



Diocese Announces 28 Aspirants to the Permanent Diaconate

By Colleen Rowan
WHEELING—They come from all corners of West Virginia, 28 men who are aspirants to the permanent diaconate for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. They have now begun their formation, gathering the weekend of Aug. 28 at St. John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston. There, they began a journey toward ordination as deacons to a ministry of service, assisting the bishop and his priests in many areas, especially in the ministry of charity but also in liturgical celebrations, distributing Holy Communion at Mass, baptizing, witnessing marriages, presiding at some funeral rites, proclaiming the Gospel and preaching. Deacons often teach and counsel as well.

Deacon John Yaquinta, chairman of the 2020-2024 Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Permanent Deacon Steering Committee, said that emotions were strong as he met with the aspirants for the first time, and seeing them begin the same journey that he started nine years ago.

“Together, we have worked through a global pandemic, gathering transcripts and sacramental records, letters of recommendation and doctor reports,” Deacon Yaquinta said. “I ask all our readers to remember these 28 men and

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Deacon John Yaquinta Photo
Pictured are aspirants to the permanent diaconate for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. Seated, from left, are Michael Brumley, Ronald Piaskowski, William Klug, and Anthony Michael O’Leary. Standing, from left, are Michael A. Kawash, Thomas Joseph McFadden, Dr. John Anthony Basil, Jason Scott Miller, Emarjun Capuno Brucal, Aaron Talbott, Stephen Francis Allard, Victor Francis Cwynar, Robert Joseph Krall, John David Butler, Bryce Burl Timberlake, and Brian Keiling. On the stairs, front row from left, are Patrick Dewey McFarland, David Andrew Torlone, Darryl Lee Feldman, Tommy Bryan Ross, Todd Shannon Burdette, James David McCullough, and Christopher James Forshey. On the stairs, back row from left, are Thomas Frank Antulove, Thomas Patrick Hassen, William Richard Allen III, Jacob Manning, and Patrick Michel.

Cathedral will Have Infant of Prague Novena this Month

WHEELING—The Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling will celebrate the annual Novena to the Infant Jesus of Prague beginning this year on Monday, September 14 at 7:00 p.m. The Novena will be prayed on nine consecutive Monday evenings concluding on November 9.

Each week consists of Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, a homily given by a guest priest, music, and prayers to the Infant of Prague. The theme for this year will be the “Fruits of the Holy Spirit.” Everyone is invited.

To Report Suspected Cases of Sexual Abuse of Children

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.”

Obituary

Sister Deana Catherine Kohlman

Sister Deana Catherine Kohlman, a Sister of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, died peacefully Sunday, August 23, 2020 at Mercy Hospital, Canton Ohio.

Born in Saskatchewan, Canada on July 1, 1935, Sister Deana entered the convent April 9, 1956, in Edmonton, Alberta Canada and professed her temporary profession December 8, 1958 with final profession December 8, 1961. She was preceded in death by her parents, Nicholas and Mary (Sperling) Kohlman, sister Agnes Vogel and brother Denis Kohlman.

Sister Deana received her BA at the Columbia Pacific University in California. Prior to entering religious life, she worked in the family business operating a gas station and coffee shop in Ponoka, Alberta, Canada. From 1958-1979 she worked as child therapist and supervisor of child care workers at Sisters of Our Lady of Charity residential treatment center for teen-age girls in Edmonton, Alberta and volunteered at a shelter for abused women and children. She coordinated an activities program for a parish senior citizen and organized a fund-raising program in Victoria, British Columbia.

Sister Deana moved to Wheeling soon after she was elected Assistant Superior General of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity in 1983 and in 1991 elected Superior General for two mandates. During this time she established the congregation’s office in Carrollton Ohio, the Diocese of Steubenville. In 2001 she dedicated a care wing for the elderly and infirmed sisters, an alternative to nursing home. From 2004-2007 she served as coordinator of communities in Erie PA. and Wheeling, volunteering at the Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center in Wheeling. In 2016 she returned to Carrollton Ohio because of declining health and where she maintained the archives.

Sister Deana is survived by her community the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd and her sisters Mary Ann, Dellah, Theresa and brothers Nick, Wes, and Jim and families. Mass of Christian Burial was held on August 26, 2020 in Carrollton. Interment will be in her be-



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
September 4, 2020
Vol. 51, No. 22

Publisher: Bishop Mark E. Brennan.....
Executive Editor: Colleen Rowan, Ext. 347 crowan@dwc.org
Advertising: contact Colleen Rowan
Freelance Writers:
Martina Hart, John Sherwood, Babette Pascasio



Member
Catholic Press Association
West Virginia Press Association
National Press Photographers Association, Inc.



Published 24 times per year. All issues sent to each registered Catholic household free of charge. Donations to help offset the cost of producing The Catholic Spirit are welcomed. Out-of-diocese subscriptions are \$25 annually. The Catholic Spirit intends its news reports to be fair and accurate in every regard. The opinions of correspondents do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Catholic Spirit. Submission of news releases, stories and color photos welcomed and encouraged. Not responsible for unsolicited material.

A Letter from Bishop Brennan



DIocese of WHEELING-CHARLESTON

1311 BYRON STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 230
WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA 26003

August 7, 2020

Dear Faithful of the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese,

It is with prayerful gratitude and a thankful heart that I reach out to you today. As our parishes begin to reopen, I have resumed the celebrations of Confirmation for our young people—affording me the great opportunity to travel our state, meet with you, and celebrate the Sacraments. One thing is clear in my travels, the faithful of this Diocese continue to step up in support of one another during the pandemic.

I want to say thank you to all of those who are volunteering at Mass, to those delivering food and medical supplies to those in need, to those ministering to the faithful, and to the countless parishioners who have continued to give financially to their parish. Your gifts have enabled each parish to meet some of their most pressing needs at this time and I cannot thank you enough.

There are so many of you that are doing so many things for the good of our state. From parishioners at Holy Redeemer in Spencer who are putting together food baskets and donating them to those in need, to the group in the Eastern Panhandle who are making and donating face masks. These are just some of the ways that our parishioners have joined together during the pandemic to care for those in need. I see the work of the Jesus Christ in all of these actions and it gives me peace knowing that the people of West Virginia will rise above the turmoil and become a better, stronger and more faith-filled people.

These are certainly challenging times, as we suffer through a global pandemic, political unrest, and racial tensions while still feeling the side effects of the misdeeds of our former Bishop. I am reminded of the following passage from John 16:33: "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." This is very much applicable today. Although we are experiencing tribulations, we have comfort in knowing that the Holy Spirit is with us every step of the way, guiding us to peace and safety.

Thank you for continuing to support your parish through your prayers, through your volunteering, and through your Sunday giving. Because of you, we are able to minister to the faithful here in West Virginia. Our parishes are operating in an entirely new environment with restrictions on gatherings, cleaning protocols, and a shift seemingly overnight from paper bulletins and giving envelopes to emails, social media and online giving.

The parishes and missions in our Diocese are our spiritual homes. Thankfully, because of the Paycheck Protection Program, our parishes, missions and Catholic schools were able to continue to pay salaries to their employees, as well as cover some other costs related to the pandemic. However, because Mass attendance still cannot be what it was prior to the pandemic, some parishes are struggling financially. Your offertory gifts have allowed them to continue to provide services and ministries in this time of uncertainty. I thank those of you who have continued to give weekly, whether you mailed a check or made your gift online.

