

THE CATHOLIC

# Spirit

## A Christmas Message from Bishop Brennan

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we all have memories of Christmas: presents we eagerly opened as children, traveling to see relatives out of state, decorating the Christmas tree, going to and maybe serving Christmas Masses. But the most important memory surely is the child lying in the manger.

Whether we see him in a small creche in our home or a larger one in our parish church, the Christ Child reminds us of the true meaning of our Christmas celebrations: the Son of God was sent by the Father to become man, being “born of the Virgin Mary” (the Apostles’ Creed).

As we sing in the carol “Silent Night,” Christ’s birth was “the dawn of redeeming grace,” for he would free us from sin by his sacrifice on the cross. But he was born for more: as Charles Wesley, who wrote “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” put it, Christ was “born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.” He rose from death to enable all men and women to inherit the fullness of eternal life through their resurrection from the dead.

Christmas, then, points to Good Friday and Easter. We rejoice when a baby is born but this baby was different. He came into the world to save us from the enemies we cannot defeat on our own: sin and death. Let’s not sentimentalize Christmas. The baby whose arms stretched out to embrace Mary and Joseph and welcome the shepherds would later be stretched out on the cross to embrace the whole world. He was born that we might die to sin; he died that we might rise to new life; he rose to restore a renewed creation to his Father.

Rejoice not so much that Christ was born, as you were. Rejoice that he was born to do what you could never do. Rejoice that you have a Savior who loves you so much that he would humble himself to be

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The stained glass window of the nativity at St. Francis Xavier Church in Moundsville is shown above.

Colleen Rowan Photo

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### Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops requires all Dioceses/Eparchies have a Safe Environment Program for the protection of children and young people. 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; sexual abuse awareness training for adults. Training may be completed on-line or via live workshop. For information, go to [www.dwc.org](http://www.dwc.org), click "Diocese", then "Offices," then "Office of Safe Environment."



### The Catholic Spirit's Print Schedule for 2025

There are 10 print editions in 2025. Below are the names of the issues and the publishing dates. Please note, the publishing dates may or may not be on feast days. Digital issues are published every Friday, delivered by e-mail to subscribers, and posted on [thecatholicspiritwv.org](http://thecatholicspiritwv.org). To subscribe, see the ad below.

#### 2025 Issues and Print Dates:

- Month of the Holy Family, February 7
- Lent, March 7
- Easter, April 18
- Month of Mary, Mother of God, May 23
- Month of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, June 13
- Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 15
- Triumph of the Cross, September 12
- Month of the Rosary, October 3
- Advent, November 21
- Christmas, December 19

**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.report-bishopabuse.org](http://www.report-bishopabuse.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](http://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 Sr. Martha Gomez, ext. 264. You may also call the Diocese's Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504 or the Diocese's sexual abuse hotline at 833.230.5656. Additional methods of reporting are available at [www.dwc.org](http://www.dwc.org), under "Accountability." Complaint forms are available online at [www.dwc.org](http://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:** call Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, at 304.559.6742. The Diocese partners with Navex Global to offer EthicsPoint to report other concerns such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese or any Catholic parish or school in WV. EthicsPoint can be accessed via [www.dwc.org](http://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.

	Christmas Vol. 55, No. 52	Office: 1322 Eoff St. Mailing: PO Box 230 Wheeling, WV 26003 (304) 232-0444	<a href="http://thecatholicspiritwv.org">thecatholicspiritwv.org</a> <a href="http://dwc.org">dwc.org</a>
	<p><b>Publisher:</b> Bishop Mark E. Brennan.....  <b>Executive Editor:</b> Colleen Rowan, Ext. 347.....<a href="mailto:crowan@dwc.org">crowan@dwc.org</a>  <b>Advertising:</b> contact Colleen Rowan  <b>Freelance Writers:</b> Martina Hart, John Sherwood,  <b>Member:</b> Catholic Press Association, West Virginia Press Association, National Press Photographers Association, Inc. </p>		
<p>Published every Friday by e-mail and printed 10 times a year (see schedule, at left). All issues sent to each registered Catholic household free of charge. Donations to help offset the cost of producing The Catholic Spirit are welcomed. Out-of-diocese subscriptions are \$25 annually. The Catholic Spirit intends its news reports to be fair and accurate in every regard. The opinions of correspondents do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Catholic Spirit. Submission of news releases, stories and color photos welcomed and encouraged. Not responsible for unsolicited material.</p>			



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**Message...**

**Cont'd from Page 1**

born in humility, suffer for us all and open for us the path to heaven. As you "toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow" ("It Came upon a Midnight Clear"), remember what the angels sang at his birth: "Peace on earth to those on whom his favor rests." His favor rests on you! Merry Christmas!

*Mark E. Brennan*

+Mark E. Brennan  
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**Contact your parish for Christmas Mass times**

# You Are Invited

## Join in the Opening Celebration of the Holy Year 2025 in West Virginia on the Feast of the Holy Family

By Colleen Rowan

The local opening of the Holy Year 2025 promises faith-enriching moments for the church in West Virginia, especially processions of pilgrims in the northern and southern regions of the diocese. This opening celebration will be held in both Wheeling and in Charleston following Pope Francis's official opening of the Jubilee Year, which carries the theme "Pilgrims of Hope."

"We are seeking pilgrims for a pilgrimage of hope," the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's vicar general, Very Rev. John Rice, V.G., said in anticipation of the upcoming celebration. Bishop Mark Brennan and Father Rice invite pilgrims—the Catholic faithful of West Virginia—to attend one of the two Masses opening the Jubilee Year in the diocese. The solemn opening will be on the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (Dec. 29), the Sunday after Christmas. The two Masses will be celebrated simultaneously at 10:30 a.m. by Bishop Brennan at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling and by Father Rice at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston.

A highlight of the local celebration will be processions of the pilgrims, clergy, and religious into the cathedral and the basilica co-cathedral. Here is a small preview of what will take place: According to the Liturgical Texts and Guidelines for the Jubilee Year issued by the



CNS photo/Vatican Media

This is the logo for the Holy Year 2025.

Dicastery for Evangelization, the distinguishing mark of the Rite of Opening is the entrance procession of a prominent cross lifted high by the clergy and faithful of the diocese, "a scene that evokes in one sense the Jubilee 2025 logo and theme, 'Pilgrims of Hope.'"

This, the guidelines state, consists of three moments: the gathering of the faithful; the pilgrimage procession; and the entrance into the cathedral (and basilica co-cathedral).

