

THE CATHOLIC  
Spirit



Courtesy Photo

Students from St. Michael Parish School in Wheeling gather outside of St. Michael Church as the palms from Palm Sunday 2020 are burned. The ashes will be used at Ash Wednesday Masses, Feb. 17.

## Preparing for Ash Wednesday

Following school Mass on Feb. 10, students from St. Michael Parish School in Wheeling gathered outside of St. Michael Church as the palms from Palm Sunday 2020 were burned.

Over the past weeks, parishioners of St. Michael Parish have brought their dried palms to church to be burned—just as parishioners

around the diocese did at their parishes. Several students from St. Michael's brought palms from home when they arrived at the school Mass.

The ashes from the burned palms will be used at Ash Wednesday Masses, Feb. 17. Many of the students were surprised to hear Father Carlos Melocoton, pastor of the parish and

school, explain that this year the ashes will not be traced on their foreheads, but will be sprinkled on the top of their heads. This is how ashes will be distributed at all parishes this year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

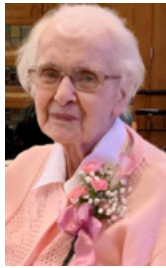
For more information about the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday or Lenten Guidelines, see Page 5 of this issue.

## Notice of passing— Father Patrick J. (Xavier) Cooney, SVD



Father Patrick J. Xavier Cooney, SVD, has passed away. His obituary was not available at press time. May he rest in the sure hope of Christ's Resurrection.

## Obituary— Sister Gabriella Wagner, CSJ



Sister Gabriella Wagner, 102, died peacefully at Mount St. Joseph in Wheeling on February 8, 2021 with a sister at her bedside. Sr. Gabriella (Angela) was born in Triadelphia on July 9, 1918. She grew up in a faith-filled family of 14. Preceding her in death are her parents, Herman C. and Angela (Weiss) Wagner, her brothers, Herman B., Jerry, George, Joseph, and Paul Wagner, her sisters, Srs. Jean Marie Wagner and Anna Wagner, Rita Wright, Marie Kennedy, Martha Ross and Dorothy Fitzsimmons. Surviving are two brothers, Charles (Patricia) and John Wagner and multitudes of nieces, nephews and their children.

Sr. Gabriella was a Sister of St. Joseph for 85 years, having the distinction of being the Sister longest in the Wheeling Congregation.

Sr. Gabriella earned a BS Ed degree from Duquesne University and an MTS degree from Catholic University of America. She spent nearly half a century teaching children throughout the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. She had a great love of mathematics and sciences. Sister taught at St. Mary and Notre Dame, Clarksburg; St. Peter, Fairmont; St. Joseph, Huntington; St. Francis Xavier, Moundsville; St. Thomas, Thomas; St. Patrick, Weston; Blessed Martin, Central Catholic, Corpus Christi, and St. Vincent Home for Girls in Wheeling. Following her retirement as an educator, she served as Treasurer of the SSJ Retirement Foundation for more than two decades.

In 2015 at her 80th Jubilee, Sister Gabriella said, "I have truly been blessed by God as a member of an exceptionally large and faith-filled family, growing up with my siblings on the Wagner Farm on Middle Wheeling Creek. By the time I was in second grade, I knew deep in my heart that God was calling me to membership in an even larger family – the Sisters of St. Joseph of Wheeling. Maybe it was the influence of Sister Mary Joseph Arthur, whom I dearly loved. I remember with great joy my classmates at St. Vincent Parish School and St. Joseph Academy. I treasure memories of close relationships with students whom I have taught and faculty members and parents who supported my efforts as an educator for nearly fifty years in a dozen parochial and central schools of the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese. I continue to be nurtured by relationships within the Congregation of St. Joseph, my family of origin, residents of Mount St. Joseph, and celebrants of our liturgies provided by the Wheeling Jesuit University priests. My life is also enhanced by relationships with many of our associates and auxiliary members, employees at Mount St. Joseph, and a host of friends whose company enables me to live out our charism of Loving Union of all persons with God and with one another."

Sister was a much-loved crafter at the Annual Spaghetti Dinner and Craft Sale. For thirty years, she designed and sewed many various, beautiful handmade stuffed animals and other items to delight children and adults alike. She created 650 teddy bears among her many sewn items. Due to continuing pandemic restrictions, services will be conducted privately.

Arrangements are being made through Altmeyer Funeral Home in Wheeling.

## 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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**Executive Editor:** Colleen Rowan, Ext. 347 ..... [crowan@dwc.org](mailto:crowan@dwc.org)  
**Advertising:** contact Colleen Rowan  
**Freelance Writers:** Martina Hart, John Sherwood, Babette Pascasio

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# Dioceses Dispute Conclusions, Methods of AP Report on Pandemic Funding

By Tom Tracy, Catholic News Service

U.S. dioceses are crying foul over an investigative report on coronavirus relief funding they say grossly mischaracterized the Catholic Church's finances and unrestricted cash flows, leaving the crass impression the church used the 2020 CARES Act to hoard cash.

Officials of the Diocese of Charlotte, North Carolina, said their diocese was among several first contacted by The Associated Press last December in advance of an investigative-style report headlined, "Sitting on billions, Catholic dioceses amass taxpayer aid," and the Charlotte Diocese provided the AP with detailed written responses and financial data related to the Paycheck Protection Program, or PPP.

The CARES Act, passed in March 2020, initially authorized some \$350 billion in loans to small businesses through PPP, a program intended to allow them to continue to pay their employees.

In late April, statistics compiled by the Diocesan Fiscal Management Conference showed 8,000 parishes, 1,400 elementary schools, 700 high schools, 104 chanceries, 185 Catholic Charities agencies and 200 other diocesan organizations in 160 dioceses had applied for assistance at that point.

But not all dioceses, parishes and Catholic schools applied for the PPP funding and some later returned the funds once their fiscal status was clarified in spite of the pandemic and economic downturn, according to Patrick Markey, executive director of the conference.

But the recent AP story alleges that "scores of Catholic dioceses across the U.S. received aid through the Paycheck Protection Program while sitting on well over \$10 billion in cash, short-term investments or other available funds," and that "even with that financial safety net, the 112 dioceses that shared their

financial statements, along with the churches and schools they oversee, collected at least \$1.5 billion in taxpayer-backed aid.

"A majority of these dioceses reported enough money on hand to cover at least six months of operating expenses, even without any new income," the AP report states, noting at the top of the report that the Charlotte Diocese received some \$8 million in Small Business Administration emergency federal funding despite sitting on "\$100 million of their own cash and short-term investments available last spring."

It continued, "When the cash catastrophe church leaders feared didn't materialize, those assets topped \$110 million by summer."

William Weldon, a certified public accountant, who is chief financial officer and chief administrative officer for the Diocese of Charlotte, told Catholic News Service Feb. 7 the AP story mischaracterizes the financial reality in Charlotte, incorrectly conflating its finances with assets owned and controlled by more than 100 separate Catholic parish and other entities within the diocese.

The report, Weldon said, also grossly overstates available assets, ignores financial liabilities, and erroneously suggests that restricted donations and funds designated for specific purposes could have been diverted to cover payroll, rent and utilities for other entities.

"That would be like shifting money parents pay in fees for school construction to cover salaries at the central office of the diocese, or taking a parish's hard-earned savings that are set aside for a new parish hall or youth program to pay for another ministry's rent and utilities," Weldon said.

"This would be unethical. Our parishioners and donors rightfully expect that we will honor the purpose for which funds are



The U.S. Capitol is seen in Washington at dawn Jan. 10.

CNS Photo/Tyler Orsburn

given to our parishes, schools and ministries."

When the pandemic hit last spring, the PPP was a lifeline for many parishes, and without that assistance, parishes, schools and ministries would have had to consider layoffs, furloughs and pay cuts: the very impacts the PPP was designed to help employers avoid, he added.

The recent AP report and a previous AP report on churches and PPP funding published in July implied the Catholic entities' success in procuring the emer-

gency pandemic funds may have come at the expense of other community needs, faith groups and charitable agencies.

All applicants were subject to the same criteria, application process and forgiveness process, Charlotte's Weldon pointed out. Applicants were required to provide supporting documentation to substantiate that they spent the loan funds on qualifying expenditures.

To date, all of those loans have qualified for forgiveness following compli-

ance reviews by the entities' financial institution and the SBA, he said of the Charlotte Diocese.

"The AP story also erroneously claims the Charlotte Diocese 'had roughly \$100 million of their own cash and short-term investments available last spring,'" Weldon said.

