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Bayardo and Susana Solorza of Henderson venerate the relics of St. Pio of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio) at St. Anthony Parish in Browns Valley on Nov. 21, 2021. **Page 6**



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Msgr. George Hancock speaks into a microphone in this undated photo. After 74 years as a priest, Msgr. Hancock passed away in November at age 102. **Page 9**

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Nov. 19 event part of Arts at the Cathedral, Faith Fest Owensboro

Front page photo by Elizabeth Wong Barnstead | WKC

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Telephone ● (270) 683-1545

Email ● wkc.editor@pastoral.org

Publisher ● Bishop William F. Medley

Editor ● Elizabeth Wong Barnstead

Contributors ● Riley Greif, Tina Kasey

Send change of address requests to
molly.thompson@pastoral.org

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A Word From Bishop Medley

Our family nativity scene and the greatest story of all time

In our family home of more than 60 years there was a fireplace. It was very small and narrow and I assume intended to be only decorative. It simply was not large enough to actually build a fire. There were andirons and a handful of logs. When I think back to my childhood home, however, this tiny fireplace figures prominently in my memories.

At Christmas my mother would remove the logs from the fireplace and it was there that she would position our small crib and nativity figures. I always thought of it as recalling the cave at Bethlehem where Joseph and Mary took refuge and where the Baby Jesus was born.

I think fondly of this memory. It seems so fitting that the manger scene was on the floor where as children we could look closely at the figures. They were plastic, not delicate or fine art; each no more than three inches tall at most. No harm was done if a toddler picked up a shepherd and wandered off with it. Usually we might find it later under the sofa.

Our tradition was that the image of the Infant Jesus was not added to the arrangement until after we got home from Midnight Mass. But the ritual of positioning the image was a well anticipated one. When we as children did a kind deed in the days before Christmas, my mother would give us a piece of straw to add to the manger to create a soft bed for the baby. Fortunately, we did not have to remove straw from the manger when we might have done an unkind deed, so there was always an ample bed of

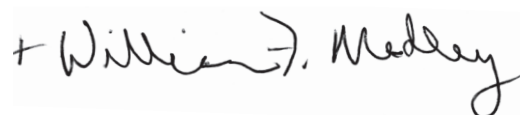
hay to greet the newborn.

Because of this encounter with the nativity figures, I suppose all of us could recount the story of Jesus' birth long before we could read the story from our children's Bible.

On Christmas afternoon, after the big dinner at my grandparents' house with dozens of aunts and uncles and cousins, another tradition was to visit our parish church to visit the manger scene there. As a small child these figures seemed life size. In reality they were probably 12-18 inches tall – but compared to the figures at home they seemed immense. Except for during Mass, we could get up close and look at the figures. I recall the rich adornment of the Magi and I thought the camel was probably large enough for me to sit on. These figures were fragile so there was no touching.

There are certainly childhood memories of the Christmas tree and lights and other decorations, but I most cherish the figures of Jesus, Mary and Joseph and the assorted characters and animals in our fireplace manger scene. They were a great way to tell the greatest story of all time. ■

Merry Christmas!



Most Reverend William F. Medley
Diocese of Owensboro

BISHOP MEDLEY'S CALENDAR DECEMBER 2021

Please note: The following program dates are subject to change or cancellation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

DEC 4	Diocesan Evangelization Event – Owensboro Convention Center
DEC 8	9 a.m. School Mass – Owensboro Catholic Schools 4-6 Campus, Owensboro
DEC 13	1:30 p.m. Priests' Council Meeting
DEC 15	Catholic Conference of Kentucky Meeting – Louisville
DEC 16	3 p.m. Priest Zoom Meeting
DEC 23	10 a.m. Mass with McRaith Catholic Center Staff
DEC 31	10 a.m. Confessions, Mass, Lunch and Listening Session at Gasper River Christmas Camp – Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center, Bowling Green

Across the Diocese

The entire Catholic Church is called to participate in the upcoming Synod of Bishops. Synodality expresses the nature of the Church as the People of God journeying together on the same path. In his most recent Across the Diocese video, Bishop William F. Medley sat down with Martha Hagan, vice-chancellor and diocesan contact for the synod, to discuss Pope Francis' call for all people to participate. They discuss the theme of the synod, expectations for listening sessions and the intended audience. Watch the video at <https://vimeo.com/642481463>.

Reaffirming their commitment to the local Church

Fr. Barrera, Fr. Valomchalil, become U.S. citizens



COURTESY OF FR. JULIO BARRERA

(Left) Fr. Julio Barrera after he was sworn in as a U.S. citizen on Oct. 21, 2021. (Right) Fr. Augusty Valomchalil with parishioners David Cecil and Rose Marie Cecil after Fr. Valomchalil was sworn in as a U.S. citizen on Nov. 9, 2021. David Cecil is the parish council chair of St. Mary Magdalene Parish in Sorgho, where Fr. Valomchalil is the pastor.



COURTESY OF FR. AUGUSTY VALOMCHALIL

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Following many years of preparation, two priests of the Diocese of Owensboro recently became U.S. citizens.

Fr. Julio Barrera, pastor of Holy Redeemer Parish in Beaver Dam and Holy Trinity Parish in Morgantown, was sworn in as a U.S. citizen on Oct. 21, 2021. Fr. Augusty Valomchalil, pastor of St. Mary Magdalene Parish in Sorgho, was sworn in as a U.S. citizen on Nov. 9, 2021.

Both were sworn in at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Louisville Field Office on Fourth Street in Louisville.

Fr. Barrera is originally from Mexico, and retained his Mexican citizenship so that he could be a dual U.S./Mexico citizen.

He told The Western Kentucky Catholic that he began the process of obtaining permanent residency in 2007, while a seminarian for the Diocese of Owensboro. It started with his student visa, which was a permit to be in the U.S. legally, and required him to return to Mexico every few years to renew it at the U.S. embassy in Mexico.

After Fr. Barrera was ordained on June 1, 2013, he could apply for permanent residency in the United States.

“My ordination date was considered my date of hire (with the diocese),” said

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Fr. Barrera. The process of applying for permanent residency took two years; he received it in 2015.

Five years after that, Fr. Barrera was then eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship. That process took over a year, but finally the end was in sight.

Fr. Barrera underwent the required physical exam, had his fingerprints taken and studied 100 questions for the citizenship test.

On Oct. 21, he went to Louisville for his 10:30 Oath of Allegiance ceremony. He said there were 40 people from 25 different countries being sworn in with him.

“It made me realize the great blessing – which brings a great responsibility,” Fr. Barrera told the WKC. “This is a great opportunity to reaffirm my commitment to serve the Church! It is solidified with my citizenship.”

Fr. Valomchalil’s journey to U.S. citizenship was different but no less complex.

He started his application for naturalization in August 2018. Since he was already a priest serving in the Diocese of Owensboro, his process was a lot faster.

India does not have the same arrangement that Mexico and Canada have with the United States – permitting nationals of those countries to have dual citizenship with their home nation and the U.S. – so Fr. Valomchalil had to relinquish his Indian citizenship.

“I had mixed feelings because I cannot have dual citizenship,” he told the WKC, explaining that it was bittersweet for his sisters and parents back in India as well. “I was a little sad, but also joyful.”

Fr. Valomchalil was originally sent as a missionary to the United States in September 2010, by the religious order he belonged to at the time. (He was incardinated in the Diocese of Owensboro in 2019.)

Over the years he has appreciated the opportunity to serve the Owensboro diocese, which like many dioceses and archdioceses is experiencing a shortage of new vocations to the priesthood – resulting in many priests pastoring multiple parishes at once.

Now, as a U.S. citizen, western Kentucky is his permanent home.

Fr. Valomchalil was sworn in as a U.S. citizen on Nov. 9, 2021 – technically at the 1:30 p.m. ceremony, though he said there was a delay which moved it closer to 2 p.m. There were 20 people from 25 countries at his ceremony.

Fr. Valomchalil’s parishioners David Cecil and Rose Marie Cecil accompanied him to his naturalization appointment. And after morning Mass the following day, the people of St. Mary Magdalene threw a surprise party for their pastor



COURTESY OF FR. JULIO BARRERA
Fr. Julio Barrera with his friend Fr. Brandon Williams after Fr. Barrera was sworn in as a U.S. citizen on Oct. 21, 2021.

with donuts and coffee in the parish hall.

“It was really nice how people were excited; it made me feel good to see the happiness of the parishioners,” he said.

Fr. Barrera invited “the entire diocese, especially those places with international priests, to support their priests. For many of us, English is not our first language” – and he said many still have an accent – “despite our efforts to the best of our abilities.”

“Check on us, see how we’re doing,” he advised. “There is an ongoing struggle because of being far from our families; please continue supporting us.”

Fr. Barrera explained that international priests retain “strong ties with our families and our countries of origin. It can seem at times our hearts are divided, but doing ministry as priests is what gives meaning to our lives.” ■

‘Once in a lifetime’ St. Anthony Parish hosts relics of Padre Pio



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

(Left) A young man touches a rosary to a relic of St. Pio of Pietrelcina during a tour of the relics of the saint to St. Anthony Parish in Browns Valley on Nov. 20-21, 2021. (Right) Eunice Taylor cantors during the Nov. 21, 2021 Mass in the presence of the relics of St. Pio of Pietrelcina.

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

When it comes to the Catholic Church’s tradition of relics – venerating the mortal remains of saints or objects that have been touched to saints’ bodies or personal items – Kevin Schwartz often thinks of St. Paul in Acts 19:11-12.

“So extraordinary were the mighty deeds God accomplished at the hands of Paul that when face cloths or aprons that touched his skin were applied to the sick, their diseases left them and the evil spir-

its came out of them,” states the passage.

Schwartz was one of the volunteers who took turns standing guard by several relics of St. Pio of Pietrelcina (often called “Padre Pio” for his fatherly guidance) when they were made available for public veneration at St. Anthony Parish in Browns Valley on Nov. 20-21, 2021.

“Having the relics of Padre Pio present helps you connect to his life and ministry – that’s pretty powerful,” said Schwartz of the Italian saint, who was canonized in 2002 and was known for his deep

faith, devotion to hearing confessions and providing spiritual direction, and being the first priest in the Catholic Church documented to have the stigmata.

The stigmata is the miraculous, otherwise-unexplainable presence of the wounds of Jesus’ Passion on a person’s body; Padre Pio experienced these wounds on his feet, hands and side.

The relics were brought to St. Anthony Parish on a tour sponsored by the Saint Pio Foundation, based in New York and dedicated to promoting the spiritual charism of Padre Pio. The relics were: the

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crusts of his stigmata wounds, cotton gauze bearing blood stains from his stigmata, a lock of his hair, his handkerchief soaked with his sweat hours before he died, and a piece of his mantle.

Since relics are used for popular piety, the Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraph 1679 emphasizes that relics are venerated, not worshiped, since worship is reserved for God alone: “While carefully clarifying them in the light of faith, the Church fosters the forms of popular piety that express an evangelical instinct and a human wisdom and that enrich Catholic life.”

Fr. Mark Buckner, pastor of St. Anthony Parish, told *The Western Kentucky Catholic* that the tour was originally planned for St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro – right before the pandemic. COVID-19 struck, the tour was postponed indefinitely, and when conversations began again, it was decided that St. Anthony Parish would be the host.

The parish’s resident deacon, Dcn. Tim Nugent, flew out to meet a courier from the Saint Pio Foundation at O’Hare International Airport in Chicago to receive the relics and transport them to Kentucky. (He flew back to Chicago the following day to hand off the relics.)

“It’s very heartwarming to be able to do this,” said Fr. Buckner, explaining that Padre Pio was from a small, rural parish in Italy similar in size and surroundings to St. Anthony Parish. “I’m humbled. Just humbled.”

