Pennsylvania Senate Approves Abortion Opt-Out for Federal Exchanges

By Matthew Gambino
Catholic News Service

The Pennsylvania Senate passed a bill June 5 that prohibits taxpayer funding of abortions in the federal health care exchanges.

Gov. Tom Corbett signed the bill, which passed in the state House of Representatives in April, on June 17.

Corbett announced last December that Pennsylvania would not set up a state health exchange under the 2010 health care reform law, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Because of that, Pennsylvanians choosing health care as required by the law may choose from the federal exchanges, which include abortion coverage.

The law allowed for state legislation to ban abortion funding in the federal exchanges for residents of Pennsylvania.

Father Andre Meluskey Remembered for Love of Priesthood

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Father Andre J. Meluskey, a priest of the Diocese of Harrisburg for 54 years, died on June 16, his 83rd birthday, in Carolyn Croxton Slane Residence of Hospice of Central Pennsylvania.

He had been a senior priest in residence at St. Patrick Parish in Carlisle since 2000.

A viewing was held June 21 from 9 a.m.-10:45 a.m., followed by a Funeral Mass celebrated by Bishop William Waltersheid, Auxiliary Bishop of Pittsburgh, at 11 a.m. at St. Patrick Church on Marsh Drive in Carlisle. Burial was in the Priests’ Circle at Holy Cross Cemetery in Lebanon.

“Father Meluskey had many beautiful qualities, and one of those was that he never had a bad comment about anyone,” Father William Forrey, pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Carlisle, told The Catholic Witness. “He was never unhappy, he was never dispirited; he was always positive and upbeat. He loved life and he loved his priesthood.”

Father Meluskey was born June 16, 1930, in Shenandoah, Pa. He attended St. Anne School and Lancaster Catholic High School, and then graduated from Lebanon Catholic High School in 1949. He attended Mansfield College and Penn State University, where he majored in Hospital Laboratory Technology.

In 1950, he began studies as a seminarian, first at St. Charles College in Catonsville, Md., and then at St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore. Bishop George L. Leech ordained Father Meluskey to the priesthood on March 14, 1959, at St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg.

His early assignments in the diocese were at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Gettysburg and St. Joseph Parish in York. He spent a summer studying Spanish at Georgetown University, and then served the
Dear Friends of the Harrisburg Diocese,

We are writing this letter to let you know how grateful we are to all of you for loving our brother, your Bishop, Joseph McFadden.

Almost three years ago when Bishop Joseph was installed as your tenth bishop of Harrisburg, it was hard to let him go from Philadelphia and from his hometown. Over time, we realized Harrisburg was just a car ride away. Something else happened in those three years that made us realize that our brother Joe was home. You, the people of Harrisburg, embraced him as your Bishop, your priest and your friend. So many times he would say to us, “The people are wonderful and have a great love of God and the Church.”

He was so happy visiting your parishes, schools and attending any event he could fit in his schedule. After each occasion, he would call one of us on the phone and tell us all about his visits, and how he always felt at home in your presence.

Our brother Joe always said he could find the best things in Philadelphia, but that all began to change in the last three years and suddenly Harrisburg had the best things, especially their Easter eggs. He truly loved his new ministry and being your Shepherd.

On May 2, for some reason God wanted your Bishop and our brother to go home to heaven with Him. We are sad and sometimes troubled by all this. Yet the words of your Bishop, “Do not be afraid,” ring in our ears and we continue to live life as he did. We know we will all be joined together with him in heaven someday.

We wish to thank you for your goodness to us during the funeral days in Harrisburg. Your hospitality, caring, kind words, Mass cards, flowers, and meals are so appreciated. It is impossible to thank each one of you individually, and so we chose to do it here in your Catholic Witness.

So thank you for all you did to make Bishop Joe feel at home during his time with you. Thank you for accepting Joe, not just as your bishop and Shepherd, but as a family member of the Diocese of Harrisburg. Joe often told people “Family is wealth.” Well, he was blessed with wealth in the Diocese of Harrisburg. And you truly were blessed with wealth in the Diocese of Harrisburg.

We continue to remember you in our prayers, and we ask you to continue to keep us in yours. We know we have many friends in Harrisburg, and we thank God and Bishop Joe for that. We finish using words Joe so often spoke, “Pray for me as I pray for you.”

God’s blessing always.

Gratefully,
John and Muffie McFadden
Sister Jane
Ellen and Pat McConney
And all the family of Bishop Joseph McFadden

Two amendments were attached to the bill that O’Hara said would have weakened it. The amendments were narrowly defeated. The overall bill passed by a vote of 31-19, and now goes to the governor’s desk to be enacted.

Edel Finnegan, executive director of the Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia, was gratified by passage of the bill because it means “taxpayers are not forced to pay for abortions” under the health care law, she said.

She believed the health care reform law and the state and federal exchanges it calls for are confusing to people, but “even people who are marginally pro-life, they don’t want to pay for abortions,” she said.

And although people might not want to get active politically, the efforts of the state Catholic conference and dioceses made it easier for people to stay informed. She praised the use of frequent e-mail messages that made it easy to contact a legislator to urge passage of the bill or to offer thanks for an affirmative vote.

“When the dignity of the unborn child and the damage of abortion causes us to act, it’s a good thing,” Finnegan said. “When we are working to advocate for the dignity of the human person, we are building a culture of life.”

(Gambino is director and general manager of CatholicPhilly.com and FaithMagazine.com, the news and magazine websites of the Philadelphia Archdiocese.)

Harrisburg Diocese

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the state, which the bill, H.B. 818, accomplished. The new state bill also prohibits funding for abortion in private health care plans that include a federal subsidy.

Pro-life advocates were pleased with the Senate’s passage of the bill.


“Pennsylvanians can be pleased that House Bill 818 has passed the full state Senate and is headed to Governor Corbett for signature,” he said. “The legislation wisely prohibits taxpayer-funded insurance plans created by the federal health care exchange from covering elective abortions.

“Abortion is violence of the most intimate sort. It has nothing to do with sound medical care, and people shouldn’t be forced to fund it. I am grateful to the legislators who had the courage to take a stand for the dignity of human life and to all who encouraged them to do so.

“Much work remains to be done,” the archbishop said. “The effort to protect and promote a culture of life will be ongoing. May God deepen our commitment to advancing the dignity of women and their children – born and unborn.”

“The Senate took a stand in support of the dignity of human life,” said Robert J. O’Hara, executive director of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference. “I applaud the efforts of the sponsors of this legislation. ... I also appreciate the senators who voted across party lines in support of life.”

Voting Records on Weakening Amendments

Two amendments were attached to House Bill 818 that would have weakened it. Votes against these weakening amendments were a courageous stand for the pro-life cause. View the chart below to see if your Senator voted “no” on the weakening amendments. If he or she did, please send a note of thanks. If your Senator voted “yes” on the weakening amendments, thus undermining the intent of the bill, please ask them to cast pro-life votes in the future. Find information on contacting your Senator under the “Current Alerts” section at www.pacatholic.org, the Web site of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference.

(Voting records provided by the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference.)

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Receiving The Catholic Witness electronically is a great way for college students and people who live outside of the diocese to stay in touch with the Church in Harrisburg. It’s also an alternative for those who wish to read the paper online instead of receiving a copy in the mail.

Registration with the e-mail service will not automatically cancel your mailed subscription. If you prefer to receive the online version instead of a copy in the mail, contact our Circulation Coordinator, Susan Hunterberger, at shunterberger@hbgdiocese.org or 717-657-4804, ext. 201, with your Witness account number, and your name, address and phone number.

And remember, previous editions of the newspaper – dating back to early 2011 – are also available online. You can find them at www.hbgdiocese.org. Just follow the News/Events tab to The Catholic Witness page.
Caregivers Examine Spirituality of Suffering during Enrichment Day at Holy Spirit

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

As part of its celebration of 50 years of carrying out the healing ministry of Jesus, Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill hosted on June 14 a professional enrichment day for spiritual care ministers, presented by the Executive Director of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.

The daylong program focused on the spiritualty of suffering and its impact on those who care for the spiritual needs of others.

The enrichment program was geared toward chaplains, pastoral care ministers, nurses and others who serve in spiritual care ministries.

"In healthcare, we care for the whole person — body, mind and spirit, and for their emotional, physical and social needs," Dr. David Lichter, Executive Director of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains, told The Catholic Witness.

"It’s important to appreciate that the filter through which people look at suffering is oftentimes a religious one," he said. "That is critical to being able to connect with people as they process their suffering."

Established in 1965 by the United States Bishops for those ministering in healthcare, the National Association of Catholic Chaplains promotes the Catholic healthcare profession and offers education, certification and support for its members.

"We promote spiritual care within the healthcare arena so that chaplains and pastoral ministers are understood as members of the healthcare team," Dr. Lichter explained. "As much as there are physical and emotional needs, there are spiritual needs as well, and all of them are important to address for healing."

During a series of presentations during the workshop, held in the hospital auditorium, Dr. Lichter addressed the spirituality of suffering, various understandings of suffering from different faith traditions, and how the personal sufferings of caregivers impact their care for the needs of others.

Dr. Lichter pointed to several studies indicating a correlation between patients who experience a dissonance with their religious beliefs, and their ability to heal.

"Suffering is a human experience, and connecting with patients is critical for them to embrace their suffering," Dr. Lichter said. "We as caregivers have to tend to our own sufferings as well so that we are free to be present to those in our care."

