

THE CATHOLIC
Spirit

Bishop Brennan Leads National Holy Hour for Life

March for Life is Virtual Today, Jan. 29

By Colleen Rowan

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the March for Life to be virtual this year, but pro-life voices are still being heard, loud and clear. Among them is Bishop Mark Brennan, who led a livestreamed holy hour at 5 a.m. today, Jan. 29, from the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling. This was part of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Prayer for Life event. The cathedral was open to the public, and the holy hour was livestreamed on the diocese's Facebook Page and website.

The faithful may view the holy hour anytime on the diocese's Facebook page.

Holy hours led by bishops from across the country began last night, Jan. 28, at 11 p.m. and ended at 8 a.m. today with Mass celebrated by Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. The Mass was livestreamed on the basilica's website.

There will be coverage of the March for Life Rally and live coverage of the March for Life today, according to the March for Life's website. The rally will include inspiring speeches from pro-life leaders, information on how to stay involved in the pro-life
See "Life" on Page 2

Pro-Life Leaders Decry Biden Decision to Rescind 'Mexico City Policy'

By Julie Asher, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Joe Biden's memo rescinding the so-called "Mexico City policy" Jan. 28, the eve of this year's March for Life, "is a deeply disturbing move, especially when the president says he wants national unity," tweeted Jeanne Mancini, president of the March

for Life Defense and Education Fund.

A number of other national pro-life leaders also criticized Biden for his decision, which was included in a "Presidential Memorandum to Protect and Expand Access to Comprehensive Reproductive Health Care."

The policy, first announced by President Ronald Reagan during

an international conference on population in Mexico City in 1984, blocked U.S. funding for nongovernmental organizations that perform or actively promote abortion as a form of family planning in other nations.

Republican presidents since then have upheld the policy and Democratic presidents have

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Celebrate Catholic Schools Week

Jan. 31 to Feb. 6

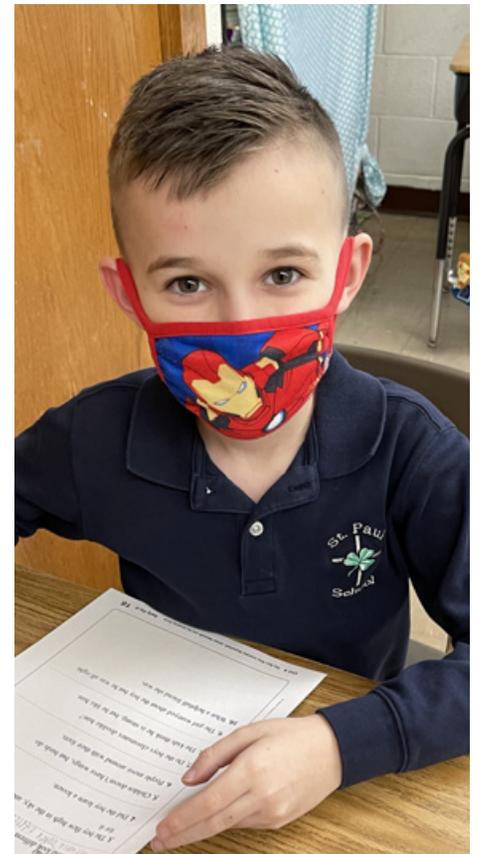
National Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 31 to Feb. 6, is a time to celebrate, said to Mary Ann Deschaine, Ed.S., Superintendent of the Catholic Schools of West Virginia.

"We know things will be a bit different due to the pandemic, but it will not contain our pride," she said. "Now is the perfect time to applaud our school community and the impressive accomplishments we have worked so hard to achieve."

The 24 Catholic schools — 18 grade schools and six high schools—work together as a team of educators, faith leaders, and families to nurture high achieving and morally responsible young people.

While times have been uncertain their goals remain very clear.

"Whether in the classroom or remote we are
See "Schools" on Page 4

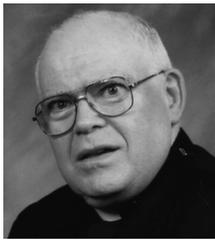


Left: Fifth-grader Stella Gigliotti at morning prayer at St. Mary Grade School in Clarksburg. Right: Third-grader Liam Scott pauses, smiling behind his superhero mask at St. Paul School in Weirton.

Obituary—Father Jeremiah Cullinane

Father Jeremiah Cullinane died peacefully at St. Paul's Elder Services in Kaukauna, WI on January 21, 2021, in the 88th year of life and the 62nd of his ministerial priesthood.

He was born to Jeremiah and Johanna Cullinane January 15, 1933. He attended Blessed Sacrament Grade School, Elizabeth, N.J. and graduated from St. Benedict's Preparatory School, Newark, N.J. as Valedictorian. He earned a BA in Philosophy at St. Vincent's College, Latrobe, P.A., as well as a MA in English from Notre Dame University, South Bend, Indiana.



He continued his studies at St. Mary's Major Seminary, Morristown, N.J., earning a Master's in Theology and a Doctor of Ministry from the New York Theological Seminary, New York, N.Y.

Fr. Jeremiah was ordained a Catholic Priest on May 23, 1959 for St. Benedictine Abbey, in Newark, New Jersey. Later he joined the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, W.V.

His career in education began at St. Benedict's Preparatory School where he taught English and American Literature. The following years found him teaching English, American Literature, Theology and Philosophy in many Universities and serving as Catholic Campus Chaplain. His ability to relate to college students and provide a positive influence on young men and women, were hallmarks of his Priestly career which provided lasting benefits on these young adults for a lifetime.

In addition to his Academic contributions in the US, he also taught in the University of Tianjin in the Peoples Republic of China. Fr. Jeremiah served as Chaplain to the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, Manitowoc, Wisconsin as his final ministerial assignment. These Sisters lovingly provided care to him in his final years.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Jeremiah and Johanna (Coughlin) Cullinane, his sister Sr. Alice Kelly OSB, and his Sister-in-law Margaret A. Cullinane. He is survived by his Brothers, Fr. Briant Cullinane O.F.M. Conv. of Pittsboro, N.C. and Deacon John Cullinane of Lakewood, N.J., as well as his nephew Brian Cullinane and niece Mary Cullinane.

A Memorial Mass will be celebrated at a later date. Interment will be private. Memorial contributions, in Fr. Jeremiah's memory, would be appreciated and sent to: The Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, Holy Family Convent, 2409 S. Alverno Road, Manitowoc, WI 54220.

Provide comfort for the family by planting a tree in memory of Rev. Jeremiah Cullinane, please visit <https://tree.tributestore.com/memorial-tree?old=19735639>

Life ...

Cont'd from Page 1

movement all year long, and a performance by Christian singer and songwriter Matthew West.

After the rally, live coverage of the March for Life begins at noon "as a small group of pro-life leaders march in representation of pro-life Americans across the country," the website states.

For information on how to watch the livestream, visit marchforlife.org.

Parishes around the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston are also celebrating the March for Life. Faithful in the Eastern Panhandle are invited to join members of St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town in praying for an end to abortion. Today, Jan. 29, the rosary will be prayed at noon at St. James Church. At 1:45 p.m. parishioners and pro-life supporters will meet in downtown Charles Town at the corner of the Post Office. "We will offer a silent hour of prayer from 2-3 p.m.," parish officials posted on St. James Church's Facebook page.

