

THE CATHOLIC

Spirit

Bishop Brennan Issues Statement on Colorado Springs Mass Shooting

November 22, 2022

Another mass shooting occurred late Saturday night at a night club for members of the LGBTQ+ community in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Our faith teaches us to do good to our neighbor, not harm, and explicitly forbids us to kill our neighbor. We do not have to agree with the lifestyle, political views, religious beliefs, or immigration status of our neighbor, but we must respect his or her bodily integrity and take measures to ensure that others respect it as well.

While on November 19 it was members of the LGBTQ+ community who were attacked (as in the Pulse Club massacre in Orlando, Florida), Jews, Christians, Moslems, African Americans, Latinos, students at school, people shopping and music lovers going to concerts have also been the target of hate-filled murderers. This is not the America I grew up in, when such violence was rare, with the exception of violence toward African Americans. When is it going to stop?

When I was young, guns were far less common than they are now. Boys in my school who had a heated argument would often meet after school to fight with their fists. I didn't like that either, but I never saw anyone die from it. Now, young men will bring a gun and kill their enemy and perhaps others with him.

We have put our heads in the sand so that we don't have to face the truth: the proliferation of guns is a strong contributing factor to the surge of violence in our communities. We can speak all day about the right to own a gun, but rights must be balanced with responsibilities. We have a duty not only to defend individual rights but also to promote the common good. The pendulum has swung too far to the side of individual rights. It is time to take effective steps to curb the plague of gun violence.

Criminal and mental health background checks, stronger than those adopted by the US Congress this past summer, should be enacted. Assault weapons used to kill multiple people should be banned outright, as we once did. Those who use guns to hunt should agree, out

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Catholic Schools, Knights of Columbus Bring Christmas Cheer in Parade

The Knights of Columbus and the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston brought Christmas cheer to the community Nov. 18 with their festive floats in Wheeling's Fantasy in Lights Christmas Parade. Right: Students from Corpus Christi School in Wheeling portray a live nativity on their float, which was driven by members of the Knights of Columbus Corpus Christi Council #12830 of Warwood. The truck pulling the live nativity led with the message "Keep Christ in Christmas." Below: students from Central Catholic High School, Corpus Christi School, Our Lady of Peace School, St. Michael Parish School, and St. Vincent de Paul Parish School in Wheeling wish all a merry Christmas from the Catholic Schools float.

Colleen Rowan Photos



Maryland AG Files Motion to Release Sex Abuse Report

Covering 80-Year Span

By Christopher Gunty, Catholic News Service
BALTIMORE (CNS) —

Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh filed a motion Nov. 17 to allow release of the office's report of its investigation of child sexual abuse in the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

The investigation began in late 2018. Although the attorney general's office has a policy of not confirming ongoing investigations, the archdiocese announced at that time that it was cooperating widely. Other names have been added in the intervening years as allegations became known. More were added in 2018 after a Pennsylvania grand jury report detailed allegations that included some priests who had served in Maryland or cases where the alleged abuse occurred within the boundaries of the archdiocese.

In April 2019, an additional 23 names were added of priests who had been accused of child sexual abuse after they were deceased.

The archdiocese's published list now includes 152 names, including many priests from other dioceses or religious orders and 17 religious brothers who served in or had a connection to the archdiocese. The list was last updated in June 2022.

Frosh's motion said, "For decades, survivors reported sexual abuse perpetrated by Catholic priests and for decades the church covered up the abuse rather than holding the abusers accountable and protecting its congregations. The Archdiocese of Baltimore was no exception."

The attorney general's motion did not mention the archdiocese's efforts since the early 1990s, including reporting all incidents and allegations to law enforcement.

Archbishop Lori acknowledged that the number of 158 accused priests, cited in Frosh's motion, might raise questions about the correlation to the archdiocesan list.

"It is difficult to make a direct comparison between this number and the 152 priests and brothers on the archdiocese's website list of accused," the archbishop said, "but we know that the archdiocese has publicly stated, after consultation with its review board, that its list does not include the names of priests or brothers who died before a single accusation of child abuse was received, unless the allegation could be corroborated by a third party or unless a second allegation was made against the same deceased cleric."

He also said that the conclusions drawn from his-

toric events cited by Frosh's investigation of 80 years of records, "while a continued source of shame and remorse, do not reflect the archdiocese's current and decades-long strong pastoral response and handling of allegations of child sexual abuse."

He cited the archdiocese's efforts to fully comply with child protection efforts, including:

— "Reporting to law enforcement of all allegations of child sexual abuse; zero tolerance resulting in permanent bans of any employee or volunteer credibly accused of abuse; offers of counseling assistance and pastoral outreach to anyone reporting harm by a minister of the church."

— "Extensive screening and training of all church ministers, employees and volunteers; continued accountability and oversight by our Independent Review Board and national compliance auditors."

— "And open communication about newly received credible allegations of abuse, including through the list of credibly accused priests posted on the archdiocesan website and through various other archdiocesan communications channels, the media, and church institutions."

The Office of the Attorney General said that as part of its investigation, it created an email address and a telephone hotline for people to report information about child sexual abuse, and that more than 300 people contacted the office.

Investigators reached out and interviewed hundreds of victims and witnesses, the office said in a news release. "For some, the attorney general's motion may help provide answers they have spent years awaiting," Archbishop Lori said. "For others, it may reopen wounds or feel as an inadequate or incomplete account of justice. To all, however, I pray it brings some measure of healing of the deep wounds caused by the scourge of child sexual abuse in the life of the church."

In 2002, the U.S. Catholic bishops approved the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" and accompanying norms for implementation in every diocese in the country.

Some dioceses, including the Archdiocese of Baltimore, already had policies in place regarding sexual misconduct by clergy.

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has an Office of Child and Youth Protection, which provides a variety of services for victims or survivors of abuse when the perpetrator is an employee or volunteer of the church.

The archdiocese also has an Independent Review Board, an eight-person group comprised mostly of laypeople, which reviews individual allegations of abuse and helps shape archdiocesan child protection policies.

The Archdiocese of Baltimore complies with Maryland laws requiring reporting suspected child abuse to civil authorities.

Under Maryland law, any person who has reason to believe a child has been subjected to abuse must report the suspected abuse to civil authorities, even if the potential victim is now over 18 years old and even in cases where the alleged perpetrator is deceased.

Anyone can report misconduct via the archdiocesan website — www.archbalt.org — including sexual misconduct or interference by a bishop.

(Gunty is associate publisher and editor of Catholic Review Media, publishing arm of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.)

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: 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 (USCCB) requires that all Dioceses/Epararchies 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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Catholic Leaders Respond to Shooting at Colorado Nightclub

By Carol Zimmermann Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic leaders have condemned the Nov. 19 attack on an LGBTQ nightclub in Colorado Springs, Colorado, that killed at least five people and injured at least 25.

Seven of those wounded were in critical condition.

The church leaders — the archbishop of Denver, leaders of religious orders and congregations, and a Catholic outreach group to members of the LGBTQ community — also prayed for those impacted by the attack and urged for an end to hate crimes and use of language that condemns those in the LGBTQ community.

The suspected gunman, 22-year-old Anderson Lee Aldrich, faced murder and hate crime charges Nov. 21, a law enforcement official told The Associated Press, adding that the suspect used an AR-15-style semiautomatic weapon in the attack at Club Q before he was subdued by people at the club.

