

THE WESTERN
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Front page main photo by Elizabeth Wong Barnstead | WKC

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:

Yes, you are still holy!

“In the Old Testament the prophets announced that the Spirit of the Lord would rest on the hoped for Messiah for his saving mission. the descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his baptism by John was the sign that this was he who was to come, the Messiah, the Son of God. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit; his whole life and his whole mission are carried out in total communion with the Holy Spirit whom the Father gives him ‘without measure.’”

-From the Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 1286

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As bishop it is my responsibility and privilege to be the ordinary minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation. In extraordinary situations I may delegate a priest to celebrate this sacrament.

In the Diocese of Owensboro, the most common age for Confirmation is 12-15, grades 7-9. Each year I celebrate Confirmation on average in 35 or more of our 78 parishes. Medium to larger parishes generally have Confirmation every year. Smaller parishes – and we have a lot of small parishes – may celebrate Confirmation every other year or even less frequently depending upon the number of eligible children. Many of these smaller parishes bring together children from neighboring parishes. Each year I confirm between 400 and 500 children and youth, and that number has been trending higher. I do not keep a particular count but after 16 years



RILEY GREIF | WKC

Bishop William F. Medley prepares to confirm the OCIA candidates at St. Stephen Cathedral during the April 4, 2026 Easter Vigil.

as bishop I am certain that I have confirmed more 6,000.

When one enters the Catholic Church as an adult it is the norm that the pastor of the parish would confer the Sacrament of Confirmation. More than 420 were confirmed in our parishes on Holy Saturday this year; a few of these were children but most were youth and adults.

The Easter season is an ideal time of the Church year to celebrate Confirmation, accentuating the reality that Confirmation and Holy Eucharist are, with Baptism, the sacraments of initiation.

I am fascinated by statistics and so I calculate that having confirmed over 6,000 people in the diocese, that I have confirmed one in every ten Catholics in the diocese. That is impressive, but I recall that when the late Auxiliary Bishop of Louisville Charles

BISHOP MEDLEY'S MAY 2026 CALENDAR	
May 1	Installation of Bishop Godfrey Mullen, OSB – Diocese of Belleville, Illinois
May 2	4:30 PM Confirmation – St. Alphonsus Parish, St. Joseph
May 3	10 AM Confirmation – St. Paul Parish, Princeton
May 5	8 AM School Mass – Sts. Peter & Paul School, Hopkinsville
May 6	6 PM Confirmation – Sts. Joseph & Paul Parish, Owensboro
May 7	9 AM School Mass – Owensboro Catholic K-3 Campus
May 8	7 PM Owensboro Catholic High School Graduation – Owensboro Sportscenter

Column and calendar continue on page 4

FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE

A Word From Bishop continued from page 3

G. Maloney died it was estimated that he had confirmed more than 80,000 people. I was one of them in 1960.

While our parish of St. Francis of Assisi in St. Francis, Kentucky, in the Archdiocese of Louisville, was considered small by comparison to the city and suburban parishes, on the night of my Confirmation, Bishop Maloney confirmed over 100 children, all the second and third graders. These were the Baby Boom years and every class was large.

I always tell the newly-confirmed that I hope that when they see me again that they will remind me that I confirmed them. Many do and now after 16 years those confirmed at the age of 14 are now 30 years old. It is not unusual for me then to meet the children of those I have confirmed.

I also tell the newly-confirmed that if they do tell me I that I confirmed them that I will ask them a

question. But I assure them that it is always the same question and I give them the answer.

The question is, “Are you still holy?” and the answer is “Yes.”

The answer is “yes” because they are created in the image and likeness of God, and as such they are holy. We cannot change what God has created.

May God bless you always!



Most Reverend William F. Medley
Diocese of Owensboro



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Shrines of
ITALY

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Spiritual Director:
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Group Leader:
Kevin Kauffeld



Spiritual Director:
Fr. Michael Schultz

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May 9	10 AM Brescia University Commencement – RiverPark Center, Owensboro
	4:30 PM Confirmation – St. Pius X Parish, Calvert City
May 13	8:30 AM Diocesan Finance Council Meeting – McRaith Catholic Center
	6 PM Confirmation – St. Michael Parish, Oak Grove
May 16	10 AM Confirmation – Holy Spirit Parish, Bowling Green
	7 PM St. Mary High School Graduation – SMHS, Paducah
May 17	8 AM Confirmation – St. Denis Parish, Fancy Farm
May 18	10 AM Priest Personnel Committee – McRaith Catholic Center
	1:30 PM Priests’ Council Meeting – McRaith Catholic Center
May 19-20	Meeting of the Bishops of the Province and the Catholic Conference of KY – Louisville
May 23	10 AM Confirmation – St. Joseph Parish, Bowling Green
	5 PM Confirmation – Sacred Heart Parish, Russellville
May 24	11 AM Confirmation – St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro
May 27	6 PM Confirmation – St. Sebastian Parish, Calhoun
May 28	5:30 PM Confirmation – Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Hopkinsville
May 30	10 AM Confirmation – St. Joseph Parish, Bowling Green
	5:30 PM Confirmation – St. Ambrose Parish, Henshaw

Happy anniversary to our priests!

In May we celebrate the ordination anniversaries of:

Bishop William F. Medley | Ordained 5/22/1982

Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro

Fr. Bruce Fogle | Ordained 5/21/1983
Pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish, Paducah

Fr. Tony Bickett | Ordained 5/21/1983
Retired

Fr. Greg Trawick | Ordained 5/11/1985
Retired

Fr. Terry Devine | Ordained 5/11/1985
Pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish, Hawesville; and St. Columba Parish, Lewisport

Fr. Larry Hostetter | Ordained 5/30/1987
Pastor of St. Pius X, Owensboro

Fr. Larry McBride | Ordained 5/30/1987
Pastor of Immaculate Parish, Owensboro; director of ongoing formation for priests

Fr. Freddie Byrd | Ordained 5/28/1988
Pastor of St. Ann Parish, Morganfield

Fr. Bruce McCarty | Ordained 5/27/1989
Pastor of St. Agnes Parish, Uniontown

Fr. Darrell Venters | Ordained 5/27/1989
Pastor of St. Jerome Parish, Fancy Farm

Fr. Dave Johnson | Ordained 5/27/1989
Pastor of Sacred Heart & St. Peter of Antioch Parishes, Waverly

Fr. Richard Cash | Ordained 5/27/1989
Coordinator of Catholic Pastoral Care at Owensboro Health Regional Hospital

Fr. Tony Jones | Ordained 5/27/1989
Pastor of St. Romuald Parish, Hardinsburg

Fr. Ray Clark | Ordained 5/25/1991
Chaplain of Carmel Home, Owensboro

Fr. John Thomas | Ordained 5/29/1993
Rector of St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro

Fr. Carl McCarthy | Ordained 5/27/1995
Pastor of Precious Blood Parish, Owensboro

Fr. Mike Clark | Ordained 5/27/1995
Pastor of St. Thomas More Parish, Paducah

Fr. Brian Roby | Ordained 5/25/1996
Pastor of St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville; and St. John the Baptist, Fordsville

Fr. Brian Johnson | Ordained 5/31/1997
Pastor of St. Pius X Parish, Calvert City; and St. Anthony Parish, Grand Rivers

Fr. David Kennedy | Ordained 5/31/1997

Pastor of Holy Cross Parish, Providence; Immaculate Conception Parish, Earlington; and Resurrection Parish, Dawson Springs

Fr. Mike Williams | Ordained 5/31/1997
Parochial vicar of Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish, Owensboro; and chaplain at Brescia University

Fr. Eric Riley | Ordained 5/23/1998
Pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Mayfield

Fr. Tom Buckman | Ordained 5/20/2000
Pastor of St. Mary Parish, Franklin; and Christ the King Parish, Scottsville

Fr. Randy Howard | Ordained 5/26/2001
Pastor of Holy Spirit Parish, Bowling Green

Fr. Al Bremer | Ordained 5/25/2002
Parochial vicar of Sacred Heart Parish, Russellville; and sacramental minister of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Guthrie

Fr. Jason McClure | Ordained 5/24/2003
Chaplain and director of St. Thomas Aquinas Newman Center, Bowling Green; ministry to Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center, Bowling Green; vicar for clergy

Fr. Daniel Dillard | Ordained 5/30/2009
Pastor of St. Martin Parish, Rome; chaplain at Owensboro Catholic High School

Fr. Joshua McCarty | Ordained 5/30/2009
Pastor of St. Leo Parish, Murray; chaplain and director of Catholic Newman Center, Murray State University

Fr. Brandon Williams | Ordained 5/29/2010

Pastor of Blessed Mother Parish, Owensboro; and co-coordinator of the Office of Worship

Fr. Steve Hohman | Ordained 5/29/2010
Pastor of Christ the King Parish, Madisonville

Fr. Uwem Enoch | Ordained 5/29/2010
United States Air Force Chaplain

Fr. Ryan Harpole | Ordained 5/21/2011
Pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Bowling Green

Fr. Emmanuel Udoh | Ordained 5/31/2014

Pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, Hopkinsville

Fr. Will Thompson | Ordained 5/31/2014
Pastor of St. Peter of Alcantara Parish, Stanley; and St. Augustine Parish, Reed; Promoter of Justice and Defender of the Bond in the Tribunal

Fr. Gary Clark | Ordained 5/30/2015
Pastor of St. Francis de Sales Parish, Paducah

Fr. Michael Charles Ajigo Abiero | Ordained 5/30/2015
Pastor of St. Rose of Lima Parish, Cloverport; and Holy Guardian Angels Parish, Irvington

Fr. Basilio Az Cuc | Ordained 5/28/2016
Parochial vicar of St. Thomas More Parish, Paducah

Fr. Jamie Dennis | Ordained 5/28/2016
Pastor of St. Mary Magdalene Parish, Sorgho

Fr. Stephen Van Lal Than | Ordained 5/23/2020
Pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Peonia, St. Augustine Parish in Grayson Springs, and St. Benedict Parish in Wax

Fr. Corey Bruns | Ordained 5/22/2021
Director of Vocations

Fr. Christopher Grief | Ordained 5/20/2023
Parochial vicar of St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro

Fr. Christopher Kight | Ordained 5/20/2023

Parochial vicar of St. Joseph Parish, Bowling Green

Fr. Conrad Jaconette | Ordained 5/31/2025

Parochial vicar of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, Hopkinsville

In June we celebrate the ordination anniversaries of:

Fr. Frank Ruff, GHM | Ordained 6/1/1963
Retired

Fr. Frank Roof | Ordained 6/10/1972
Retired

Fr. Joseph Schoettle | Ordained 6/8/1974
Parochial vicar of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Owensboro

Fr. Richard Meredith | Ordained 6/3/1978
Pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Henderson

Fr. Robert Drury | Ordained 6/2/1979
Retired

Fr. Ray Goetz | Ordained 6/6/1981
Chaplain of Mount Saint Joseph; Part-time Lecturer of Theology at Brescia University, Owensboro

Fr. Patrick Cooney, OSB | Ordained 6/1/1991
Judicial vicar of the Tribunal

Fr. Julio Barrera | Ordained 6/1/2013
Pastor of Holy Redeemer Parish, Beaver Dam; and Holy Trinity Parish, Morgantown; Director of Formation for Hispanic Candidates for Permanent Diaconate

In July we celebrate the ordination anniversaries of:

Fr. Martin Ma Na Ling | Ordained 7/2/2022
Parochial vicar of St. Pius X, Owensboro

Fr. John Vaughan | Ordained 7/20/1974
Retired

Fr. Jojy Joseph, HGN | Ordained 7/18/2008

Pastor of St. Francis Borgia in Sturgis, St. William in Marion, and St. Ambrose in Henshaw. ■

Sixteen men visit college seminary during Come and See weekend



COURTESY OF FR. COREY D. BRUNS
Diocesan seminarians, Office of Vocations staff and volunteers, and 16 young men discerning the priesthood smile for a photo on April 18 while visiting Conception Seminary College in Missouri.

BY WKC STAFF

Over the weekend of April 18, 16 young men attended a Come and See discernment visit to Conception Seminary College in Conception, Missouri, sponsored by the Diocese of Owensboro's Office of Vocations.

A Come and See visit provides the opportunity for a young man to experience seminary life and consider the possibility that God might be calling him to the priesthood.

The Office of Vocations also welcomes all – young people, older people, married couples, families, priests and religious – to its weekly Vocations Tuesday event at Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish in Owensboro. Vocations Tuesday includes 6:30 p.m. Holy Hour for vocations with confessions, followed by a 7:30 p.m. Mass for vocations.

For future vocations events, visit <https://www.owensborovocations.com/events-calendar>. Anyone with questions regarding discernment and vocations can contact vocations director Fr. Corey D. Bruns directly at fatherbruns@owensborovocations.com. ■

Four Ursuline Sisters celebrating jubilees of religious profession in 2026

BY MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH

Four Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph who have served a combined 240 years in service to God's people are celebrating jubilees of religious profession in 2026. One is from Whitesville in Daviess County, two grew up in the Archdiocese of Louisville, and one is from out of state. There will be a special jubilee celebration during Community Days at the Motherhouse in Maple Mount in July.

To read more about the jubilarians and their ministries, visit this webpage: ursulinesmsj.org/category/jubilarians. You can also follow the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph on Facebook where we will be featuring each jubilarian: facebook.com/ursulinesmsj. Jubilarian congratulations may be sent to Mount Saint Joseph, 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, KY 42356.

Sr. George Mary Hagan, a native of New Haven, is celebrating 70 years of religious life.

Sr. Angela Marie Fitzpatrick, a native of Emporia, Kansas, is celebrating 60 years of religious life.

Sr. Rita Scott, a native of Louisville, is celebrating 60 years of religious life.

Sr. Martha Keller, a native of Whitesville, is celebrating 50 years of religious life.

