SANTA SUBITO!

Short Pontificate, Long Impact: Blessed John XXIII

Catholic News Service

Although he served as pope for less than five years, Blessed John XXIII left one of the most lasting legacies in the Catholic Church’s history by convening the Second Vatican Council.

A plump, elderly, smiling Italian of peasant origins, the future pope had an illustrious career as a papal diplomat in Bulgaria, Turkey and postwar France. He became pope amid the dismantling of colonialism, the rise of the Cold War and on the cusp of a technological transformation unlike anything the world had seen since the Industrial Revolution.

Citing the Holy Spirit as his source of inspiration, he called the Second Vatican Council to help the Church confront the rapid changes and mounting challenges unfolding in the world – and, by inviting non-Catholics to the council, to work toward Christian unity.

As pope from 1958 to 1963, Blessed John launched an extensive renewal of the Church when he convoked the council, which set in motion major reforms with regard to the Church and its structure, the liturgy, ecumenism, social communication and Eastern churches.

After the initial session’s close in 1962, he set up a committee to direct council activities during the nine-month recess. Subsequent sessions – the final one ended in December 1965 – produced documents on the role of bishops, priestly formation, religious life, Christian education, the laity and interreligious dialogue.

He produced a number of historic encyclicals, including “Mater et Magistra” on Christian social doctrine and “Paecem in Terris,” issued in 1963 at the height of the Cold War.

Blessed John Paul II, who will be canonized April 27, was one of the most forceful moral leaders of the modern age.

He brought a philosopher’s intellect, a pilgrim’s spiritual intensity and an actor’s flair for the dramatic to his role as head of the universal Church for more than 26 years.

The Polish pope was a tireless evangelizer and forceful communicator, speaking to millions in their own languages. But toward the end of his life, his powers of speech faltered with his worsening illness, which left him often unable to even murmur a blessing.

The first non-Italian pope in 455 years, Blessed John Paul became a spiritual protagonist in two global transitions: the fall of European communism, which began in his native Poland in 1989, and the passage to the third millennium of Christianity.

As pastor of the universal Church, he jetted around the world, taking his message to 129 countries in 104 trips outside Italy – including seven to the United States.

Within the Church, the pope was just as vigorous and no less controversial. He disciplined dissenting theologians, excommunicated self-styled “traditionalists,” and upheld often unpopular Church positions like its opposition to artificial birth control. At the same time, he pushed Catholic social teaching into relatively new areas such as bioethics, international economics, racism and ecology.

In his later years, the pope moved with difficulty, tired easily and was less expressive, all symptoms of the nervous system disorder of Parkinson’s disease. Yet he pushed himself to the limits of his physical capabilities, convinced that such suffering was itself a form of spiritual leadership.

He led the Church through a heavy program of soul-searching events during the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, fulfilling a dream of his pontificate. His long-awaited pilgrimage to the Holy Land that year took him to the roots of the faith and dramatically illustrated the Church’s improved relations with Jews. He also presided over an unprecedented public apology for the sins of Christians during darker chapters of
Bishop Ronald W. Gainer made a pastoral visit to Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill on April 2, where he was greeted by Christian Charity Sister Romaine Niemeyer, President and CEO of Holy Spirit Health System. Bishop Gainer met with the administrative team and viewed the hospital’s 50th anniversary video, produced last year during the hospital’s golden anniversary.

Bishop Gainer also visited various patient floors and wings, where he was briefed on the hospital’s vast technology capabilities to enhance patient care. He visited the hospital’s Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, along with the Spirit Urgent Care Center, which opened in the last year adjacent to the main campus to serve non-emergency patients with same-day care who are suffering from ailments that still need prompt medical attention.

Holy Spirit Hospital recently earned Magnet® recognition that recognizes the hospital for its nursing excellence and places the hospital in a select group of 395 hospitals out of 6,000 nationwide health systems. It is also ranked in the Top-20 best Pennsylvania Hospitals by U.S. News and World Report.

The community Catholic health system has been sponsored by the Sisters of Christian Charity since opening its doors to patients in 1963.
Principal Opportunities in Harrisburg Diocesan Schools 2014-2015

Our Lady of the Angels, Columbia
(PREK/3-8) www.ourladyoftheangels.org

Sacred Heart, Lewistown
(PREK/3-5) www.sacredheartschool.com

Seven Sorrows BVM, Middletown
(PREK/4-8) sevensorrows.org

Lancaster Catholic High School
(9-12) www.lchsyes.org

Trinity High School, Camp Hill
(9-12) www.throcks.us

Minimum Qualifications:
- Practicing, knowledgeable Catholic
- Thorough understanding of Catholic School Philosophy
- Commitment to modeling the values of Catholic Educational Leadership
- PA Administrators Certificate (or in process)
- Catechetical Certification (or in process)
- 5 years of teaching experience

Preferred Qualifications:
(in addition to the minimum qualifications listed above):
- 3 years of Administrative experience
- Catechetical Certification (or in process)
- Master’s Degree in Educational Administration

Desirable Leadership Characteristics:
- Experience in marketing, recruitment, and fiscal management
- Collaborative leadership style with good interpersonal and team-building skills
- Oral and written communication and motivational skills
- Experience in instructional leadership, Curriculum development, teacher supervision, and effective instruction
- Knowledge and application of instructional technology
- Ability to effectively represent the school and the Church

Send resume and letter of interest to:
Livia Riley
Superintendent of Schools
Diocese of Harrisburg
4800 Union Deposit Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111-3710
(717) 657-4804, ext. 222
Email: lriley@hbgdiocese.org

2014 Bishop’s Annual Lenten Appeal
THE LIGHT OF FAITH

As individuals and as parishes, we are called upon to ensure that the religious, educational and charitable efforts in our diocese may continue. Many of these needs are beyond the scope and resources of any individual or parish. Therefore, we must meet these needs as the united community of faith.

These vital ministries continue only with your support. Every dollar donated is a gift in support of the many ministries of the Church in the Diocese of Harrisburg.

for giving opportunities visit www.hbgdiocese.org/BLACC
or mail to the Office of Development
HCAS-LA
4800 Union Deposit Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111-3710

Good Friday Collection Supports Church in the Holy Land

Eight hundred years ago, the Roman Catholic Church entrusted the guardianship of the Holy Land and other shrines of the Christian religion to the Order of St. Francis. This work has grown to include support of schools and missions in the Holy Land, as well as care for refugees and other needy people throughout the region.

The Franciscan Monastery in Washington, D.C., sustains this 800-year mission of the Franciscan Friars in the Holy Land through education, fundraising, recruiting vocations, promoting pilgrimages and providing pastoral ministry locally to religious and lay Catholics and to all of good will.

On Good Friday, a pontifical collection is taken up in every parish in the United States. The proceeds from the collection go to support ministries and works, largely under the direction of the Franciscans, in the Holy Land.

The funds are used to support Catholic schools, parishes and religious education in the Holy Land. The Good Friday collection also preserves the shrines for pilgrims and provides assistance, including housing and food, for the poor and needy.

Where does the money go?

Faith, Memory & Culture – The Holy Places: The staffing and maintenance of existing Holy Places and development of new projects enable those who live in the Holy Land and those who visit to deepen their faith and their spiritual and cultural connection to Salvation history.

Social & Charitable Activities: In order to assist Christians to remain in the Holy Land, including the poor and young couples, the Custody has built more than a thousand residential units in multiple locations – Bethlehem, Bethlehem and Nazareth. In the Old City of Jerusalem, about 80 homes have been rehabilitated for Christian families. Senior Care facilities have been built in Bethlehem and Nazareth. Medical assistance is provided for the needy.

Educational & Scientific Activities: To help more than 10,000 pre-K through grade 12 students, the Franciscans operate and support schools open to all, regardless of religion or nationality. Muslim and Christian students, teachers and families get to know each other and live in harmony. University scholarships for 360 students prepare them to get jobs and remain in the Holy Land as part of living Catholic communities. Some 120 young men are preparing to be priests or brothers. Still others are pursuing advanced degrees in Biblical Studies and Archaeology and Theology. Franciscan archaeologists pursue ongoing research at the Holy Places, including the new projects at Magdala, the home of St. Mary Magdalene.

Pastoral Activities: The Franciscans provide pastoral care in 29 parishes in the Holy Land, offering worship, Christian formation, youth and family programs and new parish centers in Jericho and Cana.

Liturgical, Ecumenical and Communications Programs: The Franciscan Media Center tells the story of the Holy Land through multimedia distributed throughout the world in more than seven languages. The friars organize liturgical celebrations for the local Christians and pilgrims, and share with other Christian communities in the Holy Land in ongoing ecumenical cooperation.

