It is a day of great rejoicing,” Bishop Mark Brennan said at the beginning of his celebration of Easter Sunday Mass at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling.

“The resurrection of Jesus is an absolutely stunning event in the world’s history,” he said in his homily. “It is the fundamental reason why the Christian movement has grown despite persecutions, defections, and scandals from a handful of Galilean peasants to a religion that embraces roughly one third of the human race.”

The bishop began the celebration of the Easter Triduum at St. Jude Parish in Glen Dale on Holy Thursday, Mass of the Lord’s Supper. On Good Friday of the Lord’s Passion, he gathered with the people of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Wellsburg. The Easter Vigil, Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord, took the bishop to St. Mary Parish in Star City, where he brought nine people into full communion with the Catholic Church.

Brianna Star Rose Fuller, Gabriel Michael Fuller, Silas Grant Fuller, Taylor Nichole Stull, and Krstin Nicole Wolfe received the sacraments of baptism, first Communion, and confirmation.

Jennifer Nicole Fuller, Thomas Clay Fuller, Jr., Emily Anne Jewson, and Nicholas Jakson Knowles received the sacraments of first Communion and confirmation.

In every generation since his first disciples saw his risen body, men and women have experienced that Jesus Christ is truly alive and
Diocesan Official Appointments

Bishop Mark E. Brennan has made public the following appointments:

**Father Phillip R. Szabo** is appointed chaplain of Council #8288 of the Knights of Columbus for the current Fraternal Year, effective immediately. This is in addition to his current assignment as pastor of St. John University Parish in Morgantown.

In consultation with Bishop Chinnabhanthi Bhagayilah, D.D., of the Diocese of Guntur, India, **Father Rayappa Kurakula** is appointed associate rectory of Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston with residence at the parish rectory, effective April 3, 2023.

In consultation with Very Rev. Quang Duc Dinh, SVD, provincial superior of the Society of the Divine Word, Chicago Province, **Father Nicholas Duc Hong Le, SVD**, is appointed priest in residence at St. Thomas Parish in Gassaway and Rising Lord Mission in Maysel with residence at the parish rectory, effective April 1, 2023.

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**Synod...**

**Cont’d from Page 1**

bishops, three laywomen, two priests, two laymen and two women religious — spent time in prayer, silence and discussion to distill responses for inclusion in the text, which forms a response to the Document for the Continental Stage issued by the Holy See’s General Secretariat for the Synod of Bishops in October 2022.

The final document for the continental stage from North America, along with the contributions of the six other continental assemblies, will form the basis of the “Instrumentum Laboris,” the global synod’s working document, to be released by the General Secretariat in June.

Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Doctrine, who leads the North American team with Canadian Bishop Raymond Poisson of Saint-Jérôme-Mont-Laurier, Quebec, presented the document at the Vatican April 12.

Launched by Pope Francis in October 2021, the multi-year synod of bishops—the theme of which is “communion, participation and mission”—seeks to bring an ongoing dynamic of discernment, listening, humility and engagement within the Catholic Church.

The North American report highlights the “key issues” of the synod’s “major areas of tension in North America,” as have “the historical wrongs found in the residential (and) boarding schools for Indigenous people, which ... included abuse of all kinds,” said Coll.

In their introduction to the document, Bishop Flores and Bishop Poisson admitted the need to “(make) efforts to effectively address the pain of persons whom we have not heard, including many who have been relegated to the margins of our communities, society and church.” They noted their “absence” in the synodal process was “not easily interpreted but was palpably felt.”

Among those participating from synodal sessions were priests, with bishops acknowledging their responsibility to address that lack “by example and by concrete and spiritual/pastoral fruitfulness of synodality.”

Synod participants listed women, young people, immigrants, racial or linguistic minorities, LGBTQ+ persons, people who are divorced and civilly remarried without an annulment, and those with varying degrees of physical or mental abilities as marginalized within the church.

Outreach and inclusion of these groups is ultimately driven at the local level by the faithful actively living out their baptism, McCarron told OSV News. At the same time, “the bishops really took to heart the call ... to reach out to the periphery,” Coll told OSV News, who added that virtual synod sessions enabled the need to “maintain the centrality of Christ,” especially in the Eastern rites.

The document candidly acknowledged that a “significant threat to communion within the church is a lack of trust, especially between bishops and the laity, but also between the clergy in general and the lay faithful.”

The clerical sexual abuse crisis in particular has caused “major areas of tension” within the church, noted Coll. “You have to trust that the answers, and none of this is pre-packaged,” said Coll. “We trust that the Spirit will be there to guide us despite the messiness — or maybe because of it.”

(Gina Christian is a national reporter for OSV. Follow her on Twitter at @GinaJesseRei.)

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**To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children:** The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston encourages reporting to civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. We also encourage utilizing www.reportbishopabuse.org to make a report about any bishop in the U.S. If you have reason to believe that a bishop has engaged in sexual misconduct or has interfered with an investigation into sexual misconduct, please contact civil authorities in the applicable jurisdiction and visit www.reportbishopabuse.org.

To report to the Diocesan **Civil Authority:** Contact the local law enforcement: numbers will vary based on your location. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, call 911. To confidentially report any incidence of suspected child abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse, contact the West Virginia Bureau for Children and Families’ Child Protective Services by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 800.352.6513. You may report anonymously to this hotline if you prefer.

**To Report to Diocesan Authorities:** The diocese encourages reporting to the appropriate civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. The diocese also encourages reporting to the appropriate church authorities. To report suspected cases of sexual abuse of children by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the diocese, contact one of the following designees at 1.888.434.6237 or by email at info@dwc.org. If you wish, you may also contact Bishop Joseph M. Zelenko, Bishop, ext. 353; or Very Rev. Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270. You may also call the Diocese’s Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504. You may also call the Diocese’s sexual abuse hotline at 833.230.5656. Complaint forms are available online at www.dwc.org, click “Diocese” on the menu bar, then “Offices,” then “Safe Environment,” then “Download Files and Forms.”

