Honoring Our Veterans

On Veterans Day, the nation remembers all those who have served our country in the Armed Forces. The annual observance has its roots in the armistice that ended World War I hostilities in 1918. The armistice between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed that Nov. 11 be observed as “Armistice Day.”

In 1954, Congress passed legislation that renamed the federal holiday “Veterans Day.”

This edition includes a feature on Father Vincent Capodanno, a chaplain who died in Vietnam (page 11) and a reflection by Emily M. Albert who especially remembered her grandfather during a Veterans Day ceremony (page 16).

Unimaginable Devastation

In the wake of the devastating effects of Typhoon Haiyan, the Diocese of Harrisburg will take up a special collection in all parishes the weekend of Nov. 30 and Dec. 1.

The funds will be administered by Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. Their operations serve people based solely on need, regardless of their race, religion or ethnicity. CRS maintains strict standards of efficiency, accountability and transparency: 93 percent of expenditures go directly to programs.

“May God bless you for your generosity as we help our brothers and sisters in their time of need of emergency assistance and long-term rebuilding,” said Father Robert M. Gillelan, Jr., Diocesan Administrator.

Checks may be made payable the local parish with a notation in the memo line: “Typhoon Haiyan Recovery.”

More information about CRS and updates on Typhoon Haiyan relief efforts can be found at www.CRS.org.
The devastation brought on by Super Typhoon Haiyan is on a scale so big it is "unimaginable," said Jesuit Father Edwin Gariguez, head of Caritas in the Philippines.

"This is beyond our capacity," Father Gariguez told CNS. "It's not because you don't have enough body bags. It is the life after death," he said, "As a Church this is part of our mission: to help the poor and the vulnerable.

Father Gariguez said the U.S. bishops' Catholic Relief Services was already in Bohol dealing with relief efforts from the Oct. 15 earthquake, so CRS was able to get its assessment teams to Leyte Nov. 10.

"With about 600,000 people displaced by the storm, the task of getting aid to them posed a challenge in terms of coordination and the logistics," said CRS coordinator Edwin Gariguez, representing the CRSCountry representative to the Philippines, Joe Curry, said his organization's relief efforts would involve coordinating the distribution of goods already available before the food arrived safely at its destination.

"Maybe it's at this point in time that we have to help each other, even if we lost everything. It is the life after death," he said. "As a Church this is part of our mission: to help the poor and the vulnerable."
Bishops Asked to Assess Marriage and Family Life to Prepare for Synod

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

Harriscburg Diocese to Take Part in Vatican Survey

The Diocese of Harrisburg will participate in a 39-question survey that the Vatican has sent to dioceses around the world in preparation for the Synod on the Family, which will be held in October. The topic of the gathering is on the theme of pastoral challenges of the family in the context of evangelization.

While not a survey of public opinion, it is the first time that the Vatican has asked bishops to widely share a survey with their priests and parishioners in preparation for such a meeting.

The questions, arranged in 9 topic areas, touch on such issues as how Catholic teaching on the value of the family has been received and understood; about marriage according to natural law; local efforts to support and promote family life; and how the Church is able to minister and care for people in irregular marriage situations, including the religious education of children. The survey also explores the openness of married couples to life and the Sacraments of the Church. At this time, the survey will be distributed to all priests and deacons in the diocese. Others involved in the marriage ministry of the parishes may be consulted as well. The results of the national survey must be compiled and returned by the end of the year.

A questionnaire for the laity is also available. Anyone may access the questionnaire online at www.hbgdiocese.org or before Nov. 30, 2013.

Victoria Laskowski, Director of Marriage and Family Life for the Diocese of Harrisburg, asked bishops and interested Catholic groups is to participate in the survey and compile all the surveys in the short time allotted, but I feel that it will be worth it to share this information about marriage in central Pennsylvania with the larger Church.

According to the Vatican, the questionnaire is an attempt to help the Church find solutions to difficult pastoral situations utilizing the existing doctrines of the faith. Results from the survey will be incorporated into a working document that will be utilized in the Synod. Popes traditionally use the findings of Synods to create their own documents on a given subject, in this case the family.