A cross of significance for the local church will be adorned and carried with candles, the guidelines further state. This cross will remain near the altars in the sanctuaries for the entire Jubilee Year.

At the gathering, a deacon will proclaim the Gospel and a lector will

read an excerpt from the "Bull of Indiction." The bishop will impose incense in the thurible and the deacon bids those gathered to make pilgrimage to the cathedral, the guidelines state.

"At the cathedral (and basilica co-cathedral), the pilgrimage procession approaches the principal door, and, at its threshold, the bishop raises the cross carried in procession and invites all to venerate it with an acclamation," the guidelines state.

At the baptismal fonts, the bishop and Father Rice will lead those gathered in a commemoration of Baptism.

Father Rice said the diocese hopes each parish will send two to five pilgrims to one of the celebrations to carry the "Pilgrimage of Hope" back to their parishes and into their communities.

Throughout 2025, there will be opportunities for prayer, repentance, and acts of mercy. Bernadette McMasters Kime, PhD., D.Min., director of the diocese's Office of Worship and Sacraments, said that there will also be special celebrations and gatherings for different groups in the diocese—clergy, religious, musicians, parents, grandparents, and children to name a few.

The diocese will be issuing a special prayer card with the prayer written by Pope Francis for parishes in West Virginia.

More information about Masses, spiritual opportunities, and other events for the Holy Year 2025 in West Virginia will be announced soon.

For more information, visit: [www.iubilaeum2025.va/en.htm](http://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en.htm)

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# ‘We Need the Spirit of Mary,’ Bishop Brennan Says on Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

By Colleen Rowan

“We need the spirit of Mary,” Bishop Mark Brennan said in his celebration of Mass on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling. Commemorating Our Lady’s preservation from original sin from the moment she was conceived, the solemnity is observed annually on Dec. 8 as a holy day of obligation. This year, however, the feast coincided with the Second Sunday of Advent, which in the ranking of liturgical celebrations takes precedence. As a result, the observance of the solemnity was transferred to Dec. 9.

Continuing his homily, Bishop Brennan said that Advent is not primarily a penitential season as Lent is, but it should lead all to recognize why the son of God came into the world.

“We need a savior to overcome our sins,” the bishop said. “For we ... cannot do it by our own power. Without the redeeming grace of Jesus Christ, we would keep falling back into sin and never be free of our wrongdoing.”

Some people, he said, do not like to hear about sin. But it is a reality, he said, asking the faithful to think about what is going on in the world and to think about the failure to keep all of God’s commandments at different times in our lives. What Adam and Eve began, he said, we have continued.

“And while the power of the evil one has been broken by Christ, actual sins are not an endangered species,” the bishop stressed. “Nonetheless, united in Christ in our baptism and strengthened by him in the Eucharist, restored to his grace in the sacrament of penance, enlightened and made courageous by the gifts of the Holy Spirit especially through confirmation,



Colleen Rowan photo

The statue of the Blessed Mother holding the child Jesus at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling is shown above. At the Mass he celebrated on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the cathedral, Bishop Mark Brennan said, “We need the spirit of Mary.”

we can actually move forward from the selfish way of life to one marked by charity, justice, and peace.”

The bishop then emphasized the words of Saint Paul in the second reading for the Mass: God

“chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him,” (Eph 1:3-6, 11-12).

“This means,” Bishop Brennan noted, “that even before our first parents sinned and we followed in

their footsteps, God had already determined to save us through his son. We are indeed blessed.

“We need the spirit of Mary, whose Immaculate Conception we recall today,” the bishop continued. “Her Immaculate Conception gave her freedom from the encumbrance of original sin — a grace that was granted to her for her role to become the mother of our savior. And despite her wonderment and ignorance of all that would happen later, she trusted God and said to the angel, ‘I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word,’” (Lk 1:26-38).

Though we were not conceived free of original sin as Mary was, Bishop Brennan said, we were freed from it in our baptism. The bishop added: “So, as the angel said to Mary, ‘Do not be afraid...,’ let this Advent Season, my brothers and sisters, be when you say to the Lord: ‘May it be done to me according to your word.’ Let me, Lord, fulfill your purpose in my life. Give me the strength to say ‘yes’ to you and ‘no’ to the serpent. May I bear the good fruit that you have always destined me to bear.”

As Mary, under the title of her Immaculate Conception, is the patroness of the United States, the bishop asked the faithful to pray to her constantly.

“For we are a nation that, in many aspects of our national life, has lost our way,” Bishop Brennan said. “Let us implore her to gain for our people that spirit she showed when she accepted God’s will, even though it was difficult. So that in Abraham Lincoln’s words, ‘...that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people...’ may be a government that serves the common good and honors God our creator.”

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# This Christmas, Let Your Generosity Shine for Our Neighbors in Need



Photos courtesy of Catholic Charities West Virginia

Staff and volunteers are pictured at the Catholic Charities West Virginia Neighborhood Center in Wheeling.

At Catholic Charities West Virginia, our mission is simple yet profound: to serve our neighbors across all 55 counties of our state. As West Virginia's largest nonprofit social services provider, we step in when our neighbors face their greatest times of need—offering food for families, housing support, disaster relief, child care assistance, and so much more.

This year, we witnessed just how quickly situations can change. When one of Morgantown's only emergency homeless shelters faced closure, Catholic Charities

took action. Within months, we assumed management of Grace Shelter, now operating 24/7 to provide safety and warmth for our homeless brothers and sisters in one of our state's most populated areas.

Your generosity makes stories like these possible. You empower us to act swiftly and effectively, whether responding to large-scale crises or meeting daily needs. In Wheeling, your support allowed us to install lockers at our day shelter, giving unhoused neighbors a safe place to store their belongings. In Princeton, you helped us provide

Friday lunch service, ensuring no one in the community goes hungry.

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, a symbol of love and hope, we invite you to extend that love to your neighbors in need. Your gift to Catholic Charities West Virginia during the second collection at Christmas Mass enables us to continue these essential acts of compassion.

With your help, we can:

- Provide shelter to those experiencing homelessness.
- Offer food to hungry families and individuals.

- Support communities through disaster relief and recovery.
- Provide dignified support for struggling families.

Our ability to serve depends on your continued support and faith in our mission. Together, we can create a more just and compassionate world, one neighbor at a time.

This Christmas, let's open our hearts and give. Your generosity transforms lives.

Thank you for standing with us. Catholic Charities West Virginia: Serving with love, dignity, and hope.

