Late morning sunlight beams into St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg June 1 as the candidates for ordination to the priesthood approach the sanctuary during the start of the solemn Mass. Father Mark Wilke, Father Daniel Richards, Father Stephen Kelley and Father Kevin Kayda were ordained by Bishop William Waltersheid, Auxiliary Bishop of Pittsburgh. See pages 9-12.

**Ordination to the Priesthood**

“As you receive this tremendous gift of priesthood today, recognize that it is not given to you as your own private property, but it is given to you for all in the Church to transform their lives and their hearts.

Today, you are to preach the Word in season and out of season, and every day of your priestly lives, knowing everything that comes forth from your mouth must resound to God’s glory and give inspiration.

Be courageous witnesses to the Gospel of love and truth. You are to be Good Shepherds after the heart of the Great Shepherd who says, “I will lay down my life for my sheep.” In your life as priests, you will have countless opportunities to lay down your life for the fallen, to witness to God’s love, to reach out to them and to bring the love of Christ to their lives.

Yes, it is true, you are given power to govern by ordination, but you must govern and rule with love and love alone. You must bring others to Christ by the example of how you allow yourself to be moved by Christ the Savior.

Today, you are configured to Christ, the Great High Priest, and you are espoused in a special way to his bride, the Church. Each day of the priest’s life, he must learn to love the Church again and again and again. He must recognize in her the spouse to which he has made his promise of faithful love, of prayer, of obedience. Yes, it is true that you will sacrifice much in your lives, but your sacrifice, my dear sons, will bear tremendous fruit. For as you deny yourself a marriage and family, you are given a great family: the very household of God, to which you must give your heart in faithful and chaste love.”

~ From the homily delivered by Bishop William Waltersheid, Auxiliary Bishop of Pittsburgh, to the candidates prior to their ordination to the priesthood.
Memorial Masses celebrated in Philadelphia and in Harrisburg in the weeks after the death of Bishop Joseph P. McFadden offered opportunities for the late bishop’s family, friends and co-workers to continue to remember and offer prayers for him.

On May 22, what would have been the bishop’s 66th birthday, Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia served as the principal celebrant of a Memorial Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul in Philadelphia, where Bishop McFadden was ordained a priest in 1981, and where he was ordained a bishop in 2004.

Among those gathered for the Mass was a group of alumni from St. Thomas More High School, from which Bishop McFadden graduated and was class valedictorian. The alumni, dressed in the green blazers of their high school, which closed in 1975, continue to host annual gatherings and to support Catholic education.

“Bishop McFadden was a great example” of modeling oneself after St. Thomas More, who never yielded in following Church teaching, alumni Francis Donegan told The Catholic Witness. “He was a great man. He was a guy who maintained friendships, no matter what title he had or what status he attained.”

Bishop McFadden’s friendship and devotion were attributes that also resounded in the homily of Msgr. Daniel Kutys, current pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul.

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Faithful Offer Continued Prayers for Bishop McFadden at Memorial Masses in Philadelphia, Harrisburg
Bishop Joe McFadden was our brother, uncle, cousin, teacher, coach, priest, auxiliary bishop and friend. He has been so much a part of our lives that we had to gather as a people who have lost an important person,” Msgr. Kutys said. “As we can all see from the crowd tonight, Bishop McFadden touched many lives and made many friends. While he embraced Harrisburg and the people there, he never left his family and friends in Philadelphia behind. We never lost the place we had in his heart, or he in ours.”

“If we look around at the people tonight, it is also a testimony to the fact that Bishop Joe McFadden’s greatest gift was in making friends,” he said. “It was easy to like him because he was smart, funny, loyal and generous. If he made a commitment to you, if he became your friend, he worked hard to be true to it and never forgot it.”

A month after the bishop’s death, the Diocese of Harrisburg celebrated what is known as a Month’s Mind Mass, a tradition that dates back to Medieval times. The Mass offers a time to “mind,” or remember the deceased.

The Mass was celebrated June 3 at St. Patrick Cathedral, where Bishop McFadden was installed as the Tenth Bishop of Harrisburg on Aug. 18, 2010. A portrait of him, draped in black bunting, was placed next to the empty cathedra.

In his homily, Father Robert Gillelan, Diocesan Administrator, remarked that “As our official period of mourning now draws to a close, we press on in faith, hope and love. For a Christian, it is the only way.

“As we move into the mystery of an uncertain future, our hearts are not troubled because our faith is strong. Our hearts are strong because of our hope. And our hearts are generous because of the love that has been poured into them by Christ Jesus,” he said. “May we mind the legacy of Bishop Joseph P. McFadden, Tenth Bishop of the Diocese of Harrisburg – his joyful humanity, his kind spirit, his apostolic zeal, his sacrificial love,” Father Gillelan told the congregation. “In his memory, and in thanksgiving to God for the gift of his life, may we not settle for anything less.”
Clergy Appointments

The Very Reverend Robert M. Gillilan, Jr., Diocesan Administrator, has made the following announcements:

**Effective June 17, 2013:**
- The Reverend James E. Lease from Parochial Vicar, St. Joseph Parish, Hanover, to Administrator, Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Harrisburg. Father Lease will continue as Chaplain for Delone Catholic High School, McSherrystown.
- The Reverend Joshua R. Brommer to Administrator, St. John the Baptist Parish, New Freedom. Father Brommer will continue as Liturgical Coordinator for the Diocese of Harrisburg.
- The Reverend Ignacio Falatomo from Parochial Vicar, St. Francis Xavier Parish, Gettysburg, to Chaplain, Hispanic Community of Hanover with residence at St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Hanover.
- The Reverend Joseph A. Zarda from Pastor, Divine Redeemer Parish, Mount Carmel, to Chaplain, Carmel of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Elysburg.
- The Reverend Steven W. Fauser, Chaplain, Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Father Fauser will continue as Pastor, Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, New Oxford.
- The Reverend Keith M. Carroll, Scout Chaplain for the Diocese of Harrisburg. Father Carroll will continue as Parochial Vicar, Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Harrisburg.
- The Reverend Martin O. Moran, Administrator, Divine Redeemer Parish, Mount Carmel.
- The Reverend Mark T. Wilke, newly ordained, to Parochial Vicar, St. Francis Xavier Parish, Gettysburg.
- The Reverend Kevin L. Kayda, newly ordained, to Parochial Vicar, St. John the Baptist Parish, New Freedom.
- The Reverend Daniel K. Richards, newly ordained, to Parochial Vicar, St. Leo the Great Parish, Rohrerser.</p><p>Sign Up to Receive The Witness Electronically

Now you can read *The Catholic Witness* online wherever you go!

