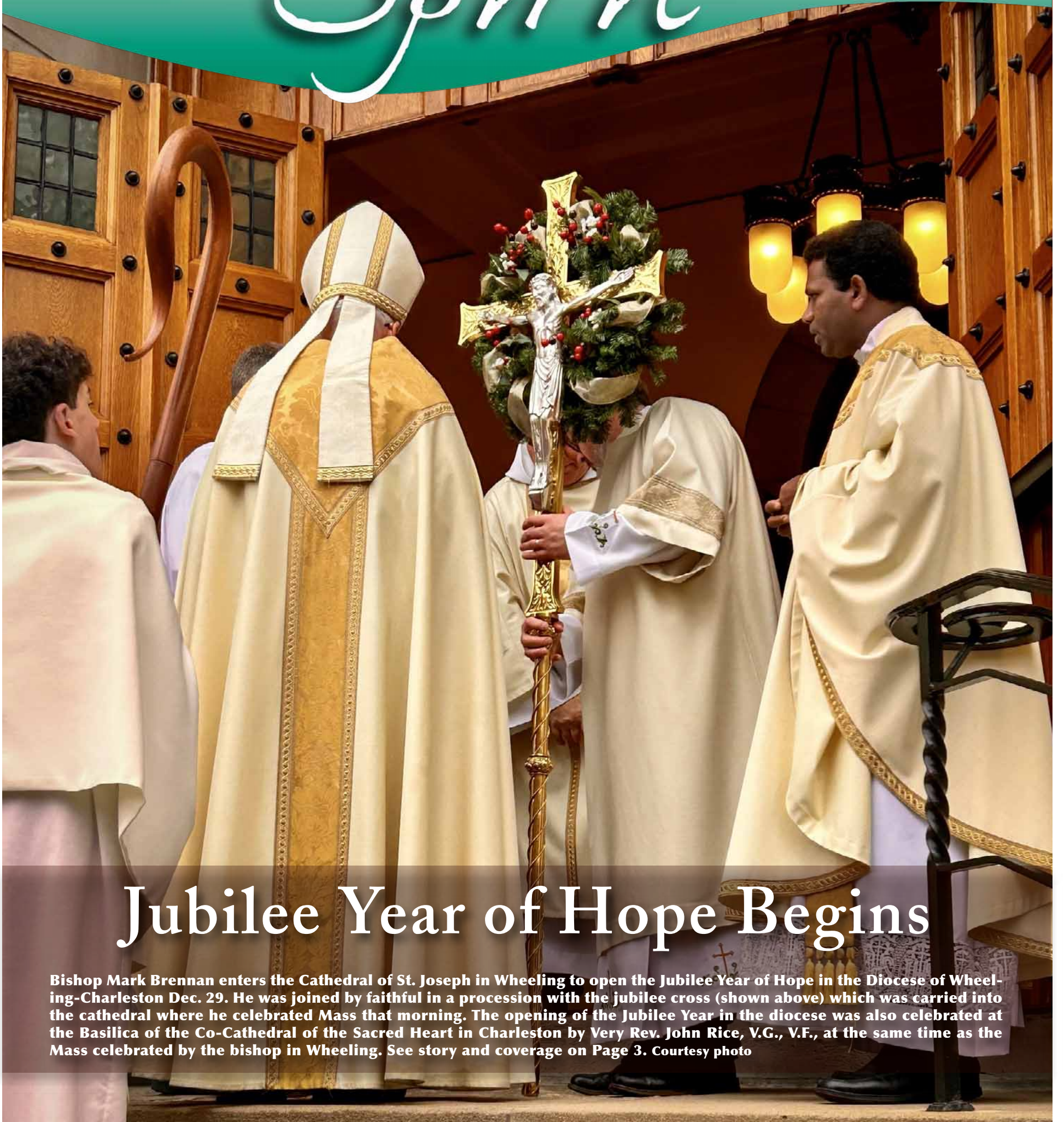


THE CATHOLIC
Spirit



Jubilee Year of Hope Begins

Bishop Mark Brennan enters the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling to open the Jubilee Year of Hope in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Dec. 29. He was joined by faithful in a procession with the jubilee cross (shown above) which was carried into the cathedral where he celebrated Mass that morning. The opening of the Jubilee Year in the diocese was also celebrated at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston by Very Rev. John Rice, V.G., V.F., at the same time as the Mass celebrated by the bishop in Wheeling. See story and coverage on Page 3. Courtesy photo

Inside: A Letter from Bishop Brennan on Instruction on the Communion Rite, Page 2

A Letter from Bishop Brennan on Instruction on the Communion Rite

January 2, 2025

On January 18, 2003, our former Bishop Bernard Schmitt implemented some norms for the celebration of the Mass, among them one regarding the posture of the faithful after the Lamb of God. Using the permission given to diocesan bishops by the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), # 43, he decreed that the posture after the Lamb of God is recited should be to stand.

As Bishop Schmitt pointed out, “the whole question of posture reminds us that the nature of the Mass is to be an act of the whole people gathered together as one. The actions and the posture of the faithful should be a visible sign of their unity in faith and spirit.” He further said that “there are times when all are called to do the same thing” – the communal dimension of liturgical expression – “and times when personal expressions are allowed.”

So, the posture during the Communion Rite, from the Our Father to the Communion Procession, reflecting the communal nature of our worship and our faith in the Lord’s True Presence in the Eucharist, should be the same for all: to stand. After receiving Holy Communion, the faithful may express their adoration and love for the Lord, whose Body and Blood they have received, in the manner they choose: to kneel or sit or to stand until all have received.

