A Season of Preparation

Derived from the Latin “ad-venio,” meaning “to come to,” Advent offers a season of preparation for the celebration of Christmas; a two-fold commemoration that directs our hearts and minds to Christ’s birth, and to his coming at the end of time.

The liturgical color for Advent is purple, just as it is during Lent, since both seasons prepare us for great feast days and include elements of penance as part of our preparation. The third Sunday of Advent is “Gaudete” Sunday – derived from the first word of the Latin Entrance Antiphon for this day, meaning “Rejoice” – and the liturgical color on this day may be rose instead of purple. It is also reflected in the pink candle of an Advent wreath. This is the Church’s way of further heightening our expectation as we draw ever nearer to the Solemnity of Christmas.

Advent is a season of conversion of the heart, as we quiet ourselves for the joy of Christmas. We are called to spend time in prayer and preparation for the coming of Christ.

You can find a variety of Advent resources – including blessings for an Advent wreath, Nativity scene and Christmas tree, information on feast days and penance, as well as recommended Christmas movies – online at http://www.hbgdiocese.org/advent/.

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 Isabella Jones, a second grade student at Holy Name of Jesus School in Harrisburg, and the illustration at the top is by Leah Brighter, a fourth grader at St. Leo the Great School in Rohrerstown. The remaining two images will be featured on the cover of the December 23 edition of The Catholic Witness. The four winning pieces will be used as illustrations on Bishop Gainer’s Christmas cards this year.
The Catholic Witness • December 9, 2016

By Jen Reed

The Diocese of Harrisburg has begun a new initiative that will directly sponsor its men who are in priestly formation.

The Patrons of Our Seminarians program invites individuals and families to invest in a commitment to the education of those studying for the priesthood, so that, God willing, they become holy men for the diocese.

The selection of the word “Patrons” as part of this ongoing program is two-fold, explains Father Brian Wayne, Director of Vocations for the Diocese of Harrisburg.

“First, as Catholics, we all have patron saints, friends in Heaven we ask to look out for us and pray for us. We all need the support of others to persevere in our God-given vocation,” he said. “Second, ‘patron’ is from the Latin word for ‘father’ and ‘parent.’ I want the faithful to think of our seminarians as their sons, and that we are a family in Christ who wants to support one another.”

Good Priests Do Not Just Happen

The diocese is blessed by the number of men who have responded to God’s call to a religious vocation. Currently, 33 seminarians are discerning the priesthood for the diocese, a number that has tripled in the past decade.

But, good priests do not just happen. Before a man can be ordained to the priesthood, he must complete eight to ten years of higher education: first building a foundation in philosophical studies before engaging in master’s level work in theological studies.

Today, in the diocese, there are 12 seminarians who are in collegiate studies, and 21 who are in theological studies. God willing, three transitional deacons will be ordained priests in the spring of 2017.

Outside of the seminary classroom, a seminarian will also spend three to five years of summer pastoral work in parishes; attend a spirituality summer program; engage in a Spanish immersion experience; participate in seminars on preaching, administration and leadership; and lead his own discernment retreat.

The Cost

The men who study for the priesthood, along with their families and the seminaries, take on a substantial portion of the cost of their education; generally, seminarians cover half of the cost of their tuition. The diocese is responsible for the remaining amount.

This year, one year of tuition, room and board for one seminarian is $37,000. Add the cost of special immersion programs and retreats, and the figure totals $42,000. This year, for the 21 seminarians currently in theology, the diocese is responsible for $882,000 for their education and formation.

“We owe it to the men, those who are willing to discern whether they are called to sacrifice their lives for us, to sacrifice some of our own treasure for them,” Father Wayne said.

The Patrons

The blessing of 33 seminarians for our diocese comes with a challenge, and a responsibility.

“Becoming a Patron is truly investing in our future priests and the mission of the Church in Harrisburg for years to come,” said Father Wayne. “As a young priest, I cherish the times I visit the faithful in hospitals, nursing homes, or bound to their home. I am in a long line of priests who have nourished their souls. We need to continue that line of priests that, generation after generation, will have the same access to the sacraments for their own spiritual well-being.”

In becoming a member of the Patrons of Our Seminarians program, you will directly sponsor the men in priestly formation for our diocese, making an investment in your future priests.

To enroll in this program and offer your ongoing investment to our seminarians, contact the Office of Vocations via e-mail at www.vocations@hbgdiocese.org or by phone at 717-657-4804, ext. 282. Information is also available at www.hbgdiocese.org/patrons.

“By investing in our seminarians’ education and formation, you are truly investing in the mission of Jesus Christ and His Church here in the Diocese of Harrisburg,” said Bishop Ronald Gainer. “Know that your sacrifice goes towards educating them in the Truth, helping them follow the Way to holiness, that they might one day lead all of us in the life of grace.”
In recognition of their PIAA State Championship achievement, the Lancaster Catholic High School golf team enjoyed a lunch with Bishop Ronald Gainer at the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg on Dec. 5. It is a tradition in the diocese for National Merit Scholar winners and state championship individuals and teams from diocesan high schools to have a meal with the bishop in honor of their outstanding achievement. The Crusaders’ golf team claimed the PIAA AA State Championship recently with a team score of 309, 10 strokes better than Sewickley Academy, for the team title. Coach Ron Weaver commented, “Since the first day of the season, one through seven, we were the most consistent team.” He continued, “That consistency was the key to our success and is what led us to the winner’s circle.”

CHRIS HEISEY, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

Bishop Gainer to Talk about Christmas and More on Radio Program

Bishop Ronald Gainer will discuss a wide range of topics in a 30-minute radio interview with host Michael Parks. During the program, the bishop is expected to discuss a variety of topics, including his reaction to the recent election, welcoming Catholics back to the Church, pornography as a challenge to the family, the new Patrons of Our Seminarians program as well as how we can all prepare ourselves spiritually for Christmas. The program will air on WHP AM 580 on Saturday, December 17 at 7:30 a.m. It will also air on AM 720 Holy Family Radio on Saturday, December 17 at noon and Sunday, December 19 at 10 a.m. It will also be heard that day on WHVR-AM 1280, Hanover, at 8 a.m. and WKOK-AM 1070, Sunbury, at 6:30 a.m.

