Year of St. Joseph to Conclude with Pilgrimage to the Basilica in Charleston

By Colleen Rowan

CHARLESTON—A Lenten pilgrimage to the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston will mark the closing of the Year of St. Joseph for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. This diocesan pilgrimage will be held on the Solemnity of St. Joseph, March 19. Bishop Mark E. Brennan opened the Year of St. Joseph March 19, 2021, with Mass at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling. He now invites all to join him for the closing Mass in Charleston. “Everyone in the whole diocese is welcome to attend,” said Bernadette Masters Kime, director of the diocese’s Office of Worship and Sacraments. “We encourage participation. Bishop Brennan began a year of St. Joseph at the cathedral last year and is ending it at the co-cathedral.”

At St. John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston the night before, there will be an evening of prayer and music in honor of St. Joseph at 7 p.m. Kime said the faithful are encouraged to make it a weekend in Charleston by staying at the pastoral center, which is located just 10 minutes from the basilica co-cathedral. A reception will be held following that evening’s event.

The next day’s events for the closing of the Year of St. Joseph will begin at

See “Pilgrimage” on Page 2

Catholic Schools Week Celebrated with Prayer, Service, and Fun

On the first day of Catholic Schools Week, Fairmont Catholic Grade School students help Sister Reeta Lopez fill blessing bags for community helpers. Catholic Schools Week was celebrated across the diocese and the country Jan. 30-Feb. 5. See more on Catholic schools on Pages 6-8 of this issue.
St. Joseph Icon to Travel around the Diocese

By Colleen Rowan

Through the Knights of Columbus’s Pilgrim Icon Program in honor of St. Joseph, an icon of the saint will be making its way to parishes around the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

“As our bishop closes out our Year of St. Joseph at the basilica, it is fitting that our local Knights of Columbus members host the Icon of St. Joseph,” said Very Rev. Donald X. Higgins, Assoc. V.F., rector of the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston. “For St. Joseph is the greatest patron of being a faithful husband, caring father, and protector of the family."

The icon will arrive at the basilica co-cathedral March 12. The parish will receive the icon at the 5:30 p.m. Mass that evening. Other parishes in the diocese will host the icon as well. Locations will be announced soon. The icon program will continue over the next few council/parishes receive four icons touring the state.

In materials released for the icon pilgrimage, Supreme Knight Patrick E. Kelly said the icon is housed at St. Joseph’s Oratory in Montréal, Canada’s preeminent Shrine to St. Joseph, founded by St. André Bessette. The original is written (prayerfully painted) by Elizabeth Bergeron, from a drawing by famed iconographer Alexandre Sobolev. In the image, St. Joseph stands with his eyes cast humbly down, but with a determined strength in his face.

In his covered arm he bears the Child Jesus, whose own hand is raised, blessing the world.

“Our world desperately needs men and women of courage,” Kelly said. “But in a particular way, it needs courageous fathers — men willing to stand up and to carry out their own mission of protecting, defending and raising future up to their faithful. It needs men willing to risk it all, in order to offer the world Jesus. In short, our world needs men in the model of St. Joseph.”

Pilgrimage …

Cont’d from Page 1

the basilica at 9:30 a.m. with check-in. People who attend will receive a name tag and a souvenir of St. Joseph, Kime said. At 10 a.m. there will be morning prayer followed by adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Throughout the morning there will also be the opportunity for the faithful to receive the sacrament of penance from various priests stationed throughout the church. Tours of the basilica co-cathedral will also be available.

Talks on St. Joseph will begin at 11 a.m. and will be presented by individuals to be announced. A box lunch will be provided. In the afternoon a music program will be held at 2 p.m. presented by various parishes. Singers are invited to participate in this combined musical collaboration. There will be a 12:30 re-hearsal. RSVP voice preference (Sopra-но, Alto, Tenor, Bass) to: Mark Haas: mhaas@shccvw.us.

The day will culminate with the celebration of Mass at 3 p.m. by Bishop Brennan to close the Year of St. Joseph. For all who attend this Mass, Bishop Brennan is giving a dispensation, so it will count as their Sunday obligation for that weekend. Kime said the pilgrimage offers a tremendous opportunity for the faithful to celebrate St. Joseph and learn more about the patron saint not only of the universal church but also of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. “We’ve been through a lot in the pandemic, and we have not been able to gather as a diocese,” Kime said. “This is a chance for us to come together.”

More information about the diocesan pilgrimage is forthcoming.

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 to make a report about any bishop in the U.S.

If you have reason to believe that a bishop has engaged in sexual misconduct or has interfered with an investigation into sexual misconduct, please contact civil authorities in the applicable jurisdiction and visit www.reportbishopabuse.org.

To Report to Civil Authorities: Contact your local law enforce-ment: numbers will vary based on your location. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, call 911. To confidentially report any suspected child abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse, contact the West Vir-ginia 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., ext. 270. You may also call the Diocese’s Office of Safe Environment at 833.230.1504. You may also call the Diocese’s sexual abuse hotline at 833.230.5656. Complaint forms are available online at www.dwc.org, click “Diocese” on the menu bar, then “Offices” then “Safe Environment” the title will read “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 plat-form to report other, additional concerns, such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese or any Catholic parish or school in West Virginia. The EthicsPoint platform can be accessed via www.dwc.org under “Accountability,” then “Report Misconduct” or by calling 844.725.8381. EthicsPoint is a third-party reporting system that reports to civil authorities when applicable and Diocesan authorities, and the identity of the person reporting is protect-ed. 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/Eparhies 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, volunteer, intern, training—directly or indirectly—with children: background check; receipt of the Diocese’s Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Children; and sexual abuse awareness training for adults.

Sexual abuse awareness training can be completed online or via live workshop. For more information on the Office of Safe Environment, please go to www.dwc.org, click “Diocese”, then “Offices”, then “Office of Safe Environment.”


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Pastoral Letter on Marriage and Family Life

Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston

"L"ove is the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being," wrote Pope St. John Paul II.¹ As we are about to observe World Marriage Day, I offer you these reflections on the Catholic understanding of marriage and family life as "an intimate community of life and love."² I do so as a priest who for many years enjoyed meeting with couples not only to plan their wedding but to consider, in the light of God's revelation, the nature of the union they would form. I continue to have friendships with a number of families, observing how the spouses meet the challenges of marriage and enjoying seeing their children grow up.

Marriage and family life are the way God calls most of His children to live out their baptismal vocation, so it always deserves our attention but all the more so in our times, when the nature of marriage and the given-ness of sexual identity are challenged by dominant forces in our society. There is a radical sanity in the Catholic understanding of marriage and family life, which is a lifeline for a society floundering in a sea of uncertainty about these fundamental relationships.

