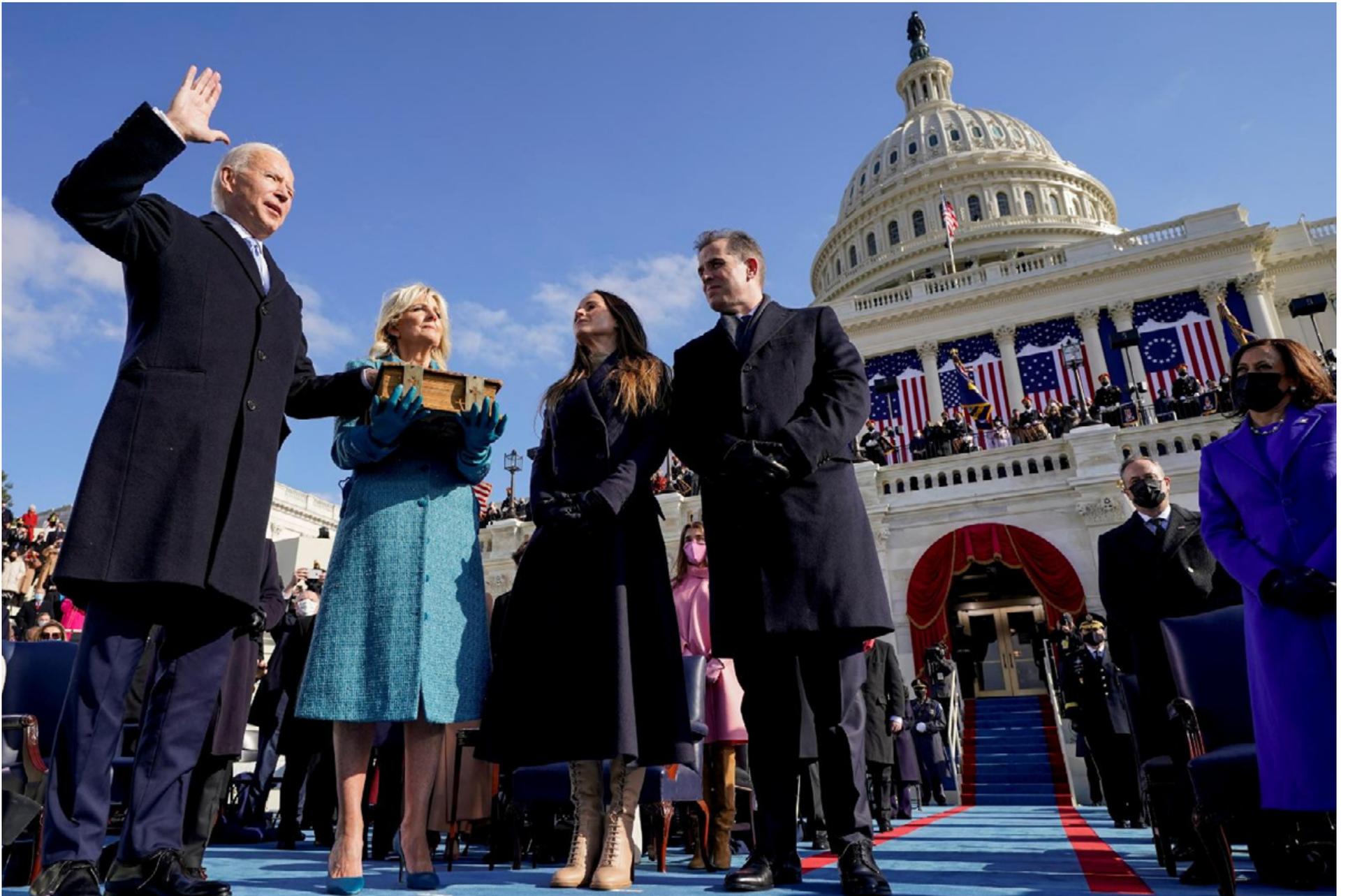


THE CATHOLIC
Spirit

USCCB President Prays God Grants Biden 'Wisdom, Courage' to Lead Nation



CNS Photo/Andrew Harnik, pool via Reuters

Joe Biden is sworn in as the 46th president of the United States by Chief Justice John Roberts as Biden's wife, Jill, holds the family Bible during his inauguration at the Capitol in Washington Jan. 20.

By Dennis Sadowski, Catholic News Service

As Joe Biden prepared to be inaugurated as the 46th U.S. president, Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, expressed hope the incoming ad-

ministration "will work with the church and others of goodwill" to "address the complicated cultural and economic factors that are driving abortion and discouraging families."

"If the president, with full respect for the church's religious free-

dom, were to engage in this conversation, it would go a long way toward restoring the civil balance and healing our country's needs," Archbishop Gomez said.

For the U.S. bishops, the "continued injustice of abortion" remains the "preeminent priority,"

he said, but "'preeminent' does not mean 'only.' We have deep concerns about many threats to human life and dignity in our society."

Archbishop Gomez also said in a Jan. 20 statement that he was

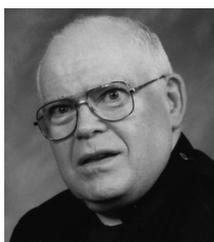
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Notice of Passing—Father Jeremiah Cullinane

Father Jeremiah Cullinane died January 21, 2021. Father Cullinane's obituary was not available at press time.



Obituary—Sister Mary Brown, CSJ

Sister Mary Brown (Emmanuel), died peacefully January 17, 2021 at Mount St. Joseph with her sisters at her bedside. Sr. Mary was a native of St. Clare, West Virginia, and was preceded in death by her parents, Harvey and Ella Sweeney Brown, and her brother, Lawrence Brown, and her sister, Helena Schaffer. Sr. Mary is survived by her sister, Pauline Schaffer of Vienna, WV and several nephews and nieces. She attended St. Clara Grade School and Doddridge County High School. Upon graduation, she entered the Congregation of St. Joseph in Wheeling on January 4, 1942. She graduated from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with a BA Degree in Elementary Education.



Sister Mary taught for over 50 years in diocesan schools, including: Corpus Christi, Cathedral Grade, Blessed Trinity, and St. Mary's in Wheeling; St. Francis Xavier in Moundsville; St. Joseph's in Huntington; Blessed Sacrament in South Charleston; St. Mary's in Clarksburg; St. Agnes in Charleston; St. Anne's in Bristol, Virginia; St. Francis de Sales in Beckley; and St. Charles Borromeo in White Sulphur Springs. She completed her teaching ministry back at Corpus Christi School where she taught for 17 years before her retirement in 1995.

Sister Mary was known for her kindness and her ability to inspire youth that needed encouragement. For years, Sr. Mary received a monthly bouquet of flowers from a grateful student who stated that Sr. Mary had been there for her and helped her to be the successful and strong woman she is today. Sr. Mary laughed easily and led with love and respect. She was always up to some good act of charity usually involving the school children she was serving.

