December 5, 2025 Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Vol. 55, No. 48

THE CATHOLIC Spirit

A Statement from Bishop Brennan

Regarding the Shooting of Two W.Va. National Guard Soldiers in Washington, D.C.

Thursday, November 27, 2025

Today, I join Catholic faithful across our Diocese and indeed every West Virginian in prayer for the two National Guard soldiers who were senselessly shot yesterday in our nation's capital.

During this Thanksgiving holiday, we united as Americans to give thanks to our Lord for our abundant blessings only He can provide. We pray particularly for the victims, their families, and all those who serve our nation so bravely.

I deplore the use of violence to achieve any end within our world. I echo the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in proclaiming that violence is not the way forward for our people. "Darkness cannot drive out darkness:" he said, "only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."

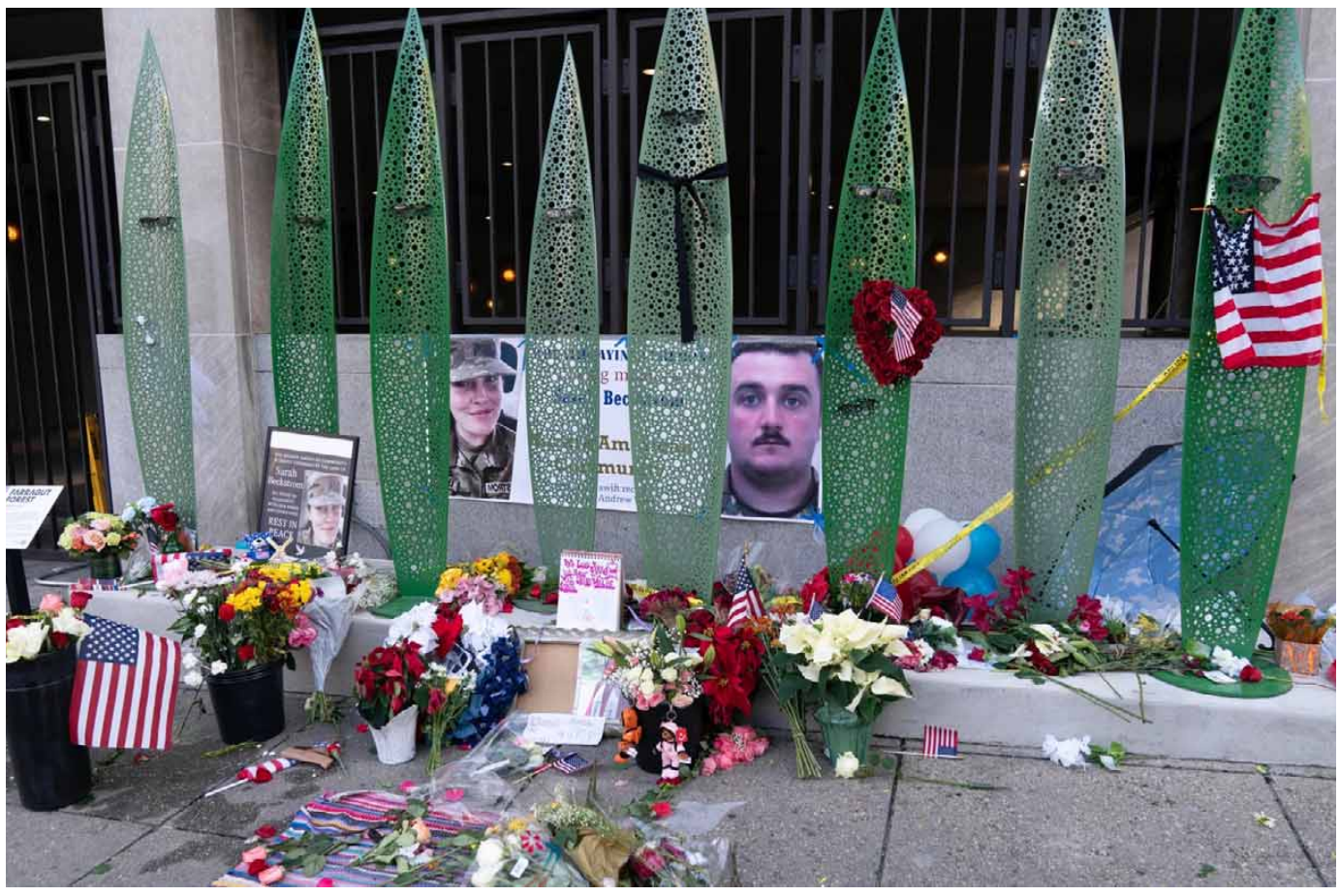
Sacred Scripture reminds us in Romans 12:21: "Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good."

We must stop this descending spiral of violence in our country that increases hate rather than diminishing evil.

Let us pray that this epidemic of violence in our country will end, and that every person; regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, country of origin, or political persuasion will see that it is only through coming together in peace to solve our differences will we be able to prosper together as one nation under God.

—Most Rev. Mark E. Brennan,
Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston

Mother of W.Va. National Guardsman Shot in Washington Asks for Prayers



Jose Luis Magana photo/AP

A show of support for Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe and Spc. Sarah Beckstrom of the West Virginia National Guard who were shot in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 26, is shown above where the shooting took place. Beckstrom passed away on Nov. 27. Wolfe remains in serious condition.

By Colleen Rowan

WEST VIRGINIA — The mother of Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe, 24, of Inwood, one of two members of the West Virginia National Guard who were gunned down in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 26, is asking for prayers as her son remains in serious condition.

"That's her only request to me," West Virginia Gov. Patrick Morrisey said of Melody Wolfe in a Dec. 1 press conference. "'Would you please get the word out that my son Andrew needs prayer.'"

Spc. Sarah Beckstrom, 20, of Webster County, who was also shot in the attack, passed away from her injuries on Nov. 27. She had volunteered for duty so that others could be with their families on Thanksgiving.

At the press conference, Maj. Gen. Jim Seward, adjutant general of the West Virginia National Guard, also shared Melody's plea.

"She said if I got the chance to talk to anyone to please ask them to continue to pray for Andy, their family, for Sarah's family, and for all of our National Guard," Seward said.

Authorities have named the suspect of the shooting as 29-year-old Rahmanullah Lakanwal. According to a story by OSV News: "The Afghan national — a resident of Washington state and a father of five — had previously worked with the U.S. government in Afghanistan. Lakanwal had been permitted to enter the U.S. in 2021 on the basis of that work, which ended after the 'chaotic evacuation' that marked the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan that same year, CIA director John Ratcliffe told CBS News."

In the wake of the shooting, prayers and support have been offered from communities across West Virginia and the nation. In a statement, Bishop Mark E. Brennan said: "Today, I join Catholic faithful across our Diocese and indeed every West Virginian in prayer for the two National Guard soldiers who were senselessly shot yesterday in our nation's capital.

"During this Thanksgiving holiday, we united as Americans to give thanks to our Lord for our abundant blessings only He can provide. We pray particularly for

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Papal Commission Votes Against Ordaining Women Deacons

By Carol Glatz, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A commission set up by Pope Francis to study women deacons has voted against the possibility of ordaining women deacons while also supporting more study on the issue.

It also expressed hope that women's access to other ministries would be expanded.

Pope Francis established the "Study Commission on the Female Diaconate" in 2020 as a follow-up to a previous group that studied the history of women deacons in the New Testament and the early Christian communities.

Cardinal Giuseppe Petrocchi of Aquila, Italy, was chosen as president of the commission and Msgr. Denis Dupont-Fauville served as secretary. Pope Francis had named 10 other members of the commission — five women and five men, including two permanent deacons from the United States and three priests.

The seven-page report published Dec. 4 was a synthesis of the commission's work, which concluded in February, and was addressed to Pope Leo XIV. According to Vatican News, the pope requested the synthesis — which was dated Sept 18. — be made public.

The Vatican published the synthesis, including the results of votes the commission members took on eight different statements or "theses."

One proposition that showed members split exactly down the middle was: "The masculinity of Christ, and therefore the masculinity of those who receive Holy Orders, is not accidental but is an integral part of sacramental identity, preserving the divine order of salvation in Christ. To alter this reality would not be a simple adjustment of ministry but a rupture of the nuptial meaning of salvation."

When this statement was put to a vote among 10 members in February, it received five votes in favor, confirming its current form, while the other five members voted to remove it. A statement that received six votes against, two for and two abstaining was: "The undersigned is in favor of the institution in the church of the female diaconate as understood as the third degree of holy orders."

