

THE CATHOLIC
Spirit

First American Elected Pope: Cardinal Prevoost Takes Name Leo XIV



OSV News photo/Claudia Greco, Reuters
Pope Leo XIV, the former Cardinal Robert F. Prevoost, waves to the crowds in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican after his election as pope May 8. The new pope was born in Chicago. See story on Page 3.

Memorial Mass for Father Mario Claro to be Celebrated at Cathedral

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston has announced that a Memorial Mass will be celebrated for the late Father Mario R. Claro at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling at 12:05 p.m. on Tuesday, May 27. The following is Father Claro's obituary, which was published in the April 25 issue of *The Catholic Spirit*:



served there until his retirement from active ministry.

Father Mario had fully adopted Franklin as his home, where he was actively involved in the community and was very supportive of the Pendleton County Ministerial Association and was a favorite of the VFW for their ceremonies. Known for his welcoming nature, humility, and good humor, Father Mario was an incredibly personable individual who sought to genuinely know and understand those around him. As a priest, Father Mario will be remembered for taking time during every Mass to welcome visitors, always being available to the faithful, exploring the mysteries of the faith, and his devotion to the Blessed Mother. Overjoyed by children's presence in church, Father Mario was delighted by their youthful clamors during Mass (which he often encouraged), likely because he truly recognized children to be the "lifeblood of the church".

Father Mario loved life to the fullest: the thrill of travel, sharing a meal and some fine wine with friends, and caring for his beloved pets. Additionally, he was an avid reader and theological researcher in both trade and hobby to the last. He was an amazing teacher and historian of the faith. His extensive personal library has been left to St. Leo Parish in Inwood.

Simply put, Father Mario, ever the Lord's servant, truly loved God and His people.

He is survived by his brother, Frank Claro of Manchester, N.J.; and niece, Kathleen S. Claro of Yonkers, N.Y.; his parish family at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton including the Sasso Family; as well as countless friends.

A Funeral Mass will be held 11 a.m., Friday, May 16, 2025 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish with Bishop Mark E. Brennan officiating. Additionally, a committal service and inurnment will be held 3 p.m., Sunday, May 18 in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Franklin, with Father Arul Anthony officiating. A Memorial Mass for Father Mario will be celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling at 12:05 p.m. on Tuesday, May 27.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made in Father Mario's name locally to Christian Assistance Network (CAN) P.O. Box 572, Franklin, WV 26807; Pendleton Animal Welfare Shelter (PAWS), P.O. Box 804, Franklin, WV 26807; globally to Catholic Charities, 2050 Ballenger Ave., Alexandria, VA 22314; Shriners Children's Hospital, P.O. Box 947765, Atlanta, GA 30394; or any charity dedicated to the protection of animals.

Condolences and memories may be shared at www.obaughfuneralhome.com.

Father Mario Richard Claro, 84, of Franklin died April 19, 2025, at UVA Medical Center, Charlottesville, Va.

He was born September 19, 1940 in New York, N.Y., a son of the late Mario Gaetano and Margaret Mary (Duffy) Claro.

Father Mario, as he was most often referred, attended Immaculate Conception College of Philosophy in Troy, N.Y., and St. Bonaventure University in Olean, N.Y. He also earned a master's in theology with a specialization in liturgy from the University of Notre Dame at South Bend. He completed his preparatory studies for the priesthood at Mt. Alvernia Seminary in Wappingers Falls, N.Y., and was ordained June 10, 1967. He previously served at St. Agnes in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Father Mario was incardinated into the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Dec. 22, 1970. He previously served as associate pastor of St. Paul Parish in Weirton from 1968 to 1970 and St. Anne Parish, Bristol, Va., from 1970 to 1972. He became chaplain at Mount Saint Joseph Motherhouse in Wheeling in 1972 and served as chaplain for a time at Central Catholic High School in Wheeling. He returned to Weirton in 1977 to serve as associate pastor of St. Joseph the Worker Parish. From 1978 to 1983, he was on the faculty at St. Joseph Preparatory Seminary in Vienna, where he also served as dean of students.

Father Mario served as associate director of the diocesan Office of Sacraments, Worship and Spirituality from 1983 to 1988; coordinator of the diocesan Office of Liturgical Practices in 1988; and diocesan coordinator for the diocesan Department of Catholic Education and Formation from 1987 to 1992. He was also regional representative of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions Region 4, consultant for the Diocesan Art and Architecture Commission, and teacher and liturgy coordinator for the Diaconate and Ministries Formation Program.

Additionally, Father Mario served as rector of the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling from 1989 to 1994; pastor of St. Theresa Parish in Morgantown from 1994 to 1998; and pastor of St. Mary Parish in Petersburg and Epiphany of the Lord Parish in Moorfield from 1998 to 2006. He also became pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Franklin in 1998 and

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

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

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

The Catholic Spirit's Print Schedule for 2025

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

2025 Print Issues and Dates:

Month of Mary, Mother of God, May 23; Month of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, June 13; Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 15; Triumph of the Cross, September 12; Month of the Rosary, October 3; Advent, November 21; Christmas, December 19



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Pope Leo XIV

CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Leo XIV, the former Cardinal Robert F. Prevost, waves to the crowds in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican after his election as pope May 8. The new pope was born in Chicago.

By Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Cardinal Robert F. Prevost, the Chicago-born prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops under Pope Francis, was elected the 267th pope May 8 and took the name Pope Leo XIV.

He is the first North American to be elected pope and, before the conclave, was the U.S. cardinal most mentioned as a potential successor of St. Peter.

The white smoke poured from the chimney on the roof of the Sistine Chapel at 6:07 p.m. Rome time and a few minutes later the bells of St. Peter's Basilica began to ring.

About 20 minutes later the Vatican police band and two dozen members of the Pontifical Swiss Guard marched into St. Peter's Square. They soon were joined by the marching band of the Italian Carabinieri, a branch of military police, and by units of the other branches of the Italian military.

As soon as news began to spread, people from all over Rome ran to join the tens of thousands who were already in the square for the smoke watch. Rome Mayor Roberto

Gualtieri was among them.

French Cardinal Dominique Mamberti, protodeacon of the College of Cardinals, appeared on the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica at 7:12 p.m. He told the crowd: "I announce to you a great joy. We have a pope ('Habemus papam')," saying the cardinal's name in Latin and announcing the name by which he will be called.

Twenty minutes later, the new Pope Leo came out onto the balcony, smiling and waving to the crowd wearing the white papal cassock, a red mozzetta or cape and a red stole to give his first public blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world).

The crowd shouted repeatedly, "Viva il papa" or "Long live the pope" as Pope Leo's eyes appeared to tear up.

"Peace be with you," were Pope Leo's first words to the crowd.

"My dear brothers and sisters, this is the first greeting of the risen Christ, the good shepherd who gave his life for God's flock," he said, praying that Christ's peace would enter people's hearts, their families and "the whole earth."

The peace of the risen Lord, he said, is "a peace that is unarmed and disarming."

Signaling strong continuity with the papacy of Pope Francis, Pope Leo told the crowd that God "loves all of us unconditionally" and that the church must be open to everyone.

"We are all in God's hands," he said, so "without fear, united, hand in hand with God and with each other, let us go forward."

He thanked the cardinals who elected him, apparently on the fourth ballot of the conclave, "to be the successor of Peter and to walk with you as a united church always seeking peace, justice" and together being missionary disciples of Christ.

Telling the crowd that he was an Augustinian, he quoted St. Augustine, who said, "With you I am a Christian and for you a bishop."