In her later years, Sr. Mary always had a twinkle in her eyes. She was most likely reminiscing some of her earlier adventures. She looked forward to afternoon coffee and refreshments with her sisters where memories were shared. She commented in gratitude, "It's wonderful to have what we need and not worry about where our next meal is coming from because we are well cared for." She was loved by family, friends, sisters and staff.

Due to the pandemic, Sr. Mary's services will be private. A memorial Mass will be planned later when all are able to more safely gather. Memorial contributions can be made to the Congregation of St. Joseph 137 Mt. St. Joseph Rd, Wheeling, WV 26003. Arrangements have been made through Altmeyer Funeral Home.

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 enforcement: numbers will vary based on your location. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, call 911. To confidentially report any incidence of suspected child abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse, contact the West Virginia Bureau for Children and Families' Child Protective Services by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 800.352.6513. You may report anonymously to this hotline if you prefer.

To Report to Diocesan Authorities: The diocese encourages reporting to the appropriate civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. The diocese also encourages reporting to the appropriate church authorities. To report suspected cases of sexual abuse of children by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, contact one of the following designees at 1.888.434.6237 or 304.233.0880: Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; or Very Rev. Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270. You may also call the Diocese's Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504. You may also call the Diocese's sexual abuse hotline at 833.230.5656. Complaint forms are available online at www.dwc.org, click "Diocese" on the menu bar, then "Offices," then "Safe Environment", then "Download Files and Forms." The form is titled "Complaint Form for Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor." The form may be returned via U.S. mail to: Office of Safe Environment, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

To Report to the Diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator: please call Dr. Patricia Bailey at 304.242.6988.

In addition to the methods listed above for reporting sexual abuse, the Diocese also has partnered with Navex Global to offer the EthicsPoint platform to report other, additional concerns, such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese or any Catholic parish or school in West Virginia. The EthicsPoint platform can be accessed via www.dwc.org, under "Account-ability", then "Report Misconduct" or by calling 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint is a third-party reporting system that reports to civil authorities where applicable and Diocesan authorities, and the identity of the person reporting is protected.

Links and information: WV Department of Health and Human Resources: <https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp>. West Virginia State Police, Crimes Against Children Unit: 304-293-6400.

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

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

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The Catholic Spirit now has a weekly electronic edition sent free of charge, by e-mail to those who subscribe.

The new electronic edition was made available to also help cut the cost of printing, and is sent every Friday morning. Many have signed up, and say they prefer this new version. Anyone can sign up for the e-list by sending an e-mail to crowan@dwc.org with "The Catholic Spirit e-list" in the subject line.

Please consider removing your name from the print edition. This helps to make sure that your fellow Catholics around the state who need the print edition, such as those without Internet access, and the elderly, will continue to receive it.



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Biden Signs Flurry of Executive Orders, Undoing Trump-Era Policies

By **Mark Pattison, Catholic News Service**

WASHINGTON (CNS) — On his first day in office, President Joe Biden signed 17 executive orders and proclamations aimed at undoing policies set in place by his predecessor, Donald Trump.

Some of Trump's executive orders undone by Biden's actions Jan. 20 were themselves reversals of policies by other past presidents.

Biden boosted the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program put in place by Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama, and which Trump sought unsuccessfully to end. Also, the 46th president revoked the Trump administration's bid to exclude noncitizens from the decennial U.S. census count.

"We welcome the Executive Order from @POTUS to preserve and strengthen #DACA," said a Jan. 21 tweet posted by Kevin Ryan, president of Covenant House. "We urge Congress to act quickly and pass legislation that provides permanent protection, including a path to citizenship, for #Dreamers."

Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington, head of the bishops' Committee on Migration, likewise praised this move "toward ensuring that immigration enforcement in our country is balanced and humane."

The Department of Homeland Security said that effective Jan. 21, it was instituting a 100-day pause in deportations and rescinding the "remain in Mexico" policy that required those seeking asylum in the United States to stay in Mexico until their case came up for review.

Another key executive order from Biden erases a Trump-imposed travel ban, which started out with a half-dozen majority-Muslim countries and later was expanded to include four African nations, plus Myanmar and Kyrgyzstan.

He also directed the State Department to restart visa processing for individuals from the formerly banned nations, and to develop ways to address harm caused by the ban.

"We welcome yesterday's proclamation, which will help ensure that those fleeing persecution and seeking refuge or seeking to reunify with family in the United States will not be turned away because of what country they are from or what religion they practice," said a joint statement Jan. 21 from Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, head of the U.S. bishops' Committee for Religious Liberty, and Bishop Dorsonville.

Biden also halted construction of Trump's U.S.-Mexico border wall via an "immediate termination" of Trump's national emergency declara-

tion that allowed billions of dollars allocated to the Defense Department to go to wall construction, as well as a review of the legality of those funding transfers.

"Walls are a failure of public policy and a failure of a compassionate imagination. We encourage our new President to reimagine border management so that it responds to the needs of border communities and migrants," said a Jan. 20 statement by said Scott Wright, director of the Columbian Center for Advocacy and Outreach.

"This must include ending detention, restoring access to asylum and removing all military presence from the border," Wright said. "Let us instead invest in our communities and support their efforts to welcome our new neighbors."

The new president signed a letter announcing the United States' intent to rejoin the Paris climate accord, which will take effect in February.

Trump formally withdrew the U.S. from the accord in 2019. He argued the agreement would harm the U.S. economy and hurt U.S. workers.

"On the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement, Pope Francis called for 'a culture of care, which places human dignity and the common good at the center,'" said a joint statement Jan. 21 from Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, head of the bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Illinois, head of the bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace; and Sean L. Callahan, president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services.

"The environment and human beings everywhere, especially the poor and vulnerable, stand to benefit from the care of our common home. For this reason, we urge the United States to do more to help poorer nations adapt to the changes in climate that cannot be prevented," they added.

One climate-related executive order by Biden revoked the permit for the Keystone XL pipeline.

Another enforces a temporary moratorium on oil and natural gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. A third reversed the rollbacks to vehicle emissions stands. A fourth undid Trump-era decisions to reduce the size of several national monuments, and a fifth reestablished a working group on the social costs of greenhouse gases.

"We look forward to administrative and legislative actions that lead to a better future for our children that includes cleaner, safer sources of energy, good-paying clean energy jobs, less carbon pollution that contributes to climate change, and cleaner air and water for all — especially for low-income communities

and those most vulnerable to this pollution including unborn and young children — many of whom have been on the front lines of pollution for too long," said a Jan. 20 statement from Dan Misleh, executive director of the Catholic Climate Covenant.

Further, Biden issued an executive order overturning a Trump executive order that called for aggressive tactics to find and deport immigrants in this country illegally. Another executive order also blocked the deportation of Liberians who have been living in the United States.

"The executive orders that President Biden issued today ... are a turn in the right direction to build a beloved community where all life can flourish. For that, we give thanks," said a Jan. 20 statement from Susan Gunn, director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns.

Gunn cited in particular his orders to establish a White House COVID-19 team, to cease withdrawal from the World Health Organization, to rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement, to preserve and fortify DACA, and to revoke a travel ban on some Muslim-majority countries.