In fact, during the commission's second session in July 2022, members agreed seven to one on the following statement: "The 'status quaestionis' of historical research and theological investigation, as well as their mutual implications, rules out the possibility of moving in the direction of admitting women to the diaconate understood as a degree of the sacrament of Holy Orders. In light of sacred Scripture, tradition and the church's magisterium, this assessment is strongly maintained, although it does not at present allow for a definitive judgment to be formulated, as is the case with priestly ordination."

The commission unanimously expressed support in 2021 for the establishment of new ministries that "could contribute to synergy between men and women. Their implementation would require the development of appropriate means of formation — theological, practical, mystagogical — and support." Pope Francis had announced several months before, in January 2021, that the ministries of lector and acolyte would be open to women. During its last working session in February, the commission also reviewed materials it received after the Synod of Bishops had allowed anyone to contribute to the commission's deliberations.

"Although many interventions were submitted, the persons or groups who sent their writings numbered only 22 and represented few countries," the report said. "Consequently, although the material is abundant and in some cases skillfully argued, it cannot be considered the voice of the Synod, much less of the People of God as a whole."

The report noted the subject of a female diaconate is of "significant complexity" and lacks "sufficient consensus," as could also be seen in the discussion reports compiled during the October 2024 Synod on Synodality.

However, the report noted some of the arguments being made in favor of women's ordination to the diaconate, citing how proponents have said excluding women from this ministry seems to contradict the biblical foundation of the equal status and dignity of "male" and "female" as images of God. Because of that, some believe women should not only be allowed access to ordination as deacons, but also to the other degrees of Holy Orders: the priesthood and episcopate, the report said.

"The argument based on the masculinity of Jesus Christ is seen as a sexist and narrow view, leading to discrimination against women," it noted. "According to these views, the 'repraesentatio Christi' should no longer be linked to gender categories but should focus on the ministerial mediation of salvation through men and women."

Given the different arguments, the commission developed during its third and final session the thesis which saw the members split down the middle about the masculinity of Christ and those who receive Holy Orders as not being accidental but is "an integral part of sacramental identity" and "the nuptial meaning of salvation."

The commission then voted nine in favor and one against on a "preamble" that encouraged broadening "women's access to ministries established for the service of the community."

"It is now up to the discernment of pastors to evaluate what further ministries can be introduced for the concrete needs of the church of our time, thus ensuring adequate ecclesial recognition of the diakonia (service) of the baptized, particularly of women. Such recognition will be a prophetic sign, especially where women still suffer situations of gender discrimination," the preamble said.

Cardinal Petrocchi then added his own personal comment in the report's conclusion, noting the "intense theoretical and existential dialectic" between two theological standpoints.

The first maintains that the

See "Women"on Page 3

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 Sr. Martha Gomez, ext. 264. You may also call the Diocese's Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504 or the Diocese's sexual abuse hotline at 833.230.5656. Additional methods of reporting are available at www.dwc.org, under "Accountability." 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:** call Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, at 304.559.6742. The Diocese partners with Navex Global to offer EthicsPoint to report other concerns such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese or any Catholic parish or school in WV.EthicsPoint can be accessed via www.dwc.org, 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://dhhr.wv.gov/bss/services/Pages/Centralized-Intake-for-Abuse-and-Neglect.aspx West Virginia State Police, Crimes Against Children Unit: 304-293-6400.

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

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

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The Catholic Spirit's Print Schedule for 2025

There are 10 print editions in 2025. Below are the names of the issues and the publishing dates. Please note, the publishing dates may or may not be on feast days. Digital issues are published every Friday, delivered by e-mail to subscribers, and posted on thecatholicspiritwv.org.

2025 Print Issues and Dates: Christmas, December 19

Courtesy Photo

Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe, 24, of Inwood, was one of two members of the West Virginia National Guard who were gunned down in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 26. Melody Wolfe, his mother, is asking for prayers as her son remains in serious condition.

Prayers ...

Cont'd from Page 1

the victims, their families, and all those who serve our nation so bravely." (Read the bishop's full statement on Page 1 of this issue.)

Catholic faithful across the state pledged prayers for Beckstrom and Wolfe in response to the posting of Bishop Brennan's statement on the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Facebook page.

Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of the Diocese of Arlington, Va., posted on X: "I invite all the faithful and people of goodwill to join with me in prayer for the National Guardsmen shot in Washington, DC last evening. This latest act of political violence is deeply troubling and should call our minds and hearts to our need for God and his saving grace. Now is the time for fervent prayer for these National Guardsmen and for peace in our nation this Thanksgiving and always."

A memorial was set up at the location of the shooting with American flags, flowers, and photos of Beckstrom and Wolfe.

On Nov. 29, a vigil was held for Beckstrom at Webster County High School in Upperglade. She was a member of the school's class of 2023.

Photo by Amelia Ferrell Knisely/West Virginia Watch

A scene from the vigil for West Virginia National Guard Spc. Sarah Beckstrom at Webster County High School in Upperglade Nov. 29 is shown above. She graduated from the school just two years ago.

Two days before, President Donald Trump announced her passing, calling Beckstrom a "highly respected, young, magnificent person, started service in June of 2023, outstanding in every way..."

In an address to the nation on the day of the shooting, Trump said, "The hearts of all Americans tonight are with those two members of the West Virginia National Guard and their families. The love of our entire country is pouring out for them and we are lifting them up in our prayers."

Seward ended his remarks at the Dec. 1 press conference by saying that the West Virginia National Guard is a family and have joined together wherever they are — across the state, in Washington, D.C., in the Middle East, in Europe, and on the southwest border.

"I've heard from all of those regions, and we're praying together," Seward said. "We are a family of 6,000 plus strong."

Seward said he was in Washington when the shooting occurred and was on scene shortly thereafter.

"Those soldiers and airmen that were present were strong, courageous, and they were grieving and they continue to grieve, and they continue to pray for Andy and for Sarah's family and for all of their fellow members that are serving across the world."

(Contributing to this story was Gina Christian, OSV News.)

Women ...

Cont'd from Page 2

ordination of a deacon is for ministry and not for priesthood, which "would open the way toward the ordination of women deacons," he wrote.

The opposing stance, he wrote, insists "on the unity of the sacrament of Holy Orders, together with the nuptial meaning of the three degrees that constitute it, and rejects the hypothesis of a female diaconate; it also notes that if the admission of women to the first degree of Holy Orders were approved, exclusion from the others would become inexplicable."

For this reason, the cardinal wrote, continued study should focus on critically examining "the diaconate in itself — that is, on its sacramental identity and its ecclesial mission — clarifying certain structural and pastoral aspects that are currently not fully defined."

"The commission insisted on the urgency of valuing 'baptismal diakonia' as the foundation of any ecclesial ministry," he wrote.

In fact, he wrote, there are whole regions where the diaconal ministry is "almost nonexistent" and others where it is active with functions often "coinciding with roles proper to lay ministries or to altar servers in the liturgy."

"It should also be emphasized that the various commissions were unanimous in pointing out the need to expand "'communal spaces' so that women can participate adequately and share responsibility in the church's decision-making bodies, including through the creation of new lay ministries," the cardinal wrote.

While the report did not name the commission members taking part in the deliberations in 2021, 2022 and 2025, Pope Francis had named the following in 2020: U.S. Deacon Dominic Cerrato, director of deacon formation for the Diocese of Joliet, Illinois; U.S. Deacon James Keating, a former director of theological formation at the Institute for Priestly Formation at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. The other three men were priests: Father Santiago del Cura Elena, a priest of the Archdiocese of Burgos, Spain, and a professor and theologian who has studied and written extensively about priestly ordination; Father Manfred Hauke, a German-born professor at the Theological Faculty of Lugano, Switzerland, and author of a book examining the church's teaching on ordaining only men as priests; and Msgr. Angelo Lameri, a professor of liturgy and the sacraments at Rome's Pontifical Lateran University.

The five women chosen had been: Catherine Brown Tkacz, a U.S.-born professor at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv, who focuses on women in the Bible and in Christian tradition; Caroline Farey, a theologian and catechist educator who serves as "Diocesan Mission Catechist" for the Diocese of Shrewsbury, England; Barbara Hallensleben, a professor of theology at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, and former member of the International Theological Commission; Rosalba Manes, a consecrated virgin and biblical scholar, who teaches at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University; and Anne-Marie Pelletier, a French biblical scholar.

Knights of Columbus to Honor Veterans with Wreath Laying Ceremony at Wheeling's Mount Calvary Cemetery

WHEELING—On Saturday, Dec. 6, the Knights of Columbus Charles Carroll Assembly 1185 will host a wreath laying ceremony at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Wheeling.

"We are going to honor veterans laid to rest at our cemetery," assembly members said.

Bishop Mark Brennan will be the celebrant.

"On behalf of Assembly 1185, we invite all of you to attend this meaningful act of remembrance," assembly members said.

