



## HONOR & PRAY FOR OUR VETERANS CALL UPON SOLDIER SAINTS FOR INTERCESSION

On Monday Nov. 11, we honor our veterans for their service and sacrifices.

Let us not take for granted the liberties and freedoms these men and women defended for us and the generations that follow.

Pray for them and ask the Lord to surround our veterans, as well as the men and women still serving, with legions of angels and a great cloud of saints to bring them peace for all their days.

As we pray, call upon the saints to intercede. We have many soldier saints to bring to mind including:

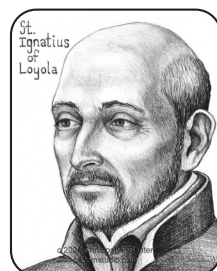
• **ST. MARTIN OF TOURS**, whose feast day we celebrate on Veterans Day, grew up in the 4th century in Rome. Born to pagan parents. By the age of 10 he knew he wanted to be Christian. He served in the Roman army at 15. He is famous for a moment when he was guarding a gate, when a poor naked man asked for help in the name of Jesus Christ. St. Martin had nothing to give but his mantle, a cape. He took his sword and cut his cape, giving the beggar the larger cloth to clothe him. The following night Jesus appeared to St. Martin in a dream, wearing the cloak saying, "Behold, here is Martin, an unbaptized Roman soldier: He has clothed me." Martin was baptized the following Easter at the age of 18. When his service was up, he told his commanding officers, "I have served you as a soldier, now let me serve Christ."



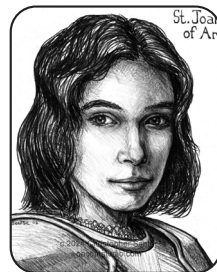
He became a monk and later the bishop of Tours.

• **ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA** taught us not to let challenges stop us. Face your fears. Don't beat yourself up in your own mind - TURN TO GOD. "Find God in all things!"

He was a Spanish Catholic priest, who happily fulfilled his boyhood dream to



become a soldier. After he was injured in battle he read about Jesus and the lives of the saints. He believed they had greater valor and spiritual nobility than he would ever have. From that moment on he vowed to be a soldier for Christ.



• **ST. JOAN OF ARC**, "Go forward bravely. Fear nothing. Trust in God; all will be well."

As a teenager, more than 600 years ago, Saint Joan of Arc answered God's call to stand up for her country during the "Hundred Years' War" between France and England to bring unity to her homeland. The story of her will, determination, and unbreakable faith has been told in many books and movies through the years.

Joan of Arc was a humble shepherdess, and youngest of five children in a hardworking Catholic family. She was born on January 6, 1412, in France. She didn't know life without the raging war around her.

When she reached her teen years, she prayed wholeheartedly for the unification and freedom of France, her beloved homeland, from the British. Two years into her dedicated prayer she saw visions and voices calling her to help restore the throne. Records indicate St. Michael the Archangel, St. Margaret of Antioch, and St. Catherine of Alexandria appeared to her urging her to do whatever she could to get Charles VII to the throne as quickly as possible for the sake of unity for her country.

• **ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI** before answering the call to religious life he served two tours fighting in the army and was held captive for one year. He understood the sacrifice and torment of loyalty to God and Country.



Much like our society today, Young Francesco Bernardone, who we

know as St. Francis of Assisi, lived in a time splattered with religious hatred and division, social injustice, and political unrest. What he wanted most was to be a famous knight, but that wasn't God's plan. Francis' dreams of being a popular warrior were dashed, when he found himself a prisoner of war in Perugia, and severely ill. As he recovered, he continued to recall a dream he had, when God was calling him to seek God in all people, even the lepers and outcasts, serving them as Christ would. It was in his darkest hours that St. Francis turned around his priorities and became a servant to God. St. Francis eventually realized that God wanted him to rebuild the greater Church, humanity, and all of God's creation.

"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible and suddenly you are doing the impossible." – St. Francis of Assisi.

• **ST. SEBASTIAN**, an early Roman Christian, took advantage of his position of guard for the Emperor Diocletian, and converted many prominent people in his day to Christianity during an anti-Christian reign.