To Report to the Diocese’s Victim Assistance Coordinator: please call Dr. Patricia Bailey at 304.242.6988. In addition to the methods listed above for reporting sexual abuse, the Diocese also has partnered with Navey Global to offer the EthicsPoint platform to report other, additional concerns, such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston or any Catholic parish or school in West Virginia. The EthicsPoint platform can be accessed via www.dwc.org, under “Accountability,” then “Report Misconduct” or by calling 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint is a third-party reporting system that reports to civil authorities where applicable and Diocesan authorities, and the identity of the person reporting is protected. Links and information: WV Department of Health and Human Resources: https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp. West Virginia State Police, Crimes Against Children Unit: 304-293-6400.

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**Sexual Abuse Awareness Training**

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) requires that all Dioceses/Eparchies have in place a Sexual Abuse Prevention Program for the protection of children and young people. In accordance with these requirements, the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Safe Environment Program consists of the following components for persons seeking employment or to volunteer—directly or indirectly—with children: background check; receipt of the Diocese’s Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Children; and sexual abuse awareness training for adults. Sexual abuse awareness training may be completed online or via live workshop. For more information on the Office of Safe Environment, please go to www.dwc.org, click “Diocese,” then “Offices,” then “Office of Safe Environment.”
Rejoicing...
Cont’d from Page 1

active in their lives, Bishop Brennan said in his homily on Easter Sunday at the cathedral. The way people, since then and today, encounter him is different from the way those first disciples met him. In all the sacraments, but especially in the Eucharist, the Lord is present to us, the bishop said. We also meet the Lord in the scriptures, in prayer, in the poor, and as we strive to love one another, he said.

These encounters, Bishop Brennan stressed, are no less powerful than physical sight. “Walking by faith the Lord invisibly walks with us,” he said. “The church itself becomes the great sign of Christ’s risen presence and activity in the world.” There are many Christians who do not live up to the name, he said, noting scandals that leave us angry and distressed.

“But they do not diminish the loving service that Christ carries on through his faithful people just as his wounds still visible in his risen body do not diminish the glory of his resurrection,” the bishop said.

Along with joining believers to the Lord for their spiritual good through common worship such as the celebration of Mass that morning and practices of private prayer which Bishop Brennan said we should all engage in, the Catholic Church operates hospitals, schools, soup kitchens, and pantries. With them are organizations such as Catholic Charities and St. Vincent de Paul conferences, he said, and the good work to help people accomplished in parishes.

“All of these things testify to the love that Jesus Christ inspires in us and by his grace makes possible,” the bishop said. He noted the Second Vatican Council, which said the church is the sacrament of salvation, the visible sign of Christ’s invisible saving work.

In light of all this, Bishop Brennan said it is distressing that more and more Americans have abandoned their faith.

“When people turn away from the living God and from his church, focusing only on the sins of believers while ignoring the immense good that so many Christians do, bad things will happen,” he said. “Our country is dealing with widespread divorce, which I saw as a parish priest and saw that it hurt people, especially children. We are seeing increasing rates of depression and suicide in our country, especially among the young. Starling rates of drug use by Americans. Americans who want their illegal drugs are the real reason why there’s a problem at the southern border with drug traffickers sending drugs into this country. If people here didn’t want to consume them, they wouldn’t have a market. Our people are responsible for all of that.

“We find the loss of citizens … future good people through abortion,” the bishop continued. “We also see seriously ill people encouraged to take their own lives in assisted suicide. There is a vast confusion today about sexual identity and the nature of marriage. We also see increased hostility toward immigrants by the descendants of immigrants. We find structures and recurring instances of racism and an indifference toward ordinary working people’s often difficult lives.

See “Rejoicing” on Page 4
Rejoicing...

Cont’d from Page 3

“Turning away from God, who loves us and who commands us to love one another is bad for our country,” he said.

Bishop Brennan added that in his farewell address, George Washington said that religion supported public morality and public morality was necessary to support the republic.

“China isn’t our biggest threat, we are if we turn away from God,” the bishop said. “It is distressing to see that all of these problems rise as religious practice declines.”

Faith in Christ’s resurrection gives us a reason to hope and a source of strength for our lives, Bishop Brennan said. If death can be overcome, he said, then we can face other obstacles and trials with confidence.

“We have the living Lord to call upon. One

See “Rejoicing” on Page 5

Members of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Wellsburg venerate the cross on Good Friday of the Lord’s Passion.
who, though removed from sight, still walks with us if we have faith,” he said.  

That is why St. Paul urges us to seek what is above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, Bishop Brennan said, noting that St. Paul said: “Think of what is above, not of what is on earth” (Colossians 3:2).

St. Paul is not urging us to disengage from earthly concerns, Bishop Brennan said, but he is telling us not to lose sight of the risen Christ whose grace will help us to do as Jesus did—to go about doing good and overcoming evil. St. Paul continues: “When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory” (Colossians 3:2).

This is our great hope for going beyond this life, Bishop Brennan said.

In ending his homily, the bishop said that our church was blessed in the second half of the 20th century with an outstanding American Catholic biblical scholar, Father Raymond Brown. When he was a seminarian, Bishop Brennan met Father Brown. Among his many books, Father Brown wrote “The Birth of the Messiah,” and “The Death of the Messiah.” He was once asked if he planned to write a book about the resurrection of the Messiah to complete the trilogy. Father Brown replied, “I have no such plans. I would rather explore that area face to face.”