The parish did all of this Jan. 22 as well to mark the anniversary of Roe vs. Wade. "January 22, 1973, a sad day in the history of our country when the Supreme Court of the

United States ruled that the Constitution of the United States protects a woman's liberty to choose to have an abortion without excessive government restriction," officials posted on the parish's Facebook page.

St. Joseph Parish in Martinsburg, which has a large contingent at the March for Life each year, will have Exposition, Adoration, and Benediction today, Jan. 29, from 1-4 p.m. at the church. Father Thomas Gallagher, pastor of the parish, encouraged all to "pray for an end to abortion, for the conversion of hearts, for those expectant mothers and fathers in vulnerable situations, and for the unborn children themselves."

The diocese and its faithful have always had a strong showing at the March for Life. Last year, Bishop Brennan joined Weirton-area Catholics including 21 Weirton Madonna High School students at the march. Last year's march also saw a group of 100 from St. James in Charles Town, a group of 75 from St. Joseph's in Martinsburg, as well as 23 students and seven chaperones from Central Catholic High School in Wheeling, among many other diocesan groups. They all joined the tens of thousands present in the nation's capitol to call for an end to abortion.

To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children

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

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

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

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

In addition to the methods listed above for reporting sexual abuse, the Diocese also has partnered with Navex Global to offer the EthicsPoint platform to report other, additional concerns, such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese or any Catholic parish or school in West Virginia. The EthicsPoint platform can be accessed via www.dwc.org, under "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, click "Diocese", then "Offices," then "Office of Safe Environment."



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Policy ...

Cont'd from Page 1

overturned it. Opponents of the policy call it a “gag order.”

Biden’s action “goes against the wishes of an overwhelming majority of Americans — in fact, consistent polling shows that 77% of Americans oppose taxpayer funding for abortion overseas,” said Mancini in her tweet. “The government should never force taxpayers to fund abortions, either here or abroad, but should work to protect the inherent dignity of all persons, born and unborn.”

The March for Life organization sponsors the annual rally and march that takes place in Washington near the Jan. 22 anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion nationwide in 1973.

This year participation in the event will be primarily virtual because of pandemic restrictions and unprecedented security in Washington following the riot at the U.S. Capitol Jan. 6. Tens of thousands of pro-lifers normally come from across the country for the event.

Only a small group, led by Mancini, planned to be on the National Mall for speeches Jan. 29. Afterward, the group was to walk to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Biden’s decision to rescind the policy that began with Reagan was expected once he was inaugurated as the nation’s 46th president.

A Catholic, Biden also has said he wants to see an end to the long-standing Hyde Amendment, which outlaws federal tax dollars from directly funding abortion except in cases of rape, incest or when the life of the woman would be endangered.

A week earlier, Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and now Biden’s chief medical adviser, said the president would take action on the policy “in the coming days.”

It is part of the new president’s “broader commitment to protect women’s health and advance gender equality at home and around the world,” Fauci told the World Health Organization’s executive board Jan. 21. He made the comments after Biden chose him to head the U.S. delegation to WHO.

“Funneling U.S. tax dollars to abortion groups overseas is an abhorrent practice that flies in the face of the ‘unity’ Joe Biden and (Vice President) Kamala Harris promised to inspire,” said Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the Susan B. Anthony List, echoing Mancini’s remarks.

“Rather than rally the nation around common ground policies to affirm and promote life,” she said, “today they force taxpayers to bankroll abortion businesses overseas, opening up a slush fund for groups like Marie Stopes International and the International Planned Parenthood Fed-

eration.”

“These abortion industry giants shamefully push their agenda on deeply pro-life nations and cultures,” she added. “Americans across the political spectrum oppose the use of taxpayer funding to promote abortion and abortion businesses. Despite this, the new administration is moving forward with a payout to the abortion industry that backed their political campaign.”

Released Jan. 27, results of the annual Knights of Columbus-sponsored Marist poll on Americans’ opinions on abortion continue to show that “a majority of Americans do not support the sweeping pro-abortion changes to law that are sought by President Biden and the Democrat Congress,” noted Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life.

“Pursuit of this radical pro-abortion agenda shows just how out of touch they are with their constituents,” she said.

On the issue of “using tax dollars to support abortion in other countries,” a majority of respondents — 77% — oppose this, the poll showed. This percentage includes 64% who identify themselves as “pro-choice.” Overall, 58% of respondents “oppose using tax dollars to pay for a woman’s abortion.”

“U.S. foreign policy — and the foreign entities we fund with billions of dollars in grant money — should consistently affirm, care for, and tangibly assist women and children — including unborn baby girls and boys,” Rep. Chris Smith, R-New Jersey, who is co-chair of the Congressional Pro-life Caucus, said Jan. 28.

He wrote a letter signed by at least 118 members of Congress calling on Biden to reconsider and reverse his decision on the Mexico City policy. Signers include Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy of California, Republican Whip Steve Scalise of Louisiana and Republican Conference Chair Liz Cheney of Wyoming.

On Jan. 23, 2017, President Donald Trump in an executive order reinstated the policy, which had been suspended by his predecessor, President Barack Obama, and he expanded it to create the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance Policy.

In August 2020, then-Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar issued the administration’s second report on implementation of the expanded policy. He said it showed the vast majority of foreign nongovernmental organizations — 1,285 out of 1,340 — had complied “with this policy with minimal disruption of health services and no reduction in funding.”

“Many countries throughout the world have been besieged by aggressive and well-funded campaigns to overturn their pro-life laws and policies,” Smith said in his statement. “The Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance Policy was designed to mitigate U.S. taxpayer complicity in global abortion.”

ABORTION

DOES NOT END THE LIFE OF A POTENTIAL HUMAN BEING...



ABORTION ENDS THE LIFE OF AN ACTUAL HUMAN BEING WITH GREAT POTENTIAL

 DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

If you or someone you know is facing an unplanned pregnancy, get support at 888-550-1588 (call/text)

 **love line**
When you love first, life follows

St. Michael Parish School Teacher Named Educator of the Year

By Colleen Rowan

WHEELING—Heather Rine, who teaches pre-kindergarten through fourth-grade at St. Michael Parish School in Wheeling, has been named West Virginia Voices for Education's Educator of the Year.

In video remarks on the school's Facebook page, Rine thanked the organization for the honor and said that she is delighted to be this year's recipient.

"There are so many people that I am thankful and grateful for that have given me the opportunity to receive this honor," Rine said.

She began by thanking her family, and husband Jason of

23 years.

"A Catholic education is very important to our family," she said. "We are both alumni of St. Michael Parish School as well as our older two children." Their youngest child, she said, is currently enrolled at the school.

"We feel that a faith-based education is the foundation for our children," she said.

Rine also thanked Principal Kim Burge and fellow teacher Marcy Hartzell, who both nominated her



Heather Rine

for the award, as well as "the staff and faculty at St. Michael Parish School, parents and the children. Without all of you, I would not be the educator that I am today."

Rine receiving the honor was no surprise to Father Carlos Melocoton, Jr., pastor of the school and St. Michael Parish. He recalled the first time he visited Rine's classroom, finding it full of joyful children wanting to learn.

"This for me is a very conducive atmosphere to learn and be with your friends in the hand

of a nurturing teacher," he said. "Since, my first visit, I usually pass by Mrs. Rine's classroom to reenergize," especially because of her welcoming character.

