

THE CATHOLIC

Spirit

Ten Things to Know about October's Synod on Synodality in Rome

By Maria Wiering

(OSV News) — The eyes of the Catholic world turn to Rome Oct. 4, as the worldwide Synod of Bishops convenes on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi to focus on “synodality” and understanding what it means in terms of “communion, participation and mission” in the church. Here’s what it is, how we got here and what to expect.

— **1. The Synod on Synodality is three years in the making.**

Pope Francis announced in March 2020 (at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in Italy) that the next Synod of Bishops would be held in October 2022 on the theme “For a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission,” which quickly became known as the “Synod on Synodality.” In May

2021, he postponed the two-part meeting to 2023 (with a second gathering in 2024), due in part to the pandemic, and announced that it would be preceded by a two-year process.

That decision reflected Pope Francis’ vision for the Synod of Bishops outlined in the 2018 apostolic constitution “Episcopalis Communio,” including what Cardinal Mario Grech, the **See “Synod” on Page 3**



Recommitting to Serving Others

Colleen Rowan Photo

Members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society recommit to serving others during Mass at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Wheeling Sept. 24. Father Jeeson Stephan, pastor of the parish, leads the members in their recommitment to the ministry. The men and women of the parish’s St. Vincent de Paul Society are dedicated to helping those in the community with basic needs.

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Pope Appoints Bishop of Steubenville, Ohio, as Detroit Auxiliary Bishop

WASHINGTON (OSV News) — Pope Francis has appointed Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton of Steubenville, Ohio, as auxiliary bishop of Detroit and named retired Bishop Paul J. Bradley of Kalamazoo, Michigan, as the apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Steubenville.

A Detroit native, Bishop Monforton, 60, is the fifth bishop of Steubenville and has headed the Ohio diocese since 2012. Bishop Bradley, 77, headed the Kalamazoo Diocese from 2009 until the pope accepted his resignation in May of this year. Canon law requires bishops to submit

their resignation to the pope when they turn 75.

The appointments were publicized in Washington Sept. 28 by Cardinal-designate Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

The Archdiocese of Detroit covers 3,901 square miles in southeastern Michigan and has a Catholic population of about 908,000 out of a total population of 4.32 million.

In the 5,900-square-mile Diocese of Steubenville in southeastern Ohio, Catholics number 28,339 out of a total population of just over 481,000.

To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children:

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston encourages reporting to civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. We also encourage utilizing www.reportbishopabuse.org to make a report about any bishop in the U.S. If you have reason to believe that a bishop has engaged in sexual misconduct or has interfered with an investigation into sexual misconduct, please contact civil authorities in the applicable jurisdiction and visit www.reportbishopabuse.org.

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

To Report to Diocesan Authorities: The diocese encourages reporting to the appropriate civil authorities first and foremost if a crime has been committed. The diocese also encourages reporting to the appropriate church authorities. To report suspected cases of sexual abuse of children by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, contact one of the following designees at 1.888.434.6237 or 304.233.0880: Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Mr. Tim Bishop,

ext. 353; or Very Rev. Dennis Schuelkens, Jr., V.E., ext. 270; or Sr. Martha Gomez, ext. 264. 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. Additional methods of reporting are available at www.dwc.org, under "Accountability." Complaint forms are available online at www.dwc.org, click "Diocese" on the menu bar, then "Offices," then "Safe Environment", then "Download Files and Forms." The form is titled "Complaint Form for Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor." The form may be returned via U.S. mail to: Office of Safe Environment, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

To Report to the Diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator: please call Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, at 304.559.6742. 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 pro-

Diocesan Official Appointments

Bishop Mark E. Brennan has made public the following appointments:

In consultation with Very Rev. Paul Puthuva, VC, provincial superior of the Vincentian Congregation in Kerala, India, **Father Joseph Abraham, VC**, is appointed priest in residence at St. Mary Parish in Morgantown and chaplain of J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital in Morgantown and Mon Health Medical Center in Morgantown with residence at St. Mary Parish Rectory, effective Sept. 20, 2023.

Deacon Marcus C. Pressl is appointed permanent deacon at St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town and to liturgical ministry at the same parish, effective immediately.

ected. Links and information: WV Department of Health and Human Resources: <https://www.wvdhhr.org/> report.asp. West Virginia State Police, Crimes Against Children Unit: 304-293-6400.

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

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



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Synod...

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general secretary for the Synod of Bishops, described at the time as “transforming the Synod from an event into a process.” Pope Francis officially opened the “synodal path” with a Mass Oct. 10, 2021, with dioceses around the world following suit.

— **2. Synodality is “the action of the Spirit in the communion of the Body of Christ and in the missionary journey of the People of God.”**

Despite the long history of synods in the church, the term “synodality” is relatively recent, emerging in church documents about two decades ago. In 2018, the topic was addressed by the International Theological Commission, which defined it as “the action of the Spirit in the communion of the Body of Christ and in the missionary journey of the People of God.”

Synodality was also a topic of conversation at the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the theme “Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment” that took place in 2018.

In the Synod on Synodality’s “vademecum,” an official handbook issued in September 2021, “synodality” is described as “the particular style that qualifies the life and mission of the Church, expressing her nature as the People of God journeying together and gathering in assembly, summoned by the Lord Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel,” adding, “Synodality ought to be expressed in the Church’s ordinary way of living and working.”

