

The Mountaineer

United States Conference of Secular Institutes

Summer 2026 – Volume 19, Issue 2

From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

One cannot help but think that the Spirit has been on the move for the past several years to jump start religious vigor here in the United States.

This past June 11th, 2026, at the decision of the USCCB and in recognition of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the United States was consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; the Eucharistic Congress and Pilgrimage of 2024 created across the land a visible commitment to the primacy of the Body and Blood of Christ, present in the Eucharist as a dogma of faith that perhaps was waning.

Coincidentally in the fall on October 18th, 2026, the Church will celebrate the 100th anniversary of World Mission Sunday. Instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1926, the purpose was to support the "propagation of the faith." And the theme will be "One in Christ, united in mission."

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, receiving and adoring Him in His Body and Blood, and other acts of devotion will help us realize our mission of being the light of Christ in the world through our daily acts of generosity, humility, and kindness, tangible care for the poor, and joining efforts to bring the stray sheep back to the church.

At the USCSI annual conference taking place the weekend of September 11-13 in St Louis we will be sharing how we as individuals and institutes are becoming pilgrims of peace and through this, One in Christ, United in mission. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35)

Sue Larkin

Blessed Are the Peacemakers



Happy Family-filled
Semiquincentennial
Birthday, America!

- Happy 4th of July -
Thank you Lord for
preserving the USA!

Inside this Issue Featuring



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Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart just like yours!

One of the soldiers opened his side with a lance, and at once there came forth blood and water. *John 19:34*

Litany to the Sacred Heart

By St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Hail, Heart of Jesus, save me!
 Hail, Heart of my Creator, perfect me!
 Hail, Heart of my Savior, deliver me!
 Hail, Heart of my Judge, grant me pardon!
 Hail, Heart of my Father, govern me!
 Hail, Heart of my Spouse, grant me love!
 Hail, Heart of my Master, teach me!
 Hail, Heart of my King, be my crown!
 Hail, Heart of my Benefactor, enrich me!
 Hail, Heart of my Shepherd, guard me!
 Hail, Heart of my Friend, comfort me!
 Hail, Heart of my Brother, stay with me!
 Hail, Heart of the Child Jesus, draw me to yourself!
 Hail, Heart of Jesus dying on the Cross, redeem me!
 Hail, Heart of Jesus in all your states,
 give yourself to me!
 Hail, Heart of incomparable goodness,
 have mercy on me!
 Hail, Heart of splendor, shine within me!
 Hail, most loving Heart, inflame me!
 Hail, most merciful Heart, work within me!
 Hail, most humble Heart, dwell within me!
 Hail, most patient Heart, support me!
 Hail, most faithful Heart, be my reward!
 Hail, most admirable and most worthy Heart,
 bless me!

Lord Jesus, let my heart never rest until it finds You,
 who are its center, its love, and its happiness.

By the wound in Your heart,
 pardon the sins that I have committed
 whether out of malice or out of evil desires.

Place my weak heart in Your own divine Heart,
 continually under Your protection and guidance,
 so that I may persevere in doing good
 and in fleeing evil until my last breath. Amen.

*On June 11, 2026, the U.S. Bishops
 Consecrated the United States of America
 to the Sacred Heart of Jesus*

O Most Sacred Heart of Jesus:

You know the longings of our hearts, and you
 desire that we enjoy friendship with you.
 From your pierced side, you have poured out
 the wellspring of life, for which we thirst.
 Your heart burns with a love for all people
 to return to a right relationship with you.
 We celebrate the abundant gifts you have
 given this nation, founded on the self-evident
 truths that our Creator has endowed all
 people with the right to
 life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
 We make reparation for the offenses against
 you and against human dignity that
 have taken place in this nation.

May our hearts be united to yours, so that our
 families and communities enjoy peace and
 happiness; may broken relationships be
 reconciled, injustices repaired, and the
 wounds of our land be healed.