Former Bookkeeper Sentenced

Mary Zangrilli, former bookkeeper of St. Jude Thaddeus Parish in Millmont, was sentenced by Judge Kenneth A. Mummah to serve a minimum of two years and maximum of seven years at a state correctional facility for stealing $252,787 from the parish over a period of six years. She will be eligible for early release in 18 months. Zangrilli had previously entered a guilty plea to two felony theft charges. She was also ordered to pay restitution for the full amount that was stolen.

The investigation into Zangrilli began in November 2012, when Father William Weary, pastor of St. Jude Thaddeus Parish, noticed irregularities in the parish’s checkwriting. Father Weary directed his internal parish finance council to investigate the matter. This suspicion was confirmed, Father Weary notified the Diocese of Harrisburg, which launched a more complete audit.

The questionnaire asks bishops to describe how people understand Church teaching, how they promote it to their local churches and Catholic movements and how the Church can transmit the faith to them. The preparatory document specifically mentioned modern contributions to Church teaching, including the Second Vatican Council’s defense of the dignity of marriage and the Family. Paul VI’s encyclical Humanae Vitae on fidelity and procreation in marriage, and Blessed John Paul II’s teaching on God’s plan for married love.

“The Church’s pastoral ministry,” it said, “finds inspiration in the truth of marriage viewed as part of the plan of God, who created man and woman and, in the fullness of time, revealed in the couple as the complement of a larger, elevated to the level of sacrament.”

The questionnaire asks bishops to describe how people understand Church teaching, how they promote it to their local churches and Catholic movements and how the Church can transmit the faith to them. A number of questions focus on the teaching and know how to evaluate it. Several questions concern the acceptance of married people who have chosen to live in same-sex unions and, in places where they can adopt children, the process of adoption can be done to the families.

Questions focus on Huma- ne Vitae, how Church teaching and Family Life to Prepare for Synod

December 1-2: Janet Jackson, Director of Human Resources for the Diocese of Harrisburg, will share about the Youth Protection Program and efforts of the diocese. She will talk about the new ID badges that are being distributed to those who have passed all the requirements for working with youth in the diocese as well as coming updates to the mandatory training program.

December 8-9: The Stephen Ministry, a parish-based care giving ministry, is featured this week on Catholic Perspective in an interview with Mary Moll, a pastoral associate at St. Patrick Parish in Carlisle.

Catholic Perspective is produced in cooperation with the Office of Communic- ations of the Diocese of KYW AM 720. It can be heard Mondays at noon and Sundays at 3 p.m. on WHYF AM 720 and on Sunday mornings on WLAB AM-1390, Lancaster at 7:30 a.m.; WHYL-AM 960, Carlisle, at 8 a.m.; WHYR-AM 1280, Ha- covre at 8 a.m.; WTRG-AM 670, Lewis- town, at 8 a.m.; WWSM-AM 1510, Lebanon, at 7 a.m.; and WWFC-FM 88.3, Eliza-bethtown, at 9:30 a.m. It is also available online at www.OldiesRadio1620.com at 6:30 a.m. and at www.WSIL-AM 1440 on Sunday at 11 a.m. or for download at www. hbgdiocese.org.

Holy Family Catholic Radio Update: Due to Federal Communication Commis- sion regulations, the Holy Family Catholic Radio Update will only be aired 4:45 p.m. seven days a week. Listeners can hear a live audio stream 24 hours a day at www.720whyf.com. Simply go to the web page, click the Listen Live button on the left side, and enjoy Catholic radio clearly any time of day.

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Annual Collection Helps Religious Communities Address Retirement Shortfall

The annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection will be held Dec. 7-8 in the Diocese of Harrisburg. Now in its 26th year, the collection is coordinated by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) in Washington, D.C., and benefits over 34,000 senior Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests.

Last year, the Diocese of Harrisburg contributed $59,613.92 to this collection. In 2013, the Sisters of Sts. Cyril and Methodius received financial support made possible by the Retirement Fund for Religious.

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By Chris Heisey  
*The Catholic Witness*

Father William C. Forrey, pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Carlisle, blessed a new track and field complex located behind the church on a cold, blustery Nov. 10 that did not deter more than 300 hardy and enthusiastic faithful parishioners in joining in the celebration.