"Together we must try to be a missionary church, a church that builds bridges and always dialogues, that is always open to receiving everyone like this square with its arms open to everyone, everyone in need," he said.

The new bishop of Rome told the people of his diocese and of the whole Catholic Church, "We want to be a synodal church, a church that journeys, a church that seeks peace always, that always seeks charity, that wants to be close to people, especially those who are suffering."

After asking the crowd to recite the Hail Mary with him, Pope Leo gave his first solemn blessing.

Cardinals over the age of 80, who were not eligible to enter the conclave, joined the crowd in the square. Among them were Cardinals Seán P. O'Malley, the retired archbishop of Boston; Donald W. Wuerl, the retired archbishop of Washington; and Marc Ouellet, retired prefect of the Congregation for Bishops.

A longtime missionary in Peru, the 69-year-old pope holds both U.S. and Peruvian citizenship.

La Repubblica, the major Italian daily, described him April 25 as "cosmopolitan and shy," but also said he was "appreciated by conservatives and progressives. He has global visibility in a conclave in

See "Pope" on Page 4



DIocese of WHEELING-CHARLESTON

• PO Box 230, Wheeling, West Virginia 26003 •

Statement from Most Rev. Mark Brennan, Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston on the Election of Robert Cardinal Francis Prevost as Pope Leo XIV

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Most Rev. Mark Brennan, Bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, released the following statement on the election of Robert Cardinal Francis Prevost as the next Pope, Leo XIV.

“Habemus Papam! We thank God, who through the power of the Holy Spirit has guided the Cardinal electors to select Robert Cardinal Francis Prevost to be the Vicar for Christ on earth. As Pope Leo XIV prepares to begin his role as Pontiff, let us unite in prayer for him and his ministry. As Catholics in America, let us pray especially for Leo XIV, that the Holy Spirit continue to guide him as he begins his service to the Catholic Church throughout the world.”

Pope ...

Cont'd from Page 3

which few (cardinals) know each other.”

That visibility comes from the fact that as prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops for the past two years, he was instrumental in helping Pope Francis choose bishops for many Latin-rite dioceses, he met hundreds of bishops during their “ad limina” visits to Rome and was called to assist the world’s Latin-rite bishops “in all matters concerning the correct and fruitful exercise of the pastoral office entrusted to them.”

The new pope was serving as bishop of Chiclayo, Peru, when Pope Francis called him to the Vatican in January 2023.

During a talk at St. Jude Parish in Chicago in August, the then-cardinal said Pope Francis nominated him “specifically because he did not want someone from the Roman Curia to take on this role. He wanted a missionary; he wanted someone from outside; he wanted someone who would come in with a different perspective.”

In a March 2024 interview with Catholic News Service, he said Pope Francis’ decision in 2022 to

name three women as full members of the dicastery, giving them input on the selection of bishops “contributes significantly to the process of discernment in looking for who we hope are the best candidates to serve the church in episcopal ministry.”

To deter attitudes of clericalism among bishops, he said, “it’s important to find men who are truly interested in serving, in preaching the Gospel, not just with eloquent words, but rather with the example and witness they give.”

In fact, the cardinal said, Pope Francis’ “most effective and important” bulwark against clericalism was his being “a pastor who preaches by gesture.”

In an interview in 2023 with Vatican News, then-Cardinal Prevost spoke about the essential leadership quality of a bishop.

“Pope Francis has spoken of four types of closeness: closeness to God, to brother bishops, to priests and to all God’s people,” he said. “One must not give in to the temptation to live isolated, separated in a palace, satisfied with a certain social level or a certain level within the church.”

“And we must not hide behind an idea of authority that no longer makes sense today,” he said. “The authority we have is to serve, to accompany priests, to be pastors and teachers.”

As prefect of the dicastery then-Cardinal Prevost also served as president of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, where nearly 40% of the world’s

Catholics reside.

A Chicago native, he also served as prior general of the Augustinians and spent more than two decades serving in Peru, first as an Augustinian missionary and later as bishop of Chiclayo.

Soon after coming to Rome to head the dicastery, he told Vatican News that bishops have a special mission of promoting the unity of the church.

“The lack of unity is a wound that the church suffers, a very painful one,” he said in May 2023. “Divisions and polemics in the church do not help anything. We bishops especially must accelerate this movement toward unity, toward communion in the church.”

In September, a television program in Peru reported on the allegations of three women who said that then-Bishop Prevost failed to act against a priest who sexually abused them as minors. The diocese strongly denied the accusation, pointing out that he personally met with the victims in April 2022, removed the priest from his parish, suspended him from ministry and conducted a local investigation that was then

forwarded to the Vatican. The Vatican said there was insufficient evidence to proceed, as did the local prosecutor’s office.

Pope Leo was born Sept. 14, 1955, in Chicago, Illinois. He holds a bachelor’s degree in mathematics from the Augustinian-run Villanova University in Pennsylvania and joined the order in 1977, making his solemn vows in 1981. He holds a degree in theology from the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago and a doctorate from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome.

He joined the Augustinian mission in Peru in 1985 and largely worked in the country until 1999 when he was elected head of the Augustinians’ Chicago-based province. From 2001 to 2013, he served as prior general of the worldwide order. In 2014, Pope Francis named him bishop of Chiclayo, in northern Peru, and the pope asked him also to be apostolic administrator of Callao, Peru, from April 2020 to May 2021.

The new pope speaks English, Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese and can read Latin and German.



OSV News photo/Eloisa Lopez, Reuters
Men wave a U.S. flag as former Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, who has chosen the papal name Leo XIV, appears on the central balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican May 8 following his election during the conclave. He is the first American pope in history.

Rosary Crusade for Vocations in West Virginia Will Kick off with Procession to Cathedral

By Joyce Bibey (Courtesy of FaithInWV)

Bishop Mark Brennan is inviting you to pray and lead – yes, lead - the Rosary Crusade for Vocations from May 13, 2025, to May 13, 2026.

What’s the saying? Control the controllables!

Let’s welcome some accountability and ownership gratefully. At least try.

Pray intentionally and boldly for Catholic vocations particularly to the priesthood, religious life, and married life that are all vital for the hope and future of the Church and spreading the Gospel by our words and deeds. Ultimately this is what will naturally lead others into a new or deeper relationship with God.

The official kickoff for the diocese will be at the Rosary Procession honoring Our Lady of Fatima at 7pm, Tuesday, May 13, beginning at St. Alphonsus Church at 2111 Market

Street in Wheeling and ending with Holy Mass at the Cathedral of St. Joseph. Children are encouraged to wear their First Holy Communion clothes to make the procession even more reverent for Our Blessed Mother.

While many won’t be able to attend, Cathedral Rector Fr. Pen (Penumaka) Manikyalarao and those present will certainly call to mind the intentions of all the faithful in the diocese.

Your Gifts of Prayer

“We are seeing the fruits of many prayers,” said Delegate for Consecrated Life Sister Martha Gomez. “Behind and before every vocation to is always the strong and intense prayer of someone: a grandmother, a grandfather, a mother, a father, a faith community.”

Watch FaithInWV, diocesan social media, your school and parish bulletins, The Catholic Spirit, and DWC.org for updates and events as the Rosary Cru-

sade unfolds between now and May 13, 2026.

Your prayers make a difference!

Last Fall Bishop Mark and Vocations Director Fr. Brian Crenwelge introduced us to 17 seminarians! Five more young men hailing from WV are attending seminaries for religious orders, and more missionary sisters and other women in formation have come to WV to serve our growing parishes and Hispanic brothers and sisters.

In addition, we have 12 men preparing for the permanent diaconate, and that is on the heels of 20 men ordained last June.