I have been asked by individuals to restore the practice of kneeling after the Lamb of God. This is the common pattern in the dioceses surrounding ours. I have discussed the matter with the Presbyteral Council (priests elected by their peers) and the Diocesan Pastoral Council (mostly members of the laity). The results were somewhat mixed; there was no clear consensus.

If you consider the Rite of Communion, the posture at every point from the Our Father through the Sign of Peace and the words, “Lord, I am not worthy,” to the moment when the faithful leave their pews to form the Communion Procession, is to stand. Indeed, the normative posture for receiving Holy Communion in the United States is to stand, although no one will be denied the Eucharist who chooses to kneel (GIRM # 160). Kneeling after the Lamb of God, while traditional, actually breaks the continuous posture of the Communion Rite, even if only briefly.

Taking into account Bishop Schmitt’s reasoning, the greater consistency of posture in the Communion Rite if all stand and the fact that West Virginia Catholics have for twenty-one years stood after the Lamb of God, I am leaving in place the decree issued by Bishop Schmitt. This is the posture our younger Catholics have always known. It also reflects in practice the measured liberty that the Latin Rite of the Church allows in some aspects of liturgical practice.

I ask you, the Catholic faithful and the priests and deacons serving in this Diocese, to receive with sincere obedience my affirmation of a good Bishop’s decision on this matter. I also urge you to see that, in the larger picture, the posture after the Lamb of God does not approach in importance the greater matters of Christ’s True Presence in the Eucharist, our eagerness to bring his Gospel to others and the charity and justice we owe our neighbor – all of which the Eucharist strengthens us do.

Jesus once warned against straining out the gnat and swallowing the camel (Matthew 23:24). We listen to the Lord when we keep in mind the distinction between things of greater importance and those of lesser. Or, as one of our sayings puts it: “Don’t make a mountain out of a mole hill.” We have much more important things to do than debate the merits of standing or kneeling after the Lamb of God. We are called to serve the Lamb who was sacrificed for us to take away our sins and rose from the dead to give us new life. That is enough to engage our thoughts and energy, our time and talents.

As a new year begins, I am praying for you. Kindly pray for me. God bless you.

Sincerely in Christ,



+Mark E. Brennan
Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston

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



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Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

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

The Catholic Spirit’s Print Schedule for 2025

There are 10 print editions in 2025. Below are the names of the issues and the publishing dates. Please note, the publishing dates may or may not be on feast days. Digital issues are published every Friday, delivered by e-mail to subscribers, and posted on thecatholicspiritwv.org.

2025 Print Issues and Dates:

Month of the Holy Family, February 7; Lent, March 7; Easter, April 18; Month of Mary, Mother of God, May 23; Month of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, June 13; Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 15; Triumph of the Cross, September 12; Month of the Rosary, October 3; Advent, November 21; Christmas, December 19

Drawing upon the Infinite Riches of Christ's Mercy

By Colleen Rowan

(Editor's note: This issue of The Catholic Spirit will cover the celebration of the opening Mass of the Jubilee Year of Hope in Wheeling. The Jan. 10 issue will feature coverage of the opening Mass in Charleston.)

"In today's Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph we have begun the Jubilee Year of Hope in our diocese," Bishop Mark Brennan said to pilgrims who filled the pews at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling. During the jubilee, the bishop said, "Drawing upon the infinite riches of Christ's mercy, the church remits or cancels the temporal punishment due to sin for those who let God's grace renew their faith and inspire them to a deeper love of God and of neighbor."

Mass opening the jubilee was celebrated simultaneously in West Virginia on the morning of Dec. 29 by Bishop Brennan at the cathedral in Wheeling and by the diocese's vicar general, Very Rev. John Rice, V.G., V.F., at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston. Both celebrations included a procession of clergy, religious, and pilgrims into the churches with a jubilee cross of significance that will remain near the altars in the sanctuaries for the entire Holy Year.

In Wheeling, Bishop Brennan reminded the congregation that Pope Francis chose the theme "Pilgrims of Hope" for the Holy Year, recognizing that people today all over the world stand in great need of hope.

The bishop continued by pointing out that the Holy Family is a model for today's families and our relationship with one another in our spiritual family, the church. The bishop sees two connections of the Jubilee Year of Hope to the Holy Family. The first is children.

"The birth of a child ... is a moment filled with hope as was Jesus's birth," Bishop Brennan said. "Parents have hopes for their children." In a larger perspective, he said, children represent the hopeful desire that humanity may continue rather than die out.

The bishop said that God stated his view about children in the first chapter of the first book of the Bible, Genesis: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it."

"Pope Saint Paul VI reaffirmed the church's teaching that contraception directly violates this divine commandment," Bishop Brennan said. "That act of contraception forcibly separates the unitive and appropriative dimensions of the sexual union of a man and woman."

The bishop continued by stressing that when a couple has serious reasons not to have a pregnancy at a particular time there are now reliable, natural means available to achieve that goal without acting contrary to God's will. He urged couples to listen to Pope John Paul II's words: "Do not be afraid. Launch out into the deep. Trust God and he will uphold you."

"We need faith to do God's will," Bishop Brennan said, "but he will strengthen us if we ask him."

Abortion, the bishop said, is a rejection of children, adding that there is an abundance of resources available to a woman who is facing an unplanned pregnancy. In many cases, he said, there are her parents, grandparents, the father's family, pastors, priests, rabbis, and pregnancy resource centers, just to name a few.

"She has more resources available to help her than does her unborn child," the

bishop said. "We should support both the woman and the child. Mary's Refuge, sponsored by St. Joseph's Parish in Martinsburg, is a home for pregnant women with nowhere else to live."

