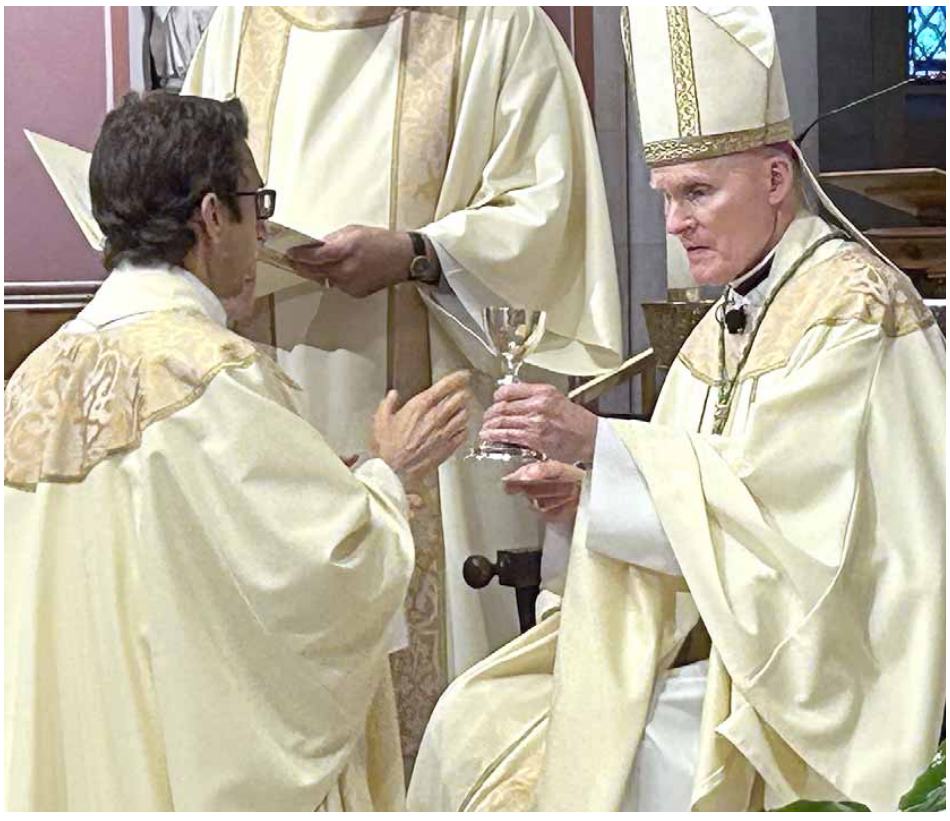
June 5, 2026 Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Vol. 56, No. 24

The Catholic Spirit

Deacon Michael Aiello and Father Clifton Mastran Ordained at the Cathedral



Colleen Rowan photos

At the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling May 30, Bishop Mark Brennan ordains Deacon Michael Aiello to the diaconate (left) and, after ordaining Father Clifton Mastran to the priesthood, presents the paten of bread and chalice of wine to him (right).

By Colleen Rowan

"What a happy moment in the life of this Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston," Bishop Mark Brennan joyfully said to the congregation at Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling on May 30. "One man to be ordained a deacon—God willing, next year a priest—and one to be ordained a priest today."

The bishop thanked the families of the newly ordained, Deacon Michael Aiello and Father Clifton Mastran, for nourishing their faith in their youth and supporting them in their vocational journey.

The bishop has appointed Father Clifton Mastran as vice rector of the cathedral. Deacon Aiello's appointment has not yet been announced.

In his homily, Bishop Brennan recalled the gospel for the Mass (John 17:6, 14-19) in which the Lord is addressing his heavenly father about his apostles: "I revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word."

Then, speaking of the newly ordained, the bishop said, "Both of these men have kept God's word and are responding faithfully to his call. We should all be grateful."

In the gospel, Jesus reminds all that following him is not easy. Addressing his heavenly father, Jesus says,"I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because

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

The Catholic Spirit

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The Catholic Spirit's Print Schedule for 2026

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

2026 Print Dates:
The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, July 7
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 14
Triumph of the Cross, September 11
Month of the Rosary, October 9
Advent, November 20
Christmas, December 18

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."

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Ordained...

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they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world."

As Jesus, in his human nature, did not conform himself to the ways of a world that often rejects truth, justice, and mercy, the bishop said, "so we find ourselves out of sorts with the world when we adhere to the truth and strive to practice justice and mercy."

He noted that an ancient writer said as the visible body contains the invisible soul, so Christians are seen in the living world, but their religious life remains unseen. The body hates the soul and wars against it. Not because of any injury the soul has done it, but because of the restriction the soul places on its pleasures. Similarly, the world hates the Christians. Not because they have done it any wrong, but because they are opposed to its enjoyments.

Bishop Brennan said, "When we oppose abortion, same sex marriage, and assisted suicide, when we promote fair treatment for immigrants, lifelong and faithful marriage, parents' rights over their children rather than state control, we oppose the enjoyments, the preferences of many of our contemporaries, including some very powerful people and institutions who cannot understand why we think and act the way we do and who take offense at us. If you thought being a Christian was supposed to be easy you were misled, but not by the Lord, who told us what to expect — Take up your cross and follow me if you wish to be my disciple (Matthew 16:24)."

He continued by saying that a world that does not appreciate Christ's gospel and loathes his followers has even less respect for the Catholic priesthood. He added that the world sees it as unnatural and restrictive for the Church in the Latin Rite to require celibacy of its priests and foolish to expect priests to be available to their people at all hours of the day and night. The priesthood, he said, is contrary to worldly patterns of career change and making money to bind priests to their low-paying ministry for the rest of their lives.

"The Catholic priesthood is both a mystery to the world—they do not understand it—and a contradiction to many of its norms," Bishop Brennan said "And yet there is also an attraction toward priests who have been consecrated in truth and are capable of articulating truths on which people can find solid footing for their lives."

Some people see a lifelong commitment to service of others as noble and inspiring and an encouragement to strive for it themselves, he added. Some recognize that not having his own family to take care of frees the priest to be available to all families, he said.

"The world does not think the Catholic priesthood is really possible," the bishop said, "but it stands in awe of those priests who actually live generously, wisely, and chastely as they promised to do at their ordination."

As he spoke of the ordinations of Father Mastran and Deacon Aiello, in preparation for a priestly ordination next year, Bishop Brennan said they will be empowered by God's grace, using Isaiah's words of the first reading (Isaiah 61:1-3abcd): "to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and release to the prisoners, to comfort those who mourn and give them the oil of gladness in place of mourning and a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit."

Isaiah's words are not mere pious wishes, but attainable goals with God's help, the bishop said.

"So, brothers, as you prepare today to be ordained remember that the Lord will not forget you, who have set aside what the world considers worthwhile in order to respond to his call."

