New location for Emergency Shelter of Northern Kentucky a ‘big step’ in addressing homelessness

Allegria Thatcher
Assistant Editor

After 12 years, Emergency Shelter of Northern Kentucky (ESNKY) announced Jan. 8 in conjunction with Kenton County and St. Elizabeth Healthcare that it will be opening doors to a new location in Covington to better assist the homeless.

St. Elizabeth purchased the new property, located at 436 West 13th St., on Dec. 19, 2019, from Steffen’s Tool Rental. St. Elizabeth, which had been providing an urgent care center in ESNKY for the last year, then transferred ownership to Kenton County Dec. 31, which will be operating the shelter under an agreement with ESNKY.

It’s been a long road for ESNKY since it began operating out of Scott Street in 2008. The current location, an old health center, was always meant to be temporary, according to Kim Webb, executive director.

The need for a more appropriate building became apparent this winter. With stricter enforcement of fire codes and occupancy laws, October saw a drastic reduction in the facility’s ability to provide shelter for people experiencing homelessness. While in previous winters ESNKY could shelter 75 guests, new code enforcement allows for only 32. Mrs. Webb said she hoped they would get an allowance because the fire board gives local jurisdictions the ability to make exceptions.

“We were the place the police could bring someone all hours of the night,” she explained. Unfortunately the exception was not granted and this winter has been a strain on the center.

(Continued on page 2)

Deanery Pastoral Council convenes to review plan

Allegria Thatcher
Assistant Editor

The entire Curia staff and representatives from the Diocese of Covington’s five deaneries met Jan. 11 for the annual Deanery Pastoral Council (DPC) Convocation at Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium.

About 20 directors of offices and agencies in the Curia presented an overview to deonary representatives the proposed Pastoral Plan for 2020-2021 and a status report on the 2018-2019 plan.

Topics covered this year ranged from the intention to create a handbook in the Chancery to the promotion of the Liturgy of the Hours for the laity to outreach in growing Hispanic commu- nities.

Since the completion in 2017 of implementing the policies of the 2006 diocesean synod, the DPC has con- tinued to meet annually to review objectives of the diocesan annual plan. The deonary representatives will take the proposals and reports back to local parish councils. Once the parish councils have reviewed and responded to the plan, the representatives will con- vene as a deonary to share and record in a single docu- ment each parish’s response. That document

will be submitted to the Chancery with comments, concerns, and an affirmative or negative vote.

There are five deaneries in the Diocese of Covington: Campbell County Deanery, Covington Deanery, Northern Kenton Deanery, South East Deanery and South West Deanery

Bishop Roger Foys concluded the convocation with an exhorta- tion to the DPC to pour time and thought into their votes before returning them to the Chancery “It’s not a question of voting, but a question of trying to see what this is all about,” he said.

He also explained that the priest file review being under- taken by the diocese from the last 70 years is a way “as far as humanly possible” to ensure that any abuse by diocesan priests has been properly reported. “Why do we have to do this?” Because we value our children, he said. “We want to be absolutely honest.”

Additionally, the priests of the diocese will continue to gather for Holy Hours, 3 p.m. every third Thursday of the month at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in preparation for those sins and for the sanctification of priests. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Bishop Foys shared that a proposed change of Mass time in parishes throughout the diocese was not favorably

(Continued on page 6)
Laura Neuner

The Christmas season came to a close, Jan. 12, on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. In his homily on morning Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, Bishop Roger Foys said that as the Church recalls the baptism of Jesus it is a good opportunity for laymen and women to think about their own baptism.

He focused his homily on the three “Cs” of baptism — creation, commitment and community.

Unlike the other liturgical celebrations of the Church, the sacrament of baptism does not begin with the Sign of the Cross. Instead, Bishop Foys said, it begins with a question, “What name do you give your child?”

“It’s important,” said Bishop Foys.

In the biblical account of creation, God entrusts the naming of animals to Adam. “A name gives us an identity, who we are and who we will be,” Bishop Foys said.

“By allowing Adam to name all the creatures God created, God gave Adam a participation in the creation of the world. So he does with parents who bring children into the world.”

The sacrament of baptism also asks for a commitment, not only of the person being baptized but also of the parents and the godparents.

“We ask the godparents. Are you willing to assist the parents in raising this child in the faith?” Being a godparent is more than an honorary position. A godparent is meant to be an example to the child, so that child can see in that godparent the faith lived out in every day life,” Bishop Foys said. “It would be horrible to expect a child to live up to a commitment that’s made in their name if the parents and the godparents don’t live up to that commitment themselves.”

The third “C” — community — is revealed in the fact that Jesus’ baptism was a public event and not a private one.

“Apart from removing original sin, baptism is part of our being a living and active member of the Christian community,” Bishop Foys said. “We are baptized into a community of faith consisting of brother and sisters — all sons and daughters of the same God. The community of faith is there to sustain us.”

Like Jesus’ baptism that revealed his identity and began his public life, “our baptism gives us an identity as Christian Catholics — a son or daughter of God,” Bishop Foys said. “Our life on this earth begins at conception, our life in the Lord — our real life — begins at our baptism.”

Addressing homelessness

(Continued from page 1)

“The new location will drastically improve the way the center operates,” said Bergmann, “it’s closer to the hospital, the Kenton County Government Center, the new Parish Kitchen and the Career Vocational Center. It is also still on a bus line.

Internally, Mrs. Webb said it’s like having an open-can van. “A building’s size doesn’t make it large or small. Our building here is larger than it seems because it’s so cut up.”

Community donated supplies, beds and non-commercial blankets will make a new home for the center’s guests, designed to suit its purpose with 24-hour sheltering during extreme temperatures, daytime operations like shower and laundry facilities, a kitchen and space for community partners. Instead of one shower, one washer and one dryer for up to 81 guests on a cold night, the new space can be developed to better meet the needs of the community.

