

THE WESTERN
KENTUCKY



Catholic

CATÓLICO DE KENTUCKY OCCIDENTAL

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Seeking Christ

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Español

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Family of faith

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School's Out Catholic Schools Week celebrations this year – originally

scheduled for Jan. 25-31 – were delayed because of inclement weather. While school was closed, St. Mary Middle School sixth grader Daniel Colgan put his faith into action by shoveling the church path at St. Thomas More Parish in Paducah. [Page 12](#)

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Front page main photo courtesy of St. Thomas More Parish, Paducah.

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:

Are Catholics honoring a piece of furniture? - The history of the Chair of St. Peter

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

This year, Feb. 22 falls on a Sunday and the Church will observe this day as the first Sunday of Lent, embracing what is inaugurated on Ash Wednesday as a 40-day season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

Though lost this year due to it being on a Sunday, Feb. 22 is the traditional Feast of the Chair of Peter. This very title may seem confusing, if not humorous. Some may ask why Catholics observe a feast to honor a piece of furniture, even if it is a hallowed and distinct piece of furniture that may have belonged to St. Peter, one of the 12 apostles and the first Bishop of Rome.

Ok, the feast is not about a physical chair. Rather, it is a companion feast to the Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul observed each year on June 29 to honor the co-founders of the Church of Rome.

The “chair” – Cathedra in Latin from which comes the word cathedral – represents Peter’s teaching authority and his role as the rock on which Jesus Christ built his Church. The observance of this feast has roots in the early Church traditions honoring Peter’s time in Antioch and Rome.

The veneration emphasizes the Church’s unity, the pope’s teaching office, and the continuity of faith from the apostles to our present day. The prominent role of Peter is established in the 16th chapter of Matthew’s Gospel in the account of Jesus asking the disciples, “Who do people say that I am?”

The disciples repeated what they had heard: “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others

Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

But Jesus, ever the teacher, persists, “But you, who do you say that I am?” Here Peter moves to the head of the class with his profession of faith: “You are the Christ (Messiah), the Son of the Living God.”

With Peter’s bold proclamation Jesus assigned the name Peter to him who had been known as Simon, son of Jonah: “You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my church.”

This honor likely surprised the other Apostles as they would not then or even later have likely themselves chosen Peter to be the first among them. The writers of the Gospels never let this “rock” off easily, quick to recount the stories of his human weaknesses and foibles. In fact, not so much later than Jesus choosing Peter we find Jesus chastising him as Satan, when Peter contradicted what he had said about going to Jerusalem to face the cross an execution. Peter had assured Jesus he would never let that happen.

After the Resurrection, recalling the three times that Peter had denied Jesus, he was asked, “do you love me, do you love me, do you love me more than these? And with Peter’s assurance of his deep love, Jesus told him to feed his lambs and his sheep.

Peter did go on to accomplish great witness to the Lord. He died a martyr’s death. The Church has recognized every pope from earliest days to now as the Successor to Peter.

Last year as Pope Francis’ health was clearly failing for all the world to see, prognosticators, journalists, social media, and regular Church-watchers



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC
The Chair of St. Peter at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, Italy, is seen in March 2025.

began the speculation as to who would be chosen to be the next pope, examining prominent cardinals.

“Will he continue the style and ministry of Francis?” “Will he model himself on Benedict XVI?” “Will he have the charisma of John Paul II?”

A wise cardinal responded to these questions: “Remember that the Conclave is not gathered to name the successor of Francis, or Benedict, or John Paul. We must choose the Successor of Peter!”

May God bless you all,

Most Reverend William F. Medley
Diocese of Owensboro

VOCATIONS

BISHOP MEDLEY'S FEBRUARY 2026 CALENDAR

Feb 1	10 AM Confirmation – Immaculate Parish, Owensboro
Feb 4	6 PM Confirmation – St. Romuald Parish, Hardinsburg
Feb 5	10:35 AM School Mass – Owensboro Catholic High School
Feb 7	6:30 PM Confirmation – Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson
Feb 8	10 AM Confirmation – St. Peter of Alcantara Parish, Stanley
Feb 9	8:15 AM School Mass – Christ the King School, Madisonville

Feb 11	8:30 AM School Mass – Mary Carri-co School, Knottsville
	6 PM Confirmation – Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Owensboro
Feb 12	9 AM School Mass – Owensboro Catholic 4-6 Campus
Feb 14	5 PM Confirmation – St. Francis de Sales Parish, Paducah
Feb 15	4 PM Rite of Election – St. Thomas More Parish, Paducah
Feb 16	10 AM Priest Personnel Committee – McRaith Catholic Center, Owensboro
Feb 18	12 Noon Ash Wednesday Mass – St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro

Feb 21	Catholic Men's Conference – Riverpark Center, Owensboro
	4:30 PM Mass – St. Stephen Cathedral
Feb 22	2 PM Rite of Election – St. Stephen Cathedral
	6 PM Rite of Election – St. Stephen Cathedral
Feb 24-25	Bishops' Province Meeting and Catholic Conference of Kentucky Meeting – Louisville
Feb 28	4 PM Dedication of Altar and Blessing of Renovated Church – Blessed Mother Parish, Owensboro

Office of Vocations welcomes eighth seminarian

BY FR. COREY D. BRUNS, OFFICE OF VOCATIONS

The Office of Vocations is happy to introduce you to Tuan Nguyen, our newest seminarian from Vietnam. Tuan has two younger siblings, a brother and sister, and is 29 years old. His home parish in Vietnam is called Khe Gat. Like our other seminarian from Vietnam, Hoan Tran, Tuan has completed his philosophy studies and after studying English at Divine Word College in Iowa looks forward to continuing theology at Saint Meinrad Seminary.

Please feel free to write notes of encouragement to our two Vietnamese seminarians as they do their English studies. Divine Word College is located at: 102 Jacoby Dr W, Epworth, IA, 52045

Please pray for all eight of our seminarians as they start back at school for the spring semester. ■

Stay up-to-date with weekly happenings in the Office of Vocations by following @OwensboroVocations on Instagram and Facebook.



COURTESY OF VOCATIONS OFFICE

Tuan Nguyen is the Diocese of Owensboro's newest seminarian. He is currently studying at Divine Word College in Epworth, Iowa.

*Happy anniversary
to our priests!*

Fr. Pat Bittel

Ordained 2/20/1982

Retired

Bishops of Kentucky: We Stand with Our Immigrant Brothers and Sisters

January 3, 2026

The four Roman Catholic Bishops of Kentucky have issued the following statement for the Feast of the Epiphany:

In November 2025, the Catholic Bishops of the United States issued a Special Message on the growing concern for the current situation facing many immigrants and refugees in our country. In continuity with that message, and with our joint statement in December 2024 with the bishops of Tennessee, as we celebrate the Epiphany

of the Lord and recognize Jesus Christ as the light that guides all nations on earth, we now wish to address ourselves specifically to our Kentucky communities.

Nations have a right and responsibility to control their borders and to enforce laws meant to protect the population, but all laws must be enforced in a just and predictable manner that respects the God-given dignity of each human person. Pope Leo reminded us of this when he stated, “No one has said that the United States should have open borders...I think every country has a right to determine who and how and when people enter.” The Holy Father then added that “we have to look for ways of treating people humanely, treating people with the dignity that they have.”

Accordingly, we are increasingly concerned about the rapidly developing challenges facing immigrants, whether documented or undocumented. Regular reports of immigrants with legal status having that status arbitrarily

revoked; increasing incidents of political leaders vilifying immigrants; the elimination of sanctuary protections for churches, hospitals, and schools; and proposals at the state level targeting the ability of immigrants to live and pursue their dreams in Kentucky, combine to create an understandable climate of hostility, anxiety, and fear. We oppose all efforts to stigmatize immigrants as a group or to spread fear based on national or ethnic origin.

We stand with all of our immigrant brothers and sisters who have been victimized by unjust government action or by harmful rhetoric and vilification. We call on all of our political leaders to work to reform our broken immigration system in a way that allows for the peaceful and orderly migration of people who are searching for peace, stability, religious freedom, and economic opportunity, as well as one that respects family unification and a realistic possibility of potentially obtaining citizenship.

We reiterate the call and commitment we made with our brother bishops in Tennessee and invite Catholics and all people of good will “to learn more about the plight of immigrants, to understand the values that form our Catholic Teaching on the matter, and to join us in advocating for just and comprehensive laws and policies that respond to the requirements of human rights and dignity and reflect the desire for the common good in our nation. We stand ready to be a part of bringing this about.”

Most Rev. Shelton J. Fabre, Archbishop of Louisville
Most Rev. William F. Medley, Bishop of Owensboro
Most Rev. John Stowe, OFM Conv., Bishop of Lexington
Most Rev. John C. Iffert, Bishop of Covington

Contact: Jason Hall, Catholic Conference of Kentucky, at jdhall@cck.org or (502) 226-0045



It's time to join the Ursuline Sisters' Quilt of the Month Club

You could win a quilt for only \$25!

Purchasing one \$25 ticket gives you 12 chances to win a handmade quilt from April 2026–March 2027. Drawings take place on the first Friday of each month* and can be viewed on our Facebook page. (*except Good Friday - drawing will be on Thursday, April 2)

Sign up by April 1, 2026, to be entered in all 12 drawings.

Only 2,500 tickets will be sold!

Sign up: ursulinesmsj.org/quilt-club

Thank you! Questions? Contact Carol Braden-Clarke: 270-229-2008
carol.braden-clarke@maplemount.org



Ursuline Sisters
of Mount Saint Joseph
8001 Cummings Road
Maple Mount, Kentucky 42156
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Kentucky, Wisconsin bishops issue statements affirming dignity of migrants

BY OSV NEWS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (OSV News) - The bishops of Kentucky and Wisconsin have joined similar efforts by bishops in a growing list of states to affirm the human dignity of migrants amid debates over immigration policy. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops voted overwhelmingly Nov. 12 to issue a rare group statement voicing “our concern here for immigrants” at their annual fall plenary assembly in Baltimore. It came as a growing number of bishops have acknowledged that some of the Trump administration’s immigration policies risk presenting the church with both practical challenges in administering pastoral support and charitable endeavors, as well as religious liberty challenges. Marking the feast of the Epiphany, celebrated this year on Jan. 4, the Catholic bishops of Kentucky released their statement “in continuity” with the USCCB statement. They acknowledged the right of nations to “control their borders and to enforce laws meant to protect the population,” but said all laws must be enforced in a “just” manner that respects the God-given dignity of each human person. They also expressed concern over “proposals at the state level targeting the ability of immigrants to live and pursue their dreams in Kentucky.” In a Dec. 18 statement, Wisconsin’s bishops said, “There is no inherent contradiction in upholding human dignity, the



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

Bishop William F. Medley greets and sprinkles holy water on members of the faithful processing into St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro, Kentucky, on Oct. 4, 2025 for the local closing Mass of National Migration Week. Bishop Medley, along with his fellow Kentucky bishops, joined with a growing list of Catholic bishops affirming the human dignity of migrants via group statements.

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PERFECT FOR AGES 12 & UP!

