

THE WESTERN
KENTUCKY



Catholic

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Front page main photo by Dijana Muminovic.

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

A Visit With Pope Leo: What I Will Report From the Diocese of Owensboro

"Unless the Apostolic See has established otherwise, during the year in which he is bound to submit a report to the Supreme Pontif, a diocesan bishop is to go to Rome to venerate the tombs of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul and to present himself to the Roman Pontiff." Canon 400

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The bishops of the 18 dioceses of the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana have been summoned to come to Rome in April of 2027 to fulfill their *ad limina apostolorum* (to the threshold of the apostles). By tradition this reporting and pilgrimage are expected once every five years.

The Covid-19 pandemic, the 2025 Jubilee of Hope, and Pope Francis' illnesses of his later years upended the scheduling of bishops from around the world. It was my privilege to fulfill this obligation and meet Pope Benedict in 2012 in my third year as bishop and then to repeat this with Pope Francis in 2019.

As Canon 400 specifies, the centerpiece of the pilgrimage is the opportunity to visit and pray at the tombs of both St. Peter and St. Paul. We will concelebrate Mass at the tomb of St. Peter, which lies in a crypt beneath the grand altar of St. Peter's Basilica. We will visit the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls and concelebrate Mass at the tomb of St. Paul.

When we met with Pope Francis in 2019, he afforded our group more than two hours for

questions and conversation. From what I have heard Pope Leo XIV is approaching our gatherings similarly. It will be distinctive, as American bishops, to converse with the first U.S.-born pope. As a native of Chicago, he will have a clear understanding of the regions of the United States, even though most of his years as a priest and bishop have been spent in either Peru or Italy.

In the coming months our diocesan staff and offices will be compiling a Quinquennial Report on the work and ministry of our Diocese of Owensboro. While we look back to previous reports the narrative may remain much the same. However, I anticipate reporting some interesting developments of recent years.

In December of 2021 western Kentucky experienced widespread tragedy when tornados wreaked havoc across a 200-mile swath of our diocese. Resurrection Catholic Church in Dawson Springs was totaled by the damage and ultimately demolished. After more than three years a new church was erected and consecrated. Additionally, the school building of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Mayfield was deemed a total loss and today a new parish center has been built.

In the aftermath of the storm our diocese received gifts from all over the country of more the \$10 million to assist local communities in recovery. Our Catholic Charities became the lead agent in many counties in assisting with the immediate needs of shelter after the storm and the rebuilding of dozens



CNS PHOTO/VATICAN MEDIA

Pope Leo XIV meets with bishops from Peru during their ad limina visit to Rome at the Vatican Jan. 30, 2026.

of homes over the years. This work continues to this day.

As the task that Catholic Charities accomplished in assisting communities with rebuilding after the storms was completed, the Catholic Charities mission was redefined to largely serve immigrants. This has been an especially prophetic witness in the United States as anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiments have become more pronounced. We have found our parishes assisting families impacted by widespread deportations.

Like most of the United States the makeup of our diocese continues to be changed by the influx of new migrants. Spanish-speaking immigrants have come from Mexico and Central and South America. Assimilating their religious and cultural practices in our parishes has been a challenge and a blessing. We have also received immigrants and refugees from Myanmar and multiple African nations. Our annual Chrism Mass has become an occasion to recognize and celebrate our diversity.

In 2026, 27 of the 82 priests in our diocese were born somewhere other than the United States. We

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have priests from seven different nations and as bishop I have visited those lands and, in most cases, met the families of our priests. In 2026 we have welcomed two seminarians from Vietnam who will study to become priests of our diocese.

The diocese will report on the financial blow inflicted when we learned that both our lay employees and our priests pension plans were critically underfunded. With sacrifice we have committed the diocese to honoring in full the pensions that have been earned and promised. Over a 25-year period we are rebuilding the pension funds. Every parish and school has contributed to this effort in forfeiting more than \$12 million received through a program rewarding non-profit groups who experienced financial losses during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The diocese continues to recognize fostering vocations to the priesthood and religious life as a core value to evangelization. After a drought we are pleased to report some growth in men who are native to our diocese entering the seminary. While some religious communities continue to welcome young women entering religious life, the overall trend across religious institutes remains one of fewer new vocations.

The diocese has sought to make the emphasis on synodality urged by both Pope Francis and Pope Leo. When faced with the crisis in our pension programs I and other diocesan leaders conducted regional synodal sessions seeking input on our plan of recovery.

When the American Church was shaken by what became known as the McCarrick scandal in 2018, synodal sessions were conducted across the diocese of give the faithful opportunities to vent their frustration and to propose healing remedies.

This is just a brief preview of the report that I will present to the Holy See next April. When the full report has been made we will make it available through our diocesan website.

Please pray for me and all the bishops entrusted with this responsibility. When I find myself at the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul I will have you and our shared ministry with me.



Most Reverend William F. Medley
Diocese of Owensboro

Happy anniversary to our priests!

*In August we celebrate the
ordination anniversaries of:*

Fr. Jerry Riney | Ordained 8/9/1975, Retired

Fr. Chrispin Oneko | Ordained 8/25/1990,
Pastor, St. Sebastian in Calhoun and St.
Charles in Livermore

Fr. John Ighacho | Ordained 8/28/1990, Pastor
of St. Joseph Parish, Central City; and St.
Anthony Parish, Browns Valley

Fr. Jean Rene Kalombo | Ordained 8/19/1995
Pastor, Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish,
Owensboro

Fr. Julian Ibemere | Ordained 8/6/1998, Pastor
of St. Michael Parish, Oak Grove

Fr. Jude Okeoma | Ordained 8/22/2009,
Parochial Vicar, St. St. Francis de Sales,
Paducah; Rosary Chapel, Paducah; St. Mary,
LaCenter

BISHOP MEDLEY'S AUGUST 2026 CALENDAR	
Aug. 1	2 PM Opening Prayer for St. Jerome Picnic, Fancy Farm
	5 PM Admission to Candidacy for Seminarians Hunter Dickens and Hoan Tran – St. Thomas More Parish, Paducah
Aug. 11	Priest Luncheon (Age Group 1)
Aug. 12	Priest Luncheon (Age Group 2)
Aug. 13	Priest Luncheon (Age Group 3)
Aug. 16	2 PM Sophia Awards – St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro
Aug. 17	1:30 PM Priests' Council Meeting – McRaith Catholic Center, Owensboro
Aug. 18-19	Bishops of the Province & Catholic Conference of Kentucky Meeting – Archdiocese of Louisville
Aug. 23	2 PM Closing Mass for Diocesan Hispanic Charismatic Conference – Bowling Green
Aug. 26	Priest Luncheon (Age Group 4)
Aug. 27	Priest Luncheon (Age Group 5)
Aug. 29	9:30 AM Opening Mass for Parish Ministry Leadership Conference – Owensboro Convention Center, Owensboro

Corrections from our May 2026 issue:

- High school graduates from St. Pius X in Calvert City were incorrectly listed under "St. Pius X, Central City," which does not exist. Avery Zaim from St. Anthony of Padua in Grand Rivers, was inadvertently excluded from the high school graduates list.
- Richard and Betty Derry, of St. Pius X in Calvert City, who celebrated their 50th anniversary on June 17, were inadvertently excluded from the anniversaries list.
- In the article titled "Celebrating Mary's month of May, pastor blesses rosary bracelets made by parishioners," it was incorrectly stated that Debbie Webb entered the Catholic Church with friend Sue Mudd. Instead, Webb entered the Church with her husband, Vance Webb, and became friends with lifelong parishioner Mudd. The WKC regrets these errors.



COURTESY OF FR. COREY D. BRUNS
Participants of the Office of Vocations' Quo Vadis Camp during June 14-17 help build a storage/maintenance shed.



COURTESY OF FR. COREY D. BRUNS
Daily Mass is held during the June 14-17, 2026 Quo Vadis Camp led by the Office of Vocations

Quo Vadis camp provides opportunity to pray about, discern God's calling

BY WKC STAFF

This summer, from June 14-17, the diocese's Office of Vocations hosted its inaugural Quo Vadis summer camp at Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center in Bowling Green.

The camp provided an opportunity for high school aged men to experience sports, prayer, brotherhood, and dynamic conversations with other young men, with the goal of helping them answer the question "Where are you going?" – which is the translation of the Latin phrase "Quo Vadis," the words Christ said to St. Peter.

Whether the young men were ultimately called to marriage, priesthood, or religious life, the camp

focused on helping them grow spiritually and to discern their callings as disciples of Jesus.

In addition to daily Mass, Adoration, and camp activities, the participants also helped build storage/maintenance shed for Gasper River's Tower #68 property.

to marriage, priesthood, or religious life, the camp focused on helping them grow spiritually and to discern their callings as disciples of Jesus.

In addition to daily Mass, Adoration, and camp activities, the participants also helped build storage/maintenance shed for Gasper River's Tower #68 property. ■

To learn more about priestly vocations in the diocese, contact fatherbruns@owensborovocations.com or visit owensborovocations.com.

Diocese's seminarians gather for prayer, brotherhood



COURTESY OF OWENSBORO VOCATIONS
Standing in front of St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro on July 26, the Diocese of Owensboro's 14 seminarians are seen with Bishop William F. Medley, vocations director Fr. Corey D. Bruns, cathedral rector Fr. John Thomas, and associate director of vocations Dcn. Mike Marsili.

BY WKC STAFF

During the final days of July, the Office of Vocations brought together the Diocese of Owensboro's 14 seminarians for a summer gathering to pray and grow in brotherhood before school began.

They attended Mass at the McRaith Catholic Center in Owensboro and met with several diocesan offices; and visited the sisters and residents at the Carmel Home, the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph, and the Passionist Nuns of St. Joseph Monastery. On Sunday, July 26, they attended the 11 a.m. Mass with Bishop William F. Medley at St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro and were officially introduced to the people of the diocese.

Please pray for all 14 of these men as they discern God's will for their lives. ■



COURTESY OF BILL BLINCOE

The exterior-in-progress of the Roncalli Home for Priests is seen on July 21, 2026. The home will serve as a residence for senior priests in the Diocese of Owensboro.

Construction continues on future Roncalli Home for Priests

BY WKC STAFF

Progress continues for the Roncalli Home for Priests, which will be the Diocese of Owensboro's residence for senior priests near the Carmel Home in Owensboro.

As of July 21, 2026, updates include driveway excavation, concrete sidewalk and curb work, installation of quartz countertops, and electrical work on wall outlets and switches. Closet and sacristy shelving are in progress, screened-in porches have been wrapped, and cabinets have been installed. Construction continues within ADA standards to accommodate older residents.

The diocese's current estimation is to fully complete the project on Nov. 1, 2026. ■

To learn how to support this ongoing initiative, visit <https://owensborodiocese.org/senior-priests-apartments>.

Office of Youth Ministry announces 2026 SLIM award and certificate recipients

BY WKC STAFF

Note: This summer, the Office of Youth Ministry announced the recipients of the 2026 Servant Leaders in Ministry (SLIM) awards. After receiving nominations from parishes, the youth ministry office team selects youth from around the diocese who have made outstanding contributions to their parishes, communities, and diocese overall. This year's 20 winners received an engraved plaque, and all nominated youth received a certificate of recognition. This year's winners and certificate of recognition recipients are listed below.

