The Christmas artwork pictured here was created by two of the four winners of Bishop Ronald Gainer’s 2016 Christmas Card Contest. The contest allowed students to portray an interpretation of the birth of Jesus Christ as seen through their eyes. Four winners were selected from contest entries among four age categories. The illustration at the bottom is by Annie St. Denis, a senior at Lancaster Catholic High School, and the illustration at the top is by Abigail Sell, an eighth-grader at Annunciation BVM School in McSherrystown. The other two winning images were featured on the cover of the December 9 edition of The Catholic Witness. The four winning pieces will be used as illustrations on Bishop Gainer’s Christmas cards this year.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing, as they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as people make merry when dividing spoils. For the yoke that burdened them, the pole on their shoulder, and the rod of their taskmaster you have smashed, as on the day of Midian. For every boot that tramped in battle, every cloak rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for flames. For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, from David’s throne, and over his kingdom, which he confirms and sustains by judgment and justice, both now and forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

(Isaiah, 9:1-6)
Dear Readers,

Christmas is a festival of light and gifts. Decorative lighting gleams everywhere. Our homes, churches, stores and offices become signs of the season. For us who believe that “Christ the Savior is born,” the lights are not just a way to pretty up things for a few weeks at the bleakest time of the year. No, the colorful lights signal the birth of the Light of the World Who came to dispel the darkness of human sinfulness and to brighten even the darkness of the Son of God came into our time and abides with us as Light, Gift, Hope and Love Who entered our time and itself has been sanctified by Divine Easter mystery in us centered on why we do all that we do at Christmas. Reflect on the wondrous mysteries we celebrate in our Liturgies and at home. Because “Christ the Savior is born,” we celebrate not just a holiday but a holy day – a day, a season, time itself has been sanctified by Divine Love Who entered our time and abides with us as Light, Gift, Hope and Life. Christ the Savior is born on Christmas Day with the increasing light of the Advent wreath, we find in this young virgin martyr a radiant light of faith and trust in God. A patron saint whose intercession is invoked for problems with eyesight, her bright example gives us a clearer vision of the power of God’s love at work in us and what grace can accomplish through us, if we allow it. Christmas is a festival of light and gifts. Decorative lighting gleams everywhere. Our homes, churches, stores and offices become signs of the season. For us who believe that “Christ, the Savior is born” the lights are not just a way to pretty up things for a few weeks at the bleakest time of the year. No, the colorful lights signal the birth of the Light of the World Who came to dispel the darkness of human sinfulness and to brighten even the mystery of death. The eternal light of the Son of God came into our darkness and, even though at times it looks as though the darkness is getting the better hand, His Light cannot be overcome. Christmas is also the season of gift giving. Parents give gifts to their children, spouses give gifts to each other, friends and family members exchange gifts. For us who believe that “Christ the Savior is born,” our gift giving is also an evocative sign. As we prepare to celebrate the Christmas Mystery, we ready ourselves to receive anew the greatest gift we could possibly receive – the Son of God come in our flesh. In Saint John’s Gospel, Jesus tells Nicodemus, “For God so loved the world that He GAVE His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life” (John 3:16). Yes, our gift giving is an expression of our love and appreciation for one another, but at a deeper level for us who believe that “Christ the Savior is born” our gift giving becomes an expression of gratitude to God and an imitation of His gracious generosity in His Incarnation and Birth. Let the words of the beautiful Christmas Carol, Silent Night, keep us centered on why we do all that we do at Christmas. Reflect on the wondrous mysteries we celebrate in our Liturgies and at home. Because “Christ the Savior is born,” we celebrate not just a holiday but a holy day – a day, a season, time itself has been sanctified by Divine Love Who entered our time and abides with us as Light, Gift, Hope and Life. Christ the Savior is born! My sincere best wishes and fervent prayers are yours for a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Your Brother in Christ,
Bishop Ronald Gainer

Congratulations to Our Diocesan Winners in the 2015-16 MCA Christmas Artwork Contest!

By Karen Harding

Madeleine Suhrbier receives her award from Father Andrew Small, OMI, for her winning artwork, above, in the annual Missionary Childhood Association Christmas Artwork Contest.

Forbin-Jansen, who began the Holy Childhood Association (as it was then known) as an organization of “Children Helping Children.” MCA now exists in 120 countries, and even children in mission countries put together their pennies to help children in other areas who are less fortunate. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, the MCA assists educators and catechists in showing our children how, by virtue of their baptism, we are all called to be missionaries through prayer and sacrifice. The diocesan MCA is part of the Office of Pontifical Missions, under the direction of Reverend Robert F. Sharman. The Diocese of Harrisburg has been blessed to have MCA Artwork Contest winners for three years straight. Thanks to all our students who submitted artwork! An entry form for the 2016-17 contest can be found on the diocesan MCA website: www.hbgdiocese.org/MCA, or contact the diocesan Missions Office at missions@hbgdiocese.org or 717-657-4804 for more information. Deadline is January 31, 2017. (Karen Harding is the Diocesan MCA Coordinator.)

Karen Harding is the Diocesan Missions Coordinator.

Sister Mary is so amazing! She learned to draw herself to draw again and was astonished that Maddie could draw this Nativity scene not long after Mary Grace died, her mother relayed. “I was astonished that Maddie could bring herself to draw again and draw so well. God is so good! Mary is so amazing! What a reward for our dear Madeleine that she won this contest after everything she had just been through.” The Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) is the Holy Father’s mission society for children. It was established in 1843 by a French Bishop, Charles de Forbin-Jansen, who began the Holy Childhood Association (as it was then known) as an organization of “Children Helping Children.” MCA now exists in 120 countries, and even children in mission countries put together their pennies to help children in other areas who are less fortunate. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, the MCA assists educators and catechists in showing our children how, by virtue of their baptism, we are all called to be missionaries through prayer and sacrifice. The diocesan MCA is part of the Office of Pontifical Missions, under the direction of Reverend Robert F. Sharman. The Diocese of Harrisburg has been blessed to have MCA Artwork Contest winners for three years straight. Thanks to all our students who submitted artwork! An entry form for the 2016-17 contest can be found on the diocesan MCA website: www.hbgdiocese.org/MCA, or contact the diocesan Missions Office at missions@hbgdiocese.org or 717-657-4804 for more information. Deadline is January 31, 2017. (Karen Harding is the Diocesan MCA Coordinator.)

Evans Sloane receives an award from Father Andrew Small, OMI, for his winning artwork, shown at right, in this year’s Missionary Childhood Association Christmas Artwork Contest.

Bishop Gainer’s Christmas Letter

Christ the Savior is Born

As I write this Christmas message, it is the Feast of Saint Lucy, the young virgin and martyr of Sicily who gave her life for Christ in the early fourth century. The name Lucy originates in the Latin word for “light” (lux, lucis) and how appropriate it is for the Church to celebrate Lucy’s memorial during Advent, as daylights approaches its shortest span. As we mark the approach of Christmas Day with the increasing light of the Advent wreath, we find in this young virgin martyr a radiant light of faith and trust in God. A patron saint whose intercession is invoked for problems with eyesight, her bright example gives us a clearer vision of the power of God’s love at work in us and what grace can accomplish through us, if we allow it.