Adorers of the Blood of Christ Sister Margaret Washington, Director of Pastoral Care at Holy Spirit Hospital, said the enrichment programs that the hospital hosts on an annual basis "are wonderful opportunities for Catholic caregivers to come together in our various professions."

The enrichment program featuring Dr. Lichter drew caregivers from several states, and "is one of the events we're looking forward to celebrating the hospital's 50th anniversary," she said.

Pastoral care services at Holy Spirit include Masses, bereavement programs, ecmemical memorial services, palliative care services and enrichment programs for caregivers.

The pastoral care staff is available around the clock for patients, families and hospital personnel. For more information on the services provided by the pastoral care department, call 717-763-2118.

Father Meluskey

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Spanish Apostolate at St. Patrick Parish in York from 1959-1962. From 1962-1967, he served at St. Edward Parish in Shamokin, and then spent four years as chaplain of the State Hospital in Harrisburg and to the Sisters of Mercy at Mercycrest Convict in Harrisburg.

In 1971, Father Meluskey was assigned to St. Coolumba Parish in Bloomsburg, and then to St. Joseph Parish in Danville, where he also served as the Director of Migrant Ministries. He then served as administrator of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Lancaster from 1973-1976.


Father Forrey also recalled Father Meluskey’s “tremendous” passion for his ministry and the Rosary, or praying his Divine Office, “He had a wonderful sense of humor, and I might add, he was a talented golfer.”

Golf was Father Meluskey’s greatest hobby. He began playing the sport when he was in the seminary, and told The Catholic Witness in a 2009 interview that he played “on 17 percent of America’s finest courses.” He also coordinated the Priest/Deacon Golf Association in the diocese, which started in 1968.

The greatest aspect of golf, Father Meluskey said, was being paired up with strangers, which afforded opportunities for evangelization. “Many a lax Catholic has met on the course and this was an occasion to witness to the faith,” he said.

Father Meluskey is survived by a brother, James Meluskey, and two sisters, Joan Delp and Mary Meluskey.

Letters of condolence may be sent to his brother, Father Meluskey, 5 Woodland Estates, Lebanon, PA 17042.

Pilgrimage for World Peace through Conversion

Thursday, August 1
National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, Emmitsburg, Md.

For the 26th year, the annual Pilgrimage for World Peace through Conversion of Heart will be held at the National Shrine Grotto. The pilgrimage is a day of prayer, reflection and spiritual growth.

The day will begin with orientation in the Chapel on the Hill at 10 a.m., followed by the Sacrament of Reconciliation from 10:15-11:30 a.m., Rosary at the Grotto at 1:18 p.m. (weather permitting), Mass at the Grotto at noon (weather permitting, celeberate and homilist to be announced).

Lunch is on your own, followed by the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Prayer of Consecration at the Grotto from 2-2:30, and a Holy Hour with the Chaplet of Divine Mercy in the Chapel from 2:30-3:30 (homilist, Deacon Michael Grella). The day concludes at 4 p.m.

No transportation is provided. Parishioners are encouraged to carpool, and parishes are encouraged to rent a bus if feasible.

For further information, contact Deacon Tom Lang at DeaconTomLang@verizon.net or 717-599-1973.
Answering the Pope’s Challenge

By Christopher Meehan
Special to The Witness

I recently read a news story about Pope Francis where he shared some personal moments with a group of 200,000 in St. Peter’s Square. It was the latest in a series of simple straightforward remarks that has defined the Holy Father’s early tenure.

During the question and answer session, Pope Francis repeated his call for Catholics “to do more to seek out those fringes of society who need help the most.” He also commented that “it breaks my heart to say that finding a homeless person who has died from the cold is not news. Today, the news is scandals, but the many children who do not have food — that is not news. This is grave. We can’t rest easy while things are this way.”

The Holy Father also challenged all Christians to “become courageous and seek out those who need help the most.”

As the largest provider of social services in the United States, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Harrisburg exists to respond to the human service needs of people throughout the 15 counties of the Diocese.

And the needs are many. Each day, our dedicated staff provides help and creates hope for those who need it most. Through our counseling services, youth and family programs, and our residential facilities, Catholic Charities does everything we can to answer the types of challenges that Pope Francis identified.

To accomplish this mission, we need your help. Our agency relies heavily on the generosity of those who support us. Our services are offered regardless of an individual’s ability to pay. Without the help of our donors, our ability to respond to the many calls for help is severely limited.


I’ll give you one small example. Every year, one of our donors hosts a Christmas party at their home. In lieu of gifts, all of the guests are asked to make a charitable gift to Catholic Charities. The checks we receive range from small to larger amounts. When everything is added up, the event generates a very nice donation for one of our programs.

Another example is the donor who sends us a small donation every month. By spreading their gift over the course of a year, this individual is able to help make a larger difference without taking a larger, one-time bite from their monthly budget.

These are just two ways that people from our community have demonstrated their commitment to the Holy Father’s challenge to be courageous and seek out those who need help the most. None of us can do it alone. But together, we can all do whatever we can to address the crisis of poverty in our world. Every little bit helps.

On behalf of those individuals that we are grateful to serve, I thank you for all that you do for Catholic Charities. May God continue to bless you and your families. For more information about Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Harrisburg, please visit us online at www.hbgdiocese.org.

(Christopher Meehan is the Director of Development for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Harrisburg.)

A Special Mercy

By Mary Mcclusky
Special to The Witness

Like many others, I have been looking forward to the Papal Mass in St. Peter’s Square as part of the Year of Faith’s “Celebration of Evangelium Vitae: Faith- ful Life.”

The Holy Father’s encyclical on the Gospel of Life. As I began to wonder what message Pope Francis might deliver on June 16 at his first papal Mass dedicated to the cause of life, my mind drifted back to a muddy day in St. Louis fourteen years ago.

I was part of a pro-life prayer and witness walk across the country during my summer college break. While we were out for dinner at a pub one night, I went to the bar to refill my drink and accidentally bumped into a woman. When I apologized, she asked me about our group. At my reply, her indignation was apparent: “What do a bunch of Catholic college kids know about abortion? Have you ever had one?” I admitted that I hadn’t and didn’t know anyone who had. She said, “Well, it’s easy to preach about something you don’t know anything about. But until you’ve walked in a woman’s shoes, you won’t understand.”

Once I admitted that it probably did seem like I thought I had all the answers, and that I had no first-hand knowledge of what an abortion is like, “Louise” opened up to me and told me she’d had three abortions over the course of two long and difficult relationships.

I’ll never forget the despondency in her voice as she gripped her half-empty beer glass and asked, “Who’s going to marry me now?” It broke my heart to hear her say that despite having a good career, many friends, and an apartment in the city, she still felt unlovable and unworthy by her past. Shame and guilt kept her from having any hope of finding love and getting married.

I listened and told “Louise” that God loved her, and that he could forgive anything. Although we never spoke again, she opened my eyes to the wound that abortion inflicts on a woman’s heart and soul.

Pope Blessed John Paul II recognized this wound by including a “special word to women who have had an abortion” in Evangelium Vitae (no. 99). He encouraged them to trust in God’s mercy, promising them hope, peace and healing, especially through the sacrament of reconciliation.

The Year of Faith event in Rome celebrated, affirmed, and encouraged all those who sacrifice time and energy to tend to the needs of those who are elderly, disabled, sick, unborn, or dying, or to those who suffer in any way. Evangelum Vitae’s special words to post-abortive women remind us that it is also vital for advocates of the Gospel of Life to reach out in love and support to post-abortive women and all those affected by abortion.

As pilgrims from across the world gathered with Pope Francis for what he called “a special moment especially for those who care about the defense of the sanctity of human life,” may we unite with them in prayer and remember the special needs of women who have experienced an abortion.

Let us pray that we might see Christ in them, lovingly offer them hope for relief of their pain and suffering, and bring to them God’s special message of mercy, hope and healing.

If someone you know has been affected by abortion, she (or he) can find help and a referral to a listening ear and compassionate heart at a local Project Rachel ministry by visiting www.hopeafterabortion.com.

(Mary McClusky is Special Projects Coordinator at the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. To learn more about the bishops’ pro-life activities, go to www.usccb.org/prolife.)

Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat for Post-Abortion Healing

August 2-4
Mariawald Retreat Center, Reading, PA

If you are hurting from an abortion experience, come enter into a healing weekend with others sharing the same pain. There is no judgment, only compassion and mercy.

Totally confidential. Contact Joy for more information at rvpamd@gmail.com or 717-788-4959.
During this Year of Faith, The Catholic Witness presents a series of articles examining the various documents, principles, and values that have shaped the history of Catholic Social Teaching. The series is produced in conjunction with the Diocesan Commission on Catholic Social Doctrine, which works to promote understanding of Catholic Social Teaching while also preparing the Church and its members for work in the common good.

The Fourth commandment [also] re- minds grown children of their responsibility toward their parents. As much as they can, they must give them material and moral support in old age and in times of illness, loneliness, or distress (CCC 2121). Parish visitors, for example, often find it a task of visiting the elderly sometimes find the elderly parents being cared for in the home of one of their children. I also know of young men and women who delayed a vocational call to the priesthood or religious life in order to continue to care for elderly parents.

