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(above left) Bishop Iffert begins Mass by thanking the Sisters of Notre Dame. (above center) Notre Dame Sister Mary Bankemper lecturers. (above right) Notre Dame Sister Margaret Gorman, Provincial Superior, shares a laugh with an attendee at the reception following the mass. (below) Bishop Iffert gathers with a large group of the Sisters of Notre Dame for a photo.



Young photos

Sisters of Notre Dame celebrate 150 years in the United States

Bella Young
Multimedia Correspondent

It has been 150 years since eight Notre Dame sisters came to the United States, setting sail from Germany in search of a place to practice their ministry and charism. Six of the eight put down roots in Cleveland, Ohio, the other two made their way to the Diocese of Covington where they inspired what would become generations of service from the Sisters of Notre Dame, Covington.

The 150 years of service was celebrated at Mother of God Parish, Covington — a location which holds special meaning to the Sisters of Notre Dame, as Mother of God parish school is where they were first missioned to teach in 1874.

At the Mass of Gratitude, the seats were filled with Notre Dame sisters, but also those that wanted to show their support and appreciation, leaving standing room only in a church that can hold hundreds. Celebrating the Mass was Bishop John Iffert, in choro with Bishop Emeritus Roger Foys, concelebrated by Father Michel Comer, pastor, Mother of God Parish, and Father Robert Ross, chaplain, Sisters of Notre Dame, Covington.

To open the Mass, Bishop Iffert acknowledged the unusually

large number of celebrants, “I want to especially welcome the clergy that are here with us, especially Bishop Foys, our Bishop Emeritus, who is here with us today. We are representing the bishops of the diocese that you have served all the way back to Toebbe, so we are here on their behalf to say thank you for all of the graciousness and goodness you have bestowed on the diocese. The priests who are here with us ... represent all those priests you have assisted, because you not only staff schools ... but work alongside the priests in the diocese, thanks you.”

Following Mass a reception was held at St. Joseph Heights, Park Hills, hosted by the Sisters of Notre Dame. The reception space was filled with warmth and laughter as capacity was reached. Old friends and new acquaintances shared memories of times the Sisters of Notre Dame affected them or someone they know. One thing quickly became evident, after 150 years the influence that the Sisters of Notre Dame have had on the Diocese of Covington cannot be adequately captured on paper, rather in the community where their deep commitment to faith remains as steadfast as it was in 1874 when they arrived.

Diocese urges support for Amendment 2 from teachers at professional development sessions

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

With the 2024–2025 school year on the horizon, the diocesan Schools Office brought in teachers for professional development days, occurring over four sessions divided by grade level, Aug. 1–2, at St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger.

The sessions, which began with presentations and reflections by Chris Padgett, author, musician and co-founder of CenterForHolyMarriage.com, geared teachers for the upcoming school year with information on new programs and interests of the Diocese of Covington's schools.

One such interest is the promotion of the upcoming Amendment 2 on the Kentucky ballot for November's election, posing the question, “To give parents choices in educational opportunities for their children, are you in favor of enabling the General Assembly to provide financial

(Continued on page 8)



Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Covington, speaks to teachers during the pre-school year professional development day, which ran in four sessions, Aug. 1–2.



The Cathedral is filled to near capacity as educators gather to celebrate Mass together

Bella Young

Multimedia Correspondent

The Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, neared max capacity as educators from across the diocese came together to celebrate the annual all schools Mass. Organized by the Diocese of Covington Schools Office, the Mass is an opportunity for teachers and administrators to gather and pray for a safe and successful school year, as they strive to create a faith focused environment.

"Today we gather as a community of believers who have answered the call to serve as educators in the ministry of Catholic education," said Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Catholic Schools.

For those in attendance at the all schools Mass, the sense of community being fostered became quickly evident when a host of priests and deacons processed into the church followed by concelebrant Father Ryan Maher, rector, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption and celebrant Bishop John Iffert. The presence of the priests and deacons was a powerful testimony to the appreciation and gratitude harbored by the ordained men in the diocese for those that educate its youth with the good news of Christ.

Bishop Iffert spoke to this appreciation, "Owing to the size of the local Church in Covington it would be impossible for me to teach all the students who attend Catholic schools, even for our pastors to teach all the students who attend Catholic schools. Therefore, I must rely on others to teach on my behalf, in my name, but most importantly in the name of the Church and Jesus Christ," he said. "You have been chosen to teach our young people and, as such, a great responsibility has been placed on your shoulders. In addition to opening up the mysteries of the created world to our young people, you must aid me and our priests, as well as our students' parents, in forming them in the ways of the Catholic faith."

What may seem a daunting task did not stop every educator in attendance from standing when Bishop Iffert asked them to stand and consent to the task.

"Do you resolve, with the help of the Lord God, to carry out the responsibilities entrusted to you as a Catholic school teacher in the Diocese of Covington? Will you to the best of your abilities, to the students commended to your care, form them in the Catholic faith and teach them about the mysteries of the created world in your specific area of expertise?" After each of these questions the educators gave a resounding "I do" that reverberated off the walls of the Cathedral, making their dedication all the more resounding.

It was not lost on those in attendance however, that the job they signed up for has only gotten more difficult in past years. In his homily Bishop Iffert addresses this point.

"When we look at this story, in a way like this I can't help but think what it means to begin another school year here, in the long shadow of the covid pandemic. We know that for decades now teaching has been getting harder. Demands on teachers have been more and more and we know for many of our colleagues, both in education and in ministry, during the times of COVID and the demands that were put on us, more and more of our friends and colleagues decided they just couldn't take it anymore."

The Scripture passage in reference is Matthew 14:13-21, commonly known as "The Return of the Twelve and the Feeding of the Five Thousand." Within these eight lines Jesus instructs his disciples to take five loaves of bread and two fish and bring them to him. With these loaves and fish Jesus raised them to Heaven and said the blessing. The food then fed more than 5,000 people, with 12 wicker baskets full left over.

Bishop Iffert emphasized how given just a few morsels, Jesus is able to take our meager offerings, bless them, break them and use them in abundance to provide for all.

"Jesus continues to do that work today, in our midst, in your lives; as family members, teachers, and friends, as Christians and Catholics ... the gifts of God will sustain us ... may this year be filled with love for you, may you give it in all you take on and all your entrusted with, and may you receive it from all who are in this room and from all who call you teacher."



(top right) Bishop Iffert gives his homily to the congregation. (above left) Kendra McGuire, superintendent of Catholic Schools, addresses principals and teachers before the start of the opening school year Mass. (above right) Teachers Pat Wilson, Mary, Queen of Heaven School, Erlanger; Emily Addington, St. Paul School, Florence; Kristen Fayne, St. Philip School, Melbourne and Maria Borchardt, Villa Madonna Elementary School, Villa Hills, deliver the gifts to Bishop Iffert.

The 2024 honorees of the biennial Life's a Ball event have been announced

Bella Young

Multimedia Correspondent

From its inception in 2010 the Life's a Ball event has honored those in the Diocese of Covington who have embodied the pro-life mission of the Church. This year is no different, the honorees chosen by the Diocese of Covington Pro-Life Office "have shown great witness to the respect and dignity of the human person," said Faye Roch, director of the Pro-Life Office.

The four honorees for the 2024 Life's a Ball event are: Father Jeff VonLehmen, pastor, St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill; The Emergency Shelter of Northern Kentucky, Covington; Mary Rose Mission, Florence and Parish Kitchen, Covington. These honorees are leading examples in their community for the respect and dignity of the human person.

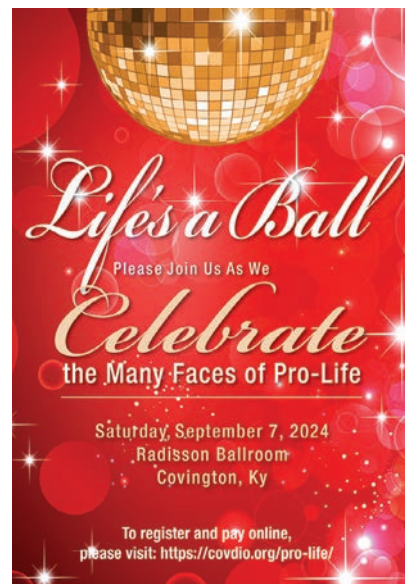
Father VonLehmen has been the pastor at St. Patrick Parish for 24 years. During that time, he has participated in many ministries across the Diocese of Covington. He has been a religion teacher at Holy Cross District High School, providing spiritual guidance to hundreds of students. Father VonLehmen has also been an active partici-

pant in the Project Rachel ministry, which provides healing and forgiveness for women who have experienced an abortion.