Biden signed an executive order requiring social distancing and the wearing of masks on all federal property for the next 100 days. He also issued a "100 days masking challenge" to Americans to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

The new president also appointed Jeffery Zients as the national COVID-19 response coordinator, reporting directly to Biden.

Further, he reinstated ties with the World Health Organization, from which the Trump team chose to withdraw last year. The head of the U.S. delegation will be Dr. Anthony Fauci, a Catholic who is considered the leading U.S. infectious disease expert.

Biden reversed a Trump administration action that weakened federal civil rights protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, and revoked a Trump executive order limiting the ability of federal agencies and contractors to conduct diversity and inclusion training.

Biden designated Susan Rice, head of his Domestic Policy Council, to lead the effort to require all federal agencies to make "rooting out systemic racism" central to their work.

He also rescinded the Trump administration's "1776 Commission"; its report, issued in the Trump's last days as president, was derided by educators and historians for its treatment of slavery.

The commission's report argued slavery was not "a uniquely American evil"; Trump formed the commission to counter The New York Times' "1619 Project."

Biden also extended through March a federal moratorium on evictions and has asked three federal agencies to extend a moratorium on foreclosures on federally guaranteed mortgages. He also continued a moratorium on federal student loan interest and principal payments through September.

The new president established ethics rules for all who serve in his administration, and ordered all appointees in the executive branch to sign an ethics pledge.

Biden also issued a freeze on all new regulations put in motion by Trump in the waning days of his administration. The so-called "midnight regulations" put in place by a lame-duck president can evade public review before they are put into place.

Many of the Jan. 20 executive orders dealt with issues that made front-page headlines for days, if not weeks or months. But these have been taken care of in one fell swoop, and were overshadowed by the inauguration of Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.

Different constituencies within the Democratic Party had urged Biden to take an aggressive "Day One" stance to counter some of Trump's policies they considered to be the most objectionable.

But observers said the coming days held the promise of still more Day One-style bunches of executive orders nullifying Trump initiatives — few of which would have happened were it not for continuous congressional gridlock stymieing the passage of laws.

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Prayer, Witness for Life, Even if Virtual this Year, Seen as Important as Ever

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Even though “peaceful prayer and witness” will take place in a different format due to the ongoing pandemic, it “must and will continue this year” to mark the 48th anniversary of the Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion, said the chairman of the U.S. bishops’ pro-life committee.

This year’s national rally and march is planned for Jan. 29, but it will be livestreamed, with pro-life advocates across the country asked to participate virtually.

“As longtime participants in the annual March for Life, my brother bishops and I commend the march organizers for their concern for the lives and safety of all participants. The countless, peaceful, pro-life marchers who would normally gather each year should not be put at risk,” said Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, who heads the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

In a Jan. 19 statement, he said he has “the honor this year of opening the March for Life Virtual Rally in prayer, so please join me at <https://marchfor-life.org/2021-virtual-events/>.”

The March for Life is usually held in Washington every January on or around the Jan. 22 anniversary of *Roe*.

Many of the bus caravans from the Midwest, long a staple of the event, were canceled last fall as a result of the pandemic, and the assault on the U.S. Capitol Jan. 6 and threats of subsequent violence by domestic terrorist groups, as reported by the FBI, made security impossible for holding such a big gathering this year.

On Jan. 15, Jeanne Mancini, president of the March for Life Defense and Education Fund, announced the changes in the event.

She said she and a small group of other pro-life advocates, including clergy, maybe some politicians and a handful of Knights of Columbus, will walk from the National Mall to the Supreme Court to carry out the march portion of the national March for Life.

This year’s the National Prayer Vigil for Life, always held the night before the march, also will be virtual. It will begin with a live broadcast at 8 p.m. (EST) Jan. 28 from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, starting with the praying of the rosary followed by Mass.

Bishops from across the country will lead Holy Hours throughout the night in the livestreamed vigil.

The vigil can be viewed on EWTN or via livestreams on the basilica’s website, www.nationalshrine.org, or the USCCB’s website, www.usccb.org.

Archbishop Naumann will be the

principal celebrant and homilist for the opening Mass. The vigil will end at 8 a.m. Jan. 29 in a closing Mass celebrated by Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore.

The National Prayer Vigil for Life is hosted by the USCCB’s Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, and The Catholic University of America’s Office of Campus Ministry.

“In preparation for the virtual March for Life, and in observance of the annual Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children on Jan. 22,

I invite you to join many thousands of Catholics praying a nationwide novena” Jan. 21-29, Archbishop Naumann said his statement. “Please join us in prayer.”

Participants in the novena can receive daily intentions, brief reflections and suggested actions — in English or Spanish — by signing up for “9 Days for Life” at <https://www.respectlife.org/9-days-for-life>. The novena is sponsored by the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

Dioceses nationwide are livestreaming Masses, rosaries, Holy Hours and more for the protection of human life

as part of this novena, which the USCCB called “an opportunity for recollection and reparation” in observance of the *Roe* anniversary. “The overarching intention of the novena is the end to abortion,” it said.

Participants can share their pro-life witness and invite their social networks to pray on social media with the hashtag #9DaysforLife.

“Now, more than ever, our nation is in need of prayer for the protection of the unborn and the dignity of all human life,” Archbishop Naumann said in an earlier statement.

‘9 Days for Life’ Novena for the Protection of Human Life Set for Jan. 21-29

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholics across the country are invited to take part in the “9 Days for Life” novena Jan. 21-29 for the protection of human life.

Each day’s intercession is accompanied by prayers, a short reflection and one or more suggested actions for novena participants to take to help build a culture of life, such as pledging to participate in a parish-based program called Walking With Moms in Need.

Participants can go to the website www.9daysforlife.com to sign up for emails or texts about each day’s intercession, in English and Spanish. The site also has a link to materials for the novena as well as resources for parishes.

The pro-life novena, sponsored by the Committee on Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, encompasses the annual Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children Jan. 22, the day the Supreme Court handed down its decision in *Roe* and its companion case, *Doe v. Bolton*.

It coincides with the annual March for Life usually held in Washington every January to mark the anniversary of the Supreme Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion.

This year’s national rally and march is planned for Jan. 29, but it will be livestreamed, with pro-life advocates across the country asked to participate virtually.

Many of the bus caravans from the Midwest, long a staple of the event, were canceled last fall as a result of the pandemic, and the assault on the U.S. Capitol Jan. 6 and threats of subsequent violence by domestic terrorist groups, as reported by the FBI, made security impossible.

On Jan. 15, Jeanne Mancini, president of the March for Life Defense and Education Fund, announced the changes in the event. She said she and a small group of other pro-life advocates, including clergy, maybe some politicians and a handful of Knights of Columbus, will walk from the National Mall to the Supreme Court to carry out the march portion of the national March for Life.

An example of the novena intercessions is: “May the tragic practice of abortion end,” for Day One, followed by the Our Father, three Hail Marys and the

Glory Be. The reflection for the day says in part: “At every stage and in every circumstance, we are held in existence by God’s love. ... Christ invites us to embrace our own lives and the lives of others as true gifts. Abortion tragically rejects the truth that every life is a good and perfect gift, deserving protection.”

