

Faith IN WV

MAY 18, 2025
DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON



PAPAL INAUGURATION WEEKEND



CNS/Lola Gomez

The Inauguration Mass for Pope Leo XIV will be celebrated at 10 am (4am EST) Sunday, May 18, at St. Peter's Square, Rome.

The celebration includes the bestowal of the Fisherman's Ring and pallium. These are two visible symbols of papal authority.



The Fisherman's Ring marks the pontiff as a successor of St. Peter the fisherman. The ring will have an image or symbol of St. Peter the Apostle on it such as keys to the kingdom of heaven, a fisherman's net or boat, a tiny portrait, etc. Popes in the 13th century used the ring for wax seals on personal letters.

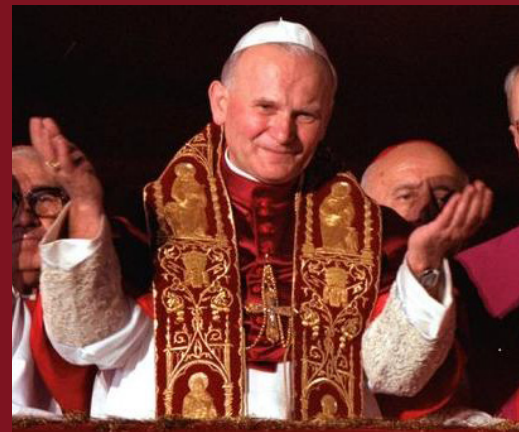
The pallium signifies the pope's worldwide jurisdiction over the Church. The pallium is a white woolen vestment band adorned with crosses and worn around the neck over the chasuble. Historically the pallium is made from the wool of a lamb that been blessed on the Feast of St. Agnes. Additionally, the pallium of wool symbolizes the pope as a good shepherd carrying a lamb on his shoulders.



As cardinal his episcopal motto was, In Illo uno unum, which means "In the One, we are one," and is taken from a treatise on Church unity by St. Augustine, patron of the now-pope's Augustinian religious order. As he is now installed officially as pope, let us not tire of praying that the Holy Spirit continues

...continue

2025 PONTIFICAL INAUGURATION



POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II'S 105TH BIRTHDAY

On this inauguration weekend for Pope Leo XIV, we pause to acknowledge that May 18th would have been Pope St. John Paul II's 105th birthday.

In his inaugural homily, Pope St. John Paul II urged all of us to open the doors of our hearts to Jesus -**surrender to Him and let Christ unfold in your life.**

"The absolute and yet sweet and gentle power of the Lord responds to the whole depths of the human person, to his loftiest aspirations of intellect, will, and heart. It does not speak the language of force but expresses itself in charity and truth.

...continue

to guide him as the Holy Father with wisdom, patience, faithfulness, and joy.

LET US PRAY FOR POPE LEO XIV

As the celebration unfolds and – God willing – the many years ahead let us keep Pope Leo XIV in our prayers.

In his first address as our Holy Father, he pledged to work for a united Church faithful to Jesus and the Gospel. Let us recall his first words to us and turn it into a prayer for him:

Dear Heavenly Father,
Peace be with Pope Leo XIV!
Let peace resound in his heart, his family and fellow servants of the Church.
Wherever he may go let peace be with him!
God, we know you love him.
That love prevails over all evil!
Let Pope Leo XIV move forward without fear
hand in hand with You.
The world needs Your light.
Pope Leo XIV needs You.
Help him build bridges through dialogue and encounter, welcoming all with open arms, uniting us together as one people, always at peace.
In his ever pursuit of peace and justice
Let him remain faithful to You in order to proclaim the Gospel without fear and to remain a missionary.
As an Augustinian, a son of St. Augustine, who said, “With you I am Christian, and for you I am bishop”
in this sense, let him confidently journey toward the homeland You have created for us.
AMEN!

Mass for Pope Leo XIV and the intentions of the pope will be celebrated by Bishop Mark E. Brennan at 6pm, on June 10th, at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling.

Simultaneously, Rev. Don Higgs will celebrate a Mass honoring Pope Leo XIV at 6pm, June 10, from the Basilica of the Co-Cathedral in Charleston.

All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

“The new Successor of Peter in the See of Rome, today makes a fervent, humble and trusting prayer: *Christ, make me become and remain the servant of your unique power, the servant of your sweet power, the servant of your power that knows no eventide. Make me be a servant. Indeed, the servant of your servants.*”

“Brothers and sisters do not be afraid to welcome Christ and accept his power. Help the Pope and all those who wish to serve Christ and with Christ’s power to serve the human person and the whole of mankind. Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ. To his saving power open the boundaries of states, economic and political systems, the vast fields of culture, civilization and development. Do not be afraid. Christ knows what is in man. He alone knows it.

“So often today man does not know what is within him, in the depths of his mind and heart. So often he is uncertain about the meaning of his life on this earth. He is assailed by doubt, a doubt which turns into despair. We ask you therefore, we beg you with humility and trust, let Christ speak to man. He alone has words of life, yes, of eternal life.”

