

THE CATHOLIC
Spirit

A Letter from Bishop Brennan

September 24, 2020

Dear faithful of the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese, I write to you again to address matters of common concern. I do so as a brother in Christ who has been given the awesome responsibility to serve as your shepherd here in West Virginia. I have considered these matters in the light of the Gospel of Christ, the teachings of our Church and my experience of forty-four years of pastoral ministry.

1. The Coronavirus pandemic. We are still in the middle of it. West Virginia has seen an upsurge of confirmed cases of the disease recently, so we cannot afford to relax our vigilance. We must persevere in patience, letting God's grace help us lead our lives productively and safely.

Since late May, we have received no reports of COVID-19 virus outbreaks traceable to a public Catholic Mass. I congratulate our parishioners, clergy and their teams for this good result but, please, do not let down your guard. While I advise persons with weakened health to stay home, I do not hesitate to urge healthy parishioners to go to Mass and bring their children, for our safety measures are working. Isn't it inconsistent to go to stores and restaurants but not to Mass, where you are safer than in many of those other venues? Is feeding the stomach more important than feeding the soul? Hearing God's Word together and receiving the Lord Jesus in Holy Communion are fundamental to our Catholic faith. If you're healthy, come to Mass!

Most of our Catholic schools have opened with teachers and students in the classroom and rigorous safety protocols in place. So far it has gone well. A few Catholic schools are teaching virtually, because of conditions in their counties, but, thankfully, our teachers are proficient at doing this. I compliment our Superintendent Mary Ann Deschaine and her staff, the principals, personnel, parents and students of our Catholic schools, for their good spirit and cooperation.

We also cooperate with civil officials in this matter, trusting that they are trying their best to deal with a changing landscape.

Most of our children attend public schools. Our parishes are beginning to offer religious education classes again, safely. Consult your parish for precisely how they are doing it. Parents: you are the primary educators of your children.

Your parish offers you help but cannot replace you. Lead your children to Jesus! You should be aware that Catholic Charities and many of our parishes continue to serve people in need, while adopting protective measures for the benefit of the serving and the served.

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Catholic Charities West Virginia Wins \$333K Innovation Challenge



Courtesy Photo

Catholic Charities West Virginia and Wheeling Hospital will begin a Hospital Transition Program, holistically supporting high-risk patients as they transition from the hospital to the home.

WHEELING—Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa) was announced as the winner of the Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) Social Innovation Challenge. CCWVa will receive a \$333,333 grant for its innovative Hospital Transition Program.

"We are incredibly grateful to CCUSA for this opportunity that will improve health outcomes for so many West Virginians," said Beth Zarate, CCWVa Chief Executive Officer. "More and more Catholic Charities agencies across the country are focusing on community-based health initiatives, holistically addressing the needs of the people we serve. We are thrilled to bring a program of this

nature to West Virginia."

The CCUSA Innovation Challenge aimed to inspire Catholic Charities agencies to propose a fresh solution toward reducing poverty.

"These awards are a testament to our strong commitment to exploring inventive ways to meet the increasing needs of our brothers and sisters who depend on Catholic Charities agencies for help and hope," said Sister Donna Markham, OP, PhD, CCUSA President and CEO. "We are excited to see how these programs progress and look forward to assessing their impact on promoting paths out of poverty and suffering."

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Letter...

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We must not stop reaching out with Christ's love to those who need our help. You should be proud of what your fellow Catholics are doing in this regard. Could you join them?

Let us pray hard for an end to the COVID-19 pandemic and for greater cooperation by our fellow citizens in the public health measures mandated or recommended to us all. I believe we Catholics can be a model for others in our State by showing how responsible people act in a public health crisis.

2. The upcoming elections. I urge you to remember, regardless of your political affiliation and views, that we are first and foremost disciples of Jesus Christ, who gathers us as one in his Catholic Church. While many of our fellow citizens engage in harsh rhetoric and even violence to express their feelings about issues and political leaders, we have to act differently everywhere but especially in Catholic settings. Our parishes, schools and Church groups must be oases of calm in the current political storm. It is simply wrong to despise a brother or sister in the faith because of his or her political views. We must worship, pray and work together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

In this light I have told our priests and deacons that they are not to endorse, in homilies, bulletins, social media or by other means, particular candidates or political parties. They can and should strive to shed the light of the Gospel on urgent moral and social issues, for our Catholic tradition has much wisdom to offer in such matters, but our clergy, religious and lay employees should not use their Church positions to advance favored candidates or parties. That is unfair to their fellow Catholics.

All citizens ought to vote. The American bishops have a fine document, Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, available at the usccb.org website. I encourage you to read it, especially parts one and two. It says: "As citizens, we should be guided more by our moral convictions than by our attachment to a political party or interest group." Conscience is different from feelings and from mere opinion, whether popular or not. We Catholics have the benefit of centuries of reflection on moral and political questions, a reflection grounded in both reason and divine revelation. We should evaluate candidates according to whether or not they stand for the inviolable dignity of the human person, the common good and the principles of subsidiarity (such as respect for the family as the basic social unit) and solidarity (in particular with the poor and oppressed). Not all issues are of equal weight. The bishops' document explains and applies appropriately these fundamental moral principles. A well-formed conscience should accompany us into the voting booth or when filling out an absentee ballot.

3. The Bransfield Saga. The reaction of our people to the Holy See's decision on the amends Bishop Bransfield should

make for some of the harm he caused, has been mixed. Some are tired of the whole affair and want to move on.

Others think the former bishop got off much too lightly. For my part, I found his apology self-serving and lacking in any recognition of, or contrition for, actually having offended people. I had it published without alteration and without comment, trusting that our people would see it for the non-apology that it was, and they did. I wasn't here to experience what you did but I deeply regret the pain that such a scandal and betrayal caused you. I can only try, as long as I am here, to be faithful and show that I care for you.

As for those who think the former bishop should go to jail, only the civil authorities can charge a person with a crime or send him to jail; the Church can do neither. (To be clear, the Diocese cooperates with civil authorities who are investigating alleged illegal behavior.) If we filed a lawsuit to recover more money from the former bishop, it is highly likely we would lose. Owing to constitutional concerns over the First Amendment's guarantee of a free exercise of religion, civil courts are very reluctant to interfere in the internal organization and norms of religious bodies, and canon law gives the bishop great control over how diocesan funds are spent. Those who dislike referring to my predecessor as a bishop must reckon with the fact that he is a bishop by virtue of his ordination; the discipline Rome imposed on him does not change that reality. With respect to the title "emeritus," Rome uses it as a technical term for a retired bishop but I do not use it because I know that, for English speakers, the term connotes honor and esteem, which neither we nor Rome attributes to the retired bishop.

One of the things we learn in life is that we don't always get our way. We did get some satisfaction relative to the Bransfield affair: to the best of my knowledge, the Holy See has never told a bishop in this country to apologize to his people and to make some financial restitution to them. Rome did that to Bishop Bransfield, even if the "apology" was anemic and the financial restitution, though substantial, was less than we initially sought. I do think Rome's decision is a "shot across the bow" to bishops that outrageous conduct will not be tolerated and will be punished.

I hope that we will not get stuck in endless quarrels that cannot change the past, but which can certainly bog us down in the present. As some of you have told me, we need to put the Bransfield saga behind us and move on to the work before us: making Christ known and loved in this State and serving those in need.

You all remain in my prayers and I ask you to remember me in yours. God bless you, your families and your parishes.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ Mark E. Brennan

+Mark E. Brennan
Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston

To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Chil-

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: Sr. Ellen Dunn, O.P., ext. 264; 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, Internet Crimes Against Children

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

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



Office: 1322 Eoff St.
Mailing: PO Box 230
Wheeling, WV 26003
(304) 232-0444
Fax: (304) 233-8551

Web site: www.thecatholicspiritwv.org
Diocesan Web site: www.dwc.org
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Executive Editor: Colleen Rowan, Ext. 347 crowan@dwc.org

Advertising: contact Colleen Rowan

Freelance Writers:

Martina Hart, John Sherwood, Babette Pascasio



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Statement Regarding Civil Suit Filed by Former PCHS Principal

WHEELING—The following is a statement from Tim Bishop, spokesperson for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, regarding a civil suit filed by former Parkersburg Catholic High School principal.