The relics were available for veneration from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday, with two Masses celebrated in their presence. The 9:30 a.m. Sunday Mass was presided over by Bishop William F. Medley.

“I first learned of Padre Pio while he was still alive,” said Bishop Medley in his homily. “I was a

boy in elementary school, taught by the sisters about him.”

Bishop Medley said Padre Pio recognized his vocation as a young boy, but his family lacked the financial means to send their son for the required education. The future saint’s father migrated to the United States to save up enough money to permit his son to enter the Capuchin friars.

“His family took seriously the words of a 10-year-old boy who said ‘God is calling me,’” said Bishop Medley.

Fr. Buckner told the *WKC* that more than 1,500 people came throughout the two days to venerate the relics. Besides visitors from different parts of



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | *WKC*
Bishop William F. Medley presides at Mass celebrated in the presence of the relics of St. Pio of Pietrelcina, held at St. Anthony Parish in Browns Valley on Nov. 21, 2021.

Kentucky, other represented states included Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois and Ohio. Confessions were available on both days as well, hearkening to Padre Pio’s dedication to the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a source of healing and guidance.

“Everybody said it was very spiritually moving for them,” said Fr. Buckner. “If it moves somebody’s

heart, that’s what’s important – that it moves them closer to God.”

He said one of his prayers while the relics were present was that Padre Pio would “pray for us to be better priests in our diocese. If we don’t allow the saints to intercede for us, we’ve failed in our faith.”

St. Anthony parishioner Faye Klee, who helped stand guard by the relics, said “God is using Padre Pio to get us closer to Jesus,” and added that she was trying to think of all the people she could pray for through Padre Pio’s intercession.

Elaine Strain, a fellow parishioner and choir member, said St. Anthony’s choir had studied the saint ahead of the relics’ arrival, so they could select the right music for Mass with the bishop.

Besides hymns like “To Jesus Christ, Our Sovereign King” for that Sunday’s Solemnity of Christ the King, the choir also sang “Healed in Christ” by Sarah Hart (in reference to Padre Pio’s gift of healing) and “Stay with Us, O Lord/Come to Us, O God” in reference to Padre Pio’s prayer known as “Stay with me, Lord.”

“Our parish has many elderly, so we are familiar with suffering,” said Strain. “It’s easy to relate to a man of suffering.”

Mary Raley, another choir member and also parish council member, said this was a “once in a lifetime opportunity. I’ve felt the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout this whole process.”

She said hosting the relics brought her faith into focus: “It makes me very grateful to be raised in the Catholic faith.” ■

Photo album

View more photos from the Mass at <https://photos.app.goo.gl/8XrsTsV8NnPyBExe7>



ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD | WKC

(Left) The choir of St. Stephen Cathedral sing during “Musical Meditations on the Stations of the Cross,” which took place on Nov. 19, 2021 as part of the Arts at the Cathedral Concert Series and Faith Fest Owensboro. (Right) Emily Wills plays the violin in the choir loft of St. Stephen Cathedral during the Nov. 19, 2021 “Musical Meditations on the Stations of the Cross.”

Cathedral uses musical memorial to honor those lost to COVID-19

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

In the evening of Nov. 19, 2021, St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro hosted “Musical Meditations on the Stations of the Cross,” as part of the Arts at the Cathedral Concert Series and Faith Fest Owensboro.

The hour-long event – which was conceptualized and arranged by the cathedral’s director of music, James Wells, with input from the Diocese of Owensboro’s director of music, Mike Bogdan – was dedicated to the memory of all who lost their lives to COVID-19.

“It is a little unusual to do stations in November, but November is the month we remember the dead,” said Wells in his introduction to the evening.

The somber musical selection featured pieces such as “Drop, Drop Slow Tears” by Orlando Gibbons and the traditional hymn “O Sacred Head Surrounded” and was interspersed with excerpts from obituaries of local people who had passed away due to COVID-19 during the course of the pandemic.

The event also featured Wells on the organ and piano, Emily Wills on violin and the choir

of St. Stephen Cathedral.

Near the end of the event, the choir processed downstairs from the choir loft, up the aisle of the church and stood in front of the sanctuary to sing “Inscription of Hope” by Z. Randall Stroope, which included the line that “But a voice rises within me saying hold on my child, I’ll give you strength, I’ll give you hope, just stay a little while.”

In concluding the performance with the 15th station – The Resurrection – the choir led the audience in a resounding chorus of the hymn “New Jerusalem” by Rory Cooney. ■

Priest, confessor, and friend

Laid to rest at 102, Msgr. George Hancock was 'everything you want in a priest'



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

(Left) Fr. George Hancock in 1947 – the year he was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Owensboro.

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Msgr. George H. Hancock, a priest of the Diocese of Owensboro who died on Nov. 8 at the age of 102, was “the epitome of everything you want in a priest,” according to one of his longtime friends, Charlie Kamuf.

“He was absolutely one of the best persons that I have ever met,” said Kamuf, who spoke with The Western Kentucky Catholic on Nov. 16.

Kamuf was hired by Msgr. Hancock as the diocesan attorney in 1975, a role he serves to this day. Over the years, in working alongside him profes-

sionally and as a friend, Kamuf witnessed how Msgr. Hancock’s “main goal in life was to get more souls to Heaven.”

“Msgr. Hancock never retired,” said Kamuf. “(His) whole life was dedicated to make the world a better place.”

Tom Fusco, another longtime friend and as well as a parishioner, remembers when he first met Msgr. Hancock. The year was 1973, and then-Fr. Hancock pulled up in his Ford Falcon to minister to the Catholics in the Land Between the Lakes – who at that time didn’t have a parish within any reasonable distance.

“I said ‘You must be the guy saying Mass’ and he said ‘Yes I am’ and he said to give him a hand unloading the car,” said Fusco, in a Nov. 17 interview with The Western Kentucky Catholic.

Fusco said Msgr. Hancock was “a brilliant man – but also very approachable.”

“He was the greatest priest I’ve ever known,” said Fusco.

Path to priesthood

Msgr. Hancock was born on Feb. 2, 1919 in Waverly, the son of George Hiram Hancock and Virginia FreDella Fenwick. He attended grade and high school at St. Peter Parish in Waverly.

To get to school, young George Hancock and his little brother Franklin (whom he called “Bud”) and his little sister FreDella (known as “Freddie”) would take a horse and buggy to and from Waverly. They kept the horse at a neighbor’s house during the

school day.

In The Western Kentucky Catholic’s February 2019 issue, which featured an interview with Msgr. Hancock on the occasion of his 100th birthday, he told the WKC that “From the time I was a little boy I wanted to be a priest,” reflecting that from all eternity, “there was an image in God’s mind that there was George Hancock, and he was going to be a priest.”

George graduated high school in 1937 – the same year that the Diocese of Owensboro was founded. (Prior to 1937, the Diocese of Louisville oversaw the territories in western Kentucky. In 1937, Louisville was elevated to an archdiocese, and the Diocese of Owensboro became its own entity.)

At the time, since the new diocese lacked funds to cover the cost of seminarian education as it does today, the young man would have to pay his way through seminary. A generous great-uncle stepped in to help George with the \$300/year tuition costs.

He entered St. Meinrad Minor Seminary and went on to study philosophy and theology at the Catholic University of America. He did graduate work in church law at the Lateran University in Rome. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Owensboro by Bishop Francis R. Cotton at St. Stephen Cathedral on May 27, 1947.

Chancellor

His priestly assignments include associate pastor positions at Sts. William and Lawrence Parishes in Daviess County, and Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish in Owensboro while teaching at St. Frances Acad-

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COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

Msgr. George Hancock celebrates Mass at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Grand Rivers in this undated photo.



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

Msgr. George Hancock with Mark Vollman, employee of the Catholic Pastoral Center, in 1985.

emy, which later became Owensboro Catholic High School.

In an April 2021 article in the WKC, Msgr. Hancock said he taught for four years at St. Frances, and then for one year after it became Owensboro Catholic in 1952.

Msgr. Hancock was also known for doing “street preaching” in his early years of priesthood. Traveling to Breckenridge and Hancock Counties on Saturdays, “he would stand on a little box and people would come by and he’d try to convert them,” said Kamuf.

“He told me that during the whole week he would have two (available) hours on Saturday afternoon,” said Kamuf. “The rest of the time he was administering his duties as a priest.”

Msgr. Hancock served as administrator and pastor at St. Peter of Alcantara Parish in Stanley from 1954 to 1963, and pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Leitchfield from 1962 to 1963. Msgr. Hancock served as presiding judge of the diocese’s Matrimonial Court from 1958 to 1983. In 1963 he was appointed the second chancellor of the diocese; a position he held until 1989.

In that same April 2021 WKC article, Msgr. Hancock said the previous diocesan chancellor, Fr. Robert Connor, had died suddenly. The bishop at the time, Bishop Henry J. Soenneker, was in Rome attending the Second Vatican Council, but returned home for Fr. Connor’s funeral.

“On his way back, he wrote me a letter that said ‘It’s four o’clock in the morning, and I’m writing you this letter to make you chancellor of the diocese,’” said Msgr. Hancock in the April 2021 interview.

Msgr. Hancock embraced his new role with obedience – and gusto.

“He always said his goal as chancellor was to have

a parish in every county in the diocese,” said Fusco.

Msgr. Hancock did just that. As chancellor, he not only established but also helped build two new parishes in the Lakes area: St. Henry’s in Aurora and St. Anthony of Padua in Grand Rivers.

“He would work at the diocese during the week, and then Friday, Saturday and Sunday he would go to the Lake,” said Kamuf.

‘He pitched his tent’

Fusco said Msgr. Hancock slept in a tent so he could be available to celebrate Mass at the two parishes, which he helped build from the ground up – beginning with metal pavilions which over the years evolved into actual churches. He became fulltime pastor of the two parishes in 1989.

“He would do the 8 a.m. Mass in Aurora, then drove to Grand Rivers for the 10 a.m., then drove back to Owensboro,” said Fusco.

Ever frugal, Msgr. Hancock fundraised for building the two churches in what Kamuf described as “pay as you go” – building with what money the parishioners had raised, and then collecting more money to build the next part, so as to avoid borrowing money from the diocese.

Fusco recalled attending the outdoor Masses in Grand Rivers with his young family in the 1970s, complete with strollers and lawn chairs.

He said Marshall County and Livingston County, home to St. Henry’s and St. Anthony’s, respectively, had few Catholics at the time. But this did not deter Msgr. Hancock, who had a special place in his heart for those outside the Church – especially lapsed Catholics.

Kamuf said Msgr. Hancock would “get them back to the Church, and many of them were eternally grateful.”

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Whether working with Glenmary Home Missionaries, sharing vegetables from his garden, or donning overalls and helping to build his churches, Fusco said Msgr. Hancock never skipped an appointment or “missed a daily Mass.”

Kamuf agreed: “If he was supposed to be someplace at some time, he was there.”

Years later, said Fusco, the people of St. Anthony’s presented Msgr. Hancock with a plaque which stated “He pitched his tent among us” in a reference to John 1:14 (“And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us...”, which in the original Greek translates as “And the Word became flesh and pitched his tent among us.”)

“He was a priest to me, a confessor for me, and a friend to me,” said Fusco.

Saturdays with the Monsignor

Msgr. Hancock “retired” to the Bishop Cotton Apartments at the Carmel Home in Owensboro in September 2007, but his ministry was far from over as he made himself available to the residents and staff of the residence.

“During the day at the Carmel Home, Monsignor would get up at four o’clock in the morning and he and his sister (FreDella, who resides at the Carmel Home) would have Mass in his room,” said Kamuf. “Then he would go down to the chapel, some days he would hear confessions of the nuns and other friends.”

Kamuf said Msgr. Hancock was “a good listener.”

