Students Pray for Those Who Stole Their 800 Pro-Life Flags from Huntington Parish Lawn

By Colleen Rowan
HUNTINGTON—Imagine how long it would take to place 800 small Right to Life flags on a church lawn. It is quite the undertaking. But students in fourth through eighth grades at Our Lady of Fatima Parish School in Huntington didn’t mind the work at all. For them, it was important to spread the pro-life message and make it visible to their community.

“I explained to the children about celebrating October as the month of life and the importance of having the flags on the church grounds,” said Father Tijo George, MCBS, pastor of the school and of Our Lady of Fatima Parish.

The students worked hard in their endeavor, and when they finished a sea of small pink and blue flags in memory of the countless baby boys and baby girls lost to abortion blanketed the lawn in front of Our Lady of Fatima Church. Their pro-life message was visible indeed.

A few days later, the flags were gone—stolen during the night by an unknown individual or individuals. Although saddened by what had happened, the students weren’t deterred. They told the bishop about their loss and asked him to help.

Bishop Brennan made the announcement of his decision to move to yearly audits in a letter to all Catholic schools and principals and all parishes and priests of the diocese.

“I firmly believe on-site visits at the local level are integral to ensuring that our parishes and schools have a clear understanding of and commitment to the requirements set forth in the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People,” the bishop wrote in his Oct. 13 letter.

See “Safe” on Page 2
Safe...
Cont’d from Page 1
According to the USCCB, the charter is a set of procedures originally established by the USCCB in 2002 for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. The charter also includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability, and prevention of future acts of abuse. It was revised in 2005, 2011, and 2018.

The audit process, according to the USCCB, measures compliance with the articles of the charter. The on-site USCCB/Stonebridge audit this past year revealed that a more robust look at the local level is necessary to maintain and assure overall compliance with the charter, the bishop wrote in his letter.

“We will do this for the good of our children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults,” he said in the letter.

The on-site audit, the bishop continued, entails many components at the chancery level of diocesan staff in Wheeling as well as auditors from Stonebridge randomly visiting parishes and schools across the diocese to verify Safe Environment compliance and best practices.

The bishop further stated that the diocese participates in and will continue to participate in data collection audits every year.

Further emphasizing the diocese’s commitment to the implementation of the charter, Bryan Minor, director of Diocesan Administrative Services and process administrator for Safe Environment, pointed to the VIRTUS sexual abuse training sessions available for parish and school staff, volunteers, parents, and any interested adults.

The Safe Environment protocol for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is about keeping children and vulnerable adults safe by reducing risk and raising awareness. “VIRTUS awareness training program utilized by our diocese is that it is applicable to any setting – not just church or school. The program encourages best practices that can be applied to any circumstance. This is the reality in today’s world – not just in the Catholic Church, but rather in society as a whole. We look forward to participating in yearly USCCB on-site audits and helping our parishes and schools remain safe places where our children can grow and thrive.”

This most recent step Bishop Brennan has taken with the move to yearly audits is a continuation of his and the diocese’s commitment to fostering trust and building a culture of safety in the diocese. In his letter, he pointed to steps that have already been taken toward these efforts, including the release of the list of credibly accused clergy; implementation of a third-party reporting system (Navex Global’s EthicsPoint); promotion of reportbishopabuse.org for reporting misconduct and concerns pertaining to bishops; release of the diocese’s yearly financial audit/report; and engagement of CSI (Corporate Security Investigations) for fingerprinting clergy and school personnel and on-site audits.

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Safe Environment Office stated that CSI (of Monaca, Pa.) conducts the on-site compliance auditing when they are in the diocese’s schools and parishes for fingerprinting sessions.

“This would be a third-party, independent spot check/audit in addition to the on-site audits by Stonebridge/USCCB,” Safe Environment officials said, noting that the diocese has been utilizing CSI for this purpose since 2020.

“The transition to yearly on-site audits by the USCCB/Stonebridge is a natural progression of our efforts to ensure we are on solid and consistent ground relative to Safe Environment compliance throughout the diocese,” the bishop wrote in his letter.