## Prayer Chain Prison Ministry Established, Offering Inmates Hope and Peace

**WEST VIRGINIA**—The Prayer Chain Prison Ministry connects prayer "warriors" on the outside with prisoners on the inside. Prisoners, wanting prayer, will be connected with someone who will commit to daily prayer for their assigned inmate. Inmates may ask for this daily prayer either anonymously or using their first name, initials or a nickname. Those praying will identify themselves by using their first name.

The purpose of this ministry is to offer the inmate hope and peace through prayers which are lifted up just for them. Often the "chains" of prison go beyond the physical chains and shackles. Sometimes the heaviest chains to bear are those within our own mind and heart. Those are the chains

that only Christ can break. This will be the ardent prayer of our prayer warriors—allow Christ to break those chains so that true freedom is possible.

"If an incarcerated man or woman can know that someone out here knows their name, thinks about them, keeps them in their heart and talks to God about them, that could very well counter the hopelessness and isolation they may feel. It may help them to understand that they do still matter in this world, and most especially, to God," says Laura Cronk, Diocesan Finance Department, whose idea it was to connect inmates with prayer partners.

There are several ways that prayer can be said. A few options are:

- A daily decade of the rosary said each day

can be dedicated to your inmate.

- A special intention said prior to grace before each meal.
- A Mass for a "special intention" can be offered.
- A novena can be offered.
- Remembering them as we say our nightly prayers.

The season of Advent is the manifestation of HOPE. Pope Francis has announced 2025 as the Jubilee Year of Hope. Please consider offering the gift of REAL HOPE to someone who is CHAINED to despair and hopelessness through the power of prayer.

Contact Kathy Barton at

kbarton@dwc.org or call (304) 233-0880, ext. 289, if you are willing to be a part of this Prayer Chain Ministry or if you have an imprisoned loved one needing prayer. Let's break these chains together!



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# Basilica Co-Cathedral Parishioner Spends Five Weeks Volunteering in Ukraine

By **Martina Hart**

**CHARLESTON** — Michael Roderick, a parishioner at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston and a member of the Knights of Columbus, recently spent five weeks in Ukraine, joining various groups to provide volunteer work. Roderick had been following news of the war in Ukraine ever since Russian military forces invaded the country on Feb. 24, 2022.

"I was staying on top of the news daily and getting more and more aggravated," he recalled. "I mentioned to my sister in Houston that I'd like to go to Ukraine when this war is over, and she suggested that I go right now and just do volunteer work. So, she planted a bug."

Roderick's online search for reliable organizations led him to find volunteeringukraine.com,

Ukraine Together. His original plan was to spend three months in Ukraine starting in September and ending in late November. He asked for time off from his job as a cabinet maker, renewed his passport, and booked a plane ticket. Volunteer workers do not require a visa. On Sept. 3, he flew from Charleston to Warsaw, Poland, via Chicago and Brussels, Belgium, followed by a 16-hour bus ride from Warsaw to Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine.

"I ended up in Kyiv at one in the morning, and the bus driver just dropped us off. The streets were barren," he recalled.

He eventually ran into a local person wearing a headlamp, who helped him find a hotel that was still open. During his first and third weeks in Ukraine Roderick stayed in Kyiv, working with the Gurtum Charity Foundation who are en-



Courtesy photo  
Michael Roderick, second from left (wearing the CAT sweatshirt) is pictured with the "Traveling Colonels," a group founded by retired U.S. military personnel volunteering in Ukraine.

shape," he observed. "It was all stunted growth, all brown leaves for miles and miles."

He later helped with restoring an old building that was being turned into a library, one way to preserve Ukrainian culture. Weeks two and three, he joined Building Ukraine Together, a non-governmental organization that creates opportunities – mainly for young Ukrainians – to preserve their common home. Since 2014, following the Ukrainian Maidan Revolution and Russia's annexation of Crimea, BUR (an acronym derived from the Ukrainian alphabet) has been organizing weeklong camps and other initiatives in various parts of the country. Roderick participated in camps in Kropyvnytskyi, a town about 4.5 hours south of Kyiv and in Pryluky, 2 hours east of Kyiv. They rehabilitated an old building, a palace of culture, stripping walls and putting up dry wall, tasks that could be performed without requiring a license.

"We were just trying to repair it a little bit at a time, one building out of many," Roderick added.

While he had to find his own accommodations in Kyiv, BUR provided dorm-style lodging and meals for their campers. They also went on excursions in the area, one of which took them to a place where

people made camouflage nettings out of a sturdy synthetic material.

"I got a chance to weave some of this stuff," Roderick said. "I was happy to have a chance to help in that way."

He became acquainted with several Ukrainians and people from other countries, volunteers like himself. A lot of people spoke English, and he learned a few Ukrainian expressions. Another helpful tool was Google translate on his cell phone.

While in Kyiv, Roderick was able to attend Sunday Masses at St. Nicholas and St. Alexander, one of them in English. The other towns



Courtesy photo  
Michael Roderick is pictured with woman in Ukraine who had to abandon her hometown because it was too dangerous there. She ended up at the camp as a volunteer with BUR, which organizes volunteer efforts.

were too far out making it too complicated to get to a Catholic church. He was also able to visit some of the Orthodox churches.

"In downtown Kyiv you drive around, you see all sorts of bomb damage here and here, blasted out windows, blown out roofs, but the city is still bustling," he said.

Despite air raid sirens going off almost every evening and hearing explosions in the distance, he felt safe. During his fifth week, back in Kyiv, Roderick overheard a group of English-speaking men in a little restaurant. They were part of the Traveling Colonels, a group founded by retired U.S. military personnel.

"Just like me they wanted to do something to help Ukraine, so they went over there and realized that the best way they could help was by putting together these medical supply kits for the hospitals and these first aid kits for the troops."

They receive supplies from various countries, assemble the kits and then personally deliver them to hospitals and frontline troops.

"When I was working with those guys, they got this big shipment that came from Ireland, boxes and boxes," he added.

Roderick concluded that while the work he had been doing the previous weeks was useful, it was not as

**See "Ukraine" on Page 8**



Courtesy photo  
Pictured is one of medical supply kits for the hospitals and first aid kits for troops assembled by the "Traveling Colonels" with donations from around the world.



Courtesy photo  
Michael Roderick waters plants near one of the Hobbit-house style bomb shelters in Ukraine equipped for schoolchildren so that air raid alarms are less stressful and traumatizing for them.

a clearinghouse of multiple relief and humanitarian agencies with information on who to select as well as planning and preparing for the trip.