To find out more about the works of the Custody of the Holy Land visit: www.custodia.org. For more information about the Franciscans and the Good Friday Collection, visit www.myfranciscan.org.
‘Beginning Experience’ Weekends for Those Suffering the Loss of a Spouse

The Beginning Experience Team for the Harrisburg Diocese announces that they have booked weekend programs at Camp Hebron, 957 Camp Hebron Road in Halifax on June 13-15 and Oct. 31-Nov. 2. Beginning Experience is an approved Roman Catholic program designed for those suffering the loss of a spouse through death, divorce or separation. Hundreds of persons have been helped to move towards successful, productive, happy lives by attending one of these weekends. Beginning Experience is the Church at work, providing help, healing and spiritual restoration. The weekends are led by persons who have lost a spouse through death or divorce and are trained in facilitating a weekend. Each Beginning Experience Team is certified by the International Beginning Experience Organization.

A Beginning Experience weekend is often most helpful after six months following a loss of a spouse or marriage. But, grief has no schedule. Many have attended a weekend after a much longer period has elapsed and found it life giving. Reserve your space on a weekend, to take advantage of this program of support, healing and encouragement. Deadline for the June 13-15 weekend is May 13. Late registrations may be accepted if space is available. Check the diocesan Web site, www.hbgdiocese.org, and go to marriage and family, or visit www.beginningexperience.org. Information can also be obtained by contacting the Harrisburg Beginning Experience Team at 717-512-2718 or harrishurbc@gmail.com.

Some time ago, I had the privilege of teaching religion to middle school students. During one of my classes, I stopped me in my tracks as she shared with me something that I never would have thought possible.

The conversation, as I remember, went like this: “Sister, I have a question. You have mentioned a lot during our religion classes that many of the Old Testament figures experienced the presence of God. Well, I can honestly say, I don’t know what you mean. I don’t think I have ever experienced the presence of God.”

Several of the other students nodded in agreement. I was absolutely floored! “You mean,” I said, “not even when you received Holy Communion, you have never felt the presence of ‘an-other’ that was greater than you?”

All of the students nodded that what I was saying was true.

“Let me tell you a story,” I said. “During retreat, the Holy Spirit asked me to ask for a sign of his love for me. That was a lot to ask for, especially for someone who didn’t even believe in God. But, I had a heart for God, so I asked for it. And, to my surprise, the Holy Spirit gave me a very definite answer. I asked for a symbol of his love, and I received a yellow feather! I then explained the sign I asked to receive. Even so, I didn’t need to see the bird, I had its feather!”

As I said this to the students, I reached into my pocket and pulled out the yellow feather. My students gasped. I continued, “In order to actually see God’s presence in our life, we have to be open to him.”

I then pulled an extra desk from the back of the room into a corner, threw a piece of cloth over the desk and then taped the feather on the cloth in the middle of the desk. From then on, when choose to meditate, I must ask for the grace of each of us to understand how God speaks to us in our lives,” I said. “When he does make his presence known, please bring a symbol of that experience and add it to our prayer table and then share with everyone the story.”

By the end of the school year, the entire desk was filled with numerous items, in addition to the area around it as well as the windowsill behind it. The stories shared about each of the items taught both student and teacher how God can be present in the common everyday happenings.

I was reminded of this story as I sat down to write about formation as the third aspect of media use that Blessed John Paul warned us against in his Apostolic Letter of January 2005, called “The Rapid Development.” Blessed John Paul warns that the improper use of media “runs the risk of manipulating and heavily conditioning, rather than serving people. This is especially true for young people, who now have a natural propensity for technological innovations, and as such are in even greater need of education in the responsible and critical use of the media.” This letter can be found at: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20051214-il-rapido-sviluppo_en.html.

So, what actually is “formation?” This word is etymologically derived from the Latin verb formare, which means “to mold.” Formation is not merely about education, instruction or learning, though they are a part of it. Formation is a process in which a person’s entire being is graced by God to respond to his vision of being the person he wants us to be. In other words, it takes the education and instruction that we learned and through it influences how and what we do or don’t do, say or don’t say, act or don’t act. John Cardinal O’Connor says it this way: “The process of formation...has the goal of developing the virtuousness of the clay in the hands of the potter, the Divine Potter, Who shapes us uniquely to be filled with His Son, and yet each of us in a different way.”

Social media has the ability, according to Blessed John Paul, to modify the learning process as well as the quality of human relations. It has the ability to create a “virtual door” to the dogmas, teaching and traditions of the Catholic Church. It has the capacity for our Church to make Christ present to everyone everywhere in the world. It can be the pathway in which individuals come back to a deeper relationship not only with Christ but also his Church. Our Church is crying out for individuals with faith that reach out to the virtual world about God’s love and amazing mercy, to invite the fully engaged in the Church, those who are on the margins and those who are not chruched to explore the richness of what Catholicism has to offer. This is the yellow feather that lies at our feet. Pick it up and share it with others!

(Sister of Christian Charity Gerilyn Schmidt, is the Wide Area Network Coordinator at the Diocese of Harrisburg and a member of the IT Department. An educator for 28 years, she is responsible for Professional Development Programs for every age learner. In addition, Sister blogs for Powerful Learning Practices, a company providing in-service opportunities for educators. Through her presentations, she challenges her audiences to be the individual God has called them to be.)
The Catholic Witness

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, and the Diocese of Harrisburg is reminding everyone—clergy, staff and parishioners—that we must work together to ensure our children are protected and safe.

“The Catholic Church is absolutely committed to the safety of children,” said Bishop Ronald W. Gainer. “Children have the right to be safe and protected in their homes, schools, community and, certainly, in our parishes and Church institutions.”

By creating the Charter to Protect Children and Young People, the United States Bishops have made a promise to protect and a pledge to heal.

In the Diocese of Harrisburg, through the efforts of our Victim Assistance Coordinator, we work to heal and reconcile those who have suffered from abuse.

Through a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors, we guarantee effective responses to allegations and we ensure accountability of procedures.

Both children and adults who work with children have been trained to identify and prevent abuse through safe environment policies. We have administered almost 25,000 background checks.

We are working to make the Catholic Church one of the safest institutions in the country.

The strides the Church has taken are important, but child abuse affects the entire community. The Pennsylvania General Assembly also has taken several steps in an effort to protect children from abuse. The General Assembly established the Pennsylvania Task Force on Child Protection through joint resolutions sponsored by Sen. Kim Gainer (R-Dauphin) and Rep. Ron Marsico (R-Dauphin).

In December 2013, many of the Task Force’s recommendations became law when Governor Tom Corbett signed 10 bills to strengthen the child protection statutes, including a law expanding the definition of child abuse.

“The legislation I’m signing today will better equip our communities to protect children, and enhance the safety and security of the Commonwealth’s children,” Corbett said.

The new laws will:

• Amend the definition of child abuse to lower the threshold from serious bodily injury to bodily injury and include knowingly, recklessly or intentionally committing acts of child abuse or failing to act when child abuse is being committed. The bill also provides exclusions from substantiation of child abuse. (House Bill 726, Rep. Scott Petri, R-Bucks)

• Broaden the definition of perpetrator to include employees or volunteers that have regular contact with the child, including school teachers, employees, and individuals related to the child. (Senate Bill 23, Senator Lisa Baker, R-Luzerne)

• Recognize that perpetrators can be as young as 18 and create new protections that address false reports and intimidation. (Senate Bill 28, Senator Patrick Browne, R-Lehigh)

• Provide immunity for reporters from liability, penalties for false reporting and improved appeals processes. (Senate Bill 30, Senator Ted Erikson, R-Chester)

• Expand the basis for disciplinary action against teachers to include findings of child abuse. (Senate Bill 34, Senator Lloyd Smucker, R-Lancaster)

• Clarify and encourage joint child abuse investigations between county children and youth agencies and law enforcement (Senate Bill 1116, Senator LeAnna Washington, D-Philadelphia)

• Instruct the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing to provide guidelines for offenses involving child pornography. (House Bill 321, Rep. Marcy Toepel, R-Montgomery)

• Declare that when awarding custody, a parent’s involvement with cases of child abuse shall be considered and provide for information sharing on child protective services and general protective services to the jurisdiction determining custody. (House Bill 414, Rep. Bernie O’Neill, R-Bucks)

Prevent the records and name of minor victims of sexual or physical abuse from being available for public review. (House Bill 1201, Rep. Bryan Barbin, D-Dambramia)

Establish the offense of luring a child into a motor vehicle or structure. (House Bill 1594, Rep. Mike Regan, R-York)

Representative Marsico, who is chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, applauded lawmakers of both parties for taking swift action on improving child protection laws.

“We have accomplished a great deal in a short period of time to increase the safety of the children in the Commonwealth,” Marsico said. “It is wonderful to have widespread bipartisan support in both chambers, as well as the governor’s office, in achieving such enormous results in such a succinct fashion and I will continue to make child protection legislation a priority.”

Other proposals are being considered in the General Assembly, including bills that would define who must report suspected child abuse to authorities.

The diocese encourages anyone who is a victim of sexual misconduct or suspects someone was abused to report it by calling the toll-free Pennsylvania Childline at 1-800-932-0313.

To report suspected abuse of a minor by a Church official, employee or volunteer, also please call the Diocesan toll free hotline at 1-800-626-1608. To learn more about Youth Protection and Victim Assistance efforts, visit www.hbgdiocese.org/safetyouth.

