

THE CATHOLIC  
*Spirit*

## Diocese's Catholic Schools Filled with Prayer

*Strengthening Hope, Leadership, and Numbers*

By Joyce Bibey

**WEST VIRGINIA**—The Department of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston reported that more families are choosing to send their children to West Virginia Catholic schools, where the focus is not only on academic excellence, but also the development of strong moral and ethical values in a faith-filled environment.

Superintendent Jennifer Hornyak shared that 75 percent (18 of the 24) of Catholic schools in the state saw an increase in enrollment from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025.

Overall, there are 4,706 students enrolled in West Virginia Catholic schools for this year up from 4,579 last year.

“Parents and grandparents are entrusting us with their children and teaming up with us to develop the whole child academically, socially, and spiritually for today’s world and tomorrow’s challenges.”

—*Superintendent Jennifer Hornyak*

“Parents and grandparents are entrusting us with their children and teaming up with us to develop the whole child academically, socially, and spiritually for today’s world and tomorrow’s challenges,” Hornyak said.

Of the 4,700-plus students in Catholic schools this year over 1,400 are receiving the state’s Hope Scholarship (a state-run ESA program that allows parents and families to

**See “Schools” on Page 3**



## Audience with the Holy Father

Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston seminarian Michael Tupta greets Pope Francis in the photo above. Tupta and his fellow seminarians from The North American College in Rome had an audience with the Holy Father on Aug. 25. Also pictured are David and Clare Swenson. David is the director of Liturgical Music at The Pontifical North American College. Courtesy photo

**Inside:** Boston Celtics Head Coach Joe Mazzulla Makes Virtual Visit to St. Patrick School in Weston, Page 3

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## Obituary—Sister Mary Diane Bushee, S.A.C.

God called Sr. Diane Bushee home at 6:30 p.m. on August 23, 2024. Sr. Diane left this world surrounded by those who loved her—including not only her religious Sisters, but family members, St. Mary's Medical Center employees, area ministers, and friends.

Sr. Diane was born on December 24, 1934, to the late Fred James Bushee and Erna Mae Marshall Bushee in Princeton. She was preceded in death by her siblings: Elois Marie McAfee, Mary Marcelyn Sadler, James Raymond Bushee, Dorothy Nadine Walda and Carol Eileen Gregory. She was the beloved aunt of her nieces and nephews.

Sr. Diane entered the Pallottine Missionary Sisters on July 16, 1953. She made her first profession on August 15, 1956, and her final profession on August 15, 1962, in Huntington. In 1959 she received her R.N. degree at St. Mary's School of Nursing. She continued her education receiving both her B.S.N. and M.S.N. degrees at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. She completed a three-year summer certificate program in Hospital Executive Development.

In Huntington, she was the Assistant Director of Nursing from 1961-1962 and served in Nursing Administration from 1964-1974. In 1974 she was asked to serve as Assistant Hospital Administrator and was elected to the Provincial Council until 1977. In 1977 she was elected as Provincial and left her beloved West Virginia to work from the Pallottine Renewal Center in Florissant, Missouri. In 1986-1987, she was consultant to the Provincial, served on the hospital boards in Huntington and Buckhannon, and St. Vincent Pallotti High School Board in

Laurel, Maryland. In 1970 she was one of many that mourned the loss of those killed in the Marshall plane crash—attending the memorials of doctors, board members, and friends. In 1972 she volunteered in Logan in the Buffalo Creek flooding and the slag dam collapses to help family members identify loved ones.

From 1990 until 2015, Sr. Diane became Senior Vice President that included being Director of Mission Integration for St. Mary's Medical Center and overseeing the Pastoral Care Department. She continued to serve on various boards including Pallottine Health Services. She was Diocesan Coordinator of Health Affairs (Wheeling-Charleston) and served on Unity Health Steering Committee. As a member of an international congregation, Sr. Diane was called to Rome, Italy, where she had an impact on the governmental structure of the Pallottine Missionary Sisters worldwide.

She will be remembered for her love of detail and meetings, and her infectious laugh. As Administrator in health care, she was vigilant to oversee the rights of patients and to ensure that the Catholic health care values for patients and employees were being met. How fitting that before Sister's death, she was able to help celebrate St. Mary's Medical Center's 100th Anniversary. Seventy of those years, Sr. Diane was involved in the direction that St. Mary's would take in the coming decades.

The funeral Mass was celebrated August 28 at St. Mary's Chapel in Huntington.

To send flowers to the family or plant a tree in memory of Sr. Mary, visit [www.regerfuneralhome.com](http://www.regerfuneralhome.com).



**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](http://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](http://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](http://www.dwc.org), under "Accountability." Complaint forms are available online at [www.dwc.org](http://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](http://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

### 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](http://www.dwc.org), click "Diocese", then "Offices," then "Office of Safe Environment."

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## The Catholic Spirit's Print Schedule for 2024

(Digital issues will continue to be published by date every Friday, delivered by e-mail and posted on [thecatholicspiritwv.org](http://thecatholicspiritwv.org))

This is the new print publication schedule for The Catholic Spirit. Each print issue is named for a memorial, feast day, or celebration of the Church within the month of publication. The following provides the name of the issue; the date of the memorial, feast day, or celebration; and the publication date of the issue.

**Our Lady of the Rosary**  
Memorial, October 7  
The Catholic Spirit publication date for this issue is October 4

**Advent**  
First Sunday of Advent, December 1

The Catholic Spirit publication date for this issue is November 22

**Christmas**  
Feast Day, December 25  
The Catholic Spirit publication date for this issue is December 20

# Daily Living

with Fr. Chapin

## Sunday Mornings

<b>6:30 WTOV FOX 9</b>	<b>Wheeling-Steubenville</b>
<b>7:30 WOWK CBS 13</b>	<b>Huntington-Charleston</b>
<b>8:00 WBOY NBC 12</b>	<b>Weston-Clarksburg-Fairmont</b>
<b>6:30 WOAY ABC 4</b>	<b>Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)</b>
<b>8:30 WVNS FOX 59</b>	<b>Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill (Lewisburg)</b>
<b>11:00 WDVM 25</b>	<b>Hagerstown-Washington D.C.</b>

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# Boston Celtics Head Coach Joe Mazzulla Makes Virtual Visit to St. Patrick School in Weston



Courtesy photo

Students at St. Patrick School in Weston listen to Boston Celtics Head Coach Joe Mazzulla in his virtual visit to the school Aug. 28.

**WESTON**—On Aug. 28, students at St. Patrick School in Weston were fortunate to speak to a West Virginia legend—Coach Joe Mazzulla, head coach of the Boston Celtics, through a virtual visit. Mazzulla is renowned for putting God first in his line of work. His unyielding Catholic faith and constant prayer has become a testament to his strength and growth in his professional basketball career and personal life.

Mazzulla made the virtual visit with students who gathered in the school gymnasium. They got to listen to him through Zoom on a jumbo screen. Mazzulla shared his wisdom with the students, whilst a select few were able to ask him questions.

“He left our school with lasting advice that your faith is stronger than any fear, to not aim for perfection or worldly goals, but to be who Jesus wants you to be—a good per-

son made perfect in His image,” school officials said. “We are grateful for coach’s time and for allowing our students to get to know an idol who is strong in his walk with God.”

Mazzulla also joined the students in a prayer led by Father Doug Ondeck, pastor of the school and St. Patrick Parish in Weston.

Before he became head coach of the Celtics, Mazzulla played basketball for West Virginia University and coached at both Glenville State University and Fairmont State University.

**At right, St. Patrick School eighth grader Conner Jordan asks Boston Celtics Head Coach Joe Mazzulla a question in his virtual visit to the school.**

Courtesy photo



## Schools...

**Cont’d from Page 1**  
utilize a portion of their state education funding to tailor an individualized learning experience – public school alternative – that works best for their individual child).

Hornyak reported while the state ESA program has

introduced more families to the possibility of a Catholic education, total enrollment has trended upward for the diocesan school system over the last five years with the largest jump post COVID year in 2021 (4,214 students in 2020-2021 and 4,415 students in 2021-2022). Hope Scholarship began for the

2023-2024 school year.

While the schools have been blessed with increasing enrollment, school administration and faculty remain true to the mission to be a blessing for families.

“Our focus is providing academic excellence in a safe and nurturing environment for our students, Hornyak

said and added, “However, it’s more than that for us. Our focus is also to develop strong moral and ethical values, as well as to guide our children through the highs and lows life brings – ultimately preparing them for a lifetime of strong virtuous decision making.”

Faith and prayer are in-

tentional realities in Catholic schools, where we seek to discover God in every part of life. More families are choosing our schools to support the character and integrity they want for their children.

Students in West Virginia Catholic schools that **See “Schools” on Page 4**

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**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2024**

Mass will be celebrated at 1:00 p.m. at the Chapel with the Most Reverend Mark Brennan (Bishop of the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese), Very Reverend John Rice (Vicar Forane), and Reverend Shinto Mathew (Pastor)

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# Celebrating 150 Years of Ministry in the U.S.

*Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity to Mark Anniversary with Mass and Gathering at Basilica Co-Cathedral in Charleston*

The Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity will celebrate their 150th anniversary of ministry in the U.S. on Sept. 7 in Charleston. Mass will be celebrated at 5:30 p.m. at the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. A reception will follow.

The public is invited to the celebration, which will be attended by Provincial Councilor, Sister Regina Snyder; and Sister Diane Bernbeck, Sister Maureen Harris, Sister Frances Kirtley, Sister Molly Maloney, and Sister Patricia McMahon.

The theme of the celebration is "Crossing the Threshold - Then and Now!" In 1874, women of courage, Mother Aloysia Lenders, and

Sisters Veronica Conradi, Felicitas Dues, and Leonarda Hannappel crossed a threshold; leaving Germany to sail to America, arriving in New York on June 5, 1874.

After establishing foundations in Buffalo, N.Y., and Columbus, Ohio, the Sisters of St. Francis were invited to teach at Sacred Heart School in Charleston. On Aug. 29, 1903, amid thunder, lightning and torrential rain, the first five Franciscan Sisters arrived at the Charleston station.

Their service in Sacred Heart Parish continued until 2000. Most notably, the sisters ministered at St. Anthony School and Parish from 1922-1975, and again from 1983-1990; as well as, Sacred Heart Ele-

mentary School (1903-1989), and Sacred Heart High School (1923-1941), then Charleston Catholic High School (1941-1992). In addition to teaching, they applied their gifts and talents to ministry in parishes, social work, pastoral care and spiritual direction.

Still residing in Charleston are Sister Molly and Sister Frances. Sister Molly is associate spiritual director and member of the West Virginia Institute of Spirituality faculty, where she offers individual and group spiritual direction, Ignatian silent directed retreats, and the 19th Annotation Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life. She is a certified supervisor for individuals offering group spiritual direction

programs and a supervisor intern for individuals offering individual spiritual direction and/or the 19th Annotation in Daily Life.

Sister Frances held a variety of positions at Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC) including her initial positions in nursing practice and education before she established the CAMC Pastoral Care Department in 1980 where she served as director until 1998. She then served as staff chaplain until her retirement. She now continues to serve at CAMC as a volunteer.

Those attending the reception are asked to confirm their attendance by calling Barbara Johnson at (716) 754-2193, or [bjohnson@stell](mailto:bjohnson@stell).

## Schools...

**Cont'd from Page 3**

are in 13 counties learn about the Church and the world around them in a "Christ-centered supportive learning culture so they feel more positive and confident," she said.

Weaving prayer into the classrooms, hallways, gymnasiums, and playgrounds, leads to prayer at home, community, and work.

"It is prayer that gives us balance and hope," Hornyak said.

As the Catholic Church around the world has celebrated the Year of Prayer in 2024, leading up to Pope Francis's 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope, the Catholic schools in West Virginia continue to celebrate the fact that it is prayer that unites and helps their students, faculty, staff, families, and volunteers be

more empathetic to and respectful of others.

"Our students can see, learn, and know they make a difference through their hard work, prayer, actions, and service," Hornyak said. "By teaching them in the classroom, at Mass, and through the Sacraments we are giving them the skills to reach their full potential, navigate the future, and empower others - that's leadership."


Want to "experience the power of God's hope... begin with prayer," said Pope Francis when he emphasized the Year of Prayer back in January.

Want to "have a partner to help guide your child morally, civically, and emotionally to be the best version of themselves... begin by contacting your local Catholic school," Hornyak said.



Courtesy photo

Students from Our Lady of Peace School in Wheeling are pictured with Bishop Mark Brennan at the Mass he celebrated for them at Our Lady of Peace Church Aug. 30

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# Morgantown Parish Hosting Presentation on Dangers of Physician-Assisted Suicide

**MORGANTOWN** — St. John University Parish and Covenant Global Methodist Church, both in Morgantown, have joined together to co-sponsor a presentation on the Dangers of Physician-Assisted Suicide.

Mary Hencke Tillman, J.D., legislative coordinator for the WV Alliance for Ethical Health Care, will be the speaker of the event which will be held at St. John's Social Hall on Tuesday, Sept. 17, from 7 to 8 p.m. The WV Alliance for Ethical Health Care is a subcommittee of West Virginians for Life (WVFL), which seeks to change laws and policies to protect the lives of elderly and disabled persons.

Following her talk, Tillman will engage in a question-and answer session. Light refreshments will follow the talk.

Tillman is a 1976 graduate of University of Maryland, College Park in Speech Pathology and a 1981 graduate of University of Maryland School of Law. She practiced law until the birth of her third child when she elected to stay home with her children, eventually homeschooling six. She has been active in the right to life movement for nearly three decades, first becoming involved in testifying against a liberal pro-abortion bill in Maryland. She has served on the board of Life Choice Pregnancy Resource Center in Clarksburg; as the

Mary Hencke Tillman, J.D., legislative coordinator for the WV Alliance for Ethical Health Care, will be the speaker at the presentation.

Courtesy photo



secretary for the Harrison County Chapter of WVFL; and as vice president for WVFL.

For more information about the WV Alliance for Ethical Health Care, visit its website at [CaringNotKilling.com](http://CaringNotKilling.com).

## Wheeling Priest Invites Faithful to Help Start the Catholics in Recovery Program for the Area

**By Father John Soplinski**

My name is Fr. John, and I am a recovering alcoholic. These words trip so easily out of my mouth after 7+ years of continuous sobriety. Initially, it was the most difficult thing to admit to myself—that I was powerless over alcohol. I am one of the fortunate; someone whose ears were opened, and who in desperation accepted the grace of God and the help of men and women who have recovered from addiction. We live in a state that is being devoured by alcohol and drug addiction, from young to old and at all ages in between. Children are losing parents, parents are

losing children, and even the well-intentioned work of experts in the field is leaving them exasperated and searching for new answers.

So, what can the Church do? As a supplement to the 12-step programs (which are the surest route to sustained recovery), and with their influence our Diocese is promoting Catholics in Recovery. It is open to all (you do not need to be Catholic to join, but it will be a Scripture based, Catholic program) who are seeking help with addiction, whether that be drug, alcohol, purity and lust issues, etc...The foundation of the program is in the Sacra-

ments of the Church and the use of Scripture for meditation and illumination. We are seeking to begin a regular meeting in the Wheeling area. As with all recovery branches, anonymity is essential. We are seeking any parishioners who would be interested in beginning a group. Please contact me directly at [jsoplinski@dwc.org](mailto:jsoplinski@dwc.org). Your information will not be shared with anyone outside of the group. This will be a collaborative effort, not a priest-led project. Anyone familiar with recovery groups such as AA knows that God is the leader of our project, and we as a group decide

how often and when we meet.

I greatly look forward to hearing from you. Please pray for all those who are

suffering from addiction and for those who are mourning its effects on the ones they love. May God Bless You!

## Cheat Lake Parish's Pastor Becomes U.S. Citizen



Courtesy photo

Father Biju T. Devassy, pastor of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Cheat Lake (left), became a U.S. citizen last month. He is pictured with parishioners and friends including Very Rev. Joseph Augustine, J.C.L., J.V., pastor of Our Lady of Peace Parish in Wheeling.



**Catholic  
in Recovery**

To start this ministry in your parish, contact:  
**Kathleen Barton, Director of Social Ministry**  
**Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston**  
**(304) 233-0880, Ext. 289; [kbarton@dwc.org](mailto:kbarton@dwc.org)**

Catholic in Recovery is a nonprofit organization that seeks to serve those suffering from addictions and unhealthy attachments.

# The Eucharist Can Recommit the Faithful to Care of Creation, Say Bishops

By **Gina Christian, OSV News**

**(OSV News)** — A “true Eucharistic experience” can recommit the faithful to the care of God’s creation, said two U.S. Catholic bishops in a joint message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation.

On Aug. 30, Archbishop Borys Gudziak of the Ukrainian Archeparchy of Philadelphia, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, and Bishop A. Elias Zaidan of the Maronite Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on International Justice and Peace, released a reflection on the centrality of the Eucharist in redeeming humankind and the creation with which it has been divinely entrusted.

The annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, which took place Sept. 1, was first proclaimed by the late Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I in 1989, coinciding with the start of the Orthodox liturgical year.

In 2015, Pope Francis instituted the observance in the Catholic Church, saying that it provided a “fitting opportunity” for Catholics “to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the won-

derful handiwork which he has entrusted to our care, and to implore his help for the protection of creation as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live.” In June, the pope announced the theme for this year’s day of prayer would be “Hope and Act with Creation.”

The World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation also marks the start of the “Season of Creation,” which concludes with the Oct. 4 feast of St. Francis of Assisi, whose “Canticle of the Sun” inspired the title and text of Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical “Laudato Si’: On Care for Our Common Home.”