Founded at Maple Mount in Daviess County, Ky., in 1874, the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph currently minister throughout Kentucky and in Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, West Virginia and Chillán, Chile, South America. Visit us online at www.ursulinesmsj.org. ■

USCCB calls for adoration hours, works of mercy to celebrate America's 250th anniversary

BY OSV NEWS

WASHINGTON (OSV News) – As the U.S. prepares to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has encouraged Catholics to participate in initiatives including a collective 250 Hours of Adoration and 250 Works of Mercy.

To celebrate the occasion, “America 250,” the initiatives encourage prayer for the unity and healing of the U.S., according to a resource guide the USCCB has published. The conference previously said the U.S. bishops will consecrate the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in June.

In his encyclical “Dilexit Nos,” Pope Francis “instructs us to ‘nourish our lives with the strength of the Eucharist’ in Holy Communion and Adoration, so that we might understand Christ’s love for all more deeply and live out this love ourselves,” the guide stated. “Our contemplation of the Sacred Heart leads us deeper into the mystery of our salvation and deeper into our love for Christ found in the faces of our sisters and brothers – especially those most in need.”

The guide said parishes can participate in 250 Hours of Adoration by offering a Holy Hour on a weekly or monthly basis leading up to the nation’s July 4 anniversary. It noted that this could include continuing current practices or inviting new people to join. It suggested similar efforts to carry out 250 Works of Mercy.

It includes resources for Holy Hours for life, peace, marriage, religious liberty, vocations, an end to racism, as well as a Sacred Heart Holy Hour.

“Consider hosting a holy hour or series of holy hours at your parish using the templates provided. ... You may have other ways to invite members of your community to spend some time in prayer for our country with Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament,” the guide said. “To prepare for the Consecration of the United States to the Sacred Heart, parishes can also incorporate the Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus into their Holy Hour.”

As examples of works of mercy, the guide encouraged parishes to find ways to assist women who are facing a crisis pregnancy; donate to food pantries and clothing closets, and community beautification programs; raise money for an overseas development project; sponsor a refugee family; tutor children; or volunteer at homeless shelters.

“The seven Corporal Works of Mercy come to us directly from the Scriptures in the Gospel of Matthew,” the guide said. “Rooted in our lives of faith, the actions that Jesus calls us to in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and imprisoned, burying the dead, and giving alms are central elements of our Catholic identity.”

It quotes from Pope Leo XIV’s apostolic exhortation “Dilexi Te,” which itself draws on Pope Francis’ “Dilexit Nos”: “As we contemplate Christ’s love, ‘we too are inspired to be more attentive to the sufferings and needs of others, and confirmed in our efforts to share in his work of liberation as instruments for the spread of his love.’” ■

Editor’s note: The U.S. bishops will consecrate the nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus during their spring assembly in Orlando, Florida on June 11, 2026. For resources, visit <https://www.usccb.org/weholdthesetruths>.



OSV NEWS PHOTO/BOB ROLLER
A painting of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is seen during Palm Sunday Mass at Sacred Heart Church in Prescott, Ariz., April 13, 2025.



Saint Stephen Cathedral invite you to:

Corpus Christi Procession



Beginning at Sts. Joseph & Paul Catholic Church
609 E 4th St, Owensboro, KY 42303
Ending at St. Stephen Cathedral

SUNDAY | JUNE 7 | 3:00 PM

ICE CREAM SOCIAL IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING
PROCESSION & ADORATION IN ST. STEPHEN
COMMUNITY CENTER

‘That Our Lord may hear our fervent desire for peace’

Faithful invited to pray for peace amid turmoil

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

On April 9, 2026, Bishop William F. Medley released a message to the priests and faithful of the Diocese of Owensboro, inviting them to pray for peace in a world torn by war.

“Throughout the world there are almost always places burdened by violence and war. Our Holy Father Pope Leo has prophetically been a voice across cultures calling the world to join together in prayers for peace,” wrote the bishop in reference to the pope’s “Urbi et orbi” message for Easter.

Pope Leo’s April 5 message had included mention of humanity “growing accustomed to violence, resigning ourselves to it, and becoming indifferent,” as well as indifference to the “deaths of thousands of people.”

“Let those who have weapons lay them down! Let those who have the power to unleash wars choose peace! Not a peace imposed by force, but through dialogue! Not with the desire to dominate others, but to encounter them!” the pope had challenged the faithful. He also invited all people to join him in a prayer vigil for peace on April 11.

Bishop Medley, in his own message, reflected that “In these days as Christians celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, we find our own nation embroiled in a war with rhetoric that escalates the danger to millions of people and challenges our nation’s conscience.”

He went on to write, “I join Catholic bishops across the United States in calling all people of good

will to prayer that peace may prevail. Jesus’ first words to his gathered disciples after his Resurrection were, ‘Peace be with you.’

“We repeat this admonition in our prayer. This week Pope Leo is calling for us to join in a vigil of prayers for peace. While every parish may not have time to plan a specific opportunity to come together in prayer, we can all join in prayer from our own space and time.

“Please join me and all people of good will and consider a commitment of prayer and good works that Our Lord may hear our fervent desire for peace.”

Bishop Medley also invited the staff of the McRaith Catholic Center, the pastoral center of the Diocese of Owensboro, to make praying for peace the focus of their intentions during the month of April.

Among parishes observing the day, St. Stephen Cathedral and St. Pius X Parish in Owensboro held vigils for peace that Saturday. St. Pius’s parishioners gathered at 11 a.m. which coincided with the conclusion of Pope Leo’s vigil in Rome. Their pastor, Fr. Larry Hostetter, led participants in scripture, Eucharistic Adoration, and the rosary.

At the cathedral, following 9 a.m. Mass, rector Fr. John Thomas invited those present to stay for Eucharistic Adoration and to pray for peace. ■

To read Pope Leo’s full text of his *Urbi et orbi* message that he gave on Easter, in which he invited the world to pray together for peace, visit <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/messages/urbi/documents/20260405-urbi-et-orbi-pasqua.html>.



OSV NEWS PHOTO/REUTERS, REMO CASILLI
Pope Leo XIV presides over a Prayer Vigil and Rosary for Peace, in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican, April 11, 2026.

BLACK HAWK DOWN

HE WAS THERE.

National Day of Prayer
May 6-7 • Owensboro

Scan for Details

TWO DAYS. FOUR EVENTS.
...including
Prayer, Worship
with Testimony by
Maj. Jeff Struecker

Chrism Mass welcomes all; priests renew promises



RILEY GREIF | WKC

The faithful look on from their seats at the Chrism Mass of the Diocese of Owensboro that took place at the Owensboro Sportscenter during the March 31, 2026.



RILEY GREIF | WKC

The Owensboro Sportscenter is seen during the March 31, 2026 Chrism Mass of the Diocese of Owensboro, during which the Oil of the Sick and Oil of Catechumens are blessed by the bishop, and the Sacred Chrism is consecrated. This special liturgy also includes the renewal of the priests' promises.

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE
WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

This year, the Diocese of Owensboro's Chrism Mass was held March 31, on Tuesday of Holy Week. During this special Mass, the priests of the diocese renew their commitment to priestly service, the bishop blesses the Oil of the Sick and Oil of Catechumens and consecrates the Sacred Chrism.

The oils are distributed to parish representatives at the end of Mass, for use in their communities throughout the year.

During his homily, which he gave in English and in Spanish, Bishop Medley emphasized that the diocese's cultural diversity is what makes the Catholic community of western Kentucky so beautiful.

He also encouraged all Catholics and people of good will to call their elected officials to encourage them to support migrants and refugees, and to continue supporting these newcomers, who are now a part of the local community.

"To God be the glory. Holy is God's name," the bishop concluded. ■



RILEY GREIF | WKC

A religious sister smiles and holds a palm after Palm Sunday Mass at St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro on March 29, 2026, as Bishop William F. Medley greets her fellow sisters.

Photo highlights continue on page 10

FEATURES

Chrim Mass continued from page 9



RILEY GREIF | WKC

St. Stephen Cathedral is seen with full pews during the April 4, 2026 Easter Vigil in the Holy Night, which was presided over by Bishop William F. Medley.



RILEY GREIF | WKC

A woman holds a lit candle during the Easter Vigil at St. Stephen Cathedral on April 4, 2026.



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

Parishioners prepare to carry the Oil of the Sick, the Oil of Catechumens, and the Sacred Chrism up the aisle of St. Stephen Cathedral prior to the Mass of the Lord's Supper on April 2.



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

A mother smiles as her and her baby's feet are washed by Bishop William F. Medley during the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, April 2, 2026, at St. Stephen Cathedral.



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Bob Stone, who has removed his shoes as a part of a penitential devotion during the Veneration of the Cross, kneels and touches the cross at St. Stephen Cathedral's April 3 Good Friday liturgy.

‘Refreshed by the divine banquet’ Bishop celebrates altar dedications in two parishes

BY WKC STAFF

On April 11, Bishop William F. Medley celebrated two altar dedications at two different parishes, on nearly opposite ends of the Diocese of Owensboro’s geographic region.

That morning, he consecrated the new altar in the recently-renovated interior of Blessed Mother Parish in Owensboro. And in the evening, he visited St. Mary Parish in Franklin to consecrate their new altar, which had been made by a parishioner.

Altar dedications include blessing of water at the start of the liturgy, during which the bishop sprinkles both the people and the new altar with holy water. Much of the Mass is similar to a typical liturgy, with the Liturgy of the Word following the Gloria.

However, after the Profession of Faith, the church sings the Litany of the Saints and then the bishop offers the lengthy Prayer of Dedication, during which he thanks God for fulfilling his promises and asks that the new altar be dedicated “for all time by the sacrifice of Christ, and stand as the Lord’s table where your people are refreshed by the divine banquet.”

After this prayer concludes, the bishop anoints the altar with Sacred Chrism – which in this case, had just recently been consecrated during the diocese’s March 31 Chrism Mass during Holy Week. The bishop then incenses the altar, and parishioners clean excess Chrism off of the consecrated altar. The altar is then vested with an altar cloth and candles are lit and placed around the altar. ■



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC
Fr. Brandon Williams, pastor of Blessed Mother Parish in Owensboro, smiles with Cyndi Vaughan, parish office assistant, before the Mass of altar dedication begins on April 11.



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC
Bishop William F. Medley anoints the new altar with Sacred Chrism at Blessed Mother Parish in Owensboro on April 11.



COURTESY OF HEATHER GREENE
Bishop William F. Medley pours Sacred Chrism on the new altar at St. Mary Parish in Franklin on April 11.



COURTESY OF HEATHER GREENE
Fr. Tom Buckman, pastor of St. Mary Parish in Franklin, incenses the altar and the congregation during the April 11 altar dedication.

Sr. Amelia Stenger remembered for her love of God, Catholic education, and her Ursuline Sisters



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

Sr. Amelia Stenger, OSU, is seen reading books with children in this undated photo. Sr. Amelia passed away on March 28, 2026, at the age of 77.



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

Sr. Amelia Stenger, OSU, is seen in this undated photo that had been originally published in Owensboro Catholic High School's Newline.



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

In 1984, Sr. Amelia Stenger, OSU, and the late Bishop John J. McRaith visits Our Lady of Lourdes School in Owensboro.

BY ANDY TELLI, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Sr. Amelia Stenger, OSU, the first woman to serve as the superintendent of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Owensboro, “was never not a teacher,” recalled Sr. Sharon Sullivan, OSU, the congregational leader of the Ursulines of Mount Saint Joseph. “Her teaching was how can you help people discover whatever it was they wanted to discover.”

Sr. Amelia, 77, died on March 28, 2026, at Mount Saint Joseph. She was in her 58th year of religious life. A funeral Mass was celebrated on Tuesday, April 7, with burial following in the Motherhouse cemetery.

Sr. Amelia served as superintendent of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Owensboro from 1984-91, before becoming the first woman to serve as

superintendent for the Archdiocese of Louisville from 1991 to 1997. Part of her legacy as the Owensboro diocese’s superintendent was the establishment of the popular Rainbow Mass, which brings together students from all of the Catholic schools in the diocese for a Mass celebrated in the Owensboro Sportscenter every two years.

The Mass takes its name from the variety of colors of the shirts the students wear.

“I didn’t realize how important (the Rainbow Mass) was until I got to the diocesan office and started traveling to schools,” recalled Ann Flaherty, who previously served as the superintendent for the Owensboro diocese and retired in 2019. “To have all those students come together in one building with the bishop... it shows the strength of our Catholic faith.”

Sr. Amelia brought the same energy she showed as a school superintendent to a long list of assignments

and projects as a member of the Ursulines of Mount Saint Joseph, including: director of the Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center 1997-2010; director of development for the Ursuline Sisters 2010-16; congregational leader 2016-22.

Among the programs Sr. Amelia shepherded were: environmental education programs at Maple Mount; the Quilt Club; commemorative, memorial and T-shirt quilts sewn for celebrations; agriculture education programs; the Memory Meditation Garden and the Rosary Walk at Maple Mount; and the Ursuline Flatboat Adventure, which recreated the journey of the pioneer Sisters who arrived from Louisville in 1874.

“Sr. Amelia had that rare gift to be able to imagine a project as a possibility, to pitch that idea to seemingly unrelated groups of people, and to bring them all on board – gathering their ideas, convincing them that they had the ability or the

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Sr. Amelia continued from page 12

desire to spend the time and effort necessary to help bring the project to completion,” Sr. Sharon said during the wake for Sister Amelia.

Sr. Carol Shively, OSU, a member of the congregation at Mount Saint Joseph and superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Shreveport, remembered Sr. Amelia as a person with a vibrant imagination.

“She could teach a pre-K 4 student just as well as she could teach an adult because she had that wild imagination and that thirst for knowledge,” Sr. Carol said. “She just knew that she wanted to pour that into her students.”

As a leader, Sr. Amelia “would never ask you to do something that she wouldn’t do herself,” Sr. Carol said. “Instead of walking ahead, she’d walk with you.”

After entering the Ursulines of Mount Saint Joseph in the fall of 1967, she began teaching at Precious Blood School in Owensboro from 1971-74, followed by assignments as a teacher and principal at Immaculate Conception School in Earlington 1975-77, Christ the King School in Madisonville 1977-82, and St. Joseph School in Bowling Green 1982-84.