Catholic Charities staff, friends, share hot meals with local community

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

In the late morning of Jan. 22, the lower level of the McRaith Catholic Center in Owensboro was abuzz with people filling disposable cups with hot soup and packing peanut butter sandwiches.

At a long table, Catholic Charities administrative assistant Tina Hawley worked with safe environment coordinator Janice Hendricks to place fruit cups, chopped raw vegetables, snack cakes, and sandwiches into individual paper bags.

In the kitchen, tribunal staff members Louanne Seibert, Patti Bartley and Rachael McFadden packed the single-serve soup containers inside an insulated container to keep everything hot.

Sr. Jacinta Powers, OSU – running back and forth to the different stations in a purple Catholic Charities sweatshirt – made note that everyone had washed their hands before preparations began.

The food would be distributed to members of the homeless community at the picnic shelter at English Park in Owensboro, many of whom reside at a nearby encampment known as Tent City.

This initiative, referred to as “Feeding Our Friends,” has been a monthly project since fall 2025, coordinated by several staff of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Owensboro with assistance from other diocesan staff members.

Hawley said that it is common to see familiar faces when she and other staff distribute the meals.

She said they package about 40 meals, even if not

that many people show up: “That’s the number we go with.”

Hendricks pointed out that this project is one of the Church’s corporal works of mercy: feed the hungry.

This initiative is also in line with Catholic Social Teaching (CST), such as its pillar known as the Option for the Poor and Vulnerable. In the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ overview of CST, it states: “A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.”

Later that day, amid the dipping temperatures as the region braced for a winter storm, the staff drove to English Park to share food with their friends. They met up with several other Owensboro community members, who helped distribute the food and other items like individual hand warmers.

“Betty,” who resides at Tent City with her brother and her sister, as well as her partner, “Billy,” came to the distribution at the picnic shelter that day. She told The Western Kentucky Catholic she has been at the encampment since July.

“I like it because they don’t make me feel less than,” said Betty, who said she was named after her grandmother and that she has been with Billy for almost five years. “I really appreciate these people. We’re happy when they come here.”

“A lot of people are down here because they don’t



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC
Snack cakes are seen on a table as Diocese of Owensboro staff members package individual paper bags of meals for the Feeding Our Friends meetup at English Park on Jan. 22, 2026.



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC
Diocesan tribunal staff members Louanne Seibert, Patti Bartley and Rachael McFadden package individual containers of hot soup on Jan. 22, 2026, in preparation for the Feeding Our Friends meetup at English Park in Owensboro.

Continues on page 8

FEATURES

Hot meals continued from page 7



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC
Working in the lower level of the McRaith Catholic Center in Owensboro, (left to right) Tina Hawley; Sr. Jacinta Powers, OSU; and Janice Hendricks package meals to share at the Feeding Our Friends meetup at English Park on Jan. 22, 2026.

have a choice,” she said, adding that she has been unable to obtain social services because she lacks a permanent address.

“And because we don’t have a permanent address, people assume we are addicts or trying to steal from somebody,” she said, explaining that Tent City residents care for their fellow residents. “We’re ‘just’ a homeless community... but we’re a community.”

Young adults “Savannah” and “R.J.” also came to the distribution at English Park that day.

“I’m from Madisonville, but my mom moved us here when I was three,” said Savannah, who is now experiencing homelessness.

R.J. said he was born in Owensboro, “and I grew up in Ohio County in foster care.” He, too, is currently experiencing homelessness.

The two said that times have been difficult, but Savannah said she tries to get through her present challenges by praying and reading scripture.

“I haven’t been able to read scripture as much lately, but it’s ok, God knows you’re trying,” she said, offering the advice that “love is the way, and no matter the circumstances, never let your love die.”

“Kevin,” who said he had served in the 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army as a chaplain because he did not want to carry a weapon, led a prayer over the gathering that day.

Kevin is originally from California, and said he was sent by God to minister to the people of Tent City. He has resided there for about two and a half months.

“Tent City always needs resources,” he said, “these church groups do a lot to help people get resources.”

Deborah Ryan, who goes to Owensboro Christian Church, came with her husband to assist with distribution that day.

The Ryans had moved to Owensboro specifically to help the local homeless population and minister with the local organization Just People, a mobile outreach.

“I believe Owensboro and other communities could do more (for those experiencing homelessness), especially for the population here in Tent City,” she said. “And I hope to be a part of that. Because no one should have to live outside.”

That morning, numbers were down at the English Park distribution, which some attributed to the coming winter storm. With the remaining meals, Sr. Jacinta and her colleagues drove to the nearby Cadillac Motel, where many people lacking permanent housing reside.

They shared the rest of the food there. ■
To learn how you can assist Catholic Charities’ mission to the marginalized, visit <https://owensborodiocese.org/catholic-charities>.



Lent 2026 Program:

Deepening Our Prayer Life: Advice from the Four Saint Teresas

All are invited to join Ursuline Sister Cheryl Clemons, Ph.D., for a Day of Prayer and Reflection during Lent. She will offer insights on prayer from Saint Teresa of Avila, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein), and Saint Teresa of Calcutta. The day will include quiet prayer and reflection and small group sharing. Lunch will be provided. The fee is \$60. Sister Cheryl has extensive training in theology, Scripture, spirituality and spiritual direction.

Saturday, March 28

9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Maple Hall, Mount Saint Joseph

Sign up online:

ursulinesmsj.org/calendar



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Moving forward after electrical fire, St. Stephen Cathedral asks for ‘patience and prayers’

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

An electrical fire that occurred in the attic of St. Stephen Cathedral’s parish office has displaced the staff and ministries, but they are pressing on and grateful for the support of the local community.

The fire was originally believed to have started in the early hours of Jan. 12. However, according to further investigations, the fire is now believed to have been smoldering in the attic as early as 5 p.m. on Jan. 11.

This information was shared by rector Fr. John Thomas via a video update on the cathedral’s Facebook page on Jan. 17. Fr. Thomas went on to explain that alarms were activated only hours later and that emergency personnel were onsite by 12:35 a.m.

Fr. Thomas said that first responders were there within two minutes of the alarm: “Thanks to their tireless efforts and professional work, the blaze was contained to the interior of the building.”

He confirmed that all sacramental records are safe, but the building itself sustained extensive damages and is “not safe: it is unusable.”

“Now the slow process of moving forward begins,” he said.

The cathedral parish office has secured a temporary workspace but it is still weeks before the staff will be able to relocate to it. Its St. Vincent de Paul and related ministries will temporarily operate out of the Catholic Charities building facing Cedar Street beside the nearby McRaith Catholic Center,

which was not affected by the fire.

Cathedral Preschool was not impacted by the fire, since it is housed in the McRaith Catholic Center, and has continued operations as usual. The regular Mass schedule, homebound ministry, and hospital visits have continued.

Fr. Thomas, in his video message, requested two things from the faithful: “Your patience and your prayers.”

“We are still gathering facts ourselves,” he added, expressing the cathedral’s commitment to transparency and keeping the community updated with further developments.

On Jan. 23, in a phone call with The Western Kentucky Catholic, Fr. Thomas shared that until the building is empty, insurance will not be able to assess the full extent of the damage, but that disaster services have been diligently clearing the space.

“I can report this morning that they found under the carpets, it is asbestos tile,” he said, which means that tile will now need to be removed and disposed within required regulations.

Fr. Thomas said many people are offering to help, but that for now, prayer is the most important contribution, and that the cathedral will let them know when more is needed.

“We are so appreciative of everyone’s support, especially the firefighters, the police, and the first responders,” he said. “We commend them for their actions taken that night.” ■

For latest updates, follow www.facebook.com/StStephenCathedral.



COURTESY OF ST. STEPHEN CATHEDRAL
The damage from the Jan. 11, 2026 fire is seen inside the St. Stephen Cathedral parish office on Jan. 12.



YOU'VE GOT THIS

Catholic Charities collaborates with several counselors who offer services at a reduced rate for parishioners in the Diocese of Owensboro.

CAP COUNSELING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Find a list of counselors ready to listen.



Returning to her roots, Brescia’s physician assistant program director looks forward to connecting students with local community



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

Blair Whitaker, the program director and chair of Brescia University’s developing physician assistant program, is seen at the C.E. Field Center for Professional Studies on Jan. 12, 2026.

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

For Blair Whitaker, coming to Brescia University in Owensboro to serve as the director of its developing physician assistant program, feels “full circle.”

Whitaker’s great-grandparents were from Leitchfield and Hopkinsville and later moved to Louisville, where she grew up. Today, finding herself in western Kentucky is like “returning to my roots,” said Whitaker in a Jan. 12 interview with The Western Kentucky Catholic.

She has been with Brescia University since June 2024, and is working to help them develop the program, which will culminate in a Master of Science in physician assistant studies degree.

If it receives accreditation later this year, Brescia’s PA program will be the fifth in the commonwealth of Kentucky and the first in western Kentucky.

In the field of physician assistant education, western Kentucky was the missing piece, said Whitaker: “It is very much needed in this region.”

She said marginalized communities, such as those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantages in western Kentucky, are often overlooked and underserved in terms of patient education and disease prevention.

But, if patients “are given the time to learn and are not passed by,” they can become actively invested in caring for themselves, she said. “That’s where PAs come in.” “We’re trained and educated to take the time to communicate that ‘I have a choice in my healthcare and options,’” said Whitaker. “At the end of the day, PAs are here to help meet the needs of the community and to help partner with physicians.”

None of this is new to her, as Whitaker has helped launch two other physician assistant programs in Kentucky.

She served as the founding program director for University of the Cumberlands Northern Kentucky Campus’s PA program, and was the first faculty member hired for Sullivan University’s PA program.

As of this story’s publication, the program has received 540 student applications, which Whitaker said include in-progress and verified applications. The program is partnering with Owensboro Health and HealthForce Kentucky, which is a collaboration

among universities and colleges across 16 counties in western Kentucky and focused on increasing careers in the healthcare workforce.

“We can take a cohort of 30, and that’s our plan,” said Whitaker, adding that she is eager to have students from the local area who want to remain in the community after graduation, and serve the western Kentucky population.

“Clinical rotations will be in the surrounding communities,” she said, which will give students the chance to get to know the area and their future patients. “Our goal is to get our students out into those communities.”

She also looks forward to continuing Brescia’s legacy as a Catholic university, especially with the Catholic Church’s history of “being a leader in meeting the needs of underserved communities.” ■

Learn more about the program

The developing physician assistant program at Brescia University is taking applications through April 1, 2026, for the inaugural cohort planned for matriculation in August 2026. The program will host an information session on Feb. 6 from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Central Time. The session will be available in person, located at 811 Frederica St., Owensboro, in Duffy Auditorium, or virtually through Zoom. For more information and the Zoom pass code, visit www.brescia.edu/program/physician-assistant-program.

Navigating parenting with Building a Family of Faith workshops



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Susy Solorza speaks to the participants of the Jan. 17 Building a Family of Faith workshop, which was held at St. Pius X Parish in Owensboro.



