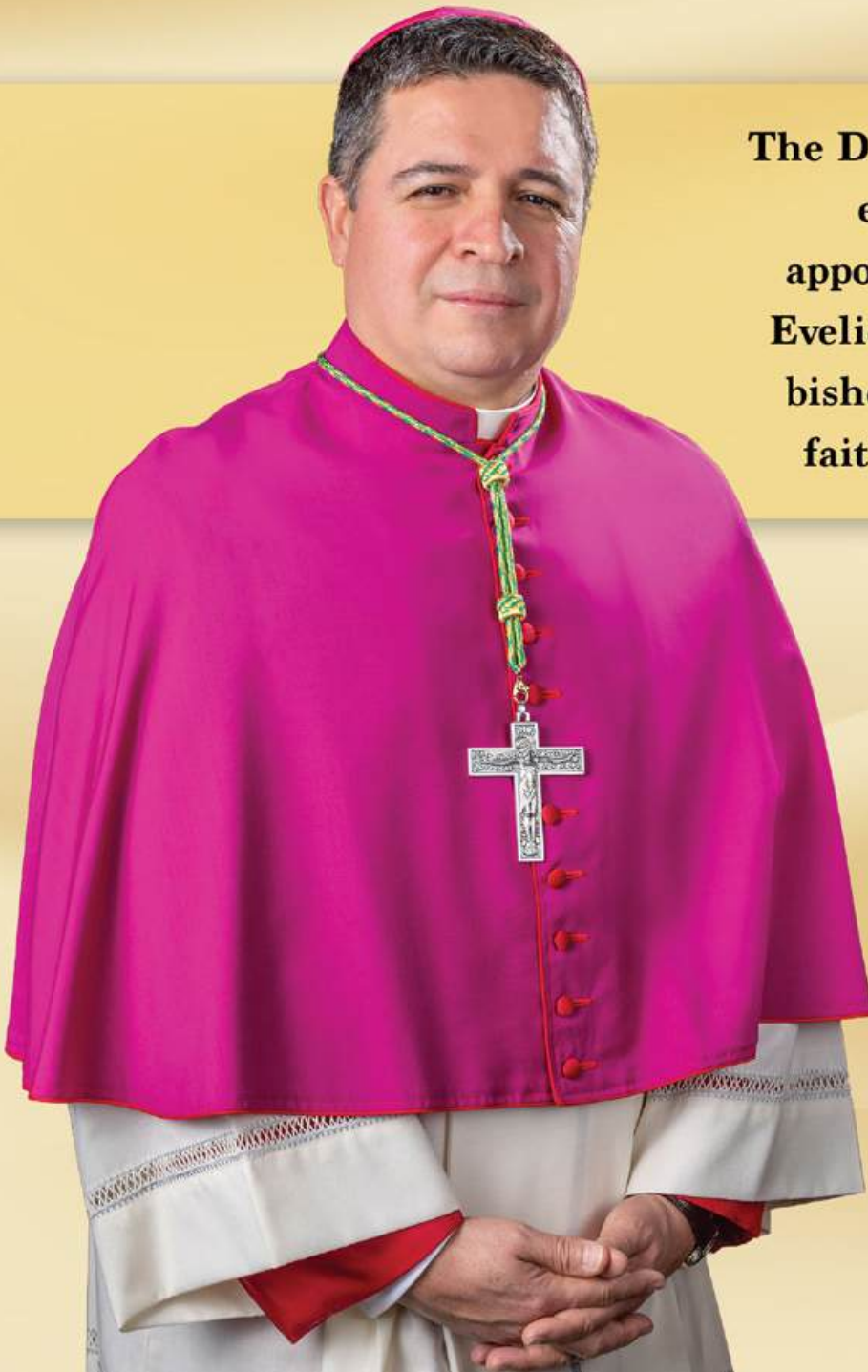


*Faith* IN WV  
DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

MAY 3, 2026



INTRODUCING THE BISHOP-DESIGNATE  
FOR THE DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON  
**BISHOP EVELIO MENJIVAR-AYALA**



**The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston enters a new era with the appointment of Bishop-designate Evelio Menjivar-Ayala as the tenth bishop to faithfully shepherd the faithful of the Mountain State.**



# BISHOP EVELIO MENJIVAR-AYALA

Pope Leo XIV appointed the Most Reverend Evelio Menjivar-Ayala as 10th Bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. Bishop-designate Menjivar, 56, is currently an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Washington. The appointment was publicized in Washington D.C. on May 1, 2026, by Cardinal Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, and at a press conference Friday morning at the chancery in Wheeling.

Bishop-designate Menjivar will succeed Bishop Mark Brennan, 79, who will remain as apostolic administrator of the diocese through July 1. The Mass of Installation will be celebrated on July 2, 2026, at 2:00 P.M., at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling.

