Apostolic Nuncio to U.S. Celebrates Mass for Boy Scouts of America National Jamboree Near Beckley

Shares His Thoughts on Becoming a Cardinal and the National Eucharistic Revival, and His Message to Scouts

By Colleen Rowan

It was unexpected, Cardinal-designate Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the U.S., said of Pope Francis naming him a cardinal. However, this was the news he woke up to on the morning of July 9 when a journalist called to ask him how he felt.

While visiting West Virginia last month to celebrate the Mass for the Boy Scouts of America National Jamboree near Beckley, Cardinal-designate Pierre sat down with The Catholic Spirit to share how he felt in this moment, his thoughts on the National Eucharistic Revival, and his message to the scouts.

Cardinal-designate Pierre is among 21 new cardinals to be formally installed by Pope Francis during a special consistory at the

Bishop Brennan Asks Faithful to Join in One Million Rosaries for Vocations in West Virginia Effort

By Colleen Rowan

WEST VIRGINIA — Bishop Mark Brennan is asking the Catholic faithful of West Virginia to join in the effort of One Million Rosaries for Vocations in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

“For vocations to the priesthood, to the consecrated life of religious men and women, to the permanent diaconate, and to Christian marriage. Those are all distinct vocations in our church. We need to pray for them,” Bishop Brennan said to those gathered at the Mass he celebrated at the Upper Ohio Valley Italian Heritage Festival in Wheeling July 30. “Thank God, you see some of the fruit of your previous prayers in our seminarians, here,” who were serving at the Mass.

The bishop continued saying that he knows men and women considering consecrated life and that the diocese has 20 men in preparation to be ordained permanent deacons. Deacon John Soplinski, the bishop said, who was the deacon for the Mass, will be ordained a priest next year.

Bishop Brennan also spoke of the importance of the vocation of Christian marriage, “the foundation of society and family life.”

The One Million Rosaries for Vocations effort begins on the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Aug. 15) and continues to the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary (Oct. 7).

“Commit yourself to praying a rosary every day for that period of time,” Bishop Brennan said.

Inside:

Diocese Announces New Seminarians, Page 1 of The Calling, Center Section

Fourth Grader Julian Haas Proves to Be A Faith Builder, Page 7
Diocesan Official Appointments

Bishop Mark Brennan has made public the following appointments:

**Father John Gallagher** is reappointed to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Finance Council for a term of one year, effective June 30, 2023. This is in addition to his current assignment as pastor of St. Michael Parish in Vienna.

**Deacon Dave Galvin** is reappointed to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Finance Council for a term of one year, effective June 30, 2023. This is in addition to his current assignment as permanent deacon at St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town.

**Mr. Pat Felton** is reappointed to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Finance Council for a term of four years, effective June 30, 2023.

**Mr. Ian Flores** is reappointed to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Finance Council for a term of two years, effective June 30, 2023.

**Mr. Chris Freeman** is reappointed to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Finance Council for a term of five years, effective June 30, 2023.

**Ms. Kathy Lester** is reappointed to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Finance Council for a term of three years, effective June 30, 2023.

**Mrs. Mary Pocki** is reappointed to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Finance Council for a term of two years, effective June 30, 2023.

**Ms. Donna Smith** is reappointed to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Finance Council for a term of three years, effective June 30, 2023.

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.

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 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” on the menu bar, then “Offices,” then “Safe Environment”, then “Download Files and Forms.” The title is “Complaint Form for Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor.”

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 Rev. 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.”

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.
Rosaries...
Cont’d from Page 1
In order to keep an accurate tally as the faithful work toward the goal of 1 million, those joining in the effort are kindly asked to make a pledge of the number of rosaries they will pray at https://dwc.org/one-million-rosaries/ or by simply scanning the QR code in the ad on the right of this page. The website also offers information and resources to aid in this endeavor, including a prayer card. This prayer is shown on the bottom right of this page.

“The more we pray together, the more vocations we will have.”
—Sister Martha Teresa Gomez, RGS, delegate for Consecrated Life for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston

Visitors to the website will find that more than 10,000 pledges have already been made. The faithful are making the commitment to pray the rosary for vocations in different ways—as families, on their own, or in groups.

The initiative seeking Our Lady’s intercession aptly begins in the month of August, which is dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and ends in October, the Month of the Rosary.

