

THE CATHOLIC

Spirit

Hope Hammered Home: Catholic Church of Preston County Wraps 39th Year of Summer Home Repair Program

As summer winds down, so too does the 39th year of the Catholic Church of Preston County's Summer Home Repair Program — a tradition that continues to bring hope, healing, and community to families across the region.

This year, 545 volunteers from Catholic parishes in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland journeyed to Preston County, responding to 150 home repair requests submitted by local residents beginning the first week in June through the first week of August.

Thanks to their tireless efforts, 85 low-income families, disabled and elderly, received critical improvements to their homes — from leaking roofs and broken windows to porch rebuilds and accessibility ramps at no charge to the homeowner.

The Summer Home Repair Program has been blessed over the past 39 years with all the volunteers who have come to Preston County to help our residents.

"Thank you is not enough to express our gratitude to the groups and individuals who give up a week of their summer to work in Preston County and repair homes," Catholic Church of Preston County's Pastor Father Dominic Athishu said. "It beautifully reflects the spirit of the Summer Home Repair Program. It's a heartfelt acknowledgment of the volunteers' sacrifice and compassion, and it reinforces the

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Courtesy photo
Volunteers brave heights to work on replacing a roof on a home in Tunnelton during the 2025 Summer Home Repair Program.



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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 Sr. Martha Gomez, ext. 264. You may also call the Diocese's Office of Safe Environment at 304.230.1504 or 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:** call Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, at 304.559.6742. The Diocese partners with Navex Global to offer EthicsPoint to report other 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 WV. EthicsPoint can be accessed via www.dwc.org, under "Accountability", then "Report Misconduct" or by calling 844.723.8381. EthicsPoint is a third-party reporting system that reports to civil authorities where applicable and Diocesan authorities, and the identity of the person reporting is protected. Links and information: WV Department of Health and Human Resources: <https://www.wvdhhr.org/report.asp>. West Virginia State Police, Crimes Against Children Unit: 304-293-6400.

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops requires all Dioceses/Eparchies have a Safe Environment Program for the protection of children and young people. 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; sexual abuse awareness training for adults. Training may be completed online or via live workshop. For information, go to www.dwc.org, click "Diocese", then "Offices," then "Office of Safe Environment."

The Catholic Spirit's Print Schedule for 2025

There are 10 print editions in 2025. Below are the names of the issues and the publishing dates. Please note, the publishing dates may or may not be on feast days. Digital issues are published every Friday, delivered by e-mail to subscribers, and posted on thecatholicspiritwv.org.

2025 Print Issues and Dates: Triumph of the Cross, September 12; Month of the Rosary, October 3; Advent, November 21; Christmas, December 19

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Hope ...

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Church's deep appreciation for their service."

The Summer Home Repair Program is faith in action, according to Father Athishu.

"As Saint James says in his Epistle, 'Faith without good works is dead' (James 2:26). That is why many keep returning to keep their faith alive and active," he said. "Thus, Saint Anthony of Padua rightly said, 'Charity is the seed of faith, makes it alive; without it, faith dies.'"

While only 85 homeowners were helped this summer, the program never discounts the homeowners who are not chosen.

"We wish we could have helped everyone who applied, but it is not feasible," SHRP Coordinator Theresa Marthey said. "The groups that come in use their time and talents to do what they can in the short time they are here. We do encourage homeowners not chosen to reapply the following year."

Marthey emphasized what may seem like a small issue to anyone else, such as going down two steps, can easily become a safety issue for a resident who uses a cane, walker, or wheelchair.

Each week brought a new wave of volunteers, each selecting projects that matched their skills and passions. Before work began, participants gathered on Sunday evenings at St. Sebastian Church for a heartfelt welcoming hosted by the Summer Home Repair Program Committee. Volunteers shared why they made the journey — and why so many return year after year.

"Every summer, Preston County reminds us what service truly means," said one returning group member. "I get more out of it than just building or repairing something. There is a connection made with the homeowners."

During the third week of



Courtesy photo
Two volunteers fix a ceiling in a Newburg home during the 2025 Summer Home Repair Program.

the program, Bishop Mark Brennan addressed 127 volunteers who journeyed from Pennsylvania and Maryland to aid Preston County residents.

During his visit, Bishop Brennan highlighted the significance of their work in bringing faith to life. He urged the volunteers to "recognize the face of Jesus" in those they would be helping during the week.

The evening welcome closed with a spirited sing-along of "Take Me Home, Country Roads," echoing through the church with laughter and love — a fitting anthem for a program rooted in West Virginia's heart and soul.

The initiative began in the aftermath of the flood of 1985, when seven young girls, moved by images of devastation in Rowlesburg and Albright, chose action over donations. Their compassion sparked a movement that has grown into a 39-year legacy of service.

"Listening to volunteers share how parents inspire



Courtesy photo
A roof is replaced on a home in Masontown by volunteers during the 2025 Summer Home Repair Program.

their children or how friends influence each other to join the Summer Home Repair Program is truly inspiring," Father Athishu said. "It shows how a small spark can grow into a wildfire, and a ripple can turn into a tsunami."

As this summer comes to a close, what remains is more than repaired homes — it's the enduring legacy



Courtesy photo
Volunteers build a porch on a home in Kingwood during the 2025 Summer Home Repair Program.

of compassion, community, and the belief that love, when put to work, can rebuild more than walls.

