

# The Catholic **TIMES**

NOVEMBER 21, 2021 • DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

## Praise and thanksgiving for Bishop Robert Brennan

After leading the Diocese of Columbus for fewer than three years, the New York-area native is leaving Ohio for a new assignment in the Diocese of Brooklyn as its eighth bishop.



### Always on the move

Scenes from Bishop Robert Brennan's time in the diocese include (counterclockwise from upper left) presiding over his first Confirmation in Zanesville, celebrating Mass at the Pontifical College Josephinum, feeding a calf on a farm, chatting with religious sisters and young women, praying the rosary at St. Joseph Cathedral, honoring an altar server, preaching during the recent Sacred Heart Congress and stopping to gaze at a statue of Our Lady of Fatima in front of the Cathedral during a downtown procession on her feast day in May.

*CT photos by Ken Snow*

## WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"Bishop Brennan will be remembered for his pastoral touch and relatability to Catholics in Central Ohio. His departure has been marked by Catholics with both joy for being named a bishop in his native New York City and sadness for what the Diocese of Columbus will miss. Bishop Brennan is truly a servant leader whose time in Ohio will be remembered fondly."

**Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine**

"I want to extend my gratitude to you for your help and guidance during some of the most challenging times our city has faced. You stood with me in prayer during protests for racial justice and encouraged pastors to speak out against racism in our community. I will remain eternally grateful for your presence."

**Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther**

"Since the day of his arrival in Columbus, Bishop Brennan has been an incredible supporter of the Josephinum. We have benefited not only from his insightful leadership but also from his genuine friendship. Bishop Brennan's sincere enthusiasm for the priesthood and for vocations has had a profound and lasting impact on our seminary community and he will be deeply missed."

**Father Stephen Beseau  
Rector, Pontifical College Josephinum**

"Through his faith leadership in the Columbus Diocese, Bishop Brennan has had a profound impact on Ohio Dominican University and, most importantly, the students we have the honor of serving. We are grateful to him for his support and advocacy for Catholic higher education, and for his role in helping ODU strengthen its various relationships within the diocese, including with Columbus Diocesan schools. The entire Ohio Dominican University community expresses its deep appreciation for Bishop Brennan's service to the global Catholic community and the Central Ohio region, and wishes him well as he begins a new chapter of faith leadership in the Diocese of Brooklyn."

**Connie Gallaher  
President, Ohio Dominican University**

"One of the discoveries I have made in life is that relationships are the coin and currency of our lives. One of the great gifts given to me has been my friendship with Bishop Brennan. Bishop is a man of character, courage and compassion. I have been blessed by his life and ministry and I thank God for him."

**Bishop Timothy J. Clarke  
First Church of God, Columbus**

## During his short stay in Ohio, Bishop Brennan reached out to all

Probably the best way to encapsulate Bishop Robert Brennan's 32 months in the Diocese of Columbus would be to say that he's a people person.

His stay in Columbus was brief, but it's not a stretch to claim that he did his best to meet every Catholic in the 23-county diocese during his time here.

No matter which parish you attend, he visited there at least once and, in many cases, more times than that. He also made himself highly visible through secular and social media – and so if you didn't encounter him in person at Mass or during a parish event, you had ample opportunity to see him on television or on the web.

"Ubiquitous" is the word that comes to mind to describe him.

Ultimately, his determination to connect with people of all ages from schoolchildren to the elderly, his willingness to communicate through media, his energy and enthusiasm for the faith, and his Spanish-speaking ability made him an attractive choice for advancement in the Catholic hierarchy.

Insiders didn't expect Bishop Brennan to be kept in a diocese such as Columbus, with a relatively small Catholic population, for long. His departure might be a little quicker than anyone expected, but the Diocese of Cleveland experienced the same transition in 2020, when Bishop Nelson Perez was relocated from the shores of Lake Erie to lead the Archdiocese of Philadelphia as its archbishop.

Purely speculation here, but Church leaders probably wouldn't have moved Bishop Brennan out of Columbus quite so quickly if they hadn't deemed him a perfect fit for the Diocese of Brooklyn to replace retiring Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio.

The move makes sense. Bishop Brennan is a native New Yorker, he's dynamic, he's not afraid of dealing with the media, he's recognizable in the metropolitan area through his television appearances with the Catholic Faith Network while he was an auxiliary bishop in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, he knows the diocese and the area, and he speaks Spanish. Almost 25 percent of the population in the Diocese of Brooklyn's two-county metropolitan area considers Spanish their primary language.

Bishop Brennan also proved adept at handling difficult situations in Columbus. Last year's unprecedented crises included the coronavirus pandemic forcing the two-month closure of churches and then the summer racial unrest spawned by the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis and police shootings in Columbus.

There are also the ongoing priestly abuse scandals and political controversies on a national and global level regarding abortion,

### EDITOR'S REFLECTIONS

Doug Bean



contraception mandates, marriage laws and religious freedom. Furthermore, the Church is facing a dwindling number of Catholics in the pews, a vocations crisis and an alarming lack of basic Catholic faith knowledge exhibited by students.

Bishop Brennan attempted to address most of these issues. He advocated for stronger Catholic school curriculums and religious education; offered defense of the unborn and the human dignity of every person at every stage of life; maintained a commitment to be transparent on sexual abuse in the Church; and encouraged young people discerning religious vocations.

In Brooklyn, the media scrutiny will be more intense but should not be intimidating for Bishop Brennan. His experience in Columbus has prepared him to take on bigger challenges. And the challenges in Brooklyn are essentially not much different than in Columbus, other than the diocese is totally urban and compact.

Don't expect to see photos from Brooklyn of Bishop Brennan sitting in a tractor or feeding a calf, as he did during his May farm tours in rural areas of the Columbus diocese to commemorate the feast day of St. Isidore the Farmer. The needs of the Brooklyn diocese, where millions of immigrants live, will be much more urban in nature.

But in the New York area, he can seek counsel from Cardinal Timothy Dolan, who leads the neighboring Archdiocese of New York, and Bishop John Barres of Rockville Centre, a former colleague. Bishop Brennan already has a relationship with both men, who attended his installation Mass in March 2019.

There's no denying that Bishop Brennan's sudden departure creates a void in Columbus. He's the first Columbus bishop to receive another Church appointment since Bishop John Carberry (later Cardinal Carberry) was elevated to St. Louis in 1968. Carberry's Columbus predecessors either died or retired.

Now the diocese must wait to see who's chosen as the 13th bishop of Columbus. If this were professional sports, we could speculate and identify names that might be potential candidates to fill the vacancy, similar to what the media do when head coaching vacancies come up.

The Church doesn't work that way, though, and we'll have to bide our time and pray for the right person to fill the vacancy. How long that will be is anyone's guess.

What we do know is that, in the eyes of many people, Bishop Brennan will be a tough act to follow.

# Bishop Brennan: Brief tenure, big impact

By Doug Bean  
*Catholic Times Editor*

Bishop Robert Brennan spent fewer than three years as the spiritual shepherd of the Diocese of Columbus, but he is leaving for a new assignment in the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, after having made a significant impact during his brief stay in Ohio.

On Sept. 29, the Diocese of Columbus was taken by surprise when the Holy See appointed Bishop Brennan to lead the Diocese of Brooklyn, the fifth-largest diocese in the United States in terms of Catholic population. He is replacing the retiring Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, who has presided in Brooklyn since 2003.

Bishop Brennan was introduced that day in Brooklyn at a news conference and then made his way throughout the two-county diocese located in two of New York's five boroughs before returning to Columbus the following day.

Once he was named bishop of Brooklyn, he became what is called the apostolic administrator in the Diocese of Columbus, which means he continues to perform his duties but is not technically considered the bishop of Columbus.

His time in Columbus will end during Thanksgiving week. Bishop Brennan's installation Mass in Brooklyn is set for Tuesday, Nov. 30.

The hallmark of his episcopacy in Columbus likely will be the Real Presence Real Future initiative launched last year to form missionary disciples among the faithful and to effectively utilize the church's resources in the current age.

"The bishop has left a great legacy here," said Matthew Schlater, the diocese's chief operating officer who was appointed to his newly created position earlier this year by Bishop Brennan. "What made him so effective is the way that he engaged with people and didn't point to himself. He pointed to Christ."

Bishop Brennan, an auxiliary bishop in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, before he was appointed as bishop of Columbus on Jan. 31, 2019, led the diocese through an unprecedented two-plus years of civil upheaval and changes in the local Church.

The most devastating event was the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that hit the United States in full force in March 2020 and led to Ohio's bishops closing churches and Catholic schools for approximately two months to help stop the spread of the deadly coronavirus, which has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives throughout the country.

Churches reopened for Sunday Masses on Pentecost in May 2020. Meanwhile, diocesan schools completed the academic year in a hybrid format and then returned in fall 2020 for in-person instruction.

Racial tensions following the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 in Minneapolis led to protests throughout the country, including in Columbus. Bishop Brennan watched some of the violence and destruction in the downtown area during summer 2020 from a front-row seat in his residence on

## DIOCESAN COMPARISON

### DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

Catholics: 278,000  
Total population: 2.9 million  
Square miles: 13,394 in 23 counties  
Parishes: 105  
Schools: 53  
Priests: 147  
Religious order priests: 13 congregations  
Religious sisters: 22 congregations

### DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN

Catholics: 1.5 million  
Total population: 4.9 million  
Square miles: 180 in 2 counties  
Parishes: 177  
Schools: 70  
Auxiliary bishops: 6  
Diocesan priests: 406  
Religious order priests: 155  
Religious brothers: 73 (7 congregations)  
Religious sisters: 415 (66 congregations)

East Broad Street.

Shooting deaths in Columbus also led to additional local unrest and protests. Bishop Brennan stood with African-American leaders of the community to address racial justice while calling for peaceful discourse and respect for public servants. In June 2020, he participated in a prayer service for healing organized by the Toltonites, a group of young Catholics from various ethnic and racial backgrounds, at Columbus St. Matthias Church.

In the diocese, the Real Presence Real Future initiative marked the start of a period of change.

A restructuring of diocesan offices began in 2020 that included the creation of an evangelization office headed by Father Adam Streitenberger and enhancement of the diocese's digital media presence with the addition of social media and digital content producers. Meanwhile, the offices for divine worship and religious education were eliminated.

In addition to Father Streitenberger's role as coordinator for evangelization, Bishop Brennan made a series of key appointments in his 2 ½ years here. Father Stash Dailey was named vicar for religious, Father Michael Lumpe was reassigned from rector of St. Joseph Cathedral to the Pontifical College Josephinum to become vice rector of the College of Liberal Arts while continuing as diocesan vicar for priests, Father Bill Hahn became the director of vocations, Father David Schalk was placed in charge

of Hispanic and Latino ministries, and Father Michael Hartge was made vice chancellor and then Moderator of the Curia.

The bishop also focused on bringing more orders of priests and religious into the diocese to serve in various ministries, and 10 new diocesan priests were ordained in the past three years.

The reorganization efforts continued this year when Schlater was hired as COO and Bill Davis was named chief financial officer.

At the parish level, the Real Presence Real Future initiative began in earnest with summer listening sessions followed by fall consultation sessions with parishioners at every church in the diocese. Results of those sessions will be processed and then presented next year, several months after Bishop Brennan leaves.

"Real Presence Real Future is catchy, but what does it point to?" Schlater asked. "It points to the very thing that God told us would sustain us throughout the ages: Him in the Eucharist, the Real Presence. Real Presence is real food."

"The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. It will sustain us through change in all circumstances of our personal life and in the culture."

"We have to make enduring decisions – decisions that may be just the start of a process that might not even benefit my kids and maybe even their kids."

After Bishop Brennan officially becomes Brooklyn's bishop, a college of consultors within the Diocese of Columbus will appoint an apostolic administrator to oversee the diocese until the Vatican names a replacement bishop. That process normally takes several months before an appointment is made and a new bishop is formally installed (and also ordained a bishop if the bishop-designate is not already a bishop) in Columbus.

It is rare for a bishop to be moved to a new diocese so quickly, but it has happened twice in Ohio in the past two years. In 2020, Bishop Nelson Perez served almost the same time in the Diocese of Cleveland as Bishop Brennan's term in Columbus before he was named archbishop in Philadelphia.

A college of consultors, which is a body of priests from our diocese, has eight days to convene after Bishop Brennan is installed in Brooklyn and then name a diocesan administrator, who could come from within the diocese or outside of it.

In the meantime, the diocese will carry on while following the course that Bishop Brennan set for the future.

"He set an example for us that it's not about him but about the mission of the diocese," Schlater said. "Whatever he was doing or whomever he was talking with, he let the conversation be about the other person. It's about the people, it's about the priests, it's about the church. And that's a pretty powerful sentiment."

"I think more than anything else, the word for that is true humility, and I think that will echo for a long time. He allowed people to see how loved they are, how great they are, how good they are."

"And he allowed that humanity to be manifested in the personality of the church in a more clear way because of how present he was."



St. Paul Church and School  
extend a heartfelt  
farewell to Bishop Brennan.  
May the Lord continue to fill  
you with grace and mercy.



## Events during Bishop Brennan's tenure in Columbus diocese

### 2019

**Jan. 19** – While driving on the Long Island Expressway, Auxiliary Bishop Robert Brennan of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, is informed in a phone call from Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, that Pope Francis has chosen him to be the next bishop of the Diocese of Columbus, succeeding the retiring Bishop Frederick Campbell.

**Jan. 31** – Bishop Brennan's appointment is announced at a news conference in Columbus.

**March 29** – Bishop Brennan is installed as the 12th bishop of Columbus at St. Joseph Cathedral, following a prayer service there the previous evening. The most memorable moment of the installation comes when the bishop walks throughout the cathedral displaying the document appointing him bishop for all to see.

**March 30-April 1**— The bishop administers the sacrament of confirmation on March 30 at Zanesville St. Nicholas Church, March 31 at Columbus St. Dominic Church and April 1 at Columbus St. Patrick Church. He also celebrates Mass on March 31 at Columbus St. Stephen the Martyr Church. During the next 2 ½ years, he travels 50,000 miles in his Ford

Fusion throughout the 23-county diocese, visiting all of its parishes, schools and institutions.

**May 3** – Frank Brown, Michael Fulton, Seth Keller and Gordon Mott are ordained as deacons for the diocese.

**May 25** – Fathers Brian Beal, PJ Brandimarti, Kyle Tennant and Christopher Yakkel are ordained as diocesan priests.

**June 19** – The diocesan Catholic Ethnic Ministries office sponsors a listening session at the Pontifical College Josephinum to discuss racial concerns within the Church.

**June 29** – The Latino ministry of the diocesan Catholic Ethnic Ministries office hosts a V Encuentro Diocesan Day at Pickerington St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish.