Opening its doors only a year ago, he said, the home is already full and looking to expand. He then shared the powerful words of Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta: "A child should not have to die so that adults can live as they want."

The bishop also expressed his compassion for couples who are not able to have children.

"I pray every morning for couples I know who have no children but want

them," he said. "Every once in a while, I'll be able to cross off a couple's name from that list" and add them to the prayer list for those expecting.

The bishop then spoke of the beautiful choice of adoption. "Our church has helped couples to do that, and if they do not adopt they can still promote the well-being of young people directly serving them as teachers, coaches, religious education instructors, and counselors," he said, adding that they can also interact and encourage children in their extended family such as their nieces and nephews to develop their talents and help them stay close to God.

"Children, whether they are one's own or who belong to others, embody the hope of families and the human race," he said.

The readings for the Mass (Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 and Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17) offer guidance on family life, the bishop said, calling children to obey their parents and their parents to not be harsh toward their children. He noted Sirach's admonition to support elderly parents even if their minds fail, which was an ancient way to describe dementia, the bishop said. In the gospel (Lk 2:41-52), the boy Jesus had a keen sense that God was his father, yet he submitted himself to the

See "Mercy" on Page 4



Courtesy photo
At Central Catholic High School in Wheeling, Bishop Mark Brennan begins the opening of the Jubilee Year of Hope in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Dec. 29. The bishop, clergy, religious, and pilgrims processed from the school to the Cathedral of St. Joseph for the opening Mass.



Courtesy photo
Deacon Aaron Talbot carries the jubilee cross in the procession to the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling.

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“As we enter this Jubilee Year, may we reach out with love to those who lack hope and encourage them to put their faith in Jesus Christ, the source of our joy and the one who enkindles in us the hope of eternal blessings.”

—Bishop Mark Brennan

Mercy...

Cont'd from Page 3

human authority of Joseph and Mary, the bishop said.

“His relationship with his heavenly father and his humility before his earthly parents teach important lessons to parents and children today,” Bishop Brennan said.

The second connection of the Jubilee Year of Hope to the Holy Family, the bishop sees, is that the family is the first place where the gospel is proclaimed.

“Our church teaches that parents—not the state, not a political party, not any other group—are the primary educators of their children in all things, including the faith,” Bishop Brennan said. “That faith, of course, should be the authentic faith

handed down to us by Jesus’s apostles not something tailored to meet the tremors of the times. Parents have a serious responsibility to train their children in the faith and moral teachings of our church.”

The bishop spoke of a family in his last parish in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. The family had six children and they did not have much money. The mother stayed at home to care for the younger children.

“In addition to seeing them at Sunday Mass,” the bishop said, “I sometimes saw that family bringing canned goods to our parish pantry which taught the children to help others even if they did not have a lot to give. That was good evangelizing of their children.”

From establishing and maintaining Catholic schools in which a

number of non-Catholic parents are now sending their children as they see how much good is there; to parish religious education programs, camps, and youth groups, “the church can help parents, but it cannot replace them,” Bishop Brennan said.

He urged parents to pray daily for their children and for children to pray for their parents. He urged parents to pray for the wisdom and strength to raise their children to love God and neighbor and to cherish the hope of eternal salvation.

There is still another way in which the family serves as a site for evangelization and brings hope, the bishop said. By the way they live their faith, by their charity toward others, their promotion of justice and peace, they can arouse the wonder of people who know them—relatives, neighbors, friends, and co-workers.

“A woman who volunteered at a pregnancy resource center came to know a young woman who was pregnant and abandoned by her boyfriend,” the bishop said. “The volunteer’s family took the pregnant woman in and cared for her during the pregnancy and the birth of her child. The family’s faith and love impressed that young woman. She asked to have her baby baptized, and she became a Catholic herself as she embraced the hope of eternal life for her-

self and her child.

“A Jubilee Year of Hope, then, will benefit both family members and those they can influence,” the bishop continued. “Now, we in the church are a spiritual family united to Christ and to one another by our common baptism. If in our families and in our church we let the word of Christ dwell in us richly—as St. Paul says, “a word that teaches us”—along with the sacraments that empower us to put on heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience bearing with one another and forgiving one another; if we do that, we will have every reason to hope for the fulfillment of God’s promise to pardon our sins and give us eternal life.

“Love for our neighbor should also move us to reach out to absent Catholics and the religious unaffiliated, of whom there are many in this state,” Bishop Brennan said. “For they need the hope of salvation too. St. Augustine once said, ‘Whatever our state of life we cannot live without these three dispositions, namely, to believe, to hope, and to love.’ As we enter this Jubilee Year, may we reach out with love to those who lack hope and encourage them to put their faith in Jesus Christ, the source of our joy and the one who enkindles in us the hope of eternal blessings.”



Pilgrims attend the opening Mass of the Jubilee Year of Hope at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling Dec. 29, the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Courtesy photo

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THE Cathedral of St. Joseph

New Orleans Archbishop, Others Offer Prayer and Support for Victims of Terrorist Attack

By Maria Wiering, OSV News (OSV News) — Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond of New Orleans offered prayers for victims of what he described as a “sign of utter disrespect for human life” perpetrated by a man who drove a Ford pickup truck through crowds celebrating the New Year in New Orleans’ French Quarter around 3:15 a.m. Jan. 1. At least 15 people were reportedly killed, with around 35 others injured.

The driver was killed by police after leaving the vehicle and exchanging gunfire with law enforcement, striking two officers. The FBI is investigating the attack as an act of terrorism.