Applications for the 2026 summer will be available for the program beginning in February at several locations throughout Preston County.

Any questions regarding the Summer Home Repair Program can be directed to

the program office at (304) 329-7318 or by email at summerhomerepairccp@gmail.com.

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Wheeling University Sees Increased Enrollment to Start New Academic Year

WHEELING — Wheeling University welcomed the second largest class in the past decade to campus on Friday, Aug. 22. The class includes more than 300 new students.

The university begins the 2025-2026 academic year with a nearly 10 percent jump in total enrollment. The new students have come to Wheeling from 30 states or U.S. territories, as well as 40 countries around the world.

Jennifer Board, vice president of Enrollment, believes working with faculty, coaches, and administration has been the key to the admission team's success this year.

"The growth of the university can be directly tied to our energetic president and Board of Trustees, as well as our dedicated faculty, staff, and coaches," Board said.

Wheeling's incoming class once again includes a large number of in-

ternational students. Board noted that this year 58 students have made their way to the university from the following countries: Argentina, the Bahamas, Belgium, Bermuda, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Columbia, the Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, England, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Luxembourg, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Northern Ireland, Panama, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Venezuela, Wales, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Wheeling University President, Dianna M. Vargo, Ed.D., offered her gratitude to the faculty, staff, and administration for their hard work in recruiting our new class.

"We can attribute the growth in enrollment to our dedicated faculty, coaches, staff, and administra-

tion who worked with the Office of Enrollment," Vargo said. "We are excited to welcome our new students on the beautiful campus of Wheeling University."

During Friday evening's New Student Convocation, faculty and administration formally accepted the class into the university's learning community. The convocation marks the start of the Wheeling University academic year.

On Saturday, all new students participated in the university's annual Make a Difference Day, where the new students undertake service projects around the campus and throughout the city of Wheeling. The students worked at various locations around Wheeling and on Wheeling's campus.

"Make a Difference Day introduces our new students to the university's mission to be men and women in service to others. This an-

nual tradition helps them understand the impact that serving others can make in the lives of others in our community," said Michael Geibel, dean of Student Affairs.

Additionally, this year, faculty and staff participated in service projects on campus and throughout Wheeling.

Vargo said, "On Wednesday, our faculty and staff embodied the spirit of the mission of Wheeling University, the spirit built on service to others, in honor of Father James O'Brien, S.J. We will carry forth this spirit of service to our students throughout the academic year."

Students and faculty will notice upgrades including a new state-of-the-art computer lab and other classrooms as well.

The university began classes on Monday, Aug. 25.

Six West Virginia Catholic School Eighth Graders Win 'Golden Horseshoe' Award

Since 1931, more than 15,000 West Virginia students have received the Golden Horseshoe Award in recognition of their knowledge of West Virginia history. Each year, thousands of eighth graders across the state take the Golden Horseshoe examination in March, and more than two hundred are inducted into the prestigious Golden Horseshoe Society. The top scorers in each county are selected as Golden Horseshoe winners.

In 1716, Alexander Spotswood, lieutenant governor of Virginia, led an expedition across the Blue Ridge Mountains into the Shenandoah Valley to promote settlement of western Virginia. Upon returning across the mountains, Spotswood presented a golden horseshoe to each member of the party.

Six Catholic school eighth grade students are among this year's winners. Their names, schools, and West Virginia Studies teachers are as follows: John Fernald, St. Francis de Sales School, Beckley (Jenna Milam); Henry Hilton, Saint Joseph School, Martinsburg (Kathleen Landry); Eian Chartier, Madonna High School, Weirton (Father Bill Matheny); Charlotte Wetzel, Corpus Christi School, Wheeling (Debra Grall); Grace Przybysz, St. Michael Parish School, Wheeling (Ashly Orzelek); and Isabella Al Khouri, St. Vincent de Paul Parish School, Wheeling (Derek Dimmey).



Courtesy photo

Four of the six Golden Horseshoe winners from diocesan Catholic schools come from the northern panhandle. They are (left to right): Charlotte Wetzel, Corpus Christi School in Wheeling; Isabella Al Khouri, St. Vincent de Paul Parish School in Wheeling; Grace Przybysz, St. Michael Parish School in Wheeling; and Eian Chartier, Madonna High School in Weirton. Three of Ohio County's four winners came from Catholic schools.

The knighting of the new members of the West Virginia Culture and History Center in Charleston on June 10.



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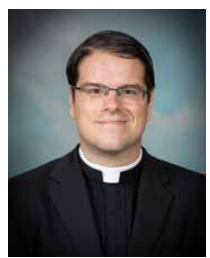
Mount St. Mary's Seminary (16300 Old Emmitsburg Rd., Emmitsburg, MD 21727)



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Third Theology



Andrew Dean
Birthday: Nov. 14
First Philosophy



Nathan Schmidt
Birthday: Jan. 20
Second Theology

Pope St. John Paul II Seminary (145 Taylor St. NE, Washington, DC 20017)



Dominick Beckman
Birthday: Dec. 10
Propaedeutic Year



Thomas Lough
Birthday: July 23
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Christopher Nelson
Birthday: Dec. 4
Second College

Pontifical North American College (00120 Vatican City State Europe)



Joseph Derico
Birthday: Feb. 16
First Theology



Michael J. Tupta
Birthday: Apr. 24
Second Theology

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Weirton, WV 26062



Bryan Tedeschi
Birthday: Oct. 17
St. Vincent de Paul
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Eucharist and Charity: The Traits That Unite Pope Leo's First Saints

By **Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service**

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Leo XIV will preside over his first canonization Mass Sept. 7, declaring the sainthood of two young Italians whose devotion to the Eucharist nourished a deep involvement in the cultures of their day.

