THE CATHOLIC Spirit

## *Prayer for Justice and Peace*

**By Bishop Brennan**

"How long, O Lord, how long?" We see violence and hatred on every side, cruel language and crueler actions. Many of your children are treated harshly by those who should protect them and others, lacking food, are given stones when they ask for bread and a scorpion when they ask for a fish.

"How long, O Lord, how long?" We see friends and neighbors suffering because of who they are or where they come from. We have forgotten that you are the Father of us all and that we are brothers and sisters.

Turn our hearts to you and to those who share our land. Make us peacemakers committed to work for that justice, which alone can ensure a lasting peace among your children, so that we may be in truth a single family united in fraternal love. Bind us together, Father, as your beloved children.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, the King of Justice and the Prince of Peace.

# Catholic Schools Week Begins This Sunday, Jan. 25

## Sacred Heart Students' Zoom with Diocesan Seminarian Studying in Rome among Unique Events Planned

Courtesy of Vatican Media

**Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston seminarian Michael Tupta is shown at his first private audience with Pope Leo XIV on Aug. 24. Tupta, who is enrolled at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, will join in a live Zoom with students at Sacred Heart Grade School in Charleston during Catholic Schools Week.**

**By Colleen Rowan**

**WEST VIRGINIA —** Students at Sacred Heart Grade School in Charleston will have a very special treat during Catholic Schools Week which begins this Sunday, Jan. 25. They will join in a live Zoom call with their very own Michael Tupta, a Diocese of Wheeling - Charleston seminarian and graduate of Sacred Heart who is currently studying at the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

"I am looking forward to having a discussion with the students ... about a variety of topics," Tupta told The Catholic Spirit. "I hope to simply emphasize that, despite the difficulties of this earthly life, God's unique plan for each of our lives is far more beautiful than we could ever imagine."

Students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade will also get to ask him questions about his life, his journey to priesthood, what seminary is like, his first audience with Pope Leo XIV, and anything else that comes to mind.

The idea of talking to the kids came about back in November when he was hosting Very Rev. Donald X. Higgs, Assoc. V.E., V.F., rector of the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston, and Niki Kurten, principal at Sacred Heart, during their visit to the Pontifical North American College.

"I expressed my openness to share my vocation story as I continue towards the sacred priesthood," Tupta said.

Kurten then invited him to share this during Catholic Schools Week, which Tupta said is a time when "we should recall the great opportunity that a Catholic school has in nurturing growth in Christian virtue and our relationship

**See "Schools" on Page 3**

# Rite of Election Dates Announced

**By Colleen Rowan**

**WEST VIRGINIA—**Lent is early this year, so planning for the Rite of Election is already underway. And earlier this week, the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Office of Worship and Sacraments finalized the dates and locations of this year's services.

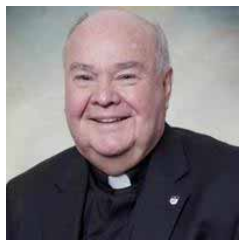
Bishop Mark Brennan will preside over all three of the services which will be held Sunday, Feb. 22, at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston at 3 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 28, at St. Leo Church in Inwood at 11 a.m.; and Sunday, March 1, at St. Alphonsus Church in Wheeling at 3 p.m.

The announcement was initially made in a Jan. 12 letter to diocesan pastors, administrators, parish staff, and Christian

**See "Rite" on Page 3**

Inside: Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Page 4 | Pope's Message for World's Sick, Page 7 | Cursillo Informational Session to be Held in Fairmont, Page 8

# Obituary—Father Joseph John McLaughlin



Father Joseph McLaughlin passed away peacefully at Mesilla Valley Hospice in Las Cruces, NM on January 08, 2026.

Father Joe was born in Evanston, IL, to Joseph F. and Mildred (Barling) McLaughlin on October 12, 1943. He attended St. Bernard School in Pittsburgh and then St. Mary's Manor in Penndel, PA. After novitiate in Rhinebeck, NY, he professed vows in the Society of Mary on September 12, 1964. Joe earned a B.A. in philosophy at Catholic University and a M.A. in theology from St. Paul College in Washington, DC. He was ordained to the priesthood at St. Thomas More Church in Bethel Park, PA, on June 3, 1972.

Father Joe taught at Marist School in Atlanta, GA, and was on the formation staff at Marist Collegiate House, Divine Word Seminary in Bordentown, NJ and Marist Novitiate in Washington. He was Vocation Director for two years. He served as pastor of St. Francis Xavier Church in Brunswick, GA, St. Joseph Church in Paulina, LA, Our Lady of Victories Church in Boston, MA, and Holy Rosary Parish in Buckhannon.

Father Joe was able to use his language skills and his deep concern for those on the margins of society as a member of a Marist International Project in San Jose, CA, and for eleven years as a member of the Marist District of Asia, doing missionary work in the Philippines. As a senior Marist Father Joe worked with migrants and homeless people in Las Cruces, NM and El Paso, TX. He was a true servant of God's people who was known for his faith, humility, gentle approach and ready smile.

Father Joe is survived by his three siblings: Tom McLaughlin of Vienna, VA, Eileen Suehr of Gainesville, VA, and John McLaughlin of Alexandria, VA. Joe was preceded in death by his sister Trudy Snee from Simi Valley, CA, and his Brother William Mclaughlin of Vineland, New Jersey.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated Jan. 21 at St. Albert the Great Newman Center, South Solano. Father Joe will then be taken to Washington, DC for a Funeral Mass and interment at the Marist plot of Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

Contributions can be made in Father McLaughlin's memory to the Marist Mission Fund, 698 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02215.

Service arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Baca's Funeral Chapel and Sunset Crematory, 300 E. Boutz Road, 527-2222. Your exclusive provider for "Veterans and Family Memorial Care."

For online condolences logon to www.bacasfuneralchapelslascruces.com

## Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

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

The Catholic Spirit

January 23, 2026
Vol. 56, No. 4

Office: 1322 Eoff St.
Mailing: PO Box 230
Wheeling, WV 26003
(304) 232-0444

thecatholicspiritwv.org
dwc.org

**Publisher:** Bishop Mark E. Brennan .....
**Executive Editor:** Colleen Rowan, Ext. 347.....crowan@dwc.org
**Advertising:** contact Colleen Rowan
**Freelance Writers:** Martina Hart, John Sherwood
**Member**: Catholic Press Association, West Virginia Press Association,National Press Photographers Association, Inc.

Published every Friday by e-mail &printed 10 times a year. All issues sent to each registered Catholics free of charge. Donations to help offset the cost of producing The Catholic Spirit are welcomed. Out-of-diocese subscriptions are $25 annually. The Catholic Spirit intends its news reports to be fair and accurate in every regard. The opinions of correspondents do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Catholic Spirit. Submission of news releases, stories and color photos welcomed and encouraged. Not responsible for unsolicited material.

