

THE CATHOLIC

Spirit

Eucharistic Congresses Begin in West Virginia

Wheeling Congress is Tonight and Saturday (April 28 & 29)



John Sherwood Photo

Representatives of the diocese's six vicariates carry banners for their region at the closing Mass for the diocese's first Eucharistic Congress at St. James the Greater Church in Charles Town April 22.

By Colleen Rowan

Eucharistic Congresses have begun in West Virginia with the second of three opening this evening (April 28) at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling for the northern region of the diocese.

"Our desire is to rekindle in West Virginia Catholics a love for the Lord in his sacramental presence and to motivate our people to bring Christ beyond the walls of our

churches to their homes, schools, workplaces and communities," Bishop Mark Brennan said in a letter inviting the faithful to the three Eucharistic congresses.

The first of the congresses was held last weekend for Catholics of the Eastern Panhandle with Evening Prayer at St. Leo Church in Inwood followed by a keynote address by Father Luke Spannagel of the Diocese of Peoria, Ill. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, discussions, and

more followed the next day at St. James the Greater Church in Charles Town.

At the closing Mass at St. James, representatives of each of the diocese's six vicariates carried banners for their region in a procession. Prayer intentions of faithful from Eastern Panhandle churches were presented to Bishop Brennan, who celebrated the Mass.

Wheeling's Eucharistic Congress begins at 7 p.m. this evening

(April 28) at the cathedral with an "Evening Service of Prayer...in the style of Taize." A reception will follow.

The Wheeling Congress continues tomorrow (Saturday, April 29) at 9 a.m. with registration/coffee and donuts, followed by a morning prayer service at 10 a.m. with the keynote address by Father Timothy Anastos of the Archdiocese of Chicago to immediately follow.

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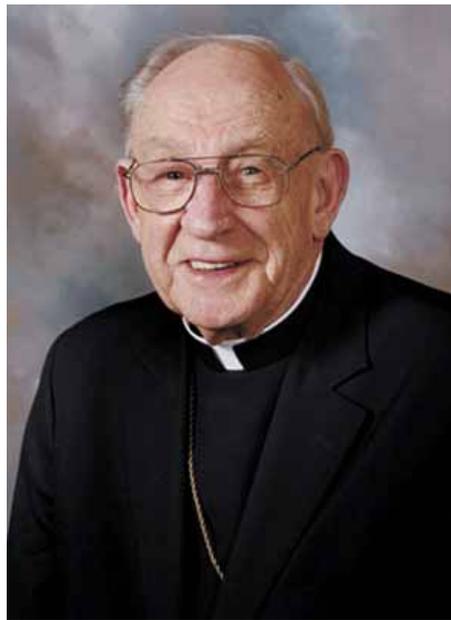
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Bishop Gilbert Sheldon Dies at the Age of 96

STEUBENVILLE — The Diocese of Steubenville's third bishop, Gilbert I. Sheldon, died April 24 at the age of 96. Bishop Sheldon served as a bishop for 26 years, 16 as an auxiliary in Cleveland and 10 as diocesan bishop in Steubenville.

Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton said, "Bishop Sheldon personified a shepherd's generosity and compassionate heart. His love for the people of God was evident in his travels throughout the diocese as he shared the good news of Jesus Christ. As his episcopal motto illustrated, he was strong in the faith."

Bishop Sheldon was born Sept. 20, 1926, in Cleveland, one of 12 children of the late Ignatius P. and Stephanie J. Olszewski Sheldon. He is survived by his sisters, Susan (Hans) Gossler of Munster, Indiana and Nancy A. Shel-



Bishop Gilbert I. Sheldon

don of Rocky River, Ohio.

He received his early education in Cleveland and enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Force, as an aviation cadet, upon graduation from high school in 1944.

Bishop Sheldon then went on to receive degrees from John Carroll University and St. Mary Seminary, both in Cleveland, and the Ohio Consortium of Seminaries, Columbus, Ohio. In addition, Bishop Sheldon has been awarded honorary degrees from Wheeling Jesuit University, Wheeling, West Virginia, and Franciscan University of Steubenville.

He was ordained to the priesthood Feb. 28, 1953, by Diocese of Cleveland Archbishop Edward F. Hoban.

On June 11, 1976, he was ordained a bishop by Bishop, and later Cardinal, James A. Hickey. As an auxiliary

bishop for the Cleveland Diocese, Bishop Sheldon was the vicar, Marriage and Family Concerns; vicar, Summit County; and vicar, Southern Region.

On April 2, 1992, he was installed as the bishop of the Diocese of Steubenville. During that time, he served on U.S. bishops' committees for Latin America, Administration, National Advisory Council, Missions and Nominations, as well as a board member of the Pontifical College Josephinum, Columbus.

Visitation for Bishop Sheldon will be held at Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, May 1, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and 7-9 p.m.; vigil service is scheduled for 7 p.m. A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 11 a.m., May 2 at Holy Rosary Church. Burial will take place following Mass.

