



## HAVING A SPIRITUAL BATTLE THIS LENT? PUT ON THE ARMOR OF GOD

Protect yourself from evil and the temptation that the devil puts in front of you to knock you down this Lent.

Saint Paul wrote about the Armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20) to protect us in our battles against evil. He describes each piece of the armor we need to not only put on, but also take care of through prayer and knowledge of the Word of God, so it remains effective.

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.*

*Stand therefore, and fasten the BELT OF TRUTH around your waist, and put on the BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. As SHOES for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel OF PEACE. With all of these (in all circumstances), take the SHIELD OF FAITH, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the HELMET OF SALVATION, and the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, which is the Word of God.*

*Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.*



be ready. We must hold on to the truth. In John 14:6, Jesus tells us, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Just as a belt secures us, secure ourselves with Christ – true God and truth itself.

**BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** – This is our confidence! Knowing and living righteous is to live life so others see Christ in you. Even when it is difficult, living morally, empathetically, and gracious despite obstacles because you have firm faith in God.

**SHOES OF PEACE** – Think of your favorite pair of shoes. You may love them because they may look good or because they just feel great. Either way they protect the bottom of your feet from rugged terrain. Shoes of Peace give you the freedom to be on the move and when we are on the move Jesus wants us to evangelize by our words and actions – be peacemakers.

**SHIELD OF FAITH** – When our faith is strong nothing can separate us from God. The Shield of Faith is our protection against attacks. Over and over in the Bible we are reminded we can do all things when Christ is the center of our life – when we have faith even in the unseen (Philippians 4:13; Luke 1:37; Matthew 19:26; and Hebrews 11:1). Fear not, when we are armed with the Shield of Faith.

**HELMET OF SALVATION** – Protect your noggin! Put on the Helmet of Salvation; have a clear mind – leave no doubt that you are a child of God. In this battle of life, we have to protect our thoughts from evil and doubt. Christ taught us that when we believe in God – when we turn to Him and away from sin - we will receive salvation. Have Christ on our minds so we knowingly and habitually act to please Him.

**SWORD OF THE SPIRIT** – The weapon of choice – be armed with the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. It is indeed the Holy Spirit that guided the righteous who held the pens to give us the Bible. As we heard in last week's gospel it was also the Holy Spirit who was Jesus' strength against the devil's relentless temptations in the desert. We must not only call upon the Spirit to defend us in battle, but also sharpen our swords through Scripture and become closer to God.

**THE BELT OF TRUTH** – Satan is a liar, a thief, and destroyer of souls (John 10:10), so we must arm ourselves and



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

## DIocese OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

1311 BYRON STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 230  
WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA 26003

March 1, 2023

My Dear Brother Priests and Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During the COVID-19 pandemic, I asked that several safety measures be implemented in parishes and during Mass out of concern for the health of our parishioners. Please take a moment to read this letter which shares updates to those safety measures I previously implemented.

### **PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST**

After much prayerful discernment and consultation with members of the medical community, I am reinstating the distribution of the Sacred Cup to the faithful who wish to receive it effective April 6, 2023. This date is most appropriate as it is Holy Thursday, when we recall that our Lord Jesus first gave the Church this precious gift of His Body and His Blood at the Last Supper.

While we believe that when one receives either the Body or Blood of Christ, one is receiving the whole Christ, “His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity,” nevertheless, “sharing in both eucharistic species reflects more fully the sacred realities that the Liturgy signifies” (Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America, #8, #10). I urge you to begin preparing and catechizing the assembly, and most importantly, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. The faithful should be reminded that the reception of the Sacred Cup has always been optional; those who are uncomfortable or fearful of drinking from the chalice should not feel badly. Moreover, from a practical point, it may take a while for members of the assembly to re-engage receiving under both forms, so that needs to be taken into consideration regarding the amount of wine that is consecrated as well as the number of communion stations. In fact, I advise that if any of us has an illness to refrain from the Sacred Cup out of concern for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should be reminded of the theological significance of their ministry as well as review practical procedures of wiping the chalice thoroughly after each communicant. Also, keep in mind that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, I mandated that all priests, deacons, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion use hand sanitizer before they begin to distribute communion. I still urge that the protocol remain in place for priests, deacons, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to sanitize their hand after distributing the Body of Christ on the tongue. Considering the lifting of mask restrictions for most public venues, I have decided that priests, deacons, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are no longer required to wear face masks when distributing Communion to the faithful. This is effective immediately.

## SIGN OF PEACE

Another part of our sacred liturgy that has been deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic is the Sign of Peace. If you recall, prior to the pandemic we were encouraged to greet those around us with a handshake or a gentle embrace. I have decided to allow both “tactile” and “non-tactile” gestures. This is also a timely opportunity to catechize the faithful on the liturgical meaning of this moment within the liturgy. Remind the assembly that this is not a time for “Hello, how are you doing?” or “Good morning!” Rather we are bestowing one another with the Peace of Christ. In the Gospel of John (14:27), Jesus makes it clear that the peace that he bestows on us, that we in turn share with one another, is not as the world gives. The Church tells us that “It is appropriate that each person, in a sober manner, offer the sign of peace only to those nearest to them” (GIRM, #82).