Pier Giorgio Frassati was born April 6, 1901, in Turin and died there July 4, 1925, of polio at the age of 24. Carlo Acutis was born to Italian parents May 3, 1991, in London and died in Monza, Italy, Oct. 12, 2006, of leukemia at the age of 15.

Pope Francis had been scheduled to canonize Blessed Acutis in April during the Jubilee of Adolescents and to canonize Blessed Frassati in early August during the Jubilee of Young Adults.

While Christine Wohar, founder and executive director of FrassatiUSA, initially was disappointed that the canonizations were delayed, she told Catholic News Service that Pope Leo declaring them saints at a Mass apart from the jubilees also sends a message.

Their lives “are not really a message for just teenagers or young adults. They are a message for every Catholic,” she said. “You do not have to be 15 or 24, you just have to be somebody who is serious about living your Catholic faith.”

For Father Primo Soldi, a Turin priest and author of a biography of Frassati, the two young men are united by “a deep faith firmly tied to real life who arrived at the perfection of Gospel living, that is, they lived faith, hope and charity and the other cardinal virtues in a heroic way.”

“Just think about how both of them lived the ordeal of their illnesses and death — like saints:



Pilgrims enter the Shrine of the Renunciation, where Blessed Carlo Acutis is buried, in Assisi, Italy, Aug. 21. Acutis who died in 2006, will be canonized Sept. 7 at the Vatican by Pope Leo XIV. CNS photo/Lola Gomez

Carlo with the joy and faith with which he faced his treatment and Pier Giorgio with the patience with which he endured the agony of those few days” between the onset of symptoms and his death, Father Soldi told CNS.

Frassati and Acutis both had a deep devotion to the Eucharist and went to Mass every day.

In 1905, just four years after Frassati was born, St. Pius X published the decree “Sacra Tridentina Synodus,” encouraging frequent,

even daily reception of the sacrament at a time when many Catholics received only a few times a year.

One of his Jesuit high school teachers encouraged him to go to Mass each day, receive the Eucharist and spend time in adoration.

For Frassati, Father Soldi said, it was not simply Eucharistic devotion but the entryway into a real relationship with Jesus and, as Frassati himself said, one that became the nourishment he relied on as he

helped the poor, discerned the path of his life and became involved in politics and the struggle against the growth of fascism in Italy.

The same could be said for Acutis, who is well known for the database on global Eucharistic miracles he compiled as a young tech-savvy student.

Cardinal Agostino Vallini, Pope Francis’ delegate at Acutis’ beatification in 2000, said the young **See “Eucharist” on Page 7**



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Eucharist ...

Cont'd from Page 6
 man's strength came from "having a personal, intimate and deep relationship with Jesus," one in which the Eucharist was "the loftiest moment."

Acutis "never withdrew into himself but was able to understand the needs of people, in whom he saw the face of Christ," the cardinal said at his beatification. His was "a luminous life offered completely to others as Eucharistic bread."

Prayer and service to others went hand in hand for both Frassati and Acutis. Both also endured teasing and misunderstanding because of their devotion but gently

challenged their peers to embrace faith.

Living a little bit longer and in the tumultuous period between World War I and the rise of fascism in Italy, Frassati had more time to prepare for his vocation — he wanted to be a mining engineer and work with miners, who were among the poorest workers in the region.

He was born when Pope Leo XIII was pope and he studied "Rerum Novarum," the encyclical published in 1891 that launched Catholic social teaching and focused particularly on the rights of poor workers. And Frassati joined the Italian Popular Party, founded by

Father Luigi Sturzo and based on Catholic social principles.

"What gave him a humanity that was so rich, alive, complete, full and happy ultimately was Jesus," Carlo Tabellini, a 38-year-old lawyer in Turin and member of the Pier Giorgio Frassati Cultural Center, told CNS.



When Pope Leo XIV celebrated Mass with a million people attending the Jubilee of Young Adults Aug. 3, he urged them to follow Jesus and do something great with their lives, improving themselves and the world.

"Let us remain united to him, let us remain in his

friendship, always, cultivating it through prayer, adoration, Eucharistic Communion, frequent confession and generous charity following the examples of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati and Blessed Carlo Acutis who will soon be declared saints," the pope said.

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Law Enforcement Officials Arrest Alabama Man after Alleged Threats to California Church

(OSV News) — Law enforcement officials arrested an Alabama man after he allegedly made criminal threats against an Orange County, California, church, and a cache of ammunition and body armor was found in his vehicle, authorities said Sept. 2.

The Orange County Sheriff's Department said its investigators were contacted Aug. 28 by a priest "regarding suspicious, threatening emails" sent to St. Michael's Abbey in Silverado Canyon. They said the suspect, Joshua Michael Richardson, 38, an Alabama resident, "first sent emails that were interpreted as threatening," before visiting the church "in person and made additional threats."

Jarryd Gonzales, head of communications for the Catholic Diocese of Orange, said in a statement provided to OSV News, "The Diocese of Orange has been made aware of a threat directed toward St. Michael's Abbey. Local law enforcement responded swiftly, and a suspect has been apprehended. We are grateful to the authorities for their quick action in ensuring the safety of our parish community."