"I looked for an agency that does reconstruction work because that's my skill set," Roderick said. He contacted Gurtum Charity Foundation and Building

gaged in various projects of restoring and constructing buildings. One of Roderick's first tasks was watering plants near one of the Hobbit-house style bomb shelters that are equipped for schoolchildren in a beautiful way so that air raid alarms are less stressful and traumatizing for them.

"The corn was in terrible

# Miscarriage Ministry Brings Comfort to Grieving Parents

By Colleen Rowan

“God has them in His keeping. We hold them in our hearts.” This is the message Covenant Resources Miscarriage Ministry offers to parents who have lost a baby to miscarriage. Based in Greensburg, Ind., the organization aims to be a source of comfort for these grieving parents, focusing on “providing dignified care to miscarried babies and their families.”

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Assistant Director for Marriage and Family Life Gregory Gust learned of this ministry while attending the National Eucharistic Congress this summer in Indianapolis. As a parent who has experienced the loss of a child himself, Gust wanted to bring awareness about this ministry and connect its services to parents in West Virginia who have experienced this tragedy.

“God has them in His keeping. We hold them in our hearts.”

—Covenant Resources Miscarriage Ministry

“I know that in the difficult time of a miscarriage people may not know what to do,” Gust said. “Our belief in the life of that child calls us to treat them with dignity and offer support to those that are experiencing this profound loss. My goal, as is the goal of Covenant Resources Miscarriage Ministry, is to be that support as well as to educate others about how they can support those in this troubling time.”

What first caught Gust’s eye was the Little Souls Memorial Ornaments displayed at Covenant Resources’ information table at the Eucharistic Congress. He soon learned of the many services the organization provides.

“They offer Miscarriage Supply

Totes that are designed to be placed in medical and funeral facilities, churches as well as NFP (Natural Family Planning) education offices,” he said. “These totes are designed to have items that you can utilize in the event of a miscarriage.”

Gust added that the ministry works to bring awareness on burying the baby that was lost; works with cemeteries to start Little Souls Cemeteries for the burial of miscarried babies; and promotes funeral Masses, memorial Masses, and memorial ceremonies for miscarried babies.


In addition, the organization offers prayers for all those who are grieving a miscarried baby; a listing of cemeteries with dedicated areas for the burial of miscarried babies; and is a resource for churches and medical and funeral facilities. The organization offers resources for planning funeral Masses or memorials for miscarried babies. Covenant Resources’ representatives are available to set up information tables or speak at events and more.

The ministry was started by Chris and Rebecca Harpring who had suffered two miscarriages. They wanted to give a proper burial to their babies. With permission from their parish priest, they established the Little Souls Cemetery for miscarried babies in St. Mary Catholic Church’s cemetery in Greensburg, Ind.

In their story on the Covenant Resources website, they share: “So many people expressed how they wished they would have known they could have a burial or that they did not have a place to bury,” the babies they lost to miscarriage.


Covenant Resources offers everything parents need to give their babies that dignified final rest.

In a message to grieving parents, the ministry says, “We extend our sincere sympathy as you face the loss of your baby. Even though you never met him or her, he or she is a unique person created in the image and likeness of God. He or she does exist and there can be real sorrow as a result of your baby’s death. We are here to support you, comfort you



This Christmas Season, We are Remembering the Little Souls Lost to Miscarriage.

Please know of our thoughts and prayers for you as you mourn the loss of your baby. We are here to support you and invite you to reach out to us.



Covenant Resources Miscarriage Ministry  
 2020 West Main Street, Greensburg, Indiana 47120  
[www.covenantresources.org](http://www.covenantresources.org)  
[contactus@covenantresources.org](mailto:contactus@covenantresources.org)  
 (812) 212-3463

Courtesy photo

Covenant Resources Miscarriage Ministry offers the above message to parents who have lost a baby to miscarriage.

and assist you. May God grant you peace in your time of sorrow.”

Covenant Resources strongly suggests NaProTECHNOLOGY, a medical reproductive science that can help with recurrent miscarriage or infertility. This is Natural Family Planning which adheres to the teaching of the Catholic Church and is supported by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. For information, visit the Pope Paul VI Institute’s website at

[www.popepaulvi.com](http://www.popepaulvi.com).

In West Virginia, NaProTECHNOLOGY and services are available at the FertilityCare Center of the Upper Ohio Valley, Inc., in Weirton. Contact Kathy Hirkala, RN, BSN, CFCE, by calling (304) 723-0478 or by e-mail to [kathnfp@msn.com](mailto:kathnfp@msn.com). To contact Gust, e-mail [ggust@dwc.org](mailto:ggust@dwc.org). To contact Covenant Resources Miscarriage Ministry, call (812) 212-3463 or e-mail [contactus@covenantresources.org](mailto:contactus@covenantresources.org).

## Ukraine...

Cont’d from Page 7

important as this task, so he joined the Travelling Colonels for a few days and then decided to cut his trip short.

“The best way to help them long-term was to raise awareness and raise funds for their operation,” he said. Since his return he has been invited to talk to the Knights of Colum-

bus and the Serra Club of Charleston. “I realized also people back here want to help somehow, but they need to know that their assistance is actually being put to good use.

That’s why I was so happy to meet these Traveling Colonels because they have a track record and a secure donor site.” (<https://donorbox.org/travelingcolonels501c>).

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# Mary's Refuge Maternity Home Offers Hope to Mothers in Need



Photo illustration by Joyce Bibey

## By Joyce Bibey

Put yourself in the story of Mary. We know well the Divine story, but for a moment concentrate on the human heart with love, empathy, and respect.

She was so young.

Her pregnancy announced before her engagement, let alone marriage to Joseph.

Our minds can wonder all over – the feelings are overwhelming. Once past the initial shocks personally and among the reaction of family, friends, and the people of around town, routine life settles in. We can't fully imagine her daily trials, but because of her great love of God we know she is strong and confident.

Then she gets to her ninth month.

However, she is not in the comfort of family or friends in her small community. They are from home, in the big city, and at night, when she knew there is no time to waste. She tells Joseph, "It's time!"

But there was nowhere to go. The Blessed One is turned away, not once but time and time again. No one takes her in. Left in the bitter cold – certainly frightened, heart pounding, in pain, in disbelief of being shunned, and completely vulnerable now.

Finally, at least one kind soul leads them to a lowly stable, where – as we know – the miracle above all miracles happens – the birth of Jesus.

We hope and pray that we would be that kind soul to give Mary refuge.

When we think and act like Christ we are.

