News



Our Sunday Visitor's composing room, where the weekly paper was put together, in a photo prior to 1961. The publication, which became a magazine in 2024, will publish its final issue in October. (Courtesy Smithsonian National Postal Museum)



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Two and a half years after taking over Catholic News Service's U.S. based operations, longtime Catholic publisher Our Sunday Visitor Inc., has announced it will sunset almost all its periodical operations by December, including its flagship title, Our Sunday Visitor magazine.

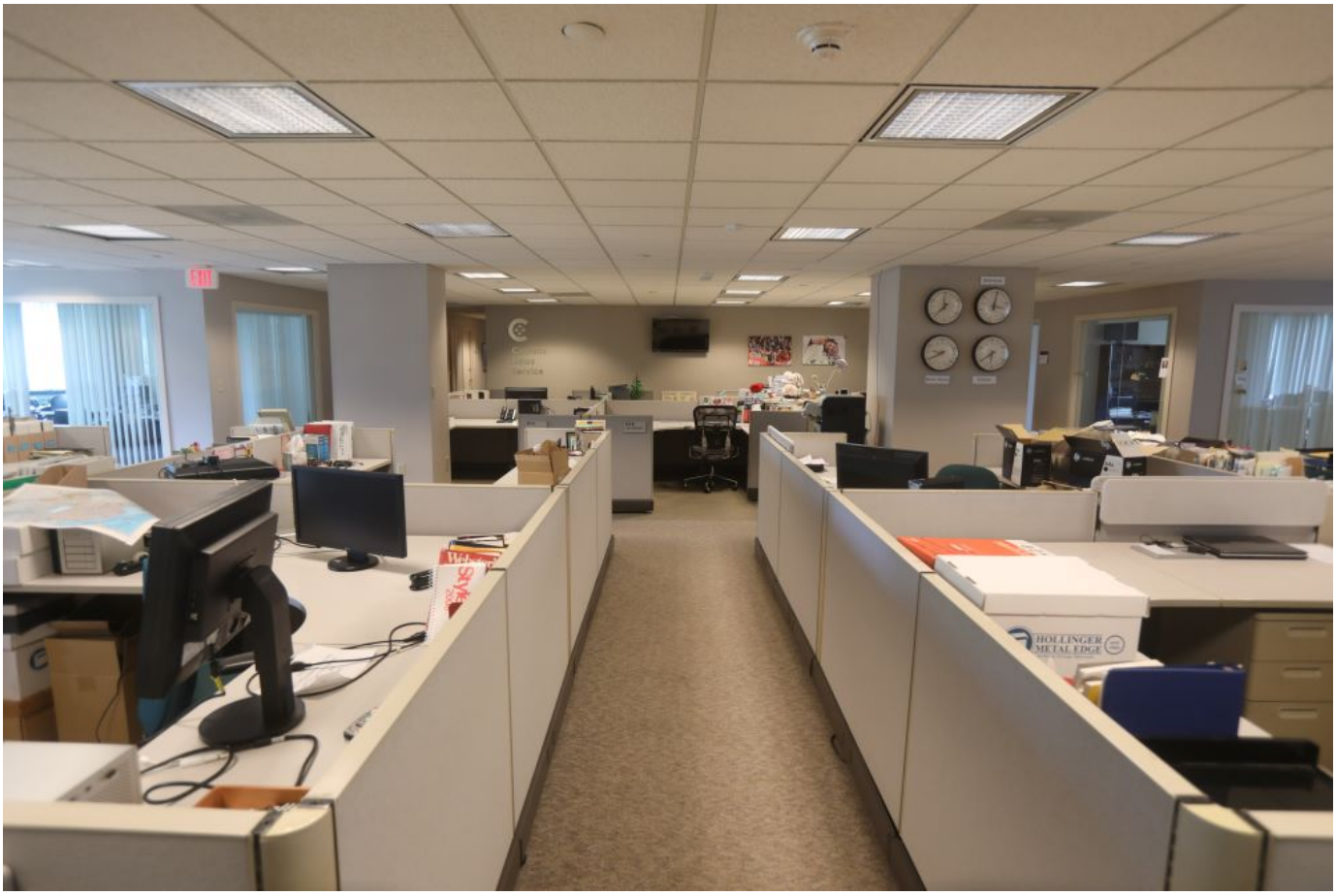
OSV News will continue to operate as part of the parent company OSV.

In an Aug. 14 press release, OSV said the move was "part of a strategic shift in response to changing readership patterns and the rapidly evolving media landscape."

OSV's plans continue a trend in Catholic media as many U.S. diocesan newspapers have ceased print editions and begun relying more on websites and social media.