"This is simply not true," he explained. "In fact, audited financial statements posted on our website for the year ending June 30, 2020, lay out our finances in detail: The **See "Funding" on Page 4**

## Funding ...

Cont'd from Page 3

report shows that, excluding parishes (which as separate entities have their own finances and report separately to their parishioners), the diocese had financial assets available for general expenditures — after subtracting current liabilities — of about \$9 million, which equates to only six weeks of operations."

Regarding future pandemic assistance loans from the government, it is too early to determine whether Charlotte parishes will qualify and choose to apply for a second round of PPP funding.

"As separate employers, parishes and schools in Charlotte are still evaluating their financial needs in consultation with their finance councils," Weldon told CNS.

In Kentucky, the Archdiocese of Louisville, singled out in the AP report, noted last year salaries were frozen for all employees of the archdiocese, parishes, and schools until Jan. 1, 2021, and there likely would have been layoffs and furloughs throughout the system without the PPP loans. According to an archdiocesan statement Feb. 5, Louisville Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz strongly recommended parishes apply for the funding, and all but two of our parishes applied.

Each parish applied individually and has its own unique financial strengths and weaknesses. Parish loans ranged from relatively small amounts of under \$10,000 up to about \$850,000. The archdiocesan loan was \$1.2 million, and Catholic Charities was \$800,000, according to the statement.

"We disagree with the analysis of the audited financials of the archdiocese and note that a June 30 report reflects the situation only a few months into the pandemic," the Louisville statement said.

It added, "More than half of the assets reflected in the archdiocese's audited statements include funds for the Catholic Cemeteries reserve fund, parish funds on deposit (which is not archdiocesan money and by canon law, cannot be used by the archdiocese) as well as designated and restricted funds that cannot be used for the general fund or to fund payroll."

"In short, these parish, restricted, and otherwise encumbered funds are not liquid assets that can be used by the archdiocese for purposes other than for which they are intended," it said.

The Louisville Archdiocese said it had pointed out to the AP reporters that some four out of five parishes of the archdiocese surveyed reported their collections at

76% to 90% of normal giving, with 25% of parishes reporting more significant decreases in collections.

In addition, parishes with schools had significant extra expenses due to COVID-19 safety measures. Those school expenditures have been reimbursed only partially by CARES Act funds originally targeted for public and nonpublic schools since nonpublic school assistance was subsequently challenged by a lawsuit.

"While some parishes' collections are beginning to stabilize at this point, many parishes lost additional income due to the inability to hold summer and fall fundraising events, as well as reductions in program income and school tuition.

"We believe that we will not know all of the long-term negative impacts on parish, school, and archdiocesan finances for some time," the statement said.

The Louisville Archdiocese said it is not applying again for the CARES Act PPP loans in 2021 because the purpose and requirements of the loan have changed and because its finances ended up better than expected. "However, we know that parish income is down overall, and schools have faced extraordinary expenses," it said.

In the wake the pandemic assistance program was launched, the Catholic Church was put in the spotlight by several major newspaper stories. First, a Washington Post piece last spring said 13,000 U.S. parishes had received PPP loans, but Markey of the Diocesan Fiscal Management Conference put the number at around 6,000 in the first round and another 3,000 in a second round in 2020.

In July, AP ran a piece asserting the "U.S. Roman Catholic Church lobbied for an unprecedented exemption from federal rules to amass more than \$1.4 billion in taxpayer-backed coronavirus aid, with many millions going to dioceses that have paid huge sexual abuse settlements."

A principal complaint about the newspaper reporting has been that the journalists are presenting a nonsensical conflation of church assets and ignoring the on-going church liabilities including salaries, utility bills, property upkeep, parking lot repairs, new roofing, educational materials and technology, insurances, liturgical and office supplies just to name a few expenses.

In the Diocese of Raleigh, North Carolina, Russell Elmayan, chief financial officer and chief administrative officer, said Feb. 5 in a statement to CNS that "the recent AP article as written does not provide appropriate context, in my opinion," he said, adding, "Parish offer-

tory remains approximately 10% below the prior year at this time.

"Since offertory is by far the largest part of the revenue stream for any parish, the PPP loans clearly saved jobs and kept people employed, which is what they were designed to do," Elmayan said.

The PPP was therefore an appropriate and necessary lifeline to preserve the nearly 3,000 jobs in our parishes, missions and schools to continue to provide ministry and services, he added.

Elmayan said it is unclear as to where the AP pulled its data when it referenced \$170 million of "funds disclosed." Actually, the audited financial statements on the diocesan website show \$193 million in assets, he noted. But against those assets are \$111 million in liabilities, leaving \$82 million in net assets.

"Of those \$82 million in net assets, \$52 million come with a donor restriction as to their use, and \$26 million are designated for specific ministry purposes, leaving a bit over \$4 million in assets that are undesignated and unrestricted — this amounts to two months of operating expenses, which is below most generally accepted standards regarding the amount of reserves an organization should have to conduct day to day operations," Elmayan said in his statement.

For the diocese to use those restricted funds for a different purpose would be a violation of a solemn promise made to a donor and it would be both legally and ethically inappropriate, Elmayan said.

In Massachusetts, the chancellor for the Archdiocese of Boston, John Straub, told CNS the archdiocese and AP reporters had several rounds of information sharing.

He said he and other archdiocesan officials went back and forth with AP about the article and their responses to questions in an effort to clarify the justification for getting the PPP funding and demonstrate that separate entities such as

the statewide Catholic Schools Foundation are not an unrestricted source of funds for the archdiocese as the article implied.

"It is grossly misleading at best," Straub said in a Feb. 8 phone call. "There is always more to the story."

Straub said the archdiocesan financial reports available to AP at the time of its reporting only reflect the early months of the pandemic when the crisis was just emerging and when the PPP funds had been received but not yet spent — giving the erroneous picture those monies were being hoarded and that cash flow increased due to the PPP.

"It ends up being very misleading to the reader," he said. "The overall assumption the article makes that is the Catholic Church should not have participated in the PPP program, but if folks go back to imagine what things were like at the start of the pandemic the need increased almost immediately after people started losing jobs or were not able to work full time."

"We encouraged churches to participate in the program to avoid us putting people in the state unemployment lines. And to be fair the states were unprepared for the crush of people lining up for that aid," Straub said, adding that a Boston-area school closure mentioned in the article had little or nothing to do with the pandemic or PPP.

Moreover, church fiscal health nationwide remains unclear as the pandemic rolls on and as churches struggle to operate weekend services at 25% capacity in structures that, in many cases, cannot accommodate safe social distancing while still reaching 25% capacity.

"Any business or institution will struggle if they continue to operate at 25% of their abilities," Straub said. "We are in this work to help people but the implication was the church was out for a cash grab rather than do the good work that it does."

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## Opportunities for Prayer at the Cathedral during Lent



Lent is just around the corner! Why not give yourself the opportunity to make this the best Lent ever? The 40 days of Lent provide many ways for everyone to grow closer to Our Lord.

PLAN AHEAD to allow yourself the time to participate in some of the wonderful opportunities for prayer we have available at the Cathedral during the Lenten Season:

Each Friday, we will have **ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT** after the 12:05 p.m. Mass until 5:45 p.m. Everyone is invited to stop by the Cathedral at any point on a Friday afternoon in Lent and spend some time in prayer and adoration.

Following the period of Eucharistic Adoration, **STATIONS OF THE CROSS** will be held each Friday at 6:00 p.m. The Stations of the Cross, or Via Crucis, began as the practice of pious pilgrims to Jerusalem who would retrace the final journey of Jesus Christ to Calvary. Later, for the many who wanted to pass along the same route, but could not make the trip to Jerusalem, a practice developed that eventually took the form of the fourteen stations currently found in almost every church.

On Sunday evenings during Lent, we will celebrate **SOLEMN VESPERS** at 6:00 p.m. Vespers, also known as Evening Prayer, is part of the Liturgy of the Hours, the official prayer of the church. The beautiful music for Vespers is provided by the Cathedral Schola.

Spending time during Lent praying, fasting and giving can make Jesus' sacrifice on Good Friday and His resurrection on Easter even more meaningful. We encourage you to take Lent seriously this year and make it the best ever!

# Basilica Invites All to Join in Lenten Zoom Series on St. Joseph

By Colleen Rowan

The Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston invites all to join parishioners for "With a Father's Heart," Lenten Reflections with the Apostolic Letter by Pope Francis on St. Joseph. The series will be held via Zoom on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. on the following dates: Feb. 24, and March 3, 10, and 17.

Martina Hart, a parishioner who is organizing the series, said that discussion began with the basilica's pastoral council last month. "We thought about organizing some kind of Lenten retreat for our parish," she said. Instead of a one-time/one-day event, she said, all agreed on the Zoom series with each segment roughly 40 minutes long.