Evans Sloane receives an award from Father Andrew Small, OMI, for his winning artwork, shown at right, in this year’s Missionary Childhood Association Christmas Artwork Contest.

By Karen Harding

Special to The Witness

Madeleine Suhrbier of Our Mother of Perpetual Help Parish in Ephrata and Evan Sloane from the Mater Dei Community in Harrisburg were selected as two of 24 national winners of the annual Missionary Childhood Association 2015-16 Christmas Artwork Contest. Their original artwork, selected from more than 5,000 entries, is currently displayed in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., throughout the 2016 Advent-Christmas season.

On Friday, December 2, an awards ceremony at the Shrine, followed by Mass and lunch, was hosted for all finalists and their families. Awards were presented by Reverend Andrew Small, OMI, the national director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the US, and Martyn Sansis, Missioon Education Director. Winners came from as far as California and Florida for the event.

The honor was especially meaningful to Madeleine and her family. In October 2015, Madeleine’s 14-month-old sister, Mary Grace, a special needs child, passed away. Mary Grace had not been expected to be born alive, but during her short life the family cared tenderly for her. Madeleine’s mother, Kate, said, “Our family was devastated by Mary Grace’s death... caring for Mary Grace was probably the hardest thing our family ever had to do, but we were honored to do so and felt blessed that she lived 14 months – that was a gift from God.”

“Maddie drew her Nativity scene not long after Mary Grace died,” her mother relayed. “I was astonished that Maddie could bring herself to draw again and draw so well. God is so good! Mary is so amazing! What a reward for our dear Madeleine that she won this contest after everything she had just been through.”

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Madeleine Suhrbier receives her award from Father Andrew Small, OMI, for her winning artwork, above, in the annual Missionary Childhood Association Contest.

Evans Sloane receives an award from Father Andrew Small, OMI, for his winning artwork, shown at right, in this year’s Missionary Childhood Association Christmas Artwork Contest.

Merry Christmas
The December 23 edition of The Catholic Witness is the final one for 2016. Our first issue of the New Year will be January 20, 2017.

Do you know that you can receive The Catholic Witness via e-mail instead of standard mail? Sign up for the e-mail service by logging on to the diocesan Web site at www.hbgdiocese.org. Follow the News/Events tab to the Catholic Witness page and click on “Catholic Witness E-mail Sign Up.” Or, send your name and street address to witness@hbgdiocese.org, and we’ll sign you up. Each Friday that the newspaper is published, you will receive an e-mail with a direct link to the latest edition. Registration with the e-mail service will not cancel your mailed subscription unless you state otherwise.

As parishes, schools and organizations plan their event calendars for the New Year, we take this opportunity to let you know that our schedule of issue dates and submission deadlines for 2017 are now available. You can find the Publication Schedule and information on how to submit items to The Catholic Witness link at www.hbgdiocese.org. If you would prefer to receive the Publication Schedule and Submission Guidelines via e-mail or standard mail, contact us at witness@hbgdiocese.org or 717-657-4804 and we’ll be happy to send them to you.

Remember to stay in touch with news from the Diocese of Harrisburg by visiting its Web site, www.hbgdiocese.org, and by following it on Facebook and Twitter. We send you best wishes for a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year!
A Photojournalist’s Farewell to The Catholic Witness

By Emily M. Albert
The Catholic Witness

For the change.

Four World Youth Days, two Popes, and three Bishops is the calculation of my nine years and three months working as a photojournalist for The Catholic Witness.

God has a special journey for each of us, and nine years ago on September 13, part of my journey was my first day at The Witness. I couldn’t even begin to mention every name of all the people I’ve been so fortunate to meet throughout the 15 counties of the Diocese of Harrisburg during this journey.

Now, I sit, writing my last commentary. My journey is taking a turn down a different path, and I’m letting go and letting God. I’m grateful for my experiences and memories I’ve made through the nine years here. It has been a privilege to photograph people at their most intimate moments with God or listen to the stories from the faithful. It has been an honor to do this job, to be there for our parishioners, whether it was going to one of our schools to meet the youth and teachers, or being present for Holy Days like Palm Sunday.

This is difficult to write. It’s hard to talk about yourself, and it’s hard to share everything that has happened in nine years; A LOT happens in just one year alone! I hope maybe a photograph or a story caught your attention. I hope we’ve learned from each other, because I’ve learned from you. Each and every time I went on assignment, I learned from the person in front of my camera, or the person behind the voice telling their story.

It was YOU that has made this job meaningful for me. Thank you for reading, thank you for looking at the photographs. Thank you for the notes that were sent, or your participation with recipes for the Feeding the Faith series [please don’t stop!]. Thank you for nine years and three months of showing me the Catholic faith alive!

There is this moment in photography called the “Decisive Moment.” It originates from famed street photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson. Essentially, it means when all things come together in a perfect second and the photographer is able to capture that moment. For me, this photograph was my “Decisive Moment.” My light, the priest’s expression. It all came together in one second. Just seconds after I photographed the priest, he moved, and just like that it was over. But I had it. This image was taken at the African American Mass in 2011, one of my favorite Masses every year. The congregation is friendly, and the music is glorious.

This isn’t by any means the best photograph of the pope that has ever been captured, but the story leading up to it is why I chose it. I had a press pass to be in a special area for the arrival of Pope Francis at Copacabana Beach in Rio during World Youth Day 2013. The language barrier in Rio was possibly the most challenging I’ve had on all my trips. I was with Father Michael Reid, who had decided he would escort me to my post, and we both had hoped his priest credential would allow him access with me. We soon realized we were running out of time before the roads would be completely shut down and mobility wouldn’t be possible. We finally – through the interpretation of what I think was from English, to French to Spanish to Portuguese – found out where my location was. We decided to go down the beach where it was less crowded and work our way from there. Suddenly, Father Reid grabbed my arm and we began to sprint down the beach. We made it just in time to get me to my post. Though Father Reid was not permitted entrance, he prayed over me and comforted me. I was standing above thousands of people praying before the Blessed Mother. Music was playing – it was wondrous, and I felt a sudden warmth well up inside. I was standing above thousands of people praying before the Blessed Mother. Music was playing – it was wondrous, and I felt a sudden warmth well up inside.

Bishop Ronald Gainer will be the Principal Celebrant and Homilist for a Mass celebrating African American Faith and Culture at Saint Patrick Cathedral, 212 State Street, Harrisburg. Mass will begin at 12:15 p.m.

The Diocesan Black Catholic Committee has planned a dynamic liturgy celebrating African American faith and culture, featuring the choir from Saint Francis Xavier Parish in Baltimore, Md. All are invited to join us as we celebrate in conjunction with the national holiday honoring the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

For more information, contact Gwen Summers at 717-423-4324 or gsummers@hbgdiocese.org.
Father Tamburro Guides Berwick Ministerium in Sharing Christian Faith

By Emily M. Albert
The Catholic Witness

Have you heard the one about a priest, a Lutheran minister and a Methodist minister who walk into a meeting on the Feast Day of St. Nicholas?