On its Facebook page, the club thanked the “quick reactions of heroic customers that subdued the gunman and ended this hate attack” within minutes of the alleged gunman opening fire after entering the club shortly before midnight Nov. 19.

It also noted that a drop-in center was set up at a nearby hotel with counseling services available all week. Outside the club, a makeshift memorial was filled with flowers and stuffed animals.

Denver Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila said he was “saddened by this tragic and senseless act.”

In a Nov. 20 statement, he said that “while the motives remain unclear, what is clear is that evil incidents like this have become far too common in our society. The random acts of killing innocent human beings must be condemned by a civil society.”

Outreach, a new initiative of Jesuit-run America Media that provides resources for LGBTQ Catholics, similarly issued a statement on its website Nov. 20 praying for those who died, those who were wounded and for the LGBTQ community in Colorado Springs.

It said the “motive for this terrible attack on LGBTQ people remains unclear” but also pointed out that it took place “the day before Transgender Day of Remembrance, a day when we commemorate transgender people whose lives were lost in acts of violence.”

The night of the attack, Club Q was planning to host a drag show to mark the day of remembrance.

The Outreach statement stressed that while a motive remained unclear, what is clear, it said, is “the effect that stigmatizing language has on the safety and well-being of LGBTQ people.”

“Language that seeks to reject, condemn, isolate, blame or target LGBTQ people should be rejected, especially by religious leaders,” it said, adding that such language “leads only to further harassment, beatings and violence.”

“Churches and other religious institutions are called to stand on the side of all who are in any way persecuted, including LGBTQ people,” the Nov. 20 statement said.

Paulist Father René Constanza, president of the Paulist Fathers, also condemned not only the attack but harmful rhetoric toward those in the LGBTQ community.

“Violence targeting our LGBTQ sisters and brothers must stop,” he said.

In a Nov. 21 statement, he said “rhetoric that dehumanizes and disrespects the inherent dignity of those who identify as LGBTQ is unacceptable, including that espoused by members of our own Catholic Church and other faith communities.”

He also said gun violence “needs to be more seriously dealt with by our civil leaders.”

The priest said it was time for society “to address the anger, contempt, and indifference that fuel violence against all people because of their sexual orientation, skin color, race or religion.”

The general council of the Adrian Dominican Sisters based in Adrian, Michigan, similarly responded to the shooting saying their “hearts ache” for those who were killed and those injured and offered “deep condolences to family and friends who are mourning the loss of their loved ones.”

“There is no place for hate crimes in our nation nor for the angry and venomous language that often precedes such evil acts — whether com-

mitted against members of the LGBTQ+ community or people who are Black, Indigenous, Latino or Asian American, or because of a person’s religious faith,” the sisters said.

Likewise, the Redemptorists of the Denver province grieved the loss of life and injuries inflicted and said they extended their prayers “for the well-being of the LGBTQ community in Colorado Springs as it faces the trauma of this attack and the pain it incurred.”

The order’s members, based in Chicago, said in a Nov. 21 statement that they recognized that “LGBTQ people are especially vulnerable to an inordinate and unwarranted amount of violence in the world,” and pledged to work against such violence and discrimination and help those who suffer from it.

The Redemptorists said the shooting was reminiscent of when 49 people were killed and 53 more were injured at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, in 2016.

At the time, they said, bishops and Catholic leaders spoke out against the tragedy but when they did “very few mentioned the victims as members of the LGBTQ community.” They urged bishops and Catholic leaders to join with them now in solidarity with the LGBTQ community and “to identify the victims as LGBTQ people, so that the church can deepen its mission as a place of safety and esteem for vulnerable minorities.”

Statement...

Cont'd from Page 1

of a sense of responsibility to the wider community, to store their guns at a local center where they can pick them up when going to hunt and return them when they are finished. Guns for personal protection were not in the dresser drawers of the adults I knew growing up — and gun violence was much less common. How many adolescents have committed suicide using a parent’s gun! I’ve had their funerals.

Pious words lamenting mass shootings have lost all credibility. Action is needed. Will West Virginians rise to the challenge? At the Last Judgement, we will not face the NRA or a politician as our judge but the Lord Jesus, who died a

violent death for our sake. He will ask us: did you love your neighbor as yourself? Did you do to others what you would have them do to you? Did you care more for the safety and welfare of your brothers and sisters than for an individual right enshrined in a political constitution? What answer will we give to him?

I urge you to think and pray about this matter. May the Lord of life bless you and your family. Faithfully in Christ,

Mark E. Brennan

+Mark E. Brennan
Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston



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Advisory Council Suggests Bishops Guide Ministries on Gender Dysphoria

By Catholic News Service

BALTIMORE (CNS) — An advisory body to the U.S. bishops has called for the development of practical and pastoral guidance on gender dysphoria to help laypeople and clergy in their ministries in parishes, schools and other settings.

The suggestion was among a series of proposals from the National Advisory Council that was included in a report Nov. 16 delivered to the fall general assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore.

The council's work is to review, discuss and advise the bishops on the agenda items from Administrative Committee meetings that may be coming before the full USCCB for action at the bishops' annual fall general assembly. It includes about three dozen members, including clergy, women religious, laypeople and four bishops.

Mark Sadd of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia, who is chair of the council, told the assembly that members of the advisory group had been discussing the issue of gender dysphoria for several years and that it felt it was time to make the request through a nonbinding resolution adopted during its September meeting.

"Currently, families, parishes and schools are daily encountering difficult conversations with their children and feel ill equipped to explain or accompany them through this journey," Sadd said in his report.

"Gender dysphoria" is a term that describes a sense of unease or distress that a person may experience by feeling there is a mismatch between their biological sex and their gender identity.

Sadd shared that a NAC member, a teacher, had described having to confront this challenge at her school.

"Our schools are having weighty and frequent discussions about policy and catechesis. We urgently need guidance on proper



CNS Photo/Bob Roller

Mark Sadd, chairman of the National Advisory Council, speaks during a Nov. 16, 2021, session of the fall general assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this was the first in-person bishops' meeting since 2019.

terms, approaches and Catholic teaching," he quoted the teacher as saying during the NAC's September meeting.

In response, he asked the bishops' assembly: "If it is not you, our bishops, who speak on these (issues), then who will speak? ... If it is not now in the present, then when?"

Sadd said the NAC adopted four other nonbinding resolutions on issues related to USCCB, including one about the importance of communications in the work of the conference.

The resolution specifically urges that the bishops draft a "framework for the responsible participation of publishers, journalists and platforms to reflect the influence of modern communication including social media."

Sadd explained that NAC members were not looking for the bishops to officially approve Catholic media outlets but that they set forth principles that guide how the bishops and dioceses "affirm and express Catholic values."

"The church must be seen not only as the guardian of the faith, for life, for family and for her institutions, but also as the leading advocate of the Gospel values of charity, mercy and of love," Sadd said.

Social media, he added, has polarized society and he said the NAC sees such outlets as presenting an opportunity "to teach people how to use old media, new media and social media in a manner fitting to their discipleship."

Sadd's report described how the council recently heard about the restructuring of the USCCB Depart-

ment of Communications from James Rogers, the conference's chief communications officer. The restructuring includes the closing of Catholic News Service domestic operations Dec. 31, and the shuttering of the USCCB Publishing Office.