“If there is one prayer that is most spoken about in the life of the church other than the Mass, it’s the rosary,” said Father Brian Crenwelge, director of Vocations for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

“Time and time again, in Marian apparitions, Our Lady has asked for a daily rosary to be prayed. Countless popes have written on its importance, and hundreds of saints have written and spoken about it. It’s very evident—the praying of the rosary is powerful.”

The idea of the One Million Rosaries for Vocations effort in West Virginia came from Sister Martha Teresa Gomez, RGS, delegate for Consecrated Life for the diocese. She addressed the Wheeling Serra Club about the effort at the club’s 54th Annual Burse Dinner July 27 at Central Catholic High School’s Great Hall.

“My first rosary was given from the Serra Club,” Sister Martha shared with attendees. She also spoke about the power of the rosary and recalled that in her youth her parents, no matter how tired or how long of a day they had, would pray the rosary at the end of the day.

“I want you to shout it out,” Sister Martha said, encouraging all of the Serrans and guests to join in and spread the word about the effort.

“We need to pray for vocations,” she stressed. “That’s where they come from—from prayers. The more we pray together, the more vocations we will have.”

Oh, my Jesus,
listen to my prayer today.
Bless more young people,
more men, and more women,
in West Virginia
to say yes to your call
to be religious brothers,
sisters, and priests.
Bless my family
and my Church family
so, we can support them,
and remain close to you.
We ask Blessed Mary
and St. Joseph to come to you
in our need to build up the Church
in the great Mountain State.
Amen.
Nuncio...
Cont’d from Page 1
Vatican Sept. 30, and he sees this as a continuity of what his life has been. “Since I have been called, so many years ago, to service of the pope,” he said, “my ministry as a priest has been to correspond to what it means to be a representative of the pope.”
He has been a nuncio for 27 years and before that served in the nunciature. He was appointed apostolic nuncio to Haiti on July 12, 1995, where he served until 1999. He was the apostolic nuncio to Uganda from 1999 to 2007 and then, the apostolic nuncio to Mexico from 2007 to 2016. He was appointed as apostolic nuncio of the United States by Pope Francis on April 12, 2016.
Throughout his years of service, he said his mission has always been to represent the pope in the best way.
In reflecting on his new role, Cardinal-designate Pierre stressed that church is not an abstract or mental concept, but it cannot be unless it corresponds to the will of Christ, “because Christ is the only one who was sent by God the Father to speak about him, to represent him, to be his presence.”
Jesus has called all to be his body, the cardinal-designate said, and the church is organized around Jesus, himself.
“My vocation, my calling in the church is to represent the successor of Peter,” he said. “It is a very precise mission.”
As a cardinal, he will share the pope’s mission in the closest way. “I will continue to do so,” he said. “I am ready to do so—to give my life for that. I have already given my life for that.”
The National Eucharistic Revival
The National Eucharistic Revival presents a wonderful opportunity for the church, Cardinal-designate Pierre said, and he is happy that the U.S. bishops have taken this action.
“To revive the faith of the people, to revive the church as church, the sacrament of God’s presence,” he said. “So that people—through the church, through the dynamism of the church—have the possibility to have a personal encounter with Christ.”
It is an opportunity to educate the faithful, especially in this time of secularization, the cardinal-designate continued.
Many have lost the real understanding of what the Eucharist is, he said.
“Not just the Eucharist … also the sacraments, the church. The Eucharist is really Jesus giving himself like he did to his first disciples. Before giving his life, he said: This is my body, this is my blood. Take it. Eat it, so that you may become my body … It is a moment of communion,” he said.
“The revival, which is undertaken by the bishops, is a monumental thing because it is the whole meaning of our faith which is at stake,” the cardinal-designate said. The Eucharist is the center of the Catholic faith, he said, the center of the life of the church. Re-viving belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist cannot happen “if you don’t help people to become aware that they have become Eucharist themselves,” he said.
When asked what he saw as the cause of many Catholics’ lack of belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist as reported by Pew Research Center, Cardinal-designate Pierre said that it goes beyond a lack of understanding of what the Eucharist is. He recalled his first year as the apostolic nuncio to Mexico in 2007. In the final document for the meeting of the bishops for South America at that time, the bishops noted a difficulty in the transmission of the faith from one generation to the next at many levels in society: Parents having difficulty communicating their values, their culture to their children; as well as teachers and priests, Cardinal-designate Pierre sees this as a factor today.
“I think it is a breakdown of communication,” he said. “The message has not been transmitted. The experience of faith has not been transmitted, even inside the family.”
There are many factors that have contributed to this breakdown in the transmission of the faith, he said, which is now into the second or third generations.
“We, the bishops in the present, now have to help our church to find a new way of reaching out to people,” the cardinal-designate said, “a new way of teaching the faith, a new way of witnessing our faith.”
All that is being offered and accomplished in the National Eucharistic Revival is good. Cardinal-designate Pierre said. It is an invitation, he said, for families to find new ways of transmitting the faith further into prayer; for the education of children; and parishes with catechism. Especially important are missions reaching out to Catholics who have lost their faith and reaching out to young Catholics, the cardinal-designate.
Nuncio...
Cont’d from Page 4
said. “You see, now, in parishes,” he said, “the youth have disappeared. Where are they?”