Through a free e-mail service, you can receive the diocesan newspaper in a fast and user-friendly electronic format. Sign up, and you will receive an e-mail with a direct link to each edition as it is published.

Sign up for the e-mail service by logging on to the diocesan Web site at www.hbgdiocese.org, follow the News/Events tab to *The Catholic Witness* page and click on “*Catholic Witness* E-mail Sign-Up.” Once you complete the form, you’ll be added to our e-mail list. Those interested in signing up for the e-mail service are asked to fill out the online form individually, not via direct contact to The Witness offices.

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 Hunterstetter, at 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.

Response to the Culture Challenge

By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC

Special to The Witness

In the March 29, 2013, edition of *The Witness*, in the article entitled, *Culture Challenge*, I wrote about a blog I came across by Naomi Simson. (http://www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/201302052534619-1291685-the-21-day-challenge-no-phone-in-the-company-of-others) In this blog, she proposed that for a period of 21 days, she would try not to be “plugged” into the cyberspace world in the presence of someone else. The purpose of this action was to make conscious contact with people who were physically present to her wherever she went.

Personally, I stepped up to “the plate” she suggested and tried to do it in the remaining part of the Easter Season, which was only 20 days. I thought, “This will be EASY to do!”

I found out that it truly wasn’t, because I responded to the “blip” of my phone almost in a knee-jerk manner. I HAD to answer it because this was my JOB! How naive I was! Several of you told me that you were going to do the same, which only deepened my commitment to try to do this.

Shortly thereafter, on my Twitter feed, I found a blog written by Travis Garner entitled, “Developing a Healthy Relationship with Technology.” (http://www.cymt.org/finding-a-technology-balance/). In that, Garner, a self-described “complete and utter ‘techie’ who loves new gadgets,” explains that while he was at table with his friend, his i-Phone beeped, indicating a text message. When he looked at his phone, he was transported into cyberspace world, far away from the table and his friend. After a while, he looked up and noticed that his friend was waiting patiently for his return from the “text-o-sphere.” Upon his landing, he was promptly notified by his friend of his ten-minute absence. Garner writes: “TEN MINUTES! I got sucked into the world of my phone for ten whole minutes while I was IN THE MIDDLE OF A CONVERSATION!!”

How many of us can understand this “dark side” of technology and have been guilty of doing exactly what Garner did? I certainly can! During the 20-day “pillgrimage” away from opening the cyber door in the presence of another, I discovered and most importantly OWNED an aspect of balance that was very easy to forget. The people around me are indeed a gift and grace of God sent by Him to teach about Him. We find this idea in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which teaches, (CCC 1700):

“The dignity of the human person is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God; it is fulfilled in his vocation to divine beatitude. It is essential to a human being freely to direct himself to this fulfillment.

So, through interacting with whom I work and live with and even meet in the street, I can deepen my love of God. It often is His voice sounding like another’s that challenges me to love more in word and action. As my phone would vibrate through the course of these 20 days, indicating that I had an other text message or e-mail message, I would focus on the person in front of me in a profound way. In short, I found myself “celebrating” the moment and the sacredness of the “now” rather than turning toward the person at the other end of my phone. The “face to face” world became more real, more sacred than the cyber world within which I move and groove on a daily basis; a world that is a huge part of my job and my life. I guess I learned that I cannot serve God and text, twitter, e-mail, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram! Did I discover this by merely focusing on another? No, not totally. You see, my “pillgrimage” from the cyber world was not just in the presence of another. I actually decided to turn off some of my applications on my phone. I turned off my Twitter feed from indicating a Tweet directed to me. I turned off my e-mail after 8:00 at night. I decidedly carved out minutes of the day in which I was unreachable from the cyberspace world.

Travis Garner’s following words have been a true source of reflection for me: “When we get caught in the mindset that in order to be effective in ministry we must be continually connected, we find ourselves in a dangerous cycle, elevating ourselves above where we ought to be and spiraling toward burnout. Technology is an incredibly useful tool for ministry, but it can’t replace the effectiveness of a rooted, balanced, spiritually nourished minister.”

(Sister of Christian Charity, Geralyn Schmidt, is the Wide Area Network Coordinator at the Diocese of Harrisburg and a member of the IT Department. An educator for 28 years, she is responsible for Professional Development Programs for every age learner. In addition, Sister blogs for Powerful Learning Practices, a company providing in-service opportunities for educators. Through her presentations, she challenges her audiences to be the individual God has called them to be.)
It’s In the Little Journeys

By Elizabeth Bare
Special to The Witness

(The following piece was written by Elizabeth Bare for the dioceese's Ning site, www.youthandyoungadult.ning.com, which is hosting all the social media posts for the diocese’s World Youth Day pilgrimage July 20-29. As a correspondent for World Youth Day, Elizabeth will be joining Emily M. Albert, photojournalist for The Catholic Witness, in posting blogs and photos before and during the diocese’s World Youth Day pilgrimage.)

In the past few years, God has allowed me to become keenly aware of myself as a pilgrim: one on a journey toward greater fulfillment and in through Jesus Christ. This path is certain in its goal but vague in its means. In fact, it has been fraught with discomfort, pain, confusion, loss, doubt, and frustration. Sometimes I really did not know what God was doing—life seemed to fall down on me at all once and things I once saw as certainties changed overnight.

And yet, in the midst of these difficulties, I experienced God’s love, mercy, and peace in a way I never thought possible. In fact, if I had never embarked on this journey in the first place, and accepted, as the Serenity Prayer tells us, “hardship as a pathway to peace,” I could not have known the depths of God’s infinite compassion, provision, and care.

All along my own personal journey, and on my journey toward World Youth Day, I have had many smaller pilgrimages that enabled me to see the Lord in a new way and find strength to get through the never-ending range of mountains that hung in front of my horizon. It is in these little “side trails” that I have been able to begin to blaze a clearer path to healing and reconciliation with God and others. My acceptances of these day-to-day meetings with the Divine strengthened my faith and taught me valuable lessons that I will take with me the rest of my life.

One such journey was fundraising for World Youth Day.

First of all, I am horrible at fundraising. I think I always sold the least donuts or cookies, or whatever it was when I was in grade school. I feel very awkward asking for monetary assistance, and I am much more awkward when it comes to marketing products to sell. I knew that if God had led me to serve as a correspondent at World Youth Day, he would provide the means necessary for me to go. Yet, in the back of my mind, doubt and fear kept rearing their ugly heads, even up to the very end when a complete stranger (to me) living in Florida donated a significant amount I needed to be “paid in full.”

