Office of the Bishop

September 30, 2026 - Deepening Our Moral Witness: A Regional Gathering on the Catholic Church's Solidarity with Migrants (see attached flyer)

Pastors, Parish Life Directors, Deans, Hispanic Deanery Coordinators, Congolese Ministry Leaders, Priests, Deacons, Parish Staff, Hispanic Leaders, Parish Leaders:

I warmly encourage you to participate in the Regional Gathering on the Catholic Church's Solidarity with Migrants to be held on Wednesday, September 30, 2026, at the Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, 711 S Northshore Dr, Knoxville, TN 37919.

Hosted by the Dioceses of Knoxville and Lexington, in collaboration with the Hope Border Institute and the Center for Migration Studies through Catholic IMMpact, this gathering will bring together diocesan and parish leaders from seven states for a day of prayer, formation, reflection, and collaboration on the Church's pastoral response to immigrant communities.

Over the past two years, through our collaboration with Attorney Emily Jones and the New Americans Initiative, the Diocese of Lexington has provided extensive formation and practical resources to Catholic school personnel, clergy, parish leaders, and our Hispanic communities regarding parish preparedness and immigration-related pastoral ministry.

In addition to the regional presentations, our diocesan breakout session will provide participants from the Diocese of Lexington an opportunity to build upon the work already underway in our diocese. Attorney Emily Jones will be available during the afternoon session to address questions about parish preparedness plans, implementation of the resources already provided, and other
practical concerns that may have arisen as our parishes continue this important pastoral ministry.

I encourage you to join us for this important day of prayer, formation, and collaboration.

Registration for Knoxville
event: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScmdePStQuoKh7-BRaZx749_kcCLZBCuUZo6kiho6JMIW3Ctg/viewform?pli=1

With gratitude in Christ,
Most Rev. John Stowe, OFM Conv.
Bishop of Lexington

Vice Chancellor

Dcn. John Brennen

September Mass Counts

- October 16 Annual Mass Counts are due - The yearly September Mass Counts are due Friday, October 16th, 2026. Please list each Mass time, language, and total in attendance. The counts will cover the Vigil Mass on Saturday, September 5th through Sunday, September 27th. Please see the attached form. You may use the back of the form if necessary.

Communication

Holly Neal

Looking for Local Stories to Feature

Do you have a local story that should to be shared in *Cross Roads, social media or online*? We're looking to feature parish storytellers—especially authors or retired journalists who might enjoy writing about life in our community. We're also eager to include insights and experiences from our young adult and youth groups to help bring fresh perspectives to the publication. If you or someone in your parish would like to participate, please contact Holly Neal at hneal@cdlex.org.

Calvary Cemetery

Fran Borders

- November 1, Sunday at 3:00 PM Calvary's Annual Mass presided by Bishop John Stowe, OFM, Conv.

Catholic Charities

Diane Gottfried

- Please follow and share CatholicCharitiesLexington on Facebook and Instagram! Stay connected and stay inspired!
- Do you want to host a drive for Mary's Closet? These items of dignity include hygiene and cleaning supplies for our clients. Contact us at 859-475-5522 or mcambray@cdlex.org for more information.
- Do you have time and talent to share? Volunteer with Catholic Charities! Scan here to find out more:



Development

Robert Watts

Diocesan Annual Appeal 2026

The 2026 Diocesan Annual Appeal will officially kick off on **September 1st** as individual promotional packages begin arriving at parishioner homes. The weekend of **September 19-20,** is IN-pew weekend (unless you have pre-arranged a makeup date for your parish) with **Announcement Weekend** on **September 13.**
Parishes should receive their kits by the last week of August. If you have not received yours, please contact Emma Jones at **ejones@cdlex.org or ext. 1050.**
Inside each kit, you will find:

- Resources to introduce the Appeal
- A supply of commitment cards and envelopes for in-pew commitments
- A small sweet treat to enjoy while reviewing the materials

Please reserve the in-pew weekend exclusively for the Diocesan Annual Appeal, with no other collections or presentations scheduled.

In early September, DAA materials will be mailed to all households on record, highlighting the ministries and programs the Appeal makes possible.

The DAA is a priority for all parishes and us as one dicoesan family, and so we greatly appreciate your full support in helping us reach our goal by the end of the active phase of the campaign which is **November 30.**
Thank you in advance for your prayers and dedication!