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 Civil Authorities: Contact your 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 304.233.0880: Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim 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." The form is titled "Complaint Form for Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor." The form may be returned via U.S. mail to: Office of Safe Environment, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

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 Navex Global to offer the EthicsPoint platform to report other, additional concerns, such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese 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 Safe Environment 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 Relating to 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."

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Congresses...

Cont'd from Page 1

Ordained in 2017, Father Anastos is a Eucharistic preacher of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He is also the host of Reel Homilies – minute-long YouTube, Instagram and TikTok reflections on the Sunday Gospel readings where he speaks through the lenses of church tradition, pop culture, and self-improvement.

Father Anastos currently serves as associate chaplain of the St. John Paul II Newman Center at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

Following Father Anastos' talk, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament begins and will conclude before the closing Mass.

Also following Father Anastos' talk will be tours of the cathedral, lunch with a question/answer session and small table discussion, and two sessions of breakout presentations (by multiple speakers).

The Wheeling Congress concludes with Mass at the cathedral celebrated by Bishop Mark E. Brennan.

The final Eucharistic Congress will be held in Charleston June 2-3 at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart with keynote speaker Father Joe Freedy of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

For more information on the diocese's Eucharistic congresses, visit dwc.org/eucharistic-congresses/.



Clockwise from top left: Bishop Mark Brennan accepts the Book of Prayer Intentions at the closing Mass for the diocese's first Eucharistic Congress at St. James the Greater Church in Charles Town April 22; faithful register and check in; faithful enjoy fellowship at the congress with women religious; participants of all ages gather; Very Rev. Timothy J. Grassi, V.F., pastor of St. James, talks with participants; and participants enjoy a reception.

John Sherwood Photos

One Mission One Day to Make a Difference May 2, 2023

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Mark Phillips Named New President, CEO of Catholic Charities W.Va.

WHEELING— Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) announced Mark Phillips has been named president and chief executive officer, effective May 1. Phillips currently serves as CCWVa's chief operating officer.



Mark Phillips

Phillips replaces Beth Zarate, who is retiring in May. During her tenure, Zarate completed a number of new initiatives and led CCWVa to make great strides in serving those in most need throughout West Virginia.

Phillips was selected due to his strong leadership in working toward the agency's mission of providing caring and compassionate services to those in need. This appointment provides CCWVa with continuity of leadership, creating a seamless transition for the agency's mission-driven work.

"I am very happy to appoint Mark Phillips as the new CEO of CCWVa," said Bishop Mark Brennan. "He is a man of faith and has genuine concern for people who need our help. He will bring both competence and dedication to his new role."

Currently in his role as chief operating officer for CCWVa, Phillips supervises the regional directors of West Virginia Birth to Three, the Child Care Resource Center, and the Child Care Food Program. He also oversees Disaster Services, the Information Technology department, and leases and contracts across the state.

In his three-and-a-half-year tenure at CCWVa, Phillips has worked with other employees to:

- Ensure service provision to the most vulnerable, including homeless clients, throughout the pandemic;
- Implement the Hospital Transition Program, a collaborative model of rural health care, in three hospitals in W.Va.;
- Coordinate a renovation of space in Morgantown for CCWVa programs to join Hazel's House of Hope, a newly established hub for social services.

Prior to joining CCWVa, Phillips served as the vice president for external relations and chief of staff to two presidents at Wheeling Jesuit University (WJU) from 2012-2018. In his time at WJU, Phillips chaired the annual process of building the budget, worked as the liaison to local and national

See "Phillips" on Page 6

TUESDAY = One Mission One Day

24-Hour Online Fundraiser for Catholic Schools

By Joyce Bibey

Just a reminder for the 24 Catholic Schools in West Virginia. There are more than 4,400 reasons to motivate you to make a difference on Tuesday, May 2.

All 18 grade schools and six high schools will be participating in a 24-hour online state-wide giving day - One Mission One Day to Make a Difference to benefit their programs, facilities, and projects for more than 4,400 students.

The first Diocesan wide Catholic schools giving day was held in 2020 and since then, more

than \$1.2 million has been raised for Catholic schools across the state. Each year the giving day has grown bigger and better and has become a crucial fundraising event each of our schools count on.

To help your local school or alma mater go to www.OneMissionOneDay.org and select your school(s) that will receive your gift. Donations will go directly to the school or schools of choice. You can also text GIVE to 304-600-8123. Follow the hashtag #OneMissionOneDay on social media and check in on the

leaderboard at OneMissionOneDay.org. You can also help your school by helping them spread the word – like and share their social media posts!

The event kicks off at 12:01AM May 2 and continues to 11:59 PM on May 3, but if you'd like to get an early start, donations have begun online. Organizers from the individual schools are eager too to see which school will raise the most money and which will have the most donors, because those schools will each receive a \$500 gift from the WV Catholic Foundation.

'Play Ball!'

