

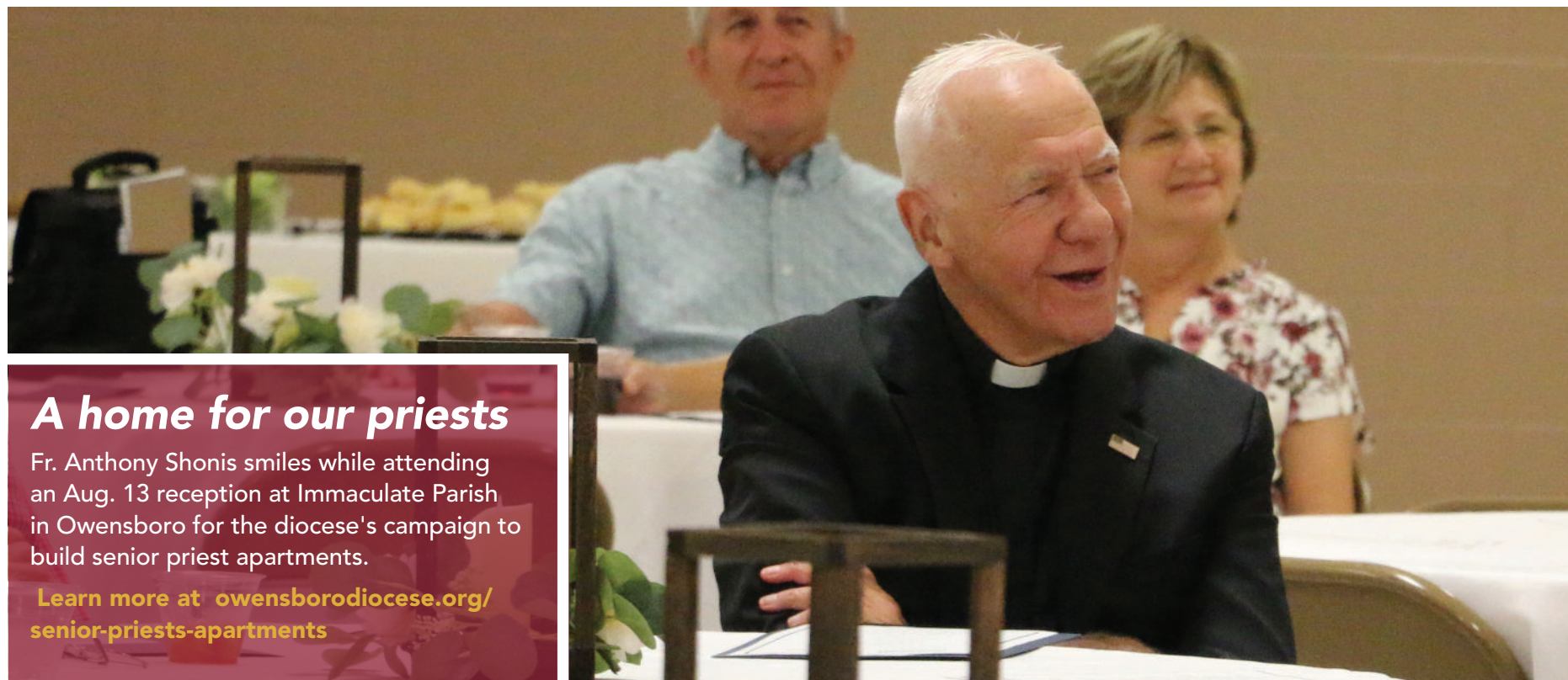
THE WESTERN
KENTUCKY



Catholic

CATÓLICO DE KENTUCKY OCCIDENTAL

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A home for our priests

Fr. Anthony Shonis smiles while attending an Aug. 13 reception at Immaculate Parish in Owensboro for the diocese's campaign to build senior priest apartments.

Learn more at owensborodiocese.org/senior-priests-apartments



Daycare memories

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Summer of hope

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Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph attend the inaugural Mass in for president-designate Madison Silvert on Aug. 15, in Brescia University's chapel. (Left to right) Sr. Pam Mueller, OSU, director of campus ministry; president emeritus Sr. Vivian Bowles, OSU, Brescia's fourth president; and Sr. Suzanne Sims, OSU. [Page 8](#)

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Front page main photo by Elizabeth Wong Barnstead, *The Western Kentucky Catholic*.

Submissions

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month prior to the publishing month. The Western Kentucky Catholic will take reader-submitted content into consideration but no submissions are guaranteed placement, due to space restrictions.

Article guidelines: The Western Kentucky Catholic will consider submitted articles pertaining to issues and events within our diocese. Please contact the editor in advance for a word limit, as space varies by month.

Photo guidelines: The Western Kentucky Catholic will consider your high-resolution digital photos showing special moments and memories from within our diocese. Photos must be a JPEG format (ending in “.jpg”) and sent via email. A photo description, date, and name of photographer must be included. Please email your articles or photos to wkc.editor@pastoral.org by the 15th of the month prior to the publishing month. Visit westernkycatholic.com/submissions for more information.

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A Word From Bishop Medley: *Justice, charity, and treating others as Jesus would*

For several months I have wanted to address in my monthly letter the debate of many years about immigrants and refugees in the United States. It is a controversial subject, and I do not want to simply add to the controversy.

And yet, the time has come that I must appeal to the citizens of our nation to come to some minimal but very important consensus. I feel that this debate would be best articulated by those more knowledgeable than me about international relations.

But when I learn of stories of arrests and deportations of our neighbors and our fellow churchgoers without any due process of law, I am ashamed of our nation. When I hear of spouses and children in effect abandoned because of these deportations I ask, "Isn't there a better way, a more humane way?" When I hear government officials laugh about detention camps surrounded by alligators I am saddened and want to protest, "That's not my country, that's not what America is known for."

The people in our country who may have entered the country illegally or who may have entered properly but overstayed their permitted time are human beings. They are the children of God, created in the image and likeness of God and for this reason alone they are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. There are no exceptions to the right to be treated as a fellow human being.

This is the teaching of the Catholic Church, expressed by all the popes of the last half century, about the rights of peoples to migrate, most

especially those who might be escaping oppression or dire poverty. The late Pope Francis frequently pleaded with world leaders, especially of more affluent nations, to recognize that the demands of justice and charity place expectations upon them to advocate for those with legitimate claims to migrate.

This, of course, elicits the protests of those who recognize the legitimate rights of nations to protect and secure their border. The right to migrate does not demand that nations may not defend themselves against dangerous criminals, and to that debate I would note that there can be reasonable paths to accommodate all of these proper concerns.

But this also demands an acknowledgement that the vast majority of immigrants and refugees in our midst are decent people, who pose no threat to anyone, and are fleeing injustices in their homelands. Just as importantly, they are contributing to the general welfare of our nation.

At this time, we see that our country is engaged in a massive effort to detain and deport large numbers of people. Again, we can respectfully disagree about the desirability of this unfolding story. But now we are seeing raids upon people by armed and masked agents of our government who refuse to offer identification. This evokes comparisons to countries that would not even pretend to afford people liberty and justice.

The United States of America, our country, despite some historical failures, is better than this.

What is the consensus we might hope for when there are so many differing opinions?

Several years ago there was a fad that found

BISHOP MEDLEY'S SEPTEMBER 2025 CALENDAR	
Aug 23- Sept 13	Pilgrimage to Spain and Portugal
Sept 14	10 AM Confirmation – Resurrection Parish, Dawson Springs
Sept 16- 17	Hispanic Ministry Summit – Saint Meinrad
Sept 18	11 AM Mass of the Holy Spirit – Brescia University, Owensboro
Sept 20	4:30 PM Confirmation – Holy Spirit Parish, Bowling Green
Sept 21	2 PM Marriage Anniversary Celebration – St. Stephen Cathedral
Sept 22- 25	Catholic Extension Mission Bishops Conference – Chicago
Sept 28	10 AM Confirmation – Sacred Heart Parish, Russellville

millions of people wearing simple bracelets with the letters WWJD, "What Would Jesus Do?" We might say that this is a too-simple moral code. But might we also say that this is as simple as the golden rule that comes from the Gospel: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Can any of us really believe that Jesus would treat others with contempt and laugh at their plight and celebrate their mistreatment? As a nation we are better than this and as Christians we are called to great compassion. We should hope and plead that all people can be treated with common decency.

What would Jesus do? Can we do the same?



Most Reverend William F. Medley
Diocese of Owensboro

Sophia Awards honor those who have led lives of stewardship



RILEY GREIF | WKC

On Aug. 10, 2025, the faithful of the Diocese of Owensboro gathered for the annual Sophia Awards Mass, honoring recipients who are at least 65 years of age who have given of their time, talent, and treasure to serve the Church.

BY WKC STAFF

Every year, the Diocese of Owensboro hosts a Mass honoring the recipients of the annual Sophia Awards – individuals at least 65 years old, who received the highest number of nominations in their parish for this recognition, and who embrace and lead lives of stewardship by giving of their time, talent and treasure. On Aug. 10, 2025, at St. Stephen Cathedral, this year’s Sophia Awards Mass was celebrated by Bishop William F. Medley. To learn more, contact Valeria Vessels, director of stewardship and development, at valeria.vessels@pastoral.org. ■

Blessed Mother, Owensboro: Joe Carr

Blessed Sacrament, Owensboro: Michael Bogdan
(Posthumously)

Christ the King, Madisonville: Sherry Kittinger
(Posthumously)

Christ the King, Scottsville: Joe Witt

Holy Guardian Angels, Irvington: Dwayne & Linda
Mitcham

Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson: Mary Stone

Holy Redeemer, Beaver Dam: Katie Raley

Holy Spirit, Bowling Green: Dana Gensler

Holy Trinity, Morgantown: Michael & Linda Davis

Immaculate, Owensboro: David Baker

Immaculate Conception, Hawesville: Gary & Robin
Elder

Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro: Mike & Ann
Flaherty

Precious Blood, Owensboro: Jeanie Wahl

Rosary Chapel, Paducah: Clora Hixon
(Posthumously)

Sacred Heart, Hickman: Teresa Hayden

Sacred Heart, Russellville: Karen Critchlow

Sacred Heart, Waverly: Susie Buckman

St. Agnes, Uniontown: Martha Girten

St. Alphonsus, St. Joseph: Richard & Brenda
McIntire

St. Ambrose, Henshaw: Tom & Paulette Collins
(Posthumously)

St. Anthony, Browns Valley: Bill & Rosemary
Thompson

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STEWARDSHIP

Sophia continued from page 4

St. Anthony, Peonia: James Higdon
St. Anthony of Padua, Grand Rivers: Kevin Diamond
St. Anthony the Abbot, Axtel: Noel & Regina Rudolph
St. Augustine, Grayson Springs: Vance & Debbie Webb
St. Augustine, Reed: Robert & Gail Blair
St. Benedict, Wax: Lisa Rose
St. Charles, Bardwell: Dean Thomas
St. Charles Borromeo, Livermore: Teresa Marcum
St. Denis, Fancy Farm: Wanda Carter
St. Edward, Fulton: Tommie & Melinda Briggs
St. Elizabeth, Clarkson: Gerald & Elaine Milliner
St. Elizabeth, Curdsville: Miles & Patty Murphy
St. Francis Borgia, Sturgis: David & Anna Conn
St. Francis de Sales, Paducah: Randy & Tracy Crawford
St. Henry, Aurora: Kevin & Mary Vaughan
St. Jerome, Fancy Farm: Denis Wilson
St. John the Baptist, Fordsville: Debbie Hagan
St. John the Evangelist, Paducah: Hazel E. Wurth
St. John the Evangelist, Sunfish: Susan Baatz
St. Joseph, Bowling Green: Chris Durbin
St. Joseph, Central City: Margaret Saddler
St. Joseph, Leitchfield : Jim & Dian Cecil
St. Joseph, Mayfield: Barbara Hughes Pickett
Sts. Joseph & Paul, Owensboro: Carolyn & Pat (Posthumously) Abel
St. Jude, Clinton: Johnny & Jane Hobbs
St. Lawrence, Philpot: John & Wanda Lanham (Posthumously)
St. Leo, Murray: Belinda Woods
St. Mark, Eddyville: Joseph & Wanda Loftus
St. Martin, Rome: Pat & Rosemary Krampe
St. Mary, Franklin: David & Glenda Duncan
St. Mary, LaCenter: Gene & Ginger Sullivan
St. Mary Magdalene, Sorgho: Eddie Byrne
St. Mary of the Woods, McQuady: Tony Beavin

St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville: Randy Howard
St. Michael, Sebree: Mary Jane Hawkins
St. Michael the Archangel, Oak Grove: Raul & Mun Hui DeJesus
St. Paul, Leitchfield: Mike & Janie Foster
St. Paul, Princeton: Richard & Christa Strong
St. Peter of Alcantara, Stanley: Randall & Gail Murphy
St. Peter of Antioch, Waverly: Sandy Harpole
Sts. Peter & Paul, Hopkinsville: Teresa Burnside
St. Pius X, Calvert City: Jim & Rose Drury
St. Pius X, Owensboro: Carolyn McCarty
St. Romuald, Hardinsburg: Jim & Betty Heavrin
St. Rose of Lima, Cloverport: Modella Mattingly
St. Sebastian, Calhoun: Robert Guenther
St. Stephen, Cadiz: Charles & Judy Garnett
St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro: Tom & Lucy (Posthumously) Neal
St. Thomas More, Paducah: Al & Mary McKeown
St. William, Knottsville: Lorene Mattingly
St. William, Marion: Daniel & Annette Rubino

Happy anniversary
to our priests!