“His style was very simple; he was not judgmental; in other words you could tell him how bad you were and he’d say ‘Now wait a minute, we’ll get this worked out,’” said Kamuf. “He cared about people.”

Kamuf said Msgr. Hancock’s door was open to anyone needing to talk. In reference to Mitch Al-



COURTESY OF CARMEL HOME

In this spring 2021 file photo, Msgr. George Hancock gathers with his former students of St. Frances Academy (today known as Owensboro Catholic High School). All are residents of the Carmel Home in Owensboro. (Left to right) Msgr. George Hancock, Joan Englert, DB Blanford, Marjorie Howard, Tom Englert, Lucille Rose, Martin Bumm, Margerie Hardesty, and Juanita Clark. (Not pictured was Anna Scheidegger; also not pictured was Bettie Hall who had recently passed away).

born’s book about visits to the author’s former professor, “Tuesdays with Morrie,” Kamuf came to refer to his own weekly visits with Msgr. Hancock as “Saturdays with the Monsignor.”

“And when you got through listening to him – I’ve talked to many a person – and they said ‘I just felt good from the advice that he gave me because it was so rewarding to me the way that he gave it,’” said Kamuf.

He said routine advice from Msgr. Hancock included “everything in life should be in moderation,” and “it’s not what happens to you – it’s how you cope with it.”

The Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus, who operate the Carmel Home, witnessed similar fatherly advice and care from Msgr. Hancock.

Sr. Maria Carmelita Navarro, DCJ, said her favorite memory of him was seeing him in his electric scooter “in our chapel spending time with Jesus. He was so faithful to his prayer life, he said that’s the best way to safeguard our vocation.”

“He loved Freddie, his younger sister who lives in our Infirmary,” said Sr. Navarro. “He would visit her, bring her the newspaper and peel and cut

peaches for her. He looked out for her, would even go to her room at night when she needed him. Always was so sweet and heartwarming to see him be a big brother to Freddie.”

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, while public liturgies were suspended and the Carmel Home was in lockdown, Msgr. Hancock celebrated private Mass for the Carmelite sisters from April 3-June 20, 2020.

Memorably, he celebrated a beautiful, private Easter Sunday Mass on April 12, 2020, in the oratory (convent chapel) of the Carmelites.

The heart of a shepherd

Kamuf recalls the second-to-last time he saw Msgr. Hancock, about two weeks before he passed away.

“I said, ‘Are you ready to go?’ And he said ‘Charlie, I’ve worked all my life trying to be a good priest and live according to the Word of God and I think I have, and I can’t wait to get to heaven to see what kind of spot I’ve got,’” said Kamuf.

And in one of the most powerful memories Kamuf retains of his friend, Msgr. Hancock told him, “Charlie, I’ve got my bags packed.”

Continues on page 13

Archbishop blesses first copies of new edition of prayer book for military

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services Nov. 9 blessed the first of 100,000 copies of the new sixth edition of the "Armed with the Faith" Catholic prayer book for members of the military. Knights of Columbus volunteers, including some currently serving in the military, delivered the copies to the archdiocese's Edwin Cardinal O'Brien Pastoral Center in Washington. The prayer books will be sent to active-duty U.S. military serving around the world. Developed by the Knights in partnership with the military archdiocese, the books are designed to hold up in arduous conditions, with features including waterproof and tear-resistant stock, and plastic binders that enable the turning of pages without a sound. "Throughout my military career, my fellow soldiers and I were strengthened and comforted by a daily commitment to prayer, as we asked for God's intercession to protect our nation and help us preserve our freedoms," Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly wrote in an introduction to the new edition. "It's my hope that today's active-duty military personnel will find the 'Armed with the Faith' Catholic prayer book their indispensable resource for reflection and prayer," he added. ■

Grassroots effort calls on pope to canonize six Black sainthood candidates

BALTIMORE (CNS) -- When Sister Rita Michelle Proctor was a young child, she was taught by the Oblate Sisters of Providence from grades three to 10. The sisters' hospitality and trust in Divine Providence inspired her to become a religious sister in their Baltimore-based order. After 53 years of love and service for the Lord in the Oblate community, the current superior

IN BRIEF

BY CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

general of her religious community was honored to participate at St. Ann Church in Baltimore in a Nov. 1 procession of six candidates for canonization. She held a portrait of the community's foundress -- and one of those sainthood candidates: Mother Mary Lange, who has the title "Servant of God." Five other members of the African American Catholic community processed to the altar holding portraits of the other prominent Black Catholics they hope will be canonized. They are: Sister Thea Bowman, the first African American member of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, and Julia Greeley, known as the city of Denver's "Angel of Charity" -- both have the title Servant of God -- as well as Mother Henriette Delille, founder of the Sisters of the Holy Family, Father Augustus Tolton and Pierre Toussaint. The latter three have the title "Venerable." The title "Servant of God" is given by the church to a sainthood candidate when his or her cause is officially opened. ■

Bishops agree to begin review of charter earlier than planned

BALTIMORE (CNS) -- An update on the U.S. bishops' "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" will take place sooner than originally planned. On Nov. 17, the second of two days of public sessions during their fall general assembly Nov. 15-18 in Baltimore, the bishops voted to begin the process of updating the charter in 2022 rather than in 2025. The vote was 230 bishops in favor of the plan and five bishops against it. Bishop James V. Johnston Jr. of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri, chairman of the Committee on the Protection of Children

and Young People, told the bishops that events in recent years made it necessary to start the review sooner than expected. The bishops most recently approved charter revisions in 2018 and set a seven-year period for future reviews. The review that led to these changes began in 2013 and took five years to complete because of various legal questions that arose as the process unfolded. Among the events Bishop Johnston cited for starting the new review earlier were changes in the Code of Canon Law regarding penal sanctions in the church that take effect in December; Pope Francis' May 2019 motu proprio, "Vos Estis Lux Mundi," revising and clarifying norms and procedures for holding bishops and religious superiors accountable for protecting abusers; and the Vatican report on the investigation into allegations of abuse by Theodore McCarrick, former cardinal and archbishop of Washington. "To wait until 2025 to begin our charter review is simply too long to wait," Bishop Johnston said. ■

Myanmar military shells northeast cathedral twice in five months

YANGON, Myanmar (CNS) -- Fighting has intensified in northeastern Myanmar's Shan state as the military reinforces troops to crush local militias, and religious buildings continue to be targets. Sacred Heart of Jesus Cathedral in the Diocese of Pekhon was hit by military artillery on Nov. 9 for the second time in five months, reported ucanews.com. There were no reported casualties, despite the windows and pews being damaged, according to church sources. On Nov. 6, a nearby convent was hit by military shelling. No casualties were reported at the convent of the Sisters of Zetaman, which is situated in a Marian shrine, ucanews.com reported. Fighting between the military and the combined forces of the Karenni army and Karenni People's Defense Force intensified Nov. 2. More than 10,000 people from Shan's Pekhon township have been

Continues on page 14

‘Day of Joy’ brings together seniors for faith sharing and fun

BY WKC STAFF

The McRaith Catholic Center (central office of the Diocese of Owensboro) hosted “Day of Joy: Celebrating the Gift of our Later Years” on Nov. 5, 2021.

Approximately 40 people attended the program, which featured presentations by Tom Lilly, the chancellor and chief administrative officer of the diocese; Valeria Vessels, the director of stewardship and development for the diocese; Maryann Joyce, program director for Mount Saint Joseph Retreat Ministries; and Bishop William F. Medley.

Topics included spiritual vitality and aging, engaging with the Church, and Pope Francis and synodality. Participants were served lunch and also participated in prayer time and small group discussions.

The program concluded with bluegrass music led by Randy Lanham.



COURTESY OF TOM LILLY

Randy Lanham and his band play music at the end of “Day of Joy: Celebrating the Gift of our Later Years” on Nov. 5, 2021, held at the McRaith Catholic Center in Owensboro.

To learn more about program opportunities like this, contact Valeria Vessels at (270) 852-8348 or valeria.vessels@pastoral.org. ■



COURTESY OF MARYANN JOYCE

Sr. Margaret Ann Aull, OSU, (left), and Sr. Rosanne Spalding, OSU, listen and learn during the Nov. 5, 2021 “Day of Joy” at the McRaith Catholic Center. Sr. Aull is the coordinator of pastoral care for Immaculate Parish in Owensboro, and Sr. Spalding is the pastoral associate/director of religious education for Precious Blood Parish in Owensboro.

Msgr. Hancock continued from page 11

Fr. Ray Clark was present, along with Fusco, Bishop William F. Medley, and the Carmelite sisters when Msgr. Hancock died on Nov. 8. Fr. Clark was also given the role of homilist at Msgr. Hancock’s Nov. 12 funeral Mass at St. Stephen Cathedral.

“Bishop Medley has remarked that Msgr. Hancock embodied the spirit of the Diocese of Owensboro,” said Fr. Clark in his homily, which referenced the prophet Elisha receiving the spirit of Elijah when the latter was taken up to Heaven. “I would like to take this opportunity to discern: What is this ‘spirit’ which Monsignor embodied? So that, like Elisha, we may ask to receive it twofold.”

“George Hancock wanted to be, above all, Fr. George Hancock,” Fr. Clark continued. “While he was ever the Monsignor, he had the heart of a shepherd and that heart beat steady for his 74 years of priesthood.”

Msgr. Hancock is survived by his sister, FreDella Hancock of Owensboro, a brother, Franklin (Agnes) Hancock of Morganfield and several nieces.

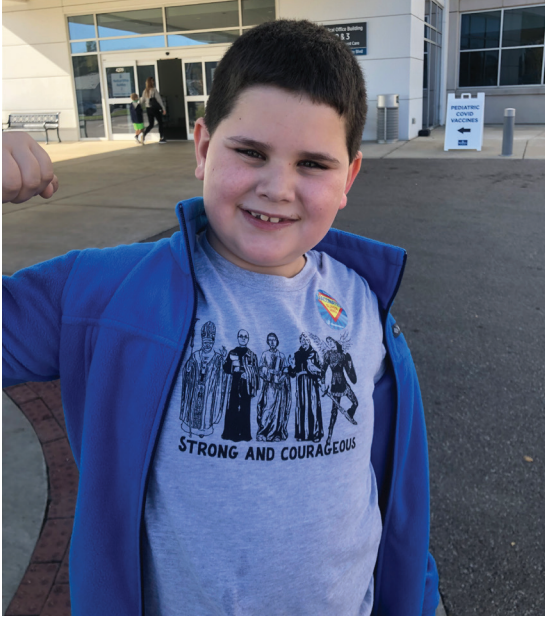
The funeral Mass was on Nov. 12, 2021 at St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro. Burial followed in Resurrection Cemetery in Owensboro. Expressions of sympathy may take the form of Masses or donations to the Charitable Trust Fund for Retired Priests, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY 42301. ■



COURTESY OF CARMEL HOME

Msgr. George Hancock celebrates a private Easter Sunday Mass on April 12, 2020 in the oratory (convent chapel) of the Carmelite Sisters in Owensboro.

Student shows Catholic school spirit when receiving vaccine



COURTESY OF KALEY CHATHAM

Kaleb Chatham, a third grader at John Paul II Catholic School in Morganfield, displays his "Strong and courageous" saint shirt on Nov. 6, 2021, after receiving his COVID-19 vaccine.

Kaleb Chatham, a third grader at John Paul II Catholic School in Morganfield, received his COVID-19 vaccine in the morning of Saturday, Nov. 6. His mother, Kaley Chatham, emailed JP II principal Beth Hendrickson (who later shared the message with The Western Kentucky Catholic with permission): "He was feeling so nervous but we said a decade of the rosary beforehand, he wore his saint shirt, and asked St. Michael the Archangel for courage. He did great and was so brave. His faith is so strong and JP II is such a big part of that. I love our school and our Catholic faith!"