A Eucharistic Congress is also excellent to have during the revival, he said, “but it’s not enough. Because if we continue to do the things with the people who are already there, I think it would be insufficient.”

Mass for Boy Scouts National Jamboree

This was the third Mass Cardinal-designate Pierre celebrated at the Boy Scouts of America National Jamboree in West Virginia.

“I was impressed this morning,” he told The Catholic Spirit several hours after the celebration July 23. “We had a few thousand young men and women that participated in the Mass. ... I’m happy to see that so many lay leaders are also serving in this capacity to help the young people.”

“It was a good experience,” he said, noting the lay leaders, bishops, and priests from across the U.S. who were present. The concelebrating bishops were Bishop Mark Brennan; Bishop Michael Fisher of Buffalo, N.Y.; Cardinal-designate Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the U.S.; and three priests who are not identified.

Mass for Boy Scouts National Jamboree


In his homily for the jamboree Mass, Cardinal-designate Pierre recalled his own experience and joy as a scout and spoke of the values scouts today can gain through membership. He also invited them to have a personal encounter with Christ, which brings the opportunity to discover many virtues. This has been the case in his life, he shared. Emphasizing the virtue of patience to the scouts, the cardinal-designate spoke about the Gospel for the Mass that Sunday, (Mt 13:24-30): “Jesus proposed another parable to the crowds, saying: ‘The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off. When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well.’

The man said that an enemy had done this but cautioned: “if you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them. ... Let them grow together until harvest....”

God gives us patience to do good, Cardinal-designate Pierre said. “He invites us to follow him even in the world which is complicated,” he said, “but to be a witness of his presence.”
Joyful, singing crowds were walking through Lisbon long after the opening Mass of World Youth Day 2023 over Aug. 1. The atmosphere surprised even those that lived in the Portuguese capital throughout their lives.

“All those people are now on the streets, it’s really exhilarating! I don’t think it will happen in my lifetime again that so many pilgrims come to my city!” Concha Sousa, a Portuguese volunteer of WYD 2023, told OSV News.

Sousa is 26 but never participated in WYD before. But now, when it’s in her city, “how could you not,” she said. “It would be a sin not to!”

Thousands of young people participated in the opening Mass of WYD in Lisbon. Cardinal Manuel Clemente, the patriarch of Lisbon, welcomed them at the Eduardo VII Parc in the city center.

“Lisbon welcomes you wholeheartedly,” Cardinal Clemente told the youths.

In his homily, he described to them how the pilgrims were walking in the footsteps of the Blessed Mother.

“Mary set out. A path that was difficult and without the means of transportation that we have available today. She was young like all of you, and had just conceived Jesus in a unique way, which the Gospel recounts,” Cardinal Clemente said. “All of you also set out. For many it was a difficult journey due to the distance, the connections, and the costs that the trip required. It was necessary to bring together resources, organize activities to obtain them, and rely on solidarity which, thanks to God, was not lacking.”

Youth from all countries of the world except from Maldives arrived in Lisbon for the event, including over 1,300 groups comprised of more than 28,600 individuals from across the United States. The U.S. is among the five largest delegations participating in WYD, which is taking place Aug. 1-6. Most U.S. pilgrims to WYD are young adults between the ages of 18 and 25.

“From near or far, you all set out. It is very important to set out. This is how we should face our own lives, as a journey to be traveled, making each day a new segment,” Cardinal Clemente said.

