



A Letter from Bishop Brennan

Dear Faithful of the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese,

We have been living through most unusual and trying times. I hope that your faith in God has helped you to stay calm amidst the storms that rage around us.

As I approach the first anniversary of my installation as your bishop (August 22), let me address a few matters of mutual concern: the Bishop Bransfield scandal; the Coronavirus pandemic; and the issue of racism.

Regarding Bishop Bransfield, neither the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States (the Pope's ambassador) nor I have heard anything in over five months from the Holy See in Rome on the plan of amends I submitted for Bishop Bransfield. The Coronavirus pandemic struck Italy hard, so that may account for the delay. Please pray that this matter may soon be resolved.

With respect to the Coronavirus pandemic here, I thank you, our lay faithful and clergy, for the cooperation you have shown in observing the protective measures we have adopted so that we may have public liturgies in our parishes. I am especially grateful to the volunteers and staff who have been sanitizing our churches and serving as ushers. I would encourage young adults to step up and help us, so that the burden does not fall only on older folks. I also compliment you on the beautiful face masks many of you wear!

See "Letter" on Page 3

Diocese's Catholic Schools Offer 'Safest Five-Day a Week in School Plan'

By Colleen Rowan

WHEELING—The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Catholic schools are committed to getting their students back in the classroom for the 2020-2021 school year.

"We will be going back to the safest five-day a week in school plan," Catholic Schools Superintendent Mary Ann Deschaine assured parents in a July 27 letter.

Families, she said, will know their individual

school plans for the fall by Aug. 3, and details will be given directly to all families by the principal.

Plans may vary slightly from school to school based on regional guidance, Deschaine said. "If that safest way means our students need to wear masks and stay distanced throughout the building, we are up to the task," she said.

The diocese's six high schools and 18 elementary and grade schools across the state are finalizing
See "Schools" on Page 2



Come Holy Spirit

Sam Santilli Photo

Bishop Mark Brennan administers the Sacrament of Confirmation to a young man at Immaculate Conception Parish in Fairmont July 17. The bishop will be traveling to a number of parishes throughout August for confirmations. Turn to Page 7 of this issue for a complete list of confirmations.

INSIDE:

COVID Pandemic Should Raise Questions about Faith, Pope Says, Page 5

Wheeling University Holds Graduation, Page 6

Good Shepherd Nursing Home Administrator Offers Good News in Coronavirus Update

WHEELING—Good Shepherd Nursing Home Administrator Donald R. Kirsch announced good news after last week's coronavirus testing.

"The tests for all Good Shepherd residents and staff are negative for COVID-19," he said July 27. "We

begin the second week of testing today."

If all tests remain negative, Good Shepherd will be permitted to reopen its building to family member visits. "If this occurs, we will pick a date to reopen and begin making phone calls

to families to set up appointments to visit their loved ones," he said.

"We plan to be open for seven days of visitation and then closed for seven days so that we can monitor residents more closely during the week of no visitation," he said. "We will repeat this pattern as long as everyone remains healthy."

He thanked family members for their understanding and promised to continue to keep them updated. He also complimented staff for using proper infection control procedures, the result of which is keeping Good

Shepherd residents safe.

Good Shepherd Nursing Home is part of a continuum of senior living options offered by the non-profit Welty Corporation to deliver the features that discerning seniors need and want. In addition to Good Shepherd, the Welty Corporation operates the Welty Home, which consists of 52 assisted living suites. For seniors who can live independently, Welty offers the Welty Apartments, Braddock Apartments and Welty TownHomes. For information call (304) 242-1093 or visit www.weltyhome.org.

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 report. 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.

To report to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston: The Diocese encourages reporting to the appropriate civil authorities first and foremost as well as 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 designees at 304-233-0880. The proper extensions are: Sr. Ellen F. Dunn, O.P., ext. 264; Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Tim Bishop, ext. 353. You may also fill out a confidential "Complaint Form for Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor" by picking one up at your local parish or requesting one in the mail from Safe Environment Coordinator, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, P.O. Box 230, Wheeling, WV 26003. The Complaint Form also is available for download on the diocese's web site www.dwc.org, click Diocese on the menu bar, then click Offices, click Safe Environment and click "Download Files and Forms" section. It is listed as "Complaint Form." To report to the Diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator: Dr. Patricia M. Bailey: 304-242-698

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

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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Schools...

Cont'd from Page 1

their individual amended opening plan with county health departments to enable face-to-face learning. Throughout the last four months, Deschaine said, the diocese's Catholic Schools office has been focused on recommendations and guidelines from worldwide, federal, state, and local experts. "Like our parishes, our schools' plans reflect that," she said.

In her letter, Deschaine notes that the American Academy of Pediatrics "strongly" supports students returning to the school building. A recently released statement from the AAP states, "All policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school."

