

THE CATHOLIC
Spirit

A Letter to the Faithful from Bishop Brennan

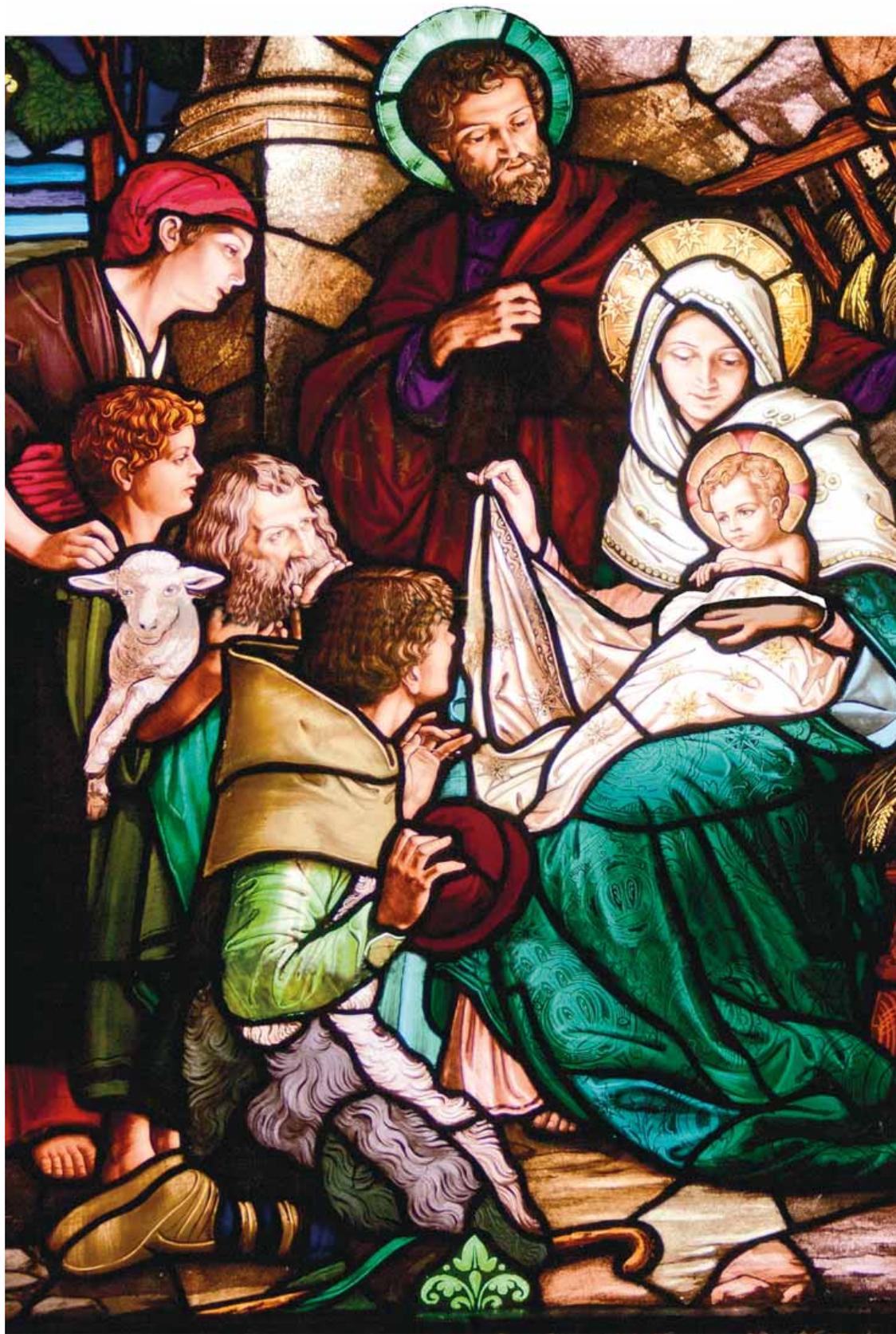
Christmas, 2022

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, it's the time of short days and long nights. We who live in the northern hemisphere are used to winter. As the earth's axis tilts slightly away from the sun, it brings us those shorter days, longer nights and colder temperatures, while the southern hemisphere enjoys summer.

Most of us prefer light to darkness. Some people suffer from seasonal "down moods" or even depression in winter. We cope with the lack of natural light by filling our homes, schools and businesses with artificial light. Candles and oil lamps were once widely used. Now we use electricity. We put up brightly-lit Christmas trees in our homes and often string up lights on the exterior of our houses. Many towns and cities celebrate festivals of light at this time of year. We try to dispel the darkness.

Our sacred Scriptures use night as a metaphor for another kind of darkness, that of sin, ignorance and despair. The Bible speaks of light as God's coming with salvation for His people. Here is how Isaiah the prophet puts it: the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwell in the land of gloom a light has shone [9:1].

St. John calls Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that life-giving light: this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it [1:4-5]. Jesus says of himself, I am the light of the world.



Colleen Rowan Photo

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

Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life [John 8:12].

Although our Savior came in humility, born in a manger and raised in an undistinguished town, the story about him and his Gospel burst forth into the world after his death and resurrection with the power of the Holy Spirit. The early Christians claimed that Christ illuminated their minds with a new way of relating to God and one another. As St. Paul would tell them: You were once darkness but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of the light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth . . . Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness [Ephesians 5:8:11].

If there is a great challenge in seeking to live in and by Christ's light, there is also great joy in doing so. Christ's light helps us see our goal and the path toward it: our destiny is to be with God forever and He shows us the way to get there, the way of love. Just as the sun's light, combined with water and good soil, allows green plants to grow, so the light of Christ's grace, falling on the soil of our good will, which is watered by faith, enables us to grow into the mature human beings we have always been meant to be. We become more and more "the glory of God, the human person fully alive" (St. Irenaeus, 2nd century AD).