Father Devasya Offers Opening Day Blessing at Princeton Ballpark



Courtesy Photos

On April 15, to the delight of the Princeton community, Very Rev. Sebastian Devasya, V.F., offered the opening day blessing at the local ballpark for youth baseball. Above, Father Devasya offers the blessing. At right, he is pictured with young players and parishioners.

Wheeling-Area Knights' Effort Helps Feed the Hungry

By Colleen Rowan

WHEELING—An effort led by the Wheeling-area Knights of Columbus April 15 engaged the community in helping to fight hunger.

“Over 150 volunteers came together to package 60,707 meals to be delivered to those in need in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and locally in West Virginia,” said Thomas J. Burke, state advocate for the West Virginia Knights of Columbus. “This amount put the Knights of Columbus’ food packing projects at over 500,000 meals prepared since these events were started a few years ago.”

The meals packed by volunteers were nutritious vitameals.

The West Virginia Knights of Columbus and Cross Catholic Outreach coordinated the food packing event at Wheeling University’s Alma Grace McDonough Center.

Volunteers were invited to participate from local parish and church organizations, schools, and civic-minded organizations.

Cross Catholic Outreach collaborates with ministry partners that care for the material and spiritual wellbeing of the poor across a variety of program areas.



Courtesy Photo
Volunteers pack meals April 15 for a Wheeling-area Knights of Columbus effort with Cross Catholic Outreach.

Phillips...

Cont'd from Page 5

government officials, and coordinated strategic planning and accreditation. During his time in the president's office, the university enrolled the largest freshman class in the school's history.

Having lost his younger sister, Angela, to an overdose in 2016, Phillips considers the opportunity to work with the marginalized as a mission and a calling. Along with his work at CCWVa, Phillips has worked with young people in foster care through Wheeling's CASA for Children, and as Catechesis Coordinator for his parish, St. Michael's. He is married to Amy Criniti Phillips and has one child, Benjamin (11). Phillips was raised in southwestern Pennsylvania and received a BA at St. Vincent College and an MA at Duquesne University.

“CCWVa is blessed to have benefited from Beth's solid leadership in the past and is looking forward to

continued growth under Mark moving forward,” said Danny Vance, CCWVa board of directors chairman. “CCWVa is making a real difference in the lives of our neighbors, and it is the hard work of every member of the organization that allows the agency to reflect the love of Christ in the Mountain State.”

CCWVa is the largest independent provider of social and emotional services in the state of West Virginia, serving tens of thousands of people in need each year. To learn more, visit www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org.

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Catholics of W.Va. Invited to Join 1 Million Prayerful Voices to Our Blessed Mother for an End to Abortion

By Colleen Rowan

WEST VIRGINIA—Kathy Barton, director of Social Ministry for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, is inviting West Virginia Catholics to participate in an international pro-life effort praying for an end to abortion.

The goal, she said, is to have 1 million rosaries prayed over the first weekend in May, the month of Mary, for the specific intention “to end surgical and non-surgical killing of unborn human beings.”

Barton explained in her April 27 letter to parishes, missions, Catholic schools, and clergy that the ef-

fort is an initiative of the Saint Michael the Archangel Organization in Tennessee.

“This is an international effort to raise 100,000,000 prayerful voices to our Blessed Mother in protection of our most vulnerable women and children,” Barton said.

Patrick Benedict, director of the Saint Michael the Archangel Organization, implored all to pray for unborn babies, noting that “...each day (on average) over 100,000 unborn human persons are killed. And, that number, as horrific as it is, does not even include all of the non-surgical killings.”

Barton encouraged all of the diocese’s faithful to participate. Families and pro-life groups in parishes and Catholic schools could join in praying together or individuals can pray the rosary on their own.

Included with Barton’s letter was a poster and sign-up sheet.

“It is our hope that each parish within the diocese will prayerfully contribute to this most timely and important intention,” she wrote. “Your prayers can make a difference. Just think of the impact of 1,000,000 rosaries being said, in one weekend, all over the world can have.”

The number of rosaries prayed at each parish or school can be e-mailed to Barton at kbarton@dwc.org at the end of the weekend to add to the grand total.

The Saint Michael the Archangel Organization began in 2007 and coordinates the One Million Rosaries for Unborn Babies prayer event three days each May, according to its website. The organization also coordinates the Pro-Life Novena for Unborn Babies from Sept. 29-Oct. 7.

More information can be found at <http://www.saintmichaelthearchangelorganization.org/>.

ONE MILLION ROSARIES FOR UNBORN BABIES

Prayer Event Friday, May 5th – Sunday, May 7th
Month of Mary



This is an international effort to have **1,000,000 Rosaries** said for the following intention:

FOR AN END TO THE SURGICAL AND NON-SURGICAL KILLING OF UNBORN HUMAN PERSONS



This is an international event started by the Saint Michael the Archangel Organization in Tennessee. For more information about this event, see www.saintmichaelthearchangelorganization.org.

Think of the impact 1,000,000 rosaries said all over the world the same weekend can have! YOU can make a difference!