Hart is preparing a PowerPoint summarizing the letter and dividing it into four parts to cover a little each of the evenings.

"We also want it to be interactive, rather than just a presentation, so participants will have the opportunity to share thoughts/reflections, etc. if they want to," she said. Hart went on to say that participation does not require attendance on all four evenings. If someone wants to attend just one evening, that is perfectly fine.

The pope's letter is easy to read, Hart noted. She found it intriguing to get to know St. Joseph better "and to see in him a model for all of us average people. We do not really know a whole lot about St. Joseph, except what is mentioned in the Gospel accounts of Matthew and Luke, but the Holy Father

draws our attention to the person of St. Joseph, this average guy, like most of us, usually acting in the background, and how he lives everyday life as well as extraordinary challenges faithfully in accordance with the will of God and as an integral part of salvation history.

"After getting to know him better," Hart said, "it would be easier to relate to him, to pray to him, ask for his intercession, etc., because for most scenarios 'he's been there.'"

The following is the introduction of the PowerPoint Hart is working on for the series: "On December 8, 1870 Pope Pius IX declared St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. Pope Francis marked the 150th anniversary (12/8/2020) by proclaiming a special 'Year of St. Joseph.' In his Apostolic Letter 'Patris Corde' (With a father's heart = the first words of the letter) Pope Francis shares some personal reflections on St. Joseph. He summarizes what we know about St. Joseph and why he is important in salvation history. He describes the gifts God gave St. Joseph, which enabled him to look after Jesus and Mary, and suggests several ways we can learn from him. 'The aim of this Apostolic Letter is to increase our love for this great saint, to encourage us to implore his intercession and to imitate his virtues and his zeal.'"

For more information and/or to RSVP to participate in the series, contact Hart by e-mail to [martinahart41@gmail.com](mailto:martinahart41@gmail.com) or call (304) 344-0423.

## Lenten Guidelines

Lent is a special season within the Church year that focuses on the two-fold theme of repentance and Baptism. We prepare ourselves to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of Christ.

Lent begins with the celebration of Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021 and ends with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, April 1, 2021. This year, Lent looks a little different as we are still amid the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Therefore, it is important that we continue to practice social distancing, the wearing of masks, sanitizing, and employ safety precautions.

### IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR ALL CATHOLICS

Fasting is to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday by everyone 18 years and older, who has not yet celebrated their 59th birthday. On a fast day, one full meal is allowed. Two other meals, enough to maintain strength, may be taken, according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but consuming liquids, including milk and juices, is allowed. Abstinence is observed by everyone 14 years of age or older. On days of abstinence, no meat is allowed. Note that when health or the ability to work is affected, the law does not apply. Ash Wednesday, all the Fridays during Lent, and Good Friday are days of abstinence.

If a person is unable to observe the above regulations due to ill health or other serious reasons, other suitable forms of self-denial are encouraged.

### ASH WEDNESDAY IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

On January 12, the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of Sacraments (Holy See) issued the following statement: Distribution of Ashes in Time of Pandemic

The Priest says the prayer for blessing the ashes. He sprinkles the ashes with holy water, without saying anything. Then he addresses all those present and only once says the formula as it appears in the Roman Missal, applying it to all in general: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel", or "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return". The Priest then cleanses his hands, puts on a face mask and distributes the ashes to those who come to him or, if appropriate, he goes to those who are standing in their places. The Priest takes the ashes and sprinkles them on the head of each one without saying anything.

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# Notre Dame Student Gives Her Perspective of Being a Senior during a Pandemic

By **Gianna Martino**

2021. The year that I've been looking forward to for as long as I can remember. I imagined starting my senior year with the senior breakfast, a tradition where we would meet in the parking lot before the last first day of school began and where we would share the excitement of being seniors and talk about our expectations. I envisioned getting together and decorating the hallways with my fellow seniors during homecoming week. I pictured me and my friends taking photos in our pretty dresses and dancing together at our last homecoming dance and prom. Most of all, I imagined gathering with my class in the church, receiving our diplomas, and throwing up our graduation caps in celebration, saying goodbye to high school and getting ready for the next chapter in our lives. However, things haven't gone exactly the way I anticipated.

In March of 2020, our Governor issued a Stay-at-Home Order because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Since the highly contagious disease is still present, this of course raised questions as to how big of an impact it would have on our school. When I returned to Notre Dame this year, things were a lot different. Our school took all the necessary precautions with everyone wearing masks, desks spaced



**Gianna Martino**

apart, a new water fountain system, daily temperature checks and other safety measures. While I felt comforted that I was safe, I quickly realized it was much different than years before. We were unable to attend sporting events, special senior activities were cancelled, and there was no homecoming week. This change of pace flipped my world upside down. For years I had dreamt of my perfect senior year, and this is it? I started to believe that there was nothing anyone could do to make this year any better. But being the loving family we are at Notre Dame, we

found ways. On Halloween, teachers and faculty put together a fun, socially distanced day full of activities where everyone dressed in costumes, received candy, and danced to music while six feet apart in the school hallways. A few days later, my fellow classmates and I went to the drive-in. Although we sat in separate cars, we communicated over Snapchat and FaceTime so we could feel like we were together.

Notre Dame has handled this crisis well, not only with fun activities, but with our educational needs. These past few months we've alternated from online to in person. This seemingly uneasy process, actually went quite smoothly. Teachers make sure we understand the lessons and how to do our assignments, and they have also been checking in on each of us to make sure we are doing okay at home. Whether we are remote learning via zoom or six feet apart while wearing masks in our classroom, our teachers are always there for us. I'm also grateful that they are thinking of new ways to involve seniors more by allowing us to lead prayer over the intercom while at school or via Facebook and Instagram when at home.

I can't help but look at this as an important life lesson in that things don't always go according to the

plan. I have no idea what the remainder of my senior year has in store, but I do understand that we have all suffered in many different ways during this COVID-19 pandemic. From losing loved ones to not being able to spend time with family and friends. At Notre Dame we are a family, and it has helped us all to share these trying times together. The bonds we form during our senior year used to be enjoyed even more with the senior activities. I personally witnessed my older sister Sophia miss out on many of her senior milestones last year when this terrible pandemic began. Now as I go through my own senior year with my graduating Class of 2021, we also face the same lost experiences. But I realize that we must also not lose sight of some things that we have gained. Our outlook on life has changed our focus. We have been given the opportunity to grow up and see things around us in a whole new way.

At Notre Dame and St Mary's we're taught and we know that God is in control. We live this reality and gain strength in knowing him through all the adversities we will face in life and even through a worldwide pandemic. We at Notre Dame can take this truth out into the world and share this strength with others around us.

## Charleston Catholic High School Now Enrolling for 2021-2022

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### **Now Enrolling for 2021-2022**

Applications may be submitted on our website: [www.charlestoncatholic-crw.org](http://www.charlestoncatholic-crw.org). For more information, call 304-342-8415 or email [andrea.herrick@charlestoncatholic-crw.org](mailto:andrea.herrick@charlestoncatholic-crw.org)

### **Important 2021 Admissions Dates:**

Monday, February 22 - Application deadline for students currently enrolled in Catholic school for first consideration. Monday, March 1 - Application deadline for the general public for first consideration. Friday, March 12 - First letters mailed regarding admission status.

## Adopt-A-Crusader Program Provides the Gift of a Catholic Education

**WHEELING**—Pay it forward with Corpus Christi School's Adopt-A-Crusader program. Funds raised for this program will go to the gap of tuition still needed for the 2020-2021 school year.

Corpus Christi is located in Wheeling. Many CCS families receive assistance from scholarships distributed both merit-based and need-based to eligible students. Even with these scholarships dollars, families are still in need of tuition assistance!

So, what can one do to help with this gap of tuition? Pay it forward this year with a donation to allow these students to receive the gift of a Catholic education. No gift

is too small and all gifts are tax-deductible. "As an alumni, parent, grandparent or just someone who cares about Catholic education YOU can make a difference in our FUTURE," school officials said.

Those who would like to give the gift of Catholic education this year, may drop their contribution off to the Corpus Christi Parish office, in the church collection box, mail it in to 1512 Warwood Ave, or visit our secure online giving site at <https://corpuschristiwheeling.com/giving/>. Please be sure to mark Adopt-A-Crusader on contribution. "Thank you for your support!"

# St. Joseph Eighth-Graders Bring Help to Eastern Panhandle's Homeless



Courtesy Photo

Eighth-graders at St. Joseph School in Martinsburg organized the collection of blankets, hand warmers and toiletries for Faith Feeding Freedom. Kneeling, from left, are Allison McDonald and Lydia Hayes. Standing, from left, are Claire Freeman, Olivia Morrison, and Julia Carter.