We rejoice, then, as we remember the coming of
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EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

SPEND AN HOUR WITH OUR LORD IN SILENT EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

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Bring in the new year with our Lord Jesus on Saturday, December 31, @ 11:00 a.m. at St. John Church

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

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

To Report to Diocesan Authorities: The diocese encourages reporting to the appropriate civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. The diocese also encourages reporting to the appropriate church authorities. To report suspected cases of sexual abuse of children by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, contact one of the following designees at 1.888.434.6237 or 304.233.0880: Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; or Very Rev. Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270. You may also call the Diocese's Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504. You may also call the Diocese's sexual abuse hotline at 833.230.5656. Complaint forms are available online at www.dwc.org, click "Diocese" on the menu bar, then "Offices," then "Safe Environment", then "Download Files and Forms." The form is titled "Complaint Form for Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor." The form may be returned via U.S. mail to: Office of Safe Environment, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

To Report to the Diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator: please call Dr. Patricia Bailey at 304.242.6988. In addition to the methods listed above for reporting sexual abuse, the Diocese also has partnered with Navex Global to offer the EthicsPoint platform to report other, additional concerns, such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a 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.

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

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

Now is the time to Talk!

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Bishop Brennan will Celebrate Christmas Mass at the Basilica Co-Cathedral in Charleston

CHARLESTON—Bishop Mark Brennan will celebrate Mass for the Nativity of the Lord at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston at 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 24.

The Mass will be livestreamed on the diocese’s website at DWC.ORG, and also available on the diocesan Facebook page at WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/DIOCESEOFWHEELINGCHARLESTON.

The faithful may also view the Mass on television. Christmas Mass will be broadcasted at midnight on the following channels: WTRF-TV7 Wheeling; WBOY/NBC Clarksburg/Morgantown; WDVM Martinsburg; WOWK Charleston/Huntington; WVNS Beckley/Bluefield

Letter..

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God’s Son into the world, because he brought us a light we did not have before. That light allows us to advance without stumbling and, even if we sometimes stumble, Christ’s light helps us get up again with the goal clearly in view. We are blessed in knowing where we are going and how to get there. That is the basis for a deep joy, which the troubles and adversities of this life cannot take away.

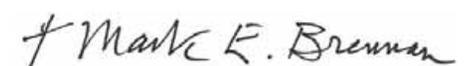
As we recall the first Christmas and await the Lord’s return in glory (which we should not fear but eagerly yearn for), we also have the promise of the Lord’s active presence in our lives. Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves, for my yoke is easy and my burden light [Matthew 11:28-30].

How is the Lord active in our lives? He strengthens us through his Word, which encourages, consoles and challenges us. He builds us up through the sacraments, giving us a spiritual birth in Baptism, anointing us with the Holy Spirit in Confirmation and then giving himself personally to us in the Holy Eucharist, as he transforms bread and wine into his Body and Blood. He seeks us out in prayer: Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will enter his house and dine with him and he with me [Revelation 3:20]. We also experience the Lord’s loving care through one another, for whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me [Matthew 25:40]. Jesus enters our lives in all these ways as long as we do not bar the door.

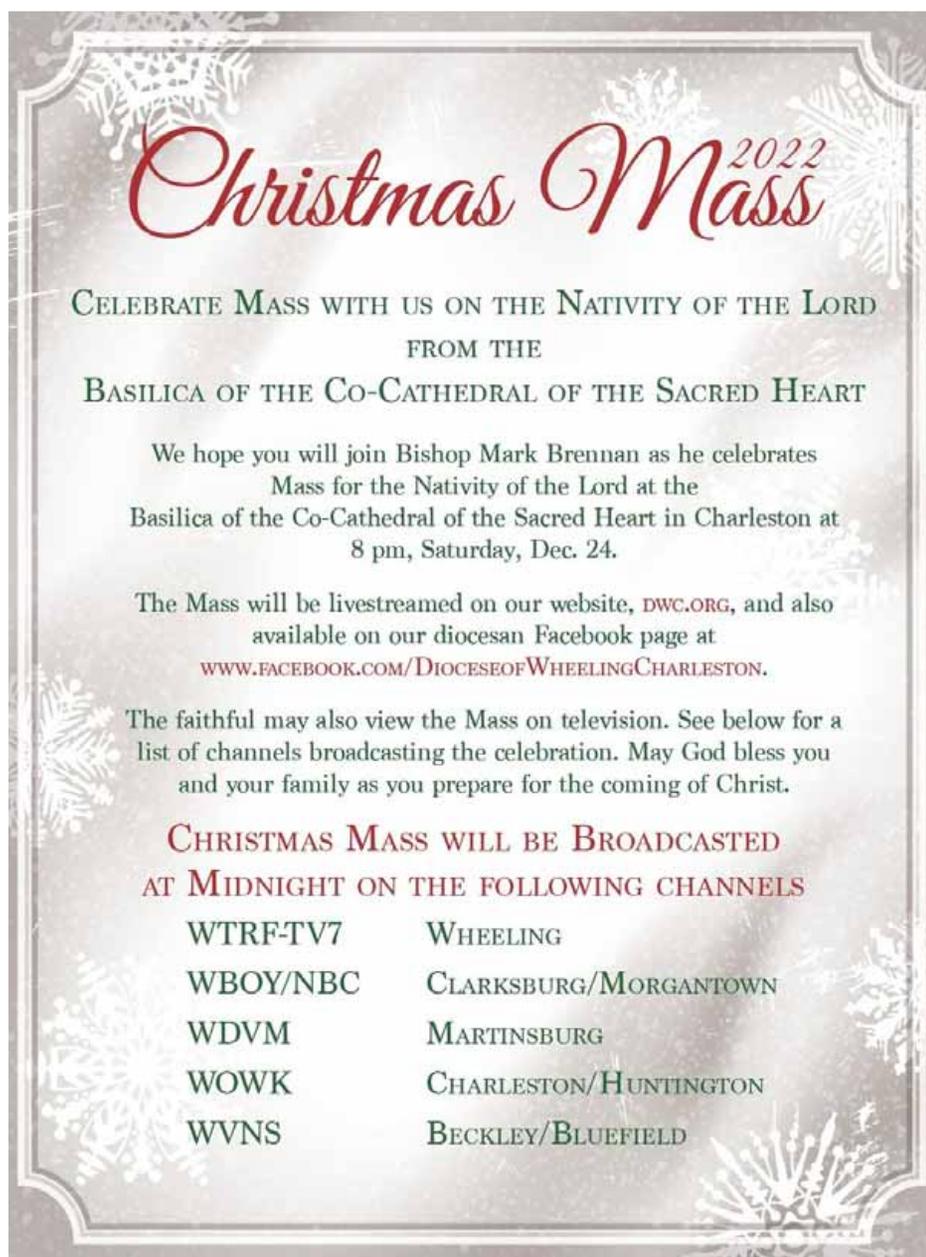
One of the most popular Christmas carols begins, “Joy to the world, the Lord is come.” I hope you will let the joy of this holy season seep into your minds and hearts. While Christmas music on the radio and TV movies will disappear on December 26, the Church refuses to let Christmas go and prolongs it until the Solemnity of the Epiphany (the Three Kings), which will be January 8, 2023. Don’t take down your Christmas decorations too soon. Why not gather the family around the Christmas creche on the evenings after December 25 and read the Scriptures assigned for those days, adding some petitions and other prayers? Maybe you could even sing some Christmas carols, some of the most beautiful music ever composed! This is a spiritual way to dispel the darkness, as we learn to live as children of the light.

