

THE CATHOLIC

# Spirit



Courtesy Photo

West Virginia University students who are members of the Mountain Catholic campus ministry at St. John University Parish in Morgantown carry their huge banner in the 49th annual March for Life in Washington Jan. 21.

## W.Va. Catholics Join in March for Life in Washington

By Colleen Rowan

Groups from all over the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston joined people from all faiths and walks of life from across the U.S. in the 49th annual March for Life in Washington Jan. 21. Parish and school groups as well as

members of Catholic and pro-life organizations from the diocese boarded busses, traveled to the nation's capital, and braved frigid temperatures to stand up for the rights of unborn children.

Among these groups were 43 people from St. John University

Parish in Morgantown and students from West Virginia University in Morgantown, many who are members of the campus ministry Mountaineer Catholic at the parish. Their pastor, Father Brian Crenwelge, said he really wanted the college students to be in-

spired by all the other young people who attend the March every year.

"I think the March for Life is a great testament to our recognition of the dignity of every human person," Father Crenwelge said. "On a **See "March" on Page 3**

### Inside:



Catholic Schools Week Begins Sunday, Page 4

Catholic Schools Week 2022  
January 30-February 5  
www.NCEA.org/csw #CSW22

## Obituary—Clarence Gerard “Smitty” Smith

Clarence Gerard “Smitty” Smith, age 92, of Berkeley Springs, WV, died on Monday, January 17, 2022 at War Memorial Hospital in Berkeley Springs.

Born August 13, 1929 in Cresson, PA, he was the son of the late Bartley Robert and Agnes Elizabeth Peters Smith.

He was a member of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in Berkeley Springs and had been active in the Holy Name Society. He was a graduate of Cresson High School and also attended the Maryland Institute in Baltimore. Smitty worked as an advertising manager with Coca Cola and retired in 1991 as an area manager with Dixie Narco sales. He served with the U.S. Army during the Korean War from May 2, 1951 until his honorable discharge on April 9, 1953 and was awarded the German Occupation Medal. He was a member of Alderton-Dawson American Legion Post #60 in Berkeley Springs and the Ruritan Club in Edgewater, MD. He enjoyed coin collecting, carpentry and golf.

Smitty is survived by his children, Maria Marlinda Tuel and her husband Daniel, of Denton, MD, Michael Wayne Smith and his wife Susan, of Waldorf, MD, Daniel Francis Smith and his wife Maria, of Edgewater, MD, Robert Allen Smith and his wife Pamela, of Annapolis, MD, Quintin Lewis Smith and his wife Shari, of Berkeley Springs and Father Leonard Andrew Smith of Beckley, WV, one sister, Hilda Theresa Eckenrode of Loretto, PA, nine grandchildren, Dawn Bulanhagui of Orlando, FL, Jason Tuel of Denton, MD, Michael Smith, Jr. of Huntingtown, MD, Jeremy Smith of Landover, MD, Sandra Thomas of Spring Hill, FL, Steven Smith and Richard Pineda, both of Edgewater, MD, Dustin Smith of Annapolis, MD and Edward Smith of Nashville, TN, step grandson, Chad Austin of Hughesville, MD, 16 great grandchildren and step great grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Helen Marie Robison Smith, one sister, Rita Mae Little and his infant brother, Robert Smith.

Mass of Christian Burial was offered on Tuesday, January 25, 2022 at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, 67 Liberty Street, Berkeley Springs, WV where military honors were provided by the Tri-State Honor Guard. Father Leonard A. Smith was the celebrant. Interment was in St. Francis Xavier Parish Cemetery, Cresson, PA.

Online condolences may be expressed at [www.helsleyjohnsonfh.com](http://www.helsleyjohnsonfh.com).

## Diocesan Official Appointments

Bishop Mark E. Brennan has made public the following appointments:

**Very Rev. Joseph M. Augustine, J.C.L., J.V.**, has been elected to a three-year term on the Diocesan Presbyteral Council, effective December 31, 2021, and terminating December 31, 2024. This is in addition to his current assignments as judicial vicar of the Diocese Wheeling-Charleston and pastor of Our Lady of Peace Parish in Wheeling.

**Very Rev. Casey B. Mahone, V.F.**, has been reelected to a three-year term on the Diocesan Presbyteral Council, effective December 31, 2021, and terminating December 31, 2024. This is in addition to his current assignment as pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Clarksburg.

**Very Rev. Joseph Konikattil, Assoc. V.F.**, is reappointed to a three-year term on the Diocesan Presbyteral Council, effective December 31, 2021, and ending December 31, 2024. This is in addition to his current assignment as pastor of St. Peter the Fisherman Parish in Fairmont.

**Father José Manuel Escalante** has been elected to a two-year term on the Diocesan Presbyteral Council, effective December 31, 2021, and terminating December 31, 2023. This is in addition to his current assignment as pastor of St. Agnes Parish in Charleston.

**Father William Kuchinsky** has been elected to a three-year term on the Diocesan Presbyteral Council, effective December 31, 2021, and terminating December 31, 2024. This is in addition to his current assignment as supervisor of the Office of Prison Ministry of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

**Father Martin Smay** has been elected to a two-year term on the Diocesan Presbyteral Council, effective December 31, 2021, and terminating December 31, 2023. This is in addition to his current assignment as administrator of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Thomas.

**Very Rev. James Conroy, S.J.**, is reappointed to a three-year term on the Diocesan Presbyteral Council, effective December 31, 2021, and ending December 31, 2024.

## To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children

**To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children:** The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston encourages reporting to civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. We also encourage utilizing [www.reportbishopabuse.org](http://www.reportbishopabuse.org) to make a report about any bishop in the U.S. If you have reason to believe that a bishop has engaged in sexual misconduct or has interfered with an investigation into sexual misconduct, please contact civil authorities in the applicable jurisdiction and visit [www.reportbishopabuse.org](http://www.reportbishopabuse.org).

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

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

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

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

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

## Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

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



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Fax: (304) 233-8551

Web site: [www.thecatholicspiritwv.org](http://www.thecatholicspiritwv.org)  
Diocesan Web site: [www.dwc.org](http://www.dwc.org)  
January 28, 2022, Vol. 53, No. 4

**Publisher:** Bishop Mark E. Brennan.....

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Published 24 times per year. All issues sent to each registered Catholic household 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.

In honor of Father  
McGivney's Beatification.....