**July** – Father David Schalk, pastor of Columbus Christ the King Church, is appointed diocesan vicar for Hispanic ministry, a new position; Father Stash Dailey, pastor of Columbus Holy Family Church, is appointed diocesan vicar for religious.

**Aug. 5** – Father Michael Lumpe is appointed vice rector for the College of Liberal Arts at the Josephinum, continuing as diocesan vicar for priests; Father Adam Streitenberger is appointed diocesan evangelization

coordinator, a new position; Deacon Frank Iannarino is appointed deacon administrator of Columbus St. John the Baptist Church, the first deacon to fill that role in a diocesan parish.

**September** – The bishop appoints a task force to review the diocese's safe environment practices.

**Sept. 14** – Eugene Joseph is ordained as a deacon of the diocese.

**Sept. 30-Oct. 3** – Bishop Brennan and the priests of the diocese gather for a convocation at Maumee Bay State Park near Toledo.

**October** – School and parish representatives meet at conferences in New Albany, Danville and Chillicothe to discuss creating a culture of safety in schools and churches.

**Dec. 9-14** – Bishop Brennan and other bishops from Ohio and Michigan travel to the Vatican for their ad limina visit with the pope.

**December** – Sisters from the Order of the Most Holy Savior of St. Bridget (the Bridgettines) announce plans to build a house of hospitality next to their convent in Columbus' Franklin-ton neighborhood.

### 2020

**Jan. 17** – The diocese sponsors a conference at Gahanna St. Matthew Church on evangelizing the millennial

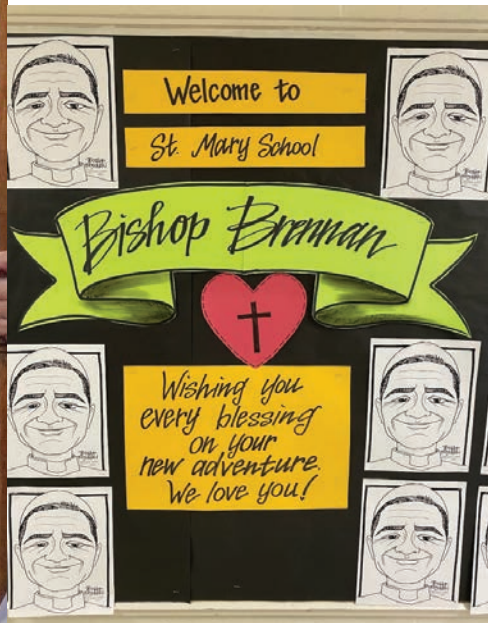
generation.

**February** – Plans to close St. Therese's Retreat Center in Columbus and the Sts. Peter and Paul Retreat Center in Newark as retreat sites are announced. The sites are being converted to other uses.

**Feb. 26** – Zanesville St. Thomas Aquinas Church announces plans to close for a structural evaluation after being declared unsafe by officials of the Mid-East Ohio Building Department.

**Mid-March** – The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic begin to be felt throughout the diocese and the nation. The Catholic bishops of Ohio announce the suspension of all public Masses and other parish activities through at least Easter Sunday, April 12, and suspend all of the state's Catholics from the obligation of attending Sunday Masses through the end of March. All schools in Ohio are closed by order of the state Department of Education. Many parishes begin livestreaming at least one Sunday Mass. St. Gabriel Radio begins broadcasting the cathedral's Sunday 10:30 a.m. and weekday 12:05 p.m. Masses. The Catholic Foundation creates an

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*May God's peace be with you,  
Bishop Brennan*



*Father Brett Garland and  
The Delaware St. Mary  
Parishioners and Students*

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emergency response fund to provide immediate and flexible assistance to diocesan parishes.

**April 2** – Ohio’s bishops extend the suspension of public Masses and parish activities and of the Sunday Mass attendance obligation through May 3.

Early April – About 50 diocesan priests receive training to safely provide end-of-life sacramental care during the pandemic.

**April 5-12** – Holy Week activities at the cathedral are broadcast live by St. Gabriel Radio, and the 10:30 a.m. Easter Sunday Mass is televised live on WCMH-TV in Columbus.

**Mid-April** – The diocesan development office sets up an online giving program, A Time for Extreme Charity, through the diocesan website.

**April 15** – Because of the pandemic, Stephen Ondrey is ordained a deacon of the Diocese of Columbus at St. John XXIII National Seminary in Weston, Massachusetts, where he is studying for the priesthood.

**April 28** – The state’s bishops extend the suspension of public Masses and of the Sunday Mass obligation through May 29.

**May 11** – Churches begin to reopen for brief periods of prayer, Eucharistic Adoration and the sacrament of reconciliation.

**May 25** – Some churches begin to reopen for daily Mass, followed on May 30 and 31, Pentecost weekend, by the resumption of Masses at all churches. Those in attendance are required to wear masks and observe safe distancing and hand sanitation practices; music is limited; holy water is unavailable; and suspension of the Sunday Mass attendance obligation is extended until Sept. 13.

**Late May and early June** – The death of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25 results in protests in Columbus and nationwide. Demonstrators in downtown Columbus damage buildings; the outer glass of two windows in the Chancery garage is the only damage to diocesan buildings. Bishop Brennan on May 29 invites everyone in the diocese “to join together in this effort to forge a path built with the pavers of justice and reverence for every human life toward a harmony that allows us to enjoy a peaceful future for our children and for all ages to come.”

**June 12** – Jacob Stinnett is ordained as a deacon of the diocese.

**June 13** – Fathers Frank Brown, Michael Fulton and Seth Keller are ordained as priests of the diocese.

**July** – The Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who have

four sisters living at Chillicothe St. Mary Church, announce plans to open a convent in the former Columbus St. Aloysius Church rectory.

**July 14** – Father Michael Hartge is appointed vice chancellor of the diocese, and Father William Hahn succeeds Father Paul Noble as diocesan vocations director. The Pallottine Fathers assume pastoral care of Columbus St. Christopher Church.

**July 15** – Laura Lewis is appointed interim victims’ assistance coordinator for the diocese. The appointment is one of several recommendations made by the safe environment task force formed the previous September.

**Aug. 16** – *The Catholic Times* announces that it will move to a year-round biweekly schedule. Ohio’s bishops indefinitely extend the dispensation of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass.

**Aug. 24-31** – All diocesan schools reopen for classes. Some are open to all students at all times, while others offer a blend of distance and in-person learning. Students have the option to learn at home, but most return to school buildings.

**September** – Sister Zephрина Mary Gracykuty, FIH, becomes director of the diocesan Missions office, succeeding Leandro “Lany” Tapay, who

retired after 13 years in the position. The Sisters of the Missionary Servants of the Word open a formation house in the former Columbus Corpus Christi Church for young women considering religious life.

**Sept. 1** – The Dominican Nuns of the Perpetual Rosary, a contemplative order with 14 sisters, relocate from Buffalo, New York, to the former Sts. Peter and Paul Retreat Center in Newark, which will be their temporary home while options for a permanent monastery are considered.

**Sept. 24** – The diocese observes the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy as a day of prayer and penance for healing and conversion.

**Sept. 27** – Two members of the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus take up residence in the Columbus Sacred Heart Church convent.

**Sept. 28** – The bishop issues a document declaring that on Jan. 1, New Boston St. Monica and Wheelersburg St. Peter in Chains churches will be merged, with their care entrusted to the pastor of St. Peter in Chains, and that West Portsmouth Our Lady of Sorrows, Otway Our Lady of Lourdes and Pond Creek Holy Trinity church-

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# We will miss you, Bishop Brennan!

On behalf of Corpus Christi, St. Ladislav, St. Mary Catholic Church, & St. Mary School, may God bless and guide you on your next journey in New York!



Photo credit:  
the Diocese of Columbus

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es also will merge, with their care entrusted to the pastor of Holy Trinity, which will become a mission of Portsmouth St. Mary Church. All the Catholic churches in Scioto County – Holy Trinity, St. Peter in Chains and Portsmouth St. Mary and Holy Redeemer – will have one pastor.

**Sept. 30** – Two Sisters of Our Lady of Kilimanjaro arrive at the Columbus St. Ladislav Church convent.

**Oct. 2** – Columbus St. Leo Church comes under the direction of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, is renamed St. Leo the Great Oratory and becomes the new home of the Columbus Latin Mass community.

**Nov. 7** – Deacons Daniel Dowler, Victor Nduaguba, James Elchert, Jesus Figueroa Jr., Jeffrey Hurdley, Nicholas Klear, Mark O'Loughlin, Christopher Walsh, Eric Wright and Douglas Yglesias are ordained as deacons of the diocese.

**Dec. 12** – Archbishop Pierre, the apostolic nuncio, is the homilist for a two-hour celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at the cathedral, conducted entirely in Spanish and televised live on WCMH-TV, which also presents the cathedral's 10:30 a.m. Christmas Day Mass on a tape-delayed basis.

**2021**

**Feb. 17** – On Ash Wednesday, the diocese begins 40 Days of Adoration, with a different parish hosting Eucharistic Adoration every day through Palm Sunday, March 28.

**Feb. 27-28** – The diocese launches Real Presence Real Future, a three-year planning initiative aimed at increasing the presence of Christ throughout the diocese and upholding the faith for future generations.

**March 29** – During Reconciliation Monday, part of the Real Presence Real Future initiative, priests are available for confession at nearly every diocesan parish.

**April 12** – WCMH-TV televises the cathedral's 10:30 a.m. Easter Sunday Mass.

**May** – Plans are announced for Unity in Community: Courageous Conversations, a six-session program giving parishes an opportunity for an in-depth dialogue on racism and cultural sensitivity.

**May 29** – Fathers Stephen Ondrey and Jacob Stinnett are ordained as priests of the diocese.

**June 5-6** – Ohio's bishops reinstate the obligation to attend Masses on Sundays and holy days of obligation for those physically able to do so.

**July and August** – Two in-person and four virtual sessions throughout the diocese give parishioners a chance to ask questions and offer comments about the Real Presence Real Future initiative. Father Tomas Carvahal, CR, is assigned to Dover St. Joseph and Zoar Holy Trinity churches, becoming the Theatine order's first priest in the diocese. Two other Theatine priests are to be assigned to Columbus Christ the King Church. All three Theatines will serve the Hispanic communities in their areas.

**July 1** – Father Michael Hartge is appointed the diocese's moderator of the Curia, and Matthew Schlater its chief operating officer, both new positions. William Davis, diocesan finance director, is appointed chief financial officer.

**July 22** – Father Eugene Joseph is ordained as a priest of the diocese. The ordination takes place in Birmingham, England, where he has remained since being called to return there in November to await approval of a change in his immigration status.

**Aug. 1** – Jerry Freewalt, director of the diocesan Office for Social Concerns, becomes executive director of the Catholic Conference of Ohio, succeeding Carolyn Jurkowitz, who retires after 34 years.

**Aug. 27-28** – The diocese hosts a

two-day Eucharistic Gathering, with a prayer service in the cathedral on Aug. 27 and a Mass plus two talks by Archbishop Nelson Perez of Philadelphia at Columbus St. Charles Preparatory School on Aug. 28.

**Late August** – The Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco begin serving at Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School.

**September to November** – Each diocesan parish hosts two, two-hour consultation sessions to discuss the Real Presence Real Future initiative.

**Sept. 20** – Bishop Brennan receives a call from Archbishop Pierre announcing that after 2½ years in Columbus, he has been selected to become the eighth bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, succeeding retiring Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio.

**Sept. 29** – The Holy See announces Bishop Brennan's new appointment.

**Nov. 9** – The Museum of Catholic Art and History, formerly the Jubilee Museum and Catholic Cultural Center, reopens in The Catholic Foundation's building across from the cathedral. It had been closed since August 2019 because of deteriorating conditions at its previous location, the former Columbus Holy Family School, and because of the pandemic.

**Nov. 30** – Bishop Brennan is to be installed as bishop of Brooklyn.

**Thank you Bishop Brennan!**

We are grateful for your faithful leadership and pray that your service to the Diocese of Brooklyn continues to engage and nourish the hearts of the faithful.



# Bishop supported strong Catholic identity for diocesan schools

By Tim Puet  
For *The Catholic Times*

Diocesan school Superintendent Adam Dufault said Bishop Robert Brennan's strong support for Catholic education has encouraged diocesan schools to emphasize Catholic beliefs even more strongly in every aspect of their classes.

"Our faith always has been the foundation of everything we do, but Bishop Brennan has been a great booster of our efforts to expand on what diocesan schools have done in the past by going beyond religious education classes to integrate the faith into all classroom subjects," he said.

"This allows us to bring the Catholic world view into every aspect of the school day. He also has led efforts to develop our school religious education curriculum, which should be completed this spring."

Bishop Brennan visited each of the diocese's 41 elementary and 11 secondary schools, many of them several times, in his 2 1/2 years in Columbus. Most of his early visits were with Dufault, and then he began going to schools on his own as he became familiar with the diocese's 23 counties.

"He has been at the schools in good times and bad," Dufault said. "One sad time was when Xavier Quinn, who was 14 and was to have entered Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School that fall, was killed in a tragic shooting incident in July 2019.

"There was an evening prayer service for him at the school a few days later. The bishop was returning from out of town that night and drove from the airport to DeSales to be with the students. He spoke beautifully and movingly at the service and never mentioned he had rushed there from the airport."

One of many happier incidents occurred earlier this year at Columbus Bishop Ready High School. "The bishop was there to take a picture with a student who had drawn the winning poster for the cover of the Bishops' Golf Classic program. While he was there, he went to a science lab class and entered into lab work with the students," Dufault said.

"One of the students asked him if he would come to a volleyball game the following week, and the next week, there he was. This was one of many times he was at sports and other extracurricular events involving diocesan



**Bishop Robert Brennan engaged with children in Catholic education from the moment he arrived in Columbus. Two years ago, he visited the John Paul II Early Childhood Preschool Center in Columbus under the direction of the Little Servant Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.**  
*CT photo by Ken Snow*

schools."

Dufault also praised the bishop's cooperation with educators throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. "He was instrumental in helping us work through the event that dominated our lives for most of his tenure as bishop, shaping policies and providing encouragement," he said.

Because the pandemic prevented large gatherings from taking place at the time, Bishop Brennan celebrated a livestreamed baccalaureate Mass for all diocesan high schools at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on May 27, 2020.

In the fall of that year, he supported the diocesan Office of Catholic Schools' decision to allow all diocesan schools to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year. All students at those schools were able to attend classes in socially distanced classrooms for at least part of each week throughout the school year if they chose to do so. Schools were fully reopened in spring 2021.

During Bishop Brennan's tenure, ties were strengthened with Ohio Dominican University (ODU) and with Franciscan University of Steubenville.