Deschaine said this is in line with the position of the diocese's Catholic Schools office. "Further, because we are Christ-centered, be reassured every choice we make, and plans we develop are prayerfully made with our students' success and well-being in mind," she said. "We are a strong Christian family guided by our faith."

The start of the school year in West Virginia was pushed back to Sept. 8 in an emergency order issued earlier this month by Gov. Jim Justice in response to an increase of COVID-19 cases in the state.

In her letter, Deschaine said the AAP recommends that Catholic schools' plans be "flexible and nimble."

"We will constantly be re-evaluating the health and safety measures in our buildings," she said. "We will also be able to turn on a dime and adapt to a remote learning environment if we must."

Read more about the upcoming academic year for the diocese's Catholic schools in the Aug. 7 edition of *The Catholic Spirit*.

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Letter...

Cont'd from Page 3

As far as we can determine, our protective measures have been effective. In the few cases in which a person at Mass later tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, the respective Health Departments and parishioners were informed and persons in close contact with the infected parishioner were quarantined. As of this writing, contact tracing has not indicated that anyone was infected at Mass. We must continue to observe our safety protocols when worshipping in church. This is no time to give in to “pandemic fatigue” and relax our vigilance.

If you are healthy, go to Mass to hear God’s Word with your brothers and sisters in the faith and receive the Lord Jesus in the Eucharist. But if you fear that going to Mass could be dangerous to you or others, remember that the obligation to go to Sunday Mass remains suspended.

We gave permission to our parishes to open up to some events other than liturgies. We must proceed cautiously in this area, since the number of positive cases in our State has been rising. Small meetings – for example, a Pastoral or Finance Council meeting, a small RCIA gathering – may be held while observing protective measures and without serving food and drink. Unfortunately, larger gatherings – parish dinners, funeral luncheons, Bingo – we cannot safely do at this time. They can easily become the setting for spreading the virus. We must keep the health and safety of others in mind. That is called “love of neighbor.”

Are there any spiritual benefits in this pandemic? I have asked Confirmation candidates how they have lived their faith during the pandemic. They said they prayed, read Scripture, watched live-streamed Masses and tried to help around the house more. Those are true benefits! Being deprived of the Eucharist can also increase our desire for the sacrament, as fasting increases our desire for food. And aren’t we more aware of how social we are by nature? We need one another and want to be together. I pray that normal gatherings may soon be possible.

With respect to racism, the months after the death of Mr. George Floyd in Minneapolis have seen great social unrest and protests over racism. While the legal segregation I saw as a boy has been overcome, other forms of racism still exist. Why is it still harder for Black men and women with the same educational background and experience as white persons to get a job for which they apply? Why have city neighborhoods and schools been re-segregated a half century after desegregation rulings and open housing laws? Even apart from individual’s intentions, racism crawls under the surface of institutions and social life.

West Virginia has a much smaller Black population than surrounding States and I am no expert on the situation here. Reports say protests in West Virginia after Mr. Floyd’s death were peaceful. People have the right and the obligation to work for justice. Violence, however, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, assaults the pursuit of justice while non-violent methods over time bring better results.

It is important that all of us recognize that our attitude towards people affects how we relate to them. The cry “Black Lives Matter” is a cry from the heart of a people who have suffered in this country for generations and will not sit idly by. (This is distinct from the organization of the same name, whose positions on some issues contradict Catholic belief and teaching.) As followers of Jesus Christ, who suffered, died and rose from the dead for all people, regardless of race or origin, we must examine ourselves honestly about how we regard people of different races and ethnic groups. Change begins in the mind and heart; otherwise, any changes in behavior will only be superficial and likely will evaporate like the morning mist.

Along with self-examination, studying the issues can help us understand why protests and even violence have broken out. I encourage you to read *Open Wide Our Hearts*, the US Bishops’ Pastoral Letter on Racism from November, 2018, that sees racism in a broad context that includes immigrants and Native Americans as well as African Americans. (Go to usccb.org.) Where possible, dialogue with members of other races and ethnic groups can prove illuminating and foster mutual understanding. I encourage parishes to look into this possibility.

Does harping on “white guilt” produce appropriate self-examination and change in white people? I honestly think it is more likely to provoke resentment than openness to change. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., recognized that some white people were oppressed, just as were Blacks, which is why he included poor Southern whites in his Poor People’s Campaign. But most white people have benefitted just from being white and it is fair to ask them to recognize this. What is unfair is to attribute personal moral guilt to them for a situation which they inherited. Judging members of any race by derogatory stereotypes is wrong. Jesus’ words, Judge not lest you be judged, apply here. Let us face social injustices squarely but keep our focus on the issues and not attack persons. The essential thing is to form alliances to overcome injustices and build a more humane society.

