Pope Francis Releases Encyclical on Care for God’s Creation

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

The earth, which was created to support life and give praise to God, is crying out with pain because human activity is destroying it, Pope Francis says in his long-awaited encyclical, “Laudato Si’, on Care for Our Common Home.”

All who believe in God and all people of good will have an obligation to take steps to mitigate climate change, clean the land and the seas, and start treating all of creation — including poor people — with respect and concern, he says in the document released at the Vatican June 18.

A lack of respect for creation is a lack of respect for God who created all that exists, the pope says. In fact, he continues, a person cannot claim to respect nature while supporting abortion, nor can one claim to be pro-life without a commitment to reversing damage to the environment.

With unusually blunt language for a papal document, the pope decries centuries of exploiting the earth, exploiting other people and acting as if the point of human life is to buy and consume as much as possible.

“The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth,” the pope writes in the document.

While acknowledging science is not the Catholic Church’s area of expertise, Pope Francis says “a very solid scientific consensus” points to global warm-

Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is, first and foremost, up to us.

~ Laudato Si’, 160

Online Resources
Read the entire encyclical and find resources, including discussion guides, practical tips, parish and school resources, and Church teaching on ecology online on the diocesan Web site:

www.hbgdiocese.org

Farewell to Bishop-Elect Malesic

As Bishop-Elect Edward C. Malesic prepares to undertake his role as the Fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Greensburg upon the Mass of Episcopal Ordination and Installation there on July 13, members of Holy Infant Parish in York Haven — where the bishop-elect has served since 2004 — gathered in large number on the weekend of June 13 and 14 for Masses and a farewell reception for their beloved pastor.

Pages 8 and 9 of this edition of The Catholic Witness feature photos from the farewell in York Haven, and an interview with Bishop-Elect Malesic on his ministry in the Diocese of Harrisburg and his appointment to Greensburg.

Morris Island in Charleston, S.C., is a barrier island at the mouth of Charleston Harbor which remains uninhabited by man. It was the scene of several terrible Civil War battles in July 1863.
Pope Francis Contemplates Shroud of Turin, Calls it ‘Icon of Love’

By Laura Ieraci
Catholic News Service

It took place in silence and lasted only a few minutes, but Pope Francis’ time of prayer and contemplation before the Shroud of Turin was marked with gestures of reverence and tenderness.

Revered by many as the burial cloth of Jesus, the shroud was the second stop on the pope’s packed itinerary for his two-day visit to the northern Italian town of Turin.

The pope did not give a speech June 21 in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Turin, Italy, after praying before the cloth in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, where the shroud is housed, but he described it later as an icon of Christ’s great love for humanity.

“At the end of our celebration, our thoughts go to the Virgin Mary, loving mother and attentive to all her children, whom Jesus entrusted to her from the cross, while he offered himself in the greatest act of love. The icon of this love is the shroud,” Pope Francis said before reciting the midday Angelus prayer.

“The shroud draws [us] to the face and marred body of Jesus and, at the same time, impels us toward the face of every suffering and unjustly persecuted person. It impels us in the same direction as Jesus’ gift of love,” he said, making reference to the words of St. Paul.

After his first meeting in Turin, a gathering in a public square with thousands of people from the world of work, Pope Francis walked to the cathedral nearby. He entered the church at 9:15 a.m. and walked directly toward the shroud, which had been on public exhibit since April 19.

The pope stood before the shroud for about 20 seconds, then crossed himself before settling into a wooden armchair, set several feet away. He stood there, contemplating it for another 20 seconds or so, before walking right up to its case, touching it gently and crossing himself again.

He then prayed before a side altar in the cathedral, the location of the tomb of a native of Turin, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, who died at age 24 after a short life dedicated to helping the poor.

The pope then celebrated an outdoor Mass in one of Turin’s central squares, Piazza Vittorio. Officials estimated the crowd at 100,000 people.

During his homily, the pope reflected on three aspects of the love of God, God’s love is faithful, re-creates all things anew, and is stable and sure, he said.

On the first aspect, the pope said God’s love does not disappoint and never fails and is incarnate in Jesus.

“For love, he became man; for love, he died and resurrected; for love, he is always at our side, in beautiful moments and in difficult ones. Jesus loves us always, until the end, without limits and without measure. And he loves all of us to the point that we each can say, ‘He gave his life for me.’ For me,” he said.

“The faithfulness of Jesus does not give up even in the face of our own unfaithfulness,” he added.

A person experiences the ability of God’s love to re-create when one realizes his or her own mistakes, sins and weaknesses and opens up to the forgiveness and love of Jesus, the pope said.

“The spirit of the world is always searching for newness, but only the faithfulness of Jesus is capable of true newness, of making us new people, of re-creating us,” he said.

The day’s Gospel reading about Jesus calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee demonstrates the third aspect: the stability and sureness of God’s love, said the pope.

When people feel they are unable to go on, he said, Jesus offers them “the rock of his love, onto which each person can grasp, certain they will not fall.”

“How many times have we felt that we cannot go on,” the pope said. “But [Jesus] is always beside us, with an extended hand and an open heart.”

The pope then urged the faithful to reflect on whether they are living on the “rock” of God’s love. People, including even Christians, run the risk of forgetting God’s love and of feeling “paralyzed by fears of the future and seeking security in passing things or in models of closed societies that tend to exclude more than to include,” he said.

He prayed that the Holy Spirit would help make Christians aware of the constant and faithful love of God, “to face life with courage and to look at the future with hope.”

“The peace that [God] gives us is for everyone,” he said, “even for the many brothers and sisters who are fleeing wars and persecution in the search of peace and freedom.”

The pope’s two most recent predecessors also visited the shroud: Pope Benedict XVI in 2010, calling it the “icon of Holy Saturday,” and Pope John Paul II in 1998. The shroud was to be on public display until June 24.
A Journey toward the World Meeting of Families

By Jim Gontis Special to the Witness

Let’s get down to brass tacks. The family, as St. John Paul II and his successors, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis have frequently pointed out, is the “fundamental cell of society.” As the family goes, so goes the culture. Show me a place where authentic marriage and family flourish, and I’ll show you a healthy culture, a healthy society. It is as simple as that. The opposite is just as true.

A great opportunity for grace is available for the receiving for the members of our diocesan family. As has been much publicized, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, will be coming to Philadelphia for the culmination of the World Meeting of Families, an event that began in 1994 during the pontificate of St. John Paul II, and which takes place every three years at various locales throughout the world. The pope will arrive September 26 and will celebrate a Papal Mass on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway on Sunday, September 27, which is open to the public. Millions will flock to the event from around the country, and thousands from our own diocese.

As a preparation for this unique and momentous event, our own diocesan chief shepherd, Bishop Ronald W. Gainer, is inviting men and women from throughout the Diocese of Harrisburg and beyond to join him on a journey of prayer and healing for our families in preparation for the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia. This preparation includes a diocesan conference about the meaning and importance of marriage and family life, on Saturday, July 11, at the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg. The day will feature important presentations by Bishop Gainer and best-selling author and nationally renowned speaker on marriage and the family, Christopher West. It will end with Sunday Vigil Mass celebrated by Bishop Gainer.

Bishop Gainer will speak about the significance of the pope’s visit to Pennsylvania and how families in the Diocese of Harrisburg can participate and prepare their hearts for this historic event. In his own words, the bishop has said, “As with any important event in our families or in our Church family, it is important to prepare ourselves for this historic occasion.”

This July 11 diocesan family event, and the subsequent World Meeting of Families, is just such an opportunity. Christopher West will break open how a “Eucharistic understanding of the family” offers hope for us to overcome the many challenges that marriage and family face in today’s world. The presentations will shed light on the “secret” hidden in God from all eternity that reveals God’s plan for man and woman, the family, and indeed, the whole universe. Participants will learn what St. John Paul II called the three “infallible and indispensable” means for a fruitful marriage and family spirituality. Attendees will come to see how the Bible is a “marriage-oriented” book, for the Sacred Scripture begins with a marriage (Adam and Eve) and ends with a wedding feast (the Wedding Banquet of the Lamb), and is “choked full” of marriage and family all through. Attendees will also see how all authentic marriage and family is leading to the great consummation of the greatest marriage of all, that is, which is between Jesus and His mystical Bride, the Catholic Church!

Finally, the men and women and spouses attending this event will receive practical advice for how to combat distortions of family life that are becoming increasingly widespread, with the goal that they will find hope and healing for the wounds afflicting marriage and family life today.

Christopher West, in a statement both eloquent and true, states: “This is a great moment of grace for the Church in the United States, and in a particular way for us, here in the neighboring diocese of the papal visit. But we know the operation of grace in our lives is not automatic. We need to do all we can to dispose ourselves, to open ourselves, to the operation of grace.”