“This civil suit arises from an employment dispute with a former principal whose contract was not renewed. The Superintendent of

Schools, Mary Ann Deschaine, and the designated pastor of the school, Father John Rice, determined it was in the best interest of the school to have new leadership. No issues with Father Rice were raised in the discussions with the former principal.

The recent news story was prompted by the Court’s granting the Diocese’s motion to

compel arbitration of the non-renewal of the contract pursuant to the terms of the contract.

The allegations alleged involving Father Rice were promptly investigated, reviewed by the Diocesan Sexual Abuse Review Board and determined not to be credible abuse claims.

Diocesan Official Appointment:

Bishop Mark Brennan has made public the following appointment:

Father John R. Gallagher is appointed interim designated pastor of Parkersburg Catholic High School for a term of one year, effective immediately. This is in addition to his current assignment as pastor of St. Michael Parish in Vienna.

Challenge...

Cont’d from Page 1

CCWVa proposed an innovative Hospital Transition Program in partnership with Wheeling Hospital. The two organizations will work together to develop a supportive transition for high-risk patients as they are discharged from the hospital.

A CCWVa case manager will coordinate with the hospital team to work with patients prior to discharge. The case manager will provide individualized supportive services, following up with the patient to ensure they understand discharge instructions and are connected to community resources.

“For high-risk hospital patients with complex needs, this collaboration will provide a more fluid transition from the inpatient setting to home, reducing readmission rates and helping individuals better achieve and maintain health stability,” said Sara Lindsay, CCWVa Chief Program Officer.

The program focuses on basic chronic disease management, home safety, support networks and food security from a nutritional angle.

“As hospitals implement interventions to improve discharge transitions,

it is important to understand patients’ perspectives on which intervention components are most beneficial,” said Heidi Porter, Wheeling Hospital Director of Quality Management. “This partnership allows us to partner with patients post discharge in a very unique way. We are thrilled to work with Catholic Charities and make a positive impact on the most vulnerable patients.”

Additionally, space will be made available within the hospital for a “food pharmacy” – a food pantry for those with fixed or low incomes to visit before they are discharged. Volunteers from local parishes will collaborate to help operate and stock the pantry with donations of nutritious foods specific to certain chronic illnesses. Client-centered patient education will be a key component of the food pharmacy.

“Collaboration with valued community partners, like Wheeling Hospital, is so key in our non-profit social service work,” said Lindsay. “Through resource leveraging and strategic program development, we are able to provide higher quality services to some of the most vulnerable people in need.”

To learn more about CCWVa, visit www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org.

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Phase Two: Reopening of Churches for Public Worship

Updated as of September 24, 2020

In an effort to provide some further clarity and/or updates to specific protocols, the diocese is releasing this document to supplement the original guidelines and directives as issued on May 7, 2020. While the bulk of the directives from the May document remain in effect, some protocols have been adjusted and refined based on the experiences of these last four months. Bishop Brennan and diocesan administration remain grateful to all the clergy, parish staff members, volunteers and parishioners who have been diligent about following these directives for the health and safety of all who gather for public worship. Moreover, the diocese has encouraged all parish communities to restore their full liturgical schedule of weekend Masses, daily Masses and other sacramental celebrations as existed prior to March 2020. Bishop Brennan continues to invite those who are physically able and healthy to resume attending Mass in person, if they have not already done so – to hear God’s Word with their brothers and sisters in the faith and to receive the Lord Jesus in the Eucharist.

*At each celebration of Mass, the names and contact information for all parishioners and visitors who are in attendance should continue to be recorded in case this information is needed for contact tracing. Moreover, hand sanitizer should be available at all entrances of the church and parishioners should be reminded to sanitize their hands upon entering the church.

*The requirement for all of the faithful to wear a mask (except children under the age of 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing), which covers both the mouth and the nose, remains in effect. As parishioners enter the church, their mask should be put on and remain on until they leave the building while also observing physical distancing.

*Strict physical distancing is still to be followed by only using every other pew and maintaining a 6-foot distance between individuals from different households; thus members of a single household do not need to practice physical distancing with each other and may be seated together in the same row. Therefore, the limited capacity of a particular church will be determined by the adherence to these protocols and the overall goal of ensuring that our people can attend Mass in a safe manner that strives to promote good health for all.

*Outdoor celebrations of the Mass may occur, as weather permits, provided that all of the same guidelines are followed as would be required for indoor celebrations (physical distancing, wearing of masks, etc...)

*Any distribution of printed materials such as worship aides or bulletins is to be undertaken with care – if possible, individuals are to carefully pick up these

items from a table as they enter/leave the church. If these items must be distributed by a volunteer or usher, he/she should wear gloves for the distribution of these materials.

*At the discretion of the local pastor, altar servers may now be utilized to assist during Mass as needed. At this time, it is suggested to utilize only a minimal number of servers per Mass (it is recommended to use no more than three servers). Physical distancing should be maintained as much as possible.

*The readings may be proclaimed by the Presider or by one lector. If the lector is reading from the ambo, the Presider should proclaim the gospel and offer his homily from another location such as the presider’s chair so as not to use the same microphone as the lector. The cantor leads the Responsorial Psalm from a separate microphone and stand, not at the ambo. As well, care should be taken that separate copies of the readings are available to prevent multiple people from touching the same liturgical books.

*Matters relating to music during Mass and singing are addressed in a separate document entitled: “Guidelines for Music during Liturgical Celebrations;” this document is being released by the diocese at the same time as these directives.

*The Entrance Procession (and Recessional) may now return to past practices prior to the start of the pandemic.

*If attendance at particular Masses is increasing and the space/setup of the church building allows, pastors may wish to add an additional station where a deacon or an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion may also distribute communion. Like the priest, this individual must wear a mask and sanitize his/her hands before and after distributing Holy Communion. The same setup, involving a small table with a corporal, purificator, and a hand disinfecting product, must be used at this additional station. The distribution of the Precious Blood to the laity is still suppressed until further notice. Proper physical distancing must be maintained at all times as the faithful come up to receive Holy Communion and then return to their respective pews. It is still recommended to have ushers/volunteers assist with directing the flow of the communion procession.

*Hospitality ministers/ushers should continue to take an active role to ensure physical distancing is maintained as people are dismissed following the conclusion of the Mass.

*At the discretion of the local pastor, churches may continue to be open for private prayer throughout the day without having a designated person always present. Wipes and sanitizing supplies should be available for individuals to sanitize the pew, door handles, etc. once they are finished making their visit and are pre-

paring to leave the church. The hours the church is open should still be limited (not 24 hours a day); as well, regular sanitization of all commonly touched surfaces should be done daily after the closing and before the opening of the church for the next day.

*For the celebration of Funeral Masses, all of the requirements for the public celebration of a Mass should continue to be followed. It is recommended to have a parish staff member or a trained volunteer present for Funeral Masses, in order to assist in the adherence to all of the proper protocols especially when visitors are present who may not be familiar with these guidelines.

*Just as for funeral Masses, the same standard requirements remain in effect for weddings. Those gathered for wedding rehearsals should wear masks at all times and an overview of the protocols should be explained by the local pastor during the rehearsal as there may be many guests who are not familiar with specific parish directives. For the actual wedding ceremony, the pastor may make a determination based on factors such as the size of the worship space and the placement of the bride/groom and the wedding party as to when, if at all, masks may be removed for certain moments during the celebration of the Wedding liturgy.

*Clergy or Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may take communion to the sick/homebound but to only one household at a time so as not to spread potential germs from house to house. The clergy member or Extraordinary Minister should practice all sanitizing measures before and after the visit and wear a mask at all times; the communicant should also sanitize accordingly and wear a mask except at the moment of receiving Holy Communion. As weather permits, it is advisable for the visit to be brief and to occur outside on a porch, in the driveway or directly at the front door if possible.

*Confirmation – The Office of Worship and Sacraments has made available additional guidelines for the celebration of Confirmation during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Our parishes and communities need to be vigilant in adhering to all of the protocols for the good and safety of everyone so that our churches may remain open for public worship. When broadcasting services or posting pictures on the internet, social media or other means, we must demonstrate our adherence to all of the guidelines so that our actions match our directives.