In closing, in my travels throughout the state I am privileged to have good conversations with the faithful in our parishes. I know that most will rejoice that this day has finally arrived. Since March 2020, we have learned and developed many precautionary wellness habits to care for our own health and wellness, and that of our neighbors. Out of respect for our brothers and sisters in Christ, let us not diminish this mindfulness.

Invoking the intercession of our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph, I ask that God continue to bless all of you, your families and parishes, and our great Mountain State.

Fraternally in Christ,



+Mark E. Brennan

Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston



# WEST VIRGINIA EUCHARISTIC CONGRESSES

## REGISTER NOW

### for Diocesan Spring Eucharistic Congresses

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN.** Plans are being finalized. Are you ready?

Have you selected which Regional Eucharistic Congresses for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston you will be attending? You are welcome to join us at all three - April 21-22 in Charles Town, April 28-29 in Wheeling, and June 2-3 in Charleston.

Bishop Mark Brennan is inviting the faithful from around the state to join him this Spring at these regional congresses. Each feature a dynamic national speaker, engaging breakout session presenters, Adoration, inspiring prayer services, celebratory music, Blessed Carlo Acutis' Eucharistic miracles display, and more. All of these will culminate in Mass celebrated by Bishop Mark Brennan.

Admission is free. Registration is required. Go to our [DWC.ORG](http://DWC.ORG) homepage and click on the Regional Eucharistic Congresses event button.

The Eucharistic Congresses are for the faithful from school age on up. The whole family is encouraged to attend along with our clergy, religious, Catholic organizations, and schools.

These diocesan events are part of the National Eucharistic Revival, a three-year renewal of "the Church by enkindling a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist."

#### IS MY PARISH, SCHOOL, OR ORGANIZATION INVOLVED?

Yes! Bishop Mark Brennan is calling all of us together to celebrate Christ's real presence and to see the faithful fully alive. "Believe what Christ said at the Last Supper, 'This is my Body. This is my Blood!'" This has been Bishop Mark Brennan's emboldening message to the faithful during his ministry

not only here in the diocese, but also as a young parish priest. While Friday evening at the congresses will feature an inspirational Taizé Prayer Service, Saturday morning will open with a Welcome Prayer Service that celebrates our six vicariates uniting to strengthen our encounter with Christ in the Eucharist. Parishes, schools, and other Catholic organizations will bring their prayer intentions in a special

Eucharistic Congress Book of Prayer. Each group will be announced as their Book of Prayer is presented to Bishop Brennan who will offer them in prayer throughout the Congresses and the remainder of the Diocesan Year of the National Eucharistic Revival.

#### WHO ARE THE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS?

In **Charles Town, April 21-22**, will be **Father Luke Spannagel**, of the Diocese of Peoria.

Fr. Luke is a member of the team of National Eucharistic Preachers which is part of the National Eucharistic Revival of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Fr. Luke currently serves at the Cathedral and Heart of Peoria Parishes in Peoria, IL. After his undergraduate studies at the University of Illinois, he went on to seminary at Mt. St. Mary's in

Emmitsburg, MD. He was ordained for the Diocese of Peoria in 2003 and has enjoyed assignments in campus ministry and parishes of all sizes. Fr. Luke has shared that his time each day in celebrating the Mass and praying during Eucharistic Adoration are the best parts of his day.

In **Wheeling, April 28-29**, will be **Fr. Timothy Anastos**, of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Fr. Tim was ordained a priest in 2017. He is currently the associate chaplain of the St. John Paul II Newman Center at the University of Illinois-



### WEST VIRGINIA EUCHARISTIC CONGRESSES

#### Christ is Present! Will you be?

*Come to the Table - Spring 2023*

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Eucharistic Congresses are part of the National Eucharistic Revival, a three-year renewal of "the Church by enkindling a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist."

DATE & LOCATION	KEYNOTE	SCHEDULE
<b>APRIL 21 - 22</b> ST. JAMES CHURCH CHARLES TOWN	 Fr. Luke Spannagel	<b>FRIDAY EVENING</b> Taizé Service Reception
<b>APRIL 28 - 29</b> CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOSEPH WHEELING	 Fr. Timothy Anastos	<b>SATURDAY</b> Powerful morning prayer & procession of all the vicariates Keynote Speaker Q & A
<b>JUNE 2 - 3</b> BASILICA OF THE CO-CATHEDRAL OF THE SACRED HEART CHARLESTON	 Fr. Joe Freedy	Breakout Sessions Music Eucharistic Adoration Mass and more

For more information and to register visit [www.dwc.org](http://www.dwc.org) or scan the QR code.




Chicago in addition to being a Eucharistic Preacher of the USCCB. He is also the host of Reel Homilies - minute-long YouTube, Instagram and TikTok reflections on the Sunday Gospel readings where he speaks through the lenses of Church tradition, pop culture, and self-improvement. Check out Reel Homilies for yourself at: [WWW.SPIRITJUICE.ORG/REELHOMILIES/](http://WWW.SPIRITJUICE.ORG/REELHOMILIES/).