There will also be rooms for counseling, mental health services, career coaching and more thorough health services through St. Elizabeth Healthcare.

Mrs. Webb said she hopes the new center will be open in time for next winter.

“We’re going to use this (the current space) this winter and for our summer operations until we get the building designed and ready to go by late 2020, November or December,” she said.

Until then, ENSKY will continue to send overflow guests to places such as the Salvation Army and local churches, like Mother of God in downtown Covington.

Mrs. Webb said the shelter truly couldn’t operate without support and leadership from the community and the will of everyone involved.

About ENSKY’s new home, Bishop Roger Foys said, “In this day and age we too often forget those who are not as fortunate as many people and who have need of something as important as the Emergency Shelter. The Emergency Shelter is a blessing to our community and I am so grateful to all those who in any way have helped to find a new home for it.”

For Mrs. Webb, it’s simply a matter of human dignity. “I try to look at their situation as if I were in it. What would it look like if I were in that neighborhood? What would I want to see? Then I’ll work hard to alleviate those fears and anxieties.”

“Everybody deserves to have a bed to sleep in,” she said.

Kenton County Judge/Executive Kris Kncholemann has been driving the political force behind the new location. He was thrilled that all parties were finally able to come together and accomplish a long-time goal.

“They’re offering many of the services but they just don’t have the space,” he said. “Once you have the space, then you can start inviting partners in to meet with guests and clients and get them help.”

Mr. Kncholemann sees it as a huge step for bolstering a thriving working population.

“We’ve got all the pieces in the region,” he said. “With the new shelter location, they can kind of be on a navigational point.”

He cited a report begun a year and a half ago. Northern Kentucky agencies partnered with the state and various cities to gather information.

For the first time, data collected proves that “it’s not a Covington problem, not a joblessness problem, thriving working population.”

The following primary schools in the Diocese of Covington are hosting an open house for prospective students during or around Catholic Schools Week. Catholic Schools Week (CSW) will be celebrated this year Jan. 27–31. Sponsored by the National Catholic Education Association, CSW is an annual celebration of Catholic education in the United States. In addition to hosting open houses, schools typically observe the week with Masses, special themes for each day and fun activities for students, families, parishioners and community members.

Through these events, schools focus on the value of Catholic education provides to young people and its contributions to Church, local communities and the nation. This year’s theme is “Catholic Schools: Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed.”

Primary schools to host open houses for Catholic Schools Week

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<tr>
<td>Villa Madonna Academy</td>
<td>1215 Villa Madonna Drive</td>
<td>(513) 961-5102</td>
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<td>St. Paul School, Florence</td>
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Sunday, Feb. 2
- St. Patrick School, Maysville, 3 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 6
- St. Joseph Academy, Walton, 6-8 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 20
- Covington Latin School, Covington, 3-6 p.m. (for fifth, sixth and seventh grade students)
- Holy Cross Elementary School, Latonia, 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- Holy Family School, Covington, 3-6 p.m.
- Prince of Peace Montessori, Covington, 3-6 p.m.
- St. Augustine School, Augusta, 3-6 p.m.
- St. Edward School, Cincinnati, 3-6 p.m.
- St. Joseph Pre-K, Camp Springs, 3-6 p.m.
- St. Peter and Paul School, California, 3-6 p.m.
- St. Philip School, Melbourne, 3-6 p.m.
Catholic Conference of Kentucky highlights for 2020 General Assembly

Parents advocate for scholarship tax credits

Lauree Keener
Editor

Two local women, Cassandra Behanan and Nancy Deaton, will be traveling to Frankfort, Jan. 27, along with many others, for the Celebrating School Choice rally. The rally takes place during National School Choice Week, Jan. 26-Feb. 1. Neither claims to be very political, but both share the same passion for school choice and support scholarship tax credit legislation.

Scholarship tax credits would allow individuals or businesses to receive a state tax credit for contributions to qualified non-profit organizations — like the Diocese’s Alliance for Catholic Urban Education that provide financial aid, or scholarships, to lower income families who choose a non-public school for their child.

Ms. Behanan works in the cafeteria at Zion Christian Academy (ZCA), Florence. She is the mother of five children; two adult children live on their own; her third oldest attends Northern Kentucky University and she has two children in primary school. With only one scholarship available to her at ZCA, Ms. Behanan made the difficult decision to have her youngest child join her at ZCA while keeping her middle-school aged son at the local public school.

When I started working here and I saw how the school was run and how the children were learning, I just thought, I thought if I couldn’t get both of them here right now, at least I could get one here,” Ms. Behanan said.

But moving her son to ZCA has taken on an added urgency. Last year her son encountered racism that led to a physical retaliation.

And while she understands her son’s punishment for hitting another student, she was disappointed that the other student received no consequence for calling her son the “N word.”

This was his first experience with racism and my son didn’t understand it. I had to explain to him that since he is biracial this may be the first time but it won’t be the last (Continued on page 13)

Cassandra Behanan, parent of a student attending Zion Christian Academy, spoke to legislators at the Northern Kentucky Legislative Forum, Jan. 4. She along with many others, will be traveling to Frankfort, Jan. 27, for the Celebrating School Choice rally in support of scholarship tax credits.

Brian Shumway
Local government

The 2020 Kentucky General Assembly began its 60-day legislative session Jan. 7. The Catholic Conference of Kentucky has identified legislation that is of interest to Kentucky’s four bishops and is asking Catholics to contact their legislators.

“There will be many bills the CCK will share in the coming weeks, but here are just a few that are of great importance, because of the gravity of the issues and because things could move very quickly,” said Jason Hall, executive director, in an e-mail to subscribers of the CCK Faithful Citizen Advocate action newsletter.