He encouraged anyone with questions or concerns to contact Sharon Goudy in the diocese’s Office of Safe Environment at (304) 230-1504 or by sending e-mail to sgoudy@dwc.org.

In ending his letter to the principals, schools, priests, and parishioners, Bishop Brennan said, “I am confident in your cooperation and willingness to continue our efforts to protect children and vulnerable adults and strengthen and grow a culture of safety.”

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. The diocese also encourages reporting to the appropriate church authorities. To report suspected cases of sexual abuse of a minor, contact one of the following designates at 304.230.1504. You may also call the Diocese’s sexual abuse hotline at 855.230.5656. Complaint forms are available online at www.dwc.org, click “Diocese” on the menu bar, then “Offices,” then “Safe Environment.”

To report anonymously to this hotline if 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.

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Relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis & St. Manuel Garcia Exposed for Veneration Nov. 12-27 in West Virginia

By Joyce Bibey

Relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis and St. Manuel Gonzalez Garcia – patrons of the National Eucharistic Revival – will be in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston from Nov. 12-27 for the faithful to venerate.

Many know of Blessed Carlo Acutis. He was a typical teen and is now on the road to sainthood. His story and his devotion to the Blessed Sacrament make Acutis the ideal role model and intercessor for Catholics young and old in this much needed awakening of our souls.

In 2006, Blessed Carlo Acutis died from leukemia. He was 15. From the time he was 11 he began compiling facts of Eucharistic miracles. Acutis used his love of the computer to share his fascination with the world by creating a website still maintained today by his friends and family (http://www.miracleucaristici.org/en/Liste/list.html). The site is presented in 17 languages and has downloadable posters for parishes and schools to have. It is truly a virtual museum with facts, images, and maps of the miracles from across the globe.

He believed “the more often we receive the Eucharist, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven.”

St. Manuel was canonized six years ago, but most do not know his story. Because of his deep devotion to Eucharistic Adoration, St. Manuel of Spain is also known as the “Bishop of the Tabernacle.”

Pro-Life... Cont’d from Page 1

happened, the students responded by praying for those responsible.

“Jesus asks us to pray and forgive those who have hurt us,” said Micah O’Connor, principal of Our Lady of Fatima Parish School. “Of course, we have anger and bitterness; however, these feelings will not give us peace. Our peace comes through prayer and forgiving those who have wronged us.”

The parish was the first to call for the prayers.

“Sorrowfully, all the flags that the students put on the lawn were removed last night,” Kathy Laferre, parish office manager, posted on the parish’s Facebook page. “Please pray for the person or persons who removed them.”

Father George realized the flags had been stolen when he walked into the church to celebrate Sunday Mass on the morning of Oct. 9. He announced to the faithful gathered at Mass that morning that the flags had been taken.

“The kids were upset and could not understand why someone would take all the flags,” O’Connor said. In addition to discussions with the students about forgiveness, O’Connor said that she and teachers also reinforced the importance of honest behavior, the concept of ownership, and how it makes others feel to have something stolen from them.

Catholics of the community were not content to allow the students’ and parish’s pro-life message to be silenced... The Lucas family, members of neighboring St. Stephen Parish in Ona and parents of a fifth grader at Our Lady of Fatima Parish School, donated money toward the purchase of new Right to Life flags.

Father George, who also serves as pastor of St. Stephen’s, said he wanted to replace the flags at Our Lady of Fatima with new ones to let the people of the community “know the stand of the church on life.”

Once the new flags arrived at the church, the students got to work placing them. And when they finished on Oct. 14, the small pink and blue flags covered the lawn and surrounded the statue of Our Lady in front of the church. The students’ and parish’s pro-life message was visible once more.

