Thomas More University begins ‘Coming to You’ tour to engage alumni and build momentum for centennial

Staff report

President Joseph Chillo and members of Thomas More University administration are packing their bags for the Thomas More is ‘Coming to You’ tour. The group will travel across the country for a series of welcome receptions to gather with alumni and friends of the university.

“We are very excited to announce that President Chillo and our team are traveling to Indianapolis on Feb 6 to kick off the Thomas More is ‘Coming to You Tour,’” said Bailey Bundy, director of Alumni and Parent Engagement. “With this being President Chillo’s first year in office, what better way to welcome him into the community than with a series of receptions across the country?”

Each event will offer an opportunity for guests to interact with President Chillo as he shares his vision for the future of TMU. During the receptions, guests will also hear more about recent success and changes at TMU, learn about joining the President’s Society and receive insider news regarding the state of the university.

“We currently have more than 14,000 alumni across all 50 states. This tour will offer a special experience for our alumni, friends and families to build and strengthen their relationships with Thomas More in the convenience of their own cities,” said Ms. Bundy. “It is our hope that the tour will foster community and build pride and momentum as we anticipate on our centennial celebrations next year.”

All events are free of charge and will include complimentary food and beverages.

For more information, including venue locations and times, visit thomasmore.edu or contact alumni@thomasmore.edu.

Obscure artist once saved Duveneck’s murals from total ruin

Stephen Enzweiler
Cathedral Historian

On a cold November day in 1920, a letter arrived at St. Mary’s Cathedral rectory addressed to the Very Rev. Joseph Flynn, Vicar General of the Diocese of Covington. It was from William E. Blank, Cathedral Historian and Assistant to the Very Rev. Joseph Flynn, Vicar General, of the Diocese of Covington.

In the letter, Blank explained that perhaps a cleaning was all that was needed. But Blank explained in his letter that a cleaning wasn’t the answer. The murals were actually in a rapid state of decay, and that a radical restoration and preservation effort was necessary in order to save them.

The news must have stunned the hopeful Father Flynn. The murals were only ten years old; how could they have deteriorated so quickly? They were by then already among the most famous church murals in America, and with Duveneck’s death the previous year, even greater attention was being paid to their historical and artistic significance. But there was never any hesitation in the priest’s mind about what to do.

In the end, Blank was given permission to do whatever was necessary to save them.

The murals can trace their origins back to the summer of 1903 and Covington’s third Bishop, the Most Rev. Camillus P. Maes. Frank Duveneck was one of the most famous artists in America. Henry James called him “the unsuspected genius,” and famed painter John Singer Sargent similarly declared he was “the greatest genius of the American brush.” Bishop Maes, who knew and appreciated fine art, was a great admirer, and he was determined to acquire the talents of this quiet genius for murals he wanted in his Cathedral. A dialogue between the two men began that summer, and Duveneck sent Maes sketches which the bishop found “striking.” On Sept. 24th, Maes explained his vision for the work in a letter.

The central idea is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross,” he wrote. “This is admirably brought out in the Central panel; to carry out the idea that before Christ as well as after the Resurrection, that self-same Sacrifice is the perpetual Obligation in the true Church of God, we will — if you please, depict

(Continued on page 23)
Preparations for the 2020 “Hope Does Not Disappoint: The Love of God Has Been Poured Out Into Our Hearts” Diocesan Parish Annual Appeal quickly got underway, Jan. 14. Mark Czarnik, videographer, A-1 Professional Video, was at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption recording Bishop Roger Foys’ DPAA message. Immediately following the taping, DPAA chairs, Mary Paula Schuh, general chair, and Randy Rawe, leadership gifts chair; met with the staff of the Stewardship and Mission Services Office to finalize details. Pictured (from left) are: Elizabeth Champ, database coordinator; Joanie Lecoy, administrative assistant; Michael Murray, director; Mr. Rawe; Mrs. Schuh; and Jennifer Cox, DPAA secretary. This year’s DPAA kick-off dinners will be held March 3 at The Prizing House, Cynthiana, and March 5 at Receptions, Erlanger. At both events a Ministry Fair will be held giving parishioners an opportunity to meet with members of the diocesan Curia and local social service agencies that receive DPAA service grants. Parishioners interested in attending a DPAA dinner should contact the Office of Stewardship and Mission Services at (859) 392-1500.

What was lost has been found

Administrators at Newport Central Catholic High School received a call, Jan. 6, from a woman who, while going through her mother’s old jewelry box, found a 1945 Newport Catholic High School class ring. Her mother told her that she found it years and years ago and thought that there was no hope to find the owner. Engraved on the inside of the ring were the initials, and school officials were able to reference school records. The ring, they discovered, belonged to Father Robert Rosing.

Father Rosing confirmed that he lost the ring a few years before he was ordained to the priesthood, which was 67 years ago. He immediately wanted to see if the ring still fit, and it did — perfectly. He was so grateful and happy to have his ring back, which he hadn’t seen in about 70 years. Father Rosing said that he thought the ring coming back into his life was very providential and will keep NCC in his heart and prayers.

God’s word can never be ‘enchained,’ pope says at general audience

By choosing to close the Acts of the Apostles not with St. Paul’s martyrdom but with his continuing to preach the Gospel even while under house arrest, St. Luke wanted to show that the word of God cannot be “enchained,” the pope said Jan. 15 during his weekly general audience.

“God’s word can never be ‘enchained,’ pope says at general audience.

“ ‘This house open to all hearts is the image of the Church which — although persecuted, misunderstood and chained — never tires of welcoming with a motherly heart every man and woman to proclaim to them the love of the Father who made himself visible in Jesus,’” he said.


“St. Paul’s treacherous journey and adventures to “the heart of the empire,” he said, did not weaken the Gospel he preached but instead strengthened it by “showing that the direction of events does not belong to men but to the Holy Spirit, who gives fruitfulness to the Church’s missionary action.”

During his imprisonment, the pope continued, the apostle would meet with notable Jewish people in his efforts to show “the fulfillment of the promises made to the chosen people” through Christ’s death and resurrection.

“While not everyone was convinced by his preaching, St. Paul continued to welcome anyone who wanted to receive the proclamation of the kingdom of God and to know Christ,” which is a grace that all Christians should pray for, he said.

May the Lord “enable us, like Paul, to imbue our houses with the Gospel and to make them cenacles of fraternity, where we can welcome the living Christ, who comes to meet us in every person and in every age,” Pope Francis said.

CNS photo/Paul Haring

Pope Francis speaks during his general audience in Paul VI hall at the Vatican Jan. 15, 2020. Also pictured is Archbishop Georg Ganswein, prefect of the papal household.
Art students collaborate with St. Vincent de Paul Society for upcoming fundraiser

Allegra Thatcher  ASSOCIATE EDITOR

St. Vincent de Paul of Northern Kentucky is branching out with an all-new fundraising event: an art night in cooperation with students from local universities. In an event titled “Creative Compassion: A Night of Art for our Neighbors in Need,” the society invites guests and donors to New Riff Distillery in Newport on Thursday, Feb. 6, 6-9 p.m.

The innovative evening will feature a silent auction of student-created artwork, as well as heavy appetizers and drinks by Eat Well Celebrations and Feasts.

“We’re trying to be creative in the way we reach out to the community,” said Karen Zengel, executive director.

“Our partners across the river in Cincinnati do a fashion show in partnership with DAAP at University of Cincinnati and so we wanted to do something similar but different,” she said.

“That’s how Ms. Zengel and her coworkers found themselves in classrooms at Northern Kentucky University (NKU) inviting students from the School of the Arts to choose an item off a shelf at the Thrift Store and create a work of art from it. The pieces will be on display at the event and auctioned off.

“Our mission has the opportunity to fundraise and the students get some exposure to people who might be interested in commissioning art from them in the future,” said Ms. Zengel. “It’s a good way for them to network their talent.

The students, 22 in all, will each split the proceeds of the silent auction with the center. Most are from NKU, but students from the University of Cincinnati, Mount St. Joseph, and even Notre Dame Academy are also contributing. Ms. Zengel said the pace picked up in November and December after the word spread about the project.

The silent auction features the artwork as well as donated baskets and some unique donations from the various thrift stores, such as furniture and decorative vases.

“That’s so everyone can get a feel that a thrift store is much more than second hand clothing,” said Ms. Zengel. “Basic necessities are important to our mission, but some of those more unique items we’re able to sell for the benefit of our programs.”

A key factor to the event, she said, is to help people understand that “when you make a donation to St. Vincent de Paul, your donation goes back to helping us spread that goodness. … We couldn’t do it without community support.”

Ms. Zengel especially credits presenting sponsor MidWest Pay Link as well as St. Elizabeth Healthcare, Trivaco, Forcht Bank, Altus Wealth Management, Eagle Savings Bank and Assured Insurance for supporting the event.

She and her committee of staff and volunteers can’t wait to see the artwork come in and the turnout at the distillery.

Tickets are on sale now at $60 a ticket. Tickets can be purchased on the St. Vincent de Paul NKY home page at wwwwsvdpnk.org.

‘Reboot’

It’s time to start living the life you were made for and the Northern Kentucky University, Catholic Newman Center is hosting a “Reboot.”

“Reboot” is billed as a life-changing event with Chris Stefanick, internationally acclaimed author and speaker, offering a fun, inspiring and practical experience for all (ages 12 and up). At Reboot, Mr. Stefanick will share how to apply the beauty and genius of the Gospel to every aspect of life — prayer, work, dating, marriage, parenting, health and more.

Reboot will be held Jan. 28, 7–9:30 p.m. at the NKU Student Union Center. Tickets are $25; call (859) 620-1813 or visit RealLifeCatholic.com/reboot.

Religion teacher/Catechist Certification Program and Adult Faith studies

The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization offers stimulating classes for teachers, parish catechists, deacons, aspirants and any adult who would like to expand their knowledge of the Catholic faith — everyone is welcome to attend any course/Workshop.

The courses are separated into two categories: Certification Core Courses (c) and Maintenance Courses (m). All courses are open to anyone interested.

“Praying All Ways” (c), Jan. 25, Feb. 1; 9 a.m.–12 p.m., Rosanne Thomas, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell

“Using Art in Faith Formation” (c), Feb. 8, 15; 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m., Rosanne Thomas, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Ft. Mitchell

“Introduction to Scripture” (c), Feb. 29; 9 a.m.–2 p.m., Father Ray Enzweiler, Curia Building, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

“Bioethics” (m), March 7, 14; 9 a.m.–2 p.m., Father Ray Enzweiler, Curia Building, Bishop Howard Memorial Auditorium, Covington

“Introduction to Catholic Spirituality” (c), March 14, 21; 9 a.m.–2 p.m., Claire Therese, St. Mary Parish, Alexandria

For more information or to register visit www.covdio.org/catechesis-and-faith-formati- on/ or call (859) 392-1500. Walk-ins accepted, but preregistration is encouraged.
**The little way**

Most of us have heard of St. Therese of Lisieux, a French mystic who died at age 24 in 1897 and who is perhaps the most popular saint of the last two centuries. She's famous for many things, not least for a spirituality she called her “little way.”

What's her “little way”?

Popular thought has often painted Therese and her “little way” within a simple piety that doesn’t do justice to the depth of her person or her spirituality. Too often her “little way” is understood simply to mean that we do little, hidden, hidden, acts of charity for others in the name of Jesus, without expecting anything in return. In this popular interpretation we do the laundry, peel potatoes and smile at unpleasant people to please Jesus. In some ways, of course, this is true. However her “little way” merits a deeper understanding.

Yes, it does ask us to do humble chores and be nice to each other in the name of Jesus but there are deeper dimensions to it. Her “little way” is a path to sanctity based on three things: littleness, anonymity and a particular motivation.

Littleness: For Therese “littleness” does not refer first of all to the littleness of the act that we do, like the humble tasks of doing the laundry, peeling potatoes or giving a simple smile to someone who’s unpleasant. It refers to our own littleness, to our own radical poverty before God. Before God, we are all little. To accept and act out of that poverty is to move towards God. We move towards God and others in her “little way” when we do small acts of charity for others, not out of our strength and the Virtue we feel at that moment, but rather out of a poverty, powerlessness and emptiness that allows God’s grace to work through us so that we give what we’re drawing from God and not to ourselves.

As well, our littleness makes us aware of, for the most part, we cannot do the big things that shape world history. But we can change the world more humbly by sowing a hidden seed, by being a hidden antibiotic of health inside the soul of humanity and by splitting the atom of love inside our own selves. And yes, too, the “little way” is about doing little, humble, hidden things.

