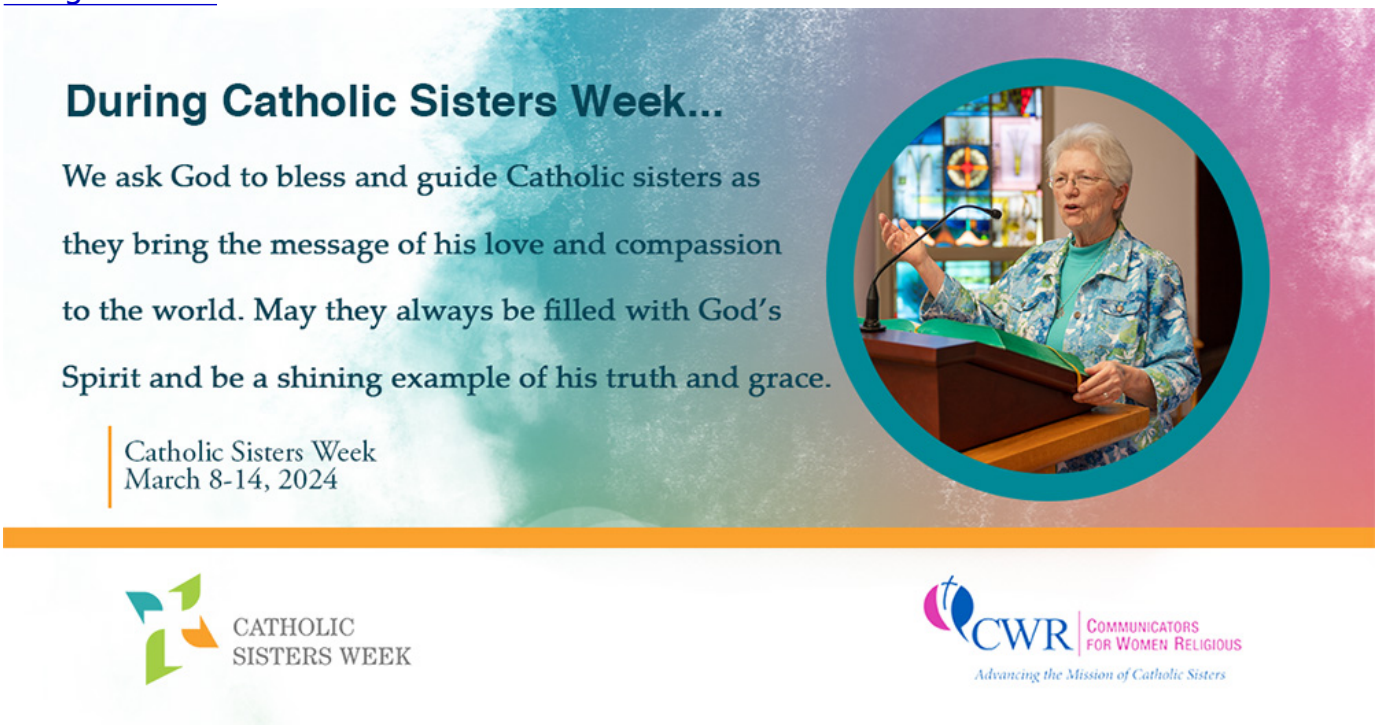
News
Religious Life



A prayer graphic designed for use during Catholic Sisters Week in 2024 (Courtesy of Catholic Sisters Week)



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Catholic Sisters Week, celebrating the women religious who go about their ministry quietly even as their work transforms the lives of people from every walk of life,

begins Friday.

Like previous iterations, the 11th Catholic Sisters Week features dozens of events that allow laypeople to both applaud the work of sisters and also connect with them and their ministries. Overseen by Communicators for Women Religious, the annual observance always begins March 8, International Women's Day.

"It's an appreciation, and a welcome to engage in healing, to engage in prayerful, spiritual experiences," said Stacy Spitler, co-chair of the Communicators for Women Religious committee that organizes the week. "It's about raising up sisters' voices."

Margaret Haik, the other committee co-chair, said the week will include big social media pushes, such as the one by Catholic Sisters of Kansas, where congregations will promote the work other communities are doing.

"We're going to collaborate in highlighting the work every individual community does and also the work Catholic Sisters of Kansas does as we work together," she said.

Haik is director of communications for the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth; Spitler is director of communications for the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

While most events involve doing something, such as learning about gun violence through a webinar or taking part in a food drive, Spitler said the week is also a chance to discover different forms of spirituality.

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"You can explore Franciscan spirituality or learn about the St. Joseph Way," she said, or get to know the charism and spirituality of any of the dozens of congregations taking part. "You could really curate your own experience and have a different perspective every day of the week, get a taste of ways to be of service to the world and ways to advocate for things you value."

Haik said one of the events she is most excited about already happened: Ten sisters from Kansas congregations* traveled to Topeka on Feb. 20 to witness Gov. Laura Kelly sign a proclamation declaring March 8-14 Catholic Sisters Week in Kansas. The sisters have been writing letters to Kansas legislators to expand Medicaid; the visit

to the governor's office was also a chance to support her work for the same cause.

The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Neumann University, Nuns Against Gun Violence, and the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas will present "Beating Guns: Hope for People Who are Weary of Violence," an in-person and online event featuring Shane Claiborne, a prominent anti-gun-violence advocate.

Six congregations of sisters in northwest Ohio will work together on a food drive for a pantry in Toledo, and have invited all parishes and schools in the region to take part, while all the sisters who minister in New Orleans will be honored by groups taking a week to feed the clients of Covenant House, which serves youth overcoming trafficking and homelessness.

Some events will be miraculous — or at least be about miracles: The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration will retell the story of the Lard Light, while the Springfield Dominicans will premiere a podcast on their "Miracle on the Lake," in which 10 sisters were saved from tragedy.

"The Sisters of Notre Dame are asking people to consider polarization, what causes it and how can you recognize it and then work to bring people to a middle ground and challenge conflict," Spitler said. "I think that's what's wonderful about many of the events — they're always an opportunity to have a conversation about things. You're not just seeing it in a vacuum, you can talk about issues that matter to you."

**This article has been edited to correct the description of the sisters who went to Topeka.*