Donations in memory of Sister Amelia may be made to the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph, 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, KY 42356. ■

Space for peace and healing: Diocese hosts Taizé prayer service

BY RACHEL HALL, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

On Thursday, April 16, 2026, the community gathered at St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro for an ecumenical prayer service dedicated to the protection and healing of victims of sexual abuse.

For the last several years, this annual prayer service has focused on the Taizé prayer’s meditative form of worship. It was developed during World War II by a French Christian community, centered on Christ’s life, and uses chanting, scripture and song. This form of prayer invites you to slow down, to listen, and to rest quietly in the presence of God.

The cathedral’s evening lights were dimmed, and candles lit around the altar in the shape of a cross.

“In a world filled with noise and distraction, this silence is not empty – it is a space where God speaks gently to us,” began Heather Greene, director of music for Diocese of Owensboro, at the beginning of the service.

Presided by Bishop William F. Medley the evening included scripture, a homily with Bishop

Medley’s reflection on “peace be with you,” prayers of intercession, and extended silence. The music was carefully curated to mirror the tradition of chanting, creating an atmosphere that was both meditative and deeply prayerful.

Also in her introduction, Greene invited people to engage in service in whatever way was most natural for them, “through singing, through listening, through stillness. Let this be a time to lay down burdens, to be present, and to encounter the peace of Christ.”

This event is sponsored by the Diocese of Owensboro’s Office of Safe Environment. For those unable to attend, the service is livestreamed



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Heather Greene, director of music for the Diocese of Owensboro, gives a brief overview of the evening for the ecumenical Taizé Prayer Service. The service took place at St. Stephen Cathedral on Thursday, April 16, 2026; an annual event put on by the Diocese of Owensboro for the protection and healing of victims of sexual abuse.

annually through St. Stephen Cathedral YouTube page. ■

The Church remains committed to safeguarding the vulnerable. For more information on these efforts and for available resources please visit [owensborodiocese.org/safe](https://www.owensborodiocese.org/safe).

‘The difference it makes to us’- Local family shares the blessings of fostering

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Note: May is National Foster Care Month.

Being a foster parent “opens up parts of your heart that you didn’t know were there” according to Misty Haycraft, who encourages other families to consider this calling: “It’s very rewarding.”

She and her husband, Ethan, belong to St. Lawrence Parish in eastern Daviess County and have served as foster parents for the past two years.

“We have had 12 different placements,” said Haycraft. “We love the kids. We love making a difference in their lives – but they’re making a difference in our lives, too.”

Currently, the Haycrafts are fostering 10-month-old twins and a nine-month-old, “so it’s like triplets right now!” she chuckled.

She emphasized that fostering requires an all-hands-on-deck approach.

“We have five biological children; our youngest is 14,” she said, adding that their biological kids are actively involved in helping welcome and care for the children. “It has to be the whole family on board; the teenagers help as much as my husband and me. Even my parents are on board. They love all the babies!”

Their parish community of St. Lawrence is equally supportive.

“Everybody at church wants to see the babies when we come in; someone’s always eager to hold a baby; they’re always open and helpful with us,” said Haycraft.

The Haycrafts are able to foster any age group but have expressed a willingness to foster larger sibling units, which are harder to place. The largest family unit they fostered so far was four siblings, and twice they have received three siblings together.

She said that people often tell her “I couldn’t do the letting go. How could you get attached and let go?”

“But I wish I could tell more people – if you don’t get attached, the kids don’t heal,” said Haycraft, explaining that kids can tell when someone genuinely loves and cares for them.

And as the children become more comfortable in her home, “the walls come down and they trust you,” she said.

And if a child’s home life improves enough that they can return to their biological family, “it’s so good to see,” said Haycraft.

She has also been asked whether fostering children will disrupt the biological family’s normal routine.

Haycraft explained, instead, that the structure of the foster family’s environment is good for the child: “A few kids come in who are really traumatized and uprooted from the only life they knew. The kids love a routine, since these kids in the system don’t have a routine.”

For instance, in her home, the daily schedule includes saying prayers before bedtime, which the children enjoy.

“People feel like it’ll tear up your home and lifestyle, but that’s not there at all,” she said. “You will continue your life and these kids will love to be a part of it, too.”



COURTESY OF HAYCRAFT FAMILY

The Haycraft family are seen at their parish of St. Lawrence in Philpot, along with babies they currently foster. As is customary in the foster family community, the babies’ faces have been covered to protect their privacy.

Haycraft said that even with both parents working fulltime, it is possible to be a foster parent, though work schedules may require adjustments as needed.

“I try to take a few days off work (after a placement) to spend one-on-one time,” she said.

There are also other ways to support foster families, even if one’s lifestyle is currently not conducive to fostering.

For example, “a couple people have signed up to do respite” said Haycraft, explaining that these volunteers make themselves available to care for the children short-term if the foster parents are unavailable, such as needing to go out of town.

Haycraft said she and her husband became interested in fostering many years ago after her husband’s brother and his wife fostered and ended

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Foster family continued from page 14

up adopting their first placement.

“We helped (them) and our hearts felt so drawn to it,” she said. But their biological children were little at the time and life was busy, so they knew they needed to wait until the right time.

When the right time came, they have never looked back.

While Haycraft knows she is helping the children she fosters, “I wish more people could see the difference it makes to us,” she said.

“I wish people could just see the difference these kids make in your life,” she reiterated. “It makes you see things through a whole different lens.” ■

To learn more about fostering in the Commonwealth of Kentucky visit foster.ky.gov. For Catholic fostering and adoption support within the Diocese of Owensboro, visit

The Quiet Way

The story behind the ‘St. Francis song’ for Chrism Mass 2026

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

An Owensboro parish music director, commissioned to write a song in honor of the Jubilee of St. Francis, hopes his composition will help the faithful reflect on their own journeys of ongoing conversion.

“I wanted the melody to be easily sung, to be something people would remember; a melody that sticks in people’s heads,” said Matt Gray, who is the music director at Immaculate Parish in Owensboro, and whose song about St. Francis, “The Quiet Way,” debuted at the Chrism Mass on March 31, 2026.

The Jubilee of St. Francis this year was proclaimed by Pope Leo XIV, on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi in 1226. The jubilee will last from Jan. 10, 2026 through Jan. 10, 2027.

“The Quiet Way” was sung by the choir during the Preparation of the Gifts at the Chrism Mass, and the refrain was included in worship aids so the faithful could also sing along.

Gray said he had been invited by diocesan music

director, Heather Greene, to consider writing a song for the jubilee if he had the time. Gray agreed and began reflecting on the composition even before Lent began.

Gray realized he was not familiar with the finer details of St. Francis’s life and decided to write “a little book report” about the founder of the Franciscan order.

“Pretty much after his major conversion, he heard God’s voice asking him to ‘rebuild my Church’ and from that point on, he lived his life opposite to society,” Gray said he learned about St. Francis, who was known for shunning his family’s earthly riches and embracing poverty and humility.

Then, “I let it sit for a while,” said Gray.

“The melody came first,” he said, adding that the first line that came to him was “peace in a time of war” – which then became the first line of the song.

Gray said the lyrics incorporate opposing concepts, such as “healing” and “ill,” “hope” and “division,” “humility” and “power,” and “trust” and “fear.”

“In all the research I did, it kept coming up how reserved and humble and quiet he was – but



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

Matt Gray, the music director of Immaculate Parish in Owensboro, is seen at the piano on Sept. 15, 2024, during the parish’s Mass of Dedication following a renovation project. In honor of the Jubilee of St. Francis, Gray was commissioned to write the song “The Quiet Way”, which was debuted at the Diocese of Owensboro’s Chrism Mass on March 31, 2026.

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The Quiet Way continued from page 15

he made such an impact on those around him,” said Gray, who was moved by how Francis was “not only a leader in the Church, but also to have lived a whole conversion experience” in so short a time, since St. Francis died in his 40s.

Gray said the themes of peace, while relevant to today’s struggles of conflict and war, were not intended to be about any specific situation.

“There’s always some sort of conflict,” he said, explaining that. “I think it’s relevant to any time in history – and so, more reflective on personal growth,” hoping that those who experience the song might “look deeper in themselves and see the conversion we need.”

Gray, who has written a number of responsorial psalm arrangements for liturgies at Immaculate Parish, in addition to other pieces, said he truly believes that “composing for the Catholic Church has to be inspired by the Holy Spirit.”

This particular songwriting experience was “very special, very unique for this jubilee,” he said.

“It was an opportunity, and an honor,” said Gray. “The goal is that it will touch more hearts.” ■



RILEY GREIF | WKC

The choir practices before the start of Chrism Mass in the Diocese of Owensboro on March 31, 2026, at the Owensboro Sportscenter.

The Quiet Way

This song was composed in honor of the Jubilee of St. Francis of Assisi and debuted at the Diocese of Owensboro's March 31, 2026 Chrism Mass.

Peace in a time of war
 Healing in a time of ill
 Hope in a time of division
 Love in a time of pain
 Poverty in a time of greed
 Humility in a time of power
 Trust in a time of fear;
 Let my life reflect the love of Christ.

Verse 1:

Let my works be known before my words
 Let my heart move before my mouth
 Let my hands reach out beyond myself
 Let my feet walk only to You, O my God.

Verse 2:

Lord, help me live this day
 In the stillness of Your peace,
 So that I may lean on your strength,
 And trust the unfolding of Your will, for me

Bridge:

If my words should fail:
 Let my actions preach the Gospel, the ways
 of Jesus.

Verse 3:

When my time on Earth has ended,
 I take nothing I have received;
 But only that which You have given
 A heart enriched with service and love.

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Save the date!



QUILT BINGO

Sunday, September 13

1-4 p.m.

Mount Saint Joseph Maple Hall

8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, Ky.



Play bingo to win quilts!

\$25 entry includes lunch
 Also, \$40 gets you enough bingo
 cards to play every game.

Must be 18 or older to play.



Seating is limited. Sign-ups start in June:

ursulinesmsj.org/quilt-bingo

or mail a check payable to Ursuline Sisters,
 Development Office, 8001 Cummings Road,
 Maple Mount KY 42356

*This year's event will be in memory of Sister Amelia
 Stenger, left, who started the Quilt Bingo fundraiser.*

Don't forget your \$5 raffle tickets!

You could be our lucky \$10,000 winner!

Or you could win \$5,000 • \$2,000

• Beautiful Handmade Queen-sized Quilt

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Ursuline Sisters
 of Mount Saint Joseph

8001 Cummings Road
 Maple Mount, Kentucky 42356

For more information, contact Dan Heckel

270-229-2007

dan.heckel@maplemount.org

License 0290

The Gospel before politics: Why Christians must choose human dignity over ideology

Part II: Contemporary witness – Pope Leo XIV and the U.S. bishops

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

Note: Last month's article explored the scriptural and theological foundations for the Church's teaching on the dignity of every human person. In this second part, we turn to contemporary witness – examining how the Church today, through the pope and the bishops of the United States, continues to apply the Gospel's call to defend human dignity in modern social and political debates.

The Church's teaching on human dignity did not end with Vatican II. It continues to be reaffirmed by the Church's shepherds today.

Recent remarks from Pope Leo XIV have emphasized that Christian discipleship requires a consistent commitment to human dignity. Speaking about the treatment of migrants and vulnerable populations, the pope has reminded Catholics that political debates must never obscure the humanity of those involved

He has insisted that while nations have a legitimate right to regulate their borders, migrants must never be treated in ways that deny their dignity. In particular, he has challenged Christians to recognize that defending human life must include concern for all vulnerable persons.

In one widely-discussed comment, the pope warned that someone who claims to defend life while supporting the inhumane treatment of migrants risks misunderstanding what it means to be truly pro-life. The point is not political but moral: the Gospel calls Christians to defend human dignity wherever it is

threatened.

The bishops of the United States have echoed this teaching. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has consistently reminded Catholics that migrants and refugees are not problems to be solved but persons to be respected.



CNS PHOTO/VATICAN MEDIA

Pope Leo XIV blesses a baby during a meeting at the Vatican Aug. 23, 2025, with refugees and their descendants who were exiled from the Chagos Islands to clear the way for the establishment of a major U.S. and U.K. military base on Diego Garcia, the largest island.

In their pastoral statements, the bishops have emphasized several principles rooted in Catholic social teaching:

Every human person possesses inherent dignity.

Nations have a right to regulate immigration, but policies must respect human rights and family unity.

Christians are called to see migrants not as threats but as neighbors and brothers and sisters in Christ.

At times this teaching can make Catholics

uncomfortable, especially in a polarized political climate. Yet the Church's mission has never been to make the Gospel comfortable. Its mission is to proclaim the truth.

This is why it is important to remember a crucial distinction: when the Church proclaims the Gospel, it is not being political – it is being faithful.

Political movements often attempt to claim religious language or symbols for their own purposes. But the Church cannot allow the Gospel to be reduced to an ideological tool.

The Church does not belong to any party. It belongs to Christ. And Christ consistently places the dignity of the human person above every social boundary – national, ethnic, or political.

For the baptized, this means that our ultimate loyalty is not to an ideology but to the Lord who tells us: “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25:40)

When Christians defend the dignity of migrants, the poor, the unborn, the elderly, and every vulnerable person, they are not engaging in partisan politics. They are doing something far more fundamental: they are living the Gospel.

And whenever the Church calls society back to the dignity of the human person, it is simply fulfilling the mission entrusted to it by Jesus Christ: to proclaim the truth that every human life is sacred and worthy of love. ■

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.

NET retreat held for youths across Union County

BY WKC STAFF

This year, NET (National Evangelization Teams) held a retreat for Union County high schoolers during Holy Week and the Sacred Triduum.

The retreat, which was given by 12 visiting NET missionaries, was open to the youth of Union County's six parishes. A total of twenty-nine teens attended, which included Catholic and non-Catholic young people.

The NET missionaries arrived on April 1 and departed on Easter Monday, April 6. ■

Beth Hendrickson contributed to this report.