The five-week celebration of a “Season of Creation” had first been proposed in 2007 at the Third European Ecumenical Assembly, with the World Council of Churches moving the following year to endorse the time of prayer and action for environmental stewardship. Following Pope Francis’ designation of the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, Catholics throughout the world have increasingly participated in the extended “Season of Creation” observance.

In the U.S., “the message of hope and care for creation resonates deeply with the Catholic community,” which

“continues to experience the joy” of the 10th National Eucharistic Congress held in Indianapolis in July, said Archbishop Gudziak and Bishop Zaidan in their message.

Drawing on the insights of both Pope Francis and Pope Benedict XVI, the two bishops shared their thoughts on “hope in the Lord in a scientific age” where “an almost spiritual hope in techno-scientific progress” can cause a drift from a reliance on “amazing grace to amazing gadgets.”

The bishops noted that in his 2007 encyclical “Spe Salvi” (“In hope we were saved”), Pope Benedict XVI identified a profound shift in thought during the early 17th century that replaced hope in Christ with “faith in progress.” Pope Francis underscored the dangers of this shift in “Laudato Si’,” which, as the bishops noted, highlights a “technocratic paradigm whereby the unchecked power of technology drives the progressive devastation of the planet.

“The damaged fruit of our technocratic endeavors, a spoiled planet, is a problem that algorithms, machines and technologies can never solve,” said Archbishop Gudziak and Bishop Zaidan. “If we are to be saved in hope, that hope must be in God.”

The bishops stressed that “we are not left to our own devices” in healing the ravages of environmental exploitation or the ravages of sin on the human condition as a whole, since “God is with us.”

Rebuilding a broken world “can only happen in continuity with the first edifice, which has Jesus Christ as the cornerstone, the rock that holds everything together,” said the bishops.

The Eucharist assures us that “Jesus chose to remain with us in a specific and concrete way, in his Body and Blood.”

For that reason, “it should be of no surprise that the poor man of Assisi (St. Francis) had a profound reverence and respect for the Body and Blood of the Lord,” said Archbishop Gudziak and Bishop Zaidan.

“The ‘root and source’ of St. Francis’ love for peace, poverty and care for creation was Jesus Christ,” they said, referencing the Second Vatican Council’s description of the Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian life.

“The care for creation is constitutive of the Christian life,” they said. “So let us go forth, with hope, to care for all of God’s creation.”

(Gina Christian is a multimedia reporter for OSV News.)

## National Eucharistic Congress Inc. Launches Society of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus

By **Maria Wiering, OSV News**

**(OSV News)** — The organization that coordinates efforts related to the National Eucharistic Revival announced Sept. 3 the launch of the Society of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus to boost revival efforts.

In an email to supporters, Jason Shanks, CEO of National Eucharistic Congress Inc., described the society as a way people “can help and remain closely connected to the many ongoing efforts of charity and evangelization, of pilgrimage and procession — of mission — to bring Christ to every corner of our nation.”

Joining the society requires a minimum \$10 monthly donation to National Eucharistic Congress Inc. Members will receive a copy of “For the Life of the World: Invited to Eucharistic Mission” by Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, who serves as board chairman of the National Eucharistic Congress Inc., and Tim Glemkowski, the founding CEO of National Eucharistic Congress Inc., who served in that role until Aug. 1.

Society members also receive access to the National Eucharistic Congress digital platform, which includes all of the talks from the July 17-21 National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, as well as additional Eucharist-related

content. Information on joining the society can be found at [www.eucharisticcongress.org/donate](http://www.eucharisticcongress.org/donate).

Shanks, who took the helm of National Eucharistic Congress Inc. Aug. 1 after serving as president of the OSV Institute for Catholic Innovation in Indiana, described the revival’s next phase as “off to an amazing, grace-led start,” and he encouraged society members to “use the talks from the Congress and the wisdom of Bishop Cozzens’ and Tim’s book to form your heart for mission.”

National Eucharistic Congress Inc. oversaw the planning and execution of this year’s National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and National Eucharistic Congress, two major components of the National Eucharistic Revival. A three-year initiative of the U.S. bishops, the revival launched in 2022 with the aim of deepening Catholics’ understanding of and love for Jesus in the Eucharist. The revival is now focusing on its Year of Mission, in which Catholics are encouraged to become “Eucharistic missionaries” who share the reality and impact of Jesus’ real presence in the Eucharist with others. This is especially realized through the revival’s “Walk with One” campaign, which asks Catholics to identify one person whom they can accompany on their faith journey and

deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ.

The National Eucharistic Congress Inc. nonprofit was formed in 2022 to support the bishops’ vision for the revival. Although the bishops’ revival initiative originally was set to formally end with the feast of Pentecost 2025, Shanks told OSV News in August that the organization’s work will continue beyond June and is expected to include future national Eucharistic congresses.

In the Sept. 3 email to supporters, Shanks described the revival’s goal as

“re-centering the life of the Catholic Church in America on Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament.”

“This is where every great Catholic saint and every great Catholic mission began, so it’s where we begin as well,” he wrote. “As we heard time and again at the Congress, He sustains us in the Most Blessed Sacrament as we set out on mission to love and serve Him by loving and serving those made in his image.”

(Maria Wiering is senior writer for OSV News.)

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# You Are Not Alone in Grief

## Bereavement Gathering Open to All on Last Monday of Each Month

By Colleen Rowan

Leading the Bereavement Gathering for the Greater Wheeling Area feels like a calling for Deacon Tom McFadden and his wife Michele. They know grief all too well. The couple suffered the unimaginable loss of their 18-year-old son 12 years ago and know that grieving is an ongoing process.

"You never get over a loss, but you try to get through it," Deacon McFadden said. "And without the element of having God in the process, I think it's impossible."

The McFaddens turned to local support groups but could not find one with a spiritual foundation and so, along with Deacon Doug Breiding, they formed the bereavement group at St. Alphonsus Parish in Wheeling in 2015. In time the gathering moved to the parish hall at St. John Parish in Benwood where it continues to be held from 6 to 7 p.m. on the last Monday of each month (dates are subject to change).

"It's a gathering where people don't have to feel like they're being judged," Deacon Breiding said. "They can be comfortable with full confidentiality to talk and we'll listen, or just feel a sense of comfort with people who are going through similar situations and circumstances."

There is no structured format to the group and there is nothing to make up or catch up on if one misses sessions.

"It's really a matter of whatever they want to share, how they're reacting

to the loss, how they are living their day-to-day with that loss," Deacon Breiding continued. "In some cases a matter of reflecting on: Where do they see God in all of this? In some cases they may not. There's no right answer, no wrong answer. It's just a matter of being able to be here, to be able to share that journey."

When someone loses a loved one, there is an immediate response from family and friends, Deacon McFadden said. Many of them will make visits, bring food, and offer comfort. However, as time moves on that response begins to fade and those grieving can feel alone.

"After our son passed away," Deacon McFadden said, "we had visitors. We had people bringing food and phone calls and everything. Then as time goes on, they got on with their life and they moved on. After the first week or so those that are grieving are kind of left in a void."

This is when the bereavement gathering can help, not just in that initial time after their loss but also for those who have been grieving for years.

"They feel like they're doing pretty good and then maybe an anniversary of a death or their wedding anniversary or a birthday comes up and then they get down in the dumps again," Michele said. "They come back and get comfort and know that there's other people going through the same thing. That they're not alone."

Making sure that group attendees know this is important to Michele, who

has given her personal phone number to many of them in case they need to talk outside of the group. She once took a phone call at 2 a.m., talking the person through the hard time for as long as it took.

Michele added that sometimes people don't want to come to the gathering by themselves, and that's ok. They can always bring a friend if that makes them more comfortable. There is no pressure to speak at the gatherings. One can merely sit and be in the presence of others. It is a Catholic ministry but there is no requirement to be of any religious denomination. The group opens and closes with prayer and prayerful resources are available for attendees to take home.

Deacon McFadden just wants anyone grieving a loss to come to the group and give the experience a chance. "Be open to support of others," he said. "They're not alone in this grief process. The Catholic Christian community is willing to reach out to them and try to help," he said.

Recalling their course in pastoral counseling, Deacon McFadden shared the words of their instructor, also a deacon: "You never solve problems for people in pastoral situations. You're leading them on to Jesus and his Holy Spirit, which is the ultimate comforter and healer."

And that is what Deacon McFadden and Michele and Deacon Breiding want to do through the bereave-



Colleen Rowan Photo  
At the Bereavement Gathering for the Greater Wheeling Area at St. John Parish Hall in Benwood are, from left, Deacon Tom McFadden and his wife Michele and Deacon Doug Breiding.

ment gathering. "It's just trying to guide people on a process that takes them toward healing. It might not be anything that one of the three of us might say. They might get something more out of something that someone else is sharing that helps them in their

grief and understanding," Deacon Breiding said.