The Emergency Shelter of Northern Kentucky has been operating since 2008 and in 2022 they opened the doors to its new 68-bed facility. Its website explains its mission and vision as, "we believe homelessness is an emergency and that shelter is a basic necessity for human beings. We believe that only when this necessity is provided, do human beings have the ability to recover from homelessness." Through its work the homeless find respect the dignity.

The Parish Kitchen has been serving the Covington population for 50 years, with 2024 being its 50-year anniversary. Since 1974, Parish Kitchen has served a free lunch every day in Covington to anyone who is hungry treating everyone with dignity, respect, affection, attention and hospitality.

The quote running across the banner of The Mary Rose Mission website is one from Pope Francis, "You pray for the hungry, then you feed them. That is how prayer works." This is the essence of the volunteers who serve



day in and day out to ensure the hungry are fed. The Mary Rose Mission is a non-profit Catholic organization. Its current ministry is to provide food to the hungry and "food insecure" population of Florence and its surrounding area.

The mission of the Life's a Ball event is not to raise money, in fact there will be no fundraising at the event, but to "honor those people who have been those witnesses for us and have gotten our vision and the

importance of the sanctity of life," said Mrs. Roch.

Mrs. Roch encourages all who can attend to consider doing so. "It's fun, it's a great chance to dress up. My kids have come to it since the very beginning and they said it is more fun than any prom they have ever gone to, it is fun."

Register online at covdio.org/pro-life.

Diocesan seminarian Michael Schulte celebrates Rite of Admission to Candidacy

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

The Sunday morning Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, Aug. 4, celebrated the Rite of Admission to Candidacy for one diocesan seminarian — Michael Schulte.

Mr. Schulte, who will begin his theology studies in the upcoming school year, was admitted as a candidate to the

priesthood by Bishop John Iffert, who celebrated the Mass. Also present, in choro, was Bishop Emeritus Roger Foys, and concelebrant Msgr. John Schulte, a cousin of the candidate.

In his homily, Bishop Iffert commented on the gift of the Eucharist and our relationship with God as a whole.

“We ask for the eyes of faith to be able to recognize the gift that is being conected in our midst — to see not just a little wheat and a little water, but to

see the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus — the fullness of the being, and the life, and the power, and the humanity and the divinity of Jesus given over for us on the cross to accompany use through our dark valley and our needs.”

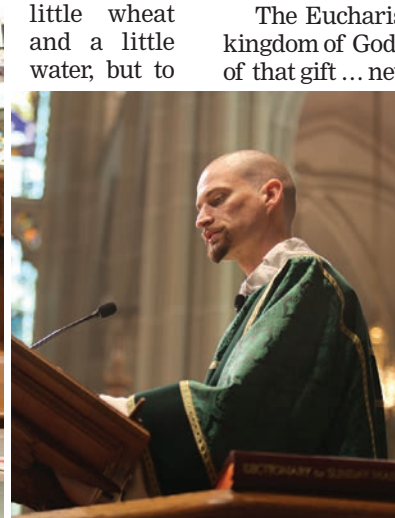
He continued, saying, “We ask the eyes faith to see that, but there’s a further gift. I worry sometimes that I’m blinded to see it, and maybe some of us are blinded to see it ... I worry that we might fail to see that the gift of the Eucharist, the fullness of Christ’s presence, is intended not simply to satiate our hunger, but to heighten our holy hungers. To make us yearn for the end that God has made for us ... a taste of the fullness of the kingdom of God.”

The Eucharist is the “appetizer to the banquet of the kingdom of God,” said Bishop Iffert. “Let’s never lose sight of that gift ... never lose sight of the journey for which this Eucharist is our food.”

Concluding the homily, Bishop Iffert said, “Today we celebrate in a special way with Michael Schulte, because he’s beginning to recognize that this meal — this sacrament, this gift of Jesus’s very being — is meant to make us into the gift that we receive. To help us become what we need. To form us as a Eucharistic people.”

“We’re proud of him,” he said, “that he was willing to ask the question and to be guided into that discernment by the power of God and his relationship with Jesus.”

Baker photos



(above left) Bishop John Iffert presides over the morning Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington. During Mass, seminarian Michael Schulte was accepted as a candidate to priesthood for the Diocese of Covington.

(above center) Michael Schulte stands before Bishop John Iffert during the Rite of Admission to Candidacy. Sitting in the background is Msgr. John Schulte, a cousin of Mr. Schulte.

(above right) Deacon Joshua Heskamp, a classmate of candidate Michael Schulte, reads from the Gospel.

(right) Deacon Charles Melville vests Michael Schulte in a white surplice.

(far right) Candidate Michael Schulte stands prayerfully following his Rite of Admission to Candidacy.



Diocese enlisting mentors to accompany learners engaged in Franciscan At Home — could it be you?

Laura Keener
Editor

The month of August is Back to School month and the perfect opportunity for the Campaign of Mercy to focus on the corporal work of mercy “to instruct the ignorant.” No one likes to think of themselves or others as ignorant. But the truth is, you can’t know what you don’t know and sometimes we don’t know what we think we know.

Everyone needs someone to show them the right way to accomplish tasks, to help them develop skills, to think critically, to develop their faith life and at times be corrected. It is an act of love to help others learn the truths they need to know to save souls — their own and others.

Bishop John Iffert, through the With One Heart diocesan pastoral plan, is removing barriers for the people of the Diocese of Covington to grow deeper in the faith and to accompany others on their faith journey. Through a partnership with Catechetical Institute, Franciscan University, everyone in the diocese has access — at no cost — to Franciscan At Home.

Franciscan At Home is an online library of over 200 workshops on the Catholic faith. Everyone can, right now, create an account at <https://franciscanathome.com/diocese-covington>, then choose a lesson to begin personal study. But what makes Franciscan At Home unique from other online learning platforms is the availability to choose a mentor to

accompany the learner as they grow in learning and living their faith.

“This is like their secret sauce,” said Deacon James Fortner, chief operating officer, Diocese of Covington, about the effectiveness and importance of the mentoring aspect of Franciscan At Home. “It gives the ability as a mentor to ask questions, enabling the student to dig deep. You’re not telling them the answer. You’re trying to lead them to an introspection. How’s God moving? What did you feel; what did you see?”

Currently the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization is looking for people to be a part of Franciscan At Home as a mentor. Five in-person workshops, beginning August 17, are being offered to train mentors. (See schedule on page 13.) And like Franciscan At Home, these mentor training workshops are available at no cost to the lay faithful.

“Everything is going to depend on how much we accompany the learners,” said Isaak A. Isaak, co-director, Office of Catechesis and Evangelization. Mr. Isaak is leading the implementation of Franciscan At Home in the diocese. “The biggest thing, really, is how we develop good mentorship.”

Deacon Fortner and Mr. Isaak have a goal for every parish and school to have at least two mentors trained and available to accompany the parents, teachers and parishioners desiring a mentor as they take Franciscan At Home courses.

“Mentorship is just walking with people. Mentors don’t have to teach, they don’t have to offer courses, they don’t

(Continued on page 13)



Bishop’s Schedule

- Aug. 11**
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 7:30 a.m.
- Aug. 13–14**
KY CCK/Province meeting, Archdiocese of Louisville
- Aug. 14**
Vigil Mass for the Feast of the Assumption Solemnity, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 5:30 p.m.
- Aug. 15**
Diocesan Curia Closed in observance of the Solemnity of the Feast of the Assumption
- Aug. 16**
New School Year Mass, Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills, 10 a.m.
- Aug. 17**
Vigil Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, 4:30 p.m.
- Aug. 20**
Advisory Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.

