In Misericordiae Vultus, the Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, Pope Francis speaks of Christ as the face of the Father’s mercy, and calls the faithful to “gaze even more attentively” on mercy so that we might become a symbol of God’s action in our lives.

Psalm 146, the Holy Father points out, shows the concrete signs of the Father’s mercy: “He executes justice for the oppressed; he gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the sojourners, he upholds the widow and the fatherless; but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.”

On March 5, Bishop Ronald Gainer brought the face of the Father’s mercy to inmates at the State Correctional Institution in Camp Hill, where he celebrated a morning Mass for the men gathered in the facility’s chapel.

“Mercy is an obsession of Pope Francis, and that is a very good obsession to have,” he told the men. See additional coverage of the Mass, as well as a commentary on prison ministry, on page 7.

Sin Makes Us Blind, but Confession Heals, Pope Says

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

Exercise a little courage and go to confession, turn away from selfishness and sin and back to God during the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis urged people at a Lenten penance service.

“When our desire to be healed becomes more courageous, it leads to prayer, to crying out fervently and persistently for help, as did Bartimaeus: ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me,’” the pope said, quoting from the Gospel of St. Mark.

The penance service in St. Peter’s Basilica March 4 kicked off the Rome celebration of “24 Hours for the Lord,” a period when select churches around the city were to be open all night – or at least for extended hours – for confession and Eucharistic adoration.

After delivering his homily at the service, Pope Francis walked to one of the confessionals in the basilica and knelt in front of a priest to confess his sins. Then he and 60 priests went to other confessionals, or even just plastic chairs set in quiet corners, to hear confessions.

Like Bartimaeus, who was blind, Catholics go to confession because they want to see again, the pope said. “Our sins have made us lose sight of all that is good and have robbed us of the beauty of our calling, leading us instead far away from our journey’s end.”

The blindness of sin “impoverishes and isolates us,” the pope said. It prevents people from seeing what is most important and instead makes them focus on themselves “until we are indifferent to others and to what is good.”

“How easy and misguided it is to believe that life depends on what we have, on our success and on the approval we receive,” the pope said. Sin makes people believe “the economy is only for profit and consumption” and “that personal desires are more important than social responsibility.”

The Year of Mercy, Pope Francis said, “is the favorable time to welcome God’s presence, to experience his love and to return to him with all our heart. Like Bartimaeus, let us cast off our cloak and rise to our feet: that is, let us cast aside all that prevents us from racing toward him.”

Speaking to priests, particularly those about to administer the sacrament, Pope Francis urged them to ensure that nothing they do makes it more difficult for people to draw close to Jesus in confession.

Priests are meant to “inspire courage, to support and to lead others to Jesus,” he said.
Conference Urges Men to Be Active in the Faith

By: Emily M. Albert
The Catholic Witness

Lent is a time for reflection, sacrifice, repentance and prayer. Each of these was a focus for nearly a thousand faithful men gathered at Bishop McDevitt High School in Harrisburg for the annual Diocesan Men’s Conference March 12.

Men of all ages attended the daylong conference that included a keynote speaker, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Divine Mercy reflection, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, several workshops and Mass celebrated by Bishop Ronald Gainer.

The keynote address from Tom Peterson, founder and president of Catholics Come Home, focused on “Our World Needs Catholic Heroes.”

Catholics Come Home (www.catholicscomehome.org) is an apostolate that creates media messages to inspire, educate and evangelize inactive Catholics and others, and invite them to live a deeper faith in Jesus Christ, in accord with Catholic Church.

Mr. Peterson urged the men to be active in their roles as Catholics and encouraged them to use simple dialogue with others as a way to evangelize.

He told them that the smallest of responses can create a moment of faith. For instance, instead of responding to the question of “How are you?” with “Good,” respond, “I am blessed,” he suggested. This, he explained, will either prompt a person to reflect on their own blessings, or maybe even open a dialogue for a person who has been away from their faith.

Mr. Peterson said he felt the call to change his lifestyle 18 years ago at a retreat where he had spent time in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

“When I was in front of the Eucharist, God called me to downsize and simplify my life. Little did I know he had an adventure in store. So many young people don’t realize when they say yes to God their life becomes adventurous, becomes a miraculous fulfillment of God’s will in their life. We need to embrace that call he has for each one of us, know that we can trust Jesus, that he wants the best for us, he wants to lead us to the Father, and when we say yes to God the doors of joy open,” Mr. Peterson said. “I learned that on my retreat and shortly thereafter, and that is the message we need to tell other people, that we can trust God, that he only wants the best for us as a loving Father.”

After an inspiring keynote address of fruitful words to ponder, the men at the conference were given time to reflect and pray during Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. This annual retreat, hosted the Diocesan Department of Religious Education, is a special time for men to grow their faith among each other with no judgment.
The Diocese of Harrisburg and the Trinity High School Board of Directors are pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. John W. Cominsky, as the new principal for Trinity High School in Camp Hill, effective July 1.

Mr. Cominsky is currently principal at St. Joseph School in Mechanicsburg.

“I am truly blessed to join the Trinity team as principal for the 2016-2017 school year,” Mr. Cominsky remarked. “Committed to its mission as a Catholic school, Trinity has educated students in mind, body, and spirit for more than 50 years. The school has an incredible dedicated faculty, families who place great emphasis on education, and a spirited student body. I am thankful for this opportunity and eager to begin this ministry.”

Father Edward Quinlan, Diocesan Secretary for Education, commented, “Mr. Cominsky is well prepared for his new role at Trinity High School. His administrative experience at St. Joseph School, as well as his years in the classroom, both at the high school and college levels, will allow him to bring an excellent spiritual and academic spirit to Trinity.”

Mr. Cominsky is familiar to the Trinity community, both as a graduate and having served there on the faculty from 1994 until accepting the position as Principal of St. Joseph School in 2011. He previously served as a member of the Religion and History Departments at Trinity.

Mr. Cominsky also served as an adjunct professor of Theology at Alvernia College and Mount St. Mary’s University. He holds a BA in Theology from Mount Saint Mary’s University, an MA in Religion from Lutheran Theological Seminary, and is currently working on a Master in Business Administration at Mount Saint Mary’s University.

Mr. Cominsky was appointed by Father Edward J. Quinlan, the Secretary for Education of the Diocese of Harrisburg. He was recommended by a search committee that was formed by the Trinity High School Board of Directors.

Trinity’s current principal, Mr. Joseph Gressock, will be retiring later this year after two years of outstanding service to the school.