Tour of the Relics

| Nov. 12 | 3 to 8 p.m. – Sacred Heart of Mary, Weirton – Public Veneration |
| Nov. 13 | 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Sacred Heart of Mary, Weirton – Public Veneration |
| Nov. 14 | 10:30 a.m. to noon – Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with the relics present |
| Nov. 15 | Noon – Mass with the relics present |
| Nov. 16 | 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. Eucharistic Adoration with Veneration of the Relics |
| Nov. 17 | 3 p.m. – Praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet and an hour of Sacred Music |
| Nov. 18 | Exposition and Adoration from 6 to 8 p.m. concluding with Benediction |

Reconciliation will be available (times TBD)

| Nov. 19 | Nov. 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. Eucharistic Adoration with Veneration of the Relics |
| Nov. 20 | Nov. 15:00 Mass at the Mass of the Holy Spirit |
| Nov. 21 | Nov. 16:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Nov. 22 | Nov. 17:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Nov. 23 | Nov. 18:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Nov. 24 | Nov. 19:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Nov. 25 | Nov. 20:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Nov. 26 | Nov. 21:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Nov. 27 | Nov. 22:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Nov. 28 | Nov. 23:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Nov. 29 | Nov. 24:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Nov. 30 | Nov. 25:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Dec. 1 | Nov. 26:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Dec. 2 | Nov. 27:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Dec. 3 | Nov. 28:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Dec. 4 | Nov. 29:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Dec. 5 | Nov. 30:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Dec. 6 | Dec. 1:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
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| Dec. 8 | Dec. 3:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Dec. 9 | Dec. 4:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Dec. 10 | Dec. 5:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
| Dec. 11 | Dec. 6:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |
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| Feb. 13 | Feb. 9:00 Mass at the Spanish Mass |

For updates, visit: dwc.org/year-of-the-eucharist/
By Deacon Paul Lim, Father Cyprian Osuegbu, and Sister Mary Ann Rosenbaum, CSJ (WVU Medicine Wheeling Hospital, Pastoral Care Team)

In every parish church you will find the tabernacle, the special place where the Eucharist is reserved during Mass after Holy Communion. But many do not realize for who the Eucharist is reserved. In addition to devotion and adoration, the Church has always reserved the Eucharist for the sick and those who cannot be at Mass (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1379).

At WVU Medicine Wheeling Hospital, up to 35 Catholic patients a day receive Holy Communion through the ministry of our two priests, two CSJ Sisters, and a generous team volunteer Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. An additional 30 patients receive Holy Communion regularly at the Continuous Care Center.

The Eucharist has a major role in their healing process both spiritually and physically, yet many who are sick are not able to receive the Eucharist regularly at Mass because they are unable to leave their home. This has left many people who are homebound without the Eucharist, some for even years. So, when they have to be in the hospital for a medical need, many Catholic patients are grateful for the opportunity to make a sacramental confession as necessary and receive Jesus in the Eucharist again. They are also encouraged to reconnect with their parish and to invite their own clergy to visit.

When the Eucharist is purposely received prior to death, it is called viaticum. Viaticum in Latin means “provision for a journey.” When we receive Holy Communion during Mass, we are drawn into a closer union to Jesus in His journey back to the Father through His passion, death, and resurrection. When we receive Jesus at the time of our passing, we are reminded that He will guide us on the way that He Himself has already travelled for us. When received as viaticum, the Eucharist, Reconciliation, and Anointing of the Sick, are the “sacraments that prepare for our heavenly homeland or the sacraments that complete our earthly pilgrimage” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1525).

Priests, deacons, and lay ministers who bring Holy Communion to the sick and homebound know the sacred responsibility that they have and are edified with what is entrusted to them. They recognize that grace is just as necessary as eating and breathing because they have witnessed the life-changing effects of the sacraments for those who desperately need them. We can also consider them to be vessels of the Holy Spirit since they are often the first to convey our support and concern to those who may feel estranged or isolated from the Church.

When we encounter Jesus in the Eucharist, whether through receiving Holy Communion during Mass or when visiting a church for prayer and adoration, be assured that He is there for you. At the same time, we should also know that Jesus is especially present for those who cannot be with us. Our Lord is reserved in tabernacles throughout the world because it is important for the sick and the dying to receive the “true food” so that they can remain with Jesus on the journey to everlasting life (John 6).

