Holy Spirit Hospital celebrates 50 years

On March 4, 1963, Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill opened its doors to eight patients.

In 50 years, the hospital, operated by the Sisters of Christian Charity, has expanded in size and service, while maintaining its mission of compassionate and faith-based care.

Holy Spirit’s vision to provide patient-focused and fiscally-responsive quality services is carried out through its respect and care for patients, the use of innovative technology, and the alignment of the entire health care system.

Hospital administrators, staff and benefactors marked the 50th anniversary earlier this month with a Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated in the hospital chapel by Bishop Joseph P. McFadden and with a press conference marking the moment the hospital first admitted patients 50 years ago.

“We have been so blessed over the years. Holy Spirit would not be the vibrant health care organization it is today without the support and guidance of so many thoughtful, gifted, compassionate and committed individuals,” said Christian Charity Sister Romaine Niemeyer, Holy Spirit Hospital’s President and CEO. “At Holy Spirit, we will always live our lives with every person, every day, every time. With God’s Grace, Holy Spirit will be here another 50 years as one of the region’s leading – and only faith based – healthcare systems."

(See coverage of the celebration of Holy Spirit Hospital’s 50th anniversary on pages 8 and 9.)

Christian Charity Sister Romaine Niemeyer, President and CEO of Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill, makes the Sign of the Cross during Mass celebrated in thanksgiving for the hospital’s 50th anniversary.

As Conclave begins, Bishop Celebrates Mass for Election of New Pope

As cardinal electors were entering the Sistine Chapel March 12 for the conclave, Bishop Joseph P. McFadden celebrated a Mass for the Election of a New Pope at St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg.

The bishop told the congregation that the cardinals do not act independently as they elect a new pontiff. Rather, they are assisted by the prayers of the faithful.

Offering prayers during this historic time in the Catholic Church, Bishop McFadden expressed that “We must remember that it is God who chooses the High Priest.”

“The man that is chosen will not be Superman, but a man who will act in the name of Jesus Christ,” the bishop remarked.

“The job of the Holy Father is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to shepherd the ministry with charity and love,” he said.
Whole Church Enters Conclave in Prayer, Archbishop Says

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

Although there will only be 115 cardinals in the Sistine Chapel voting for a pope, the whole Church joins them in prayer and expectation, said the archbishop who spearheaded the design of the conclave rites and prayers.

Archbishop Piero Marini, currently president of the Pontifical Committee for International Eucharistic Congresses, was master of ceremonies for Blessed John Paul II and coordinated the development of the prayers and Masses that guided the cardinals entering the conclave March 12.

“The spirit of expectation is part of this period” in the life of the Church, Archbishop Marini told reporters March 9 during a media briefing organized by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops at the Pontifical North American College.

“The event of a conclave doesn’t just involve a small circle of particular people who gather to make their own little decision. It’s an ecclesial event at which the cardinals represent the entire College of Bishops,” he said.

Catholics are called to enter spiritually into the Sistine Chapel with the cardinal electors, he said.

“We have the pope’s indication of who the next pope should be,” he said.

Archbishop Marini also headed the group of liturgical and theological experts who designed the Mass for the installation of a new pope. The text was not approved by Blessed John Paul in 1998 when he approved the rites for a conclave, Archbishop Marini said, because the late pope did not want to dictate how his successor would initiate his ministry.

One important value in designing the Mass, which was approved by Pope Benedict XVI the day after his election, was to ensure that the gestures associated with the papal installation ― like receiving the fisherman’s ring and the pallium ― were connected to the Gospel passages that inspired them, Archbishop Marini said. In 2005, the pope received the symbols immediately after the Gospel reading.

The Gospel text foreseen for the Mass is from John 21, which includes Jesus telling his disciples to cast their nets into the sea, as well as Jesus telling Peter, “Feed my sheep.” The fisherman’s ring depicts Peter casting out his net to be a fisher of men; and the pallium, a wool band worn around the shoulders, evokes a shepherd carrying his sheep, Archbishop Marini said.

The consignment of the symbols right after the reading, he said, highlights the fact that the Gospel is not “simply an account of events that occurred long ago, but is a message that continues to have relevance today.”

The words said to Peter are said again today to the successor of Peter. “Archbishop Marini’s successor, Msgr. Guido Marini, who is not related, told the Vatican newspaper that continuing a process begun under Pope Benedict, gestures – like giving the new pope the ring and pallium – that are not sacramental would take place before the Mass begins,” Msgr. Marini, the current master of ceremonies, said Pope Benedict ordered the changes shortly before resigning Feb. 28.

The new pope’s installation, he said, also would include a return to the practice of all the cardinals paying homage publicly was a way to illustrate the universality of the church.

Msgr. Kevin W. Irwin, a professor of liturgical studies at The Catholic University of America, joined Archbishop Marini for the press briefing March 9.

He explained that the conclave began with a procession from the Pauline Chapel in the Apostolic Palace to the Sistine Chapel as a reminder that all people are on a pilgrimage from one place to another on this earth as they make their way home to God.

“The entire conclave, he said, “is liturgy. It’s prayer from beginning to end.”

The conclave handbook, Msgr. Irwin said, emphasizes that the conclave “is not only a juridical action – how to do your hanging chads, it’s not about that. It’s about prayer.”

Praying that the Holy Spirit assist the conclave makes them recognize that the key value is not so much who walks out on the balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica as the new pope, but that “the Gospel be most clearly proclaimed to the world.”

Matthew 25
Grant Applications are now being accepted through March 31, 2013

Any organization in the Harrisburg diocese can apply for a grant provided they address basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter.

All applications must be submitted with an endorsement letter from your pastor.

Applications can be found online at www.hbgdiocese.org/matthew25 or you can obtain a copy from your pastor.

Mail all applications to:
Office of Development
4800 Union Deposit Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111-3710

The Diocesan Matthew 25 Review Committee will notify awardees by May 31, 2013.

The angel is from Saint Patrick Cathedral and is a symbol for Saint Matthew. Photograph by Chris Helsley.

March for Marriage
March 26, Washington, D.C.

The National Organization for Marriage is sponsoring a March and rally at the Supreme Court in Washington on March 26, the day on which the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments to determine if Proposition 8 – the 2008 California initiative to protect marriage – is constitutional. More importantly, the question of same-sex “marriage” and the right of Americans to protect traditional marriage will be decided. The March from the National Mall to the Supreme Court will begin at 8:30 a.m. and be followed by a rally at the National Mall at 11 a.m. All are welcome. For more information, visit www.marriagemarch.org or e-mail marriagemarch@nationformarriage.org.
The Good Friday Collection: Providing Care to Christians in the Holy Land

On Good Friday, all Christians are united in a special way to the Holy Land. Donations on Good Friday make a direct impact on the Christians living in the Holy Land.