- Aug. 21**
Building Commission meeting, 2 p.m.
- Mass for The Knights of the Holy Sepulcher, Mary, Seat of Wisdom Chapel, Thomas More University; dinner to follow at Triple Crown, 5 p.m.
- Aug. 22**
Serra Club seminarian cook out, Baker Hunt Art and Cultural Center, 11:30 a.m.
- Catholic Charities Board meeting, 2 p.m.
- DPAA celebration event, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, 6:30 p.m.
- Aug. 23**
Mass for Covington Catholic High School, Mother of God Parish, Covington, 10 a.m.
- Aug. 25**
Catholic Charities CaSSba, Drees Pavilion, Covington, 3 p.m.



The Eucharistic Congress and the primacy of the supernatural

I have just returned from the magnificent National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. I can honestly say that those several days constituted one of the greatest

WORD ON FIRE



Bishop Robert Barron

moments in my 38 years as a priest. To see more than 50,000 faithful laity, thousands of priests, over 150 bishops, armies of habited religious both men and women and hundreds of seminarians all gathered together to celebrate and commune with their Eucharistic Lord was splendid beyond words.

I have spoken to some large crowds in my time — including 26,000 in an arena in Krakow for World Youth Day and 10,000 in the Anaheim Convention Center for the LA Congress — but I have never faced 50,000 before. The experience was overwhelming. But the most moving part of the Indy celebration for me was the public procession on Saturday afternoon. As thousands upon thousands of bishops, priests, nuns and seminarians marched through the streets of downtown Indianapolis, we were cheered by thousands upon thousands of lay faithful — and all of us were simply part of a great symbolic pilgrimage in honor of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Will I ever forget the silence that fell upon the massive park in central Indianapolis when, after the festive procession, we all knelt to venerate the Lord and receive his benediction?

What made this event so successful? We could speak, of course, of the dedication and intelligence of the myriad people entrusted with logistics and planning. We could speak of the cleverness of the advertising and the efficacy of the Catholic communication network. But none of that would be sufficient.

What made the Congress successful is that it was predicated upon the supernatural. It exuded the spirit of the

supernatural. It ordered us toward the infinitely fascinating world that we cannot see, the world of the angels and saints and the Creator God. At the heart of the entire event was the unnerving mystery of the Eucharist, that Jesus — Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity — is really present under the forms of bread and wine. No merely earthly or natural category could possibly account for this. It makes sense only from a supernatural perspective.

And this moves me to make a provocative claim: liberal Catholicism could never have pulled off what happened in Indianapolis. I understand that the term is slippery; so, I will define it precisely. By “liberalism” in religion, I mean the tendency to reduce the supernatural to the natural. Liberal Catholicism was regnant when I was going through school, and it took the form of expressing the doctrines of Christianity in terms of anthropology, psychology and especially politics.

If, during my grade school and high school years, you had asked me what religion was all about, I probably would have said “social justice, especially racial justice.” A little later in life, if you had asked me the same question, I might have said, “becoming a well-adjusted and generous human being.” Obviously, there isn’t one little thing wrong with social justice, being well-adjusted or generosity.

The problem is reducing religion to these concerns and its purpose to these results. When we do so, the faith becomes, at best, a faint echo of what can be heard in the secular culture, and when that happens, people very quickly lose interest. And this is why liberal Catholicism has never generated the kind of energy and enthusiasm that I saw in Indianapolis.

If I may put this in a broad, metaphysical context, the problem with liberalism is that the natural cannot contain or adequately bear the supernatural. When it pretends to do so, we end up with, at best, a simulacrum of the supernatural. However, the supernatural can indeed contain and perfect the natural, according to the principle whereby a higher form of existence can elevate a lower.

Consider the way in which nutrients are taken in by a plant and a plant assimilated by an animal. This princi-

ple of assimilation prevents Christianity from devolving into some form of crude dualism. The supernatural God created the natural world, which therefore reflects some of his goodness and beauty. Moreover, that same God redeemed the world and endeavors to draw it into union with himself. So, in a word, the supernatural cannot be naturalized, but the natural can be supernaturalized.

One of the distinctive marks of this Congress was the presence of so many religious and priests in habits and clerical garb. I heard one participant comment, “I had no idea there were so many orders in the Church!”

Another mark was how attractive these people were, especially to the young. Smiling nuns in habits seemed to be especially magnetic. Years ago, when I was in the seminary, the wearing of distinctive religious dress was, in line with the liberal instincts of the time, frowned upon. Priests and nuns were supposed to look as natural as possible. It is, of course, no accident that vocations to orders that eschewed the habit plummeted. Once again, if there is nothing on offer that is distinctive or redolent of a mysteriously higher world, why bother?

I want to make a final observation that accords with the principle of assimilation I mentioned above. A critic might complain that what I’m advocating would lead to a dangerous “other-worldliness,” an indifference to the suffering of real people around us. One of my favorite photos from the Congress shows two young, habited nuns sitting on the sidewalk with a homeless person, laughing and sharing food with him.

Understood properly, a focus on the supernatural intensifies one’s commitment to the elevation and amelioration of the natural — a principle firmly grasped by Ambrose of Milan, Francis of Assisi, Elizabeth of Hungary, Dorothy Day and Mother Teresa of Kolkata.

Three enthusiastic cheers for all those who planned and participated in the Eucharistic Congress. And God bless them for allowing the spirit of the supernatural to breathe through the proceedings.

Bishop Robert Barron is bishop of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota. Article originally published at WordOnFire.org.

Somewhere along the way, last time, as a matter of fact, we discussed hate, one of life’s strangest mysteries. This time, let’s talk about, and maybe ponder, that funny thing called love, as

described by one of many songwriters enhanced by its magic. Please agree with me that, without a doubt, love is the firm opposite of hate.

Ever wonder how someone can live without love? While wondering, please remember that love cannot live without you! “Love makes the world go ‘round.” I wish I had written that. “You can, Ray!” that 3:30 a.m. dream recently screamed out and clearly

emphasized... “You can ‘write’ love in your thoughts and actions, in every step, in every breath you take, in every word you speak.” I awoke and wished, “Wouldn’t that be wonderful?”

It truly was beautiful and exciting to research many experts and to review their experiences and viewpoints regarding love, its meanings and its workings in our lives. One revealed that “love is a complex and powerful emotion that can be expressed in different ways. Love can

The ins and outs of love

mean an intense, deep affection for another person involving care, closeness, attraction and trust. Love can also mean a strong like for something or to like something a lot, such as a hobby, a place or a food. Love can vary in intensity and change over time.”

Another expert shared that not all forms of love are the same, and psychologists have identified a number of different types of love that people may experience. One type of love is friendship. This type of love involves liking someone and sharing. Author Nancy Lovering holds that “Love is an emotion of strong affection, tenderness or devotion toward a subject or object.”

Research also uncovered a general opinion that “Love encompasses a range of strong and positive emotional and mental states, from the most sublime virtue or good habit, the deepest interpersonal affection, to the simplest pleasure.”

One easily finds love in social movements or humanitarian causes. Consider these champions of worldwide caring: Martin Luther King, Jr., St. Teresa of Calcutta, Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi and Malala Yousafzai. Consider this timeline of impressive examples: 153 BC — The ancient Romans celebrate “Lupercalia,” a festival of love and fertility; 1742 — The first public performance of Handel’s “Messiah,” a musical expression of divine love, takes place in Dublin; 1967 — The Beatles release “All You Need Is Love,” a global anthem of peace and love.

Check out this wild observation: Love is like a drug. A study from the Kinsey Institute states that the brain of a

person falling in love looks the same as the brain of a person who has taken cocaine. Ponder that for a moment or two or more!

That being written, let’s turn now to Pope Francis. His captivating book, “The Joy Of Love,” or “Amoris Laetitia,” centers on love in marriage and love in the family. From the Fourteenth Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, *Relatio Finalis* (Oct. 24, 2015), our Holy Father drew the following: “The joy of love experienced by families is also the joy of the Church. As the Synod Fathers noted, for all the many signs of crisis in the institution of marriage, ‘the desire to marry and form a family remains vibrant, especially among young people, and this is an inspiration to the Church.’ As a response to that desire, the Christian proclamation on the family is good news indeed.”

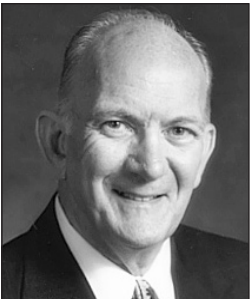
Continued internet research uncovered this interesting set of conclusions: “Determining whether you’re in love can be both exciting and confusing. While everyone experiences love differently, there are some other signs to consider:

— Euphoria: Early in a relationship, you might feel a sense of euphoria. This heightened neural activity in dopamine-rich areas of the brain contributes to the intense feelings associated with love.

