NATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

JAN. 28 - FEB. 3



The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is proud to celebrate National Catholic Schools week January 29-February 2, 2024, in all 24 Catholic schools across the state. Beginning in 1974, this year marks the 50th annual celebration of Catholic education. This

year's theme is "Catholic Schools: United in Faith and Community." Schools will focus on the value Catholic education provides to young people and its contributions to our church, our communities, and our nation

during this week. All WV Catholic schools and students have created a week full of events that celebrate students, faculty, community & vocations.

Jennifer Hornyak, Interim Supt of WV Catholic Schools, looks forward to this opportunity to connect with families, donors, educators,



and community members and to showcase the many gifts of a Catholic education.

"Our school communities are blessed to be a blessing," said Hornyak. "We have been blessed by the gift of our Catholic faith. Catholic education is one important way we can share that gift with the world," she said. "Our schools are committed to providing a top-quality education in the Catholic tradition for all students. We partner with families to live our shared mission to help our students recognize, challenge, develop, and share

their God-given gifts and talents. We have so many things to celebrate about our students and schools! With overall increased enrollment, academic achievements, high attendance rates, and high expectations for accountability

and responsibility; our schools are an excellent choice for parents looking for a challenging and nurturing Christ-centered learning environment for their children."

The Department of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston has 18 grade schools and six high schools with a 100% graduation rate.

Three of the Catholic high schools - Charleston



Catholic High School (Charleston), Notre Dame High School (Clarksburg), and Central Catholic High School (Wheeling) - are among only seven high schools in the state to earn the AP (Advanced Placement) School Honor Roll Award, a recognition for the best of the best in outstanding achievements for college readiness.

Hornyak said the accolade reflects dedicated staff, student work ethic, accountability, and mission of the Catholic Schools in West Virginia.

"We are so proud of this distinction for our students, their families, and our teachers," Hornyak said. "When you are a member of our Catholic schools you are an important part of our team that works hard to remain focused on living our united mission."

There are 4,579 students attending Catholic schools in 13 counties of WV. More than 40% of students are non-Catholic.

Overall, the Catholic schools in the state offer a 11:1 professional staff to student ratio.

Hornyak said the Catholic schools in West Virginia will gather with their parishes, alumni, families, friends, and prospective families this week for Masses, open houses, and other activities to honor the mission of Catholic education, what our schools provide for our young people, and their contributions to our church, our communities, and our nation.

Catholic schools are faith-based communities where our belief

and faith in God is part of the everyday environment, prioritizing the development of positive character traits such as responsibility, accountability, empathy, and generosity, she said.

"Our parish communities, staff, parents, and grandparents value the academic excellence of a Catholic school education and the respect shown in our schools for Catholic beliefs, virtues, and a higher sense of purpose,"



Hornyak said.

Academic achievement, as well as both college and career readiness are priorities for WV Catholic schools, Hornyak said, but that's not all "We are also focused on developing life and leadership skills to instill confidence, self-awareness, and emotional wellbeing. Add to that athletics, fine arts, STEM, and community service opportunities students in WV Catholic schools are in our environment to work hard and exceed their own expectation.

Building administrators, teachers, secretaries, advancement directors, custodians, pastors, and school advisory boards, each play a significant role in carrying out the mission of Catholic education, she said. "So, yes, we the Catholic schools of WV are blessed to be a blessing."

To learn more about Catholic education in West Virginia go to: wvcatholicschools.org.



THE GIFT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Catholic education is one important way we share the gift of our faith with the world.

System at a Glance

18 Elementary Schools \mid 6 High Schools \mid 7.5% Minorities 482 Professional Staff \mid 100% Graduation Rate

13 Counties served by Catholic Schools

4,579 Elementary & Secondary Students

43% of Catholic School Students are non-Catholic

Enrollment has increased over the last three academic years

2021-2022

259 Students 4,4

dents







CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK A TIME FOR ALL FAITHFUL TO REFLECT

At baptism parents accept the responsibility to be the first teachers of their child's faith, and God parents step forward to share that obligation.