Anonymity: Therese’s “little way” refers to what’s hidden, to what’s done in secret, so that what the Father sees in secret will be rewarded in open sight. And what’s hidden is not our act of charity, but we, ourselves, who are doing the act. In Therese’s “little way” our little acts of charity will go mostly unnoticed, will seemingly have no real impact on world history, and won’t bring us any recognition. They’ll remain hidden and unnoticed; but inside the Body of Christ what’s hidden—secret, selfless, self-effacing, and seemingly insignificant and unimportant—is the most vital vehicle of all for grace at a deeper level.

Just as Jesus did not save us through sensational miracles and headline-making deeds but through selfless submission to His Father and quiet martyrdom, our deeds too will become our real fruitfulness. They’ll remain hidden and unnoticed; but inside the Body of Christ what’s hidden—secret, selfless, self-effacing, and seemingly insignificant and unimportant—is the most vital vehicle of all for grace at a deeper level.

Finally, her “little way” is predicated on a particular motivation. We are invited to act out of our own littleness and anonymity and do small acts of love and service to others for a particular reason, that is, to, metaphorically, wipe the face of the suffering Christ. How so?

Therese of Lisieux was an extremely blessed and gifted person. Despite a lot of tragedy in her early life, she was (by her own admission and testimony of others) loved in a way that was so pure, so deep, and so wonderfully affectionate that it leaves most people in envy. She was also a very attractive child and was bathed in love and security inside an extended family within which her every smile and tear were noticed, honored, (and often photographed). But as she grew in maturity it didn’t take her long to notice that what was true in her life wasn’t true of most others. Their smiles and tears went mostly unnoticed, and only occasionally acknowledged. Always the most vitally vital vessel of all for grace at a deeper level.

In her own words: “One Sunday, looking at a picture of Our Lord on the Cross, I was struck by the blood flowing from one of His divine hands. I felt a pang of great sorrow when thinking this blood was falling on the ground without anyone’s hastening to gather it up. I was resolved to remain in spirit at the foot of the Cross and to receive its dew... Oh, I don’t want this precious blood to be lost. I shall spend my life gathering it up for the good of souls... To live from love is to dry Your Face.”

To live her “little way” is to notice and honor the unnoticed tears falling from the suffering faces of others.

**God’s love is unconditional**

Ray Smith

He is born in utter poverty in order to win our hearts by the Worthy of love.

Pope Francis struck a nerve when he mentioned God's patience: I pray daily for my own and I also talk on perseverance on the road more than my “way” from time to time. You no doubt observed recently that the Holy Father’s patience was worn thin when, while conducting a meet and greet with a barricaded audience on New Year’s Day, a well-meant pilgrim and admirer, it turned out, grabbed his hand, held tight, and pulled him toward her, so violently that he lost his balance, dislodged himself from her grip with a strong slap on her hand and moved away quickly. “Thank God,” I thought when I saw him break safety for he surely could have been seriously injured, or worse, in a fall.

When, in the aftermath of the incident, he apologized to her and cited his brief lack of patience and understanding, it struck me and impressed me, especially in light of his Christmas homily, that he is quite human and a man of so much more than just words. So be it and thank God for that, in my opinion.

Internet news recently reported a delightful moment and our Holy Father’s sense of humor and renewed patience at a recent Wednesday audience when a demonstra-}

**Commentary**

Webel Kellin is an award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas.

ON THE COVER: Pope Francis prays at the Christmas Midnight Mass.

**Somewhere along the way through the “miracle of television” (how many times have you heard that) that ‘attended’ Christmas Eve Mass (formerly known as Midnight Mass) coming from St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican, St. Peter’s, Rome, Italy, some 4,709 miles away. That’s the miracle part.

**Along the Way**

Kim Holocher ........................................................................ Advertising Manager
Laura Keener ................................................................. Editor, General Manager
Rev. Ronald M. Ketteler .............................................................. Episcopal Liaison
Ray Smith is a commissioned Lay Pastoral Minister for the Diocese of Covington.

**IN EXILE**

Father Ron Rohlfeser

**COMMENTS**

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**Ordinary time is truly extraordinary**


We have recently begun celebrating in our liturgical year those many Sundays when the reading is unflaggingly called “Ordinary Time.” My suggestion would be that for Christians, even ordinary time is somewhat “extraordinary.” Nevertheless, I would like to depart for a moment from my usual reflection on the texts and make a few general remarks about the choice of readings for “Ordinary Time.” As its name suggests, “Ordinary Time” represents those parts of the year to which the Church is not actively engaged in rememberine some particular aspect of or event in salvation history as we do during Advent, Christmas Time, Lent, Easter Time, and so on. We now celebrate the events of Christ’s everyday life and our daily living of our vocations.

During Ordinary Time “in our Gospel reading we will always be from Matthew” (last year it was from Luke, next year it will be from Mark). We read from John every year during the Easter season. We begin the reading of Matthew this Sunday with the account of the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. The bulk of Ordinary Time we will move slowly through Matthew, catching all the significant highlights of Jesus’ ministry and preaching. We begin today with chapter 4; we will end in November with chapter 25.

During Ordinary Time the first reading is chosen from the Old Testament. It will generally have the same theme as the Gospel reading; that is, the first reading and Gospel are tied together thematically. For example, today’s Gospel quotes directly from the first reading which is taken from the book of the prophet Isaiah. “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.” This second reading will always be from a New Testament writing other than a Gospel — usually one of Paul’s letters. It is not chosen to fit thematically with the other readings. Instead, this reading is proclaimed simply so that, over the course of three years, all the major writings of the New Testament will be heard in our churches.

This second reading is a continuous reading. That means, for example, that this week we will begin reading Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians. We will continue reading a portion of it each week until we have finished it. In addition to First Corinthians, we will hear in this year of Ordinary Time: Romans, Philippians and First Thessalonians.

Hidden behind the scenes of today’s readings is the meaning that ordinary time, ordinary events, and ordinary people can be truly extraordinary. Today’s Gospel gives us a very brief summary of Jesus’ preaching ("Reform your lives! The kingdom of heaven is at hand."). The bulk of the Gospel, however, is taken up with the account of Jesus choosing two very ordinary sets of brothers as his apostles. "The Gospel, however, is taken up with the account of Jesus choosing two very ordinary sets of brothers as his apostles.

Paul’s letter to the Corinthians gives us another glimpse of life as we ordinarily experience it. Within every family there always seems to be rivalry among the children. The family of the Church appears to be no exception. All of us could stand to take the Apostle’s words to heart: "I beg you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to join in mind and judgment." The 16 weeks of Ordinary Time reminds us that it is in the ordinary events and people of our daily lives that we experience and find the salvation of our God.

_Father Daniel Vogelpohl is pastor of Blessed Sacrament Parish, Mt. Mitchell._

**How can businesses be more pro-life? Create family-friendly workplaces**

On Jan. 2, over 200 members of Congress called on the Supreme Court to reconsider and, “if appropriate,” to overrule Roe v. Wade when the justices decide this spring the fate of a Louisiana law that requires abortion providers to have admitting privileges at nearby hospitals.

The call to reverse the landmark decision that legalized abortion nationwide will be echoed later in January by the thousands of students, religious leaders and activists attending the 47th annual March for Life in Washington. With the appointment of two pro-life justices to the Supreme Court by President Donald Trump, members of the pro-life movement are hopeful that the long-avoided reversal or a significant weakening of Roe is close at hand. We share that hope.

But as the editors of this review wrote one year ago: "The pro-life movement’s work becomes more complicated, not less so, as the prospect of meaningful legal protections for unborn children dawns." Because abortion will likely remain legal in many if not most states regardless of where the court comes down on Roe, building a culture that helps mothers and fathers defend Catholic values in a secular age, to be heard in the public square and, ultimately, to trust in God’s will.

From a Catholic perspective, few if any dates were more significant during the soon-to-close decade than Feb. 11, 2013.

On that day Pope Benedict XVI, citing his age and declining health, broke an 800-year tradition of popes holding onto office until death with the stunning announcement of his retirement. It has been the defining church moment of the past 10 years.

A consistent theme throughout Pope Benedict’s eight-year papacy was the connection between faith and courage. An essential component of faith, he taught, is courage. Christians need courage to uphold truth and defend Catholic values in a secular age, to be heard in the public square and, ultimately, to trust in God’s will.

And in Pope Benedict’s case that meant the courage to stand aside and let a man with more vigor assume the crucial work of leading the Church in difficult times. The papacy, he said, is not about the person who wears the ring of St. Peter but about the greater mission to make all men ready for the kingdom of heaven. So, if it takes a strong spine to accept the mantle of pope, perhaps it takes even a stronger one to announce to the world, after much powerful reflection, you are no longer up to the job.

It’s unlikely, however, that even Pope Benedict foresaw the degree of Fortitude required from all Catholics to endure what became a decade so consistently darkened by scandal. Faith and trust in Pope Benedict taught, are indeed inextricably linked and each faced a stern test over the past 10 years.

The person most immediately affected by Pope Benedict’s bold resignation was Pope Francis.

GUEST

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As Pope Benedict made history by leaving, Pope Francis made it as the first non-European pope in modern times, the first from the Americas, the first called Pope Francis and the first Jesuit. Unlike every other pope over the previous centuries, Pope Francis had never even studied or worked in Rome. A true outsider and reformer, Pope Francis was chosen who choose to take advantage of the benefits available to parents. This is especially important for men — 76 percent of whom return to work after one week or less following a birth or adoption, according to a 2014 study.

If Roe v. Wade is reversed, it will remain only a partial victory as long as people feel they have to choose between keeping their baby and supporting their family. But mothers and fathers should be able to feel secure in their decision to build a child into the world without having to depend on the rulings of justices or the votes of politicians. Paid leave in both the Church and the private sector, do not need to wait for a government mandate to begin building pro-family workplaces.

This unsigned editorial appeared online Jan. 10 on the website of America magazine, a weekly Jesuit publication.

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**Event of the decade**

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This unsigned editorial appeared online Dec. 26 on the website of the Catholic Register, the Toronto-based national Catholic Canadian newspaper and has been pro-vided by the Washington Times. This unsigned editorial was 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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**Event of the decade**
Sisters of Divine Providence focus on care for creation

By Sister Kay Kramer, CDP

Each year during the Christmas holidays, the Sisters of Divine Providence gather at the Province Center in Melbourne, Ky.—coming from near and far—to pray, celebrate, share, and reflect together on a topic of importance and relevance. This year, the topic was “Laudato Si,” Pope Francis’s 2015 encyclical letter on care for our common home.

At the international meeting held at the motherhouse in France in August 2018, the Congregation included care for the most vulnerable in humanity and creation as a focus for the next several years. The U.S. province then made the decision to study “Laudato Si” individually and communally and have begun a two-year process of studying the encyclical. To aid in their study, they were joined at their Christmas assembly by Msgr. William Cleves—long-time friend of the Sisters, philosopher, and scholar; and by Sister Kathy Sherman, CSJ, of Lagrange, Illinois—a liturgical musician and composer. Several associate members joined the sisters in their reflection.

Msgr. Cleves began with a philosophical overview of “Laudato Si” and encouraged the Sisters to read it against the backdrop of “Gaudium et Spes,” the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,” one of the four constitutions to come out of the Second Vatican Council. Doing so, Msgr. Cleves stated, leads us to ask “why?” This question leads us deeper into God our creator, in whose image and likeness we are made. Msgr. Cleves continued with a summary of each chapter of the encyclical, and challenged the Sisters to remember, as Joseph Spalding stated, “We did not inherit the earth from our parents, we borrowed it from our children.”

Sister Kathy, with song, reflections and small-group sharing, encouraged the Sisters to think about their place in this beautiful world God has created. In discussing the reality of climate change, she asked them to think about “What did you do once you knew?” She taught her song “Touch the Earth” and inspired the Sisters to continue their efforts to care for the earth—small though as it may seem—trusting that “God has given us the power to create the world anew.”

This day gave the Sisters and Associates renewed enthusiasm for their continued study of “Laudato Si” and growth in their understanding of the need for all peoples to care for God’s creation.

Pope Francis’s prayer for the earth, included in the encyclical, is an inspiration and challenge:

A Prayer for Our Earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

Chesterfield, Ky. (Jan. 8) — The Sisters of Divine Providence are a community of women religious founded in 1840 in the United States and are the first international congregation of women religious. They have been called “the first family of American Catholicism” and the “first women to become nuns in the United States.” The Congregation of Divine Providence (CDP) was founded in 1840 by Frances Cabrini and is the first international congregation of women religious in the United States.

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The Sisters of Divine Providence gather at the Province Center in Melbourne, Ky.—coming from near and far—to pray, celebrate, share, and reflect together on a topic of importance and relevance. This year, the topic was “Laudato Si,” Pope Francis’s 2015 encyclical letter on care for our common home.