† Mark E. Brennan

Bishop Mark E. Brennan

Norms for Reopening Parish Facilities for Meetings and Gatherings

Updated as of September 24, 2020

The following norms are intended to assist pastors as they reopen their parish/mission facilities to serve those entrusted to their pastoral care. Obviously, the diversity in size, location and facilities will require pastors to make some adaptations in the following norms. However, the substance and intent of these norms are to be observed. These norms are provided to promote a safe environment for our faith communities.

Please note that the State of West Virginia currently does not permit gatherings of more than 25 under most circumstances. For any clarification you might need, please consult your local county health department.

1. Parish Meetings and Formation

a. Parishes may convene and host in-person regu-

lar meetings of parish committees, most importantly Parish Council, Finance Council, parish administrative staff and VIRTUS trainings. Preparations must be made in advance for physical distancing, such as sitting on every other seat. Attendees must wear masks upon entry and exit from parish buildings and during meetings. No tactile greetings are permitted. Hand sanitizer must be made available to all those in attendance. No food or drink is to be served. Any handouts must be taken home by those in attendance or discarded before leaving. Use projection devices when possible. Follow state and county guidance regarding the maximum number of attendees for public gatherings. Disinfect the meeting space upon conclusion. Please consider making provisions for participants who wish to participate virtually or by teleconference.

b. Group meetings may reconvene at this time in

our parishes. This includes parish groups, youth groups, prayer groups, or outside groups such as ecumenical groups, AA, scouting, etc. Guidelines in Section 1 (a) above must also be followed. For youth groups, minors are not to be taken off-site by parish employees or volunteers. They are not to travel in groups for diocesan or parish-sponsored events. Field trips are also not to take place at this time. Youth should travel only with their parents or guardians and only with members of their own households.

c. Adult religious education, youth religious education and formation classes and related programming, etc., may meet in person at this time and are to follow the norms put into place by the Department of Evangelization and Catechesis. Contact Daniel Maul for more information in this regard.

See “Gatherings” on Page 5

Guidelines for Music During Liturgical Celebrations

(The following guidelines have been developed by the members of the Diocesan Music Consulters)

Updated as of September 24, 2020
WHAT SHOULD WE BE SINGING?

The Diocese still asks that singing be done in moderation during the COVID pandemic. Therefore, the question becomes “what should we be singing?” According to the USCCB document, “Sing to the Lord” paragraph 110-118 describes for us a hierarchy of liturgical music. “Singing by the gathered assembly and ministers is important to all celebrations. Not every part that can be sung should necessarily be sung at every celebration; rather, preference is given to those parts that are of greater importance.”

1) Dialogues and Acclamations—Among the parts to be sung, preference should be given to the dialogues and acclamations of the Eucharistic liturgy. It is our assent to God’s Word and actions. These are: Gospel Acclamation, Holy Holy, Mystery of Faith, and Great Amen.

2) Psalms - The Responsorial Psalm in the Liturgy of the Word of the Mass, “has great liturgical and pastoral importance since it fosters the meditation of the Word of God.” Singing of Psalms is deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition and early Christianity. Jesus sang psalms, our Jewish brothers and sisters sing psalms. **(In light of the COVID pandemic, you DO NOT have to proclaim the psalm from the ambo. It may be sung from a different location.)**

3) Refrains and repeated responses – These include the Kyrie and Lamb of God, at the Mass

4) Hymns – At Mass, in addition to the Gloria, hymns that have been judged appropriate may be added to the Liturgy. There is no mention of a Preparation of the Gifts song or a Recessional Hymn in the Roman Missal; thus, their use is optional.

INSTRUMENTALISTS

At this time, other instrumentalists may now be reintroduced into our music ministry programs as long as the standard safety protocols are followed including wearing of masks, distancing and minimal rehearsal time together with other musicians. String instruments, guitars, handbells, and percussion appear to pose minimal risk (please consult <https://handbellmusicians.org> for guidelines for safely returning to ringing). Some concern still exists regarding the use of woodwind and brass instruments and the potential spread of aerosol droplets that could be produced by these instruments. We would caution against the use of these instruments at this time; larger musical organizations (such as symphonies, etc...) are looking into covers and other measures to mitigate the challenges posed by woodwind and brass instruments. As we learn more from these developments, we will revisit the usage of woodwinds and brass instruments.

VOCAL CHOIRS

At this time, concern still exists regarding vocal choirs/ensembles and their potential to spread aerosols and other droplets into the air. Moreover, many members of our choirs fall into the higher risk category because of age and other underlying health issues. Thus, full vocal choirs may still not be utilized at this time; however, consideration may be given to a small schola of no more than four members to allow SATB music. Like all musicians, these schola members are to wear masks at all times (even while singing regardless of where they are located in the church) and are to be in an area that allows at least six feet of space between each of the singers. We also recommend that each schola member have his/her

own microphone to prevent cross-contamination and to allow their voice to be clearly heard and understood while singing with the mask. Moreover, a reminder that the schola should always encourage and support the singing of the assembly; as well, it is suggested for moderation in the number of musical selections the schola will actually sing before and/or during the Mass or service. As more studies do further investigation into larger group singing and its impact on spreading the virus, additional updates may be made to this aspect of music ministry. Further information on singing and related protocols may be found at the American Choral Directors Association (www.acda.org).

“BROADCASTING” AND/OR REPRODUCING MUSIC/LYRICS IN PRINT OR VIA PROJECTION

Please know that separate and specific licenses must be obtained if your parish/community broadcasts any liturgical service involving copyrighted music that is played and/or sung during the broadcast. The term “broadcast” includes podcasts, Facebook live, YouTube, and any other method where the liturgical service is recorded and then shared. As well, a separate license must be obtained if your parish/community reprints the lyrics and/or the music of songs in a worship aid, bulletin or any other printed material; this same license would also allow for the projection of lyrics and music. Much of the music that most parishes utilize falls under the licensing of OneLicense.net. However, if you use music outside of the coverage of OneLicense.com, you would need to secure additional licensing (ex. Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) covers many contemporary songs which some parishes may choose as part of their repertoire). In addition to obtaining the license, each song, either projected or printed, must include the composer’s name and the copyright notice with the publisher’s name (this includes both the reproduction of lyrics with the melody line and/or simply the reproducing of the song’s text); moreover, music used each week must be reported to the respective licensing company. The Office of Worship and Sacraments can provide assistance in answering questions related to appropriate licensing. Worship aids are only for single-time usage and must be disposed after each Mass.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Recordings of choirs or liturgical instrumental recordings are not to be used during the celebration of the Eucharist and are not to be used in place of music that would normally be sung or played live during Mass.

Please remember that all musicians (vocalists and instrumentalists) should wear masks at all times during the Mass(es) and during any rehearsals; as well, regular sanitizing, appropriate distancing and good air ventilation must also be practiced. Regarding rehearsals, it is recommended not to share any instruments or printed materials and to keep rehearsals to a minimum with the length of the rehearsal not to exceed 30-50 minutes. Music ministers, as leaders, must always practice and exhibit proper adherence to the protocols and safety guidelines; since there remain greater concerns with singing and the potential to spread the virus, music ministers must demonstrate greater awareness and take additional precautions for the safety of all.

† Mark E. Brennan

Bishop Mark E. Brennan

Gatherings...

