

THE CATHOLIC  
Spirit

## Seeing so Many at Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion is a Joy, Bishop Brennan Says



Martina Hart Photo

Godparents place their hands on the elect and sponsors place their hands on the candidates as the Catholic faithful pray for them during the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston Feb. 18.

**By Colleen Rowan**

As Bishop Mark Brennan began the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion in Charleston Feb. 18, he said it was a joy to see so many who want to be one with us in the Catholic Church.

"A joy," he said, "because there

is so much God offers to us through this church."

Candidates and catechumens gathered with their sponsors and Godparents that day at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart for parishes of the southern region of the diocese.

"This is a place where Jesus

Christ may be found, worshipped, served, and honored," Bishop Brennan continued. "And that's what we're called to do—to live as his disciples and to help others to find him because he is the source of life, the source of genuine freedom, the source of the fullness of all God's blessings."

This was the first of the three celebrations of the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion in the diocese with the second to be held at St. James the Greater Church in Charles Town Feb. 24 at 11 a.m. for the parishes of the Eastern Panhandle, and the third at the

**See "Joy" on Page 3**

## Wheeling University President Ginny Favede Suspended, Relieved of Duties

**WHEELING** — The Wheeling University Board of Trustees has suspended Ginny Favede, with pay, as president of Wheeling University and relieved her of all duties. The announcement was made the evening of Feb. 20 in an e-mail.

Dr. Dianna Vargo will now serve as the interim chief operations officer and will work directly with the board to develop a plan for moving forward, the announcement stated. Vargo is director of Graduate Education and Accelerated Certification for Teaching Programs at Wheel-

ing University and the former superintendent of Ohio County Schools.

The announcement further stated, "The Board of Trustees is working to ensure that all functions of the university continue without disruption."

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## Obituary—Sister Loretta Fahey, VHM

Sister Loretta Fahey, VHM, age 81, died peacefully at Good Shepherd Nursing Home, Wheeling, WV, on Thursday, February 15, 2024.

Sr. Loretta was born in Wheeling, West Virginia, to the late Joseph P. and Helen (Wingerter) Fahey. She entered the Monastery of the Visitation at Mount de Chantal, Wheeling in 1960 and was called to the Sisters of the Visitation in Washington, DC in 2012 where she was elected to the Monastery Council, served as a member of the Monastery Board, and was Formation Director of Novices.



Sr. Loretta was an educator most of her life. She taught Grades 6 & 9 at Mount de Chantal Visitation Academy; Sixth grade at St. Michael Parish School of Religion and served as the Director of Religious Education; Adjunct Instructor, BOLD Program, "Religion and Spirituality", and Religious Studies at Wheeling Jesuit University; and more recently taught and led PSR classes on Sunday mornings at St. Michael Catholic Church. In addition to her broad teaching experience, she also served as a Guidance Counselor, Director of Women's Retreat, Preacher & co-director at several parishes in MD, PA, MI and OH; and was a Spiritual Director in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

She held degrees from Carlow University, Xavier University, Wheeling Jesuit University, and a certificate from Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation.

Sr. Loretta's spiritual roots and faith grew from her family and her education at St. Michael's School where she attended from grades 1-8 and received the Sacraments of Baptism, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation. When she was called to the monastery in Washington, D.C., she continued to be in touch with St. Michael's through social media and never forgot her Ohio Valley roots. As her health needs increased, she had the opportunity to move back home to Wheeling where she received the utmost care and compassion from the staff at Good Shepherd Nursing Home.

Sr. Loretta loved Wheeling, WV and she loved Mount de Chantal. She also had a passion for music and spent much of her free time listening to her Bose sound system. Sister Loretta traveled around the country leading retreats and she was a Spiritual Director to people far and wide. She loved her Mount de Chantal classmates and kept in touch with all of them. But the most important thing in Loretta's life was her love of God and her vocation to serve Him. She will be missed by the many whose lives she touched.

Family and friends will be received at 10:00 a.m. on February 23, 2024 at St. Michael Catholic Church, 1225 National Road, Wheeling, WV, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00 a.m. The funeral liturgy will be live streamed via a link on Sr. Loretta's obituary page at [www.altmeyerfuneralhomes.com](http://www.altmeyerfuneralhomes.com).

Following the funeral liturgy, cremation and entombment will be held at Mount Calvary Cemetery, Wheeling, WV, at a date to be determined.

Funeral arrangements by Altmeyer Funeral Home, 1400 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV.

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

**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.reportbishop-abuse.org](http://www.reportbishop-abuse.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.reportbishop-abuse.org](http://www.reportbishop-abuse.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; or Sr. Martha Gomez, ext. 264. 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. Additional methods of reporting are available at [www.dwc.org](http://www.dwc.org), under "Accountability." Complaint forms are available online at [www.dwc.org](http://www.dwc.org), click "Diocese" on the menu bar, then "Offices," then "Safe Environment", then "Download Files and Forms." The form is titled "Complaint Form for Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor." The form may be returned via U.S. mail to: Office of Safe Environment, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003. **To Report to the Diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator:** please call Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, at 304.559.6742. 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.

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# Catholic Charities Announces 2024 Charity in Action Award Recipient

**WHEELING** — Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) announced the recipient of its 2024 Charity in Action Award: the Life Hub.

The Life Hub is a 501c3 nonprofit organization created as a program of the Wheeling Housing Authority partnering with the City of Wheeling. The goal of the Life Hub is to acquire and operate a spacious, year-round shelter for those who are homeless.

“The Life Hub serves as a way to join community partners with city government in a cooperative effort to solve a complicated problem,” said Mark Phillips, CCWVa president and CEO. “Collapsing the divide between nonprofit entities and pub-

lic services benefits both the community and those individuals who are most in need.”

Melissa Adams serves as the Interim executive director of Life Hub and as the City of Wheeling’s homeless liaison.

“It’s a huge honor and a blessing to receive this award. It’s been a very challenging year and to see the efforts of the Life Hub and what we have done to get to where we are today to be recognized means the world to us. I am blessed, grateful, and thankful for the support, love, and recognition to be seen...it just speaks volumes,” said Adams.

The Life Hub currently operates an overnight shelter from December

through March.

“In one of her first days as the city’s homeless liaison, Melissa Adams came to us to ask what we thought would be the most effective area for her focus. We said emergency shelter,” said Phillips. “Melissa recognized this as an unmet need, and has been determined to find a solution.”