The continued existence of programs that support Christians in the Holy Land depends on the faithful financial support received from the Good Friday Collection.

The Franciscans have been in the Holy Land since 1209, walking in Jesus’ footsteps, caring for the poor, educating young people, providing scholarships, protecting the Holy shrines, conducting pastoral ministries and keeping Christianity alive.

Programs supported by the Good Friday Collection include:

- Faith, Memory & Culture – The Holy Places: For 800 years the Holy See has entrusted to the Franciscans the care of the Holy Places for the benefit of the Franciscans of the Christians who live there and all who come as pilgrims from around the world.

- Social & Charitable Activities: In order to assist Christians in the Holy Land, including the poor and young couples, the Custody has built more than a thousand residential units in multiple locations.

- Liturgical, Ecumenical and Communications Programs: The Franciscan Media Centre tells the story of the Holy Land through multimedia distributed throughout the world in more than seven languages.

- Educational & Scientific activities: The Franciscans organize Liturgical Celebrations for the local Christians of the Holy Place and development of new projects enabling those who live in the Holy Land and those who visit to deepen their faith and their spiritual and cultural connection to Salvation history.

The Good Friday Collection provides the Holy Father with the financial means to continue supporting these programs. Visit myfranciscan.org/our-mission/the-good-friday-collection/ to learn more.

Diocese Arms Parishes and Schools with Measures to Strengthen Fiscal Controls

Last month, personnel from Harrisburg Catholic Administrative Services (HCAS) conducted a series of 13 presentations to provide parishes and schools with information and best practices regarding fiscal controls and health plan options.

The presentations, led by Donald Kaercher, the Diocese’s Chief Financial Officer, and Janet Jackson, Diocesan Director of Human Resources, outlined the measures that the diocese is taking to ensure the viability of its health insurance plan and the strengthening of its fiscal controls. The sessions were attended by persons involved in the financial management of parishes and schools, including pastors, principals, finance council members, parish managers and parish bookkeepers.

“It is the first time that HCAS personnel have delivered such presentations, and it is considered the beginning of a continued sharing of best practices, noted Mr. Kaercher.

And in the wake of the theft of funds in two parishes within the past six months, the presentations on fiscal controls have also underscored the diocese’s efforts to review and update its fiscal practices and safeguards.

“We are vigilant of the funds in our care and take very seriously the responsibility to be accountable for what is entrusted to us,” Bishop Joseph P. McFadden wrote in a letter to the diocese last October.

“We have zero tolerance toward financial malfeasance,” he said, and noted the necessity to “re-double our efforts to protect the funds in our care.”

HCAS is arming parishes and schools with best practices “to help safeguard their assets,” Mr. Kaercher said. “We are serious about good custodial care of the funds that have been entrusted to us.”

Last month’s presentations, for example, focused on cash-related functions, such as the custody and recording of cash receipts, bank accounts and tuition collections.

The strengthening of existing policies and procedures are based on guidelines developed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. One of the new tools includes a questionnaire that parishes and schools must review and submit annually to HCAS to ensure ongoing compliance with established policies and to examine the functioning of their finance council.

Canon Law requires the existence of a finance council, Mr. Kaercher pointed out.

“An active and engaged finance council coupled with strong pastoral oversight is an essential part of a well functioning internal control system,” he said.

In the complex and emerging area of health care, the diocese is working closely with benefit brokers, legal counsel and providers “to ensure the long term economic viability of our plans and compliance with health care reform, all the while still preserving the Catholic identity of our plan,” Mrs. Jackson said.

Changes to the cost structure and employee contributions will be implemented with plan options to enable the diocese to ensure the plan’s long term sustainability and affordability, she said.

The changes are proposed to take effect on July 1, 2013. Education seminars for employees will be conducted throughout the diocese in April.

“The health care regulations are extremely complex and evolving, and require an increasingly high amount of expertise and oversight regarding the administration required. Therefore, this expertise centralized will ultimately save the parishes and schools money and ensure their regulatory compliance,” Mr. Kaercher said.

“We are not sitting back and waiting to react,” Mr. Kaercher said. “We are proactively making decisions that are compliant but that also position us well into the future.”

With the implementation of measures to strengthen financial controls and health insurance plans, the diocese is assisting parishes and schools with safeguarding their financial resources.

“HCAS is not designed or staffed to provide an oversight function with respect to parish and school operations. That responsibility properly resides at the parish and school level. Rather, our charge is to process transactions centrally in an efficient and effective way,” Mr. Kaercher said.

“Our job is also to provide them with the best tools and practices to assist them in protecting their assets.”

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The Catholic Witness

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Bishop Joseph P. McFadden’s Public Calendar

March 15 – Confirmation at St. Cecilia Church in Lebanon, 5:30 p.m.
March 16 – Confirmation at Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in York, 10 a.m.; Vespers for the Fifth Sunday in Lent, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 4 p.m.
March 17 – Confirmation at Queen of Peace Church in Millersburg, 11 a.m.; Vespers for March 17, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 4 p.m.
March 18 – Confirmation at the Pennsylvania House of Representatives Irish Caucus Day, State Capitol, 11 a.m.; Confirmation at St. Joseph Church in Dallastown, 5:30 p.m.
March 19 – St. Vincent Seminary Board of Regents Meeting, Latrobe, Pa.
March 20 – High School Senior Lenten Course, Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg, 2 p.m.; Catholic Charities’ Soup Salad and Sermon luncheon, Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg, noon; Confirmation at Good Shepherd Church in Camp Hill, 5:30 p.m.
March 21 – Palm Sunday Youth Mass, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 5 p.m.
March 23 – Chrism Mass, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 5:30 p.m.
March 24 – Confessions, Good Shepherd Church in Camp Hill, 7 p.m.
March 25 – Mass of the Lord’s Supper, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 5:30 p.m.
March 26 – Easter Vigil, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 8 p.m.
March 31 – Easter Mass, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 9:30 a.m.

Diocese Thanked for Contributions to Peter’s Pence Collection

Archbishop Angelo Becciu, a Substitute of the Secretariat of State, recently sent a letter to Bishop Joseph P. McFadden to thank the people of the Diocese of Harrisburg for the $148,131.74 they contributed to the 2012 Peter’s Pence Collection.