Joseph Vo set out to come to WYD from San Jose. He saw the videos of WYD in Krakow in 2016, and that’s when he first dreamed of coming to World Youth Day.

“It was 11 at the time, and it was just so beautifully done and inspiring, and with Pope Francis being such an inspiring pope I decided that when I would get older I would one day go to World Youth Day,” he said.

He loved the Lisbon encounter from the first sight.

“It’s been fantastic, it’s been beautiful,” he told OSV News. “There is plenty of time to pray and encounter God directly. Also it’s just a really beautiful opportunity to talk and engage and meet other young people.”

“It feels like we’re all family members that haven’t seen each other for a long time,” Vo said.

For youth, often closed in their own virtual circles, what matters in WYD is the actual personal meeting.

“Virtual reality keeps us seated in front of means that easily use us when we think we use them. Quite the contrary, reality consists in going out to encounter others and the world as it is, both to admire and make better,” Cardinal Clemente said.

“I’ve never seen so many different people so happy together,” a 16-year-old Portuguese pilgrim said, marching with her friends.

There are 354,000 pilgrims registered for the event, with the most representatives from Spain (77,224 young people), Italy (almost 60,000) and Portugal (43,742). France brought 42,482 pilgrims, followed by the U.S. The theme of WYD is “Mary arose and went with haste.”

“When I told Pope Francis that this was precisely the motto of our World Youth Day — Mary arose and went with haste... — he immediately added that, ‘yes, with haste but not anxiously,’” Cardinal Clemente told the youth at the opening Mass Aug. 1.

The encounter is also important for bishops from all corners of the Catholic world. Almost 700 bishops are registered for the event, according to the organizing committee, 30 of whom are cardinals.

Bishop Artur Wazny, auxiliary bishop of Tarnow, Poland, is one of them, and he told OSV News that after participating in several World Youth Days, this one means a lot to him as it is the first one he is participating in as a bishop.

“Starting with quite a difficult journey, I am really happy I could experience the event just like the young people and with them,” he said. “Young people give light and joy, and we can all embrace that joy from them and believe, thanks to them, that what I do as a bishop makes sense. They teach me to be a better man.”

“In fact, every meeting we have must begin with a true greeting, in which we exchange words of sincere welcome and full sharing,” Cardinal Clemente told the youth.

And the youth don’t have to be asked twice. Across Lisbon, they are exchanging signatures on their national flags, taking pictures together and sharing stories, ready to make the most of the next few days together.

(Paulina Guzik is international editor for OSV News.)
Diocese Announces New Seminarians

By Colleen Rowan

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston announced three new seminarians. This brings the total number of men now in formation for priesthood in West Virginia to 11.

“I am so excited for our returning men as well as our new men entering our program,” Father Brian Crenwelge, director of Vocations for the diocese, said. “They are a witness of what it means to give your life generously over to the will of God. Whenever someone lets God reign in his life and will, he is always abundantly blessed. I am excited to see what the future is for these men.”

Father Crenwelge introduced the new seminarians—Michael Aiello, Clifton Mastran, and Peter Russman—at the Wheeling Serra Club’s 54th Annual Burse Dinner at Central Catholic High School in Wheeling July 28.

Aiello’s home parish is the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston. He is 32 and holds an associate’s degree in culinary arts from the Culinary Institute of America. He later completed the pre-theology program at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md.

“After a few years away discerning monastic life, I will be returning to Mount St. Mary’s to start first theology,” Aiello said. “What I’m looking forward to the most this year is being back with my brother seminarians and amongst the people of this diocese.”

Mastran, 44, comes to the Mountain State from Washington, D.C. He has a Bachelor of Science in computer science with minors in business administration and classical studies from the University of Florida. He had an 18-year professional career as a federal civilian employee within the U.S. Department of Defense. He is entering third theology at Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary in Weston, Mass.

“The Lord has drawn me from Washington, D.C., and, through a movement of the Holy Spirit, led me to ‘Almost Heaven’ West Virginia,” Mastran said. “I am so excited to find out what the Lord has called studies from the University of Florida. He had an 18-year professional career as a federal civilian employee within the U.S. Department of Defense. He is entering third theology at Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary in Weston, Mass.