It happened, and the meeting was for the Berwick and Nescopeck Area Ministerium. The ministerium consists of several local churches and their congregations to share ideas and opportunities to join the communities together. Father Francis Tamburro, pastor of immaculate conception BVM Parish in Berwick, has led the group as its first-ever Catholic president for the last year and was recently re-elected for his second term. He has been involved with the ministerium for several years and has worked along the side of longtime committee member, Father Dominic Mannarella, a retired priest of the diocese. “I see it as a role of service to my fellow clergy,” Father Tamburro said of his responsibility.

According to the ministerium’s constitution, the primary purpose of this organization is to encourage growth in the Christian faith and to promote fellowship among the clergy of the area’s churches. In accord with this purpose, it is the ministerium’s desire to promote the unity and common ministry of the corporate church of Jesus Christ in the greater Berwick area. They guide this purpose by hosting unity services throughout the year. Most recently, they hosted a Thanksgiving unity service on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. And they also help place people in hotels or at the local warming station that enables them to create an emergency heating fund.

As a new clergy recently appointed, I really value the ministerium and getting to know all the other clergy of the other churches,” commented Rev. Laura King of Calvary and St. Paul’s United Methodist Churches. Rev. Darlene Little of First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Warren Baughman, Jr. Retired, of Bower United Methodist Church, Lt. Trisha Smouse of the Salvation Army, Rev. Thomas Jones of First United Methodist Church, and Rev. Stephen Portner of Bethany United Methodist Church.

At the conclusion of their December meeting, members of the Berwick and Nescopeck Ministerium celebrated, including a special visit from St. Nicholas. Rev. Brian Vasey of St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, who dressed up as the saint to tell the story of the origin of Father Christmas started. Father Tamburro is to the left of St. Nicholas, and Father Mannarella to the right. Other ministerium members are Rev. Chad Hebrink of Grace Lutheran Church, Pastor Susan Knorr of Columbia Circuit U. M., Rev. Ralph Hartenbach of Bower Memorial U.M. Church, Pastor John Hill of Berwick Christian Church, Rev. David Kingsborough of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Rev. Mary Kinsky of Christ Episcopal Church, Mrs. Joan Vasey, wife of Rev. Vasey, Rev. Craig Gommer of Wesley United Methodist Church, Rev. Laura King of Calvary and St. Paul’s United Methodist Churches, Rev. Jessica Kingsborough of Faith United Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rev. Darlene Little of First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Warren Baughman, Jr. Retired, of Bower United Methodist Church, Lt. Trisha Smouse of the Salvation Army, Rev. Thomas Jones of First United Methodist Church, and Rev. Stephen Portner of Bethany United Methodist Church.

The ministerium also provides assistance to those in need. One such way is through a grant they receive from the Berwick Health and Wellness Foundation that enables them to create an emergency heating fund. They also help place people in hotels or at the local warming shelter during extreme winter conditions. The ministerium also provides a clearer process for those in need to seek help. Rev. Chad Hebrink of Grace Lutheran Church, explains, “It’s a united response, so that those in the community do not have to go through the Yellow Pages calling different churches. If you speak to one of us we can share the information and we can point them in the right direction.”

At the end of their agenda during monthly meetings, ministerium members ask if any of the clergy have church events to share. They can then take this information back to their own church and share with their own congregations what is going on in the other faith communities. The ministerium also brings together fellow clergy by giving them a network.

“AS a new clergy recently appointed, I really value the ministerium and getting to know all the other clergy of the other churches,” commented Rev. Laura King of Calvary and St. Paul’s United Methodist Churches. “And being pulled into the brotherhood of fellow clergy, it has been a really helpful thing for me as a new person in town.”

Father Tamburro feels he has seen the ecumenical relationships improve over the years. “We don’t impose anything on anybody, we just work together with our shared Christian faith.” He continued, “I see it as a really good channel or instrument for evangelization in the sense of spreading the Gospel of Christ and witnessing to it in the greater Berwick community.”

The Diocesan Girl Scout Committee Presents
A St. Agnes Patch Workshop
Saturday, January 21 from 2-4:30 p.m.
Good Shepherd Church, Camp Hill

Girls are invited to celebrate the Feast Day of St. Agnes, patron saint of Girl Scouts and American Heritage Girls. Cost of the workshop is $7.
Donations of children’s snacks, hats, gloves and mittens will be collected for a service project.
Register online by visiting the Girl Scouts link at www.hbgdio.cese.org/youth-and-young-adults/catholic-scouting/. Deadline to register is January 4.

Bishop Ronald Gainer accepts the gifts from Matthew Cates, Newman Club Treasurer, and Mark Freidhoff, Newman Club Vice President, during a Mass for the Catholic Campus Ministry at York College on Dec. 7, for the Vigil of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Last year, the Newman Club of York College of Pennsylvania celebrated its 50th anniversary as the Catholic student organization on campus. The Newman Club there holds regular Masses, socials, retreats and community service efforts.
Forgiving Self
By Sister Gerialyn Schmidt, SCC
Special to The Witness

As you are all well aware, last December, Pope Francis announced an Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. He spent the year reflecting, preaching, and teaching the global Church about what it means to be merciful like the Father, and how we enflabish this concept in today’s world.

Throughout this year, you and I have also mulled over the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. With this year of grace now drawn to a close, I have looked back not only to the articles that I have written about mercy in The Catholic Witness but also to the varied presentations on mercy.

Of all the words that I typed or said about God’s grace and mercy, there is one aspect that I believe, only few of us live or understand: being merciful to self; extending forgiveness to the person that we see in the mirror. Can each and every one of us go up to the person we see reflected back and announce with all sincerity, “I love you!” I am not talking about a narcissistic, “worship me” type of attitude. I mean truly gazing on our warts, moles, scars and, because of them, in spite of them, loving self.

“How does one get there?” you might ask. First and foremost, it begins with being totally honest with self, being in the presence of God and saying, “I am powerless over how I …..” (am addicted to drink, food, sex, lust, comfort, entertainment, being right, being better than others, being more wealthy than others, and … and …) This reflection could easily cause an emotional downward spiral if it wasn’t for the fact that God CAN restore all those things within us that are lacking. Then, LET HIM do so! This means being brutally honest within the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

Within this sacrament, let him forgive you for that one thing you have hidden away under your “spiritual bed,” or in your “spiritual closet” or up in your “spiritual attic.” After all, he already knows about it! Remember, on the first day of creation, God formed man in his image and likeness. “MOLLY! VIRTUE, person in my life, body, and blood.” Within this sacrament, let him forgive you for that one thing you have hidden away under your “spiritual bed,” or in your “spiritual closet” or up in your “spiritual attic.” After all, he already knows about it! Remember, on the first day of creation, God formed man in his image and likeness. “MOLLY! VIRTUE, person in my life, body, and blood.”

This grace of forgiveness found within the sacrament that stems from the cross beckons us to open our beings to the workings of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, we experience a personal resurrection; we become a new creature in Christ.

Some of you might be thinking, “Yeah, not me!” Really? What offense is not pardoned by God?