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Charlie Hardesty smiles while presenting at the Building a Family of Faith workshop, which was held at St. Pius X in Owensboro on Jan. 17.



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Parents listen to Danny May during the Building a Family of Faith workshop on Jan. 17 at St. Pius X Parish in Owensboro.

BY RACHEL HALL, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Do you remember coming home from the hospital with a brand-new baby, and thinking, “Wait you’re just going to let me take this human home and raise him/her?” Have you ever wished someone would hand you a set of directions?

The day you were thrust into parenting is a real standout moment. As a parent, you are simply wanting to raise good humans, with strong moral compasses, who understand truly they are a child of God.

While not all of life’s answers are clear, there are people that dedicate their lives to walking with families through those questions. In the Diocese of Owensboro, several offices focused on youth and family ministry have come together to host a workshop series on Building a Family of Faith. The workshops are designed to help families by balancing practical tools with meaningful conversations.

On Jan. 17, the diocese hosted one such workshop at St. Pius X in Owensboro. Here, Susy Solorza, with the Hispanic/Latino Ministry Office, started by sharing both her professional experience and personal reflection. Solorza, who leads retreats with children and young adults, and now homeschools her own children after being a teacher for several years, emphasized that as a parent, you make the difference in your child’s faith lives.

She encourages parents to approach family life not with perfection, but with grace and awareness.

“Faith,” she said. “It is fuel for this life.” She invited parents to be present with their children and reminded them that turning to Jesus in the small moments makes it easier to do so in the hard ones.

Parents that gathered for breakout discussions reflecting on ways they already model joy in their faith life. Sydney and Issacc Warren, parents of young children, sat with Rachel and Trevor Crabtree, who are raising teenagers. Despite being in different seasons of parenting, both couples quickly agreed

that shared family meals are a meaningful place to start.

Rachel and Trevor shared one way they connect with their teens is simply by getting in the car together.

“We won’t have anywhere specific we’re driving,” Rachel said. “We’ll just hop in, maybe grab snacks.”

Trevor added, “Being away from distractions helps us really talk.”

Rachel laughed, noting, “Even our teenagers still love it.”

Little things add up to big things.

Charlie Hardesty, director of diocesan youth and young adult ministry, who is a parent of now middle schoolers himself, pinpointed a familiar conversation all parents have had with their kids.

You: “How was your day?”

The child: “Fine.”

To this he offered real-life strategies to get past the surface level answer and move the conversation

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Family of Faith continue from page 11

into a more meaningful path.

Sydney and Isaac Warren, who enjoy camping, shared how getting away from it all sometimes helps their family reconnect. Limiting technology, spending time outdoors, and being close to grandparents have all helped shape their family culture. Highlighting the importance of prayer in the family and getting the kids be engaged, “We help them light the candles when we pray,” Sydney said, smiling, “sometimes when we forget, they remind us

we need to pray and get out our candles.”

Danny May, diocesan director of marriage and family life, expanded on what family prayer life can look like in daily life. He discussed the importance of mixing your faith-based tools, using traditional prayers, such as the rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet, with other tools such as journaling or a devotional reading, and praying with saints. He also encouraged families to use technology intentionally, pointing to prayer apps and podcasts like The Bible

in a Year with Fr. Mike Schmitz.

“We can be role models by what we put on our own screens,” May said. “It’s about finding what works for your family.” ■

The Diocese of Owensboro will continue hosting Building a Family of Faith workshops open to parents in all seasons of life. The next workshop will be held March 7 at St. Thomas More Parish in Paducah. Learn more at owensborodiocese.org/building-a-family-of-faith.

Snow postpones Catholic Schools Week activities, but school spirit remains

BY RACHEL HALL, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

The week of Jan. 25-31, 2026, celebrated Catholic Schools Week across the nation. The theme this year was “Catholic Schools: United in Faith and Community,” bringing into focus the value and contributions of Catholic education to students, families, the Church, and the country.

Just before the celebrations began, western Kentucky, along with much of the U.S., experienced a major winter storm that brought with it freezing temperatures and the perfect amount of snow for sledding. This left our 17 Catholic schools in the Diocese of Owensboro on non-traditional instruction (NTI) days. Snowed-in students spent their time balancing NTI assignments, drinking hot chocolate and shoveling snow, a reminder of the warmth and strength in our Catholic school communities.

Catholic Schools Week typically includes activities such as Mass with Bishop Medley, bible trivia, pajama day, and other school-wide celebrations were delayed due to weather and occurred after The Western Kentucky Catholic went to press. Look for coverage of these celebrations in a future issue. ■

COURTESY OF ST. MARY OF THE WOODS
(Right photo) Catholic Schools Week celebrations this year – originally scheduled for Jan. 25-31 – were delayed because of inclement weather. During the prior week, Bishop William F. Medley visited with St. Mary of the Woods School in Whitesville. Here, the bishop speaks with a classroom of students.



COURTESY OF DAVID KESSLER
(Above photo) Bishop William F. Medley visited St. Mary of the Woods School, Whitesville, on Jan. 20 to celebrate Mass and to talk with students in the classrooms the week before Catholic Schools Week (Jan. 25-31, 2026) and before the snow delayed other celebrations.

St. Valentine and the baptized call to discipleship

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

The life and witness of St. Valentine, though historically sparse, speak powerfully to the universal call to discipleship entrusted to every baptized Christian. Beneath the legends and cultural associations that surround his name lies a profound Gospel truth: authentic love is never sentimental alone – it is sacrificial, courageous, and rooted in fidelity to Christ.

St. Valentine lived during a time when following Jesus carried real risk. As a priest – and, according to some traditions, a bishop – he ministered to Christians under Roman persecution. One enduring account holds that he secretly celebrated Christian marriages in defiance of imperial authority. Whether historically precise or not, this tradition captures something essential about discipleship: love ordered by God is worth defending, even when it costs us comfort, reputation, or safety. Valentine’s witness reminds the baptized that discipleship is not a private belief, but a public commitment shaped by conscience and faithfulness to the Gospel.

At the heart of Valentine’s story is the connection between love and witness. Christian discipleship begins in baptism, where believers

are plunged into Christ’s death and resurrection and sent forth to live differently in the world. Valentine’s life illustrates this baptismal mission. His ministry embodied a love that was not abstract but concrete – blessing marriages, encouraging the faithful, and offering hope amid fear. In this way, he lived what the Church teaches: that every baptized



CNS PHOTO/CLODAGH KILCOYNE, REUTERS
Irish Bishop Denis Nulty of Kildare and Leighlin blesses newly engaged couple Emer Duffy and Killian Casey at the Shrine of St. Valentine in the historic Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Dublin Feb. 12, 2019. While little historical record can be found of St. Valentine, his witness remains a reminder that God’s love is worth defending.

person shares in Christ’s priestly, prophetic, and kingly mission. Valentine did not wait for ideal circumstances; he lived his vocation in the tension of an imperfect and often hostile world.

Valentine’s martyrdom further deepens this connection to discipleship. The baptized are not

all called to shed their blood, but all are called to die to self. Martyrdom, at its core, is an act of ultimate trust in God. Valentine’s willingness to suffer rather than abandon Christ reflects Jesus’ own words: “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13). For the baptized, this translates

into daily sacrifices – choosing truth over convenience, fidelity over compromise, and love over fear.

Finally, St. Valentine challenges modern Christians to reclaim a Christian vision of love. In a culture that often reduces love to emotion or self-interest, his witness calls the baptized to a deeper, more demanding love rooted in Christ’s self-gift. Discipleship flows from baptism into relationships, vocations, and moral choices that reflect God’s faithful love.

In remembering St. Valentine, the Church does more than honor a martyr of the past. She holds up a model of baptized discipleship – one that dares to love boldly, to witness faithfully, and to follow Christ wherever He leads, even to the cross. ■

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.



COURTESY OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CENTER
Students from Western Kentucky University's St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Center smile while riding a bus to SEEK26 in Columbus, Ohio, which was held Jan. 1-5, 2026.

SEEK 2026 summons young people to draw close to Christ, discover his plan for their lives

BY OSV NEWS

COLUMBUS, Ohio (OSV News) – Thousands of youth and young adults across the nation were assured of God's love – and encouraged to respond to his call in their lives – during an annual gathering spanning three cities, with Pope Leo XIV delivering a special recorded message to participants. The SEEK 2026 conference took place Jan. 1-5 at event locations in Columbus, Ohio; Denver; and Fort Worth, Texas, drawing an estimated 26,000 participants in total for talks and workshops on encountering Jesus Christ. The schedule included daily Mass, Eucharistic adoration, the sacrament of reconciliation and fellowship. In his Jan. 4 keynote address, Curtis Martin – retiring CEO and founder of conference sponsor FOCUS, an international Catholic outreach which serves at more than 200 college campuses in the U.S., Mexico and Europe, as well as at some 20 parishes – told attendees that God “wants to dance with” them. Those who welcome the transformative power of God's love can in turn become missionary disciples, able to “go love the world,” said Martin. “Be open to what the Lord has in store for you,” the pope said in a

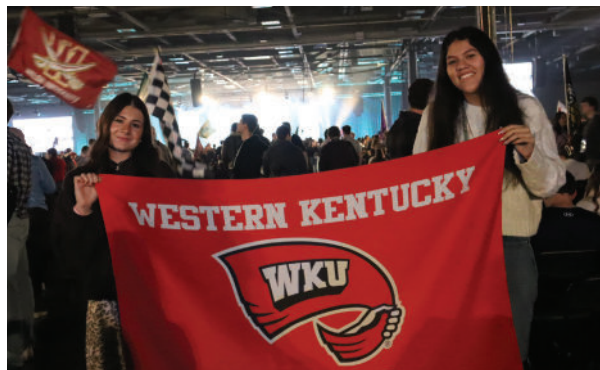
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COURTESY OF MURRAY STATE NEWMAN CENTER
The group of students attending SEEK26 in Columbus, Ohio, from Murray State University's Newman Center smile for a group photo during the conference.

SEEK continued from page 14

video address to those attending SEEK 2026. Four-time SEEK attendee Angelina Roa, who teaches at St. Rita Catholic School in Fort Worth, told the North Texas Catholic, the Fort Worth Diocese's newspaper, that the conference was an ideal way to begin 2026, deepening both faith and fellowship. "Going to SEEK starts off the year with Jesus," she said. ■



COURTESY OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CENTER
Two Western Kentucky University students attending SEEK26 in Columbus, Ohio, with a group from the university's St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Center pose with a Hilltoppers flag.



COURTESY OF MURRAY STATE NEWMAN CENTER
Several students from Murray State University's Newman Center and campus minister Philomena Hempel pose with a Murray State Racers flag while attending SEEK26 in Columbus, Ohio.

Taking shape: Framing done for future priest retirement home



COURTESY OF BILL BLINCOE

On Jan. 23, 2026, Amish framers put up the framing of the Diocese of Owensboro's future priest retirement home, which will be located behind the Carmel Home in Owensboro.

BY WKC STAFF

Progress continues to be made on the future home for retired priests in the Diocese of Owensboro, including the framing that took place on Jan. 23 ahead of the winter storm that arrived a few days later.