— Missing the person: If you find yourself missing someone when they’re not around, it could indicate a strong emotional attachment and commitment. Missing

(Continued on page 14)

ALONG THE WAY



Ray Smith

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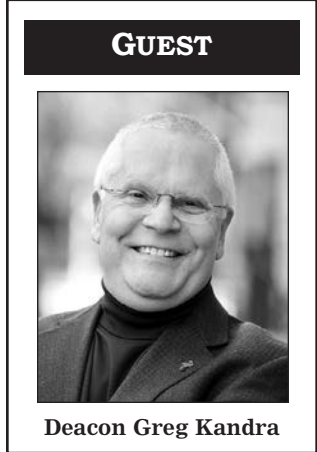
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The bread of life

The readings for the eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary time — Cycle B — are: Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15, Ephesians 4:17, 20-14 and John 6:24-35

When you think about it, we got our first clue at Christmas.

It was there, in the very name of the town where Jesus was born — Bethlehem, a word which means in both Aramaic and Hebrew, “House of Bread.” His followers shouldn’t really have been puzzled or surprised when he told them, as we hear this Sunday in John’s Gospel, “I am the bread of life.”



GUEST

Deacon Greg Kandra

It couldn’t be any other way.

But the now-famous words that Jesus utters in this passage are obviously about more than just food or sustenance. Jesus is telling us something we urgently need to hear. It’s about craving, desire, yearning — and the gnawing

emptiness and holy longing that only he can fill.

It’s no accident that this passage in John’s Gospel begins with people looking for Jesus — seeking for him to feed their particular hunger. When they finally find him, he tells them that he does more than provide bread for the multitudes. He turns their expectations upside down and states something bold and new. Searching for bread to feed you? The search is over. Look no further. Here is the bread of life.

Bread, of course, is a staple in every diet around the world. Google tells us that the earliest bread was made around 8,000 years before Christ in the Middle East, most notably in Egypt. Various forms of it eventually materialized in parts of Europe, India, Mexico and virtually every part of the globe, made not only from wheat but also from corn, barley and rice. It is truly the universal food.

So, it makes perfect sense that the Savior who came for all would describe himself in a way that can be understood and consumed by all. Here he presents himself as a food that is not only ordinary, but humble and easily accessible.

Which makes his presence for us under the appearance of bread in the Eucharist even more understandable — and, in fact, even poignant.

It’s been said that part of the power of the Incarnation is that through this astounding act the Creator became part of creation. In a similar way, the One who is the source of everything shows a desire to share himself as almost nothing — a mere crumb of bread, a sliver of baked wheat, something that can be held in the palm of your hand and, even, broken and then shared.

Here is a generous love that almost defies human understanding.

I don’t know that any of that mattered to the crowd that traveled by boat to Capernaum, looking for the rabbi who fed them. They were searching for the miracle worker who had done something astounding. Whether they realized it or not, they found someone even more remarkable. “I am the bread of life,” he told them. “Whoever comes to me will never hunger and whoever believes in me will never thirst.”

This passage should spur all of us to wonder anew: Just what are we hungering for? What do we search for in Christ Jesus? What do we want him to give us?

The one who fed a multitude continues to feed multitudes today through the Eucharist, through his Word, through his boundless generosity that has redefined for all time mercy, sacrifice and love.

He’s more than a wonder worker, more than a rabbi, more than baker who knows how to fill empty stomachs. As a familiar hymn puts it, he satisfies the hungry heart, with gift of finest wheat.

Here is the bread of life.

Who could crave anything more than that?

Deacon Greg Kandra is an award-winning author and journalist, and creator of the blog “The Deacon’s Bench.”

Our place in time

The last Saturday in July holds a special place for some river town Kentuckians as the day of the Bromley Summer Block Party. While attending this year, I noticed



VIEWPOINT

Sarah Torres

the volunteer staff members wearing shirts that read, “Bromley Block Party established 1915,” and that caught my attention.

In 1915, most of Europe was entangled in the First World War, Grand Duchess Anastasia Romanov would have still been living a relatively peaceful life in Russia, the first STOP signs were going up throughout Michigan, and the people of Bromley, Kentucky were having a street party.

Sometimes, it is simply mind-boggling realizing everything happening around the world all at the same time. To think that soldiers were fighting, a princess was playing, a police officer was making a sign out of a piece of plywood all around the same moment serve to remind us how large the world around us is.

When I was working on my bachelor’s in history, one of my professor’s told us not to worry about remembering dates. Seems like an odd statement for a history professor, doesn’t it? “The date isn’t what is important,” he continued, “the context is.”

The context — being able to tell what else was happening around an event is more important than knowing exactly when it happened. One of the most popular examples of this is knowing that Anne Frank, Martin Luther King Jr. and Barbara Walters were all born in same year, and then seeing the differences in how they lived. Another more local example would be the Diocese. The Diocese of Covington turned 171 years old on July 29. The same year that we were founded, 1853, Vincent Van Gough was born, the Steinway & Sons piano company was founded, the Yellow Fever Epidemic was going on and the potato chip was invented. Quite a collection of events.

The risk of understanding the context of the world is that it tends to make one feel very small surrounded by so many large events. This decade has most certainly done that for many of us. We see the joke on social media, peo-

ple saying they are tired of living through major historical events. COVID seemed like a large enough event to satisfy most peoples’ quota for a lifetime, but history tells us that nothing ever happens alone.

Everyone lives through major historical events; we just don’t always realize how major it is in the moment. It has the unusual ability to make a person feel so important and so unimportant at the same time. I imagine it is similar to how the Apostles felt walking around with Jesus. Imagine, Jesus chose you by name, you are special; Jesus is God, how special could the human standing next to him be?

We, also, are all called by name by God. We know we are all special, but we are also human, and we are often forgetful. We put so much focus on the context of the Church and God himself, that sometimes we forget that we, though we may feel small, are a part of it. An important part.

Sometimes, it’s easy to feel like one small element of the big picture is insignificant. Who would notice if you were at Mass on Sunday? What difference does it make if you volunteer when so many others already have? What difference does your donation make when others can donate thousands?

I have felt it. As a child in church, it is easy to feel unnoticed. As a teenager, it is easy to feel like a nuisance or a liability. As a young adult, it is easy to feel like an intruder in established programs. As an established adult, it can feel like it’s too late to get involved. As an older adult, it is easy to feel like it’s already over. However, that is not the truth of the Church. God notices, He chose you and called you by name. The people in the pews around you notice when you are gone, the weight of the work appreciates every single volunteer, and the person in need on the other side notices every penny donated.

I am not so naïve as to say there is no truth in the feeling of exclusion some may experience, I have felt it myself a time or two. But as a Church, as a faith, and as a family of God there is no exclusion, no small events in our collective history. All are welcome and all are important. So, in the context of your history choose to be the Bromley Block Party. Perhaps it won’t make national news, but it brings only joy to those around it. Find your place in time, and be the positive, be the love, be the joy.

Sarah Torres is the archivist for the Diocese of Covington, Ky

Listen, Teach, Send

The Bishops of the United States recently issued a new framework for ministry with youth and young adults called, Listen. Teach. Send. It flows directly from Pope



GUEST

Angie Poat

Francis’ document, *Christus Vivit*, (Christ is Alive), the culmination of years of prayer and synodal listening sessions with youth. In the words of our Holy Father, *Listen, Teach, Send* is a “trptych” for ministry.

Trip tickets are familiar to those who grew up without the internet. One would obtain a trip ticket from a travel agency after choosing a destination by pouring through travel brochures, maps, and

advice passed on from other travelers. The physical trip ticket was a customized map printed and collated into a booklet. When one reached the end of a page, that was the equivalent to completion of a leg of the journey. There were no estimated arrival times stamped on the end of each page. Traveling lent itself to spontaneous stops and conversations and building memories with companions.

This trip ticket analogy lends itself well to explaining the “new” framework of ministry. The methodology of listen, teach, send, is the first thing that Jesus did after his resurrection. Recorded in the Road to Emmaus, Luke 24:13-25, Jesus encounters the first two people to leave the Church, Cleopas and companion, and He walks with them,

listening to their needs and confusion. He provided the time and space that they needed to process and question their experience.