Recently, I came across a blog that was specifically about this topic. In this blog, the author states, “Forgiving yourself is not about forgetting. It is a program for married couples that called them to be the individual God has written about mercy in The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “Christ assumed a true human body by means of which the invisible God became visible.” (92) But when did this occur? Because of the great Feast of the Nativity on December 25, we mostly associate the Incarnation with Christ’s birth. His visible Body though was given to Him at His Baptism (October 28, 46 AD). The invisible God was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became visible. The person in my life, body, and blood.

Whence the Incarnation?
By Father Paul CB Schenck
Special to The Witness

Have you ever had the experience of meeting someone you’ve greatly admired, for the first time? It happened to me when I was invited to accompany the Greek Catholic Archbishop of Jerusalem, Lacham, on Pope St. John Paul’s Holy Land Pilgrimage. We were in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, where the Great Saint would meet us. I had been reading and following John Paul II for a decade. As a Protestant minister, I was thrilled with his encyclicals, Ut Unum Sint, (On Christian Unity), and Evange- lium Vitae, (The Gospel of Life). Now, I was in the Holy Land, in Bethlehem, and was to be greeted by him. He entered the room, and the response I had written and memorized evaporated from my brain, and I was speechless. His holiness was palpable, it exuded from him, and enveloped all of us. He greeted us, blessed us, then we followed him into the grotto of Christ’s nativity to pray. I had met the holiest person in my life, body, and blood.

At the Incarnation, God gave himself a Body. God gave himself Blood. The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “Christ assumed a true human body by means of which the invisible God became visible.” (92) But when did this occur? Because of the great Feast of the Nativity on December 25, we mostly associate the Incarnation with Christ’s birth. His visible Body though was given to Him at His conception. Conception is when 46 human chromosomes pair up and according to the Human Genome Project, a new, distinct, and unique human comes into being. We now know the embryonic body begins at conception and the blood is in place five weeks later. In the Creed, we profess, I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him, all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

Perhaps it is because for most of history the prenatal child has been technically invisible, that we do not associate the Incarnation with the conception. Imagine if ultrasound existed in Mary’s time, it would have been possible to capture an image of His “true human body by means of which the invisible God became visible.” Still, at the Visitation, Elizabeth asks, “how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” (Lk 1:43) She knew her Lord was present within Mary. Pop culture makes a lot these days of the “baby bump.” I have a beautiful depiction of the Madonna Della Divina Maternita, “Our Lady of Divine Motherhood,” with an obvious baby bump! As we celebrate the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas), we should harken to the Annunciation nine months before. It was then, at the divine conception, that the invisible God was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became visible. He was making Himself known, fully and completely, Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. (Father Paul CB Schenck is the Director of the Diocesan Office of Respect Life Activities.)

Retrouvaille ~
A Lifeline for Marriages

Stress in Your Marriage? Retrouvaille is a program for married couples that feel bored, disillusioned, frustrated, or angry in their marriage. Some experience coldness. Others experience conflict in their relationship. Most don’t know how to change the situation or even communicate with their spouse about it. This program has helped tens of thousands of couples experiencing difficulties in their marriage. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, Retrouvaille falls under the auspices of the Office for Family Life. For confidential information about Retrouvaille, or to register for the January program beginning with a weekend on Jan. 13-15, call 800-470-2230 or visit the web site at www.HelpOurMarriage.com.

Diocesan Pro-Life Mass
Sunday, January 22
St. Patrick Cathedral

The annual Diocesan Pro-Life Mass will take place on Sunday January 22, 2017, at St. Patrick Cathedral, 212 State Street, Harrisburg. Mass begins at 12:15 p.m., and Bishop Ronald Gainer will be the celebrant and homilist. The Mass will mark the 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, legalizing abortion in America and leading to the death of more than 57 million unborn children. All are welcome to attend.
By Tom Grenchik Special to The Witness

January 22, 1973 is ingrained in the minds of those who cherish human life as the infamous day when the U.S. Supreme Court invalidated state abortion bans and made abortion legal and available on-demand throughout all 9 months of pregnancy across the country. And every year since the tragic Roe v. Wade decision, people have gathered in Washington, D.C., each January to march for life, pray for the protection of unborn children and their mothers, and make their voices heard to federal elected officials.

This coming year, the national March for Life will be held in our nation’s capital on Friday, January 27, 2017. As happens every four years, the March is shifted by a week due to the Presidential Inauguration. In addition to the hundreds of thousands who will gather in D.C., many thousands more will be gathering at local and regional events from coast to coast. Visit marchforlife.org/mlf-2017/local-march-for-life-events to get a sense for the size of this movement, largely made up of young people compelled to right a grievous wrong from an earlier generation.

Whether you are making a national pilgrimage or a local one, pilgrimages are marked by prayer and penance. And the U.S. Catholic bishops have created a very adaptable novena to assist you. 9 Days for Life is an annual invitation to join the bishops in focused prayer and action for the nine days encompassing the Roe anniversary and the events marking it nationwide. Especially geared toward young people, participants can join the bishops in daily prayers and simple sacrifices from Saturday, January 21, to Sunday, January 29. Prayers and activities are provided through email, text messages, various social media platforms, and even a free mobile app. So even if you can’t attend a physical pilgrimage, you can join in spirit from home, office, or school—and invite others along as well.

Not long ago, we were looking at the prospect of the Supreme Court being justices who would have been deeply committed to further shrinking abortion in our legal system and culture. Now, perhaps, there is hope that the next justices appointed will be more committed to upholding the Constitution, rather than furthering the culture of death. Let us offer our prayers and sacrifices for such a hope.

During 9 Days for Life, the bishops not only ask us to pray for children’s and mothers’ lives at risk, but to also pray for the many millions of lives that have been lost, and for those who personally mourn those losses. Rare is the family that has not been touched by abortion in some way. The novena reminds us to pray for those who grieve and to assure them of hope through post-abortion healing ministries like Project Rachel.

Various ideas for individual or group participation in the novena are available at www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/january-novena-9-days-for-life-summary.cfm. The bishops look forward to you joining them in this special time of prayer for our nation. Prayer changes things. (Tom Grenchik is the Executive Director of the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Learn about the bishops’ pro-life activities at www.usccb.org/prolife.)

Join in the March for Life ~ January 27, 2017

Agenda for the Day:

Youth Rally & Mass at the DC Armory (ticketed event) 2001 East Capitol Street, SE, Washington DC 6:30 a.m. Doors Open 7:30 a.m. Rally Begins 7:30 a.m. Confessions 9:30 a.m. Mass March for Life at the National Mall (no tickets needed) 11:45 a.m. Musical Opening 12:00 p.m. Rally 1:00 p.m. March 3:00 p.m. (approx) Silent No More testimonies outside U.S. Supreme Court 3:30 p.m. Visit your Representative or Senator to advocate for life Visit www.marchforlife.org for additional information.

Visit www.marchforlife.org for additional information.

Depart from the HVM parking lot at 7 a.m. and return approximately 7:30-8 p.m. Cost: $10. Seats must be reserved by the end of December. Contact Steve Signorello at 717-253-3924 or John Schaline at 717-699-4534.

Saint Patrick Parish in Carlisle: Council 4057 of the Knights of Columbus in Carlisle is sending a bus to the March. Depart from the Parish Activity Center at 85 Marsh Drive at 5:30 a.m. to allow participants to attend Mass in Washington. Return time is 8 p.m. Cost: $25. For additional information, contact George Pollin at gapollin3@gmail.com.