St. Sebastian is the patron saint of athletes. He was dedicated to God, even in the face of certain death. Legend has it that St. Sebastian was tied to a tree and shot by archers countless times, but wouldn't die. Saint Irene nursed him back to health. After he recovered, he publicly and proudly denounced the emperor for his cruelty to Christians. For speaking out, he was martyred.

### LET US PRAY ON VETERANS DAY

God of mercy, we pray for those who have served our nation, protecting and defending our freedoms.

We pray for those who have fought, whose spirits and bodies are scarred by war.

We pray for those who serve us now, shield them from danger and bring them home safely, when their duty is complete.

Turn the hearts and minds of all Americans to respect and honor their courageous, selfless work toward peace. Amen

*Editor's note: The Charcoal portraits featured in this story are by Parkersburg native artist and educator Christopher Santer, who completed a series of more than 100 portraits of saints for Saint Paul Seminary in St. Paul Minnesota and NET Ministries (the national Catholic youth missionary organization). These and more sacred art are available at: [WWW.PACEMSTUDIO.COM](http://WWW.PACEMSTUDIO.COM)*

# Martinsburg St. Joe's School Joins Sweats for Vets Giving

Saint Joseph School is joining forces with several regional groups from WV, Virginia, and MD including the local Animal Health Clinic; VFW Post 1177 in Leesburg, Va.; the Ancient Order of Hibernians; and Knights of Columbus Council 12791 in Potomac Falls, Va., to collect sweat suits for veterans hospitalized at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Martinsburg.

Students will be collecting new sweat suits, socks, and slippers through Friday, Dec. 20. Solid colors are preferred and, in all sizes, (with the largest demand for XL, 2XL, 3XL and 4XL). Items can be dropped off or mailed to the school office at 110 E. Stephen St. Martinsburg.

The schools asks that the items are not wrapped but would appreciate if they were tied together

with a ribbon and "SJS" on a gift tag. Monetary donations also will be accepted in the form of checks written to "Martinsburg VAMC".

The sweats will be sorted at VFW Post 1177 on Dec. 26 and delivered to the Martinsburg VAMC in January.



# SPECIAL COLLECTION

Special Collection set for this weekend's Masses to support the Archdiocese for the Military Services.

The priests and deacons in this ministry provide pastoral care and services to Catholics serving in the United States Armed Forces, enrolled in our US Military Academies, undergoing treatment at our 153 VA Medical Centers, working civilian jobs for the federal government beyond our borders, and the families of these populations.

It is important to note that the AMS does not receive any funding from the government or military, and has no parishes from which to receive a weekly assessment. To learn more about the AMS, go to [WWW.MILARCH.ORG/NATIONALCOLLECTION](http://WWW.MILARCH.ORG/NATIONALCOLLECTION).

## AN EVENING WITH THE RELICS

In this Year of Prayer, discover the history of relics and explore St. Alphonsus' extensive collection.

The evening concludes with a prayer service, reflective music, and veneration of several relics.

*Tuesday, November 19 | 6:30 p.m.*

*St. Alphonsus Church  
2111 Market Street, Wheeling*





"THE CAVALRY IS COMING"

# Keep Praying for Vocations



By Fr. John Sopliniski

An excerpt of his homily from Nov. 3, 2024, at the Cathedral of St. Joseph

We pray for an increase in vocations at every Mass, following our Lord's instruction to pray to the Master of the harvest for laborers for His harvest.

This is a challenge in our Diocese and has been since the beginning, in July of 1850—when Bishop Whelan inherited less than 10 priests.

We have been, are, and will likely remain a Mission Diocese. Less than 5% of the 2.1 million people that call West Virginia home are Catholic. This is an improvement upon where we started, though not our high-water mark that would have been seen in the years 1910 through 1970.

Bishop Whelan, in order to recruit priests, wrote to a Seminary in Ireland, where his recruiting pitch was the following:

*"Catholicism is looked upon poorly by the majority of the population, you will get little to no respect for your person, much less your office. The roads are difficult to pass, food is scarce."*

Those zealous souls who came and served our Diocese!

And that has not changed.