The Lord Jesus Christ has come as the world’s light, freeing us from sin and ignorance, for in him we find forgiveness of sins and the truth about God, ourselves and the world. If we keep our word of faith to him, we can also trust that he will keep his word to us and overcome our last enemy: death. Then Paul’s words will come true: Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead and Christ will give you light [Ephesians 5:14]. So, rejoice in the Lord always, I shall say it again: rejoice! [Philippians 4:4].

Sincerely in Christ,



+Mark E. Brennan
Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston



Christmas Mass ²⁰²²

CELEBRATE MASS WITH US ON THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD FROM THE BASILICA OF THE CO-CATHEDRAL OF THE SACRED HEART

We hope you will join Bishop Mark Brennan as he celebrates Mass for the Nativity of the Lord at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston at 8 pm, Saturday, Dec. 24.

The Mass will be livestreamed on our website, DWC.ORG, and also available on our diocesan Facebook page at WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/DIOCESEOFWHEELINGCHARLESTON.

The faithful may also view the Mass on television. See below for a list of channels broadcasting the celebration. May God bless you and your family as you prepare for the coming of Christ.

CHRISTMAS MASS WILL BE BROADCASTED AT MIDNIGHT ON THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS

WTRF-TV7	WHEELING
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Winter Shelter Opens at Catholic Charities in Wheeling



Courtesy Photo

At the temporary winter shelter, from left, are Deacon George Smoulder, John Moses, Joyce Wolen, and Mark Phillips.

WHEELING—The temporary winter shelter for adults experiencing homelessness in Wheeling has opened in the grand ballroom of the Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) administrative building.

“This space has been used by our community over the past century honoring many special events,” said Beth Zarate, CCWVa president and chief executive officer. “What a privilege it is now to provide warmth and shelter.”

The temporary shelter is designed to keep individuals warm during the upcoming winter. The winter shelter will operate from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. through mid-March.

Operations will fall under the newly created nonprofit the LIFE HUB. The LIFE HUB was created as a nonprofit organization, a program of the Wheeling Housing Authority partnering with the City of Wheeling.

“We are grateful for all of the individuals, organizations, foundations and faith-based community that have supported the winter shelter efforts through financial and in-kind gifts over the last several years,” said John Moses, Winter Shelter director. “We thank them for their continued support this year. The winter shelter would not happen without it.”

Donations are needed for the temporary winter shelter. Checks may be made out to the LIFE HUB and mailed to P.O. Box 2089; Wheeling, WV 26003.

Cash donations are used to purchase items such as work uniforms, scrubs, workstyle boots, shoes, and bus tokens. In addition to the cash donations, the most needed in-kind items include the following:

- Thermal undergarments — men and women sizes small to 5x
- New boxer briefs — men and women sizes small to 5x
- Sports bras — sizes small to 5x
- Coats — men and women sizes small to 5x
- Hats
- Gloves
- Sweatshirt hoodies
- Rain ponchos
- Belts — All sizes
- Twin XL fitted and flat sheets, pillowcases, and blankets
- Hand and feet warmers
- Tampons and feminine hygiene products

In-kind donations are being accepted on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to noon and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Wheeling Hous-

ing Authority’s main office building, located at 11 Community Street in Elm Grove.

Meals are being provided by the Catholic Neighborhood Center, the Soup Kitchen, and HoH-Share at their locations during hours of operation throughout the week. The groups are also providing snacks. Youth Services System, Street Moms, and partnering organizations are providing toiletries and supplies.

“We’ll continue to provide a day shelter at our Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center on 18th Street,” said Mark Phillips, CCWVa chief operating officer. “We’re grateful to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston for enabling us to open the doors of our administrative office to our neighbors in the evening.”

Other partners providing shelter this winter include Helping Heroes, which will coordinate shelter services for veterans. Families will be sheltered at partnering organizations or in hotel rooms when needed. Project Hope will make rounds and care for medical needs.

Questions may be directed to the following: Melissa Adams at (304) 551-2118 or madams@wheelingwv.gov; John Moses at (304) 215-8904 or johnmoses@comcast.net; Joyce Wolen at (304) 639-8429 or joyce@wheelingwv-pha.org.