In his homily for the Mass opening the synod process, Pope Francis said, “Celebrating a synod means walking on the same road, walking together.” He said that when meeting others, Jesus would “encounter, listen and discern,” and those verbs “characterize the synod.”

“The Gospels frequently show us Jesus ‘on a journey’; he walks alongside people and listens to the questions and concerns lurking in their hearts,” he said. “He shows us that God is not found in neat and orderly places, distant from reality, but walks ever at our side. He meets us where we are, on the often rocky roads of life.”

He continued: “Today, as we begin this synodal process, let us begin by asking ourselves — all of us, pope, bishops, priests, religious and laity — whether we, the Christian community, embody this

‘style’ of God, who travels the paths of history and shares in the life of humanity. Are we prepared for the adventure of this journey? Or are we fearful of the unknown, preferring to take refuge in the usual excuses: ‘It’s useless’ or ‘We’ve always done it this way?’”

— **3. A synod is a meeting of bishops. It has ancient roots in the Catholic Church’s history and continuity in the Eastern Churches, but declined in the Latin Church. The modern Synod of Bishops**

was instituted near the end of Vatican II.

“Synod” has been historically interchangeable with “council,” such as the church-wide Council of Nicea or the Council of Trent, or more localized meetings, such as the Plenary Councils of Baltimore, which brought the U.S. bishops together in 1852, 1866 and 1884. The late Jesuit Father John W. O’Malley, a theologian at Georgetown University, noted in a February 2022 essay for *America* magazine that local councils declined in

use following the First Vatican Council, which defined papal primacy, but they didn’t die out: “One of the first things that the future Pope John XXIII did when he became patriarch of Venice was to call a diocesan synod,” he wrote.

The idea for a permanent bishops’ council surfaced during the Second Vatican Council, and in 1965 St. Paul VI established the Synod of Bishops with “the function of providing information and offering advice.” “It can also enjoy the power of making decisions

when such power is conferred upon it by the Roman Pontiff; in this case, it belongs to him to ratify the decisions of the Synod,” St. Paul VI wrote.

— **4. The Synod on Synodality is the 16th Ordinary Synod since the global Synod of Bishops’ institution.**

Three extraordinary general assemblies have also been held, including in 2014 to complete the work of the 2015 ordinary general assembly on the family. An additional 11

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Candlelight Rosary Procession



All are invited to join Bishop Mark Brennan in praying the Rosary in procession for our Church, our world, and our families.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6 AT 7PM

**Procession begins at ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH
(2111 Market Street, Wheeling) and ends at the
CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOSEPH (1300 Eoff Street, Wheeling)**

Synod...

Cont'd from Page 3

special Synods of Bishops have been held to address issues facing a particular region. Among them was a special synod on America in 1997 and one on the Amazon region in 2019. Synods have regularly resulted in the pope, who serves as the synod president, writing a post-synodal apostolic exhortation.

— **5. Preparations for the Synod on Synodality sought to be the most extensive ever, with an invitation to every Catholic to provide input.**

An unprecedented worldwide consultation occurred at the diocesan/national and continental levels. The synod's two-year preparation process invited all Catholics worldwide to identify areas where the church needed to give greater attention and discernment. That feedback was gathered and synthesized by dioceses and then episcopal conferences, before being brought to the continental level. The syntheses from episcopal conferences and continental-level meetings were shared with the Holy See, and they informed a working document known as an "Instrumentum Laboris" for the general assembly's first session. The document's authors describe it as "not a document of the Holy See, but of the whole Church." However, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' report indicates that only about 700,000 Catholics in the U.S. participated, representing just over 1% of the U.S. Catholic population of 66.8 million.

— **6. The Synod on Synodality's objective boils down to answering a two-part question.**

According to the vademecum, "The current Synodal Process we are undertaking is guided by a fundamental question: How does this 'journeying together' take place today on different levels (from the local level to the universal one), allowing the Church to proclaim the Gospel? and what steps is the Spirit inviting us to take in order to grow as a synodal Church?"

The working document released in June to guide general assembly participants includes many other reflection questions; but it particularly asks participants to reflect on these priorities, guided by its focus on communion, participation and mission: "How can we be more fully a sign and instrument of union with God and of the unity of all humanity?"; "How can we better share gifts and tasks in the service of the Gospel?"; and "What processes, structures and institutions are needed in a missionary synodal church?"

— **7. For the first time ever, non-bishops — including lay men and women — have a vote in the synod.**

The synod's general assembly includes more than 450 participants — 363 of whom are voting members — with leaders from the Vatican curia and episcopal conferences. More than a quarter of synod members are non-bishops, including laypeople, who for the first time will have a vote during synod deliberations. A deliberate effort was made to include women and young adults. As of July 7, when the Vatican released the initial list, the number of voting women was the same as participating cardinals: 54. The list was subject to change ahead of the synod, organizers said.

In previous synods, some non-bishop participants held the non-voting role of "auditor," which has been eliminated at this assembly, although some attendees will be non-voting observers, called "special envoys," or non-voting facilitators or advisers.

The presence of "non-bishops," according to Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, the synod's general relator, in a letter published at the time the change was announced, "ensures the dialogue between the prophecy of the people of God and the discernment of the pastors."