The collection provides the Holy Father with the financial means to respond with emergency assistance to those who are suffering as a result of war, oppression, natural disaster, and disease. It was started centuries ago to provide financial support for the pope and has evolved to fund the Holy See’s charitable actions for those in need.
Collection during 40 Days for Life Campaign in Hanover Will Assist Mothers and Babies

The Catholic Witness

Since the start of Lent, pro-lifers in the Hanover area have devoted themselves to a daily pro-life witness on the town’s square. Every day from 7 a.m.-7 p.m., they’ve stood publicly for the dignity of human life. Their peaceful and prayerful witness will continue through Lent as part of the 40 Days for Life campaign, a nationwide grassroots initiative that focuses on 40 days of prayer and fasting, peaceful vigil at abortion facilities, and grassroots educational outreach.

Hanover is one of hundreds of communities conducting simultaneous 40 Days for Life campaigns across the country. At the midpoint of the campaign, participants held a collection of maternity items to be donated to the Tender Care Pregnancy Center and the Gabriel Project in Hanover. In addition to $146 in cash donations, the collection amassed cases of diapers and a multitude of baby food, blankets, clothing, toys and other baby care items.

“It’s 20 days completed, 20 days to go of our 40 Days for Life campaign of prayer, fasting, vigil and outreach,” said Annie Kilkelly, who is a coordinator for the Hanover campaign. “It was time to gather with members of the community at Center Square to share stories and encourage one another. It was also a wonderful opportunity to help Tender Care Pregnancy Center [and] the Gabriel Project.”

The 40 Days for Life project began in the community of Bryan/College Station, Texas, in 2004, and has since grown to 481 cities nationwide. This year, it has also reached England, Australia, Poland, Spain, Nigeria, South Africa, Wales and Russia. This year marks the fourth campaign in the Hanover community, which has had 200 participants, including organizations such as the Knights of Columbus, the Holy Name Society, and the Ladies Auxiliary of the Knights of Columbus.

“We want to thank all the people who’ve made great personal sacrifice to bring 40 Days to Life to the halfway point,” said Chris Noel, volunteer coordinator. “We also know that we still have a long way to go in our collective effort to demonstrate the harm abortion has done—and is continuing to do—to our community.”

Speakers at the 40 Days for Life mid-point event included Msgr. James Lyons, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Hanover, and Ms. Kellye, while Jeff Quellet provided musical reflection.

“For the remainder of the 40 days of prayer and fasting and community outreach, we intend to gather for continuous prayer in the public right-of-way outside Planned Parenthood, Center Square, Hanover, praying for an end to abortion in our community. We look forward to the challenge of bringing 40 Days for Life to an energetic conclusion,” said Judy Milenic.

To learn more about the 40 Days for Life campaign, visit: http://www.daysforlife.com/hanover/.

Called to Action: Your Most Powerful Contribution

By Anne McGuire

Special to The Witness

On January 19, 2013, a blogger (I’ll call her “Rachel”) wrote that she’d awakened that day with the memory of her abortion fresh in her mind. But that morning the experience was different: “Instead of feeling hopelessly lost in that old dark abyss something different came over me. ... It was a comforting feeling. Like a hundred people praying for me right at that exact moment. Then I checked my email and I realized that they were.”

Like many people, I’ve often been struck by injustices in our society and have felt the desire to do something to make a difference. I’ve also felt helpless, as though there was nothing I could do to make any significant difference. I believe in the power of prayer, but sometimes I find myself almost brushing it into the background, wanting to do something else that will “really” have an impact.

However, Rachel’s story is a powerful reminder of the very real impact of prayer. It was not a coincidence that she felt as if hundreds of people were praying for her at the same time. January 19th was the first day of the bishops’ novena marking the 40th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, Nine Days of Prayer, Penance and Pilgrimage, and the day’s intention emailed to subscribers that morning was “for the mother who awakens each morning with the memory of abortion fresh in her mind.”

Rachel continued: “...if it had not been for that email I might have been swallowed whole by despair. If you are currently participating in the nine days of prayer and happened to pray today for post-abortive women to find healing I want to extend my thanks to you. Your prayers were felt and very much needed.”

The rest of her post is a heartbreaking reminder of the suffering caused by abortion. It is also a call to action. It reminds us that we are being sold a bill of goods which promises freedom and happiness, but is as deceptive as it is tragic. Instead of liberating women, we force women who feel trapped, as though there is no way out. We must act now.

In this Year of Faith, the U.S. Catholic bishops have called for a focused time of prayer from the feast of the Holy Family (December 30, 2012) until the feast of Christ the King (November 24, 2013) for the sake of renewing a culture of life, marriage, and religious liberty in our country. The five components of the Call to Prayer (www.usccb.org/life-marriage-liberty) include monthly Holy Hours, a daily rosary, special Prayers of the Faithful, abstinence from meat and fasting on Fridays, and a Fortnight for Freedom in June/July. Like the Nine Days prayer campaign, you can sign up to receive email or text messages with a new intention, reflection, and “Did you know?” section each week. Text “fast” to 99000 or visit www.usccb.org/fast (where you can also pledge to fast for life, marriage, and religious liberty).

Please consider how you, your family and friends can participate in the bishops’ Call to Prayer, and encourage others to do the same. It is an opportunity to respond in solidarity as the Body of Christ to the threats we face. It is a chance to fight for Rachel and all who have been so hurt by false and empty promises of happiness. It is a time to stand together.

Let us never forget the power of prayer, the most effective thing we can do. For in prayer, we remember and acknowledge our dependence on God. He is bigger than anything we face.

(Anne McGuire is a staff assistant for the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.) Visit www.hopeafterabortion.com if you or someone you know has been affected by an abortion. For more information on the bishops’ pro-life activities, please visit www.usccb.org/prolife.
In Online Class with Seniors, Bishop Shares Candid Thoughts about Faith, Papal Transition

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

As diocesan high school seniors assembled via videoconference for the first of several live sessions presented by Bishop Joseph P. McFadden this Lent, the bishop looked upon the students, dressed in Catholic school uniforms, gathered in classrooms, libraries and auditoriums.

He greeted the young members of the Church, who are preparing to commence a new stage of their lives in just a few months. And he told them that challenges will accompany them as they move forward.

“You’re going to have to take more control of all the aspects of your life… You’re going to have to decide what type of person you’re going to be,” he said.

In light of the new experiences on the seniors’ horizons, Bishop McFadden focused the start of his annual Lenten senior course Feb. 27 on the subject of faith.

He reiterated Pope Benedict XVI’s call for the Year of Faith, and the former Holy Father’s concern that many of us take our faith for granted.