“Our prayers go out to those killed and injured in this morning’s horrific attack on Bourbon Street,” said Archbishop Aymond, a New Orleans native, in a Jan. 1 statement. “This violent act is a sign of utter disrespect for human life. I join with others in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New Orleans in offering prayerful support to the victims’ families. I give thanks for the heroic duty of hundreds of law enforcement and medical personnel in the face of such evil.”

Officials identified the driver as Shamsud-Din Jabbar, and said he likely did not act alone. An ISIS flag was located on the vehicle’s trailer hitch. The FBI found explosive devices in the pickup truck and elsewhere in the French Quarter, including reportedly near the historic Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis.

In an early afternoon press conference, officials described Jabbar, 42, as “a U.S.-born citizen from Texas” and U.S. Army veteran, and that law enforcement is looking for known associates. Anyone who had interacted with Jabbar within the past 72 hours is asked to contact the FBI at the agency’s tipline, 1-800-CALL-FBI.

New Orleans Police Superintendent Anne Kirkpatrick and other city officials confirmed that the attack was deliberate and that they were focused on ensuring the safety of the city’s residents and visitors. Officials did not release information about the identities of the victims known dead.

Louisiana Attorney General Liz



An Orleans Parish coroner’s van is parked at the corner of Bourbon and Canal streets after a pickup truck drove into a large crowd in the French Quarter of New Orleans Jan. 1. A driver wrought carnage on New Orleans’ famed French Quarter early on New Year’s Day, ramming a pickup truck into a crowd and killing at least 15 people and injuring dozens before being shot to death by police, authorities said.

OSV News photo/Brian Thevenot, Reuters

Murrill said that there were “some people who are fighting for their lives right now in the hospital.”

“So I’d ask everyone to pray for them,” she said. “They need our support and they need our prayers.”

“This was a heinous act. A heinous, cowardly act,” she added. “And we will find them and we will bring them to justice.”

At the press conference, Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry announced he had issued an amended emergency declaration initially planned for tomorrow so “that we could bring all of our federal, state, and local agencies to bear in preparation for the Super Bowl and Mardi Gras.” Because of the attack, Landry said he also ordered “the mobilization of a military police company” in New Orleans.

Also speaking at the press conference, U.S. Sen. John Kennedy said, “I wish I understood better

why bad things happen to good people.”

“If I make it to heaven, I’m going to ask,” he said. “For those people who don’t believe in objective evil, all you have to do is look at what happened in our city early this morning. If this doesn’t trigger the gag reflex of every American, every fair-minded American, I’ll be very surprised.”

Kirkpatrick, whose role includes chief of police, called the action “evil” and that “New Orleans Police and all law enforcement is built, we are built, for dealing with evil.”

President Joe Biden said in a statement that he was “grateful for the brave and swift response of local law enforcement in preventing even greater death and injury.”

“I have directed my team to ensure every resource is available as federal, state, and local law en-

forcement work assiduously to get to the bottom of what happened as quickly as possible and to ensure that there is no remaining threat of any kind,” he said.

President-elect Donald Trump posted on social media that “Our hearts are with all of the innocent victims and their loved ones, including the brave officers of the New Orleans Police Department. The Trump Administration will fully support the City of New Orleans as they investigate and recover from this act of pure evil!”

The attack came ahead of the Allstate Sugar Bowl, originally scheduled Jan. 1, and the Super Bowl LIX Feb. 9, both to be played in New Orleans’ Caesars Superdome. This year’s Sugar Bowl doubles as a much-anticipated college football playoff game between the University of Notre Dame and the

See “Prayer” on Page 7

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On New Year's, Pope Calls for Real Commitment to Respect Human Life



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis poses for a photo with young people — dressed as the three kings who visited Jesus — during Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Jan. 1, the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and World Peace Day.

By Carol Glatz, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Marking the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and the start of the new year, Pope Francis renewed his appeal for a “firm commitment” to respect all human life worldwide.

“May we learn to care for every child born of a woman, above all by protecting, like Mary, the precious gift of life: life in the womb, the lives of children, the lives of the suffering, the poor, the elderly, the lonely and the dying,” he said in his homily during Mass in St. Peter's Basilica Jan. 1.

“All of us are invited to take up

the summons that flows from the maternal heart of Mary: we are called to cherish life, to care for wounded lives — so many wounded lives, so many — to restore dignity to the lives of everyone” because it is the basis for building a culture of peace, he said, highlighting that the feast also marks the World Day of Peace.

The pope's message for the World Day of Peace was published in December and is shared with heads of state around the world by Vatican ambassadors. In it, Pope Francis called on all nations to eliminate the death penalty, to divert a fixed percentage of arms

spending to a global fund to fight hunger and climate change, to cancel the international debt of developing nations and to respect human life.

After praying the Angelus in St. Peter's Square following Mass, the pope urged the leaders of countries with Christian roots and traditions “to set a good example by canceling or reducing as much as possible the debts of the poorest countries.” The Jubilee Year focuses on the “remission of debts” and it also “asks us to translate this remission on the social level, so that no person, no family, no people will be crushed by debt.”

He also expressed his “grateful appreciation to all those in many areas of conflict who are working for dialogue and negotiations. We pray that fighting will cease on every front and there will be a decisive aim for peace and reconciliation.”

While Pope Francis presided over the morning liturgy and gave the homily, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, was the main celebrant at the altar. He was joined by Cardinal Michael Czerny, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, and Archbishop Paul Gallagher, Vatican foreign minister.