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Joyce Bibey photo

Deacon Michael Aiello, left, and Father Clifton Mastran prostrate themselves before the altar before being ordained.

Joyce Bibey photo

Deacon Michael Aiello is vested with the stole and the dalmatic by Deacon Michael Kawash.

Colleen Rowan photo

Father Bill Matheny lays hands upon the Father Clifton Mastran before he is ordained.

Ordained...

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When Jesus's first disciples asked what they who had given up everything to follow him would get, Jesus said, "Amen I say to you there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive 100 times more now in this present age houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions and eternal life in the age to come."

"After 50 years as a priest, I can testify that the Lord's words are true," Bishop Brennan said. "I have gained so many friendships, been enriched by so many unexpected experiences, and had a sense of God's closeness to me in my years as a priest that it makes what I gave up to be a priest seem paltry in comparison. I pray that you, Clifton and Michael, will have the same experience."

The bishop then spoke of Father Charles Carroll, a diocesan priest who was ordained in 1933. Those who knew him when they were children or young adults are promoting his cause for sainthood. Father Carroll, the bishop said, lived out in practice the words that Isaiah spoke, truly bringing the good news to poor families, helping them from his meager personal resources when they were in need. He received gifts, but passed them on to people who had greater need; spent hours consoling those who had lost loved ones and suffered tragedies; freed thousands of people of their sins during many hours in the confessional. Consecrated in truth, he taught the faith without compromise, celebrated multiple Masses on Sundays to give his people the oil of gladness and revive their listless spirit through the word of God and the Eucharist, the bishop said. His priestly ordination anointed him with God's spirit to serve his people in truth and love. He held the treasure of the gospel and the grace of God in his earthly vessel, the bishop said, and he knew that its surpassing power was of God and not of him.

"Clifton and Michael, are you conscious that you hold a treasure in earthen vessels?"

Bishop Brennan recalled that years ago a priest preaching at a priesthood ordination, asked the men if they were weak enough to be a priest? Some may see that as an odd question, the bishop said, but what that priest meant was: Did they realize that the surpassing power of the gospel and the sacraments comes from God and not from the priest.

"Are you humble enough to rely on his grace to help

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Colleen Rowan photo

Bishop Brennan places the Book of the Gospels in the hands of Deacon Aiello.

Colleen Rowan photo

Father Mastran is vested with the stole and the chasuble by Father Andy Gonzalo and Father Sebastian Devasya, right.

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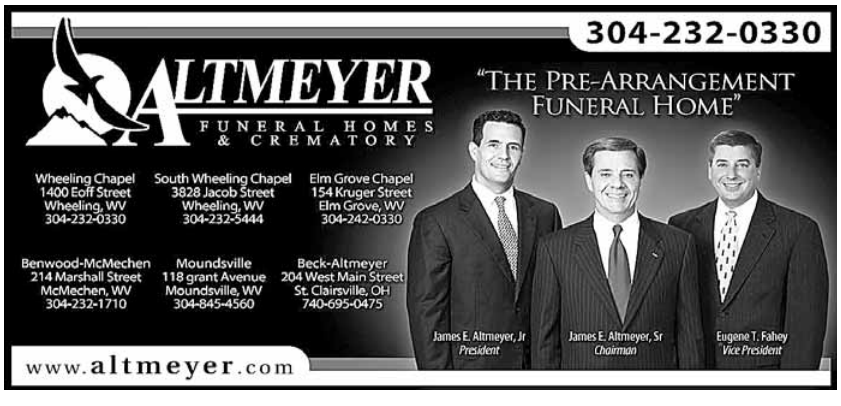

Ordained...

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you?" the bishop asked Deacon Aiello and Father Mastran before ordaining them. "Do you recognize your need for the Lord's forgiveness even as you strive to serve the people with integrity and love? Will you pray daily for the strength to announce the good news to people who often don't get much of it?"

This was the spirit of Father Carroll, he said to Deacon Aiello and Father Mastran, and it can be their spirit as well.

"Whether called to priesthood or diaconate," the bishop said to them, "your sacrament of holy orders is oriented toward the people whom Christ's blood redeemed."

He noted the words of St. Paul: "For God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to bring to light the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of [Jesus] Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6).

"My brothers," Bishop Brennan said. "I believe that light has shown in your hearts. Let it continue to shine there so that you can share it with the people to whom you are sent. Do not preach yourself, but preach Christ Jesus as Lord and yourself as his slave for the sake of Jesus. The priesthood and diaconate are not about serving ourselves but about serving others, just as the Son of God came not to be served but to serve. Don't worry about the

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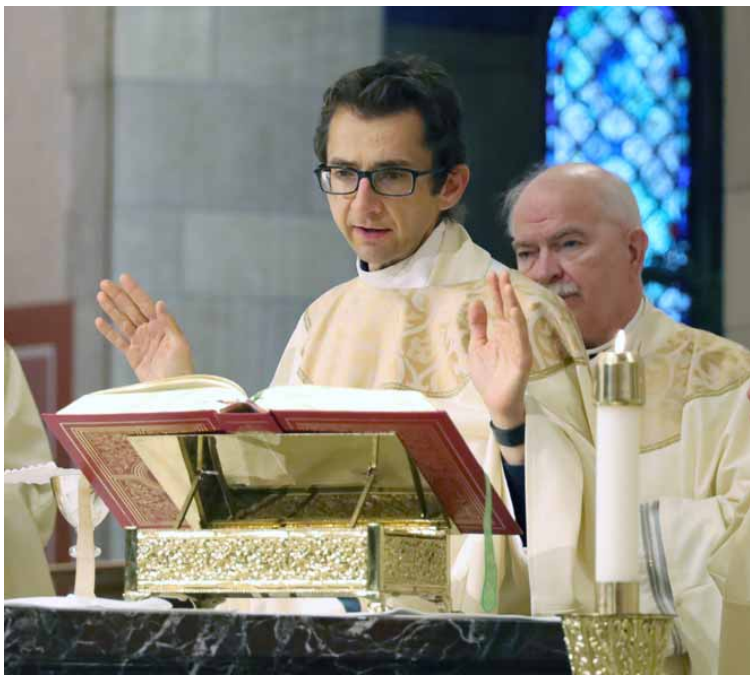

Colleen Rowan photo

Father Mastran concelebrates at his ordination Mass.

Colleen Rowan photo

Deacon Aiello serves at his ordination Mass.

Joyce Bibey photo

Father Mastran offers holy Communion to his family.

Colleen Rowan photo

Deacon Aiello serves at his ordination Mass.

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Ordained...

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world's view of the priesthood or the Christian faith. As Mother Teresa of Calcutta said, 'When they laugh at you for doing what is right, just do it anyway.' The world is shallow. God's love is deep."