The community aspect of the family is also expressed in the love and care shown for the senior members of the family who may or may not live within the family home. Their presence, especially to the younger members of the family, can be of great value. Both the young and old benefit from the relationship. Grandchildren who are comforted and cared for when the child was held close and gently rocked. One of these children, now a married mother, sees her grandmother singing to her granddaughter to comfort them and help them sleep. It always worked especially well when the child was held close and gently rocked. One of these children, now a married mother, sees her grandmother singing to her granddaughter to comfort them and help them sleep. It always worked especially well when the child was held close and gently rocked. One of these children, now a married mother, sees her grandmother singing to her granddaughter to comfort them and help them sleep. 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The Catholic Church values the family in the larger society comes with a corresponding responsibility on the part of the society. "Society should never fail in its fundamental task of respecting and fostering the family" (Familiaris Consortio). "Society, and in particular its political institutions, has the duty to guarantee and foster the genuine identity of the family and its role in society, in order to guarantee and foster the genuine identity of the family and its role in society, in order to guarantee and foster the genuine identity of the family and its role in society, in order to guarantee and foster the genuine identity of the family and its role in society, in order to guarantee and foster the genuine identity of the family and its role in society, in order to guarantee and foster the genuine identity of the family and its role in society, in order to."

Examination of Conscience

- Do I try to make positive contributions in my family and in my community?
- Am I a good listener and communicator in my family?
- Do I try to understand and support my family members, even when they make decisions that differ from my own?
- Do I support the efforts of poor persons to work for the common good and for change in their neighborhoods and communities?
- Do I do my part to bring care and aid to those who live in poverty, the handicapped, the sick, the elderly, the young, and the outcast?
- Do I try to make positive contributions in my family and in my community?
- Am I a good listener and communicator in my family?
- Do I try to understand and support my family members, even when they make decisions that differ from my own?
- Do I support the efforts of poor persons to work for the common good and for change in their neighborhoods and communities?
- Do I do my part to bring care and aid to those who live in poverty, the handicapped, the sick, the elderly, the young, and the outcast?
The Roots of a Religious Vocation

Smith Siblings Recall How Farm Work, Faith Life Nourished their Vocations

By Jen Reed

The Catholic Witness

An old Jesuit farm in the valley below the Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Conewago Township, Adams County, has yielded much produce over the years. For generations, the Smith family has farmed this land, giving long and hard hours to plowing fields, watering crops, and raising cows and chickens.

And the farm has given in return — milk, eggs, corn, soy, beets and wheat.

The Smith family has also sown special seeds there — ones that, through the grace of God, yielded three religious vocations more than 50 years ago.

The farm, the Basilica and Conewago are home to Msgr. Thomas Smith and Christian Charity Sisters Mary Mark and Thomasine Smith. The siblings, three of 13 children raised by Mark and Anna Smith, have given a combined total of 160 years of service to the Catholic Church.

The oldest of the Smith siblings, Msgr. Smith is pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Lancaster and currently the oldest working pastor in the Diocese of Harrisburg at age 82. He has been a priest for 56 years.

Sister Mary Mark (formerly Anna Smith) has served as a teacher and principal in the Dioceses of Harrisburg, Scranton and Allentown, and in New York and New Jersey. She has been a religious sister for 54 years, and currently serves as the Sisters of Christian Charity as local coordinator of their motherhouse in Mendham, N.J., and as Provincial Counselor.

Sister Thomasine (formerly Jane Smith), who is celebrating her 50th jubilee, has served as cook for the Sisters of Christian Charity in the Dioceses of Harrisburg and Scranton, and in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. She is currently a pastoral assistant in Rockaway, N.J.

Work Ethic

For the Smith siblings, work continued to run deep on the family farm, where they worked before and after school once they started second grade.

The Smith children went to Sacred Heart School and then on to Delone Catholic High School in McSherrystown.

Season after season, year after year, as Tom, Anna and Jane grew, so did their faith and their desire to serve God.

On the farm, the youngest children tended to the cows — the boys fed them and the girls milked them. They also washed and crated eggs from the chicken house. As they grew older, they were tasked with tending to the fields, plowing or bailing hay.

The family sold milk and eggs, and were sustained by the homegrown food that they canned and by the steers, pigs and chickens they raised for meat.

In the summertime, the children picked cherries for Musselman’s in Biglerville, and were allowed to use the money they earned to purchase pencils, notebooks and book bags for the upcoming school year.

“They weren’t the easiest days with the amount of work there was, but that work ethic was valuable, and it continues to serve us,” Msgr. Smith said.

“We didn’t have much money, but we had family, we had food, we had faith — everything that we needed,” he said.

They prayed the Rosary daily as a family, and faithfully attended Masses and novenas at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, where 11 generations of the Smith family have worshipped since ancestors Charles and Annie first joined in 1763.

Charles, who served in the Revolutionary War, and his wife are buried in the church cemetery, the final resting place of many of the generations that followed them.

Growing up in Conewago Township “was like living in a history book,” Msgr. Smith said. From generation to generation, family members recounted the history of the Basilica, Charles Smith’s service in Valley Forge, and the family’s generous offerings of chicken or ham to soldiers who passed through during the Civil War.

Along with the stories of the honest work and deep faith of their ancestors, the Smith children also found such exemplary models in their parents.

Sister Mary Mark recalled a vivid example of seeing her mother’s faith in action.

The children were working on the farm one afternoon when Anna (Sister Mary Mark) heard a beam in the barn begin to crack. She tracked down her mother in the chicken house to tell her of the impending trouble. Her mother sent one of the boys into the field to get their father, then ran into the house, found a badge of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pinned it to the barn wall and said, “He will take care of it.”

“That’s just one example of what we lived by,” Sister Mary Mark said. “All we had to do was follow Mom and Daddy.”

Hard work and faith in God are part and parcel of the Smith family, Sister Thomasine said.

“There was no time to sit around or say you were going to go rest,” she noted. “But, my father gave us recreation too. After lunch, we would play baseball and then rest underneath the shade trees before we went back to work.”

“We grew up with the attitude that if there was a job to do, we were going to do it, and do it well,” she said. “And if we didn’t do it well, we were going to do it over.”

Placing Seeds

Several members of the Smith family have entered religious life over the generations — some as Jesuit priests, others as religious sisters in various congregations. When Tom, Anna and Jane were growing up, they knew of local families whose children were pursuing a

JEN REED, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

Msgr. Thomas Smith, the oldest of the 13 Smith siblings, with a photo taken not long after his ordination in 1957. In his 56 years of ministry in the Diocese of Harrisburg, he has served at St. Columbia Parish in Bloomsburg, St. Peter Parish in Mount Carmel, Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill, and as pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Annville and St. Joseph Parish in Lancaster. At 82, he is currently the oldest serving pastor in the diocese.
Siblings

Continued from 6

religious vocation.

“I remember Mom saying to me, ‘When your dad and I got married, we agreed that if God gave us any children, we would never stand in the way of what they wanted to do in their lives.’” Sister Mary Mark recalled.

Tom was the first to enter religious life.

“She pointed to me – maybe a minus sign if they didn’t think so, and a question mark if they were unsure. ‘I put a plus down, and I never changed my mind after that.’” Sister Mary Mark recalled.

When she entered high school, the Sisters of Christian Charity, who were teaching at Delone, invited her to attend a weekend retreat on the grounds of their motherhouse in Mendham, N.J.

She said Sister Helene was particularly adamant about young Anna’s presence and said, “She told me I had to go to the convent and get away with it!”

Sister Mark entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Christian Charity in Mendham after graduating from Delone Catholic High School.

In those days, religious communities had some strict rules about going home for family visits. The Sisters of Christian Charity, for instance, were permitted to return home just three times during their life. Those rules were relaxed after the Second Vatican Council, but they were never deuterons to Sister Mary Mark and Sister Thomasine.

“We didn’t give those rules a second thought, because religious life was what we wanted,” Sister Mary Mark said.

Sister Thomasine was drawn to the Sisters of Christian Charity as a young child, several years before they would teach her at Delone. She was attracted by their jovial nature and their confectionary skills, she said. On Sundays, the religious sisters serving in Conewago and McSherrystown – the Sisters of Christian Charity as well as the Sisters of St. Joseph at Sacred Heart – went for walks through the area, enjoying the outdoors and stopping to visit with families.

When the Sisters of Christian Charity stopped at the Smith house, they often brought cake, and the children welcomed the treat, Sister Thomasine said. One day, Sister Volerja, a Sister of Christian Charity, asked young Jane (Sister Thomasine) what she wanted. Jane replied that she wanted to be a Sister of St. Joseph. “I told Sister Valeria, ‘At Sacred Heart, the girls get out of school 15 minutes early to go to the convent and help the Sisters of St. Joseph. We take their wash off the line and fold it. Then, we get hot chocolate, a cookie and a holy card,’” Sister Thomasine recalled.

Sister Valeria responded, “I can do one better. You can come to our convent, take down and fold twice the amount of clothes, and we’ll give you two cups of hot chocolate, two cookies and two holy cards.”

“I was sold!” Sister Thomasine said. “To a kid in grade school, two cookies always won.”

As time went by, she found herself drawn to the smiles and friendly disposition of the Sisters of Christian Charity. And, during trips with the family to visit her older sister in Mendham, she encountered “a welcoming atmosphere that radiated happiness.”

After high school, she too decided to enter the Congregation of the Sisters of Christian Charity. Sister Mary Mark was in her first assignment – teaching at St. Boniface in Wilmington, Pa. – when her sister called to say she was entering.

