COURAGE
INTERNATIONAL

November 2023

Dear Friends,

I would like to introduce myself: I am Fr. Kyle Schnippel of the Diocese of Cincinnati. As the Chairman of Courage's Board of Directors, I have also become the Interim Director since Fr. Bochanski was called back to his home archdiocese. In my diocese, I am also a pastor, overseeing 5 parishes. I have been a Courage chaplain for ten years, and have attended many annual conferences. I am so pleased to give you the annual fall/winter update on the Courage and Encourage apostolates.

It hardly seems possible that it has been several months since we departed Atchison, Kansas, and our annual conference. Time has just been flying and so many things are happening; everything feels like it has sped up and it all just keeps getting quicker! So, it is good to take a pause every now and again and reflect on the many things that have happened over the past few months because activity in the Courage Office has not slowed down, even in the absence of a full-time Executive Director.

For my part as Interim Executive Director, I stay in regular contact with the Courage Office from my parishes in Ohio. The staff in the office impress me every day with their dedication and commitment to you, our members and benefactors. I am constantly edified in how they know you, your joys and struggles, the small victories and the little moments of pain. In early October, I was able to spend a few days in the headquarters, to pray with them, to work with the staff, and to serve you during that week. That time was full of blessings and graces, a chance for me to get to know the apostolate better and to spend a few days in prayer united with, and for you as well.

After that week, I can attest that despite all the challenges we face, whether at home in the United States, the challenges presented by our culture around the world, and sometimes even the struggles we face inside the Church, Courage is still growing and thriving.

In the past year, our work has continued to grow as we become ever more international in reach. We are finalizing the translation of our Handbook into both Slovak and Polish; Italian and Spanish translations have already been completed. The translation of our CourageRC website into Polish is almost finished. New chapters for both Courage and EnCourage continue to be launched in the U.S., South and Latin America, and Europe. Fr. Blatchford spent several days in both Charlotte, North Carolina, and Houston, Texas, training cohorts of new chaplains to serve in their home dioceses.

Spiritual retreats for Courage and EnCourage members continue in various regions of the U.S. It is always a blessing to see our members coming together, because that fellowship piece is so important, and is a reminder that we do not walk this path alone. Plus, when we remember that we walk alongside our brothers and sisters, we offer support that can only be provided by those who know the unique experiences of this journey.

Fr. Blatchford recently conducted a training session for the Transitional Deacon Class at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, forming men who are soon to be priests across our country in the mission of Courage. Fr. Richard Samour traveled to Peru and Colombia, and our *Courage Internacional* team attended the annual Encuentro conference in Mexico. I had the opportunity to address a joint meeting of the Bishops of Slovakia and the Czech Republic, with a goal of establishing and growing Courage in their countries. Additionally, I have been invited to Poland to address the bishops there and to speak at a conference for young adults about the spirituality and purpose of Courage.

Our Courage/Encourage apostolate is growing and thriving. And we are needed more and more to answer the questions of this age.

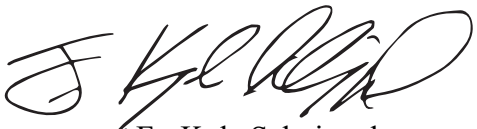
This is where you can help, because our activity and outreach is an investment of time and money. Our annual budget exceeds $750,000, and to do what we need to do, we could easily keep a staff twice our size busy. Your investment in our work pays dividends into the future for those who come to know Jesus better through this apostolate.

We strive to make every donation go as far as we can. As you have no doubt experienced, everything costs more this year! If you are able to increase your donation by 10-20% it will help us keep up with inflation, and will help us continue to offer the training our clergy need to aid their flock in addressing the culture. Your donation helps us to provide the translation of our Handbook into new languages so that the message of Courage will continue to grow internationally. Your donation helps us to provide that clarity of thought and praxis that we have learned and honed over our 43 years of ministry, ever since that first meeting convened by Fr. Harvey in September 1980.

One final note, and it is a question I get frequently: 'Where are we in hiring the new executive director?' The Board of Directors continues to meet monthly over this specific question and we continue to chase down every lead we can find. We are convinced of two things: the right priest is out there, we just need to find him, but also this apostolate is too important to hand to just any priest. There is a unique skill set required for this post, and we will keep searching until the right priest is identified.

Please keep this process at the forefront of your prayers, daily.

In Christ,



Fr. Kyle Schnippel
Interim Executive Director