I recognize that this may be a very difficult time for you and your loved ones. Many are struggling financially, physically, and mentally. And so too are our priests. These men have dedicated their lives to the care of faithful through the celebration of the Sacraments, and for too long, they were unable to do that. Even now that Masses have resumed, it is not at full capacity, like it was prior to the pandemic. Thank you for the support you have given them, and I encourage you to keep praying for them as they remember you at the Altar of the Lord.

Please continue to pray for our Diocese. We are continuing to provide so many needed services, following health and safety guidelines. As we all adapt to the new ways of being together, thank you for your patience and understanding.

Thank you for being compassionate, merciful, and generous. In these difficult times, may we continue to support one another as followers of Christ. Together we will be Christ's light to others during these times of tribulation.

Entrusting you to the care of Mary, Mother of the Church and St. Joseph, Patron of our Diocese, I remain,

Sincerely in Christ,

Mark E. Brennan

Most Reverend Mark E. Brennan

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Diaconate...

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their families in prayer as they continue their journey towards ordination in 2024. Special thanks to Tina High, secretary to the Vicar for Clergy and the rest of the Permanent Deacon Formation Steering Committee for all their hard work and enabling us to reach this milestone."

The aspirants are: Stephen Francis Allard of St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town, William Richard Allen III of St. Francis de Sales Parish in Beckley; Thomas Frank Antulove of St. Patrick Parish in Mannington, Dr. John Anthony Basil of St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Weirton, Emarjun Capuno Brucal of Sacred Heart Parish in Williamson, Michael Brumley of Holy Trinity Parish in Nitro, Todd Shannon Burdette of St. Matthew Parish in Ravenswood, John David Butler of St. Matthew Parish in Ravenswood, Victor Francis Cwynar of St. Francis Xavier Parish in Parkersburg, Thomas Patrick Hassen of St. Francis de Sales Parish in Morgantown, Michael A. Kawash of the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston, Christopher James Forshey of Corpus Christi Parish in Wheeling, Darryl Lee Feldman of St. Leo Parish in Inwood, William Klug of St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town, Robert Joseph Krall of St. Michael Parish in Wheeling, Jacob Manning of the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling, James David McCullough of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Stonewood, Thomas Joseph McFadden of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Wheeling, Patrick Dewey McFarland of Immaculate Conception Parish in Fairmont, Patrick Michel of St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town, Jason Scott Miller of St. Paul Parish in Weirton, Anthony Michael O'Leary of Blessed Sacrament Parish in South Charleston, Ronald Piaskowski of Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Huntington, Tommy Bryan Ross of Blessed Sacrament Parish in South Charleston, Aaron Talbott of St. Brendan Parish in Elkins, Bryce Burl Timberlake of St. James the Greater Parish in Charles Town, and David Andrew Torlone of St. Leo Parish in Inwood.

Bishop Mark Brennan expressed his desire last fall to begin a new formation program for the permanent diaconate. The committee was then organized by suggestions from the Presbyteral Council and the process was overseen and facilitated by the vicar for clergy, Very Rev. Dennis R. Schuelkens, Jr., V.E.

"It has been a pleasure to work with the members of the Permanent Diaconate Formation Steering Committee," Father Schuelkens said. "Through the efforts of this committee, the inquiry period was established, applications were received, interviews were conducted, can-

didates were accepted, the formation program was cultivated and solidified, and now formation has begun. I commend the committee chairman, Deacon John Yaquina, and each member of the steering committee. They worked ... to bring to fruition our current program. May their work and their continued efforts bear fruit for our diocese for years to come."

For these 28 men who have answered the call to the diaconate for West Virginia, many things in their lives have brought them to this point. Over the last several years, 53-year-old Dave Torlone has been involved with several ministries at his Parish of St. Leo's in Inwood. Although he has found those ministries very fulfilling, he felt the need to serve in an additional capacity. That need led him to the permanent diaconate.

"As I studied more about the role of deacons in the church, the more clear it became that I was being called to that vocation."

—Dave Torlone, St. Leo Parish, Inwood

"As I studied more about the role of deacons in the church, the more clear it became that I was being called to that vocation," he said. "Being a deacon means being a servant of Christ. Having the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and to be Christ's servant for the Catholic faithful of our diocese is an amazing opportunity. I look forward to the next four years of formation."

Torlone and his wife Darien live in Bunker Hill and have two children, Gabriella 16 and Andrew 19. He is Contract Manufacturing Manager for HP Hood LLC, a Boston-based dairy manufacturing company. He is also State Advocate, FDD, PGK, PFN, for the West Virginia Knights of Columbus.

Tom McFadden, 62, a lifelong resident of Wheeling has felt the call to the diaconate for years.

"It has been my pleasure to be associated with a number of deacons in my parish as well as other deacons who provide needed ministry services in various areas," he said. "I see the permanent diaconate as a call from the Lord to serve the Lord and his church in a special way. There are many areas of ministry and service and I am open to whatever ministry God is calling me to do."

He and his wife Michele have been members of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Wheeling since 1986. He is a physical therapist at Wheeling Hospital, and his primary area of practice is in the Center for Dizziness and Balance.

"I have always been drawn to occupations of service," said Steve Allard of Inwood. He realized that work helping people gave him the greatest sense of fulfillment. He volunteers at his Parish of St. James the Greater in Charles Town. At 56 years of age, he said his career as a systems engineer is nearing its end. "That is when the Holy Spirit whispered in my ear," he said, "giving me the thought that now it is time to not just help people, but to devote my life to it."

"What a big decision!" he said. "I felt overjoyed, then terrified at the huge commitment I made. Over months, a sense of real calm, peace and certainty came over me, removing any doubt that I am in the right place and doing the right thing. Please pray for me, and I hope and pray that I make a difference in people's lives in the diocese in the years to come."

John Butler is a member of St. Matthew Parish in Ravenswood. The 50-year-old engineer, who is mostly working from home, said his journey toward the diaconate has been a story of deliverance.

"I converted to Catholicism in 2010 and, since then, have been increasing my devotion to prayer, study, and service," he said. "Last year, I led a fraternity of men through the Exodus 90 program. During this time of commitment to prayer, temperance, and discipline is when I heard God's call. He also brought me to the diaconate by way of influences from past priests, fellow parishioners, and most especially through the love and support from my beautiful and faithful wife, Jenny."

"Your prayers for vocations are being answered," he said. "Please pray for us aspirants and we will pray for you as well."



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St. Bernadette's is Now a Parish

Bishop Brennan Issues Decree September 3



Courtesy Photo

St. Bernadette Church, Hedgesville

By Colleen Rowan

HEDGESVILLE—Bishop Mark Brennan announced Sept. 3 that St. Bernadette Mission in Hedgesville has been raised to the status of a parish in recognition of substantial growth within the community. The church, which began with 40 families in the early 1980s has grown to now seeing almost 280 Mass attendees.

Bishop Brennan announced the decree raising St. Bernadette's to parish status Sept. 3. The decree states: "In accordance with canon 515, #2, of The Code of Canon Law, having heard the Presbyteral Council and having listened to the Diocesan Consultors, the Catholic mission at Hedgesville, West Virginia, formerly under St. Joseph Parish, Martinsburg, West Virginia, is hereby raised to the status of parish..."