Award winners

Elijah Ford
Grade 11
Parents: Chris and Julie Ford
Parish: Blessed Mother, Owensboro
Nominated by: Christina Barnard

Gabriela Garcia
Grade 12
Parents: Jonathan and April Garcia
Parish: Christ the King, Scottsville
Nominated by: Fr. Tom Buckman

Brett Haley
Grade 11
Parents: Tracy and Jennifer Haley
Parish: Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson
Nominated by: Beth Probus

Noah Stinnett
Grade 12
Parent: Mandy Stinnett
Parish: Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro
Nominated by: Helen Bennett

Mayme Powell
Grade 12
Parents: George and Amanda Powell
Parish: Immaculate, Owensboro
Nominated by: Karina Romero

Aiden Chino
Grade 12
Parents: Stephen and Sheryl China
Parish: St. Francis de Sales, Paducah
Nominated by: Ben Teer

Gabrielle Ault
Grade 12
Parents: Zach and Anne Ault
Parish: St. Francis de Sales, Paducah
Nominated by: Ben Teer

Therese Watson
Grade 12
Parents: Clint and Rachel Watson
Parish: St. Francis de Sales, Paducah
Nominated by: Ben Teer

Brylee Cash
Grade 12
Parents: Bryan and Kelly Cash
Parish: St. Jerome, Fancy Farm
Nominated by: Peyton Hutson

Hadley Hayden
Grade 12
Parents: Levi and Whitney Hayden
Parish: St. Jerome, Fancy Farm
Nominated by: Peyton Hutson

Andrew Kaler
Grade 12
Parents: John and Lily Kaler
Parish: St. John the Evangelist, Paducah
Nominated by: Lorie Brown

Rafe Courtney
Grade: 12
Parents: Stacy and Tracy Courtney
Parish: St. John the Evangelist, Paducah
Nominated by: Lorie Brown

Jack Stewart
Grade 12
Parents: Tim and Sarah Stewart
Parish: St. John the Evangelist, Paducah
Nominated by: Lorie Brown

Bryleigh Jo Hayden
Grade 12
Parents: Bryan and Haleigh Hayden
Parish: St. John the Evangelist, Paducah
Nominated by: Lorie Brown

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YOUTH

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Maria Juan Andres
Grade 11
Parents: Felipe Domingo and Juana Andres
Parish: St. Michael, Seabee
Nominated by: Jenny Glenn

Johnathon Adams
Grade 11
Parents: Dan and Maureen Adams
Parish: St. Paul, Princeton
Nominated by: Susan Brinkley

Joseph Kurtz
Grade 12
Parents: John and Christine Kurtz
Parish: St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro
Nominated by: Karina Romero

Dale Bautista
Grade 11
Parents: Juan and Maria Bautista
Parish: St. Thomas More, Paducah
Nominated by: Ann Morrow

Levi Congleton
Grade 12
Parents: John and Terri Congleton
Parish: Sts. Joseph and Paul, Owensboro
Nominated by: Aynde Bennett

Michael Bennett
Grade 12
Parents: Tony and Aynde Bennett
Parish: Sts. Joseph and Paul
Nominated by: April Dickens

Certificate recipients

Abigail Stone
Grade 12
Parents: Amber Hays and Shaun Stone
Parish: Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson
Nominated by: Beth Probus

Matthew Molnar
Grade 12
Parents: Tim and Bridgette Molnar
Parish: Precious Blood
Nominated by: Jennifer Danhauer

Trayce Millay
Grade 11
Parents: Todd and Cecilia Millay
Parish: St. Anthony, Browns Valley
Nominated by: Ealine Strain

Eric McCarthy
Grade 12
Parent: Paula McCarthy
Parish: St. Elizabeth, Curdsville
Nominated by: Toni Thompson

Maddux O'Guinn
Grade 12
Parents: Karly and Rickey O'Guinn
Parish: St. Jerome, Fancy Farm
Nominated by: Peyton Hutson

Anna Taylor
Grade 12
Parents: TJ and Ashley Taylor
Parish: St. Jerome, Fancy Farm
Nominated by: Peyton Hutson



COURTESY OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST
The 2026 Servant Leaders in Ministry award winners and certificate recipients of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Paducah are seen in this photo taken in summer 2026.



COURTESY OF SSJP
Sts. Joseph and Paul parishioners, Levi Congleton and Michael Bennett, both received a 2026 Servant Leaders in Ministry (SLIM) award. They are seen with parochial vicar Fr. Mike Williams.



COURTESY OF HOLY NAME OF JESUS
Brett Haley, who belongs to Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Henderson, received a 2026 Servant Leaders in Ministry award.



COURTESY OF ST. MICHAEL PARISH
Maria Juan Andres, who belongs to St. Michael Parish in Seabee, received a Servant Leaders in Ministry award this summer 2026. She is pictured with pastor Fr. Carmelo Jimenez.

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YOUTH

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COURTESY OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES
Shown are the three winners of the 2026 Servant Leaders in Ministry awards from St. Francis de Sales Parish in Paducah, along with pastor, Fr. Gary Clark.



COURTESY OF POWELL FAMILY
Mayme Powell, a parishioner of Immaculate Parish in Owensboro, received a Servant Leader in Ministry award in summer 2026.



COURTESY OF STINNETT FAMILY
Our Lady of Lourdes parishioner Noah Stinnett was among the youth who received a 2026 Servant Leader in Ministry award.



COURTESY OF MILLAY FAMILY
Trayce Millay, a parishioner of St. Anthony in Browns Valley, was among the youth who received a certificate of recognition for the 2026 Servant Leaders in Ministry (SLIM) awards.



COURTESY OF MCCARTHY FAMILY
Eric McCarthy, who belongs to St. Elizabeth Parish in Curdsville, received a certificate of recognition in the 2026 Servant Leaders in Ministry awards. He is seen with his pastor, Fr. John Okoro.



COURTESY OF KURTZ FAMILY
Joseph Kurtz, a parishioner of St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro, received a 2026 Servant Leaders in Ministry award.

Diocese announces new administrative roles, assignments

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

This summer, several appointments and changes were made within the McRaith Catholic Center, which is the pastoral center for the Diocese of Owensboro, and in several parishes and diocesan organizations.

On June 30, Raymond T. Purk retired as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for the diocese. He was succeeded by Julie Garvin, who signed her Oath of Fidelity, Oath of Office, and Profession of Faith as the new CFO on July 1. Garvin previously served as the director of finance for the Owensboro Catholic School System.

Also on June 30, Tom Lilly retired as Chancellor and Chief of Staff for the diocese. As of July 7, he was succeeded by Martha Hagan as the new Chancellor. Previously, Hagan served as Vice-Chancellor and administrative assistant to the Office of the Bishop. She will continue her role with the bishop's office in addition to serving as Chancellor.

Fr. Jason McClure, Vicar for Clergy and chaplain for the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Campus Center at Western Kentucky University, was appointed by Bishop Medley to serve as the Moderator of the Curia, effective July 7. In accord with Canon 473 §2, the Moderator of the Curia is a priest who assists the bishop in the governance and administration of the diocese by coordinating the work of diocesan offices, promoting effective collaboration among curial staff, and ensuring that diocesan administrative activities are



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

On July 1, during an all-staff Mass in the Chapel of Mary, Mother of the Church, in the McRaith Catholic Center, Julie Garvin signs her Oath of Fidelity, Oath of Office, and Profession of Faith as the new Chief Financial Officer.

carried out in a manner that serves the mission of the Church and the pastoral needs of the People of God. The Moderator of the Curia works in close collaboration with the Chancellor in supporting the bishop's governance and administration of the diocese. Fr. McClure will continue to serve as the Vicar for Clergy.

Fr. McClure will also serve as pastor of Precious Blood Parish in Owensboro beginning Dec. 10, 2026. Fr. John Vaughan began serving as parish administrator of Precious Blood Parish on July 1, 2026 and will continue to serve in that capacity until Fr. McClure begins his assignment as pastor. (Fr. Vaughan retired from active ministry in June 2025.)

Fr. Corey D. Bruns, diocesan vocations director, will fill Fr. McClure's role as chaplain at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Campus Center effective Dec. 10. Fr. Bruns will continue his role as vocations director.

This summer, Susana Solorza transitioned from her role as coordinator of Hispanic/Latino youth and young adult ministry for the diocese, and took on the new responsibility as a Spanish teacher and campus minister for Holy Name of Jesus School in Henderson, effective this fall semester. ■

Christ-centered: Whitesville sponsor couple helps engaged couples learn Church's vision for marriage'

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

About eight years ago, Mark and Donna Dorth were invited to consider serving as a sponsor couple for their parish's marriage preparation – and as of this summer the two have taken 11 engaged couples under their wings.

The Dorths, who belong to St. Mary of the Woods Parish in Whitesville, say they hope to help engaged couples gain “a little better understanding of the Church's vision for marriage.”

St. Mary's uses the “Joined by Grace: Preparing for the Sacramental Journey of Marriage” program published by Ave Maria Press, which the Dorths say works well with the incorporation of a sponsor couple.

“It is all Christ-centered, in how Christ is there for us in the good times and bad times,” said Donna.

The two said they try to start meeting with the engaged couple as soon as possible, since “we don't want to do a week before the wedding!” said Donna.

Their pastor, Fr. Brian Roby, connects the Dorths with the newly-engaged couples and “we get at least a six-month time frame” to meet, said Mark, referencing the Church's standard requirement of being engaged for at least six

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Sponsor couple continued from page 9



COURTESY OF DORTH FAMILY

Mark and Donna Dorth are seen in an undated photo. The two serve as a sponsor couple for marriage preparation at their home parish of St. Mary of the Woods in Whitesville.

months prior to the wedding day.

“We just love our couples,” said Donna. “We get to know them, we ask how they met and we share how we met... by our second meeting we feel like we really know them.”

Her husband added that, “by the second session we know if they like cookies or pie, or coffee or bottled water!”

The *Joined by Grace* book is “very thorough,” said Donna. It “discusses how to build a sacramental marriage and “how, through marriage, Christ shows us his love. It’s a great program; we love it.”

“Each of our sessions ties into one of the sacraments,” said Mark. For instance, the concept of self-gift is explored through the lens of the Eucharist; healing in marriage is discussed while talking about the Sacrament of Reconciliation; and serving others through one’s marriage is seen as a parallel to Holy Orders.

While they use the book to guide and structure their meetings, the Dorths said their conversations

are organic, casual, and they often share examples from their own marriage and life together.

These long-term friendships bless both couples mutually.

“We send them a text on their anniversaries that we’re thinking and praying for them,” said Mark.

The Dorths said they are invited to many weddings through the relationships they build with the couples. Later on, they have even been invited to the baptisms and First Communion of the couples’ children.

Their success as a sponsor couple has resulted in their pastor relying on them on a regular basis.

“Fr. Brian usually emails us that ‘we’ve got another couple if you’re ready!’” said Mark. “We started with couple #11 in the evening of the day that couple #10 got married.”

This year, the Dorths have been married for 44 years after meeting as students at Western Kentucky University’s St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Campus Center.

They credit their marriage’s longevity to a strong foundation supported by the priests that guided their own marriage preparation experience: Fr. Ray Goetz and Fr. Jerry Riney.

Donna said she and her husband “would highly encourage others” to consider becoming sponsor couples, and to learn whether their parish provides the opportunity for sponsor couples within their marriage preparation program.

Mark agreed: “If you’re married, you’ve got something to share.” ■

To learn more about marriage preparation options in the Diocese of Owensboro, and to learn if you can become a sponsor couple, visit <https://owensborodiocese.org/marriage-preparation>.

‘Gracious and surprised’

Sorgho pastor reflects on summertime meeting with Pope Leo XIV

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

In Fr. Jamie Dennis’s experience, “you don’t just decide to meet the pope.”

Yet, his journey to encounter Pope Leo XIV on June 3, 2026, was “a trip that happened in a matter of weeks,” he said.