Father Brown died a few years later, Bishop Brennan said, “And given what is known about his faithfulness to his priesthood and his Catholic faith, I suspect that he has met the risen Lord. He would hope, as I do, that all of us have the same happy encounter with Jesus Christ.”
Register Now for Diocesan Spring Eucharistic Congresses

By Joyce Bibey
WEST VIRGINIA—The first two of three Eucharistic Congresses in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston (DWC) are set for the end of the month in Charles Town and Wheeling. These are events are free – meals, refreshments, and materials included. Space is limited based on the host facility.

As you continue to read in your FaithInWV e-bulletin, The Catholic Spirit, DWC social media, and your parish bulletins, it is time to register!

Bishop Mark Brennan invites the faithful from all reaches of the state to attend any or all of the Congresses, regionally offered for your convenience in Charles Town, Wheeling, and Charleston.

These homegrown events are part of the National Eucharistic Revival, a three-year renewal of “the Church by enkindling a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.”

The Congresses will bring together people like you for prayer services, celebratory music, Mass, enriching talks, Eucharistic Adoration, and more. Two breakout sessions on Saturday will be tailored to registrants in our faith family, including school aged participants (K-12). Priority will be given to those within the diocese before opening registration to others.

The Eucharistic congresses are set for:
April 21-22: St. James Catholic Church, Charles Town
April 28-29: Cathedral of St. Joseph, Wheeling
June 2-3: Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Charleston

The Eucharistic Congress Book of Prayer Intentions to Include YOUR personal prayers
You parish priest and Catholic school principal will be placing a Eucharistic Congress Book of Prayer Intentions out for the community to write their own personal prayers. On the Saturday the events begin with a Welcome Prayer Service that celebrates our six vicariates uniting to strengthen our encounter with Christ in the Eucharist. Parishes, schools, and other Catholic organizations (in that region) are to have a representative(s) present in the procession, and then announced as their Book of Prayer is presented to Bishop Brennan, who will offer them in prayer throughout the Congresses and the remainder of the Diocesan Year of the National Eucharistic Revival.

The rest of Saturday will feature a nationally known keynote speaker, lunch, a Q&A conversation with the keynote, the breakout sessions to bring the message to life, Adoration, Confessions available, and a closing Mass celebrated by Bishop Brennan.

For more details, schedule, and to register go to: https://dwc.org/eucharistic-congresses/
Watch for updates in the FaithInWV e-bulletin, The Catholic Spirit, your parish bulletin, and our DWC social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter).

It is also important to know the diocesan and parish years will be followed by the National Eucharistic Congress Event set for July 17-21, 2024, in Indianapolis for a five-day congress. Then the National Year of Mission begins and extends to Pentecost of 2025. This will be a time when all Catholics are encouraged to evangelize and be a light of Christ in the world.

For more information and to register visit www.dwc.org or scan the QR code.
Archbishop, Governor Call for Prayer as Louisville Mourns Mass Shooting ‘in the Shadow of the Cross’

By Marnie McAllister
LOUISVILLE, Ky. (OSV News) — Amid calls for prayer and praise for first responders, officials confirmed that five people were killed in an April 10 mass shooting, Easter Monday morning, in a downtown bank in Louisville, Kentucky.

According to the Louisville Metro Police Department, at least nine people were injured, including two LMPD officers, during the shooting at the Old National Bank, 333 E. Main St.

The shooter, identified by police as Connor Sturgeon, a 25-year-old bank employee with a finance degree and no known criminal record, died at the scene after exchanging gunfire with police who arrived within three minutes of the attack’s start. Sturgeon was reportedly armed with an AR-15-style semi-automatic rifle, and livestreamed the slaughter over Instagram.

“My heart is heavy as we learn about another mass shooting, now in our own Louisville community,” Louisville Archbishop Shelton J. Fabre said in a statement hours provided to The Record, the weekly newspaper of the Archdiocese of Louisville, reminding the faithful that amid Easter joy, the cross remains. “Even with our Easter hope so recently renewed, we have been quickly reminded that we still live in the shadow of the cross, the cross of senseless violence.”

“For now, please join with me in praying for those who have died and for those who have been injured and for their families,” he said. “Let us also pray for all in our community as we deal with this tragedy.”

LMPD has identified those killed in the shooting as Joshua Barrick, Deana Eckert, Thomas Elliot, Juliana Farmer and James Tutt. The victims’ ages ranged between 40 and 64 years old. Officer Nickolas Wilt, 26, who graduated from the police academy March 31, was shot in the head and is in critical condition, the department said. Eckert initially survived the shooting but succumbed to her wounds.

Prayer also headlined comments made by Mayor Craig Greenberg and Gov. Andy Beshear, who appeared at a press conference near the scene soon after the incident.

“The mayor, who survived a shooting in his campaign offices last year, asked the community to pray for victims of the latest shooting and to work together to prevent gun violence. He also gave thanks for the efforts of “brave and heroic first responders.”

“Without a doubt, their actions saved lives,” he said.

LMPD Deputy Chief Paul Humphrey said during the press conference that officers who arrived at the scene exchanged gunfire with the shooter. It was unclear whether law enforcement killed the suspected shooter or if death was due to a self-inflicted wound, he said, adding that the cause will be part of the investigation.

Heavy with emotion, Gov. Beshear echoed calls to prayer and praise for law enforcement, “the brave heroes of LMPD” and others who responded.

“Their efforts saved lives and put their own on the line,” he said, noting that the FBI, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Department of Homeland Security and Kentucky State Police were among those on the scene.

Gov. Beshear said the shooting affected him personally.