In **Charleston, June 2-3**, will be **Fr. Joe Freedy**. Father Joe grew up in Pittsburgh. He was the starting quarterback for the University at Buffalo for 3 years. After college he entered the seminary and was assigned to study in Rome at the Gregorian University and the John Paul II Institute. He was ordained a Priest in 2008. Fr. Joe served as the vocation director for 8 years and is currently the Assistant Director of

Evangelization for the Diocese of Pittsburgh and the Senior Assistant at Divine Mercy Parish. He is president of Dry Bones Ministries, a grassroots evangelization ministry in the Pittsburgh diocese that re-evangelizes God's people with an emphasis on the treasures of the Church like Holy Mass, the Holy Rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet and prayers for healing ([WWW.DRYBONESPGH.ORG](http://WWW.DRYBONESPGH.ORG)).

At all three events - the keynote will not only address the entire congress with an uplifting talk about the Eucharist, but will also take part in a Q&A conversation during the weekend. The keynote along with a panel of breakout session presenters will bring the message to life, reviving our spirits, energizing our hearts, and give us confidence share Christ with others as a Eucharistic people.



## NEWS FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES WEST VIRGINIA

### SUPPORT FOR SUSAN

Recently, a young mother named Susan came to us after being negatively affected by COVID. She had lost her home and was looking for help for herself and her three children.

While she was happy to hear about the housing and utility assistance that we provide, she wanted a more permanent solution - a way forward for her family. For clients like Susan, we provide case management.

In case management, we utilize a strengths-based approach, respecting our clients as the experts in their own journey, and promoting their positive skills and lived experiences as they decrease barriers toward goal attainment.

Six months after being enrolled in case management, Susan had gained new employment skills, support for her children, and permanent housing.

The people that come to us are capable of amazing things, and our case managers support and encourage them as they accomplish their goals.

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia, visit [WWW.CATHOLICCHARITIESWV.ORG](http://WWW.CATHOLICCHARITIESWV.ORG).

The Mission of Catholic Charities West Virginia: *Guided by God's love, Catholic Charities collaborates with community partners, parishes and families to provide caring and compassionate services to people in need and work toward lasting and meaningful change.*



*Catholic Charities case managers work one-on-one with clients to support them as they work toward their goals.*

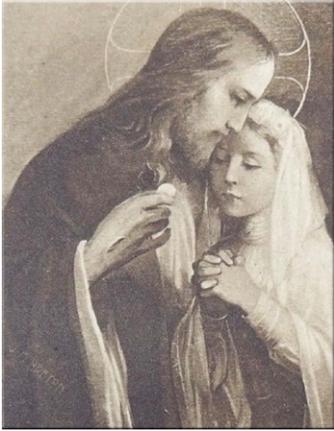


# NATIONAL Eucharistic Revival

Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston

## FALLING IN LOVE WITH JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST

*This column was written by Clare Tupta. Clare is a member of the Basilica of the Co Cathedral of the Sacred Heart Parish and a student at Ave Maria University majoring in theology.*



I heard once in a talk on vocations given at my college that I am at the “age of falling in love”. I found this to be an interesting way to put it, but I understand the point the speaker was making. As a junior in college, I am in a unique place of intentionally contemplating and praying for openness to God’s will for my life. Whether that be a call to natural marriage and motherhood, to a life of total

consecration as a religious sister, whatever it may be, it is all about where I will best live out union with my Beloved during this lifetime. If you consider it this way, every single one of us, no matter age or marital status, is at the age of falling in love, namely, with He Who is Love.

Living out union with Our Beloved is the very reason for our existence. In perceiving that we were created in the Imago Dei, the “Image of God”, we come to terms with this. We have been created as human beings by Being Himself. It is important to recognize we are human beings, not human doings. In accepting this, we are able to recognize our life purpose to a greater degree, that is, “to love and be loved”. The fundamental way we do this while on earth is through devotion to Our Lord in the Eucharist.

Growing up, I was catechized well. I was exposed to Eucharistic devotions such as adoration, processions, and fervent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. As a young child I remember being beyond delighted when I thought about receiving my first Holy Communion, mindful of the saints I read about and how they spoke of the Eucharist as the greatest treasure. I was so excited to share in this treasure. As a child, loving our Lord was simple. It was clear to me that my call was to love God.

As I grew in age, I simultaneously grew in the awareness that the world was not under the primary mission of loving God. Our fallen world draws further and further away from peace, from reverence, and from the recognition that our lives are not about ourselves. I encountered this as I grew into adolescence and, as a result, shifted my focus from what was most important to what others thought of me, my personal comforts being met,

and worldly goods as a whole. Instead of allowing the visible to point me to the invisible, I began seeking my end in the visible. Nevertheless, I remained faithful to praying and attending Sunday Mass. Yet, in a way, I compartmentalized God. I had not given Him my total self, but rather, only those parts of me that appeared better than others, the parts that were easy to surrender.