Pope John Paul II clarified through his pontificate that “True holiness does not mean a flight from the world; rather, it lies in the effort to incarnate the Gospel in everyday life, in the family, at school and at work, and in social and political involvement.”



LISTEN. HOPE. SHARE. SEE CHRIST IN THE LITURGY

Comments from Pope Leo XIV, from last summer - then Cardinal Robert Prevost - during an evening reflection at a suburban Chicago parish give us a glimpse of the Holy Father's heart.

Listen to the Word of God

“Let’s go back to listening to the word of God. Let’s go back to understanding what it means to be authentic community, communion, parish community, where we care about one another, and we recognize as the Lord promised, ‘Where two or three (are) gathered in my name, there I am in, their midst,’ and we say, ‘We have a message, as believing Catholics have a magnificent message.’”

Jubilee Year of Hope

“We can live jubilee right here, and we can live hope when in our hearts we recognize that everything does not have to be doom and gloom and the pessimism which sometimes comes over us; it can truly color our vision.”

National Eucharistic Revival

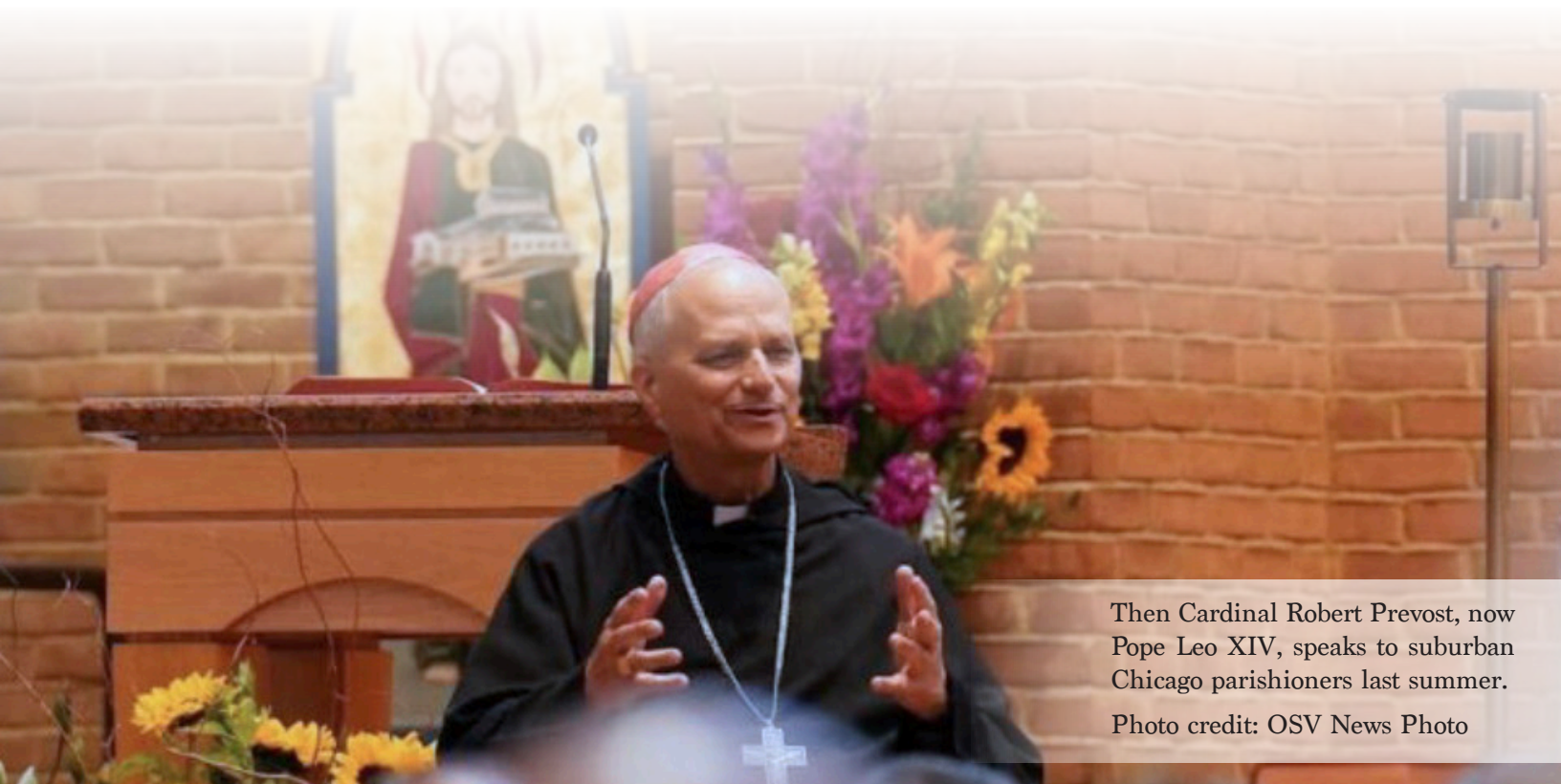
“There are dynamic, life-giving experiences (like the National Eucharistic Congress) that do fill us with hope, and we have to learn to share that message with others -- it depends on all of us.”