**MARTINSBURG**—Every year at Saint Joseph School, the eighth-grade class does a service project in the community.

This school year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the class has not been able to perform an act of service in person. Instead, they asked all the students in the school—ages 2 through eighth grade—to bring in

new and gently used blankets, hand warmers and other basic survival items throughout the month of January for Faith Feeding Freedom. The nonprofit organization feeds and clothes the homeless and hungry every Friday outside the main branch of the Martinsburg-Berkeley County Library.

Dozens of blankets were collected, as well as several bags of hand warmers and toiletries, all of which were given to Faith Feeding Freedom for distribution to those in need.

For information about Saint Joseph School, go to [sjsvw.org](http://sjsvw.org) or call (304) 267-6447.

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# Diocese Reviving TEC Program

**WHEELING**—TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) is a diocesan spiritual movement for older high school teens and young college students. It begins with a retreat weekend filled with dynamic reflections, music, sacraments, adoration, small group dialogue, prayer and community building. Afterwards, the TEC community (TECITES) evolves into a network of mutual support that both reinforces their parish involvement and personal spiritual growth.

TEC leads participants to integrate Christ's Paschal Mystery (dying, rising, and going forth) at a time of passage through which they are preparing for adult life after high school and college.

TEC is effective in helping young people focus on their spiritual life as well as

their secular life. It also empowers them to speak openly and courageously to their friends about their faith in Christ and their living out of Christian values.

TEC began in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston in the late sixties under

the leadership of Fathers Ed Bell and Jody DeBias (both deceased). Father Leon was a team member of the very first TEC in Wheeling serving as a confessor for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In recent years, TEC be-

came dormant but is currently being revived under the leadership of Mr. Daniel Maul, the Diocesan Director of Evangelization, Catechetics and Youth. Daniel has formed a Diocesan TEC Steering Committee consisting of Ralph Modena of

Princeton, Kathy Lynch of Beckley, Theresa O'Leary of Charleston, Father Leon Alexander of Charleston, Father John McDonough of Morgantown, and many more. They are meeting often via Zoom conferencing.



VIRTUAL EVENTS

## Virtual Retreats and Midweek Reflections

For grieving parents whose children of any age have died by any cause, no matter how long ago.

**Losing a child** under any circumstances is horrendous. Focusing on the spirituality of the grieving process can help tremendously.

Just as He comforted his grieving disciples on the road to Emmaus, Jesus comforts us and we comfort each other in this very special Catholic ministry.

With other Emmaus Parent Companions and Spiritual Leaders, find spiritual nourishment in a warm and loving place—to think, talk, feel and pray. Find compassion, rest and peace... at least for a time.

### EMMAUS ONE-HOUR MIDWEEK REFLECTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Join us for an hour of spiritual nourishment offered by an Emmaus Spiritual Leader, followed by a short discussion with other grieving parents who know somewhat of your pain.

**EMMAUS FIVE-HOUR VIRTUAL RETREATS:** Give yourself the gift of getting away from the rest of the world for an extended period of time to focus on your spiritual journey after the death of your child. Register for an Emmaus Ministry Virtual Five-Hour Spiritual Retreat, live on Zoom.

**Space is limited! When maximum number is reached, registration will close. REGISTER TODAY!** Or see [www.emfgp.org](http://www.emfgp.org) for more information.



Learn more at [www.emfgp.org](http://www.emfgp.org) or call (800) 919-9332



LIVE!

## All are welcome

**One-Hour Midweek Reflection**  
Feb. 17, 2021  
8-9 p.m. ET  
Offered by EMFGP Arizona

**FIVE-HOUR VIRTUAL RETREAT**  
March 20, 2021  
11:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. ET  
Offered by St. Patrick Parish and The Archdiocese of Omaha, NE

**FIVE-HOUR VIRTUAL RETREAT**  
April 17, 2021  
10:15 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. ET  
Offered by the Archdioceses of New York and Boston and the Dioceses of Albany and Wheeling-Charleston, WV

**One-Hour Midweek Reflection**  
May 26, 2021  
8 - 9 p.m. ET  
Offered by EMFGP Rhode Island

**FIVE-HOUR VIRTUAL RETREAT**  
June 19, 2021  
10:15 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. ET  
Offered by the Archdioceses of New York and Boston and the Dioceses of Albany and Wheeling-Charleston, WV

**CELEBRATION! OUR FIRST-IN-OVER-A-YEAR IN-PERSON RETREAT**  
**August 14, 2021**  
9:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. ET  
Our Lady of Lourdes, Carver, MA

**Registration Required:** Space for each retreat is limited. Registration will close when we reach the maximum number of parents.

**Cost:** Optional Free-Will Offering

**ZOOM:** Internet connection and computer literacy required. You will receive an Emmaus Zoom Meeting ID and Password after you register. You do not need to open a Zoom account.

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# Knights of Columbus Extend Free, First-Year Membership Offer to June 30

**By Colleen Rowan**

The Knights of Columbus have extended their offer of free, first-year membership to Catholic men 18 years and older who sign up online. The free membership offer will be open until June 30.

"We are Catholic men who lead, serve, protect and defend. We share a desire to be better husbands, fathers, sons, neighbors, and role models and to put charity and community first. We are role models in a world that needs them. ... This is what it means to be a Knight," the organization states on its website.

The West Virginia Knights of Columbus has councils all over the state. They assist charities, are Pro-Life advocates, and promote the Catholic faith and patriotism throughout West Virginia. In a letter to Catholic men last year, Bishop Mark Brennan encouraged them to consider joining the organization.

"The Knights of Columbus are not just another 'club,'" Bishop Brennan wrote. "They are Catholic men committed to living out their faith in practice."

The organization describes its mission as promoting the original principles of Blessed Father Michael J. McGivney (founder of the Knights of Columbus) of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism, and to serve as an example of Cath-

olic gentlemen dedicated to the church and its principles and teachings.

The West Virginia Knights' vision is: "To be the leaders of Catholic principles, teachings and values in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston and to create a Knights of Columbus organization based on our founding principles and dedicated to God and our families that all Catholic gentlemen in the diocese aspire to be a part."

The national Knights of Columbus state on the organization's website: "Our goal is to strengthen men and their families in the Catholic faith. Formation in our faith goes beyond mere facts or religious practice to an authentic connection with a loving God and his son Jesus Christ.

"Knights are called to serve others. Our first principle is charity—at home with our families and in our communities. When Knights of Columbus members come together they accomplish great things. The Knights of Columbus vigorously defend the dignity of each human being at every stage of life."

The special free, first-year membership opened again Jan. 31, and is being offered in honor of the recent beatification of Blessed Michael McGivney.

"The founder of the Knights of Columbus, Father Michael J.

McGivney was a central figure in the growth of Catholicism in America, and he remains a model today," Michael Bush, Public Relations chairman for the West Virginia Knights of Columbus State Council, said in a piece he wrote for The Catholic Spirit in November. "His example of charity, evangelization, and empowerment of the laity continues to bear fruit and guide Knights of Columbus around the world."

The free membership campaign was launched last year and ended Dec. 31. However, the organization decided to reopen and extend the

offer to June 31. Regular dues are \$30 a year.

To obtain the free, first-year membership, sign up online on the organization's website: [kofc.org/joinus](http://kofc.org/joinus) and use promotion code MCGIVNEY2020.

For more information about the West Virginia Knights of Columbus, contact: Paul Niedbalski, state deputy, (304) 545-5100 or by e-mail to [ginooffice@aol.com](mailto:ginooffice@aol.com); Harry Helmick, membership chair, (304) 295-7097 or by e-mail to [helmickhp@yahoo.com](mailto:helmickhp@yahoo.com); or Sam Gross, online membership chair, (304) 545-4329 or by e-mail to [hawkeye221@aol.com](mailto:hawkeye221@aol.com).

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Visit [kofc.org/joinus](http://kofc.org/joinus)  
enter the code  
**MCGIVNEY2020**





## Mount Calvary Cemetery

Wheeling, W.Va.


### Cemetery Spring Clean-Up

We will be conducting our Spring clean-up at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Wheeling, W.Va., weather permitting, beginning March 1 and concluding March 15.

All items will be removed throughout the entire cemetery (graves and mausoleums).  
Items in vases on the graves will be removed too.  
**Please remove any items you wish to keep by February 28.**  
After February 28 all items will be removed.

**Please do not place any items in the cemetery until March 16th.**

Further information is available at  
Mount Calvary Cemetery Office by calling (304) 242-0460.



Copies of the rules and regulations are available at Mount Calvary Cemetery's Main Office.