The staff of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference contributed to this article.

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Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse affects boys and girls of all ages, in all kinds of neighborhoods and communities. Children are more likely to be sexually abused by someone they know and trust than by a stranger. Abusers do not always use physical force. Many use games, gifts, lies or threats to engage children and to keep them from telling anyone what has happened.

What You Can Do

To prevent child sexual abuse, it is important to keep the focus on adult responsibility, while teaching children skills to help protect themselves. Consider the following tips:

• Take an active role in your children’s lives. Learn about their activities and people with whom they are involved. Stay alert for possible problems.

• Watch for “grooming” behaviors in adults who spend time with your child. Warning signs may include frequently finding ways to be alone with your child, ignoring your child’s need for privacy (e.g., in the bathroom), or giving gifts or money for no particular occasion.

• Ensure that organizations, groups and teams that your children are involved with minimize one-on-one time between children and adults. Ask how staff and volunteers are screened and supervised.

• Make sure your children know that they can talk to you about anything that bothers or confuses them.

• Teach children accurate names of private body parts and the difference between touches that are “okay” and “not okay.”

• Empower children to make decisions about their bodies by allowing them age-appropriate privacy and encouraging them to say “no” when they do not want to touch or be touched by others, even in nonsexual ways.

• Teach children to take care of their own bodies (e.g., bathing or using the bathroom) so they do not have to rely on adults or older children for help.

• Educate children about the difference between good secrets (such as birthday surprises) and bad secrets (those that make the child feel unsafe or uncomfortable).

• Monitor children’s use of technology, including cell phones, social networking sites, and messaging. Review contact lists regularly and ask about any people you don’t recognize.

• Trust your instincts. If you feel uneasy about leaving your child with someone, don’t do it. If you are concerned about possible sexual abuse, ask questions.

• If your child tells you that he or she has been abused, stay calm, listen carefully and never blame the child. Thank your child for telling you. Report the abuse right away.

In his first conversation with diocesan high school seniors via videoconference, Bishop Ronald W. Gainer took on the topic of same-sex marriage and why the Church stands firmly in the teaching that marriage is the union of one man and one woman.

From a conference room in the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg on April 2, the bishop spoke to the students—shown in real-time on a projection screen before him—about being created in the image and likeness of God, the understanding of the human person, and the gift of marriage, authored by God.

His talk was followed by a genuine discussion with the students, who engaged him with questions reflective of society’s increasing support for same-sex marriage. According to a March 2014 report released by the Pew Research Center on same-sex marriage in the United States, 54 percent of Americans today support same-sex marriage, up from 35 percent in 2001. The same poll indicates that 68 percent of Millennials (those born since 1981) are also in favor of same-sex marriage.

The topic is a hot and controversial issue, Bishop Gainer acknowledged. “The issue of marriage is very much at the core of who we are and what we need to be about,” he told the students. “In God’s plan, each of us is the fruit of our mother and our father’s love for each other. This is what God intended from the beginning, and that’s who we are. This is why the issue of marriage and same-sex marriage is of great concern to every one of us. It touches everybody’s life.”

The Church cares so much about marriage, he said, because it is not a private issue between two people, but rather a “fundamental good given to the human family by God. It is essential to the flourishing of human society. It is not simply for the pleasure or the satisfaction of two individual people.”

Understanding the Church’s position regarding marriage and family begins not with civil rights or equality, but with the human person, Bishop Gainer said.

“The human person is also made for relationship,” he explained. “It is not simply for the pleasure or the satisfaction of two individual people.”

Understanding the Church’s position regarding marriage and family begins not with civil rights or equality, but with the human person, Bishop Gainer said.

“Marriage has to begin with the understanding of the human person because marriage is a unique relationship between two specific human persons,” he explained.

When God created the human person in his own image, he placed in our hearts this desire, this responsibility, to love and to be able to give ourselves totally to one another,” the bishop said. This communion of man and woman brings about the possibility of new life into the world.

“The basic family unit—an mother, father and child—become for us a mirror, an icon, of the mystery of the Holy Trinity,” he said. “That’s why marriage is so important. That’s why we must raise our voices, because it has such an implication for every one of us, and for society in general.”

To understand the message of marriage and family life, we must first understand the human person, the bishop remarked. “If we get right the self-understanding of who we are, then the teaching of the Church and the objective truth about marriage and the family will fall into place,” he said.

“Video recordings of the Conversations on the Faith series presented to high school seniors are available on the diocese’s Web site at www.hbgdiocese.org under the “Our Faith” tab. In addition to Bishop Gainer’s talk on same-sex marriage, the series also includes his sessions on prayer, Father Edward J. Quinlan’s session on discerning God’s will.”

**Harrisburg Diocesan Council of Catholic Women’s 89th Annual Convention**

*Be the Voice of Catholic Women*

**Monday, May 5 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.**

Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg

Bishop Ronald W. Gainer, Principal Celebrant, with priests of the diocese concelebrating

Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC, Keynote Speaker

Religious items and Fair Trade items available for purchase.

Afternoon workshop on Mombasa Catholic Community-Based Health Care and AIDS Relief

Meditation room, exhibits, silent auction, lunch, closing prayer service

All women of the diocese are cordially invited to attend.

Registration begins at 8 a.m.

Cost of the day is $25, and includes continental breakfast and lunch.

**Registration deadline is April 21; contact Debbie at 717-514-8815 or mvdb01@verizon.net.**

**Council of Catholic Women Seeks Applicants for Scholarship**

The Harrisburg Diocesan Council of Catholic Women’s Scholarship Fund will be awarded to a Catholic senior high school girl for her freshman year at an accredited college, university or trade school. The amount of the academic scholarship is $1,000.

Applicants must be sponsored by a mother, grandmother or guardian who is an active member of a parish Council of Catholic Women for no less than one year. The applicant and her sponsor must be residents of the Diocese of Harrisburg. Applicants must meet all conditions established by the scholarship committee as set forth in its rules and regulations, which are included in the application packet.

Applications are available from parish presidents of the Council of Catholic Women. More information can be obtained by contacting Joyce Scott, Scholarship Chair, 717-737-0927 or joynbob10@comcast.net. The deadline for submitting applications is May 1.
By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

According to a recent estimate by IBM, 90 percent of the world’s current online information was created within the past two years.

Given the enormous amount of information accessible at the click of a mouse, “How can anyone, including teachers, just be dropped into the Internet and left to search or access things for themselves?” posed Rich Kiker, the keynote speaker at this year’s Tech’d Out Conference for Catholic school educators. “I compare teachers to artists. We need to provide them with the canvas and the tools to design ways of learning in the classroom that is connect- ed and relevant,” Mr. Kiker told The Catholic Witness.

In addition to being director of online learning for Palisades School District in Bucks County, Pa., Mr. Kiker is a consultant for e-learning and Google solutions, and is the top-rated Google trainer in the world. He works closely with the cutting-edge company on new solutions.

His keynote presentation for the conference, held March 27 at the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg, focused on “Connecting, Calibrating and Creating in the Cloud.” In it, he used videos and images to highlight the web as a classroom and ways to prepare today’s learners for future jobs.

“The Web is a classroom. Open it up. Let the students in, and let them explore and create,” he told the educators.

“We need to shift the focus from static resources to more dynamic plans for flexible competencies, so that kids can apply the Pythagorean Theorem not just to math equations but to building the roof of a house or designing clothing in fashion.”

“Students need to be empowered with autonomy,” Mr. Kiker said. “They can’t be creative if they don’t have the autonomy to do so.”

He told The Catholic Witness that he has been heart- ened to see teachers embrace the ever-changing ways of bringing technology into the classroom.

“Even teachers who were once hesitant or even critical about technology and change have realized this is the future. When they recognize that, they begin to be empowered and inspired,” he said. “Age has little weight in this conversation. There are so many teachers who are later in their careers who are completely immersed in technology. It’s all about mindset.”

“I think it’s absolutely wonder- ful to see technology confer- ences like the one hosted here by the diocese,” Mr. Kiker remarked. “The culture is here. How can you not be inspired in technology when you leave here and go back to your classroom?”

Deb Schultz of Good Shepherd School in Camp Hill participates in a session presented by Christian Charity Sister Geralyn Schmidt, Wide Area Network Coordinator for the Diocese of Harrisburg. Sessions during the conference focused on wireless networks, iPad apps, digital Christianity virtual integrity, personal learning communities, Lightspeed and multimedia messaging.

Father Gillelan to ‘Dance with the Stars’ at Jake Gittlen Gala

Father Robert M. Gillelan, Jr., Diocesan Vicar General and pastor of Prince of Peace Parish in Steelton, will participate in the third annual “Dancing with the Central PA Stars” gala presented by the Central Pennsylvania Symphony and the Jake Gittlen Cancer Research Foundation.

The event will take place April 26 at the Zembo Shrine in Harrisburg.

Six local celebrities and their professional dance partners from PA DanceSport will compete for a mirror ball trophy in a format similar to the popular TV show. The gala will also include a silent auction, hors d’oeuvres, a cash bar, group dance lesson and an open dance floor. All music will be played live by the Central PA Symphony.