The suggested “acts of reparation” for the first day are: Take a break from television and movies and consider spending some of that time praying with the day’s reflection. Or pray the short prayer “Every Life Is Worth Living,” reflecting on the gift of human life. Or offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for the day’s intention.

For “one step further,” novena participants are encouraged to read more about abortion, in particular the article “Another Look at Abortion,” available at www.respectlife.org/another-look-at-abortion, which provides a basic overview and summarizes key points. “This article will help you be better prepared to witness to the sanctity of human life,” it says.

On Jan. 15, President Donald Trump signed a proclamation declaring Jan. 22, the *Roe* anniversary, as National Sanctity of Human Life Day.

“Every human life is a gift to the world. Whether born or unborn, young or old, healthy or sick, every person is made in the holy image of God,” he stated.

“The Almighty Creator gives unique talents, beautiful dreams, and a great purpose to every person,” he said. “On National Sanctity of Human Life Day, we celebrate the wonder of human existence and renew our resolve to build a culture of life where every person of every age is protected, valued, and cherished.”

Trump also called on Congress to protect and defend “the dignity of every human life, including those not yet born” and urged all Americans “to continue to care for women in unexpected pregnancies and to support adoption and foster care in a more meaningful way, so every child can have a loving home.”

“Finally, I ask every citizen of this great nation to listen to the sound of silence caused by a generation lost to us, and then to raise their voices for all affected by abortion, both seen and unseen,” he added.

Bishop Brennan Celebrates the Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

By Colleen Rowan

Growing up in Maryland in the 1950s and 1960s, Bishop Mark Brennan witnessed the injustice of segregation. He recalled that in his youth, he saw black children bussed out of their neighborhood, passed by his own all white school, to an all black school. He remembered knowing that they could not go to the beaches and parks that his family could go to. As a junior in college, Bishop Brennan had the honor of hearing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., speak in person.

The bishop shared these memories in his homily for a special Mass he celebrated honoring King's legacy on Jan. 18. King "was a prophet that we needed in the middle of the last century, and who we still need now," the bishop said at the Mass, which was celebrated on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling. The Mass was livestreamed on the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Facebook page and was followed by the praying of the rosary for peace and healing in the nation.

The bishop recalled, in his homily, watching along with the rest of the nation King's speech on television. And it was four years later as a junior in college that he heard King in person, quoting the prophet Amos: "Let justice roll like water and righteousness, like an everlasting stream."

"It remains, for me, a prophet for our times," Bishop Brennan said.

The scriptural reading for the day, the bishop noted, spoke of love. "Jesus who loves us to the end calls us his friends, not slaves. He urges us to imitate his love, 'This I command you, love one another as I have loved you.'" He noted that St. Paul says, "Nothing else, not great faith or the courage to die for Christ, or generosity to the poor can count before God if we reject his commandment to love him wholeheartedly and love our neighbor as ourselves."

Love is the greatest good, Bishop Brennan said, the only one that endures. King advocated for justice, but some see a conflict between justice and love, the bishop said. They think Paul's words "love is patient, love is kind. It does not seek its own interests. It does not brood over injuries..." foster passivity and resignation in the face of injustice. They believe, he continued, that Jesus's counsel to turn the other cheek is a surrender to injustice.

"Is there a conflict between justice and love?" the bishop asked. "Consider that Paul also says, 'Love does not rejoice over wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.' This same Paul labored to bring Jews and Gentiles together under the banner of Christ, the truth of all humanity that God had revealed to him."

St. Paul wrote in his letter to the Galatians, the bishop said, "There is neither Jew or Greek, nor slave, nor free person, not male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus."

St. Paul strove to overcome the natural differences that people converted into barriers, Bishop Brennan said; and stressed that, "Faith in Jesus Christ should demolish walls."

As for Jesus's words about turning the other



The Catholic Spirit Photo

In this screen shot from the livestream of Mass celebrating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling Jan. 18, Bishop Mark Brennan (right) welcomes all. Concelebrating is Father Martin Smay, vice rector of the cathedral (left). Deacon Doug Breiding, serves as deacon of the word (center).

cheek, Bishop Brennan said, he opposed the continuation and escalation of violence. The bishop then noted the recent writings in the Intelligencer of Wheeling Pastor Darrell Cummings quoting King: "Returning violence for violence, multiplies violence and a deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars."

Bishop Brennan said that when Jesus was struck by a guard during his interrogation by Annas, the high priest, the Lord turns to the guard and says, "If I have spoken wrongly testify to the wrong, but if I have spoken rightly why do you strike me?"

"Jesus did not strike the man back, but he did not let the injustice go unchallenged," Bishop Brennan said. "There is no conflict between justice and love. Love respects the other person and opposes behavior that injures and holds him back. Love opposes. It does not foster injustice."

King thought that too, Bishop Brennan said, pointing to King's letter from the Birmingham, Ala., jail: "I have tried to stand between these two forces saying that we need emulate neither the do nothingism of the complacent or the hatred and despair of the black nationalist. For there is a more excellent way of love, a nonviolent protest."

King conceived his doctrine of nonviolent resistance to evil as a form of love and at its center, the principle of love, Bishop Brennan said. The faithful should also remember that when St. Paul speaks of the superiority of love, he is not disdaining the other gifts of the Holy Spirit, the bishop said. Just after his words on

love, St. Paul says, "Pursue love, but strive eagerly for the spiritual gifts above all that you may prophesy which is to speak the truth that comes from God."

"Martin Luther King was a prophet that we needed in the middle of the last century and who we still need now," Bishop Brennan said. "His doctrine of nonviolent protest and action against injustice is thoroughly Christian and should be used in confronting today's evils including the vestiges of racial inequality, the sin of nativism by which the native born hold back those who choose to come here, and the terrible injustice of abortion which deprives unborn children of their lives. Whether that injustice comes from an individual or a group or a government, it should be resisted."

King's inclusive vision would lead him today to fight against all forms of injustice but to do it without resorting to violence, the bishop said.

"Those who choose the path of violence dishonor the legacy of a man we honor today," Bishop Brennan said. "The command to love one another cannot be fulfilled if we are content to let injustices pile up and do nothing about them. We Americans, especially those of us, who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ must not be passive in the face of evil. To the extent of our abilities and opportunities, singly and together, we're challenged by our faith and by a genuine patriotism to work for a more just and fraternal society."

See "King" on Page 6

King ...

Cont'd from Page 5

The bishop then pointed to King's words in closing his letter from the Birmingham jail. Words, the bishop said, that apply to all forms of unjust structures and unloving behavior. The following are King's words in closing that letter: "Let us hope that the dark clouds of

racial prejudice will soon pass away, the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched communities, and in some not-too-distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all their scintillating beauty."

In closing his homily, Bishop Brennan said, "My brothers and

sisters, with God's help, we can make Dr. King's tomorrow our today."