Whether one block or a seven-mile walk, Jesus was in it with them for the long haul. Truly listening. When they were ready, He moved to the next page, or the next leg of the journey, He explained Scripture and then celebrated the Eucharist with them. The last part of the journey — and page on the trip ticket, they went back to Jerusalem, to the Church, and were empowered to live their faith boldly in Christian community. This was a slow, personal process. A journey of discovery and faith.

This is the model that we are to use as we journey with the teens and young adults, many who feel marginalized, confused, and not heard. Clearly, and fortunately, the Listen. Teach. Send. framework is not new. Nothing can improve on Scripture and tradition and especially the very model that Jesus provided. “Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it.” (2 Timothy 3:14) However, the invitation and challenge remain with us, to bring to light the treasury of the living Church to a new generation and to discern new ways of ministry.

The Road to Emmaus model also nods to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who goes out to find and rescue the lost sheep. If one is reluctant to go out like Jesus, to seek others who are hurting or those who are not coming to Church or programming, we can take comfort in that God has things covered in our absence. Note in the Emmaus Scripture, Jesus leaves those whom he had just empowered through the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to run the Church and to take care of each other in his absence.

(Continued on page 14)

The History of the Sisters of Notre Dame

The Sisters of Notre Dame are members of an international congregation that began in Coesfeld, Germany in 1850. Two teachers, Hilligone Wolbring and Elisabeth Kühling, cared for poor, neglected children whose families were unable to provide for them.

At the invitation and encouragement of Rev. Theodor Elting, the two women decided to continue their good work as vowed religious. They were already formed in the spiritual and pedagogical tradition of Rev. Bernard Overberf. Through the Sisters of Notre Dame of Amersfoort, Holland, they received a way of religious life that came from St. Julie Billiart, foundress of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. Hilligonde Wolbring became known as Sister Maria Aloysia and Elisabeth Kühling as Sister Maria Ignatia.

The new Coesfeld congregation expressed its charism, a deep experience of God's goodness and provident care, both in spirituality and in apostolic ministry.

The Coesfeld Sisters of Notre Dame developed a flourishing educational ministry to teacher education. Beyond education, their work extended to the care of neglected children and infirm elderly. Laws passed by the Bismarck government during the Kulturkampf between 1872 and 1875 removed religious sisters from teaching positions in the public elementary schools and expelled teaching congregations from Prussia. The situation led the Coesfeld congregation to seek a new field of labor in the United States.

In July of 1874, eight sisters arrived in Cleveland, Ohio and Covington, Kentucky including the foundress, Sister Maria Aloysia (Hilligonde Wolbring). Over the next four years, two hundred Sisters of Notre



(above) Two Sisters of Notre Dame tend to a young child.



(left) A classroom full of children smile for a picture with Sisters of Notre Dame teachers.

Dame came to the United States to teach children of immigrants, mainly across northern Ohio and in the Covington-Cincinnati area. In 1924, Tolde, Ohio and Covington, Kentucky were established as provinces, separate from the Cleveland province. That same year, sisters from Cleveland started working in the Watts area of Los Angeles and in Huntington Park, California, which became the fourth U.S. province in 1961.

In each province, the sisters built their own administrative centers and schools and formed new members. In their collaborative style of ministry, the sisters connect effectively with community partners, volunteers, and governmental agencies. From each province the sisters extended their ministries of education, healthcare, social justice initiatives and faith formation across the United States, and into new international missions in India, East Africa and Papua New Guinea.

The information in this article can be found at <https://sndusa.org/history/>.

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PEOPLE AND EVENTS

The prayer intention for August, as recommended by Pope Francis, is for political leaders. We pray that political leaders be at the service of their own people, working for integral human development and for the common good, especially caring for the poor and those who have lost their jobs.

The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption is broadcast locally on The CW, Sundays, 10—11 a.m. Viewers can tune-in on the following channels: antenna 12.2; Spectrum 117 or 25; Cincinnati Bell 17 or 517; and DirectTV 25.

Bishop Iffert and the priests of the Diocese of Covington will pray a Holy Hour for survivors of sexual violence and for the sanctification of priests, 3 p.m., every third Thursday monthly, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington. All are welcome.

St. Mary's Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, offers Veneration of a relic of the True Cross, on the first Friday of every month, from noon–1 p.m. Confessions are offered concurrently. The monthly veneration is held in silence and concludes with a blessing and the opportunity for the faithful to come forward to personally venerate the True Cross relic. The monthly veneration is sponsored by the Knights and Dames of the Covington-Lexington section of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

Graduating seniors connect here — the Newman Connection connects graduating seniors to the Catholic campus ministry at their chosen college before they get to campus. To connect, students or parents simply visit <https://signupnc.newmanministry.com/> and fill out the form.

Parents of Addicted Loved Ones, (PAL) is a support group that meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 6:30–8 p.m. at Catholic Charities, Latonia. It provides continuing education and support, at no charge, for parents with a son, daughter or spouse suffering from addiction to alcohol or drugs. No cost. Just come — 3629 Church Street, Latonia. For more information contact Client Care at (859) 581-8974.

The Diocese of Covington Office of Youth Ministry presents REVIVE!, a night of fellowship, sports, music and adoration for high school and college students, Aug. 10, in Thomas More University's Saints Center, 7–10 p.m. No cost or RSVP required. Visit www.covdio.org/youth for details.

The Mustard Seed Catholic Charismatic Community of NKY sponsors a monthly Third Tuesday prayer gathering, "Spirit & Grace," 7-8:45 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament's Parish Center, Ft. Mitchell. All are invited Aug. 20 for praise and worship music, teaching, witnesses

and healing prayers. For information, call Carol (859) 341-5932.

Join the Knights of Columbus council of Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Paul parishes for their annual car cruise, Aug. 17, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. No cost to attend or display your special ride. Enjoy oldies music and full concessions from the Knights. In the IHM church parking lot, Burlington. Help support the Knights of Columbus at this free event. Any questions, e-mail jgedney@covdio.org.

"Bystander, Enablers and Institutional Complicity," a webinar for survivors and those who care for them, Aug. 26, 6:30–8 p.m. CDT. Dr. Amos Guiora will lead an examination of the role of institutions who have allowed victim/survivors to be further abused. For information contact Paula Kaempffer, coordinator for Restorative Practices and Survivor Support, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, kaempferp@archspm.org. Register in advance to receive a confirmation e-mail with the link to join the meeting.

Bishop John Iffert will celebrate Mass, Aug. 28, 7 p.m., St. Joseph Church, Cold Spring, for Catholics Embracing ALL God's Children, a support group for LGBTQ+ individuals, their parents, friends and allies. All are welcome. A reception will follow Mass in Kelley Hall, in the undercroft.

Bishop John Iffert will celebrate Vespers at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, to honor couples celebrating significant wedding anniversaries in 2024. Married couples celebrating their 1st, 25th, 50th, or 60+ wedding anniversary in 2024 are invited to the Vespers celebration on Sunday, Sept. 15, 2 p.m. Anniversary couples RSVP by July 16, at covdio.org/wedding-vespers/ or contact Lisa Taylor at (859) 392-1533 to register. Reservations are only required for anniversary couples; family members and guests are welcome to attend.

Donate a bike — Change a Life! **Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington started a new min-**

2024 Parish Festivals

St. Mary, Alexandria
Aug. 9, 6–11 p.m.
Aug. 10, 5–11 p.m.

St. Bernard Parish,
Dayton, Aug. 16, 6-11 p.m.;
Aug. 17, 5–11 pm.

St. Philip, Melbourne
Aug. 17, golf ball drop and festival

St. Augustine, Augusta
Aug. 23 and 24, 5–10 p.m.
Aug. 25, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.

Holy Cross District High School
Aug. 23, 6 p.m.–12 a.m.
Aug. 24, 5:30–12 a.m.

St. Cecilia, Independence
Aug. 30–31, 7–11 p.m.,
Sept. 1, 6–11 p.m.
Family Day, Sept. 2,
1–10 p.m.

St. Patrick Parish,
Maysville
Fall festival, Sept. 6–8

St. Barbara, Erlanger
Rocktoberfest
Sept. 13, 6 p.m.–12 a.m.,
Sept. 14, 5 p.m.–12 a.m.,
Sept. 15, 2–7 p.m.