The stars include Father Gillelan, Ben Allatt of Harrisburg City Council, Julia Hatmaker of the PA Media Group, Kendra Nichols from ABC27, Tom Russell from CBS21, and Tom DeWall from the PA Psychological Association.

Purchase tickets and cast a vote online at http://centralpasymphony.org/annual-gala/. Votes are $10 each, and tickets to the gala are $80 per person or $600 for a table of eight. Proceeds benefit the Jake Gittlen Cancer Research Foundation and the Central PA Symphony. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. Black tie is optional.
Pope: OK to Fight with God, Hold Him to His Promise

By Carol Glatz

Catholic News Service

Don’t hold back when praying to God — tell him exactly what’s wrong and insist on holding him to his promises, Pope Francis said.

Prayer should be like speaking face-to-face with a friend: “without fear, freely and also with insistence,” the pope said in his homily April 3 during an early morning Mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

Pope Francis’ homily focused on the day’s reading from the Book of Exodus (32:7-14), in which Moses begs God to spare his people, even though they have created a golden calf to worship as their god.

God says he’s going to let his wrath “blaze up against them to consume them,” but Moses reminds the Lord that these are his own people he has saved before and has promised to make their descendants “as numerous as the stars in the sky.”

Pope Francis said that, in the day’s reading, Moses shows what praying to God should really feel and sound like: not filled with empty words, but a heartfelt, “real fight with God.”

Moses is courageously insistent and argues his point, the pope said, and prayer must also be “a negotiation with God, presenting arguments” supporting one’s position.

When God decides to not punish his people, it’s not God who has changed, but Moses, the pope said.

By freely talking out the problem and underlining all the ways God has always shown his mercy, Moses was able to rediscov -"er, deep in his heart, what his head already “more or less sort of knew.”

“Prayer changes our hearts. It helps us better understand what our God is like,” it helps people grow closer to him, recognize his love and rejuvenate one’s faith.

The pope underlined what Jesus said: “In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words.”

“No, say what’s what: ‘Look, Lord, I have this problem, in my family, with my child, with this, with that ... What can you do? Now see here, you can’t leave me like this!’ This is prayer. And does this prayer take a long time? Yes, it takes time.”

Pray like Moses did, face-to-face with the Lord, like a friend, freely, with insistence and good arguments, the pope said. “And also scold the Lord a little: ‘Hey, you promised me this, and you haven’t done it ...’ Like that, like you talk with a friend.”

Open one’s heart wide to God and get to know him better, he said. Prayer is a grace, and the Holy Spirit is present; it changes and reinvigorates one’s heart so people can strike back out on their life journey.

Recognize Limits, Be Open to Light of Christ, Pope Tells Movement for the Blind

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

Only those who recognize their own limits can accept the great gift of salvation in Jesus Christ, which is why Catholics with disabilities are such important and powerful witnesses of faith, Pope Francis said.

Meeting March 29 with close to 7,000 members, staff and volunteers of the Apostolic Movement for the Blind and the Little Mission for the Deaf, Pope Francis insisted it is “truly blasphemous” to believe that a physical limitation or dis -ability is a punishment from God.

“Jesus radically refused that way of thinking,” he said.

“The person who is sick or has a disability, precisely because of his or her fragility and limits, can become a wit -ness of the encounter: the encounter with Christ who opens one to life and to faith; and the encounter with others, with the community,” Pope Francis said.

“Only one who recognizes his own fragility, his own limits, can construct relationships that are fraternal and marked by solidarity in the Church and in society,” he said.

The key to being a trustworthy, effec -tive witness to Jesus, he said, is first hav -ing had the experience of meeting Jesus.

“As a witness to the Gospel is one who has en -countered Jesus Christ, who knows him or, bet -ter, feels known by him, recognized, respected, loved and forgiven. This encounter has touched him deeply, has filled him with new joy and giv -en his life new meaning,” the pope said.

Discussing the story from the Gospel of St. John about the man born blind, Pope Francis said the man becomes a believer and witness to Jesus and to “the life, love and mercy” of God.

He urged people to read and re-read the ninth chapter of St. John’s Gospel during the coming week.

He said the story, which deals only briefly with the miracle of the man recovering his sight, speaks at length of the man’s faith and the Phar -isees’ doubts. The story “opens with a blind man who begins to see and ends – curiously – with those who presumably can see, but who continue to remain blind in their souls.”

“Today we are called to open ourselves to the light of Christ to bear fruit in our lives and to elimi -nate non-Christian behavior,” he said. “We are all Christians, but all of us — all of us — sometimes have non-Christian behaviors, behavior that is sinful. We must repent of this, eliminate these be -haviors and decisively set out on the path toward holiness.”

As a service for those who are unable to visit the graves of loved ones in Diocesan Cemeteries, a program is offered each spring for flowers to be placed at gravesites. Floral arrangements may be ordered for one or more of the dates indicated. Selection and purchase, at the price of $33, can be made at one of the Diocesan Cemeteries offices listed below, or online at www.hbgdiocese.org/cemeteries.

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Reconstruction, Holy Cross, Mount Calvary, Harrisburg
116 S. Oak Grove Road, Harrisburg PA, 17112
717-545-4205
jblransky@hbgdiocese.org

All Saints, Elysburg
172 All Saints Road, Elysburg PA, 17824
570-672-2872
kshervinskie@hbgdiocese.org
Kevin Shervinskie, Manager

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Joe Blransky, Manager

Holy Cross Cemetery, Lebanon
1810 Jay Street, Lebanon PA, 17046
717-273-7541
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Patrick Eichelberger, Manager

Holy Cross Cemetery, Lebanon
1810 Jay Street, Lebanon PA, 17046
717-273-7541
peichelberger@hbgdiocese.org
Patrick Eichelberger, Manager

St. Joseph, St. Anthony, St. Mary, Lancaster
Box 127, Bausman PA, 17504
717-394-2231
peichelberger@hbgdiocese.org
Patrick Eichelberger, Manager

Gate of Heaven, Mechanicshs
1313 S. York Street, Mechanicsburg PA, 17055
717-697-0206
jblransky@hbgdiocese.org
Joe Blransky, Manager
Many of Today’s Papal Traditions Were John Paul’s Innovations

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

The first anniversary of Pope Francis’ election brought stories highlighting the unique style he has brought to the papacy. Maybe people have forgotten how much of what we do today for papal “tradition” was actually an innovation of Pope John Paul II.

Frequent parish visits? Check. Joking with and leading a big crowd in a chant? Check. Sneaking out of the Vatican? Wait, that was Blessed John Paul who’d head out to go skiing or hiking. Pope Francis categorically denied in February that he had ever snuck out of the Vatican.

As John Thavis, the former Rome bureau chief of Catholic News Service once wrote: “If there’s anything Pope John Paul II loved more than following traditions, it was inventing new ones.”

The calendar of Pope Francis and of the universal Church is filled with annual appointments established by Pope John Paul, who is scheduled to become St. John Paul on April 27.

The day of the canonization is Divine Mercy Sunday, an observance Pope John Paul decided in 2000 to put on the Church’s universal calendar the Sunday after Easter. The Polish pope was a long-time devotee of the Divine Mercy devotion of St. Faustina Kowalska, whom he beatified in 1993 and canonized in 2000.

Presiding over the first universal observance of Divine Mercy Sunday in 2001, Pope John Paul quoted from his 1980 encyclical “Divine Mercy in Life and in Death” (“Rich in Mercy”): The cross and resurrection of Christ speak and never cease “to speak of God the Father, who is absolutely faithful to his eternal love for man... believing in this love means believing in mercy.”

Meeting in March with priests from the Diocese of Rome, Pope Francis said one of the greatest inspirations of Pope John Paul was his intuition that “this was a time for mercy.”

“It is a gift he gave us, but one that came from above,” Pope Francis said. “It is up to us as ministers of the Church to keep this message alive, especially in our preaching and gestures, in signs and pastoral choices – for example, in deciding to give priority to the sacrament of reconciliation and, at the same time, to works of mercy.”

Pope John Paul also instituted the annual Feb. 2 World Day of Consecrated Life, the Feb. 11 World Day of the Sick and a World Meeting of Families every three years. But welcoming hundreds of thousands of young people to the Vatican for a special Palm Sunday celebration in 1984, Pope John Paul launched what has become the biggest international gathering on the Church’s calendar: World Youth Day.

Explaining to the Roman Curia the importance of World Youth Day and youth ministry in general, Pope John Paul said: “All young people must sense that the Church is accompanying them, therefore the whole Church in union with the successor of Peter increasingly must be committed, on a worldwide level, to the good of youth, their worries and concerns and their openness and hopes.” At the end of the U.N.-declared International Year of Youth in 1985, he said young people were hoping for change in society and in the world, the Church, which looks to youths with “hope and love,” must help young people realize that change by communicating the Gospel truths to them, supporting them as they seek God’s plan for their lives and educating them in living their faith.