“There’s a lot of good things going on, a lot of hope-filled things that each and every one of us can take part in (the National Eucharistic Revival/Mission).”

Beautiful Liturgy Strengthens Us

“We all need to see Christ among us and Christ transfigured. We all need that special boost that helps us in our faith.... The experience of celebrating our faith together can truly be, liturgy needs to be beautiful so that will help us, strengthen us in our faith.”

To read more check out Our Sunday Visitor (OSV News) at: WWW.OSVNEWS.COM/WHAT-THEN-CARDINAL-PREVOST-TOLD-AN-ILLINOIS-PARISH-ABOUT-HIS-LIFE-POPE-FRANCIS-SYNODALITY-AND-MORE/



Then Cardinal Robert Prevost, now Pope Leo XIV, speaks to suburban Chicago parishioners last summer.

Photo credit: OSV News Photo



WE PRAY FOR THE CHURCH

Rosary Procession & Crusade for Vocations



It may have seemed like an ordinary Tuesday evening, but it was extraordinary in Wheeling as more than 100 people sweetly sang Immaculate Mary a cappella and prayed the Rosary in the streets - for the Church, for those who have left the Church, for our families, for those suffering due to illness or silent struggles, and for strong Catholic vocations for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

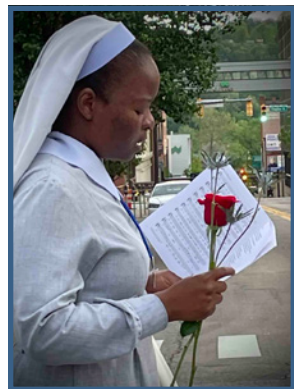


On Tuesday, May 13, the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima, local forecasters called for rain, but not a drop fell upon the solemn and peaceful procession, singing and praying from St. Alphonse Church in the Centre Market district to the Cathedral of St. Joseph.

The crowd representing youth in our parishes and Catholic schools to elders, who despite physical aches and pains (offering the latter for their special intentions), walked the half mile, kicking off the encore to the diocesan Rosary for Vocations from two years ago.

From May 13, 2025, to May 13, 2026, faithful around the world can join our diocesan Rosary Crusade for Vocations in WV. The diocese has created a webpage for Rosary pledges at: DWC.ORG/ROSARY-CRUSADE

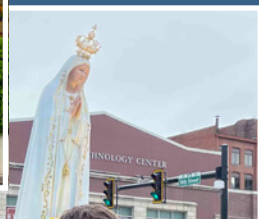
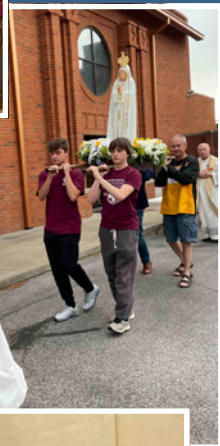
As we unite in prayer for vocations, let us call to mind the lyrics of Immaculate Mary as the faithful, clergy, deacon, sisters, and religious educators sang out:



*Immaculate Mary, your praises we sing;
You reign now in splendor with Jesus our King.
Ave, ave, ave, Maria! Ave, ave, Maria!*

*In heaven, the blessed your glory proclaim;
On earth we, your children, invoke your sweet name.
Ave, ave, ave, Maria! Ave, ave, Maria!*

*We pray for the Church, our true Mother on earth,
And beg you to watch o'er the land of our birth.
Ave, ave, ave, Maria! Ave, ave, Maria!*



GREAT JOY IN ROME



By Seminarian Michael J. Tupta,
Pontifical North American College, Rome, for FaithInWV

“Annuntio vobis gaudium magnum... Habemus papam!”

Have you ever experienced a moment in your life in which you most certainly knew that something particular was about to occur and yet you are still unable to believe it?

In the last few weeks here in Rome, I have been blessed to participate in some events that, on average, occur only every ten to sometimes twenty-plus years. Shortly after Pope Francis' death on Easter Monday, I visited and prayed next to Pope Francis' mortal remains in St. Peter's Basilica.



NAC Photo: Chris Tillotson

A few days later, I gathered with over 200,000 people, including almost every world leader, in St. Peter's Square to attend his funeral Mass. This moment of liturgical prayer for his soul, thanking the Lord for the gift of his life and taking him to his final place of rest was a significant example of unification in our church and the entire world. Pope Francis desired to be buried at his favorite church, the Papal Basilica of St. Mary Major, making him the seventh pope to be buried there. Following this, nine days of mourning are

prescribed after the death of the pope. This step is crucially important to how the Church transitions from one successor of Peter to the selection of the next one by allowing time for the cardinal-electors to gather for prayer, fraternity and to discern how Jesus desires to guide his beloved Church as well as all of humanity through the leadership of the Bishop of Rome.