“This is awful. I have a very close friend that didn’t make it today,” he said. “I will do anything I can for you — just let me know what you need.”

(Marnie McAllister is editor for The Record, the newspaper of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Kentucky. OSV News staff contributed to this report.)
By Gina Christian (OSV News) — The end of a 20-year Catholic pastoral care contract at a leading U.S. military medical center highlights broader concerns about the potential传导性 processes for such services, according to the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services and several lawmakers.

“The government cannot supervise a Catholic priest’s ministry, so by extension, the government cannot hire a secular firm to do what the government is not doing,” Richard Breen, director of communications for the Defense Health Agency, advised OSV News. “We’ve just turned our back on it. You’re bringing a secular firm with no interest in actually doing ministry (now handling) the contract.”

On March 31, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland issued a “cease and desist” order to Holy Name College Friary, a community of Franciscan priests and brothers, and Silver Spring, Maryland, who have served service members and veterans at Walter Reed for close to two decades, according to the U.S. Archdiocesan website.

Walter Reed is one of several major medical centers operated within the U.S. Department of Defense and the Defense Health Agency, and, as such, falls within the pastoral jurisdiction of the military archdiocese. Walter Reed recently (has) an ordained Catholic chaplain on staff who is continuing to provide all of our Catholic services for the hospital. McNamara added that Catholic liturgies throughout Holy Week were provided by the “active duty Army Catholic chaplain, who was able to provide bedside service to all patients who were unable to attend liturgies in person.”

McNamara said the new Catholic pastoral care contract was awarded to Mack Global, LLC, a secular defense contracting firm based in Mechanicsville, Virginia. The request for proposal was released between March 15-29, said McNamara, adding he could not provide a copy of the solicitation “for proprietary reasons.”

Mack Global’s website states the company provides “telework consulting services, administrative and religious staffing, transportation and roadway services, (and) professional development and training.”

“The typical religious positions” staffed by the company include music directors and musicians for “Catholic services,” as well as coordinators for Catholic religious education and youth, according to its website.

Tomlin said she “did not know what the definitive factor was in the decision to reassign the contract. McNamara did not indicate a reason for the contract’s nonrenewal with the firm but simply said the contract “was up for rebidding.”

According to Tomlin, the approximate amount of Mack’s bid was about $600,000, “a number slightly less than that bid by Holy Name College Friary.”

Although not a party to such contracts, the military archdiocese has at least been able to specify in the statement of work — which details the tasks to be performed by the contractor — that religious educators be certified by the archdiocese for both catechetical competence and safe environment training, Tomlin said.

But the “emerging” trend of “trying to bid out priests’ contracts” poses a unique set of challenges, she stressed.

Permission for a Catholic priest to minister at Walter Reed or other military locations first requires official ecclesiastical endorsement from the military archbishop, who must complete Department of Defense Form 2088 certifying the priest is credentialed and qualified for an appointment within the military chaplaincy.

The military archbishop must also grant the priest the facilities to serve within the archdiocese, Tomlin said.

Authority Broglio said in the April 7 news release he “fearful that giving a contract to the lowest bidder over looked the fact that the bidder cannot provide the necessary service.”

The case of the Holy Name Franciscans and Walter Reed shows the “disconnect between a secular, for-profit firm trying to subcontract mendicant friars who give a professional service nobody else can give,” said Tomlin.

Rep. Mike Lawler, R-N.Y., told OSV News the incident raises “questions about this process,” which could result in “certain people not being able to exercise their faith.”

“We are doing this may need to be evaluated,” said Lawler, who has called for Walter Reed to change its decision.

On April 11, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and several Republican lawmakers sent a letter to Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin asking why the Franciscans’ contract with Walter Reed had ended just before Holy Week.

“We have made promises to our service members and veterans that if they take care of us, we will take care of them,” wrote the lawmakers.

This extends to not just providing quality healthcare at our nation’s military medical facilities, but by also providing the ability to freely practice their religion to those under care at these facilities.”

(Gina Christian is a national reporter for OSV News.)
Maryland AG’s Abuse Report ‘Heartbreaking,’ New Reminder of ‘Tragic and Shameful Time,’ Says Archbishop

By Christopher Gunty
BALTIMORE (OSV News) — In a pastoral letter responding to the release of a redacted version of the Maryland attorney general’s report “Clergy Abuse in Maryland: Report on the Investigation of the Archdiocese of Baltimore,” Archbishop William E. Lori said it serves “as a heartbreaking and new reminder of a tragic and shameful time.”

The report, released April 5, details cases of sexual abuse committed by representatives of the church, for the most part from the 1940s to the early 1990s, as well as the way the archdiocese responded to reports of abuse.

In a message delivered via email to members of the archdiocese just after the report was released, the archbishop said, “The detailed accounts of abuse are shocking and soul searing. It is difficult for most to imagine that such evil acts could have actually occurred. For victim-survivors everywhere, they know the hard truth: These evil acts did occur.”

The report includes information on more than 600 victims of child sexual abuse, and 156 people affiliated with the church in that time span. The attorney general’s list includes priests, deacons, brothers and laypeople, with 10 names redacted “by order of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, because they were not known to be deceased at the time of the Report and had not previously been listed as credibly accused by the Archdiocese of Baltimore or otherwise publicly identified,” according to a footnote in the report.

Of those cited, the archdiocese has named 152 credibly accused priests or brothers on its list, first made public in September 2002, with additions since that time. The archdiocese was one of the first in the country to make public a list of credibly accused priests.

The attorney general’s report recommended that the archdiocese expand its public accountability to include deacons and lay people, citing notable cases involving those who are not priests.