At the international meeting held at the motherhouse in France in August 2018, the Congregation included care for the most vulnerable in humanity and creation as a focus for the next several years. The U.S. province then made the decision to study “Laudato Si” individually and communally and have begun a two-year process of studying the encyclical. To aid in their study, they were joined at their Christmas assembly by Msgr. William Cleves—long-time friend of the Sisters, philosopher, and scholar; and by Sister Kathy Sherman, CSJ, of Lagrange, Illinois—a liturgical musician and composer. Several associate members joined the sisters in their reflection.

Msgr. Cleves began with a philosophical overview of “Laudato Si” and encouraged the Sisters to read it against the backdrop of “Gaudium et Spes,” the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,” one of the four constitutions to come out of the Second Vatican Council. Doing so, Msgr. Cleves stated, leads us to ask “why?” This question leads us deeper into God our creator, in whose image and likeness we are made. Msgr. Cleves continued with a summary of each chapter of the encyclical, and challenged the Sisters to remember, as Joseph Spalding stated, “We did not inherit the earth from our parents, we borrowed it from our children.”

Sister Kathy, with song, reflections and small-group sharing, encouraged the Sisters to think about their place in this beautiful world God has created. In discussing the reality of climate change, she asked them to think about “What did you do once you knew?” She taught her song “Touch the Earth” and inspired the Sisters to continue their efforts to care for the earth—small though as it may seem—trusting that “God has given us the power to create the world anew.”

This day gave the Sisters and Associates renewed enthusiasm for their continued study of “Laudato Si” and growth in their understanding of the need for all peoples to care for God’s creation.

Pope Francis’s prayer for the earth, included in the encyclical, is an inspiration and challenge:

A Prayer for Our Earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.
Campaign pushes plans to make affordable housing a national priority

Dennis Sadowski
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — For years, Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, has said it’s a scandal that millions of American families are struggling to find a stable place to call home.

She knows how housing costs are soaring, forcing families and individuals to cut back on other necessities — food, health care, clothing, school needs and even utilities — so they can keep a roof over their head.

The struggle continues daily in rural, suburban and urban communities across the country. Sister Markham chairs a program being planned by the Opportunity Starts at Home campaign at the National Press Club Jan. 16.

“We need to acknowledge sadly that we’re not doing all that we could or need to do to make basic moral basic of attending to the needs of poor people and their children to live safely and securely in a home and have a pathway out of extreme poverty,” Sister Markham said as one of program’s four panelists.

“We’ve got a crisis on our hands and what are we doing about it?” Markham said.

Catholic Charities USA is one of 20 organizations that are part of the campaign in a nationwide push to call attention to the massive shortfall of affordable housing.

The coalition is calling on the federal government to set policy priorities and incentivize and coordinate state and local efforts to address the crisis.

The work largely focuses on the sites that stabilizing the lives of the poor, which is key to economic opportunity, good health and performance in school by children without the threat of homelessness looming.

Dr. Megan Sandel, principal investigator with Children’s Health Watch and co-director of the Grow Clinic at Boston Medical Center, told the audience that data gathered from Health Watch and co-director of the Grow Clinic at Boston Medical Center, told the audience that data gathered from

“In a nationwide push to call attention to the massive shortfall of affordable housing,” Sandel explained. “What we know is that it’s just not about being homeless but about not having to move frequently and not falling behind on rent. That’s really where we’re going to see the biggest health impact over a lifetime.”

Race plays major factor in household stability, said Irma Koparza Duggs, senior executive and director, federal advocacy and community development for the National League of Cities — food, health care, clothing, school needs and even utilities — so they can keep a roof over their head.

“Real is the reality that we are living with the consequences of historic and often times intentional discriminatory housing policies, like redlining and racial isolation,” Duggs said.

“Quite frankly if you are a student of how we got here, you realize the decades of public policy that been intentionally segregating communities.”

The result, she said, is that cities in particular are struggling to address housing challenges without federal assistance.

Organizations such as the Children’s Defense Fund, the National Association of Social Workers, the National Education Association, and the Food Research & Action Center have joined the Opportunity Starts at Home campaign, reflecting a widening of the collaborative effort needed to advance an affordable housing agenda.

Diane Velt, president and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, told the press club audience the country has a shortage of 7 million units of affordable housing, which translates to 37 homes being available for every 100 households in need.

“The high cost of housing is the fact that 8 million of the lowest income people pay 40% or more of their income for rent, Velt said.

Such factors are beginning to resonate with the wider public.

Velt shared the results of a recent survey that found 80% of respondents say Congress and the White House should “take major action” to make housing more affordable for low-income households.

Perhaps not totally in response to those findings, two bipartisan bills were introduced in Congress in December in an attempt to address the nation’s affordable housing gap. One would address evictions and the other would boost the number of housing vouchers available to low-income families with children.

Opportunity Starts at Home backs both bills, said Mike Kaprowski, the campaign’s national director.

The Eviction Crisis Act, introduced by Sen. Michael Bennet, D-Colorado, and Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, addresses homelessness on several fronts. Eviction has become a one-time way for landlords to remove people from a property even when rents are paid in full and on time.

The bill calls for developing a national database to track evictions and establishing an advisory committee on eviction research that would recommend policies and practices to prevent evictions and ease their consequences. Funding would be available to track evictions and analyze landlord-tenant laws.

The Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act, introduced by Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Maryland, and Sen. Todd Young, R-Indiana, would provide 500,000 housing vouchers to families with children young than 18. The campaign said the bill would help families move from neighborhoods with high poverty rates and low-performing schools while parents would have access to better jobs and community resources.

Such federal action will support the work already being done at the local level, including Catholic Charities USA’s Healthy Housing Initiative, a collaborative effort in five cities among local diocesan agencies, hospitals, housing developers and funders.

The initiative places homeless people into stable housing and provides essential supportive services. The goal is to reduce hospital readmissions while ensuring that basic human needs are met.

Sister Markham said the program has saved $18 million in hospital costs while placing 350 people into affordable housing with necessary supporting services.

Still, Velt said, the affordable housing gap cannot be addressed by Church and nonprofit agencies alone.

“We can choose to solve and end housing poverty in our country,” she said. “We know what to do and certainly we have the resource in the country. We only lack the political will to solve the housing crisis.”

Visit the website of the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

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**Newsmaker**

Happy Birthday to Father Richard Bolte, pastor, St. Timothy Parish, Union, Jan. 20; Father Leo Schmidt, retired, Jan. 30 and Father John Sterling, pastor, St. Barbara Parish, Erlanger, Jan. 31.

Scholarships and awards


Three Villa Madonna Academy students were recognized in the regional Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. The competition is administered by the Art Academy of Cincinnati. Emily Richardson won two Gold Keys; one for her novel, “Uhler” and one for her personal essay and memoir, “My Favorite Place on Earth.” Her essay is also nominated for an American Voices award and Gold Key works will advance to compete for the national Scholastic Art and Writing Awards; Liam Collins, Silver Medal for his critical essay “The Slavery Sewn into Your Socks.”

Grace Rowland, student, St. Therese School, Southgate, has been selected to participate in the 2020 Kentucky Children’s Chorus, which in February will perform in Louisville.

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 5-2; Spectrum 188 in Kentucky and Cincinnati Bell 23 or 24. Have something to list in “People and Events.” The deadline for event notices is nine days prior to the desired publication date. E-mail messenger@covdio.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.covdio.org/chancery/.

**March for Life NKY**

Jan. 24, 5 p.m. Opening prayer at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Burlington. Walk a mile and return to IHM by 7 p.m. for Holy Hour of Prayer and Penance for Life.

**Lady Crusader Invitational**

For the 27th year, St. Henry Catholic School, Elsmere, hosted the Lady Crusader Invitational basketball tournament. With brackets of third through eighth grades, it’s a great way to showcase what the teams have accomplished throughout the season. At school, the students dressed in their Crusader best and a pep rally was held for all the St. Henry teams.

Several St. Henry Catholic School eighth grade students, along with their principal, Dennis Wolf, spoke at all the Masses at St. Barbara Church. The students shared how their Catholic education has made them more connected to God and to each other, confident in all their work and contributing through service to others while at St. Henry.

**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 628-1813 or RealLifeCatholic.com/reboot.

**Catholic Schools Night**

Jan. 30, 5 p.m.-7 p.m., hosted by Thomas More University in the Mary Seat of Wisdom Chapel, Crestview Hills, an evening for students who attend a Catholic high school in the Diocese of Covington or Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Students at any stage of their high school career are invited to enjoy light refreshments, a talk by our campus minister, and a tour. Sign up at www.thomasmore.edu/admissions or call 344-8900.

**Men’s and women’s restoration retreats for Cursillo alumni**


**Beautifully You**

Feb. 1, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., St. Thomas, Ft. Thomas. Mothers and daughters, 13 and older, are invited to discover what Pope St. John Paul referred to as the “Feminine Genius.” Come for brunch, conversation and presentations with special guests Caitlin Dwyer, professor of Theology, Thomas More University and Rita Johansen, NaPro instructor $10 donation. E-mail Pam at mam-abucher1@gmail.com

**Trivia Night**

Feb. 1, 7 p.m. Newport Central Catholic High School Blackbox Theatre, sponsored by the Newport Central Catholic FAN Club. Entry fee is $60 and teams may have up to 8 members. Register by e-mailing Charles Marks, earmarks@mchs.com.

21st annual “Jack & Pat McGarr Memorial Euchre Tournament” Feb. 1, Bishop Brossart High School, Hegeman Hall. $25 entry fee, doors open at 5:30 p.m. Register online at McGarrEuchre.givesmart.com. Contact (513) 460-6959 or e-mail jackmcaignsrch@gmail.com.

“Welcome Home” reception and donor appreciation, Feb. 1, Sisters of Notre Dame of Covington. Sisters Anita Marie Stacy and Mary Judith Averbeck return from the Uganda Mission. Reception 6-7 p.m., presentation at 7 p.m. RSVP by Jan. 24 to mshellel@endyork.org or 392-8229.

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 SVdP NKY. Food and drinks will be served throughout the night. Purchase tickets at: www.svdpnkky.org. Call 446-7727.

NKY Family Promise shelter program is having its 5th annual “Home is Where the Heart Is” bourbon and wine tasting, Feb. 7, 6 p.m., St. Elizabeth Training and Education Centre, Erlanger. Cost $60. Tickets http://www.nkypfamilypromise.org. In the memo/comments section write: “Heart Tickets” Call 360-0800.

**Sharing the good news of Catholic schools**

St. Agnes School alumnus Kevin Wagner, graduate student at Arizona State studying exoplanets, visited the fourth graders of St. Agnes School, Ft. Wright, to help them celebrate “Galaxy Afternoon.” The students were culmination their studies of the solar system. They enjoyed extending their knowledge of the galaxy by asking Kevin questions about planets outside the solar system and black holes.
Foolish food and fun  

St. Agnes School. St. Wright, has a favorite library book: “What’s New Cupcake?” This book is full of fun and creative baking ideas for cakes and cupcakes. This talented third-grader made the April Fool’s Day” cupcake creation (fries and ketchup) and gave it to the school librarian.


“Denin & Diamonds,” Feb 8, 11-11:30 p.m., hosted by Holy Cross High School at Reception Banquet Hall. Erfanger. Tickets are $40 per person; $75 per couple. Call 451-1335 or go to hcschscov.com.

Craft Show, Feb 8, 10 a.m.–3 p.m., St. Paul Parish, Florence. Shopping, food truck, raffles. $2 admission.

“Art Revealing God” women’s retreat, Feb 12, 9-11:30 a.m., St. Paul Parish, Edgewood. Evening session Feb 12, 6:30-9 p.m., Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Center, Cincinnati. For information visit https://rochhivesavley.org/monthly retreat.

8th and 7th Grade Scavenger Hunt, Feb 14, 5:30–5 p.m., Notre Dame Academy. An afternoon of games, food and more. Registration form online at www.ndaparadise.org. For more information call 290-1929.

“Decades of ‘1 do,’” Feb 14, 6:30 p.m., Blessed Sacrament Parish. Centennial marriage celebration featuring Mass, marriage blessing, heavy hors d’oeuvres, drinks and dancing. Tickets $20, register online.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter, Feb 14-16. Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Center, Cincinnati. Contact Andy and Jeanne Follis at (517) 566-5296 or jeannemariez2@hotmail.com.

9th annual Catholic Men’s Conference of Western Kentucky. Feb 15, RiverPark Center, Owensboro. What it means to be a Catholic man in a secular world. Tickets available online.

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 Chaplet 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.

E6 Catholic Men’s Conference. Feb 22, St. Leon, Indiana. Featuring speakers Dr. Scott Hahn, Father Don Callaway and Doug Barry, with adoration, confession and Holy Mass. Registration online.

