



BE THE LIGHT OF LOVE

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

– Martin Luther King, Jr.



As we honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., on Monday, let us be mindful of the role we have in our homes, parishes, communities, and the future.

Bishop Mark Brennan has repeatedly cited in his homilies and letters to the faithful and the public not only the significance of the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. but also the importance of opening our hearts and minds, as we accept our duty to work for a better society.

“People have the right and obligation to work for justice,” he said. “It is important that all of us recognize that our attitude towards people affects how we relate to them. As followers of Jesus Christ, who suffered, died, and rose from the dead for all people, regardless of race or origin, we must examine ourselves honestly about how we regard people of different races and ethnic groups. Change begins in the mind and heart; otherwise, any changes in behavior will only be superficial and likely will evaporate like the morning mist.”

Just as King lead the life of a Christian prophet, we too are called to do the same. “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Mt 7:12).

Let us pray, the words King left us:

Thou Eternal God, out of whose absolute power and infinite intelligence the whole universe has come into being, we humbly confess that we have not loved thee with our hearts, souls and minds, and we have not loved our neighbors as Christ loved us.

We have all too often lived by our own selfish impulses rather than by the life of sacrificial love as revealed by Christ. We often give in order to receive. We love our friends and hate our enemies. We go the first mile but dare not travel the second. We forgive but dare not forget.

And so as we look within ourselves, we are confronted with the appalling fact that the history of our lives is the history of an eternal revolt against you. But thou, O God, have mercy upon us. Forgive us for what we could have been but failed to be. Give us the intelligence to know your will. Give us the courage to do your will. Give us the devotion to love your will. In the name and spirit of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

This and other prayers from Martin Luther King Jr., can be found in the book: *Thou, Dear God; Prayers that Open Hearts and Spirits.*

SCHOOLS FINALIZE CSW PLANS, READY FOR SHADOW DAYS AND TOURS

Catholic Schools in West Virginia are finalizing plans to celebrate National Catholic Schools Week from Jan. 29-Feb. 4.

Principals, staff, and volunteers in the 24 Catholic schools - 18 grade schools and six high schools - are working together to showcase our exceptional schools, said Mary Ann Deschaine, Ed.S., Superintendent of WV Catholic Schools.

“Our schools provide an environment that is an extension of our family,” she said. “We are committed to providing a quality education that is unapologetically Catholic in nature. Lessons in Catholic faith are integrated into all subject areas and activities. With a steadfast focus on our faith, we trust God, through his son Jesus Christ, will continue to guide us to help our children reach their full potential.”

While academic excellence is a priority proven with proficiency assessments remaining above national and state averages (according to the US Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), nurturing the whole child for college and career readiness in a Christ-centered environment is our mission.

“Our priority is our students, our privilege is supporting our families, and our commitment is to continually improve our schools as we look to the future,” Deschaine said. “Through individual and critical thinking; strong self-esteem; empathy; citizenship; and a sound moral foundation all in a Christ-centered environment, each of our 24 schools prepare our students to be the best version of themselves, so they can confidently share their God-given gifts and talents.”

All 24 schools across the state will host a variety of activities for their students and the community.

Catholic Schools Week is a great time to schedule a tour or shadow day at the school if you are considering sending your child, grandchild, or loved one. Contact your local school to schedule, and ask them about their celebrations you can be a part of, such as athletic events, academic fairs, choral concerts, community service projects, school Mass, and more.

For more information contact your local Catholic school or find a listing at wvcatholicschools.org.

CATHOLIC
SCHOOLS
WEEK

JAN. 29-FEB. 4



JOIN THE MARCH FOR LIFE IN POST-ROE AMERICA

2023 Marks the 50th Anniversary of the Significant Celebration of Life

Editor's note: The following was written by The Catholic Spirit Editor Colleen Rowan and published in the January print issue of the paper.

A historic March for Life will be held in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 20.

“For the first time, in the history of the March for Life, we celebrate the overturning of Roe v. Wade which eliminates the ‘right’ to abort an unborn child and returns the power to each state and their elected officials,” said Kathy Barton, director of Social Ministries for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

This year also marks the 50th March for Life in the nation’s capital and bears the theme “Next Steps: Marching in a Post-Roe America.”