“I had no clue that she had even been thinking about it,” she said of St. Thomasine, “but I was happy nonetheless.”

Return to Roots

Just as they have reap the blessings from the family farm, so too have the members of the Smith family enjoyed the blessings of three members who continue to serve the Church.

Msgr. Smith, Sister Mary Mark and Sister Thomasine show photos of themselves as novices with the Sisters of Christian Charity some 50 years ago. Sister Mary Mark, who currently serves the Sisters of Charity as the local coordinator of their motherhouse in Mendham, N.J., and as Provincial Counselor, taught in the Diocese of Harrisburg at St. Lawrence in Harrisburg. She has been serving the Church for 54 years. Sister Thomasine, currently a pastoral assistant in Rockaway, N.J., was a longtime cook for the community, including at Holy Spirit Camp in Camp Hill. She is celebrating her 60th jubilee this year.
June 1863 was a pulse pounding time in south central Pennsylvania as more than 90,000 Confederate soldiers invaded Franklin, Cumberland, Adams and York counties on their large, but last, grand invasion of the north. Having marched more than 150 miles in two weeks, Robert E. Lee’s Army of the Virginia was robbing, ransoming and plundering the faithful farm families whose bounty-rich barns littered the rolling valley floors. Hot on their tails was the Army of the Potomac, whose morale was low after two drubbings outside of Fredericksburg, Virginia, in the winter and spring of 1862-63. And to make matters worse, the persistent intrigue that polarized the Union high command and Lincoln Administration grew worse, the persistent intrigue that was hardly Lincoln’s pick as a saving warrior. In faint praise, he commented that if nothing else “he would fight well on his own dung heap.”

With the armies spread out from Carlisle to Northern Virginia, to say affairs were more than fluid would be an understatement. Twenty days that month rain poured down, turning roads into muddy quagmires – but after each drenching downpour, the sun would shine and the mud would turn to dust in a day. Soldiers in both great armies suffered personal discomfort as they chased and eluded each other before finally clashing in Gettysburg on July 1-3, 150 years ago in what is still considered to be the biggest and bloodiest battle ever fought in the Western Hemisphere.

For the common soldier that was marching more than 20 miles a day in the rain, mud and dust to follow, they knew something big was about to happen. One soldier in the Irish Brigade wrote home to New York that, “Something big is going to happen, yet we know not what and where.”

Both armies had vaunted brigades (Iron, Stonewall, Irish) in their legions that had fought gallantly through great battles like Antietam and Fredericksburg. A brigade usually consisted of five regiments that on paper would give a brigade nearly 5,000 men. But as the war wore on, brigades usually brought 3,500 men into battle in a division that consisted of four brigades. For Civil War generals, moving large divisions quickly and striking the enemy on the move was the greatest challenge and rarely did it occur with precision; however, numerous times in the war a brigade ably led did strike fast and unleash a deadly punch or counterpunch in battle.

One brigade that had earned a reputation for hard fighting was the Union’s Irish Brigade, which was home to three New York regiments and both a Massachusetts and Pennsylvania regiment. Not only were these men fearless fighters, they were Catholic men whose families had already been through war even before this great Civil War erupted.

In a four-year period in the mid-1840’s, nearly a million Irish Catholics immigrated to the United States. New York City had the largest enclave of Irish who worked in the mills, foundries and sanitation services as the country’s growing cities industrialized. These men were great manufacturing hubs and both a Massachusetts and Pennsylvania regiment. Not only were there a thousand men. Catholic school children from the Catholic text editions.

Chris Heisey, The Catholic Witness

The Catholic Witness

By Chris Heisey

The Catholic Witness

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In a four-year period in the mid-1840’s, nearly a million Irish Catholics immigrated to the United States. New York City had the largest enclave of Irish who worked in the mills, foundries and sanitation services as the country’s growing cities industrialized. These men were great manufacturing hubs and both a Massachusetts and Pennsylvania regiment. Not only were they tactics poured into the quaint Quaker City of Philadelphia that the city became a simmering keg ready to explode. The peace loving Quakers, happy in their red brick homes and simple businesses, were not ready for the onslaught of Irish immigrants looking for work on the city’s growing textile factories and foundries.

So many Catholic school children flooded the parochial schools that the public schools had to accommodate the overflow Irish youth. It was common practice in public schools in those days to study from the King James Version of the Holy Bible, but before long Bishop Patrick Kenrick petitioned the city’s board to allow Catholics to study from the Catholic text editions.

When the board agreed with the bishop, the Nativist bigots who feared a Rome takeover of politics and societal norms rioted and targeted prominent Catholics in the Kensington and Levittown parts of Philadelphia. When a stray bullet killed a leading Nativist instigator, the Nativists rallied together and ransacked and burned Irish Catholic homes with little mind to conscience. They attacked the convent of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and when an outraged Sister Mary opened the door and stared them down, they pelted her with rocks. Bloodied and unconscious, she was dragged inside by two of her pupils as gunfire erupted from across
Irish Brigade

Continued from B

the street to disperse the ter-
rorists.

The mobs left and sought out
the convent of the Sisters
of Charity and burned the
buildings along with the
parish buildings of St.
Michaels’s and St. Augus-
tine’s. The Nativists hauled
out 5,000 of the Augustine
priests’ books and lit a bon-
fire so grand that the en-
tire city could see the glow.

When the Hibernia Fire
Company arrived, they too
were stoned and shot, and
the riots continued with retri-
sion on both sides. Scores
were dead, hundreds injured
and property destroyed in
these ugly clashes.

So tense was the situation
and so real the possibility
that the violence would ex-
calate elsewhere that Bishop
Hughes of New York warned
the mayor, Robert Morris:

“If a single Catholic church
is burned in New York, the
city will become a second
Moscow,” he told him.

“Are you afraid, bishop?”
the old smug mayor said.

“No sir,” the bishop said.

“But I am afraid that some
of yours will be burned. I came
to warn you that some of
yours will be burned if this
continues.”

Nearly 30 percent of New
York City by 1855 was Irish
Catholic — in a representative
democracy that’s enough mi-
nority numbers to hold veto
power and elect local con-
gressmen of your persua-
sion. Not only did the rioting
get violent but the politics
grew murky and corrupt.
Irish Catholic gangs (the
Dead Rabbits) paddled the
voting rolls with deceased
names by copying them off
tombstones in the local cem-
eteries.

By the eve of the Civil War
tensions still boiled, though
the Irish made steady prog-
res in economic advances. While
they were still called “dirty and
dumb,” more and more Irish pubs, bookstores
and dock businesses opened.
Soon the going wage for a
dock worker was 87 cents a
day with ten hour days rather
than 12.

As the Civil War broke
out, it was not clear if the
Irish would support a Lin-
coln Administration that was
favored with Republicans who
had once championed many
of the Nativist arguments in
the now defunct Whig party.

Leery were the Irish of Re-
publicans who on one hand
sought the limits of slavery
and its evil, but on the other,
the party was not a big tent
just yet on religious and eth-
nic equality.

Archbishop John Hughes
supported the Union, but he
dreaded the coming plague
of war. “It will be the most
sanguinary if not ferocious
war that ever dismayed hu-
manity.”

The Irish were predomin-
nately Democrats who want-
ed nothing to do with abol-
ishing slavery and throwing
the social order into chaos
with emancipated slaves
looking for labor on the free
market. But still, Union and
country trumped their poli-
tics, and patriotic fervor led
them to fight for a country
they had come to love as
their new home.

The stalwart regiment
that the Irish Brigade would
eventually be built around
was the 69th New York. They
were loyal, hardy men who
went off to war just after the
first shots were fired at Fort
Sumter. The 69th marched
down Broadway with their
beautiful battle flag unfurled
that depicted shamrocks
and harps floated behind
in bright Irish green hue.

“Riamh na druid o shaírn
lann,” was inscribed in Gael-
c: “They should not retreat
from the clash of spears.”

And when they came
upon St. Patrick’s Cathedral,
Archbishop Hughes said to
them, “I will be deeply af-
licted if they should be less
than brave in battle, less than
human and kind after the
battle is over… nor should
they bring tarnish to their
name, their country and re-
ligion.”

In the war’s first big clash
at Bull Run near Manassas,
Virginia, in July 1861, the
Irish Brigade was in the mid-
dle of the heaviest fighting
on Henry Hill and thought
terrible carnage was theirs until
a Confederate counterattack
sent them fleeing, along with
more than 30,000 other Van-
kees, back into the environs
of Washington.

At Antietam, the brigade
attacked the Sunken Road
and suffered horrendous ca-
sualties trying to grab the
high ground around Piper
Farm. Tenacity and bravery
won the day as the Confed-
erates were dislodged from a
perfect killing trench that the
Irish were able to outflank
after terrible carnage on the
afternoon of September 17,
1862.

Three months later, the
Irish Brigade was given
the suicidal order to attack
the Stone Wall on Marye’s
Heights at Fredericksburg.
The attack, arguably the
war’s most gallant assault,
was a disaster, and the Irish
 Brigade suffered more than
500 casualties attacking a
wall lined with rebel mus-
kets on December 13, 1862.

The Irish Brigade was bat-
tled tested and under-manned
when it made the 150-mile
march from Gettysburg in June
1863 from Virginia. On the
battle’s second day, the Bri-
gade was again asked to go
into a “Maelstrom of Death”
as the Rebels were attacking
in force against the Union’s
right flank on Little Round
Top, Devil’s Den, the Peach
Orchard and The Rose
Wheelfield.

