



Faith IN WV

FEBRUARY 1, 2026
DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

Christ's Message of Mercy and Transformation Still Calls to Us Today

And so, it begins - today's Gospel unfolds the first of five vital sermons Christ delivered to us - the broken souls in need of a Savior.

Recognize first, Jesus was sent to restore our relationship with God - to rattle some thinking, recover the lost, and disrupt a very broken mindset so we can turn our focus to love, healing, hope, restoration, and mercy.



Art by Faith Art Creation: www.etsy.com/shop/FAITHARTCREATION

In the days he walked this earth the Sermon on the Mount shared today by Matthew (Chapter 5), Jesus gave a huge wake up call, telling the people who were listening to him that the Kingdom of Heaven is for the lowly, the mourners, the poor in spirit.

Poverty was considered a punishment for sin. Are we still like that? Does our culture have us throw blame on others, jump to conclusions, and be so self-centered that our opinion and mindset are superior to Sacred Scripture and the lessons of the Son of God?

The evil spirits that prowl around this world will continue to spew darkness and distract you from listening to God's word, learning from the prophets, believing in the Gospels. . . . God Almighty embraces all true and sincere believers.

The Sermon on the Mount holds the message Christ's

ministry leads with - our attitudes need adjusting. He gives us a clear description of the character God wants us to embrace. He gives us the path to true happiness - eternally. The key - we must make the choice to be fully alive for the Kingdom of God and make an inner transformation. It's up to us.

Spend time with Scripture - beyond Sundays, when it's read to us.

Matthew hands us the five key sermons:

1. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7): the Beatitudes, the Lord's Prayer, and the true meaning of the Law.
2. The Missionary Discourse (Matthew 10): instructing the apostles on how to preach, live fully united to God, endure persecution while spreading the message of the Kingdom of Heaven, and trusting the Holy Spirit will guide them.
3. The Parables of the Kingdom (Matthew 13): Jesus preaches so we all can understand and apply - such as the Sower, the Mustard Seed, etc.
4. The Discourse on the Church (Matthew 18): Jesus teaches humility, forgiveness, and discipleship - all emphasizing our responsibility to share the Word of God by our actions and words with all ages.
5. The Olivet Discourse (Matthew 23-25): Hard truths - the destruction of the Temple, signs of the end times, and final judgment.

May we open our hearts to Christ's words, allow Him to transform us from within, and live each day fully alive for the Kingdom of Heaven.

Be Blessed and a Blessing

The Beatitudes provide the mindset and roadmap we need on our journey through life—Christ's simple teachings on how to think and live, both blessed and a blessing.

Pull out your Bible and reread what we hear in the Mass (Mathew 5:1-12a). Read as if Jesus is speaking right to you. Listen as He tells us we should not regard power and prestige as blessings, but instead consider being humble, pure, and merciful as gifts to be embraced.



Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult and hate you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.



HONORING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

BLACK CATHOLIC FAITH AND LEGACY IN WEST VIRGINIA

Revisiting a FaithInWV Feature Story Showcasing our 175th Anniversary as a Diocese

As we celebrate Black History Month in February, we are invited to reflect on the many stories of Black resilience, faithful advocates, and community that have shaped both the nation and the Church in our diocese.

The Catholic Church spread across West Virginia's rugged mountains and coal valleys through the dedication of believers who built parishes out of hope, prayer, and perseverance. Among these faithful were Black Catholics whose courage helped the Gospel take root, even in places where they faced exclusion or misunderstanding.

One of the most significant milestones was the founding of St. Peter Claver Mission in Huntington in 1939, the first Black Catholic parish in West Virginia. Black Catholics had attended Mass at St. Joseph Church but were often not fully welcomed. With

compassion and vision, Msgr. John Newcomb, and Bishop John J. Swint helped establish a parish community where Black Catholics could worship with dignity. What began in a modest house quickly grew into a center of faith and education. The Pallottine Missionary Sisters opened classrooms there, serving children of all backgrounds until 1964. Over the decades, devoted priests and lay leaders helped St. Peter Claver thrive as a symbol of inclusion, service, and hope. In 1981, a new church building—largely constructed by parish craftsmen—was dedicated as an “open house” for people of all faiths, reflecting the parish’s welcoming spirit.

Bishop Swint also extended his mission to other Black Catholic communities. In 1938, St. Augustine’s Parish opened in Bristol, Virginia (then within the diocese), and in 1941, Our Lady of Lourdes mission was established in Bluefield in a former Presbyterian church. For 15 years, Our Lady of Lourdes welcomed both Black and White Catholics by the Oblate order of priests, who happily served them. Though these parishes eventually closed after desegregation in 1955, their existence remains an

continue...