However, while I thought God was testing my faith and patience (and fundraising skills), he was teaching some other people valuable lessons for their spiritual journey. Along my path this past year, I met a special acquaintance—let’s call him Tim. Tim is an older gentleman, former professor, and缺席务er for Central Dauphin High School. At Shippensburg University, he participated in Catholic Campus Ministry and served as a pianist for campus Masses. Elizabeth is an Eastern Orthodox Christian and served as a pianist for campus Masses. Elizabeth is an Eastern Orthodox Christian and served as a pianist for campus Masses. Elizabeth is an Eastern Orthodox Christian and served as a pianist for campus Masses.

Elizabeth Bare is a recent summa cum laude graduate from Shippensburg University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, and an alumna of Central Dauphin High School. At Shippensburg University, she participated in Catholic Campus Ministry and served as a pianist for campus Masses. Elizabeth is an Eastern Orthodox Christian and served as a pianist for campus Masses.

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The Diocese of Harrisburg’s Golden Apple Awards Program honors educators for their contributions to Catholic schools and their students. The awards, now in their eighth year, are presented by the Diocesan Department of Catholic Schools, based on nominations from school principals, parents, students and fellow educators. The program was established by Jack and Rhodora Donahue from Pottstown.

The 2013 Golden Apple recipients are Michelle Banks, sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade science teacher at Trinity School in New Cumberland; Mary Jo Pronio of St. Margaret Mary Catholic High School in McSherrystown; Patricia Marrocco of Delone Catholic High School in McSherrystown; Nora Knott of Bishop McDevitt High School, St. Catherine Laboure School in Harrisburg and Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in Middleburg; Francesca Kornish of Catherine Laboure School in Holy Cross, Delone Catholic High School, Holy Name of Jesus School and St. Catherine Laboure School in Harrisburg and Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in Middletown; Michelle Banks of St. Theresa School in New Oxford; Patricia Buckley of St. Theresa School in New Oxford; and Tiffany Stultz of Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in McSherrystown.

On bringing the Catholic faith into the classroom, Michelle Banks, first-grade teacher at Trinity School in New Cumberland, said, “I think there is a very vital connection between science and religion. I think there is a very vital connection between science and religion. I think there is a very vital connection between science and religion. I think there is a very vital connection between science and religion.”

On how she works with students to help develop their character: By giving them leadership and responsibility roles. I like to give them some sort of accountability so that they can show that they have the capability to be leaders, to be in charge. I have discussions with them about how to be leaders and how you present yourself and how you present yourself to others is very important, and it speaks to their character.

I think Catholic schools are really wonderful because they can teach in a Catholic school: you can address the character issues and have faith built in every subject.

Patricia Buckley, first-grade teacher at Trinity School, said, “We've been working very hard to bring the children into the faith: they're intrinsically linked because, as you're helping the students hone their musical skills, and as everybody is getting better in their own ability level, they're encountering God in a very personal, very intimate way. When we're really making music for God -- whether it be in the church or in the classroom -- we realize that the talents and the gifts Our Mother has are from him; and when we use them well -- whether alone or as a group -- we're really meeting him one on one in a special way.

On how music connects students to their faith: They're intrinsically linked because, as you're helping the students hone their musical skills, and as everybody is getting better in their own ability level, they're encountering God in a very personal, very intimate way. When we're really making music for God -- whether it be in the church or in the classroom -- we realize that the talents and the gifts Our Mother has are from him; and when we use them well -- whether alone or as a group -- we're really meeting him one on one in a special way.

On the attributes she has witnessed in her students in the faith: I love to be able to teach the children not just the academ- ics, but the spiritual side too. It helps me to grow in my faith. I teach second grade, and teach the Sacraments of First Communion and Reconciliation. Sometimes I learn as much from them as they do from me. It's a huge responsibility.

On what it means to teach at her alma mater: I felt a coming home when I began teaching there. My brothers and sisters and I graduated here, my mom has worked here for many years in the cafeteria and now, at age 55, she's working here also. We've had two sisters who have worked here on and off through the years, and my prin- cipal was my fifth-grade teacher. There are a lot of connections. Literally, it is a family for me.

Nora Knott, music teacher at Bishop McDevitt High School, St. Catherine Laboure School and Holy Name of Jesus School in Harrisburg, and Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in Middletown, said, “I think the relationships that the teach- ers have with the students is very vital. We can't do our job without students. Students know they can come to you when they need help, they can ask you questions. It's nice to be able to come to school and help the other students, and then help one another.

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On music as praise and worship, not just for help, they can ask you questions. It's nice to be able to come to school and help the other students, and then help one another.

On her role in nurturing children in the classroom: Sometimes, by mistake, the students call me ‘Mom.’ I like that. They like to emulate me, so I know I have to be on my toes when I speak because they really want to learn how to help the other students, and then help one another.

On what she would tell parents considering a Catholic school education for their children: It is nice to be able to come to school and fol- low God and Jesus, and to be able to follow the teachings of the Church…. You can see the difference in a student who has received a Catholic school education. The daily faith setting is so important.

On love teaching at Annunciation: I've been there for 12 years now, and every day it just gets stronger. The teachers, the parents and the community are all involved, and we're working with one another.
Dear Friends in Christ,

Through the Missionary Cooperative Program, the Diocese of Harrisburg invites priests from mission dioceses and religious communities to preach in our parishes during the months of June, July, and August. This annual appeal from missionaries helps unite the Diocese of Harrisburg with the Universal Church, and it animates mission awareness for our diocesan faithful.

To have a foreign missionary stand right in front of you makes the needs of the missions real and much more personal. We can hear firsthand of the preaching and catechizing that takes place all over the world. We come to understand how the seeds of faith are bearing fruit in personal spiritual growth and in the physical structures that support developing faith communities.

The missions have two important needs that we can meet in solidarity with them. They are in need of our prayerful support. St. Thérèse of Lisieux realized that the best service she could render to missionaries was her prayers.

The missions are also in need of our financial support to continue the work of proclaiming the Gospel and building the Kingdom. To have a foreign missionary stand right in front of you makes the needs of the missions real and much more personal. We can hear firsthand of the preaching and catechizing that takes place all over the world. We come to understand how the seeds of faith are bearing fruit in personal spiritual growth and in the physical structures that support developing faith communities.