In a pastoral letter responding to the report, “Apology, Healing and Action: The Church’s Work to Repair the Sacred Trust of the Faithful,” issued in English and Spanish, Archbishop Lori said there were three reasons for writing it: to express again the sorrow of the church for its failures, to see the failures and the suffering they produced through “the lens of Jesus’ redeeming love,” and to communicate how the church has taken steps over the last several decades to accompany victim survivors and root out the evil of child sexual abuse.

“My letter to you about this painful subject can only begin with a heartfelt apology. I offer this as my imperfect attempt,” Archbishop Lori said. “To the victim-survivors, their families and all the faithful of the archdiocese: I see the pain and destruction that was perpetrated by representatives of the church and perpetuated by the failures that allowed this evil to fester, and I am deeply sorry.”

He acknowledged the heinous acts of sexual abuse and the untold harm they inflicted. He added that the behavior of the abusers represents the polar opposite of what any representative of the church should be.

He noted that the details in the attorney general’s report generally spanned five decades — from the early 1940s to the 1990s, from the attack on Pearl Harbor to the advent of the World Wide Web. The archbishop noted that the response of church leaders to abuse was “woefully inadequate,” but not because they wanted children to be harmed.

“We know that during this era what was deemed shameful was often buried and the common response to scandal was to keep it quiet at all costs. This was true in families, in society and, sadly, in the church,” Archbishop Lori wrote. “We also know that there was a woefully inadequate understanding of both the lasting harm of sexual abuse and the rate of recurrence of these crimes.”

The attorney general’s report noted, “The criminalization of child sexual abuse in Maryland has a complicated history, made even more so by evolving understanding of what constitutes abuse and the applicability of statutes of limitation. Legal obligations to report suspected abuse have also evolved over time.”

A chart in the pastoral letter plots the number of incidences of child sexual abuse in the attorney general’s report by five-year time spans. The number doubled from the 1950s to the mid-1960s and then rose precipitously over the next 15 years before beginning to decline.

The chart also notes the evolution of Maryland law regarding reporting child abuse and laws related to criminal child abuse and sexual offenses. The first state law that criminalized child abuse of children under 14 was enacted in 1963. A year later came the first state law requiring doctors to report signs of abuse.

In 1993, after the Office of Attorney General issued an opinion that reporting requirement applies even when a victim is no longer a child, or an abuser is no longer alive, the archdiocese began reporting all allegations of child sexual abuse, regardless of age. That year, the archdiocese also published written child protection policies and established an independent review board.

Incidents reported in the attorney general’s report dropped significantly in the late 1990s and in
Federal Judge Issues Good Friday Ruling Suspending FDA Approval of Abortion Pill

WASHINGTON (OSV News) — A federal judge in Texas ruled April 7 to suspend the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s approval of a medication abortion pill, additionally granting a seven day pause for his ruling before it would go into effect to allow the federal government to appeal and seek emergency relief.

The Good Friday ruling comes amid a lawsuit by a coalition of pro-life opponents of the drug mifepristone, the first of two drugs used in a medication or chemical abortion. The groups are seeking for the FDA’s approval of the drug to be revoked, arguing the government violated its own safety standard in approving the drug more than two decades ago. U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk’s ruling marks the most significant abortion-related court ruling since the Supreme Court issued its Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization decision last year that overturned abortion restrictions in most states where abortion is legal and the drug is permitted under state law. However, the government will appeal the ruling, and it may not be implemented.

The archdiocese noted that on his first day as archbishop of Baltimore, he met with victim-survivors of sexual abuse by clergy.

“The wound in the Body of Christ is deep indeed. So too is the need for all of us, most especially bishops and priests, to share in the work of healing this wound.”

The pastoral noted that the archdiocese has made transformative changes over the last 30 years in how it handles allegations of child sexual abuse in the church, including:

— Permanently removing clergy from ministry if even a single credible allegation is reported. Zero tolerance is the foundation for policies on sexual abuse.

— Reporting all accusations of abuse to the Attorney General’s Office and other law enforcement authorities. This happens whether the church deems the allegation credible or not, and the archdiocese makes the report no matter when the abuse is said to have occurred.

— Readiness on the part of church leadership to meet with victim-survivors and to accompany them pastorally, if they choose.

— Offers to provide ongoing therapeutic care of victim-survivors, as well as direct payments.

— Enhanced screenings to prevent abusers from working or volunteering in the church.

— Mandated training for employees and volunteers on spotting signs of abuse.

— Strong accountability measures and a commitment to transparency.

The pastoral also detailed the counseling and other compensation provided to victim survivors, including the option for them to select a therapist they trust — not necessarily ones sponsored by the church or Catholic Charities — and continue treatment for as long as it is helpful.

“The Office of Child and Youth Protection also coordinates a financial mediation program, if victim-survivors would prefer monetary compensation instead of coverage for their professional therapeutic care. Since the 1980s, the archdiocese has invested more than $13.4 million into the care and monetary compensation for 301 victim-survivors. This includes $6.8 million toward 105 voluntary settlements under a mediation program led by a retired non-Catholic judge,” the archbishop wrote.

“Regardless of how long ago abuse occurred, our offer to pay for counseling is available to all victim-survivors. Also, since 2007, the archdiocese’s financial mediation program has been available for victim-survivors regardless of legal liability, including for those whose legal claims are barred by the statute of limitations.”

The Maryland attorney general’s report, issued April 5, recommended lifting the statute of limitations for civil cases by those who have been abused. The report was written before the 2023 Maryland legislative session.

Its release comes as the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation in both houses — as House Bill 001 and Senate Bill 686, known as the Child Victims Act — legislation that would remove the statute of limitations on civil claims for future incidents of child sexual abuse and retroactively reopens cases that are currently time-barred, no matter how long ago the alleged abuse took place. Gov. Wes Moore has indicated support for the legislation, although it is expected to face constitutional challenges.