Of course, Pope John Paul left a mark on many more than the Church’s calendar. Surprisingly for many people, St. Peter’s Square didn’t have a Christmas tree or Nativity scene until 1982. Even after the College of Cardinals asked him to leave Krakow, Poland, and lead the universal Church, he continued to keep Polish Christmas traditions; for years, he would invite fellow Poles to the Vatican on Christmas Eve to break “oplatek” (a Polish wafer) with him and to sing Polish carols. He had been pope for four years when he asked the Vatican governor’s office to put some Christmas decorations in the square under his window, thus a new tradition was born.

Some of Pope John Paul’s innovations had a lot to do with the fact that he was a very outdoorsy, fit 58-year-old when elected to the See of Peter in 1978. He liked to ski and walk in the mountains and, apparently, didn’t think that should change. As he grew older and weaker from Parkinson’s, the physical activity diminished, but he and a few aides never stopped slipping out of the Vatican on the occasional Tuesday for a drive to the mountains and a sack lunch al fresco.

But he didn’t just head for the hills. Pope John Paul made the nine international trips taken by Pope Paul VI seem like a trifle; Pope John Paul took his message on the road, visiting 129 countries several repeatedly – on 104 trips and logging more than 700,000 miles in a papacy that lasted more than 27 years.
Blessed John Paul Played Major Role in Fall of Soviet Communism

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

Catholics venerate Blessed John Paul II for his holiness, as demonstrated, among other ways, by his globe-trotting evangelism and long-suffering endurance in the papacy despite his illness.

For secular historians, however, none of the late pope’s accomplishments looms larger than his role in the end of the Cold War and the fall of Soviet communism.

Blessed John Paul’s opposition to totalitarianism grew out of his devotion to the idea of God-given human rights. As a father of the Second Vatican Council, then-Archbishop Karol Wojtyla of Krakow was a key supporter of the 1965 Declaration on Religious Freedom, “Dignitatis Humanae,” which affirmed that the “right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the person, as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself.”

At the end of the 1970s, a period of increasing ferment in Poland marked by major strikes to protest the communist government’s economic failures, then-Catholic Wojtyla became a well-known champion of human rights for all Poles.

“It cannot happen that one group of men, one social group – however well-deserving – should impose on the whole people an ideology, an opinion contrary to the will of the majority,” he said in a 1976 homily.

After his 1978 election to the papacy, Blessed John Paul modified Pope Paul VI’s policy of “Ostpolitik,” whereby the Vatican sought to foster better relations with Soviet bloc countries in the hope of improving conditions for Catholic churches there. The new pope kept open the channels of dialogue, while pressuring communist regimes to comply with international agreements on human rights.

In June 1979, less than nine months after becoming pope, Blessed John Paul visited his native land, where he spoke to crowds totaling 13 million and publicly called for “political self-determination for (Poland’s) citizens and formation of its own culture and civilization.”

The next year, widespread strikes, forced the Polish government to raise wages, loosen censorship and permit the formation of an independent labor union, Solidarity. Blessed John Paul was a major inspiration for this non-violent movement. Lech Wałęsa, a Solidarity leader and later president of Poland, signed the accords ending those strikes with a pen bearing the pope’s portrait.

The alarm of Polish officials and Soviet leaders at the pope’s influence in that period has been well-documented in books published since the end of the Cold War. When a Turkish gunman nearly succeeding in killing Blessed John Paul in May 1981, many observers suspected a Soviet connection. That link has never been proven, but Cardinal Stanisław Dziwisz, the late pope’s secretary, wrote in 2007 that Blessed John Paul himself believed Moscow was behind the assassination attempt.

“Don’t all roads, however disparate they are, lead to that XGB?” Cardinal Dziwisz wrote.

Blessed John Paul’s second visit to Poland, in June 1983, came after the Polish government imposed martial law to suppress the democracy movement. The pope met with Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski and called on other countries to lift economic sanctions against the military regime. But he also publicly championed independent trade unions as a mouthpiece for the struggle for social justice” and insisted on meeting with Wałęsa, who was still in custody. Martial law was lifted the next month.

Over the following years, the pope continued to encourage the democracy movement with weekly radio addressings. His pontificate has been captured in some lasting images, like sitting on his wheelchair, waving at the crowd in St. Peter’s Square May 13, 1981.

Karol Wojtyła was born May 18, 1920, in Wadowice, a small town near Krakow, in southern Poland. He lost his mother at age 9, his only brother at age 12 and his father at age 13.

An accomplished actor in Krakow’s underground theater during the war, he changed paths and joined the clandestine seminary after being turned away from a Carmelite monastery with the advice: “You are destined for greater things.”

Following theological and philosophical studies in Rome, he returned to Poland to pastor work in 1948, spending weekends on camping trips with young people. When named auxiliary bishop of Krakow in 1958, he was Poland’s youngest bishop, and he became archbishop of Krakow in 1964. He also came to the attention of the universal Church through his work on important documents of the Second Vatican Council.

Though increasingly respected in Rome, Cardinal Wojtyła was a virtual unknown when elected pope Oct. 16, 1978. In St. Peter’s Square that night, he set his papal style a-topical talks— delivered in fluent Italian, interrupted by loud cheers from the crowd.

After more than 26 years as pope, Blessed John Paul died at the age of 84 at the Vatican April 2, 2005, the vigil of Divine Mercy Sunday. Divine Mercy Sunday had special significance for Blessed John Paul, who made it a Church-wide feast day to be celebrated a week after Easter.

The pontificate has been captured in some lasting images, like sitting on his wheelchair, waving at the crowd in St. Peter’s Square May 13, 1981. The pope publicly forgave Agca and later said he did so "because that’s what Jesus teaches. Jesus teaches us to forgive.”

Blessed John Paul was not easily translated by the media. Yet in earlier years, this pope seemed made for modern media, and his pontificate has been captured in some lasting images, like huddling in a prison-cell conversation with his would-be assassin, Mehmet Ali Agca, who shot the pope in St. Peter’s Square May 13, 1981.

John Paul II sits with his would-be assassin, Mehmet Ali Agca, in Rome’s Rebibbia prison in 1983. The pope suffered serious intestinal wounds after the gunman fired shots at him on St. Peter’s Square May 13, 1981. The pope publicly forgave Agca and later said he did so “because that’s what Jesus teaches. Jesus teaches us to forgive.”

CNS/DIARIO MAR, L’OSSERVATORE ROMANO


CNS/Paul Haring, Reuters
For Blessed John XXIII, Calling Vatican II Was an Act of Faith

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

Blessed John XXIII called the Second Vatican Council in the conviction that it was necessary for the Catholic Church, yet without pre-conceived ideas of what it would accomplish, said Vatican II participants who recalled the event half a century later.

The men spoke in exclusive interviews featured in a forthcoming Catholic News Service documentary film, “Voices of Vatican II: Council Participants Remember.”

Blessed John had come to a “conviction that something ought to be done in order to make the Church more responsive to this modern world, in order to make the modern world more responsive to the Church. And that intuition went far beyond his intellectual preparation,” said Jesuit Father Ladislas Orsy, a “peritus” or expert theological adviser at the council.

Cardinal Loris Capovilla, who served as Blessed John’s private secretary during his pontificate, was privy to some of the pope’s first remarks, made only a few days after his election in 1958, about what would become Vatican II.

Cardinals and bishops had presented the new pontiff with a itinerary of challenges before the Church — “not doctrinal but pastoral problems,” Cardinal Capovilla said — in areas that included liturgy, diplomacy, and the education and discipline of priests.

“My desk is piling up with problems, questions, requests, hopes,” Blessed John told his secretary. “What’s really necessary is a council.”

When the secretary refused to comment, the pope interpreted his silence as disagreement.

“You think I am old,” Blessed John told him. “You think I’ll make a mess out of this enormous task, that I don’t have time. ... But that’s not how you think with faith. If one can only begin with the preparatory commission, that will be of great merit. If one dies, another will come. It is a great honor even to begin.”

Blessed John died June 3, 1963, after the council’s first session, and the remaining four sessions took place under his successor, Pope Paul VI.

Yet Blessed John’s ideas greatly influenced the outcome of Vatican II in certain areas, including liturgy.

Cardinal Paul Poupard, who served as a peritus at the council, said Blessed John believed “liturgy better expresses the mystery of the Church insofar as everyone takes part, so the more who take part, the better.”

In that spirit, Cardinal Poupard said, the liturgical reform that followed in the council’s wake produced a missal that was simpler, clearer and celebrated in modern languages.

The pope’s influence was also eventually seen in the council’s 1965 declaration “Nostra Aetate,” which exonerated the Jewish people of collective guilt for the killing of Jesus and affirmed that God’s covenant with them had never been abrogated.

Cardinal Georges Cottier, a Vatican II peritus, said Blessed John appreciated the special need for the document in the aftermath of the Holocaust. His sensitivity to the matter reflected his experience as a Vatican diplomat in pre-war Bulgaria, where he had befriended many Jews, and his later actions to save Jews in the region from the Nazi genocide.