Allison Ferrell, her staff, and many named and unnamed supporters are those kind souls to young expectant mothers. Ferrell is the director of Mary's Refuge, a pro-life maternity home in Martinsburg.

Meeting her and letting her talk about the home is a chance to see the love of Christ and the respect of Mary come to life. It is obvious in her eyes and compassionate spirit she is a loving momma mentor.

"We are a family here – the young ladies, their babies, the staff, Father Tom (Gallagher), Deacon Pat (Michel), Deacon Dave (Galvin), our volunteers..." Ferrell said. "We are showing these ladies and the community there is hope."

As we are in this season of waiting approach-

ing Christmas, and we begin the Church and Pope Francis' Year of Hope on Christmas Eve; Mary's Refuge stands as a great example – a model of what the season and our faith is about. Further it is a virtuous ministry for pro-life, pro-women, pro-child.

"Our theme is Hope Is Here," Ferrell said. "And hope grows here in every sense of the word."

Mary's Refuge, named in honor of the Blessed Mother, is that safe haven home, where mothers-to-be find more than a stable roof over their heads, but also prenatal care, parenting classes, and educational resources. These mothers receive physical, emotional and spiritual support.

Ferrell said the mothers living at Mary's Refuge are from a wide range of backgrounds and are in different spots on life's journey, but each now a part of a community working to take positive steps towards a better, brighter future.

Currently Mary's Refuge, that was once a convent, serves nine mothers and mothers-to-be – and of course their little ones.

"We make sure these ladies feel this is home – it's not a shelter – they have support from the staff, the (St. Joseph and surrounding) parishes, and the community working with these ladies day in and day out," she said. "We are showing and teaching many of them what they didn't grow up with – how to cook, clean, be a good mom. We show them God's love through our work and day to day interactions."

Ferrell added, "There is tough love too. We have rules, responsibilities, and boundaries. We want them to be successful beyond here. We want them to reach their goals and as they transition out on their own, and we want them to know there is a great family of support here and in the community. We want to continue our relationship with them. We become family."

The St. Joseph Pastor, Father Tom Gallagher, said funds from the Catholic Sharing Appeal were used to build a much-needed deck, fence, playground, and outdoor furniture for the home by volunteers from the parish and surrounding areas.

It is the same sense of charity and loving Fer-



Courtesy photo

One of the little ones living at Mary's Refuge enjoys looking at a book.



Courtesy photo

Mary's Refuge Director Allison Ferrell prays in the chapel at Mary's Refuge Maternity Home in Martinsburg.

rell and her family found in Martinsburg nearly 19 years ago.

"I am not a cradle Catholic, but when my family moved here, we joined St. Joseph School and Church," she said. "It was life changing. The love we found was real, and we could see it through people living out their faith."

"I want to show these young ladies that love – His love," she said. "I hope I am showing

**See "Hope" on Page 10**



**MARY'S REFUGE**

**October 2023-2024**

**Year End Data**

- 19 Mothers Helped
- 24 Children Helped
- 10 Babies Born at Mary's Refuge
- 241 Rides Given to Appointments
- 5,867 Diapers Given
- 1,126 Hours of Free Childcare
- 3,794 Nights Moms & Babies Stayed at Mary's Refuge

# Hope...

**Cont'd from Page 9**

them that I truly depend on God, and I want them to also. I want them to know how to turn to Him in prayer."

As their website says, Ferrell echoed that, "Mary's Refuge nurtures young mothers-to-be who feel like they're not being listened to, have nowhere to turn, and have no safe place to be."

"We don't know exactly how to put ourselves in their story, what their struggles are, but are here working hard to support them and this home, because we know it's the right thing to do," she said. "It's what God taught us. And it's also amazing to know that this home was once a convent and home to a group of sisters who worked for the Church and the school and the community. I can imagine that their souls are very happy."

Get involved, get help, give support to Mary's Refuge! For more info contact (304) 350-1632, [life@marysrefuge.com](mailto:life@marysrefuge.com). Make sure to check out their website at: <https://marysrefuge.com>.



Courtesy photo

Funds from the Catholic Sharing Appeal were used to build a much-needed deck, fence, playground, and outdoor furniture (shown above) for Mary's Refuge by volunteers from St. Joseph Parish in Martinsburg and surrounding areas.

MERRY Christmas

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# Revival is about to Break Through

## *Be Instruments of His Work*

**By Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Seminarian Joe Derico**

This past summer, I was blessed to attend the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, an event that marked a high point in the USCCB's four-year National Eucharistic Revival. Reflecting on the congress, one central theme stands out: revival. This period has witnessed remarkable growth in faith within the Church in the U.S., especially in our diocese. Here are key areas where this revival is taking hold and ways we can foster its continued growth.

### 1) Revival of Belief in the Eucharist

The revival's primary focus has been rekindling belief in the Eucharist, and by all measures, it has been profoundly successful. Across our diocese, Eucharistic Adoration is on the rise, daily Mass attendance is growing, and there is a renewed enthusiasm to share the faith. This revival is most deeply rooted in individual hearts, drawn closer to the Eucharist through prayer, Mass, and Adoration.

For laypeople, the invitation is clear: prioritize time with the Eucharist. Daily, the King of the universe comes down to us in the form of bread and wine—what could be more important than sharing in this mystery? For priests, this revival is a call to celebrate the Eucharist with dedication. The Eucharist is Christ's daily gift to us, and priests are uniquely privileged to bring it to life. Laypeople can encourage this commitment by showing up whenever Mass is offered, reinforcing the importance of the Eucharistic mystery.

### 2) Revival of the Sacrament of Confession

A greater devotion to the Eucharist naturally leads to a renewed call to the Sacrament of Confession. St. Paul reminds us of the necessity of preparing

our souls to receive Christ worthily. Confession is the primary means for this preparation, through which we seek God's mercy and forgiveness.

For most, a good habit is regular confession, ideally every one to two weeks. Families can encourage each other in this practice, holding one another to a higher standard of living. Parishioners can also ask their priests to extend confession hours and should never hesitate to request confession, even outside designated times. Most priests will be willing to make time, as the sacrament's importance is immense.

### 3) Revival of the Priesthood

It is evident that the priesthood in the U.S. has been challenged over the past decades. Many priests have faced intense scrutiny, and some have faltered, losing sight of their calling as spiritual fathers. But this revival is an invitation for priests to reclaim that role, dedicating themselves anew to leading souls to heaven.