Regarding the closing of CNS, Sadd said NAC members were "wistful but accepting" of the decision while suggesting that the "restructuring presents an ideal time to ensure that the mandate of the communications department is sustainable and achievable."

The two remaining resolutions ask the bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations to share leadership development resources with clergy and lay leaders alike and to distribute a report on the effectiveness of existing practices to prevent clergy sexual abuse, respectively.

The report would cover steps under the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," now 20 years old, and the Catholic Bishops Abuse Reporting System regarding allegations against bishops as well as bishops' handling of abuse charges.

The NAC report also credited the bishops for their three-year Eucharistic revival, which will culminate in a National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis in 2024.

"The states of belief or unbelief of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament remain of highest concern to the members of the advisory council," Sadd said.

At the same time, NAC members urged the bishops to devote more time during their assembly to presentations on life issues, saying the time allotted to such concerns during this year's fall assembly "was grossly inadequate."

"Our members are calling on the bishops to ramp up the church's advocacy on other life issues and to reconfigure the church's resources through all of its institutions to more life-centric ministries, especially to mothers and children in need," Sadd said.



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Cardinal Dolan Says Senate's Marriage Bill Threatens Religious Liberty

By Julie Asher, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A bill on same-sex marriage advancing in the Senate is “a bad deal for the many courageous Americans of faith and no faith who continue to believe and uphold the truth about marriage in the public square today,” said New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan.

“It is deeply concerning that the U.S. Senate has voted to proceed toward potential passage of the Respect for Marriage Act, which would essentially codify the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Obergefell* (in 2015) that found a constitutional right to same-sex civil marriages,” the cardinal said Nov. 17.

The Respect for Marriage Act “does not strike a balance that appropriately respects our nation’s commitment to the fundamental right of religious liberty,” said the cardinal, who is chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee for Religious Liberty.

The Senate advanced the measure with a 62-37 vote Nov. 16. A final vote will take place after the Thanksgiving holiday.

Every Democrat supported it and they were joined by 12 Republicans after they worked out an amendment they said would protect religious freedom. These senators “have claimed that their amended bill ‘respects and protects American’s religious liberties,’ but the provisions of the act that relate to religious liberty are insufficient,” Cardinal Dolan said.

Obergefell “created countless religious liberty conflicts, but the act offers only limited protections,” he said.

“Those protections,” he continued, “fail to resolve the main problem with the (Respect for Marriage) Act: In any context in which conflicts between religious beliefs and same-sex civil

marriage arise, the act will be used as evidence that religious believers must surrender to the state’s interest in recognizing same-sex civil marriages.”

“Wedding cake bakers, faith-based adoption and foster care providers, religious employers seeking to maintain their faith identity, faith-based housing agencies — are all at greater risk of discrimination under this legislation,” he added.

The U.S. House passed the bill July 19 with a large, bipartisan vote of 267-157.

Ahead of the House vote, the chairmen of the U.S. bishops’ pro-life and marriage and family committees wrote a joint letter to House members urging they reject the measure.

In mid-September, the Senate decided to hold off voting on the measure until after the Nov. 8 midterms.

A bipartisan group of negotiators — headed by Sens. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., and Susan Collins, R-Maine — also wanted more time to consider “an amendment designed to respond to the concerns of GOP lawmakers who feared the legislation could put churches and other religious institutions at legal risk if Congress voted to codify same-sex marriage rights.”

The group agreed on an amendment to the bill that “protects all religious liberty and conscience protections available under the Constitution or federal law, including but not limited to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and prevents this bill from being used to diminish or repeal any such protection.”

The amendment also “confirms that nonprofit religious organizations will not be required to provide any services, facilities, or goods for the solemnization or celebration of a marriage.” Two of the Republican senators opposed to the bill, Mike Lee of Utah

and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, said the measure’s protections for religious liberty are not adequate.

Lee tweeted Nov. 16: “I offered to support the bill if the sponsors would include my amendment to prohibit the government from removing tax-exempt status based on religious beliefs about same-sex marriage (for or against). The sponsors adamantly refused even to consider that. Why?”

Graham said that “nothing in the bill adds new protections for gay marriage, but it does, in my view, create great uncertainty about religious liberty and institutions who oppose gay marriage.”

He added that Lee’s amendment would have protected religious institutions “from reprisals.”

The Respect for Marriage Act would repeal the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act, signed into Law by President Bill Clinton. It barred the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriage until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that law unconstitutional in 2013.

The push in Congress to codify a right to same-sex marriage in federal law followed an opinion by Justice Clarence Thomas in the *Dobbs* ruling that overturned *Roe v. Wade*.

Thomas voted with the 6-3 majority that struck

down *Roe*, but in a concurring opinion, he said the court should reconsider other rulings, including *Obergefell* and its 1965 *Griswold* decision that said a state’s ban on the use of contraceptives violated the right to marital privacy.

But the majority opinion in *Dobbs* said the ruling only concerned a constitutional right to abortion.

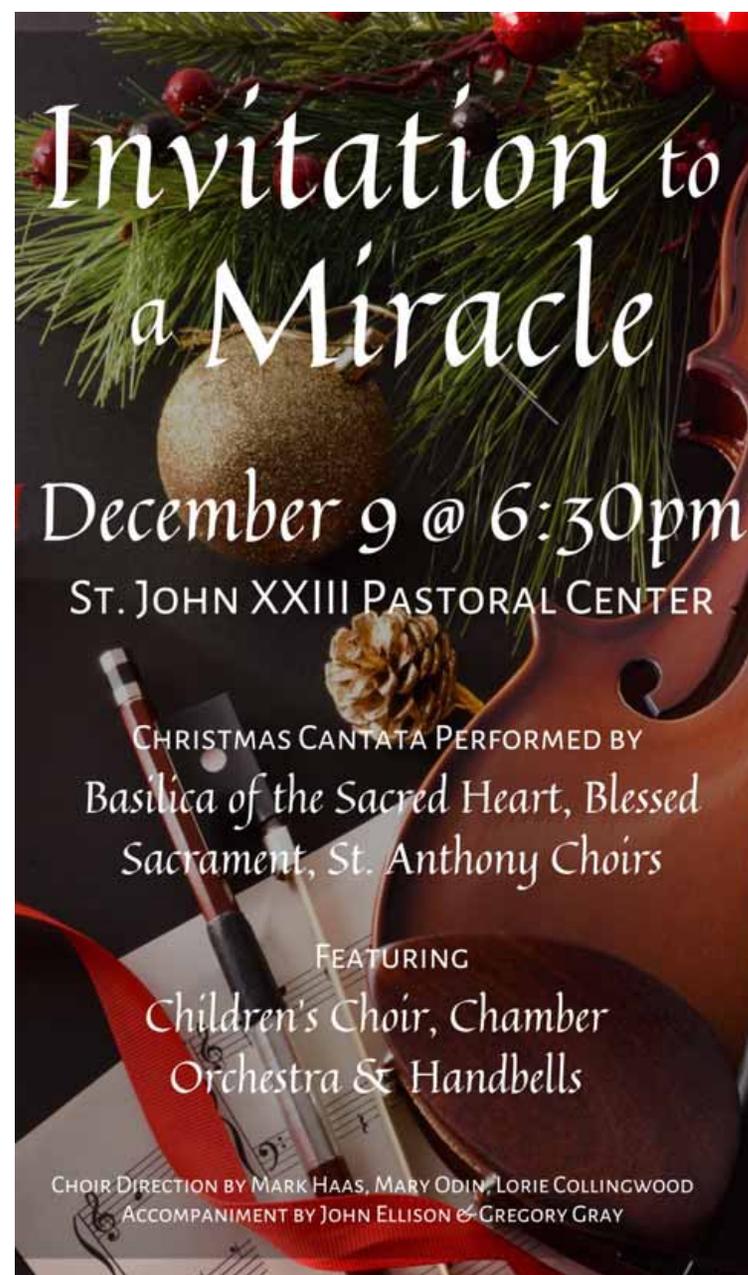
In arguing for passage of the Respect for Marriage Act Nov. 16, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said it would be one of the “highlights of the year for this body.” If the Senate passes the measure, the House would have to vote on it again because it has been amended.