Bishop Brennan Gathers with Diocesan Seminarians and Their Families



Courtesy Photo

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's seminarians and their families gathered with Bishop Mark Brennan in anticipation of the upcoming Christmas season. Continue to pray for our seminarians! Pictured, from left, are Father Brian Crenwelge, director of Vocations for the diocese; seminarians Michael J. Tupta, Donvito Cortese, Timothy Kawash, and Joe Derico; Bishop Brennan; seminarians John Soplinski, Nathan Schmidt, Dominic Re, Bryan Tedeschi, and Dylan O'Sullivan; and Ross Semler, office manager of the Office of Vocations.



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Pandemic-Era Border Policy Allowed to Stay in Place for Now

By Carol Zimmermann, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Chief Justice John Roberts temporarily stopped the Biden administration from ending a pandemic-related border restriction with a one-page order Dec. 19.

It gives the Supreme Court time to consider the emergency request filed by 19 states asking the justices to keep in place what is known as Title 42 of the federal Public Health Services Act.

The Trump administration used the public health measure during the pandemic to allow U.S. border officials to expel migrants quickly without giving them an opportunity to seek asylum in the United States.

Roberts' administrative stay ensures the policy — which a trial judge had ordered be ended by midnight Dec. 21 — could stay in place while the full court considered it. His order also asked the Biden administration to re-

spond Dec. 20 by 5 p.m. (EST).

The Republican state attorneys general opposing the discontinuation of this policy warned that if the court did not block a federal judge's order to end the policy it would "cause a crisis of unprecedented proportions at the border."

The Biden administration had extended the policy last August, but this April they announced plans to end it, saying it was no longer necessary to protect public health.

Migrant advocates, including Catholic church organizations, women religious and Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, who is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' migration committee, have strongly supported ending Title 42.

Texas border cities, like El Paso, had been preparing for the surge of new migrants as the pandemic-era policy was scheduled to end.

In mid-December, Dylan Corbett,

director of the Hope Border Institute, a Catholic organization helping migrants, said constant changing policies make it hard for organizations like his to plan.

"You have a lot of pent-up pain," he told The Associated Press, noting that with government policies in disarray, "the majority of the work falls to faith communities to pick up the pieces and deal with the consequences."

In October, Bishop Seitz issued a statement expressing his disappointment that Title 42 had been expanded to Venezuelans seeking to cross the border.

"Now we must all work harder, especially the faith community, to build a culture of hospitality that respects the dignity of those who migrate, and to continue to press lawmakers and the Biden administration to establish a safe, humane, functioning and rights-respecting system to ensure protection to those in need," he

said.

Title 42 is among other immigration policies brought to the Supreme Court this year. In June, the court ruled that the Biden administration could potentially end the Trump administration's "remain in Mexico" policy, which sent those seeking asylum at the U.S.-Mexico border back to Mexico to wait for a hearing in U.S. immigration court.

But the Supreme Court also sent this back to a lower court to determine if the Biden administration's efforts to end the policy complied with administrative laws. In mid-December, a federal judge in Texas put the administration's attempts to end this policy on hold.

In late November, the Supreme Court also heard arguments challenging a 2021 policy that prioritizes certain groups of unauthorized immigrants for arrest and deportation. A ruling is expected next June.

Priests for Life Head Says Vatican Didn't Tell Him Directly He Was Laicized

By Julie Asher, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In a live morning broadcast on Twitter Dec. 18, Father Frank Pavone, national director of Priests for Life, said he was not told directly by the Vatican that he has been laicized.

"I haven't received any communication from the Vatican, I haven't seen anything," he said. "I'm not even being told about this myself."

Pavone said he learned about it from Catholic News Agency in an email asking him for comment about the Vatican returning him to the lay state.

Late Dec. 17, CNA broke the story that "Father Pavone has been dismissed from the clerical state for 'blasphemous communications on social media' and 'persistent disobedience of the lawful instructions of his diocesan bishop.'"

The news outlet said it had obtained a Dec. 13 letter about the matter — "confirmed by multiple sources as authentic" — that Archbishop Christophe Pierre, U.N. nuncio, sent to U.S. bishops.

Shortly after the CNA story, The Associated Press, The New York Times and several other media outlets reported the news. In an updated news story midday Dec. 18, AP published the full text of the nuncio's letter.

It said the head of Priests for Life "was dismissed from the clerical state by the Holy See" Nov. 9. "This action was taken after Father Pavone was found guilty in canonical proceedings of blasphemous communications on social media, and of persistent disobedience of the lawful instructions of his diocesan bishop."

The letter also said the priest "was given ample opportunity to defend himself in the canonical proceedings, and he was also given multiple opportunities to submit himself to the au-

thority of his diocesan bishop. It was determined that Father Pavone had no reasonable justification for his actions." There is "no possibility of appeal" for "Mr. Pavone," it said.

Ahead of his Twitter broadcast, Pavone tweeted: "So in every profession, including the priesthood, if you defend the #unborn, you will be treated like them! The only difference is that when we are 'aborted,' we continue to speak, loud and clear."

Pavone and his ministry have not been without controversy over the years, and some of the biggest headlines and scrutiny his actions have drawn came in 2016 when he placed the body of an aborted fetus on an altar and broadcast it on Facebook Live on the eve of the presidential election to get people to vote for Republican Donald J. Trump.

Shortly after the broadcast, the Diocese of Amarillo, Texas, where he was incardinated as a diocesan priest in 2005, announced it was investigating the incident.

"We believe that no one who is pro-life can exploit a human body for any reason, especially the body of a fetus," Amarillo Bishop Patrick J. Zurek said in a statement issued after the controversial broadcast. The use of an aborted fetus for political purposes by one of the diocese's priests violated "the dignity of human life," he added.

During Trump's run for reelection in 2020, then-Father Pavone campaigned for him and told CNA at the time that canon law's prohibitions against political involvement by clergy did not apply to him because he was campaigning against abortion and for the pro-life cause.