“The Lord has drawn me from Washington, D.C., and, through a movement of the Holy Spirit, led me to ‘Almost Heaven’ West Virginia,” Mastran said. “I am so excited to find out what the Lord has called
‘DWC Vocations 2023’ Promotional Video Showcases Joy Found in Priesthood

By Colleen Rowan
WEST VIRGINIA — A new promotional video showcases the joy diocesan priests have found in priesthood. The piece, which has been posted to YouTube and social media, features long-serving priests in West Virginia as well as a few seminarians.

The four-minute video, with the title “DWC Vocations 2023,” begins with the header, “He’s calling!” What follows are clips of diocesan priests in action and then footage of the late Bishop Bernard Schmitt sharing his homily for the Vocations Mass in 2002.

Seminarians Joe Derico and Timothy Kawash share their thoughts on the seminary and when they felt the call to priesthood.

Father Brian Crenwelge, director of Vocations for the diocese, shares what he tells a man considering priesthood and it begins with prayer.

“Pray every day. Ask the Lord for the grace to be open to his will in your life,” Father Crenwelge says in the video. “Second, talk to someone. Whether it’s a close friend, whether it’s your parish priest… And then, finally, be open. Don’t be afraid. You’re going to be fulfilled being a priest. There’s no greater honor than to give greater glory to our Lord.”

Additional clips highlight the life of the church in West Virginia as well as Msgr. Paul Hudock and Father John Rice. This part of the video offers a glimpse of them as seminarians more than 25 years ago. Clips also show Very Rev. Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., Father Tom Gallagher, and Father John Gallagher in action and ends with a blessing from Bishop Mark Brennan.

The video was produced by Ted Rouse and may be viewed on the diocese’s YouTube channel OfficialDWC (https://youtu.be/2eRD-vc3rMw).

Seminarians ...

Cont’d from Page 1

in store for me here and wherever He leads me!”

Russman, 24, is a parishioner of St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town. He has an associate’s degree in information systems technology from Lord Fairfax Community College.

“I’m looking forward to beginning this new adventure as God leads me, as well as continuing to build my relationship with Jesus, particularly through daily Mass and regular adoration,” he shared.

At the dinner, Father Crenwelge also recognized the eight returning seminarians: Deacon John Soplinski, Donvito Cortese, Joe Derico, Timothy Kawash, Dominic Re, Nathan Schmidt, Bryan Tedeschi, and Michael Tupta.

Attending the dinner was part of the annual seminarians weekend in Wheeling July 28-30. During that time, the seminarians met with Bishop Brennan and Vocations Office personnel. They also served at the Mass the bishop celebrated at the Annual Upper Ohio Valley Italian Festival in Wheeling.

Being Present to Young Catholics

Father Martin Smay, center, gives a thumbs up at the National Boy Scouts of America Jamboree at Summit Bechtel Reserve near Beckley July 20. With him are Deacon John Soplinski, left, and Deacon Harry Evans, permanent deacon at St. Francis de Sales Parish in Beckley. Father Smay is chaplain to the Catholic Committee on Scouting for the diocese.
Parishes said goodbye recently to seminarians who spent summer assignments in their communities.

“Don’t be a stranger...” Sacred Heart Parish in Bluefield posted to Facebook. “This past weekend we had to say, ‘see you soon’ to our seminarian Michael Tupta. Michael was a great help to our parish, especially on Wednesdays at our food pantry. So instead of goodbye, we will say, ‘until next time....’”

The assignments gave the seminarians the chance to spend time with the faithful and serve their parishes, or to be enriched by different environments and institutions of the church.

“Today was the last day at daily Mass for our summer seminarian Donvito Cortese,” St. Margaret Mary Parish in Parkersburg posted on Facebook. “Many blessings for him as he returns to Pontifical College Josephinum.”

Deacon John Soplinski spent time at St. Thomas Parish in Thomas, while fellow seminarians Joe Derico was in Antigua Guatemala for Spanish immersion and Bryan Tedeschi was in Rome for the Rome experience. Timothy Kawash spent part of his summer at St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town, Dominic Re was at the Institute for Priestly Formation in Omaha, Neb., and Nathan Schmidt was at St. Joseph Parish in Huntington.

Summer Assignments Take DWC Seminarians across West Virginia and Beyond

By Colleen Rowan

Seminarian Bryan Tedeschi is pictured in Rome with St. Peter’s Basilica in the background earlier this summer.

At St. Joseph Parish in Huntington seminarian Nathan Schmidt, center, stands with Msgr. Dean Borgmeyer, pastor, and Father Christopher Turner, parochial vicar.