For more information on the group, contact Deacon McFadden by calling (304) 830-2024 or by e-mail to [tmcfadden@dwc.org](mailto:tmcfadden@dwc.org) or Michele by calling (304) 280-5863 or by e-mail to [mrmcfadden@comcast.net](mailto:mrmcfadden@comcast.net).

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# Catechists: True Servants and Ministers of Our Church

By Daniel Maul, director of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston

Catechetical Sunday – the day on which the USCCB and the US Dioceses recognize, commend, commission, and bless our parish catechists, including parochial-school religion teachers – will be on September 15th. In our Diocese – according to latest parish reports – we have over five hundred (500) PSR catechists, religion teachers, and RCIA team members. Thanks be to God!

This year's theme is "Lord, when did we see you hungry? (Matthew 25:37)" When reading this passage, we probably think of physical hunger, which is, of course, widespread and calling for our rectifying, and perhaps we wonder how it connects with catechesis. We must remember – as our catechists do – that people are hungry for

Love (God), especially young people, and often don't even realize it. They don't need more pizza, fun, or entertainment. They need more spirituality, prayer, and connection with people of faith. Our wonderful catechists consistently provide our young people (and adults!) with these necessities, and, for doing this, we offer them our highest praise and thanks.

The etymological root of catechesis means, in English, "to echo." In catechesis, we strive to get the next generation of Catholics to hear, adopt, and share with others the Good News Message of Jesus Christ and His Church's Apostolic teachings. The message and teachings that our catechists "echo" are not their own. They belong to the Church, are from the Church, and build up and sustain the Church. The Holy Spirit accomplishes all of that. We are mere disciples of Jesus Christ, trying to carry out His Mis-

sion, by lovingly living His Truth, in humility and obedience. This is why we recognize our catechists as true servants and ministers of our Church: they entrust themselves to Jesus Christ, by meditating upon His Word, opening themselves to the Holy Spirit, and giving their time and energy to doing the Will of God, by teaching and forming God's people in the Catholic Christian faith.

These individuals do so much for our parishes and, thus, for our Church. In addition to explaining the faith to people, they also model the living and sharing of it. They are role models for our young people and inspiring examples to our adults. As such, they sometimes feel pressure to try to be Jesus Christ for them, despite their personal sin. In contrast, many of us maintain quite private faith lives: not speaking much about our Catholic faith, praying only privately, and



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Catechetical Sunday  
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even worshipping rather privately (arriving at, attending, and leaving Mass, having spoken to no one), and many people wouldn't even know that we're Catholic. This cannot be the case with our catechists. They often are seen by our young people at the grocery store or elsewhere in public and are known as the

"Church lady" or the "religion-class guy." They, effectively, are the representatives of our Church and, in many cases, they even represent God to our young people. We give them great gratitude and approbation for accepting this responsibility – one that the rest of us often struggle to take on.

## Knights of Columbus Asking for Support for Fall Meal Packing Event – Hope in Action

By Joyce Bibey

**HURRICANE**—Once again, the West Virginia Knights of Columbus will gather this Fall in the Charleston Vicariate to pack meals for children and families in the poorest of countries and areas of West Virginia. The event is part of the Cross Catholic Outreach (CCO) program that supports the Catholic religious, laity, and relief organizations serving the vulnerable in 30 countries. Additionally, the Knights of Columbus will be serving the poor at home.

However, organizers need your support up front to enable volunteers to prepare 60,000 meals, said Will Dempsey, who serves on the State Council of the Knights of Columbus, and is a member of the Hurricane Bishop Hodges Council #9483.

"In addition to the 125-plus volunteers we need to raise \$19,800," Dempsey said. "That money will cover the cost of the 60,000 meals at 33-cents a meal."

The Knight of Columbus in West Virginia have held two such events each year packing 40,000-120,000 meals, depending on the funds raised for the events.

Dempsey has been involved in a leadership role for the events since 2021, when he attended training in Maryland for CCO.

The purpose of the event is to provide hope for hungry children and families. Last year at the Fall event 49,032 meals were packed and sent to

poor and vulnerable families in the Dominican Republic. In addition to that 12,096 meals were given to West Virginia families.

The meals are Vitafood formulated with a blend of protein, vitamins, and nutrients to improve health. Servings are calorie-dense, are easy to ship and store, and can be seasoned to suit local preferences, CCO reports.

More than 3 million children worldwide die from hunger related causes each year. That is one child every 10 seconds.

"These meals are crucial to people who we can't even begin to imagine their challenges," Dempsey said. "This isn't about an organization, a faith, a state... it's about feeding people – families like our own who count on us."

The West Virginia Knights have teamed up with Forrest Burdette Memorial United Methodist Church in Hurricane to organize sponsorships and volunteers from other ecumenical groups, schools, families, and even the Army National Guard, who have volunteered their time in the past and will again for the West Virginia Knights, Dempsey said.

"For now our goal is to raise the fund we have to have in order to get to our 60,000 meal goal," he said.

Sponsorships are a significant act of faith in action, Dempsey added. Sponsors are the ones who empower our students, parishes, and organizations to spend a faith-filled day pre-



Courtesy photo

West Virginia Knights of Columbus member Scott Nale hoists a box of 216 meals as part of the Cross Catholic Outreach program. The West Virginia Knights of Columbus will be packing boxes for the Dominican Republic and families in West Virginia.

paring the meals.

Contact Dempsey at [wkdempsey3@gmail.com](mailto:wkdempsey3@gmail.com) to make your gift or donate online at <https://crosscatholic.org/food-packing-events/donate/> and scroll down to the Oct. 19 event. The West Virginia project number is code: UCP24KWV9021. All donations are

tax deductible.

To volunteer for the Oct. 19, 8 a.m. to noon event sign up at <https://crosscatholic.org/food-packing-events/volunteer/>

The event will take place at the Forrest Burdette Memorial United Methodist Church, 2848 Putnam Ave, Hurricane.



# The Eucharist: Christ Keeps His Promise to Remain with Us Always

By Bishop Mark E. Brennan

(This story originally ran in the July 12, 2024, digital edition of *The Catholic Spirit*)

## I. The Last Supper

As we focus intensely on the nature, meaning and role of the holy Eucharist in our lives during our National Eucharistic Revival, it is good to look at what the earliest account of the Last Supper, in which Jesus instituted the Eucharist, tells us. It comes from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 11: 23-24. The Apostle to the Gentiles says: *I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you." Do this in remembrance of me.*

Imagine yourself there. If Jesus did not hold a loaf of bread in his hand and said, "This is my body, that is for you," you would have thought he was referring to his physical body, even if you didn't understand what he meant by the phrase, *that is for you*.

But he did hold a loaf of bread. He identified the bread with the body behind it, his body. This creates a mystery, a mystery that we do not figure out but one we enter into, one that envelops us.

An experience I had may illustrate the difference. I once visited the Yad Vashem museum in Jerusalem, which is a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust. At the end of the visit, I entered a darkened chamber in which an unseen voice spoke, one by one, the names, ages and countries of the 1,500,000 Jewish children who were murdered by the Nazis. The disembodied voice invited me to confront a mystery of evil, to enter into its immense horror, not to "solve" it. In contrast, in the Eucharist we experience a mystery of divine goodness that invites us to enter into a beneficial union with Jesus Christ.

## II. Eucharist as Memorial Meal

At his last meal with his disciples before his death, Jesus then gave them the bread, now identified with his body, to eat and told them to continue doing it in remembrance of him. In the Acts of the Apostles 2:42, we see that they did: *They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.*

The expression, the breaking of the bread, was the earliest description of the Eucharist. When the newly risen Jesus accepted the invitation of the two disciples he met on the way to Emmaus to stay in their home, *while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him but he vanished from their sight* [Luke 24:30-31]. The two immediately returned to Jerusalem and reported to the other disciples *how he was made known to them in the breaking of the*



Colleen Rowan photo

Bishop Mark Brennan celebrates Mass at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling June 24 for the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Route of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage.

*bread* (Luke 24: 35).

*For you.* The Eucharist takes place in a meal. It's food. The Sacrament is founded on the common human experience of a shared meal that sustains bodily life but it builds on the religious significance of the Passover meal. The avenging angel that passed over the Hebrews' homes to strike down the first born of the Egyptians and the meal in which the paschal lamb was eaten prepared the Hebrews to pass over from slavery to freedom and a new life through God's decisive action. Faithful Jews today celebrate the Passover meal as a memorial of God's liberating action.

At the Last Supper, Jesus acts decisively and leaves his disciples a memorial meal that fortifies them to pass over from their old, sinful ways to the new way of love of God and neighbor as they make their pilgrimage of faith toward eternal life in heaven.

## III. Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

Jesus said in his Bread of Life discourse: *My flesh is true food and my blood is true drink* [John 6:55]. He could hardly be more explicit. The early Christians understood him to mean what he said.