Catholic Charities on the Radio

“Providing help, creating hope” is the motto of Catholic Charities. How they do that through the many different facets of services they offer will be the topic for an upcoming radio program. Chris Meehan, Director of Development for the agency, will join Bishop Ronald Gainer to Talk about Christmas and More on Radio Program. Catholic Charities services are delivered to clients regardless of age, race, gender, religion, or ability to pay. No person is ever denied help because of finances, and a person does not need to be Catholic to receive help. This program will air on WHP AM 580 on Saturday, December 17 at 7 a.m. It will also air on AM 720 Holy Family Radio on Saturday, December 24 at noon and Sunday, December 25 at 10 a.m. It will also be heard that day on WHVR-AM 1280, Hanover, at 8 a.m. and WKOK-AM 1070, Sunbury, at 6:30 a.m.

Correction

A photo caption that was part of The Catholic Witness’ coverage of the Trinity girls’ PIAA soccer championship in the November 25, 2016, edition incorrectly indicated that the Shamrocks’ Theresa Durle had played in all four of Trinity’s state championship games. Rather, Catherine Greigore played in all four championship matches.
Some time ago, I traveled to New Jersey to partake in a class reunion of my elementary school of St. Anthony of Padua, located in Butler. I had 35 classmates in my graduating class. As I traveled across Pennsylvania by my old neighborhood and parish, I noticed that the pulpit of my hands began to get clammy and the pit of my stomach began to get queasy. I thought, “What is going on with you? What are you dreading about this class reunion?” In- stanply, I remembered a member of my class, who, so, so many years ago, took great delight in being a bully. Several of my class members and I were among his “favorites.” “I suddenly pictured myself as the bullied 10-year-old, and wanted so desperately to beat the bullies this way or out of not only the building but the individual as well! As I recalled, I found myself clenching not only my teeth, but also the steering wheel. As I caught myself doing this, I began to laugh and cry at all once. I prayed, “My dearest Beloved, give me your peace, your love and your forgive- ness. Allow me to extend You to him.”

The feeling of dread only increased as I entered the room and spied my childhood nemesis. Our glances locked. As he walked up to me, he spread his arms and I brace myself as he hugged me. Standing on his toe tips, holding me within his arms, he whispered, “Please forgive me. As a kid, I was such a jerk!” I retorted, “Yes you were. Honestly, and I can’t believe I am going to tell you this, but I was dreading seeing you. After so many years, what you made me still hurt. But, I do forgive you, or at least am trying to do.”

Something happened within my heart in that brief encounter. Because he sought out my forgiveness and I didn’t ignore the pain, the wounded part in me that hadn’t been healed was finally exposed to God’s touch. Who I was to not forgive this poor middle-aged man something that has been 40 years ago? I could not help being reminded of the corporal work of mercy: Bury the dead.

You see, the scar on my psyche that was associated with his actions and his words had never been healed. It was tuck away so deeply under the safety of that place. If you are not ready to do that, then pray for the grace for the ability to release your hold on it. This is indeed a process and not a once and done happening.

At the end of the acknowledges the understanding of this, as well as the difficulty. I often wonder whether or not the reason he included the words “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” within the Our Father was to remind us of this reality. Do we truly own our demand on God to for- give us and our personal inability to forgive others? I often think not. Now that I have had it I can say it and I can keep it from me saying to me, “Why should I forgive THAT or forgive so and so?” You might remember a time when you were still quite young and you were in college at this time and you were not ready to do that, then pray for the grace for the ability to release your hold on it. This is indeed a process and not a once and done happening.

By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC

Special to The Witness

Bury the Past

The Light Shines in the Darkness

By Jim Gontis

Special to The Witness

Thoughts from a Catholic Evangelist
Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC

The Catholic Witness
OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG

Most Rev. Ronald W. Gainer, Publisher
Jennifer Reed: Managing Editor

catholicwitness@hbgdiocese.org

The Catholic Witness
PHONE: 717-657-4000 ext. 201
FAX: 717-657-2973

Website: www.hbgdiocese.org

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Fax 717-657-2973
Email: witness@hbgdiocese.org

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Have you ever thought what a magical time of year December is? I have ever since I was a child. We see the colorful lights displayed in windows and on streets, the fresh smell of crisp air and frost all seem to bring with it the first snowflakes of the year, sweet hot chocolate warming our insides, and, despite the commercialization of the season, even the hustle and bustle of this time of year as we prepare for Christmas is a time of happy preparation. And so it is in the Church, too. Advent is a time pregnant with hope and expectation.

Don’t we all need something to look for- ward to? Maybe it was brighter when we were kids. There was always the next holiday, or picnic, or family gather- ing, or ballgame, or whatever it happened to be. It is possible as one gets older, as one enters adulthood, even the winter season becomes, for some, even a little. The monotony of the work-a-day world with its concomitant responsi- bilities, the disappointments of certain dreams not quite fulfilled. All these can jade us a bit if we let them.

Let’s not let them. Let’s allow ourselves to be captured once again by this “most wonderful time of the year.” December and Advent offer hope for new beginnings as we prepare to welcome the Christ-child come Christmas. Different signposts help to mark the way for us.

For the faithful, the beginning of Advent itself. I remember as a child my parents pulling out the Advent wreath every year. Each evening, my parents and their five children (three girls and two boys), would gather around the table and light the candle of the week with its three purple and one rose colored candle and argue about who got to light the candles or blow them out. The rose one, lit for the first time on the third week, was particularly sought after. My parents always managed to negotiate a peace out of this traditional tostado, but not before we kid each other about who blew it being showed. Somehow, my wife and I have managed to do the same with our children.

My parents always found a little Advent devotional booklet and would read a page or two every night. Usually, I was the one to recite “O Come, O Come Emmanuel.” As we got older, they would let one of us read from it. The readings, the candles flickering in the dark kitchen, the hauntingly beautiful melody of that hymn, always brought a certain peace. We still do now for my wife and me, and the staple for our kids, too, as they are usually the first to remind us that it is time to bring the Advent wreath out of mothballs.

The lighting of the Advent wreath helps in a simple way to remind us what is important. As we light the candle of the first week in a Liturgical year, the month of December, and it is Emer- manuel, God With Us, Who comes specifically to dispel the darkness.

As we move through the season, along with the hectic, but mostly enjoyable holiday preparations, the Church puts before us certain key moments and feasts. The Memorial of St. Nicholas is a favorite of mine, because he is the patron of my firstborn child. St. Nicholas, the patron of children, is the forerunner of Santa Claus. As we celebrate his feast day on December 5, and sure as God made little green apples, St. Nicholas manages to provide some gold-covered chocolate coins in each shoe on the morning of December 6. This also gives Eva (my wife) and me entree to read the well-known story of St. Nicholas, generous bishop and great defender of the divinity of Christ against the Arian heretics. They also each enjoy, on the Feast of St. Nicholas, “Breakfast with Santa” at our own Holy Name of Jesus Church. This custom of having them come with a certain amount of dynamite, as our eldest will be in college at this time next year. So this will probably be the last time we were all together for this little, but meaningful annual family rite at our parish hall.

