



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



LOVE IN ACTION

A Principle of Beacons of Light

MAY 2026 NEWSLETTER

EASTER SEASON CONTINUES

We hope everyone is having a wonderful Easter and enjoying the (mostly) warmer weather. It's wonderful to see the flowers blooming, our vegetable seeds sprouting, and the animals coming back out. We're also excited to celebrate the mothers in our lives and the completion of another school year.

Alongside these beautiful and exciting things, our world continues to struggle, especially with the unjust immigration practices here in our country, the devastation of war in the Middle East and beyond, and the ravages of hunger that know no boundaries. We pray that God continues to give us strength, courage, and hope, guiding us to continue our work honoring and protecting human dignity and all of God's creation.

This month we host the second event in our series on the [Saintly Seven](#) - the seven African American candidates for sainthood. We've put a lot of work into this, and we'd love to have your help spreading the word. All sessions are in person as well as livestreamed. The second session is Saturday, May 30, at 10:00am at the [Province House for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur](#). See below for more information.

As you know, it's another big election year. To support our parishes, schools, and Catholic communities, we've updated the [iVoteCatholic website](#). We hosted our first re-introduction webinar on 4/28, and there's another one on Thursday, May 7. Details are below!

On Wed. 5/6, we're hosting the third presentation of our series on economic justice and the rights of workers - Faith & Labor. See below for more information.

Thanks in advance for your prayers and support!

We humbly ask that you continue to pray for us. 2026 will continue 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 joyful Easter season, a wonderful Mother's Day, and - as always - we look forward to seeing you soon as we continue to stand up for justice, solidarity, and peace.

Peace and all good,
Catholic Social Action team



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The Saintry Seven



Back row: Venerable Pierre Toussaint, Venerable Henriette DeLille, Father Augustus Tolton, Servant of God Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange

Front Row: Friar Martin De Porres Maria Ward, Servant of God Julia Greeley, Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman

Celebrating the Seven African American Candidates for Sainthood

Were you aware that there are seven African American candidates for canonization? The lives of these holy men and women span the nearly the entire existence of the United States as an independent nation—from Pierre Toussaint, born in 1766, through Thea Bowman, who died in 1990. It will be a truly thrilling day when we celebrate the canonization of the first African American saint!

To grow awareness of the lives of the Saintry Seven over the coming months, the Archdiocesan Anti-Racism Task Force is organizing seven sessions throughout the Archdiocese to talk about their lives, their causes for canonization, and the experience of Black Catholics in this nation. The sessions will be in-person and live-streamed so that everyone can join in the conversation and reflection. In conjunction with the presentations, each candidate will be featured in the Catholic Telegraph as well. The series will conclude in November, Black Catholic History Month—reminding us that a single month is not sufficient to honor the contributions that Black Catholics have made to our Church and our nation since before its founding.

For information on the series, please check out this [webpage](#). It will be updated regularly as information becomes available.

- The second presentation will be on Venerable Mother Mary Lange on Saturday, May 30, at the [Province House for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur](#). You can [download the flyer](#) here (and see it below). Please share!
- The third presentation will be on Venerable Fr. Augustus Tolton on Monday, June 29, at [St. Andrew \(Milford\)](#) at 7:00pm.
- The fourth presentation will be on Servant of God Sr. Thea Bowman on Tuesday, July 7, at [Salem Heights, home of the Sisters of the Precious Blood](#).

All are welcome to join, and you can attend one or as many as you're able.

THE SAINTLY SEVEN

Black Candidates for Sainthood



VENERABLE MOTHER MARY LANGE

Saturday, May 30, 10:00-11:30am
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur
Province House
699 E Columbia Ave., Cincinnati 45215

RSVP Here



or join the Zoom!



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Contact Andrew Musgrave for more information
amusgrave@catholicaoc.org | (513) 263-6691

<https://zoom.us/j/91370876545>



iVoteCatholic

We again find ourselves in an election year where the country is deeply divided and unable to find common ground, and neither party (nor any candidate) fully represents our Catholic commitment to life and dignity.

Thankfully, we don't have to rely on a party platform to tell us how to vote; in fact, we aren't called to vote Democrat or Republican. We are called to vote with our morals, our faith; we are called to vote **Catholic**, and the archdiocese has a resource to help you do that: iVoteCatholic.org. On this website, you'll find information about key issues – the life and dignity of the human person, care for creation, love for people who are poor and vulnerable, etc. – as well as resources to use in liturgies, meetings, classrooms, and homes.