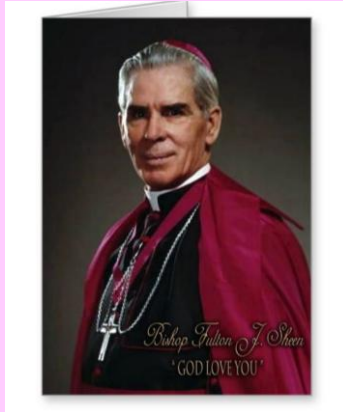
May your holy Catholic Church serve as a
 sign, pointing all people to your infinite love.

**O Desire of Nations and Center of History,
 we ask you to bless these
 United States of America.**

Who live and reign with God the Father
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Beatification of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

In the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America, there will be the Beatification Mass of an Illinois farm boy:



Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen will be beatified on September 24, 2026, at St. Louis, Missouri.

Pope Leo XIV will send Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Pro-Prefect of the Section for First Evangelization and New Particular Churches of the Vatican Dicastery for Evangelization, as his Papal Legate/Representative to the celebrations.

“It is an indescribable joy to learn that Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, who was National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies from 1950 to 1966, will be beatified in St. Louis on September 24,” said Monsignor Roger J. Landry, the current National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States, in a press release on Wednesday, March 25, 2026. “He is a source of inspiration, not only for all of us who continue his work of prayer and support for the mission of the Church throughout the world, but also for all whose faith has been strengthened by his preaching, his radio and television broadcasts, his writings, and his holy Catholic life,” Father Landry emphasized.

Fulton Sheen was born on May 8, 1895, in El Paso, Illinois, to an Irish family. He felt his calling to the priesthood at the age of 24 and was ordained a priest in 1919. He continued his academic studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., the Catholic

University of Louvain in Belgium, and the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome.

After returning to the United States, he began teaching at the Catholic University of America in 1926, a position he held until 1950. From 1930 to 1950, he also hosted the evening radio program *The Catholic Hour* on NBC, which quickly gained a large audience and was extraordinarily successful, leading many people to the Catholic faith. During his 16 years as National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States (1950–1966), he was deeply committed to the Church’s missionary work.

Fulton Sheen was Bishop of Rochester, New York, and in 1969 Pope Paul VI appointed him Titular Archbishop of Newport, Wales. A lecturer and brilliant speaker, he also hosted the weekly television series **Life is Worth Living**, which reached approximately 30 million viewers and earned him two Emmy Awards. From 1961 to 1967, he hosted **The Fulton Sheen Show**. Fulton Sheen also founded the magazine *Christ to the World* and wrote some 300 books and articles.

Blue Sparrow published **The Wisdom of Fulton Sheen** – 365 Days of Inspiration, with an introduction by Matthew Kelly. Highly recommended and available online.

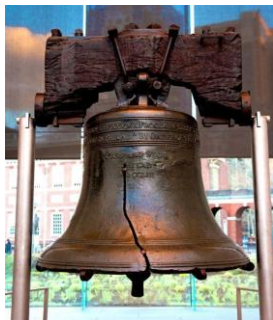
Sample day of August 15:

“America, it is said, is suffering from intolerance-it is not. It is suffering from tolerance. Tolerance of right and wrong, truth and error, virtue and evil, Christ and chaos. Our country is not nearly so overrun with the bigoted as it is overrun with the broadminded.”

-Fulton Sheen



Mark your calendars for our annual gathering—new location and city:



The National Meeting of the United States Conference of Secular Institutes in this 250th Anniversary of the United States of America will be at the Augustine Institute in St. Louis, MO.

Friday, September 11 to Sunday, September 13, 2026

Theme: Blessed Are the Peacemakers

Presenter: Fr Jerry Stookey, O.P.