CCWVa will present the Charity in Action Award at its Hope Gala on Saturday, March 2, at the newly renovated White Palace in Wheeling. The gala will feature live music by the band Eli and the Mojo Kings.

The event is presented through the generosity of major sponsors: The Health Plan; N.F. Mansuetto & Sons, Inc.; WVU Medicine;

and the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

“We’re thrilled to celebrate our work and the work of Life Hub at our annual gala,” said Phillips. “It’s always a fun and inspiring evening with our community.”

Tickets for the gala are \$125 per person and

can be purchased at [ccwva.org/event/hope-gala-2024/](http://ccwva.org/event/hope-gala-2024/) or by calling (304) 905-9860.

Funds raised through the gala support CCWVa’s programs and services in northern West Virginia, including the Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center in Wheeling.

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## Joy ...

Cont'd from Page 1

Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling Feb. 25 at 3 p.m. for the parishes of the Northern Panhandle and central region of the state. Bishop Brennan is presider for all three celebrations.

In all, 48 parishes in the diocese have candidates and catechumens participating, taking a step closer to full communion with the Catholic Church. Their journey will culminate at the Easter Vigil at their parish churches.

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# Spring Clean-Up Scheduled at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Wheeling

**WHEELING**—The spring clean-up at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Wheeling, weather permitting, will begin March 1, and conclude March 15.

All items will be removed throughout the entire cemetery (grave, mausoleum, and columbarium). Items in vases on the graves will be removed too. Nonapproved items attached to the mausoleum

crypt facing will be removed. "Please remove any items you wish to keep by Feb. 29. After Feb. 29, all items will be removed. Please do not place any items in the cemetery until March 16," cemetery officials said.

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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# March 8th to 11th, 2024

St. Michael Parish Angelus Center, Wheeling, WV

Full exhibit details:  
[spiritcatholicradio.com/shroud](http://spiritcatholicradio.com/shroud)



# Eucharist is Theme for Day of Reflection for Catholic Men with Father Justin Golna

By Colleen Rowan

**WHEELING**—The Laymen’s Retreat League invites all Catholic men to join in a Day of Reflection with Father Justin Golna, JCL, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 9, at St. Vincent de Paul Parish’s Marist Center in Wheeling.

The theme will be on the Eucharist and the day includes light breakfast and lunch.

“During the Eucharistic Revival, a time in which we are called to rediscover the centrality of the Eucharist in our lives, it is essential that men be given opportunities to come and spend some time away with the Lord, to be strengthened by His Presence, to

be consoled and comforted by Him, to be invited to follow Him deeper on the path of discipleship,” Father Golna said. “The Day of Reflection will focus on how the Eucharist is truly the source and summit of our lives, how we can fall more deeply in love with our Lord in the Eucharist, and how we can allow the Eucharist to transform our hearts, our homes, and our very lives.”

Father Golna was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston in 2020 and is currently serving as administrator of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Wellsburg. He continued by saying that the Day of Reflection is the perfect opportunity for

Catholic men from different parishes to meet each other, “to discover that you are not alone as you walk the path of discipleship, and to come to a deeper understanding, appreciation, and love of our Lord’s continued presence among His people in the Eucharist. If you are a Catholic man desiring a deeper relationship with the Lord, hearing the call of the Lord to cast out into the deep, this is the perfect opportunity to answer the Lord’s call and spend some time with Him.”

The cost of the retreat is \$30. To attend or for more information, contact Don Klamut at (304) 280-4626 or by e-mail to laymensretreatleague@gmail.com.

# Women’s Retreat Will Help Participants to ‘Hold on to Hope!’

By Colleen Rowan

**CHARLESTON** — An upcoming women’s retreat will help participants to “Hold on to Hope!”

Co-sponsored with the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, “Hold on to Hope!” will be presented by Sister Sallie Latkovich, CSJ, March 8-10, at St. John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston.

“The focus of this retreat will be on HOPE! We will reflect together on the experience of hope in each of our lives, remembering that the single source of our hope is in God, and relying on the Scriptures that provide us hope. We will be renewed in the call to be bearers of hope in our families, our Church, our world,” promotional materials state. “May we indeed hold on to hope!”

Participants will attend Mass together and engage

in small group discussions, socials, reflection time, “prayer experience,” and more.

Sister Sallie holds a Doctor of Ministry Degree in Scripture and Spirituality. She has been active in providing spiritual direction and in giving retreats since the early 1980s and was on the faculty at Catholic Theological Union from 2009 to 2018 when she was elected to leadership in the Congregation of St. Joseph. Her term of office concluded in 2023, and she has resumed her ministry of spirituality.

“The women’s retreat has been going on for about 15 years and has provided a getaway weekend for women filled with companionship, sharing, learning, prayer and rejuvenation,” said Anna Marie Troiani, executive director of the St. Joseph Retreat Center in Wheeling. “We

Sister Sallie Latkovich, CSJ, who is passionate about retreats, spiritual companionship, faith formation, prayer, and spirituality. Her kind spirit, gentle demeanor and wisdom are among the things that I admire about her.”

Troiani along with Sandi Hudson and Gerri Wright comprise the retreat team.

The cost of the retreat is as follows: Commuter,

\$100; overnight, single occupancy, \$200; overnight, double occupancy, \$175.

For more information contact: Wright at (304) 552-3662 or gwright@dw.org; Hudson at (304) 549-4009 or shudson0155@gmail.com; or Troiani at (304) 907-0171 or atroiani@csjoseph.org.

Register online at [www.dwc.org/2024-Womens-retreat](http://www.dwc.org/2024-Womens-retreat).

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### The Synod on Synodality Continues

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After three years of the Universal Church's journey of Synodality, we *still* must ask ourselves...

**Do we yet know how to be a synodal Church in mission?**

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**MISSION: To Proclaim the Risen Lord and His Gospel to the World Today**

Let us remember what Pope Francis has taught, regarding this Synod:

**“The important thing is *how* the reflection is done, that is, in a synodal way.”**

### **Diocesan-Wide Listening Sessions**

The Bishops are asking us to hold more listening sessions – at the Diocesan level – to deepen our reflection.