Saint Joseph Parish in Danville: The parish office will be coordinating the bus arrangements. Our meeting place is the front of the church. Depart after the 6:30 a.m. daily Mass and return time is between 10:30 and 11 p.m. after a quick stop for dinner. Individuals need to pack a lunch. Cost: $20. To register, call the parish office at 570-275-2512.

Seven Sorrows BVM Parish in Middletown: The parish along with the George V. Lentocha Knights of Columbus Council #3501 is arranging a bus for the March for Life. Depart the church by 7:05 a.m. to arrive at the National Basilica at 10:15 a.m. and attend Mass at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at 11 a.m. After Mass, participants will take the Metro to the site of the Rally. Those who wish may also stay at the Basilica for reflection or sightseeing during the Rally. After the Silent No More testimonies, the group will take the Metro back to the Basilica and board the bus for home. There will be a quick dinner stop on the way back. Cost: $25 for ages 16 and up. For youth ages 6-15, cost is $15 and they must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Children five years of age and under are free. For more information, please contact Daniel Samar in 717-919-7587 or at danasam3@msn.com.
The labors of love enfolded into the history of St. Patrick Church in Trevorton ring through the parish’s 150-plus years to the community of faith that it continues to be today.

This rich history and care for the community was evident as Bishop Ronald Gainer made a pastoral visit to the Northumberland County parish on the third Sunday of Advent, Dec. 11.

The coal-mining town of Trevorton drew people to the area after the opening of the mines in 1827, and soon priests visited the Catholics among the townpeople, tending to their needs and celebrating Mass in private homes.

By 1852, Father Michael Sheridan, the pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Danville, was making regular visits to Trevorton, and he soon planned for the construction of a Catholic church named after the patron saint of Ireland.

Construction of the original church began in 1857, and its cornerstone was blessed by St. John Neumann while serving as Bishop of Philadelphia.

An account in a diocesan history book tells the legend that Father George Goetsch, pastor of the parish as the church was nearing completion, carried the bell for the new church on his shoulders from Sunbury, and died as a result of heat exhaustion and pneumonia just days before its dedication.

The present church was purchased during the short pastorate of Father George Seubert; the first Mass was celebrated there in the basement on Christmas Day, 1901.

The original murals were created by Edwin Sharkey of Glenside, Pa., and members of the parish posed for the paintings. The church’s stained-glass windows depict 13 pastors, and were created by Edward J. Byrne of Doylestown, Pa.

St. Patrick Parish celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2000. The parish is a community that cares for the poor and those in need via a food bank, a clothing pantry and a charitable fund that assists people in paying for fuel and emergency needs.
Located on the southeastern-most edge of the diocese, St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Quarryville was the final stop Dec. 18 on Bishop Ronald Gainer’s most recent series of pastoral visits in November and December.

St. Catherine’s, which will mark its 175th anniversary in 2019, traces its history to the Scotch-Irish immigrant Catholics who came to work at the iron furnace built in 1809 along the Conowingo Creek. Those early Catholics in the area were tended to by priests from Assumption BVM Parish in Lancaster and St. Malachy’s Parish in Chester County.

Around 1830, Father Bernard McCabe began celebrating a monthly Mass for the congregation; the first was celebrated in a grove of trees which is now located in St. Catherine Cemetery. By 1842, Father McCabe began overseeing the construction of a church, and St. Catherine’s Chapel was completed in 1844. Bishop Francis Kenrick of Philadelphia dedicated it on May 4, 1844.

According to parish history, St. Catherine’s Church was almost named for St. Patrick, but Bishop Neumann felt that there were too many St. Patrick churches in the Philadelphia Diocese. Since more of the women in the parish had Catherine as their name, St. Catherine was chosen as patroness, and on July 26, 1857, Bishop Neumann rededicated the cornerstone.

The parish’s second church was dedicated by Bishop Thomas McGovern on Nov. 8, 1896. By the 1990s, the church could no longer accommodate its growing congregation, with more than 650 families. Bishop Nicholas C. Dattilo saw the need for a larger worship space, and Father Joseph C. Coyne, pastor, began the building process along Robert Fulton Highway, Route 222. Ground was broken on April 4, 1998, construction began that October, and the first Mass was celebrated there on July 3, 1999. Classrooms and offices were also included in the new building project. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and Father Ronald J. Moratelli, former pastor, dedicated the parish’s large community room on July 16, 2005, which included additional classrooms, an office and a well-equipped kitchen for social gatherings.

Today, St. Catherine of Siena Parish is under the pastorate of Father Mark Speitel. An estimated fifty percent of the parish’s families are those who moved to the area from Philadelphia, New Jersey and New York.

The parish enjoys an active Knights of Columbus Council, and has just resumed a youth group. Its “Good Samaritans” group visits shut-ins and offers a prayer shawl ministry. The parish also participates in Quarryville’s “Flowing Oil” project, in which area churches take turns organizing and hosting meals for those in need.
Pope Francis has accepted the resigna-
tion of Bishop William F. Murphy of Rock-
ville Centre, N.Y., and ap-
pointed as his successor Bishop John O. Barres of Allentown, Pennsylvania. Bishop Barres, 56, has headed the Di-
cocese of Allentown since 2009. Bishop Murphy, who has been Rockville Cen-
tre’s bishop since 2001, is 76. Canon law requires bishops to turn in their resi-
gnation to the pope when they turn 75.
The changes were announced Dec. 9 in Washington by Archbishop Chris-
tophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.
Bishop Barres’ Mass of installation will be celebrated at the Catholic of St. Agnes in Rockville Centre Jan. 31. Until that time, Bishop Murphy will serve as apostolic administrator of the diocese.

“It is my deep conviction that he will be bishop for all of us without excep-
tion,” Bishop Murphy said of his suc-
cessor in a statement. “He has shared with me his love of youth and his care for the elderly. He has a keen sense of parish life and has a special expertise in education. He has a deep love for the poor.

Bishop Murphy also said Rockville Centre’s new bishop “will be a good neigh-
bor to our brothers and sisters in other Christian denominations as well as members of other faiths, and the many civic and political leaders with whom the church works in building up Long Island for future generations.”

He described Bishop Barres “as a man of prayer” above all.

The newly named Rockville Centre bishop was introduced to the diocese during an early morning Mass the day of his appointment that he con-celebrated with Bishop Murphy at the Cathed-
dral of St. Agnes.

“I must thank the priests and the en-
tire people of God of the Diocese of All-
entown, where I have had the great bless-
ing of serving as bishop for the last seven-and-a-half years,” Bishop Barres said in a statement. “You will all always be in my heart, my memories, my prayers and my Masses as I remem-
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Christmas Joy Comes from Knowing God Loves and Saves Us, Pope Says

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

As Christmas approached, St. Peter’s Square was filled with balloons, singing and an incredible variety of Baby Jesus figures – everything from plastic figures that would fit in a walnut shell to those that were larger-than-life sized.

For Pope Francis, the most important ingredient in the mix was joy.