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A message from the West Virginia Knights of Columbus State Council

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Knights of Columbus Present Check in Support of Catholic Schools Dinners

Courtesy photo

State Deputy Brian Gordon of the West Virginia Knights of Columbus State Council presents a $7,500 check to Bishop Mark Brennan in support of the recent Catholic Schools Dinners where students were honored in Wheeling, Charleston, and Clarksburg. With them are Very Rev. John Rice, V.G., V.F., chaplain of the state council (left); Tom Burke, secretary of the state council (fourth from left); and Jennifer Hornyak, superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

U.S. Bishops Release Prayer Service Commemorating Immigrants, Enslaved with Call to Action

By Gina Christian

(OSV News) — As the U.S. marks its 250th anniversary, the nation's Catholic bishops have released a prayer service text commemorating its immigrants and refugees, as well as those trafficked under historic and modern forms of slavery in the U.S.

The document also features prayers for government officials, asking God to "help them understand the great dignity of human persons."

"A Path Toward Justice: A National Prayer Service Honoring the Many Journeys that Shaped America" was recently posted to the resource page of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' website.

The text was prepared by both the USCCB's Committee on Migration and its Subcommittee for the Promotion of Racial Justice and Reconciliation.

The 15-page document, which is also available in Spanish, is designed "to acknowledge and honor the many diverse communities that have journeyed to the United States in search of hope, safety, and opportunity," as the bishops stated in its introduction.

At the same time, the prayer service also recognizes "the voices, sufferings, and enduring contributions of those who were forcibly brought to this land," they said.

Scholars have estimated that as many as 100 million persons have immigrated to the U.S. since the end of the American Revolution in 1783. Today, the U.S. has 50.2 million immigrants, or 14.8% of its 340.1 million residents, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

Of the approximately 12-20 million Africans who were forcibly transported to the Americas during the four centuries of the transatlantic slave trade, about half a million were taken to what is now the U.S.

In his recently released encyclical "Magnifica Humanitas," Pope Leo XIV, himself a descent of Africans enslaved and taken to the Americas, issued a formal apology for the Church's 18-century delay in recognizing the evils of slavery, calling it "a wound in Christian memory, one from which we cannot consider ourselves detached."

The pope also decried modern forms of slavery, which take the form of both forced labor and sex trafficking, and which affected some 27.6 million globally in 2022, according to the International Labor Organization. In the U.S. the National Human Trafficking Hotline counted close to 22,000 victims in the U.S. in 2024.

The U.S. bishops said the prayer service template is "inspired by the Gospel call to welcome the stranger and uphold the dignity of every human person," and "seeks to provide a sacred space for reflection, remembrance, lament, and hope."

The service invites participants "to encounter one another as members of the one human family and the one Body of Christ," they added.

Prayer gatherings based on the template "may be celebrated at a variety of sites or points of entry throughout the country," said the bishops.

The service is structured as a celebration of the Liturgy of the Word, with hymns, prayers, Scripture readings, a responsorial psalm and the proclamation of the Gospel.

The words of welcome preceding the opening prayer ask the "God of hope, freedom, justice and peace" for "the grace to walk in deeper solidarity with immigrant communities, each of which enriches the life of this nation through the diversity of its gifts and traditions."

The opening prayer invokes the intercession of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, an Italian immigrant whose ministry to fellow immigrants ultimately led to her canonization as the first American saint.

The prayer service's first reading is taken from Deuteronomy 10:12-22, where Moses exhorts the Israelites to love and serve the Lord, commanding them to "befriend the alien, for you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt."

Psalm 146 recalls that the Lord "secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry," "sets captives free" and "protects strangers."

The second reading, drawn from Chapter 13 of the Letter to the Hebrews, urges listeners not to "neglect hospitality, for through it some have

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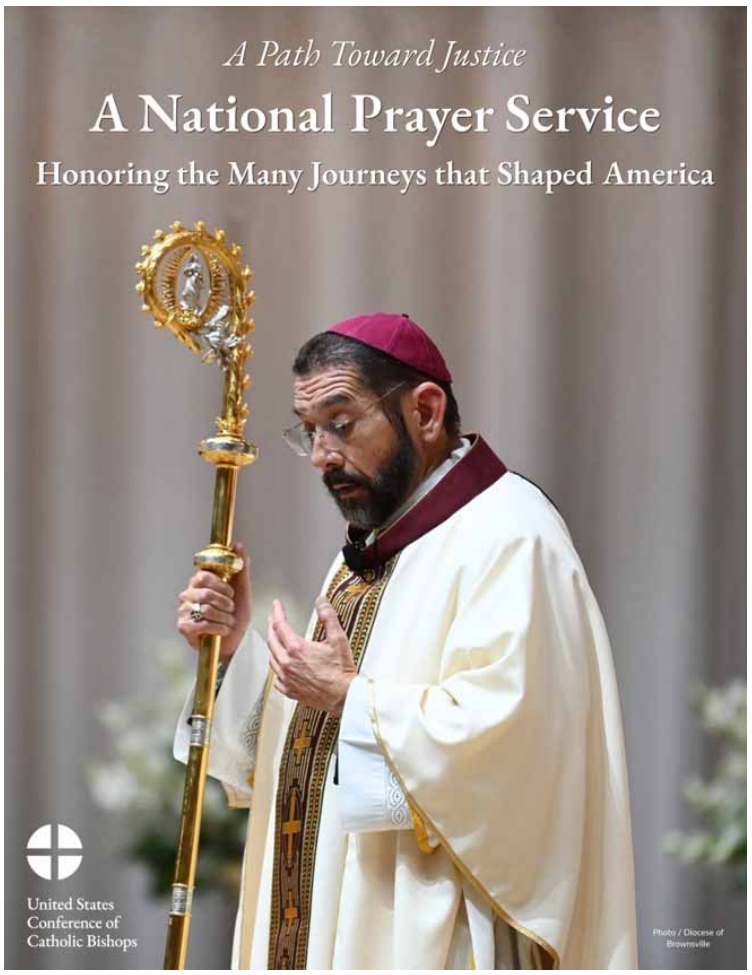

OSV News illustration/Yohan Garcia, courtesy USCCB

Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, is featured on the cover of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' "A Path Toward Justice: A National Prayer Service Honoring the Many Journeys that Shaped America."

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Relics of Sister to Whom Jesus Appeared, Showing His Sacred Heart, Will Come to the U.S. in June

By Caroline De Sury

PARIS (OSV News) — The relics of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, the French Visitation sister who experienced visions of Jesus revealing his Sacred Heart, will be present with the U.S. bishops in Orlando, Florida, when they consecrate the United States to Jesus' Sacred Heart June 11.