**This month we celebrate the
anniversary of:**

Fr. John Okoro
Ordained 9/9/1995
*Pastor of St. Alphonsus Parish in St.
Joseph; and St. Elizabeth Parish in
Curdsville*

Please continue to pray for vocations!

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Dear God,

You have called Your priests to serve Your people in word and sacrament, in joy and in sacrifice, through many seasons of life. We thank You for the faithful shepherds who have guided us to You, celebrated our joys, and stood beside us in times of trial. Now, as their years of active ministry transitions, we seek to offer them a place of rest, dignity, and community. Bless the work of our hands and hearts as we prepare a home for those priests who have served us. May the walls we raise be blessed with strong protection, the rooms be warm with Your peace, and the halls echo with prayer and fellowship. Guide all who plan, give, and labor in this work. Let this building be not only shelter, but a testament to gratitude, and a living sign of Your love for those who have loved and served the Church.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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‘We had so much fun’ - Lourdes daycare co-founders reminisce favorite memories



COURTESY OF FREDA O'BRYAN

(Left photo) Jennifer Galloway and Freda O'Bryan are seen together on Aug. 14, 2025. The two co-founded Our Lady of Lourdes Daycare in Owensboro in 1986. (Right photo) In this undated photo, Our Lady of Lourdes Daycare students recite the Pledge of Allegiance during an Independence Day activity.

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Jennifer Galloway recently received a message that brought back a memory and made her laugh.

The text was from a woman who was Baptist and whose son, many years ago, had attended Our Lady of Lourdes Daycare in Owensboro, which Galloway had helped open in 1986 with fellow parishioner Freda O'Bryan.

The story went that since the daycare taught the children typical Catholic prayers, this little boy was eager to pray on Sunday at his church.

“He stood up, made the sign of the cross, and said the Hail Mary!” said Galloway. While this was not a usual prayer for those of the Baptist faith, the boy’s mother was amused and loved telling the story.

The news that the daycare program would conclude on July 31, 2025, prompted the mom to reach out to Galloway and share the warm ecumenical memory from years past.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish announced this summer that the daycare would be closing after a long period of discernment and review. Like many early childhood centers across the country since the COVID-19 pandemic, “despite the dedicated efforts of our staff and leadership, continuing operations is no longer financially sustainable,” the parish stated in a press release.

Following the bittersweet announcement, O'Bryan and Galloway, as co-founders of the daycare, sat down with The Western Kentucky Catholic on Aug. 14, 2025 to reminisce about the program’s nearly 40 years of ministry.

“From the start, it was all about the mission,” said O'Bryan.

O'Bryan said she was working for the Owensboro city schools at the time when she and Galloway, a stay-at-home-mom at the time, were hired by pastor Fr. Delma Clemons to start the daycare.

“There were six kids at the beginning,” said Galloway, explaining that the daycare program began in a single classroom.

They said the daycare’s cook, Angie McCarty, provided nourishing food for the children – including shamrock cookies for St. Patrick’s Day, a cake at Christmastime to celebrate Jesus’ birthday, and a Thanksgiving party for the daycare families.

“We had a Thanksgiving feast each year, invited all the parents, and the kids made the decorations,” said

Continues on page 5

Daycare continued from page 4



COURTESY OF FREDA O'BRYAN

An Our Lady of Lourdes Daycare worker helps a child place a crown of flowers upon a statue of Our Lady during a May Crowning event in this undated photo.

O'Bryan. "There were always tears when it was a child's last year to attend (when graduating the daycare)."

Christmas festivities included the children "learning lines" to recite at a family program, and singing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus when serving "his" cake.

Another favorite memory was the annual St. Patrick's Day parade, which was regularly covered by local media as the children wore green outfits and marched around the campus.

O'Bryan said Galloway was responsible for teaching many of the daycare children to jump rope, roller skate, and ride a bike. The daycare also made regular visits to the church so the kids could say hello to Jesus.

While the two women acknowledged the sadness of the end of an era, they said they were grateful for the time together, the children and families they served, and the supportive parish community.

And to this day, graduates of the daycare will still approach them in public and ask, "Do you remember me?" to the women who cared for them in their earliest formative years.

"We had so much fun; it was like it wasn't a job," said O'Bryan. ■

Last chance: Final parish picnics of summer 2025

Sept. 6

Christ the King, Scottsville
Street address: 298 Bluegrass Dr., Scottsville
Serving 3-7 p.m.
Contact: Valerie Vargo (270) 943-7892

Sept. 6

St. Agnes Parish & Knights of Columbus, Uniontown
Street address: 504 Mulberry St., Uniontown
Serving 5 p.m.
Contact: Steven Gough (270) 952-3071 or Travis Hancock (270) 952-2500

Sept. 6

St. John the Evangelist, Paducah
Street address: 6705 Old Hwy 45 South, Paducah
Serving: 8 a.m. (meat stand); 12 noon-5:30 p.m. (dinner)
Contact: Parish office (270) 554-3810

Sept. 13

St. Romuald, Hardinsburg
Street address: 394 N Hwy 259, Hardinsburg
Serving 4-7 p.m.
Contact: (270) 756-2356

Sept. 20

Christ the King, Madisonville
Street address: 1500 Kingsway Dr., Madisonville
Serving 4-8 p.m.
Contact: Lesley Mills (270) 821-8271

Sept. 20

St. Elizabeth, Clarkson
Street address: 306 Clifty Ave., Clarkson
Serving 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m.
Contact: (270) 242-4414

Sept. 21

Mary Carrico Catholic School, Knottsville
Street address: 6119 St. Lawrence Rd., Philpot
Serving 11 a.m.
Contact: Joe Schepers (270) 929-5522

Sept. 27

Immaculate, Owensboro
Street address: 2516 Christie Pl., Owensboro
Pick-up only; serving 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Contact: John Jones (270) 316-2214

Sept. 28

St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville
Street address: 10534 Main Cross St., Whitesville
Serving 11 a.m.
Contact: Parish office (270) 233-4196



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Setting out: Silvert inaugurated as sixth president of Brescia University

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

On Aug. 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Brescia University in Owensboro officially welcomed its new president, Madison Silvert.

An inaugural Mass preceding Silvert's inauguration was held at 11 a.m. in the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel on Brescia's campus, and was presided over by Bishop William F. Medley, and concelebrated by president emeritus Fr. Larry Hostetter, Brescia alumnus Fr. Jamie Dennis, and campus chaplain Fr. Mike Williams.

That afternoon, at 3 p.m., Silvert was inaugurated as the sixth president of Brescia University during a special ceremony held at St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro. Silvert is the first layperson to serve as

Brescia's president in its 100-year history.

The ceremony was presided over by Bishop Medley, and Susan Montalvo-Gesser, chair of Brescia's board of trustees, administered the Oath of Office. Remarks were offered by Dr. Aaron Thompson, president of the Kentucky Council of Postsecondary Education, and Fr. Hostetter.

During the ceremony, Silvert was sworn in to uphold the four pillars that define Brescia University: respect for the sacred, devotion to learning, commitment to growth in virtue, and promotion of servant leadership.

In an interview with *The Western Kentucky Catholic* this past winter, Silvert said that "As with so many people, your faith journey starts with the people who came before you," citing the faith formation of his family and mentors.

He added that serving as Brescia's president "will always be a ministry - whether the president is a religious or a layperson," he said in the Jan. 8, 2025 interview, during which he commended the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph, who founded the school in 1925.

Bishop Medley spoke on this theme during the Aug. 15 inaugural Mass, explaining that Silvert "has been preparing for this role his entire life - whether or not he knew it."

Citing the day's Gospel reading, in which Mary is asked by the angel to be the mother of God and then sets out to serve her cousin Elizabeth, the bishop likened this response to Silvert's new calling.

"Perhaps, the most important words in the Gospel today are 'Mary set out,'" said the bishop.

Rachel Hall contributed to this story. ■



RACHEL HALL | WKC

(Left photo) Madison Silvert, president of Brescia University in Owensboro, (left), stands with president emeritus Fr. Larry Hostetter on the day of Silvert's inauguration as the university's sixth president at St. Stephen Cathedral on Aug. 15. (Right photo) Members of Madison Silvert's family, including his wife, Amy, extend their hands in prayer for Silvert during his inauguration ceremony at St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro.



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

Sarah Cox, the new director of Brescia University's Fr. Leonard P. Alvey Library, is seen on Aug. 5, 2025. Cox, the first lay director of the library, assumed the role on June 1.

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE
WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

An Adoration-focused youth retreat is what ultimately brought Sarah Cox, the new director of Brescia University's library services, to Owensboro, Kentucky.

As a teen, Cox traveled with her rural Tennessee parish's youth group to attend YOUTH 2000, a retreat for young Catholics held annually at Brescia.

"I grew up in the Bible Belt," said Cox, who assumed the role on June 1, 2025, and explained that in her hometown, Catholics were few and far between.

In comparison, the Catholic faith in Owensboro was "very vibrant here; it's like drinking out of the water hose," she quipped. There are eight Catholic churches in the City of Owensboro alone, not counting the nine additional parishes outside city

Formed in Ursuline tradition, new Brescia library director hopes to help students grow in community

limits but still within Daviess County.

Cox fell in love with YOUTH 2000 and Brescia University and decided to apply. Her older brother attending Brescia was a strong encouragement for her, too.

Studying English with an emphasis in professional writing, Cox's Brescia experience – formed by the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph – "made my faith much more personal for me," she said.

"I was raised Catholic, but (my faith) was not as 'personal' as it is now... and we definitely didn't have the influence of religious life," she said, praising the Ursuline Sisters for their commitment to the university.

Her path to serving the Fr. Leonard P. Alvey Library began when Cox was a freshman doing the work-study program. She continued working there over the next four years and then applied for the role of public services manager for the library.

Working there for the next few years – and meanwhile obtaining her master's degree in library and information science with a focus on academic libraries – Cox enjoyed the opportunity to support literacy on campus and beyond.

"Libraries play a vital role in strengthening democracy by ensuring that every person, regardless of background, has the right to access quality information and resources," she said, explaining that librarians work to "combat misinformation, promote literacy skills, and empower informed

citizens to actively engage in their communities!"

Cox looks forward to continuing her love of library sciences, and the Ursuline tradition of quality education, having received the reins from previous director, Sr. Judith "Judy" Nell Riney, who retired after 45 years this spring.

"Sr. Judy guided the library through new technologies, like getting the first computers here," she said of her predecessor's legacy, which built up the library and helped form "a really great team" among the staff.