Reciting the Angelus Dec. 11 and blessing the Baby Jesus statues children brought for their home or school Nativity scenes, the pope insisted that the true meaning of Christmas should bring Christians a deep and abiding sense of joy.

Unlike “superficial happiness” or even the giddiness shopping can bring, he said, “it is a joy that touches the depths of our being while we await Jesus, who already has come to bring salvation to the world, the promised Messiah, born in Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary.”

“God entered history to free us from slavery to sin; he pitched his tent among us to share our existence, heal our wounds, bandage our injuries and give us new life,” the pope said. “Joy is the fruit of this intervention of salvation and God’s love.”

The Christmas decorations and lights and the Nativity scenes being set up in homes all over the world are signs of that joy, Pope Francis said. They are a call “to welcome the Lord who always knocks at our door, the doors of our hearts, to draw near to us” and “to recognize his footsteps in those of our brothers and sisters passing by, especially the weakest and neediest.”

Pope Francis asked the children to pray in front of their Nativity scenes with their parents. “Ask Baby Jesus to help us all love God and our neighbors.”

Baby Jesus Reminds Us of Painful Plight of Migrants, Pope Says

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

The Christmas tree and Nativity scene are symbols of God’s love and hope, reminding us to contemplate the beauty of creation and welcome the marginalized, Pope Francis said.

Baby Jesus, whose parents could find no decent shelter and had to flee persecution, is a reminder of the “painful experience” of so many migrants today, he said Dec. 9, just before the Vatican Christmas tree was to be lit and its Nativity scene was to be unveiled.

Nativity scenes all over the world “are an invitation to make room in our life and society for God – hidden in the gaze of so many people” who are living in need, poverty or suffering, he told people involved in donating the tree and creche for St. Peter’s Square.

The northern Italian province of Trent donated the 82-foot-tall spruce fir, which was adorned with ceramic ornaments handmade by children receiving medical treatment at several Italian hospitals.

The 55-foot-wide Nativity scene was donated by the government and Archdiocese of Malta. It features 17 figures dressed in traditional Maltese attire as well as replica of a Maltese boat to represent the seafaring traditions of the island.

The boat also represents “the sad and tragic realities of migrants on boats headed toward Italy,” the pope said in his speech in the Vatican’s Paul VI hall.

“In the painful experience of these brothers and sisters, we revisit that [experience] of baby Jesus, who at the time of his birth did not find accommodation and was born in a grotto in Bethlehem and then was brought to Egypt to escape Herod’s threat.”

“Those who visit this creche will be invited to rediscover its symbolic value, which is a message of fraternity, sharing, welcoming and solidarity,” the pope said.

The beauty of the pristine forests of northern Italy where the tree grew “is an invitation to contemplate the creator and to respect nature,” he said, adding that “we are all called to approach creation with contemplative awe.”

The Nativity scene and tree will remain in St. Peter’s Square until the feast of the Lord’s Baptism Jan. 9.

The Nativity scene, created by Maltese sculptor Manwel Grech, was dream to create art for the Vatican and have it exhibited in the square where thousands of people from around the world will see it.

With more than a dozen statues of people and a menagerie of animals and other elements in the scene, Grech is a bit of a traditionalist. Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus are his favorites among the resin sculptures.

He wanted Mary to have a peaceful face because “when you see Jesus, you relax,” he said, and he tried to give Joseph a look of pride.

Grech included several very Maltese touches in the Nativity scene: A traditional balcony decorated with a Maltese cross; a statue of St. George Preca, the country’s only canonized saint; and a “luzzu,” the traditional Maltese fishing boat, which also reminds people of the journeys of migrants across the Mediterranean Sea.

Between the Nativity scene and the Christmas tree, the Vatican placed the cross and chunks of the facade of the Basilica of St. Benedict in Norcia, Italy. The basilica was destroyed by an earthquake in October and dozens of other churches in central Italy crumbled or were heavily damaged. Money left at the Nativity scene by visitors will be donated to the church rebuilding effort in Norcia.

A boat representing migrants is pictured in the Nativity scene in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican Dec. 9.

Archbishop Lauro Tisi of Trent, speaking at the tree-lighting ceremony as the sun set, told people in St. Peter’s Square that the towering tree had lived decades – decades that saw thousands of people from the region emigrate in search of work in the early 1900s. It’s unconscionable, he said, that people today refuse to welcome those coming from poorer places with the same needs and dreams.

Manwel Grech, a sculptor of religious statues from Gozo, Malta, won a contest to make the Nativity scene. It was dream to create art for the Vatican and have it exhibited in the square where thousands of people from around the world will see it.

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Sister Therese Dugre
Sister Therese (of the Infant Jesus) Dugre, a Discalced Carmelite nun, died on June 11, 1916, in St. Boniface, Province of Quebec, Canada, she emigrated to the United States with her family in 1928 and continued her schooling in Manchester, N.H.
In 1932, at the age of 16, she entered the Discalced Carmelite Monastery in Loretto, Pa., and made profession in 1934. Nine years later, she was chosen to be one of the foundresses of the monastery in Mount Carmel, which was opened in 1935. In 1945, she moved to its newly-built monastery in Elysburg.
In religious life, Sister Therese served as a baker, director of novices, sacristan for more than 20 years, and maintained altar linens, seamstress, making liturgical banners, council sister and prioress.
Sister Therese was a witness to love of God, fidelity in prayer, diligent service to the community, obedience, and had a spontaneous enjoyable humor. Like her patron, St. Therese of Lisieux, Sister Therese was humble and transparent.
The funeral Mass was celebrated on Nov. 16 in Marla Hall Chapel, Danville.

Sister Daniel Marie Catherine
Sister Daniel Marie Catherine, a member of the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy, Villa Rosello, Newfield, N.J., died on Dec. 4 at St. Joseph Parish Convent in York.
Born in Palmyra, she entered the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy in Newfield in 1961. She earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Glassboro State College in New Jersey, and a master’s in Theology from St. Michael’s College in Winonoski, Vt. She also earned certification for psychotherapy and spirituality from Neumann College in Aston, Pa.
Sister Daniel Marie taught in elementary schools in Berwick and Hershey, and in New Jersey. Following her teaching career, she was involved in parish ministry in Connecticut and Assistant Director of Vocations for the Diocese of Camden, N.J.
From 1996-2007, sister Daniel Marie served as a missionary in the Diocese of Managua, Nicaragua. Upon her return to the United States, she was appointed Minister of Religious Education at St. Joseph Parish in York, and then went on to serve as the Provincial Superior of her religious order at Villa Rosello in Newfield. Her last assignment was at St. Joseph Parish in Dallastown.
The funeral Mass was celebrated at the order’s Provincial House in Newfield, N.J., on Dec. 10. Burial was in the Pieta Cemetery on the grounds of Villa Rosello.