"In today's environment of increased threats against churches, and particularly mindful of recent events in Minnesota, our parishes and schools continue to strengthen security efforts and remain vigilant to help protect our

parishioners, students and staff," Gonzales added.

St. Michael's Abbey is a Norbertine Catholic monastery. The priests and seminarians live a monastic life at the abbey but also have apostolic ministries at schools, parishes and prisons in Southern California.

The Orange County Sheriff's Department said its investigators and deputies "quickly located and detained Richardson for criminal threats," and that they subsequently found body armor, high-capacity magazines, brass knuckles, and knives after searching his vehicle. They said he was arrested and booked into the Orange County Jail.

"While incidents like this can feel unsettling, they also highlight the power of community," the statement said. "If something seems off, say something. Trust your instincts and report suspicious activity, whether it is a strange message, unusual behavior, or something that does not sit right. Your call could stop a crime before it happens."

The sheriff's office said their investigation is ongoing. And urged anyone with information about the incidents to contact them at (714) 647-7000, or to submit information anonymously to Orange County Crime Stoppers at 1-855-TIP-OCCS or OCsheriff.gov/OCCrimeStoppers.

Fletcher Loved His Family, Harper Was a 'Joyful' Big Sister: Annunciation Shooting Victims Mourned

(OSV News) — Eight-year-old Fletcher Merkel "loved his family, friends, fishing, cooking and any sport that he was allowed to play." Ten-year-old Harper Moyski was a "joyful" big sister, who was "bright" and "deeply loved."

The parents of both children confirmed as victims of the Aug. 27 shooting at Annunciation Catholic Church issued their first statements in the aftermath, mourning the loss of their children.

Jesse Merkel, Fletcher's father, said the hole left in his family's hearts by his son's death will never be filled, during an Aug. 28 press conference outside Annunciation School in Minneapolis.

In his remarks, Jesse Merkel said they would never be allowed to "watch him grow into the wonderful young man he was on the path to becoming."

He also noted prayers for the family of Harper Moyski and of the other people affected by the shooting, and expressed gratitude for "the swift and heroic actions of children and adults alike" inside the church.

"We ask not for your sympathy, but your empathy as our family and our Annunciation community

grieve and try to make sense of such a senseless act of violence," Merkel said. "Please remember Fletcher for the person he was, and not the act that ended his life."

Harper was a "bright, joyful, and deeply loved 10-year-old whose laughter, kindness, and spirit touched everyone," her parents, Michael Moyski and Jackie Flavin, said in a statement issued Aug. 28.

"Our hearts are broken not only as parents, but also for Harper's sister, who adored her big sister and is grieving an unimaginable loss. As a family, we are shattered," they said.

"While our immediate focus is on Harper and our family's healing, we also believe it is important that her memory fuels action. No family should ever have to endure this kind of pain. We urge our leaders and communities to take meaningful steps to address gun violence and the mental health crisis in this country," they continued.

"Harper's light will always shine through us, and we hope her memory inspires others to work toward a safer, more compassionate



OSV News photo/courtesy Moyski-Flavin and Merkel family
Harper Moyski, 10, and Fletcher Merkel, 8, killed Aug. 27 in a shooting during a school Mass at Annunciation Catholic Church in Minneapolis, Minn., are pictured in this undated photo.

world."

Choking back tears, Fletcher's father pleaded: "Give your kids an extra hug and kiss today."

He said, "We love you, Fletcher, and you'll always be with us."

(The Catholic Community Foundation of Minnesota has es-

tablished The Annunciation Hope and Healing Fund to provide financial support for the needs of the church and school and to provide support to those affected by the tragedy. Donate online at <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZM37/campaign/C-1619X>

Pope's Prayer for September: Respecting, Protecting God's Creation

By **Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service**

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Participating in the ecumenical Season of Creation, Pope Leo XIV's prayer intention for the month of September is "for our relationship with all of creation."

In his monthly video, distributed Sept. 2 by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, Pope Leo prays to God: "Help us to discover your presence in all creation, so that, in fully recognizing it, we may feel and know ourselves to be responsible for this common home where you invite us to care for, respect and protect life in all its forms and possibilities."

The Season of Creation, a time of Christian prayer and commitment to safeguarding the earth, runs from Sept. 1 through the Oct. 4 feast of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of ecology.

After reciting the Angelus prayer Aug. 31, Pope Leo called on Catholics to join him in marking the Sept. 1 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation.

He told people gathered for the Angelus prayer that Pope Francis had established the day of prayer for Catholics, accepting an invitation Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople had made to all Christians. The Orthodox Church began the observance in 1989, including ecological responsibility in their Sept. 1 liturgical feast of creation, which ponders the mystery of God creating all things.

Marking the day of prayer "is more important and urgent than ever," Pope Leo said, adding that the theme, "Seeds of Peace and Hope" will be contemplated throughout the Season of Creation.

In the spirit of the Canticle of Creation, which St. Francis of Assisi "composed 800 years ago, we praise God and renew our commitment not to



CNS photo/screen grab, Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network) **Pope Leo XIV, recording a video in the Villa Barberini at Castel Gandolfo, Italy, recites a prayer asking God to help people discover his presence in creation. The video was released Sept. 2 by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network.**

ruin his gift but to care for our common home," the pope had said after the Angelus.