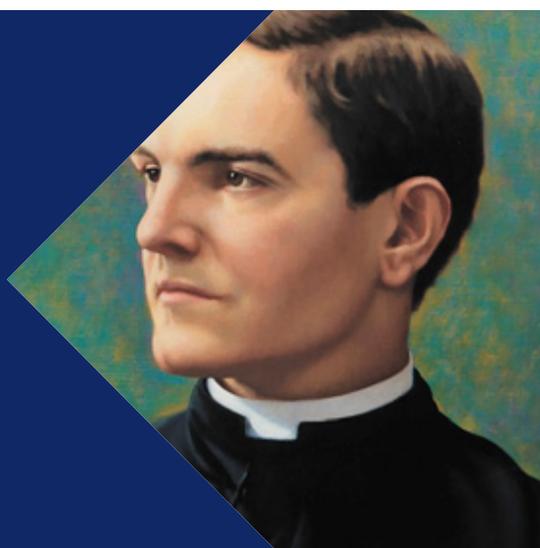
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# Pro-Life Rally at Capitol in Charleston Set for Feb. 7

**CHARLESTON**—West Virginians for Life (WVFL) invites all to join in the annual Pro-Life Rally Day at the Capitol in Charleston Feb. 7.

“Come in cars, buses, vans, snowboard if you have to, but don't miss it!” rally organizers said.

Bishop Mark E. Brennan will speak at the rally and give the invocation.

The rally will be held at noon inside the lower rotunda featuring keynote speakers Kurt and Chloe Kondrich, who say “Embrace Don't Erase Down syndrome.” Also speaking will be National Right to Life Political Director Karen Cross and WVFL President Wanda Franz. Hear an

update on God's Battlefield, experience special music, hear from pro-life legislators, and walk in the prayer processional holding a cross at the conclusion, rally organizers said.

“The crosses we carry will represent aborted babies. According to the latest figures from National Right to Life, roughly 2,400 unborn babies in the U.S. are lost to abortion each day,” rally organizers said.

Rally goers will have the opportunity to meet with their legislators by appointment from 9-10:30 a.m. They must set up their appointments. They will also be introduced in the House/Senate Galleries when session begins at 11 a.m.

WVFL encourages all to sign the Unborn Child with Down Syndrome Protection Act, “a bill that will protect unborn children diagnosed with a disability and their families from the trauma of coerced abortion.” Petition deadline is Jan. 31 in order to present it to House and Senate leadership at the rally. The petition can be signed at <https://www.wvforlife.org/call-to-action/>.

Special music will be provided by Pastor Joey and Bethanie McCutcheon featuring Frank Tettenburn's “God Bless America.”

Details regarding Capitol parking, etc. are found on the legislative website.

For more information visit, [www.wvforlife.org](http://www.wvforlife.org) or call (304) 594-9845.

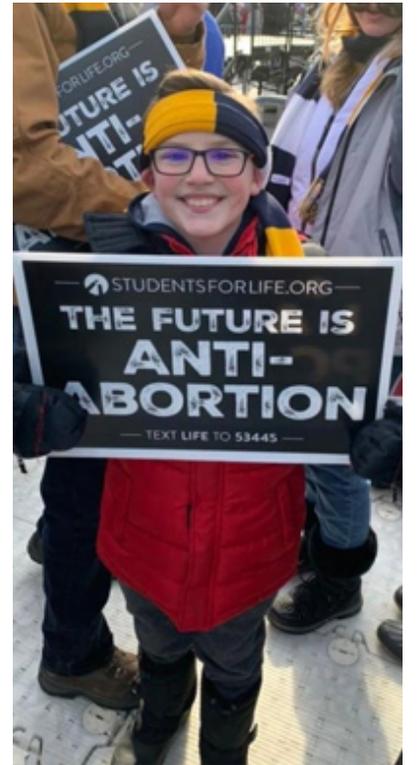
## March ...

Cont'd from Page 1

college campus, most often abortion is promoted, so for these students to see so many other students like them, I think that was very encouraging to them. It was definitely a cold day outside, but it was so worth it to be at the Washington Mall with the thousands of others in support of the lives and dignity of mothers and their babies.”

Many of the young people at the march proudly held signs that proclaimed, “I am the Pro-Life Generation” and “The Future is Anti-Abortion.” Sailing high above the marchers and a sea of “Choose Life” signs on the march to the Supreme Court was the huge “West Virginia, Mountaineer Catholic, St. John University Parish” banner carried by the Morgantown group.

The theme for this year's March for Life was “Equality Begins in the Womb,” march organizers said, emphasizing that the march highlights how true equality is only possible if all recognize that children in the womb also deserve protection. The annual March for Life, they said, is the



Courtesy Photos

From left: A group of students from Central Catholic High School in Wheeling and a young parishioner of St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town attend the 49th annual March for Life in Washington Jan. 21.

world's largest annual human rights demonstration.

The Catholic community of West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle was well represented at the march once again with a large group from St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town and St. Joseph Parish in Martinsburg

travelling to the nation's capital.

“We were blessed to send three buses with more than 110 participants to D.C.,” St. James Parish officials posted on Facebook. “It was inspiring to see so many gather for 7 a.m. Mass before beginning their journey.”

The parish thanked the

Knights of Columbus for once again providing breakfast; Grace Guiney for making lunches; and Father Bill Kuchinsky, Cathy Kerns, and Alex Mooney for presentations they gave.

Many students from St. Joseph School in Martinsburg, accompanied by three faculty members and

parents, also took part in the march as well as a large group from Central Catholic High School in Wheeling.

These are just a few of the groups from the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston that marched for life in Washington, calling for an end to abortion and respect for life.

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# Catholic Schools Week Begins Sunday



Courtesy Photos

From left: Very Rev. Casey B. Mahone, V.F., pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Clarksburg, distributes Communion to Notre Dame High School students during a school Mass in December; students at St. Francis de Sales School in Beckley work on an assignment in the computer lab; and Madonna High School students in Weirton unload provisions for those in need in their community.

## By Colleen Rowan

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Catholic schools will join in the celebration of National Catholic Schools Week Jan. 30 – Feb. 5. The theme for this year is “Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service.”

The diocese's Catholic schools will celebrate the special week by gathering for school Masses; holding fun events such as silly hat days, school spirit days; and more. They will also celebrate the week by reaching out to those in need in their communities. For example, Wheeling's Central Catholic High School and St. Michael Parish School will hold “Stuff the Bus,” challenging students and families to fill a bus load of needed items for the Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center in Wheeling. Students at St. Joseph Catholic School in Huntington will make banners of encouragement for hospital per-

sonnel and decorate bags for essential workers and pre-kindergarten students will make Valentine's cards for nursing home patients.

“Through these events, schools focus on the value Catholic education provides to young people and its contributions to our church, our communities, and our nation,” said National Catholic Educational Association officials.

The diocese's Catholic schools offer students opportunities to excel academically, to grow in their Catholic faith, and to serve their communities.