At the very beginning of the Bible, God speaks of marriage and the family. After the man exclaims "I am very thirsty; let me have some water to drink" (Genesis 2:11), God says, "It is the very nature of conjugal love to be definitive. The lasting union expressed by the marriage vows is more than a formality or a traditional formula; it is rooted in the natural inclinations of the human person."³ If the husband and wife make a constant effort to love, a friendship may form that stands strong when the winds of hardship blow. In my first parish, a wife suffered a severe back problem that kept her bedridden for years. Her husband was a busy lawyer, but he made time to take care of her. Eventually her health improved – and then the husband fell ill with cancer. In a role reversal, she became his primary caregiver. Theirs was a friendship born of love and strengthened by God's grace.

Another benefit of a lifelong marriage is that each spouse brings personal qualities to the relationship that enrich the other: for example, a very patient spouse may help a less patient spouse learn patience. The spouses also bring to the marriage qualities that are typical of their sex. Men and women differ not only biologically but, as experience shows, they often think and express feelings in different ways. Yet, over a lifetime together, men may learn from their wives how to integrate some feminine qualities into themselves infertile by using artificial means of birth control throughout their marriage. This is a direct violation of God's command and will likely be a source of sorrow to them as they age. Other couples have only one or two children owing to a medical condition that impedes conception or they may have married when the wife was near the end of her reproductive life. I find such couples grateful for the child or children they have. I never judge couples with few children because I do not know their circumstances. I only encourage them to be honest with themselves and God.

See "Letter" on Page 4

¹Apostolic Exhortation on the Family, Familiaris Consortio 11
²Lumen Gentium, number 50
³Apostolic Exhortation on the Family, Familiaris Consortio 11
⁴See "Letter" on Page 4
⁵Divorce Strategies Group, June 22, 2022. 67% of second marriages end in divorce.
⁶Amoris Laetitia, 123
Letter ... Cont'd from Page 3
Yet God’s command to be fertile challenges couples to cooperate with Him in bringing forth new life. A couple I prepared for marriage told me, “We want to have just one child and give that child all of our love.” I asked them, “Have you ever thought of it from the child’s point of view? You will die some day and, because of your decision, your child will have no family left. Is that what you want for your child?” It is also the nature of parental love that it grows as other children are born. I have seen this in many families. Love does not shrink. It will be tested, but rarely does it break.

There is a benefit to children in having a number of siblings. In their own family they learn how to get along with another, to play fair, to stick up for one another when others harm them. Friendships with siblings can last a lifetime. There is also a benefit to parents in having more children. Older children can help them take care of the younger ones. In addition, their children are the ones most naturally inclined to help their parents when the parents have difficulties, especially in their old age. Having a child around to respect and embrace God’s command to be open to new life, I must add that there are circumstances that justify postponing having another child: a parent’s (especially the mother’s) serious illness, a severe loss of income, having several children of young age, having one or more children with special needs. The couple must decide honestly what they can manage. If they decide that they are not in a position now to have another child, the Church assures them that they do not offend God by that decision.

The means to a worthy end must also be worthy. Many people, including many Catholics, see no problem with the use of contraceptives. Why does the Church take a stand against contraceptive use? Let me explain. Jesus said about marriage: What God has joined together, no human being must separate [Mark 10: 9]. The logic of his words applies not only to the lifetime union of the couple but to the act by which they may bring forth new life. Their sexual union has two distinct but related dimensions: the expression of their love for one another — called the “unitive dimension” — and the possibility of procreation and conceiving a child — called the “procreative dimension.”

The unitive dimension is always operative but the procreative dimension only periodically, when the woman is in her brief fertile phase. What artifical means of birth control do is to deliberately and forcibly separate the two dimensions when both are present. They separate what God has joined together. This is the crucial difference between contraception and natural family planning. The couple following NF does not separate the two dimensions of their sexual union; they simply refrain from sexual intercourse during their fertile phase.

NF today is far more effective than the older rhythm method, just as modern medical care surpasses that available to our ancestors. NF is based on real-time observations of changes in the woman’s body and gives accurate information so that the couple can decide to engage in or refrain from sexual relations according to their work, health and convenience at times, but it avoids the medical problems associated with contraceptive use by some women and gives spiritual peace of mind. Does NF always work? No, but neither do contraceptives. A woman pointed to her little child and said that she did not think it “thank- fully.” A man fathered a child after a vasectomy! But if the couple is properly instructed and follows the NF method carefully, it will usually postpone an untimely pregnancy.

Once formed, the family becomes a “school of love” and the “domestic Church,” the Church’s smallest social unit. Without pretending that family life can avoid all struggles and trials, it remains true that families are where we learn to care for other human beings, and, in many cases, are introduced to faith in God. Pope St. John Paul II wrote: “Marriage and the Christian family build up the Church; in effect, within the family the human person not only is engendered and progressively introduced through education into the human community but through the rebirth of baptism and education in the faith is introduced as well into the family of God, which is the Church.”

In the multiple relationships within the family — that of the spouses to one another, their relationships with their children, the children’s relationships with each other, plus grandparents, uncles and cousins — the love that places the other first must gradually overcome the family members’ natural self-centeredness. For the spouses, St. Paul writes: Wives should be subordinate to their husbands, as to the Lord, but insists, husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church [Ephesians 5: 21-33].

As Pope St. John Paul II wisely noted, a husband cannot love his wife if he is selfish. He must, like Christ, subordinate his own plans and preferences to the plans of another person, in this case his wife and, for the youth caring for her husband even when it costs her. Love always has a sacrificial dimension. Marriage and family life are truly a school that teaches lessons.

Parents are the first and most important educators of their children in all things, including the faith. With respect to the faith, parents should have their children baptized soon after birth so that the children can begin living in the Catholic faith. At home, parents can teach their children basic prayers and pray with them; I still remember fondly my parents praying with me when I was a little boy. Family meals give parents the opportunity to ask their children how their days are going and what is new in them. If the parents listen closely, give the parents guidance on how to guide their children’s spiritual and moral formation.

As for formal education, I can only admire those parents who home-school their children, while recognizing that this is beyond the ability of many parents. I urge parents who choose to send their children to school to give serious consideration to sending them to a Catholic school, where such a school exists. There they will receive a regular formation in the faith to supplement — not replace — what the family gives at home. Paying tuition is a challenge for some families, but if a Catholic education is seen as an investment in the children’s future, then the sacrifice is worth it. Some tuition assistance is available from the Diocese, usually from the school itself and sometimes from the family’s parish.

Children should respect their parents for all they do for them and obey them, unless this would lead them into sin. The commandment, Honor your father and mother, refers first of all to the obligation of adult children toward their elderly parents but, by extension, it encompasses the duty of children to listen to and cooperate with their parents. Children, even teenagers, benefit from having clear rules, even if they chafe under them at times. But in raising children it is prudent to follow St. Paul’s advice: Let us do not provoke your children, so they may not become discouraged [Colossians 3: 21]. Unrea- sonable demands put upon a child or adolescent can wound their spirit. As children grow, they should be given more responsibility (e.g., taking care of pets, helping with household chores), be rewarded when they perform well and be gently corrected when they fail. One bit of advice I gave to adolescents who complained that their parents did not trust them, was: “Show your parents you are worthy of their trust by acting responsibly. Before long, your par- ents will notice and begin to trust you more.”