## The Catholic Spirit's Print Schedule for 2026

There are 10 print editions in 2026. Below are the names of the issues and the publishing dates. Please note, the publishing dates may or may not be on feast days. Digital issues are published every Friday, delivered by e-mail to subscribers, and posted on thecatholicspiritwv.org.

**2026 Print Dates:**
Lent, February 20
The Annunciation of the Lord, March 13 (Solemnity, March 25)
Easter, April 10 (Easter Sunday, April 5)
Month of Mary, Mother of God, May 15
Month of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, June 12
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 14
Triumph of the Cross, September 11
Month of the Rosary, October 9
Advent, November 20
Christmas, December 18

**To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children:** The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston encourages reporting to civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. We also encourage utilizing www.reportbishopabuse.org to make a report about any bishop in the U.S. If you have reason to believe that a bishop has engaged in sexual misconduct or has interfered with an investigation into sexual misconduct, please contact civil authorities in the applicable jurisdiction and visit www.reportbishopabuse.org. **To Report to Civil Authorities: Contact your local law enforcement:** numbers will vary based on your location. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, call 911. To confidentially report any incidence of suspected child abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse, contact the West Virginia Bureau for Children and Families' Child Protective Services by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 800.352.6513. You may report anonymously to this hotline if you prefer. **To Report to Diocesan Authorities:** The diocese encourages reporting to the appropriate civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. The diocese also encourages reporting to the appropriate church authorities. To report suspected cases of sexual abuse of children by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, contact one of the following designees at 1.888.434.6237 or 304.233.0880: Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; or Sr. Martha Gomez, ext. 264. You may also call the Diocese's Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504 or the Diocese's sexual abuse hotline at 833.230.5656. Additional methods of reporting are available at www.dwc.org, under "Accountability." Complaint forms are available online at www.dwc.org, click "Diocese" on the menu bar, then "Offices," then "Safe Environment", then "Download Files and Forms." The form is titled "Complaint Form for Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor." The form may be returned via U.S. mail to: Office of Safe Environment, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003. **To Report to the Diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator:** call Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, at 304.559.6742. The Diocese partners with Navex Global to offer EthicsPoint to report other concerns such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese or any Catholic parish or school in WV.EthicsPoint can be accessed via www.dwc.org, under "Accountability", then "Report Misconduct" or by calling 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint is a third-party reporting system that reports to civil authorities where applicable and Diocesan authorities, and the identity of the person reporting is protected. Links and information: WV Department of Health and Human Resources: https://dhhr.wv.gov/bss/services/Pages/Centralized-Intake-for-Abuse-and-Neglect.aspx West Virginia State Police, Crimes Against Children Unit: 304-293-6400.

# Rite ...

**Cont'd from Page 1**

initiation coordinators, from Worship and Sacraments Director Bernadette McMasters Kime, PhD., D. Min., and a follow up letter this past week finalizing the location for Wheeling. In the first letter, she noted that three locations are needed because of the size of the diocese. These locations are centrally located for the southern region, the Eastern Panhandle, and the northern region of the state. Parishes are asked to choose a location most convenient for their initiation team, catechumens, and candidates.

"Keep in mind that you can always send someone to a different Rite of Election to accommodate their schedules," Kime wrote. A registration form accompanied the letter with a Feb. 6 deadline to return to the Office of Worship and Sacraments.

"The Rite of Election / Call to Continuing Conversion is not a Mass, rather it is a Liturgy of the Word service with the special ritual celebrations included," Kime said in her letter.

At each service, catechumens and candidates move closer to full communion with the Catholic Church. In the Celebration of Election, catechumens are called by name and stand with their godparents. After affirmation from godparents and the assembly, the bishop says the Church, in the name of Christ, accepts their judgment and calls the catechumens to the Easter sacraments. They will affirm their intent to enter fully into the life of the Church through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist and the bishop will invite them to come forward and offer their names for enrollment by signing the Book of the Elect.

The Call to Continuing Conversion follows with the names of the candidates from each parish announced. They will stand with their sponsors who, with the assembly, will affirm them. The bishop will say that the church recognizes their desire to be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit and to have a place at Christ's Eucharistic table.

Their journey will culminate at the Easter Vigil as they receive the sacraments — baptism, first Communion, and confirmation for the elect and first Communion and confirmation for candidates — at their parish churches.

*"Catholic Schools Week is always an exciting time to celebrate our wonderful schools across the diocese."*

**—Jennifer Hornyak, superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston**

# Schools ...

**Cont'd from Page 1**

with Jesus Christ and His Church."

Tupta is also a graduate of Charleston Catholic High School.

In honor of the event, Sacred Heart students will enjoy pizza and gelato for lunch. The Zoom is being held on the day celebrating vocations, one of the daily themes observed during the weeklong celebration.

This is just one of the many unique and fun events in store for students of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's 18 elementary schools and seven high school this week.

"Catholic Schools Week is always an exciting time to celebrate our wonderful schools across the diocese," said Jennifer Hornyak, superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. "It is always a great week filled with service projects, prayerful gatherings, and unique learning opportunities (and sometimes even snow delays and cancellations) for our students. It is the perfect time to show gratitude for all those who support our schools — a special thank you to everyone across the State of West Virginia for your support. Whether you have children in our schools or simply pray for our school communities and our amazing students, I am grateful for your support of the great gift of Catholic education."

The theme for the annual nationwide celebration is "Catholic Schools: United in Faith and Community"— on which to build a spirit of the gospel to benefit the human family, according to the National Catholic Education Association.

Many of the diocese's schools are also having special events on "Celebrating Vocations" day, including Ss. Peter and Paul School in Oak Hill where students will pray the rosary for religious vocations and hold a pastor appreciation in the afternoon. Weirton Madonna High School students will dress in the color of their favorite religious order and attend talks on vocations. Schools will be gathering students for Masses that day as well.

Other vocations will be celebrated with students at a number of schools dressing as what they want to be when they grow up.

In addition to vocations, daily themes include celebrating parishes; the nation; the community; students; and faculty, staff and volunteers.

For "Celebrating the Nation" day, Central Catholic High School will once again hold a patriotic program honoring veterans, members of the military, and first responders in the community. A performance by the CCHS choir, video messages from alumni currently serving in the military and other service roles will be part of the program as well.

St. Francis of Assisi School in St. Albans is inviting students to dress in the attire of their favorite decade. Kids will be sporting poodle skirts of the 50s, disco vibe clothing of the 70s, and the big hair of the 80s. On this day, practically every school is having a dress in red, white, and blue to show patriotism.

Service to those in need in the community is at the core of CSW and every day in Catholic schools throughout the year. Each day of CSW, Charleston Catholic students will bring in provisions for charities in their community—Manna House, Covenant House Food Pantry, Second Avenue Community Center - After School Program, the Gabriel Project, and Risen Lord Food Pantry in Clay.