“God’s covenant with them is not a thing of the past. And that’s what the Church needs to understand. ... That’s what the Church needs to understand.”


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John XXIII Lived with Keen Sense of Humor

By Emily Antenucci and Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Blessed John XXIII, who will be made a saint April 27, is remembered by many for his warmth, simplicity, social conscience and sense of humor.

Pope Francis, who will canonize “the Good Pope,” recalled his predecessor as being holy, patient and a man of courage, especially by calling the Second Vatican Council.

“He was a man who let himself be guided by the Lord,” Pope Francis has said.

But the Italian Pope John was also guided by his cheerful disposition, his simple, peasant background and tongue-in-cheek, wisecracking Italian culture.

Here’s a look at some of this soon-to-be saint’s funny quips:

- When a cardinal complained that a rise in Vatican salaries meant a particular usher earned as much as the cardinal, the pope remarked: “That usher has 10 children; I hope the cardinal doesn’t.”

- When he went to visit a friend at the nearby Hospital of the Holy Spirit in the evening, the nun answering the door said: “Holy Father, I’m the mother superior of the Holy Spirit.” He replied: “Lucky you! What a job! I’m just the ‘servant of the servants of God.’”

- Not long after he was elected pope, Blessed John was walking in the streets of Rome. A woman passed him and said to her friend, “My God, he’s so fat!” Overhearing what she said, he turned around and replied, “Madame, I trust you understand that the papal conclave is not exactly a beauty contest.”

- He once wrote: “There are three ways to face ruin: women, gambling and farming. My father chose the most boring one.”

- When he was cardinal and patriarch of Venice, the future pope was talking with a wealthy city resident and told him, “You and I have one thing in common: money. You have a lot and I have nothing at all. The difference is I don’t care about it.”

- When a journalist asked the then-patriarch of Venice what he would be if he could live his life over again, the future pope said, “Journalist.” Then he said with a smile, “Now let us see if you have the courage to tell me that, if you could do it all over again, you’d be the patriarch!”

- A Vatican official told the pope it would be “absolutely impossible” to open the Second Vatican Council by 1963. “Fine, we’ll open it in 1962,” he answered. And he did.

Dynamic Duo: John XXIII and Valet often skirted Protocol

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Blessed John XXIII struggled to shake off many formalities that came with the papacy and often comprised with his valet to sneak out of the Vatican.

One covert road trip in the Alban Hills outside of Rome got Guido Gusso, the pope’s valet, in trouble with the Italian police responsible for the pope’s safety.

But the security breach just made the pope chuckle – happy with their unauthorized escapade, Gusso told journalists during a news conference at Vatican Radio April 1.

While the conference was designed to unveil the radio’s latest project of digitalizing its complete audio archives from Popes Pius XI to Francis, Gusso was among a number of panelists invited to speak about their memories of Blesseds John XXIII and John Paul II.

Gusso, the son of a fisherman and a native of Venice, worked for five years for then-Cardinal Angelo Roncalli when he was patriarch of Venice. He followed the cardinal to Rome for the conclave in 1958 and remained in the pope’s residence for another five years until the pope’s death, after which he was promoted to running the papal household.

Gusso said that a week after his election, Pope John was already bored with taking the same daily walk in the Vatican City walls.

“The route is always the same one!” he said the pope complained. “Take me to the Jardiniere Hill. Take me to Villa Borghese!” a park the pope knew from his days as a student in Rome.

When Gusso said it wouldn’t be allowed, the new pope said, “How come it’s not possible? It’s easy. You’ve got the car, let’s go!” But Gusso said the pope made only two secret outings in Rome: once to visit the British ambassador to the Vatican who was at the hospital, and once to see a journalist.

“It was also dangerous because we’d have to stop at the red lights,” he laughed, which gave passersby the chance to identify his passenger since “he didn’t wear a black overcoat” to cover up his white papal cassock.

However, when they went to the papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, he said Pope John was much bolder about getting out. One day he hatched a plot to escape out the back gate of the pontifical villa.

He said the pope told him, “Let’s do this... Get the keys to the gate. Unlock it and let’s leave it open for about 10 days so nobody will get what’s going on.”

Several days later, when they were in the car riding around the villa’s gardens, the pope told his valet to take one extra spin around the property “so we’ll make the gendarmes dizzy” and confused. They got to the unlocked gate, opened it and left for an excursion, he said.

Toward the end of their road trip in the Alban Hills, they passed through the town of Marino. The narrow streets were full of people taking their afternoon stroll and “we couldn’t get through,” Gusso said.

The crowds realized the pope was in the car and started shouting, “Long live the pope! And there’d be someone else saying, ‘Yo! Yo! Yo, Johnny, our boy!’”

When they finally made it back to the papal residence in Castel Gandolfo, Gusso said he’ll never forget the look on the Swiss Guard’s face when he saw the pope driving up. “The gendarmes were freaked out, the Italian police – I can’t tell you. It was amazing.”

The head of the Italian police, however, sent a formal letter of complaint against Gusso to the Vatican Secretariat of State.

The pope read aloud the letter from the police in front of Gusso and Cardinal Angelo Dell’Acqua, a top official at the Vatican Secretariat of State. “The pope started to laugh, happy, because we were in the process of getting away with it, in defiance of everyone.”

Gusso said they’d either take the huge Chrysler that had been used by Pope Pius XII or the valet’s own two-tone – ivory and blue – Opel Record, which the pope said, reminded him of the car he had in Venice.

The transition to the Vatican from his independent life in Venice was hard for Pope John, Gusso said.

The first night in the papal apartments, they looked out onto St. Peter’s Square “and it was all dark, so dark,” and completely empty of people.

“It was a disappointment for him” because he had been used to music, lights and nightlife going on past midnight in Venice’s St. Mark’s Square.

When the pope’s personal belongings arrived from Venice, the pope was unable to put up with the dozen Vatican workmen deciding where all the pictures and paintings should be hung, Gusso said.

“The pope told me, ‘Tomorrow, don’t call anyone [to help].’ Have them leave the nails, hammer and ladder. And we’ll do it.”

A few days later I got up the ladder, and he held the foot of the ladder so it wouldn’t slip, and he’d say, ‘Higher, lower!’” indicating where to hang the pictures.

Pope John told his valet it was OK for him to call him, “His Holiness,” but to otherwise pretend they were still in Venice and stop the hand kissing and the kneelings, adding that if the pope felt he needed to kneel, it was better in prayer before the Lord.
Catholic Perspective Radio

April 13 - It’s more than a long walk, it’s a spiritual journey. This week on Catholic Perspective, we speak with someone who walked the El Camino de Santiago, “The Way of Saint James.” It is the pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain, where legend has it that the remains of Jesus’ apostle Saint James the Elder lie. The Camino has existed as a Christian pilgrimage for over 1,000 years, and there is evidence of a pre-Christian route as well. Throughout the medieval period, it was one of the three most important Christian pilgrimages undertaken. Indeed, it was only these pilgrimages— to Jerusalem, to Rome, and to Santiago de Compostela—which could result in a plenary indulgence, which frees a person from the peneance due for sins.

Author Kim Brown found her spiritual questions answered as she embarked on her journey as a pilgrim on the el Camino de Santiago in Spain. Contributor Rose Atkinson talks with Kim during our spotlight story of the week.

Catholic Perspective is produced in cooperation with the Office of Communications of the Diocese and WHFY AM 720. It can be heard Mondays and Thursdays at 7:30 a.m. on WHFY AM 720 and Sunday mornings on WLAM-AM 1390, Lancaster at 7:30 a.m.; WH-VM-AM 1280, Hanover at 8 a.m.; WKOK-AM 1070, Sunbury, at 6:30 a.m.; WIEZ-AM 670, Lewistown, at 7 a.m.; and WYBF-FM 88.3, Elizabethtown, at 9:30 a.m. It is also available online at www.OldiesRadio1620.com at 6:30 a.m. and at www.WESI1480.com on Sunday at 11 a.m. It can also be heard on-line at www.hbgdiocese.org.

Listen to the Parish Bulletin Board — During the day, Holy Family Radio AM 720, WHFY announces events and activities free as part of its service to the local Catholic community. Tune in to hear what is going on. The Parish Bulletin Board is sponsored by the Catholic Communication Campaign of the Diocese of Harrisburg. You can also listen online at www.720whyf.com. Catholic parishes and organizations can send event information to the station at Contact@720whyf.com.

Bob Evans Fund-Raiser for Holy Family Radio

Bob Evans restaurants in Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, York and Snyder counties will participate in a community fund-raiser to benefit Holy Family Radio WHFY AM 720 on April 28-30. The restaurants at specific locations (noted below) will donate 15% of your total sales for any meal purchased between 7 a.m.-9 p.m. on those specific dates. Dine in or carry out. A flyer must be presented at check out in order for Holy Family Radio to receive the credit. Flyers will be available on the station’s website, www.720whyf.com, and at the station, located at 8 West Main Street in Shiremanstown, during business hours. Call the station at 717-525-8120 for hours. Flyers will also be e-mailed to all parishies in the diocese.