The family is besieged today by many forces. Even what constitutes marriage has been mind-bogglingly challenged. Now is not the time to despair. It is time to roll up our sleeves, challenge the powers of darkness with truth and love and mercy, and be light and love to a world in desperate need of both. This is not someone else’s task. This is about love and responsibility.

We are at a crucial moment. Now is the time! Come be with us on July 11. Don’t miss the grace!

(Jim Gontis is the Director of the Diocesan Department for Religious Education)

Statement Regarding Financial Irregularities at Holy Trinity Parish, Columbia

Diocesan Press Release

The Diocese of Harrisburg has worked closely with the Columbia Police Department and the Lancaster County District Attorney’s Office regarding certain irregularities involving the embezzlement of parish funds by Josetta Reese, the former parish secretary at Holy Trinity Parish, Columbia. On or around March 27 of this year, irregularities were noticed by the Diocese in Holy Trinity Parish finances. An investigation was begun into the matter. On May 7, Mrs. Reese was interviewed about the matter and a confession was secured. She admitted to taking at least $10,000 over a period of years from the Sunday offerings and other parish financial sources. Mrs. Reese had worked for the parish since 2008.

After her admission to taking the funds, Mrs. Reese was placed on suspension. In keeping with the Diocesan zero tolerance policy toward financial malfeasance, the matter was reported to the Columbia Police Department and the Lancaster County District Attorney’s Office for prosecution as warranted. The Diocese will seek restitution of the stolen funds.

On Monday, June 22, 2015, Columbia Police Detective Matthew Ledly filed one count of Felony Theft by Unlawful Taking or Disposition against Josetta Reese. Reese was arraigned by District Judge Robert Herman and released on $5,000.00 unsecured bail pending a preliminary hearing.

In an effort to better safeguard funds donated to the Church, the Diocese revised and strengthened fiscal controls, policies and guidelines in 2013. These enhanced financial procedures and controls have been implemented and enforced in the parishes and schools across the diocese. They have served to increase awareness and accountability on the part of the Diocese and, as well as pastors, principals and administrators.

At the local level, parishioners serving on finance councils and in the parish office are more involved in the financial administration of the parishes and are able to recognize potential problems and to question and/or report practices and activities which do not comply with Diocesan policies.

At the Diocesan level, financial reviews of parishes and schools have substantially increased over the last few years. In addition, the Diocese has many tools at its disposal to identify and detect frauds and irregularities. Some of these include the review of parish financial controls, data analytics, and even surveillance. It is hoped that both the controls and detection efforts will serve as a deterrent to anyone considering misappropriating church funds now or in the future.
Summer Schedule of The Witness

The Catholic Witness will have a revised schedule this summer in order to provide timely coverage of the Episcopal Ordination and Installation of Bishop-Elect Edward C. Malesic, a native son of the Diocese of Harrisburg, as the Bishop of Greensburg.

Please note that there will be no edition on July 10, as previously scheduled. Instead, we have arranged for an edition to be published on July 17.

The Mass of Episcopal Ordination and Installation of Bishop Malesic will be celebrated at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral in Greensburg on July 13, and The Catholic Witness will provide coverage in the July 17 issue. The Witness will then take its summer publication hiatus and will resume bi-weekly publication with the August 7 edition.


If you’re planning a little travel this summer, you can find Mass times worldwide at www.masstimes.org.

Enjoy a safe and blessed summer, and look for our upcoming editions on July 17, August 7 and August 21.

Telephone 717-657-4804 ext. 201
717-657-7673
Email witness@hbgdiocese.org
Website www.hbgdiocese.org

Yearly Subscriptions: $8.17 per family; derived from diocesan revenues plus the parish share. Other subscriptions $12.00.

Moving? Send us the address label from The Catholic Witness plus your NEW address, including zip code plus 4. Please allow three weeks for the change.

Consecrated Life: Configured to Christ

By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC

Special to The Witness

Some time ago, I had an amazing experience talking to a high school teacher of Psychology and Sociology. He related to me an experiment that he had his psychology students perform. His class was divided into four different teams. Each team went to a different public area. One team went to the mall, another traveled to a nearby museum, a third went to a ball game, and the fourth went to a subway station. Each leader of the team had to stand in the middle of the public area and point and stare at a spot either on the ceiling or far away. The expression on the face of the team leader could indicate confusion, interest or fear. The others on the team had to record the spectators’ reactions to the gesture. Each team then summed up what they observed by the spectators. The students found that the spectators turned their head to the direction of the gesture, trying to see what the individual was so focused upon. The spectators began talking to other people, trying to figure out what was happening. Unable to discover a reason, most shrugged their shoulders, shook their heads and walked away mumbling.

I was reminded of this story when I read a blog1 by Sister Marianne Lorraine Trouvé, FSP, that “pointed to” the Sacrament of Baptism and consecrated life. In it, Sister reminds her readers that the Sacrament of Baptism puts an indelible mark on the soul. This “mark” makes us like Jesus. This feature “configures us to Jesus in a way that enables us to take part in Christian worship.” In addition, she also states that all individuals that are baptized are consecrated as well as called to become holy. Those men and women who are also called by God to consecrated life “point” to Christ in a different manner coming from their baptism.

Men and women who are called to consecrated life are called to live like Jesus in a radical way. “He lived radical poverty in complete dependence on the Father, a radical chastity in giving up marriage for the sake of the Kingdom, and a radical obedience in always doing the will of his Father: ‘My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work’ (John 4:34).” Jesus lived this in union with the Holy Spirit and teaches all the faithful, not just those in consecrated life, how to be truly human. Those individuals that are called to consecrated life strive to imitate Jesus in their life by living poverty, chastity and obedience according to the dictates of their specific institutes and congregations. When they publically profess the vows – also called evangelical councils – of poverty, chastity and obedience, they “point” to something in which they “see” with the eyes of faith: how to be the best human being that God calls each of us to be. Ok, so you might say, “Yes, but the Year of Consecrated Life is for those who are called by God to live that way. I am not, so it’s nothing I really need to think about.” Really? Are you consecrated to a life of holiness because of your baptism?

What might this look like for someone who is not called to Consecrated Life? Sister Marianne Lorraine explains: Saying a personal “no to consumerism, and a yes to a simple lifestyle, mindful of sharing with the poor,” saying a personal “no to all forms of sexual indulgence, and a yes to the virtue of chaste and holy love;” saying a personal “no to sin, and a yes to entrusting ourselves to God’s loving care for our lives.”

By doing this, anyone can offer their lives in union with Christ to the Father through the Holy Spirit. By doing this, others will be “pointing” to us as they marvel the likeness of Christ they can actually see in us!1http://www.patheos.com/blogs/pursuedbytruth/2015/04/get-character-baptism-and-consecrated-life.html

(Sister of Christian Charity, Geralyn Schmidt, is the Wide Area Network Coordinator at the Diocese of Harrisburg and the Director of Formation for Wives in the Diaconate Program. An educator for 29 years, she is responsible for Professional Development Programs for every age learner. Through her presentations, she challenges her audience to be the individual God has called them to be.)
Lancaster Catholic High School Names Terry Klugh as Principal

Lancaster Catholic High School and the Diocese of Harrisburg announced June 17 that Mr. Terry Klugh has been named Principal, effective immediately.

Mr. Klugh comes to the role after serving in similar roles at Lancaster Catholic. He spent the 2014-15 academic year as the Interim Principal and the 2013-14 academic year as the Vice Principal of Studies.

“We appreciate the zeal and fidelity that we know Terry will bring to the position,” said Father Edward J. Quinlan, Diocesan Secretary of Education.

Mr. Klugh has been a mainstay in the Diocese of Harrisburg and Lancaster Catholic since being hired as a religion teacher at LCHS in 1980. He went on to become the head of the Religion Department in 1986; he wrote and implemented two new religion courses for LCHS during his eight years as a religion teacher before being named the Diocesan Director of Religious Education in 1988.

Mr. Klugh oversaw the strategic direction of religious education for over 20,000 children in Diocesan Parish Religious Education and high school programs before returning to Lancaster Catholic in 1999 as the Director of Athletics, Head Softball Coach and Philosophy Teacher.

During his tenure as Athletic Director, Mr. Klugh directed the school’s 21 athletic programs which involve over two-thirds of the student body, and over 70 coaches and volunteers. Under Mr. Klugh, the Athletic Programs thrived, collecting four team state titles, 15 district and league team championships and 42 team section titles. Individually, he led the softball team to section championships in 2003 and 2005 and was part of two league coaching-staffs of the year.

“Terry continued the success of the athletic department during his tenure as Athletic Director,” said Rich Hinnenkamp, Athletic Director. “He did a great job managing a department that increased the student involvement in athletics and his love for LCHS is evident through his dedication as a teacher, coach, Athletic Director and Vice Principal.”