Priests like our Pastor/Rector (of the Cathedral of St. Joseph) Fr. Pen (Penumaka Manikyalarao), and the many priests from India, Indonesia, Vietnam, South America, Africa—who leave their families, their homes, their native tongue, behind and come to ensure that we, the faithful of West Virginia have access to the Sacraments!

We owe these men our gratitude and our respect.

If the situation were reversed, and I was asked to go to India, learn a new language...I can't honestly say I'd be so eager.

And so, we pray for more vocations from our homegrown young men and women—and the prayers we offer at Mass, through Sr. Martha's (Gomez, the diocesan delegate for consecrated life) *One Million Rosaries for Vocations*, through Bishop Mark's travels, where, if he finds a young man or woman, he thinks may have a vocation, he takes their name and prays for them every day. (That list is up to 200 folks.)

It is the work of Fr. (Brian) Crenwelge, and his predecessors Fr. (Dennis) Schuelkens and Msgr. (Paul) Hudock, tireless service in traveling the state. We priests and deacons and sisters and brothers are asked to play our part—to encourage vocations and to live our vocations in such a way that it is attractive to young men and women.

And we ask you, the lay faithful, to play your part, not only in

praying for more vocations, but to encourage your children and grandchildren, your nieces and nephews.

In my own vocation story, my mother would've loved seeing this, one of my grandmother's, not so much.

It's easy to look at the sacrifices that are asked—celibacy, a life of service and scrutiny, perhaps a life of poverty and suffering, and think—I don't want that for my son or daughter, or for my grandchild.

I would implore you, don't let that fear be a discouragement. Is it a difficult life? Sure, but what vocation doesn't bring its challenges and hardships? I can't think of one to be frank with you.

Right now, we have 17 men in formation for the priesthood for our Diocese—a windfall, no one around can remember when it was so high. In addition, there are two who are in formation for religious orders, one who is in formation for the Fraternal Society of St. Peter, and two who are in formation for the Byzantine Catholic Church.

And as a recent graduate of a Seminary, I can speak to the enthusiasm, the joyfulness of the young men who are studying to serve you.

I credit those young men for helping me along my journey—even if there were times, I wanted to knock their heads together for their enthusiasms...that's just the age gap.

We ask you to pray for them, because there is an attrition factor, not all the young men who go to Seminary stay in Seminary. This is not a failure—you don't really know if God is calling you until you submit to the process of formation.

The Church cannot discern whether a man or a woman is called to religious life until they enter into formation. And it takes a number of years, 7 at a minimum, 9 at a maximum, there are no shortcuts to the priesthood.

Bishop Mark, himself once a vocations director for 10 years in Washington D.C., often ends his vocation talks to the Serra Club or to the various retreats offered for men discerning a vocation by saying: "The people of God want priests, good holy, healthy, and happy priests."

And we need them, as a new priest I can tell you a few extra hands wouldn't hurt a bit.

Keep praying, as one of my professors who speaks often nationally tells his audience—the cavalry is coming—the Holy Spirit provides for the Church—especially when you and I play our part.

(Father John was ordained May 31, 2024).

# SHE PLANTED A GARDEN FOR GOD

She lived her life by planting seeds, to grow a garden to glorify God.

On Sunday, Nov. 3, Sister Carole Riley, a Sister of Divine Providence congregation and Spiritual Director of the WV Institute of Spirituality, passed away.

She wrote many books, lead many retreats, presented at many conferences, and sang to and with anyone who was open to learning and loving God. Catholics and non-Catholics sought her guidance.

She was featured in July 2021 for FaithInWV, that described her as “a petite, perfectly groomed white-haired religious sister with a heartwarming smile... at first glance may seem like an ordinary sweet servant of God, but spend an hour with her and one will walk away with a sense of being in the presence of a dynamic fisher of souls – someone who genuinely wants to bring out the best in everyone with a little humor lovingly woven into the process - good luck keeping up with her.”

Sister Carole held several degrees in music education and piano performance from Duquesne University including a Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctorate. She was also a licensed professional counselor and an AAPC-Fellow.

Bishop Joseph Hodges encouraged Sr. Carole to take on the journey to help the WV diocese specifically the central part of the state several decades ago. She told FaithInWV that it was not because of her expertise in scripture, theology, or Church teachings, it was

because she could drive a truck, she shared with a laugh.

