



‘With a Heart Broken,’ Pope Prays for Peace in Ukraine

By Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis said his heart was “broken” by the war in Ukraine, and he pleaded again, “Silence the weapons!”

“Many times, we prayed that this path would not be taken,” he told people gathered in St. Peter’s

Square for the midday recitation of the Angelus prayer Feb. 27. But rather than giving up, he said, “we beg God more intensely.”

With many of the people in the square holding Ukrainian flags, Pope Francis greeted them the way they traditionally greet each other, “Slava Isusu Chrystu,” meaning, “Glory to Jesus Christ.”

Pope Francis has continued to personally express his concern about Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and to appeal for peace. The previous evening, he phoned Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The Vatican press office confirmed the call Feb. 26 but provided no details.

Zelenskyy tweeted that he had thanked Pope Francis “for praying for peace in Ukraine and a cease-fire. The Ukrainian people feel the spiritual support of His Holiness.”

The Ukrainian Embassy to the Holy See tweeted, “The Holy Father expressed his deepest sorrow for the tragic events happening in

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Six Madonna Students Come into Full Communion with the Catholic Church at School Mass

By Colleen Rowan

Many tears were shed at St. Joseph the Worker Church in Weirton on the morning of Feb. 16. Tears of joy, that is, for six Madonna High School students who came into full communion with the Catholic Church at the weekly school Mass. Senior Graham Molnar along with his brother Corey Molnar, a freshman, junior Santo DoBraska, sophomore Cory Gontas, and freshmen Koleton Grishkevich and Brayden Miller received sacraments with their fellow students, teachers, family members, and school community present with them. All are members of St. Joseph the Worker except for Gontas, who is a member of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish in Weirton, and Miller, a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Wellsburg.

The school community had anticipated the day the boys would be coming into the church since the beginning of the school year and after all of the prayers, support, and preparation, emotions overflowed at the Mass.

“It really touched a lot of hearts,” said Amy Granato of Madonna’s Campus Ministry

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Photo Courtesy of Kathleen & Paul’s Portrait Gallery
 Very Rev. Dennis R. Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., pastor of St. Joseph the Worker and Sacred Heart of Mary parishes in Weirton, stands with the six Madonna High School students who came into full communion with the church during a school Mass at St. Joseph the Worker Church Feb. 16. From left are Santo DoBraska, a junior; Graham Molnar, a senior; Koleton Grishkevich, a freshman; Father Schuelkens; Corey Molnar and Brayden Miller, both freshmen; and Cory Gontas, a sophomore.

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WV Catholic Schools Receiving Many Inquiries as State Treasurer Opens Application Process for Hope Scholarship

By Joyce Bibey

WEST VIRGINIA—The Department of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston confirmed its 24 schools across West Virginia are receiving many inquiries about the Hope Scholarship program since the application process opened this week.

The West Virginia Hope Scholarship (WVHS) is run by the WV Treasurer Riley Moore's Office and can be used towards tuition and fees for non-public schools and home schools in the state. This scholarship is not run, managed, or determined by the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston or the Department of Catholic Schools in the Diocese. The WVHS application period for the 2022-2023 school year is March 1 - May 15, 2022, according to the treasurer's website.

The site declares, "Hope Scholarship is the state's education savings account program that gives parents an opportu-

nity to build an individual learning experience that works best for their child. The scholarship allows K-12 students to receive financial assistance that can be used for tuition, fees and other expenses." According to Moore's office, under the current school aid formula, each eligible student would receive \$4,298.60 for the 2022-2023 school year to use toward private school, alternative instruction programs, or home school. According to the US Department of Education, West Virginia public school's cost per pupil is \$11,757 (last updated Aug. 1, 2021).

The state stipulates that money in the Hope Scholarship education savings account will be administered and through a third party and released by the parent/guardian for state approved expenses. All purchases would be pre-approved by the state. Beyond tuition, the funds awarded can be spent on special services, transportation, extracur-

riculars, tutoring, materials, supplies, textbooks, transportation, etc.

The state website clarifies to qualify for the Hope Scholarship Program in the 2022-2023 academic year, a student must be a West Virginia resident and be one of the following:

- Eligible for or required to be enrolled in kindergarten
- Enrolled full-time in public elementary or secondary school in West Virginia for an entire instructional term of the 2021-2022 academic year
- Enrolled full-time and attending a public elementary or secondary school in West Virginia for at least 45 calendar days during the current instructional term at the time of application.

Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Mary Ann Deschaine, Ed.S., said the Catholic schools welcome Hope Scholarship recipients to apply for a Catholic education in West Virginia.

Additional notes from Moore's office for the WVHS:

- Parents/guardians must complete a letter of intent to participate in the Hope Scholarship Program. Families are responsible for sending it to the county superintendent in your county of residence. A sample is posted on the program's website.

- Applicants/Parents must also create an account through the Education Market Assistant (EMA) portal lined on the state site.

- Parents will also need your child's WVEIS ID#. This is assigned by your County Board of Education. (If you do not have a WVEIS ID# for your incoming kindergarten student, please contact your county board of education.)

For more information and to apply for the scholarship go to: hope-scholarshipwv.com. To learn more about the Catholic Schools of West Virginia go to: wvcatholicsschools.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 make a report about any bishop in the U.S. If you have reason to believe that a bishop has engaged in sexual misconduct or has interfered with an investigation into sexual misconduct, please contact civil authorities in the applicable jurisdiction and visit www.reportbishopabuse.org.

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

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

To Report to the Diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator: please call Dr. Patricia Bailey at 304.242.6988. In addition to the methods listed above for reporting sexual abuse, the Diocese also has partnered with Navex Global to offer the EthicsPoint platform to report other, additional concerns, such as suspected financial, professional, and personal misconduct of a priest, deacon, religious, or lay employee of the Diocese or any Catholic parish or school in West Virginia. The EthicsPoint platform can be accessed via www.dwc.org, under "Accountability", then "Report Misconduct" or by calling 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint is a third-party reporting system that reports to civil authorities where applicable and Diocesan authorities, and the identity of the person reporting is protected. Links and information: <https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp>. West Virginia State Police, Crimes Against Children Unit: 304-293-6400.

Peace...

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our country." The call to Zelenskyy came a day after Pope Francis made the diplomatically unusual gesture of going to the Russian Embassy to the Holy See to express his concern about the war. Usually, a head of state would have an ambassador come to him. Pope Francis also had phoned Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk of Kyiv-Halych, the head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, who remained in Kyiv with his people, taking refuge with others in the basement of Resurrection Cathedral and sending out daily videos of encouragement.

As Feb. 27 dawned with people under a curfew and many still sheltering in basements and subway stations, Archbishop Shevchuk promised that priests would be joining them underground to celebrate the Sunday Divine Liturgy.

"The church is with its people," he said. "The church of Christ brings the eucharistic Savior to those who are experiencing critical moments in their life, who need the strength and hope of the resurrection." And he called on anyone who could to go to confession and receive the Eucharist, remembering those unable to go to services and, especially, the Ukrainian soldiers defending the nation. But also, he said, make a "sacrifice for those

who are wounded, for those who are discouraged, for the refugees who are on the roads" fleeing the war.

Speaking after the Angelus prayer, Pope Francis also remembered the Ukrainians in the bunkers and those fleeing the war, especially "the elderly, those seeking refuge in these hours, mothers fleeing with their children. They are our brothers and sisters for whom humanitarian corridors must be opened as a matter of urgency and who must be welcomed."

"In these days we've been shaken by something tragic: war," he told the people in the square.


One who wages war, he said, is not and cannot be thinking about people, but is putting "partisan interests and power before everything." One who wages war "relies on the diabolical and perverse logic of weapons, which is the furthest thing from God's will, and distances himself from the ordinary people who want peace," the pope said. In every conflict "the ordinary people are the real victims" and they "pay for the folly of war with their own skin."

"With a heart broken by what is happening in Ukraine — and let's not forget the wars in other parts of the world, such as Yemen, Syria, Ethiopia — I repeat: Silence the weapons!" Pope Francis said.

"God is with the peacemakers," he said, "not with those who use violence."

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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Pastoral Letter for Lent, 2022

From Bishop Mark E. Brennan

It is good that Lent comes every year. Most if not all of us let some rust accumulate on our soul during the year and it is good to scrape it off. Our cars need a check-up from time to time and so do we. Lent gives us a focused opportunity to examine ourselves in the light of God's love and to see where we fail to respond to His love.

Jesus proclaims at the beginning of His public ministry: The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel [Mark 1: 15]. In Jesus Christ, who said as He prepared to return to the Father, I am with you always, until the end of the age [Matthew 28: 20], the kingdom of God is mysteriously present. By repenting of our sins – the principal work of Lent – and believing Jesus' Good News of forgiveness and new life, we will let the Lord reign in our lives more fully, manifesting God's power and goodness to us and to others.

We tend to focus on ourselves in Lent because spiritual renewal must begin with each one of us. So, it is appropriate that we prepare ourselves for a devout reception of the Sacrament of Penance – the "Sacrament of God's mercy," as Pope Francis likes to refer to it – and give ourselves to prayer more often and with greater receptivity. We should observe the days of fasting prescribed by the Church on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (one full meal and other food not to equal in total a full meal for those between 21 and 59) and the days of abstinence from meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays of Lent (for those 14 and older). But other forms of fasting, foregoing a good thing to honor God, are also helpful. So is almsgiving, doing good especially to the poor, the sick and the marginalized.

