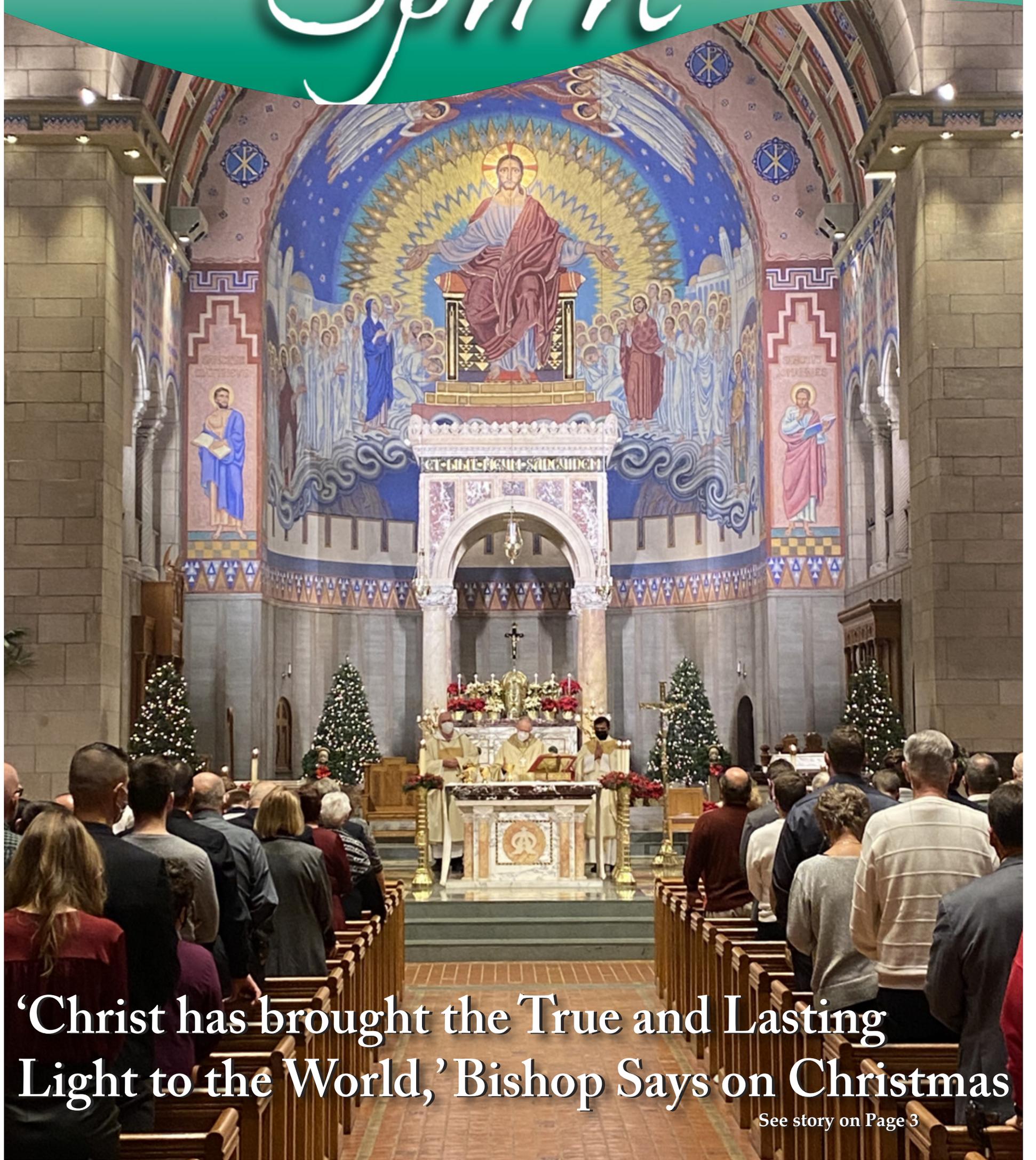


THE CATHOLIC

# Spirit



## ‘Christ has brought the True and Lasting Light to the World,’ Bishop Says on Christmas

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**ON THE COVER**

**Bishop Mark E. Brennan celebrates Christmas Eve Mass at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling.** Colleen Rowan Photo

**To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children**

**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](http://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](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 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](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:** 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](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.

**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](http://www.dwc.org), click "Diocese", then "Offices," then "Office of Safe Environment."



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# A Joyful Christmas at the Cathedral

By Colleen Rowan

**W**heeling-area faithful gathered with Bishop Mark Brennan for the joyful celebration of Christmas Eve Mass at the Cathedral of St. Joseph.

For those unable to be present in person, the Mass was livestreamed on the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Facebook page and website. Through the sponsorship of WVU Medicine and a bequest to promote outreach to shut-ins, the Mass was televised at midnight on five stations throughout the state.

Concelebrating the Mass with Bishop Brennan was the cathedral's vice rector, Father Sateesh Narisetti HGN. Deacon Douglas Breiding, permanent deacon of the cathedral, served as deacon of the word.