The service will start at 9 a.m. in front of the Bishop's Chapel at the cemetery. The knights will be placing a large wreath in front of the chapel to honor all the veterans laid to rest at Mount Calvary, as well as place over 100 wreaths throughout the cemetery.

"Please join the Knights of Columbus Assembly 1185 in saying a prayer or two in honor and memory of all our veterans throughout this great country of ours," assembly members said.

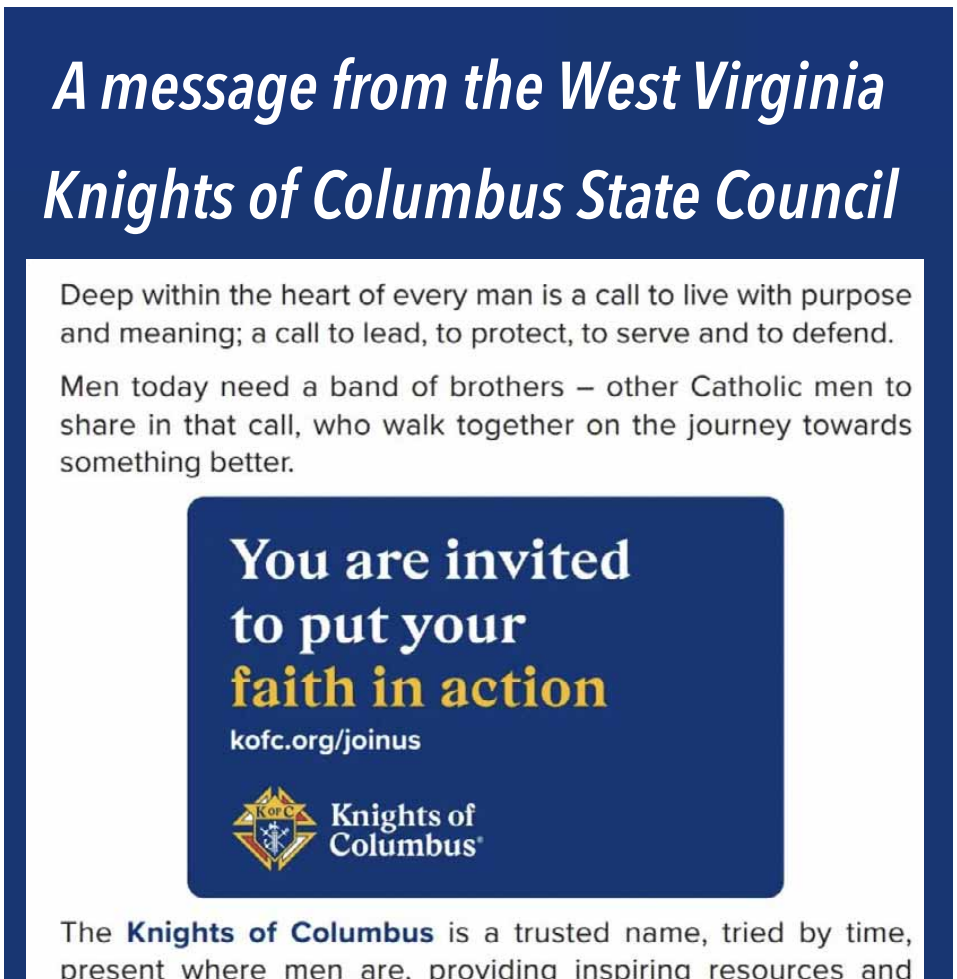
Radio Luz de Vida to Launch Catholic Radio Ministry en Espanol

WEST VIRGINIA—On the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Dec. 12, Radio Luz de Vida will be formally launching a Catholic radio ministry en Espanol.

Radio Luz de Vida will webcast at www.rdo.to/WLOL2 24 hours per day, seven days per week and will include national Catholic Hispanic programs as well as local voices with prayer and announcements of events in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston and the Diocese of Steubenville, Ohio.

For more information including podcasts, program guide, and free mobile apps, go to https://www.lolradio.org/Espanol.html.

Preceding the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, all were invited to pray the nine day Novena to Our Lady beginning on Dec. 3 on www.rdo.to/WLOL and/or en Espanol on www.rdo.to/WLOL2.



Diocese's Catholic Schools and Groups Featured in Wheeling's Christmas Parade

Colleen Rowan photos

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston had a great showing in Wheeling's Christmas Parade Nov. 21. Clockwise from top left: Students from Central Catholic High School, Corpus Christi School, Our Lady of Peace School, St. Michael Parish School, and St. Vincent de Paul Parish School wave from their float; children portray the Holy Family, shepherds, and angels aboard the Wheeling Knights of Columbus "Keep Christ in Christmas" float; and Wheeling University students ride the school's float with many walking behind—all of them wearing "Fr. James O'Brien" T-shirts, honoring the beloved late priest who served the university for more than 50 years.

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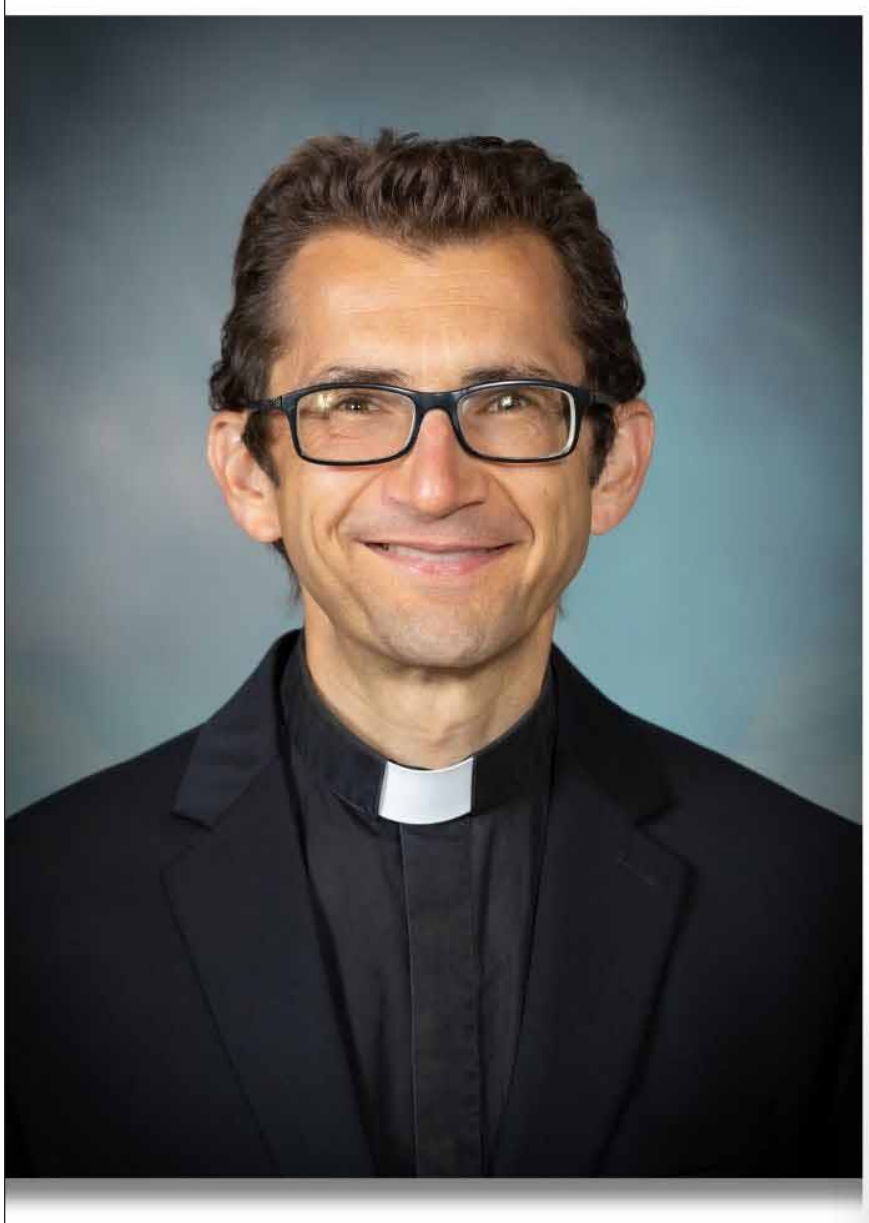

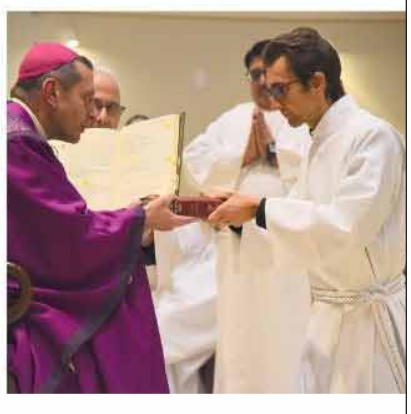

Unity, Dialogue, Respect: On First Trip, Pope Highlights Paths to Peace

By Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Visiting two countries over six days on his first foreign papal trip, Pope Leo XIV preached unity, dialogue and respect for differences as the only paths to peace.