The Church must help married couples and families. The Diocese is hosting a “Together in Holli- ness” conference on February 12, 2022, in Charleston, which will also assist parishes to form small groups of couples for ongoing formation and support. As a Diocese we will participate in World Family Day, June 22-26, 2022, in different locations. The movements such as Marriage Encounter and the Apostolate for Family Consecration strengthen families. Our beautiful Camp Carlo near Elkins provides a rich experience of faith and outdoor activities for children, while efforts to bring back Teens Encounter Christ are on the way. The Diocese is also entering into programs that some parishes have. Campus min- istry is flourishing at some of our universities and we will be trying to extend it to more campuses.

There are many more topics relating to marriage and family life, too many for me to address in this letter. I encourage you to read Pope Francis’ Apost- olic Exhortation, The Joy of Love (Amoris Laetitia) for a fuller discussion of this most important mat- ter. It is available at the Vatican website and in print- ed form from The Word Among Us Press, 7115 Guilford Drive, Frederick, MD 21704.

Some who read these reflections may judge them to be out of touch with the reality of contemporary life and the many alternative ways people under- stand marriage and families. I would counter that the Catholic approach to marriage and family life constitutes a radical sanity in a world that has lost its bearings on these fundamental relationships. In the Catholic faith we are able, like the hand of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old [Matthew 13: 52], to offer some- thing of perennial value in new clothing. We have new ways to prepare couples for marriage and to as- sist them in living a grace-filled family life while em- phasizing the old and authentic teachings of the Church as the foundation of their relationships. In doing that, we respond appropriately to the needs of married couples and their children and offer our Catholic vision of marriage and family life as a mod- el for the world.

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, look on our families with kindness and love. Strengthen them in the truth of their vocation and give them the confidence that, with God’s grace, they can live it with love and joy! Amen.

+Mark E. Brennan
Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston

[7Familiaris Consortio, 15
My friends, however the US Supreme Court decides the Dobbs vs. Jackson case, the Court's ruling is not likely to change the minds and hearts of the people of our country. We hope for a decision that provides the greatest possible protection for unborn children, but we will still have much work to do to move public opinion toward a genuine respect for all human life.

To show our true colors to our fellow citizens who are neither diehard supporters of abortion or diehard opponents, we must be as concerned for the welfare of mothers as we are for their unborn children. We must show we are both pro-child and pro-woman. Many mothers are in truly difficult situations and struggle over the decision to have or to abort their child. We need to understand that, without denying our principles. If we are judgmental in our attitude, harsh in our speech and unwilling to offer positive help, we will not win many people over to the side of protecting all life.

How can we change attitudes? We start with ourselves. We must recognize that a woman inclined to abortion or who procures one is still a person made in God’s image and likeness. We are called to love everyone without exception. That does not mean approving or promoting bad behavior, but it does mean trying to understand why some women think their only viable choice is to abort their child. We must think and act in such a way that we come across as their allies in dealing with the pregnancies that are causing them distress. Many pregnant women face powerful threats, some from their own families.

What positive help can we offer? We have outreach centers for pregnant women all over this state. They not only counsel women to respect and cherish their unborn child but they offer concrete help, ranging from providing baby clothes, diapers and formula to giving parenting classes. We need to support them and ensure that their good work is widely known. A Catholic initiative called “Walking with Moms in Need” joins local parishes to pregnancy centers to mentor pregnant women and mothers with infants and offer them the assistance they need.

An effort to establish a safe, welcoming place for a woman to live while pregnant and for some time after the birth of her child is underway in the Eastern Panhandle. How can we establish more of these programs in our state to help pregnant women who need a place to stay?

Do we condemn or turn our backs on women who have had abortions? Does that do any good? We show the compassionate side of our movement when we offer post-abortion counseling, as some pregnancy centers do, and initiatives such as Project Rachel counseling and Rachel's Vineyard retreats. We can help post-abortion women move from remorse and guilt to forgiveness and peace.

Many of these efforts can be undertaken of our own initiative and without government assistance but government policy can also be a help to pregnant women, and those already raising children. We can continue to ask our state and local officials for relief from the housing and food insecurity that many women face, for resources for women experiencing domestic violence, for effective laws that forbid discrimination against pregnant women in the workplace, for adequate maternity leave, and for affordable child care options for working mothers. In these ways we may broaden society’s support for pregnant women and those with young children. These things are consistent with the love, compassion and kindness that define our movement. This approach to women can indeed change the minds and hearts of West Virginians who are not strongly in the pro-abortion camp but sympathize with women who are desperate for help and struggling with an abortion decision. We can, and we must, be both pro-child and pro-woman.

Every life is a gift from God. Every life, that of a mother and that of her child, is precious and deserves our respect and help. We are grateful for signs that our West Virginia legislators want to strengthen our laws to reduce abortions in this state. Let us also show that we are committed to helping mothers deal with the challenges that a pregnancy can present. Mother and child should not be pitted against one another. They are not natural enemies. We can recognize that a woman inclined to abortion or who procures one is still a person made in God’s image and likeness. We are called to love everyone without exception. That does not mean approving or promoting bad behavior, but it does mean trying to understand why some women think their only viable choice is to abort their child. We must think and act in such a way that we come across as their allies in dealing with the pregnancies that are causing them distress. Many pregnant women face powerful threats, some from their own families.

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A Statement on Pro-Life Issues by Bishop Brennan

Sincerely in Christ,

+Mark E. Brennan
Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston

Every Life, that of a Mother and that of Her Child, is Precious and Deserves our Respect and Help

Natural Family Planning Introductory Session to be Held

WEIRTON—The Creighton model fertility-care system is Natural Family Planning (NFP). Those who want help with infertility, those who are interested in learning about today’s effective methods of NFP, and those married or single and looking for a way to treat women’s health problems other than using birth control pills are encouraged to come to a Creighton System Introductory Session.

The next introductory session will be held on Thursday, March 19 at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph the Worker Church in Weirton. There is a $10 fee and reservations are necessary.

For more information or to make a reservation, call Kathy Hirkala at (304) 723-0478.