Very Rev. Sebastian E. Devasya, Assoc. V.E., V.F. (right), and seminarian Michael Tupta are pictured during Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament at Sacred Heart Parish in Bluefield earlier this summer.

Seminarian Donvito Cortese, left, serves at Mass celebrated by Very Rev. J. Stephen Vallelonga, V.F., pastor of St. Margaret Mary Parish in Parkersburg.
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- Paul Grist

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By Joyce Bibey

Many Catholic parents can admit they have a hard time teaching some of the routine let alone complicated aspects of our faith to their kids in a way they find fascinating and interactive.

One of the last things a parent may think to do is ask a kid for advice. However, you may want to rethink that.

Nine-year-old Julian Haas a soon-to-be fourth grader at Point Harmony Elementary in Cross Lanes, with the help of his dad, Mark Haas, has constructed a way to connect fun and games to faith and formation — Minecraft!

“It’s super cool to build something and be able to teach people real stuff about the church,” Julian said.

The whole family enjoyed it — mom Renae; sisters Ruth, Josephine, Magdalyn, and Victoria; and brother Isaac. Julian will have to wait a couple years to get the reaction of his youngest sibling, Grace Elizabeth, who was just born in July.

“People would tell me they thought it was really cool,” Julian said, adding that his teacher even saw it.

Do you know an exceptional Catholic in West Virginia, someone or a group who are shining examples of #FaithInWV? Email Joyce Bibey your feature idea to jbibey@dwc.org. Visit FaithInWV.org and every issue of The Catholic Spirit to read more inspiring stories.
Calling all Cursillistas!

Would you like to gather with other past participants in Cursillo weekends for an Ultreya meeting? Well, you can, on Saturday, August 19th, and you have two locations and times to choose from!

The Diocesan Cursillo community will gather, on Saturday, August 19th, first at the St. John XXIII Pastoral Center, in Charleston, at 10:30 AM. Then, the other Ultreya option will be a gathering at the Parish Center of St. John University Parish, in Morgantown, at 4:30 PM.

What should you expect? At both meetings, we will have our Regional Director for Cursillo, Mr. Dan Kubisiak, as the rector/moderator, along with the Lay Director for Cursillo in South Carolina, Mr. Tommie Smith, as our main witness speaker.

At both locations, we will gather for about an hour and a half, for fellowship, spiritual enrichment, socializing, refreshments, and a meal. We hope these gatherings will help revive Cursillo in our wonderful state.

If you would like to join us, and we’d love if you would, please let us know either by calling the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis, at 304-233-0880, ext. 374, or by emailing Daniel Maul, at dmaul@dwc.org.

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Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE Fall 2023

Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

Sunday, August 6: Ascension Hurricane; 11:00 a.m.
Sunday, September 17: St. Stephen, Ona; 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, September 19: Our Lady of Mercy Mission, Parsons; 5:00 p.m.
Monday, October 23: Sacred Heart, Chester; 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 4: St. Francis Xavier, Parkersburg; 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 19: Sacred Heart, Bluefield; 9:00 a.m.

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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.

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

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. Schuelkens, Jr., V.E. Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, P.O. Box 230, Wheeling, WV 26003.
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Faith...

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at the basilica looks like and find out what to expect, what to say (including our prayers), what happens, and why you would go to confession.

Praying the Rosary in Minecraft! This video defines what the rosary is, the prayers it includes, and the mysteries — the life of Christ to think about as you pray. The resource they share is: thecatholickid.com.

· The Sacrament of Baptism in Minecraft! “This one is my favorite and was most fun to make,” Julian said. Check it out to view not only the baptismal font in the co-cathedral, but also get some pretty intricate Minecraft creations that visually aid references in the bible of God’s baptismal waters, including the creation of the earth; Noah’s ark (Julian included cages with animals and also adequate beds for Noah’s family); Moses and the parting of the water; and the baptism of Jesus.

· The Four Marks of the Church in Minecraft! Learn how the four marks of the church are recited at Mass in the Nicene Creed — one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic. Julian also reveals in the video a mind-blowing fun fact that “there is even a diocese on the moon!” (Bonus: sister Ruthie makes a sweet appearance in the video).

· Altar Serving in Minecraft! Julian loves being an altar server at Mass, so watch this video to get an altar server’s point of view. Julian explains his duties during the Mass, and the duo stops to explain what a few words mean and the importance. They also explain why altar servers are to hold their hands in prayer a certain way.