We look forward to meeting/mingling with faculty & students at mealtimes

- 286-acre facility outside Florissant, MO • 12 miles, 21 min drive from the St. Louis Airport • Picturesque setting overlooking the Missouri River • 5 miles of walking trails and recreational courts
- 4 towers, 204 residential rooms • Dining hall and meeting spaces that can accommodate small to medium size conferences • Dedicated chapel and chaplain • Graduate School of Theology



Mitchell Rozanski, the archbishop of St. Louis, said in the initial press release that the facility could become “the premier center for the new evangelization in the United States.”

Email jessica@schsrsmaty.org to confirm and hold your reservation; email invites sent on July 1st

*This impactful coffee article caught my eye and spoke right to my heart. Our thanks to the **Verily Magazine** for allowing us to share with our readers during the more leisure-filled summertime!*

This Simple Afternoon Practice Is Changing My Year for the Better If Latin coffee is a charism, I want it to characterize my life.



by [Kate Tombs](#) • September 3, 2025



by [Verily Magazine](#)



Quisiera un cafecito, por favor. I'd like a little coffee, please.

Growing up as an American, I didn't come of age with the idea of routinely pausing my afternoon to sit down to drink a hot beverage and not do much else. However, once I became a Spanish teacher and traveled to the wide ranges of the Spanish-speaking world, I encountered this practice time and again. It has both subtly and powerfully impressed itself upon me.

Un cafecito. A little coffee, quite literally. But it doesn't have to be coffee. A tea will do. Or a milkshake. Or a soda. Or basically anything that serves as a vehicle for the experience as long as you sit down and don't do anything other than be present.

A mandatory invitation

I distinctly remember my first introduction to the idea of an afternoon *cafecito* when I lived in San José, Costa Rica for a month in college. My roommate and I had just returned to our host home from a weekend excursion, and we were incredibly tired. We were invited by another American student staying at the house to "take a coffee" with the family out on the patio, which we politely declined. Drinking caffeine while exhausted to the bone was the last thing I was hoping to do at that moment.

No sooner had we turned down the invite than our host mom came to tell us that it wasn't optional; this was something that we were to do. Certainly we had meant no cultural offense, and our wonderful host mom was neither angered nor rude when reissuing the invitation. The exchange showed me just how important this intentional act of taking time was. These moments together were not to be missed.

Connecting over coffee

On a trip with a friend to visit her family in Puebla and Mexico City five years into my teaching career, I was no longer so green as to be surprised when we took a *cafecito* every single afternoon of vacation. Without fail, after a late lunch, we planned a separate stop for a sit-down coffee time.

Day after day, I was amazed that we never lacked for conversation and that people I had only just met on the trip were so easy to connect with. "We don't do this every day typically," my friend's sister explained, "but we are doing it because we are on holiday. I love taking a coffee." *-Continued on page 6*



As I sampled my way through a week of *cafecitos*, I tried to envision recreating this experience with American friends or my own family members. Did it need to take place in Latin America for the magic to work? Would it have the same effect in the States?

Choosing to make time

Whether it's due to a messily intertwined cultural or generational matter of dwindling social finesse, plagued attention spans, or the decreasing depth to which we allow ourselves to connect with one another, I think many of us just don't realize we are worthy of stopping time.

Taking what I'm coining a "Latin coffee" means acknowledging that we and the people around us are worthy of phones-away, face-to-face conversation with nothing "productive" needing to happen. It's no secret that keeping up via social media and text don't fulfill us in the way our souls crave. Have we lost the ability to prioritize spontaneity and lose track of time in the best way?

The skill seems forgotten, perhaps, but not totally lost. I've committed this year to Latin coffee—to intentionally taking time to stop, slow down, and savor the moment. I want people to know that I've got time, and that I'll make it even when it seems like I don't have it.

I'm actively denying myself the phrase "I'm too busy" as a response to personal connections that could easily be rescheduled. If being busy is a badge of honor, I don't know who I'm trying to convince of this overextended, exhausted, and often shallow sense of self-importance. Rather, I want the people in my life to know by my initiative and example that they are worthy of intentional time.