As we look into the future, we do not know how long we will have to contend with the Coronavirus pandemic nor by what means or how long it will take to bleach out the stains of racism from our national character. But, with trust in God, who blesses His people with wisdom and courage, we must resolve to follow the Lord Jesus, who, living during a pandemic of sin, nonetheless, anointed with the Holy Spirit and power, went about doing good and healing those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him [Acts of the Apostles 10:38]. We have also been anointed with the Holy Spirit and power, the power of faith in Christ. With confidence in God’s grace, we can endure the physical evil of a terrible disease and make genuine progress in erasing, as far as possible, the moral evil of racism. With God all things are possible [Matthew 19:26].

Yours in Christ,

Mark E. Brennan

+Mark E. Brennan
Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston

Beatification of Father McGivney to Take Place Oct. 31 in Hartford, Conn.

By Catholic News Service

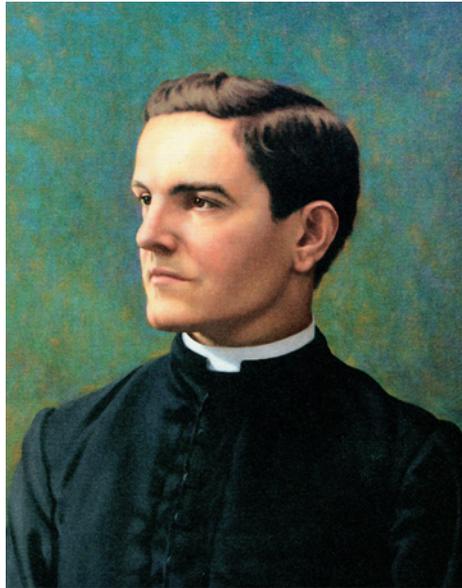
HARTFORD, Conn. (CNS) — Father Michael McGivney, the founder of the Knights of Columbus, will be beatified during a special Mass Oct. 31 at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford.

On May 27, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis, who met with the board of directors of the Knights of Columbus in February, had signed the decree recognizing a miracle through the intercession of Father McGivney, clearing the way for his beatification. Once he is beatified, he will be given the title “Blessed.”

Details of the beatification ceremony have not been released, including what COVID-19 restrictions might still be in place in the fall, such as limiting congregation size, social distancing and the wearing of facial coverings. The Vatican Congregation for Saints’ Causes announced the date for the beatification July 20.

The miracle recognized by the Vatican occurred in 2015 and involved a U.S. baby, still in utero, with a life-threatening condition that, under most circumstances, could have led to an abortion.

That baby, Mikey Schachle, is now 5. His parents, Dan and Michelle Schachle, of Dickson, Tennessee, prayed to Father McGivney to intercede with God to save their son, still in his mother’s womb, who was given no hope of surviving a life-threatening case of fetal hydrops. Father McGivney (1852-1890), the son of Irish immigrants, was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, and was ordained a priest in 1877 for what is now the Archdiocese of Hartford. He founded the



CNS file photo

The beatification ceremony for Father Michael McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus, will be celebrated Oct. 31, 2020, in the Archdiocese of Hartford, Conn. Father McGivney is pictured in an undated portrait. On May 27 the Vatican announced Pope Francis had approved a miracle attributed to the priest’s intercession, clearing the way for his beatification.

Knights of Columbus at St. Mary’s Parish in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1882.

He originally started the Knights as a service organization to help widows and orphans. At the time, Father McGivney was an assistant pastor at St. Mary’s Parish. He is buried in New Haven.

The fraternal order for Catholic men has become the largest lay Catholic organization in the world with 2 million members and sponsors a wide range of educational, charitable and religious activities.

Father McGivney, who will be the first American parish priest to be beatified and has long been a hero of working-class Catholics, can be viewed as a martyr of a pandemic. When he died of pneumonia complications at age 38 in 1890, it was during an outbreak of influenza known as the Russian flu in Thomaston, Connecticut. Some recent evidence, according to the Knights, indicates the outbreak may have been the result of a coronavirus.

“Father McGivney has inspired generations of Catholic men to roll up their sleeves and put their faith into action,” Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson said. “He was decades ahead of his time in giving the laity an important role within the church. Today, his spirit continues to shape the extraordinary charitable work of Knights as they continue to serve those on the margins of society as he served widows and orphans in the 1880s.”

He added, “Father McGivney also remains an important role model for parish priests around the world and left us a transformative legacy of effective cooperation between the laity and clergy.”

After the announcement that the priest would be beatified, Anderson told Catholic News Service in an interview: “We’ve been praying for years for this to occur, and finally this day has arrived.”

The initial work on his sainthood cause began in 1982 on the Knights’ centenary. His cause was formally opened in Hartford in 1997, and he was given the title “servant of God.” In March 2008, the Catholic Church recognized the priest heroically lived the Christian virtues, so he was given the title “venerable.”

Generally, two miracles attributed to the candidate’s intercession are required for sainthood — one for beatification and the second for canonization.

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COVID Pandemic Should Raise Questions about Faith, Pope Says

By Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Besides the immediate considerations of trying to stay healthy, to mourn the dead and protect others, the coronavirus pandemic should be prompting Christians to reflect on their faith, Pope Francis wrote.