Bishop Mark truly believes those reverent prayers produced great hope and fruit.

In his homily in November, Fr. John Soplinski said, “We pray for more vocations from our home-grown young men and women—and the prayers we offer at Mass, through Sr.

Martha’s Rosaries for Vocations, through Bishop Mark’s travels, where, if he finds a young man or woman, he thinks may have a vocation, he takes their name and prays for them every day. That list is up to 200 folks!

“It is the work of Fr. Crenwelge, and his predecessors’ - Fr. (Dennis) Schuelkens and Msgr. (Paul) Hudock - tireless service in traveling the state. We priests and deacons and sisters and brothers are asked to play our part—to encourage vocations and to live our vocations in such a way that it is attractive to young men and women.

“And we ask you, the lay faithful, to play your part, not only in praying for more vocations, but to encourage your children and grandchildren, your nieces

and nephews.”

As we prayerfully contemplate our pledges and commitment to our Rosary for Vocations Crusade let us pray:

*Oh, my Jesus,
listen to my prayer today.
Bless more young people,
more men, and more
women
here in West Virginia
to say yes to your call
to be religious brothers,
sisters, and priests.
Bless my family
and my Church family
so, we can support them,
and remain close to you.
We ask Blessed Mary
and St. Joseph to come to
you
in our need to build up the
Church
in the great Mountain
State.
Amen*

Rosary Procession

Join us in prayer as we honor Our Lady of Fatima with a Rosary Procession for our Church, our world, and our families.

Tuesday, May 13
MEMORIAL OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

7:00 pm

Begins at
ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH

Ends with Holy Mass at the
CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOSEPH

OFFICIAL KICKOFF

Rosary Crusade for Vocations in WV
May 13, 2025 - May 13, 2026

Priestly Vocation Survey Results

In conjunction with the World Day of Prayer for Vocations on May 11, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations released the Ordination Class of 2025 Study, conducted annually by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University.

Nine in 10 seminarians said someone encouraged them to consider the priesthood.

Responsible for their nudge:

- Parish priest 60%
- Friend 52%
- Fellow Parishioner 42%

Never too young!

- 35% first considered the priesthood in elementary school
- 20% in high school.

Catholic school educated?

- 46% attended Catholic grade school
- 36% Catholic high school

Prayed Rosary regularly before seminary?

72%

Participated in Bible study?

48%

Eucharistic Adoration?

78%

Parish Youth Group?

51%

In the US there are 405 men who will be ordained this year in 115 dioceses and eparchies and 36 religious institutes. The survey was completed by 309 men.

More Than \$313,000 Raised for Catholic Schools through One Mission One Day

By Colleen Rowan

WEST VIRGINIA—More than \$313,000 was raised through One Mission One Day (OMOD) to Make a Difference for the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. All 24 diocesan schools participated in the annual giving event through which donations were made on the OMOD website to a particular school or schools. The site also offered a profile of each school, many of which listed a description of how the money would be used.

Heidi Sforza, director of Annual Giving for the diocese, said OMOD is more than just a fundraiser.

"It's a powerful reminder of the love and support that surrounds our Catholic schools," she said. "It brings together families, alumni, parishioners, and friends in a shared mission to uplift our students and celebrate the faith-filled education they receive. This day shines a light on the heart of our school communities and the lasting impact Catholic education has on so many lives."

"It's a powerful reminder of the love and support that surrounds our Catholic schools."

—Heidi Sforza, director of Annual Giving for the diocese

Raising the most funds was St. Joseph Catholic School in Huntington with a total of \$47,935. The 105 donors that gave to the school will help fund facility improvements that include replacing classroom carpet and hallway epoxy flooring as well as safety and security upgrades to the existing 6th Avenue crosswalk.

Coming in at a close second was St. Vincent de Paul Parish School in Wheeling which raised \$42,632. The school's 108 donors will help fund rehabilitation and modernization of classrooms.

In third was Central Catholic High School in Wheeling with

\$34,660 raised by 136 donors. St. Paul School in Weirton had the highest number of donors—266, raising \$18,402 for the school. St. Francis of Assisi School in St. Albans had the second highest of 223 donors raising the fourth highest amount of \$30,657. The school plans to use the funds for upgrading its playground.

"This includes purchasing additional pieces of equipment, adding an additional camera, and fencing to meet safety requirements," the school said in the OMOD profile. "The children love to use this area for outdoor recess."

As she reflected in another suc-

cessful OMOD, Sforza said that supporting Catholic schools means investing in the future—not just academically, but spiritually and morally as well.

"Our schools nurture the whole child, forming students who are not only well-educated but grounded in faith, service, and compassion," she said. "When we support Catholic education, we're helping to build strong, values-driven leaders for our Church and our world."

"One Mission One Day has become such a fun and meaningful tradition for our students and schools—a day filled with excitement, community spirit, and purpose," she added. "It's a wonderful opportunity to come together as one diocesan family, celebrating all that makes our Catholic schools special just before we head into summer. It's a day our students look forward to and will remember for years to come."

Total amounts raised for each school can be viewed at www.onemissiononeday.org.

ST. FRANCIS
OF
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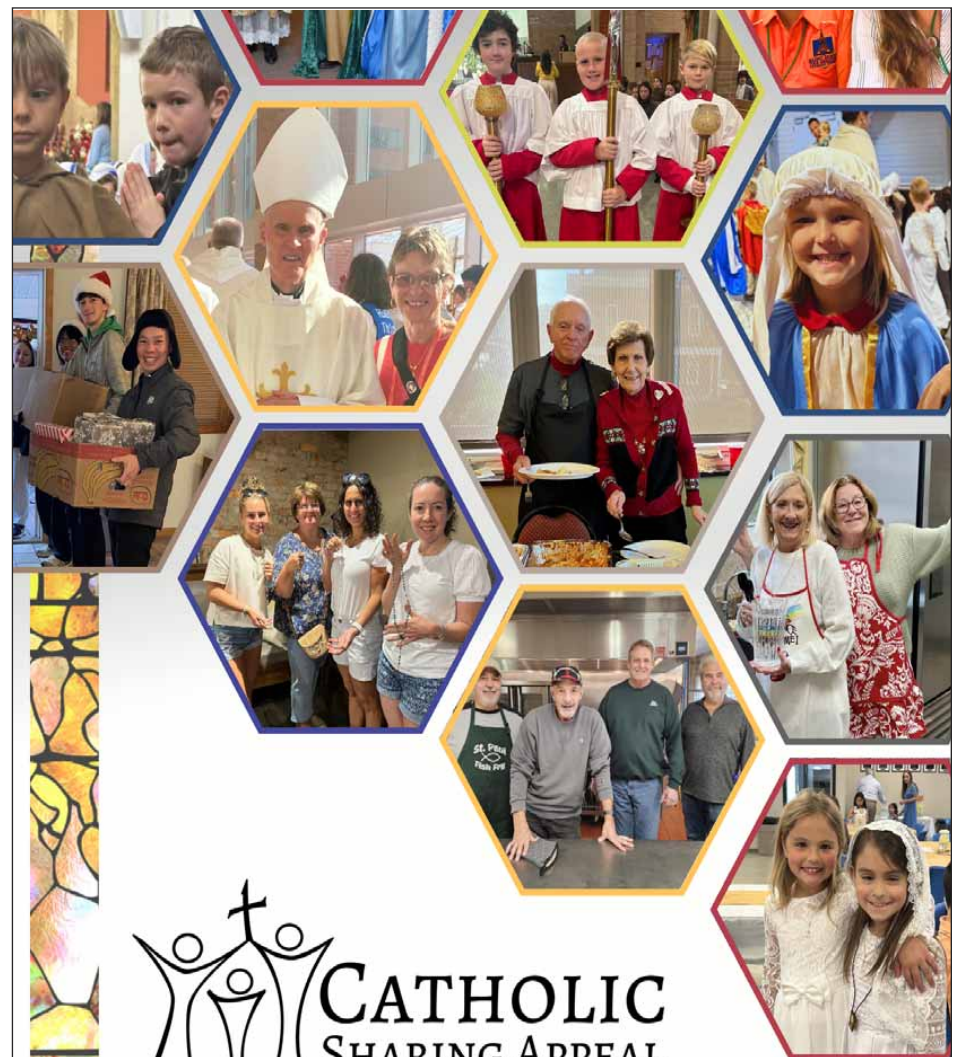
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Visit dwc.org/CSA to learn more about making an impact on evangelization and outreach efforts across West Virginia.