With big shoes to fill, including being the library's first layperson director, Cox said she is excited to work with students and faculty, as well as other visitors who come through.

"I'll be seeing what we can do to bring more people into the library," she said, adding that during the academic year, the library screens movies, hosts a philosophy club, and provides a much-needed space for commuter students to study.

"If people come through the diocese on a visit, they can come by if they need to do research and use our databases," she said. "Don't be strangers!"

Cox said the Ursuline worldview "very much shaped" her own worldview, especially the education-based philosophy of the Ursuline Sisters.

"It is a commitment to the whole person," she said, describing Brescia as "a space where (students) can also grow in community and friendship with each other." ■

‘When we do stuff together, the kids win’- Kentucky youth survey shows high rates of engagement with sacraments, active prayer life

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

This past spring, hundreds of young people across Kentucky participated in a survey of their faith engagement – with results indicating a strong sacramental life and desire to grow in their relationship with Christ.

“There were about 800 responses, primarily from our Catholic schools (in the Diocese of Owensboro),” said Charlie Hardesty, director of the diocese’s youth and young adult ministry. “The numbers tell the story on their own – it’s really very positive.”

Hardesty’s office collaborated with the diocese’s Catholic Schools Office to promote the online survey, which was conducted by Equipping the Saints, a national Catholic organization that provides resources, training and events for teens and ministry leaders.

The survey was made available to middle and high school students, coinciding with regular academic exams in April and May 2025. Hardesty’s office and the diocese’s Catholic Schools Office began to review the results – which were anonymous – this summer.

According to a summary report released by the diocese’s youth ministry office, the results “represent all of Kentucky, but it is our understanding from EQ Saints that it was almost exclusively responses from the Diocese of Owensboro.”

“Responses included approximately 504 middle school students (98.41% Catholic school) and 368

high school students (94.84% Catholic school),” stated the survey.

God is present

Hardesty said the majority indicated personal connections to their Catholic faith, including 93.6% of middle school youth and 89.2% of high school youth either selecting “strongly agree” or



RILEY GREIF | WKC
Youths kneel in prayer during Eucharistic Adoration at the Owensboro Diocese Youth Conference, which was held Nov. 23, 2024 in Hopkinsville. Around 380 participants attended.

“agree” to the statement, “I feel that God is present in my daily life.”

The results also showed that 90.59% of surveyed middle schoolers and 88.86% of high schoolers selected “strongly agree” or “agree” to “I think about God outside of Mass or church activities,” and that 96% of middle schoolers and 91.92% of high schoolers chose either of those responses to the statement “I believe God has a purpose for my life.”

Other highlights were seen in questions about the Mass and sacraments.

The survey indicated 89.12% of middle schoolers and 86.56% of high schoolers chose “strongly agree” or “agree” for “Good preaching is important and helps me feel close to Jesus” and that 92.68% of middle school and 85.35% of high school youth selected either of those options for “Going to Mass is important to my faith.”

Furthermore, “I feel spiritually connected when I participate in the sacraments” received the response of “strongly agree” or “agree” among 84.39% of middle schoolers and 81.69% of high schoolers. And 85.80% of middle school students and 80.79% of high school students selected either of those responses to the statement “I have felt close to God during times of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.”

Living witnesses

David Kessler, the diocese’s superintendent for its 17 Catholic schools, called the results a “testament” to the “living examples” of faculty, staff, and other adult faith leaders “doing what they do on a daily basis.”

“That makes me proud, that our schools take that very seriously; that is what we’re here for,” he said.

“I wasn’t surprised,” said Kessler, adding that, after all, “our schools are ‘Catholic’ schools” – placing emphasis on the word “Catholic.”

“We don’t just have a Catholic name on the front,” he said.

He said that whether it’s a class pausing to pray

Continues on page 11

Youth survey continued from page 10

when a student shares that a grandparent is having surgery, the kids are regularly taken to school Mass, or when Eucharistic Adoration is offered for the students, these routine occurrences build up a school's Catholic culture.

"That doesn't happen in all Catholic schools

'It will have to stay intentional'
– Charlie Hardesty

(across the country)," he explained.

"That speaks volumes – that it literally takes the whole village – that everyone here is playing a role" to foster students' relationship with Christ, he said.

Places of encounter

Another significant aspect of the survey was found in what youth freely shared when asked open-ended questions.

To the question "Can you describe a time when you felt especially close to God?", multiple young people mentioned diocesan youth opportunities like YOUTH 2000 (a Eucharistic retreat held every spring at Brescia University), Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center in Bowling Green, and the Owensboro Diocese Youth Conference, which is held every other year to alternate with the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis.

Within this question's response, many youth mentioned opportunities for silence and reflection, particularly in Eucharistic Adoration.

The survey's summary report also named the Mass and sacraments, and "a culture of prayer – both communal and personal" among young people's preferred moments of connection with God.

Ben Warrell, director of Gasper River, was moved to hear that the diocese's youth camp and retreat

center was referenced so frequently in the survey results.

"We are a place of encounter," he said. From small group scripture study time, to daily Mass, to faith conversations in all camp activities, Warrell said Gasper focuses on "intentionality about being with Christ."

Warrell said he appreciates working with the diocese's Catholic schools – who often take students on retreats at Gasper – as well as priests, youth ministers and other faith formation leaders who care about today's young people.

"We like to let each parish know when their kids are at camp" so that when campers return home, they can continue to support their faith journeys, he said. "We get the kids for a week – to hear that they continue on past that week is great."

He also affirmed the partnership of the priests who take on the "hugely impactful" role of "sharing

'We don't just have a Catholic name on the front'
– David Kessler

their stories of how they felt the call," and "help the Gospel come alive" for campers.

Areas to grow

In August, Hardesty presented these results to the diocese's Priests' Council. He told The Western Kentucky Catholic that he will continue studying the survey results to see how best to serve today's teens – and how to address shortcomings of the survey and responses.

For instance, youth not attending Catholic school were welcome to participate in the survey. But because of the late spring timing and winding-down of activities, it was difficult for parish youth ministries to connect kids with it. Hardesty would

like to see a survey down the road that more actively engages these youths.

He also is worried for the teens who did not respond positively.

"In a class of 100, there's still the 20 who need (to be reached)," he said. "I still worry about that 20%," adding that he wants to focus on ways leaders can engage these disaffiliated teens.

He emphasized that now is not the time for complacency, even considering the positive statistics.

"(These efforts) will have to stay intentional," he said. "The moment we stop, it starts going backwards."

Among aspects that teens reported wanting to see more of, Hardesty said the teens desired a greater relationship with the scriptures, peer-to-peer experiences like small groups, and quality homilies – with the report stating that "80% of students reported the good preaching at Mass is vital to their

sense of connection to Jesus."

Hardesty urged ongoing collaboration among the various ministries that serve young people, pointing out that it is impossible to do this alone.

He said the survey shows that teens' faith thrives when they do "all the things" like attending Catholic schools, have an active parish life, are supported in their family life, and attend camp and youth ministry initiatives – and when they are surrounded by "a culture of prayer, a sacramental life, doing works of service," he said.

"It took work to get us here; it will take work to continue," he said, adding that "when we do stuff together, the kids win." ■

Youth reflects on whitewater rafting experience with St. Thomas More youth group



COURTESY OF ST. THOMAS MORE
Participants of St. Thomas More Parish's July 31-Aug. 1 youth group trip go whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River on Aug. 1, 2025.

BY KOBEE SEAY, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Fr. Mike Clark and St. Thomas More Parish youth group went whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River in Tennessee on July 31 and Aug. 1. After leaving on Thursday from the church and stopping for lunch at Whataburger, we arrived at the lodge. The lodge had separate rooms for boys and girls. Having set it up this way helped everyone to bond and share close moment with our friends. There was a campfire and everyone – including the adults – were able to connect and listen to music. Preparing and sharing food, then time around the campfire, were times of fellowship with the youth and adults.

On Friday some of the kids that woke up early cooked breakfast. Then, the most fun part happened. We went whitewater rafting. The outfitters gave a thorough and entertaining class on how to raft and what to do when/ if you found yourself in the river. After a short bus ride, groups of five and six were assigned to rafts where a guide chaperoned the rafts down the Ocoee. Through rapids between majestic mountains, there was whooping and hollering. During rafting there was lots of laughing and a few people fell out. This whole experience opened our eyes to the wonder and beauty of God's earth. During Mass on Thursday night on the deck of the bunkhouse the group realized that you can worship anywhere and that our faith shouldn't be controlled by exterior things. ■

Kobee Seay belongs to St. Thomas More Parish in Paducah and was a youth participant of the recent St. Thomas More whitewater rafting youth trip.

HOLY SPIRIT
CATHOLIC CHURCH

GOLF CLASSIC
SEPTEMBER 19, 2025

8:00 AM SHOTGUN
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CROSSWINDS GOLF COURSE | SEEKING SPONSORS & FOURSOMES

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COURTESY OF ST. THOMAS MORE
Fr. Mike Clark, pastor of St. Thomas More Parish in Paducah, celebrates Mass on July 31 during a youth group whitewater rafting trip on the Ocoee River.

‘I can’t wait to come back’- A summer of hope at Gasper River

BY BEN WARRELL, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

“This was the best summer of my life!”

“Thank you for having this special place for us to come to grow in faith.”

“I’m going to look for hope and do my best to share hope everywhere I go.”

“I’ve never felt closer to God.”

“Spending time with Jesus at adoration was amazing. Going to Mass and receiving Jesus everyday was awesome!”

“I made so many friends and grew so close to God, I didn’t want this week to end.”

“I can’t wait to come back next summer.”

These are just some of the messages we received from campers about their experiences this summer. We are so filled with hope after our 18th summer here at Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp. It was our biggest summer ever

with lots of campers on waiting lists to get into several weeks of camp. So many young people had life-changing encounters with Jesus and left here as different people!

Our theme for the summer was Pilgrims of Hope with the focus on “The one who has hope lives differently.” We spoke about what hope is and how to grow hope in our lives. Hope is a special gift from God to help us know Him and love Him better and have our hearts’ greatest desire

to be in Heaven with the Lord forever. We grow our hope by being rooted in faith, celebrating the sacraments as often as possible, and developing a strong prayer life.

We also talked about looking for hope in this

part of their stories. Campers were also challenged to write and share their own stories of hope. Finally, campers were sent forth on Fridays challenged to live differently as Pilgrims of Hope.

One of the problems we are facing as we grow and grow each year is our need for more caring adults to be involved with the ministry here during the summer. Please begin praying about being involved with camp for summer 2026. If you are baptized, you are qualified to help out here! We need your help!

Camp is growing faster than we ever imagined and we need weekly volunteers to help young people come to know Jesus Christ. If you feel called to help out, please contact our office at (270) 781-2466 for more information. Thank you all so much for the prayers and support of the ministry at Gasper River. It is so wonderful to have the support of so many for the amazing things the Holy Spirit is doing here at camp. ■

Ben Warrell is the director of Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center.

To support Gasper’s efforts, visit <https://www.gasperriverretreatcenter.org/support-gasper-river>, or mail a donation to Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp & Retreat Ctr., 2695 Jackson Bridge Rd., Bowling Green, KY, 42101. To bring a work team to help with projects, contact Ben Warrell at (270) 781-2466 or email ben.warrell@pastoral.org.



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

Fr. Jason McClure, chaplain for Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center, celebrates Mass on June 11, 2025, for Quest 1 Camp (seventh and eighth grade level), as vocations director Fr. Corey Bruns concelebrates.

world. We find what we look for: if we look for bad things, we’ll find bad things, and if we look for holy things, we will find holy things – so we talked about changing our mindsets to look for hope in our world. We also shared about being anchored in hope: that of all the things we experience in life, good or bad, if we are anchored in hope we will always be led back to Christ. On Thursdays we talked about stories of hope and shared stories of the saints’ lives and how hope played such a huge

St. Martin VBS: Faith in action, one tribe at a time

Vacation Bible School gathers donations for overnight emergency shelter

BY NICOLE GRAY, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

This summer's Vacation Bible School at St. Martin Parish in Rome, Ky., was equal parts bible lesson, neighborhood block party, and living example of generosity. Dubbed Bible Adventures 2, the week focused on four key ancestors in Jesus' family tree – Abraham, Rebekah, and Joseph – while rallying kids and adults to collect money and supplies for CrossRoads to Hope, Owensboro's emergency shelter for women and children.