Mary and the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception also helps light our path to- ward Christmas. This is a day of all those, who in their devotion to herself as the Imma- culate Conception to a young French girl named Bernadette in the French Pyrenees Mountains, brings Christ to us and we go back to Him through her. In her Immaculate Conception, God reminds us that grace is greater than sin in her who is both “full of grace” and presence of all evil without the stain of Original Sin. It is under the title of the Immaculate Conception that Mary is Patroness of these United States. Let us invoke her powerful intercession for our nation and for our nation’s leaders.

Just four days later, December 12, we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. In 1531, in Mexico, Our Lady appeared to a humble man late in his middle age, named Juan Diego, now a saint, and left her image, her personal “photograph,” on his tilma. She came to see the planting of Her Son’s Church more securely in the Americas. The Church in which her tilma is displayed is still the most visited pilgrimage site in the Americas. It is not coincidental that God, through the “Immaculate, Ever-Virgin, Mother of the True God,” was enacting a sort of divine compensation inasmuch as where mil- lions were leaving the bosom of the Catholic Church in Europe, even more millions, would be entering into the Church in the New World. She came to promise her unyield- ing, protective, and healing love and mercy toward Juan Diego, his sick uncle, and all who are her spiritual children. And, Our Lady of Guadalupe came to eradicate the hu- man sacrifice so common in that land at this time and to crush the head of Quetzacoatl, the head of the Serpent, our ancient foe. She wants to do this in the world and in our own lives. The Church Father, St. Irenaeus said famously, “the knot of Eve’s disobedi- ence is united by Mary’s obedience.” This Advent, let us go to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas and of the Unborn, for her maternal help in untying the knots in our own lives and families.

In this darkest time of the year, when the shadows fall early and long, may we, with the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, her secret and Foster-father of Jesus, prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of the Divine Infant Jesus, come in human form. May we do so with a bit more fidelity to prayer, attentiveness at Mass, sacratu- mental confession, and through forgiveness that needs to be given and mercy extended. Then, amidst the busyness of this season of preparation, trimming and gift-swapping, we shall be the more prepared for the One Who is THE Gift. He is It, the Infant of Bethle- hem, Who is “the Light that shines in the Darkness, and the Darkness has not overcome him...” has not overcome Him. Come, Lord Jesus! (Jim Gontis is the Director of the Diocesan Department of Religious Education and the Director of Sports Ministry.)
**National Blue Ribbon Status Awarded to St. Joan of Arc School in Hershey**

By Emily M. Albert

The Catholic Witness

What does one half of 1% look like? Look to St. Joan of Arc School in Hershey, a recipient this year of the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program.

This prestigious program of the U.S. Department of Education has been recognizing schools since 1982 based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. The award isn’t based on one year, but looks at the cumulative progress of a school and affirms the hard work of students, educators, families and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging content.

And only half of one percent of schools in the United States are awarded this honor. School principal, Sister Eileen McGowan, DM, commented that while in Washington, D.C., to receive the school’s Blue Ribbon award last month, she realized that the honor is bigger than can be comprehended. She and Susan Hampton, President of the school’s Board of Education, were invited to conferences, a banquet and an awards ceremony as part of the recognition.

The application process for the National Blue Ribbon award took place five years ago, but St. Joan of Arc School couldn’t be accepted at the time because it missed one criteria: a classroom didn’t have the required number of students. They were informed and encouraged to resubmit their application when the factor was resolved.

And because St. Joan’s excelled in the other criteria, such as after school activities, community involvement, and test scores, Sister Eileen felt good about St. Joan’s chances of being selected, but didn’t rejoice and celebrate until Sept. 28, when they were officially notified of the achievement.

Sister Eileen commented that this past summer, she was receiving “in case you win” messages from the Blue Ribbon committee, suggesting a photograph of the school be provided. And, “in case you win,” you should have your hotel reserved for the awards ceremony. With these messages, Sister Eileen felt good about St. Joan’s chances of being selected, but didn’t rejoice and celebrate until Sept. 28, when they were officially notified of the achievement.

The school community celebrated at St. Joan’s that day by watching the announcement live and quickly planning a party for the students and faculty.

St. Joan of Arc School received a banner, flag and framed award at the ceremony in Washington. Teachers have free access to a computer software program for a year, and the school is implementing its Blue Ribbon status into its identity. In anticipation of Christmas this year, the school placed a blue tree with ribbons in the lobby.

Sister Eileen McGowan, DM, Principal of St. Joan of Arc School in Hershey, and Father Al Sceski, pastor of St. Joan of Arc Parish, display the plaque that the school received as part of its selection as a National Blue Ribbon School this year. In recognition of the prestigious honor, the school is displaying a blue Christmas tree this year.

Look to St. Joan of Arc School in Hershey, a recipient this year of the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/index.html.

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Your gifts will offer hope and help to low-income families and communities working to overcome poverty and injustice throughout the 15 counties in central Pennsylvania.

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Nearly 500 years after Mexico’s patron saint spoke to a humble Mexican, who looked Latino, who was canonized in the 20th century, to convey the message: olive skin, pregnant with Jesus, adorned in a turquoise mantel and surrounded by rays of light. Such an image of Mary adorns the homes of countless Mexican and Mexican-American families and serves as much as a cultural symbol and as religious one, said Oblate Father Bob Wright, professor of systematic theology at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. “You cannot separate the two of them,” he told Catholic News Service. Such an attachment is readily apparent in the hundreds of celebrations of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which feature the singing of “Las Mananitas” (early morning song) and traditional dances along with a festive Mass, all followed, of course, by heaps of food and drink. Father Wright described the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe as “universal to everyone, a mother figure who looks after us, that you can turn to, just as Jesus himself you can turn to.”

A colleague, Oblate Father Fernando Velazquez, associate professor of missiology at the Oblate school, said devotion to Mary is carried out in daily life by many of Mexican heritage. It is custom, he said, for mothers or grandmothers to send children to school with a brief prayer that Mary and God’s mantle protect them throughout the day. Perhaps it is no other group than women who have embraced a devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. From family prayer to weekly praying of the Rosary among a group of women to sharing a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe in processions from house to home, women have led the practice of prayer before Mary.

Nancy Pineda-Madrid, associate professor of theology and Latino/Latina ministry at Boston College, is writing a book on the religious symbolism of Our Lady of Guadalupe and how the message of a five-century-old apparition can be liberating for women today. She called the appearance of Mary then a Pentecost moment for the Church, serving to “transform the pain and suffering into a hope for life.” Her narrative, which is taking one of the lives at the margins and talking about their dignity and coming to know their own sense of themselves with God in a way that’s deeply, deeply affirming,” Pineda-Madrid explained. “She speaks to that. That’s the reason she is such a powerful symbol today to Mexicans.”