Saint Joseph High School Names Byrd as Principal

MARTINSBURG— Maria Byrd was appointed as the inaugural principal of Saint Joseph High School, which is opening in August 2025.

A seasoned educator and faithful leader, Byrd currently serves as principal of Saint Joseph School, overseeing students ranging in age from toddlers through eighth grade, as well as staff for that spectrum of ages. She will continue to hold that position.

Her transition to leading the high school marks a powerful continuation of her vision for whole-child education grounded in truth, goodness and faith.

Byrd brings a wealth of leadership and classroom experience, having served in education for more than a decade across multiple states and student populations. Her commitment to cultivating a learning environment rooted in Christian love, dignity and academic excellence makes her a natural choice to shepherd the high school's foundational years.

"It's an honor to continue serving the families of Saint Joseph as we expand our mission to include high school education," Byrd said. "We are not simply opening a school — we are forming the next generation of leaders, thinkers and disciples of Christ."

Byrd holds a professional administrative certificate in supervision of instruction and principalship (for prekindergarten through adult education) from the state of West Virginia. She completed a graduate program in school administration and supervision at Liberty University in 2022, and earned a master's degree in education from Jacksonville State University in 2012. She also holds an MBA from the University of Phoenix and a Bachelor of Science in business with a major in accounting.

Her professional journey included teaching in Loudoun County (Virginia) Public Schools, where she worked with English lan-

guage learners and taught fourth grade. Before moving to Virginia, she taught first grade and served second-language students in Alabama, where she also worked five summers with the migrant program in St. Clair County, helping families thrive through education.

Byrd's leadership extends beyond the classroom. Originally from Lima, Peru, she brings a global perspective to her work and a deep sense of service. She currently serves as president of the Legion of Mary Curia at her home parish, St. James the Greater Church, and has remained actively involved in religious education throughout her life.

As a cradle Catholic, a mother and a lifelong learner, Byrd approaches education with deep reverence for its power to transform hearts and minds. Her leadership philosophy is grounded in her Christian worldview: "As a school leader, I am respon-

sible for every child and adult under my care. The well-being and presence of those I serve must take priority over any other task. The strength of our vision depends on the relationships we cultivate — relationships rooted in Christian courtesy, love and charity. We are called to be the light of the world. Education is not only about knowledge, it's about helping students recognize their God-given dignity and potential. As we grow in learning, we grow in truth."

As Saint Joseph High School prepares to welcome its first ninth- and 10th-grade classes, Byrd's leadership will be instrumental in shaping the school's early identity — one defined by faith, academic rigor and a culture of care. With her guidance, the school will continue to build on its legacy of excellence, while opening new doors for students to explore dual enrollment, career pathways and Christ-centered



Maria Byrd

formation.

"We are thrilled to have Mrs. Byrd leading this new chapter," said Deacon Patrick Michel. "She understands what it means to lead with both wisdom and heart, and we couldn't ask for a more faithful steward of this mission."

For more information about Saint Joseph High School, enrollment opportunities and upcoming events, please contact Michel at 304-267-6447 or deaconpat@stjosephwv.org.

ONE MILLION ROSARIES FOR UNBORN BABIES

Prayer Event Friday, May 9th – Sunday, May 11th

Month of Mary

Mother's Day Weekend



This is an international effort to have **1,000,000 Rosaries** said for the following intention:

For the protection of unborn human persons and true respect for life from the moment of conception through natural death



We are attempting to sponsor **1000** rosaries with this special intention. **Will you help?** Pass this on to everyone you know! This is an international event started by Saint Michael The Archangel Organization. Please help spread the word!

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Wheeling Central's Luke Tiu Named One of Five WVU Foundation Scholars

By Emma Delk (Courtesy of the *Intelligencer*, *Wheeling News-Register*)

When Central Catholic High School senior Luke Tiu joined a follow-up Zoom meeting for West Virginia University's Bucklew Scholarship recipients, he did not expect WVU President Gordon Gee to pop up on his screen.

He was then shocked when Gee informed him that he would join an elite group in the school's history as one of the five 2025-26 WVU Foundation Scholars.

The Foundation Scholarship is the university's highest academic scholarship, and Tiu is the first Central student to receive the honor in more than 10 years. Valued at more than \$90,000, the scholarship will cover college costs for four years of undergraduate studies, including tuition and fees, room and board and a book stipend.

Tiu's cohort of scholars includes Paige Fox from Pikeview High School, Noah Galvin from Martinsburg High School, Emily Garrett from Braxton County High School and Zoey Hoffman from Buffalo High School.

"I was so surprised when I saw Gordon Gee on my screen," Tiu recalled. "I had no idea they would tell me I got that scholarship. It was a complete shock."

Tiu's journey to receive the scholarship began with his application for the Bucklew Scholarship, which requires a minimum grade point average of 3.8 and a minimum composite score of 30 on the ACT or the equivalent SAT score. Tiu was one of the 50 to 60 students selected from the initial application pool to interview over the phone for the Bucklew.

After being named one of the 20 Bucklew Scholars, Tiu traveled to Morgantown to be interviewed by former Foundation Scholars and Honors College faculty for the Foundation Scholarship.

As he moved through the application process, Tiu said he felt "pretty confident" in the quality of his three essays and his phone and in-person interviews.

"My phone interview went very well," Tiu noted. "It was very personable, so I was happy when I got the Bucklew. I was already happy to receive the Bucklew, so it was a great surprise when I got the Foundation as well."

Tiu points to his unique career aspirations as what set him apart during the application process. With most of his family involved in the medical field, Tiu plans to use his biology degree as an unortho-

dox path to law school.

Tiu's father, Jeremy Tiu, owns the private practice Tiu Ear, Nose, Throat and Allergy. Tiu's mother, Melissa Tiu, is a registered nurse and works as the Office Manager at the practice.

Though much of his family is involved in medicine, a medical career was not in the cards for Tiu. After shadowing at his father's practice, Tiu realized there was one thing holding him back—his squeamishness.

"I had to help my dad once last minute at the clinic, and there were a lot of ears that needed to be cleaned that day," Tiu recalled. "My dad was doing that, and I was so grossed out when I helped him on one case. After that, I thought, 'I can't do this, a career in medicine is not for me.'"

After speaking with his uncle James Tiu, who majored in biology in college before heading to law school, Tiu realized he could use his love for STEM outside the medical field as a health policy lawyer. Tiu plans to major in biology and minor in law and legal studies at WVU.

"I come from a family where a ton of people majored in biology — my dad, uncle and grandfather are all doctors, and my mother is a nurse," Tiu said. "I've always liked the sciences and reading and writing, so I figured, why can't I combine the two and go to law school?"