When the child reaches school age that responsibility is then shared by the parish through the parish school of religion and parish(s) Catholic school.

Our Catholic schools are a gift from generation to generation to pass on the faith, weaving Christ and the Church's teachings across all subjects, activities, and service learning.

Just as St. John Bosco believed education is a matter of the heart, so do our Catholic Schools. He believed if you want to do a good deed – teach a child. If you want to do something holy – teach a child. "Truly, now and for the future, among holy things, this is the holiest."

Let us reflect this week on our responsibility as the faithful in our parishes.

Lord, light my heart on fire, so, I make time to pray for our young people, our Catholic schools, and the future of the Church. Help me too willingly and naturally sacrifice for the good of educating vouth in the truth -Your ways, to find joy in doing good deeds for the future of the Church, and to be more responsible as a life-long learner in faith, like a child of God always growing and learning. May I be inspired by St. John Bosco - always grateful for my faith and those who strengthen it with their very lives and in their vocations. AMEN!





TAKE CHARGE, DEEPEN YOUR FAITH ATTEND THE CONGRESS

When it comes to the task to "share Jesus in the Eucharist with others," do you know what to do?

This summer the Church will address that and inspire more than 80,000 Catholics from across the country to deepen their own faith and love for Jesus, and also learn how to share the Good News and the Light of Christ for others.

Attend the National Eucharistic Congress July 17-21 in Indianapolis.

Bishop Mark Brennan wants it to be a priority of all vicariates, all parishes, and all priests to have a WV delegation present to represent them at the national congress and take home with them the witness of how to be fully alive in our parishes, families, and communities.

Pope Francis said the Eucharist is "a summons to go forth, as missionaries, to bring the message of the Father's tenderness, forgiveness and mercy to every man, woman and child."

We are all called to go to the ends of the earth to share and be the Body of Christ. This summer will strengthen us to do so.

The first 250 registered parishioners from the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to secure the Catholic pilgrimage travel package will receive a free FIVE-DAY pass as a gift from Bishop Brennan and the Catholic Sharing Appeal.

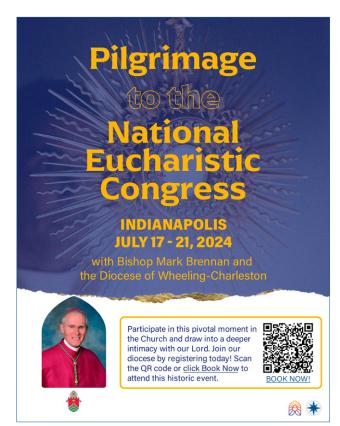
Bishop Mark wants to the faithful of WV "at the National Eucharistic Congress representing their local parishes. I encourage parishes to work together to find ways to finance the travel package for participants. Ideas such as having a fish fry or spaghetti dinner or some other fundraiser...."

With the help of their pastors and Eucharistic Revival point persons, delegates should also seek sponsorships from their Knights of Columbus, Ladies Guild, Rosary groups, etc., to help cover costs.

Word of caution is to sign up online before the passes and travel packages are all taken.

Get more info and register now through the diocesan travel package at:

DWC.ORG/YEAR-OF-THE-EUCHARIST/





NATIONAL Eucharistic What to Expect

Indianapolis July 17-21, 2024



A glimpse of the five-day national congress from the National Eucharistic Revival committee:

DAY ONE

July 17th, the 10th National Eucharistic will commence! Our Catholic family will gather to experience profound, personal renewal through the power of Christ's love. That evening the Congress opens with a major procession as we welcome all four branches of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage to their final destination and prepare for the arrival of Our King. The national procession will culminate when Jesus enters the stadium, carried by Bishop Cozzens in a massive monstrance created specifically for the Congress. The Eucharist will take center stage, and the stadium will fall silent as we adore Our King on his throne.