Therefore, we will be conducting six (6) listening sessions, one in each vicariate, starting at 6:30 PM. They are:

- Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>: St. John XXIII P.C., Charleston
- Thursday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>: St. Leo, Inwood
- Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>: St. Francis de Sales, Beckley
- Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>: Immaculate Conception, Clarksburg
- Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup>: St. Francis Xavier, Parkersburg
- Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>: St. Michael, Wheeling

### **The Nature of This Year's Sessions**

More than just *listening* sessions, these gatherings are to be “**Conversations in the Spirit**” to **discern** the Will of God for our Church, by listening both to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit, within, and the contributions of one another.

### **Two Guiding Questions**

The Bishops have provided us with two (2) guiding questions that we are going to discern responses to, together.

1. Where have I seen or experienced successes—and distresses—within the Church's structure(s)/organization/leadership/life that encourage or hinder the mission?
2. How can the structures and organization of the Church help all the baptized to respond to the call to proclaim the Gospel and to live as a community of love and mercy in Christ?

### **Preparing Yourself for These Sessions**

We need to prayerfully and spiritually prepare for these sessions, by personally reflecting upon synodality.

We ask that you read and reflect upon some Scripture, in preparation for the listening session:

**John 14, Romans 12, and Isaiah 61.**

Entrust yourself to the Father, converse with the Lord Jesus, & listen to the Holy Spirit, about these questions.

# Oregon Bishop Bars Blessings for Same-Sex Couples in Diocese to Prevent Confusion, Scandal

By **Lauretta Brown**

**(OSV News)** — The Vatican's document permitting blessings for those in "irregular situations," including same-sex relationships, has continued to spark controversy and varied responses from bishops around the world.

On Feb. 9, Bishop Liam S. Cary of Baker, Oregon, said he has asked the priests of his diocese "not to bless known co-habiting couples, of the same sex or both sexes" because he does not believe that blessings for couples in such situations could be carried out in a "scandal-free" manner in his diocese.

"If a co-habiting heterosexual couple or a same sex couple were to ask a priest to bless them, they would be seeking an official sign of approval for behavior that the Church teaches is sinful in God's sight," he wrote in a statement. "If the priest complies with their request, the subtle distinctions of *Fiducia Supplicans* will not keep bystanders from concluding that the Church the priest represents no longer believes as she always did before, but is now endorsing the unions of unmarried couples."

Bishop Cary began his



CNS Photo/Paul Haring  
Bishop Liam S. Cary of Baker, Ore., prays during Mass at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome Feb. 7.

statement by referencing a March 2021 response by Cardinal Luis Ladaria, then prefect of the former Congregation (now Dicastry) for the Doctrine of the Faith, to a question about whether the church could bless unions of persons of the same sex. The Vatican said "no" at the time in a statement signed by Pope Francis.

Cardinal Ladaria wrote that "it is not licit to impart a blessing on relationships ... that involve sexual activity outside of marriage," because such a blessing would effec-

tively "approve and encourage a choice and a way of life that cannot be objectively ordered to the revealed plans of God." The cardinal added that "persons with homosexual inclinations" may be blessed as individuals if they "manifest the will to live in fidelity to the revealed plans of God as proposed by Church teaching."

Bishop Cary then addressed the Dec. 18 document "*Fiducia Supplicans*" ("*Supplicating Trust*") on "the pastoral meaning of blessings," issued by Cardinal Víctor Manuel Fernández, the current head of the Dicastry of the Doctrine of the Faith.

"In the years since the 2021 Response was issued, Cardinal Fernandez contends, the 'horizon' of Church teaching has undergone 'a real development,'" he wrote. "The new 'context' allows 'the possibility of blessing ... same sex couples without officially validating their status or changing in any way the Church's perennial teaching on marriage.'"

The cardinal "earnestly" reaffirms, Bishop Cary said, that marriage between a man and a woman "is the uniquely blessed environment for sexual relations between human persons."

"Far from authorizing same-sex unions, therefore, the Declaration repeatedly cautions against 'the risk of confusing a blessing given to any other union with the Rite that is proper to the Sacrament of Marriage,'" he continued. "In fact, Cardinal Fernandez says, the new non-ritualized 'pastoral' blessings he proposes, should not be given if they will spread confusion about Catholic doctrine on marriage and sexual morality."

He noted that, despite this language, following the release of "*Fiducia Supplicans*," images of "pre-planned same-sex ceremonies filled computer screens around the globe" with priests giving blessings the document actually prohibited. "Mass media quickly spread the news worldwide: the Catholic Church has changed her mind; she now approves of same-sex unions," he wrote.

In Africa, "what seemed to be papal authorization to bless homosexual couples stunned Evangelical and Pentecostal Christians, who had always counted on unflinching Catholic witness to the biblically based truth of marriage," he pointed out. "Africa's Mus-

lims took critical note of the document too. So did the African bishops."

Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo of Kinshasa in Congo brought his concerns to Rome, which led to a statement "on behalf of the entire Catholic Church in Africa" with the agreement of Pope Francis, stating the bishops' belief that "the extra-liturgical blessings proposed in ... '*Fiducia Supplicans*' cannot be carried out in Africa without exposing themselves to scandals."

Bishop Cary agreed with the bishops of Africa regarding such blessings. "I do not believe they can be carried out scandal-free in the Diocese of Baker either," he wrote.

"In accord with Cardinal Fernandez's above-noted cautions about creating confusion and the statement of the African bishops, I ask priests of Baker not to bless known co-habiting couples, of the same sex or both sexes," he concluded. "Individual men and women, however, as Cardinal Fernandez and the African bishops agree, should feel free to request and should receive, a priestly blessing outside of Mass."

(Lauretta Brown is culture editor for OSV News.)

## Catholic Parents Ask High Court to Correct 'Dangerous Precedent' on Parental Rights, Trans Identity

By **Kurt Jensen**

**WASHINGTON (OSV News)** — It is a case that strikes at the heart of both family relationships and Catholic beliefs in the confines of the household.

The teen at the center of a dispute about parental rights and transgender identity — a case involving the teen's parents trying to get a hearing before the U.S. Supreme Court — is now legally an adult over age 18.

The case began as one family's dispute over gender identity, and involved a state social service agency and the removal of the child. But any deci-

sion on the petition submitted to the high court Feb. 15 won't result in the teen — named in court filings as A.C. and identifying as a transgender woman — being returned to the family home.