We probably do not think that the whole Church needs Lent but it does. There is an old Latin expression, *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, the Church always in the process of being reformed, that points to the Church's need for renewal. I would like to look at two of the many ways in which that renewal is needed in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

First, the necessity of unity. Has our love grown cold? The Lord says to us: Love one another as I love you [John 15: 12]. It seems to me that some Catholics in West Virginia, as elsewhere in our nation, have let divisive issues in our society color their perception of their brothers and sisters in the faith. Hard lines are drawn, not only on social issues such as abortion and immigration but on liturgical matters: the way to receive Holy Communion and whether or not girls should serve at the altar.

On the latter two issues everyone should recognize that the Church allows greater freedom than some disciples would like to admit. It is the communicant's right to choose to receive Holy Communion in the hand or on the tongue. It is not the priest's or other minister of the Sacrament's right or anyone else's to impose their preference on the communicant. The Church also allows girls and women to be altar servers. We may have our preference but we cannot deny others the right to do what the Church allows, nor should we look down on those who do what we would rather not do. Will you be a modern Pharisee, persecuting your brothers and sisters rather than respecting them? If you do, you are opposing the Lord, who condemned the Pharisees' judgmental attitude.

It is also true that there are things that every Catholic should accept. For example, from the first century AD faithful disciples of Christ have believed that the Lord Jesus gives Himself to us personally in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. His "Real Presence" means it is He, not a reminder of Him or a mere symbol of His love, that we receive in Holy Communion. The appearances of bread and wine remain but they are just that: appearances. The risen Jesus takes over the physical elements and, without changing their appearance, converts them into Himself. Since this belief comes from the Lord – This is my Body; this is my Blood – we are not free to deny it. The American bishops will launch a Eucharistic Revival Project on June 19, Corpus Christi Sunday, precisely to help those Catholics, whose faith in Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist has wavered, to believe again that He gives His very self to them in the Sacrament to build them up in faith and love.



Colleen Rowan Photo
Bishop Mark Brennan distributes ashes during the Ash Wednesday Mass he celebrated for Central Catholic High School students at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling March 2.

On the moral plane, it is utterly wrong for a Catholic to approve of taking an unborn child's life or that of a handicapped person (euthanasia) or to assist a depressed elderly person to commit suicide. This is to side with the culture of death and disregard the truth that all human life, even if burdened, is a gift from God. It is to agree with the "throw-away culture" that Pope Francis condemns. Rather than eliminate another human being, even one who is suffering greatly, we are called by our God to bear one another's burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ [Galatians 6: 2]. As much as we try, we may not be able to convince our fellow citizens to afford the maximum protection and care to vulnerable persons but, among ourselves, the Lord expects us to be united in the truth.

St. Paul wrote: I urge you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say and that there be no divisions among you but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose [I Corinthians 1: 10]. We must resist, then, the temptation to let political and social divisions in our society infiltrate our Church. We must cherish our unity, holding fast to fundamental teachings while respecting the freedom God gives His children in areas of less importance. As St. Augustine put it: "In essential things, unity; in non-essential things, liberty; in all things, charity."

The other area where this Lent may serve as a beginning of renewal and reform is evangelization. Do not let the word scare you. It simply means bringing the Gospel (evangelium in Latin) to others. There is but one Savior of the human race, only one Person who can save us from sin and death, the twin enemies from which we cannot save ourselves (see I Timothy 2: 5-6). His name is Jesus Christ. This is truly good news, news too good to keep to ourselves. That is why the Lord himself has commanded us: Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you [Matthew 28: 18-20].

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Letter...

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Too many Catholics see the Church as a gas station where they go to fill their spiritual tank or as a grocery store where they “buy” grace for their needs, without engaging with their fellow disciples. Others understand the deeply social dimension of the Church (a word which, at its root, means “assembly”) but restrict it to their circle of friends, a kind of “Catholic club.” The truth is that we are a movement going through history proclaiming Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. The Lord’s words to make disciples are a command, not a suggestion, and are a principal way that we show love for our neighbor.

There are many people to reach with Christ and His Gospel. Thousands of Catholics in West Virginia no longer walk with us in faith. In the year 2000 there were about 118,000 Catholics in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. In 2018 there were 79,000. Now we estimate about 70,000. Do we want our Church in the Mountain State to disappear? Our absent brothers and sisters have many reasons for staying away. We cannot judge their faith; only God can do that, but we miss them. In many instances, with good will and mutual cooperation, even serious problems can be resolved. Pope Francis has urged us, for example, to draw closer to divorced and remarried Catholics to see how the Church may walk with them toward a full integration into Church life. (See his Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, *The Joy of Love*, chapter 8.) It is – they are – worth the effort.

There are also hundreds of thousands of West Virginians without any religious affiliation. They may believe in God and share some of our moral values but they do not know their Savior by name, nor do they gather with us to praise him, receive his grace through the sacraments and come to know us as their brothers and sisters in faith. There is a large field for spiritual harvesting in a state which is losing population. Our Church could be growing if we had the courage and love to invite the unchurched to believe in Christ and join us.

Some Catholics feel that they should not bring up their religion with others and even less try to interest them in ours. Religion is private, they think. They say, “I’ll practice my faith but let others do whatever works for them.” Would St. Paul or St. Francis Xavier or the Catholic Focus missionaries at the West Virginia University campus in Morgantown have brought anyone to Christ with that attitude? We are talking about a relationship with the world’s Savior and with those who believe in him. We have not just the right but the obligation to invite – not force – others to take a good look at Jesus Christ and His Church.

Others are simply afraid to speak of the Lord. They fear losing friends or being labeled a religious fanatic. They are like the servant in Jesus’ parable who was given one talent to do business with but who, out of fear of his Master, buried it in the ground and then gave it back to him. The Master was not pleased [Matthew 25: 14-30]. We have received the gift of faith to share it with others: parents with their children and grandchildren, catechists with those whom they teach but every one of us with others when the opportunity arises. Imagine standing before the Lord when you die. “Whom did you bring with you?” He asks. You say, “Lord, I was afraid to speak of you. I didn’t want to lose any friends.” The Lord points to the wounds in His hands and feet and side and says, “I died and rose for them, too, and you were afraid to tell them?” Don’t bury your talent of faith. Pray for the courage to speak of Christ!

I challenge you to use the Gospel of Ash Wednesday [Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-18] as your model for preparing spiritually to help others know their Savior. There the Lord Jesus speaks of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. As a child of God, you can speak to God and to His saints on behalf of Catholics you know who have stopped associating with us and non-religious persons whom God loves. Pray daily for them, that they will

be open to faith and the gift of God’s grace.

Fasting, especially from food, is a prayer of the body: we offer our hunger for those for whom we are praying. But fasting may take other forms: denying ourselves an innocent pleasure such as a favorite TV program or podcast or – for the younger ones among us – playing video games. Fast in some way once a week for absent Catholics and non-religious people. Almsgiving is the doing of good works, such as helping a poor family with food or clothing, visiting a sick neighbor or offering to go to the store for her. Offering to God without complaint any hardship or suffering you are experiencing is the other side of good works and is most acceptable to God. Almsgiving in whatever form says to God, “I really mean it when I pray for these folks.”

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving prepare you for the final step: asking the Lord for opportunities to speak of your faith in Christ and your love for your Church. You do not need a theological degree. You only need to reflect on why you follow the Lord and why it matters to you to be in union with other disciples in the Christian movement. Then speak simply and sincerely about it. People often will give you an opening. A moment of great joy, such as the birth of a child, when the parents are sensitive to their awesome responsibility to raise the child, allows you to speak of your joy on a similar occasion and how you thanked God for His blessings. A moment of great sadness, such as the death of a loved one, the loss of a job or a great disappointment may give you the opportunity to speak of how your faith in Christ brought you consolation and strength in the face of a similar loss. Most people are not tone-deaf. They will usually give you a hearing and think about it.

If we take Lent seriously this year, we can truly become better Christians. If this is true for each individual believer, it is also true for us as a body of believers, who are privileged to live and work in this beautiful state of West Virginia. In the mid-third to mid-fourth centuries AD, there was a young layman, Anthony, who gave his worldly goods to the poor and went to live in the Egyptian desert. But Anthony did not abandon his Christian brothers and sisters. During times of persecution by the Roman government, he welcomed those who fled the cities for the desert. He counseled disciples who had doubts about their faith, strengthening many. St. Anthony understood what love demands and how important it was to maintain unity among Christ’s disciples. In the early twentieth century, a Benedictine monk, Thomas Verner Moore, founded St. Anselm’s Abbey in Washington, DC. He always encouraged people to pray but he did not impose any form of prayer on them. He told people, “Pray as you can, not as you can’t.” Father Moore respected the Christian’s freedom to pray according to his or her temperament and situation.


Guarding unity in essentials and respect for liberty in non-essentials, as St. Augustine taught, we are poised to share our faith with our fellow West Virginians, both absent Catholics and persons who are not religious. A young laywoman in a Catholic high school in our Diocese has brought a number of students into the Catholic faith. She prays for them, fasts for them and works hard to encourage them to let the Holy Spirit move them to faith in Christ and union with us. She is not afraid to share her faith. In a simple, personal way, she presents the Gospel of Christ to those whom God has given her the opportunity to evangelize.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, this Lent is about personal renewal and the renewal of our Diocese. Don’t let it slip away without addressing both. May God bless and guide you as you move through Lent!