Bishop Menjivar was born August 14, 1970, in Chalatenango, El Salvador. He migrated to the United States in 1990 and in 2023 became Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Washington, notably the first Salvadoran bishop in the country.

Bishop Menjivar attended St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami, Florida, receiving a bachelor's degree in philosophy. He attended the North American College in Rome and obtained a master's degree in theology from the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome ("Angelicum") in 2002. He pursued licentiate studies at the Pontifical Scalabrinian Institute for Pastoral Theology for Human Mobility in Rome before his ordination. He was ordained to the priesthood for The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington on May 29, 2004.

Bishop Menjivar's assignments in The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington have included posts as parochial vicar at Mother Seton Catholic Church in Germantown; St. Bartholomew Catholic Church in Bethesda; the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington; and as pastor of Our Lady Queen of the Americas Catholic Church in Washington. From 2017 to 2023, he served as pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Landover Hills. He speaks English, Spanish, and Italian.

He previously served as dean of Middle Prince George's County Deanery and was also a member of the Archdiocesan Child Protection Advisory Board. In 2023, Cardinal Wilton Gregory named him Vicar General of The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington. He currently is a member of the Priest Personnel Board, Administrative Board, the College of Consultants, and the Priest Council. He also serves as a member of the

Board of Directors of the Maryland Catholic Conference, Catholic Charities and Catholic Relief Services. He is also the Episcopal Moderator of the National Catholic Ecclesial Movements and Member of the USCCB Committee on Communications.

In 2024, he was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Georgetown University. Throughout his ministry, he has actively supported workers and continues to promote social justice for immigrants.

Bishop Menjivar was ordained as an auxiliary bishop of Washington on February 21, 2023, by Cardinal Gregory at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle.

Bishop Brennan who has served the WV diocese since August 22, 2019, expressed his confidence in Bishop-designate Menjivar's leadership.

"Many faithful across the diocese and I have prayed to God for a true shepherd of the people to lead our diocese into the future. I truly believe God has answered our prayers with the appointment of Bishop Evelio Menjivar," Bishop Brennan said.

Bishop Emeritus Mark Brennan has served the diocese faithfully as a true "boots-on-the-ground" shepherd, walking with and listening to his flock, while proclaiming the Gospel with compassion, clarity, and pastoral charity. His episcopacy has been highlighted by broader lay participation in the Church's life and mission, by reassembling the lay led diocesan pastoral council for collaboration, dialogue, and discernment among clergy, religious, and laity as well as a creating a more vibrant role for the diocesan finance council. At the same time, we have been blessed by an increase of vocations to the priesthood and diaconate life and have strengthened our encouragement to the consecrated life.

He has given the Church a consistent national voice in defense of the rights of the unborn and the vulnerable, affirming the dignity of women and the protection due to children as well as standing up to defend the rights of immigrants.

Bishop Brennan has also been a true friend of Catholic education at all levels across the state. Since 2019, the diocese has expanded classes in several schools and is opening a new high school in the Eastern Panhandle. He has also been a staunch supporter of Catholic Institutions of Higher Learning, including Wheeling University and Catholic Distance University.

# Pillars of the Early Church



The Church celebrates the feast of Saints Philip and James, on May 3rd. They are two apostles who answered Christ's call and, after the Resurrection, carried His message into the world. As we listen to and reread the Gospel for this Sunday, May 3rd, know they were present when Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. . . I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:1-12)

Jesus chose both men to be his apostles.

Philip was from Bethsaida (the same as Andrew and Peter) and was the third man approached by Christ to "Follow me." He was also the apostle that evangelized Nathanael, bringing him the news that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, "We have found the one about whom Moses wrote in the law, and also the prophets, Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth (John 1:43-51)."

James, who was also called "James the Less," because he was either younger or smaller than the other Apostle named James, was also close to our Blessed Mother. He stood with her at the cross. It was James to whom Christ appeared after His Resurrection. James went out to begin

the Christian church community in Jerusalem. He was the author of the first Epistle and was then referred to as "James the Just" and pillar of our faith. In the Epistle James 5:13-20, he writes about the power of prayer and our responsibility to confess and bring back sinners to Christ, saving them from death.

Both apostles were martyred. Even though they did not die at the same time or place the Church honors these men together, because their remains were moved and buried at the Basilica of the Twelve Holy Apostles (Basilica dei Santi XII Apostoli) in Rome, on the same day.



## May: A Month to Celebrate Mary, Our Blessed Mother

May is a beautiful month to honor Mary, Queen of Heaven.

In West Virginia, as our hills and valleys bud into new life: dogwoods and rhododendrons dot our landscapes with inviting color, and the sweet fragrance of lily of the valley, peonies, and even a trimming of sassafras remind us that God's love is always at work.

As Catholics we honor Mary because she is truly the Mother of God, and because the Church asks for her prayers and points to her as a model of discipleship.