Rine is very deserving of the honor, Father Melocoton said. He also said that the parish and school community are proud of her contributions as a member of the faculty and as a parishioner of St. Michael's.

"I know she will continue to contribute for the good of our school and parish ministry," he said. "Her example of putting the gospel values into the minds of these little ones help parents in their responsibility to raise their children in the faith."

Schools ...

Cont'd from Page 1

steadfast in presenting challenging and engaging academics complimented with life and leadership lessons in empathy, morals, responsibility, service, and faith," Deschaine said. "Our schools have gone above and beyond with safety protocols based on the guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control, and state and local health departments, so we could maintain a five day a week plan. When remote learning was mandated by the state our principals reported full attendance with faculty requiring participation and accountability among students. Principals continued to have high expectations of their faculty; and in turn teachers did not settle for bare minimum work or ease grading to a pass-fail curriculum."

The Catholic Schools of West Virginia require standardized assessments not once, but three times a year in to measure our students' growth, define areas that need improvement, and identify strengths in order for our educators to develop the best course of action for student success.

"It is that persistence that guides our students to surpass their own expectations," she said.

The Class of 2020 in the six Catholic high schools (Central Catholic High School, Wheeling; Charleston Catholic High School, Charleston; Madonna High School, Weirton; Notre Dame High School, Clarksburg; Parkersburg Catholic High School, Parkersburg; and St. Joseph Central Catholic High School, Huntington) were offered more than \$28.4 million in academic and athletic scholarships. That's nearly \$14 million more than the previous year thanks in part to the encouragement of teachers, counselors, principals, coaches, and priests.

"As a school system we remain forward thinking and are committed to high standards as we plan ahead," Deschaine said. "We have embarked on an intentional growth planning process in 2020-2021. In doing so our schools have been able to honor and reflect on the past

and plan for the future."

Each school's comprehensive plan strategically focuses on the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools (NSBECS). All 24 schools' plans center around four pillars:

- Mission and Catholic Identity
- Governance and Leadership
- Academic Excellence
- Operational Vitality

"This growth process is part of our national accreditation," she said. "The diocesan inten-

tional growth plan will reflect the individual school plans. It is our priority to continually improve Catholic education across the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston."

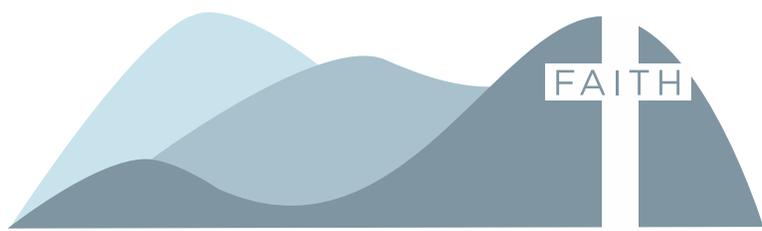
In conclusion she said, "We are not only making history, but also writing our story of adaptability, perseverance, and unwavering faith every step along this journey. As I have said countless times, I am inspired by our schools, their advisory boards, and parishes they love and value each one of our students."

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SYSTEM AT A GLANCE

18 ELEMENTARY & 6 HIGH
SCHOOLS 4,195 elementary & secondary students

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL SYSTEM IN NUMBER OF STUDENTS **11%** of students represent minorities

20TH LARGEST **Over 400** professional staff

8TH LARGEST WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL SYSTEM IN NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

13 counties are served by West Virginia Catholic Schools

West Virginia Catholic Schools provide exceptional academics in a Christ-centered environment, while nurturing responsibility, accountability, citizenship, and empathy. Our PK-12 focus is to encourage individual and critical thinking; deepen faith; build self-esteem; and develop a sound moral foundation rooted in the gospel. God is in our schools. Everything we do, choices we make, and plans we develop are prayerfully made with the best intentions of our students' success. The social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental well-being of each child is just as important to academic achievement. We lead with faith.

- Mrs. Mary Ann Deschaine, Ed.S.
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE

West Virginia Catholic Schools remain forward thinking and committed to high standards. We have embarked on an intentional growth planning process. In doing so, each of our 24 schools were able to honor and reflect on the past and plan for the future. Each school will finalize a comprehensive plan strategically focused on the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools(NSBECS). All 24 schools' plans center around four pillars:

- **Mission and Catholic Identity**
- **Governance and Leadership**
- **Academic Excellence**
- **Operational Vitality**

This growth process is part of our ongoing accreditation through our national accrediting organization, Cognia. The diocesan intentional growth plan will reflect a strong combination of the individual school plans. It is our priority to continually improve Catholic education across the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.



The WV Catholic Schools' Class of 2020 received \$28.4 million in academic and athletic scholarships.

DIOCESAN APPEAL ASSISTANCE

The Diocesan Tuition Assistance Program (TAPS) awarded more than \$850,000 to Catholic school families in 2020.

Funds raised for West Virginia Catholic Schools through the diocesan annual giving program provide professional development for faculty and staff, online assessment and remote learning trainings, enrichment classes for faculty, school-based health programs, health screenings, healthcare access, and more.

nwea map GROWTH

West Virginia Catholic Schools follows the MAP (*Measures of Academic Progress*) practical testing protocol that tests our students not once a year, but three times. This assessment tool helps us measure individual student learning and growth at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year. We can then use this data to support individual student needs, educational plans, group learning, and advanced placement academics, so students can strive to reach their full academic potential. For more about the MAP Growth test, please visit: www.nwea.org/the-map-suite/family-toolkit/

Light Reflects on Role as Principal

CLARKSBURG — Kelly Light started as the Notre Dame High School Principal on Aug. 15, 2020. There were two big things going on in her life at the time—a worldwide pandemic and she was seven months pregnant with her third child.

Due to the timing, Light, a 2006 graduate of Notre Dame, had mixed emotions about applying for the position. However, she was reassured by the outpouring of support from her family and current employees. She was delighted when she was asked to be the principal and appreciative of the faith Father Joe Konikattil (designated pastor of Notre Dame and St. Mary Central Grade School) had shown in her. Light said, “I was excited and humbled to be offered the position and Father Joe was looking forward to mentoring me as he has a significant amount of experience in Catholic education.”

After a tremendous amount of planning, Notre Dame opened on Sept. 8 for the 2020-21 school year. Many changes and new protocols had to be implemented immediately to keep students and employees safe. Light said, “Managing safety guidelines and providing students with a quality high school experience has been the biggest challenge so far. I’m grateful to the parents and students for their continued support of Notre Dame and for their understanding with decisions that have had to be made. I’m also very appreciative of the faculty and staff for making the best of a difficult situation.”

Light gave birth to a son, Jamison, in mid-October and took six weeks of maternity leave. During that time, she felt a little frustrated about not being at school but was very confident in the ability of the people she had left in charge. Light said, “We didn’t miss a beat and I was kept well informed about how things were going.”



Kelly Light, principal of Notre Dame High School in Clarksburg.

Courtesy Photo

Two Notre Dame Graduates, Patty DuPont ‘77 and Becky Korn ‘89, took charge of the school during Light’s absence. DuPont is the director of religious education and has taught at Notre Dame for 20 years. Korn has been the school counselor for seven years. Both commented on how this time gave them a much greater appreciation of what a principal does and the challenges that come with it. Korn said, “When you see something through someone else’s eyes, it gives you a greater

understanding of their role.”

DuPont echoed those sentiments and added, “We were very appreciative of the help and support Father Joe gave us.”