“We don’t really think about it each and every day. It’s something that’s there. It’s maybe something that we do on Sunday, maybe something that we do every day when we come to school. But does it have any impact on us?” he asked.

The Year of Faith calls us to a deeper understanding of our faith, to a closer encounter with Christ, and to share our faith with others, the bishop told the seniors, who were displayed to him on a large projection screen in the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg. A number of seniors from Lebanon Catholic School were in attendance at the event.

Several seniors from Lebanon Catholic School talk with the bishop after participating as an in-house audience during the first of three Lenten sessions the bishop is holding for the diocesan high school seniors.

The bishop told the students that they will be challenged to share their faith with the world as they move on from high school and from their homes.

“You’re going to go into a culture that is not always welcoming of our faith beliefs, and not welcoming of the values that we are called to live in the world,” he said.

“You’re going to be challenged by various philosophies, by various ideas of life and what life is about, and you’re going to have to make some decisions in terms of using your understanding, using your intel-

test, using your will to say, ‘What is it that I believe about life? Is there a God who has an interest in me? Is there a God who has called me to life? Is there a God who is responsible for the world? Is there a God that has hope and a plan for us as we move forward?’”

He told the seniors that faith is about building the Kingdom of God and living the values that Jesus teaches. Faith isn’t simply intellectual; it’s real, he said. “Our faith is useless unless we act on it,” Bishop McFadden remarked. “Our faith is not just something we do in church on Sun-

day. Our faith is the way we live each and every day. Our faith is something that should be the motivating purpose of how we live in the world as sons and daughters of God.”

Throughout the hour-long Lenten classes with the seniors, being held three times this Lent, the bishop is also speaking about their relationship with Jesus, and sharing their faith with the world.

Each session concludes with an opportunity for the students to ask questions of the bishop. During the Feb. 27 session, which was held the day before Pope Benedict’s papacy ended, Lebanon Catholic student Jose Lopez asked Bishop McFadden for his thoughts on the pope’s resignation.

The bishop expressed his affection for Pope Benedict, who he said has been a great leader for the Church, and who took on the difficult task of following in the footsteps of Pope John Paul II.

“Most people would say that Blessed John Paul II will be known in history as John Paul the Great, because he was such a great witness to the faith, and he was such a charismatic person, and he was able to reach out to all humanity,” Bishop McFadden remarked. “Pope Benedict had the difficult task of following somebody who was a great individual. How do you do that? When he became pope, he was very humble. He recognized that he didn’t have all of the gifts and talents that might be needed for this responsibility, but that God had called him at this time to lead the Church. He accepted it, and he said that he trusted that God would be with him each and every day to help him in leadership. Throughout the course of his eight years, he tried to do was encourage us to grow deeper in our relationship with Jesus Christ.”

“I would say the defining characteristic of Pope Benedict was his constant call for us to encounter Jesus Christ and to understand Jesus Christ and to allow him to live in us,” the bishop said.

“The new pope will give us a new direction, will give us new enthusiasm, will be able to proclaim the Gospel, and will walk the journey in life with us. I can’t wait to see who is selected, and I’m sure that the one who is selected will be a great leader of the Church,” he said.

Solemn Lenten Vespers ~ March 17

All are invited to celebrate Solemn Lenten Vespers with Bishop Joseph McFadden on March 17. Vespers begins at 4 p.m. at St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg and will include a homily offered by Bishop McFadden. In a special way, those who will be received into the Church during the Easter season and those newly received into the Church this past year are welcome to greet the Bishop. During the Year of Faith, this celebration brings the special gift of a plenary indulgence for all those who fulfill the prescriptions required for its reception.
The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference (PCC) and the Pennsylvania Catholic Health Association (PCHA) have sent a joint letter to Catholic colleges, universities and religious orders in the state urging them to submit comments to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Congress and the White House in protest of the mandate that violates our religious liberty.

The PCC also asked its Catholic Advocacy Network to submit comments; you can become a member by visiting www.pacatholic.org and clicking on “Take Action: HHS Mandate.”

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Affordable Care Act, is demanding coverage of sterilization, contraception and abortion-causing drugs as women’s preventative services. Religious ministries of service such as charities, schools, health care facilities and institutions of higher education are given a ‘for-profit, for-profit employer’ status under the law in the form of a stiff penalty: “accommodation.”

As it stands, the HHS mandate ignores our nation’s foundational freedoms of conscience and religion. The Church and its ministries have been told that we can call ourselves Catholics; we just can’t act like we are. The mission of all religious employers is threatened by these regulations, so every Catholic organization and religious order is being forced to provide for, or refer patients to abortion providers because of their religious beliefs, values and traditions. O’Malley and the Catholic leaders are studying the implications of the new proposed rules, but many have said they do not go far enough.

HHS is accepting comments on the new proposed rules until April. Final rules are expected by summer.

Click on “Take Action: HHS Mandate” to submit comments to HHS, Congress and the White House.

Cardinal Welcomes Opportunity to Discuss Mutual Concerns with Obama

New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan in a letter to President Barack Obama accepted a White House offer to continue discussing the Catholic Church’s concerns about abortion, traditional marriage and federal rules governing implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

“We accept your invitation to address these areas together, always with the civility we have both encouraged in public discourse,” the president U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“We welcome specifically an opportunity to re-solve the perplexing issue of the redefining of our religious ministries,” Cardinal Dolan wrote. “Surely we should be able to find some ground where neither of us is asked to compromise conscience.”

In response, the president offered Feb. 28 that Cardinal Dolan’s warm wishes were welcome and that the president “looks forward to continuing our respectful collaboration.”

The cardinal also renewed good wishes and offered prayers for Obama as he prepared to tackle a long list of goals for his second term that were outlined in his inaugural and State of the Union addresses.

Recalling a meeting with Obama at the White House, Cardinal Dolan pointed to the president’s stated desire “to cooperate with us for the good of our beloved country,” particularly in the Church’s educational, charitable and health care services.

“The bishops of the United States cannot rest so long as the vital ministry the Catholic Church carries out – for people of all or no creeds – remains threatened due to an erosion or loss of the constitutional guarantee of the freedom to serve without violation of our faith,” he said.

Cardinal Dolan said Obama’s second term “provides a special opportunity” to strengthen and promote marriage, family, churches and faith-based ministries of service in order to “keep the American dream alive and well for generations to come.”

The letter also listed a series of issues in which the U.S. bishops are ready to work with Obama “for the good of all people who live in and love our nation.”