Priests carry significant responsibility, traditionally and in the face of societal pressures and cultural confusion. Their strength is vital to the Church's mission. As laypeople, we are called to support them through prayer and friendship. Show your care for priests—invite them to dinner, let them know they are not alone. Just as they come



Courtesy photo  
At Sacred Heart Church in Princeton, seminarian Joe Derico kneels before the Most Blessed Sacrament as Very Rev. Sebastian E. Devasya, V.E., pastor, bestows the blessing.

ready to serve us in our times of need, our prayers and companionship help sustain them.

In these three key areas, revival is happening, and it's up to each of us to nurture this growth. By drawing closer to the Eucharist,

recommitting to regular confession, and supporting our priests, we can foster the seeds of renewal sown during the National Eucharistic Revival. Let us be instruments in this work, allowing God to move

through us as we share His love and mercy with the world. Revival is indeed breaking through—let's continue to walk with the Lord, opening our hearts to all that He wishes to accomplish through us.

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# Deacon Galvin, Outreach Ministry of St. James the Greater Among Those Honored by Gassaway's Father Thien

By Joyce Bibey

**GASSAWAY** — Father Thien Duc Nguyen, SVD, pastor of Risen Lord Mission and St. Thomas Parish in Braxton and Clay counties recently honored his team of more than 40 local volunteers that keep his food pantries open and stocked to feed hundreds of families in need.

Also in attendance by invitation was Charles Town's Deacon Dave Galvin of St. James the Greater Parish, who Father Thien surprised and presented with his "Matthew 25 Award" — an award that exemplifies "it is better to give than to receive."

Matthew chapter 25 focuses on the importance of performing good deeds. God created each one of us with skills and abilities. Therefore, it is critical to without hesitation use those to help one another when we see an opportunity. The Gospel of Matthew reminds us we will be held accountable.

According to Father Thien, Deacon Dave and the Outreach Ministry of St. James the Greater, although 300 miles away from his food pantries,

have "given countless hours and many ways in which they live the Gospel by bringing comfort, food, and care to our brothers and sisters in need in West Virginia, particularly in Clay and Braxton counties for the past eight years.

"Many times, during the year, they bring clothes, diapers, furniture, and food."

Each year the St. James Outreach Ministry has delivered between 3,000 to 6,000 pounds of vegetables between June-December to help feed the 250-300 families that depend on the food pantries run by Thien's faithful.

Deacon Dave's group also installed a fence around the food pantries' gardens and on the day of the recognition dinner they brought 20 living chickens for people to raise. In all 50 chickens have been brought to those families.

Father Thien said taking time to honor those who choose to do good on earth to bring a bit of joy to others is an important moment, "an opportunity (to thank them for letting



Courtesy photo

Father Thien Duc Nguyen, SVD, pastor of Risen Lord Mission and St. Thomas Parish in Braxton and Clay counties (second from right), and Deacon Dave Galvin of St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town (second from left), and volunteers stand by some of the 20 living chickens St. James donated for people in need.

their 'light shine before others, that glorify your Father in heaven' (Mt 5:16)."

## 'Preach the Gospel at All Times; And if Necessary, Use Words'

By Father William J. Kuchinsky

The Church of St. Thomas the Apostle was built in 1906 and established as a Mission of Richwood in 1908. Over the years the Marist Fathers served there until in 1973 when the Divine Word Missionaries (SVD) became the first resident Priests. It is a tribute to the Catholics in the area that this Church remained open as the mainly Italian and Irish who had settled there to build the railroad had to seek livelihoods elsewhere.

Entering St. Thomas in Gassaway on a recent Sunday the faithful were quietly offering a Rosary in this beautiful and obviously Catholic country Church as they prepared for Mass. It immediately felt like home as the sun poured through the stained glass into the sanctuary, most brightly upon the statue of St. Joseph.

Father Thien Duc Nguyen, SVD, the present Pastor, offered Mass beautifully along with his people! The Faith is alive, and here at the Source and Summit of Our Faith it would become obvious that what we celebrated would be shown to be carried beyond the walls of the Church into the hills surrounding it. During the hymns it seemed as if the whole congregation became a choir, with due reverence for the mysteries celebrated. Indeed, it would soon be shown some small sample of how this faith community, empowered by the Lord in Word and Sacrament does, "Ite Missa est," "Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life."

After Mass a good number of people remained in thanksgiving and would filter out in a few minutes to join the rest of the faithful gathered. Most lingered outside on this big blue sky day, including a number of families with children — such a beautiful way to glorify the Lord in openness to new life! The love shown forth in new families gathering to give thanks to the Lord, a

blessing in itself.

Father invited me to go for a walk to tour some of the various apostolates the Parish has cultivated over the years. Coming with us was a blue bird which awaited Father Thien's exit from the rectory and hopped "onboard" the bird house which Father was now carrying by its hanger as we walked along. We paused briefly at the marker in memory of the unborn lost through abortion. A solemn remembrance.

As Father, the bird and myself enjoyed each other's company on a beautiful and temperate Fall Day, Father Thien spoke of the good work his parishioners do.

Even before entering the building from which many and varied ministries are coordinated there were the signs: a truck announcing "Jesus' Mission is Our Mission," invoking our Lord's call to feed the hungry and cloth the naked. There were also the encouraging words from Mother Teresa: "If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one." There is so much hunger, there is so much need! These words are consoling.

We entered the center of operations. Signs on the building told of the work springing forth from there: "Walking with Mom's in Need — Baby Pantry," "St. Thomas Food Pantry," "Backpack Foods." The story inside told of work which was greater than the signs — so much good! So much love.

It might be noted that the "Backpack foods" are to supplement what government or other programs may not: meals for children in need over the weekend or holidays when school food programs are not available. They must have some strong children in those parts! The backpacks were heavy!

Each month the food pantries alone serves some 120 families at St. Thomas and 300 families at Risen Lord.

Father is so proud of, and joyful in, the mini-



Courtesy photo

Father Thien Duc Nguyen, SVD, pastor of St. Thomas Parish in Gassaway and Risen Lord Mission in Clay, greets the blue bird that hopped on the bird house he is carrying.

stry of his parishioners. I get the impression he stands somewhat in awe at the multitude of good work his people, and visitors from other parishes, take part in. It is not only life giving but life saving as there has been at least one woman who was helped to choose life, and these parishioners continue to walk with Mothers in Need: just like the sign says!

I was admittedly quite blessed to hear and see how much this little dynamo of a Parish does. To see kindness and joy in the folks I met. Was told by a woman that less than 30 years ago running water in homes was not necessarily the norm. In the Holy Spirit, our brothers and sisters, in Braxton and Clay counties "preach the Gospel," sometimes they may even do so "in word."