Building the practice

I recently spent a miracle of a day in Manhattan with a friend visiting from Paraguay. After about four hours of sightseeing, I determined it was time to sit down for an afternoon coffee and treated my friend to his first ever chai latte at a randomly selected café. An hour and a half of nonstop conversation and laughter later, we came up for air only because we truly had to be elsewhere. "*Hay cosas más importantes que el trabajo*," I had told him earlier that day. "Some things are more important than work."

Even now, I can mentally return to *cafecitos* taken in Aguas Calientes, Peru or Málaga, Spain and tell you what beverage I had in hand, who I was with, and how nothing mattered but being in that moment. Each of these pauses was more than a simple afternoon coffee; each amounted to an invaluable act of presence.

Taking time for Jesus and Mary – heart to heart over coffee

Proclaim that mercy is the greatest attribute of God. All the works of My hands are crowned with mercy.
–St Faustina writes these words from Jesus, in *Diary: Divine Mercy in My Soul*.

O my God, my only hope, I have placed all my trust in You, and I know I shall not be disappointed. It is my greatest desire that souls should recognize You as their eternal happiness, that they should come to believe in Your goodness and glorify Your infinite mercy. –from St Faustina's *Diary writings*

Promises and Consecrations of the DeSales Secular Institute

“There is nothing as strong as gentleness, nothing as gentle as true strength.” -*St Francis DeSales*



On November 8, 2025, the DeSales Secular Institute gathered in Wilmington, Delaware, for a beautiful morning of shared prayer, confessions, Mass, and vow and promise

renewals. Several of our associates renewed their promises. Heather Triggs made her Fifth Consecration, while Catherine Grove and Kathy Tierney also renewed their vows. Our novice, Cindy De Ponti, was joyfully present for this meaningful occasion.

We were blessed to have Fr. Michael Bremer, a priest of the Archdiocese of Atlanta, travel to be with us. In his homily, he reminded us that our vows deepen our relationship with God in a substantial and particular way. Through our vows, God invites us to begin living the heavenly reality even now. He offers us “not a good amount of joy,” or a “decent amount of peace,” but rather gives us at every single moment of our lives “everything.” God aches with love and delight for each one of us, His beloved consecrated daughters.

Our group chose to gather in Wilmington primarily because our senior member, Catherine Grove, resides in a personal care facility there. We wanted her to be fully present with us—not only in spirit, but in person. Following the vow renewals and Mass, we gathered in the dining room to share a meal filled with stories, laughter, and deep connection. It was truly a sacred and blessed time of community, lived in the joy of Salesian life.

With her Fifth Consecration, Heather Triggs was elected U.S. Group Directress. She resides in Atlanta, Georgia, where she serves as a counselor in an archdiocesan Catholic school. She also enjoys retreat work and speaking at Catholic student centers at two local universities. Heather looks forward with gratitude and hope to caring for her sisters in community in the coming years and prays that the Lord will bless the Group with new vocations.



News Briefs -- News Briefs -- News Briefs -- News Briefs

Claudette Cyr, Principal Officer of the Oblates Missionaries of Mary Immaculate sent an email on May 24, 2026, informing us:

We lost another Oblate in the US. **Lourdes Chaves from Miami** passed away a few weeks ago. She was originally from Cuba but due to the situation in her home country, the Oblates brought her to live in the United States. Please remember her in your prayers – May she rest in peace!

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For our readers who clicked on the link listening to Fr Scott Jones' session on Consecrated Celibacy, the next counsel is available. The class on **our commitment to poverty in consecrated secularity** was given April 18, 2026. If anyone is interested in the link and passcode please text 262-244-9329 / jessica@schsrsmary.org.

The next session will be Saturday, August 29, 9:30 am Central Time, and the topic will be the evangelical counsel of obedience. As always, please bring one line from your own institute's constitutions on how your institute practices obedience.