Cardinal Dolan specifically mentioned the bishops’ support for:

• Reasonable regulation of firearms.

• Increased attention to the needs of mentally ill people.

• Immigration reform.

• Access to comprehensive, affordable and “life-affirming” health care, “which we believe includes the pre-born child, the undocumented and the dying.”

• Increased attention to the needs of mentally ill people.

• Protecting the environment.

• Education reform, including parental choice.

• Developing a financially responsible federal budget that protects the poor, sick and elderly.

• Peace in the Middle East and an end to the war in Afghanistan.

• Efforts to strengthen family life and uphold the importance of responsible parenthood.

“Those issues of mutual importance are hardly new … All of them flow from God’s own holy word in the Bible and the truth about the human person revealed in Jesus as faithfully passed on by the church,” Cardinal Dolan wrote.

“Tey also resonate, as you have observed, from the most noble values of America, which the founders of our country identified in the Declaration of Independence as ‘self-evident truths,’” he added.
Sister Georgina stresses that the program provides invaluable opportunity and motivation for students to do what is most needed in math: practice.

“If you’re a baseball player, you practice. But for most students and for even grown-ups, you think math you should know it,” Sister Georgina says. “And you don’t. You need practice.”

“Anybody can be a mathematician,” she says. “But the sad thing is that in our society, in the world, a lot of people expect it to come and if it doesn’t right away, then they give up.”

The First in Math website, which provides accounts to students through their schools, offers lessons from kindergarten-level skills and whole numbers up through multiplication, division, fractions, measurements, algebra, geometry and increasingly complicated word problems.

“There’s something for everybody,” Sister Georgina says.

And at Sacred Heart, First in Math is for everybody. Every student in the school has an account. Logging on and meeting goals is part of homework for many grades.

Students can only gain points for completing skill sets a certain number of times, so they’re spurred to move on to practice other skills. New bonus games become available once students finish lower-level ones.

Those who master skills can move ahead and gain new ones. Cassie, for instance, is working with algebra and equations as many classmates continue honing their skills in fractions and multiplication.

“It’s really fun, especially when it is harder to do,” Cassie says. “The more you challenge yourself, the more you learn and the more fun it becomes.”

For Diamond, the program has been a chance to learn new skills.

“The more you learn the more fun it becomes.”

And at Sacred Heart, First in Math is for everyone. Teachers are thrilled to see the progress each child has made in mastering math facts.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Georgiana Connell is the coordinator for the program and wants the world to know about this amazing school team.

For fifth-grader Cassie Peris, who’s held the highest score in First in Math for much of the school year, it’s a chance to hone skills beyond her grade level while “playing really fun games.”

Dr. Henry Fesniak, a cardiologist at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pennsylvania, and second in the nation out of 66,021 active teams in 45 states.

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For Diamond, the program has been a chance to practice the skills she’s learned in class. “It’s the same thing that I’m doing in school. I get to practice at home and at school,” she says. “It helps me understand it much better.”

Erin Ague, the algebra and pre-algebra teacher for grades six through eight, says she sees students’ basic skills improving significantly. “They can multiply and divide much faster. They’re also doing better with word problems,” she says.

Ms. Ague also has students asking to learn new skills. “I’ll teach them things we don’t have in the curriculum yet, but they ask to learn it for First in Math,” Ague says. “It’s definitely a motivator.”

Sister Georgina cheers on the school’s progress, checking totals nightly, encouraging students to keep gaining points and stopping those she passes at school to ask how the math is going. She’s developed certificates and awards for students who complete certain levels or gain point totals. And, Cassie notes, Sister Georgina’s encouragement has inspired students to achieve more and more. “She’s really lit a spark for First in Math,” she says.

Congratulations to Sacred Heart’s current top leaders in the school with over 7,000 stickers each: Grace English, Amanda Peris, Mariana Duran, Nick Stasiak, Kameron Garcia, Carmen Guzman, Oliver Klemmer, Maxwell Lester, Cassie Peris, Livia Seifert, Haydn Wiebner, Vivian Klemmer, Joseph Werhel, Zane Wiebner, and Hayden Brukman.
Witness the growth of Holy Spirit Hospital over the past 50 years, and it is just striking as to what a miracle this healthcare system has grown into today. When eight patients entered the hospital on March 4, 1963 — greeted by the Sisters of Christian Charity who sponsor and operate the hospital — few would have imagined how far this place of caring would come under the loving leadership of these humble sisters and their fellow 2,900 employees to reach this hospital’s milestone golden anniversary.

Today, the hospital is more than an eight-story, 315-bed community hospital. There are four affiliated corporations that bring specialty care, outpatient services and primary care services at 30 various locations in the Capital Region of South Central Pennsylvania. The system is ever growing as the hospital is currently building a new Spirit Urgent Care Center and Data Center facility on the southern border of its campus in Camp Hill. Today’s competitive challenges of 21st century medical care in America means no institution can stand to be idle.

The birth of Holy Spirit Hospital can be traced to a simple question asked in the 1950s: “When are you Catholics going to build a hospital on the West Shore?” When Father Martin Lohmuller, then a priest from Philadelphia on loan to Harrisburg, relayed the message to Bishop George Leech, it was the genesis of what is today the diocese’s only Catholic healthcare institution.

By 1956, the sisters were asked to sponsor and operate the hospital and have devoted many of their sisters to caring for the sick, which they had been doing in many ministries tracing back to their foundress, Blessed Pauline von Mallinckrodt, who founded the order in rural Germany to help the blind, sick and poor more than 150 years ago.

The original structure was a five-story hospital.
Holy Spirit

Continued from 8

story facility, but by the early 1970s had added another three floors and a Community Mental Health Center. By the 1980s, the satellite health centers, outpatient facilities and a new Birthplace floor were completed. The 1990s brought a new emergency care center that caters to the needs of a growing population on the West Shore.

While so much has changed over the years at Holy Spirit, there are several rocks that have not changed in the campus. The hospital has had only two CEOs/Presidents. The first was Sister Ursula Frei, who guided the hospital for the first 27 years until she was assigned to Rome in 1990 and then years later retired in her community’s nursing center in Danville. The second is Sister Romaine Niemerer, who has ably led the health system for the past 23 years, though she also mentored under Sister Ursula as a vice president for more than a decade before taking the reins.

“The way we celebrate something great is to give thanks,” Bishop McFadden said in his homily. “Eucharist means thanksgiving, and we are so grateful for the gift of this wonderful hospital.”