Upon Light’s return, the Notre Dame students have had a mixture of remote and in-person learning which is dependent on the number of coronavirus cases in Harrison County. A rewarding aspect for Light is seeing the students and employees continue to succeed despite the difficult circumstances. She said, “Events and activ-

ities have had to be cancelled, but everyone is doing a great job in challenging times.”

At the time of writing, Notre Dame students have only just returned to the building after the Christmas break. Looking forward, Light is positive saying, “The biggest goal, having got the students safely back into the building, is to build them back up emotionally and spiritually. I want to focus on making the school a positive place to be and continue to grow and improve.”

Considering Clarksburg Notre Dame? Zoom with Admissions Counselor to Learn about the School

CLARKSBURG—It’s not too late to be a part of the Notre Dame High School family, officials of the school posted on the NDHS Facebook page Jan. 19.

“Do not miss your chance to chat with the Counselor of Admissions, Jacqueline Reed. You can set up a confidential appoint-

ment for a Zoom call via email. If you prefer to speak by phone, that can be scheduled too,” they said. “We want to answer all of your questions and talk about our new FINANCIAL INCENTIVES.”

To receive more information, email jacqueline.reed@notredamewv.org.

Daily Living

Sunday Mornings: with Fr. Chapin

11 Nexstar WDVM Hagerstown, Md.
6:30 WOWK CBS 13 Charleston, Huntington
8:30 WVNS FOX 59 Beckley, Bluefield, Lewisburg
8:30 WTOV METV Wheeling, Steubenville
9:30 WVFX FOX 10 Clarksburg, Fairmont, Morgantown
10:00 DirecTV 367 World Harvest Television

Episodes
Available at
mydailyliving.com

Infant of Prague Novena Begins in Wheeling

WHEELING—Our Lady of Peace Parish in Wheeling began the Infant of Prague Novena Jan. 25. All are invited to attend the novena which will be held at 7 p.m. on Mondays, ending on March 22.

“We hope that you will consider joining us ‘on the hilltop’ as we once again give honor and praise to the Divine Infant of Prague,” parish officials said. “Remember, He said, ‘The More You Honor Me, The More I Will Bless You.’”

Many area priests have been asked to be guest homilists. Father Joseph Augustine, pastor of Our Lady of Peace, was the featured homilist on the first Monday. The special intention was for all those who are alone.

Members of the Knights of Columbus Council #12195 will be serving. All are welcome.

Novena of Holy Hour for Life to be Held in Parkersburg

PARKERSBURG—St. Francis Xavier Parish in Parkersburg will have a Holy Hour for Life with Eucharistic Adoration.

“We pray for respect for the dignity of human life, forgiveness, and healing of those wounded by abortion, and the gift of life,”

parish officials said. “All are welcome.”

The novena will be held on nine Wednesdays, beginning Feb. 3 and ending April 7. The evenings will be from 6-7 p.m. with a Mass following at 7 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier Church.

Charleston Knights Sponsoring Blood Drive

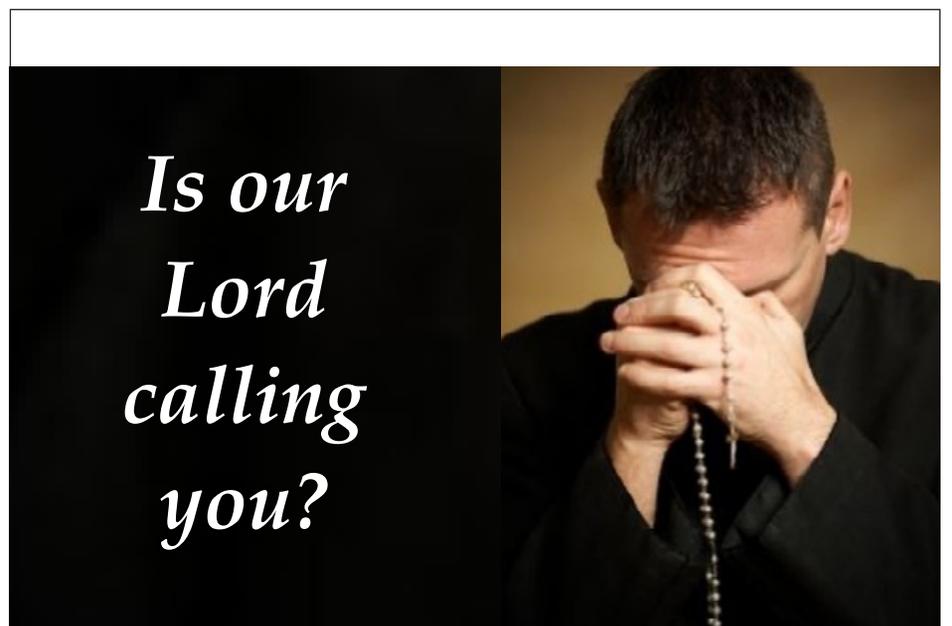
CHARLESTON—The Knights of Columbus Council #12630 announces the sponsorship of another Red Cross Blood Drive to be held on March 4 between the hours of 1 to 6 p.m. at the West Montgomery Room of the Holiday Inn and Suites, 402 2nd Ave. in South Charleston. “The need for blood is still very great,” council officials said. “The Red Cross has been holding blood drives safely at this location for a number of months. We encourage all persons willing to give blood to sign up for the drive.”

To make an appointment, visit redcrossblood.org and enter scc or call 1-800-733-2767.

Fairmont’s Holy Cross/Mt. Carmel Cemetery to Begin Removal of Christmas Flowers

FAIRMONT—At Holy Cross/Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Fairmont, removal of Christmas flowers/wreaths will begin Feb. 1.

The Cemetery Committee asks the faithful to please remove any items that they would like to keep before Feb 1.



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

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Pope: Failure to Remember Holocaust Will Lead World Down Same Path

By Junno Arocho Esteves, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Remembering the Holocaust and its victims is not only an act of solidarity but also serves as a warning to humanity that such horrors could happen again, Pope Francis said.

Before concluding his weekly general audience Jan. 27, the pope marked the observance of International Holocaust Remembrance Day by calling on the world to “remember the Shoah” and to “be aware of how this path of death began, this path of extermination, of brutality.”

“To remember also means to be careful because these things can happen again, starting with ideological proposals to save a people and ending up destroying a people and humanity,” he said.

International Holocaust Remembrance Day is observed around the world Jan. 27, the anniversary of the liberation in 1945 of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in Oswiecim, Poland.

Operated from 1940 to 1945, Auschwitz was the Nazi’s largest camp and consisted of three parts: Auschwitz I, where many were imprisoned and murdered; the Birkenau extermination camp — also known as Auschwitz II — and Auschwitz III (Auschwitz-Monowitz), an area of auxiliary camps that included several factories.

Beginning in 1942, Auschwitz became the site of the mass extermination of over 1 million Jews, 23,000 Roma, 15,000 Soviet prisoners of war and thousands of Polish citizens.



CNS photo/Paul Haring
Pope Francis touches the death wall at the Auschwitz Nazi death camp in Oswiecim, Poland, in this July 29, 2016, file photo. The pope said remembering the Holocaust and its victims is not only an "expression of humanity" but also makes people aware that such horrors may happen again. The pope's comments came at his general audience as he commemorated International Holocaust Remembrance Day Jan. 27.