Cardinal Dolan urged senators who back the

measure to “reverse course and consider the consequences of passing an unnecessary law that fails to provide affirmative protections for the many Americans” who believe traditional marriage is “both true and foundational to the common good.”

“The Catholic Church will always uphold the unique meaning of marriage as a lifelong, exclusive union of one man and one woman,” he added.

“In doing so, we are joined by millions of what the *Obergefell* court called ‘reasonable and sincere’ Americans — both religious and secular — who share this time-honored understanding of the truth and beauty of marriage,” the cardinal said.



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Bishop Brennan Celebrates Mass of Gratitude at Cathedral

Thanking those who generously give to the Catholic Sharing Appeal and in other ways

By Colleen Rowan

Bishop Mark Brennan celebrated a Mass of Gratitude at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling Nov. 21 to thank those who generously give to the Catholic Sharing Appeal.

The Mass was celebrated on the Memorial of the Presentation of Our Blessed Mother, as a little girl, in the temple in Jerusalem, Bishop Brennan said at the beginning of the celebration.

"We also want to acknowledge all of those who, through the Catholic Sharing Appeal or in other ways, support the charitable, educational, and religious mission of this diocese," the bishop said. "We're very grateful for that support, and may God bless all of those who give it."

Donations to the appeal support Catholic Charities West Virginia, the diocese's Catholic schools and parishes, evangelization efforts, vocations, and so much more.

The Mass of Gratitude gathered many of the faithful from the area and from around the state at the cathedral. Michael and Soni Laurencell, members of St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town, traveled to Wheeling to be present for the celebration.

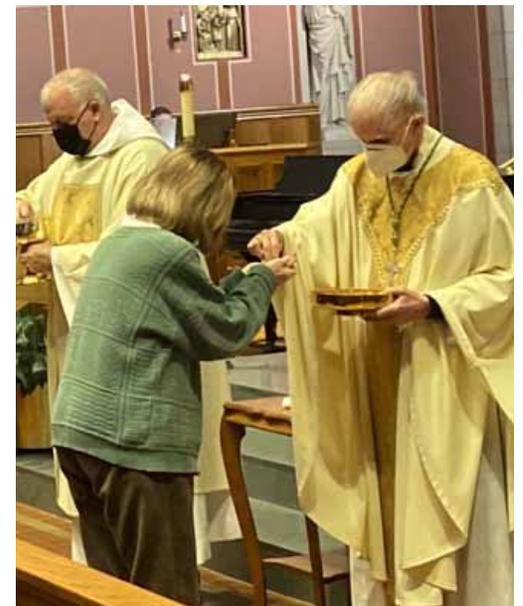
For those who could not attend in person, the Mass was livestreamed on the diocese's Facebook page.

Concelebrating the Mass with the bishop was Msgr. Eugene Ostrowski, V.G. Deacon Paul Lim, WVU Medicine Wheeling Hospital's vice president of Mission Integration, served as deacon of the word; and Deacon Doug Breiding of the cathedral was deacon of the Eucharist.

A giving event for the Catholic Sharing Appeal will be conducted on Giving Tuesday, Nov. 29.

"Give the gift that enlivens your parish and shines light in the lives of Catholics across West Virginia," appeal promotional materials for Giving Tuesday state. "Together we can serve as a light for all to see!"

Visit dwc.org/CSA to make a gift online this Giving Tuesday.



Colleen Rowan Photos

Clockwise from top: Bishop Mark Brennan celebrates a Mass of Gratitude at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling with Msgr. Eugene Ostrowski, V.G. (left), concelebrating and Deacon Paul Lim (right) serving as deacon of the word and Deacon Doug Breiding serving as deacon of the Eucharist; the bishop and Deacon Breiding offer Holy Communion; and the bishop and Deacon Breiding talk to Michael Laurencell of Charles Town following the Mass.



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Gala Raises \$50,000 for Mary's Refuge Maternity Home in Martinsburg

By **Meg H. Partington**

INWOOD—Nearly 250 people came together Nov. 11 to celebrate that the Eastern Panhandle said “yes” to life by welcoming a maternity home to the region.

Surround with Love, a benefit gala for Mary's Refuge, took place in the parish hall at St. Leo Catholic Church in Inwood. Approximately \$50,000 was raised from the purchase of table seating and donations at the event to support what will be one of only 400 maternity homes in the United States, according to Kimberley Roche, executive director.

Bishop Mark Brennan opened the evening's festivities with prayer before a gathering of clergy and parishioners from throughout the Eastern Panhandle, nuns, and administrators and staff from St. Joseph School in Martinsburg and St. Maria Goretti Catholic High School in Hagerstown, Md. Roche is awaiting an occupancy permit from the City of Martinsburg before officially opening the former convent at 111 E. Stephen St. to expectant mothers and children younger than 3 in their care.

Deacon Dave Galvin, emcee for the gala, lauded the Father Thomas Gallagher, pastor of St. Joseph Parish, for his willingness to transform the former home for nuns into a safe space for mothers-to-be.

“He was willing to say ‘yes’ to the Lord, ‘yes’ to the mothers,” said Deacon Galvin, who serves at the Parish of St. James the Greater in

Charles Town.

Father Gallagher said he looks forward to the three-story house, built in 1929, again being a place of light and love.

Renovations began in earnest on March 19 — the Solemnity of St. Joseph, spouse of the refuge's namesake — and were done by hundreds of volunteers and contractors. The home has nine bedrooms, a chapel, kitchen, laundry facilities, and rooms for infant care, relaxation and house meetings.

Father Gallagher expressed gratitude for the funds and volunteer labor provided by local parishes of myriad faiths, Catholic Daughters of the Americas and the Knights of Columbus, among other organizations.

“This has not only been a Catholic endeavor, but a Christian endeavor,” he said.

Kathleen Wilson, founder and executive director of Mary's Shelter in Fredericksburg, Va., collaborated with Roche for seven years to provide guidance and stability to women in need.

“God planted this ministry in her heart,” Wilson said of Roche as guests shared a catered meal.

Roche's vision and Father Gallagher's eagerness to provide space are a winning combination.

“This ministry has clearly been preordained,” Wilson said.

Roche said the mission of Mary's Refuge is to guide women toward self-sufficiency.