Senate Bill 1 (SB1) is designed to prevent “sanctuary cities” to Kentucky. Sanctuary cities are cities that adopt a policy of refusing to cooperate with federal immigration enforcement efforts. Kentucky currently has no sanctuary cities. The CCK is asking constituents to contact senators to oppose this bill.

While rhetoric surrounding this bill is problematic, the CCK said that there is one aspect of SB1 that is especially problematic.

It requires all ‘public agencies’ (any organization receiving more than 25 percent of its budget from state or local government) to use their best efforts to support immigration enforcement. It is unclear what that means or what it would require of local health departments, domestic violence shelters, or any other number of agencies.

Such a law could create uncertainty among the immigrant population, leading many to avoid seeking the help they need from law enforcement or other agencies, even if they have been victims of crime,” Mr. Hall said.

The two bills the CCK is asking constituents to support are House Bill 5 and 237.

HB 67 — the Abortion Nurturing Constitutional Amendment — would put a constitutional amendment on the ballot in November that would make it explicit that there is no right to an abortion in the Kentucky Constitution. If Roe v. Wade were overturned in federal courts, HB 67 would prevent the right to an abortion from being added to the state constitution.

HB 67 would eliminate the use of the death penalty for defendants with a diagnosed severe mental illness. CCK has long supported this bill.

As Scholarship Tax Credit legislation was gaining in momentum, House Floor Leader John “Bum” Carney (District 50), the champion for Scholarship Tax Credits, has fallen ill and is continuing to fight for recovery;

“We pass our sincere prayers and thoughts to him and his family as they go through this time,” said Mr. Hall.

Despite the setback, the CCK is continuing its public advocacy efforts for scholarship tax credits and is working with leadership to determine “the appropriate path forward legislatively.”

The CCK is hopeful that a bill will be filed this session and is encouraging constituents to contact legislators now to express support for scholarship tax credits. Scholarship tax credits would allow individuals or businesses to receive a state tax credit for contributing to a qualified non-profit organization — like the diocese’s Alliance for Catholic Urban Education — that provide financial aid, or scholarships, to lower income families who choose a non-public school for their child.

Day of Prayer and Penance for Life and Eucharistic Adoration

In solidarity with the pilgrims who are traveling to the March for Life in Washington, D.C., Bishop Roger Foyes has called for a Day of Prayer and Penance for Life, Jan. 24, throughout the Diocese of Covington. Each church is to be open for prayer and to schedule at least one hour of Eucharistic adoration.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

All Saints, Walton, all day
St. Barbara, Erlanger, all day (call parish for code)
St. Benedict, Covington, 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
Blessed Sacrament, Ft. Mitchell, 10:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.
Sts. Boniface and James, Ludlow, 3-5 p.m.
St. Catherine of Siena, Ft. Thomas, 9:30 a.m.-4:45 p.m.
St. Cecilia, Independence, 8 a.m.-12 p.m.
Crifo Rey, Florence, 12-6:30 p.m.
Divine Mercy, Bellevue, 12-3 p.m.
St. Edward, Cynthiana, 7 p.m.-8 p.m.
St. Edward, Otenton, 8 a.m.
Holy Cross, Latonia, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
Holy Spirit, Newport, 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
St. John the Baptist, Wilder, 8:30-9 a.m.
St. John the Evangelist, Carrollton, 1 p.m.
St. John the Evangelist, Covington, 1:30-2:30 p.m.
St. Joseph, Camp Springs, 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
St. Joseph, Cold Spring, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
St. Joseph, Crescent Springs, all day
St. Mary of the Assumption, Alexandria, 7:30-8 p.m.
Dr. Patricia, Taylor Mill, all day
St. Patrick, Maysville, 9 a.m.-7 p.m.
Sts. Peter and Paul, Calhoun, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
St. Pius X, Edgewood, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
St. Theresa, Southgate, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
St. Timothy, Union, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
St. Thomas, Ft. Thomas, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
St. William, Williamstown, 8:30-10 a.m.

Holy Hour locations

Bishop Foyes encourages the faithful of the diocese to join together in prayer for a Holy Hour for life, Jan. 24, 7 p.m.
Nine parishes throughout the diocese have been designated.
Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington
Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell
Divine Mercy Parish, Bellevue
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Burlington
St. Edward Parish, Cynthiana
St. John the Evangelist Parish, Carrollton
St. Mary Parish, Alexandria
St. Patrick Parish, Maysville
St. Patrick Parish, Taylor Mill

Bishop’s Schedule

Jan. 18 Covington Latin School Board planning meeting, Covington Latin School, 8:30 a.m.
Jan. 19 Mass, Cathedral Basilica, Covington, 10 a.m.
Jan. 20 Curia offices closed — Martin Luther King observance
Confirmation, St. William Parish, Williamstown, 7 p.m.
Jan. 21 Individual meeting, 10 a.m.
Confirmation, St. Mary Parish, Alexandria, 7 p.m.
Jan. 22 Individual meetings, 10 a.m.; 11 a.m.
Confirmation, St. Thomas Parish, Ft. Thomas, 7 p.m.
Jan. 23 Priests Continuing Education Committee meeting, 10 a.m.
Jan. 26 Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.
The need for renewal and conversion for ecumenical journey to Christian unity

The “Week of Prayer for Christian Unity” is a tradition- al period for common prayer for the intention of Christian unity. This privileged time of eight days of intensified prayer for the restoration of church unity is customarily observed from Jan. 18, Feast of the Chair of Peter, through Jan. 25, the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. Although the “Week of Prayer for Christian Unity” has been cele- brated internationally since the 1960s, such was not always the case. Widespread observance was not reached until mid-20th century. Historically Father Paul Wattson (d. 1938) in the United States and Abbe Paul Couturier (d. 1933) in France are the two principal ecumenical pioneers who are associated with the creation of this contemporary ecumenical event. The year 2008 marked the 100th anniversary of this important movement of ecumenical prayer. Father Wattson, its originator in the U.S., had implemented the first observance in 1908. Known initially as “the Church Unity Octave,” the practice was later named “the Chair of Unity Octave.”