COURTESY OF BETH HENDRICKSON

The youth of Union County who attended this year's NET retreat for area teens are seen on April 1, 2026.



Catholic Schools Office
DIOCESE OF OWENSBORO

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The Catholic Diocese of Owensboro is seeking dedicated individuals to join our mission of faith, service, and community for the 2026-2027 school year.

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- Secretary/ Nurse Assistant - John Paul II School, Morganfield
- Preschool Director - Owensboro Catholic Schools, Owensboro
- Elementary Librarian - St. Mary School, Paducah

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The Diocese of Owensboro's Summer Food Service Program returns for 2026!

Scan this QR code with your phone for the list of all summer feeding sites within the Diocese of Owensboro.



There's also a toll-free National Hunger Hotline: 1-866-3-HUNGRY or 1-877-8-HAMBRE or visit: www.whyhunger.org/findfood to locate all sites for summer feeding.



Congratulations to the Class of 2026: Diocesan Schools

As an annual tradition for our May issue, The Western Kentucky Catholic requests from the high schools and parishes within the Diocese of Owensboro, the names of graduating high school seniors. Inquiries about these names may be directed to the corresponding schools or parishes. Congratulations, Class of 2026!

Please note: This information reflects what the WKC received by its press deadline and may not represent the status of final grades.

Owensboro Catholic High School, Owensboro

Philip Abshier
Sydney Adams
Molly Arnold
Gentry Atwell
Nicholas Bell
Michael Bennett
Leannah Blondin
Benjamin Booker
Miller Bowman
Payton Burns
Jack Byrne
Grace Calhoun
Michael Calhoun
Jude Cecil
Taylor Clark
Karis Colbert
Levi Congleton

Caden Conkright
Jeremy Danetz
Hudsen Ebelhar
Miles Edge
Reagan Engineer
Luke Estes
Barrett Evans
Mary Ava Evans
Jaxson Farmer
Tristan French
Andrew Garvin
Connor Grant
Juan Felipe Guadarrama
Lucia Guido
Bella Guinn
Dylan Hagan
Jacob Hamilton
Paige Hamilton
Reagan Hamilton
Nathaniel Hardesty

Julia Helwig
Rodrigo Hernandez
Colin Howard
Jazlen Howard
Jack Igleheart
Faith Jerome
Tristan Jones
Joseph Kurtz
Harper Latham
Xavier Maddox
Susanna Maglinger
Ava Martin
Will Martin
Nicolas Martins
Zachary Masterson
Erick McCarthy
Ethan McPherson
Coen Mejia
Addyson Millay
Matthew Molnar

Sterling Monroe
Andrew Moore
Mason Moser
Owen Moss
Molly Murphy
Vera Kate O'Herron
Addison Oller
Lanie Ann Osborne
Ethan Payne
Zachary Peerman
Luke Pfeifer
Mayme Powell
Mallory Powers
Elizabeth Ray
Nora Rector
Hta Reh
Kaden Rice
Harper Rundall
Addie-Belle Rutman
Eric Schrecker

Ava Settles
Ava Shea
Nicholas Sims
Reece Sims
Isabella Sloan
Solomon Smith
Noah Stinnett
Cameron Taylor
Lucas Thomas
Cale Thompson
Briley Volk
Colton Wallace
Anna Katherine Wathen
Cameron Woodward
Katharine Young

Trinity High School, Whitesville

Ava Coomes
Emmy Edge
Maggie Greer,
Mallie Herrington
Matthew Hibbitt
Jaycee Higdon
Thomas Jarboe
Will Jenkins
Hadley McBride
Aubrey Meserve
Gracie Mills
Laney Mills
Shealyn Mills
Easton Pedley
Ava Rhodes
Chanse Stiff
Hope Turner

St. Mary High School, Paducah

Jacob Haas
Gabrielle Ault
Abigail Sullivan
Hunter Korte
Aiden Chino
Ashton Spurr
Conrad Green
Elizabeth Sanborn
William Norris
Ellyson Mowers
Jack Stewart
Copelan Cobb
Sienna Rosa
Rafe Courtney
Jake Morris
Lanie Fearon
Nolan Howard
Lucille Duran
Cooper Richison

Congratulations to the Class of 2026: Non-Diocesan High Schools

Editor's note: These include students from public schools, homeschool, private non-Catholic schools and Catholic schools outside the Diocese of Owensboro.

Blessed Mother, Owensboro

Tyler Allison
Dekota Laboy
Adelyn Moorman
Brenden Murray
Joshua Staples
Mason Steele

Christ the King, Scottsville

Elizabeth "Gabby" Garcia

Holy Guardian Angels, Irvington

Josie Mitcham
Case Redmon

Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson

Hadley Jo Book
Lillianne Clark
Lizzy Cleavenger

Azucena Cruz-Arroyo
Asher Daily

Henry Francke
Melanie Garcia
Lyndon Gower
Brett Haley
Jack Hampton
Eli Hartmire
Caeson Hargitt
Jake Hayden
Owen Hibbs
Caden Jenkins
Alex Johnston

Jackson Joyner
Madison Latta
Samuel Loeffler
Jackson Mattox
Lhaim Mechels
Wyatt Newman
Warren Phelps
Jack Porter
Nathaniel Raymer
Gabriel Sheffer
Jenna Stewart

Abigail Stone
Molly Ann Stone
Keaton Sutton
Garrett Thomas
Aoni Tiotaake
Aldo Vitervo
Garrett Wedding
John Zollner
Immaculate, Owensboro
Izzy Blue
Xavier Coomes

Benjamin Minier
Madeline Meyer
Ethan Payne
Carter Vanover
Gracie Waninger
Ryleigh Wyatt
Immaculate Conception, Hawesville
Abigail Curry
Carter Lyday
Courtney Thomason
Hunter Greathouse
Jonathon Wheatley
Lettie Ogle

Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro

William Atticus Aud
Tyler Michael Bertke
Matthew Dalton Boarman
Ethan Thomas Bowlds
Lola Ann Edge
Madelyn Rose Hardesty
Sara Horn
Faith McKenzie Jerome
Emily Judd
Shane Martindale
Cameron Woodward

St. Alphonsus, St. Joseph
Lucas Lindsey

Continues on page 20

EDUCATION

Graduates continued from page 19

St. Ambrose, Henshaw
Savanna Nalley

St. Ann, Morganfield
Ethan Byrd
Lane Clements
Cailey Divine
Rosella Greenwell
Sarah Jones
Laila Kanipe
Will Lawyer

St. Anthony the Abbot, Axtel
Avery Hinton
Gavin Tucker
Wyatt Miller
Todd Galloway
Anna Priest

St. Charles, Bardwell
Gerald Wilson

St. Charles Borromeo, Livermore
Alex Coakley

St. Columba, Lewisport
Camden Toler
Lawson Ward

St. Denis, Fancy Farm
Phillip Wilson
Malachi Frazier

St. Elizabeth, Curdsville
Luke Winfield
Erick McCarthy

St. Francis de Sales, Paducah
Gabriella Gorline
Hadley Suzanne Martin
Ian Swenson
Therese Watson
Lilayna Weaver

St. Jerome, Fancy Farm

Namon Brann
Austin Buckman
Brylee Cash
Ella Dowdy
Hadley Hayden
Eli Marler
Trinity Miller
Maddux O'Guinn
Maggie Ralph
Ashton Spurr
Addison Stamper
Anna Taylor
Jake Trevathan
Michah Webster
Emilie Williams
Gerald Wilson

St. Joseph, Central City
Blanca Abrego
Shawn Perkins

St. Joseph, Leitchfield
Brack Allen
Ella Decker
Anais Falcon
Conner Lee
Zach Pierce
Abby Schlosser

St. Joseph, Mayfield
Alejandra Ballew
Elida Baten
Nick Bell
Keaton Canter
Jose A Carrillo
Kelly Cortes
Christian Garcia
Leah Gregory
Erik Leco Ramirez
Lorenzo Montes Arellano
Mariana Oronia
Daisy Pacheco
Abigail Perez
Kevin Rodriguez
Pablo Rosas Jr.
Soledad Ulloa
Ulisses Villa Lopez

St. Mary of the Woods, McQuady
Kennedy Drane

Maggie Carwile
Hunter Boehman
Montgomery Moorman

St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville
Karter Castlen
Cynthia Conder
Louis Conder
Mariah Lindsey
Bryson Oliver
Isaac Mayfield
Noah Gray
Carson Wright
Ciara Jackson

St. Michael the Archangel, Oak Grove
Sofia Cerritos-Sanchez
Brian Valencia
Stephen K. Pelafiya

St. Paul, Leitchfield
Lilly DePoyster
Corbin Geary
Grayson Wright

St. Peter of Alcantara, Stanley
Abby Coomes
Adalyn McPherson
Claire Pollard
Dane Paris
Hannah Coomes
Will Ebelhar

St. Pius X, Central City
Cole Scheidegger
Dominic Schiaretti
Juan Mendoza

St. Romuald, Har-dinsburg
Connor Bevil
Andrew Carwile
Brooklyn Critchelow
Tyler Davis

Amelia Foran
Sadie Herbert
Audrey Jackson
Lydia Kennedy
Sydney Moore
Lanee Roach
Sam Weise

St. Sebastian, Calhoun
Macie Caraway

St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro
Jacob Breedon
Harrison Carter
Henry Carter
Max Knoop

St. Thomas More, Paducah
Rebecca Alsip
Samuel Bozone
Conner Campbell
Daniela Carrion Perez
Hermayoni Gembe
Maria Haley
Isaac Hart
Angelique Hernandez
Donovan Hernandez
Aliah Lemus
Gustavo Martinez Ramirez
Yocelin Perez-Diaz
Steven Pham
Jaleyah Powell
James Puschaver
Kareen Puschaver
Sydney Shea
Caden Skaggs
Tessa Smith
Wyatt Turner
Brandon Urias
Emilee Vieitez
Brooke Willett

Sts. Joseph and Paul, Owensboro
Peyton Boarman
Brent Brown
Sierra Brown
Jesus Diaz Cordova
Juan Felipe Guadarrama

Jack Hagedorn
Ian Hernandez
Ariadne Malave
Sean Rhodes
Cielo Lopez-Soto

Sts. Peter & Paul, Hopkinsville
John Allard
Caroline Baker
Diego Bonifacio-Perez
Laney Chaudoin
Wendy Michell del Angel
Millaray Galdean
Edgar Galvan
Elijah Hale
Nathalie Hernandez
Hannah Johnson
Cecilia Langhi
Jesus Lopez-Saldana
Ryan Luckey
Alanis Mulero

Alex Ramirez-Villegas
Cesar Sotelo-Fernandez
Elizabeth Stevens
Jesus Tomas
Tommy Turbé
Mariana Vieyra

Sts. William and Lawrence, Knottsville
Isaiah Moore
Starla Whitehouse
Cecily Holder
Kailee Lanham
Landon Milan
Trevor Howard
Caroline Connor

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St. Benedict's serving the community for over 20 years

Annual Tables of Hope event looks to the future as Nehemiah Program is announced



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Harry Pedigo, director of St. Benedict's Homeless Shelter in Owensboro, speaks to the crowd at 10th Annual Tables

BY RACHEL HALL, THE WESTERN
KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

The 10th annual Tables of Hope fundraiser for St. Benedict's Homeless Shelter took place Friday, April 17, 2026, at St. Joseph and Paul Parish Hall in Owensboro. The shelter operates under the Diocese of Owensboro as a Catholic ministry, serving a vital need in the homeless population in the community.

An array of tables had been decorated for the night, from simple, elegant flower arrangements

to whimsical tables from a world of fairies. The Owensboro Museum of Science & History came to the event with a red-checkered racing theme. Each table sponsor created a full table setting as an expression of hope.

St. Benedict's first opened their doors in 2005, marking the milestone last year of 20 years. Harry Pedigo, director, started working at St. Benedict's in 2014 and acknowledged since this time they have continued to develop and improve. It now operates several facilities, a 64-bed men's shelter,

four transitional homes for men, a day shelter for women and families, and a home for women dealing with crisis pregnancies. He noted the multiple roles played by the 14 people on staff across all the facilities.

St. Benedict's specializes in targeted case management for one's specific needs, whether that be for battling substance abuse, or needing mental or emotional support, to being connected to resources that can help clients get back on one's feet.

The evening served as a platform to discuss the needs and hopes for a sustainable future. Pedigo, mentioning he was a numbers guy, noted a few stats: 48% of men that come in have some type of disability and are between the ages of 35 to 65. Citing the increase, he said there is an increase in needs and homelessness in the nation.

Pedigo addressed the root of the problem, "the answer here is not more homeless shelters. It's affordable housing."

He described a "perpetual wheel" where a lack of resources repeatedly forces people back into situations that inevitably land them back on the streets. While advocating for long-term systemic change, Pedigo asked those in the audience "if you see these people on the streets, send them our way. We have the thing they need, a hot meal and a warm bed."

At the night's event, Pedigo made the announcement of an ambitious restructuring of the men's shelter, the "Nehemiah Program," set to

Continues on page 22

SOCIAL CONCERNS

Tables of Hope continued from page 21



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Maria Kelly, with Nona's Market, catered the Tables of Hope Fundraiser on Friday, April 17, 2026 event. She poses with her staff after being given the Friendship Award.



RACHEL HALL | WKC

People chat as they gather for the April 17 Tables of Hope event held at Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish Hall in Owensboro.

launch at the beginning of July.

Under the new model, 20 of the 64 beds offered at the facility, will remain for any man coming off the streets, with no questions asked for up to 30 days, which will be designated as the "Mercy Program." The remaining 44 beds will be reserved for those who transition into the Nehemiah Program, which requires compliance with therapy, life skills development, and employment or income goals.

"The hope is to have a beginning and an end. Where they graduate from the program," with more structure and planning, Pedigo said, "We then help them with their next steps, like transitional housing."

Pedigo shifted to the needs to make this new program and the rest of St. Benedict's facilities successful: "It takes roughly \$12,000 a week to operate," he said. Unexpected needs tend to pop up, like a recent broken air conditioner, with a quote to cost \$30,000 to replace.