He continued in the role as Athletic Director until May 2013, when he was appointed the Vice Principal of Studies, allowing him to return to his specialty as an academic administrator.

“Religious education should be about the passing on of God’s Word to invite people to personal faith,” said Mr. Klugh. “Today’s culture places many challenges in front of us that I think are and will continue to be addressed through religious-based education at LCHS.”

Following a year-long process, “Excellence by Design,” Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School in Coal Township has earned re-accreditation from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

The presentation of an accreditation certificate was given to Deacon Martin McCarthy, Secondary Principal, and Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Margaret Ann Quinn, Elementary Principal, last month during a school-wide Mass.

Lourdes’ teachers Mary Bias and Heather Krebs co-chaired the “Excellence by Design” project to undertake the re-accreditation process last year. The process called upon Lourdes to demonstrate how it meets the Middle States Association’s 12 standards for accreditation, including mission, leadership, school planning, finances, facilities, organization, staffing, health and safety, student services, student life, and educational programming.

Lourdes also received a three-day visit from peers from other schools who reviewed Lourdes and its standards as part of the re-accreditation process.

The Middle States Association works to improve the quality of education in the region and around the world. The U.S. Department of Education describes approved accrediting organizations such as Middle States as a “reliable authority as to the quality of education.” Accreditation is an external, objective validation of school quality and student achievement that fosters continuous school improvement.

Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School’s accreditation will last through 2022.

Annual Pilgrimage to the National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes

Started by Father Walter Sempko in 1987, the 28th Annual Pilgrimage for World Peace will take place on Thursday, August 6, at the National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes in Emmitsburg, Md.

Bishop Ronald Gainer will be the celebrant and homilist for the Mass that day, with priests of the Diocese of Harrisburg concelebrant.

The day will begin at 10 a.m. with opening remarks at St. Mary's Chapel on the Hill. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available from 10:15-11:30 a.m. The Rosary will be prayed at 11:30 a.m., followed by the celebration of Mass at noon, both in the Grotto, weather permitting.

Lunch will take place from 11:15-1:15, and attendees must bring their own lunch. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Prayer of Consecration will take place from 2:15-2:45 p.m. in the Grotto, weather permitting.

A Holy Hour from 3-4 p.m. in St. Mary’s Chapel on the Hill will conclude the day. Bishop Gainer will be the homilist during the Holy Hour.

All are welcome this day to join with Bishop Gainer to pray for peace through the conversion of hearts, and to receive God’s blessings through Mary, Mother of God, and Mother of the Church.

There is no need to register. Pilgrims must provide their own transportation and lunch. If there are any questions, contact Deacon Tom Lang at DeaconTomLang@verizon.net or 717-599-1973.

Annual Pilgrimage to the National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes

Lourdes Re-Accredited by Middle States Association

The presentation of an accreditation certificate was given to Deacon Martin McCarthy, Secondary Principal, and Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Margaret Ann Quinn, Elementary Principal, last month during a school-wide Mass.

Lourdes’ teachers Mary Bias and Heather Krebs co-chaired the “Excellence by Design” project to undertake the re-accreditation process last year. The process called upon Lourdes to demonstrate how it meets the Middle States Association’s 12 standards for accreditation, including mission, leadership, school planning, finances, facilities, organization, staffing, health and safety, student services, student life, and educational programming.

Lourdes also received a three-day visit from peers from other schools who reviewed Lourdes and its standards as part of the re-accreditation process.

The Middle States Association works to improve the quality of education in the region and around the world. The U.S. Department of Education describes approved accrediting organizations such as Middle States as a “reliable authority as to the quality of education.” Accreditation is an external, objective validation of school quality and student achievement that fosters continuous school improvement.

Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School’s accreditation will last through 2022.
Hot Time for EITC

By A.B. Hill
Special to The Witness

“The hot time is now” to contribute to an Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) scholarship organization, said Richard Bluu, partner in the accounting firm, Martin M. Sacks and Associates. He is a member of the school board and parent of a student at St. Catherine Labouré School in Harrisburg. Bluu’s firm has received tax credits for contributing to the EITC program for many years and he encourages other businesses to take advantage of the program.

“The Educational Improvement Tax Credits go fast,” said Bluu. “July 1 is the first day they are available, but it is also a deadline. The tax credits sell out fast, like concert tickets.”

Bluu joined others supporters at the Catholic school to rally support for House Bill 752, which would increase funding for the EITC and the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) by $100 million, a similar program aimed at helping qualified students in continually low performing schools.

“About 30 percent of the families at St. Catherine Labouré School benefit from EITC scholarships,” explained Kelly Rogers, advancement director. “But our needs exceed the qualifying income levels of our families far exceeds what is available for scholarships.” She said increasing funding for EITC and OSTC as proposed by HB 752 would be a “huge help…. It would be amazing to be able to help more families.”

All parents should be able to select the school that best suits their children. The state should support parents in meeting their obligation to educate their children, not the other way around. Not every qualified student will choose a Catholic school, but as demonstrated by St. Catherine Labouré School in Harrisburg, many do. The EITC and OSTC programs allow more families to choose Catholic school, without sacrificing our core mission and high standards.

Catholic schools play a vital role in our communities. They provide an essential service that helps to create new generations of productive and engaged citizens. When a fraction of the cost of educating the same student in a public school. If every nonpublic school student returned to public school, the costs would be unbearable. Given the average per pupil price tag, our Catholic schools saved the taxpayers more than $2.28 billion this year alone.

HB 752 passed the House of Representatives on May 11, and now it is time for the Senate to vote for it, so that even more parents can make a choice about the right school for their children. Visit www.pacatholic.org to join the Catholic Advocacy Network by sending a message to your elected officials urging support for this important legislation.

(Hill is the Communications Director of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference, the public affairs agency of Pennsylvania’s Catholic bishops and the Catholic Dioceses of Pennsylvania. Stay up-to-date with Catholic news and issues at www.pacatholic.org, www.facebook.com/pacatholic, and www.twitter.com/pacatholic.)

The Power of Testimonies

By Christopher Meehan
Special to The Witness

Part of my responsibilities with Catholic Charities is to share our success stories with others. It’s one of the more enjoyable parts of my job because there are numerous examples that illustrate how our agency provides help and creates hope for those in need. It’s easy to tell people what you do well. But no matter how many times I share these positive stories, I learned some time ago that having a client share his or her experience is even more powerful.

Recently our office received a testimonial from a mother whose son is a student in our Lancaster Day Treatment Program. This program serves at-risk youth who possess significant emotional and behavioral needs. It is a therapeutic environment – one in which personal growth and change take place through positive relations between the youth and the staff as a result of individual, group and family therapy programming.

The letter we received told us about a special-needs child who was struggling in elementary school. The student was failing academically, was having verbal altercations with his teacher, and was dealing with anger, stress and anxiety. The school had recommended that the student enroll in our Day Treatment Program in order to receive both the therapy and the education that he needed.

During his time there, the student had to deal with the death of a close family member and also had some legal issues. However, as part of the Day Treatment Program, he received the help he needed in an environment that catered to his individual needs. Over time, he was able to develop better anger management skills, improve his social skills, and improve his academic performance. None of this was easy by any means, but the program staff was there throughout the entire experience.

Today, this young man is about to graduate from the Day Treatment Program. His mother’s letter mentioned that her son has “matured in such a way that the impossible has become possible.” The proud mom told us that “my son is such a good kid over-all. He has sprouted, and I finally see another side of him that I was helplessly trying to.”

I could not have said it any better myself.

This is just one example (of many) of the good work our dedicated staff does each day at Catholic Charities. Our agency is there to help a troubled student, to provide refuge for a homeless family, to offer counseling to a person who is struggling, to help an addict who is dealing with addiction, to support a pregnant mother who doesn’t know where to turn, etc.

But don’t take my word for it. Listen to those who have benefited from our work. They can tell the story better than I ever could.

Thank you for your support of Catholic Charities. For more information, visit our website at www.cchbg.org.
(Christopher Meehan is the Director of Development for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Harrisburg.)

World Meeting of Families Monthly Theme

A ‘No’ to What’s Popular is Really a ‘Yes’ to God’s Plan

By Christopher C. Roberts
Special to The Witness

Theme: Light in a dark world.

Pope Francis observed that the Church is popular with the world when Catholics work for social justice. But, the pope continued, with respect to “the cultural crisis” facing the family, “we find it difficult to make people see that when we raise other questions less palatable to public opinion, we are doing so out of fidelity to precisely the same convictions about human dignity and the common good.”

This chapter carefully examines subjects such as pornography, contraception, and so-called same-sex marriage. These are topics where Catholic teaching tends to be at odds with current worldly opinion.