Fairmont Catholic School students are bringing in boxes of pasta for a local food bank. The school has added a fun spin to the endeavor to help inspire generous donations.

"We will make a 'Pasta Wall' in the main entrance," school officials said. "Our goal is 500 pounds of pasta! It's not 'IMPASTABLE!'"

Among other distinctive events planned is the Saint of the Day at St. Francis de Sales Central Catholic School in Morgantown where students will learn about the life of these holy men and women. Among them will be St. Catherine of Bologna, patron of artists. Students will look at art and symbolism around the world and create stained glass windows. Another will be St. Blandina. Students will learn about Catholic missions and monasteries of the American West and discuss the global church and how missionaries bring the Catholic faith around the world.

These are just some of the great celebrations and activities being held this week to celebrate the Catholic Schools of the diocese.

(The Catholic Schools Week logo, pictured above, is courtesy of the National Catholic Education Association.)

COLEMAN'S FISH MKT.
Established 1914
Centre Wheeling Market House
304-232-8510
111 Years

LG
LEWIS GIANOLA PLLC
Webester J. Arceneaux • Matthew R. Bowles • James A. Gianola
John F. Gianola • Sandra H. Kinney • Mark A. Sadd
Charleston | Morgantown
A West Virginia law firm www.lewisgianola.com

Food service Equipment, Supplies, Disposables, Janitorial and more
national equipment co.
1 Fourteenth Street,
Wheeling, WV 26003
304-233-2270
Stop in or call us today!

# Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Photo courtesy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, Wheeling, WV

**Bishop Mark Brennan, second from right, participates in an interfaith service with faith leaders from the Ohio Valley at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Wheeling celebrating the life and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

# Wheeling Central Well Represented at MLK Project on Racism Awards

Courtesy photo

**Wheeling Central Catholic High School was well represented at the annual MLK Project on Racism Awards held at Laughlin Chapel in Wheeling Jan. 19. Keyuri Morgan, a senior, and Emma Dean, a junior, were part of the video production team that won third place. Juniors Jaden Evans and Dominic Paesani represented the video production team that took first place, and senior Jacob Perry placed third in the essay contest. CCHS officials said they are impressed with these groups and Jay Morris, video production & digital media teacher, for continuing to recognize the importance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Pictured, from left, are Morris, Dean, Perry, Morgan, Paesani, and Evans.**

Now is the time to Talk!
Kepner
FUNERAL HOMES
CREMATORY
304.232.5110 | KepnerFuneral.com
James B. Kepner President | Melissa Hill COIC

RICH & SHIRLEY'S QUICKPRINT
RSQP.net
PRINT & DESIGN
(304) 233-7433
92 16th Street,
Wheeling, WV

# Two Steubenville Students Found Dead in Apparent 'Tragic Accident'

**By Gina Christian , OSV News**

**(OSV News) —** A Catholic university is mourning the apparent accidental deaths of two students outside a campus dormitory.

Franciscan University of Steubenville students Luke Reimer and Mary Mich were found shortly after noon Jan. 19, according to a statement released that same day by university president Father Dave Pivonka.

The two 20-year-olds — respectively from Indian Shores, Florida, and Downington, Pennsylvania — had been located inside a car in the parking lot of the school's St. Agnes Residence Hall, said Father Pivonka.

"At this time, early indicators suggest this was a tragic accident related to a potential vehicle exhaust or engine malfunction," he said in his statement.

OSV News is awaiting a response to its request for comment from the Steubenville Police Department, which Father Pivonka noted is investigating the case.

News of the deaths "brings profound sorrow to our entire Franciscan University community," said Father Pivonka, a member of the Franciscans' Third Order Regular.

"We grieve the loss of two young lives, and our hearts ache for their families, friends, classmates, professors, and all who knew and loved them," he said. "Please know that we are holding Luke and Mary, and all who mourn them, close in prayer, asking the Lord for comfort, mercy, and peace."

All campus events for the evening of Jan. 19 were canceled "out of respect for our students and in recognition of our shared grief."

The university community was instead invited to gather for a Holy Hour and rosary that evening in the university's Christ the King Chapel "to place Luke and Mary into the loving hands of our Lord and to ask for his consolation for our community."

Noting that "in moments such as this, it is especially important that we care for one another," Father Pivonka said counselors and Franciscan friars would be on hand in student residence halls and at the school's J.C. Williams Center.

"I strongly encourage anyone who is struggling, grieving, or in need of support to make use of these resources and to reach out to a trusted friend, faculty member, or staff member," said Father Pivonka.

He also directed university parents with questions to contact the university's vice president of student life, Kim King.

"Let us remain united in faith, hope, and charity, carrying one another through this time of sorrow. May Christ, who wept at the death of his friend Lazarus and who conquered death through his Resurrection, be our strength and our peace," said Father Pivonka. "Please join us in continuing to pray for Luke and Mary, and for all who are grieving their loss."

(Gina Christian is a multimedia reporter for OSV News.)

# Wheeling Church Has Eucharistic Adoration Praying for Unborn Babies and Their Mothers Today, Jan. 23

**WHEELING —** In Conjunction with the March For Life in Washington D.C., St. Michael Church will be offering all day Eucharistic Adoration in the church today, Friday, Jan. 23, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"All are welcome to come and pray for unborn babies, their mothers, and your own special intentions. We will be praying the Pro-Life Rosary every hour and the Chaplet of Mercy at the 3 hour," parish officials said.

"The beautiful thing about the pro-life movement is that it's ordinary people doing 'extraordinary' things for God," St. Teresa of Calcutta.

# Infant of Prague Novena Begins at Our Lady of Peace Parish in Wheeling Jan. 26

**WHEELING —** The Infant of Prague Novena at Our Lady of Peace Parish in Wheeling begins on Monday, Jan. 26, at 7 p.m. The guest homilist will be Very Rev. Justin Golna, J.C.L., J.V., pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Wellsburg, and the theme will be "Hope Begins in the Manger."

The novena will held on Mondays at 7 p.m. through March 23 and will include Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament and a guest homilist for each night.

The church is located at 690 Mt. Olivet Rd., Wheeling.

# Moundsville Parish Offering Mini-Bible Study Series 'Images of Mary'

**MOUNDSVILLE—**St. Francis Xavier Parish in Moundsville is offering a three-week mini-Bible study series 'Images of Mary.

The series is free and will be held Mondays Jan. 26, Feb. 2, and Feb. 9 from 6-7:30 p.m. in the church basement at 912 7th St.

"'Images of Mary' are all around us in the form of paintings, carvings, sculptures, and several other art forms — in churches, museums, educational institutions, private homes, and even some public squares, especially in Europe," series organizers said. "How many images or statues of Mary have you encountered in your lifetime?