Confirmation Schedule

March 23: Our Lady of Peace, Wheeling; 6 p.m.
April 2: Annunciation of Our Lord, Fort Ashby, 4:30 p.m.
April 23: St. Francis de Sales, Morgantown, 5:15 p.m.
April 26: St. Vincent de Paul, Wheeling, 6 p.m.
April 27: St. John the Evangelist, Wellsburg, 5:30 p.m.
April 28: Corpus Christi, Wheeling, 6 p.m.
April 30: St. Alphonsus, Wheeling, 5:30 p.m.
May 1: Combined Confirmation: Sacred Heart, Chester, and Immaculate Conception, New Cumberland, 11 a.m. at Sacred Heart, Chester
May 3: St. Michael, Vienna, 6 p.m.
May 5: Combined Confirmation: Holy Trinity, Nitro, and St. Patrick Mission, Bancroft, 6 p.m. at St. Patrick Mission, Bancroft
May 7: Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Charleston, 5:30 p.m.
May 9: St. Michael, Wheeling, 5:30 p.m.
May 12: St. Jude, Glen Dale, 6:30 p.m.
May 18: St. Joseph the Worker, Weirton, 6:30 p.m.
May 19: St. Bernadette, Hedgesville, 6 p.m.
May 20: St. Leo, Inwood, 6:30 p.m.
May 21: St. James, Charles Town, 10 a.m.
May 22: St. Joseph, Martinsburg, 3 p.m.
May 28: Immaculate Conception, Clarksburg, 4:30 p.m.
May 29: St. Margaret Mary, Parkersburg, 2 p.m.
May 31: St. Anthony, Follansbee, 6 p.m.
June 4: St. Francis de Sales, Beckley, 5 p.m.
June 25: St. Brendan, Elkins, 11 a.m.

Confirmation Schedule

Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

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Success of Catholic Schools Attributed to Culture of Collaboration and Shared Responsibility among Staff at Building Level

By Joyce Bibey

WHEELING—As the nation celebrates Catholic Schools Week from January 30 through February 5, West Virginia Catholic Schools’ leadership and parents agree the success of the Catholic school system in West Virginia is completely reflective of the dedication of the individual school principals, teachers, and support staff.

The Catholic Schools of West Virginia made headlines last year with the announcement that academic achievement did not falter during the pandemic and remote learning, based on their national assessment scores across grade levels. Superintendent Mary Ann Deschaine, Ed.S., credits her principals, teachers, and support staff for maintaining a mission driven focus and continuously enriching a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility.

“Without hesitation we completely attribute our successes to the phenomenal women and men, who work for our Catholic schools,” Deschaine said. “From the building administration to the teachers, secretaries, and custodians, each plays a significant role in carrying out the mission of Catholic education. When you are in our buildings it doesn’t take long to recognize their genuine dedication and flexibility.”

It is no secret the pandemic has been hard on educators and the educational system across the board, she said.

“I firmly believe everyone who works in education, no matter if it is a Catholic school or not, are heroes in our society, right up there with healthcare workers and first responders,” Deschaine, who has worked in both the public and Catholic school systems as an educator and administrator, said.

“When you consider what we ask our school staff to include in their objectives, and look at the sacrifices and demands they willingly take on for the betterment of our children, it takes that sentiment to another level. The impressive teams our principals and past faculties assembled in our schools are exceptional. They are living and leading with faith, Christian values, and respected morals. That is the environment that enables students to thrive. Together we are the best for our children.”

Carol McDonald, a parent at St. Joseph School in Martinsburg, shares Deschaine’s attitude. “Over that past two years we have discovered many heroes among us,” McDonald said. “The SJ’s staff and teachers are definitely some of those heroes. As heroes they have superpowers, not to see our children for who they are today but see what they can become tomorrow and strive to help them achieve this. These powers are blessings from our heavenly Father. It has been challenging but they rose above these challenges by showing strength, love, and compassion for our children. This dedication helped our students weather the storm.”

Jocelyn Czapp, a parent of Corpus Christi School and Central Catholic High School in Wheeling, said she could cite “a million” examples of how school staff has helped her three children.

“The staff and principals at our Catholic schools are fully invested in our children’s education, spiritual growth, and successes. For that, my husband and I are forever grateful and feel very blessed for their Catholic education,” she said. “The teachers go above and beyond to ensure that our children are learning and working to their full potential. They do it with so much compassion, care and love that it makes me know that they are there for our kids and truly want the best for them. It is an amazing feeling that they celebrate our children’s accomplishments and are just as excited for them, as we are as parents, when they hit milestones and goals.”

Michelle Martin, principal of St. Paul School in Weirton, said the pandemic has placed a spotlight on the collaboration that has always been a part of Catholic education. Supporting one another as a staff or even filling someone else’s shoes in order to get work done or reach an objective is second nature in the Christ-centered school system. Returning to a classroom to substitute for a teacher who is in quarantine may be challenging for administrators, but it is also rewarding and grounding, she said.

“It’s definitely been challenging, but I do enjoy it,” she said. “I get first-hand experience on the challenges the teachers face. I enjoy having the students see me as a teacher and not just the principal! Doing both jobs at one time can be a bit overwhelming, but I have a supportive staff that will pitch in, no questions asked. They work really hard to give the students a normal school year by keeping them engaged and challenged.”

We expect a lot from our schools. See “Success” on Page 8

Catholic Education More Than School, It’s Extended Family

Morgantown Mom Says Catholic School Helped Her Family When It Mattered Most

By Joyce Bibey

While working at a hospital four years ago at St. Francis de Sales Central Catholic School in Morgantown, Michelle Martin was taken by a phone call that shook her to the core, but she was quickly wrapped in the love and comfort she knows that only her Catholic school could offer.

“I was diagnosed with breast cancer,” she said. “I actually received the call while at St. Francis. I hung my cell phone, took a deep breath, and finished out my task. When I was leaving, I spoke with our secretary, Ms. Janet (Stone), and explained to her that I did in fact have cancer. She hugged me and told me that we were going to fight it together. I thanked her and left with tears in my eyes.”

Downey, the mother of three children, said in the midst of trying to comprehend how her life and her young family’s life was about to change because of the surgery and treatments ahead, she never felt so supported and confident that her children would be in an environment that would be compassionate and empowered through prayer and actions.

Stacy and her husband Brandon had just transferred their children to the school that year. Aydan, their oldest, was in fourth grade, Kaitlynn was in first grade, and Mallory was just a baby.

The Downey family remembers well the day they toured the school and the children shadowed in the classroom.

“The day I picked my oldest two children up from their shadow day, I had never heard my kids speak about how wonderful school was,” she said. “They talked my ear off. Kaitlynn asked me if I was able to go back because she wanted to learn more. I knew at the moment this was what my children needed. I was amazed at how organized the structure of the classes were. Their focus on education was a breath of fresh air.”

The Downey children are among the 40% of students attending Catholic school in West Virginia that are non-Catholic.

“I have had numerous friends ask me how I feel about our children learning about Catholicism, and the only answer I ever say is, ‘We are blessed that our children are able to learn about Catholicism in a place that does not force it as a religion, but shows them how the teachings relate in their lives and what it truly means to be a good person,’” she said.