Reading this chapter in its entirety is an opportunity to consider the reasons for the Church’s teaching. Each one of these issues deserves more space than this summary paragraph can offer. But as we said at the start of this catechesis, all Church teaching about marriage, the family and sexuality flows from Jesus.

Catholic moral theology builds upon basic Christian convictions about God’s creation and covenant, humanity’s fall, and Christ’s incarnation, life, crucifixion and resurrection. These teachings involve costs and suffering for all who would be Jesus’ disciples, but they also open up new opportunities for beauty and human flourishing.

This chapter is your chance to explore how it all fits together, even when it might mean taking unpopular stances in our culture. This chapter explains how every time the Church says “no” to something which secular society accepts, it is for the sake of enabling a deeper “yes” to God and his plan for our lives.
Donna Tompkins
Mathematics Teacher
Delone Catholic High School, McSherrystown

Since coming to Delone Catholic, I have taken every opportunity to give back to my school and community. When my children were younger, I volunteered in the parish to coach their sports teams, as well as start a youth group. Over the past few years, I have introduced the Provide-A-Lunch program to our school, where once a month the administration, faculty and students work side-by-side feeding the less fortunate of our town. With the help of my coworkers, I started a Relay for Life team, which is thriving today. I have volunteered my time to serve as a mentor teacher in the diocese and as a cooperating teacher for student teachers eager to begin their careers.

Over the years, I have found that being a teacher at Delone Catholic is a blessing for me and my family. I am able to provide my students a holistic education. I am afforded the freedom to not just teach my students mathematics, but also life lessons. I have the opportunity to offer my students a well-rounded view of the world through Works of Mercy, and to work side-by-side with them, leading by example. What an incredible opportunity I am afforded to help mold young minds, hearts and souls.

Shelby Yinger
Fourth-Grade Teacher
St. Rose of Lima School, Thomasville

I teach in a Catholic school because it is more than instructing a specific subject. It is being open to acting as a witness to the Catholic faith and to leading students to the understanding of God’s calling for them. Pope Francis stated, “Educating is an act of love: it is like giving life.” I believe this to be true especially because our ultimate goal is to help our students grow to be adult Christians active in their faith.

Golden Apples

Now in its tenth year in the Diocese of Harrisburg, the annual Golden Apple Awards are presented to Catholic school educators who demonstrate professional excellence, leadership, commitment to Catholic values and devotion to teaching.

In May and June editions, The Catholic Witness is featuring this year’s seven recipients from the schools in which they teach. Their remarks are drawn from essays they wrote as part of their nomination packet.

The Golden Apple recipients were honored at a dinner at the Cardinal Keeler in Harrisburg on May 12, where they received a $5,000 cash award, a Golden Apple, a certificate and a photo with Bishop Ronald Gainer. Awardees are nominated by parents, students or fellow teachers. The program is made possible by the generosity of the Donahue Family Foundation in Pittsburgh. Learn more about the program and nominations at http://www.hbgdiocese.org/catholic-schools/golden-apple/

Find out more about a Catholic school education at www.hbgdiocese.org.
Serve the Lord with Gladness

Bishop-Elect Malesic Reflects on Faith Formation in Harrisburg as He Prepares to Shepherd Flock of Greensburg

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

A few weeks after the April 24 announcement naming him as the Fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Greensburg, Bishop-Elect Edward C. Malesic – a priest of the Diocese of Harrisburg for 28 years – participated in an interview with The Catholic Witness regarding his faith formation, vocation discernment, service to the faithful in Harrisburg, and receiving the call to shepherd the flock in Greensburg.

The text of the interview is printed here, accompanied by several photos from a Mass and farewell reception for Bishop-Elect Malesic at Holy Infant Parish in York Haven, where he had served as pastor since 2004.

Bishop-Elect Malesic, 54, will be ordained and installed as the Fifth Bishop of Greensburg during an invitation-only Mass at BlessedSacrament Cathedral in Greensburg on July 13. The Witness will feature coverage of the Mass in the July 17 edition.

Q: You were publically announced on April 24 as being named as the Fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Greensburg. When did you receive the call from Archbishop Viganò, the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States – and what were your thoughts in those first days?

A: Two Mondays before that announcement, I had just come back from the dentist. I was about ready to go grocery shopping, and was sitting at my desk going through some e-mails. I heard the phone ring, and the caller ID said “VAT EMB” for Vatican Embassy. I had never received a call from the Vatican Embassy, and certainly never at Holy Infant Parish in York Haven… We exchanged some pleasantries and I tried to deflect everything by saying how nice the weather was here, and asking about the weather in Washington, thinking that maybe he would forget anything important that he was calling me about. But within about 30 seconds, he said, “The Holy Father would like to appointment you the Bishop of Greensburg. Would you accept?”

Of course, your life flashes before you with that question because the answer is critical, and the answer could be life changing. So, if I could take a few moments to think about it and pray about it, and he was gracious enough to give me that brief bit of time.

When I’ve been asked to do things that are not part of my plan, I’ve asked myself, “Is there a reason why I can’t do it? Am I not equipped to do it?” I thought about it and prayed about it, and eventually said, “There’s not one reason I can come up with that I can’t do this.” If the Holy Father thinks that I have the gifts and talents that Greensburg needs right now – and I do believe the Holy Spirit works through the human element of the Church – then, I said to Archbishop Viganò, “With my trust in God, my respect for the Holy Father, I say yes.”

Q: The Mass of Episcopal Ordination and Installation will be July 13. Does that date hold a special significance for you?

A: Sometimes dates of ordination do hold significance, but for me, this date was simply a practical matter of timing and all the different schedules that needed to be coordinated. July 13 doesn’t have a specific meaning for me, but it will from now on.

Q: Your Episcopal Motto is “Serve the Lord with Gladness,” from Psalm 100. How did you come to select it, and what is involved in that reflection process?

A: I prayed to the Holy Spirit to guide me in the right direction, because it does set the tone for my ministry as bishop. One of my favorite quotes of all time is from the Book of James, “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you,” so my initial thought was, “Draw near to God.”

But somehow the Spirit wasn’t leading me in that direction. Then I returned to prayer, and as I was praying through the Psalms, that line just struck a chord. It was an “Ah-ha moment.” I truly believe the Spirit guides us in these matters. In the sense of a musical instrument, it struck the right pitch in the sense that everything was fitting together.

“Serve the Lord with Gladness” – my ministry has been about service and joy. Joy is really important to me. To be a Christian without joy does not make any sense to me.

Q: How has your ministry here in the Diocese of Harrisburg – as a pastor, as Judicial Vicar, as a college campus minister – helped prepare you for your role as a bishop?

A: When I was in the seminary, I went to the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio. In the Theology portion of those last four years, you can get two degrees. One is academic and one is pastoral. The academic is the Master of Arts and Theology, and the pastoral is the Master of Divinity. You have to get the Master of Divinity before you are ordained a priest. I chose to get the latter, but not to get the academic degree. I remember sitting before a group of professors during an evaluation, and they said, “Ed, we understand that you’re not going to write your paper for the Master of Arts degree. We are kind of disappointed. Why would you not want to simply write a paper so you would have this extra degree?” I said to them – and maybe it was less than humble – “I don’t want anyone to ever look at me and say that I should be in a diocesan office.” I figured this was one way to keep me out of a diocesan office, if I don’t get the academic degree.

A few years later, when I was in campus ministry, Msgr. [William] King said that Bishop [Nicholas] Dattilo would like me to study Canon Law. I said, “I can’t. I don’t have the Master of Arts and Theology degree.” He said, “We understand that. We looked into it. You don’t need it.” You would think, why would a campus minister – at that time I was at Millersville University and Franklin & Marshall College – be asked to study Canon Law. At that time in my life, my understanding of Canon Law was that it was part of the legal system of the Church and that law was just a matter of following rules. But apparently Bishop Dattilo wanted a different type of canon lawyer, and he wanted a canon lawyer who not only knew the laws, but how the laws affect people. At that point, I had been parochial vicar at St. Theresa in New Cumberland and St. Rose of Lima in York, and also campus minister at York College, so I had a lot of pastoral experience. I believe that Bishop Dattilo wanted someone who knew what applying the law does to people – so that the law is not applied in a sterile or uncaring way, but in a pastoral way.
I was fascinated by biology, and I met a biology teacher who talents – as they perceive them to be – are needed there.

It's a leap of faith for the people of Holy Infant because I've been the pastor, guiding them. The Tribunal has to have a leap of faith for Greensburg; Greensburg doesn't know me. It is a leap of faith. But look at the Acts of the Apostles. In a selfish way, I thought, “If I say yes to the Holy Father's request that I become the next Bishop of Greensburg, I'm going to leave my father, though I will get back as often as I can.” But I'm going to leave what I'm familiar with here at the Diocesan Center.” I'm going into the absolute unknown. I knew no one in Greensburg, except for some of the Benedictine priests at St. Vincent Archabbey because some of them have worked in our parishes and I've made several retreats there.