All Christians. Father Wattson and Mother Lurana White had founded an Anglican foundation, the Franciscan Friars and Sisters of the Assumption at Graymoor, New York. The Graymoor movement was corporately received into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church in 1939. Pope St. Pius X officially blessed the octave in 1916 and Pope Benedict XIV extended the observance to the Universal Church in 1919. From its inception, differing concepts of ecclesiology and of the nature of church unity had proven to be problematic for the participation of many Roman Catholics as well as for Reformation Churches in general. Stumbling blocks, however, were eventually reduced by the approach of Abbe Paul Couturier from the Archdiocese of Lyons, France. In the 1930s, Father Couturier was instru- mental in creating a more inclusive basis for separated Christians to come together in common prayer. His starting point was taken from Christ’s prayer for unity in the 17th chapter of John’s Gospel — “that all may be one” (John 17:21). That “conservative prayer of Christ” sum- moned Christians to gather in prayer for a “unity that Christ wals, as he wills, and when he wills.”

Cardinal Walter Kasper, the president-emeritus of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, has noted that the original ecumenical movement “was driven by a spiritual movement, by spiritual ecumenism, which is the power behind the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, established initially by the Abbe Paul Couturier, the grand apostle and pioneer of the ecumeni- cal movement.”

In an address at the 2006 plenary assembly of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Church Unity, Cardinal Kasper noted that the faith of one of John 17:21: “Significantly, Jesus’ words ‘that all may be one’ (John 17:21) are not a mandate, much less a command; they are a prayer, and ecumenism is nothing other than joining in this prayer of Our Lord and making it one’s own. That is what the great master of spiritual ecu- menism, Jean Paul Couturier (1891-1953), taught.”

In time, the direction initiated by Father Couturier was validated at the Second Vatican Council in “Lumen Gentium” (the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church,” 1964) and “Unitatis Restitutio” (the “Decree on Ecumenism,” 1965). Later, subsequent ecumenical docu- ments confirmed the practice of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. “The Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms of Second Vatican Council” (DAPNE, 1985), “Ut Unum Sint” (“That All May Be One”), 1995, Pope John Paul II’s encyclical on ecumenism (UES), and the Catechesis of the Catholic Church (CCC, 1997).

The “Decree on Ecumenism” reaffirmed the conciliar teaching of “spiritual ecumenism” as the “soul” of the ecumenical movement. Spiritual ecumenism is an umbrel- la concept which includes conversion to the Gospel, fidelity to holiness, and prayer. “This change of heart and hold- ness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and can rightly be called ‘spiritual ecumenism.’” (UR, n. 8. See UUS, n. 23, DAPNE, n. 6, CCC, n. 27).

Accordingly, “Ut Unum Sint” identifies the primacy of prayer in the practice of “spiritual ecumenism.” (UUS, nn. 21-27)

In the context of the primacy of prayer, St. John Paul II contributed an in-depth exegesis on the indispensable role of prayer for Christian unity for prayer interpenetrates the process of conversion to the Gospel and the desire for Christian unity.

The late Holy Father emphasized that the journey to the conversion of hearts that is guided by love is “directed to God and at the same time, to all our brothers and sisters, including those not in full communion with us.” (UUS, n. 21)

Since the desire for unity stems from love, love forms “the great undercurrent which gives life and adds vigor to the movement towards unity.” The unity of the inner life of love within the Godhead — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — is the wellspring, “the perfect source of communion,” from which Christians who are not in full communion with one another may draw “the strength to build commu- nion between individuals and Communities, or to re- establish it between Christians still divided.” (UUS, n. 21). In this vein, the “Decree on Ecumenism” calls attention to the unconditional need for interior conversion with the following admonition: “The faithful should remember that they promote union among Christians better, that they live it better, when they try to live holier lives according to the Gospel. For the closer the union with the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, the more deeply and easily will they be able to grow in mutual brotherly love.” (UR, n. 7)

St. John Paul II further developed this need for renewal and conversion in the lived practice of the ecumenical journey toward unity (UES, n. 15-17).

Thus, if love inspires the desire for unity, common prayer promotes love’s “most complete expression.” (UES, n. 21) The “Decree on Ecumenism” substantiates the reality of prayer as “a genuine expression of the ties which even now bind Catholics to their separated brethren.” (UUS, n. 21) The Decree also highlighted the common prayer of Christians who are not in perfect ecclesial commu- nion as “the soul of the whole ecumenical movement.” (UR, n. 8) Accordingly, besides being an essential means for peti- tioning the grace of unity, Christian prayer becomes a lived expression of the unity already binding Christians togeth- er in a real, albeit imperfect, communion. For this reason, “Ut Unum Sint” bestows a “pride of place” to common prayer; that is, “the prayerful union of those who gather together around Christ himself” (UES, n. 22) Common prayer discloses the genuineness of their brotherhood and hospitality in Christ.