NKU Catholic Newman Center Women’s Group. 2-4 p.m., workshop and discussion, Feb 23, March 29, April 26. E-mail Russell14@nkku.edu to RSVP.

Spaghetti dinner and fine arts festival, Feb 23, 4-6:30 p.m., Covington Catholic High School. Sponsored by the Parents Club, featuring a performance by the award winning CCH Chamber Choir and the Covington Catholic and Notre Dame Academy Band. CCH student artwork will be exhibited as well.

Ash Wednesday — day of recollection, Feb 26, 9 a.m.–2 p.m., sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame at the Sisters of Notre Dame Provincial House. Cost $20 includes lunch. Speaker is Notre Dame Sister Mary Kathleen Givrich from Chardon, Ohio. Call Sister Margie Schnelle 392-8228 or e-mail mschnelle@sndky.org.

Women’s Retreat. Feb 28. March 1, St. Anne Retreat Center. A Lenten Retreat on the meaning of the cross in our lives. Cost is $35, including lodging and meals.

Fish Fry. St. Agnes Parish, Fr. Wright, in Murphy Hall. Feb 28, March 6, 13 and 20.


“Telling on Ourselves; Stories about Wells, Pools and Teems (The Gospels of the Last Three Sundays of Lent),” March 14, 9:30 a.m., sponsored by the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg. $20 fee includes snacks and materials. Participants must pre-register at sdhosb@yahoo.com or 331-6771. No walk-ins.

Bingo every Friday, St. Mary’s undercroft, Alexandria. Jimmy games, 7 p.m.; regular games, 8 p.m.

Volunteer medical interpreters are needed to help Spanish speakers with specialist appointments. Rose Garden Center for Hope and Healing, 623-0121. Must be VIR-TUS-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, 311 W Pike St., Covington, Monday–Friday: 8-11 a.m. or Catholic Charities, 9-28 Church St., Latonia, Monday–Friday: 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Contact 981-7745 or mmeyer@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 Volpenhein at 351-3224, ext. 1440.

A faith-based support group, New Beginnings, provides separation 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 932-1500, ext. 1926. The next eight-week session is Thursday, March 12 — April 30.

Project Rachel, God’s greatest desire is to forgive. Come back to God who is love and mercy. Project Rachel hotlines, (866) 832-1047 or e-mail projectrachel@ove.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 not a club and there are no membership fees 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 381-5999 or e-mail primeNwise@stelizabeth.com.

For couples in troubled marriages, Retreataville is a program of healing and renewal consisting of one weekend and six follow-up sessions over the course of three months. Contact: www.cncytreoutaville.org or (513) 436-5413.

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, 581-8745 or www.covingtoncharities.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 follows. Visit www.cathmed.org.
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Pro-Life
Office
of the Diocese of Covington

Mission Statement
The Pro-Life Office of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, guided by our bishop, promotes the sanctity and legal protection of human life from conception to natural death through prayer, pastoral care, public policy and education.

"If there were
one million families praying
the rosary every day,
the entire world would be saved."
— Pope St. Pius X

Families matter

Meg Wittman
Messenger Contributor

Perhaps the most popular slogan of the pro-life movement is "building a culture of life." However, the goal of a pro-life culture will not be reached until the root of the problem in our society is understood.

Abortion is not actually the root. Rather, it is a symptom of something harder to pinpoint — the destructive impact of multiple attacks on the family unit. Transgressions such as the radical feminist movement, casual divorce, comprehensive sex education, artificial contraception, abortion, pornography, same-sex weddings, transgenderism and the like are all aimed at annihilating the structure and purpose of the family.

• Although the early feminist movement was pro-life, the movement today is highly pro-death. It prefers careers, money, travel, time, convenience and sexual "liberation" over the bearing and rearing of children within marriage.
• In the late 1960s, states began legalizing no-fault divorce, and studies now show that anywhere from 40 percent to 50 percent of marriages in the United States end in divorce. Furthermore, fewer people are getting married. Some 39 percent of all babies born today in the United States are born to single mothers.
• The Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States, Planned Parenthood and their counterparts have hijacked sex education. They have taken it out of the hands of parents and turned it into a pornographic curriculum.
• Abortion and contraception work together to get men free rein to be promiscuous and to enable women to turn a most sacred gift from God into a commodity. Contraception always leads to more abortion, and abortion destroys the family from the inside out — quite literally.
• Pornography steals the souls of men and women alike. Fifteen states have even declared it to be a major health crisis, citing sex trafficking, violence against women and child abuse.
• The re-definition of marriage in our country has thwarted God's law and the union between a man and a woman. Because sex has no boundaries now, the transgender movement has been a natural next step in this war against the family.

The theme that best describes this entire picture is selfish indulgence for our own pleasure. However, pleasure alone isolates us. Consider that we now live in a country that has killed over 60 million of its own innocent, unborn children and which insists that post-abortive women who feel shame or regret must "shout" their abortions instead.

In order to solve the problem of an anti-family culture, we must attack its root. To preserve and re-build the traditional family, first we must re-form the whole of society so that every child is seen once again as a blessing and every new life treated with true charity.

God sends children to families in different ways and at different times, but he desires that all families be open to his plans for them. Not every family is biologically created, some are blessed by other circumstances, yet all families manifest divine love.

I recently had the great pleasure of witnessing an adoption, in which a loving mother and father to five biological children adopted two siblings after fostering them for over a year. As I stood in the courtroom I found myself surrounded by many families and dozens of children, many of whom had been touched by adoption themselves. After the adoptive parents spoke, the judge asked if anyone else wished to speak on behalf of them. Family members and friends quickly rose to their feet to testify to the generous love that this man and woman would show these two precious children.

By the time all testimonies were complete, there was not a dry eye in the room. It was then that I realized the courtroom was full of an entire community of families living out the "culture of life."

It is true that we must continue to pass pro-life laws and demand that justice be delivered by our courts. In the year 2019 alone, 17 states passed pro-life laws. Those efforts must maintain momentum and are an especially important consideration in an election year.

It is also true that we must find ways to help our fellow citizens choose life. This means fostering children ourselves or supporting those who do. It means helping to erase the stigma of adoption and working to eliminate the many financial and legal barriers to it. It means removing the social and economic barriers that make it difficult for parents to choose life for their unborn babies.

Our protests and our pleas in defense of innocent lives must remain as strong as ever. However, at the core of all of this should be our personal commitment to the traditional family as the critical foundation of a Godly and life-giving society.

A nation is only as strong as its families, and it is children that make families strong. Let us pray for the strength and generosity to support family life. It is only through true charity that we will re-build our families and renew the culture of life in America.

Meg Wittman is executive director of Flight to Life of Greater Cincinnati, a pro-life organization in Southwest Ohio dedicated to the promoting the dignity of and protecting all innocent human life in the public square.

For more information about the Pro-Life Office or to be added to our e-mail newsgroups, visit us online at www.covdio.org/prolife/ or call (859) 392-1500.

The family is the original cell of social life.

It is the natural society in which husband and wife are called to give themselves in love and in the gift of life.

Authority, stability and a life of relationships within the family constitute the foundations for freedom, security and fraternity within society.

The family is the community in which, from childhood, one can learn moral values, begin to honor God, and make good use of freedom. Family life is an initiation into life in society.

(CCC 2207)
January 2020

My dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

As we begin a new year and a new decade we pause to celebrate Catholic Schools Week. This celebration is especially dear to our hearts here in the Diocese of Covington where Catholic school education has been and continues to be a primary apostolate. From the earliest days of our Diocese, founded in 1853, until this very day Catholic schools have been a focus of our ministry. We are proud of our 29 grade schools and nine high schools and of our Thomas More University.

Please join me this week in taking part in the various diocesan and parish celebrations of Catholic schools. We live in a time where unfortunately faith is devalued and society is quickly becoming more and more secular. We are called as Catholics to transmit the faith as best we can to succeeding generations. One means of accomplishing this goal is through Catholic schools. The primary goal of every Catholic school — from pre-school to university — is to transmit the faith. If a Catholic school is not accomplishing this goal, it does not deserve to be called Catholic.

I take this opportunity to thank all those who through your generosity enable our schools to thrive in their mission. I thank our parents for choosing Catholic school education. I thank our teachers, administrators and staff of our schools for answering God's call to teach, certainly a noble vocation. I thank our Department of Catholic Schools for its guidance and oversight of each of our schools.

Without a doubt, there are certainly alternatives to a thoroughly Catholic school education, but there are no substitutes!

Be assured of my prayers. Please, pray for me.

Yours devotedly in the Lord,

Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, D.D.,
Bishop of Covington
Catholic Schools Week focuses on the values of a Catholic education

Michael Clines
Messenger Contributor

Our beloved Catholic schools provide an outstanding education in a faith-enriched environment. They deliver excellent academics and a tremendous ability to prepare young people for adult occupations and higher education.

As we celebrate Catholic Schools Week – Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed. – our schools will incorporate into the week many activities that celebrate who we are and why we are so special. Teachers might incorporate a lesson into religion class about committing to life-long learning. Lessons might show up in history class about the contribution of Catholics to society. Teachers might incorporate videos that promote their school and school community. Parents and community members will be invited to schools to help celebrate Catholic schools in a variety of ways.

As superintendent of schools, in addition to all the wonderful school activities that celebrate our Catholic schools, Catholic Schools Week also prompts me to reflect upon all the wonderful people who make Catholic education possible. My gratitude begins with Bishop Roger Foys, who inspires us to a Catholic school, took a lot for granted and didn't realize how lucky I was. I write these words, now, to encourage Catholic educators and Catholic parents to recognize how lucky we are. I write these words, now, to encourage Catholic educators and Catholic parents to remember that raising youth in the faith is certainly not a sprint; it is a long, often painful marathon that requires a great deal of patience and endurance. The youth, for their part, go through a lot of ups and downs and have a lot to learn as well as to stop and really think about what it is we are celebrating.

What is it about Catholic education that is so extraordinary? What makes a school “Catholic” in the first place? Perhaps students will share how they have come to appreciate who we are and why we are so special. Teachers might incorporate a lesson into religion class about committing to life-long learning. Lessons might show up in history class about the contribution of Catholics to society. Teachers might incorporate videos that promote their school and school community. Parents and community members will be invited to schools to help celebrate Catholic schools in a variety of ways.

Many people support parents in passing on the Catholic faith

Catholic schools are a miracle. It's a strong statement I know; but I wouldn’t write that if I didn’t truly believe it. Think about it just from our own country’s perspective: Catholic schools were never a given, or even part of the original plan. They have had the odds stacked against them for long periods of U.S. history. And yet, not only did Catholic schools survive, but for the most part, they thrived. We will never be able to accurately calculate the force of our history, of our country, even on those citizens who think they have no connection to us. And yet, we know that the Church, through the Church’s teaching, we have an infinite source of strength, comfort and mercy. And yet, we know that the Church, through the Church’s teaching, we have an infinite source of strength, comfort and mercy.

I was blessed to have parents that sacrificed for us. We were rich in faith. Well, at least my parents were rich in faith. I on the other hand, probably not unlike a lot of today’s students who are blessed to go to a Catholic school, took a lot for granted and didn’t realize how lucky I was. I write these words, now, to encourage Catholic educators and Catholic parents to remember that raising youth in the faith is certainly not a sprint; it is a long, often painful marathon that requires a great deal of patience and endurance. The youth, for their part, go through a lot of ups and downs and have a lot to learn as well as to stop and really think about what it is we are celebrating.

I think there are certain points on which we could all agree. While you might get 25 different answers if you asked 25 people that question, I think there are certain points on which we could all agree.

Simply put, Catholic schools are part of the education ministry of the Catholic Church. I have heard Bishop Roger Foys, our shepherd and chief catechist, say more than I can count that the primary reason for any Catholic school to exist is to pass on the Catholic faith. As a parent, I couldn’t agree more. That being said, parents and godparents are always meant to be the primary teachers of the faith; the schools are a ministry that exist to supplement the education the child – religiously, intellectually, physically and communally. My appreciation goes out to the teachers who accept the responsibility that the greatest impact on student achievement is the teacher and center that responsibility on our faith. We recognize the commitment parents make to send their children to a Catholic school, and value the vital role that they play in our school communities. I know that most of our schools could not exist without the commitment of the thousands of benefactors who recognize the value of a Catholic education to the students and to the communities of Northern Kentucky.

Catholic schools are truly a community, and by building a community around the Church’s teaching, we have an infinite source of strength, comfort and mercy. Michael Clines is the superintendent of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Covington.
Catholic school teachers transmit the faith

Bishop Roger Foys has often said that the primary purpose of any Catholic school is to transmit the faith. Preparing students for the sacraments is one of the more direct ways that Catholic schools transmit the faith especially in the second grade as students prepare for the sacraments of reconciliation and first holy Communion. What stands out about this year’s second grade class as they approach the sacraments?