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# A Day That Begins with Prayer is a Good Day, Pope Says

By **Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service**

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** — Prayer makes every day better, even the most difficult days, Pope Francis said.

Prayer transforms a person's day "into grace, or better, it transforms us: it appeases anger, sustains love, multiplies joy, instills the strength to forgive," the pope said Feb. 10 during his weekly general audience.

Prayer is a constant reminder that God is nearby and so, "the problems we face no longer seem to be obstacles to our happiness, but appeals from God, opportunities to encounter him," Pope Francis said, continuing his series of audience talks about prayer.

"When you start to feel anger, dissatisfaction or something negative, stop and say, 'Lord, where are you and where am I going?' The Lord is there," the pope said. "And he will give you the right word, a piece of advice for moving forward without this bitter, negative taste, because prayer is always — to use a secular word — positive. It moves you forward."

"When we are accompanied by the Lord, we feel more courageous, freer and also happier," he said. "So, let's pray always and for everyone, even our enemies. This is what Jesus advised us, 'Pray for your enemies.'"

By placing one in touch with God, the pope said, "prayer inclines us toward an overabundant love."

In addition to praying for one's family and friends, Pope Francis

asked people to "pray above all for people who are sad, for those who weep in solitude and despair that there still might be someone who loves them."

Prayer, he said, helps people love others, "despite their mistakes and sins. The person is always more important than his or her actions, and Jesus did not judge the world, but he saved it."

"Those people who always are judging others have an awful life; they are always condemning, judging," he said. "It's a sad, unhappy life. Jesus came to save us. Open your heart, forgive, excuse the others, understand them, be close to them, have compassion and tenderness, like Jesus."

At the end of the audience, Pope Francis led prayers for all who died or were injured Feb. 7 in northern India when part of a glacier broke off, setting off a major flood that smashed two hydroelectric dams that were under construction. More than 200 people were feared dead.

He also expressed his best wishes to the millions of people in Asia and around the world who will celebrate Lunar New Year Feb. 12.

Pope Francis said he hoped all those celebrating would enjoy a year of "fraternity and solidarity. At this time when there are such strong worries about facing the challenges of the pandemic, which touches not only people's bodies and souls, but also impacts social relationships, I hope that each person may enjoy the fullness of health and serenity."

## Pandemic Shows Need for New Model of Care for Elderly, Academy Says

By **Catholic News Service**

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** — A new attitude and approach toward the elderly are needed in today's world, especially in the places and ways they are cared for when they become more fragile, said the Pontifical Academy for Life. To make sure the needs of older people are met and their gifts appreciated, renewed attention and new solutions must be given to assisted living facilities, architectural barriers, friendships and social support networks, in-home caregivers, families and younger family members and opportunities in parishes, the academy said in a new document. Released Feb. 9, the 11-page "note" is titled, "Old Age: Our Future. The Elderly After the Pandemic," and was made available in six languages at [academyforlife.va](http://academyforlife.va). It offers a reflection on the importance of the elderly and the challenges the older generation faces and will face, given the World Health Organization's estimate that by 2050, the world will have 2 billion people over the age of 60, that is, one out of every five people in the world. The academy also appealed to every facet of society, including families, health care providers, city administrators and local parishes to be more attentive to and inclusive of older people, reviewing and rebuilding the way they welcome and care for people in their fragility.

*Is our  
Lord  
calling  
you?*



You may find the answer at the

## Men's Priestly Discernment Retreat

Saturday, March 20

St. John XXIII Pastoral Center  
Charleston, WV

For college-age young men  
and older

*Presented by the Vocation Office  
Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston*

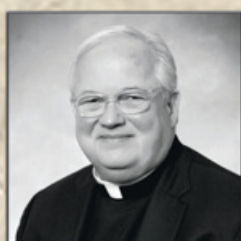
Do you desire a life of sacrifice and faithful service to God and His People? Do you desire to give yourself completely to God in a life of consecration and commitment to building up the kingdom of God here in West Virginia? Perhaps the Lord is calling you to be a Priest of Jesus Christ in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston!

The annual diocesan Men's Priestly Discernment Retreat will be held on Saturday, March 20 at the Pope St. John XXIII Pastoral Center (100 Hodges Rd, Charleston, WV 25314) from 10AM – 5PM. This event is open to men 18 years and older who are simply open to reflecting on God's will for them in their lives. The day will consist of Holy Mass, prayer, reflections on the priesthood, and the opportunity for the Sacrament of Confession.

**For any men interested in attending, email Rick Teachout at [rteachout@dwc.org](mailto:rteachout@dwc.org) or call (304) 233-0880, ext. 442.**



In the generous spirit of **SAINT JOSEPH**, our Diocesan Patron, we give thanks for our priests who serve the People of God in West Virginia.



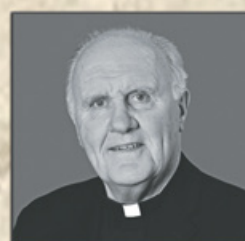
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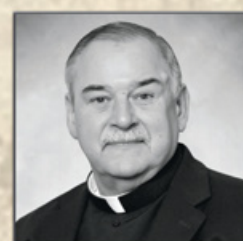
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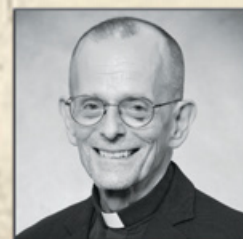
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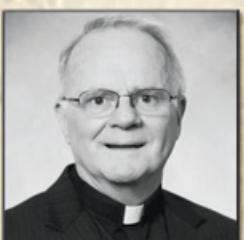
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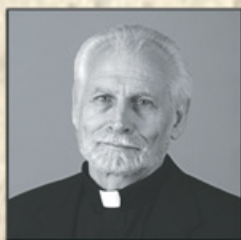
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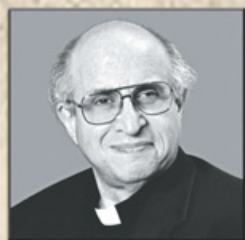
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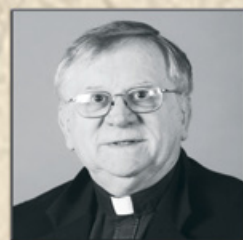
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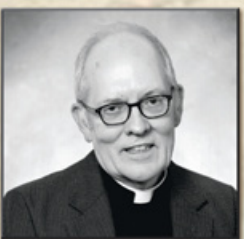
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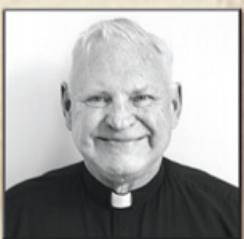
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Fr. Laurence Wrenn

**RETIREMENT FUND FOR DIOCESAN PRIESTS**

**COLLECTION DATE: March 7, 2021**



# Wheeling University Named Best for Value in West Virginia by Niche.com

**WHEELING**—Wheeling University has been named the Best Value College in West Virginia by Niche.com – the second collegiate ranking and review service this year to make this distinction.

“Once again, a national ranking service is recognizing Wheeling University for what so many already know – we provide students with an affordable, quality, Catholic education that prepares them well for the job market or graduate school. This recognition by Niche is a tribute to the dedicated faculty who deliver Wheeling University students a well-rounded education,” said Ginny R. Favede, president of Wheeling University.

“Despite the significant challenges brought forward in 2020 by the global pandemic, Wheeling University has continued to deliver on its promise,” said Favede. “The fact that keeping our promise to our students and their families is being recognized by external organizations, which commend our rigorous instruction, exemplary residential and learning environment, affordability, and student-centered services, is further testament to our unwavering commitment.”

Niche.com is the second ranking service to name Wheeling University a “Best Value.” In September, U.S. News & World Report also recognized the institution as a Best Value School among its peers. Additionally, the university was selected the best regional university in West Virginia by the 2021 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges Rankings.

Niche.com, an online rankings and review site founded in 2002, explores colleges to determine which institutions are a best value based on net price, alumni earnings, graduation rates and student debt. Niche uses data from the U.S. Department of Education, as well as reviews from students and alumni, to rigorously analyze and rank colleges and universities.

The rankings awarded Wheeling University a score of B+ for value. The University received an A for diversity and its faculty received a B+.



Courtesy Photo

## Wheeling University

“One hundred percent of the student polled told Niche, Wheeling University professors are passionate about teaching and care about the success of their students. This information re-affirms what we already know – our professors are dedicated to educating students to succeed in the classroom and in life,” Favede added.

Favede said by looking at a variety of data sources and reviews to determine its rankings, “Niche.com provides students and parents a holistic picture of what Wheeling University offers – from cost to academics to campus life – and compares those grades to our competition. Wheeling University was founded to provide the men and women of Appalachia a quality, affordable, Catholic education. Sixty-six years later, I am proud this university continues to be recognized for remaining true to those core values.”