NAC Photo: Chris Tillotson

On the morning that the conclave began, I attended the “Santa Messa pro eligendo Romano Pontifice”, Holy Mass for the election of the Roman Pontiff, inside St. Peter's Basilica. In this Holy Mass, the cardinals, pray the Holy Mass together one last time in public. Watching the cardinal-electors process up the center aisle was a beautiful opportunity to pray for the Holy Spirit to guide their discernment of who will be chosen to be the next Bishop of Rome and 267th successor of St. Peter. While the cardinals can technically select a man from outside of the group of cardinal-electors, it has not happened in 647 years. Therefore, I was fairly confident that the future Holy Father was in the group processing within arm-length

of me. A short while later, the cardinal-electors solemnly processed into the Sistine chapel, swore a vow of secrecy, and were locked in with a key. This is where the name “conclave” comes from, meaning “with a key”.



I was in St. Peter's Square for about ten hours in total over the next two days. I had time to pray the Psalms, pray the Holy Rosary, and have great conversations with my seminarian brothers and people from many other countries while we waited for the chimney smoke indicating if a new pope had been chosen or not yet. This was a privileged opportunity for tens of thousands to gather to pray for the cardinal-electors inside the Sistine chapel and unite at the church built over the tomb of St. Peter, to whom Jesus gave the keys to His Church here on earth (Matthew 16:18).

Shortly after six o'clock in the evening after the fourth round of voting, white smoke began to pour out of the Sistine chapel chimney. We were all so excited and emotional that we once again had a spiritual father, in concomitance with the Holy Spirit. Over the next hour, the piazza and surrounding streets became even more packed with incredible crowds to hear the

announcement as to who is the new Roman Pontiff to guide the “one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church” (Council of Nicea, 325 A.D.). This specific moment of the announcement is what I was unable to believe was actually happening. Hearing that Cardinal Prevost was chosen and knowing that he was born in the United States, my group of seminarian brothers from the Pontifical North American College did not chant “U-S-A”, but rather “Li-o-ne”, which is Leo in Latin. His American citizenship, while interesting, is rather insignificant to his core identity. Above everything, he is a son of the Lord Jesus by adoption through his baptism and a faithful servant of the Church. In the end, none of us are meant for this world. Rather, Jesus Christ is inviting us to a personal, life-giving relationship with Himself both in this life and ultimately in the life to come in heaven where Jesus will “wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more” (Revelation 21:4). Shortly thereafter, Pope Leo XIV came out on the loggia looking over St. Peter's Square. Hearing his first address to the people of God and receiving his Urbi et Orbi blessing was a grace that I believe will remain with me in my continued seminary formation and priesthood in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.



NAC Photo: Chris Tillotson

Praised be Jesus Christ, now and forever!

EXCITING NEWS FROM CAMP CARLO

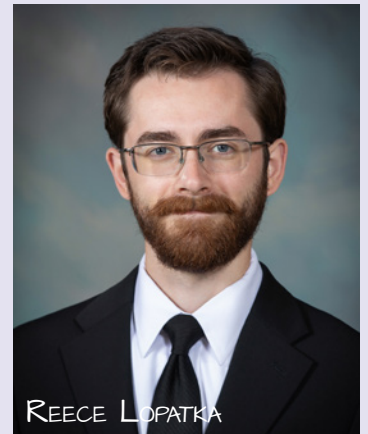


MICHAEL TUPTA

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston announces Seminarians Michael J. Tupta, of Charleston, and Reece Lopatka, of Morgantown, will be co-directors of Blessed Carlo Acutis Youth Camp (Camp Carlo), the Catholic youth adventure camp in Huttonsville, WV.

For more information on camp and to register your child or grandchild go to:

CAMPCARLOWV.ORG



REECE LOPATKA

HABEMUS PAPAM!

A column by Sr. Jessica Bernal, HMSP for FaithInWV

“Habemus Papam!” These were the words that filled with joy and relief my hopeful heart. The first American pope, religious, and a missionary; conditions that have both broadened his horizons and prepared him for this new calling!

Our Lord has made to him to lead all people of different backgrounds, states of life, and cultures to the green pastured of our Lord’s presence.

In a special way, I see in our Holy Father a great hope for the church of America. America finds herself wounded and hurt in the most inner being of the souls of the people, and our faith is shaking. We find ourselves hungry for the healing love of our Lord, and at the same time, far from true understanding of what this love is and means.

May our Holy Father remember the words of Saint John Paul II who, in a homily before the conclave in which he was elected pope said, “He asked of Simon: ‘Do you love me more than these? The heart of Simon trembled. A human heart must tremble, because in the question there is also a demand. You must love! You must love more than the others do, if the entire flock of sheep is to be entrusted to you, if the charge, ‘Feed my lambs, feed my sheep’ is to reach the scope which it reaches in the calling and mission of Peter.”

Our world has forgotten how to lay down one’s life, how to forget self in order to love the neighbor, how to seek first the kingdom of God. Our world has also lost men who can truly answer this question, and with trembling hearts lead others in the ways of Christ, feeding with

the richness of Christ’s body and blood and with his Word the lambs and the sheep. Pope Leo XIV is this hope for America and for the World; to heal with the peace he gives, the peace of the risen Christ who is ‘the

Good Shepherd who gave his life for the flock of God’ and to instruct each of us in the way of love, the way of life and truth that is Christ Jesus.