In a darkened cathedral, illuminated by candles held by the faithful, the "Proclamation of the Birth of Christ" was given by Tyler Greenwood, associate organist at the parish. The faithful then sang "Silent Night" as the bishop and clergy processed to the nativity beside the altar. The bishop then incensed the nativity, knelt, and prayed.

Beginning his homily, Bishop Brennan said the prophet Isaiah sees people walking in darkness in a land of gloom. It might seem that he is describing the situation today, Bishop Brennan said, with the worsening pandemic, the rising cost of necessities, the political strife in various parts of the country, social unrest in many forms, and threats to peace in many parts of the world.

"It seems like a lot of darkness in a land of gloom, but as you heard the prophet gives a reason for hope: 'The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light. Upon those who dwell in the land of gloom a light has shown.'"

People, especially those in the northern hemisphere, appreciate light at this time of year, Bishop Brennan said, now being the darkest time. Long winter nights are brightened, he said, by lighted Christmas trees, candles in windows, and the light displays at Oglebay Park in Wheeling.

"We Christians believe that Jesus Christ has brought the true and lasting light to the world," Bishop Brennan said. "His light gives life to us in the way that sunlight gives life to green plants in the photosynthesis process. His light reveals the stains of our sins but also illumines the path forward so that, as St. Paul says in his letter to Titus, we may live temporarily, justly, and devoutly in this age as we await the return of our Savior ... 'and to cleanse for himself a people as his own, eager to do what is good.'"

This is truly good news, the bishop said.

"Not only do we gain, in Jesus Christ, the forgiveness of our sins which honest folks will admit they need, but we also get the help we need from him to be good people loving God and one another until we are called to eternal life," Bishop Brennan said. "That's good news, and it's news meant to be shared with others."

The son of God did not come into the world as a conquering hero, the bishop noted. Rather, he came in humility to a simple couple. He was subject to the limitations that strain all, the bishop said. He needed the care of adults in young years, necessity of work and study as he grew up, the need to eat and sleep. "We know that he suffered an unjust and painful death," the bishop said. "This was the eternal son of the father. The father gave us the gift of his son in the radical act of the incarnation,



Colleen Rowan Photo

**Bishop Mark E. Brennan celebrates Christmas Eve Mass at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling. Concelebrating the Mass is the cathedral's vice rector, Father Sateesh Narisetti, HGN, right. Deacon Douglas Breiding, permanent deacon of the cathedral, center, serves as deacon of the word.**

the coming into flesh of God himself. Only a deep and abiding love on God's part can explain this astoundingly humble act of God becoming a creature among all his other creatures and yet that is what he did and that is what we remember on this Christmas."

The bishop also noted that for the Holy Family at the time of Jesus' birth, there was no room in the inn. There are many people today, Bishop Brennan said, who do not make room for Jesus in their lives. "Some because, for whatever reasons, they have let their faith sort of evaporate, or they follow a lifestyle that is simply alien to God's will which is always what is best for us," Bishop Brennan said. "There are some that have serious grievances with the church which they might lend themselves to resolution, others have just gotten out of the habit of practicing their faith."

But for all of them we should pray, the bishop said, because they are our brothers and sisters by our

common baptism. Bishop Brennan said we should also look at ourselves and ask, do we make room in our inn for the Lord?

"Do we take time to pray each day to invite the Lord into our life that day? Do we join in the communal prayer of the Mass? Sunday is the Lord's Day," the bishop said. "Do we read and meditate on the Scriptures? The word of God, which enlightens us. A word that challenges us, a word that encourages us and consoles us. Do we seek God's forgiveness in the sacrament of penance? Especially for serious sins. Perhaps many of you have done so in the past few days. I commend you for it. That's honesty."

It takes humility to admit that one needs God, Bishop Brennan said. People like to think that they can do everything themselves, but experience teaches this is not so, the bishop said. The Lord announces good news that can actually lift our spirits, the bishop said. People can be afraid to bet on

**See "Christmas" on Page 4**



Screenshot Photo

**The faithful are gathered for Christmas Eve Mass at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling.**

## Christmas...

### Cont'd from Page 3

God rather than their own unaided efforts, the bishop said. "The shepherds were afraid too, as St. Luke tells us. And probably they doubted when they heard the angel's message. But remembering God's promise to their people that he would send a savior and given a sign that would identify that Savior, they went and found the Divine Child in the manger, and they left rejoicing."

What is the sign today that will identify the Savior? the bishop asked, just as the swaddling clothes and the infant lying in the manger identified him for the shepherds.

"I believe that that sign is you and me. We who are God's church, the assembly of the believers. We, who are the members of the mystical body of Christ for which Christ himself is the head," Bishop Brennan said. "I believe that the swaddling clothes and the infant lying in the manger are found among us. If there are multiple wounds of sin in our church, and there are, as there are signs of the wounds of his crucifixion on Christ's Risen body still there are many signs that this is a people in whom Christ dwells and whom he sustains by his grace."

The bishop then pointed to the Apostles' Creed, toward the end where the faithful say: "I believe in one, holy Catholic and apostolic church."

"These are not idle words," Bishop Brennan said. "One — Our Catholic Church is the largest of all the Christian faiths, but it has more substantial unity in faith and morals than many much smaller Christian bodies where it should be easier to maintain unity."