Cont’d from Page 4

2. Indoor, Parish Hall or Gymnasium Events

a. **Funeral Luncheons and other gatherings with meals:** Presently, parishes may NOT have funeral luncheons/dinners.

b. **Wedding Receptions, Baptismal/Confirmation gatherings, Bridal/Baby Showers, etc.:** Presently parishes may not hold these types of gatherings.

c. **Charitable Outreach:** Parishes have been and still are encouraged to continue charitable outreach to the community during the pandemic, with special emphasis on operating food pantries, “meals on wheels,” utility assistance, clothing distribution, and outreach with local partners such as the Gabriel Project, Red Cross, St. Vincent de Paul Society, etc. Be certain to follow social distancing guidelines, use location specific plans to avoid contact, always wear masks and encourage hand washing/use of hand sanitizer. Organizers must clearly mark separate doors for ingress/egress and mark floors for one-way traffic flow. Track names of those in attendance at the entrance of your facility for contact tracing purposes. Prohibit use of public drinking fountains. Clean bathrooms frequently. Sanitize after each facility use.

d. **Indoor or Outdoor Fund-Raising Auctions, Craft Fairs or public events without food or beverage service:** At this time, you may seek permission to have these events. First, assemble your plans for the event and submit them to your county health department. Should you receive county approval, please forward your plans and the approval from the county health department to Bryan Minor in the Chancery, and we will respond with an answer as soon as possible.

e. **Athletics:** With the permission of the pastor/administrator, parish indoor athletic practices, games or recreational activities on parish property may resume at this time, but these are all subject to WVEA and WVDHHR color coded guidance and policies (green and yellow: you may proceed; gold, orange or red follow state rules). Guidance for Catholic School facilities is available through the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. If you have any questions, please refer to your county health department.

f. **Fellowship:** Per the guidelines already distributed for the resumption of public liturgies, no coffee, donuts or other gatherings are permitted in halls, gymnasiums or other church properties.

g. **Bingo:** With the approval of the pastor/administrator, bingo may resume under the following conditions:

i. You must follow state guidelines for bingo found at this website - <https://tax.wv.gov/Documents/Publications/Covid19Response/SafetyGuidanceForBingoHalls.pdf>. Failure to abide by state policies will automatically result in termination of bingo operations.

ii. You must submit your plan to the county health department and secure written approval to begin bingo on your property.

iii. Submit your plan to begin bingo along with written permission from the county health department to Bryan Minor for diocesan consideration, and we will respond as soon as possible.

h. **Rentals:** Parish halls and gymnasiums are not available for parishioner or public rental at this time.

3. **Outdoor Facilities and Venues:** While outdoor events appear to provide more flexibility, it is important that care be taken to keep these events safe. Therefore safe-distancing is important as is the wearing of masks and meals are not to be served at these locations.

† Mark E. Brennan

Bishop Mark E. Brennan



Priesthood Sunday

September 27

Very Rev. Dennis R. Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., prepares to process into St. Joseph the Worker Church in Weirton, where his is pastor, for the beginning of Mass. Courtesy Photo

By Colleen Rowan

This weekend is Priesthood Sunday, a special day set aside each year to honor priesthood in the United States. The Sept. 27 celebration is sponsored each year by Serra International, which describes the special day a time to reflect upon and affirm the role of the priesthood in the life of the Church as a central one.

"Priesthood Sunday is to priests like Father's Day is to dads," said Deacon John Yaquina, chaplain of the Clarksburg Serra Club. "It's a time to honor all our current priests, with spiritual bouquets of prayer; to pray for those in study to be priests, and also to remember our retired priests."

Deacon Yaquina, who is also permanent deacon at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in

Stonewood, said this is also an opportunity to just say thank you to priests for their vocation.

"I urge all Serrans," he said, "to pick up the phone and/or send an e-mail to thank a priest today."

Priesthood Sunday is annually celebrated on the last Sunday of September. In normal times, the day is celebrated in many ways from a special prayer service, to a feast, to songs from children. Parishes would tailor the event to suit their own style. Though the 2020 celebration is hindered a bit by the pandemic, the Catholic faithful can still mark the special day with prayers, a message or, again, just a simple thank you to a priest after Mass.

The Serra Club of Charleston has been fortunate to have several in-person meetings since early July, observing social distancing and other

COVID-19 protocols, said Charleston Serra President Michael A. Kawash, noting that attendance has not been at the levels prior to the pandemic. And, even though normal celebrations cannot be held, the club still plans to make Priesthood Sunday special.

"Priesthood Sunday will be different this year, as we will limit what we are doing to using social media to heighten the faithful's awareness of the role of priests in our lives," Kawash said. "We do not want that important date to pass this year without showing our appreciation for everything priests do, especially in bringing us the sacraments."

In anticipation of Priesthood Sunday, Wheeling Serra Club President Chris Freeman spoke of the club's mission and the many **See "Priesthood" on Page 7**

Life Chains Planned around Diocese for Respect Life Sunday, Oct. 4

WEST VIRGINIA—Respect Life Sunday is Oct. 4, and will include a national life chain to be held from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. This is a one-hour display of silent witness in public prayer for the protection of life from conception to natural death.

Stanley Wyatt, a prisoner of St. Anthony Parish in Charleston, is helping with efforts and planning in his community. Life chains, he said, are scheduled on Kanawha Boulevard and McCorkle Avenue in the Kanawha City section of Charleston, as well as MacCorkle Avenue in South Charleston, Jefferson, and St. Albans. Another Life Chain, Wyatt said, will be held at the same time on Washington Street West in Charleston between Maryland and Delaware avenues. Other life chains in the region will be conducted in Cross Lanes, Hurricane, and Huntington, he said. "Participant stand 10 feet apart," Wyatt said. "Signs are available from me for pick up or delivery. We ask that signs be retained for the following year."

No registrations needed, he said, "Just

show up." Signs are also available along the route at living Word Christian Center or Christian Assembly in Charleston.

In the Eastern Panhandle a life chain will be held from 2-3 p.m. on East King Street and South Queen Street.

The youth group from St. Joseph Parish in Martinsburg will be participating.

These are just a few of the life chains being held in West Virginia on Respect Life Sunday. For more information, faithful should contact their parishes.

October is Respect Life Month with this year's theme "Live the Gospel of Life." Sponsored annually by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the annual Respect Life Program is "a year-round, nationwide effort by leaders like yourselves to help Catholics understand, value, and become engaged with building a culture that cherishes every human life," program officials said.

For more information and resources for Respect Life Month, visit www.respectlife.org.

Live the Gospel of *Life*

RESPECT LIFE MONTH
October 2020

J.M. Holman, Historic, "Christ Healing the Sick," Drawing, 18th century, in: Of the Institution of Christ: Four Books, by Thomas à Kempis, page 181, Philadelphia, PA: J. Holman & Company, 1893. Courtesy of the Library of Congress. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

Celebrate!

PRIESTHOOD SUNDAY

Priesthood...

Cont'd from Page 6

great priests in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. "Our mission as Serrans is to promote and foster vocations," Freeman said. "Our diocese is fortunate to have so many wonderful priests. We invite all Catholics to give thanks and join us in offering prayers for our priests and for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life." Freeman also offered:

The Serran Prayer for Vocations

"We give thanks for all priests who are ordained to serve our church, that their ministry may be fruitful and appreciated by the people they serve. We also give thanks for their gifts to our parishes and their vocations to the ordained priesthood.

We pray that good men may be drawn to love and to serve the people of God. For retired priests, we pray that they may experience God's abundant love as they walk a new path of prayer and servanthood in retirement.

We affirm, support and celebrate our priests' gift of service to us and pray that we may never take the presence of our priests for granted, as we cherish the celebration of the Mass and are nourished by the Eucharist.

We also pray for all priests who struggle with loneliness, declining health or loss of mobility, that they may be comforted by the grace of the Holy Spirit. May this parish family always embrace our priests and sustain their ministry by our love, our constant prayer and our trust in their leadership.

Finally, we pray for priests who now sleep in peace of the resurrection, and for those who may die this year or this day, that God lead them gently into their eternal reward. Let us offer our prayers in thanksgiving for our priests this Sunday and throughout the year."

For more information about Priesthood Sunday, visit Serra International's website: serraus.org/priesthood-sunday/

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U.S. Bishops Say 'Enough' on Federal Executions

By Carol Zimmermann,
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Just hours before the sixth federal execution took place this year, and two days before the next one was scheduled, two U.S. bishops' committee chairmen called on the government to end this practice.

"We say to President Trump and Attorney General Barr: Enough. Stop these executions," said Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Pro-Life Activities, in a statement issued late Sept. 22.

"In the last 60 years, before the Trump administration restarted federal executions, there were only four federal executions. Since July, there have been five, which is already more federal executions than were carried out in any year in the last century," the bishops said.