The relics will be flown from Paris to New York June 2 and will remain in the U.S. until September. As part of their plenary assembly in Orlando June 10-12, the U.S. bishops will concelebrate Mass and pray the act of consecration. The bishops also will hear reflections on the Sacred Heart ahead of the Mass.

Arnaud Bouthéon, the lay leader of the Knights of Columbus in France, will be in charge of the unusual transatlantic trip with the reliquary.

"I will personally go to the Shrine (of the Sacred Heart) of Paray-le-Monial to retrieve the reliquary and bring it to the United States," he told OSV News.

Bouthéon will first take the reliquary to the international headquarters of the Knights of Columbus in New Haven, where the relics will be venerated during the first week of June. Then they will be taken to Orlando, Florida, for the consecration.

Meanwhile, "the arrival of the relics of Margaret Mary in the United States is an invitation to consecrate families and individuals to the Sacred Heart," Bouthéon said.

St. Margaret Mary received visions of Jesus between 1673 and 1675 at the Monastery of the Visitation in Parais-le-Monial. Christ showed her his Sacred Heart and invited her to experience his love, mercy and tenderness. Devotion to the Sacred Heart subsequently spread thanks to St. Claude La Colombière, her Jesuit confessor, and then with the help of the entire Society of Jesus.

St. Margaret Mary was canonized in 1920, and today her relics are venerated in the Chapel of the Apparitions of her convent, where a large reliquary contains a wax effigy of her body, as well as most of her bones.

Four portable reliquaries allow St. Margaret Mary's relics to be sent to dioceses and parishes in France and abroad. "They traveled extensively during the year of the 350th anniversary of the apparitions, between December 2023 and June 2025," Bouthéon noted.

The reliquary that is heading to the United States is the largest of them all. Standing 1.3 feet tall, 2.3 feet long and 1.2 feet wide, it weighs nearly 150 pounds with its protective case. It contains the saint's clavicles, two of her ribs and a small piece of her brain. It can be carried in procession using two poles and two to four bearers.

"It will have to go in the cargo hold of the plane," Bouthéon confirmed to OSV News. "I won't be able to keep it in the cabin."

After the consecration of the U.S. to Jesus' Sacred Heart, the relics will be in Denver Aug. 1-6 for the Knights of Columbus' annual convention and then travel back to New Haven for veneration Sept. 25-27. The shrine in Parais-le-Monial hopes that dioceses will also take advantage of the relics' pilgrimage to the U.S. and invite the relics to their churches.

OSV News photo/courtesy SAJE

This scene from the film "Sacré Coeur," depicts St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, to whom Jesus was showing his heart between 1673 and 1675 in Paray-le-Monial, in the French region of Burgundy. The French blockbuster is coming to theaters in the U.S. just in time for the consecration of the nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and will premiere for U.S. audiences from June 9-14.

This won't be the first time Bouthéon has traveled to the United States with relics.

"In 2019, the Knights of Columbus organized a nine-month pilgrimage of a relic of the Curé d'Ars through American dioceses," he recalled, using the French name for "the parish priest of Ars," St. John Vianney. "It was (St. John Vianney's) heart which I had brought with me from France. For the trip, it was officially classified as 'organic matter.' It fit into a small box that I carried in a backpack, which I kept with me the entire journey. It was very moving."

"Many very positive testimonies followed this pilgrimage of the relic of the Curé d'Ars," Bouthéon said. "That

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Service...

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unknowingly entertained angels," and to "be mindful of prisoners as if sharing their imprisonment, and of the ill-treated as of yourselves."

The Gospel passage, Matthew 25:31-46, describes the judgment of the nations, in which Jesus Christ — who identifies himself with the world's marginalized and suffering persons — blesses those who have cared for the vulnerable, while chastising those who have shunned the works of mercy.

The prayer service includes a post-Gospel sharing of testimonies from immigrants, with pre-recorded messages permitted for reasons of safety and privacy.

As an aid to the service's homily or guided reflection, the bishops provided a copy of their special message on immigration as well as excerpts from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech.

The service's "call to action" invites participants to "prayerfully reflect on what we, as the Body of Christ, are called to do collectively within our local parishes, communities, state, and nation" to assist immigrants and refugees in concrete ways, "while faithfully advocating for just and humane immigration reform that upholds the dignity of every human person created in the image of God."

Rounding out the service is a moment of silence, followed by intercessory prayers petitioning for the end of modern slavery as well as for the care of migrants and refugees. It concludes with the Lord's Prayer, a closing prayer for migrants, and a hymn.

(Gina Christian is a multimedia reporter for OSV News)

NOTES: "A Path Toward Justice: A National Prayer Service Honoring the Many Journeys that Shaped America" can be downloaded from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' website in English at www.usccb.org/resources/A%20National%20Prayer%20Service%20Honoring%20the%20Many%20Journeys%20that%20Shaped%20America.pdf and in Spanish at www.usccb.org/resources/National%20Prayer%20Service%20Spanish.pdf

Relics...

Cont'd from Page 9

is what prompted us to organize the exhibition of the relics of St. Margaret Mary, with the approval of the rector of the shrine of Paray-le-Monial."

The Church highly regulates the transport of relics, Bouthéon clarified.

"Such a journey requires a great deal of official authorizations, starting with that of the bishop of Autun, to whom the shrine of Paray-le-Monial is subject, and that of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome," he said. "Everything is closely supervised."

The relics' American pilgrimage coincides with the U.S. release of a French documentary on the Sacred Heart. Released in France in October 2025, the film depicts the apparitions of Christ and the revelations received by St. Margaret Mary.

The documentary highlights the "extraordinary, even disconcerting, nature," of the apparitions, Bouthéon explained. "But it also features priests, religious and other witnesses who explain, in contemporary language, how the spirituality of the Sacred Heart is relevant to Christians today."

In the documentary, "we also see many ... of today's witnesses who recount their own experience of God's love, which they have perceived through the spirituality of the Sacred Heart," Bouthéon added. "They explain how they came to understand that Christ awaits them in prayer for a personal relationship full of tenderness. These testimonies deeply moved people."

The film was a phenomenal success in France — "something no one could have predicted," Bouthéon recalled. "It quickly surpassed 500,000 admissions, which was a record."