Tiu hopes his unique major will set him apart on his law school applications. With his law degree, Tiu hopes to help improve West Virginians' health by working on state health policies.

"West Virginia is towards the bottom of the totem pole in a lot of health statistics, and growing up in a health-oriented family, I think it would be nice to improve the health of West Virginia," Tiu said. "My parents always preach to me about giving back, no matter what I do with my career and make my community a better place, whether I was a garbage man or CEO, so that's what I'd like to do."

Though he is still at least four years away from attending law school, Tiu noted that having a well-thought-out plan for his college career and what he plans to do afterwards helped him during the Foundation Scholarship application process.

"I think it's too early for me to be completely set in my career path, but I think they like to hear that applicants have a plan heading into school," Tiu said. "I'm



Emma Delk photo, courtesy of the *Intelligencer*, *Wheeling News-Register*. Wheeling Central Catholic High School senior Luke Tiu stands with Principal Rebecca Sancomb outside the school after being named a WVU Foundation Scholar.

going to head into college with an open mind and let it shape me from there."

In addition to having a thorough plan for college, Tiu credits his four years at Central with earning him the scholarship. As a third-generation Central student, Tiu said he was shaped by the same values his family members learned at the school.

"You learn how to be an adult at Central Catholic High School," Tiu said. "You learn how to talk to adults and be professional, which is another thing they're looking for. All my interviews for the scholarship went very well, and I think Central played a large part in that."

Central Catholic Principal Rebecca Sancomb said Tiu entered the school "ready to make an impact," and thought he achieved that goal. In addition to being a "phenomenal student," Sancomb noted Tiu's character was even more impressive than his academic achievements.

"Luke is a phenomenal student,

and I have no question he will excel at that level," Sancomb said. "However, as good a student as he is, he's a better person. Luke is just a good human being, and his faith, how he treats people and his commitment to serving are all very much part of our mission here. As much as he says that we shaped him, he has really lived our mission here at CCHS and impacted others in the same way."

Tiu noted that his next step of heading to college would be a "huge one," but he felt prepared and ready to enjoy the experience. He added that he was excited to possibly study abroad in Japan, with the \$4,500 stipend each Foundation Scholar receives, to diversify his academic journey.

"I'm extremely grateful to everyone who's helped me get to this point, I couldn't have done any of this without so much help, and I couldn't even list everyone who helped me," Tiu said. "I'm extremely grateful to WVU, my school, my family and to God."



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Catholic Charities West Virginia Merges with St. Ursula Food Pantry & Outreach Center

Expanding Hunger Relief in Monongalia County

MORGANTOWN — Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) is proud to announce its merger with St. Ursula Food Pantry & Outreach Center in Pursglove. This strategic partnership will allow both organizations to enhance and expand services to individuals and families facing food insecurity in Monongalia County.

St. Ursula Food Pantry & Outreach Center, a long-standing and deeply rooted presence in the community, has provided critical food assistance and support to households living at or below the poverty level. With services including scheduled pantry appointments, emergency food distribution, and a dedicated Baby and Toddler Pro-

gram, St. Ursula has been a lifeline for families west of the Monongahela River and the Town of Star City.

“St. Ursula Food Pantry & Outreach has faithfully served our neighbors in need with dignity and compassion,” said Ashlie Kotson, Northern Regional director of Catholic Charities West Virginia. “We are honored to join together to continue and grow this mission, guided by our shared commitment to Catholic social teaching and to building stronger, healthier communities.”

The merger reflects Catholic Charities’ ongoing efforts to collaborate with community partners to provide effective, localized solu-

tions to poverty. As part of CCWVa, the St. Ursula site will benefit from increased access to regional food distribution networks, and strengthened operational support—while maintaining the community spirit and volunteer-led engagement that has been the hallmark of St. Ursula’s work.

St. Ursula Food Pantry & Outreach is a proud member of the United Way Family Resource Network Food and Hunger Committee and the Mountaineer Food Bank, and an active participant in community food drives and Empty Bowls Monongalia.

“This merger is a powerful way to reach more people with the care and compassion they deserve. St.

Ursula Food Pantry has been a lifeline in this community, and together, we’ll build on that foundation to serve more families, meet urgent needs, and bring hope to those we serve,” stated Mark Phillips, president and CEO of Catholic Charities West Virginia.

Catholic Charities West Virginia is the largest private social service provider in the state, serving all 55 counties with compassionate care for tens of thousands of people each year. We serve all people—regardless of faith or background—working alongside communities to create lasting change and help individuals reach their full potential. To learn more, please visit www.ccwva.org.

Catholic Charities West Virginia Relocates Weirton Office to Community Bread Basket Facility

WEIRTON—Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) is pleased to announce the relocation of its Weirton office to the Community Bread Basket facility. This move strengthens CCWVa’s ability to serve individuals and families in the Northern Panhandle by providing increased access to compassionate care and vital support services.

While both organizations remain independent, this shared space will enhance collaboration and provide greater convenience for clients seeking assistance. Catholic Charities West Virginia will continue offering its core services at the new location, including emergency financial assistance and other resources aimed at addressing poverty and promoting stability.

“We’re grateful for the opportunity to relocate our office to such a welcoming and mission-aligned space,” said Mark Phillips, president and CEO of Catholic Char-

ities West Virginia. “By working alongside Community Bread Basket, we can offer our services in a more accessible location while continuing to walk with our neighbors in need with dignity and love.”

Community Bread Basket will continue to operate all of its own programs and outreach efforts as usual. The co-location simply provides a new home for CCWVa’s Weirton team as they continue their work throughout Hancock and Brooke Counties.

Catholic Charities West Virginia is the largest private social service provider in the state, serving all 55 counties with compassionate care for tens of thousands each year. Rooted in God’s love, we serve all people—regardless of faith or background—working alongside communities to create lasting change and help individuals reach their full potential. To learn more, please visit www.ccwva.org.



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HHS Releases Report Critical of Gender Transition Procedures for Youth

By **Kate Scanlon, OSV News**
WASHINGTON (OSV News)

— The Department of Health and Human Services recently released what it called a “comprehensive review” of medical or surgical gender reassignment procedures for minors who identify as transgender, calling for broader use of psychotherapy for young people with gender dysphoria rather than what proponents call gender-affirming care.

Catholic health care providers and commentators praised the report.

The more than 400-page document that HHS released May 1 was the result of a January executive order issued by President Donald Trump that said his administration would seek to prohibit certain types of medical or surgical gender reassignment procedures for those under 19. That order also required HHS to publish “a review of the existing literature on best practices for promoting the health of children who assert gender dysphoria, rapid-onset gender dysphoria, or other identity-based confusion.”

“Our duty is to protect our nation’s children — not expose them to unproven and irreversible medical interventions,” Dr. Jay Bhattacharya, director of HHS’ National Institutes of Health, said in a statement. “We must follow the gold standard of science, not activist agendas.”

Supporters of banning gender transition surgeries or hormonal treatments for minors who identify as transgender say such restrictions will prevent them from making irreversible decisions as children that they may later come to regret as adults.

Theresa Farnan, a fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, told OSV News the report “exceeded my expectations.”

The report, Farnan argued, sifts “through all available evidence analyzing the quality of evidence that is alleged to support pediatric medical transition” to show that “this evidence is weak and of low quality.”

The report found that what proponents sometimes call a “gender-affirming” model of care “includes irreversible endocrine and surgical interventions on minors with no physical pathology.” It said these interventions risk “significant harms including infertility/steril-

ity, sexual dysfunction, impaired bone density accrual, adverse cognitive impacts, cardiovascular disease and metabolic disorders, psychiatric disorders, surgical complications, and regret.”