“I encourage defenders of life to join with those who have marched before us for a half of a century as we celebrate our progress while recognizing the work that remains to defend the unborn,” Barton said.

At the same time she is encouraging participation in the march, Barton is stressing the need to also focus energy and efforts working toward solutions for mothers and their children.

“Now is the time to truly support life!” she said.

The reason to continue the March for Life post-Roe is stated on the march’s website at <https://marchforlife.org>. “Even with the wonderful blessing of Roe v. Wade being overturned, which allows more freedom at the state level to enact pro-life laws, the necessary work to build a culture of life in the United States of America is not finished,” the site states. “Rather, it is focused differently. Sadly, the number of abortions annually is still well over 900,000 each year, and that number is

expected to decrease only by roughly 200,000 each year in a post-Roe America.

“Many national legislative battles loom, including even keeping longstanding Hyde protections, which limit government funding for abortion on annual appropriation bills,” the site states. “The Hyde Amendment has saved over 2 million lives and is arguably the most impactful pro-life policy in our nation’s history, but now cannot

be taken for granted. Last, our most important work is changing hearts and minds. The goal of the national March for Life is to not only change laws at the state and federal level, but to change the culture to ultimately make abortion

unthinkable.”

The site states that the march will continue every January at the national level until a culture of life is restored in the U.S.

The schedule is as follows: Wednesday, Jan. 18: March for Life Expo, 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 19: March for Life Expo, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Capitol Hill 101, 11 a.m.-noon. Friday, Jan. 20, March for Life Expo, 9-11 a.m. & 4-7 p.m. Pre-Rally Concert, 11 a.m. – noon. March for Life Rally, noon-1 p.m. March for Life, 1-4 p.m.

For information on bus transportation from West Virginia to the March for Life and information on Walking with Moms (a nationwide, pastoral effort led by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to encourage increased outreach to pregnant and parenting mothers in need), contact Barton by calling (304) 233-0880, ext. 289, or by e-mail to kbarton@dwc.org.

More information can be found at MARCHFORLIFE.ORG.

SISTERS OF LIFE AND KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS TO HOST LIFE FEST, AN ALL-NEW MORNING RALLY AT NATIONAL MARCH FOR LIFE

In response to an increased need to support vulnerable women and to form hearts in receiving every human life as a gift, the Sisters of Life and the Knights of Columbus announced an all-new morning rally, Life Fest, to be held in conjunction with the 2023 National March for Life in Washington, D.C. Life Fest will be held on Jan. 20 at the 4,200-seat Entertainment & Sports Arena in Washington. Doors will open at 7 a.m. Eastern Time. Life Fest will feature dynamic speakers such as Sister Bethany Madonna, SV; music; Holy Mass; and a time of Eucharistic adoration.

“The 2023 National March for Life is one of the most crucial in the history of the pro-life movement. In the wake of the recent Dobbs decision, we see a profound opportunity to build the culture of life in a new way,” Sister Maris Stella, SV, said. “We want to serve the church in her most urgent need—that of the cause of human life, sharing the good news of God’s plan for life and love. So, let’s return to the heart of the matter. Let’s renew our commitment to love. Let’s be agents of healing in a broken world.”

“50 years ago, the Knights of Columbus helped launch the National March for Life. Tens of thousands of Knights have marched, year after year, and it’s become the largest annual human rights demonstration in the world,” said Patrick Kelly, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus. “The end of Roe is a crucial milestone, but we should not mistake the ruling as the end of abortion. The fight to protect life will now evolve at the state level but a united stand before national lawmakers is still essential. We’re delighted to partner with the Sisters of Life to inspire the next generation, and together, we’ll push forward in the states and as a nation, with all the courage and compassion we can summon.”

This event hopes to inspire and educate a new generation on the next steps for a new spirituality of love and life, one foundational to building a culture of life in the post-Dobbs



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Morning Rally & Mass
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Questions?
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We would love to see you there!

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era. The Sisters and Knights aim to reignite the faithful in an appreciation of the gift of their own lives, and love and empathy for women who are unexpectedly pregnant and for women and men who have suffered after abortion. They also hope to encourage the attendees to continue to participate in the March for Life as a celebration for life.