Each evening about 56 children were sorted into the Twelve Tribes of Israel, five or six per tribe with a teen/adult leader at the helm. Tribes traveled together as nomads: singing, crafting, playing games, running chariot races and huddling for “Tribe Time.” There they heard the day's bible story, kneaded dough for that night's snack bread, and learned what life was like in ancient tents. Meeting an incostume “ancestor” – Joseph, Abraham and Rebekah – brought the scriptures to life. The goal was simple: help our kids see that the people in Jesus' lineage were real, flawed, faithful human beings – just like us.

From the start, Debi Hopkins, director of religious education at St. Martin, wanted VBS to feel like the parish family table. A hot supper was served at 5:30 p.m. every night, free for anyone under 19. Adult volunteers ate in the kitchen, swapping stories while refilling blue “Nile Water” pitchers.

Registration cost nothing; families who could,

slipped a donation envelope in the basket. The message was clear: money shouldn't stand between a child and an encounter with Christ.



COURTESY OF NICOLE GRAY

Kids and volunteers smile while crafting at St. Martin Parish's summer 2025 Vacation Bible School, which also collected donations for the local emergency shelter for women and children.

Floater, door greeters, craft aides, and kitchen hands all found a place. Even teens who “weren't sure about church stuff” discovered they could run games, glue googly eyes, or count donations – and have a blast doing it.

The parish donated small comfort items (toothbrushes, snack bars, coloring books, and

personal care items) for Blessing Bags that would land in the hands of Crossroads guests. The final tally surprised everyone: \$580 in cash, and 110 Blessing (or “Buddy”) Bags. Hopkins and volunteer Cheryl Clark also took a vanload packed full of the bags and other items donated like bottled water, and larger items to be used in the shelter, like quilts, along with toiletries, towels, diapers, and cleaning supplies and detergent. Crossroads' director and staff visited three evenings, thanking the kids and telling stories from the shelter: the mom who arrives at midnight with nothing but a backpack, the gradeschooler thrilled to get her own toothbrush. Their gratitude was genuine.

St. Martin's partnership began modestly and keeps growing because, as Hopkins put it, “Serving the poor isn't extra credit; it's the Gospel.”

Ask any tribe member what they remember most, and you'll get a range of answers: winning the camelrace game, making wooden bead bracelets, or the shock of seeing how much toothpaste 110 tubes really is. But underneath the fun runs a deeper lesson: faith is meant to move, to travel, to pitch its tent wherever someone needs hope.

Thank you to every donor, volunteer, and pint-sized nomad who made Bible Adventures 2 possible. May the generosity we practiced in one joyful week keep echoing through St. Martin – and far beyond – for months to come. ■

Nicole Gray is the communications director for St. Martin Parish in Rome, Ky.

Vacation Bible School: Take 2

BY WKC STAFF

When The Western Kentucky Catholic went to press last month on July 23, some Vacation Bible School programs were still underway and not all parishes had gotten a chance to see their photos in print. Here are a few more of our favorite highlights from this beloved tradition of parish life. ■



COURTESY OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST
St. Mary Thomas of the Sister Servants of the Eternal Word shares with youth during snack break at Vacation Bible School at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Paducah. The parish's VBS took place from June 24-27, 2025.



COURTESY OF KATTIA ANGULO
With assistance from volunteers, children participate in Vacation Bible School at St. Michael Parish in Sebree on July 10-11, 2025. The theme was "Light Up the Way: Guided by God's Love."



COURTESY OF HANNAH CLARK
Children have fun with bubbles during the July 7-11 Vacation Bible School at St. Mary Parish in Franklin.



COURTESY OF AMIE STEVENS
Children and volunteers from St. Pius X Parish in Owensboro, gather for a group photo during their "True North" Vacation Bible School, held July 16-18, 2025. The Alaska-themed program helped kids discover that Jesus is our True North: our faithful guide in every season of life.

Learners, servants, leaders: 2025 Celebration of Catholic Schools



RACHEL HALL | WKC

(Left photo) Kiley Leonard, middle school language arts teacher at St. Joseph Catholic School in Bowling Green, smiles with superintendent David Kessler after Leonard received the 2025 Outstanding Catholic School Educator of the Year Award on July 25 at Celebration of Catholic Schools in Madisonville. (Right photo) Catholic school faculty and staff participate in July 25 Mass for Celebration of Catholic Schools at Christ the King Parish and School in Madisonville.

BY RACHEL HALL, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Every year, the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Owensboro hosts a gathering to celebrate our 17 Catholic schools across western Kentucky.

As teachers finish preparing their classrooms - lining the desks, hanging posters, and organizing folders - their work is a motion of steadfast dedication, not unlike a prayer. They pray students will feel excited, nurtured, and welcomed when they walk in the door. They prepare “get to know me” pages and decorate bulletin boards in hope that trust and relationships will grow between students, parents, and teachers throughout the year.

On Friday, July 25, educators from across our diocese gathered at Christ the King in Madisonville for this annual celebration. This was an opportunity to recognize

their incredible work, recharge spiritually, and prepare for the year ahead.

The day was kicked off with a Mass celebrated by Fr. Steve Hohman, pastor of Christ the King, who during his homily reflected on his own Catholic school upbringing and years of teaching before entering the priesthood.

Following Mass, teachers heard from keynote speaker Dr. Jason Winkle, who drew from his over 20 years of experience in higher education, speaking on the importance of leaning on their faith in their teaching and leadership, highlighting his years at the United States Military Academy at West Point.

Superintendent David Kessler expressed gratitude for our diocesan educators’ dedication to their ministry and gave special recognition for those with years of service milestones. He then awarded the 2025 Outstanding Catholic School Educator of the year to Kiley Leonard,

middle school language arts teacher serving at St. Joseph Catholic School in Bowling Green. A colleague nominated Leonard, praising her as, “a true role model for our students, not only teaching them the right thing to do but also demonstrating it through her actions.” Leonard goes beyond the expected, modeling a Christian witness with her faith, service, and dedication in all that she does.

The day also included a special recognition of Sr. Celine Weidenbenner, OSU, from Mary Carrico Catholic School in Knottsville, celebrating her 50 years of education.

As the teachers and administrators check off those final tasks and welcome new students, they do so with anticipation of the joys and challenges a new school year brings. They left that Friday with the mission Christ gave us: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” - Matthew 28:19-20. ■

Where is the hope?

BY DR. JEFF ANDRINI, EVANGELIZATION & DISCIPLESHIP

Are you a glass half-full or a glass half-empty type of person? No matter, I would like you to consider that a “Kingdom of God” perspective can help us all be filled with hope in God.

As we survey the news cycle, talk to friends and family members, and even reflect on our own thoughts, it becomes obvious that our lives are often overwhelmed and messy.

However, as I sat in my backyard this morning praising God for the beauty of the trees and my wife’s amazing flowers, a hummingbird came to our feeder and then flew over to me about two feet from my head. We just looked at each other and I marveled at the gift of creation.

I grew up in a Catholic home in St. Charles, Ill., outside of Chicago. Both my grandparents lived near us, and my parents were very faith-filled people. We gathered with four other families every other Friday for many years for community meal. The parents would pray, sing and read the bible and one parent would join with the kids, and we acted out stories from the bible.

In high school, I was not a big fan and began to drift from the faith. Then our parish hired a full-time youth minister, Frank. He greeted me one week after Masses and shook my hand. He asked what I liked to do. I responded, “play football, wrestle and lift weights.” He said that we were opening a weight room at the Church and asked me to come. After a few invites I did, and he has been a lifelong mentor for me! The weight room was the hook, but his mission was to see me grow as a disciple of Jesus!

While college was a difficult time for me with many pitfalls, Frank prayed, as did my parents. Frank’s prayer was literally, that I would be miserable apart from the Gospel. His wife saw my mom in the grocery store during this time and asked how I was. What do you think my mom said? Oh, De, he is miserable! And I was! Academic probation, drugs and alcohol, poor dating relationships and I eventually hit rock bottom and God broke through. I graduated, spent a year on the National Evangelization Teams (NET) with 120 other young adults and then took a job as a youth minister.

I married Amy, whom I met on my NET team; we had three girls and a boy, all adults now, and we have three grandkids. We look back and see God’s hand blessing us in so many ways! Jesus says, “I have come to give you abundant life.” As we take time to pause in life, to pray daily and reflect often, we see God’s loving plan.

Join me in living the mission of the Office of Evangelization: “To be missionary disciples of Jesus, making present the kingdom of God.” Having a “Kingdom of God” perspective and a personal relationship with the King is our Hope! ■

Hope in Christ,

Jeff

Dr. Jeff Andrini is the director of the Office of Evangelization and Discipleship. He can be reached at jeff.andrini@pastoral.org.



COURTESY OF FR. MARTIN MA NA LING
The participants of the Aug. 3, 2025 friendly soccer match are seen at Holy Spirit field in Bowling Green.

Second annual friendly Catholic soccer match unites players across cultures

BY WKC STAFF

Fr. Martin Ma Na Ling, the parochial vicar of St. Pius X Parish in Owensboro, recently gathered parishioners for a friendly soccer match with several other parishes. On Aug. 3, at 4:30 p.m., St. Pius X Parish members, Holy Spirit Parish members, and others gathered to play at Holy Spirit’s soccer field, totaling about 50 participants.

“It was amazing to see that all the young adults, or just people who love sports, share and build the friendship, teamwork, kindness and love as good Catholics in the Diocese of Owensboro,” said Fr. Ma Na Ling.

This is the second time he has gathered a group of like-minded parishioners for a friendly soccer match, with the first gathering taking place on June 15, 2024 at Holy Spirit.

Fr. Ma Na Ling said he finds that soccer unites people across cultural differences – whether they are Latino, from Myanmar, or white – and helps them grow closer as the Body of Christ. ■

After Labor Day: Remembering Leo XIII and the legacy of a name

BY DCN. JAY W. VANHOOSIER, OFFICE OF
FAITH FORMATION

As Labor Day passes and the rhythms of fall begin, we are offered a chance not just to return to work and routine, but to reflect more deeply on the meaning of labor and the dignity of the worker – especially through the lens of our Catholic faith.

One of the most powerful and enduring contributions to this reflection comes from Pope Leo XIII, whose 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* remains a cornerstone of Catholic Social Teaching. Writing in the midst of the Industrial Revolution, Leo XIII addressed the harsh conditions faced by laborers, the growing inequality between rich and poor, and the moral dangers of both socialism and unregulated capitalism. He affirmed the rights of workers to fair wages, just working conditions, and the right to organize – long before such ideas were commonly accepted.

But Leo XIII's insights went even deeper. He emphasized that work is not merely a means of survival or economic activity – it is a fundamental expression of human dignity and participation in God's creative work. This vision has shaped more than a century of Church teaching, influencing popes from Pius XI to Francis and guiding the Church's engagement with the social and economic



CNS PHOTO/LOLA GOMEZ

Pope Leo XIV waves to the crowd from the popemobile as he departs after celebrating Mass concluding the Jubilee of Youth in Rome's Tor Vergata neighborhood Aug. 3, 2025.

challenges of every age.

That's why, in my view, it is especially meaningful that our current Holy Father chose the name Leo XIV when he was elected pope. While many popes take names that honor saints or strong leaders, choosing Leo seems to intentionally evoke the bold, socially-engaged papacy of Leo XIII. It suggests a desire to carry forward that legacy of speaking clearly and compassionately on behalf of the poor, the worker, and the vulnerable.

In our own time, when economic uncertainty persists, when workers face new challenges from automation and artificial intelligence, and when the gap between the powerful and the powerless continues to widen, the Church's voice is still needed. The name Leo XIV may very well be a signpost – pointing us back to the roots of our social teaching and forward to renewed advocacy for



OSV NEWS PHOTO/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Pope Leo XIII is depicted in this official Vatican portrait. He laid the foundation for modern Catholic social teaching with his landmark 1891 encyclical "*Rerum Novarum*," addressing the rights and dignity of workers in the face of industrialization.

justice rooted in the Gospel.