Trinity High School is a college preparatory, Roman Catholic, parochial, co-educational high school serving 533 students in grades nine through twelve. Located in Camp Hill, Trinity was founded in 1963 and is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

Principal Opportunities in Diocesan Schools for 2016-2017

- St. Andrew School, Waynesboro (K-6) www.saintandrewschool.org
- St. Joseph School, Hanover (Pre-K-8) www.sjsahanover.org
- Sacred Heart of Jesus School, Hanover (K-8) www.shspa.org
- St. Joseph School, Mechanicsburg (K-8) www.sjshanover.org

Minimum Qualifications:
- Practicing, knowledgeable Catholic
- Thorough understanding of Catholic School Philosophy
- Commitment to modeling the values of Catholic Educational Leadership
- PA Administrators Certificate (or in process)
- Catechetical Certification (or in process)
- 5 years of teaching experience

Preferred Qualifications
- (in addition to the minimum qualifications listed above): 3 years of Administrative experience
- Catechetical Certification (or in process)
- Master’s Degree in Educational Administration

Desirable Leadership Characteristics:
- Experience at marketing, recruitment, and fiscal management
- Collaborative leadership style with good interpersonal and team-building skills
- Oral and written communication and motivational skills
- Catholic in instructional leadership
- Curriculum development, teacher supervision, and effective instruction
- Knowledge and application of instructional technology
- Ability to effectively represent the school and the Church

Send Resume and Letter of Interest by March 31, 2016, to: Livia Riley, Superintendent of Schools, Diocese of Harrisburg, 4800 Union Deposit Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111 (717) 657-4804, ext. 222 lriley@hbgdiocese.org

Part-Time Position Available

Associate Director of Catholic Campus Ministry Gettysburg College

Help college students live their Catholic faith. Catholic Campus Ministry at Gettysburg College is seeking an Associate Director of Catholic Campus Ministry, a part-time, ten-month professional position. Needed to assist the Director of Catholic Campus Ministry in leading our Christ-centered and growing Catholic Campus Ministry. Responsibilities include: creating innovative ways to bring people together; responding to inquiries about the Catholic faith; providing opportunities for young adult faith formation; attending weekly campus Mass and coordinating the liturgical leadership team; providing pastoral care to students; coordinating annual retreats; mentoring and guiding the student Leadership Team. We offer competitive salary. This position requires fully initiated active member of the Catholic Church. Preferred candidates will have previous experience in youth/young adult ministry and a strong academic background in a related field.

All interested applicants should submit a resume and cover letter by April 15, 2016 to: employment@hbgdiocese.org.

Bishop Gainer’s Public Calendar

- March 19 – Celebrate Mass at Diocesan Symposium on Catholic Social Teaching, Cardinal Keeler Center, 8:30 a.m.
- March 20 – WYD Celebration on Palm Sunday, Capitol Steps and St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 3 p.m.
- March 21 – Afternoon of Reflection for Priests, St. Lawrence Chapel, Harrisburg, 1 p.m.; Chrism Mass, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 5:30 p.m.
- March 22 – Mass of the Lord’s Supper, St. Patrick Cathedral, 7 p.m.
- March 23 – Confessions, St. Patrick Cathedral, 12:30 p.m.; Celebration of the Lord’s Passion, St. Patrick Cathedral, 3 p.m.
- March 24 – Celebration of the Easter Vigil, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 8 p.m.
- March 25 – Mass on Easter Sunday, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 9:30 a.m.
- March 30 – Stewardship Mission of Faith Visit, Lancaster Catholic High School, 10 a.m.
- April 2 – Celebrate Sisters’ Jubilee Mass, Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg, 10 a.m.; Invitation at Gift of Smiles Gala, Clarion Hotel, New Cumberland, 5:30 p.m.
- April 3 – Preach Opening of Forty Hours Devotions, St. Joseph Church, Milton, 3 p.m.

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What Shall I Do?

By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC
Special to The Witness

Some years ago, on a beautiful spring day, the phone rang. On the other end was a colleague of mine. She was having difficulty in maintaining her balance and decided to go to the doctor to get checked out. After a battery of tests, she was diagnosed with an illness that was debilitating and would eventually take her life. The fact that she had a terminal illness was already known to me. The conversation she had with me that sunny day was something I’ll never forget.

“You see, she asked for my assistance for her preparation for her death.

After we exchanged greetings, she said, “Sister, can you help me die? Can you please walk with me until I take my last breath?” The silence on the phone was deafening as my mind raced to truly understand the words I was hearing. Each second seemed like an eternity.

“Sister? Are you still there?” she asked. I stammered. “Wow! Me? What would this look like? What do you need from me?” She answered as her voice cracked, “Teach me how to trust God. Just listen to me and point the way.”

We agreed that I would journey to her home on a weekly basis to talk and pray with her. I truly became a ministry of presence. I had no words, no experience, no wisdom that I could give to her as an ointment on the pain of her soul. We talked a lot about mercy and forgiveness as I watched her body become weaker and weaker. Prayerfully, together, we began to discover that mercy and forgiveness are often used as synonyms for one another. They were not the same thing, however. In fact, there is a vast difference between the two. Forgiveness is the action of forgiving. But, mercy is an uncountable relenting; forbearance to cause or allow harm to another. It is never-ending compassion to the less fortunate. It is limitless empathy and tenderness. Only within the belief of the fathomless mercy of God can trust germinate.

Isn’t this what the Year of Mercy is all about? Pope Francis has repeatedly proclaimed that mercy is greater than any sin. No one can put limits on the love of God who is ever ready to forgive. After all, the love that God expresses consoles, pardons, and instills hope. How do I know this? If you read the books of the Old Testament, we see the Israelites sinning against God over and over again. Yet, even in the midst of this, God always called them back; wooed their hearts into relationship with Him again and again and again.

There are three passages of the Old Testament that Pope Francis quotes: “He forgives all your iniquity, he heals all your diseases, he redeems them back; wooed their hearts into relationship with Him again and again. Yet, even in the midst of this, God always called them back; wooed their hearts into relationship with Him again and again and again.”

As the months passed since her death, I have prayed for her husband and children daily. She, for me, reminds me that this Year of Mercy is a call for us to open our heart to allow Jesus’ love to enter our soul. By doing this, we allow Him to enter us in a way that strips everything away. We become wide open to Him and others as well. This is where true vulnerability and true intimacy lies. Unprotected. Humble. It is a love that makes all things new. It is a love that never dies.

(Sister of Christian Charity, Geralyn Schmidt, is the Wide Area Network Coordinator at the Diocese of Harrisburg and the Director of Formation for Wives in the Diocesan Program. An educator for 29 years, she is responsible for Professional Development Programs for every age learner. Through her presentations, she challenges her audiences to be the individual God has called them to be.)
During the season of Lent four decades ago, the women’s council at Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Berwick offered classes to instruct people in how to make pysanky, Ukrainian Easter eggs. The colors and designs on the eggs symbolize specific wishes for its recipient, such as health, financial wellbeing, spirituality and hope. The designs are made by covering areas of the egg and dipping it in dyes. In this photo from Charlie Blahusch that appeared in the March 11, 1976, edition, Pauline Hovancak, class founder and council president, Delores Deschaine and Father Thomas Kujoyvsky, pastor, examine pysanky created in the class.

Witness History:
A Look Back at 50 Years of Photos

The Blessing of Easter Baskets: A Cherished Catholic Tradition

By Kenn Split
Special to The Witness

In many Eastern European countries, it’s a tradition to have a basket of food blessed on Holy Saturday. This Catholic ritual has been cherished for centuries among many families. It has now been adopted by people of all ethnic backgrounds who enjoy this richly symbolic custom.

The roots of this tradition date back to the 12th century early history of Poland, and is now observed by expatriates and their descendents in the U.S., Canada and the U.K. and other Polish parish communities. However, the Eastern Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians, including Czechs, Croatians, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Russians, Slovaks and Ukrainians, also participate in this holy ritual.

What goes into a food basket depends on the region one is from and the family’s preferences. Years ago in rural villages, it was a mark of one’s wealth if a groaning basket of special, savory foods was presented to be blessed. However, these types of extravagant conspicuous displays are less common, and just a sample of many foods with symbolic meaning now line the baskets. Instead of hams, some Croatians and Slovanes place a lamb in their basket, and western Slovaks might place a veal loaf or a yeast bread made with sourdough in their baskets. In wine-making regions like Hungary and others, bottles of superior vintage go into the basket, and others add green vegetables to their tables. Balkan countries like Serbia, Bosnia, Bulgaria and some others exchange eggs on Easter morning rather than have a basket of blessed food.