True Food for the Journey

Throughout this Diocesan Year of the National Eucharistic Revival, each print edition of The Catholic Spirit (published on the First Friday of each month) will feature a guest article on the Eucharist.
On the Solemnity of All Saints, Bishop Mark Brennan blesses students from St. Patrick School in Weston at the end of the Mass he celebrated at St. Patrick Church. Father Doug Ondeck, pastor, is also pictured. Clockwise from top, right: Before Mass, the bishop joins Superintendent of Catholic Schools Mary Ann Deschaine to visit classrooms; the student choir signs at Mass; religion teacher Megan White and students Ella Minnich and Alexis Terranova dress as St. Teresa of Calcutta; and kindergartners and second graders dress as saints.
Bowles and Massimino Invested Knights of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem

From the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, Matthew R. Bowles, DHS; and Dominic R. Massimino, KHS, were invested as knights of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem Oct. 29. The Rite of Investiture and Holy Mass were held at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Charleston, W.Va.

Pictured in the front row, from left, are Dominic R. Massimino, KHS; Wanda Franz, DHS; and Matthew R. Bowles, KHS. In the back row, from left, are Mark A. Sadd, KCHS; and Jacob Manning, KCHS.

“The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem is reserved solely for practicing Catholics. Membership in this Order is the highest Papal award which can be conferred on clergy and laity alike. It is precisely that faith that bonds them so closely to the Sovereign Pontiff. The investiture ceremony itself requires the pledge of fidelity to the Holy Father and defense of the Faith with a Profession of Faith, which, of course, only the Catholic faithful could undertake," the order’s website states.

NCEA Reports Quicker Academic Recovery from Pandemic for Catholic Schools

By Mark Pattison, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The National Catholic Educational Association says Catholic schools have recovered more quickly from the pandemic than its public school counterparts. The successes, according to the NCEA, go across the board when looking separately at Black students, Hispanic students, students from low-income households, and students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals. The scores were first reported in October by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, colloquially known as “The Nation’s Report Card.” The numbers tracked the progress, or lack thereof, in math and reading by both fourth graders and eighth graders.

While Catholic schools’ scores are generally better than those of their public school counterparts — Annie Smith, NCEA vice president of data and research, said eighth graders prior to COVID-19 were about 5% better in math and 6% better in reading — the new numbers, based on testing conducted in 2021, showed a wider separation between the two.

Catholic schools’ scores have pretty much bounced back to the levels they had achieved prior to the coronavirus pandemic’s onset in March 2020. The only area that is still not up to snuff is eighth-grade math, which is still five points behind pre-pandemic levels.

Even so, said NCEA president Lincoln Snyder, those numbers are 15 points ahead of the comparable figures reported by public schools.

“It wasn’t a surprise to me at all,” Snyder told Catholic News Service in an Oct. 28 phone interview. “We’ve been monitoring testing data, really, throughout COVID.”

The NAEP numbers, Snyder said, bear out what a private firm found in 2021 when it conducted a lateral study of 3 million U.S. students to assess learning loss.

Given the upheaval wrought by the pandemic within society in general, and education in particular, Snyder said, “you would expect all students to have some learning loss.”

But it was the ability to bounce back that characterized much of Catholic education, he added.

“It’s a testament to our educators to meet in person as soon as possible,” Snyder said. “It greatly did improve our Catholic school outcomes.” The NAEP numbers dovetail with the NCEA’s own census showing that, for the first time in 20 years, enrollment in Catholic schools across the United States increased by 62,000. The number of Catholic schools also stayed steady, as 50 new schools were created to offset the closing of 50 other schools.

“We did have a big uptick in enrollment. We had an initial drop. In March of ’20, when we went to distance learning, people were fearful for losing their jobs. Or they did lose their jobs, but they quickly recovered.”

“Our retention of those new families was very high,” Snyder told CNS, citing a rate of 90% percent and “some dioceses were really as high as 98%.” “They fell in love with the school, but they also stayed because of the community. This is a real opportunity for us to shine,” he said.

Only about one-third of dioceses had reported enrollment numbers for the current school year to the NCEA. A final tally is not expected until the spring.

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Beth Williams, FD & Lic “Boots” Jarvis, Co-Owner & Sec

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Catholic Young Adults Invited to an Evening with Bishop Brennan in Charleston

By Colleen Rowan

CHARLESTON—Young West Virginia Catholics, ages 18 to 35, are invited to get to know their bishop. And at an upcoming event in Charleston which includes Mass, dinner, and a question-and-answer session with Bishop Brennan, they can do just that.