“The pandemic poses fundamental questions about happiness in our lives and about the treasure of our Christian faith,” he wrote in the preface to a short book of initial theological reflections prompted by COVID-19 and its global impact.

Originally published in German with the title, “Being Christians in the Coronavirus Crisis,” the book

was curated by Cardinal Walter Kasper and Pallottine Father George Augustin, director of the Cardinal Walter Kasper Institute for Ecumenism, Theology, and Spirituality.

The Italian edition, titled “Communion and Hope,” was published in late July by the Vatican publishing house. In addition to the preface by Pope Francis and essays by Cardinal Kasper and Father Augustin, the book includes essays by: U.S. Paulist Father Mark-David Janus, who was struck by the virus; the Czech theologian Father Tomas Halik; Swiss Cardinal Kurt Koch, who succeeded Cardinal Kasper as president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; and Archbishop Bruno Forte of Chieti-

Vasto, Italy.

“This crisis represents an alarm that leads to a reflection on where we sink the deepest roots that support all of us in a storm,” the pope wrote. “It reminds us that we have forgotten and neglected some of the important things in life and makes us reflect on what is truly important and necessary and what is less important or only apparently so.”

While the initial period of lockdown was “a painful time of eucharistic fasting” for many Catholics,

it also showed them that Christ is present, as he promised, where two or three gather in his name, the pope said.

As the pandemic continues, he said, Christians should turn more resolutely to God, “our help and our aim,” and should listen more carefully to the cry of the poor and of the earth.

Theological reflection on the pandemic and the experience of the past months, he wrote, should give rise to “new hope and new solidarity.”

Caritas Warns of Rise in Human Trafficking amid Pandemic

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — As governments and world leaders struggle to contain the coronavirus pandemic, they must also work harder to protect victims of human trafficking, said the Vatican-based international network of Catholic charities. Insufficient attention “was paid on the collateral damage of the ongoing pandemic, especially on migrants and informal workers, who are now more exposed to trafficking and exploitation,” Caritas Internationalis said in a July 28 joint statement with COATNET, a network of 46 Christian organizations engaged in fighting human trafficking. The statement was made ahead of the July 30 commemoration of the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. “Caritas Internationalis and COATNET also call for urgent and targeted measures to support workers in informal sectors such as domestic work, agricultural and construction work, where most vulnerable workers (i.e. undocumented migrants) can be found,” it said. Citing statistics released by the International Labor Organization, Caritas said currently there are “40 million people in our world today” who are victims of human trafficking.

U.S. Data Group: China Hacked Computers of Vatican, Other Church Entities

HONG KONG (CNS) — China has been accused of hacking Vatican computers as well as those in the Diocese of Hong Kong and other Catholic organizations in May. The hacking appears to be an attempt to gain an advantage in talks between the Vatican and China, due to resume as early as this week, about a fresh deal on the appointment of bishops. U.S. data monitoring group Recorded Future and its Insikt Group used sophisticated data analysis tools to uncover the cyber espionage, reported ucanews.com. “From early May 2020, the Vatican and the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong were among several Catholic Church-related organizations that were targeted by RedDelta, a Chinese-state sponsored threat activity group tracked by Insikt Group,” the Recorded Future report stated.

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Sister Jennifer Berridge Professes Vows

By Joyce Bibey

Surrounded by her extended family, friends, fellow Sisters, and parishioners of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, in Wheeling, Sister Jennifer Berridge professed her first vows for the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Sister Jennifer (at right) proudly poses with her mother Kathy Doberstyn prior to the Mass. Read the full story of this joyful moment in the Aug. 7 issue of The Catholic Spirit.



Wheeling University Holds Graduation

WHEELING—Wheeling Mayor Glenn Elliott told graduates of Wheeling University July 25, “this is your time to make a difference ... what you do now, in times like this, could come to define you for the rest of your lives.”

University President Ginny R. Favade conferred undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees on more than 200 students during Wheeling University’s 62nd Commencement exercises, held for the first time on Bishop Schmitt Field. Originally slated for May 2, the ceremony was postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Elliott, who just began his second term as mayor of Wheeling, served as the Commencement speaker and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

Valedictorian Kenzie Lee Schroer of New Lexington, Ohio, told her classmates the events of 2020 will always be a part of their lives.

“We cannot change (what happened). What we can change, is the way we handle and respond to these events. Look at how much we were able to get through. We can use each and every one of these events as motivation to get through whatever challenges come our way. All successes come with some failures, and all positives come with some negatives. The difference between us and others is the way we react to the negatives and implement their outcomes into our lives,” she explained.