"Holiness—all through the church's life, from the beginning, we have great saints and common folk in every age who have lived by the gospel and become holy men and women enlightened by the Scriptures, the Word of God, and strengthened by the sacraments to enable them to walk by faith and not by sight," the bishop said.

"Catholic—the word means universal. Our church truly is the most universal one in the world. The most universal religion, not bound by geography or ethnic group. We are a kaleidoscope of humanity who follow Jesus. That's our unity, following him.

"Apostolic—We do not make up our teachings or follow the fads of the day," the bishop continued. "Our beliefs come from Christ's apostles who were led by the Holy Spirit into all truth to understand what Jesus had taught them. ... We are also apostolic when we bring Christ and his teachings to others, which is our responsibility as followers of Jesus.

"All of these things—the one-



Screenshot Photo

Bishop Brennan stands before the nativity at Christmas Eve Mass at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling.

ness, the holiness, the catholicity, and apostolicity of the church—are signs of the presence of Christ the Redeemer in our midst," Bishop Brennan said.

During his homily the bishop also shared a story of a father who had read the story of the little drummer boy to his daughter. The boy had no gift for the Christ Child, so he played his drum for him. For this, the Christ Child smiled at him with the most beautiful smile the boy had ever seen.

"That's how Jesus wants us to treat others. To smile on them and do them good," the father told his little girl. On Christmas morning after Mass, the little girl received the gift of a new winter coat. It was her favorite gift. Later that day, she looked out of her bedroom window and saw another little girl outside without a coat and shivering. Remembering her father's words, she brought her new coat outside and gave it to the other little girl.

"This coat is for you," she said. "Merry Christmas," and smiled at her. The other little girl, was very surprised, thanked her and wished her a merry Christmas as well.

"My brothers and sisters in the Lord, smile on others, do them good while you can. Honor the God who was born as a man for your salvation by imitating his goodness. That will please him more than gold, frankincense, and myrrh," Bishop Brennan said. "A little drummer boy and a little girl got that message. May we get it as well."

Bishop Brennan also offered a Christmas message to the faithful of the diocese. The message may be viewed by visiting [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Oqg62wUfns](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Oqg62wUfns)

## BISHOP BRENNAN'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE



*to the faithful of the  
Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston*

Visit:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Oqg62wUfns](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Oqg62wUfns)



## Special Collection Set for Jan. 1-2 to Support Recovery Efforts in Kentucky

Donate on the Diocese of  
Wheeling-Charleston's website:  
[dwc.org/disasterrelief](http://dwc.org/disasterrelief)

Bishop Mark Brennan has approved a special collection to be held the weekend of Jan. 1 and 2 in all parishes and missions of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to support recovery efforts related to the recent natural disasters that have occurred in Kentucky, leaving severe damage and significant loss of life. Donations can also be made at your parish or on the diocesan website at [dwc.org/disasterrelief](http://dwc.org/disasterrelief).

Proceeds will support the humanitarian and recovery efforts of Catholic Charities agencies on the ground, working in the communities affected by the tornadoes.

Please remember in prayer all those who have lost their lives in the wake of these disasters, as well as all those who have been injured and lost their homes, cars, employment, and access to food and water, especially as we prepare for the Christmas Season.

As we hold the victims and first responders in our prayers during these critical days, let us also spend time in prayer and discernment as we prepare for this upcoming collection. Let us come together now to support our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering this horrible loss.

Above: William Henley of Mayfield, Ky., hugs his 3-year-old granddaughter Anna Faith Cissell for the first time Dec. 15 since surviving a devastating outbreak of tornadoes that hit the state and several others days earlier. CNS photo/Adrees Latif, Reuters



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## *Children's Christmas Eve Mass in Bluefield*

Children at Sacred Heart Parish in Bluefield stand with Very Rev. Sebastian E. Devasya, V.F., pastor, and other members of the parish following the children's Mass on Christmas Eve.

Screenshot Photo

## Ring in the New Year with Christ! (and donuts) at St. James the Greater Church in Charles Town



Looking for a great way to start the new year? Come to St. James. On December 31 extended holy hour will begin at 10:00 pm, followed by benediction at midnight. This is a wonderful opportunity to start the new year with a blessing from Christ. Following benediction will be a social with donuts.



## Day of Prayer, Eucharistic Adoration, and Hourly Pro-Life Rosary to be Held in Wheeling

**WHEELING**—St. Michael Parish in Wheeling will hold a day of Prayer, Eucharistic Adoration, and an hourly Pro-Life Rosary on Jan. 21 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the anniversary of Roe v. Wade.

All are welcome to join the parish in prayer.

## Parkersburg Catholic Schools Asking for Intercessors

**PARKERSBURG**—Parkersburg Catholic Schools are asking for intercessors who will pray for the schools (Parkersburg Catholic High School and Parkersburg Catholic Elementary School).

Those prayer warriors that may be interested can contact MC Heffner, principal of PCHS, at mcheffner@pchs1.com and she can explain more about this partnership and answer any questions.