Honoring Mary is not worshiping her. We call upon her to intercede for us. To pray with and for us. Authentic devotions to Mary are meant to do exactly what they say: they help bring us closer to her Son. Adoration belongs to God alone.

Be confident in your love of Mary just as St. Maximilian Kolbe was:

*continue...*

***“Never be afraid of loving the Blessed Virgin too much.***

***You can never love her more than Jesus did.”***

While there are beautiful formal prayers to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Teresa of Calcutta had a holy habit to recite this one-line, prayerful plea throughout the day:

***“Mary, Mother of Jesus, please be a mother to me now.”***

May is also the perfect time to make a “Mary Altar” in Your Home. Let it remind you daily that Mary points us to Christ and that the Church truly asks for her prayers. How to start? Dedicate a small space in your home as a Mary Altar—a simple, visible “prayer spot.” Think of it as a place where your family can pause, breathe, and turn to heaven.

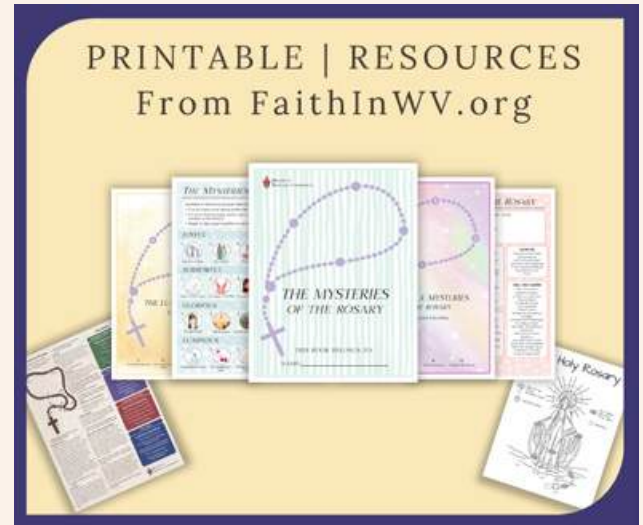
Suggestions to include at your Mary Altar:

- A statue or picture of Mary
- Fresh or silk flowers
- A rosary (or your favorite prayer cards)
- A candle (real or flameless, if needed for safety)
- Children’s drawings or notes
- A short personal prayer asking for Mary’s intercession

If you have children or grandchildren, let them help choose items - especially anything that reflects their own love and understanding - add a drawing, write a short intention or small note, a flower from outside, etc.

This month, consider pairing devotion with charity. Support your local parish Altar Society; parish women’s/ mothers’ groups; parish Walking with Mom’s in Need programs; Mary’s Refuge - [MARYSREFUGE.COM/HOW-TO-HELP](http://MARYSREFUGE.COM/HOW-TO-HELP); and Catholic Charities West Virginia - [WWW.CCWVA.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/DONATE/DONATE-ONLINE](http://WWW.CCWVA.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/DONATE/DONATE-ONLINE).

For prayer resources go to FaithInWV online at: [FAITHINWV.ORG/RESOURCES](http://FAITHINWV.ORG/RESOURCES)



*Editor’s note: The art with this post is by Jean Keaton and is in the office of Joyce Bibey at the Chancery.*

# Celebrating the Brothers Among Us

by Sister Martha Gomez, RGS, Delegate for Consecrated Life

Every year on May 1, the Church celebrates “Religious Brothers Day.” We invite you to take a moment in this month of May to recognize those men who live the Gospel in a unique way by consecrating their lives to the service of God for others.

We have in our Diocese the presence of the Marist Brothers who come from different branches but have the same roots. Let us express our gratitude not only for their service but for their presence among us.



Brother John Byrd, F.M.S., of the Marist Brothers of the Schools’ US Province served for many years at our Bishop Donahue Catholic High School and continues to be an active member of the Cathedral of St. Joseph. He is a co-founder of the

South Wheeling Preservation Alliance, a master gardener, and a promoter of planting trees in the city.

In late 2025, our dear Brother John McDonagh, F.M.S., left us to go to their headquarters in N.Y. for a well-deserved retirement. Brother John served in the education field for many years. Those of us in the Wheeling area will remember him in

his ministry as a kind and thoughtful Chaplain at Wheeling Hospital and Liza’s Place (Hospice). His wisdom and kindness will never be forgotten.



The last but not the least- we have in our midst Brother Roy Madigan, S.M., of the Marist Priests and Brothers Society. Brother Roy worked at Holy Rosary Parish in Buckhannon, WV, for many years in a variety of ministries including helping in soup kitchens and reaching out to the poor. Currently, he is an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at Good Shepherd Nursing Home in Wheeling where he brings communion to the residents who cannot attend Mass. He spends time with each resident, talking with them and inquiring about their well-being. He is noted for the time he takes with each resident. In his unique way, he makes them feel important and loved. He is known for being compassionate and treating each resident with dignity and respect.