In one of the battle’s great
moments and the war’s most
legendary events, as the Bri-
gade was asked to race into
a field without the sacra-
tion for he felt strongly that
no soldier should die on the
battlefield without the sacra-
tion was intended for all in
quantum possum,” Father
Corby said after the battle.

Not only for the brigade but
for all North or South who
were susceptible of it, and
were about to appear before
their Judge.”

Before the war was over,
Father Corby was a legend
and hero, returned to Notre
Dame University where he
later became a two-term
president of the prestigious
school, whose moniker “The
Fighting Irish” was surely
earned on a hallowed Penn-
sylvania battlefield 150 years
earlier.

Writer’s Note:
If you think there is noth-
ing new or more to say about
the Battle of Gettysburg –
after all there are about
50,000 books that have been
published about the battle in
some small or large way over
the past 150 years, that’s about
350 per year or near-
ly one every day since the
campaign ended in mid-July
1863 – you would be wrong.
A book that is the most
Get-
tysburg: The Last Invasion
by Gettysburg College pro-
fessor Dr. Allen Guelzo. It’s
a terrific book that not only
uses primary sources but
uses many superb secondary
sources on which to base his
conclusions. It’s worth read-
ing even if you have read
very Gettysburg book there is.
And if you have not read
many, Dr. Guelzo brings the
novice along so the big pic-
ture is always in view. If you
are interested in the Irish
Brigade, God Help the Irish!
by Philip Thomas Tucker is
very detailed and written by
an experienced historian.
And The Greatest Brigade
by Thomas Caughwell is less
detailed but provides many
interesting vignettes on the
brigade’s remarkable Civil
War experience.
Meet Our World Youth Day Correspondent

Hi! My name is Alexandra Gabriele Genevieve Parisi, and I will be 16 in July. I was born in Hollywood, Fla., and grew up there until the age of seven. Since then, I have lived in Mendham, N.J., sometimes even spending the night a few blocks away from my friends. I grew up in a Catholic family with a strong faith. I spend time at the chapel of Holy Spirit Hospital in conjunction with my faith, and pray for us as we will be praying for you.

I am a very fun, sweet, loving, patient, outgoing person who loves to help others. I have always enjoyed helping others, but in order for me to receive Confirmation in eighth grade, I had to complete 20 service hours. After recording all of them, I ended up with 300 hours! The person who inspired me the most to do so is our Squirettes of Mary Circle, which is the only one in the country with the largest number of Christian base communities and small faith-sharing groups popular in Latin America especially.

More than 2 million people are expected to participate in the festivities, and Pope Francis will join the pope in the celebration. His visit will coincide with the closing Mass of World Youth Day, scheduled for July 25. The pope will visit Brazil to speak to the youth, the new generations.”

In Brazil, the various lay movements such as Focolare and others are popular among Catholic laity in Brazil as well as a locally popular method for reading and understanding the Bible developed by a Carmelite monk from Belo Horizonte.

In Rio, Pope Francis can expect to find what Bingemer calls a post-modern youth shaped by the same materialism and cultural forces that contemporary youth anywhere might experience.

“Consumerism is the post-modern ideology and God is the one thing they do not need about the need to look to the poor, to be interested in them,” she said, adding that visitors to Rio should prepare to experience a very beautiful city but also one marked by contrasts with very rich and poor living in close proximity.

Brazil, she said, had been known as the country with the largest number of Christian base communities and small faith-sharing groups popular in Latin America especially, “and I am confident it will come back,” Bingemer said.

The charismatic movement is the one that catches the most young people because of the music. The youngsters are captured by the music, the possibility of expressing themselves through singing songs, sacred rock, the mixture of gospel and rock and the charismatic movement knows how to do that,” Bingemer said.

We are expecting more than 2 million people, houses are being prepared, families are staying in touch and sharing their stories as often and conveniently as possible. We are excited to have the faithful of diocese journey with us, for he is there for us. Every time I talk/pray to God about going on this pilgrimage, he always tells me “Do not be afraid.”

I am a very fun, sweet, loving, patient, outgoing person who loves to help others. I have always enjoyed helping others, but in order for me to receive Confirmation in eighth grade, I had to complete 20 service hours. After recording all of them, I ended up with 300 hours! The summer of 2012, I began to volunteer at Bethany Village for the Alzheimer’s unit, and this summer I am able to continue there as an intern. I also help out at my church as an altar server. I serve Mass many times a month and I can expect to find what Bingemer calls a post-modern youth shaped by the same materialism and cultural forces that contemporary youth anywhere might experience.

You can journey with diocesan pilgrims as they prepare for, and participate in, World Youth Day this July by creating an account at http://youhandyoungadult.ning.com. The Diocesan Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry has created this site, called a “Ning,” to offer a one-stop-shop for online social media.

Here, you will find blogs, photos and Facebook posts related to World Youth Day. Leading up to World Youth Day, there will be social media postings about the pilgrimages and its sites posted on the WYD group. During World Youth Day, photojournalist Emily Albert from The Catholic Witness will join young adult correspondents in sharing updates during the pilgrimage.

Through the Ning site, The Catholic Witness and youth correspondents will be able to stay in touch and share their stories as often and conveniently as possible. We are excited to have the faithful of diocese journey with us and pray for us as we will be praying for you.

Interactive participation on the Ning site is available to those who sign up to become members. Once you establish your account at http://youhandyoungadult.ning.com, and have been approved by the moderators here at the diocese, you will want to join the WYD group. Join the Ning group today to unite with other peers as they prepare for this faith-filled experience!

Providence College "Providence College" is a leader in the Jesuit-founded lay movement, Christian Life Communities and was regional coordinator of the Latin American Ecumenical Association's Third World Theologians from 1986 to 1992.

Pope Francis will arrive in Rio and first visit the National Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida July 24, followed by a visit to a new drug rehabilitation facility and a subsequent tour before the opening of World Youth Day on Copacabana beach July 25.

Our local archdiocese is very good with communications and has good relations with the TV and radio stations and the media in general, so it will be a well-covered visit. It was hard to find a place to have the closing Mass,” Bingemer said. “They fear it will be more than 2 million people.”

A native of Rio, Bingemer, who wrote a chapter for the new book “Pope Francis: Hope Reborn,” describes Pope Francis’ style as simple and direct, with a “de-centered and collegial” style of pastoral leadership, a renewed emphasis on the Second Vatican Council and of the centrality of the poor.

“I think it is very comforting for us from Latin America,” Bingemer said of having a pope from neighboring Argentina.

Based on Pope Francis’ lively interactions with audiences at the Vatican and the fact that he is very well-liked by the people, houses are being prepared, families are staying in touch and sharing their stories as often and conveniently as possible. We are excited to have the faithful of diocese journey with us, for he is there for us. Every time I talk/pray to God about going on this pilgrimage, he always tells me “Do not be afraid.”

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St. Anne’s Student Shows Skills at Scripps National Spelling Bee

By Emily M. Albert

The Catholic Witness

Students from all over the Diocese of Harrisburg’s 15 counties excel in many different activities: sports, theater, chorus and spelling.

Yes spelling. Each year, students participate first at a local school level, battling their knowledge of vocabulary right in their own schools. Then they can progress on to competitions among their local communities designated by their local spelling bee sponsors. If you’re as good as Hannah Citsay from St. Anne School in Lancaster, then national is the top level.

Hannah is a seventh-grade student whose spelling journey this year “all started in Mrs. Henry’s room” where she scored the highest on a written spelling competition. Next, she brought home a trophy from a spelling bee sponsored by the local newspaper in Lancaster. Following that, it was time for the Scripps National Spelling Bee, held in late May near Washington, D.C.

Upon asking Hannah if she studied for the big competition, she commented that she took some time to look through a binder of the words used in previous years, but other than that, she used her skills of looking at different origins of words. She said this helps her to piece together the proper spelling of a word. Hannah also attributes much of her success to her love of reading.

During the national spelling bee, participants compete in written and oral tests. In the written exam, the participants are also quizzed on vocabulary to demonstrate that they know the meaning of the word. The bees runs for several rounds: the first round is a written exam; rounds two and three are verbal exams on stage, round four is a written exam, and rounds five and six are on stage.

This year’s Scripps National Spelling Bee began with 281 contestants. After the sixth round, 18 participants remained, and Hannah placed 11th after the written and oral scores were accumulated.

Hannah’s first word during the on-stage spelling exam was “di-chotomy.”

“I wasn’t sure if it was ‘t’ or ‘d’ towards the end – she spelled it correctly – but the weirdest word I was given was ‘Tequistlatecan.’ I did not get it right,” she said.

“Tequistlatecan” is a language family of the Hokan stock in Mexico. Along the way, Hannah also correctly spelled “nostalgic” (shivering at night), “drupiferous” (bearing a one-seeded fruit) and “hesped” (a eulogy at a Jewish memorial service).

“I really want to go back next year,” Hannah said of the national spelling bee. “I will probably start studying over the summer. They provided us with different learning tools and guides. It was a great experience, I met so many different people and it really was a lot of fun!”

Hannah is a well-rounded student with a vibrant personality. She told The Catholic Witness that she enjoys basketball and soccer and spending time with her friends. Her favorite subject at St. Anne’s is science, and she commented that the school has a great learning environment. She enjoys studying Latin and Spanish at St. Anne’s because the classes, she said, assist in learning root words.