## Donations Being Collected for St. Martin of Tours Clothing Giveaway in Charles Town

By Colleen Rowan

**CHARLES TOWN**—The St. Martin of Tours Clothing Giveaway will be held at St. James the Greater Church in Charles Town on Saturday, Jan. 15 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The parish is now accepting donations of clothing, shoes, and accessories for the clothing giveaway until Jan. 3.

“We are grateful for your help sorting and folding during the week of Jan. 10 through Jan. 14. It takes a lot of hands to make this event possible and to help our community!” parish officials stated on St. James the Greater’s Facebook page.

The giveaway will be held in the social hall, which is located in the lower level of the church. Parking will be available in front of the church, and signs will be placed to direct guests.

Promotional materials posted on the parish Facebook page encouraged guests to: “Bring large plastic bags (as many as you need). Tell friends and family. All are welcome!”

Guests can also participate in a raffle for a Martin’s gift card.

The clothing drive is being sponsored by the American Heritage girls WV0082 at St. James. The group has been serving the community for 10 years.

## Parish Music Director and Husband Release Debut Christmas Album



Courtesy Photo

Pictured is the “Comfort and Joy” album cover.

**WEIRTON**—“Our music director Rebecca Harding and her husband Sean are so excited to announce their debut Christmas album, ‘Comfort and Joy,’” officials of St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Weirton said. “The album features Rebecca’s brand-new arrangements of 15 beloved Christmas songs with performances by Rebecca and Sean.”

The album can be purchased online at [www.rebeccahardingmusic.com](http://www.rebeccahardingmusic.com), both as a digital download and as an audio CD. The audio CD will also be sold in the foyer of the church or in the church office.

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# SYNOD Listening Sessions

Check updates at <http://dwc.org/synod-sessions/>



**Ascension Parish, Hurricane:** Jan. 9, 5 p.m. – Middle / Senior High Youth; Jan. 12, 6:30 p.m. – Parish Women; Jan. 17, 7 p.m. – Parish Pastoral Council; Jan. 25, 7 p.m. – Parish Men

**Holy Family, Richwood:** First Session—Dec. 11 following Mass; Second Session—Dec. 12, following Mass

**Holy Rosary, Buckhannon:** Third Session—Jan. 11, 1 p.m.; Fourth Session—Jan. 13, 1 p.m.

**Holy Trinity, Nitro:** First Session—Jan. 8 after Mass; Second Session—Jan. 9 after Mass; Third Session—Jan. 13, 6 p.m.; Fourth Session—Jan. 15 after Mass; Fifth Session—Jan. 16 after Mass

**Immaculate Conception, Fairmont** Jan. 17, 1 p.m.; Jan. 20, 7 p.m.; Jan. 22, 10 a.m.; and Jan. 23, noon

**Sacred Heart, Bluefield:** First Session—Dec. 14, 1 p.m.; Second Session—Dec. 16, 6 p.m.

**Sacred Heart of Mary, Weirton:** First Session—Jan. 13, 1-2:30 p.m.; Second Session—Jan. 13, 6:30-8 p.m.; Third Session—Feb. 9, 1-2:30 p.m.; Fourth Session—Feb. 9, 6-8:30 p.m.

**St. Catherine of Siena, Ronceverte:** First Session: Dec. 5—12 p.m.; Second Session—Dec. 9, 7 p.m.

**St. Charles Borromeo, White Sulphur Springs:** First Session—Dec. 20, 6 p.m.

**St. Francis de Sales, Beckley:** Second Session—Jan. 9, after 11 a.m. Mass; Third Session—Jan. 18 after the 8:30 a.m. Mass

**St. Francis de Sales, Morgantown:** First Session—Jan. 9 after Mass; Second Session—Feb. 19 after 5:15 p.m. Mass; Third Session—March 8 10 a.m.

**St. Francis of Assis, St. Albans:** First Session—Jan. 9, 1 p.m.; Second Session—Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m.

**St. John, St. Marys:** First Session—Jan. 25; Second Session—Inclement weather date, Feb. 1

**St. Michael, Wheeling:** Second Session:—Jan. 9, 6 p.m.; Third Session—Jan. 25, 6-8 p.m.

**St. Peter, Farmington:** First Session—March 20 following Sunday Mass

**St. Peter Claver, Huntington:** First Session—Jan. 9 after 11 a.m. Mass

**St. Vincent de Paul, Berkeley Springs:** Second Session—Jan. 6, 5 p.m.; Third Session—Jan. 22, 10 a.m.; Fourth Session—Feb. 6, 10:30 a.m.; Fifth Session:—Feb. 23, 2 p.m.

**St. Vincent de Paul, Wheeling:** First Session—Feb. 6; Second Session—Feb. 16; Third Session Inclement weather date, Feb. 20

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# Even the Holy Family Felt Stress, Pope Tells Families

By **Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service**

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** — The COVID-19 pandemic has been tough on families, but with extra patience and faith, bonds can grow stronger, Pope Francis wrote in a letter released on the feast of the Holy Family.

