PRIESTHOOD SUNDAY

By Rev. Fr. Brian J. Crenwelge Director of Vocations for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston Pastor/Director of Campus Ministry, St. John University Parish, Morgantown, WV

rowing up, I have very fond memories of my imperfection. A good priest also recognizes his own childhood pastor. Yet, my memories are not simply hagiographic...they are true memories. I remember him holding luncheons for us altar servers every year to thank us for our service at the Altar. I remember him being at our Catholic grade school every day to greet us as we left school for that day. I remember him stooping down to tie kindergarteners' untied shoes. I also remember him losing his patience with the servers when we'd mess around

before Mass. I remember him snapping his finger at us if we were being sloppy at serving. On one occasion, when I was bringing up the water and wine to him during Mass, I was waiting for him to beckon me forward to approach him. Yet he was waiting for me to just *come* to him. So, after a brief staring contest between the two of us, he finally bellowed (with his microphone on for all to hear), "What do you think I am, an orangutan? Get over here!"

In today's age, people might be much less tolerant toward my pastor's impatience than we were back then. We loved him, nonetheless. He was our

priest, after all. And he loved us. Unfortunately, I was too young to really take in his homilies, though my mother has told me that they were truly inspiring. He had a great love for the Holy Eucharist. He also strived to instill in us kids a love of our Eucharistic Lord as well. Was he a perfect man? No, but despite his imperfections, he was still an alter Christus to us - another Christ. We didn't expect him to be perfect, but we expected him to help lead us closer to God. And he did.

This weekend we celebrate Priesthood Sunday. It's a day when we can reflect and honor the service that our beloved priests give to us each week. As a parish priest now, I have much more compassion and understanding for the annoyances that I used to have with human imperfections. After all, as a college chaplain, I hear Confessions every day for the students and parishioners. Priests understand imperfections.

The Second Vatican Council teaches that priests are called to a special perfection by the nature of their office, but as we know all too well, priests can often be just as imperfect as anyone else because they are human. Yet, they have given their lives over to Christ so as to bring souls to heaven. "To save a thousand souls" - that's the mission of a metropolitan priest each weekend as hundreds pass through

> his parish. Yet, if only 30 pass through his parish on a weekend, the dignity of the mission is still the same. Every soul counts.

Christ has allowed men to be chosen from among men to be His priests. Through their ordination, priests are conformed to Christ the Head. This means that they have the governance role in the Church. Not because of anything to do with them individually, but because each of them are called to be an alter Christus (other Christ) and ipse Christus (Christ himself). That is why if a priest does not lead his people well, the parish itself will suffer. As the saying goes,

"One good priest can change the world." Why? Because if a priest lives his priesthood well - i.e. conforms himself to Christ more and more each day and serves his people - Christ is able to work through him even more so. This is why people always want the priest at their Altar Society meetings, their Knights of Columbus events, their rosary rallies. Why? Because when the priest is present, the people feel supported. Their head and *father* is there. No one else can replace the presence of the priest.

As we celebrate Priesthood Sunday, let us thank our Lord for the gift of the sacred priesthood. Let us thank our Lord for the gift of our parish priests. Priests are definitely imperfect people, but if we watch what they do with the eyes of faith, we will see how much God is able to work through them because they are doing the noblest work on earth keeping Christ in the lives of the people.



FEAST OF THE ARCHANGELS ~ MICHAEL, GABRIEL, AND RAPHAEL

On Tuesday, the Church honors God's messenger angels, the words we lovingly pray, "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is archangels - Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, who unceasingly with thee," as he proceeded to tell her of God's ultimate plan glorify God and present to Him our prayers and petitions. To for her to be the Mother of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. profile them simply with one word each we can declare Michael

protects, Gabriel announces, and Raphael guides.

Michael is thought of as our mighty warrior angel, fighting against Satan and all his evil. His name in Hebrew means "Who is like God," which indicates his position of honor among the angels. He is referred to as the prince of the heavenly host in the book of Daniel, and the protector of all humanity in our battle against the enemy.

Gabriel gives understanding, insight, and direct messages from God. He

appeared to Daniel to explain a vision about the Messiah, and to Zachariah about the birth of his son, John the Baptist. However, Gabriel is most notable for appearing as the messenger of the Annunciation before Our Lady. He addressed her by the

The story of Raphael, as healer and traveler, is told in the Old Testament Book of Tobit, one of the biblical novellas. God sends the Archangel Raphael in disguise to help a devout and noble Jewish man, Tobit, as an answer to prayer and a reward for the man's charitable life. This short book in the bible illustrates how true faith and devotion to God and family is more powerful than evil.