Following the Mass, all gathered in the cathedral and watching the livestream prayed the rosary lead by Gretchen Wilson, a member of St. Michael Parish in Wheeling.

"We pray this rosary for peace and unity with the Joyful

Mysteries," said Wilson, who then prayed the Prayer for Peace and Unity by St. Pope John Paul II.

Before beginning the rosary, Wilson said: "With this holy rosary, we beseech our Heavenly Father through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace, for the gift of peace and unity in our world."

USCCB ...

Cont'd from Page 1

praying for Biden, the country's second Catholic president, as he enters office so that God grants "him wisdom and courage to lead this great nation and ... to meet the tests of these times."

In particular, the archbishop said he was praying God will help Biden "heal the wounds caused by the pandemic, to ease our intense political and culture divisions, and to bring people together with renewed dedication to America's founding purposes, to be one nation under God committed to liberty and equality for all."

The USCCB leader's comments came in a statement released as the inaugural ceremonies began on the steps of the U.S. Capitol.

"I look forward to working with President Biden and his administration, and the new Congress," Archbishop Gomez said.

"As with every administration, there will be areas where we agree and work closely together and areas where we will have principled disagreement and strong opposition," he said.

While the bishops work with "every president and every Congress," they can find themselves on some issues "more on the side of Democrats, while on others we find ourselves standing with Republicans," he said.

"Our priorities are never partisan," he explained. "We are Catholics first, seeking only to follow Jesus Christ faithfully and to advance his vision for human fraternity and community."

Working with Biden will be "unique," the archbishop said, because he is the first president in six decades who is Catholic.

"In a time of growing and aggressive secularism in American culture, when religious believers face many challenges, it will be refreshing to engage with a president who clearly understands, in a deep and personal way, the importance of religious faith and institutions," the prelate said.

However, Archbishop Gomez cautioned that Biden has "pledged to pursue certain policies that would advance moral evils and threaten human life and dignity, most seriously in the areas of abortion, contraception, marriage and gender."

"Of deep concern is the liberty of the church and the freedom of believers to live according to their consciences," he added.

The archbishop pointed out the USCCB's quadrennial election document, "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility from the Catholic Bishops of the United States" tries to help Catholics and others of good will in their reflections on political issues.

An introductory letter accompanying the document describes abortion as the bishops' "preeminent priority," he said, but the document addresses much more.

The bishops also hold deep concerns about "many threats to human life and dignity in our society," Archbishop Gomez said, including euthanasia, the death penalty, immigration policy, racism, poverty, care for the environment, criminal justice reform, economic development and international peace.

The Catholic Church's "commitments on issues of human sexuality and the family, as with our commitments in every other area — such as abolishing the death penalty or seeking a health care system and economy that truly serves the human person," he noted, "are guided by Christ's great commandment to love and to stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters, especially the most vulnerable."

"But as Pope Francis teaches, we cannot stay silent when nearly a million unborn lives are being case aside in our country year after year through abortion," he said.

"It is also a matter of social justice. We cannot ignore the reality that abortion rates are much higher among the poor and minorities, and that the procedure is regularly used to eliminate children who would be born with disabilities," he said.

The prelate also said it was his hope to work with the administration to "finally put in place a coherent family policy in this country, one that acknowledges the crucial importance of strong marriages and parenting to the well-being of children and the stability of communities."

Archbishop Gomez concluded his statement saying that Biden's call for national healing and unity is a welcome one, saying it was "urgently needed" as the country continues to confront the pandemic and social isolation "that has only worsened the intense and long-simmering divisions among our fellow citizens."

He also called for continued prayer that "God will give our new president, and all of us, the grace to seek the common good with all sin-

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

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

Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston

Version 1: June 29, 2020

Version 2: September 23, 2020

Version 3: January 19, 2021

Norms for Reopening Parish Facilities for Meetings and Gatherings

The following norms are intended to assist pastors as they reopen their parish/mission facilities to serve those entrusted to their pastoral care. Obviously, the diversity in size, location and facilities will require pastors to make some adaptations in the following norms. However, the substance and intent of these norms are to be observed. These norms are provided to promote a safe environment for our faith communities.

Please note that the State of West Virginia currently does not permit gatherings of more than 25 under most circumstances. For any clarification you might need, please consult your local county health department.

1. Parish Meetings and Formation

- a. Parishes may convene and host in-person regular meetings of parish committees, most importantly Parish Council, Finance Council, parish administrative staff and VIRTUS trainings. Preparations must be made in advance for physical distancing, such as sitting on every other seat. Attendees must wear masks upon entry and exit from parish buildings and during meetings. No tactile greetings are permitted. Hand sanitizer must be made available to all those in attendance. No food or drink is to be served. Any handouts must be taken home by those in attendance or discarded before leaving. Use projection devices when possible. Follow state and county guidance regarding the maximum number of attendees for public gatherings. Disinfect the meeting space upon conclusion. Please consider making provisions for participants who wish to participate virtually or by teleconference.
- b. Group meetings may reconvene at this time in our parishes. This includes parish groups, youth groups, prayer groups, or outside groups such as ecumenical groups, AA, scouting, etc. Guidelines in Section 1 (a) above must also be followed. For youth groups, minors are not to be taken off-site by parish employees or volunteers. They are not to travel in groups for diocesan or parish-sponsored events. Field trips are also not to take place at this time. Youth should travel only with their parents or guardians and only with members of their own households.
- c. Adult religious education, youth religious education and formation classes and related programming, etc., may meet in person at this time and are to follow the norms put into place by the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis. Contact Daniel Maul for more information in this regard.

2. Indoor, Parish Hall or Gymnasium Events

- a. ***Funeral Luncheons and other gatherings with meals:*** Presently, parishes may NOT have funeral luncheons/dinners.
- b. ***Wedding Receptions, Baptismal/Confirmation gatherings, Bridal/Baby Showers, etc. :*** Presently parishes may not hold these types of gatherings.
- c. ***Charitable Outreach:*** Parishes have been and still are encouraged to continue charitable outreach to the community during the pandemic, with special emphasis on operating food pantries, “meals on wheels,” utility assistance, clothing distribution, and outreach with local partners such as the Gabriel Project, Red Cross, St. Vincent de Paul Society, etc. Be certain to follow social distancing guidelines, use location specific plans to avoid contact, always wear masks and encourage hand washing/use of hand sanitizer. Organizers must clearly mark separate doors for ingress/egress and mark floors for one-way traffic flow. Track names of those in attendance at the entrance of your facility for contact tracing purposes. Prohibit use of public drinking fountains. Clean bathrooms frequently. Sanitize after each facility use.
- d. ***Indoor or Outdoor Fund-Raising Auctions, Craft Fairs or public events without food or beverage service:*** At this time, you may seek permission to have these events. First, assemble your plans for the event and submit them to your county health department. Should you receive county approval, please forward your plans and the approval from the county health department to Bryan Minor in the Chancery, and we will respond with an answer as soon as possible.
- e. ***Athletics:*** Athletics may only resume within guidelines permissible by state and local authorities. Guidance for Catholic School facilities is available through the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. If you have any questions, please refer to your county health department.