Soon after this, I was faced with the reality that Jesus’ entire life on earth was about me and, therefore, it only makes sense that my entire life is about Him. Coming to terms with this hurt. It involved immense suffering. A real death had to take place. However, it is only in dying to ourselves that we can allow Christ to live in and through us. And here is where my journey to falling in love with Jesus in the Eucharist began.

Like most everyone, the spring of 2020 consisted of monumental life shifts. The biggest one being the absence of weekly reception of the Blessed Sacrament. The saying, “you don’t know what you’ve got until it’s gone”, though cliché, rendered absolutely true. I distinctly remember kneeling before our television screen on Sunday mornings reciting the spiritual communion prayer with an ache inside of me. I knew that Our Lord was present in the midst of my prayers, but in the absence of His physical Presence, there was a real lack. I recognized that not only did I long for Our Lord in the Eucharist, but I hungered for Him, signifying a true need. Not only this, but my own hunger led me to experience how infinitely greater was His hunger for me.

In the hours I have spent before Our Lord in Adoration, I often have contemplated why, of all things, He has chosen to come to us in the form of bread. Jesus Who I know to be the Son of God appears before me in a simple, flavorless Host. I realized that God’s purpose in veiling Himself is not to hide from us, but rather to reveal profound truths about Himself. Namely, how great He is and how little I am. In my littleness, I could not handle any more than the utmost humbleness of appearance. Therefore, it only makes sense that the proper response on my part is the utmost reverence, the utmost love in receiving Our Lord.

I am still learning what this means and will spend my whole life learning what it means to love my Beloved. Yet, what a dignified call this is. What a gift it is to be received into His Own Life through the reception of Holy Communion. The taste of eternity lies before me, how can I seek fulfillment elsewhere?

*Editor’s note: the image accompanying this column is one of Clare Tupta’s favorites of Christ with the Eucharist, lovingly embracing the young woman who adores His Real Presence. She imagines it is her. Artist and origin unknown.*



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

## DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

1311 BYRON STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 230  
WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA 26003

March 2, 2023

Dear members of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston,

Keeping a promise made to you, I am happy to present the audit of diocesan finances for fiscal 2022, which ended June 30, 2022. The full audited financial statements of the Diocese may be found online at [www.dwc.org](http://www.dwc.org). My letter is part of a summary of information for readers of *The Catholic Spirit*, our diocesan newspaper, in its electronic and printed versions.

In reviewing the audit, keep in mind that diocesan revenue should support the efforts of the Church to promote the Gospel and bring people to Jesus Christ. Money should follow mission.

What a difference a year can make! In the fiscal 2021 report, we saw increased value in the diocesan investment portfolio. Due to a myriad of factors, stock and bond markets in fiscal 2022 put downward pressure on our assets. Even with mineral income trending higher than last year, we experienced nearly a \$29 million dollar unrealized loss in assets. My Diocesan Finance Council, our Finance Department and I continue to resist knee-jerk spending decisions because of short-term increases or decreases in investments or oil revenue. Rather, we seek long-term financial stability so that our Diocese can continue its mission in a balanced manner. With stronger policies, careful administration and trust in God's Providence, we will seek to balance our budgets and live within our means.

Having served as your Bishop since 2019, I have observed how intricate and complex is the network of relationships among our parishes, schools, charitable agencies, cemeteries, foundations and social outreach efforts. It reminds me of the diversity in our Appalachian home as we seek together to spread Christ's Good News. As St. Paul says: *As in one body we have many parts and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another* [Romans 12:4-5]. Our diocesan funds support a large and varied number of good works.

One unique and evolving ministry in our Diocese is our three pastoral centers. The adult side of the Mary, Help of Christians Center in Huttonsville, has closed owing to lack of use and large financial shortfalls but the camping side remains open to benefit our youth with Christ-centered camping experiences in the summer. The St. John XXIII Center in Charleston has seen increased use by Catholic and other groups. The Priest Field Center in the Eastern Panhandle has been leased to St. James Parish in nearby Charles Town. That Center is used for traditional retreats and meetings but also serves as a base for St. James' outreach ministries, feeding programs, emergency shelter placements and other stewardship projects. During the first year of this plan, Priest Field has recorded a \$600,000 turnaround, which you will see reported in the lower cost of pastoral center operations in the financial report.

Some of our Catholic schools are bursting at the seams with higher enrollments while others have not grown or have seen a decrease in enrollment. The West Virginia Hope Scholarship program, a publicly funded program but not in operation until fiscal 2023, gives us an opportunity to attract more students to our Catholic schools, which did an outstanding job during the COVID pandemic. In the end, though, it is Catholic parents who must show they want Catholic education to succeed by being willing to send their children to Catholic schools.

Some Catholic parishes are growing with more parishioners now than before the pandemic. Others continue to webcast their liturgies for the homebound while encouraging the healthy and able to come to church. You will note in the financial report that diocesan support for parishes and schools is significantly higher than last year, in large part because of the financial toll of a changing economy.