Upon asking the seventh-grader if she had any idea what she wanted to do when she grows up, she responded with a shrug of the shoulders and a huge smile saying, “I have no idea, but something that will make a positive impact.”
The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

ANNVILLE — St. Paul the Apostle: Sophie Brickley, John Gherardini
BONNEVILLE — St. Joseph the Worker: Charles L. Staub, Jr.
COCOLIA — Our Lady of Hope: “Pete” Brown, Mary K. Brown
DANVILLE — St. Joseph: Mary Flacco, Martha Swisher
ELIZABETHTOWN — St. Peter: Richard Shertz.
ENOLA — Our Lady of Lourdes: Edward Blasco, Kathleen Martin.
HANOVER — St. Joseph: Rose Bausman, Joseph McLaughlin, Ruth Yealy; Vicent de Paul: Eleanor Raubenstein.
HARRISBURG — St. Martha Cemetery: Teresa M. Keffer, Ditchey, William Strouse, Jr.
LEBANON — St. Joseph the Worker: Dorothy D. Bausman, John Guerardini.
NEW FREEDOM — Sacred Heart of Jesus: Donna Pape.
MCHEVRSTOWN — Annunciation BVM: Teresa M. Keffner, Shirley W. Staub.
MOUNT CARMEIL — Divine Redeemer: Mary E. “Betty” Hertzog; Our Lady: Marie Kondisko.
NEW CUMBERLAND — St. Theresa: George Sherr.
NEW FREEDOM — St. John the Baptist: Dorothy Lopinski, Mildred A. Loyco.
COLUMBIA — Hope: Henry “Pete” Brown, Mary K. Brown.
DANVILLE — St. Joseph: Mary Flacco, Martha Swisher.
ESCHEWILL — St. Rita: Sister Rita Joseph Knapp.
HARRISBURG — Our Lady of Visitation: Zelma M. Armiho.
STEELTON — St. Mary in Assisi: Nora Diamond.
YORK — St. Patrick: Thomas Staub.
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cemetery in Mount Carmel will hold its annual festival June 21 from 6-11 p.m. and June 22 from 5:30-10:30 p.m. Entertainment Friday by “The Shoreliners” and Saturday by DJ J. Mike Wonsky. Food, refreshments, games of chance and baskets.

CHRISTIAN CATHOLICS’ Immigration and Refugee Services will host a picnic to high-light World Refugee Day June 23 at Lingle Park in Harrisburg from noon-5 p.m. Events include an international cook-off, dance exhibitions, music from various cultures, a community resource fair, and games.

Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Middletown will hold its annual festival July 12-13 from 11 a.m.-11 p.m. The event will include informative riders and carnival rides, games for kids and adults, bingo, food, a flea market, a craft corner, and basket and cash raffles. A car show will be held July 11 from 5-8 p.m. There will be a chicken parrasenese and spaghetti dinner Thursday from 5-8 p.m., and a seafood and pasta dinner Saturday from 5-8 p.m. Entertainment features DJ Dan Steele on Thursday, The Polka Quads on Friday, and Fresh Ayre on Saturday.

The annual Sacred Heart Parish Festival in Cornwall will be held July 11, 12 and 13. The fun begins Thursday, 5-11 p.m. and continues on Saturday, 4-11 p.m. Thursday features a spaghetti dinner; Friday, come for the fish fry and Saturday enjoy a chicken and pig dinner. All dinners served from 4-7 p.m. Additional events provided by the “Luv ‘Gad,” Friday listen to “HIT List,” and Saturday features “Karma.” Enjoy Bingo, a special children’s area, pony rides and much more. Come out for the food, fun, and games at Sacred Heart Church, Route 419 and Cornwall Road.

Prince of Peace Parish in Steelton will hold its annual picnic July 14 from noon-8 p.m., at Dport Park, in Breder. No admission fee. Foods being served include: lamb, pork and meatball sandwiches; Schmid’s Sausage, hot dogs and hamburger barbecue, cabbage & noodles, baked potatoes, salad. Also available will be ethnic baked goods including apple, churros, cheese bread, as well as other delicious cakes and cookies, funnel cakes, and ice cream. Drinks include soda, beer, wine and mixed drinks. Music is being provided by the Polka Quads and DJ—The Buccaneer. Raffle drawing with top prizes of $1,000 and $500 to gift cards, games, food tickets, done & dusted will be held in addition to the 50/50 & with live table. Children’s games from noon-3 p.m. For more information, call Prince of Peace Parish at 717-865-3370 or visit www.stjoanhershey.org.

Come to an old fashioned Church Picnic — The Conway Picnic will be held July 20 from 11 a.m.-9 p.m. at the Conway (Basilica) Picnic Woods in Hanover. The Picnic features for our famous chicken & soup to make into chicken pot pie, hot dogs and corn on the cob, pit beef. The family style chicken dinner will begin at 3 p.m until sold out. Live entertainment, games, kids’ games, Country Store, 13-jares, something for everyone.

St. Anthony Church in Orrtanna — The annual festival of the Church of St. Anthony will be held July 11-12, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. At the festival, there will be a chicken dinner, music, raffles, games, and much more.

St. Ignatius Loyola Church — The annual parish festival for Holy Spirit Parish in Palmyra will be held from 6-11 p.m. featuring a wide array of rides, food and entertainment.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cemetery in Mount Carmel will hold its annual festival June 21 from 6-11 p.m. and June 22 from 5:30-10:30 p.m. Entertainment Friday by “The Shoreliners” and Saturday by DJ J. Mike Wonsky. Food, refreshments, games of chance and baskets. In the event of rain, food sales will be held June 23 in the hall at 41 South Market Street.

St. Pius Church in Lebanon — The annual festival on the church grounds on Locust Lane in Harrisburg from noon-9 p.m. Enjoy great homemade Eastern European foods to eat-in or take-out. Two bands: The Polka WHO000 and The Polka Partners. Church tours, world class iconography, chargin and singing demonstrations, and an Eastern European market. Games for young and old, bingo, 50 theme baskets and cash raffles. Free admission and parking. 717-652-1415 or visit www.stpia.org.

Holy Angels Parish in Kulpmont will hold its annual festival from 5 p.m.-midnight and 8 p.m. Friday, 4 p.m.-midnight and 8 p.m. Saturday. Fantastic menu, games, basket bonanza, bake sale. Entertainment by The Shoreliners 7-11 p.m. each night. Fireworks display Saturday at 10 p.m. $3,000 in 50/50 drawings.

Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Roaring Creek will hold its annual picnic Aug. 2 and 3 from 10 a.m.-11 p.m., off Roaring Creek Road, off Route 218. Featuring food by "Pasta on the Beach" and Saturday features music by "The 60's Boys." No coolers permitted on church grounds.

St. Patrick Parish in Carlisle will hold an indoor parish picnic in the Church Parish Center Aug. 4 and 5 from 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Cost: $10/dinner includes: potato salad, hot dogs and corn on the cob, fries. No beverages will be served. Featuring food from Red's Smokehouse and Leo's Ice Cream. Games, silent auction, Zumba. Contact Mary Moll at 717-258-1104, or mmoll@saintpatrickchurch.org.

St. Christopher Parish in Benton will host a Polish Festival in Elysburg on Aug 14 beginning at 11 a.m. We will meet at Pavilion S. Christ the King Parish will supply hamburgers and hot dogs. Attendees are asked to bring a salad or dessert.

St. Joseph Parish and Italian Festival in Elysburg will be held on the parish grounds Aug. 16 and 17 from 4-6 p.m., and Aug. 18 from noon-5 p.m. Ethnic and festival food, kids games, raffles, games, change of entertainment. Friday and Saturday by "D&D" and Saturday by "Polka Puck." A pasta dinner will be served Sunday.

The annual Buchanan Valley Picnic will be held Aug. 24, from noon until dusk, rain or shine. Homecooked and fresh food from a local cook every half hour all day. Price: Adults and seniors, $4.50 per person; kids age 6 to 12 and 5 and under are free. To be held at the picnic grove at the St. Ignatius Loyola Church in Orrtanna, the picnic has been a tradition for over 175 years. Needed in the quaint and beautiful hills of Buchanan Valley, historically known for the capture of Mary Jenkinson in 1758 by the Indians, is an old-fashioned picnic with games for the children, bingo, music, and good food. For more information, contact St. Ignatius Loyola Church at 717-677-8612.
The Magnificat Prayer Group welcomes all to a Charismatic Mass with prayers for healing at 7 p.m. on June 27 at the Oblates of St. Joseph, 300 S. Keister Rd., Millersville, Pa. The celebration will mark his first Mass, a Mass of Thanksgiving, at Holy Name of Jesus Church on Sunday, June 30, at 3:30 p.m. Deacon Ziemba is a graduate of Immaculate Heart of Mary High School and Bishop McDevitt High School. He is an Oblate of St Francis de Sales (OSFS).

Deacon Brian Ziemba, OSFS, will be ordained in September 2013. He is celebrating his first Mass, a Mass of Thanksgiving, at Holy Name of Jesus Church on Sunday, June 30, at 3:30 p.m. Deacon Ziemba is a graduate of Immaculate Heart of Mary High School and Bishop McDevitt High School. He is an Oblate of St Francis de Sales (OSFS).