Check out [iVoteCatholic](http://iVoteCatholic.org) and help yourself and your community face the coming election with faith, compassion, and a commitment to loving your neighbors.

If you'd like to learn more about iVoteCatholic - especially if you're a parish or school leader - please join us for a short virtual presentation. We'll explore the resources on the website, answering questions, and take recommendations for how to make iVoteCatholic more helpful. (This is a repeat of the webinar hosted on 4/28.)

Thurs, May 7, 1:30-2:45pm

[Register Here](#)



Praying in Solidarity

The Archdiocesan Immigration Task Force has developed a new initiative, an effort to peacefully and prayerfully stand in solidarity with our immigrant and refugee sisters and brothers.

We are encouraging people to go and pray - either outside of the Butler County Jail (where ICE detainees are being held) or the ICE office in Blue Ash.

You can find all of the information on this webpage - **Praying in Solidarity** - but, simply put, this is an opportunity for groups - no matter the size, faith tradition, or frequency - to stand in witness to and solidarity with those who are being affected by the "climate of fear and anxiety around questions of profiling and immigration enforcement." *US Bishops Special Message on Immigration*.

This is prayer, not a protest, so no signs/posters. People will be standing together, witnessing and praying in solidarity.

On the webpage, you'll find forms to fill out if you're looking to organize an event, whether one-time or repeated, as well as one to give feedback after your event(s).

- The ITF will be meeting on the **4th Monday of every month at 12:30pm outside of the Blue Ash ICE office**. All are welcome. (**June 1 (moved due to Memorial Day), June 28, and so forth**)

- The Jesuit Family of parishes will be praying outside the **Blue Ash ICE Office the second Tuesday of every month at 12:00pm**. Again, all are welcome.

- There will also be prayer (hosted by the St. Stephen family) at the **Butler County Jail every Tuesday at 10:00am**.

If you have any questions, [please let us know](#).

"We pray for an end to dehumanizing rhetoric and violence, whether directed at immigrants or at law enforcement. We pray that the Lord may guide the leaders of our nation..." -US Bishops Special Message on Immigration



Donations Needed to Support Immigrants

The Immigrant Dignity Coalition is seeking donations to support immigrants who are in need of basic resources (e.g. food, diapers, etc.) If you're willing and able to contribute, please [click here](#) to learn how to donate.





FAITH & LABOR

A CATHOLIC VISION FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

A 4-Session Series on
Catholic Social Teaching,
Economic History, and the
Dignity of Work



Led by: Erin Shaw

SESSION 3:
**History of Labor
and Catholic Involvement**

WHEN:
Wednesday, May 6
6:30 PM EST

WHERE:
A Virtual Presentation:
<https://zoom.us/j/94789043039>



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[Click Here to Join](https://zoom.us/j/94789043039)



Retirement...

After many, many years of dedicated service, Tammie Mers is retiring from her position as Administrative Assistant for our department. We are so grateful for her

service and support and wish her well as she moves into the next phase of her journey. Well done, good and faithful servant! (Mt 25:23)

...and Hiring

Subsequently, we're looking to hire Tammie's successor. Please check out the **job posting** on the Archdiocese's website and prayerfully consider if this is something you might be interested in or if you know someone who might want to join our team.



Planting Season Prayer Spring 2026

Every planting season presents both familiar and unique challenges to farmers, farmworkers, and their local communities. We are acutely aware that farmers across our archdiocese, state, nation, and world are facing conditions both natural and human made that affect their input costs and their decisions both for this year and the future. Droughts, floods, fires, severe weather, policies involving immigration, tariffs, and land use have added to their economic, physical, and mental stress. All of these issues have long lasting effects on the personal and economic wellbeing of farmers, farmworkers, local communities, and consumers. With this in mind, we ask that all may pray for those affected by these serious challenges.

Let us pray.

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.

St. Isidore, patron of farmers and farmworkers, pray for us.

Amen.

Feast of St. Isidore is May 15th.

The Farm Bill is again being considered by Congress (just three years late, and eight months past the end of the last extension). [Click here to view a recent letter from the](#)

USCCB on this legislation, and please consider contacting your elected officials to voice your support for greater support for small farmers, food for the hungry, and support our global sisters and brothers.



