NEW Bishop McDevitt High School Brings Light of Christ to Students

Midday sunlight spills into the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Chapel at the new Bishop McDevitt High School in Harrisburg Jan. 4 as Bishop Joseph P. McFadden dedicates the chapel, which he called the heart of the school. See coverage of the chapel and school dedication on pages 10 and 11.
Catholic Schools: Raising the Standards

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Catholic schools throughout the country are gearing up for the annual celebration of Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 27-Feb. 2, planning activities to recognize students, educators, volunteers and community leaders, and to promote everything they have to offer, from a faith-based and technology-driven curriculum to excellence in academics, the arts and athletics.

The theme for this year’s Catholic Schools Week observance is “Catholic Schools Raise the Standards.” The theme supports the National Catholic Educational Association’s recent launch of the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools, which ensures the effective operation and responsible governance of Catholic schools across the country.

Administrators in the Harrisburg Diocese’s Department for Catholic Schools are working with the principals and teachers of the diocese’s 40-plus Catholic schools to meet these standards and their benchmarks (presented by Loyola University Chicago, the School of Education and the Center for Catholic School Effectiveness). Standards ask the schools to examine their mission and Catholic identity, their governance and leadership, their academic excellence and their operational vitality.

This year, principals and teachers in the diocese are also working to transition from a statewide to a national Common Core, which endeavors to ensure that students across the country are college and career ready, noted Livia Riley, Diocesan Superintendent of Schools.

And, with an aim towards an even more rigorous curriculum, diocesan schools will undertake an effort to increase their focus on literacy across all subjects, Mrs. Riley said. This will specifically result in an increase in reading in the primary grades, and in science and social studies classes.

In a partnership with Mount St. Mary’s University in Emmitsburg, Md., the diocese is launching “Essentially Catholic,” a program that will help schools to fully incorporate a Catholic identity within their disciplines.

Maretta Schmidt, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Schools and Federal Programs, noted that a workshop this past summer helped to get the program off the ground, and said professors from Mount St. Mary’s will be working with diocesan school teachers this summer in a series of workshops.

“We want a Catholic curriculum, not schools that happen to have religion classes,” said Father Edward J. Quinlan, Diocesan Secretary for Education.

“We want the Catholic view to run through the whole program.”

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Harrisburg have much to celebrate during Catholic Schools Week and beyond, including:

- High graduation rates — More than 98% of their students graduate from high school.
- Excellent test scores — 93% of elementary students score above the national average in language skills, 85% score above the national average in reading, and 81% score above the national average in math.
- Technology — Students have access to a world-class wide area network that brings untold educational resources and opportunities to them in well-equipped classrooms.
- Accreditation — Catholic schools in the diocese are accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and are members of the National Catholic Educational Association.

As the Diocesan Department for Catholic Schools continues to strive for excellence in its schools, Father Quinlan points to their proven success in forming students in the faith and preparing them for the future.

“Parents want to know that their child is going to be well prepared for life. In study after study, children from Catholic schools do far better when they go to college than their counterparts,” he said. “And it’s not just the exceptionally bright kids. When you give a young person the proper educational environment and all the tools that they need, they’re prepared for the college level or career training.

“They’re well-rounded individuals who’ve been put in an environment where they have to show that they can master their own self-discipline, and have acquired the skills that they need to move to the next level,” Father Quinlan said of Catholic school students. “If you give young people high expectations, as our teachers do, they have a good chance of living up to them.”

(For information on Catholic schools in the Diocese of Harrisburg, visit the Catholic Education link at www.hbgdiocese.org.)

Garrett Hutchison concentrates on printing numbers at Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in McSherrystown.

JEN REED, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS
In the last four months, three men were scheduled to be executed - Terrance Williams, Hubert Michael and Mark Spotz. Last minute appeals delayed those cases, which are now pending before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and a federal appeals court. Decisions will be made about these cases soon, meaning the death penalty will continue to be headline news in 2013. Nearly 200 others also sit on Pennsylvania’s death row.

In recent months, advocates sent hundreds of messages to the Board of Pardons and Governor Tom Corbett urging a commutation of the death sentences to life in prison or a temporary reprieve for Williams and Michael. The Church is not advocating that they go unpunished for their crimes; however the modern penal system provides alternatives to taking the lives of guilty persons, alternatives that break the cycle of violence in our society.

As we renew our advocacy efforts in support of the inherent dignity of the life of every person, here is some background information:

- The law proscribes two sentencing options for first degree capital murder – life imprisonment without parole or death. A verdict of death is imposed if the sentencing jury finds unanimously at least one aggravating circumstance and no mitigating circumstances or the aggravating circumstances outweigh any mitigating circumstances. In all other cases, life imprisonment must be imposed.
- Aggravating circumstances are details of the crime that make it particularly terrible: killing a public servant, murder for hire, killing a child under age 12 or the victim was under a protection from abuse order, to name a few.
- Mitigating circumstances do not excuse or diminish the crime; but they are details the jury must consider when determining the harshness of the punishment. For example, a jury might impose life imprisonment instead of death if the defendant had no significant prior convictions, was under the influence of extreme emotional disturbance or under substantial domination by someone else. Insanity, mental retardation and being under age 18 at the time of the murder are absolute bars to a death penalty sentence.
- By law, every death sentence is subject to an automatic review by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. The high court affirms the sentence unless it determines that it was a product of passion, prejudice or other arbitrary factor, or evidence failed to support the finding of an aggravated circumstance.
- If the Supreme Court denies the appeal, the governor must issue a warrant within 90 days to set the date of the execution. The inmate can make other appeals in state court and possibly in federal court. When an appeal is filed, the reviewing court will usually issue a stay until it can review the case. If appeals are pending or a stay is in effect, the date of execution will simply pass. If an appeal is denied, the stay is lifted and the governor must issue a new warrant of execution.
- An inmate can also appeal for clemency with the Pennsylvania Board of Pardons. The five-member board, after a public hearing, can recommend commuting the sentence from death to life imprisonment. The governor can then accept or reject the recommendation. He cannot commute the sentence without the unanimous vote of the Board of Pardons. The governor can, however, grant a reprieve for individual inmates for an express reason and for a limited time period such as the remainder of his term in office.

Inmates spend on average more than 14 years on death row in Pennsylvania. The last time someone was put to death in Pennsylvania was in 1999, a “volunteer” who willingly gave up his appeals. The last time someone was put to death in Pennsylvania was in 1999, a “volunteer” who willingly gave up his appeals. The last time someone was put to death in Pennsylvania was in 1999, a “volunteer” who willingly gave up his appeals. The last time someone was put to death in Pennsylvania was in 1999, a “volunteer” who willingly gave up his appeals. The last time someone was put to death in Pennsylvania was in 1999, a “volunteer” who willingly gave up his appeals. The last time someone was put to death in Pennsylvania was in 1999, a “volunteer” who willingly gave up his appeals. The last time someone was put to death in Pennsylvania was in 1999, a “volunteer” who willingly gave up his appeals. The last time someone was put to death in Pennsylvania was in 1999, a “volunteer” who willingly gave up his appeals. The last time someone was put to death in Pennsylvania was in 1999, a “volunteer” who willingly gave up his appeals. The last time someone was put to death in Pennsylvania was in 1999, a “volunteer” who willingly gave up his appeals.
On January 25, multiplied thousands of conscientious citizens will, for the 39th year, march down Constitution Avenue from the Capitol to the United States Supreme Court. The large Catholics from all over the country, including bishops, priests, religious, seminarians, families and students from large and small parishes, schools and communities. The year 2013 marks 40 years since the Supreme Court ruled that laws prohibiting voluntary abortion were unconstitutional and struck down longstanding legislation that protected unborn children and their mothers from the scourge of abortion. Claims were made that more than 10,000 women a year died from so-called “back alley” abortions, and so medically regulated abortions had to be made available. That argument would later be enlarged to include women’s psychological, emotional and economic welfare. Even later, the Court would determine that women needed abortion as a back-up to birth control failure. Today, nearly 1.5 million such abortions are committed every year. Maternal deaths continue, and the majority of women experience physical and emotional distress with increased risks of repeat abortions, substance abuse and suicide. Efforts to end abortion on demand are not focused exclusively on the interests of the child but, as the corrosive effects of the abortion trade on society.

Still, many wonder why the Church is so emphatic about the injustice and crime of abortion when there are so many other ills affecting our society, such as gun violence, poverty, racism, war and “pure of heart,” I was struck by the importance of the meaning of truth and that this eight-year-old wanted to know if something as tragic as a shooting really could happen. His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, in his message for the 42nd World Communications Day said: Man thirsts for truth, he seeks truth; this fact is illustrated by the attention and the success achieved by so many publications, programs or quality fiction in which the truth, beauty and greatness of the person, including the religious dimension of the person, are acknowledged and favorably presented. Jesus said, “You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (Jn 8:32). The truth which makes us free is Christ, because only he can respond fully to the thirst for life and love that is present in the human heart. Those who have encountered him and have enthusiastically welcomed his message experience the irreplaceable desire to share and communicate this truth.