"We have deepened our links with ODU and integrated the university with the diocesan schools in many ways," Dufault said. "I'm the diocesan representative on the ODU board, and the university president attends many events at our schools. The university makes amazing contributions to the schools at all levels.

"Diocesan school administrators were asked at a recent meeting at

ODU whether their schools were involved with ODU in some way, and two-thirds of them, representing students from pre-kindergarten through high school, raised their hands.

"Franciscan University created an outstanding catechetical institute in 2019, and we have entered into a partnership which allows us to use the institute for all our teacher formation programs," Dufault said. "The university's president, Father Dave Pivonka, TOR, has worked closely with us on setting up the partnership and has visited the diocese on a number of occasions."

Lori Dulin is the associate director for marketing for the Schools Office. She has helped unify the schools' promotional activities on the office's Our Catholic Schools website, which may be found at [education.columbuscatholic.org](http://education.columbuscatholic.org).

"I've worked with many wonderful people on behalf of promoting the schools but have never seen anyone quite like Bishop Brennan," she said. "He has such presence and love for children, especially the high-schoolers.

"Whenever he's in the schools, he reminds the students of how much God loves them and will always be there for them. Students need to know this, and he gives them his assurance every time," Dulin said.

"From a marketing perspective, Bishop Brennan has done nothing but breed even more good will for our schools. His recognition that Catholic education is a partnership in faith between parents, the schools and the communities they serve has invigorated our mission and purpose."

Thank you,  
Bishop Brennan...

Wishing you well  
Praying for you

From the Hardin County parishes:  
Immaculate Conception Church, Kenton  
Our Lady of Lourdes, Ada



# Bishop was strong supporter of Damascus campus, youth programs

By Tim Puet  
For *The Catholic Times*

Bishop Robert Brennan was strongly supportive of the Damascus Catholic Mission Campus in rural Knox County and of its Catholic Youth Summer Camp (CYSC) program.

Aaron Richards, Damascus executive director for operations and finance, said that when praying for Bishop Brennan following the announcement in early 2019 that he would succeed Bishop Frederick Campbell as spiritual leader of the Diocese of Columbus, “we asked for a shepherd, and God gave us a father.”

“Damascus has found greater resolve, clarity and momentum in the 2 ½ years of its partnership with Bishop Brennan than at any other time in its 21-year history,” he said.

The bishop’s first visit to Damascus came during a CYSC session in summer 2019, a few months after his installation as bishop of Columbus. Richards said Bishop Brennan told the Damascus leadership team, “I have always been of the mind that one should judge a tree by its fruits,” then said he was impressed by the positive things he had been told about the mission center’s work by parents, school principals, priests and students throughout the diocese.

The bishop concluded his talk by saying, “I believe that we can do great work in this diocese together.” Richards described this as “an invitation to partnership that has borne incredible fruit over the course of two years and which will continue to bear fruit for years to come.”

“Bishop Brennan believes in the work of Damascus, but even more than this, he believes in the community of Damascus,” Richards said. “During many of his visits, I’d be left wondering whether he was truly here to celebrate Mass or because he felt



Bishop Robert Brennan presents a scouting award.

CT photo by Ken Snow

at home. I think it was frequently the latter.”

He said that when visiting CYSC, the bishop celebrated Mass, took part in Eucharistic Adoration, administered the sacrament of reconciliation and sometimes just showed up to talk with young people. At the closing programs of several weeklong camp sessions, the bishop “would stand captivated at the back of the room as campers shared the testimonies of encounter with Jesus that they’d experienced that week.”

Damascus had a booth at the SEEK conference for young people at Indianapolis in 2019. Richards said, “Bishop Brennan spent the entirety of New Year’s Eve there, celebrating with joy, entering into conversation and prayer, and even demonstrating his knowledge of every hand motion to (Catholic recording artist) Matt Maher’s songs that were being played in the room.

“Even in his last weeks with our diocese, Bishop Brennan, no doubt overwhelmed by a tremendous list of administrative priorities, stayed true to his heart for his people,” Richards

said. “He recently hosted a dinner with all the youth missionaries and seminarians within the diocese to celebrate our time together and offer encouragement and prayer.

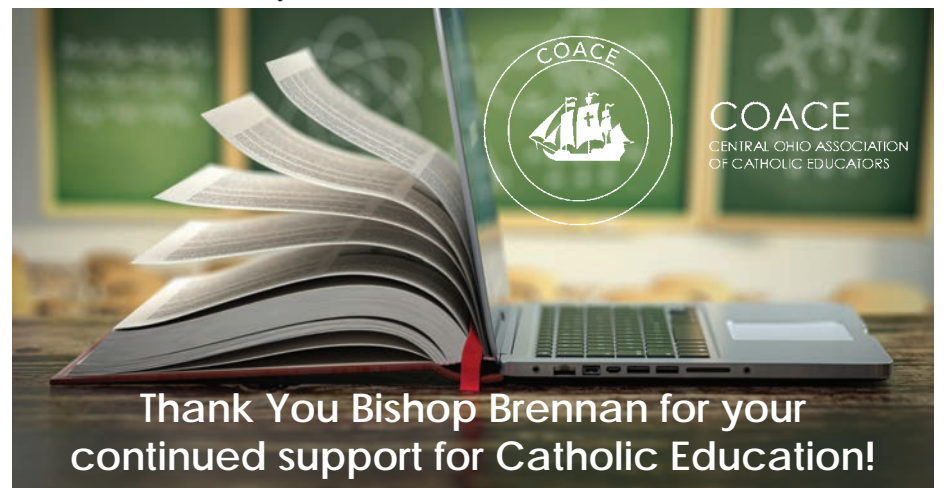
“It was an event that spoke to his character, his fatherhood and his love of his flock. The missionaries of Damascus have been forever changed by our bishop. We’ll bear the mark of his love for generations to come, and we’ll be looking forward to (a possible) Damascus Brooklyn.”

Besides his encounters at Damascus, Bishop Brennan saw young people when he administered the sacrament of confirmation. Brendan O’Rourke, communications director and former youth minister at Columbus St. Catharine Church, said the bishop’s visits were more than perfunctory events.

“Confirmation season is a busy time for a bishop, but Bishop Brennan never made his visits ‘in-and-out’ activities,” he said. “He always made sure that either before or after confirmation, he would have a chance to sit down with the young people being confirmed, ask about their lives and talk about their faith concerns.

“You could tell that young people were a priority for him and that he clearly cared about them. They appreciated this. People often say young people are the future of the Church, and that phrase bothers me. They are the Church, just as much as adults are, and Bishop Brennan realized that.

“Another thing I’ll remember about Bishop Brennan is that everywhere I went, it seemed he was there, too. I’d see him at football games, schools and diocesan young people’s events just hanging out with the kids. He showed what it is to have pastoral care for everyone.”



# Bishop was eager to engage with secular, social media

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

Right from the start of Bishop Robert Brennan's time in Columbus, he embraced secular and social media like few church leaders have done before him in this diocese.

He quickly identified a need for the local Church to be present on social media; he willingly agreed to interviews with secular print, radio and television outlets; and he became a regular contributor to St. Gabriel Catholic Radio.

Rarely does a leader of any organization impress members of the media with candor and forthrightness, but Bishop Brennan certainly did that in Columbus right up until he leaves to become the next bishop of Brooklyn, New York.

With plenty of experience in front of television cameras on Catholic Faith Network when he was auxiliary bishop in Rockville Centre, New York, Bishop Brennan felt at ease in interviews and never hesitated to be a voice for the local Catholic Church in the public arena.

Longtime WCMH-TV news anchor Colleen Marshall was shocked when Bishop Brennan agreed within the first month after he was installed as bishop to an interview – and with no questions off limits no matter how difficult the subject.

"We had talked about maybe trying to get an interview with this new bishop who had come to town," Marshall recalled. "And I remember saying, 'They never really do sit-down 'interviews.' When they told me the new bishop is going to sit down with you at the cathedral, I said, 'Really? What restrictions are they trying to put on the interview?' They said no restrictions. I said, 'OK, we'll see.'"

"I went down there, and he said I could ask him anything, and I did. And I actually thought to myself, this is the first time I've been able to have what I consider to be a no-holds-barred interview with a leader in the Catholic Church.

"And he was forthright. He was honest, he was insightful. He allowed me to question him about what I consider to be the issues facing the Catholic Church here in this diocese today – issues that would have in the past been off limits for someone in his position. And I found him to be welcoming and open.

"I remember going back to the newsroom and saying, 'This is going to be the leader this diocese 'needs.' I was so



**Bishop Robert Brennan prepares for one of his many interviews that aired on St. Gabriel Catholic Radio during his time as bishop in Columbus.** Photo courtesy Andy Mackey

impressed with him. And so grateful that he was willing to answer not only the questions I had as a journalist, but the questions I had as a Catholic."

During the next two years, Marshall interviewed Bishop Brennan a number of times and continued to be appreciative of the opportunity to interact with him.

"It wasn't just his willingness to answer tough questions, but he didn't make you feel as if you were off-putting because you ask those questions," said Marshall, who attends Hilliard St. Brendan Church. "He is such a welcoming person.

"My final interview with him at the diocese office, I'll be honest with you, we both cried a little bit. I felt like I made a friend."

Bishop Brennan's tenure was fraught with difficult situations, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic.

"During the COVID crisis, this is what really elevated him, in my opinion," Marshall said. "As you know, everyone at the very beginning days of that crisis was frightened. We were all being told to stay in our homes. We couldn't go to Mass.

"And, you know, people in crisis turn to the Church, right? We couldn't turn to the Church in a physical, present way. The diocese agreed that I could interview him, and he was one of my first Zoom interviews. And I interviewed him frequently during the crisis.

"Each time I found him to be comforting, and he gave words that people needed to hear, that we will get through this as a Church. We will get through this as a community.

"He helped marshal the forces and figure out the way that churches could

continue to connect with the congregants at a time when we couldn't physically be in the church. And he helped lead the effort to make services available online, for people to do things as simple as having rosary sessions online, and communicate with each other, even though we couldn't be present with each other.

"During Christmas and Easter, we were able to broadcast Masses with the bishop from the cathedral so that Catholics could connect with him. And during those Masses, I found his messages to be comforting."

Bishop Brennan also addressed the uprising that ensued in 2020 after the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis and several shooting incidents in Columbus. He reached out to leaders of other faiths, particularly in the African-American community, to try to bring peace amid the violence and destruction occurring in downtown Columbus.

"You're impressed because he always seems to find the right words for any situation, including a crisis, like the racial unrest that we saw downtown. That went right past his church," Marshall said.

"He not only called for calm, but he acknowledged the reason that people were so upset and the reason that we need to maybe re-examine ourselves and the way we approach these difficult situations.

"He talked frankly about the Church's role and acknowledged the problems. He was just a source of comfort and calm during another crisis. When you think about it, for the little bit of time that he was here, he had to navigate some really difficult

situations – unprecedented situations."

Marshall believes the impact of the bishop's words and actions, particularly during the pandemic, extended beyond the Catholic Church and its faithful.

"You don't even have to be Christian to realize that he's got this message of, we can get through this as a community," Marshall said. "Love your neighbor. He would constantly tell people to check in on older people who might be alone, who might need someone to get food for them. His message was one of community helping communities, and that applied to everyone.

"He was saying prayers for the people of his diocese, but I think he was praying for the city, the community, the counties in central Ohio. And I think that resonated with anyone who was troubled and trying to get through this.

"He made you feel like, I would like to follow him. He's the kind of leader who makes people feel welcome, and then once they get there, make them glad they're there."

Not only did Bishop Brennan appear on television often during those crises, but he also did interviews for print publications, wrote columns and spoke to Catholics on St. Gabriel Catholic Radio every weekday during the first three months of the pandemic.

He also initiated a weekly show, Faith Dialogue with Bishop Brennan, on St. Gabriel Radio and appeared often on Father Adam Streitenberger's Conversations in Discipleship show.

"When Mother Angelica invited grassroots nonprofits to start Catholic radio stations, she encouraged the stations to localize," said Bill Messerly, executive director of St. Gabriel Radio. "She encouraged not only catechesis but that we connected the faith community, especially through the leadership of our bishops.

"From day one, Bishop Brennan has been enthusiastic and present with Catholic radio listeners.

"It has unified our diocese in very real way. Bishop Brennan's availability was especially impactful during the COVID-19 outbreak. Our listeners were overwhelmed by his love and care in addressing them by radio every day. Every day. What a gift to all of us."

Immediately upon Bishop Brennan's arrival in Columbus in 2019, he recognized the medium of radio as an important tool to communicate and connect with the diocese.

"Bishop Brennan has kept us on our

**MEDIA**, continued from Page 10

toes,” Messerly said. “Although he is a bishop of deep prayer and study, he moves quickly. It didn’t take us long to realize this.

“Shortly after Bishop Brennan was installed, we received a phone call from the Chancery. We were told that Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation *Christus Vivit* was being released the next day and that Bishop Brennan would like to go on the radio in the morning and share his thoughts and encouragement.

“It was a new world for us. I didn’t even know that it was being released and knew nothing about it. Reading an exhortation in one evening and preparing questions stretched me in a good way. He later said that the world moves fast and that he wanted to be sure that the faithful hear from him first.”

Bishop Brennan immediately immersed the diocese in the world of social media, beginning with a livestream of his installation Mass on March 29, 2019.

He quickly identified the need to communicate with people and evangelize – specifically young Catholics – through YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social sites.

Father Streitenberger was appointed the diocese’s coordinator for evangelization several months after Bishop Brennan took over, and he began building the diocese’s social media presence.

Since then, the diocese has hired a coordinator for social and digital media evangelization, a web designer, a graphic designer for social and digital media and a video specialist. More members to that team likely will be added in the coming months.

The diocese is also redesigning its website in a partnership with British Columbia-based Glass Canvas, which specializes in evangelization through digital media. Also included in the di-



**In an empty St. Joseph Cathedral, Bishop Robert Brennan (center) celebrates a Mass that was broadcast on WCMH-TV in Columbus and via livestream on Easter Sunday 2020 when churches were closed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.**



**Bishop Robert Brennan was adept at utilizing media. A number of his homilies were livestreamed through various outlets or heard on St. Gabriel Catholic Radio.**

*CT photos by Ken Snow*

ocese’s web presence eventually will be additional evangelization and informational sites. And, as part of the web reboot process, parishes are being invited to transition their websites to the same provider that the diocese is using.

Another element to the transition is a new website for The Catholic Times, [catholictimescolumbus.org](http://catholictimescolumbus.org), that will debut in the coming weeks.