As we move beyond Labor Day and deeper into the year, may we carry with us not only gratitude for the rest we've enjoyed, but also a renewed commitment to uphold the dignity of work and the rights of all who labor. May we remember that, in every season, our faith calls us to see the image of God in every worker and to build a society that honors that image.

The legacy of Pope Leo XIII endures. And in the name of Leo XIV, it lives anew. ■

Dcn. Jay W. VanHoosier is the Director of Faith Formation for the Diocese of Owensboro. For more information visit owensborodiocese.org/faith-formation, email jay.vanhoosier@pastoral.org or call (270) 852-8324.

Pro-life music festival-fundraiser to be held Oct. 11

BY PICKIN' LIFE ORGANIZERS, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

The Pickin' Life Project will host the 12th annual "Bluegrass on (Lake) Beshear" charity music festival on Saturday, Oct. 11 with the help of 10 Knights of Columbus councils and one Fourth Degree Assembly, all from the Owensboro diocese. Resurrection Church parishioners (and Pickin' Life Project founders) Laura and Jeff Smith of Dawson Springs are in the midst of planning the one-day music festival and fundraiser for five life-affirming pregnancy care centers in western Kentucky. The event will take place on the shore of Lake Beshear, four miles outside of Dawson Springs, from 11:45 a.m.- 5 p.m.

During its first 11 years, "Bluegrass on (Lake) Beshear" has raised more than \$250,000 for pro-life pregnancy care centers, with each year's intake exceeding the previous year's. In 2024, the music fest raised almost \$50,000. In addition, Knights of Columbus involvement netted an additional \$9,000 for the pregnancy centers through its national Aid and

Support After Pregnancy (ASAP) program. In 2025, a benefactor will match the first \$15,000 in donations and purchases to double their impact.

The organizers defray all event costs. The Pickin' Life Project donates 100% of money raised at Bluegrass on (Lake) Beshear to Alpha PCC (Hopkinsville), Door of Hope (Madisonville), H.O.P.E. Clinic (Benton and Eddyville) and Pathway of Hope (Greenville). The pregnancy centers are faith-based and depend on private donations to remain open. They receive no government funding because the centers will never refer clients for abortion.

The music festival will be held, rain or shine, at 307 Island Cove Lane in Dawson Springs, on the shore of beautiful Lake Beshear. The grounds open at 11 a.m. Attendees should bring lawn chairs and are welcome to bring coolers. Friendly volunteer staff members will help people park and will use golf carts to help music fans make the short trip to the venue and back to their cars. Five bands will perform bluegrass, country, gospel, rock and blues music beginning at 11:45 a.m. Hot food and cold drinks are available for purchase all



COURTESY OF PICKIN' LIFE
Cutter Singleton of the Grand Ole Opry performers "Cutter and Cash and the Kentucky Grass" plays at the Bluegrass on (Lake) Beshear Music Festival on Oct. 12, 2024.

day. There will be a raffle with many prizes, 15 winners and a \$1,000 cash grand prize.

More information about the event and ways to donate can be found on www.bluegrassonbeshear.com, facebook.com/bluegrassonbeshear or (270) 399-5018. All donations go to the pregnancy care centers and are tax deductible. Please help the Pickin' Life Project in its mission, "Saving babies' lives and families' hearts." ■

Mass and picnic for foster, adoptive families to launch ministry

BY KRISTI MCCABE, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

The ministry of fostering and adoption is a call to "look after orphans and widows in their distress" (James 1:27). For families who have accepted the call to this vital mission, the Church has a supplemental call to provide spiritual guidance, prayer, and visible support.

Springs of Love, a Catholic apostolate dedicated to inspiring and equipping Catholics to discern and live out the call to foster and adopt, represents a grassroots movement to cover adoptive and foster families in prayer while offering tangible support.

Founded by adoptive parents Greg and Kimberly Henkel, Springs of Love was formed with a focus on providing wrap-around support for foster families

Continues on page 20

Springs of Love continued from page 19

and families in crisis, from prayer to making meals to providing material support. The hope is that this support will encourage more Catholics to open their hearts to foster and adopt.

Springs of Love recently hosted a picnic and Mass in Columbus for foster and adoptive families, providing a chance for fellowship and community.

“I attended the Mass and picnic in Ohio because the priest is called to serve,” said Fr. Chris Kight, spiritual director for Springs of Love and parochial vicar of St. Joseph Parish in Bowling Green. Fr. Kight is an adoptee himself.

“God has called me to minister to families in this unique and specialized way as spiritual director for Springs of Love,” Fr. Kight explained.

“If I am going to be present to families in another state, why not make more of an effort to remain close to families here in Kentucky who take up the call to foster and adopt?”

To begin this important work, all are invited to a free event on Saturday, Sept. 27, at Christ the King Parish in Madisonville, Ky. The day will begin with Mass at 11 a.m., followed by a picnic with all food provided, games for the children, and opportunities to ask questions, share ideas, and build community. Foster and adoptive families, families discerning fostering or adoption, and anyone wishing to support them are encouraged to attend. ■

For more information contact Fr. Chris Kight at christopher.kight@pastoral.org.

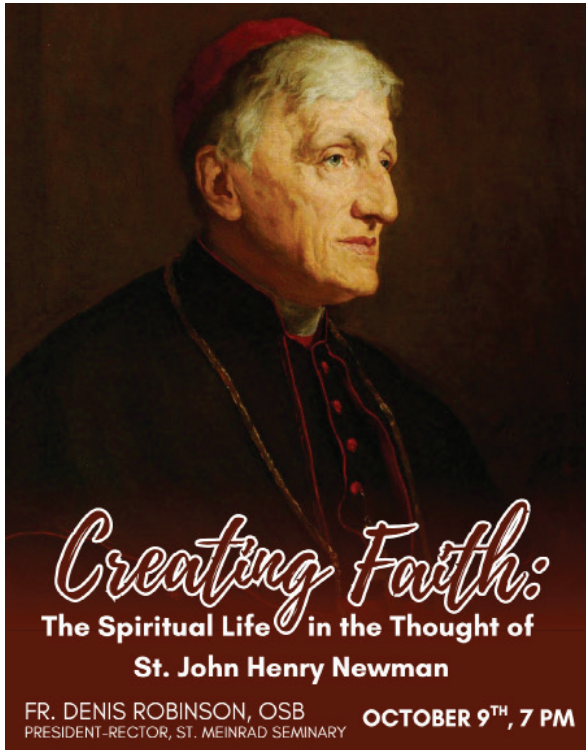


Springs of Love
Mass & Picnic
for Foster and Adoptive Families

RSVP ONLINE 

bit.ly/springsoflovepicnic

Saturday, September 27th
Christ the King, Madisonville



Creating Faith:
The Spiritual Life in the Thought of
St. John Henry Newman

FR. DENIS ROBINSON, OSB
PRESIDENT-RECTOR, ST. MEINRAD SEMINARY

OCTOBER 9TH, 7 PM

Tribunal Explains

Question: Does my former spouse have to be contacted and invited to participate in the process, even if he/she has been abusive and is dangerous?

Answer:

The former spouse has to be notified of the process because he/she is a part of the marriage. This notification comes directly from the Tribunal only. If he/she does not respond or cooperate, that does not stop the case; a declaration of absence will be issued. In cases of proven abuse or other dangerous situations, there are provisions where the Respondent's rights can be upheld and protected. It is the judgment of the Judicial Vicar in such cases on how to proceed.

One of the ways the Church addresses this need is through the ministry offered by the Diocesan Tribunal which is designed to help individuals in the healing process by seeking clarification with regard to their marriage. Further information will be published monthly. If you have questions, please contact the Tribunal at (270) 683-1545 or tribunal@pastoral.org.

Bronze Pelican Award presented to Fr. Basilio Az Cuc

BY SHERI BABBS, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

On Aug. 3, Fr. Basilio Az Cuc, parochial vicar of St. Thomas More Parish in Paducah, was presented the Bronze Pelican Award by Andrew Richison of Troop 2007 from the Diocese of Owensboro Catholic Committee on Scouting. The presentation was done during Sunday Mass at St. Thomas More.

Troop 2007 nominated Fr. Az Cuc for the Bronze Pelican Award, which recognizes adults who have made contributions to the spiritual development of youth in scouting.

Fr. Az Cuc has taken an active part in St. Thomas More-sponsored Troop 2007 since 2020. He has celebrated Mass with Troop 2007 in the woods, in a barn, and in a national forest. He attends and supports Troop 2007 events such as the annual Way of the Cross Walk and Living Rosary. Fr. Az Cuc has been kayaking, ridden on a tractor, taken turns stirring apple butter, and ridden on a four-wheeler with Troop 2007 members. He has been integral in introducing scouting to the Hispanic/Latino community at St. Thomas More.

Troop 2007 appreciates Fr. Az Cuc and all that he does to promote the troop and the faith of all involved including scouts and scout families. ■



COURTESY OF ST. THOMAS MORE

Fr. Basilio Az Cuc blesses the new Troop 2007 trailer and gives a summer camp travel blessing on June 22, 2025 at St. Thomas More Parish in Paducah. On Aug. 3, he was presented with the Bronze Pelican Award by the Diocese of Owensboro Catholic Committee on Scouting.

Fr. Daniel Dillard looks ahead with hope and purpose at St. Martin



COURTESY OF NICOLE GRAY

Fr. Daniel Dillard is the new pastor of St. Martin Parish in Rome, Ky.

BY NICOLE GRAY, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Fr. Daniel Dillard's journey to the priesthood may have started unexpectedly, but today he is filled with a deep sense of joy and purpose – and a clear vision for the future of St. Martin Parish in Rome, Ky.

As the new pastor, Fr. Dillard hopes to bring energy, openness, and intentional leadership to the St. Martin community. He plans to focus on building a culture of discipleship and prayer, beginning with initiatives like a traveling chalice program to encourage parish-wide prayer for vocations.

“Vocations come from prayerful, joyful communities,” he said. “We need to invite our young people to imagine this life and support them in asking the question.”

Fr. Dillard also wants to strengthen communication within the parish and ensure that liturgy is meaningful

and deeply engaging. His approach to preaching is honest and grounded in everyday life, and he is not afraid to talk about real, sometimes difficult topics that affect the faithful.

Faith formation will be a priority – especially for families, young adults, and children. He believes that everyone, no matter their age or background, should have a place to grow in faith at St. Martin.

Outside of weekend Masses, Fr. Dillard will continue his role as chaplain at Owensboro Catholic High School, where he hopes to help students see Catholic education as more than academics – it's about forming disciples.

“St. Martin is a parish with a lot of heart,” he said. “I'm here to listen, to lead with joy, and to grow in faith alongside you.” ■

Nicole Gray is the communications director for St. Martin Parish in Rome, Ky.

Ursuline Sisters continue a century-old tradition on Feast of Our Lady of the Snows

BY MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH STAFF

On the evening of Aug. 5, 2025, the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph kept up a tradition that has continued for more than a century. They processed to their cemetery on the Feast of Our Lady of the Snows to honor the pioneer Ursuline Sisters who led them in becoming an independent religious community. It was Aug. 5, 1911, when Mother Agnes O'Flynn and Sister Ursula Jenkins left Owensboro, Ky., for Washington, D.C., to meet with the Apostolic Delegate to the United States. They wanted to make their case to become an autonomous community apart from the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville.

Fr. Edward Fitzgerald, the pastor of St. Paul Church and the ecclesiastical superior for their Ursuline community, wrote the history of the community for the Sisters to present. This is what Mother Agnes wrote about that moment.

"Father met us at the (train) station in Owensboro and gave us the document with the words, 'This is the Feast of Our Lady of the Snows; I have promised our Blessed Mother that if the journey is successful, this feast will be annually observed in the Community as a day of thanksgiving and a procession to the cemetery will take place in commemoration of the departed Sisters of the Community.'"

The following year, the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph became an independent community.