It is a leap of faith. But look at the Acts of the Apostles. I thought I would be Judicial Vicar for a couple more years. I thought I would be at the service of the bishop, and now at the service of the people of faith because a new Judicial Vicar has been named (Father Mark Weiss was appointed pastor there, effective June 22).

I went on a vocation discernment retreat at the former Trinity Spiritual Center at Trinity High School. In a selfish way, I thought, “If I say yes to the Holy Father's request that I become the next Bishop of Greensburg, I'm going to leave my father, though I will get back as often as I can.”

Bishop Gainer has been a joy to work with and work for. It's only been a little more than a year, but he brings those qualities that we need right now as a diocese. Because of the life-changing things in my life, he's been a good friend and a person I can lean on.

A: Even as a child, I felt close to God. In junior high school, I was fascinated by biology, and I met a biology teacher who started asking me questions about my religion. I didn't ask a lot of the facts about my Catholic faith, and he was a Mormon. He began to talk to me about his faith, and I was attracted by his ability to explain his faith. I went on to high school and dated several girls who weren't Catholic, and I went to their services. I had decided that I was probably not going to remain Catholic. When I left home, I knew I wanted to be close to God; I just didn't think it was going to be in the Catholic Church.

A: As I said in the press conference in Greensburg, my faith has been formed by the people of the diocese - first by my parents and my family, then the people of St. John's in Enhaht. Those people and the German ethnic parish have had such an influence on my life. I didn't know it at the time, but looking back, I see their solid faith. And the people throughout the diocese, whether at the diocesan level or in parishes or campuses. We're in this together. We learn from each other how to be Christian. We make mistakes, we forgive each other, and then we move on. And I really want to be a model teacher. I've been a teacher. I've really, truly loved our Catholic school kids, our youth. I have wanted to be a model teacher.
ing and indicates “human activity” has seriously con-
tributed to it, that is threatening the planet and all life on it.

Situating ecology firmly within Catholic social teaching, Pope Francis not only insists that wealthier nations – who contributed more to despoiling the earth – must bear more of the costs of remedying the dam-
age, he also calls for their solidarity with the poorest of the earth. He urges generosity in transferring clean technology, protecting small farms, opening access to markets and protecting people’s jobs.

Quoting St. John Paul II and a constant theme of the Church’s social doctrine, Pope Francis says the Church recognizes the “legitimate right” to private property, but that right is never “absolute or inviolable,” since the goods of the earth were created to benefit all.

Regarding pollution and environmental destruction in general, he says it is important to acknowledge “the human origins of the ecological crisis,” and while ecol-
ogy is not only a religious concern, those who believe in God should be especially passionate on the subject because they profess the divine origin of all creation.

Pope Francis singles out for special praise Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, who has made environmental theology a key topic of his research and teaching since the early 1990s. Be-
fore the encyclical’s release, the pope told a group of priests that he had asked the patriarch to join him for the public presentation of the encyclical, but the patri-
arch had a scheduling conflict and so sent one of his top theologians, Metropolitan John of Pergamon.

People are fooling themselves, Pope Francis says in the document, if they think “things do not look that seri-
sous, and the planet could continue as it is for some time.” Such people in all honesty are giving them-
selves permission to carry on with their current life-
styles and habits; their attitude is “self-destructive,” he says.

In large sections of the encyclical, Pope Francis’ lan-
guage is poetic, echoing the tone of St. Francis of As-
sisi’s “Canticle of the Creatures,” which is the source of the “laudato si’” (praised be you) in the encyclical’s title. He quotes a large section of the hymn of praise in a section on the place of each creature in the harmony of creation. The canticle is most famous for its refer-
ences to “Brother Sun,” “Sister Moon” and “our sister, Mother Earth.”

But, the pope says, “sister earth” is crying out, “pleading that we take another course” marked by healing and protecting the earth and all its inhabitants. While Christians cannot “put all living beings on the same level nor ... deprive human beings of their unique worth and the tremendous responsibility it en-
tails.” St. Francis’ hymn expresses the truth that God is creator of all things, that every part of creation speaks of God’s love and power and that every created being is part of interdependent whole, the pope writes.

“Everything is related,” the pope says, “and we hu-
man beings are united as brothers and sisters on a won-
derful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for all. Courage will be needed, he says, to adopt policies that initially may slow the pace of economic growth, but which will be farsighted in ensuring a fu-
ture for their voters, their voters’ grandchildren and all humanity.

“We know that technology based on the use of high-
ly polluting fossil fuels – especially coal, but also oil and, to a lesser degree, gas – needs to be progressively replaced without delay,” he says.

But he also calls on every Catholic and all people of good will to do their part by, for example, using only non-polluting detergents, recycling paper, using pub-
lic transportation and putting on a sweater instead of raising the heat in the winter.

And he urges Catholics to return to the practice of saying grace before meals, a habit that reminds them regularly that the food they are about to eat is a gift that comes from the earth and from God.

At the end of the document, Pope Francis offers two prayers he composed himself: “A Prayer for Our Earth” and “A Christian Prayer in Union with Cre-
atists.”

The first prayer includes asking God to “bring heal-
ing to our lives that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.”

The second prayer includes the petition, “O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty.”

In the encyclical, Pope Francis urges Catholics to cultivate simplicity; it is good for the soul and for the
planet, he says. “A constant flood of new consumer goods can baffle the heart and prevent us from cher-
ishing each thing and each moment,” the pope writes.

The encyclical presents the vision of an “integral ecology” that highlights not only the interconnected-
ness of all created life, but recognizes how political, eco-

nomic, social and religious values and decisions are interrelated and impact the way people live with one another on the planet and use its resources.

“A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compas-
sion and concern for our fellow human beings,” Pope Francis insists. For example, he says, “it is clearly inconsistent to combat trafficking in endangered species while re-
maining completely indifferent to human trafficking, unconcerned about the poor, or undertaking to destroy another human being deemed unwanted.”

“Everything is connected,” the pope writes. “Con-
cern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an un-
wavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.”

Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change.

– Laudato Si’, 202
What To Do?

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Pope Francis’ encyclical “Laudato Si’”, on Care for Our Common Home is a call for global action as well as an appeal for deep inner conversion. He points to numerous ways world organizations, nations, communities and individuals must change and work together.

Here are some of the pope’s suggestions, with references in parentheses to their paragraphs in the encyclical:

• Do not give in to denial, indifference, resignation, blind confidence in technical solutions. (14, 59)

• Be forthright about the causes of climate change; issues cannot be dealt with once and for all, but will need to be “reframed and enriched again and again” by everyone. (17)

• Reduce, reuse, recycle. Preserve resources, use them more efficiently, moderate consumption and limit use of non-renewable resources. (22, 192)

• Slash pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions. Transition to cleaner and renewable energies and replace fossil fuels “without delay.” (26, 165)

• Promote green construction and energy efficient homes and buildings. (26, 180)

• Protect clean, safe drinking water and don’t privatize it with market-based solutions for the poor. (27-29, 164)

• Keep oceans and waterways clean and safe from pollutants; use biodegradable detergents at home and business. (30, 174)

• Be aware that synthetic pesticides and herbicides will harm birds and other animals and the land’s fertility. (34)

• Leave room for wandering and migrating species by creating “biological corridors;” don’t let dams, highways and construction lead to their extinction. (35)

• Protect biodiversity, especially wild forests, wetlands, coastal areas, mangrove swamps. (39)

• Promote smart growth. Create livable communities with beautiful design and plentiful green spaces for everyone, especially the poor. Tackle noise and “visual pollution” and our cities’ cultural treasures. Design spaces that help people connect and trust each other. (44-45, 113, 147)

• Put an end to the lucrative trade in wild species. (47)

• Get down from the ivory tower and stop the rhetoric. Get to know the poor and suffering; it will wake up a numb conscience and inspire real action. (49)

• Stop blaming problems on population growth. The real threat is excessive consumerism and waste. (50)

• End commercial over fishing and make the oceans not the common good. (50)

• Special interests manipulate information, offer “superficial or sporadic acts of philanthropy and perfunctory expressions of concern.” (54)

• Sweat it out. Increasing use and power of air-conditioning seems “self-destructive.” (55)

• Even if it doesn’t fix the world, beautification and goodwill gestures inspire and remind people that “we were made for love.” (58, 113, 212)

• Get back to nature — “the carress of God” — to recharge. Be more attentive to its beauty and wonder and revisit places that left you with happy memories. (84, 97, 215, 233)

• Be consistent. Pro-life, environmental and social justice movements are all connected. Protecting vulnerable species must include the unborn, endangered animals and the exploited. (91, 120)

• Use technology to solve real problems and serve people, helping those have more dignity, less suffering and healthier lives. (112)

• Believe in a happy future, a better tomorrow. Slow down, recover values and the meaning of life. Putting the brakes on “unnecessary delusions of grandeur” is not a call to go back to the Stone Age. (113-114, 225)

• This is a moment for vocational renewal. Create jobs that allow for personal growth, stability, living out one’s values. (128)

• Listen to, protect lands of and involve indigenous peoples. The disappearance of cultures is even more serious than losing species. (148-150, 152, 219, 232)

• Make public transportation a priority and a more pleasant experience. (153)

• Provide essential services to rural areas. (154)

• Accept and care for the body God gave you. Value sexual differences and your own gender. (155)

• Implement tough police global agreements on sustainable development, caring for the ecosystem, limiting greenhouse gases, handling hazardous wastes, ozone protection. Nix the “ploy” of trading carbon credits. (164, 167-171)
People Express Heartache, Outrage as They Mourn Shooting Victims

By Daniel O’Shea

Catholic News Service

The tragic taking of nine lives at a historically black church downtown in Charleston, South Carolina, brought an outpouring of solidarity, compassion and sorrow from around the country.