In addition, construction of a studio for television, radio and podcasting with professional-quality equipment is currently in process in the diocese’s main office at 197 E. Gay Street behind St. Joseph Cathedral. The studio will allow the diocese and various affiliated organizations to produce quality content, do live interviews for radio and television, and produce programs.

“When it comes to the new evangelization, and evangelization in general, we have to engage the culture and be willing to talk to the culture. And that’s what really impressed me about Bishop Brennan was his real desire to kind of boldly lean into the culture and be a part of the conversation,” Father Streitenberger said. “He sees

media as a means to communicate the faith and to evangelize.

“Before he came, I often say that we were kind of in the Dark Ages. But he really dedicated resources and attention to social media, the website, and he moved us into this direction where now we’re present on all of the platforms and social media.

“And I think that’s probably one of his great lasting legacies is really supporting media and using it for evan-

gelization.”

His media presence left a lasting impression beyond the scope of the Church and the Catholic faithful.

“I’m going to be honest with you, I almost got angry at the Church that they are taking him away from central Ohio after such a short amount of time,” Marshall said. “You just want to say, ‘Really, you have to come and take him away from here? We need him as much as Brooklyn.’”



Thank you, Bishop Brennan, for your work in the Diocese of Columbus and your support of Catholic education. May God bless and protect you as you begin your new work in New York.

**NTD**  
THE  
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SCHOOLS

Wishing you the very best  
Bishop Brennan from  
The Notre Dame Schools!

# Bishop encouraged religious orders to expand into diocese

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

Bishop Robert Brennan showed a heart for many apostolates during his brief tenure in Columbus. One of those was religious orders.

A story illustrates Bishop Brennan's zeal to bring more religious into the diocese, beginning from the time he was installed in March 2019 right up until his departure this month.

Bishop Brennan was scheduled to accompany Father Stash Dailey, the diocese's vicar for religious, to Chicago and Milwaukee at the end of September to visit several orders that might be interested in establishing a presence in Columbus.

A week before the trip, those plans drastically changed for Bishop Brennan when he received a call from Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the Vatican's representative in the United States, informing him that he was being named the new bishop of Brooklyn, New York.

Instead of traveling to Illinois and Wisconsin on Sept. 28-30, Bishop Brennan headed to New York for the announcement of his appointment to the Brooklyn diocese.



Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary pray at St. Joseph Cathedral. At right is Father Adam Streitenberger, diocesan coordinator for evangelization.

In the meantime, the bishop encouraged Father Dailey not to cancel the visit and to go on his own to assess the prospects of new communities potentially bringing their charisms to the diocese. And so he went without the bishop.

Though Bishop Brennan was not physically present, his heart remained intent on continuing to build up the Diocese of Columbus.

"It went kind of like this in the

meeting with the orders: (Bishop Brennan) wants you to come," Father Dailey said, "and then, 24 hours later, you have to say he's no longer bishop, but he still wants you to come."

Bishop Brennan showed his commitment to religious early on when he appointed Father Dailey, pastor at Columbus Holy Family Church, to the position of vicar for religious in summer 2019, just several months after the bishop's arrival in central Ohio.

He placed Father Dailey in charge of overseeing all religious communities outside of diocesan priests and recruiting others to come to the diocese.

Deacon Tom Berg Jr., the diocesan chancellor, had overseen religious orders as part of his duties, but Bishop Brennan sought a priest for that role who could actively pursue more priests, sisters and brothers to establish a presence here. Father Dailey has always had a heart for working with religious and was, in the bishop's eyes, well suited for the position.

"I think that the mere fact that he wanted to have a vicar for religious showed that he understood that in order for the local church to be healthy and faithful to the Lord it had to have religious fully present and fully alive," said Father Dailey, who remains pastor at Holy Family.

"And, thankfully, he had that vision and the eagerness to assist helping religious life in the diocese to become stronger and more fully alive.

"He encourages them to be present among the faithful and to be bold in their service to the Lord by being an encouraging and giving witness to the

See **RELIGIOUS ORDERS**, Page 13

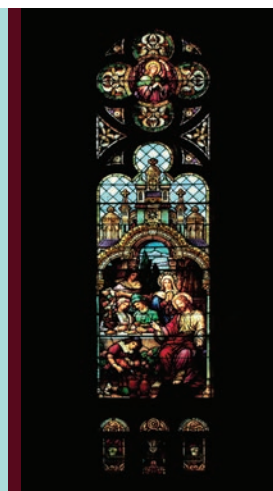
*A fond farewell from  
your devoted friends at*

**CRISTO REY**  
COLUMBUS HIGH SCHOOL



## Most Reverend Bishop Brennan:

Thank you for your enthusiastic and passionate support of our school, our mission, and most importantly, the students of Cristo Rey Columbus. You will be greatly missed and may God bless you on your journey.



The Church of the Ascension in Johnstown wishes to express our deep appreciation to Bishop Brennan for his tremendous contributions to the Diocese of Columbus.

We ask God to bless him richly in his new endeavors, and pray that he will find continued success in his faith journey as the new Bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn.



Thank You  
Bishop  
Brennan

for serving our  
St. Anthony community.  
Best of luck in all of  
your future endeavors!

**RELIGIOUS ORDERS**, *continued from Page 12*

whole world.”

Father Dailey’s ability to make connections, with support from Bishop Brennan, has resulted in three new orders of priests and five orders of sisters moving into the diocese during the bishop’s 32 months here. In the meantime, several other orders already here added sisters or priests to their Columbus presence.

The two newest women’s orders to the Diocese of Columbus are the Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco, who are working with students at Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School this year, and the Leaven of the Immaculate Heart of Mary sisters, who arrived three weeks ago in Portsmouth.

“They do a lot of evangelization and help with home enthronements to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary,” Father Dailey said of the sisters in Portsmouth, “and one of the sisters teaches in the Catholic school.”

The order, founded in the Philippines in 1991, has established communities in Ohio, Alabama, Nebraska, South Dakota and Australia in addition to the Philippines. The sisters’ website describes the order as a community of missionary sisters dedicated to the education and formation



**Bishop Robert Brennan (center) visits with young women and sisters during the Marian Dinner earlier this month to promote vocations to religious life.**

*CT photo by Ken Snow*

of the young and their families. Early childhood formation, catechetical instruction, sacramental preparation, retreats and house-to-house evangelism are all part of the apostolate. They also coordinate with parishes for children, youth and family formation seminars or retreats.

Last year, the cloistered Dominican Sisters of the Perpetual Rosary relocated from New York to the former Sts. Peter and Paul Retreat Center outside of Newark. Two sisters from the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Kilimanjaro moved into the former Columbus St. Ladislav Church convent, the Sister Servants of the

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus came to the Columbus Sacred Heart Church convent, the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary expanded from Chillicothe to open a convent at the former Columbus St. Aloysius Church rectory, and the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Word started a House of Formation for Missionaries at St. Ladislav in addition to its sisters serving the Hispanic and Latino congregations at Columbus Christ the King and Columbus St. Stephen the Martyr churches.

Men’s orders that are new to Columbus since Bishop Brennan’s arrival are the Pallottine Fathers, who assumed pastoral care of Columbus St. Christopher Church in 2020; the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, an order dedicated to celebrating the Traditional Latin Mass that moved into the former Columbus St. Leo Church last year; and the Theatine Fathers, who arrived this year to serve in Latino ministry at Columbus Christ the King Church and at Dover St. Joseph Church and Zoar Holy Trinity Church.

“(Bishop Brennan) wanted the universality of the Church to be fully alive throughout the whole diocese so you’d have a variety of charisms, different

apostles being fully engaged, and making sure, to the degree that he could in the brief time he was here, for religious life to permeate all parts of the local church, with the local church being the whole diocese,” Father Dailey said.

“With all of the different congregations, institutes and orders, there’s this harmonious complementarity that benefits the whole church and the whole world. That’s a blessing. It doesn’t matter their country of origin or their language. It’s how does the Church reach out as a mother to assist the faithful and encourage them and give witness.”

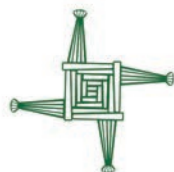
Father Dailey continues to work on attracting more religious orders but is sad that Bishop Brennan will no longer be here.

“Every interaction I’ve ever had with him, it’s more like I feel like I’m working with a brother than working for a boss,” Father Dailey said. “Obviously, there’s a holy deference to him because of his position and there’s always maintaining respect of his office in conversation and in cooperation.

“He delegated but never became detached, was fully invested, and even though he had delegated the task to you, he was still very much invested and interested.”

## Farewell and blessings to Bishop Brennan from Saint Brigid of Kildare!

*May the road rise up to meet you.  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face;  
the rains fall soft upon your fields and  
until we meet again,  
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.*



SAINT BRIGID OF KILDARE



Thank you, Bishop Brennan, for  
supporting us as we learn and grow!  
We wish you all the best in Brooklyn.



933 Hamlet Street | [www.sjms.net](http://www.sjms.net) | 614.291.8601

## Priests describe Brennan as 'roll-up-your-sleeves' bishop

By Tim Puet  
For *The Catholic Times*

A priest who worked closely with Bishop Robert Brennan said one of the hallmarks of his 2 ½ years as spiritual shepherd of the Diocese of Columbus was his active involvement with the diocese's priests.

"I think of Bishop Brennan as a 'roll-up-your-sleeves' bishop," Father Michael Lumpe said. "As Pope Francis might say, he didn't mind 'smelling like the sheep.' He would never ask anyone to do something he wouldn't do himself."

An incident that occurred in 2019 while Father Lumpe was rector of Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral provided an example of the bishop's willingness to pitch in whenever necessary.

"We were getting ready for a wedding one weekend, and everybody on the cathedral maintenance staff was down with the flu," he said. "I told the bishop I was going to do cleanup work in their absence, and he said, 'I know how to operate a bucket and mop from when I was a pastor on Long Island.' So he grabbed a bucket, and the two of us went to work."

Father Lumpe was rector of the ca-



**Bishop Robert Brennan is joined by priests of the diocese in the background and then-Deacons Seth Keller (left) and Christopher Yakkell (right) for the annual Chrim Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral during Holy Week in 2019.**  
*CT photo by Ken Snow*

thedral from 2013 until becoming vice rector of the College of Liberal Arts at the Pontifical College Josephinum in 2019. He also was diocesan vicar for priests, the bishop's chief liaison with diocesan clergy, until Father William

Hahn recently was appointed to the new position of vicar for clergy. Father Hahn also is the diocese's vocations director, with Father Lumpe now serving as vicar for senior and infirm priests.

"I first learned of Bishop Bren-

nan's appointment to Columbus when Bishop (Frederick) Campbell told the diocesan Chancery staff the news," Father Lumpe said. "We were given his biography, and the first thing I thought was, 'Why is my birthday listed here?'" Both were born on June 7, two years apart.

"(Diocesan vicar general) Msgr. (Stephan) Moloney and I had dinner with him when he came here from the Diocese of Rockville Centre (New York, where he was auxiliary bishop) a few days before his installation here, and he wanted to know as much as he could about the diocese right away.

"He asked Msgr. Moloney and I what we wanted to see in the diocese. I mentioned that I'd like to see more priests teaching in high schools and hoped we could have a vocations director who could devote more time to that role rather than also serve as pastor of a parish," Father Lumpe said. Both changes were put into place during Bishop Brennan's tenure.

"Coming from a diocese in New York that consists of just two suburban counties, he really enjoyed exploring the 23 counties of our diocese

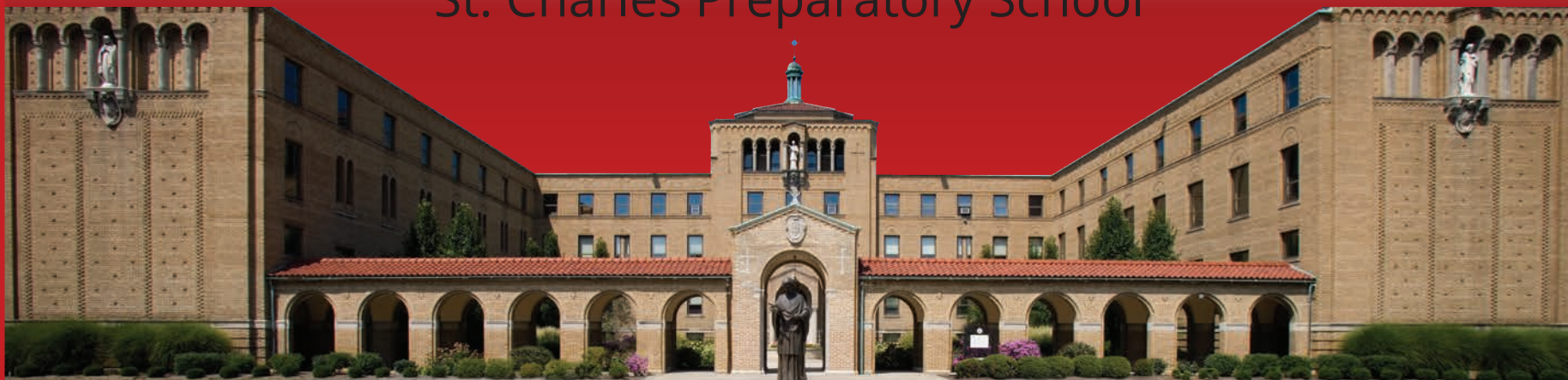
See **PRIESTS**, Page 27



# Thank You and Best Wishes Bishop Brennan!



St. Charles Preparatory School



# Bishop is leaving, but Real Presence Real Future will proceed

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

The Real Presence Real Future initiative launched during Bishop Robert Brennan's episcopate most likely will be the defining legacy of his time in Columbus.

Though he won't see the project through to completion, he set the stage for significant change throughout the 23-county diocese for years to come. The initiative launched a planning process that will culminate with a direction for the diocese that accounts for the needs of the faithful while considering available resources, or lack thereof, particularly the shortage of priests.

The fall consultation phase of Real Presence Real Future was scheduled to wrap up Nov. 20. The results of the feedback from two months of sessions that included every parish in the diocese will be analyzed during winter and presented next year. At that time, models will be offered for consideration among the pastors and their appointed key parish leaders that incorporate restructuring of parishes and resources based on feedback from the consultation sessions.



**Bishop Robert Brennan (center) celebrates Mass in August at St. Charles Preparatory School as part of a two-day Eucharistic Gathering held in conjunction with the Real Presence Real Future initiative in the diocese.**  
*CT photo by Ken Snow*

Bishop Brennan announced last month after he was appointed bishop of Brooklyn, New York, that Real Presence Real Future would continue in Columbus despite his impending departure in late November, saying he hoped the work already completed would put the next bishop in an advantageous decision-making position to implement the goals of the initiative.

The roots of the Real Presence Real Future process can be traced to a convocation for priests held at Maumee Bay

State Park in northern Ohio in September 2019, six months after Bishop Brennan was installed in Columbus.