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Thank you for the warm reception and welcome you give to our visiting missionaries. May your prayers and financial support enable them to proclaim Christ to the world.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

Reverend Robert F. Sharman
Diocesan Director

Saint Vincent Archanbey*
Missions in Brazil and Taiwan; education and formation of seminarians from 20 foreign countries in Latrobe, PA

Pallottines, Nagpur Province*
Missions in India, Africa

Vincentian Congregation, Marymatha Province*
Missions in Masaka, Uganda, East Africa

Diocese of Lucena*
Philippines

Diocese of Mendiulev*
Jamaica

Oblates of St. Francis de Sales*
Missions in Namibia, Benin, Brazil, Uruguay, Mexico, Ecuador, India, and the Ukraine

Order of Friars Minor (Capuchin-Franciscan)*
Missions in Puerto Rico and Papua New Guinea

Franciscan Mission Association*
Missions in Ghana, Kenya, Jamaica, Japan, Philippines, US

Diocese of Kumbo*
Cameroon, Africa

Diocese of Chingleput*
India

Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary*
Missions in Timor, Nigeria, India

Divine Word Missionaries*
Worldwide; Missions in Papua New Guinea

Dominican Fathers and Brothers, Province of Nigeria*
Nigeria, Ghana, Austria, Germany, Canada, US, Grenada

Apostles of Jesus*
Africa

Diocese of St. Thomas*
US Virgin Islands

Missionaries of the Poor
Jamaica, Africa, Haiti, India, Philippines, Indonesia, US

*Graces Shared are Blessings Returned
When vocations flourish in America, many of our young men and women went forth to evangelize the world by preaching the Gospel of Christ. These missionary sisters, brothers and priests traveled to Africa, Asia, the Far East, and Latin America to share their love for Jesus with others.

With the need for more priests worldwide, the “Graces Shared” long ago are now “Blessings Returned” as foreign missionaries come to us as servants of the Lord. Missionaries that are marked with an asterisk (*) serve and minister in the Harrisburg Diocese in parishes, schools, and charitable and health care institutions, helping us to grow in Christian faith through their sacred ministry.

“Please Welcome These Missionaries!”

A missionary will be visiting your parish this summer, offering an inside look at how your participation in the annual Missionary Cooperative Program has a resounding effect in the worldwide Church. In some cases, we may need to Google a country to find the mission land on a map. But from our pews, we can make a great impact. Although we are not an especially large diocese, last summer through your generous support more than $360,000 was collected in the Harrisburg Diocese for 15 different missions! That goes a long way in providing missionaries with the tools necessary to carry out the Church’s Mission of Evangelization.

Please welcome these missionaries with your attention, your prayers, and your sacrifice. And pull out a map and see how far, through you, God’s love can reach.

The Diocesan Office received nearly 175 applications for the Missionary Cooperative Program from missionary organizations. Participants in this summer’s 2013 MCP appeals include:

Or contact:
Office of Pontifical Missions
4800 Union Deposit Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111
717-657-4804 ext. 240
missions@hbgdiocese.org

For More Information

“I’m telling you about the kind of people you support when you give to the Missions. They are totally dedicated. St. Paul writes in his letter to the Corinthians that ‘love never gives up.’ For missionaries, they give everything and they keep on giving until there’s nothing left to give.”

~ From a missionary’s homily during last year’s Missionary Cooperative Program

Summer Missionary Cooperative Appeal
June 7, 2013, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Over the course of the past nine years, the number of seminarians in the Diocese of Harrisburg has flourished, from 12 seminarians in 2004 to 37 today. On June 1, the diocese rejoiced in the ordination of four priests: Father Kevin Kayda, Father Stephen Kelley, Father Daniel Richards and Father Mark Wilke.

The four were ordained at St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg by Bishop William Waltersheid, Auxiliary Bishop of Pittsburgh. In recent interviews with The Catholic Witness, the newest priests spoke of their discernment, the God-given gifts they bring to the priesthood, and their eagerness to serve Christ’s Church.

Father Mark Wilke, a native son of St. Joseph Parish in Dallastown, says the image of the Good Shepherd comes to his mind when he considers his role as a priest.

“So often, the role of shepherd is used to describe the priest, and I think that is so appropriate because the priest is a leader,” said Father Wilke.

“Shepherds have expertise in how to move the flock and how to defend the flock,” he said. “Like a shepherd, a priest is with the flock, and leading them forward at the same time. That’s a unique role. You get to know the people and share in their joys and their sorrows. Their joys become your joys, and their sorrows become your sorrows. They know your voice, and you know their needs. You tend to them. You might need to go pick one up because you’ve lost him, but you go after that one because you love them so much. The image of the Good Shepherd is just overwhelming for the priesthood and the ministry that we’re given.”

Father Wilke, who has been assigned to St. Francis Xavier Parish in Gettysburg, says the Holy Mass and his interaction with several priests offered him opportunities to realize that the priesthood was possible for him. He earned a degree in civil engineering from Drexel University in 2006 and held a job for a year before entering Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md.

Prayer life is essential to formation, said Father Wilke, who has a particular devotion to St. Joseph.

“His role was so unique, and reminds me of the priesthood, to be espoused to the Church, as well as to guard the Redeemer, the Eucharist, and to defend the faith,” he said. “It’s sometimes hard to be so humble, and it’s hard to work and not get thanks for it, but in that way, Joseph can be a model for priests.”

Father Wilke said his service as a deacon this past year has prepared him for ministry as a priest, particularly in the role of explaining Church teaching.

Many people don’t interact with the parish priest outside of Mass, he said, so it is critical to present them with ideas, advice and teaching that apply...
Deacons Kevin Kayda, Stephen Kelley, Daniel Richards and Mark Wilke process into St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg to be ordained priests of the Diocese.
The seminary is an interesting environment. From the outside, we might all look the same. People might assume that we are the guys who knew from the time we were kids that we were going to be priests,” Father Richards said. “But when you start to really get to know the guys in seminary, there are so many different stories and backgrounds that there really is a diverse mix.”

Father Richards shared that the greatest fear he had in considering the seminary was the life of celibacy – he wondered whether he would be fulfilled without a family.

The people of the diocese have stepped in to fill that role for him, he said.

“I’ve been amazed at the real sense of family that I’ve received, from priests, from people who work for the diocese, and the Catholics in the pews who are proud of me, even if they’ve just met me,” he said. “I don’t have a lot of family in the area, and I’ve always been able to look back and say, ‘This is home.’ This is where I feel comfortable. I need the diocese, and I think the diocese needs me in a certain way. We rely on each other. I’ve never actually experienced the loneliness that I was afraid of.”

Father Stephen Kelley fell deeply in love with the Church when he was in his early 30s. A friend had challenged him about Church practices and teachings, and he didn’t have an answer to give. So he set out to find answers to those questions.