Each of us then, looking to our Holy Father, chosen from among his brethren by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit have the obligation to unite in prayer for this new pontificate and to leave behind the murmuring Christ experiences on many occasions on behalf of the people, in order to open our hearts to the healing and renewal Christ is so eager to give. If the supposed followers of Christ have this openness during the discourse of the Bread from Heaven, everyone of them would have experienced the overwhelming joy of Christ’s gift of his very self in

the Eucharist, but because they did not, rather than change the teaching, Christ allowed them to walk away from him. It is the duty of our Holy Father to teach and defend the faith, it is also our duty to know how to respond with faith and confidence even to that which we do not fully understand in the moment.

May we be the unity that his Holiness has invited us to, seeking together to, “be a missionary church, a Church that builds bridges and dialogue, always open to receiving, with arms open to everyone to all those who are in need of our charity, our presence, dialogue, love.”



The 1700th Anniversary of The Nicaea Council

(authors of the Nicene Creed)

The Nicene Creed is a bold affirmation of our Christian identity – Jesus Christ is “true God from true God.”



Seventeen hundred years ago, 300 bishops from all over the world were called to the first ecumenical council held in a Byzantine palace in Nicaea (the year 325). Maybe for your mind’s eye, imagine the recent papal conclave with cardinals from all over the universe gathering for the conclave.

The meeting in Nicaea, however, was dedicated to produce the first universal creed, proclaiming salvation in Jesus Christ and affirming the Trinity - God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It was created to serve as testimony for our love of God.

The creed we recited together at Mass is relatively the same as it was originally with a few modifications mainly through the year 381. It was essentially one of the Catholic Church’s foundational professions of faith, declaring in black and white belief in the greatest mysteries and the Holy Trinity.

In April the Vatican released, “*Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour - the 1700th anniversary of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325-2025)*” – an extensive document to further understand this proclamation of faith and the Christian community. (Read it at: WWW.VATICAN.VA/ROMAN_CURIA/CONGREGATIONS/CFAITH/CTI_DOCUMENTS/RC_CTI_DOC_20250403_1700-NICEA_EN.HTML)

The bishops that gathered in 1700 years ago was significant for it marked the first time that the Church’s unity and mission were expressed at a universal level (hence the title “ecumenical” or “universal”) in a synodal form.

Pope Francis praised the intense work of the 1700th anniversary document committee, because it has resulted in a tool “intended to shed light on the timeliness of the faith professed at Nicaea” and “to nourish and deepen the

faith of believers and, based on the figure of Jesus, to offer insights and reflections useful for a new cultural and social paradigm inspired by the humanity of Christ.”

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God,

the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,

the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

Our Lady of West Virginia

In this month of May to honor Mary, we share a tribute to her entitled
“Our Lady of West Virginia.”

Our Lady is a beauty of the West Virginia Hills.

From Spruce Knob’s lofty towering to where Kenova spills
Out of bounds, and seeks to share our wealth with sister-states,
Our Lady smiling sunshine forever radiates.

The bright blue of her mantle is in summer skies at Cheat,
Her golden tresses ripple in Greenbrier’s autumn wheat.

Romney’s apple-blossoms bear the blushing of her face
As she heard the Angel-whisper, “Hail, Mary, full of grace.”

Our Lady is the music of our lovely lakes and streams,
“The beautiful Ohio,” and the Tygart’s dashing gleams.
Her low-voiced laughter tumbles in Blackwater’s clear cascade,
And echoes on Kanawha “Behold the Lord’s handmaid.”

Our Lady is the loveliness of all young, growing things.
She is the rapture in our souls, The gaiety which sings:

“Lady of West Virginia, Virgin Immaculate,
Reign over every heart and soul Queen of our Mountain State.”

Editor’s note of interest: The author is identified as Mark Smith and the writing was “imprimatur” (granted permission of publication of any writing containing something of peculiar significance to religion, theology, or morality) in 1953 by John J. Swint, Bishop of Wheeling, who dearly loved his West Virginia and Our Blessed Mother Mary.

Not much is known about Smith, but it is evident that his soul was indeed grateful for our Almost Heaven West Virginia, and our Blessed Mother.

It is also important to note that Archbishop Swint was the diocese’s first native-born priest and bishop. Born on Dec. 15, 1879, in the small community of Pickens in Randolph County he spent his childhood in Weston, attending St. Patrick’s Church, where he was inspired to study for the priesthood.

His love of God and his state energized his mission to bring Christ to all reaches of the Mountain State and he convinced Bishop Donahue to let him form and lead the Diocesan Apostolic Mission Band - traveling throughout the diocese to serve in labor camps and factory towns dotted among the mountains and rugged terrain. He traveled by horseback and on foot providing missionary work for Catholics and non-Catholics of 20 different ethnic groups in private homes, farms, courthouses, and halls, while also building up the Church and bringing Mass and the sacraments to scattered Catholic families.

In 1914, became pastor of his childhood parish, St. Patrick’s, Weston. He was there when the current church and school were constructed. In 1922 he was named Bishop of Wheeling in 1922, a position he would maintain until his death in 1962.

It was in 1954, when Pope Pius XII gave him the unusual title of Archbishop “ad Personam” I honor of his extensive years of service and leadership of the diocese. Ultimately, he was instrumental in the construction of 100 churches, a new Cathedral, a college, 52 elementary and high schools, and five hospitals.