The boundary lines of the parish, as stated in the decree, are the intersection of the Berkeley County/Morgan County Line where it joins the Maryland/West Virginia Border (at the Potomac River) follow the Maryland/West Virginia/Berkeley County Line east, and then south along the Potomac River until it meets Ope-

quon Creek. Continue generally west along Opequon Creek to Hoke Run (creek) where the border line heads upstream and generally west along Hoke Run to where it meets I-81, then continue south along I-81 (toward Winchester, VA) to CR 15 (King Street/Tuscarora Pike at Exit 13). There, the line continues roughly west on Tuscarora Pike continuing on until it becomes CR 7/13 Hampshire Grade Rd. until that intersects with the Berkeley/Morgan County line.

"All Catholics living within the above-described territories are considered members of this parish and, as such, are subject to the spiritual jurisdiction of the Reverend Pastor of that parish, are entitled to his pastoral ministrations..." the decree states.

The decree took effect Sept. 3.

In making the announcement, Bishop Brennan recalled found memories of celebrating Masses at St. Bernadette's in the 1980s while on vacation and visiting his parents, who lived in Martinsburg at the time.

"I used to help at St. Joseph's, which they belonged to, and its missions," Bishop Brennan said. "At that time, St. Leo's in Inwood

was a mission, and St. Bernadette's in Hedgesville opened as a mission. I helped in both of those places."

When he would arrive in Martinsburg, he said he would let the pastors know he was available to help out with Masses. He remembers Father Leo Lydon, Father Bill Nottle, and Father John Di Bacco as pastors. He also remembers Msgr. Dean Borgmeyer, V.F., and Father Ronald Prechtel as associate pastors there.

St. Bernadette's was originally in a building that was once a diner. That building is now a meeting room. A new church was built in 2012.

From celebrating Mass at the original St. Bernadette's to celebrating his first Mass as bishop of Wheeling-Charleston, Bishop Brennan said he saw firsthand the growth of the community.

"When I went last September to visit St. Bernadette's, at a Saturday night Mass there was nearly 100 people there," Bishop Brennan said. "Before my own eyes, I had seen the growth in that parish."

The church, he noted, has Sunday Masses as well, and its own pastoral council, finance council, and religious education program.

"It's a beautiful place, and it deserves to be a full-fledged parish," Bishop Brennan said. "It's nice to be able to raise it up to a parish."

According to St. Bernadette's history, with the leadership and advice of Father Lydon, Bishop Joseph H. Hodges purchased the Lewis residence, located near the school in Hedgesville as a future presence for expansion of the Catholic community in Berkeley County in October 1978. With about 40 families as members, the first Sunday Mass was celebrated at the church by Father Bill Nolte on the first Sunday of Advent Nov. 29, 1982.

The present church was built and dedicated in 2012. St. Bernadette's has reported new growth to more than 250 families. Activities include many children with returning numbers to religious education, the parish reports. The church's outreach includes social concerns and bereavement committees.

Since 2017, Deacon Marcus Pressel as been assigned to the church. The current administrator is Father William J. Kuchinsky, who was appointed in June.

Superintendent Commends Catholic School Teachers and Staff, Thanks Families for Support

By Colleen Rowan

WEST VIRGINIA—Students of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Catholic schools will have five-days a week, in-school instruction this year thanks to the efforts of administrators, teachers, and staff, Catholic Schools Superintendent Mary Ann Deschaine said. She also thanked school families for their continuing support through the pandemic and always.

Deschaine sentiments were expressed in two letters, the first to the administrators, teachers and staff who have worked to make Catholic schools operational amid the coronavirus pandemic. She commended them for their efforts in a letter on the eve of the start of the 2020-2021 school year. In it, she expressed her appreciation to them for answering the

call to serve Catholic school children, all they have done, and will be doing in the months ahead.

"You are the individuals who have to take temperatures at the door, make sure masks are worn properly, and stand guard for your school family against an invisible invader we call COVID-19," she says in the letter. "I thank you for having that loving and compassionate character."

They will be called upon, she said, to arrive early and stay late to adjust, and disinfect surroundings sacrificing time with families.

"I thank you for that generous spirit," she says in the letter. "You have to be so flexible to turn your classroom into an inspiring virtual learning environment at a moment's notice with a smile on your face in

these unwanted times. I thank you for that graceful adaptability."

Each of the diocese's six high schools and 18 elementary and grade schools have filed reopening plans which have been approved by the respective county health officials after consultation with the Center of Disease Control (CDC), and the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) offices. Plans were communicated to school families early last month. These plans, Deschaine said, have changed and have been adjusted over the past months and would not have been completed without the hard work of administration, teachers, and staff.

Policies, plans, and practices have been prepared to provide protection for everyone in school buildings and are subject to

change as needed, Deschaine said. Reopening plans include a variety of actions and changes in day to day operations including new desk arrangements, hallway flow patterns, lunch protocols and strict extra-curricular. Some measures may not be popular, Deschaine said, but they must be followed to minimize the spread of this virus. She expressed her gratitude to administrators, teachers, and staff for leadership through their actions in this pandemic.

"Thank you for completely understanding what the 'new normal' is in our schools and reinforcing that to our families. I appreciate you accepting the role of a positive ambassador," she said.

"So now, just as we are about to give our students a new set of responsibility,

challenges, and accountability, thank you for accepting the same," she said. "Our students will follow your lead."

In her letter to school families Aug. 31, Deschaine thanked them for their "faithful support and dedication to our Catholic schools."

She asked families to be familiar with their school's procedures and protocols and to review them with their children. She also said in the letter that working together is important in the return to school.

"We've demonstrated that we can do great things when we work together," she said.

For more information about the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Catholic schools, visit: <https://wvcatholic.schools.org>

Fairmont Parish Priest Eager to Shepherd Three Schools

By Joyce Bibey

FAIRMONT—He has been assigned as the official pastor of three schools – Fairmont Catholic School, St. Mary Central School, and Notre Dame High School. For some this may seem a bit daunting- working in two cities with three different administrative staffs and three school advisory boards. However, Father Joseph Konikattil is eager to help and sees it as an exciting opportunity to enable students to "carry Christ in their hearts and soar high in the community with the wings of knowledge."

Father Joe, as he prefers, because most people stumble over his last name, which is pronounced Ko-nah-'kah-til; is no stranger to school leadership. In fact, he has an impressive list of accolades that includes being named by the Federal Government of India the best principal for promoting information technology in a school. He was also recognized three times as an elite principal by the State Government of Manipur, in Northeast India.

He is certain his beliefs on the importance of Catholic schools will be evident in his leadership.

"Catholic Education enables a person to face the future with confidence because he/she is equipped with knowledge powered by faith," he said. "Catholic school is the nursery of faith. It is like the seed sown in the good soil: 'some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold' (Mathew 13:8). It certainly produces and makes a difference in the community."

Children all over the world have great potential but need the foundation of Christ's teachings to empower them, he said.



Courtesy Photo

Father Joseph Konikattil, pictured above, is the official pastor of three schools—Fairmont Catholic School, St. Mary Central School, and Notre Dame High School in Clarksburg.

"Students have great talents but need greater motivation to pursue after academic and spiritual excellence, and parents need to guide their children properly to realize their great potentials to face the future with great vision," he said. "(West Virginia specifically) is a great land thirsting for CHRIST."

Without a doubt Catholics and non-Catholics alike benefit from religious based schools, he said.

"I worked in Catholic schools with more than 90% Hindus and 10% Christians," Father said. "Catholic schools welcome everyone and (instructs) based on the principles of Catholic doctrines. The principals of Catholic doctrine also reflect universal values such as love, peace, freedom, social justice and progress, equal rights, human dignity, forgiveness etc. to make a person a better human being without sacrificing Catholic identity. These universal values regulate the formation of the young, and the religious and moral education provided in the Catholic schools is in accordance with the good conscience of any parents who are either Catholics or non-Catholics."