The Nazi’s systematic persecution and genocide led to the deaths of 6 million Jews in Europe.

Commemorating the victims of the Holocaust, the pope said the act of remembering is “an expression of humanity” and “sign of civility.”

Remembering “is a condition for a better future of peace and fraternity,” he said.

Audrey Azoulay, director-general of UNESCO, issued a similar warning in her statement commemorating International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

“Today, as hateful voices continue to rise, denying or distorting the implacable reality of these facts, we have a universal responsibility to remember each and every individual whom the Nazis sought to erase from the face of the earth,” Azoulay said.

The day, she added, is also time to reflect “upon the choices of the individuals and governments that allowed this genocide to unfold.”

“It is also a call for vigilance and for action, to address the root causes of hatred and prevent future atrocities from happening,” she said.

In Germany, Catholic bishops marked Holocaust Remembrance Day with a call for decisive action against all forms of anti-Semitism.

“The memory of the Holocaust fills me with profound sorrow but also with shame because so many remained silent at the time,” the president of the Ger-

man bishops’ conference, Bishop Georg Bätzing, wrote on Twitter and Facebook.

He called on all people to join together to courageously oppose “anti-Jewish prejudice, conspiracy myths and every form of hatred in everyday life, at school or among friends.”

The “industrial murder of the Jews” had been at the end of a path “that began with hate speech, conspiracy myths and social exclusion. We must never go down that path again.”

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Pope: Scripture Not Meant to be Stuck on Paper but Fixed in One's Heart

By Junno Arocho Esteves, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Praying with Scripture is not meant to be a mindless repetition of biblical quotes but instead is a gift that is meant to be accepted in people's hearts, Pope Francis said.

During his weekly general audience Jan. 27, the pope said the words contained in Scripture were "not written to remain imprisoned on papyrus, parchment or paper, but to be received by a person who prays, making them blossom in his or her heart."

He also said Christians must not exploit the Bible or use it for "ulterior motives" like justifying "his or her own philosophical and moral view."

"It irritates me a little when I hear Christians who recite verses from the Bible like parrots: 'Oh, yes, the Lord says (this), he wants this,'" the pope said, departing from his prepared remarks.

"But did you encounter the Lord with that verse? It is not a question only of memory; it is a question of the memory of the heart, that which opens you to the encounter with the Lord. And that word, that verse, leads you to the encounter with the Lord," he said.

Livestreaming his audience from the library of the Apostolic Palace, the pope continued his series of talks on prayer by looking at how Christians pray with Scripture.

"The Bible was not written for a generic humanity, but for us, for me, for you, for men and women in flesh and blood, men and women who have a name and a surname, like me, like you," he said.

The Christian tradition of "Lectio Divina," reflecting on and praying with the biblical readings, allows Christians to enter "into dialogue with the Scripture," he said. And recognizing oneself in a particular passage, biblical character or situation "is a grace."

However, he added, praying with Scripture is "delicate" because those who pray "must not slip into subjective interpretations" but instead be united to Scripture and view it as "an icon to be contemplated."

Pope Francis said the word of God "inspires good intentions," gives strength and serenity to those in need and "even when it challenges us, it gives us peace."

"On 'weird' and confusing days, it guarantees the heart a core of confidence and of love that protects it from the attacks of the evil one," he said.

14-Nation Survey Shows U.S. Faith has Stayed Strongest amid COVID-19

By Mark Pattison, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — According to a new poll by the Pew Research Center, more Americans say the coronavirus pandemic has strengthened their religious faith than those in 13 other nations that possess what Pew called "advanced economies."

On the other side of the coin, though, a majority in every country, the United States included, said the pandemic has made no difference in the level of their faith.

With the exception of Australia, Canada, Japan and South Korea, the other nations surveyed were all European: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The survey, released Jan. 27, showed that 28% of Americans said the pandemic had strengthened their own religious faith, and 28% said it had strengthened the faith of people in their country.

The countries closest to the United States were Spain, where 16% of respondents said the pandemic had strengthened their faith, with 17% saying it had strengthened the faith of other Spaniards, and Italy, where 15% said it had strengthened their own faith and 19% said it had strengthened the faith of other Italians.

Across all 14 countries surveyed, the median was 10% saying the pandemic had strengthened their own faith, while 15% said it had strengthened the faith of people in their country.

The only country of those surveyed that registered single digit increases to each question was Japan, where 5% said it had strengthened their own faith and 5% said it had strengthened the faith of people in their country.

Nine percent of South Koreans said the pandemic had actually weakened people's faith. Compared to 10% who said it had strengthened their faith, it was a net positive of just 1%. The only country with as small a net gain was Sweden, where 3% said it had strengthened their faith and 2% said it had weakened it.

In the United States, 68% of those surveyed said their own faith had not changed much, and 47% said the faith of other Americans had stayed about the same.

The survey was conducted June 10-Aug. 3 last year, as people in the affected countries had been under social distancing rules, na-

tional lockdown orders, or both. Pew did phone surveys of 14,276 adults total in all 14 countries.

More favorable responses were given when asked whether the pandemic had strengthened family bonds. Spain topped out at 42%, with the United States, the United Kingdom and Italy each registering 41%. Yet even in those countries, a higher percentage of respondents said that had not changed much, either.

For those who say their faith is very important to them, Spain led, as 49% said the pandemic had strengthened their faith, compared to 6% of Spaniards who said their faith is either somewhat, not too important, or not at all important, a net difference of 43, which also led all 14 nations surveyed.

Among Americans, 45% of those who say their faith is very important to them said the COVID crisis had strengthened their faith, compared to 11% who held faith less important or unimportant, a difference of 34 points. Overall, 49% of Americans said religion is very important in their lives, as do 24% of Spaniards.

While focus is usually given to white evangelicals in the United States for their religiosity, there was one area where U.S. Catholics outshone their evangelical counterparts.

According to Pew, 48% of Catholics surveyed said the pandemic "strengthened bonds with their immediate family members, which is higher than the share of white evangelical Protestants (34%) who say their family relationships are stronger as a result of the pandemic."

However, 49% of white evangelicals said the pandemic had strengthened their faith, compared to 35% of Catholics, and 43% of evangelicals said the crisis had strengthened their fellow Americans' faith, compared to 30% of Catholics.

Regardless of nation, people with lower incomes reported stronger faith than those with higher incomes. In the United States, 34% of respondents with lower incomes said their faith had been strengthened because of COVID. The 22% recorded by Americans with higher incomes, though, is higher than the highest percentage of lower-income people from any other country with enough respondents to make the response statistically significant.

Asked whether Americans' responses represented a pause in the nation's continuing slide toward secularization, Neha Sahgal, associate director of research for Pew, replied: "I wouldn't go that far. One thing is pretty clear, that in the last few years in the United States, there is a secularization trend — more people saying they have no religion, and a fall in the faith of the people who say they are observant."

Sahgal added, "The greater proclivity" of Americans saying their faith or that of the nation is stronger as a result of COVID "is largely being driven by this groups who is already religious."

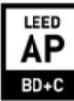


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Asylum-Seekers along Mexican Border Express Hope with Biden in Office

By David Agren, Catholic News Service

MATAMOROS, Mexico (CNS) — Idalia Reyes remembers the desperation that drove her to seek out smugglers to take her children, unaccompanied, to the United States. Reyes and her children lived in a tent camp along the Rio Grande, where they endured crime, cold snaps and infestations of insects and snakes.