— **8. More than 20 Catholics from the United States have been invited to participate.**

Participating American bishops chosen by Pope Francis are Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago, Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory of Washington, Archbishop

Paul D. Etienne of Seattle, Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley of Boston and Cardinal Robert W. McElroy of San Diego, California.

Additional bishop-delegates selected by the USCCB and confirmed by Pope Francis are Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas; Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York; Bishop Robert E. Barron of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota; Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana; and Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, who leads the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, and serves as USCCB president.

American prelates Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, and Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, formerly the bishop of Dallas, are also delegates by nature of prior papal appointments. Cardinal Tobin is an ordinary member of the Synod of Bishops and Cardinal Farrell is prefect of the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life.

Pope Francis also nominated synod member Jesuit Father James Martin, editor-at-large for America magazine and founder of Outreach, a ministry for Catholics who identify as LGBTQ+.

Other U.S. delegates were nominated by the USCCB and confirmed by the pope. They include: Richard Coll, the executive director of the USCCB's Department of Justice, Peace and Integral Human Development; Cynthia Bailey Manns, director of adult faith formation at St. Joan of Arc Parish in Minneapolis; Father Iván Montelongo of El Paso, Texas; Wyatt Olivas, a student at the University of Wyoming in Laramie, Wyoming; Julia Oseka, a Polish student at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia; and Sister Leticia Salazar, a member of the Company of Mary, Our Lady and chancellor of the Diocese of San Bernardino, California.

USCCB-nominated delegates participated in the continental synod, and Coll, Bishop Flores and Sister Salazar were members of the 18-person North American Synod Team that prepared the North American continental synod report for the U.S. and Canada. Bishop Flores has been named one of nine delegate presidents of the assembly.

Sister Maria Cimperman, a member of the Society of the Sacred Heart and theologian at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, and American Jesuit Father David McCallum, executive director of the Discerning Leadership Program in Rome, are among the 57 non-voting experts.

— **9. In the U.S., the meeting has been a source of great expectation and great apprehension.**

The synod has inspired both great praise and deep criticism for its approach, including allowing laypeople to vote; its subject matter, which includes controversial topics such as leadership roles for women, ministry to Catholics who identify as LGBTQ+, and

the relationship between laypeople and clergy. At least one cardinal expressed concern that the meeting could lead to confusion and error in church teaching.

However, Bishop Flores, speaking recently with OSV News, said the meeting aims to better understand people's reality so it can better minister to them. "We can't respond with the Gospel if we don't know what the reality they're facing is," he said of people, especially those on margins and in difficult situations.

— **10. October's meeting is just the beginning.**

In an unusual move, the synod general assembly has been divided into two sessions, with the first Oct. 4-29, and the second planned for October 2024. The decision, announced in October 2022, has parallels to the Synod of Bishops on the Family, which met in 2014 for an extraordinary general assembly of the Synod of Bishops, and then continued its work the following year as an ordinary assembly. The work of both meetings culminated in the post-synodal apostolic exhortation "Amoris Laetitia" ("The Joy of Love"), released in 2016.

Prior to the synod, Pope Francis presides over an ecumenical prayer vigil in St. Peter's Square Sept. 30. Synod participants attend a retreat Sept. 30-Oct. 3 in Sacrofano, about 16 miles north of Rome. The retreat includes morning meditations — offered by Dominican Father Timothy Radcliffe of the United Kingdom and the Benedictine Rev. Mother Maria Ignazia Angelini of Italy — afternoon small-groups and Mass.

Meanwhile, the Taizé community and other organizations have organized a meeting in Rome that weekend called "Together — Gathering of the People of God" for young people to pray for the synod.

The synod's general assembly opens Oct. 4 with a papal Mass that includes the new cardinals created at a Sept. 30 consistory. Among them is expected to be Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

(Maria Wiering is senior writer for OSV News.)



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Expo Aims to Connect Organizations and Faithful in Support of Women in Choosing Life

Engage and learn from groups who support the social, economic, physical and spiritual needs of women, children and families from prenatal on

By Colleen Rowan

“What better way to support Respect Life Month than to kick it off with a Life Expo?” asked Kathy Barton, director of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Office of Social Ministries. Her office is sponsoring the 2023 Life Expo which aims to connect organizations and the faithful in helping support women who choose life.

Expo attendees can engage and learn from groups who support the social, economic, physical and spiritual needs of women, children and families from prenatal on. Parish leaders, church and community outreach groups, groups that support women in unplanned pregnancies, social workers, and school and community counselors will find the expo especially informative, Barton said.

The expo will be held Oct. 5 from 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. at the St. Michael Parish Angeles Center in Wheeling. Admission is free and lunch will be provided.

“As people of faith, let’s offer real hope and real help to some of the most vulnerable around us. The task at hand is too large for any one group, but together we can be an answer to a prayer.”

—Kathy Barton, director of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston’s Office of Social Ministries.

“The expo will offer a distinguished panel of speakers as well as local organizations ready to share information and resources for those who want to assist moms, children and families who need us,” Barton said.

Twenty-one organizations that provide help to women during pregnancy and beyond will be present at the expo. Representatives of the organizations will be manning tables with information about the services they provide and some will be speaking throughout the day.