“This project is a wonderful example of how alive and vibrant this parish really is,” Father Forrey told the throng gathered around a beautiful new eight-lane track that will be used not only by the track team, but also by the school’s physical education program and parish walking program. And the inside field is nicely graded to allow for other full field sports to be played. An anonymous donor generously gave the parish $500,000 to complete the project for a school that already has a proven and successful track and field program that annually has more than 100 athletes competing against the region’s other schools. In the past, the school had to rely on the generosity of Carlisle area schools, which graciously shared and opened their facilities to St. Patrick’s. Dickinson College and most recently Cumberland Valley High School offered their track for use; however, now athletes will be able to compete and practice right after school on their own campus on Marsh Drive, about three miles from downtown Carlisle.

After the blessing, many students and families participated in running a ceremonial first lap despite the chill. St. Patrick’s has long had a successful track program that has produced two PIAA state cross country champions and 10 PIAA state track and field champions over the past several decades. Currently, 17 St. Patrick alumni are competing at the collegiate level.
Washington Cathedral, Site of Kennedy Funeral in 63, is ‘Holy Ground’

By Mark Zimmermann

Catholic News Service

O n Nov. 22, 1963, a television audience of millions of people around the world prayed for President John F. Kennedy as his flag-draped coffin was placed before the sanctuary of the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington, during the funeral Mass for the slain president.

Today, 50 years later, people come to the cathedral from across the country and around the world, with many wanting to stand at that very spot, where an inlaid marble plaque is inscribed with the words, “Here reposes the remains of President Kennedy at the Requiem Mass, Nov. 25, 1963, before their removal to Arlington.

Mass, Nov. 25, 1963, before their removal to Arlington.

It was an emotional day in spare language: “The heart of the entire world shared the grief of the American people in the loss of one of the great leaders of the 20th century.”

The cardinal said, “The words of Christ on the cross of Calvary came repeatedly to my mind: ‘Oh heavenly Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing’.” Everyone then was asked why, why, why?... My thought was that there is the most difficult ‘why,’ and I have no answer for it.”

In a 1966 oral history interview for the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Cardinal Cushing reflected on its place in history as the Catholic cathedral of the nation’s 35th president and he shared the grief of the American people in the loss of the martyred Lincoln. No fanatic rite, everyone bowed in sorrow, tears flowed in abundance.

But he did not lose his composure. It was a very, very simple funeral, following as close as possible the services in the memory of Martin Luther King. No fanatic, everyone bowed in sorrow, tears flowed in abundance.

“On the way out, I was preceding the casket, and I was able to go to Jacqueline and shook hands with her. I kissed little Caroline and shook hands with her. John was getting a little restless, so he was down in the rear of the church. Outside at the end of Mass, John saluted the flag, the most touching thing I ever saw.

Outside of St. Matthew’s, that little boy’s salute to his father’s flag-draped casket, immortalized in a photograph by Stan Stearns of United Press International, remains perhaps the most poignant image from that day.

In his memoir, Archbishop Hannan recalled what happened next: “Released from restraint, the crowds erupted in an earthquake of pent-up emotion: groans, tears, uncontrollable sobbing.”

Growing up in Perryville, young Oscar Huber stayed out of school to manage the farm while his elder brother went away to denial the nation’s 35th president and he shared the grief of the American people in the loss of the martyred Lincoln. No fanatic rite, everyone bowed in sorrow, tears flowed in abundance.

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He watched as the president’s flag-draped casket was brought behind in a solemn procession along Connecticut Avenue in Washington, Auxiliary Bishop Philip Hannan, who had been attending the Second Vatican Council in Rome and rushed back to Washington after learning of the president’s death.

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Memoir Recalls Bishop Setting Aside Grief for Eulogy

By Mark Zimmermann

Catholic News Service

Auxiliary Bishop Philip Hannan of Washington was a close friend and confidant of President John F. Kennedy, but he had kept that friendship secret. Then he was called upon to deliver the eulogy at the funeral Mass for the country's first Catholic president, killed by an assassin in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

The bishop had been a paratrooper chaplain with the 82nd Airborne during World War II, but after the president's death, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Washington, Philip Hannan soon learned that he would face one of the most difficult challenges of his life:

First lady Jacqueline Kennedy had asked him to be the eulogist at the funeral Mass for her husband at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington.

“I was numb and emotionally exhausted as every other American struggling to make sense of the stunningly brutal murder,” wrote then-retired New Orleans Archbishop Hannan in his 2010 memoir, “The Archbishop Wore Combat Boots.”