Since Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians fast during Lent, none of the blessed food is eaten until after Mass on Easter Sunday. This then becomes the traditional Easter breakfast. Generally, each member of the family eats a sample of everything in the basket.

The blessing of the food is a festive occasion. People take special pride in preparing a decorative and tasty basket with crisp linens, possibly embroidered for the occasion, both lining the basket and covering the food which symbolizes the covering of Christ’s burial shroud. These covers are usually passed down from generation to generation. The basket could also be decorated with colorful ribbons and greenery, pussy willows or dried flowers to symbolize spring, renewal and the Resurrection. The creativity of the parishioners brings a special joy to this event. Children are eager to help prepare and decorate the family basket and proudly carry it into the church. Some families with small children carry their own decorated basket filled with fruits, a chocolate bunny or some other treats. In some parishes, baskets are lined up on long tables; in others, parishioners process to the front of the altar carrying their baskets or line the aisle next to the family who brought the basket to church.

While tastes vary by region and family, the basket usually contains smoked meats, sausage, butter, cheese, bread, salt and decorated, colored pysanky eggs. A white candle symbolizing Jesus, the light of the world, is placed in the basket so it can be lit during the blessing. Another local tradition is to tie two nails together in the form of a cross and place them in the basket.

The foods that have a place of honor on the festive Easter table are the decorated hard boiled eggs, which are broken and shared by all, and a lamb molded of butter or pastry, representing Christ as the “Lamb of God.” Butter may also be placed into a glass container with cloves in the form of a cross studding the top.

Basket Contents and Symbolism
- Eggs - Decorated Ukrainian pysanky or various dyed or plain white eggs; symbolizing hope, new life and Christ’s Resurrection from the tomb
- Butter - Dairy products are included to celebrate the end of Lent and the richness of our salvation; reminds us of the goodness of Christ that we should have toward all things
- Easter Bread - A round loaf, sweetened yeast Paska or rye, topped with a cross, symbolic of Jesus, the Bread of Life
- Horseradish - Symbolic of the bitterness and harshness of the Passion of Christ; the vinegar is mixed with symbolizing the sour wine given to Jesus on the cross but sweetened with some sugar because of the Resurrection. This may be white or pink with grated red beets
- Pepper - Also symbolic of the Passion of Christ and the bitter herbs
- Kielbassa/Sausage - The links are symbolic of the chains of death that were broken when Jesus rose from the dead, as well as God’s favor and generosity
- Ham, Lamb or Veal - Meats are symbolic of great joy and abundance in Christ’s Resurrection
- Smoked Bacon - With its great fatness, it is a symbol of the overabundance of God’s mercy and generosity
- Salt - A necessary element in our physical life; symbolic of purification, prosperity and justice; preserves us from corruption. Jesus used its symbolism: “You are the salt of the earth”
- Cheese - Usually fresh, dry curd or farmer’s cheese shaped into a ball, it is the symbol of the moderation Christians should practice
- Holy Water - Used to bless the home, animals, fields and used in various rituals throughout the year
- Sweets - Fruits, candy, poppy seed and nut rolls, pastry items; promise of eternal life or good things to come
- The food included within any basket can be easily personalized to meet family needs and desires. However, the three-part blessing specifically addresses special prayers for the meats, eggs, cakes and breads.

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Grief Support Program at Holy Spirit Sets Bereaved on Path to Healing

By Jen Reed

The Catholic Witness

When her mother died, Agnes Zapcic sped away in her car, desperate to escape the pain of her loss. By the time her husband called her cell phone to find out where she was, she realized she couldn’t outrun her grief. “I sat in the car and screamed at God, because I was angry at him for taking my mom. And I was angry at my mom for leaving me,” she recalled.

“When I took off in the car, I was hoping I would end it all in a ditch somewhere. I really didn’t care what happened to me. I just wanted to stop the pain,” she said.

Her mother, Laverne Conrad Gales, died on March 3, 2010. Now, six years later, sitting in the cozy dining room of her home in the sloping neighborhoods above her parish of Prince of Peace in Steelton, Mrs. Zapcic still understands the loss of the woman she says was her best friend, but she has journeyed from grief to healing, thanks to the Bereavement Support Program at Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill.

Sponsored by the hospital’s Pastoral Care Department, the bereavement program consists of six sessions that center on the five stages of loss and grief—denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance—as first introduced by psychologist Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her book, “On Death and Dying.”

Concurrently, the program stresses that each person experiences loss differently, and will travel their own path toward healing. It is facilitated by Sister Margaret Washington, ASC, Director of Pastoral Services, and Pastoral Care Associates Sister Ann Marie Marabela, CPS, and Reverend Sally Strayer. All three are certified chaplains.

After the death of her mother in 2010, Mrs. Zapcic had attended bereavement programs associated with other organizations, but she said she didn’t find them to be of particular help because they weren’t faith-based.

She hadn’t been aware of the program at Holy Spirit Hospital at the time, but no matter; the program facilitators found her. A month after she lost her mother to breast cancer, Mrs. Zapcic was back to work at a party supply store in Hershey, when Sister Margaret and Sister Ann Marie came in, looking for particular plates.

Mrs. Zapcic is from St. Joseph School in Hanover, a place that she’d had to order what they were looking for, and when the plates later arrived, she personally delivered them to the Sisters in memory of her mother, who had very much enjoyed parties. “When they came to me, all I could do was cry,” she said. “In those times, one of the Sisters would talk to me one-on-one after the sessions, and I felt better just sharing my story.”

The Bereavement Support Program is open to anyone experiencing grief over the death of a loved one, and to those who care about relatives or friends who are grieving.

The series assists participants in understanding how to express grief and in developing skills to turn their grief into cherished memories.

“The program has two basic parts. The first part invites participants to enter into prayer at the beginning of each session and hear a facilitator explain the progressive stages of grief that invites the person to journey through the steps of ‘letting go’ in order to find the peace that they so desire,” Sister Margaret explained.

“This program is unique to most grief programs because it invites the participants to call upon their faith and to blindly trust a way to move through the grief process,” Sister Margaret noted.

“The Scripture story of Job becomes central to the process, while accepting the understanding that it is certainly acceptable to question God because of the loss and emptiness they feel. It is in this questioning that their relationship with God grows stronger than ever before,” she said.

The six sessions—each lasting an hour and a half—are offered on afternoons and evenings so that participants can choose a time convenient for their schedule.

Each weekly session focuses on a different topic—learning about grief, feelings surrounding grief, stress and grief, rituals and grief, finding meaning in loss, and new beginnings.

The sessions maintain small groups, and participants can share as much or as little as they want.

It took several weeks, for example, until Mrs. Zapcic could bring herself to talk to the group about the encounter.

“The first time I went to a session, Sister Margaret and Sister Ann Marie asked ev-

The deadline to pre-order commemorative patches is March 18. The deadline to have your achievement printed in the Mass booklet is April 5.

By Jen Reed

The Catholic Witness

When her mother died, Agnes Zapcic sped away in her car, desperate to escape the pain of her loss. By the time her husband called her cell phone to find out where she was, she realized she couldn’t outrun her grief. “I sat in the car and screamed at God, because I was angry at him for taking my mom. And I was angry at my mom for leaving me,” she recalled.

“When I took off in the car, I was hoping I would end it all in a ditch somewhere. I really didn’t care what happened to me. I just wanted to stop the pain,” she said.