In a Snapshot of “Our Catholic Schools” at [wvcatholicschools.org](http://wvcatholicschools.org), Superintendent of Catholic Schools Mary Ann Deschaine said: “Our priority is our students, our privilege is supporting our families, our commitment is to continually improve our schools as we look to the future. Through individual and critical thinking;

strong self-esteem; empathy; citizenship; and a sound moral foundation all in a Christ-centered environment, each of our 24 schools prepare our students to be the best version of themselves. Catholic school students in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston not only outperform their counterparts academically, but also learn to put faith, accountability, responsibility, and integrity into action every day.”

The application and re-enrollment for the diocese's Catholic schools will begin in February. Many schools have been and will be holding open houses to showcase all they offer children and young people in their communities. Under “Common Application and Re-Enrollment Timeline” on the diocese's Department of

Catholic Schools website, Feb. 4, re-enrollment for current families begins; Feb. 11, application for parishioners new to the school begins; and Feb. 18, general public application begins. For more information, visit: [wvcatholicschools.org/join-a-catholic-school/](http://wvcatholicschools.org/join-a-catholic-school/).

The website also features numerous testimonials by students and families on the value of Catholic education. Leo Haid, A 2020 sixth-grade graduate of Parkersburg Catholic Elementary School said, “Attending Parkersburg Catholic Elementary has made me thrive in my faith, knowledge, and skill.”

“Fantastic teachers, small class sizes with lots of individual attention, and the strong moral base that comes with a Christian

**See “Schools” on Page 5**

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“Catholic school students in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston not only outperform their counterparts academically, but also learn to put faith, accountability, responsibility, and integrity into action every day.”

—Superintendent of Catholic Schools Mary Ann Deschaine, Snapshot of “Our Catholic Schools” at [wvcatholicschools.org](http://wvcatholicschools.org)

## Schools ...

Cont'd from Page 4

education are all reasons we chose Saints Peter and Paul for our three children. It feels like family there and has been a great start for academic advancement and raising kind, responsible children,” said Caroline Swank, a parent of students at SS. Peter and Paul School in Oak Hill.

“Providing our children with the best possible education in a Catholic context has been a priority for us,” said Angela Carter, a parent of students who attended St. Joseph School in Martinsburg. “St Joseph’s School has promoted academic and spiritual growth in my daughters, teaching them to be successful in high school, as well as keeping Christ at the center of their lives.”

The diocese has 24 Catholic schools located all over West Virginia. Its six secondary schools are Central Catholic High School in Wheeling, Charleston Catholic High School, Madonna High School in Weirton, Notre Dame High School in Clarksburg, Parkersburg Catholic High School, and St. Joseph Central Catholic High School in Huntington.

The diocese has 18 Catholic elementary and grade schools. In Wheeling are Corpus Christi School, Our Lady of Peace School, St. Michael Parish School, and St. Vincent de Paul Parish School. Weirton is home to St. Joseph the Worker Grade School and St. Paul School.

In the south are Sacred Heart Grade School in Charleston, St. Francis of Assisi School in St. Albans, Our Lady of Fatima Parish School and St. Joseph Catholic School in Huntington, SS. Peter and Paul Catholic School in Oak Hill, and St. Francis de Sales School in Beckley.

In the Central Region of the state through the I-79 corridor are St. Francis de Sales Central Catholic School in Morgantown, Fairmont Catholic Grade School, St. Mary Central School in Clarksburg, and St. Patrick School in Weston. The Central Region is also home to Parkersburg Catholic Elementary School, while the Eastern Panhandle provides Catholic education at St. Joseph School in Martinsburg.

For contact information for all of the diocese’s Catholic schools, visit [wvcatholicschools.org/our-schools/](http://wvcatholicschools.org/our-schools/).



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- Friday, February 4- Re-Enrollment for Current Families
- Friday, February 11- Enrollment for Parishioners new to the school
- Friday, February 18- Enrollment for the General Public

**For more Information visit:**  
[www.weirtonmadonna.org](http://www.weirtonmadonna.org)  
 or email Alicia Evkovich at  
[aevkovich@weirtonmadonna.org](mailto:aevkovich@weirtonmadonna.org)



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**Email [admissions@charlestoncatholic-crw.org](mailto:admissions@charlestoncatholic-crw.org)**  
**to register.**

# Beloved St. Vincent's Principal Retiring

By Colleen Rowan

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School in Wheeling will say good-bye to its beloved Principal Laurajenn Rossell, who will retire this year. "Laurajenn loves her role as an educator," said Msgr. Paul Hudock, pastor of the school and St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Wheeling.



Laurajenn Rossell

"She has served our community with dedication, compassion and faith. She believes in our children and she greatly desires to see her students flourishing always. I thank Laurajenn for serving our community and making St. Vincent School a safe and good place for families to participate in Catholic education."

Rossell has served as principal of the school for seven years.

In a Jan. 19 letter to SVS

parents, Rossell announced she will retire at the end of June.

"I have enjoyed being the principal of St. Vincent de Paul Parish School. We have the very best students, teachers, parents, grandparents, and parishioners!" she said in the letter. "I thank Msgr. Paul Hudock for his kindness and support."

She said a committee to select a new principal has been formed to find the best possible person to fill the position.

"In the meantime, we still have a lot to accomplish and enjoy this school year," she wrote. "Many blessings to all!"

The SVS community wishes Rossell all the best in her impending retirement and thanks her for all she has done.

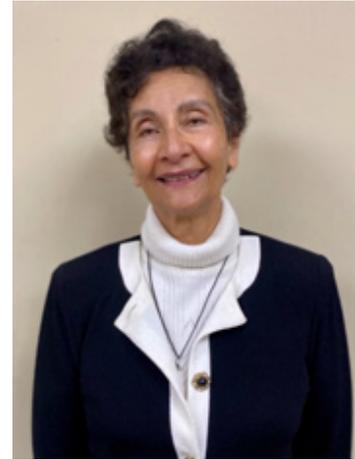
# Beloved St. Vincent's Teacher to Retire

When asked if she taught any notable figures or people of importance, Christine Anghie, life-long educator, immediately responds: "I consider all of my students, past and present, as celebrities!"

Anghie taught middle school classes at St. Vincent de Paul Parish School in Wheeling for 43 years. Students remember her as thoughtful, caring and honest!

"She is the best teacher I ever had because she teaches from the heart! I learned so much from her... especially in English." She not only thoroughly teaches the class content but gives her students pointers for their lives well beyond school, said Jack Klug, currently a freshman at WVU.

Anghie started several clubs and learning activities at St. Vincent. The canned-food drive and "can-less collection" during the pandemic allowed hundreds to feed their families because of her commitment to Catholic Charities and the 18th Street Center in Wheeling.