“It ended up becoming a journey for me,” he said. “I came to understand that the faith makes sense when you understand that the faith makes sense when you understand that the faith makes sense when you understand that the faith makes sense when you understand.”

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Orpation

Continued from 11

stand how it is put together in one tapes-

try…. It is the avenue to some of the great-
est joys that humanity can experience:’

“The more I got into that, the more the

data opened up to what was possible,”

Father Kelley said. “Once you get on that

slope, you just want to keep going.”

Father Kelley, who grew up in Lebanon,

entered St. Vincent Seminary in Latrobe,

Pa., from St. Patrick Parish in York when

he was 35.

His experiences of living and working

on his own before entering seminary are

ones that he can bring to his ministry as a

priest, he said.

“I’ve dealt with having to live on Ra-

men Noodles for months. I’ve dealt with

the struggles of living paycheck to pay-

check, paying rent,” Father Kelley said.

“I’ve struggled with finances and I know

how difficult things can be…. I have a real

sympathy for people who, in their lives,
had the bottom fall out.”

Prayer has been critical to his formation,

he said.

“The demand to become the person that

we’re being called to be requires expo-
nentially more prayer as we go on,” said

Father Kelley, who has been assigned to

serve at St. Joseph Parish in Hanover.

“When we practiced for the Sacrament

of Reconciliation and for the celebration

of the Mass this past year, I got a real

strong sense that once you get into minis-
try, you can’t fake it. You can’t give what

you don’t have,” he said. “You have to be

the priest. That has to be your existence.

From my perspective, all bright and shiny

at the beginning, I see a great challenge,

and I can only hope through the prayers

of many people that I can rise to meet that

challenge.”

The support he has received from the

people of the diocese has been a blessing,

he said, and he is ready to reciprocate that

support.

“I intend to live the vocation that God

gave me, to serve his people wherever

God puts me,” Father Kelley said. “I trust

his will for me, and I will do whatever I
can for the people that he puts in my care.

It will be wonderful to give back for all

that I have been blessed with.”

Above: Father Walter Sempko, who celebrates his 90th birthday this month, offers a sign of peace to Father Mark Wilke.
The bishop and the priests present exchanged a gesture of peace with the newly-ordained at the conclusion of the Rite of Ordination.

CHRIS HEISEY, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

Below: Newly-ordained Father Stephen Kelley distributes Holy Communion during the Mass celebrating his ordination to the priesthood.

EMILY M. ALBERT, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS
The U.S. bishops’ conference has announced a second Fortnight for Freedom, scheduled for the two weeks leading up to Independence Day, to raise awareness and support for the right to religious liberty.

“The need for prayer, education, and action in defense of religious liberty has never been greater,” said Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore. “The Fortnight for Freedom exists to meet that need.”

The pastoral initiative will begin with a June 21 Mass celebrated by Archbishop Lori at the Baltimore basilica. It will conclude at noon on July 4 with a Mass at the Washington, D.C., basilica celebrated by Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl.

The first Fortnight for Freedom, held last year, included Masses, prayer rallies and other events aimed at prayer, education and action in order to promote and defend religious freedom. Members of other religions joined in the fortnight, hosting events or ringing church bells in a sign of solidarity.

The two-week event is designed to “emphasize the need for conscience protection” and general religious liberty both at home and overseas. It will focus on a broad variety of recent threats to religious freedom, including those in the realms of immigration, humanitarian aid, adoption and health care.

Among the major religious liberty concerns in the U.S. is a federal mandate, issued by the Department of Health and Human Services, that requires employers to offer health insurance plans covering contraception, sterilization and some drugs that can cause early abortions.

The mandate includes free of charge in the health care plans they offer. Critics argue that the objecting religious employers will still end up paying for the coverage that they consider immoral through increased premiums. Archbishop Lori noted in his May 13 statement that the 2013 fortnight “occurs just weeks before August 1, when the administration’s mandate coercing us to violate our deeply-held beliefs will be enforced against most religious non-profits.”

He added that during this year’s fortnight, “the Supreme Court’s decisions on the definition of marriage will likely be handed down as well.”

“Those decisions could have a profound impact on religious freedom for generations to come,” he said.

In March, the Supreme Court heard arguments in two gay marriage cases, Hollingsworth v. Perry and U.S. v. Windsor. One challenges California’s Proposition 8, a state measure which recognizes marriage as existing solely between a man and a woman, and the other challenges the Defense of Marriage Act, a federal law which defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

Decisions in both cases are expected in late June.

In addition to the contraception mandate, the second fortnight will place a special emphasis on faith and marriage due to the Supreme Court rulings and their potential to impact religious freedom in a significant way, according to a statement from the bishops’ conference in December 2012.

A web page created by the bishops’ conference to offer resources for the pastoral strategy described the upcoming fortnight as “a visible, vibrant reminder of the God-given nature of religious liberty.”

Modern threats to the Church “call for increased awareness and formation, as well as spiritual stamina and fortitude among the faithful, so that we may all be effective and joyful witnesses of faith, hope and charity,” it explained.
Eucharist Nourishes, Sustains and Should Transform People, Pope Says

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

In the Eucharist, Jesus makes himself the food that nourishes and sustains Catholics, even when the road gets rough, Pope Francis said before leading a Corpus Christi procession through the streets of Rome.

Mass and participation in Corpus Christi processions are times for Catholics to reflect on how they follow Jesus and, particularly, what the Eucharist means to them, the pope said at Mass May 30 to celebrate the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.

The pope encouraged Catholics to ask themselves: Is the Eucharist a “moment of true communion with the Lord, but also with my many brothers and sisters who share at this same altar?” and “Adoring Christ truly present in the Eucharist, do I allow myself to be transformed by him?”

The pope celebrated the Mass outside the Basilica of St. John Lateran, then – on foot – joined a candlelight Corpus Christi procession from St. John’s to the Basilica of St. Mary Major, just over a mile away.

The procession with the Blessed Sacrament was carried on the truck that Blessed John Paul II began using in 1994 when he could no longer walk the full mile. Pope Benedict XVI participated in the procession each year, riding in the truck, kneeling before the monstrance during the procession.

“Jesus speaks in the silence of the mystery of the Eucharist and reminds us each time that following him means going out of ourselves and making our lives not something we ‘possess,’ but a gift to him and to others,” Pope Francis said in his homily at Mass.

The same dynamic should be at work today when Catholics gather at Mass to listen to the Gospel and be nourished by the body and blood of Jesus, he said.