Second Collections
Formation of Ordained and Lay Ministers

English
We will take up the Second Collection for Formation of Ordained and Lay Ministers on September 12-13. Funds from this collection will support formation opportunities for the diaconate program as well as continuing education programs for our priests, deacons and lay ministers. Thank you for your support and prayers for their efforts.

Spanish
Tomaremos la Segunda Colecta para la Formación de Ministros Ordenados y Laicos del 12-13 el Septiembre. Los fondos de esta recaudación apoyarán las iniciativas de formación para aquellos en el programa del Diaconado, como también para los programas de formación continua de nuestros sacerdotes, diáconos y ministros laicos. Gracias por su apoyo y recemos por los esfuerzos de aquellos en formación.

iGiveCatholic
Registration for #iGiveCatholic 2026 is NOW OPEN! Any organization who registers prior to the Diocesan Early Registration Deadline of **September 12th** will be entered into our Early Registration Prize Drawing!

#iGiveCatholic data migration from GiveGab to MightyCause has been completed as of September 1st. If your organization has participated in #iGiveCatholic in the past, you are now able to register for #iGiveCatholic 2026 and access your previously saved data.

For any participants joining #iGiveCatholic 2026, Sara Spellman will be available to do an onsite registration and onboarding session at your parish or school this month. Contact Sara by email sspellman@cdlex.org or by phone (859) 253-1993 ext. 1051 to schedule your session.

Pastoral Life

Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry
Michael Armstrong

- **October 17th Diocese of Lexington Middle School Youth Rally:** Middle school is a crucial time in the life of a young person as they begin to struggle with their sense of identity and who they are. Which is why we're throwing a big, all-day event for youth in grades 6-8, focusing on what it truly means to be Catholic. The day will be centered around community, formation, and prayer, all of which will find their greatest fulfilment in the mass. The cost will be $20 per youth (scholarships are available) and will be hosted by St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Lexington. To register, contact your parish youth minister or visit cdlex.org/youth.

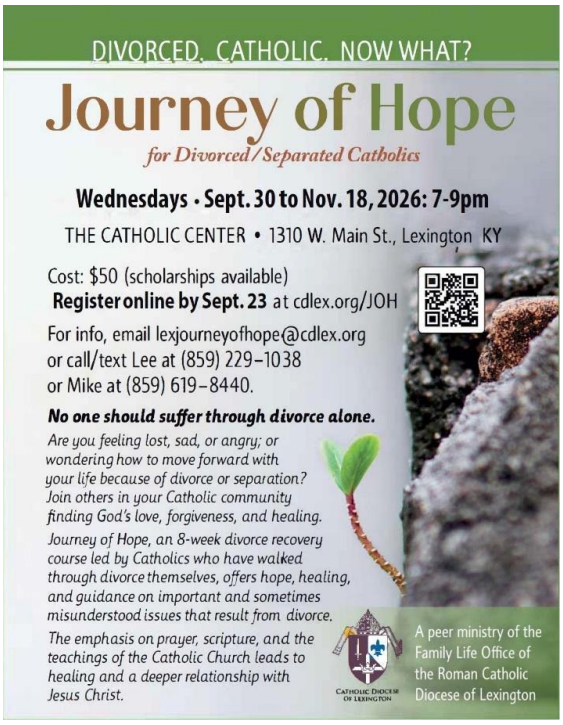
Family Life and Evangelization
Mike Allen

Grace Marriage to be Offered at Two Diocesan Parishes in 2026-2027

Could your marriage use some refreshment? Whether you've been married six months or sixty years, every marriage needs intentional tending in order to grow
Beginning this September, two parishes (Mary Queen/Lexington and Ss. Francis and John/Georgetown) will be offering the marriage enrichment ministry called “Grace Marriage,” a ministry originating in Owensboro and based on a simple idea: Four focused (and fun!) half-day Saturday mini-retreats over the school year, in which married couples gather together to deepen their marriages. Anyone from any parish is welcome to attend. To learn more, see https://cdlex.org/gracemarriage/