Schroer said she found a devotion by Christian Author Joyce Meyer that was meaningful and shared it with the graduates. “She says, ‘we will go through things in life, but the things we go through are the very circumstances, challenges, and situations that make us people who know how to overcome adversity. We do not grow or become strong during life’s good times; we grow when we press through difficulties without giving up.’ As Meyer’s words suggest, it is up to us to choose our attitudes and actions during these difficulties.”

She added, “We will be the class that everyone remembers and will always be applauded for our strength and courage during these difficult times. Although things got a little blurry in, what we thought would be the year of perfect vision, we were able to come out on top.”

Favade, who received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, told the graduates, “This is the



Courtesy Photo

Wheeling Mayor Glenn Elliott served as the speaker at Wheeling University’s 62nd Commencement Ceremonies. From left are: Mayor Elliott, Wheeling University President Ginny R. Favade, and class Valedictorian Kenzie Schroer.

day I promised you. Today is your day. You have envisioned goals for yourselves and set yourselves to the task of achieving them, and now, you’ve done it. You have earned the honor and distinction of ‘a college graduate.’ You have all persisted despite the obstacles you encountered and today you should feel great pride for yourselves and gratitude for those family and friends who have helped you in this momentous achievement.”

Favade added, “I am extremely proud of you. I know that wherever you go, the values of your Wheeling University education will shape the world for the better. Now, as you move on, please remember that you will always be members of the Cardinal family. Wherever your exciting pursuits take you, please come home to your alma mater

often to share your news, your memories and your dreams. Most importantly, continue to let your light shine each and every day.”

Rishaun Hall, a member of the Black Student Union and part of the University’s Jesuit Strong program, thanked the president and university “for working diligently to make sure that our dream of walking across this stage became a reality. Class of 2020, I want you to reflect upon how, in the midst of a global pandemic, our school made it possible for us to celebrate one of our most crowning moments in our young professional career. They said what good came from Nazareth, some would even say what good could come from this pandemic? Well, Class of 2020, this is an auspicious occasion.”

The Philadelphia native said when he came to visit the campus five years ago with Cristo Rey high schools from across the country, he never imagined his “life would truly change forever. I met great individuals from this program that I will never forget, and will always have a place in my heart ... The Jesuit Strong program was a pilot program (at Wheeling) that sent over 30 Cristo Rey students from urban neighborhoods to college with over 92 percent of their tuition covered. Keeping alive not only the Jesuit philosophy of being a beacon of light to their community, by helping others and seeing God in all things. And in the times that we are in now, seeing God in all things has become one of the most difficult tasks to do in this country.” He asked his classmates to come to their feet. “Look to the left of you, now look to the right. The people that you see love you. Some even risked their lives to come here to celebrate the moment in time that will never be forgotten, the Hero Class.”



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St. Francis of Assisi, St. Albans
Saturday, Aug. 8: 11:00 a.m.

St. Agnes, Charleston and St. Anthony, Charleston, at St. Agnes
Saturday, Aug. 8: 5:00 p.m.

Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Charleston
Sunday, Aug. 9: 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. (4:00 Mass if necessary)

St. Francis de Sales, Morgantown
Wednesday, Aug. 12: 7:00 p.m.

St. Leo, Inwood
Saturday, Aug. 15: 10:00 a.m.

St. Agnes, Shepherdstown
Sunday, Aug. 16: 9:00 a.m.

St. Joseph, Martinsburg (to be held at St. James Parish, Charles Town)
Sunday, Aug. 16: 3:30 p.m.

St. Sebastian, Kingwood; St. Zita Mission, Masontown; St. Edward the Confessor, Mission, at St. Sebastian
Friday, Aug. 21: 6:00 p.m.

St. Peter Welch and Sacred Heart Mission, Powhatan, at Sacred Heart Mission
Saturday, Aug. 22: 5:30 p.m.

St. Francis de Sales, Beckley
Sunday, Aug. 23: 11:00 a.m.

Corpus Christi, Warwood
Saturday, Aug. 29: 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

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Carta del obispo Brennan

Queridos fieles de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston,

Hemos estado viviendo los momentos más inusuales y difíciles. Espero que tu fe en Dios te haya ayudado a mantener la calma en medio de las tormentas que nos azotan.

Al acercarme al primer aniversario de mi instalación como obispo (22 de agosto), permítanme abordar algunos asuntos de interés mutuo: el escándalo del obispo Bransfield; la pandemia de coronavirus; y la cuestión del racismo.

Con respecto al obispo Bransfield, ni el nuncio apostólico en los Estados Unidos (el embajador del Papa) ni yo hemos escuchado nada en más de cinco meses de la Santa Sede en Roma sobre el plan de enmiendas que presenté para el obispo Bransfield. La pandemia de Coronavirus golpeó a Italia con fuerza, lo que puede explicar la demora. Ore para que este asunto se resuelva pronto.