Spending time with Catholics, other Christian leaders and top Muslim clerics in Turkey Nov. 27-Nov. 30 and Lebanon Nov. 30-Dec. 2, the pope made formal speeches about how believing in God as the father of all means recognizing one another as brothers and sisters.

But he also set aside time in a packed schedule for private talks, lunches and late evening meetings with the leaders.

"The more we can promote authentic unity and understanding, respect and human relationships of friendship and dialogue in the world, the greater possibility there is that we will put aside the arms of war, that we will leave aside the distrust, the hatred, the animosity that has so often been built up and that we will find ways to come together and be able to promote authentic peace and justice throughout the world," he told reporters flying back to Rome with him Dec. 2.

The three iconic moments of the trip were his prayer with top Christian leaders Nov. 28 at the site of the Council of Nicaea, his visit to the Blue Mosque in Istanbul Nov. 29 and his prayer Dec. 2 amid the rubble of the Beirut port explosion in 2020.

The whole trip was planned to commemorate the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea and its drafting of the Creed that mainline Christian communities still recite today.

Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople hosted the ecumenical prayer service and the common recitation of the Creed on a platform overlooking the ruins of a Christian basilica in Iznik, site of the ancient Nicaea, about 80 miles southeast of Istanbul.

With the Greek Orthodox patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem or their representatives and with representatives of other Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant churches, Pope Leo said that at a time when humanity is "afflicted by violence and conflict," the world "is crying out for reconciliation."

"The desire for full communion among all believers in Jesus Christ is always accompanied by the search for fraternity among all human beings," he said. "In the Nicene Creed, we profess our faith 'in one God, the Father.' Yet, it would not be possible to invoke God as Father if we refused to recognize as brothers and sisters all other men and women, who are created in the image of God."

The desire to reach out and form relationships with others also was on display when Pope Leo, like his two immediate predecessors, removed his shoes and entered the so-called Blue Mosque in Turkey's capital; he spent about 20 minutes inside but did not appear to pause for prayer as Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis had done.

Instead, he listened to Askin Musa Tunca, the mosque's muezzin who calls people to prayer five times a day, explain the building, its construction and how Muslims pray. And the pope asked questions.

The Vatican press office said afterward that Pope Leo visited the mosque "in a spirit of reflection and attentive listening, with deep respect for the place and for the faith of those who gather there in prayer."

On his last morning in Beirut, he laid a wreath, lighted a candle and prayed silently at a memorial to the more than 200 people killed when improperly stored chemicals exploded at the port; the blast also injured some 7,000 people and left an estimated 300,000 people without homes.

Standing amid mountains of rubble, piles of burnt-out cars and heaps of tattered clothing and cloth, the pope was joined by family members of those killed and by people still bearing the scars of injuries they suffered that day.

They carried photos of the loved ones they lost and signs appealing for the government to seriously investigate who was at fault for allowing the chemicals to be stored there.

A young woman, crying, asked Pope Leo for a hug, which the pope gave her before putting his hand on her head and blessing her.

At Mass afterward, he said, "I prayed for all the victims, and I carry with me the pain, and the thirst for truth and justice, of so many families, of an entire country."

And after Mass, before heading to the airport, he told the people, "During these days of my first apostolic journey, undertaken during this Jubilee Year, I wanted to come as a pilgrim of hope to the Middle East, imploring God for the gift of peace for this beloved land, marked by instability, wars and suffering."

Even when it seems peace is far off, Pope Leo said, "I invite you to lift your gaze to the Lord who is coming! Let us look to him with hope and courage, inviting everyone to set out on the path of coexistence, fraternity and peace. Be artisans of peace, heralds of peace, witnesses of peace!"

CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Leo XIV kneels to speak to a boy holding a photo of a loved one lost in the deadly explosion in 2020 at the port in Beirut Dec. 2.

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Children, Refugees Victimized By AI-Fueled Human Trafficking, Says Vatican Diplomat

By Gina Christian, OSV News

(OSV News) — With human trafficking on the rise globally, the Vatican's diplomatic mission to the United Nations is highlighting concerns for child victims and refugees — while warning of technological tools used by traffickers to expand their criminal activities.

Msgr. Marco Formica, counselor at the Holy See's permanent observer mission to the U.N., spoke at a Nov. 25 high-level meeting on appraising the U.N.'s Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

Adopted in July 2010, the plan promotes international cooperation in tackling modern slavery, and advocates for the universal ratification of legal instruments to address the problem, such as the U.N.'s Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, issued in 2000.

The day prior to Msgr. Formica's address, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a broad political declaration on the implementation of the global plan of action against human trafficking.

Yet "despite the progress made," said Msgr. Formica, the number of trafficking victims worldwide "is growing."

The U.N.'s Office on Drugs and Crime, or UNODC, estimates that as many as 50 million people worldwide "may be subject to various forms" of trafficking, especially sexual exploitation and forced labor.

Ilias Chatzis, acting head of UNODC's organized crime branch, said at the Nov. 24 assembly vote that trafficking networks are "more violent" and "more difficult to dismantle."

The majority of victims are women and girls, who are "overwhelmingly trafficked for sexual exploitation," he said, noting as well that children represent "38% of detected cases" of trafficking.

At the same time, the crime is both underreported and underprosecuted.

Trafficking survivor Shamere McKenzie — now CEO of the nonprofit Sun Gate Foundation, which supports survivors in their recovery from exploitation — said at the Nov. 24 assembly that "human trafficking is succeeding because governments are moving too slowly."

Reflecting on her own experience of being trafficked, McKenzie said, "My voice had been stolen. … My worth had been reduced to dollars and violence."

The UNODC notes on its website that "the true extent of the crime is difficult to ascertain," and that human trafficking is "one of the fastest-growing crimes," garnering an estimated $150 billion in overall profits each year. Victims are typically trafficked from lower- to higher-income countries, said the agency.

In his Nov. 25 statement to the U.N., Msgr. Formica said that children are "increasingly affected, particularly those who are unaccompanied or separated from their families."

He said that "while most girls are trafficked for sexual exploitation, boys are more often subjected to forced labor, criminal activity, and begging.

"Both forms of exploitation undermine the God-given dignity of the victim," said Msgr. Formica.

He stressed that "trafficking networks continue to exploit the vulnerabilities arising, among others, from poverty, underdevelopment and humanitarian emergencies."

Msgr. Formica also commended the assembly's "recognition of the greater risks faced by refugees and migrants," adding that "when dealing with human trafficking, it is important to remember that the weakest are those who suffer the most."

Quoting Pope Leo XIV's Oct. 23 address to the World Meeting of Popular Movements, Msgr. Formica called for "a collective and united effort aimed at reversing the dehumanizing trend of social injustices and promoting integral human development."

Msgr. Formica warned that "the increasing misuse of rapidly evolving technologies also facilitates the recruitment, control and abuse of victims."

"Criminals are increasingly weaponizing AI to enhance their operations," with the technology representing a "dangerous advancement" that enables traffickers to operate "at an unprecedented scale," said the U.S. Department of State in its 2025 Trafficking in Persons report.

Traffickers use AI translation tools to lure vulnerable persons, creating "culturally nuanced messages that resonate with victims in their native language," and offering "unprecedented ability to target potential victims" by analyzing their social media data and developing "tailored exploitation strategies," said the report.

Chatbots, along with generative AI images and audio, also permit traffickers to recruit and ensnare victims, the report said.

But AI "can also be a powerful prevention and intervention tool," said the State Department in its report.

Echoing multiple calls from Pope Leo XIV and Pope Francis, Msgr. Formica said it is "crucial to reverse this trend and ensure that technology, including artificial intelligence, is used to serve human dignity, justice and the common good."

Msgr. Formica commended the assembly's political declaration on implementing the U.N. global plan of anti-trafficking action, which he said "rightly calls for the intensification of international and regional cooperation" to prevent trafficking, reunite families and "enhance criminal justice responses."

However, he clarified the Holy See's position on passages that contained "problematic language" — specifically, regarding the terms "gender," "exploitation of surrogacy" and "sexual and reproductive health-care services."

Msgr. Formica stressed the Catholic Church holds that humans are created male or female, and that the practice of surrogacy is "deplorable in any case, as it constitutes a grave violation of the dignity of both the woman and the child."