It is no surprise that Archbishop Swint would not hesitate to grant publication permission of this devotion and declaration to the Queen of the Mountain State.



MEMORIAL MASS FOR FR. MARIO RICHARD CLARO

Noon Mass, May 27th, at the Cathedral of St. Joseph, Wheeling

A Memorial Mass will be celebrated for Fr. Mario Richard Claro at the Cathedral of St. Joseph (1300 Eoff St, Wheeling) on Tuesday, May 27 at 12:05pm.

Fr. Claro, 84, of Franklin, WV, passed away Saturday, April 19, 2025, at University of Virginia Medical Center in Charlottesville, VA.

He was born September 19, 1940, in New York, NY, a son of the late Mario Gaetano and Margaret Mary (Duffy) Claro.

Fr. Mario, as he was most often referred, attended Immaculate Conception College of Philosophy in Troy, NY and St. Bonaventure University in Olean, NY. He also earned a master's in theology with a specialization in liturgy from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, IN. He completed his preparatory studies for the priesthood at Mt. Alvernia Seminary in Wappingers Falls, NY and was ordained June 10, 1967. He previously served at St. Agnes in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Father Claro was incardinated into the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston December 22, 1970. He previously served as associate pastor of St. Paul Parish in Weirton from 1968 to 1970 and St. Anne Parish in Bristol, VA from 1970 to 1972. He became chaplain at Mount Saint Joseph Motherhouse in Wheeling in 1972 and served as chaplain for a time at Central Catholic High School in Wheeling. He returned to Weirton in 1977 to serve as associate pastor of St. Joseph the Worker Parish. From 1978 to 1983, he was on the faculty at St. Joseph Preparatory Seminary in Vienna, where he also served as dean of students.

Father Claro served as associate director of the diocesan Office of Sacraments, Worship and Spirituality from 1983 to 1988; coordinator of the diocesan Office of Liturgical Practices in 1988; and diocesan coordinator for the diocesan Department of Catholic Education and Formation from 1987 to 1992. He was also regional representative of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions Region 4, consultant for the Diocesan Art and Architecture Commission, and teacher of liturgy coordinator for the Diaconate and Ministries Formation Program.

Additionally, Mario served as rector of the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling, WV from 1989 to 1994; pastor of St. Theresa Parish in Morgantown, WV from 1994 to 1998; and pastor of St. Mary Parish in Petersburg, WV and Epiphany of the Lord Parish in Moorefield, WV from 1998 to 2006. Father Claro became pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Franklin, WV in 1998 and served there until his retirement from active ministry.

Fr. Mario had fully adopted Franklin as his home, where he was actively involved in the community. There, he was very supportive of the Pendleton County Ministerial Association and was a favorite of the VFW for their ceremonies. Known for his welcoming nature, humility, and good humor, Mario was an incredibly personable



individual who sought to genuinely know and understand those around him. As a priest, Mario will be remembered for taking time during every Mass to welcome visitors, always being available to the faithful, exploring the mysteries of the faith, and his devotion to the Blessed Mother. Overjoyed by children's presence in church, Mario was delighted by their youthful clamors during Mass (which he often encouraged), likely because he truly recognized children to be the "lifeblood of the church."

Fr. Mario loved life to the fullest: the thrill of travel, sharing a meal and some fine wine with friends, and caring for his beloved pets. Additionally, he was an avid reader and theological researcher in both trade and hobby to the last. He was an amazing teacher and historian of the faith. His extensive personal library has been left to Saint Leo's Catholic Church, Inwood, WV.

Simply put, Fr. Mario, ever the Lord's servant, truly loved God and His people.

He is survived by his brother, Frank Claro of Manchester, NJ; and niece, Kathleen S. Claro of Yonkers, NY; his parish family at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton including the Sasso Family; as well as countless friends.

Fr. Claro's Funeral Mass was celebrated on May 16, 2025, in Franklin, WV. A Memorial Mass will be celebrated for him at the Cathedral of St. Joseph (1300 Eoff St, Wheeling) on Tuesday, May 27 at 12:05pm.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made in Mario's name locally to Christian Assistance Network (CAN) P.O. Box 572, Franklin, WV 26807; Pendleton Animal Welfare Shelter (PAWS), P.O. Box 804, Franklin, WV 26807; nationally to Catholic Charities, 2050 Ballenger Ave., Alexandria, VA 22314; Shriners Children's Hospital, P.O. Box 947765, Atlanta, GA 30394; or any charity dedicated to the protection of animals.

ST. BERNADINE OF SIENA

May 20th is the memorial of St. Bernadine of Siena – a 15th Century Franciscan, called “the Apostle of the Holy Name of Jesus.”