The procession on Aug. 5, 2025, began with a few readings in the Motherhouse Chapel. Then the group walked to the cemetery while praying the

rosary. Once there, they sang, "Holy Ground," and prayed the rosary as Congregational Leader Sister Sharon Sullivan, Ursuline Associate Linda Rocco and Barbara Ervin, a Mount Saint Joseph employee, blessed the graves with holy water.

At the closing, the group did more readings together, which included, "Holy are these graves, holy this earth that has held in gentle embrace the bodies of all who are buried in this cemetery. Lord, with reverence, we leave these graves with memories and with our faith in the reality of that Easter morning when all the holy dead shall rise in the splendor of Your glory." ■



COURTESY OF MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH
Sr. Michele Morek, OSU, (left), and Sr. Cecelia Joseph Olinger, OSU, lead the praying of the rosary as several Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph, as well as some visitors, walk to the cemetery in Maple Mount. This annual tradition for the feast of Our Lady of the Snows on Aug. 5 has continued for over a century.





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Heritage Room at the Mount to open for special occasions



COURTESY OF MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH

Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph Michael Ann Monaghan, OSU (left), and George Mary Hagan, OSU, look at glass items on a table in the new Heritage Room located in Lourdes Hall at the Motherhouse in Maple Mount, during its open house on May 8, 2025.

BY MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH STAFF, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

After holding its open house this past May, the new Heritage Room at Mount Saint Joseph will now be open for visitors on special occasions such as Associates and Sisters Day and Mount Saint Joseph Academy Alumnae Weekend. The rooms contain many items that were previously located in the Museum in the Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center before that building had to be taken down. Set up in the former location of the Angela Oratory, the Heritage Room still contains some of the books and items that were featured in the Oratory. Sister Amelia Stenger, OSU, worked for weeks to plan the displays and write the tags for each item. She had help from Edward Wilson, the archivist for the Ursuline Sisters and the Diocese of Owensboro. The Heritage Room can be toured upon request by any guests who visit the campus. Contact Sister Amelia or Edward Wilson to tour the room. There is a guest book for visitors to sign. To find out more, visit this webpage: www.ursulinesmsj.org/heritage-room. ■

Prayer and intentionality: *An invitation to participate in fostering a culture of vocations*

BY FR. COREY D. BRUNS, DIRECTOR OF VOCATIONS

“How can we change the culture of our diocese in our approach to vocations?”

I have wrestled with this question since Bishop Medley first asked me to pray about taking on this new ministry as director of vocations for the Diocese of Owensboro. We all know that we need more holy priests. We are a Eucharistic people; we need the sacraments and we need priests to celebrate the sacraments among us. But priestly vocations don’t just grow on trees; they come from the family and are the fruit of prayer.

How can we change our culture and encourage young men and women to respond with generosity, courage, and holiness to the Lord’s call? I don’t have a complete answer, but if we look to the Lord’s example and what is working in other dioceses, we find the starting point: prayer and intentionality. It’s really that simple, and it is the core of our approach to vocation ministry these days in the Diocese of Owensboro.

I’d like to invite you to participate in two new initiatives we’re beginning this fall as we work to change the culture of vocations in our diocese: “Vocation Tuesdays” and the “St. Therese Vocation Society.” At their core, both of these initiatives follow two simple activities that I want



RILEY GREIF | WKC

Newly-ordained Fr. Conrad Jaconette smiles for a photo with Bishop William F. Medley and his parents after his Mass of Ordination to the Priesthood on May 31, 2025, at St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro.

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Vocations culture continued from page 23

to invite each of us to do daily: intentional prayer and intentional sacrifice.

Our Lord tells his disciples when they struggle in their ministry that some things can only be carried out with prayer and fasting. In that spirit, I invite you to:

1. Choose some prayer that you can pray each day intentionally for an increase in good and holy vocations within our diocese, whether that be a Mass intention, a holy hour, a rosary, or simply saying the Lord's Prayer or a Memorare for vocations each morning.

2. Offer something up! Choose some sacrifice you can make weekly or daily for an increase in vocations.

Vocation Tuesdays

Starting on Sept. 16, the Office of Vocations will begin hosting Vocation Tuesdays for the Owensboro area at Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish in Owensboro. Every Tuesday except for Chrism Mass and Christmas, we will have a holy hour and Confessions at 6:30 p.m., followed by a Mass for Vocations at 7:30 p.m. Bring your family, your children, your spouse, your friends! It's my hope that this will become a space and time each week where we can intentionally pray as a diocese for an increase in vocations and the grace to live out our vocations, in addition to being a time of intimacy with the Lord, in which we can ask Him where He might be calling us.

For our first night on Sept. 16, following the holy hour, we will celebrate a Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit at 7:30 p.m. As we embark on this journey, we will ask the Holy Spirit to renew in us and enliven through our common baptismal vocation those particular vocations of priesthood, religious life, and marriage within our diocese.

St. Thérèse Vocation Society

Inspired by the efforts of the Diocese of Arlington's

vocations office, the St. Thérèse Vocation Society is a new, intentional, prayer society we will begin in our diocese on her feast day, Oct. 1. As a cloistered nun in a Carmelite monastery, St. Thérèse of Lisieux knew deeply the call of God within her. She responded to her "vocation of love" with confidence and embraced the sacrifices that God asked of her. St. Thérèse was known especially for her prayers for priests and her desire to be "an apostle to apostles."

This is a fantastic opportunity for those who are homebound, suffering from illness, or anyone who wishes to join us in intentional prayer and sacrifice for vocations within our diocese from home.

Members of the St. Thérèse Vocation Society will pledge to:

1. Offer daily prayers for an increase of vocations and the sanctification of our priests and seminarians.

2. Make a holy hour each week (in church or at home) for an increase in vocations in our diocese, for the perseverance of the seminarians now studying for the priesthood, and the men and women in formation for consecrated life.

3. Pray at Mass once a month (illness excusing attendance) for these same intentions.

4. Offer any sufferings they may experience for an increase in vocations in our diocese and for an increase in zeal, fervor and grace for our priests, deacons and consecrated religious men and women serving our diocese.

To register for the St. Thérèse Vocation Society and receive regular correspondence, please visit: OwensboroVocations.com/VocationSociety. ■

Fr. Corey D. Bruns is the director of vocations for the Diocese of Owensboro. Contact him at fatherbruns@owensborovocations.com.

Diocese's seven seminarians begin fall studies

BY WKC STAFF



FILE PHOTO

Fr. Corey D. Bruns is the vocations director for the Diocese of Owensboro, Kentucky.

This fall, the Diocese of Owensboro's seven seminarians are beginning their studies at several different seminaries around the country. Three of them will continue their studies at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad, Indiana; two will study at

Conception Seminary College in Conception, Missouri; another will do his pastoral year at Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Henderson; and another will pursue English language studies at Divine Word College in Epworth, Iowa. ■

Please pray for these men as they study and discern God's will in their lives. To learn more or speak with a priest, visit owensborovocations.com, call (270) 421-7868, or email vocations director Fr. Corey Bruns at fatherbruns@owensborovocations.com.

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VOCATIONS

Seminarians continued from page 24



Hunter Dickens, a parishioner of St. Thomas More in Paducah, is in Second Discipleship at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.



Tommy Rhodes, a parishioner of St. Lawrence in Philpot, is in First Discipleship at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.



Wes Wheatley, whose home parish is St. Rose of Lima in Cloverport, is in First Discipleship at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.



Caleb Neitzel, whose home parish is St. Joseph in Bowling Green, is in his propaedeutic year at Conception Seminary College.



Chris Paris, whose home parish is St. Romuald in Hardinsburg, is in his propaedeutic year at Conception Seminary College.



Juan Carlos Lazo Soriano, whose home parish is St. Joseph in Bowling Green, is in his pastoral year at Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Henderson.



Hoan Tran, whose home parish is Kim Lam in the Can Loc district in Vietnam, is doing his English language studies at Divine Word College in Epworth, Iowa, in anticipation of his eventual First Configuration stage of seminary.

Vocation Tuesday

Beginning

September 16

and continuing

weekly!

Join us in praying

for and about

vocations every

Tuesday night at

Sts. Joseph and

Paul Parish in

Owensboro.

6:30 PM

Holy Hour &

Confessions

7:30 PM Mass

All are welcome.

Pope paves way for St. John Henry Newman to be formally named doctor of the church

BY OSV NEWS

ROME (OSV News) - St. John Henry Newman - the 19th-century theologian, intellectual and preacher who journeyed from Anglicanism to Catholicism, powerfully shaping religious thought in both faith traditions - will be named a doctor of the church by Pope Leo XIV.

The news was announced by the Vatican shortly after Pope Leo's July 31 audience with Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints.

The Vatican press bulletin stated that the pope had "confirmed the affirmative opinion of the plenary session of cardinals and bishops, members of the dicastery" for sainthood causes, on conferring the title, which since the early church has been bestowed on saints whose doctrinal writing and teachings are held to have special authority. St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Gregory the Great and St. Jerome were the first four doctors of the church, and excluding today's announcement, there have been 37 saints so named.

The move had been supported by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, who at their November 2023 plenary assembly voted almost unanimously to support a request by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales that Newman be named a doctor of the church by Pope Francis. ■

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE VOCATIONS OFFICE

The 40 Martyrs: Fr. Robert Gipperich (Part 2)

BY EDWARD WILSON, ARCHIVES

The previous article in August covered the creation of the Diocese of Owensboro from the western territory of the Diocese of Louisville. This resulted in many Louisville priests, nicknamed “the 40 Martyrs,” being bound to the newly-created Diocese of Owensboro.

We left off with one of these priests, Fr. Robert Gipperich, requesting to be returned to his service in the soon-to-be Archdiocese of Louisville. He was confident his request would be granted as he was good friends with the bishop-elect, Fr. Francis R. Cotton, and had received the word of the soon-to-be-archbishop, Bishop John Floersh, that he would only spend a short amount of time serving outside of Louisville. The response he received was not what he expected.

Five days after Fr. Gipperich sent his letter, he received a response from bishop-elect Cotton. The bishop-elect directed Fr. Gipperich to review Canon 334 paragraph 2, and then Canon 2394. He stated that this would make Fr. Gipperich understand that the bishop-elect could partake in no act of governance until he was installed as bishop. This response quite rightly worried Fr. Gipperich. It was cold, and in no way addressed the possibility of a return to Louisville.

Fr. Gipperich continued to reach out to Bishop Floersh. Two days after the announcement of the creation of the Diocese of Owensboro, Fr. Gipperich had an audience with Bishop Floersh. At this meeting, the bishop acknowledged his promise to bring Fr. Gipperich home and told him not to worry. One month later he wrote Bishop Floersh, “...I do hope

you have not forgotten me or the promise you made to me. I desire as much as ever to return to Louisville and be under your leadership.” In complete humility he ended the letter, “So, again I beg of you and plead that you get me back.”

The day of Bishop Cotton’s installation came and went, but Fr. Gipperich had not given up hope. Bishop Cotton attempted to favorably sway Fr. Gipperich by offering him desirable diocesan positions. However, Fr. Gipperich turned him down, stating that acceptance would be “a tacit admission” that he “had become reconciled to staying in the Diocese of Owensboro.” But as the years passed so too did his hope of a return to Louisville.

Though the desire to return to Louisville never left him, Fr. Gipperich began to find a satisfaction that he previously believed unattainable in the Diocese of Owensboro. He was assigned to Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Henderson, one of the most beautiful churches in the diocese. He was placed on boards and councils that filled him with fulfillment. Though things were doubtlessly better for Fr. Gipperich than he had previously thought possible, he still looked with favor on the archdiocese.

There is still more to this story. Fr. Gipperich and Bishop Cotton continued to butt heads, and little did the good priest know, but a second life in Louisville was a very real possibility in his future. These things and more will be covered in the final installment of Fr. Gipperich’s 40 Martyrs story next month. ■

Edward Wilson is the director of the Diocese of Owensboro’s Archives and the Archives of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph. Comments and questions may be sent to edward.wilson@pastoral.org.



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Henderson, Ky., is seen in this undated archives photo. This was the parish Fr. Robert Gipperich served for nearly his entire priestly service to the newly-established Diocese of Owensboro.