St. Ignatius of Antioch in the early second century lamented that some Christians "refuse to acknowledge that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered for our sins and whom the Father in his goodness raised up" [Smyrnaeans, 6.2]. Ignatius saw that the Eucharist and a true communion of life among Christ's disciples went together; he writes: "Make it a point to participate in the one Eucharist, for the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ is one and one is the cup that yields unity in

his Blood" [Philadelphians, 4.1]. The Eucharist signifies and builds up our unity in faith and love.

St. Irenaeus in the late second century understood the power of Christ in the Eucharist to change us: "We do not receive these things as common bread nor common drink; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Savior, having been incarnate by God's logos, took both flesh and blood for our salvation, so also we have been taught that the food eucharistized through the word of prayer that is from Him, from which our blood and flesh are nourished by transformation, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who became incarnate" [First Apology, 66]. Irenaeus traces a direct line from the Incarnation of God's Son in our human nature to the mysterious or sacramental presence of Christ's risen Body in the Eucharist. As the Lord's Incarnation took place to save us from sin and death, so the changing of bread and wine into his Body and Blood are meant to change us into faithful disciples who will live as Christ lived and love as Christ loved.

The Eucharist is a major way in which the Lord Jesus fulfills his promise to be *with [us] always until the end of the age* (Matthew 28:20) and *not leave [us] orphans* (John 14:18). Modes of presence may differ. We may be physically present to one another but we may also meet by Zoom or may text or email or call one another. All are true modes of presence yet distinct with varying degrees of intensity. So it is in our encounters with Jesus Christ. People experienced him in his physical body and heard his voice during his earthly life, as we will experience him when he returns in glory to raise us from the dead. His presence in the Eucharist is real but hidden, spiritual, not physical.

St. Leo the Great said in the mid-fifth century: "All that was visible of our Lord Jesus Christ has passed into the sacramental rites of the Church." The Lord's healing, forgiving and feeding of multitudes continue in the sacraments. They are a different mode of presence than when he did these things in Galilee and Judea but they are no less real among us today.

St. Ambrose a century before asked: "Why do you seek the order of nature in the Body of Christ, seeing that the Lord Jesus Himself was born of a virgin, not according to nature? It is not man that causes the things offered to become the Body and Blood of Christ but he who was crucified for us, Christ himself. The priest, in the role of Christ, pronounces these words but their power and grace are God's. *This is my body*, he says. This word transforms the things offered (*On the Mysteries*, par 53-54)."

Believing that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist requires faith. As St. Paul says, in this life we must *walk by faith and not by sight* [II Corinthians 5:7]. But, putting our faith in what Jesus said at the Last Supper, as he identified the bread and wine with his Body and Blood, we find that his words

See "Eucharist" on Page 10



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## Eagle Scout Candidate Completes Project at Grandparents' Parish of St. Francis of Assisi in Logan



Courtesy Photo

Joseph Molinini is pictured with his brothers Mathew and Ian, his mother Megan, and his grandparents Mike and Susan Ferrell who are parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Logan.

**LOGAN** — As part of his Eagle Scout community development project, Joseph Molinini decided to beautify his grandparents' parish. Mike and Susan Ferrell, Joseph's grandparents, are members of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Logan.

Under their direction and with the help of his mother Megan Molinini and his brothers Mathew and Ian Molinini, Joseph began his project.

The endeavor consisted of clearing the undergrowth, digging and clearing of the church's side wall, filling with stone chips, and construction of a beautiful wall around the parking lot. They also planted beautiful perennial greens.

"This has immensely enhanced the beauty of the St. Francis campus," said Father Biju Paul Parampil, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi as well as Sacred Heart Parish in Williamson and St. Edmund Chapel in Manassas. "The community development project is planned, financed and ex-



Courtesy Photo

The group works on the development project at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Logan.

ecuted by Joseph Molinini and his team."

Megan, Joseph, Mathew, and Ian are members of St. Mark's Parish in Vienna, Va.

## Eucharist...

Cont'd from Page 9

are indeed spirit and life (John 6:63) – *spirit*, because the Eucharist surpasses in power its material elements, and *life*, because the Sacrament infuses spiritual life in us, a share in Christ's risen life.

### IV. Eucharist as Sacrifice

The phrase *for you* in Christ's words also refers to his sacrifice on the cross. It was not the loaf of bread that would be crucified but his physical body – yet a body offered in sacrifice that he had identified with the loaf of bread. The Church's faith is that we do not receive dead and rotting flesh in the Eucharist but the flesh of the living, risen Lord. Yet Jesus' risen body still bears the marks of his sacrifice. He said to Thomas: *Put your finger here and see my hands and bring your hand and put it into my side and do not be unbelieving but believe.* They recognized him by his wounds as much as by his face and voice.

By identifying his physical body with the loaf of bread in his hand, the Lord ensured that the reality of his sacrificial act would be present, but now in an unbloody way, in the Sacrament of the altar. As St. Paul says: *As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes* [I Corinthians 11:26]. Jesus comes to us in the Eucharist with the same love with which he died for our salvation, a sacrificial love.

We Catholics hold that the Mass, in which the Eucharist is celebrated, is a true sacrifice precisely because the grace that the Sacrament bestows flows from the sacrifice of the crucified and now risen Savior. It is not in the strict sense a new sacrifice; what Christ did on Calvary was done once for all. But it is an efficacious re-presentation of that sacrifice with all the vital power that the Lord wills to be ours as we *do this in remembrance of him*.

The Mass is a sacrifice because it participates mystically in the one enduring sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The celebration of the Eucharist causes a kind of time warp in which Christ's saving act on Calvary is brought to our time and place by the Holy Spirit of Christ, so that we may receive the benefit here and now of what the Lord has done for us. The words, *for you*, that he pronounced at the Last Supper, are not only an invitation to a meal but a promise that we have been saved from sin and death by Christ's sacrifice.

### IV. Theological descriptions of the Eucharist

Some theological terms indicate dimensions of the Eucharist that are worth keeping in mind:

1. Transubstantiation. Without denying the evidence of our eyes, nostrils and taste buds, Christ changes the bread and wine in their deepest reality – their "substance" – into a participation in his risen Body and Blood. He changes the physical species into his own personal, incarnate reality, while leaving their appearances (called "accidents") the same. So, when we say Amen to the minister of Holy Communion's "Body of Christ," we speak the truth. It is his Body and Blood.

2. Transignification. The sacrament is grace for the whole person rather than just food for the body, which is its natural meaning. Jesus makes clear this change in meaning: *Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood you do not have life within you* [John 6:53]. Receiving Christ in the Eucharist gives us strength to love one another and serve those in need.

3. Transfinalization. The goal or end of the sacrament is elevated from the sustenance of bodily life to the sustenance of one's spiritual life ordered toward the fullness of life in heaven. Jesus says this in John 6:54: *Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal; and I will raise him on the last day.* The Eucharist is the pilgrim's sacrament, giving us strength to continue on the journey toward that blessed life that God promises us.

Having offered these three points, I emphasize that the element of mystery surrounds the Eucharist. We can describe the dimensions of the sacrament but not truly explain them. It is still a mystery how the Lord can change bread and wine into himself without altering their appearance. He did, of course, make the universe out of nothing, as we say in the Nicene Creed: "Through him all things were made." As St. Ambrose pointed out, it is a lesser thing to change one thing into another while leaving its secondary aspects as they were before (*On the Mysteries*, par 52).

But we need not figure it out. The witness of Christians through the ages, who have held the ancient Eucharistic faith, is that they enter into a mysterious relationship with the Lord through the sacrament and discover that the Lord through it sustains them in their faith and strengthens them in their weakness. The Eucharist is a gift of Jesus' love, calling forth our own. May we treasure this gift as we experience more fully into its mysterious transforming power.

# Walk with 270 Leads to Walk with One

*Guess which will be more challenging?*

**By Joyce Bibey**

So many stories and photos have sprung up since the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis last month – all testimonies of an almost heaven – where pride, mission, unity, and graces flowed freely from every heart and soul. I was blessed to have a bird’s eye view from start to finish – making a way to walk with 270 faithful from all over West Virginia to now being charged to Walk with One – an even greater challenge.

The journey to the Congress began for me more than two years ago getting to work with the National Eucharistic Revival initiatives in our diocese. The ordinary people in our parishes – just like you reading this; the Catholic influencers I follow for my lifelong catechesis; and the spiritual guides in my life who strengthen my faith daily (many of them don’t even know the impact they have) became my “why” – the motivation to carry our precious cargo to a “new Pentecost.”

What did I take to the Congress? I had with me one energized and fully engaged bishop; two years of plans printed and tucked in my messenger bag; three large groups of eager pilgrims on busses from Martinsburg, Charleston, and Wheeling – plus more than 100 more traveling on their own; and enough stamina to sprint through the five days and four nights with a combined 20 hours of sleep. It is safe to say I will never be the same.