Katie Parker
St. Patrick School, Maysville
What stands out is their courage, especially when it comes to reconciliation. They seem very eager and not as nervous. I feel that they have a good understanding of it being like going to the doctor when your body is sick, except you are going to a priest to heal your soul.

Mariann McGhee
Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills
This year’s class is incredibly kind. They are always doing little acts of kindness for their classmates and other students in school. It is the understanding that it is to do and say something nice to others. The students are always making comparisons to Jesus when we are reading and doing things. The other day we were reading a book about Martin Luther King, Jr. and one of the students said “He acts like Jesus did!”

Karen Bunton
St. Cecilia, Independence
This year’s second grade loves to hear and talk about the parables that Jesus taught. They understand that there are many meanings in parables, not just the most obvious one. Also, parables have meaning to their life now and it’s their job to figure out what Jesus is saying to them in this story.

Joanna Tallarigo
St. Pius X, Edgewood
As a school, we have been asked to take time to study the saints and to expose our students to saints that they may be unfamiliar with. My class has taken off with this exercise and they have really looked to the saints to be their role models. I love teaching second graders because they truly have a child-like faith and love of Christ. They understand the simple idea that God just wants to be our friend and he just wants us to spend time with him at Mass, in adoration, or even simply in prayer. These students truly understand the importance of that time and they constantly remind me of that.

Amy Cowles
Blessed Sacrament, Ft. Mitchell
They are like little sponges. They just completely absorb every little thing I teach them about the sacraments. I love how engaged they are when I tell them stories or we have discussions about reconciliation or first Communion. They ask so many intellectual questions that come from the heart.

I think they understand just how holy and sacred it is to receive a sacrament. They’re so reverent, honest and open.

Terri Birkenhauer
St. Philip School, Melbourne
This year’s second grade is very complimentary of another. They are intelligent and inquisitive. They are excited about their upcoming special day.

We have been working through our Eucharist book and we’ll be ready when first Communion comes. We have been concentrating on the idea that God calls us to be good listeners not just people who hear; we need to listen with our minds and hearts as well as our ears.

Beth Gettig
St. Augustine School, Covington
What stands out is their love for Jesus and their desire to be like Jesus.

(Continued from page 12)
In a video message to young men and women in advance of World Youth Day 2019, Pope Francis called on them to begin a “revolution of service.”

In helping those who are suffering, both young believers and nonbelievers can find “a strength that can change the world,” the Pope said. “It is a revolution that can overturn the powerful forces at work in our world.”

The Messenger asked high school teachers how they think service fosters leadership, and do you see the students embodying that idea at your school?

Kathy Metzger and Christy Boehmker
Front Office
Covington Latin School, Covington
Service leads to leadership as the students experience the world around them. They are engaged in activities with people of all ages and backgrounds. It is a good starting point for what they will encounter as they go out on their own. Our students are smiling and talking about their time when they return to school. They build on their experiences by initiating special drives to collect items needed, going back to places to tutor or help with distributions. Christian service is a wonderful way for the students to be involved. It is something they will carry with them and refer to as they find their own paths to travel. Leadership and commitment go hand in hand — so while they are performing their service they are also learning what it takes to keep the world in harmony with one another.

Barbara Droege
Cafeteria Manager
Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills
Service fosters leadership in many ways. It teaches our students responsibility, how to use their time wisely and above all, how to help others. All of the different venues of service out there help to give students an awareness of needs and a different perspective on life and its challenges. Our school truly embodies the teaching of service, helping others and an awareness of community service.

Rita Blakefield
President, St. Patrick Grandparents Club; secretary, St. Patrick School Board; volunteer and janitor (at times)
St. Patrick School, Maysville
Service is a concept that is expected as much as studying for exams. Not only do the students participate and mostly enjoy this process, but they also learn from it and receive gratification from doing so.

Whether it is volunteering at grade school basketball league, serving Christmas and Thanksgiving meals, planting flags at the courthouse, crosses at the cemetery, visiting nursing and assisted living homes and on and on, there are so many instances our students reach out to serve the people of our community. I have also seen our students serving even when it is not something they are doing as a part of their daily school life. I see these students many times on their own jumping in and volunteering to serve. Leadership is indeed born out of these experiences but leadership is gained in many other ways at our school due to the size of the school and the ability to interact in smaller groups, which promotes confidence and self-reliance.

Emily Vogt
Coordinator for Family Ministry (PTO)
St. Timothy School, Union
Our school is service learning based so the students are to learn more about him. The students ask questions and are excited about religion class. This particular group of children is kind, honest and compassionate.

Something I have noticed about my second graders is their ability to see Jesus in other people and in everyday life. I think this is something that most adults “forget” or get “too busy” to do. These children see the good in others and notice the beauty in the world around them. For example, one day at recess, a dandelion blew around the playground and a student said, “Wow, I bet this dandelion has been on a beautiful journey.”

Cindy Feeback
St. Therese School, Southgate
What stands out is the pure joy and excitement they express each day knowing they will be making two very important sacraments. They are truly excited to have Jesus closer to their hearts.

I believe my students understand the importance of having Jesus in their lives. They know Jesus is always with them wherever they go. I feel many of us tend to forget this as we get caught up in our daily routines.

Maria Borchardt and Carrie Williams
St. Henry Catholic School, Elsmere
They have been taking this sacramental year to reach out to students with older siblings who came to this school year excited about the sacraments. These students are anxious, excited and really have their hearts into this special sacramental year.

Catholic schools — creating leaders through a ‘revolution of service’

In a video message to young men and women in advance of World Youth Day 2019, Pope Francis called on them to begin a “revolution of service.”

In helping those who are suffering, both young believers and nonbelievers can find “a strength that can change the world,” the Pope said. “It is a revolution that can overturn the powerful forces at work in our world.”

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Emily Vogt
Coordinator for Family Ministry (PTO)
St. Timothy School, Union
Our school is service learning based so the students are
"I PLANTED THE SEED...BUT GOD MADE IT GROW."
— 1 CORINTHIANS 3:6

At Covington Catholic High School, growth is achieved through committed and talented teachers and staff; breadth of challenging curriculum; strength of academic, athletic, social and service programs; almost 100 years of tradition; a culture of brotherhood; a community of support; and a resolute focus on spiritual formation...all rooted in core values based on relationships, humility, integrity and faith.

Covington Catholic High School
1600 Dixie Highway
Park Hills, Ky 41011
(859) 448-2257
www.cowcats.org
Catholic Diocese of Covington

2
Nat'l Blue Ribbon School Awards
9
National Merit Finalists in 2018-19
10
Million Dollars in Campus Enhancements

We're celebrating our High School

CLASS OF 2019

$264,000 average scholarship offer per graduate
100% graduates receive college scholarships
3.71 average GPA

41% received scholarships covering half tuition at the school of their choice
28 average ACT score
81% competed in at least one sport

#1 PRIVATE SCHOOL
IN NORTHERN KY
Reported by Niche.com

#1 FOR STEM
AMONG NKY PRIVATE SCHOOLS
According to Newsweek

#1 IN KENTUCKY TRIPLE THREAT ATHLETES
KHSAA statistics

Contact: 859-331-6333 Email: admissions@villamadonna.net Explore: VillaMadonna.org Visit: 2500 Amsterdam Road, Villa Hills, KY
Official Blessing and Dedication of the
“Building on Excellence, Guided by Faith” Building Project
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16 - 2:00 p.m.
RSVP @ shdhs.org/rsvp

LEARN. SERVE. LEAD. SUCCEED.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

www.hchscov.com
Catholic schools — communities of learning, serving, leading and succeeding

Bishop Brossart High School: Charity First

The beginning of high school marks a pivotal transition for any student, both academically and as an individual. What Bishop Brossart High School offers to each person who walks through our doors is a commitment to make the halls feel like home and equip every student with the tools to grow in faith, academics and beyond.

Growth at Bishop Brossart is made possible through the reinforcement of our motto “Charity First.” Students are given full exposure to the blessings that come from helping others through the services days each grade participates in, as well as organizations like National Beta Club and National Honor Society that have charity as one of, if not, the main pillar of its foundation. Student involvement as a whole marks another area where Bishop Brossart allows our students to grow. With a countless array of organizations from Student Council to our decorated robotics team, there is immense encouragement for all students, no matter what their interests, to be involved. These enriching extracurriculars cultivate a community and friendship among students and faculty alike, allowing a sense of true family to flourish. Having this unique sense of family allows for a culture of honesty and love, a quintessential environment for students to perform at their highest ability and fully realize the potential their future holds.

At Bishop Brossart you will find staff willing to go above and beyond to ensure every student reaches that full potential and has the tools to achieve the full scope of their future dreams and faith goals. The countless letters of recommendation for colleges and scholarships that are written attest to the close relationship each student is able to create with members of the faculty. A substantial factor of this closeness comes from many of our teachers being involved as coaches and leaders of other student-involved organizations, creating one family in God’s work.

Just as each student experiences their own personal growth at Bishop Brossart, our school itself is growing with them as well. Since our humble beginnings as St. Mary’s High School in 1960, we have had numerous expansions to our campus. Among our most recent was the addition of a turf field for both soccer and football, a track named after our 2018 Ribbon School in 2018. Perhaps the most exciting growth of all, however, comes from the grand opening of the brand new Mustang Athletic Complex. This top-of-the-line facility now includes: a turf field for both soccer and football, a track named after our girls track and Larosa’s Hall of Fame coach Dave Schuh, fully equipped concessions and locker rooms, a full set of stands and a multi-sport field house now under construction, with plans for even more in the coming years. The generosity of those who brought this into reality demonstrates how close the Bishop Brossart community is. BBHS is a true family one who can take a sapling of an idea and grow it into the beautiful home we can now call our Mustang Athletic Complex.

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Service fosters leadership

always working on projects that have an impact on our community. Each class has a separate project that they focus on all year. Boonespring, a local nursing home, is near door where the students have visited with the residents; they are church greeters and also get out into the community volunteering at organizations like Rose Garden Mission.

I think that service fosters leadership by building confidence, and the students appreciate it when they are able to contribute and help others. It is important for us as parents to set that example for them and create those opportunities for them to serve others. Family Ministry is the parent support for the school and we also have athletic teams where parents volunteer their time to coach. St. Timothy School this year has created an entire program for leadership within the school for students who are interested in participating. Our children see the difference that they are making and want to grow and build on that.

Mike Schack
Facilities Director
Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria

I see leadership through service every day with our students. Whether it is clubs, school activities or sports teams you see the growth as they come here as freshmen and mature during their four years here. When they graduate you see responsible young men and women who have been taught and understand that service to others is the correct way to live your life.
A two-time National Blue Ribbon School (in 2016 and 2007) and the only all-male high school in the Diocese of Covington, Covington Catholic High School is approaching the century mark. 2018-19 marks the 94th school year for the “House of Blue,” as well as the pending completion of a $9 Million major construction project of new and renovated facilities on the current campus. The physical footprint is changed, but inside the school the steadfast focus is on the mission to embrace the Gospel message of Jesus Christ in order to educate young men spiritually, academically, physically and socially.

While the approach and traditions remain fundamentally the same across generations of Colonels, there are new spiritual challenges and opportunities, new breadth and depth to academic standards, new athletic seasons and goals, and new social connections that both educate and inspire students’ futures in the following ways:

• Spiritually. A young man experiences the humble satisfaction of participating in community service with his fellow Covington Catholic brothers. Our students contribute almost twice the required hours of community service each year, via efforts such as tutoring at inner-city schools and actively working at Special Olympics events in Northern Kentucky. In addition to Mass and other sacraments, which are regularly offered at school, our young men seize opportunities to grow and communicate their faith, such as at the annual March for Life and mission/trip retreats.

• Academically. Students are challenged via a wide range of academic offerings and program levels. We celebrate the exceptional achievements of our students, such as: the 2018 graduating class AEP average composite score of 26 and greater than 85 percent pass rate on AP Exams (both well above state and national averages); 7 National Merit Finalists (the most of any school in Northern Kentucky); 43 AP Scholars; 41 students accepted to the Kentucky Governor’s Programs for Scholars, Arts and Entrepreneurs over the past five years; and $2 Million in academic or athletic college scholarships being earned by more than 96 percent of the Class of 2018. We also boast of a range of class levels and disciplines across core subjects as well as the arts, languages, religion and social sciences, and our exemplary science, technology, engineering, and mathematics integrated curriculum (STEM), which allows each student the opportunity to be challenged in his area(s) of academic strength, while balancing with a strong college prep curriculum in other areas, individually suited to him.