“We are never judged or treated differently for not being Catholic. Honestly, I have never felt more welcome in a place before. I, myself, love to hear Ms. (Nora) Sheets or (Principal Arthur Moore) give prayer every day.”

That prayerful energy is the balance Stacy Downey has needed.

“The night before my surgery, Mr. Moore called and spoke with me,” she said. “He talked about my cancer, my family, and what the school could do to help us fight this! His words put me at ease knowing that while I was taking care of myself, he, the teachers, and the whole school would be behind our children providing them with all they needed during this time. Now keep in mind we were a new family and did not know much of the staff yet. Over the next several weeks, I received numerous text messages, emails, phone calls from our St. Francis family checking on me and my family.”

During that time teachers made sure to provide her children with extra time and attention to help keep them on track in school, as well as process what their mother was going through.

Downey said the school is like an extended family led by the most amazing people you could ever know.

“So, how does St. Francis go above and beyond? I believe that is the only thing they know to do,” she said. “Our St. Francis family is real community is a wonderful place to be a part of.”
Catholic Sharing Appeal Brings Great Joy to St. Vincent’s Faculty and Staff

When you commit to working for a Catholic school or parish, you commit early on to the mission, to give rather than receive, to serve rather than be served. The faculty and staff of St. Vincent de Paul Parish School in Wheeling felt what it was like to be on the receiving end this Christmas.

Through the generosity of the parish, the annual Catholic Sharing Appeal, exceeded its goal once again this year. Regardless of the economy in the Upper Ohio Valley, parishioners of St. Vincent de Paul Parish continue to support the parish and school through their time, talent and treasure. Even throughout the pandemic weekly collections and online giving remained strong.

This year, Msgr. Paul Hudock, pastor of St. Vincent’s, asked that the teachers and staff of St. Vincent de Paul Parish School benefit from the monies raised through the Catholic Sharing Appeal. Rami Peckens, middle school math teacher at SVS, was overjoyed with the gift.

“I was surprised, actually shocked, when I received the call from Mrs. Rossell, our principal. The additional money was a way of showing appreciation for me as well as my colleagues,” Peckens said. “Several of us are just starting a family of our own. We already use so much of our own money on classroom supplies. It was in that moment of kindness that we felt our hard work was noticed. It was such a great feeling! God bless our parish for their giving spirit!”

TJ Butyn teaches physical education/gym to all of the SVS students. He knows every student by name. He recently welcomed his second child to the Butyn family. “I am extremely grateful for the gift,” he said. “It helped make our family life just a little bit easier!”

School secretary, Missy Carpenter, said that she was not only surprised but deeply grateful. She expressed how very much she appreciated the generosity of the parish. She confirmed the joy that many of the teachers felt when sharing the good news about the gift they received.

Through the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, the Catholic Sharing Appeal is an annual campaign designed to enliven the shared ministries of the diocese and each parish. The appeal strengthens families, enriches parish life, and expands the charitable outreach ministry of the church.

St. Vincent de Paul Parish values the administration, faculty and staff of our school. Laurajenn Rossell summed it up best when she said; “Our staff is truly deserving because of the day to day contributions they make and especially for the love and joy they share so generously with our students!”

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11 Days Catholic Ireland. Sep 12-22, 2022 $3950 Includes 1 night Limerick, 2 nights Kilkenny, 3 nights each in Galway and Dublin. With Fr Art Bugle from Marlmont, WV.

6 Day Mexico OL of Guadalupe Anniversary Dec 8-13, 2022, Price TBD Includes Insurance. With Priest TBD.

For brochures or more information, contact John Tagnesi by calling 1-888-544-4461 or by e-mail to jtag1964@verizon.net

Visit dwc.org/CSA today to learn more!
Success ... Cont’d from Page 6

said Jennifer Hornyak, associate superintendent for accreditation and technology. Hornyak oversees staff development for the diocesan schools, as well as technology enrichment.

“Our teachers are constantly challenged to learn new teaching and learning methods while balancing their everyday classroom work,” Hornyak said. “Teachers and administrators put in a great deal of time and effort to learn new things and are true models of what it means to be a life-long learner. They continually participate in new professional development opportunities, not only in the changing landscape of education, but also in the ever-changing world of technology.”

Julie Link, office manager of the Department of Catholic schools, praises the individual schools’ front office staff for gracefully handling the constant juggle of duties.

“Our secretaries in our schools don’t get enough credit for the important role they have in the daily life of the school,” Link said. “Their list of to-dos is constantly growing, not only from staff, students, and parents, but from our office, as well. They go the extra mile to assist their principal when our office requests documents or if we have specific requests. I always find that when I call a school, I hear a friendly, well-spoken voice.”

Theresa DiPiero, director of curriculum and instruction for the diocesan schools, loves working with and for the 24 Catholic schools in the state. It is reaffirmed every time she gets to observe the principals concern and attention for their students as they constantly are “calming fears, extending a warm smile, calling students by their first names in the halls, and asking about a brother, sister or their parents.”

She said there is nothing like watching “the way a student lights up when he or she is noticed and made to feel important. Catholic schools are a gift.”

“I reflect on my conversations with a guidance counselor and wonder how they remember every single detail about their students,” she said, adding that it is her privilege “to work in a system where teachers and counselors are able to pray with and for a student when they lose heart.”

To learn more about Catholic education in West Virginia go to: https://wvcatholicschools.org.
Retreat Will Help Men Consider Priesthood

By Colleen Rowan
Kearneysville — An upcoming retreat will offer men a chance to consider God’s call to be priests of Jesus Christ. A weekend of prayer and discernment will be offered by the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Vocations Office at Priest Field Pastoral Center in Kearneysville March 5-6.

“If you are a man discerning priesthood or have at least considered it: What have you to lose by going on the retreat?” asked Father Brian Crenwelge, vocations director. “It’s a no-strings attached deal. "It’s a no-strings attached deal. It fully equips educators, religious education coordinators, and catechists for their important role of faith formation in parishes and schools. Graduates earn their master’s degree in Theology and Educational Ministry while living in several different states while her husband was in the military. “My intellectual growth in the field of theology is indisputable after completing this program,” she says. "I have also grown from a person who was just interested in the faith into a person who is able to invite and accompany others on their faith journeys to more fully live Christ’s mandate to become missionary disciples. This is mostly due to my spiritual growth.”

The program is unlike any other currently offered. While the coursework for the MA program is completed online, a component of the program that must be fulfilled prior to graduation is a unique, self-designed practicum that offers students the opportunity to put what they have learned into practice in a classroom or parish setting. Students design their own practicum programs usually around their current Church and school involvement. This crossover makes it possible for those already working in the field to use their experiences to complete the master’s degree program while gaining expertise in ministerial leadership.