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# World Marriage Day to be Celebrated This Year on Feb. 14, Valentine's Day

**By Catholic News Service**

**WASHINGTON (CNS)** — This year, World Marriage Day, observed annually on the second Sunday of February, will be celebrated Feb. 14, which also is the feast of St. Valentine and which since the eighth century has been a celebration of love and affection.

In the United States, National Marriage Week leads up to World Marriage Day and this year's theme for the weeklong observance, which began Feb. 7, is "To Have, To Hold, To Honor."

The theme was chosen "to highlight how married couples live and renew their wedding promises daily in the building up of the domestic church in their homes, particularly as many couples and families have spent more time at home together this year," said a news release from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Each year, the week provides "an opportunity for the Catholic Church to focus on building a culture of life and love that begins with supporting and promoting marriage and the family," the release said, adding that the week also "is a great prompt for everyone to reflect on the gift marriage is to our church and our country, as well as an opportunity for couples to build up their own marriages."

Two events during the week were livestreamed on the USCCB's Facebook page: a rosary for married and engaged couples Feb. 10, led by San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life

and Youth; and a conversation about St. Joseph as a model of fatherhood and spousal love Feb. 12.

The USCCB offers resources to Catholics for the promotion and defense of marriage as a lifelong union of one man and one woman through its dedicated websites ForYourMarriage.org, Por

TuMatrimonio.org, and MarriageUniqueForAReason.org.

The conference also provides resources to dioceses for National Marriage Week, including a preaching aid for priests, bulletin insert or flyer for parish bulletins, prayer intentions, and a seven-day at-home marriage retreat for

married couples, available in English and Spanish. These resources are available for download at ForYourMarriage.org/celebrate-national-marriage-week.

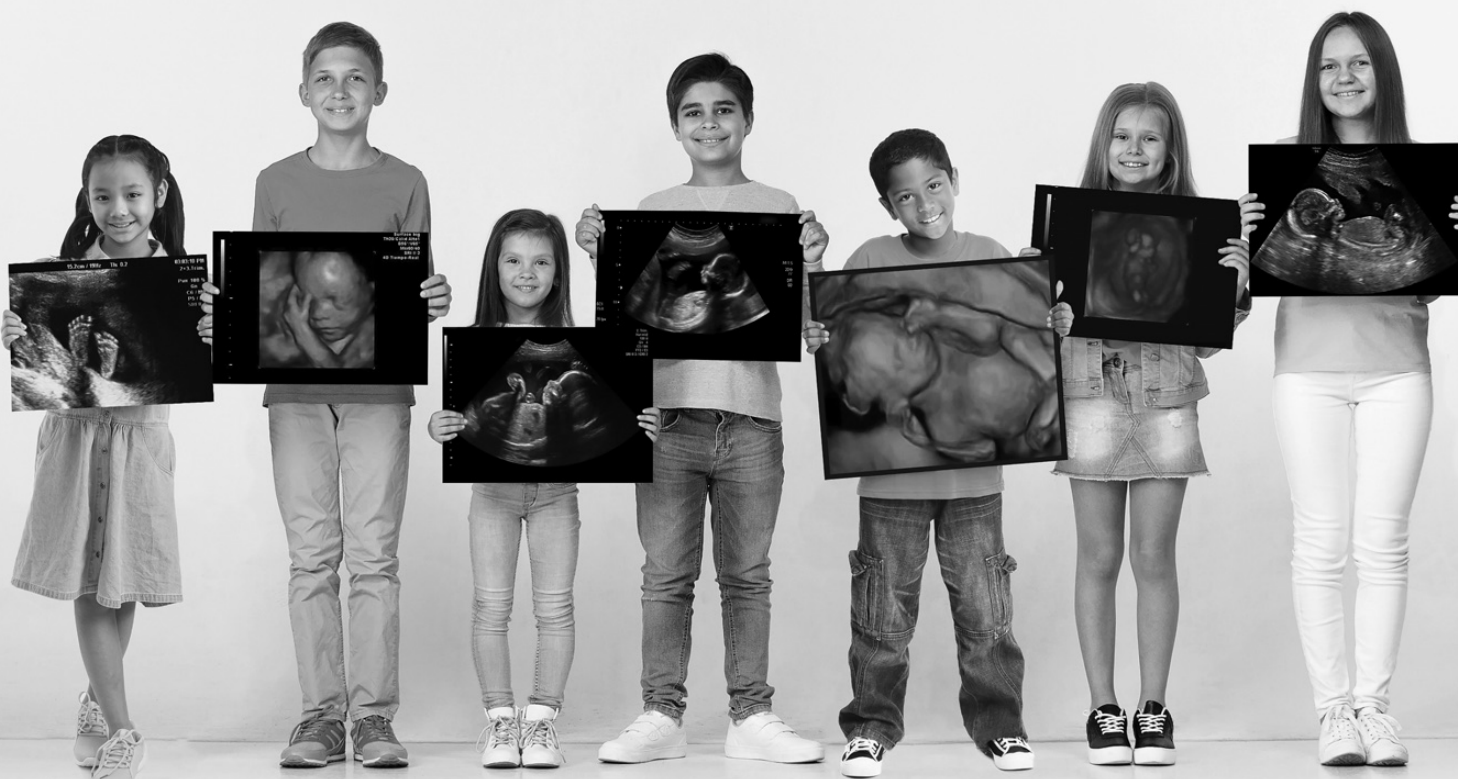
World Marriage Day was started in 1983 by World-wide Marriage Encounter.

National Marriage Week USA — which has its own


website, [www.nationalmarriageweekusa.org](http://www.nationalmarriageweekusa.org) — was launched in 2010 as part of an international event meant to "mobilize individuals, organizations and businesses in a common purpose to strengthen marriage in communities and influence the culture," according to the USCCB.


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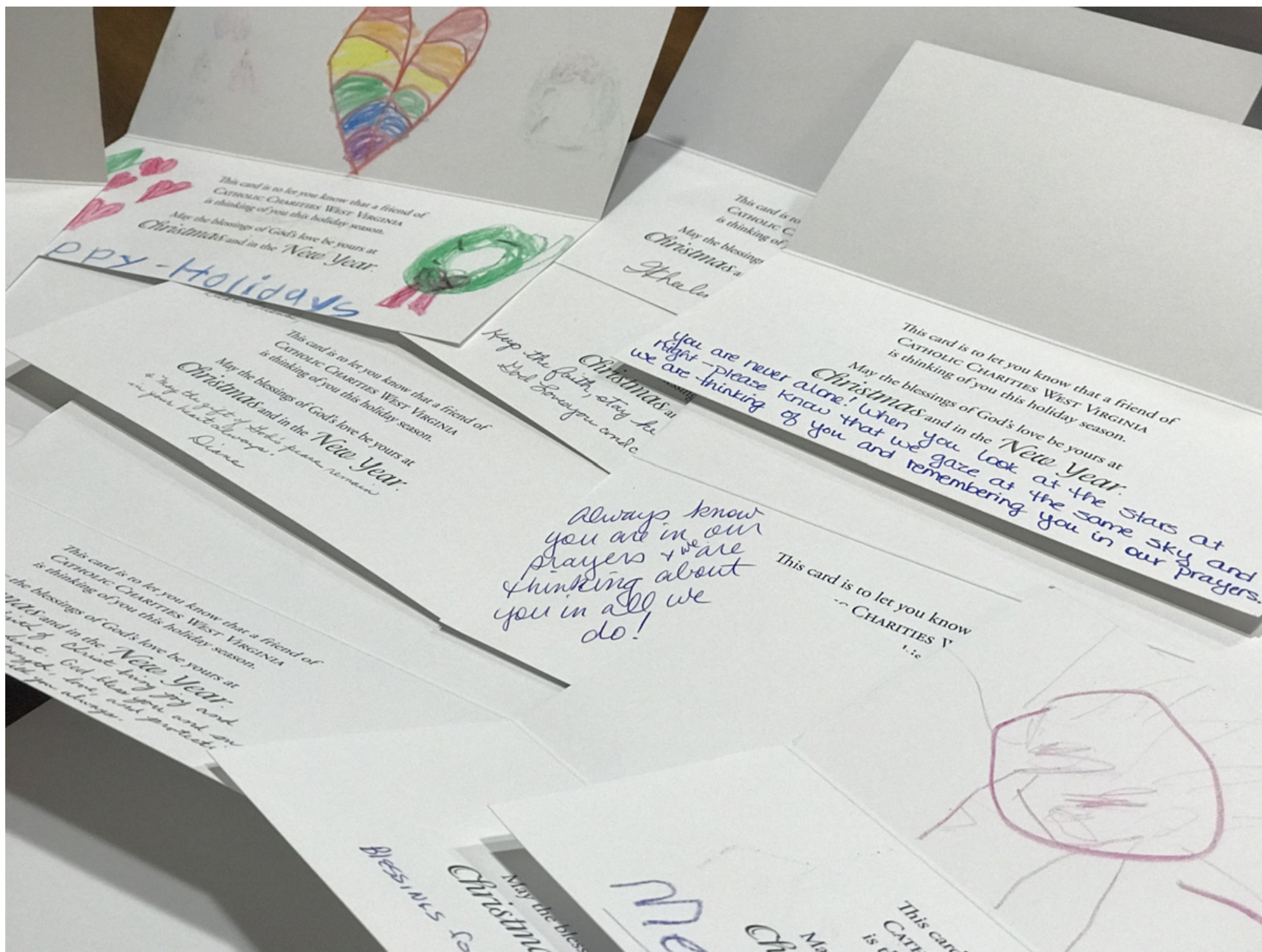
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Catholic Charities  
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Mission Moment