In honor of Michael the Archangel pray the Prayer to St. Michael.

In honor of angel Gabriel recite the

ANGELUS (traditionally at 6 am and noon). In honor of Archangel Raphael read the **BOOK OF TOBIT** it is only 14 short chapters, but overflowing with inspirational devotion.



WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES ABOUT ANGELS

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (328) notes the existence of angels, spiritual beings is "a truth of faith." They are celestial without bodies and separate from saints, the exemplary men and women who have walked among us.

The Catechism (329) also quotes St. Augustine, "Angel is the name of their office, not of their nature. If you seek the name of their nature, it is 'spirit'. He also said, "angels are servants and messengers of God. Because they 'always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven' they are the mighty ones who do his word, hearkening the voice of his word."

If you don't have a copy of The Catechism of the Catholic Church, you can access it online through the Vatican. For the section on the Church's teachings on angels (320-354) CLICK HERE.

FEAST OF THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS

On October 2nd we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Guardian had a great devotion to his angel. He made it a practice to pray Angels. It was St. Jerome (who's feast day is Sept. 30th) who said we are all so precious to God that he assigned each one of us our very own guardian angel. This spirit is invisible but always with us to protect and guide our soul, as well as pray for us and present our prayers to God.

We know guardian angels are real. Jesus tells us in Matthew 18:10 they are assigned to us, and Psalm 91:11 declares, "He commands His angels... to guard you wherever you go."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (336) assures us that Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever they are beside us on guard and leading us to heaven.

Last week's FaithInWV e-bulletin featured St. Padre Pio. He

that his guardian angel would go before him and prepare the way. Let us share that zeal and call upon our dear angel to guide our steps and enrich our spirit.

We teach our children the lovely guardian angel prayer, but we all need to pray and petition to our guardian angel. God has given us this amazing gift to be our spiritual companion on the road of life on earth. Recognize the guardian angel in your life. Grow in faith, knowing we do not walk alone.

this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen

CELEBRATE THE MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY

As we welcome October this week, we welcome a month dedicated to the Most Holy Rosary.

Our world needs us to renew our spirit and dedication to this comforting devotion.

Dr. Edward Sri, author, theologian, and Catholic speaker, gives us an honest and inspiring insight in his *Praying the Rosary Like Never Before* talk

he made at the Napa Institute Conference.

Some Catholics pray the Rosary every day, some every week, and some have to stop and try to remember not only when the last time they prayed the rosary, but also where their rosary beads even are. God knows we have good intentions to pray the Rosary, so, don't let Satan tell you or overwhelm your thought that praying the Rosary is too difficult or too time consuming, Sri said.

He said Pope St. John Paul II has changed and rejuvenated his devotion to the Rosary.

It was on the anniversary of his pontificate, Oct. 16, 2002, when Pope St. John Paul II announced the Luminous Mysteries and declared the Year of the Most Holy Rosary to spark renewed interest and love to this devotional prayer. He was gravely concerned that we face a crisis in the Catholic faith not valuing the rosary and not teaching it to our children.

The pope explained in his Apostolic Letter on the Rosary that the prayer accompanied him through "moments of joy and in moments of great difficulty. The Rosary is my favorite prayer. A marvelous prayer! Marvelous in its simplicity and depth...."

This pope definitely knew suffering, loneliness, and grief, Sri said. He lost his mom when he was a very young boy. He lost



his only brother, when he was in third grade, and he was only 20, when he lost his father. As a young man under the Nazi occupation he was forced into labor at a rock quarry. After saying yes to the call to priesthood, he attended an underground seminary in Krakow, Poland during the height of tension in World War II, and his ordination was held in a secret ceremony. Even

as pope his life was threatened as he was shot in St. Peter's Square celebrating the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima.

Pope Saint John Paul II wants us to see the Rosary as a "tool" in helping others and to bring peace.

"These are not the words of some abstract theologian or outof-touch pastor who's just exhorting us to cling to our beads for the sake of saving some pious devotion that is going out of style.... These are the words that flow from a man who experienced many trials and sufferings and found the Rosary to be a tremendous source of strength," Sri said. "And like a good spiritual father toward the end of his life, he wanted to share that treasure with us as if he was giving the church one last gift."

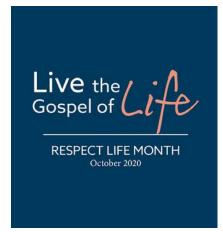
Let the Rosary give us hope and peace, Sri said. Don't think of it as a "spiritual chore." Let it be a prayer to help us welcome silence and comfort into our lives.