Christine Anghie

Anghie stood side by side with her students as they rolled thousands of meatballs for the annual Spaghetti Dinner.

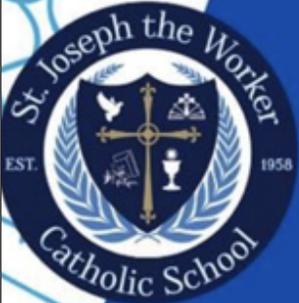
Her love for Poetry was demonstrated in developing a Poetry Declamation event where students are encouraged to compose a piece of poetry that they will share in front of an audience! This audience consists of parents, grandparents, guests and fellow

students. Students walk away with a feeling of confidence and pride in their work.

Laurajenn Rossell, principal of St. Vincent's, echoes her love and support of Anghie.

"Her passion and compassion are valued by students as well as her colleagues," Rossell said. "You only hear positive comments from any of our alumni and their families! Christine Anghie, as a teacher and individual, is extraordinary."

In addition to her longevity at St. Vincent School, Anghie served as an adjunct professor in English at Wheeling University.



## ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER SCHOOL

# 2022-2023 OPEN ENROLLMENT

**Schedule to Enroll:**

Jan 31-Feb 4: Re-Enrollment for Current Families

Feb 7-Feb 11: Enrollment for Parishioners new to the school

Feb 14- Feb 18: Enrollment for the General Public

**\*New Enrollment and Pre-K families need to apply online at [www.stjosephtheworkerschool.org](http://www.stjosephtheworkerschool.org) under the admissions tab\***

151 Michael Way  
Weirton, WV 26062  
304-723-1970







# Principal Needed

St. Vincent de Paul Church of Wheeling, West Virginia is seeking a Principal for St. Vincent de Paul Grade Catholic School, pre-school through 8 grades. Candidates for principal must be willing to assume responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the school as well as assist in developing long range goals for school advancement.

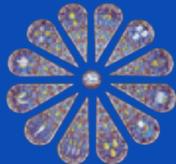
We seek a leader with strong communication skills, capable of developing and maintaining an excellent academic program. The Candidate must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with Church precepts and act as an example and motivator toward our mission to instruct students in the Catholic faith. The ideal candidate must have an earned Master's Degree in Educational Leadership or Administration or begin the process of completing degree requirements; or hold a valid Educational Leadership certification from the state of West Virginia or be eligible for such certification. The candidate will have a minimum of five years of successful educational experience with a preference for administrative experience.

Salary will be competitive and negotiable, depending on qualifications and years of experience. This position begins on July 1st for the 2022-23 school year. Applications must be submitted by February 28, 2022.

A résumé with three references may be emailed with all attachments in PDF to Jen Kinkade at [jenkinkade@pgka.com](mailto:jenkinkade@pgka.com).

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## Saint Joseph School

Martinsburg, WV

(304) 267-6447 | [mpartington@sjsww.org](mailto:mpartington@sjsww.org)

### Seeking Principal

Saint Joseph Catholic Church of Martinsburg, West Virginia, is seeking a principal for Saint Joseph School, which has students in preschool through eighth grades.

The candidate must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with Church precepts, and act as an example and motivator toward the fulfillment of the Catholic philosophy of the school.

The ideal candidate must have an earned master's degree in educational leadership or administration, or begin the process of completing degree requirements; or hold a valid educational leadership certification from the state of West Virginia or be eligible for such certification.

The candidate will have a minimum of five years of successful educational experience, with preference given to one with administrative experience.

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

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# Retired Pope Benedict Corrects Statement for Munich Abuse Report

By **Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service**

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** — Amending a written statement made to a panel investigating clerical sexual abuse in his former Archdiocese of Munich and Freising, retired Pope Benedict XVI said he was present at a 1980 meeting to discuss the transfer of a priest accused of misconduct.

“He did attend the meeting on Jan. 15, 1980,” said a statement issued on Pope Benedict’s behalf by his secretary, Archbishop Georg Ganswein.

“The statement to the contrary was therefore objectively incorrect. He would like to emphasize that this was not done out of bad faith but was the result of an oversight in the editing of his statement,” the archbishop said Jan. 24.

The 94-year-old Pope Benedict, he said, is still going through an almost 1,900-page report, which was released Jan. 20 and looked at the handling of cases in the archdiocese between 1945 and 2019. The former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger headed the Munich Archdiocese from 1977 to 1982.

The report identified 497 victims and 235 abusers, but the lawyers who conducted the study say they’re convinced the real numbers are much higher. In the report, the lawyers said that, on four occasions, then-Cardinal Ratzinger mishandled abuse allegations.

Particularly regarding the case of repeat offender Peter H., a priest sent to Munich from Essen in 1980, lawyer Ulrich Wastl described Pope Benedict’s statements as “not very credible.”

The law firm Westpfahl Spilker Wastl, conducted the investigation for the archdiocese; the retired pope had sent an 82-page statement to the investigators while they were doing the investigation.

In the statement, the former pope had said he did not take part in a decisive meeting on the case of Peter H. But, at the news conference where the legal report was presented, Wastl read out the minutes of that meeting. In it, then-Archbishop Ratzinger is mentioned in several places as a rapporteur on other topics.

Once the retired pope has had the time to

thoroughly read the Westpfahl Spilker Wastl report, Archbishop Ganswein said, “he will explain” how the editing error occurred.

“He is very sorry for this mistake and asks pardon,” the archbishop said.

At the same time, Archbishop Ganswein said, the retired pope’s assertion that “in this meeting no decision was made about a pastoral assignment of the priest in question” remains “objectively correct.”

The 1980 meeting, he said, dealt only with “the request to provide him (Peter H.) with accommodation during his therapeutic treatment in Munich,” a request that was granted. Later the priest was assigned to provide pastoral care in Bavaria and continued to sexually abuse minors.

Archbishop Ganswein assured the people of the archdiocese of Pope Benedict’s closeness, “especially in these days,” and his support of efforts “to clarify the situation.”

“He is thinking especially of the victims who have experienced sexual abuse and indifference,” he said.

# Ukraine Deserves Peace, Pope Francis Says

By **Carol Glatz, Catholic News Service**

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** — On the day Pope Francis established as a day of prayer for peace in Ukraine, the pope appealed for an end to all war and prayed that dialogue, the common good and reconciliation would prevail.

“Let us ask the Lord to grant that the country may grow in the spirit of brotherhood, and that all hurts, fears and divisions will be overcome,” he said at the end of his weekly general audience in the Vatican’s Paul VI audience hall Jan. 26.

“May the prayers and supplications that today rise up to heaven touch the minds and hearts of world leaders, so that dialogue may prevail and the common good be placed ahead of partisan interests,” he said.