He did eventually end his role as a co-chair of Trump's 2020 pro-life coalition and as an advisory board member of Catholics for Trump, tell-

ing CNA he stepped down "at the request of 'the competent ecclesiastical authority.'"

In his live broadcast on Twitter Dec. 18, Pavone said he will not apologize for actively supporting Trump, "who got us to this point where we are now." He was referring to Trump's appointees to the U.S. Supreme Court joining in the majority vote June 24 that overturned *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 ruling that made abortion legal nationwide.

In his Twitter broadcast, he took issue with being accused of "blasphemous communications" on social media.

He admitted getting angry with a "rabid (Joe) Biden supporter" during a conversation they two were having on Twitter and he tweeted the "GD" word: "You and these goddamn baby-killing politicians."

"I shouldn't have used that word — I don't usually use that word — in response to that guy," Pavone told his listeners. "I was very angry, so I (went) to confession" afterward.

"Father Frank is damning people to hell? I don't think so," he said, citing several examples

See "Life" on Page 8

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Pope Reveals He Prepared Resignation Letter in Case of Impairment

By **Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service**

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis said he wrote a resignation letter in 2013, his first year in office, to be used in case he became physically or mentally impaired and unable to fulfill the duties of the papacy.

In an interview published Dec. 18, the day after his 86th birthday, Pope Francis said that during the time that Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone was Vatican secretary of state, a position he left in October 2013, he gave a resignation letter to the cardinal.

"I signed it and said, 'If I should become impaired for medical reasons or whatever, here is my renunciation. Here you have it,'" the pope told the Spanish newspaper ABC.

Pope Francis joked that now that the letter's exist-

ence has been made public, someone will go after Cardinal Bertone and say, "Give me that piece of paper!"

But he also said he was certain Cardinal Bertone gave it to Cardinal Pietro Parolin, who succeeded him as secretary of state.

The interviewer also noted that Pope Francis had named several women as secretaries or undersecretaries of Vatican offices, but that he had not appointed a woman to lead a Vatican dicastery, although his reform of the Roman Curia says it is possible for a layperson to head a dicastery.

Pope Francis responded that he has been thinking of appointing a woman to lead "a dicastery where there will be a vacancy in two years." He did not say what office that was.

"There is nothing to pre-

vent a woman from guiding a dicastery in which a layperson can be a prefect," the pope said.

However, "if it is dicastery of a sacramental nature," presumably like the dicasteries for the Doctrine of the Faith, for Bishops, for Clergy or for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, "it has to be presided over by a priest or a bishop," the pope said.

Asked if he worries about active Catholics who may feel neglected by the pope paying so much attention to people who feel far from the church, Pope Francis responded, "If they are good, they will not feel neglected."

But if they do feel shunned, he said, they may share the fault of the elder son in the biblical parable of the prodigal son, echoing his complaint to his father,

"I've served you for years and now you take care of him and don't pay any attention to me."

That attitude, the pope said, "an ugly sin, one of hidden ambition, of wishing to stand out and be considered."

Pope Francis also told ABC that he believes the church is making progress "little by little" in tackling clerical sexual abuse and in becoming more transparent in handling the cases.

Asked what he would say to Catholics whose faith in the church falters every time a new case is made public, the pope said, "It is good that you feel outrage about this. That leads you to act to prevent it, to make your contribution."

"It doesn't scare me," the pope said. "If their faith is faltering, it's because it is

alive. Otherwise, you would feel nothing at all."

Also Dec. 18, Italy's Canale 5 television station aired an interview with Pope Francis in which he was asked about Dec. 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, when he began a prayer asking Mary to intercede for Ukraine and had to pause because he was crying.

War is "madness," the pope said. "I tell people, please, don't be afraid, but let's cry a little bit. We should be crying today about these cruelties" that always go with war.

Pope Francis said he has met many children from Ukraine in the 10 months since Russia began the war. "None of them smile. Not one. They greet you, but they cannot smile. Who knows what they have seen."

Life..

Cont'd from Page 7

of "extending the mercy of God" to those who have supported abortion.

In his pastoral work with Rachel's Vineyard, a post-abortion retreat ministry, he has extended "the mercy of God" to countless women who regret their abortions, he added. "Don't talk to me about damning people to hell."

Originally ordained for the Archdiocese of New York by Cardinal John J. O'Connor in 1988, then-Father Pavone took over the helm of Priests for Life a couple of years after its 1991 founding.

In 2005, Father Pavone told Cardinal Edward M. Egan, then New York's archbishop, that he wanted to pursue his pro-life ministry full time and had been invited to do so

by Bishop John W. Yanta of Amarillo, Texas, who served on the Priests for Life board of advisers. Father Pavone was incardinated into the diocese that year.

In 2011, Bishop Zurek, Bishop Yanta's successor, suspended Father Pavone from active ministry outside the diocese.

The priest appealed to the Vatican and in 2012, what's now the Dicastery for the Clergy, issued a decree allowing Father Pavone to minister outside the diocese but said he would still have to obtain specific permission to do so from Bishop Zurek.

In 2014, New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan cut ties with Father Pavone and his group Priests for Life, saying the priest refused to allow an audit of the group's finances. Priests for Life was based in Staten Island, New York.

In 2017, Priests for Life announced it had relocated its headquarters to Titusville, Florida.

In April 2020, Father Pavone

told CNA he was no longer "under the authority" of the Amarillo Diocese and would not say what diocese he had moved to.

Daily Living
with Fr. Chapin
Sunday Mornings

6:30 WOWK 13	Huntington - Charleston
6:30 WTOV FOX 9	Wheeling-Steubenville
8:00 WBOY NBC 12	Weston-Clarksburg-Fairmont
8:30 WVNS FOX 59	Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)
11:00 WDVM 25	Hagerstown-Washington D.C.
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Dynamic Planning Team Sought for TEC Revival

WEST VIRGINIA—As we ring in the new year, the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s organizers for young adult events is announcing the revival of TEC (Teens Encounter Christ)!