The concrete flooring was poured a week earlier on Jan. 13, which included zero threshold between the future apartments and attached garages, decreasing risk of tripping for the home's residents.

Bill Blincoe, diocesan director of project and risk management, has been in conversations with Amish cabinet makers to finalize cabinets and countertops.

This project has been supported through the efforts of the Office of Stewardship and Development's Faithful Foundations Campaign. To stay up-to-date on the project and learn how you can help, visit owensborodiocese.org/senior-priests-apartments. ■

What can God do through you this summer?

An invitation to volunteer at Gasper River

BY BEN WARRELL, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Are you looking for a new way to be involved in this New Year? Are you looking to grow in your own faith? Have we got an opportunity for you!

As Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center continues to grow, we have so many new needs. One of the biggest needs we have is something you can directly help us with. We need volunteer helpers every week of camp!

First of all, if you are an adult who cares about kids and are baptized, you are qualified for this position. We often talk to so many people who would love to help out but don't feel like they know the faith well enough to teach it. But think about the apostles: they were uneducated and very simple people and most of them couldn't even read. What they did have was a relationship with Jesus Christ that they wanted to share and they helped change the course of human history. So, you're already ahead of the apostles! With that knowledge, what can God do through you this summer?

Secondly, we are called to be evangelists! All of us are called to this mission. This was Jesus' last command to us, "Go and make disciples." Evangelizing is simply being in relationship with

someone and helping them see or come to know Jesus. It's really simple as that. Giving up a week of your summer and allowing God to use you to make an impact in the life of child is amazing! Honestly,



COURTESY OF CALEB JONES, GASPER RIVER
Amber Payne, a young adult volunteer, climbs the Jacob's Ladder with camper Amelia Fagella during 2024 summer camp at Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center in Bowling Green.

the campers don't mind if you can't quote scripture or have all the prayers of the Church memorized. What they do care about is: Do you know who I am? Do you care? Do you realize that I have dreams? That is what matters most to them. We are simply called to accompany them, help them grow in relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church and let the Holy Spirit do the rest.

So if you've read over all of this and realized that it describes you, then we need your help this summer! Please go to www.gasperriverretreatcenter.org and click on the Volunteers link at the top of the page. There you will find information on the role of counselor and all the questions most people have about this vital position.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to call the camp office at (270) 781-2466 and we'll gladly talk with you. We have never had a volunteer counselor tell us that this wasn't worth their time. In fact, most tell us that they feel like they get more out of the week than the campers do!

We are counting on you, the campers are counting on you, and most importantly, God is counting on you. Get involved and come be a part of an amazing team that is having lasting impacts on our diocese and beyond. Come and have the time of your life.

Come share your gifts and talents and make a difference in the life of young person. Camp is just not for kids! The beautiful thing about giving to serve God is that you get blessed so much by our Lord in return. Give a week of your time this summer and let your life never be the same. ■

Ben Warrell is the director of Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center in Bowling Green, which is a ministry of the Diocese of Owensboro.



COURTESY OF RACHEL EVANS

Students and adult leaders from Owensboro Catholic High School stand in front of the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington, D.C., while in town for the March for Life, which took place Jan. 23, 2026.

Owensboro Catholic High School youth attend 53rd March for Life in D.C.

BY WKC STAFF

On Jan. 23, 2026, a group of students and adult leaders from Owensboro Catholic High School attended the 53rd annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. The students ranged from freshmen to seniors. The group traveled via bus and returned safely before a winter storm impacted a significant portion of the U.S. ■

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Precious Blood launches new men's ministry

BY ANDY TELLI, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Precious Blood Parish on Fenmore Street in Owensboro has launched a new men's ministry with the Restored Parish Mission and Men's group training led by Catholic speaker and evangelist John Edwards.

The new ministry is based on the model developed by Edwards and his Just A Guy in the Pew Ministries. There are four pillars to the ministry, which provide themes for the weekly meetings: Fellowship, in which men gather in a relaxed setting to create new friendships; Service, in which men help with a service project; Worship, in which men participate together in a time of prayer and worship; and Formation, in which men discuss issues facing them and other men in today's society.

The goal of the program is to help men develop authentic friendships and to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Edwards, who spoke at the 2025 men's conference sponsored by the Diocese of Owensboro, kicked off the January 2026 parish mission at Precious Blood with his personal story of overcoming addiction and becoming a Catholic evangelist. On Saturday, he spoke on "Restoring Your Identity: Who You Are, Who's You Are, and Why You're Here" and "The Most Important Thing: A Personal Relationship with Jesus Christ." The mission was followed by a training

session for men interested in participating in the ministry.

The first meeting of the new ministry at Precious Blood was the fellowship meeting on Jan. 14 at Mister B's Restaurant. A service meeting followed on Jan. 21 with a clean-up project at the parish grounds. The first worship meeting was held on Jan. 28, with Mass and the parish's weekly Eucharistic Adoration.

Future meetings include:

Formation: Feb. 4, at the parish burgoo barn to discuss and share personal experiences with issues facing Catholic men.

Fellowship: Feb. 11, with axe throwing, darts, pool, pinball, arcade and golf at Escape Today, 820 West 2nd St. in Owensboro.

Service: Feb. 18, to restock Blessing Boxes with food and hygiene supplies.

Worship: Feb. 25, with Mass, Confession and Eucharistic Adoration at Precious Blood.

Formation: March 4, with the viewing of the Living Lent video by Father Mike Schmitz and Ascension Press, followed by a sharing and discussion session, at the Burgoo Barn at Precious Blood.

Fellowship: March 11, with a bourbon tasting at The Pub on Second Street, 116a West 2nd St., Owensboro.


Service: March 18, to be determined.

Worship: March 25, with Mass, Confession and Eucharistic Adoration at Precious Blood.

The ministry is open to all men, and they can attend any or all of the weekly meetings. Each meeting will begin with Mass at 6-6:30 p.m. at Precious Blood, followed by the activity for that week, which will typically be from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Communication will be done through the GroupMe app. ■

For more information and to be added to the GroupMe app, email Charlie Johnson at pcjjjr@gmail.com.

Catholic Men's Conference of Western Kentucky




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March 9th



Fr. Corey Bruns
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March 10th



Fr. Christopher Kight
Eucharist and the Vocation to Family Life

40 hours of Eucharistic Adoration

The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed each day in the morning with time for Adoration throughout the day and end with Preaching and Benediction at 6pm with the event ending around 7pm.

Sunday, March 8th Adoration begins at Noon	Monday, March 9th Adoration begins at 8:30am	Tuesday, March 10th Adoration begins at 8am
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Come and enjoy a light meal each evening before the mission in the parish hall from 4:45-5:45 p.m.

3418 HWY 144 Owensboro, KY 42303 Childcare will be provided each evening during the Mission.

For more information, please call the parish office at 270-684-4745.

Diaconate candidate cohort instituted into Ministry of Lector

BY DCN. TIM NUGENT, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

On Jan. 10, the seven permanent diaconate candidates from the 2022 cohort of the Diocese of Owensboro took a significant step in their journey toward Holy Orders as they were instituted into the Ministry of Lector by Bishop William F. Medley in the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel at Brescia University.

During his homily, Bishop Medley reminded the candidates of the profound words of John the Baptist, “I must decrease, he [Christ] must increase.” (John 3:30) During the rite, the candidates received bibles as Bishop Medley exhorted, “Take this book of holy Scripture and be faithful in handing on the word of God, so that it may grow strong in the hearts of his people.”

As lectors, the men acquired several liturgical rights and responsibilities including: in the absence of a deacon, lectors may carry the Book of Gospels in the procession; lectors read from the ambo the readings proceeding the Gospel; in the absence of a psalmist, lectors may proclaim the Responsorial Psalm; in the absence of a deacon, lectors may, after the introduction of a priest, announce the intentions of the Universal Prayer from the ambo; and lectors may read the Entrance and Communion Antiphons during Mass when directed at the appropriate time.

These newly-instituted lectors now continue spiritual and academic formation as they prepare for Institution into the Ministry of Acolyte as they continue discernment for the sacrament of Holy Orders.



RACHEL HALL | WKC

The seven permanent diaconate candidates, along with Bishop William F. Medley and Fr. Ken Mikulcik, director of formation for the permanent diaconate program, are seen on Jan. 10 during the candidates' institution into Ministry of Lector at Brescia University.

The 2022 diaconate candidate cohort are:

Greg Bell, husband of Kim Bell, from St. Anthony Parish, Browns Valley.

James Jarboe, husband of Amanda Jarboe, from St. Mary of the Woods Parish, Whitesville.

Ken Keller, husband of Linda Keller, from Blessed Mother Parish, Owensboro.

Robert Lyons, husband of Mary Beth Lyons, from Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Henderson.

Kevin Mudd, husband of Roni Mudd, from St. Joseph Parish, Leitchfield.

Craig Willett, husband of Kathy Willet, from St. Thomas More Parish, Paducah.

Ken Woodward, husband of Mary Grace Woodward, from Immaculate Conception Parish, Hawesville.

Please keep these men, their wives, and their families in prayer as they discern this vocation of service to the Church. Please also keep in prayer Rick and Peggy Turner. Rick Turner, a deacon candidate with the 2022 cohort, died in November.

Currently, the diocese is experiencing a robust number of men discerning the permanent diaconate with 4 Burmese-speaking candidates, 10 Hispanic-speaking aspirants, 7 English-speaking candidates, and 7 English-speaking inquirers. Meanwhile, 41 permanent deacons associated with the diocese are currently actively serving the Church in ministry. ■

Dcn. Tim Nugent is the Diocese of Owensboro's director of the permanent diaconate. Contact him at tim.nugent@pastoral.org.

What is Cursillo?

BY CHRISTY ALLARD, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Cursillo is Spanish for “short course.” The weekend starts on a Thursday evening at Gasper River Retreat Center in Bowling Green. It ends Sunday evening. During those three days you will live and work together with others attending the weekend with you while listening to talks given by priests and laity. You will also share the Eucharist and pray together. The titles of the talks indicate their content: Ideal, Habitual Grace, The Lay Person in the Church, Actual Grace, Piety, Study, The Sacraments, Action (Lay Evangelization), Obstacles to a Life of Grace, Leaders, Study of the Environment, Life in Grace, Christianity in Action, The Cursillista Beyond the Cursillo, and

Total Security (in Jesus). Each talk is followed by a discussion period.

Why attend? The Cursillo is an encounter with Christ. Christ-like attitudes in a few good people can be contagious. The goal of the movement is that Christ be the prime influence in society. So the primary objective of the Cursillo Movement is to further develop a consciousness of their power and mission to become leaders in the work of Christian renewal.

Who is invited? Practicing adult Catholics in good standing who are ready to unplug (no phones or electronics) from Thursday evening until Sunday evening while learning and reflecting in a group environment on their faith. See any of your local parishioners who have made a Cursillo weekend for further details. If you are unsure who has made a weekend in your parish, (or there are none in your area) please contact us at the information below.

Where is it? Gasper River Retreat Center in Bowling Green.