# Nativity Scenes are Reminder of Lord's Love & Tenderness, Pope Says

By Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

**ROME (CNS)** — Making his customary visit to the Rome Basilica of St. Mary Major to pray before his trip to the French island of Corsica, Pope Francis also met and prayed with dozens of actors staging a living Nativity scene.

For the third year in a row, the basilica and an Italian association that promotes the tradition of Nativity scenes, including living representations, turned the neighborhood around the basilica into a small Bethlehem with the manger on the basilica's steps.

After a noon Mass Dec. 14 celebrated by new Cardinal Rolandus Makrickas, coadjutor archpriest of the basilica, parishes, prayer groups, confraternities and Italian folklore groups provided the actors and the tableau. Marching bands, musicians, singers and dancers performed for the crowd.

Later, after Pope Francis prayed before the Marian icon "Salus Populi Romani," as he does before and after every foreign trip, he met inside the basilica with the living Nativity participants.

With the couple playing Mary and Joseph holding a baby and standing alongside him, Pope Francis told participants, "Christ-



The people playing Jesus, Mary and Joseph in a living Nativity scene sit under an awning on the steps of Rome's Basilica of St. Mary Major Dec. 14.

CNS photo/Pablo Esparza

mas always brings us joy. Christmas brings us the tenderness of a baby."

Gazing at a Nativity scene, he said, the newborn baby Jesus "gives us hope," and the image of Mary is a reminder that people can count on "the care of a mother, Our Lady, who accompanies us throughout our lives" and on the example of St. Joseph, who worked to support his family.

Pope Francis also told the crowd that if there was anyone present "who does not have peace in your heart, remember that God forgives everything and God forgives al-

ways. Do not be afraid to ask the Lord's pardon because he forgives everything, and he forgives

always."

"He came for us, with so much tenderness," the pope said.

## Jesus' Crown of Thorns Returns to Notre Dame Cathedral

By OSV News

**PARIS (OSV News)** — On Dec. 13, the Crown of Thorns was returned to Notre Dame, marking a deeply moving moment for Parisians and pilgrims alike. The relic, which survived the devastating 2019 fire, had been stored at the Louvre since the blaze. The return procession, attended by over 400 members of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, saw the crown — held by a knight in full regalia — walk from the Louvre to Notre Dame, drawing crowds of onlookers, including Bénédicte de Villers, a Catholic who was granted entry to witness the ceremony. The crown, acquired by King Louis IX in 1239, was originally housed at Sainte-Chapelle before being moved to Notre Dame in 1806. Once inside the cathedral, it was placed on the new altar, designed by Sylvain Dubuisson. The reliquary, an altarpiece of marble and cedar wood, evokes the crown's Byzantine history with its gilded bronze thorns and intricate design. Archbishop Laurent Ulrich led a prayer service, reflecting on the significance of the relic during Advent and the Passion. From Jan. 10, 2025, the crown will be displayed every Friday, offering visitors a chance to venerate it in its new, radiant setting — symbolizing Notre Dame's rebirth as a cathedral of light.

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# Diez cosas que debes saber sobre el Jubileo 2025, el Año Santo que empieza en diciembre de 2024

Por **Maria Wiering**

**(OSV News)** — Carteles alrededor de la Ciudad Eterna anuncian "Roma si trasforma" -- "Roma se transforma" -- como explicación de los proyectos, presentes en todas partes, de infraestructura en curso, incluyendo la restauración de esculturas y monumentos icónicos, de cara al Jubileo 2025, un Año Santo que comienza en la víspera de Navidad.

He aquí 10 cosas que debes saber sobre el próximo Año Jubilar:

1. Año Jubilar, también conocido como "Año Santo", es un año especial en la vida de la Iglesia que actualmente se celebra cada 25 años. El jubileo ordinario más reciente fue en el año 2000, mientras que el Papa Francisco convocó un Año Jubilar Extraordinario de la Misericordia en 2015-2016. Los Años Jubilares se celebran a intervalos regulares en la Iglesia Católica desde 1300, pero tienen sus raíces en la tradición judía de marcar un año jubilar cada 50 años.

2. El Jubileo 2025 comienza a las 7:00 p.m. en la víspera de Navidad, el 24 de diciembre, con el rito de apertura de la Puerta Santa en la Basílica de San Pedro en el Vaticano, inmediatamente antes de que el Papa Francisco celebre la Misa de Medianoche. Las Puertas Santas también se abrirán en las cuatro principales basílicas de Roma: San Juan de Letrán, el 29 de diciembre; Santa María la Mayor, el 1 de enero; San Pablo Extramuros, el 5 de enero. Sin embargo, primero se abrirá una Puerta Santa el 26 de diciembre en la prisión de Rebibbia, una cárcel romana que el Papa Francisco ha visitado dos veces antes para celebrar Misa y lavar los pies de los reclusos en Jueves Santo. Las puertas representan el paso hacia la salvación que Jesús abrió a la humanidad.

3. El tema del Año Santo es "Peregrinos de la Esperanza". La bula papal, emitida el 9 de mayo, que presentó el próximo Año Jubilar, se titula "Spes non confundit", o "La esperanza no defrauda", tomado de Romanos 5, 5. "Todos esperan", escribió el Papa Fran-

cisco. "En el corazón de toda persona anida la esperanza como deseo y expectativa del bien, aun ignorando lo que traerá consigo el mañana".

"Sin embargo, la imprevisibilidad del futuro hace surgir sentimientos a menudo contrapuestos: de la confianza al temor, de la serenidad al desaliento, de la certeza a la duda", continuó. "Encontramos con frecuencia personas desanimadas, que miran el futuro con escepticismo y pesimismo, como si nada pudiera ofrecerles felicidad. Que el Jubileo sea para todos ocasión de reavivar la esperanza".

El Papa Francisco también espera que este año acerque a los católicos a la paciencia, que describió en "Spes non confundit" como una "virtud estrechamente relacionada con la esperanza", pero que puede parecer esquiva en un mundo en el que "estamos acostumbrados a quererlo todo y de inmediato".

4. Los años jubilares, que tienen raíces judías, enfatizan el sacramento de la reconciliación y la restauración de relaciones con Dios. También ofrecen la oportunidad de una indulgencia jubilar especial, que puede eliminar los efectos residuales del pecado mediante la gracia de Cristo.