· “I really like teaching people this way,” Julian said. The platform help’s uncomplicate the message. Jesus’ teachings are pretty simple, according to Julian.

His outlook — while on the super impressive side — is blissfully sensible. His favorite bible verse reflects that straightforward unassuming faith Jesus wants us to have — I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6).

His favorite song, “O God Beyond All Praising,” echoes our wonder of God’s blessings, mercies, and love for us.

If we heed Julian’s advice, we can all grow in faith if we don’t try to complicate it, and choose to see it more like children, and then share it.

Julian’s favorite saint, Mark (which is Julian’s first name), teaches us in his Gospel (10:45), “For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve.” Mark is also the Gospel writer who gets right to the point all while painting us an impressive picture of Jesus and making it easy for us to put ourselves in the scene of the readings.

So, what will Julian come up with next to build and tackle as a topic? “I want to keep it a surprise,” he said.

You will have to keep tabs on or subscribe to their YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/@catholicminecraft) to find out.

#FaithInWV

Pictured is the Haas family. In the front row, from left, are Isaac, Josephine, Ruth, and Magdalyn. In the back row, from left, are Julian, Mark holding Victoria, and Renae. Inset: Grace.

Photo illustration by Joyce Bibey

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Lisboa se llena de alegría en la apertura de la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud

Por Paulina Guzik, OSV News

La diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston alienta a informarse a través de 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 Ninos y Familias de West Virginia llamando a la línea directa de abuso infantil al 800.352.6513. Puede informar anónimamente a esta línea directa si lo prefiere.


Además de los métodos enumerados anteriormente para denunciar el abuso sexual, la Diócesis también se ha asociado con Naves 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, empleado laic o de la Diócesis de 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 “Informe 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 está protegida. Enlaces e información: Departamento de Salud y Recursos Humanos de WV: https://www.wvdhr.org/report.asp. Policía Estatal de Virginia Occidental, Unidad de Crímenes contra Ninos: 304-293-6400.
Building Bright Futures: Back to School with Catholic Charities

At Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa), back-to-school season is year-round through the agency’s Adult Education Program.

“Education is a powerful tool for individuals to improve their circumstances,” said Jason Miller, CCWVa Western regional director.

Catholic Charities’ Adult Education Program provides free classes to any adult who wishes to further his or her education or gain new skills.

CCWVa’s Adult Education Program provides free classes to any adult who wishes to work toward a high school equivalency, earn a certification for work, or gain skills to pursue a new career or higher education. The program is offered in Mullens, Huntington, and McDowell County.

Research shows not only does adult education have a positive impact on learners’ employability and income; it also helps individuals acquire a renewed sense of self as well as an improved quality of life.

“We serve many adults who are in recovery from Substance Use Disorder,” said Miller. “We walk alongside our learners in their journeys – providing not only education, but also supportive services and resources to overcome barriers that may be preventing individuals from reaching their goals.”

Catholic Charities’ Adult Education Instructors work one-on-one with learners to provide customized instruction.

At CCWVa, all program staff are trained in Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma-informed care techniques to provide the highest-quality care possible to vulnerable West Virginians.

“Our adult learners go on to earn gainful employment, pursue higher education, advance in their careers, achieve stability or reach long-term goals,” said Miller. “We’re grateful to help provide the foundation for them to take those next steps.”

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.
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. We have a multidisciplinary team of experts, including interventional cardiologists, cardiac and vascular surgeons, dedicated nursing staff, and other specialists, to ensure our patients receive the most comprehensive care available for common and complex structural heart conditions.

The WVU Heart and Vascular Institute Structural Heart Program is the only program in West Virginia that offers eight specialized, structural heart procedures and is one of the few programs in the United States (and the only one in West Virginia) offering cerebral embolic protection during transcatheter aortic valve replacement (Protected TAVR) and transcatheter mitral valve replacement.

Our expert team uses the latest catheter-based techniques to treat all forms of structural heart disease, including aortic, mitral, and tricuspid valve diseases and conditions and congenital defects.

**OUR TEAM**

- David Michael Campsey MD  
  Interventional Cardiology
- Deepak Hooda MD  
  Interventional Cardiology
- Sushant Sharma MD  
  Cardiology

Learn more at: MyWVUHeart.com

**Appointments:** 304-243-8362