In the video released by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, Pope Leo recites his own prayer linking the 800th of the Canticle of Creation and the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si", on Care for Our Common Home," the network said.

Pope Leo prays in the video: "Lord, you love everything you have created,

and nothing exists outside the mystery of your tenderness.

Every creature, no matter how small, is the fruit of your love and has a place in this world.

"Even the simplest or shortest life is surrounded by your care.

Like St. Francis of Assisi, today we too want to say:

'Praised be you, my Lord!'"

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Dates	Locations
August 16, 2025	St. Michael Parish Angelus Center, Wheeling
August 23, 2025	St. Francis Xavier Parish Center, Parkersburg
September 6, 2025	Blessed Sacrament Parish Hall, S. Charleston
September 13, 2025	St. Francis de Sales Parish Hall, Beckley
September 20, 2025	St. Leo Parish Hall, Inwood
September 27, 2025	All Saints Parish Hall, Bridgeport

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DIocese of WHEELING-CHARLESTON

Make your pledge! Rosary Crusade for Vocations May 13, 2025 to May 13, 2026

The Rosary - a perfect devotional tool for an increase in Catholic vocations join us in prayer.

Pledge to say Rosaries for vocations in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston between May 13, 2025, to May 13, 2026. Let's go all out for Jesus and the Church!

Remember each priest, consecrated person, deacon, and catechist; marriage in our grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers, mothers, fathers, children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and all those who are called to the priesthood, religious life, and the diaconate.

Prayer

Oh, my Jesus, listen to my prayer today more men, and more women, in West Virginia to say yes to your call to be religious brothers, and my family, and my Church family, so we can support them, and women close to you. We ask Blessed Mary, in our need to hold up the Church in the great Mountain State. Amen.

Rosary Pledge Counter 1,137

From May 13, 2025, to May 13, 2026, faithful around the world can join our Rosary Crusade for Vocations in WV. PRAYER WORKS! Step up for Jesus and His Church! **Pledge. Share. Pray.**

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 • Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart
 1032 Virginia Street East, Charleston
 • St. Patrick Church 210 Center Avenue, Weston
 • St. Joseph Parish 225 S. Queen Street, Martinsburg

Through December 28, 2025, Catholics are invited to visit any and all of these locations to obtain a Plenary Indulgence by completing:

- **Reverent Prayer** (at site): Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Liturgy of the Hours, or Mass.
- **Confession** - within 20 days before or after pilgrimage.
- **Holy Communion**
- **Pray for the Pope**

For information and updates go to: dwc.org/jubilee-year-2025

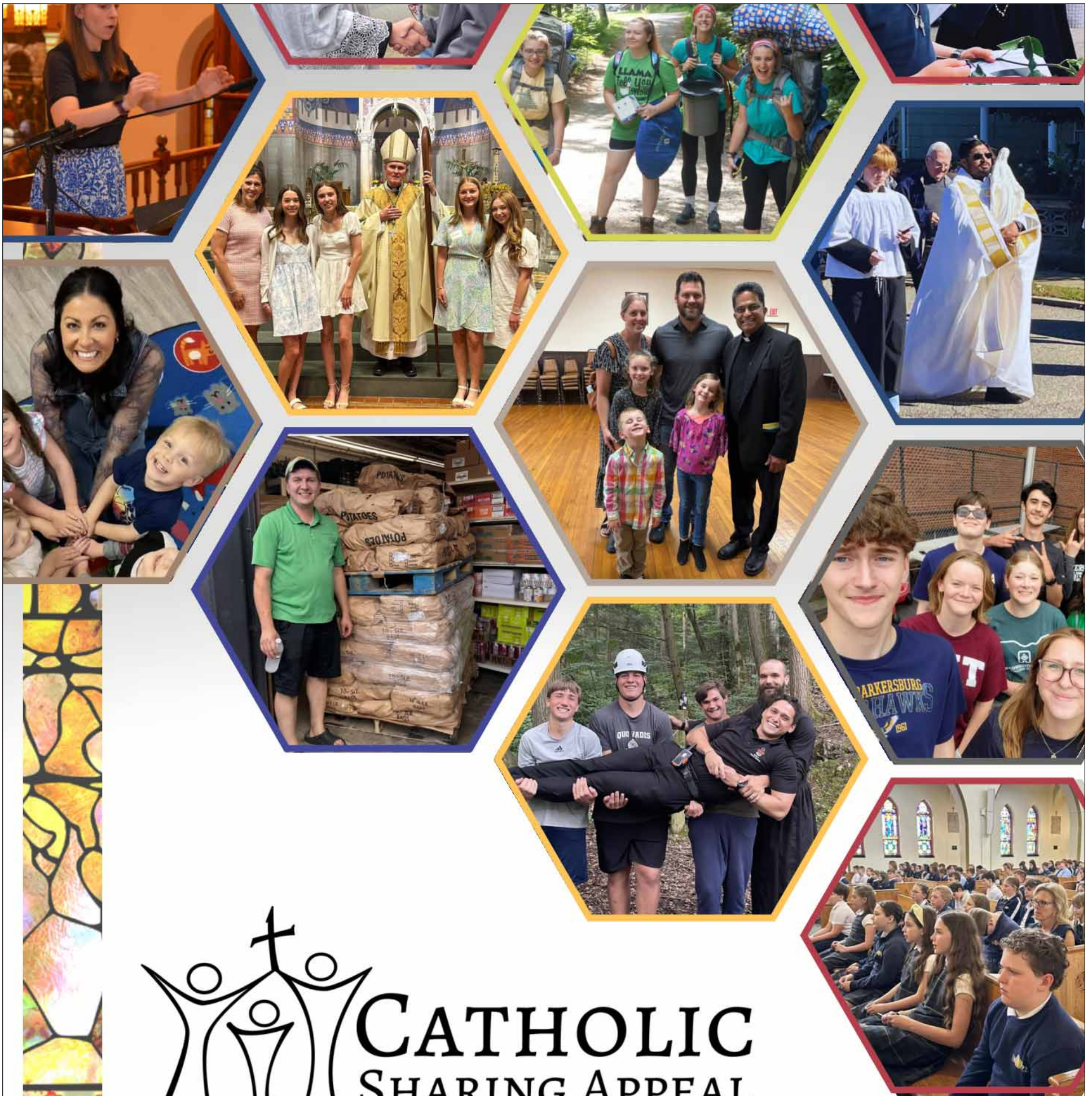
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2025-2026 Theme is Set in the Hearts of the Students at St. Joseph the Worker Grade School