With rising tensions in the region and the threat of a possible Russian-Ukrainian conflict spreading, Pope Francis had set Jan. 26 as a day of prayer for peace in Ukraine.

With the day coinciding with his weekly audience, the pope asked people to pray throughout the day.

“Let us make our prayer for peace in the words of the Our Father, for it is the prayer of sons and daughters

to the one Father, the prayer that makes us brothers and sisters, the prayer of children who plead for reconciliation and concord,” he said.

The pope said that as people remember the Holocaust on the eve of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, also “think about the more than 5 million people who were

annihilated (in Ukraine) during the time of the last war. They are a suffering people, they suffered famine, they suffered so much cruelty and they deserve peace.”

Russia annexed Crimea in early 2014 and, shortly afterward, Russian-backed separatists began fighting Ukrainian government forces in the eastern Uk-

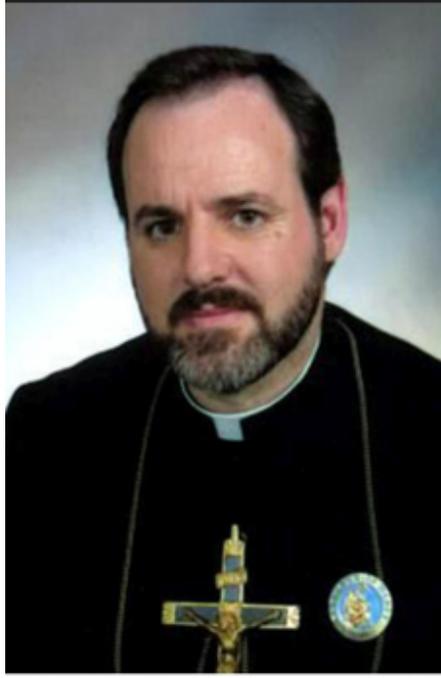
rainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. Some 1.5 million people have fled the region to other parts of Ukraine and thousands of civilians and soldiers have died or been injured.

While in the spring of 2021 Russia was accused by many Western nations of trying to provoke more active fighting by holding military exercises near the

border, a massive Russian buildup of troops just over the border created alarm in early December. The buildup has continued and, late Jan. 22, Britain’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office released a statement saying it had evidence that Russia was developing plans to install a pro-Russian government in Ukraine.

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# SYNOD Listening Sessions

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

**Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Charleston:** First Session—Jan. 30, 11 a.m.; Second Session—Feb. 4, 12:40 p.m.; Third Session—Feb. 13, 1 p.m.; Fourth Session—Feb. 19, 6:30 p.m.; Fifth Session—Feb. 23, 6:30 p.m.

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

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

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

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

**Our Lady of Peace, Wheeling:** First Session—Feb. 17, 7 p.m.; Second Session—Inclement weather date, Feb. 24.

**Our Lady of the Hills, Elkview:** Fourth Session—Jan. 30, after 8:30 a.m. Mass; Fifth Session—Feb. 6, after 8:30 Mass

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

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

**St. Anthony, Charleston:** First Session—Jan. 17, 10:30 a.m.; Second Session; Feb. 21, 1 p.m.; Third Session—March 12, 10 a.m.; Fourth Session—April 3, 11:40 a.m.

**St. Anthony, Fairmont:** First Session—Feb. 1, 1 p.m.; Second Session, Feb. 6, 6 p.m. after Mass; Third Session—Feb. 5, 7 p.m. after Mass; Fourth Session—Feb. 6, noon after Mass; Fifth Session—Feb. 7, 10 a.m.

**St. Anthony, Follansbee:** First Session—Jan. 31, 7 p.m.

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

**St. Brendan, Elkins:** First Session—Jan. 30, noon after the 11 a.m. Mass

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

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

**St. Francis of Assis, St. Albans:** First Session—Jan. 30, after 11 a.m. Mass; Second Session—Jan. 31, 6:30 p.m.

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

**St. James, McMechen:** Second Session—Feb. 2, 6 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**St. Vincent de Paul, New Martinsville:** First Session—Feb. 11, 6-8 p.m.

## Brother and Sister Help Dig Their Parish Church out of the Snow



Courtesy Photo

Brother and sister Chaz and Josie Frizzell of St. Francis Xavier Parish in Moundsville are pictured after clearing the church parking lot of snow.

**MOUNDSVILLE**—Brother and sister Chaz and Josie Frizzell came out on their snow day off from school to help clear the parking lot at their Parish of St. Francis Xavier in Moundsville.

“These are two young people who joyfully give service in their lives and to our parish, and we are especially grateful for this week as we dig out from the recent storm,” parish officials stated in the church’s bulletin. They are also students at Central Catholic High School in Wheeling. Chaz is a junior and Josie is a freshman.

The parish thanked the brother and sister team for making sure parishioners and visitors of St. Francis Xavier have an easier time getting from their cars to the church and to other places on the parish campus.

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# Print Commemorates 150th Anniversary of St. Joseph Parish in Huntington

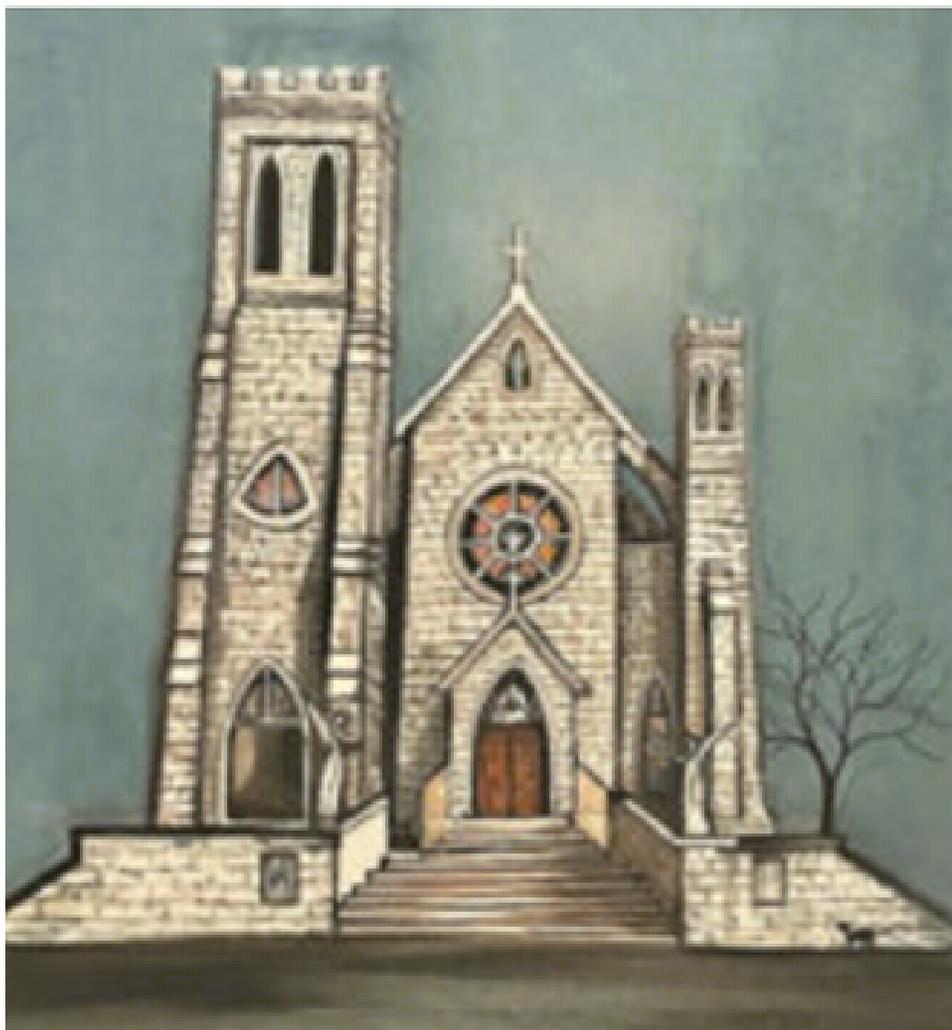
There will be many events and opportunities to mark the 150 years of Catholicism in Huntington — culminating in a week of celebration in October of this year to commemorate the first Catholic Mass held in the city and the beginnings of the St. Joseph Parish community. As part of the 150th anniversary happening this year, artist P. Buckley Moss was commissioned to paint a picture of the church.