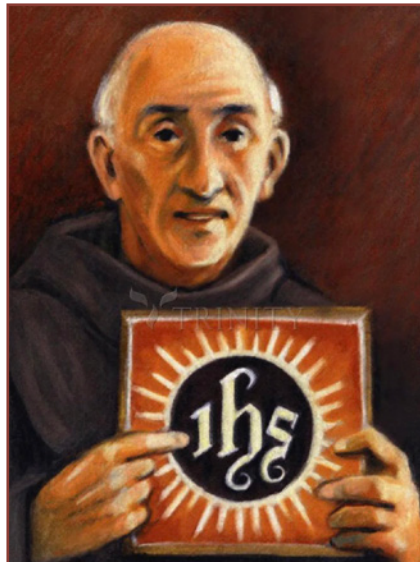
His wisdom shared in his sermons still reminds us that, “Whenever divine grace selects someone to receive a particular grace or some especially favoured position, all the gifts (needed for it) are given to the person (by God) abundantly.”

It was St. Bernadine who created the IHS monogram (the Greek initials of Jesus) and in turn also began the devotion to the Most Holy Name of Jesus.

It was his Aunt Diana who was his great witness of faith, taught him to praise God always, and be devoted to honor the Blessed Mother. She actually raised him. His parents died, leaving him orphaned at the age of seven.

As a boy he would build pretend altars and pretend to be a priest giving sermons and celebrating Mass. He was selfless turning to prayer, fasting, and helping others.

When his aunt died, he prayed to God to clearly guide him in his vocation – within two years he joined the Franciscans. During his first 12 years with the missionaries, he wasn’t able to do much preaching because an ailment left barely a voice – it was weak and hoarse. So, he spoke through his actions.



He never backed down from a missionary and evangelization assignment, and when he was given the important task to travel to Milan, Italy to convert souls, he asked God to give him a voice strong and bold. God did.

His preaching drew crowds from all over. Stores would close so shop owners, workers, and customers could listen to him. Pope Pius II called him the “second St. Paul”.

Vatican records note that at the end of his sermons he would always leave the people with a message of Jesus’ mercy and Mary’s great love, telling them never to forget the power in the name of Jesus.

Faithful Catholics around the world reverently bow their heads during Mass when the name of Jesus is said.

Call upon St. Bernadine’s intercession:

Saint Bernardine of Siena, words were very important to you. You used your gifts to share words of Jesus’ mercy and forgiveness and to praise his Holy Name. Pray for us that we may always choose to speak Jesus’ name with reverence and to use our words to promote peace and love rather than discord. Amen.

Editor’s Note: the painting of St. Bernadine of Siena is by Julie Lonneman and available at Trinity Stores TRINITYSTORES.COM

DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

WV PILGRIMAGE SITES FOR JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE



- **Cathedral of St. Joseph** 1300 Eoff Street, Wheeling
- **Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart** 1032 Virginia Street East, Charleston
- **St. Patrick Church** 210 Center Avenue, Weston
- **St. Joseph Parish** 225 S. Queen Street, Martinsburg

Through December 28, 2025, Catholics are invited to visit any and all of these locations to obtain a Plenary Indulgence by completing:

- **Reverent Prayer (at site):** Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Liturgy of the Hours, or Mass.
- **Confession** - within 20 days before or after pilgrimage.
- **Holy Communion**
- **Pray for the Pope**

For information and updates go to: dwc.org/jubilee-year-2025

¡Viva Cristo Rey! Long Live Christ the King! ~St. Cristóbal Magallanes~



“¡Viva Cristo Rey! ¡Viva la Virgen de Guadalupe!” Long live Christ the King! Long live the Virgin of Guadalupe!

This was the cry of the Cristeros, peasant Catholics who opposed the fierce political and anti-Catholic oppression inflicted by the Mexican government on its citizens in the early twentieth century.

On May 21, we remember St. Cristóbal (Christopher) Magallanes Jara and his 24 companions who were killed during the Cristero War of the 1920s in Mexico.

It was an era when Catholics literally put their lives on the line just to go to Mass.

The Mexican government was violently anti-Catholic. Religious persecution began around 1914, when restrictions for religious and the Catholic religion came into law.

The efforts to push out Catholicism from the country only worsened over the next decade. The government leaders believed the Catholic faith was a threat to their power. Religious were banned from wearing their clerics outside of church.

Any Catholics who resisted or criticized the government were put in jail and often brutally killed. Catholic schools, monasteries, seminaries, and convents were all closed.

Foreign priests were forced to leave the country.

Prior to the war there were more than 4,500 priests in Mexico compared to the estimated less than 350 who remained during that time. Church property was taken over by the Mexican government too.

The saints we celebrate on this feast day were all priests like St. Cristóbal, except for three who were proud Catholic laymen. The 25 did not die together but in eight different Mexican states. The 22 priests were killed for offering the sacraments. Saint Cristóbal remained a faithful servant of God and not only continued to celebrate Mass and the sacraments in hiding, but was also secretly preparing seminarians for the priesthood after their seminary was

closed. He did so within his parish in Totatiche (which still exists today). Historians note that he did not join the Cristeros rebels. He opposed a violent resolution.

The Cristeros were a group of more than 50,000 Mexican men who chose to fight for their religious freedom. Their name came from their motto, “Long live Christ the King (Viva Cristo Rey)!” They believed the only end to the hateful regime would have to come from a show of unity and physical resistance.