"The Church presents Mary to us as our mother, and as Mother of God. In these gatherings, we will identify and appreciate the Church's teachings about Mary and apply these notions to her pictorial portrayal within a variety of cultures."

As "Images of Mary" is a series, organizers recommend that participants attend all three gatherings as one session builds upon the other.

There will be videos, handouts, discussion, and no homework!

To register, call the parish office at (304) 845-1593.

## *'No Greater Love'*

Courtesy photo

**Fairmont Catholic School's eighth-grade girls created the sweetest Valentine door with the theme "No Greater Love," school officials said. Love, kindness, and creativity all wrapped into one.**

Center for Dominican Studies
2025–26 Events

# Celebrations of Dominican Saints

ODU and The Center for Dominican Studies invite students, faculty, staff, and community members to join us for our annual three-part series of Dominican Saints lectures. Please mark your calendars.

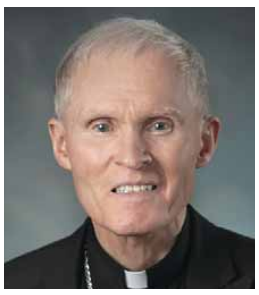
## St. Albert the Great Lecture

**Wednesday, Nov. 12, 2025 | 11 a.m.**

Erskine Hall's Sr. Mary Andrew Matesich, OP Theatre

"Thinking Outside The Panel: How Solar Panel Orientation and Location Influence Power Production, The Local Environment and Economic Value"

*Presented by Dr. Rydge Mulford*



## St. Thomas Aquinas Lecture

**Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026 | 11 a.m.**

Erskine Hall's Sr. Mary Andrew Matesich, OP Theatre

"Today's Immigration: Friend or Foe?"

*Presented by Bishop Mark Brennan*

## St. Catherine of Siena Lecture

**Wednesday, April 29, 2026 | 3:30 p.m.**

Sansbury Hall's Colonial Room

"We Each Have a Part to Play: Discerning Your Role in Promoting the Common Good"

*Presented by Sr. Julia Walsh, FSPA*

OHIO DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY™

*Founded by the Dominican Sisters of Peace.*

**Columbus, Ohio**

# Everyone Can be a Good Samaritan, Pope Says in Message for World's Sick

**By Carol Glatz, Catholic News Service**

**VATICAN CITY (CNS) —** People of faith and goodwill need to take time to acknowledge the needs and suffering of those around them and be moved by love and compassion to offer others concrete help, Pope Leo XIV said.

"To love one's neighbor — whom Jesus identifies as anyone who has need of us — is within everyone's reach," he wrote in his message for the 34th World Day of the Sick, observed by the church Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

"The pain that moves us to compassion is not the pain of a stranger; it is the pain of a member of our own body, to whom Christ, our head, commands us attend, for the good of all," the pope wrote in the message released Jan. 20.

The theme chosen for the 2026 observance is inspired by the parable of the good Samaritan and Pope Francis' encyclical on human fraternity, "Fratelli Tutti."

Titled, "The compassion of the Samaritan: Loving by bearing the pain of the other," the message focuses on the importance of: encountering and listening to others; being moved by compassion; and loving God through concrete action in solidarity with others.

While traditionally addressed to Catholic health care and pastoral workers, this year's message is offered to everyone, Cardinal Michael Czerny, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, said at a Vatican news conference to present the message Jan. 20.

The message is offered to everyone because "we're one body, one humanity of brothers and sisters, and when someone's sick and suffering, all the other categories — which tend to divide — fade away into insignificance," the cardinal said.

Asked to comment about how people in the United States should best respond when witnessing violence toward immigrants, Cardinal Czerny said, "I don't know what to say about the larger picture," but he said it would be helpful to focus on "the underview" or what should or is happening on the ground.

"There are many situations in which the individual Christian, the individual citizen, can extend their hand or lend their support. And that's extremely important," he said. "I suppose we could all hope that those many gestures, many Samaritan gestures, can also translate into better politics."

The Catholic "struggle for justice," he told Catholic News Service, gets "its real depth and its real meaning" from daily lived experience helping real people.

Advocacy work, for example, should "evolve out of real experience," he said. "When, let's say, your visits to the sick reveal, for example, the injustice of inaccessibility to health care, well then you take it up as an issue, but on the basis of your lived — and indeed pastoral and Christian — experience."

The good Samaritan shows that "we are all in a position to respond" to anyone in need, he said. "And the mystery, which you can discover whether you are a Christian or not, is that by responding, in a sense, your own suffering is also addressed."

"Since the major suffering for so many today, young and not so young, is loneliness and hopelessness, by worrying about it less and reaching out to someone who needs you, you will discover that there's more life than you imagined," he added.

In his message, Pope Leo said, "To serve one's neighbor is to love God through deeds."

In fact, the "true meaning of loving ourselves," he wrote, involves "setting aside any attempt to base our self-esteem or sense of dignity on worldly stereotypes — such as success, career, status or family background — and recovering our proper place before God and neighbor."

"I genuinely hope that our Christian lifestyle will always reflect this fraternal, 'Samaritan' spirit — one that is welcoming, courageous, committed and supportive, rooted in our union with God and our faith in Jesus Christ," Pope Leo wrote.

"Enkindled by this divine love, we will surely be able to give of ourselves for the good of all who suffer, especially our brothers and sisters who are sick, elderly or afflicted," he wrote.

# National Marriage Week to be Celebrated Feb. 7-14

The observances of National Marriage Week and World Marriage Day (Feb. 8) are an opportunity to focus on building a culture of life and love that begins with supporting and promoting marriage and the family. The theme for this year is "Man and Woman He Created Them: Together with Purpose."

Below is a link to a National Marriage Week 2026 Parish Resource document that can be utilized.

https://www.usccb.org/resources/NMW_2026_Parish_Resource1.pdf

This resource shares things you can do as a parish, for couples, families, and selected resources and recommended websites.

# CURSILLO
# INFORMATIONAL SESSION

## Where: St. Peter the Fisherman Catholic Church

DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON
CURSILLO

If you are unable to attend in person, let us know, and you can join via Zoom.
**For the Zoom link, please email**: **Cursillo@dwc.org** **or you can leave a message** at the following **phone number** – it is checked frequently – **304-233-0880, Ext. 480**.

### Is the Holy Spirit calling you to a richer relationship with God?

- Cursillo is a Catholic movement that encourages Christians to deepen their faith and become better evangelizers in their community.
- Those who have "lived" Cursillo say it is an experience of living and sharing with others in a loving and caring Christian community.
- It is not a theoretical course but, an experience that must be lived. It is said to be life-changing experience, which brings with it the discovery of the basis of Christianity and its fundamental significance to life.
- It is an experience that can change your relationship with Christ.
- The motto of Cursillo is make a friend, be a friend, and bring a friend to Christ.