Con respecto a la pandemia de Coronavirus aquí, les agradezco a nuestros fieles laicos y al clero por la cooperación que han mostrado en la observación de las medidas de protección que hemos adoptado para que podamos tener liturgias públicas en nuestras parroquias. Estoy especialmente agradecido con los voluntarios y el personal que han estado desinfectando nuestras iglesias y sirviendo como ujieres. Animaría a los adultos jóvenes a que den un paso adelante y nos ayuden, para que la carga no recaiga solo en las personas mayores. ¡También los felicito por las hermosas máscaras que muchos de ustedes usan!

Hasta donde podemos determinar, nuestras medidas de protección han sido efectivas. En los pocos casos en que una persona en la misa luego dio positivo por el virus COVID-19, se informó a los respectivos departamentos de salud y feligreses y se puso en cuarentena a las personas en contacto cercano con el feligrés infectado. Al momento de escribir este artículo, el rastreo de contactos no ha indicado que alguien haya sido infectado en la misa. Debemos seguir observando nuestros protocolos de seguridad al adorar en la iglesia. No es momento de ceder ante la "fatiga pandémica" y relajar nuestra vigilancia.

Si está sano, vaya a misa para escuchar la Palabra de Dios con sus hermanos y hermanas en la fe y reciba al Señor Jesús en la Eucaristía. Pero si temes que ir a misa pueda ser peligroso para ti u otros, recuerda que la obligación de ir a misa dominical sigue suspendida.

Dimos permiso a nuestras parroquias para abrirse a otros eventos que no sean liturgias. Debemos proceder con cautela en esta área, ya que el número de casos positivos en nuestro Estado ha ido en aumento. Se pueden realizar pequeñas reuniones, por ejemplo, una reunión del Consejo Pastoral o de Finanzas, una pequeña reunión de RICA, mientras se observan medidas de protección y sin servir comida ni bebida. Desafortunadamente, reuniones más grandes (cenas parroquiales, almuerzos fúnebres, bingo) no podemos hacerlo de manera segura en este momento. Pueden convertirse fácilmente en el escenario para propagar el virus. Debemos tener en cuenta la salud y la seguridad de los demás. Eso se llama "amor al prójimo".

¿Hay algún beneficio espiritual en esta pandemia? Les pregunté a los candidatos de Confirmación cómo habían vivido su fe durante la pandemia. Dijeron que rezaban, leían las Escrituras, miraban misas en vivo e intentaban ayudar más en la casa. ¡Esos son verdaderos beneficios! Ser privado de la Eucaristía también puede aumentar nuestro deseo por el sacramento, ya que el ayuno aumenta nuestro deseo de comida. ¿Y no somos más conscientes de lo sociales que somos por naturaleza? Nos necesitamos unos a otros y queremos estar juntos. Rezo para que las reuniones normales pronto sean posibles.

Con respecto al racismo, los meses posteriores a la muerte del Sr. George Floyd en Minneapolis han sido testigos de grandes disturbios sociales y protestas por el racismo. Si bien la segregación legal que vi de niño ha sido superada, todavía existen otras formas de racismo. ¿Por qué es aún más difícil para los hombres y mujeres negros con la misma formación académica y experiencia que las personas blancas obtener un trabajo para el que solicitan? ¿Por qué los barrios y las escuelas de la ciudad han sido segregados medio siglo después de las decisiones de desagregación y las leyes de vivienda abierta? Incluso aparte de las intenciones del individuo, el racismo se arrastra bajo la superficie de las instituciones y

la vida social.

Virginia Occidental tiene una población negra mucho más pequeña que los Estados vecinos y no soy un experto en la situación aquí. Los informes dicen que las protestas en Virginia Occidental después de la muerte de Floyd fueron pacíficas. Las personas tienen el derecho y la obligación de trabajar por la justicia. Sin embargo, la violencia, como dijo el Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., ataca la búsqueda de justicia mientras que los métodos no violentos con el tiempo traen mejores resultados.

Es importante que todos reconozcamos que nuestra actitud hacia las personas afecta cómo nos relacionamos con ellas. El grito "Black Lives Matter" es un grito del corazón de un pueblo que ha sufrido en este país por generaciones y no se quedará de brazos cruzados. (Esto es distinto de la organización del mismo nombre, cuyas posiciones en algunos temas contradicen la creencia y la enseñanza católicas.) Como seguidores de Jesucristo, quien sufrió, murió y resucitó de entre los muertos para todas las personas, independientemente de su raza u origen, nosotros debemos examinarnos honestamente sobre cómo consideramos a las personas de diferentes razas y grupos étnicos. El cambio comienza en la mente y el corazón; de lo contrario, cualquier cambio en el comportamiento solo será superficial y probablemente se evaporará como la niebla de la mañana.