The Knights of Columbus St. Katharine Drexel Council #11300 in Mechanicsburg recently presented Operation Wildcat in Mechanicsburg with a donation of coats from the Coats for Kids drive. The Knights of Columbus developed the Coats for Kids program, which allows councils across North America the opportunity to purchase new winter coats for children at a discount and distribute them to children in need in their local communities.
Operation Wildcat began in 2006 to pool the resources of the Mechanicsburg community to help school district students and families in need. Operation Wildcat strives to be the one resource available to Mechanicsburg Area School District students and families. The coats were distributed to students and families beginning Nov. 21. In the photo, Grand Knight Kulper Kalup and Brother Knights Scott Christ, Joe Moritz, Paul Bowers and Dave Orris present coats for Kids to Leslie Collins, President of Operation Wildcat.
A Parish Mission will be held at St. Rose of Lima Parish in York from September 18-28, 2017. You are invited to join Father Steven Georges in “Consoling the Heart of Jesus,” a 10-week retreat, beginning on January 11 at 4:30 p.m. (snow date Jan. 11), on January 13 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (snow date, Dec. 20), and on February 1, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The school will host an Open House on Feb. 1 from 9-11 a.m. and 1-2 p.m., as well as information nights for parents of prospective students on Feb. 1 at 7 p.m.

Court Queen of Peace #1023 of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas announces the Catholic Daughters of the Americas 2017 National Education Contest for all children in grades 4-12. Entrants can choose from two themes: “Whatever you do for the least of my brothers, do it to me because you are doing it to me quietly, where I live.” For details of contest rules and awards, please go to www.catholicdaughters.org, scroll down the page to find downloads, and under contests, select Education Contest Forms. Court Queen of Peace #1023, Lancaster, will be sponsoring entries at the local level to be sent to the national level. Each participating student must sign a completed entry form, and all rules must be adhered to in order for the entries to be valid. On the Return to portion of the entry form, please put: Name of Sponsoring Court: Name of Sponsoring Court: Queen of Peace #1023; City and State of Sponsoring Court: Lancaster, PA; Name of Education Chairperson: Margaret T. Giordano; Address: 1533 Hollywood Drive, Lancaster, PA 17601, 717-590-8035.

Jody Cole will be conducting 2 icon writing (painting) workshops this winter. Tuesdays beginning January 10 at 8:30 a.m. in Mechanicsburg and Thursdays beginning January 12 at St. Patrick Parish in Carlisle. Each class will meet in the evenings for 3 hours for 8 consecutive weeks. The icons being written are Our Lady of Fatima or St. Patrick of the Cliffs. The cost is $150. All supplies are included. More information is available by calling Jody at 717-793-8791 or e-mail jcoleicons@jcom.net.

Fundraisers & Events

The Shamrock Showcase Basketball Tournament will take place on December 29 and December 30 at Trinity School in Camp Hill. Come out and see three full days of exciting games, as Trinity hosts and takes on five other PA boys basketball teams. Tickets purchased at the door. Cost is $5 per adult, $3 per students. Your ticket includes all three games for the day! Visit www.shamrocksports.com for more information.

George’s International Tours at (800) 566-7499, sales@georgesintnl.com or visit www.georgesintnl.com. For complete details on this pilgrimage, contact: George’s International Tours at (800) 566-7499, sales@georgesintnl.com or visit www.georgesintnl.com.

Job Opportunities

immediate opening for a part-time parish secretary position at Holy Family Church in Cornwall. This position requires a positive, friendly, mature, detail-oriented person with average computer skills and the ability to understand and follow instructions, as well as work independently. Trustworthiness, reliability, willingness to maintain confidentiality are essential. The ability to complete routine and delegated assignments in a timely manner is essential. The person should possess an overall knowledge of general office procedures, and possess excellent spelling and grammatical skills. The person should be proficient in Microsoft applications, most especially Word, Excel. Our parish office is a visible representative of the parish and sometimes the only person in the parish office, this person will need to put the interests of the parish first in all actions and communications with others. Cordial and effective communication with parishioners, parishioners, vendors, committee members, office staff, etc. is essential. This person is an ongoing necessity. Job hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Educational and work experience equivalent to a high school diploma plus business curriculum. Associate degree in office administration helpful. Two to three years of related work experience. Please submit your resume to the parish office or send to: Sacred Heart of Jesus, PO Box 136, Cornwall, PA 17016.

Submission Deadlines

The next edition of The Catholic Witness is January 20, 2017. The deadline for announcement of the diocesan prayer groups for the month of January will be January 11 at 4:30 p.m. Submissions should be e-mailed to witness@hbgdiocese.org. A list of upcoming issue dates and deadlines can be found online at www.hbgdiocese.org, or requested via e-mail.
**Winter/Spring Diocesan Institute Adult Faith Formation Offerings**

The 2017 Winter/Spring Session of the Diocesan Institute for Catechetical and Pastoral Formation affords adult Catholics the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the Catholic Faith. All courses and workshops are open to any interested adult, including those who are pursuing catechetical formation in the diocese and those who simply wish to understand the Catholic faith better.

Learn from home option: Numerous faith formation offerings are also available via webinar, allowing you to participate in “real time” from home or to request recordings to view at your convenience. Webinar offerings are clearly marked.

To view the complete Winter/Spring session schedule, which includes course descriptions and fees, as well as a number of available pre-recorded courses and sessions, please visit www.hbgdiocese.org.

For information about the Diocesan Institute or obtaining catechetical certification in the Diocese of Harrisburg, contact Ryan Bolster at 717-657-4804, ext. 225 or rbolster@hbgdiocese.org.

**BASIC CATECHETICAL CERTIFICATION COURSES**

**Introduction to Scripture**
- Mondays, January 9, 16, 23 and 30, 2017
- 6:30-9:00 p.m.
- Divine Redeemer Parish, Mount Carmel
- Mr. Joe Mullen

**Teaching Methodology—Part 2**
- Wednesdays, March 8 and 22, 2017
- 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Saint Mark the Evangelist Parish, Greenscastle
- Mr. Ryan Bolster

**Introduction to Prayer**
- Tuesdays, January 31, February 7, 14, 21, and 28, 2017
- 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Saint Catherine Laboure Parish, Harrisburg
- **ALSO AVAILABLE VIA WEBINAR**
- Mr. Ryan Bolster

**Introduction to Morality**
- Thursdays, March 23, 30, April 6, 20, 27, and 2017
- 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Saint Joseph the Worker Parish, Bonneauville
- Rev. Peter DiTomaso, M.S.S.C.C.

**ADVANCED CATECHETICAL CERTIFICATION COURSES**

**Christology**
- Tuesdays, March 14, 21, 28, April 4, 11, 18, and 25, 2017
- 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg
- **ALSO AVAILABLE VIA WEBINAR**
- Mr. Ryan Bolster

**Recent Church Documents**
- Tuesdays, March 28, April 4, 18, 25 and May 2, 2017
- 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Immaculate Conception BVM Parish, York
- Very Rev. Jonathan Sawicki

**ELECTIVES**

**Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love): Pope Francis’ Apostolic Exhortation on Love in the Family**
- Thursdays, February 23, 2017
- 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg
- **ALSO AVAILABLE VIA WEBINAR**
- Mr. Ryan Bolster

**The Beauty of Sacred Art**
- Thursdays, March 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30, 2017
- 6:30-8:00 p.m.
- Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg
- **ALSO AVAILABLE VIA WEBINAR**
- Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC

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**Suds and Solidarity: Buying Benedictine Beer Helps Rebuild Basilic**

By Cindy Wooden

_Catholic News Service_

The Latin-liturgy chanting, beer-brewing Benedictine monks of Norcia, Italy, the birthplace of St. Benedict, are living and praying in temporary structures after an earthquake in August damaged their buildings and a big quake in late October razed their basilica, except for the facade.