Her mother, Laverne Conrad Gales, died on March 3, 2010. Now, six years later, sitting in the cozy dining room of her home in the sloping neighborhoods above her parish of Prince of Peace in Steelton, Mrs. Zapcic still understands the loss of the woman she says was her best friend, but she has journeyed from grief to healing, thanks to the Bereavement Support Program at Holy Spirit Hospi- tnal in Camp Hill.

Sponsored by the hospital’s Pastoral Care Department, the bereavement program consists of six sessions that center on the five stages of loss and grief—denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance—as first introduced by psychologist Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her book, “On Death and Dying.”

Concurrently, the program stresses that each person experiences loss differently, and will travel their own path toward healing. It is facilitated by Sister Margaret Washington, ASC, Director of Pastoral Services, and Pastoral Care Associates Sister Ann Marie Marabela, CPS, and Reverend Sally Strayer. All three are certified chaplains.

After the death of her mother in 2010, Mrs. Zapcic had attended bereavement programs associated with other organizations, but she said she didn’t find them to be of particular help because they weren’t faith-based.

She hadn’t been aware of the program at Holy Spirit Hospital at the time, but no matter; the program facilitators found her. A month after she lost her mother to breast cancer, Mrs. Zapcic was back to work at a party supply store in Hershey, when Sister Margaret and Sister Ann Marie came in, looking for particular plates.

Mrs. Zapcic is from St. Joseph School in Hanover, a place that she’d had to order what they were looking for, and when the plates later arrived, she personally delivered them to the Sisters in memory of her mother, who had very much enjoyed parties. “When they came to me, all I could do was cry,” she said. “In those times, one of the Sisters would talk to me one-on-one after the sessions, and I felt better just sharing my story.”

The Bereavement Support Program is open to anyone experiencing grief over the death of a loved one, and to those who care about relatives or friends who are grieving.

The series assists participants in understanding how to express grief and in developing skills to turn their grief into cherished memories.

“The program has two basic parts. The first part invites participants to enter into prayer at the beginning of each session and hear a facilitator explain the progressive stages of grief that invites the person to journey through the steps of ‘letting go’ in order to find the peace that they so desire,” Sister Margaret explained.

“This second part encourages each person to share where they are from week to week. They are led to understand that it is important to move through the process. Getting ‘stuck’ on any stage of grief is something to be avoided,” she said.

Rituals and symbols are also part of the program; Psalms and prayers are coupled with keepsake items like incense, rocks, clay and pearls that help the bereaved to connect the faith to their mourning.

Participants are welcome to attend additional sessions after the conclusion of the six-week program. Mrs. Zapcic, who went through the program after the death of her mother, participated again two years ago when she accompanied her friends Mary Ann Jones and Teresa Stair, whose husbands died in early 2014.

“I was further along on the journey than I am, given that my loss is more re- cent,” said Mrs. Jones, “but in the pro- gram, we all have lost to a common. No one judges you about how you’re feeling or how you’re grieving.”

Tears fill Mrs. Jones’ eyes and thicken her voice when she talks about her hus- band, and she acknowledges that her journey from grief to healing has been a day-to-day process. Still, there is nothing about the Bereavement Support Program that has given her more than she could handle.

“We talk about faith, life, death and the hope in the Resurrection, and that was a fit for me,” she said.

Through the sessions, Mrs. Jones has found a support system of friends from the group. “We have a bond because of our loss, even though our losses are different—the death of a husband, or a dad, or a sister,” she said. “We shared and cried together during the sessions, but by the end of the program, we were going to dinner together, having an enjoyable time and laughing with one another. “When the two friends think back to the start of that journey from the first time they walked in to the program at Holy Spirit, they can see the path they’ve traversed, step by step,” Mrs. Jones, though initially hesitant to attend the Bereavement Support Program, found it to be helpful in simply surviv- ing the oppressive grief of her husband’s death.

Here, you learn how to deal with the daily situations. For example, I had trouble driving past our favorite restaurant, or even going into the grocery store where we shopped—things that seem small and stupid, but are part of the day-to-day pro- cess,” she said. “The program helped me to deal with those situations and start on a journey to heal.”

There’s a special tinel on the small shelf above Mrs. Zapcic’s dining room table that holds a broken heart, a memento from the session on ritual and grief. She looks it over as she pondered the sessions and the loss of her mother as she headed on her journey from grief to healing.

“I can remember Sister Margaret say- ing in one of those first sessions that there would come a day when the loss of my mom wouldn’t be the first thing on my mind; I will wake up, Mrs. Zapcic said. “And I thought, There is no way I won’t always be thinking constantly about my mom. There is no way this pain will go away.”

“But it did. Sister Margaret was right. That day actually did come, even with my mom’s picture right beside my bed. I can go for whole days without crying about my mom’s death,” she said. “There is definite- ly a process you go through, and it makes me smile now as I think back and realize how I’ve come through that grief to cher- ish the memories of my mom.”

The Catholic Witness

The annual Diocesan Geography Bee brought dozens of Catholic school students to the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg on March 9 to demonstrate their knowledge about land masses, countries, farming processes and climates. This year’s contest saw a repeat winner in Luke Capper, left, from St. Joseph School in Mechanicsburg. Madison Truong, center, of Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School placed second, and Alejandro Zambrano-Foote, right, from St. Joseph School in Hanover earned third place.

Mass for All Scouts of the Diocese

April 17 at 2 p.m.

Good Shepherd Church
3435 Trindle Road,
Camp Hill

Bishop Ronald Gainer, Celebrant

Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, American Heritage Girls, Scout leaders and families are invited to this Mass. Scouts who have completed any of the Catholic religious awards in the past year will be recognized for their accomplishments, and all Scouting families are encouraged to attend.

Full details are available on the diocesan Web site at http://www.hbgdiocese.org/youth-and-young-adults/catholic-scouting/

For information, call 717-763-2118 or e-mail PastoralCare@hsh.org.

The deadline to pre-order commemorative patches is March 18. The deadline to have your achievement printed in the Mass booklet is April 5.
Bringing the Face of the Father’s Mercy to Inmates

There are currently more than 50,300 inmates in Pennsylvania’s state prisons. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, 90 percent of those in state prison today will be released.

Prison ministry is one of the many ministries of the Church, and is rooted in Catholic social teaching. Visiting the imprisoned is one of the Corporal Works of Mercy, found in Christ’s teachings and actions as a model for how we should treat our brothers and sisters as though we were Jesus in disguise.

On March 5, Bishop Ronald Gainer put on the face of Christ for those at the State Correctional Institution in Camp Hill, as he celebrated a Mass for the inmates there. He was joined at the altar by Deacon Jorge Vera, the Catholic chaplain at the facility. SCI Camp Hill is one of 18 correctional facilities within the boundaries of the Diocese of Harrisburg, with Catholic chaplains and numbers of men and women who routinely minister to inmates through the RCIA, Bible study and faith-sharing efforts.

Prison ministry in the diocese is under the auspices of the Diocesan Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization. Visit http://www.hbgdiocese.org/special-ministries/prison-ministry/ or contact clevmail@hbgdiocese.org to learn more and find out how to get involved in this ministry.

Deacon Jorge Vera, Catholic Chaplain at SCI Camp Hill, raises the Book of the Gospels before proclaiming the Gospel Reading.

Behind Bars

Two recent events in the Harrisburg Diocese have brought the joy of mercy to women in state prison and to the women in our midst.