He added that "the Holy See interprets the term 'sexual and reproductive health-care services' as referring to a holistic concept of health" that excludes access to abortion and abortifacients.

Concluding his address, Msgr. Formica again quoted Pope Leo XIV, citing a statement from the pope's May 30 address to peace movements: "Amid wars, terrorism, human trafficking and widespread aggression, our children and young people need to be able to experience the culture of life, dialogue, and mutual respect."

(Gina Christian is a multimedia reporter for OSV News. Follow her on X @GinaJesseReina.)

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Reception to Follow

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Thursday, December 11
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New Coalition Aims to End Capital Punishment as Executions Increase but Public Support Wanes

By Kate Scanlon, OSV News

WASHINGTON (OSV News) — Despite an uptick in executions in the U.S. in 2025, opponents of the death penalty lauded decreases in new death sentences and waning public support for the practice during comments at a Dec. 3 press event announcing a new coalition called the U.S. Campaign to End the Death Penalty.

Laura Porter, the campaign's director, said in a statement that the new coalition comes at "a critical juncture in our country's history with the death penalty, with executions on the rise and new experimental execution methods being promoted in a handful of states despite growing opposition to the death penalty."

"It is more important than ever that we shine a light on capital punishment's failures and come together to show growing bipartisan support for ending executions," Porter said.

According to data from the Death Penalty Information Center, as of Dec. 3, 44 prisoners have been executed in 11 states in the U.S. in 2025, with three more scheduled before the end of the year.

Sister Helen Prejean, a Sister of St. Joseph, who is author of "Dead Man Walking" and a member of the coalition's advisory council, told reporters, "Simply by being a human person, we have an inalienable right to life, and you cannot entrust over to government ever to have the wisdom or the know how, or the purity of heart, to be able to carry (the death penalty) out."

The number of executions in the U.S. nearly doubled in 2025 from the previous year, when 25 executions were carried out.

Among the first actions of his second term earlier this year, President Donald Trump signed an executive order directing the U.S. attorney general to "pursue the death penalty for all crimes of a severity demanding its use," and to "seek the death penalty regardless of other factors for every federal capital crime" that involves the "murder of a law-enforcement officer" or a "capital crime committed by an alien illegally present in this country."

Some states, such as Florida, have sought to follow suit, dramatically increasing their scheduled executions.

However, an October 2025 Gallup poll found that although a slim majority of Americans favor the death penalty for people convicted of murder, that number continued a steady decline over 30 years, dropping from a peak of 80% in 1994 to 52% in 2025. While statistically similar to its findings in the previous two years, the 2025 result marks the lowest in Gallup's death penalty trend since 1972, when 50% were in favor.

"I am full of hope on this issue, despite the harshness and terribleness of what's going on, because I know I've been with the people too much, and I see they get the message," Sister Helen said.

The coalition of more than 50 organizations aims to further increase the number of Americans opposed to the death penalty, advocate for more states to end the practice, and decrease the number of new sentences.

Demetrius Minor, executive director of Conservatives Concerned, a group that opposes the death penalty on pro-life and limited government grounds, told reporters "more and more conservatives across the country are questioning the death penalty and advocating for change."

Minor argued there is "significant growing interest in the pro-life community to explore how the death penalty fits into their advocacy for life issues, and many are taking on the death penalty."

"Every successful repeal of the death penalty in the last 20 years has included support from pro-life Republican legislators," he said. "We expect much more of that in the years to come, and by working in collaboration with the U.S. campaign to end the death penalty and its partners, we can ensure that these efforts continue to be inclusive and bipartisan in the future."

The Catholic Church's official magisterium opposes the use of capital punishment as inconsistent with the inherent sanctity of human life, and advocates for the practice's abolition worldwide.

The late Pope Francis revised the Catechism of the Catholic Church in 2018 to clarify the church's teaching that capital punishment is morally "inadmissible" in the modern world and that the church works with determination for its abolishment worldwide.

In his 2020 encyclical "Fratelli Tutti," Pope Francis addressed the moral problem of capital punishment by citing St. John Paul II, writing that his predecessor "stated clearly and firmly that the death penalty is inadequate from a moral standpoint and no longer necessary from that of penal justice."

About a decade prior to becoming Pope Leo XIV earlier this year, then-Bishop Robert Prevost also raised his voice in support of abolishing capital punishment, writing in a March 5, 2015, post on X, then known as Twitter, "It's time to end the death penalty."

(Kate Scanlon is a national reporter for OSV News covering Washington.)

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Wheeling University Business Class Gets Inside Look into Operating a Successful Business

Courtesy photo

Pictured are 14 members of Wheeling University's Introduction to Tourism and Hospitality Industry course.

WHEELING—The general manager of The Hampton Inn of Wheeling offered Wheeling University Business students some keys to running a successful business when the class visited and toured the local hotel.

Fourteen members of the Introduction to Tourism and Hospitality Industry course got an inside look at the successful operations at an award-winning hotel.

Dr. Zahra Mohebbi, assistant professor of Business and the class instructor, said, "Visiting a hotel allowed the students to see how the tourism and hospitality industry operates, bridging the gap between theory and practice. It helps the students understand daily operations, customer service operations and standards, and various career roles, while making classroom concepts more tangible and engaging."

Jack Poling, general manager of The Hampton Inn, gave the students a brief overview, before showing them around the hotel.

"I love being a part of this family-owned business, and I want to share that with the students. This is a successful business and explaining what we do to make The Hampton Inn successful could help each of them as they set out to begin their careers," Poling said.

He told the students two key factors to the hotel's success is its location and ownership. Poling said both of these factors will pertain to running a hotel or any business. The hotel, which is near a major highway, draws in customers because of its close proximity to larger businesses like Wheeling University and WVU Medicine. Being near leisure attractions also draws in guests.

Poling, who was a guest lecturer in the class recently, told the students the hotel's long-time ownership, the Hitchman family, believes offering personalized service is why guests stay at the hotel and continue to come back.

"If you can get them to the front desk with their optimism intact, you've done a good job. Our ownership believes in doing the little things to make each person's stay special. If we have kids in the lobby in the morning looking at the fish tank, we ask them to help us feed the fish. It is that type of service that matters to our customers," Poling explained.

This is the first time Mohebbi has taken this class to view a hotel and she is grateful to Poling for "offering our students a unique opportunity to observe first-hand the successful business practices and high industry standards" at the Hampton Inn.

"Students gained a practical understanding of the tourism and hospitality industry by observing how hotels operate on a day-to-day basis. They learned the importance of customer service standards, and the different career roles available. The visit allowed them to connect the theory we have been discussing in the classroom to real-world practice," she added.

Opportunities like this, Mohebbi said, give students the chance to explore the many career possibilities that are available once they complete their degrees.

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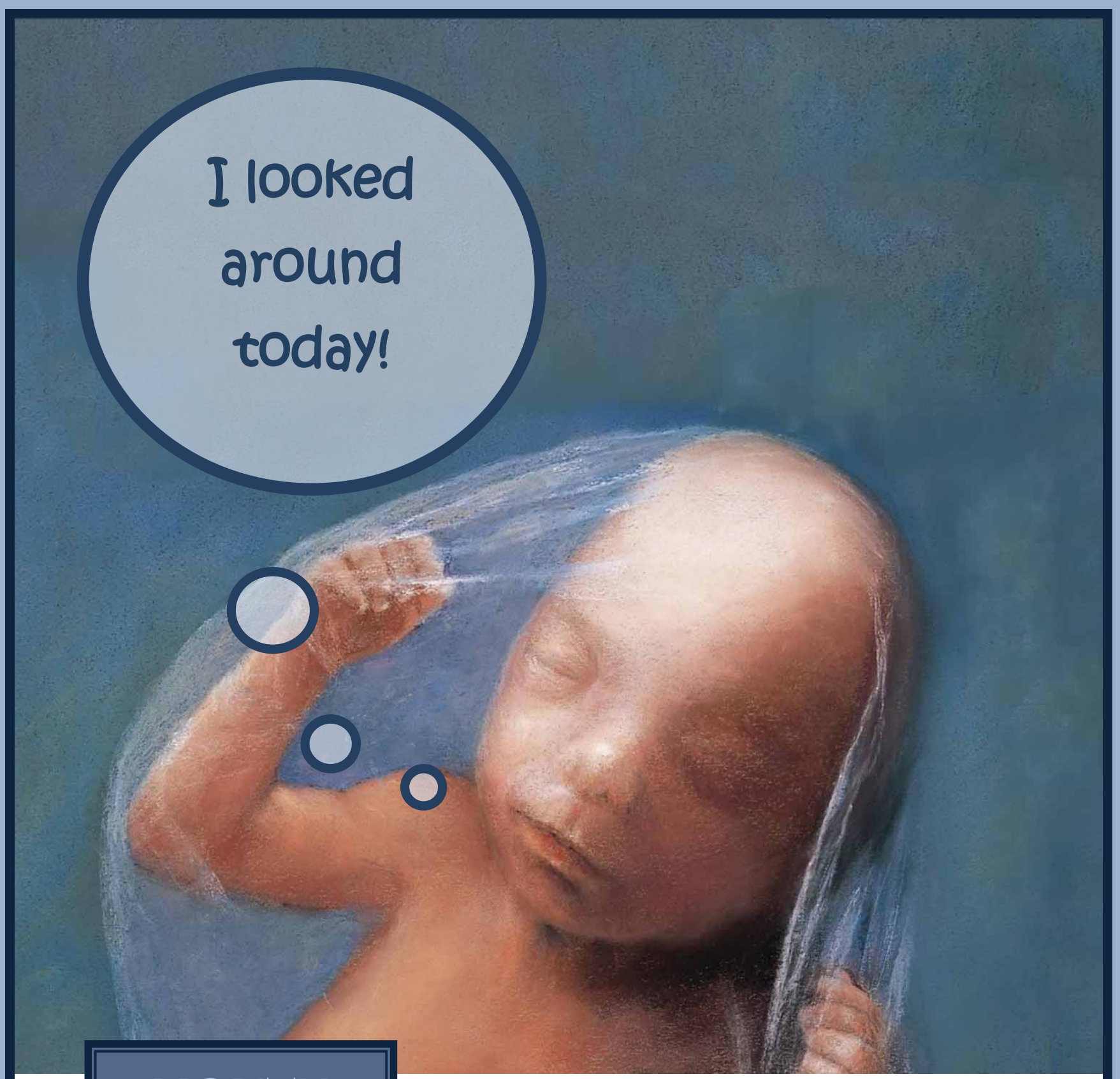