They said the Catholic Church "must give concrete help to victims of violence" and "encourage the rehabilitation and restoration of those who commit violence." They noted that "accountability and legitimate punishment are a part of this process" and emphasized that "responsibility for harm is necessary if healing is to occur and can be instrumental in protecting society."

"Executions are completely unnecessary and unacceptable, as Popes St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis have all articulated," they

added.

The bishops' statement was issued the day before Barr, a Catholic, was scheduled to receive the Christifideles Laici Award, named for St. John Paul II's postsynodal exhortation, at the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast. The award is given by the independent Catholic organization in "honor and gratitude for fidelity to the church, exemplary selfless and steadfast service in the Lord's vineyard."

The Association of U.S. Catholic Priests, Catholic Mobilizing Network and the Santa Fe Archdiocese's Office of Social Justice and Respect Life spoke out against Barr receiving this honor, emphasizing that in his role as attorney general, he directed the federal government in July 2019 to resume the execution of prisoners on federal death row.

The Catholic Mobilizing Network, which works to end use of the death penalty and promotes criminal justice reform and restorative justice, relaunched its petition against federal executions in early September, emphasizing that Barr was being honored "despite promoting actions contrary to Catholic teaching."

And a Sept. 23 statement by the group's executive director, Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy, further denounced Barr's award, especially for its presentation in between two federal executions, saying it "could mislead the public to believe the Catholic Church somehow condones the death penalty. This is categorically false."

She also said that under Barr's leadership, the Department of Justice has "carried

out more executions in 2020 than in any other comparable time in the past 70 years. Nothing about this is pro-life."

The Catholic Mobilizing Network led a virtual prayer vigil Sept. 22, hours before the federal execution of 50-year-old William Emmett LeCroy, who was charged with the 2001 murder of a Georgia nurse.

They were to lead another virtual prayer vigil Sept. 24 before the scheduled execution of Christopher Vialva, a 40-year-old from Texas who was convicted of kidnapping and killing an Iowa couple in 1999. Vialva will be the first Black man to be executed since the federal executions resumed this year after a 17-year hiatus.

In prison, Vialva became a Messianic Jew and in recent years he has regularly ministered to fellow inmates, according to a report on WFIU public radio in Indiana.

LeCroy received a lethal injection Sept. 22 at the federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana. Nearby was his spiritual adviser, Sister Barbara Battista, a Sister of Providence of St. Mary of the Woods.

Sister Battista told local radio station WTWO in Indianapolis that during the execution, members of her order were planning to join death penalty protesters nearby. "We are attempting to send a clear message that says: 'No we need to stop this. No more death penalty, no more extrajudicial killing, stop police killing, stop mass incarceration,'" she said.

At the Sept. 22 virtual prayer service, a statement written by Atlanta Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer was read aloud to the 215 online participants. It said: "The death penalty goes against the church's pro-life teaching rooted in the inherent dignity of every

human person. It jeopardizes innocent lives since the justice system has wrongfully convicted innocent people."

He also said "a convict who is killed never has an opportunity to repent or seek reconciliation with those he or she may have hurt. We must always leave open the door for redemption and rehabilitation."

The archbishop prayed for LeCroy's victim, Joann Lee Tiesler, and for her family. He also prayed for LeCroy "because he is a child of God" whose life has worth and dignity.

He also prayed for government employees involved in carrying out the death penalty and that "our judicial and political system may find a way to end the death penalty, so as to achieve a measure of justice that does not involve the violence of execution of a fellow human being."

Congress Urged to Cover Immigrant, Refugee Families in Any Stimulus Bill

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The chairman of the U.S. bishops' migration committee told a House subcommittee Sept. 23 that any stimulus bill Congress is considering must include assistance for immigrant and refugee families and also make them eligible for past stimulus relief.

Many immigrants and refugees in this country are among the front-line essential workers the country has relied on during this pandemic, said Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington.

Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, he made the comments in written testimony to the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship during its hearing on "Immigrants as Essential Workers During COVID-19."

"Immigrants and refugees are a blessing to our country," the bishop said. "The church teaches that every human being is created in God's image and deserves dignity and respect and that human labor has an inherent dignity, allowing all to share in the ongoing work of creation, while providing the resources to build and sustain families."

"The contributions of essential workers have become undoubtedly more important during COVID-19," he continued. "While many essential workers are U.S. citizens, many are also immigrants and refugees. Immigrants comprise 31% of U.S. agricultural employees ... (and) they risk their own safety to support their families and to ensure continuity in the nation's food supply chains."

Immigrant and refugees who are essential workers also are "highly vulnerable" to COVID-19 and "less likely to have access to medical care," Bishop Dorsonville noted.

And so far, "they have been completely left out" of any federal stimulus package offering financial help to many segments of the U.S. workforce and U.S. families, he said.

"We urge Congress to include immigrant and refugee families in any future COVID-19 relief as well as be made eligible for past relief efforts," he said.

"Additionally," Bishop Dorsonville said, "we continue to advocate Congress for a path to citizenship for undocumented workers who have been living, working and contributing to our country. As Pope Francis states: No one must be left behind."

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Pro-life Leaders Welcome ‘Born Alive Executive Order’ Announced by Trump

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Donald Trump’s Sept. 23 announcement that he will issue a “Born Alive Executive Order” will “provide necessary legal protections for some of the most vulnerable in society,” said Jeanne Mancini, president of the March for Life Education and Defense Fund.

“These steps had to be taken,” she said, “because some Democrats in the Senate promised to block legislation that mandates basic medical care for children who survive an abortion — an extremist view shared by vice presidential candidate Kamala Harris.”

Mancini made the comments in a statement she issued shortly after Trump announced the order in his remarks during the annual

National Catholic Prayer Breakfast, which this year could not be an in-person event because of the pandemic and was livestreamed to over 10,000 registered participants.

“We believe in ... the eternal truth that every child, born and unborn, is made in the holy image of God. ... I will always defend the sacred right to life,” the president said. His executive order will “ensure that all precious babies born alive, no matter their circumstances, receive the medical care that they deserve. This is our sacrosanct moral duty,” he said.

Trump’s opponents and

some obstetricians and gynecologists say existing law that already provides protections to newborns, whether born during a failed abortion or under other circumstances.

Sen. Ben Sasse, R-Nebraska, the lead co-sponsor of the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, S. 311, has said current law does not provide enough protections. His bill would protect newborns who survive abortions by requiring appropriate care and admission to a hospital. On Feb. 23, a Senate vote to advance the bill failed.

In other reaction to Trump’s planned executive order, said Carol Tobias,

president of National Right to Life, “protects the youngest of patients and ensures that their right to life is defended to the greatest extent of the law.”

Kristan Hawkins, president of Students for Life Action, called it “a humane response to a struggling infant gasping for air.”

“The fact that Democrats in the House and Senate have blocked efforts to provide legal protections for babies born during botched abortions should horrify all Americans,” she said, adding that “one of the sleeper issues of this election cycle is infanticide, which is allowed under our current

laws.”

The Guttmacher Institute estimates that out of about 926,000 annual abortions, about 12,000 take place after viability, or after 20 weeks, she said.

“The radical reality of Roe is that abortion is legal in the U.S. through all nine months, sometimes with taxpayer funding, and it offers no legal protections for babies born during botched abortions,” Hawkins said.

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True Change Requires Input of Everyone, Not Just the Powerful, Pope Says

By Carol Glatz, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The world will not overcome the current crisis if only big businesses, financial institutions and the powerful have a voice, Pope Francis said.

“Everyone must be listened to. Everyone — those on the top, those on the bottom,” he said Sept. 23 during his weekly general audience.

“Getting out of this crisis does not mean brushing a coat of paint over the current situation,” he said.

“Overcoming a crisis means changing. And true change comes about with everyone, all the people,” who make up a community, he said to applause.

“Either together or it will not work,” he said at the audience, which was held in the San Damaso courtyard of the Apostolic Palace.

He continued his series of talks on “healing the world” by reflecting on the “principle of subsidiarity,” which emerged in church teaching in Pope Pius XI’s 1931 encyclical “Quadragesimo Anno” on the reconstruction of the social order.

