



— ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI —
**CATHOLIC SOCIAL
ACTION OFFICE**



LOVE IN ACTION

A Principle of Beacons of Light

MAY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Easter Season

May - the end of the school year and the beginning of summer - has arrived. The showers continue, and thankfully many of the beautiful flowers and beginnings of crops are growing.

April was quite an eventful month. We opened with the installation of [Archbishop Casey](#) - it was a fantastic celebration, and we are so blessed to have him joining our archdiocese. We completed our Lenten journey and had a joyful Easter. The next day, we learned of the passing of our leader in faith, Pope Francis. He was a wonderful shepherd, and we pray that his commitment to our Church, the poor, all of God's creation, and justice will continue to inspire us for many years to come.

We pray for Pope Francis as he now rests in heavenly peace, and we pray for our Church and her leadership as we discern our next pope.

And amidst all of this, we continued to face myriad challenges, especially for those who are seeking safety and a better life for themselves and their families (i.e. immigrants, refugees, and asylees) and the support of our sisters and brothers around the globe. With regards to the latter, please remember that the **annual CRS collection** is THIS WEEKEND (5/3-4) and see below for an action alert from CRS.

We're also fully immersed in our events connected to the [Eucharistic Year of Mission](#). Notably, on Sunday, 6/1, 10:00am - the Feast of the Ascension - Archbishop Casey will celebrate mass at St. Peter in Chains. We're hoping to have representatives from all of our families of parishes so that we can make this a truly archdiocesan-wide event. Check the link above for more information, and contact [Jill](#) if you have any questions.

This year we celebrate the 10th anniversary of *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis' landmark encyclical on caring for our common home. Check out a [brief article](#) we wrote to learn more, and - if you're reading this on Thursday 5/1 - we invite you to join us at Moeller High tonight at 7:00pm to celebrate our four new Laudato Si' Communities.

We humbly ask that you continue to pray for us. 2025 continues to be a challenging year, and your prayers - and engagement! - will make our success possible. God help us!

If there's anything that we can do to support the work happening in your community, please let us know. We're trying to be more present to families of parishes, especially during the Beacons of Light process, and we'd love to (re)connect with you and work to build up God's kingdom of peace, justice, and kinship in your corner of the kingdom.

We will continue to send out Action Alerts encouraging everyone to bring their voice and power to bear on important issues.

We wish you a wonderful rest of the Easter season, and - as always - we look forward to seeing you soon as we continue to stand up for justice, solidarity, and equity.

Peace and all good,
Tammie, Sr. Christine, Jill, Glen, & Andrew



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On May 3rd and 4th, the Catholic Relief Services Collection will be taken up across our archdiocese. Your generous support from the pulpit, in your bulletin, newsletter, and social media as well as through posters throughout your facilities contributes to the collection's success and to an enhanced global solidarity among your parishioners.

You can find resources on the Archdiocesan page for Catholic Relief Services (<https://resources.catholicaoc.org/offices/catholic-social-action/task-forces-committees/crs>) - including the [letter from Archbishop Casey](#) - and the National Collections Office of the USCCB will send you promotional information as well. Email Jillian Foster jfoster@catholicaoc.org with questions.

When you have finished, please submit your collection to the archdiocese: Finance Office, 100 E. Eighth St., Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. Please note on the memo line that the money is for the Catholic Relief Services Collection.

Separately, if your parish needs a different amount of collection supplies for next year's collection, please email the CRS Program Coordinator Glen Glenn at gglenn@catholicaoc.org.

There is an urgent Action Alert from CRS on preventing the rescission of already appropriated funds for humanitarian aid. A rescissions package can be introduced any day, and we want our congressmen to be prepared and know what we think before it does! Take a look at the Action Sheet link below for more information on the Remissions Package and Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations.

ACTION LINK

Rescissions Requests

We expect that the administration will soon request that Congress rescind previously appropriated funds for humanitarian aid and development programming. These funds are lawfully appropriated by Congress to support vulnerable families and

communities. The rescissions package is the administration's way of formally requesting that these previously allocated funds be canceled.

In the short term, the rescissions package will immediately freeze implicated funds and restricted any changes to projects to these funds for a 45-day review period. While projects can continue to operate during this time, the restrictions could severely impact CRS' ability to ensure the continuity of lifesaving programs.