# Connecting in New and Creative Ways



Courtesy Photo

Catholic Charities West Virginia donors included personal messages to people in need during the 2020 holiday season.

## By Katie Hinerman Klug, Catholic Charities West Virginia Marketing Communications Specialist

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, our Catholic Charities West Virginia team has learned to adapt our services in new and innovative ways to meet our clients' needs. From video conferences to drive-through food pantries, we learned to connect in creative ways.

That creativity carried through to our year-end appeal. We included a greeting card in the mailing, but asked donors not to keep it; instead, we asked them to write a message to one of those we serve and mail it back to us.

The greeting card message noted, "This card is to let you know that a friend of Catholic Charities West Virginia is thinking of you this holiday season."

We distributed the cards through our various regional offices. This connection was an opportunity for our clients to feel seen and supported, and it was a way for donors to interact with people in need at a time when it was difficult to see one another in person.

The outpouring of love we received was overwhelming. Messages included:

"Stay strong! You matter!"

"Always know that you are in our hearts and prayers and we are thinking about you in all we do!"

"May the birth of Christ bring joy and peace to your heart. God bless you and surround you with His strength, love and protection. You are never alone; He is with you always."

"I try to remember this one passage. It has helped me in my most trying times. The passage is

this: Jeremiah 29:11. Try to never give up HOPE."

"You are never alone! When you look at the stars at night, please know that we gaze at the same sky we are thinking of you and remembering you in our prayers."

"Life can be very difficult; but it is important to remember people care about you."

We are grateful for the support of our donors, whose generosity enables us to continue making a difference in West Virginia.

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.

# University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation Offering Two Courses

**WEST VIRGINIA**—Two five-week courses are being offered through the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF). These courses are hybrid models. They are composed of both weekly live two-hour Zoom lectures as well as a rich variety of online course materials and discussion experiences through the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community For Faith Formation (VLCFF).

The courses are being underwritten by the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, who pays 100% of the tuition and the cost of the books associated with the courses. The course instructor is Dr. Rodica Stoicoiu.

For further information or to register, contact Jeanne McKeets at [jmckeets@dwc.org](mailto:jmckeets@dwc.org) with your name, address, and phone number. The last day to register is Friday, Feb. 19.

## **Ecclesiology: Beginnings of the Church**

Ecclesiology is the theological study of the Church and in this course we will learn basic terms and concepts that are essential for understanding the Church's nature and mission, and how these have been a constant theme in the Church's evolution as a "living organism" throughout history. We will focus on the New Testament Church, those earliest of Christians and what it

felt like to be a Christian in the first century. We will look at this time of development and transition as community and leadership rose. We will study the early questions that arose in this time period and we will end with how this early Church serves as a guide and blueprint for issues in the Church today.

Although the class will meet regularly on Thursday nights, the first night of the class will be on Wednesday, Feb. 24 at 7 p.m. This is due to a Diocesan wide Zoom presentation with Bishop John Stowe on Thursday, Feb. 25, which we don't want to interfere with. Offered Thursdays 7-9 p.m.

## **Introduction to Scripture**

Though an introductory course can't cover everything one needs to know to navigate the world of scripture, this course provides the basic concepts to begin the journey! We will focus on how the Bible came about, what were some of the cultural factors which influenced the events around the writings of the Old and New Testaments, and what Church documents today tell us about the Bible. Our focus will be on how Catholics read and interpret the Bible. Offered Thursdays 1-3 p.m.

All courses run from Feb. 21-March 27; successful completion is worth 2.5 CEU's if taken for score.

# IC Parish Nurses to Host Virtual Lenten Program with Spiritual Reflection, Fitness, and Fellowship

**CLARKSBURG**—The Immaculate Conception Parish Nurses will be hosting a virtual "Walk to the Cross" group throughout Lent. The purpose of the group is to promote spiritual reflection, fitness, and fellowship. The group will meet each Sunday at 7 p.m. throughout Lent via Zoom. The first virtual meeting will be on Feb. 21. Members will need to purchase their own devotions booklet.

To register or for more information, visit IC Parish Nurses on Facebook.

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**VIRTUAL GALA**

Save the Date

March 16, 2021

# Un día que comienza con la oración es un buen día

Por Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

**CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS)**—La oración hace que cada día sea mejor, incluso los días más difíciles, dijo el papa Francisco.

La oración transforma el día de una persona "en gracia, o mejor, que nos transforma: apacigua la ira, sostiene el amor, multiplica la alegría, infunde la fuerza para perdonar", dijo el papa el 10 de febrero durante su audiencia general semanal.

La oración es un recordatorio constante de que Dios está cerca y para que "problemas a afrontar no sean estorbos a nuestra felicidad, sino llamadas de Dios, ocasiones para nuestro encuentro con Él.", dijo el papa Francisco, continuando su serie de charlas en audiencia sobre la oración.

"Y cuando nos viene un pensamiento de rabia, de descontento, que nos lleva hacia la amargura. Detengámonos y digamos al Señor: '¿Dónde estás? ¿Y dónde estoy yendo yo?' Y el Señor está ahí, el Señor nos dará la palabra justa, el consejo para ir adelante sin este zumo amargo del negativo", dijo el papa. "Porque la oración siempre, usando una palabra profana, es positiva. Siempre. Te lleva adelante".

"Cuando uno es acompañado



Foto CNS / Vatican Media  
El papa Francisco dirige su audiencia general en la biblioteca del Palacio Apostólico del Vaticano el 10 de febrero de 2021. El papa habló sobre la importancia de la oración diaria.

por el Señor, se siente más valiente, más libre, y también más feliz", dijo. "Por (lo) tanto, recemos siempre por todo y por todos, también por los enemigos. Jesús nos ha aconsejado esto: 'Rezad por los enemigos'".

Además de rezar por la familia y los amigos, el papa Francisco pidió a las personas que "recemos sobre todo por las personas infelices, por aquellos que lloran en

la soledad y desesperan porque todavía haya un amor que late por ellos".

La oración, dijo, ayuda a la gente a amar a los demás, "no obstante sus errores y sus pecados. La persona siempre es más importante que sus acciones, y Jesús no ha juzgado al mundo, sino que lo ha salvado".

"Es una vida fea la de las personas que siempre están juz-

gando a los otros, siempre están condenando, juzgando", dijo. "Es una vida fea, infeliz. Jesús ha venido a salvarnos: abre tu corazón, perdona, justifica a los otros, entiende, también tú sé cercano a los otros, ten compasión, ten ternura como Jesús".

Al final de la audiencia, el papa Francisco pidió oraciones por todos los que murieron o resultaron heridos el 7 de febrero en el norte de la India cuando se rompió parte de un glaciar, provocando una gran inundación que destruyó dos represas hidroeléctricas que estaban en construcción. Se teme que más de 200 personas hayan muerto.

También expresó sus mejores deseos a millones de personas en Asia y en todo el mundo que celebrarán el Año Nuevo Lunar el 12 de febrero.

El papa Francisco dijo que espera que todos los que celebran disfruten de un año de

"frutos de fraternidad y solidaridad. En este momento particular, en el cual son fuertes las preocupaciones para afrontar los desafíos de la pandemia, que toca no solo el físico y el alma de las personas, sino que influye también en las relaciones sociales, formuló el deseo de que cada uno pueda gozar de buena salud y serenidad de vida".

**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 variarán 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 Am-

biente 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.