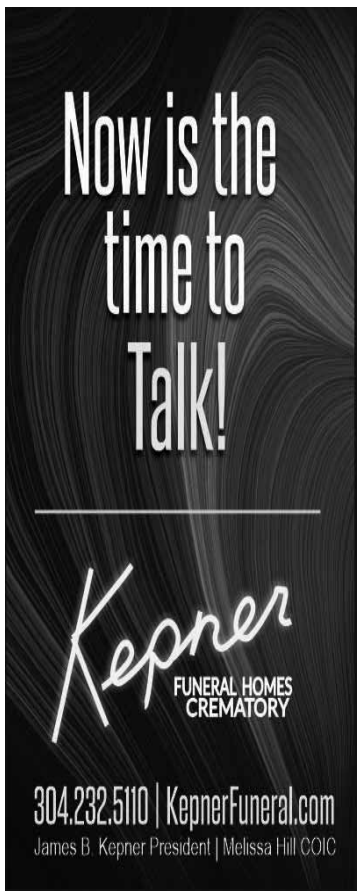
He added: "Many people have drawn closer to the faith after seeing it, and have wanted to visit Paray-le-Monial. It is also very successful abroad. It is a French docudrama, but it clearly shows that devotion to the Sacred Heart has a universal dimension."

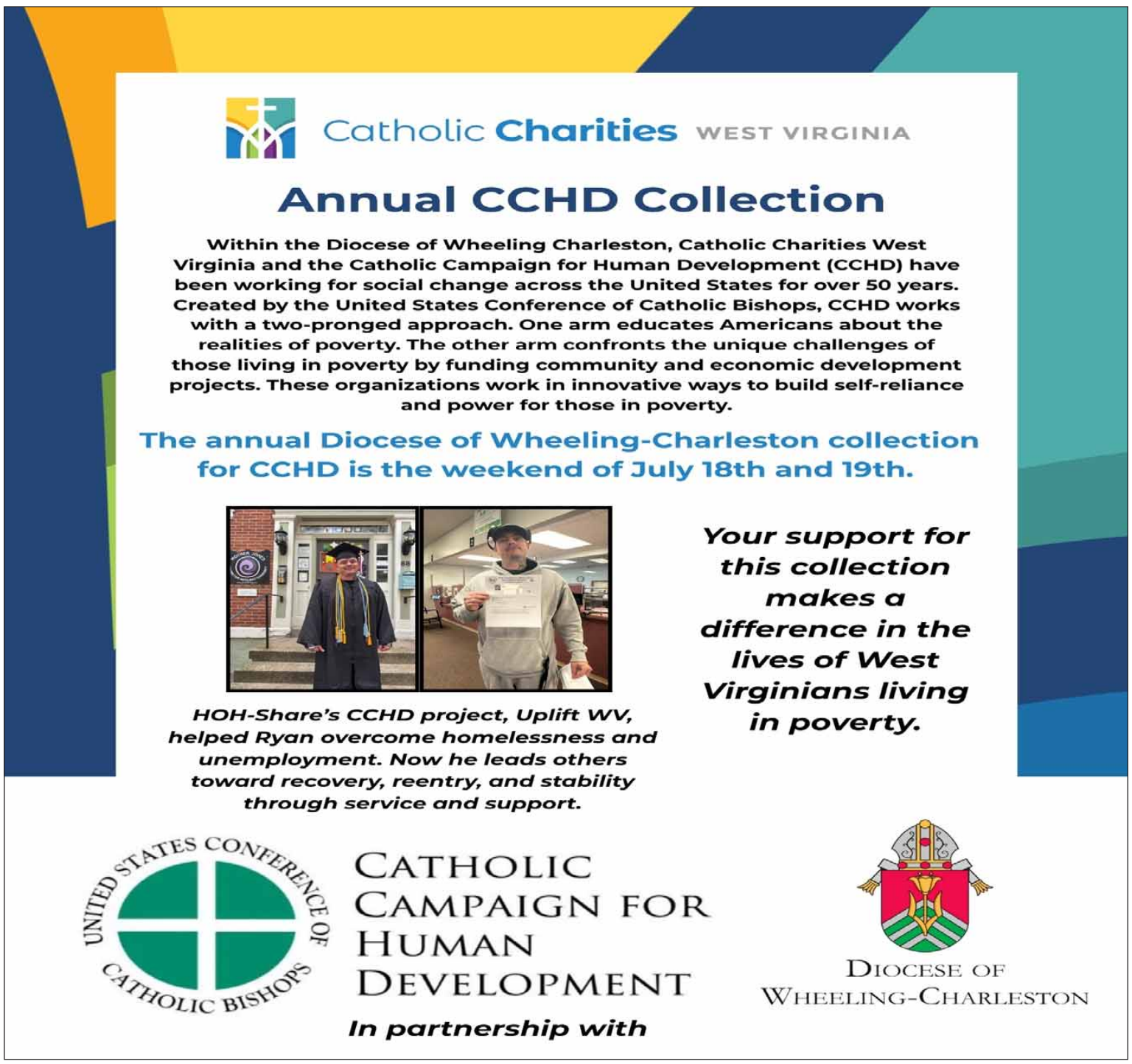
Bouthéon himself appears in the film, among those interviewed. "My family has a special devotion to the Sacred Heart," he said. "My grandmother, my mother and my daughter are named Margaret Mary. But it was thanks to the Knights of Columbus that I rediscovered the spirituality of the Sacred Heart. Their founder, Father Michael McGivney, was devoted to it. He wore a Scapular of the Sacred Heart."

"The veneration of a relic must be presented in an educational manner," he stressed. "It helps us to become tangibly aware, as popular devotions do, of the mystery of the Incarnation — that God, in Jesus, came to dwell among us."

"To personally consecrate oneself to the Sacred Heart on this occasion is to accept the reminder that Jesus has a gentle and humble heart, and that he wishes to share his tenderness with us," Bouthéon concluded. "It is drawing closer to that burning love that is his. And it also means asking ourselves: Do I love others as Christ loves me, with gentleness and humility?"

(Caroline de Sury writes for OSV News from Paris.)





Feast of Corpus Christi

EUCHARISTIC PROCESSION FOR IMMIGRANTS

"We are the body of Christ caring for the wounds of the world"

Sunday, June 7, 2026

12 Noon – 4:00 p.m. ET

Mass
12:00 noon
Shrine of the Sacred Heart
3211 Sacred Heart Way NW
Washington, DC

Bishop Evelio Menjivar
Auxiliary Bishop of Washington
Principal Celebrant

Procession
1:30 p.m.
From Shrine of the Sacred Heart to the Cathedral of Saint Matthew the Apostle
1725 Rhode Island Ave NW
Washington, DC 20036

For more information, contact Antonio Cube in the Office of Justice and Peace at (301) 853-4416 or cubea@adw.org.

Hosted by the Secretariat of Evangelization and Synodal Renewal in collaboration with Season of Faithful Witness, Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle, Shrine of the Sacred Heart, Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc, Jesuit Refugee Service and Network Lobby.

For ASL interpretation, contact deafcatholic@adw.org four weeks in advance.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese *of* Washington

Forty Years of Service

How a Teen-Led Mission Became a Preston County Tradition

'Built by Love, Framed on Service'

KINGWOOD — The Flood of 1985 left deep scars across Rowlesburg, Albright, and Preston County, but it also sparked an extraordinary act of compassion.