“My own grieving, however, would have to wait,” he said. “First lady Jacqueline Kennedy had asked that the eulogy be for her husband — and my friend.”

Working late into the night before the Nov. 25, 1963, funeral Mass, the churchman had decided that the eulogy should consist of key passages from the president's inaugural address, to “let the president speak for himself in his own stirring words.”

On the day ending his presidency forever, I would cite passages from the day it had begun.”

The eulogy also included favorite scriptural passages that President Kennedy liked to quote, which the family provided to Bishop Hannan.

As he walked up the steps to the cathedral’s pulpit to deliver the eulogy at the funeral, Bishop Hannan looked out over the congregation that included the Kennedy family, President Lyndon Johnson, and former Presidents Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower. World leaders in attendance included Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, President Charles de Gaulle of France and Prince Philip of Great Britain.

When Bishop Hannan read part of the third chapter of Ecclesiastes: “There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens,” he could hear people sobbing in the congregation.

He concluded the eulogy with Kennedy’s clarion call to serve others from his inaugural address: “And so, my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.

With a good conscience our only sure reward, with love our country and its people, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth, God’s work must truly be our own.”


As President, Kennedy Faced Challenges of Fast-Changing World

By Cathy Harastra

Catholic News Service

A young first family, captivating and chipper, reinvented life in the White House during John F. Kennedy's 34-month presidency in the early 1960s.

The public image was vibrant; with first lady Jacqueline Kennedy's redecoration of the somewhat battered White House and her posy for magazine covers in striking Oleg Cassini designs, the couple's two emerging children, Caroline and John-John, and their pet pony, Macaroni – a gift from Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson. The president's inaugural address was celebrated vividly as the Cold War fostered globally and social upheaval fractured the homefront.

In Kennedy, the nation's 35th president and first Catholic to hold the position, the populace got a war hero, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and -vising editor, a TIME cover of Jacqueline Kennedy and John F. Kennedy Jr. are seen leaving the U.S. Capitol Nov. 24, 1963. The following day a funeral Mass was celebrated for U.S. President John F. Kennedy at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington.

The political power struggle known as the Cold War that also defined the Kennedy presidency lasted for decades and shaped international affairs on many fronts.

The disastrous U.S. attempt to overthrow Cuban leader Fidel Castro in the Bay of Pigs invasion heightened international tensions. Soon after, the Soviet buildup of missiles in Cuba, a scant 90 miles off the coast of Florida, brought the United States and the Soviet Union to the brink of nuclear war in October 1962.

For 13 days, the world watched and waited as the U.S.-Soviet standoff continued. Finally, Kennedy and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev came to an agreement: The U.S. would not invade Cuba if Khrushchev removed the missiles from Cuba. On Oct. 28, 1962, Khrushchev announced he had agreed to remove the missiles.

A race to succeed in space exploration added to competitive zeal between the U.S. and the Soviets. Kennedy also made strides for civil rights during a struggle that dramatically revealed the country's divisions.

In a televised speech in June 1963, during the height of civil rights protests, Kennedy told the nation that racial discrimination was intolerable.

“If an American, because his skin is dark, cannot eat lunch in a restaurant open to the public, if he cannot send his children to the best public school available, if he cannot vote for the public officials who represent him, if, in short, he cannot enjoy the full and free life which all of us want, then who among us would be content to have the political order thus changed and stand in his place? Who among us would then be content with the counsels of patience and delay?”

He concluded Kennedy's assassination Nov. 22, 1963, was pivotal for the nation's collective mindset.

"His death was the beginning of the end of innocence for the post-World War II generation," he said. "For the first time, Americans realized that they weren't going to be able to do, collectively, everything they wanted to do in the world."
THE CATHOLIC WITNESS
NOVEMBER 22, 2013

By Emily M. Albert
The Catholic Witness

The spectators who filled the gymnasium at Central York High School for the PIAA State Volleyball championships Nov. 16 were buzzing about the AA final – a repeat match from last year’s championship game between Delone Catholic’s Squirettes and Fort LeBoeuf’s Bison.

Last year, Fort LeBoeuf, located 25 miles south of Erie between Erie and Edinboro, edged Delone in four sets to take home the gold. This year’s final was also closely contested, but with a different outcome as the Squirettes won their first state volleyball championship in school history at the end of a five match series 25-14, 15-25, 26-24, 18-25, 15-9.