After her children, ages 7 and 4, suffered an outbreak of sores, she sought out smugglers, who floated the children across the river in the dead of night to the U.S. side. The children promptly surrendered to immigration officials and were reunited with their father, who was already residing in the United States with an older son.

"It's difficult seeing your children suffer," Reyes recalled on a rainy night in the camp. "That's why I decided to send them across the river."

Despite the difficulties of remaining in the tent camp and desperately missing her children, Reyes spoke somewhat hopefully of being reunited with her family. She cited a simple reason: President Joe Biden, who promised an overhaul of U.S. immigration and asylum policies.

"We've had our hopes in Biden because he said that he was going to help us," Reyes said. "We hoped that he would win."

Reyes is stuck living in Matamoros — opposite Brownsville, Texas — as part of the Migrant Protection Protocols, which forces asylum-seekers to wait in Mexico as their cases are heard in U.S. courts. Biden has promised to scrap the protocols and announced new participants would not be enrolled after Jan. 21, though few people were being processed due to restrictions on entry implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Details on what comes next for the asylum-seekers remains uncertain, and many still have U.S. court dates, which had been pushed repeatedly into the future during the pandemic.

Catholics working with program participants are urging them to remain patient. Some are encouraging the Biden administration to wind down the program, which they describe as "unjust" and designed to discourage asylum-seekers.

"(It) should be eliminated. It doesn't make sense for anyone," said Scalabrinian Father Pat Mur-



CNS Photo/David Agren
Adalia Reyes, an asylum-seeker from El Salvador, poses with a friend's child outside a Mass celebrated Jan. 9 in a tent camp for migrants along the U.S.-Mexico border in Matamoros. Reyes said, out of desperation, she sent her two children unaccompanied to the United States, where they were reunited with their father.

phy, director of a migrant shelter in Tijuana. "An asylum process that is fair should be started after so many years of injustice on the part of the Trump administration."

Despite the dearth of details, the prospect of an overhaul under a new U.S. administration has buoyed spirits among asylum-seekers stranded in unsafe Mexican cities the length of the U.S.-Mexico border.

"Biden is their hope," said Juan Sierra, a lay volunteer with the Diocese of Matamoros' migrant ministry.

Adding to the expectations, he said: first lady Jill Biden visited the camp in December 2019 and served them lunch.

Sierra and the local diocese — along with volunteers, mostly from the United States — have attended to the camp, which once hosted an estimated 3,000 asylum-seekers. Its population has dwindled to roughly 700 as people found other housing, applied for asylum in Mexico, returned to their countries of origin or risked the Rio Grande, according to volunteers.

Residents said in interviews that criminal groups had infiltrated the camp and charge \$500 for permission to cross the river. Migrant activists in other parts of the border report similar situations of criminal

control and desperation among asylum-seekers.

"Many people, in their desperation, go to the river and try to cross. But many drown," said Dominican Brother Obed Cuellar, director of the diocesan shelter in Piedras Negras, opposite Eagle Pass, Texas.

Brother Cuellar, two Franciscan sisters and a social worker have tried to assist asylum-seekers in Piedras Negras, but encountered resistance. The local government closed the diocesan migrant shelter early during the pandemic and later prohibited providing hot meals for takeout.

"It's an extremely difficult situation for the shelter because we're being prohibited from providing charity," he said.

For Brother Cuellar, the situation reflected a broader trend in Mexico: local populations showing scant interest in the asylum-seekers' plight and broken promises from the federal government.

"The Mexican government has not fulfilled what it promised upon receiving the migrants here. They're not giving access to doctors, health care, not giving the work or giving them poorly paid work," he said.

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has disputed

claims of migrants being mistreated, saying in December: "We have respected migrants. There have been no violations of their human rights," according to the Associated Press.

Brother Cuellar regularly checks in on the asylum-seekers, bringing food — when there are donations — and, during a cold week in January, blankets.

At a flophouse full of migrants and asylum-seekers, he fielded questions on the front patio, including one from a young Honduran woman, who asked about a "law" allowing children to be admitted, a rumor spread widely in Central America. Brother Cuellar told them everyone was being sent back, including pregnant women, some of whom "wait until they are in labor to trying crossing." He urged them to wait until there is more clarity from the Biden administration.

Brother Cuellar also checked in on a Honduran asylum-seeker, María Teresa Álvarez, who fled after gangsters killed her husband for not paying extortion and demanded her daughter be their girlfriend.

In Mexico, Álvarez was paying roughly \$200 monthly for a dimly lit room — shared with her daughter and a son, 21 — and confessed security concerns as the police in Piedras Negras have a history of extorting migrants.

"I can go back to my country," she said, "but my daughter can't."

But with the change of government in the United States, she confessed: "I'm feeling a little hopeful. (Biden) says that he's going help people going through this process."

Sandro Hernández, 21, an Afro-Honduran, traveled to Mexico in a 2019 caravan and obtained a humanitarian visa to remain in Mexico legally for one year. He expressed optimism and some exasperation: Police detained him, he said, and stole 2,000 pesos (US\$100.)

Hernández had been working at a grocery store in the city of Saltillo, 200 miles south, but quit his job and headed for the border because of the prospect of migration policy changes under Biden.

"When I heard about Biden, I headed here," Hernández said outside a noisy dive bar, where he worked as a bouncer. "I'm looking for a better future. Hopefully, I can fix my paperwork, like the U.S. president is talking about."

Employment Opportunities

Director of Human Resources

Roman Catholic Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is seeking to hire a Director of Human Resources, a full-time position based at the Chancery Building in Wheeling, West Virginia. Reporting to the Vicar General of the Diocese, the Director of Human Resources develops policy and directs and coordinates human resources activities such as employment, compensation, labor relations, benefits, training and employee services. Essential duties includes overseeing the employee onboarding system, providing data on wage and salary information, explaining policy directives to department managers, consulting with legal counsel on a regular basis regarding employment issues and immigration matters, managing records in compliance with law or governmental authorities, delivering presentations to department directors regarding human resources policies and practices, administering all benefit programs and government regulatory standards, and maintaining all records required by the Affordable Care Act, including all necessary ACA reporting requirements.

Qualification requirements include a Master's degree, 4-10 years of experience in an administrative position, expertise in federal and state employee legislation, excellent interpersonal and communication skills, ability to provide direction on personnel issues, familiarity with payroll databases and Microsoft Office suite, ability to work within a team environment and the successful candidate must adhere to the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church and possess a clear sense of a Catholic Theology of work and compensation. Applications must be submitted on or before February 4, 2021. Applications may be directed to the Human Resources Office, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, P.O. Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

Kitchen and Pantry Assistant

Catholic Charities West Virginia is seeking a full-time Kitchen and Pantry Assistant in its Neighborhood Center in Wheeling. Duties include assisting in the kitchen and in other parts of the Center as assigned by the Neighborhood Center Coordinator. The Assistant is also responsible for dishwashing, cooking, cleaning, donation weighing and recording, freezer and stock maintenance, and pantry setup. The Assistant may also be responsible for driving the company vehicle to donation sites to pick up donations. Work schedule includes early mornings, weekends, and holidays as needed.

Qualifications include: at least one year of experience in food service preferred; a valid driver's license with the ability to drive a large delivery van; ability to follow directions and supervision; ability to communicate and work with others in a team environment; and be flexible with changes in scheduling. Must be able to lift heavy packages and other items, work on his/her feet for the majority of the day, and operate various types of food service equipment. Individual hired must possess or be able to obtain a food handler's card as issued by the state of West Virginia.