Courtesy photo

From the top of a 30-foot rock wall, Father Dennis Schuelkens waves to students at St. Joseph the Worker Grade School in Weirton on the first day of school.

During the homily at the first Mass of the year for St. Joseph the Worker Grade School in Weirton, Father Dennis Schuelkens exclaimed that “this year, we will climb a mountain, one step at a time!” “We think and pray every step of the way!”

The scripture reference is Psalm 121 verses 1 and 2: “My eyes look to the mountains. From where shall come my help? My help shall come from the Lord, who made heaven on earth.”

Father Schuelkens encouraged the students to be aware of their fears and face them. He went on to say that “God gives us the courage, the strength from within, to do what we might be afraid to do. Whether that involves studies, sports, social interactions, anything that might hold us back, if we turn to God, the Holy Spirit will give us the strength to move forward and do what we need to do!”

Following Mass the students were surprised to find a 30-foot rock wall awaiting them in the parking lot as they exited from the side door. With the crowd’s support and encouragement, Father Schuelkens climbed to the top of “the mountain” and led the students in a cheer involving the theme. For the next two hours, students had the opportunity to “climb the mountain one step at a time” embedding in their hearts and minds the importance of the school’s 2025-2026 theme.

Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Confirmation Schedule, Fall 2025 Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

Sunday, Sept. 28: St. James the Apostle Parish, Clarksburg, 11 a.m.

Thursday, Oct. 9: St. Anthony Parish, Fairmont, 6 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 18: St. Anthony Parish, Charleston, 5 p.m.

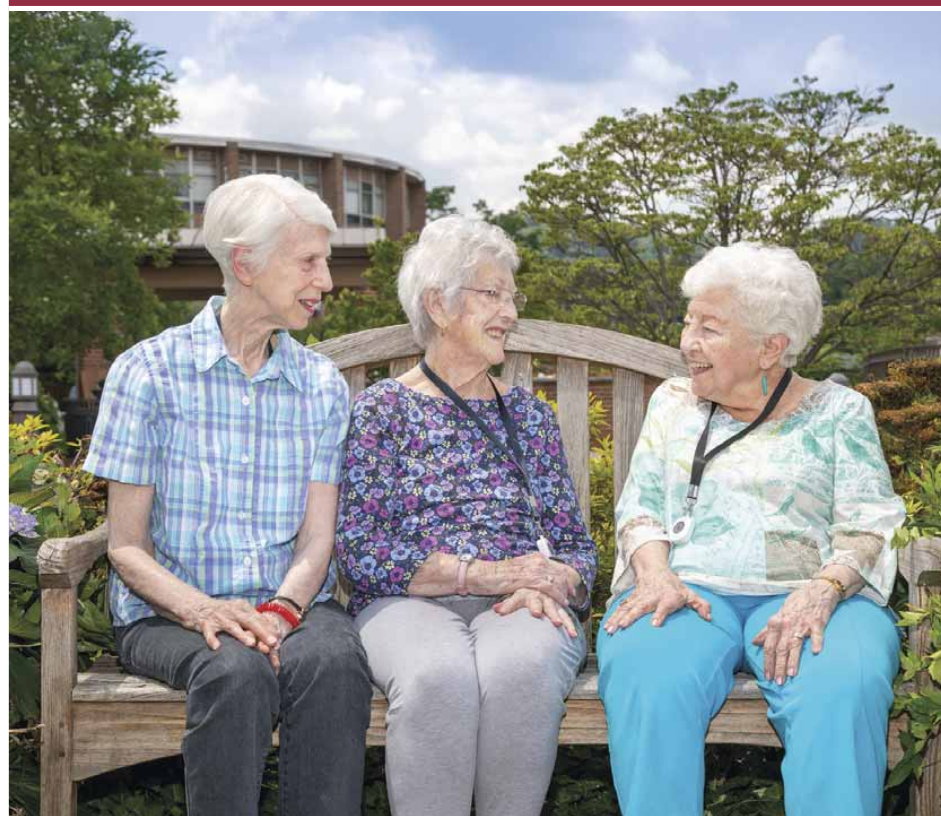
Sunday, Oct. 19: Sacred Heart Parish, Huntington, 9 a.m.