When is it? The men’s weekend is Feb. 26 - March 1. The women’s weekend is March 5-8.

How will this be formatted? You will have a sponsor who will either personally take you to the Gasper Retreat Facility on Thursday evening and pick you up Sunday evening (after the graduation ceremony) or will ensure you have an adequate means and way of getting to and from the retreat without undo hardships to you or your family. There are many follow-up activities to this weekend which include Group Reunions (small group) as well as Ultreyas (grouping of groups). You are welcome to attend either of these groups prior to making a Cursillo weekend. There are multiple Ultreyas around the Owensboro diocese. ■

For more information please contact Christy Allard at (270) 889-1526 or christyallard1@gmail.com.

The importance of St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Stores

BY BELINDA ABELL, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC



COURTESY OF BELINDA ABELL
The exterior of the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store in Owensboro, Ky., is seen in a recent photo.

St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) Thrift Stores have long been cornerstones of compassion in communities across western Kentucky. Operating under the mission of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul – a Catholic lay organization dedicated to serving individuals in need – these stores do far more than sell secondhand goods. They transform donations into hope, extend the life of usable items, provide vital financial support for local assistance programs, and strengthen entire communities. Currently, SVdP Thrift Stores operate in Owensboro, Henderson, Madisonville, Lewisport, Paducah, and Whitesville.

At the heart of every SVdP Thrift Store there is a simple but powerful belief: everyone deserves dignity, support, and opportunity. Revenue from store sales helps fund the Society’s outreach efforts. Every item purchased or donated becomes a step toward helping a neighbor in crisis.

Every purchase contributes to something larger than a simple transaction. It fuels a cycle of giving: someone donates an item they no longer need; a customer buys that item at an affordable price; the

Continues on page 21

St. Vincent de Paul continued from page 20

proceeds fund essential services for local families; and the community becomes stronger and more resilient.

This ripple effect – rooted in neighbor helping neighbor – embodies the core mission of St. Vincent de Paul. For families on tight budgets, SVdP Thrift Stores are a lifeline. They offer affordable goods for every household. By making everyday necessities financially accessible, the stores play a critical role in helping people stretch limited incomes.

Plans are underway to raise the newest SVdP Thrift Store in the Southeast District under the guidance of District President Duane Wolter, “We are actively seeking financial donations that will be dedicated to this project. SVdP Southeast District is committed to opening a new thrift store in Franklin KY to better serve neighbors in need.” To learn how you can support this project contact Duane Wolter at dwolter@att.net

SVdP Thrift Stores create vibrant community spaces where volunteers find meaningful ways to serve others, individuals completing service hours can contribute to their neighborhoods, donors feel connected to the impact of their contributions, shoppers from all backgrounds connect through the shared experience of finding value and giving back. These stores foster a culture of generosity and compassion, reminding us that community support is both powerful and personal.

St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Stores are far more than retail spaces. They are engines of compassion, sustainability, and community support.

To learn more about SVdP and their vital work visit svdpwky.org or contact your local SVdP Parish Conference. ■

St. Mark hosts baby shower drive for local clinic

BY REGINA HOSEY, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

St. Mark Parish in Eddyville, held its second annual Baby Shower for Jesus from Nov. 30 – Jan. 4. This year, with the assistance of St. Paul Parish in Princeton, 1,731 diapers, 40 packs of baby wipes, a romper, and a bag overflowing with baby food were donated to the HOPE Clinic in Eddyville.

The HOPE Clinic is a Christ-centered ministry that focuses on the sanctity of life by preparing and empowering women and men with healthy options before, during, and after an unplanned pregnancy. Moms and dads earn Baby Bucks by attending prenatal and parenting classes. They use the bucks to buy diapers, wipes, clothing, and other baby needs. Baby food is always free. There is also a special three-class program that allows parents to buy a car seat with Baby Bucks.

HOPE provides health services like free pregnancy testing with immediate, confidential results; ultrasound services that confirm pregnancy and often reveal the miracle of life; and sexually transmitted disease testing which is crucial for protecting health.

Through prenatal and birth-to-age-three classes, the clinic builds confident and capable parents. Court-ordered classes are offered for free to help families meet legal requirements, and a post-abortion recovery program is also available to heal hurting hearts. The Eddyville clinic has a sister location in Benton, Kentucky. ■

Regina Hosey belongs to St. Mark Parish in Eddyville and volunteers at the HOPE Clinic.



COURTESY OF REGINA HOSEY

Items collected for St. Mark Parish’s Baby Shower for Jesus, which was held Nov. 30, 2025 to Jan. 4, 2026, are shown in a pile before being donated to The HOPE Clinic, which is a local pregnancy resource center.

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St. Gianna's welcomes eight babies, moves forward as independent organization



COURTESY OF DIONA KELLY
Baby Darcy.



COURTESY OF SARAH EVANS
Baby Gabriel.



COURTESY OF CRYSTAL MORAN
Baby Oliver.



COURTESY OF SARAH EVANS
Baby Olivia.



COURTESY OF KATIE WHITLEY
Baby Sadie.

(Above) Meet St. Gianna's newest arrivals

These are five of the babies recently born while their moms were staying at St. Gianna Crisis Pregnancy Home. Please keep all the mothers and babies in your prayers.

BY SYLANN SMITH, SPECIAL TO THE
WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

On Aug. 1, 2024, St. Gianna CPH (Crisis Pregnancy Home) opened its doors on a tranquil property on the campus of Holy Spirit Parish in Bowling Green, Kentucky to expectant women in difficult situations.

Originally launched under the umbrella of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Owensboro, the home was supported through its first year with funding for staffing, utilities, and insurance. By God's grace, through the efforts of Tamara Vogler, the board of directors, and generous donors, on Aug. 1, 2025, the home began operating as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. This date marked a significant milestone in the program's

growth and mission. As it transitions into full independence, St. Gianna CPH will now rely solely on the generosity of donors, volunteers, and private grants to continue its mission.

The house can accommodate up to six women and their babies. The first mom-to-be arrived at St. Gianna CPH on Sept. 3, 2024, and several more have followed. Participants can stay through pregnancy and up to eight months post-delivery while caring for their baby. In addition, the ministry has also helped connect over 57 women with vital community resources.

Altogether, the ministry has been blessed to have eight moms deliver eight precious babies while staying at the home. Five moms have graduated to independent living, one of whom will be moving out by the first of February. One was reconciled with her family after spending several months at the home. Her family saw her working hard at a difficult job, remaining sober, and succeeding in following the ministry's program. They welcomed her back home and shortly thereafter, she gave birth to a baby boy.

When the most recent graduates leave, there will be space to serve four more moms-to-be, as two sets of moms and babies remain.

St. Gianna CPH has hired a former participant, Ashley Steiner, as the new evening house monitor. She joins Amanda Ashley, the daytime house manager, as the ministry's only two paid employees. Each of these amazing women has experienced a crisis pregnancy themselves, providing them with an empathetic perspective and ability to give practical guidance to home participants for the challenges they face daily.

Amanda Ashley stated: "Being pregnant is stressful. To be pregnant and homeless, sleeping in a car, or staying with friends or family who are struggling themselves, raises the level of stress so high that the health of mother and baby are compromised."

Ashley Steiner reiterated: "Though our moms don't have to sleep in a cold car or worry about where their next meal is coming from, life is still difficult as they struggle to find work, finance a car,

Continues on page 23

St. Gianna continued from page 22

gas and insurance, and encounter lengthy delays for very expensive housing on their own.”

Donations of time, talent, and treasure provided by donors, volunteers, and South Central Kentucky community partners go a long way in assisting these women in overcoming obstacles. Consider investing in the lives of the women and babies served by St. Gianna Crisis Pregnancy Home and the communities they will be impacting by making a donation today.

Please keep all past, present, and future moms and babies and all those associated with St. Gianna CPH in your daily prayers.

For more details or ways to support homeless pregnant women in crisis with the basic needs of life, visit www.stgiannacph.org, follow on Facebook or Instagram @stgiannacph, or contact house directors Kathy Byrne or Missy Monroe at (270) 702-4984 or info@stgiannacph.org. ■

God's children in need of faith-filled families: How to build a culture of fostering and adopting in our diocese



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Fr. Chris Kight, parochial vicar of St. Joseph Parish in Bowling Green and chaplain of the national Springs of Love organization, smiles with a family attending the Springs of Love picnic at Christ the King Parish in Madisonville on Sept. 27, 2025.

BY DCN. CHRIS AND PATTI GUTIÉRREZ,
SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY
CATHOLIC

We are so excited to share about a new ministry being formed in the Diocese of Owensboro!

Springs of Love is a ministry that seeks to raise up more Catholic foster and adoptive families and provide ongoing support to those living out this call. There are many children around our diocese, the country and the world that need the love and care of faith-filled families. They need to know how much God loves them, experience his healing and come to trust in his plan for their lives.

Maybe you're like us who sometimes feel like we're drowning in the never-ending activities and challenges of parenting our biological and foster children. Springs of Love might just be the lifeline that you're looking for. Maybe you are a family that is open to fostering or adopting, but you're not sure how to discern whether God is really calling you to do it. Springs of Love is here to help you discern and learn more. Maybe you know that God is not calling you to foster or adopt right now, but you really wish you could be of service and support to those who are. Springs of Love can't wait to help you get involved in whatever capacity you feel called. Maybe you fostered or adopted in the past, or you yourself are an adoptee, birth parent or were a foster child and you are willing to share your experience. Springs of Love needs your wisdom!

The local Springs of Love chapters in the Diocese of Owensboro are getting off the ground. So far, we have chapters forming in Bowling Green, Madisonville, Paducah and Owensboro. Our mission is to support

Catholic foster and adoptive families and encourage more Catholics to discern fostering or adopting. So many children are in need of good, holy families to grow up in! We want to build a culture of fostering and adopting in Catholic parishes all around our diocese.

Would you like to get involved? Please consider sending the local chapter your contact info by visiting the webpage at the bottom of this article and taking the Questionnaire Survey. A Chapter Leader will be in touch as the ministry takes shape.