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Information on the developing baby was taken from: *Life before Birth* by Marjorie A. England, © 1996, Mosby-Wolfe, Times Mirror Int'l. Pub., Ltd., London, and *Abortion: Questions and Answers*, Dr. and Mrs. John C. Wilke, © 1985, Hayes Publishing Company, Inc., Cincinnati, Ohio.

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Los niños y los refugiados son víctimas del tráfico de personas impulsado por la inteligencia artificial, afirma un diplomático del Vaticano

Por Gina Christian, OSV News

(OSV News) — Ante el aumento del tráfico de personas a nivel mundial, la misión diplomática del Vaticano ante las Naciones Unidas ha destacado su preocupación por los niños y refugiados que son víctimas de esta lacra, al tiempo que advertía sobre las herramientas tecnológicas que utilizan los traficantes para expandir sus actividades delictivas.

Monseñor Marco Formica, consejero de la misión permanente de observación de la Santa Sede ante la ONU, intervino el 25 de noviembre en una reunión de alto nivel para evaluar el Plan de Acción Mundial de las Naciones Unidas para Combatir la Trata de Personas.

Aprobado en julio de 2010, el plan promueve la cooperación internacional para combatir la esclavitud moderna y aboga por la ratificación universal de instrumentos jurídicos para abordar el problema, como la Convención de las Naciones Unidas contra la Delincuencia Organizada Transnacional y el Protocolo para prevenir, reprimir y sancionar la trata de personas, especialmente mujeres y niños, publicado en 2000. El día anterior al discurso de monseñor Formica, la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas aprobó una amplia declaración política sobre la aplicación del plan de acción mundial contra la trata de personas.

Sin embargo, "a pesar de los progresos realizados", dijo monseñor Formica, el número de víctimas de la trata de personas en todo el mundo "está aumentando".

La Oficina de las Naciones Unidas contra la Droga y el Delito (UNODC, por sus siglas en inglés) estima que hasta 50 millones de personas en todo el mundo "pueden ser objeto de diversas formas" de trata, especialmente de explotación sexual y trabajo forzoso.

Ilias Chatzis, jefe en funciones de la división de delincuencia organizada de la UNODC, afirmó en la votación de la Asamblea del 24 de noviembre que las redes de trata son "más violentas" y "más difíciles de desmantelar".

La mayoría de las víctimas son mujeres y niñas, que "en su gran mayoría son víctimas de la trata con fines de explotación sexual", dijo, y señaló también que los niños representan "el 38 % de los casos detectados" de trata.

Al mismo tiempo, este delito no se denuncia ni se persigue lo suficiente.

Shamere McKenzie, superviviente de la trata y actual directora ejecutiva de la organización sin ánimo de lucro Sun Gate Foundation, que ayuda a las víctimas a recuperarse de la explotación, afirmó en la asamblea del 24 de noviembre que "la trata de personas tiene éxito porque los gobiernos actúan con demasiada lentitud".

Reflexionando sobre su propia experiencia como víctima de la trata, McKenzie afirmó: "Me habían robado la voz. (…) Mi valor se había reducido a dólares y violencia".

La UNODC señala en su sitio web que "es difícil determinar el verdadero alcance del delito" y que la trata de personas es "uno de los delitos de más rápido crecimiento", con unos beneficios totales estimados en 150.000 millones de dólares al año. Las víctimas suelen ser trasladadas de países de bajos ingresos a países de ingresos más altos, según la agencia. En su declaración del 25 de noviembre ante la ONU, monseñor Formica afirmó que los niños "se ven cada vez más afectados, en particular los que no están acompañados o están separados de sus familias".

Afirmó que "mientras que la mayoría de las niñas son víctimas de la trata con fines de explotación sexual, los niños suelen ser sometidos a trabajos forzados, actividades delictivas y mendicidad".

"Ambas formas de explotación socavan la dignidad que Dios ha dado a la víctima", afirmó monseñor Formica.

Destacó que "las redes de tráfico de personas siguen explotando las vulnerabilidades derivadas, entre otras cosas, de la pobreza, el subdesarrollo y las emergencias humanitarias".

Monseñor Formica también elogió el "reconocimiento por parte de la asamblea de los mayores riesgos a los que se enfrentan los refugiados y los migrantes", y añadió que "cuando se trata de la trata de personas, es importante recordar que los más débiles son los que más sufren".

Citando el discurso del Papa León XIV del 23 de octubre ante el Encuentro Mundial de Movimientos Populares, monseñor Formica pidió "un esfuerzo colectivo y unido destinado a revertir la tendencia deshumanizadora de las injusticias sociales y promover el desarrollo humano integral".

Monseñor Formica advirtió que "el creciente uso indebido de tecnologías en rápida evolución también facilita el reclutamiento, el control y el abuso de las víctimas".

"Los delincuentes utilizan cada vez más la inteligencia artificial como arma para mejorar sus operaciones", y esta tecnología representa un "avance peligroso" que permite a los traficantes operar "a una escala sin precedentes", según el informe sobre trata de personas de 2025 del Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos.

Los traficantes utilizan herramientas de traducción basadas en la inteligencia artificial (IA) para atraer a personas vulnerables, creando "mensajes con matices culturales que resuenan en las víctimas en su lengua materna" y ofreciendo "una capacidad sin precedentes para dirigirse a víctimas potenciales" mediante el análisis de sus datos en las redes sociales y el desarrollo de "estrategias de explotación personalizadas", según el informe.

Los chatbots, junto con las imágenes y el audio generados por IA, también permiten a los traficantes reclutar y atrapar a las víctimas, según el informe. Pero la IA "también puede ser una poderosa herramienta de prevención e intervención", afirma el Departamento de Estado en su informe.

Haciéndose eco de múltiples llamamientos del Papa León XIV y del Papa Francisco, monseñor Formica afirmó que es "fundamental invertir esta tendencia y garantizar que la tecnología, incluida la inteligencia artificial, se utilice al servicio de la dignidad humana, la justicia y el bien común".

Monseñor Formica elogió la declaración política de la asamblea sobre la aplicación del plan mundial de la ONU de acción contra la trata de personas, que, según él, "exige acertadamente la intensificación de la cooperación internacional y regional" para prevenir la trata, reunir a las familias y "mejorar las respuestas de la justicia penal".

Sin embargo, aclaró la posición de la Santa Sede sobre los pasajes que contenían "lenguaje problemático", concretamente en lo que respecta a los términos "género", "explotación de la gestación subrogada" y "servicios de salud sexual y reproductiva".

Monseñor Formica subrayó que la Iglesia Católica sostiene que los seres humanos son creados hombres o mujeres, y que la práctica de la subrogación es "deplorable en cualquier caso, ya que constituye una grave violación de la dignidad tanto de la mujer como del niño".