As I read this posting by a father who was determined to help keep his daughter “pure of heart,” I was struck by the importance of the meaning of truth and that this eight-year-old wanted to know if something as tragic as a shooting really could happen. His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, in his message for the 42nd World Communications Day said: Man thirsts for truth, he seeks truth; this fact is illustrated by the attention and the success achieved by so many publications, programs or quality fiction in which the truth, beauty and greatness of the person, including the religious dimension of the person, are acknowledged and favorably presented. Jesus said, “You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (Jn 8:32). The truth which makes us free is Christ, because only he can respond fully to the thirst for life and love that is present in the human heart. Those who have encountered him and have enthusiastically welcomed his message experience the irreplaceable desire to share and communicate this truth.

So much of what we hear and see in the media accepts the modern notion that there is no such thing as absolute truth. In Infinite Bandwidth: Encountering Christ in the Media, (Emmaus Road, 2010), Eugene G. Conard, PhD, states, “Truth does exist. It’s real and it’s eternal. It doesn’t change from age to age, culture to culture, or person to person. It also isn’t hard to know. … If we seek it, we can find it. It’s not hidden. God doesn’t keep truth a secret from man.” (pg 69)
Gravissimum Educationis: Declaration on Christian Education

By Father Joshua Brommer, STL

The Catholic Witness a series of articles on the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on Christian Education, Gravissimum Educationis, established the Council's vision that Christian education be focused on the whole human person. 

“Pardon me, said Archbishop John Cody of Chicago in his speech to the Council Fathers on November 17, 1964, “if I dare to mention the United States of America.” The declaration approved by the Council will ensure that our 45 million Catholics who support 13,655 Catholic schools, which reach out to 6.84 million students in every grade of education, directed by 191,126 priests, brothers, sisters and lay teachers. The bishops of the United States had fought long and difficult battles for the right to educate Catholic youth. Archbishop Cody expressed a sense of sincere gratitude for the Council’s Declaration on Christian Education, Gravissimum Educationis. Church officials had guarded their arguments and their fears of losing Catholic schools within the universal mission of the Church. Education, he declared, “is an inalienable right to education, to which every child, without exception, has a just claim in virtue of his human dignity.”

The true education is to promote the whole person, his or her abilities, sex and national origin. The right of young people to education is protected by a law passed by the United States Congress in 1954, which states that “it shall be the duty of the federal government and leaders of education are called upon to protect this sacred gift which is the principal school of the social order.”

The language of the Council does not presume that every Catholic is attending a Catholic school; although, it clearly reaffirms the right of all Christians to a Christian education. The Council states, “the family is the primary school of the social virtues which are necessary to every society (GE 3).” The health of the individual depends on the health of the families which make it up. And, the health of those families is grounded upon the love and incontestable obligations of that family, to educate their children in their responsibilities as faithful Christians and good citizens. Schools and educators outside the family help to reinforce what is begun at home, by a spirit of liberty and charity. 

The Council makes it clear that it is the “gravest obligation” for the Church to foster the development of young people. Parents have the right to educate their children so that they are able to enjoy the fullest liberty in their choice of school. The educational program of Catholic schools is not only a blessing to the Church but a gift to humanity. The Declaration states, “the family is therefore the principal school of the social virtues which are necessary to every society (GE 3).” However, the true content of this possibility is not simply to pass on the faith. The Church wants to see the child grow in faith, love, and virtue. In the Declaration, the Church promises that Catholic education will be of the highest quality and will be able to bring to the outside world the best of the Church’s spirituality.

“young people have the right to be stimulated to make sound moral judgments based on a well-formed conscience and to put them into practice with a sense of personal commitment, to know and love God more perfectly.” The civil government, the Declaration says, “recognizes that there is a profound link between education and the development of young minds and the good of society. For this reason, the declaration praises the apostolate of teachers, for “they render a valuable service to society” (GE 8). Working “in close cooperation with the Church”, teachers are called to “treat each pupil as a unique individual, and to “awake in their pupils a spirit of personal initiative (GE 8).” In an undeniable way, after parents, teachers are often the most important figures in the lives of young people. The great good they are called to do is rooted principally in the mission to help their pupils grow into fully developed men and women. They touch the whole person, by the words they use and the example of their own lives, bringing to maturity the unique skills and gifts God has given to each individual. When society steps in to assist parents, it is never to impose its own concept of education and preventing the encroachment of any formation of young people. The mission of Gravissimum Educationis is still strong almost fifty years after it was issued, not simply because it promotes the great gift of Catholic education, but because it explains that the foundation of any formation of young people begins at home, with parents who are the only people who need to raise holy children who enrich society with Gospel values and Christian virtues. When the directive of education is grounded on this authentic Christian understanding of humanity, the aim of education and the various instruments used to provide it continues to shape our nation with the 78 million Catholic school-age children who make up 34% of all schools, which receive more than two million students in every grade of education, directed by 131,393 priests, brothers, sisters, and lay teachers.

(Father Brommer is the Administrative Assistant to the Bishop and Liturgy Coordinator for the Diocese of Harrington. During this Year of Faith, he is contributing to The Catholic Witness a series of articles on the Second Vatican Council’s Declaration on Education.)
Grant Creates Science Opportunity for Lourdes Regional School

By Emily M. Albert
The Catholic Witness

Several teachers from Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School in Coal Township are excited to begin teaching science with a hands-on and out-of-the-ordinary-textbook approach this year.

Students and teachers will participate in GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment), a worldwide, hands-on, primary and secondary school-based Earth science and education program. The program will be funded from Merck’s Neighbor of Choice Community Grants Program. Officially becoming a GLOBE school, Lourdes will be the first Catholic School in Pennsylvania to provide a school-wide GLOBE curriculum.

The program will promote students’ scientific critical thinking and verbal skills while exposing them to a full range of opportunities to further their understanding and applications of earth sciences and their research about the environment.

Chris Ort, science teacher at the high school level, participated in a two-day GLOBE training at the Palmyra Cove Nature Park and Environmental Discovery Center in New Jersey. At this training, he and other teachers learned how schools are implementing and working with the GLOBE program, and how to get the best use out of it. There are possibilities to talk via the Internet to share data and ideas with schools all over the world. They can use face time and share classroom lectures and labs with other schools.

Rosemary Purcell works with the primary grade levels and looks forward to integrating the program school wide, so that when the high school students have a lesson they can come and help the lower grades with a similar lesson plan. For instance, while the high school might be out in the field tracking insects’ behaviors, Pre-K will be looking at books with images and reading stories. Mrs. Purcell and Mr. Ort asked questions, and list scientific publications relevant to GLOBE,” the program notes.

Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School teachers Chris Ort, Rosemary Purcell and Joann Picarellie display materials they will use in their classrooms as part of the schools’ integration of the Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) program.

York Catholic Student Earns Full Scholarship to St. Vincent College

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Wednesday, Jan. 9 was just like any other school day for York Catholic High School senior Alex Pawlikowski. Until 2:20 p.m.

While taking notes during his psychology class, Alex caught a glimpse of some people gathered in the hallway outside of his classroom. Among them were his parents, Gregory and Christine. There were balloons, photographers, and a check that was large in both its physical size and its dollar amount.

The ensemble was led by Shawn Gouch of the Office of Admission from St. Vincent College in Latrobe, Pa., and it was there in “prize-patrol style” to present Alex with a full scholarship to the Catholic college.

That’s good reason to interrupt class. Alex had already been informed by St. Vincent’s that he had won the $160,000 scholarship, and as he humbly stood to accept the accolades in class that day, his classmates erupted in congratulatory cheers and applause.

For the past 11 years, St. Vincent’s has offered the Wimmer Scholarship Competition for high school students. The scholarship is named in honor of Archabbot Boniface Wimmer, who founded St. Vincent’s in 1846 as the first Benedictine college in the United States. The scholarship is awarded to the student who achieves the highest score on a written exam administered at the college.

Alex took the test in November.

“When I first heard about the exam, I thought I’d at least give it a shot,” he told The Catholic Witness.

York Catholic High School senior Alex Pawlikowski receives a check from St. Vincent College in Latrobe, Pa., for $160,000 to cover tuition, room and board for four years. Alex was awarded the full scholarship based on his score on an exam administered by the college.

More than 200 high school students took the test, which included sections in mathematics, writing and general knowledge. It was a rigorous exam, with lengthy math problems and SAT-style writing requirements.

“When I came out of the exam, I was just hoping that I had done a fairly good job, because it was so difficult,” Alex said. “Then I heard other students saying they thought it was an impossible test, or that they struggled with it, so I thought that maybe I did pretty well on it.”

Several days before Christmas, as Alex and his family were packing up the car to head to his grandparents’ house for a holiday stay, he received a phone call from St. Vincent’s.

“David Collins [Assistant Vice President of Admissions] was on the phone saying I had scored the highest on the test and had won the four-year full tuition. I was speechless. All I could say was, ‘Thank you,’” Alex said.

At St. Vincent’s, Alex, a member of St. Joseph Parish in York and a graduate of its parochial school, plans to major in biology. He eventually wants to enter medical school and become a neurologist.

He credits his education at York Catholic High School for his performance on the scholarship test and his preparedness for college.

“Throughout my years at York Catholic, the English Department has been drilling us in reading and writing exercises so that we can demonstrate reading comprehension, and that’s given me an advantage,” he said. “Teachers have developed us in psychology, history and social sciences, and this year I’m taking Advanced Placement chemistry and Advanced Placement Calculus. We have great teachers here who really challenge us.”
At St. Joan of Arc School in Hershey, everyone from administrators, clergy and playground monitors to students and parents fulfills a key role in bullying prevention.