The keynote speaker is Dr. Byron Calhoun, professor and vice-chair in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at West Virginia University-Charleston. He is directly involved in resident and medical student education. He is licensed in several states and continues to actively practice maternal-fetal medicine, perform diagnostic obstetrical ultrasound, participate in prenatal diagnosis counseling, and provide education to residents and medical students.

Calhoun’s talk will be right after lunch at 1:10 p.m. Barton is one of three morning speakers. She will be giving an overview of Walking With Moms in Need, a U.S. bishops’ program through which Catholic parishes and communities “walk in the shoes” of

local pregnant and parenting women in need. The program helps them discover how they can help pregnant women and women who already have children dealing with difficult circumstances.

A representative from Wellspring/Haven/After-Care in West Virginia, which offers a broad range of services from outpatient counseling to home-based services in 21 counties, will be speaking as well. Kathy Hirkala, RN, BSN, CFCE, of the FertilityCare Center of the Upper Ohio Valley, Inc., will be speaking on Creighton FertilityCare & NaProTECHNOLOGY. Natural Procreative Technology is a women’s health science that monitors and maintains a woman’s reproductive and gynecological health offering solutions with infertility and more that do not go against the teachings of the Catholic Church and are sanctioned by the U.S. bishops.

The last of the morning speakers will be Nina Lindemuth, CNRP, a family nurse practitioner of Penn Highlands DuBois Hospital in Central Pennsylvania, who will discuss how to recognize signs of abuse and informed trauma care. She will highlight what the next steps are and where to go for help.

Afternoon speakers include representatives from Catholic Charities West Virginia and the St. Vincent de Paul Society in Wheeling sharing services and outreach they provide to those in need.

Representatives from the West Virginia Pregnancy Center Coalition will be sharing their mission which is “to glorify God by strengthening, encouraging, and facilitating networking among Christian-based pregnancy centers and related organizations and to advocate for public support and laws that uphold their life-saving work.”

The coalition serves 37 pregnancy help organizations throughout West Virginia.

The last of the speakers will be a representative from Her PLAN, a pregnancy and life assistance network that facilitates collaboration between assistance providers and their communities to empower women and families through comprehensive medical, social, and material support.

Bishop Mark Brennan will close Wheeling’s Life Expo with remarks and a blessing at 4:10 p.m.

Choosing life is not easy for women, Barton said, and she hopes this expo will help connect everyone with ways they can help women through the hard times.

“As people of faith, let’s offer real hope and real help to some of the most vulnerable around us,” Barton said. “The task at hand is too large for any one group, but together we can be an answer to a prayer.”

The following organizations and groups will have information tables at the expo: Walking With Moms In Need; Her PLAN; Wellspring/Haven/After Care; Creighton FertilityCare & NaProTECHNOLOGY; Catholic Charities West Virginia; St. Vincent de Paul Society; West Virginia Pregnancy Center Coalition; St. Michael’s Pro Life; YWCA; Holy Family; Wheeling Health Right; Crittenton Services; Mary’s Refuge Maternity Home; WVU Wheeling Hospital; Mother Jones House/House of Hagar; OV YoungLives; West Virginia WIC (Women, Infants, and Children); Soup Kitchen of Wheeling; WV Adult Education; and the Northern Panhandle Chapter of West Virginians for Life.

The plan, Barton added, is to mimic this Life Expo around the state thereby connecting groups and offering support throughout West Virginia.



Keynote Speaker,
Dr. Byron Calhoun

Dr. Byron C. Calhoun, MD, FACOG, FACS, FASAM, MBA is a 1979 Distinguished Graduate of the United States Air Force Academy. He graduated from the University of Iowa Medical School with an MD in 1983. Dr. Calhoun completed his residency in OB/GYN at the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1987 and finished a Fellowship in Maternal-Fetal Medicine at the Oregon Health Sciences University in 1989. Dr. Calhoun is a diplomate of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology with board certification in general Obstetrics and Gynecology and in the subspecialty of Maternal-Fetal Medicine. He is also board certified in Addictions Medicine.

He has authored 94 peer-reviewed articles in the obstetric and gynecologic literature, presented over 100 scientific papers, participated in over 40 research projects, and published numerous articles on medical aspects of obstetrics and gynecology. He recently edited and published a new book (March, 2016, Springer publication) dealing with addictions in women’s health titled, “Tobacco Cessation and Substance Abuse Treatment in Women’s Healthcare.”

Dr. Calhoun serves as Professor and Vice-Chair in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at West Virginia University-Charleston and is directly involved in resident and medical student education. He is licensed in several states and continues to actively practice maternal-fetal medicine, perform diagnostic obstetrical ultrasound, participate in prenatal diagnosis counseling, and provide education to residents and medical students.

Dr. Calhoun and his wife, Kathryn, have five children and two lovely granddaughters.



October 5, 2023

9:00am - 4:15pm

St. Michael Angelus Center

1225 National Rd., Wheeling, WV 26003

Engage and learn from groups who support the social, economic, physical, and spiritual needs of women, children, and families from prenatal on.

Keynote Speaker Dr. Byron Calhoun, MD

Admission is FREE and Lunch will be provided.

Additional speakers include:

Walking With Moms In Need, Her PLAN, Wellspring, Creighton FertilityCare™ & NaProTECHNOLOGY, Catholic Charities West Virginia, St. Vincent de Paul Society, WV Pregnancy Centers Coalition, and Nina Lindemuth, CNRP

PLUS visit with and gather resources from groups to learn how they can assist your life supporting efforts!