She and two other religious sisters went to work in Charleston for the Catholic schools there and eventually help with a spiritual direction retreat center that may have otherwise closed its doors. Sister Carole was happy to go on the adventure. She was going to get to teach music – her love and area of expertise – at Charleston Catholic High School.

many seeds. She wrote it to remind her sisters and brothers that they should have “a new awareness of humility, courage, and trusting God.

“Let breathing become prayer, breathing in the Holy Spirit and breathing out blessings.”

Sister Martha Gomez, delegate for consecrated life in the diocese said Sr. Carole shared her gifts of music, song, prayer, and counsel to build up the Church and bless souls.

“She offered numerous programs in faith development, vocation discernment, and prayer,” Sr. Martha said. “She was dedicated to training others in the ministry of spiritual direction and truly lived ‘The Good News’ beautifully reflecting Christ’s light to all those she lovingly served.”

David Lake, interim director of the WV Institute of Spirituality, in a letter to friends of WVIS said, “Over the years she has been a ‘Mighty Oak’- standing proudly in her calling to be one of Almighty God’s faithful servants.

“Let us remember that this ‘Mighty Oak’ has dropped and planted many acorn seeds along her pathway of life. The work and ministry of Jesus Christ will continue due to these seeds she has planted!”

At the request of Sister Carole’s family, a Mass of Resurrection will be celebrated after the New Year to allow relatives from distance to participate with the Sisters of Divine Providence at their Visitation Chapel, Allison Park, PA.



The retreat center became her main focus. She called it her greatest joy to bring people of all faiths into a conversation about God as a means to hope and peace.

“We nurture the mind, body, and soul through scripture and reflection to obtain personal peace, healing, and mindfulness,” she said to FaithInWV.

As a young novice Sr. Carole set a goal for herself “to work and be a saint who made a difference in people’s lives, bringing them closer to Christ and heaven.”

Many of her handbooks are published and available on Audible. One such recording is from

“Prayer in the Fallow Years”.

It is written for religious in their later years after many years of service – those who have planted and spread

# SHE'S PRAYING FOR YOU

## *Honor St. Gertrude the Great*

On Nov. 16th we celebrate the feast of St. Gertrude the Great. She was a Benedictine nun who continually prayed for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. In her prayer, so important in the Church through the centuries, she is also praying for you.

In last week's FaithInWV we were reminded that all through November we are called to pray for those who have died and especially for the souls in Purgatory.

Church history tells us that Jesus appeared to St. Gertrude calling for prayer, invoking the mercy of God. Jesus promised her that 1,000 souls would be released from

purgatory every time the following prayer is said with honor and reverence:

*Eternal Father,  
I offer You the most precious blood  
of thy Divine Son, Jesus,  
in union with the Masses said  
throughout the world today,  
for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory,  
for sinners everywhere,  
for sinners in the universal Church,  
for those in my own home,  
and in my family. Amen.*

Gertrude was born in Germany in 1256. There is no confirmed record of her parents, and many historians believe she may have been presented to the Church – a child oblate (from the Latin word oblatum “one who is offered” – a practice when parents handed over their child to be raised by a religious house/monastery). She chose religious life for herself.



She was intellectual and highly educated unlikely for a woman in those days. She thrived in philosophy, literature, music, and art. She was obsessed with wanting to learn more and more, putting off anything else, even God. Realizing that was detrimental she turned her focus on learning to Scripture and Church history.

She kept a journal and wrote about her mystical experiences and her devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The Church considers her “Great” and so should all the faithful, knowing that she is still praying for us - for all sinners.

Several thoughts based on her quotes to give you a tiny glimpse of her wisdom:

Evil is not match for Mary, and warrior angels do exist – “Angels constantly guard the clients of the Blessed Virgin from the assaults of Hell.”

When you are reverent before the Blessed Sacrament, be assured God knows! – “Every time we look at the Blessed Sacrament, our place in Heave is raised forever.”

Offer up your suffering and be grateful, the rewards are greater. – “Gratitude for suffering is a precious jewel for your heavenly crown... man should always firmly believe that God sends just that trial which is most beneficial for Him.”