This annual fundraiser is just one way they help to fund the day-to-day operations and also a way to honor those helping on the front lines.

Local businesswoman and caterer Maria Kelly was presented with the Friendship Award for giving graciously to the community at St. Benedict's. Kelly and her staff at Nona's Market worked alongside current shelter residents to serve the night's dinner, bridging the gap between supporters and those being served.

The evening concluded with an atmosphere of optimism. Supporters and volunteers of the shelter came out ready to celebrate the mission the shelter provides to the greater community.

"Without faith supporters," Pedigo ended with gratitude, "we wouldn't exist." ■

St. Benedict's Shelter is open every day. Check-in takes place on a first-come, first-served basis between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. Bible study begins at 6 p.m. Dinner is served at 8 p.m., and a light breakfast is served at 7 a.m. before check-out at 8 a.m.

To learn more about this mission, or how to volunteer, donate, and further support St. Benedict's and its affiliated ministries, visit <https://stbenedictsowensboro.org>.

CELEBRATING
20
YEARS
St. Benedict's
20TH ANNIVERSARY ★ 2005-2025

We are currently looking for meal teams comprised of families, church groups, businesses, or groups who would be willing to provide, prepare, and serve a meal for the men at St. Benedict's Shelter each month.

You would be preparing for 70 men, ready to serve between 7-8pm, and have the same night each month.

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Easter boom: US dioceses say rise in new Catholics may point to regional ‘revivals’

BY KIMBERLEY HEATHERINGTON, OSV NEWS

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (OSV News) – Several U.S. dioceses and archdioceses reported an uptick in adults joining the Catholic Church at Easter, with some dioceses saying they are seeing “record” numbers. That tracks with 2023 and 2024, which also saw increases over the previous year. Sherry Anne Weddell, an expert in Catholic evangelization, said that the “high point” of adult Catholics joining the Catholic Church in the U.S. was in 1999, with 172,000 adult baptisms and receptions, followed by decline. But she has been watching the upswing. “There was significant growth between 2023 and 2024,” she told OSV News. And while the data for 2025 and 2026 have yet to be published, “the numbers that are being reported are getting bigger and bigger.” Increases in this year’s enrollment in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults have been noted across the country, from Boston to Portland, Oregon, and Newark, New Jersey, to Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University counseled that reports of increased numbers of converts are still at this point anecdotal. The nation’s nearly 200 dioceses and archdioceses will not begin formally reporting 2025 sacramental data until early 2026, and those figures will only be publicly available with the release of the 2026 Official Catholic Directory later this year. And yet, “There’s this growth in the numbers,” affirmed Weddell, who visits dioceses from coast to coast. “Many of the parishes I’ve talked to say, ‘Yeah, we’re seeing it – in our own small way.’” ■



COURTESY OF ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH
St. Thomas More Parish in Paducah welcomes 18 into the Catholic Church during their April 4 Easter Vigil liturgy.



COURTESY OF ST. JOSEPH PARISH
At St. Joseph Parish in Bowling Green, 45 people enter the Catholic Church during the Easter Vigil on April 4.



COURTESY OF ST. LEO PARISH

Thirty-four people, along with their sponsors, are confirmed by Fr. Josh McCarty, pastor of St. Leo Parish in Murray, during the April 4, 2026, Easter Vigil. This is almost triple the number from 2025, which saw 13 candidates and catechumens last year.

Celebrating Mary's month of May, pastor blesses rosary bracelets made by parishioners



COURTESY OF DAVID MUDD
(Left to right) Debbie Webb and Sue Mudd smile with their pastor, Fr. Stephen Van Lal Than, making a home visit on April 15. Fr. Van Lal Than also blessed the many rosary bracelets the women made over the past two months.

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Two longtime friends recently welcomed the blessing of a collection of rosary bracelets they had handmade for the month of May, and they hope to make even more.

Debbie Webb and her friend Sue Mudd are parishioners of St. Augustine Parish in Grayson Springs. On April 15, their pastor, Fr. Stephen Van Lal Than, visited Mudd's home to bless the rosary bracelets.

Webb said she and Mudd became dear friends when the two came into the Catholic Church 20 years ago.

Their parish of St. Augustine is one of the three in the tri-parish community pastored by Fr. Van Lal Than. The Grayson County Tri-Parish is made up of St.

Augustine, Grayson Springs; St. Anthony, Peonia; and St. Benedict, Wax.

"In May these rosary bracelets will be gifted to encourage praying the rosary and the Church's devotion to Mary during the month of May," Webb told the WKC. She said the rosary bracelet project is something she has tried to do over the past five years for her parish community in May and sometimes October.

The Catholic Church has long considered May to be a month dedicated to Our Lady, and celebrations often include praying the rosary and "May Crownings" in which children place a crown of flowers upon a statue of Mary.

"My intention is to leave about 20 handmade and blessed stone and/or glass bead rosary bracelets at each church for anyone who might want or need one," said Webb. "This year, thanks to the help of a St. Paul School benefactor, another 50 rosary bracelets will be given to the students to present to their mothers on Mother's Day."

She said the remaining rosaries made thus far this year are intended to be shared at and with Saint Meinrad's Monte Cassino Shrine and the Benedictine Sisters in Ferdinand, Indiana.

If the two women can make even more rosary bracelets, Webb said she has spoken with Fr. Van Lal Than about sharing those with his friends in the Myanmar (Burmese) Catholic community in Bowling Green. (He is the first Myanmar-born priest ordained in the United States and was ordained in 2020.)

"Fr. Stephen is a genuine blessing... we are so grateful he (via Bishop Medley) found his way to our parish/parishes!" said Webb. "We are very grateful to be a part of his Church family!" ■

Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph

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 Diocese of OWENSBORO 

Hosted by the Marian Shrine Committee of the Diocese of Owensboro

Youth provide ancient Lenten prayer experience at local park



COURTESY OF BETH HENDRICKSON
Youths participate in a devotion based on the Scala Sancta, or Holy Stairs, at a local park in Union County on the evening of Palm Sunday, March 28, 2026.

BY WKC STAFF

Brave Catholic Youth, the shared youth group of the parishes in Union County, held a Scala Sancta devotion at a local park on March 28 in the evening before Palm Sunday.

The Scala Santa, (or Holy Stairs), located in Rome, Italy, are traditionally venerated as the steps that Jesus ascended during his Passion as he was led to Pontius Pilate's praetorium in Jerusalem.

According to tradition, these marble steps were brought to Rome in the fourth century by St. Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine. They remain preserved and venerated today in a church managed by the Passionist order, located near the Papal Archbasilica of St. John Lateran.

For centuries, the faithful have ascended these 28 steps on their knees in prayerful remembrance of Christ's suffering and humility during His Passion. It has since become customary for stairways modeled after the Scala Sancta to be constructed in other parts of the world, to continue the devotion for those who cannot visit Rome.

Brave Catholic Youth set up their devotional experience on the steps at the local park, complete with prayers on signs, which had been donated by the Knights of Columbus.

Adult volunteer Beth Hendrickson said Brave Catholic Youth took its name from the local high school team, the Union County Braves: "So it was a great name; the kids named it."

The Brave Catholic Youth members "also do most of the planning for the events... they have really taken a leadership role," she said.

She said that as the sun went down that evening, "the effects were much more powerful. We had several young high school men that came after dark around 8 p.m. and they went through it twice. They were not Catholic... that melted my heart." ■



COURTESY OF CHARLIE HARDESTY
Participants of this year's The Journey Hike Retreat for young adults are seen over the weekend of April 17-19.

Young adults experience God in nature during 2026 hike retreat

BY WKC STAFF

Over the weekend of April 17-19, nine young adults attended The Journey, a Catholic retreat experience along the North Trail at Land Between the Lakes.

"Solvitur Ambulando" is a Latin phrase attributed to Saint Augustine which roughly translates to "In walking, it is solved." Using this as the theme, the Diocese of Owensboro's Office of Youth and Young Adult ministry designed this two-night, two-day, 23-mile-long retreat to help young adults find the space and time to listen to God in the stillness of creation.

The Journey takes place twice a year, with one retreat in the fall and one in the spring. Those interested in future retreat opportunities can contact Charlie Hardesty at charlie.hardesty@pastoral.org. ■

Parishes' live Stations of the Cross depict final hours of Christ's Passion

BY WKC STAFF

Multiple parishes across the Diocese of Owensboro took part in an annual tradition of live Stations of the Cross throughout Holy Week 2026. The Stations of the Cross are a devotion that often takes place during Lent and prayerfully journey through the 14 stations of Christ's Passion prior to his death on the cross. Here are several photo highlights provided by the faithful of the diocese. ■



COURTESY OF FR. COREY BRUNS

A depiction of St. Simon of Cyrene helping Jesus carry his cross is seen during Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish's live Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, April 3, 2026.



COURTESY OF AMBER BERRY

Parishioners of St. William and St. Lawrence in eastern Daviess County portray live Stations of the Cross on Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026. Here, they depict Jesus' crucifixion.



COURTESY OF ST. MICHAEL PARISH

Children take a turn carrying a wooden cross during the live Way of the Cross prayer experience at St. Michael Parish in Sebree on Good Friday, April 3, 2026.



COURTESY OF ST. MARY PARISH

On Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026, parishioners of St. Mary in Franklin participate in live Stations of the Cross.

‘Thank you for the memories’ – Owensboro Catholic Schools celebrates 75 years with ‘Aces Night Out’



COURTESY OF OCS

Attendees react with delight during the March 28 “Aces Night Out” event held for alumni and friends of Owensboro Catholic Schools at the downtown Owensboro Convention Center.



COURTESY OF OCS

Displays with prom dresses, school spirit wear, movie posters, sports memorabilia, and more are seen during the “Aces Night Out” event at the Owensboro Convention Center on March 28, which was held in celebration of 75 years of Owensboro Catholic High School.

BY RACHAEL MCFADDEN, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

On March 28, 2026, in the west ballroom of the Owensboro Convention Center, overlooking the mighty Ohio River, an equally mighty milestone was being celebrated.

On this beautiful spring night, a sold-out crowd of 600 guests gathered to celebrate 75 years of Owensboro Catholic High School and Owensboro Catholic Schools in this community. Alumni, friends, staff and supporters gathered to celebrate

the Owensboro Catholic story, honoring the people and families who built the legacy and those who help sustain it now and for the future. Not everyone in the room graduated from Owensboro Catholic, but everyone in attendance had a passion for the mission and respect for the work that takes place inside the OCS schools.

The OCS administrative team, led by Natalie Hayden, OCS director of advancement, began working on the vision for the 75th anniversary last year. The essence of the event was to be celebration. As the committee formed and work began last fall,

32 sponsors jumped on board, with Independence Bank partnering to be the premier sponsor. The energy and enthusiasm from the community was overwhelming and by midwinter the original 450 tickets were sold out. The committee worked with the Owensboro Convention Center to add an additional 150 seats as the requests for tickets continued.

As guests arrived to the ballroom, they were transported down memory lane with a Decade Walk of memorabilia from the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s and 2000s. Each decade’s creative team sought to bring back the nostalgia of clothing, entertainment, sports

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AROUND THE DIOCESE

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highlights and school spirit from each

graduating era. The Decades committee reported that as they reached out to classmates for items, former Aces eagerly showed up with storage bins full of collectibles, each item carrying a story of their “good old days” at OCHS. The display drew high praise from attendees and even impressed the event-savvy convention center staff.

Inside the ballroom, guests were treated to a plethora of green and gold, a warm and delicious meal, shopping at the ACES pop-up store, a photo booth and photo ops with mascot, Snoopy: The Flying Ace.

As with any celebration of a milestone, there is the business of making sure that there are many more milestones to commemorate, and this night was no different. The sustainability of our Owens-

boro Catholic Schools is, and always will be, work that we must attend to. Safe, modern learning spaces, with energy efficiency for cost savings, along with maintenance of our infrastructures are all critical to the future of our school system.

Guests were invited by guest speaker, Bob Marrett (Class of ‘61) to donate to the future of OCS and all that was being celebrated in the ballroom that night. Emcees Kevin Kabalen and Chip Pride then challenged the crowd to engage in friendly competition to see which class and which decade could raise the most money for the evening. WonderBoy Media kept the leaderboard going during the night to urge on the supporters during the event. As the business of competitive fundraising set in, the dance floor opened to “dance through the decades,” celebrating the Twist, The Hustle, the Macarena, the

MoonWalk and other timeless dances. The OCS Spirit Flag and Spirit Stick even made an appearance. And even as the night set on the celebration, the room was still full of people telling stories, reminiscing and people talking about getting together for the next celebration.

Those attending the event expressed a resounding thought as they left that evening: “Thank you for the memories.” As the Owensboro Catholic Schools administration looks forward to the next 75 years, they want to be certain that there can be many more of these sold-out nights to celebrate and continue to plan for a strong and enduring foundation. If you would like to help with the mission of securing a solid foundation, please contact Natalie Hayden at the Owensboro Catholic Schools central office at (270) 686-8896. ■

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See what missionaries say Pope Leo's Africa trip was (really) all about



OSV NEWS PHOTO/GUGLIELMO MANGIAPANE, REUTERS

Pope Leo XIV smiles as he arrives to celebrate Mass at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Mongomo, Equatorial Guinea, April 22, 2026.



OSV NEWS PHOTO/SIMONE RISOLUTIE, VATICAN MEDIA

Pope Leo XIV greets a man and young women as he attends a meeting with the Algerian community at the Basilica of Our Lady of Africa in Algiers, Algeria, April 13, 2026.

BY INES SAN MARTIN, OSV NEWS

ALGIERS, Algeria (OSV News) – As Pope Leo XIV pushed back on media narratives about his first Africa trip, saying the visit was less about politics and more about pastoral presence, missionaries on the ground said that's exactly what they saw. Across Algeria, Cameroon, Angola and Equatorial Guinea, the pope's message centers on fraternity, peace, healing and hope rooted in Christ. In Algeria, a tiny Christian community models coexistence with Muslims through daily life and service. In conflict-hit Cameroon, the papal visit signaled solidarity with suffering communities. In Angola, Pope Leo called for justice and human dignity in the wake of war.