On Nov. 8, Bishop Brennan will celebrate the Mass at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston at 5 p.m. The dinner will follow as well as the question-and-answer session with the bishop. While the target audience is young adults, all are welcome to attend, said Daniel Maul, director of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. His office is co-sponsoring the Mass with the Basilica Co-Cathedral in an effort to reach and connect with the young Catholics of the diocese.

The first evening with the bishop was held last month in Morgantown at St. John University Parish.

“It went very well and was well attended,” Maul said. The young adults simply wanted to get to know the bishop better, asked personal questions of him, “and they sought his pastoral guidance and advice,” Maul said.

One attendee asked the bishop what advice he has for young Catholic parents in raising their children in the faith. Maul said the bishop responded by encouraging them to pray, enroll children in Catholic schools, and encouraged parents to live their faith with their children.

Evangelization is effective one-on-one, in small groups, at large speaking events, and through corporal and spiritual works of mercy, Maul said, and the question-and-answer session could be effective.

“Through the bishop’s own person, interactions, and message, the young people could encounter Christ and the Good News message and have their hearts changed by it,” Maul said. “They could be put on fire with the Holy Spirit, which, of course, is always the goal with evangelization.”

To register, see the ad at right on this page.

Clarksburg Serra Club to Host Presentation on ‘True Meaning of Christmas’ Dec. 18

STONEWOOD—The Clarksburg Serra Club will host Father Chapin Engler from the syndicated television show “Daily Living with Father Chapin” on Dec. 18 at 3 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Stonewood. His talk, “The True Meaning of Christmas,” will be presented in the main church and a spaghetti dinner will follow in the parish hall.

There is no cost to attend the talk, but tickets must be purchased in advance for the spaghetti dinner. Tickets are $12 per person. See any Serra Club member for tickets or call (304) 629-9941.

Father Engler was ordained to the priesthood in 2007 and is currently the pastor of Christ the King Parish in Dunbar, Holy Trinity Parish in Nitro, and St. Patrick Mission in Bancroft.

CDU partners with the diocese to offer free non-credit continuing education courses for catechists and those involved in parish ministry.

Visit www.pathlms.com/cdu to browse the courses and register. Use the access code, CDU20DIOCESW.
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Father Crenwelge Asks: ‘Who Will You Bring to Heaven?’

We are celebrating Vocations Awareness Week from Nov. 6-12. We are not simply celebrating the priesthood, but the gift of every vocation—marriage, single life, priesthood, religious life and diaconate. Yet, in a particular way, we are focusing on raising awareness of the vocations of priesthood and religious life. Each vocation’s role is to bring people to heaven. A married person is supposed to bring his or her spouse and children to heaven. A single person is supposed to bring his or her friends and co-workers. A deacon and religious are supposed to bring those to whom they are sent to minister. A priest is supposed to bring his congregation. That being said, all of us can easily through our own, imperfect actions, do the opposite, if we are not careful.

And so, a good question for each of us to reflect on this week as we celebrate the different vocations—“Who am I bringing to heaven?”

Called to do More for God as a Deacon

I have always felt called to do more for God. As an adult, I taught religious education classes, but the Lord wanted more. So, I became a youth director, but the Lord wanted more. And then, I received a call to become a permanent deacon.

Living the life of a permanent deacon, you have one foot in the life of the clergy, and one foot in the life of the lay people, and you form a bridge of sorts between the two worlds. You still live and exist as a lay person (being married, with children, and a secular job), but you also have responsibilities in the parish (preaching, teaching, sacramental prep., etc.). Being a permanent deacon demands that you balance that life between the two worlds.

Every man who goes through the formation

Discernment & Discipleship—the Focus of Seminary Formation

It would be impossible for me to accurately describe how life in the seminary works. Some people say that Disney World is the happiest place on earth, but I beg to differ. Each day, I rise within the walls of St. John Paul II Seminary surrounded by 53 of the most kind and joyful men on the planet. Halfway through my second year of seminary, the Lord has shown me that it is prayer, and my relationship with Him, that fosters joy, peace, and most importantly, trust.