Rather, Jeremy and Mary Cox, Catholic parents in Anderson, Indiana, are arguing over their rights over their younger children as well as their decisions about A.C.

Their petition for a writ of certiorari, *M.C. and J.C. v. Indiana Department of Child Services*, was submitted by Becket, a public-interest law firm in Washington.

The Supreme Court's decision on whether or not to accept the case could come as late as the end of its current term in June. But because the court also asked for a brief from Indiana officials, that's seen as an indication that acceptance could be likely, according to Lori Windham, vice president and senior counsel at Becket.

Windham described the case to OSV News as "a really tragic situation."

The Indiana Supreme Court refused to hear the Coxes' appeal.

The Coxes, the brief states, believe children should be raised based on their biological sex. Further, they be-

lieve that pronouns or names inconsistent with their biological sex is immoral.

They agreed, as a sort of compromise, to call their child A.

The Coxes lost custody of the then-16-year-old in 2021. The Indiana Department of Child Services petitioned a Madison County court, alleging that the teen's physical and mental condition was in danger and that there was a threat of self-harm as a result of the parents' physical and emotional abuse.

A case manager's investigation  
**See "Parents" on Page 8**

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## Parents ...

Cont'd from Page 7

found that the teen had an untreated eating disorder, that A.C.'s parents had pulled the child from school and discontinued therapy, and that A.C. was contemplating self-harm, according to court records. The case manager's report also found the teen's mother used vulgar and demeaning language.

The Coxes denied the allegations, and Indiana officials, following an investigation, conceded that they were unsubstantiated.

But the Indiana Court of Appeals upheld the child's removal from the home, concluding that the arguments over gender identity had contributed to the eating disorder even though agreeing that the Coxes were fit parents. The appellate court upheld a gag order, which it said was allowed under both the state and federal constitutions, over the Coxes imposing their religious views on gender.

"The appeals court left in place a gag order so the parents could not discuss gender with their child other than at family therapy appointments," Windham said.

"With increasing frequency," the Becket brief asserts, "state governments run roughshod over par-

ents' religious beliefs on gender identity, including removing children from parents, favoring certain beliefs in divorce custody disputes, and preventing adoptions.

It added, "These cases are sure to proliferate. Some state legislatures are now authorizing the state to take custody where parents refuse full-steam-ahead gender transitions."

"This case," the Becket brief concludes, "poses a question of national importance that is bound to recur absent (the Supreme Court's) intervention."

"The numbers of transgender youth are rising, matched by governmental willingness to remove gender-dysphoric children from their parents' custody," the brief says. "Indiana's tack — blame a comorbidity and dodge adjudication of parental fitness — provides a playbook that any state can use to eviscerate bedrock constitutional protections while guaranteeing they remain insulated from review."

"The big picture here is that this case sets a dangerous precedent for the state to be able to take children away from fit parents," Windham said. "If this can happen in Indiana, it can happen anywhere."

(Kurt Jensen writes for OSV News from Washington.)

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**Monday, February 26, 2024**

12:00pm	Mass
1:00pm	Rosary
3:00pm	Chaplet of Divine Mercy
3:30-5:30	Confessions
<b>6:00pm</b>	<b>Presentation with Deacon Lim</b> <i>(Reception to follow)</i>

**Deacon Paul Lim** is a permanent deacon in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He currently serves as Vice-President of Mission Integration at WVU Medicine Wheeling Hospital.

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# Vatican Theme for World Day of Migrants and Refugees Focuses on 'Journey'

By **Justin McLellan, Catholic News Service**

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** — The Catholic Church's focus for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2024 highlights its need to walk alongside displaced persons and to convey to them God's presence and guidance along their paths, the Vatican said.

In a statement released Feb. 22, the Vatican announced "God walks with His people" will be the theme for the 110th world day, which will

be celebrated Sept. 29.

Pope Francis' message for the world day — not yet released — "will address the itinerant dimension of the Church with a particular focus on our migrant brothers and sisters, a contemporary icon of the journeying Church," the statement said.

It added that the church's journeying alongside its people, and in particular migrants and refugees, "is a path to be undertaken in a synodal way, overcoming all threats

and obstacles, in order to reach our true homeland together."

"During this journey, wherever people find themselves, it is essential to recognize the presence of God who walks with His people, assuring them of His guidance and protection at every step," the Vatican statement said. "Yet it is equally essential to recognize the presence of the Lord, Emmanuel, God-with-us, in every migrant who knocks at the door of our hearts and offers an opportunity

for encounter."

In his message for last year's world day, Pope Francis said that "the synodal path that we have undertaken as a Church leads us to see in those who are most vulnerable — among whom are many migrants and refugees — special companions on our way, to be loved and cared for as brothers and sisters."

World Day of Migrants and Refugees was established in 1914 by St. Pius X and is celebrated annually on the last Sunday of September.

# Alabama Supreme Court Rules Frozen Embryos are Children under Wrongful Death Law

By **Kate Scanlon**

**(OSV News)** — An Alabama Supreme Court ruling that frozen embryos qualify as children under state law has raised complex legal questions about artificial reproductive practices opposed by the Catholic Church.

The Feb. 16 ruling responded to appeals brought by couples whose embryos were destroyed in 2020, when a hospital patient removed frozen embryos from storage equipment, destroying them.

The 8-1 opinion said the state's highest court has previously held "that unborn children are 'children' for purposes of Alabama's Wrongful Death of a Minor Act ... a statute that allows parents of a deceased child to recover punitive damages for their child's death." The judges found that parents' ability to sue over the wrongful death of a minor child applies to unborn children, without an exception for "extrauterine children."

"Under existing black-letter law, the answer to that question is no: the Wrongful Death of a Minor Act applies to all unborn children, regardless of their location," it said.

Elizabeth Kirk, co-director of the Center for Law & the Human

Person at The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law in Washington, told OSV News that the cases in which the court had previously held that unborn children are "children" had "involved injuries to pregnant women and the subsequent deaths of their unborn children."

"Here, the court held that the word 'child' in the statute includes unborn children regardless of location, whether in or outside of a biological womb," she said.

The 1987 document from the Congregation (now Dicastery) for the Doctrine of the Faith known as "Donum Vitae" ("The Gift of Life") states the church opposes in vitro fertilization and related practices, including gestational surrogacy, in part because "the connection between in vitro fertilization and the voluntary destruction of human embryos occurs too often."