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World Day of Prayer for Vocations

THIS SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 2023

The purpose of World Day of Prayer for Vocations is to publicly fulfill the Lord's instruction to, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest" (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2). As a climax to a prayer that is continually offered throughout the Church, it affirms the primacy of faith and grace in all that concerns vocations to the priesthood and to the consecrated life. While appreciating all vocations, the Church concentrates its attention this day on vocations to the ordained ministries (priesthood and diaconate), consecrated life in all its forms (male and female religious life, societies of apostolic life, consecrated virginity), secular institutes in their diversity of services and membership, and to the missionary life.



Our Priests, Deacons, Religious, and Seminarians of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston



Pope Appeals for End to Violence in Sudan

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has appealed for an end to violence in Sudan and a return to dialogue.

“I invite everyone to pray for our Sudanese brothers and sisters,” he said after reciting the midday “Regina Coeli” prayer with about 30,000 people gathered in St. Peter’s Square April 23.

The pope had already expressed his concern about Sudan after the

midday prayer April 16; fighting between forces loyal to two different generals has led to the deaths of hundreds of civilians since April 13. The power struggle has brought violence, shootings and bombings to the capital Khartoum and elsewhere. Electricity, internet and access to food and water have been cut off for many of the people.

Pope Francis said April 23, “Unfortunately, the situation in Sudan

remains grave, and therefore I renew my appeal for an end to the violence as soon as possible and for a return to the path of dialogue.”

The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, reported April 20 that between 10,000 and 20,000 people had fled Sudan’s western Darfur region in the previous few days and sought refuge in neighboring Chad, which already hosts more than 370,000

Sudanese refugees.

“The majority of those arriving are women and children, who are currently sheltering out in the open,” it said in a press release.

“The initial most pressing needs are water, food, shelter, health care, child protection and prevention of gender-based violence. Due to the violence experienced by those crossing the border, psychosocial support is also among our top priorities,” it added.

Pope Decides Women Will be Voting Members of Synod of Bishops

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — At least three dozen women will be voting members of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October, Pope Francis has decided. In a decision formalized April 17, “the Holy Father approved the extension of participation in the synodal assembly to ‘non-bishops’ — priests, deacons, consecrated men and women, lay men and women,” the synod office said in a statement April 26.

Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, relator general of the synod, told reporters April 26 that about 21% of the synod’s 370 members would not be bishops and at least half of that group would be women.

Adding women and young people to the membership will make sure “the church is well represented” in the prayer and discussions scheduled for Oct. 4-29 at the Vatican, the cardinal said. “It will be a joy to have the whole church represented in Rome for the synod.”

“As you can see, the space in the tent is being enlarged,” Cardinal Mario Grech, synod secretary-general, told reporters, echoing the title that had been chosen for the working document for the just-

completed continental phase of the synod. The document said that in local and national synod listening sessions there were consistent questions about how to promote greater inclusion in the Catholic Church while staying true to church teaching.

“The Synod of Bishops will remain a synod of bishops,” Cardinal Grech said, but it will be “enriched” by representatives of the whole church.

The pope’s decision to expand the categories of synod members, the April statement said, “is in continuity” with the Catholic Church’s growing understanding of the synodal dimension of the church and “the consequent understanding of the institutions through which it is exercised.”

Since the Synod of Bishops was reinstated after the Second Vatican Council, the voting members of the synod have all been men. The membership was primarily cardinals and bishops, except for the 10 priests — and recently one religious brother — elected by the men’s Union of Superiors General.

Now, rather than the Union of Superiors General selecting 10 voting members, the office said, it will elect only five priests or brothers. And the women’s International Union of Superiors General also will elect five sisters or nuns.

Past synods have included women as non-voting “auditors,” a group that included many women.

Pope Francis has done away with the “auditor” category of synod participant, the Vatican said. Instead, there will be a group of 70 non-bishop members representing “various groupings of the faithful of the people of God,” including priests, consecrated women, deacons and laypeople from every part of the world. The pope will choose the 70 from a list of 140 people selected by bishops and organizers of six regional groupings of bishops and by the Assembly of Patriarchs of Eastern Catholic Churches. The six regional groups are: the council of bishops’ conferences of Latin America and the Caribbean, known as CELAM; the Council of Bishops’ Conferences of Europe; the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar; the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences; the Federation of Catholic Bishops’ Conferences of Oceania; and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops together.

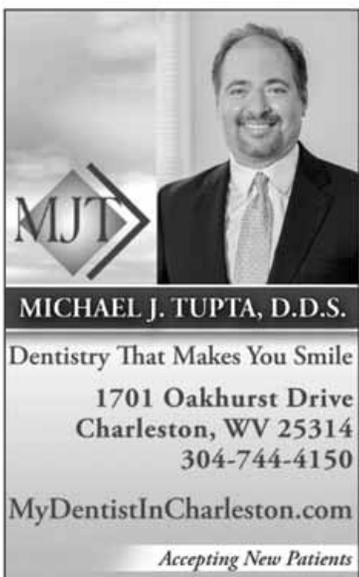
Each of the seven bishops’ groups will nominate 20 people, the statement said, and

“it is requested that 50% of them be women and that the presence of young people also be emphasized.”