The pope took a moment before the Mass to pose for a photo with more than a dozen young people dressed as the three kings who visited Jesus. In Germany, Austria and other regions of Europe, children known as “sternsingers,” or star singers, sing carols and raise money for charity between Christmas and Epiphany each year. And, after the Mass, Pope Francis spent nearly 10 minutes greeting children and handing them chocolate Santas as his aide pushed him in his wheelchair down the central aisle of the basilica.

See “Pope” on Page 8

Prayer...

Cont'd from Page 6

University of Georgia. After first announcing that the game would go on as scheduled, officials later moved the game to Jan. 2 with heightened security.

Notre Dame posted on X that its community was praying “for those injured and lost in this senseless act of violence.”

University president Father Robert Dowd, a priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross, shared a similar message on a website for Notre Dame alumni and friends and on X, where he said the university community extends “our deepest gratitude to the brave first responders who risked their lives to protect others.”

“To be in solidarity with those who suffer is to exemplify the spirit of Notre Dame,” he wrote. “Today,

we are in solidarity with all those impacted by this tragedy.”

Saying that it is “always grounded in faith, hope, and love, especially at difficult times,” the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis posted on social media the archdiocese's “Family Prayer” requesting the intercession of Mary under the title of “Our Lady of Prompt Succor.” It noted that the church “serves the entire Archdiocese and far beyond, but the French Quarter is our home and neighborhood.”

“We stand in solidarity with those who lost loved ones this morning,” it said. “We are grateful for the first responders and other healthcare and law enforcement professionals who put themselves in harm's way and who care for the injured.”

The attack occurred on the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, and the World Day of Peace.

Pope...

Cont'd from Page 7

In his homily, the pope reiterated his proposal in his peace day message for "a firm commitment to respect the dignity of human life from conception to natural death, so that each person can cherish his or her own life and all may look with hope to the future."

"Let us entrust this new year to Mary, Mother of God. May we learn, like her, to discover God's

greatness in the little things of life," he said.

God chose to act "through littleness and hiddenness" by coming into the world as a tiny helpless child born of a woman in a manger to be "one of us and, for this, he is able to save us," the pope said.

"Jesus never yielded to the temptation of performing great signs and imposing himself on others, as the devil had suggested," he said. Instead, "by the frailty of

his humanity and his concern for the weak and vulnerable, Jesus shows us the face of God," who is always near, compassionate and merciful "to those suffering in body and spirit."

Mary reminds the faithful "that Jesus came in the flesh, and that we encounter him above all in our daily life, in our own frail humanity and that of all those whom we encounter each day," the pope said.

"If he, who is the Son of God, became so small as to be held in a mother's arms, cared for and

nursed, this means that today, too, he comes among us in all those who need similar care: in every sister and brother we meet, in everyone who needs our attention and tender care," he said.

The pope asked the faithful to entrust to Mary "this new Jubilee Year. Let us entrust to her our questions, our worries, our sufferings, our joys and all the concerns that we bear in our hearts" and to "entrust to her the whole world, so that hope may be reborn and peace may finally spring up for all the peoples of the earth."



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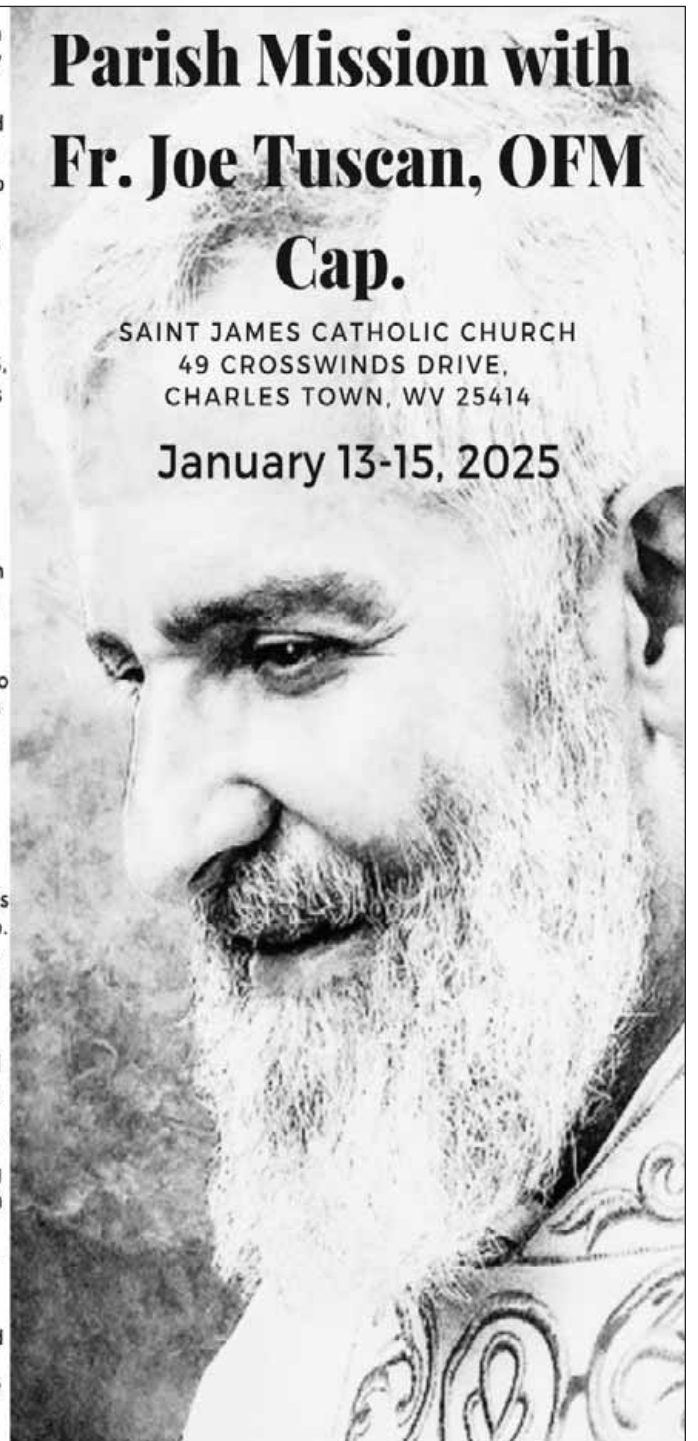
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Fr. Joseph was born in Columbus, OH, in 1967 and was raised in Canton, OH. He earned his Bachelor's degree in 1989 from Borromeo College Seminary. In 1990, he professed his first vows as a Capuchin Franciscan friar. Making his Perpetual vows in 1993, he went on to earn his Master's degree in theology in 1995 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1997. His first assignment after ordination was in Papua New Guinea in the South Pacific where he served for four years. Returning to the US in 2001, he has ministered in various capacities as a parochial vicar and pastor, as well as a military and hospital chaplain; he also served in our Province's Custody of Puerto Rico. Our brother currently serves as the national director of the Archconfraternity of Christian Mothers and in full-time preaching ministry for the Capuchin Province of St. Augustine, offering retreats and reflection days for parishes, Religious and Priests. Fr. Joseph can be viewed on several YouTube channels and has appeared on Catholic Radio and TV outlet