Even in remote Equatorial Guinea, where many couldn't follow events, the message resonated, the missionaries OSV News spoke to said. For them, the pope's visit did not introduce a new agenda but reaffirmed that their pastor is with them, understands their struggles and empowers their hopes. In many ways, the trip was also the fulfillment of a longstanding personal desire. Days after his election in May 2025, Pope Leo had already signaled his intention to travel to Africa – beginning with Algeria, the land of St. Augustine of Hippo, whose thought and spirituality have shaped his own vocation as an Augustinian. Islands and in Barcelona to inaugurate the tallest tower in the Sagrada Familia. ■

In the Know

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The Kentucky Mesa: How there came to be a Catholic, Daviess County, Kentucky, settlement in New Mexico



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

The pioneer Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph, who served the Kentucky Mesa in the early 1900s, are seen in this undated photo. Shown are (with Mother Agnes O'Flynn in the center) Ursuline Sisters Margaret Mary Barrow, Mary Bartholomew Walsh, Elizabeth Kelly, Florence Monarch, Gertrude Pike, Andrew Lamkin, Antionette Krampe, and Veronica Benedict.

BY EDWARD WILSON, ARCHIVES

A young Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph makes her way to the little schoolhouse one morning.

After stepping out of the Model T, she thanks Mr. Stallings for the ride, waves to Mr. Wethington and stops to thank Mrs. Drury for the delicious sweets she dropped off earlier that week. This scene could have taken place in countless little towns in western Kentucky.

However, this Kentucky Ursuline and these fine Kentucky people are not in Kentucky at all: they are in New Mexico, in a place dubbed the Kentucky Mesa.

This is a truly interesting tale. It is one that spans decades and cannot be told in its entirety in a single

small article. But it is a story that many of you may find fascinating and one that few outside of the Mount are even aware of. This is the story of how there came to be a Catholic Kentucky settlement in New Mexico.

In 1909, two brothers from Daviess County, Kentucky – Joseph and Lorenzo Stallings – found their way to San Juan County, N.M. The brothers were devout Catholics and would often meet with and host the Franciscan friars in their humble accommodations. After a few years of this life, the men began to speak with the friars about the possibility of starting a Catholic colony on the mesa.

About five years after their arrival, the Stallings brothers invited four other Daviess County bachelors to experience life out West. The men all moved into a house that came to be known as “Bachelors’ Hall.”



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

Ursuline Sisters Veronica Benedict, Margaret Mary Barrow, Florence Monarch are seen at their original convent in Farmington, New Mexico, between 1919 and 1920.

The men took their faith very seriously and a room was fitted for the friars to say Mass when they were in the area.

Gradually, due to a process called chain migration, the men’s families and perspective colonists started to move from Kentucky to join them. Things truly began to move along. Naturally, with women now settling in, the colonists began to marry. With babies being born and families growing, the obvious question of education was raised. This is, of course, where the Ursuline Sisters import even more Kentucky influence.

Lead by Mother Agnes O'Flynn, nine Ursulines of Mount Saint Joseph board a train and head to New Mexico. After the long journey, they are warmly welcomed. The land, however, was not as hospitable or familiar as the people.

Continues on page 31

Kentucky Mesa continued from page 30

The environment was very foreign to the Kentucky sisters and the accommodations were rough. The sun would break through the cracks in the wood slat wall and the wind sailed through the small makeshift convent freely. This led the sisters to wallpaper the house with newspaper supplied by the town's people. Undeterred by the harsh conditions, the sisters persisted. They taught numerous children and further entrenched Kentucky culture and the Catholic faith 1,400 miles west of western Kentucky.

This very short recounting is the origin story of how a colony of Kentuckians and numerous Mount Saint Joseph Ursulines firmly established the Kentucky Mesa. Over the years more than 70 Ursulines labored in New Mexico and many Ursuline vocations also came from the venture. As often happens, this was a case when the Holy Spirit and the Kentucky pioneer spirit moved in the same direction. ■

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



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES
Ursuline Sisters Ursulita O'Bryan and Dorothy Payne are seen in Aztec, New Mexico, in 1920.

Pilgrims experience Easter joy during diocesan trip to Washington, D.C. area

BY WKC STAFF

From April 12-17, a group of 39 pilgrims participated in an Easter season pilgrimage guided by chaplain Fr. Carl McCarthy, which took them around the Washington, D.C., area with a theme of "Risen and Sent."

The trip led them to the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Shrine, the National Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, the Franciscan Holy Land Monastery, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the 9/11 Memorial at the Pentagon, and more. The pilgrimage featured daily Mass and opportunities for prayer, reflection and fellowship.

The trip was made possible through a partnership with Faith in Travel and the Diocese of Owensboro. To learn about future opportunities, visit faithintravel.com/trips. ■



COURTESY OF HOLLI JO CORLEY
The 39 pilgrims from the Diocese of Owensboro pose for a photo at the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Shrine in Emmitsburg, Maryland, on April 13, during an Eastertime pilgrimage.



COURTESY OF HOLLI JO CORLEY
The Risen and Sent pilgrims from the Diocese of Owensboro pay respects at Arlington National Cemetery on April 16 while visiting and praying at the grave of Joseph Allen Payne, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army, who was the brother of one of the pilgrims, Russ Payne.

May, June and July Wedding Anniversaries

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

May

Blessed Mother, Owensboro

Brad & Donna Hinton, 40
Ed & Ellen Higdon, 56
James & Janet Hagan, 54
Jimmy & Donna Brooks, 40
John & Mary Pickrell, 51
Joseph & Donna Roby, 54
Mike & Alice Hays, 53
Pat & Robin Phister, 25
Ray & Judy Taylor, 57

Blessed Sacrament, Owensboro

Charles & Tonia Brown, 10

Christ the King, Madisonville

Andy & Diana Groves, 51
Michael & Susanne Wolford, 50
Ralph & Jeanne Hines, 60

Christ the King, Scottsville

Bill & Catherine Grapes, 57
Bill & Nancy Wooldridge, 61
Donald & Christine Eastman, 52

Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson

Charles & Becky Clark, 50
Darrel & Darlene Cummings, 58
David & Kathy Butler, 54
Davis & Tara Hunter, 10
Don & Joyce Hutchinson, 58
Enrique & Cindy Hernandez, 40
Ernesto & Daisy Posadas, 52
Jacob & Abby Polivick, 5
Jeff & Kim Floyd, 25
Richard & Linda Day, 56
Rick & Sally Clements, 57
Robert & Dee Dee Sellars, 55
Royden & Carrie McCollom, 10
Travis & Terra Hurtte, 25
William & Phyllis Durham, 61

Holy Spirit, Bowling Green

Glenn & Edith Lohr, 58
Jack & Georgie MacEachern, 64
James & Carol Blackburn, 58
John & Jenny Boustani, 40
Matthew & Erin Hedgespeth, 5
Ryan & Tiffany Metzger, 10
Tony & Sharon Payne, 54
Vincent & Kim Miller, 40

Holy Trinity, Morgantown

Richard & Debbie Coleman, 51

Roger & Maria White, 25

Immaculate Conception, Earlington

Daniel & Janet Hartline, 66

Immaculate Conception, Hawesville

Steven & Callie Jennings, 5

Immaculate, Owensboro

Bob & Sylvia Lovett, 60
Britt & Gina Gray, 40
Chris & Hannah Tyson, 5
Don & Shirley Story, 56
Ernie & Shirley Taliaferro, 56
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Terry & Brenda Royal, 58

Sts. Peter & Paul, Hopkinsville

Donald & Mary Ann Moore, 69
Michael & Mary Kay Green, 60
Robert & Christine Stites, 53



Up for an adventure? Well here's your invitation!

Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp & Retreat Center is currently accepting applications for volunteer counselors, and anyone 16 and older is welcome to apply!

Counselors accompany the campers on their adventures all week, and often find it becomes an adventure of their own!

Learn more and apply:



gasperriverretreatcenter.org/volunteers



Catholic Charities USA's traveling museum 'celebrates power of Christian service'

BY ARMANDO MACHADO, THE GOOD NEWSROOM, OSV NEWS

NEW YORK (OSV News) – Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York welcomed the mobile People of Hope Museum March 26, near Union Square in Manhattan. The tractor-trailer-sized traveling museum will tour under the sponsorship of Catholic Charities USA.

With its welcome in New York, “People of Hope: Faith-Filled Stories of Neighbors Helping Neighbors” began a three-year journey across the United States.

Produced by Catholic Charities USA, the People of Hope Museum will ultimately visit more than 150 communities to promote empathy and inspire visitors to find ways to serve those in need in their local areas. The initiative is made possible thanks to a 2024 grant of nearly \$5 million from Lilly Endowment Inc. through an invitational round of its National Storytelling Initiative on Christian Faith and Life.

The museum is a nationwide storytelling initiative from CCUSA “highlighting the impact of neighbors helping neighbors, and celebrating the power of Christian service,” organizers said.

Locally, Catholic Charities of New York is co-sponsoring the People of Hope Museum with CCUSA, along with Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

The People of Hope Museum was parked March

26 in an area near Union Square. A 10 a.m. opening ceremony and ribbon cutting took place in front of three dozen Catholic Charities staff, affiliates and journalists.

About an hour later, the museum was open to the public until 6 p.m. The next day it was open to the public again from 12 noon to 6 p.m.

“We’re here to tell the stories of many, many employees of Catholic Charities throughout the country ~ hundreds of Catholic Charities (chapters), thousands of employees, who day in and day out, they take care of the people who need it the most,” J. Antonio Fernandez, president and CEO of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York, said during the opening ceremony. “Thank you for coming today as we celebrate this wonderful museum. Thank you, and God bless you.”

Kerry Alys Robinson, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, was at the opening of the mobile museum, a venture she said “is a testament to mercy, service, hope, compassion and faith. And it is a special honor that we are here in New York City, and that it is co-hosted by Catholic Charities (of the) Archdiocese of New York, and Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens.”

Father Patrick J. Keating, deputy CEO of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Brooklyn, offered a prayer of blessing for the museum, the people who enter it, and for “the human family.”

Jamar Carr, a substance abuse counselor with the Brooklyn Diocese, was given the honor of cutting

the ribbon.

Housed in a digitally outfitted semi-truck, the People of Hope Museum features 42 original, authentic video stories told by Catholic Charities staff and volunteers from agencies around the country. In the brief videos, the storytellers share first-person accounts of what it means to serve someone in need in their darkest moment.

Beyond these stories, the museum contains an interactive poverty simulation of stepping into another person’s life, making difficult choices and experiencing the realities of living on the margins.

Visitors can also peruse a learning library featuring curated 2- to 4-minute audio segments from prominent books on poverty, social isolation, bridgebuilding and community action, including by authors Matthew Desmond, Arthur Brooks and Robert Putnam.

National and state data illustrate the scope of need and the vital role of social services organizations across the country, and a recording room allows attendees to share their own stories of hope and service.

From New York, through December, the mobile museum will go through 21 states, from Texas to Ohio and from Maine to Florida, mostly in the eastern half of the United States. It will tour the Western states in 2027. In the first half of 2028, the museum will visit communities that were missed or would like a repeat visit, CCUSA said in a news release.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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CCUSA, which has its headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, is a network of local Catholic Charities agencies in dioceses across the U.S.

Thomas Galfo, 44, and his wife, Hazel Yaptangco, were among members of the public who entered the mobile museum on its opening morning to view and listen to what the museum had to offer. They are parishioners of St. Simon the Apostle Catholic Church in Green Pond, New Jersey, in the Paterson Diocese.

“We heard about this through social media, and we wanted to take the trip into the city to see it firsthand. It’s absolutely amazing, from the second that you walk up to the trailer, and walking through the trailer with all the details. They did an excellent job,” Galfo said in an interview inside the museum with The Good Newsroom, the news outlet of the Archdiocese of New York.

Yaptangco said, “Wow, there are many real stories here, of people struggling every day. This really spells it out, what is going on in their lives. It’s great to see an organization bringing awareness to that, and showing ways that you can take action.”

Armando Machado writes for The Good Newsroom. This story was originally published by The Good Newsroom, the online news outlet of the Archdiocese of New York, and distributed through a partnership with OSV News. ■



OSV NEWS PHOTO/ARMANDO MACHADO, THE GOOD NEWSROOM
A bicyclist passes Catholic Charities USA’s People of Hope Museum March 26, 2026, just north of Union Square in Manhattan. The tractor-trailer-sized traveling museum will tour the country highlighting “the impact of neighbors helping neighbors, and celebrating the power of Christian service,” organizers said.

**PEOPLE
OF HOPE
MUSEUM**

To sign up for updates on the tour stops for the People of Hope traveling museum, go to:

peopleofhope.us/tour-stops/#keep-in-touch-with-people-of-hope.

The People of Hope Museum will visit the Diocese of Owensboro on July 26-28.

For updates and to learn more, visit:

owensborodiocese.org/people-of-hope.

MAY 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

Open the same door of faith that was once opened to you. Including your parish in your will may become the most profound gift you ever make – one that supports the sacraments, ministries, and faith community you cherish. To learn more about this opportunity, contact Valeria Vessels, Director of Development, Diocese of Owensboro, at (270) 852-8348 or valeria.vessels@pastoral.org.

Upcoming Rachel's Vineyard retreats for healing after abortion

If you are suffering from grief or trauma from an abortion, come experience the healing love of Jesus Christ on a Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreat during this Year of St. Francis of Assisi! There will be three Catholic retreats offered during May, June, and October 2026, sponsored by Rachel's Vineyard of Bowling Green. Our retreats will be offered in the Louisville; Cullman, Alabama; and Owensboro areas. We also are sponsoring two Interdenominational events in Middle Tennessee. Our weekend retreats will combine discussions, spiritual exercises, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, a Memorial Service and a Mass of Entrustment of our Children to Jesus. Participation is strictly confidential and offers a beautiful opportunity to experience God's love, forgiveness and compassion. For more information or registration contact us on our confidential hotline (270-474-4707) or email (retreats@hope-afterabortionky.com). The cost is \$250 for meals, private room, and all retreat materials. If you have a financial burden, assistance is available – no one

is ever turned away due to financial need! More information is available on our website: HopeAfter-AbortionKY.com. For a complete listing of retreat dates and locations contact 1-877-HOPE-4-ME or visit the Rachel's Vineyard website at www.rachels-vineyard.org.

