource advocacy, and action." In a statement provided to OSV News, the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services said it "appreciates" and "welcomes" the implementation of the new Office of Religious Affairs. It added, "Placing spiritual readiness alongside other departmental priorities, and shortening the timeline between identified field needs and senior decisions can have the practical effect of resolving legacy constraints that historically limited chaplaincy support."

Tennessee Catholic bishops join call for clemency for execution survivor

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — After Tennessee officials failed in their Sept. 30 attempt to execute death row inmate Christa Gail Pike for a 1995 murder, a number of faith leaders, including Tennessee's Catholic bishops, have called for her sentence to be commuted to life imprisonment. The state's Gov. Bill Lee said he already halted the one remaining execution for the rest of the year pending an investigation. Officials administered two doses of a lethal drug to Pike, but her attorneys told media outlets that she remained "alive and loudly snoring" after the attempted lethal injection and was later taken by ambulance from the prison to a hospital. Richard Garnett, director of the Notre Dame Program on Church, State and Society, said in written comments, "The failed attempt to execute Christa Pike illustrates, yet again, the delusion that by making executions look more 'medical,' 'technical', or 'scientific' we are somehow changing what they are, namely, killings of helpless human beings — who have, to be sure, committed horrible crimes — by our governments, in our names." In a letter to Lee dated Oct. 1, Tennessee faith leaders, among them the state's Catholic bishops, urged him to commute Pike's sentence to life imprisonment in the wake of the incident. They said, "Such an act does not deny justice. It declares that justice need not become vengeance and that the State of Tennessee can choose restraint, human dignity, and mercy."

St. Louis Archdiocese sues over ICE policy barring sacraments

WASHINGTON — The Archdiocese of St. Louis filed a lawsuit against the federal government Oct. 5 over a policy it said prohibits priests from distributing Communion and hearing confessions to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees. The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, said a no-contact policy at the Ste. Genevieve County Detention Center — a detention center ICE uses for migrants awaiting deportation proceedings — has refused to accommodate clergy seeking to provide sacraments to migrants held there. In a statement, the Archdiocese of St. Louis said it "steadfastly supports the right of all Catholics and the priests who serve them to practice their Catholic faith." In a written statement, a spokesperson for the Department of Homeland Security told OSV News Oct. 6 the allegations are false. "This is a non-contact county jail, not an ICE facility. Detainees are given the opportunity to practice their religions," the statement said. The complaint stressed that denying pastoral access to detainees not only violated their religious rights, but also the religious rights of Catholic priests who are "obligated to say Mass and administer the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation."

Remains uncovered at Irish baby home challenge dumping claim

DUBLIN — A new update from the excavation of Ireland's former St. Mary's Mother and Baby Home in Tuam is challenging longstanding claims that children's remains were simply "dumped" at the site. Investigators report that all 109 sets of remains recovered so far show evidence of having been buried in coffins. The state-led excavation, which began in July 2025, is examining a location believed to contain the remains of nearly 800 infants and children who died at the institution between 1925 and 1961. According to the latest update issued Oct. 2, archaeologists uncovered 10 additional sets of remains during an 11-week period. Officials said forensic evidence supports earlier findings that the children had been placed in coffins, many of which later deteriorated over time. The home was operated by the Bon Secours Sisters on behalf of the Irish government. The case gained international attention after local historian Catherine Corless discovered death records for 796 children but found no corresponding burial records. A 2017 investigation later identified significant human remains in underground chambers on the property. The Bon Secours Sisters have contributed $2.81 million toward the excavation and previously apologized for burial practices described as "disrespectful and unacceptable." DNA collection and identification efforts continue, with excavation expected to run through 2027 and further analysis planned afterward.

CHANGE A LIFE FASTER THAN AN OIL CHANGE.

DONATE A CAR AND HELP JUMP-START A COMMUNITY.

A car donation to Samaritan Car Care Clinic gets a working family in Northern Kentucky back on the road — and back to work.