St. Benedict, Covington
Sept. 20 and 21, 5–11 p.m.

St. Agnes, Ft. Wright
Sept. 27–29, Oktoberfest

istry, Pickett's Corner, in 2023. The new ministry distributes and repairs bicycles to those in need in the area. Most people receiving a bike use it for transportation to work, store or doctor appointments. Adult-size bikes needed. E-mail pickettscorner23@gmail.com if you have a bike to donate. The volunteer team will pick it up.

New Beginnings is an 8-week, faith-based support group that provides separated and divorced individuals the opportunity for healing and growth. In this group, participants find new understanding of themselves and their relationships and gain courage to discover new life. Evenings, 7-8:30; location varies. Registration is required. Visit <https://covdio.org/new-beginnings-2/> or call (859) 392-1500, ext.1592. Summer/Fall schedule is consecutive Tuesdays – Aug. 20, Aug. 27, Sept. 10, Sept. 17, Sept. 24, Oct. 1, Oct. 8, and Oct. 15; Time: 7 to 8:30 p.m., at Catholic Charities — 3629 Church St., Covington.



NKU at the MAC (left and above) Northern Kentucky University hosted its Track and Field home meet for the first time in program history at the Bishop Brossart High School's Mustang Athletic Center, April 13. The weather was perfect and the MAC was packed. The smiles, the endurance, the togetherness made for indescribable meet. BBHS is proud of the opportunities the MAC provides the community.

Support for Amendment 2

(Continued from page 1)

support for the education costs of students in kindergarten through 12th grade who are outside the system of common (public) schools by amending the Constitution of Kentucky as stated below?"— with the amending text reading "The General Assembly may provide financial support for the education of students outside the system of common schools. The General Assembly may exercise this authority by law, Sections 59, 60, 171, 183, 184, 186 and 189 of this Constitution notwithstanding."

"Yes on 2" promotes school choice, and the Diocese of Covington vouches for voting "Yes" on the ballot this fall.

Kendra McGuire, diocesan superintendent of Catholic Schools, brought this interest to the attention of teachers during each session. For the upcoming school year, diocesan interest in serving under-represented communities is increasing. Programs such as the inclusion of the FIRE Foundation, which seeks to make Catholic schools accessible to students with disabilities, are being implemented in the new year.

"Another hindrance that we see especially in all our schools is finances," said Mrs. McGuire. "Finances sometimes are a barrier to serving our families."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states the responsibility of education for children, and as such, Mrs. McGuire said, "Parents have the right to choose a school for them which corresponds to their own convictions. This right is fundamental."

Two years ago, the Vatican published a docu-

ment called "The Identity of a Catholic School for a Cultural Dialogue," which stated that, according to Mrs. McGuire, "a distinctive feature of the ecclesial nature of our schools is that it is a school for all, especially the weakest."

Historically, Catholic schools were established by religious to serve the neediest populations — this mission remains.

Mrs. McGuire stressed that the passing of Amendment 2 won't take away from public school funding, which is required to remain fully funded by law of the Kentucky Constitution — but would allow money to "follow the student" to allow for families a wider range of choice for education, regardless of financial barriers.

As of 2024, 33 states in the United States have some sort of school choice program or charter school law in effect, including every state bordering Kentucky.

If the amendment passes, no immediate programs will become effective, but it will allow "state legislators to listen to constituents across the state to choose to establish or not establish a school choice program in Kentucky," Mrs. McGuire said. "I hope you will consider voting yes so that we can help all students in our state choose the school that's best for them."

"This is the moment for us in making an effort towards school choice," she continued, "If it doesn't pass in November, then we are out of options for these children."

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Local pilgrims react to Walk With One initiative announced at the Eucharistic Congress

Bella Young
Multimedia Correspondent

It was the final evening of the National Eucharistic Congress, in the midst of over 60,000 Catholics when the Walk with One Initiative was announced. This initiative will be part of the Year of Mission, the final steppingstone on the three-year journey that is the Eucharistic Revival.

The Walk with One initiative is meant to serve as a tactic for evangelization that is accessible to everyone. True to the name, the initiative invites all of us to find someone in our lives who has walked away from the faith and walk with them back to Christ.

“We are called to evangelize, and thanks to the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are well equipped for this mission ... There is someone in your life right now whom Jesus longs to call to himself. He wants to spark a relationship them and bless them with his sacraments. In this Year of Mission, Catholics across the U.S. are saying ‘yes’ to a special form of heart-to-heart accompaniment called the Walk With One initiative.” This statement from the National Eucharistic Revival website affirms what was announced on July 21, everyone is able to spread the word of Christ.

Of those in attendance for the announcement of the Walk With One initiative were diaconal aspirants from the Diocese of Covington: Jeff Bier, St. Henry Parish, Edgewood; Mike Bezold, St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Alexandria; J.J. Wurtz, St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring, and Kevin Hooker, St. Paul Parish, Florence.

Mr. Wurtz shared his optimism for the success of the initiative, “I look forward to seeing the counts in church

and how the numbers will continue to grow. I think the Eucharistic Congress excites people.”

This year of mission comes 25 years after the Pew Research Center released statistics showing that 71 percent of Catholics who are now unaffiliated with a religion left the Church after gradually drifting away. The now commonly cited study is telling of the potential success that the Walk With One Initiative, as a gradual falling away from Christ is what this initiative is looking to combat.



“What you received as a gift, you must give as a gift. This year we’ve invited you to ‘walk’ with one person. What would happen if each of you thought of one person you know who’s currently away from the faith; and you decided to pray for them and befriend them and then invite them to take one step closer to Jesus and his church?,” asked Bishop Cozzens, board chairman of the National Eucharistic Congress.

At this the crowd in Lucas Oil Stadium erupted into cheers, and Mr. Bezold knows why, “I think it’s a great idea I think there’s so many people in need of hearing his message, that anyway we can get the message out and bring people back home is a great idea.”

The excitement at the announcement of the initiative was palpable, coursing through the stadium as people realized the impact this could have on the Church. “If everyone that was there brought someone to the Church, to the Eucharist, the Church would be much more vibrant,” said Mr. Hooker.

Understanding that the process of evangelization can be daunting, the Walk With One website breaks it down

into four steps. The first step is to identify. “Don’t just pick someone. Ask God whom he wants you to accompany on their journey home to the Church. He will point you to the person he has in mind and open the doors for the conversations that need to happen.”

The Eucharistic Congress website explains the next step, intercede. “As soon as the Lord lays someone on your heart, begin to pray for them! Ask God to remove whatever obstacles are making it difficult for this person to draw closer to Christ and his Church. Pray for the grace to be able to accompany them as well.”

After intercession is connection. “Look for ways to build a deeper relationship with this person. Listen deeply for promptings from the Holy Spirit as you get to know your friend’s joys and struggles. Share with them some of your own.”

Perhaps the most intimidating step is the fourth one, invite. “Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit. When the time is right, invite your friend to take a concrete next step in fostering a personal relationship with Jesus and the Church. This might mean joining you for a small group or Mass on Sunday.”

These steps and their explanations can be found on the Eucharistic Revival website. <https://www.eucharisticrevival.org/walk-with-one#start-today>.

With the announcement of the Walk With One initiative, the Eucharist Revival is closer its beginning than to its end. As the clock begins to tick away on this Year of Mission, acting on the promptings of the Holy Spirit is of the utmost importance. Mr. Bier stresses this, “We need to make a priority for this message because people need it, you could see it at the congress, just how deeply people were affected. We need to give that opportunity for encounter to all the other millions of Catholics.”



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Catechists teach the truth, invited to journey with others during Ministry Day

Maura Baker
Staff Writer

Parish catechists, including coordinators and directors of parish religious education programs, came together, Aug. 3, for the annual Catechist Ministry Day held at St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger.

Hosted by the diocesan Office of Catechesis and Evangelization, much of the day was planned by Angie Poat, diocesan youth minister — who changed the typical schedule for the ministry day to include more engagement,

situated in multiple “sessions” with breakout groups divided by ministry ending the day.

The day began with Mass, celebrated by Father John Sterling, pastor, St. Barbara Parish, and assisted by Deacon Jim Fortner, chief operating officer of the diocesan Curia.