Sincerely in Christ,

Mark E. Brennan

+Mark E. Brennan
Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston



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Territory Meeting

“The disposition towards our relationship with God is palpable in the school at every level. Our walk is not about perfection but about the journey and honest discussion of what’s in our heart. When a community encourages that kind of discussion, evangelization happens.”

—Very Rev. Dennis R. Schuelkens, Jr., V.E.,
designated pastor of Madonna High School in
Weirton

Students...

Cont’d from Page 1

and Religion Department. She had the honor of being the Molnar brothers’ godmother, and Madonna High School Principal Jamie Lesho was Grishkevich’s confirmation sponsor.

“Lots of prayers in this little school for those kids,” Granato said. “Back in September and October, I kept telling the faculty these are the ones the evil one goes after. We have to pray hard for these kids that they make it to the end to where we need them to be.”

Granato was also touched by the many people present at the Mass for the boys, including Mary Ann Deschaine, superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, and a few of the school’s coaches.

Very Rev. Dennis R. Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., designated pastor of the school, celebrated the Mass and administered sacraments to the boys. He commended them for coming forward and realizing the invitation that God was giving to them. “You stepped forward, you opened your heart, you received the Lord in the most profound way. Now, you’re going to have to stir the gift of God that he has placed within you. That is still your responsibility and that is the responsibility of all of us, including me,” said Father Schuelkens, who is also pastor of St. Joseph the Worker and Sacred Heart of Mary. He also thanked Granato and Jeff Takats, the junior and senior religion teacher at Madonna, for working with the boys and preparing them.

For the boys, it was a day they have longed for and will not soon forget. All of them were confirmed while some received the sacraments of baptism and first Communion as well.

“Being confirmed meant a lot to me because I feel closer to Jesus than I ever did,” Miller said. “The day that I was confirmed will be the day I will always remember.”

DoBraska was baptized as an infant. At the Feb. 16 Mass, he received his first Communion and was confirmed. “I felt that it brought me closer to God and my school—repairing my once lost connection with the church,” DoBraska said, noting that for him this was a great journey.



Photo Courtesy of Kathleen & Paul's Portrait Gallery

Very Rev. Dennis R. Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., pastor of St. Joseph the Worker and Sacred Heart of Mary parishes in Weirton, confirms six Madonna High School students who came into full communion with the church during a school Mass at St. Joseph the Worker Church Feb. 16. The students are pictured, from left: Koleon Grishkevich, a freshman; Santo DoBraska, a junior; Brayden Miller and Corey Molnar, both freshmen; Graham Molnar, a senior; and Cory Gontas, a sophomore.

The Molnar brothers received all three sacraments. Corey realizes where the sacraments have taken him. “My baptism has brought me closer to not only the people in the church, but also closer to God,” he shared. “My entire family has been in support of me the whole way.”

“Getting baptized helped me become a fuller person in the church,” Graham added, “and as a student of Madonna. It helped me on this path I’m going on.”

Another great joy was to take place for Graham and Corey on March 5 as their mother Wendy Molnar would reach a milestone in her own journey to the Catholic faith. She is a catechumen and was to join others in signing her name in the “Book of the Elect” at the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling. Granato is her godmother as well and was overwhelmed with joy that Wendy and her sons asked her to fill this important role for their family. “That day, I cried,” Granato said. “I just cried the whole time.”

The Holy Spirit was not yet finished at Madonna. Coming into the church with Wendy is Kay Bilal, the school’s chemistry, physics, and organic chemistry teacher. They are in RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) at St. Joseph the Worker where they will be received into full communion with the church at the Easter Vigil.

So, what is it about Madonna High School that helped to foster this draw to the church? Granato believes it is because the church is present to the students every day in all that they do.

“I think it’s a matter of that door is open to them,” she said. “That it’s presented to them each day—we go to Mass every week, we pray before every class.” The students have many opportunities to receive the sacrament of penance and to engage in service in the community. “It’s just part of who we are,” Granato said.

It’s also the leadership of Lesho and Father

Schuelkens, “who make faith formation, religious development, and spirituality the most important thing that we do here,” she said.

“We’re lucky we have good priests up here that are willing to make themselves present to us,” she continued. In addition to Father Schuelkens, there is Father Tony Thurston, associate pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary. He visits the school and speaks to classes throughout the year and comes in whenever needed for confessions, usually once a month. “Those kinds of things,” Granato emphasized. “Those examples of the clergy, of goodness, of holiness.”

Takats, who provided catechesis and took care of the paperwork and everything else for the six Madonna students just received into the church, begins each school year by asking the students if they have received the sacraments and if anyone wants to. Sometimes, a simple invitation is all that is needed. Granato noted that she and Father Schuelkens are looking more deeply into the possibility of an RCIC (Rite of Christian Initiation of Children) program for the school.

As the family is the domestic church, Granato feels that Madonna is an extension of that and fills that role for the students. At Madonna, it is all about the relationship with God.

“Beyond the theology classes and the encouragement for a service to the family, school and community, the entire student body comes together for prayer every day,” Father Schuelkens said. “It is student led and it ends with invoking the saints of all the parishes from where the students come, and concludes with our mission: Faith, family, service, through Mary. At Madonna we are followers of Christ, leaders in the world.”

“The disposition towards our relationship with God is palpable in the school at every level,” Father Schuelkens said. “Our walk is not about perfection but about the journey and honest discussion of what’s in our heart. When a community encourages that kind of discussion, evangelization happens.”

Parish's Racial Justice Initiative Raises Awareness in Shepherdstown

By Colleen Rowan

SHEPHERDSTOWN—In an effort to foster awareness and begin a dialogue within their community, members of St. Agnes Church in Shepherdstown launched the Racial Justice Initiative at the parish last summer.

The group's first meeting was June 16 with committee members Barbara Bergman, Christine Wiegman-Green, Helen Harris, Judy Lilga, Katie Hershey, Rosemary James, and Thomas Ruhf. In August, the group offered its first project. Parishioners were asked: "What does the term racism bring to your mind in six words or less."

"We got a very good response from the people," Ruhf said. "It was about 80 percent." Responses were then published in the St. Agnes Racial Justice Initiative News section of the weekly bulletin. Ruhf began writing this section in the summer and has continued ever since.

Harris, who is the only African American member of the group, said that she is very happy that her parish has begun this initiative.

"It makes us feel very proud that St. Agnes is willing to have a racism initiative committee," Harris said, noting that she and her husband Leonard, daughter Shana, granddaughter Maleia, 2, and grandson Sinceere, also 2, are among very few African American members of the parish. However, the fact that the Racial Justice Initiative was launched says a lot about St. Agnes, she said. "That speaks volumes," she said.

"I think that dialogue might have started even if we weren't members of St. Agnes, because of the focus St. Agnes has of trying to make everyone feel welcome," Harris said. "The fact that they are very in tune into what is going on in the world today. I think that alone just gives you a sense of comfort and the people with the committee are very in tune to what's going on in the world today. Not only just being in tune to it but also distraught by some of it and just recognizing the fact that it just seems so unbelievable that here we are in 2022 and this racism that is going on today. I think for a few that it has really opened their

eyes. I think in the last couple years especially has opened the eyes to a lot of people that they finally realized that racism still exists and it's alive and well in this country."

Another effort by the Racial Justice Initiative that Harris and Ruhf are proud of is the offering of roughly 40 books on racial justice added to the parish library. He also noted that Lilga was very instrumental with this effort.

"We're trying to put in some books as a focus on African Americans," Harris said. "People are checking out some of the books and that's great. There was a focus on Harriet Tubman and actually the parish as a whole asked people to read the book on Harriet Tubman."

This came about after Harris and other members of the Racial Justice Initiative attended a talk by author Catherine Clinton on her book, "Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom," on Nov. 9 at Shepherd University.

The covid-19 pandemic has hindered the committee in planning events, but Ruhf said that members hope to do more in the future.

St. Agnes Parishioners Preserving Berkeley County's Black History

By Colleen Rowan

Helen and Leonard Harris, parishioners of St. Agnes Parish in Shepherdstown, are preserving black history in their community. During Black History Month in February, Helen shared the mission that she and Leonard have through the operation of the Sumner-Ramer Memorial School for African Americans in Martinsburg.

Leonard serves as president of the museum and Helen is the treasurer. They and their family are among few African American members of St. Agnes, where Helen also serves on the parish's Racial Justice Initiative Committee.

The Sumner-Ramer Memorial School is owned by the Berkeley County Board of Education, and the museum is located in a room inside housing artifacts that tell the history of the school and its students and faculty.

"We both went to this school, here in Martinsburg, that was only for African Americans, and we now have a museum there," Helen said. "People who have gone there or their parents went to school — when they realize what's actually in

there as far as the museum, they are really amazed by it."

The school was for African American children in Berkeley County, Helen said, but there were children from Morgan County who were enrolled as well.

The museum has pictures of graduates and graduation classes as well as those who served in the military and the American Legion. There is history on the teachers, the basketball and football teams, and the band. Museum goers can learn about J.R. Clifford, the first African American attorney in West Virginia, who was a teacher and a principal at the school.