Bishop McFadden also told the gathered faithful that “this hospital is about respect, respect for life, and the work here is done with great respect and caring.... This just isn’t the only Catholic hospital in our diocese, this is the best hospital in the diocese, and it is a gift from God.”

Holy Spirit Hospital’s CEO, Sister Romaine Niemerer, shakes hands with Bruce Brown, chairman of the Holy Spirit Health System board, during a press conference on March 4.

At a press conference 50 years to the moment that the first patients entered the doors in 1963 on March 4, Sister Romaine told the hundreds of employees gathered in the hospital’s beautiful, welcoming atrium, “We have been so blessed over the years. Holy Spirit would not be the vibrant health care organization it is today without the support and guidance of so many thoughtful, gifted, compassionate and committed individuals. At Holy Spirit, we will always live our lives with every person, every day, every time. With God’s Grace, Holy Spirit will be here another 50 years as one of the region’s leading – and only faith-based – health care systems.”

One of the easy things to miss as you near the doors of the hospital, just as those eight patients did 50 years ago, is the cornerstone that humbly proclaims the Apostle Paul’s epistle to the Galatians (5:22): “The Fruit of the Spirit is Charity...” That witness of peace and kindness will not be easily missed once you do enter Holy Spirit Hospital.

Patricia Carnes, a 43-year veteran employee, brings the offertory gifts to Bishop McFadden. Mrs. Carnes has served as a nursing executive during her long tenure.

Christian Charity Sister Florita Gehert has an audience after Mass.

Sister Elizabeth Kovacks, background, and Sister Margaret Muchire, foreground, share a joyful moment during the hospital’s celebration.
RYAN DIEHL EMERGES AS FOUR-TIME STATE CHAMP

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Going into the 126-pound match in the PIAA Class AA state finals March 9, there was little doubt in the high school wrestling world that Trinity senior Ryan Diehl would capture his fourth state championship that day.

Onlookers were keyed up for the match that pitted Diehl – last year’s champ at 113 – against Zeke Moisey of Bethlehem Catholic, a 26-2 junior and last year’s state runner up.

The anticipation for the title match began the night before, after their respective semi-final matches. Diehl, who had won a majority of his matches this season by pin or technical fall, found himself with a 4-3 lead going into the final period of the semifinal match. In a flurry of offensive moves late, he advanced with a 9-3 win.

On the other side of the bracket, Moisey pinned his opponent, telling reporters he would “do what I need to do to win” against Diehl the next day.

Meanwhile, Diehl said he was ready to give the crowd at Hershey’s Giant Center what it wanted to see.

And while all odds were rightly on Diehl, his offensive prowess in the final match caught most people – including Moisey – off guard.

Some 30 seconds into the match, Diehl countered a move by Moisey, snagged him speedily into a headlock, worked him onto his back and pinned him at the 46-second mark.

When the referee’s hand hit the mat, an overwhelmed Diehl threw his hands to his head in elation. As he ran to celebrate with Trinity head coach Chris Bentley, Diehl waved four fingers in the air, signaling his four state titles – two now in Pennsylvania and two previously earned in West Virginia.

“It’s every kid’s dream,” Diehl said of his four championships. “I’m just speechless. It’s amazing.”

Finishing his high school wrestling career with an overall record of 147-5, Diehl will wrestle for the University of Maryland this fall.
Every year, diocesan swimmers at the District 3 Swimming Championships held at the Cumberland Valley High School Natatorium do well in various races, and this year on March 1 and 2 was no exception.

Delone Catholic senior Victoria Griffin, who had a great meet a year ago, continued her dominance in the freestyle events by winning gold medals in the 100 and 200.

Lancaster Catholic’s great swimmer Everett Albert won gold in arguably the meet’s toughest event, the 200 IM, and he helped lead the Crusaders to gold in the 400 freestyle relay and a silver medal in the 200-freestyle relay. Albert also won a silver in the 500-freestyle.

Trinity, led by Ian DiCarlo (silver in the 200-freestyle) came in second in the team standings. Lancaster Catholic’s Rachael DePietro won a silver in the 100-backstroke.
YORK CATHOLIC WINS ITS RECORD EIGHTH STRAIGHT DISTRICT TITLE

By Chris Heisey
The Catholic Witness

When you win eight straight District 3 Class AA girls’ championships in a row, it’s a record that speaks for itself. No program has ever accomplished this feat, and while records are meant to be broken, it’s hard to see how this one will be for many years to come. It’s simply that kind of unmatchable accomplishment.

The Fighting Irish beat the Squirettes of Delone Catholic, 56-38, which makes it three straight years that the Fighting Irish have beaten Delone for the title. “Our girls have to believe they can get the job done. We just have to approach it mentally different until we get over that hump. Until that happens, I have no magic potion,” Delone’s state championship-winning head coach Gerry Eckenrode said after the game.

In fairness to the Squirettes, they won a hard fought, 73-72, overtime victory over the Lynx of Oley Valley in the semifinal to reach the championship. To beat the Fighting Irish, it seems that having a full tank of gas is a must because they never stop playing hard. Delone did jump out to a 9-3 lead and threw a 9-0 run at the Fighting Irish in the second quarter, but what wins York Catholic gold medals is their ability to play shut-down defense at another level against teams that do not have great perimeter shooters or a big inside to hurt them close to the basket. Those folks come later in states, and York Catholic has not had that answer in recent years.

DELONE BEATS TRINITY AT THE BUZZER

By Chris Heisey
The Catholic Witness

One of the things that make the District 3 basketball playoffs at Hershey’s Giant Center so entertaining is the fact that many of the championship games came down to one or two possessions to decide a closely contested game that has great intensity-thrilling finishes.

For the second year in a row, the Squires of Delone Catholic played the underdog role perfectly, as they won their second straight championship in Class AA, this time over a talented and bigger Trinity team. For head coach Jim Dooley, it marked his 701st win and though it took 40 years to win his first championship last year, it’s mighty sweet to get two in a row from his scrappy, overachieving team.

The Squires fell behind by nine points in the first half before rallying to tie it up at half. Led by their senior leader Brett Smith, the Squires battled back by hitting a few timely threes and by beating the much bigger Shamrocks on the boards. Delone won when it had the ball for the final shot. An offensive rebound put back by Andrew Austin with only seconds left won gold for the Squires.
The Red Raiders of Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School in Coal Township nabbed their fifth straight District 4 Class A girls’ championship with a 37-27 win over the Redskins of Sayre High School — the number one seed in the tournament. Lourdes only trailed once in the defensive-oriented game played at Montoursville High School near Williamsport.