Seminary formation is focused on discernment and discipleship. We seek to begin and end our days asking for Christ’s aid to see His will for our lives. We hope to further discern each day whether God is calling us to serve his church, to give ourselves to Him as His priests. This disposition reminds us that we can achieve nothing without prayer: we cannot properly
Deacon...

Cont’d from Page 9

program soon learns that you have to make sacrifices. You cannot continue to do all the activities you used to do before entering formation and still do all the work that the formation program demands and remain a good husband and father. You must draw the line between those activities that bring you closer to God and those that do not, and there draw the line.

Inside the Church on weekends, being a deacon looks similar in every parish. But outside the weekend Eucharist, deacons have many different ministries. I get to work with people coming into the church via the new OCIA program. I work with couples preparing for marriage and the baptism of their children. I lead an adult Bible Study and a weekly Holy Hour that we started during the National Eucharistic Revival. I am also fortunate that I get to support the Office of Permanent Diaconate Formation as the Coordinator of the Formation Program. Other deacons visit prisons, bring Communion to the sick and shut-in, visit hospitals, direct food drives, hold Communion services in nursing homes, and a few even work as pastoral associates.

My life is full. Between being a husband, a father, a software engineer, and a permanent deacon I feel like I am doing all I can possibly do for the Lord. At times I feel totally exhausted; but it is a feeling of doing everything I possibly can to serve the Lord. People often ask, “How do you do it all?” My response is always, “Ordination grace. At my ordination, God gave me the grace I need to do what he has called me to do as a permanent deacon. I just rely on that grace!”

Seminary...

Cont’d from Page 9

understand how to serve the Lord without first knowing how He is looking at us and hearing His voice.

Before seminary, I could not have imagined what seminary brotherhood would be like. We are united in all things not only because we are united in Christ, but also because we each understand the struggles which our brothers are having in their discernment, because we all have them. Some may experience more of these struggles than others; some may experience them in greater magnitude; but we all have some taste of each of the issues which the enemy puts in front of us. We are united in the same cause, interceding on behalf of our brothers; we are united in prayer.

Seminary has taught me that I cannot understand what God is asking me to do with my life if I do not put my relationship with Him first. Prayer is how we communicate with God. All relationships require communication, and our relationship with God is no different. Prayer is heart speaking to heart; it is the only way to maintain the loving relationship He desires for us.

St. John Henry Newman’s episcopal motto, which appeared on his coat of arms was just that, Cor ad Cor Loquitur. Heart speaks to heart, the Sacred Heart of our Lord speaks to each of us in prayer, and we just have to be willing to take the time to listen. It is the unity which is engendered in the life of the seminary which makes this call to listen to the Sacred Heart so powerful.

Seminary has made me appreciate the time that I spend in prayer even more. Before, prayer sometimes felt like a burden, an hour which I “have” to spend with the Lord. Now, I see it as an hour that I “get” to talk to God about what he is asking of me and receive His love. This outlook does not come naturally, and I must first fight the idea that I could be doing something more important. This is especially important, with mid-terms just around the corner. But then I realize there is nothing more important that I do each day: not my schoolwork, my reading, or even the time I spend with friends. To become like Christ is the preeminent goal of the Christian life, and so prayer must be primary in my day. Only through that dialogue can I come to find Christ’s salvation offered freely to each of us.

St. Padre Pio famously said, “Pray, hope, and don’t worry. Worry is useless. God is merciful and will hear your prayer.” It’s hard to believe the Lord has taught me so much in my first semester, but Padre Pio echoes the best, yet simplest, lesson I’ve learned: God speaks, and He listens!

Have You Heard?

GOD IS DOING SOMETHING NEW—AND HE IS CALLING YOU TO BE A PART OF IT!

We are in the midst of a National Eucharistic Revival. Why? Because the Church needs healing, and the world needs Jesus. The Holy Spirit is inviting us to return to the source and summit of our faith—the Eucharist.