Dynamic emcees will guide us through the program for the evening, fostering an atmosphere of worship and helping us to prepare our hearts for a powerful encounter with Jesus. Our keynote speakers will spark hope with how God is moving throughout our world at this pivotal moment. They will invite us to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus, allowing him to move our hearts in new ways.

DAY TWO

July 18th, the first full day of events will unfold designed to facilitate a life-changing encounter with Jesus, regardless of where you are on your faith journey.

Throughout the Congress, attendees will select their preferred impact sessions for the morning and then their preferred breakout sessions for the afternoon. Then gathered together as one, the whole assembly will experience the powerful revival sessions in Lucas Oil Stadium each evening.

That morning we will first gather for Mass. This will be followed by morning impact sessions with Bishop Robert Barron, Bishop Daniel Flores, Fr. John Burns, Fr. Leo Patalinghug, Sister Mary Grace Langrell, Chika Anyanwu, and more!

Afternoon breakout sessions will follow, led by faithful Catholics such as Sr. Alicia Torres, Tim Glemkowski, Dr. Edward Sri, Trent Horn, Anna Carter, Esther Garcia, Marilyn Santos, and Matthew Petrusek. You could also participate in one of our special experiences such as a musical triptych, or a session specifically for deacons.

That Thursday evening, we will all gather for a powerful general session where we will experience the revival Our Lord desires to accomplish. We will be joined by Fr. Michael Schmitz and our amazing emcees: Montse Alvarado, Sr. Miriam James Heidland, and Fr. Josh Johnson!

DAY THREE

July 19th will be another amazing day. Mass in the morning and then be invited to participate in morning impact sessions. These sessions to renew our minds in the foundations of our Eucharistic faith. They will be led by passionate Catholic disciples such as Dr. Mary Healy, Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, Bishop Joseph Espaillat, Meg Hunter-Kilmer, Sarah Kaczmarek, Damon Owens, and more!

That afternoon, breakout sessions will be with Deacon Charlie Echeverry, Dr. Andrew & Sarah Swafford, Jason Evert, Dr. Hosffman Ospino, Fr. Leo Patalinghug, and others! You will also have the opportunity throughout the Congress to visit the National Shroud of Turin exhibit, which includes a replica of the world's most studied and controversial artifact.

Friday evening, we will all gather in Lucas Oil Stadium, where we will have the opportunity to participate in praying the Family Rosary Across America live with Fr. Rocky, followed by the highly anticipated Revival Session with Sr. Josephine Garrett, Fr. Josh Johnson, Sr. Miriam James Heidland, Montse Alvarado, and Dave Moore.

DAY FOUR

July 20th the day begins with Mass. Morning impact sessions will be led by Dr. Edward Sri, Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers, Paul Albert, Bishop Joseph Espaillat, Julianne Stanz, Curtis Martin, and more! Afternoon breakout sessions and special experiences on Saturday will be offered by Catholic disciples such as Sr. Josephine Garrett, Dr. Tim Gray, Fr. Mathias Thelen, Monsignor James Shea, and more!

Then we take to the streets of Indianapolis for a historic Eucharistic procession. Tens of thousands of Catholics will follow Our Lord through downtown Indianapolis—publicly professing faith in Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist. This will be an incredible moment to be together!

Saturday evening, we will gather once again in Lucas Oil Stadium for an inspiring Revival Session led by Bishop Robert Barron, Mother Adela Galindo, and Gloria Purvis. We will also be joined in the evening by Grammy-nominated Catholic artist Matt Maher for an experience that will surely help us draw closer to the Lord.

DAY FIVE

July 21st is the day we will be commissioned to go out into the world as missionary disciples as we enter the third year of the National Eucharistic Revival - the Year of Mission.