5. El Año Santo llama a los cristianos a la acción. El Papa Francisco pidió "signos de esperanza" en el año jubilar, como el deseo de paz en el mundo, la apertura a la vida y la paternidad responsable, la cercanía con los prisioneros, los pobres, los enfermos, los jóvenes, los ancianos, los migrantes, y las personas "en situaciones de catástrofe o de inestabilidad social". El Papa Francisco también instó a los países ricos a perdonar las deudas de aquellos países que nunca podrán pagarlas y a abordar la "deuda ecológica", que describió como "relacionada con desequilibrios comerciales con consecuencias en el ámbito ecológico, así como con el uso desproporcionado de los recursos naturales llevado a cabo históricamente por algunos países".

6. Se espera un flujo masivo de pere-

grinos en la Ciudad Eterna. El Instituto Nacional de Investigación Turística de Italia proyecta 35 millones de visitantes en 2025, casi el triple de los 13 millones registrados en 2023. La peregrinación es una parte "fundamental" de los eventos jubilares, señaló el Papa Francisco en "Spes non confundit". "Ponerse en camino es un gesto típico de quienes buscan el sentido de la vida. La peregrinación a pie favorece mucho el redescubrimiento del valor del silencio, del esfuerzo, de lo esencial", escribió. Se espera que los peregrinos jubilares visiten las catacumbas cristianas de Roma y sus siete iglesias de peregrinación: las basílicas de San Pedro, Santa María la Mayor, San Juan de Letrán, San Pablo Extramuros, San Lorenzo, Santa Cruz, y San Sebastián, destinos popularizados por San Felipe Neri en el siglo XVI con una caminata de 15 millas. Además, otras 12 iglesias romanas, incluido el Santuario del Divino Amor en el sureste de Roma, han sido designadas como "iglesias jubilares", destinadas a ser puntos de encuentro para los peregrinos durante el jubileo.

7. Habrá eventos importantes en Roma. Entre ellos, reuniones jubilares con liturgias, ponencias y audiencias papales para celebrar a distintos grupos dentro de la Iglesia. El primero será el Jubileo del Mundo de las Comunicaciones, del 24 al 26 de enero, seguido por el Jubileo de las Fuerzas Armadas, Policía y Personal de Seguridad, del 8 al 9 de febrero. También habrá encuentros para artistas (15-18 de febrero), diáconos (21-23 de febrero), e incluso bandas de música (10-11 de mayo).

Algunos de estos eventos coincidirán con canonizaciones importantes, como la del beato Carlo Acutis durante el Jubileo de los Adolescentes (25-27 de abril) y la del beato Pier Giorgio Frassati durante el Jubileo de la Juventud (28 de julio-3 de agosto).

Se espera que algunos eventos destaquen el 1700 aniversario del Concilio de Nicea, donde los cristianos recibieron el Credo Niceno.

8. Se espera que Roma brille y resplandezca. Muchos sitios y obras de arte famosos en Roma y en el Vaticano han sido limpiados o restaurados para el jubileo, algo que decepcionó a muchos turistas en 2024, quienes encontraron monumentos importantes cubiertos por cercas, andamios, y lonas. Se espera que muchos de estos proyectos concluyan a tiempo, con una cara fresca, renovada para el jubileo. En octubre, la Basílica de San Pedro presentó su baldaquino recién restaurado, diseñado por Gian Lorenzo Bernini en el siglo XVII, después de 10 meses de trabajo. También se están limpiando o restaurando la Pietà de Miguel Ángel, la Fuente de los Cuatro Ríos de Bernini en la Piazza Navona, y los ángeles de Bernini en el Puente Sant'Angelo.

9. Aunque muchos eventos jubilares tendrán lugar en Roma y el Vaticano, es una celebración para toda la Iglesia. El 29 de diciembre, se espera que los obispos diocesanos inauguren el Año Santo localmente con Misas en sus catedrales y catedrales. Se anima a los católicos a hacer peregrinaciones a sus catedrales durante el año y a estar atentos a las comunicaciones diocesanas para eventos locales. Aunque el Papa Francisco alentó a los obispos a designar Puertas Santas en sus propias catedrales durante el Jubileo de la Misericordia en 2015, este año solo habrá Puertas Santas en el Vaticano y en Roma.

10. El Año Jubilar concluye con el cierre de la Puerta Santa en la Basílica de San Pedro el 6 de enero de 2026, en la festividad de la Epifanía. Sin embargo, las Puertas Santas de las otras grandes basílicas de Roma se cerrarán el 28 de diciembre de 2025, el mismo día en que las diócesis finalizarán las celebraciones locales del Año Santo.

El Año Jubilar también mira hacia el 2033, cuando la Iglesia conmemorará el 2000 aniversario de la pasión, muerte, y resurrección de Jesús, celebración que el Papa Francisco calificó como "otro aniversario fundamental para todos los cristianos".

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](http://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 Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, al 304.559.6742.

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, diacono, 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](http://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.

**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](http://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](http://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 eclesiales 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 Sor Martha Gómez, ext. 264. También puede llamar a la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro de la Diócesis al 304.230.1504.

# Employment Opportunities

## St. John XXIII Pastoral Center Job Opening – Cook

The Cook at St. John XXIII Pastoral Center, as a member of Diocesan Services, is committed to advancing the mission of Jesus Christ and offering hospitality to our guests. The Cook is responsible for the preparation, service, clean-up and storage of all meals, snacks and food service for special functions. Assures the kitchen/dining room/dish room areas are clean and in good order at the end of a shift or function. Oversees and assists kitchen aides in the preparation, service and storage of food and cleanliness of the kitchen/dining area. Works early mornings, days, evenings, weekends and holidays/holydays as needed. Prefer a minimum of one year experience in food service.

For more information, contact the Director, Gerri Wright at (304) 342-0507.

## St. John XXIII Pastoral Center Job Opening – Guest Services Coordinator

The Guest Services Coordinator at St. John XXIII Pastoral Center, as a member of Diocesan Services, is committed to advancing the mission of Jesus Christ and offering hospitality to our guests.

The Guest Services Coordinator is responsible for working with guests to plan and book lodging and events. Some of the required qualifications include multi-tasker, problem solver & self-starter, detail oriented, excellent written & verbal skills, computer knowledge, team player and welcoming & respectful to all faith & secular guests. Additionally, the position entails the ability to perform the physical requirements of kitchen aide & housekeeper.

Works evenings, weekends and holidays/holydays as needed. Works in kitchen & housekeeping when needed.

For more information and to schedule an interview, contact the Director, Gerri Wright at (304) 342-0507 or [gwright@dwc.org](mailto:gwright@dwc.org)

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