To register, visit dwc.org/2023-life-expo.

For more information, contact A.J. Emery at aemery@dwc.org, or 304.233.0880, ext. 326.

Shoulda Woulda Coulda Club...

Don't miss this opportunity to be a difference maker with your prayer! You don't want to be in the Shoulda Woulda Coulda Club!

Be a proud prayer warrior for the One Million Rosaries for Increased Vocations for WV. Start off this Month of the Rosary with a commitment to prayer. Go to: <https://dwc.org/one-million-rosaries/> and make your pledge to have your future Rosaries said including WV vocations.

It's no secret our parishes, schools, organizations, families, and communities are in great need of increased vocations in WV to serve God and others. Join our prayer partners, who are choosing to be a solution with their faith and not just complain or come up with a plethora of excuses.

Your Questions Answered

One million, really? Lofty we know, but we believe in you! Last spring when we began to promote our 54-day campaign for the span of the Feast of the Assumption on August 15th to the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on Oct. 7th, Sister Martha Gomez and her staff began to pray for you - our priests, principals, deacons, DREs, religious/consecrated, and faithful in WV, so we would respond, be excited, begin a new habit, take control, and commit to prayer.

In a perfect world if all of us - the 66,925 Catholics in WV - would pledge to say just 15 Rosaries this year, we would have more than 1,003,000 prayed.

If our 154 parishes, missions, chapels, and Catholic schools would lead the Rosary once a week with an average of 25 people each then 200,200 Rosaries would be said in one year's time. If this same small group made a commitment to pledge one million, their prayer promise would be "paid off" in five years with more than 1,001,000 Rosaries completed for increased vocations in WV.

How are we doing so far? As of Wednesday (Sept. 27th), more than 184,000 Rosaries have been pledged by less than 900 entries. These entries are from all over the US and Mexico - Sister Martha's homeland. While that number is far off from one million, we are "winning", Sister Martha said.

"When I see the photos of our children in our schools and parishes, gathering to say the Rosary together my heart is full, I can't begin to know how it makes our Blessed Mother feel," she said. "When Bishop Mark shared with me a sweet card from a parishioner, praising him for promoting the Rosary, empowering us to call upon Heaven to help us, I was humbled by that genuine faithfulness to God and His Church. When I receive a weekly correspondence from a

See "Rosary" on Page 8

...or Difference Maker ?

Rosary Appeal Deadline Quickly Approaching



Students at St. Joseph Catholic School in Huntington pray the rosary.

Courtesy Photo



Courtesy Photo

Students at Our Lady of Peace School in Wheeling pray the rosary.

Rosary...

Cont'd from Page 7

regional Rosary group that prays more than 200 Rosaries each week for us, I am encouraged to step up my prayer life. All of these examples are breathtaking. We are winning – souls into heaven. But let's not settle, we can do better. Please, make a promise – a pledge – to dedicate your Rosaries for us this year."

So, I don't have to fulfill my pledge by Oct. 7th? No. This is an honor system. When you submit your pledge online fulfilling that pledge is between you and God. Many are pledging for a year, some five, it's up to you.

What if I already pledged can I pledge again? Yes! If you have fulfilled your pledge already or if you have challenged yourself to increase your pledge enter your new pledge, go online: <https://dwc.org/onemillionrosaries/>

Will I be solicited? No! Submissions are anonymous and no contact info is gathered, saved, or shared. We only ask to check a box, so we know if you are joining us as prayer partner from a parish, school, mission/organization, or other. Note – even that information is not required, just your pledge number.



Courtesy Photo

Pray the rosary on a walk.

I don't like to go online and submit any info or click links, what can I do?

Phone in your pledge to Joyce Bibey, who works for you in the communications office: (304) 233-0880 ext. 357 or email her at jbibey@dwc.org. Just let her know your pledge number and she will be happy to enter it for you.

What am I really praying for? Aside from your special and habitual intentions you are including the intention for an Increase in Vocations in WV – Marriage, Holy Orders, Single Life, and Religious/Consecrated Life.

Wait! Marriage and single life too? Absolutely! At baptism we are called to holiness – to serve God and others. Strong marriages, where couples grow in faith and receive the Eucharist together; and the commitment to a single life without marriage and children (CCC 1658) and focused on living in the spirit of the Beatitudes – both are important vocations to the Church.

But I don't know the Rosary, where would I even start? YOU ALREADY DID! Congrats! You already started by asking where to start. We are so happy! You can google "How to say the Rosary" online, but we tried to do our best to save you time.

Go to: <https://dwc.org/onemillionrosaries/>; scroll down the page and you will find "Printable Resources" and also tabbed resources for apps, web pages, children's resources, and how to make a knotted rosary.

What do I do if I don't own a Rosary? You can email Sister Martha Gomez (mgomez@dwc.org) who will be happy to help you get one, or if you use one of the apps suggested on our webpage you will find a virtual one.

The Rosary is too long, I lose my concentration why do it? If you set aside a moment even if it's at the end of your day to say it and you fall asleep, think of what you are doing! You are falling asleep praying with our Blessed Mother! Don't you think she would love spending that moment with you? Keep trying. She will help you through. Don't give up before you even start.