Fleischmann brothers discuss faith, upbringing, and vocations in video

BY WKC STAFF

On Oct. 26, two members of the Diocese of Owensboro's Office of Communications interviewed 92-year-old Br. Conrad Fleischmann, OCSO, and his identical twin brother, Melvin Fleischmann.

Br. Conrad is a monk at the Abbey of Gethsemani in Trappist, Ky. Melvin is a layperson who belongs to Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish in Owensboro, Ky. Both live their Catholic faith with equally deep commitment, though in different ways through their different vocations.

Riley Greif, digital media specialist, and Elizabeth Wong Barnstead, editor of The Western Kentucky Catholic, learned the Fleischmann twins' family history, how they were raised in the Catholic faith, and when they discovered their individual callings from God.

Their story is powerful and inspiring.

You can watch the full video interview with Br. Conrad and Melvin at <https://vimeo.com/rcdok>. ■



SCREENSHOT

Br. Conrad Fleischmann, OCSO, (left), and his identical twin brother Melvin Fleischmann (right), during their Oct. 26, 2021 video interview.

Myanmar continued from page 12

newly displaced due to the fighting and indiscriminate attacks with heavy weaponry by the military, according to aid workers. A Catholic social worker said his family was forced to flee from their homes as artillery shells fell on his neighbors. "It was intense fighting, so the majority of people have fled from their homes to safe areas," he told ucanews.com. He said the fighting has affected church response to displaced people, because church aid workers are among those who have fled their homes. Pekhon Diocese is one of the worst-affected areas, along with Loikaw Diocese in Kayah state, where the conflict escalated in May. At least five Catholic churches in Loikaw Diocese have been attacked

by the military, and a May 23 attack killed four Catholics and wounded eight others. Church leaders, including Pope Francis, have called for the military not to target religious buildings; places of worship are the cultural property of a community covered by international protocol. ■

In March of this year, Bishop William F. Medley issued a statement on the situation in Myanmar and urged prayers for peace. Read his statement at: <https://owensborodiocese.org/2021/03/05/a-statement-from-bishop-william-f-medley-on-situation-in-myanmar>

Our Lady of Lourdes block party welcomes neighbors, reunites parish families



COURTESY OF DANNY MAY
Musicians from Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish in Owensboro lead the music during the Spanish language Mass held at the end of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish's Oct. 24, 2021 block party.

BY DANNY MAY, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

It was a warm, but windy day in Owensboro on Oct. 24, 2021. The sound of live music could be heard from the parking lot. A pair of inflatable dinosaurs high-fived kids as they arrived. There were tables for painting pumpkins, a bean bag toss and other games for the kids, free food, and parishioners handing out candy along the “trail of treats” along decorated tables.

The Our Lady of Lourdes Knights of Columbus provided hotdogs, drinks, and popcorn as families mingled and kids played and giggled, pointing at the costumes walking by. For the community at Lourdes,



COURTESY OF DANNY MAY
Children paint pumpkins during Our Lady of Lourdes Parish's Oct. 24, 2021 block party.

it was one of the first chances to gather socially as a parish family since the pandemic.

The 2021 block party ended with a Spanish Mass celebrated by Fr. Ray Clark with a homily by Dcn. Chris Gutiérrez and music provided by musicians from Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish in Owensboro.

The annual block party also serves as a way to welcome neighbors within walking distance. The event originated as a “trunk or treat” the night before Halloween several years ago, but was moved inside the parish hall and renamed “the pumpkin patch” for a few more years. Then in 2017, the event expanded and evolved into a block party held in the lawn along Time Drive and a live band, hayride, and balloon an-

imals were added. To extend the invitation beyond the parish, a group of parishioners walk the neighborhood and hang fliers door-to-door.

It truly has become an event the whole parish supports as members from several different committees coordinate the block party.

Our Lady of Lourdes' pastor, Fr. J. Patrick Reynolds, recalled an encounter with a family at the block party.

“We were standing by the pumpkin patch display and a Latina mother was standing there with her kids. I pointed at a pumpkin said in my very broken Spanish ‘En español, calabaza.’ She smiled and nodded and said to me, ‘In Guatemala, auyama’. So that little interaction let me know that she was from Guatemala and spoke a Guatemalan dialect. The block party in that sense just made me more aware of who our neighbors are and where they’re from, and that’s a good thing as we try to be more welcoming.”

“Each year the Lourdes Block Party has been enthusiastically received by our parishioners and neighbors,” said Rosemary O’Brien, who helped coordinate the block party. “With the addition of the Spanish Mass this year, we are improving our outreach to our neighbors as well as providing a new experience for many of our parishioners. This was a wonderful and fun way to welcome the fall season and we hope to improve on this event as the years go by.” ■

Danny May is the director of the Office of Marriage and Family Life for the Diocese of Owensboro. Learn more at owensborodiocese.org/office-of-marriage-family-life.

Collection helps aging sisters, brothers, priests in religious orders

Nov. 3, 2021 – The Diocese of Owensboro will hold the Retirement Fund for Religious collection Dec. 11-12. The parish-based appeal is coordinated by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) in Washington, D.C. Proceeds help religious communities across the country to care for aging members.

Last year, the Diocese of Owensboro donated \$25,971.14 to the collection.

Hundreds of U.S. religious communities face a large gap between the needs of their older members and the funds available to support them. Historically, Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests—known collectively as women and men religious—served for little to no pay. As a result, many communities now lack adequate retirement savings.

At the same time, health-care expenses continue to rise, and an increasing number of older religious require specialized services.

To help address the deficit in retirement funding, Catholic bishops of the United States initiated the Retirement Fund for Religious collection in 1988. Donations provide supplemental funding for necessities, such as medications and nursing care and underwrite resources that help religious communities improve eldercare and plan for long-term retirement needs. ■

To learn more, visit retiredreligious.org or contact Beth Kennedy, campaign director, at (919) 414-4007 or bethkennedy@retiredreligious.org.

Diocese celebrates jubilees for women religious



COURTESY OF MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH

The sisters celebrating jubilees who were present at the Oct. 23 diocesan celebration at St. Martin Parish gather with Bishop William F. Medley after the ceremony. (Left to right) Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph Julia Head, Pam Mueller, Nancy Murphy, Betsy Moyer, Rosanne Spalding, Elaine Burke and Helena Fischer.

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

Each fall, the Steering Committee of the Council of Religious for the Diocese of Owensboro sponsors a celebration of the jubilees for the women religious in the diocese. This year's event was held Oct. 23 at St. Martin Parish in Rome, Ky. Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph, a Glenmary Sister and a Carmelite Sister were honored, although not all jubilarians could attend. The celebration was canceled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so jubilarians from both 2020 and 2021 were recognized. Bishop William F. Medley presided over the event. ■

St. Edward's partners with Catholic Charities to serve area youth

BY SUSIE FENWICK, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

St. Edward Social Outreach Group, of St. Edward Parish in Fulton, used grant funds allocated by the Diocese of Owensboro's Catholic Charities to benefit area youth.

The group partnered with South Fulton Elementary School, Fulton Independent Schools, and the Twin Cities Men's Organization. ■



COURTESY OF SUSIE FENWICK

(Left to right) Terri Harvey and Jean Fenwick of St. Edward Social Outreach Group; Cory Edmison of Twin Cities Men's Organization; Tracy Pulley, family connection coordinator for Fulton Independent School System; and Tommie Briggs, Fr. Robert Drury and Melinda Briggs of St. Edward Social Outreach Group.



COURTESY OF SUSIE FENWICK

(Left to right) Rick Smith and Tommie Briggs of St. Edward Social Outreach Group of St. Edward Parish in Fulton; Sandi Bigham, school principal of South Fulton Elementary; and Fr. Robert Drury, pastor of St. Edward Parish in Fulton.

Diocesan staff celebrate unique holiday traditions

Editor's note: What Christmas and Advent celebrations are unique to your family? Below, several diocesan staff share their favorite family traditions.

White Elephant

For years, my extended family did a White Elephant gift exchange. The first year someone brought a bowling ball with finger holes too small for anyone to use it. The tradition in my family was that this bowling ball would come back every year. The joy of the Christmas celebration became seeing who would get the bowling ball, and how the person giving it would disguise it. My personal favorite was the year someone wrapped a framed photograph of the bowling ball. Each year the person who received it signed the bowling ball with a paint pen, and we eagerly awaited next Christmas to see what that person would come up with.

Fr. Daniel Dillard is the director of vocations for the Diocese of Owensboro, chaplain at Owensboro Catho-

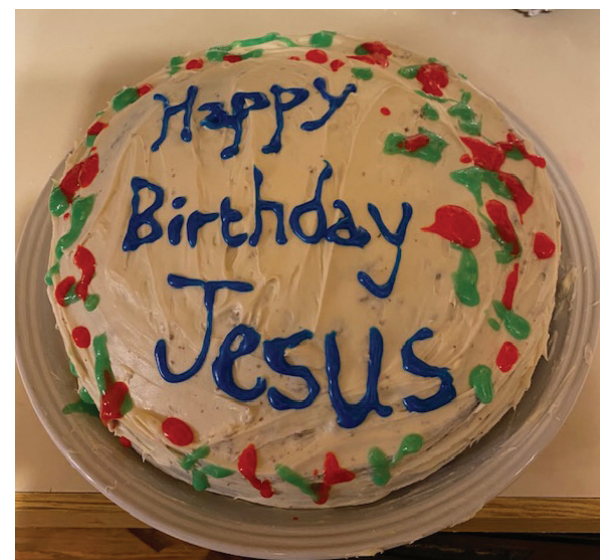
lic High School and parochial vicar at Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish in Owensboro.

O Christmas tree

Over our 30 years of marriage, our tradition has been to get the house decorated with lights and have our tree up by the first Sunday of Advent. The day after Thanksgiving is tree day and we go to a tree farm and cut one down, \$15 for a great Michigan Blue Spruce! Then Sunday night we gather the family, say a prayer and flip the switch. Wishing you and yours a peace filled Christmas!

Love, the Andrini Family

Dr. Jeff Andrini is the director of the Office of Evangelization and Discipleship.



COURTESY OF SUSAN MONTALVO-GESSER

One of the birthday cakes made for Jesus by the Montalvo and Gesser families.

Continues on page 18

Christmas traditions continued from page 17

Montalvo and Gesser Christmas traditions

While I really am a stickler for “not starting Christmas too early” and fully celebrating Advent, I usually lose the argument to wait to Christmas Eve to put up the tree... but if it were up to me, that’s the way it would be. To celebrate Advent, I do my nails in a liturgically themed way (three fingernails in purple, ring finger in pink and thumbs in white). In our home, just after Thanksgiving, the clamoring begins to put up and decorate our Christmas tree with the ornaments the children have made. Our children each put up ornaments received from their Godparents and my husband and I put “Our 1st Christmas Together 1997” ornament close to the top of the tree. My son Michael and daughter JoJo start playing Christmas music on their trumpet and saxophone in November. We celebrate Christmas Eve at the Montalvo house (my mother’s) right after attending Mass and usually change into comfy clothes or PJs. Either before Mass or after coming home from Montalvo Christmas Eve, we make Jesus a birthday cake and decorate it. We ensure the stockings are hung and wake up to Santa gifts for the family. We then host a big meal at our home for the Montalvos and the Gessers. We potluck the meal and everyone contributes. We have another round of gifts for the children and play cards, fall asleep on couches, and graze over desserts for hours.

Susan Montalvo-Gesser is the director of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Owensboro. ■

Pioneer Dinner honors parishioners ages 70 and up



COURTESY OF TRACY CECIL

Attendees of the Oct. 17, 2021 Pioneer Dinner with their pastor, Fr. Anthoni Ottagan, HGN.