Añadió que "la Santa Sede interpreta el término 'servicios de salud sexual y reproductiva' como una referencia a un concepto holístico de la salud" que excluye el acceso al aborto y a los abortivos. Para concluir su discurso, monseñor Formica volvió a citar al Papa León XIV, repitiendo las palabras del discurso del Papa del 30 de mayo a los movimientos por la paz: "En medio de guerras, terrorismo, tráfico de personas y agresiones generalizadas, nuestros niños y jóvenes necesitan poder experimentar la cultura de la vida, el diálogo y el respeto mutuo".

(Gina Christian es reportera multimedia de OSV News. Síguela en X @GinaJesseReina.)

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FROM THE DESK OF SR. MARTHA GOMEZ RGS

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SWEET FAREWELL TO BROTHER JOHN MCDONAGH, FMS

Farewell dinner (clockwise): Peg Brennan, Brother John McDonagh, Frother John Byrd, and Sr. Martha

Brother John Byrd (left) and Brother John McDonagh (right) on the eve of his full retirement

This week, we said our "Goodbyes" to our dear brother John McDonagh, FMS who spent almost 20 years serving the people of God for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston and has chosen to fully retire and move to his community's retirement/assisted living facility.

Brother John McDonagh is a member of the Marist Brothers of the Schools' U.S. Province. From 1963 until the late 1980s, he served in the education field and a variety of "as needed for the good of the people and the Church" positions, including hospital pastoral care, which is what brought him to Wheeling in 1996. He is known for his love of the Church, serving God's people, and sharing the wisdom he has gained through the years.

Brother John is quite proud of his religious community, sharing that they were "founded in France in 1817 to fill the gap left behind when Napoleon siphoned off the educated from of rural areas. The brothers feared peasants could otherwise be doomed to illiteracy. Then (we) were known by the nickname 'Little Brothers of Mary' – the order took on a permanent educational ministry that is reflected in their modern name, the Marist Brothers of the Schools."

The Marist Brothers came to our diocese in the 1930's to staff and administer Wheeling Centra Catholic High School. There were as many as 14 Marist brothers at one time among the staff and administration of the school.

Bother John McDonagh and Brother John Byrd are the last of the Marist Brothers serving in our diocese.

Until recently, Brother John McDonagh, even though "retired", served as a volunteer in the Pastoral Care Department at WVU Wheeling Hospital and the area hospice.

Brother McDonagh has treasured his vocation but looks forward to being completely retired and spending his days at his community's assisted living facility.

He will cherish his long workdays, the friendships he has made, and the difference he has made through the grace of God in the lives of believers and non-believers, because he did so with the compassion of Christ. He testifies that his energy to do God's work was truly sustained by his fellow religious.

"One hidden joy of community life is the encouragement, the good example and the holiness of men who love and serve Jesus with all their hearts,"he said.

Our Brother John spent many years spreading the "Good News of Jesus Christ" through his gentle and humble way of approaching others. He was very much loved by all who had a chance to meet him either in the workplace or in his daily life.

We surely are going to missed him, but we wish him well in his new home where he is going to receive the attention and care like he deserves.

Support Catholic Charities West Virginia:
Give to the Second Collection at Christmas Mass

HERE FOR GOOD.

Catholic Charities WEST VIRGINIA

As we celebrate Christ's birth, we're invited to share His love with neighbors facing hunger, homelessness, and hardship.

Your gift helps:
- Feed families
- Support seniors
- Assist children and parents in need
- Welcome newcomers seeking safety
- Provide compassionate crisis support

Every dollar brings hope.

Thank you for supporting the Christmas Collection. May the peace of the Christ Child be with you.

"Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for Me." -Matthew 25:40

Donate online at www.ccwva.org

You're Invited to Attend... **16th Annual**

Hope GALA

Catholic Charities

Enjoy an evening of dinner, drinks, dancing and celebrating those we serve!

Tickets & Sponsorships Now Available

Date: March 7, 2026
Time: Cocktail Hour - 5 pm;
Dinner - 6:30 pm
Location: The White Palace
1801 National Rd
Wheeling, WV 26003

ccwva.org/event/gala

$125 Single Tickets

Proceeds from this Gala directly support our mission in 17 counties in northern West Virginia, including our Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center on 18th Street in Wheeling, and other programs and services for children, seniors and families.

Good Shepherd treats us like family.

Welty Home for the Aged www.WeltyHome.org • (304) 242-1093

Knights of Columbus®

Carroll Council 504
OF WHEELING, W.VA.

Since 1900, West Virginia's first Knights of Columbus Council — Carroll Council 504 — has been committed to Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism.

Guided by these Principles, we will continue to serve the parishioners of St. Michael, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Alphonsus, and the Cathedral of St. Joseph, and the Wheeling community today and tomorrow.

To learn more and to join us,
click here

Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Confirmation Schedule, Fall 2025 Bishop Mark Brennan, Celebrant

Saturday, Dec. 6: St. Anthony Parish, Follansbee, 4 p.m.

The Welty Home Difference:
Assisted Living At Its Best

Welty Home for the Aged
www.WeltyHome.org • (304) 242-5233

DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

2026 Men's Discernment Retreat

WWW.WVPRIESTS.ORG

FEBRUARY 13 - FEBRUARY 15

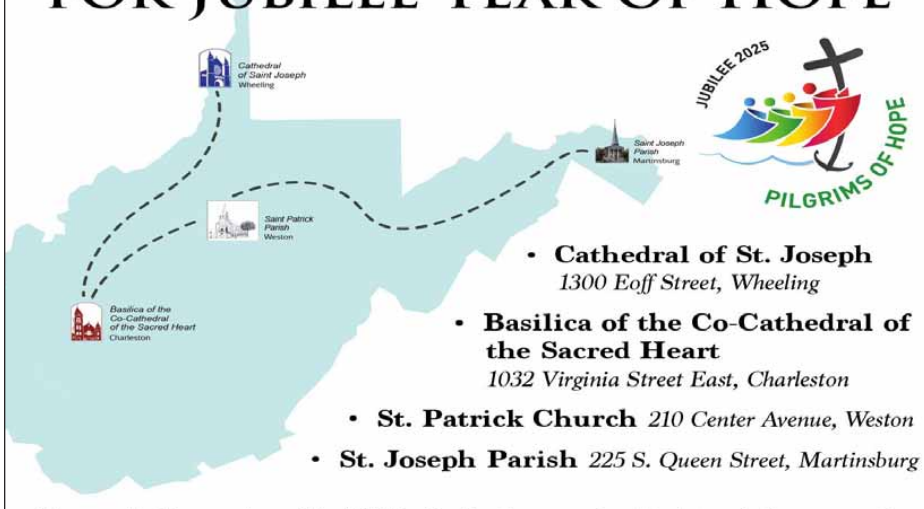
PRIESTFIELD PASTORAL CENTER
4030 MIDDLEWAY PIKE, KEARNEYSVILLE, WV 25430

- OPEN TO MEN 18 AND OLDER
- PRAY, SHARE MEALS, AND MEET WITH CURRENT WV SEMINARIANS
- HEAR TALKS ABOUT PRIESTLY LIFE AND DISCERNMENT

Register Today!

DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

WV PILGRIMAGE SITES FOR JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE



JUBILEE 2025 PILGRIMS OF HOPE

- **Cathedral of St. Joseph** *1300 Eoff Street, Wheeling*
- **Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart** *1032 Virginia Street East, Charleston*
- **St. Patrick Church** *210 Center Avenue, Weston*
- **St. Joseph Parish** *225 S. Queen Street, Martinsburg*

Through December 28, 2025, Catholics are invited to visit any and all of these locations to obtain a Plenary Indulgence by completing:

- **Reverent Prayer** *(at site)*: Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Liturgy of the Hours, or Mass.
- **Confession** - within 20 days before or after pilgrimage.
- **Holy Communion**
- **Pray for the Pope**

For information and updates go to: dwc.org/jubilee-year-2025

Mountaineer Catholic At St. John University Parish

St. John University Parish
Mountaineer Catholic
On the Campus of West Virginia University

Going to WVU?

+ Mass
+ Confession
+ Adoration
+ Bible Studies
+ Retreats

Movie Nights +
Dinner for a Dollar +
Jam Sessions +
Dances +
Fellowship with college students!

Grow your faith with us!

@mountaineercatholic

St. John University Parish & Mountaineer Catholic

Five WVU Medicine Skilled Nursing Facilities Recognized by U.S. News & World Report

MORGANTOWN — Five WVU Medicine skilled nursing facilities have earned the highest possible rating, "High Performing," in U.S. News & World Report's 2026 Best Nursing Homes ratings.

To be recognized as one of the U.S. News Best Nursing Homes, a home must have been "High Performing" in short-term rehabilitation, long-term care, or both. Only 19 percent of almost 15,000 skilled nursing facilities rated by U.S. News meet that standard.