The limited edition print is available to order until Moss' appearance at St. Joseph's on Saturday, Feb. 26 when she will sign prints in the connection from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. There will also be other art for sale.

There are two different sizes, the larger one selling for \$150 and the smaller one for \$85.

A total of 30 percent of the purchase price of these prints — as well as any other art purchased on the day of signing — directly returns to St. Joseph Parish.

For questions or to pre-order prints, call Joann Fuller at (304) 522-0897.



Courtesy Photo  
At right is artist P. Buckley Moss' painting of St. Joseph Church in Huntington.

## Global Catholic Tours of Va

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### 10 Days Vienna, Salzburg, Budapest

Sep 19-28, 2022 \$3999. Includes 3 nights Vienna, 3 nights Salzburg, 4 nights Budapest. With Fr Bjorn Lundberg from Winchester, VA.

### 13 Days Istanbul and Greece

Nov 7-19, 2022 \$4999. Includes 2 nights-Istanbul, 1 night each in Kavala, Thessaloniki, Kalambaka & Delphi, & 3-nights in Athens. Plus a 3 day cruise to Islands of Mykonos, Patmos, Crete, & Santorini. With visit to Ephesus. With Fr Shafer from Colonial Beach, VA

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Sep 12-22, 2022 \$3950 Includes 1 night Limerick, 2 nights Kilkenny, 3 nights each in Galway and Dublin. With Fr Art Bufogle from Marlinton, WV.

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# Webster Cares Effort Provides Christmas Meals and Toys for Families in Need



Courtesy Photos

Above: Volunteers unload provisions for the Webster Cares annual Christmas distribution in Webster Springs (left). Toys are ready for families in need (right).

The Webster County Office of Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) held its annual Christmas distribution Dec. 16 with 125 (350 individuals) area families given food to take home and prepare a Christmas meal. In addition, parents to nearly 200 children were able to “shop” for five gift items for each child.

CCWVa has always sponsored a distribution for Christmas, however, in 2007, it was named Webster Cares in order to encourage more community participation.

“We both wanted and needed it to be a community project,” CCWVa

Webster County Office officials said. “The cost of the food and gifts became too much for one organization to handle. By calling it Webster Cares, it has encouraged numerous churches, organizations, and even individuals to pitch in and make it happen.

“Thank you to all of our donors who have made this possible!” office officials said.

Donors for 2021 include: St. Jane de Chantal, The Snowshoe Foundation, The O’Neil Foundation, Resurrection Roman Catholic Church Mission Trip, Samantha Crites, St. Anne Parish in Webster Springs, United

Bank of West Virginia, Webster County Memorial Hospital, Bergoo Baptist Church, The Custard Stand, Family Resource Network of Webster County, Elk Valley Chapel, Dodd & Reed/Petry Funeral Homes, Cogar Right of Way Clearing, Emmanuel Assembly of God Church, Annabel Armentrout, Hope Hamrick, Jeff & Mary Furr, Charles & Joann Miller, Min-

nich’s Florist, Geri Kolesar, Point Mountain Community Church, Paul & Susan Bennett, Bennie & Barb Cowger, Seneca Health Services, Starting Points, St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town, WVAVC, and numerous community members.

“We also want to thank all of our wonderful volunteers!” office officials said.

## Diocese to Send Group to World Youth Day in 2023

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is coordinating a group to attend World Youth Day, August 2023 in Lisbon Portugal. This will be a planned trip and they also plan to provide parishes and youth groups with resources and opportunities to physically, mentally, financially & spiritually prepare to have an incredible experience. Details of said preparatory events and materials will be released in the coming months. The main goal now is to spread the word about World

Youth Day. The Pilgrimage will take place July 31-August 9, 2023 and the trip will include a one-day trip to the site of Our Lady of Fatima. The recommended age range for this trip are young adults 18-35 but would be willing to accept 16 year olds with parental participation. Cost per person will be \$3,500 and includes air travel, taxes, lodging, meals, a JMJ Travel guide and registration fees. The group will fly out of Pittsburgh.

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# Warming Hearts and Hands in Wheeling

Winters in Wheeling can be brutal. The cold weather puts many of our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness at increased risk of illness and even addiction relapse. Unfortunately, social distancing requirements related to the pandemic mean that the Neighborhood Center on 18th Street is not large enough to accommodate a warming center along with regular services.

Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) partnered with Father Joseph Wiley and the parishioners of St. Alphonsus Catholic Church, who graciously opened their doors. CCWVa operates a warming center in their parish hall.

We are so grateful for this partnership! Now, people who have nowhere else to go are welcome from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. Together and through collaboration

with the Soup Kitchen of Greater Wheeling, we serve three meals each day.

“As the weather gets colder, people just don’t have somewhere they can comfortably be for the day,” said Mark Phillips, CCWVa Northern Regional director. “There are places you can stay for an hour, like the library. But at our place, it doesn’t matter what you like look or what you’re bringing with you. We don’t ask questions. People can access resources and get a hot meal.”