Dr. Alfonso Oliva, a plastic and reconstructive surgeon and an executive board member of the Catholic Medical Association, told OSV News that the HHS report was similar to England’s notable Cass report that found “gaps in the evidence base” for puberty blockers, which arrest the onset of puberty by inhibiting sex hormones, and led to that nation scaling back its approach to the issue.

“There are no systematic reviews that show a benefit to medical transitioning of children and adolescents,” Oliva said. “However, the risks include permanent sterility, decreased cognitive development, worsening psychological health, depleted bone density, increase in obesity, diabetes, and insulin resistance.”

Louis Brown Jr., executive director of the Christ Medicus Foundation, a Catholic health care ministry that works to protect religious freedom for medical professionals and patients, told OSV News that a Catholic medical approach to treating a minor patient experiencing gender dysphoria would be to care for the patient on “the spiritual level, on the physical level, their mental health and their emotional health, but starting from the place that every child is a gift of God is good, has dignity and is owed love and truth.”

Critics of the report argued that HHS did not disclose the report’s authors. For example, the Cass report was named for its author, Dr. Hilary Cass, a former president of the Royal College of Pediatrics and Child Health, whom the NHS appointed in 2020 to conduct an independent review of its gender identity services.

But the HHS report’s supporters who spoke with OSV News argued that the department’s decision to withhold the authors’ names was not a source of concern for them.

“I do find it telling that instead of responding to the contents of the report on its own merits, critics keep harping on the fact that the authors are anonymous or trying to identify who the authors might be,” Farnan argued.

Oliva acknowledged that it is “not typical” to withhold the au-

thors’ names on such a report. But he noted HHS’ claim that nine experts across the political spectrum, who are very well known and respected in their fields, were involved.

“They expect that the review will undergo peer-reviewed scrutiny and HHS claims they wished to maintain the integrity of this process,” he said. “We’ll see if that is true and whether the names will be published.”

At least 25 Republican-led states have adopted laws restricting or banning gender reassignment surgery or related hormonal treatments for minors. A still-pending ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in *United States v. Skrmetti*, a challenge to one such law in Tennessee, could potentially have a significant impact on the future of those laws.

In guidance on health care policy and practices released in March 2023, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Doctrine stated the church’s opposition to interventions that “involve the use of surgical or chemical techniques that aim to exchange the sex characteristics of a patient’s body for those of the opposite sex or for simulations thereof.”

“Any technological intervention that does not accord with the fundamental order of the human person as a unity of body and soul, including the sexual difference inscribed in the body, ultimately does not help but, rather, harms the human person,” the document states.

(Kate Scanlon is a national reporter for OSV News covering Washington.)

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Cardinal Dolan, Bishop Barron to Serve on Trump's New Religious Liberty Commission

By Tyler Arnold, CNA

Two members of the Catholic hierarchy in the United States — Cardinal Timothy Dolan and Bishop Robert Barron — have been tapped to serve on a new presidential commission on religious liberty created by President Donald Trump on May 1.

Trump signed an executive order creating the Religious Liberty Commission in the White House Rose Garden surrounded by faith leaders from various traditions. The announcement coincided with the country's National Day of Prayer.

"As we bow our heads this beautiful day in the Rose Garden on the National Day of Prayer, we once again entrust our lives, our liberties, our happiness to the Creator who gave them to us and who loves us," said Trump, a self-described "nondenominational Christian," before signing the order.

The new Religious Liberty Commission is tasked with creating a report on current threats to freedom of religion and strategies to enhance legal protections for those rights. The report will also outline

the foundations of religious liberty in the United States and provide guidance on how to increase the awareness of peaceful religious pluralism in the country.

Some of the commission's key areas of focus will include parental rights in religious education, school choice, conscience protections, free speech for religious entities, institutional autonomy, and attacks on houses of worship. It was created due to concerns that federal and state policies have infringed upon those rights.

Members of the newly formed commission include the two Catholic prelates and Protestant leaders, such as Pastor Paula White, along with rabbis and imams. The Catholic president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, Ryan Anderson, was also appointed to serve on the commission, as was psychologist and television personality Dr. Phil McGraw and renowned neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson.

The commission will be chaired by Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, an evangelical Christian who Trump said gave him the idea to create the commission.

"No one should get between God and a believer," Patrick said at the event. "No one should get between God and those seeking him."

Bishop Robert Barron of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota, was in attendance and delivered a prayer for the country and the president. Dolan, the archbishop of New York and a cardinal elector in the upcoming papal conclave, is in Rome.

"We know that the rights we enjoy to life, to liberty, to the pursuit of happiness are given not by government or popular consensus but by [God]," Barron said in his prayer, adding that "we are indeed a nation under God."

Bishop Barron said religious liberty "has been revered from the very beginning of our republic as our first freedom" and prayed that God "might give us the grace to preserve it and strengthen it."

He prayed that God will "bless our president" and that Trump will "strive always to please you in what he says and does, and may he govern under the direction of your providence." He prayed that the

president's decisions will "always be particularly mindful of those who suffer and those who are most in need."

Bishop Barron also prayed for the American people to always be "architects of justice and makers of peace" and asked God for a country that is "prosperous and strong, but above all righteous and docile to your will."

In a post on X, Bishop Barron expressed gratitude toward Trump for appointing him to serve on the commission and said that religious liberty is a central concern of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

"I see my task as bringing the perspective of Catholic social teaching to bear as the commission endeavors to shape public policy in this matter," he wrote.

Bishop Barron added that he will try to model his service after Father Theodore Hesburgh, who was the president of the University of Notre Dame from 1952–1987 and served on 16 different presidential commissions in Republican and Democratic administrations.

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Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Confirmation Schedule, Spring 2025 Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

Sunday, May 11: Cathedral of St. Joseph, Wheeling;
10:30 a.m.

Sunday, May 11: St. Mary, Star City; 4:00 p.m.

Monday, May 12: St. Michael, Wheeling; 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 14: St. Michael, Vienna; 7:00 p.m.

Friday, May 16: St. Joseph, Martinsburg; 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 17: St. James, Charles Town; 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, May 17: St. Leo, Inwood; 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 18: St. Bernadette, Hedgesville; 11:00 a.m.

Sunday, May 18: St. Vincent de Paul, Berkeley Springs;
5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 21: St. Joseph the Worker, Weirton;
6:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 22: St. Thomas Aquinas, Thomas;
5:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 25: St. Paul, Weirton; 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 28: St. Patrick, Weston; 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 31: Annunciation of Our Lord, Fort Ashby;
4:30 p.m.

Sunday, June 1: St. Luke the Evangelist, Cheat Lake;
2:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 7: St. Francis of Assisi, St. Albans; 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 8: St. Francis de Sales, Beckley; 11:00 a.m.

Sunday, June 8: Sacred Heart, Bluefield, 4:30 p.m.

A message from the West Virginia Knights of Columbus State Council

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- 6:30 WOAY ABC 4 Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)
- 9:30 WVVA NBC 6 Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)
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Wheeling University Commencement Speaker Tells Graduates to Make Their Dreams Happen

WHEELING — Wheeling University's Director of Campus Ministry, Father David Griffin told the class of 2025 they had a final assignment as they embark on their professional careers ... don't listen to the critics – make your dreams happen.

During the Wheeling University's 67th Commencement exercises, President Dianna M. Vargo, Ed.D., presented degrees to undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students. Additionally, Father Griffin was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

In his address, Father Griffin told the graduates after four years of early morning practices, service projects, coffee in the kiosk, and midnight food runs to Sheetz, it is time to begin again. Commencement, he noted, marks the completion of one chapter and the beginning of a new one. He reminded them to remain grounded in the mission by always being men and women for life, leadership and service.