Celebrations of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe this year in the U.S. may take on a different cast because of increasingly sour rhetoric and student calls for the deportation of millions of immigrants in the country without legal permission. Because of the concerns arising from such talk, Renata Furst, associate professor of Scripture and spirituality at the Oblate school, said that Mary’s message remains deeply relevant today. She said it helps people understand how important it is that grounded in their culture and its values while seeing “the way God is recreating them and respond in a changing world.”

“The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe is extremely valuable for reading back into the Bible,” said Furst, who grew up in Honduras. She has observed that the images of a black Christ that appear in the border region of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras reflect a fusion of culture and faith in a way that people could better understand. So it is with Our Lady of Guadalupe and other lesser known apparitions of Mary in the Americas. “You might look at Our Lady of Guadalupe as the source of this integration,” Furst said. “It is as though God is hanging from the bottom up as opposed from the top down.”

Our Lady of Guadalupe also has remained a symbol of resistance. Mexican-American Rebecca Berru-Davis calls popular religion, or the faith practiced in the home. Berru-Davis, who recently concluded a two-year postdoctoral fellowship at St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minnesota, explained that such the popular practice of religion can come through music, performing arts and even traditional foods. She saw how that popular religion was expressed while spending time over four years in Berkeley, California, with a group of Latino women who met weekly to pray the rosary before a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe that traveled from home to home.

She focused on trying to understand the importance of such devotion in the women’s lives and how it was transmitted throughout the family. She said the devotion transcended age and continues to be transmitted to children. “A devotion like this diffused the formal aspect of liturgy [in church] and the informal or the home religion, the popular religion,” Berru-Davis told CNS. “But it also said, ‘We’re carrying liturgy into the home and the virgin is the vehicle.’”

“The women described it as ‘tela,’ a cloth that is placed over the community that brings them together, or ‘cadenas,’ a chain, that brought the community together,” she continued. “The of light. ‘The women described it as very clear about that, that the devotion was continuing because it is what the Virgin wanted.’

Feeding The Faith

Mrs. Toni Weaver - Annunciation BVM Church, McSherrystown

Chicken Bake

Ingredients:
4 cups of cooked chopped chicken breast
1 8oz. sour cream
2 cans cream of chicken soup
1 sleeve Ritz crackers, crushed
1 stick melted butter

Directions:
Grease 9x13 dish, put chicken on bottom.
Mix soup and sour cream and spread over the top of chicken. Sprinkle crumbs on top and pour butter over. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees.

This is my favorite recipe, as well as that of my seven grandchildren. I won the Hanover Evening Sun newspaper cookbook contest with this recipe. I have made it for our church picnic and for Parish Council of Catholic Women’s covered dishes. This recipe is also in our school cookbook, “Faith, Family and Friends.”
Natural Family Planning Presentation Offered in Bonneauville

Have you ever heard of Fertility Awareness? What about Natural Family Planning (NFP)? Fertility Awareness is a way of following God’s plan for achieving or avoiding pregnancy by using a woman’s signs of fertility to determine the fertile and infertile times of her cycle. The Catholic Church, Fertility Awareness and Natural Family Planning enable couples to avoid pregnancy by practicing abstinence during the fertile time of the woman’s cycle, while avoiding putting artificial hormones and devices into a woman’s body.

Come to a very special presentation at St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Bonneauville on December 15th from 6:30-8 p.m. Dr. Luis Garcia, a medical doctor in York, will present on basic Church teaching regarding sexuality and NFP, and explain various forms of NFP and the science behind them. Couples will then have the opportunity to learn a bit more about the specific model of NFP that is best suited for their family. Advanced registration is not required, but for further information, please call the St. Joseph the Worker Parish office at 717-334-2510.

SAINT SAMUEL CENTER CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Catholic Charities’ “Hope for All” campaign to make the Saint Samuel Center a safe and accessible place for its physically challenged residents has been a success. At the center, we care for the residents of the Interfaith Shelter for Homeless Families, Lourdeshouse Maternity Home, and Evergreen House for women recovering from addiction. Thanks to your generosity, to the first phase of the campaign, the kitchen, dining room, powder room, living room and two bedrooms have been redesigned with new equipment and mobility challenges. New ramps have been installed to assist our clients in moving from room to room.

We are now launching Phase II of our “Hope for All” campaign, so that our clients who reside at the center can easily travel from floor to floor. Phase II features the addition of a new elevator that will serve not only our clients with mobility challenges, but also our existing and future clients too, such as the children at The Interfaith Shelter and Lourdeshouse, for example, who are often too young to walk the stairs. Each floor features a coffee area for the residents to gather and socialize. Each floor is equipped with a refrigerator, microwave and coffee service. The cost for the elevator is $450,000. We again appeal to your kindness and generosity in support of this campaign of “Hope for All.”

Please help us help those in need.

Mail your donation/pledge to:  
Diocece of Harrisburg  
Officer of Development  
1400 Union Deposit Road  
Harrisburg, PA 17111-9710

Donate On-Line:  
Visa or MasterCard  
www.dioharrisburg.org  
and click on the “Donate” box

Your donation may be deductible. Please refer to your tax advisor.
During a visit to Lancaster Catholic High School on Nov. 29, Bishop Ronald Gainer led the school community in a service to bless and light all of the school’s Advent wreaths. The bishop, assisted by servers Amanda DeCarolis and Autumn Cybulski, shown in the top photo, blessed the various wreaths, and then lit the first candle on the school’s main wreath. Several students, including Siobhan McShea and Nathalie Rivera, shown at left, followed in lighting the smaller wreaths placed throughout the school.

CHRIS HEISEY, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

As we make the Sign of the Cross, the leader says:
Our help is in the name of the Lord.
R/. Who made heaven and earth.
A song may be sung as the candle is lighted.
O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel!
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

Scripture Reading
(see Daily readings for Advent at www.hbgdiocese.org/advent)
A reflection may be shared about the Reading.

Concluding Prayer
Lord our God,
we praise you for your Son,
Jesus Christ:
He is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples,
He is the Wisdom that teaches and guides us,
He is the Savior of every nation.
Lord God,
let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath.
May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ’s promise to bring us salvation.
May He come quickly and not delay.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

As we make the Sign of the Cross, we say:
May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us everlasting life. Amen.