Saying Mercy to Inmates

On March 5, Bishop Ronald Gainer, the Catholic Bishop of Harrisburg, celebrated Mass at SCI Camp Hill, one of 18 correctional facilities within the Diocese of Harrisburg. The Mass was celebrated by Deacon Jorge Vera, the Catholic chaplain at the facility.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says, “The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities.” (CCC No. 2447) The work of mercy in prison ministry lies in simple friendship, in restoring dignity with non-judgmental smiles and laughter, and in simply sharing faith with my sisters in Christ regardless of their sins.

My lessons are part catechesis, part apostolic, and 100% personal faith sharing and storytelling. I will simply share my experiences and lessons learned from questions posed in the YouCat study guide; the youth catechism is a great resource. But often an inmate will share a story about her struggles that steers us in a different direction. I encourage my group to ask questions. I remind them that the Holy Spirit might be prompting them to ask because someone else needs to hear the answer. Tears and hugs are common when we talk about God’s love and mercy.

In 2014, nearly 200,000 people were sent to Pennsylvania’s county prisons. Another 52,000 were incarcerated in the state prison system. I never ask the women why they are there, but they do share a lot. Almost everyone talks about their addictions. They openly talk about their addictions. They openly talk about the crimes they commit to get the drugs – shoplifting, prostitution, larceny, and worse.

All of us are sinners and some of us commit sins that are also against the law and must be punished by the civil judicial system. Criminal justice is necessary to keep our communities safe and to steer us away from the wrong doing that harms society. But Saint Paul urges us to, “be mindful of prisoners as if sharing their sufferings – sexual and physical abuse, addiction, human trafficking, mental illness, poverty, lack of family support. They deserve punishment for their crimes, but they also deserve mercy and support in their conversion.

Visiting the imprisoned is humbling and rewarding. Faith sharing, smiles, and laughter are spiritual necessities for me. Why not share them with women in prison? We all experience suffering. Even if a woman cannot pardon me, I can always share my forgiveness with her, if it means giving her a chance.

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(Alana Hill is Communications Director for the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference and a parishioner at the Cathedral Parish of St. Patrick in Harrisburg.)
How Do I Go to Confession?

The following may be helpful in preparing for Confession. Above all, do not be afraid. If you are hesitant about what to do, ask the priest for help.

Greeting

The priest welcomes the penitent warmly and greets him or her with kindness.

Sign of the Cross

Then the penitent makes the Sign of the Cross, which the priest may also make.

Invitation to Trust in God

The priest invites the penitent to have trust in God and anything else that may help the confessor in exercising his ministry.

Prayer of the Penitent and Acceptance of Satisfaction

The penitent confesses his or her sins and accepts the prayers or deeds that the priest proposes as a penance.

Prayer of the Penitent and Absolution

The priest asks the penitent to express sorrow by praying one of the prayers found in the ritual or in his or her own words. The priest then says the Prayer of Absolution, to which the penitent responds, “Amen.”

Proclamation of Praise and Dismissal

The priest continues: “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.” The penitent responds: “His mercy endures for ever.” The priest then dismisses the penitent, using one of the formulas round in the ritual.

Confession

Continued from 1

“Our ministry is one of accompaniment so that the encounter with the Lord may be personal and intimate, and the heart may open itself to the savior in honesty and without fear.”

The gift of priesthood, he said, is a gift that brings with it the ability to facilitate a sinner’s personal encounter with the Lord and, even more, “to stretch out our hand and to absolve, thus making his mercy visible and effective.”

“We certainly must not water down the demands of the Gospel, but we cannot risk frustrating the desire of the sinner to be reconciled with the Father,” Pope Francis said. “For what the Father awaits more than anything is for his sons and daughters to return home.”

“May every man and woman who comes to confession find a father who welcomes them and the Father who forgives them,” the pope said in a brief addition to his prepared homily.

Pope: When It Comes to Our Sins, God Has a ‘Bad Memory’

By Junno Arocho Esteves

Catholic News Service

Although God is all-powerful, when it comes to sins, he has one weakness: a bad memory, Pope Francis said.

“Once he forgives you, he forgets. This is great,” the pope told a group of seminarians, new priests and priests who hear confessions in the major basilicas of Rome.

“Every faithful penitent, after receiving absolution from the priest, has the certainty through faith that their sins no longer exist, they have been canceled by divine mercy,” he told the group March 4.

The forgiveness of sins offered in the sacrament of reconciliation is open to all and is “the greatest of the ‘holy doors’” that remain wide open to those wounded by sin and who wish to experience God’s love and mercy, the pope said.

Departing from his prepared remarks, the pope highlighted the importance of celebrating God’s forgiveness in the sacrament.

“Let us not forget this: It is very easy to go [to confession], ask forgiveness, feel the embrace of forgiveness and forget to celebrate. This isn’t theological doctrine, but I would say that celebration is part of the sacrament. Just as penance is part of the sacrament, so is celebration; I must celebrate with the father who has forgiven me,” the pope said.

Those who administer the sacrament of confession, he said, are called to follow the example of St. Padre Pio and St. Leopold Mandic, two Capuchins known for the long hours they would spend hearing confessions.

Offering God’s love and mercy like they did means looking for a way to offer absolution to penitents even in the most difficult situations, not being “tied down” only to what the penitent is able to say, but recognizing his or her presence in the confessional as a sign of repentance.

Ministers must also learn to “speak like a father” when unable to offer absolution and assure penitents—especially those weary of being “beaten over the head”—of the paternal warmth of God’s love.

“How many times have you heard people say: ‘I will never confess again because one time I went and he shouted at me.’ Even if I can’t absolve them, they can at least feel the warmth of a father, who blesses them and says: ‘Come back, come back’ and to pray with him or her,” the pope said.

The sacrament of reconciliation is “true space of the Spirit in which everyone, confessor and penitent, can experience the definitive and faithful love of God for each one of his children, a love that never disappoints,” he said.
St. Joseph Students Share Academic, Artistic Talents with Bishop Gainer

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

St. Joseph School in Mechanicsburg highlighted its blue-ribbon students and staff March 10 as Bishop Ronald Gainer made a pastoral visit there, and took the opportunity to congratulate the school community on its recent National Blue Ribbon recognition.

The visit began with Mass in the parish church, where students offered their talents and service as part of the handbell choir, liturgy choir and altar servers. At the conclusion of the Mass, they presented the bishop with a check for $1,000 for tuition assistance and a large handmade card sign by all the students.

“We were very pleased to have the bishop here during our Blue Ribbon year. We know he is a very big proponent of Catholic education,” said Principal John Cominsky, referring to the school’s recognition by the United States Department of Education as a National Blue Ribbon School for 2015.

“We’ve had so much success academically and artistically – especially with the music program that is such an important part of our worship. The kids work hard here,” he said.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes public and private elementary, middle and high schools based on their overall academic excellence – as in the case of St. Joseph’s – or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. It affirms the hard work of students, educators, families and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging content.

St. Joseph School presents a number of liturgical and community-service offerings, including weekly Masses, Advent and Lenten Penance services, a May crowning and a living Rosary, as well as regular food and monetary collections. Produce from the school’s garden is given to the students’ lunch program, parish priests and New Hope Ministries.

“We treat you here at St. Joe’s as a total mystery of the human being…. We want your souls to be rich, to be strong, to be beautiful. Your education here is complete,” Bishop Gainer told the students.

“You received a wonderful distinction by being named a Blue Ribbon School. It does not just come because you wished for it. You worked for it. It is a tremendous accomplishment,” he said.