Fr. Dennis, who is the pastor of St. Mary Magdalene Parish in Sorgho, like many people has always dreamed of meeting the pope.

When he was studying in seminary, many of his fellow seminarians talked about wanting to visit Rome in the future so they could attend a papal audience.

But, “as a blind person, if I was in a typical Wednesday audience, I would have heard him on a speaker,” said Fr. Dennis. “I can do that at home!”

So, he concluded, if he was going to encounter the Holy Father one day, he would need to meet him in person for it to feel meaningful.

On May 8, 2025, the first U.S.-born pontiff walked out to greet the crowds in St. Peter’s Square. Fr. Dennis reflected on the election of Pope Leo XIV – and decided that one day, he would meet the Chicago native.

FEATURES

Over the next year, Fr. Dennis shared this hope with one of his parishioners, Kristi McCabe. McCabe, who has written for the online Catholic blog *Where Peter Is*, decided to see if she could connect her pastor with the blog's managing editor, Mike Lewis.

Lewis, in turn, put them in touch with a cardinal's office in Rome so that they could write letters of introduction and explain Fr. Dennis's far-reaching goal.

"I'm a priest in a rural parish, who's blind..." Fr. Dennis wrote.

Not long after, Rome responded with several dates that could not guarantee, but provided the chance, of Fr. Dennis attending a Wednesday audience and possibly meeting Pope Leo XIV.

"They were still not sure if a one-on-one would happen but it was 'highly possible,'" said Fr. Dennis.

A whirlwind turn of events followed as Fr. Dennis and a small group of his friends chose a date for the Wednesday audience and booked plane tickets and places to stay – a mere three weeks out.

"Because we didn't know (if it would work out), we kept it hush-hush," said Fr. Dennis. He chose to announce the news of his upcoming trip at a parish anniversary celebration of his May 28, 2016 priestly ordination.

On June 3, Fr. Dennis and his friends arrived in St. Peter's Square and found their seats.

"A guy came up and said 'Kristi McCabe and Fr. Jamie Dennis? You're on the stage,'" recalled Fr. Dennis.

Then he knew his dream was becoming a reality.

After Pope Leo arrived and gave his Wednesday audience catechesis, "he came to our row and talked to each one individually," said Fr. Dennis.

"We were last in the row. There were a lot of dignitaries, people you'd expect... and us."

Fr. Dennis said he prefers to keep some of his conversation with Pope Leo private, but he shared that he greeted the Holy Father "on behalf of Bishop Medley, the diocese, and St. Mary Magdalene."

"The pope listened. He was fully present with



COURTESY OF KRISTI MCCABE

Fr. Jamie Dennis, pastor of St. Mary Magdalene Parish in Sorgho, shakes hands with Pope Leo XIV on June 3, 2026 in St. Peter's Square in Rome, Italy.

us," said Fr. Dennis. "He was so gracious and surprised by us (being there). He wasn't expecting a little blind priest from the middle of nowhere."

The whole encounter lasted "all of two minutes" but "it was significant," he said. "I can't believe it happened."

Following the high of the Wednesday audience,

Fr. Dennis and his friends spent the rest of their trip exploring historic sites. Fr. Dennis also celebrated a private Mass in one of the side chapels of St. Peter's Basilica, which is a beloved opportunity for priests visiting the Vatican.

At the end of the liturgy, they even joined a Corpus Christi procession out of the basilica and through St. Peter's Square.

After the procession, his group found their way back inside St. Peter's Basilica. And Fr. Dennis did something he likes to do when visiting any church, large or small: he sang.

"I like to sing in a space so that I can 'feel' the space in the acoustics," he said. "I sang the *Salve Regina*, which was written by a blind monk."

Nearly two months later, back home in Kentucky, Fr. Dennis continues to reflect on his experience, feeling "that connection" with the pope.

"I've come back home, back to my routine and the parish, and things are back to normal," he said. "But things are not the same."

Whenever he celebrates Mass and says the part of the Eucharistic Prayer, "and Leo our pope," he is struck by the significance of that phrase, "because I've met him – he's not just a name on a page," said Fr. Dennis.

"It changes your worldview," he said.

In speaking with Pope Leo, Fr. Dennis said he could sense that "he's a person being pulled in different directions, and he has that weight on his shoulders. You could feel it."

This chance encounter fills him with hope for the future of Leo's papacy: "Pray for the Holy Father, above all. We need to pray for him."

"We have a good shepherd," said Fr. Dennis. "I'm excited to see what else happens." ■

More than a game: Catholic Soccer League unites parishes through local 'World Cup' tournament

BY DIJANA MUMINOVIC, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

While, for the first time in history, FIFA World Cup matches were being played across Mexico, Canada and the United States – bringing together nations and millions of fans from around the globe – another World Cup unfolded locally in Bowling Green, Kentucky, uniting Catholics from different cultures through the game.

Eight teams from five cities across the Diocese of Owensboro gathered for the third annual Catholic Soccer League Tournament on July 11, 2026. The excitement, intensity and determination echoed the world's greatest soccer tournament. But before the first whistle, the players came together not as opponents, but as brothers in faith.

On the grounds of Holy Spirit Parish in Bowling Green, before the opening match, priests and deacons reviewed the tournament rules and blessed the players. Moments later, the players stepped onto the field as rivals.

The Catholic Soccer League was founded in 2024 by Fr. Martin Ma Na Ling, then-parochial vicar of Holy Spirit, after he saw soccer becoming increasingly popular among young adult Catholics throughout the Diocese of Owensboro. Many players had already been practicing and playing recreationally for years, but he believed soccer could become something more: a way to build relationships across parish boundaries and express faith through sport.

His vision quickly gained the support of fellow

priests in the Bowling Green Deanery.

The first Catholic Soccer League Tournament in the diocese was held June 15, 2024, with six teams from five cities. The second tournament, held Aug. 3, 2025, brought together four teams. This year's tournament welcomed eight teams from Bowling Green, Owensboro, Sebree, Russellville and Morgantown. Teams represented Holy Spirit (two



DIJANA MUMINOVIC | WKC

Holy Spirit Parish in Bowling Green is seen in the background as players compete in the July 11, 2026 Catholic Soccer League Tournament, which was the third annual event of its kind.

teams), St. Joseph in Bowling Green, St. Pius X in Owensboro, Sts. Joseph & Paul in Owensboro, Holy Trinity in Morgantown, Sacred Heart in Russellville and St. Michael in Sebree.

For many returning players, the tournament has become an annual tradition.

Peter Saang, who has played soccer since fifth grade, represented St. Pius X in Owensboro for the third year.

"The best part is the fellowship and being here together," Saang said. "I have known most of these people since I was a young boy, and now I get to play soccer with them once a year."

On the field, the players competed with the intensity of professionals. Not even the steady morning rain could keep them off the field. They fought for every possession, defended every goal and celebrated every point. There was the joy of watching the ball reach the net, the relief of a goalkeeper making a difficult save and the disappointment of seeing a shot slip just beyond the goalkeeper's reach.

The youngest players chased the ball with no less determination than the adults, creating matches of their own just beyond the sidelines.

Before each tournament begins, players are reminded that while competition is expected, faith must always come first.

"I always tell them, 'If you cannot control your anger during the game, you had better not play, because we are all Catholics,'" Fr. Ma Na Ling said. "We are called to love one another, even during the game."

The message came to life throughout the day.

One moment captured the spirit of the tournament. When Fr. Ken Mikulcik, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, fell during the match, members of the opposing team immediately came to help him back to his feet.

The presence of priests, deacons and seminarians was not limited to organizing the tournament or offering blessings from the sidelines. They participated

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FEATURES

World Cup continued from page 12



DIJANA MUMINOVIC | WKC

Fr. Martin Ma Na Ling gives a medal to diocesan seminarian Tuân Nguyen at the conclusion of the third annual Catholic Soccer League Tournament on July 11, which was held in Bowling Green. Nguyen's summer assignment was at St. Pius X Parish in Owensboro, where Fr. Ma Na Ling serves as parochial vicar.

throughout the day, supporting the players and, in some cases, joining them on the field. Five priests and three seminarians attended this year's tournament.

Another memorable moment came when Fr. Chris Kight of St. Joseph's scored a goal himself, drawing cheers from players and spectators alike.

The players may have spoken different languages and belonged to different parishes, with jerseys separating them into teams, but their faith continued to unite them.

For Nicholas Pau, who represented Holy Spirit for the second time, that unity is what makes the tournament unique.

"We are all Catholics, yet we come from different cultures and different churches. Now we get to meet each other. This is really good for the future and for unity," Pau said.

Among the tournament's first-time participants

was Edwin Rivera of St. Joseph in Bowling Green, originally from El Salvador. Rivera's team went on to defeat St. Pius X in the championship match, capturing the 2026 Catholic Soccer League title.

Fr. Ma Na Ling expressed gratitude to God and to the priests, deacons, seminarians, diocesan staff and everyone who has supported the league during its first three years. Looking ahead, he hopes to rotate the tournament throughout the diocese, with Owensboro a possible host for next year's event.

The FIFA World Cup shows how soccer can bring nations together. On one field in Bowling Green, the Catholic Soccer League showed how the same game can bring parishes, cultures and communities together through faith.

For Bernardine Naing of Holy Spirit, that spirit is what stands out most.

"When I see all of us coming together, I feel happy



DIJANA MUMINOVIC | WKC

A goalie stands ready as players from Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish in Owensboro approach him during the July 11, 2026 Catholic Soccer League Tournament, held at Holy Spirit Parish in Bowling Green.



DIJANA MUMINOVIC | WKC

Seminarian Hunter Dickens (fourth from the right) stands with Fr. Ryan Harpole, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Bowling Green, while observing the July 11 Catholic Soccer League Tournament held at Holy Spirit Parish. Dickens' summer assignment this year was at St. Joseph.

and blessed," Naing said.

Before the first whistle, they prayed as one Church.

During the matches, they competed as rivals.

At the final whistle, they remained one Catholic family. ■

Dijana Muminovic writes from Bowling Green, Kentucky.

‘We are not alone’

Catholic Charities People of Hope Museum unites community

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Standing before the crowd of 200+ people the evening of July 26, Mercedes Santos Tellez told her story of escaping a domestic violence situation as a youth in Mexico to freedom as a young woman who ultimately gained U.S. citizenship, a college degree, and is now in law school.

“Organizations like Catholic Charities give us hope and remind us we are not alone,” said Santos Tellez to those attending the People of Hope Gala, which supported the efforts of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Owensboro in collaboration with the visit of the People of Hope Museum, a Catholic Charities USA traveling exhibit.

Santos Tellez credited the accompaniment of Susan Montalvo-Gesser, director of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Owensboro, who is also an immigration attorney.

“Thank you for your courage and resilience,” said Santos Tellez. “Thank you Susan, Miguel, and everyone at Catholic Charities who believed in me before I believed in myself,” referencing Miguel Quintanilla, a paralegal with Owensboro’s Catholic Charities who works with youth clients navigating the immigration system.

The gala was just one event in a three-day initiative sponsored by Catholic Charities. From July 26-28, the People of Hope Museum was parked outside the Owensboro Convention Center and open for visitors to watch and listen to stories from people whose lives were changed by Catholic Charities across the country.

From July 26-27, volunteers worked inside the convention center to assemble 2,000 “Boxes of Hope” (meal-at-home food kits) to be distributed by Audubon Area Head Start programs across the region. July 27 also saw a health fair and community resources day with free meals for kids, provided by the diocese’s School Food Service’s summer feeding program.

On July 28, the initiative wrapped up with the Advocacy & Action on Food Insecurity press conference, which featured a panel discussion with John Cain of Feeding Kentucky, Joe Klemczewski of Tri-State Food Bank, and Steve Innes of Green River Community Food Warehouse.