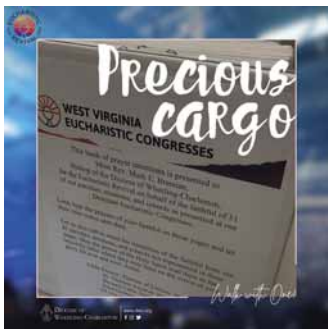
**Arrived**

We arrived at Lucas Oil Stadium fittingly just as the opening Eucharistic Procession entered the vast facility. More than 50,000 people from all over the US and 17 countries were in reverent awe of this significant moment – many on their knees, others waving their arms or holding their hearts, and some with tears of joy (or maybe for some it was relieved accomplishment) rolling down their faces. Count me in on the latter. We made it! Despite years of roadblocks, snafus, and daunting circumstances, here we were ready to be enlightened and determined to be difference makers - not just complainers.



**Now what? Precious Cargo**

As our delegation descended on the city that became a Catholic-utopia, we became a speck among a sea of massive crowds. We all co-existed like nowhere on earth I’d ever witnessed. The negativity and cynicism of the outside world was silenced and replaced with excitement, compassion, and the healthy energy we pray our Church would always be. Among the precious cargo in tow on this adventure were prayers from the people back home – literally.



I had privilege to pray on behalf of our diocesan staff for the thousands of prayers submitted to Bishop Mark Brennan by faithful all over the state during our three Diocesan Congresses in the Diocesan Year of the Revival. He had kept them in the Bishop’s Chapel at the Chancery and prayed over this special book of intentions during the Parish Year of the Revival. Now those prayers – written in crayon by little hands in our preschools and in ink by shaky arthritic hands of the elders in our parish families – would be brought to our loving God through me during a holy hour before the Real Presence of Christ in Adoration – I could not think of a better place or moment, because Lord knows I’m not a polished presenter.

**Untied**

On the evening of the first full day of the Congress, Gerri Wright, the director of St. John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston, who became my co-pilot at the Congress, jogged ahead of the crowd to try to secure seats for our gang. Winded from rushing and a little disheveled after the 8.25 miles that I zigged and zagged around the Congress venues, press conferences, and local Catholic church campus all day, Gerri stopped me and said, “Hey, be careful. Your shoe came untied.”

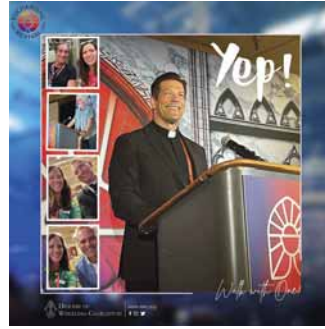


Looking down I laughed a little louder than I

should have and replied, “Oh, no! It didn’t come untied. I forgot to tie it this morning!” Yep, for 14 solid hours I was so busy and on such a high surrounded by so many uplifting opportunities I didn’t even stop to look down or notice my shoe was untied.

**Yep – He’s all that!**

Soul enriching opportunities were endless at the Congress. Needless to say, my list of Catholic influencers for my own lifelong catechesis grew tenfold. I will now be touting Chris Stefanick, Mother Olga of the Sacred Heart, and Sister Josephine Garrett among others (all of which we shared on the Eucharistic Revival page on our diocesan website <https://dwc.org/year-of-the-eucharist>).



The five days in Indy afforded me so many rubbing elbows - bucket list moments! A meeting with award winning Catholic writer and photographer Jeffrey Bruno; a quick “jog” with well-known author and Catholic speaker Dr. Edward Sri, as he made his way from our impact session to his book signing while he was asking me to sum up my favorite parts of his talk and me telling him to like our DWC social media – LOL; plus, a huge perk was getting to be in the front row at the daily NEC press conferences and in arms reach of contemporary Christian recording artist and songwriter Matt Maher; NEC Chairman Bishop Andrew Cozzens; NEC CEO Tim Glemkowski; and a priest I’ve been following on social media for more than five years now – you may have heard of him – Fr. Mike Schmitz. Oh, and yes, he is all that! Genuine, sincere, thought-provoking, real, and dynamic.

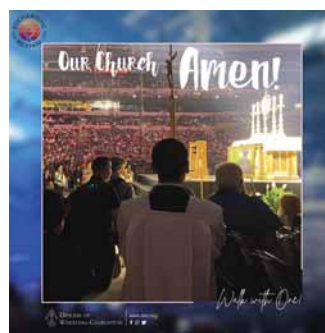
**The View**

Orchestrating the daily choreography at the Congress for our travelers was a task that I couldn’t do alone. Having Gerri Wright there with me was a God send. In order to successfully juggle our assignments, logistics, and itinerary Gerri became my “boss” while we were in Indy. Because I had media privileges, I could access restricted floor areas and even the press box overlooking the impressive NFL football stadium – so of course I was able to get the boss access along with me. All shenanigans aside, it was high up in the box when our eyes left the eight-foot table of our paperwork, spreadsheets, and schedules that we could see a view unlike any other – the stadium filled with 60,000 plus filed into neat rows and squared off sections all there to cheer on our faith, ready to get the next play call! This was our Church!



**This is Our Church, AMEN!**

Our Church is boring, because it’s the same old same old? Bologna! “What are you feeding yourself and your loved ones then,” asked Fr. Leo Patalinghug, founder of Plating Grace and award-winning chef. Father was one of our breakout session speakers – loud, funny, and boldly passionate about strengthening Catholic families. He like the others who addressed us, put us – the people in the pews – in the driver’s seat for this National Eucharistic Revival. It can’t just be up to our bishops and priests; we have to take ownership.



Our Church in Indy was happy, vibrant, hopeful, inclusive, loving, reverent; we spoke 17 difference languages; we wore street clothes, robes, habits, clerics, collars; we looked like the United Nations; and we were all created by God the Father. We were all together... but not. Too many of us were missing in Indy and are missing in our parishes.

Let’s take accountability – repent, pray, and celebrate our National Eucharistic Revival, our Year of Mission, and Year of Prayer. Let’s share the greatest gift we ever received. Let’s Walk with One – invite one back to the Church family. This joy, this love of Christ and His Real Presence only found at Mass, Adoration, Eucharistic Processions, and the tabernacles around the world is too good not to share.

Let all the people say, AMEN!

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# The 'Limitless Soul of an Artist'

## Sacred Heart's 15-Year-Old Parishioner Jack Holt Wows Crowd at Piano Performance at Parish Church in Bluefield

By Colleen Rowan

It was an honor for Very Rev. Sebastian Devasya, V.E., to introduce his parishioner Jack Holt for his piano performance at Sacred Heart Church in Bluefield, which was filled with fellow parishioners and members of the community on Aug. 11. At just age 15, Jack is a skilled pianist and composer whose works have been performed by the West Virginia State Symphony Orchestra and the Butler Philharmonic Orchestra.

"He regularly composes classical music, including a six-part Holy Mass which he hopes to see performed for the bishop one day," Father Devasya said before the concert began.

Proudly seated in the front row was Jack's family—his parents, Andrew and Michele Holt; and his sisters, Isabella, 20, and Claire, 17. They are all parishioners of Sacred Heart.

Introducing each of the seven pieces Jack performed was Dr. Scott Woodard, conductor and director of the West Virginia State Symphony Orchestra and the Butler Philharmonic Orchestra.

"I look out and I see such a wonderful crowd and it makes me happy in my heart to see that you're supporting live music and supporting this wonderful young man," Woodard said, adding that he met Jack about two years ago when he was doing work with the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

"In all of my years of working as a conductor with various orchestras and bands at all levels, I've had

the privilege to work with a lot of musicians who had the technique in their fingers and in their brains to do great things," Woodard shared. "But very few of them were able to couple it with the limitless soul of an artist and tonight you're going to hear a performer and a composer who has done exactly that."

Jack wowed the crowd performing Frédéric Chopin's "Minute

"He regularly composes classical music, including a six-part Holy Mass which he hopes to see performed for the bishop one day."

—Very Rev. Sebastian Devasya, V.E.,  
pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Bluefield  
and Sacred Heart Parish in Princeton

Waltz" and "Fantaisie-Improvisation," Sergei Rachmaninoff's "Prelude in C Sharp Minor," Claude Debussy's "Clair de lune," Ludwig van Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata #14 opus 27 #2," and Franz Liszt's "Dreams of Love."

In introducing the final piece of the evening's recital, Woodard said those gathered would have the opportunity to not only see Jack as performer but as composer as well.

"Because he is presenting a piece that he wrote himself," Woodard said. The original piece, he explained, was written by Jack this year, composed at the request of



Courtesy photo

Jack Holt performs at his piano recital at Sacred Heart Parish in Bluefield Aug. 11.

another pianist Jack met at a Catholic spiritual retreat.