Faith & Friendship Groups

Our interfaith partner, Equasion, best known for organizing the annual [Festival of Faiths](#) (scheduled for 8/2 this year), is launching a new initiative designed to bring people of different faiths together around a shared interest/purpose.

Each of the 10 groups will focus on a particular topic and will be made up of people from different faith traditions. The initial meeting is on Wed. 5/6 (though it's ok if you miss this first gathering), and then each of the 10 groups will set a schedule of five gatherings to continue the conversations.

[Click here for more information and registration](#), and please let [Andrew](#) know if you have any questions.



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, please contact Mary Anne Bressler at mbressler@ccswoh.org.



Join churches across Greater Dayton on May 24th at 6pm for a Citywide Service at UD Arena on Pentecost Sunday!

[Click here for more information.](#)



RISE Retreat in the AoC

The National Association of Catholic Social Action & Mission (NACSAM) is thrilled to announce that **registration is open** for the second retreat and immersive summer experience (RISE) event scheduled to take place this summer from June 29 - July 2, 2026 at the Jesuit Spiritual Center in Milford, OH. This year's theme is *Our Reckoning and Our Hope: Racial Justice and Reconciliation* and will examine the spirituality of racial justice efforts with immersive experiences in Cincinnati and nearby Kentucky. From these experiences, participants will have an opportunity to pray, reflect, and develop a call to action that will inspire efforts in their respective agency, diocese, or parish. [Click here for more information](#) or [contact Andrew](#).



Advocacy Opportunities

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!

Stop Unjust Treatment of Immigrants

The U.S. bishops urge Congress to demonstrate its support for religious liberty on a bipartisan basis by (1) ensuring respect for what are commonly referred to as sensitive locations, especially houses of worship, and (2) mandating consistent access to religious and pastoral services for all immigration detainees.

Complete [this action alert](#) to join with the bishops in calling for immigration enforcement that respects human dignity and religious freedom for all.

Urge Your Representative to Support Anti-Trafficking Legislation

At the beginning of the 119th Congress, the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2025 (H.R. 1144) was reintroduced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In April 2025, the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration joined with national partners in [calling](#) on the House to pass H.R. 1144. The bill [now has the potential](#) to reach the House floor in the coming weeks.

[Click here](#) to add your voice supporting this critical legislation.

Protect International Humanitarian Assistance

Support our global family in poverty by advocating for U.S. international humanitarian and development assistance. This funding provides lifesaving aid in emergencies and supports long-term development to help families and communities become more resilient and create a brighter future.

Lift your voice today!

Support Religious Workers & the Communities They Serve

An increasing number of priests, religious sisters and brothers, and others serving the Church throughout the United States will be forced to abandon their ministries if policymakers do not act soon. Unfortunately, many churches, schools, and other Catholic institutions have already had to part with men and women who served in our country for years because of challenges with the Religious Worker Visa Program.

Tell Congress to act now!



From the Respect Life Office

Emily Branscum, Associate Director of Respect Life Ministries

Honoring Every Mother

A few years ago, I was buying Hawaiian Punch at the grocery store. A woman near me in the aisle watched as I grabbed the jug from the shelf and asked, "is that stuff any good?". I smiled and said, "I'm not really sure, but my kids love it!" She laughed and asked how many kids I had. Without missing a beat, I replied "19". The woman's jaw hit the floor and I immediately blushed, realizing my mistake. You see, I had been buying the punch for a Halloween party I was hosting for my youth group that evening and I knew there were 19 kids coming. I laughed and explained that I was a youth minister and I that thought of my youth group as my 'kids'. She smiled, looked at me like I was still a little crazy, and then walked away.

This humorous encounter was evidence of my internalized spiritual motherhood. It wasn't something I thought about consciously or intended to do, I just loved these children I ministered to, and, in that love, a type of maternal bond was formed. Motherhood is a natural part of every woman's nature. Motherhood is a privilege and honor. Though it takes many forms, it is important that each expression of motherhood be named, understood, and honored.