Pictures of President Barack Obama, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and President Abraham Lincoln adorn the walls of the mu-

seum. There is also a drawing showing where African Americans used to live in Berkeley County. There is also information on the horrific account of a hanging of an African American man. "So much went on in Berkeley County years ago," Helen said. "Of course, there were slaves, and they were sold on the block. People don't even realize there was slavery in the area."

Through the museum, Helen and Leonard hope to continue to provide the history of the school and black history of their community.

Helen is currently president of the Berkeley County Development Authority. She is the first African American and first female to serve in the position. She was also the first African American president of a Rotary Club in Martinsburg and



Jenni Vincent Photo Courtesy of Harold – Mail Media
Helen and Leonard Harris, left, are pictured in February 2020 at the Sumner-Ramer Memorial School for African Americans in Martinsburg. With them is Veronique Walker, associate superintendent of equity and inclusion for the school district, right.

was elected to serve on the Diocesan Pastoral Council for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. Leonard is a long-time activist. "There have been a lot of changes in this area that have taken place because of him," He-

len said. Leonard is also a veteran who served in the U.S. military.

For a tour of the museum, contact Leonard at (304) 261-0197 or e-mail hlharrismusic@gmail.com.

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A Letter from Bishop Brennan

As everyone has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace [I Peter 4:10]. Our Diocese seeks to use the gifts it has received for the good of our Catholic people and others throughout West Virginia. So that you may judge for yourselves, I am pleased to release the report of the independent audit for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston for the fiscal year 2021, which ended on June 30, 2021. The full report can be found online at www.dwc.org. My letter is part of the summary information provided to readers of The Catholic Spirit newspaper in both online and printed versions.

What might jump out at you is the marked increase in the value of our investment portfolio. This was owing mostly to the rise in the stock market; however, while unrealized gains may appear suddenly, they may disappear just as suddenly. Stock market declines in early 2022, due to geo-political tensions, have significantly lowered the value of our equity investments. Such market volatility is why our advisors and our Diocesan Finance Council maintain an investment policy and strategy that seeks long-term growth for the good of our diocesan Church in the future. We do not make knee-jerk spending decisions because of a short-term rise or fall in investments or oil revenue.

As a pastor I always believed there were only two basic approaches to handling parish finances: increase revenue and decrease expenses. Regarding the latter, the Diocese continues to trim our budget to live within our means. If you look at the Program Services section of our Statement of Activities, you will see that we have reduced costs in every category, except one: Catholic Charities West Virginia. We increased our diocesan subsidy to CCWVa by \$400,000 to help the poor in our state, regardless of their religion. That's what Catholics should do.

We are blessed in having been able to reduce diocesan debt obligations, both diocesan debt and debt owed to the Diocese by parishes and schools. In FY 2021, the Diocese provided an incremental debt forgiveness incentive to Catholic schools by rewarding those that keep a balanced budget and make deposits into savings or our West Virginia Catholic Foundation by June 30, 2021. Even during the peak of the pandemic we wanted to encourage schools to build tuition assistance funds. Further, the Diocese extended support to the school families that stayed with us during the 2020-2021 academic year (when many families withdrew their children) by offering a one-time \$250 per child grant to those families. Those grants will be reflected on next year's fiscal audit report, as the \$1,200,000 grant support will be delivered in March 2022. We have also recently launched a matching grant program for fiscal 2023, which will provide up to \$50,000 for capital improvements at parishes and schools based on certain fund-raising and operations benchmarks. The short-term results of these strategies are seen in the financial statements, as we reduced the need for parish and school subsidies by almost \$1,800,000.

Our financial advisors remind us of the guidance coming from the Federal Reserve regarding the potential for higher interest rates later this year and beyond. This could have a negative effect on parishes that rely on bank loans, the amount which the Diocese cannot provide itself. Higher interest rates could mean higher mortgage rates locally, which can cripple cash flows at parishes. I encourage parishes in this situation to engage in fund-raising efforts in order to create a pool of funds for payments or to retire long-term debt altogether, if that is possible. I would add that this scenario is an added impetus to promote and take part in the annual Catholic Sharing Appeal in 2022 (now launching), since every dollar above 50% of the parish goal stays in the parish for its needs.

The extinguishing of \$2,019,000 shown on our Statement of Activities reflects our participation in the Payroll Protection Program authorized by the federal government. The Diocese, its parishes and schools, as well as Catholic Charities, participated in this loan program. It helped us keep employees on the payroll during a critical and turbulent period and allowed the Diocese to focus on institutional stability and help to those in need. I find this quite acceptable as the Catholic Church, in addition to offering so much charitable help to needy West Virginians, is also one of the largest employers in the state. While our spiritual mission does not depend fundamentally on financial criteria, being able to save thousands of jobs for our families during an economic disaster was certainly in the public interest. The Diocese followed the rules of the PPP, applied for debt forgiveness and was relieved of repayment, for which I am grateful.

Other highlights of note in the 2021 financial statements include information on Diocesan Real Estate, a holding company which maintains titles to property at Wheeling University and Wheeling Hospital, the latter being leased to Wheeling Hospital as a Catholic hospital, as of April 1, 2021, is now part of the West Virginia University health system. Our promise to give Wheeling University financial assistance was explained in last year's report. This fiscal year's financial support will amount to \$1,000,000 and will decrease to \$500,000 for the next three years. We assumed \$3,500,000 of the University's line of credit to disentangle Wheeling Hospital from financial involvement from Wheeling University.

To help victims of sexual abuse by clergy through counseling of their choice and other means, we added the \$441,000 received from Bishop Bransfield to our Diocesan Victim Outreach fund, as I promised we would do. Legal issues from the Bransfield era and before followed us into FY 2021. Our expenses show

that reality. I hope and pray, and I ask you to join me in doing so, that our local Church can heal more than its balance sheet by spiritual renewal, a strong commitment to live with integrity and the extension of God's mercy to abuse victims.

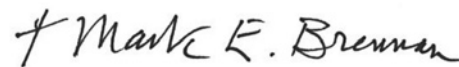
Rental income from the use of diocesan facilities was much lower in 2021 due to the pandemic-related closure of two pastoral centers and the infrequent use of the St. John XXIII Center in Charleston. However, signs of recovery in this area are appearing: St. James Parish in Charles Town is now operating the Priestfield Pastoral Center and some groups that used the center in Charleston are returning.

I would truly be remiss if I did not publicly acknowledge the fine work of our Diocesan Finance Office. For more than three years, this lightly staffed office of professionals has been dealing with the pressures of crisis management, from providing information on the previous Bishop's activities to responding to my request to create a better budget, cut costs significantly and find more affordable ways for the Diocese to operate. They are working well with the revamped Diocesan Finance Council, which also takes its mission seriously. Our Finance Office received this year a perfectly clean independent audit report. I am immensely proud of them for their diligence and competence and I thank them.

I have served in well-off and struggling parishes and in other parts of the Western hemisphere where the Church disposes of few material resources. What I have always seen is that the true resource of the Church is her people, united to Christ, their Savior. Some material resources even the poorest parish or diocese needs, so St. Peter's call to responsible stewardship is always in order. I hope you will see from this year's audit report that the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is trying to respond to that call. But let us not lose sight of the truth that our treasure is in heaven and in the brothers and sisters with whom we are journeying toward that blessed life. Let us cherish one another and serve Christ with the means that we have. If we do, the Lord one day will say to us: Well done, good and faithful servant. Come share your Master's joy.

God bless with His incomparable spiritual riches you and your loved ones!

Sincerely in Christ,



+Mark E. Brennan
Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston

See Report on Pages 8-9



What exactly happens to the money you donate at your parish on Sunday?
Where does the money go?
How is it spent?

Here are five important things you should know about the Diocesan Assessment and what it means at your parish.

THE NUMBERS ①

91 cents of every dollar (or more in many instances) stays right in your parish. The Diocese does, however, assess some collections in the parish.

6% of the Diocesan Assessment is used to fund the Priest Health and Retirement Fund (PHRA). This money does not come to the Diocese but rather is allocated to a separate entity. It is used to support our priests as they age and leave active ministry and enter retirement.

3% of the assessable income is Cathedralricum. This is what is used to provide operational support for the Diocese. The assessment in our Diocese is one of the lowest in the country. What we receive in assessments that the Diocese collects is not alone sufficient to sustain Diocesan operations. The 3 percent is returned to parishes in need, such as mission parishes or parishes that have difficulty covering parish operations through their collections. The assessment is also used to support Catholic Charities West Virginia and Catholic Education.

DEDUCTIONS ②

Just like with taxes, there are deductions referenced above. Under the current structure, parishes are able to maximize their offertory income by taking advantage of the following deductions:

- The first \$100,000 of offertory and memorial contributions are exempt from the 3% and 6% assessments.



3% - Cathedralricum
"Amount of parish funds assessed annually by the Diocese."

6% - Priest Retirement Fund
"New Diocesan Fund"

91% - Stays with Parish

2ND COLLECTIONS ④

Second collections are not assessed. These funds are collected for specific agencies outside the Diocese and the parish. Unless conducted by the parish for debt reduction, building funds, etc., the second collection is strictly a pass through the funds are not retained by the parish or the Diocese, but forwarded to the appropriate agency.