Kirk said that "all of us should welcome laws and court decisions that comport with the truth of the human person, including the dignity of all human life from conception to natural death."

Denise Burke, senior counsel with Alliance Defending Freedom, said that the ruling "is a tremen-

dous victory for life."

"The Court ruled that unborn children created through assisted reproductive technology are children under Alabama law and therefore protected," Burke said. "No matter the circumstances, all human life is valuable from the moment of conception. We are grateful the Court correctly found that Alabama law recognizes this

fundamental truth."

According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 238,126 patients underwent IVF treatment in 2021, resulting in 112,088 clinical pregnancies and 91,906 live births.

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



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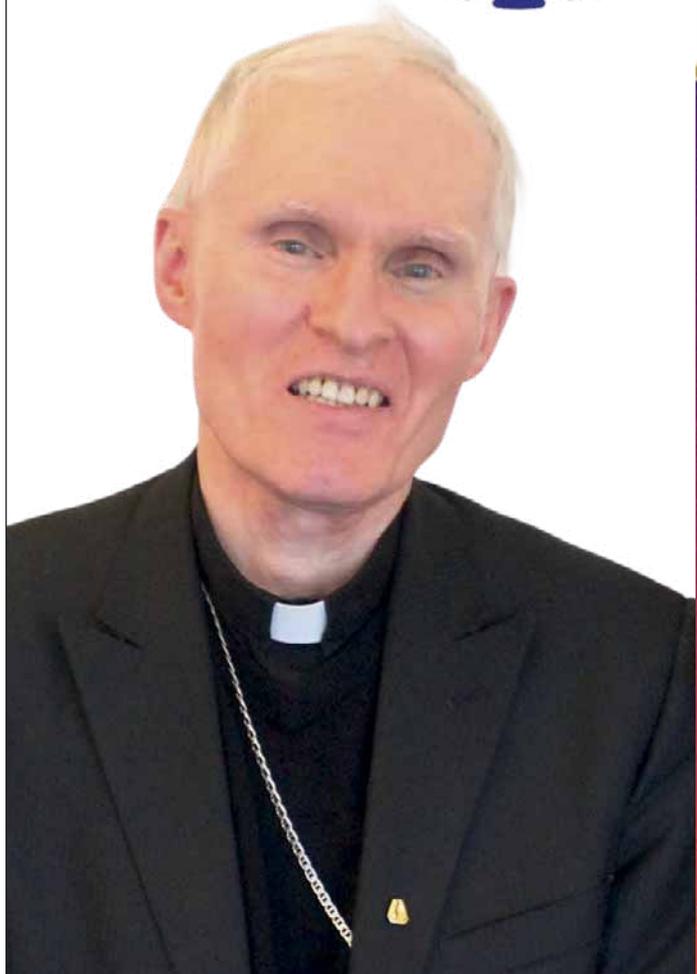
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Bishop Mark encourages parishes (priests, parish council, Knights of Columbus, women's groups, etc.) to work together to find ways to finance the travel package for their parish representatives.

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# Friar Who Said Ash Wednesday Mass for Roumie, Wahlberg Shares How to Meet God in Lent's 'Desert'

By **Lauretta Brown**

**(OSV News)** — Father Mark-Mary Ames of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal had an atypical Ash Wednesday this year after celebrating an early morning Mass for actors Jonathan Roumie and Mark Wahlberg.

Hallow reached out to Father Mark-Mary, an author who has narrated an audiobook for the popular Catholic prayer app, about saying Mass Feb. 14 in New York City prior to the actors' morning appearance on "Fox & Friends" to talk about Hallow's huge increase in users following an advertisement it ran during the Super Bowl LVIII Feb. 11.

The friar enjoyed a brief conversation with Wahlberg and Roumie, who voice some prayers and other offerings on Hallow. Wahlberg starred in "Father Stu," a 2022 biographical drama about a prizefighter turned priest, and Roumie plays Jesus in the series "The Chosen."

Father Mark-Mary said the actors appear to be "sincere about their journey with the Lord" and have had "a real encounter with God and his goodness" in their lives. After such an encounter, he said, "it's natural to bring that to all the spheres of your world" and "their sphere happens to be massive because of their platform."

Regarding evangelization efforts through social media and the Hallow app, "there's no duplicate for real, lived, in-person, sacramental life," Father Mark-Mary said, "but this is where people are and so we have to be able to meet them there."

He said the actors are "meeting people in a very public space, but the end of the journey is to get these people into a place where they are alone in prayer encountering the Lord."

As the season of Lent begins, Father Mark-Mary said that rather than focusing on the things one gives up during this time, he would instead focus on how "the desert is ultimately a place of encountering God."