“None of us can solve this problem alone,” said Innes. “It’s not about one organization doing more; it’s about all of us working together.”

By the time the museum closed in the afternoon of July 28 in preparation for its next trip, more than 370 visitors had come through, which surpassed the museum’s stops in Louisville, New York City, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. ■



RILEY GREIF | WKC

Bishop William F. Medley speaks at the July 26, 2026 People of Hope Museum kickoff in front of the Owensboro Convention Center. Susan Montalvo-Gesser, director of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Owensboro, stands nearby.



RILEY GREIF | WKC

More than 15 organizations participate in the July 27 health fair and community resources day in downtown Owensboro in collaboration with Catholic Charities USA’s People of Hope Museum visit to the area.



RILEY GREIF | WKC

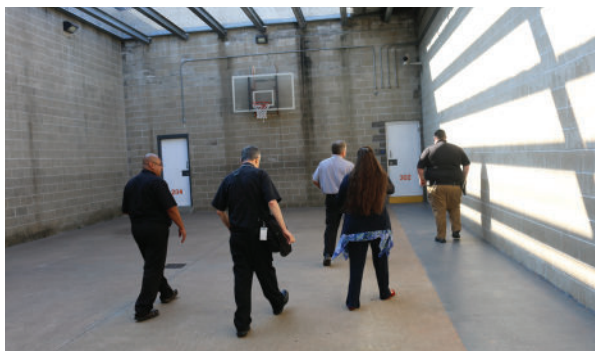
Molly and Al Thompson, recipients of this year’s Providing Help, Creating Hope Award at the July 26 People of Hope Gala supporting Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Owensboro, affirm the work of local volunteers and Catholic Charities staff.

‘We all have freedom in our hearts’- On 250th anniversary of American independence, Bishop Medley meets with Daviess County inmates



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Bishop William F. Medley lifts the Eucharist during a Communion Service held at Daviess County Detention Center on July 4, 2026. In the background, Fr. Carmelo Jiménez, pastor of St. Michael Parish in Sebree, assists at the service.



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Guided by a staff member, Fr. Carmelo Jiménez, Bishop William F. Medley, Dcn. Ken Bennett, and Susan Montalvo-Gesser enter Daviess County Detention Center on July 4 for a pastoral visit with inmates.



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Dcn. Ken Bennett, co-coordinator of the Office of Worship for the Diocese of Owensboro, speaks with Bishop William F. Medley before assisting at a Communion Service held there on July 4, 2026.

BY RACHEL HALL, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

“Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for these least brothers of mine, you did for me.”

Fr. Carmelo Jiménez read those words from the Gospel of Matthew both in English and Spanish on July 4, 2026, at a Communion Service that took place at the Daviess County Detention Center. The setting was sterile with heavy plastic chairs, a room behind several locked heavy metal doors. To get there one passes a small basketball court which looks almost normal save for the metal grate over your head that offers just a fleeting hint of the humid summer day outside.

Fr. Jiménez, pastor of St. Michael Parish in Sebree, made the journey this past Independence Day at the request of Bishop William F. Medley to join him on a pastoral visit. Sebree is well-known for its vibrant multi-lingual Latino population, and as we walked into the facility, he noted with a smile that he needed to get

back soon for a wedding. He explained that the holiday meant a slow day in the restaurant industry, where many of his parishioners work, providing a perfect day for a couple to get married and celebrate their anniversary on.

As the men filed into the chapel wearing orange or green jumpsuits, they were each greeted individually with warm smiles and handshakes as small conversations were had. Joining in the day’s visitation was Dcn. Ken Bennett from the diocesan Worship Office. As a retired police officer, Dcn. Bennett’s experience was invaluable in planning and navigating the logistics involved in visiting the facility.

Also present from the diocese was Susan Montalvo-Gesser, director of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Owensboro and an immigration attorney. According to a July 1, 2026 story in the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer, of the 621 people incarcerated at Daviess County Detention Center, 91 were being held on federal immigration detainees.

The jail staff was helpful and accommodating for

our visit that day, as they guided us through the visitor procedures.

Following the Gospel reading, Bishop Medley, marking the occasion of America’s 250-year anniversary, reflected in his homily, “I said, let’s go where they can’t come to us to celebrate,” since he knew he wanted to do something deeper than a prayer service.

“Freedom looks different here, I want to take you to a BBQ and cook you a steak, but that is not an option here,” said Bishop Medley. “Where you do have freedom, however, is inside you. We all have freedom in our hearts.”

As Catholic social teaching reminds us, human dignity is an inherent gift. And as our nation celebrates the 250th anniversary of its founding, this Independence Day visit served as a reminder to renew our commitment to living as a people committed to faith, freedom, and the dignity of all. ■

Rachel Hall is the director of communications for the Diocese of Owensboro.

What is Alpha? *An introduction*



COURTESY OF DR. JEFF ANDRINI

Members of the faithful attend an Alpha retreat held in the parish center at St. William Parish in Knottsville on March 28, 2026.

BY DR. JEFF ANDRINI, EVANGELIZATION & DISCIPLESHIP

Alpha is a practical tool for evangelization used by thousands of Catholic parishes worldwide to introduce (or reintroduce) people to the core message of the Christian faith, known as the kerygma – the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Rather than acting as a formal, systematic theology class or catechism course, Alpha serves as a welcoming “on-ramp” to faith. It is designed for everyone: active parishioners looking to deepen their faith, lapsed Catholics, and those completely outside the Church.

Alpha is an 11-week program, and each session is built around a simple, relaxed, three-part rhythm that lowers barriers and builds trust. 1) Connection (The Food): Every session begins with a shared meal

or refreshments. Eating together breaks the ice, builds authentic community, and models radical hospitality. 2) Content (The Talk): Participants watch a high-quality, 30-minute video that explores a fundamental question of faith (e.g., “Who is Jesus?”, “Why and how do I pray?”, or “How does God guide us?”). 3) Conversation (The Small Group): Guests gather in small groups to share their thoughts. The golden rule of Alpha is that no question or opinion is off-limits, and there is no pressure or judgment. It is a space to voice doubts safely.

The Holy Spirit Retreat occurs after week seven where participants attend a day-long retreat focused entirely on the person and work of the Holy Spirit, which many describe as the turning point for personal transformation.

Alpha meets people right where they are, offering a uniquely personal impact focused on encounter

over content. The sessions provide a safe space for questions and a rare, pressure-free environment to process their thoughts out loud. Finally, it awakens hearts, frequently revitalizing Catholics who have been going through the motions, turning routine attendance into active, personal faith.

Alpha is a catalyst for parish renewal in the following ways. It shifts from maintenance to mission by giving parishioners a simple, high-quality tool to confidently invite unchurched friends, family, or neighbors to church without it feeling confrontational. It builds a leadership pipeline, as guests who finish Alpha frequently return as small group hosts or helpers. This drastically increases parish engagement, transforming passive consumers into active volunteers. Finally, it fosters radical hospitality. By the welcoming, non-judgmental culture cultivated in Alpha sessions, this naturally spills over into the broader parish, changing how the community welcomes visitors on Sunday mornings.

Alpha is a wonderful starting point for ongoing adult faith formation. It focuses purely on the initial proclamation of the Gospel and serves as a powerful bridge to deeper Catholic programs, like the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA), bible studies, and sacramental preparation.

Prayerfully consider forming a small team this fall and offering Alpha in your parish beginning in January 2027. The diocese will host a Retreat Day on March 20, 2027 at St. William Parish in Knottsville for all parishes participating in Alpha. Learn more at alpha.org and contact me for details. ■

Blessings,
Jeff

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

Faith is more than believing

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

Every one of us believes in something. We believe the sun will rise tomorrow. We believe those we love will keep their promises. We believe the chair beneath us will hold our weight. Yet Christian faith is something far deeper than simply accepting a set of facts as true.

That is the focus of this new monthly series in *The Western Kentucky Catholic: Ten Matters of Faith Every Catholic Should Know: A Journey from Belief to Discipleship*. Over the coming months, we will explore some of the most important questions of our Catholic faith – not simply to increase our knowledge, but to deepen our relationship with Jesus Christ. My hope is that these reflections will help us move from knowing about our faith to truly living it each day.

We begin with perhaps the most important question of all: What is faith?

Many people think faith means believing that God exists or accepting the teachings of the Church. Those things certainly matter. But if faith ends there, it remains incomplete. Even the demons know that God exists (James 2:19). Christian faith is much more than intellectual agreement.

Faith is first and foremost a relationship.

When God revealed Himself throughout salvation history, He was never simply providing information. He was inviting people into communion with Him.

He called Abraham to leave everything behind and trust Him. He called Moses to lead His people to freedom. He called the apostles to leave their nets and follow Jesus. In every case, faith meant responding personally to God's invitation.

The same invitation is extended to us.



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Bishop William F. Medley shakes hands with a man participating in the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion held at St. Thomas More Parish in Paducah on Feb. 15, 2026.

When we profess the Creed each Sunday, we are not merely reciting theological statements. We are renewing our trust in the God who knows us, loves us, and continually calls us into a deeper friendship with Him. Faith is saying, "Lord, I trust You with my life."

That trust changes everything.

It shapes the way we make decisions, treat our families, respond to suffering, spend our time, and serve our neighbors. Faith is not something we practice for one hour on Sunday morning. It becomes the lens through which we see the entire world.

Of course, faith is also a gift. None of us creates it by our own effort. God always takes the first step. He speaks to us through Sacred Scripture, the sacraments, the Church, and even through the ordinary events of daily life. Our role is to listen, to respond, and to continue saying "yes" each day, even when the road ahead is uncertain.

As Catholics, we never stop growing in faith. Whether you have attended Mass every Sunday for decades or are just beginning to rediscover your relationship with Christ, there is always another step to take. Faith is not a destination we arrive at once and for all; it is a lifelong journey of conversion and discipleship.

I invite you to join me over these next ten months as we explore together what every Catholic should know – not simply with our minds, but with our hearts. My prayer is that each month's reflection will encourage you to encounter Christ more deeply and to discover anew the joy of following Him.

Because in the end, faith is far more than believing something about Jesus.

It is believing in Him, walking with Him, and allowing Him to transform every part of our lives. ■

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

Chesterton Academy looks to help students 'grow in virtue' as inaugural class begins this fall

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Every time he welcomes someone into the facilities that will soon house the inaugural class of Chesterton Academy of Bowling Green, "I am filled with pride," said the new headmaster.

"The teachers I've been hiring have been excited," said Dr. Tom A. Stewart, Chesterton Academy's headmaster. "We're eager to build this little community with our students and our families."

Chesterton Academy's first day of classes is Aug. 12. The classical high school is located in the DeVries Pastoral Center on the campus of St. Joseph Parish in Bowling Green, but it hopes to expand to a building of its own in the future.

Historically, St. Joseph School had a high school, but it closed in 1965.

Dr. Stewart said every new Chesterton Academy – there are almost 100 in the worldwide Chesterton Schools Network – opens with ninth and tenth graders. A junior class is added the following year, and in their third year they add a senior class.

And naturally, "we add freshmen each year," said Dr. Stewart, who worked in public education for 30+ years before joining Chesterton Academy this summer.

With their motto as a "joyfully Catholic classical academy," Dr. Stewart said that "we believe students



COURTESY OF CHESTERTON ACADEMY

Faculty, staff, and friends of Chesterton Academy in Bowling Green are seen during the school's June 16, 2026 ribbon cutting with the Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce.

should enjoy coming to school."

The Chesterton schools are named after British Catholic intellectual G.K. Chesterton, who died in 1936 and was known for having joyful disposition.