SCHOOLS ⑤

School funds and fundraisers are NOT assessed by the Diocese. Tuition payments, donations to schools and school fundraising revenues are not assessed by the Diocese in any form. Any Catholic Schools donation goes directly to the school and is used solely by the school for the benefit of students.

HOW IT IS SPENT ③

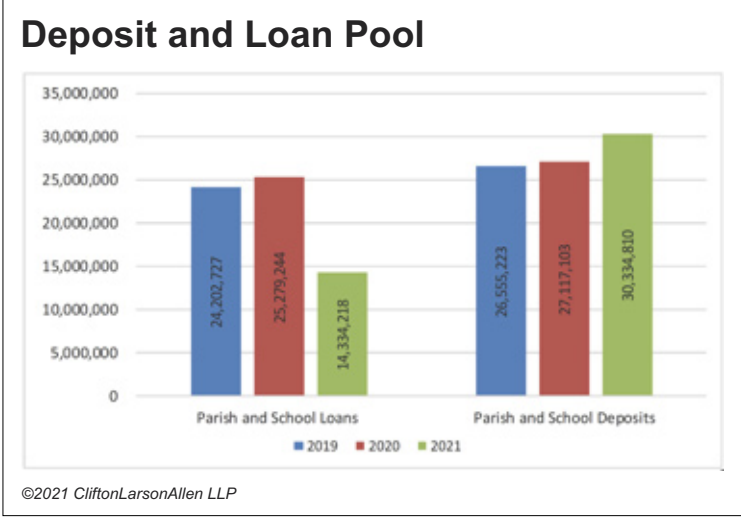
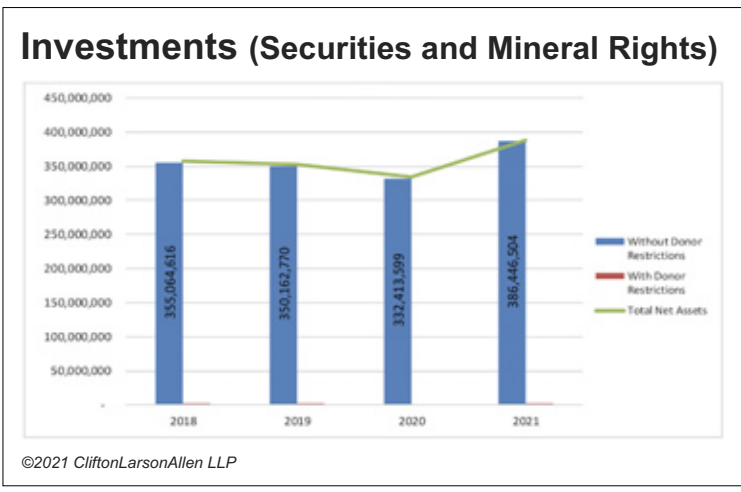
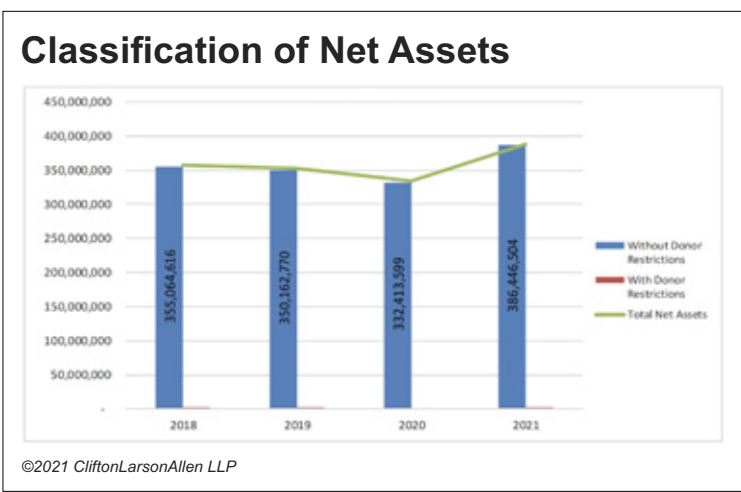
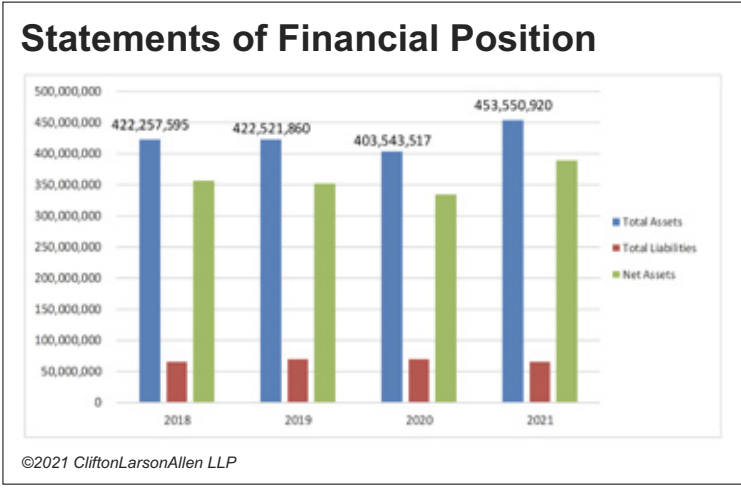
Cathedralricum is given right back to parishes. Currently, only about 75% of parishes across the Diocese are able to pay Cathedralricum. As noted in the recently released audit report, the Diocese collected \$346,339 in Cathedralricum for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2021. The receipts from cathedralricum combined with Diocesan Funds subsidized parishes and schools at an expense of \$4,173,384. None of the Cathedralricum collected by the Diocese is used to fund Chancery operations. Cathedralricum is also not used to pay legal fees or settlements.

To review the Independent Auditors' Report, Audited Financial Statements, and Notes to Financial Statements please visit
www.dwc.org

Statements of Financial Position - June 30, 2021 and 2020

	2021	2020
Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 636,196	\$ 998,465
Investments		
Securities, at Fair Value	283,633,128	238,564,622
Mineral Rights, at Fair Value	52,198,000	48,293,000
Total Investments	335,831,128	286,857,622
Receivables, Net of Allowances for Uncollectible Amounts		
Mineral Rights	1,662,093	985,411
Investment Income	612,196	512,442
Promised to Give and Bequests	357,553	98,692
Accounts	134,635	154,853
Premiums, Reimbursements, and Assessment	3,167,444	4,125,740
Notes Receivable	12,324,207	17,032,288
Prepaid Expenses and Other	299,534	272,608
Property, Buildings, and Equipment Net of Accumulated Depreciation	68,150,825	72,617,246
Interest in Net Assets of Diocesan Real Estate, Inc	29,181,524	18,901,577
Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trusts	1,193,585	986,573
Total Assets	453,550,920	403,543,517
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	1,751,113	2,241,402
Payable for Securities Purchased	765,861	11,500
Catholic Sharing Appeal Grants Payable	306,828	46,778
Amounts Payable for Collections to Other Organizations	361,608	483,692
Loan Payable	--	1,996,372
Promise to Give Payable	2,500,000	5,000,000
Deferred Revenue	534,182	475,072
Certificates of Deposit Payable	30,334,810	27,117,103
Lines of Credit Payable	28,422,581	32,227,551
Total Liabilities	64,976,983	69,599,470
Net Assets		
Without Donor Restrictions		
Undesignated	316,482,471	258,608,290
Designated - Victim Outreach	1,854,078	1,188,063
Invested in Property and Equipment	68,109,955	72,617,246
Total Without Donor Restrictions	386,446,504	332,413,599
With Donor Restrictions	2,127,433	1,530,448
Total Net Assets	388,573,937	333,944,047
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 453,550,920	\$ 403,543,517