Parish Mission with Fr. Joe Tuscan, OFM Cap.

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World Marriage Day Event to be Celebrated at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Wheeling



Courtesy photo

St. Vincent de Paul Parish's World Marriage Day Committee members are, from left: John Dudzik, Dorothy Dudzik, Marilyn Delbrugge, Denny Beiter, Brenda Beiter, Susie Newmeyer, and Paul Newmeyer. Committee members absent from the photo are Susie Koval and Matt Koval.

February 8 Event Open to Area Catholic Parishioners

WHEELING — World Marriage Day will be celebrated at St. Vincent de Paul Church and Marist Centre in Wheeling on Saturday, Feb. 8. The event is open to members of St. Vincent de Paul's and other area Catholic parishes for an afternoon of celebrating your love for your spouse and thankfulness for the blessings received in the Sacrament of Marriage.

The program will begin at Mass with the congregation at 5 p.m. in the St. Vincent de Paul Church on Marshall Avenue in Elm Grove. Following Mass, a wine/coffee/tea and cheese social for participating couples, and an opportunity to renew their marriage vows as a group, will precede a catered meal and a brief witness by a couple as to their experience in the Sacrament of Marriage.

The evening will conclude with coffee and wedding cake.

Couples unable to participate in the Mass can meet directly in the adjacent Marist Centre at 6 p.m. Special recognition will be made to the most recently married couple and the couple who has been married the longest. Couples are encouraged to

bring and display their wedding pictures and albums for all to enjoy.

Reservations will be accepted until Jan. 31. The cost for the evening is \$60 per couple.

For reservations or additional information, please call Dennis or Brenda Beiter at (304) 238-4904, or John or Dorothy Dudzik at (304) 243-1104.

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10 Resolutions to Kick-Start Your Year

By Deacon Greg Kandra

(OSV News) — For most of us, New Year's Day means both celebrating what's ahead and learning from the year that's ending. For Catholics, it's seeing the past year not just through the rearview mirror, but refracted through the lens of faith. A new year offers us more than a fresh start. It can be an opportunity for conversion of heart — to take what we have experienced and resolve to grow more deeply as people of faith.

Losing weight and exercising are great — good luck with that diet! — but how about exercising our spiritual muscles?

This is a moment to resolve to get our faith in shape — to live more prayerfully, more gratefully, more thoughtfully, more hopefully.

How can we do that? Here are a few ideas and suggestions to chart a new path for the coming 12 months. You don't have to tackle them all; try one or two. You might be surprised at what happens. Our God is the God of astonishment and miracles.

Ready? Here we go.

1. Prayer and gratitude

Hit the ground running — and start by hitting your knees. You can kickstart your daily prayer life by resolving to begin and end every day in prayer. Try starting this new year with a prayer comprised of two simple words: "Thank you." Find a moment or two to offer a quiet prayer of gratitude. Count your blessings. Find reason to hope. You'll be amazed at how it can change your perspective — and reset your day.

Want to give your renewed prayer life a little "oomph"? Pick a patron saint for the new year. Dedicate each day to your patron. Read up on your saint. Pray with him or her. Ask for guidance, intercession or just help. You might find you enjoy the company!

2. Adoration

"O come let us adore him." You don't have to sing those words just at Christmas or only on Sundays. Resolve to carve out some time during the week to drop by church and have a talk with Jesus. If your parish has adoration and Benediction, try to work that into your schedule. Simply sit in church and spend some spare time with

God. You'll be glad you did.

3. Pray the rosary

Grab those beads. Maybe they've been sitting in your dresser drawer unused. Maybe you only grab them as a last resort, when you have run out of words to pray and you're desperate for some divine intervention. Want to start a new habit for the new year? Resolve to pray the rosary — and not just when you need to ask God for a really big favor. Build this into your prayer life.

Intimidated? Start small. Begin with just one bead, then try a decade, then two. Soon enough, you're praying the rosary like a pro. Tuck it in your pocket or purse before you head out the door. Finger the beads and whisper a prayer while waiting for a bus, riding to work or walking the dog. Use your imagination. You can turn almost anything into an opportunity to hail Mary. It can help immeasurably to give you a sense of peace and give your day an added dose of grace. Who doesn't want that?