“We come from faith, hope and



Luis Pagano Photo
Kimberley Roche, executive director of Mary's Refuge, a maternity home in Martinsburg, discusses the mission of the refuge during a gala held Nov. 11 to benefit the endeavor.

love, tempered with understanding that we must reach out to each person, sometimes in tough love, while embracing them as a whole person,” she said. “They understand it is a program designed for independent living ... learning to make better choices, learning to prioritize as a family for needs to be met, and a plan of action to

help them meet their own chosen goals.

“We will grow as our moms each come to us, seeking not only shelter, but affirmation, acceptance and love. Your prayers, your service, your generosity, will allow us to help our families find a place of refuge.”

Other speakers included Sister Hosanna Immaculata, who is missioned at Holy Respite in New York, a home where pregnant women and their children live with the Sisters of Life; and Sister Rita Marie, who works in the finance office and is the hospitality coordinator at the Sisters of Life Mother House in New York.

A 200 Club has been formed with a goal of having 200 individuals or families donate \$1,000 each, which should be enough to cover the costs of bills, salaries, supplies and other budgetary needs for the refuge for the year 2023. For more information about the club, please email Patrick Michel at pmichel@stjosephwv.org.

For more information about Mary's Refuge, go to <https://31937.sites.ecatholic.com> or call (304) 261-3664.

Checks to Mary's Refuge, which receives no government money, may be made out to Saint Joseph Catholic Church (with Mary's Refuge written in the memo line), and mailed to the church at 336 S. Queen St., Martinsburg, WV 25401.

(Partington is administrative assistant at St. Joseph School in Martinsburg.)



Courtesy Photo

The chapel at Mary's Refuge, a maternity home in Martinsburg.



Courtesy Photo

The playroom at Mary's Refuge, a maternity home in Martinsburg.

Sacred Heart, Huntington, Hosts November Mission



Courtesy Photo

Father Bill Garrott, OP, sings at a mission at Sacred Heart Church in Huntington.

HUNTINGTON—He's Alive! That was the title and message of the song that ended the second night of a three-evening mission at Sacred Heart Church in Huntington, which featured Father Bill Garrott, OP, a sought-after presenter and speaker. The mission was held each evening from Sunday, Nov. 6 through Tuesday, Nov. 8.

Combining musical talents on keyboard and guitar, Father Garrott's theme was *iMercy: The Divine Hotspot*. Each evening held a different topic: on Sunday the theme was *The Father Blesses*; Monday's theme was *The Son Heals*; and Tuesday's theme was *The Spirit Strengthens*.

Parishioners were first introduced to Father Garrott when he co-celebrated the 5 p.m. Vigil Mass, and celebrated the 9 a.m. Sunday Mass. At these Masses, he introduced an overview of the Mission content, and performed an uplifting rendition of the Don Francisco song *Adam, Where Are You?*

On the first evening, Father Garrott's preaching focused "on the unconditional love of the Father. Being a Christian means knowing your heavenly Father loves you not because you're good, but because He is good." He performed a powerful version of *Adam, Where Are You?* and finished with *Raise Him Up*, by Randy Travis.

The second evening discussed "the remedy the Father provides for us in His Son Jesus, Who by His death on the Cross sets us free from sin, enables us to forgive and gives meaning to our suffering." *Tears in Heaven*, made popular by Eric Clapton, was played by Father Garrott on guitar, followed by the previously mentioned Don Francisco song, *He's Alive*, both of which



Courtesy Photo

Father Bill Garrott, OP, preaches at a mission at Sacred Heart Church in Huntington.

moved most of the people to tears.

On the last night of the mission, Father Garrott preached "on the power of Holy Spirit which enables us to live the Christian life and propels us to be witnesses of Jesus Christ in the world." His performances this night included a Johnny Cash tune, *He Turned the Water into Wine*, ending with Randy Travis' *When Mama Prayed*.

The mission saw a number of fallen-away Catholics come back to the church; one person who had not been to either church or confession in "more than four years" was relieved to be back. Another adult had never been to confession before and was grateful for the opportunity. As a Missionary of Mercy, Father Garrott is one of 900 specially selected priests who have been granted the authority to pardon even those sins reserved to the Holy See.

The attendance averaged 85 persons per evening; attendance was noted from the Huntington parishes of Sacred Heart, St. Peter Claver, St. Joseph, and Our Lady of Fatima, and from further away parishes of St. Ann's (Chesapeake, Ohio), St. Lawrence (Ironton, Ohio), St. Joseph (Ironton, Ohio), Holy Family (Ashland,

Ky.), St. Stephen (Ona), and Ascension (Hurricane).

The mission concluded with a blessing of the people by Father Garrott. Sacred Heart's Pastor, Father Shaji Thomas, then blessed Father Garrott for success in preaching and safety in his travels. The congregation is thankful to Father Thomas for his enthusiastic and unwavering support of hosting a parish mission, and to Father Garrott for making Sacred Heart his first mission in West Virginia. Father Garrott has been asked to return to the Huntington area to preach a mission in 2023; that mission is scheduled to be held Nov. 5-7, 2023, at Holy Family Church, Ashland.

Father Garrott is a member of the Dominican Order, of Washington, D.C., known as the Order of Preachers (O.P.). He has held over 220 missions in the U.S., from Florida to Maine. The missions are always free of charge for those attending. "You might call my ministry a ministry of encouragement," says Father Garrott. "I'm preaching the basic Gospel message of hope: God loves us, He has a plan, He always provides, and we can truly live a new life in His Son, Jesus Christ."

Eighth-Grader Outlines Ideas for Bringing People Back to the Catholic Church in Winning Essay

MARTINSBURG—St. Joseph School eighth-grader Jack Allen recently won a Catholic citizenship essay contest sponsored by Monsignor Lackey Council 1169 of the Knights of Columbus in Martinsburg.

All 27 of the Martinsburg school's eighth-graders submitted essays for judging by Knights Jonathan Noyalas and Mike O'Donnell, and Maria Byrd, principal St. Joseph School. Students were invited to write about how young Catholics can evangelize to families and friends who have turned away from religion. In 500 to 750 words, they were asked to offer suggestions on ways to encourage those who have strayed to return to the church and embrace the sacraments.

"There is an overwhelming problem in the American Catholic Church," Allen wrote. "Over half of Americans that were raised Catholic are either nonpracticing Catholics or have left the Church altogether. There are many reasons why, such as loss of belief, indifference and disaffiliation for another religious group. However, there is always hope to get those people back into a religious life."

He cited busy schedules, falling out of the habit of going and allegations of misconduct against the Catholic Church as reasons people cite for not going to Mass on a regular basis.

"Therefore, it is important for current Catholics to model appropriate behavior and commitment," Allen wrote. "Also, it is important for the church to gain feedback from its current and former members" through surveys and open conversations regarding what about the faith resonates with them and what is troublesome.

"One major way to get people back to church is to stress the importance of community," Allen wrote. "The Catholic Church and those who attend services form a type of extended family. ... Catholic Church communities have been known to hold charitable events to help those in the community in need or specific people who attend their church. By stressing this commitment to community, the Catholic Church can appeal to many people's sense of helping others."