Short-term rehabilitation is for patients following a hospitalization for surgery, heart attack, stroke, injury, or similar condition. Long-term care is for patients who are no longer able to live independently and need help with daily activities.

The WVU Medicine facilities recognized as "High Performing" for short-term rehabilitation are: Garrett Regional Medical Center's Subacute Rehabilitation Unit in Oakland, Maryland; Thomas Hospitals Skilled Nursing Unit in Charleston; United Hospital Center's United Transitional Care Center in Bridgeport; Weirton Medical Center's Rehabilitation Center; and Wheeling Hospital's Continuous Care Center, which was also recognized as "High Performing" for long-term care.

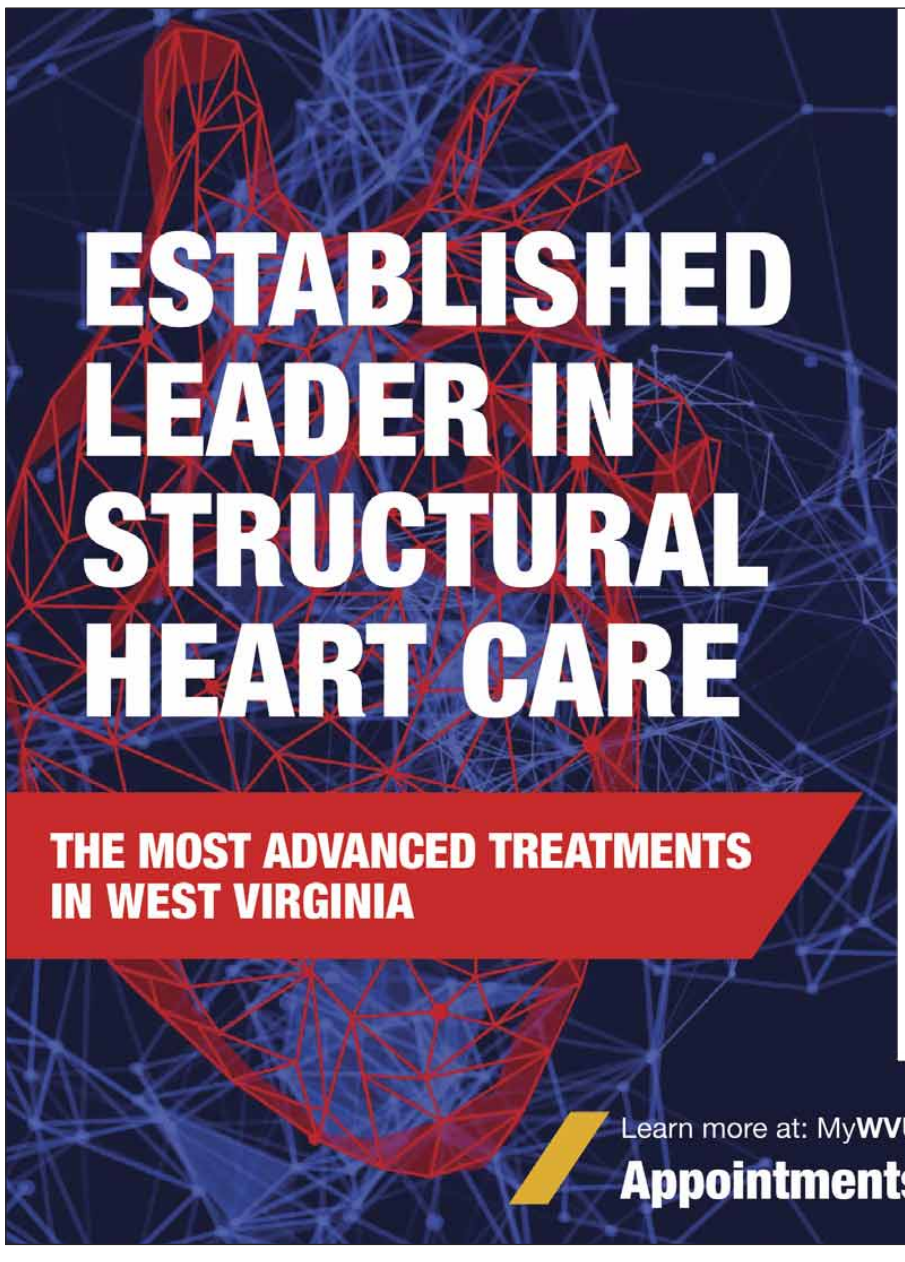
The short-term ratings are based on an assessment of nine quality measures, using data from the federal government's Care Compare program. Those measures include staffing levels, medical outcomes, and resident complaints.

Similarly, the long-term ratings are based on an assessment carried out by U.S. News of eight quality measures, including staffing, medical outcomes, resident complaints, vaccinations, and appropriate use of medications.

The quality of care provided to the 1.2 million residents of U.S. skilled nursing facilities varies widely. U.S. News publishes ratings of nursing homes, as well as other information, including whether the facility is part of a continuing care retirement community or offers memory care. This is one example of how U.S. News uses "data journalism" – in-depth, unbiased analyses of the best data available – to help consumers make important healthcare decisions.

"We are proud of this recognition and honored each time someone selects WVU Medicine as their provider of choice," Albert L. Wright, Jr., president and CEO of the WVU Health System, said. "Most importantly, we are grateful to the employees whose hard work and dedication to our patients made these ratings possible."

For more information on WVU Medicine, visit WVUMedicine.org.



The nation-leading cardiologists and surgeons of the WVU Heart and Vascular Institute Structural Heart Program at Wheeling specialize in problems with the heart's valves, walls, or chambers.

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

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

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

OUR TEAM

David Michael Campsey MD
Interventional Cardiology

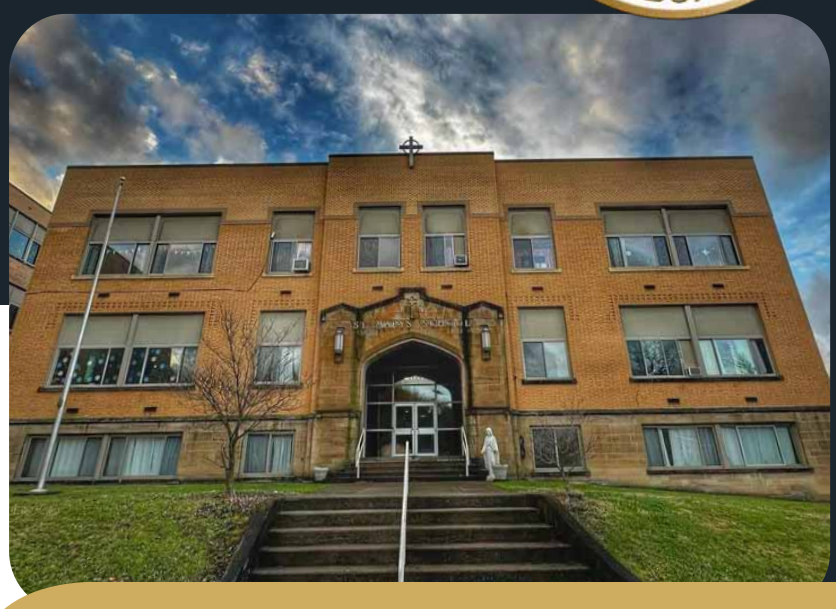
Deepak Hooda MD
Interventional Cardiology

Sushant Sharma MD
Cardiology

Learn more at: My**WVU**Heart.com
Appointments: 304-243-8362
WVU Heart & Vascular Institute

WE'RE HIRING

Principals for Notre Dame Middle/High School & St. Mary's Grade School



Faith - Knowledge - Service

JOIN OUR TEAM!

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is seeking dynamic, faith-filled leaders to serve as principals for Notre Dame High School and St. Mary's Grade School in Clarksburg, West Virginia.

These schools share a proud tradition of academic excellence, spiritual growth, and community engagement, forming young men and women who live out their faith in service and leadership.

POSITION OVERVIEW

The principals will serve as the spiritual, instructional, and administrative leaders of their respective schools. Each will work closely with the designated pastor, faculty, parents, and the DWC Catholic Schools Office to advance the mission of Catholic education.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

- The ideal candidate must have an earned Master's Degree in Educational Leadership or Administration or begin the process of completing degree requirements; or hold a valid Educational Leadership certification from the state of West Virginia or be eligible for such certification.
- The candidate will have a minimum of three years of successful educational experience with a preference for administrative experience.

HOW TO APPLY

Candidates interested in this position should be energetic, positiove, enjoy working with children, and be able to uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church.
Interested candidates should email their resume to avernon@stmaryswv.org