Currently, the law in Maryland allows victims until age 38 to file such claims, an extension — from age 25 — that was supported by the church in 2017.

In a statement about the bills, the Maryland Catholic Conference — which represents the archdioceses of Baltimore and Washington and the Diocese of Wilmington, Delaware — expressed concern the legislation “creates blatant disparity in its treatment of victims, with much lower monetary judgements available to victims of abuse in public institutions than those of abuse in private settings.”

Potential civil lawsuits against private institutions, including Catholic schools or parishes, would be capped at $1.5 million; suits against public institutions such as public schools or other governmental entities would be limited to $890,000 (currently $400,000).

(Christopher Gunty is associate publisher and editor of Catholic Review Media, publishing arm of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. George P. Marovich Jr., managing editor, contributed to this story.)

Report... Cont’d from Page 9
Catholic Men of West Virginia, Married or Single, Consider the Vocation of a Deacon

Deacons are ordained to a ministry of service, assisting the bishop and his priests in many areas, especially in the ministry of the liturgy, of the word, and of charity.

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston opened a new Diaconate Formation Program for all Catholic men who will be 35 by June of 2027. Bishop Mark Brennan has made the 2023-2028 Diaconate Formation Program free to the men who apply, and the cost will be covered by the diocese.

Permanent deacons may be married. They must be faithful Catholics. Most work at secular jobs and must be willing to be open to an assignment outside of their parish.

To apply and for more information, click the link below:
https://dwc.org/directory-listing/ permanent-diaconate-formation-office-of/2275/

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is accepting applications for the next class of permanent deacons.

Note: Only the application form and the letter of recommendation from your pastor must be submitted prior to April 15.

Applications may also be obtained by contacting Tina High in the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston at (888) 434-6237 or for the Wheeling area at (304) 233-0880, ext. 271. Completed applications must be sent to the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston: Very Rev. Dennis R. Schuilkens, Jr., V.E. Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, P.O. Box 230, Wheeling, WV 26003.
Immaculate Conception Parish in New Cumberland hosted its annual Blessing of Easter Food on Holy Saturday morning. Participants included (left to right): Helen Kirpan, Vanessa Dicks, Lisa Baxter, Emersyn White, Megan White, Father Bill Matheny (pastor), Larry Binkoski, Vicki DiLullo, and Lori Kaczmarek.

‘Life of the Beloved’ Zoom Series to be Offered by West Virginia Institute for Spirituality

The West Virginia Institute for Spirituality in Charleston will offer the Zoom series “Life of the Beloved,” a five-week group spiritual direction program Monday evenings (April 17 and 24, May 1, 8, and 15) at 5 p.m. This will be offered by Jill Gordon, WVIS associate spiritual director intern.

“The resurrection has been accomplished! Lenten studies have ended, and you may be asking, ‘Is that it?’ Do I just coast from here until Advent? Certainly not! The sacrifice of the cross is the beginning call of the beloved,” program organizers said. “In this short series, we’ll be reading Henri Nouwen’s book ‘Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World.’ As Nouwen says, ‘The great spiritual call of the beloved is to pull their brokenness away from the shadow of the curse and put it under the light of the blessing.’ Our world and ourselves live out the reality of that brokenness daily. How do we face it?” Each week, participants will focus on one chapter, having read it, and in a quiet, meditative time, prayed about the reading and then journaled our thoughts and reactions to each – Loved, Chosen, Blessed, Broken, and Given.

“At meeting time, we’ll share our reflections (as we so desire) and always in a covenant of confidence,” organizers said.

Registration deadline is April 16. Offering: $25 plus the cost of the book (purchased separately). For more information or to register, visit https://www.wvis.org/.
Confirmation Schedule
Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

Saturday, April 15: St. Augustine, Grafton, 11:00 a.m.
Saturday, April 15: St. Francis de Sales, Morgantown, 5:15 p.m.
Sunday, April 16: St. Luke the Evangelist, Cheat Lake, 11:00 a.m.
Tuesday, April 18: St. John, Benwood, 6:30 p.m.
Monday, April 24: St. Michael, Wheeling, 5:30 p.m.
Tuesday, April 25: St. Patrick, Weston, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, April 30: St. Matthew, Ravenswood, 2:00 p.m.
Saturday, May 6: St. Mary, Star City, 11:00 a.m.
Saturday, May 6: St. John University, Morgantown, 5:00 p.m.
Thursday, May 11: St. Francis of Assisi, St. Albans, 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, May 13: Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Charleston, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, May 14: Our Lady of Fatima, Huntington, 11:00 a.m.
Sunday, May 14: St. Joseph, Huntington, 5:30 p.m.
Wednesday, May 17: St. Joseph the Worker, Weirton, 6:30 p.m.
Friday, May 19: St. Leo, Inwood, 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, May 20: St. Bernadette, Hedgesville, 9:00 a.m.
Saturday, May 20: St. James, Charles Town, 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, May 21: St. Vincent de Paul, Berkeley Springs, 9:00 a.m.
Sunday, May 21: St. Joseph, Martinsburg, 4:00 p.m.
Monday, May 22: Assumption, Keyser, 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, May 28: St. Paul, Weirton, 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, June 1: St. Agnes, Charleston, 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, June 10: Sacred Heart, Princeton, 11:00 a.m.
Saturday, June 10: St. Francis de Sales, Beckley, 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, June 18: Immaculate Conception, Fairmont, 11:00 a.m.
Saturday, June 24: Mater Dolorosa, Paden City, 5:00 p.m.