These fine gentlemen truly reflect their Marist Charism of radiating the Lord’s mercy, compassion, and kindness to all who they meet.

# Doubly blessed!

## Bishop Brennan to Ordain a Priest and a Deacon on May 30

On Saturday, May 30 at 10 am, at the Cathedral of St. Joseph, the faithful will witness a truly joyful “double” celebration for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. Bishop Mark E. Brennan will ordain Deacon Clifton Mastran as holy priest, and during the same Mass, seminarian Michael Aiello will be ordained to the transitional diaconate. This will be a day when God’s grace pours out in visible, sacramental ways for the life of the Church and the people of West Virginia.

These ordinations are not simply milestones; they are moments meant to draw the whole local Church together in prayer. The Church teaches that the ordination of clergy is of such importance that “as many

of the faithful as possible” should take part, and that the celebration belongs within the Eucharistic liturgy which is at the very heart of the Church’s life.

So, West Virginia, celebrate and pray.

As Clifton Mastran is called to serve as a shepherd of Christ’s flock through the priesthood, and Michael Aiello is set apart to serve the Gospel as a transitional deacon, the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is reminded that prayers for vocations are heard on high.

May the faithful rejoice, give thanks, and keep these two men in prayer as May 30 becomes a day of renewed blessing for the whole diocese.



*Deacon Clifton Mastran*



*Michael Aiello*



# Set to Defend, Uphold, and Evangelize

## *Mastran's Ready to put on Armor of God*



Deacon Clifton Mastran's story begins in public service and is now being fulfilled in holy service as he will "Stand. . . with the belt of truth. . . breastplate of righteousness. . . shield of faith. . . helmet of salvation. . . sword of the Spirit. . . the word of God." (Ephesians 6:14-17)

After 18 years working in the Department of Defense, he will now be ordained to the holy priesthood, called to teach by proclaiming the Word of God and to sanctify by offering the sacrifice of Christ on the altar – the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Bishop Mark Brennan will ordain Deacon Clifton at 10 am, May 30 at the Cathedral of St. Joseph.

Clifton will be vested by a trio of priests: Fr. Andy Gonzalo (Archdiocese of Washington), Msgr. William Fay (Pope St. John XXIII Seminary), and Fr. Sebastian Devasya our Co-Vicar of Clergy and pastor of St. Margaret Mary, Parkersburg.

His first assignment will be announced at the ordination.

Deacon Clifton is 47. He entered seminary at the age of 40 after an 18-year career in the Department of Defense as a Federal Civilian. He was born and raised Catholic. He is the son of David and Martha Mastran. He was born in Youngstown and grew up in Clearwater, FL.

Deacon Clifton felt he had a call to the priesthood at a very young age and went so far as to talk to his parents about it when he was a child, but in his words he "never really nurtured or explored (it), and then the world got in the way."

"God started to go to work on me later in life in all aspects of my life," he said and continued, "During the growth and nurturing of that deepening relationship with our Lord, the calling to His Priesthood resurfaced and will now soon be fulfilled, thanks be to God!"

Who did he talk mostly to about his call to the priesthood in adulthood? God!

"It was directly with our Lord, who was speaking to me in many ways, but especially to the mind and to the heart," he said. "I then spoke to him directly during the Sacrament of Confession, and confirmation of his message was received! The dialogue and support would continue to grow and be strengthened through the Blessed Sacrament in Adoration!"

He is grateful to his parents for raising him Catholic and filling his life with unconditional love and support.

"Make no mistake, it has been God who has supported me the most, but right after that there is no question at all: my loving parents," he said. "They are a modern-day Mary and Joseph on this journey!"

Discerning the call to the priesthood also including the discernment of where God was calling him to be and serve.

"The diocesan priesthood has always appealed to me, and it is he who serves at the frontier between Heaven and Earth, serving the people while knowing and living in the world but also set aside for the Lord, serving as bridge between the Kingdom of the World and the Kingdom of Heaven,"

*continue...*



he said. "I am so grateful to serve the Lord and the people at any time and in any place, and I am looking forward to bringing Christ to the people of West Virginia!"

Spending time with Scripture brings many graces and understanding. There isn't one verse or Gospel that takes precedence over another for him.

"Scripture is the Living Word of God, and there is so much richness in Scripture that speaks to me at different times and places, or in a multitude of different ways as I live my relationship with our Lord, and so verses or themes will ebb and flow into the forefront of my mind and heart, but it all is kept deep within my heart and soul, and the Holy Spirit always reminds me of what I need to see and hear at the right time and the right place," he said.

So, how can the faithful of West Virginia pray for Deacon Clifton in these moments before his ordination and beyond?