“Marriage, as a vocation, calls you to steer a tiny boat — wave-tossed yet sturdy, thanks to the reality of the sacrament — across a sometimes stormy sea,” he told couples in the letter published Dec. 26.

Like the disciples who were foundering on the Sea of Galilee, couples must keep their eyes fixed on Jesus, he said. “Only in this way, will you find peace, overcome conflicts and discover solutions to many of your problems. Those problems, of course, will not disappear, but you will be able to see them from a different perspective.”

Reciting the midday Angelus prayer with visitors in St. Peter’s Square Dec. 26, Pope Francis said he had written the letter as a “Christmas gift” to married couples during the celebration of the “Amoris Laetitia Family” Year, a year dedicated to re-reading his 2016 exhortation on marriage and family life.

In his Angelus talk, the pope commented on the day’s Gospel reading about a 12-year-old Jesus staying behind in Jerusalem and making Mary and Joseph frantic.

“In the Gospel, we see that even in the Holy Family things did not all go well: There were unexpected problems, anxiety, suffering. The Holy Family of holy cards does not exist,” he said.

When Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the temple and ask him why he worried them so, he tells them, “Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”

Mary and Joseph do not under-

stand, the pope said. “They need time to learn to know their son. That’s the way it is with us as well: Each day, a family needs to learn how to listen to each other to understand each other, to walk together, to face conflicts and difficulties.”

In his letter to families, like in “Amoris Laetitia,” Pope Francis paid tribute to the strength and tenacity of couples as they face real difficulties together on the journey of life.

Like Abraham, called by God to set out to an unknown land, he wrote, with the pandemic “we, too, have experienced uncertainty, loneliness, the loss of loved ones; we, too, have been forced to leave behind our certainties, our ‘comfort zones,’ our familiar ways of doing things and our ambitions, and to work for the welfare of our families and that of society as a whole, which also depends on us and our actions.”

The pandemic lockdowns, quarantines and periods of isolation “meant that there was more time to be together, and this proved a unique opportunity for strengthening communication within families,” the pope said. But that also demanded patience.

“It is not easy to be together all day long, when everyone has to work, study, recreate and rest in the same house,” he said.

When nerves are frazzled, the pope said, try to put the needs of others first and re-read the hymn to love from 1 Corinthians 13 “so that it can inspire your decisions and your actions” and “the time you spend together, far from being a penance, will become a refuge amid the storms.”

Pope Francis also told married couples, “Don’t be ashamed to kneel together before Jesus in the Eucharist, in order to find a few moments of peace and to look at each other with tenderness and goodness.”

And, for couples whose prob-

lems were exacerbated by the pandemic and led to a breakup, Pope Francis said, “I would like them, too, to sense my closeness and my affection.”

But he urged them to be civil to one another, especially in front of their children so that the pain of seeing their parents separate is not made worse by seeing them constantly fighting.

“Children are always a gift,” the pope wrote. “They are thirsty for love, gratitude, esteem and trust.”

Parents must pass on to their children “the joy of realizing that they are God’s children, children of a Father who has always loved them tenderly and who takes them by the hand each new day,” he said. “As they come to know this, your children will grow in faith and trust in God.”

Addressing engaged couples,

Pope Francis said he knows the pandemic has been especially hard for those trying to plan a future together.

“In your journey toward marriage,” he told them, “always trust in God’s providence, however limited your means, since at times, difficulties can bring out resources we did not even think we had. Do not hesitate to rely on your families and friends, on the ecclesial community, on your parish, to help you prepare for marriage and family life by learning from those who have already advanced along the path on which you are now setting out.”

The 85-year-old pope also expressed his affection to grandparents, especially those who are feeling isolated or alone. He urged families to make greater efforts to be with them or at least be in touch with them.

## Register for January TEC



TEC stands for Teens Encounter Christ. TEC is an international, spiritual-renewal movement in the Catholic Church that strives to bring young people and adults into close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. TEC is a community, led by the Holy Spirit, that gathers people into Christian groups of faith, while attempting to incorporate its ministry into the overall ministry of their members’ dioceses and parishes.

The next TEC retreat that will take place in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston will be held from Friday, January 14th to Monday, January 17th, at the St. John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston, West Virginia.

It will be free for all teens who are in their junior year of high school through first year of college.

You can register to attend or volunteer at this retreat on the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s website ([dwc.org](http://dwc.org)) and clicking Events at the top right of the home page.

## Resister

<https://dwc.org/diocese/ministries/youth-and-young-adult-ministry/youth-ministry/tec/>

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**Most Rev. Mark E. Brennan**

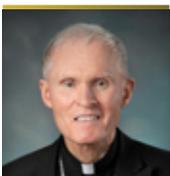
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# Hurricane Knights Welcome New Members



Courtesy Photo

Knights of Columbus Council #9483 at Ascension Parish in Hurricane initiated three new members into the organization. Pictured in the first row, from left, are Will Dempsey, grand knight; new members Dr. Ryan Cicenias, Ismael Borrero, and Tanner Westfall (of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in St. Albans); and Bob Matheny, district deputy. In the second row, from left, are Jack Walsh, K of C insurance agent; and council members Pete Robusto and Chris Rock. In the third row is Father Bill Matheny, council chaplain and pastor of Ascension Parish.