In addition to the 10 religious elected by their groups of superiors and the 70 non-bishop members nominated by continental groups, Pope Francis may include “non-bishop members” among the members he appoints.

And, since the leadership of the synod secretariat will be full members, that includes Xavière Missionary Sister Nathalie Becquart, undersecretary of the synod. Cardinal Hollerich added that after all the work they did preparing the synod, “it would be very unfair” to exclude them as

members. Most synod members will be bishops elected by their episcopal conference or by their Eastern Catholic bishops’ synod. The number of delegates each conference can elect depends on the size of the conference. Bishops’ conferences with more than 200 members — like the conferences of Italy, Brazil and the United States — will elect five members.



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Pope Names Members of Dicastery for Evangelization's First Section

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has appointed 19 people as members of the Dicastery for Evangelization's first section and has named another 15 as consultants.

The first section, led by Italian Archbishop Rino Fisichella, formally is known as "Section for Fundamental Questions regarding Evangelization in the World," and has responsibility for promoting evangelization, missionary discipleship, catechesis and Christian social engagement in countries where Christianity already is well established.

Pope Francis also has given the section responsibility for planning the Holy Year 2025.

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York is among the new members, as is Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, pro-prefect of the second section of the dicastery, that is responsible for "the first evangelization and new particular churches," what traditionally has been known as the church's mission territories.

Msgr. Geno Sylva, vicar for special projects in the Diocese of Paterson, New Jersey, and rector of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, also was named a member. He is a former staff member of the former Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, the precursor to the dicastery's first section.

The 19 new members include three women: Sister Maria Eliane Azevedo da Silva, superior general of the Missionary Sisters of the

Sacred Heart; Marta Maria Carla Cartabia, a professor of jurisprudence and former president of Italy's Constitutional Court; and María Ascensión Romero Antón, a member of the international leadership team of the Neocatechumenal Way.

Pope Francis' reorganization of the Roman Curia, which formed the Dicastery for Evangelization, said that "the members of curial institutions are appointed from among the cardinals living in Rome or outside the city, to whom are added some bishops, especially diocesan or eparchial ones, insofar as they have expertise in the particular matters involved."

"Depending on the nature of the dicastery," it said, "priests, deacons, those in institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life and lay faithful may also be appointed members."

The 15 consultants include nine priests, a religious brother, two women and three laymen.

Among them are Salesian Sister Cettina Cacciato Insilla, a professor of catechetics in Rome; Chiara Amirante, founder and president of the New Horizons Community; Curtis A. Martin, founder and CEO of FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students; and Petroc Willey, a professor of catechetics at Franciscan University of Steubenville.

Amirante, Martin and Willey also were consultants to the former Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization.

Archbishop Clarifies Remarks on Assisted Suicide in Italy

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The president of the Pontifical Academy for Life affirms his opposition to euthanasia and assisted suicide but believes that to end confusion in the country, the Italian Parliament needs to make clear laws about withdrawing end-of-life care, his office said.

"Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, president of the Pontifical Academy for Life, in full conformity with the church's magisterium, reaffirms his 'no' to euthanasia and assisted suicide," his office said in a statement April 24.

The archbishop participated in a debate April 19 about end-of-life issues, and the complete text of his remarks was published April 21 by the Italian news site Il Riformista. Some websites, reporting on his remarks, claimed he defended euthanasia and medically assisted suicide. The experience of countries where medically "assisted death" is permitted by law, he had said, shows that "the pool of people admitted tends to expand; competent adult patients are joined by patients in whom decision-making capacity is impaired, sometimes severely," for example, psychiatric patients, children, the elderly with cognitive impairment.

"Cases of involuntary euthanasia and deep palliative sedation without consent have thus grown," the archbishop had said. He argued that in Italy, where the Constitutional Court has ruled assisted suicide a crime, but one that is not punishable in certain cases, a law regulating the practice "may be the greatest common good concretely possible under the conditions in which we find ourselves."

Court Blocks Lower Court's Restrictions on Abortion Pill, Leaving Drug on the Market during Litigation

WASHINGTON (OSV News) — The U.S. Supreme Court said April 21 it would block a lower court's restrictions on an abortion pill, leaving the drug on the market while litigation over the drug proceeds.

The Court froze a lower court's ruling to stay the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's approval of the drug. The Justice Department and the pharmaceutical company behind the abortion pill mifepristone previously asked the U.S. Supreme Court to intervene in the case after an appeals court allowed portions of the ruling by U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk to take effect. The order was an apparent 7-2 vote, with Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito publicly dissenting.

A coalition of pro-life opponents of mifepristone, the first of two drugs used in a medication or chemical abortion, filed suit in an effort to revoke the FDA's approval of the drug, arguing the government violated its own safety standards when it first approved the drug in 2000.