One aspect of our ministry here stands out from many other warming centers in the state: Peer Recovery Coaches are available on site for anyone who needs support with substance use disorder (SUD). Peer Recovery Coaches have not only been through extensive training, they’ve also been through their own trials with SUD. They offer nonjudgmental

companionship, a witness to what’s possible, and support for those seeking — and remaining in — recovery.

“At Catholic Charities, we get involved in both sides of recovery,” said Phillips. “We help people access recovery programs, and we support people who are coming home from those programs.” Phillips noted that with few halfway houses existing in the Wheeling area, it is essential for CCWVa to offer financial assistance for deposits and first month’s rent for people coming home to jobs.

The warming center at St. Alphonsus is truly a community effort. Besides our part-

nerships with the parish and the Soup Kitchen of Greater Wheeling, House of Hagar sends a Peer Recovery Coach to the warming center. And we always need helping hands. If you’re available to prepare meals, serve meals, make coffee, or simply spend time with people, please reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator, Keith Miller: (304) 232-7157 or kmiller@ccwva.org.

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia, visit [www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org).

The Mission of Catholic Charities West Virginia: Guided by God’s love, Catho-

lic 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.

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## Martinsburg CCWVa Office in Need of a Volunteer for VITA

**MARTINSBURG**—Catholic Charities West Virginia in Martinsburg is seeking a volunteer scheduler to help with the VITA Tax Season through mid-March. This volunteer will be provided with a cellphone and can work from home.

Requirements include: Having at least an hour each week day to respond to requests for appointments and to schedule them; access to the Internet and reliable cellphone service; and the ability to use a computer to schedule appointments in an online calendar.

If interested in volunteering, contact Trina Bartlett at (304) 267-8837, ext. 8, or [tbartlett@ccwva.org](mailto:tbartlett@ccwva.org).

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# Aplicación Hallow Español ofrece oraciones católicas, meditaciones en español

**Por Catholic News Service CHICAGO (CNS)** -- Hallow, la aplicación católica de oración y meditación número 1 en el mundo, ha lanzado su versión en español, Hallow Español, con una amplia gama de contenido exclusivamente para católicos hispanos.

La aplicación -- disponible en todos los países de habla hispana y en Estados Unidos -- "tiene como objetivo ayudar a católicos hispanos a profundizar su fe", dijo un comunicado de prensa.

"A medida que aumenta el porcentaje de católicos en Estados Unidos que son hispanos -- con un tercio (33 por ciento) de todos los adultos católicos de EE. UU. identificándose como hispanos -- la Iglesia Católica se ha enfocado más en brindar recursos y programas que atraigan a sus feligreses de habla hispana", señalaba el comunicado.

"La tecnología ha desempeñado un papel importante para llegar a los católicos hispanos", agregó el comunicado. "Pero no ha habido una aplicación católica que los atienda, hasta ahora".

"Con más de 1.7 millones de descargas, Hallow se ha convertido en un recurso esencial para la oración y la meditación en el mundo de habla inglesa", expresó en un comunicado Jaime Gil, líder del equipo de contenido en español de Hallow. "A medida que avanzamos con nuestra visión de tener millones de personas orando todos los días, estamos

emocionados de hacer que el mismo contenido de calidad esté disponible en español".

Se puede descargar una versión de prueba de 14 días de Hallow Español; información para registrarse en la versión de prueba se puede encontrar en [www.hallow.com](http://www.hallow.com).

Aquellas personas que ya tienen la edición en inglés de la app pueden cambiar el idioma a español y así aparecerán todas las oraciones y meditaciones en español.

"El español no solo se habla en 21 países de las Américas, España, y otras partes del mundo", indicó Gil, "sino que también es el segundo idioma más hablado en Estados Unidos. Con Hallow Español, creemos que Dios continuará santificando la vida de muchas personas más en todo el mundo".

El contenido original de Hallow Español está diseñado específicamente para una audiencia hispana y se actualizará continuamente durante el año litúrgico. Para su lanzamiento oficial en diciembre, ese contenido incluyó la Novena de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, un Desafío Comunitario de Las Posadas, y meditaciones especiales para el Día de los Reyes Magos (la fiesta de la Epifanía).

Hallow, que ha acumulado más de 40,000 reseñas de cinco estrellas, está disponible en Apple App Store, Google Play Store, y Amazon App Store.

Durante el año pasado, Hallow agregó muchos líderes

religiosos a la aplicación, incluyendo el obispo auxiliar de Los Ángeles, Robert E. Barron, fundador del ministerio de medios Word on Fire; el padre Mike Schmitz, sacerdote de la Diócesis de Duluth, Minnesota, y co creador del podcast diario "La Biblia en un año"; Scott Hahn, fundador y presidente del Centro St. Paul de Teología Bíblica en Steubenville, Ohio; Leah Darrow, esposa y madre católica, autora y presentadora de podcasts; y la Hermana Miriam James Heiland, miembro de la Sociedad de Nuestra Señora de la Santísima Trinidad, quien es una oradora solicitada en conferencias de jóvenes.

Hallow también formó una nueva junta de asesores, dirigida por el obispo Kevin C. Rhoades de Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, quien es ex presidente del Comité de Doctrina de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos. Según su CEO y cofundador, Alex Jones, Hallow intenta ser "una aplicación que te ayude a desconectarte de las aplicaciones y la tecnología".

Eso suena como una contradicción, admitió en una entrevista de 2020 con Catholic News Service.

Sin embargo, mientras que otras aplicaciones religiosas tienen a los usuarios pegados a su pantalla para leer la Biblia, explicó, Hallow les permite a sus usuarios presionar "reproducir", cerrar los ojos, y escuchar el audio de una oración.

Se alienta a los usuarios a

desarrollar el hábito de la oración, dedicando al menos un minuto a la oración guiada por Hallow cada día.

"La parte más difícil de orar es simplemente hacerlo", manifestó Jones a CNS. "Es fácil en las temporadas de Cuaresma y Adviento cuando es importante hacerlo, pero (en

otras épocas del año) cuando tienes muchas otras cosas sucediendo, es fácil dejarlo".

La aplicación permite a los usuarios establecer objetivos y se "puede agregar miembros de familia y amigos a la aplicación para hacer a uno más responsable", dijo. "Puedes establecer recordatorios diarios".