After an all-night search, police June 18 found the white man suspected of fatally shooting nine people, including the Rev. Clementa Pinckney in Charleston, S.C. They arrested 21-year-old Dylann Storm Roof in neighboring North Carolina and charged him with the murders. The man did not fight tradition so he was returned to South Carolina.

Witnesses said Roof had joined a prayer meeting the evening of June 17 at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston.

They said he sat with church members for about an hour then stood up, yelling racist reeks, and opened fire.

Religious leaders as well as government leaders issued their condolences and condemned the shooting, which is being investigated as a hate crime.

Catholic Bishop Robert E. Guglielmo of Miami expressed a deep sadness over the tragedy.

"The inside of any church is a sanctuary," he said in a statement. "They are private persons, he or she has the right to worship, pray and learn in a safe and secure environment. For anyone to enter a church and intimidate, but to kill them inside of a church during a Bible study class is devastating to any faith community."

Catholic Guglielmo also shared his sympathy with the families of those who lost loved ones, including the Rev. Pinckney in Charleston, S.C., June 19. Two days prior, nine people were murdered during a Bible study session at the church.

As of press time for this edition it was unclear how many of the victims were in the Bible study or keep silent about it. Some said it was a megachurch that was part of a larger group of churches.

"I want to thank the city of Charleston for their support," the Rev. Pinckney said. "There are other churches that have been hit and it's a blessing that this happened here."

"We need to speak about [marriage], but we need to encounter each other as human beings. We need to listen more to each other," he said.

"The importance of responding to this challenge is that there are no exceptions, the Church continues to promote and defend marriage as between one man and one woman," said Archbishop Cordileone.

Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Raleigh in the Diocese of Raleigh said he was "in solidarity with my brother bishop... I ask all the Catholic faithful and people of goodwill in this nation, in South Carolina and the nation today, and offer sincere and thoughtful prayer for the nine victims of this horrific crime and for their families.

A number of Jewish groups issued strong statements on the crime that took place in Charleston.

"Hate crimes attack both individual victims and entire communities," said the Jewish Council for Public Affairs. "They are meant to isolate and terrorize. We stand in direct contrast for an inclusive and pluralistic community, one that cherishes life and recognizes that every person is created in the divine image."

The statement went on to point out that the tragic act "highlights that there is still racism in our society and that there is urgent need to address the issue directly. We must clearly and unequivocally demonstrate that hate violence has no place in our society."" Rice said. "No one should be targeted for their sexual orientation or gender identity."

Bishop Noelían, manager of interreligious and intergroup relations at AJC Global Jewish Advocacy, said that "this horrific massacre of innocents at prayer is extreme depravity. We are shocked beyond words that someone could enter a house of worship in our country and commit such a horrific crime, all the more so if it was racially motivated."

Numerous religious leaders weighed in on the shooting, with some citing an attachment to Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. Closely impacted by the tragedy was Charleston Mayor Joseph Riley.

According to AP coverage of a news conference, Riley, who is Catholic, said that for someone to go into a church and kill people who had gathered to pray and worship is "beyond any comprehension. We are going to put our arms around that church and that church community.

A number of Catholic bishops across the country issued statements, including Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, who is president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

He expressed "grief and deep sadness" over the murders June 19, saying, "There have been far too many heartbreaking losses in the African-American community this year alone. Our prayers are with all those suffering from this heinous crime. We invite our voices with civic and religious leaders in pledging to work for healing and reconciliation.""Archbishop Kurtz added, "We must continue to build bridges and we must confront racism and violence with a commitment to life, a vision of hope, and a call to action."

Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Jill, in a joint statement recalled meeting Rev. Pinckney, who also was a state senator.

"He was a dear friend, a man of service who carried forward Mother Emanuel’s legacy as a sacred place promot- ing dignity, equality, and justice," the statement said, using a popular name for the church. "We pray for him and his sister as we do for the seven other innocent souls who en- tered that storied church for their weekly Bible study seeking nothing more than humble guid- ance for the full lives ahead of them."

President Barack Obama in a separate statement said he and first lady Michelle Obama know several members from Mother Emanuel church, including the pastor.

"There is something particularly heart- breaking about the death happening in a place in which we seek solace and we seek peace, in a place of worship," he said.

"Mother Emanuel is, in fact, more than a church," President Obama continued, noting the church's long and proud history. "This is a place of worship that was founded by African-Americans seeking liberty. This is a church that helped to bring African-Americans closer to the cause for wor- shippoper to end slavery."

"When you were labsing roll-black churches, and you began to understand that there was something secret," he said. "When there was a nonviolent monster to bring the country closer in line with our highest ideals, some of our bright- er leaders spoke and led marches from this church thing out."

He said the kind of shootings that took place at the Charleston church don't happen as often in the United States and blamed the politics of gun control for keeping the U.S. from addressing the issue, but said such the issue has to come to terms with such inci- dents.

President Obama was joined by his wife, First Lady Michelle Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Jill, in a joint statement recalling meeting Rev. Pinckney, who also was a state senator.

"He was a dear friend, a man of service who carried forward Mother Emanuel’s legacy as a sacred place promoting dignity, equality, and justice," the statement said, using a popular name for the church. "We pray for him and his sister as we do for the seven other innocent souls who entered that storied church for their weekly Bible study seeking nothing more than humble guidance for the full lives ahead of them."

President Barack Obama in a separate statement said he and first lady Michelle Obama know several members from Mother Emanuel church, including the pastor.

"There is something particularly heartbreaking about the death happening in a place in which we seek solace and we seek peace, in a place of worship," he said. "Mother Emanuel is, in fact, more than a church," President Obama continued, noting the church's long and proud history. "This is a place of worship that was founded by African-Americans seeking liberty. This is a church that helped to bring African-Americans closer to the cause for worship to end slavery."

"When you were labsing roll-black churches, and you began to understand that there was something secret," he said. "When there was a nonviolent monster to bring the country closer in line with our highest ideals, some of our brighter leaders spoke and led marches from this church thing out."

He said the kind of shootings that took place at the Charleston church don't happen as often in the United States and blamed the politics of gun control for keeping the U.S. from addressing the issue, but said such the issue has to come to terms with such incidents.

President Obama was joined by his wife, First Lady Michelle Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Jill, in a joint statement recalling meeting Rev. Pinckney, who also was a state senator.

"He was a dear friend, a man of service who carried forward Mother Emanuel’s legacy as a sacred place promoting dignity, equality, and justice," the statement said, using a popular name for the church. "We pray for him and his sister as we do for the seven other innocent souls who entered that storied church for their weekly Bible study seeking nothing more than humble guidance for the full lives ahead of them."

President Barack Obama in a separate statement said he and first lady Michelle Obama know several members from Mother Emanuel church, including the pastor.

"There is something particularly heartbreaking about the death happening in a place in which we seek solace and we seek peace, in a place of worship," he said. "Mother Emanuel is, in fact, more than a church," President Obama continued, noting the church's long and proud history. "This is a place of worship that was founded by African-Americans seeking liberty. This is a church that helped to bring African-Americans closer to the cause for worship to end slavery."

"When you were labsing roll-black churches, and you began to understand that there was something secret," he said. "When there was a nonviolent monster to bring the country closer in line with our highest ideals, some of our brighter leaders spoke and led marches from this church thing out."