In the long term, if approved by Congress, these rescissions would reduce the overall funds available for lifesaving and poverty-reducing programs, undermining decades of work to establish the U.S. as a leader in serving the global community and fostering a more peaceful and prosperous world.



Stories from the Heart: *Voices of Refugees and Immigrants*



Catholic Charities of Southwestern Ohio has started the Voices Project to tell the stories of refugees and immigrants who have settled in our community. Here are a few examples of what participants have said after meeting our new neighbors and listening to their actual stories:

- "I was riveted to every word. He opened my eyes to the humanity of refugees and immigrants."
- "Very touching, so informative."
- "Healing for the storyteller; understanding and connection for the listener. He was so captivating."
- "A personal experience makes the story much more impactful. His story was so personal, not abstract information. It was a privilege to be here to hear it."

If you want to get beyond the media spin and shrill politics, this interactive presentation is for you and your congregation or organization. If you want to really understand the ordeal refugees and immigrants go through and appreciate the character of the people who are coming to us, scheduling this 90-minute experience will be life-changing and inspirational for participants. To learn more or schedule a meeting, please contact Paul Bergman at paulbergman@live.com.

"I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me." – Matthew 25:35





Festival of Faiths Returns!

The 8th annual Cincinnati Festival of Faiths will be held on Sunday, June 22 from 12:30 – 4:30 p.m. at the Cintas Center. The festival is a celebration of all faiths where we can have fun and learn from one another. In the week following the festival, there will be online programming, and on Sunday, 6/29, there will be a Gathering for Good at The Grail.

For more information, check out www.equasion.org/about-the-festival-2/.



Honoring Sr. Dorothy Stang and *Laudato Si'*

Sr. Dorothy Stang, SNDdN, was a tireless advocate for the poor and the earth. She spent much of her life caring for marginalized people and the Amazon forest, and - 20 years ago - she was rewarded for her work by being assassinated on the way to a community meeting.

Laudato Si' - On Care for our Common Home was the first of two powerful documents penned by Pope Francis to encourage Catholics and all people to have a great focus on the needs of the earth and all of God's creation. This year we celebrate the 10th anniversary of its release.

On Saturday, June 14, at 4:00pm at Our Lady of the Valley (Reading) and St. Rita (Dayton), we will gather to celebrate these anniversaries. We're holding masses in both locations in the hopes that we can gather as many people as possible to pray together for the blessings received and the strength to carry on this work.

Look for more details in our June newsletter, but - for now - add these dates to your calendar. We'd love to see you then!



SAVE THE DATE!

Laudato Si' Conference

Creating a Hope-filled Future Together

10.11.2025

9:00AM - 4:30PM

Xavier University, Cincinnati



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Way of the Cross for Justice

On Good Friday, our annual ecumenical Way of the Cross for Justice occurred on the riverfront in downtown Cincinnati. A crowd of over 200 people came together to remember the suffering of Christ and connect it to the suffering of our immigrant and refugee sisters and brothers. Over the two-hour gathering, we learned how these folks are affected in their housing and healthcare, how climate change is driving migration, what sanctuary can mean, and what it means to be a refugee in Cincinnati. It was a powerful and unifying gathering, and we are so thankful to all who joined us.

If you're interested in learning (and doing!) more, please check out [Ignite Peace](#), the Cincinnati Sanctuary Congregation Coalition, the [Catholic Climate Covenant](#), the [Greater Cincinnati Homeless Coalition](#), and [Refugee Resettlement](#) (Catholic Charities).



Planting Season Prayer Spring 2025

As planting season begins this year, we are acutely aware of the many challenges facing farmers in our archdiocese, state, nation, and world. Droughts, floods, fires, severe weather, and recent public policy decisions around immigration and tariffs are making for an uncertain future within the agriculture communities at home and worldwide. In particular, the northwest counties in our archdiocese are experiencing devastating results of the avian flu outbreak as poultry producers are forced to destroy millions of birds. The result of these issues will have lasting effects on the personal and economic wellbeing of farmers, farmworkers, and consumers.

With this in mind, we ask that all may pray for those affected by these serious challenges.

Creator God, we come to you in a time of great need for our rural community. We ask that you fill us with renewed hope in you and trust in one another as we face the challenges so evident to us this year. Comfort the hearts of those who are distressed and concerned by actions and events beyond their control. Bless the families of parishes that together pastors and parishioners may be communities of Love in Action, carrying words of comfort, healing, and hope as visible signs of the continuing care of the Creator for the lives of all. May the Holy Spirit inspire leaders of nations to work toward policies that are just in support of family farms, farmworkers, good stewardship of all creation, nutrition, and anti-hunger efforts that there may be food for all. We ask this in the name of Jesus who fed the multitudes and shared our very flesh and blood to teach us the Law of Love, through his death and resurrection. Amen.