The Redskins shot less than 15 percent from the field as the patented Red Raider full-court pressure defense and swarming man-to-man half-court pressure never let the Redskins get closer than four points in the second half.

“These girls work very hard,” head coach Mike Klembara said after the game. “They are not just good athletes; they are all good students… They are just very coachable kids, never thinking of themselves, but as a team.”

The only thing standing in the way of Lebanon Catholic winning the District 3 Class A boys’ championship was a very good Greenwood team. In a tie game with less than 30 seconds to go, the Beavers had the ball. And with the ball in the hands of their rock, Timmy Orr, it was a good spot to be in. Fouled while driving for a shot in the final seconds, Orr sank a clutch free-throw to secure the 51-50 win to give the Beavers their first title in seven years. And it’s the school’s fourth gold, all under head coach Scott Clentimack.

Orr netted 20 points to lead the Beavers who finished their season 18-8 after losing in the first round of states. With a roster loaded with underclassmen, the Beavers have a bright future.
Lenten fish dinners will be available Wednesday evenings from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at St. Ann Byzantine Catholic Church, Harrisburg. Perohi will also be available for $5.50 per dozen each Wednesday and Saturday during Lent in the parish hall from noon-1 p.m. and 4:30-6:30 p.m.; Saturdays from 11 a.m.-noon. Call 717-652-1415 or visit www.stannwhy.org.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Cornwall will serve Lenten Fish Dinners every Wednesday through Ash Wednesday from 4-7 p.m. in the parish hall, for $7 for adults and $4 for children (10 & under). Fish is a $4 for large adult dinners, $7 for small adult dinners and $4 for child’s (10 & under) fish dinner.

Immaculate Conception BVM Parish in Berwick will hold Fish Fry Fridays 11 a.m.-7 p.m. through March 22. All dinners are $8, smaller items available for purchase. Eat in or take out. Factory orders must be placed by 10 a.m. Call 570-759-9227.

St. Rose of Lima Parish in York will hold its Lenten seafood dinners. Take-out or eat-in lunch from noon-1:30 p.m. and take-out or eat-in dinner from 4-8 p.m. each Friday through March 22. Lighter fare and $3 kids’ menus available. For take-out service call 717-854-1371.

Church of the Holy Spirit in Palmrya will be holding its annual Fish Fry from 4-7 every Friday through March 22. Cost is $8 for adults, $4 for children. Take outs available.

St. Peter Parish in Columbia will hold its Lenten Fish Fry on Fridays through March 22 from 4-6:30 p.m. Prepared by the women of the parish. Eat in or take out. Stations of the Cross are held in the church at 7 p.m.

The Knights of Columbus of St. Jude Thaddeus Parish in Millmont will serve its annual Lenten Fish Dinners Fridays through March 22 from 4-7 p.m. All-you-can-eat. Adults $10; ages 6-12 $6; children 5 and under free.

Our Lady Help of Christians Parish in Lykens will sponsor its weekly Friday Fish Fry on Fridays through March 22 from 4-7 p.m. in the social hall. Call 717-453-9931 for take-out orders.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Enola is serving Lent Baked Fish Dinners in the social hall from noon-7 p.m. through Fridays March 15. Cost is $10 for adults, $5 for children. Eat in or take out.

Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Elysburg will serve Lenten pasta Dinners Fridays through March 22 from 4:30-7 p.m. Eat in or take out. Adult dinner is $10, children’s dinner is $5.

St. Francis Xavier Parish in Gettysburg will hold its Lenten Fish Frys on Fridays through March 22 from 5-7 p.m. at Xavier Center on Table Rock Road. There will be adult, senior, children and reduced portion menus. Call 717-334-4048.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in New Holland is serving a Lenten fish dinner Friday through March 22 from 5-7 p.m. in the parish hall. Cost is $12 per adult, $7 for seniors, $6 for children 12-6 and $5 for children 6-12. Eat in or take out. Stations of the Cross are held immediately following the dinner at 7 p.m. For info, call the church at 717-354-4065.

Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Middletown is holding its 16th Annual Fish Fry on Fridays through March 22 from 5-8 p.m. in the school cafeteria. Dine in or take your takeout order by calling 717-944-5488 after 4 p.m.

Overlook parking is available at nearby Feaster Middle School. For more information, including full menu, visit www.sevensorrows.org.

Knights of Columbus Holy Rosary Council 806, located at 145 Peach Street, Palmyra, will serve Lenten Seafood Dinners, 5-8 p.m., all-you-can-eat buffet. Cost is $5 for adults, $5 for children 5-10.

St. Catherine Laboure Parish in Harrisburg will hold Lenten Soup Suppers Wednesdays through March 20 from noon-1 p.m. and 4-6:30 p.m. at Xavier Center on Table Rock Road. There will be adult, senior, children and reduced portion menus. Call 717-334-4048.

In his Perspective on the faith, Father William Weary offers a teaching moment on the topic of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Religious Notebook report gives us an idea of just some of the many activities happening in the churches of the Harrisburg Diocese. Once again, if you have any information you would like to contribute to our church calendar, we’d love to hear about it. 

Catholic Perspective is produced in cooperation with the Office of Communications of the Diocese and WHFY AM 720. The program is heard Mondays at noon and Saturdays at 8 a.m. on the diocesan radio station, WHFY AM 720. The program is also heard on Sunday mornings on WLAM-AM 1390, Lancaster at 7:30 a.m.; WHYM-AM 960, Carlisle, at 8 a.m.; WHVR-AM 1290, Hanover, at 8 a.m.; WKOK-AM 1070, Sunbury, at 6:30 a.m.; WIEC-AM 1390, Lebanon, at 6:30 a.m.; and WWCM-AM 1510, Bloomsburg, at 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. It is also available online at www.Oldiesradio1620.com at 6:30 a.m. and at www.WHYF.com on Sunday mornings and on www.720whyf.com. Click the “Listen Live” button located on the left side of their home page for more information.
SPIRITUAL OFFERINGS

Stations of the Cross. Times may vary. A different language will be celebrated March 17 at 19 noon at Father Dibrikziruk Tulatuk at Prince of Peace—Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church. St. Luke Church in Carlisle will host its Italian Stations of the Cross at 1 p.m. at St. Joseph’s. Mass starts at 2:30 p.m. and will be followed by the recitation of the Chaplet chanted beginning at 3 p.m.

Host a Celebration of Divine Mercy on April 7. The church will remain open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. for prayer. The annual Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be available for Confession and spiritual nourishment. Following the soup and presentations at 6 p.m. at St. Patrick Church in York. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be held at 2:30 p.m. at St. Joseph Parish in Hanover.