Woodard further explained, that in pieces of music "we hear these catchy names like 'Moonlight Sonata' and we think that the composers actually put those on there and oftentimes they didn't do that, history did. Sometimes it's really simple." He then announced the name of Jack's original piece, "Melody in D Major." It was a beautiful piece that moved those in attendance.

"Music is the language in which I believe it's most easy to see God at work," Woodard said at the end of the recital. "It was a wonderful, wonderful, wonderful performance and I'm so happy that I was able to drive down and be here for it, but the star of our show is at the piano. Would you please help me thank him once more."

Those who filled the church gave Jack a standing ovation.

Father Devasya then came to the ambo and thanked all who attended. He thanked Jack for the beautiful evening and for all of his efforts.

"God has blessed you with beautiful talents," Father Devasya said to Jack. "We ask that God will bless you so that you can continue this beautiful journey with music."

In addition to music, Father Devasya said Jack is an accomplished athlete holding multiple black belts in two forms of martial arts. Last year, he was a captain of his wrestling team at Princeton Senior High School.

Father Devasya also thanked Woodard as well as Jack's parents and siblings and his grandparents, who were also present. Father Devasya ended by leading all in prayer.

Attendees then gathered in the parish hall for a reception organized by the Sacred Heart Family and Life Committee.



Courtesy photo

From left are Dr. Scott Woodard, conductor and director of the West Virginia State Symphony Orchestra and the Butler Philharmonic Orchestra; Jack Holt; and Very Rev. Sebastian Devasya, V.E., pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Bluefield and Sacred Heart Parish in Princeton.

# A Day of Joy and Learning: WV Birth to Three - RAU One's Storywalk Success

**WEST VIRGINIA**—In the heart of West Virginia, a delightful program unfolded, bringing smiles and laughter to families through the magic of storytelling and play. WV Birth to Three - RAU One recently held two enchanting Storywalk events as part of their Brown Bear Storywalk program, engaging children and parents in Wheeling and Morgantown.

In Wheeling, the event was a resounding success, with 12 dedicated practitioners and RAU One staff welcoming 19 adults and 22 children. Morgantown echoed this success, with 14 practitioners and RAU One staff hosting six adults and eight children. The practitioners, who generously volunteered their time and expertise, organized a series of captivating and developmentally appropriate activities centered around the beloved book "Brown Bear, Brown Bear" by Eric Carle.

Children eagerly followed bear paw prints to various stations, each offering a unique and engaging ac-

tivity. They read the story together, crawled through tunnels, tossed rings on cones, blew bubbles, fished for magnetic fish, played matching games with ducks, and dug through beans to find feathers to glue onto bird pictures. The excitement was palpable as children immersed themselves in these activities, their faces lighting up with each new discovery.

As families completed the Storywalk, they received bags of goodies to continue the fun at home. One little boy was so thrilled with his bag that he sat at the exit, eagerly sorting through each item and exclaiming, "Wow!" with every new find. His joy was a testament to the event's success and the happiness it brought to each child.

The impact of the Storywalk extended beyond the activities. Families expressed their gratitude and enthusiasm for the program. Emily and Christopher Cawthon, parents of twin boys who attended, shared, "The boys had a blast, thank you

for doing it! Have a great summer!" Another parent noted, "The children had a great time! It helped that there was a familiar face there."

These Storywalk events highlighted the power of community, dedication, and the joy of learning through play. WV Birth to Three RAU One's commitment to fostering development and family engagement shone brightly, leaving a lasting impression on everyone involved. As the children and families left with smiles, laughter, and bags full of goodies, the true success of the Storywalk was evident: a day of joy, connection, and lasting memories.



In the photos at right, children enjoy WV Birth to Three - RAU One enchanting Storywalk events as part of their Brown Bear Storywalk program in Wheeling and Morgantown. Courtesy photos


## Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE – Fall 2024 Bishop Mark E. Brennan, Celebrant

- Saturday, September 21: Sacred Heart, Chester; 5 p.m.
- Saturday, September 28: St. Mary, Petersburg; 4 p.m.
- Sunday, October 6: St. Agnes, Shepherdstown; 10:30 a.m.
- Sunday, October 20: Ascension, Hurricane; 11 a.m.
- Sunday, October 27: All Saints, Bridgeport; 10 a.m.
- Saturday, November 9: St. Peter the Fisherman, Fairmont; 10:30 a.m.
- Saturday, November 16: Sacred Heart, Williamson; 7 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 19: St. Anthony, Follansbee; 6 p.m.

## Director of Music Ministries Needed

The Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart located in Charleston, West Virginia is looking for a pastoral musician. Responsibilities include overseeing the selection of music for liturgies, substituting for our organist, directing the choir, cantoring when necessary, preparing worship aids and expanding our current music program. Candidates should have a BA degree or higher in a music field, or other field, if musically trained, excellent organ/keyboards/choral conducting skills and vocal technique and be familiar with music notation software. A practicing Catholic is preferred but not required; candidates must be of the Christian faith with willingness to learn about and genuinely support others in their Catholic faith. Conversant with a variety of liturgical styles including contemporary, classical, and traditional. Must demonstrate a commitment to use a blended approach to liturgical music that encourages the assembly to sing. Working hours are flexible and include weekends and some evenings. Complete job description available upon request. Please send résumés to: Bernadette McMasters Kime, Office of Worship and Sacraments, PO. Box 230, Wheeling, WV 26003 or email [bkime@dwc.org](mailto:bkime@dwc.org)

Résumé submissions will be accepted until the position is filled.




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# Celebrá el 'Cinco con 5'

## Con motivo del quinto aniversario del Obispo Brennan

Durante la celebración del quinto aniversario de la instalación del Obispo Mark Brennan como obispo de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston, hacemos un llamado a todos los fieles a celebrar el cinco con 5. Esta es una oportunidad para que conmemoremos el año histórico del Obispo Mark con los regalos que Cristo nos enseñó, que eran los más grandes para dar: la oración y las obras de misericordia. A lo largo del año, los fieles podrán conectarse en línea por medio del siguiente enlace: <https://dwc.org/celebrate-five/> y de esta forma regalar sus cinco.

Regalo de la oración: elija reflejarse con las oraciones del Obispo Mark. Sus hábitos diarios de oración incluyen rezar el rosario durante sus viajes por carretera por las mujeres embarazadas y también por el esposo/padre; por las parejas comprometidas/recién casadas; por las intenciones de los fieles de la diócesis; y también por las Vocaciones al sacerdocio, al

diaconado y a la vida religiosa.

Donación de buenas obras/servicio: inspírese en su ejemplo, La agencia de Caridades Católicas de West Virginia recopiló los

siguiente cinco actos de servicio: ser voluntario en su comunidad; escuchar y reunirse con los demás, servir a los vulnerables, brindar a otros apoyo espiritual y emocional y abogar por la

justicia.

Favor de registrar su regalo en línea a través del siguiente enlace: <https://dwc.org/celebrate-five/>

Para obtener más in-

formación, consulte el boletín electrónico FaithInWV de esta semana, mismo que se encuentra disponible en el siguiente enlace: <https://faithinwv.org>



*Celebrá el 'Cinco con 5'*  
**Con motivo del quinto aniversario del Obispo Brennan**

[dwc.org/celebrate-five](https://dwc.org/celebrate-five)

### 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](http://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](http://www.reportbishopabuse.org).

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

**Para informar a las autoridades diocesanas:** La diócesis alienta a informar a las autoridades civiles apropiadas, ante todo, si se ha cometido un delito. La diócesis también alienta a informar a las autoridades eclesiales apropiadas. Para reportar casos sospechosos de abuso sexual de niños por parte del personal de la Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston a la Diócesis, comuníquese con uno de los siguientes designados al 1.888.434.6237 o 304.233.0880: Sr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Sr. Tim Bishop, ext. 353; o Sor Martha Gómez, ext. 264. 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](http://www.dwc.org), haga clic en "Diócesis" en la barra de menú, luego en "Oficinas", luego en "Ambiente seguro", luego "Descargar archivos y formularios". El formulario se titula "Formulario de queja para denuncias de abuso sexual de menores". El formulario se puede devolver por correo de EE. UU. A: Office of Safe Environment, Diócesis de Wheeling-Charleston, PO Box 230, Wheeling WV 26003.

**Para informar al Coordinador de Asistencia a Víctimas de la Diócesis:** llame a la Erin McFarland, M.Ed., LPC, al 304.559.6742.

Además de los métodos enumerados anteriormente para denunciar el abuso sexual, la Diócesis también se ha asociado con Navex Global para ofrecer la plataforma EthicsPoint para informar otras inquietudes adicionales, como sospecha de mala conducta financiera, profesional y personal de un sacerdote, diácono, religioso, o empleado laico de la Diócesis o cualquier parroquia o escuela católica en West Virginia. Se puede acceder a la plataforma EthicsPoint a través de [www.dwc.org](http://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 Estatal de Virginia Occidental, Unidad de Crímenes contra Niños: 304-293-6400.