CRT and DEI and WOKE - OH MY!

Bellarmino Chapel
May 8th @ 7 pm



Melanie Moon
Community activist
and Creator of the
Race and the City
Project

In Coordination
With
Bellarmino Chapel's
Dismantling Racism
Team

[Livestream Here:](#)



Bellarmino Chapel
Social Mission

CRT AND DEI AND WOKE - OH MY!

Melanie Moon, community activist, creator of the Race and the City Project, and member of Bellarmino Chapel's Dismantling Racism Team, presents *CRT and DEI and Woke - OH MY!* Melanie looks at DEI through Hebrew scripture, and conducts a close examination of DEI, CRT, and "Woke," shining light and dispelling fear in our modern times. The presentation takes place in **Bellarmino Chapel, May 8th at 7pm.**

The presentation will also be livestreamed, [available here.](#)



DEEPENING COMMUNION IN A POLARIZED WORLD

November 4-6, 2025 | St. Meinrad, IN

Designed for Catholic theologians, students of theology, and Church leaders, this convocation brings together recognized leaders from differing perspectives to model healthy discourse, seek common ground, and make recommendations for how to build unity in a deeply divided Church.

[Click here for more information.](#)



Job Description: Executive Director

Position Title: Executive Director (Part-Time) | **Organization:** EquaSion
Location: Cincinnati, Ohio | **Reports To:** Board of Directors

About EquaSion: EquaSion is a nonpartisan civic organization founded upon interfaith dialogue. We work to develop educational and community service programming to foster greater understanding, respect, compassion, inclusion, and engagement for all people and faith communities in Greater Cincinnati and beyond. EquaSion's signature program is the Festival of Faiths, a celebration of the religious diversity in our community.

Position Summary: EquaSion is seeking a dynamic and visionary leader to serve as its part-time Executive Director. The Executive Director will be responsible for overseeing the

administration, programs, and strategic planning of the organization. Key duties include program development and management, fundraising and financial management, marketing, and community engagement and advocacy, and volunteer management. The position reports directly to the Board of Directors.

For More information: [click here](#)

Application Process: Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to Michael Hawkins, Board President, hawkeyeuk47@gmail.com.



A Vision for Love in Action: Becoming Communities of Salt & Light

Is your family of parishes ready to take your visioning for Love in Action to the next level? The Department of Life, Dignity, & Charity is offering a 3-part series **Love in Action** opportunity to help your parish family Love in Action team understand why this vision is important, how this vision has developed in the history of the Church, what are the larger and small local organizations with which your parish can cooperate, and how to build on what you already have going on in your parishes (along with your resources of time, talent, and treasure) to create a growing vision of Love in Action in your parish family. This series is only offered on the deanery level so we invite you to ask your pastor if he is interested in bringing this series to your deanery and how he might work with the other pastors and families in his deanery to bring it to fruition. If you would like more information about the series, please contact Mary Anne Bressler at mbressler@ccswoh.org.



Mass of Celebration

A Year of Mission and Love in Action

Let us celebrate the wonderful service and care our parishes give to their communities. All are welcome to attend this Mass of Celebration for the Eucharistic Year of Mission as we recognize all the work that has been done, and all the work yet to come.

Cathedral Basilica of St. Peter in Chains
Sunday, June 1st at 10:00am



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Eucharistic Year of Mission

Inspired by the Christ in the Eucharist and following the Eucharistic Congress, we are celebrating a Eucharistic Year of Mission. To showcase the amazing work of

Catholics in the Archdiocese, we launched a webpage, www.catholicaoc.org/yearofmission, to promote several events, programs, and stories of mission and action. For this Year of Mission, we are:

- Celebrating a Year of Mission Mass, an occasion for a plenary indulgence for the Jubilee Year of Hope, on Ascension Sunday, June 1st
- Relaunching the 2015 Food for All Campaign, which includes a year-long food drive and letter-writing opportunity to promote the Farm Bill
- Promoting Parish Ministry Fairs and the Love in Action principle of Beacons of Light
- Year of Mission stories in the *Catholic Telegraph*

Please visit www.catholicaoc.org/yearofmission for more details and information. Contact Jillian Foster at jfoster@catholicaoc.org with any questions.