"Please pray that I will always be a happy, humble, and holy priest, a Good Shepherd, a Good Steward of Souls, His Good Instrument, and a loving Spiritual Father, always loving and serving the will of God the way He wants, when He wants, and how He wants, with all my heart, all my soul, and all my strength!"

- Deacon Clifton Mastran

## From Chef to Servant of God

### *Feeding the People the Good News*

He once fed people as a chef, measuring ingredients, mastering flavors, and placing nourishing meals within their reach. But on May 30th he will take a vow to feed all in a deeper way: by breaking open the Scriptures and offering the Word of God that satisfies the hunger inside every heart.

Seminarian Michael Aiello will be ordained a transitional deacon by Bishop Mark Brennan, Bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling at 10 am on May 30th.

At the ordination Aiello will promise obedience to the bishop and his successors.

As Deacon he will preach the Gospel and prepare for ordination to the priesthood.

His summer assignment will be announced at the end of the Mass.

Aiello will be vested with a stole and dalmatic worn by deacons at liturgies by his uncle and godfather, Deacon Michael Kawash.

Aiello will be presented with the Book of the Gospels by Bishop Mark, and vow to proclaim the Good News and model his life after Christ. Bishop Mark will recite, "Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach."

Aiello, 35, is a member of the Basilica of the Co-cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Charleston. He is the son of Susan Aiello and the late Louis Aiello. He is a cradle Catholic, born in Philadelphia, raised in Charleston.

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A fun fact about Aiello is he is a talented chef, having worked as such in WV and Texas.

It was during that stint in Texas as a young adult, away from family, when his call to the priesthood entered into his heart and mind.

“Several years after a strong reversion, I was wanting to be more involved at my parish in Houston, where I was living and working at the time,” he said. “But this proved to be impossible because of the demanding work schedule of a chef. I recognized that something needed to change. With a simple job change in mind, I asked the Lord for the first time in my life, ‘what do you want me to do?’ Priesthood started coming up subtly, but consistently, after that.”

The pace of life and noise of society made ignoring that divine prompting easy, but God has a plan and His timing is perfect.

“After ignoring and running from these promptings for some time, I eventually became open to the idea and spoke with my first spiritual director, the late Fr. Alberto Rodriguez, OP,” Aiello said. “I’ve been blessed with support from all kinds of people – from my former co-workers to my family, and so many of the faithful of Wheeling-Charleston. This made for a more conducive setting for me to then further my discernment well.”

It seems fitting that the young man who fed and nourished the people, will soon be doing so with the Word of God.

“I am very excited to be able to serve the faithful of WV,” he happily exclaimed. “Service to the people of God is what Holy Orders is all about.

“God has put a love and desire to serve the people of West Virginia on my heart. The diocesan priest is the one who is among the flock. It’s a natural fit, which made discernment much easier!”

Opening your heart to a life to serve God and His Church is laying down your own life, but Scripture is full of reasons why it is the ultimate sign of love.

The Gospel of Luke, specifically the Annunciation, 1:26-38, mirrors Aiello’s sentiment.

“It reveals the immeasurable love of God, as he enters into our fallen world,” he said. “And it also reveals Mary’s unique role in salvation history, including her own love for us, as she agrees to bring forth the Savior of the world.”

So, West Virginia, let’s pray for Michael Aiello that he stays “close to Our Lady – because if I do, she always will keep me close to the will of her Son!”



# One Mission, One Day is May 5

## 24-Hour Online Fundraiser for WV Catholic Schools

Join families in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to support our Catholic schools.

One Mission, One Day to Make a Difference is literally a 24-hour online fundraiser for our Catholic schools in the diocese. Your gift can give our students, teachers, and school programs a boost. Whether you're a parent, alum, parishioner, or friend, every gift, big or small helps us grow stronger, deepens our faith, and shapes the next generation.

Dollars raised this year will again go directly to the individual schools they are pledged to, supporting their earmarked program, project, or school improvement.

“As our schools remain grounded in faith, committed to service, and striving for academic excellence, we invite YOU to be part of something extraordinary—One Mission, One Day to Make a Difference,” said Heidi Sforza, Director of Annual Giving. “Let’s come together—parents, alumni, parishioners, and friends—to lift our schools through 24 hours of giving. Your support has the power to fuel innovation in the classroom, strengthen our Catholic identity, and expand outreach in the communities we serve.”

Prayerfully consider making a monetary gift in support of Catholic education. Your generosity helps ensure that our schools continue forming students in faith, knowledge, and service for generations to come.

To support your local school or alma mater, visit [WWW.ONEMISSIONONEDAY.ORG](http://WWW.ONEMISSIONONEDAY.ORG) and select the school (or schools) you wish to support. Every donation goes directly to the school you choose.

The event begins at 12:01 a.m. on May 5 and continues through 11:59 p.m. Early giving is open now for those who want to get a head start.