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Mass and confession times in the Diocese of Owensboro

Did you know you can view Mass times on the diocese's website? Visit <https://owensborodiocese.org/find-a-parish/> for a list of parishes, Mass times and more. As confession times are subject to change, visitors are encouraged to contact the parishes directly for their most up-to-date confession schedule.

Gennesaret Retreat Sept. 26-28

Are you or anyone you know living with chronic, serious, or terminal illness? The Diocese of Owensboro Gennesaret Retreat may be a blessing for you. This retreat is structured to accommodate individual needs. Each guest is provided with a private room and bathroom. The schedule allows for choice and time for rest. Special dietary needs can be planned for. Team members are available and ready to assist with your needs. The Gennesaret Retreat is at retreat is offered at no cost for guests or volunteer team members. Funding it provided through grants and generous donations. Applications are being accepted for this year's retreat the weekend of Sept. 26-28, 2025 at the Abbey of Gethsemane retreat center, Trappist, KY. Guests will be accepted on a first come basis. When the retreat filled up, we will start a waiting list for next year. To apply to be a guest or to volunteer as a host team member contact coordinators Amy or Tom Payne at 270-316-0403 or email apayneat2251@hotmail.com. Please keep us in your prayers.

Thirty-fifth annual Marian Congress Oct. 4

"Pilgrims of Hope through Mary." Oct. 4, 2025, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at St. Joseph Parish in Bowling Green. Featured speaker: Fr. Peter Stryker, CPM. Mass at 8:30 a.m. Opportunities for Jubilee indulgence, brunch, May crowning, rosary procession, Divine Mercy chaplet, confessions, Adoration and Benediction. Questions: Patricia Hicks at (270) 943-1812.

Fourth Day Annual Cursillo Retreat Oct. 11

Hello all Cursillistas! Please save the date for Oct. 11, 2025 for the 4th Day annual retreat. It will be held at Christ the King in Madisonville from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., beginning with Mass. Lunch

will be potluck. The Fall Encounter will be Sept. 19 with more info to follow. Contact: Michelle Sandheinrich michelle.sandheinrich@gmail.com.

Holy Name School Fall Festival Oct. 24-25

Oct. 24-25, 2025 at Holy Name of Jesus School in Henderson, Ky. Carnival rides, auctions, raffles, games, bingo, fish and chicken dinners, food booths, a haunted house and much more. All are welcome! For more information: school office at (270) 827-3425.

Support groups for victims/survivors of clergy abuse

The Diocese of Owensboro would like to share some support group opportunities made available through the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. These groups are open to all victims/survivors in the United States. Learn more at <https://owensborodiocese.org/support-group/> and <https://owensborodiocese.org/safe/>. You are also invited to visit <https://www.awakecommunity.org/>, a community of abuse survivors, concerned Catholics, and allies responding to the wounds of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church.

Dynamic Parish Culture –
Living As a Community of
Missionary Disciples
with Dr. Jeff Anarini

Conspicuous vitality in every
aspect of our life is the
key to engaging in the mission of
Jesus Christ. This is not a theoretical
ideal but a lived reality.
And it is our mission to
bring this life to every
corner of the parish.
What does this look like in
practice? A vibrant parish is
welcoming, attractive, and deeply
committed to the Gospel. It is
a place where we live and
celebrate our faith, and
where we are called to
share our faith with others.
Join us for a day of
missionary discipleship.

Saturday, September 13
Coffee 9:00 am
Presentation... 9:30-12:00
Lunch 12:00

September Wedding Anniversaries 5, 10, 25, 40, 50 and More Than 50 Years of Marriage

A note from the WKC: Make sure your anniversary is listed!

The WKC recognizes 5th, 10th, 25th, 40th, 50th and over anniversaries being celebrated for the month printed (i.e. this edition shows the milestone anniversaries for August). In order to appear in the WKC's monthly anniversaries, you must be listed by your parish. Please contact your parish directly to make sure your anniversary is on file with them.

Blessed Mother, Owensboro

David & Margaret Wingfield, 54

Christ the King, Madisonville

George & Beverly Soria, 54
Gustaro & Sandra Perez, 53
Joseph & Daisy Rocha, 59

Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson

Carroll & Margaret Fulkerson, 62
Chris & Morgan Thomas, 10
David & Mary Sue Barron, 52
Dean & Janice Arnold, 55
Dennis & Nora Massoth, 50
Dennis & Tracey Sauer, 5
Harold & Lucy Hargis, 56
James & Rita Mills, 54
Kevin & Andrea Trainer, 10
Mac & Tammy Neel, 40
Mike & Katrina Greenwell, 54
Raymond & Joan Wawrin, 58
Ronald & Joan Hockey, 66
Sam & Patsy Moore, 52
Stephen & Marilyn Schwallier, 51

Holy Spirit, Bowling Green

Anthony & Cathy Pendino, 40
Anthony & Rhona Feckter, 62
Bushiri & Tamala Walebela, 10
Dustin & Jennifer Perkins, 10
Gabe & Claudine Cabral, 40

Continues on page 28

ANNIVERSARIES

Anniversaries continued from page 27

John & Angie Belcher, 25
John & Susan Miller, 10
Jonathan & Sarah Bessinger, 10
Mathew & Michelle Myers, 25
Rick & Kathy Granger, 54
Stephen & Wanda Baka, 55
Steve & Sandy Stahl, 55
Thanh & Oanh Ly, 25

Holy Trinity, Morgantown
Richard & Peggy Seiler, 64

Immaculate Conception, Hawesville
Charles & Peggy Howard, 56
Dale & Marcia Reddin, 55
Gary & Robin Elder, 50
Randy & Debbie Lindauer, 25

Immaculate, Owensboro
Chris & Susie Mattingly, 40
Joe & Angie Mattingly, 25
Larry & Stacy Hayden, 25
Stewart & Rose Foster, 56

Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro
Carl & Marie Hamilton, 54
Edward & Marilyn Sumner, 52
Harvey & Cathy Bowlds, 40
Mike & Suzanne Wurth, 55
Thomas & Barbara Norvell, 40
Wally & Julie Johnson, 52

Precious Blood, Owensboro
Andrew & Suzette Telli, 40
John & Patricia Kramer, 55
William & Susan Wedding, 56

Resurrection, Dawson Springs
Mike & Linda Randolph, 60

Rosary Chapel, Paducah
Rodney & Mary Ann Williams, 51

Sacred Heart, Waverly
Brad & Nicole Clements, 25
Mark & Sonny Danhauer, 40

St. Alphonsus, St. Joseph
David & Debbie Coomes, 54
P.J. & Kiley Murphy, 10

St. Ann, Morganfield
Bill & Janet Robertson, 65
Bill & Kay Owen, 51
Jim & Carol Hosman, 59
Paul & Jennie Smock, 40

St. Anthony of Padua, Grand Rivers
Steve & Linda Wilkes, 54

St. Anthony, Axtel
Coston & Terry Lawson, 40
James & Mary Mercer, 57

St. Anthony, Browns Valley

Darrell & Linda Howard, 52
James & Amy Hines, 25
St. Augustine, Reed
Sonny & Linda Evans, 60
Stephen & Sheila Byrne, 53
St. Charles, Bardwell
Danny & Bonnie Henderson, 54

St. Edward, Fulton
Eddie & Jan Taylor, 52
St. Elizabeth, Clarkson
Hayward & Sharon Roberts, 52
James & Joan Chaney, 51
David & Sue Hamilton, 51

St. Francis de Sales, Paducah
Carl & Patsy McConnell, 50
Durwin & Maureen Ursery, 59
Joseph & Paula Weitlauf, 40
Thomas & Jeannette Tocco, 52

St. Henry, Aurora
Albert & Cathy Downs, 50
Jack & Janice Faust, 58

St. Jerome, Fancy Farm
Caleb & Kristin Ballard, 10
Donnie & Veronica Wilson, 50
Glenn & Barbara Wilson, 59
Glenn & Gayle Willett, 52
Jordan & Emiley Puckett, 5
Manny & Denise Torres, 5
Marvin & Martha Byrd, 63
Preston & Taylor Bradford, 5
Sam & Becca Higdon, 54
T.J. & Beth Richmond, 10
Terry & Patrice Milan, 53
Todd & Keri Dowdy, 25
Walter & Karen Shupe, 53

St. John the Evangelist, Paducah
Lawrence & Dorothy Durbin, 57
Lawrence & Geraldine Durbin, 60
Richard & Betty Wurth, 63
Robert & Yolanda Neihoff, 62

St. Joseph, Bowling Green
Blake & Shannon Melton, 25
Dean & Colleen Ewing, 58
Eric & Shelby Escamilla, 10
George & Judith Martin, 59
Hubert & Linda Richardson, 56
Kody & Molly Brown, 10
Shayne & Alex Merrick, 10

St. Joseph, Central City
Ric & Judy Sims, 60

St. Joseph, Leitchfield
Jimmy & Sue Kipper, 59

St. Joseph, Mayfield

Charles & Gay Willett, 54
Robert & Jean Carrico, 58

St. Lawrence, Philpot
Brian & Anita Johnson, 40
Joseph & Nancy Payne, 65

St. Leo, Murray
James & Joan Carden, 61

St. Mark, Eddyville
Kenneth & Maggie Pierson, 52

St. Martin, Rome
Brandon & Sharon Reisz, 25
Jack & Delores Beyke, 59
William & Judy Peak, 59

St. Mary Magdalene, Sorgho
Barry & Kathy Hardy, 10
Danny & Sharon Ebelhar, 56
Grady & Donna Ebelhar, 52
Heath & Leanna Byrne, 10
Robert & Terry Knott, 66
Sam & Rachel Knott, 5

St. Mary of the Woods, McQuady
David & Barbara Bates, 50

St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville
Austin & Kaitlin Goetz, 5
Bobby & Della Payne, 52

St. Mary, Franklin
Jim & Gail Briley, 64
John & Cindy Janicek, 52

St. Michael the Archangel, Oak Grove
Richard & Sherry Washington, 55
Roger & Margo Blair, 55

St. Paul, Leitchfield
Dale & Yvonne DePoyster, 52
James & Helen Gawarecki, 63
Joseph & Anna Jean Clark, 54
Larry & Geneva Pawley, 58
Mike & Joyce Whitfill, 57

St. Peter of Antioch, Waverly
Clarence & Darlene Powell, 51
Leslie & Martha Gibson, 55
Tanner & Presley Pruitt, 5

St. Pius X, Owensboro
Earl & Peggy Castlen, 56
James & Connie Fleischmann, 50
Jamison & Jessica Hughes, 10
Jeffrey & Angela Morrison, 25
Larry & Patricia Hicks, 54
Ronald & Mary Helen Strehl, 61
Stan & Beth McKay, 40
Tom & Janie Blair, 54

St. Romuald, Hardinsburg
Chuck & Joellen McGary, 60
David & Elaine Adkins, 53

Todd & Janet Board, 40
St. Sebastian, Calhoun
John & Brenda Pinkston, 56
Mike & Margaret Dant, 60

St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro
Arthur & Nancy Hodde, 54
Howard & Louise Brown, 58
Joel & Liza Ciaccio, 5
John & Patsy Clayton, 68
Louis & Debra Byrne, 51
Pat & Donna McNulty, 60
Ryan & Olivia Payne, 10
Scott & Kathy Warren, 25

St. Stephen, Cadiz
Jim & Sally Vollmer, 59
Mike & Tana Dickens, 54

St. Thomas More, Paducah
Blake & Erica Harrison, 10
Eric & Heather Butterbaugh, 10
Gary & Janie Lamb, 60
Larry & Miranda Farris, 50
Mark & Chelsea Smith, 10
Michael & Rene Dawson, 25
Phil & Betty Higdon, 61
Robert & Judy Milford, 59
Steve & Julie DuPerrieu, 51
Tom & Barbara Clinton, 57
Tomi & Cindy Zaninovich, 10
Zane & Ashley White, 10

St. William, Knottsville
Alan & Dana Petri, 25
Charles & Joyce Mills, 68
Darrell & Mary Lou Payne, 56
Derek & Mallery Berry, 10
Jamie & Charla Coomes, 25
Ricky & Suzanne Fulkerson, 40
Steve & Darlene Fulkerson, 53

Sts. Joseph & Paul, Owensboro
Bobby & Theresa Pedley, 61
Craig & Stacy Jones, 40
Frank & Joanne Mason, 54
John & Alicia Blankendaal, 25
Ralph & Emilee Ward, 59

Sts. Peter & Paul, Hopkinsville
Billy & Kellie Bellew, 25
Greg & Dawn Ligibel, 40
Gregory & Anita Jones, 56
Jim & Maria Creighton, 56
Ken & Julie Tiell, 10
Tommy & Missy Craft, 40
William & Ann Farrell, 55
William & Linda Keach, 53

Justicia, caridad y tratar a los demás como lo haría Jesús

Desde hace varios meses he querido abordar en mi carta mensual el debate de muchos años sobre los inmigrantes y refugiados en los Estados Unidos. Es un tema polémico y no quiero simplemente añadir más controversia.