These dynamic spiritually uplift-

ing events are for high school juniors and seniors and underclassmen in college. Participants can be Catholic or non-Catholic. Those attending a TEC retreat can see how God is working and can more fully be welcomed to work in their lives –

through the struggles, joys, and triumphs.

It’ll be a gathering for people who might want to become a part of the diocesan TEC movement through retreat leadership, participation, and volunteering.

Adults who are interested in supporting the Teens Encounter Christ (TEC) movement in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston are invited to participate in a brainstorming event planning session from 11 a.m. to 2:30 pm, Saturday, Jan. 14 at St. Mary’s Catholic Church, 3346 University Avenue, Star City (Morgantown).

Daniel Maul, director of evangelization and catechesis for the diocese, said the group will outline the event logistics and details, define, and discern the team - directors, members, spiritual directors, Wheat (Support) Team, music ministers, and other volunteers representative of the regions around the state.

To be a part of this forward-think-



ing planning team email or call Ralph Modena at ralph.modena@gmail.com or at (304) 716-6164.

For more information about TEC in West Virginia, please contact Maul at (304) 233-0880, ext. 376 or at dmaul@dwc.org.



Photo courtesy of TECconference.org



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Children Tell the Story of Christ's Birth for Their Parish Community



John Sherwood Photo

Children portraying Mary, Joseph, and shepherds process into St. James the Greater Church in Charles Town with a real donkey. The children told the story of Christ's birth for their parish community.

Catholic Men's Fellowship of Maryland to Hold 2023 Conference

BALTIMORE—Early-bird registration is currently underway for the 2023 Conference of the Catholic Men's Fellowship of Maryland, scheduled for Saturday, March 25 at St. Louis Parish in Clarksville/Howard County. The conference theme is Receive the Father's Love.

The conference will feature Curtis Martin of FOCUS Ministries, Nathan Crankfield of Seeking Excellence Ministries, and Neal Lozano of Heart of the Father Ministries. Baltimore Archbishop William Lori will open the conference with the celebration of Mass beginning at 8 a.m.

Conference activities will include presentations, the administration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation by priests from the Archdiocese of Baltimore, and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Select vendors will also be avail-

able for the purchase of Catholic religious items throughout the day.

Early Bird registration of \$30 per person ticket pricing runs through Feb. 1. Ticket price includes continental breakfast, lunch, and refreshments. For conference details and registration, please visit the website Catholic Men's Fellowship of Maryland - Baltimore, MD (catholicmensfellowship.com). For more information, please contact Ed Roberts at (443) 858-7504 or via email at edw.roberts.28@gmail.com.

"For more than 20 years, the Catholic Men's Fellowship of Maryland has worked to strengthen men's spirituality through evangelization and discipleship. We cultivate leaders among men for the Church's mission. We help men answer the call to holiness through prayer, worship, word, and sacrament."

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Advent Giving Tree at Vienna's St. Michael Parish Collects Food for the Homeless



Courtesy Photo

The Advent Giving Tree at St. Michael Parish in Vienna has become an annual tradition to restock the shelves of the Stone Soup Kitchen in downtown Parkersburg. The kitchen feeds the homeless population each week. Under the tree are provisions collected at the parish.

University of Dayton's VLCFF Offering Two Courses

Two, five-week courses are being offered through the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) in the first part of 2023.

These courses are hybrid models. They are composed of both weekly live two-hour zoom lectures as well as a rich variety of online course materials and discussion experiences through the VLCFF. The courses are being underwritten by the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Office of Evangelization & Catechesis, who pays 100% of the tuition and the cost of any books associated with the courses.

The course instructor is Dr. Rodica Stoiciu.

For further information or to register, contact Jeanne McKeets at jmckeets@dwc.org with name, address, email, and phone number.

"Survey of Catholic Doctrine" will be offered Jan. 9-Feb. 12.

"Have you ever wanted to explore your faith more deeply and understand more clearly the Trinity, Jesus as God's self revealed, the Holy Spirit and much more?" a question posed in the course description. "We will study some of the major doctrines of the Catholic Church through the five-week hybrid course... There are no prerequisites, just bring your questions and a desire to learn about your faith."

This course combines Zoom lectures/discussions once a week on Wednesday evenings from 7-9 p.m. led by Stoiciu with materials available online through the VLCFF website and meets the course requirement for catechetical certification for the diocese.

"The New Testament" will be offered Jan. 9-Feb.12. This course builds on the material learned in 'Introduction to Scripture' and assumes a basic understanding of how Catholics read and interpret Scripture.

"We will explore the world behind the text of the New Testament, its history and culture, as well as examine how we today read and understand these texts in light of our own world and culture," the course description states. "We will look at how all four Gospels developed, study the letters of Paul, and examine the world of first century Christianity."

Those enrolled in the course will be able to work online taking quizzes and accessing material, as well as meet once a week via Zoom for class lecture and discussion with Stoiciu, the course facilitator. The Zoom sessions will be held on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. (a second session on Monday afternoon may be added if the response is large enough.)



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Students Give the Gift of Song



Students at St. Francis de Sales Central Catholic School in Morgantown perform at the school's 2022 Advent show.

Courtesy Photos

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Nativity Scenes on Display at a Record 43 State Capitols, Law Firm Says

By Catholic News Service

CHICAGO (CNS) — Private citizen groups have arranged for Nativity scenes to be on display at 43 state capitols around the country, a record number, according to a not-for-profit law firm's tally.

The Chicago-based Thomas More Society said Dec. 20 that the number of displays is notable despite the secularization of Christmas throughout the U.S.

Four new displays depicting the biblical description of the birth of Jesus in a manger have been erected this year, the society said: Alaska, New York, Utah and Virginia.