“Why do we rally, and why do we march?” said Sister Marie Veritas, SV. “Because abortion is more than a political issue, or a legal term, or a medical procedure. Abortion has a face and a name. We march because we stand with women who are pregnant and in need. We march because no woman who

has experienced abortion is left unseen by God’s love and mercy. We march because God wants to heal broken hearts and lives. We march because your life, and every life, is a gift.”

For more information about Life Fest, or to register, visit: LIFEFEST2023.COM.

The Sisters of Life is a Catholic religious community of women founded in New York in 1991 by John Cardinal O’Connor. Consecrated completely to Jesus, the Lord of Life, they commit themselves to the protection of human life and to the promotion of new life in Christ, acknowledging the sacredness of every person, and sharing the good news of God’s abundant mercy. In this way, they seek to help reveal to each person their own innate goodness, the particular love God has for them, and the call to a life of abundant truth, joy, and hope. Immersed in Eucharistic prayer within a vibrant community life, their missions include caring for vulnerable pregnant women and their unborn children, inviting those wounded by abortion into the healing mercy of Jesus, fostering a culture of life through evangelization, retreat works, spiritual accompaniment of college students, and upholding the beauty of marriage and family life. For more information, visit SISTERSOFLIFE.ORG.



Mary's Refuge

MARY'S REFUGE OPENS IN MARTINSBURG

Editor's note: the following was written by Meg Partington, administrative assistant at St. Joseph School in Martinsburg.

With a pantry and refrigerator stocked with food, beds made, furniture arranged and a nursery awaiting curious children, the first maternity home in the Eastern Panhandle welcomed its first guest.

Mary's Refuge opened Jan. 9 after being approved for occupancy the week before and nearly 10 months after renovations began on the former convent at 111 E. Stephen St. in Martinsburg. The second guest was expected to arrive three to five days later at the home for expectant mothers and children younger than 3 in their care.

"We're ready to welcome them," Executive Director Kimberley Roche said on Jan. 8. "I am re-energized and beyond ready."

Renovations began in earnest on March 19, 2022 - the Solemnity of St. Joseph, spouse of the refuge's namesake - and were done by hundreds of volunteers and contractors. The home has nine bedrooms, a chapel, kitchen, laundry facilities, and rooms for infant care, relaxation and house meetings.

"It is a significant milestone to finally open our doors to the vulnerable women who are pregnant in the community of Martinsburg and the areas surrounding," said the Rev. Thomas Gallagher, pastor of Saint Joseph Catholic Church, for which the refuge is a ministry. "For us as a community, I think it is especially significant because it is only through supporting our people in need that we can begin to help others become productive, joy-filled community members who take pride in their city/area."

Roche said the women staying at the refuge must be at least 18 years old; clean and sober; able to clear a background check; and have no debilitating mental-health issues. They also must come on their own accord, ready to work toward a positive and productive future.

Those who stay at Mary's Refuge will cook for themselves in the communal kitchen. The women can come and go for breakfast and lunch, but will be encouraged to eat together at dinnertime to build a sense of community, Roche said. They must clean up after themselves in every room they use and be home by the 9 p.m. curfew, unless their job requires them to return later.

In exchange, they get a place to call home, budgeting and parenting classes, help with

education and employment, and connections to resources for rebuilding their lives. They also

will have access to the St. Joseph's Angels boutique, which is run through the church and is about a block away.

"They come in overwhelmed. We work at their pace," Roche said.

Undertaking a major project costing hundreds of thousands of dollars also can be overwhelming and doesn't come to fruition without glitches.

"Some unexpected hitches are what come whenever you are renovating an old house," including replacing the building's electrical system and most of its plumbing, said Patrick Michel, a deacon candidate who played a leading role in the project.

Other significant hurdles were supply-chain issues and the cost of building materials skyrocketing, Gallagher added.

“Mary and God work on their own time,” Roche said. “This takes a village and a great deal of perseverance.”



There have been countless bright spots, too.

“We have had many blessings during this process,” Michel said. “The level of public support was - and is - wonderful. I also want to thank the City of Martinsburg and the building inspectors and fire marshals. They supported us every step of the way.”

Michel said the fact that the endeavor has progressed this far is a reflection of the caring, loving community of Martinsburg and beyond. Among the many financial supporters are members of Saint Joseph Catholic Church and The Roman Catholic Parish of St. James the Greater in Charles Town, W.Va., as well as other Catholic parishes in the area.