Subsidiarity has been explained as balancing the many necessary levels of society — government, business, family, associations, etc. — and seeking the allocation of resources by higher levels of society to support engagement and decision-making by the lower levels.

Pope Francis said the principle works both ways: from top to bottom and from the bottom to the top, with all levels working in a cooperative, not competitive way, leading to greater unity and working for the common good.

Unfortunately, he said, not everyone has the possibility, the right, the resources or the courage to take on their responsibility in

helping heal the world.

“Many people cannot participate in the reconstruction of the common good because they are marginalized, excluded or ignored; certain social groups do not succeed in making a contribution because they are economically or socially suffocated,” he said.

In some places, people are not free to express their own faith or values and could even go to prison if they did and, especially in Western nations, “many people repress their own ethical or religious convictions.”

“Unfortunately, this injustice happens often in those places where huge economic and geopolitical interests are concentrated, such as, for example, certain extractive activities in some areas of the planet” and where the voices of indigenous peoples, their culture and worldviews are not taken into consideration.

“Today, this lack of respect for the principle of subsidiarity has spread like a virus,” the pope said.

“The largest financial companies are listened to rather than the people or the ones who really move the economy,” he said. “Multinational businesses are listened to more than social movements.”

Also, when it comes to finding a vaccine for the coronavirus, he added, “the large pharmaceutical companies are listened to more than the health care workers employed on the front lines in hospitals or in refugee camps.”

To sum it up, he said, “the powerful are listened to more than the weak. And this is not the way. It is not the human way; it is not the way Jesus taught.”

The pope recalled “the spontaneous gesture of applauding for doctors and nurses” during the lockdown in Italy and other countries, as a sign of encouragement and hope.

“Let’s extend this applause to every member of the social body for their precious contribution, no matter how small,” and make sure they are listened to, consulted and given a chance to do something, he said.

“Let’s applaud those this culture characterizes as the rejected: the elderly, children, persons with disability, workers, all those who dedicate themselves to service,” he said, and let them collaborate to overcome this crisis.

People should not be content just with applauding, though, he said. “Let’s encourage ourselves to dream big ... seeking the ideals of justice and social love that are born

of hope” rather than trying to reconstruct a past that was “unjust and already ill.”

At the end of the audience, Pope Francis blessed a large bell that was commissioned by the “Yes to Life” Foundation in Poland.

The bell, called “The voice of the unborn,” was to be used at events recognizing the value of human life from its moment of conception to its natural end, the pope said in remarks to visitors from Poland.

May the tolling of the bell, “reawaken the consciences of lawmakers and all people of goodwill in Poland and the world,” he said.

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CONFIRMATION IN SHEPHERDSTOWN

Courtesy Photo

Bishop Mark Brennan confirms a young member of St. Agnes Parish in Shepherdstown. With him is Father Mat Rowgh, former pastor (left) and Father Andrew Switzer, current pastor (right). The next confirmation will be at All Saints Parish, Bridgeport Oct. 11 at 3 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Below is the full confirmation schedule.

CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

**Bishop Mark E. Brennan,
Celebrant**

All Saints Parish, Bridgeport
Sunday, October 11 at 3:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Blessed Sacrament Parish, South Charleston
Saturday, October 17 at 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

St. Anthony Parish, Follansbee
Sunday, November 22 at 10:30 a.m.

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Una carta del obispo Brennan

24 de septiembre de 2020

Queridos fieles de la diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston,

Le escribo nuevamente para abordar asuntos de interés común. Lo hago como un hermano en Cristo a quien se le ha dado la asombrosa responsabilidad de servir como su pastor aquí en Virginia Occidental. He considerado estos asuntos a la luz del Evangelio de Cristo, las enseñanzas de nuestra Iglesia y mi experiencia de cuarenta y cuatro años de ministerio pastoral.

1. La pandemia de coronavirus. Todavía estamos en medio de eso. Virginia Occidental ha visto un aumento de casos confirmados de la enfermedad recientemente, por lo que no podemos permitirnos relajar nuestra vigilancia. Debemos perseverar con paciencia, dejando que la gracia de Dios nos ayude a llevar nuestras vidas de manera productiva y segura.

Desde finales de mayo, no hemos recibido informes de brotes del virus COVID-19 que se puedan atribuir a una misa católica pública. Felicito a nuestros feligreses, clérigos y sus equipos por este buen resultado, pero, por favor, no bajen la guardia. Aunque aconsejo a las personas con problemas de salud que se queden en casa, no dudo en instar a los feligreses sanos a que vayan a una misa y traigan a sus hijos, porque nuestras medidas de seguridad están funcionando. ¿No es inconsistente ir a tiendas y restaurantes pero no a misa, donde estás más seguro que en muchos de esos otros lugares? ¿Es más importante alimentar el estómago que alimentar el alma? Escuchar juntos la Palabra de Dios y recibir al Señor Jesús en la Sagrada Comunión son fundamentales para nuestra fe católica. ¡Si estás sano, ven a misa!

La mayoría de nuestras escuelas católicas se han abierto con maestros y estudiantes en el aula y se han implementado rigurosos protocolos de seguridad. Hasta ahora ha ido bien. Algunas escuelas católicas están enseñando virtualmente, debido a las condiciones en sus condados, pero, afortunadamente, nuestros maestros son competentes en hacerlo. Felicito a nuestra superintendente Mary Ann Deschaine y su personal, los directores, personal, padres y estudiantes de nuestras escuelas católicas, por su buen espíritu y cooperación.

También cooperamos con los funcionarios civiles en este asunto, confiando en que están haciendo todo lo posible para hacer frente a un panorama cambiante.

La mayoría de nuestros niños asisten a escuelas públicas. Nuestras parroquias están comenzando a ofrecer clases de educación religiosa nuevamente, de manera segura. Consulte a su parroquia para saber exactamente cómo lo están haciendo. Padres: ustedes son los principales educadores de sus hijos.

Su parroquia le ofrece ayuda pero no puede reemplazarlo. ¡Lleva a tus hijos a Jesús! Debe tener en cuenta que Caridades Católicas y muchas de nuestras parroquias continúan sirviendo a las personas necesitadas, al tiempo que adoptan medidas de protección para el beneficio de los que sirven y los que sirven.

No debemos dejar de acercarnos con el amor de Cristo a aquellos que necesitan nuestra ayuda. Debería estar orgulloso de lo que están haciendo sus compañeros católicos a este respecto. ¿Podrías unirte a ellos?

Oremos mucho por el fin de la pandemia de COVID-19 y por una mayor cooperación de nuestros conciudadanos en las medidas de salud pública que se nos ordenan o recomiendan a todos. Creo que los católicos podemos ser un modelo para otros en nuestro estado al mostrar cómo actúan las personas responsables en una crisis de salud pública.

2. Las próximas elecciones. Les insto a recordar, independientemente de su afiliación política y opiniones, que somos ante todo discípulos de Jesucristo, quien nos reúne como uno en su Iglesia Católica. Si bien muchos de nuestros conciudadanos se involucran en una retórica dura e incluso en la violencia para expresar sus sentimientos sobre los problemas y los líderes políticos, tenemos que actuar de manera diferente en todas partes, pero especialmente en los entornos católicos. Nuestras parroquias, escuelas y grupos de la Iglesia deben ser oasis de calma en la actual tormenta política. Es simplemente incorrecto despreciar a un hermano o hermana en la fe debido a sus puntos de vista políticos. Debemos adorar, orar y trabajar juntos como hermanos y hermanas en Cristo.

En este sentido, les he dicho a nuestros sacerdotes y diáconos que no deben respaldar, en homilias, boletines, redes sociales o por otros medios, candidatos o partidos políticos en particular. Pueden y deben esforzarse por arrojar la luz del Evangelio sobre cuestiones morales y sociales urgentes, ya que nuestra tradición católica tiene mucha sabiduría que ofrecer en tales asuntos, pero nues-

tro clero, religiosos y empleados laicos no deben utilizar sus puestos en la Iglesia para promover candidatos favorecidos. o fiestas. Eso es injusto para sus compañeros católicos.