He went on to write that increasing their presence on social media could help Catholic



Courtesy Photo
St. Joseph School eighth-grader Jack Allen is surrounded by grandparents Nina and Rick Boarman, and his parents, Mandi and Jason Allen, after being presented a certificate and gift card Nov. 16 at the Martinsburg school by Jonathan Noyalas, left, a member of Monsignor Lackey Council 1169 of the Knights of Columbus, for winning the local Knights' Catholic citizenship essay contest.

churches keep their members connected and spread the word about all the good they are doing.

"By having honest conversations, highlighting community service, and embracing the modern ways of life, the Catholic Church has the opportunity to raise its numbers," he wrote. "This cannot be accomplished overnight. It will take commitment and patience for Catholic communities across the nation to get these attendance numbers back up."

Noyalas said selecting a winner of the essay contest was difficult.

"This is never an easy contest to judge, as so many students submitted great ideas, but what

set Jack's essay apart, aside from the clarity and organization of his writing, was the practicality of his approach, using the power of good works to draw people back to the church," Noyalas said.

During a brief ceremony at the school on Nov. 16 in front of SJS middle-schoolers; teachers; his parents, Jason and Mandi Allen; and grandparents Nina and Rick Boarman, Jack was given a \$25 gift card and a framed certificate. The award was given in memory of Noyalas' father, Robert Noyalas Sr., who died in the summer of 2018 from cancer at age 67.

Allen's essay will now be judged at the district level.

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Territory Meeting

‘The Eucharist Awaits Us,’ Advent Evening of Reflection to be Held at Cathedral

WHEELING—“The Eucharist Awaits Us,” an Advent Evening of Reflection, will be presented at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling Nov. 29 at 6 p.m.

“Join us for a special evening of Eucharistic Adoration, prayer, music, and reflection as we focus on the beauty of the Advent Season and prepare for Christmas and the coming of Our Savior,” organizers of the gathering said.

The evening will include guest speaker, Deacon Paul C. Lim, a permanent deacon in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He currently serves as the vice president of Mission Integration at WVU Medicine Wheeling Hospital.

The gathering is being held during the National Eucharistic Revival, and all are invited to attend.

Parkersburg Parish to Offer National Night of Prayer Service

PARKERSBURG— All are invited to a National Night of Prayer gathering at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Parkersburg on Thursday, Dec. 8, beginning at 6:30 p.m. The National Night of Prayer unites the Feast of the Immaculate Conception with the Feast of St. Juan Diego. The service includes four separate hours of Eucharistic Adoration, the rosary, hymns, prayers, and silent meditation.

“Stay for an hour or the entire service,” parish officials said. “Pray with us and join in unity of prayer across America and the entire world to restore: life, faith, liberty, and the family. ‘If then my people, upon whom my name has been pronounced, humble themselves and pray, and seek my face and turn from their evil ways, I will hear them from heaven and pardon their sins and heal their land.’ (2 Chronicles 7:12-22).” For information call (304) 482-6193.

Save Souls and Build World Peace by First Saturday Devotion to Mary’s Immaculate Heart

WEIRTON—Save Souls and Build World Peace by First Saturday Devotion to Mary’s Immaculate Heart. The Virgin Mary asked us, through Fatima, to make Reparation to Her Immaculate Heart by doing the following on the First Saturday of the month with the intention of making reparation to her Immaculate Heart: 1. Attend Mass and receive Holy Communion; 2. Pray 5 decades of the Holy Rosary; 3. Keep Our Lady Company for 15 minutes while meditating on the mysteries of the Holy Rosary; 4. Go to Confession especially for this devotion (can be done up to 10 days before or after the First Saturday).

St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Weirton will host First Saturday Devotion on Dec. 3, rosary at 7 a.m., Mass at 7:30 a.m., and meditation immediately following Mass. Mary told Sister Lucy, “I promise to assist at the hour of death with all the graces necessary for salvation all those who on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, go to confession and receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the rosary and keep me company for a quarter of an hour while meditating on the mysteries of the rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me.”

St. Agnes Racial Justice Initiative Recommends Opportunity to Learn about Black Christian Spirituality

SHEPHERDSTOWN—The Racial Justice Initiative at St. Agnes Parish in Shepherdstown recommends an opportunity to learn more about Black Christian Spirituality being offered in an ecumenical context.

Starting on Wednesday, Nov. 30, there will be two different gathering times offered for reflection on Advent themes based on the publication, “Mary Had a Baby,” that utilizes Black Spirituals as a discussion aid. One at 1 p.m., each of the four Wednesdays of Advent, hosted at the New Street United Methodist Church, the other at 6:30 p.m. at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, both in Shepherdstown. Members of the St. Agnes Racial Justice group are planning to attend along with Father Andy Switzer, pastor of St. Agnes, who highlighted this in his weekly bulletin message last Sunday.

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Father Donald Lawrence Meuret, Jr.

Father Donald Lawrence Meuret, Jr., at the age of 67 and a priest for 38 years, died on Saturday, October 29, 2022, in the rectory of St. Paul Parish in Mosinee, Wisconsin.

Donald Meuret was born on July 15, 1955 in Wausau, Wisconsin. He studied for the priesthood in Wisconsin, but wanting to work more closely with the poor, he transferred to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. On June 23, 1984, he was ordained a priest at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Charleston, by Bishop Joseph H. Hodges. In his first three years of ministry, he served as the associate pastor at St. Francis de Sales Parish, Beckley. He was then assigned to be the pastor of St. Catherine of Sienna Parish, Ronceverte;

Immaculate Conception Station, Williamsburg; and St. Louis Chapel, Lewisburg. In 1992, Father Meuret was assigned to be the pastor of St. Peter's Parish, Welch, and Christ the King Chapel, War. Following a leave of absence from ministry in 1999, Father Meuret returned to Wisconsin where he served a number of parishes in the Diocese of LaCrosse until his death.

In addition to his ministry, Father Meuret will be remembered for his interest in instrumental and choral music, education, and cooking. With gratitude for the years that he served the people of Southern West Virginia and Wisconsin, our prayer is that he may share in the fulness of God's love and peace!

Deacon George John Doerr

George John Doerr, 84, of Venice, died Tuesday, December 15 after a short illness. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Noreen; daughter, Julia Polo; son, Michael (Laura) Doerr; grandsons Robert Doerr and Carl Doerr; sister, Mary Moyle; and brother, William Doerr. He is further survived by nieces, nephews, and other relatives and many friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Lilly Doerr; his daughter, Jennifer Doerr; and his son-in-law, Philippe Polo.

George was born in Milwaukee, WI and went to Mesmer High School, where, at age 14, he met the love of his life, Noreen Ludwig. After high school, George served 4 years in the United States Army. Upon his return from duty, he and Noreen married in 1959 and were rarely separated from that day forward.

They raised their three children in the Milwaukee area. George worked for Wisconsin Bell (later Ameritech) for many years, eventually retiring from the company.

George's faith was very important to him. George was ordained a permanent deacon in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Wisconsin on December 26, 1975 and served in a number of parishes in Wisconsin, West Virginia, and Florida.

After retiring, George and Noreen moved to West Virginia and then to Florida, eventually settling in Venice.

Services will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorials to the Food Pantry Serving Waukesha County in Waukesha, WI would be appreciated. The family would like to thank the staff at Harbor Chase of Venice, FL who cared for George in his final years.