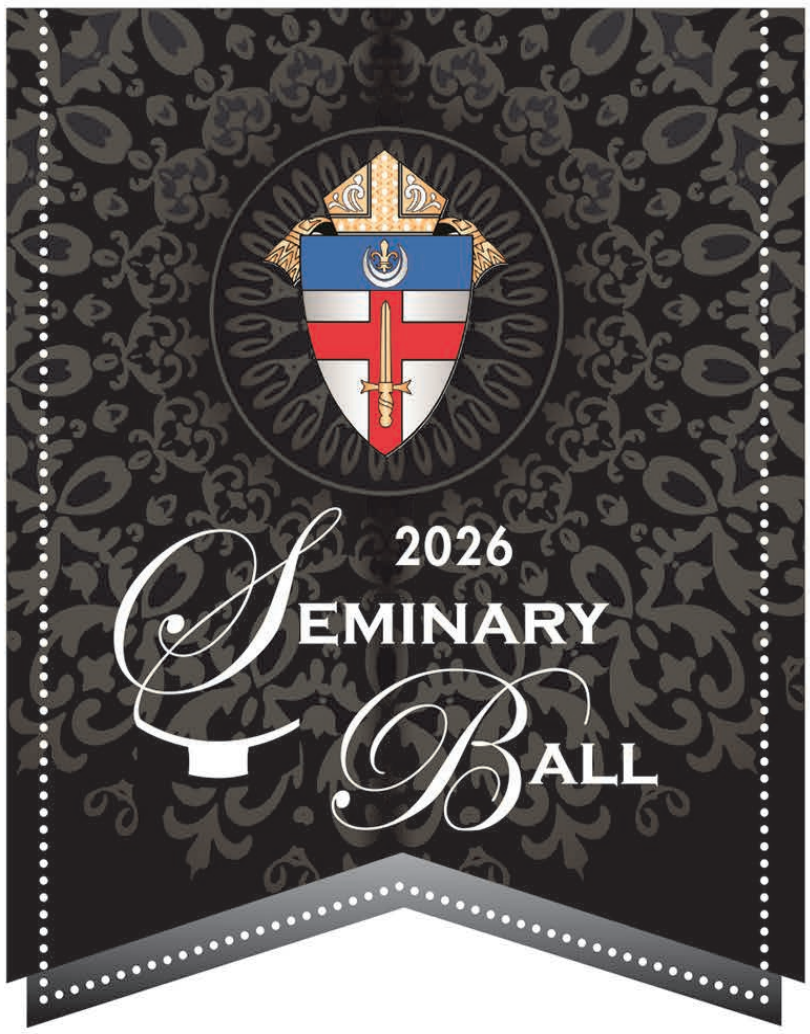
It really is faster than an oil change.



www.SamaritanCarCare.org

Donate an unused car or make a financial donation to help Samaritan Car Care Clinic offer a neighbor a hand up.

Samaritan Car Care Clinic



THANK YOU 2026 SPONSORS!

Our Future Priests Count On You!

ORDINATION SOCIETY SPONSORS

Al Kenkel Family Foundation
Friends of St. Cecilia Parish
St. Elizabeth Healthcare

ACOLYTE SOCIETY SPONSORS

Catholic Order of Foresters Agency, Tom Kaelin
Catholic Order of Foresters, KY Jurisdiction Court
C-Forward
Cristo Rey Parish
John Garvey III
St. Agnes Parish
Western & Southern Financial Group

CANDIDACY SOCIETY SPONSORS

The Angelico Project
Cooper Jones & the Covington Latin Class of 2022
Deacon Jim & Julie Fortner
The Fuller Family
J.T.M. Food Group
Legionaries of Christ
Mariner Institutional
Schneller Knochelmann

RECEPTION CO-SPONSORS

Knights of Columbus Councils, Northern Kentucky
Serra Club for Vocations, Northern Kentucky

TABLE SPONSORS

Most Reverend John C. Iffert
Most Reverend Roger J. Foys (2)
Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption
Carl & Mary Creech
Connley Brothers Funeral Home
Diocesan
Divine Mercy Parish & St. Bernard Parish
DBL Law
Earl Franks Sons & Daughters
The Fagel & Winnike Families
Fred Espenscheid Plumbing
Holy Cross Parish
Holy Redeemer Parish & St James Mission, Minerva
Holy Spirit Parish
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish
The Ihrig Family (2)
Key Bank
Made 4 More - Dierker Friends & Family
Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish
Mother of God
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish
Prestige Electrical Services
Radius Construction
Dr. Greg & Barbara Salzman
Schilling Properties
The Schuetter Family
The Schulte Family
St. Anthony Parish
St. Augustine Parish, Augusta
St. Benedict Parish
St. Catherine of Siena Parish
St. Francis Xavier Parish
St. Francis Xavier Parish Vincentians
St. James Parish, Brooksville
St. John the Evangelist Parish, Carrollton & Transfiguration Mission
St. Joseph Parish, Camp Springs
St. Joseph Parish, Crescent Springs
St. Patrick Parish, Maysville
St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill
St. Pius X Parish
St. Therese Parish
St. Timothy Parish
Sts. Peter & Paul Parish
Thomas More University
U.S. Bank
Vintage Business Solutions
Robert & Stella Volmer

FRIDAY OCTOBER 16
RECEPTIONS EVENT CENTER
SPONSOR TODAY

Information included in this ad is current up through September 23, 2026