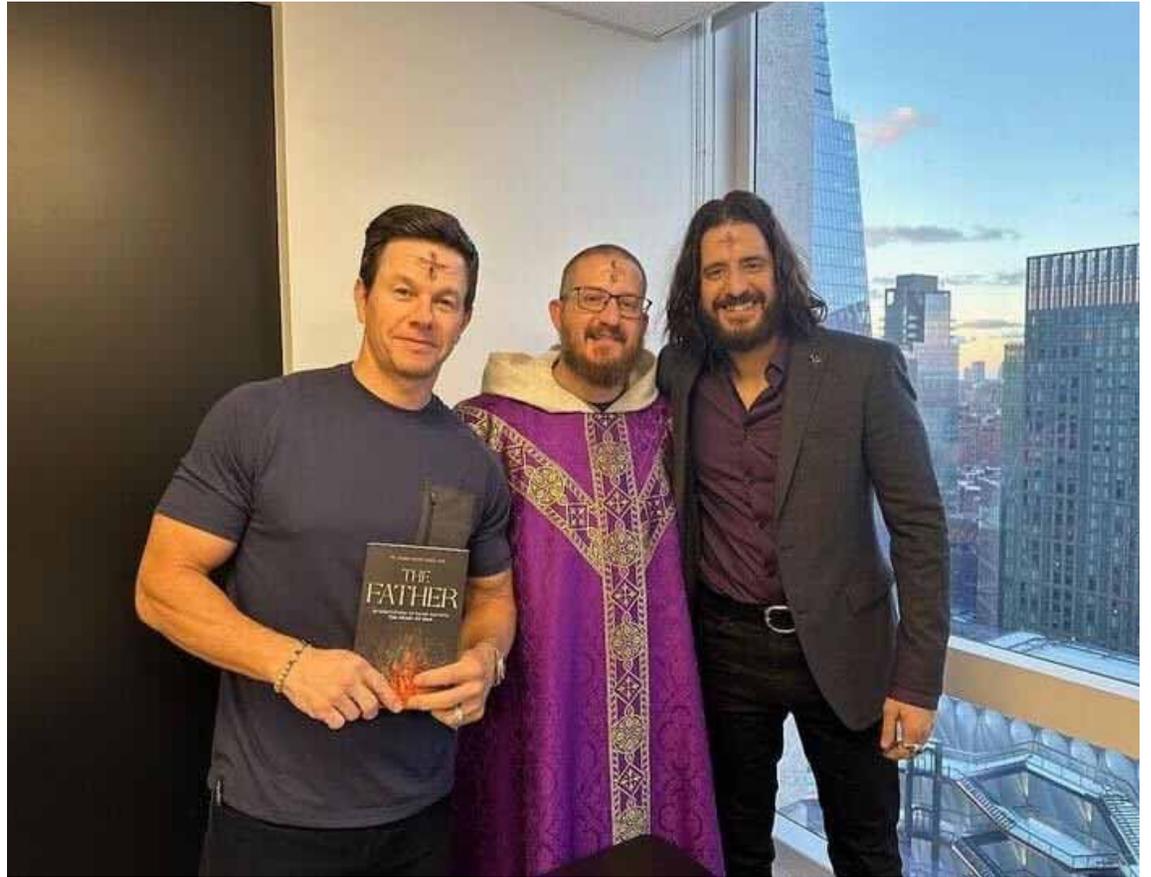
"Jesus goes to the desert right after his baptism, and it's there where he essentially is tested and shows his fidelity to God in his fatherhood. God the Father also shows his fidelity through his care for his son," he said.

"It's not about doing hard things," he added. "First and foremost, it's not about privations and discipline. It's really about identity. It's creating space in our lives to really, prayerfully be seen by the Lord."

Father Mark-Mary observed that the desert "is a place where you're just vulnerable. You're pretty exposed. And so, it's a place to really look at yourself, to come out of hiding, to be seen, to see yourself, but also then to be seen truly by the Lord as you are."

He recommended as a Lenten practice to examine in prayer "the things you don't normally want to look at and to talk about," because "that is the desert of the heart, that's the desert within and that's where we most need the Lord to come and to meet us."

Father Mark-Mary quoted Hosea 2:14-20, where the Lord says of Israel that he "will lead her into the desert" and "betroth



OSV News Photo/courtesy Previs Marketing  
Actors Mark Wahlberg, left, and Jonathan Roumie, right, received ashes from Father Mark-Mary Ames, a Franciscan Friar of the Renewal, Feb. 14.

himself to her. Ash Wednesday coinciding with Valentine's Day this year can serve as "a beautiful reminder that Jesus comes to us as bridegroom, desiring to, in the desert, betroth himself to us," the priest said.

Father Mark-Mary's new book, "The Father: 30 Meditations to Draw You Into the Heart of God," received some unexpected attention on Ash Wednesday when Wahlberg and Roumie held up the copies he had given them in an Instagram video they made.

The friar said the book could be an aid in encountering God this Lent. The goal of the book, he explained is "to help the

reader access and understand and receive: What does it actually mean for God to be a father?" through telling 30 different stories involving earthly and spiritual fathers. Each story highlights "some characteristic of the Father's heart, but in a way that's accessible and moving and then explaining how this is true of Jesus," he said.

"We all have such complex relationships with our earthly fathers," he said. "Some of them are great, but imperfect. Some of them are really core wounds. But what Jesus reminds us is that we really do, in him, have access to the best of fathers, and that those things that we desire,

we have in God."

(Lauretta Brown is culture editor for OSV News.)



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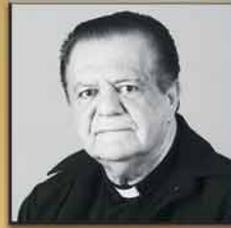
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 AND CONTINUING TO SERVE THE HOLY ONES.”  
 -HEBREW 6:10



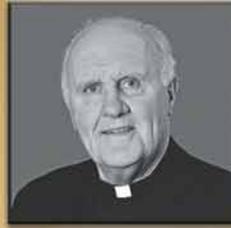
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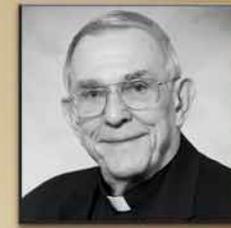
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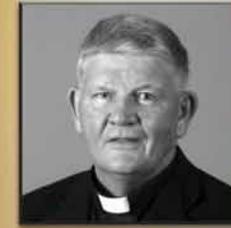
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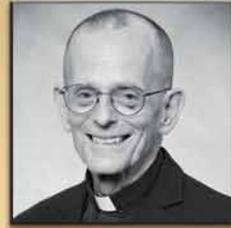
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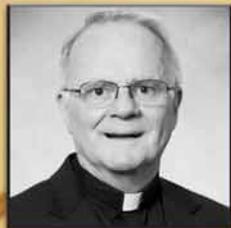
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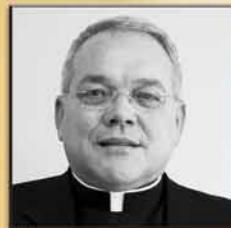
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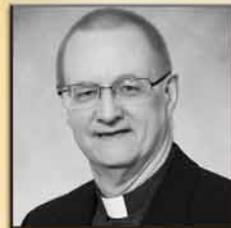
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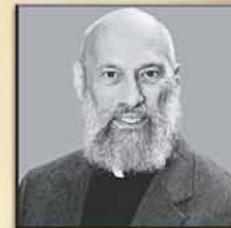
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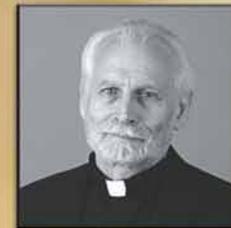
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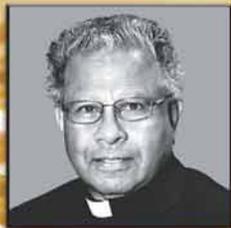
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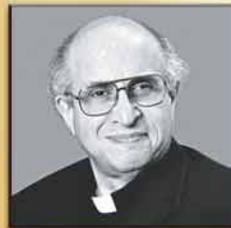
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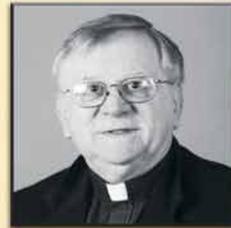
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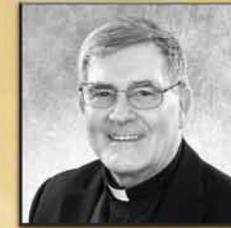
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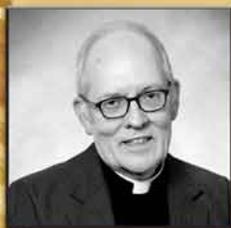
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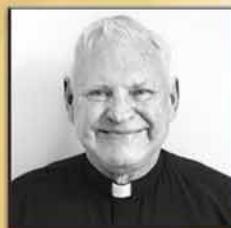
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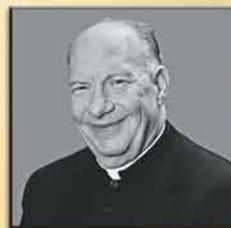
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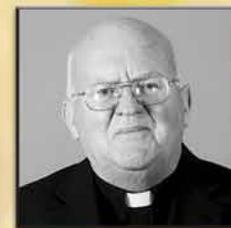
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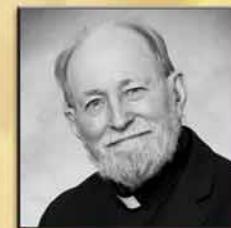
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# RETIREMENT FUND FOR DIOCESAN PRIESTS