Hear his talk from the conference at SRI PRESENTATION.

Many of parishes have a collection of Lighthouse CDs available in their vestibule, Pray the Rosary Like Never Before is one of many presented by Sri.

For an online guide for how to pray the Rosary CLICK HERE.

OCTOBER IS RESPECT LIFE MONTH



Each October the Church in the United States celebrates *Respect Life Month*, and the first Sunday of October is observed as *Respect Life Sunday*. As Catholics, we are called to cherish, defend, and protect those who are most vulnerable, from the beginning of life to its end, and at every point in between. During the month of October, the Church asks us to reflect more deeply on the dignity of every human life.

This year's theme is "Live the Gospel of Life." This theme inspires us to transform our culture by allowing the Gospel of Christ to touch and transform our own hearts and the decisions we make.

May we strive to imitate Christ and follow in his footsteps, caring for the most vulnerable among us. Through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, may Our Lord grant us the grace to live courageously and faithfully his Gospel of life.



DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

1311 Byron Street
Post Office Box 230
Wheeling, West Virginia 26003

September 24, 2020

Dear faithful of the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese,

I write to you again to address matters of common concern. I do so as a brother in Christ who has been given the awesome responsibility to serve as your shepherd here in West Virginia. I have considered these matters in the light of the Gospel of Christ, the teachings of our Church and my experience of forty-four years of pastoral ministry.

1. <u>The Coronavirus pandemic.</u> We are still in the middle of it. West Virginia has seen an upsurge of confirmed cases of the disease recently, so we cannot afford to relax our vigilance. We must persevere in patience, letting God's grace help us lead our lives productively and safely.

Since late May, we have received no reports of COVID-19 virus outbreaks traceable to a public Catholic Mass. I congratulate our parishioners, clergy and their teams for this good result but, please, do not let down your guard. While I advise persons with weakened health to stay home, I do not hesitate to urge healthy parishioners to go to Mass and bring their children, for our safety measures are working. Isn't it inconsistent to go to stores and restaurants but not to Mass, where you are safer than in many of those other venues? Is feeding the stomach more important than feeding the soul? Hearing God's Word together and receiving the Lord Jesus in Holy Communion are fundamental to our Catholic faith. If you're healthy, come to Mass!

Most of our Catholic schools have opened with teachers and students in the classroom and rigorous safety protocols in place. So far it has gone well. A few Catholic schools are teaching virtually, because of conditions in their counties, but, thankfully, our teachers are proficient at doing this. I compliment our Superintendent Mary Ann Deschaine and her staff, the principals, personnel, parents and students of our Catholic schools, for their good spirit and cooperation. We also cooperate with civil officials in this matter, trusting that they are trying their best to deal with a changing landscape.

Most of our children attend public schools. Our parishes are beginning to offer religious education classes again, safely. Consult your parish for precisely how they are doing it. Parents: you are the primary educators of your children. Your parish offers you help but cannot replace you. Lead your children to Jesus!

You should be aware that Catholic Charities and many of our parishes continue to serve people in need, while adopting protective measures for the benefit of the serving and the served. We must not stop reaching out with Christ's love to those who need our help. You should be proud of what your fellow Catholics are doing in this regard. Could you join them?

Let us pray hard for an end to the COVID-19 pandemic and for greater cooperation by our fellow citizens in the public health measures mandated or recommended to us all. I believe we Catholics can be a model for others in our State by showing how responsible people act in a public health crisis.

2. The upcoming elections. I urge you to remember, regardless of your political affiliation and views, that we are first and foremost disciples of Jesus Christ, who gathers us as one in his Catholic Church. While many of our fellow citizens engage in harsh rhetoric and even violence to express their feelings about issues and political leaders, we have to act differently everywhere but especially in Catholic settings. Our parishes, schools and Church groups must be oases of calm in the current political storm. It is simply wrong to despise a brother or sister in the faith because of his or her political views. We must worship, pray and work together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

In this light I have told our priests and deacons that they are not to endorse, in homilies, bulletins, social media or by other means, particular candidates or political parties. They can and should strive to shed the light of the Gospel on urgent moral and social issues, for our Catholic tradition has much wisdom to offer in such matters, but our clergy, religious and lay employees should not use their Church positions to advance favored candidates or parties. That is unfair to their fellow Catholics.