The case for a Creator” DVD program by Lee Strobel while offering his own presentation will be held March 21 at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Church in Hershey. Attend the session series “Catholicism” by Father Barron. It will begin at 6-7:30 p.m. each Wednesday for six weeks beginning April 2. The applicant must also have a strong commitment to Catholic education. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Brenda Weaver at 717-392-3083 or bweaver@resurrectioncatholic.org.

Parishioners who cannot be present for meetings can attend via a webcast at www.mpcreading.org or visit www.mscreading.org. Proceeds benefit our retired Sisters and our cause, call 610-929-2802; e-mail cwhitmoyer@mscreading.org; or visit www.mscreading.org. Enjoy this special Lenten journey with an evening of inspirational music in the Pocantico Room at Sacred Heart Parish in Mount Vernon on April 13 at 7 p.m. Father Calloway will tell his latest story, “His latest, "Wrongful Conviction," will be held March 21 at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Church in Hershey.

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Parish & Organization News

Resurrection Catholic School in Lebanon is looking for an individual who is creative, organized, goal-oriented, and has strong communication skills to become our part-time Development Director. The applicant must also have a strong commitment to Catholic education. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Brenda Weaver at 717-392-3083 or breewise@resurrectioncatholic-schools.org.

The position of Associate Director of Catholic Campus Ministry will be held at April 20 at the Harrisburg Campus Community. Bishop Joseph P. McKeown will be present. Please see the website for information or contact the office at 717-776-2288. Father Tim Steenstra will be the next班主任 at Trinity_High_School/Advancement/Advancement_Office to get more information. We will be on display after Masses at Sacred Heart Church the weekend of Saturday, April 6 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, April 7 at 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Enjoy a hearty breakfast and pick up some nuts, cookies, peanut butter balls, peanut butter eggs and much more to take home.

Divine Redeemer Parish in Mount Carmel will host their annual “Pink ‘N’ Things” fundraiser from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 19. A pink tq will be run beginning at 10:30 a.m. Sale starts at 11 a.m. and will run until 3 p.m. A 50/50 raffle will be held at 3 p.m. Food will be served. Enjoy a hearty breakfast and pick up some nuts, cookies, peanut butter balls, peanut butter eggs and much more to take home.

Holy Infant Parish in York Haven will be selling Lottery tickets for 20 each (that less than 75 cents per day) during the months of March and April. All tickets are split on the PB Big 4 Number Winner played Monday through Friday by 5 p.m. Winners will be paid out strictly or lost up to $1,500. All proceeds will benefit the Fund for Tomorrow. To purchase tickets call Lauren DiMauro at 717-549- 5296 or Angie at 717-726-0615 or angie@comcast.net.

St. Theresa School in New Cumberland will hold the “St. Theresa Holy Hour” fund raiser from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Friday, March 15. Pray the Holy Hour for our deceased and sick and forget the one who has died. A dinner will be held at 6 p.m. followed by a dance at 7 p.m. Proceeds benefit our school and for our ongoing educational mission and prayer. A free-offering will be taken. Call 717-637-8236 for more information.

Walking Way of the Cross, sponsored by Pax Christi, will be held on Good Friday, March 29, in Hanover. Participants will meet at 2 p.m. at St. John Neumann Church and proceed through the streets downtown throughout Hanover in prayer, silence, song and reflection. The walk continues Jesus’ journey to the Cross with current themes of peace and justice. Call 717-238-8238 for more information.

A Mission, “Prodigal Son Returns,” will be preached by Father Donald Calloway, One’s Father, at the Divine Mercy Parish in York City in Lancaster April 1 at 7 p.m. Father Calloway will tell his moving conversion story. Widely known as a speaker on Divine Mercy and the Holy Spirit, Father Calloway is the author of ‘The Prodigal Son Returns’ and ‘Pure Love, All Pure Love.’ Free parking will be available in the church lot.

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Lebanon will host a Celebration of Divine Mercy on April 7. The church will remain open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. for prayer. The annual Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be available for Confession and spiritual nourishment. Following the soup and presentations at 6 p.m. at St. Patrick Church in York. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be held at 2:30 p.m. at St. Joseph Parish in Hanover.

A Parish Lenten Series at St. Benedict the Abbot in Lebanon • Join Father Walter Guzman for a journey through our faith with the help of spiritual writers that will begin at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday for six weeks beginning April 2. The applicant must also have a strong commitment to Catholic education. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Brenda Weaver at 717-392-3083 or bweaver@resurrectioncatholic.org.

A Teaology on Tap session for young adults will be held March 26 at 6 p.m. The Teaology on Tap is a monthly gathering for conversation and companionship. Participants will meet at 6 p.m. at St. Patrick Church in York. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be held at 2:30 p.m. at St. Joseph Parish in Hanover.

A Theology on Tap session for young adults will be held March 26 at 6 p.m. The Teaology on Tap is a monthly gathering for conversation and companionship. Participants will meet at 6 p.m. at St. Patrick Church in York. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be held at 2:30 p.m. at St. Joseph Parish in Hanover.

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St. Catherine Labouré Students Gather Together as History is Made

By Emily M. Albert
The Catholic Witness

There are certain historical events that take place where people can remember the exact place they were standing when it happened. For students at St. Catherine Labouré School in Harrisburg, a special Mass celebrated in honor of Pope Benedict XVI will come to mind when they think of his resignation.

Just hours before the former pope would board a helicopter for the last time from the Vatican, students, faculty and the community joined together at St. Catherine Church for a Mass and a blessing of four flowing scrolls with messages of hope, faith, prayer and good wishes meant to be seen by the retired Holy Father.

Father Neil Sullivan, pastor, spoke about the selflessness of Pope Benedict’s retirement. He explained to the congregation what a hard decision this must have been to make, and how no decision comes without prayer or guidance from God. Immediately after his homily, Father Sullivan prayed a special blessing over the scrolls and sprinkled them with holy water.

Assigned students rolled up the scrolls, placed them in a box and sealed them, and mail carrier and parishioner Renee Cinchy came to the altar to receive them and took them straight to the post office. The morning Mass concluded with a special song to the Holy Father.

Faith on Display

The diocese’s Expressions of Faith Art Show began March 1, featuring a striking collection of icons, paintings, sketches, photographs, sculptures and jewelry that illustrates the Catholic faith. The 75 pieces of work were produced by 51 artists in the diocese, and are on display in the two lobbies of the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg. Each piece includes a card with information about the artist and his or her artwork. Visitors can view the art show Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m.-4:45 p.m.