# Long-Serving Priests in W.Va. Return to India

After decades-long service in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, Father Vincent Joseph and Father Thomas Kalapurackal returned to India earlier this summer to continue their ministry.

Father Joseph served in various roles in West Virginia from 2000 to 2015 at parishes including Sacred Heart Parish in Williamson, St. Patrick Parish in Weston, St. Mary of the Greenbrier Parish in Alderson, Sacred Heart Parish in Rainelle, St. John the Evangelist Parish in Wellsburg, and St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Cheat Lake. He also served on Presbyteral Council from 2005 to 2008. After returning from India in 2017, Father Vincent served as pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Fairmont and Holy Spirit Parish in Monongah. He most recently served as pastor of Ascension Parish in Hurricane.

Father Joseph was born in Kodancherry, India, and is the fifth of nine children. After graduating from Nirmalagiri College in 1978, he entered St. Joseph's Theological Seminary in Aluva in 1979. Father Vincent received a Doctorate in Missiology from the Pontifical Urban University in Rome in 1995. He is fluent in four languages.


He was ordained to the priesthood on Dec. 26, 1984, by Archbishop Sebastian Valloppilly of the Archdiocese of Thalassery.

Father Kalapurackal came to West Virginia in 2014. He has served in various roles since then at St. Francis de Sales Parish in Beckley, Christ the King Parish in Dunbar, Holy Trinity Parish in Nitro, St. Patrick Mission in Dunbar, and St. Stephen Parish in Ona. He most recently served as pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Charleston and Our Lady of the Hills Parish in Elkview.


Father Kalapurackal also served as chaplain for West Virginia State University and chaplain to the Knights of Columbus St. Joseph Council #12893.

He graduated from Nirmalauri College in 1981 and entered St. Joseph's Pontifical Seminary in Alwaye later that year. Father Kalapurackal also received advanced studies at St. Peter's Pontifical Seminary in Bangalore and received a degree in Canon Law from the Pontifical Urban University in Rome.

Father Kalapurackal was ordained to the priesthood on Dec. 26, 1988, by Bishop Sebastian Mankuzhikary of the Diocese of Thamarassery, India.





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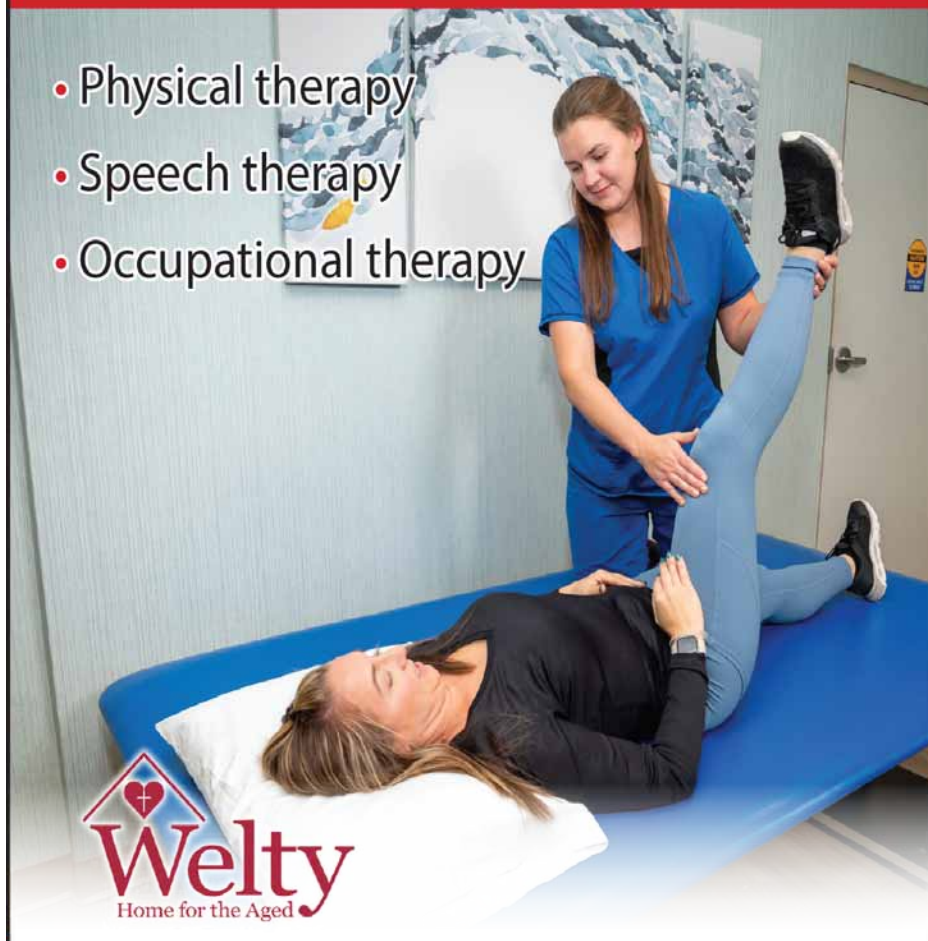


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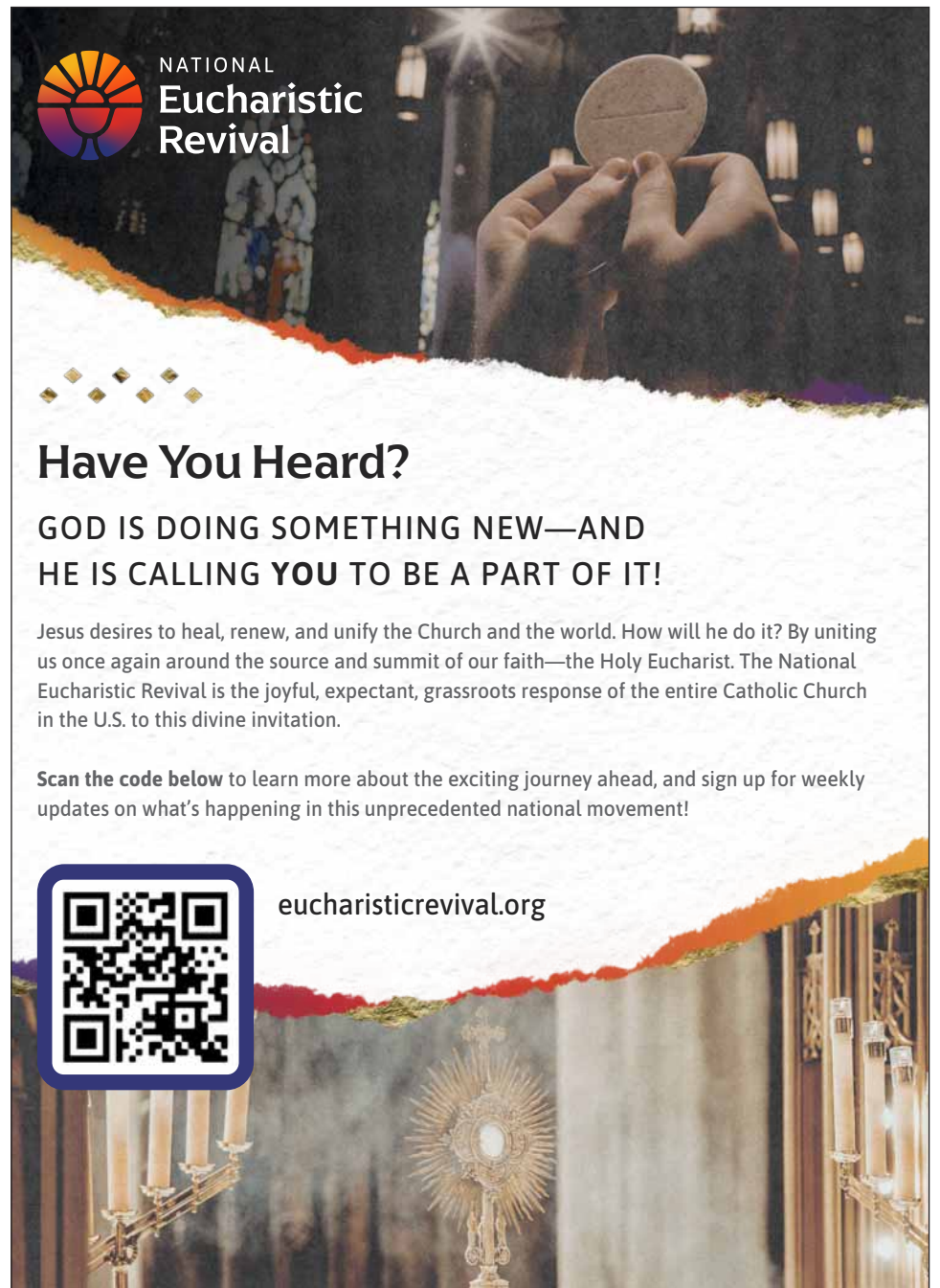



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