## Charleston Knights Share Success of Recent Endeavors

**CHARLESTON**—“The Knights of Columbus Council 12630 would like to wish everyone a meaningful Advent and a very Merry Christmas,” members said in a message to parishioners of the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston. “We know that everyone will continue to work toward keeping Christ in Christmas which is something the Knights strongly encourage.”

In the message, the council shared some of its recent endeavors and programs. With the encouragement of Father Don Higgs, rector of the basilica, and with the help of John Blake and the parish maintenance staff, the council placed three “Keep Christ in Christmas” banners on parish property the past two years.

Council 12630 made a second

delivery of food donated by the Parishioners of Sacred Heart to Father Thien at Risen Lord Food Pantry in Clay on Dec. 15 and presented him with a second check for \$2,607. Along with the \$2,730 check presented before Thanksgiving, this makes for a total of \$5,337.

“Father Thien and his group of volunteers want to extend special thanks to all the parishioners who gave food or money to this worthy project,” the council said. The food was to be distributed before Christmas.”

Recently, a work party from Council 12630 placed lights in the gardens around the church. The knights want to thank John Blake and the maintenance crew of Sacred Heart for their help with removing the lights from storage and

**See “Knights” on Page 12**

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# Knights Help Bring Christmas Joy to Children in Need in Bluefield



Courtesy Photo  
Knights of Columbus Council 1404 of Bluefield provided gifts for 20 local children in need. The gifts are pictured under the Christmas tree above.

## Knights...

**Cont'd from Page 11**  
preparing the electrical outlets.

"We hope that the parishioners will notice and enjoy the new exterior 'Keep Christ in Christmas' window banner. Thanks to Father Don for suggesting this idea," the council said.

"With the help of our parishioners, Catholic students, Knights from other councils across the state, and the support of Cross Catholic, the Knights are especially pleased that we have assisted in packing 90,490 meals to Guatemala, along with 10,000 earmarked for West Virginia," the council said. "We are advised by Terry Watters of Cross Catholic that so far no Knights group has packed more meals than we did in Charleston on Oct. 16, 2021."

Council 12630, again with the help of the groups above sent along 61 "Boxes of Joy" earmarked for Guatemala, Haiti and other Latin American countries. The council plans to sponsor the effort again next year.

"We are always looking for new members of any age who would like to help us with projects..." members of the council said. "Ask a Knight or an usher to point out a Knight. We would be happy to talk with anyone interested in Knights membership."

See ad on Page 11 for membership opportunities.



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The Campus Minister, as a member of Diocesan Services, is committed to advancing the mission of Jesus Christ, consistent with the core purpose and Gospel values articulated in the Diocesan Services' Mission Statement.

The Campus Minister's responsibilities are to plan and implement a broad program of campus ministry for the Catholic Community of students and faculty at Shepherd University based on the principles of Empowered by the Spirit and the new evangelization.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES:** Develop and implement, in a collaborative manner, a strategic plan for campus ministry at Shepherd University; coordinate and facilitate the schedule of Masses and Sacramental ministries in collaboration with the designated priest Chaplain; develop and implement, in consultation with students and faculty, Chancery supervisor, catechetical opportunities and pastoral services including retreats, faith-sharing groups and other formational events, appropriate to the needs, concerns, and schedules of the community; manage day to day operation of the Campus Center, including buildings and properties, as well as maintain its website and social media; represent the Catholic Church on campus, becoming actively involved in the academic community building relationships and networks among faculty, staff, administration and students; form and support Catholic student groups or organizations on campus; work irregular hours including weekends and evenings; regularly communicates with and sends reports to Chancery supervisor; collaborates with the Department of Formation & Mission, Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Office of Social Ministry, as well as other campus ministers in offering opportunities relevant to young adults; supervises and supports any campus ministry volunteers and committees; and recruits and supports volunteer campus peer ministers.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Holds a master's degree in theology, or related field preferred; C.C.M.A. Certification preferred (or willing to pursue certification); is able to give evidence of personal commitment and witness to, and sound knowledge of, the teachings and life of the Catholic Church; has practical experience and theoretical knowledge of young adult Catholics and the special needs, concerns, and developmental tasks which are theirs; experience in and knowledge of campus life; interpersonal communication and effective presentation skills; and must possess a valid driver's license. Bi-lingual proficiency English/Spanish, a plus.

Interested candidates may forward a cover letter and resume to [mwalsh@dwc.org](mailto:mwalsh@dwc.org).

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St. Francis de Sales Central Catholic School in Morgantown is currently seeking qualified applicants for a LongTerm Substitute 4th Grade Teacher and Certified School Counselor (K8) positions. The longterm sub position is a temporary, fulltime position; the school counselor position will begin as part time with potential to become a fulltime position. If interested, please visit the school website: [sfrancismorgantown.com](http://sfrancismorgantown.com), click on the "About" tab, then select "Employment" for details.