Get to know her more by her books: *The Life and Revelations of St. Gertrude the Great* and *The Herald of God's Loving-Kindness*, among others.

*Editor's Note: the art with this post is by Ann Arbor artist Tricia Hampo of When Hearts Listen available on Etsy at: [www.etsy.com/shop/WHENHEARTSLISTEN](http://www.etsy.com/shop/WHENHEARTSLISTEN), where she also shares a little spiritual insight in each piece's item details.*

# PRAY FOR THE COURAGE OF CABRINI

On Nov. 13th, we celebrate the feast day of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini - the first US citizen to become a canonized saint!

You want courage, pray for St. Frances Cabrini to intercede for you. Never underestimate the power of that holy mighty woman.

After she founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, she was sent to the US with six other sisters from Italy in 1889, helping Italian immigrants who were being discriminated against. She became an American citizen and founded 67 schools, hospitals, and orphanages in North and South America. She was definitely a hands-on 'roll up your sleeves' or in her case, habit, kind of sister! As the story goes, she fired the general contractors who were cheating the missionary sisters who paid to have a hotel remodeled into a hospital. For weeks she was directing and overseeing the workers on the job to keep things efficient and effective.

St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, missionary in the US and founder of six institutions for the poor, abandoned, uneducated and the sick, pray for us.

Many of our parishes in WV gathered for a movie night at the theater, before an outdoor screen, or in their parish gathering spaces to watch the film together. If you missed it, schedule a viewing at your church. See the trailer for the Cabrini movie that was a box office hit earlier this year at: [YOUTU.BE/ZAMLUazXvY?si=MVIAQLLMlKAoKW4k](https://youtu.be/ZAMLUazXvY?si=MVIAQLLMlKAoKW4k)

(Photo with this post was enhanced by [CATHOLICARTANDJEWELRY.COM](http://CATHOLICARTANDJEWELRY.COM))



## In a letter to clergy last week, Bishop Mark Brennan announced:

That the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, December 8th, will be celebrated as a Holy Day of Obligation on Monday, December 9, 2024.

The USCCB noted that because this year the solemnity falls on a Sunday, which is the Second Sunday of Advent, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception has been transferred to Monday, December 9.



While it has been customary in the United States of America that when a Holy Day falls on a Monday, the obligation to attend Mass has been abrogated. However, because there was some uncertainty as to whether this was permissible according to Canon Law, the USCCB sought clarification from the Holy See Dicastery for Legislative Texts. Rome ruled in a memo outlining the response that the Solemnity “must be observed as a day of obligation on the day to which it is transferred.”

Further, “because it falls on a Monday, it is important to keep in mind that Sunday, December 8th is the Second Sunday of Advent. Therefore, you may **not** celebrate a vigil Mass for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on Sunday evening, because that is still considered the Second Sunday of Advent. All Masses for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception are to be celebrated on Monday, December 9th this year.

# 32<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

## First Reading: 1 Kings 17:10-16

Elijah received a little cake from the widow – a model of generosity. She used all the flour and oil she had left for her and her son. It would have been their last supper, but Elijah promised them God’s generosity.

## Responsorial: Psalm 146

“Praise the Lord, my soul.”

## Second Reading: Hebrews 9:24-28

Saint Paul tells us that Christ came to take away the sins of many by His sacrifice. He will come again, “to bring salvation.”

## Gospel: Mark 12:38-44

The widow’s mites - Jesus praised the poor widow who placed two coins in the temple treasury. She, like the widow in the first reading, gave all she had. Their motivation? For the love for God, they gave everything they had. He will reward her faithfulness. Greed, selfishness, and injustice are punishable by God.

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT](#)

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that like the widows in today’s readings, we all respond to those in need with generosity to reflect our love for God, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That those who were elected to public office this past week may govern with justice and serve with integrity, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That religious communities continue to be signs of charity and hope, as they prove we all need to be the hands and feet of Christ, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For widows and widowers and all those who struggle after the loss of loved ones, that they may find compassion in our parish community, let us pray to the Lord. . .

*Lord hear our prayer*



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## *Liturgy of the Hours*

# LITURGY OF THE HOURS

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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).