Father Griffin also shared lessons he has learned: "Be for something and not just complain about it. Seek out role models and mentors and become one yourself. Admit when things go wrong and seek a solution instead of an excuse. Never settle for 'good enough,' you are better than that."

He said, in 1960, President Kennedy told the world at his inauguration, the United States would send astronauts to the moon within a decade. "Critics immediately said, it wouldn't happen, we don't have the technology. Decades later, the Space agency announced that a space station would be launched and circle the Earth ... critics said it wouldn't happen, it is too



Courtesy photo
Wheeling University awarded more than 200 degrees during its 67th Commencement. From left are Board Chair David Hendrickson, Valedictorian Jade Miller, Commencement Speaker Father David Griffin, Salutatorian Abigail Elliott, and University President Dianna Vargo, Ed.D.

expensive.

"So, one final assignment ... in the diversity of your professional careers, dream and make it happen," he said.

Before handing out degrees to the Class of 2025, Vargo offered some words of encouragement to the graduates.

"Go strong with confidence and determination from this day forward," she said. "Be our proud example of Wheeling University."

Class Valedictorian, Jade Miller of Washington, Pennsylvania, said when she chose to attend her father's alma mater, many asked her, "Why Wheeling?" Four years after she became a Cardinal, Miller took the opportunity Saturday to thank God for lead-

ing her and her classmates to "little old Wheeling, West Virginia."

"I grew up in a household that never pressured me in school, they just asked that I do my best. My family made it very clear to me that my value was not found in my accolades, but in the person I am. They loved me no matter how I performed, similar to how God feels about us!" she said.

She added, "As much as we excelled in our given areas of school, this is not the reason I will remember

you all by. These are the things I find important and what I will remember you all by. I will remember you by your character, your kindness, your compassion, and your love... So, no matter what GPA you are leaving here with, no matter how many (honor) cords are around your neck, know that God loves you, has a purpose for you, and sees value in his children."

Miller concluded, "Wheeling University taught me, it is the people who make the place. Some time between freshman

year and now, my house became my parents' house, and my friends here became my home. Which makes me believe those 'West Virginia Country Roads' truly did take me home. Thank you, God, for bringing us to this very moment in this very place."

Chair of the University's Board of Trustees, David Hendrickson, J.D., congratulated the graduates and asked them to help at least one individual each day. "It doesn't matter how big or small the assist is, but what matters is that you are giving back to an individual you may or may not know. If we could get the entire world to do the same thing every day, wouldn't it be a much better place to live?"

The University also honored Jill Emery, Chair of Nursing, by awarding her the Fr. Edward Gannon, S.J. Outstanding Teaching Award. Each year, Wheeling University gives two medals during Commencement to those graduates who have distinguished themselves both in service and in academics. The Mary Woomer Medal and Archbishop John J. Swint Medals, are given to the woman and man in the class who most exemplifies the ideals of Wheeling University. Riley Kindall was the recipient of the Woomer Medal, while Dasyn Hores was given the Swint Medal.

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El cardenal Prevost, misionero de EEUU, es elegido Papa y toma el nombre de León XIV

Por Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS)—El cardenal Robert F. Prevost, nacido en Chicago y prefecto del Dicasterio para los Obispos bajo el Papa Francisco, fue elegido el 267º Papa el 8 de mayo y tomó el nombre de Papa León XIV.

Es el primer norteamericano elegido Papa y, antes del cónclave, era el cardenal estadounidense más mencionado como posible sucesor de San Pedro. Tiene la nacionalidad estadounidense y peruana, ya que sirvió como misionero en Perú por muchos años.

La fumata blanca salió de la chimenea del tejado de la Capilla Sixtina a las 6:07 p.m., hora de Roma, y pocos minutos después empezaron a sonar las campanas de la Basílica de San Pedro.

Unos 20 minutos más tarde, la banda de la policía vaticana y dos docenas de miembros de la Guardia Suiza Pontificia entraron en la plaza de San Pedro. Pronto se les unió la banda de música de los Carabinieri italianos, una rama de la policía militar, y unidades de otras ramas del ejército italiano.

Nada más conocerse la noticia, gentes de toda Roma corrieron a unirse a las decenas de miles que ya se encontraban en la plaza para ver el humo. Entre ellos se encontraba el alcalde de Roma, Roberto Gualtieri.

El cardenal francés Dominique Mamberti, protodiácono del Colegio Cardenalicio, apareció en el balcón central de la basílica de San Pedro a las 7:12 p.m.: "Os anuncio una gran alegría. Tenemos Papa ('Habemus papam')", diciendo el nombre del cardenal en latín y anunciando el nombre por el que será llamado.

Los cardenales que tenían más de 80 años, quienes no podían participar en el cónclave, se unieron a la multitud en la plaza. Entre ellos se encontraban los cardenales Seán P. O'Malley, arzobispo emérito de Boston; Donald W. Wuerl, arzobispo emérito de Washington; y Marc Ouellet, prefecto emérito de la Congregación para los Obispos.

El Papa, de 69 años, ha sido durante mucho tiempo misionero en Perú y tiene la nacionalidad estadounidense y peruana.

La Repubblica, el principal diario italiano, lo describió el 25 de abril como "cosmopolita y tímido", pero también dijo que era "apreciado por conservadores y progresistas. Tiene visibilidad mundial en un cónclave en el que pocos (cardenales) se conocen".

Esa visibilidad proviene del hecho de que, como prefecto del Dicasterio para los Obispos durante los últimos dos años, fue fundamental para ayudar al Papa Francisco a elegir obispos para muchas diócesis de rito latino, se reunió con cientos de obispos durante sus visitas "ad limina" a Roma y fue llamado a ayudar a los obispos de rito latino del mundo "en todos los asuntos relacionados con el ejercicio correcto y fructífero del oficio pastoral que se les ha confiado".

El nuevo Papa estaba sirviendo como obispo de Chiclayo, Perú, cuando el Papa Francisco lo llamó a servir en el Vaticano en enero de 2023.

Durante una charla en la parroquia de San Judas en Chicago en agosto, el entonces cardenal dijo que el Papa Francisco lo nominó para ese puesto "específicamente porque no quería que alguien de la Curia Romana asumiera este papel.



Foto CNS/Vatican Media

El Papa León XIV, quien antes fuera el cardenal Robert F. Prevost, saluda a la multitud en la Plaza de San Pedro del Vaticano tras su elección como Papa el 8 de mayo de 2025. El nuevo Papa nació en Chicago.

Quería a un misionero; quería a alguien de fuera; quería a alguien que entrara con una perspectiva diferente".

En una entrevista de marzo de 2024 con Catholic News Service, dijo que la decisión del Papa Francisco en 2022 de nombrar a tres mujeres como miembros de pleno derecho del dicasterio, dándoles entrada en la selección de obispos "contribuye significativamente al proceso de discernimiento en la búsqueda de quienes esperamos sean los mejores candidatos para servir a la Iglesia en el ministerio episcopal".

Para disuadir actitudes de clericalismo entre los obispos, dijo, "es importante encontrar hombres que estén verdaderamente interesados en servir, en predicar el Evangelio, no sólo con palabras elocuentes, sino más bien con el ejemplo y el testimonio que dan".

De hecho, dijo el cardenal, el baluarte "más eficaz e importante" del Papa Francisco contra el clericalismo es ser "un pastor que predica con el gesto".

En una entrevista en 2023 con Vatican News, el entonces cardenal Prevost habló sobre la cualidad de liderazgo esencial de un obispo.