Here are some of the ways people can be involved in Springs of Love:

- Participate in small groups (virtual or in-person)
 - Lead a small group (training and materials provided)
 - Be part of a support network or parish care team
 - Organize parish or diocesan events
 - Provide food or childcare for events or small groups
 - Attend discernment date nights or Q&A sessions
 - Provide respite care for families needing a break
 - Donate money to sponsor a family to participate in a program
 - Gather donations for addressing practical needs
 - Pray for specific intentions
 - Mentor struggling parents or youth
 - Share personal experience or professional expertise
- For more information, please visit <https://owensborodiocese.org/adoptionssupport>. ■

February 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 50 anniversaries being celebrated for the month printed. 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

Bob & Marian Davis, 58
Daniel & Sandra Thomas, 40
Martin & Vickie Logsdon, 50
Phil & Natalie Roberts, 10
Ralph & Rose Bemboom, 57
Vince & Joan Frey, 67

Blessed Sacrament,

Owensboro

Burnell & Mabel Hamilton, 56

Christ the King, Madisonville

Robert & Martha Pleasant, 51

Holy Name of Jesus,

Henderson

David & Laura Hager, 52
John & Carlene Gabe, 63
Kenneth & Harriett Hite, 59
Larry & Teresa Baronowsky, 51
Mike & Bobbie Willett, 63
Norman & Mary Anne Williams, 61
Richard & Doris Market, 63
Walter & Gail Clancy, 55

Holy Spirit, Bowling Green

Agustin & Margaret Sepulveda, 58
Arthur & Carol Kunkel, 51
Donald & Janet Mott, 58
Joe & Betty Kunkel, 53
Ken & Lorraine Baushke, 50
Peter & Kaye Buser, 59

Immaculate Conception,

Hawesville

Charles & Patricia Hagman, 55
Denis & Martha Wheatley, 66

Immaculate, Owensboro

Chase & Emily Lester, 5
Danny & Francele Warren, 56
Gary & Pat Satterwhite, 66
Kenny & Rosie Holt, 57
Michael & Shelia Fulton, 56
Tony & Becky Dant, 54
William & Lynda Maddox, 59

Our Lady of Lourdes,

Owensboro

Brandon & Angela Davis, 5
Christopher & Erin Fulkerson, 10

Precious Blood, Owensboro

Dustin & Kelsey Leonard, 10
Guy & Linda Connor, 65

Thomas & Michele
Bickwermert, 5

Sacred Heart, Russellville

Lee & Denise Robey, 51

St. Agnes, Uniontown

Darrell & Donna Thomas, 40
Donnie & Becky Ervin, 58
Jack & Sue Miller, 61
Robert & Carolyn Mills, 59
Wayne & Vicky Gough, 40
William & Rosemarie Thomas, 50

St. Alphonsus, St. Joseph

Paul & Beverly Smith, 61

St. Anthony, Axtel

Homer & JoAnn Mattingly, 58

St. Anthony, Browns Valley

Rocky & Madison Ebelhar, 5

St. Augustine, Grayson Springs

Billy & Diana Thompson, 52

St. Augustine, Reed

Jimmy & Patty Hanley, 57
Lawrence & Darlene Smithhart, 55

St. Benedict, Wax

Dwight & Brenda Johnston, 60
Ruel & Louise Patterson, 58
Tom & Judy Croghan, 59

St. Charles, Livermore

Tony & Sherry Logsdon, 40

St. Denis, Fancy Farm

David & Sandy Hayden, 57

St. Edward, Fulton

Rick & Maria Smith, 54

St. Francis Borgia, Sturgis

Cletus & Peggy Russelburg, 59
Dave & Anna Conn, 50
Jimmy & Cecilia Curtis, 54

St. Francis de Sales, Paducah

Larry & Becky Hopper, 53
Theodore & Karen Coreau, 10

St. Henry, Aurora

Philip & Dianna Alvey, 56

St. Jerome, Fancy Farm

Jim & Ann Munsell, 53

St. John the Baptist, Fordsville

Jim & Dorothy Roberts, 58
Lee & Connie Roberts, 56

St. John the Evangelist,

Paducah

John & Anna Drury, 57
Kenny & Jeannie Spraggs, 55

St. Joseph, Bowling Green

Bill & Elise Konwiczka, 50
Gerald & Norma Jenkins, 59
Michael & Robyn Hughes, 50
Santos & Rebecca Pocasangre, 25
Toby & Nancy Church, 58
Tom & Pat Volk, 58

St. Joseph, Leitchfield

Bob & Joanne Deweese, 59
John & Reva White, 52
Sam & Rita Hodges, 51

St. Joseph, Mayfield

Charles & Dorothy Harris, 59
Jerry & Norma Erwin, 60
Randy & Sandy Gossum, 58
Robert & Rose Copen, 75

St. Leo, Murray

Joe & Linda Ohnemus, 56

St. Martin, Rome

Gerard & Donna Johnson, 25
Mark & Mary Keller, 53

St. Mary Magdalene, Sorgho

Eddie & Alo Byrne, 57
Jim & Barbara Schwartz, 53
Sam & Sherry Holinde, 57

St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville

Bryce & Sue Roberts, 53
David & Peggy Morris, 56
James & Martha Wathen, 50
Jason & Lauren Hagan, 10
Jimmy & Marty Johnson, 62
Randy & Denise Edge, 52

St. Mary, Franklin

David & Marian Becker, 52
Richard & Elizabeth Gardner, 57

St. Mary, LaCenter

Jim & Marie Funk, 59

St. Michael the Archangel, Oak Grove

Gary & Cheryl Heim, 55

St. Paul, Leitchfield

Cody & Amber Clemons, 10

St. Peter of Alcantara, Stanley

Denny & Sarona Grant, 51

St. Peter of Antioch, Waverly

John & Judy Moore, 55
Robert & Freda LaRue, 25

St. Pius X, Owensboro

David & Pat Jones, 58
Mike & Janet Schwartz, 55
Mu & Hser Dah, 5
Sherrill & Julie Castlen, 50

St. Romuald, Hardinsburg

Ken & Michaelanne
James, 64
Kenny & Faye Glasscock, 52
Larry & Mary Edward
Henning, 53

St. Stephen Cathedral,

Owensboro

Audie & Lana Chaney, 56
Rick & Lizann Thompson, 40
Robert & Vurble
Mahoney, 69

St. Stephen, Cadiz

Hong & Cathy Khang, 57
Jim & Kathleen Ariagno, 61
Thomas & Susan Hoffman, 54
Tom & Patricia Fritsch, 61

St. Thomas More, Paducah

Al & Mary McKeown, 63
Gary & Deanna Gaugler, 25
Larry & Phyllis Stovesand, 56

St. William, Knottsville

Daniel & Mary Brasher, 58
Linus & Suzanne Murphy, 40
Stanley & Barbara Roberts, 54

Sts. Joseph & Paul,

Owensboro

Daniel & Stephanie Heard, 10
Gerry & Cami Frey, 5
Randy & Elizabeth Belcher, 59

Sts. Peter & Paul, Hopkinsville

Pete & Ofelia Barrios, 58



Diocese of
OWENSBORO

Save The Date

**Risen & Sent: An Easter Pilgrimage to
Washington D.C. with Chaplain, Fr. Carl McCarthy**

April 12 - 17, 2026





HIGHLIGHTS:

- National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
- Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception
- Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America
- Holocaust Museum
- National Monuments
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- Daily Reflective Prayer time
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‘Playing with dynamite’ – Bishop Cotton vs. the Knights of Columbus



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

An undated photo shows Msgr. William Jarboe, the chaplain of St. Stephen Cathedral's then-Knights of Columbus council.

BY EDWARD WILSON, ARCHIVES

In the early 1950s, a Knights of Columbus council in Owensboro wanted to build a clubhouse for the recreation of its members.

When the request was introduced to Bishop Francis R. Cotton, he flatly denied it. Though this may seem like an arbitrary authoritarian move by our first bishop, he had good reason. Some bad actors had recently been conducting unsanctioned gambling within the group. No doubt, a clubhouse would have exacerbated this problem.

Over the next several months, a dramatic saga ensued.

Though they believed the issue was settled, this was not the case. On Dec. 1, 1953, Msgr. William Jarboe, the council's chaplain, wrote Bishop Cotton updating him on the situation.

He told the bishop that council meetings had repeatedly been cancelled for months. However, he had recently been made aware that secret meetings had been occurring at Gabe's Steakhouse. The purpose of the meetings was to make progress on the clubhouse.

Msgr. Jarboe let the council know the bishop would not stand idly by and informed them that they were “playing with dynamite.” Disregarding this warning, the council bought land and tore down the existing structure with the intent of building the clubhouse. Even through this the bishop remained quite silent.

However, after the Messenger-Inquirer printed an announcement about the clubhouse and praised the recreation it would offer, the bishop's patience with the council ran out.

Bishop Cotton was invited to the regional gathering for the K of C. When he did not show, he received several letters from various K of C national leaders saying they wished he could have made it and hoped there were no hard feelings over the clubhouse business. Bishop Cotton coolly replied that he had no hard feelings against the K of C, who did great, godly work; however, he would direct any member of the Owensboro diocese against joining the Owensboro council. If they wished to join, they could do so with the next nearest council.

He would likewise advise current members to do the same. The K of C leaders were dumbfounded. They understood such a declaration would be a death knell for the council. St. Stephen's bulletin published the bishop's directive on June 27, 1954.

State K of C leaders wrote the council telling them to obey the bishop going forward without question. Further, they ordered the council to sell the property and take the loss.

The excerpt in the old St. Stephen's bulletin was brought to my attention by parishioner Eddy McFarland. He asked if I had any information on what had caused the bishop's condemnation of the council. Intrigued, I decided to look into the matter further. The bulletin alone makes the situation appear to be a strange campaign of the bishop launched against the Knights.

In actuality, it turned out to be a very necessary action. A skilled statesman, Bishop Cotton worked behind the scenes trying to come to terms amicably. When the council flagrantly defied his decision, the bishop dropped the hammer and immediately enacted his authority as the leader of the souls in his diocese.

This is a good historical example of how one single item taken alone and out of context can paint a fatally flawed account of a situation. If you endeavor to let it, the past will often speak for itself. ■

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.

FEBRUARY 2026 BULLETIN BOARD

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.

A message from the Office of Stewardship and Development

Few gifts bring greater peace of mind than knowing your life's blessings will be shared according to your hopes and values. Including your parish in your will is a meaningful way to express gratitude for God's goodness and support the mission of the Church beyond your lifetime. To learn more about remembering your parish through your estate, contact Valeria Vessels, Director of Development, Diocese of Owensboro, at (270) 852-8348 or valeria.vessels@pastoral.org.

40 Days of Giving offers a simple way to live almsgiving during Lent

From Feb. 18-April 2, 2026, St. Teresa Thrift Store and Ministries in Bowling Green invites households, small groups, and parish friends to set aside gently used items during Lent and drop them off at St. Teresa Thrift Store. This is the second year of the challenge, built to keep participation easy and focused on the Lenten call to give. Lent asks Catholics to pray, fast, and give. Almsgiving can feel hard to plan, but it does not need to feel complicated. 40 Days of Giving gives you a clear way to respond. As you move through Lent, you choose items you no longer need and offer them as a gift. Your donations support St. Teresa Ministries' food support for low-income wage earners and elderly neighbors in Warren County. Thrift Store proceeds also support local nonprofit partners who know the needs in their own neighborhoods, including two St. Vincent de Paul food pantries. St. Teresa of Calcutta said, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love." Drop off: 600 US 31-W ByPass, Bowling Green, KY 42101. Questions (270) 904-1832.

The Ursuline Sisters want to know about Acts of Kindness you have Witnessed

The Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph are

reimagining our Kindness Campaign. Our new campaign involves sharing the stories of those who have shown an act of kindness to you or someone you know. These will be featured on our website and included in our monthly "Pilgrimage" e-mail newsletter. The Bible emphasizes hospitality as a virtue, encouraging people to welcome strangers and "love thy neighbor." No matter how small, an act of kindness can make an impact on someone's life, so never underestimate the difference you can make. The Ursuline Sisters challenge themselves to "Answer the darkness by being light, and to give witness that is public." We believe that love and kindness prevail, and it begins with each of us. You can read the kindness stories and submit your own at this link: <https://ursulinesmsj.org/kindness-campaign>. To sign up to receive our Pilgrimage emails, visit this page: <https://ursulinesmsj.org/subscribe/> We hope you will be inspired to show kindness to others.