Statements of Financial Position is represented in the following graphs

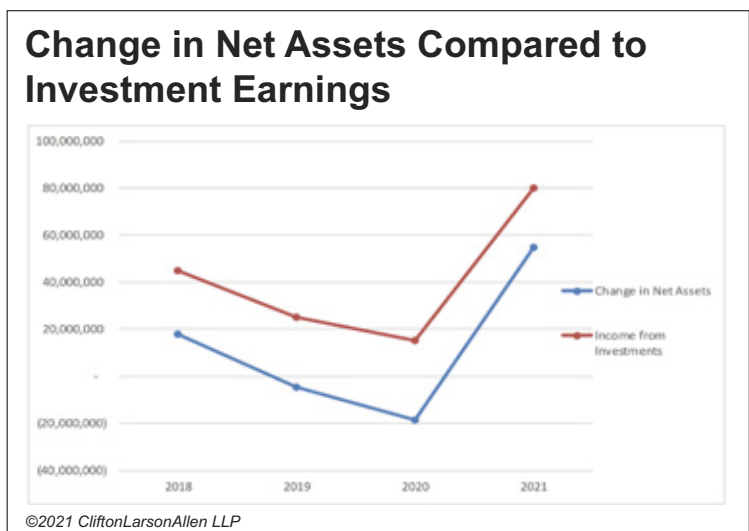
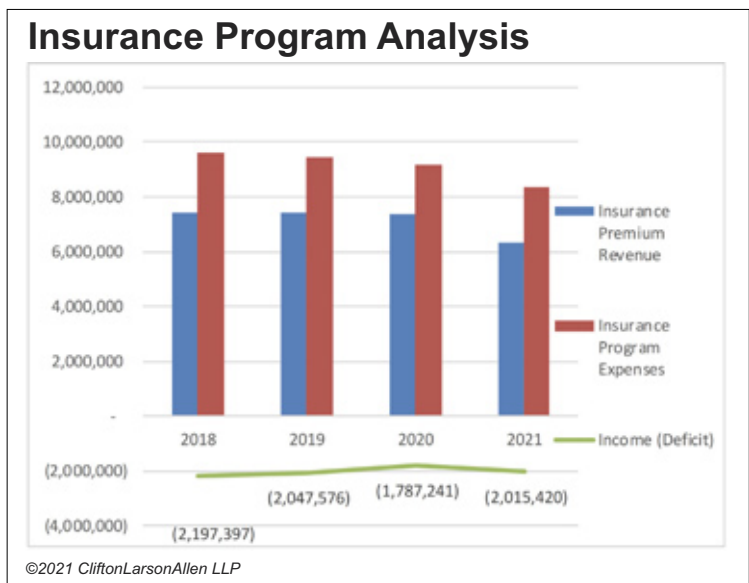
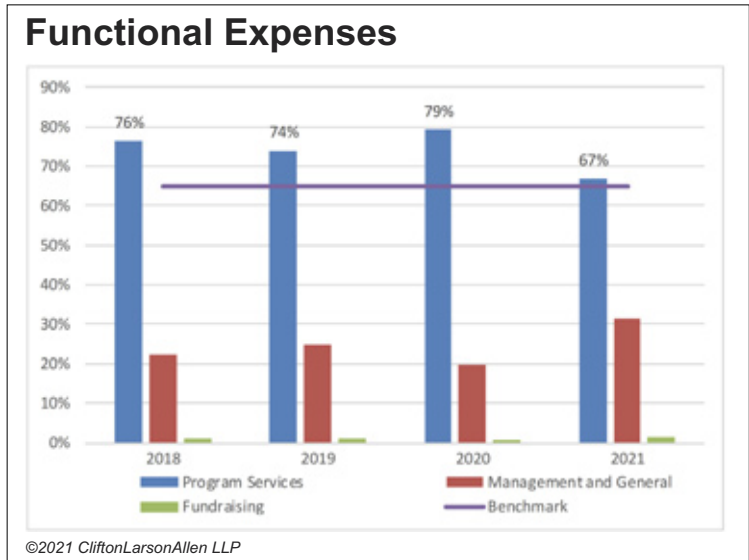
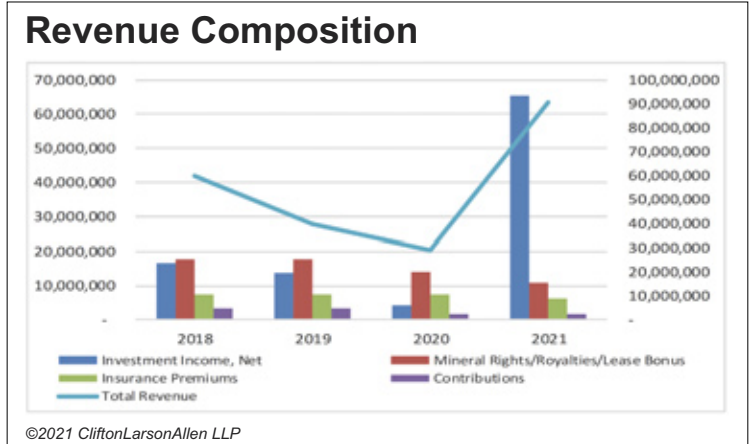


Statements of Activities - June 30, 2021 and 2020

* Does Not Reflect Donor Restrictions

	<u>2021 Totals</u>	<u>2020 Totals</u>
Revenues		
Cathedraticum	\$ 346,339	\$ 306,188
Bequests and Contributions	609,532	475,670
Catholic Share Appeal	1,037,515	1,099,402
Use of Facilities	625,150	1,203,376
Insurance Premiums	6,360,008	7,378,171
Cemetery Fees	498,951	370,038
Proceeds from Dissolved The Bishop's Fund, Inc.	--	5,282,633
Gain (loss) on Disposal of Assets	(407,155)	(2,009,728)
Gain (loss) of Diocesan Real Estate, Inc	(1,002,686)	(486,260)
Gain on extinguishment of note payable	2,019,312	0
Other Income	242,287	430,769
Total Revenues	<u>10,329,253</u>	<u>14,050,259</u>
Income from investments		
Investment Income, Net	65,393,119	4,316,602
Mineral Rights Royalties and Lease Bonus Revenue, Net	10,790,828	13,986,532
Unrealized Loss on Oil and Gas Properties	3,905,000	(3,266,000)
Total Income from Investments	<u>80,088,947</u>	<u>15,037,134</u>
Total Revenues and Income from Investments	<u>90,418,200</u>	<u>29,087,393</u>
Expenses		
Program Services		
Insurance Programs	8,375,428	9,165,412
Parish and School Deposit and Loan Program	610,889	1,537,783
Pastoral Centers	2,140,211	3,295,221
Parish and School Subsidies	4,173,384	5,921,362
Parish Catholic Sharing Appeal Grants	325,026	919,972
Vocations and Seminarians	656,711	1,124,310
Catholic Charities Subsidy	1,441,280	1,016,407
Evangelization and Education	2,590,823	2,895,330
Communications and Technology	1,427,742	1,698,739
Mt Calvary Cemetery	737,051	738,437
Outside Entity Support	594,439	1,263,723
Wheeling University	850,000	8,005,000
Total Program Services Expense	<u>23,922,984</u>	<u>37,581,696</u>
Support Services		
Management and General	\$ 5,255,922	\$ 5,193,521
Mineral Management	1,833,334	2,130,878
Diocesan Properties	1,173,431	1,332,695
Investigations, Suits, and Related	3,055,335	746,462
Fundraising and Development	547,304	429,861
Total Supporting Services Expense	<u>11,865,326</u>	<u>9,833,417</u>
Total Expenses	<u>35,788,310</u>	<u>47,415,113</u>
Change in Net Assets	(54,629,890)	(18,327,720)
Net Assets, June 30, 2020		\$ 333,944,047
Net Assets, June 30, 2021	\$ 388,573,937	

Statements of Activities is represented in the following graphs



SYNOD Listening Sessions

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

- Cathedral of St. Joseph, Wheeling:** March 8, 1-3 p.m. in Columbia Hall at St. Alphonsus Parish in Wheeling
- Christ the King, Dunbar:** March 6, noon; March 13, noon.
- Holy Cross, Pineville:** March 20, 4 p.m.
- Holy Redeemer, Spencer:** March 20, 10 a.m.; March 27, 10 a.m.
- Immaculate Conception, New Cumberland:** March 6, 9:30 a.m.; March 11, 6 p.m.; March 20, 9:30 a.m.
- Sacred Heart, Bluefield:** March 27, 10 a.m.
- Sacred Heart, Huntington:** March 19, 6 p.m.; March 20, 10 a.m.
- Sacred Heart, Powhatan:** March 27, 12:30 p.m.
- Sacred Heart, Princeton:** March 20, 12:30 p.m.
- St. Anthony, Charleston:** March 12, 10 a.m.; April 3, 11:40 a.m.
- St. Augustine, Grafton:** March 27, 10 a.m.-noon
- St. Edward, Terra Alta:** March 6, 2 p.m.
- St. Elizabeth, Elizabeth:** March 13, 1 p.m.; if needed, April 3, 1 p.m.
- St. Elizabeth, Phillipi:** April 3, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
- St. Francis de Sales, Morgantown:** March 8, 10 a.m.
- St. Francis Xavier, Parkersburg:** March 16, noon; March 26, 1 p.m.
- St. James, Charles Town:** March 5, 1 p.m.
- St. John, Benwood:** March 13, noon; March 20, noon
- St. Leo, Inwood:** March 11, 5-7 p.m.; March 25, 5-7 p.m.; April 3, 10:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.; Virtual Session-TBA
- St. Michael, Vienna:** make up date, March 13, 10 a.m.
- St. Michael, Wheeling:** March 9
- St. Peter, Farmington:** March 20, following Sunday Mass
- St. Peter the Fisherman, Fairmont:** March 6, 11:45 a.m. and 2 p.m.; March 20, 11:45 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- St. Peter, Welch:** March 6, 10 a.m.
- St. Sebastian, Kingwood:** March 20, 2 p.m.
- St. Thomas, Gassaway:** March 13, 12:15 p.m.
- St. Vincent de Paul, Berkeley Springs:** March 1, 6:30 p.m.
- St. Zita, Masontown:** March 13, 2 p.m.