Participating Bob Evans restaurants include those located at:

- Dauphin County: 650 Walton Ave., Hummelstown; 771 Eisenhow Blvd., Harrisburg
- Cumberland County: 1400 Harrisburg Pk., Carlisle; 5302 Carlisle Pk., Mechanicsburg; 135 Shalimar Ave., Dr. New Cumberland
- Franklin County: 1131 Wayne Rd., Chambersburg
- Lancaster County: 3000 Hempland Rd., Lancaster; 2472 Lincoln Highway East (Rockvale Shopping Center), Lancaster
- York County: 303 Arsenal Blvd., York; 1125 Carlisle Rd., York
- Shamokin Dam: 3289 Susquehanna Trail, Shamokin Dam

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- Franklin County: 1131 Wayne Rd., Chambersburg
- Lancaster County: 3000 Hempland Rd., Lancaster; 2472 Lincoln Highway East (Rockvale Shopping Center), Lancaster
- York County: 303 Arsenal Blvd., York; 1125 Carlisle Rd., York
- Shamokin Dam: 3289 Susquehanna Trail, Shamokin Dam
At Border Mass, Bishops Call for Compassion, Immigration Reform

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

With the backdrop a few feet away of the rusted iron slats of the 30-foot wall along the U.S.-Mexico border in Nogales, Ariz., Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, Ariz., blesses people on the Mexican side as he distributes Communion through the border fence in Nogales, Ariz., April 1. A group of U.S. bishops, led by Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley of Boston, celebrated Mass at the border, calling attention to the plight of migrants and appealing for changes in U.S. immigration policy.

“They were some of the most industrious, ambitious and enterprising citizens of their own countries and brought enormous energy and good will to their new homeland. Their hard work and sacrifices have made this country great,” he added.

After Communion, a procession of bishops climbed the Border Patrol access road alongside the fence. Pathway up the steep hill, Cardinal O’Malley placed two wreaths alongside a cross to commemorate those who have died along the border, including “ranchers, farmers, peacekeepers and travelers who seek a common ground of peace and prosperity,” as the Mass program described the memorial.

Another Mass was held simultaneously at the border between the cities of San Luis, Mexico, and San Luis, Ariz., at the southwestern tip of the state.

Cross-border religious events to bring attention to immigration-related issues have been sponsored by dioceses in the U.S. and Mexico for years. Among them are annual processions for the Way of the Cross during Lent and Palm Sunday, and the Christmas season re-enactment of the search for lodging by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem, as well as occasional Masses at the border.

The April 1 Mass had perhaps the greatest number of bishops participating, as well as priests from throughout the region and across the country.

Other bishops at the Mass included: Seattle Auxiliary Bishop Eusebio L. Elizondo, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ migration committee; Salt Lake City Bishop John C. Wester; Bishop Oscar Cantu of Las Cruces, N.M.; Bishop Mark J. Seitz El Paso, Texas; San Diego Bishop Cirillo B. Flores; Atlanta Auxiliary Bishop Luis R. Zarama; and retired Bishops Ricardo Ramirez of Las Cruces and Gerardo Flores of Vera Paz, Guatemala.

Bishop Flores brought a letter of greetings and support from the Guatemalan bishops’ conference, in recognition of the many Guatemalans who pass through Mexico and Arizona on their way north.
Pope Francis also presented President Obama with a pair of bronze medallions, one commemorating the 17th-century consecration of the chapel of St. John and Peter's Square; another portraying an angel that brings together the world's North and South in "solidarity and peace founded on justice."

"This gift is from the pope," Pope Francis said of the first medallion. "But this other one is from Jorge Bergoglio. When I saw it, I said: 'I'll give to Obama, it's the angel of peace.'" President Obama said.

"I invited and urged him to come to the Vatican," President Reagan told the pope during the meeting, "telling him that he would be overjoyed to see you," President Obama said later.

President Obama's visit to the Vatican came in the course of a six-day international trip that included stops in the Netherlands and Belgium and was scheduled to end in Saudi Arabia. The day before the meeting, Pope Francis, Obama met with European Union and NATO officials in Brussels, where he discussed economic and strategic responses to Russia's invasion of Ukraine earlier in the month.

The president's motorcade entered the Vati- can a few minutes after 10 a.m. Archbishop Georg Gänswein, prefect of the papal household, greeted him in the San Damaso Court- yard of the Vatican Palace, then led him up- stairs to the pope's private library, followed by Pope Francis' entourage, which in- cluded U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, Ambassador Susan Rice, the national security adviser, and Ambassador Ken Hackett, the U.S. envoy to the Holy See.

The pope greeted the president outside his library a few minutes before the appointed time.

"Wonderful meeting, you're a great ad- mirer," President Obama told the pope as they shook hands.

Inside the library, the two leaders sat down on either side of the pope's desk, each with an interpreter beside him. Through his interpreter, Mgr. Mark Miles, the pope who speaks in Spanish, could be heard telling the president: "I'd like you to feel really at home here." During an extended handshake at the end of the meeting, President Obama told the pope: "My family has to be with me on this journey. They've been very strong. Pray for them. I would appreciate it."
The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parish.

BERWICK – St. Joseph: Ralph Marsicano, Erminnie Olah, Michael Scala.

BLOOMSBURG – St. Columba: Anna (Nancy) Behr, Louisa J. DeBonis.

BLUE RIDGE SUMMIT – St. Rita: Becky Hays.


CARLISLE – St. Patrick: Claire Rue.


CAMP HILL – Sacred Heart: Michael J. W. and Margaret E. Heilmann.

CARRIESTOWN – Our Lady of Lourdes: Thomas C. Sayers.

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA – Immaculate Conception BVM: Joseph Reaves.

CHAMBERSBURG – St. Francis of Assisi: Rocco Duttera, Mary Giraffa, Theresa Joseph DiRocco, Agnes T. Freeborn Gill.

CHERRY HILL – Defenders of the Family:


DANVILLE – St. Joseph: Stanley Gill.

ELIZAETHTOWN – St. Peter: Delores M. Ember, Romana Mendoza.

ENOLA – Our Lady of Lourdes: Joseph DiRocco, Agnes T. Freeborn Jones, Harry F. Hockenberry.

FAIRFIELD – Immaculate Conception BVM: Joseph Pecher.


HARRISBURG – Cathedral Parish of St. Patrick: Jean Rio-Baptiste; Holy Name of Jesus: Michael A. Epoca, William H. Keffler, Joanne H. Smears; Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament: Henry Green, Anita Knight, Marlene Pinko; St. Francis of Assisi: Rocco Formico; St. Margaret Mary: Joan Marie Gaughan, Stanley May, Charles E. Newbaker, Jr.


LITTLESTOWN – St. Aloysius: Leslie R. Updyke.

LYKENS – Our Lady Help of Christians: Melvin (Butch) Kopehnahvah.

MCSHEEYSTOWN – Annunciation BVM: Cortine E. Henry, Frank X. Smith.


MIDDLETOWN – Seven Sorrows BVM: Loretta Amidpuh, Elizabeth Poplawski, Frank Vola.

MOUNT CARMEl – Divine Redeemer: Albert R. Colross, Dorothy Kort, Michael J. Romanuce, Constance Wensing.

NEW CUMBERLAND – St. Theresa: Mary Deppen, Sandy Eltringham, Kevin McCarthy, Lena Rice.

NEW FREEDOM – St. John the Baptist: Michael J. Loyco, Martha Jane Youngman.


ROARING CREEK – Our Lady of Mercy: Irene Lukus, Marcella Melkos.

ROHRERSTOWN – St. Leo the Great: Clifford Sisler.

SHAMOKIN – Mother Cabrini: Frances “Moto” Gurski, Joseph Kidron, Clarence Kopp, Rose Spatzer.


WILLIAMSTOWN – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Anna Underkoffer.

YORK – Immaculate Conception BVM: JEN Becket, Gregory Botizan, Miriam Castleman, Kyle Kerchner, Ruth MacDonald; St. Patrick: Leonard Ferree, Agnes Horn, St. Rose of Lima: Donald F. Munchel, Cyril B. Smith.

YORK HAVEN – Holy Infant: Teresa Mahoney.

Barbara Anne Brady.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Barbara Anne Brady died in Camilla Hall, Immaculata, Pa., on March 19, 1982.

A native of Philadelphia, she entered the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1952. Sister Barbara Anne taught grades 1-8 in the archdioceses of Philadelphia and Miami, and in the dioceses of Harrisburg, York, Camden, St. Joe and Norfolk. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, she taught at St. Edward’s in Shamokin from 1970-1976. In the last eight years, while living and assisting at Villa Maria House of Studies, she worked as an aide at Villa Maria Academy. She retired to Camilla Hall in August 2013. The funeral Mass was celebrated in Camilla Hall on March 24.

Merrill Hoge. ESPN Sportscaster and former Pittsburgh Steelers, will speak May 16 at Heritage Hills to benefit York Catholic High School’s James Forjan Focus Fund. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. with Dinner and Hoge’s speech at 7:30 p.m.