Sister Rita Marie von Berg, CSJ

Sister of St. Joseph Rita Marie von Berg, who was the CEO and chairman of the board of the former St. Joseph's Hospital in Parkersburg and the administrator at Wheeling Hospital in Wheeling, turned 100 years old on August 27, 2022. Almost exactly 2 months later, on Tuesday, October 25, she went home to God.

Sister Rita Marie was born in South Wheeling to Peter Paul and Anastasia von Berg. She entered the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1939 and celebrated 81 years of religious life. "I've had a Love affair with the Sisters of St Joseph since I was in the first grade. From grade one through twelve, the sisters were in my life – my teachers, mentors, counselors. I wanted to be one of them and that's what happened! I started my journey June 24, 1939; and after 80 years, I love them as much today as I did in the first grade."

Sr. Rita Marie was a graduate of the Wheeling Hospital School of Nursing, received a bachelor of science in nursing from Catholic University at Washington, D.C., and a master's in counseling and guidance from Ohio University in Athens.

She was a nurse at Wheeling Hospital from 1941-1944 and director of the School of Nursing there from 1956-1958. She was the last sister who was an administrator of Wheeling Hospital from 1958-1964.

Sister Rita Marie was chief executive officer from 1964 to 1976 at St Joseph's Hospital in Parkersburg, then owned by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Under her leadership she began the Paramedic Ambulance Service, inviting young men and women to help shape the course for pre-hospital care and paramedicine in West Virginia. She was the chairman of the Board of Directors from 1976 to 1991 at St. Joe's and was on the Sisters of St. Joseph Leadership Team from 1989 to 1993.

She resided in Torch, Ohio with dear friends Asunta Damron and Sharon Feeney, who she referred to as her "mates," and contributed her talents to St. Ambrose Catholic Church and the Mid-Ohio Valley. Sister Rita Marie was proud of her involvement with the Red Cross Disaster Nursing, providing care to victims from Hurricane Andrew and floods in the Albright area.

An animal enthusiast, she raised nubian goats that provided milk to many families with children who required a special diet and milk. At the time of her death she had three dogs, two cats and



two fish that kept her active and amused with their antics.

She was active in the Clown Club and delighted in raising the spirits of children and the sick as Whugy the Clown.

Sister Rita Marie also was an enthusiastic and avid West Virginia sports and WVU football fan who had attended many football games, both at home

and away. Opposing fans considered her loud and boisterous, which made her very proud.

Well into her late 70s, Sister Rita played basketball in the West Virginia Senior Women's League. Her team won and was presented with the championship trophy, although she confessed to folks that the other team did not show up.

She was considered a fine shot in both trap and target shooting and among her lifelong interests were outdoor sports, camping, wildlife photography and white water rafting on the New River. Her favorite motto was "Live, love, laugh."

"I believe in my heart that I lived life to the fullest. I love God and all He has created with a passion, and I laugh a lot," Sister Marie said. "In whatever years I have left, with God's help, they will be lived in the spirit of gentleness, peace, and joy."

Rita is survived by the sisters and associates of the Congregation of St. Joseph, a niece, friends Asunta Damron and Sharon Feeney, and a multitude of friends across West Virginia and beyond, both four-legged, winged and two legged.

An important part of Rita Marie's final wishes was donating her body to WVU School of Medicine. Once her remains have been returned to the Sisters, her funeral liturgy and interment will be scheduled to celebrate her life.

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sources and emotional support to help our neighbors lift themselves out of poverty. And our case managers receive the gift of empathy.

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Happy Thanksgiving!

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Parishes Hosting Relics

St. Francis de Sales Parish in Beckley was blessed to be the host parish for the Nov. 16 visit of the relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis and St. Manuel González García (shown above) to the Beckley Vicariate. The relics of these two patronal saints of the National Eucharistic Revival are touring the different vicariates of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. The public veneration of the relics began with a noon Mass with the St. Francis de Sales School community with Eucharistic Adoration following. The visit concluded with an evening Mass with priests (shown above) and parishioners from across the Beckley Vicariate participating.

The remaining locations and dates for the relics in West Virginia are: Nov. 26 at St. Joseph Parish in Martinsburg from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.—public veneration; 5 p.m.—relics present at Masses; 7 p.m.—relics present at the Spanish Mass. Nov. 27 at St. James Parish in Charles Town from 8 to 11 a.m. (Relics present at all Masses. Public veneration in between Masses).

Wheeling Serra Club and Team Sledd Launch Diaper Drive

WHEELING—The Wheeling Serra Club is once again raising funds to buy diapers for the Gabriel Project to help struggling families with babies and toddlers. For the past 13 years, Serrans have raised funds to support the Northern Panhandle Gabriel Project, which assists pregnant women and needy families with children 2 years of age and younger. Serrans Jim Gilligan and Jay Prager are again leading the Diaper Drive, with the generous assistance of Team Sledd, the con-

venience store distribution leader.

Rob Sincavich, president of Team Sledd, has once again agreed to match the Serrans' contribution to the Gabriel Project, up to \$1,500 dollars. Sincavich also gives the Gabriel Project a good discount on the diapers and other items that families need.

To support the Serrans Diaper Drive, please send a check made out to the Wheeling Serra Club to Wheeling Serra Club, P.O. Box 4, Wheeling, WV 26003.

Wheeling and Alderson Broaddus Partnership to Produce More Physical Therapists

WHEELING—Wheeling University and Alderson Broaddus University have entered into an articulation agreement that will allow AB undergraduates seeking an advanced degree in physical therapy to make an easy transition to Wheeling's program.

Recently, the two institutions established a partnership where Wheeling University's Doctor of Physical Therapy program will accept at least two Alderson Broaddus students each year, given they meet the course requirements and prerequisites.

"Wheeling University is pleased to partner with Alderson Broaddus University and looks forward to welcoming well-qualified students into our outstanding DPT program. Establishing this agreement will result in more physical therapists being educated to serve the residents locally, as well as across West Virginia and the region," said Ginny R. Favede, president of Wheeling University.

AB President Dr. James "Tim" Barry said, "This program continues our cooperative relationship with Wheeling University and enhances the opportunities for students from both universities to continue their educational studies at the graduate level."

Alderson Broaddus is the third West Virginia institution to establish an articulation agreement to allow students to apply and seamlessly transition to Wheeling's DPT program. To be eligible for acceptance into the program, AB students must meet specific qualifications and course prerequisites. Some of those include: An overall cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale or higher; a grade point average of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale or higher in the required prerequisite courses, which include, but are not limited to: BIO 124/125, BIO 325/326, BIO 302/303, BIO 328/334, CHEM 110/111, CHEM 112/113, PHYS 101/110, PHYS 102/111, PSYC 101, MAT 160 Higher level courses may be substituted for lower-level courses in the same area; a minimum grade of B in each required prerequisite course.

"This partnership between Wheeling and AB helps both institutions educate and produce more well-trained physical therapy professionals who will, in turn, provide high-quality care to patients they serve upon graduation," said Dr. Alison Kreger, PT, DPT, Ed.D., director of Wheeling Doctor of Physical Therapy program.

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Andrea Bucklew added, "Alderson Broaddus University and Wheeling University both share a strong commitment to student success. We are so pleased to join in this partnership which provides an additional pathway for both universities to provide exceptional academic opportunities to our students."

Wheeling University's DPT program emphasizes a whole person approach to the investigation of clinical issues using a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) format. PBL encourages teamwork, open discussion, and researching appropriate resources to acquire essential didactic knowledge.