CDU’s graduate programs are accredited by the Association of Theological Schools, which accredits most seminaries in the U.S. and Canada. CDU also offers an Associate degree in Liberal Arts with a concentration in Catholic Studies and a Catechetical Diploma program. Certificate options include the undergraduate Catechetical Coordinator certificate and graduate certificates in Sacred Scripture, Church History, and Catholic Education.

For about $47k, students can earn a bachelor’s degree in theology. A master’s degree in theology is just $20k.

The master’s degree in Theology and Educational Ministry is geared to teachers and those working in a religious education capacity. It fully equips educators, directors of religious education, and catechists for their important role of faith formation in parishes and schools. Graduate Ute Eble earned her master’s degree in Theology and Educational Ministry while living in several different states while her husband was in the military. "My intellectual growth in the field of theology is indisputable after completing this program," she says. "I have also grown from a person who was just interested in the faith into a person who is able to invite and accompany others on their faith journeys to more fully live Christ’s mandate to become missionary disciples. This is mostly due to my spiritual growth."

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To apply, visit WVPriests.org.

Catholic Distance University in Charles Town Offers Affordable Online Degree Programs

CHARLES TOWN — Enrollment is underway in Catholic Distance University’s Winter II term. Classes begin March 14, so apply soon to be admitted and eligible to register. Working adults especially appreciate Catholic Distance University’s online course format, affordable tuition, and faithfully Catholic focus. For about $47k, students can earn a bachelor’s degree in theology. A master’s degree in theology is just $20k.

The master’s degree in Theology and Educational Ministry is geared to teachers and those working in a religious education capacity. It fully equips educators, directors of religious education, and catechists for their important role of faith formation in parishes and schools. Graduates earn their master’s degree in Theology and Educational Ministry while living in several different states while her husband was in the military. “My intellectual growth in the field of theology is indisputable after completing this program,” she says. “I have also grown from a person who was just interested in the faith into a person who is able to invite and accompany others on their faith journeys to more fully live Christ’s mandate to become missionary disciples. This is mostly due to my spiritual growth.”

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Consecrated Women and Men on the Journey for the Synod for a Synodal Church

The consecrated women and men in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston are responding to the invitation of Pope Francis and Bishop Mark Brennan by participating in the Journey for the Synod for a Synodal Church. The group initially met virtually on Dec. 14.

“We have been part of a journey—a long journey—for generations,” said Sister Martha Gomez, delegate for consecrated life for the diocese. “We have all been called to grow and build the Church, the Body of Christ among us. This body must change somewhat to keep up with the needs of our time.”

She said changes do not have to be feared or considered radical, but when carefully examined by calling upon the Holy Spirit for guidance will be respectful and full of integrity.

“The Church is a living body of hopes, dreams, faith, and trust,” she said. “It is a body blessed with sacramental ointments that heal, strengthen, and make us as the family of God. Sure, together the Church has been bruised and broken, challenged and strained, we remain together as one by God’s love and design. We are products of our time today, here, and now. We need a living and loving Church for which the third millennium—still new and unfolding in our Church for which the third millennium—still new and unfolding in our world,” she said. “We are a beautiful array of cultures and customs that shape and express our one faith in Jesus, in our one Church, the Body of Christ. That richness is who we are as a Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.”

Sister Gomez praised the Holy Father, the Synod of Bishops, and Bishop Brennan for making the synod for a Synodal Church a priority.

“It shows we come together knowing that we cannot be a Church alone,” she said. “This is not about one or a few, but ALL of us adding color, texture, and spirit to the soul of God among us! We need to go to the margins and meet people who no longer journey with us and engage them, invite them, and listen to them. We need to include those whose voices are rarely heard, for we are all loved dearly by God.

“We journey together, sojourners, if you will, side by side, leading all we meet along the road mapped out by God, to be disciples of the Gospel Mission of Jesus in our Church today.”

Sister Gomez said it is important to note that the sisters, brothers, and consecrated virgins all belong to the National Catholic Conference of Vicars for Religious (NCVR), Inc. The National Conference of Vicars for Religious is recognized by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) as a Conference of service to and represents all members of consecrated life in our dioceses in the U.S. As such, NCVR is responsible to invite all its members to participate in the Synodal Process and summit a Conference Report to USCCB.

She said she will gather the information from her group before the end of February.

SYNOD Listening Sessions

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

Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Charleston: First Session—Feb. 4, 12:40 p.m.; Third Session—Feb. 13, 1 p.m.; Fourth Session—Feb. 19, 6:30 p.m.; Fifth Session—Feb. 23, 6:30 p.m.

Holy Redeemer, Spencer: First Session—March 20, 10 a.m.; Second Session—March 27, 10 a.m.

Holy Rosary, Sistersville: First Session—Feb. 7, 6-8 p.m.

Immaculate Conception, New Cumberland: First Session—March 6, 9:30 a.m.; Second Session—March 11, 6 p.m.; Third Session—March 20, 9:30 a.m.

Mater Dolorosa, Paden City: First Session—Feb. 8, 6-8 p.m.


Our Lady of the Hills, Elkhv: Fifth Session—Feb. 6, after 8:30 Mass

Sacred Heart, Princeton: First Session—March 20,12:30 p.m.

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

St. Anthony, Charleston: Second Session—Feb. 21, 1 p.m.; Third Session—March 12, 10 a.m.; Fourth Session—April 3, 11:40 a.m.

St. Anthony, Fairmont: Second Session, Feb. 6, 6 p.m. after Mass; Third Session—Feb. 7, 7 p.m. after Mass; Fourth Session—Feb. 6, noon after Mass; Fifth Session—Feb. 7, 10 a.m.

St. Augustine, Grafton: First Session—March 27, 10 a.m.-noon

St. Elizabeth, Phillippi: First Session—April 3, 2022, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

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

St. James, Charles Town: First Session—March 5, 1 p.m.

St. Joseph, Proctor: First Session—Feb. 9, 6-8 p.m.

St. Joseph, Martinsburg: First Session—Feb. 26, 2-4 p.m.; Second Session—Feb. 27, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

St. Michael, Vienna: First Session—Feb. 27, 10 a.m.; Second Session make up date, March 13, 10 a.m.

St. Patrick, Coalton: First Session—Feb. 6, after 8:30 a.m. Mass

St. Patrick, Hinton: First Session—Feb. 9, 1-3 p.m.; Second Session—Feb. 15, 6-8 p.m.

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

St. Peter Claver, Huntington: Second Session—Feb. 5, 10:30 a.m.; Third Session—Feb. 6, directly after Mass

St. Peter the Fisherman, Fairmont: First Session—Feb. 6, 11:45 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Second Session—Feb. 20, 11:45 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Third Session—March 6, 11:45 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Fourth Session—March 20, 11:45 a.m. and 2 p.m.