At both Fairmont Catholic and St. Mary Central grade schools his goals are clear: "provide a safe environment for learning and to build up the morale and increase enrollment; give the best possible for the students and to prepare and inspire the students to lead meaningful lives in our catholic tradition; and make the learning a joyful experience for the kids so that they remember their days at school for the rest of their lives."

He said these communities that are equally rich in hospitality "deserve a good Catholic school to keep abreast of the technological and scientific advancements, and to grow in Catholic tradition."

"I will reach out to the community and make use of all the resources available for the good of the school and establish a strong Catholic

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Charleston's Own Sister Albertine Reflects on Becoming a Dominican Sister of St. Cecilia



Photo Courtesy of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia

During the Mass for the Rite of Perpetual Religious Profession for the Congregation of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia in Nashville, Tenn., at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Nashville, Sister Albertine Cevallos, O.P., who is from Charleston (third from right) and seven other women to be professed stand before Bishop Mark Spalding of Nashville who questions them on their readiness to dedicate themselves to God.

By Colleen Rowan

"I feel like I'm supposed to tell you something," people would often say to her. "You really need to check out the national Dominicans." They recognized a possible vocation to religious life in a young woman. They were the members of the Serra Club of Charleston. She is Sister Albertine Cevallos, O.P., a Charleston native and former member of the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart who was one of eight women who professed perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience as Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia in Nashville, Tenn., on July 25.

"I am truly grateful to the Serra Club of Charleston," Sister Albertine said as she reflected on her vocation. "I love them so much. They are the ones that introduced me to the national Dominicans. I owe so much to them."

It takes courage to walk up to someone you've never met before and give them that kind of message, she said. "They were so courageous," she said, "so faithful in their prayer for vocations."

In her youth, religious life was something that had never entered Sister Albertine's mind. Although she grew up in a Catholic family, she recalled that in her teenage years her relationship with Jesus was nonexistent.

"Before, I was just living life according to the worldly standard," she said. But at 23, everything changed. She describes it as a "con-

version reversion" experience. And, at that point, she was just trying to figure out where God was leading her.

"I knew that God loved me, and he had a plan for my life," she said. "I just wanted to know what that was and make up for all the lost time of not listening to him, and get to know him."

Once she started listening, things moved very quickly "as the Holy Spirit is want to do," she said, laughing. It was around this time that Serrans and fellow parishioners began to tell her about the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia.

"It became clear to me that I was supposed to go and visit them," she said. "I had never heard of them before, but all these people kept telling me about them. So, I went for a visit."

That first visit was in March of 2012, courtesy of the Charleston Serra Club which paid for her registration and gas money for the trip from Charleston to Nashville. And, in that first visit, everything became quite clear.

"Once I visited and experienced their charisma of working in education and that prayer is primary, it just became so clear that this was where I wanted to spend the rest of my life. I couldn't believe that I could actually choose this as a way of life," she said. "I just couldn't believe that I could really be this happy for the rest of my life. Of course there are challenges, but a vocation is an incredible gift from the Lord."

See Albertine" on Page 8



Photo Courtesy of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia
At the altar, Sister Albertine signs the vows she wrote out in advance.



Photo Courtesy of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia
Sister Albertine Cevallos, O.P.

Albertine...

Cont'd from Page 7

From there, she began her discernment. She went on the congregation's retreat open to any woman 18 to 30. In normal times, this retreat is offered several times a year for women who are interested. There, she had a chance to talk to the vocation director who encouraged her to spend another year keeping active in her parish, going to daily Mass, and continuing to be involved in the young adult ministry. She was also encouraged to deepen her prayer life, read spiritual readings, and to be open to hearing the Lord's voice. At the time Sister Albertine was working for Catholic Charities West Virginia in Charleston. She also played guitar for different youth events.

The next step of discernment was a vocations retreat, which is a longer retreat for those who are seriously considering joining the congregation.

"At that point I really felt the Lord was inviting me, but not forcing me or requiring me to choose this," she said. "I had a real sense on the vocations retreat that the Lord was showing me a plan for my life, and it was Plan A—a plan he wanted for me and that would make me most happy. In his infinite wisdom, he knows our heart, and he knows what will satisfy it, and of course it's him. But he also left me free to choose Plan B—which would be marriage, which is a beautiful vocation. So, it was a tremendous freedom to choose between these two beautiful vocations."

This freedom from the Lord, she said, led her to choose religious life and, on Aug. 15, 2013, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sister Albertine entered the con-

gregation.

Her first year was a postulant year, in which she had not received a habit, but wore a black and white uniform. "It's a year of just living the religious life," she said, "and still the time of discernment."

At the end of that year, she entered her novice year. That is when she received the habit and a new religious name, Sister Albertine. At the end of that second year, she made her first vows in 2015. Three years later, she renewed her vows, and two years later she professed her final vows.

Sister Albertine currently teaches math at St. Cecilia Academy in Nashville, where she has taught for four years. "I love it," she said. "If you had asked me when I was younger what I would do with my life, I probably would've said 'I'm going to be a math teacher.' It's funny that, in my vocation, I've ended up as a math teacher."

As a Dominican Sister of St. Cecilia, Sister Albertine said her vocation is primarily being, not doing. "Even though what I do is teach math, who I am is a consecrated bride of Christ and that is what gives meaning to everything that I teach," she said. "That's what gives the eternal value of every single small act done through your assignment, and every small act of obedience is an act of worship."

This, she said is what gives a special character to the teaching. It's like a mediation of Christ's love through Mary, she said, because the consecrated virgin is for the whole church, so her love is for everybody. "That is one of the beautiful things about religious life," she said, "that you can mediate Christ's love in a universal way."

Sister Albertine is the daughter of Dr. Jose Fernando Cevallos-Candau and Dr. Kathleen

Minnagh of Charleston. She is a graduate of George Washington High School in Charleston, and the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, Calif., where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in astrophysics. She also has earned a certificate in science communication at the University of California Santa Cruz in Santa Cruz, Calif., and a Master of Arts in education at Aquinas College, Nashville.

Sister Albertine expressed profound gratitude to the Serra Club of Charleston for introducing her to the Congregation of Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, for their prayers, and for all the ways they helped her. She encourages Catholics in West Virginia to not underestimate the value of their prayers. "Especially before the Blessed Sacrament," she said.

"Keep praying for vocations to the priesthood and religious life," Sister Albertine said. "Don't be discouraged if they don't come immediately, just keep persevering in prayer."



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Pope: Jubilee for the Earth a Time for Restoring Bond with God, Creation

By Junno Arocho Esteves, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The exploitation and plundering of the Earth's resources at the expense of the poor and vulnerable cry out for justice and the forgiveness of debts, Pope Francis said.

In his message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation Sept. 1 and the Season of Creation, which runs through Oct. 4, the pope said the observance is a time to renew, repair and restore humanity's broken relationship with God and his creation.

"It is a time for restorative justice. In this context, I repeat my call for the cancellation of the debt of the most vulnerable countries, in recognition of the severe impacts of the medical, social and economic crises they face as a result of COVID-19," he wrote.

Since 2020 included the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the ecumenical team organizing the Season of Creation chose "Jubilee for the Earth" as this year's theme.

In the Bible, the pope noted, a jubilee was a "sacred time to remember, return, rest, restore, and rejoice."