Last year I urged parishes and schools to consider retiring long-term debt because of a rising interest rate environment. I'm pleased to report that several parishes and schools have retired long-term debt through fund-raising campaigns, careful financial planning and debt elimination strategies supported by the diocesan Chancery. Dollar-for-dollar write-off options are available to all parishes in the diocese, based on debt management commitments and endowment development in the West Virginia Catholic Foundation. In fiscal 2022 we implemented a new capital matching grant program, whereby parishes can earn up to \$50,000 for approved projects that also enjoy local financial support. I relish these opportunities to collaborate with our parishes and schools that are striving to better position themselves to carry on Christ's work.

Jesus said, *The poor you will always have with you and whenever you wish you can do good to them* [Mark 14:7]. A requirement of our faith in good economic times and bad is to care for our neighbor in need. Increased parishioner support of the 2022 Catholic Sharing Appeal enabled the Diocese to earmark funds for parish food pantries, Catholic school tuition assistance and other outreach efforts towards children and families, regardless of religious affiliation. As you will see in the financials, the CSA has rebounded dramatically since the pandemic. This partnership with our parishes is flourishing thanks to your stewardship and generosity, even in a time of high inflation and rising costs to families. I am most grateful to you who support the CSA and your parish collections.

You will note in the audit report that the Diocese had more lawsuit settlements in fiscal 2022. The Lord once said: *Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court with him* [Matthew 5:25]. That is good advice. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, settlements that are reasonable avoid contentious trials that can re-open the wounds of abuse victims and obscure the good work our people are doing to keep Church environments safe for children and youth. We continue to pay for counseling for victims of abuse or harassment from funds derived from the sale of the former episcopal residence and the return of some money from the previous bishop. To strengthen our efforts to ensure the safety of our young people, I have asked for onsite audits of parish and school safe environment measures to be conducted annually in our Diocese rather than every three years. We cannot fall asleep at the switch. Our children's safety is of paramount importance.

Every day, priests, deacons, religious sisters and brothers and lay faithful in 55 counties across the 24,000 square miles of the Mountain State find ways to use their gifts and build up the Church in love. As St. Paul told a young disciple: *I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God . . . For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control* [II Timothy 1: 6-7]. Our diocesan financial resources are directed to sustaining and enhancing their efforts, for money should follow mission.

I pray that we may all have the courage to step forward in faith and use our material resources and personal talents in service to others. When we do so, we fulfill the Lord's will by "living the truth in love." God bless you, your families and all your loved ones.

Sincerely in Christ,



+Mark E. Brennan

Bishop of Wheeling-Charleston

N.B. I am very grateful for the hard work and dedication of our diocesan Finance Office, which once again this year has received a clean audit letter. The members of that Office are helping me be a trustworthy steward of the resources which the Diocese is blessed to have.

# SEEK THE COURAGE OF SAINTS PERPETUA AND FELICITY

Saints Perpetua and Felicity are named in the first Eucharistic Prayer, but do you know their story?

They are two of the first women martyrs. Perpetua was from a noble family in Africa and Felicity was her servant. The year was 203, when they were studying to become Christian.

This was a time when the emperor had forbidden anyone to be baptized or become Christian. So, when it became known what they were doing, the women and two others were arrested and sentenced to death. Their teacher upon finding out of their arrest turned himself in and joined them in prison, where he continued to teach them about Christ and the eternal happiness of heaven.

Perpetua kept a diary during her imprisonment. The diary was found by a witness of the executions who added details of the account to the end of St. Perpetua's last entry. The diary is published as *The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicity*.

Perpetua was 22 at the time and still nursing her newborn son.



Felicity was late into her pregnancy when she was thrown in jail. Just before the executions Felicity gave birth to a baby girl.

Perpetua's father, a pagan, begged his daughter to denounce Christ, so she would be set free, but she refused. She wrote of her exchange with her father in her diary. The book also notes of visions she had of getting to heaven and commanding a dragon "In the name of Christ Jesus" not to harm her.

While awaiting their executions the women were baptized. On the day of execution, the women were "joyful" as if they were "on their way to heaven," a witness recorded.

Saints Perpetua and Felicity, pray for us. May we have the courage of these young women as we face our trials, and share their joy knowing that because of their steadfast faith they will see the face of God.

*Editor's note: the watercolor with this article is by Anne Argenziano of AnneArchiArt*

## DO WHAT IS RIGHT IN CHRIST'S SIGHT!



"Labor without stopping, do all the good works you can, while you still have the time." These are wise words from St. John of God.

We celebrate the Memorial of St. John of God on March 8.

He lived much of his formation years and young adulthood carelessly and it wasn't until he reached dire straits that he looked to change his ways.

He was born in Portugal on March 8, 1495. Sadly, at the age of 8 he was somehow separated from his parents and grew up on an opposite coast along the Spanish peninsula.

At the age of 22 he was a reckless soldier – drinking, self-centered, and wild. As the story goes, he had stolen a horse and was fleeing from authorities, when he was thrown off. He feared he would be killed or captured. It was in that moment of desperation he pleaded to God that he would not be caught. He knew he had to change his ways.