As a classical school, Chesterton Academy offers a humanities sequence, literature, history, philosophy, theology, and a foreign language, in addition to standard high school subjects like math and science. Dr. Stewart said the curriculum also emphasizes the fine arts, including drama and music.

He said this helps students grow into well-formed adults with strong leadership skills.

"Chesterton graduates are well-prepared for college, if that's the student's vocation," he said, adding that these schools aim to "help students and families with the discernment process" whether that be college, the workforce, the military, or priesthood/religious life.

Dr. Stewart added that "the primary goal is to help them grow in virtue and determine and discern God's will."

In terms of athletics, he said the academy plans to join the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) as soon as they are certified as a non-public school in Kentucky.

Dr. Stewart said tuition is affordable, but "we never want tuition alone to be a family's deciding factor so financial aid and scholarships are also available."

"I'm excited for our students and families to have a Catholic high school again," he said. "It's a huge honor to be the headmaster." ■

Student application information for Chesterton Academy of Bowling Green, including details about financial aid options, may be found at <https://chestertonbgky.com/admissions>.

Intentional opportunities: As students head to college, here's how to connect them with Catholic campus ministry

BY CHARLIE HARDESTY, OFFICE OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

One of the most significant “hand-off” moments in the lives of our young people is the transition from high school to college. This is often a moment of freedom and independence, but also a moment of identity crisis as many young adults are searching to find their next space of belonging. Helping a college student to find Catholic community on their campus or at a Newman Center is a vital part of bridging this transition.

We were excited to feature our campus ministry efforts in this summer's Diocese of Owensboro impact report. We are proud of the ministry happening at Brescia University, Murray State University and Western Kentucky University. The desire of this article, as we enter the fall semester, is to continue to show off their great work and equip you, the reader, with the knowledge of how to invite a college student to check out their campus ministry.

Brescia University: Brescia is our only Catholic university in the Diocese of Owensboro. Much of their ministry is woven into the regular campus experience. Fr. Mike Williams is the chaplain, and Sr. Pam Mueller, OSU, is the director of campus ministry. For more

information about campus ministry opportunities, please contact Sr. Pam at pam.mueller@brescia.edu.

Murray State University: Philomena Hempel is the campus minister at the Newman Center at MSU. Please check out <https://www.catholicracers.org> for more information about campus ministry opportunities. St. Leo Parish in Murray serves as the parish home for all Newman Center activities at Murray State. For more information, please contact Philomena at philomena@stleoky.org.

Western Kentucky University: Katie Bickers is the Campus Minister at St. Thomas Aquinas Newman Center at WKU. Fr. Jason McClure is the chaplain through the end of 2026 and then Fr. Corey Bruns will become chaplain in 2027 while remaining diocesan vocations director. Please check out <https://www.stthomasaquinaswku.com/> for more information about campus ministry opportunities and to find Mass and confession times. For more information, please contact Katie at katie.bickers@pastoral.org.

We are excited to have FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students) missionaries on campus at both Murray State and Western Kentucky Universities. You can learn more about their ministries and find the missionaries serving you campus at www.focus.org.

Not all young adults at this age are heading off to

college this fall, so this intentional welcome is just as important at our parishes. Please help us by inviting young adults more deeply into the life of your local parish community.

There are many other students from our diocese heading off to schools and experiences outside of our diocese. I would love to help you connect them to opportunities. Please contact me at charlie.hardesty@pastoral.org for help locating a ministry outside our diocese. ■



COURTESY OF TOPPER CATHOLIC
Students of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green listen to a talk led by a Dominican Sister of St. Cecilia from Nashville during the 2025-2026 academic



COURTESY OF BRESCIA UNIVERSITY
Students of Brescia University in Owensboro participate in Faith Fest 2026 during the spring semester.



COURTESY OF CATHOLIC RACERS
Students of Murray State University participate in the Stations of the Cross, coordinated by the Newman Center, as Lent is observed during the spring 2026 semester.

Gaspar camps provide space to encounter Christ



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

A camper grins while climbing Tower #68 on July 15, 2026, while attending Expedition 2 Camp for 5th and 6th graders at Gaspar River.

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE
WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

At Gaspar River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center, “you learn to honor and glorify God in everything, not just prayer and Adoration, but also in adventure time and the canteen,” according to a Hopkinsville camper who attended this past July.

James Lansford, a rising sixth grade homeschooled student from Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, attended Expedition 2 Camp at Gaspar, which took place July 12-17. He said appreciated the time spent “with people from other places and other dioceses.”

“If you’re looking for a way to learn more about Jesus and the Catholic faith and want to have lots of fun, this is the place for you!” he said.

The eight weeks from May 31-July 22 saw Gaspar River’s 19th summer of camp as 530 kids participated in adventure activities, small groups, and prayer experiences, as well as Mass and opportunities for confession.

Gaspar welcomed a variety of ages ranging from



RILEY GREIF | WKC

In the evening of July 15, 2026, Fr. Jason McClure, Gaspar River’s chaplain, leads campers in a Eucharistic procession after Mass.

rising third graders to graduating high school seniors, with each camp tailored to campers’ specific age groups with the overarching 2026 camp theme of “Life with Christ is a Wonderful Adventure.”

This was the first summer at camp for Elliott Green, who is going into fifth grade this fall and attends St. Albert the Great Parish in Louisville.

He enjoyed “all the friends I have made,” and “all the activities because everything is about Jesus and we have Mass every day!”

Vivian Ross, a rising sixth grader from St. Leo Parish in Murray, said this was her third year attending camp at Gaspar.

“Making new friends is my favorite thing,” she said, adding that, “I’ve learned new ways to pray.”

In addition to regular summer camp, Gaspar also offered Called to Love, a camp for high school and graduating senior girls, which focused on helping campers understand their identity as beloved daughters of God.

Gaspar staff member Jenna McCarty, who belongs to St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro,

was a camper for 10 years before joining the staff.

“I would not have the prayer life I have now” if it was not for the staff’s regular prayer routine, she said. “Chapel time is built into our staff schedules, with 30 minutes to spend time with the Lord.”

“I just really love this place,” said McCarty, who today is studying nutrition and dietetics at Murray State University. “I love what we do here. It brings me hope.”

According to another staff member, John Blair, making a difference in campers’ lives tends to make a difference in the staffs’ lives, too.

Blair, who is studying business management at University of Kentucky, learned about Gaspar River through a friend who volunteers with him in UK’s prolife club.

He said that most of his college roommates have not been Catholic, and “being here with a full Catholic community has been really awesome.”

Winter Wells, who belongs to Christ the King Parish in Madisonville, will enter fifth grade this year and said her favorite aspect of Gaspar is learning about Jesus: “I feel like I listen more in church and try to be closer to Jesus” as a result of her camp experiences.

“It’s fun and you add Jesus into everything,” she said. ■



RILEY GREIF | WKC

A camper climbs the vertical playground during Expedition 2 Camp on July 15, 2026 at Gaspar River Camp.

St. Martin VBS supports The Foster Shop



COURTESY OF NICOLE GRAY

Shown are the young participants and volunteers of St. Martin Parish's summer 2026 Vacation Bible School.

BY NICOLE GRAY, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Three years ago, St. Martin Parish director of religious education, Debi Hopkins, had a vision of creating more than just a summer activity for children. She wanted Vacation Bible School to become a place where families could grow in their faith, build friendships, and strengthen the sense of community within our parish.

Today, that vision continues to flourish.

This year's Bible Adventures Vacation Bible School welcomed 67 children, more than 20 youth assistants, and more than 30 adult volunteers who gave countless hours to make the week a success. Children are divided into the 12 "Tribes of Israel" and experience the bible in a hands-on way through storytelling, crafts, games, music, food, and interactive encounters with biblical figures. Every activity helps bring Scripture to life while teaching children about their faith and the rich history of God's people.

While the learning and fun are important, Hopkins believes one of the greatest blessings of VBS is the community it creates. Each year, the parish also chooses a local nonprofit to support through donations collected during this free event. This year, St. Martin

is partnering with The Foster Shop, formerly known as Borrowed Hearts Owensboro. The organization recently adopted its new name while continuing its mission of serving children in foster care and the families who welcome them into their homes.

The Foster Shop provides clothing, shoes, hygiene products, baby items, school supplies, and other everyday essentials to children entering foster care, often with very few personal belongings. Beyond meeting physical needs, the organization offers dignity, encouragement, and practical support to foster families throughout their journey. It also operates the Agape House, a welcoming space where children awaiting placement can shower, enjoy a warm meal, do laundry, and rest in a safe, comforting environment.

By supporting The Foster Shop through VBS, St. Martin Parish is helping extend Christ's love beyond its own walls and into the lives of some of the most vulnerable children in our community. It's another reminder that Vacation Bible School is about much more than one week in the summer – it's about living our faith through learning, service, and love.

As of this writing we have over \$1,200 in monetary donations to give to The Foster Shop. ■

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



COURTESY OF TONI THOMPSON

Sr. Martha Keller, OSU, visits with parishioners of St. Elizabeth in Curdsville during a June 28 celebration of her 50 years of religious life.

Parish celebrates jubilee, wishes sister well on new path

BY WKC STAFF

On June 28, St. Elizabeth Parish in Curdsville held a celebration for the 50th anniversary of religious life of Sr. Martha Keller, OSU. The parish wished to celebrate her jubilee before she left the parish for her new assignment at St. Jerome Parish in Fancy Farm. Sr. Martha lived in residence at St. Elizabeth Parish for a number of years while working at Mount Saint Joseph. ■



COURTESY OF FAITH FORMATION OFFICE

The group of participants of the Diocese of Owensboro's July 10-12, 2026 catechists retreat are seen at Saint Meinrad Archabbey, where the retreat was hosted.

Catechist retreat draws record attendance

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

From July 10-12, 35 catechists from across the Diocese of Owensboro gathered at Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, Indiana, for the 2026 Catechist Retreat, "Growing in Wisdom and Grace Throughout Life." Led by retreat master Sr. Cheryl Clemmons, OSU, the weekend invited participants to reflect on the lifelong journey of faith and spiritual growth through inspiring presentations, guided prayer, fellowship, and personal reflection.

The retreat also offered many opportunities for worship and the sacraments, including the

celebration of Mass, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, guided prayer experiences, prayer triads, and ample time for private prayer in the peaceful setting of Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

This year's retreat welcomed 35 participants, making it the largest-attended catechist retreat to date. The record attendance is a joyful sign that the diocese's catechists continue to recognize the importance of spiritual renewal and ongoing formation. We are grateful to everyone who participated and look forward to building on this momentum as this annual retreat continues to grow, strengthening those who faithfully share the Gospel in our parishes and schools. ■

Sr. Carol Shively named one of Brescia University's Distinguished Alumni

BY MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH STAFF

Ursuline Sr. Carol Shively, who has served as superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Shreveport, La., for 27 years, was named one of three Distinguished Alumni of Brescia University during the annual Laurel Awards on April 18, 2026.

Sr. Carol graduated in 1983 with a Bachelor of Science degree in early elementary education from the Owensboro, Ky., college that was founded by the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph. She earned a Master of Arts degree in Catholic school administration and curriculum from the University of Saint Thomas in 1991.

Sr. Carol is active in numerous professional organizations, including the National Catholic Education Association and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. She also serves on the Brescia University Board of Trustees.

"Sr. Carol remains at the forefront of educational innovation while staying deeply rooted in the mission of Catholic education," according to a news release from Brescia. "She is widely recognized for her ability to integrate rigorous academic standards and classroom strategies that foster both student achievement and character formation."