Michel and Gallagher hope Mary’s Refuge inspires others to support expectant mothers in need.

“Once we have Mary’s Refuge secure through its infancy, it is our desire to help others to replicate maternity homes - whether it be in this area or in other areas in the state of West Virginia,” Gallagher said. “Fortunately, we have had the support of Bishop Mark Brennan and the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, who are very open and encouraging to support other maternity home projects.”

“There are many empty church buildings throughout the state that could be transformed into homes that support both mothers and children in need,” Michel added.

Ongoing backing of Mary’s Refuge is vital to its success.

“Prayers and fiscal support are both very important,” Michel said. “Volunteers are the lifeblood of this

ministry. Get involved. Never in our history has it been more important to support mothers and their children.”

Gallagher said the desire to minister to the guests at the refuge flows from the Catholic faith and worshipping God at Mass.

“We are living our faith by giving shelter to those women in need, and perhaps even feeding and clothing them, too,” he said. “Not only that, it is my hope, most especially, that these women begin to understand and know that they have a family at Mary’s Refuge and at Saint Joseph Parish. It is the life of the family that is the heart of life and love, and we strive to promote and protect it at all stages.”



Fr. Tom Gallagher tours Mary’s Refuge earlier this year with members of 630K that raised \$7,000 for the maternity home. They are working on additional ways to raise more money for the women and children who will benefit from the safe haven.

Donations of money and/or gift cards to stores where clothing, shoes and coats can be purchased are welcome. Checks to Mary’s Refuge, which receives no government money, may be made out to Saint Joseph Catholic Church (with Mary’s Refuge written in the memo line), and mailed to the church at 336 S. Queen St., Martinsburg, WV 25401. Gift cards also may be mailed there.

Monetary donations also may be made at the Mary’s Refuge website (<https://31937.sites.ecatholic.com>). For more information, go to the site or call 304-261-3664.

MATERNITY HOME IS SIGN OF ACTION OF PRO-WOMEN, PRO-CHILD, AND PRO-LIFE

Editor's note: The following are excerpts worth repeating from Bishop Mark Brennan's Sept. 29, 2022, letter to the faithful that share the importance of putting our faith and convictions into action and tangible support.

My brothers and sisters, our Church is both pro-child and pro-woman. As the pro-life movement long ago realized, seeking only to limit or eliminate abortions is not enough. We must also provide support to mothers before and after they give birth and to their families. Pregnancy centers around the nation have been doing that for decades, often helped by volunteers and money from Catholic parishes. The American bishops' program, "Walking with Moms in Need," will strengthen the connection between Catholic parishes and local pregnancy centers. Stay alert for more information about this initiative.

We must work as well to ensure that hospitals in our State provide quality prenatal and postpartum care, especially to those women who lack health insurance and other financial resources. Having checked with the administrators of Catholic hospitals in West Virginia, I can assure you that, as a matter of faith and respect for the dignity of the person, they will not turn away women who lack health insurance but need quality prenatal and postpartum care.

An inspiring example of what we can do together comes from St. Joseph's Parish in Martinsburg. Assisted by other Catholic parishes and other churches in the Eastern

Panhandle, St. Joseph's is renovating a former convent to provide a place for pregnant women to live who have nowhere else to go. "Mary's Refuge" will be able to accommodate nine pregnant women, who can live there for up to a year while they work and receive counseling on healthy lifestyle choices and how to raise a child. Could not such a project go forward in other parts of our State?

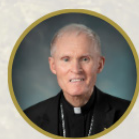
Pope St. John Paul II often spoke of "building a culture of life." That is the larger goal to which we Catholics must be committed. Building that culture includes all of the positive steps that the Church, other private groups, and our governments can take to uphold the right to life and promote the welfare of families. But building a culture that respects all human life also means resisting evil, the "culture of death" that has gained a strong foothold in our country.

St. Paul said, "Bear one another's burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ" [Galatians 6:2]. Let us bear the burden of standing up for life and promoting the good of our brothers and sisters, the little ones, and the bigger ones. As a contemporary song says, "Go make a difference. You can make a difference. Go make a difference in the world." Let us not shrink from the struggle but engage in it with confidence in the God who has made the ultimate difference in the world by sending His Son as our Savior. United to him, we can make a difference in today's world for women, children, and families.