BY FAYE GABBARD, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

On Oct. 17, St. Alphonsus Parish hosted our annual Pioneer Dinner with an afternoon Mass officiated by Fr. Anthoni Ottagan followed by a soup, sandwich and dessert meal. We hosted 19 current and former parishioners from St. Alphonsus and St. Elizabeth (Curdsville) parishes for Mass and served 30 meals.

Our Pioneer Dinners started in 2017 as way for ours and St. Elizabeth parishes to honor and say thank you to the members and former members of our parishes 70 years old and up for their service. None of us would be where we are at and know the things we know without the ability to tap into their experience and knowledge as we were growing up. Pre-Covid, we gathered in our parish hall and played bingo (giving gift cards as prizes), we served an early supper, and reminisced about how things have changed over the years in our parishes! Since Covid, we have done a drive-thru sending food home with everyone to enjoy following the afternoon Mass. Spending an afternoon with dear friends and neighbors is always a great way to spend a fall Sunday afternoon! It’s our favorite event to host and is a favorite for our attendees as well! ■

Faye Gabbard belongs to St. Alphonsus Parish in St. Joseph, Ky.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Advent Retreat: Saying "Yes" with Mary

Saturday, December 11

Retreat Directors: Sister Cheryl Clemons, OSU, Ph.D., and Maryann Joyce

Do you often begin Advent with good intentions to prepare spiritually for Christmas, only to find that those intentions get lost in the busy-ness? This Advent retreat offers an opportunity to put good intentions into practice by reflecting on the event that Christians believe changed history forever—God becoming human in the Incarnation of Jesus. Mary, Jesus' biological mother, will serve as our guide and companion for the day. The retreat will include the infancy narrative from the Gospel of Luke, beginning with Mary's invitation to say "YES" to God's call. Within a format of input sessions, prayer, and small group sharing, retreatants will be encouraged to examine and apply to their own lives the virtues and attitudes of Mary.

9 a.m.–2 p.m. • Mount Saint Joseph Auditorium • \$39 includes lunch

To register: 270-229-0206 • retreatcenter@maplemount.org

Online: <https://ursulinesmsj.org/advent-retreat/>

Note: Pandemic safety protocols will be in place.



Office of Spiritual Life for the Diocese of Owensboro



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DECEMBER 2021 BULLETIN BOARD

Please note: The following program dates are subject to change or cancellation due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

A message from the International Center of Kentucky

Hello Everyone: As many of you know the International Center is taking part in Operation Allies Welcome to assist Afghan allies and vulnerable women in their resettlement to the U.S. We are currently expecting to receive up to 118 arrivals between now and November 20th. Friends, we are in desperate need of housing for these families. Could you please reach out to your congregations and see if anyone has a place to rent or would be willing to open their homes temporarily to either singles or a family? If you or anyone in your church is able to help with housing, please have them contact Diane Ford at dianeford14@gmail.com or Anna Allen at anna@wkrmaa.org. In addition, we are also looking for assistance in transporting clients from the airport in Evansville to Owensboro. With 20-40 daily arrivals our vans alone do not provide enough space for all arrivals. If you would like to assist with transporting clients or using a church van to pick clients up at the airport, please email Anna. Thank you so much for the love and support you have shown our organization and our clients. It is through the efforts of amazing people like you that we are able to serve Owensboro's refugee communities! Sincerely, Anna Allen, Site Director, International Center, 2818 New Hartford Road, Owensboro, KY, 42303

Immaculate Parish presents Advent scripture series with Fr. Anthony Shonis

Looking for the best way to prepare for Christ's coming during Advent and for a way to truly celebrate this time of holy waiting? Please join us for a presentation series on the Infancy Narratives of Jesus in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke presented by Fr. Anthony Shonis! Beginning Thursday, Dec. 2 and then again on Thursday Dec. 9 and Thursday, Dec. 16, we will gather in the Immaculate Parish Hall from 6-7:30 p.m. Starting with the lighting of our Advent wreath, we will journey through this time of holy waiting, by reading the scriptures, immersing ourselves in the context of first century Jewish culture, and enjoying discussion and application of these events to our lives today. We

cannot wait to see you at 6 p.m. on Thursdays for this event! We will conclude promptly at 7:30 each evening, and coffee and light refreshments will be provided. We will have some Bibles on hand, or feel free to bring your own. Inviting a friend is an excellent way to pass on our faith! Please pre-register by contacting Heather Owens at 270-683-0689 or howens@immaculateparish.org.

Service of the Longest Night set for December 18

Abbey Caskets, a work of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, will host a Service of the Longest Night on Saturday, December 18, 2021, at 6 p.m. Central Time in the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House Chapel in St. Meinrad, IN. Many people find the holidays a challenging time. Instead of celebrating, they are struggling with grief. They miss loved ones and find that the usual traditions and bright lights serve only to heighten their struggle. Fr. Adrian Burke, OSB, will lead the service with prayer and Scripture that acknowledge those who mourn and struggle with loss during the Christmas season. Everyone is welcome. Light refreshments will follow. RSVP requested, but not required, for planning. Reply to info@abbeycaskets.com or call (800) 987-7380 for further information. Parking is available in the Guest House parking lot. Guests to Saint Meinrad are asked to wear masks.

St. Joseph: Our Spiritual Father documentary

On Oct. 12, Knights of Columbus announced the launch of its newest documentary, St. Joseph: Our Spiritual Father – a timely and rich resource to help Catholics nourish a devotion to St. Joseph. The documentary sheds light on one of the most hidden protagonists in the Bible. The 60-minute documentary premiered on Oct. 10 for a six-week run on ABC- affiliated stations across the country through a partnership with the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission (IBC). By mid-December, the full documentary will be uploaded at Kofc.org/stjoseph, available to all.

A Scout is Reverent

The upcoming Religious Emblems Mass with Bishop Medley at St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro will be determined soon. At this Mass, Bishop Medley confers the religious emblems that the youth have earned through the programs offered

by the National Catholic Committee on Scouting and by the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministers. Now is the time to begin working toward earning these emblems. They include for Cub Scouts: Light of Christ and Parvuli Dei and for Boy Scouts: Ad altare Dei and Pope Pius XII and Light is Life (Eastern Catholic) and for Girl Scouts and others: God is Love, Family of God, I Live My Faith, Mary the First Disciple, The Spirit Alive, and Missio. For an introduction to these and a presentation by the Catholic Committee on Scouting at your next meeting, please see the diocesan website's scouting page under Youth Ministry: <https://owensborodiocese.org/scouting/>.

New mailing address for Knights of Columbus Council #817

There is a new mailing address for the Knights of Columbus Owensboro Council #817. The mailing address is: Knights of Columbus Council #817, 3540 East 10th St., Owensboro, KY, 42303. Any questions may be directed to (270) 926-6959.

Free Natural Family Planning opportunity

Thanks to a partnership with the St. Augustine Institute, the Diocese of Owensboro is now offering FREE instruction in the Billings Method of NFP throughout 2021! This offer includes 5 sessions with one of our trained instructors and any Catholic married or engaged couple in our Diocese (where at least one spouse is a practicing Catholic) is eligible. Contact Martha Winn to begin today! 270-796-2972 or 270-791-9434.

Book for trauma survivors

A message from the Office of Safe Environment: Liturgical Press has a book titled You Have Set Us Free: Scriptural Reflections for Trauma Survivors, by Kenneth W. Schmidt. It is a well-written book of spiritual reflections for trauma survivors. It pulls together Jesus's suffering, the pain of trauma survivors and the scriptures in a wonderful way. To learn more, contact the Office of Safe Environment at owensborodiocese.org/safe, or email Janice Hendricks at janice.hendricks@pastoral.org. The book may be purchased at <https://litpress.org/Products/4712/You-Have-Set-Us-Free>.

‘Receive and Be the Light of Christ!’

BY DR. JEFF ANDRINI, OFFICE OF
EVANGELIZATION AND DISCIPLESHIP

On December 2, pastors, parish leaders and Catholic school principals from around the diocese will gather. “Receive and Be the Light of Christ” is the theme for the event and it is the first major in-person gathering of our diocese since March 2020! The event will model what is needed in parishes, schools and in our own spiritual lives as Catholics.

Our diocesan gathering will begin with an extended prayer service. We will worship God through song, prayer and silent adoration of the Blessed Sacrament followed by an exercise acknowledging our grief and hardships through the pandemic over the past 18 months. The entire prayer will be an opportunity for each participant to encounter Jesus and receive grace and hope from God’s heart. Before any of us can be the light of Christ for others, we must allow ourselves to be filled with love from God. Our daily prayer and contemplation, regular reception of the Eucharist and special times for faith sharing and formation, as well as an annual retreat are all ways we can receive grace from God. What are some other ways you experience God’s love? Once received, we have something to share with others and we can be the light of Christ to others.

The next aspect of our event will be to celebrate the fruit we have seen in our own lives and in our parishes over the past four years as we participated in the annual Living as Missionary Disciples gatherings. Ministry leaders will gather in small groups

to discuss “What fruit they have seen in their parish in the areas of ‘encounter,’ ‘accompany,’ ‘community’ and ‘send’? And what opportunities are present to keep moving these forward?”

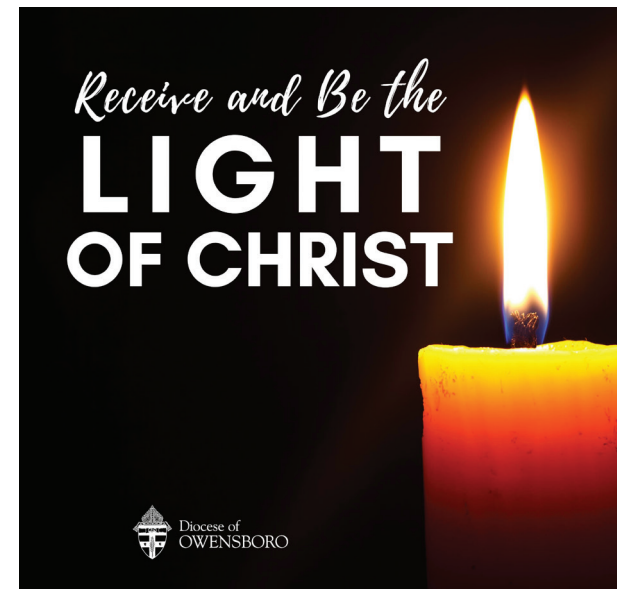
In the afternoon we will share a meal together and Bishop Medley will share a message. He will be highlighting our new mission, “To be missionary disciples of Jesus, making present the kingdom of God” and introducing the upcoming synodal process in our diocese. The synodal process was initiated by Pope Francis and the idea is that we become a listening and discerning Church. Listening to the needs of others and discerning how the mission of Jesus calls us to care for those in need and proclaim the good news of God’s love to the world.

The day will close with some practical tools for parishes to share our new mission and pray for a movement of the Holy Spirit across our diocese. Our parish leaders will be challenged to take what they have “received” from Jesus and to “Be the Light of Christ” for those they serve in their parish and beyond.

We will kick off 2022 with a prayer effort across the diocese and look forward to many gathered ministry opportunities in the coming year. Wishing you and yours a blessed Advent and Christmas season.

Peace in Christ,
Jeff ■

Dr. Jeff Andrini is the director of the Office of Evangelization and Discipleship. Send comments to jeff.andrini@pastoral.org.



Coming to your parish or a parish near you!

ENCOUNTER LOVE
Encounter Jesus

Join other parishioners for an experience of community, prayer and God’s love. This three-hour seminar will introduce you the Pope Francis’s call to Living as Missionary Disciples and the USCCB document of the same name. The day will include:

1. Laughter
2. Music
3. Prayer
4. Refreshment
5. Inspiration
6. Scripture
7. An experience of God!
8. And a new understanding of God’s plan for your life!