See “Norms” on Page 8

Norms ...

Cont'd from Page 7

- f. **Fellowship** : Per the guidelines already distributed for the resumption of public liturgies, no coffee, donuts or other gatherings are permitted in halls, gymnasiums or other church properties.
 - g. **Bingo**: With the approval of the pastor/administrator, bingo may resume under the following conditions:
 - g.i. You must follow state guidelines for bingo found at this website - <https://tax.wv.gov/Documents/Publications/Covid19Response/SafetyGuidanceForBingoHalls.pdf>
Failure to abide by state policies will automatically result in termination of bingo operations.
 - g.ii. You must submit your plan to the county health department and secure written approval to begin bingo on your property.
 - g.iii. Submit your plan to begin bingo along with written permission from the county health department to Bryan Minor for diocesan consideration, and we will respond as soon as possible.
 - h. **Rentals** : Parish halls and gymnasiums are not available for parishioner or public rental at this time.
3. **Outdoor Facilities and Venues**: While outdoor events appear to provide more flexibility, it is important that care be taken to keep these events safe. Therefore safe-distancing is important as is the wearing of masks and meals are not to be served at these locations.
 4. **Parish or School Fish Fry**: The Diocese will review parish plans for a local fish fry held during the COVID-19 pandemic, and such events may not take place without prior written approval. We encourage plans to be submitted as early as possible. Plans **may not** include the option for eating indoors at your facilities. Your submitted proposals should include one or more of these considerations:
 - a. **In car pickup** – please outline drive thru/drive up options, and how you might use numbered parking spaces in designated areas and asking patrons to call upon arrival.
 - b. **Indoor pickup** – please demonstrate how you can properly distance folks in the food pick up area, how you will make sure patrons will not congregate, and how you will have one-way walking patterns and one-way entry and exit doors.
 - c. **Deliveries** – if you are considering deliveries to homes or businesses, please outline your plans to protect drivers and separate food from the driver (trunk, back seat, hatchback).

Your plan will also need to address these issues:

1. Your plan must address how you will prevent folks from congregating indoors and in parking lots. Provide details about the flow of movement among kitchen staff, volunteers and those awaiting pick up. Pre-ordering is encouraged.
2. How to transfer money/payment: Can you accept payments via check, ParishSoft online forms, your parish/school website, or by other electronic means? In other words, can you go “cashless?”
3. Please address how you will provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for your workers and discuss how you will be able to comply with the state’s guidelines for restaurants (attached) and make certain workers’ safety will remain paramount in operating the fish fry.
4. Bingo and a fish fry may not be held in the same facility on the same day.
5. Please describe your plans to disinfect your fish fry area before and after the event.
6. Your plan must have the approval of your local health department before you submit it to the Diocese.
7. Note that submitted plans must be approved first by the pastor and principal (if school facilities are proposed for use). Their signatures need to be seen on your submitted proposal.

St. Francis, Morgantown, Video Offers Inspirational Message



The Catholic Spirit Photo

Above is a scene shot of the opening of the "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" production by St. Francis de Sales Parish in Morgantown.

By Colleen Rowan

MORGANTOWN—St. Francis de Sales Parish in Morgantown offers an inspirational message of peace through song to visitors of its Facebook page.

"Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" is a five-minute musical performance video of the beloved St. Francis of Assisi song. The performance is by Cantor Wes Nugent and Pastoral Musician Donna Kinsey as accompanist. The video features joyful images of the life of St. Francis de Sales Parish, and showcases beautiful images of the church and scenery as well as drone footage of the parish grounds.

"Our everyday actions can make us a channel of peace," parish officials posted on the parish's

Facebook page Jan. 19 for the video's debut. "As St. Francis of Assisi's remarkable prayer goes, where there is hatred, bring love; where there is injury, beg pardon; where there is despair, bring hope; where there is dark, bring light."

Comments on the post included: "That was just beautiful! Thank you all so much!" and "Magnificent. Thank you."

The parish thanks Kinsey and Nugent for producing the performance and all involved in the project. Photography was provided by Regina Kalisz, Morgan J. Pitts, and Robert Phipps; and video was provided by Robert and Noah Phipps.

To view the video, visit St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church, Morgantown, on Facebook.

St. Joseph Eighth-Graders Extend Outreach Project to Help the Homeless in Martinsburg

MARTINSBURG—Every year at St. Joseph School in Martinsburg, the eighth-grade class does a service project in the community. This year, with COVID restrictions, the class is not yet able to perform an act of service in person.

Until the time arrives when they are able to be out in the community as a class, they are asking students and local parishes to help their friends at Faith Feeding Freedom, a nonprofit organization that feeds and clothes the homeless and hungry every Friday outside

the main branch of the Martinsburg-Berkeley County Library.

The deadline for the project has been extended. SJS is collecting new and gently used blankets, plus hand warmers, for distribution to those in need, along with other basic survival items the organization provides.

Those who would like to help are asked to bring donated items to the school by Jan. 29. They will be delivered to Faith Feeding Freedom.

Parishioner Has Chalice, Patens Restored for St. Vincent's, New Martinsville

By Colleen Rowan

NEW MARTINSVILLE—Two chalices with patens have been restored and given to St. Vincent de Paul Parish in New Martinsville, courtesy of longtime parishioner Lois Estep.

Before beginning his homily, Msgr. Kevin Quirk, pastor of the parish, announced to the faithful gathered for the Jan. 17 Sunday morning Mass that one of the two chalices was there, present on the altar. The chalices and patens were given by a priest to Estep who then had them refinished, cleaned, and restored for her parish community.

Msgr. Quirk expressed, "great thanks to Lois and to her family. And as we are using that chalice we remember her, her brother, and her parents in our prayers."

Following the petitions, he blessed the chalice.

Rosary for Life to be Prayed at St. James, Charles Town

CHARLES TOWN—St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town invites all to pray the rosary for life in community at noon at the church on Friday, Jan. 22 and Friday, Jan. 29.

Young Adult Group is Forming at Holy Rosary Parish, Buckhannon

BUCKHANNON—Holy Rosary Parish in Buckhannon is looking for men and women between the ages of 18 to 30 who are interested in learning more about God! This Young Adult Group will meet on Saturday evenings at 8 p.m. in Marist Hall for learning and social activities.

Samuel Walker and Kaitlyn Luterek are organizing the group, "hoping to build a strong youth community that is passionate about growing in their faith."

Call the parish to participate or for more information.

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Weirton's St. Joseph the Worker Parish Now Has a Free App

WEIRTON—St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Weirton is pleased to announce that the parish now has a free app. The parish hopes this will help spread the Gospel and the love of Christ farther and faster.

"We also hope that our app will be your one-stop shop for all things St. Joseph the Worker!" parish officials posted on the parish Facebook page. "Receive lightning fast updates via push notifications on new events, changes to the Mass/Confession schedule, evangelization and volunteer opportunities, our latest bulletin, and much more! The app will also soon make it possible for you to continue your generous contributions electronically!"