Each Friday during Lent, the students of Resurrection Catholic School in Lancaster gather to pray the Stations of the Cross. It has become a tradition that residents of Evergreen Estates join the students for this devotion. Each week, the eighth-grade students meet the residents’ bus to help the seniors into church.

Brenda Weaver, principal of Resurrection School, shared, “One week, I saw a student waiting one of our guests out of church with his arm around her shoulders and guiding her carefully to the bus. At that moment I prayed, ‘Thank you, Jesus, because today I witnessed Simon helping Jesus carrying his Cross.’”

A Woman’s Concern” Annual Dinner to Feature Dr. Alveda King

A Woman’s Concern in Lancaster is pleased to announce its annual fundraising dinner on May 1 at 6 p.m. The event, which is themed Defending the Dream, will be held at Holy Spirit Health System in Camp Hill.

Dinner to Feature Dr. Alveda King

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Holy Spirit Announces Annual FertilityCare Practitioner Program

Holy Spirit Health System in Camp Hill announces its annual Creighton Model FertilityCare Practitioner education program. The Practitioner Program is 13 months long and consists of two education phases, two supervised practica and an onsite visit.

Students are educated in both the basic as well as advanced aspects of the Creighton Model FertilityCare System. In addition to achieving or avoiding pregnancy, this system can help in evaluation and treatment of infertility, repetitive miscarriage, abnormal bleeding, ovarian cysts, pelvic pain, PMT, and other gynecological symptoms. Only the educational phases are done on campus, all other educational services are provided through an innovative system of long distance supervision and onsite visitation. Education Phase I will be held at the Diocese of Harrisburg April 28-May 4. Applications are currently being accepted. All students enrolled in the Practitioner Program are required to take a criterion referenced, professionally administered final certificate examination, following successful completion of the two education phases and two supervised practica. For more information, call Spirit FertilityCare Services at 717-514-6136 or e-mail Dorice.Millar@hsh.org.
The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Lebanon will host a celebration of Divine Mercy on April 27. The church will remain open from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Confessions will be heard from 1:15 p.m.-2:15 p.m. The Solemn Liturgy will be celebrated Easter Sunday at 8 a.m. The Greenfield Prince of Peace—Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Steelton. Traditional Ukrainian Easter foods with tamboura accompaniment will be sung during the Mass.

Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill will host a “Spa’d Hearts” cardiac support group meeting April 23 from 6-7 p.m. in the hospital’s auditorium. Free. For information, call 717-927-4488 by April 18 to reserve your seat. On May 16, “Spa’d Hearts” attendees are invited to join together at a Senator’s Day celebration at the state capital.

Theology on Tap – Lancaster will gather April 23 at St. Anne Church in Lancaster. Iconographer Jody Cole will present on iconography. Topic is “The Byzantine Icons.” The evening begins with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at 6:30 p.m., Happy Hour with wine, cheese and light refreshments. RSVP to 717-774-7873.

New England School of Religious Study will host its first “SpringFest” on April 26 at Adams Rcc Park in Enola. The event will include a flower sale and chicken and rib barbecue, children’s activities, a 5K family run walk, the Spirit 5K walk, sponsored by “Crackers” the Clower. Additional activities include a bake sale, door prizes, raffle and a flower sale. Flower pre-orders are available. For more information, or to pre-order flowers or chicken barbecue meals, call the Holy Spirit Hospital Auxiliary office at 717-763-2768 or e-mail Ann.Hubbard@hsh.org or visit: www.hsh.org/springfestival or contact Holy Spirit’s Office of Resource Development at 717-763-2779 or Development.

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The month of March brought hundreds of the diocese's youth together for spirited competition in four bees held at the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg. The competitions highlighted the participants' proficiencies in spelling, geography, speech and the Catholic faith. New on the docket this year was the Diocesan Faith Bee, which tested youth on their knowledge of the Catholic faith. The bee began at the parish-level, with winners advancing to the diocesan competition. The questions tested participants on their knowledge of such topics as the Ten Commandments, the Mysteries of the Rosary, the saints, and the lives of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Pictured are the top three place winners for each of the bees. The speech competition included three categories: persuasion, oral interpretation and duo dramatic interpretation.

Bees Showcase Aptitude in Faith, Geography, Speech and Spelling

Diocesan Recognition Mass for Girl Scouts Sunday, May 4 at 2 p.m. • St. Theresa Church, New Cumberland

Place winners in the Faith Bee, are, from left, runner up Catie Appar of St. Joseph Parish in Hanover, first-place winner Nicholas Minnich of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Enola, and third-place finisher Benjamin Sites of St. Francis Xavier Parish in Gettysburg.

Screening of Mary of Nazareth
May 4 at 1:30 p.m. • Allen Theater in Annville

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Cornwall will host a screening of the movie, which follows the life of Mary from her childhood through the Resurrection of Jesus. Witness the life of the Holy Family as it was 2,000 years ago through the eyes of the Mother of Jesus. Admission is free. Call 717-269-8345 for more information.
Since the start of their high school CYO basketball season, the Saints of St. Theresa Parish in New Cumberland have had one thing on their mind: to win a state title.

On March 16, that objective became a reality, as they captured gold in the statewide CYO tournament held in the Diocese of Greensburg.

On their way to the tournament title, they topped respectable opponents from the dioceses of Allentown and Greensburg, before topping Pittsburgh in the finals, 56-45. The three teams the Saints faced combined for just two losses on the year.

The state title win resulted in an undefeated season for the Saints, who finished the year 16-0.

“The guys on this team have played CYO basketball together since fifth grade,” Coach John Ford said. “They are a close group of guys and enjoy having fun, but when it was time to play, they put on their game faces, and kept themselves pumped up.”

The Saints commemorated their win by gathering as a team for Mass at St. Theresa Church. Students there had sent them off to Greensburg with a rally that lined both sides of Bridge Street.

CYO offers athletes a chance to play competitively in a non-pressured atmosphere, noted Coach Ford, who coached high school girls for 12 years. He came out of retirement two years ago to coach his son on the Saints’ team.

The starting five from the state championship team are headed off to college, where they will endeavor in sports.

“On my team, everybody gets to play. My main goal is to get every player to score at least once in a game,” Coach Ford said.

“Whenever these guys were challenged, they rose to the occasion. They showed a lot of fortitude,” he said.

EMILY M. ALBERT, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

Trinity’s Ian DiCarlo glides in District 3 competition earlier this year.

TRINITY DOES WELL IN THE POOL

Chris Heisey
The Catholic Witness

Swimming and diving state championships were held last month at Bucknell University, where Trinity High School’s record-holding diver Bradley Buchter bested his closest competitors to capture his second straight PIAA State gold medal. The sophomore shattered his own mark set last year with a score of 557.30. Buchter earned a perfect score in his first dive, a back dive, which paved the way to his victory.

In the swimming competition, the Shamrocks of Trinity High School won a silver medal in the team Class AA competition, coming in second behind Mars High School. The Shamrocks were paced by the 200-medley relay team of Ian DiCarlo, Henry Tanguay, Anthony Capper and Lucas Haywood as they won a state gold medal, nipping Mercyhurst Prep by a tenth of a second.

EMILY M. ALBERT, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

Trinity diver Bradley Buchter takes form during a dive in District 3 competition.

Trinity Does Well in the Pool

EMILY M. ALBERT, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

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Surprise is no easy task these days, given the world we live in. It takes but a moment to send a message around the globe, and students and faculty at St. Joseph School in Mechanicsburg are well aware of that truth. That is what made a recent surprise all the more special.

Army Reserves Specialist Jeremy Swords left for the dangers of Afghanistan last April on a deployment that would keep him away from his wife, Elizabeth, and his two stepchildren, Kayla Youch, a seventh grader, and Karson Youch, second grader, at St. Joe’s.

On March 12, exactly 11 months after he deployed, Specialist Swords returned home to Mechanicsburg to partake in surprising his two children in a grand and special way. With the whole student body assembled in the gym for what they were told was their monthly good citizenship awards ceremony, Kayla and Karson were called forward to receive an award just as their stepdad appeared from a closed door adjacent to the gym.

To see the complete surprise on the faces of the two students was one of those moments hard to forget and good to the core. War, at its most awful, keeps families apart, and the total elation on Specialist Swords’ face, along with his loved one’s joy, hid the fact that they were apart for a long year filled with lonely moments.

“I missed that he could not go to my basketball games and Karson’s football games,” Kayla said after the reunion, with tears still streaming down her cheeks.

“He missed a couple of my touchdowns last fall,” Karson said. “I missed him not being here for the important stuff going on in our lives.”

Specialist Swords was a mechanic, and his unit helped tear down units that were used when the war in was at its zenith five years ago. Though the unit did not suffer any casualties, danger lurked around every culvert or bridge or village street.

The surprise and tearful reunion would not have been possible without the support of the school’s faculty and administration. Assistant principal Mary Earnest coordinated the surprise, and proof of the success of the planning and end result had to be in the elation shone on the faces of Kayla and Karson. That was a special moment to be remembered.