Confirmation Schedule

Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

- March 23: Our Lady of Peace, Wheeling, 6 p.m.
- April 2: Annunciation of Our Lord, Fort Ashby, 4:30 p.m.
- April 23: St. Francis de Sales, Morgantown, 5:15 p.m.
- April 26: St. Vincent de Paul, Wheeling, 6 p.m.
- April 27: St. John the Evangelist, Wellsburg, 5:30 p.m.
- April 28: Corpus Christi, Wheeling, 6 p.m.
- April 30: St. Alphonsus, Wheeling, 5:30 p.m.
- May 1: Combined Confirmation: Sacred Heart, Chester, and Immaculate Conception, New Cumberland, 11 a.m. at Sacred Heart, Chester
- May 3: St. Michael, Vienna, 6 p.m.
- May 5: Combined Confirmation: Holy Trinity, Nitro, and St. Patrick Mission, Bancroft, 6 p.m. at St. Patrick Mission, Bancroft
- May 7: Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Charleston, 5:30 p.m.
- May 9: St. Michael, Wheeling, 5:30 p.m.
- May 12: St. Jude, Glen Dale, 6:30 p.m.
- May 18: St. Joseph the Worker, Weirton, 6:30 p.m.
- May 19: St. Bernadette, Hedgesville, 6 p.m.
- May 20: St. Leo, Inwood, 6:30 p.m.
- May 21: St. James, Charles Town, 10 a.m.
- May 22: St. Joseph, Martinsburg, 3 p.m.
- May 28: Immaculate Conception, Clarksburg, 4:30 p.m.
- May 29: St. Margaret Mary, Parkersburg, 2 p.m.
- May 31: St. Anthony, Follansbee, 6 p.m.
- June 4: St. Francis de Sales, Beckley, 5 p.m.
- June 25: St. Brendan, Elkins, 5 p.m.

Principals Needed

St. Patrick Catholic Church, Weston, West Virginia is seeking a Principal for St. Patrick Catholic School, pre-school through eighth grades.

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

The ideal candidate must have an earned Master's Degree in Educational Leadership or Administration or begin the process of completing degree requirements; or hold a valid Educational Leadership certification from the state of West Virginia or be eligible for such certification.

The candidate will have a minimum of five years of successful educational experience with preference for administrative experience.

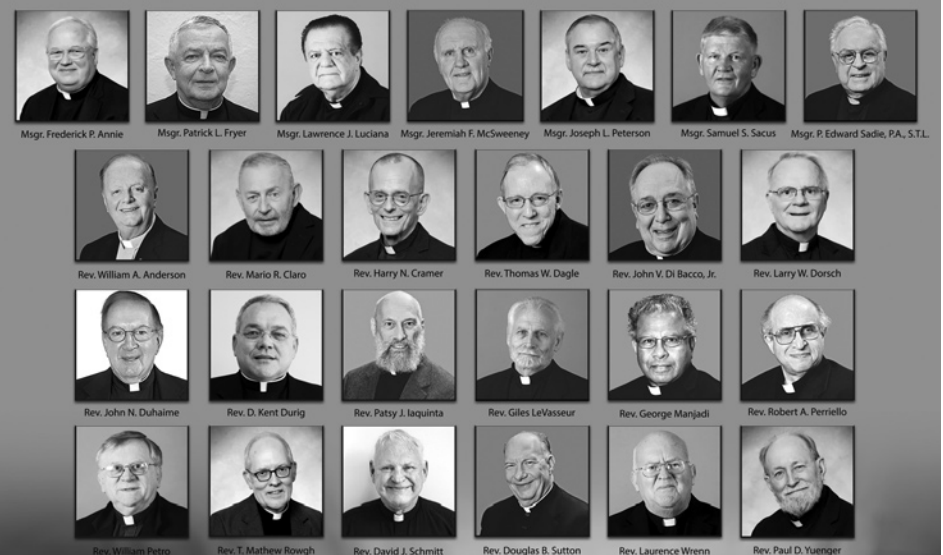
A resume with three references may be emailed with all attachments in PDF to Rev. Father Douglas A. Ondeck, dondeck@dwc.org or mailed to 210 Center Ave., Weston, WV.

St. Joseph Catholic Church, Martinsburg, West Virginia, is seeking a principal for St. Joseph School, which has students in pre-school through eighth grades. The candidate must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with Church precepts, and act as an example and motivator toward the fulfillment of the Catholic philosophy of the school.

The ideal candidate must have an earned Master's Degree in Educational Leadership or Administration, or begin the process of completing degree requirements; or hold a valid Educational Leadership certification from the state of West Virginia or be eligible for such certification. The candidate will have a minimum of five years of successful educational experience, with preference given to one with administrative experience.

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

“I CHOSE YOU FROM THE WORLD, TO GO AND BEAR FRUIT THAT WILL LAST,” SAYS THE LORD. -JOHN 15:16



RETIREMENT FUND FOR DIOCESAN PRIESTS

COLLECTION DATE: March 20, 2022



On the Road to Sainthood: Leaders of African Descent

Venerable Pierre Toussaint (1776-1853)

Venerable Pierre Toussaint, a philanthropist and founder of many Catholic charitable works, was born a slave in Haiti and brought from Haiti to New York as an apprentice under a popular hairstylist in the city. He eventually became the most sought-after hairdresser of high society women. Upon the death of his master, he gained his freedom and quickly succeeded as one of the country's first black entrepreneurs. He became quite wealthy, but instead of spending lavishly on himself, he supported the Church and the poor. He and his wife sheltered orphans, refugees, and others out on the streets in their home. He founded one of New York's first orphanages and raised money for the city's first cathedral. During yellow fever epidemics, Toussaint would risk his life to help others by nursing the sick and praying with the dying. "I have never felt I am a slave to any man or woman but I am a servant of Almighty God who made us all. When one of his children is in need, I am glad to be His slave."



Servant of God Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange (1784-1882)

Servant of God Mother Mary Lange was born Elizabeth Lange, a native of the Caribbean, and believed to be Cuban born of Haitian descent. She was the foundress and first Superior General of the Oblate Sisters of Providence (1829-1832), the first religious congregation of African American women in the history of the Catholic Church. On July 2, 1829, Elizabeth and three other women professed their vows and became the Oblate Sisters of Providence with the goal of educating and evangelizing African Americans. They educated youth and provided a home for orphans. Freed slaves were educated and at times admitted into the congregation. They nursed the terminally ill during the cholera epidemic of 1832, sheltered the elderly, and served as domestics at St. Mary's Seminary. Mother Mary Lange practiced faith to an extraordinary degree. It was her deep faith – in close union with Jesus – which enabled her to persevere against all odds. She lived through disappointment and opposition until God called her home in 1882 at the St. Frances Convent in Baltimore, Maryland.



Venerable Henriette Delille (1813-1862)

Venerable Henriette Delille was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, where she would live her entire life. For the love of Jesus and responding to the Gospel's mandate, she was determined to help those in need. Henriette was also a person who suffered as she made her way through life, and she bore many crosses. She taught those around her that sanctity can be attained in following the path of Jesus. It was in this manner that she dealt with her troubles and major obstacles to achieve her goals. Some of the troubles Henriette met were the resistance of the ruling population to the idea of a black religious congregation; the lack of finances to do the work; the taunts and disbelief of people in her mission; the lack of support from both the Church and civil authority; and poor health.



However, Henriette practiced heroic virtue. She had faith, lived in hope, and practiced love. She was compassionate, forgiving, and merciful. She believed in justice and was not afraid to do what was right in the eyes of God. God blessed her efforts and, in 1842, she founded the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family. Henriette died 20 years later on November 17, 1862. Her funeral was held at St. Augustine Church. Her obituary stated, "... Miss Henriette Delille had for long years consecrated herself totally to God without reservation to the instruction of the ignorant and principally to the slave."

Venerable Fr. Augustus Tolton (1854-1897)

Venerable Augustus Tolton was the first U.S. Roman Catholic priest publicly known to be black when he was ordained in 1886. A former slave who was baptized and reared Catholic, Tolton formally studied in Rome. He was ordained in Rome on Easter Sunday at the Archbasilica of St. John Lateran. Fr. Tolton led the development and construction of St. Monica's Catholic Church as a black "National Parish Church", which was completed in 1893. Tolton's success at ministering to black Catholics quickly earned him national attention within the Catholic hierarchy. "Good Father Gus," as many called him, was known for his eloquent sermons, his beautiful singing voice, and his talent for playing the accordion. He is the subject of the 1973 biography from Slave to Priest by Sister Caroline Hemesath. For more information on Fr. Augustus' cause, check out <https://tolton.archchicago.org>.



Julia Greeley (1833 and 1848-1918)

Servant of God Julia Greeley was born into slavery in Hannibal, Missouri sometime between 1833 and 1848. Freed by Missouri's Emancipation Act in 1865, Julia subsequently earned her keep by serving white families in Missouri, Colorado, Wyoming, and New Mexico—though mostly in the Denver area. Julia entered the Catholic Church at Sacred Heart Parish in Denver in 1880 and was an outstanding supporter of all the parish. The Jesuits who ran the parish considered her the most enthusiastic promoter of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus they had ever seen. Every month she visited on foot every fire station in Denver and delivered literature of the Sacred Heart League to the firemen, Catholics and non-Catholics alike. A daily communicant, Julia had a rich devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin and continued her prayers while working. She joined the Secular Franciscan Order in 1901 and was active in it until her death in 1918. As part of the Cause for Canonization, Julia's mortal remains were transferred to Denver's Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception on June 7, 2017.