Todos los ciudadanos deberían votar. Los obispos estadounidenses tienen un excelente documento, Formando la conciencia para la ciudadanía fiel, disponible en el sitio web usccb.org. Te animo a leerlo, especialmente las partes uno y dos. Dice: "Como ciudadanos, debemos guiarnos más por nuestras convicciones morales que por nuestro apego a un partido político o grupo de interés". La conciencia es diferente de los sentimientos y de la mera opinión, popular o no. Los católicos tenemos el beneficio de siglos de reflexión sobre cuestiones morales y políticas, una reflexión basada tanto en la razón como en la revelación divina. Debemos evaluar a los candidatos en función de si defienden o no la inviolable dignidad de la persona humana, el bien común y los principios de subsidiariedad (como el respeto a la familia como unidad social básica) y de solidaridad (en particular con los pobres y oprimido). No todas las cuestiones tienen el mismo peso. El documento de los obispos explica y aplica adecuadamente estos principios morales fundamentales. Una conciencia bien formada debe acompañarnos a la cabina de votación o al llenar una papeleta de voto ausente.

3. La saga de Bransfield. La reacción de nuestro pueblo a la decisión de la Santa Sede sobre las enmiendas que el obispo Bransfield debería hacer por algunos de los daños que causó ha sido mixta. Algunos están cansados de todo el asunto y quieren seguir adelante.

Otros piensan que el ex obispo se salió con demasiada ligereza. Por mi parte, encontré su disculpa egoísta y carente de reconocimiento o arrepentimiento por haber ofendido a la gente. Lo hice publicar sin alteraciones y sin comentarios, confiando en que nuestra gente lo vería por la falta de disculpa que era, y así fue. No estuve aquí para experimentar lo que tú hiciste, pero lamento profundamente el dolor que te causó tal escándalo y traición. Solo puedo intentar, mientras esté aquí, ser fiel y demostrar que me preocupo por ti.

En cuanto a quienes piensan que el ex obispo debería ir a la cárcel, sólo las autoridades civiles pueden acusar a una persona de un delito o enviarla a la cárcel; la Iglesia no puede hacer ninguna de las dos. (Para ser claros, la Diócesis coopera con las autoridades civiles que están investigando un presunto comportamiento ilegal). Si presentamos una demanda para recuperar más dinero del ex obispo, es muy probable que perdamos. Debido a las preocupaciones constitucionales sobre la garantía de la Primera Enmienda del libre ejercicio de la religión, los tribunales civiles son muy reacios a interferir en la organización interna y las normas de los cuerpos religiosos, y el derecho canónico otorga al obispo un gran control sobre cómo se gastan los fondos diocesanos. Aquellos a quienes no les guste referirse a mi predecesor como obispo deben tener en cuenta el hecho de que él es obispo en virtud de su ordenación; la disciplina que Roma le impuso no cambia esa realidad. Con respecto al título "emérito", Roma lo usa como un término técnico para un obispo retirado, pero yo no lo uso porque sé que, para los angloparlantes, el término connota honor y estima, que ni nosotros ni Roma atribuimos al obispo jubilado.

Una de las cosas que aprendemos en la vida es que no siempre nos salimos con la nuestra. Conseguimos cierta satisfacción en relación con el asunto Bransfield: que yo sepa, la Santa Sede nunca le ha dicho a un obispo en este país que se disculpe con su pueblo y que les haga una restitución económica. Roma le hizo eso al obispo Bransfield, incluso si la "disculpa" fue anémica y la restitución financiera, aunque sustancial, fue menor de lo que inicialmente buscábamos. Creo que la decisión de Roma es un "tiro por el arco" para los obispos de que no se tolerará y se castigará una conducta indignante.

Espero que no nos quedemos atrapados en disputas interminables que no pueden cambiar el pasado, pero que ciertamente pueden atascarnos en el presente. Como algunos de ustedes me han dicho, debemos dejar atrás la saga de Bransfield y seguir adelante con el trabajo que tenemos ante nosotros: dar a conocer y amar a Cristo en este Estado y servir a los necesitados.

Todos permanecen en mis oraciones y les pido que me recuerden en las suyas. Dios los bendiga a ustedes, a sus familias y a sus parroquias.

Sinceramente en Cristo,

+ Mark E. Brennan

+ Mark E. Brennan
Obispo de Wheeling-Charleston

Obispos de EE. UU. dicen 'basta' a las ejecuciones federales

Por Carol Zimmermann, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Pocas horas antes de que se llevara a cabo la sexta ejecución federal este año, y dos días antes de que se programara la siguiente, dos presidentes de comités de obispos estadounidenses pidieron al gobierno que pusiera fin a esta práctica.

"Le decimos al presidente Trump y al fiscal general Barr: Basta. Paren estas ejecuciones", dijo el arzobispo Paul S. Coakley de Oklahoma City, presidente del Comité de Actividades Pro-Vida de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos, y el arzobispo Joseph F. Naumann de Kansas City, Kansas, presidente del Comité de Actividades Pro-Vida de la USCCB, en una declaración emitida a finales del 22 de septiembre.

"En los últimos 60 años, antes de que la administración Trump reiniciara las ejecuciones federales, sólo se habían llevado a cabo cuatro ejecuciones federales. Desde julio, han habido cinco, que ya son más ejecuciones federales de las que se llevaron a cabo en cualquier año del siglo pasado", dijeron los obispos.

Dijeron que la Iglesia Católica "debe dar ayuda concreta a las víctimas de la violencia" y "alentar la rehabilitación y restauración de quienes cometen violencia". Señalaron que "la rendición de cuentas y el castigo legítimo son parte de este proceso" y subrayaron que "tomar responsabilidad por el daño causado es necesario para que se llegue a la sanación y es fundamental para proteger a la sociedad".

Las ejecuciones son completa-

mente innecesarias e inaceptables, como han articulado los papas San Juan Pablo II, Benedicto XVI y Francisco", agregaron.

La declaración de los obispos fue emitida el día antes de que Barr, quien es católico, estaba programado para recibir el Premio Christifideles Laici, nombrado por la exhortación postsinodal de San Juan Pablo II, en el Desayuno Nacional de Oración Católica. El premio es otorgado por la organización católica independiente en "honor y gratitud por la fidelidad a la iglesia, ejemplar servicio desinteresado y firme en la viña del Señor."

La Asociación de Sacerdotes Católicos de los Estados Unidos, la Red Católica de Movilización (Catholic Mobilizing Network) y la Oficina de Justicia Social y Respeto por la Vida de la Arquidiócesis de Santa Fe se pronunciaron en contra de que Barr recibiera el honor, haciendo hincapié en que en su puesto como fiscal general, ordenó al gobierno federal en julio de 2019 reanudar las ejecuciones a nivel federal.

La Red Católica de Movilización, que trabaja para poner fin al uso de la pena de muerte y promueve la reforma de la justicia penal y la justicia restaurativa, relanzó su petición contra las ejecuciones federales a principios de septiembre, haciendo hincapié en que Barr estaba siendo honrado "a pesar de promover acciones contrarias a la enseñanza católica".

En una declaración del 23 de septiembre de la directora ejecutiva del grupo, Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy, denunció además el premio de Barr, especialmente porque se le presentó durante un periodo en el cual se llevaban a cabo dos ejecuciones federales,

diciendo que "podría engañar al público dando la ilusión de que la Iglesia Católica de alguna manera aprueba la pena de muerte. Esto es categóricamente falso."

También dijo que bajo el liderazgo de Barr, el Departamento de Justicia "ha llevado a cabo más ejecuciones en 2020 que en cualquier otro momento comparable en los últimos 70 años. Nada de esto es pro-vida".

La Red Católica de Movilización organizó una vigilia de oración virtual el 22 de septiembre, horas antes de la ejecución federal de William Emmett LeCroy, de 50 años, quien fue acusado del asesinato en 2001 de una enfermera en Georgia.

Iban a dirigir otra vigilia de oración virtual el 24 de septiembre antes de la ejecución programada de Christopher Vialva, un hombre de 40 años de Texas que fue declarado culpable de secuestrar y matar a una pareja en Iowa en 1999. Vialva será el primer hombre negro en ser ejecutado desde que las ejecuciones federales se reanudaron este año después de un receso de 17 años.