Mass with prayers for healing will be celebrated July 5 at 7:30 p.m. by Father Dwight Schiltzine at Holy Family Church in the intersection of 232nd Street and creek Road. The Mass is sponsored by the Pilgrims of Praise and Life in the Spirit prayer groups; call Mary Ann at 717-526-3070 or Linda at 717-520-1145.

St. Jude Thaddeus Church in Milltown will host its next monthly healing Mass on July 11 at 6 p.m. Father William Voit will celebrate.

Mass in the Polish language will be celebrated by Father Walter Sempko July 21 at 2 p.m. at St. Catherine Labouré the Trainer, Scouter Development or the Boy Scout Religious Mass at 6:30 p.m. in the hall of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Lebanon. If you cannot attend the information session, order a parishioner packet for $20. Information session to register will be held June 27 at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Church, York.

Music provided by the 12:15 Mass will be celebrated July 8 at 10 a.m. at Our Lady in Lady in the Apocalypse Church on Sunday, June 30, at 2:30 p.m. For information, call Jo Barnes at 717-682-2688 or Mary Brown at 717-545-7312.

The Diocesan Catholic Committee for Scouting announces the dates and times for its 35th annual retreat. The 2013 retreat will be held at Carlisle Correctional Facility, Lebanon, the weekend of Sept. 20-22. This year’s theme is “Year of Faith.” All Scouts and Scouters of all denominations of all faiths are invited to attend. All our adult leaders are invited to attend a meeting of the DCSSC Saturday the 21st from 3-4 p.m. in the barn basement. Special arrangements are being made for a special group of those Scouts whose units are not attending to register as a “Lone Scout.” Scouts ages 14-17 may register for the C.O.P.E. course. Registration deadline is Aug. 31. For additional information, visit www.catholiccentral.org or contact the office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry at oymah@bishops.org or 717-657-4843 ext. 800.

Pilgrimages to Our Lady of Guadalupe and Catholic Shrines of Mexico: Father Sylvan Capitani, Parish priest of St. John the Baptist Parish in New Freedom, will be in Mexico Nov. 18-30, 2013, traveling with an educational group led by Father Zeno Gregoli. It’s a 13-night trip which includes book, retreat companion, prayers and rosary.

Adult Catholic Scouters are invited to attend Train the Trainer, Scouter Development or the Boy Scout Religious Mass at 6:30 p.m. in the hall of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Lebanon. If you cannot attend the information session, order a parishioner packet for $20. Information session to register will be held June 27 at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Church, York.

Deacon Mike Solomon will be retiring in June of this year after 20 years in the Diocese of Harrisburg. Deacon Mike Solomon (Brother of St. John’s parishioner Paul Solomon) will lead a pilgrimage for Father Capitani on the occasion of his retirement. The tour will take place Nov. 21-29, 2013, and it will include all price of $250 (based on double occupancy). The inclusive trip will leave from St. John’s Parish via deluxe motor coach to depart in the morning of Nov. 21. The tour will include a visit to all five star hotels, breakfast and dinner daily, tour guides and admissions, and all taxes and tips. For full itinerary, contact Deacon Mike Solomon at 717-569-7224.
Religious Freedom Gets More Lip Service Than Guarantees, Pope Says

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Religious freedom is talked about more than it is protected, Pope Francis said.

“The serious violations inflicted on this basic right are causes of serious concern,” and the world’s nations must act together to uphold “the intangible dignity of the human person against every attack,” he said.

The pope made his comments during an audience with Italian President Giorgio Napolitano at the Vaticano June 8.

The pope said the cooperation that exists between church and state is built on the daily interactions and rapport between government officials and Catholics, but said it is always the promotion of “the interests of the people and society.”

He noted that 2013 marked the 1,700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan. This proclamation of tolerance of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire is seen by many, he said, “as a symbol of the first affirmation of the principle of religious freedom.”

However, today “religious freedom is more often declared than achieved,” the pope said.

Religious liberty, in fact, is frequently violated and finds itself “subjected to various kinds of threats,” the pope said. “It’s the duty of everyone to defend religious freedom for all people.”

Also, everyone benefits when people together safeguard this “moral” right as it “guarantees the growth and development of the whole community,” the pope said.

Pope Francis also told Napolitano that the “profound and persistent global crisis” in the world today worsens current problems, especially for the weaker members of society.

But the most “worrying” problems today include the weakening of the family and social ties, falling birthrates, the rule of profit in the work world and insufficient attention being paid to younger generations and their education. In order to face the crisis, he said, “it is fundamental to guarantee and develop” democratic institutions, which are precisely the arena where Catholics can make “critical, just and creative” contributions to society.

Pope Francis said it was “urgent to help foster, especially among young people, a new way of looking at political involvement.

There needs to be “a culture of encounter” in which “believers and nonbelievers may collaborate together to promote justice in a world that ignores the value of every person, and every person may be welcomed and may contribute to the common good,” he said.

“We Catholics have the duty to dedicate ourselves even more to a sensitive service to the problems so that every day we get closer to the Gospel,” which calls on the faithful to offer “concrete and effective service to people and society.”

Bishops Warn against Changes in Immigration Bill That Could Kill It

By Doris Benavides
Catholic News Service

Three bishops weighed in on the ongoing congressional debate on immigration reform legislation June 10, warning against amending a Senate bill in ways that would block the path to legalization for undocumented immigrants, but urged support for its passage.

“Families are separated, migrant workers are exploited, and our fellow human beings die in the desert,” said Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Migration.

At a news conference in San Diego, held as the USCCB opened its annual spring meeting, the chairmen of three committees reiterated the bishops’ support for comprehensive immigration reform that protects families and workers.

“Each day in our parishes, social service programs, hospitals and schools, we witness the human consequences of a broken immigration system,” said Archbishop Gomez.

He called the status quo morally unacceptable, adding: “This suffering must end.”

Bishop John C. Wester of Salt Lake City, chairman of the Committee on Communications and former chair of the migration committee, specified a handful of concerns for changes to the bill that might be attempted on the Senate floor.

The Senate on June 11 voted 82-15 to approve a procedure known as cloture, allowing debate to proceed for the same day. President Barack Obama gave an address on immigration reform, saying the United States can do better than the current outdated system that leaves out too many talented, hard-working immigrants.

A panel of House members was reportedly still working on a version of a bill for that chamber.

“Some will argue that before we can begin welcoming new citizens, we will need more fencing and blocking of the border,” Bishop Wester said. “However, it is the legalization program contingent upon border metrics that are practically impossible to achieve would effectively prevent the undocumented from ever becoming citizens, or even legal residents. Such a step would render the immigration reform program useless and the bill not worth supporting.”

“We urge Congress to maintain the current balance between enforcement goals and improvements in the legal immigration system, including a path to citizenship.”

He said the bishops also would oppose amendments to reduce the number of people who might pursue the path to citizenship laid out in the bill, S. 744: “Additional measures to make the path to citizenship more difficult, such as an increase in fines or imposition of other difficult income and employment requirements, or amendments to remove the citizenship option altogether, will also meet our opposition.”

Bishop Wester said efforts to prevent immigrants in the legalization program from obtaining benefits such as the earned income tax credit, Social Security and eligibility for health care coverage also would meet the Church’s opposition.

People who pay taxes and otherwise contribute to the economy “should not be barred from these benefits, to which every worker should be entitled,” he said.

Bishop Wester said he hopes the legislative process would lead to improvements in the Senate bill, not additional restrictions.

Bishop Jaime Soto of Sacramento, a member of the board of directors of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, warned that attempts to reform the immigration system would fail if they don’t allow for immigrants to fully incorporate into American society.

In addition to the three main speakers, bishops at the news conference at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, where most parishioners are immigrants, included San Diego Coadjutor Bishop Cirolo B. Flores, Bishop Richard J. Garcia of Monterey and Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas.

Activists with the immigration rights group Border Angels carry wooden crosses to a U.S. bishops’ news conference on immigration reform legislation June 10 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in San Diego. The wooden crosses represent undocumented workers who have died crossing into the United States.

A choir from Our Lady of Guadalupe and other nearby churches sang as the bishops and press gathered. “There is no God that does marvelous things like you do.”

Ana Laura Nunez was among them. Minutes later, the university student who recently was accredited legal status through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, shared from the podium how her family arrived in the U.S. when she was 5 years old and was separated when her mother had to leave the country for a couple of years. Nunez asked for family unity and for an affordable path to citizenship.

Bishop Soto said the key points of the bishops’ policy goals for immigration reform include:

An accessible and achievable path to citizenship that includes the maximum number of people. If the goal of reform is to address the problem of irregular immigration in a humane manner, he said, undocumented people should be brought out of the shadows and placed into the new system. “Leaving a large group behind does not solve the problem, and in the future, could create new ones.”

Family unity as the cornerstone of the system. “Immigrant families help our nation both economically and socially,” he said. “This nation cannot take an immigrant’s labor and deny the immigrant’s family.”

“Enforcement by itself, especially along our southern border, will not solve the challenge of irregular immigration,” said Bishop Soto. “The punitive enforcement-only approach has been the default policy for the last two decades. It has only aggravated the problem of irregular immigration. Our southern border should be a place of mutual support and an extension of hands across boundaries, not a militarized zone. Sadly, many of our elected officials see more enforcement along our border as the sole solution to irregular migration. We oppose the acceleration of border enforcement as a prerequisite to a legalization program that includes citizenship. An effective legalization program with a path to citizenship will lead to more effective border management.”

Bishop Soto said that it’s important to consider why people risk their lives to come to the United States, and how to address global poverty and persecution.