Recognizing that no school is immune to bullying behavior, Sisters, principals and the Olweus program have made the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in the fall of 2009. It’s a school-wide program designed to reduce and prevent bullying problems among students and to improve peer relations at school. It’s been proven to reduce bullying and improve the classroom climate.

As a result of St. Joan of Arc School’s fidelity to the program model, the school has been recognized as a Certified Olweus School. The unique recognition was given this past fall by members of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, one of a number of programs conducted by Clemson University’s Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life.

“St. Joan of Arc School is among the first in the nation and the first non-public school to achieve certification,” said Judi Caldwell, a fifth-grade teacher at St. Joan’s and chairperson of the school’s Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee.

“Everybody in the program has to be involved – teachers, custodians, priests, secretaries, kitchen staff,” she pointed out.

“They’re trained in the program so that they can recognize bullying and bring prevention practices into the classroom, the playground, the cafeteria and the hallways. Program requirements are rigorous and extensive, and include regular staff meetings and discussion groups, reviews of the school’s supervisory system, school-wide events to promote the program, and efforts to engage the local community in the school’s efforts.

Parents are kept well-informed too, through PTO meetings, school events and take-home packets. They’re also provided with a discipline policy that outlines the definitive steps the school will take in the event of a bullying incident.

The various components of the program allow it to be tailored to all grade levels. At St. Joan of Arc, which enrolls students in PreK-8, weekly class meetings present students the opportunity to express concerns and work together on solutions to problems. The comprehensive program has made the school a system-wide method of addressing bullying behavior.

“Before the Olweus program, we had been putting Band-Aids on any problems that would arise,” Mrs. Caldwell said. “We would hold assemblies and talk to the students, but that didn’t effect real change because there’s no follow up. You have to have a program, and have everybody on board for it to work.”

Sister Eileen said the Olweus program fits into St. Joan of Arc’s mission as a Catholic school.

“The mission of Catholic education is to promote peace, unity and virtues. By preventing bullying, we are creating an atmosphere where people are able to work together sympathetically,” she said. “They’re not afraid to give their opinions or state their problems. Everybody working together for a solution is part of our way of teaching Christ-like values.”

“Let’s take a look at the sexual assault treatment program at Holy Spirit Hospital that features forensic nurses as first responders. Registered nurse Lynn Gray tells us how the program helps people and says that it has gotten good reviews over the past seven years of its existence. Bishop McFadden has emphasized the DVD series on our faith, titled “Catholicism,” by Father Robert Baron for this Year of Faith. Grand Knight Eric Falling explains how the Cathedral Council of the Knights of Columbus in Harrisburg is utilizing the series. Are you a member of the Knights of Columbus or know someone who is? Then tune in to Knight Talk on Holy Family Radio, WHFY AM 720, every Sunday at 3 p.m. during each 30-minute program, district news and information concerning the Knights of Columbus is presented. An encore is aired Saturdays at 12:30 p.m. in our Vocation segment, Catholic Perspective presents Father Paul Clark, pastor of St. Matthew Parish in Dauphin. He tells us that family influence was important but that there was one particular priest who encouraged him to begin a walk down a religious path. Catholic Perspective is produced in cooperation with the Office of Communications of the Diocese of Harrisburg and WHFY AM 720. The program is heard Mondays at noon and Sundays at 5 p.m. on WHFY AM 720 and on Sunday mornings on WLAM-AM 1390, Lancaster at 7:30 a.m., WHKL-AM 960, Carlisle, at 8 a.m., WJLR-AM 1280, Hanover, at 8 a.m.; WKOK-AM 1070, Sunbury, at 6:30 a.m.; WIEZ-AM 670, Lewistown, at 8 a.m.; WWSM-AM 1510, Lebanon, at 7 a.m.; and WQIC-FM 88.3, Elizabethtown, at 9:30 a.m. It is also available on line at www.OldiesRadio1620.com at 6:30 a.m. and at www.WLIS1480.com on Monday at 11 a.m. or for download at www.hbgdiocese.org.

**St. Joan of Arc School Earns Certification in Bullying Prevention Program**

By Jen Reed

**The Catholic Witness**

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**CALL TO ALL ARTISTS**

**Year of Faith Art Show**

Art Show will begin on March 1, 2013 at the Cardinal Keeler Center

4800 Union Deposit Rd

Harrisburg, PA 17111

**Theme:** Expressions of the Faith

Entries that do not pertain to the theme will not be accepted into the show.

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People are surprised to learn that the Catholic Church has been speaking on “Caring for Creation” for over 800 years in recent times the term “Environmental Movement” or "Environmentalism" are identified with caring for the earth and they evoke varied emotions in people. Some identify these terms with “tree huggers” and an extreme left wing agenda. Others view these terms as the scorch that has consumed the earth. The Catholic Church subscribes to neither extreme; instead, she views it as part of our being God’s Stewards.

The pontiffs, from key teachings and insights from Blessed John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and our United States Bishops. From there, we will conclude with reflections on an important topic: the care of our common home.

The Environment and Stewardship: The Moral Art of Caring for Creation

By Father David L. Dannerke, PhD

JENN REED, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

Stature of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals and ecology, on the grounds of the National Shrine Grotto of Lourdes in Emmitsburg, Md.

Examination of Conscience

Excerpted from the USCCB

• Do I live out my responsibility to care for God’s creation?

• Do I express my care for creation as connected to my concern for poor persons, who are most at risk from environmental problems?

• Do I live wastefully? Am I energy too freely? Are there ways I could reduce consumption in my life?

• Are there ways I could change my daily practices and those of my family, school, workplace, or community to better conserve the earth’s resources for future generations?

that all people are brothers and sisters; that life is a stewardship of the goods received from God, which is why each one is responsible for the other, and whoever is rich must be as if he were an “executor of the orders of God the Benefactor” (Hom 6 de avitatis: PG 32, 1181-1196). We must find one another and cooperate as members of one body (Ep 203, 3). (General Audience, August 1, 2007) It is important for us to assume this mantle of responsibility and leave it to the world a better place for the next generation.

On November 8, 2010, the USCCB co-hosted a symposium at the United States Council for Catholic Drama and Peace, gave an address on ten principles of environmental ethics drawn from the book Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church which should mirror the creative love of God’s creation.

During this Year of Faith, The Catholic Witness is publishing a series of articles examining the various documents, principles and historic figures associated with Catholic Social Teaching. The series is produced in conjunction with the Diocesan Commission on Catholic Social Teaching and the Brevard Diocesan Office of Justice and Peace which works to promote understanding of Catholic Social Teaching while fostering the mission of the Church and work for the common good. Find resources at www.bhbgdiocese.org/catholic-social-teaching.

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Examination of Conscience

Excerpted from the USCCB

• Do I live out my responsibility to care for God’s creation?

• Do I express my care for creation as connected to my concern for poor persons, who are most at risk from environmental problems?

• Do I live wastefully? Am I energy too freely? Are there ways I could reduce consumption in my life?

• Are there ways I could change my daily practices and those of my family, school, workplace, or community to better conserve the earth’s resources for future generations?

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Lebanon Catholic Marches On as Great Season Takes Shape

By Chris Heisey
The Catholic Witness

As the high school basketball season speeds by the halfway point, it’s fair to say that the Beavers of Lebanon Catholic are a very good basketball team, posting an 11-2 record. Superbly coached by veteran Coach Scott Clentimack, every player on this team can run the floor, hit the long three-ball and press and defend.

Against league foe Pequea Valley at home on Assumption Hill, Jan. 9, the Beavers beat the senior-laden Braves, 71-54, behind the solid play of team captain Timmy Orr, who had double digit points and rebounds. The Beavers turned up the defensive intensity to begin the second half and turned a four-point lead into a 15-point cushion in less than 90 seconds.

The Beavers also committed only eight fouls the entire game and did not enter the bonus in either half. Given their aggressive style of play, that’s an amazing stat that shows you they can physically get after you, but in a fundamentally sound way.

The Braves threw a number of zone defense looks at Lebanon Catholic, but the Beavers stayed patient and drilled their open looks. And while this team can hit from downtown, it has enough size inside to attack the basket and rebound. The Beavers start four juniors along with senior Orr, who is nearing the 1,000-point plateau for his career.

It’s difficult to foresee any team giving the Beavers trouble in Class A in District 3, other than Greenwood come early March in the playoffs. And it should not be surprising if the Beavers are playing in the state playoffs come late March.

Above: Captain Timmy Orr is a threat in the paint and beyond the arc.
Right: After a great steal, Anthony Thomas lays in two.
Fulfilling the Promise:

Tradition of Catholic Education
Continues at New Bishop McDevitt High School

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

The new Bishop McDevitt High School offers an array of amenities expected of today’s state-of-the-art educational facility. There are technology-driven science, computer, art and home economics labs, a fully-equipped fine arts center, an expansive library, bright and spacious classrooms, a sizable gymnasium and a multi-purpose stadium fitted with artificial turf.

There are spiritually significant items here too, such as a stained-glass window hanging in the main lobby that was a gift from Bishop Philip R. McDevitt, fourth Bishop of Harrisburg, to St. Joseph Parish in Locustdale in the early 1900s.

Religious articles in the chapel come from the Redemptorist community, and the school hallways are adorned with statues of the saints that were brought from the former high school building.