Common Prayer for unity itself paves a way to spiritual reconciliation, for it heightens awareness, the divisions notwithstanding, “of how little divides them in compar- ison to what unites them.” (UUS, n. 22. See DAPNE, n. 16)

The 1980 Ecumenical Directory sums up several situa- tions where prayer in common is especially appropriate:

“Prayer in common is recommended for Catholics and other Christians so that together they may put before God the needs and problems they share — e.g., peace, social concerns, mutual charity among people, the dignity of the family, the effects of poverty, hunger, violence, and etc. The same may be said of occasions when, according to circum- stances, a nation, region or community wishes to make a common act of thanksgiving or petition to God, as on a national holiday; at a time of public disaster or mourning, or a day set aside for remembrance of those who have died for their country. This kind of prayer is also recom- mended when Christians hold meetings for study or com- mon action.” (DAPNE, n. 109)

The Directory then explains that “j[his] shared prayer should, however, be particularly concerned with the restoration of Christian unity.” In this context, “Prayer in common, in addition, can provide those who regularly gather before Christ in prayer “to gain the courage to face the painful circumstances which they will find themselves together once more in that commu- nity of the Church which Christ constantly builds up in the Holy Spirit, in spite of weaknesses and human limi- tations.” (UUS, n. 22)

“Ut Unum Sint” provisions “ecumenical prayer” to be “at the service of the Christian mission and credibility.” Through common prayer for unity, brothers and sisters in Christ until separation and division are absolved, they will find themselves together once more in that commu- nity of the Church which Christ constantly builds up in the Holy Spirit, in spite of weaknesses and human limi- tations.” (UUS, n. 22)

The means to obtain the grace for Christian unity are threefold. Prayer holds the first place in seeking the grace for unity. Giving thanks is an essential aspect of that prayer. Finally, hope in the Holy Spirit is integral to that process because the Spirit “can banish from us the painful memories of our separation, as well as he is able to gift us with “clear sightedness, strength, and courage to take whatever steps are necessary, that our commitment may be ever more authentic.” (UES, n. 102)

With clarity and conviction St. John Paul II asserted that the Council’s commitment to the rebuilding of Christian unity reflects that “the Holy Spirit is active in this endeavor and that he is leading the Church to the full realization of the Father’s plan, in conformity with the will of Christ.” (UUS, n. 100)

Ecumenical initiatives are a call to realize the will of Christ for unity. They are a call to meet and express the saving mystery of his Passion. Just as he did then, today too Christ calls everyone to renew their commitment to work for full and visible communion.” (UUS, n. 109)

Father Ronald Ketteler is director of ecumenism, episco- pal liaison to the Messenger and professor of theology at Thomas More University.

 пуруп 18:25 is the annual observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The theme chosen for 2020 is “They Shoved Us Unusual Kindness.” (cf. Acts 2:23) Throughout 2020, join Christians everywhere in praying “that they may all be one” joining our prayer with that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

—Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute

COMMENTS

February 17, 2020

COMMENTS

February 17, 2020
The high tension of the tightrope

The readings for the second Sunday in Ordinary Time — Cycle “A” are: Isaiah 49:3, 5; 1 Corinthians 1:3-6; and John 1:29-34.

A good teacher does not just give answers to her students; she teaches them how to find the answers. A good teacher does not always organize the subject matter for his students, he teaches them how to organize it. The goal of every teacher is to train students to be able to think for themselves.

Similarly, a good parent does not teach children to be dependent, but to become, over a period of years, independent and self-reliant.

Unfortunately, life is not as simple as it would like us to be. As a teacher I have experienced the sometimes illogical thinking of a young adult who thought he was old enough and wise enough to “know it all.” I recall times from my own youth when I wanted to be independent of my parents’ decisions regarding what was good for me. Likewise, I recall times when I wanted to rely on their decisions only to be told I was old enough to make up my own mind.

The more the tensions we all experience in life. John the Baptist was one who experienced the same sort of tension any parent or teacher has in walking the tightrope between being too protective and dominating on one hand and too permissive and not giving enough direction on the other.

Those who teach as a teacher of his disciples — a parent of sorts — was over. The one for whom he was preparing his followers had come. It was time for him to let go of them, to allow them to use what they had learned and to hope that they would be wise enough to follow Jesus. But that had to be their decision.

John’s role in life was the same as any teacher or parent, indeed, any Christian. He was a witness to something greater than himself. We see him as the true witness to Christ in today’s Gospel as he literally points to Jesus and says, “There is the Lamb of God.” Later John asserts that Jesus ranks ahead of him.

In today’s Gospel we find that John baptizes only with water. Jesus, however, is the one who forgives sins, and he baptizes with the Spirit. Thus, Jesus is the true Baptism. John points his followers in the right direction. But it must be their individual decisions as to where they will take that path.

Today’s reading from Isaiah gives us another example of a true witness to God. Isaiah had been called from birth to be a certain ministry. So the prophet tells us that the Lord “formed me as his servant from the womb, that Jacob may be brought back to him and Israel gathered to him.” By the time today’s passage was written, that work had been completed. That’s why Isaiah can rightfully say, “I am the one you look for in the sight of the Lord, and my God is now my strength.”

But the conclusion of today’s first reading makes it clear that the vocation of the true witness is never over: So God tells Isaiah that what he has accomplished is “too little” even though it is more than anyone would have expected. Having already brought his own — the Jewish nation — back to the Lord, God now assigns him the task of converting the gentiles. “I will make you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”

So it is with every Christian. The job is not finished when the children are grown or when I retire. I must always be a witness to God’s love and salvation. I must always be one whose words and lifestyle paint others in the direction of Christ, the Lamb of God.

Father Daniel Vogelpohl

EIGHTH DAY

The Martini Curve revisited

Pope Francis concluded his pre-Christmas to the Roman Curia by memory of Cardinal Carlos Maria Martini, S.J., who died in September 2012. The Holy Father recalled that, “in his last interview, a few days before his death, (Cardinal Martini) said something that should make us think: ‘The Church is 200 years behind the times. Why is she not shaken up? Are we afraid? Fear, instead of courage. Yet faith is the Church’s foundation. Faith, confidence, courage... Only love conquers weariness.’”

The Martini Curve should therefore indeed make us think. I thought about it at the time and ended up with questions rather than answers. What, precisely was the Church 200 years behind? A western culture come unigned from the deep truths of the human condition? A culture that celebrates the imperial autonomous self? A culture that detaches sex from love and deprivation? A culture that breeds a politics of immediate gratification and inter-generational irresponsibility? Why on earth would the Church want to be 200 years behind?