Archbishop Gomez said as the debate continues, the nation must answer several questions:

“Do we want a country with a permanent underclass, without the same rights as the majority? Do we want to continue to separate families from creating a generation of young U.S. citizens who are suspicious and fearful of their government? Do we want a nation with a culture of fear and taxes of undocumented workers without offering them the protection of the law?”

“Do we want a country where families and children and others who have the deferred-action status?” the archbishop said. “This nation cannot take the immi-
**Pope Says False Ideas of Freedom Spawn Threats to Human Life**

By Francis X. Rocca

Catholic News Service

Ideologies and practices that destroy human life arise from false ideas of freedom without God, Pope Francis told a cross-sectional gathering of thousands of pro-life activists from around the world.

"Whenever we want to assert ourselves, when we become wrapped up in our own selfishness and put ourselves in the place of God, we end up spawning death," the pope said in his homily during the Mass June 16.

The Mass was the culmination of a weekend dedicated to Evangelium Vitae (the "Gospel of Life"), a pilgrimage organized for the Year of Faith and named after the 1995 encyclical by Blessed John Paul II on the "value and inviolability of human life."

"All too often," Pope Francis said, "people do not choose life; they do not accept the 'Gospel of Life' but let themselves be led by ideologies and ways of thinking that block life, that do not respect life, because they are dictated by selfishness, self-interest, profit, power and pleasure, and not by love, by concern for the good of others."

"It is the idea that rejecting God, the message of Christ, the Gospel of Life, will somehow lead to freedom, to complete human fulfillment," he said. "As a result, the living God is replaced by fleeting human idols which offer the illusion of a flash of freedom, but in the end bring new forms of slavery and death."

"Let us say 'yes' to love and not selfishness," Pope Francis concluded. "Let us say 'yes' to life and not death, let us say 'yes' to freedom and not enslavement to the many idols of our time."

The pope did not mention any specific threats to life, but at an address to the Mass, Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, alluded to abortion and euthanasia.

"From the very beginning in the womb of a woman, until the very last moment when a person's breaths speaks of his or her presence in the world, this life is human, even if it develops in conditions of weakness, suffering and demands for help," said the archbishop, whose office organized the weekend pilgrimage.

Archbishop Fisichella drew attention to the presence in the square of "witnesses to the Church of England and the Catholic Church of Anglican ordinariates, he said, "will enhance Pope Benedict's provisions. The pope also offered a general greeting to hundreds of the motorcycle's 110th anniversary.

Mass in their biker vests during a Rome celebration of the".

After Mass, Pope Francis followed his usual practice of individually greeting a number of disabled persons among the congregation. On a lighter note, the pope also offered a general greeting to hundreds of Harley-Davidson enthusiasts who attended the Mass in their biker vests during a Rome celebration of the motorcycle's 110th anniversary.

One of the pilgrims in the crowd, Mary J. McClusky, a special projects director with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, praised Pope Francis for reminding listeners that forgiveness is available for even the worst sins.

"It's what the world needs to hear, the assurance that whatever we do, God will always love us," she said. "That's what's going to break hearts open and allow that love to flow in."

McClusky was one of five USCCB staff members who traveled to Rome to help organize special activities for English-language pilgrims June 15, including an academic conference featuring an address by U.S. Cardinal Raymond Burke, head of a Vatican tribunal, and a holy hour of Eucharistic adoration led by U.S. Bishop Joseph A. Di Noia, vice president of the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei.

In his address, Cardinal Burke warned against the "anti-family agenda of the pervasive mass media" and urged his largely American audience to participate in "family politics."

"The culture of death advances in good part because of a lack of attention and information among the public in general," he said.

In a panel discussion following the cardinal's talk, philosopher Francis Beckwith of Baylor University and author of "Abortion: A Christian Case," said that the traditional group of some 2,500 pilgrims also took part in a prayer vigil, which included readings in various languages from Blessed John Paul's Evangelium Vitae, and a candlelight procession to St. Peter's Square.

In their speeches, the two Christian leaders did not ignore the issues that have stalled hopes for unity in recent years.

"The history of relations between the Church of England and the Catholic Church is long and complex and not without pain," Pope Francis told Archbishop Welby. However, he said, "firm bonds of friendship have enabled us to remain on course even when difficulties have arisen in our theological dialogue that were greater than we could have foreseen at the start of our journey."

Archbishop Welby told the pope that for many years he has "found inspiration in the great corpus of Catholic social teaching and worked on its implications with Anglican groups."

"We must love those who seek to oppose us," the archbishop said, "and love above all those tossed aside — even whole nations — by the present crises around the world."

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

Pope Francis and Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury, spiritual leaders of the Anglican Communion, pledged to support each other with their meetings privately, with an interpreter, including thousands of pro-life activists from around the world.

"Since we began our respective ministries within days of each other, I think," the archbishop said with the bill, "the concept of marriage as a normative place for economic, social justice and peace, Pope Francis told him. "As you yourself have had occasion to recall recently," the pope told the archbishop.

In early June, Archbishop Welby criticized a proposed bill in the British Parliament to recognize gay marriage. The archbishop said with the bill, "the concept of marriage as a normative place for procreation is lost. The idea of marriage as covenant is diminished. The family in its normal sense predating the state and our base community of society is weakened."

Like Pope Francis, Archbishop Welby has been an outspoken critic of the way modern financial and economic structures place profit above the good of persons.

"We share many ideas," on the topics of economics, social justice and peace, "We make 'sincere efforts' to understand Pope Benedict's provisions. The Anglican ordinariates, he said, "will enable the spiritual, liturgical and pastoral traditions that form the Anglican patrimony to be better known and appreciated in the Catholic world.

Despite new challenges, the pope said, Anglicans and Catholics recognize their shared obligations to work for the unity of Christ, desired, to proclaim the Gospel, defend Christian values and to serve the poor and speak on their behalf.

Pope Francis said the joint witness of Anglicans and Catholics "will enhance Pope Benedict's provisions. The pope also offered a general greeting to hundreds of Harley-Davidson enthusiasts who attended the Mass in their biker vests during a Rome celebration of the motorcycle's 110th anniversary.

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Art Showcases Students’ Faith

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Paintings, sculptures, sketches and other artistic pieces produced by students in the Diocese of Harrisburg illustrated their faith as part of an art show at the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg last month.

The Year of Faith Diocesan Fine Arts Show featured pieces by students in grades 7-12, and was hosted by the Diocesan Department of Religious Education as an activity marking the Year of Faith.

Schools were invited to submit several pieces created by students in their art classes. Once on display at the Cardinal Keeler Center, the artwork was judged for awards in a junior division and a senior division.

The top three finishers in the junior division were Michael Chicriro of Our Mother of Perpetual Help School in Ephrata, Veronica Ruiz of Resurrection School in Lancaster, and Rachel Dudek of York Catholic High School.

In the senior division, the top three place winners were Julianne Petrillo of Lancaster Catholic High School, Hannah Favilla of Lancaster Catholic High School, and Mark Panas of Trinity High School in Camp Hill.

Hannah Favilla, who just completed her junior year at Lancaster Catholic, earned top prize for her clay depiction highlighting Christ’s sacrifice. The piece features images of the Lamb, the Altar and the Chalice, with the words, “The Lamb of God, neither by blood of goats and calves, but his own blood, he entered in once onto the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption.”

“I was creating the piece during Lent, and I finished it right before Good Friday, so it really helped me to reflect on Christ’s sacrifice,” she said.

Rachel Dudek, who just finished eighth grade at York Catholic, created a color replica of a stained-glass window, which earned third place in the junior division.

Rachel said she patterned her project after a stained-glass window from St. Rose of Lima Parish in York. “I morphed the imagery I had in mind with stained-glass from St. Rose,” she said. “It points to the sense of beauty in religious art.”

Juliette Petrillo, who just completed her junior year at Lancaster Catholic, finished second place in the senior division for her color print representing the seven Sacraments’ baptism, reconciliation, Eucharist, confirmation, matrimony, holy orders and anointing of the sick.

“It’s an honor to have this piece displayed, and I think it is great to have had this art show to display students’ talents and how we interpret the faith in different ways,” she said.

With Groundbreaking, St. John Neumann Parish Plans Religious Education Center

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Thirty-five years ago, St. John Neumann Parish in Lancaster, was established on the northern outskirts of Lancaster city. It was founded from St. Anne Parish in the city, which was exceeding its capacity in the mid and late 1970s.

In the past three decades, the burgeoning parish, which shares a school with St. Anne’s at the downtown parish’s campus, has grown to become one of the largest in Lancaster, with an expanding youth ministry and religious education programs.

On June 9, St. John Neumann Parish broke ground for its Blessed John XXIII Religious Education Center, which will be built on the tract of land that gently slopes upward behind the parish’s back parking lot.

The center will be Phase 1 of a $13 million project, and will include preschool classrooms, a social hall, gymnasium and kitchen.

Msgr. Richard Youtz, pastor of St. John Neumann Parish in Lancaster, leads parishioners in prayer prior to blessing the site of the future Blessed John XXIII Religious Education Center.

“We want to build something that people will see, and that will make them want to come and be involved,” Msgr. Richard Youz, pastor, told The Catholic Witness. “This will be the beginning of future growth for the parish.”

The construction phase of the 9,400-square-foot project is expected to take seven or eight months to complete, according to Larry Prescott, project architect from Professional Design and Construction.