All citizens ought to vote. The American bishops have a fine document, Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, available at the usccb.org website. I encourage you to read it, especially parts one and two. It says: "As citizens, we should be guided more by our moral convictions than by our attachment to a political party or interest group." Conscience is different from feelings and from mere opinion, whether popular or not. We Catholics have the benefit of centuries

of reflection on moral and political questions, a reflection grounded in both reason and divine revelation. We should evaluate candidates according to whether or not they stand for the *inviolable dignity of the human person*, the *common good* and the principles of *subsidiarity* (such as respect for the family as the basic social unit) and *solidarity* (in particular with the poor and oppressed). Not all issues are of equal weight. The bishops' document explains and applies appropriately these fundamental moral principles. A well-formed conscience should accompany us into the voting booth or when filling out an absentee ballot.

3. The Bransfield Saga. The reaction of our people to the Holy See's decision on the amends Bishop Bransfield should make for some of the harm he caused, has been mixed. Some are tired of the whole affair and want to move on. Others think the former bishop got off much too lightly. For my part, I found his apology self-serving and lacking in any recognition of, or contrition for, actually having offended people. I had it published without alteration and without comment, trusting that our people would see it for the non-apology that it was, and they did. I wasn't here to experience what you did but I deeply regret the pain that such a scandal and betrayal caused you. I can only try, as long as I am here, to be faithful and show that I care for you.

As for those who think the former bishop should go to jail, only the civil authorities can charge a person with a crime or send him to jail; the Church can do neither. (To be clear, the Diocese cooperates with civil authorities who are investigating alleged illegal behavior.) If we filed a lawsuit to recover more money from the former bishop, it is highly likely we would lose. Owing to constitutional concerns over the First Amendment's guarantee of a free exercise of religion, civil courts are very reluctant to interfere in the internal organization and norms of religious bodies, and canon law gives the bishop great control over how diocesan funds are spent. Those who dislike referring to my predecessor as a bishop must reckon with the fact that he is a bishop by virtue of his ordination; the discipline Rome imposed on him does not change that reality. With respect to the title "emeritus," Rome uses it as a technical term for a retired bishop but I do not use it because I know that, for English speakers, the term connotes honor and esteem, which neither we nor Rome attributes to the retired bishop.

One of the things we learn in life is that we don't always get our way. We did get some satisfaction relative to the Bransfield affair: to the best of my knowledge, the Holy See has never told a bishop in this country to apologize to his

people and to make some financial restitution to them. Rome did that to Bishop Bransfield, even if the "apology" was anemic and the financial restitution, though substantial, was less than we initially sought. I do think Rome's decision is a "shot across the bow" to bishops that outrageous conduct will not be tolerated and will be punished.

I hope that we will not get stuck in endless quarrels that cannot change the past, but which can certainly bog us down in the present. As some of you have told me, we need to put the Bransfield saga behind us and move on to the work before us: making Christ known and loved in this State and serving those in need.

You all remain in my prayers and I ask you to remember me in yours. God bless you, your families and your parishes.

Sincerely in Christ,

+Mark E. Brennan

Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston

& Marker Brennan

THE LATEST AND UPCOMING NEWS FROM THE CATHOLIC

CATHOLIC CHARITIES WEST VIRGINIA: MISSION MOMENT YOUNG DONOR GIVES TO CATHOLIC CHARITIES ELKINS PANTRY

By Katie Hinerman Klug, Catholic Charities West Virginia Marketing Communications Specialist



9-year old Reed Burdette donates 143 pounds of food to the Catholic Charities West Virginia food pantry in Elkins

Recently we received a visit from 9-year old Reed Burdette (and his grandmother). Reed had received a food purchasing card in response to COVID-19, and decided to make a difference with his.

He decided that he only wanted a handful of items for himself, and chose to use his card to purchase 143 pounds of food for the Elkins food pantry. He said he was hoping it would make a difference for people that needed it, and he wanted to do what he could.

Throughout this pandemic and its struggles, one thing that has continued to be both humbling and impressive is the generosity of our community. Thank you, Reed!

Read the full story in the Sept. 25 issue of The Catholic Spirit. Sign up to receive The Catholic Spirit by e-mail to crowan@dwc.org.

For more news and information from The Catholic Spirit visit <u>TheCatholicSpiritWV.org</u> or follow on Facebook at <u>www.facebook.com/TheCatholicSpiritWV</u>

THE CATHOLIC SPIRIT IS NOW AVAILABLE BY E-MAIL!

You are invited to join our new e-list to receive The Catholic Spirit by e-mail. To be added to the e-list, send an e-mail to Colleen Rowan, crowan@dwc.org, with "The Catholic Spirit e-list" in the subject line. Please let us know your preference saying: "E-mail only, and remove me from print mailing list" or "I would like both print and e-mail versions."