He traveled to the shrine of St. James of Compostela in Spain. It is the burial place of the Apostle St. James the Great. This trek is still famous today called the Camino de Santiago (the Way of St. James). It is also believed that the hike is a way to reset your life. He confessed his sinful ways and professed not only his love of God, but his commitment to serving the rest of his life doing good as penance for all of his previous wrongdoings. He even went in search of his parents, but found that both had already died. He immersed himself into

reading Scripture and religious books.

Years later he had a vision of the Child Jesus. He had been traveling and came upon a child who was barefoot and disheveled. The boy asked John to carry him, so he did. When the two stopped at a fountain to take a drink the boy transformed into the Christ Child. Before disappearing He said, "John of God, Granada shall be your cross." Granada is a city in southern Spain. John went to the city and opened a bookstore to sell religious books and holy cards. It was in Granada he also heard Saint John of Avila preach. His words influenced John of God so strongly he felt even more remorseful for his sins – for hurting God. He gave away all his possessions. People believed he was insane. For 40 days he suffered cruel treatment in a hospital area for lunacy. It was St. John Avila who had him moved to a better part of the hospital.

He became dedicated to sheltering the homeless and poor. He also opened a hospital. He helped all he could. When he heard that a hospital was on fire, he impulsively ran inside and began carrying patients out. After all were safe he ran back in to start saving equipment in the hospital. When the building collapsed all believed he died, but he walked out of the billowing smoke unharmed.

He died in 1550, on his 55th birthday from pneumonia he suffered after rescuing a boy from the river. He was found in the infirmary kneeling before a crucifix.

He is the patron saint of booksellers, printers, firefighters, heart patients, hospitals, nurses, mental illness, and the sick.



# Catholic Sharing Appeal 2023 Begins

## Faithful Called to Strengthen the Ministries of the Church

*You are the salt of the Earth... You are the light of the World."*

– Matthew 5:13-14

As the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston kicks off the 2023 Catholic Sharing Appeal (CSA), Bishop Mark Brennan reminds the faithful they are called to strengthen the ministries of the Church with their gifts of prayer and financial support.

In his letter to the faithful, Bishop Mark Brennan said, "Recently during my quiet time in prayer, I reflected on the Beatitudes, Christ's teachings on authentic Christian discipleship. He began his instruction by saying, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."* Jesus goes on to tell them that they are also *the salt of the Earth*. What an incredible concept. But what does it mean?

"During the time of Christ, salt was a vital element. It was used to preserve food, sustaining the lives of many during times of drought or famine. It was so important that Romans used salt as currency in many regions. This is what Christ meant for His disciples. They were the vital element to build and sustain Christ's Church on Earth. They were called to preserve Christ's teachings and spread the Gospel to all nations.

"We too are to be the salt of the Earth. As disciples ourselves, we are called to spread the Gospel, especially those who are in need of God's love and light. In service to others, we share His light, compassion, and love with those who need it most throughout our state. When you give to the CSA, you put your faith into deeds and help deliver shared ministries of our local Church."

Gifts to the CSA support parishes and their missions/chapels; our Catholic schools; and Catholic evangelization and outreach efforts covering all reaches of the state.

The funds from the CSA are crucial for Catholic schools including school-based health and wellness programs; tuition assistance programs; professional development for faculty, staff, and advisory boards; retreats; religious sisters in schools; and school enrichment programs.

Funds raised for evangelization and outreach will help

fund local activities for the Eucharistic Revival Parish Year planned by churches; Camp Carlo; food pantries; social ministries such as the new Walking With Moms program, addiction recovery, and prison ministry; and Catholic Charities.

The kickoff of the CSA is always such an exciting time of year for our office, because we get to work closely with pastors, administrators and volunteers to go over the various ministries and programs supported by the appeal," said Heidi Sforza, director of annual giving for the diocese. "I've learned so much about our churches and state through our various meetings and programs over the years. Having the opportunity to meet with pastors and help them fulfill their parish needs, whether it be for building maintenance, technology upgrades, or expanded ministries is always a joy."

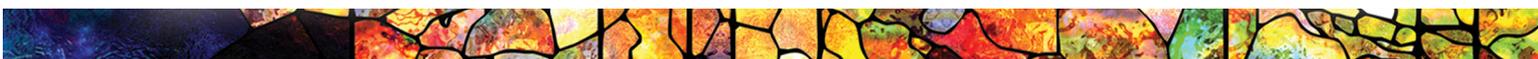
Director of Stewardship and Development Krissie Benson concurs with Sforza and added that

the CSA is an opportunity to learn about and celebrate the uniqueness of our parishes that unite to strengthen our work as Christ's hands and feet.

"Over the years the Catholic Sharing Appeal has proven to be an opportunity for the faithful to unite together to serve the needs throughout our Diocese," Benson said. "This was very true this year. As we see the costs rise, unemployment uncertainty, and an unstable economy, we are even more aware that many throughout West Virginia need our help now more than ever. Donors are making a huge difference in the lives of those who benefit from programs and services made possible through the help of the CSA."