As a time of remembrance, he said, the day of prayer and the Season of Creation should call to mind "creation's original vocation to exist and flourish as a community of love."

"We exist only in relationships: with God the creator, with our brothers and sisters as members of a common family and with all of God's creatures within our common home," the pope wrote.

The call for a jubilee for the Earth, he said, is a call for repentance and for restoring harmony with God by taking care "our fellow human beings, especially the poor and the most vulnerable."

"We have broken the bonds of our relationship with the Creator, with our fellow human beings, and with the rest of creation," the pope wrote in his message.

He also said it was time to "heal the damaged relationships that are essential to supporting us and the entire fabric of life."

"A jubilee is a time for setting free the oppressed and all those shackled in the fetters of various forms of modern slavery, including trafficking in persons and child labor," he said.

Creation itself, he added, admonishes humankind "to return to our rightful place" as members and not masters of "this interconnected web of life."

"The disintegration of biodiversity, spiraling climate disasters and unjust impact of the current pandemic on the poor and vulnerable: all these are a wake-up call in the face of our rampant greed and consumption," the pope said.

Humanity, he said, must stop excessively consuming the Earth's resources and "pushing the planet beyond its limits."

"Our constant demand for growth and an endless cycle of production and consumption are exhausting the natural world," the pope said. "Forests are leached, topsoil erodes, fields fail, deserts advance, seas acidify and storms intensify. Creation is groaning!"

The coronavirus pandemic, he added, "has given us a chance to develop new ways of living" and "has led us to rediscover simpler and sustainable lifestyles."

Citing St. John Paul II's assertion that corporate misconduct is a "new version of colonialism," Pope Francis called for the protection of indigenous communities from business practices which "shamefully exploit poorer countries and communities desperately seeking economic development."

"We must use this decisive moment to end our superfluous and destructive goals and activities, and to cultivate values, connections and activities that are life-giving," the pope said.

The chairmen of two U.S. bishops' committees said the bishops were united in prayer with Pope Francis and invited "every Catholic and all people of goodwill who care for our common home in the United States to increase efforts toward ecological conversion during this Season of Creation."

Profit over Safety, Especially in Pandemic, 'Unjust,' Says Labor Day Statement

By Mark Pattison, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Given the "somber" realities imposed by the coronavirus pandemic, for companies to put profits over safety is "unjust," said Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, in the U.S. bishops' annual Labor Day statement.

Even before the pandemic, "a significant number of Americans were trapped in low-wage jobs, with insecurity around food, housing and health care, and with little opportunity for savings or advancing in their career," Archbishop Coakley said in the statement, issued Sept. 2. "Those same workers have been hit particularly hard, and, it is devastating to say, many have paid with their life. As one New York subway worker put it: 'We are not essential. We are sacrificial.'"

Archbishop Coakley quoted Pope Francis in his exhortation, "Evangelii Gaudium," saying: "Today we also have to say 'thou shalt not' to an economy of exclusion and inequality. Such an economy kills."

"What was wrong before the pandemic has been accelerated now," Archbishop Coakley said. "What may have been hidden to some is now revealed."

See "Statement" on Page 10

Hurricane Destroys Louisiana Churches, Closes Schools, Displaces Priests

LAKE CHARLES, La. (CNS) — Hurricane Laura destroyed six churches in the Diocese of Lake Charles, left a dozen others "highly compromised" and did heavy damage to chancery offices.

The diocese, in a report posted on its website, said that only one of six Catholic schools reopened Aug. 31, while the others needed at least some repairs before classes could resume.

The storm, which slammed southern Louisiana with winds of up to 150 mph in the early hours of Aug. 27, also left a diocesan rectory housing 20 priests, a third of them in active ministry, uninhabitable. Some of the priests were able to relocate to rectories that sustained little or no damage, while others moved into Vianney House, a diocesan residence for people discerning a vocation, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in central Lake Charles and private homes. Utilities, including power and water, in much of the region remained out Aug. 31.

Donations for relief effort are being accepted online at www.catholiccharitiesswla.com and www.catholiccharitiesusa.org.

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Statement..

Cont'd from Page 9

Against this backdrop, the murder of George Floyd was like lighting a match in a gas-filled room."

Pope Francis, who is currently writing a series of reflections on the pandemic, noted in an address based on these writings: "We are all frail, all equal, all precious. May we be profoundly shaken by what is happening all around us: the time has come to eliminate inequalities, to heal the injustice that is undermining the health of the entire human family!"

"Injustice does not need to have the last word. The Lord came to free us from sin, including the sins by which we diminish workers and ourselves," Archbishop Coakley said in the Labor Day statement, titled: "Behold, I make all things new" — Rebuilding a Dignified Post-COVID World."

"Beginning with our own decisions, we might ask when we buy goods from stores or online: Do we know where they came from? Do we know whether the people who made them were treated with dignity and respect? Was the workplace made safe during the pandemic, and did workers receive a just wage? If not, what can we do to remedy this?" he wrote.

Government has a part to play as well, according to the archbishop. "Policymakers must address the outstanding needs that people have around nutrition, housing, health care, jobs and income support, as I and my brother bishops have written repeatedly. People are hurting, and some of the relief measures of previous legislation are expiring. Congress and the White House should reach a deal that prioritizes protecting the poor and vulnerable."

Archbishop Coakley also lauded the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the

U.S. bishops' domestic anti-poverty program, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

"Founded to do more than meet emergency needs, CCHD supports low-income-led efforts to address poverty, create good jobs and be a force for transformation in families and communities. Over its history, CCHD has distributed over 8,000 grants worth more than \$400 million to help create grassroots change," he said. "Pope Francis has made the work of the popular movements that CCHD supports a key theme in his pontificate."

Archbishop Coakley cited one example of how CCHD-funded organizations have stepped up since the pandemic was declared in March.

"Workers in meat processing plants are faced with dangerous working conditions as companies fail to provide basic protections from COVID-19 or do not make sufficient workplace modifications to reduce risk of exposure to the virus. The CCHD-supported Rural Community Workers Alliance has helped organize workers in rural Missouri, pressuring employers to take these concerns seriously and advancing the dignity of workers," he said.

"These groups, as well as labor unions and other worker associations, make an invaluable contribution to the safety and well-being of workers."

In addition to practicing solidarity with low-wage workers, "we can offer charitable assistance to all those who have become unemployed during this time by donating to local food banks and Catholic Charities agencies," Archbishop Coakley said. "Catholic Charities helped 13 million people last year, and the demand has increased 30-50% so far during the pandemic and is anticipated to increase."

Shepherd...

Cont'd from Page 6

identity," he added. "I definitely need the helping hands of the entire community on deck to sail together toward a greater glory."

His focus is on point at the high school level too. Notre Dame may sit in Clarksburg, but the school community crosses over many city and county lines. The key will be to unite all the communities and help them realize they are one great big family.

"Rebuild the human infrastructure and provide the best for the students and make it a powerhouse in WV in all the fields," Father Joe said. "Faith formation is an ongoing process and high school life prepares the students to make the right choices in their lives. The exposure to the Catholic faith and religious education as a core subject develop a strong religious foundation in high school."

Families need to realize that Catholic education is an investment in their child, the community, and the future.

"It is worth the cost," he said. "It is the greatest investment parents could ever make in human resource development, and they will never regret it. Catholic schools have superior academics, faith formation, and the character formation in a safe environment where every child is ac-

cepted and respected by all. Catholic education leads to better career opportunities and a more successful life."

Catholic schools are more than academics and extra-curriculars.