Call me a dullard, but try as I might to adjust my thinking, I’m afraid that what I still think about the allegation that Catholicism’s contemporary failures result from our being stuck in a rut behind the curve of history. Moreover, since Cardinal Martini’s death seven years ago, certain empirical facts have become unmistakable: the local Churches that have tried hardest to play catch up with “history” and “the times” are failing.

The premier example is Catholicism in the German-speaking world. Weekly Mass attendance percentages have fallen into single digits in German cities and aren’t much better in Austria and the German-speaking parts of Switzerland. Has this implosion of the sacramental community compelled a rethinking of the strategy of cultural accommodation? On the contrary: With a bullheadedness once caricatured as typically German, the great majority of German bishops support a national “synodal process” that seems determined to put the pedal to the metal of surrendering to “the times,” even if — particularly if — this means jettisoning the truths that, according to both revelation and reason, make for happiness and holiness.

There is, however, evidence that the offer of friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ as the pathway to a more humane future gets traction.

Shortly after last October’s Great Pachamama Flap, I got a bracing email from a missionary priest in West Africa. After expressing condolences for my “recent Roman penance” at the Amazonian synod (which had feat a truly a politically-correct chatter about the ecologi cal sensitivity of indigenous religions), my friend related an instructive story: “You’ll be happy to know that last year when one of our villages invited me to come and help them destroy their idols and baptize their chief, we did not, before doing so, engage in any ‘dialogue with the spirits,’ as we so highly praised in the [Syndic’s working document]. There was no Tyler to throw [the idol] in, so a sledgehammer and a fire had to suffice. Somehow the village managed to survive without such a dialogue, and in fact they have been so happy... to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the great event, and to bless a cross that will be set up in the village as a permanent reminder of their decision.”

Three weeks ago, the local archbishop wrote those same villagers, telling them of his “immense joy” that the year before, they had “turned away from idols in order to turn resolutely to the Living and True God... You recognize Jesus as Lord and Saviour of the Church and the Life. Open wide your hearts to him... and always conquer evil with good.”

There’s no Martini Curve in that part of the global vineyard, it seems. Rather, there is, to borrow from the late cardinal’s last interview, “faith, courage, confidence... and the love that conquers weariness.” That is surely something to think about in the Vatican — and throughout the world. Everyone is called to missi onary discipleship.

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

President Donald Trump’s executive order 13881, issued on Sept. 26, 2018. The executive order requires consent from state and local governments for federal resettlement of refugees. When the order was issued, states were given 90 days to provide written consent. The deadline date, curiously, was Christmas Day.

In Wisconsin, Gov. Tony Evers submitted his written consent on Dec. 18 to allow resettlement to continue.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, who sponsor National Migration Week, has voiced opposition to Trump’s executive order, if only through their Committee on Migration.

“We also have deep concerns about the forthcoming executive order permitting state and city officials to turn away refugees from their communities,” wrote Bishop Joe S. Vásquez of Austin, Texas, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Migration, on Sept. 27.

In a much stronger show of concern and solidarity, the Lutheran and Catholic bishops of Minnesota co-wrote an open letter in support of refugees in the state. That letter was published Dec. 23 in the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

“We fear the executive order will create further hard ship for refugees by delaying the resolution of their cases, invading extended families and placing national strains on the resettlement system,” the bishops wrote.

(Continued on page 22)
DPC Convocation
(Continued from page 1)

received by pastors and will not be implemented. He also announced his upcoming intention to submit a letter of retirement to the Holy Father Pope Francis at his 75th birthday, as bishops are required to do. He said that he does not know when Pope Francis will accept his retirement but is pleased to serve as long as the Holy Father desires him to remain in his position.

During his address at the DPC Convocation, Bishop Roger Foys accepted the recommenda-
tion of the recently restructured Office of Catechesis and Faith Formation to change its name to the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization.
“We are called to evangelize, and that’s what faith formation is. Evangelization covers all that and more,” Bishop Foys said.

The approval comes after reflection by Bishop Foys and his talk with Pope Francis dur-
ing his December quinquennial ad limina visit. He said Pope Francis spoke with him about how “everything we do as bishops has to be geared toward evangelization: presenting the Gospel to God’s people.”

(Left) Members of the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization
Isaak Isak, co-director;
David Cooles, co-director and
director; and office manager;
Bradley Torino, associate director.

Happy 90th birthday
Charlie and Mary Sue Deters, parishioners, All Saints Parish, Walton, gathered with family and friends, Jan. 12, to celebrate their 90th birthdays. Bishop Roger Foys and Father Daniel Schomaker, vicar general, were among the guests wishing the couple many more happy birthdays together.
First steps by kindergartners and freshmen

This year on the first day of school we witnessed the “first step” of approximately 650 kindergarteners to our Catholic elementary schools and 740 freshmen to our Catholic high schools. Now their journey is well underway and they are counting their steps.

In Catholic schools we have the unique privilege of being able to connect with students, each other and the entire community in a faith-filled environment that nurtures a sense of belonging. We do this most simply by how we treat the person in front of us. We celebrate our newest students to our K–12 grades and their new beginning of spiritual formation, academic advancement, social development and physical growth.

Yours in Catholic education,

Michael Clines
Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Diocese of Covington

(above) The kindergarten classes at St. Agnes, Pt. Wright, celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany by learning about the three kings. They made crowns, placed Baby Jesus in the manger of good deeds and helped the kings follow the star to the stable.

(above) Santa visits the kindergarten class at St. Augustine, Covington.

(right) The students in Mrs. Mary Hanon and Mrs. Katie DeNew’s kindergarten classes at St. Joseph, Cold Spring, enjoy practicing the Engineering Design Process in the Kindergarten Discovery Center whether they are working in groups or individually.

(right) St. Henry District High School. During orientation, students helped welcome the new freshman class to the Crusader family during New Crusader Day at the St. Henry Athletic Complex. Students participated in team building, icebreaker activities and question and answer sessions helping build new connections and friendships.