Motherhood is expressed by women in two ways, biologically and spiritually. It is important to note that not all women are called or able to be biological mothers, yet all women are still ordered toward motherhood. Speaking of biological motherhood, St. John Paul II in his Apostolic Letter *The Dignity of Woman* wrote, "Motherhood involves a special communion with the mystery of life, as it develops in the woman's womb. The mother is filled with wonder at this mystery of life, and 'understands' with unique intuition what is happening inside her." (**Mulieris Dignitatem 18**)

But if we are honest, biological motherhood is not always experienced only in joy. For many women, it is also marked by loss, longing, or wounds that are not always visible. There are women who have lost children through miscarriage or death who are still mothers. There are women who have experienced abortion who are still mothers. There are women who have struggled with infertility whose hearts are still deeply oriented toward motherhood.

Motherhood is not only about biology. It is about the gift of self. It is about receiving life and giving it in return. St. John Paul II reminds us that “the moral and spiritual strength of a woman is joined to her awareness that God entrusts the human being to her in a special way.” (**Mulieris Dignitatem 30**). That entrustment looks different in every life, but it is real in every woman.

As we celebrate Mother’s Day this month, we should do so with both joy and sensitivity. We celebrate the beauty of motherhood, but we also recognize that this day can be difficult for some. This reality offers us an invitation to expand our understanding of motherhood. To see it not just in one form, but in all the quiet, sacrificial, and hidden ways it is lived out every day. When we do that, we honor not just some mothers, but all of them. And in doing so, we learn how to love each other better.



From the Office for Persons with Disabilities

Lisa Averion, Associate Director, Persons with Disabilities

A Mother’s Sacred Path: Embracing the Gift of Disability

The call to holiness is lived not only in extraordinary moments, but also in the quiet, hidden acts of love that fill each day. For mothers, this vocation is a beautiful and demanding journey, one that often includes sleepless nights, unexpected challenges, and countless sacrifices offered silently to God. Yet within these very moments—moments the world may overlook—grace is poured out in abundance. Mothers who care for a child with a disability often discover a depth of faith and tenderness that reflects the heart of Christ Himself. Their daily perseverance becomes a living prayer, a testimony that holiness is found in love that never gives up.

In times of exhaustion or uncertainty, many mothers turn instinctively to our Blessed Mother, who knows the joys and sorrows of motherhood intimately. Mary understands the weight of worry, the ache of fear, and the courage required to trust God’s plan when the path is unclear. Through the Rosary, caregivers place their burdens in her gentle hands, finding peace in her maternal care. Each Hail Mary becomes a breath of hope, a reminder that no mother walks her journey alone. In Mary’s example, mothers discover renewed strength, patience, and confidence in Christ’s unfailing love.

At the heart of the Church is the profound truth that persons with disabilities are not defined by limitations but by their dignity as beloved children of God. They are not merely recipients of care—they are essential members of the Body of Christ. Their presence reveals God’s tenderness in ways that words cannot fully express. Through their joy, honesty, resilience, and unique ways of encountering the world, they reflect aspects of God’s love that might otherwise remain unseen. They teach communities to slow down, to listen more deeply, and to love without conditions. Their lives remind the Church that every person, regardless of ability, has a mission, a purpose, and a place in God’s plan.

Parishes and families are enriched by the gifts persons with disabilities bring. Their authenticity inspires compassion. Their perseverance strengthens faith. Their trust encourages others to rely more fully on God. When the Church embraces these gifts, it becomes more whole, more loving, and more reflective of Christ’s inclusive heart. As understanding grows, so does the awareness that disability is not a detour from

holiness but a path through which God's grace shines brightly.

Mothers who raise children with disabilities offer a powerful witness to the world. Their love is steadfast, creative, and courageous. Their faith is often forged in the quiet places—doctor's offices, therapy rooms, late-night prayers whispered over a sleeping child. They embody the gospel in ways that are both ordinary and extraordinary. Their lives proclaim that every child is a blessing, every life has meaning, and every family is called to holiness in its own unique way.

As the Church continues to deepen its understanding and support for families, may we recognize more fully the beauty and strength these mothers bring to our communities. May we honor their sacrifices, celebrate their victories, and accompany them with compassion. And may every family who welcomes a child with a disability know that they belong, they are cherished, and they are a radiant sign of God's love in the world.

Happy Mother's Day to all mothers chosen to raise a child with disabilities. Your vocation is a blessing, your love is a gift, and your witness shines with the light of Christ.



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