The monks have not been able to brew beer since before the summer quake, but in a newsletter to supporters in mid-December, they reported that bottles shipped earlier to the United States are available for Christmas gift giving. Their U.S. online store—birranursia.com/purchase—has all the details.

The purchase of beer will help the monks rebuild and will help the devastated town of Norcia.

“The monastic presence in Norcia is extremely important for the identity of the town, so rebuilding the monastery means giving new life to a town that finds itself sorely tried,” the monks wrote on the website. “Our neighbors count on our solidarity, both spiritual and material.”

Before the earthquakes, the monks were tithing 10 percent of beer profits to charity. Now, they said, 15 percent of profits will go to charity and a portion of all earthquake-recovery funds raised will be used to help the people of Norcia rebuild.

Outside of Norcia, the monks have set up a temporary monastery, and they announced in early December that Sunday morning Masses open to the public would be celebrated in their makeshift Chapel of St. Andrew.

“The brewery, which was located in the basement of the now-ruined monastery, was largely spared of any damage,” according to the monks’ Web site.

But local officials declared the building unsafe and off limits.

“All of the brewing equipment that was used to make the beer you’ve all come to love will be salvaged, and, as soon as possible, transferred to a new brewing location outside the city walls,” the monks said. “This may take a few months to find a suitable space, and therefore, brewing is suspended until an alternative brewing quarters is secured.”
Dear Friends in Christ,

I am pleased to share with you the audited Diocesan Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2016. This report reflects the continued and generous financial support from you, the faithful of the diocese, for our overall mission and ministry.

The mission statement of our great diocese is to proclaim the goodness of God and to make truly present and active the one, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ to all people through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is in our mutual collaboration that the diocese is not merely an administrative structure, but rather a means to join communities, our parishes, into a strong local Church, uniting its people in faith, worship and service to others.

As your Bishop, I could not shepherd the people of Central Pennsylvania without your willingness to share your time, talent and treasure. Please know of my abiding gratitude for your generous and consistent support. I pray that as we welcome the New Year you and your loved ones may experience the richness of God’s love.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Ronald W. Gainer, D.D., J.C.L.
Bishop of Harrisburg

Consistent with its policy of providing financial disclosure, the Diocese of Harrisburg is once again presenting the financial statements of its Diocesan Offices and Ministries. The financial statements presented here for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2016 and 2015 were prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and were audited by the independent certified public accounting firm of McKeon and Asbury, LLP. These financial reports do not include the financial status of diocesan parishes and schools or Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Harrisburg, PA. Each of these entities maintains its own set of fiscal records and reports individually to its own particular constitutions. The complete financial reports for the diocese, together with the independent auditor’s report and notes to the financial statements, are available from Harrisburg Catholic Administrative Services, Inc. (HCAS) upon request.
`Jesus is Always There`

Perpetual Adoration Chapel in New Freedom Brings Blessings to Adorers

By Emily M. Albert

The Catholic Witness

Executing a great idea can be intimidating, sometimes even debilitating. Questions fly by around, our human instinct for fear of failure can eat away at the idea. But it takes one person to believe, to take all their faith and truly believe that all things done through God will be done well.

Twenty years ago, Bette Siemon and other parishioners of St. John the Baptist Parish in New Freedom, approached then-pastor, Father Sylvan Capitani, with an idea to start a perpetual adoration chapel because they had known of the one at St. Patrick Parish in York. They knew they would take full parish involvement to staff the chapel 24 hours a day and seven days a week. A meeting was planned for moving forward and Ms. Siemon came to learn at that meeting that in order for things to progress, she would need 24 coordinators. Ideally, she should have already had them accounted for, but with God’s grace she turned to the nearly 100 people at the meeting and made a plea for volunteers. In an instant, 24 hands were raised. Then, Ms. Siemon was asked to present the names of four division leaders. Again, previously unaware of this need, she turned back to the audience and four more hands were raised.

“And so it was providence,” explained Randy Mentzell, one of the current administrators of the Corpus Christi Chapel, located in the parish’s historic church. It was dedicated on June 23, 1996 and is one of ten perpetual adoration chapels in the diocese. Currently it has a total of 273 adorers; 195 regulars, 56 of whom have been involved since the conception of the chapel. Administrators Randy and Marguerite Mentzell manage a battery of schedules and other responsibilities there, including keeping a personal connection with the adorers.

“We encourage people to come and visit the chapel, feel the warmth of the chapel and get a rhythm going there and just visit at first. And then generally people fall in love with it,” Mr. Mentzell explained. Often, the adorers build a relationship with one another and become like a little family. They have a prayer packet for new adorers, which includes phone numbers and explanations about what to do if they can’t make their regularly-scheduled hour.

“We always try to make everyone feel comfortable here, and I think it’s that personal touch that is so very important about keeping the rhythm of the chapel going. For adorers Brian and Tracy Noll, the chapel has been pivotal to their family in ways beyond explanation. They have a son and daughter. Their son, Tyler, now 18, has autism, and when he was 13, the family needed to make a very hard decision. It was becoming more evident that he needed care beyond what they could provide, and they were able to find a great school to assist him, but it was located in Pittsburgh.

For Mr. Noll, the decision was very hard. “That was a very difficult thing for me to admit, as a father especially. We are charged with taking care of the family, and I realized I couldn’t do that. And it was really hard for me to let him go.”

Soon after their son left for school, Mr. Noll began to experience health issues that were evident that he needed care beyond what they could provide, and they were able to find a great school to assist him, but it was located in Pittsburgh.

For Mr. Noll, the decision was very hard. 

“Sometimes in the A.M. hours it’s neat to hear Jesus is always there and he’s there for everybody, and it’s kind of a good feeling, because you know Jesus is always there and he’s there for everybody, and they can feel free to come in.”

In celebration this past June of the chapel’s 20th anniversary, renovations were made, including the dedication of two new pieces of art: an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and an image of the Divine Mercy.

The chapel exists because of its volunteers, those who keep their hour regularly or those who have donated their time to repairs or building tables and other furniture. But it’s not just the adoration chapel that makes this parish special, it’s all their parish activities and the participation of the community, under the pastorate of Father Robert Yohne, Jr.

Mr. Noll commented, “The thing that I’ve gotten out of the chapel is that this parish is different in a lot of ways. We are so removed from most parishes that are closer to each other. But the service that the parishioners provide, tons and tons of things that people volunteer for… And I think it is because of the blessing we get from perpetual adoration. I look at the Mentzells and Father Capitani and all the others that started all this and thank them for it, because I think that has really blessed our parish in so many ways.”

Mr. Mentzell added, “I’ve heard Father Capitani say how he believes almost everything that has been successful in this parish he thinks is because we have the adoration chapel.”

For additional information about the chapel, visit http://www.sjbnf.org/perpetual-eucharistic-adoration. People are welcome to the chapel at any time.