As the priests gathered to pray and discuss the future of the diocese, he sought their feedback on how to meet the current and future needs of priests and the people they serve.

"He wanted to bring as many voices in as possible to the discussion," recalled Father Michael Hartge, who has since been appointed moderator of the Curia for the diocese while

serving as the point person for Real Presence Real Future. "That's kind of how he is, and I think that one of the great qualities he has is his humility.

"He knew we were truly embarking on something that is impacting everyone, and whether it's five people or 50,000, he wants to hear from people. He's very collaborative and just really does a great job of being an active listener before he makes a decision."

To facilitate the undertaking, the diocese subsequently partnered with the Catholic Leadership Institute, a national non-profit organization that has assisted dioceses throughout the country with similar restructuring projects.

"They have a lot of experience and expertise and could just give us sort of the arms and legs and a framework with how to reach out to people, incorporate feedback into some suggestions," Father Hartge said.

At the priest convocation, clergy members were presented projections for the future and, as Father Hartge pointed out, the bishop could have just looked at the data and formulated a plan.

"He could have gone with sheer

*See RPRE, Page 30*



Bishop Brennan's physical presence at Bishop Hartley, whether celebrating Mass on Founder's Day or offering support from the sidelines at sporting events, are signs of his shepherding leadership and support for Catholic schools.

His words in homilies or discussion ignite and unite us all in the call to Christ for one another.

Bishop Hartley loves Bishop Brennan and wishes him the best of luck as he heads home to serve the greater body of Christ.

[BISHOP-HARTLEY.ORG](http://BISHOP-HARTLEY.ORG)

**BISHOP  
HARTLEY**

# Bishop reflects on events during time in diocese

By Doug Bean  
Catholic Times Editor

In a final interview with *The Catholic Times* on Monday, Nov. 8 before his departure to lead the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, Bishop Robert Brennan answered questions for 1 ½ hours in his office at the Chancery. The following is an edited conversation:

**Question: How has your perception of the diocese and its people changed from your arrival until today?**

**Answer:** When I first arrived, it was all new. And it was exciting. I just really felt this great desire to get to know places, the history, the people. There was something very exciting about being in such a variety of different areas. ... That was sort of my wide-eyed vision, and now I would say it's still very, very positive. I'm just impressed by the depth of faith and by the way that people live it out in the different parishes and in different ways, but also in many of the movements that are taking place here. There's something really extraordinary here. ... I detected a real openness among people, a real goodness among people, to try to adjust to realities of the day. If you go around in different parts of the diocese, the realities are very different. ... So I feel a little bit more like I have an understanding of all of those realities and how they affect people in different parts of the diocese.

**Q: What challenges needed to be addressed early on, and do you feel progress has been made?**

**A:** My first challenge was to get to know the diocese. I didn't want to jump right into Real Presence Real Future. ... Bottom line is, when I first came, we were doing some amount of strategic planning, but it wasn't with any kind of reflection. That's not critical of anybody. So it's not that we're doing anything new; we're trying to anticipate needs and see if we can do it in the thoughtful way across the board. People needed to realize just how well they were living out the Gospel in the church here in the Diocese of Columbus.

**Q: The fall 2019 convocation with priests seemed to be pivotal. What did you take away from the meeting, and was it the genesis for Real Presence Real Future?**

**A:** So that was right about six months after I arrived, and I had gotten to meet and know a number of priests in that period of time. But this was our first real extended time working together, relaxing together, enjoying each other's company and praying together. I felt a connection with the priests in a very powerful way. I had been hearing about the needs of the diocese, and I would say that marked the real beginning of Real Presence Real Future.

**Q: You were very willing to work with the secular media, Catholic radio and social media. How important is media communication in advancing the faith?**

**A:** I wish I could say that we are getting the message across to all the people at Sunday Mass. That's just not the case. And even among the people who go to Sunday Mass, there's something about when they read it in the paper that they say, "Oh, it's re-



**Bishop Frederick Campbell (left) congratulates Bishop Robert Brennan during the public announcement on Jan. 31, 2019 of Bishop Brennan's appointment to succeed the retiring Bishop Campbell. Brennan was an auxiliary bishop in Rockville Centre, New York.**

ally true."

**Q: Just a year after you arrived, the pandemic hit, and the decision was made to close churches for two months. As you look back, how do you assess the Church's response?**

**A:** I'd like to say that we did do the best that we could with what we had in front of us. One of the hardest things that I ever did in 31 years as a priest was to make that decision, along with the other bishops. The idea that we should not have public worship, or suspend public worship for a while, that just ran against every instinct. The bishops listened to the facts together, and we were dealing with something that was a real unknown, and we could see the experience of the world around us. I trusted the recommendations that were being given to us by the state of Ohio. And we made some tough, prudent decisions. ... I get a good amount of feedback, a lot of mail, and I don't mind that. In fact, I'm glad to get it. It's good to hear from people. ... But I would say that most people are somewhere in the middle. Many, many people understand exactly and just wanted to find that middle group to keep people safe but also allows them to live life. I was glad that I was already here just two weeks shy of a year when all of this hit, and I felt I had been able to develop a relationship with people, and they knew me and I knew them. And that helped in navigating through that. I'm deeply grateful for the means of communication that we had so that we could continue to stay connected. ... Some of our social service agencies did extraordinary work and met the greater needs of the community. And our priests were extraordinary during this time. There was tremendous pressure on them, and they tried to balance the pastoral needs of the people with the grave responsibility of keeping people safe.

**Q: Compared with some other dioceses throughout the country, Ohio's churches reopened relatively quickly, in about two months. How did the bishops come to that decision?**

**A:** We were examining the data together. We were preparing for that day when we would return. ... We were talking and working with the different health



**Bishop Robert Brennan walked through St. Joseph Cathedral at his installation Mass on March 29, 2019 displaying for everyone to see the official decree from the Vatican naming him the bishop of Columbus.**

*CT photos by Ken Snow*

agencies at the different levels on a plan, and when we had that in place, on Pentecost Sunday in 2020, we were able to be back. And a year later, we had all these restrictions when we were looking at when can we put more people in church. And all of a sudden, the governor said, on June 2, everything gets dropped, and we were fortunate we already were working on a plan to be back at full capacity.

**Q: Then the racial tensions swept the country in summer 2020. You supported both the protesters and law enforcement. What is your assessment of where the country and the Church is today on racial issues?**

**A:** What I tried to do, whether it was effective or not, is really to rise above it. It wasn't so much a matter of supporting the protest, but really to try to rise above that and to recognize what was going on at its deepest level. Even before that, I remember here among the staff we viewed that film *Emanuel* together about the attack at the church in South Carolina. And it hit me – I remember watching that film, and then we had a discussion – seeing the pain within the African American community stayed with me. And so when the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis happened, what came back to me were those prior discussions, the things I learned that this is a very painful moment for a lot of people. ... It was not about making statements or the protests. It's understanding how people are viewing this. ... In those days when the protests were taking place, I was a little discerning about what was happening. I wasn't ready to attach myself to every little thing that's going on. And I was rather cautious, because, quite honestly, living here downtown, I saw a lot of it up front. And I saw some pretty bad behavior, the level of destruction, the amount of violence, the disrespect for the police, who were just really trying to protect and maintain order, was appalling. But that does not change the fact that a broad spectrum of people were indeed still hurting by this.

We have a young adult community, the Toltonites,



## Q&amp;A, continued from Page 16

and they represent various minority communities. They put together a prayer service (at Columbus St. Matthias Church). I trust them. And I was thrilled that they came together in prayer. I think they did a wonderful job, and I was proud to stand with them and to be with them. Our own Ethic Ministries office also did a great job of fostering conversations. And I was very glad that conversations were happening in our Catholic schools – what can we learn from one another and understand the pain and suffering that's going on.

Also, I had already developed a relationship with Bishop Timothy Clarke, pastor of the First Church of God, and that enabled me to connect with the larger African American churches. So we began a little bit of work together so that we could continue those conversations and develop other things such as the Coalition for the Common Good. Our different Catholic agencies were meeting with community leaders. The other piece to this is how it affected our police officers. It's another community that I feel very, very close with and respect tremendously. I have a lot of law enforcement in my family. And after the George Floyd incident, most law enforcement people I know were very concerned about what happened in Minneapolis. ... And then six months later, we had two very troubling situations here in Columbus. And, again, I tried to rise above it, and I called for an examination to get to the answers of that. I think we need to be honest about where something's wrong.

**Q: Catholic schools reopened in fall 2020 for in-person instruction. How important was getting students back in the classroom?**

A: Very important. I give a lot of credit to certainly the schools office here at the diocese, but to all of the school administrators and representatives of the faculty who really worked through the summer of 2020 to examine every possibility, and they came up with different contingency plans. And when it came to opening up, people are really creative and able to set up our schools so that they could be safe. There are things that we can only do together, and so it was important to return but in a way that kept everybody safe. Even though there were some COVID cases, we didn't have outbreaks, super spreaders. And we could not have done it if the parents weren't so committed to work together. This year, we did have to use masks in a number of places because when school started the delta variant was strong.

**Q: On the topic of education and young people, why do you think so many young people, including significant numbers who received Catholic education, have fallen away from the practice of the faith? How does the Church stop that migration?**

A: The very point of Catholic schools is the transmission of the faith to the next generation. ... Religious education programs in the parishes I find are such a varied experience here. They're very different from parish to parish. The suburban models here would be closer to what I would have experienced back on Long Island, but what we realized is that we could do some things with some partnerships with groups and by using online tools.

**Q: The Church and the world are facing many contentious issues. One is immigration. How should Catholics balance the need for charity**



**Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the Vatican's representative in the United States (left), chats with Bishop Robert Brennan in the sacristy at St. Joseph Cathedral. Archbishop Pierre made several trips to Columbus during Bishop Brennan's time here.**  
CT photos by Ken Snow



**A group of abortion advocates made their way into St. Joseph Cathedral and disrupted a Respect Life Mass in January.**

**and to be welcoming against the illegality of entry, particularly at the southern border?**

A: Many who are in positions of political responsibility seem not to be focused on issues or solving some of the problems. The fact is, we do need some kind of comprehensive immigration reform. The Church has been quite clear on that. ... I think we need to have very clear and effective border security. Having said that, you have to be ready to address those other problems. During the last administration in Washington, there was a chance to work together, to solve border security and then solve the issues involving DACA for the dreamers, which I think is the right thing to do. ... Six months before I came here, I actually visited the border, and border security would be a good thing. There are a lot of very unscrupulous people who are misleading folks. My hat is off to border security because they're saving lives and helping people. They're very much maligned. There's also a fair amount of human trafficking, and so we do need to have an orderly process but be generous.

**Q: You have sought to bolster the presence of Hispanics and Latino religious here. How important is it to have the presence of these orders?**

A: There are two sides to that. Obviously, you want to be able to minister and relate to people. But there's also the evangelical point that we have such incredibly good news to bring to God's people

wherever they are. So part of the reason was, I want to be able to provide for the pastoral needs of people and serve them. We have Hispanic communities, and we also have some different African communities, Filipino community, Haitian community, all of these are something that the rest of the Church can learn. That was my experience in learning Spanish. All of a sudden, now I find myself going to Masses where there are lots of families, lots of children, lots of joy in proclaiming the Gospel.

**Q: We see a cancel culture today where people are discouraged from speaking the hard truths of the Catholic faith. Why is that, and what can be done to support those who speak the hard truths?**

A: There's the expression "speak the truth." And we look to Jesus Himself. So the first step for any of us as a Catholic is to know and understand what the Church teaches and why the Church teaches it, but it teaches to get to the heart of human dignity of every person created in the image and likeness of God. Begin with that. In the public square, say this is what I believe and that the truth actually has been revealed about the human person, about marriage. You might end up having to say sometimes you may not agree with me, but please understand where I'm coming from. And so it's not unreasonable to disagree, but treat people with respect.

Another thing that's important for us as Catholics is mutual support. Very often we're made to feel as if we're marginalized, we're on the fringe for believing what we believe, there's something wrong with us. But then that's why we need to be together with other Catholics. That's why some of these great movements here in the diocese are so important. At critical times, we need to support one another. And third, when it comes to people, it's not just a matter of disagreeing, but people who are really in tough situations, this is where Jesus comes in, to walk patiently, to listen. Jesus never backed down on the teachings; He patiently walked with them to help them get where they needed to be.

**Q: Another issue that has become highly politicized is the Eucharist and public reception of Christ's Body and Blood, especially by politicians or others who are not following the teachings of the Church on abortion, non-traditional marriage and religious freedom. Where do you stand on that?**

A: Don't tell the Church to bend to the political parties; get the political parties to hear the truth that the Gospel proclaims. I've said this very publicly, that we need Catholics in the Democratic Party, we need Catholics in the Republican Party. But what we really need are Catholics to bring the pro-life and the whole of the Catholic teaching to the political sphere.

Now, when you get to the question of the Eucharist, there are people on both sides who want to score political points but not for the good of the Church. Having said that, I also know there are many, many people legitimately scandalized by politicians taking these very public stances and then go to communion.

Meanwhile, there are people who are refraining from receiving Holy Communion because of an irregular marriage situation or a personal situation, and

## Q&amp;A, continued from Page 17

then they see somebody who promotes abortion, just flaunting it. ...

The Church does teach that when you do something, like actively promote abortion, you're not living in communion with the Church, and I should not be going to communion. I think we need to start putting the burden on that person and say to the politicians, please, if you're not going to accept what the Church teaches, at least have the integrity and the honesty to say that and to live in accord with it and show respect. What I really would like to say is, pray for conversions and try to encourage the conversion of politicians who are so adamant in these abortion mentalities. ... The sad thing is, it seems to me that the pro-abortion lobby is moving toward not only the acceptance of abortion but to pushing it on people and pushing Catholic physicians and hospitals to do things that would violate their conscience.

**Q: With some of the things that have been said in the Church in the past few years, people feel somewhat confused about Catholic teaching, whether the Church is headed in a new direction on key issues.**

A: I've been in Pope Francis' presence, and I've heard him talk about some of these things. And he's very much trying to teach what the Church teaches. There are a lot of complexities to it, and one of the things he's always calling on us to do as a priest is to accompany. And the other thing is for people to get to know Jesus Christ, to have an encounter with Jesus Christ. Sometimes he'll change the emphasis,

and sometimes everything is not always said. You see this desire to make the Catholic faith the real engine to everything else that we do. A lot of his call is to rise up above the political fray and to see the human dimension. He did tell the bishops that abortion is what we call the pre-eminent issue. There are those who misuse or twist Pope Francis' statements rather liberally. But what he's trying to do is to draw us deeper, to take this all the way. I think he acts in such a way that he knows he can achieve more by bringing the tenderness of Jesus Christ into the world than by swinging swords and condemnation.