When do I really have the time? If you are too busy to pray, then you are too busy. Think of the Rosary and your prayer life as a gift to yourself to concentrate on all the intentions that are in your heart, weighing on your mind, and the prayers you can offer for another. Pray while you're taking a walk, exercising, doing the dishes, working in the yard, or rocking a child to sleep. Completing your first Rosary is a great feeling, and making it a habit will bring endless blessings, because you are giving God part of your day recalling the life of Christ.

So, you want me to pray the Apostles' Creed, six Our Father's, 53 Hail Mary's, five Glory Be's, five Fatima prayers, and the Hail Holy Queen prayer? YES! "So that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ!" That pretty much says it all.

Seriously – Mary gave us this calming prayer. We are all guilty of a monotony of sins, let's give them to God with a monotony of meditative prayer.

It was Mary who said:

"When you say your Rosary, the angels rejoice, the Blessed Trinity delights in it, my Son finds joy in it too, and I myself am happier than you can possibly guess. After the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, there is nothing in the Church that I love as much as the Rosary."



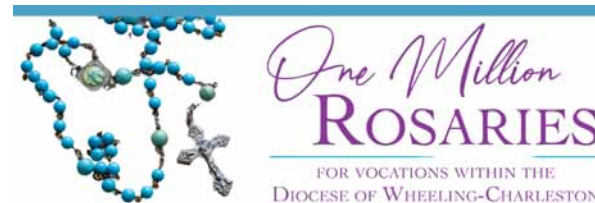
Courtesy Photo

Parkersburg Catholic High School students pray the rosary.



Courtesy Photo

Praying the rosary is Leo, the great nephew of Sister Martha Gomez, RGS, delegate for Consecrated Life for the diocese.



PLEDGE YOURS!



dwc.org/onemillionrosaries

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October 5—Saint John XXIII Pastoral Center, Charleston, WV



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8:00 WBOY NBC 12	Weston-Clarksburg-Fairmont
6:30 WOAY ABC 4	Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)
8:30 WVNS FOX 59	Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)
11:00 WDVM 25	Hagerstown-Washington D.C.

Plus watch online at - www.mydailyliving.com and YouTube



Courtesy Photo

Assumption Parish, Keyser

Assumption Parish Kicks Off Sesquicentennial Jubilee Year of Celebration

Assumption Parish in Keyser is celebrating its 150th anniversary with a series of events throughout the next year. "It will be a year of prayer, thanksgiving, outreach, education, celebration, and special events in gratitude to Our Lord for our parish, our parish family and all the special priests, nuns, and religious who have shepherded the parish throughout the past century and half," said Father Thomas Sebastian, CST, pastor of the parish.

The jubilee inaugural event was recently held at Brookdale Farm, a local event venue. Father Thomas celebrated Mass with nearly 100 parishioners in attendance under a pavilion which was beautifully decorated by several

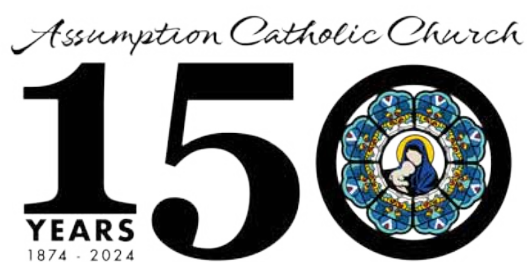
parish families. Lunch and fellowship followed the Mass.

The guiding theme for the parish's jubilee year is "Do whatever He tells you" (John 2:5). Many activities, guest speakers and retreats are

scheduled throughout the year, including a Teaching Mass with Father Giles LeVasseur on Sunday, Oct. 15, at 8:30 a.m. followed later that day by a Team Trivia Competition in St. Mary's Hall (check with the parish for time). Father Bill Kuchinsky will celebrate Mass on All Saints Day, Nov. 1, at 6 p.m. with a special homily on purgatory. Teaching Masses with Father LeVasseur will be Sunday, Nov. 12, at 8:30 a.m. and Sunday, Dec. 10, at 8:30 a.m. A retreat with Father Joseph Tuscan, OFM Cap., will be Dec. 17-19 (check with the parish for time).

A complete schedule of events with details is available at assumptionkeyserwv.org.

Bishop Mark Brennan will celebrate an anniversary Mass on Aug. 12, 2024.



Join the Life Chain in Weirton on Respect Life Sunday

Give an Hour and Save a Life!

WEIRTON—Give an Hour and Save a Life! The Weirton Catholic Pro-Life group is organizing the Life Chain again this year. Life Chain is a peaceful and prayerful public witness of Pro-Life Americans standing for one hour praying for the nation and for an end to abortion.

“It’s a chance to involve your whole family,” organizers said.

Lawn chairs, umbrellas, and strollers are welcome and encouraged. Life Chain will take place rain or shine on Sunday, Oct. 1, from 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. along Main Street in Weirton.

Pro-Life signs will be available at St. Paul Church in Weirton.

“Come and stand with thousands of Pro-Lifers in the U.S. and Canada,” organizers said. “You will be a light in a darkened world as you help put an end to abortion through prayer.”