St. Vincent de Paul, Berkeley Springs: Third Session—Feb. 6, 10:30 a.m.; Fourth Session—Feb. 23, 2 p.m.; Fifth Session—March 1, 10 a.m.

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

St. Vincent de Paul, New Martinsville: First Session—Feb. 11, 6-8 p.m.
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Weirton Parish Invites All to 33-Day Consecration to St. Joseph Group, and a Lenten Eucharistic Mission

**BRIDGEPORT —** All Saints Parish in Bridgeport is celebrating the Year of St. Joseph with the “Children of Light,” a project to help clothe the children at the U.S. southern border. Parishioners brought clothes for 2- to 6-year-old children. All clothing was placed near the icon of St. Joseph throughout December and January.

Sister Norma, who is the director of Catholic Charities in Brownsville, Texas, works among the immigrants and migrants on the border in the Texas region. She walks with the families there as they search for new ways of life and to provide for their needs.

Father Walter Jagela, pastor of All Saints, has said: “The crisis at the border is a humanitarian crisis, and we as people of faith, listening to and following the Gospel of Jesus Christ are called to respond in faith!”

The gifts were blessed at the end of Mass Jan. 30 and were sent to McAllen, Texas. The gifts will then be given to the “Children of Light.”

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**WEIRTON—** Bishop Mark Brennan began the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Year of St. Joseph on March 19, 2021, the Solemnity of St. Joseph. “Who is St. Joseph? What better time to learn about St. Joseph than now as our diocese’s Year of St. Joseph is coming to an end,” officials of St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Weirton said. “We invite you to join the 33-Day Consecration Group at St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Weirton, in consecrating yourself to St. Joseph.”

The 33-day journey will meet on Tuesdays — Feb. 15, 22, and March 1, 8, 15, and conclude on the Solemnity of St. Joseph, Saturday March 19. Cost for the book is $15; time is 6-7:30 p.m.; location is St. Joseph the Worker Grade School in Weirton.

To register and order the book, call Sally at the rectory at (304) 723-2054.

The parish also invites all to its Lenten Eucharistic Mission the week of March 19-24. Father William Casey, CPM, of the Fathers of Mercy will be speaking at local parishes during Sunday Masses and then present the Eucharistic Mission for four nights, March 21-24.

The mission talk will take place from 7-8 p.m. each evening followed by confession from 8-9 p.m. Refreshments and a Eucharistic display will be in the church vestibule.

The theme of a Eucharistic Mission was chosen to promote Eucharistic adoration.

“Our local Catholic community is in the process of establishing Perpetual Adoration in the Communion of Saints Adoration Chapel located in St. Joseph the Worker Church,” parish officials said. “The chapel is open to all people of the upper Ohio Valley who wish to participate either as a Guardian or visitor.”

Adoration is currently open every Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

This week-long event will also be used as recruitment for guardians, who are people from various local parishes who commit to a specific hour of adoration each week in the chapel. Their role is to ensure that the Blessed Sacrament is never left alone.

“By their generosity, the chapel can remain open for others to come and visit Our Lord,” parish officials said, noting that they are now registering guardians for Saturday adoration 8 a.m.-8 p.m. When at least two guardians have signed up for each hour, the chapel will open for another 12-hour day of adoration.

“Our goal is to establish Perpetual Adoration which would make Our Lord present in the Blessed Sacrament available in the chapel day or night, 24/7,” parish officials said.

The opportunity to register as a guardian will be in the church vestibule. For more information, call (304) 374-6170.
Clarksburg Knights Brought ‘Wreaths Across America’ to Veterans at Rest

Our Lady of Peace Assembly #1184, Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus sponsored the “Wreaths Across America” project at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Clarksburg on Dec. 18.

Sir Knight Anthony Ovies was the project Chairman, and “he did the incredible job of raising donations to sponsor over 800 wreaths to honor the veterans interred at Holy Cross,” assembly members said. “We would like to acknowledge Brian Wiseman, and his staff at the cemetery for their invaluable assistance, and the members of VFW Post 573 in Clarksburg, who provided an honor guard, and 21 gun salute, and a rendition of ‘Taps.’”

The assembly gave a special acknowledgment to Berkshire - Hathaway Corporation for providing volunteers to help lay the wreaths, and lunch for all the volunteers.

“Our Lady of Peace Assembly intends to continue this project on an annual basis to honor our deceased veterans,” members said.

Sir Knight Carmen Romano, right, presents a wreath to be placed honoring veterans at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Clarksburg. Courtesy Photo

Recovering from a House Fire: Suzanne and Her Grandkids

Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) helps people across the state recover from disasters. While disasters are devastating for anyone impacted, people already struggling financially have an increased risk of sliding more deeply into poverty after a disaster. That’s why our Disaster Services program is concentrated on finding resources for as many people as possible.

House fires are particularly heartbreaking. Over the past four months (just since October 2021), we have encountered six families who lost their homes to fire. “Suzanne” represents one such family. She is raising her three grandkids. They lost their home in May 2021 and were homeless for many months, relying on friends and family to sleep indoors.

The family qualified for subsidized housing, and Suzanne could even afford the down payment. But she had no money left over to get utilities connected, so the family was stuck without a place of their own.

Luckily, the Disaster Services team was able to step in. “Our job was to make sure Suzanne and her grandkids had a safe place to call home,” said Lora Pierce, CCWVa Disaster Services Specialist.

Suzanne’s granddaughter had to sleep in a playpen after the fire and before family moved into their new home. “She is just so happy to have her own bed again!” said Suzanne.

“We have been through so much, one thing after another,” said Suzanne. She is grateful for Catholic Charities staff, volunteers, and donors who made it possible to rebuild a life for the three kids who depend on her. “May God bless you so you may keep blessing others who need help like my family and I?”

Because donors give so generously, CCWVa can distribute funds to help families like Suzanne’s get back on their feet after a tragic house fire. “In general, we offer up to $500 per family to help them secure their next residence,” said Pierce.

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia and our Disaster Services program, please visit 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.

Dr. Mark Miravalle to Present Talk on St. Joseph at Cathedral

WHEELING — World-renowned theology professor and author Dr. Mark Miravalle will present a talk titled “Meet Your Spiritual Father: St. Joseph the Worker” on Wednesday, Feb. 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling.

There will be a recitation of the rosary prior to the event at 7 p.m.

Miravalle has been a professor at the Franciscan University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio, since 1986, where he has been the recipient of several teaching awards and holds the St. John Paul II Chair of Mariology. He is president of the International Marian Association, comprised of more than 130 theologians, bishops, clergy, and laity worldwide who seek to promote Marian devotion and doctrine.

Miravalle’s book, “Meet Your Spiritual Father: A Brief Introduction to St. Joseph,” will be available for purchase and autographing after the talk.
En Español

Papa ora por hombre que interrumpió oración, habla de relación con santos

Por Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS)—El papa Francisco dijo que cuando era pequeño, pensaba que la frase “la comunión de los santos” en el Credo significaba que los santos en el cielo estaban recibien- do la Comunión.