But the most important element in the new school at 1 Crusader Way came directly from 2200 Market Street, and before that, from the school’s original site at Church and North Streets: the school’s tradition of offering a quality Catholic education to high school students.

Dedicating the new Bishop McDevitt High School on Jan. 5, Bishop Joseph P. McFadden spoke of the school’s mission “to proclaim the truth of Jesus Christ to the world.”

“It is in this building that we hope to be able to bring the light and the truth of Jesus Christ to the young people that will enter these walls,” he said.

This building is the fruit of a vision of Bishop McDevitt High School. It is a family with a long and distinguished history, with an illustrious group of alumni, men and women who have left the confines of this great school and gave contribution to this country, to the world and to the Church,” Bishop McFadden remarked. “This great tradition has now been brought here to this building.

Students, parents, alumni, faculty, administrators and benefactors gathered in the spacious auditorium for the long-awaited dedication, held on the Feast of St. John Neumann, the founder of the Catholic school system.

The ceremony included a Scripture reading, a homily from the bishop and musical presentations from the school choir and band as the bishop went through the building and sprinkled each room with holy water.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Mary Anne Bednar, principal, John DiSanto, Building Committee Chair; and Angela DiMartile Ortenzio and Carmen Finestra, Capital Campaign Committee Co-Chairs, offered remarks.

Sister Mary Anne shared her enthusiasm at the prospect of welcoming students into their classrooms on Jan. 7.

“For me personally, that’s the day that I’ve been waiting for – the day that our students walk into this beautiful building,” she said. “After all, this is about them. This is for them. This is built to ensure that a quality, Catholic education will be provided for the young men and women of our area for many years to come.”

It’s a tradition envisioned by the school’s founder, Bishop Philip R. McDevitt, who was passionate about Catholic education, Sister Mary Anne remarked.

“He wanted to make Catholic schools accessible to all students and to make those schools the best that they could be,” she said.

The new school, built on an 87-acre campus, is replete with 45 classrooms, a 1,200-seat auditorium, a fine arts center, a 1,800-seat gymnasium, fully equipped library, multi-purpose stadium with artificial turf and an eight-lane track, and 1,200 parking spaces.

The central focus of the brightly-lit school is the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Chapel, located on the main floor and situated in the center of the three-story classrooms wing.

The 128-seat chapel is furnished with an altar, statues and crucifix acquired from the Redemptorists in Ephrata, and with Stations of the Cross purchased by St. Catherine Labouré Parish in Harrisburg.

Bishop McFadden dedicated the chapel on Jan. 4, calling it “the heart of Bishop McDevitt High School.”

“This is what Catholic education is about. It is about a relationship with the Lord Jesus. It is about proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus. It is about forming young men and women who understand truly who we are as sons and daughters of God,” he said.

“That is the mission of Catholic education,” he said. “It is the mission of Bishop McDevitt High School. Among those on hand for the dedication of both the chapel and the school were Raymond and Jeannette Rodgers, Class of 1933 and 1951, respectively. The benefactors donated the chapel’s crucifix in memory of Mr. Rodgers’ parents, who sent their eight children to the school from 1946-1964.
“They sacrificed so much to send us to Bishop McDevitt, and we received a good Catholic education there,” Mr. Rodgers said. “We decided we had to do something in their memory, so we selected the crucifix in the chapel, which is the whole focus of the school.”

As visitors toured the new school, they took note of its brick motif both inside and out, the gleaming cross that stands as a centerpiece atop the building, and the portrait of Bishop McDevitt and the original Founders Roll that hang in the lobby.

Students walked the halls in anticipation of their first day in the new building. In the second floor hallway, freshman Maria DeJesus and sophomore Clare Orris stood near the chapel’s choir loft and marveled at the sunlight streaming in through the windows. The girls had just come from the auditorium, where they performed as part of the choir.

“I really like the windows and the lighting a lot — it’s motivating,” said Maria. “I’m ready to get the school year started again. It’s awesome to finally be here.”

“I was amazed when I first walked in here today,” said Clare, who was most impressed by the state-of-the-art auditorium, a dream facility for those involved in drama and music. “I’m very excited to be in the new school and to see what else it offers.”

Freshmen Michael Wood and Matthew White and junior Mark Caruso also shared their enthusiasm for the newness and spaciousness of the school and its grounds. But they pointed out that the Catholic atmosphere and camaraderie among students are integrated into the school, not things that can be built.

“All the people here are nice, and the teachers are very friendly and encouraging,” said Matthew. “I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else.”

“Everyone here is really friendly and helpful to one another,” Michael agreed. “There’s great camaraderie here, and outside of the school building as well.”

“Why I would tell people about Bishop McDevitt High School is the same thing I told them when the school was on Market Street,” Mark said. “We’re a great Catholic school and we all continue to see the mission of Catholic education through.”

(Information on Bishop McDevitt High School and its “Fulfilling the Promise” Capital Campaign can be found at www.bishopmcdevitt.org.)

The new Bishop McDevitt High School, located at 1 Crusader Way in Harrisburg, sits on an 87-acre campus that offers room for expansion. The school’s features include 45 classrooms and technology-driven labs, a 120-seat chapel, a 1,200-seat auditorium, a fine arts center, a spacious library, a 1,000-seat gymnasium, a multi-purpose stadium with artificial turf and an eight-lane track, and 1,200 parking spaces.
The name of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, pray for us!

On June 28, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI authorized a decree that formally recognized Sheen’s heroic virtues and according him the title “Venerable.”

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen: Missionary and Evangilizer for Our Times

By James Gontis
Special to The Witness

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen was a man of talent and holiness. Born and raised in Peoria, Ill., Sheen spent most of his adult life in New York. He may well be the most influential United States Catholic of the 20th century.

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen was an evangelizer par excellence, authoring 66 books and numerous articles. He was a pioneer in his use of mass media to reach souls for Christ. He did this first through radio and then through his television show, “Life is Worth Living,” for which he won an Emmy for prime-time television.

Once, when asked by Pope Pius XII how many converts he’d made, he replied: “Your Holiness, I have never counted them. I am always afraid if I did count them, I might think that I made them, instead of the Lord.”

Holy Priest and Bishop

To Archbishop Sheen, the salvation of souls was of paramount importance. Having deep respect for persons of all religious persuasions, he nonetheless preached without compromise the fullness of divine revelation as embodied in the one Church instituted by Christ.

Fundamental to the exercise of Archbishop Sheen’s priestly and episcopal ministry was his love for the Mass and his dedication to the ministry of reconciliation through the Sacrament of Penance, which he exercised regularly.

He held tender devotion for Our Blessed Mother, Mary, to whom he referred as “The Woman I Love.” He spoke with her as a child speaks with his own mother.

He attributed his success to his daily Eucharistic Holy Hour, which he referred to as “the hour that makes my day.” In his autobiography, Treasure in Clay, he wrote that he had never missed his Holy Hour in all his years as a priest.

Perhaps the most satisfying moment of Sheen’s life occurred when the then-still-young Pope John Paul II, in his first visit as Pope to New York, embraced the 84-year-old Sheen in the sanctuary of St. Patrick Cathedral, saying to him: “You have written and spoken well of the Lord Jesus Christ. You are a loyal son of the Church.”

Legacy

Archbishop Fulton Sheen died on December 9, 1979, at the age of 84. At the time of his passing, he was praying in his chapel in front of our Eucharistic Lord.

On June 28, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI authorized a decree that formally recognized Sheen’s heroic virtues and according him the title “Venerable.”

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen, pray for us!

James Gontis is the Director of the Diocesan Department of Religious Education.
The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

BERWICK – St. Joseph: Merry E. Goto.

BLOOMSBURG – St. Columbia: Goldie A. Bennett, Joseph J. Keszelewski, Edward F. Kriner.

CAMP HILL – Good Shepherd: Jeanne Boyd, Theresa Peet.


CHAMBERSBURG – Corpus Christi: Louise Brookens, Margaret Cox, Pearl Foose.

COAL TOWNSHIP – Our Lady of Lourdes: Victoria Rechel.

COLUMBIA – Holy Trinity: Sherry Frey, Pauline Gaianola, Helen Kiehl; St. Peter: Betty Lou Overmeyer.

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart: Denise Jacoby, Joseph Minings, Raymond "Bob" K., Jeff M., St. ELIZABETH TOWN – St. Peter: Jill Kathryn Bresch.

ENOLA – Our Lady of Lourdes: Shirley Jessick.


HARRISBURG – Holy Family: Catherine Zeiders; St. Catherine Laboure: Ginni O. Doherty-Stebner, St. Margaret Mary: Richard Gotowska, Grace Martimeo, Catherine Potami.

HERSHEY – St. Anthony of Padua: Antionia DiVittorio, Marlene Pellegrini.

KULPMONT – Holy Angels: Rose Duncheon, Gloria Leaveck, Helen Polniak.

LANCASTER – St. Anne: Josephine Zoltan.

LITTLESTOWN – St. Aloysius: Normand Frontant, Lucille Wherley.

LEYKIN – Our Lady Help of Christians: Jeanie C. Magner.

MCHSRYSTOWN – Annunciation BVM: Mary Vallerio.


MIDDLETOWN – Seven Sorrows BVM: John Gelata, Jacqueline Gerhards, Frank Murawski.

MILLERSVILLE – St. Philip the Apostle: Marion Gray, Aaron M. Haines, John Hufnagel.