Advocacy Opportunities



UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

Tell Congress to Prioritize Families and Protect Safety Net Programs in Budget Reconciliation

“Those services which society offers to its citizens are not a type of alms, but rather a genuine ‘social debt’ with respect to the institution of the family, which is foundational and which contributes to the common good.” – Pope Francis

Congress is working on a budget deal called a reconciliation package. The package will include tax policies and other economic policies that affect everyone, including families. Later today, the House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on a budget resolution that could set the reconciliation process in motion. Deep cuts are being proposed to Medicaid, SNAP, and other important social safety net programs as Members of Congress debate how to pay for the package.

Please urge your Representative to oppose cuts to SNAP and Medicaid, keeping in mind how budget and tax decisions will impact families, especially the most vulnerable families, and to use budget reconciliation to support the needs of children and families experiencing poverty. Essential safety net programs that

serve those most in need, including SNAP and Medicaid, must be protected. Changes to these programs that result in the loss of access to life-affirming healthcare and proper nutrition, including for millions of children, are unacceptable. Legislators must avoid creating a situation in which cuts to programs for the poor will be made to seem inevitable and necessary, whether in the short- or longer-term, in order to make tax cuts possible.

We encourage you to add your own personal story about how families are struggling in your community and why ensuring they have the support they need to thrive is important to you.

You could also share why any the following policies that could be included in a reconciliation package are important to you:

- *Strengthening the Child Tax Credit so its benefits are targeted to the poorest children and continuing to provide the credit to all children with a SSN, regardless of their parents' immigration status.*
- *Protecting Medicaid and SNAP for families and individuals in need.*
- *Ensuring taxes raise adequate revenue for programs that meet the needs of the poor.*
- *Expanding the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC), Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), and Adoption Tax Credit and ensuring their benefits better serve low-income families and individuals.*
- *Incentivizing and assisting charitable giving at all income levels through the charitable tax deduction.*

You can read the recent USCCB letter advocating to prioritize vulnerable families in the budget reconciliation process [here](#).

Take Action Now

Proposed Legislation to Prohibit State-Funded Death: HB 72 & SB 134

Legislation has been introduced into both Ohio chambers which would prohibit state funding of intentional termination of human life at any stage and circumstance in Ohio. This first-of-its-kind legislation reinforces current law banning state funding for abortion, abolishes the death penalty, and expands protections against assisted suicide by linking these prohibitions together in Ohio Revised Code.

Click the bill numbers below for summaries and status updates on each bill:

- **House Bill 72:** sponsored by [Representative Adam Mathews](#) (R-Lebanon) and [Representative Jean Schmidt](#) (R-Loveland)

- **Senate Bill 134**: sponsored by [Minority Leader Nickie Antonio](#) (D-Lakewood) and [Senator Steve Huffman](#) (R-Tipp City)

Click [here](#) to read the letter from the OH bishops to all OH legislators advocating for support for these bills.

Reach out to your legislators and encourage them to support these bills!

Prioritize Lifesaving Aid

Tell Congress to Protect International Assistance

Millions of vulnerable people worldwide, including women and children, have been impacted by the disruption of international humanitarian and development assistance by the administration. Demand that your elected officials oppose further reductions of previously appropriated funds for lifesaving humanitarian aid and maintain current funding levels for poverty-reducing international assistance in fiscal year 2026 appropriations.

Support Our Sisters and Brothers World-wide

Tell Congress to Protect International Assistance

Urge Congress to ensure the highest funding levels possible for hunger-reducing international humanitarian and development assistance in the fiscal year 2025 budget.

Help Communities Affected by Climate Change

Urge Congress to support the Green Climate Fund and Development Assistance.

Urge Congress to address the impact of climate change by providing robust funding for poverty-reducing international assistance programs in the fiscal year 2024 budget, especially for the Green Climate Fund and Development Assistance.

Protect the Persecuted

Ask your members of Congress to lift up their voice in support of upholding our nation's bipartisan legacy of refugee resettlement.

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP)—communicates the importance of responding to the needs of those forced to flee their homes because they are persecuted on the basis of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

The Reception & Placement (R&P) Program provides crucial assistance to refugees and Afghan special immigrant visa holders during their first three months in the United States to support their successful integration and help them to achieve self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. [Tell Congress to immediately resume these programs.](#)

Protect Dreamers and Mixed Status Families

Dreamers have made critical contributions to our communities and our nation. For most, the United States is the only home they know.