## January 31, 2026 - 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
## 407 Jackson Street, Fairmont, WV 26554

**DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON**
**CURSILLO MINISTRY**
**1311 Byron Street**
**PO Box 230**
**Wheeling, West Virginia 26003**
**304-233-0880, Ext. 480 | cursillo@DWC.org | dwc.org (Events – Cursillo)**

# Who is my Neighbor?

## Catholic Social Teaching & Immigration

## February 5, 2026

**6:30 - 8:00 pm | St. Michael Parish** Angelus Center

Join us for a synodal style listening session concerning the most recent teachings of the Catholic Church, from Pope Leo XIV, to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, to our own Bishop Mark Brennan, growing in hospitality, solidarity, and compassion with the many refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, and immigrants around the world.

### Featuring

Very Reverend Fr. Carlos Melocoton Pastor, St. Michael Parish

Genevieve Volpe

Reverend Fr. Lusius (Luis) Mite Parochial Vicar, SVD,
(Society of Divine Word Missionaries)

Lou Volpe ~ Facilitator

**Joined by the Most Reverend Bishop Mark E. Brennan**

# New Partnership Aims to Support Church's Ministry to Migrants, Refugees

**By Kate Scanlon, OSV News**

**WASHINGTON (OSV News)** — A group including Catholic organizations announced Jan. 21 a new partnership — The Catholic Immigrant Prophetic Action Project — that aims to assist the Catholic Church in the U.S. in organizing a robust response on behalf of migrants and refugees in the country, including those with legal status, who are affected by mass deportation efforts.

The project — a partnership between the Hope Border Institute, a group that works to apply the perspective of Catholic social teaching in policy and practice to the U.S.-Mexico border region, and the Center for Migration Studies of New York — aims to assist the Catholic Church in the U.S. in offering a robust response on behalf of migrants and refugees through research, communications and other support. The project will directly support dioceses and archdioceses to strengthen the Catholic Church's response to mass deportations, organizers said.

On a call announcing the partnership, Bishop Brendan J. Cahill of Victoria, Texas, who is chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, pointed to the USCCB's November "special pastoral message on immigration," which voiced "our concern here for immigrants" at the bishops' annual fall plenary assembly in Baltimore.

That statement, he said, "showed the unity of the bishops on the dignity, God-given, of every human person, and our almost unanimous desire to take that public. We oppose indiscriminate mass deportation, as the bishops are united in our statement."

J. Kevin Appleby, senior fellow for policy at the Center for Migration Studies and the former director of migration policy for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the conference's special pastoral message "really puts the wind at our backs in terms of doing this work."

A key focus of the partnership, Appleby said, will be assisting dioceses in organizing events and communications related to migration issues.

"How can we amplify what the Church is doing, both in the print media, but also in social media?" he said.

The partnership will also develop response plans in the event immigration enforcement officers come to sensitive locations like schools, hospitals or churches, he said.

Dylan Corbett, executive director of the Hope Border Institute, said on the call, "Now, thinking about this current moment, our historic contribution as Catholics right now needs to be in the public square, in coordinated and collective action, promoting healthy tension, overcoming polarities, building peace, moving beyond the fracturing and the blame seeking and the side picking."

"This is what evangelization looks like in 2026: Productive tension is the pathway towards meaningful change," he said.

Catholic social teaching on immigration balances three interrelated principles — the right of persons to migrate in order to sustain their lives and those of their families, the right of a country to regulate its borders and control immigration, and a nation's duty to regulate its borders with justice and mercy.

Previously, Archbishop Bernard A. Hebda of St. Paul and Minneapolis — an area that has become a flashpoint in the nation's immigration policy debate — wrote in a Jan. 20 opinion piece for The Wall Street Journal that what once was "a difficult policy discussion" has increased in urgency as it is "playing out on the streets here."

"If recent events in Minnesota have clarified anything, it's that we can no longer put off the hard work of immigration reform," Archbishop Hebda wrote. "Each year of inaction has made the debate louder, angrier and less humane."

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

Good Shepherd
treats us like family.

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

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

Going to WVU?

+ Mass
+ Confession
+ Adoration
+ Bible Studies
+ Retreats

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

Grow your faith with us!
@mountaineercatholic
St. John University Parish &
Mountaineer Catholic

# Pro-Life Leader Says Movement 'Not Safe' in Republican Party: 'We Can't Hold Back'

**By Daniel Payne**

**(CNA)—**A major pro-life leader is urging the movement to continue to press for protection for the unborn, calling on advocates to demand more pro-life policy even as the Republican party shows signs of wavering.

"We have to do everything we can to make sure that we're communicating the moral position and also the political position," Marjorie Dannenfelser, the president of Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America, said on Jan. 9.

Dannenfelser spoke to "EWTN News in Depth" anchor Catherine Hadro on President Donald Trump's recent remarks in which the president urged the Republican party to be more "flexible" regarding the taxpayer funding of abortion.

"Now you have to be a little flexible on Hyde," the president said on Jan. 6, referring to the long-standing federal Hyde Amendment, which has broadly prohibited taxpayer funding of abortion for nearly half a century.

Speaking to Hadro, Dannenfelser said bluntly: "There's no flexibility on that."

"Flexibility should be reserved for what you wear tomorrow, what you're going to eat tonight, where you go on vacation," she said. "This is a matter of life and death."

Hadro noted that during his first run for presidency, Trump had outlined a slate of pro-life promises to voters, including the intent to make the Hyde Amendment "permanent law" rather than a legislative provision. Dannenfelser admitted that she engaged with Trump on pro-life issues during his first term alone.

"Once he got into the second term, he thought he was dealing with the life issue by basically saying, 'States only, we're not doing anything else on the federal level'," she said.

"Now we see the consequence of such a position. It means you can't even stand firm on the Hyde Amendment," she argued.

Asked by Hadro whether or not the pro-life movement needs to "face reality" and accept changing political priorities with respect to the Hyde Amendment, Dannenfelser said: "I 100% reject it."

"There is no chance that the power has left the pro-life position," she argued.

"We've been here before. We've been here at moments where there was a weakening in the GOP spine, where we have to do everything that we can to make sure that we're communicating the moral position and also the political position," she said.

Dannenfelser argued that the pro-life movement is "at the best place we could possibly be to move forward" and continue advancing pro-life goals.

She admitted, however, that the movement is "not safe" in the current Republican party.

"I think communication is key," she said. "We can't hold back in demanding what has been promised and following through."

(Daniel Payne is a senior editor at Catholic News Agency.)

Zambito Flooring AMERICA
We have it ALL!
5095 National Road, Triadelphia, WV
304-547-1800
www.flooringamericawestvirginia.com

# Vice President JD Vance and Wife Expecting Their 4th Child

**By Lauretta Brown**

**WASHINGTON (OSV News) —** Vice President JD Vance and his wife, Usha Vance, announced Jan. 20 that they are expecting a boy this summer.