“It is easy to find the bad news these days – you will find it if you look for it. But the good news is not hard to find either. It is that God is a merciful God who loves us and forgives us. That’s the Good News,” he said.

Learn more about St. Joseph School by visiting http://www.sjsmch.org/.
Bishop’s Pastoral Visit to York Catholic Highlights Stewardship

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

This academic year, diocesan high school students are learning about the virtues of stewardship, as members of the non-profit organization Stewardship: A Mission of Faith join Bishop Ronald Gainer in presentations about helping others through the gifts they’ve received from God.

On March 14, Bishop Gainer joined organization members David Abel and Tom DeAngelis at York Catholic High School for a stewardship program. The students received a collection of the New Testament, a prayer book and a Rosary at the conclusion of the presentation, and then welcomed the bishop into their classrooms as he toured the school.

For Principal Katie Seufert, the visit offered a wonderful opportunity for the York Catholic community to share its values of faith and family.

“York Catholic High School has a longstanding tradition of honoring faith, mind, heart and family for over 85 years,” she told The Catholic Witness. “We are privileged to have the opportunity to partner with our families to reinforce family values in the home – that is the heart of York Catholic.”

She spoke of the values of respect and trust that are held high at the school – illustrated in part by the fact that the school does not have a need for locks on its lockers – and pointed to the 20,000 hours of volunteer community service performed by this year’s graduating class alone.

Academically, York Catholic students achieve high amounts of scholarships, most recently $9.13 million, she pointed out. “A Catholic education at York Catholic is a return on investment,” she said.

“Our students grow academically and spiritually here, and they grow to give back to the community as Catholic global citizens,” Mrs. Seufert said.

York Catholic, which enrolls students in grades 7-12, enjoys a partnership with eight parishes and five deanery schools – St. Joseph School in York, St. Patrick School in York, St. Rose of Lima School in Thomasville, St. Joseph School in Dallastown and St. John the Baptist School in New Freedom.

“The opportunity to have Bishop Gainer visit us today only reinforces that Catholic values are something we can emphasize and share in our classrooms,” Mrs. Seufert said. “His visit was very well received, and we certainly appreciate his time to interact with the students here at YC.”

(For information about York Catholic High School, visit http://yorkcatholic.org/.)
Christ’s Passion to Be Retold in Live Musical Broadcast from New Orleans

By Beth Donez
Catholic News Service

Christ’s final hours will come to life in spectacular fashion on Palm Sunday, March 20, when Fox airs “The Passion,” a two-hour, live musical event from New Orleans.

Bolstered by a soundtrack of contemporary songs performed live by the cast, the epic television event will be a modern retelling of Christ’s passion, following Jesus as he eats with his friends at the Last Supper, is betrayed by Judas, put on trial by Pontius Pilate, walks to his crucifixion and rises from the dead.

“This Palm Sunday television event is a modern-day production of the most famous story of all time, full of universal themes, which we hope provides a unifying experience [that brings] the sacred and secular together,” said Mark Bracco, executive vice president of programming and development at Dick Clark Productions, one of the event’s three executive producers.

The Scripture-based narrative, written by Peter Barsocchini, will unfold live on a stage erected in the city’s Woldenberg Park and through a series of pre-taped segments broadcast on the stage’s jumbo screen. (It airs 8-10 p.m. (EST); check local listings).

A highlight of the production will be the simultaneous mile-and-a-half procession of a 20-foot illuminated cross from Champions Square to Woldenberg Park, ten by Peter Barsocchini, will unfold live on a stage erected in the city’s Woldenberg Park, and through a series of pre-taped segments broadcast on the stage’s jumbo screen.

Hosting and narrating the event from the stage in the park will be New Orleans-born actor and film producer Tyrese Gibson. Actor, singer and songwriter Jencarlos Canela will portray Christ, and three-time Grammy winner Trisha Yearwood will play Mary.

The cast also includes Seal as Pontius Pilate; Chris Daughtry as Judas; and Prince Royce as Peter.

“I think New Orleans is the best place to have ‘The Passion’ for one reason,” said Perry, speaking in a pre-taped Fox media blitz. “Literally, the town rose again, and to come through so much tragedy and so much darkness and find love and find compassion and find forgiveness – I think the city of New Orleans is the perfect backdrop for the story that has a lot of the same things to say.”

As Perry narrates the story from Woldenberg stage, a giant cross, reminiscent of a glowing light box, will be carried by a pre-selected group of volunteers from Champions Square through the French Quarter, with an anticipated 30,000 spectators lining the route.

The broadcast will include pre-taped scenes — all filmed in New Orleans — that will depict Christ and his disciples interacting in iconic New Orleans locations such as Audubon Park, the French Quarter, McDonoghville Cemetery, Duncan Plaza and Jackson Square.

Producers will intermittently cut to the live procession, interspersing these images with the live action taking place on the Woldenberg stage and the pre-taped visuals.

Producers of “The Passion” said that while the narrative is faithful to Scripture, it promises to rivet viewers in a new way by being set in contemporary times. For example, the actors will be costumed in street clothes, rather than the robed garments of Jesus’ time. In the arrest scene, Christ will be seen in an orange jumpsuit and metal cuffs, and his captors in modern-day law enforcement uniforms.

The music, sung live by cast members, includes songs made famous by Whitney Houston, Imagine Dragons, Evangeline Lilly, Tim Turner, Katy Perry and Hoobastank.

“I cannot wait to bring the greatest-story-ever-told to life through music, in a way that has never been heard before,” said Adam Anders, the musical producer behind the hit television series “Glee,” who took on the task of arranging the existing songs to reflect the emotion-filled journey experienced by Christ, his friends and his enemies on the road to Calvary.

For example, the Imagine Dragons song “Demons,” to be performed by Canela’s Jesus and Daughtry’s Judas, will underscore the apostle’s greed in inner conflict in the scene in which he betrays Jesus with a kiss.

Yearwood’s solos — in songs that include “I Won’t Give Up,” “You’ll Never Walk Alone” and “Broken” — will take on fresh meaning as they are sung from the perspective of the grief-stricken yet strong Mary, the mother of God.

The format of “The Passion” was originally created in the Netherlands in 2011 by Jacob Doornbos of Eye-2Eye Media. Since then it has become the country’s highest-rated live musical television event, a pop culture phenomenon that commanded nearly half of the Dutch TV-viewing market share when it aired in 2015.

The Dutch version, scheduled to air live later this month for the sixth straight year, received the Dutch equivalent of the Emmy for its creator, Doornbos, and as best entertainment program.

A prayer hour, sponsored by the Archbishop of New Orleans and held independently from the Fox network, will follow “The Passion” at St. Louis Cathedral and will include opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and reflection.

Pope Marks Third Anniversary of Election with Talk on Mercy

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

Pope Francis celebrated the third anniversary of his election with a simple Tweet — “Pray for me” — and the usual Sunday recitation of the Angelus prayer with tens of thousands of people gathered in St. Peter’s Square.

In his talk March 13, the pope did not mention the anniversary, but focused on God’s forgiveness and mercy as he did in his first Angelus address in 2013.

“God does not nail us to our sins; he does not identify us with the evil we have committed,” the pope told the crowd.

“God wants to free us,” the pope said. He wants people to use their freedom to do good and not evil. “This is possible – it’s possible – with his grace.”

Pope Francis’ Angelus address focused on the Gospel passage being read at Masses around the world: St. John’s account of Jesus and the woman caught in adultery.