Nominate the 2025-2026 Outstanding Catholic School Educator of the Year

The Catholic Schools Office and the Principals and Administrators of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools (PACESS) are again asking for nominations for Outstanding Catholic School Educator of the Year. The winner will be announced at the 2026 Celebration of Catholic Schools event. Anyone, with the exception of an immediate family member, may nominate an educator for the award. All information concerning nominees will be kept confidential, including the name of the person submitting the nomination. The educator must currently be employed in the Diocese of Owensboro and must have taught for a minimum of five years in the diocesan schools. The outstanding Catholic School Educator must be a role model as an outstanding human being; have a major influence in the lives of students; show concern with the faith development as well as the physical, mental and emotional development of students; and encourage students to improve their abilities and talents. The deadline for nominations is July 1, 2026. A committee will serve as judges. For the nomination form, visit <https://owensborodiocese.org/educator-award/>.

Vendor space available at St. Henry for 400-mile yard sale

Location: St. Henry Catholic Church, 16097 U.S. Highway 68 East, Hardin, KY. Dates and times: June 4, 7 a.m.-5 p.m.; June 5, 7 a.m.-5 p.m.; June 6, 7 a.m.-2 p.m. Vendor details: 10x10 space, \$40 per spot plus \$25 refundable cleanup deposit. Spots are limited; first-come, first-served. For more information or to reserve your spot: Janet Seego, (630) 253-0681, jseego@comcast.net.

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 have a question 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 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 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. There is a Heritage Room filled with artifacts at Mount Saint Joseph that can be toured upon request. The archives director, Edward Wilson, can be reached at 270-229-4103, ext. 302, or email Edward.wilson@maplemount.org.

Join Ursuline Sisters for Adoration on Fridays and first Sundays

The Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph invite the public to join them for Eucharistic Adoration on the first Sunday of the month from 1 p.m.-5 p.m. at the Motherhouse Chapel, 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, Ky. (12 miles west of Owensboro on Hwy. 56). The Ursuline Sisters also have Eucharistic Adoration on Fridays from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., and the public is welcome to attend. Adoration on the second Friday of each month is dedicated to praying for vocations. The Adoration concludes with evening prayer. To see Adoration and Mass times for the Ursuline Sisters, visit <https://ursulinesmsj.org/mass-prayer-times/>

Visit the Ursuline Sisters' Rosary Walk and Shrine Walk

Since the day it was blessed and dedicated 20 years ago in 2006, the Rosary Walk on the grounds

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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MAY 2026 BULLETIN BOARD

of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph has offered people a chance to deepen their spirituality among the beauty and splendor of the "holy ground" at Maple Mount (8001 Cummings Road, 12 miles west of Owensboro, Ky., on Hwy. 56). The Rosary Walk is located on the front of the grounds (northwest corner) and includes the Christ the King statue. Visitors can use their cell phones to reach this webpage and listen to an audiotape of the rosary (recorded by Sister Elaine Burke, OSU) to accompany their walk: <https://ursulinesmsj.org/rosary-shrine-walk/> Or visitors can stroll to see the inspiring shrines on the grounds of the Motherhouse. They can visit this webpage to find a list of the shrines and to hear a recording about them (recorded by Sister Nancy Murphy, OSU): <https://ursulinesmsj.org/shrine-meditation-walk/> People can also listen to these recordings on their computers. No appointment is necessary to see the Rosary Walk or the shrines. There are new sidewalks on the west side of campus available for anyone to use.

Support groups for victims/survivors of clergy abuse

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

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. of Owensboro, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY 42301.

SHOW UP. BUILD HOPE.

SAVE THE DATES



JULY 26, 27TH & 28TH
COMING TO OWENSBORO

Location: Owensboro Convention Center
501 West 2nd St.
Owensboro, KY 42301

**Dress for
Less Gala** 
Catholic
Charities
DIOCESE OF OWENSBORO

Sunday, July 26th, 2026

Doors open 5PM, event to start 6PM

Have the opportunity to tour the museum and get inspired. Available to the public these times below.

July 26 from 2PM-6PM

July 27 from 10AM-6PM

July 28 from 10AM-2PM

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE THE MUSEUM
AT PEOPLEOFHOPE.US

St. Mary Magdalene
111th Annual Picnic
Saturday, June 27th 2026



**\$10 Raffle
Tickets**



QR Code to purchase Raffle Tickets

7232 KY-56
Owensboro
(270)-771-4436



Online Meat Presale



Ends June 21st

**Chicken
Pork
Mutton
Burgoo**

2026 DIOCESAN PARISH PICNICS SCHEDULE

Editor's note: Parish picnics and cooking teams are a longstanding tradition in the parishes of the Diocese of Owensboro. Parishioners and non-parishioners alike gather to celebrate with food, games and community during the warmest months of the year. All questions about the individual picnics should be directed to the parishes at the numbers provided with each listing.

- May 16**
Carmel Home, Owensboro
Street address: 2501 Old Hartford Rd.,
Owensboro
Serving: 11 a.m.
Contact: (270) 683-0227
- May 24**
St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville
(Spring picnic)
Street address: 10534 Main Cross St.,
Whitesville
Serving: 11 a.m.
Contact: (270) 233-4196
- June 6**
St. Joseph, Leitchfield
Street address: 204 North Main St.,
Leitchfield
Serving: 4-6 p.m.
Contact: (270) 259-3028
- June 13**
St. Mary of the Woods, McQuady
Street address: 4711 S. Hwy 105,
Hardinsburg
Serving: 4-7 p.m.
Contact: Parish office (270) 257-2132
- June 20**
Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro
Street address: 4029 Frederica St.,
Owensboro
Drive-thru only; pickup 3 p.m.
Contact: (270) 684-5369
- June 27**
Tri-Parish Community of St. Anthony,
St. Augustine & St. Benedict, Grayson
County
Street address: 1256 St. Anthony Rd.,
Clarkson
Serving: 3-7 p.m.
Contact: Steven Kenney (319) 210-7050
- June 27**
St. Mary Magdalene, Sorgho
Street address: 7232 State Route 56,
Owensboro
Drive-thru only; pickup 4 p.m.
Contact: Anne Jones (618) 731-8321
- July 4**
St. Anthony the Abbot, Axtel
Street address: 1654 S. Hwy 79,
Hardinsburg
Serving: 4-7 p.m.
Contact: Parish office (270) 257-2132
- July 4**
St. Denis, Fancy Farm
Street address: 2758 Hwy 1748 West,
Fancy Farm
Serving lunch: 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Serving supper: 5-7 p.m.
Contact: Susan Hayden (270) 642-2491
- July 12**
St. Alphonsus, St. Joseph
Street address: 11028 St. Joseph Ln.,
Owensboro
Drive-thru only; pickup 4 p.m.
Contact: Tiffany Powers at (270) 302-
6244 or st.alphonsus@att.net
- July 18**
St. Charles, Bardwell
Street address: 6922 State Route 408,
Bardwell
Serving lunch: 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Serving supper: 4:30-7 p.m.
Contact: Susan Hayden (270) 642-2491
- July 18**
St. Peter of Alcantara, Stanley
Street address: 81 Church St., Stanley
Serving: 4 p.m.; drive-thru also
available
Contact: Parish office (270) 764-1983
- July 25**
St. Paul, Leitchfield
Street address: 1821 St. Paul Rd.,
Leitchfield
Serving: 3 p.m.
Contact: Parish office (270) 242-7436
- Aug. 1**
St. Jerome, Fancy Farm
Street address: 20 State Route 339
North, Fancy Farm
Serving 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
Contact: Andy Hayden (270) 705-4312
- Aug. 1**
Blessed Sacrament Chapel,
Owensboro
Street address: 602 Sycamore St.
Drive-thru only; pickup 11 a.m.-1
p.m.
Contact: (270) 926-4741
- Aug. 4**
St. Martin, Rome
Street address: 5856 State Route
81, Owensboro
Drive-thru only; pickup 4 p.m.
Contact: (270) 685-0339
- Aug. 22**
Holy Guardian Angels, Irvington
Street address: 301 High St.,
Irvington
Serving: 2-7 p.m. Eastern Time
Contact: Donna Butler (270) 801-
3489
- Sept. 5**
Christ the King, Scottsville
Street address: 298 Bluegrass Dr.,
Scottsville
Serving 3-7 p.m.
Contact: Valerie Vargo (270) 943-
7892
- Sept. 12**
St. John the Evangelist, Paducah
Street address: 6705 Old Hwy 45
South, Paducah
Serving: 12 noon-7 p.m. (8:45 p.m.
closing Mass)
Contact: Tim Stewart (270) 994-
6156 or Hazel Wurth (270) 554-
3810
- Sept. 12**
St. Romuald, Hardinsburg
Street address: 394 N Hwy 259,
Hardinsburg
Serving: 4-6:30 p.m.
Contact: Fr. Tony Jones (270) 756-
2356
- Sept. 19**
Blessed Mother, Owensboro
Street address: 601 E 23rd St.,
Owensboro
Drive-thru only; pickup 2 p.m.
Contact: Cyndi Vaughan (270) 683-
8444
- Sept. 20**
Mary Carrico Catholic School,
Knottsville
Street address: 6119 St. Lawrence Rd.,
Philpot
Serving: 11 a.m.
Contact: Joe Schepers (270) 281-5526
- Sept. 20**
St. Elizabeth, Clarkson
Street address: 306 Clifty Ave.,
Clarkson
Serving: 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. (Honeyfest
Chicken & Barbecue Dinner and Silent
Auction)
Contact: (270) 242-4414
- Sept. 26**
Immaculate, Owensboro
Street address: 2516 Christie Pl.
Drive-thru only; pickup 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Contact: John Jones (270) 316-2214
- Sept. 26**
St. Joseph, Central City
Street address: 109 S 3rd St, Central
City
Serving: 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Contact: Erin Hopper (270) 841-9242
- Sept. 27**
St. Leo, Murray
Street address: 401 N 12th St., Murray
Serving: 12 noon-4 p.m.
Contact: Kevin D'Angelo (270) 753-
0466 or (270) 293-7061
- Sept. 27**
St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville (Fall
picnic)
Street address: 10534 Main Cross St.,
Whitesville
Serving: 11 a.m.
Contact: (270) 233-4196

Vacation Bible School 2026 Summer Calendar

Editor's note: Below are the VBS dates submitted before the WKC went to press. Please direct all questions to the parishes.

Parish	City	Dates	Time	Theme
Holy Name	Henderson	June 15-18	8AM-Noon	Around the World with Saints
Holy Redeemer	Beaver Dam	July 20-24	5PM-8PM	Rainforest Falls
Immaculate	Owensboro	June 1-4	9AM-Noon	The Great Journey with Jesus
Precious Blood	Owensboro	July 7-9	5PM-7:30PM	Assorted Saints & Virtues of Faith, Hope, & Love
St. Francis de Sales	Paducah	June 8-11	5PM-7:30PM	The Mass Comes Alive
St. Jerome	Fancy Farm	June 21-24	5PM-8PM	Saints in Training - Incoming K-6th Grade
St. Jerome	Fancy Farm	June 18-19	5:30PM-7:30PM	Saints in Training - Preschool
St. Joseph	Bowling Green	July 27-30	5PM-8PM	The Vatican Express
St. Leo	Murray	June 22-26	5PM-8PM	Rainforest Falls
St. Martin/St. Mary Magdalene	Owensboro	July 6-9	6PM-8:20PM	Bible Adventures #3



COURTESY OF SANDY FLEMMING
Group poses with their craft project at Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro summer VBS last year. The theme of their VBS was Cave Quest.



COURTESY OF HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC CHURCH
Group enjoys the outdoors from Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Bowling Green at their VBS last summer. The theme of their VBS was True North.

Un Mensaje del Obispo Medley

Un mensaje del Obispo Medley: ¡sí, sigues siendo santo!

“En el Antiguo Testamento, los profetas anunciaron que el Espíritu del Señor reposaría sobre el Mesías esperado para realizar su misión salvífica. El descenso del Espíritu Santo sobre Jesús en su Bautismo por Juan fue el signo de que Él era el que debía venir, el Mesías, el Hijo de Dios. Habiendo sido concedido por obra del Espíritu Santo, toda su vida y toda su misión se realizan en una comunión total con el Espíritu Santo que el Padre le da ‘sin medida’”.

- Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica, párrafo 1286

Mis queridos hermanos y hermanas en Cristo,

Como obispo, es mi responsabilidad y privilegio ser el ministro ordinario del Sacramento de la Confirmación. En situaciones excepcionales, puedo delegar a un sacerdote para celebrar este sacramento.

En la Diócesis de Owensboro, la edad más común para la Confirmación es entre los 12 y los 15 años, lo que corresponde a los grados 7 a 9. Cada año celebramos la Confirmación, en promedio, en 35 o más de nuestras 78 parroquias. Las parroquias de tamaño mediano a grande generalmente celebran la Confirmación todos los años. Las parroquias más pequeñas —y tenemos muchas parroquias pequeñas— pueden celebrar la Confirmación cada dos años o incluso con menos frecuencia, dependiendo del número de adolescentes que cumplan los requisitos. Muchas de estas parroquias más pequeñas reúnen a adolescentes de parroquias vecinas. Cada año confirmo entre 400 y 500 adolescentes y jóvenes, y esa cifra ha ido en aumento. No llevo un recuento exacto, pero



RILEY GREIF | WKC

El Obispo William F. Medley se prepara para confirmar a los candidatos de RICA en la Catedral de San Esteban durante la Vigilia Pascual del 4 de abril de 2026.

después de 16 años como obispo, estoy seguro de haber confirmado a más de 6,000 personas.