HONORING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Black Catholic Voices of Faith and Inspiration for All

In November the Catholic Church honors Black Catholic History Month, and when February rolls around we get to celebrate our nation’s Black History Month. As we do, take time to not only learn from our history, but also to intentionally broaden our diversity in African American Catholics making a difference now. There are many inspiring Black Catholic voices on social media today who offer faith-filled encouragement, real-life inspiration, cultural richness, and strong Catholic teaching for both younger and older Catholics.

Here are several Catholic evangelizers and ministries to check out:



Fr. Josh Johnson - Catholic priest, preacher, and host of Ask Fr. Josh through Ascension Press.

Official Profile (with links to his podcasts):
[ASCENSIONPRESS.COM/PAGES/PERSON/FR-JOSH-JOHNSON](https://ascensionpress.com/pages/person/fr-josh-johnson)

Instagram: [WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/FRJOSHJOHNSON/](https://www.instagram.com/frjoshjohnson/)

continue...



important witness to the Church's early steps toward unity.

Another inspiring legacy is Blessed Martin School in Wheeling, opened in 1942 after Black families pleaded for Catholic education for their children. Operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph, the school grew from a converted house into an accredited high school offering strong academics and spiritual formation. Blessed Martin became a cultural and community hub, hosting athletics, the first Girl Scout troop for Black girls in Wheeling, and a deep sense of pride and belonging. When schools desegregated in 1955, its students integrated into other schools, carrying forward the values of faith,

dignity, and perseverance.

The story of Black Catholics in West Virginia is not about large numbers, but about immense heart. These parishioners, parents, priests, sisters, and students built sacred spaces when they were told they did not belong. Their faith overcame barriers, strengthened communities, and helped shape the diocese we know today.

This Black History Month, we honor these unsung heroes whose devotion reminds us that the Church's foundation is one of love that transcends race, faith that conquers hardship, and unity that reflects the heart of Christ.



Sr. Josephine Garrett, CSFN - Religious Sister, licensed counselor, and national Catholic speaker focused on healing, identity, and hope in Christ.

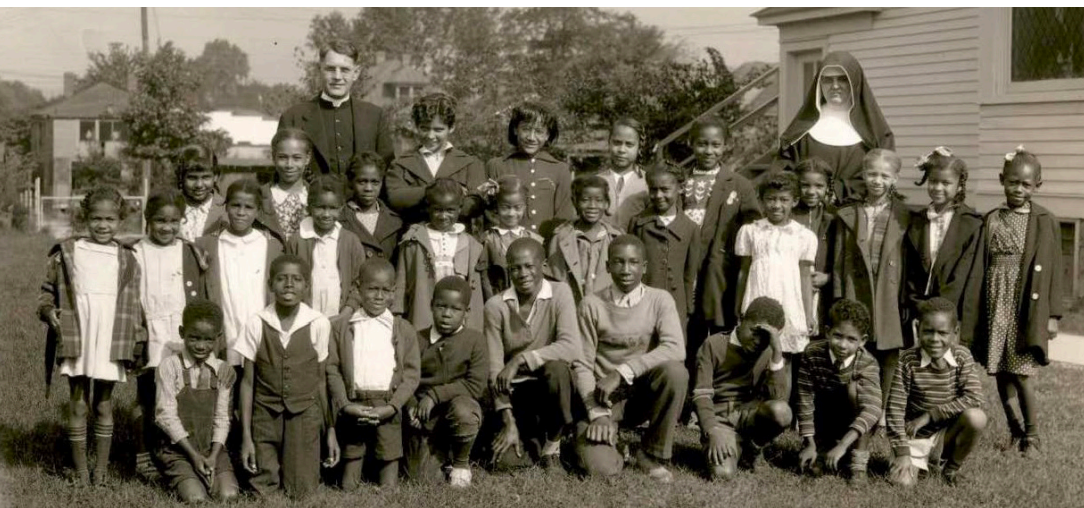
Official Profile: [ASCENSIONPRESS.COM/PAGES/PERSON/SR-JOSEPHINE-GARRETT-CSFN](https://ascensionpress.com/pages/person/sr-josephine-garrett-csfn)

Instagram: [WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/SR_JOSEPHINE/](https://www.instagram.com/sr_josephine/)



Immaculée Ilibagiza - International speaker, author, and witness of forgiveness and faith.

Official Website with social media links: [WWW.IMMACULEE.COM](http://www.immaculee.com)



BLACK CATHOLIC MESSENGER

Black Catholic Messenger - A leading Catholic media apostolate uplifting Black Catholic news, culture, spirituality, and history.