Catechists share the truth, said Deacon Fortner during his homily.

“Sometimes I think we’re a little bit weary because people aren’t listening,” he continued, recalling his own experiences, “...I taught PSR since I was 34 years old and some-

times I’ve looked at the kids and it’s like, is anyone listening to the truth? But you just keep doing that and at the end of the year, they got the message.”

“We must have faith,” Deacon Fortner told the gathered catechists, “We must never lose our joy for teaching the truth.”

Having recently returned from the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, Deacon Fortner mentioned the congress’s parting initiative: Walk With One.

“Let’s focus on that as we teach,” he said, “as we share the goodness, let’s focus on each person and let’s meet them where they’re at. Let’s journey with them through the semester, and put all the trust in God.”

Baker photos



(above left) Parish catechists stand to sing at the Ministry Day’s opening Mass.

(above center) Father John Sterling, pastor, St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger, prays the Eucharistic Prayers at the altar. Deacon Jim Fortner, chief operating officer of the diocesan Curia, assists.

(above right) Deacon Jim Fortner preaches the homily at the Catechist Ministry Day, Aug. 3.

(right) Parish catechists gesture numbers corresponding to years during an icebreaker game which had them line themselves up based on seniority.

(far right) Angie Poat, diocesan youth minister, speaks to catechists.

(below) Joanie Lecoy, catechist, Sts. Boniface & James Parish, Ludlow, was one of the attendees



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St. Ann Church, Covington, prayed its 137th novena to its patron saint over a nine-day period asking for St. Ann's intercession. St. Ann is the patroness of Christian families, mothers, grandmothers, housewives, pregnancy, pregnant women, women in labor and sterility, among others. The theme for this year's novena was "The Eucharist," with a deacon or priest preaching on the Eucharist during each of the nine days. On July 25, Deacon Chuck Melville began his homily on the Eucharist and Social Justice by saying, "Why was Christ here, what is it about Christ that he was here for? We look at Christ's life here on earth it was about dealing with the poor and downtrodden, it was a life focused on social justice." At the conclusion of Mass worshippers received a blessing with a relic of St. Ann.

Pope prays for peace, calls for end of discrimination in Afghanistan

Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

Meeting leaders of the Afghan community in Italy, Pope Francis condemned violence and discrimination based on religion and later asked people to pray for an end to discrimination in Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan, particularly discrimination against women.

At his weekly general audience Aug. 7, he asked people to work and pray "that ethnic discrimination in regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan would be eliminated and especially discrimination against women."

Before the audience he had met with nine men representing the Afghan Community Association in Italy.

Afghanistan and Pakistan, he told them, "are made up of many peoples, each proud of their culture, traditions and unique way of life."

Unfortunately, he said, instead of "protecting the characteristics and rights of each group," some people use diversity "as a reason for discrimination and exclusion, if not outright persecution."

"The religious factor, by its very nature, should help soften the harshness of contrasts and create space for everyone to be granted full citizenship rights on an equal footing and without discrimination," he said. "Yet oftentimes religion is manipulated and instrumentalized and ends up being used for contrary ends."

(Continued on page 12)



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis and members of the Afghan Community Association in Italy recite prayers in a meeting room behind the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican Aug. 7, 2024.

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Pope prays for peace

(Continued from page 11)

"In such cases, religion becomes a factor of confrontation and hatred, which can lead to violent acts," the pope said. "You have often seen this yourselves. I too have seen these difficult moments reported by the news — so much difficulty and pain!"

"One cannot invoke God's name to foment contempt, hatred and violence toward others," Pope Francis told the group, thanking them for their "noble endeavor to promote religious harmony and to strive to overcome misunderstandings between different religions in order to build paths of trusting dialogue and peace."

"May the almighty and merciful God assist government

leaders and peoples in building a society where all are accorded full citizenship with equal rights; where everyone can live according to their own customs and culture within a framework that takes into account the rights of all, without abuses of power or discrimination," the pope prayed.

With the situation in the Middle East remaining tense after the assassination in Iran of a leader of Hamas, at the end of his general audience Pope Francis again expressed his deep concern and called for a cease-fire, starting in Gaza.

"I continue to follow the situation in the Middle East

with great concern, and I reiterate my appeal to all the parties involved that the conflict does not spread, and that there may be an immediate cease-fire on all fronts, starting with Gaza, where the humanitarian situation is dire and unsustainable," the pope told the crowd at his audience.

"I pray that the sincere search for peace will extinguish strife, love will overcome hatred and vengeance will be disarmed by forgiveness," he said.

Pope Francis also asked people to join him in praying for Ukraine, Myanmar and Sudan. "May these war-torn populations soon find the peace for which they yearn," he said.

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Diocese enlisting mentors

(Continued from page 3)

have to administer the program. All they need to do is be available as a mentor to walk with people and guide them," said Mr. Isaak. "It's like almost giving a person a gift of faith and salvation, introducing them to and leading them closer to Jesus Christ," that's the role of the mentor.

How do you know if you're being called to be a mentor? First, if the thought of accompanying someone on their faith journey stirs your heart and mind, start praying about it. Ask the Lord if this is his plan for you. Then, talk with your pastor or school principal about becoming a mentor. And, of course, register for the mentor training workshops.

"The only qualification, as far as I know, is that you are a baptized Christian and Catholic, practicing your faith and that you are in union with Jesus Christ," said Mr. Isaak. "The one thing that I would advise people is take advantage these free courses. Bishop Iffert has generously and kindly invested in his people's lives by bringing this huge platform."

Mr. Isaak's encouragement to others comes from deep personal experience.

"When I talk about my faith, I always want to cry because I feel so awesome about it," said Mr. Isaak. "I just love the Holy Spirit that's working in it, in these words, in the things that we learn, in everything we do — it just so impactful. I want everyone to come and enjoy what I'm enjoying."

The Diocese of Covington School Lunch Program receives USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program (FFVP) Grant

The Diocese of Covington School Lunch Program is pleased to announce Holy Trinity, St. Anthony and St. Augustine are recipients of the federal Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) funded and regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The FFVP provides all children in participating schools with a variety of free fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the school day. It is an effective and creative way of introducing fresh fruits and vegetables as healthy snack options. The FFVP also encourages community partnerships to support the school when they offer free fruits and vegetables to children during the school day.

The goal of the FFVP is to:

- Create healthier school environments by providing healthier food choices
- Expand the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience
- Increase children's fruit and vegetables consumption
- Make a difference in children's diets to impact their present and future health

School selection was based upon submitted applications from elementary schools that operate the National School Lunch Program and that have 50 percent or more of their students eligible for free/reduced-price meals. Priority was given to schools with the highest percentage of free and reduced-price eligible students. Kentucky received more than 3.8 million dollars in FFVP funding for the 2022 Federal Fiscal Year. Each participating school will receive funds to operate the program based on approximately \$50 per student.

The participating schools are listed below.

Site Name	Award Amount
Holy Trinity	\$6,600.00
St. Augustine	\$6,975.00
St. Anthony	\$5,400.00
FFVP Grant Total	\$18,975.00

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Mentor Workshops

The Vocation of the Catechist

Saturday, Aug. 17 and 24, 9–11:30 a.m.
St. Mary Parish, Alexandria

The vocation of the catechist is to be a witness of Christ's goodness, of His zeal, His ways, of Him — to be like the Master. This is a two-part workshop.

Being Guided and Guiding Souls

Saturday, Sept. 14, 28, and Oct. 5, 9–11:30 a.m.
St. Timothy Parish, Union

Explore what it means to be guided and the fundamentals of what it means to guide another soul in a catechetical context. This is a three-part Workshop.

Personal Vocation and the Mentoring Relationship

Saturday, Nov. 9, 30, and Dec. 21, 9–11:30 a.m.

Diocesan Curia Offices, Covington, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium

Discuss the meaning of personal vocation and the pressing need for integrating personal vocation into all Catholic formation. This is a three-part Workshop.

Building the Mentoring Relationship: Asking Good Questions

Saturday, Jan 11, 18, 9–11:30 a.m.
St. Pius X Parish, Edgewood, Meeting Rooms, PMR 1,2&3

An important part of being a mentor is getting to know the person under your care. Explore various kinds of questions related to this work of discovery. This is a two-part Workshop.