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### Para denunciar presuntos casos de abuso sexual de niños:

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

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

**Para informar a las autoridades diocesanas:** La diócesis alienta a informar a las autoridades civiles apropiadas, ante todo, si se ha cometido un delito. La diócesis también alienta a informar a las autoridades eclesásticas 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](http://www.dwc.org), haga clic en "Diócesis" en la barra de menú, luego en "Oficinas", luego en "Ambiente seguro", luego "Descargar archivos y formularios". El formulario se titula "Formulario de queja para denuncias de abuso sexual de menores". El formulario se puede devolver por correo de EE. UU. A: Office of Safe Environment, Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

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

Además de los métodos enumerados anteriormente para denunciar el abuso sexual, la Diócesis también se ha asociado con Navex Global para ofrecer la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar otras inquietudes adicionales, como sospecha de mala conducta financiera, profesional y personal de un sacerdote, diácono, religioso, o empleado laico de la Diócesis o cualquier parroquia o escuela católica en West Virginia. Se puede acceder a la plataforma EthicsPoint a través de [www.dwc.org](http://www.dwc.org), en "Rendición de cuentas", luego "Informar mala conducta" o llamando al 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint es un sistema de informes de terceros que informa a las autoridades civiles cuando corresponda y a las autoridades diocesanas, y la identidad de la persona que informa esta protegida. Enlaces e información: Departamento de Salud y Recursos Humanos de WV: <https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp>. Policía Estatal de Virginia Occidental, Unidad de Crímenes contra Niños: 304-293-6400.

# Pope Declares St. Irenaeus a Doctor of the Church



**By Junno Arocho Esteves, Catholic News Service**

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** — Pope Francis officially has declared St. Irenaeus of Lyon a doctor of the church.

In a decree released by the Vatican Jan. 21, the pope ordered that the second-century theologian be given the title of “doctor of unity” and said St. Irenaeus’ life and teachings served as “a spiritual and theological bridge between Eastern and Western Christians.”

“May the doctrine of such a great teacher increasingly encourage the journey of all the Lord’s disciples toward full communion,” the pope said.

During a meeting with Pope Francis Jan. 20, Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes, asked the pope to “accept the affirmative opinion” of the cardinals and bishops who are congregation members to confer the title on St. Irenaeus, who was known for his defense of orthodoxy amid the rise of gnostic sects.

St. Irenaeus is the second doctor of the church named by Pope Francis after St. Gregory of Narek, who was given the designation in 2015. He brings the total number of doctors of the church to 37.

Born in Smyrna, Asia Minor — now modern-day Turkey — St. Irenaeus was known as a staunch defender of the faith.

Concerned about the rise of gnostic sects within the early Christian church, he wrote “Adversus haereses” (“Against Heresies”), a refutation of gnostic beliefs that emphasized personal spiritual knowledge over faith in Christian teachings and in ecclesiastical authority.

In October, the pope had told members of the St. Irenaeus Joint Orthodox-Catholic Working Group that he intended to declare their namesake a doctor of the church.

“Your patron, St. Irenaeus of Lyon — whom I will soon declare a doctor of the church with the title, ‘doctor unitatis’ (‘doctor of unity’) — came from the East, exercised his episcopal ministry in the West, and was a great spiritual and theological bridge between Eastern and Western Christians,” he said.

During his meeting with Cardinal Semeraro, Pope Francis also signed decrees recognizing how three sainthood candidates — one man and two women — heroically lived the Christian virtues. The three were:

— Italian Archbishop Francesco Saverio Toppi, the former prelate of Pompei, who was known for his devotion to Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary. He was born in 1925 and died in 2007.

— Italian Sister Maria Teresa De Vincenti, founder of the Little Workers of the Sacred Heart. She was born in 1872 and died in 1936.

— Italian Sister Gabriella Borgarino, a member of the Daughters of Charity. She was born in 1880 and died in 1949.

CNS Photo/The Crosiers

St. Irenaeus of Lyon is pictured in a stained-glass window at the Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate in Guelph, Ontario. Pope Francis received a formal recommendation Jan. 20 to declare St. Irenaeus of Lyon a doctor of the church, the Vatican announced.

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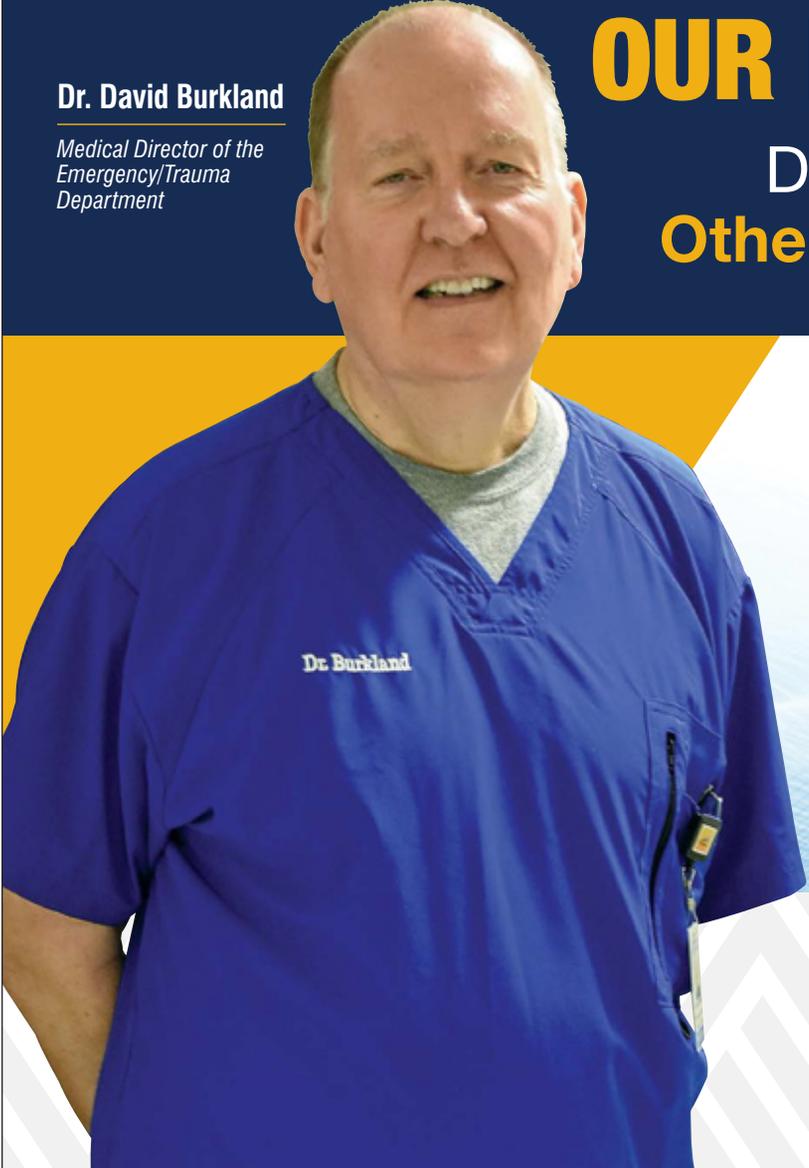
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