(© Diocese of Harrisburg, Office for Divine Worship)

Blessing of a Nativity Scene

The custom of displaying figures depicting the birth of Jesus Christ owes its origin to St. Francis of Assisi, who made the Christmas crèche or manger for Christmas Eve of 1223. When the manger is set up in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by a parent or another family member.

As we make the Sign of the Cross, the leader says:
Our help is in the name of the Lord.
R/. Who made heaven and earth.

One of those present or the leader reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example, Luke 2:1 (lines 1-8) or Isaiah 7:10 (lines 10-15, the birth of Emmanuel).

R/. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The leader prays with hands joined:
God of every nation and people, from the very beginning of creation you have made manifest your love: when our need for a Savior was great you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. To our lives he brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love.

Lord,
bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise our thoughts to him, who is God-with-us and Savior of all, and who lives and reigns forever and ever.
R/. Amen.

(From USCCB Advent resources, Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers)
Bishop Gainer Celebrates at Resurrection Catholic School

By Donna Walker
Special to The Witness

The Bishop of Harrisburg was doing his favorite thing Dec. 1 when he visited Resurrection Catholic School in Lancaster to celebrate Mass for the students in observance of the school’s 25th anniversary.

Bishop Ronald Gainer talked to students in the school built in 1895 as St. Anthony School. In 1991-92, St. Anthony combined with St. Mary and St. Joseph schools to form Resurrection.

In the slightly newer cafeteria, he ate lunch with fourth graders in between visiting classrooms. He found younger students asked questions about what he wears at Mass, and upper classes focused more on what it’s like to be a bishop.

“What is your favorite part of being a bishop?” asked a seventh-grade student. “This. Being out of the office and visiting schools and prisons [and other places in the diocese],” the bishop responded.

“What is your favorite part of the Mass?” asked an eighth grader. “Holy Communion. When we receive the Bread of Life.”


“What was that cane you carried in Mass?” asked a second-grade student. “The crozier, or pastoral staff.” It resembles a shepherd’s hook, and Bishop Gainer is the chief shepherd of the Harrisburg Diocese.

“What was that hat?” asked a second grader. “The beanie or skullcap is called a zucchetto, and the high hat is a miter, a sign that the bishop is the high priest.”

Prior to the school visit, the bishop celebrated Mass along with St. Mary’s Pastor, Father Leo Goodman; St. Anthony Pastor, Father Daniel O’Brien; retired Pastor Bernardo Pistone; and St. Joseph’s Father Sebastian Thekedath. Father Allan Wolfe, pastor of St. Joseph and San Juan Bautista parishes, was master of ceremonies.

Bishop Gainer’s homily mentioned the consolidation and the school’s theme this year, Family of Faith – Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow. He said that combining the schools was a decision made with faith.

“You get the best preparation for life here so you can succeed and do well,” Bishop Gainer said. But Catholic education also makes us ready for “a life that is eternal, to live with Jesus in the glory of heaven.”

The bishop thanked parishioners attending and “the families who choose Resurrection School.”

“The family is the strength of our schools,” Bishop Gainer said.

( Donna Walker is the Marketing Director at Resurrection Catholic School. For information about the school, visit www.rscpa.org or call 717-392-3083.)
Sports Commentary

The Wait is Over ~ Cubs Win, Cubs Win, Cubs Win

By Chris Heisey
The Catholic Witness

Not much attention it seems was paid to the passing of Mabel Bell in Chicago a few weeks ago. Her death was sudden, succumbing silently to heart failure in her sleep. According to her son, Rich, she died at peace, seemingly happy and content with a life very well lived.

“The cruel irony, the almost unbelievable irony,” Rich told a Chicago reporter, “is that the person who waits and waits and waits, and after it happens says, ‘I’ve done what I’ve got to do, and I am out of here.’ It ain’t funny, but it’s actually quite funny.”

The 112th World Series was arguably the best one yet going into a final, climactic Game 7 that did not disappoint, except to all the Cleveland Indians fans who saw their beloved Tribe lose to a Chicago Cubs team that just seemed destined to win. Even when the Cubs were down 3 games to 1, the casual baseball fan just had this inkling that something dramatic was still about to be witnessed. When Chicago pulled out Game 5 at home, and then Game 6 in Cleveland, Game 7 in Cleveland on a warm November 2 – All Souls Day – you had to know and it’s difficult not to see the hand of God in all of this drama.

Given the history of the Chicago Cubs, and the laughable curse that has followed them since they last won the World Series in 1908 when they beat the Detroit Tigers, it’s not easy for the sports agnostic to see God’s plan unfolding in something as trivial as a baseball game. Yet, if you really ponder the history of the Cubs, dubbed the “loveable losers” by their adoring fans, it’s no wonder Mabel Bell died at peace.

Not since 1945 had the Cubs reached the World Series. There have been a few “almosts” of course, like in 1984 when the Cubs seemed a lock to win the decisive Game 5 of the National League Championship Series against the San Diego Padres, until first baseman Leon Durham was eerily clumsy on a routine groundball in the 7th inning which opened the flood gates for a Padres rally.

Then there’s 1989, when one of the game’s best hitters in the modern era, Greg Maddox, got shelled twice in the 8th inning which opened an 8-run inning for the Atlanta Braves. Chicago could pull in WGN 720 out of Chicago and listen until dinner.

In more recent times, the Cubs went 20 miles north of Wrigley Field on Chicago’s old north side most of her life, but she never attended a game until she was 90. Her son, Rich, took her that season. But what she did, and her children remember this vividly, while cooking dinner, she would listen to every home game of the Cubs, tuning them in on the radio perched upon the window sill for good reception. She started this in the 1940s when Jack Brickhouse called the games and continued through when Harry Carey would do his legendary broadcasts that featured his famous “Cubs Win, Cubs Win, Cubs Win” declaration in victory. I used to love hearing those cringing words. Those words, her kids said, made her hate baseball.

Me, too. I’m a believer.

When the cursed Cubs blew a three-run lead in the 8th inning in Game 7 last month, that was for those who have to wait, watching human beings in extreme pain. Almost like watching human beings in extreme pain.

With the score tied 5-5 after nine innings, a gentle rain began falling. “Holy cow,” as Harry Carey would have said.

After that fortuitous 17-minute rain delay from the Cubs’ point of view, the heavens dried up long enough for the team to rally in the 10th to score two runs to take the lead. And when the Indians mounted a determined rally in the bottom half that gave Cubs nation even more stress, the uneasy feeling returned. “They are going to blow this,” even the most fervent, true believer had to believe. But when a slow rolling grounder that in years past might easily have been booted was fielded by Kris Bryant, 108 years of odorous history passed away in Cleveland.