"We're very excited to share the news that Usha is pregnant with our fourth child, a boy," the couple wrote in a statement on Instagram. "Usha and the baby are doing well, and we are all looking forward to welcoming him in late July."

"During this exciting and hectic time," Vance added, "we are particularly grateful for the military doctors who take excellent care of our family and for the staff members who do so much to ensure that we can serve the country while enjoying a wonderful life with our children."

The Vances' three other children are Ewan, 8, Vivek, 5, and Mirabel, 4. Vance, a convert to the Catholic faith, shared in a Fox interview in November that Ewan recently received his first Communion. Usha Vance is Hindu.

Congratulations to the couple came quickly on social media, including from Catholic individuals and organizations.

During his speech at the 2025 March for Life in Washington, Vance told those gathered that "each time Usha and I welcomed our own children into the world, we saw firsthand the indescribable beauty of new life," and "watching all three of our kids grow, learn and become who they are today has been the single greatest blessing of our lives."

Vance also said, "I want more babies in the United States of America," adding that "it is the task of our government to make it easier for young moms and dads to afford to have kids, to bring them into the world and to welcome them as the blessings that we know they are."

Vance is slated to speak at the 53rd annual March for Life Jan. 23 in Washington.

His speech this year will likely meet with some scrutiny as pro-life groups have recently clashed with the Trump administration on several issues, including the administration quietly releasing Title X family planning funds back to Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider in December.

(Lauretta Brown is culture editor for OSV News.)

We Sell Handmade Custom Rosaries & Religious Gifts!
Scan The QR Code To Visit Our Online Store Today!
Phone: (304) 277-8049
www.heavenlydivinerosaries.com
Visit Our YouTube Channel For Daily Devotionals, Prayers & Quotes of The Saints
YouTube @HDRosaries

MILLS GROUP
ARCHITECTURE ▪ PLANNING ▪ PRESERVATION
SERVING THE DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON'S PARISHES AND SCHOOLS FOR OVER 25 YEARS
DWC PARISHIONERS VICTOR GRECO, JULIE DOERR AND ALEXIS BEHRENS
VISIT US @ MILLSGROUPONLINE.COM

Mansuetto Roofing & Sheet Metal
N.F. Mansuetto & Sons, Inc.
Roofing and Sheet Metal Contractors
Serving West Virginia, the Ohio Valley and the Catholic Community
Since 1945
Three Generations of Family Management
116 Wood Street
Martins Ferry OH 43935
740-633-7320

# For Pope Leo XIV, Christian Unity is Not Just an Ideal, but an Imperative

**By Junno Arocho Esteves, OSV News**

**(OSV News) —** As the Catholic Church prepares to join Christians around the world in commemorating the 2026 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the theme chosen also reflects Pope Leo XIV's hope of unified humanity in an increasingly individualistic world.

"There is one body and one Spirit," drawn from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, is the theme.

Unity is "more than simply an ideal," but a "divine mandate at the core of our Christian identity," according to resource materials for the week published by the Vatican.

"It represents the essence of the Church's calling — a call to reflect the harmonious oneness of our life in Christ amidst our diversity," the materials stated. "This divine unity is central to our mission and is sustained by the profound love of Jesus Christ, who has set before us a unified purpose."

The material for the Jan. 18-25 octave of prayer, which was published on the website of the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, was prepared by the Armenian Apostolic Church, as well as members of the Armenian Catholic Church, and evangelical churches.

The full theme chosen for the week of prayer reads, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling," which "encapsulates the theological depth of Christian unity," the materials said.

The theological vision of Christian unity has also been a recurring theme since the start of Pope Leo's pontificate, starting with his motto: "In Illo uno unum" ("In the One, we are one.")

During his return flight from Lebanon Dec. 2, Pope Leo noted that although his motto is a Christ-centric hope for unity, that hope is not limited to just Christians, but an invitation "to all of us and to others" to promote "authentic unity and understanding, respect and human relationships of friendship and dialogue in the world."

For the pope, true and sincere unity increases the hope that "we will put aside the arms of war, that we will leave aside the distrust, the hatred, the animosity that has so often been built up, and that we will find ways to come together and be able to promote authentic peace and justice throughout the world."

Pope Leo also told journalists aboard the papal flight that his first apostolic visit to Turkey and Lebanon, which commemorated the 1,700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea, was "organized thinking about ecumenical affairs" and "seeking unity in the Church."

During his visit, the pope signed a joint declaration with Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, which stressed that unity could not be reduced to mere agreements.

Christian unity, the declaration stated, "is not merely the result of human efforts, but a gift that comes from on high." It went on to call all Christians to earnestly seek "the fulfilment of the prayer that Jesus Christ addressed to the Father: 'that they may all be one, even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you ... so that the world may believe.'"

The choice of the Armenian Apostolic Church in preparing the resource materials for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, was notable given the pope's admiration for the suffering endured by the people of Armenia, which he expressed during his Nov. 30 visit to Archbishop Sahak II Mashalian, the Armenian Apostolic patriarch of Constantinople, in Istanbul.

Reflecting on the Nicene Creed, Pope Leo said unity must take the form of "a communion which does not imply absorption or domination, but rather an exchange of the gifts received by our Churches from the Holy Spirit."

When Christians gather to pray as one during the week of prayer, its theme, the witness of Armenian Christians and Pope Leo's vision for unity all converge on a central message that Christians are called not only to reflect on unity, but to live it.

(Junno Arocho Esteves is an international correspondent for OSV News.)

**We Are Now A Full Service Hardware Store!**
Do it Best
*We Also Specialize n Plumbing, Heating & Cooling*
**Lou W. Nau, Inc.**
69 Edgington Lane, Wheeling Phone (304) 242-6311
louwnau.doitbest.com

**Jarvis-Williams Funeral Homes**
*Weldon P. Williams, FD & LIC*
*"Boots" Jarvis, Co-Owner & Sec*
1224 S. Bridge Street, New Martinsville, WV (304) 455-3456
309 N 4th Avenue, Paden City, WV (304) 337-2311

**JOHNSON BOILER WORKS, INC**
53 Marshall St.
Benwood, WV 26031
(304) 232-3070
Steam Boiler Repairs

MICHAEL J. TUPTA, D.D.S.
Dentistry That Makes You Smile
1701 Oakhurst Drive
Charleston, WV 25314
304-744-4150
MyDentistInCharleston.com
*Accepting New Patients*

**Prison Ministry Needs Your Help**

Prison Ministry is in need of a priest, deacon, or trained Catholic volunteer willing to serve the incarcerated men and women at **North Central Regional Jail in Greenwood, WV**.

Prison ministry has received several calls requesting support for the facility. Before his retirement, Deacon Rue Thompson faithfully traveled to NCRJ weekly to offer prayer, encouragement, and sacramental support to inmates. His ministry made a meaningful impact, and the need continues.