Official Website: [WWW.BLACKCATHOLICMESSENGER.ORG/](http://www.blackcatholicmessenger.org/)

Social Media Hub: linktr.ee/blackcatholicmessenger

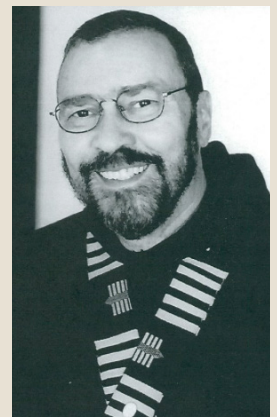
NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

FOR THE AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY FOUNDED IN 1989
BY THE LATE FR. JAMES "JIM" GOODE, OFM

Let us recite the prayer that Fr. Jim wrote:

God of mercy and love we place our African American and African Families before You today. May we be proud of our history and never forget those who paid a great price for our liberation. Bless us one by one and keep our hearts and minds fixed on higher ground. Help us to live for you and not for ourselves, and may we cherish and proclaim the gift of life. Bless our parents, guardians and grandparents, relatives and friends. Give us the amazing grace to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Help us, as Your children, to live in such a way that the beauty and greatness of authentic love is reflected in all that we say and do. Give a healing anointing to those less fortunate, especially the motherless, the fatherless, the broken, the sick and the lonely. Bless our departed family members and friends. May they be led into the light of Your dwelling place where we will never grow old, where we will share the fullness of redemption and shout the victory, for all eternity. This we ask in the Precious Name of Jesus, our Savior and Blessed Assurance. Amen.

Holy Mary, Mother of Our Families, pray for us.



Living in the Light

As we enter the first week of February, the Church offers Catholic families a beautiful journey through sacred moments of faith, courage, and hope. From the light of Candlemas to the witness of heroic saints, these days remind us that Christ is present in every season of life—especially in moments of joy, sacrifice, and perseverance.

The Presentation of the Lord — Christ, Our Light



THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

On February 2, we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, honoring the day Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to the temple in humility and obedience to Jewish law.

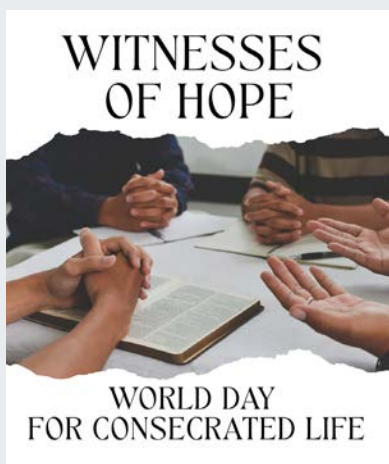
As required for every firstborn son, Jesus was presented to the Lord forty days after His birth. In the temple, the Holy Family encountered two holy witnesses: the elder Simeon and the prophetess Anna, who had waited their entire lives for the promised Messiah.

Simeon, filled with the Holy Spirit, recognized the Savior immediately. Holding Jesus in his arms, he proclaimed with joy:

“My eyes have seen your salvation. . . a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel (Luke 2:29–32).”

This moment has inspired the celebration of Candlemas for the Church – a reminder for us that Christ is our Light, guiding us through our joys and struggles. Have your parish priest bless the candles you will use in your home this year, lighting them to send up prayers and calling upon Jesus to bring us out of darkness. (Art by Shari Van Vranken of CatholicPaperGoods: WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/CATHOLICPAPERGOODS)

World Day for Consecrated Life — Witnesses of Hope



Also on February 2, the Church observes the World Day for Consecrated Life, established by Pope St. John Paul II in 1997. This day invites us to pray for and celebrate men and women who give their lives entirely to Christ through religious vows and service.

In our Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, we are blessed by the presence of many sisters, brothers, and consecrated individuals serving through education, care for the poor and elderly, prayer, and ministry.

We are blessed in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston with so many consecrated religious serving in our communities.

Just as the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord and Candlemas remind us of the light of Christ in the world, let us honor and pray for the men and women who

sincerely reflect Christ's Light as brothers, sisters, consecrated virgins, hermits, and members of apostolic life and secular institutes.

May they continue to be inspired by Jesus Christ and respond generously to God's gift of their vocation. They lead us to Heaven through their service, example, and prayers!

Show your gratitude. Be dedicated in your prayers for vocations to consecrated life. Pray for our families to be stronger in our faith. Nurture, encourage, and support religious vocations.

For more information about Consecrated Life and the call to religious life contact the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston's Office of the Delegate for Consecrated Life - Sister Martha Gomez at MGOMEZ@DWC.ORG.

Healing and Mission



On February 3, we honor St. Blaise, bishop, and martyr, known as a healer and intercessor for those suffering from illnesses of the throat. Many Catholics receive the traditional Blessing of Throats, praying:

“May God deliver you from ailments of the throat and from every other evil. . .”

That same day, we remember St. Ansgar, a monk and missionary who overcame youthful struggles to become a great evangelizer of northern Europe. Through visions and hardships, he devoted his life to spreading Christ’s Gospel despite threats and opposition.



His story reminds families that God can transform even the most restless hearts into instruments of holiness.