It is estimated about 90,000 Catholics and their supporters died under the force of hateful government before it backed down from its total suppression of religious freedom.

Saint Cristóbal and his companions are examples of true martyrs for all of us who take our religious freedom for granted.

Saint Cristóbal, called upon Jesus, Mary, and the saints to come to the aid of Christ’s people. Even the Cristeros war cry in this time of persecution was an affirmation to her and her intercession:

“The Virgin Mary is our protector and defender when there is something to fear,

She will defeat the demons crying ‘Long live Christ the King!’

She will defeat the demons crying ‘Long live Christ the King!’

Soldiers of Christ let us follow the flag that the Cross shows the army of God!

Let us follow the flag crying, ‘Long live Christ the King!’”

Just before St. Cristóbal was murdered by his government he said, “I am innocent and die innocent. I absolve with all my heart who seek my death and ask God that my blood bring peace to a divided Mexico.”

St. Cristóbal and companions, pray for us.

St. Rita of Cascia

Remembered as Healer & Peacemaker

Her life is a story of great love, terrible loss, profound forgiveness, and strong faith. Saint Rita of Cascia (1381-1457), born Margarita Lotti, is a beloved saint of the Church, who honors her bravery. Her feast day is May 22.

As a young girl she proclaimed she wanted to join the religious sisters of Cascia, but her parents had arranged her marriage and wouldn't entertain religious life.

So, she married a noble warrior, helped him overcome personal challenges, and converted him to her faith.

The couple had two sons.

Because of a foolish feud, her husband was murdered. It was customary at the time to then seek revenge against the family that did the killing. However, St. Rita refused to revolt.

She forgave the killers for they did not have Christ in their hearts.

Soon after the death of her husband, both of St. Rita's sons died to illness. She was alone.

The call to serve God as a religious sister grew stronger.

She went to the Augustinian convent. She had admired these sisters since she was a child. However, they turned her away, noting the family feud as the root cause.

She accomplished what seemed to be the impossible, convincing her husband's family to end the feud and forgive the killers. She went so far as to have both families sign a peaceful agreement, ending any future animosity.

The Augustinian sisters at the St. Mary Magdalene Monastery heard of this and welcomed her into religious life. She was 36.

Rita was elated and prayerfully united with Jesus and His Passion. It is recorded that she had a profound spiritual experience and a thorn from Christ's crown penetrated her forehead. The wound it caused remained open and visible until the day of her death.

Several months before her death, she was visited by a relative who asked if there was anything she could do for her. Saint Rita at first declined, but then made a simple request to have a rose from the garden of her family home brought to her.

It was January, the dead of winter in the hills of Umbria, but upon her return home the relative passed Rita's family garden and found to her astonishment a single fresh rose in the snow-covered garden on an otherwise barren bush.

She immediately returned to the convent where she presented the miraculous rose to Rita who accepted it with quiet and grateful assurance.

Her body is incorrupt and is in a glass enclosed coffin at the Basilica of St. Rita in Cascia, Italy. She is one of the most beloved saints of the Church.

For more on the life of St. Rita visit the Monastery of Santa Rita Da Cascia at: WWW.SAINTRITASHRINE.ORG

Editor's note: the portrait of St. Rita is by Antonio Maria Nardi (1897-1973).



FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

First Reading: Acts 14:21-27

Paul and Barnabas complete their mission journey making disciples throughout Asia.

Responsorial: Psalm 145

“I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.”

Second Reading: Revelation 21:1-5a

Like bride and groom, God pledges everlasting love.

Gospel: John 13:31-35

Jesus gives his disciples a new commandment: love one another as I have loved you.

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT](#)

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For Pope Leo XIV, on this day of his inauguration as pontiff, that he will forever glorify God through the love he has for all people, nations, and creation, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That leaders of nations work to break down barriers between peoples and cultures, fostering mutual understanding and enabling cooperation among those of all backgrounds, for God's dwelling is with the whole human race, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For missionaries around the world, who teach the faith by word and deed, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That we may be reminded always that as Jesus' disciples we are commanded to love one another, especially when disagreements or divisions threaten our harmony and unity, let us pray to the Lord. . .

Lord hear our prayer

WV CATHOLIC RADIO BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOU

Berkeley Springs - Hancock, MD	FM	96.3
Berkeley Springs	FM	107.9
Clarksburg-Bridgeport	FM	97.5
Dunbar - Charleston	AM	1450
Eastern Panhandle - coming soon	FM	88.5
Grafton - Clarksburg	AM	1190
Keyser - coming soon	FM	98.9
Montgomery - Beckley	FM	89.7
St. Marys - Parkersburg	FM	105.3
Star City - Morgantown	FM	89.7
Summersville	FM	91.3
Wheeling - Martins Ferry, OH	FM	90.7
Weirton - Steubenville	FM	97.9

~Listen on LoL Stream at www.rdo.to/WLOL~

ENROLL TODAY

WV Catholic Schools

*Empowered
by knowledge.
Transformed
by faith.*



Register today

wvcatholicschools.org



Liturgy of the Hours LITURGY OF THE HOURS

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 DWC.ORG.