Erik Baptist, senior counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom, one of the groups challenging the FDA's approval of mifepristone, said in a statement that "As is common practice, the Supreme Court has decided to maintain the status quo that existed prior to our lawsuit while our challenge to the FDA's illegal approval of chemical abortion drugs and its removal of critical safeguards for those drugs moves forward."

Washington State Bans AR-15 Sales, Requires Training and Waiting Period for New Gun Buys

OLYMPIA, Wa. (OSV News) — Washington state enacted a new law April 25 banning the sale, manufacture and import of assault weapons in the state, including the AR-15, a military-style semi-automatic rifle that has been used in some of the recent mass shootings in the United States.

The bill does not ban the existing possession of such weapons by current owners, and has exceptions for ownership by law enforcement or military members. It also has exceptions for cases of inheritance. The office of Democratic Gov. Jay Inslee said Washington is now one of 10 states in America with a ban on assault weapons. Inslee signed an additional bill that now makes Washington one of a few states with both a waiting period and training requirement for all gun purchases.

Another measure approved by the governor permits consumers to sue firearm manufacturers or retailers for irresponsible conduct, a law only four other states have enacted.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has called for a national ban on assault weapons, a term that refers to military-style semi-automatic rifles, shotguns, and pistols fed by ammunition magazines of various capacities. They also support other gun safety measures including universal background checks and limitations on civilian access to high-capacity ammunition magazines.

Kansas Enacts 'Born-Alive' Bill after Legislature Overrides Governor's Veto

TOPEKA, Kan. (OSV News) — Lawmakers in the Kansas legislature voted April 26 to override Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly's veto of a "born-alive infants protection act."

The Kansas House voted to override the veto in a vote of 87-37, while the Kansas Senate voted 31-9 to override the governor's veto. The bill aims to protect infants born alive, regardless of whether the intent was to abort them, and marks the first abortion-related legislation enacted in the state since Kansas voters rejected an effort to

strip abortion protections from their state constitution last year. It is scheduled to go into effect in July. The bill, HB 2313, which would require physicians to provide infants born alive as the result of a failed abortion procedure the medical care appropriate to their gestational age, and to report data to the state about any such incidents.

The Kansas bill also would apply to instances where doctors induce labor to deliver an unborn child that is not expected to survive outside the womb.



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Courtesy Photo

Confirmation at St. John Parish in Benwood April 18

Confirmation Schedule

Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

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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Michigan Third Grader Launches ‘Kid’s Bible in a Year with Teddy’ Podcast

By Gabriella Patti

NEWPORT, Mich. (OSV News) — When he grows up, third grader Teddy Howell, a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Newport, wants to be a podcaster and a priest. At 9 years old, he already has achieved one of those goals with the recent launch of his podcast: “Kid’s Bible In A Year with Teddy.”

In each 10-minute episode, released Sundays and Wednesdays, Teddy leads his listeners in prayer and through a series of Bible verses. Teddy has been given permission by Ascension Press to use the “Catholic Bible Chronicles” as his reference.

Subscribers can listen to Teddy’s podcast on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and other podcast hosting platforms.

If the youngster’s podcast sounds familiar, that’s because it’s inspired by Father Mike Schmitz’s chart-topping podcast, “The Bible in a Year (with Fr. Mike Schmitz).” The priest, of the Diocese of Duluth, Minnesota, created the Bible podcast with Scripture scholar Jeff Cavins with the backing of Ascension. Cavins is the author of the hugely popular “Great Adventure Bible Study Program” and “The Bible Timeline Learning System.”

Although Teddy, the oldest of six children, wanted to listen to Father Schmitz’s podcast along with his parents, the series contains some material that isn’t suitable for young children, said Teddy’s mother, Steffi Howell.

“Father Mike Schmitz gets a PG-13 rating, and Teddy was getting frustrated when we turn off Father Mike,” Steffi Howell told Detroit Catholic, the online news outlet of the Archdiocese of Detroit. “He first had the idea about two years ago to

make his own (podcast), and it finally came to fruition.”

Teddy writes his own scripts, including an intro, prayer, Bible verses he wants to highlight and a conclusion to each episode. His parents help him type it out, and he records each episode using a microphone hooked up to his father’s computer or his mother’s cellphone.

At the time of Detroit Catholic’s interview with Teddy, he was unsure how many followers he had; however, he has had 323 episode plays total for his five first episodes with listeners in the U.S., Canada, Australia and Great Britain.

Once this podcast is over, Teddy hopes to make another and another — eventually becoming a podcaster priest like Father Schmitz.

“I love God ... and I want to grow in the virtue of God with other kids,” said Teddy, who attends St. Charles Borromeo Academy in Newport.

Although Teddy’s podcast is geared toward other children, he thinks it could benefit adults as well.

“(If adults listen to it) maybe if they’re not Catholic, they could become Catholic,” Teddy added.