Courage in Suffering



On February 5, we honor St. Agatha, a young martyr remembered in the Eucharistic Prayer of the Mass. She was a woman of breathtaking beauty but rejected all men for she considered herself a bride of Christ. Church legend tells us she was tortured and mutilated for this love of Christ and His teachings; however, she was miraculously healed. She prayed that God would have mercy on her and as she slept in her prison cell her soul was received in heaven. She died a martyr around the age of 22. Her story teaches us courage, commitment, and perseverance. When we are assaulted, or amid life’s worst trials, St. Agatha reminds us to keep our faith for God is always with us and His love will lead us to everlasting joy in heaven. (Art by Jessica Huber of Sanctified Souls: WWW.ETSY.COM/SHOP/SANCTIFIEDSOULS)

Faith That Cannot Be Silenced



On February 6, we reflect on Saint Paul Miki and his Companions, martyrs of Nagasaki, Japan. Paul Miki, a Jesuit brother, preached Christianity in his homeland during a time of persecution.

At only 33 years old, he and 25 others—priests, laypeople, children, artisans, servants, doctors, and catechists—were crucified for refusing to deny Christ.

From the cross, St. Paul Miki offered forgiveness: “I do not hate them. . . I hope my blood will fall. . . as a fruitful rain.”

Two centuries later, missionaries returned to find thousands of Christians still alive in Nagasaki—proof that the faith of martyrs always bears fruit. (Art by Bernadette Meyer of Meyer Market Designs: www.etsy.com/shop/MeyerMarketDesigns).



THE Cathedral of St. Joseph

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to the renovation work being done in the Cathedral of St. Joseph, beginning Monday, February 2, 2026, the 12:05 daily Mass (M-F) will be celebrated at St. Alphonsus Parish, 2111 Market Street, Wheeling, WV 26003. This will include Friday 11:00 AM Confessions. Also beginning Saturday, February 7, 2026, the 9:00 a.m. Mass and 11:00 a.m. confessions will also move to St. Alphonsus Parish.

Saturday 6:00 p.m., Sunday 7:30 and 10:30 a.m. Masses will continue at the Cathedral of St. Joseph. This will continue until further notice.



Who is my Neighbor?

Catholic Social Teaching & Immigration



February 5, 2026

6:30 - 8:00 pm | St. Michael Parish Angelus Center

Join us for a synodal style listening session concerning the most recent teachings of the Catholic Church, from Pope Leo XIV, to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, to our own Bishop Mark Brennan, growing in hospitality, solidarity, and compassion with the many refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, and immigrants around the world.

Featuring

Very Reverend Fr. Carlos Melocoton Pastor, St. Michael Parish

Genevieve Volpe

Reverend Fr. Lusius (Luis) Mite Parochial Vicar, SVD,
(Society of Divine Word Missionaries)

Lou Volpe ~ Facilitator

Joined by the Most Reverend Bishop Mark E. Brennan

DIOCESE OF WHEELING-CHARLESTON

2026 Men's Discernment Retreat

WWW.WVPRIESTS.ORG

FEBRUARY 13 - FEBRUARY 15

PRIESTFIELD PASTORAL CENTER
4030 MIDDLEWAY PIKE, KEARNEYSVILLE, WV 25430

- OPEN TO MEN 18 AND OLDER
- PRAY, SHARE MEALS, AND MEET WITH CURRENT WV SEMINARIANS
- HEAR TALKS ABOUT PRIESTLY LIFE AND DISCERNMENT

Register
Today!



FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Zephania 2:3, 3:12-13

Seek justice and humility and seek the Lord.

Responsorial: Psalm 146

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, the kingdom of heaven is theirs!"

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

God chose us - the weak and lowly to shame the wise for Christ who is our strength and glory.

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12a

Jesus teaches the Beatitudes - blessed are the lowly, the sorrowing, the poor in spirit.

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL SCRIPTURE TEXT](#)

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that we may give witness to the Beatitudes and lead more people to truly value what God blesses, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For leaders and all who are entrusted to enforce the laws of peace, that they seek the justice, peace, and righteousness as Christ taught, leading them to achieve more of each in the community, the nation, and the world, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all considering a vocation to the priesthood, diaconate, and consecrated life, that they may realize the spiritual reward of giving their lives to God and His Church, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all who must work in these brutal winter conditions or venture out in them in order to keep us safe and secure, let us pray to the Lord. . .

Lord hear our prayer



WV CATHOLIC RADIO BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOU

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

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

Radio Luz de Vida streaming at www.rdo.to/WLOL2

ENROLL TODAY

WV Catholic Schools

*Empowered
by knowledge.
Transformed
by faith.*



Register today

wvcatholicschools.org



Liturgy of the Hours LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!

EBREVIARY.COM LITURGY OF THE HOURS

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



MASS ONLINE

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