Junto con el autoexamen, estudiar los problemas puede ayudarnos a comprender por qué estallaron las protestas e incluso la violencia. Le animo a leer *Open Wide Our Hearts*, la Carta Pastoral de los Obispos de EE. UU. Sobre el racismo de noviembre de 2018, que ve el racismo en un contexto amplio que incluye a inmigrantes e indígenas estadounidenses, así como a afroamericanos. (Visite uscbb.org.) Donde sea posible, el diálogo con miembros de otras razas y grupos étnicos puede ser esclarecedor y fomentar el entendimiento mutuo. Animo a las parroquias a estudiar esta posibilidad.

¿Harping sobre la "culpa blanca" produce un autoexamen apropiado y un cambio en los blancos? Sinceramente, creo que es más probable que provoque resentimiento que apertura al cambio. El Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., reconoció que algunas personas blancas estaban oprimidas, al igual que los negros, por lo que incluyó a los blancos pobres del sur en su Campaña de los Pobres. Pero la mayoría de los blancos se han beneficiado solo de ser blancos y es justo pedirles que reconozcan esto. Lo injusto es atribuirles una culpa moral personal por una situación que heredaron. Juzgar a los miembros de cualquier raza por estereotipos despectivos está mal. Las palabras de Jesús, no juzgues para que no seas juzgado, aplica aquí. Enfrentémonos a las injusticias sociales directamente, pero mantengamos nuestro enfoque en los problemas y no atacemos a las personas. Lo esencial es formar alianzas para superar las injusticias y construir una sociedad más humana.

A medida que miramos hacia el futuro, no sabemos cuánto tiempo tendremos que lidiar con la pandemia de Coronavirus ni por qué medios ni cuánto tiempo llevará blanquear las manchas de racismo de nuestro carácter nacional. Pero, con confianza en Dios, que bendice a su pueblo con sabiduría y coraje, debemos resolver seguir al Señor Jesús, quien, viviendo durante una pandemia de pecado, ungido con el Espíritu Santo y el poder, hizo el bien y la curación. aquellos oprimidos por el diablo, porque Dios estaba con él [Hechos de los Apóstoles 10:38]. También hemos sido ungidos con el Espíritu Santo y el poder, el poder de la fe en Cristo. Con confianza en la gracia de Dios, podemos soportar el mal físico de una enfermedad terrible y hacer un progreso genuino en borrar, en la medida de lo posible, el mal moral del racismo. Con Dios todas las cosas son posibles [Mateo 19:26].

Tuyo en Cristo

Mark E. Brennan

+ Mark E. Brennan

Obispo de Wheeling-Charleston

Reportar casos sospechosos de abuso sexual de niños

La Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston alienta a informar a las autoridades civiles ante todo si se ha cometido un delito. También alentamos a utilizar www.reportbishopabuse.org para informar. Si tiene razones para creer que un obispo se ha involucrado en una conducta sexual inapropiada o ha interferido con una investigación de conducta sexual inapropiada, comuníquese con las autoridades civiles de la jurisdicción correspondiente y visite www.reportbishopabuse.org.

Para informar a las autoridades civiles: Póngase en contacto con la policía local; Los números variarán según su ubicación. Si crees que alguien está en peligro inmediato, llama al 911. Para reportar confidencialmente cualquier incidencia de sospecha de abuso o negligencia infantil, incluido el abuso sexual, comuníquese con la Oficina de Servicios para la Protección Infantil de la Oficina de Niños y Familias de West Virginia llamando a la línea directa de abuso infantil al 800-352-6513.

Para informar a la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston: La Diócesis alienta a que se informe ante las autoridades civiles apropiadas, en primer lugar, así como 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 designados al 304-233-0880. Las extensiones adecuadas se enumeran a continuación: Sr. Ellen F. Dunn, O.P., ext.264; Señor. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Rdo. Tim Bishop, ext. 353. También puede completar un "Formulario de Queja por Alegaciones de Abuso Sexual de un Menor" confidencial recogiendo uno en su parroquia local o solicitando uno por correo a la Coordinadora de Ambiente Seguro, Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston, P.O. Box 230, Wheeling, WV 26003. El formulario de queja también está disponible para descargar en el sitio web de la diócesis www.dwc.org, haga clic en Diócesis en la barra de menú, luego haga clic en Oficinas, haga clic en Entorno seguro y haga clic en la sección "Descargar archivos y formularios". Está listado como "Formulario de Queja". Para informar al Coordinador de Asistencia a las Víctimas de la Diócesis: Dr. Patricia M. Bailey: 304-242-6988

Enlaces e información: Departamento de Salud y Recursos Humanos de WV: <https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp> Policía del Estado de Virginia Occidental, Unidad de Delitos contra los Niños, Crímenes de Internet contra los Niños



**Catholic Charities
West Virginia**
Mission Moment

Catholic Charities Provides Stability during COVID-19 Pandemic

By Trina Bartlett, Catholic Charities West Virginia Eastern Region Director

MARTINSBURG—Eugene has been a case management client at the Martinsburg office since May 2019. He was referred by his high school special education teacher, who had been helping him for years. She was concerned because he had recently been evicted and was experiencing homelessness. At the time, he was working as a dishwasher at a local restaurant.