If you know of anyone who may be interested, or if there is someone already serving, please reach out to Kay Sanders at 304-621-4514 or msanders@dwc.org.

**Thank you for your continued commitment to those in need.**

LEGIO MARIAE
The Legion of Mary Invites you to its
FOURTH ANNUAL -FREE OF CHARGE -
Morning of Reflection
SAT., FEBRUARY 07 8:00 AM- NOON
Mother Mary, Our Lenten Companion
Mass, Confessions, Rosary, Spiritual Talks
and Hot Breakfast
ST JAMES THE GREATER CATHOLIC CHURCH
Charles Town, West Virginia
Rsvp at legionofmary@stjameswv.org

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

# Hope GALA

Catholic **Charities**

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

## *Tickets & Sponsorships Now Available*

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

**ccwva.org/event/gala**

**$125 Single Tickets**

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

# Pair of SJS Students Win State Accolades for 'Keep Christ in Christmas' Poster Contest

**By Meg H. Partington**

**MARTINSBURG —** Two students from Saint Joseph School in Martinsburg placed first in a statewide "Keep Christ in Christmas" poster contest sponsored by the Knights of Columbus.

Avery Hjort-Michel won in the kindergarten category and eighth-grader Karina Vasyliuk won among students in grades seven and eight.

Hjort-Michel's drawing bore the message "Keep Christ in Christmas" with a baby in a manger and a smiling angel keeping watch, set in a background colored in blue. Vasyliuk drew the baby Jesus, an angel and three wise men in silhouette against a blue sky with twinkling stars, asking those who view it to "Keep Christ in Christmas."

The students received certificates and gift cards from Brian Kaltenbaugh, a member of Monsignor Lackey Council 1169 of the Knights of Columbus in Martinsburg, during a Jan. 15 assembly in the school gym. Kaltenbaugh also teaches handbells and piano at SJS.

Hjort-Michel's and Vasyliuk's posters were submitted for state-level assessment by the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus after winning the school contest, which was judged by SJS art teacher Jane King.

Also winning at the school level were:

Grades three and four: Third-grader Coraline Reed wrote "Prince of Peace … All I Need … Reign in Me, Prince of Peace" on a red and green background next to two angels in a manger over a kneeling Mary accompanied by a sheep.

Grades five and six: With a heading of "The Greatest Gift of All …," Alice Smith, grade five, drew Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus surrounded by wise men, a shepherd, sheep, camels, a cow and the donkey that carried the holy family to a safe space.

The 11-by-17-inch artwork was judged on how clearly the "Keep Christ in Christmas" message was presented and how effectively the students' drawings captured people's attention and caused them to reflect on their meaning.

(Meg H. Partington is the administrative assistant at Saint Joseph School in Martinsburg.)

Courtesy photo

**Saint Joseph School (Martinsburg) students whose artwork was deemed the best in the Knights of Columbus' "Keep Christ in Christmas" poster contest are, front row from left, Avery Hjort-Michel, Coraline Reed, Alice Smith and Karina Vasyliuk. The works created by Hjort-Michel and Vasyliuk won at the state level. Their awards were presented Jan. 15 at the school by Brian Kaltenbaugh, standing in back, a member of Monsignor Lackey Council 1169 of the Knights of Columbus in Martinsburg.**

# Parkersburg Knights Invite All to Family Rosary

**PARKERSBURG—**Knights of Columbus Parkersburg Council 594 is hosting a family rosary. "Join us as we strengthen our devotion to Mary by praying Her Most Holy Rosary together as one family," council members said.

The family rosary will begin at Council Hall, 1010 Market St. in Parkersburg on Jan. 29, 7 p.m.

"Please bring your family and join us!"council members said.

Refreshments will be served after the rosary. "Spread the word, ALL ARE WELCOME!" council members said.


Duplaga's
TOP NOTCH
LANDSCAPING and SUPPLY LLC
Mowing • Landscaping • Patios • Retaining Walls
Supply Yard
Chris Duplaga ,Owner
140 Peninsula Street, Wheeling
www.topnotchlandscape.com
WE DELIVER
office@topnotchlandscape.com (304) 233-0332



A message from the West Virginia Knights of Columbus State Council

Deep within the heart of every man is a call to live with purpose and meaning; a call to lead, to protect, to serve and to defend.

Men today need a band of brothers – other Catholic men to share in that call, who walk together on the journey towards something better.

You are invited to put your faith in action
kofc.org/joinus
Knights of Columbus

The **Knights of Columbus** is a trusted name, tried by time, present where men are, providing inspiring resources and support for strengthening your faith and living a life of virtue.

Knights lead with faith. Knights protect our families. Knights serve those in need.

When the world says men should step aside, Knights of Columbus step up.

We are Catholic men. We live by principles informed by faith. We are sons, fathers, husbands, and grandfathers. Join us on life's greatest adventure to discover the man God calls you to be.

Become a Knight.

Click here

Join us at Camp Carlo 2026 to
ENCOUNTER
God in the mountains.
REGISTRATION
NOW OPEN!
Saint Carlo Acutis Youth Camp
Camp Carlo 2026
Our Catholic Youth Adventure Camp
High School Week:
June 28th – July 4th
Week 1: July 5th – 11th
Week 2: July 12th – 18th
Week 3: July 19th – 25th
Go to: campcarlowv.org

# Todos podemos ser un buen samaritano, dice el Papa en su mensaje para los enfermos del mundo

**Por Carol Glatz, Catholic News Service**

**CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) —** Las personas de fe y buena voluntad deben tomarse el tiempo para reconocer las necesidades y el sufrimiento de quienes les rodean y dejarse mover por el amor y la compasión para ofrecer a los demás una ayuda concreta, dijo el Papa León XIV.

Amar al prójimo --a quien Jesús identifica como cualquiera que nos necesite-- está al alcance de todos, dijo el Papa en su mensaje para la 34.ª Jornada Mundial del Enfermo, que la Iglesia celebra el 11 de febrero, festividad de Nuestra Señora de Lourdes.

"El dolor que nos conmueve, no es un dolor ajeno, es el dolor de un miembro de nuestro propio cuerpo al que nuestra Cabeza nos manda acudir para el bien de todos", escribió el Papa en el mensaje publicado el 20 de enero.

El tema elegido para la celebración de 2026 se inspira en la parábola del buen samaritano y en la encíclica del Papa Francisco sobre la fraternidad humana, "Fratelli Tutti".

Bajo el título "La compasión del samaritano: amar soportando el dolor del otro", el mensaje se centra en la importancia de: encontrarse con los demás y escucharlos; dejarse conmover por la compasión; y amar a Dios a través de acciones concretas en solidaridad con los demás.