Cuando uno ingresa a la Iglesia católica como adulto, lo habitual es que el párroco le confiera el Sacramento de la Confirmación. Este año, más de 420 personas recibieron la Confirmación en nuestras parroquias en la Vigilia Pascual; algunos de ellos eran niños, pero la mayoría eran adolescentes, jóvenes y adultos.

La temporada de Pascua es un momento ideal del año litúrgico para celebrar la Confirmación, acentuando la realidad de que la Confirmación y la

Sagrada Eucaristía son, junto con el Bautismo, los sacramentos de iniciación.

Me fascinan las estadísticas, así que calculo que, habiendo confirmado a más de 6,000 personas en la diócesis, he confirmado a uno de cada diez católicos de la diócesis. Eso es impresionante, pero recuerdo que cuando falleció el difunto obispo auxiliar de Louisville, Charles G. Maloney, se estimaba que había confirmado a más de 80,000 personas. Yo fui uno de ellos en 1960.

Si bien nuestra parroquia de San Francisco de Asís en St. Francis, Kentucky, en la Arquidiócesis de

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Louisville, se consideraba pequeña en comparación con las parroquias de la ciudad y los suburbios, la noche de mi Confirmación, el Obispo Maloney confirmó a más de 100 niños, todos de segundo y tercer grado. Eran los años del *Baby Boom* y todas las clases eran numerosas.

Siempre les digo a los recién confirmados que espero que cuando me vuelvan a ver me recuerden que fui yo quien los confirmó. Muchos lo hacen, y ahora, después de 16 años, aquellos que fueron confirmados a los 14 años tienen 30 años. No es inusual, entonces, que aquellos a quienes he confirmado me presenten a sus hijos.

También les digo a los recién confirmados que, si me dicen que yo los confirmé, les haré una pregunta. Pero les aseguro que siempre es la misma pregunta y les doy la respuesta.

La pregunta es: “¿Sigues siendo santo?” y la respuesta es “Sí”.

La respuesta es “sí”, porque fueron creados a imagen y semejanza de Dios y, como tales, son santos. No podemos cambiar lo que Dios ha creado.

¡Que Dios los bendiga a ustedes siempre!



Obispo William F. Medley
Diócesis de Owensboro

CALENDARIO DEL OBISPO MEDLEY MAYO DE 2026	
1 de mayo	Instalación del Obispo Godfrey Mullen, OSB – Diócesis de Belleville, Illinois
2 de mayo	4:30 PM Confirmación – Parroquia San Alfonso, St. Joseph
3 de mayo	10 AM Confirmación – Parroquia San Pablo, Princeton
5 de mayo	8 AM Misa escolar – Escuela Santos Pedro y Pablo, Hopkinsville
6 de mayo	6 PM Confirmación – Parroquia Santos José y Pablo, Owensboro
7 de mayo	9 AM Misa escolar – Escuela Católica de Owensboro, Campus de K-3,
8 de mayo	7 PM Graduación de la Escuela Preparatoria Católica de Owensboro – Centro Deportivo de Owensboro [Sportscenter]
9 de mayo	10 AM Graduación de la Universidad de Brescia – Centro Riverpark, Owensboro
	4:30 PM Confirmación – Parroquia San Pío X, Calvert City
13 de mayo	8:30 AM Reunión del Consejo Diocesano de Finanzas – Centro Católico McRaith
	6 PM Confirmación – Parroquia San Miguel Arcángel, Oak Grove
16 de mayo	10 AM Confirmación – Parroquia Espíritu Santo, Bowling Green
	7 PM Graduación de la Escuela Preparatoria Santa María – SMHS, Paducah
17 de mayo	8 AM Confirmación – Parroquia San Dionisio, Fancy Farm
18 de mayo	10 AM Reunión del Consejo de Personal Sacerdotal – Centro Católico McRaith

	1:30 PM Reunión del Consejo Sacerdotal – Centro Católico McRaith
19-20 de mayo	Reunión de los obispos de la provincia y de la Conferencia Católica de Kentucky – Louisville
23 de mayo	10 AM Confirmación – Parroquia San José, Bowling Green
	5 PM Confirmación – Parroquia Sagrado Corazón, Russellville
24 de mayo	11 AM Confirmación – Catedral de San Esteban, Owensboro
27 de mayo	6 PM Confirmación – Parroquia San Sebastián, Calhoun
28 de mayo	5:30 PM Confirmación – Parroquia Santos Pedro y Pablo, Hopkinsville.
30 de mayo	10 AM Confirmación – Parroquia San José, Bowling Green
	5:30 PM Confirmación – Parroquia San Ambrosio, Henshaw



Un obispo visitante inspira un momento de 'Caminata a Emaús' en el camino de la vida

POR SUSANA SOLORZA, ESPECIAL PARA EL CATÓLICO DE KENTUCKY OCCIDENTAL

Este tiempo de Pascua nos invita a contemplar a Cristo resucitado y a acercarnos a él en todo lo que hacemos. Cada uno de nosotros tenemos nuestro

propio "Camino a Emaús", tal como lo tuvieron los discípulos de Jesús en los primeros días después de la crucifixión.

En la noche del 15 de abril, el invitado especial, el Obispo José María García-Maldonado, obispo auxiliar de Chicago, habló a un grupo de feligreses de toda la diócesis en la Parroquia Santos José y Pablo en Owensboro precisamente sobre este tema.

La invitación se envió a varios grupos de las 14 parroquias con comunidades hispanas, incluyendo grupos de oración, jóvenes y movimientos eclesiales de la Renovación Carismática y Cristo Renueva su Parroquia.

El Obispo García-Maldonado exhortó a los allí reunidos a trabajar para reconocer a Cristo en las personas que los rodean. Les recordó a todos que

Cristo resucitado siempre camina con nosotros; no estamos solos en nuestro camino.

Agradecemos su mensaje de acompañamiento y esperanza durante estos tiempos de incertidumbre para muchas personas en nuestras comunidades. El Obispo García-Maldonado también tiene una conexión personal con nuestra diócesis, ya que él y el Diácono Cristóbal Gutiérrez, director de la Oficina del Ministerio Hispano/Latino de nuestra diócesis, asistieron al mismo seminario en México donde se conocieron y mantienen su amistad hasta el día de hoy. El Diácono Gutiérrez invitó al Obispo García-Maldonado a la diócesis para dirigir el retiro anual para ministros hispanos en el Monasterio Pasionista, el cual se celebró los días 16 y 17 de abril de 2026. ■



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DEL DIÁCONO CRISTÓBAL GUTIÉRREZ

El Obispo José María García-Maldonado, obispo auxiliar de Chicago, visita la Parroquia Santos José y Pablo en Owensboro para dar una plática inspiradora el 15 de abril de 2026.

La Misa Crismal da la bienvenida a todos; los sacerdotes renuevan sus promesas



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

Los fieles escuchan mientras el Obispo William F. Medley pronuncia parte de su homilía en español durante la Misa Crismal en el Centro Deportivo de Owensboro [Sportscenter] el 31 de marzo de 2026.



RILEY GREIF | WKC

El Centro Deportivo de Owensboro [Sportscenter] durante la Misa Crismal de la Diócesis de Owensboro el 31 de marzo de 2026, durante la cual el obispo bendice el Óleo de los Enfermos y el Óleo de los Catecúmenos, y se consagra el Santo Crisma. Esta liturgia especial incluye también la renovación de las promesas de los sacerdotes.

POR ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, EL CATÓLICO DE KENTUCKY OCCIDENTAL

Este año, la Misa Crismal de la Diócesis de Owensboro se celebró el 31 de marzo, martes de Semana Santa. Durante esta Misa especial, los sacerdotes de la diócesis renuevan su compromiso con el servicio sacerdotal, el obispo bendice el Óleo de los Enfermos y el Óleo de los Catecúmenos y consagra el Santo Crisma.

Los óleos se distribuyen a los representantes parroquiales al finalizar la Misa, para que los utilicen en sus comunidades durante todo el año.

Durante su homilía, que dio en inglés y en español, el Obispo Medley hizo hincapié en que la diversidad cultural de la diócesis es lo que hace que la comunidad católica del oeste de Kentucky sea tan hermosa.

También animó a todos los católicos y a las personas de buena voluntad a que llamaran a sus representantes electos para instarles a que apoyaran a los migrantes y refugiados, y a que siguieran apoyando a estos recién llegados, que ahora forman parte de la comunidad local.

“A Dios sea la gloria. Santo es el nombre de Dios”, concluyó el obispo. ■



RILEY GREIF | WKC

Priscila Juan, de San Miguel en Sebree, sonríe antes de servir la misa Crismal 2026 con otros jóvenes. Nuestra Oficina de la Liturgia trabaja diligentemente para encontrar líderes en la liturgia de toda la diócesis para celebrar como un cuerpo en Cristo.

Las representaciones en vivo del Vía Crucis en las parroquias muestran las últimas horas de la Pasión de Cristo

POR EL PERSONAL DE WKC

Varias parroquias de la Diócesis de Owensboro participaron en la tradición anual de realizar el Vía Crucis viviente durante la Semana Santa de 2026. El Vía Crucis es una devoción que a menudo se realiza durante la Cuaresma y consiste en un recorrido en oración por las 14 estaciones de la Pasión de Cristo antes de su muerte en la cruz. Aquí les presentamos algunas fotografías destacadas proporcionadas por los fieles de la diócesis. ■



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE LA PARROQUIA SANTA MARÍA
El Domingo de Ramos, 29 de marzo de 2026, los feligreses de la Parroquia Santa María en Franklin participan en un Vía Crucis viviente.



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE LA PARROQUIA SAN MIGUEL
Los niños se turnan para llevar una cruz de madera durante la experiencia de oración del Vía Crucis viviente en la Parroquia San Miguel en Sebree el Viernes Santo, 3 de abril de 2026.



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DEL P. COREY BRUNS
Una representación de San Simón de Cirene ayudando a Jesús a cargar su cruz durante el Vía Crucis viviente de la Parroquia Santos José y Pablo el Viernes Santo, 3 de abril de 2026.

‘Alimentados en el convite sagrado’

El obispo celebra dos consagraciones de altares en dos parroquias.

POR EL PERSONAL DE WKC

El 11 de abril, el Obispo William F. Medley celebró dos consagraciones de altares en dos parroquias diferentes, situadas en extremos casi opuestos de la región geográfica de la Diócesis de Owensboro.

Esa mañana, consagró el nuevo altar en el interior recientemente renovado de la Parroquia Santísima Madre en Owensboro. Y por la tarde, visitó la Parroquia Santa María en Franklin para consagrar

su nuevo altar, que fue hecho por un feligrés.

La consagración de un altar incluye la bendición del agua al comienzo de la liturgia, durante la cual el obispo rocía con agua bendita tanto a los fieles como al nuevo altar. Gran parte de la Misa es similar a una liturgia típica, con la Liturgia de la Palabra después del Gloria.

Sin embargo, después de la Profesión de Fe, la iglesia canta la Letanía de los Santos y luego el obispo ofrece la extensa Oración de Dedicación, durante la cual agradece a Dios por cumplir sus promesas y pide que el nuevo altar sea dedicado

“para siempre al sacrificio de Cristo y sea también la mesa del Señor, donde tu pueblo se alimente en el convite sagrado”.

Una vez concluida esta oración, el obispo unge el altar con el Santo Crisma, que en este caso había sido consagrado recientemente durante la Misa Crismal de la diócesis el 31 de marzo, durante la Semana Santa. A continuación, el obispo incienso el altar y los feligreses limpian el exceso de crisma del altar consagrado. A continuación, se cubre el altar con un mantel y se encienden velas que se colocan alrededor del mismo. ■



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE HEATHER GREENE
Los feligreses de la Parroquia Santa María en Franklin revisitan el altar recién ungido el 11 de abril durante la Misa de dedicación del altar.



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE HEATHER GREENE
El Padre Tom Buckman, párroco de la Parroquia Santa María en Franklin, incienso el altar y a la congregación durante la dedicación del altar el 11 de abril.



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE HEATHER GREENE
El Obispo William F. Medley unge el nuevo altar con el Santo Crisma en la Parroquia Santa María en Franklin el 11 de abril.



CNS PHOTO/VATICAN MEDIA

Pope Leo XIV looks through the main telescope of the Vatican Observatory in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, alongside U.S. Jesuit Father David A. Brown, an astronomer, July 20, 2025. The pope visited the observatory to mark the anniversary of the first crewed mission to land on the moon in 1969, following the recitation of the Angelus in the city's main square.

Artemis II mission prompts look at Catholics' longtime interest in space exploration

BY OSV NEWS

CHICAGO (OSV News) - On Easter Monday, April 6, NASA's Artemis II mission reached a major milestone, carrying astronauts past the far side of the moon - the first crewed journey of its kind in more than 50 years. The mission was set to conclude April 10 with a splashdown in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of San Diego at about 8 p.m. EDT. For Catholics, space exploration has long stirred both curiosity and faith. Just months after John F. Kennedy's 1962 "moonshot" speech, Catholic Extension Society, for the cover of its July 1963 magazine, created an image of an astronaut praying on the moon's surface. On July 20, 1969, NASA's Apollo 11 mission successfully landed the first two humans on the surface of the moon. St. Paul VI sent a congratulatory message to the astronauts. It was his hope that this exploration would lead us to see God's power more clearly. The Church continues to engage science through the Vatican Observatory, founded in 1891. In 2011, Pope Benedict XVI was the first pope to speak live with astronauts at the International Space Station. He called Earth a "beautiful fragile oasis," urging responsible stewardship. Pope Leo XIV visited the Vatican Observatory on July 20, 2025, to mark the anniversary of NASA's Apollo 11 mission. He looked through its main telescope and viewed its other instruments after praying the Angelus in the city's main square. Today, as Americans and as Catholics, we can rightfully celebrate humanity's return to the far reaches of space in the hopes that our exploration will bring us closer to the one who made the universe, and who through the miracle of Easter, promises to renew all of creation. ■