Interested applicants should send a cover letter, resume, and three (3) letters of reference to Principal Moore at [amoore@sfccs.org](mailto:amoore@sfccs.org) or mail/deliver to his attention at St. Francis de Sales Central Catholic School, 41 Guthrie Lane, Morgantown, WV 26508



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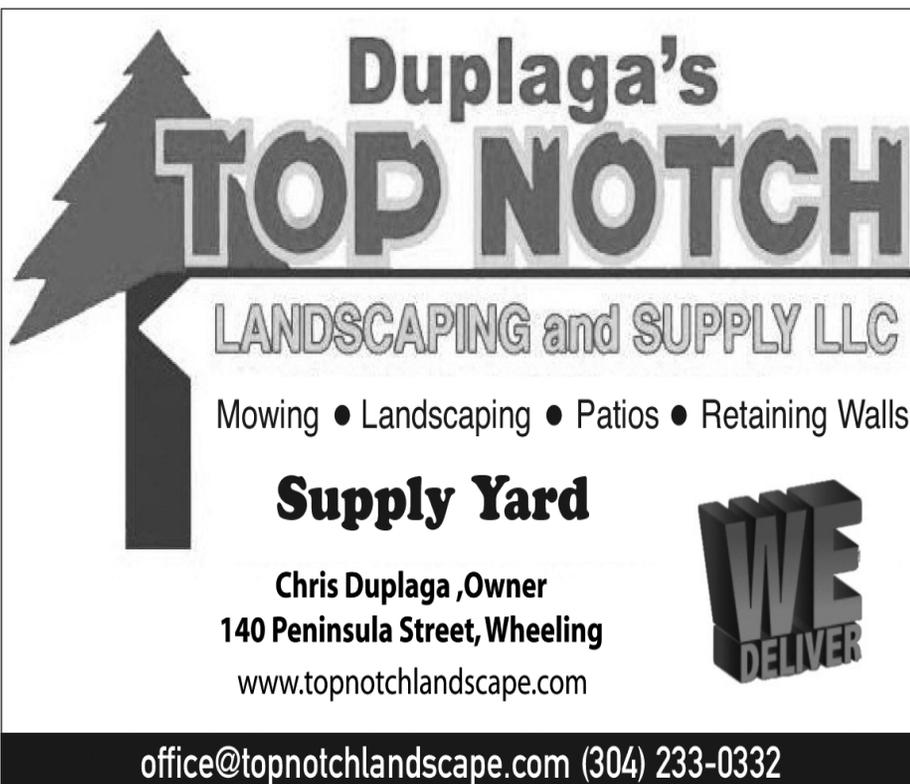
### 11 Days Catholic Ireland.

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# Sharing the Love of God

Happy New Year! We are celebrating the times we answered God's call to love our neighbor as ourselves! While the pandemic continued to negatively impact the people we serve, we are grateful witnesses to hope-filled transformation in our communities.

Our staff gave out more food in 2021 than last year — which means those with the most critical need, including the elderly, received necessary nourishment during a traumatic time.

Federal funding also enabled us to expand our Emergency Assistance program; a blessing since twice as many families needed this type of assistance in 2021. Thousands of families received \$417,960 of rent and utility assistance this year. We are grateful to alleviate this hardship for so many of our neighbors.

Our Case Managers were extra hard at work. Across the state, staff walked with 175 families striving to move out of poverty. Case Managers offer support and guidance; individuals do the hard work of setting and achieving goals unique to their situation. We integrated a Case Management mindset into more of our programs, including Emer-

gency Assistance, Adult Education, and Relatives As Parents.

We are particularly humbled by our work with people struggling with Substance Use Disorder. Case Managers supported 508 people in recovery this year. With community support, they achieved extraordinary goals! For example, "Ellen" got her driver's license back, completed her Recovery Coach course, and secured employment as a Peer Support Specialist — all while maintaining her own recovery. Ellen's journey will have positive ripple effects across her community! We are inspired by her resilience.

Our Hospital Transition Program is a new initiative aimed at reducing the number of people who are re-admitted to the hospital after discharge. Clients are referred to us by hospital staff who use the Social Determinants of Health screening tool. So far, the program has been a resounding success with ZERO clients re-admitted within 60 days! Our Case Managers, Sister Jen and Stephanie, have worked with 60 people who were at risk of consecutive hospital stays.

Meanwhile, our Refugee Resettlement and Immigra-



Courtesy Photo

Volunteers and donors across the state, like these students from St. Joseph Central Catholic High School in Huntington, have made this transformation possible!

tion Services team worked with another vulnerable population. We welcomed six new refugees into West Virginia during the month of November! By definition, refugees are forced to leave their country in order

to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster. Our new neighbors hail from Uganda, Syria, and Eritrea. We are also expecting more arrivals from Uganda and Syria. During this Christmas Season, it is humbling to remember that Jesus, Mary, and Joseph were also refugees. We are thrilled to help make West Virginia home to our newcomers!

This year of service has filled us with hope for the future. It's an honor to serve each of our clients. We are grateful for your

prayers and support as we live out this Mission of Love!

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia, visit [www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org).