Mabel Bell died five days later after watching her beloved Cubs win this incredible World Series. Baseball ironically isn’t so funny for those who have to wait, and wait and wait. Go Indians, is now my call. They have not won the World Series since 1948!

Murphy the goat has a beer at Mr. Sianis’ Billy the Goat Tavern in 1945.
Pope: Reflections on Mercy May Be Over, But Compassion Must Live On

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

The Year of Mercy and its series of papal reflections may be over, but compassion and acts of mercy must continue and become a part of everyone’s daily lives, Pope Francis said.

“Heaven is not the place for us to keep a hold of our experience of mercy. It is not an eternal ‘banquet’ or ‘feast’, but a place where we give mercy to those who have died. It was a natural part of our lives,” he said. “We must pass on our experience of mercy to others, starting now and continuing in the future.”

Henderson, the actress who played Carol Brady on “The Brady Bunch,” died Nov. 24 at age 82. Henderson told the magazine in what was her last interview before her death that she didn’t keep her from developing a deep love for her faith, which sustained her through life, Piro wrote.

Henderson was educated by Benedictine nuns and priests at St. Meinrad and Ferdinand, Indiana. (She had a priest in the family; her uncle, St. Meinrad Father Charles, taught constitutional law at Fordham University.) In the St. Anthony Messenger interview, Henderson talked at length about her first-grade teacher — Benedictine Sister Gemma.

After high school, with the help of a close friend and her wealthy family, Henderson was enrolled at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City — which launched her long acting career.

She made her debut on Broadway as the star of “Fanny” in 1952. She played Maria in the original version of “The Sound of Music,” also on Broadway. She starred in several touring productions, including “South Pacific” and “ Oklahoma!” She made numerous appearances on television, in film and live music shows.

Henderson’s last television performance was with Maureen McCormick (who played daughter Marsha Brady) on “Dancing With the Stars” on ABC Sept. 19. McCormick was a contestant, and Henderson took part in a Brady-themed performance. Henderson competed on the show herself in 2010.

In a 1994 interview with Mark Pattison, media editor at Catholic News Service, Henderson lovingly recalled her role as Carol Brady and “The Brady Bunch” legacy.

She said that perhaps because of her wholesome image, people approached her to ask if certain TV shows were good for their children to watch. “They’re responsible for this little soul they’ve brought into the world and they want what’s best for them,” she told CNS.

“Very few people in our business have been a part of something that everyone seems to feel with great affection. They really love the characters. They love Carol Brady, everyone in it. And that’s still going strong after so many years absolutely amazes me,” she said.

The show “represents what everyone wants in life, and that is a loving family, understanding, a place to make mistakes, to get angry, to be forgiven, to forgive,” Henderson said.

(Editor’s Note: More information about St. Anthony Messenger and how to get the complete article on Florence Henderson is available at www.franciscanmedia.org/source/saint-anthony-messenger.)

For Late Actress Florence Henderson, Catholic Faith Was Her Foundation

Catholic News Service

In what came to be her final interview, actress Florence Henderson told St. Anthony Messenger magazine that throughout her life, through good times and bad, her Catholic faith was her foundation.

“I don’t ever remember not praying. Bedtime prayers, the Rosary, praying for friends, relatives, for the sick and for those who had died. It was a natural part of our lives,” she told writer Rita E. Piro, who interviewed the popular actress for her final interview.

“I frequently am contacted by people who want to thank me for ‘The Brady Bunch,’” she told Piro. “Whether they grew up during the show’s original television run or are those who had heard of it, they tell me how important ‘The Brady Bunch’ has been in their lives. I want to thank them.”

Henderson was a contestant, and Henderson took part in a Brady-themed performance. Henderson competed on the show herself in 2010.

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Some Fleeing Scene of Wildfires
Describe it as Escaping ‘Gates of Hell’

By Bill Brewer
Catholic News Service

St. Mary’s Catholic Church was at ground zero in the wild- 
fires that devastated parts of Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge, Ten- 
nessee, Nov. 28, and while flames reached to within yards of the 
tourist city church, it appears to have been spared.

Some parishioners weren’t as fortunate.

Its pastor, Carmelite Father Antony Punnackal, was forced to 
evacuate St. Mary’s as intense fires came within 300 yards of the 
church that sits in the heart of Gatlinburg.

The church and rectory have been closed since then, but the 
priest has received reports that the buildings were spared from the 
blaze but sustained smoke damage and possible damage from 
high winds that fueled the flames.

The wildfires left a swath of destruction in and around the 
city, as the fires burned across at least 13,500 acres, incinerat- 
ing homes, businesses, automobiles.

YouTube was populated intentionally.

Of the recent eastern Tennessee woodland blazes, officials are 
investigating whether some of the wind-whipped fires above 
the wildfires raced down the mountains, eviscerating ev -

Catholic Bishops’ Subcommittee on the Catholic Home Mis-

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Catholic News Service

The chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-

life Activities has called for increased efforts and “renewed 
vigor” to stop legalized physician-assisted suicide after the 
practice has been backed by voters in Colorado and the Distric- 
tof the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is-

(Edi-
For Cuban Exiles, Painful Memories Mix with Relief at Castro’s Death

By Ana Rodriguez-Soto
Catholic News Service

While many celebrated loudly on the streets, the death of Fidel Castro triggered a more subdued reaction among the Cuban exiles who attended the noon Mass Nov. 26 at the National Shrine of Our Lady Charity.

"Today is a day like any other," Luis Gutierrez told the Florida Catholic, Miami’s archdiocesan newspaper. "The fact that ‘el caballo’ has died means nothing."

Gutierrez used the Cuban slang — “caballo,” or horse — for Castro, whose face had been echoed by Miami Archbishop Agustin F. Horta, now at the helm.

That is when, despite the joy on the streets of Little Havana, Westchester and Hialeah, the death of Fidel Castro in 2016 means much less than it would have in 1959. In 2006, as Castro turned 80, Gutierrez regime still shackles basic freedoms on the island, keeping a stranglehold on a beleaguered economy.

In 1959, the Communist Party approved a new socialist constitution and Fidel was elected president. Before that, in 1959, he was prime minister following the successful revolution he led to over turnBatista’s regime. In 2006, while he underwent intestinal surgery, Fidel temporarily turned over power to younger brother Raul. He resigned in 2008 and died Aug. 19, 2016. Nearly 10,000 exiles welcomed him that night during an emotional Mass at Bobby Maduro Stadium, which has since been torn down.