During this friendly competition to see who raises the most money in such a short amount of time, the schools will compete for bonus gifts from the WV Catholic Foundation. Awards will be given to the schools with the most funds raised, the highest number of donors, the most peer-to-peer fundraisers, and the school with the largest gift increase over last year—each receiving an additional \$500.

**Join us on Tuesday, May 5, for a day of unity, purpose, and faith in action.**

Make your gift. Strengthen our schools. Shape the future of Catholic education.



## 24-hour Giving Day

Can we count on you to join  
in our friendly competition?

## Tuesday, May 5th



# Celebrations Honoring USA's 250th in Our Local Church

As the Nation celebrates the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has planned two major initiatives to honor our American faith, heritage, and devotion to Christ: a Eucharistic Pilgrimage and a Consecration of the USA to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Additionally, Bishop Mark E. Brennan has called the priests in the diocese to honor this historical milestone in the local parishes with Mass and fellowship.



On the national level the consecration of the US to the Sacred Heart of Jesus will be on June 11 in Orlando at the USCCB gathering of all bishops. The National Eucharistic Pilgrimage will begin on May 25 in Florida and extend to the 250th American Celebrations July 2-5 in Philadelphia.

Bishop Mark Brennan has asked the priests in each of our local parishes to celebrate Mass on Friday, June 12, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus with celebratory devotion, sacred music, and fellowship to follow the Mass. The USCCB has created a resource for readings, prayers, and special intentions for the celebration.

These events are a national call to action for the faithful in the US to realign our lives, communities, and country under the sovereignty of Christ.

“Let us remember that the Lord’s message to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque was that his human heart, ineffably joined to his divinity, continues to beat with great love for all his disciples and, indeed, for the entire world, which he came to redeem. In these troubled times, we American Catholics must implore his mercy upon our nation and beg him to renew in us a spirit of faith, hope and charity toward all,” Bishop Mark, wrote this week.

It was in 1673, when St. Margaret Mary Alacoque received visions of Jesus revealing His Sacred Heart. This continued for her for 18 months. She was a sister of the Visitation of

Holy Mary in eastern France. It is through her we learn to never lose sight of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and His love for us, so run to Him in the Eucharist and to Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

It wasn’t until 1856, when Pope Pius IX declared the feast day for the universal Church, writing, “(Jesus) showed His Heart to us bearing about it the symbols of the passion and displaying the flames of love, that from the one we might know the infinite malice of sin, and in the other we might admire the infinite charity of Our Redeemer, and so might have a more vehement hatred of sin, and make a more ardent return of love for His love.”

## *Imagery of the Sacred Heart of Jesus:*



Flames - represent the infinite fire of love that Christ has for each soul.

Crown of Thorns - “And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe”. (John 19:2). Although Christ suffered the crown of thorns on His head, all

that He suffered in the crucifixion He suffered in the depths of His Heart.

Wounded Heart - the wound of the guard’s sword is visible - the wound in which blood and water flowed. “Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.” (John 19:34). Both the water and blood are very symbolic to our Church - our faith - with the water of Baptism and the Blood of the Eucharist.

The Cross - The cross at the top of the Heart seems dwarfed by the Heart and almost implanted at the top. St. Margaret Mary said, “The entire reality of the crucifixion derives its meaning from and cannot be understood apart from the Heart of Jesus.” It is His Heart that supports the weight of the cross!”

To venerate the Sacred Heart of Christ devotions to consider are a Holy Hour on Thursdays, the reception of the Eucharist on the first Friday of every month, and praying the litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, in his first apostolic exhortation (*Dilexi Te*), invites us to contemplate Christ’s love that moves us to be missionaries where we are and all the reaches of the earth for our suffering world.

May the United States of America renew our devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the kingship of Christ.



# One Million Rosaries for Life

## A Million Rosaries, One Intention — Pray for Life

### A Mother's Day Weekend Invitation to Pray Three Rosaries!

Pledge now to participate in the Million Rosaries for Life campaign, and spread the word!

On Mother's Day weekend, May 8th, 9th, and 10th, 2026, Catholics and people of goodwill across the world are being asked to unite in a simple, powerful act of faith: pray at least one Rosary each day for a single intention - "For the protection of unborn human persons and true respect for life from the moment of conception through natural death."

This is the heart of the Million Rosaries for Life campaign - a grassroots, multinational prayer effort that places Mary's prayer in the hands of ordinary believers and asks God to do what only grace can do - heal a wounded world, defend the vulnerable, and awaken hearts to the dignity of every human life.

**Participation is as easy!**

Sign up at: [DWC.ORG/ROSARIES-FOR-LIFE](https://www.dwc.org/rosaries-for-life)

Invite others to join, spreading the campaign through families, friend groups, parishes, and communities around the world.