Two 16 year old girls from New Jersey, determined to help in a meaningful way, gathered five friends, their priest, and two chaperones and traveled to Preston County in 1986. With the support of Father Jerome McKenna of St. Sebastian's Parish in Kingwood and Sister Priscilla Weidenschlaer, the group arrived ready to serve.

That summer, the seven teenagers helped a family of five who had been living in their car after losing their home and all their belongings to the flood. From that single act of kindness, the Summer Home Repair Program was born — a program that has grown and endured for 40 years.

Each June through July, hundreds of volunteers from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey come to Preston County to repair and restore homes. This year, groups begin to arrive on June 7 for a week of service to support low-income families, elderly residents, and people with disabilities — all at no cost to the homeowners.

In just eight weeks, the volunteers complete essential projects such as roof replacements, ramp construction, and the installation of new walls, windows, and floors, if necessary.

Courtesy photo

Volunteers of the Summer Home Repair Program are pictured in recent years.

Courtesy photo

Volunteers from the first years of the Summer Home Repair Program are pictured.

The volunteers not only provide the labor but also raise the funds for materials and travel. In 2025 alone, 545 volunteers assisted 85 households, delivering critical improvements that many residents could not otherwise afford.

Every Sunday evening, new volunteer groups gather at St. Sebastian's Catholic Church in Kingwood for an orientation hosted by the Summer Home Repair Program Committee. It is during this orientation, participants share the reason why they continue to come back year after year, or why they decided to come for the first time.

One of the annual challenges for the program's committee is sorting through the applications to verify eligibility. The group leaders then come to the county for advance visits to finalize who they can logically help in the short week they are in the county.

"As always, we have more applications for the program than we have groups coming in," Coordinator Theresa Marthey said. "That is always the big challenge for our groups – deciding on who they can reasonably help with their time and talents."

As this year marks the program's 40th anniversary, the program is being celebrated with a keepsake booklet featuring memories and photos from longtime participants.

Marthey said another challenge for the groups this year was writing their thoughts and stories down for the booklet, but contributors had to limit their reflections to 200–250 words to fit on a page.

"Many group leaders shared they had a tough time trying to put everything they want to share into 250 words," she said. "After reading the full text of

See "Years" on Page 13

Confirmation Schedule

Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

Saturday, June 6: Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Charleston, 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, June 14: St. Matthew / Sacred Heart Mission, Point Pleasant, 11:15 a.m.

Saturday, June 20: St. Sebastian, Kingwood, 6 p.m.

Years...

Cont'd from Page 12

their memories and thoughts, I agree because all the stories touch the heart."

As another summer begins, the program continues its legacy. Volunteers aren't just repairing houses — they are strengthening community, restoring dignity, and proving that the work done here is truly "Built by Love, Framed on Service."

K OF C

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Carroll Council 504

OF WHEELING, W.VA.

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

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

To learn more and to join us,
click here

Welcome Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala in a special issue of The Catholic Spirit

Parishes, Catholic schools, and Catholic groups and organizations are invited to purchase ads of welcome and congratulations to our new bishop in the July 7 print edition of The Catholic Spirit. All of the proceeds help provide The Catholic Spirit free of charge to all Catholics in West Virginia. The deadline to purchase ads is Friday, June 26. Ad sizes and prices for black and white are below. For color, add $100. We can create the ad for you or you are welcome to send in your own design.

Eighth page - $100
Quarter page - $200
Half page - $400
Full page - $900

To purchase an ad, send e-mail to crowan@dwc.org with "Welcome ad" in the subject line.

Wheeling University Receives Half Million Dollars from Alumna's Trust

WHEELING — Wheeling University recently received more than a half million-dollar gift, thanks to a generous bequest from a trust established by alumna Sandra Piper Sonneborn and her husband, Sydney.

Sandra Sonneborn, or Sandy as she was known to her friends, was a member of the Class of 1960, the University's second graduating class.

"Members of the Wheeling University community are grateful to the Sonneborn's for the lasting legacy they have left. This gift will impact the lives of students today and in the future," said Wheeling University President Dianna M. Vargo, Ed.D.

In keeping with the Sonneborn's wishes, the funds have been placed in the Wheeling University general endowment account as the Sandra and Sydney Sonneborn Scholarship Fund. The interest from the $525,000 principal will be used to fund scholarships for students from West Virginia.

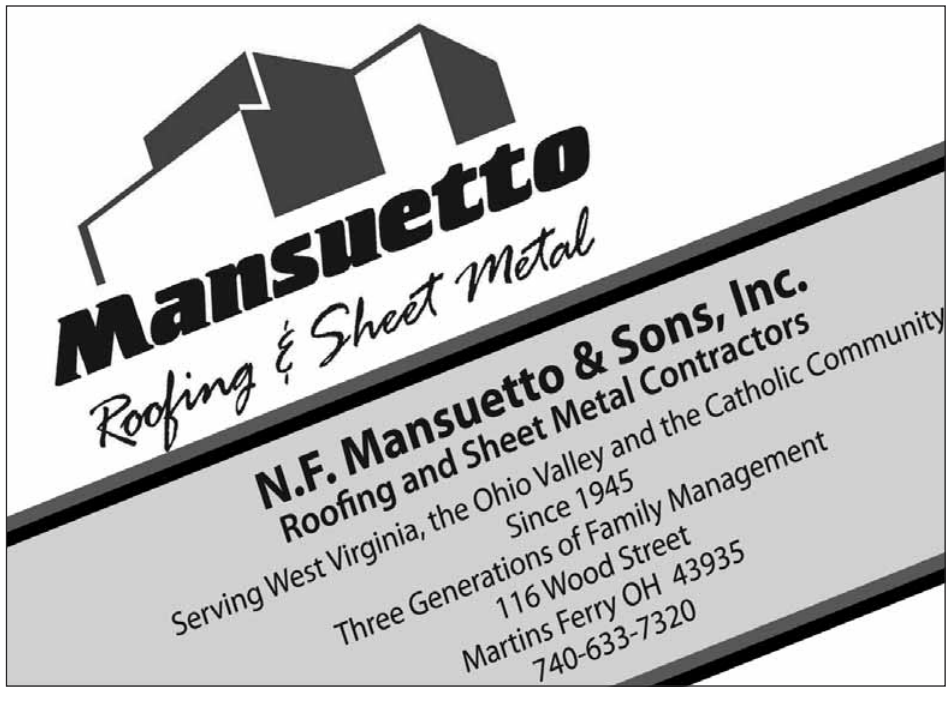
Edward Shahady, MD, like Sandy, is a member of the class of 1960. He recalled talking to the couple about his intention to include the University in his estate plan.