Building the Mentoring Relationship: Empathic Listening

Saturday, Feb 8, 22, 9–11:30 a.m.
Diocesan Curia Offices, Covington, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium

Empathic listening is the counterpart skill to asking good questions that enables mentors to truly understand another person intellectually as well as emotionally. This is a two-part Workshop.

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The ins and outs of love

(Continued from page 4)

someone is often attached to feelings of love.

“— Healthy jealousy: Feeling a healthy level of jealousy can also be a sign of being in love. It shows that you care about the person and want to protect the relationship.”

On the lighter side of love, never overlook the simple ways of caring, as in “Take care,” “Be happy,” “Love you,” “Peace and love,” “Be safe,” “Be well” and the ever important “God bless.”

Ray Smith is a commissioned Lay Pastoral Minister for the Diocese of Covington.

Listen, Teach, Send

(Continued from page 5)

The Holy Spirit has reminded us of the Jesus model, to walk with one and to listen, teach, and send in his name. Are you willing to go on that spiritual journey with one person? We are also reminded that when we journey and listen to another, we, the Church, “are to be a field hospital to heal wounds, restore trust, and rejuvenate faith.” Thanking Jesus in advance for healing wounds, restoring trust, and rejuvenating faith in the Diocese of Covington.

Angie Poat is the diocesan Youth Minister for the Diocese of Covington, Ky

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Step 3: Your account becomes active when your background check, VIRTUS

session and Acceptance Form are posted on your account. You will receive 12 bulletins per year. You will receive e-mail notices at system@pub.virtus.org unless your computer program blocks them.

Bulletins:

■ August bulletin: posted Sunday, August 4; due Tuesday, Sept. 3. The monthly e-mail reminder

of a new bulletin posted will come from system@pub.virtus.org.

www.virtusonline.org, enter your user id and password. If your account is suspended contact your primary location where you volunteer or are employed. Your primary location contact information is found under your Contact Tab.

VIRTUS Training:

■ Tuesday, Aug. 27, 6:30–9 p.m., St. Francis Xavier Parish, parish hall, Falmouth

■ Thursday, Aug. 29, 6:30–9 p.m., DCCH Center for Children and Families, Ft. Mitchell

■ Wednesday, Oct. 2, 9–11:30 a.m., Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

■ Wednesday, Oct. 2, 6–8:30 p.m., Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

Note: If your Training Tab is missing or you cannot access your account, contact your parish, school or institution.

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NEWS BRIEFS

National/World

Pope pleads for restraint in Middle East after killing

VATICAN CITY — As fears of a widening war in the Middle East grew again in early August, Pope Francis pleaded with the region's leaders to exercise restraint and engage in dialogue. "Let us have the courage to resume dialogue so that there is an immediate cease-fire in Gaza and on all fronts, the hostages are freed and the people are helped with humanitarian aid," the pope said Aug. 4 after leading the recitation of the Angelus prayer. "Attacks, even targeted ones, and killings can never be a solution," the pope told thousands of people gathered in the midday heat to pray with him. The pope's remarks came after the killing July 31 of a top Hamas leader in Iran — a killing widely attributed to Israel. Attacks and killings, the pope said, never promote "the path of justice, the path of peace, but generate even more hatred and revenge."

New Ohio law requires 'reasonable' accommodation of religious beliefs

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio Republican Gov. Mike DeWine July 24 signed the Religious Expression Days Act into law, which requires every public school to adopt a policy that reasonably accommodates the sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of students. The new law also allows students in K-12 to be absent for up to three school days for religious expression per school year, in order that they may celebrate major religious holidays that are not already school holidays, without those days counting against their attendance record. A spokesman for DeWine did not immediately respond to a request from OSV News for comment. The Catholic Conference of Ohio did not take a position on the law, HB 214, but the group did testify previously during the legislative session as proponents of a similar bill that would have also made accommodations for students in public schools to be excused for holy days. Brian Hickey, executive director of the Catholic Conference of Ohio, told OSV News the group "welcomes the provisions of the Religious Expression Days Act that recognize the importance of holy days for Catholic families in Ohio."

Catholic group sues EEOC over regulations involving abortion, gender identity

WASHINGTON — The Catholic Benefits Association filed a motion July 24 in federal court for preliminary injunction against the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission over two regulations it says violates Catholics' religious beliefs. The group objects to two regulations issued earlier this year. One is the final regulation issued for the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, granting workers protections for time off and other job accommodations for pregnancy-related medical conditions such as miscarriage, stillbirth and lactation — but also for abortion, which was opposed by many of the bill's supporters, including the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The other was a provision of the EEOC's "Enforcement Guidance on Harassment," which CBA CEO Doug Wilson argued in a statement means that "if an employer declines to use an employee's preferred pronouns or refuses to grant him or her access to bathrooms or locker rooms for the opposite sex, such decisions would constitute actionable sexual harassment." Both regulations, Wilson said, "imposed mandates unacceptable for Catholic employers and never intended by Congress." Martin Nussbaum, CBA's general counsel at the Colorado Springs-Colorado-based First and Fourteenth law firm, explained to OSV News the Supreme

Court's recent overturning of its Chevron doctrine eliminates the courts' deference to regulatory agencies' interpretation of law that would have put a heavier burden on the CBA's legal challenge. The CBA's membership comprises Catholic dioceses, hospitals, school systems, religious orders and other entities that offer their employees insurance and benefit programs that adhere to Catholic teaching.

'Abundant data' shows elective induced abortion is not 'health care'

ARLINGTON, Va. — Abortion, which intentionally ends the life of an unborn child, is not health care, according to a new publication by Dr. Ingrid Skop, an board-certified OB-GYN with more than 30 years of experience. "Abundant data indicates that elective induced abortion fails to fulfill the criteria to be considered health care and is certainly not the type of medical intervention for which any health care professionals should advocate," the paper by Skop, vice president and director of medical affairs for the Charlotte Lozier Institute, reads. "Rather, abortion is the intentional ending of an unborn child's life that uses medical drugs and procedures to kill rather than heal, often harming his or her mother in the process." The 25-page paper titled "Is Induced Abortion Health Care?" was published Aug. 7 by Charlotte Lozier, the Arlington-based research education institute of the national pro-life group Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America. According to Skop, abortion not only fails the principles of medical ethics toward the unborn child but also meets none of the criteria established by the American Medical Association for identifying health care that physicians should support. Since the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision overturning Roe v. Wade, she said,

"abortion advocates have tried to promote abortion as essential medical care (but) more than 95% of abortions are in a healthy mom on a healthy baby."

'Parishes are on their own,' says Nicaraguan priest as regime's repression targets diocese

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — At least 11 churchmen have been detained by police and paramilitaries over a weeklong assault in northern Nicaragua, depleting the already demoralized Diocese of Matagalpa — whose leader, Bishop Rolando Álvarez, lives in exile. Nine priests and a deacon were detained Aug. 1 and 2 — with some taken from parishes and parish residences — according to independent Nicaragua media. An octogenarian priest was also detained July 27 in the Diocese of Estelí, where Bishop Álvarez is apostolic administrator. "The Diocese of Matagalpa practically no longer has any clergy. We've been expelled, pressured and forced to flee. Parishes are on their own," an exiled priest, familiar with the diocese, told OSV News. "(The church) has been attacked from all sides. They've removed clergy, they've frozen its accounts. The church has survived," he added. But he said of the ruling Sandinista regime, "Their ultimate goal is to exterminate the diocesan church where Monsignor Rolando (Álvarez) is still bishop." The arrests reflected the deepening repression of the Catholic Church in the Central American country, which has careened toward totalitarianism. President Daniel Ortega and his wife, Vice President Rosarillo Murillo, continue to crack down on dissent, close spaces for civil society and infringe on freedom worship — with priests being spied upon and forced to watch their words during Mass.

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Holy Cross opens perpetual Adoration chapel
Holy Cross Parish, Latonia, celebrated the renovation and opening of its newly established perpetual Adoration chapel following the 10:30 a.m. Mass, July 21. The renovation project was started by former pastor Father Michael Hennigen, who joined for Mass and the procession to transfer the Eucharist to the chapel. The chapel renovation was completed by members of the parish. While the chapel will be left open for Adoration 24/7, an access code is required for entry and can be obtained from the parish office by calling (859) 431-0636.

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