**Q: The pope's *motu proprio* in July regarding the Traditional Latin Mass has created controversy and confusion. Some bishops, including yourself, have allowed the Traditional Latin Mass to continue. Others have restricted it. Why was his document necessary, and doesn't it single out a specific group of Catholics?**

A: First of all, I very much welcome what Pope Francis said about restoring much of the responsibility to approving the Latin Mass in a diocese to the local bishop. ... I'm glad we have the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest here (at Columbus St. Leo Oratory). Things need to be sorted out, but I think that the way they function meets some of many concerns that Pope Francis raised. It's very clear to me that, by and large, the people at the oratory and working with the institute, they absolutely respect the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. I was able to be with them on Sunday (Nov. 7) for confirmation. Some of them are members of other

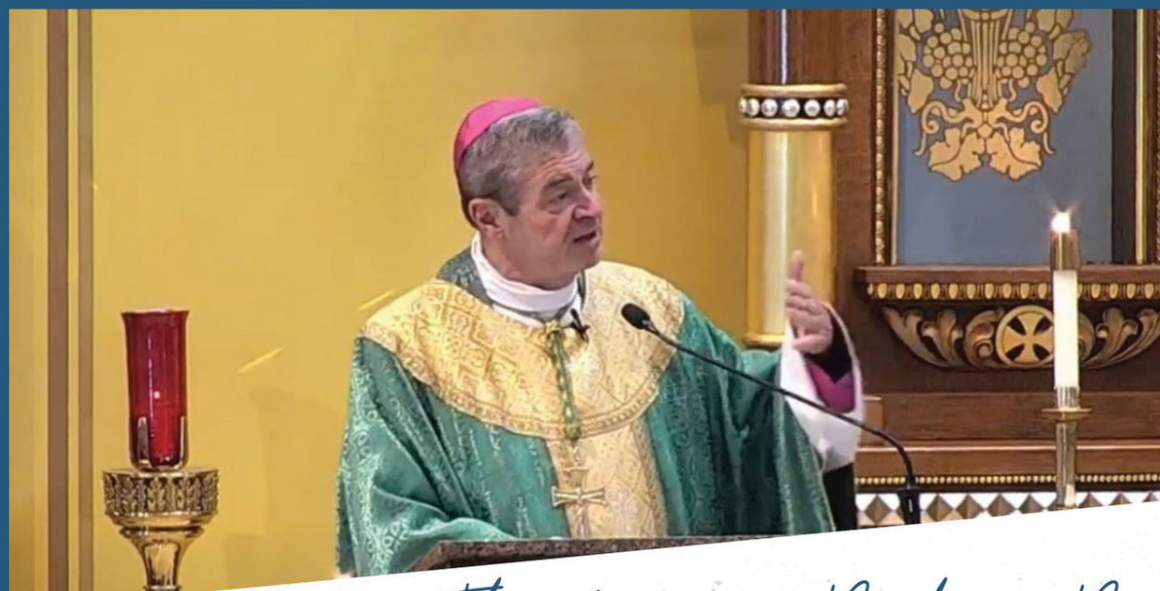
parishes but travel to St. Leo to find something that edifies them. And the priests connect with the larger community. The second thing is that they take care of broader pastoral needs of people, which is something else that Pope Francis seemed to mention in the *motu proprio*. It's not just you go to this Mass celebration. They care for souls. I do understand where some of the language in the report might offend some people. But I think what we want to really do is, again, is focus on our shared love of Jesus Christ.

**Q: What is your hope for the future of the Columbus diocese?**

A: I have great hope and confidence in this diocese. I think there's a deep faith, and so I want to see that continue to grow. Before I found out that I was moving, through this process of Real Presence Real Future my hope was to be able to understand the needs of the world and the Church in the 21st century and be able to respond to that with eternal truths of Jesus Christ in the Gospel and the sacraments.

**Q: What would you like the people of the diocese to remember about your time here?**

A: I had a priest say to me, "You know what you did? You held up a mirror to us and let us see what God was doing for us." If that's something that I was able to do, great. The other thing is, when I came in, I often put together the two encyclicals *The Joy of the Gospel* and *The Splendor of Truth*. I think the feedback I get is, people did see the joy of the Gospel and the truth in my own ministry, in my preaching. I get a lot of credit for showing up at things, but I just enjoy it.



  
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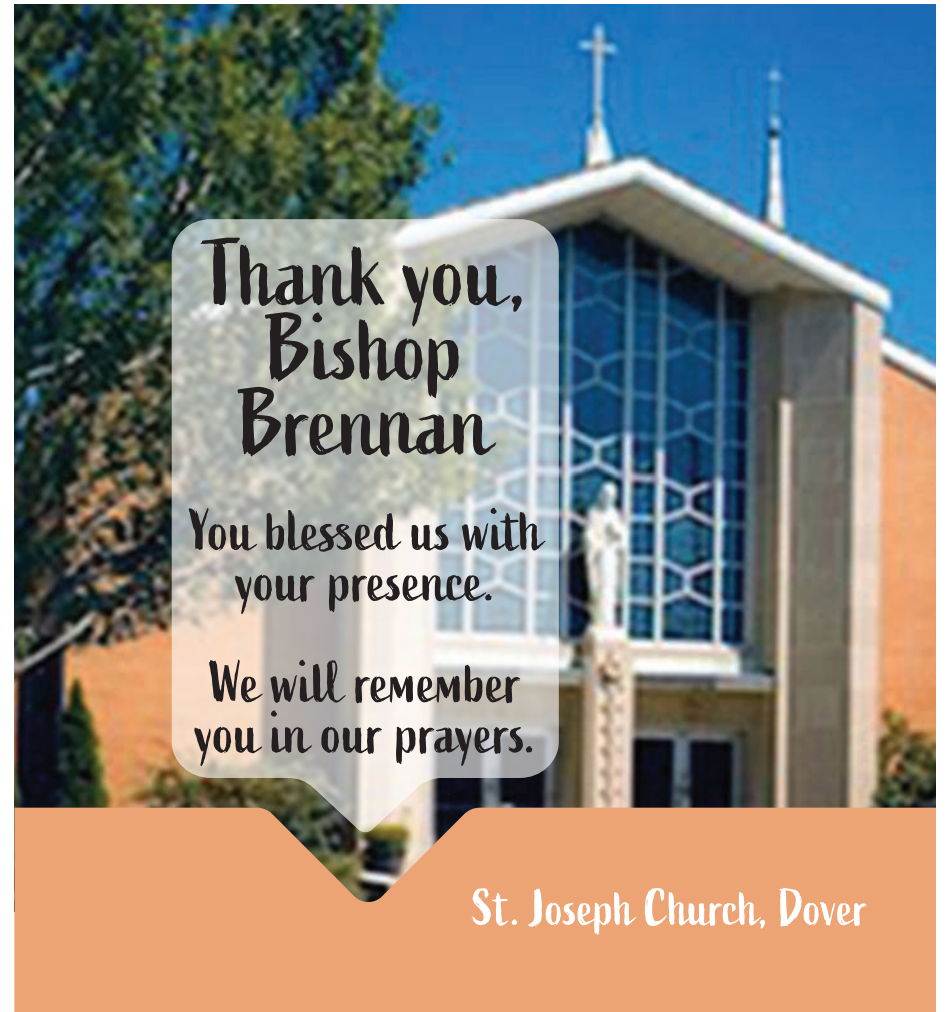
*Thank you, Bishop Brennan!*

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Thank you,  
and  
God bless you  
Bishop  
Brennan...

from the Italian Catholic Community  
and Korean Catholic Community  
at St. John the Baptist



Thank you,  
Bishop  
Brennan

You blessed us with  
your presence.

We will remember  
you in our prayers.

St. Joseph Church, Dover

“ And he shall stand  
and shepherd his flock  
in the strength of the Lord,  
in the majesty of the  
name of the Lord his God.  
And they shall dwell secure,  
for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth.”

- Micah 5:4

Thank You,  
Bishop  
Brennan



The men of Catholic Men's Ministry thank  
Bishop Brennan for his leadership and service  
to our Diocese, and prayerfully ask The Sacred  
Heart of Jesus to bless and guide Bishop Brennan  
as he begins his service in the Diocese of Brooklyn.



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FOLLOW:     

# Bishop Brennan appreciated diocese's ethnic diversity

Bishop Robert Brennan recognized the ethnic diversity of the Diocese of Columbus' Catholic population from the time he arrived in central Ohio from Long Island in 2019.

"It was significant that each of the eight Prayers of the Faithful for his installation Mass was read in a different language," said Pamela Harris, director of the diocesan Catholic Ethnic Ministries office. "It showed that from the start, he recognized the growing diversity of the diocese's Catholic population.

"Bishop (Frederick) Campbell and Deacon (Thomas) Berg (Jr., chancellor of the diocese) recognized how the arrival of immigrants from several nations has changed central and southern Ohio when they announced formation of the ethnic ministries office in August 2018. Bishop Brennan met with the board of the ministries office soon after he came here and said he wasn't coming in to try to 'fix' anything.

"He listened to the individuals on the board and recognized the importance of them serving as missionary disciples in a way appropriate to their individual ethnic communities. He wanted us to make sure that when we said we are inclusive, we meant it," said Harris, who will be leaving the



**Bishop Robert Brennan celebrates his Irish heritage by participating in a torchlit procession on the vigil of the feast of St. Patrick at Columbus St. Patrick Church.**

*CT photos by Ken Snow*

diocese on Friday, Nov. 12 to become secretary of pastoral ministry and social concerns for the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C.

"I first met the bishop at a reception just before his installation in March 2019," Harris said. "We took a selfie together, and we hit it off right away. It was the start of a great relationship. He's always been so personable and has such a peaceful spirit. That's something we needed in the ethnic ministries office in these last two years because of the challenges relat-



**Bishop Robert Brennan distributes Holy Communion during a Mass at Columbus St. Matthias Church in August to pray for all those affected by the devastating earthquake in Haiti.**

ed to COVID and the racial turmoil resulting from police shootings in Columbus and elsewhere."

(The bishop's responses to the deaths of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May 2020 and of Casey Goodson Jr. and Andre Hill in Columbus in December of that year are highlighted in another story in this issue of *The Catholic Times*.)

Bishop Brennan took part in a listening session on racial attitudes conducted at the Pontifical College Josephinum in cooperation with the U.S. Confer-

ence of Catholic Bishops in June 2020 and led by Bishop Shelton Fabre of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana, and in Mission Sunday Masses in October at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral. Those Masses, like his installation, included representatives from several nationalities.

Harris said the bishop also took part in the diocesan Filipino community's pre-Christmas Simbang Gabi celebration and encouraged the ethnic ministries office to conduct a series of Black Catholic History events this month. The last of those events is on Saturday, Nov. 20 from 5 to 7 p.m. at Gahanna St. Matthew Church, 807 Havens Corners Road.

The bishop at his installation Mass recognized the steady growth in the diocese's Latino community, with the entrance hymn, the second reading and the hymn after communion being in Spanish.

"Bishop Brennan enjoyed visiting churches with a large Latino population, and he said one of the reasons he liked those visits was because it gave him a chance to practice his knowl-

*See ETHNIC, Page 21*

*The Ready Family* is filled with deep gratitude for the faithful service of **Bishop Brennan**.

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**ETHNIC**, *continued from Page 20*

edge of the language by celebrating Mass and delivering homilies in Spanish,” said Lisset Mendoza, manager of the diocese’s Office for Hispanic Ministry for the past two years.

That office had been part of the ethnic ministries office but was given a separate status in 2019, with Father David Schalk, pastor of Columbus Christ the King Church, being appointed vicar for Hispanic ministries.

The bishop will be moving to a diocese that is known as “The Diocese of Immigrants,” with a Latino population of more than 1.1 million in the New York City boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, which it includes. That represents 23 percent of the total population, including Catholics and non-Catholics, in the two counties.

The Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, where Bishop Brennan served until coming to Columbus, also has a large Latino population, and he became familiar with Spanish during his time there. The Latino population in the 23 counties of the Diocese of Columbus numbers a little more than 100,000, or 3.7 percent of the total.

Mendoza said that since the Hispanic ministry office was formed, pastors of the parishes with large Latino populations have met monthly with



**Bishop Robert Brennan holds a crucifix for veneration at Columbus Christ the King Church, home to a large Hispanic population, on Good Friday in 2019, less than a month after he arrived to lead the Diocese of Columbus. CT photo by Ken Snow**

her and Father Schalk, and with the bishop attending several meetings and being informed of the results when he can’t make it.

This past Dec. 12, the office presented a two-hour celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at the cathedral that included a Mass celebrated by the bishop, presentations by music groups and dancers from Latino parishes, and a homily by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the Vatican’s apostolic nuncio to the United States. It was televised live by WCMH-TV in Columbus.



**From the start of Bishop Robert Brennan’s ministry in Columbus, he reached out to Latino Catholics throughout the diocese, including celebrating an outdoor Mass in Spanish.**

*Photo courtesy Ethnic Ministries Office*

The event was to have taken place in Kasich Hall at the state fairgrounds and to have attracted as many as 6,000 people, but the pandemic forced it to be downsized and held in front of a limited audience at the cathedral.

This year, the feast day falls on a Sunday, so the diocesan celebration of the event will take place from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Dec. 11 at Westerville St. Paul Church, 313 N. State St.

Three months after being ordained, the bishop attended a diocesan Encuentro gathering at Pickerington St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish that was

part of the ongoing national Encuentro process of discerning ways in which the Church in the United States can better respond to its Latino presence.

Mendoza said the bishop was among more than 300 people at a picnic her office sponsored on Friday, June 4 at Columbus St. Cecilia Church. The event included Mass, followed by a concert with several Latino choirs and bands, and dancing that she said included the bishop and several Josephinum students. This past summer, four Josephinum seminarians took part in six weeks of Spanish immersion classes throughout the diocese. In past summers, the classes were in Central and South America, but the pandemic prevented that travel this year.

From Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, the diocese celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month, which began with a Mass celebrated by the bishop at Christ the King Church. Throughout the month, an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe presented by the Dominican Sisters of Peace traveled throughout the diocese. Its last stop is at Dover St. Joseph Church, where it is staying until Friday, Dec. 11, when it returns to Columbus for the diocesan Our Lady of Guadalupe celebration the following day in Westerville.



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SAINT MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION - LANCASTER

# Bishop leaves legacy of evangelization

By Father Adam Streitenberger

In his opening remarks at the announcement of his appointment on Jan. 31, 2019, Bishop Robert Brennan mentioned the need to proclaim “the splendor of truth and the joy of the Gospel.” When I heard that I immediately knew what we had received. The expression signaled the bishop-elect’s evangelical orthodoxy. It signaled we had received a winner!