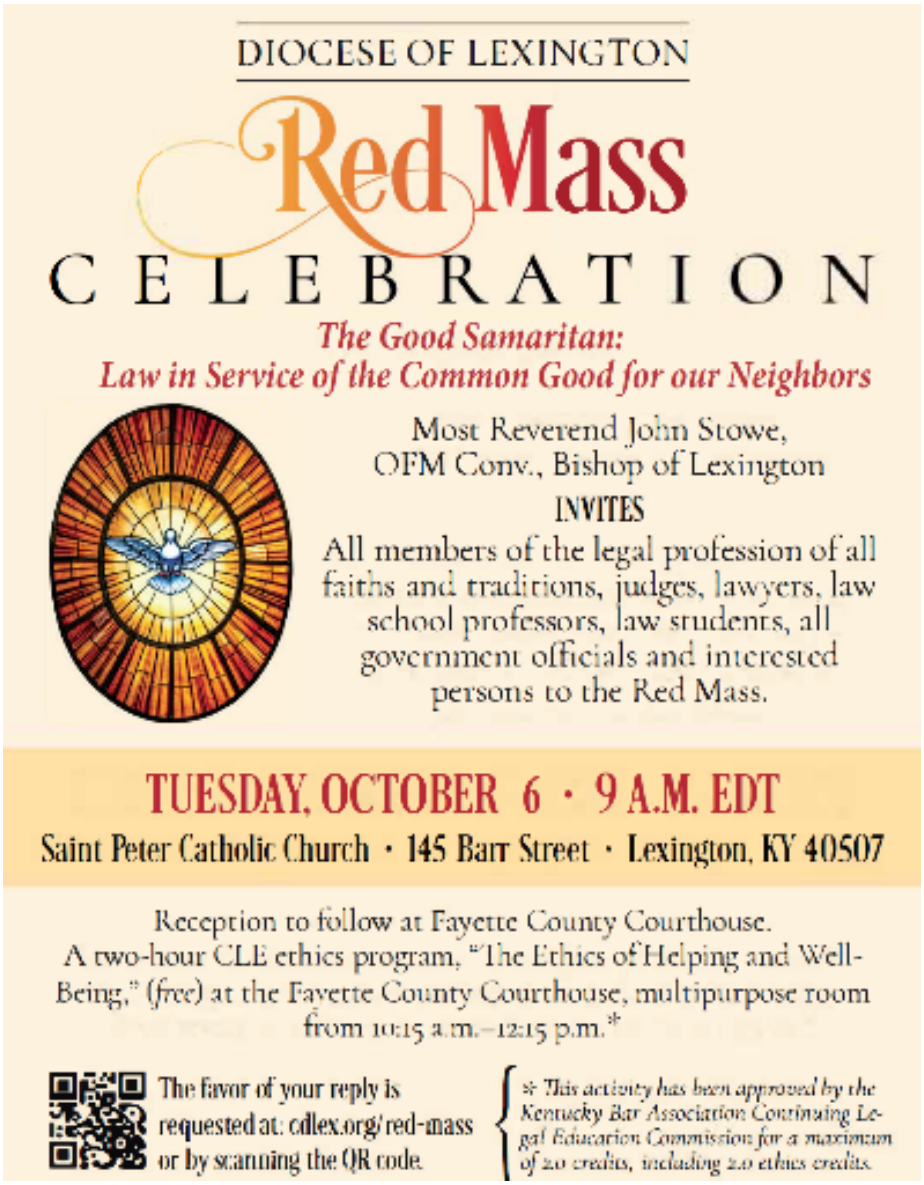
Fall 2026 Journey of Hope Course for Divorced Catholics

(Sessions starting September 30)
This 8-week course, led by Catholics who have experienced and found healing after divorce, begins Wed. evening, **September 30th, from 7-9pm** at the Catholic Center in Lexington (1310 West Main St). Go to https://cdlex.org/joh/ for info and to register. If you have any questions, email lexjourneyofhope@cdlex.org, or call Lee at 859-229-1038 or Mike at 859-619-8440.



Red Mass

Red Mass for the Legal and Political Professions
October 6, 2026 at 9am EDT; St. Peter Catholic Church, 145 Barr St. in Lexington
Bishop John invites all members of the legal profession of all faiths and traditions, judges, lawyers, law school professors and students, all government officials and other interested persons to the annual Red Mass. A Red Mass is an annual dedication of prayers for all who serve others through the legal profession or a governmental office and for those interested in the rule of law.
The Red Mass dates back to the Middle Ages. Red signifies the Holy Spirit. The Mass will be followed by a reception and optional two-hour CLE event: The Ethics of Helping and Well-being.
To register, see cdlex.org/red-mass.