How to Stay in Touch with the Ursuline Sisters

There are several ways you can stay in touch with the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph (Maple Mount, Ky.) The Sisters have a website: ursulinesmsj.org. They publish a magazine three times a year. To sign up to receive "Ursulines Alive," visit the website and click Contact Us and send a message. You can ask to receive our Quilt Club, raffle, and annual appeal letters. If you would like to get our monthly Pilgrimage emails, visit our website and click Subscribe. You can sign up in the same place to receive prayer requests. Every day there is a new Facebook post, so be sure to like the Ursuline Sisters (facebook.com/ursulinesmsj). The Sisters also post on Instagram ([ursulinesistersofmsj](https://instagram.com/ursulinesistersofmsj)) and YouTube (UrsulineSistersMSJ). You can reach the Sisters by phone at 270-229-4103, email info.ms@maplemount.org, or send mail to 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, KY 42356. The Sisters look forward to hearing from you!

Mount Saint Joseph Archivists can respond to requests

Do you have a relative who was an Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph? Did you attend Mount Saint Joseph Academy and need a transcript or wish to obtain more information related to the former school? Are you interested in learning something specific about the history of the Ursuline Sisters? The Mount Saint Joseph Archives office is open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The archives is the repository

for the permanent historical records of the Ursuline Sisters in Maple Mount, Ky. The mission is to collect, preserve, and make available the permanent records that show the development, growth, and works of the congregation. Records in the archives span from the founding of the community in 1874 until the present day. You can find a list of the collections in archives here: <https://ursulinesmsj.org/archives-collections/> We do ask that researchers set up an appointment prior to visiting the archives. An online request form can be found here: <https://ursulinesmsj.org/archives>. You can mail inquiries to Mount Saint Joseph Archives, 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, KY 42356. The archives director, Edward Wilson, can be reached at 270-229-4103, ext. 302, or by email at Edward.wilson@maplemount.org.

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 eapolis. 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.

Tribunal Explains

Do You Have Questions About the Declaration of Invalidity (Annulment) Process?

In an effort to minister to the people of western Kentucky, the Marriage Tribunal is giving you an opportunity to submit any questions you may have about the declaration of invalidity (annulment) process directly to their office. Questions will be answered in upcoming issues of The Western Kentucky Catholic.

Please submit your questions either by email to tribunal@pastoral.org or in writing and mailed to Louanne Seibert, Tribunal, Diocese of Owensboro, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY 42301.

Lent 2026 fish fries in the Diocese of Owensboro

Editor's note: Canons 1250 and 1251 state that all Fridays are days of penance in the Catholic Church. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops requests that Catholics abstain from meat on Fridays during Lent, and practice some form of penance on the other Fridays throughout the year. Due to fish being a popular Lenten Friday option in this part of the world, the tradition of Friday fish fries has become a common activity for many communities. Below is information for the 2026 fish fries offered within the Diocese of Owensboro, provided by the parishes and local community organizations. All questions about the individual fish fries should be directed to the parishes and organizations. Unless otherwise noted, all times are Central.

Blessed Sacrament Chapel, Owensboro

Address: 602 Sycamore St., Owensboro
Date: March 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5 p.m.
Contact: (270) 926-4741

Christ the King, Madisonville

Address: 1600 Kingsway Dr., Madisonville
Date: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5-7 p.m.
Contact: Jim Donley (270) 339-7244

Holy Rosary Knights of Columbus Council 1055

Address: 3028 Jefferson Street, Paducah
Dates: Feb. 13, 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Drive-thru only
Serving time: 4-7 p.m.
Contact: (270) 443-3480

Holy Spirit, Bowling Green

Address: 4754 Smallhouse Rd., Bowling Green (parish hall)
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Contact: Billy Mills (270) 784-0935

Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro

Address: 4029 Frederica St., Owensboro
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5-6:30 p.m.
Contact: Parish office (270) 684-5369

Precious Blood, Owensboro

Address: 3306 Fenmore St., Owensboro
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Contact: Parish office (270) 684-6888

St. Alphonsus, St. Joseph

Address: 7925 State Route 500, Owensboro
Date: March 20
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5:30 p.m.
Contact: Jessica Green (270) 302-9171

St. Charles, Bardwell

Address: 6922 State Route 408, Bardwell
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Contact: Susan Hayden (270) 562-0347

St. Columba, Lewisport

Address: 815 Pell St., Lewisport
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in, carryout, and drive-thru
Serving time: 4-6:30 p.m.
Contact: Parish office (270) 927-8419

St. Jerome, Fancy Farm

Address: 161 Picnic Blvd., Fancy Farm (parish hall)
Dates: March 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Contact: (270) 623-8181

St. Joseph, Mayfield

Address: 702 West Broadway, Mayfield
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 4:30-7 p.m.
Contact: (270) 247-2843

St. Martin, Rome

Address: 5856 State Route 81, Owensboro
Dates: Feb. 6, 27; March 13
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5 p.m.
Contact: (270) 543-6442

St. Michael the Archangel, Oak Grove

Address: 448 State Line Rd., Oak Grove
Dates: Feb. 18, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5-8 p.m.
Contact: (931) 216-4600

St. Paul School and Knights of Columbus, Leitchfield

Address: 1821 St. Paul Rd., Leitchfield (St. Paul gym)
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 4:30-7 p.m.
Contact: School office (270) 242-7483

St. Paul, Princeton

Address: 813 S. Jefferson St., Princeton
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20
Format: Drive-thru
Serving time: 3:30-5:30 p.m.
Contact: (270) 625-0269

St. Peter of Alcantara, Stanley

Address: 81 Church St., Owensboro (parish hall)
Dates: Feb. 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5:30 p.m.
Contact: (270) 764-1983

Sts. Peter and Paul, Hopkinsville

Address: 902 E. Ninth Street, Hopkinsville (Meredith Hall)
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5-7 p.m.

Contact: Grand Knight Bruce Wilcox (270) 484-0523

St. Pius X, Calvert City

Address: 777 E. 5th Ave, Calvert City
Dates: Feb. 13, 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 4-7 p.m.
Contact: (270) 395-5747

St. Romuald, Hardinsburg

Address: 394 N Hwy 259, Hardinsburg (school gym)
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 4-7 p.m. Central Time
Contact: Lori Carwile (270) 756-5504

St. Sebastian, Calhoun

Address: 180 Hwy. 136 W., Calhoun
Dates: Feb. 27; March 6, 13, 20
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5-7 p.m.
Contact: (270) 273-3185

St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro

Address: 610 Locust Street, Owensboro
Date: March 6
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5 p.m.
Contact: (270) 683-6525

St. William/St. Lawrence, Daviess County

Address: 9546 KY-144, Knottsville (Mary Carrico School Gym)
Dates: Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 4:30-6 p.m.
Contact: Candice Schwartz (270) 314-0221

Whitesville Lions Club

Address: Whitesville Senior Center, 10345 KY-54, Whitesville
Dates: Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27; April 3
Format: Dine-in and carryout
Serving time: 5 p.m.
Contact: (270) 233-4332 or (270) 313-7281

Un Mensaje del Obispo Medley

¿Los católicos honran un mueble? La historia de la Cátedra de San Pedro

Mis queridos hermanos y hermanas,

Este año, el 22 de febrero cae en domingo y la Iglesia observará este día como el primer domingo de Cuaresma. La Cuaresma comienza el Miércoles de Ceniza y es una temporada de 40 días de oración, ayuno y limosna.

Aunque este año no se celebra porque cae en domingo, el 22 de febrero es la tradicional fiesta de la Cátedra de Pedro. Este mismo título puede parecer confuso, si no chistoso. Algunos podrían preguntarse por qué los católicos celebran una fiesta para honrar un mueble, incluso si se trata de un mueble sagrado y distintivo que puede haber pertenecido a San Pedro, uno de los 12 apóstoles y el primer obispo de Roma.

Bueno, la fiesta no se trata de una silla física. Más bien, es una fiesta que acompaña a la solemnidad de San Pedro y San Pablo celebrada cada año el 29 de junio para honrar a los cofundadores de la Iglesia de Roma.

La “cátedra”- de donde proviene la palabra catedral - que quiere decir silla, representa la autoridad docente de Pedro y su papel como piedra sobre la cual Jesucristo edificó su Iglesia. La celebración de esta fiesta tiene raíces en las tradiciones de la Iglesia primitiva que honraban el tiempo de Pedro en Antioquía y Roma.

La veneración enfatiza la unidad de la Iglesia, el magisterio del Papa y la continuidad de la fe desde los apóstoles hasta nuestros días. El papel destacado de Pedro se establece en el capítulo

16 del Evangelio de Mateo, en el relato de Jesús preguntando a sus discípulos: “¿Quién dice la gente que es el Hijo del hombre?”

Los discípulos repitieron lo que habían oído: “Unos dicen que eres Juan el Bautista; otros, que Elías; otros, que Jeremías o alguno de los profetas”.

Pero Jesús, siempre maestro, persiste: “Y ustedes, ¿quién dicen que soy yo?” Aquí Pedro pasa a la cabeza de la clase con su profesión de fe: “Tú eres el Mesías, el Hijo de Dios vivo”.

Con la audaz proclamación de Pedro, Jesús le asignó el nombre de Pedro a quien había sido conocido como Simón, hijo de Juan: “Tú eres Pedro y sobre esta piedra edificaré mi Iglesia”.

Este honor probablemente sorprendió a los otros apóstoles, ya que ellos probablemente no habrían elegido entonces - ni siquiera después - a Pedro para ser el primero entre ellos. Los escritores de los Evangelios nunca dejaron que esta “piedra” se escapara fácilmente, y se apresuraron a relatar las historias de sus debilidades y flaquezas humanas. De hecho, no mucho después de que Jesús escogiera a Pedro, lo encontramos castigándolo llamándolo Satanás, cuando Pedro contradijo lo que había dicho acerca de ir a Jerusalén para enfrentar la cruz y la ejecución. Pedro le había asegurado a Jesús que nunca permitiría que eso sucediera.

Después de la Resurrección, recordando las tres veces que Pedro había negado a Jesús, le pregunta: “¿me amas más que éstos?... ¿me amas?...

¿me quieres?” Y con la afirmación de Pedro de su profundo amor, Jesús le dijo que apacentara sus corderos y sus ovejas.

Pedro continuó dando gran testimonio del Señor. Murió como mártir. La Iglesia ha reconocido a cada Papa desde los primeros tiempos hasta ahora como el sucesor de Pedro.

El año pasado, cuando la salud del Papa Francisco estaba empeorando claramente a la vista de todo el mundo, los pronosticadores, periodistas, redes sociales y observadores habituales de la Iglesia comenzaron a especular sobre quién sería elegido para ser el próximo Papa, examinando a cardenales prominentes.