"El Papa Francisco ha hablado de cuatro tipos de cercanía: cercanía a Dios, a los hermanos obispos, a los sacerdotes y a todo el pueblo de Dios", dijo. "No hay que ceder a la tentación de vivir aislados, separados en un palacio, satisfechos con un determinado nivel social o un determinado nivel dentro de la Iglesia".

"Y no debemos escondernos detrás de una idea de autoridad que hoy ya no tiene sentido", dijo. "La autoridad que tenemos es servir, acompañar a los sacerdotes, ser pastores y maestros".

Como prefecto de ese dicasterio, el entonces cardenal Prevost también fue presidente de la Pontificia Comisión para América Latina, donde reside casi el 40% de los católicos del mundo.

Natural de Chicago, también fue prior general de los agustinos y pasó más de dos décadas sirviendo en Perú, primero como misionero agus-

tino y después como obispo de Chiclayo.

Poco después de llegar a Roma para dirigir el dicasterio, declaró a Vatican News que los obispos tienen la misión especial de promover la unidad de la Iglesia.

"La falta de unidad es una herida que sufre la Iglesia, muy dolorosa", dijo en mayo de 2023. "Las divisiones y las polémicas en la Iglesia no ayudan nada. Los obispos especialmente debemos acelerar este movimiento hacia la unidad, hacia la comunión en la Iglesia".

En septiembre, un programa de televisión de Perú informó sobre las acusaciones de tres mujeres que afirmaban que el entonces obispo Prevost no actuó contra un sacerdote que abusó sexualmente de ellas cuando eran menores. La diócesis negó rotundamente la acusación, señalando que se reunió personalmente con las víctimas en abril de 2022, apartó al sacerdote de su parroquia, lo suspendió de su ministerio y llevó a cabo una investigación local que luego se remitió al Vaticano. El Vaticano dijo que no había pruebas suficientes para proceder, al igual que la fiscalía local.

El Papa León XIV nació el 14 de septiembre de 1955 en Chicago, Illinois. Licenciado en Matemáticas por la Universidad agustiniana de Villanova, Pensilvania, ingresó en la orden en 1977 y emitió los votos solemnes en 1981. Es licenciado en Teología por la Catholic Theological Union de Chicago y doctor por la Pontificia Universidad Santo Tomás de Aquino de Roma.

Se unió a la misión agustiniana en Perú en 1985 y trabajó en el país hasta 1999, cuando fue elegido jefe de la provincia agustiniana de Chicago. De 2001 a 2013, fue prior general de esta orden. En 2014, el Papa Francisco lo nombró obispo de Chiclayo, en el norte de Perú, y el Papa le pidió también que fuera administrador apostólico de Callao, Perú, de abril de 2020 a mayo de 2021.

El nuevo Papa habla inglés, español, italiano, francés, portugués y sabe leer latín y alemán.

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Intentamos patrocinar _____ rosarios con esta intención especial. ¿Nos ayudas? ¡Comparte esto con todos tus conocidos! Este es un evento internacional organizado por la Organización San Miguel Arcángel. Es importante saber cuántos Rosarios se ha rezado durante los tres días.

Por favor, escriba la cantidad de su compromiso en la hoja de registro a continuación o en el Narthex durante las inscripciones o en el tablón de anuncios.

Por favor, regístrese solo una vez por familia para evitar duplicar los recuentos totales.

También puedes registrarte online en:

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¡Piensa en el impacto que 1,000,000 Rosarios rezados en todo el mundo el mismo fin de semana podría tener!

¡Tus oraciones importan muchísimo a los niños no nacidos!

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 Estados 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, Diocese 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 ofrece 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.

Employment Opportunities

Part-Time Teaching Positions at St. Vincent de Paul Parish School, Wheeling, W.Va.

We are currently hiring for the following part-time positions for the 2025-2026 school year:

- Middle School Math Teacher (Grades 6-8)
- Middle School Science Teacher (Grades 6-8)
- Music Teacher for PK through 8th Grade
- Art Teacher for PK through 8th Grade
- Technology Teacher for Kindergarten through 8th Grade
- 8th Grade Spanish Teacher

These part-time positions may be combined to create a full-time role, depending on qualifications and availability.

Bachelor's Degree / Certification in Education required.

Please contact the school or email jperoni@stvincentschool.org for more information.

St. Michael Parish, Wheeling



St. Michael Parish

Young Adult Group* Invites You to Join in Their Summer Kick-Off Event!

The Spirit Spikers vs The Venerable Volleys

Team captain for the **Spirit Spikers** (you, the Young Adults):

Emma "The Rage" Romanek

Team captain for our local clergy, **The Venerable Volleys**:

Fr. Carlos "The Cannon" Melocoton

Thursday, May 29, 2025

5:30pm

Angelus Center

Volleyball and BBQ

*All the food and fun are FREE!***

Please invite a friend or two!

****BBQ for the Young Adult Group & Volleyball Teams**

*The Young Adult Group is open to anyone between the ages of 20ish-35 who wish to build Christian Community while having fun!

The summer lineup includes:

June – Music & Pizza in the Park (Oglebay or Wheeling)

July – Game night and dinner at the Angelus Center

August – Pickleball Event at local court

For more information on the Young Adult Group or to RSVP, please contact Emma Romanek @ 304-905-4229

Human Resources Generalist

The Human Resources Generalist as a member of Diocesan Services, is committed to advancing the mission of Jesus Christ, consistent with the core purpose and Gospel values enunciated in the Diocesan Services' Mission Statement. The Human Resources Generalist will work as part of the HR team with a focus on supporting the Catholic Schools throughout the Diocese and serve to drive the onboarding process within the Diocese.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES: Performs all onboarding for Diocese, including schools and parishes; Works directly with school administration and staff to ensure accuracy and proper use of entire HRIS system; Supports person for Family Medical Leave and Short Term Disability; Ensures all ACA reporting and maintains file accuracy in the payroll system; Assists with open enrollment for all benefit platforms; Helps maintain organizational guidelines; Maintain employee files and records electronically; Monitors HR Help Desk; Backup for Diocesan Pension Plans.

QUALIFICATIONS: High school graduate. Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources or Business; Five(5) years' experience in human resources; Firm knowledge and understanding of human resources best practices; Knowledge and experience working with payroll and HRIS applications. Labor relations and policy experience a plus; Ability to maintain confidentiality; Ability to work collaboratively in a team environment; Qualified candidates should forward a cover letter and current resume to: Debbie Turziano, Director of Human Resources at dturziano@dwc.org.

DWC is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer. Click here to apply.

Cook

The Cook at St. John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston, as a member of Diocesan Services, is committed to advancing the mission of Jesus Christ and offering hospitality to our guests. The Cook is responsible for the preparation, service, clean-up and storage of all meals, snacks and food service for special functions. Assures the kitchen/dining room/dish room areas are clean and in good order at the end of a shift or function. Oversees and assists kitchen aides in the preparation, service and storage of food and cleanliness of the kitchen/dining area. Works early mornings, days, evenings, weekends and holidays/holydays as needed. Prefer a minimum of one year experience in food service. Contact the Director, Gerri Wright at 304.342.0507 or gwright@dwc.org to schedule an interview or for more information.

Housekeeper

The Housekeeper at St. John XXIII Pastoral Center, as a member of Diocesan Services, is committed to advancing the mission of Jesus Christ and offering hospitality to our guests. The Housekeeper is responsible for cleaning and preparing the facility, laundry and guest relations. Works evenings, weekends and holidays/holydays as needed. Helps in kitchen as needed. Contact the Director, Gerri Wright at 304.342.0507 or gwright@dwc.org to schedule an interview or for more information.

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