• Physically. Covington Catholic has 11 KHSAA-sanctioned athletic teams (involving approximately 66 percent of students), and state championships in both football and basketball, as well as 11 regional champions or runner-up team finishers in 2017-18, as well as through participation in intramural sports, including a basketball league which involves about two-thirds of the student body in friendly but vigorous competition.

• Socially. Students have access to a multitude of organized extracurricular clubs and experiences, but also with a “House System” which fortifies the brotherhood to embody “A Spirit That Will Not Die.” Whether as the Colonel Crazies supporting our athletic teams in impressive — even award-winning — fashion, or on an individual level by supporting a classmate through good and bad, Covington Catholic students develop into young men in a spirited and supportive atmosphere.

Contact Covington Catholic High School: www.covcath.org or (859) 491-2247.

Exceptional students require exceptional educational opportunities. Ranked by Cincinnati Magazine and Niche as the #1 private school in Northern Kentucky, Covington Latin School has developed an unparalleled reputation by fostering an atmosphere of academic and spiritual leadership through its accelerated curriculum.

Acceleration is a distinctive hallmark of Covington Latin School and offers an avenue for bright and enthusiastic fifth, sixth, and seventh grade students to advance one to two years; to move at a pace, level, and complexity appropriate to their individual needs, while surrounding them with like-minded and engaged peers who share their intellectual curiosity.

And the results are impressive: the Covington Latin Class of 2015 averaged over $212,000 per student in scholarship offers and had an average ACT® composite score of 30.2. Graduates go on to excel in the nation’s finest colleges and universities, with 98% holding bachelor’s degrees and 48% with advanced or terminal degrees (MD, PhD, JD, etc.). Alumni have compiled tremendous records of achievement and leadership in the Church, business, law, engineering, medicine, public service, education, science, and technology sectors.

But a premier Catholic education is more than cultivating intellect and accomplishments alone. Covington Latin maintains a deep and abiding commitment to its Catholic identity. Our in-depth theology coursework builds on the foundations developed within families and provides comprehensive understanding of the Catholic faith. This knowledge is put into practice by our Campus Ministry through weekly all-school Masses at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, class retreats and humanitarian service work.

Wide-ranging athletic and extracurricular involvement reflects CLS students’ commitment to academic, social, spiritual, and personal aspects of their total formation. A broad spectrum of clubs and organizations, ranging from Ski Club, Junior Classical League and Literary Guild, to Academic Team, Robotics and Drama Clubs reflect the wide-ranging extracurricular interests of our students.

We offer KHSAA-recognized varsity athletic teams in...
archery, ejections, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross-country, golf, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, track and volleyball. Latin School values the lessons taught by athletic participation: leadership, strength of character, teamwork and sportsmanship — respect for one’s opponents, acknowledge-ment of victory with humility and acceptance of defeat.

Students are best prepared for college and the world beyond by having a strong spiritual foundation and learning in a supportive, diverse, coeducational atmosphere — reflective of, and therefore preparatory for, the world they will inherit. Our students come from varied economic, educa-tional, cultural and geographic backgrounds, drawing enrollment from throughout Southern Ohio, Indiana, and seven counties in Northern Kentucky.

We believe that financial wealth should not determine access to the best education, nor should it shape a learning community. Covington Latin offers tuition assistance to families across a broad spectrum of financial circumstances to ensure the Latin School experience is accessible to all deserving students.

There has never been a more exciting time to be at Covington Latin. The school’s community continues to search for students interested in exploring the possibilities Covington Latin may hold for their children, to join us at Covington Latin’s Open House on Thursday, Feb. 27 at 6:30 p.m. Please reserve your place available at covingtonlatin.org or by calling 859.291.7044.

Article submitted by Covington Latin School.

## Holy Cross District High School — providing opportunity, developing dreams

Holy Cross High School has a proud tradition of providing a strong, faith-filled education for its students. Since its founding in 1929, the vision has transformed to meet the ever-changing needs of students. Holy Cross High School has changed from a mission that it in some ways unrecognizable from past eras.

The dream was to build the school into one of the strongest schools in the area. There have been expansions curriculum, extracurricular activities, and the campus. And yet, despite this growth, Holy Cross has retained the virtues and advantages of the small school fondly remembered by alumni: small classes, a supportive family atmosphere, individual attention and a high level of involvement.

The student body of Holy Cross is as diverse as that of any school in the diocese, coming from an amazing range of socio-economic and academic backgrounds. Over the years, the school’s curriculum has grown to match this diversity. Five levels of study and individualized scheduling allow our students to take courses that will challenge them while providing a genuine opportunity to achieve their future dreams.

The flexibility and variety of the curriculum enable students to move back and forth among different levels as their preferences and development in various subjects dictate.

Holy Cross High School has continued to expand its curriculum. Offering only one A.P. course in 1994, Holy Cross now offers courses that will provide the highest level of challenges for students, enabling them to earn college credits. Advanced Placement courses are offered in English and Mathematics (10.0) and state (20.2) averages. In addition, 35 students have been enrolled in AP courses.

Holy Cross offers a wide range of extracurricular opportunities which allow students to develop and discover talents, friendships and experiences. Almost 80 percent of the students participate in at least one extracurricular, 75 percent on one of our 21 athletic teams. More importantly, every graduate of Holy Cross has performed a minimum of 100 hours of community service, with many students going far beyond that figure. National Honor Society members do at least 10 additional hours each year. Students do all of this on their own time, not during school hours, helping make Holy Cross an even more integral part of Northern Kentucky and fostering a community spirit that will last a lifetime. What also lasts forever is a deep-rooted connection to the Holy Cross family forged in a thousand different ways during a student’s four years here.

We provide students with the best spiritual, educational and extra-curricular opportunities possible to equip them with a foundation so that they can develop their dreams into their brightest future.

Article submitted by Holy Cross District High School.

**Five pillars define the mission at NCC:**

- **faith**
- **family, academic excellence, character development and community stewardship**

We believe in... faith

Before even entering the building of Newport Catholic High School, visitors realize the importance of our faith. The giant white cross, positioned adjacent to Mary, can be seen from miles around. Our cross logo adorns our front brick entrance, while the Holy Mother looks out over the panoramic view of the region. At the base of our front steps sits tablets honouring the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and the corporal works of mercy.

Once in the classrooms, more than just tangible objects represent a testament to our faith. Every single day our morning announcements start with a prayer. Furthermore, every single teacher in every single class begins with a prayer of their own. Christ was the greatest teacher and our own faculty and staff do their best to model their behaviors after him.

At the foundation of everything we stand for; you can find our faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Our academics, character community stewardship and family are all in the pursuit of eternal heaven.

We believe in... family

At NCC, students develop a sense of family that extends

(Continued from page 18)

## Providing quality Christ-centered elementary education to children in our urban areas

Every day is Open House at the ACUE Schools. To schedule a tour, please contact the school directly.

- **HOLY CROSS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
  - 3615 Church Street, Latonia (859) 281-6599
  - Please call to schedule a tour.

- **HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL**
  - 338 E. 16th Street, Covington (859) 281-4900
  - Please call to schedule a tour.

- **HOLY TRINITY SCHOOL (K-8)**
  - 235 Division Street, Bellevue (859) 291-6933
  - Sunday, January 26
    - 12:00 – 2:30PM

**Celebrating Catholic Schools Week**

Providing quality Christ-centered elementary education to children in our urban areas

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## We are grateful for the support of our parishes:

- **1 Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption**
  - 1840 Jefferson Avenue, Covington
  - (859) 292-1500

- **1 Our Savior, Covington**
  - 1 Holy Cross, Latonia
  - 1 Holy Cross, Latonia
  - 1 St. Boniface & St. Judes, Ludlow
  - 1 St. Benedict, Covington
  - 1 Our Lady of Good Counsel, Covington
  - 1 Holy Spirit, Newport
  - 1 Holy Cross, Latonia
  - 1 St. Bernard, Dayton
  - 1 St. Anthony, Covington
  - 1 St. John, Covington
  - 1 Sacred Heart, Lexington
  - 1 St. Joseph, Covington

### SCHOOLS WEEK

Catholic Urban Education Since 1834 • www.covingtondiocese.org • (859) 392-1500

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1 Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption
- 1840 Jefferson Avenue, Covington
- (859) 292-1500

1 Our Savior, Covington
1 Holy Cross, Latonia
1 Holy Cross, Latonia
1 St. Boniface & St. Judes, Ludlow
1 St. Benedict, Covington
1 Our Lady of Good Counsel, Covington
1 Holy Spirit, Newport
1 Holy Cross, Latonia
1 St. Bernard, Dayton
1 St. Anthony, Covington
1 Our Savior, Covington
1 St. John, Covington
The Catholic schools of the Diocese of Covington welcome you to discover how they are raising the standards by incorporating faith, academics and service in education. Visit them on the web or better yet attend an open house. Private tours are also available. Contact the school of your choice to arrange a tour.

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

Blessed Sacrament School, Covington (859) 261-0543 www.sacramentinos.com
St. Anthony School, Taylor Mill (859) 431-9587 www.saintanthonytaylormill.org
St. Augustine School, Augusta (606) 732-3229 www.saintaugustinesaugusta.org
St. Augustine School, Covington (859) 261-5564 www.staugustines.net
St. Catherine of Siena School, P. Thomas (859) 572-2680 www.sainttheresa学校.com
St. Cecilia School, Independence (859) 363-3414 www.stceciliaschool.net
St. Edward School, Cynthiana (859) 234-2731 www.stedwardsg.org/ school
St. Henry School, Erlanger (859) 342-2551 www.sthennyschool.net
St. Joseph Academy, Walston (859) 485-6444 www.sjwalton.com
St. Joseph School, Camp Springs (pre-school) www.stjosephcampingringschool.com
St. Joseph School, Cold Spring (859) 441-2025 www.stjosephcoldspring.com
St. Joseph School, Covington (859) 578-2742 www.sjcovington.com
St. Mary School, Alexandria (859) 635-9593 www.saintmaryparish.com/school
St. Patrick School, Maysville (606) 564-5949 www.stpatrickschool.com
St. Philip School, Melbourne (859) 441-3423 www.jpilpak.org
St. Pius X School, Edgewood (859) 411-4900 www.stpius.com
St. Theresa School, Southgate (859) 441-0449 www.stthereseschool.com
St. Thomas School, P. Thomas (859) 572-4641 www.sttsschool.org
St. Timothy School, Union (859) 384-5100 https://bainbridgeville-school.org
Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills (859) 331-6333 www.villacovington.org
Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills (859) 331-6333 www.villamadonna.org

**HIGH SCHOOLS**

Bishop Brossart High School, Alexandria (859) 635-2108 www.bishopbrossart.org
Covington Catholic High School, Park Hills (859) 491-2247 www.covcath.org
Covington Latin School, Covington (859) 291-7044 www.covingtonlatin.org
Holy Cross District High School, Covington (859) 431-1335 www.hcacs.org
Newport Central Catholic High School, Newport (859) 392-0001 www.nchs.com
Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills (859) 261-4500 www.ndapandans.org
St. Henry District High School, Erlanger (859) 525-0255 www.shdhs.org
St. Patrick School, Maysville (606) 564-5949 www.stpatrickschool.com
Villa Madonna Academy, Villa Hills (859) 331-6333 www.viliamadonna.org

**UNIVERSITY**

Thomas More University, Crestview Hills (859) 341-5800 www.thomasmore.edu

We believe in... academic excellence
We are proud to address the whole student, and through this we ensure academic rigor. There is ongoing discussion concerning academic rigor and a challenge to each student to perform to the best of his or her ability. This may mean that students look to challenge themselves in our numerous AP courses, dual credit options or honors classes. On the other hand, some students need the support of the Academic Enhancement Program to meet their greatest standard. The students in between can find challenges in the variety of electives offered in our school curriculum.

We believe in... character development
Our faculty and staff take the approach that our students are more than test scores. They are people and the future of our world. With this in mind, there is no greater investment of time, talent or treasure than in Catholic education. Looking at the character of our alumni it is obvious that students are not just prepared for their four years of high school or even just their next four years of college; we are preparing students for life and most importantly for heaven.

We believe in... community stewardship
Our school would not exist if it were not for the generous giving of time, talent and treasure. Our foundations were built by a number of Catholic vocations that inspired alumni to support our missions. As a tribute to this, we encourage our students to give back through service projects both required and optional, and establish giving as a lifelong promise.

Through the daily focus on faith, family, academic excellence, character development and community stewardship, Newport Central Catholic High School helps students prepare for college, employment, life and eternal life.