"The message of hope delivery by the baby Jesus celebrates the joy of new life. This troubled world can benefit from more hope and more joy," Ed O'Malley, president of the American Nativity Scene, said in a news release from the society.

The organization works with the law firm to ensure that private citizens can sponsor a manger scene on public property.

Thomas Olp, Thomas More Society vice president and senior counsel, said in a statement that state laws in large part allow government entities to erect and maintain celebrations of the Christmas holiday season or allow private citizens to put up manger scenes as long as "the sole purpose is not to promote its religious content."

In addition, such displays must be "placed in context with other symbols of the season as part of an effort to celebrate the public Christmas holiday through traditional symbols," Olp said.

"We pray that the Nativity scenes of the Christmas season will help to foster a sense of unity and peace on earth," he added.

The state capitol sites without a privately sponsored Nativity display in 2022 are Alabama, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Nevada, Oregon and Tennessee.



CNS Photo/courtesy American Nativity Scene
A Nativity scene placed in front of the Alaska Capitol in Juneau is seen in this December 2022 photo.

Spanish Teacher Needed

St. Joseph School in Martinsburg, W.Va., is seeking a Spanish teacher for grades kindergarten to two beginning Jan. 2, 2023.

The candidate must have prior experience as a teacher or teacher's aide; be a fluent Spanish speaker; be experienced in differentiating language instruction for diverse learners; and use appropriate instructional strategies for making language instruction comprehensible.

The ideal candidate is proficient in Spanish and has an associate degree or higher education in the field of language or teaching. The preferred applicant will act as an example and motivator toward the fulfillment of the Catholic philosophy of the school. The applicant agrees that the employer has the right to dismiss the teacher for public rejection or violation of the official teachings, and for any violations of the employee handbook policies.

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Medida que impide a inmigrantes cruzar la frontera sigue en vigor

Por Carol Zimmermann, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) – El presidente de la Corte Suprema de Estados Unidos, John Roberts, impidió el 19 de diciembre que la administración Biden pusiera fin a una restricción fronteriza relacionada con la pandemia.

Esto le da tiempo a la Corte Suprema para considerar la solicitud de emergencia presentada por 19 estados pidiendo a los jueces que mantengan lo que se conoce como el Título 42 de la Ley de Servicios de Salud Pública federal.

La administración Trump utilizó la medida de salud pública durante la pandemia para permitir que los funcionarios fronterizos estadounidenses expulsaran a los migrantes rápidamente sin darles la oportunidad de buscar asilo en Estados Unidos.

La suspensión administrativa de Roberts garantiza que la política, que un juez de primera instancia había ordenado que finalizara antes de la medianoche del 21 de diciembre, podría mantenerse mientras el tribunal la considera. Su orden también pedía a la administración de Biden que respondiera para el 20 de diciembre a las 5 p.m. hora de la costa este de los Estados Unidos.

En su respuesta, la administración solicitó a la Corte Suprema que recha-

zara la oferta de los estados de mantener la restricción fronteriza mientras se desarrollaban los desafíos legales.

Pero también pidió a los jueces que pospusieran el fin del Título 42 hasta al menos el 27 de diciembre, y señaló que aún se necesitan los preparativos necesarios para acomodar la avalancha de inmigrantes en la frontera.

"El gobierno no pretende en absoluto minimizar la gravedad de ese problema. Pero la solución a ese problema de inmigración no puede ser prorrogar indefinidamente una medida de salud pública que todos reconocen ahora que ha superado su justificación de salud pública", dijo la administración en su presentación judicial.

Los fiscales generales estatales republicanos que se oponen a terminar con el Título 42 advirtieron que si el tribunal no bloqueaba la orden de un juez federal de poner fin a la política, "provocaría una crisis de proporciones sin precedentes en la frontera".

La administración Biden había extendido la política en agosto pasado, pero este abril anunció planes para ponerle fin, diciendo que ya no era necesario para proteger la salud pública.

Los defensores de los inmigrantes, incluidas organizaciones de la iglesia católica, las religiosas y el obispo Mark J. Seitz de El Paso,

Texas, quien es presidente del comité de migración de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de EE. UU., han apoyado firmemente el fin del Título 42.

Las ciudades fronterizas de Texas, como El Paso, se habían estado preparando para la ola de nuevos inmigrantes cuando la política de la era de la pandemia estaba programada para terminar.

A mediados de diciembre, Dylan Corbett, director del Hope Border Institute, una organización católica que ayuda a los inmigrantes, dijo que las políticas en constante cambio dificultan la planificación para organizaciones como la suya.

"Se tiene mucho dolor reprimido", dijo a The Associated Press, y señaló que por las políticas gubernamentales en desorden, "la mayor parte del trabajo recae en las comunidades religiosas para recoger los pedazos y lidiar con las consecuencias".

En octubre, Monseñor Seitz emitió un comunicado expresando su decepción porque el Título 42 se había ampliado, incluyendo a los venezolanos que buscaban cruzar la frontera.

"Ahora todos debemos trabajar más duro, especialmente la comunidad religiosa, para construir una cultura de hospitalidad que respete la dignidad de quienes migran, y continuar presionando a los legisla-

dores y al gobierno de Biden para que establezcan un lugar seguro, humano, que funcione y respete los derechos, para garantizar la protección de quienes la necesitan", dijo.

El Título 42 se encuentra entre otras políticas de inmigración presentadas ante la Corte Suprema este año. En junio, la corte dictaminó que la administración de Biden podría poner fin a la política de "Quédate en México" de la administración Trump, que envió a quienes buscaban asilo en la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México a esperar una audiencia en la corte de inmi-

gración de Estados Unidos.

Pero la Corte Suprema también envió esto a un tribunal inferior para determinar si los esfuerzos de la administración Biden para poner fin a la política cumplieron con las leyes administrativas. A mediados de diciembre, un juez federal en Texas suspendió los intentos de la administración de poner fin a esta política.