En prisión, Vialva se convirtió en judío mesiánico y en los últimos años ha ministrado regularmente a otros reclusos, según un informe de la radio pública WFIU en Indiana.

LeCroy recibió una inyección letal el 22 de septiembre en la prisión federal de Terre Haute, Indiana. Muy cerca estaba su asesora espiritual, la hermana Barbara Battista, hermana de la Providencia de Santa María del Bosque.

La hermana Battista le dijo a la estación de radio local WTWO en Indianapolis que durante la ejecución, los

miembros de su orden planeaban unirse a los manifestantes en contra de la pena de muerte.

"Estamos tratando de enviar un mensaje claro que dice: 'No. Tenemos que parar esto. No más pena de muerte, no más asesinatos extrajudiciales, detengan las muertes a manos de la policía, paren el encarcelamiento masivo'", dijo.

Durante el servicio de oración virtual del 22 de septiembre, se leyó una declaración escrita por el arzobispo de Atlanta Gregory J. Hartmayer a los 215 participantes en línea. Decía: "La pena de muerte va en contra de la enseñanza provista de la iglesia enraizada en la dignidad inherente de toda persona humana. Pone en peligro vidas inocentes ya que el sistema de justicia ha condenado injustamente a personas inocentes".

También dijo que una persona convicta que ha sido asesinada "nunca tiene la oportunidad de arrepentirse o buscar la reconciliación con aquellos a quienes puede haber lastimado. Siempre debemos dejar abierta la puerta para la redención y la rehabilitación".

El arzobispo rezó por la víctima de LeCroy, Joann Lee Tiesler, y por su familia. También rezó por LeCroy "porque es un hijo de Dios" cuya vida tiene valor y dignidad.

También rezó por los empleados del gobierno involucrados en el cumplimiento de la pena de muerte y para que "nuestro sistema judicial y político pueda encontrar una manera de poner fin a la pena de muerte, y de lograr una medida de justicia que no implique la violencia involucrada en la ejecución de un ser humano".

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 anónimamente 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 eclesiales 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: Hna. Ellen Dunn, O.P., ext. 264; Sr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Sr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; o Muy Reverendo Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270. También puede llamar a la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro de la Diócesis al 304.230.1504.

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

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

Además de los métodos enumerados anteriormente para denunciar el abuso sexual, la Diócesis también se ha asociado con Navex Global para ofrecer la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar otras inquietudes adicionales, como sospecha de mala conducta financiera, profesional y personal de un sacerdote, diácono, religioso, o empleado laico de la Diócesis o cualquier parroquia o escuela católica en West Virginia. Se puede acceder a la plataforma EthicsPoint a través de www.dwc.org, en "Rendición de cuentas", luego "Informar mala conducta" o llamando al 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint es un sistema de informes de terceros que informa a las autoridades civiles cuando corresponda y a las autoridades diocesanas, y la identidad de la persona que informa está protegida.

Enlaces e información: Departamento de Salud y Recursos Humanos de WV: <https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp> Policía del Estado de Virginia Occidental, Unidad de Delitos contra los Niños, Crímenes de Internet contra los Niños



Catholic Charities
West Virginia
Mission Moment

Young Donor Gives to Catholic Charities Elkins Food Pantry

By Katie Hinerman Klug, Catholic Charities West Virginia Marketing Communications Specialist

Recently we received a visit from 9-year old Reed Burdette (and his grandmother). Reed had received a food purchasing card in response to COVID-19, and decided to make a difference with his.

He decided that he only wanted a handful of items for himself, and chose to use his card to purchase 143 pounds of food for the Elkins food pantry. He said he was hoping it would make a difference for people that needed it, and he wanted to do what he could.

Throughout this pandemic and its struggles, one thing that has continued to be both humbling and impressive is the generosity of our community. Thank you, Reed!



Courtesy Photo
Nine-year old Reed Burdette donates 143 pounds of food to the Catholic Charities West Virginia food pantry in Elkins.

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia, 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.

Bishop Blesses Wheeling Hospital Facilities

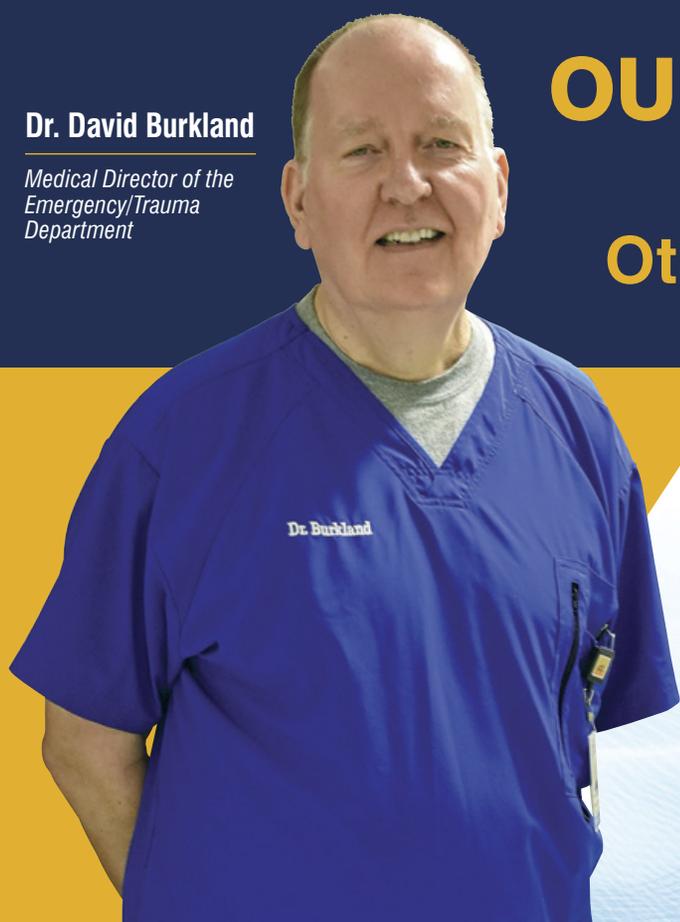


Courtesy Photos

It was a beautiful fall morning to honor two critical care facilities of Wheeling Hospital. Bishop Mark Brennan held two blessings Sept. 23 for Wheeling Hospital's newest Urgent Care in downtown Wheeling, and the Ambulatory Surgery Center in Ohio on the Bridgeport and Martins Ferry border. Bishop Brennan is pictured above (left) with Dr. Rex Lasure, director of the Wheeling Care Center, and Father Cyprian Osuegbu, Wheeling Hospital pastor. At top right is the Urgent Care, and at right is the Ambulatory Surgery Center.

Dr. David Burkland

*Medical Director of the
Emergency/Trauma
Department*



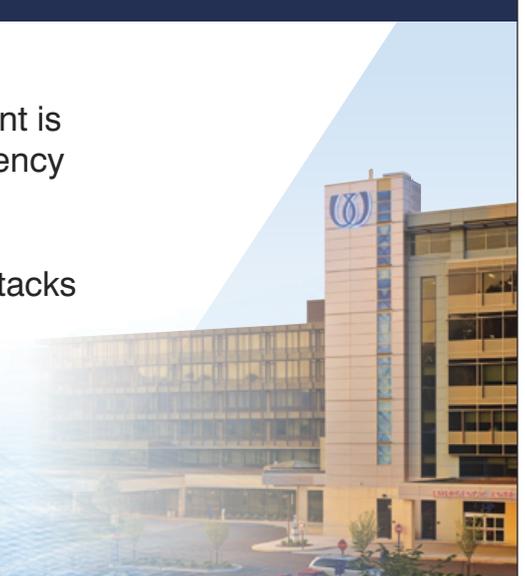
OUR ER WILL PROTECT YOU.

Do Not Ignore Warning Signs of **Other Illnesses** Because of COVID-19.

Our Emergency/Trauma Department is staffed by board-certified emergency physicians from WVU Medicine.

Don't ignore signs of strokes, heart attacks and other emergency conditions.

We'll protect you, and take good care of you.



A Tradition of Excellence. A Legacy of Caring.®