Already, Teddy’s grandmother opts to listen to Teddy over Father Schmitz because she appreciates the short length and doesn’t like the “nitty gritty,” said Steffi Howell.

Teddy’s goal for the podcast is just for people to listen to the word of God.

“I like to read about the Bible, and I pray,” Teddy said. “If you want to follow me, you can subscribe if you want.”

(Gabriella Patti is a staff reporter for Detroit Catholic, the online news outlet of the Archdiocese of Detroit.)



OSV News Photo/Courtesy Howell Family
Nine-year-old Teddy Howell, seen in an undated photo, wants to be a podcaster and a priest. Inspired by Father Mike Schmitz’s popular podcast, “The Bible in a Year,” the third-grader at St. Charles Borromeo Academy in Newport, Mich., has achieved one of those goals with the recent launch of his own podcast: “Kid’s Bible In A Year with Teddy.”



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Los Obispos de EE.UU. reafirman su 'Inquebrantable solidaridad' con la Iglesia nicaragüense perseguida por el gobierno

WASHINGTON (OSV News) — Los obispos de Estados Unidos reafirmaron el 20 de abril su "inquebrantable solidaridad" con los obispos, sacerdotes, fieles y "todos los hombres y mujeres de buena voluntad" de Nicaragua que están sufriendo "una intensificación" de la persecución religiosa por parte del gobierno de Nicaragua.

El obispo David J. Malloy de Rockford, Illinois, presidente del Comité de Justicia Internacional y Paz de la Conferencia de los Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos, emitió la declaración, en la que señalaba las restricciones impuestas por el gobierno a la Iglesia católica, especialmente durante la Semana Santa y la Pascua.

En medio de la represión contra la Iglesia por parte del régimen del presidente Daniel Ortega y su esposa, Rosario Murillo, quien es vicepresidente, las procesiones religiosas en las calles están prohibidas desde el comienzo de la Cuaresma en febrero. Para la Semana Santa, el gobierno se negó a autorizar el tradicional Vía Crucis que se celebra públicamente en todas las diócesis del país.

El obispo Malloy también hizo un llamamiento al gobierno de Estados Unidos "y a toda la comunidad

internacional para que sigan trabajando por la liberación" de Mons. Rolando Álvarez, obispo de Matagalpa, que "languidece en prisión" y ha sido "despojado de su ciudadanía".

En febrero, tras negarse a ser deportado a Estados Unidos junto con más de 200 presos políticos nicaragüenses, el obispo Álvarez fue condenado a más de 26 años de prisión tras ser declarado culpable de traición a la patria, atentado contra la integridad nacional y difusión de noticias falsas, entre otros cargos. Antes de eso, estuvo en arresto domiciliario durante meses tras un asalto a su sede diocesana en agosto de 2022.

Además de la prohibición de las tradicionales celebraciones y procesiones al aire libre de Semana Santa, señaló el obispo Malloy, el gobierno ha confiscado propiedades de la Iglesia y expulsado al clero y a religiosas.

"A pesar de estas dificultades extremas, los fieles nicaragüenses, en unión con sus obispos y sacerdotes, han dado testimonio del poder de la resurrección de Cristo, asistiendo a las celebraciones de Pascua en un número récord", dijo.

"Que Nuestra Señora de la Inmaculada Concepción, patrona de los Estados Unidos y de Nicaragua, abraza a sus hijos en este tiempo

difícil, y los ilumine con la luz de Cristo resucitado", añadió.

En su mensaje de Pascua, el Papa Francisco recordó a los cristianos que celebran la Pascua "en circunstancias particulares", mencionando específicamente a Nicaragua.

En marzo, en Washington, una audiencia de la Cámara de Representantes de Estados Unidos examinó lo que calificó de persecución anticatólica de Ortega y pidió que se tomaran medidas, pocos días después de que el Vaticano dijera el 18 de marzo que había cerrado su embajada en Nicaragua después de que el gobierno del país propusiera sus-

pendar las relaciones diplomáticas.

"¿Está haciendo lo suficiente Estados Unidos?", preguntó el representante Chris Smith, republicano de Nueva Jersey, legislador católico de larga trayectoria que presidió la reunión de la subcomisión mixta de Asuntos Exteriores de la Cámara de Representantes. "¿Estamos haciendo lo suficiente en el Congreso? ¿Está haciendo lo suficiente el presidente? Francamente, estoy preocupado".

"Todos tenemos que redoblar nuestros esfuerzos, todos tenemos que hacer más, y tenemos que hacerlo inmediatamente", dijo.

El Papa nombra a los miembros de la primera sección del Dicasterio para la Evangelización

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS)— El Papa Francisco ha nombrado a 19 personas como miembros de la primera sección del Dicasterio para la Evangelización y ha nombrado a otras 15 como consultores.

La primera sección, dirigida por el arzobispo italiano Rino Fisichella, se conoce formalmente como "Sección para las Cuestiones Fundamentales de la Evangelización en el Mundo", y tiene la responsabilidad de promover la evangelización, el discipulado misionero, la catequesis y el compromiso social cristiano en los países donde el cristianismo ya está bien establecido. El Papa Francisco también ha dado a la sección la responsabilidad de planificar el Año Santo 2025.