COLLECTION DATE: March 3, 2024

**Diocese of Wheeling-  
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**CONFIRMATION**  
**SCHEDULE – Spring 2024**  
Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

**Sunday, March 17:** St. Margaret Mary, Parkersburg;  
2:00 p.m.

**Saturday, April 6:** St. Francis de Sales, Morgantown;  
5:15 p.m.

**Wednesday, April 10:** Our Lady of Peace, Wheeling;  
6:00 p.m.

**Thursday, April 11:** St. Joseph the Worker, Weirton;  
7:00 p.m.

**Sunday, April 14:** SS Peter and Paul, Oak Hill; 10:30  
a.m.

**Monday, April 15:** Corpus Christi, Wheeling; 6:00  
p.m.

**Saturday, April 20:** St. Sebastian, Kingwood; 6:00  
p.m.

**Sunday, April 21:** Our Lady of Perpetual Help,  
Stonewood; 10:00 a.m.

**Sunday, April 28:** St. Jude, Glen Dale; 9:00 a.m.

**Sunday, May 5:** St. Brendan, Elkins; 11:00 a.m.

**Saturday, May 11:** St. John the Evangelist, Wells-  
burg; 11:00 a.m.

**Saturday, May 11:** St. Vincent de Paul, Wheeling;  
5:00 p.m.

**Sunday, May 12:** Immaculate Conception, New  
Cumberland; 8:30 a.m.

**Monday, May 13:** St. Michael, Wheeling; 5:30 p.m.

**Sunday, May 19:** St. Agnes, Charleston; 10:30 a.m.

**Wednesday, May 22:** Immaculate Conception,  
Clarksburg; 6:00 p.m.

**Saturday, May 25:** St. James, Charles Town;  
10:00 a.m.

**Saturday, May 25:** St. Vincent de Paul, Berkeley  
Springs; 5:00 p.m.

**Sunday, May 26:** St. Joseph, Martinsburg; 4:00 p.m.

**Saturday, June 1:** St. Francis Xavier, Moundsville;  
4:00 p.m.

**Saturday, June 8:** Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the  
Sacred Heart, Charleston; 5:30 p.m.

**Sunday, June 9:** Sacred Heart, Princeton; 11:00 a.m.

**Saturday, June 15:** St. Francis de Sales, Beckley;  
5:00 p.m.

**Sunday, June 16:** St. John the Evangelist, Summers-  
ville; 9:00 a.m.

## JOB OPENINGS

**The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston has  
the following job openings at  
St. John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston:**

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

The Cook is responsible for the preparation, service, clean-up and storage of all meals, snacks and food service for special functions.

Assures the kitchen/dining room/dish room areas are clean and in good order at the end of a shift or function.

Oversees and assists kitchen aides in the preparation, service and storage of food and cleanliness of the kitchen/dining area.

Works early mornings, evenings, weekends and holidays/holydays as needed. Covers housekeeping department when needed.

Prefer at least one year experience in food service.

Contact the Director, Gerri Wright at 304.342.0507 or [gwright@dwc.org](mailto:gwright@dwc.org) to schedule an interview or for more information.

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

The Evening Housekeeper is responsible for cleaning and preparing the facility, laundry and guest relations.

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

Contact the Director, Gerri Wright at 304.342.0507 or [gwright@dwc.org](mailto:gwright@dwc.org) to schedule an interview or for more information.

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

The Maintenance position is responsible for assisting in tasks related to the general maintenance of the Center buildings (interior and exterior), grounds, equipment and vehicles.

Usually works Monday-Friday day shift. Occasional evenings, weekends and holidays/holydays as needed. Helps in kitchen when needed.

Contact the Director, Gerri Wright at 304.342.0507 or [gwright@dwc.org](mailto:gwright@dwc.org) to schedule an interview or for more information.



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6:30 WTOV FOX 9 Wheeling-Steubenville

6:30 WOWK CBS 13 Huntington-Charleston

8:00 WBOY NBC 12 Weston-Clarksburg-Fairmont

6:30 WOAY ABC 4 Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)

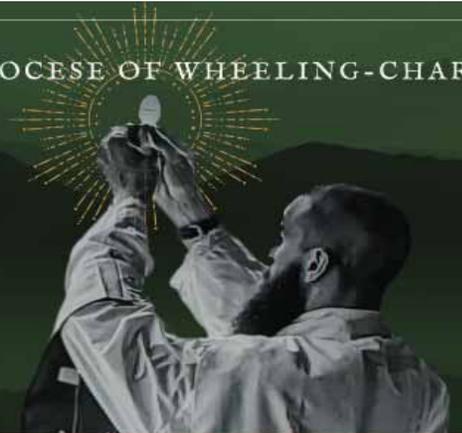
8:30 WVNS FOX 59 Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)

9:30 WVVA NBC 6 Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)

11:00 WDVM 25 Hagerstown-Washington D.C.