MOUNT JOY – Mary, Mother of the Church: Christine Graham, Joan Meszaros, Sara “Sally” Salfo.

NEW CUMBERLAND – St. Theresa: John K. Keedlemond, Jr., Edward Segeleon, Fred Siegfried.

NEW FREEDOM – St. John the Baptist: Sheila von Lange.

OXFORD – Immaculate Conception BVM: Mary Berhoff, Mary Klunk, John Kuhn, John Spruance.

ROARING CREEK – Our Lady of Mercy: Christine Daniels.

ROHRERSTOWN – St. Leo the Great: Frances Abel, Gloria C. Barbaro, Mary Landis, Charles Sterling.

SelingroVe – St. Pius X: George P. Margherio.

STeELTON – Prince of Peace: Faye Ranegar, Stephen Taljan.

WAnsEhRO – St. Andrew: Marian Brownlow, Josephine Lustick, Zoltan Mandy, Evelyn Pfeil.

WILLIAMSTOWN – Sacred Heart of Jesus: John Cozzu, Jr., Evelyn Readinger.

YORK – Immaculate Conception BVM: Joan Drust, Robert Klunk, Connie Michalak; St. Joseph: Joanne Holtzer; St. Patrick.

Sister Jane Coyle

St. Joseph Sister Jane Coyle, formerly St. Mary Joeanne, died Jan. 6 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Residence in Scranton, Pa. She was 86.

She served as librarian at Lebanon Catholic High School from 1972-1979 and at York Catholic High School from 1983-1989.

The funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 26 at St. Joseph Villa. Burial was in the Villa Cemetery.

Sister M. deRicci Baker

Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister M. deRicci Baker died Jan. 6 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Residence in Scranton, Pa. She was 90.

Born in Altoona, Pa., she entered the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1941, and served as a teacher in the dioceses of Altoona-Centre, Pittsburgh, and in Connecticut, New York and Maryland. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, she was teacher and principal at Our Joseph Elementary School in Danville from 1963-1968.

Sister deRicci also served on the office staff at several hospitals in the state. From 2000 until the time of her death, she was chaplain at St. Elizabeth Hospital.

She was preceded in death by her mother and three sisters, including Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister M. Gracette Baker.

Her funeral Mass was celebrated Jan. 11 at Our Lady of Peace Residence. Burial was in St. Catherine’s Cemetery in Moscow, Pa.

Sister Mary Valerie Stublar

Adorers of the Blood of Christ Sister Mary Valerie Stublar died Dec. 27 at the age of 95.

Born Margaret Stulbauer in Johnstown, Pa., she entered the Congregation of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ in 1933 at St. Joseph Convent in Columbus. During her years in education ministry, she taught in classrooms in Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, North Carolina, and Illinois. She moved to St. Anne’s Retirement Community in Columbus last spring.

The funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 29 at St. Anne’s. Burial was in the convent cemetery.

Catholic Daughters in Mount Carmel to Organize Junior Court

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court Our Lady of Victory #588, held its “Eleven Days After Christmas” party on the Epiphany, January 6. The tradition of exchanging Christmas gifts traces its origin to these generous and worshipful kings, and the Catholic Daughters participate in a gift exchange every year on this date.

The Court plans to organize a Junior Court in 2013, and five future Catholic Daughters attended the party. Two of these future daughters, Claudia and Eliana Seidel, made Christmas ornaments with a picture of each of the victims from the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. Father Frank Karwacki, Chaplain, led a prayerful tribute to the victims. Mary Catherine Wydra, Regent, read the names of the adults that were killed and each of the future daughters participated in reading the names of the children. The Court embraced the 20 children from Sandy Hook as honorary Catholic Daughters and will especially remember them with prayer.

Shown from left to right in the photo are Sarah Soksy, Danielle Hooper, Madison Sosky, Mary Catherine Wydra, Regent, Claudia Seidel and Eliana Seidel.

Knights Collect Comfort Items for Veterans

Knights of Columbus, Cathedral Council #11008, which is based at the Cathedral Parish of St. Patrick in Harrisburg, in coordination with Knights of Columbus Father Capodano Assembly #3167 also of Harrisburg and the surrounding area, recently delivered more than 1,600 comfort items to veterans currently receiving treatment at the Lebanon VA Hospital.

The items, which included things like body-wash, toothpaste, magazines/puzzles, and postage stamps, were collected after Masses held at St. Patrick Cathedral during the month of December. The items were donated from the generosity of the Cathedral’s parishioners.

The collection was spearheaded by Sir Knight Adam Robinson, a Navy Veteran; and Grand Knight Eric Failing, both of Catholic Council #11008.

“The fourth pillar of our order is patriotism,” noted Failing, “efforts like collecting comfort items for our disabled and hospitalized veterans and other work we do in conjunction with Veterans Administration gives the Knights of Columbus to give back to those who have already given so much in the name of patriotism.”

Robinson was similarly enthusiastic. “To be able to give back to fellow veterans is only one of the highlights for me in being a knight of Columbus,” he said. “I am glad to see the generosity of our parish in helping those who have served our country.

For more information and to learn how to donate to this cause, please visit the Knights of Columbus Foundation web page at kofc11008.com. Find them on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/KofC11008. The local Knights also are on Twitter at @kofc11008.

Gastley Scholarship Has Full Slate at Delone Catholic High School

The John Gastley Scholarship Foundation now has its fourth Delone Catholic High School scholarship recipient in mid-year and at its very first awardee looking beyond Delone to his next national international college.

The funds for these scholarships are being raised by the Foundation, a 501c3 non-profit, a Charitable Corporation named as a memorial to a Delone alumna, athlete, coach and teacher. The scholarship rewards a young person with an excellent faith-based high school education, helps Delone by bringing a positive influence to their hallmarks, helps link the financially local with the Catholic faith. There is a significant amount of good that can be supported with your tax deductible donation or participation in the Foundation’s four fun-raising events.

The Foundation just distributed tickets for its Gift Certificate Lotto game that began January 1. If your ticket number is drawn in the浦3 digit daily game, you win a nice national brand gift certificate. Details are available at www.gastleyfoundation.com. The Foundation’s May Dinner Raffle tickets are also available. Only 500 are being sold.

Lancaster Order of Malta Marks Anniversary with Awards

The Lancaster Hospitaler Region of the Order of Malta recently celebrated its six-year anniversary as a region of the Federal Association Following a gala on December 12 including a good time, Shakespears and in doing so, he presented three Hospitaller awards: Our Lady of Philermos Stew-

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Despite Evil, Human Beings Are Hard-Wired for Peace, Pope Says

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Welcoming in the new year, Pope Benedict XVI said that despite the injustice and violence in the world, everyone has within them a tendency for peace.

“Man is made for peace, which is a gift of God,” but also something individuals must work tirelessly to build, he said.

The pope celebrated Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica Jan. 1, which the Church marks as the feast of Mary, Mother of God and as World Peace Day.

Thousands of people filled the basilica, which was decorated with white roses, small yellow flowers and evergreens. In the crowd was a group of children wearing colorful capes and cardboard crowns in memory of the three kings who traveled to Bethlehem; three of the children brought offertory gifts to the pope.

Prayers for peace were offered in five languages; in Arabic, the prayer asked that Mary “awaken in government leaders, legislators and men and women of science respect and concern for motherhood, God’s supreme gift to humanity.”

In his homily, the pope quoted from the peace day message he had sent to government leaders around the globe.

Despite the “tension and conflict caused by growing instabilities of inequality between rich and poor, by the prevalence of a selfish and individualistic mindset which also finds expression in an unreregulated financial capitalism,” as well as terrorism and crime, “I am convinced that ‘the many different efforts at peacemaking which abound in our world testify to mankind’s innate vocation to peace.’ People are called to find an inner peace with God by living peacefully with and for others, including all of creation, he said.

Inner peace is possible even when struggling with “problems, darkness and distress,” he said; Mary is a prime example with how she faced uncertainty and challenges with calm and peaceful reflection.

“It is this inner peace we would want to have in the midst of sometimes tumultuous and confusing events,” he said. Nothing can destroy a Christian’s inner peace because it is rooted in the certainty that there is a good, loving and omnipotent God who always offers his grace and peace, the pope said.

“In fact, suffering, trials and darkness don’t corrode, but strengthen our hope, a hope that never disappoints,” he said.

The pope also tweeted a special blessing in eight languages to his more than 2 million Twitter followers: “May Our Lord bless you and watch over you in the new year.”

People are called to find an inner peace with God by living according to his will, and to enrich that gift by living peacefully with and for others, including all of creation, he said. Inner peace is possible even when struggling with “problems, darkness and distress,” he said; Mary is a prime example with how she faced uncertainty and challenges with calm and peaceful reflection.

“We must be good Samaritans ourselves,” he added. “Let us pray that every child is welcomed as a gift from God and is supported, loved and cared for.”

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“There is good in the world and this good is destined to silently reflect, think and listen to God. If people are to truly understand the world and what life is about, they must go beyond the news flash and be able to reflect, think and listen to God.”

No matter how many troubles in the world or in one’s life, “there is good in the world and this good is destined to conquer all kinds to God, the God of Jesus Christ, in our hearts, died and risen,” he said.

It’s easy to forget that the good will win, since evil acts like homicides, violence and injustice are what grab the headlines, rather than acts of love and kindness, which often remain hidden in the background,” he said.