Families Invited to Share their Experiences for Pope Leo and the October Synod

As you may know, Pope Leo XIV will convene a worldwide meeting of Episcopal Conference Presidents at the Vatican from **October 7–14, 2026**, focusing on Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love), Pope Francis's 2016 apostolic exhortation. To support this synodal discernment, Catholic Church Reform International (CCRI)—at the suggestion of the Association of U.S. Catholic
Priests (AUSCP) and in collaboration with the Ignatian Encounter Ministry (IEM)—is launching a global initiative to share the lived experiences of diverse families directly with the Synod Office. We are inviting families from all around the world to host small, informal listening sessions using the Conversations in the Spirit format (https://catholicchurchreformintl.org/conversation-in-the-spirit-format/) share your joys, struggles, and pastoral needs.

How It Works
1. Gather: Families or small groups meet to reflect prayerfully on your experiences as a family, giving each member equal time to speak.
2. Submit: Members of the family use the short form (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdvpMrhfgw1-aaKWlRfnk6uCx_GvVwYJQnhybFjnwbKD2xOFw/viewform) to capture the themes that emerge - convergences (issues on which everyone agrees), divergences (issues left unresolved), and suggestions of how the Church could better guide and support you through your struggles.
3. Deliver: CCRI and Ignatian Encounter Ministry (IEM) will synthesize these global insights and deliver them to Pope Leo and the Synod Office by mid-September.

Diocesan Annual Wedding Anniversary Celebration– November 7th, 2026

For all couples having their 10th, 25th, 40th, 50th, or 50th-plus wedding anniversary in 2026, the Bishop will celebrate with you at the Cathedral of Christ the King on Saturday, **November 7th**. The event begins with Mass at 5:00 PM with Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv. presiding, followed by a catered reception in Hehman Hall. We are also looking for couples newly married
in the past year to be hospitality ministers. If you or someone you know is celebrating one of these jubilee anniversaries in 2026 or if you are newly married and would like to serve as hospitality ministers, please register at https://cdlex.org/family/ or contact Claudia Green at the Catholic Center at (859) 253-1993, ext. 1004 to **make reservations by October 30th.** Please give your
name, parish, mailing address, phone number, and original wedding date.


DIÓCESIS CATÓLICA DE LEXINGTON
MISA Y RECEPCIÓN DE ANIVERSARIO DE BODAS
con el Obispo John
SÁBADO,
7 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2026
CATEDRAL DE CRISTO REY
A LAS
5PM
¡ESCANEA PARA REGISTRARTE!
PARA PAREJAS QUE CELEBRAN SUS
10.º, 25.º, 40.º, 50.º Y 50.º+
ANIVERSARIOS DE BODA EN 2026
REGÍSTRESE EN CDLEX.ORG/FAMILY
O EMAIL MIKE ALLEN A
MALLEN@CDLEX.ORG


CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON
WEDDING ANNIVERSARY
Mass and Reception
WITH BISHOP JOHN PRESIDING
SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 7TH, 2026
CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE KING
AT
5PM
SCAN TO REGISTER!
FOR COUPLES CELEBRATING THEIR
10TH, 25TH, 40TH, 50TH, AND 50TH+
ANNIVERSARIES IN 2026
REGISTER AT CDLEX.ORG/FAMILY
OR CALL CLAUDIA BY OCT. 30TH AT
(859) 253-1993 x 1004.

Peace and Justice

Josh Van Cleef

Season of Creation Events (September 1-October 4)

- September 8: Season of Creation Virtual Prayer at 7pm (see attached flyer)
- September 12: Love's Splendid Garden: Laudato Si' and Caring for Holy Mother Earth 9:30am to 3:00pm (see attached flyer) Pax Christi Fellowship Hall 4001 Victoria Way Lexington, KY Registration Cost: $25
- September 20: Celebration Mother of Good Counsel, Hazard, will celebrate its Franciscan legacy beginning with 11:30 Mass. Bishop John Stowe will bless the parish's new solar panels. Contact Lori at lhelfrich@cdlex.org for information. More information below.
- October 3: Walking Tour of Calvary Cemetery 10:00 AM at 874 W. Main Street Lexington, KY (see attached flyer)

Vocations

Fr. Marc Benley

Begin Planning for National Vocation Awareness Week

National Vocation Awareness Week will be celebrated November 1–7, 2026. This annual observance gives particular attention to vocations to priesthood, the diaconate, and consecrated life. Within the broader culture of vocation, it is also an opportunity to help all the baptized — including those called to marriage — listen more attentively for how Christ is calling them to holiness, discipleship, and service.

This year, National Vocation Awareness Week begins on the Solemnity of All Saints and continues with All Souls' Day. These celebrations offer a natural starting point. The saints show us the many ways a faithful "yes" to God can take shape, while the faithful departed remind us of the people whose witness first helped us recognize God's call in our own lives.