Through the generosity of the faithful in West Virginia more than \$2.2 million was raised during the 2022 CSA for the good of God's people. Since 2002, the CSA has raised more than \$27 million to enliven parishes, Catholic education, ministries, and outreach efforts all within the state of West Virginia.

For more information go to [DWC.ORG/CSA](http://DWC.ORG/CSA).

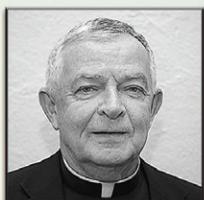


“HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT, BECAUSE THE LOVE OF GOD HAS BEEN POURED OUT INTO OUR HEARTS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO HAS BEEN GIVEN TO US.”

-ROMANS 5:5



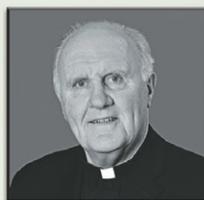
Msgr. Frederick P. Annie



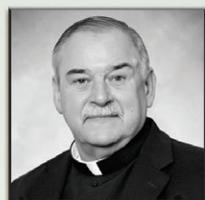
Msgr. Patrick L. Fryer



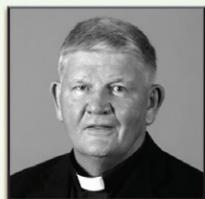
Msgr. Lawrence J. Luciana



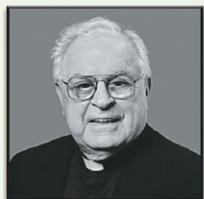
Msgr. Jeremiah F. McSweeney



Msgr. Joseph L. Peterson



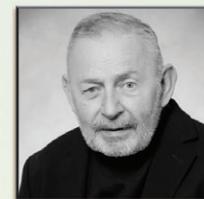
Msgr. Samuel S. Sacus



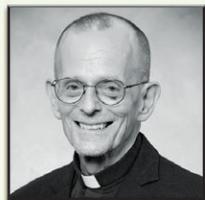
Msgr. P. Edward Sadie, P.A., S.T.L.



Rev. William A. Anderson



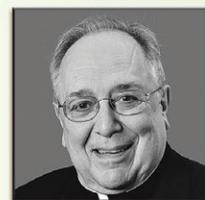
Rev. Mario R. Claro



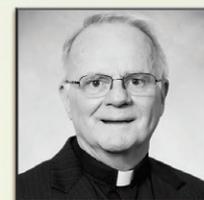
Rev. Harry N. Cramer



Rev. Thomas W. Dagle



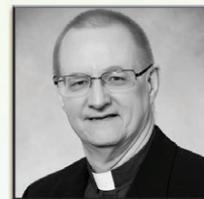
Rev. John V. Di Bacco, Jr.



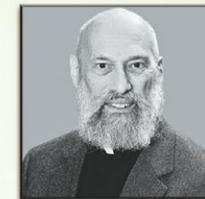
Rev. Larry W. Dorsch



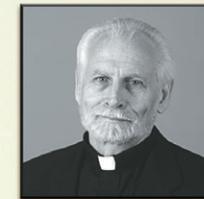
Rev. D. Kent Durig



Rev. John H. Finnell



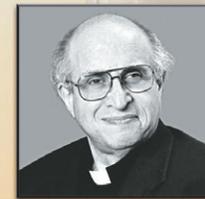
Rev. Patsy J. Iaquina



Rev. Giles LeVasseur



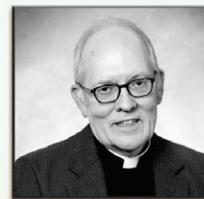
Rev. George Manjadi



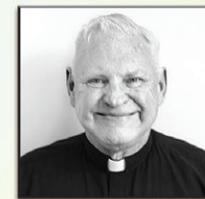
Rev. Robert A. Perriello



Rev. William Petro



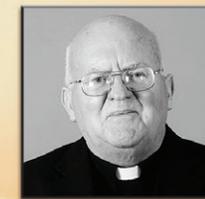
Rev. T. Mathew Rowgh



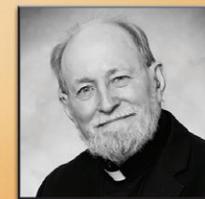
Rev. David J. Schmitt



Rev. Douglas B. Sutton



Rev. Laurence Wrenn



Rev. Paul D. Yuenger



RETIREMENT FUND  
FOR DIOCESAN PRIESTS

COLLECTION DATE: March 12, 2023

## SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

### First Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a

God calls upon Abram to leave his home, declaring he will be a great prophet – a leader of a great nation – a blessing to the people.

---

### Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 33

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

---

### Second Reading: 2 Timothy 1:8b-10

Bear your share of hardship for the gospel – God will give you strength. He gave us Jesus, who destroyed death.

---

### Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

Peter, James, and John witness the transfiguration of the Lord. They hear God speak from the heavens, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased: listen to him.”

---

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT](#)

[BIBLE.USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS/030523.CFM](http://BIBLE.USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS/030523.CFM)

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that we rejoice knowing that at every Mass we see bread and wine transfigured into the Body and Blood of the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. . .