Y, sin embargo, ha llegado el momento en que debo hacer un llamamiento a los ciudadanos de nuestra nación para que lleguen a un consenso mínimo pero muy importante. Creo que este debate quedaría mejor articulado por aquellos que tienen más conocimientos que yo sobre relaciones internacionales.

Pero cuando me entero de historias de arrestos y deportaciones de nuestros vecinos y compañeros en nuestras iglesias sin el debido proceso legal, me avergüenzo de nuestra nación. Cuando oigo hablar de cónyuges e hijos que han sido abandonados a causa de estas deportaciones, pregunto: “¿no habrá una manera mejor, una manera más humana?” Cuando oigo a funcionarios del gobierno reírse de los campos de detención rodeados de cocodrilos, me entristezco y quiero protestar: “Ese no es mi país, los Estados Unidos no ha sido conocido por eso”.

Las personas que se encuentren en nuestro país que pueden haber ingresado al país ilegalmente o que pueden haber ingresado correctamente y quedarse más del tiempo permitido son seres humanos. Son hijos de Dios, creados a imagen y semejanza de Dios y sólo por eso tienen derecho a ser tratados con dignidad y respeto. No existen excepciones al derecho a ser tratado como ser humano.

Ésta es la enseñanza de la Iglesia católica, expresada por todos los Papas del último medio siglo, sobre el derecho de los pueblos a migrar, muy especialmente de aquellos que podrían estar escapando de la opresión o la pobreza extrema. El difunto Papa Francisco instó

con frecuencia a los líderes mundiales, especialmente de los países más ricos, a reconocer que las exigencias de la justicia y la caridad generan expectativas sobre ellos de que defiendan a quienes tienen derechos legítimos para migrar.

Esto, por supuesto, provoca las protestas de quienes reconocen los derechos legítimos de las naciones a proteger y garantizar la seguridad de sus fronteras. El derecho a migrar no exige que los países no puedan defenderse de criminales peligrosos. En relación con ese debate quisiera notar que puede haber caminos razonables para dar cabida a todas estas preocupaciones legítimas.

Pero esto también exige reconocer que la gran mayoría de los inmigrantes y refugiados entre nosotros son personas decentes, que no representan una amenaza para nadie y que huyen de las injusticias en sus países de origen. De igual importancia es que están contribuyendo al bienestar general de nuestra nación.

En este momento, vemos que nuestro país está inmerso en un esfuerzo masivo para detener y deportar a grandes cantidades de personas. De nuevo, podemos estar respetuosamente en desacuerdo sobre si lo que está sucediendo es conveniente o no. Sin embargo, ahora estamos viendo redadas contra personas por parte de agentes armados y enmascarados de nuestro gobierno que se niegan a ofrecer identificación. Esto evoca comparaciones con países que ni siquiera pretenderían ofrecer libertad y justicia a su gente.

Los Estados Unidos de América, nuestro país, a pesar de algunos fracasos históricos, es mejor que esto.

¿Cuál es el consenso que podemos esperar cuando hay tantas opiniones diferentes?

Hace varios años hubo una moda que hizo que millones de personas usaran pulseras simples con las

CALENDARIO DEL OBISPO MEDLEY SEPTIEMBRE DE 2025	
23 de agosto - 13 de sept.	Peregrinación a España y Portugal
14 de sept.	10 a.m. Confirmación – Parroquia de la Resurrección, Dawson Springs
16-17 de sept.	Cumbre del Ministerio Hispano – San Meinrad
18 de sept.	11 a.m. Misa del Espíritu Santo – Universidad de Brescia, Owensboro
20 de sept.	4:30 p.m. Confirmación – Parroquia Espíritu Santo, Bowling Green
21 de sept.	2 p.m. Celebración Diocesana de los Aniversarios de Matrimonios – Catedral de San Esteban
22-25 de sept.	Conferencia de <i>Catholic Extension</i> para Obispos de Misión – Chicago
28 de sept.	10:00 a. m. Confirmación – Parroquia Sagrado Corazón, Russellville

letras WWJD, que significan “What Would Jesus Do?” [¿Qué haría Jesús?]. Podríamos decir que éste es un código moral demasiado simplista. Pero podríamos decir también que esto es tan sencillo como la regla de oro que viene del Evangelio: “Trata a los demás como te gustaría que te trataran a ti”.

¿Puede alguno de nosotros realmente creer que Jesús trataría a los demás con desprecio, se reiría de su situación y celebraría su maltrato? Como nación somos mejores que esto y como cristianos estamos llamados a una gran compasión. Deberíamos esperar y suplicar que todas las personas puedan ser tratadas con decencia común.

¿Qué haría Jesús? ¿Podemos hacer lo mismo?

+ William F. Medley

Obispo William F. Medley
Diócesis de Owensboro

Los siete seminaristas de la Diócesis comienzan sus estudios de otoño

POR EL PERSONAL DE WKC

Este otoño, los siete seminaristas de la Diócesis de Owensboro comenzarán sus estudios en varios seminarios distintos alrededor del país. Tres de ellos continuarán sus estudios en el Seminario y Escuela de Teología de San Meinrad en St. Meinrad, Indiana; dos estudiarán en el Colegio del Seminario Concepción en Conception, Missouri; otro hará su año pastoral en la Parroquia Santo Nombre de Jesús en Henderson; y otro cursará estudios de idioma inglés en el Colegio Palabra Divina en Epworth, Iowa.

Por favor oren por estos hombres mientras estudian y disciernen la voluntad de Dios en sus vidas. Para obtener más información o hablar con un sacerdote, visite owensborovocations.com, llame al (270) 421-7868 o envíe un correo electrónico al director de vocaciones, el Padre Corey Bruns, a fatherbruns@owensborovocations.com. Él habla español. ■

FOTOS POR CORTESÍA DE LA OFICINA DE VOCACIONES



Hunter Dickens, feligrés de Santo Tomás Moro en Paducah, está en el segundo año de discipulado en el Seminario y Escuela de Teología de San Meinrad.



Tommy Rhodes, feligrés de San Lorenzo en Philpot, está en el primer año de discipulado en el Seminario y Escuela de Teología de San Meinrad.



Wes Wheatley, feligrés de Santa Rosa de Lima en Cloverport, está en el primer año de discipulado en el Seminario y Escuela de Teología de San Meinrad.



Caleb Neitzel, feligrés de San José en Bowling Green, está en su año propedéutico en el Colegio del Seminario Concepción.



Juan Carlos Lazo Soriano, feligrés de San José en Bowling Green, está en su año pastoral en la Parroquia Santo Nombre de Jesús en Henderson.



IUBILAEUM A. D. MMXXV
**PEREGRINANTES
IN SPEM**

**Migrantes
y
Refugiados**

**Misioneros de
esperanza**

Santa Misa
celebrando la
semana
nacional de la
migración y el
jubileo de
migrantes



Unidos en
Nuestra
Diversidad

**4 DE
OCT
2025**

1:00 pm

CELEBRADO POR
OBISPO WILLIAM
F. MEDLEY

**UNA PROCESION
PARTIRA DE LA
UNIV. DE BRESCIA
A LAS 12:30**

PARA MÁS
INFORMACIÓN
LLAME A DCN.
CRISTOBAL
GUTIERREZ
(270) 880-8018

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Continuado de la página 30



Chris Paris, feligrés de San Romualdo en Hardinsburg, está en su año propedéutico en el Colegio del Seminario Concepción.



Hoan Tran, feligrés de Kim Lam, en el distrito de Can Loc en Vietnam, está realizando sus estudios de inglés en el Colegio Palabra Divina en Epworth, Iowa, en previsión de su eventual etapa de Primera Configuración en el seminario.

El segundo partido amistoso católico anual de fútbol une a jugadores de distintas culturas



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DEL P. MARTIN MA NA LING

Los participantes del partido amistoso de fútbol del 3 de agosto de 2025 se ven en el campo de la Parroquia Espíritu Santo en Bowling Green.

POR EL PERSONAL DE WKC

Acompañe al Director de Vocaciones, el P. Corey Bruns, el 16 de septiembre en la Iglesia de San José y San Pablo en Owensboro para una Hora Santa especial y una Misa Votiva del Espíritu Santo, donde comenzaremos a orar por el aumento de buenas y santas vocaciones en nuestra Diócesis. El Martes de Vocaciones se celebrará cada martes a partir de entonces, como un momento para reunirnos y orar con intención por el aumento de nuestras propias vocaciones. ¡Todos están invitados a unirse a nosotros en oración! Hora Santa y Confesiones a las 6:30 p.m., Misa a las 7:30 p.m. Mira el video de invitación: <https://www.youtube.com/@OwensboroVocations>

El Padre Martin Ma Na Ling, vicario parroquial de la Parroquia San Pío X en Owensboro, reunió recientemente a los feligreses para un partido amistoso de fútbol con varias otras parroquias. El 3 de agosto, a las 4:30 p.m., los miembros de la parroquia San Pío X, los miembros de la Parroquia Espíritu Santo y otros se reunieron para jugar en el campo de fútbol del Espíritu Santo, con un total de alrededor de 50 participantes.

“Fue increíble ver cómo todos los jóvenes adultos, o simplemente los amantes del deporte, compartían y cultivaban la amistad, el trabajo en equipo, la bondad y el amor como buenos católicos en la Diócesis de Owensboro”, dijo el Padre Ma Na Ling.

Esta es la segunda vez que reúne a un grupo de feligreses con ideas afines para un partido amistoso de fútbol; el primero partido tuvo lugar el 15 de junio de 2024 en la Parroquia Espíritu Santo.

El Padre Ma Na Ling dijo que considera que el fútbol une a personas más allá de las diferencias culturales (ya sean latinos, de Myanmar o blancos) y les ayuda a crecer más unidos como Cuerpo de Cristo. ■

Se celebra la Escuela Bíblica del Verano en parroquias del Kentucky occidental

POR EL PERSONAL DE WKC

Este verano, las parroquias de toda la Diócesis de Owensboro organizaron sus muy queridos programas de Escuela Bíblica del Verano (VBS por sus siglas en inglés). A continuación, se muestran algunas fotografías destacadas de este año. ■



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE KATTIA ANGULO
Con la ayuda de voluntarios, los niños participan en la Escuela Bíblica del Verano en la Parroquia San Miguel en Sebree del 10 al 11 de julio de 2025. El tema fue "Ilumina el camino: Guiados por el amor de Dios."



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DEL SANTO NOMBRE DE JESÚS

Se toma una fotografía en grupo de los participantes de la Escuela Bíblica del Verano del 23 al 26 de junio en la Parroquia Santo Nombre de Jesús en Henderson.



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE HANNAH CLARK
Los niños se divierten con burbujas durante la Escuela Bíblica del Verano del 7 al 11 de julio en la Parroquia Santa María en Franklin.



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE APRIL DICKENS
Los niños participantes asisten a una "audiencia papal" en la "Plaza de San Pedro" (en el salón parroquial) durante la Escuela Bíblica del Verano con temática del cónclave del 7 al 9 de julio en la Parroquia Santos José y Pablo en Owensboro.