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to Make a Difference
May 2, 2023

Visit OneMissionOneDay.org
or Text GIVE to 304-600-8123

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Education: The Pathway to Opportunity

Education is the pathway to opportunity, especially for someone like Logan.

Logan dropped out of high school in 11th grade. “I didn’t like school,” he said. “Then, my mom got sick… so, I quit.” Logan turned to drugs, and things spiraled out of control.

When he discovered the Adult Education classes offered by CCWV’s McDowell Learning Center, Logan felt hopeful. He completed High School Equivalency classes with Catholic Charities’ Adult Education Instructor, Michelle Montz, while receiving treatment for addiction at Southern Highlands.

His high school equivalency diploma allowed him to participate in the WV Transition Jobs Program. Logan started his job in January!

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia, visit www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org.

The Mission of Catholic Charities West Virginia: Guided by God’s love, Catholic Charities collaborates with community partners, parishes and families to provide caring and compassionate services to people in need and work toward lasting and meaningful change.

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Stop in or call us today!

Now is the time to Talk!

CAMP CARLO
With Him on the mountain

Catholic Youth Adventure Camp
Huttonsville, WV

Join us at Camp Carlo for Summer 2023!
We’re dedicated to bringing young people closer in relationship to Jesus Christ in the beautiful environment of the Camp Carlo property. Campers will enjoy horseback riding, swimming, fishing, canoeing, religious education classes, archery, a climbing wall, zip line, arts and crafts and more! Our shared love of Christ is at the heart of the camp experience.

Faith + Friendship + Fun = Camp Carlo!

CAMP CARLO DATES

JUNE 25 - JULY 1
Rising 6th graders to 8th graders
A “catch all week” 3rd grade through 12th grade

JULY 2 - JULY 8
A “catch all week” 3rd grade through 12th grade

JULY 9 - JULY 15
Rising Freshman to Seniors in High
A “catch all week” 3rd grade through 12th grade

JULY 16 - JULY 22

JULY 23 - JULY 29
“Camp Carlo Summer Vacation” free program for 7-12 year olds who receive support from the government or Catholic Charities.

For information and registration, visit campcarlowv.org or scan the QR code.
Cost: $275 per camper
On-line payment processing fee of $7.75 will apply

20/20 Vision Series
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON EUCHARISTIC REVIVAL

The 20/20 vision series for 2023 will focus on the Eucharist. Pope Francis has called for a worldwide Eucharistic Revival. Journey with us this year from Jan. 23-Dec. 11, as we journey with the Holy Father and his invitation to focus our vision on the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist – the Source and Summit of the Church.

Note: Each session will begin at 7 pm and will be presented via Zoom.

Jan 23 The Transformative Power of the Eucharist - Bishop Mark Brennan
Feb 27 Let us be Bread - Beth Longo, CSJ, Associate
March 27 The Eucharist as a noun - Bernadette McMasters Kime
April 24 Eucharist in the early church - Fr. John Di Bacco
May 22 Lord I am not worthy - Alex Nagem
June 26 The Eucharist as a verb - Deacon Paul Lim
July 31 Eucharist Is Thanksgiving - Kate Marshall
Aug 28 Bread broken and shared - Sr. Jeanne Cmolik, CSJ
Sept. 25 Eucharistic Reflections through song - Chad Carter
Oct 30 The Road to Emmaus: Were Not Our Hearts Burning? - Fr. Walt Jagela
Nov 27 Bread for the Journey – Rodica Stoicoiu, Ph.D.
Dec 11 Do this in remembrance of Me – Deacon Doug Breiling
(Series originated by Ms. Shirley Carter, B.A., M.A.T.)

COST FOR COMPLETE SERIES: $120.00 OR $15.00 PER SESSION.
FOR DETAILS AND MORE INFO CONTACT: ATROIANI@CSJOSEPH.ORG OR CALL THE RETREAT CENTER AT: 304-232-8160 X112

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Arzobispo y gobernador hacen un llamado a la oración mientras Louisville lamenta un tiroteo masivo ‘a la sombra de la cruz’

Por Marnie McAllister

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky (OSV News) — En medio de llamamientos a la oración y elogios para los que se apresuraron a responder a los hechos, las autoridades confirmaron que cinco personas murieron en un tiroteo masivo el 10 de abril, Lunes de Pascua por la mañana, en un banco del centro de Louisville, Kentucky.

Según el Departamento de Policía Metropolitana de Louisville (LMPD por sus siglas en inglés), al menos nueve personas resultaron heridas, entre ellas dos agentes de policía de LMPD, durante el tiroteo en el Old National Bank, 333 E. Main St.

El tirador, identificado por la policía como Connor Sturgeon, empleado del banco de 25 años, linciado en su departamento, en antecedentes penales conocidos, murió en el lugar de los hechos tras intercambiar disparos con la policía, que llegó a los tres minutos de iniciado el incidente. Sturgeon iba armado con un rifle semiautomático del tipo AR-15 y Sturgeon iba armado con un rifle semiautomático del tipo AR-15.

El alcalde, que sobrevivió a un tiroteo en 2006, dijo que “el gobernador Beshear en una revisión que las muertes han afectado directamente a nuestra comunidad mientras lidiamos con esta tragedia”.

La diócesis también expresa su apoyo a todas las personas que están sufriendo el sufrimiento de la muerte y heridas de estos incidentes. "Es hora de un cambio, de tomar la iniciativa con nuestras vidas y nuestras decisiones", dijo. "Es hora de ver lo mejor de nosotros".


El gobernador también reiteró su gratitud al LMPD, que recientemente fue reprendida por investigadores federales en una revisión de sus prácticas.

El personal de OSV News ha contribuido a este informe.