If people are to truly understand the world and what life is about, they must go beyond the news flash and be able to silently reflect, think and listen to God. “That way our soul can find healing from the inevitable wounds of daily life” while the mind tries to see things with God’s eyes and learn to “look with truth upon our actions and also the evil present in us and around us.” Such self-reflection is necessary for “conversion, which makes one wiser and better” and more able to act in solidarity and communion, he added.

Christians are people of hope, especially in the midst of darkness, because they know that what’s bad in the world doesn’t come from God but comes from human sin and error, the pope said.

“Christ is the true source of life and hope and it’s this certainty “that prompts us to look to the new year with confidence,” he said.

After the prayer service, the pope went by popemobile into St. Peter’s Square, where he visited the Vatican’s Nativity scene. While the Swiss Guard band played “Silent Night,” the pope knelt before the manger scene for a few moments of prayer.

On Dec. 30, the feast of the Holy Family, the pope prayed at his noon blessing for all the families in the world.

Just like the Holy Family, mothers and fathers worry about properly raising their children, hoping to create honest and responsible adults and citizens, the pope said.

Children need not only the gift of faith, but also the personal example of their parents, he said.

“We let pray that every child is welcomed as a gift from God and is supported, loved and cared for.”

Be Like Good Samaritan, Help Those in Need, Pope Says in Message

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

In a message for the 2013 World Day of the Sick, Pope Benedict XVI called on everyone to be a good Samaritan and concretely help those in need.

“Thanking those who care for the sick and elderly, the pope underlined the Church’s fundamental role in “lovingly and generously accepting every human being, especially those who are weak and sick.”

The Pope Benedict XVI arrives to celebrate Mass in the Basilica in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Jan. 1.

The World Day of the Sick is celebrated annually Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. The Vatican released the text of the papal message Jan. 8.

Pope Benedict expressed his affection for all those “undergoing a time of trial due to illness and suffering,” and he prayed that they remember they are not alone, marginalized, forgotten or useless.

“You have been called by Christ and are his living and transparent image,” he said, quoting from a message delivered by the fathers of the Second Vatican Council in 1965 “To the Poor, the Sick and the Suffering.”

The Gospel parable of the Good Samaritan is just one of many accounts that show how Jesus expected his disciples to behave toward others, especially those in need, the pope said.

Be Like Good Samaritan, Help Those in Need, Pope Says in Message
“Go and make disciples of all nations”  
(Matthew 28:19) 

The Year of Faith announced by Pope Benedict XVI began on October 11, and concludes on November 24, 2013. Pope Benedict XVI referred to this Year of Faith as “…a summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one Savor of the world” (Porta Fidei 6) and proclaimed, “To rediscover the essence of the faith that is professed, celebrated, lived and prayed, and to do so with renewed confidence, is a task that every believer must make his own, especially in the course of this year” (Porta Fidei 9).

Throughout this yearlong observance, the Diocesan Institute for Catechetical and Pastoral Formation is offering a variety of faith formation opportunities to help you renew your relationship with Jesus Christ and deepen your Catholic faith. Included are sessions on the content of the Apostles’ Creed, the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

For more information on how the Year of Faith is being celebrated throughout the Diocese of Harrisburg, visit the “Year of Faith” webpage on the diocesan website at www.hbgdiocese.org/youngchurch.

The articles of Faith in Vatican II at Age 50  
(To register, contact Becky Broderic at 717-273-2160 or beckybroderic@hotmail.com)

Prayer: The Gasoline for our Spiritual Engines  
3-5 p.m. March 4  
Resurrection School, Lancaster  
Mr. James Gontis  
(to register, contact Stacey White at 717-390-9035)

Evangelization and the New Media  
6:30 p.m. April 19  
Sr. Susan Geryan, Schmidt, SCC  
*Also available via webinar

The Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Catechist and the Catholic School Teacher’s Best Friend  
7-9 p.m. Jan. 8, 15, 29, Feb. 5, 12  
St. Catherine Labouré, Harrisburg  
Mr. Ryan Bolster  
*Also available via webinar

A Catechetical Explanation of the 15 Promises of the Blessed Virgin Mary That Those Devoted to the Rosary  
7-8:30 p.m. Jan. 31  
St. Margaret Mary, Harrisburg  
Mr. James Gontis  
(to register, contact Bonnie Finney at 717-213-2832)

JANUARY 18, 2013, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS - 15

Dioecesan World Youth Day Celebration on Palm Sunday
For High-School Aged Youth
Sunday, March 24 from 3-7 p.m.
At the Capitol Steps, St. Patrick Cathedral and Strawberry Square in Harrisburg

Main Celebrant and Homilist: Bishop Joseph P. McFadden
Pre-Liturgy Music by St. Patrick Church Life Teen Music Ministry
Liturgy Music by Youth Instrumentalists and Vocalists
Concert by DJ Bill Lages

For more information, contact your parish youth ministry or Catholic campus ministry leader, or the Diocesan Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry at 717-657-4804, ext. 327, or oyyam@hbgdiocese.org. Information can also be found at www.hbgdiocese.org/youngchurch.

The Diocesan Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry is joining Bishop Joseph P. McFadden and Pope Benedict XVI at World Youth Day this summer. The diocese’s spiritual pilgrimage takes place July 20-29, beginning with a retreat in Guadalajara, Mexico, and concluding with World Youth Day activities in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. More than 40 young pilgrims from the diocese will participate in the pilgrimage, and the “Chance and a Dance” fund-raiser will benefit their experience.

$100 Donation includes:  
• Entrance for four adults (must be at least 21)  
• A chance to win one of ten raffle prizes  
• Music by Ziegler’s Mobile Entertainment  
• Hors d’oeuvres  
• 50/50 raffle and silent auction

Formal attire required
For information and tickets, contact the Diocesan Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry at 717-657-4804, ext. 327, or oyyam@hbgdiocese.org.

Catholic Daughters of the Americas Announce National Education Contest  
Court Queen of Peace #1023 of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas announces the 2013 National Education Contest for students in grades 4–12. Entrants can choose from two themes: “Jesus Is Rekindled in Me,” or “My Life is a Reflection of Good.”

For details of contest rules and awards, visit www.catholicdaughters.org, scroll down the page to frequent downloads, and under contests, select Edu- 
cation Contest Forms. Court Queen of Peace #1023 in Lancaster will be sponsoring entries at the local level. First place winners will compete at the state level. Pennsylvania winners will compete at the national level. Local entries must be submitted by April 15, 2013.

All participants must sign a completed entry form, and adhere to all rules in order for entries to be valid. In the entry form, fill in the “Return to:” portion of the form as follows:

Name of Sponsoring Court: Queen of Peace No. 1023  
City of Sponsoring Court: Lancaster, PA  
Name of Education Chairperson: Margaret T. Giordano  
Address: 1530 Hollywood Drive  
Phone: (717) 390-9035  
City: Lancaster  
State: PA  
Zip Code: 17601

Court Queen of Peace has had numerous state winners and several national winners. Last year’s two national winners were from Trinity High School, Camp Hill; Anastasia Mauger with a first place in Music, and Brendon Rigney with an honorable mention in Photography. For more information contact Margaret Giordano at 717-390-9035.

The Year of Faith announced by Pope Benedict XVI begins on October 11, and concludes on November 24, 2013. Pope Benedict XVI referred to this Year of Faith as “…a summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one Savior of the world” (Porta Fidei 6) and proclaimed, “To rediscover the essence of the faith that is professed, celebrated, lived and prayed, and to do so with renewed confidence, is a task that every believer must make his own, especially in the course of this year” (Porta Fidei 9).

Throughout this yearlong observance, the Diocesan Institute for Catechetical and Pastoral Formation is offering a variety of faith formation opportunities to help you renew your relationship with Jesus Christ and deepen your Catholic faith. Included are sessions on the content of the Apostles’ Creed, the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

For more information on how the Year of Faith is being celebrated throughout the Diocese of Harrisburg, visit the “Year of Faith” webpage on the diocesan website at www.hbgdiocese.org.

Online registration and payment are now available. You can register and pay online for Diocesan Institute courses and workshops. To access an online registration form and a complete course listing for the current schedule of offerings, click on the icon at www.hbgdiocese.org.

Learn from home. Take advantage of Diocesan Institute offerings without leaving the comfort of home! Through Eliminate Live, you can participate in courses and workshops offered at the Cardinal Keeler Center via webinar. You can either join these webinars as they happen (real-time), or view recordings of the webinars at a time that is more convenient for you. Offerings that are available via webinar are clearly marked on the schedule of courses. For more information, contact Ryan Bolster at 717-657-4804, ext. 225, or rbolster@hbgdiocese.org.