"It is the holistic development of a person: mind, body and soul; academics, athletics and faith," Father Joe explained. "Catholic education is the part of the mission of the church and all the teachers are dedicated to their students in developing the human potential and empowering individuals to become responsible, contributing members of society through faith and knowledge."

As any good leader, Father Joe is strategically looking down the road five years, "I know I will have been successful in my role as pastor for these three schools if teaching faculty, parents and students have close cooperation as members of a family and pursue after excellence with greater faith in God."

He said he will do everything he can to help the schools be elite.

"Children are the future of the country and they need to be formed well with good values to preserve this country as the greatest," he said. "Thus, God expects all to be responsible stewards to keep this country even more beautiful. 'Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more.'" (Luke 12: 48)

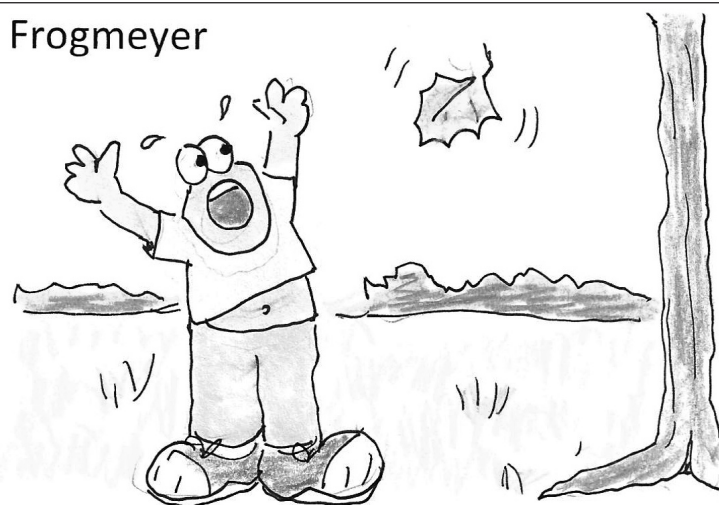
Parade Honors Sister Mary Florence Burke for Her 75th Jubilee



Courtesy Photos

Sister Mary Florence Burke, CSJ, (left) was honored for her 75th Jubilee with a parade Aug. 19. Among the well-wishers were, representing Central Catholic High School, John Yelenic and Principal Becky Sancomb (above right) and teacher Mary Hennen. Sister Mary Florence was on the faculty at Central from 1982 to 2010.

Frogmeyer



OH NOOOO! A leaf JUST fell!!!
WINTER IS COMING!!!

By Msgr. Dean Borgmeyer

Remarkable Past Strengthens His Mission

By Joyce Bibey

His love for Christ and his mission to evangelize is not only genuine, but unbelievably impressive. You would never know it by Father Joseph Konikattil's humble nature and gentlemanly presence, but he is anything but ordinary.

As an Indian priest serving in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, you can assume his background is interesting, but that might be the understatement of the decade. Unless you have the opportunity to sit down and ask him about his experiences that ultimately led him here you may not fully appreciate his wisdom or enthusiasm.

He came to the diocese in May of 2017, serving his first month at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Wheeling, before he was assigned to St. Paul Parish in Weirton, where he served until Feb. 1, 2018, when he was appointed to be administrator at St. Peter the Fisherman Parish in Fairmont.

He was born in the beautiful coastal state of Kerala, in south-west India. He is one of six children of Matthew and Aleykutty Konikattil. They are a farming family with strong Catholic roots.

"We have a written family history as Catholics tracing back to the 15th Century A.D.," he said, adding that the family may have been Catholic for several centuries before their written history, as St. Thomas the apostle was in Kerala in 52 A.D. evangelizing many families into Catholicism.



Courtesy Photo
Father Konikattil rides an elephant in India.



Courtesy Photo
Father Joseph Konikattil

"The seed of faith sown in me as a kid began to grow in later years," he said. "I was born as the fourth child and the first male in the family."

It was tradition for the firstborn son to be baptized with the name of the paternal grandfather, which for the Konikattils was "John." However, his maternal grandfather insisted he be named Joseph. So, against custom the parents agreed to baptize him after St. Joseph.

When young Joseph was born, he suffered a birth defect in his leg that worsened in his toddler years.

"Doctors told my parents that 'this child may not be able to walk properly in life,'" he said.

It was once again his maternal grandfather that stepped in.

"He took me to a shrine of St. Joseph and made me move around the statue of St. Joseph three times on my knees," he said. "After I completed moving around the statue, I felt like an electric shock pass through my leg, and I was fully healed."

His grandfather was a stellar example of his family's unwavering faith. There are nearly 20-million Catholics in India, but that makes up for less than 2-percent of the population. Kerala is considered one of the strongest Christian regions of India with 20-percent believing in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

As a young boy, Joseph wanted to be a scientist, however the older he got the more significant his

Courtesy Photo

faith became in his life.

At age 15, after completing his sophomore year of high school, he chose to start seminary.

He left home in 1986 and traveled about 2,500 miles away. It took him four days and three nights by train to get to the seminary in Manipur – a north eastern state of India close to China and Bangladesh. It is a tribal area.

"Manipur is a small mountain state with a population of almost 3-million," he said. "Meti (Hindus), who are the majority group in the state, then there are Kuki and Naga peoples, who speak a variety of Sino-Tibetan languages. There are many sub-tribes that have distinguished dialects and cultures that are often village-based with more than 36 dialects. Manipur was a princely state until King (Maharaja) signed a Treaty of Accession merging with India in 1949. This merger has been disputed by groups in Manipur as having been completed without consensus and under duress. The dispute and



Courtesy Photo

Father Konikattil receives the 2007 National Award for Technology Education in India.

differing visions for the future have resulted in 68 years of insurgency in the state for independence from India, as well as in repeated episodes of violence among ethnic tribal groups in the state.

"Thirty-two militant insurgency groups are responsible for many violent deaths in Manipur," he noted. "The Catholic Church, officially started in 1952, and became a diocese in 1980, suffered terribly at the hands of insurgents."

By the age of 29, Father Joe, was too familiar with those unthinkable acts.

"Many missionary priests became martyrs and many others got physically or mentally tortured or abducted by the insurgent groups," he said. "My best friend and companion priest, and other 3 priests were martyred by the terrorist groups (in 2000-2001)."

His faith could have very easily have been shaken from his core,
See "Mission" on Page 12

#FaithInWV

Do you know an exceptional Catholic in West Virginia, someone or a group who are shining examples of #FaithInWV? Email Joyce Bibey your feature idea to jbibey@dwcc.org. Visit FaithInWV.org and every issue of The Catholic Spirit to read more inspiring stories.



CNS Photo/Claudio Iannone, courtesy PICTUREHOUSE

Jorge Lamelas, Alejandra Howard and Stephanie Gil star in a scene from the movie “Fatima.”

Fatima

Movie Review

By John Mulderig, Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) — “Fatima” (Picturehouse), a fact-based drama from director and co-writer Marco Pontecorvo, recounts what may rank as the most remarkable series of religious events of modern times. Namely, the 1917 apparitions of the Virgin Mary (Joana Ribeiro) to three shepherd children near the Portuguese city of the title.

Despite a few flaws, believers will find Pontecorvo’s chronicle congenial fare that’s suitable for all but the youngest viewers.

The narrative is told in flashbacks during a 1980s interview between fictional Professor Nichols (Harvey Keitel), a dyed-in-the-wool skeptic, and the only one of the trio to have survived into adulthood, Carmelite Sister Lucia dos Santos (Sonia Braga). As the two spar over the reality of what Sister Lucia experienced, the scene shifts to the very different times of her childhood.