He said the kind of shootings that took place at the Charleston church don't happen as often in the United States and blamed the politics of gun control for keeping the U.S. from addressing the issue, but said such the issue has to come to terms with such incidents.
Full-Time Position
Payroll Manager, Harrisburg Catholic Administrative Services

It takes a sharp and savvy Payroll Manager to oversee the activities of The Diocese of Harrisburg’s in-house Payroll Department. Do you have what it takes to succeed in this vital position? You’ll be responsible for carrying out payroll preparation and process management, working closely with the Finance Department and other departments. You’ll manage all payroll related tasks, including tax reporting, benefits records administration, and payroll systems maintenance. You’ll be tasked with overseeing a fast-paced team of payroll employees. In short, you’ll be our authority on all things payroll-related for more than 3,000 dedicated employees located in over 100 locations throughout South Central Pennsylvania.

Job Responsibilities and Expectations:
- Ensure appropriate and timely payment of compensation for 3,000+ employees
- Ensure the diocese is in compliance with payroll laws and tax regulations.
- Ensure the diocese and all locations are in compliance with Fair Labor Standards Act.
- Must have the ability to manage and prioritize effectively
- Must be passionate about payroll and related tax filings, as well as any regulatory requirements (ACA, health insurance reporting, etc.)
- Must be able to work independently and proactively, with excellent organization and time management
- Ability to be flexible with your work schedule (some holidays/weekend work may be required)
- Must be able to work independently and proactively, with excellent organization and time management
- Results oriented
- Excellent Customer Service skills are essential as you will be working with entities throughout the diocese to process involves transactions on a weekly basis
- Must be able to work independently and proactively, with excellent organization and time management
- Ability to be flexible with your work schedule (some holidays/weekend work may be required)

Requirements Include:
- 5+ years of progressive experience in all aspects of managing a payroll function and team
- Bachelor’s Degree preferred in Accounting or similar or equivalent combination of education and experience may substitute
- Requires proficiency in Microsoft, Excel, Outlook, data entry and internet; Microsoft Navision knowledge a plus
- Proven customer service approach working with all levels of employees
- Must be able to work independently and proactively, with excellent organization and time management
- Ability to be flexible with your work schedule (some holidays/weekend work may be required)

Competitive salary & benefits offered. Please send resume and cover letter to: employment@hbgdiocese.org

Harrisburg Catholic Administrative Services
Catholic Administrative Services is looking for a highly-motivated individual to work in a fast-paced, close knit team environment. You must enjoy working with numbers and possess excellent data entry speed with a high level of accuracy to be able to manage a high volume of weekly transactions within strict deadlines.

Excellent Customer Service skills are essential as you will be working with entities throughout the diocese to process involve transactions on a weekly basis. Time Management is a key skill for this role so you must be detail-oriented, organized and able to multi-task.

You are also responsible for addressing routine inquiries from vendors as well as assisting in-house and outside customers. Patience, tact and diplomacy are essential skills required for problem solving and dispute resolution concerning payables is a key function of this role.

Excellent Microsoft Office skills are required, especially in the use of Excel.

Educational Experience

High school diploma or general education degree (GED) preferably with a business major.
A basic understanding of the accounting cycle, cash receipts and general ledger. One to two years related accounts payable experience would be helpful but not necessary as on the job training is provided.

Competitive salary & benefits offered. Please send resume & cover letter to: employment@hbgdiocese.org

Parish Festivals and Picnics

The annual Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish festival in Mount Carmel will be held on the church grounds, located at 600 Union Deposit Road, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Friday, June 26, and from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 27. The fair will feature the usual carnival rides, games of chance and entertainment. For more information, call the parish office at 717-562-6722.

The annual Sacred Heart Parish Festival in Cornwall will be held July 9-11. The fun begins Thursday, 5:30-10:30 p.m. and continues on Friday and Saturday, 5:30-10:30 p.m. Throughout the week, we will have the traditional game midway from 4:7 p.m. and entertainment from 6-10 p.m. Friday features a Fish Fry dinner from 4-7 p.m. Entertainment on Friday by “Jimi’s Not Home” and on Saturday by “Stanky & the Coal Miners” Friday from 7-10 p.m., and “The New Individuals” Saturday from 6-10 p.m.

The annual St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Bonneauville will host its parish Picnic on the evenings of August 7 & Entertainment by The Keystone Kids Starmakers Friday 6-7PM, The Shoreline’s Saturday from 7-8PM & The Hit List on Sunday from 7-8PM. Entertainment by The Hit List on Thursday, Laredo on Friday, and Pentagon on Saturday.

The annual Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish festival in Mount Carmel will be held on the church grounds, located at 600 Union Deposit Road, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Friday, June 26, and from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 27. The fair will feature the usual carnival rides, games of chance and entertainment. For more information, call the parish office at 717-562-6722.

The annual Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish festival in Mount Carmel will be held on the church grounds, located at 600 Union Deposit Road, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Friday, June 26, and from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 27. The fair will feature the usual carnival rides, games of chance and entertainment. For more information, call the parish office at 717-562-6722.

The annual Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish festival in Mount Carmel will be held on the church grounds, located at 600 Union Deposit Road, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Friday, June 26, and from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 27. The fair will feature the usual carnival rides, games of chance and entertainment. For more information, call the parish office at 717-562-6722.

The annual Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish festival in Mount Carmel will be held on the church grounds, located at 600 Union Deposit Road, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Friday, June 26, and from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 27. The fair will feature the usual carnival rides, games of chance and entertainment. For more information, call the parish office at 717-562-6722.

The annual Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish festival in Mount Carmel will be held on the church grounds, located at 600 Union Deposit Road, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Friday, June 26, and from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 27. The fair will feature the usual carnival rides, games of chance and entertainment. For more information, call the parish office at 717-562-6722.

The annual Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish festival in Mount Carmel will be held on the church grounds, located at 600 Union Deposit Road, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Friday, June 26, and from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 27. The fair will feature the usual carnival rides, games of chance and entertainment. For more information, call the parish office at 717-562-6722.
The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

ANNVILLE – St. Paul the Apostle: Kay Mihalek.
CAMP HILL – Good Shepherd: Lucille Tebonevich.
CHAMBERSBURG – Corpus Christi: Ruth Baugham, Maxine Cleary, Archie Cook, Trudy Monn.
CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Mary Belinski, Marie Gehbhart.
DANVILLE – St. Joseph: Christine Donnoyer.
ENOLA – Our Lady of Lourdes: Charles Skorjica.
GETTYSBURG – St. Francis Xavier: Mary Anna El Taher, Angel Estrada, Pat Varano.
Great: Carolyn Burns.

The Catholic Witness • June 26, 2015

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

ANNVILLE – St. Paul the Apostle: Kay Mihalek.
CAMP HILL – Good Shepherd: Lucille Tebonevich.
CHAMBERSBURG – Corpus Christi: Ruth Baugham, Maxine Cleary, Archie Cook, Trudy Monn.
CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Mary Belinski, Marie Gehbhart.
DANVILLE – St. Joseph: Christine Donnoyer.
ENOLA – Our Lady of Lourdes: Charles Skorjica.
GETTYSBURG – St. Francis Xavier: Mary Anna El Taher, Angel Estrada, Pat Varano.
Great: Carolyn Burns.

The Catholic Witness • June 26, 2015

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

ANNVILLE – St. Paul the Apostle: Kay Mihalek.
CAMP HILL – Good Shepherd: Lucille Tebonevich.
CHAMBERSBURG – Corpus Christi: Ruth Baugham, Maxine Cleary, Archie Cook, Trudy Monn.
CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Mary Belinski, Marie Gehbhart.
DANVILLE – St. Joseph: Christine Donnoyer.
ENOLA – Our Lady of Lourdes: Charles Skorjica.
GETTYSBURG – St. Francis Xavier: Mary Anna El Taher, Angel Estrada, Pat Varano.
Great: Carolyn Burns.

The Catholic Witness • June 26, 2015

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

ANNVILLE – St. Paul the Apostle: Kay Mihalek.
CAMP HILL – Good Shepherd: Lucille Tebonevich.
CHAMBERSBURG – Corpus Christi: Ruth Baugham, Maxine Cleary, Archie Cook, Trudy Monn.
CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Mary Belinski, Marie Gehbhart.
DANVILLE – St. Joseph: Christine Donnoyer.
ENOLA – Our Lady of Lourdes: Charles Skorjica.
GETTYSBURG – St. Francis Xavier: Mary Anna El Taher, Angel Estrada, Pat Varano.
Great: Carolyn Burns.

The Catholic Witness • June 26, 2015

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

ANNVILLE – St. Paul the Apostle: Kay Mihalek.
CAMP HILL – Good Shepherd: Lucille Tebonevich.
CHAMBERSBURG – Corpus Christi: Ruth Baugham, Maxine Cleary, Archie Cook, Trudy Monn.
CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Mary Belinski, Marie Gehbhart.
DANVILLE – St. Joseph: Christine Donnoyer.
ENOLA – Our Lady of Lourdes: Charles Skorjica.
GETTYSBURG – St. Francis Xavier: Mary Anna El Taher, Angel Estrada, Pat Varano.
Great: Carolyn Burns.