“The Eucharist is the sacrament of the communion that takes us out of our individualism so that together we live our discipleship, our faith in him,” Pope Francis said.

The pope said he is “always struck” by the disciples asking Jesus to send the crowd away to find food and lodging and Jesus telling him, “Give them some food yourselves.”

“In the face of the crowd’s needs, this is the disciples’ solution: Everyone takes care of himself; dismiss the crowd,” the pope said. “Many times we Christians have that same temptation; we don’t take on the needs of others, but dismiss them with the unworthy ‘May God help you’ or a not-so-compassionate ‘Good luck.’”

Jesus’ solution, though, was to ask God’s blessing on the little food available, then to have the disciples share it with crowd, he said.

“It is a moment of profound communion: the crowd quenched by the word of the Lord is now nourished by his bread of life, and all had their fill.”

What Jesus encouraged the disciples to do was an act of “solidarity,” he said, which is nothing other than “placing at God’s disposal what little we have, our humble abilities, because only in sharing and in giving will our lives be fruitful.”

In the Eucharist, the pope said, Catholics experience the “solidarity of God,” a solidarity that can never be exhausted and should never stop causing awe.

“Once again this evening, Jesus gives himself to us in the Eucharist, shares our journey and, in fact, makes himself the food that sustains our lives, even when the road gets rough and obstacles slow our steps,” Pope Francis said.

At the same time, he said, in receiving the Eucharist faithfully “the Lord leads us to follow his path – that of service, sharing and giving; and, at the little that we are, if shared, becomes a treasure because the power of God, who is love, descends to our poverty and transforms it.”

Pope Francis’ First Encyclical Might Be Out This Year, Says Spokesman

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Pope Francis may publish his first encyclical this year, the Vatican spokesman said. Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi said he “would not exclude” the possibility of the publication of the pope’s first encyclical “within this year,” Vatican Radio reported.

The spokesman told reporters April 25 that retired Pope Benedict XVI had already “fleshed out material on the theme of faith” for an encyclical.

Vatican officials had said Pope Benedict completed work in late 2012 on what would have been his fourth encyclical – a letter on the theological virtue of faith. Its release was expected in the first half of 2013, but the pope resigned Feb. 28 before its publication.

It is not unusual for a pope to pick up work begun by his predecessor, make changes and publish it in his own name. The second part of Pope Benedict’s first encyclical, “Deus Caritas Est” (“God is Love”), was a discussion of Catholic charitable activity prepared under Blessed John Paul II. Nine months after Pope Benedict was elected, the document was released after the new pope reworked that section.

Father Lombardi also said that Pope Benedict, who has been living at the papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo since his retirement, would soon be moving – as expected – to a renovated building in the Vatican Gardens.

The retired pope moved to the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery in early May, the spokesman said.

He said Pope Francis will continue to reside in the Vatican guesthouse where he has been staying since the beginning of the conclave that elected him, instead of the papal apartment in the apostolic palace.

The Domus Sanctae Marthae houses permanent residents as well as some guests who come to the Vatican for meetings.

Pope Francis “likes it there very much,” the spokesman said, and, at the moment, it doesn’t seem he wants to change his accommodations, even though no “final decision” has been made.
Mass in the Polish language will be celebrated June 9 at 7:30 a.m. at Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Steelton.

Theology On Tap session for young adult Catholics will be held June 17 at 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist Church in New Freedom. Contact Joy for more information at rvpamd@gmail.com or 717-788-4959.

Holy Angels Parish in Kulpmont will hold its parish picnic Aug. 2 from 5 p.m.-midnight and Aug. 3 from 9 a.m.-midnight. Fantastic menu, games, baskets, raffles, free admission and parking. July 7-11, 6-11 p.m. at the Kulpmont Volunteer Fire Company grounds for young and old, 50 theme baskets and cash raffles. Free admission and parking. July 7-11-15 6-11 p.m at the Kulpmont Volunteer Fire Company grounds for young and old, 50 theme baskets and cash raffles.

Holy Angels Parish in Kulpmont will hold its parish picnic Aug. 2 from 5 p.m.-midnight and Aug. 3 from 9 a.m.-midnight. Fantastic menu, games, baskets, raffles, free admission and parking. July 7-11, 6-11 p.m. at the Kulpmont Volunteer Fire Company grounds for young and old, 50 theme baskets and cash raffles. Free admission and parking. July 7-11-15 6-11 p.m at the Kulpmont Volunteer Fire Company grounds for young and old, 50 theme baskets and cash raffles.
Merion is the Best Test We Have

By Chris Heisey
The Catholic Witness

Sixty-three Junes ago, Ben Hogan won the National Open Golf Championship at Merion Golf Club on the Main Line just outside Philadelphia. Hogan, a gruff, intimidating man and though his stature was diminutive inbuilt, his large legend as a superb ball striker and precise perfectionist stills stands today. But, it is Merion that truly stands the test of time. This year’s Open Championship returns to this great golf course which was so uniquely designed a century ago to stand the test of time.

Merion sits only a few miles from the slums of West Philadelphia, where dilapidated row homes and shabby mini markets line Lancaster Avenue as you make your way into center city Philly. Nothing about Merion is shabby though. It’s flanked by old mansions and generations-old wealth that makes the enthralling capitalist golfist and the do-gooder socialist seethe. And while Merion can easily remind you of the great golf between rich and poor that has always marked our shared American experience, this golf course is so rich in history that you are quite poor if you do not recognize what can be learned from this storied of places.

By today’s standards, the golf course sits on a very small parcel of land for a championship layout. At 112 acres, it is not even half the land that most modern courses command. Designed by Hugh Wilson, a Princeton grad and captain of his golf team in the early 20th Century, Merion was “built” by Wilson after he traveled to England and Scotland in the spring of 1912 to walk the great old courses where golf was born centuries before. So intrigued by the courses, Wilson decided to stay a “little longer” and refunded his ticket that would have given him a return trip to the states on the luxury liner, the RMS Titanic.

Wilson’s Merion so unique is the “white faces of Merion.” Steep-faced sand bunkers are pitched at angles carved into the limestone valley that Cobb’s Creek has meandered through Merion. This golf course is nestled just two miles from Route 30 and sits adjacent to the rickety rail lines of Amtrak and SEPTA. The bunkers strike the immediate eye as they are rimmed with native Pennsylvania fescue grasses that grow in bunches and are not the type you manicure. The 18 holes of Merion is a mere inch just as equally as it does not four like today. For good measure, Wilson brought back with him Scottish broom and Scottish grasses that grace the innards of the devilish pits. There’s nothing quite like a double dose of punishment in golf to compound a simple error into an unrepairable one missed by 20 yards. Golf, like life, is unfair – it punishes the golf shot missed by a mere inch just as equally as it does one missed by 20 yards. Golf, like life, is unfair – it punishes the wealthy and poor equally. Almost is never good enough in golf.