Though the phrase might seem simple enough, the new bishop was referencing Pope John Paul II’s 1993 encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* and Pope Francis’ 2013 apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*.

The first was John Paul’s great renewal of moral theology, which condemned errors such as proportionalism and faulty fundamental option theories. John Paul taught the perennial truth that there are intrinsically evil acts, and mortal sin is a constant danger.

The second was the most recent in a series of documents on the New Evangelization in which Pope Francis coined the phrase “missionary disciple” to describe the universal call to mission and holiness of all the baptized.



**Father Adam Streitenberger has worked under the leadership of Bishop Robert Brennan, who appointed the priest the diocese’s coordinator for evangelization.**

*Photo courtesy Andy Mackey*

At the time, I was finishing my dissertation for a licentiate in theology of the New Evangelization. Later that day, as I was introduced to our new bishop-elect, he mentioned how important evangelization would be in his ministry in Columbus. Indeed, evangelization has

been one of, if not the most important, priority of Bishop Brennan’s short but impactful time in Columbus.

Bishop Brennan began to explore the diocese in his seeming omnipresence at every parish, school and event. As he did so, he recognized what the Lord was already doing in the Diocese of Columbus.

He noticed dynamic parishes already forming missionary disciples. He met the many lay apostolates that the Lord has raised up here in Columbus. He met the many young lay missionaries at work with youth and young adults. He recognized how the Lord was using St. Gabriel Catholic Radio and the men’s and women’s conferences to change lives. He met new movements such as Damascus, St. Paul’s Outreach and Young Catholic Professionals that he had never experienced back in New York. All these things were here before Bishop Brennan arrived, but he embraced them and became a father to them.

In the spirit of the New Evangelization, Bishop Brennan also introduced new methods. During the COVID shutdown, he pushed the diocese into using livestreaming and social media

to reach parishioners and the larger community. He saw the diocese’s presence in the digital world as essential to the mission and supported media evangelization with resources.

He created an Office of Evangelization and four positions just for media evangelization. With a heart for university students, he brought in FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students) to Ohio State University while also re-energizing the diocese’s relationship with both the St. Thomas More Newman Center near OSU and SPO.

His greatest contribution was to gather the leaders of evangelization in the diocese, most of whom were from the lay apostolates, and use their experience and zeal to create a strategic plan to expand the work of evangelization in the diocese.

The bishop established six priorities: parish missionary disciple formation, Catholic school staff formation, university evangelization, media evangelization, lay missionaries and soft-entry evangelization to the religiously unaffiliated.

*See LEGACY, Page 23*



Thank you Bishop Brennan for your time and dedication ministering to the people of Columbus. Our prayers are with you and the people in the Diocese of Brooklyn.

From the Parishes of the West Columbus Deanery:

St. Aloysius, St. Mary Magdalene, St. Stephen the Martyr, St. Joseph,

St. Cecilia, St. Patrick, Holy Family, St. Agnes,

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and Sts. Simon & Jude



**LEGACY**, *continued from Page 22*

These priorities were not taken from the clouds or from the bishop's own personal agenda. They were taken from what he saw the Lord already doing in the diocese. Moreover, those plans, which he supported and approved, were formed by men and women of the diocese, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Bishop Brennan has left three great legacies of evangelization. First, he helped us to recognize what the Lord was already doing. He used his office to spotlight the work of evangelization already being done by lay apostolates and missionaries, dynamic parishes and zealous priests. Even more than spotlighting, he was their greatest cheerleader. The first lesson is that the Church in Columbus is already a national leader in evangelization.

Second, Bishop Brennan reminded us that the work of evangelization belongs to the whole diocese. Frequently, he spoke of the need to encounter Jesus Christ and be on mission as missionary disciples. The work of evangelization belongs to all the baptized. It is also the work of the whole institutional Church. Every Catholic parish, school, office and agency has received the Great Commission.

He began the restructuring of the diocesan institutions and the dedication of resources to expand the work of evangelization started by the Lord and summarized in the evangelization strategic plans. His second lesson is that we must continue with a boldness for evangelization and missionary discipleship.

The final lesson from Bishop Brennan is his personal witness. He often spoke of joy and boldness for Christ. We were all witnesses of his joy and boldness. They were not mere words but resonated from a heart that has encountered Jesus Christ. Bishop Brennan has left us with a lesson for the need for authentic personal witness.

Pope Paul VI famously said, "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses." We have all been blessed with the witness of Bishop Brennan, which has taught us much. May we continue to respond personally to the call to holiness and evangelization, which each of us has received in the Diocese of Columbus.

*Father Adam Streitenberger is the coordinator for evangelization in the Diocese of Columbus.*



We thank you for your time with us. It has been so appreciated! May God bless you in your new ministry in the Diocese of Brooklyn.

St. Margaret of Cortona Parish

Thank you for your faithful service and may God be with you always.

From:  
Your Brother  
Deacons of  
the Diocese  
of Columbus



# Bishop Brennan spoke out on racial matters

By Tim Puet  
For *The Catholic Times*

Matters involving racial justice and fatal shootings were at the forefront of public discussion during much of Bishop Robert Brennan's 2 ½ years in Columbus.

The death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 sparked worldwide reaction after videos were posted showing a Minneapolis police officer kneeling on Floyd's neck for more than nine minutes while he was lying face down in the street and handcuffed. Floyd had been arrested on charges of passing a counterfeit \$20 bill.

In Columbus, two Black men were killed by local law enforcement officers 18 days apart in December 2020. Casey Goodson Jr., 23, was shot and killed by a Franklin County sheriff's deputy outside his grandmother's home on Dec. 4. Andre Hill, 47, was fatally shot by a Columbus police officer on Dec. 22 outside a friend's home.

Three more fatal shootings involving police have taken place in Columbus in 2021. A 16-year-old girl was one of the deceased. Altogether, there have been 350 homicides in Columbus since 2020 – a record of 175 was set last year and was equaled for 2021 earlier this month.

Floyd's death in 2020 resulted in protests in cities throughout the world. In Columbus, marches and other demonstrations took place almost daily downtown for nearly a month, with occasional confrontations with police, damage to some buildings and incidents of defacing the Statehouse occurring.

St. Joseph Cathedral, the diocesan Chancery and the diocesan office building are a short distance from the Statehouse, but the only damage they suffered was broken outer glass of two windows in the Chancery garage. Windows of the diocesan buildings were boarded up during the unrest.

Bishop Brennan issued a statement on May 29, 2020 that said, "The events surrounding the death of Mr. George Floyd in Minneapolis are deeply troubling for all people, causing unrest and anger. The feelings surrounding this situation and others like it are justified, and there are so many ways those feelings and thoughts can and should be voiced.

"We are blessed to live in a nation that affords us the right to express ourselves, but the violent protests that have occurred in Columbus and elsewhere only bring additional harm to innocent persons and to business owners, so many of whom have suffered during the coronavirus pandemic.

"They represent a participation in

the toxic cloud of stereotypical judgment which such protests rightly seek to condemn. Mr. Floyd's death calls for an honest self-examination on the part of all of us that seeks to identify sinful attitudes and judgments that must be remedied. Laws and policies must do more to protect the fundamental rights of those at risk.

"I recognize also that most in our law enforcement community are very good people who find these situations abhorrent and have a strong reaction against what has happened. They too share in the call for investigation and action to prevent these situations from occurring again. I thank them for their service and willingness to risk their wellbeing to help assure the common good. ...

"I invite all in our community here in central Ohio to join together in this effort to forge a path built with the pavers of justice and reverence for every human life toward a harmony that allows us to enjoy a peaceful future for our children and for all ages to come."

After the Goodson shooting, the bishop wrote a letter that expressed sympathy to the victim's family and then continued, "It is incomprehensible to write this statement following a summer of significant unrest caused by similar events. This distressing incident reminds us of the effort we must make together to form a com-

munity that is sincerely committed to eradicating racism, prejudice and unjust discrimination.

"While experiencing initial shock and dismay, our response to any officer-involved shooting must be rooted in nonviolent means of expression so that justice may be served. We have a long road ahead of us, but this must be traveled in fellowship with those who are most vulnerable to unjust discrimination. We must continue to open wide our hearts to honest dialogue with a moral and prophetic voice."

The bishop hosted a private prayer session with other faith leaders at Columbus St. Matthias Church, near the site of Goodson's death, on Dec. 18 and joined representatives of many denominations in a letter urging racial justice that was published in the Dec. 15 edition of *The Columbus Dispatch*.

On Christmas Eve 2020, the bishop wrote in response to Hill's death, "I am truly heartbroken by the recent shooting of Andre Hill, an unarmed African American man, in Columbus this past Tuesday. Our community continues to experience the tragic loss of life in a police officer-related incident, despite all the efforts these past weeks and months.

See **RACIAL**, Page 26





# Selection of a new bishop involves many steps

By Tim Puet  
For *The Catholic Times*

Pope Francis' decision appointing Columbus Bishop Robert Brennan as the eighth bishop of Brooklyn, New York put into motion a process that involves many steps and consultation with a large group of representatives of the clergy and laity from within the diocese and beyond.

Determination of who will succeed Bishop Brennan and become the Columbus diocese's 13th bishop rests in the hands of Pope Francis. The pope usually bases the decision on recommendations from his representative in the United States, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the apostolic nuncio.

The archbishop called Bishop Brennan on Sept. 20 to inform him of his appointment to succeed Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio in Brooklyn. Bishop DiMarzio had reached the mandatory retirement age of 75 for bishops two years ago but continued to serve until a successor was named.

Bishop Brennan's installation in Brooklyn will take place Tuesday, Nov. 30. Until then, he is serving as apostolic administrator of the Columbus diocese. A new apostolic administrator for the diocese will be selected upon Bishop Brennan's departure and will be in charge of the diocese until Bishop Brennan's successor is chosen.

Apostolic administrators are restricted by canon law in what they can do to the diocese they temporarily administer.

Bishop Brennan's predecessor, Bishop Emeritus Frederick Campbell, was apostolic administrator of the Columbus diocese from the time his resignation was accepted because of

age in late January 2019 until Bishop Brennan was installed as his successor on March 29 of that year.

Acceptance of Bishop Campbell's resignation and the appointment to Columbus of Bishop Brennan, who had been auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, were announced at the same time.

A similar simultaneous announcement was made in 2004 when Bishop Campbell, who had been auxiliary bishop of St. Paul-Minneapolis, was selected as the successor to Columbus Bishop Emeritus James Griffin, who retired because of health issues.

There is no time frame on the search process for a new bishop, which is bound by strict confidentiality. There's also no public speculation as to possible candidates and their merits for the position. Few, if any, people know with certainty who might be under consideration to become Bishop Brennan's successor, and those people aren't telling.

The process begins when a bishop's position becomes vacant through his death, his appointment to another position by the pope or his retirement for age, health or other reasons.

Each diocese throughout the world is part of a larger group of dioceses known as a metropolitan province, which has an archbishop – a title that is symbolic and does not convey authority over other bishops. The six dioceses of Ohio are part of the Cincinnati metropolitan province.

The selection of candidates for consideration to become bishops begins at the provincial level. Any bishop in a province is invited to submit names of priests he thinks possess the maturity, pastoral and spiritual qualities and other characteristics needed for a bishop.

The bishops of a province usually meet at least once a year, and the provincial archbishop at that time circulates the names submitted, along with a resume of each priest named. The bishops then discuss the merits of those priests and vote to decide which of them should be recommended to the nuncio to add to his list of potential bishop candidates for dioceses anywhere in the United States. There is no lower or upper limit to the number of priests who may be recommended.

Once the nuncio receives a list of candidates from a province, he conducts his own investigation to determine their suitability to be a bishop.

When a vacancy is created in the office of bishop for a diocese, the outgoing bishop or the administrator is asked to report to the nuncio on the condition of the diocese, in consultation with other diocesan officials.

During this process, the nuncio can consult with priests, previous bishops and laypersons of the diocese, as well as other bishops in the province and the president and vice president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Broad consultation is encouraged with regard to the needs of the diocese but

not the names of specific candidates.

From these recommendations and the candidates' lists from the various provinces, the nuncio creates a "short list" of potential bishops for a specific diocese. He then sends a questionnaire, to be completed in strictest confidentiality, to 20 to 30 people who know each of the priests or bishops being considered for the position.

This material is collected and reviewed by the nuncio, who prepares a report of approximately 20 pages, concluding with his selection of three potential candidates – called a terna – in which the candidates are listed alphabetically with the nuncio's preference noted.

That report is sent to the prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for Bishops, who currently is Canadian-born Cardinal Marc Ouellet. If the appointment involves a bishop who is being promoted from auxiliary bishop or transferred to another diocese, the matter may be handled by the prefect and the staff. If the appointment is of a priest to become a bishop, the

See SELECTION, Page 26

Thank you Bishop Brennan for standing with us to defend the unborn, the aged, and the infirm. Your enthusiasm and faithful witness has been a blessing to the pro-life cause. We will miss you, but are praying, as you taught us, that "Thy will be done." Your friends at Greater Columbus Right to Life



**SAINT JOSEPH**

**CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**PLAIN CITY, OHIO**

**Many Blessings**

Upon the Most Reverend Bishop Brennan on his new appointment to the Diocese of Brooklyn. You have brought passion and energy to the faithful of our parish and the Diocese. You will be greatly missed and God's Blessings to you.

Outside Mass on July 18, 2021

**RACIAL**, *continued from Page 24*

“I am encouraged that the Ohio BCI (Bureau of Criminal Investigation) has initiated its investigation and ask all to be patient as we await their findings. ... May Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose nativity we proclaim these days, be our light in the darkness and bring healing and hope to our community.”

Bishop Brennan also was the host for a listening session on racial attitudes conducted at the Pontifical College Josephinum in cooperation with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bish-

ops in June 2020 and led by Bishop Shelton Fabre of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana.

Bishop Brennan said early this year that he had begun meeting with Christian pastors in the last half of 2020 to examine racism and violence.

“We’ve been meeting with a goal of providing some hope,” he said. “Together, I think we can speak with a moral voice. Not just on this issue but in general, there are many things we can do.”

**SELECTION**, *continued from Page 25*

full congregation, which has about 35 members, usually is involved.

One of the congregation’s members is chosen to summarize the documentation and make a report to the full congregation, which generally meets twice a month on Thursdays and usually considers bishop candidates from four dioceses per session. After hearing the summary, the congregation discusses the appointment and usually votes either to follow the nuncio’s recommendation or to choose another of the candidates on the terna. It also has the option of asking that another terna be prepared.