# Employment Opportunities

## Director of Human Resources

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is seeking to hire a Director of Human Resources, a full-time position based at the Chancery Building in Wheeling, West Virginia. Reporting to the Vicar General of the Diocese, the Director of Human Resources develops policy and directs and coordinates human resources activities such as employment, compensation, labor relations, benefits, training and employee services. Essential duties includes overseeing the employee onboarding system, providing data on wage and salary information, explaining policy directives to department managers, consulting with legal counsel on a regular basis regarding employment issues, managing records in compliance with law or governmental authorities, delivering presentations to department directors regarding human resources policies and practices, administering all benefit programs and government regulatory standards, and maintaining all records required by the Affordable Care Act, including all necessary ACA reporting requirements.

Qualification requirements include a Bachelor's degree (Master's preferred), 4-10 years of experience in an administrative position, expertise in federal and state employee legislation, excellent interpersonal and communication skills, ability to provide direction on personnel issues, familiarity with payroll databases and Microsoft Office suite, ability to work within a team environment and the successful candidate must adhere to the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church and possess a clear sense of a Catholic Theology of work and compensation. Position will remain posted until filled. Applications may be directed to the Human Resources Office, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, P.O. Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

## Outreach Coordinator Southern Region – Loaves & Fishes

Catholic Charities West Virginia is seeking a full-time Outreach Coordinator in its Southern Region Loaves & Fishes location in Hinton. The Outreach Coordinator oversees all on-site services including the food pantry and thrift store. He or she provides direct service to clients and customers, keeps accurate records, carries out clerical duties, and helps establish and maintain effective community partnerships. The Coordinator assists the Regional Director with all aspects of program development and fundraising at Loaves & Fishes Outreach.

Qualifications include: High school or equivalent. Experience in social service field preferred. Excellent computer and data tracking skills. Ability to work with disadvantaged clientele with compassion, understanding, and a positive attitude. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills; experience in serving the public. Ability to lift and move up to 70 pounds. Reliable transportation required.

Please email resume, cover letter, and three professional references by 02/19/2021 to: [matwood@ccwva.org](mailto:matwood@ccwva.org). Application materials can also be delivered to: Matt Atwood, Southern Regional Director, 203 S. 7th Street, Princeton, WV 24740

## Early Childhood Associate - TRAILS Child Care Resource Center

Catholic Charities West Virginia is seeking a full-time Early Childhood Associate-TRAILS in its Child Care Resource Center office in Wheeling, WV. The TRAILS Associate is responsible for keeping inventory clean and up to date in the WASP inventory tracking system, safely operate and maintain the TRAILS van, communicate with child care providers linking them to resources as needed, and represent CCRC in a professional manner. The TRAILS Associate must be able and willing to work cooperatively and meet the expectations of West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Bureau of Children and Families Division of Early Care and Education Policy and Procedure Manual for Child Care Resource and Referral Services. In addition the TRAILS associate must follow CCWVa, CCRC and TRAILS Policy and Procedure. This individual works collaboratively with other members of the Professional Development Team.

Qualifications: Must possess a High School diploma or GED with prior experience working with young children. Must be willing to register or be registered on the WV STARS Career Pathway for professional Development. Must hold a valid driver's license and have the ability to drive agency van throughout service area and state. Must be able to maintain confidentiality. Must subject to a background check prior to hire and any time after.

Please send cover letter, updated resume, and three professional references by March 1, 2021, to Brittany Lucci, Child Care Resource Center Director, 965 Hartman Run Road, Suite 1103, Morgantown, WV 26505, or submit via email to [brittany.k.lucci@wv.gov](mailto:brittany.k.lucci@wv.gov)

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# Health Care Organizations in Ohio County Team up to Provide COVID Vaccines to WV Residents

**WHEELING**—Major health care facilities and agencies in Ohio County have joined forces to vaccinate as many area West Virginia residents as possible against the COVID-19 virus. The Community Vaccine Clinic collaboration includes Wheeling Hospital, the Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department, the county Emergency Management Agency and Wheeling Health Right.

The combined resources of people, vaccines and infrastructure will be leveraged to operate in the most efficient manner possible. The clinic, which went into operation Feb. 4, is located in the former Michael's store at the Highlands. To be vaccinated first are West Virginia residents 65 years and older.

"This community vaccination clinic is further evidence of how West Virginia is leading the nation in getting our citizens vaccinated," Douglass Harrison, Wheeling Hospital CEO, said. "This event also epitomizes the definition of community and how all community members pull resources together for the greater good. Wheeling Hospital is honored

to work side-by-side with our community partners to do our part to stop the spread of this dreadful virus."

Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department Administrator Howard Gamble said, "The community vaccination center will allow Wheeling Hospital, the Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department, Wheeling-Ohio County Emergency Management and Wheeling Health Right a venue to provide vaccinations to the public in a single location. It is our hope that a convenient and accessible location will increase our vaccination services to the residents of Ohio County."

Kathie Brown, Health Right executive director, said, "Wheeling Health Right is honored to be a community health partner in bringing the vaccine to as many West Virginia residents as possible. We have worked tirelessly with Wheeling Hospital and the Wheeling Ohio County Health Department to offer widespread testing and are now looking forward to doing the same through vaccinating our residents."

"In emergency management, the best way to deal with a disaster or event or response is by using the 'Whole Community' planning model," said Lou Vargo, director of the Wheeling-Ohio County Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency. "This is an example of this model in action. By the County Homeland Security Agency and Health Department working with our community partners especially Wheeling Hospital, Wheeling University, Health Right, and other volunteer agencies and business, we can work as a team for the best care and service to our citizens."

As vaccine supplies become more readily available, the vaccine clinic will be able to vaccinate 1,000 people per day. Nationally, West Virginia continues to be recognized for its success at getting the vaccine in people's arms.

The clinic will operate Thursday through Saturday or Sunday, based on the amount of vaccines made available through the federal and state governments. Also providing support for the clinic are volunteers from Wheeling Univer-

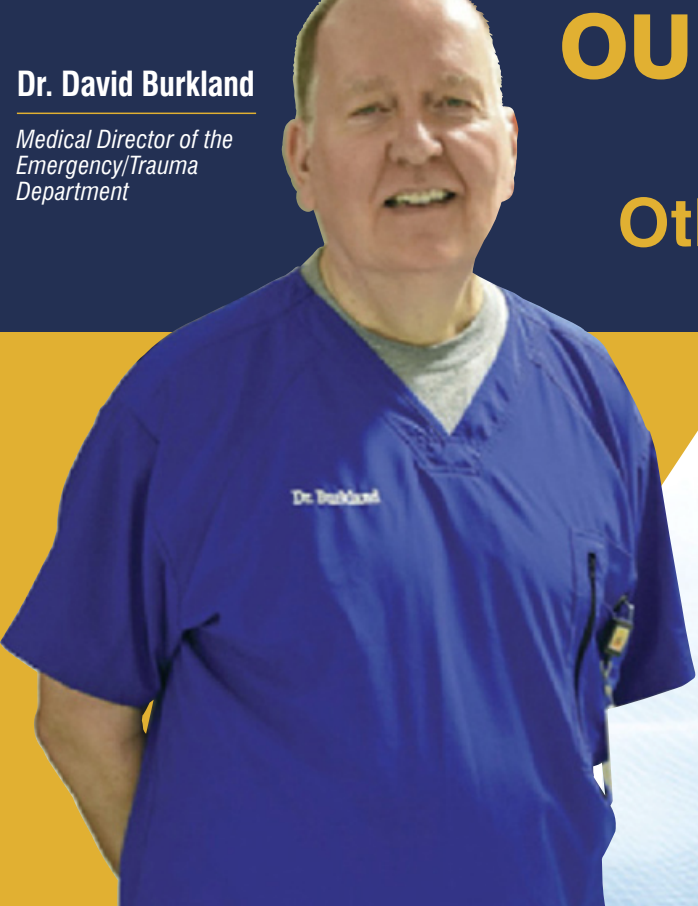
sity.

The clinic will not accept any walk-in appointments, and patients must present a valid West Virginia ID, or U.S. passport and a utility bill with a West Virginia address, to verify West Virginia residence.

West Virginians can pre-register online at [vaccinate.wv.gov](https://vaccinate.wv.gov). Those who have already been placed on a wait list through their local health department or other medical provider, as well as those who have already received their first vaccine dose, will be integrated into this new system and thus do not need to pre-register.

Users will get a message after registering to confirm they are in the system, and will be sent updates regularly. The system sends texts, email, and phone calls.

Any West Virginian who does not have the ability to register online can call the COVID-19 Vaccine Info Line at 1-833-734-0965 to get help with pre-registration. The call center is active from Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



**Dr. David Burkland**  
Medical Director of the  
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