To download, search for "St. Joseph the Worker Church" in the App Store for an iPhone, or "St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church" on Google Play for an Android.

"We'd also be abundantly grateful if you could help us get the word out by sharing our app with your friends and family!" parish officials said in the post.



Courtesy Photo
Pictured at right is St. Joseph the Worker Parish's promotion of its free app.

Ongoing Efforts at Shepherdstown Parish Helps Meet Needs in Community

SHEPHERDSTOWN—On an ongoing basis St. Agnes Parish in Shepherdstown provides sleeping bags for the homeless. Normally volunteers make "ugly sleeping bags" from donated comforters, blankets and sheets and tie them with men's ties.

During the pandemic the volunteers couldn't gather so they raised funds to purchase and distribute 100 sleeping bags since April. These have all been given away so volunteers are making ugly sleeping bags in their homes and the social concerns committee used funds to purchase an additional 13 sleeping bags.

The parish also has been assisting Shepherdstown Shares with gift cards to pur-

chase formula for infants, diapers and feminine hygiene products. The parish was not able to conduct its normal Advent Gift Tag project to provide Christmas gifts for people whose first names we received from area community organizations and assisted living facilities. So parishioners donated \$7,000 which they used to provide gift cards in lieu of gifts to these agencies.

Along with many other churches and groups in the Eastern Panhandle the parish participates in the Meals for the Homeless effort which, during the pandemic, is providing carry out meals. St. Agnes parishioners and youth provide meals three Wednesdays a month in

Charles Town.

Parishioners of St. Agnes also donate non-perishable food items weekly which are given to Jefferson County Community Ministries. All of this is in addition to the 10 percent tithe of collections which is distributed to meet an array of needs.

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Praying Through Lent Zoom Gathering Offered by West Virginia Institute for Spirituality

CHARLESTON—The West Virginia Institute for Spirituality invites all to join in a five-week prayerful journey reflecting on Father Henri Nouwen's "Can You Drink the Cup?"

This is an opportunity to reflect Jesus' question to James, Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink? This is for anyone who wants to Pray through Lent with the book, "Can You Drink the Cup?"

The program will be held Tuesday mornings, and will be facilitated by Denise Myers, an associate spiritual director intern with the West Virginia Institute for Spirituality in Charleston. The program will be held on Zoom from 10-10:45 a.m. CST on the following dates: Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23, and March 2. The Zoom link will be sent out later.

The cost is a \$20 donation to WVIS. The book must be bought before the first meeting. The book cost \$12 dollars.

Those who are interested in attending or for any questions, Contact Myers at (304) 669-1298.

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St. Joseph Retreat Center Offers Virtual Look at Celtic Christianity: Origins and Saints

WHEELING—Celtic Christianity: Origins and Saints virtual program with Bonnie Thurston will be held Jan. 30 from 1-3 p.m. This retreat is being presented by the St. Joseph Retreat Center in Wheeling.

After an introduction to the origins and characteristics of the Celtic Church by means of some contemporary poetry, participants will “meet” a dozen or so of her saints and visit a few ancient and modern Celtic “thin places.”

“It will warm your heart on a winter af-

ternoon!” program organizers said.

Thurston is a Wheeling educator, author, pastor, and religion scholar affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Episcopal Church. She is the author of *Belonging to Borders: A Sojourn in the Celtic Tradition* available from Liturgical Press at sales@litpress.org or 1-800-858-5450 and *Practicing Silence, New and Selected Verses* available from Paraclete Press www.paracletepress.com.

The cost is \$10. To participate, RSVP to atroiani@csjoseph.org.

Confirmation Schedule

Bishop Mark Brennan, Celebrant

St. Anthony Church, Follansbee, Sunday, Jan. 24 10:30 a.m.

Employment Opportunity Assistant Director of the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston has an opening for Assistant Director of the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis. This is a full time position.

This person will assist the Director in providing leadership for the ongoing development and success of Parish programs and services in the ministerial areas of Evangelization & Catechesis. This person will develop programs and processes that support and empower parishes to manifest a vision of life long formation. Areas of focus are ministries of Evangelization, Catechesis, Laity, Marriage, Family Life Youth and Pro Life activities. Person will be a resource to Parish personnel in the various areas of ministries in order to grow and foster those ministries at the Parish level.

Qualified persons will have a Bachelor's Degree in Theology, Religious Education or related fields of study. Preference given to persons holding a Master's Degree. Three (3) or more years of experience in Catechetical Formation is preferred. Person must be a practicing active Catholic who adheres to the teachings and Traditions of the Catholic Church. Leadership abilities as well as organizational skills are essential to succeed in the position. Must be able to work flexible schedules at time as well as work evenings and weekends when position requires.

Interested persons should respond with Resume and 3 letters of reference to:

Daniel Maul
Director, office of Evangelization & Catechesis
Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston
1311 Byron Street
Wheeling, WV 26003
Office of Evangelization & Catechesis

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Catholic Charities
West Virginia
Mission Moment

The Value of Providing Service to Others

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

Every year, Catholic Charities West Virginia serves tens of thousands of people in West Virginia. Providing the breadth of services we offer to such a vast number of people would not be possible without the commitment and compassion of our dedicated volunteers.

“Seeing our neighbors with food insecurities is a very humbling experience,” said volunteer Carol Meador. “I feel honored and blessed to help provide food for these folks.”

Volunteers not only allow our staff to focus on coordinating services, but they also show those we serve that they matter. The generosity of volunteers sends a powerful message to our clients: you are a valuable part of our society, and we care about your well-being.

Catholic Charities West Virginia provides a range of opportunities – from the traditional to the innovative – for volunteers to make a difference in their communities.

Individuals and groups can give of their time stocking food pantry shelves, collecting hygiene items, welcoming refugee families and providing meals to struggling families. Other opportunities include tutoring adult learners, providing administrative assistance and serving as regional advisory council members.

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia, 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.



Courtesy Photo
Carol Meador has been volunteering at the Catholic Charities West Virginia Elkins Outreach Office for over two years.

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El presidente de la USCCB ora que Dios conceda a Biden 'sabiduría y valor' para liderar la nación

Por Dennis Sadowski, Catholic News Service

Mientras Joe Biden se preparaba para ser investido como el 46° presidente de EE. UU., El arzobispo José H. Gómez de Los Ángeles, presidente de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de EE. UU., Expresó su esperanza de que la administración entrante "trabaja con la iglesia y otros de buena voluntad" para "dirigirse los complicados factores culturales y económicos que impulsan el aborto y desaniman a las familias".

"Si el presidente, con pleno respeto por la libertad religiosa de la iglesia, participara en esta conversación, sería de gran ayuda para restaurar el equilibrio civil y curar las necesidades de nuestro país", dijo el arzobispo Gómez.

Para los obispos estadounidenses, la "continua injusticia del aborto" sigue siendo la "prioridad preeminente", dijo, pero "preeminente" no significa 'solo'. Tenemos una profunda preocupación por muchas amenazas a la vida y la dignidad humanas en nuestra sociedad. "

El arzobispo Gómez también dijo en una declaración del 20 de enero que estaba orando por Biden, el segundo presidente católico del país, cuando asume el cargo para que Dios le otorgue "sabiduría y coraje para liderar esta gran nación y ... para superar las pruebas de estos tiempos."