INTRODUCTORY COURSES
Introduction to Scripture  
7-9 p.m. Feb. 5, 12, 26, March 5, 19  
Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg  
Beacon Church  
*Also available via webinar

Introduction to the Sacraments  
6:30-9 p.m. April 4, 11, 18, 25  
Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg  
Father Paul Clark  
*Also available via webinar

Introduction to Morality  
6-9 p.m. Feb. 20, 27, March 6, 13, 20  
Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg  
Father Paul Fisher  
*Also available via webinar

Catechetical Documents of the Church  
7-9 p.m. April 9, 10, 11, 16, 17  
Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg  
Mr. James Gontis  
*Also available via webinar

Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us: A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States  
6-8:30 p.m. April 15, 22, 29  
Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg  
Mr. Ryan Bolster  
*Also available via webinar

ADVANCED CERTIFICATION COURSES OF SPECIALIZATION
Christology  
6:30-9 p.m. Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28, March 7, 14  
Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg  
Mr. Ryan Bolster  
*Also available via webinar

The Apologetics of St. Thomas Aquinas  
6:30-9 p.m. Feb. 19, March 4  
St. Aloysius, Littlestown  
Mr. Ryan Bolster

Catholic School Teacher’s Best Friend  
7:30-9 p.m. April 5, 12, 19  
Sacred Heart of Jesus, Cornwall  
Mr. Ryan Bolster  
*Also available via webinar

Prayer: The Gasoline for our Spiritual Engines  
3-5 p.m. March 4  
Resurrection School, Lancaster  
Mr. James Gontis  
(to register, contact Becky Broderic at 717-273-2160 or beckybroderic@hotmail.com)

Prayer: The Gasoline for our Spiritual Engines  
3-5 p.m. March 4  
Resurrection School, Lancaster  
Mr. James Gontis  
(to register, contact Becky Broderic at 717-273-2160 or beckybroderic@hotmail.com)

Electives: Vatican II at Age 50  
6:30-8:30 p.m. Feb. 26, March 29  
Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg  
Mr. James Gontis  
*Also available via webinar

The Articles of Faith in the Year of Faith  
7-9 p.m. March 12 and 13  
Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg  
Mr. James Gontis  
*Also available via webinar
Compiled by Jen Reed

Spiritual Offerings

Mass in the Catalan language will be celebrated Jan. 20 at 12:30 p.m. in the Prince of Peace-Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Steelton.

Mass in the Polish language will be celebrated at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church on Jan. 10 at 11 a.m. in the Sanctorum sacrum of Father Walter Sempko. Confessions will be heard after Mass.

A Pro-Life Mass will be celebrated by Father Paul Schenck Feb. 2 at 6 a.m. at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Church in Lebanon.

Mass with Prayers for Healing will be celebrated Feb. 5 at 7:30 a.m. at St. Theresa Church in New Cumberland by Father Joseph Cottier. The healing Mass will take place in the chapel of Peace of Life in the Spirit prayer groups. For more information, call Mary Ann Feeney at 717-684-7709 or Loreta at 717-737-7551.

In recognition of World Day of the Sick on Feb. 11, the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord, St. Mark Catholic Church will celebrate Divine Redemer Parish in Mount Carmel, will celebrate a Mass of Healing with Anointing of the Sick and Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament for the sick and those in need of healing. The Mass will be offered 11 a.m. in the Sanctorum sacrum of Father John A. Szada, Jr., Pastor of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in York beginning Feb. 9 at 9:30 a.m. or visit www.allheartsafire.org to order the Harrisburg Diocese for a 33 day preparation for Consecration of Blessed John Paul II and Blessed Mother Teresa knew that the quickest way to evangelize active participation in the life of the Church – will be offered at St. Jude Thaddeus Parish in Millholland will host a free Life in the Spirit seminar. Classes will be held Saturday mornings, 9:30-10:30 a.m. for eight consecutive weekends. The program is open to everyone in which people are taught how to have a stronger spiritual life and deeper relationship with Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. This Life in the Spirit publics. Sessions will be taught by Father William Weary, pastor of St. Jude, and Katherine Norte, a parishioner of Christ the King Parish, New Bloomfield. To register, call 717-904-DonasionRevival@gmail.com or call Katherine at 717-567-6038 (evenings) only. Deadline is Saturday, Feb. 23.

Retreats & Pilgrimages

The brochure for the 2013 retreat season at Saint Mary’s aspires to heal you in the Spirit of Jesus, to free you from the feeling of loss and to lead you to Jesus. It offers spiritual retreats for women, men and couples. The retreat will include a session on how to correctly use an automated external defibrillator (AED) for adults and children. "BLS for Healthcare Providers" will teach participants the skills needed to successfully resuscitate the victim of a cardiac arrest. "Child of My Heart" meets on the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at St. Gabriel Parish in Westminster. This program is open to the public. For more information, contact Kathy Dalus at 570-374-8883 (evenings) or kathydalus@ptd.net.

Holy Spirit Health System is offering a free support group for those who have experienced miscarriage, pregnancy loss, or the death of a child. “Child of My Heart” meets on the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at Holy Spirit Health System in Carlisle. For more information, call 717-244-6727. For information to register or to attend, please call 717-763-2275.

Divine Mercy 101: St. Patrick Parish in York will host Brother Chris Alar from the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy, Stockbridge, Mass. Jan. 11, 7-9 p.m. in the church. Brother Chris’ presentation will cover The ABCs of Divine Mercy, The Feast of Divine Mercy and Receiving the Graces of that Day. How Divine Mercy is the Heart of Jesus will be discussed, as well as the ongoing devotion of Divine Mercy and the Shroud of Turin are Linked. A free-will offering for the Marans of the Immaculate Conception will be gratefully accepted.

Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University: A 9-week class that will teach you to take control of your money, invest for the future and look forward to a more secure financial future will be held at Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in York beginning Feb. 9. The class, a combination of videos taught by financial consultant Dave Ramsey and live group discussions, teaches the basics of budgeting, dumping debt, planning for the future and much more. Dave uses biblical principles to teach participants how to achieve these tasks. The course is for everyone, regardless of age, and includes all necessary materials for the course. Register at www.daveramsey.com. If you have any questions regarding the course, call 717-223-8473.

Holy Spirit Health System is offering free CPR classes Feb. 9 in Holy Spirit Hospital’s auditorium. These classes will teach participants the skills necessary to successfully resuscitate the victim of a cardiac arrest and to provide basic life support. For more information to register or to attend, please call 717-372-4622.

“Catholic, Welcome Home: Discover the Faith Anew!” – a Lenten encounter for non-practicing or less active Catholics seeking to reactivate their faith in the Church – will be offered at St. John the Baptist Parish in New Freedom. This program will run for nine sessions on Thursdays, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m., with a final, daytime session on Saturday, March 23. For more information or to register, call Carol Moore at 717-941-2612.

33 Days to Morning Glory: an all-you-need-to-know guide to the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in York beginning Feb. 13, 7-9 p.m., with a final, daytime session on Saturday, March 23. DVDs presentations are by author and speaker Father Michael Galley, MIC. Register at the hour-long into session Feb. 9 at 9:30 a.m. or visit www.allheartsafire.org to order. For information, contact Nell at cnell@shdp.org or wog325@gmail.com.

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Berwick will host a Year of Faith program featuring one-hour lessons from Father Robert Baran. The Catholicism adult formation program is open to the community. The next session is scheduled for Feb. 21 at 6:30 p.m., “I’m Happy Are We – The Teachings of Jesus.” Future sessions take place March 21, April 18, May 16, June 20, July 15 and Nov. 23. For information, contact the parish at 570-759-8113.

St. Jude Thaddeus Parish in Millholland will host a free life in the Spirit seminar. Classes will be held Saturday mornings, 9:30-10:30 a.m. for eight consecutive weekends. The program is open to everyone in which people are taught how to have a stronger spiritual life and deeper relationship with Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. This Life in the Spirit publics. Sessions will be taught by Father William Weary, pastor of St. Jude, and Katherine Norte, a parishioner of Christ the King Parish, New Bloomfield. To register, call 717-904-DonasionRevival@gmail.com or call Katherine at 717-567-6038 (evenings) only. Deadline is Saturday, Feb. 23.

Catholic Seminars and Retreats

The Diocesan Catholic Committee for Girl Scouts and Camp Fire invite girls from eyebrows through ambassadors to attend a retreat Feb. 11 at St. Basil Sacred Heart in Danville. The retreat will include a session on how to correctly use an automated external defibrillator (AED) for adults and children. “BLS for Healthcare Providers” will teach participants the skills needed to successfully resuscitate the victim of a cardiac arrest. For additional information, contact the Office for Youth at 717-657-4804, ext. 282 or vocation@hbgdiocese.org.

Slovak Catholic Federation plans Pilgrimage of Faith: Father Philip Alabatka, Pastor of the Cathedral of St. Peter, Slaton, Pa., and National Director of the Slovak Catholic Federation, will lead a pilgrimage April 14-26, 2013, to Rome and Slovakia. In Rome, visit major religious and historic churches and sites, attend the weekly Wednesday papal audience, and visit the Pontifical Slovak Colleges of Saints Cyril and Methodius. In Slovakia, stay in Bratislava and visit St. Martin’s Cathedral. The pilgrimage will also include a visit to Vishnev, Czech Republic, where Saint Methodius is believed to have died in 855 a.d. Cost of the air and land package is $2,050. Double occupancy is $1,480 inclusive of all other expenses. For more information, contact www.slovakcatholicfed.org or contact Father Alabatka at 570-344-7231.

Events & Fund-Raisers

The Trinity High School Swim Team is hosting its annual all-you-need-to-know guide to the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in York beginning Feb. 19 from 7-9:30 p.m. in the Trinity High School Cafeteria. Cost is $7 for adults and $4 for children ages 5-11. No charge for children 4 and under. A raffle will be held.

A Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship for boys and girls ages 7-11 will be held at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Center in Newark Jan. 19 from 7-10 p.m. in the Trinity High School Cafeteria. Cost is $7 for adults and $4 for children ages 5-11. No charge for children 4 and under. A raffle will be held.