Saturday, Nov. 15: St. Francis Xavier Parish, Parkersburg, 5 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 18: St. Patrick Mission, Bancroft, 6 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 6: St. Anthony Parish, Follansbee, 4 p.m.

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6:30 WOAY ABC 4	Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)
9:30 WVVA NBC 6	Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)
9:30 DC News Now	Hagerstown-Washington D.C.

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

Oración del Papa para septiembre: Respetar y proteger la creación de Dios

Por Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) -- Participando en el Tiempo Ecu­ménico de la Creación, la intención de oración del Papa León XIV para el mes de septiembre es "por nuestra relación con toda la creación".

En su video mensual, distribuido el 2 de septiembre por la Red Mundial de Oración del Papa, el Papa León reza a Dios: "Ayúdanos a descubrir Tu presencia en todo lo creado, para que, enteramente reconociéndola, podamos sentirnos y sabernos responsables de esta casa común donde nos invitas a cuidar, respetar y proteger la vida en todas sus formas y posibilidades".

El Tiempo de la Creación, una temporada de oración cristiana y compromiso con la protección de la Tierra, se extiende del 1 de septiembre al 4 de octubre, el día en que la Iglesia celebra a San Francisco de Asís, patrono de la ecología.

Tras rezar el Ángelus el 31 de agosto, el Papa León invitó a los católicos a unirse a él para conmemorar la Jornada Mundial de Oración por el Cuidado de la Creación, que se celebra el 1 de septiembre.

Informó a los asistentes al rezo del Ángelus que el Papa Francisco había establecido el día de oración para los católicos, acogiendo la invitación que el Patriarca Ecu­ménico Ortodoxo Bartolomé de Constantinopla había hecho a todos los cristianos. La Iglesia Ortodoxa inició esta celebración en 1989, incluyendo la responsabilidad ecológica en su fiesta litúrgica de la creación, el 1 de septiembre, que re-

flexiona sobre el misterio de Dios, creador de todas las cosas.

Celebrar el día de oración "es más importante y urgente que nunca", dijo el Papa León, añadiendo que el tema, "Semillas de Paz y Esperanza", se contemplará durante todo el Tiempo de la Creación.

En el espíritu del Cántico de la Creación, que San Francisco de Asís compuso "hace 800 años, alabamos a Dios y renovamos nuestro compromiso de no estropear su don, sino de cuidar nuestra casa común", dijo el Papa después del Ángelus.

En el video publicado por la Red Mundial de Oración del Papa, el Papa León recita su propia oración, uniendo el 800.º aniversario del Cántico de la Creación y el décimo aniversario de la encíclica "Laudato Si" del Papa Francisco sobre el Cuidado de la Casa Común, según informó la red.

El Papa León reza en el video:

Señor, Tú amas todo lo que has creado,
y nada existe fuera del misterio de Tu ternura.

Cada criatura, por pequeña que sea,
es fruto de tu amor y tiene un lugar en este mundo.

Incluso la vida más breve o sencilla es rodeada por tu cariño.

Como San Francisco de Asís, hoy también queremos decir:

"¡Alabado seas, mi Señor!"

Padres lloran la muerte de sus hijos en el tiroteo de la escuela Annunciation: Fletcher amaba a su familia, Harper era una hermana mayor 'alegre'

(OSV News) -- A Fletcher Merkel, de ocho años, "le encantaba su familia, sus amigos, pescar, cocinar y cualquier deporte que se le permitiera practicar". Harper Moyski, de diez años, era una hermana mayor "alegre", "brillante" y "profundamente querida".

Los padres de los dos niños confirmados como víctimas del tiroteo del 27 de agosto en la Iglesia Católica de la Anunciación emitieron sus primeras declaraciones tras el suceso, lamentando la pérdida de sus hijos.??

Jesse Merkel, padre de Fletcher, dijo que el vacío que la muerte de su hijo ha dejado en el corazón de su familia nunca se llenará, durante una rueda de prensa celebrada el 28 de agosto en el exterior de la escuela Annunciation Catholic School de Minneapolis.

En sus declaraciones, Jesse Merkel dijo que nunca podrán "verle crecer hasta convertirse en el maravilloso joven en el que iba camino de convertirse".

También pidió oraciones por la familia de Harper Moyski y por las demás personas afectadas por el tiro-

teo, y expresó su gratitud por "las rápidas y heroicas acciones de niños y adultos por igual" dentro de la iglesia.

"No les pedimos su compasión, sino su empatía mientras nuestra familia y nuestra comunidad de la Anunciación lloran y tratan de dar sentido a un acto de violencia sin sentido", dijo Merkel. "Por favor, recuerden a Fletcher por la persona que era, y no por el acto que acabó con su vida".

Harper era una niña de 10 años "brillante, alegre y profundamente querida, cuya risa, amabilidad y espíritu conmovían a todo el mundo", dijeron sus padres, Michael Moyski y Jackie Flavin, en un comunicado emitido el 28 de agosto.

"Nuestros corazones están rotos no sólo como padres, sino también por la hermana de Harper, que adoraba a su hermana mayor y está sufriendo una pérdida inimaginable. Como familia, estamos destrozados", dijeron.