Holy Rosary Adventure Club Planning Bicycle Ride on the Blackwater Canyon Trail

BUCKHANNON — Join the Holy Rosary Adventure Club for a bicycle ride on the Blackwater Canyon Trail on Sunday, Oct. 8. The group will meet in Thomas at 2 p.m. and bicycle down the Blackwater Canyon Trail to Parsons. It

will be a 13-mile bicycle ride. A mountain bike in most suitable for this ride.

Anyone interested in bicycling both directions on the trail for a 26-mile ride, contact Rachel Weber at (304) 613-8477.

Congregation of St. Joseph Service Day to be Held in Wheeling

WHEELING — The Congregation of St. Joseph Service Day is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 7, in Wheeling.

“Come and partner with the Sisters of St. Joseph as we fight local food insecurity with the Ohio County Family Resource Network!” organizers said.

Drop off locations for nonperishable foods and personal care items will be at the St. Michael Parish parking lot and Mount St. Joseph at the front door. The drop off time for both locations is from 9 a.m. to noon.

For more information, contact Rose Mathes at (304) 231-6440.



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Serra International presenta la versión en español de su moneda vocacional

Por Katie Peterson

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (OSV News) — A medida que los grupos Serra Club Hispanos comienzan a formarse en los Estados Unidos, Serra International está llevando su iniciativa de monedas de invitación un paso más allá con una nueva moneda de invitación "¿Te estará llamando Dios al sacerdocio?" y una tarjeta en español, que se puede presentar a cualquier joven que los sacerdotes o laicos consideren un candidato potencial al sacerdocio.

Esta es la tercera versión de la moneda de invitación desde que se lanzó la moneda original en enero en el Rally Internacional Serra 2023 en Irving, Texas. La segunda versión para la vida religiosa se lanzó en la primavera.

Desde entonces, se han comprado más de 6.000 monedas. Y Bob Rudman, vicepresidente de vocaciones de Serra International para el comité ejecutivo y miembro del Serra Club del condado de Williamson, Tennessee, dijo que espera que esta nueva versión en español tenga el mismo éxito.

"Veó esto como una oportunidad real para que nuestra organización Serra y todos los demás se acerquen a los sacerdotes de habla hispana, los conozcan, comprendan su cultura y establezcan una buena relación", dijo Rudman, destacando sus experiencias cuando se ofreció como voluntario en un evento organizado por la comunidad hispana.

"Vi con ellos lo unidos que son,

lo amigables que son y el ambiente de familia, así que me dije: 'Creo que nosotros, los que tenemos nuestra edad, nunca podremos aprender español, pero sería genial poder entender su cultura'", dijo al Tennessee Register, periódico de la Diócesis de Nashville.

"Creo que sería una excelente manera de establecer una relación", añadió. "Por eso creo que es tan importante que estas monedas lleguen a la comunidad hispana".

Serra Internacional, el apostolado laico global para la promoción de vocaciones, ha estado invitando a hombres a considerar el sacerdocio durante décadas. La moneda es una ayuda para el discernimiento, actuando como un "sacramental", un recordatorio físico de la gracia del llamado de Dios.

El padre Luke Wilgenbusch, director diocesano de vocaciones de Nashville, dijo que la moneda en español es una gran iniciativa, señalando que durante los últimos años ha sido una prioridad explícita para todos los hombres en formación para el sacerdocio en la diócesis aprender español.

"La necesidad de más clérigos que hablen español es muy obvia para nosotros", dijo el padre Wilgenbusch. "Como sacerdotes, estamos llamados a servir a todo el pueblo de Dios, y esta es una habilidad que necesitamos para poder desempeñarnos bien en nuestra diócesis".

Disponer de la moneda en español "es una gran ampliación de la iniciativa", continuó. "Estamos tra-

bajando muy duro para ser intencionales y llegar a todas las diferentes comunidades de la diócesis, pero sabemos que nuestra comunidad hispana es muy grande y todavía no estamos haciendo todo lo posible para llegar a ellos".

"Es fantástico incluir la moneda en español, especialmente porque lo que estamos tratando de hacer para promover las vocaciones es alentar a los sacerdotes y feligreses a acercarse individualmente a aquellos jóvenes que consideran que tienen una posible vocación al sacerdocio", concluyó. "Darles esta herramienta es una forma de alentarlos a tener esa conversación".

El padre Juan Carlos García, pastor asociado de la Iglesia San Felipe Apóstol en Franklin, ya ha visto el beneficio de tener la moneda disponible tanto en inglés como en español.

Las monedas en ambos idiomas "muestran la unidad que estamos viendo en nuestra diócesis", explicó. "Como saben, el centro de Tennessee continúa creciendo en diversidad, y cada vez más personas de diversos lugares llaman a Tennessee su hogar".

"La tercera marca de nuestra Iglesia, 'católica', que significa 'según el todo' o universal, es claramente visible cuando damos la bienvenida y ministramos a personas de diversas culturas, tradiciones e idiomas en nuestra diócesis", añadió.

El padre García señaló que "la mayoría de las personas que vienen a nosotros son hispanohablantes

que están enamorados de Jesús y su Iglesia. Esto crea la necesidad de más sacerdotes que hablen el español como lengua materna o que tengan la voluntad y el deseo de servir a los hispanos, una población que está creciendo dramáticamente en nuestra diócesis".