Sr. Carol grew up in Marion County, Ky., where she met the Ursuline Sisters as her teachers when she began the second grade. She joined the community in 1978 and has served in solely education ministry since 1982. She served as a teacher in Kentucky at Hardinsburg, Leitchfield, and Owensboro; as a principal in Missouri

Continues on page 23

Shively continued from page 22



COURTESY OF MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH
Sr. Carol Shively, OSU, accepts a Distinguished Alumni award from Brescia University president Madison C. Silvert on April 18, 2026. Sr. Carol is the superintendent of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Shreveport, La.

at Glennonville, New Madrid and Poplar Bluff; and as a superintendent of Catholic schools in Beaumont, Texas, for three years before moving to Shreveport in 1999.

The Distinguished Alumni award was created to honor graduates who exemplify the elements that encompass “The Brescia Difference: Respect for the Sacred, Devotion to Learning, Commitment to Growth in Virtue, and Promotion of Servant Leadership.” Also receiving the honor with Sr. Carol were Dr. M. Edward Jones, class of 1966, and Dr. Gayle Rhodes, class of 1983.

Sr. Carol is the 12th Ursuline Sister to receive the honor. She joins current Sisters Cheryl Clemons, Sharon Sullivan, Mary Matthias Ward, Larraine Lauter, Vivian Bowles, Ruth Gehres and Michele Morek. Four Ursulines who are now deceased also received the award – Sisters Joseph Angela Boone, Rose Marita O’Bryan, Dianna Ortiz, and Amelia Stenger. Ursuline Associate Mary Danhauer also received the honor. ■

Brescia University Granted Accreditation-Provisional Status for New Physician Assistant Program

PRESS RELEASE

Owensboro, Ky. (May 28, 2026) – Brescia University has announced another achievement in the launch of its upcoming Physician Assistant (PA) program. The University was recently notified by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) that it received provisional accreditation. The program will welcome its inaugural cohort of 30 students in August.

The ARC-PA has granted Accreditation-Provisional status to the Brescia University Physician Assistant Program sponsored by Brescia University.

Accreditation-Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program’s ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding Accreditation-Provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students.

Accreditation-Provisional does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status. It is limited to no more than five years from matriculation of the first class.

The program’s accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at <https://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-brescia-university/>.

“Achieving accreditation status is a testament to the caliber and hard work of the PA program’s faculty, as well as the support of the institution,” said M. Blair Whitaker, MPAS, PA-C, Physician Assistant Program

Director. “Our faith has been unwavering throughout this process, and we are blessed to continue the tremendous work we are doing. Brescia’s PA program is dedicated to improving access to quality medical care in our community and region, and we are eager to welcome our first cohort of students.”

The ARC-PA serves as the national accrediting agency for physician assistant education. Its purpose is to protect the interests of the public and the PA profession by defining standards for PA education and ensuring programs across the United States meet those standards through a rigorous evaluation process.

The development of Brescia University’s PA Program has been made possible in part through startup funding from HealthForce Kentucky, a regional initiative designed to inspire healthcare careers by expanding access to advanced education and technology. HealthForce Kentucky represents a collaborative partnership of nine higher education institutions and numerous school districts across 16 counties in western Kentucky.

“Brescia’s commitment to our region’s workforce is rooted in our founding. We are incredibly fortunate to have a world-class faculty and, thanks to HealthForce and the Kentucky Legislature, a world-class simulation facility,” said Madison Silvert, Brescia University President. “We are privileged to help form the next generation of compassionate healthcare providers through the holistic and deeply personal education that every student at Brescia enjoys.”

The Physician Assistant Program exemplifies Brescia University’s commitment to expanding

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Accreditation continued from page 23

academic offerings aligned with regional workforce needs and its mission of service. By preparing highly qualified healthcare professionals, the University is positioned to make a meaningful impact on healthcare access and outcomes throughout the region.

Brent Hayden, MD, Brescia University Physician Assistant Program Medical Director, said, "This is a huge milestone for our program, and I am personally excited to see students from our own community learning to provide exceptional care for both the hospital and the surrounding regions in the near future." ■

For more information about Brescia University's Physician Assistant Program, visit brescia.edu/program/physician-assistant-program/ or contact Brescia University's Advancement Office at (270) 686-2110

Catholic schools hire new leadership

BY WKC STAFF

This summer, several of the Diocese of Owensboro's Catholic schools welcomed new leadership.

John Kirkpatrick is the new principal of Mary Carrico Catholic School in Knottsville.

Katie Marks is the new Director of Advancement for Owensboro Catholic School System in Owensboro.

Bryan Krueger is the new system director of St. Mary School System (effective May 18).

Holly Miller is the new principal of St. Mary Middle and High School in St. Mary School System in Paducah.

Laura Cecil now serves as the curriculum coordinator for the diocese's Catholic Schools Office.

Please keep all of these members of our Catholic school leadership in your prayers. To learn more about Catholic education in the Diocese of Owensboro, visit owensborodiocese.org/catholic-schools. ■

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Holy Mackerel! The constitution of the Mount Saint Joseph fishing club

BY EDWARD WILSON, ARCHIVES

Few things say Kentucky summer like getting out the fishing poles and heading to the lake. This felt like the perfect summer article to kick off the fall printing season of The Western Kentucky Catholic.

Last October, Sr. Mary Timothy Bland, OSU – one of the archival volunteers at Mount Saint Joseph – told me she had discovered the constitution for a fishing club for the Mount’s lake. (For those who are unaware, the Mount has a lake that sits across the road from the convent on another patch of land owned by the Ursulines.) I had never heard of this club and was interested to see the document.

She showed me the constitution and I was amazed. What a great little piece of forgotten Mount history. I told her I wanted to write an article on it but wanted to wait for summer, when people would be fishing. It would make it much more appropriate. So, thanks to Sr. Mary Timothy, here is the “Constitution of the Lake Club of St. Joseph, Kentucky.”

On Wednesday, April 8, 1931, a day that the sisters remarked was a day of “Wonderful weather!” seven men from St. Joseph, Ky., gathered with a purpose. That purpose was to sign the constitution of their newly organized club. The sisters had agreed to let

the men start a private fishing club utilizing the Ursuline lake. The men were Joseph H. Ballard (the postmaster of St. Joseph, Ky.) Bert Ballard, Oliver Cecil, J.D. Merimee, Charles Thomas, Joe Muth (the Mount’s beloved jack-of-all-trades handyman),



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

Joe Muth, the beloved jack-of-all-trades handyman of Mount Saint Joseph, is seen with pet dog Bozo in 1930. Muth was one of the seven members of a fishing club for the Mount’s lake.

and Fr. Joseph J. Diemert (the Mount’s chaplain, teacher of philosophy and pastor of nearby St. Alphonsus Parish.)



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

Fr. Joseph J. Diemert is seen in this undated photo. Fr. Diemert, one of the seven members of a fishing club for the Mount’s lake, was the Mount’s chaplain, a teacher of philosophy and pastor of nearby St. Alphonsus Parish.

The club was structured like any other club of its day. The lake club’s constitution included articles for membership, finance, duties of officers, meetings, etc. It laid out guidelines for the election of president and secretary-treasurer. The core agreements of the club’s members were \$10 a year to stock the lake with fish, membership was limited to the original seven members, no fishing for the first year, and fishing was limited to the members and their immediate family. Each man signed the constitution, and the dream of a private fishing club and private lake was realized. There is no telling the amount of stories that could be told about those days on the lake. How many beautiful sunrises and sunsets must have been observed by those jolly fishermen on that holy ground.

Little else is known about the club. With some additional digging, there may be a bit more that can be gathered about the venture. However, this is a story that I thought many would find interesting. It never ceases to amaze me how much history there is out there to rediscover. Time and time again, our documents remind us that everything, even a little lake, can have a big history to tell. ■

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST 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

Consider naming your parish as a final beneficiary in your will. After caring for loved ones, a residuary gift to your parish becomes a lasting testament of faith, gratitude, and commitment to Christ's work. For more information on how to remember your parish in your estate, contact Valeria Vessels, Director of Development, Diocese of Owensboro, at (270) 852-8348 or valeria.vessels@pastoral.org.

Aug. 16 Cursillo workshop

Cursillo friends! Please join us for a workshop at Christ the King Parish in Madisonville on Aug. 16 at 10 a.m.! We will be learning about and discussing the progression of the Rollos as set out by Eduardo Bonnin. Our annual retreat day with Fr. Tom Buckman will be Oct. 10 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Come for a day of prayer and fellowship! For more information, text or call Michelle Sandheinrich at (270) 889-3546. We had a great turnout for Grand Ultreya! Let's continue the 4th Day! De Colores!

August retreat for healing from abortion

Come join us for a weekend of emotional healing and spiritual renewal. Rachel's Vineyard offers post-abortion healing retreats for women and men who are suffering from the lingering effects of abortion. Catholic retreat will be held Aug. 21-23, 2026 in Mount St. Francis, Indiana (Louisville area). Contact Rita: (270) 474-4707, ext. 1. retreats@hopeafter-abortionky.com. <http://hopeafter-abortionky.com>.

com. A Catholic retreat will also be held Oct. 23-25, 2026 in the Whitesville/Owensboro, KY, area.

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.



YOU'VE GOT THIS

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

CAP COUNSELING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Find a list of counselors ready to listen.



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HIGHLIGHTS:

- National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion
- National Shrine of Saint Jude
- Visit with Fr. Byron Macias
- Childhood home of Pope Leo
- Catholic History and Inspiration of the Upper Midwest
- Dinner by the Lake
- Daily Mass
- Daily Reflective Prayer time
- Spiritual Direction & Much More!



August Wedding Anniversaries

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

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

Blessed Mother, Owensboro

Charles & Nola Courtney, 55
Donnie & Connie Clark, 53
Harold & Rhonda Staples, 55
James & Alma Topper, 56
Jerry & Cecilia Wilkerson, 53
John & Rose Meister, 55
Joseph & Geraldine Jarboe, 53
Larry & Mary Ann Mattingly, 51
Nick & Amy Rinaldi, 50
Raymond & Theresa Payne, 66
Ron & Mereda Hicks, 54
Steve & Brenda Hagan, 57
Christ the King, Madisonville
David & Ellen Waters, 67
Doug & Patricia Pilson, 58
Frank & Barbara Schnapf, 58
James & Judy Donley, 58
Mark & Linda Koenig, 5
Ron & Marsha Segebarth, 58
Tommy & Carol Richardson, 60

Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson

Andrew & Patricia Wynne, 51
Armando & Holivia Sandoval, 55
Bill & Judy McClellan, 63
Brad & Anne Boyd, 40
Brian & Jamie Smith, 25
Chris & Lisa Armstrong, 40
Danny & Debbie Bullock, 53
Dorin & Betsy Luck, 51
Jim & Denise Roethemeier, 51
Jimmy & Debbie Hagan, 55
Joshua & Estefania Wirey, 10
Keith & Diane Utley, 57
Kevin & Karen Morris, 40
Mike & Kay Smith, 54
Roger & Cathy Robertson, 10
Scottie & Cynthia Long, 53
Thomas & Sandra Rugg, 54
Thomas & Yvonne Drury, 52

Holy Spirit, Bowling Green

Dale & Heather Lawrence, 10
Jack & Carole Hoeft, 54
Jack & Ginny French, 40
James & Renetta Bemiss, 50
John & Jocelyn Knepler, 57
Joshua & Kasey McNamee, 10
Steve & Ann Bolt, 53
Wesley & Alexis Smith, 10
Holy Trinity, Morgantown