“Acre for acre, Merion is the best test we have in golf,” is how the world’s best ever golfer Jack Nicklaus described Merion. Though the Open has not been to Merion since 1981, when the Golden Bear came in sixth and in 1971, the year he lost in a playoff to Lee Trevino, no course has staged more championship golf in the world than Merion. In 1930, the great Robert Trent Jones (Bobby) won the Grand Slam of Golf when he closed out the match play final on the 11th hole to complete the near impossible feat. To win four major championships in golf must rank as one of sport’s greatest feats.

The 11th hole is not only hallowed, it’s arguably the best hole at Merion. A very short par-4, it requires a precise lay-up from the tee and then an even more exact pitch from a sidehill lie to a green guarded so close by Cobb’s Creek that a shot one yard off line to the right will get wet. And that’s what makes Merion, Merion. It has wonderful short par fours that require precision with wedges. If it rains and the course goes soft, low scores are going to happen. Merion’s defense is not lengthy, but deep rough, menacing bunkers, and sloping greens. Fast firm conditions will make Merion play shorter true, but if the greatest players in the world can’t control roll and spin, Merion will prove to be the test it was built by Wilson to be.

It’s the par-threeth at Merion that catch the eye of the seasoned player. The ninth hole is a gem that requires a 220-yard carry over water to an hourglass green that is long, but slim. It’s a terrific visual hole. The 13th is almost a joke at 115 yards; however, today’s players with juiced up balls and gap wedges that are tough to dial back, this hole is barely as big as a backyard swimming pool. And the 17th is this writer’s favorite hole in all of golf. A 240-yard all carry three-par that requires a precise strike over an old quarry to a small undulating green that fits perfectly into Merion’s back corner. In 1950, Hogan matched wits with these famous holes and almost lost. Hogan was almost too much for Hogan in a number of ways. Fourteen months prior to that National Open, Hogan was traveling in Highway 80 in Texas on February 2, 1949, with his wife Valerie as they were returning from Phoenix back to their home in Fort Worth. After spending the night in a $4 a night motel near El Paso, the Hogans set out for home in their Cadillac early in the foggy morning.

Alvin Logan was a journeyman bus driver for Greyhound who was repeatedly scolded for being behind schedule by his bosses. So in the dense fog, Logan tried to pass a slow-moving truck on a bridge with his ten-ton bus and smashed head-on into the Hogans. At the last minute, Hogan drove across the seat to shield his wife, and if he had not done that, it is likely the steering wheel would have crushed him instantly. Valerie escaped the wreckage with minor injuries, but Ben suffered extensive injuries and burns to his legs. Infections, swelling and intense pain haunted the golfer until his death in 1997. Against doctor’s orders, Hogan decided that he was going to play the Open at Merion despite his horrible condition. And in those days, the Open finished with a 36-hole finish on Saturday – it was 72 holes over three days, not four like today.

So intense was the pain and cramping that during the final round, Hogan told his caddy on the 13th hole that he was done. “I cannot finish,” he said, “take my clubs to the clubhouse.” He was trembling, visually shaking and though he had a two-shot lead, the “Hawk” was physically spent. But his caddie, a man he hardly knew because the USGA provided local caddies in those days for players, would not hear of his quitting. “No, Mr. Hogan, you are not quitting,” the caddy of meager means said. “I do not work for quitters – you can’t quit – I’ll see you on the next tee.” Hogan made it to the 14th tee, but he bogeyed 15 when he three-putted from 10-feet. He then bunched his tee-shot on 17 and missed a six-footer for par to fall into a tie. As history would have it, Hogan perfectly drove the ball into the middle of the 18th fairway – a long par-4 – with a large, plateaued green surrounded by heavy rough. Standing there in the fairway, Hogan asked his caddy for his one-iron – the butter knife dubbed so for its small clubface and sharp edged flange. Few players, even the best, are able to hit a one-iron off the turf especially so on the 72nd hole of the Open.

Hogan laced the ace-215 yards into the left portion of the green some 25 feet from the wicker basket flagstick (another Scottish tradition). Hogan made par and forced an 18-hole play-off on Sunday to decide the championship. But Hogan would win the Open the next day without his now famous one-iron, as it was stolen from his bag by a relish-hunting thief as he took a shower in the clubhouse. That night, Hogan would soak in an Epson Salt bath for hours in the ritzy Barclay’s Hotel in downtown Philadelphia in an attempt to get his swollen legs in shape for the five-mile playoff loop around famed Merion, June 11, 1950.

Historic lore oozes from Merion’s hallowed hills and dales. By Peskin was an aggressive Life Magazine photographer who made a fateful decision to photograph Hogan as he hit that famous one-iron shot, Hogan’s 286th shot of the championship. It has become golf’s most iconic image of a perfect swing made by the game’s greatest player of the era. Great images freeze time and what makes it even more the classic is that Hogan hated having his photo taken, especially so on the course in competition.

“No, don’t move, pal,” Peskin asked the faithful spectator as he perched his large camera on the fan’s shoulder as he sniped his photo taken, especially so on the classic is that Hogan hated having his photo taken, especially so on the course in competition.

“Don’t move, pal,” Peskin asked the faithful spectator as he perched his large camera on the fan’s shoulder as he tripped the shutter. The image truly stands the test of time, capturing Merion’s rich history.
**District 3 Diocesan Class AA Track and Field Gold and Silver Medal Winners**

**Gold Medal Girls**
- Rachel Pitman (100 and 200-meter, Bishop McDevitt)
- Shannon Quinn (400 and 800-meter, Trinity)
- Anna Bailey (Javelin, Bishop McDevitt)
- Bishop McDevitt (4 x 100-meter relay)
- Trinity (4 x 400-meter relay)
- Trinity (Team Gold Medal)

**Silver Medal Girls**
- Madison Depner (Pole Vault, Trinity)
- Kameko Webb (Triple Jump; Discus, Bishop McDevitt)
- Mary Gingrow (Javelin, Delone Catholic)
- Bishop McDevitt (Team Silver Medal)

**Gold Medal Boys**
- Tyrone Gibson (100 and 200-meter, Bishop McDevitt)
- Danny Jackson (Long Jump, Trinity)
  - Trinity (4 x 100 and 4 x 400-meter relay)
- Silver Medal Boys
  - David Bricker (200 and 400-meter, Trinity)
  - Ryan Herr (110-meter high hurdle, Trinity)
  - Bishop McDevitt (4 x 100-meter relay)
  - Trinity (4 x 800-meter relay)
  - Trinity (Team Silver Medal)

**PIAA State Class AA Championships**

**Gold Medal Boys**
- David Bricker (400-meter, Trinity)
- Silver Medal Boys
  - Danny Jackson (Long Jump, Trinity)
  - Trinity (4 x 100 and 4 x 400-meter relay)
- Silver Medal Girls
  - Shannon Quinn (800-meter, Trinity)

Trinity's Danny Jackson follows last year’s state gold with a silver in the long jump.