"Aunque nuestra atención inmediata se centra en

Harper y en la curación de nuestra familia, también creemos que es importante que su memoria alimente la acción. Ninguna familia debería tener que soportar este tipo de dolor. Instamos a nuestros líderes y comunidades a tomar medidas significativas para abordar la violencia armada y la crisis de salud mental en este país", continuaron.

"La luz de Harper siempre brillará a través de nosotros, y esperamos que su recuerdo inspire a otros a trabajar por un mundo más seguro y compasivo".

Ahogando las lágrimas, el padre de Fletcher suplicó: "Denles a sus hijos un abrazo y un beso extra hoy".

Y añadió: "Te queremos, Fletcher, y siempre estarás con nosotros".

La Catholic Community Foundation of Minnesota ha creado el Fondo de Esperanza y Sanación de la Anunciación para brindar apoyo financiero a la iglesia y la escuela, así como a los afectados por la tragedia. Done en línea aquí: <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZM37/campaign/C-1619X>

Para denunciar presuntos casos de abuso sexual de menores:

La diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston te exhorta a denunciar cualquier delito ante las autoridades civiles. Para realizar una denuncia en contra de cualquier obispo en todos los Estados Unidos, favor de reportarlo en la página web www.repostbishopabuse.org. Y si, además, existen motivos para creer que un obispo ha cometido alguna conducta sexual inapropiada favor de comunicarse con las autoridades civiles de la jurisdicción correspondiente y también puede realizar un reporte en la página web antes mencionada.

Para informar a las autoridades civiles: comuníquese con la policía local; los números varían según su ubicación.

Si considera que alguien está en peligro inmediato, favor de llamar al 911.

Para informar de forma confidencial sobre cualquier sospecha de abuso o negligencia infantil, incluido el abuso sexual, favor de comunicarse con la Oficina de Servicios de Protección Infantil de Niños y Familias de West Virginia, llamando a la línea directa de abuso infantil al 1-800.352.6513.

Para informar a las autoridades diocesanas: La diócesis exhorta a informar primeramente a las autoridades civiles correspondientes, cuando la denuncia incluye un delito, y también alienta a informar a las autoridades eclesásticas correspondientes. Para reportar casos sospechosos de abuso sexual de menores por parte del personal de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston, comuníquese directamente con la diócesis a los teléfonos 1.888.434.6237 o 304.233.0880 para hablar con cualquiera de las siguientes personas asignadas: Sr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Sr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; y si desea hablar en español con Sor Martha Gómez, ext. 264. También puede llamar a la Oficina de Am-

biente Seguro de la diócesis al 304.230.1504 o a la línea directa de abuso sexual de la diócesis al 833.230.5656.

Los formularios de quejas están disponibles en línea en la página web www.dwc.org, favor de hacer clic en "Diócesis" en la barra de menú, luego en "Oficinas", en "Ambiente seguro" y en "Descargar archivos y formularios". El formulario se titula "Formulario de queja para denuncias de abuso sexual de menores". El formulario se puede enviar por correo en Estados Unidos a: Office of Safe Environment, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

Para informar al Coordinador de Asistencia a Víctimas de la Diócesis: Favor de llamar a Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, al 304.559.6742. Además de las vías mencionadas anteriormente para denunciar el abuso sexual, la diócesis se ha asociado con la compañía Navex Global que ofrece la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar cualquier inquietud adicional, como sospecha de mala conducta financiera, profesional y personal de un sacerdote, diacono, religioso, o empleado laico de la diócesis o cualquier parroquia o escuela católica en West Virginia. Puede acceder a la plataforma EthicsPoint a través de la página web www.dwc.org, en "Rendición de cuentas", luego "Informar mala conducta" o llamando al 844.723.8381.

EthicsPoint es una herramienta de denuncia confidencial y anónima, ellos se encargarán de transmitir su denuncia directamente a las autoridades civiles y a las autoridades diocesanas correspondientes, y lo más importante al denunciar a través de ellos, la identidad de la persona que denuncia está 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 a menores: 304-293-6400.

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Contact the Director, Gerri Wright at 304.342.0507 or gwright@dwc.org to schedule an interview or for more information.

Part-Time Preschool Aid, St. Michael Parish School, Wheeling

St. Michael Parish School is accepting applications for a part time PreSchool Aide.

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- Experience working with children in a classroom setting
- Strong communication skills
- Willingness to support the mission and values of a Catholic educational institution.

Interested individuals can apply via email to: Adrienne Manning at mrsmanning@smpswv.org and/or Sara Herron at mrsherron@smpswv.org

Send a resume with three references.

Middle School Mathematics Teacher, St. Michael Parish School, Wheeling

St. Michael Parish School is accepting applications for a full time Middle School Mathematics Teacher.

We seek a passionate and committed individual who will value the mission of a Catholic education and who can help nurture both the intellectual and spiritual

development of our students. Applicants should be committed to creating engaging and supportive learning experiences for our students across our middle school grade levels. A knowledge of teaching 5th grade math through Algebra 1 is essential.

Requirements: Bachelor's degree in edu-

cation or related field, valid teaching certification or be actively pursuing certification/licensure, experience working with children in a classroom setting, strong classroom management, communication skills and curriculum development skills, willingness to support the mission and values of a Catholic educational institution.

Interested individuals can apply via email to: Adrienne Manning at mrsmanning@smpswv.org and/or Sara Herron at mrsherron@smpswv.org Send a resume with three references.

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