To learn more, email jeff.andrini@pastoral.org

A Mother that comforts in adversity

BY DEACON CHRIS GUTIÉRREZ, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

All of us in one way or another find ourselves still recovering in different ways from a long pandemic and all the anxiety, suffering, pain and loss it has brought with it. Also, as we come to the end of this year 2021, we realize the enormous divisions, suspicion, struggles and challenges we continue to face as people of our great nation. Many brothers and sisters of all ages also struggle with different levels of depression or isolation; many turning to their smartphones for the illusory comfort and to escape into the fantasy worlds the internet seduces with.

So, current realities as described beg the question. Is there anything or anyone that can give us hope and comfort us during these difficult times? And the answer should be Yes! Absolutely! As Catholics, es-

pecially during the month of December every year, we are reminded of a Mother we all share; a Mother that cares, knows of our pains and difficult journeys. Mary is our Heavenly Mother, who in the case of Our Lady of Guadalupe decided to stay among us (via the miraculous image of her on the tilma of St. Juan Diego) and remains present in the Americas to this day.

The words said, almost 500 years ago, by Our Lady of Guadalupe to St. Juan Diego in response to his concern for his uncle Juan Bernardino who was gravely ill, still resonate and could be meaningful to so many of us in our time:

“Listen; put it into your heart, my youngest and dearest son, that the thing that disturbs you, the thing that afflicts you, is nothing. Do not let your countenance, your heart be disturbed. Do not fear

Mañanitas and novena

Contact your parish to find out their schedule for the novena in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the mañanitas celebrations.

this sickness of your uncle or any other sickness, nor anything that is sharp or hurtful. Am I not here, I, who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Am I not the source of your joy? Are you not in the hollow of my mantle, in the crossing of my arms? Do you need anything more?”

As we commemorate the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Dec. 12 may these words echo in our hearts. May we find hope and consolation knowing that our Mother Mary never leaves our side. She covers us with her mantle and wraps us in her arms in a maternal embrace. Do we need anything more? ■

Deacon Chris Gutiérrez is the director of Hispanic/Latino Ministry for the Diocese of Owensboro. Learn more at owensborodiocese.org/ministerio-hispano.

A message from the editor

Those with zip codes beginning with “423” may have experienced delivery problems with their November 2021 issues of The Western Kentucky Catholic. Some households received multiple repeated copies while others did not receive any at all. After investigation, the WKC learned this was an error on the part of the printing company that we use to print our newspaper. The company had experienced a computer glitch, which botched the addresses printed on the mailing labels – resulting in repeated address labels for some people, and deleting other addresses.

To make up for this mistake, our printer covered the cost of printing and shipping additional copies of the November WKC to households who were accidentally excluded. Households who received multiple copies were not sent any more.

Since this printing and shipping process was expedited in order for the missed homes to receive the WKC as soon as possible, the edges of the second round of newspapers were not trimmed nor stapled together. If your November issue looked like this, that is because it was part of the second round of shipments.

I’d like to thank all of our readers who called to graciously and kindly inform us that they had not received their WKC, or that they had received multiples. We appreciated their patience and understanding, and were encouraged by their dedication to their diocesan newspaper. ■

-Elizabeth Wong Barnstead, editor, The Western Kentucky Catholic

Advent – Looking back in order to look forward

BY DEACON JAY W. VANHOOSIER, SPECIAL TO THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

In all the hustle and bustle that is the Christmas season, it is important to remember that, as Catholics, we are spiritually invited to prepare for two very important things. First, we are to reflect on the birth of the Christ child, and second, we are to look to the fulfillment of God's plan – the second coming of that same Christ and the redemption of the world. The Church teaches us that these two events – one that occurred in the past and one that is yet to come – are intimately connected and that we should prepare for them. We call this period of preparation Advent.

I would like to suggest that Advent encourages us to look back in order to look forward. The celebration of the Incarnation – God becoming man in the most humble of ways – only has meaning and purpose because of the hope and expectation of Christ coming again in victory and glory. Christmas is not an antiseptic remembrance of a thing that occurred long ago, but an efficacious preparation of what is to come!

The season of Advent begins in penitence: its color is violet – the symbol for Christians for preparation and forgiveness. It is a time that we stop and reflect on our lives and take note of the times we have fallen short. However, in this reflection we do not – must not – remain focused on ourselves. This is because Advent urges us to look with joy to God – who is coming to complete his salvation! The hymns and

readings we hear during this season are full of this joyous expectation. But it is important for each one of us to remember that we “know neither the day nor the hour.” Advent candles and Advent calendars count down towards the Nativity, but Advent encourages us to not put off preparation to tomorrow but to be ready now.

We ourselves cannot be ready on our own. So, we turn to, and depend on, God's grace to help us be ready. We are called to prayer and worship. We are called to recognize our dependence on him. We are called to participate in the sacramental life of the Church – especially the Eucharist in which we are fed and in which we look back with a memory that is re-presented in the here and now. This is Advent explained and expressed.

Advent should cause us to adjust our ways of thinking, our attitudes, and the way in which we live our lives. This is because Advent should put these in their proper perspective – namely, they should be seen from their end. We should no longer prepare for promotion, success, or achievement as goals in themselves. No. Promotion, success, or personal achievement are things that should promote Christ's Kingdom and Christ's will in the world as everything moves towards their perfection in Christ himself.

For most people, the great symbol of Advent is the increase of light. On an Advent wreath candles are lit in greater number in growing expectation of the End. Advent becomes an extended meditation on the mystery of time. We

gaze backward to that wondrous moment of the incarnation – the center point around which world history turns – in order to realize the meaning of the flow of events of human history towards their consummation in Christ.

Thus, Advent is the cure for frenetic cares and icy pessimism. Advent ends in the wondrous celebration of the incarnation – ending at the beginning with restored devotion and promise in the life of Christ. ■

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



Stop by the Gift Shop at Mount Saint Joseph!

We have a variety of merchandise including religious items and handmade quilts and crafts.

Tuesdays 10:30 a.m.-noon

Thursdays 10:30 a.m.-noon

Also open to groups meeting at the Mount by request.

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ursulinesmsj.org/gift-shop



Ursuline Sisters
of Mount Saint Joseph
8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, KY

December Wedding Anniversaries

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

Please send any anniversary updates or corrections to Charlotte Hedges, Office of Marriage & Family Life, at charlotte.hedges@pastoral.org.

Blessed Mother, Owensboro

Thomas & Lois Wedding, 59
Ron & Greta Beals, 66
James & Sherry Clark, 25
Louis & Mae Hoskins, 52
Mark & Jan Hubbs, 53
Nicholas & Brittany Johnson, 10

Christ the King, Madisonville

Bob & Floy Daugherty, 68
Sherrell & Jeannie Calhoun, 63

Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson

Allen & Terri Allen, 53
Daniel & Lynn Dekemper, 51
Darren & Anna Gibson, 25
Herbert & Mary Gold, 52
Lucio & Ramona Hernandez, 54
Forrest & Mary Meuth, 60
Robert & Betty Pritchett, 66
Stephen & Roxanne Sellars, 50
Clyde & Janice Sutton, Jr., 59
Michael & Susan Thurman, 40

Holy Spirit, Bowling Green

Samuel & Christine Rzepka, 50
Carol & Frank Kersting, 52
Allen & Judy Freeland, 53
H. Leon & Jane Brasher, 56

William & Sharon Mckay, 57
John & Mary Anne Reiss, 58
Larry & Anita Willoughby, 58

Immaculate Conception, Earlington

Ken & Rosemary Porter, 61

Immaculate Conception, Hawesville

Ellis & Sharon Russelburg, 55
Jerry & Linda Atwood, 55
Ryan & Bethani Curry, 10

Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro

Emery & Mitzi Szemethy, 25
Paul & Joan Fritz, 25
John K. & Kay Steele, 60
James & Linda Warren, 54
James & Diane Hunter, 53
Daniel & Dolores Fickas, 52

Parish of the Immaculate, Owensboro

Fred & Beverly Bosley, 51
Otis & Judy Hicks, 58
Mike & Terry Lewis, 40
Carl & Brenda Millay, 53
Paul E. & Donna Munsey, 54
Jared & Kelsey Pedley, 10
Larry & Jean Sims, 53
Hubert & Janet Terry, 5

Precious Blood, Owensboro

Jesse & Theresa Lowe, 58
Jerry & Ellen Blandford, 64
James & Dorothy Hodges, 50

Resurrection, Dawson Springs

Joe & Mazie Mastromarino, 69

Sacred Heart, Russellville

Richard & Donna Bryan, 40
Erasmus & Gloria Gomez, 60
Michael & Linda Slaughter, 54

Sacred Heart, Waverly

Mike & Marilyn Fenwick, 52
Mike & Linda Williamson, 51

St. Agnes, Uniontown

Kenny & Linda Gough, 54
Alvin & Betty Lou Borup, 63
Jerry & Carole Gough, 61
Paul & Stephanie Cassidy, 25

St. Alphonsus, St. Joseph

Jim & Patsy Love, 50
Chris & Joyce Kormelink, 57

St. Ann, Morganfield

Jason & Patty Millikan, 25
Justin & Wilma Jean Wolfe, 58
John F. & Madonna Wyatt, 62

St. Anthony, Browns Valley

Ronald & Janice Tindall, 54

St. Anthony the Abbot, Axtel

Celestine & Bonnie Hinton, 52
Keith & Diane Morris, 51
Denvir & Carolyn Henning, 51
Thomas & Theresa Roby, 51

St. Augustine, Grayson Springs

Leon & Mary Hill, 54

St. Charles, Bardwell

James & Sue McIntyre, 55

Daniel & Wanda Hayden, 57

St. Columba, Lewisport

Anthony & Margaret Hall, 54
Dennis & Denise Long, 40
John & Christie Taylor, 10
Robert & Mary Johannemann, 25

Robert & Patty Durbin, 55

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Clarkson

Glenn & Patty Campbell, 53
Danny & Patsy Clemons, 53

St. Francis de Sales, Paducah

David & Edith Keeney, 62
Jerry L. & Diane Perry, 53
Robert & Marcia Bryant, 5

St. Francis Borgia, Sturgis

Dennis & Terri Moman, 40

St. Jerome, Fancy Farm

Bruce & Linda Sue Turner, 52
Donnie & Elizabeth Nelson, 54
Laddie & Judy Thomas, 56
Joseph W. & Ruth Ann Higdon, 66