El cardenal Timothy M. Dolan de Nueva York se encuentra entre los nuevos miembros, al igual que el carde-

nal Luis Antonio Tagle, pro-prefecto de la segunda sección del dicasterio, que es responsable de "la primera evangelización y las nuevas iglesias particulares", lo que tradicionalmente se ha conocido como los territorios de misión de la Iglesia.

Entre los 19 nuevos miembros hay tres mujeres; entre los 15 consultores hay nueve sacerdotes, un religioso, dos mujeres y tres laicos. Entre ellos se encuentran la hermana salesiana Cettina Cacciato Insilla, profesora de catequética en Roma; Chiara Amirante, fundadora y presidenta de la Comunidad Nuevos Horizontes; Curtis A. Martin, fundador y CEO de FOCUS, la Fellowship of Catholic University Students; y Petroc Willey, profesor de catequética en la Universidad Franciscana de Steubenville.

Para denunciar presuntos casos de abuso sexual de niños:

La Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston alienta a informar ante las autoridades civiles ante todo si se ha cometido un delito. También alentamos a utilizar www.reportbishopabuse.org para hacer un informe sobre cualquier obispo en los EE. UU. Si tiene motivos para creer que un obispo ha cometido una conducta sexual inapropiada, comuníquese con las autoridades civiles de la jurisdicción correspondiente y visite www.reportbishopabuse.org.

Para informar a las autoridades civiles: comuníquese con la policía local; los números varían según su ubicación. Si cree que alguien está en peligro inmediato, llame al 911. Para informar confidencialmente cualquier incidencia de sospecha de abuso o negligencia infantil, incluido el abuso sexual, comuníquese con la Oficina de Servicios de Protección Infantil de Niños y Familias de West Virginia llamando a la línea directa de abuso infantil al 800.352.6513. Puede informar anonimamente a esta línea directa si lo prefiere.

Para informar a las autoridades diocesanas: La diócesis alienta a informar a las autoridades civiles apropiadas, ante todo, si se ha cometido un delito. La diócesis también alienta a informar a las autoridades eclesísticas apropiadas. Para reportar casos sospechosos de abuso sexual de niños por parte del personal de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston a la Diócesis, comuníquese con uno de los siguientes designados al 1.888.434.6237 o 304.233.0880: Sr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Sr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; o Muy Reverendo Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270. También puede llamar a la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro de la Diócesis al 304.230.1504.

También puede llamar a la línea directa de abuso sexual de la Diócesis al 833.230.5656. Los formularios de queja están disponibles en línea en www.dwc.org, haga clic en "Diócesis" en la barra de menú, luego en "Oficinas", luego en "Ambiente seguro", luego "Descargar archivos y formularios". El formulario se titula "Formulario de queja para denuncias de abuso sexual de menores". El formulario se puede devolver por correo de EE. UU. A: Office of Safe Environment, Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

Para informar al Coordinador de Asistencia a Víctimas de la Diócesis: llame a la Dra. Patricia Bailey al 304.242.6988.

Además de los métodos enumerados anteriormente para denunciar el abuso sexual, la Diócesis también se ha asociado con Navex Global para ofrecer la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar otras inquietudes adicionales, como sospecha de mala conducta financiera, profesional y personal de un sacerdote, diácono, religioso, o empleado laico de la Diócesis o cualquier parroquia o escuela católica en West Virginia. Se puede acceder a la plataforma EthicsPoint a través de www.dwc.org, en "Rendición de cuentas", luego "Informar mala conducta" o llamando al 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint es un sistema de informes de terceros que informa a las autoridades civiles cuando corresponda y a las autoridades diocesanas, y la identidad de la persona que informa esta protegida. Enlaces e información: Departamento de Salud y Recursos Humanos de WV: <https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp>. Policía Estatal de Virginia Occidental, Unidad de Crímenes contra Niños: 304-293-6400.



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Brittani pursued her learning and professional goals through Catholic Charities' Adult Education program.

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Brittani is a wife and mother who found herself dealing with Substance Use Disorder. She was referred to Catholic Charities by our community partner, Jobs & Hope, as part of her personal development and recovery plan. Brittani came to Catholic Charities to help prepare for the High School Equivalency (HiSet) exam, utilizing the distance education option to study from home while raising her two small children.

Brittani is a self-motivated learner who moved through the preparation courses quickly after enrolling in our learning center at the Catholic Charities Community Center of Huntington. When ready to register for her high-school equivalency testing, she found that no testing was scheduled where she lived. The Catholic Charities team facilitated her registration at a site in McDowell County. Brittani drove over two hours to complete her testing.

Her efforts paid off! Brittani passed the High School Equivalency exam. She is continuing her journey and is now enrolled in Mountwest's Radiology program.

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JULY 23 - JULY 29

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