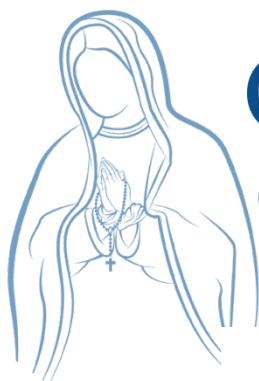
At a private audience with the pope, usually on a Saturday, the prefect presents the congregation’s recommendations to the pope, given in a particular order with the congregation’s choice at the top. The pope then affirms the congregation’s recommendation, chooses another candidate on the terna, asks for a new terna to be submitted or, in the rarest of cases, chooses his own candidate.

The pope’s decision is then given to the congregation, the nuncio is informed, and he makes the phone call. Once the nuncio’s appointment is accepted – it can be refused, but this is

rare and must be for good reason – the nuncio arranges with the Vatican to make a public announcement of the appointment, usually within two to four weeks. During this period, the bishop-elect cannot tell anyone of his appointment.

Many bishops have noted the difficulty of maintaining such secrecy. When he received the appointment to Columbus, Bishop Brennan had to keep the news to himself throughout a pilgrimage to World Youth Day in Panama that began the day after he got the nuncio’s phone call. When Archbishop Pierre told him he was to become bishop of Brooklyn, Bishop Brennan had to be silent about it for nine days – not an easy thing for a person as outgoing as he is.

After the appointment of a new bishop is announced, plans begin for his installation, which usually takes place at the diocese’s cathedral but can be at a larger venue so more people can attend. In Bishop Brennan’s case, the period between appointment and installation was about two months. It’s anybody’s guess as to when a successor to Bishop Brennan will be chosen and how soon he will be installed once his selection is made.



# OUR LADY OF LOURDES

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Marysville, Ohio

**Thank you Bishop Brennan for all you have done.**

**May God continue to bless you  
as you serve the people of Brooklyn.**

**Blessed  Sacrament**  
CATHOLIC CHURCH & SCHOOL

**Thanks Bishop Brennan for  
your service and God Bless.**

**PRIESTS**, *continued from Page 14*

and how it includes urban, suburban and rural areas," he said.

"As an auxiliary bishop, he did a lot of administrative work, so being able to serve as a bishop and spiritual leader of a diocese brought him great joy. He said, 'I get to be a priest again.'

"In that priestly role, he always was talking to people, learning about their faith life and how to enhance it. When the COVID pandemic came, Dr. Marian Schuda, a specialist in geriatric medicine, taught many of our priests the protocols involved with going to hospitals to visit COVID patients. The bishop wanted to be part of that, but we cautioned him about it because of the concerns about how it would affect his role as bishop if he were to have COVID," Father Lumpe said.

Msgr. David Sorohan, the longtime pastor of Columbus St. Catharine of Siena Church and a former diocesan school superintendent, died on Christmas Day 2020 at Mount Carmel East Hospital, where he was a COVID patient. "When I told the bishop Msgr. Sorohan was dying, he said he wanted to give him the Last Rites," Father Lumpe said. "So he went with me to Mount Carmel, and we got him gowned up with all the personal protective equipment he needed.

"Msgr. Sorohan was surprised and grateful. The bishop administered the

sacrament of anointing of the sick and gave him communion, then they had a pleasant conversation in which the bishop thanked him for his years of service. Father Justin Reis was a COVID patient a couple doors down. He was sedated at the time, but the bishop did the same for him." Father Reis died of COVID-related issues at Mother Angelina McCrory Manor on March 2.

The bishop also was at Father Victor Wesolowski's side just before his death July 27. "Whenever I told Bishop Brennan a priest was seriously ill, he'd drop whatever was on his schedule and off we'd go to see the priest," Father Lumpe said. "Bishop Campbell was the same way. They wanted to be with their brother priests when they were preparing to complete their lives of service to Jesus and the Church."

Bishop Brennan and most of the diocese's priests gathered at Maumee Bay State Park near Toledo for a four-day convocation in fall 2019. "It was a very fruitful time because we were able to pray together as brother priests and get away together at a place outside the diocese to discuss common concerns and learn from each other," Father Lumpe said. "The bishop wanted to have more of this type of gathering. Then COVID came along, and there never was a chance for another large meeting like this, but the

bishop had many other meetings with priests at the presbyterate level."

Father Hahn, the vocations director, said, "Bishop Brennan set a great example for young men discerning the priesthood and for those considering entering the seminary, and they were very excited about his interest in them. You could see that when he visited the Josephinum, which he did frequently in his role as its vice chancellor. The seminarians loved his involvement with them, and his sense of engagement set a great example.

"He wanted them to get a better sense of what parish work was like before they began serving as priests, so he introduced a pastoral year at a parish between their second and third years of theology studies. When COVID halted the summer Spanish immersion period in Latin America, it was replaced by activities at the parishes in the diocese with large Latino populations, and that will continue.

"Bishop Brennan has said the future of vocations is not so much about numbers

as it is about helping everyone discern their calling, whether it is to the religious life or life as a married or single member of the laity. He doesn't want anyone to feel pressured into religious service," Father Hahn said.

Before coming to the Josephinum, Father Hahn was pastor of a group of churches in Chillicothe, Waverly and Washington Court House. He said the bishop paid several visits to those parishes, and their members were pleased that these were for events other than confirmations.

"The bishop was all over the place, so much so that for a while, St. Gabriel Radio had a 'Where's the Bishop?' feature to track his travels," Father Hahn said.



With deepest gratitude and prayerful good wishes,  
Very Reverend Steven P. Beseau, Rector/President,  
and the seminarians, priests, professors, and staff of the  
Pontifical College Josephinum  
honor

HIS EXCELLENCY  
THE MOST REVEREND ROBERT J. BRENNAN

for his dedicated service to the Church as  
Bishop of Columbus and  
Vice-Chancellor of the Pontifical College Josephinum



PONTIFICAL COLLEGE  
JOSEPHINUM



**We will miss you, Bishop Brennan!**

**Yours in Christ,  
Our Lady of Perpetual Help School**

THANK YOU,  
*Bishop Brennan,*  
FOR BEING A GOOD SHEPHERD!

BECAUSE OF YOU,  
WE HAVE BEEN CHANGED  
FOR THE GOOD!

OUR LADY OF VICTORY PARISH



OUR LADY OF VICTORY CHURCH  
1559 ROXBURY ROAD COLUMBUS, OHIO 43212-2723



*By the power of the Eucharist, O Lord,  
increase the gifts of your grace  
in Robert, your servant and Bishop,  
that he may serve you worthily in the pastoral  
ministry and receive the eternal rewards of a  
faithful steward.*



Best wishes and a heartfelt thank you, Bishop Brennan,  
from your St. Joan of Arc Parish Family



RPRF, continued from Page 15

numbers – where people were going to Mass, how many priests we have, where we have church buildings – and could have executed some decision that way, and then done things on the back end to explain to people why this had to be done,” Father Hartge said.

“But instead, he flipped that on its head by saying, before we do anything, let’s hear from as many people as possible.

“He wanted to be collaborative and not be hindered in our thinking, maybe think outside the box a little bit as far as who we’re going to collaborate with and so on.”

Looking back, Father Hartge said, the convocation “was a great time to bring the priests together. But I don’t think any of us knew at the time we’d be involved in this now. It takes an enormous amount of work, time and energy.”

Bishop Brennan asked Father Hartge in spring 2020 to begin working in the Chancery to help with administrative duties. As Real Presence Real Future progressed, Father Hartge began to assume more of a management role on the project. He has been heavily involved since then, including facilitating the summer 2021 listening

sessions and subsequent fall consultation sessions, and regularly providing updates to Bishop Brennan and the Presbyteral Council.

A key element of Real Presence Real Future is evangelization, and last spring the diocese initiated a 40 Days of Adoration campaign during Lent and a day of reconciliation. Numerous parishes participated, and Bishop Brennan traveled to many parishes throughout the diocese for their designated day of adoration.

“I would say we talk multiple times a week in kind of an informal way,” Father Hartge said. “And it’s important that we always make it an agenda item at the presbyteral council meetings to update the priests, who can talk to the priests in their deaneries to know what’s going on.”

Father Hartge stressed that the bishop’s goal is not to make drastic changes but leverage the resources of the diocese in a way that meets the needs of current reality and positions the Church for future growth. He also emphasized that no decisions have been made on how parish structures might look in the future.

“Bishop said in his introductory vid-

eo at the parish consultation sessions that it’s not about his vision. It’s really a shared vision inspired by the Holy Spirit ultimately to benefit the priests and the people,” Father Hartge said.

“It’s not about his preference, or anything like that. We knew we had to do something, and because of his great love for the people and the priests of the diocese, he wants whatever is most beneficial to all of us collectively.”

Despite being a newcomer to the diocese, Bishop Brennan was willing to bear the burden of a process that could result in major changes and might not leave everyone pleased with the outcome.

“He said, ‘I’ll take this on, we’ll move together, we’ll try to come up with a solution together, and, hopefully, people see the benefit of that in the long run,’” Father Hartge said.

Even with the bishop leaving at the end of the month, the diocese remains committed to Real Presence Real Future.

“The process continues as we go through the transition,” Father Hartge said. “There is no reason to stop because we’re just consulting with people, we’re hearing from people and we’re going to be able to readjust

some of the models and continue to present those because we’re not making final decisions yet.

“People have invested so much into this – over a year’s worth of work, and they’ve submitted feedback. We want to make sure now that that gets heard and evaluated and considered so people don’t think that it’s all been for nothing or wasting their time.

“No matter when a bishop comes in, the insights we gather from this are still going to be valid.”

Father Hartge underlined the importance of remaining rooted in prayer.

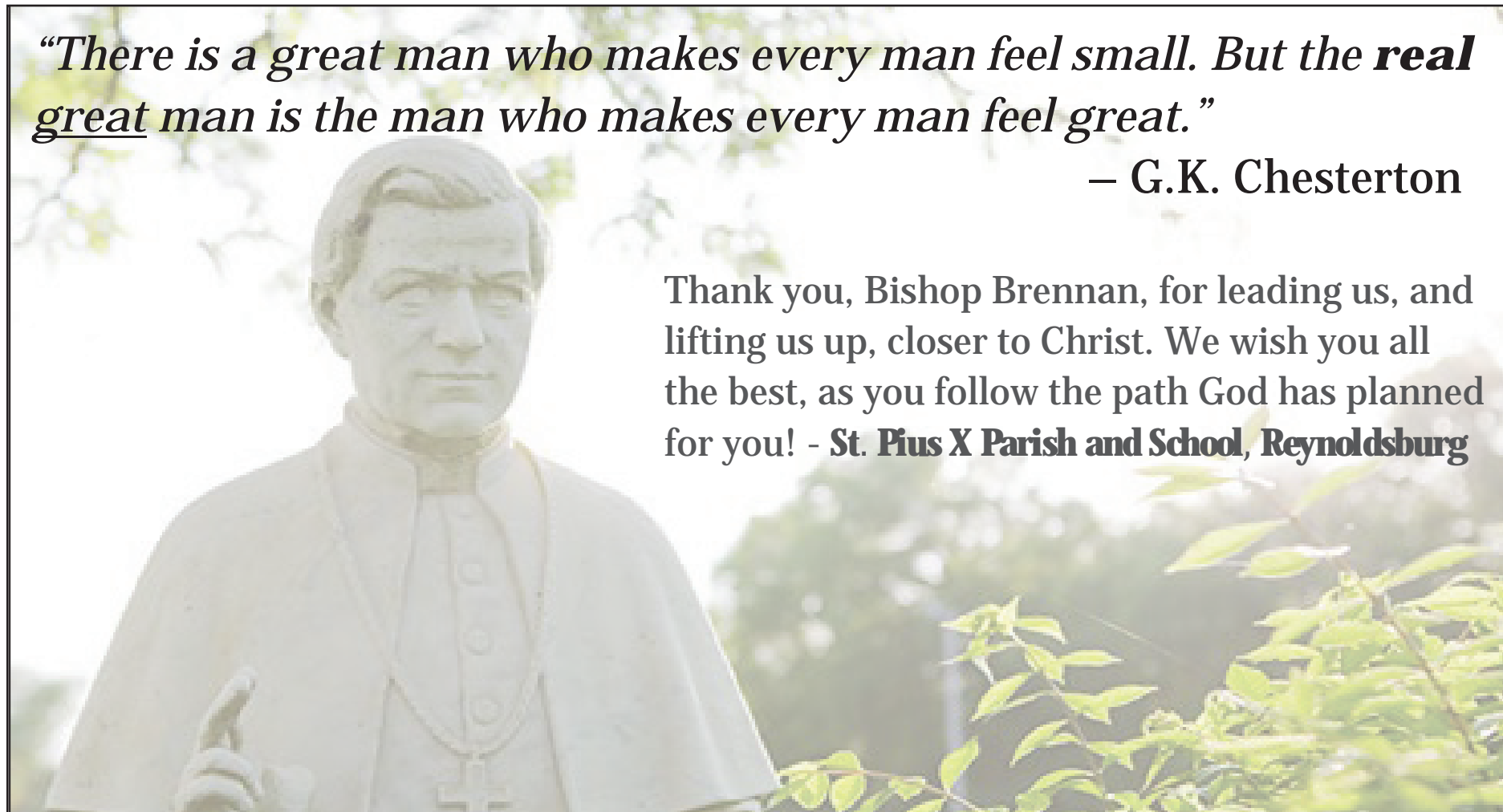
“If we’re not praying, if we’re not centering ourselves on Christ, this really will be one of the hardest things that we’ve ever done, because we may see things going away that we’re used to seeing, whether it’s a building or a particular routine. The church has done this for centuries.

“Ultimately, it’s about strengthening the faith. We have to keep that in perspective. We’re not changing the faith or doctrine. We have to just adjust to meet the needs of the people right now, and be missionary disciples, bring people back into the fold with outreach.”

*“There is a great man who makes every man feel small. But the **real great** man is the man who makes every man feel great.”*

– G.K. Chesterton

Thank you, Bishop Brennan, for leading us, and lifting us up, closer to Christ. We wish you all the best, as you follow the path God has planned for you! - **St. Pius X Parish and School, Reynoldsburg**



# Bishop Brennan

Thank you for celebrating many special moments with our St. Francis DeSales High School family. May God bless you with peace of heart and mind as you embark on your new journey, leading the faithful of the Diocese of Brooklyn.



*Psalm 100:3 ESV*  
Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.



*faith family tradition*

# GRATEFUL FOR THE MEMORIES

BISHOP BRENNAN, WE ARE BEYOND GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SERVICE TO THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS.  
MAY GOD BLESS YOU ABUNDANTLY AS YOU LEAD THE DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN!