Larry & Mary Martin, 64
Teddy & Margie Seiler, 56
Immaculate Conception, Earlington
Johnny & Elizabeth Wix, 58
Immaculate Conception, Hawesville
Dallas & Margaret Powers, 56
James & Brenda Adkins, 58
Immaculate, Owensboro
Edward & Nannette Parish, 56
Gary & Bonnie Roberts, 59
James & Sharon Murphy, 61
John & Margie Wathen, 71
Ron & Kay Woodward, 50
Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro
Al & Judy Mattingly, 55
Dan & Kathy Medley, 50
David & Shelley Tipmore, 25
Kenneth & Johanna Boarman, 64

Mike & Linda Todd, 58
Thomas & Cindi Reisz, 56
Wayne & Laura Edge, 56
Precious Blood, Owensboro
Bill & June Johnson, 66
Michael & Amanda Murphy, 25
Paul & Tancy Payne, 58
Roger & Linda Haynes, 53
Rosary Chapel, Paducah
Mike & Julia Ward, 57
Sacred Heart, Hickman
Gerald & Mary Harris, 59
Jimmy & Barb Blanton, 61
Jimmy & Pat Cooley, 66
Sacred Heart, Waverly
Charles & Nancy Clements, 55
St. Agnes, Uniontown
Bill & Lora Lee Duncan, 57
Damon & Cathy Dayberry, 59
St. Alphonsus, St. Joseph
Charles & Sarah Dant, 61
Randy & Elaine Blandford, 54
St. Ambrose, Henshaw
Jerry & Ellen Day, 50
St. Ann, Morganfield
Anthony & Judy Moore, 52
Charles & Elizabeth Acker, 59
Eddie & Yvonne Burks, 50
Fred & Bonnie Hooper, 59
James & Dorothy Buckman, 69

John & Donna Greenwell, 51
John & Yvonne Davis, 60
Kenny & Judy Willett, 59
Naven & Julianna Brown, 5
St. Anthony of Padua, Grand Rivers
Dan & Cindy O'Brien, 56
Paul & Diane Quayle, 59
St. Anthony, Peonia
James & Donna McLemore, 57
St. Augustine, Grayson Springs
David & Mary Doris Simon, 68
Joseph & Jody Ziegler, 55
St. Augustine, Reed
Bill & Connie Williams, 52
St. Benedict, Wax
John & Brenda Schmidt, 50
St. Charles, Livermore
Mitch & Linda Dotson, 50
St. Columba, Lewisport
Eddie & Rachel Gray, 54
St. Denis, Fancy Farm
Chris & Cindy Higgins, 40
St. Edward, Fulton
Jerry & Mary Ann Hobbs, 66
Tommie & Melinda Briggs, 55
St. Elizabeth, Clarkson
Allen & Rhonda Clemons, 52
Rich & Mary Ellen Wygant, 40
St. Francis Borgia, Sturgis
Bobby & Faye Greenwell, 68
Michael & Rosanne Thornsbury, 53
St. Francis de Sales, Paducah
Charles & Hazel Marie Collier, 60
Daniel & Linda Quinlan, 51
Darrell & Cindy Boyd, 53
Gene & Fran Glastetter, 61
Jim & Judie Bonner, 56
William & Judith Hayden, 67
St. Henry, Aurora
Kent & Nadine Eikenberry, 52
Ray & Ann Davis, 59
Ty & Nancy Thill, 58
St. Jerome, Fancy Farm
Benny & Ruthie Wood, 53
Dale & Evelyn Spraggs, 50
David & Emmalene Hayden, 55
Grant & Claudette Mills, 59

Joseph & Paula Elliott, 55
Norris & Elexie McNutt, 54
Preston & Lindsey Wilferd, 5
Richard & Margaret Wilson, 51
William & Angela Higdon, 53
St. John the Evangelist, Paducah
David & Elizabeth Goewert, 58
Frank & Kay Kern, 63
Richard & Susan Durbin, 56
St. Joseph, Bowling Green
Bob & Paula Baysinger, 57
Bruce & Renee Updegraff, 25
Dan & Jennifer Murphy, 59
Jerry & Diana Webb, 51
John & Cathy Fox, 54
John & Donna Browning, 50
Malcolm & Susan Cherry, 51
Phillip & Maria Hinkle, 51
Ralph & Mary Wilken, 56
Richard & Rosemary Wiesemann, 56
Ronnie & Paula Miller, 57
Tom & Peggy Cahill, 66
St. Joseph, Leitchfield
Greg & Ashley Ashley, 10
St. Joseph, Mayfield
Charles & Belinda Nanny, 50
Charles & Christie Henson, 54
Gerald & Pam Brooks, 58
James & Judy Hobbs, 58
Joey & Nancy Wilson, 56
Larry & Rose Seay, 56
St. Lawrence, Philpot
David & Judy Carrico, 10
Thomas & Marquita Howe, 40
Travis & Laura Rhodes, 10
St. Leo, Murray
Andy & Lou Ann Conklin, 56
Dan & Cheryl Earles, 59
Doug & Anne Walton, 54

James & Susan Koegel, 56
Michael & Kathy Johnson, 50
Sean & Jennifer Caldwell, 25
St. Martin, Rome
Larry & Donna Kamuf, 54
Phillip & Jena Hayden, 10
St. Mary Magdalene, Sorgho
Bill & Judi Head, 59
Gary & Sharon McCarty, 50
Robert & Jane Kamuf, 40
St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville
Bill & Hope Brey, 51
Frank & Connie Hagan, 52
Gene & Brenda Hamilton, 54
James & Silva Lanham, 5
John & Kalley Marchand, 5
Lewis & Jeanie Jean, 57
St. Mary, Franklin
David & Glenda Duncan, 51
St. Mary, LaCenter
Jerry & Julie Owsley, 58
Joe & Betty Lane, 54
St. Michael, Sebree
Bobby & Susie Blanford, 63
St. Paul, Princeton
George & Sharon Barber, 55
Tommy & Kay Cotton, 58
St. Peter of Alcantara, Stanley
Jack & Vicki Stogsdill, 52
Nathan & Julie Grant, 25
Steve & Sally Moss, 55
St. Peter of Antioch, Waverly
John & Gwynn Royster, 55
Jonis & Hannah Buckman, 5
Steve & Dana Bishop, 50
St. Pius X, Calvert City
Larry & Judy Krouse, 56
RJ & Diane Witowski, 58
St. Pius X, Owensboro
Al & Jane Johnson, 61
David & Jennifer Brown, 53
Greg & Marion Bates, 53
Jacob & Olivia Gerteisen, 10
Joshua & Rebecca Ann Jones, 10
Rusty & Kate Burton, 25
Thomas & Mary Payne, 52
St. Romuald, Hardinsburg
Donnie & Audrey Mercer, 40
Larry & Patti Mattingly, 64
PJ & Martha O'Donoghue, 58

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Ron & Jamesetta Whitfill,
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Rudy & Kathy Brumfield, 50
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Donald & Cindy Durbin, 60
Jerry & Mary Abney, 67
**St. Stephen Cathedral,
Owensboro**
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Ed & Gloria Cecil, 57
Ed & Mary Riney, 59

Elmo & Dora Thompson, 64
Mike & Susan Fulkerson, 62
Raymond & Barbara Trogolo,
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St. Stephen, Cadiz
Gerald & Sandra Allen, 51
Gus & Carol Puth, 61
Randy & Stacy Roussey, 40
Wayne & Nancy Gundry, 55
St. Thomas More, Paducah
Anthony & Cecilia Toren, 63
Gary & Linda Whitelock, 56
Harry & Julie Brigrance, 58

James & Jeanine Taylor, 55
James & Julia Harper, 64
Jerry & Diane Stoverink, 54
Jimmie & Kathy Golden, 51
John & Cathy Elliott, 50
Larry & Tena Payne, 51
Michael & Camy Clark, 40
Michael & Lydia Meredith, 10
Rich & JoAnne Miller, 65
Richard & Pat Heflin, 56
St. William, Knottsville
Bob & Joy Turner, 50
Charles & Susie Hamilton, 52

Robert & Karyl Millay, 54
St. William, Marion
Lynn & Kathy Bechler, 58
Sts. Joseph & Paul, Owensboro
Carl & Terry Working, 52
David & Iona Clark, 57
Edward & Mary Haynes, 59
John & Davena Cecil, 51
Rod & Ashley Wilkerson, 40
Steve & Pam Simmons, 40
Sts. Peter & Paul, Hopkinsville
James & Patricia Goode, 51
Jonathan & Chelsea Ide, 5

2026 Parish Picnic Schedule in the Diocese of Owensboro

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

Aug. 29

St. Ann, Morganfield
Street address: 304 South Church St., Morganfield
Serving 5-9 p.m.
Contact: (270) 389-2287[EB1.1]

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. 12

St. Agnes Parish, Uniontown
Street address: 504 Mulberry St., Uniontown
Serving 5 p.m.
Contact: Parish office (270) 822-4416[EB2.1]

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. 19

Christ the King, Madisonville
Street address: 1500 Kingsway Dr., Madisonville
Serving 4-8 p.m.
Contact: Lesley Mills (270) 821-8271[EB3.1]

Sept. 19

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. 20

Mary Carrico Catholic School, Knottsville
Street address: 6119 St. Lawrence Rd., Philpot
Serving: 11 a.m.
Contact: Joe Schepers (270) 281-5526

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

Una visita con el Papa León: Lo que informaré desde la Diócesis de Owensboro

“El Obispo diocesano, el año en que debe presentar la relación al Sumo Pontífice, vaya a Roma, de no haber establecido otra cosa la Sede Apostólica, para venerar los sepulcros de los Santos Apóstoles Pedro y Pablo, y preséntese al Romano Pontífice”. Canon 400

Mis queridos hermanos y hermanas en Cristo,
Los obispos de las 18 diócesis de los estados de Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi y Louisiana han sido convocados a viajar a Roma en abril de 2027 para cumplir con sus obligaciones de su visita ad limina apostolorum (hasta el umbral de los apóstoles). Por tradición, este informe y peregrinación se realizan una vez cada cinco años.

La pandemia de Covid-19, el Jubileo de la Esperanza de 2025 y las enfermedades que sufrió el Papa Francisco en sus últimos años afectaron la posibilidad de programar las visitas de los obispos de todo el mundo. Fue un privilegio para mí cumplir con esta obligación y reunirme con el Papa Benedicto XVI en 2012, en mi tercer año como obispo, y luego repetir la experiencia con el Papa Francisco en 2019.

Tal y como especifica el Canon 400, el elemento central de la peregrinación es la oportunidad de visitar y orar ante las tumbas de San Pedro y San Pablo. Concelebraremos la Misa en la tumba de San Pedro, que se encuentra en una cripta bajo el gran altar de la Basílica de San Pedro. Visitaremos la Basílica de San Pablo Extramuros y concelebraremos la Misa en la

tumba de San Pablo.
Cuando nos reunimos con el Papa Francisco en 2019, nos concedió más de dos horas para preguntas y conversación. Por lo que he oído, el Papa León XIV está haciendo algo similar para nuestras reuniones. Será una experiencia singular, para nosotros los obispos estadounidenses, conversar con el primer papa nacido en Estados Unidos. Como nativo de Chicago, tendrá



FOTO DE CNS/VATICAN MEDIA
El Papa León XIV se reúne con obispos del Perú durante su visita ad limina a Roma, en el Vaticano, el 30 de enero de 2026.

un conocimiento profundo de las regiones de los Estados Unidos, a pesar de que la mayor parte de sus años como sacerdote y obispo los ha pasado en Perú o Italia.

En los próximos meses, nuestro personal y oficinas diocesanas elaborarán el Informe quinquenal sobre la labor y el ministerio de nuestra Diócesis de Owensboro. Si bien al revisar informes anteriores la narrativa puede seguir siendo prácticamente la misma. Sin embargo, tengo pensado informar sobre algunos acontecimientos interesantes de los últimos años.