Coach Jason Leppo expressed, “This is an unbelievable feeling. To accomplish first in anything is something these girls will remember for a lifetime.”

“We could play another seven games, and I think it would always come down to a point or two,” Coach Leppo said of the quality of play from both teams. He continued, “They’re great kids, and you really can’t beat this moment. They weren’t just a great team, but a dominant team.”

Delone volleyball matches are loud. Outside of the roaring spectators, the girls call every play on the court. They support each other with a high-five on a kill or ace, and they support each other after a missed volley. They are always a team.

“This has been a phenomenal ride. We aren’t perfect as individuals, but we are as a group, we do it all together,” commented Coach Leppo.
By Chris Heisey
The Catholic Witness

One of the best clues to whether a high school sports team has chemistry and moxie to compete is when it falls behind and faces an uphill climb on the scoreboard. The girls’ soccer team of Trinity High showed plenty of grit and team unity in its PIAA Class AA state final game at Hersheypark Stadium on a perfect, balmy, Saturday, Nov. 16.

The Shamrocks gave up two goals midway through the first half against the Warriors of Central Valley – an undefeated District 7 school located just north of Pittsburgh along the Ohio River. Not only did the Warriors possess great speed at the mid-field, they also had players able to cross the ball long into open space where their speed could create great scoring opportunities. Central Valley finished off two nifty scoring plays that caught Trinity’s defense undermanned inside the goal box.

But after halftime, the Shamrocks played tighter on the backend as they countered the Warriors’ speed with quickness. Midway through the second half, Trinity’s star striker Addy Fitzgerald nailed a dandy shot top shelf off a free kick some 30 yards out to close to 2-1. The goal gave the Shamrocks life, and for the rest of the game, Trinity attacked the goal and controlled the play. And in heartbreaking fashion, that hard work and determination almost netted them a goal with less than a minute to go, when Ashley Mahaffey ripped a shot off the crossbar and the follow by Ali Basom sailed just feet wide of an open net. It was an exciting finish to a great, physically played soccer match.

It was a tough way to lose for a Shamrock team that was a senior-laden club that never quit against a speedy team that could handle the ball. Trinity finished its marvelous season at 22-3.
Bishops Send ‘Special Message’ Reiterating Objectives to HHS Mandate

In a “special message” released Nov. 13, the U.S. bishops reiterated their objections to the Affordable Care Act’s requirement that employer insurance include contraceptive coverage and said they are united in resisting to “restrain this heavy burden and protect our religious freedom.”

The message was released one day after the conclusion of the Nov. 11-12 public portion of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ fall general assembly in Baltimore. The bishops met in executive session Nov. 13.

A media release with the message explained that USCCB regulations regarding statements and publications define a “special message” as a statement, only issued at general meetings, that the general membership considers appropriate in view of the circumstances at the time. It was passed unanimously.

The message opened with a listing of various matters the bishops had dealt with during their assembly, including a response to the Philippines’ typhoon, some liturgical issues and an update on church assistance to Haiti.

“We stand united as pastors charged with proclaiming the Gospel in its entirety,” it said. “That Gospel calls us to feed the poor, heal the sick and educate the young, and in doing so witness to our faith in its fullness.”

The Constitution and the law protect the Church’s freedom to engage in apostolates, the statement said.

“Their actions, however, are intended to undermine our ability to witness to our faith in its fullness,” it said. “This is a serious threat that we cannot ignore.”

The message ended, repeating: “We stand united as pastors charged with proclaiming the Gospel in its entirety.”

“Do we ever get the gist of what it means to serve Christ?” he observed.

Being an officer of the USCCB is a ministry of service and unity, he said — service to the U.S. bishops and the people of God, and unity with those groups, with the pope and with episcopal conferences around the world.

Archbishop Kurtz isn’t likely a familiar name or face to U.S. Catholics outside the dioceses where he’s served, although during his term as USCCB president he has had a busy agenda away from his archdiocese.

As vice president, he served on the USCCB’s Executive and Administrative Committee. He also is the vice chancellor of the Catholic University of America, special ad viser to the Catholic Social Workers National Association, and on the board of trustees of The Catholic University of America and on the board of directors of the National Catholic Bioethics Center.