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

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# Papa: La Sagrada Familia también sintió estrés

Por Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

**CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS)** — La pandemia de COVID-19 ha sido difícil para las familias, pero con más paciencia y fe, los lazos pueden fortalecerse, escribió el papa Francisco en una carta publicada en la fiesta de la Sagrada Familia.

"La vocación al matrimonio es una llamada a conducir un barco incierto —pero seguro por la realidad del sacramento— en un mar a veces agitado", dijo en la carta publicada el 26 de diciembre, dirigida a matrimonios.

Al igual que los discípulos que se hundían en el mar de Galilea, las parejas deben mantener los ojos fijos en Jesús, dijo. "Sólo así encontrarán la paz, superarán los conflictos y encontrarán soluciones a muchos de sus problemas. No porque estos vayan a desaparecer, sino porque podrán verlos desde otra perspectiva", dijo.

Al rezar el Ángelus del mediodía con los visitantes en la Plaza de San Pedro el 26 de diciembre, el papa Francisco dijo que había escrito la carta como un "regalo de Navidad" a las parejas casadas durante la celebración del Año de la Familia Amoris Laetitia, un año dedicado a leer su exhortación de 2016 sobre el matrimonio y la vida en familia.

En su discurso del Ángelus, el papa comentó sobre la lectura del Evangelio del día sobre Jesús

cuando tenía 12 años, se quedó en Jerusalén y preocupó a María y José.

"Incluso en la Sagrada Familia no todo va bien: hay problemas inesperados, angustia, sufrimiento. No existe la Sagrada Familia de las estampitas", dijo.

Cuando María y José encuentran a Jesús en el templo y le preguntan por qué los preocupó tanto, él les dice: "¿Acaso no sabían que era necesario estar en la casa de mi Padre?"

María y José no le entienden, dijo el papa. "Necesitan tiempo para aprender a conocer a su hijo. Así es también para nosotros: cada día, en la familia, hay que aprender a escucharnos y comprendernos, a caminar juntos, a afrontar los conflictos y las dificultades".

En su carta a las familias, como en "Amoris Laetitia", el papa Francisco rindió homenaje a la fuerza y tenacidad de las parejas que afrontan juntos dificultades reales en el camino de la vida.

Como Abraham, llamado por Dios a salir hacia una tierra desconocida, escribió, con la pandemia "nosotros hemos vivido más que nunca la incertidumbre, la soledad, la pérdida de seres queridos y nos hemos visto impulsados a salir de nuestras seguridades, de nuestros espacios de 'control', de nuestras propias maneras de hacer las cosas, de nuestras apetencias, para atender no sólo al bien de la propia familia, sino además al de la socie-

dad, que también depende de nuestros comportamientos personales".

Los cierres por la pandemia, las cuarentenas y los períodos de aislamiento han "sido una oportunidad única para cultivar el diálogo en familia", dijo el papa. Pero eso también exige paciencia.

"No es fácil estar todo el día juntos, cuando todos tienen que trabajar, estudiar, recrearse y descansar en la misma casa", dijo.

Cuando los nervios se agotan, dijo el papa, hay que poner las necesidades de los demás primero y volver a leer el himno al amor de 1 Corintios 13 "para que inspire sus decisiones y sus acciones" y "estar juntos no será una penitencia sino un refugio en medio de las tormentas".

El papa Francisco también dijo a los matrimonios: "No se avergüencen de arrodillarse juntos ante Jesús en la Eucaristía, para encontrar unos momentos de paz y mirarse con ternura y bondad".

Y, para las parejas cuyos problemas se vieron agravados por la pandemia y llevaron a una ruptura, el papa Francisco dijo: "Me gustaría que ellos también sintieran mi cercanía y mi afecto".

Pero los instó a ser amables entre ellos, especialmente frente a sus hijos, para que el dolor de ver a sus padres separarse no empeore al verlos pelear constantemente.

"Los niños son siempre un regalo", escribió el papa. "Tienen sed

de amor, gratitud, estima y confianza".

Los padres deben transmitir a sus hijos "el gozo de descubrirse hijos de Dios, hijos de un Padre que ya desde el primer instante los ha amado tiernamente y los lleva de la mano cada día. Este descubrimiento puede dar a sus hijos la fe y la capacidad de confiar en Dios".

Dirigiéndose a las parejas comprometidas, el papa Francisco dijo que sabe que la pandemia ha sido especialmente difícil para quienes intentan planificar un futuro juntos.

"En el camino hacia el matrimonio", les dijo, "aun teniendo pocos medios, confíen siempre en la Providencia, ya que a veces las dificultades son precisamente las que sacan a relucir recursos en cada uno de nosotros que ni siquiera pensábamos tener. No duden en apoyarse en sus propias familias y en sus amistades, en la comunidad eclesial, en la parroquia, para vivir la vida conyugal y familiar aprendiendo de aquellos que ya han transitado el camino que ustedes están comenzando".

El papa, con 85 años cumplidos, también expresó su afecto a los abuelos, especialmente a aquellos que se sienten aislados o solos. Instó a las familias a hacer mayores esfuerzos para estar con ellos o al menos estar en contacto con ellos.

**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 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 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 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](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 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](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.

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