Plus watch online at - [www.mydailyliving.com](http://www.mydailyliving.com) and YouTube

 DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON



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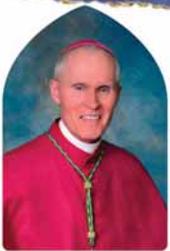
For more information visit:  
[kofc.org/join](http://kofc.org/join)



# Peregrinación Al Congreso Nacional Eucarístico

INDIANÁPOLIS  
17-21 DE JULIO, 2024

Con nuestro Obispo Monseñor Mark Brennan  
de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston



Participa en este momento crucial en la Iglesia y entra en una intimidad más profunda con nuestro Señor. ¡Únate a nuestra diócesis regístrate hoy! Escanea el código QR o selecciona el enlace de Reserva Hoy, para asistir a este evento histórico



RESERVA HOY!

  
NATIONAL  
Eucharistic  
Congress

Precio Por Adulto

**\$919**

Triple/Cuádruple

**\$1,119**

Doble

**\$1,619**

Individual

**Seguro de Viaje**

Cancelar por cualquier motivo ("CFAR") la protección de viaje es muy recomendable. Ver enlace de Viaje Asegurado: [www.travelinsured.com/agency?agency=47907&p=CTS21](http://www.travelinsured.com/agency?agency=47907&p=CTS21)

**Plan de Pago:**

Depósito de \$750 por persona al registrarse

El saldo restante se vence el 17 de abril del 2024

Los pagos no son reembolsables. Al registrarse para el recorrido, usted entiende y acepta los términos y condiciones de CTS y acepta nuestra liberación de responsabilidad de CTS. Todas las cancelaciones deben ser recibidas por escrito.

## UN MENSAJE DEL OBISPO MARK BRENNAN SOBRE EL CONGRESO NACIONAL EUCARÍSTICO

"Será estimulante ver a los fieles de Virginia Occidental en el Congreso Eucarístico Nacional representando a sus parroquias locales. Estoy feliz de asociarnos con Corporate Travel, una empresa católica que se especializa en peregrinaciones católicas, para aliviarnos la carga logística de viajes".

-Obispo Brennan

### Lo Que Incluye el Recorrido

- Pase al Congreso NEC (5 Días)
- Cuatro (4) noches de alojamiento en o cerca de Indianápolis
- Desayuno continental diario (asignación de hotel pendiente)
- Transporte de ida y vuelta desde West Virginia a Indianápolis en autobús de primera calidad
- Traslados diarios entre el hotel y Indianapolis Convention Center y Lucas Oil Stadium
- Propinas para los conductores de autobuses

### Lo Que No Incluye en el Recorrido

- Comidas y bebidas no identificadas previamente
- Artículos no mencionados anteriormente

### 3 Pasos Para Registrarse

1. Escanee el código QR en la portada del folleto o selección [AQUÍ](#) para acceder a nuestro sitio de registro en línea.
2. Siga las indicaciones para ingresar su información personal, seleccione la configuración de su habitación, ingrese la información de pago y acepté nuestros términos y condiciones
3. Al finalizar, recibirá un correo electrónico de confirmación con el código diocesano y un video tutorial con instrucciones para finalizar su inscripción en el sitio web oficial del Congreso Nacional Eucarístico.



866.468.1420 | [NEC@CTSCENTRAL.NET](mailto:NEC@CTSCENTRAL.NET)



**Para denunciar presuntos casos de abuso sexual de niños:** La Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston alienta a informar ante las autoridades civiles ante todo si se ha cometido un delito. También alentamos a utilizar [www.reportbishopabuse.org](http://www.reportbishopabuse.org) para hacer un informe sobre cualquier obispo en los EE. UU. Si tiene motivos para creer que un obispo ha cometido una conducta sexual inapropiada, comuníquese con las autoridades civiles de la jurisdicción correspondiente y visite [www.reportbishopabuse.org](http://www.reportbishopabuse.org).

**Para informar a las autoridades civiles:** comuníquese con la policía local; los números varían según su ubicación. Si cree que alguien está en peligro inmediato, llame al 911. Para informar confidencialmente cualquier incidencia de sospecha de abuso o negligencia infantil, incluido el abuso sexual, comuníquese con la Oficina de Servicios de Protección Infantil de Niños y Familias de West Virginia llamando a la línea directa de abuso infantil al 800.352.6513. Puede informar anonimamente a esta línea directa si lo prefiere.

**Para informar a las autoridades diocesanas:** La diócesis alienta a informar a las autoridades civiles apropiadas, ante todo, si se ha cometido un delito. La diócesis también alienta a informar a las autoridades eclesiales apropiadas. Para reportar casos sospechosos de abuso sexual de niños por parte del personal de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston a la Diócesis, comuníquese con uno de los siguientes designados al 1.888.434.6237 o 304.233.0880: Sr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Sr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; Muy Reverendo Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270; o Sor Martha Gómez, ext. 264. También puede llamar a la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro de la Diócesis al

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

**Para informar al Coordinador de Asistencia a Víctimas de la Diócesis:** llame a la Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, al 304.559.6742.

Además de los métodos enumerados anteriormente para denunciar el abuso sexual, la Diócesis también se ha asociado con Navex Global para ofrecer la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar otras inquietudes adicionales, como sospecha de mala conducta financiera, profesional y personal de un sacerdote, 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.

**Ask your doctor to refer you to Good Shepherd for:**



- Physical therapy
- Speech therapy
- Occupational therapy

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**Women's Discernment Retreat**  
June 21-23, 2024 St. Joseph Retreat Center, Wheeling, WV





The Office of Consecrated Life presents a discernment retreat for single Catholic women ages 18 and over. In a world that lacks moments of silence and reflection it can be easy for us to ignore our callings. Join us and take this time to get to know yourself, your heart, and how Christ is working in your life.

- ✦ Retreat is free.
- ✦ Be with other discerning women.
- ✦ Register now - space is limited!





To Register/More Info:

✉ Sister Martha Gomez, RGS,  
mgomez@dwc.org

☎ Office of Consecrated Life  
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