Sunday morning, we will gather in Lucas oil Stadium for our concluding session, where we will experience an outpouring of grace that will launch us into the Year of Mission ahead. This session will be led by Chris Stefanick, Sr. Miriam James Heidland, Monste Alvarado, Fr. Josh Johnson, and Dave Moore. The Congress will end with a beautiful Mass celebrated by a papal delegate with music by the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra.

Be a part of this moment to experience profound personal renewal and be set ablaze to share Christ's love with your community. Like a new Pentecost, this transformation will flow out from Indianapolis to bring revival in our communities as the Church returns to her first love—the source and summit of our faith.

THIS WEEK'S FEAST DAYS FULL OF LESSONS FOR THE SOUL

The Church celebrates some significant feasts this week. Let them feed your soul and bring you strength and courage.



On Jan. 31, we celebrate **St. John Bosco**, a living example of how we should live our faith and lead others to it - with Christian joy. It is fitting we remember this saint during Catholic schools week - he wholeheartedly believed Catholic education and Christian values were crucial, "if you want to have

a good society and moral order."

From the time he was nine years old Saint John Bosco would tell his mother he wanted to be a priest, and he would help children love Jesus and all of His creation too.

In 1841, he was ordained Father John Bosco (also called Don Bosco for "Don" was Italian for father). He made it his mission to teach youth to get to know God, reflect on their faith, and celebrate the sacraments frequently.

A prayer to Saint John Bosco to Intercede:

Friend of the young, teacher in the ways of God, your dedication to empowering the needy inspires us still.

Help me to work for a better world, where the young are given the chance to flourish, where the poor's dream for justice can come true, and where God's compassion is shown to be real.

Intercede for me as I bring my needs to you and to our heavenly Mother, the Help of Christians.

Saint John Bosco, pray for us!

Editor's note: The charcoal portrait of St. John Bosco is by Christopher Santer of PACEMSTUDIO.COM Santer, who grew up in the Parkersburg area draws and brings each holy soul to life "with the goal of depicting someone you could meet on the street."

The feast of **St. Brigid of Kildare/Ireland** is celebrated Feb. 1. God's love was clearly visible through this compassionate saint, who during and after her life inspired others to let our words and actions speak the love of Christ.

She was born around the year 450, so precise details

of her life are scarce. She is believed to have been the daughter of a pagan chieftain, and her mother was one of his slaves. Her mother raised her Catholic until she was 10. At that time, she was sent back to her father as a servant. She would sell off or give away his



possessions in order to help the poor. Needless to say, when he found out he was furious and tried to sell her to another royal family. The king he presented her to was Christian and impressed with her selfless spirit, one that saw God in every living thing.

When her father was restless, inconsolable, and downright mean on his deathbed the servants, who knew and loved St. Brigid sent for her to come to calm him. Legend has it that while she was in his chambers, she had a pile of rushes/reeds on her lap. As she talked to him, she wove them into a special cross. Insistent that he know what exactly she was doing she calmly told him what the cross represented – Christ's ultimate sacrifice, love, and mercy – and how he suffered and died for all of our sins. Her delivery of this message and the image of the cross captivated him and he willingly converted to Christianity and was baptized just before he died.

When the story spread of this seemingly impossible conversion the people in Ireland considered Brigid a holy woman and to this day St. Brigid's Cross is a visible sign of Irish culture.

Let us especially during this time of revival and synodality in our Church be like St. Brigid and be the light of Christ – calm, peaceful, endearing.... It is never too late for anyone to seek God's mercy and love.

Saint Brigid, pray for us!

Editor's note: The charcoal portrait of St. Brigid is also by Christopher Santer whose larger collection can be found at: <u>www.</u> Christophersanter.com.

The Feast of the **Presentation of the Lord** is Feb. 2nd. On this day we honor the day of Jesus' presentation in the temple as a sign of Mary and Joseph's humility and respect for their Jewish faith and the first public appearance of the Messiah. As joyous as the moment was, it was also a day that pierced Mary's heart.