*Article submitted by Newport Central Catholic High School.*

**Notre Dame Academy:**

**Innovators of tomorrow**

As Northern Kentucky’s ONLY Catholic college-preparatory high school exclusively for young women, Notre Dame Academy (NDA) provides a premier education empowering young women to become intelligent and compassionate leaders who make a difference in the world.

For well over a century Notre Dame Academy students have been ignited with a passion for learning. Through the culture of innovation at NDA, they have become critical and creative thinkers, effective communicators and skillful collaborators. Our students today at Notre Dame Academy are the innovators of tomorrow.

This culture of innovation is not a trend or a buzz phrase but rather a critical component of a Notre Dame Academy education established by the Sisters of Notre Dame. Well over a century ago, the Sisters were visionary and innovators themselves. At a time when women didn’t even have the right to vote, the Sisters of Notre Dame realized the importance of educating young women. What a tremendous difference these trailblazers made!
made in 1906 when they founded Notre Dame Academy! Today we are charged with continuing that innovative spirit and forward-thinking approach to education at Notre Dame Academy. We do this by empowering our students with the fundamental skills they need to be prepared for college and to succeed later in life. NDA leads the way in educational technology and science research, integrating core competencies that enable students to thrive in the 21st century. We cultivate innovation not only in our classrooms but also through our fine arts programs, athletics and in the many extracurricular opportunities offered at NDA.

Most importantly, we encourage our students to be trailblazers and innovators in their service to others. The young women of Notre Dame Academy come to understand the opportunities and responsibilities of global citizenship. They are inspired to use their God-given gifts and their Notre Dame Academy education to make a difference in the world.

At Notre Dame Academy, we believe in an education that combines the timeless wisdom of our Catholic faith with the necessary skills that our students will need to adapt to a continuously changing world. With an innovative approach that integrates academics, arts and athletics, we are molding young women to have a vibrant faith and a passion for learning.

To learn more about the advantages of Notre Dame Academy education, visit www.ndacademics.org.

**Voted “Best Doctors” 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018**

Our vision is to be the school that develops the whole child, spiritually, intellectually and physically.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

**St. Henry District High School — Building on Excellence, Guided by Faith**

It is a great time to be a part of the Crusader community!

The completion of a $7.8 million building expansion project is propelling an already incredible St. Henry District High School to the next level. The “Building on Excellence, Guided by Faith” expansion is near completion and the official blessing and dedication is set for Sunday, Feb. 16 at 2 p.m.

The St. Henry faculty work together to help students grow academically, personally and spiritually. Through college prep courses, academic support programs, and extracurricular activities, students are prepared for the demanding challenges of the future. Each year, St. Henry continues to rank among one of the top high schools. Over the previous four years, St. Henry had:

- Over $41 million in scholarship offers
- 6 National Merit Finalists and 10 National Merit Commended
- 9 National AP Scholars / 71 AP Scholars with Distinction
- 30 AP Scholars with Honors / 74 AP Scholars
- Out of 115 AP Exams, 80 of students received a score of 3 or higher
- St. Henry students understand the importance of what it means to be CRUfined in Christ. Inside and outside the classroom, the Department of Religious Formation works with the Northern Kentucky community through service, campus ministry and catechesis. It is during the all-school masses, prayer services, retreats and community service opportunities where students truly come together and grow from the teachings of the Catholic faith.

The Crusader community is extremely proud of the success of its athletic programs.

- The boys’ cross country team reached the podium at the state championships, placing third.
- The boys’ golf team qualified for the first Annual All-State Championship and finished second in the All-State tournament.
- The girls’ soccer team defended its 4th District Championship and continued on to win the All-State Championship.
- The girls’ volleyball team won the NKAC conference title, District 17 title, and head coach Maureen Kaiser was awarded the KHSAA coach of the year.
- The competitive cheer squad qualified for nationals.
- The swim and dive team was Combined Champions in the All-State Invitational. This spring, boys’ and girls’ lacrosse will kick off their inaugural seasons.

To experience a day in the life of a Crusader, families are encouraged to schedule a campus tour or shadow day by contacting the Enrollment Office at (859) 525-5844. To learn more, visit shdhs.org or connect with them on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

**Article submitted by St. Henry District High School.**
their college tuition. Parents believe it’s the people behind the results that make the difference. They say small class sizes, the welcoming community, engaged teachers, and a values-based approach to education are the top reasons they chose Villa. The small-by-design class sizes (91 stu-
dent-teacher ratio) allow Villa’s dynamic teachers to help students find their best path to success, and the Benedictine values of scholarship, hospitality, service, stewardship and respect help create an environment where everyone is wel-
come and challenged to grow academically and spiritually.

Villa’s welcoming community extends outside the class-
room as well. All students have the opportunity to play on the Villa Vikings competitive sports teams, perform on stage, or participate in one of Villa’s many clubs. In fact, more than 90 percent of students participate in extracur-
curricular activity, thus contributing to Villa’s history of suc-
cess. The Villa Vikings compete at regional and state levels as do the academic, chess and Future Lego League teams, and the Destination Imagination team has competed on a global stage. In addition, artists and authors at Villa have been recognized regionally and nationally for the quality of their work.

Villa is Catholic, co-ed, close to home, and more afford-
able than you might think. Villa works diligently to provide scholarships and financial assistance to qualify for the awards. 42 percent of students receive assistance. You are invited to explore Villa as an option for your family. Observe Villa stu-
dents, talk to parents, and meet the faculty. Learn more by visiting villamadonna.org or by contacting Janet Baugh, our Admissions Director, at jbaugh@villamadonna.net / 859-331-6333.

Article submitted by Villa Madonna Academy

Thomas More University—‘Make It More’

Thomas More University provides students with some-
thing much more than job training. Graduates are pre-
pared for any career. But they leave prepared for much
more.

A college education isn’t supposed to be a hoop to jump through or a box to check in order to get a good job,” said President Chillo. “Education is a transformative endeavor, not a transactional exchange. It is a community, not a com-
modity.”

At Thomas More, students are exposed to the very best thought, literature, art and music. They learn to harness the power of human rea-
son to solve problems and discover truth. Most impor-
tantly, they have the chance to begin to become the person they were creat-
ed to be. This is the power of the liberal arts in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition at Thomas More. Students come to Thomas
More looking for more. And that’s exactly what the University offers. At Thomas More, students take that opportunity and make it more.

Founded in 1921 as Villa Madonna College by the Bene-
dictine Sisters, Thomas More University still serves the community and globe with the same mission on which the Benedictine Sisters founded Villa Madonna College — to serve as a Catholic higher educa-
tion institution that challenges students of all faiths to examine the ultimate meaning of life, their place in the world, and their responsibility to others. With this focus, Thomas More continually ranks competitively among other high education institutions nationally and is cur-
rently positioned as No. 1 in long-term gain among four-
year private and public institutions in Kentucky.

Top highlights at the University this past year include welcoming Thomas More’s 15th president, Joseph L. Chillo, LJD, introducing the Diocese of Covington Guarantee, which ensures that all diocesan graduates who meet admission criteria are awarded $20,000 in insti-
tutional aid, opening a new space dedicated to student veterans and celebrating another national championship win from the Women’s Basketball team as it finished the season with a perfect record.

For more information about campus happenings, to schedule a campus visit or to learn about scholarship opportunities, visit thomasmore.edu.

Article submitted by Thomas More University

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO STUDENTS

Diocesan Policy states that “No person shall be refused admission to any church, school or institution or membership in any Catholic society or organization solely on the grounds of race, national origin, color, sex, age, or disability. In keeping with this policy, the school under the auspices of the Department of Catholic Education, Diocese of Covington, do not discriminate on the basis of race, color or national or ethnic origin. Students of any race who meet the individual school’s eligibility requirements are admitted to the right privileges, programs and activities gener-
ally accorded to students at that school and that school does not discriminate on the basis of race in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships and loan pro-
grams and other school-administered programs. The names and addresses of these schools are listed below.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Bishop Brossart - 4 Goose Avenue, Alexandria, Kentucky 41010-2195
Covington Catholic - 1600 Dixie Highway, Covington, Kentucky 41011-2797
Covington Latin - 25 East Sixth Street, Covington, Kentucky 41011-3196
Holy Cross - 3657 Church Street, Covington, Kentucky 41015-4948
Newport Central Catholic - 13 Cherokee Road, Newport, Kentucky 41071-2497
Notre Dame Academy - 1019 Hilton Drive, Covington, Kentucky 41011-7270
St. Henry - 3755 Scheller Drive, Erlanger, Kentucky 41018-1073
St. Patrick - 818 Limestone Street, Maysville, Kentucky 41056-1248
Villa Madonna Academy - 2500 Amsterdam Road, Villa Hills, Kentucky 41017-3798

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Blessed Sacrament - 2407 Dixie Highway, Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky 41017-2994
Holy Cross - 3655 Church Street, Covington, Kentucky 41015-1430
Holy Family - 330 E. Sixth Street, Covington, Kentucky 41016-1006
Holy Trinity School - 225 Division Street, Bellevue, Kentucky 41073-1001
Immaculate Heart of Mary - 5678 Veterans Way, Burlington, Kentucky 41005-8284
Mary Queen of Heaven - 1120 Donaldson Drive, Erlanger, Kentucky 41018-3088
Prince of Peace - 025 Pike Street, Covington, Kentucky 41011-2798
St. Agnes - 1322 Sipsey Hollow Road, Ft. Wright, Kentucky 41111-2769
St. Anthony - 485 Grand Avenue, Covington, Kentucky 41015-0219
St. Augustine - 203 East Fourth Street, Augusta, Kentucky 40022-1117
St. Augustine - 1840 Jefferson Avenue, Covington, Kentucky 41014-1165
St. Catherine of Siena - 23 Rosefield Avenue, Ft. Thomas, Kentucky 41075-1298
St. Cecilia - 3313 Madison Pike, Independence, Kentucky 41051-0186
St. Edward - 607 North Walnut Street, Cincinnati, Kentucky 41011-1225
St. Henry - 3825 Dixie Highway, Erlanger, Kentucky 41018-1863
St. Joseph - 6829 Four Mile Road, Camp Springs, Kentucky 41019-9746
St. Joseph - 4011 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, Kentucky 41076-1817
St. Joseph - 2474 Lorraine Avenue, Crescent Springs, Kentucky 41017-1439
St. Joseph Academy - 48 Newstone Street, Walton, Kentucky 41094-3228
St. Mary - 9 South Jefferson Street, Alexandria, Kentucky 41001-1398
St. Patrick - 518 Limestone Street, Maysville, Kentucky 41056-1248
St. Paul - 7303 Dixie Highway, Florence, Kentucky 41042-2126
St. Peter - 2500 California Crossroads, California, Kentucky 41007-9713
St. Philip - 1400 Mary Ingeles, Hwy, Melbourne, Kentucky 41059-9701
St. Pius X - 348 Dudley Road, Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky 41017-2899
St. Therese - 2156 Alexandria Pike, Southgate, Kentucky 41072-3208
St. Thomas - 428 St. Thomas Avenue, Ft. Thomas, Kentucky 41017-2295
St. Timothy - 10377 Hwy 42, Union, Kentucky 41091
Villa Madonna Academy - 2500 Amsterdam Road, Villa Hills, Kentucky 41017-3798

Duveneck murals
(Continued from page 1)

in the smaller panel to the right the Sovereign High Priest of the Old Law (with attendant if you wish) offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, both (outside panels) facing the Crucifixion.”

attendant priests if you like) offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Old Law (with attendant if you wish) offering the Holy Sacrifice of the New Law (a Bishop with loaves of Bread on the Altar of Propitiation; in the larger panel to the left a priest of the New Law (a Bishop with

Detail of the left panel, showing a modern bishop celebrating Mass.

Frank Duveneck, a devout Catholic who studied as a youth under religious painter Johann Schmitt, understood Mass’ ideas perfectly and went right to work. The layout of the main mural itself would take the form of a “trypytch” - a single painting comprised of three panels. To accommodate the large, 21-foot high canvases required, Duveneck executed the works in his roomy studio at the Cincinnati Art Museum, a space given to him because of his teaching position with the Art Academy.

For four and a half years he worked on the murals. In December 1899, he put the finishing touches on the last panel, then put down his brush. The triptych was finished, along with a second, smaller mural destined for the chapel’s upper west wall, depicting Christ breaking bread with his disciples at Emmaus. In January 1910, amid great fanfare and public excitement, the finished three-panel triptych and smaller mural were exhibited in the main entrance hall of the Cincinnati Art Museum.

They would be installed in the cathedral’s chapel later that May.