En cambio, la comunión de los santos, como miembro de la iglesia está ligado a mí de una manera profunda y este vínculo es tan fuerte que no puede ser roto ni siquiera por la muerte”, dijo el 2 de febrero du- rante su audiencia general sema- nal.

Concluyendo su serie de char- las sobre San José durante la audi- encia, el papa Francisco recitó una oración que dijo haber recitado to- dos los días durante más de 40 años.

Pero mientras lo leía, un hombre- bre en la parte de atrás de la sala de audiencias comenzó a gritar, in- cluso sobre el uso de los cubrebo- cas. La policía del Vaticano lo es- coltó fuera del edificio.

Tan pronto como terminó su oración, el papa Francisco le dijo a la gente en el salón que el hom- bre tenía un problema.

“No”, dijo, “no es físico, psíquico o es- trual, pero es nuestro hermano con un problema. Quisiera terminar orando por él, nuestro her- mano que sufre, pobre hombre. Si grita o es porque está sufriendo, tiene algún problema. No debemos ser sordos a las necesidades de este her- mano”, dijo.

Luego, el papa dirigió a la multitud a rezar un Ave María por él.

En su discurso de audiencia principal, el papa Francisco dijo que quería dejar en claro la diferencia entre la devoción a un santo, incluso a San José o María, y la superstición o la idola- tría.

“A veces, incluso el cristianismo puede caer en formas de devoción que parecen reflejar una mentali- dad más pagana que cristiana”, dijo. Pero “la diferencia fundamenta- tal es que nuestra oración y la devoción del pueblo fiel no se basa en la confianza en un ser hu- mano, ni en una imagen ni en un objeto, aun sabiendo que son sagrados”, dijo.

“No son los santos los que ha- cen milagros, sino sólo la gracia de Dios que actúa a través de ellos”, dijo.

Los Santos, canonizados o no, dijo, son parte de la comunidad de la iglesia, una reunión no de los perfectos sino de “pecadores salva- dos”.

Y así como una persona puede tener una amistad con otro feligrés, él o ella puede tener una relación “con un hermano o una hermana en el cielo”, dijo el papa. “Los santos son amigos” y la devoción “es en realidad una forma de expresar el amor que nace de este vínculo que nos une”.

En Cristo, nadie puede jamás separarnos verdaderamente de aquellos a quienes amamos”, dijo.

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

Para informar a las autoridades civiles: comuníquese con la policía local; los números variarán según su ubicación. Si cree que alguien esta en peligro inmediato, llame al 911. Para informar confidencialmente cualquier incidencia de sospecha de abuso o neg- ligencia infantil, incluido el abuso sexual, comuníquese con la Oficina de Servicios de Proteccion Infantil de Ninos y Familias de West Virginia llamando a la línea directa de abuso infantil al 800.352. 6513. Puede informar anónimamente a esta línea directa si lo pre- ferir.

Para informar a las autoridades diocesanas: La diocesis alienta a informar ante las autoridades civiles apropiadas, ante todo, si se ha come- tido un delito. La diocesis también alienta a informar a las autoridades eclesiásticas apropiadas. Para reportar casos sospe- chosos de abuso sexual de niños por parte del personal de la Diocesi- s de Wheeling-Charleston a la diocesis, 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. 367; o Muy Reverendo Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270. También puede llamar a la Oficina de


Además de los métodos enumerados anteriormente para denun- ciar el abuso sexual, la Diocesis tambien se ha asociado con Navex Global para ofrecer la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar otras in- quietudes adicionales, como sospecha de mala conducta financiera, profesional y personal de un sacerdote, diacono, religioso, o emplea- do laico de la Diocesis o cualquier parroquia o escuela católica en West Virginia. Se puede acceder a la plataforma EthicsPoint a través de www.dwc.org, en “Rendicion 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 per- sona que informa esta protegida. Enlaces e informacion: Departamento de Salud y Recursos Humanos de WV: https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp. Policía Estatal de Virginia Occi- dental, Unidad de Crimen contra Ninos: 304-293-6400.
Principal Openings at Three Catholic Schools

St. Vincent de Paul Church, Wheeling, West Virginia is seeking a Principal for St. Vincent de Paul Grade Catholic School, pre-school through 8th grade. Candidates for principal must be willing to assume responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the school as well as in developing long range goals for school advancement. We seek a leader with strong communication skills, capable of developing and maintaining an excellent academic program. The candidate must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with Church precepts and act as an example and motivator toward our mission to instruct students in the Catholic faith. The ideal candidate must have an earned Master's Degree in Educational Leadership or Administration or begin the process of completing degree requirements; or hold a valid Educational Leadership certification from the state of West Virginia or be eligible for such certification. The candidate will have a minimum of five years of successful educational experience with a preference for administrative experience.

Salary will be competitive and negotiable, depending on qualifications and years of experience. This position begins on July 1 for the 2022-23 school year. Applications must be submitted by February 25, 2022.

A résumé with three references may be emailed with all attachments in PDF to Jen Kinkade at jenkinkade@pgka.com or at St. Vincent de Paul School, 127 Key Ave., Wheeling, WV 26003

St. Joseph Catholic Church, Martinsburg, West Virginia, is seeking a principal for St. Joseph School, which has students in preschool through eighth grades. The candidate must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with Church precepts, and act as an example and motivator toward the fulfillment of the Catholic philosophy of the school. The ideal candidate must have an earned Master's Degree in Educational Leadership or Administration, or begin the process of completing degree requirements; or hold a valid Educational Leadership certification from the state of West Virginia or be eligible for such certification. The candidate will have a minimum of five years of successful educational experience, with preference given to one with administrative experience.

A résumé with three references may be emailed with all attachments in PDF to Fr. Thomas Gallagher (tgallagher@dwc.org) by Friday, March 11, 2022.

St. Francis of Assisi Church, Saint Albans, West Virginia, is seeking a principal for St. Francis of Assisi School, preschool through 5th grade. Candidates for principal must be willing to assume responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the school as well as assist in developing long range goals for school advancement. We seek a leader with strong communication skills, capable of developing and maintaining an excellent academic program. The candidate must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with Church precepts and act as an example and motivator toward our mission to instruct students in the Catholic faith. The ideal candidate must have an earned Master's Degree in Educational Leadership or Administration or begin the process of completing degree requirements; or hold a valid Educational Leadership certificate from the state of West Virginia or be eligible for such certification. The candidate will have a minimum of five years of successful educational experience, with preference given to one with administrative experience.

A résumé with three references may be emailed with all attachments in PDF to Kelly Oxley at koxley@sfswv.com or mailed to St. Francis of Assisi School, Attn: Ms. Kelly Oxley, 525 Holley St, St. Albans, WV 25177

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