His presence provided a spiritual boost to the early exiles and ultimately resulted in the construction of the shrine — known as La Ermita — along Biscayne Bay. It remains a beacon of Cuban faith and patriotism, and also a place where exiles and immigrants from all the nations of Latin America come to give thanks or seek Mary’s intercession.

“I pray the Rosary every day,” Gutierrez said, adding that his prayers that day remained the same. “I pray for my family and for freedom in Cuba.”

But for the Mendezes and all the others celebrating the hour of its reconciliation in truth, accompanied by freedom and justice.

Father Feliciano del Vals of the Church of San Juan Castro’s revolution, when priests and religious were interrupted or ended, of courage and sacrifices made, Castro’s death caused memories to surface: of lives on the streets or marking the day quietly at home, of prayers for my family and for freedom in Cuba.

For the Mendezes and all the others celebrating the hour of its reconciliation in truth, accompanied by freedom and justice.

“I pray the Rosary every day,” Gutierrez said, noting that he has been coming to noon Mass at the Lady of Charity for years. "I went to Mass in Santiago Atitlan. It’s totally murdered July 28, 1981, in a Guatemalan village where he ministered to the poor.

He went to Santiago Atitlan in 1968 on assignment from the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. He helped the people there build a small hospial, school and its first Catholic radio station. He was beloved by the locals, who called him “Padre Fernando Heria.”

Many priests and religious in Guatemala became targets during the country’s 1960-1996 civil war as government forces cracked down on leftist rebels supported by the rural poor.

The bodies of some of Father Rother’s deacons and parishioners were left in front of his church and soon he received numerous death threats over his opposition to the presence of the Guatemalan military in the area.

Though he returned to Oklahoma for a brief period, he returned to the Guatemalan village to remain with the people he had grown to love during the more than dozen years he lived there.

He was gunned down at the age of 46 in the rectory of his church in Santiago Atitlan. Government officials then put the blame on the Catholic Church for the unrest in the country that they said led to his death. On the day he died, troops also killed 13 townspeople and wounded 24 others in Santiago Atitlan, an isolated village 50 miles west of Guatemala City.

Many priests and religious lost their lives and thousands of civilians were kidnapped and killed during the years of state-sponsored oppression in the country.

While his body was returned to Oklahoma, his family gave permission for his heart and some of his blood to be enshrined in the church of the people he loved and served. A memorial plaque marks the place.

In 2016, the United States. Father Rother was recognized as a martyr, the church in Guatemala and his name was included on a list of 78 martyrs for the faith killed during Guatemala’s 36-year-long civil war. The list of names to be considered for canonization was submitted by Guatemala’s bishops to St. John Paul II during a pastoral visit to Guatemala in 1996.

Because Father Rother was killed in Guatemala, his cause should have been undertaken there. But the local church lacked the resources for such an effort. The Guatemalan bishops’ conference agreed to a transfer of jurisdiction to the Oklahoma City archdiocese.

By Frank de la Peña
CNS

Local Cubans listen to Miami Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski celebrate Mass Nov. 26 at the Our Lady of Charity National Shrine in Miami. The death of former Cuban leader Fidel Castro triggered both excitement and a more subdued reaction among Cuban exiles in Miami.

said, and held for two weeks in miserable conditions at the Blanquita Theater in Havana. After the invasion, the priest found refuge for 40 days with Mendez’s family.

After a futile search for asylum in a foreign embasssy, he was arrested, put on a ship, the Covadonga, and sent into exile in Spain with more than 100 other priests — including Miami Auxiliary Bishop Agustin Roman, the shrine’s longtime rector, who died in 2016.

“I followed that bus the whole way,” Mendez said, referring to the exiled priests. Then, with resignation in his voice, “We have to keep waiting.”

In prison, Mendez sometimes, in that hurt, that Father Fernando Heria, the shrine’s newly appointed rector, spoke of during his homily at the Mass. His uncle was killed by a Castro firing squad Sept. 16, 1961.

“Today is not a typical Saturday,” Father Heria said. “It’s not that we rejoice at the death of any human being, because that would be a sin. But it’s that, on this day, we want to turn over to God the pain we have carried around for more than 57 years.”

“We have to begin to heal,” Father Heria continued. “We have to go to the Almighty and turn all our pain over to him. Be not afraid to tell the Lord, I have a pain that only you can take away.”

Father Heria also spoke about the need for unity among the Cuban people, reminding them that Our Lady of Charity was “the first Cuban ‘balsera’ [raf-
ter].”

“Don’t forget,” he added. “Charity unites us. The maternal love of the daughter of God, of the wife of God, of the Mother of God, is a unity.”

In that sense, said Carlos Perez, Castro’s passing is cause for hope, if not joy.

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**Obituaries**

The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their families. Please remember in your prayers the happy repose of these recently departed souls and the consolation of their loved ones.

**ABBOTSTOWN** – Inmaculate Heart of Mary: Mary Lou Ratty.

**ANNVILLE** – St. Paul the Apostle: Patrick Heffner, Helen Jean Klatchko, Tam Chon Luong, Charles Prosser.

**BERWICK** – Inmaculate Conception: BVIM: Oldelda Batres, Melvin Eddinger, Joseph Kiss.

**BLOOMSBURG** – St. Columba: Howard E. McKinnon.


**CAMP HILL** – Good Shepherd: Murray Huber, Bernadine “Penny” Klingensmith, Anne Theresa Sawyer.

**CATAWISSA** – Our Lady of Mercy: Stella Dananias.

**HANBERG** – Corpus Christi: Timothy K. Hoar, Helen Mitchell, Dorothy Nies.".


**COTTER** – Our Lady of Hope: Charles Furladawicz, Diane Haines, Chestier Purrula.

**ELIZABETHTOWN** – St. Peter: Walther Ortega.

**GETTYSBURG** – St. Francis Xavier: Sarah Funt, José Antonio Tavar Campuzano, Eric Zimmer.

**GREENCASTLE** – St. Mark: Charles J. Gentile.

**HANOVER** – St. Joseph: Joseph Farber, St. Vincent de Paul: Darla Kahn, Philip Mckeely, Marie Nissley.

**HARRISBURG** – St. Catherine Laboure: David Miller; St. Francis of Assisi: Joseph Williams, Jr., St. Margaret Mary: Louis C. Adams, Lois Mavretic; Nicholas Mistishen

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**HERSHEY** – St. Joan of Arc: Rose Rippon, Mary Vieli Whitser.

**LANCASTER** – Assumption BVM: Josephine Neumann, Louis Bibi, Joan Mcbride, Mary Louise Eizen, Cathy Englewood, Jay Kellar, Phyllis Newton, Helen Voeter; St. St. Joseph the Worker: Timothy K. Hoar, Helen Manceney, Oliver Ogden, Mark Reiff, Alice M. Southward.