Very few records exist that tell us about William Blank, the artist hired to restore them. Nothing is known of his artistic life - no works, no exhibitions, no newspaper articles. What we do know is that he was born Wilhelm Edward Blank on May 30, 1877 in Germany, the second youngest child of Nicholas and Barbara Blank. In 1883, the family of seven emigrated to America and settled in Newark, New Jersey where William grew up. His father was a “decorator of churches and house painter” as was his older brother Gustav. Another brother, Louis, became a medical doctor.

William moved to Cincinnati around 1908 and had a studio and residence at 2316 Kemper Lane in Walnut Hills. Only his WWII draft registration card and a 1918 city directory list his occupation here as a “church painter.”

But by the time William Blank was hired to clean them in 1920, the famous works were in bad shape. “After careful inspection,” he wrote Father Flynn in his letter, “I found the paintings were in worse condition than at first inspected.” He pointed out that the paintings had been “cut up in sections” when glued to the wall, and that “an improper and impractical method was used in hanging them” giving the murals a wrinkled appearance.

Additionally, he noted that the glaze used to protect the painting’s surface had “formed a soft scum on the canvas and due to atmospheric conditions, blurred the pictures to such an extent that the subjects were almost beyond recognition.” He blamed the problem on a primitive glue made from the “buttermilk process,” a popular French technique made by mixing milk, slaked lime and linseed oil, which was thought to be a satisfactory substitute for more expensive glazes. But in wet and humid weather the mixture tends to grow moist, soften and ferment, which damaged Duveneck’s original underlying paint.

William Blank had his work cut out for him. He removed the canvases completely from the chapel walls and stripped off the defective glue and sizing. At his studio on Kemper Lane, he then set about carefully retouching the damaged areas of surface paint laid down by Duveneck’s own hand. He cleaned the canvases backs, applied new sizing, then carefully

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ST. PATRICK SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Saint Patrick School has a vacancy for the position of Principal beginning with the 2020-2021 school year. Our school is a growing Pre-K through 12th grade Catholic parochial school in beautiful Maysville, Kentucky. As the only Catholic school offering high school courses within a 50-mile radius in Kentucky and Ohio, we strive to form our students to be intentional disciples of Jesus Christ as they prepare to assume their adult responsibilities. Candidates must be actively practicing Catholics with a demonstrated commitment to Catholic education. A Master’s Degree in Education or an Education related program is required for the position, as well as a Kentucky teaching and/or Administrative Certificate. Candidates should have at least five years of teaching experience with some of that time spent in Catholic education, Administrative experience as a Principal and/or Vice Principal is preferred in Candidates but is not required for this position. Commensurate experience or credentials may be accepted for teaching, Catholic education, and/or administration. All wishing to apply for this position need to submit a cover letter, resume, and a copy of all relevant transcripts and certifications to Father Andrew Young at 110 E. 3rd St., Maysville, KY 41056 or by e-mail to ayoung@stpatschool.com.

ST. ANNE RETREAT CENTER

The Saint Anne Retreat Center is accepting applications for multiple positions throughout the Center. • Part-Time Hospitality Ministers work at the Center for a weekend or midweek retreat catering to the needs of visiting retreat groups. Hospitality applicants must be able to stay overnight. • Part-Time Hostess helps with food prep, set-up, clean up, and works closely with the cook. • Part-time Dishwashers assist in all aspects of kitchen and Dining Hall clean up. Dishwasher is ideal for high school students. Weekly schedules vary. All candidates must submit to a background check. Please contact Karen for more information at klittle@covdio.org or (859) 441-2003, ext. 325

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DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Care Net Pregnancy Services of Northern Kentucky is seeking to advance it’s development efforts and is in search of a part-time (30 hour) Development Director. The Development Director is responsible for planning, management, and execution of development strategies as outlined in the annual development plan: annual banquet, fundraiser events, major gifts, planned giving, grant writing and capital campaign. This entails active engagement with donor base including prospecting, development and procurement of financial gifts. The Development Director is responsible for managing special events and donor marketing. The Development Director supervises the Development Assistant and works in close partnership with the Executive Director, Development Committee and Board members. Candidates must possess strong verbal and written communication skills and demonstrate advanced PC skills in Microsoft Office.

Applicants should include resume, cover letter and salary requirements to info@carenetky.org

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St. Augustine Parish in Covington, KY (www.staugustines.net) is seeking to identify qualified, actively practicing Roman Catholic candidates for the part-time (Monday – Friday; 9:00AM – 1:00PM) position of Parish Office Secretary. The responsibilities of this position will include management of the parish calendar and the database of 375 families, sacramental record keeping, tracking of Mass offerings, editing the bulletin, word processing, and telephones. Requirements include strong organizational skills and attention to detail, basic computer and word processing skills, comfort with a small office environment, and flexibility. Interested candidates should send a letter of interest, simple resume including references with email addresses, and compensation history to Stephen Koplyay at skoplyay@covdio.org or fax to 859/392-1589. EOE

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Studio apartment and garage parking for one vehicle available. Very reduced rent in exchange for grounds and pool maintenance and other duties. Beautiful farm setting in Crittenden, KY. Call 859-790-7552

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‘Actual innocence’ warrants retrial

WASHINGTON — In an amicus brief to a Florida capital murder case, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops told the Supreme Court the claims of “actual innocence” of the Florida man sentenced to death for the crime “must be resolved on the merits and cannot be dismissed on any procedural grounds.”

In the case, “the central question raised by the petition is whether our society can permit the execution of a person without requiring a new trial when he has come forward with persuasive evidence of actual innocence,” said the brief, dated Jan. 17.

James Milton Dailey was found guilty in 1987 of complicity in the murder of a 14-year-old girl. The verdict was rendered June 27; his first execution date was set for that Aug. 7 — 40 days after the conviction.

That Dailey has spent every day in prison wondering when his execution will be is in itself grounds against the Eighth Amendment’s provision against cruel and unusual punishment, said the 36-page brief, written by Owen Pell, counsel of record for White & Case in New York City. The most recent stay of execution was granted Oct. 23.

Dailey was imprisoned over 30 years ago for a murder he has steadfastly denied committing. Indeed, it is undisputed that another man, Jack Pearcy, killed the victim and was duly convicted of the offense, the brief said, while Dailey was convicted on the basis of testimony of three jailhouse informants, who each had every incentive to lie.

Evidence of innocence includes “a sworn affidavit by Pearcy wholly exonerating” Dailey, the brief said. “Viewed together, and in combination with the meager and suspect evidence that was presented against him at trial, the post-conviction evidence establishes the very real prospect that Mr. Dailey is innocent. Yet, the Florida Office of the Attorney General, the state lower courts and the Supreme Court of Florida have set aside such evidence.”

Pearcy was given a life sentence for the murder. Two fellow prisoners said Pearcy told them Dailey was not with him at the murder scene, although the two had been together earlier that evening. The USCCB brief said police showed newspaper clippings of the murder to 15 inmates in a bid to have some testify against Dailey.

“The evidence of Mr. Dailey’s actual innocence is not only credible; it is overwhelming,” the USCCB brief said, the U.S. bishops were joined in the brief by the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops, the public policy arm of the state’s bishops.

“The Catholic Church opposes the death penalty for it represents a violation of human dignity. It is fundamentally incompatible with the principle that human life is sacred and that redemption is always possible. The moral harm is all the more grievous, and utterly intolerable, when this irrevocable punishment is imposed upon an innocent person,” the brief said.

The brief took note of the Supreme Court’s plurality opinion in a 1960 case in which the court said, “The basic concept underlying the Eighth Amendment is nothing less than the dignity of man.” It also quoted from a 1993 high court case in which the justices said, “The central purpose of any system of criminal justice is to convict the guilty and free the innocent.”

“Before the court now is a case in which the guilty — Pearcy — has been convicted, serving a life term in prison for his heinous crime,” the USCCB brief said. “It remains for the court to insist that the criminal justice system perform the second part of its task: free the innocent after affording Mr. Dailey a new trial.”
“Spies in Disguise” (Fox) In this animated comic adventure, a superspy (voice of Will Smith) and a tech geek (voice of Tom Holland) team up to fight an international group of villains (the most prominent voiced by Ben Mendelsohn). But their mission is complicated by the fact that one of the lab whiz’s experiments has gone awry, transforming the agent into a small blue pigeon. The pace is rapid while the premise is vapid, but small children are unlikely to mind. Directors Nick Bruno and Troy Quane, working from a screenplay by Brad Copekald and Lloyd Taylor, somehow manage to let learning take place, too, even if that means occasional lessons in pigeon ingestion. Some intense action sequences and digestion-themed dialogue. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II – adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association rating is PG – parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.

“Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker” (Disney) Battles both physical and spiritual play out in this ninth, and officially final, installment in the main body of the blockbuster franchise. With the evil First Order rebranding themselves the Final Order as they prepare to launch a vast space fleet capable of crushing all opposition, General Leia (the late Carrie Fisher), commander of the Resistance, dispatches her ablest follower, Rey (Daisy Ridley), to locate the enemy’s secret base. Rey is aided by ex-stormtrooper-turned-Resistance-fighter Finn (John Boyega) and by hotshot pilot Poe (Oscar Isaac). But Kylo Ren (Adam Driver), now the Order’s supreme leader, is convinced that he can draw Rey over to the Dark Side to which he, once the good Ben Solo, long ago surrendered himself. While the status of the saga’s trademark Force remains ambivalent from a Christian perspective, lessons about making moral choices, rejecting temptation and the power of forgiveness and redemption are clear. Although it feels less substantive than the previous chapter, director and co-writer J.J. Abrams’ action epic certainly has spectacle to spare as well as some touching moments. Probably acceptable for older teens. Much stylized combat violence with minimal gore, a same-sex kiss, a couple of mild oaths, at least one cuss term. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III – adults. The Motion Picture Association rating is PG-13 — parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

For full reviews of each of these films — go to catholic-news.com and click on “Extras,” then choose “Movies.”

Catholic News Service (CNS) classifications are:
• A-I — general patronage;
• A-II — adults and adolescents;
• A-III — adults;
• L — limited adult audience;
• O — morally offensive.
Pope urges bishops to teach discernment, including on political issues

VATICAN CITY — Sometimes the political choices people face can seem like a choice between supporting a "snake" or supporting a "dragon," but Pope Francis told a group of U.S. bishops their job is to step back from partisan politics and help their faithful discern based on values, said Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston. Meeting the bishops of Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas Jan. 26, Pope Francis mentioned how, in an election, "you sometimes seem to be caught, you know, are you going to vote in one sense for a snake or you going to vote for a dragon?" Cardinal DiNardo said. The pope's advice to the bishops was "teach your people discernment by you stepping back from the sheer politics of it," and focus on the values at stake, Cardinal DiNardo told Catholic News Service. "If you try to step back and say 'but here are the major moral issues that we face, that's what is most important.'" The region's 26 bishops, including auxiliaries and retired bishops, spent about two and a half hours talking with Pope Francis in English and Spanish. The pope responded in Italian so his aides could translate the responses into English. The topics were wide-ranging and included the clerical sexual abuse crisis, migration, the challenges of a media-permeated culture and forming Christian consciences, especially in a time of deep political divisions.

Trump aims to 'even playing field' for faith-based groups seeking grants

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Jan. 16 his administration is issuing new rules to ensure the nation's faith-based service providers and organizations are not discriminated against by federal agencies' regulations or in their grant-making processes because of religion. The agencies affected include Veterans Affairs, Health and Human Services, Labor, Agriculture, Education, Justice, Homeland Security and International Development. Trump said his administration wants to protect the rights of religious student groups at public universities, giving them equal treatment with secular student groups. For schools to receive federal funding, they will need to certify once a year with state education departments that they do not have policies in place that would prevent students from constitutionally protected prayer, a senior administration official said. State departments of education also would have to report to the U.S. Department of Education each year with a list of local school boards that failed to make the required certification as well as complaints made to that department about a local school board or school that has been accused of denying students or teachers their right to engage in constitutionally protected prayer.

President Trump issues new guidance on prayer in public schools

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump announced his administration's new guidance on prayer in public schools during a Jan. 16 event in the Oval Office on National Religious Freedom Day. Primarily, it will require states to report cases where public school students have been denied their right to pray. Ahead of the event, which was delayed from a 2 p.m. (EST) start to around 4 p.m., material about it was provided to reporters in a background briefing the morning of Jan. 16. In a separate proposed rule, the administration aims to protect the rights of religious student groups at public universities, giving them equal treatment with secular student groups. For schools to receive federal funding, they will need to certify once a year with state education departments that they do not have policies in place that would prevent students from constitutionally protected prayer, a senior administration official said. State departments of education also would have to report to the U.S. Department of Education each year with a list of local school boards that failed to make the required certification as well as complaints made to that department about a local school board or school that has been accused of denying students or teachers their right to engage in constitutionally protected prayer.

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