Please send cover letter, resume and three references to Diana Bell, Neighborhood Center Coordinator, CCWVa, at 125 18th Street, Wheeling, WV 26003 or email to dbell@ccwva.org.

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Catholic Charities
West Virginia
Mission Moment

Catholic Charities Opens Day Shelter for Homeless

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

Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) has opened a day shelter in Wheeling for those experiencing homelessness. The space is provided rent-free through a partnership with Regional Economic Development.

“When the pandemic closed our day shelter at the Neighborhood Center in Wheeling, we knew that the people we serve were going to be in great need in the colder months,” said Mark Phillips, CCWVa Northern Regional Director.

“Thanks to this partnership with Regional Economic Development, we’re able to offer people a safe, warm place to get out of the cold, relax, and get something to eat,” said Phillips.

CCWVa client Erica Donaldson recently lost possession of the tent where she was residing.

“This is a place for me to come in and get warm and rest,” said Donaldson.

CCWVa serves two meals per day and provides snacks and coffee throughout the day at the shelter. The agency is diligent in meeting the Centers for Disease Control guidelines regarding COVID-19. A CCWVa case manager staffs the shelter to provide additional resources for those looking to improve their circumstances.

To learn more about CCWVa, visit catholiccharitieswv.org.

The Mission of Catholic Charities West Virginia: Guided by God’s love, Catholic Charities collaborates with community partners, parishes and families to provide caring and compassionate services to people in need and work toward lasting and meaningful change.



CCWVa client Erica Donaldson signs in to the warming shelter on Market Street and completes her COVID-19 screening.

Courtesy Photo

Courtesy Photo
From left: Erica Donaldson, CCWVa client; Mark Phillips, CCWVa Northern Regional Director; and Mehdi Ayari, CCWVa Case Manager; converse in front of a ping pong table at CCWVa’s homeless day center.



Solicitantes de asilo cerca de frontera sienten esperanza con Biden

Por David Agren, Catholic News Service

MATAMOROS, México (CNS) -- Idalia Reyes recuerda la desesperación que la empujó a buscar a coyotes para que llevaran a sus niños a los Estados Unidos. Reyes y sus hijos vivían en un campamento de tiendas de campaña en la rivera del Río Grande, donde aguantaban crimen, rachas de frío y plagas de insectos y serpientes.

Después de que sus niños, de 7 y 4 años, sufrieran un ataque de pústulas, buscó a los coyotes que cruzaron a los niños por el río durante la medianoche al lado de los Estados Unidos. Los niños enseguida se entregaron a los oficiales de inmigración y se reunieron con su padre, que ya residía en Estados Unidos con un hijo mayor.

"Es difícil ver sufrir a tus hijos," recordaba Reyes durante una noche lluviosa en el campamento. "Por eso decidí mandarlos a cruzar el río".

A pesar de las dificultades de seguir en el campamento y de extrañar desesperadamente a sus hijos, Reyes habló con cierta esperanza de reunirse con su familia. Citó una sencilla razón: el presidente Joe Biden, quien prometió un giro total en las políticas de inmigración y asilo de los Estados Unidos.

"Nosotros teníamos la esperanza puesta en Joe Biden porque él lo había dicho que nos iba a ayudar y nosotros queríamos que él ganara", dijo Reyes.

Reyes está todavía varada en Matamoros—al otro lado de Brownsville, Texas—como parte de los Protocolos de Protección de Migrantes, que obligan a quienes buscan asilo a esperar en México a que se escuche su caso en los tribunales de los Estados Unidos. Biden ha prometido retirar los protocolos y anunció que los nuevos participantes no se inscribirían después del 21 de enero, aunque pocas personas estaban siendo procesadas debido a las restricciones de entrada puestas en vigor durante la pandemia de COVID-19.

Los detalles de lo que va a ocurrir ahora con personas que buscan asilo todavía no están claros, y muchos aún tienen citas en cortes estadounidenses, que se han ido posponiendo repetidamente durante la pandemia.

Los católicos que trabajan con los participantes en los programas, los exhortan a seguir teniendo paciencia. Algunos están animando a la administración Biden a ir clausurando el programa, que describen como "injusto" y diseñado para desanimar a los que solicitan asilo. "Deberían eliminarlo. No tiene sentido para nadie", dijo el padre escalabriniano Pat Murphy, director de un albergue para migrantes en Tijuana. "Lo

más pronto posible sería bueno comenzar un proceso de asilo que sea justo después de tantos años de injusticia de parte de la administración de Trump".

A pesar de la escasez de detalles, la perspectiva de un cambio total bajo una nueva administración en Estados Unidos ha elevado los ánimos de los solicitantes de asilo que están varados en ciudades mexicanas inseguras a lo largo de la frontera de Estados Unidos y México. "Biden es su esperanza", dijo Juan Sierra, un voluntario laico del ministerio migratorio de la diócesis de Matamoros.

Añadiendo a las esperanzas, dijo que la primera dama Jill Biden visitó el campamento en diciembre de 2019 y les sirvió el almuerzo.

Sierra y la diócesis local — junto con voluntarios, en su mayoría de los Estados Unidos — han asistido al campamento, que en un momento albergaba a unos 3,000 solicitantes de asilo. La población ha disminuido a unos 700, a medida que las personas encontraron otros alojamientos, solicitaron asilo en México, regresaron a sus países de origen, o se arriesgaron a cruzar el Río Grande, según dicen los voluntarios.

En entrevistas, los residentes afirmaron que grupos criminales se habían infiltrado en el campamento y cobraban \$500 por un permiso para cruzar el río. Los activistas en otras partes de la frontera informan de situaciones parecidas de control mafioso y de desesperación por parte de los solicitantes de asilo.

"Mucha gente, en su desesperación, van al río y tratan de cruzarlo. Pero muchos se ahogan", dijo el hermano dominico Obed Cuéllar, director del albergue diocesano en Piedras Negras, al otro lado de Eagle Pass, Texas.

El hermano Cuéllar, dos hermanas franciscanas y un trabajador social han tratado de ayudar a los solicitantes de asilo en Piedras Negras, pero encontraron resistencia. El gobierno local cerró el albergue migrante diocesano al principio de la pandemia y más tarde prohibió que dieran comida caliente para llevar.

"Es una situación muy difícil para el albergue porque se nos está prohibiendo hacer la caridad", dijo.

Para el hermano Cuéllar, la situación refleja una corriente más amplia en México: las poblaciones locales muestran un escaso interés en el problema de los solicitantes de asilo y las promesas incumplidas del gobierno federal.

"El gobierno mexicano no cumplió con lo que prometió al recibir a los migrantes aquí. No se les da acceso al doctor, a la salud, no se les dan trabajos, o si se les dan trabajo, pues mal pagados", dijo.

El presidente mexicano Andrés Manuel López Obrador ha disputado las acusaciones de que se esté tratando mal a los migrantes, diciendo en diciembre: "Hemos respetado a los migrantes. No ha habido violaciones de sus derechos humanos", según la agencia de noticias The Associated Press.