By joining the e-mail list, you will receive an e-mail on each issue date of The Catholic Spirit with a link to the full issue.

The Catholic Spirit will now be available under "Downloadable Spirit" at

THECATHOLICSPIRITWV.ORG.



MASS READINGS FOR THE TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading EZEKIEL 18:25-28

Thus says the LORD: You say, "The LORD's way is not fair!" Hear now, house of Israel: Is it my way that is unfair, or rather, are not your ways unfair? When someone virtuous turns away from virtue to commit iniquity, and dies, it is because of the iniquity he committed that he must die. But if he turns from the wickedness he has committed, he does what is right and just, he shall preserve his life; since he has turned away from all the sins that he has committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

Responsorial PSALMS 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9

R. (6a) Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Your ways, O LORD, make known to me; teach me your paths, guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my savior.

R. Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Remember that your compassion, O LORD, and your love are from of old. The sins of my youth and my frailties remember not; in your kindness remember me, because of your goodness, O LORD.

R. Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Good and upright is the LORD; thus he shows sinners the way. He guides the humble to justice, and teaches the humble his way.

R. Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Second Reading PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11 OR 2:1-5

Brothers and sisters:

If there is any encouragement in Christ, any solace in love, any participation in the Spirit, any compassion and mercy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing. Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but also for those of others. Have in you the same attitude that is also in Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

or

Brothers and sisters:

If there is any encouragement in Christ, any solace in love, any participation in the Spirit, any compassion and mercy,

complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing. Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but also for those of others. Have in you the same attitude that is also in Christ Jesus.

Alleluia JOHN 10:27

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord; I know them, and they follow me.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel MATTHEW 21:28-32

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people:

"What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, 'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.' He said in reply, 'I will not, ' but afterwards changed his mind and went. The man came to the other son and gave the same order. He said in reply, 'Yes, sir, 'but did not go. Which of the two did his father's will?" They answered, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Amen, I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you. When John came to you in the way of righteousness, you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you did not later change your minds and believe him."

PRAYER INTENTIONS

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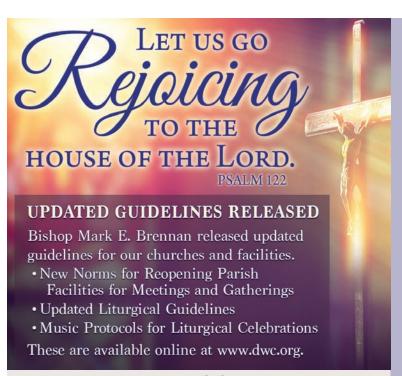
For Pope Francis, Bishop Brennan, and all church leaders, that they may be guided by the Holy Spirit so that we may grow ever closer to truly realizing the mission of Jesus, we pray . . .

For our elected leaders, that they may be guided by empathy for the people they serve and consider the effects of their decisions, we pray...

That all of us may make lifestyle choices that are selfless and sustainable, promote the care and safeguarding of the environment, guarantee access to basic resources, and respect that fundamental rights of the human person and of every creature, we pray . . .

For all those affected by the Coronavirus, for hospital workers and all those who come in contact with the virus, and for an end to the pandemic, we pray . . .

Lord hear our prayer



Liturgy of the Hours LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!

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





WV CATHOLIC RADIO

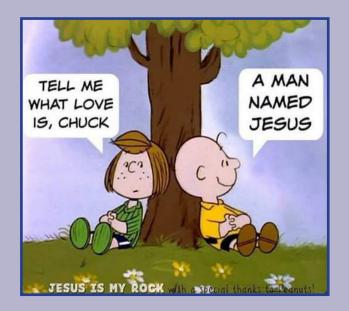
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~Also Streaming in WV at <u>www.rdo.to/WLOL</u>~

A LITTLE CATHOLIC HUMOR





MASS ONLINE

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

Below are four options for enriching your spirit through daily Mass online.

- EWTN airs daily Mass from Our Lady of Angels Chapel, in Irondale, Alabama, at 8am, noon, and 7pm: https://www.ewtn.com/tv/watch-live
- St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York has daily Mass live streamed at 7am; HTTPS://SAINTPATRICKSCATHEDRAL.ORG/LIVE
- Catholic TV also streams its daily Mass: http://catholictv.org/masses/catholictv-mass
- Daily Mass Online at Notre Dame' Basillica of the Sacred Heart is live at 11:30 am Monday-Friday: HTTPS://CAMPUSMINISTRY.ND.EDU/MASS-WORSHIP/BASILICA-OF-THE-SACRED-HEART/WATCH-MASS/SPECIAL-MASSES/