Scan the code to learn more about the exciting journey ahead, and sign up for weekly updates on what’s happening in this unprecedented national movement!

eucharisticrevival.org

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Now is the time to Talk!
DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

SEMINARIANS

BISHOP MARK E. BRENNAN
Bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston

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Assistant to the Director of Vocations
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“...to share all suffering, to penetrate all secrets, to heal all wounds, to go from men to God and offer Him their prayers, to return from God to men to bring pardon and hope... My God, what a life... and it is yours, O priest of Jesus Christ!”
~ Lacordaire

JOHN SOPLINSKI
Third Theology
Mount Saint Mary’s Seminary
Sacred Heart of Mary, Wheeling

DOMINIC RE
Second Philosophy
Mount Saint Mary’s Seminary
Sts. Peter and Paul, Clarksburg

BRYAN TEDESCI
Second Philosophy
Mount Saint Mary’s Seminary
St. James the Greater, Charleston

TIMOTHY KAWASH
First Philosophy
Pontifical College Josephinum
Sacred Heart Co-Cathedral, Charleston

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St. Patrick, Weston

DYLAN O’SULLIVAN
Second College
Saint John Paul II College Seminary
St. Patrick, Weston

DONVITO CORTESE
First College
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WOULD YOU LAY DOWN YOUR LIFE FOR THE SALVATION OF SOULS?
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Volunteer Spotlight: Quenton Northcraft

Quenton Northcraft shares the efficient food pantry organizational system he organized at the Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center in Wheeling.

Quenton Northcraft has a passion for service, and he uses his talents and gifts to improve the lives of other people. He is a devoted volunteer at the Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center in Wheeling.

“I’m just an ordinary person doing ordinary things, and everybody could plug in,” said Northcraft. “Everybody could contribute somehow.”

But the team at the Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center in Wheeling considers Northcraft’s work to be extraordinary.

“Quenton’s thoughtful and strategic approach is evident in everything he does,” said Trish Whitleatch, former CCWVa Neighborhood Center assistant coordinator. “He noticed that some of the carts at the center were not in good repair, making it difficult to move donated food and goods. He donated two carts that are much easier to maneuver and can be used for multiple purposes. This is just one example of how Quenton has helped us become more efficient so we can improve our services.”

Northcraft began volunteering at the Neighborhood Center by delivering meals to those who are homebound.

“When I first started there I was just running a meal route with a friend. I was just taking food to an address,” said Northcraft. “It took a little while for it to click… and that’s the transformative part.”

“It changes everything when you realize it’s not just food to an address, but meals to people,” he said. “The people get to know you. You get to know them and really that’s the best part.”

In addition to sharing his time and talent with Catholic Charities, Northcraft volunteers at the Mother Jones Center for Resilient Community and is an active member of St. Michael Parish in Wheeling.

Catholic Charities West Virginia honored Quenton Northcraft with a Charity in Action Award in April 2022.

The nomination period is open for the 2023 Charity in Action Award – to be presented at the Shining a Light on Hope Gala in Wheeling.

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

The Mission of Catholic Charities West Virginia: Guided by God’s love, Catholic Charities collaborates with community partners, parishes, and families to provide caring and compassionate services to people in need and work toward lasting and meaningful change.
Society of St. Vincent de Paul Conference in Wheeling Celebrates 100th Anniversary

By Colleen Rowan

WHEELING—“We’ll help with whatever we can,” said Mary Lou Kent about the organization of which she proudly serves as president. That organization is the St. Mary’s Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Wheeling.

Established in the suburb of Elm Grove, the conference is celebrating a century of service to those in need.

“This conference was founded here, actually, 100 years ago today on Oct. 15,” Kent said.

Her involvement with the conference is a family tradition as her father and stepmother were volunteers.

“It’s the idea of helping people,” she said. “Every conference is different. We help with utilities, rent, and food and whatever else is needed. One thing they say is ‘No act of charity is foreign to the society.’”

Kent shared these thoughts Oct. 15 at a Society of St. Vincent de Paul Ozanam Orientation, which gathered members from all over West Virginia including Wheeling, Moundsville, Pineville, Kingwood, Martinsburg, Charleston, and Berkeley Springs as well as Virginia. The orientation was held at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Wheeling.