The scribes and Pharisees, planning to stone the woman in accordance with the law, brought her to Jesus in an attempt to trick him. “If Jesus followed the severity of the law, approving the stoning of the woman, he would lose his fame of meekness and goodness, which so fascinated people,” the pope said. “But if he wanted to be merciful, he would go against the law, which he himself said he had come not to abolish but to fulfill.”

Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees, “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

“This response scatters the accusers, disarming all of them in the true sense of the word,” the pope said. They leave one by one, beginning with the oldest, who is “more aware of not being without sin.”

“How good it would be for us, too, to be aware that we are sinners,” Pope Francis said. “How good it would be if we would encourage to let fall to the ground the stones we have for throwing at others and rather to think about our own sins.”

Every sin is a betrayal of God, making people “adulterers before God,” the pope said. But Jesus showed them that “rather to think about our own sins.”

“Her experience represents God’s will for each of us: not our condemnation, but our salvation through Jesus,” Pope Francis said.
St. Andrew Parish in Waynesboro is kicking-off its capital campaign to fund expansion and renovation of the school to a very classy way. It is raising off a classic Porsche, definitely very desirable by collection. The vehicle, donated by parishioner Peter Skehan, is a 1983 911 SC Coupe, with a 3.2 liter engine, a 5-speed transmission, with black on black paint, a whale tail, sunroof, and other options. The drawing for the car will be held on July 4, 2016, as part of the Waynesboro Jubilee. The winner will be the first in line to have the vehicle. The minimum ticket price is $25 each or $50 for a pack of five. Tickets are available on-line at the school’s website, www.santafremioweb.org. Anyone interested in seeing the car in person is encouraged to contact the school for an appointment.

The parish has three years to reach its donation goal. The car raffle is just one activity planned to help with the capital campaign. Other events are forthcoming. But, it certainly means for an amazing start. Skehan adds, “Now, buy some tickets. Some of the ‘sacred titles’ are getting in the bidding. In 2050, after 75 years of wandering, the painting found a permanent home in a shrine in Vilnius.

Today, many images of Divine Mercy are available. How did so many other renderings of St. Faustina’s vision become so well known around the world while the original remained in obscurity? This film explores the absorbing history of the original image.

In the first year of the DivineMercy devotion at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, the ministry acquired a large portrait copy of the original image of Divine Mercy, as painted by the artist Ewangelina Kamieśawska in Vilnius, Lithuania. St. Faustina’s original image was in the possession of her sister, Blessed Father Michal Sopocko (who also served as the model), began working with an artist to capture St. Faustina’s mystical vision of the Merciful Jesus. Later, the Soviet occupation of Vilnius, Lithuania, forced the painting to go hiding. In 2050, after 75 years of wandering, the painting found a permanent home in a shrine in Vilnius.

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In the first year of the DivineMercy devotion at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, the ministry acquired a large portrait copy of the original image of Divine Mercy, as painted by the artist Ewangelina Kamieśawska in Vilnius, Lithuania. St. Faustina’s original image was in the possession of her sister, Blessed Father Michal Sopocko (who also served as the model), began working with an artist to capture St. Faustina’s mystical vision of the Merciful Jesus. Later, the Soviet occupation of Vilnius, Lithuania, forced the painting to go hiding. In 2050, after 75 years of wandering, the painting found a permanent home in a shrine in Vilnius.

Today, many images of Divine Mercy are available. How did so many other renderings of St. Faustina’s vision become so well known around the world while the original remained in obscurity? This film explores the absorbing history of the original image.
Mass and Confessions in the Croatian language will be celebrated on Palm Sunday, March 20, at 3:00 PM with Confessions presented in English before the mass. Call Deacon Johnas Rupar, Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Cornwall, to be available to hear confessions.

On Sunday, May 22, 2016, Court Queen of Peace #1023, Catholic Daughters of the Americas is hosting a trip to Lourdes. Buses leave Holy Spirit Catholic Church, 225 South Main Street, York at 8:00am. The day will include time for prayer, Eucharistic adoration, time for reflection and fellowship, Eucharistic procession, and a pause for lunch. A donation of $20, if possible, is appreciated. For more information, contact Deacon Betty Butler at undelegatecourage@gmail.com

Celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday Assumption By St. Anne Parish, 851 South Main Street, York will be celebrated at 11:30 am. Confession 1:00 pm, Divine Mercy Holy Hour 2:30 - 3:30 pm.

FUNDRAISERS AND EVENTS

The Dehne Catholic Drama Team will present the musical, "The Sound of Music," for three performances: April 1, 2, and 3, 2016. Shows are at 7:30 PM on April 1 & 2, and 2:00 PM on April 3. The show is directed by Virginia Dehne. For reservations, please call 717-333-8100.

The Bishop McDevitt High School Campus PTO announces a Designer Bag Bingo April 10, at 2 pm, in the school cafeteria, 521 East Orange Street, Lancaster. This high-end purse sale sells out well before the event. Discounted bags will be available for a designated time prior to the sale. Tickets are $25 and can be pre-ordered from rpschoolpto@gmail.com or 717-408-6724 – Designers are limited for the event.

"Hush" Documentary to be shown in Annville. St. Paul the Apostle Pre-Liturgical Group invites all to a one-time showing of the documentary of the same name. On Sunday, April 10, at 1:00 pm at the Atrium Theater, 36 East Main Street, Annville. Doors open at 12:30 pm. Admission is free. In-choir director Dr. Lunn Cuero felt that questioning anything about abortion was treason to her feminist identity. But when she heard the 'Hush' truth, she had to question her own worldviews. Among women who have been pela...am the politics of the people involved, and that 50 million women worldwide, [1 in 3 in 1983]. This woman is now my neighbor. It is a difficult and honest and comprehensive look at the subject. She researched the abortion controverted to the idea of the right to life for the unborn. She concludes that the women and the facts of physical problems of women. What she discovered was not only vital to the relationship connection to breast cancer, premature birth, and psychological and emotional problems. She also found out that the first 20 weeks of pregnancy is when the women can be affected most by the pro-life movement. For more information, contact Deacon Betty Butler at undelegatecourage@gmail.com

The Oblates of St. Benedict, Holy Spirit Province, will celebrate a month on a Saturday at 2:00 pm at Holy Spirit Catholic Church, 425 West Peirce Street, Palmyra. The Oblates of St. Benedict are individuals or families affiliated with a Benedictine Community to enrich their Christian way of life. Oblates celebrate Christ in the midst of ordinary events and gift God in all things. Everyone is welcome to join us at our meetings. For more information, call our office at 717-429-3797 or visit hsb.org.

Holy Spirit Hospital – A Geisinger Affiliate is presenting a health lecture at Bosler Memorial Library, Carlisle, March 31, at 10:30 am for Health and Safety. For information, call Bishop McDevitt High School, 521 East Orange Street, Lancaster, for more information, call 717-754-2724 or visit www.stmarybythesea.org.

We are invited to a Community Discussion: Consider the Conversation. If you are seriously & unable to speak, please join us. Please join us at our monthly Dumbledore meeting. It is important to discuss your choices and preferences with family, friends, health and healthcare providers – before you experience a health crisis. The day will include discussion and a Q&A session with local experts. The program will be held on Saturday April 1, 2016 at 1:30 pm at the New Oxford Social Club, 517 Main Street. For more information, and for advance registration please call 717-845-7628 or office@stmarys.org. The program is free and open to all in the community.