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In May, Deacon Paul Lang and his wife Eileen were in Mobile, Alabama, for a Voluntas Dei meeting, and met with our Episcopal Moderator, Archbishop Mark Rivituso.



Preview – Spoiler Alert:

In the upcoming **VISION 2027** magazine, Secular Institutes are featured in an article by Kathy Tierney: Hidden in Plain Sight.

Free copies for parishes and friends will be available soon.

Link is: [Welcome | VISION Vocation Network for Catholic Religious Life & Priesthood](#)

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We are looking forward to the presence of both Archbishop Rivituso and Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski of St. Louis at our annual meeting.

Which souls does Our Lord usually choose for an exceptionally tender, intimate relationship? They are souls which love the **Blessed Mother** very much. Our Lady's heart is a safe dwelling, a safe home, because God built it himself for us.
-Fr Joseph Kentenich

**Plan now for SEEK27 with theme:
"Ever Ancient, Ever New!"**

This phrase from St. Augustine emphasizes the timelessness of the Catholic faith and its ability to constantly renew the human heart.

Two locations **January 1-5, 2027**: again at Columbus OH, Greater Columbus Convention Center and in San Antonio TX, Henry González Convention Center.

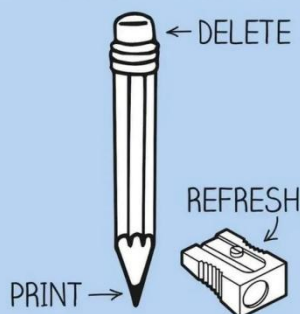
If you are interested to help staff our booths, contact **Cathy McDonnell 714.496.9597**

Sr Miriam James & Nora Perez, Seek26, Ft Worth, TX

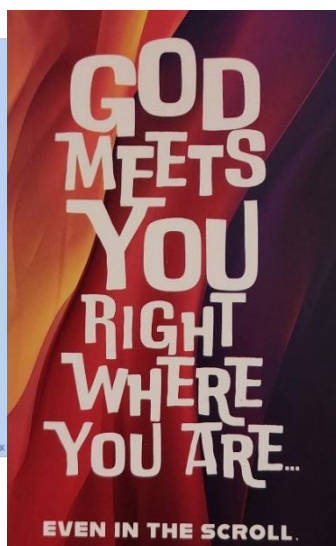


Generation Z with their thumb hearts lighten up the camp weeks at Lamar, TX. Schoenstatt's theme was on generosity of the heart.

WHEN I WAS A KID, THIS WAS MY COMPUTER:



DAN BACKLAND FOR GRUMPY OLD GITS © LITTLE CHURCH MOUSE LTD MMXX



For the 100th anniversary of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, Pope Leo XIV has granted the gift of a Plenary Indulgence at the shrines and chapels under their care – until November 4, 2026



USCSI Mission Statement:

The USCSI shares in the mission of Jesus Christ in serving its member institutes by providing education, resources, and support for member institutes. It is an organization of member institutes committed to making known, understood, and appreciated the call to consecrated secularity in the Church. The USCSI collaborates with other groups to present consecrated secularity as a viable option in today's society.



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Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwrsN2t7T8xHfrdyGCHY59g>

Websites: www.secularinstitutes.org & www.cmis-int.org/en/

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/secular_institutes_usa/

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/secularinstitutes>



Contributions and photos for our **Fall Mountaineer** are due by **October 20, 2026**, to jessica@schsrmmary.org or text 262-244-9329



God our Father, giver of life, we entrust the United States of America to your loving care. You are the rock on which this nation was founded. You alone are the true source of our cherished rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Reclaim this land for your glory and dwell among your people.

Send your Spirit to touch the hearts of our nation's leaders. Open their minds to the great worth of human life and the responsibilities that accompany human freedom. Remind your people that true happiness is rooted in seeking and doing your will.

Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, patroness of our land, grant us the courage to reject the "culture of death." Lead us into a new dawn of life, love and vocations. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