Aunque tradicionalmente se dirige a los trabajadores católicos de la salud y la pastoral de salud, el mensaje de este año se ofrece a todos, dijo el cardenal Michael Czerny, prefecto del Dicasterio para el Servicio del Desarrollo Humano Integral, en una conferencia de prensa en el Vaticano para presentar el mensaje el 20 de enero.

El mensaje se dirige a todos porque "somos un solo cuerpo, una única humanidad de hermanos y hermanas, y cuando alguien está enfermo y sufre, todas las demás categorías --que tienden a divider-- se desvanecen en su insignificancia", afirmó el cardenal.

Cuando se le pidió que comentara sobre la mejor manera en que la gente en Estados Unidos debería responder al ser testigo de la violencia hacia los inmigrantes, el cardenal Czerny dijo: "No sé qué decir sobre el panorama general", pero afirmó que sería útil centrarse en "la visión inferior" o en lo que debería suceder o está sucediendo sobre el terreno.

"Hay muchas situaciones en las que el cristiano individual, el ciudadano individual, puede tender su mano o prestar su apoyo. Y eso es extremadamente importante", afirmó. "Supongo que todos podríamos esperar que esos muchos gestos, muchos gestos samaritanos, también se traduzcan en una mejor política".

La "lucha por la justicia" católica, declaró a Catholic News Service, obtiene "su verdadera profundidad y su verdadero significado" de la experiencia cotidiana de ayudar a personas reales.

El trabajo de abogacía, por ejemplo, debe "evolucionar a partir de la experiencia real", afirmó. "Cuando, por ejemplo, tus visitas a los enfermos revelan la injusticia de la inaccesibilidad a la atención médica, entonces lo tomas como un problema, pero basándote en tu experiencia vivida, y de hecho pastoral y cristiana".

El buen samaritano muestra que "todos estamos en condiciones de responder" a cualquier persona necesitada, dijo. "Y el misterio, que puedes descubrir seas cristiano o no, es que al ayudar, en cierto sentido, también se alivia el propio sufrimiento".

"Dado que el mayor sufrimiento para muchos hoy en día, jóvenes y no tan jóvenes, es la soledad y la desesperanza, al preocuparte menos por ello y tender la mano a alguien que te necesita, descubrirás que hay más vida de la que imaginabas", añadió.

En su mensaje, el Papa León dijo: "Servir al prójimo es amar a Dios en la práctica".

De hecho, lo que significa "amarse a sí mismo", escribió, implica "alejar de nosotros el interés de cimentando nuestra autoestima o el sentido de nuestra propia dignidad en estereotipos de éxito, carrera, posición o linaje y recuperar nuestra propia posición ante Dios y ante el hermano".

"Deseo vivamente que no falte nunca en nuestro estilo de vida cristiana esta dimensión fraterna, 'samaritana', incluyente, valiente, comprometida y solidaria que tiene su raíz más íntima en nuestra unión con Dios, en la fe en Jesucristo", escribió el Papa León.

"Encendidos por ese amor divino, podremos realmente entregarnos en favor de todos los que sufren, especialmente por nuestros hermanos enfermos, ancianos y afligidos", escribió.

**Para denunciar presuntos casos de abuso sexual de menores:**

La diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston te exhorta a denunciar cualquier delito ante las autoridades civiles. Para realizar una denuncia en contra de cualquier obispo en todos los Estado Unidos, favor de reportarlo en la página web www.repostbishopabuse.org. Y si, además, existen motivos para creer que un obispo ha cometido alguna conducta sexual inapropiada favor de comunicarse con las autoridades civiles de la jurisdicción correspondiente y también puede realizar un reporte en la página web antes mencionada. **Para informar a las autoridades civiles:** comuníquese con la policía local; los números varían según su ubicación. Si considera que alguien está en peligro inmediato, favor de llamar al 911. Para informar de forma confidencial sobre cualquier sospecha de abuso o negligencia infantil, incluido el abuso sexual, favor de comunicarse con la Oficina de Servicios de Protección Infantil de Niños y Familias de West Virginia, llamando a la línea directa de abuso infantil al 1-800.352.6513. **Para informar a las autoridades diocesanas:** La diócesis exhorta a informar primeramente a las autoridades civiles correspondientes, cuando la denuncia incluye un delito, y también alienta a informar a las autoridades eclesiásticas correspondientes. Para reportar casos sospechosos de abuso sexual de menores por parte del personal de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston, comuníquese directamente con la diócesis a los teléfonos 1.888.434.6237 o 304.233.0880 para hablar con cualquiera de las siguientes personas asignadas: Sr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Sr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; y si desea hablar en español con Sor Martha Gómez, ext. 264. También puede llamar a la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro de la diócesis al 304.230.1504 o a la línea directa de abuso sexual de la diócesis al 833.230.5656. Los formularios de quejas están disponibles en línea en la página web www.dwc.org, favor de hacer clic en "Diócesis" en la barra de menú, luego en "Oficinas", en "Ambiente seguro" y en "Descargar archivos y formularios". El formulario se titula "Formulario de queja para denuncias de abuso sexual de menores". El formulario se puede enviar por correo en Estados Unidos a: Office of Safe Environment, Diocesis of Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003. **Para informar al Coordinador de Asistencia a Víctimas de la Diócesis:** Favor de llamar a Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, al 304.559.6742. Además de las vías mencionadas anteriormente para denunciar el abuso sexual, la diócesis se ha asociado con la compañía Navex Global que ofrecer la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar cualquier inquietud adicional, como sospecha de mala conducta financiera, profesional y personal de un sacerdote, diacono, religioso, o empleado laico de la diócesis o cualquier parroquia o escuela católica en West Virginia. Puede acceder a la plataforma EthicsPoint a través de la página web www.dwc.org, en "Rendición de cuentas", luego "Informar mala conducta" o llamando al 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint es una herramienta de denuncia confidencial y anónima, ellos se encargarán de transmitir su denuncia directamente a las autoridades civiles y a las autoridades diocesanas correspondientes, y lo más importante al denunciar a través de ellos, la identidad de la persona que denuncia está 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 a menores: 304-293-6400.

# The Welty Home Difference: Assisted Living At Its Best

Welty Home for the Aged

www.WeltyHome.org • (304) 242-5233



K OF C

# Knights of Columbus®

**Carroll Council 504**

OF WHEELING, W.VA.

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

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

To learn more and to join us,
click here



# ESTABLISHED LEADER IN STRUCTURAL HEART CARE

**THE MOST ADVANCED TREATMENTS IN WEST VIRGINIA**

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

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

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

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

## OUR TEAM

**David Michael Campsey** MD
*Interventional Cardiology*

**Deepak Hooda** MD
*Interventional Cardiology*

**Sushant Sharma** MD
*Cardiology*

Learn more at: My**WVU**Heart.com

**Appointments: 304-243-8362**

WVU Heart & Vascular Institute