En particular, el arzobispo dijo que estaba orando para que Dios ayude a Biden a "curar las heridas causadas por la pandemia, aliviar nuestras intensas divisiones políticas y culturales y unir a las personas con una dedicación renovada a los propósitos fundacionales de Estados Unidos, para ser una nación bajo Dios. comprometidos con la libertad y la igualdad para todos".

Los comentarios del líder de la USCCB se produjeron en un comunicado emitido cuando comenzaron las ceremonias inaugurales en los escalones del Capitolio de los Estados Unidos.

"Espero trabajar con el presidente Biden y su administración, y el nuevo Congreso", dijo el arzobispo Gómez.

"Como ocurre con todas las administraciones, habrá áreas en las que estamos de

acuerdo y trabajaremos en estrecha colaboración y áreas en las que tendremos un desacuerdo de principios y una fuerte oposición", dijo.

Si bien los obispos trabajan con "todos los presidentes y todos los congresos", pueden encontrarse en algunos temas "más del lado de los demócratas, mientras que en otros nos encontramos con los republicanos", dijo.

"Nuestras prioridades nunca son partidistas", explicó. "Somos católicos en primer lugar, y solo buscamos seguir fielmente a Jesucristo y promover su visión de la fraternidad y la comunidad humanas".

Trabajar con Biden será "único", dijo el arzobispo, porque es el primer presidente católico en seis décadas.

"En una época de secularismo creciente y agresivo en la cultura estadounidense, cuando los creyentes religiosos enfrentan muchos desafíos, será refrescante interactuar con un presidente que comprenda claramente, de manera profunda y personal, la importancia de la fe y las instituciones religiosas", dijo el prelado.

Sin embargo, el arzobispo Gómez advirtió que Biden se ha "comprometido a seguir ciertas políticas que promoverían los males morales y amenazarían la vida y la dignidad humana, más seriamente en las áreas de aborto, anticoncepción, matrimonio y género".

"Es motivo de profunda preocupación la libertad de la iglesia y la libertad de los creyentes para vivir de acuerdo con sus conciencias", agregó.

El arzobispo señaló que el documento electoral cuatrienal de la USCCB, "Formar conciencia para una ciudadanía fiel: un llamado a la responsabilidad política de los obispos católicos de los Estados Unidos" trata de ayudar a los católicos y otras personas de buena voluntad en sus reflexiones sobre temas políticos.

Una carta introductoria que acompaña al documento describe el aborto como la "prioridad preeminente" de los obispos, dijo, pero el documento aborda mucho más.

Los obispos también tienen profundas preocupaciones sobre "muchas amenazas a la vida

humana y la dignidad en nuestra sociedad", dijo el arzobispo Gómez, incluida la eutanasia, la pena de muerte, la política de inmigración, el racismo, la pobreza, el cuidado del medio ambiente, la reforma de la justicia penal, el desarrollo económico y paz internacional.

Los "compromisos de la Iglesia Católica sobre cuestiones de la sexualidad humana y la familia, así como nuestros compromisos en todas las demás áreas, como la abolición de la pena de muerte o la búsqueda de un sistema de atención médica y una economía que realmente sirva a la persona humana", señaló, "son guiados por el gran mandamiento de Cristo de amar y ser solidarios con nuestros hermanos y hermanas, especialmente con los más vulnerables".

"Pero como enseña el Papa Francisco, no podemos quedarnos en silencio cuando casi un millón de vidas por nacer están siendo dejados de lado en nuestro país año tras año a través del aborto", dijo.

"También es una cuestión de justicia social. No podemos ignorar la realidad de que las tasas de aborto son mucho más altas entre los pobres y las minorías, y que el procedimiento se usa regularmente para eliminar a los niños que nacerían con discapacidades", dijo.

El prelado también dijo que tenía la esperanza de trabajar con la administración para "finalmente poner en marcha una política familiar coherente en este país, que reconozca la importancia crucial de los matrimonios y la paternidad fuertes para el bienestar de los niños y la estabilidad de las comunidades".

El arzobispo Gómez concluyó su declaración diciendo que el llamado de Biden a la sanación nacional y la unidad es bienvenido, diciendo que era "urgentemente necesario" mientras el país continúa enfrentando la pandemia y el aislamiento social "que solo ha empeorado las intensas y prolongadas divisiones entre nuestros conciudadanos".

También pidió una oración continua para que "Dios le dé a nuestro nuevo presidente, ya todos nosotros, la gracia de buscar el bien común con toda sinceridad".

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 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.

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; o Muy Reverendo Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270. También puede llamar a la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro de la Diócesis al

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

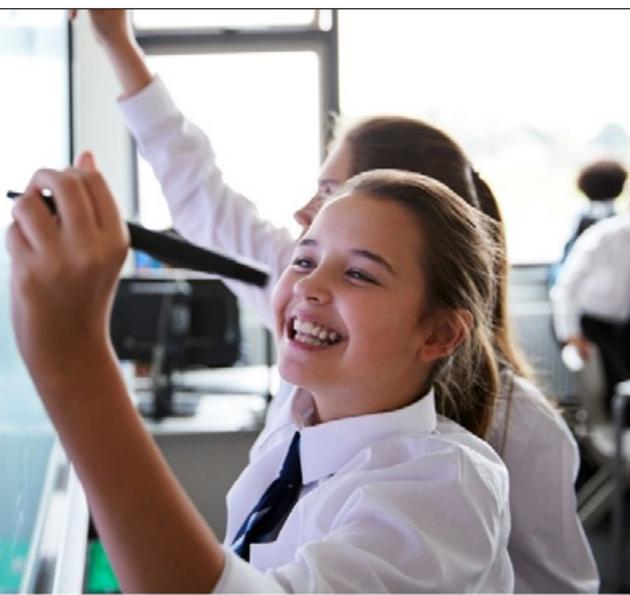
Para informar al Coordinador de Asistencia a Víctimas de la Diócesis: llame a la Dra. Patricia Bailey al 304.242.6988.

Además de los métodos enumerados anteriormente para denunciar el abuso sexual, la Diócesis también se ha asociado con Navex Global para ofrecer la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar otras inquietudes adicionales, como sospecha de mala conducta financiera, profesional y personal de un sacerdote, diácono, religioso, o empleado laico de la Diócesis o cualquier parroquia o escuela católica en West Virginia. Se puede acceder a la plataforma EthicsPoint a través de www.dwc.org, en "Rendición de cuentas", luego "Informar mala conducta" o llamando al 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint es un sistema de informes de terceros que informa a las autoridades civiles cuando corresponda y a las autoridades diocesanas, y la identidad de la persona que informa esta protegida.

Enlaces e información: Departamento de Salud y Recursos Humanos de WV: <https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp>. Policía Estatal de Virginia Occidental, Unidad de Crímenes contra Niños: 304-293-6400.

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