"During one of our reunions, I told Sandy and Sid that I was leaving a portion of my final worth to our university and suggested they do the same. I am glad to see they included Wheeling in their plans. I hope others will consider doing the same as Sandy and Sid did," Dr. Shahady said.

Sandy Sonneborn was a native of Wheeling. She married Sydney Sonneborn following her graduation from then Wheeling College. At Wheeling, she was a biology major and graduated with a bachelor's degree from the program. During her time at the college, she was active in the annual Gambol chorus line, which she enthusiastically reenacted with other members of her class during her 50th reunion. Following graduation, she went on to become a registered nurse. She later earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from the University of Montana in 1981.

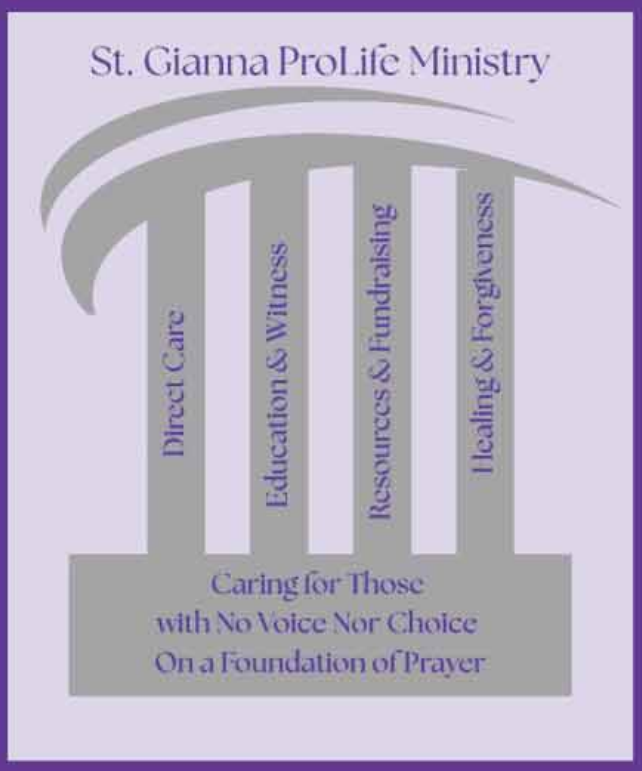
Following Sandy's Sonneborn's death in 2014, her spouse remained connected to his wife's alma mater, returning for class reunions, where he happily took Sandy's place in a subsequent Gambol chorus line. He continued to support the University until his own passing in April of 2025.

Sydney Sonneborn was also a Wheeling native. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Painting from University of Illinois and a Master's in Fine Arts from West Virginia University after serving in the United States Air Force. The couple moved to Miles, Montana in 1967, where they lived for 30 years. Upon their retirement in 1998, they moved to Palm Desert, California.



Dare to be Different!

The 2026 Dobbs Day Conference



Sponsored by

the St. Gianna Pro-Life Ministry

Be informed

& equipped

to build a culture of life

amidst the current landscapes

of abortion practices & legal changes.

Sat, June 27th 9:00 – 1:00

Wheeling University

Erickson Alumni Center, CET Bldg.

Cost: $18

Light food & beverage provided!

To register, please call the Cathedral, (304) 233-4121.

Early registration is requested, in case we need to add more seating.

Featured presenters & panelists

Dr. Wanda Franz of West Virginians for Life

Rebekah Cohen Morris of Aim Women's Center

Morgan David, Ohio Coordiator of Her Plan

Interested in having a table at the conference? Please call Amy Carlson Miesel, (304) 312-9051.

El estreno de la película del Sagrado Corazón en cines de EEUU coincidirá con la consagración del país

WASHINGTON (OSV News) — Una superproducción francesa llega a los cines de EE.UU. justo a tiempo para la consagración de la nación al Sagrado Corazón de Jesús y se estrenará para el público estadounidense en junio.

Estrenada en Francia el 1 de octubre de 2025, la película de ficción "Sacré Coeur", subtitulada "Su reinado no tendrá fin", se centra en las apariciones de Jesucristo a una religiosa francesa de la Congregación de la Visitación, Santa Margarita María Alacoque, mostrándole su corazón entre 1673 y 1675, en Paray-le-Monial, en la región francesa de Borgoña.

"Sacré Coeur" se proyectará en cines (en inglés) del 9 al 11 de junio y el 14 de junio a través de KREA Film-Makers, Saje Distribution y Fathom Entertainment. El 10 de junio se proyectará en español. La información sobre entradas y cines se encuentra en sacredheartfilm.us.

Las proyecciones coinciden con la consagración de los Estados Unidos al Sagrado Corazón de Jesús que los obispos estadounidenses celebrarán el 11 de junio.

Creado con motivo del 350.º aniversario de las apariciones, este docudrama combina recreaciones históricas, testimonios y análisis de expertos. Dedica un amplio espacio a los relatos de encuentros personales con Jesucristo, a menudo durante la adoración del Santísimo Sacramento.

Los testigos y ponentes son muy diversos, desde el padre Matthieu Raffray, un sacerdote tradicionalista francés conocido por sus contundentes opiniones en las redes sociales, hasta presos, diputados y un antiguo traficante de drogas de Bondy, una localidad de los suburbios del norte de París conocida por su elevada tasa de criminalidad.

Los directores de la película, Steven y Sabrina Gunnell, se inspiraron para producirla tras su visita al santuario de Borgoña. Steven Gunnell es un antiguo miembro de la banda francesa de chicos de los años 90 Alliage. Se convirtió al catolicismo y ahora trabaja con su esposa Sabrina en la producción de películas relacionadas con su profunda fe cristiana.

La película concede gran importancia al santuario de Paray-le-Monial. Confiado a la Comunidad Emmanuel desde 1985, el santuario acoge a decenas de miles de peregrinos cada año. Fue el escenario de una celebración jubilar de gran éxito con motivo del 350.º aniversario de las apariciones, que tuvo lugar entre diciembre de 2023 y junio de 2025.