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As momentum builds to implement new limits on assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition clips, the Catholic bishops of the United States remain focused on urging a “dialogue on responsible restrictions” on gun ownership without infringing upon Second Amendment rights.

“The bishops continue to support measures that control the sale and use of firearms, and to advocate for reasonable restrictions on gun ownership without infringing upon Second Amendment rights,” Kathy Sale, the bishops’ director of domestic social development, told Catholic News Service. “In addition to that, we need to make a serious commitment to address the perva-sive role that addiction and mental illness have in crime,” she said in the wake of the December 21 school shooting in Newtown, Conn., that left 20 children, five educators and the heavily armed gunman who attacked the Sandy Hook Elementary School.

In a Dec. 21 statement on the shooting, the chairmen of three U.S. bishops’ committees – domestic policy, communications, and marriage and family life – reiterated the bishops’ stance on gun control and criminal justice. In it they called for “measures that control the sale and use of firearm... that makes guns safer” and for “sensible regulations of handguns.”

Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., a Catholic, welcomed the Catholic Church’s involvement in the conversation on violence and possible restrictions on certain firearms.

The senator, a strong supporter of gun rights, told CNS that the Church could play a significant role in upcoming discussions that he hopes will not involve just Congress and the White House, but also mental health professionals, law enforcement officers and community activists in determining the best path to protect society.

“These are the conversations I’m now willing to have. It’s something we should do now,” Manchin said.

“If you’re blaming it all on guns, then you’re blaming me as someone who’s used guns. You’re tying me into a silent man,” Manchin said. “If it’s all about guns, guns and guns, then you’re accusing everybody who’s a law-abiding citizen who owns guns. It’s not just the shooters. You put them in the same box [as someone using guns illegally]. It’s a brush on all of them.”

Manchin’s unexpected call on the “Morning Joe” show Dec. 17 for a national conversation on gun violence was uplifting to grassroots groups that in the days since the Newtown atrocity have renewed their desire to see assault weapons outlawed and restrictions on gun ownership.

The Sandy Hook massacre also prompted at least one retailer, Dick’s Sporting Goods, to suspend the sale of certain kinds of semiautomatic weapons nationwide and to call for legislation that might reduce the availability of such guns.

The call for stricter gun laws comes as Americans now possess nearly 300 million firearms. The number of guns in private hands has climbed exponentially over the years. A National Institute of Justice survey in 1994 found that civilians owned 192 million guns. Two years later, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms reported that there were an estimated 300 million guns in the United States, though the bureau’s data were not broken down by category of gun.

By Dennis Sadowski  
Catholic News Service

Bishops Remain Focused on Responsible Restrictions on Gun Ownership

The chairmen of three committees of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a joint statement Dec. 21 stressing the need for gun control, improved services for the mentally ill and a more complete examination of the violence in today’s movies, television and video shows.

The statement was released in response to the Dec. 14 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., that left 20 children, the principal and five teachers dead.

The bishops said they joined New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, president of the USCCB, who in a Dec. 14 statement expressed his “profound solidarity with and support for all those who have been injured and hurt by heartrending images of human suffering, every soul by the malice and cruelty at work in any act of violence.”

In response, Cardinal Dolan thanked the archbishop, saying the support “as our northern neighbor comforts us and reminds us that the Catholic community is a single community, not divided by rivers and mountains, but united in the one family of faith.”

“We shall continue to work together,” he wrote, “so that both our nations discover a rebirth of love and a renewed appreciation for the gift and value of each human life and every human being.”

January 18, 2013, The Catholic Witness - 17

USCCB Committees on Action in Response to the Newtown Tragedy

Catholic News Service

The bishops said the tragic shooting also points to the need for society to “provide health services and support to those who have mental illnesses and to their families and caregivers.”

“Burdensome health care policies must be adjusted so people can get help for themselves or others in need. Just as we properly reach out to those with physical challenges who are not able to take care of themselves, the time, the bishops cited the proliferation of guns among young people and the rising number of shooting deaths and injuries among children and teenagers as priorities for the country to address.

The bishops then refocused their encompassing assault weapons. Prior to the past two presidential elections, the bishops in their quadrennial statement “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship” supported “reasonable restrictions on access to assault weapons and handguns.”

The bishops are not alone. Other religious leaders, community activists and ad-vocates for families and children have long called for strict regulations and bans on weapons specifically designed to kill, as well as stronger controls on handguns.

Details of a survey released Aug. 28 by the Public Religion Research Institute show that 42 percent of Catholics favor stricker gun control laws. That compares with 35 percent of white evangelical Protestants and 42 percent of white mainline Protestants.

Overall, according to the survey, 52 percent of people favor stricter regulations on guns with 44 percent opposed.

Conducted in early August, the survey sampled 1,006 adults and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

Some of the survey’s comments have largely been ignored in Congress and in state legisla-tures over the years. Citing the rights established under the Second Amendment, the pro-gun lobby, led by the National Rifle Association, has deployed dozens of lobbyists and millions of dollars to defeat existing regulations on guns and defeat new efforts to limit gun rights for decades.

The killings at Sandy Hook may just cause the political landscape to change, however. Congressional sources and gun lobbyists said there is the safety of all Americans. The NRA said it was “prepared to offer meaningful contri-butions to help make sure this [Newtown] never happens again.”

At a Dec. 17 news conference in Washington, D.C., presidential candidate and presidential candidate President Barack Obama said that the “families, friends, neighbors, and community-whose hearts have been rent by the loss of a child or loved one.”

“Understandingly this tragedy has given rise to discussions about national policies and steps that can be taken to foster a culture that protects the innocent and those most vulnerable among us. It is time for our nation to renew a culture of life in our society,” said the committee chairman.

The bishops are Bishop Stephen E. Blaire of Stockton, Calif., Committee on Domest-ic Justice and Human Development; Bishop John C. Wester of Salt Lake City, Committee on Communication; and Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth.

The bishops called on all Americans and elected leaders in particular to have “faith-filled courage to address the challenges our nation faces, both in our homes and in our national policies.”

They noted that “guns are too easily accessible” and cited a 2006 document by the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace that emphasized the importance of enacting concrete controls on handguns and noted that “limiting the purchase of such arms would certainly not infringe on the rights of anyone.”

They also reiterated some of what a bishops said in a 2000 statement on “Responsibility, Rehabilitation and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice.”

The statement urged legislators to support measures that control the sale and use of firearms and make guns safer. They also called on sensible regula-tions of handguns and limited access to assault weapons. The bishops also said legislators should confront the pervasive role of addiction and mental illness in crime.

In responding to the Newtown tragedy, the bishops also urged entertainers, particularly film producers and video game creators, to recognize the extent of violence in movies, television programs and video games, which they said have “desensitized all of us.”

“We need to fight for what the viewing and use of these products has negative emotional, psychological and spiritual effects on people,” they added, stressing that parents, guardians and youth need resources to “evaluate entertainment products intelligently.”

The bishops said the tragic shooting also points to the need for society to “provide health services and support to those who have mental illnesses and to their families and caregivers.”

“Burdensome health care policies must be adjusted so people can get help for themselves or others in need. Just as we properly reach out to those with physical challenges who are not able to take care of themselves, the time, the bishops cited the proliferation of guns among young people and the rising number of shooting deaths and injuries among children and teenagers as priorities for the country to address.

A statement by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious similarly noted how the school shooting calls for gun control and efforts to change the culture of violence in the entertainment industry.

“There is much to mourn, but mourning is not enough,” the statement said, noting that “gun regulation is an imperative.”

“The time has come to restore civility to our world and work to change the pervasive culture of violence found throughout this nation, and especially in the entertainment industry.”

The LCWR statement urged the organization’s members to “stand up and speak out for the sacredness of the lives of these children and all people every-where.”

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Conception: A Health Condition With A 20% Mortality Rate

By Joelle Shea
The Catholic Witness

According to a recent report from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, 36,280 lives were lost in our Commonwealth because of abortion in 2011. It is a sobering number – we’ve legally allowed 36,280 citizens to be killed, and 36,280 mothers are left with an empty future.
St. Catherine’s Welcomes Shepherd

St. Catherine of Siena parishioners and pastor, Father Robert Yohe, welcomed Bishop Joseph P. McFadden to their Lancaster County parish on December 23 for the celebration of Mass on the Fourth Sunday of Advent. In anticipation of Christmas, the church was beautifully adorned with an Advent wreath, poinsettias, lit evergreens and a manager awaiting the Christ child. The parish, located in southern Lancaster County, traces its history back to the early 1800s and was founded by Irish immigrants who worked in the local iron furnace. In 1999, the parish built its current church, located along Robert Fulton Highway in the southern part of the county.
On the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, January 1, Bishop Joseph P. McFadden blessed La Estatua del Dulce Nombre de Jesús (the Statue of the Sweet Name of Jesus) at San Juan Bautista Parish in Lancaster, following a joy-filled Mass filled with festive song.

San Juan Bautista Parish became the diocese’s first Spanish-speaking parish with a mandate to provide for the needs of the area’s Hispanic population ten years ago.

La Estatua del Dulce Nombre de Jesús depicts Jesus bent beneath his cross. It reflects the Scripture passage from Paul’s Letter to the Philippians in which he describes Jesus, who “humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

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