Dennis & Peggy Tharp, 54

Larry & Delores Wilson, 55

St. John the Baptist, Fordsville

Ray & Peggy Montgomery, 51

St. John the Evangelist, Paducah

Donald & Karol Richards, 51

St. Joseph, Bowling Green

William & Linda Nesbitt, 51
Jim & Phyllis Huggins, 54

William & Joanne Powell, 62

John & Rita Riley, 58

St. Joseph, Leitchfield

Continues on page 25

ANNIVERSARIES

Anniversaries continued from page 24

Danny Joe & Barbara Allen, 40

St. Joseph, Mayfield

Hector & Maria Avila, 10

St. Lawrence, Philpot

Jerry & Shirley Powers, 59

James & Marie Brandle, 54

St. Leo, Murray

H. Tyson & Susan DeLoach, 52

Phillip & Sarah Bryan, 59

St. Martin, Rome

Jeremy & Nicole Ebelhar, 10

St. Mary, LaCenter

Clyde & Mary Kay Riepe, 54

David & Gladys Fraser, 62

King & Cecilia Moss, 51

Butch & Janie Rainer, 57

St. Mary of the Woods, McQuady

Louis & Elaine Hinton, 54

St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville

Raymond & Emma Whistle, 69

Charles & Linda Payne, 59

David & Judy Connor, 57

Bobby & Linda Helm, 56

Ronnie & Patsy Mayfield, 54

Ivo & Martha Burch, 53

Jerry & Berdelle Howard, 53

St. Mary Magdalene, Sorgho

Adam & Katie Ebelhar, 5

St. Michael the Archangel, Oak Grove

Lionel & Sue McElroy, 69

Joseph & Marcia Schmitt, 50

St. Paul, Leitchfield

Byron & Megan Darst, 10

St. Paul, Princeton

James & Linda Herbek, 54

St. Pius X, Owensboro

Daniel & Angela Withers, 25

Thomas & Janice Conrey, 52

Soe Reh & Mary Elizabeth Beh Meh, 25

Jordan & Courtney Castlen, 5

St. Romuald, Hardinsburg

Brad & Kellie Dooley, 25

Don & Sue Ford, 57

Paul & Anne O'Reilly, 56

Harold & Fonda Roach, 50

Brian & Marilyn Henning, 40

Jeff & Tammy Fuqua, 10

St. Stephen, Cadiz

Raymond & Roberta Ward, 62

St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro

William & Sherry O'Bryan, 10

Tom & Kristy Lovett, 25

Pat & Jenny Bosley, 25

Jeffrey & Stacy Hendricks, 25

Garry & Ann Pierce, 53

St. Thomas More, Paducah

Hector & Carol Carrillo, 5

Antonio & Megan Henderson, 10

Mitch & Kathy Barkett, 40

James & Priscilla Hollowell, 54

St. William, Knottsville

Tom & Nan Simmons, 50

Paul & Brenda Clemons, 57

St. William of Vercelli, Marion

Donnie & Jeanette Phillips, 54

Sts. Joseph & Paul, Owensboro

James & Theresa Bailey, 5

Ethan & Kelly Hagan, 5

Bill & Lora McCarty, 40

Jim & Jenny Wilson, 51

Sts. Peter & Paul, Hopkinsville

Tarek & Nathalie Toubia, 10

Jerry & Malinda Powell, 50

Trinidad & Maria Soriano, 52

Arnold & Linda Harkins, 63



Don't miss the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph online Quilt Sale!

Visit ursulinesmsj.org/get-involved/2021-online-quilt-sale

Several quilts are still available!

Each one is unique!

Find the size/pattern/colors you like...

King/Queen/Twin/Throw/Baby

Get your Christmas shopping done early!

Proceeds provide funding for the Ursuline Sisters' ministries of education and Christian formation.

Contact Carol Braden-Clarke

270-229-2008

carol.braden-clarke@maplemount.org



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8001 Cummings Road
Maple Mount, Kentucky 42356-9999

The first Christmas in the Diocese of Owensboro

BY EDWARD WILSON, ARCHIVES

The Diocese of Owensboro's first Christmas really does have all the makings of a classic Christmas tale. Through the final cold days of a hard year, parishioners remain prayerful, and faith-filled and are given a blessing that renews the spirit of hope and joy.

With December arriving and the year ending, for many 1937 was another year of hardship and struggle. The country was still gripped by the economic depression it had been dealing with for years. To make matters worse, earlier in the year, one of the worst natural disasters to hit Kentucky in modern times, the 1937 flood, struck, and had some still picking up the pieces. The western Kentucky territory had around 57 orphans in its care that it struggled to provide for. The population was so burdened, they could not successfully support the orphans solely through the traditional means of local alms.

Through the hardship, the faith of the area remained strong. Although this Christmas would be another of financial difficulty, on December 9, God gave his faithful people a very special Christmas gift.

On December 9, 1937, Pope Pius XI created the Diocese of Owensboro out of the western part of the Diocese of Louisville. Few things, if any, could have caused such a joyous uproar. Rumors abounded about possible bishops and which church would be elevated to the status of cathedral. Although the cathedral was announced, in Latin, in the Papal Bull creating the diocese, letters from several, including cler-

gy, indicate that it was not public knowledge until the following year. The creation of the diocese became a favorite subject among news outlets and gossip throughout the area. That year, the western Kentucky territory celebrated its first Christmas together as the Diocese of Owensboro.

On that first Christmas, even when there was nothing to give, western Kentucky parishioners scraped to give what they could. This is evident by the numerous \$0.05 and \$0.10 donations in so many parish logs. That year, the Christmas collection at St. Anthony, in Axtel, amounted to \$24.51. The average offering was roughly \$0.49. Only two individuals were able to offer more than a dollar, with several unable to offer anything at all. For context, St. Stephen in Owensboro, a much larger, non-rural, and much wealthier church, could only amass roughly \$1.03 per household. Rural or not, all gave whatever they could muster. The giving spirit of the diocese made one observer comment to Bishop Cotton, years later, that though a small diocese like Owensboro "cannot boast of having many wealthy Catholics" they would out contribute "better situated Dioceses and even one or the other Archdiocese." The newly established diocese gave still more than money when it happily sent 22 young men to seminaries and colleges for the priesthood its first fall. On that first Christmas as a diocese, though the Depression's end



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES

A snow-covered Locust Street and St. Stephen in Owensboro in 1933.

was not quite in sight, the faithful of western Kentucky were renewed with hope to carry on the fight.

How beautiful it is to think that we celebrate the birth of our diocese the same month that we celebrate the birth of our Savior. It is almost as if our little Catholic piece of western Kentucky was lovingly wrapped and presented to the Christ Child for his birthday. Let us not forget, this season, the faithful, giving, and hopeful spirit of those who established the foundation of that which we now enjoy. ■

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.

Two seminarians complete the Rite of Candidacy

BY ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

On Oct. 24, 2021, seminarians Christopher Kight and Conrad Jaconette completed the Rite of Candidacy during Mass at St. Joseph Parish in Bowling Green, at which Bishop William F. Medley had presided.

Fr. Daniel Dillard, vocations director for the Diocese of Owensboro, told The Western Kentucky Catholic that the Rite of Candidacy is the step in the formation process where the seminarian publicly declares that he intends to become a priest, and is therefore considered a candidate for Holy Orders.

For Kight, this is the final step before he is ordained to the transitional diaconate. Jaconette will still need to receive the ministries of Lector and Acolyte.

Fr. Dillard said this is because when Kight was on his two pastoral years at St. Joseph Parish, St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology (where the Owensboro diocese sends its seminarians for major seminary) changed where candidacy falls in the overall process.

“They were following the lead of other U.S.

seminaries in moving it from just before diaconate to the beginning of first theology,” said Fr. Dillard.

The celebration was held at St. Joseph Parish because the two seminarians share a strong connection to the parish. Jaconette considers it his “home parish” even though he grew up outside the diocese (he

joined the Catholic Church in 2017), and Kight spent the last two years stationed there. ■

To learn more about vocations in the Diocese of Owensboro, visit owensborovocations.com.



COURTESY OF BISHOP WILLIAM F. MEDLEY
(Left to right) Seminarian Conrad Jaconette, Bishop William F. Medley, and seminarian Christopher Kight smile for a picture after the Oct. 24, 2021 Rite of Candidacy at St. Joseph Parish in Bowling Green.

Contact the Office of Vocations

Fr. Daniel Dillard, Director of Vocations

(270) 683-1545

owensborovocations.com

daniel.dillard@pastoral.org

[instagram.com/owensborovocations](https://www.instagram.com/owensborovocations)

[facebook.com/owensborovocations](https://www.facebook.com/owensborovocations)



Happy anniversary to our priests!

In December we celebrate the anniversaries of:

Fr. Babu Kulathumkal | Ordained 12/18/1996
Pastor of St. Pius X Parish, Owensboro

Fr. John Paul Mang | Ordained 12/11/2001

Fr. Jegin Puthenpurackal | Ordained 12/27/2004

Pastor of St. Sebastian Parish, Calhoun and St. Charles Parish, Livermore

Un Mensaje del Obispo Medley

Nuestro nacimiento familiar y la mejor historia de todos los tiempos

En la casa donde mi familia vivía por más de 60 años había una chimenea. Era muy pequeña y estrecha y supongo que estaba destinada a ser solo decorativa. Simplemente no era lo suficientemente grande como para encender un fuego. Había morillos de hierro y un poco de leña. Sin embargo, cuando pienso en el hogar de mi niñez, esta pequeña chimenea ocupa un lugar destacado en mis recuerdos.

En Navidad mi madre quitaba la leña de la chimenea y allí colocaba nuestro pequeño pesebre y figuras del nacimiento. Siempre lo consideraba como un recuerdo de la cueva de Belén donde se refugiaron José y María y donde nació el Niño Jesús.

Con cariño guardo esta memoria. Parece tan apropiado que la escena del nacimiento estuviera en el suelo, donde de niños podíamos mirar de cerca las figuras. Eran de plástico, no delicadas de yeso o de bellas artes; cada una no más de tres pulgadas de alto como máximo. No se les hacía daño si un niño pequeño tomaba un pastor y se marchaba con él. Por lo general, podríamos encontrarlo más tarde debajo del sofá.

Nuestra tradición era que la imagen del Niño Jesús no se añadiera a la escena hasta después de que llegáramos a casa después de la Misa de Medianoche. Pero el rito de colocar la imagen era siempre muy esperado. Cuando de niños hacíamos una buena acción en los días previos a la Navidad, mi madre nos daba un trozo de paja para añadir al pesebre y crear un lecho blando para el bebé. Afortunadamente, no teníamos que quitarle la paja del pesebre cuando quizás habíamos desobedecido

u hecho una travesura, por lo que siempre había un buen lecho de paja para recibir al recién nacido.

Debido a este encuentro con las figuras del nacimiento, supongo que todos podríamos contar la historia del nacimiento de Jesús mucho antes de que pudiéramos leer la historia de la Biblia infantil.

La tarde de Navidad, después de la gran cena en casa de mis abuelos con varios de mis tías, tíos y primos, otra tradición era de visitar nuestra iglesia parroquial para allí visitar el nacimiento. Cuando era un niño pequeño, estas figuras parecían de tamaño natural. En realidad, probablemente medían de 30 a 45 centímetros de altura, pero en comparación con las figuras en casa, parecían inmensas. Excepto durante la Misa, podíamos acercarnos y mirar las figuras. Recuerdo el rico adorno de los magos y pensé que el camello probablemente era lo suficientemente grande para que me sentara. Estas figuras eran frágiles, por lo que no se tocaban.

Ciertamente hay recuerdos de la infancia del árbol de Navidad y las luces y otros adornos, pero aprecio más las figuras de Jesús, María y José y los personajes y animales variados en nuestro nacimiento de la chimenea. Fueron una excelente manera de contar la mejor historia de todos los tiempos. ■

¡Feliz Navidad!



Obispo William F. Medley
Diócesis de Owensboro

CALENDARIO DEL OBISPO MEDLEY DICIEMBRE DE 2021:

Tengan en cuenta: Las siguientes fechas están sujetas a cambios o cancelaciones debido a la pandemia del COVID-19.

2 DE DIC.	Evento de evangelización diocesana - Centro de Convenciones de Owensboro
8 DE DIC.	9 a.m. Misa escolar - Escuela Católica de Owensboro, Campus 4- 6, Owensboro
13 DE DIC.	1:30 p.m. Reunión del Consejo Sacerdotal
15 DE DIC.	Reunión de la Conferencia Católica de KY - Louisville
16 DE DIC.	3 p.m. Reunión por Zoom con Sacerdotes
23 DE DIC.	10 a.m. Misa con el personal del Centro Católico McRaith
31 DE DIC.	10 a.m. Confesiones, Misa, almuerzo y sesión de escucha en el campamento navideño del Río Gasper - Campamento Juvenil Católico y Centro de Retiros del Río Gasper, Bowling Green

Parroquias con misa en Español



Una Madre que consuela en la adversidad

POR EL DIÁCONO CRISTÓBAL GUTIÉRREZ,
ESPECIAL PARA EL CATÓLICO DE
KENTUCKY OCCIDENTAL

Todos, de una forma u otra, nos encontramos todavía recuperándonos de diferentes maneras de una larga pandemia y de toda la ansiedad, el sufrimiento, el dolor y la pérdida que ha traído consigo. Además, a medida que llegamos al final de este año 2021, nos damos cuenta de las enormes divisiones, sospechas, luchas y desafíos que seguimos enfrentando como personas en esta gran nación. Muchos hermanos y hermanas de todas las edades también luchan con diferentes niveles de depresión o aislamiento; muchos recurren a sus teléfonos inteligentes en busca de la comodidad ilusoria y para escapar a los mundos de fantasía con los que el Internet seduce.