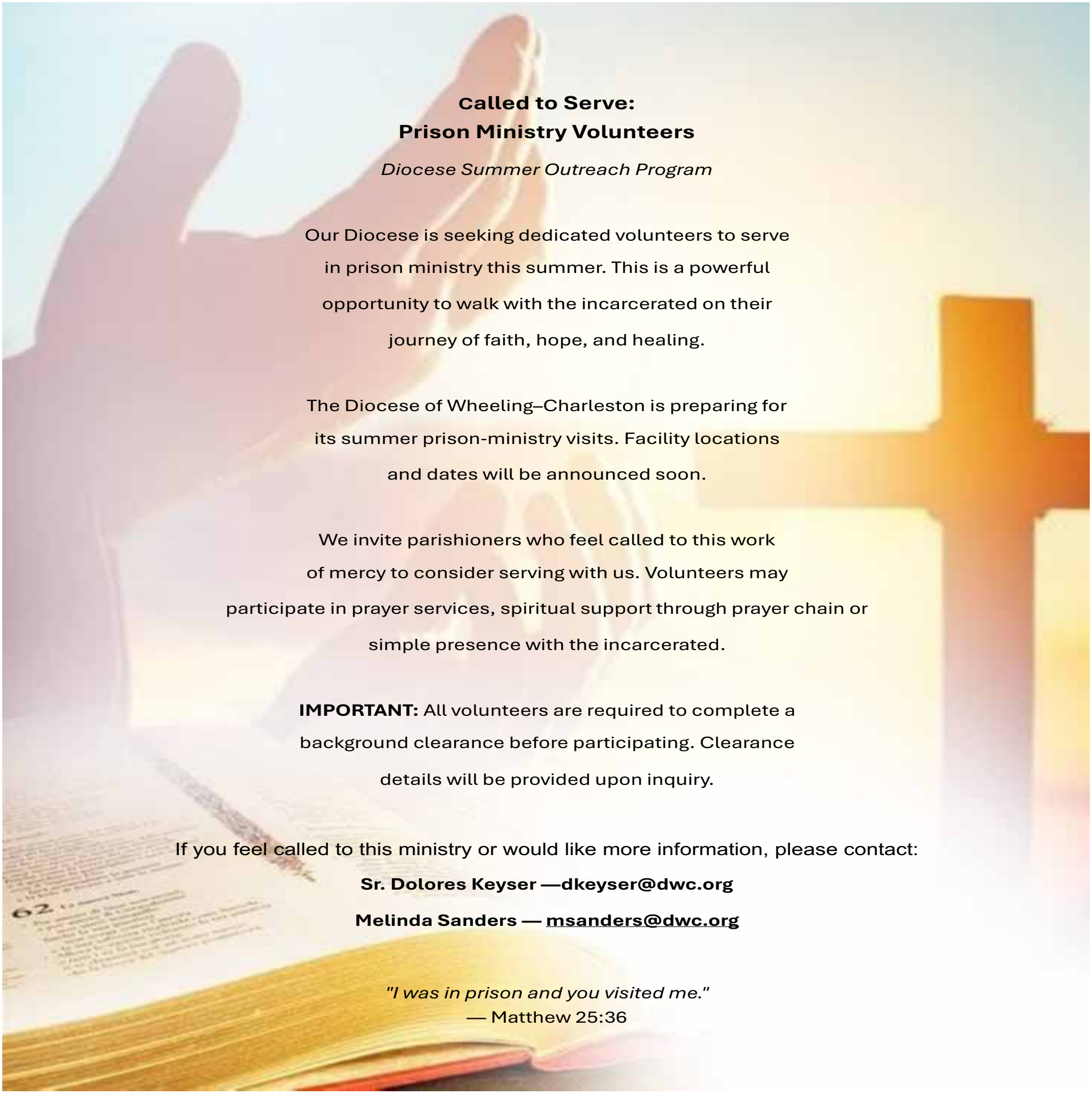
Foto OSV News/cortesía de SAJE

Esta escena de la película "Sacré Coeur" representa a Santa Margarita María Alacoque, a quien Jesús le mostró su corazón entre 1673 y 1675 en Paray-le-Monial, en la región francesa de Borgoña. El éxito de taquilla francés llegará a los cines de EE.UU. justo a tiempo para la consagración de la nación al Sagrado Corazón de Jesús y se estrenará para el público estadounidense del 9 al 14 de junio de 2026.

El jubileo estuvo estrechamente vinculado a la última encíclica del difunto Papa Francisco, "Dilexit Nos", subtitulada "Sobre el amor humano y divino del corazón de Jesucristo", publicada en octubre de 2024.

Para denunciar presuntos casos de abuso sexual de menores:

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



Called to Serve:
Prison Ministry Volunteers

Diocese Summer Outreach Program

Our Diocese is seeking dedicated volunteers to serve in prison ministry this summer. This is a powerful opportunity to walk with the incarcerated on their journey of faith, hope, and healing.

The Diocese of Wheeling–Charleston is preparing for its summer prison-ministry visits. Facility locations and dates will be announced soon.

We invite parishioners who feel called to this work of mercy to consider serving with us. Volunteers may participate in prayer services, spiritual support through prayer chain or simple presence with the incarcerated.

IMPORTANT: All volunteers are required to complete a background clearance before participating. Clearance details will be provided upon inquiry.

If you feel called to this ministry or would like more information, please contact:

Sr. Dolores Keyser —dkeyser@dwc.org

Melinda Sanders — msanders@dwc.org

"I was in prison and you visited me."
— Matthew 25:36

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CAMP CARLO

FAITH & FRIENDSHIP

HIGH SCHOOL WEEK: JUNE 28TH – JULY 4TH (GRADES 9-12)
WEEK 1: JULY 5TH – 11TH (GRADES 3-12)
WEEK 2: JULY 12TH – 18TH (GRADES 3-12)
WEEK 3: JULY 19TH – 25TH (GRADES 3-12)

Cost: $300 for a week
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-Mass
-so much more!

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EXCITING NEWS!
QUO VADIS CAMP
for Middle School Boys
Due to high demand, we announce:
Quo Vadis Camp - a dedicated Middle School track. These boys and the high schoolers attending Quo Vadis Retreat meet at the same location, but middle schoolers will have activities tailored for them.
Deacon Dave Galvin and trained staff from nearby St. James the Greater Parish will guide them on an adventurous path to strengthen their relationship with God and the Church as they enjoy the amenities of the Priestfield Pastoral Center - hiking trails, the scenic Opequon creek, and 38 acres of beautiful cedar forest.
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Kearneysville, WV
June 29 to July 2, 2026
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ESTABLISHED LEADER IN STRUCTURAL HEART CARE
THE MOST ADVANCED TREATMENTS IN WEST VIRGINIA
The nation-leading cardiologists and surgeons of the WVU Heart and Vascular Institute Structural Heart Program at Wheeling specialize in problems with the heart's valves, walls, or chambers.
We have a multidisciplinary team of experts, including interventional cardiologists, cardiac and vascular surgeons, dedicated nursing staff, and other specialists, to ensure our patients receive the most comprehensive care available for common and complex structural heart conditions.
The WVU Heart and Vascular Institute Structural Heart Program is the only program in West Virginia that offers eight specialized, structural heart procedures and is one of the few programs in the United States (and the only one in West Virginia) offering cerebral embolic protection during transcatheter aortic valve replacement (Protected TAVR) and transcatheter mitral valve replacement.
Our expert team uses the latest catheter-based techniques to treat all forms of structural heart disease, including aortic, mitral, and tricuspid valve diseases and conditions and congenital defects.
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