4. Pray with others

Those first three ideas up above? You don't have to do them alone. Resolve to look for opportunities to pray together, in person, even if it's just for a minute or two at the end of the day or around the table at mealtime. You might even seek out parish prayer groups — which brings me to the next idea.

5. Get involved

Stop avoiding that parish group that's been asking you to join! Hey, "family" is more than just the people you live with. It's also the people around you in the pews every Sunday. Resolve to get to know some of the people you only see in the parking lot on Sunday. Resolve to learn what your parish is doing to reach out to the sick, the elderly, the hungry or the poor. Find opportunities to give and give back.

6. Confession

Get a few things off your chest. When was the last time you went to confession? (Go ahead. Think about it. I'll wait.) The catechism tells us we're only required to go to confession once a year (No. 1457), but why be stingy about wanting all that grace? Let's call this "committing to the Three R's": Resolve to be reconciled

regularly. Aim for once a month. If that's too challenging (or daunting), try every other month — or every six months. Build up a routine. Make it a Saturday ritual. Find a church, go to confession, take yourself out to lunch. (After making a good confession, you just may find yourself wanting to give the waitress a bigger tip. It's a win/win.)

7. Fasting and abstinence

Try life in the fasting lane. During Lent, I like to tell people, "Abstinence makes the heart grow fonder." But why limit it only to Lent? The ancient Catholic discipline of fasting and abstinence can do more than just help you drop a pound or two; it can, in a very real and tangible way, become a form of prayer. It reminds us of the poor, the hungry, the suffering around us. And it can connect us powerfully to all of those who have had to go without.

I know, I know, sacrificing a meal or two one day a week or giving up meat or a favorite food on Friday sounds so "pre-Vatican II." But it's actually very contemporary. After lifting restrictions on "no meat on Friday," the church has been encouraging some sort of personal sacrifice on Fridays since 1966.

The fact is skipping a meal may be the easiest thing to do. The U.S. Catholic bishops offered some other ideas in the mid-60s: "It would bring great glory to God and good to souls if Fridays found our people doing volunteer work in hospitals, visiting the sick, serving the needs of the aged and the lonely, instructing the young in the faith, participating as Christians in community affairs, and meeting our obligations to our families, our friends, our neighbors, and our community, including our parishes, with a special zeal born of the desire to add the merit of penance to the other virtues exercised in good works born of living faith."

That brings me to some advice that I often mention when I preach on Ash Wednesday.

8. Works of mercy

Remember that "giving up" begins with "giving." You've heard about them, you've read about them, now you can resolve to live them: I'm talking about the corporal works of mercy. (Go ahead and Google them if you need a

See "Resolutions" on Page 12



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Resolutions...

Cont'd from Page 11

refresher.) In a nutshell, these involve acts of generosity and sacrifice that can bring abundant amounts of grace. And it all begins with giving — giving time, giving attention, giving a prayer to someone in need.

For starters, resolve to look for ways to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, visit the sick and shelter the homeless. Send a card to someone who is lonely. Offer a Mass for someone who has died. Donate to shelters, pantries, charities. Often, the most precious gift of all is simply the gift of time. Spend an hour with someone who is hurting or needs help. Buy flowers for a lonely neighbor to let them know they are loved and remembered. Help people know that they have dignity. They matter. It can be a beautiful way of carrying out the second greatest commandment: loving your neighbor as yourself.

9. Pilgrimage

Take a hike. That's another way of saying pack a bag and go on that pilgrimage you've been meaning to take. Ever wanted to visit Lourdes, Fatima or Rome? How about a nearby basilica or monastery? It doesn't have to be expensive, and you don't necessarily have to go far. Visit a neighboring diocese and check out the cathedral. Take a weekend and go on retreat to an abbey or a convent. Spend some time living somewhere else and walking in the footsteps of our holy forebears. See the world with new eyes, and hear its sounds with new ears!

10. Reflect

If you do nothing else, just do this: remember. Resolve to remember what the last year was like. In your remembrance, remember patience, kindness, mercy. Remember lessons learned, hope restored. We Catholics live as people who every week hear again the quiet, transformative command: "Do this in memory of me." Remembering is central to our faith. So do this: remember. Take nothing for granted. Reflect on it all. Pass it on. Share what you learned with your children, your grandchildren. You won't regret it.

Most of all: Resolve to have a truly blessed new year — one that is new, focused on growing, learning, hoping. Every page of the calendar is blank. By the grace of God, every day holds promise and possibility. Recall the stirring and hope-filled words from Revelation: "Behold, I make all things new" (21:5).

Isn't that what we all really want? May we all resolve to trust, to pray and to collaborate with God to make it so!

(Deacon Greg Kandra is the creator of The Deacons Bench blog TheDeaconsBench.com and is the author of "The Busy Person's Guide to an Extraordinary Life," Word Among Us Press.)

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En Año Nuevo, el Papa pide un compromiso firme para respetar la vida humana

Por Carol Glatz, Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — Con motivo de la fiesta de María, Madre de Dios, y del inicio del nuevo año, el Papa Francisco renovó su llamamiento a un "compromiso firme" para respetar toda vida humana en el mundo.

"Que aprendamos a cuidar de toda criatura nacida de una mujer, sobre todo protegiendo el don precioso de la vida, como lo hizo María: la vida en el vientre materno, la vida de los niños, la de aquellos que sufren, la vida de los pobres, la vida de los ancianos, la de quienes están solos, la de los moribundos", dijo el Santo Padre en su homilía durante la Misa en la Basílica de San Pedro el 1 de enero.