In keeping with Bishop John's emphasis on a synodal and missionary Church, National Vocation Awareness Week should be more than a campaign, a display, or a series of announcements. It should help our communities listen together for the movement of the

Holy Spirit, recognize the gifts God has given others, ask what the Church and our neighbors need, and accompany people as they discern where Christ is calling them to serve.

Parishes, schools, religious education and OCIA programs, youth and young adult ministries, campus ministries, and other ministries throughout the Diocese of Lexington are encouraged to place November 1–7 on their calendars and begin planning now. An observance does not need to be elaborate. One or two thoughtful activities, followed by continued accompaniment, can begin conversations that bear fruit long after the week has ended.

Here are some possibilities:

- **Pray and listen together.** Include intercessions for vocations at Mass, offer a Holy Hour, Rosary, or Scripture reflection for vocations, or begin classes and ministry meetings with prayer for those discerning. Whenever possible, pair prayer with an opportunity for conversation and listening.
- **Listen especially to young people.** Give students and young adults room to speak about their hopes, questions, gifts, and concerns. Ask where they see needs in the Church and the world and how God might be inviting them to respond. Vocation ministry should include listening to young people, not only speaking to them.
- **Share varied and relatable vocation stories.** Invite a priest, deacon, religious sister or brother, seminarian (via Zoom), married couple, or lay ecclesial minister to speak in a parish, classroom, youth gathering, or ministry meeting. Honest stories about prayer, uncertainty, sacrifice, joy, and service can make discernment feel approachable. Whenever possible, include witnesses of different ages, cultures, and backgrounds.
- **Connect vocation with mission and service.** Help participants see that vocation is not simply about choosing a role or career. It is a response to Christ and a commitment to serve God's people. A parish, school, or ministry might connect a service activity with reflection on the needs of people who are poor, isolated, new to the community, or otherwise overlooked.
- **Offer personal invitation and accompaniment.** Pastors, parents, teachers, catechists, youth ministers, and other trusted adults should be attentive to the gifts they see in others. A simple comment such as, "I see gifts in you that could serve the Church," can open an important door. An invitation should be offered without pressure and followed by prayer, conversation, and accompaniment.
- **Adapt the observance to your community.** Resources and activities should be appropriate to the age, culture, and circumstances of the people being served. Parishes and schools are encouraged to draw upon the experiences of the different communities that make up our diocese.

The Vocations Office will share additional diocesan resources closer to the week.

Begin with Our Diocesan Vocations Website

Parishes, schools, and diocesan ministries are encouraged to share the Catholic Diocese of Lexington Vocations website in bulletins, newsletters, school and parish websites, classroom materials, and social media. The site includes guidance for discernment, information about priesthood and religious life, introductions to our seminarians, upcoming discernment events, vocation prayers, and a direct way to contact the Vocations Office:

https://cdlex.org/vocations/

National Resources

National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors (NCDVD)
Resources for vocation promotion and for men discerning diocesan priesthood:
https://www.ncdvd.org/resources/
https://www.diocesanpriest.com/

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)
National Vocation Awareness Week information, prayers, and educational resources:
https://www.usccb.org/committees/clergy-consecrated-life-vocations/national-vocation-awareness-week

National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC)
Information, videos, prayers, and resources related to religious life:
https://www.nrvc.net/national-vocation-awareness-week

Vianney Vocations
Resources for parishes, schools, youth ministry, liturgy, bulletins, and communications:
https://vianneyvocations.com/nvaw/

Vocation Ministry
Practical resources for parishes, schools, families, and catechetical programs, including lesson plans, classroom activities, vocation calendars, bulletin and newsletter materials, and ideas for building a culture of vocations:
https://www.vocationministry.com/

Come and See Visit to Saint Meinrad

Men who are in college or older and discerning whether God may be calling them to priesthood or religious life are invited to join the Catholic Diocese of Lexington Vocations Office for a Come and See visit to Saint Meinrad. The visit will begin the evening of Thursday, October 8, and conclude the afternoon of Sunday, October 11.

Participants will experience the daily rhythm of seminary life, join the Saint Meinrad community in prayer, meet seminarians and formators, and learn more about discernment and formation. Attending does not represent a commitment to enter seminary or a religious community. It is simply an opportunity to step away, pray, ask questions, and listen more attentively for God's call.

To register or learn more, email Father Marc Bentley, Director of Vocations, at mbentley@cdlex.org.