May all leaders in our communities, parishes, schools, and organizations have hearts full of peace, hope, and love that turn away from conflict, negativity, and divisiveness, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all the faithful as we prepare for our Diocesan Eucharistic Congresses this Spring, that we prioritize Christ in our lives and make time to grow in unity, celebrating his True Presence in the Eucharist, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For our habitual and special intentions that we hold dear, let us pray to the Lord. . .

*Lord hear our prayer*

## BROTHERS SERVING IN SUMMERSVILLE COMPLETE SERVICE IN WV

Father Rene Gerona, SVD, Pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Summersville, announced that two religious brothers who were serving the Summersville are returning to their province. Brother John DeBold and Brother Gerard “Jerry” Raker will be moving back to the Society of the Divine Word retirement facility in Techny, Il.

The departure was unplanned, but necessary due to the medical attention that Brother John needs, Fr. Rene noted. The planned date for their move is February 28, 2023.

“In the name of all of us here in the Diocese, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Brother John and Brother Jerry for the years of service rendered to St. John the Evangelist Parish in Summersville,” said Sister Martha Gomez, RGS, Delegate for Consecrated Life in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. She asked all the faithful to pray for these missionaries, as she knows they will continue to pray for us.

If you would like to send Brother John and Brother

Jerry a card you can use the address for the missionaries: Society of the Divine Word, 1985 Waukegan Rd, Techny, IL 60082

Founded in 1875 by St. Arnold Janssen, the Society of the Divine Word is the largest Roman Catholic order that focuses on missionary work.

Worldwide, the Society of the Divine Word is organized into 60 provinces. Each province is made up from men from all different parts of the globe. With 250 men, the Chicago Province is the Society of the Divine Word’s largest province in the Western Hemisphere.





# Eucharistic Retreat Weekend

## March 10-12

**Saint John XXIII Pastoral Center**  
100 Hodges Road, Charleston

As part of the Diocesan Year of the Eucharistic Revival in the US, the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston will host a Eucharistic Retreat. Faithful around the state are invited to attend a weekend to bring our hearts closer to Christ in the Eucharist.

### Agenda

- Friday** 8:00 pm - *Social* Participants are encouraged to attend  
Those needing accommodations may also check-in at the retreat center prior to the social.
- Saturday** 8:00 am - *Breakfast* Registration and Mass will follow  
The weekend will consist of inspiring talks, facilitated discussions, Liturgy, Reconciliation, music, and private prayer.  
Keynote Speaker and Celebrant: Father John Finnell
- Sunday** Breakfast, concluding reflections, and Mass at 11 am

### Cost

**\$100/per person** Price includes meals and accommodations at the retreat center.

### Registration

**Deadline is March 6th** To register please visit [dwc.org/eucharistic-retreat-2023/](http://dwc.org/eucharistic-retreat-2023/).

For more information contact director Gerri Wright at [gwright@dwc.org](mailto:gwright@dwc.org) or call her at 304-342-0507.

## BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOU

Berkeley Springs - Hancock, MD	FM	96.3
Berkeley Springs	FM	107.9
Clarksburg-Bridgeport	FM	97.5
Dunbar - Charleston	AM	1450
Eastern Panhandle	AM	740
Eastern Panhandle	FM	106.5
Grafton - Clarksburg	AM	1190
Montgomery - Beckley	FM	89.7
Purgitsville	FM	98.7
St. Marys - Parkersburg	FM	105.3
Star City -Morgantown	FM	89.7
Summersville	FM	91.3
Wheeling - Martins Ferry, OH	FM	90.7
Weirton - Steubenville	FM	97.7

~Also Streaming in WV at [www.rdo.to/WL0L](http://www.rdo.to/WL0L)~

# Catholic Men of West Virginia, Married or Single, Consider the Vocation of a Deacon



Deacons are ordained to a ministry of service, assisting the bishop and his priests in many areas, especially in the ministry of the liturgy, of the word, and of charity.

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston opened a new Diaconate Formation Program for all Catholic men who will be 35 by June of 2027. Bishop Mark Brennan has made the 2023-2028 Diaconate Formation Program free to the men who apply, and the cost will be covered by the diocese.

Permanent deacons may be married. They must be faithful Catholics. Most work at secular jobs and must be willing to be open to an assignment outside of their parish.



DIocese of WHEELING-CHARLESTON

To apply and for more information, click the link below:

<https://dwc.org/directory-listing/permanent-diaconate-formation-office-of/2275/>

## The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is accepting applications for the next class of permanent deacons.

**Note: Only the application form and the letter of recommendation from your pastor must be submitted prior to April 15.**

Applications may also be obtained by contacting Tina High in the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston at (888) 434-6237 or for the Wheeling area at (304) 233-0880, ext. 271. Completed applications must be sent to the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston: Very Rev. Dennis R. Schuelkens, Jr., V.E. Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, P.O. Box 230, Wheeling, WV 26003.

## ENROLL TODAY

WV Catholic Schools

Empowered  
by knowledge.  
Transformed  
by faith.



Register today

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



*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).