Chris Heisey, The Catholic Witness
**FIGHTING IRISH DRIVE HOME FOR FIRST DISTRICT TITLE**

By Chris Heisey  
_The Catholic Witness_

One thing that is difficult to notice in York Catholic’s gym is a missing District 3 championship banner. And given that the Fighting Irish have won scores of championship trophies in recent decades, you could easily miss that there is not a regional championship trophy for its baseball program. Two seasons ago, the Irish made it to the state quarterfinal, though they lost in districts that warm spring before making their run in states.  

This season, the Irish outscored opponents 42-5 in four district tournament games to capture the District 3 Class A championship by winning the final against Lancaster Country Day 7-1 at York’s Sovereign Bank field on a hot, sticky May 29. Led by the heavy hitting of Clint Bohn and Cliff Krevetski, who belted an inside the park homer and went 4 for 4 respectively, the Irish handled the Lions from the early going, as pitcher Erich Hartman only gave up one run and never faced more than four batters in an inning to chalk up his most important win of the season.

The Irish lost to Devon Prep in the first round of the PIAA tournament to end their great season 13-9.

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**SQUIRES SCORE TRIPLE PLAY WITH BASEBALL WIN**

By Chris Heisey  
_The Catholic Witness_

It’s not easy winning any District 3 titles in any sport, given that the district stretches from Reading to Chambersburg in a sweeping arc that is home to more than a quarter of the state’s school districts. Yet, when the Squires of Delone Catholic captured the Class AA District 3 baseball championship in the golden twilight at York’s Sovereign Field on May 29, they accomplished something no other school in the district has ever done — namely winning titles in the “Big 3” — football, basketball and baseball. Delone has won several other District titles as well.

In a complete game shutout, pitcher Dalton Haymaker beat the Kutztown Cougars, 4-0, to pace his team to another gold medal. And he got a key double play when he got the Cougars’ best hitter to ground into an inning-killing double play with the bases loaded.

Delone got just enough offense to win and great baserunning from Brett Smith, who has been instrumental in winning each of these three gold medals for the Squires as the school’s quarterback, point guard and shortstop/second baseman.

Delone beat Prep Charter, 13-4, in the PIAA first round to continue their outstanding season.
Tornado Victims Receiving ‘Overwhelming’ Outpouring of Prayer, Support

As communities across central Oklahoma continued to recover from the “powerful and deadly tornadoes” of May 19 and 20, they have experienced an “overwhelming” outpouring of “prayer, love and support from across our great state and from around the nation,” said Oklahoma City’s archbishop.

“It is bringing comfort to those who have lost loved ones, suffered injuries and whose homes, businesses and properties have been damaged or destroyed,” Archbishop Paul S. Coakley said.

He made the comments in his column, “Put Out Into the Deep,” in the latest online issue of the Soon-er Catholic, the archdiocesan newspaper.

“The emergency response efforts are still fluid and adapting to changing needs and circumstances,” he wrote.

But in the days since the tornadoes, “emergency responders, relief workers, counselors, chaplains, friends, neighbors and strangers,” have come together “to bring comfort and sustain hope where hope has been shaken,” Archbishop Coakley said. “And Jesus still weeps. God is with us.”

The Catholic community “stands shoulder to shoulder with religious, government and volunteer organizations and agencies” to assist in the recovery, he continued.

“Some are first responders. Others offer assistance with cleanup and immediate needs such as temporary shelter, meals and clothing. Some help facilitate spiritual, physical and emotional healing. Still others focus on long-term needs in accessing community resources,” he added.

He said parish clergy and staff members in the affected areas “have been engaged from the beginning. They have been contacting parishioners and assessing needs.”

He praised Catholic organizations such as Catholic Charities USA, the Knights of Columbus and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul for “reaching out and providing support in the various areas affected by these devastating storms.”

The Knights’ national organization set up relief efforts in St. Andrew Church in Moore, where the twister hit hardest, to coordinate response to community requests and to register volunteers. A few days after the tornado members of the local Knights council visited parish families to assess property damage and people’s needs.

Archbishop Coakley called the Knights’ efforts “incredible” and said that in addition to addressing immediate needs and offering counseling, Catholic Charities and St. Vincent de Paul “are offering long-term case management to help storm survivors rebuild their lives over the course of many months to come.”

Coakley also said the damage sustained by the area’s religious institutions was minimal. During a May 26 visit to Moore to view the devastation, President Barack Obama praised residents for inspiring the nation “with their love, their courage and their fellowship.”

“This is a strong community with strong character. There’s no doubt they will bounce back. But they need help,” he said, assuring the community of the federal government’s ongoing help with cleanup and rebuilding efforts.

The tornado killed 24 people, 10 of whom were children, including seven from an elementary school that was destroyed. About 350 families lost their homes.

Archbishop Coakley expressed gratitude for Pope Francis offering a special prayer for the tornado victims during his early morning Mass May 21 and that he sent his condolences. He said he was thankful, too, for the letter he received on behalf of the Catholic community from Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

At the request the USCCB, Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley of Boston authorized a special second collection to be taken in U.S. dioceses the weekend of June 1-2 or June 8-9, according to individual parish schedules.

“The purpose of this collection is to assist those affected by the recent devastating tornadoes in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma (City), as well as other natural disasters in the United States,” said a statement about the special collection.

“The funds collected in this one-time special appeal for the 2013 storms and disasters will be utilized to support the efforts of the USCCB and Catholic Charities USA,” it said, “as they respond to the immediate emergency needs for such necessities as water, food, shelter and medical care, as well as to the long-term need to rebuild after widespread destruction, and to the pastoral and reconstruction needs of the Church.”

Joanna Hatton works to clean debris off of a house foundation May 27 in a neighborhood heavily damaged by the May 20 tornado in Moore, Okla. Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City said that through the kindness “of neighbors and strangers” the hard-hit community is recovering.