El gobernador Beshear se hizo eco de los llamamientos a la oración y a los agentes que llegaron al lugar de los hechos intercambiaron disparos con el autor de los disparos. No estaba claro si las fuerzas intervinientes (o equipos de primera respuesta) no estaban en el lugar de los hechos.

"Sus esfuerzos salvaron vidas y pusieron la suya en peligro", dijo, señalando que el FBI, la Oficina de Alcohol, Tabaco, Armas de Fuego y Explosivos (ATF), el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional y la Policía Estatal de Kentucky se encontraban entre los que acudieron al lugar de los hechos.

La oración también fue una parte importante en los comentarios del alcalde Craig Greenberg y del gobernador Andy Beshear. "Estoy unido a la comunidad de Louisville», dijo el alcalde.

"Mi corazón está apesadumbrado al enterarnos de otro tiroteo masivo, ahora en nuestra propia comunidad de Louisville", dijo el arzobispo de Louisville, Louis Besheer, en una declaración. "El alcalde, que vive al tiroteo, pero sucumbió a los heridos por sus familias", dijo.

La oración también fue una parte importante en los comentarios de Metropolitana de Louisville, Kentucky.
The women disciples, who were the first to meet the risen Jesus, offer a lesson to all Christians: “We encounter Jesus by giving witness to him,” Pope Francis said.

The entire city of Jerusalem had seen Jesus crucified on the cross, yet the women who find his tomb empty, run to share the good news that he is alive, the pope said before reciting the “Regina Coeli” prayer with visitors gathered in St. Peter’s Square April 10, Easter Monday, a public holiday in Rome.

The experience of the women disciples is a reminder, the pope said, that “when one encounters Jesus, no obstacle can prevent us from proclaiming him.”

“If instead we keep his joy for ourselves,” he said, “perhaps it is because we have not yet truly encountered him.”

Pope Francis also used the midday appointment to mark the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, which ended some 30 years of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland.

“With a grateful spirit, I pray to the God of peace that what was achieved in that historic passage may be consolidated for the benefit of all men and women of the island of Ireland,” the pope said.

Pope Francis began his main talk, a commentary on the day’s Gospel reading, by asking people to think about why the risen Jesus appeared to the women disciples first.

It is simple, he said, the women were the first to go to Jesus’ tomb.

Even though they were mourning like all the disciples and frightened as well, “they do not stay home paralyzed by sadness and fear,” the pope said. They go to the tomb to anoint his body and “that gesture of love prevails over everything.”

The Gospel of Matthew says an angel tells the women that Christ has risen and, as the women are running to tell the disciples the news, “Jesus met them on their way and greeted them.”

Too often, the pope said, Christians seem to think they will keep Jesus closer to them if they don’t tell anyone about him. Or, at least, they will not have to face judgment, criticism or questions they don’t know how to answer.

But “this won’t do,” the pope said. Good news is meant to be shared.

Thinking of the women disciples, Pope Francis asked people in the square, “When was the last time you witnessed to Jesus?” and he prayed that Mary would “help us be joyful proclaimers of the Gospel.”
Join in a Pilgrimage with Bishop Brennan
September 29–October 2, 2023

Itinerary
DAY 1: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29
DEPART USA, ARRIVE IN MEXICO
• Depart to Mexico City via independent flights
• Welcome dinner with orientation talk

DAY 2: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30
Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe
• Breakfast at the hotel and then take your bus to the world famous Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe
• See the miraculous image, the “Tilma” of St. Juan Diego, at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe
• Guided tour: the Shrine, the New Basilica, Old Basilica, Tepeyac Hill, and more
• Celebrate Mass with our pilgrim priests
• Time to pray, shop & explore the grounds of the Shrine
• Dinner presentation: Sisters of Mary programs around the world

DAY 3: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1
Sisters of Mary Girlstown
• Be inspired as you celebrate Mass with 3,500 girls
• Enjoy an amazing musical performance by the girls
• Lunch with the exceptional Sisters of Mary
• Tour Girlstown and see how the Sisters are transforming lives
• Time to play and enjoy the girls
• Light dinner with the Sisters before departing
• Return to the hotel for wrap-up

DAY 4: MONDAY, OCTOBER 2
Return to USA
• Return home on independent flights

Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe
• The most-visited Marian Shrine in the world!
• Home of the only true image of our Blessed Mother.
(A miraculous image created by God)

PILGRIMAGE PREP SUGGESTIONS
Excellent books:
“Our Lady of Gaudalupe: Mother of the Civilization of Love” by Carl Anderson and Eduardo Chavez
“Priest and Beggar” by Kevin Wells

Sisters of Mary
In 1964, Venerable Fr. Aloysius Schwartz founded the Sisters of Mary to serve the poorest of the poor. Today, 400 Sisters now operate our Boytowns and Girltowns in seven countries. They have rescued and transformed more than 170,000 of the world’s poorest children from the most desperate circumstances.

Testimonials
“It was truly one of the most spiritually important pilgrimages I’ve ever made.”
—Glory Sullivan
“Anyone who goes to Guadalupe and Girlstown will be so grateful for the experience of this faith-filled journey.” —Jane Lanier

To Join in the Pilgrimage
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Office of Evangelization and Catechesis
Saint James the Greater Catholic Church

Join Us For An Evening With Bishop Brennan!

May 23, 2023
Mass - 5:30pm
St. James the Greater Parish
Dinner to Follow Mass

Get to know Bishop Brennan while you celebrate Mass and enjoy dinner.

All Young Adults Welcome!

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The nation-leading cardiologists and surgeons of the WVU Heart and Vascular Institute Structural Heart Program at Wheeling specialize in problems with the heart's valves, walls, or chambers.

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- Deepak Hooda MD, Interventional Cardiology
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