(above) Ann Williams, Guidance Counselor at Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Burlington, shared a lesson on metamorphosis to teach the kindergarten students about the beauty and wonder of God’s creation.

For more information about the Department of Catholic Schools, call (859) 332-1500 or e-mail pmeirose@covdio.org.
Newsworthly

Happy Birthday to Father Joseph Gallenstein, pastor, St. Mary Parish, Alexandria, Jan. 23; Father Raymond Hartman, retired, Jan. 23; Deacon Timothy Britt, St. Mary Parish, Alexandria, Jan. 23; and Father Michael Black, parochial vicar, St. Patrick Parish, Mayville, Jan. 25.

High School Scholarship awards


Our Dame Academy offered academic scholarships totaling $17,750 to 28 incoming freshmen at Miami University High School Placement Test (MYP) results meeting Jan. 6.

The weekly TV Mass from the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption will be broadcast on Sunday, 5-6 p.m. on station Me-TV WLWT on channels: over the air 9-2, Spectrum 181 in Kentucky and Cincinnati Bell 23 or 291.

Have something to list in “People and Events”? The deadline for event notices is nine days prior to the desired publication date. Email messenger@covodin.org no later than the Wednesday before the week you would like the information to appear.

Planning an event featuring a speaker or minister from outside your parish? In the Diocese of Covington, before contracting the services of a priest or deacon, man or woman religious, or lay person, a request for verification in good standing must be submitted to the Chancery office no later than four weeks before the desired date of service. Screening applications and instructions can be found at www.covodin.org/Chancery/.

An unsupportive environment is a key reason why many continue to struggle in poverty. Would you like to be someone who has helped a person achieve self-sufficiency, with encouragement and kindness? St. Vincent de Paul is seeking interested volunteers who would like to be part of one of their systemic change mentoring programs. For information contact Jacob Roeding at 428-2648 or jacob.roeding@svdpnkj.org.

NKU Catholic Newman Center Women’s Group. 2-4 p.m., workshop and discussion, Jan. 19, Feb. 23, March 20, April 26. Email russell1146@nku.edu to RSVP.

Cooks say goodbye

One of the long time volunteer cooking teams for Parish Kitchen “retired” after many years of loyal service. They are pictured here at Parish Kitchen on their final night making delicious meatloaf. (from left) Jerry Rapin, Cheryl Johnson (former board member and longtime cook), Mitzie O’Neill, John Johannemann (kitchen manager for one year in the early days), Catherine O’Neill, Susan O’Neill.

NAACP MLK luncheon. Jan 21. Syndicate in Newport. Tickets are $40 at the door or call 442-4776. Evening program, 6 p.m., Erlanger City Hall.

Washington, D.C., 47th annual March for Life. Jan. 24. An adult family bus will depart Jan. 20 and return Jan. 25. Cost: $250 per person double occupancy, $270 per person triple occupancy. $320 per person quad occupancy. Family rates available upon request. Price includes accommodations and bus travel, $50 deposit due Dec. 6. Contact Peggy Piccola at 582-1330 or e-mail ppiccola@covodin.org.

“Reboot!” a one-evening regional event with national Catholic speaker, Chris Stefanik, speaker, author, TV host; NKU Student Union, Jan. 28, 7-9:30 p.m. Tickets $25. Call 620-1833 or Inland@Catholic.com/reboot.

Catholic Newman Center, Northern Kentucky University, Father John Bullock’s apologetics schedule. Jan. 30, God Reveals Himself — Salvation History and the Bible, Feb. 6, Jesus Christ — What is He? Who is He? Feb. 20, Catholic Church, Just another ideology? Part 1, March 5, Catholic Church, Just another ideology? Part 2: 6-7 p.m. each day.


St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky is hosting “Creative Compassion: A Night of Art for our Neighbors in Need” Feb. 6 at New Riff Distillery. Newport, 6-9 p.m. Local art students have created works of art from thrift store finds that will be auctioned off. Proceeds benefit NKY. Food and drinks will be served throughout the night. Purchase tickets at: www.svdpnkj.org. Call 446-7727.

NKY Family Promise shelter program is hosting its 5th annual “Home is Where the Heart Is” bourbon and wine tasting, Feb. 7, 6:30 p.m., St. Elizabeth Training and Education Center, Erlanger. Cost $65. Tickets http://www.nkyfamilypromise.org, in the menu/comments section write: “Heart Tickets” Call 582-0905.

Young Men’s Silent Retreat, Feb. 7-9, Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Retreat Center, Norwood. Cost is $110, covers meals and accommodation. Contact Vicks Jung, (513) 260-2373, or register online. Attend Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, Mass and adoration with other young men.

Father Nihy Kanai is leading a trip to Germany, Switzerland and France July 14-25, 2020. The focus of the trip will be the Passion Play in Oberammergau, Germany, which is performed once every 10 years. Visit www.precatholictourists.com for itinerary Contact Father Nihy, 535-0889.

There will be a Holy Hour on the third Thursday of every month, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 3-4 p.m., to pray for victims of sexual abuse by clergy and to pray for the Church. All priests of the diocese will be in attendance; the lay faithful are invited to join. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed, concluding with the
Blessing the doors

Sixth-grade students at St. Paul School, Florence, participated in the Ceremony of Blessing the doors to the school. Students went door to door; reciting a prayer. They wrote 20+C+M+B+20 with blessed chalk above each entrance. The letters represent the three wise men and 2020 represents this calendar year.

Chapel of Divine Mercy and benediction. The sacrament of reconciliation will be available during the Holy Hour. The next Holy Hour will be held Thursday, Feb. 20.

Bingo every Friday, St. Mary’s undercroft, Alexandria. Army games, 7 p.m.; regular games, 6 p.m.