Men's Discernment Group at UK Newman Center

The Diocese of Lexington's Men's Discernment Group will meet this fall at Holy Spirit Parish/UK Newman Center. The group is open to men ages 18 and older who are discerning the priesthood or would like to learn more about vocational discernment.

Each meeting will begin with pizza at 6:00 p.m. The evening's speaker will share his vocation story and answer questions before the group concludes with Evening Prayer. Meetings will end by 7:30 p.m.

The fall schedule is:

• Wednesday, September 9 — Father Corey Bruns, Director of Vocations for the Diocese of Owensboro

• Wednesday, September 23 — Father Marc Bentley, Director of Vocations for the Catholic Diocese of Lexington

• Wednesday, October 7 — Father Anthony McLaughlin, JCD, Pastor of Holy Spirit Parish/UK Newman Center

• Wednesday, November 4 — Father Conor Kunath, Director of Vocations for the Diocese of Covington

• Wednesday, November 18 — Father Matthew Millay, Director of Vocations for the Archdiocese of Louisville

As the Commonwealth's flagship university, the University of Kentucky welcomes students from throughout Kentucky, including many men whose home parishes are located in other dioceses. Inviting vocation directors from across the state gives them an opportunity to speak at UK and to meet men from their own dioceses who are studying or living in Lexington. This collaboration also strengthens relationships among Kentucky's vocation offices, with the hope of creating similar opportunities for the Diocese of Lexington to connect with men studying elsewhere in the Commonwealth.

Pastors, campus ministers, parish staff members, and others are encouraged to share this invitation with men who may benefit from attending. For more information, contact Father Marc Bentley at mbentley@cdlex.org.

The Liturgical Commission (formerly the Worship Office) will no longer be processing annual sourcebooks/workbooks orders for the parishes. You can now go directly to the LTP website (ltp.org) and place your orders for workbooks, calendars, etc. at your convenience.

If you need additional information or assistance, please email Beth Keenon at ekeenon@cdlex.org.

Mental Health Ministry

In Honor of Worldwide Suicide Prevention Month

- September 10 at 7:00 PM, Centro de San Juan Diego Lexington, KY A Mass for Suicide Healing and Rememberance by Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv., (see attached flyer)
- September 11 at 10:30 - 2:30 PM, Cathedral of Christ the King, Lexington, KY, Assess and Respond to Suicide Risk Training (see attached flyer).

Extra...Extra...Read All About It

Laity invited to study theology at Saint Meinrad

Seek God through prayer, study, and a tradition of Benedictine hospitality. The Saint Meinrad Graduate Theology Program invites you to learn about its MA and certificates in theology during an **online Open House on Wed Sept23 at 6:30 pm CT**, OR an **in-person Open House on Sat Oct 10.** Discover how theological study can enrich your faith and your service to the Church. Learn more at **www.saintmeinrad.edu/openhouse**.

(If possible, please include this QR code in the bulletin announcement which redirects to a Graduate Theology Program Open House page.)

Post-Master's Spiritual Direction Certificate

Do you feel called to accompany others in their journey of faith? Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology's Post-Master's Certificate in Spiritual Direction prepares more experienced students to serve as spiritual directors through theological study, formation, and supervised practice rooted in the Benedictine tradition. We are forming a new certificate cohort. Register your interest by **October 1** to save your spot. Learn more at **www.saintmeinrad.edu/SD**.

(If possible, please include this QR code in the bulletin announcement which redirects to a Graduate Theology Program Spiritual Direction information page.)

Any questions can be directed to Isabella Thompson at 812-357-6336 or lthompson@saintmeinrad.edu.

Catholic in Recovery

- October 3, 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM at Stable Recovery in Nicholasville, KY A gathering of people involved in ministries. Potluck meal (see attached flyer).

Christ the King is looking for a Part-Time Position



Mother of Good Counsel Catholic Community

On Sunday, **September 20th** Mother of Good Counsel is celebrating our Franciscan Heritage with Mass, a meal and celebration. During the Franciscan Jubilee Year, marking the 800th anniversary of the passing of St. Francis of Assisi, a Catholic friar who founded the religious order of the Francisicans, the parish remembers the life and legacy of St. Francis and the commitment of the Franciscan Friars who staffed the parish in Hazard and other locations in the Diocese of Lexington for many years.

Go to www.mgccc.org for information and to register for this event. If you have questions, email Lori Helfrich,the Parish Life Director at Mother of Good Counsel. lhelfrich@cdlex.org