[Urge Congress](#) to support legislation that will provide Dreamers, especially DACA recipients and those who are part of mixed-status families, with access to permanent legal status and a pathway to citizenship.

Protect at-risk Pregnant Moms and babies Abroad

The lives of he lives of thousands of pregnant women and their children face a new risk from starvation and lack of basic health services.

[Ask Congress](#) to ensure that the promised, lifesaving nutrition and basic health assistance are able to reach vulnerable young mothers and babies.

Prioritize Families and Protect Safety Net Programs in Budget Reconciliation

Oppose cuts to Medicaid and SNAP, and use Budget Reconciliation Process to Support the Needs of Children and Families Experiencing Poverty.

[Act Now!](#)



From the Respect Life Office

Bob Wurzelbacher, Director of Respect Life Ministries

Cross the Bridge for Life

Please join our newly installed Archbishop Casey, Bishop Iffert of Covington, and thousands more for the 20th Anniversary celebration of our Cross the Bridge for Life event on Sunday, June 1, 2025! Cross the Bridge for Life is a family-friendly celebration of life and life-affirming agencies in our local area. It is a collaborative

effort between the Diocese of Covington, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and hard-working volunteers, and is co-sponsored by many life-affirming organizations and businesses from Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky.

Festivities begin at 1PM with live music, **free** t-shirts, and **free** face-painting and balloons for kids of all ages. A brief program of positive speakers, including Archbishop Casey, begins at 2PM, followed by a kid-friendly walk to and across the Purple People Bridge and back. The walk begins at the Festival Park in Newport, KY, just west of the Purple People Bridge. Local American Heritage Girls troops, representatives from the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Archbishop Casey and Bishop Iffert of Covington and many priests and seminarians, will lead thousands more as they head their way to cross the Purple People Bridge into Cincinnati and back again. Many of our local pregnancy care centers and other life-supporting organizations will be present to offer information about their services as well. With everything in the news about abortion pill access and the passing of the amendment to Ohio's constitution to enshrine access to abortion for all 9 months of pregnancy, we need to show our region that our message is one of love, joy and empowering women. There will also be free hot-dogs and water, and other food available for purchase.

Mark your calendars for June 1 and bring the whole family to help us celebrate life in 2025! For more information see the webpage at CROSSTHEBRIDGEFORLIFE.ORG.



From the Office for Persons with Disabilities

Lisa Averion, Associate Director of Office for Persons with Disabilities

Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and our Mental Wellness Ministry Teams are hosting community prayer services, Masses, and fellowship. The Mental Wellness Ministry teams at St. Gregory the Great and Our Lady of Hope Families of Parishes, kicked off their ministries in May 2024 after forming teams and completing required training. The teams have been offering support groups and events and are accompanying our brothers and sisters with mental illness and caregivers back to the table. This ministry is building awareness, breaking the stigma, and educating our communities.

In 2025, Mother of God, St. Michael, and St. Gabriel the Archangel Families of Parishes began the process of starting Mental Wellness Ministry. After they complete their training, they too will provide opportunities for their Families of Parishes to gather and accompany their community. St. John Paul II said, "Whoever suffers from mental illness 'always' bears God's image and likeness in himself, as does every human being. In addition, he 'always' has the inalienable right not only to be considered as an image of God and therefore as a person, but also to be treated as such."

Please plan to attend one of these events:

Our Lady of Hope Family of Parishes: St. Francis de Sales, Lebanon St. Philip, Morrow

- May 9 — Rosary: St. Francis de Sales, Pastoral Center, St. Luke Rm. 9:00 AM
- May 10 — (MWM walk) Miller Ecological Park 9:00 AM
- May 18 — MWM Rosary Walk St. Philip the Apostle 12:30 PM
- May 20 — Spiritual Support Group, St. Francis de Sales, St. Luke Room 7:00 PM
- May 25 — St. Dymphna Mass, St. Francis de Sales, 11:00 AM

St. Gregory the Great Family of Parishes: Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cincinnati, Guardian Angels, and St. John Fisher, Newtown

- Thursday, May 15 — St. Dymphna Mass and reception, 7:00 PM Saint John Fisher
- Saturday, May 31 — Wellness Walk, 9:00 AM (location tba)



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