A fines de noviembre, la Corte Suprema también escuchó argumentos que cuestionan una política de 2021 que prioriza el arresto y la deportación de ciertos grupos de inmigrantes no autorizados. Se espera un fallo para junio próximo.

Se necesita profesor de español

La escuela Saint Joseph en Martinsburg está buscando un maestro de español para los grados de jardín de infantes a segundo a partir del 2 de enero de 2023.

El candidato debe tener experiencia previa como docente o auxiliar docente; ser un hablante fluido de español; tener experiencia en diferenciar la instrucción de idiomas para estudiantes diversos; y usar estrategias de instrucción apropiadas para hacer que la instrucción del idioma sea comprensible.

El candidato ideal domina el español y tiene un título de asociado o educación superior en el campo del idioma o la enseñanza. El candidato preferido actuará como ejemplo y motivador hacia el cumplimiento de la filosofía católica de la escuela. El solicitante acepta que el empleador tiene derecho a despedir al maestro por rechazo público o violación de las enseñanzas oficiales, y por cualquier violación de las políticas del manual del empleado.

Si está interesado en este puesto, envíe su currículum por correo electrónico a Meg Partington a mpartington@sjsvw.org.

Para denunciar presuntos casos de abuso sexual de niños:

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

Para informar a las autoridades civiles: comuníquese con la policía local; los números variarían 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 eclesásticas apropiadas. Para reportar casos sospechosos de abuso sexual de niños por parte del personal de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston a la Diócesis, comuníquese con uno de los siguientes designados al 1.888.434.6237 o 304.233.0880: Sr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Sr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; o Muy Reverendo Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270. También puede llamar a la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro de la Diócesis al

304.230.1504. También puede llamar a la línea directa de abuso sexual de la Diócesis al 833.230.5656. Los formularios de queja están disponibles en línea en www.dwc.org, haga clic en "Diócesis" en la barra de menú, luego en "Oficinas", luego en "Ambiente seguro", luego "Descargar archivos y formularios". El formulario se titula "Formulario de queja para denuncias de abuso sexual de menores". El formulario se puede devolver por correo de EE. UU. A: Office of Safe Environment, Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

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

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

Obituary

Father Ivan M. Lebar, TOR

Father Ivan M. Lebar, T.O.R., 91, a member of the Franciscan Friars of the Third Order Regular, Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, died on December 7, 2022 at Saint Francis Friary in Loretto, PA.



Born September 7, 1931 in Cleveland, Ohio, the son of Ivan A. and Magdalene (Kramar), Father Ivan was given the name Michael Paul. After completing one year of high school in Cleveland, Michael transferred to Saint Francis Preparatory School in Spring Grove, Pennsylvania to complete his high school education and become a candidate with the Third Order Regular Franciscans. Upon entrance into the novitiate in 1950, Michael assumed the religious name Ivan, his deceased father's name. A year later, Brother Ivan entered Saint Francis College where he graduated in 1954 with a Bachelors in Philosophy and minor in Latin. After professing solemn vows on July 3, 1954, he completed his theological studies at St. Francis Seminary in Loretto.

Following his ordination to the Priesthood on May 24, 1958, Father Ivan went on to teach religion and English at Bishop Egan High School in Philadelphia for sixteen years. During that time, he also earned an M.A. in Educational Psychology from Villanova University.

Then, upon his request, Father Ivan began a long career in parochial ministry, being assigned first to Ss. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Tucson, Arizona where he could also care for his aging mother. Following her death in 1981, Father Ivan was appointed Parochial Vicar at St. Joseph Parish in Herndon, Virginia where he faithfully served for nine years with other Franciscan friars.

His first appointment as Pastor came in 1990 when he was assigned to St. Ann & St. Peter Catholic Churches in Geddes and Platte, South Dakota. However, due to feelings of loneliness and being the only priest in two small rural parishes, far away from family and friends, Father Ivan asked for a new assignment after just one year. For this reason, Father Ivan was reassigned in December 1991 to serve as Pastor of Assumption Parish in Keyser, WV where he ministered faithfully for the next twenty-two years. Although Assumption Parish was also a small rural parish, Father Ivan resided there with Bro. Luke Stone, TOR, who served the parish in numerous capacities until his death in 2011. Two years later, after serving in parish ministry for early 38 years, Father Ivan retired at the age of 82.

Following his retirement, Father Ivan resided at St. Francis Friary, the Franciscan's retirement facility located in Loretto, PA where he could often be found outdoors planting flowers and working in the gardens. His love for nature was also evident at the various parishes he served, especially Assumption Parish, where he enjoyed spending time maintaining the parish cemetery grounds.

In addition to his parents, Father Ivan is preceded in death by his two brothers Ivan Jr. and Stephen and two sisters Martha (Bukovec) and Margaret (Stahlinecker). He is survived by his nieces Joanne (Lebar) Rozic, Karen (Lebar) Ehrbar, Frances (Lebar) Kent and his nephew Michael Bukovec; as well as their spouses, grand nieces and nephews, and his Franciscan Community.

A Mass of Christian Burial was concelebrated on December 12, 2022 at St. Francis Friary at Mount Assisi with the Very Rev. Joseph Lehman, T.O.R., Minister Provincial as principal celebrant. Following the Mass, interment was at the Franciscan Friars' Cemetery on the campus of Saint Francis University, Loretto.

In lieu of flowers, memorial offerings for the Friar's Retirement Fund can be made payable to: Franciscan Friars TOR, P.O. Box 500, Loretto, PA 15940.

Online condolences can be made by visiting gibbon funerals.com.

Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord, and let perpetual light shine on him. May he rest in peace. Amen.



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The second collection at all Christmas Masses will go directly to benefit clients of Catholic Charities. Please give generously so your neighbors can receive the services they need to be happy, healthy, and reach their full potential.

Merry Christmas!

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

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