The Catholic Witness • June 26, 2015

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

ANNVILLE – St. Paul the Apostle: Kay Mihalek.
CAMP HILL – Good Shepherd: Lucille Tebonevich.
CHAMBERSBURG – Corpus Christi: Ruth Baugham, Maxine Cleary, Archie Cook, Trudy Monn.
CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Mary Belinski, Marie Gehbhart.
DANVILLE – St. Joseph: Christine Donnoyer.
ENOLA – Our Lady of Lourdes: Charles Skorjica.
GETTYSBURG – St. Francis Xavier: Mary Anna El Taher, Angel Estrada, Pat Varano.
Great: Carolyn Burns.

The Catholic Witness • June 26, 2015

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

ANNVILLE – St. Paul the Apostle: Kay Mihalek.
CAMP HILL – Good Shepherd: Lucille Tebonevich.
CHAMBERSBURG – Corpus Christi: Ruth Baugham, Maxine Cleary, Archie Cook, Trudy Monn.
CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Mary Belinski, Marie Gehbhart.
DANVILLE – St. Joseph: Christine Donnoyer.
ENOLA – Our Lady of Lourdes: Charles Skorjica.
GETTYSBURG – St. Francis Xavier: Mary Anna El Taher, Angel Estrada, Pat Varano.
Great: Carolyn Burns.

The Catholic Witness • June 26, 2015

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

ANNVILLE – St. Paul the Apostle: Kay Mihalek.
CAMP HILL – Good Shepherd: Lucille Tebonevich.
CHAMBERSBURG – Corpus Christi: Ruth Baugham, Maxine Cleary, Archie Cook, Trudy Monn.
CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Mary Belinski, Marie Gehbhart.
DANVILLE – St. Joseph: Christine Donnoyer.
ENOLA – Our Lady of Lourdes: Charles Skorjica.
GETTYSBURG – St. Francis Xavier: Mary Anna El Taher, Angel Estrada, Pat Varano.
Great: Carolyn Burns.

The Catholic Witness • June 26, 2015

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

CONEWAGO – Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
CUMBERLAND – Seven Sorrows: Sister Bernadette Sullins.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.

Sacred Heart of Jesus: Clara M. Keretski, Theresa L. Deemer.
Spiritual Offerings

The Holy Name of Jesus Retreats of Columbus of Oulting, OH, Presents "For the Love of God." The retreat will be held on Saturday, July 12 at Deer Valley Golf Club in honor of Peter Ketelet, one of the founders of the Holy Name of Jesus. Participants at the event will support the Holy Name of Jesus Parish and School in Columbus. Following the Mass, there will be a Praise and Worship Night. There will be an event on a focus theme: Starting at 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 12, there will be a seminar on how to get involved in the faith. A Retreat of the Holy Name of Jesus Parish will be held in the month of July. It will be held at 11 a.m. on Sunday, July 12 at the Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Columbus. The retreat is open to all ages and attendance is welcome. Please join us for this event.

Events & Fund-Raisers

The Sanctuary of the Blessed Sacrament, a center for devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, located on the beautiful, 120-acre campus of the Orchard Lake School, is seeking a Parish Manager. The position is available immediately at $150 per hour. For more information, contact Barbara Rice at 717-808-6525 or email at crice41209@aol.com.

The 2015 San Marziale Procession, "The Kupmont Our Boys Band," will be held in Kupmont on July 12 at 11 a.m. and will begin at 11 a.m. at the Kupmont Our Boys Band. This procession will showcase the "Our Boys Band," which will play a variety of Irish and American songs. The procession will include a parade and a Mass at the Kupmont Our Boys Band Church. These activities will be held in the process of meeting at Holy Angels Church at 12:30 p.m.

The 10th Anniversary of Divine Mercy retreat, "Holy Spirit," will be held in the month of July. The retreat is open to all ages and attendance is welcome. Please join us for this event.

The 10th Anniversary of Divine Mercy retreat, "Holy Spirit," will be held in the month of July. The retreat is open to all ages and attendance is welcome. Please join us for this event.
Members of the St. Thomas More Society of Central Pennsylvania assemble for the annual Mass celebrated by Bishop Ronald Gainer at St. Joseph Church in York June 22 in memory of the martyr who gave his life for God instead of yielding to the demands of King Henry VIII in 1535.

On Feast of St. Thomas More, Bishop Points to Martyr as Example of Remaining Faithful in Face of Persecution

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

On the Feast Day of St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher, two martyrs who remained faithful in the face of political persecution, Bishop Ronald Gainer lauded the saints for their example of giving of their soul to the Lord alone.

The bishop celebrated the Mass for members of the St. Thomas More Society of Central Pennsylvania and the faithful in attendance at St. Joseph Church in York June 22, the second day of the annual Fortnight for Freedom.

Prayer for the Protection of Religious Liberty

O God our Creator,
from your provident hand we have received our being,
and the pursuit of happiness.
You have called us as your people and given us the right and the duty to worship you, the only true God,
and your Son, Jesus Christ.
Through the power and working of your Holy Spirit,
you call us to live out our faith in the midst of the world,
with the light and saving truth of the Gospel to every corner of society.
We ask you to bless us in our vigilance for the gift of religious liberty.
Give us the strength of mind and heart
to readily defend our freedoms when they are threatened;
give us courage in making our voices heard
on behalf of the rights of your Church and the freedom of conscience of all people of faith.
Grant, we pray, O heavenly Father,
a clear and united voice to all your sons and daughters
who are persecuted each year around the world.

The St. Thomas More Society of Central Pennsylvania was founded by Catholic lawyers and judges to promote Catholic principals in the law in the spirit of St. Thomas More.

Father Paul Clark, Diocesan Judicial Vicar and liaison to the St. Thomas More Society of Central Pennsylvania, receives a blessing from Bishop Ronald Gainer before proclaiming the Gospel reading.

During this year’s Corpus Christi procession, Pope Francis asked us to remember “our many brothers and sisters who do not have the freedom to live their faith in the Lord Jesus.” About 100 million Christians are persecuted every year around the world.

“Let us be united with them,” he said. “And, in our hearts, let us venerate those brothers and sisters who were asked to sacrifice their lives out of fidelity to Christ. May their blood, united to the Lord’s, be a pledge of peace and reconciliation for the whole world.”

Closer to home, the Pennsylvania House of Representa tives also condemned the worldwide persecution of Christians and called on global leaders to protect the religious liberty of Christians and all other faiths within their borders.

Representative Kathy Rapp (R-Warren, Crawford, Forest), recalled Pennsylvania’s heritage while urging her colleagues to support her resolution: “Our Founder William Penn, himself, was imprisoned for seven years for his faith. He was a leading defender in his time of religious freedom.” House Resolution 182 passed unanimously on April 1, 2015.

From June 21 to July 4, 2015, American Catholics will mark the annual Fortnight for Freedom with a focus on the “freedom to bear witness” to the truth of the Gospel. These two weeks will include prayer, liturgical celebrations, and special events across the nation.

While we unite our prayers for persecuted fellow Christians around the world, we must also be ever vigilant for threats to our own religious liberty at home. For example,

• The mandate of the Department of Health and Human Services forces religious institutions to facilitate access to products contrary to their own moral teaching or be punished. Further, the federal government tries to define the religious liberty as a “religiously sufficient” to merit protection of their religious liberty.

• Boston, San Francisco, the District of Columbia, and the State of Illinois have driven local Catholic Charities out of the business of providing adoption or foster care services—by revoking their licenses, by ending their government contracts, or both—because those Charities refused to place children with same-sex couples.

• The years of excellent performance by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Migration and Refugee Services (MRS) in administering contract services for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in administering contract services for victims of human trafficking, the federal government changed its contract specifications to require MRS to provide or refer for contraceptive and abortion services in violation of Catholic teaching.

Prayer

O God, you have called us as your people and given us the right and the duty to worship you, the only true God, and your Son, Jesus Christ. Through the power and working of your Holy Spirit, you call us to live out our faith in the midst of the world, with the light and saving truth of the Gospel to every corner of society. We ask you to bless us in our vigilance for the gift of religious liberty. Give us the strength of mind and heart to readily defend our freedoms when they are threatened; give us courage in making our voices heard on behalf of the rights of your Church and the freedom of conscience of all people of faith. Grant, we pray, O heavenly Father, a clear and united voice to all your sons and daughters gathered in your Church in this decisive hour in the history of our nation, so that, with every total whitewash and every danger overcome—for the sake of our children, our grandchildren, and all who come after us—this great land will always be “one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(From the USCCB)