Sister Thea Bowman, FSPA (1937-1990)

Sister Thea Bowman, FSPA was a self-proclaimed, "old folks' child." Bowman was the only child born to middle-aged parents, Dr. Theon Bowman, a physician, and Mary Esther Bowman, a teacher. At birth, she was given the name Bertha Elizabeth Bowman. She was born in 1937 and reared in Canton, Mississippi. As a child, she converted to Catholicism through the inspiration of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration and the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity who were her teachers and pastors at Holy Child Jesus Church and School in Canton. During her short lifetime, many people considered her a religious sister undeniably close to God and who lovingly invited others to encounter the presence of God in their lives. She is acclaimed as a "holy woman" in the hearts of those who knew and loved her and continue to seek her intercession for guidance and healing. For more information on Sister Thea Bowman's cause, check out <https://www.sistertheabowman.com>.

Story and photos provided by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) African American Affairs.

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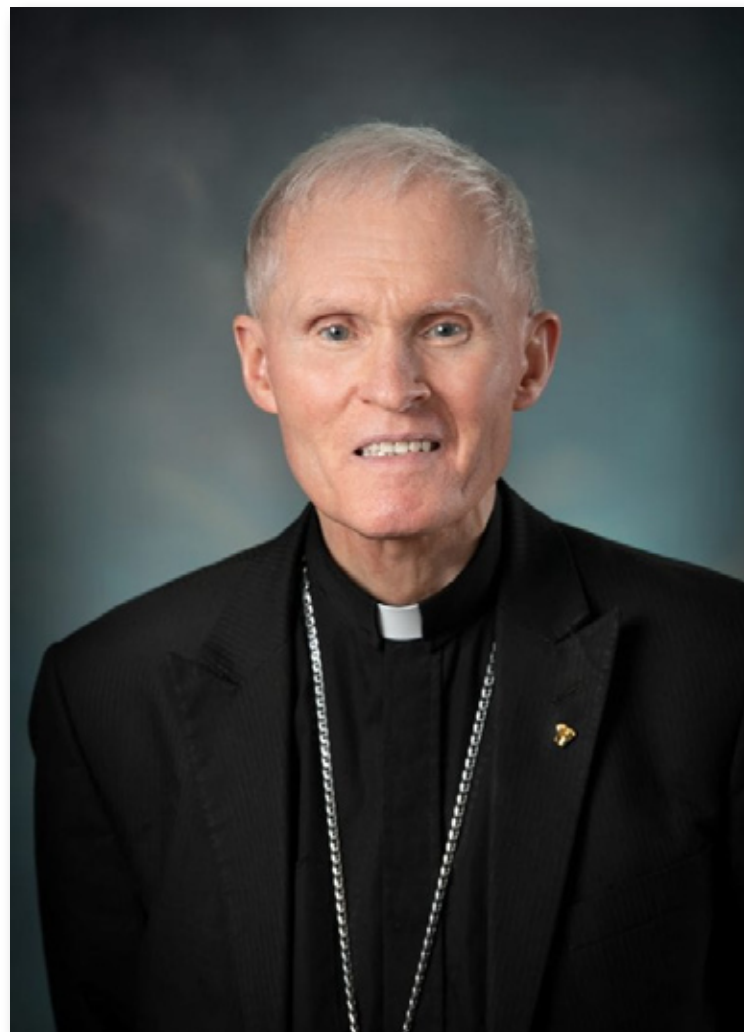


Jack Walsh

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Wishing you a Happy and Blessed 75th Birthday, Bishop Mark!



From Weirton's Catholic Community:

*Sacred Heart of Mary Parish, St. Joseph the Worker Parish,
St. Joseph the Worker Grade School, St. Joseph the Worker Day School,
Madonna High School, & Very Rev. Dennis R. Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., pastor; &
St. Paul Parish, St. Paul School, & Father Babu Joseph Elamturuthil, pastor*



‘Con el corazón roto’, el Papa reza por la paz en Ucrania’

Por Cindy Wooden, Servicio Católico de Noticias

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — El Papa Francisco dijo que su corazón estaba “roto” por la guerra en Ucrania, y suplicó nuevamente: “¡Silencien las armas!”

“Muchas veces rezamos para que no se tomara este camino”, dijo a la gente reunida en la Plaza de San Pedro para el rezo del Ángelus del mediodía el 27 de febrero. Pero en lugar de rendirnos, dijo, “rogamos a Dios más intensamente.”

Con muchas de las personas en la plaza sosteniendo banderas ucranianas, el Papa Francisco los saludó de la forma en que tradicionalmente se saludan entre sí, “Slava Isusu Chrystu”, que significa “Gloria a Jesucristo”.

El Papa Francisco ha seguido expresando personalmente su preocupación por la invasión de Ucrania por parte de Rusia y haciendo un llamado a la paz. La noche anterior, llamó por teléfono al presidente ucraniano Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

La oficina de prensa del Vaticano confirmó la llamada el 26 de febrero, pero no proporcionó

detalles.

Zelenskyy tuiteó que había agradecido al Papa Francisco “por orar por la paz en Ucrania y un alto el fuego. El pueblo ucraniano siente el apoyo espiritual de Su Santidad”.

La Embajada de Ucrania ante la Santa Sede tuiteó: “El Santo Padre expresó su más profundo pesar por los trágicos acontecimientos que están ocurriendo en nuestro país”.

La llamada a Zelenskyy se produjo un día después de que el Papa Francisco hiciera el gesto diplomáticamente inusual de ir a la Embajada de Rusia ante la Santa Sede para expresar su preocupación por la guerra. Por lo general, un jefe de estado haría que un embajador viniera a él.

El papa Francisco también llamó al arzobispo Sviatoslav Shevchuk de Kyiv-Halych, líder de la Iglesia católica ucraniana, quien permaneció en Kiev con su pueblo, refugiándose con otros en el sótano de la Catedral de la Resurrección y enviando videos diarios de aliento.

Cuando amaneció el 27 de febrero con gente bajo toque de

quedada y muchos todavía refugiados en sótanos y estaciones de metro, el arzobispo Shevchuk prometió que los sacerdotes se reunirían con ellos bajo tierra para celebrar la Divina Liturgia dominical.

“La iglesia está con su gente”, dijo. “La iglesia de Cristo lleva el Salvador eucarístico a quienes están pasando por momentos críticos en su vida, que necesitan la fuerza y la esperanza de la resurrección”.

Y llamó a todo el que pudiera a confesarse y recibir la Eucaristía, recordando a los que no pueden acudir a los servicios y, en especial, a los soldados ucranianos que defienden la nación.

Pero también, dijo, hacer un “sacrificio por los heridos, por los desanimados, por los refugiados que están en los caminos” que huyen de la guerra.

Hablando después del rezo del Ángelus, el Papa Francisco también recordó a los ucranianos en los búnkeres y a los que huyen de la guerra, especialmente “a los ancianos, a los que buscan refugio en estas horas, a las madres que huyen con sus

hijos. Son nuestros hermanos y hermanas para quienes se deben abrir corredores humanitarios con carácter de urgencia y que deben ser acogidos”.

“En estos días nos ha sacudido algo trágico: la guerra”, dijo a la gente en la plaza.

Quien hace la guerra, dijo, no está ni puede estar pensando en la gente, sino que está anteponiendo “los intereses partidistas y el poder por encima de todo”.

Quien hace la guerra “se apoya en la lógica diabólica y perversa de las armas, que es lo más alejado de la voluntad de Dios, y se distancia de la gente común que quiere la paz”, dijo el Papa. En todo conflicto “la gente común es la verdadera víctima” y “paga la locura de la guerra con su propia piel”.

“Con el corazón roto por lo que está sucediendo en Ucrania, y no olvidemos las guerras en otras partes del mundo, como Yemen, Siria, Etiopía, repito: ¡Silencien las armas!” dijo el Papa Francisco.

“Dios está con los pacificadores”, dijo, “no con los que usan la violencia”.

Para denunciar presuntos casos de abuso sexual de niños:

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

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

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

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

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

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



Ways to Help Your Neighbors during Lent

This Lenten Season gives us an extra opportunity to demonstrate our love for God through our care and concern for our brothers and sisters. During this time of fasting, praying, and almsgiving, Catholic Charities West Virginia staff invite you to deepen your relationship with God through our ministry. Here are a few ways to get involved:

Pray and Reflect with Neighbors Nationwide

Staff and volunteers from Catholic Charities agencies throughout the country write reflections based on the daily readings for Lent. Having these short reminders delivered to your inbox each day is a powerful reminder to pray for people in need. Visit this link to sign up: bit.ly/CCUSAReflections.

Volunteer at an Outreach Center

People come to our Outreach Centers for a variety of reasons. They might need help to pay a utility bill or make rent one month (Emergency Assistance). Some need support to feed their family, so they turn to one of our food pantries. And others want to set and achieve longer-term goals through Case Management.

Volunteers provide a safe space and a listening ear for people searching for

compassion. If you want to be inspired by the resilience of your neighbors, consider spending some time helping out at an Outreach Center.

Give Generously to Help Your Community Thrive

Each one of our successful clients has a Catholic Charities West Virginia community of supporters behind him or her. Without the open hearts of donors, we could not meet the most urgent needs of our neighbors. And we could not shine a hopeful light on the path out of poverty.

Your monetary support makes a true and lasting difference in your community. And we appreciate your generosity! Visit www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org and click the "Donate Now" button to make a secure donation online.

These next 40 days will take us through the desert and into the proverbial land of milk and honey. And by working together as we fast, pray, and give, we will create a world where everyone has what they need to be happy, healthy, and reach their full potential. Thank you for being with us in our Mission of Love!

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

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