Through this unique learning format, Wheeling's physical therapy graduates demonstrate exemplary professionalism, exceptional skills, and problem-solving, as well as the ability to access and utilize knowledge, reflective of a commitment to life-long learning, Kreger explained.

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Líderes católicos responden a tiroteo en club nocturno de Colorado

Por Carol Zimmermann, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Los líderes católicos condenaron el ataque del 19 de noviembre en un club nocturno LGBTQ en Colorado Springs, Colorado, que dejó al menos a cinco personas muertas y al menos 25 heridos.

Siete de los heridos se encuentran en estado crítico.

Líderes de la iglesia (el arzobispo de Denver, líderes de órdenes y congregaciones religiosas y un grupo de alcance católico para miembros de la comunidad LGBTQ) también rezaron por las personas afectadas por el ataque e instaron a poner fin a los crímenes de odio y al uso del lenguaje que condena a personas de la comunidad LGBTQ.

El presunto, Anderson Lee Aldrich, de 22 años, enfrenta cargos de homicidio y delitos de odio el 21 de noviembre, dijeron agentes oficiales a la agencia de noticias The Associated Press, y agregaron que el sospechoso usó un arma semiautomática estilo AR-15 en el ataque dentro del Club Q antes de que la gente del club lo parara.

En su página de Facebook, el club agradeció las "rápidas reacciones de los heroicos clientes que enfrentaron al (presunto) y pusieron fin a este ataque de odio" a los pocos minutos de que la persona abriera fuego después de ingresar al club poco antes de la medianoche del 19 de noviembre.

También señaló que se instaló un centro de acogida en un hotel cercano con servicios de asesoramiento disponibles durante toda la semana. Afuera del club, un memorial improvisado estaba lleno de

flores y animales de peluche.

El arzobispo de Denver, Samuel J. Aquila, dijo que estaba "triste por este acto trágico y sin sentido".

En una declaración del 20 de noviembre, dijo que "si bien los motivos siguen sin estar claros, lo que está claro es que incidentes malvados como este se han vuelto demasiado comunes en nuestra sociedad. Los actos aleatorios de matar a seres humanos inocentes deben ser condenados por una sociedad civil".

Outreach, una nueva iniciativa de America Media dirigida por jesuitas que proporciona recursos para los católicos LGBTQ, emitió de manera similar una declaración en su sitio web el 20 de noviembre orando por los que murieron, los heridos y por la comunidad LGBTQ en Colorado Springs.

Dijo que "el motivo de este terrible ataque contra las personas LGBTQ sigue sin estar claro", pero también señaló que sucedió "el día anterior al Día del Recuerdo de las Personas Transgénero, un día en el que conmemoramos a las personas transgénero cuyas vidas se perdieron por actos de violencia".

La noche del ataque, el Club Q planeaba organizar un espectáculo de drag para conmemorar ese día.

La declaración de Outreach enfatizó que si bien un motivo no quedó claro, lo que está claro, dijo, es "el efecto que tiene el lenguaje estigmatizante en la seguridad y el bienestar de las personas LGBTQ".

"El lenguaje que busca rechazar, condenar, aislar, culpar o atacar a las personas LGBTQ debe ser rechazado, especialmente por parte de los líderes religiosos", dijo, y agregó que dicho lenguaje "conduce solo a

más acoso, palizas y violencia".

"Las iglesias y otras instituciones religiosas están llamadas a ponerse del lado de todos los que son perseguidos de alguna manera, incluidas las personas LGBTQ", decía la declaración del 20 de noviembre.

El padre paulista René Constanza, presidente de los Padres Paulistas, también condenó no solo el ataque sino también la retórica dañina hacia la comunidad LGBTQ.

"La violencia contra nuestros hermanos y hermanas LGBTQ debe cesar", dijo.

En una declaración del 21 de noviembre, dijo que "la retórica que deshumaniza y no respeta la dignidad inherente de quienes se identifican como LGBTQ es inaceptable, incluida la adoptada por miembros de nuestra propia Iglesia Católica y otras comunidades religiosas".

También dijo que la violencia armada "debe ser abordada más seriamente por nuestros líderes civiles".

El sacerdote dijo que es hora de que la sociedad "haga frente a la ira, el desprecio y la indiferencia que alimentan la violencia contra todas las personas por su orientación sexual, color de piel, raza o religión".

El consejo general de las Hermanas Dominicas de Adrián con sede en Adrian, Michigan, respondió de manera similar al tiroteo, hablando de su "dolor de corazón" por los que murieron y los heridos y ofreció "profundas condolencias a familiares y amigos que están de luto por la pérdida de sus seres queridos".

"No hay lugar para los crímenes de odio en nuestra nación ni para el lenguaje enojado y venenoso que a menudo precede a tales actos malvados, ya sea que se cometan contra

miembros de la comunidad LGBTQ+ o personas que son negras, indígenas, latinas o asiático-americanas, o debido a la fe religiosa de una persona", dijeron las hermanas.

Asimismo, los Redentoristas de la provincia de Denver lamentaron la pérdida de vidas y lesiones infligidas y dijeron que extendieron sus oraciones "por el bienestar de la comunidad LGBTQ en Colorado Springs mientras enfrenta el trauma de este ataque y el dolor en el que incurrió".

Los miembros de la orden, con sede en Chicago, dijeron en un comunicado del 21 de noviembre que reconocían que "las personas LGBTQ son especialmente vulnerables a una cantidad excesiva e injustificada de violencia en el mundo", y se comprometieron a trabajar contra esa violencia y discriminación y ayudar a los que sufren.

Los Redentoristas dijeron que el tiroteo recordaba cuando 49 personas murieron y 53 más resultaron heridas en el club nocturno Pulse en Orlando, Florida, en 2016.

En ese momento, dijeron, los obispos y los líderes católicos se pronunciaron en contra de la tragedia, pero cuando lo hicieron "muy pocos mencionaron a las víctimas como miembros de la comunidad LGBTQ".

Instaron a los obispos y líderes católicos a unirse a ellos ahora en solidaridad con la comunidad LGBTQ e "identificar a las víctimas como personas LGBTQ, para que la iglesia pueda profundizar su misión como un lugar de seguridad y estima para las minorías vulnerables".

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, diacono, religioso, o empleado laico de la Diócesis o cualquier parroquia o escuela católica en West Virginia. Se puede acceder a la plataforma EthicsPoint a través de www.dwc.org, en "Rendición de cuentas", luego "Informar mala conducta" o llamando al 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint es un sistema de informes de terceros que informa a las autoridades civiles cuando corresponda y a las autoridades diocesanas, y la identidad de la persona que informa esta protegida. Enlaces e información: Departamento de Salud y Recursos Humanos de WV: <https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp>. Policía Estatal de Virginia Occidental, Unidad de Crímenes contra Niños: 304-293-6400.

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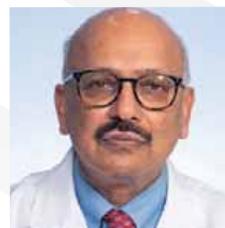
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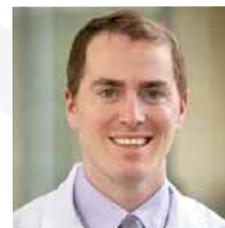
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