Catholic newspapers, magazines and newsletters have experienced a steep decline for at least the last 10 years.

U.S. Catholic newspapers numbered 196 with 6.5 million in circulation in 2006, according to figures from the Catholic Media Association, which serves Catholic journalists in the U.S. and Canada. In 2020, the number of newspapers had dropped 40%, to 118 with 3.8 million in circulation.



An empty Catholic News Service newsroom is pictured at the headquarters of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington May 4, 2022. The USCCB closed the Washington and New York offices of CNS at the end of 2022. The Rome bureau remains open. (CNS/Bob Roller)

In May 2022, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops announced it was closing the Washington and New York offices of CNS as part of a reorganization of its communications department. The service was founded in 1920.

The CNS Rome bureau continues to operate, and the organization since 2023 has made its Rome coverage available to all U.S. dioceses at no charge.

A total of 21 CNS employees — 11 of them union members — were laid off at the end of 2022. Among them were longtime reporters Carol Zimmermann and Rhina Guidos. Zimmermann joined the National Catholic Reporter as news editor in August 2024. Guidos is the Latin America regional correspondent for Global Sisters Report.

The USCCB cited financial reasons for its 2022 decision.

It is unclear how many OSV employees will lose jobs or if employees will be reassigned within the company.

Among OSV's discontinued publications are OSV Kids, The Priest, The Deacon and Our Sunday Visitor magazine.

OSV will also continue to publish the English edition of L'Osservatore Romano, the Vatican's newspaper.

magazine covers

Pictured is a combination image of covers of Our Sunday Visitor magazine. Longtime Catholic publisher Our Sunday Visitor, the parent company of OSV News, announced Aug. 14 it will sunset almost all of its periodical operations by December, while retaining OSV News. (OSV News/OSV)

Kathleen Johnston, an investigative reporter and journalism professor who grew up reading Our Sunday Visitor, said losing the publications is unfortunate.

"This publication was designed to give Catholics a local voice in their communities, to make the church more accessible and tangible," she said. "One less voice is a loss for all, Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

No institution can truly thrive without multiple media voices that are available to all. It truly is a loss."

Former religion reporter David Gibson wrote at the time that the bishops' decision to dramatically downsize CNS operations "eliminates a rare source of credibility for the hierarchy, a critical tool for reliably informing American Catholics about the church beyond their own diocese, and a counterwitness to the proliferation of ideologically driven Catholic media platforms that are driving the church apart, and regular Catholics around the bend — often right out of Catholicism."

Gibson is director of Fordham University's Center on Religion and Culture.

Archbishop John Noll, the founder of Our Sunday Visitor newspaper, is pictured in a combinati

Archbishop John Noll, the founder of Our Sunday Visitor newspaper, is pictured in a combination photo with the first issue of the paper, May 5, 1912. (CNS/OSV)

Our Sunday Visitor magazine, a monthly lifestyle magazine that had replaced OSV's longtime weekly newspaper in 2024, will publish its final issue in October.

OSV Kids will conclude with the September issue. The December issue of The Priest will be that periodical's last. The Deacon is ending its run as an OSV publication with its November/December issue.

"These publications have been an integral part of OSV's mission for more than a century," Kyle Hamilton, CEO of OSV, said in a statement.

"As we look to the future of OSV, Archbishop John Francis Noll's vision to serve the Church through faithful, relevant, and accessible Catholic content continues," Hamilton said. "Today, that mission is being refocused and redirected into OSV News, our book publishing, curriculum products, parish resources, and other initiatives that champion the Catholic Church for the glory of God and the salvation of souls in a rapidly changing world."

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Advertisement

OSV was founded in 1912 by then-Fr. John Francis Noll, an Indiana priest who early in his ministry felt a call to expand evangelization efforts among Catholic faithful and non-Catholics alike through Catholic publications.

The success of Noll's catechetical pamphlets eventually led him to found a monthly magazine and then the national weekly Our Sunday Visitor, which later counted a circulation of almost a million. Until his death in 1956, Noll (who was made an honorary archbishop while bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne, Indiana) continued his pioneering efforts in the use of mass media to promote the Catholic faith.

Johnston, founding director of the Michael I. Arnolt Center for Investigative Journalism and a professor of practice at Indiana University, said her parents subscribed to The Chicago Tribune, Sun-Times, Gary (IN) Post-Tribune — and OSV.

"My parents wanted their five children to be exposed to as much media as possible and Our Sunday Visitor was part of that effort," she said.

"In these polarized times, we need more media, not less," Johnston said.

OSV is the parent company of OSV News wire service. An earlier version of this story erred in referring to the parent company as OSV News. This story has been updated to reflect the distinction.