"La moneda vocacional en ambas lenguas no sólo enriquece una dimensión cultural y lingüística, sino que también abarca un elemento espiritual. Cuando un hombre que habla español recibe la moneda vocacional en el idioma que probablemente aprendió por primera vez en casa y en la primera lengua que conoció. En el idioma en el que aprendió a orar primera vez con su familia, especialmente sus padres y abuelos, y posee un gran valor espiritual.

"Es recibido de manera diferente, se siente más personal", añadió el padre García. "Una de las características de esta moneda es su peso. Es pesada intencionalmente para que el hombre la sienta en sus manos o en su bolsillo. Al tener la moneda disponible en español, le estamos agregando un peso espiritual".

"Cuando el hombre recibe la moneda en el idioma que primero aprendió a relacionarse con Dios", concluyó, "es nuestra esperanza que desde dentro pase a un discernimiento más serio hacia el sacerdocio ministerial".

(Katie Peterson es reportera del Tennessee Register, periódico de la Diócesis de Nashville.)

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

Para informar a las autoridades diocesanas: La diócesis alienta a informar a las autoridades civiles apropiadas, ante todo, si se ha cometido un delito. La diócesis también alienta a informar a las autoridades 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: 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 Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, al 304.559.6742.

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

Center for Beauty Reveals Fall Line up for Monday Arts & Culture Series

STEUBENVILLE, OHIO — The Center for Beauty at Franciscan University of Steubenville began its fall series of Monday evening talks, recitals, and musical performances on Sept. 18.

The first event was a talk by Franciscan University alumni Rocco Ambrosio '09 and Julian Curi '12, both Los Angeles-based independent film directors, on "The Art of Independent Filmmaking."

"As it says in John Paul II's Letter to Artists: 'Art must make perceptible, and as far as possible attractive, the world of the spirit, of the invisible, of God,'" said Franciscan University Professor of Philosophy Dr. Paul Symington. "Inspired by this, our arts and culture program provides an opportunity to strive for this ideal through beautiful music and imagery, and in sharing our common and God-given humanity in the experience and appreciation of this special gift from God."

All upcoming presentations are open to the public at no cost and will take place at 6 p.m. in the J.C. Williams Center's Tony and Nina Gentile Gallery at Franciscan University.

The upcoming dates in the series are as follows:
Oct. 9, 6 p.m., musical performance—"Haydn String Quartet in C major, Op. 74 No. 1 and Dvorak

No 14 in A flat major, Op. 105" by members of the Cleveland Orchestra: Zhan Shu, violin, Stephen Tavani, violin, Dane Johansen, cello, Stanley Konopka, director of Franciscan University's Chamber Orchestra, viola.

Nov. 6, 6 p.m.—"The Life of St. Francis Through Art: A Tour of the Upper Basilica," by Dr. Alan Schreck, professor emeritus of theology at Franciscan University.

Nov. 27, 6 p.m., schola concert—"Autumn and Advent: Motets, Anthems, and Songs" by Schola Cantorum Franciscana, directed by Dr. Vincent Rone, adjunct professor of Sacred Music and music director for Archangel Gabriel Parish in Pittsburgh.

Dec. 4, 6 p.m., musical performance—"Music by

J.S. Bach and Hindemith" featuring the Franciscan University New Chamber Orchestra with Stanley Konopka, director of Franciscan University's Chamber Orchestra and assistant principal violist with the Cleveland Orchestra.

The series is sponsored by the Center for Beauty, the Henkels Family Fund, and the Fine Arts Society. The Center for Beauty aims to help people to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of beauty as a living truth in its ability to touch, instruct, and move them to desire the transcendent. The center also seeks to support Franciscan University and its local community in the production and presentation of that which is beautiful in the areas of visual arts,

music, drama, and literature.

For more information and video on demand of some presentations, go to franciscan.edu/monday-arts-and-culture-series.



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Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

Fall 2023
Bishop Mark E. Brennan,
Celebrant

Monday, October 23: Sacred Heart, Chester; 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 4: St. Francis Xavier, Parkersburg; 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 19: Sacred Heart, Bluefield; 9:00 a.m.



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Calling all Cursillistas!

Would you like to gather with other past participants in Cursillo weekends for an Ultreya meeting? Well, you can, on Saturday, August 19th, and you have two locations and times to choose from!

The Diocesan Cursillo community will gather, on Saturday, August 19th, first at the St. John XXIII Pastoral Center, in Charleston, at 10:30 AM. Then, the other Ultreya option will be a gathering at the Parish Center of St. John University Parish, in Morgantown, at 4:30 PM.

What should you expect? At both meetings, we will have our Regional Director for Cursillo, Mr. Dan Kubisiak, as the rector/moderator, along with the Lay Director for Cursillo in South Carolina, Mr. Tommie Smith, as our main witness speaker.

At both locations, we will gather for about an hour and a half, for fellowship, spiritual enrichment, socializing, refreshments, and a meal. We hope these gatherings will help revive Cursillo in our wonderful state.

If you would like to join us, and we'd love if you would, please let us know either by calling the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis, at 304-233-0880, ext. 374, or by emailing Daniel Maul, at dmaul@dwc.org.

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YOU are invited to a day-long pilgrimage event at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC, on September 30, 2023. Hear life-changing talks from Dominican Friars, participate in Mass, and, of course, pray the Rosary — all in our country's capital together with thousands of other Catholics.



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