The moments were described by Luke and shared the Gospel reading for the day (Luke 2:22-40).

As required by Mosaic Law for all males 40 days after they are born, Jesus was presented at the temple. There the Holy Family was greeted by an elder priest named Simeon and the prophetess Anna. They had waited a lifetime for the promised Messiah. Luke's passage declares that Simeon



knew immediately the infant Jesus was the Savior he waited ages to see. He took the child into his arms then proudly raised him high and in a voice of praise exclaimed in thanksgiving to God, "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel" (Luke 2:29-32).

However, what happened next revealed a striking truth and what we now identify as one of the piercing seven sorrows of Mary.

Simeon blessed the Holy Family, then looked into Mary's eyes and said to her, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

Can you imagine young Mary's heart? She was only in her early teens.

Being a devout Jew, Mary knew exactly what Simeon was saying for it is written in Psalm 22, the Messiah's feeling of abandonment and mockery; and Isaiah 53, which the prophet proclaims the lamb led to slaughter, tortured for the sins of the people. As we pray today, recalling this whirlwind of emotions don't diminish our Blessed Mother's emotions - her pounding heart, her labored breath, her racing thoughts....

Let us pray that in our faithfulness we live in the light of Christ, bring our soul and the souls of others out of the darkness. God's plan is greater than our own, knowing one day we will join You in heaven and have eternal joy, love, and peace.

Editor's note: The painting accompanying this article is the "Virgin of Light by Randy Louis Friemel and is available at Fine Art Card Shop online at: www.etsy.com/shop/fineartcardshop

February 2nd is also referred to as Candlemas the traditional conclusion Christmas of the season. Its name honors Presentation the the Lord, the day that Christ's light brought into the temple - the core of the Jewish center in Jerusalem for all to see.



Today we are reminded that Christ's Light is always among us no matter how dark our days may be. If you have special prayer candles you will use this year, this is the appropriate time to take our prayer candles to church for a blessing.

Let the flame of your prayer candles bring to mind the light of Christ, His salvation, and His love for us. Pray in confidence, knowing His light will guide the life of the faithful to eternal happiness.

Editor's note: the art featured in this article is by Monica Welch of Dovetail Ink, available at: www.etsy.com/shop/DovetailInk



World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life is Feb. 2 and is to be celebrated in parishes Feb. 4-5. Please pray for all those who have made commitments in the consecrated life and be sure to thank them on their special day for they take the Light of Christ to all the ends of the world. May they continue to be inspired by Jesus Christ and respond generously to God's gift of their vocation.

For more information about Consecrated Life and the call to religious life contact the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Office of the Delegate for Consecrated Life - Sister Martha Gomez at mgomez@dwc.org.

Editor's note: the image of Pope Francis with religious is by CNS/Catholic Press 2015.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Moses tells the people God will send a prophet to us – one who will speak God's words with great authority.

Responsorial: Psalm 95

"If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

Don't be distracted. Keep your focus on Christ to be free of anxieties.

.....

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

Christ speaks the Word of God with such great authority that even the unclean spirit obeys and leaves, freeing the poor man from torment. Follow Him, listen to Him, and be free.

CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT
BIBLE.USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS/012824.CFM

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that we continue to speak the true Word of God with the authority Jesus modeled, willing to call out the demons afflicting our world and driving them out from those influenced by them, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For those in authority, that they hear and obey the call of God, refusing to harden their hearts, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all those who invest in Catholic schools may they be blessed for providing for our children to be nurtured in wisdom, in faith, and in love, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For the six million Jewish and five million non-Jewish victims of the Holocaust – as we honor the Jan. 27th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau as the International Holocaust Remembrance Day - that their lives be remembered as a blessing to the world, let us pray to the Lord. . .

Lord hear our prayer

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Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!

EBREVIARY.COM LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to view a PDF version of the Liturgy of the Hours.



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 <u>DWC.ORG</u>.