The screenplay, on which Pontecorvo collaborated with Valerio D’Annunzio and Barbara Nicolosi, emphasizes the context of World War I within which Mary’s message of prayer and repentance as the path to peace was delivered.

Thus we see the young Lucia (Stephanie Gil) accompany her mother, Maria (Lucia Moniz), to the periodical public announcement by Fatima’s mayor, Arturo (Goran Visnjic), of local casualties in the global struggle. Though devout, Maria is consumed by anxiety over the fate of Lucia’s older brother Manuel (Joao Arrais) who is serving with the Portuguese forces.

The other primary focus of the script is on the family and community conflicts that arose when news of Mary’s appearances to Lucia and her two younger cousins, Jacinta (Alejandra Howard) and Francisco (Jorge Lamelas), spread. Initially, both Maria and the local parish priest, Father Ferreira (Joaquim De Al-

meida), are understandably doubtful and try to convince the kids to recant.

So, too, does Arturo. As an official of Portugal’s nascent First Republic, established in 1910, Arturo is charged with carrying out its anti-clerical and more broadly anti-religious policies. So alleged visits from the “Lady of the Rosary,” as Mary identified herself to Lucia and her companions, are the last thing he needs.

“Fatima” successfully portrays piety without yielding to sentimentality. But it fails to wrap up the loose ends of its story.

The justly celebrated “Miracle of the Sun” that occurred during Mary’s last appearance on Oct. 13 provides the movie with a spectacular built-in conclusion. Yet the gentle dispute between Sister Lucia and Professor Nichols is left hanging — nor do we get a sense of resolution about the strained relationships that prevailed before the children’s veracity was so strikingly vindicated.

This sense of incompleteness notwithstanding, “Fatima” is a welcome affirmation of faith in the midst of worldwide challenges to health and tranquility. If nothing else made it timely, the reflection that Jacinta, aged 9, and Francisco, at a year older, both perished in the influenza pandemic that began in 1918 would serve to do so.

Sister Lucia, by contrast, lived a long life, dying in 2005 at 97. Her cousins were canonized on the centennial of the first Fatima apparition, May 13, 2017. The cause to raise her to the same status is currently active.

The film contains mature themes and bloodless images of combat violence. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II — adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association rating is PG-13 — parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

(Mulderig is on the staff of Catholic News Service.)

Mission...

Cont’d from Page 11

but instead his calling became more impassioned.

“A priest is for all and it is not a career, but a calling to witness Christ through life and proclamation,” he said. “I experienced the abject poverty of the tribal communities and learned to live with them by getting used to their food, habits and culture, learning the dialects to communicate with them, tried to empower them through gospel values, and liberate them from their pagan practices and terrorism through education. I had to make many missionary journeys lasting many weeks, traveling from village to village on foot for several hours a day and return to the parish only after a month or more. The tribal communities who are originally head-hunters live on the top of the mountains in the remotest areas where there are no jeepable roads or electricity. We reached their village after a day’s journey on foot and stayed with them for a few days and slept in mud plastered rooms where snakes, rats and other insects would be crawling around. It was all to fulfill the mission of Christ to evangelize them through teaching the Catholic faith and celebrating the sacraments with them.”

His horrific experiences of being both abducted by terrorists and witnessing his brother priests being martyred spiritually marks the territory as, “a land of religious vocations now. It is true that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.”

He pointed out that the mission diocese has more than 100,000 Catholics, a tribal/local Archbishop, more than 100 local priests, and 400 religious nuns excluding the missionary priests and religious.

He has no doubt he was meant to be a servant of God. He quotes Isaiah 52:7, “How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of him who brings glad tidings (Isaiah 52:7).” He emphasized, “I am here in this beautiful mountain state of WV to proclaim JESUS CHRIST!”

To become “an effective educator as part of the mission of the church,” he holds five bachelor’s degrees, three master’s degrees, and a doctorate in American literature.

He taught high school for two years as part of his training in seminary. He continued to be associated with schools at all levels including collegiate his entire priesthood as either dean of studies, vice-principal, principal, superintendent or president.

He said in India he wanted to educate “youth to liberate them from terrorism and poverty and to give a future with hope and meaning.”

In West Virginia, he hopes to help the faithful young and old, and to “become all things to all people.... Run as to win” (1 Corinthians 9:22-24).

Powhatan's Sacred Heart Mission Donates \$500 to Scholarship Fund in Honor of Bishop Brennan

POWHATAN—Sacred Heart Mission in Powhatan joyfully celebrated as Bishop Mark Brennan bestowed the sacrament of confirmation on Aug. 22, his first anniversary as bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

In honor of Bishop Brennan, Sacred Heart Mission donated \$500 to the Bob Bishop Scholarship Fund for a McDowell County student in need who is going to college. Bob was a former teacher in McDowell County Schools and adjunct instructor for Marshall University and Institute University. Some of his former students started this scholarship. They formed a committee and each year students are interviewed by family members of Bob and other teachers.

"In keeping with the bishop's humble spirit the

\$500 will be given to the fund in honor of Bishop Brennan on his first anniversary as our bishop, on which he celebrated Mass with us," said Jim Copollo, a member of Sacred Heart.

Bishop Brennan was also presented with a picture of the Sacred Heart of The Sorrowful Christ by one of the confirmation students. The piece was hand stitched by one of the members of Sacred Heart.

Courtesy Photo
Bishop Mark Brennan is pictured with young people who received the sacrament of confirmation at Sacred Heart Mission in Powhatan. With them is Father Binny Thomas Mulackal, pastor.



Diocese's CFO Announces Retirement

By Colleen Rowan

WHEELING—After 20 years with the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, Alex J. Nagem, chief financial officer (CFO) of the diocese, announced his retirement to devote more time to his beloved wife Lori who faces many challenges as a recent survivor of pancreatic cancer, and his family. "The good that has come from this is that we have become closer to God and each other," Nagem said.

Nagem made the announcement Aug. 24, and said that he will continue to work through December to help with transitions.

"It is with heavy heart, mixed feelings, but no regrets on the decision that I announce my retirement," Nagem said in his announcement to parishes, schools, and diocesan employees. "During the 34 years Lori and I have been



Courtesy Photo
Pictured are Alex and Lori Nagem.

together I have tried to balance family life and career by trying to give appropriate time to each. There had been days of guilt, though, when I felt I had neglected my family for working long hours. But my family was always understanding. They know that is part of my nature. Now I feel the long working hours must come to end. Lori and I

have grown to appreciate each day together not knowing what each new day will bring. She has not asked for much, only my time and this she is deserving," Nagem said.

Nagem began his service to the church in West Virginia as finance director for Catholic Community Services, which is now Catholic Charities West Virginia, where he served for five years. He then became comptroller of the diocese, then finance director for its Risk Management for Parishes and Schools. He became interim CFO of the diocese last year and was then appointed CFO by Bishop Mark Brennan last fall.

"I had hoped to have worked for Bishop Brennan as his CFO through his retirement," Nagem said in his announcement. "I find him to be a kind and caring man. Our diocese is fortunate to have him as our

bishop. I thank him for his trust in me during his time as our bishop. I thank all staff and clergy in the chancery, schools and parishes for your confidence in me over my 20 years working with you in our diocese."