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The St. John Paul II Foundation and the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston invite all married and engaged couples to the second annual Together in Holiness marriage conference:

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10:30 am - 5:30 pm

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[TOGETHERINHOLINESS.ORG](https://togetherinholiness.org)

or email TH@forlifeandfamily.org.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

Isaiah prophesizes the servant's song - created in your mother's womb to be a child of God.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 40

"Here am I, Lord, I come to do your will."

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:1-3

St. Paul greets the people with the grace and peace of God the Father and our Savior Jesus Christ. We are all called by Jesus to be holy with all who love and call out to Christ Jesus.

Gospel: John 1:29-34

John the Baptist declares Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God that has come to earth to take away the sins of the world.

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT
BIBLE.USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS/011523.CFM](http://BIBLE.USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS/011523.CFM)

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that our entrusted Holy See leads with clear vision provided by the loving grace and lifegiving breath of the Holy Spirit in order to guide the faithful, bring back the lost, and evangelize all people to know and love our Savior Jesus Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

..

For leaders of nations, that they open their hearts and minds to the grace and peace Almighty God the true ruler of the universe, enabling them to stand up against injustice and govern with strong convictions against racism, religious persecution, and human trafficking, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all the faithful that truly believes, adores, and loves You, that we unite in prayer and beg pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, or do not love You, let us pray to the Lord. . .

Like the Lamb of God taught us, may we be ever mindful to be kind, compassionate, and forgiving especially to those who are unkind, selfish, and cold-hearted for we do not know the battle raging within them, let us pray to the Lord. . .

Lord hear our prayer



RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT POVERTY



Catholic Charities West Virginia serves families and individuals who are impacted by poverty.

January is Poverty Awareness Month, a month-long initiative to raise awareness and call attention to the growth of poverty in our country.

Across the state, Catholic Charities West Virginia staff and volunteers meet people and families daily who are impacted by poverty. Since poverty looks different from one person to another, it can be challenging to recognize.

Take the "Smith" family, for example. Both parents have jobs and a stable income. And yet, they and their two children had been living with extended family because they could not afford a home of their own. They were experiencing homelessness.

Consider the actual startup cost of finding a place to rent. You need to save up a security deposit and at least your first month of rent. You also need furniture — a bed for your children and a table for your family's meals; cleaning supplies to help keep your family healthy; dishes, bedding, and towels.

Understandably, the Smiths had trouble saving enough to get started in their own place.

Many families are faced with similar struggles. The minimum wage in West Virginia (\$8.75/hour) means that two earners, like the Smiths, can make \$36,400 if both are working full time. Rent for a 2-bedroom apartment takes about one-third of that gross income. Once you factor in taxes, childcare, clothing, and food, there's not much left.

The Smiths came to us during a vulnerable time. They asked for help and we met this family with dignity and compassion. In addition to helping them with their security deposit, we invited other members of the community to help out as well. The response was overwhelming and the family received a table, chairs, twin bed, full bed, sofa, dresser, bath towels, dishes, and bedding.

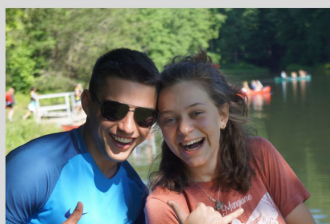
Living in poverty can lead to feelings of despair and hopelessness. Pope Francis, in his message for World Day of the Poor, said, "Let us ask ourselves: what is demanded of us as Christians in the face of this reality? We are required to nurture tomorrow's hope by healing today's pain." We are grateful and humbled by this call to serve!



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Have you ever experienced a Cursillo weekend? Are you a cursillista?

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is trying to resurrect the Cursillo Movement in the diocese and is looking for people who have experience with the apostolic movement.

If you are experienced with Cursillo and would like to join the diocesan efforts in bringing it back to the diocese, please contact Daniel Maul, in the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, at 304-233-0880, ext. 376, or by email at DMAUL@DWC.ORG, or communicate with Joe Pangilinan, at JOEYPANG@AOL.COM

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Liturgy of the Hours

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

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MASS ONLINE

Saturday 6pm Masses will continue to be livestreamed from the Cathedral of St. Joseph, and will be available on our website each Sunday at DWC.ORG.