Initially, our Catholic Charities case manager, Kat Hagedorn, helped him get situated at the Union Rescue Mission. While Eugene worked with Kat on his finances, she also worked with other organizations to identify additional resources.

Eugene got a second job as a dishwasher at another restaurant, and in November 2019 he moved into his own apartment. Eugene was so proud of the fact that he could pay his rent himself, make his insurance payment and continue his car payments.

In March of 2020, Eugene was laid off from both of his jobs because of the coronavirus pandemic. In the past, the loss of his job would have meant a downward spiral for Eugene. But this time he knew he could call Catholic Charities.

When Kat met with Eugene, they both wore masks and gloves and completed the on-

line application for unemployment. Catholic Charities was able to assist him with his rent for April until his unemployment began. When he got his unemployment card, Kat taught Eugene how to use it.

Kat also assisted Eugene with making his car insurance payment over the phone, as he had always done it in person. She also helped him make arrangements to extend his car, ensured he understood how to put his Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) funds into his savings account, and taught him how to cash the check from his insurance rebate.

During that meeting Eugene whispered from behind his mask how much money he had in savings and on his unemployment card right now. Even though Kat couldn't see because of his mask, she knew he was smiling. He said, "I can pay the rent on my own this month. You don't have to help me. But you will help me when I need it. Thank you."

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia, visit www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org.

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



Courtesy Photo
Wearing personal protective equipment, Eugene met with a Catholic Charities case manager to receive help in completing the online application for unemployment.

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Wheeling Hospital among WVU-Managed Facilities Recognized in U.S. News & World Report Rankings

WHEELING—Wheeling Hospital, managed by WVU Medicine, has been recognized in U.S. News & World Report's Best Hospital's 2020-21 as High Performing in COPD and Heart Failure.

A total of six WVU Medicine hospitals – four member hospitals and two managed hospitals – were recognized. This year's rankings also include the WVU Medicine Urology Program's fourth consecutive national ranking, and WVU Medicine J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital's designation as the number one hospital in the state. In addition to Urology, which was ranked 40th in the country, Ruby Memorial Hospital's Nephrology, Neurology and Neurosurgery, Orthopedics, and Pulmonology and Lung Surgery programs were all recognized as High Performing specialties.

Six WVU Medicine hospitals were designated as High Performing in the Procedures and Conditions category. They are:

- Wheeling Hospital (managed hospital) – High Performing in COPD and Heart Failure

- Berkeley Medical Center – High Performing in COPD

- Camden Clark Medical Center – High Performing in COPD and Heart Failure

- Ruby Memorial – High Performing in COPD and Heart Failure

- Uniontown Hospital (managed hospital) – High Performing in COPD

- United Hospital Center – High Performing in COPD and Heart Failure

"We are thrilled to have more specialties and more hospitals recognized by U.S. News and World Report. These rankings validate the strides we have made in strengthening our system and the care we provide throughout it," Albert L. Wright, Jr., president and CEO of the West Virginia University Health System, said. "Of course, none of this would be possible without the hard work and dedication of our employees, and we thank them for making WVU Medicine the world-class health care system that it is."

Kareen Simon, Wheeling Hospital's executive vice president and chief operating of-

ficer, said, "A lot of the credit for our recognition can be attributed to the team effort coordinated with physicians, specialists and various programs, including the Chest Pain Center, Transitional Care Clinic and Heart and Vascular Center. Our experienced staff manages patients from the moment they get here until well after discharge. It's a great continuum of care."

The annual Best Hospitals rankings and ratings, now in their 31st year, are designed to assist patients and their doctors in making informed decisions about where to receive care for challenging health conditions or for common elective procedures.

For the 2020-21 rankings and ratings, U.S. News evaluated more than 4,500 medical centers nationwide in 26 specialties, 10 procedures and conditions. In the 16 specialty areas, 134 hospitals were ranked in at least one specialty. In rankings by state and metro area, U.S. News recognized best regional hospitals based on high performing rankings across multiple areas of care.

"For more than 30 years, U.S. News & World Report has been helping patients, along with the help of their physicians, identify the Best Hospitals in an array of specialties, procedures and conditions," said Ben Harder, managing editor and chief of health analysis at U.S. News. "The hospitals that rise to the top of our rankings and ratings have deep medical expertise, and each has built a track record of delivering good outcomes for patients." The U.S. News Best Hospitals methodologies in most areas of care are based

largely on objective measures such as risk-adjusted survival and discharge-to-home rates, volume, and quality of nursing, among other care-related indicators. Best Hospitals was produced by U.S. News with RTI International, a leading research organization based in Research Triangle Park, N.C.

For more information about the 2020-21 rankings and ratings, please visit the FAQ. The rankings will be published in the "Best Hospitals 2021" guidebook (ISBN 9781931469951), available in stores Oct. 6.



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