This effort is coordinated by Charles Town's St. James the Greater parishioner and mother of Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Seminarian Donvito Cortese, Nancy Cortese, who has been involved in the prayer campaign for more than 15 years.

Her "yes" began simply: while living in Maryland and involved with pro-life initiatives she heard about the truly lifesaving Rosaries for Life appeal and approached her pastor about getting her parish involved. At the time, she was a member of St. Martin of Tours in Gaithersburg. "As fate would have it," her pastor was Monsignor Mark Brennan, now Bishop Mark Brennan, shepherd of the

Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston! He welcomed the idea with enthusiasm, she said.



So, Nancy Cortese went to work and posted sign-ups at both the parish and the parish school. More than 1,200 signed up that first year.

Two years later, the Cortese family moved to the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia, arriving

in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston seven years before Bishop Mark Brennan (who was installed in August of 2019). Her dedication and ministry for the Rosary for Life campaign remained steadfast - to gather people to pray—one Rosary at a time to save the unborn and all human life until natural death.

The Million Rosaries for Life campaign was originally organized in Memphis by the St. Michael the Archangel Organization and its member Patrick Benedict as a way to unite in prayer for "the babies who cannot pray for rosary themselves."

As Cortese explains, "The sole purpose of the Saint Michael the Archangel Organization was to pray for an end to abortion." Benedict retired from the campaign in 2023, and that is when Cortese stepped in to fill Benedict's shoes leading the annual weekend prayer campaign.

"Originally, his intention was 'For an end to the surgical and non-surgical killing of unborn human persons,'" she said. "But by the time I volunteered to lead it in 2024, not only was abortion prevalent, but physician assisted suicide,

gender surgeries, and more were also prevalent, so I felt that we should be praying for the respect of all human life the way God created us to be.”

So, the intention changed to this fuller plea—one that speaks directly to today’s spiritual battlefield:

“For the protection of unborn human persons and true respect for life from the moment of conception through natural death.”

Cortese’s words are not theoretical. They come from a mother’s heart, a parishioner’s lived experience, and a Catholic’s clear-eyed look at the world.

“Our world is suffering so badly,” Cortese said. “Our youth, especially, are being attacked from all sides with a message that their life doesn’t matter, that THEY don’t matter.” She points to the cultural message embedded in abortion—that life is disposable.

“We live in a society that says, ‘we can help you commit suicide!’”

Take action, she said.

“I can’t do it alone - the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston can’t do it alone! We need EVERY diocese in the US to commit to this one prayer campaign! Pray at least one Rosary everyday May 8th through May 10th, for the protection of unborn human persons and true respect for life from the moment of conception through natural death. I truly believe we will see a difference if we can make this happen!”

A Million Rosaries for Life begins the same way every Rosary begins: with one person picking up the beads, making the Sign of the Cross, and choosing to honor God.



*Sunday Mass can't be our only touchpoint with God. Beyond Sunday is a guide to living the Catholic faith more fully each day through Catholic media, podcasts, art, gifts, and trusted voices from the church to help nourish our own prayer, reflection, and mission.*

## RESOURCES FOR YOU THIS WEEK

**NEWS - America Magazine The Jesuit Review** - interpreting the Church for the world and the world for the Church. A forum for religion, society, politics, and culture. [WWW.AMICAMAGAZINE.ORG](http://WWW.AMICAMAGAZINE.ORG)



**HOME ACCENTS - House of Joppa** - Catholic owners Matt and Tabitha Kidman of Southeastern Michigan have an online boutique of Catholic art and items with a modern look and appeal to fit into homes today. [WWW.HOUSEOFJOPPA.COM](http://WWW.HOUSEOFJOPPA.COM)



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# Young Saints Show Us Great Strength and Joy

This week as the Church marks the feast days of two remarkable young saints, Saint Nunzio Sulprizio on May 5, and Saint Dominic Savio on May 6, we are invited to rediscover that holiness is not reserved for the extraordinary few, nor does it depend on age, comfort, or circumstance. It can be and is lived here and now, even in quiet suffering and simple genuine faith.



Saint Nunzio Sulprizio died on May 5, 1836, just before he turned 20. His life was marked by profound loss, hardship, and physical suffering.

To say he had a hard life is an understatement.

He was three when his father died.

Soon after, his baby sister tragically died.

When he was six, his mother died.

His grandmother took care of him and continued to take him to Mass as his mother had done, but still a child, his grandmother died. He was sent to live with his uncle who was less than happy to have him. He was forced into the dangerous labor of blacksmithing. He confided in Jesus at the foot of the crucifix and at the tabernacle in his Church.

Saint Nunzio's wounds were both visible and hidden. A severe leg injury became so infected it had to be amputated. Despite natural instincts of self-pity, anger, and depression, St. Nunzio chose to accept his suffering and emotional scars and become closer to Christ.