El hermano Cuéllar va regularmente a visitar a los solicitantes de asilo, llevando comida—cuando hay donativos—y, durante una semana de frío en enero, mantas. En una casa de paso llena de migrantes y solicitantes de asilo, respondió a preguntas en el patio, incluyendo una de una joven hondureña que preguntó sobre una "ley" que permitía la admisión de niños, un rumor que se ha extendido mucho por Centroamérica. El hermano Cuéllar les dijo que todo el mundo estaba siendo enviado de regreso, incluyendo a mujeres embarazadas, algunas de las cuales "esperan hasta que están de parto para tratar de cruzar". Los urgió a esperar hasta que haya más claridad por parte de la administración Biden.

El hermano Cuéllar también fue a chequear a una solicitante de asilo hondureña, María Teresa Álvarez, que se escapó después de que pandilleros mataran a su esposo por no pagar la extorsión y exigieron que su hija fuera la novia de ellos.

En México, Álvarez estaba pagando unos \$200 mensuales por un cuarto con muy poca luz—compartido con su hija y un hijo de 21 años—y confesó que tenía preocupaciones de seguridad, ya que la policía en Piedras Negras tiene la reputación de extorsionar a los migrantes. "Yo puedo regresar a mi país" dijo, "pero mi hija no puede." Pero con el cambio de gobierno en Estados Unidos, confesó: "Estoy sintiendo un poco de esperanza. (Biden) dice que va a ayudar a la gente a pasar este proceso".

Sandro Hernández, de 21 años, afro-hondureño, viajó a México con una caravana en el 2019, y obtuvo una visa humanitaria para permanecer en México legalmente por un año. Expresó optimismo y un poco de exasperación: la policía lo detuvo, dijo, y le robó 2,000 pesos (\$100).

Hernández había estado trabajando en una bodega en la ciudad de Saltillo, a 200 millas al sur, pero dejó su trabajo y fue hacia la frontera por la perspectiva de cambios de políticas de migración bajo Biden.

"Cuando escuché sobre Biden, vine para acá", dijo Hernández en las afueras de una ruidosa cantina donde trabajaba como vigilante. "Estoy buscando un futuro mejor. Espero poder ajustar mis documentos, como está diciendo el presidente de Estados Unidos".

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Virtual Women's Retreat Will Draw Upon Story of Ruth

CHARLESTON—"Lessons from Women in the Bible and our lives today, a spiritual study and reflection using the story of Ruth" will be offered via Zoom.

Program officials said that using "The Story of Ruth: Twelve Moments in Every Woman's Life" by Joan Chittister, "we will reflect on the various stages of our lives and how we can continue our roles as women of faith in modern times."

This is a five-week Sunday afternoon program that will focus on the life stages of Loss, Change, Transformation, Aging and Fulfillment, officials said.

"We will read and reflect on Ruth's story as it relates to these stages and use her journey to understand how God wants us to be spiritual persons and caretakers of our faith in the world today," they said.

The program will be facilitated by PJ Scarr, an associate spiritual direction intern with the West Virginia Institute for Spirituality in Charleston.

In preparation for each session, participants will be asked to read selected portions of the book by Joan Chittister "paying attention to what moves heart and soul and what captures your attention."

The group then comes together to share their thoughts and reflections.

Zoom gatherings will be held on Sundays from 3-4p.m., Feb. 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21. The link to the sessions will be provided upon registration.

The cost is a \$15 offering and the cost of the book. Books may be ordered directly by the participant or by contacting Scarr via e-mail at PJLoehrScarr@gmail.com. To register, contact Scarr by e-mail by Feb. 13. Attendance will be limited.



Mount Calvary Cemetery Wheeling, W.Va.

Cemetery Spring Clean-Up

We will be conducting our Spring clean-up at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Wheeling, W.Va., weather permitting, **beginning March 1 and concluding March 15.**

All items will be removed throughout the entire cemetery (graves and mausoleums).
Items in vases on the graves will be removed too.

Please remove any items you wish to keep by February 28.

After February 28 all items will be removed.

Please do not place any items in the cemetery until March 16th.

Further information is available at

Mount Calvary Cemetery Office by calling (304) 242-0460.



Copies of the rules and regulations are available at Mount Calvary Cemetery's Main Office.

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Sign up for The Catholic Spirit Weekly Edition Via E-mail!

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

The new electronic edition was made available to also help cut the cost of printing, and is sent every Friday morning. Many have signed up, and say they prefer this new version. Anyone can sign up for the e-list by sending an e-mail to crowan@dwc.org with "The Catholic Spirit e-list" in the subject line. Please consider removing your name from the print edition. This helps to make sure that your fellow Catholics around the state who need the print edition, such as those without Internet access, and the elderly, will continue to receive it.

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Save the Date
March 16, 2021

Wheeling Hospital Off-Site COVID Clinic to Retain Shortened Saturday Hours

WHEELING — Beginning Jan. 30, Wheeling Hospital's off-site COVID Testing Center will have shortened Saturday hours. The site had previously been scheduled to close on Saturdays beginning in February, but because of the ramping up of outpatient surgeries, an increase in the need for testing was seen.

The clinic will continue COVID testing from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. Hours on Saturdays will be 9 a.m. to noon.

The drive-through center is located at the former Harmony House, next to Valley Professional Center South at the old OVMC. To reach the site, those being tested will drive up 22nd Street to behind the old Valley Professional Center South, turn left at the top of the hill and follow the signs.

Those unable to register online may also call the hotline at 304-221-3995.

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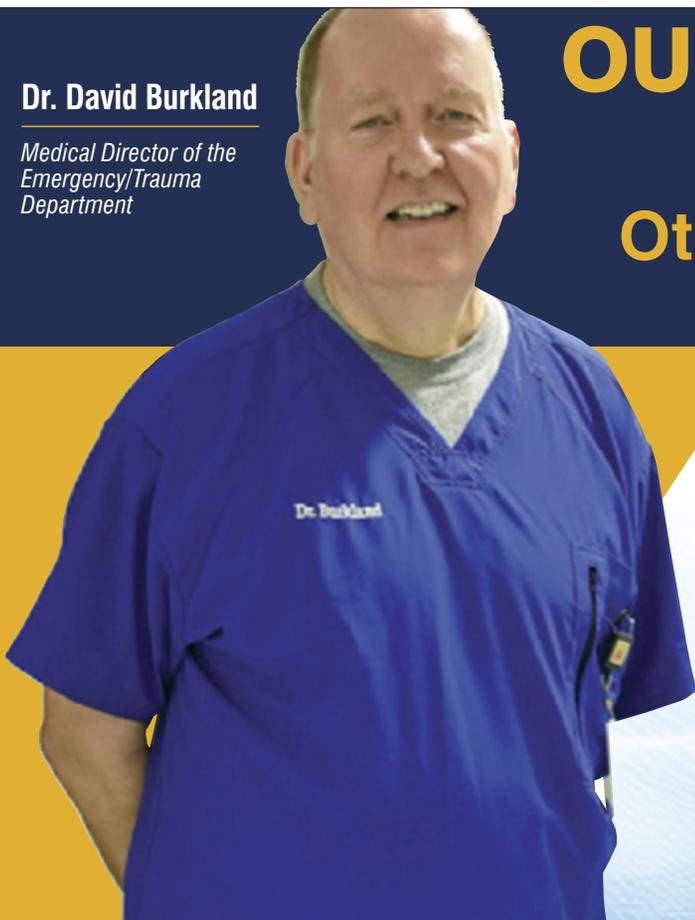
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