“¿Continuará el estilo y el ministerio de Francisco?” “¿Se inspirará en Benedicto XVI?” “¿Tendrá el carisma de Juan Pablo II?”

Un sabio cardenal respondió a estas preguntas: “Recuerden que el Cónclave no se reúne para nombrar al sucesor de Francisco, o de Benedicto, o de Juan Pablo II. ¿Debemos elegir al Sucesor de Pedro!”

Que Dios los bendiga a todos,



Obispo William F. Medley
Diócesis de Owensboro

CALENDARIO DEL OBISPO MEDLEY FEBRERO 2026	
1 de feb.	10 a.m. Confirmación – Parroquia Inmaculada, Owensboro
4 de feb.	6 p.m. Confirmación – Parroquia San Romualdo, Hardinsburg
5 de feb.	10:35 a.m. Misa escolar – Escuela Preparatoria Católica de Owensboro
7 de feb.	6:30 p.m. Confirmación – Santo Nombre de Jesús, Henderson
8 de feb.	10:00 a.m. Confirmación – Parroquia San Pedro de Alcántara, Stanley
9 de feb.	8:15 a.m. Misa escolar – Escuela Cristo Rey, Madisonville
11 de feb.	8:30 a.m. Misa escolar – Escuela Mary Carrico, Knottsville

	6 p.m. Confirmación – Parroquia Nuestra Señora de Lourdes, Owensboro
12 de feb.	9 a.m. Misa escolar – Escuela Católica de Owensboro, Campus de 4-6,
14 de feb.	5 p.m. Confirmación – Parroquia San Francisco de Sales, Paducah
15 de feb.	4 p.m. Rito de Elección – Parroquia San Tomás Moro, Paducah
16 de feb.	10 a.m. Reunión del Consejo de Personal Sacerdotal – Centro Católico McRaith, Owensboro
18 de feb.	12 p.m. Misa de Miércoles de ceniza – Catedral de San Esteban, Owensboro

21 de feb.	Conferencia de Hombres Católicos – Riverpark Center, Owensboro
	4:30 p.m. Misa – Catedral de San Esteban
22 de feb.	2 p.m. Rito de Elección – Catedral de San Esteban
	6 p.m. Rito de Elección – Catedral de San Esteban
24-25 de feb.	Reunión de la Provincia Episcopal y de la Conferencia Católica de Kentucky – Louisville
28 de feb.	4 p.m. Dedicación del Altar y Bendición de la Iglesia Renovada – Parroquia Santísima Madre, Owensboro

Nos Solidarizamos con Nuestros Hermanos y Hermanas Inmigrantes: *Declaración de los Obispos de Kentucky en la Fiesta de la Epifanía 4 de enero de 2026*



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

El Obispo William F. Medley saluda y rocía agua bendita a los fieles que ingresan en procesión a la Catedral de San Esteban en Owensboro, Kentucky, el 4 de octubre de 2025 para la Misa de clausura local de la Semana Nacional de la Migración. El Obispo Medley, junto con sus hermanos obispos de Kentucky, se unió a una lista creciente de obispos católicos que afirman la dignidad humana de los migrantes a través de declaraciones grupales.

En noviembre de 2025, los Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos emitieron un Mensaje Especial ante la creciente preocupación por la situación actual que enfrentan muchos inmigrantes y refugiados en nuestro país. En continuidad con ese mensaje, y con nuestra declaración conjunta de diciembre de 2024 junto con los obispos de Tennessee, mientras celebramos la Epifanía del Señor y reconocemos a Jesucristo como la luz que guía a todas las naciones de la tierra, deseamos ahora dirigirnos de manera especial a nuestras comunidades de Kentucky.

Las naciones tienen el derecho y la responsabilidad de controlar sus fronteras y hacer cumplir las leyes destinadas a proteger a la población, pero todas las leyes deben aplicarse de manera justa y predecible, respetando la dignidad dada por Dios a cada persona humana. El Papa León nos lo recordó cuando afirmó: «Nadie ha dicho que los Estados Unidos deban tener fronteras abiertas... Creo que todo país tiene derecho a determinar quién entra, cómo entra y cuándo entra».

Continúa en la página 30

Continuado de la página 29

El Santo Padre añadió después que «debemos buscar maneras de tratar a las personas humanamente, tratarlas con la dignidad que les corresponde».

En consecuencia, estamos cada vez más preocupados por los desafíos que se desarrollan rápidamente y que enfrentan los inmigrantes, ya sean documentados o no. Informes frecuentes de inmigrantes con estatus legal a quienes se les revoca arbitrariamente ese estatus; el aumento de incidentes en los que líderes políticos vilipendian a los inmigrantes; la eliminación de protecciones de santuario para iglesias, hospitales y escuelas; y propuestas a nivel estatal que buscan limitar la capacidad de los inmigrantes para vivir y perseguir sus sueños en Kentucky, se combinan para crear un clima comprensible de hostilidad, ansiedad y temor. Nos oponemos a todo esfuerzo por estigmatizar a los inmigrantes como grupo o por difundir miedo basado en el origen nacional o étnico.

Nos solidarizamos con todos nuestros hermanos y hermanas inmigrantes que han sido víctimas de acciones gubernamentales injustas o de una retórica dañina y deshumanizante. Llamamos a todos nuestros líderes políticos a trabajar para reformar

nuestro sistema migratorio roto de una manera que permita una migración pacífica y ordenada de las personas que buscan paz, estabilidad, libertad religiosa y oportunidades económicas, y que respete la reunificación familiar y una posibilidad realista de poder obtener la ciudadanía.

Reiteramos el llamado y el compromiso que hicimos junto con nuestros hermanos obispos de Tennessee e invitamos a los católicos y a todas las personas de buena voluntad a «conocer más sobre la situación de los inmigrantes, comprender los valores que fundamentan nuestra enseñanza católica sobre este tema y unirse a nosotros para promover leyes y políticas justas e integrales que respondan a las exigencias de los derechos humanos y la dignidad, y que reflejen el deseo del bien común en nuestra nación. Estamos dispuestos a ser parte de este esfuerzo». ■

Arzobispo Shelton J. Fabre de Louisville

Obispo William F. Medley de Owensboro

Obispo John Stowe, OFM Conv. de Lexington

Obispo John C. Iffert de Covington

Contacto: Jason Hall

jdhall@cckky.org | (502) 226-0045

Para Hacer Informe de Alegatos de Abuso Sexual

Para denunciar una sospecha de abuso, llame a la Línea Directa de Protección Infantil de Kentucky: 1-877-KYSAFE1 o 1-877-597-2331 (llamada gratuita) o comuníquese con su Fiscal Local del Commonwealth. Para reportar abuso, actual o pasado, a la diócesis por parte de cualquier persona que actúe en nombre de la Iglesia, llame a Scott Ingram, Coordinadora de Asistencia Pastoral (inglés) al 270-852-8380, o Miguel Quintanilla, Coordinadoras de Asistencia Pastoral (español) al 270-880-8360. También puede visitar la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro (owensborodiocese.org/safe) para obtener más información. Para hacer un informe de abuso sexual de un menor de edad o conducta inapropiada relacionada por parte de algún obispo, visite <https://reportbishopabuse.org/es>.

La fiesta del Bautismo del Señor



FOTO OSV NEWS/SIMONE RISOLUTI, VATICAN MEDIA El Papa León XIV bautiza a uno de 20 niños en la Capilla Sixtina del Vaticano el 11 de enero de 2026, fiesta del Bautismo del Señor.



FOTO OSV NEWS/SIMONE RISOLUTI, VATICAN MEDIA El Papa León XIV saluda a una madre y a su bebé mientras bautiza a 20 niños en la Capilla Sixtina en el Vaticano el 11 de enero de 2026, fiesta del Bautismo del Señor.

Llamando a todos los padres y madres de familia

POR SUSANA SOLORZA

Por diversas razones, la juventud es una etapa desafiante tanto para los hijos como para los padres. Si a esto le añadimos los retos de vivir en este país y las diferencias de cultura e idioma, surgen barreras que dificultan la comunicación y el entendimiento mutuo dentro del hogar.

Durante los primeros meses de este año, nuestra oficina del Ministerio Hispano desea abordar estos retos junto a ustedes. Como primeros catequistas de sus hijos, queremos apoyarlos a ellos fortaleciendo primero el vínculo con sus padres.

Este año daremos continuidad a nuestros encuentros especiales:

Retiro de Madres e Hijos: 28 de febrero, de 9am-4pm, Campamento Gasper, Bowling Green, Kentucky

Retiro de Padres e Hijos: 28 de marzo, de 9am-4pm, Campamento BIAC, Robards, Kentucky

Invitamos a participar a adolescentes desde el nivel de middle school (secundaria) hasta jóvenes adultos, acompañados de sus padres. Queremos crear un espacio para centrarnos en Cristo y reconocer nuestra misión compartida como familia, iniciando un proceso de sanación para las heridas que hayamos podido causarnos a lo largo de la convivencia.

La única manera de lograr esto es pasando tiempo juntos de forma intencional, bajo la misericordia y

la gracia del Señor. Durante estos retiros, tendremos momentos para orar, dialogar sobre temas difíciles y jugar. Los encuentros se llevarán a cabo en campamentos que ofrecen diversas actividades para disfrutar y aprender al aire libre, permitiéndonos compartir alegría y risas.

Siempre recordaré que, en uno de nuestros retiros de madre e hija, una joven me comentó que nunca había visto a su mamá reír y sonreír como lo hizo aquel día.

Los invitamos a tomar este tiempo para sonreír y participar de la alegría de la resurrección de nuestro Salvador. Regálense este momento de retiro en familia. ■



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE SUSANA SOLORZA
Padres e hijos rezan y se abrazan durante el Retiro Padres e Hijos en febrero de 2025.



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE SUSANA SOLORZA
Madres e hijas sonríen para una foto durante el Retiro de Madres e Hijos de febrero de 2024.

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CNS PHOTO/VATICAN MEDIA

Pope Leo XIV greets people at the conclusion of his weekly general audience in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican Jan. 14, 2026.

Let communication be conducted by real human beings, not AI, pope says

BY CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Humanity must not allow technology, especially AI, to obscure, exploit or suppress human voices, needs, knowledge, talents, creativity and critical thinking abilities, Pope Leo XIV said. Algorithms designed to maximize engagement on social media can lock people into “bubbles” of easy consensus and rage, weakening people’s ability to listen and think critically, and increasing polarization, the pope wrote in his message for the World Day of Communications. The pope’s message was released Jan. 24, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of journalists. The Vatican and most dioceses will celebrate the World Day of Communications May 17, the Sunday before Pentecost. The main concern is not what “machines” or technology can or will be able to do, Pope Leo wrote, “but what we can and will be able to do, growing in humanity and knowledge, with the wise use of such powerful tools at our service.” The heart of the problem, he wrote, is the human temptation to passively accept the fruits of knowledge without being an integral part of the technological process, without doing the needed research and without being held accountable and responsible regarding their use. ■