"Jesus suffered so much for us. . . If we suffer a little bit, we will taste the joy of paradise," he said.

St. Nunzio spent a lot of time before the Blessed Sacrament to fill his heart with grace and to "keep Jesus company."

Canonized in 2018, he stands as a witness to patience,

humility, and unwavering trust in God despite the path you are on in life.



Another teenage saint to call upon to intercede for your prayers is St. Dominic Savio. St. Dominic died just shy of his 15th birthday. He shows us the beauty of joyful holiness in everyday life.

Saint Dominic was a student of Saint John "Don" Bosco, who would later go on to write a book about the beloved pupil- *The Life of Dominic Savio*. The book give us a quote from the young saint that illuminates the young boy's heart, "I am not capable of doing big things, but I want to do everything, even the smallest things for the greater glory of God."

Under St. Don Bosco's guidance, Dominic embraced a spirituality of cheerfulness, generosity, and devotion especially to the Blessed Mother. He encouraged his peers, formed a group dedicated to Mary, and lived each day with intention and joy. Near death, he revealed that his greatest comfort was through the Blessed Mother.

The takeaway from these young saints we can apply to our own lives and through our own parishes is that our choices can lead us to holiness. Whether through enduring suffering with faith like Nunzio, or embracing daily duties with joy like Dominic, each of us is called to live for Christ right where we are.

In a world too often marked by discouragement and distraction, may their examples strengthen our resolve: to complain less, trust more, serve faithfully, and seek God in all things.

Saint Nunzio Sulprizio and Saint Dominic Savio, pray for us.

# Discovering the Cathedral:

AN EVENING OF  
HISTORY, FAITH,  
AND BEAUTY



Led by  
**Fr. Larry Dorsch**  
*Former Rector  
of the Cathedral*



**Tuesday, May 5, 2026**  
**at 6:00 p.m.**



The evening will feature a *guided tour* of the Cathedral combined with *scripture, prayer, and music.*

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF FAITH

**EXCITING  
NEWS!**

# QUO VADIS CAMP

for Middle School Boys

**Due to high demand, we announce:**

**Quo Vadis Camp** - a dedicated Middle School track. These boys and the high schoolers attending Quo Vadis Retreat meet at the same location, but middle schoolers will have activities tailored for them.

Deacon Dave Galvin and trained staff from nearby St. James the Greater Parish will guide them on an adventurous path to strengthen their relationship with God and the Church as they enjoy the amenities of the Priestfield Pastoral Center - hiking trails, the scenic Opequon creek, and 38 acres of beautiful cedar forest.



**Priest Field Pastoral Center**  
Kearneysville, WV

June 29 to July 2, 2026

**REGISTER NOW**



WVPriests.org





# QUO VADIS

*Where are you going?*

9TH-12TH GRADE BOYS'  
DISCERNMENT

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Priest Field Pastoral Center  
Kearneysville, WV

June 29 to July 2, 2026

Staffed by seminarians and priests of  
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Director  
Seminarian Michael J. Tupta  
Pontifical North American College



# CAMP CARLO

FAITH & FRIENDSHIP



HIGH SCHOOL WEEK: JUNE 28TH – JULY 4TH (GRADES 9-12)  
WEEK 1: JULY 5TH – 11TH (GRADES 3-12)  
WEEK 2: JULY 12TH – 18TH (GRADES 3-12)  
WEEK 3: JULY 19TH – 25TH (GRADES 3-12)

Cost: \$300 for a week  
\*Financial Assistance  
Available Upon Request

 304-233-0880 ext 373

 [campcarlowv.org](http://campcarlowv.org)

EMAIL [GGUST@DWC.ORG](mailto:GGUST@DWC.ORG) FOR  
MORE INFORMATION OR  
QUESTIONS

#### Activities:

- climbing wall
- giant swing
- backpacking
- camping
- fishing
- Adoration
- Confession
- Mass
- so much more!

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### First Reading: Acts 6:1-7

The Apostles chose seven men filled with the Holy Spirit for charitable work for people overlooked.

### Responsorial: Psalm 33

“Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.”

### Second Reading: 1Peter 2:4-9

Peter tells us to come to Christ the “living stone” so we can be built into a strong, “spiritual house”.

### Gospel: John 14:1-12

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God for He is “the way and the truth and the life.”

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT](#)

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that we are strengthened by the Holy Spirit to take up the charitable works, helping those who are overlooked, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That social workers all over the world receive the support and compassion from government leaders in order to reach all in their care, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For our deacons, filled with the Holy Spirit, like the seven chosen by the Apostles, may they find joy and grace as they do their work, bringing Christ’s Word and example to the people, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For the newly baptized and confirmed who are the newest living stones strengthening our Church, 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
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
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*Liturgy of the Hours*

# LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!

[EBREVIARY.COM](http://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](http://DWC.ORG).