The Advocates for Women will be hosting in the Lancaster Daughters will be hosting the Fourth Annual Project Live & Let Live in Memory of our sister, the late Noble Margaret L. Cahoon. All proceeds will go toward raising awareness and providing education and information to the public. The event will be held on Saturday, March 26, 2016 at 2:00 pm at the Round Hill Community Center in the Round Hill Shopping Center. The dress code will be black attire. For more information, and for advance registration please call 717-954-3473 or visit www.sarahwilliams.com. The program is free and open to all in the community.
Above: Lancaster Catholic senior Joe Lobeck finishes his high school wrestling career with a third-place finish in the 120-pound AA weight class. Lobeck placed second last year at 113 and fourth in 2014 at 106. Lobeck has committed to wrestle for Lehigh University.

Left: Bishop McDevitt’s John Pipa tries to tilt his opponent in the AA gold-medal match at 132 pounds, but fell short in his quest for gold, losing to Taylor Ortz of Brookville, who entered the match with an unblemished 43-0 record. Ortz scored a takedown and back points early in the match, eventually topping Pipa 7-2.

It was a defensive struggle between Josiah Jones of Westmont Hilltop, left, and Cole Nye, of Bishop McDevitt, right, in the 220-pound AA match. Nye had enough gas in the tank to edge Jones, 2-1, in triple overtime and capture state gold.

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Underneath the stands at the Giant Center in Hershey, amidst camera flashes and congratulatory handshakes, things finally began to sink in for Cole Nye.

The Bishop McDevitt junior had just gut-checked his way through a triple overtime match in the 220-pound final to become the Crusaders’ first state wrestling champion.

A wry smile crept across his face as he considered the feat, gold medal hanging from his neck.

“It’s not fully sunk in yet, but it’s a great feeling to be the first state champ in wrestling for McDevitt,” said Nye. “I’m sure we’ll have more to come, but being the first is really something special.”

Nye was one of three wrestlers from Bishop McDevitt to place at the state tournament, held March 10-12. Junior John Pipa took home the silver medal at 132 pounds, and freshman Chase Shields placed sixth in the 106-pound bracket. The trio was joined on the podium by fellow diocesan high school wrestler Joe Lobeck of Lancaster Catholic. A state runner-up last year, Lobeck fell short in a close match in the quarterfinal round, but battled through wrestle-back brackets to earn third place.

Nye’s championship bout was a defensive struggle with opponent Josiah Jones of Westmont Hilltop. The duo had wrestled each other earlier in the season, with Nye besting Jones 3-1, so the Crusader junior was ready for a tight rematch in the finals.

After a scoreless first period, Jones and Nye traded an escape point apiece in the second and third periods. Neither could find opportunity for quality shots throughout the match, and the 1-1 score after three periods sent them into overtime.

From early in the match, I had a feeling it was going to go into overtime. He fended off all of my shots, because he’s a defensive wrestler,” Nye said. After a scoreless sudden victory overtime period, Nye scored an escape point quickly in the first tiebreaker round, and then held Jones from escaping in the second en route to the 2-1 win.

“I don’t think anybody does conditioning like us,” Nye said of the stamina he demonstrated in the match. “When it comes to conditioning, Coach [Dean] Shields is relentless. That’s our strength.”

Bishop McDevitt sent a total of six wrestlers to the PIAA Class AA championships, and ultimately tied for fifth place in the team standings.

“Our goal this year was to send six to states,” said Nye. “We have an offensive mentality, and when you get to this level, sometimes you only need one point to win.”

Above: Lancaster Catholic senior Joe Lobeck finishes his high school wrestling career with a third-place finish in the 120-pound AA weight class. Lobeck placed second last year at 113 and fourth in 2014 at 106. Lobeck has committed to wrestle for Lehigh University.

Left: Bishop McDevitt’s John Pipa tries to tilt his opponent in the AA gold-medal match at 132 pounds, but fell short in his quest for gold, losing to Taylor Ortz of Brookville, who entered the match with an unblemished 43-0 record. Ortz scored a takedown and back points early in the match, eventually topping Pipa 7-2.
Diocesan Athletes Bring Home Medals in District 3 Swimming

By Emily M. Albert
The Catholic Witness

Several diocesan high schools were prestigiously represented by student-athletes from Trinity, Bishop McDevitt and Lancaster Catholic during the District 3 Swimming Championships held on March 4 and 5 at the Cumberland Valley High School Natatorium.

Trinity’s boys’ team won the overall Class AA team score with a total of 233.5 points. McDevitt’s Josiah Lauver and Jonathan Mata placed second and third respectively in the boys’ 100-yard backstroke, and Michael Southward of Lancaster Catholic placed second in the 200-yard freestyle.

In girls’ competition, Sarah Wyant from Trinity won the first place in the Class AA 50-yard freestyle and third in the 100-yard freestyle. Trinity girls placed second overall in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

Several Bishop McDevitt swimmers broke school records, including the boys’ 200-yard relay, the boys’ 400 freestyle relay and the girls’ 400-yard freestyle relay. The Crusaders’ free-styler Nicole Augustine also swam a school-best in the 100.

Trinity’s Sarah Wyant celebrates after placing first in the 50 Yard Freestyle.

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Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Harrisburg invites you on an 11-day pilgrimage with Most Reverend Ronald W. Gainer, Bishop of Harrisburg, PA

ITALY
August 27-September 6, 2016

Register Now for WYD Stateside!

Mirror the events of World Youth Day in Poland this summer at the World Youth Day Stateside event right here in the Diocese of Harrisburg.

World Youth Day Stateside is a two-day event for teens and young adults, and will be held at Lancaster Catholic High School and Clipper Magazine Stadium in July.

The unique event – emceed by Jackie Francois Angel – begins Saturday, July 30 at Lancaster Catholic with an opening liturgy, followed by catechesis, a concert by Ceili Rain, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions.

After an overnight, outdoor vigil, pilgrims will trek to Clipper Magazine Stadium for Stations of the Cross, a concert by Jackie Francois Angel and closing liturgy celebrated by Bishop Edward Malesic of the Diocese of Greensburg.

The entire experience is designed to mirror the events of World Youth Day in Krakow, and will include a video message from Pope Francis, and exhibits about Poland, St. John Paul II, the Divine Mercy Chaplet and the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary.

Registration is open for WYD Stateside. Cost is $175 for the two-day event, and Sunday-only tickets are also available. High school youth must register with a youth group or with their family. Young adults can register individually or as a group. Sign up today! Registration deadline is May 31. Visit www.hbgdiocese.org/wydstateside for all the details.

DIOCESAN CATHOLIC CEMETERIES SPRING/FALL FLOWER PROGRAM

As a service for those who are unable to visit the graves of loved ones in Diocesan Cemeteries, a program is offered each spring for flowers to be placed at gravesites. Floral arrangements are placed for Easter, Mother’s Day, Memorial Day, Father’s Day and for early autumn.

This year, the Diocesan Office of Catholic Cemeteries is offering an expanded selection of silk arrangements, which will be placed at graves in advance of the holiday. Flower arrangements may be ordered for one or more of the dates indicated. Selection and purchase, at the price of $34, can be made at one of our Diocesan Cemetery offices or online at www.hbgdiocese.org/cemeteries.

Flowers will be placed on the dates below

March 21, 2016 for Easter (March 27)
May 2, 2016 for Mother’s Day (May 8)
May 23, 2016 for Memorial Day (May 30)
June 13, 2016 for Father’s Day (June 19)
August 22, 2016 for Fall flowers (September 5)