Bishop Brennan commended Nagem for stepping into the CFO position after many years working in the Finance Department and before that, CCWVa. "He handled the investigation of the former bishop's misuse of diocesan funds, the audit of two years' of diocesan finances, the public disclosure of diocesan investment income, the application for federal CARES act assistance to our parishes and schools (and Catholic Charities West Virginia and the chancery) and many other matters with competence and devotion," Bishop Brennan said. "He is also a man of deep

faith and love for the church. He has always been a pleasure to work with and I will miss him. I pray that God may richly bless him, his wife Lori and all their family as he enters the ranks of the retired."

As Nagem looks back on his years at the chancery, he said what he has learned is patience and how to listen, and that there is more to life than making money.

"Spiritually it probably made me more of a caring person," he said. "I learned to listen more to people. I didn't always have to give my opinion in a conversation. I learned more about individuals, about the church, about problems we are facing, and about how to fix the problems, by listening."

Working at the chancery in all his positions was something he truly

See "CFO" on Page 15

La diócesis anuncia 28 aspirantes al diaconado permanente

Por Colleen Rowan

WHEELING — Vienen de todos los rincones de West Virginia, 28 hombres que son aspirantes al diaconado permanente de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston. Ahora han comenzado su formación, reuniéndose el fin de semana del 28 de agosto en el Centro Pastoral St. John XXIII en Charleston. Allí, comenzaron un viaje hacia la ordenación como diáconos a un ministerio de servicio, ayudando al obispo y a sus sacerdotes en muchas áreas, especialmente en el ministerio de la caridad pero también en las celebraciones litúrgicas, distribuyendo la Sagrada Comunión en la Misa, bautizando, presenciando matrimonios, presidiendo en algunos ritos funerarios, proclamación del Evangelio y predicación. Los diáconos a menudo también enseñan y aconsejan.

El diácono John Yaquinta, presidente del Comité Directivo del Diácono Permanente de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston 2020-2024, dijo que las emociones eran fuertes cuando se reunió con los aspirantes por primera vez y al verlos comenzar el mismo viaje que comenzó hace nueve años.

“Juntos, hemos trabajado a través de una pandemia mundial, reuniendo transcripciones y registros sacramentales, cartas de recomendación e informes médicos”, dijo el diácono Yaquinta. “Pido a todos nuestros lectores que recuerden en oración a estos 28 hombres y sus familias mientras continúan su camino hacia la ordenación en 2024. Un agradecimiento especial a Tina High, secretaria del Vicario

para el Clero y al resto del Comité Directivo de Formación de Diáconos Permanentes para todos su arduo trabajo y nos permite alcanzar este hito”.

Los aspirantes son: Stephen Francis Allard de la parroquia de Santiago el Mayor en Charles Town, William Richard Allen III de la parroquia San Francisco de Sales en Beckley; Thomas Frank Antulove de parroquia de San Patricio en Mannington, Dr. John Anthony Basil de parroquia San José Obrero en Weirton, Emarjun Capuno Brucal de parroquia sagrado corazon en Williamson, Michael Brumley de parroquia de la Santísima Trinidad en Nitro, Todd Shannon Burdette de parroquia de San Mateo en Ravenswood, John David Butler de parroquia de San Mateo en Ravenswood, Victor Francis Cwynar de parroquia de San Francisco Javier en Parkersburg, Thomas Patrick Hassen de San Francisco de Sales en Morgantown, Michael A. Kawash de la Basílica de la Co-Catedral del Sagrado Corazón en Charleston, Christopher James Forshey de la parroquia de Corpus Christi en Wheeling, Darryl Lee Feldman de la parroquia de San Leo en Inwood, William Klug de la parroquia de Santiago el Mayor en Charles Town, Robert Joseph Krall de parroquia de San Miguel en Wheeling, Jacob Manning de la Catedral de San José en Wheeling, James David McCullough de parroquia Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro en Stonewood, Thomas Joseph McFadden de parroquia de San Vicente de Paúl en Wheeling, Patrick Dewey McFarland de la parroquia de Inmaculada Concepción en Fairmont, Patrick Michel de la par-

roquia de Santiago el Mayor en Charles Town, Jason Scott Miller de la parroquia de San Pablo en Weirton, Anthony Michael O’Leary de la parroquia de Santísimo Sacramento en South Charleston, Ronald Piaskowski de parroquia Nuestra Señora de Fátima en Huntington, Tommy Bryan Ross de la parroquia de Santísimo Sacramento en South Charleston, Aaron Talbott de la parroquia de San Brendan en Elkins, Bryce Burl Timberlake de la parroquia de Santiago el Mayor en Charles Town, y David Andrew Torlone de parroquia de San Leo en Inwood.

El obispo Mark Brennan expresó su deseo el otoño pasado de comenzar un nuevo programa de formación para el diaconado permanente. El comité fue organizado luego por sugerencias del Consejo

Presbiteral y el proceso fue supervisado y facilitado por el vicario para el clero, Reverendísimo Dennis R. Schuelkens, Jr., V.E.

“Ha sido un placer trabajar con los miembros del Comité Directivo de Formación del Diaconado Permanente”, dijo el Padre Schuelkens. “A través del esfuerzo de este comité, se estableció el período de investigación, se recibieron postulaciones, se realizaron entrevistas, se aceptaron candidatos, se cultivó y solidificó el programa de formación, y ahora se ha iniciado la formación. Felicito al presidente del comité, el diácono John Yaquinta, ya cada miembro del comité directivo. Trabajaron ... para llevar a buen término nuestro programa actual. Que su trabajo y sus continuos esfuerzos den frutos para nuestra diócesis en los próximos años”.

CONFIRMACIÓN CALENDARIO

Obispo Mark E. Brennan, Celebrante

Ascensión, Huracán
Jueves 3 de septiembre a las 6:00 p.m.

Todos los Santos, Bridgeport
Domingo 11 de octubre a las 3:00 p.m. y 6:30 p.m.

Santísimo Sacramento, South Charleston
Sábado 17 de octubre a las 10:00 a.m. y 1:00 p.m.

San Antonio, Follansbee
Domingo 22 de noviembre a las 10:30 a.m.

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 eclesásticas apropiadas. Para reportar casos sospechosos de abuso sexual de niños por parte del personal de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston a la Diócesis, comuníquese con uno de los siguientes designados al 1.888.434.6237 o 304.233.0880: 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

CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

Ascension Parish, Hurricane
Thursday, September 3 at 6:00 p.m.

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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Can Collection Helps to Fund Knights' Charities



Photo by Bob Matheny

Members of the Knights of Columbus Council #9483 from Ascension Parish in Hurricane collect aluminum cans to help fund the council's charities. The council has earned more than \$1,200 in the past three years. Pictured, from right, are Mike Page, Pete Robusto, Father Bill Matheny (pastor), Mark Trimble, and Gary Bonnett.

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Cont'd from Page 9

enjoyed, because he was working for the church.

"As a layperson," he said, "I felt that I was really doing something that helped the church grow every day, even if it was on a financial basis."

"I have made many friends working for the diocese and many friends are like family to me and Lori. I'm not quite sure if I could've done it any place else."

What stands out most to him in his time with the diocese are the people who work

there—in the schools, in the parishes, at the chancery. They are people, he said, who all try to live a Christian lifestyle, not only at work but at home as well, he said. "They are all very caring," he said. "Not only in their jobs, but for individuals. They are all trying to walk in the footsteps of Christ."

Nagem said he will miss his co-workers at the chancery, parish and school staff, and the many priests of the diocese. In ending his announcement, he said, "You are all remembered in our prayers, as I hope Lori and I are remembered in yours."

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