**MANHEIM** – St. Richard: Daniel Lindeman.


**MOUNT CARROLL** – St. Philip the Apostle: Denis Foley III, Helen Howard, Filomena Landi, Helen Mcaneny, Loretta Mitchell, Dorothy Purcell.

**MOUNT CARMEL** – Divine Redeemer: John Mekubski.


**SHAMOKIN** – St. Mary: Michael C. Erwin, Josephine Surfich; St. Patrick: Michael Gavitt, Sharon Wilt; St. Rose of Lima: Frank Accardo, Kathleen Kuba, Catherine Lankford, Hugh Phillips, Sr.

**Tavarnelle Campuzano**, Eric Zimmer.


**XAVIER** – Sarah Funt, José Antonio Tavar Campuzano, Eric Zimmer.

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ESL Classes will be offered three times a week at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Hanover, starting Thursday, December 1. Classes are Monday and Thursday morning from 9-10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Wednesday evening from 7-8 p.m. Our teachers are motivated and ready to help you learn the English language. For further information, please contact Judith E. Ciandoni at judithesciandoni@comcast.net or at 717-678-0445.

A partir del jueves, 1 de diciembre de 2016, las clases de ESL se ofrecerán tres veces por semana en la iglesia. El tiempo y lugar de las clases es como se indica anteriormente. Para más información, favor de comunicarse con Judith E. Ciandoni a judithesciandoni@comcast.net o al 717-678-0445.

Instruments and voices come together at York Catholic High School at 7:30 p.m. The senior high concert is Sunday, December 11, at 6 p.m., and the junior high concert is Wednesday, December 14, at 7 p.m. Celebrate their singing and enjoy the music. York Catholic is located at 601 E. Springgarden Avenue. Admission is free.

CRS Global Fellows are priests and deacons who have been trained and vetted to represent Catholic Relief Services in dioceses across the United States. They are available to deacons and priests who are interested in creating community events and spiritual initiatives to help people in need. The fellows will come to your diocese to offer presentations in parishes, assemblies or during a weekend liturgy. They will describe, firsthand, the work of CRS and provide concrete examples of how you can help CRS end poverty around the world. Deacon Tom Aumen of St. Joseph Parish in Hanover is a Global Fellow with CRS. He can be reached at the parish at 717-637-5236.

Job Opportunities

Immediate opening for a part-time parish secretary at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Cornwall. This position requires a highly responsible, energetic individual who communicates well with a variety of people including Parishioners, committee members, officers of church councils and Diocesan office personnel is an ongoing necessity. This person should possess an overall knowledge of general office procedures and excellent spelling and grammatical skills. This position requires a positive, friendly, mature, detail-oriented individual with exceptional organizational and interpersonal skills with the ability to understand and follow instructions, as well as work independently. Trustworthiness, reliability, willingness to maintain confidentiality and the ability to complete routine and diverse work without supervision is a prerequisite. The person should possess an overall knowledge of general office procedures, and possess excellent spelling and grammatical skills. The application should include knowledge of Microsoft applications, most especially Word, Publisher, and Outlook. Your application should be submitted to: Sacred Heart of Jesus, PO Box 136, Harrisburg, PA 17101. Resume and cover letter can be mailed to Sacred Heart of Jesus, PO Box 136, Harrisburg, PA 17101. An interview will be conducted.

CRS Global Fellows are priests and deacons who have been trained and vetted to represent Catholic Relief Services in dioceses across the United States. They are available to deacons and priests who are interested in creating community events and spiritual initiatives to help people in need. The fellows will come to your diocese to offer presentations in parishes, assemblies or during a weekend liturgy. They will describe, firsthand, the work of CRS and provide concrete examples of how you can help CRS end poverty around the world. Deacon Tom Aumen of St. Joseph Parish in Hanover is a Global Fellow with CRS. He can be reached at the parish at 717-637-5236.

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Immediate opening for a part-time parish secretary at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Cornwall. This position requires a highly responsible, energetic individual who communicates well with a variety of people including Parishioners, committee members, officers of church councils and Diocesan office personnel is an ongoing necessity. This person should possess an overall knowledge of general office procedures and excellent spelling and grammatical skills. This position requires a positive, friendly, mature, detail-oriented individual with exceptional organizational and interpersonal skills with the ability to understand and follow instructions, as well as work independently. Trustworthiness, reliability, willingness to maintain confidentiality and the ability to complete routine and diverse work without supervision is a prerequisite. The person should possess an overall knowledge of general office procedures, and possess excellent spelling and grammatical skills. The application should include knowledge of Microsoft applications, most especially Word, Publisher, and Outlook. Your application should be submitted to: Sacred Heart of Jesus, PO Box 136, Harrisburg, PA 17101. Resume and cover letter can be mailed to Sacred Heart of Jesus, PO Box 136, Harrisburg, PA 17101. An interview will be conducted.

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By Jen Reed

The Catholic Witness

Continuing his pastoral visits to parishes on the Sundays of Advent, Bishop Ronald Gainer visited two in upper Dauphin County on Dec. 4: Our Lady Help of Christians in Lykens and its mission, Sacred Heart of Jesus in Williamstown, located five miles away.

You have a very, very beautiful church here,” Bishop Gainer told the parishioners of Sacred Heart during the Mass he celebrated there.

“I am truly blessed to be here with you on the second Sunday of Advent.”

“Our minds gravitate to tell the truth. Our hearts gravitate to beauty,” he remarked, reflecting on the Advent season of reconciliation and preparedness.

Sacred Heart was established from Our Lady’s when, in 1868, Father John Loughran, the pastor at Lykens, began celebrating Masses for the Catholics in Williamstown in their homes, in the town hall, and in public schools.

The development of the coal industry in the Lykens Valley drew Catholic families to the area; most of them of Irish and German descent.

In 1875, construction of a Catholic church in Williamstown began, after the laying of the cornerstone in August by Bishop Jeremiah Shanahan. The first Mass was celebrated in the church basement in November of 1875 as construction of the church slowly progressed. It was dedicated by Bishop Shanahan a decade later.

Sacred Heart and its members were cared for by the priests from Our Lady’s in Lykens, until Father Charles Kenny was appointed the first resident pastor of the Williamstown mission in 1887.

The Sisters of Mercy opened a grade school and a high school there in the early 1900s, and served the Catholic students of Williamstown and Lykens until the schools closed in 1967.

The decrease in demand for coal after World War II resulted in a decreased population in the Lykens Valley. Our Lady’s and Sacred Heart are both under the pastorate of Father C. Anthony Miller.