Volunteer medical interpreters are needed to help Spanish speakers with specialist appointments. Rose Garden Center for Hope and Healing, 361-0221. Must be VIRTUS-compliant and able to meet patients at various locations.

Help Parish Kitchen, a ministry of Catholic Charities – Diocese of Covington, provide warmth for the homeless this winter: Donate new sleeping bags or new twin blankets at either: Parish Kitchen, 141 W. Pike St., Covington, Monday-Friday, 8-11 a.m. or Catholic Charities, 3620 Church St., Latonia. Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Contact 581-7745 or nmeyer@covingtoncharities.org.

St. Charles Resource Center for the Aging is a service to inform, educate and empower seniors and their families who are in need of support services. The consultation service is free and aimed to educate seniors and their families about the resources offered in the community and other aging issues. Contact Margie Volpenheim at 351-3224, ext. 1440.

A faith-based support group, New Beginnings, provides separated and divorced individuals the opportunity for healing and growth. Participants will find new understanding of themselves and their relationships and gain courage to discover new life. Session location TBD. Registration required, call 392-1200, ext. 1319. The next eight-week session is: Thursdays, March 12 - April 30.

Project Rachel, God’s greatest desire is to forgive. Come back to God who is love and mercy. Project Rachel hotline, (800) 882-1347 or e-mail projectrachel@covdio.org. All calls and e-mails are confidential.

PrimeWise at St. Elizabeth Healthcare offers adults, age 50 and over, a free network of valuable services especially suited to their needs and interests. It’s a club and there are no membership dues or meetings, just lots of benefits, information, programs and special discounts. PrimeWise can provide information on topics like advance directives and living wills, Medicare and many health-related concerns. Call 301-5989 or e-mail primewise@stelizabeth.com.

For couples in troubled marriages, Retrouvaille is a program of healing and renewal consisting of one weekend and six follow-up sessions over the course of three months. Contact: www.cincyretrouvaille.org or (513) 656-5413.

Free support group, Parents of Addicted Loved Ones (PAL), meets every Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m., at Catholic Charities, Latonia. Group 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. Information, 381-0874 or www.covington-charities.org.

The Sts. Teresa of Calcutta and Faustina Guild of the Catholic Medical Association, Diocese of Covington, monthly meeting is held the 4th Thursday at Divine Mercy Parish, Bellevue, beginning with Mass, 5:30 p.m.; dinner and meeting follow. Visit www.catholicmd.org.

St. Vincent de Paul, Erlanger, needs volunteers for the call center and food pantry. For just a few hours each week. Food pantry volunteers help set up bags of food that are provided to those in need. Call center volunteers assist with answering calls for assistance and data entry, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. For information call (859) 446-7721.
‘A world for all’
(Continued from page 9)

“We foresee a host of practical problems that would arise if states and municipalities were given a veto over refugees resettlement.”

The Minnesota church leaders concluded their statement by saying that the cap on refugees and the executive order “lack the mercy compassion and justice that are not only called for by the Gospel, but that also should be expected from a strong and historically diverse nation.”

Minnesota’s church leaders should be praised for their united moral voice on this issue.

As hostilities escalate in the Middle East, so too may the world’s refugee population. Now is not the time to turn our backs on our brothers and sisters caught in geopolitical chaos. Instead, as the National Migration Week theme hints, it’s time to promote a Church and a world for all.

Sam Luers is news and information manager for The Compass, diocesan newspaper of Green Bay, Wisconsin. His editorial has been provided by Catholic News Service. The views or positions presented in this or any guest editorial are those of the individual publication and do not necessarily represent the views of Catholic News Service or of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

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Weekly schedules vary. All candidates must submit to a background check. Please contact Karen for more information at klittle@covdi.org or (859) 441-2003, ext. 325

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Scholarship Tax Credits
(Continued from page 9)

time,” she said.
Ms. Behanan has talked to her son on better ways to
tackle racism but she feels he
would have a better social and
academic experience that would
ultimately help him be more
successful at ZCA. At ZCA, Ms.
Behanan said, the faculty and
administration have the time to
handle student conflicts before they escalate to a physical con-
frontation.

“Here if children have disagreements they sit down and
talk it out and work it out. I’ve seen it work,” she said.

Seeing how different school environments can impact a
child’s education motivates Ms. Behanan to advocate for
Scholarship Tax Credits.

“When this opportunity came I couldn’t do nothing but
run with it because I have a child in a public school and a
private school, wishing they were both in a private school,” she said.
Nancy Denton’s great grandson is a middle-school stu-
dent at Holy Trinity School, Bellevue. When he was very
young her grandson experienced a serious fall and suffers
with a tra-
matic brain
injury. His
skull was frac-
tured in sever-
al places re-
quiring multiple sur-
geries and
hospitalizations and a helmet.

In addition to his physical challenges, her grandson
also bears the emotional burden of having a mother that is
incarcerated and an absent father.

When it came time for him to go to elementary school,


she wanted a small, private school where he “wouldn’t be
put aside,” she said.

“I’m not criticizing public schools by any means — they
do a good job and they are there to help any child — but he
needed a little bit more feeling of security and he was able
to get that in a smaller school,” Ms. Denton said.

Ms. Denton said now her grandson is “a regular” child.

“He has an emotional story and when I think about it, it
brings the emotion back to it and my heart hurts,” she
said. “Now I wonder how I did it.”

She said she is grateful for the scholarship that enabled
her grandson to attend a private school and thinks more
families should be able to choose a private school for their
children, which is why she supports scholarship tax cred-
ts.

“Education is an absolute necessity and it should be
offered at the school that will best serve the child, not
because of your financial status or who you know.
Hopefully Kentucky will pass the bill and it will do exactly
what it is supposed to do — help children.”

For more information on Scholarship Tax Credits visit
www.achievementky.com. For information on National
School Choice Week visit www.schoolchoiceweek.com.

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