Robert Hart, an officer for 40 years with a conference in the Diocese of Arlington, Va., who is also a 20-year member of the Kingwood Conference, presented a plaque to members of the St. Mary Conference in honor of the centennial.

Hart, who is a member of St. Edward the Confessor Mission in Terra Alta, spoke of the mission of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

“We are a lay Catholic organization that strives to be a servant of the poor,” Hart said. “The poor represent Christ himself. We go to the poor to help them. We don’t wait for them to come to our desk in an office. They call and say they need some help; we go to them.”

That, he said, is the major difference between the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and a social services organization.

“We consider the poor our friends,” Hart said. “How would you treat your neighbor or a friend that comes to you and says, ‘I can’t pay my bill this month?’ How would you treat your friend? That’s the way we treat the poor.”

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul has conferences throughout the United States and around the world. There is no initiation fee. According to the society, there are no special qualifications other than the desire to join with others to help those in need for the love of God.

Anyone in West Virginia who would like to become a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul should visit svdpusa.org.
Papa: Los santos fueron revolucionarios que vivieron las bienaventuranzas

Por Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — Los santos no eran conformistas “almidonados”, dijo el papa Francisco; eran “contraculturales y revolucionarios”.

La multitud de hombres y mujeres honrados en la solemnidad de Todos los Santos vivieron de acuerdo con las Bienaventuranzas, lo que los hizo decididamente fuera de lugar en el mundo, dijo el papa Francisco el 1 de noviembre antes de recitar la oración del Ángelus.

Con miles de personas reunidas en la Plaza de San Pedro, incluidos los que habían participado en la caravana de 10 km del Día de Todos los Santos, el papa Francisco también animó a la gente a no solo visitar los lugares de entierro de sus seres queridos al día siguiente, la solemnidad de los Fieles Difuntos, sino ir a “cerrar la puerta”, la paz, la enseñanza de Jesú.

Mientras mucha gente hoy trata de convencer a todos de que solo el poder y la fuerza pueden garantizar la paz, la enseñanza de Jesús y el ejemplo de los santos muestran que “la paz no se logra venciendo o derrotando a alguien, nunca es violenta, nunca es armada”. Para empezar a sembrar la paz, el papa Francisco pidió a las personas que se miraran a sí mismas y se preguntaran: “En los lugares donde vivimos, estudiamos y trabajamos, ¿llevamos tensión, palabras que hieren, chismes que envenenan, controversias que dividen? ¿O abrimos el camino de la paz: ¿Perdona- remos a los que nos han ofendido, cuidaremos a los que están en los márgenes, reparamos alguna injusticia ayudando a los que menos tienen? Esto es con- struir la paz.”

Al final de su discurso del mediodía, el papa pidió oración por su viaje del 3 al 6 de noviembre a Bahrein para que sus encuentros con los cristianos locales y con los líderes musulmanes promuevan, “en el nombre de Dios, la causa de la fraternidad y la paz”, que nuestros tiempos necesitan tan desesperada y urgente-

Y “por favor”, dijo, “no se olviden de Ucrania mártir; oremos por la paz, oremos para que en Ucra- nia haya paz”.

Para denunciar presuntos casos de abuso sexual de niños: La Diocesis de Wheeling-Charleston alienta a informar ante las autoridades civiles cuando corresponda y a las autoridades diocesanas, y a denunciar el abuso sexual, la Diocesis también se ha asociado con Navex Global para ofrecer la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar otras inquietudes adicionales, como sospecha de mala conducta, y formulación: Departamento de Salud y Recursos Humanos de WV:

Para informar al Coordinador de Asistencia a Víctimas de la Diocesis: llame a la Dra. Patricia Bailey al 304.242.6988. Además de los métodos enumerados anteriormente para denunciar el abuso sexual, la Diocesis también se ha asociado con Navex Global para ofrecer la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar otras inquietudes adicionales, como sospecha de mala conducta, y formulación: Departamento de Salud y Recursos Humanos de WV:
Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Confirmation Schedule

Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

Sunday, November 6: All Saints, Bridgeport, 10 a.m.

The Catholic Spirit 15

November 4, 2022

Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Confirmation Schedule

Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

Sunday, November 6: All Saints, Bridgeport, 10 a.m.