- En diciembre de 2021, el oeste de Kentucky sufrió una tragedia generalizada cuando los tornados causaron estragos en una franja de 200 millas de nuestra diócesis. La Iglesia Católica de la Resurrección en Dawson Springs quedó totalmente destruida por los daños y finalmente fue demolida. Tras más de tres años, se erigió y consagró una nueva iglesia. Además, el edificio escolar de la Iglesia Católica de San José en Mayfield fue declarado pérdida total y hoy se ha construido un nuevo

CALENDARIO DEL OBISPO MEDLEY AGOSTO DE 2026	
1 de agosto	2 PM Oración de apertura para el picnic de San Jerónimo, Fancy Farm
	5 PM Admisión al proceso de candidatura para los seminaristas Hunter Dickens y Hoan Tran – Parroquia Santo Tomás Moro, Paducah
11 de agosto	Almuerzo con sacerdotes (para sacerdotes del Grupo de Edad 1)
12 de agosto	Almuerzo con sacerdotes (para sacerdotes del Grupo de Edad 2)
13 de agosto	Almuerzo con sacerdotes (para sacerdotes del Grupo de Edad 3)
16 de agosto	2 PM Misa de entrega de premios Sofia – Catedral de San Esteban, Owensboro
17 de agosto	1:30 PM Reunión del Consejo Sacerdotal – Centro Católico McRaith, Owensboro
18-19 de agosto	Reunión de Obispos de la Provincia y la Conferencia Católica de Kentucky – Arquidiócesis de Louisville
23 de agosto	2 PM Misa de clausura de la Conferencia Diocesana Carismática Hispana – Bowling Green
26 de agosto	Almuerzo con sacerdotes (para sacerdotes del Grupo de Edad 4)
27 de agosto	Almuerzo con sacerdotes (para sacerdotes del Grupo de Edad 5)
29 de agosto	9:30 AM Misa de apertura de la Conferencia de Liderazgo y Ministerio Parroquial – Centro de Convenciones de Owensboro, Owensboro

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UN MENSAJE DEL OBISPO MEDLEY

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centro parroquial.

- Tras el paso de la tormenta, nuestra diócesis recibió donaciones de todo el país por un valor superior a los \$10 millones para ayudar a las comunidades locales en su recuperación. Nuestra organización Caridades Católicas se convirtió en la principal entidad en muchos condados, brindando asistencia para cubrir las necesidades inmediatas de alojamiento tras la tormenta y la reconstrucción de docenas de viviendas a lo largo de los años. Este trabajo continúa hasta el día de hoy.

- Una vez concluida la labor que Caridades Católicas había realizado ayudando a las comunidades a reconstruirse tras las tormentas, su misión se redefinió para servir principalmente a los inmigrantes. Esto ha resultado especialmente profético en Estados Unidos, a medida que los sentimientos antiinmigrantes y antirefugiados se han acentuado. Hemos visto que nuestras parroquias están ayudando a las familias afectadas por las deportaciones en muchos lugares.

- Al igual que en la mayor parte de Estados Unidos, la composición de nuestra diócesis sigue cambiando debido a la llegada de nuevos inmigrantes. Los inmigrantes de habla hispana han llegado de México, de Centroamérica y Sudamérica. Integrar sus prácticas religiosas y culturales en nuestras parroquias ha sido un reto y una bendición. También hemos recibido inmigrantes y refugiados de Myanmar y de varias naciones africanas. Nuestra Misa Crismal anual se ha convertido en una ocasión para reconocer y celebrar nuestra diversidad.

- En 2026, 27 de los 82 sacerdotes de nuestra diócesis han nacido fuera de los Estados Unidos. Tenemos sacerdotes de siete naciones diferentes y, como obispo, he visitado esos países y, en la mayoría de los casos, me he reunido con las familias de nuestros sacerdotes. En 2026 hemos recibido a dos seminaristas de Vietnam que estudiarán para convertirse en sacerdotes de nuestra

diócesis.

- La diócesis informará sobre el duro golpe financiero sufrido al enterarnos de que tanto los planes de pensiones de nuestros empleados laicos como los de nuestros sacerdotes presentaban un déficit de financiación crítico. Con sacrificio, la diócesis se ha comprometido a honrar completamente las pensiones que se han ganado y prometido. Durante un período de 25 años, estamos reconstruyendo los fondos de pensiones. Cada parroquia y escuela ha contribuido a este esfuerzo renunciando a más de \$12 millones recibidos a través de un programa que premia a los grupos sin fines de lucro que sufrieron pérdidas financieras durante la pandemia de Covid-19.

- La diócesis sigue reconociendo el fomento de las vocaciones al sacerdocio y a la vida religiosa como un valor fundamental para la evangelización. Tras un período de sequía, nos complace informar de un cierto aumento en el número de hombres originarios de nuestra diócesis que ingresan al seminario. Si bien algunas comunidades religiosas siguen dando la bienvenida a mujeres jóvenes que ingresan a la vida religiosa, la tendencia general en los institutos religiosos sigue siendo la de un menor número de nuevas vocaciones.

- La diócesis ha tratado de poner énfasis en la sinodalidad instado tanto por el Papa Francisco como por el Papa León. Ante la crisis en nuestros programas de pensiones, su servidor [PA1.1] y otros líderes diocesanos llevamos a cabo sesiones sinodales regionales para escuchar opiniones sobre nuestro plan de recuperación.

- Cuando la Iglesia estadounidense se vio sacudida por lo que se conoció como el escándalo McCarrick en 2018, llevamos a cabo sesiones sinodales en toda la diócesis para dar a los fieles la oportunidad de expresar su frustración y proponer soluciones para la reconciliación.

Esto es solo un breve adelanto del informe que

presentaré a la Santa Sede el próximo mes de abril. Cuando el informe completo esté listo, lo publicaremos en el sitio web de nuestra diócesis.

Por favor, oren por mí y por todos los obispos a quienes se les ha confiado esta responsabilidad. Cuando me encuentre ante las tumbas de San Pedro y San Pablo, los tendré presentes a ustedes y a nuestro ministerio compartido.



Obispo William F. Medley
Diócesis de Owensboro



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DE VOCACIONES DE OWENSBORO
De pie frente a la Catedral de San Esteban en Owensboro el 26 de julio, están los 14 seminaristas de la Diócesis de Owensboro con el Obispo William F. Medley, el director de vocaciones P. Corey D. Bruns, el rector de la catedral P. John Thomas y el director asociado de vocaciones Dcn. Mike Marsili.

Los seminaristas se reúnen para oración, fraternidad

POR EL PERSONAL DE WKC

Durante los últimos días de julio, la Oficina de Vocaciones reunió a los 14 seminaristas de la Diócesis de Owensboro para un encuentro de verano con el fin de orar y crecer en fraternidad antes del inicio del curso escolar.

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Asistieron a Misa en el Centro Católico McRaith en Owensboro y se reunieron con varias oficinas diocesanas; y visitaron a las monjas carmelitas y los residentes del Asilo de ancianos Carmel Home, a las hermanas ursulinas del Monte San José y a las monjas pasionistas del Monasterio de San José. El domingo 26 de julio, asistieron a la Misa de las 11 a.m. con el Obispo William F. Medley en la Catedral de San Esteban en Owensboro y fueron presentados oficialmente a la gente de la diócesis.

Por favor, oren por estos 14 hombres mientras disciernen la voluntad de Dios para sus vidas. Para obtener más información sobre las vocaciones sacerdotales en la diócesis, pónganse en contacto con fatherbruns@owensborovocations.com o visiten owensborovocations.com. ■



RACHEL HALL | WKC

Susan Montalvo-Gesser, directora de Caridades Católicas de la Diócesis de Owensboro, proclama una lectura durante un servicio de comunión en el Centro de Detención del Condado de Daviess en Owensboro el 4 de julio de 2026.



RACHEL HALL | WKC

El Obispo William F. Medley preside un servicio de comunión en el Centro de Detención del Condado de Daviess en Owensboro el 4 de julio de 2026. Le asiste el Padre Carmelo Jiménez, párroco de la Parroquia San Miguel en Sebree.

El Obispo Medley celebra el servicio de comunión en el centro de detención

POR RACHEL HALL, EL CATÓLICO DE KENTUCKY OCCIDENTAL

“Yo les aseguro que, cuando lo hicieron con el más insignificante de mis hermanos, conmigo lo hicieron”.

El Padre Carmelo Jiménez leyó esas palabras del Evangelio de Mateo tanto en inglés como en español el 4 de julio de 2026, en un servicio de comunión que tuvo lugar en el Centro de Detención del Condado de Daviess.

El Padre Jiménez, párroco de la Parroquia San Miguel en Sebree, llegó a Owensboro el pasado Día de la

Independencia a petición del Obispo William F. Medley para acompañarlo en una visita pastoral. Participaron también el Diácono Ken Bennett, de la Oficina Diocesana de Culto, y Susan Montalvo-Gesser, directora de Caridades Católicas de la Diócesis de Owensboro y abogada de inmigración.

“Aquí la libertad se ve diferente”, dijo el Obispo Medley en referencia a la visita que tuvo lugar el Día de la Independencia. “Sin embargo, donde sí tienen libertad es dentro de ustedes. Todos tenemos libertad en nuestros corazones”. ■

Más que un juego La Liga Católica de Fútbol une a las parroquias a través de un torneo local de “Copa Mundial”



DIJANA MUMINOVIC | WKC

El portero se mantiene listo mientras los jugadores de la Parroquia Santos José y Pablo en Owensboro se le acercan durante el Torneo de la Liga Católica de Fútbol, celebrado el 11 de julio de 2026 en la Parroquia Espíritu Santo en Bowling Green.

POR DIJANA MUMINOVIC, EL CATÓLICO DE KENTUCKY OCCIDENTAL

Mientras que, por primera vez en la historia, se jugaban partidos de la Copa Mundial de la FIFA en México, Canadá y Estados Unidos,

Continúa en la contraportada



DIJANA MUMINOVIC | WKC

Los jugadores y el Padre Chris Kight echan porras mientras el Padre Martin Ma Na Ling levanta el trofeo del Torneo de la Liga Católica de Fútbol celebrado el 11 de julio de 2026 en Bowling Green, Kentucky.

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reuniendo a naciones y millones de aficionados de todo el mundo, otra Copa Mundial se celebraba a nivel local en Bowling Green, Kentucky, uniendo a católicos de diferentes culturas a través del deporte.

Ocho equipos de cinco ciudades de la Diócesis de Owensboro se reunieron en la Parroquia Espíritu Santo para el tercer Torneo Anual de la Liga Católica de Fútbol el 11 de julio de 2026. El torneo de este año contó con la participación de ocho equipos procedentes de Bowling Green, Owensboro, Sebree, Russellville y Morgantown. Los equipos representaron a las parroquias: Espíritu Santo (dos equipos), San José en Bowling Green, San Pío X en Owensboro, Santos José y Pablo en Owensboro, Santísima Trinidad en Morgantown, Sagrado Corazón en Russellville y San Miguel en Sebree.

Puede que los jugadores hablaran idiomas diferentes y pertenecieran a parroquias distintas, y que las camisetas los separaran en equipos, pero su fe seguía uniéndolos.

Para Nicholas Pau, quien representó a la Parroquia Espíritu Santo por segunda vez, esa unidad es lo que hace que el torneo sea único.

“Todos somos católicos, pero provenimos de culturas y parroquias diferentes. Ahora tenemos la oportunidad de conocernos. Esto es realmente bueno para el futuro y para la unidad”, dijo Pau. ■