"Todos estamos llamados a aceptar esta invitación que brota del corazón materno de María: proteger la vida, hacernos cargo de la vida herida -- hay tanta vida herida --, dignificar la vida de cada 'nacido de mujer' porque es la base para construir una cultura de paz", dijo, destacando que la fiesta marca también la Jornada Mundial de la Paz.

El mensaje del Papa para la Jornada Mundial de la Paz

se publicó en diciembre y los embajadores del Vaticano lo transmiten a los jefes de Estado de todo el mundo. En él, el Papa Francisco pide a todas las naciones que eliminen la pena de muerte, que destinen un porcentaje fijo del gasto en armamento a un fondo mundial para luchar contra el hambre y el cambio climático, que cancelen la deuda internacional de las naciones en desarrollo y que respeten la vida humana.

Tras rezar el Ángelus en la Plaza de San Pedro después de la Misa, el Papa instó a los líderes de los países con raíces y tradiciones cristianas "a dar buen ejemplo cancelando o reduciendo en la medida de lo posible las deudas de los países más pobres". El Año Jubilar se centra en "saldar las deudas" y también nos pide que traduzcamos este perdón "a nivel social, para que ninguna persona, ninguna familia, ningún pueblo sea aplastado por las deudas".

También expresó su "agradecimiento a todos aquellos que en muchas zonas de conflicto trabajan por el diálogo y las negociaciones. Rezamos para que

cesen los combates en todos los frentes y se apueste decididamente por la paz y la reconciliación".

Mientras que el Papa Francisco presidió la liturgia de la mañana y pronunció la homilía, el cardenal Pietro Parolin, secretario de estado del Vaticano, fue el celebrante principal en el altar. Le acompañaron el cardenal Michael Czerny, prefecto del Dicasterio para el Servicio del Desarrollo Humano Integral, y el arzobispo Paul Gallagher, ministro de Asuntos Exteriores del Vaticano.

El Papa se tomó un momento antes de la Misa para posar para una foto con más de una docena de jóvenes vestidos como los tres reyes que visitaron a Jesús. En Alemania, Austria y otras regiones de Europa, los niños conocidos como "sternsingers", o cantantes estrellita, cantan villancicos y recaudan fondos para obras benéficas entre Navidad y la Epifanía cada año.

Y, después de la misa, el Papa Francisco dedicó casi 10 minutos a saludar a los niños y entregarles Papás Noel de chocolate mientras su ayudante le empujaba en su silla de ruedas por el pasillo central de la basílica.

En su homilía, el Papa reiteró su propuesta en su mensaje del día de la paz para que exista "un compromiso firme para promover el respeto de la dignidad de la vida humana, desde la concepción hasta la muerte natural, para que toda persona pueda amar la propia vida y mirar al futuro con esperanza".

"Confiémosle entonces este nuevo año que comienza a María, Madre de Dios, para que también nosotros aprendamos como Ella a hallar la grandeza de Dios en la pequeñez de la vida", dijo.

Dios eligió actuar "a través de la pequeñez y el ocultamiento" al venir al mundo como un pequeño niño indefenso nacido de una mujer en un pesebre para ser "uno de nosotros y, precisamente por eso Él puede salvarnos", dijo el Papa.

"Él no cederá nunca al esplendor del poder divino para realizar grandes signos e imponerse sobre los demás como le había sugerido el diablo", dijo. En cambio, "Jesús nos muestra a Dios por medio de su humanidad frágil, que se hace cargo de los frágiles", que siempre está cerca, compa-

sivo y misericordioso "por los sufrimientos del cuerpo y del espíritu".

María recuerda a los fieles "que Jesús viene en la carne y, por eso, el lugar privilegiado donde es posible encontrarlo es sobre todo en nuestra vida, en nuestra humanidad frágil, en la de quienes pasan a nuestro lado cada día", dijo el Papa.

"Si Él, que es el Hijo de Dios, se hizo tan pequeño como para ser sostenido en los brazos de una madre, cuidado y amamantado, esto significa que también hoy viene entre nosotros en todos aquellos que necesitan cuidados similares: en cada hermana y hermano que encontramos, en todos los que necesitan nuestra atención y tierno cuidado", dijo.

El Papa pidió a los fieles que encomienden a María "este nuevo año jubilar, entreguémosle a ella los interrogantes, las preocupaciones, los sufrimientos, las alegrías y todo lo que llevamos en el corazón", añadiendo "confiémosle a ella el mundo entero, para que renazca la esperanza, para que finalmente florezca la paz en todos los pueblos de la tierra".

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.

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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 Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, al 304.559.6742.

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

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For more information, contact the Director, Gerri Wright at (304) 342-0507.

St. John XXIII Pastoral Center Job Opening – Guest Services Coordinator

The Guest Services Coordinator at St. John XXIII Pastoral Center, as a member of Diocesan Services, is committed to advancing the mission of Jesus Christ and offering hospitality to our guests.

The Guest Services Coordinator is responsible for working with guests to plan and book lodging and events. Some of the required qualifications include multi-tasker, problem solver & self-starter, detail oriented, excellent written & verbal skills, computer knowledge, team player and welcoming & respectful to all faith & secular guests. Additionally, the position entails the ability to perform the physical requirements of kitchen aide & housekeeper.

Works evenings, weekends and holidays/holydays as needed. Works in kitchen & housekeeping when needed.

For more information and to schedule an interview, contact the Director, Gerri Wright at (304) 342-0507 or gwright@dwc.org

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