Entonces, las realidades actuales como se describen plantean la pregunta. ¿Hay algo o alguien que pueda darnos esperanza y consolarnos durante estos tiempos difíciles? Y la respuesta debería ser ¡sí! ¡Absolutamente! Como católicos, especialmente durante el mes de diciembre de cada año, recordamos a una Madre que todos compartimos; una Madre que se preocupa por nosotros, conoce nuestros dolores y caminos difíciles. María es nuestra Madre Celestial, que en el caso de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe decidió quedarse entre nosotros (a través de la imagen milagrosa de ella en la tilma de San Juan Diego) y permanece presente en las Américas hasta el día de hoy.

Las palabras que dijo Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, hace casi 500 años, a San Juan Diego en respuesta a su preocupación por su tío Juan Ber-

nardino, quien estaba gravemente enfermo, todavía resuenan y pueden ser significativas para muchos de nosotros en nuestro tiempo:

Escucha, ponlo en tu corazón, Hijo mío el menor, que no es nada lo que te espantó, lo que te afligió; que no se perturbe tu rostro, tu corazón; no temas esta enfermedad ni ninguna otra enfermedad, ni cosa punzante y aflictiva. ¿No estoy yo aquí, que soy tu Madre? ¿No estás bajo mi sombra y resguardo? ¿No soy yo la fuente de tu alegría? ¿No estás en el hueco de mi manto, en el cruce de mis brazos? ¿Acaso tienes necesidad de alguna otra cosa?

Al conmemorar la fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe el 12 de diciembre, que estas palabras resuenen en nuestros corazones. Que encontremos esperanza y consuelo sabiendo que nuestra Madre María nunca se aparta de nuestro lado. Nos cubre con su manto y nos envuelve en sus brazos en un abrazo maternal. ¿Acaso tenemos necesidad de alguna otra cosa? ■

El Diácono Cristóbal Gutiérrez es el Director del Ministerio Hispano/Latino de la Diócesis de Owensboro. Obtenga más información en owensborodiocese.org/ministerio-hispano.

Mañanitas y novena

Comuníquese con su parroquia para conocer el horario de la novena en honor a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe y las celebraciones de las mañanitas.

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Dos seminaristas completan el rito de candidatura



CORTESÍA DEL OBISPO WILLIAM F. MEDLEY
(De izquierda a derecha) El seminarista Conrad Jaconette, el Obispo William F. Medley y el seminarista Christopher Kight sonríen para una foto después del Rito de Candidatura del 24 de octubre de 2021 en la Parroquia San José en Bowling Green.

El 24 de octubre de 2021, los seminaristas Christopher Kight y Conrad Jaconette completaron el Rito de Candidatura durante la Misa en la Parroquia San José en Bowling Green, presidida por el Obispo William F. Medley. ■

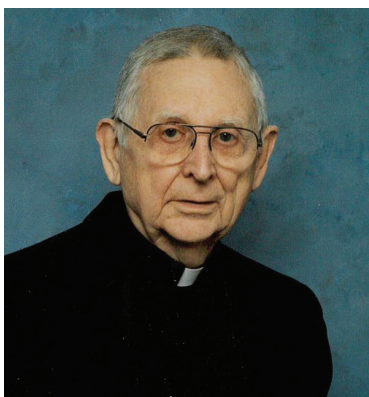


FOTO DE ARCHIVO
Mons. George Hancock se ve en esta foto sin fecha.

Mons. George Hancock, 1919-2021

El Monseñor George Hancock, sacerdote de la Diócesis de Owensboro, falleció el 8 de noviembre de 2021 en el Carmel Home en Owensboro, KY. Tenía 102 años.

La Misa Exequial fue el 5 de noviembre en la Catedral de San Esteban seguida del entierro en el Cementerio Resurrección. Que descanse en paz. ■

Un mensaje de la editora

Aquellos con códigos postales que comienzan con "423" pueden haber experimentado problemas de entrega con sus periódicos de noviembre de 2021 de El Católico de Kentucky Occidental. Algunos hogares recibieron varias copias repetidas, mientras que otros no recibieron ninguna. Después de la investigación, la WKC se enteró de que se trataba de un error de la imprenta que utilizamos para imprimir nuestro periódico. La compañía había experimentado una falla en la computadora, que estropeó las direcciones impresas en las etiquetas de correo, lo que resultó en etiquetas de dirección repetidas para algunas personas y la eliminación de otras direcciones.

Para compensar este error, nuestra impresora cubrió el costo de impresión y envío de copias adicionales del WKC de noviembre a los hogares que fueron excluidos accidentalmente. Los hogares que recibieron varias copias no se enviaron más.

Dado que este proceso de impresión y envío se aceleró para que las casas faltantes recibieran el WKC lo antes posible, los bordes de la segunda ronda de periódicos no se recortaron ni se engraparon. Si su número de noviembre se ve así, es porque fue parte de la segunda ronda de envíos. Gracias por su paciencia y comprensión. ■

- Elizabeth Wong Barnstead, editora, *El Católico de Kentucky Occidental*

Para Hacer Informe de Alegatos de Abuso Sexual

Para denunciar una sospecha de abuso, llame a la Línea Directa de Protección Infantil de Kentucky: 1-877-KYSAFE1 o 1-877-597-2331 (llamada gratuita) o comuníquese con su Fiscal Local del Commonwealth. Para reportar abuso, actual o pasado, a la diócesis por parte de cualquier persona que actúe en nombre de la Iglesia, llame a Louanne Payne, Coordinadora de Asistencia Pastoral (inglés) al 270-852-8380, o Susan Montalvo-Gesser/Miguel Quintanilla, Coordinadoras de Asistencia Pastoral (español) al 270-880-8360. También puede visitar la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro (owensborodiocese.org/safe) para obtener más información. Para hacer un informe de abuso sexual de un menor de edad o conducta inapropiada relacionada por parte de algún obispo, visite <https://reportbishopabuse.org/?lang=es> o llame al 1-800-276-1562.

Parroquias con ministerio hispano/latino

Parroquia del Santo Redentor, Beaver Dam

107 13th Street, Beaver Dam, KY 42320
Contacto: Padre Julio Barrera (270) 274-3414

Parroquia de San José, Bowling Green

434 Church Street, Bowling Green, KY 42101
Contacto: Sra. Gina Holmes o Padre Corey Bruns (270) 842-2525

Parroquia de San Francisco de Asis, Guthrie

7600 Russellville Road, P.O. Box 297, Guthrie, KY 42234
Contacto: Diácono Heriberto Rodríguez (270) 265-5263 o (302) 438-7335

Parroquia de Santa María, Franklin

403 North Main Street, Franklin, KY 42134
Contacto: Padre Tom Buckman (270) 586-4515

Parroquia del Santo Nombre de Jesús, Henderson

511 2nd Street, Henderson, KY 42420
Contacto: Abraham Brown (270) 724-2172

Parroquia de Santos Pedro y Pablo, Hopkinsville

902 East 9th Street, Hopkinsville, KY 42240
Contacto: Sra. Mayra Tirado (270) 498-6456

Parroquia de Cristo Rey, Madisonville

1600 Kingsway Drive, Madisonville, KY 42431
Contacto: Padre Carl McCarthy (270) 821-5494 o Padre Carmelo Jiménez Salinas (270) 881-7737

Parroquia de San José, Mayfield

702 West Broadway, Mayfield, KY 42066
Contacto: Hermana Maria Luisa Morales Solano (270) 247-2843

Parroquia de la Santísima Trinidad, Morgantown

766 Logansport Road, Morgantown, KY 42261
Contacto: Hermana Aida Badillo (706) 284-0996, o Padre Julio Barrera (270) 274-3414

Parroquia de San Leo, Murray

401 North 12th Street, Murray, KY 42071
Contacto: Hermana Esperanza Rivera (270) 753-3876

Parroquia Santos José y Pablo, Owensboro

609 East 4th Street, Owensboro, KY 42303
Contacto: Padre Juan Rene Kalombo (270) 903-8070

Parroquia de Santo Tomás Moro, Paducah

5645 Blandville Road, Paducah, KY 42001
Contacto: Padre Basilio Az Cuc (270) 316-1421
Parroquia del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, Russellville

296 West 6th Street, Russellville, KY 42276
Contacto: Padre Ken Mikulcik (270) 726-6963 o Diacono Edwin Pacheco (913) 542-8948

Parroquia de San Miguel Arcangel, Sebree

57 Watkins Road, Sebree, KY 42455
Contacto: Alyssa Maty (815) 207-3208 o Padre Carmelo Jiménez Salinas (270) 881-7737

Terapeutas de habla hispana

Caridades Católicas de la Diócesis de Owensboro ofrece un programa único de asistencia de consejería llamado CAP (por sus siglas en inglés). A través del programa CAP, Caridades Católicas colabora con varios consejeros en todo el oeste de Kentucky que ofrecen sus servicios a una tarifa reducida para los feligreses de la Diócesis de Owensboro. Aprendan más en owensborodiocese.org/servicios-de-consejeria/.

Joy Navan, M.A., LPA

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P. Julio Barrera y el P. Augusty Valomchalil se convierten en ciudadanos estadounidenses

POR ELIZABETH WONG BARNSTEAD, EL
CATÓLICO DE KENTUCKY OCCIDENTAL

Después de muchos años de preparación, dos sacerdotes de la Diócesis de Owensboro se convirtieron recientemente en ciudadanos estadounidenses.

El P. Julio Barrera, párroco de la Parroquia Santo Redentor en Beaver Dam y la Parroquia Santísima Trinidad en Morgantown, hizo el juramento para convertirse en ciudadano estadounidense el 21 de octubre de 2021. El P. Augusty Valomchalil, párroco de la Parroquia de Santa María Magdalena en Sorgho, hizo el juramento para convertirse en ciudadano estadounidense el 9 de noviembre de 2021.

El P. Barrera es originario de México. El P. Valomchalil es originario de la India.

Ambos hicieron el juramento en la Oficina de Louisville del Servicio de Ciudadanía e Inmigración de los Estados Unidos (USCIS) en Fourth Street en Louisville.

“Me hizo darme cuenta de la gran bendición, que conlleva una gran responsabilidad”, dijo el P. Barrera. “¡Esta es una gran oportunidad para reafirmar mi compromiso de servir a la Iglesia! Se solidifica con mi ciudadanía”.

El P. Valomchalil dijo que estaba triste por renunciar a su ciudadanía india, “pero también feliz” de ser ciudadano estadounidense.

“Dios tiene un plan tan bueno”, dijo. ■



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DEL P. JULIO BARRERA
El P. Julio Barrera después de su juramento como ciudadano estadounidense el 21 de octubre de 2021.



FOTO POR CORTESÍA DEL P. AUGUSTY VALOMCHALIL
El P. Augusty Valomchalil con los parroquianos David Cecil y Rose Marie Cecil después de que el P. Valomchalil hizo el juramento como ciudadano estadounidense el 9 de noviembre de 2021. David Cecil es el presidente del consejo parroquial de la Parroquia Santa María Magdalena en Sorgho, donde el P. Valomchalil es el párroco.