He also serves on the boards of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia, Leader ship Louisville, and on the advisory board for the sainthood cause for Archbishop Ful von Steen.

Born Aug. 18, 1946, in Mahanoy City, Pa., he was one of four children of the late George and Stella Kurtz. He earned bache lor and master’s degrees in social work from Marywood School of Social Work in Scranton, Pa. He was ordained for the Diocese of Altoona, Pa., March 14, 1972.

His 27 years in the Allentown Diocese included positions as associate director and director of the diocesan social services agencies and coordinator of health affairs, as pastor of two parishes, totaling 12 years; and as an instructor at Mary Immaculate and St. Pius X seminaries.

He also serves on the boards of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference and the Catholic Social Action Council while in Allentown. In Knox ville, he was a member of the Association of Christian Denominational Leaders and Lead ership Knoxville.

Archbishop Kurtz still identifies strongly with his roots. “I grew up in a coal town. Family was very important to me. Neighbors were very important. I think we took an inter est in our neighbors. That means a lot. I don’t care how big the city is, I still say hello to the person I pass on the street.”

That approach has served him well in mak ing inroads in Tennessee and later Ken tucky, he said.

“I think no matter what culture a person comes from, we can [learn about] them from their sense of family, their sense of devo tion, their sense of community,” he said. “The Catholic Church has been, for many years, thematics comments about focusing on love and mercy, seeing the dignity of an individual, and accompanying people in their struggles, I think, ‘those words suit me well.”

Members of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops will hold their annual fall general assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore, the bishops:

- Approved a budget for 2014 and approved a 3 percent increase in diocesan contributions.
- Approved the development of a pastoral statement on the dangers pornography poses to family life that would serve as a teaching tool for church leaders. The Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth will develop the statement, providing a draft to the bishops in 2015.
- Nearly unanimously approved several steps toward adapting the Mexican Misa Romana for use in the U.S. The Mexican translation of the missal will have Mass programs for the U.S. calendar included, with publication possible as soon as fall of 2015.
- Approved adaptations for the Order of Celebrating Marriage and OK’d a new translation of the Order of Confirmation for use in U.S. dioceses.
- Heard a report on the USCCB’s efforts to promote and defend traditional marriage, which stressed that recent laws have placed the legal defense of marriage “at a critical stage” in this country.
- Heard a report on the work of Catholic Relief Services, which highlighted what the agency is doing for survivors of Super Typhoon Haiyan. The agency has already committed $20 million in emergency aid, with the funds expected to come from a translation of the Order of Confirmation for use in U.S. dioceses.
- Adopted a resolution of conscience for employers who object to such coverage on moral grounds.
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Military Archdiocese Remembers Sainthood Candidate Killed in Vietnam

By Mark Pattison

As the sainthood cause for a Vietnam War chaplain gathers momentum, the priest was remembered at a recent memorial Mass as a man “completely dedicated to the spiritual care of his Marines.”

Father Vincent Capodanno, who died in Vietnam Sept. 4, 1967, was one of the “great priest chaplains,” said Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services in his homily at the Mass, celebrated at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

“This annual gathering is to pray for him and to recall his pastoral service as a model for chaplains and priests in general,” Archbishop Broglio said.

“The cause for his canonization is not for him, but for us. Others should know of his dedication and his desire to serve others. His was a response filled with faith to the Master who laid down his life for the sheep.”

Father Capodanno, a Maryknoll priest and Navy chaplain, died in Operation Swift in the Thang Binh district of the Que Son Valley. He went among the wounded and dying, giving last rites. Wounded in the face and hand, he went to help a wounded corpsman only yards from an enemy machine gun and was killed.

“One way or another, directly or indirectly, we have been touched by the life and ministry of the ‘servant of God,’ Vincent Capodanno,” Archbishop Broglio said.

In his homily, he challenged all given pastoral responsibilities. “That is the constant tension in pastoral ministry: Where do I best use my time and talents, what furthers the mission? It is the mission that is central and not merely my career, or promotion, or whatever,” he said.

“ar the Mass, the archbishop said, “Is that not why you, fellow Marines of Father Capodanno, have joined us tonight?”

Knights of Columbus
Father Capodanno Assembly 3167

Father Capodanno Assembly 3167 in Harrisburg was named in honor of Father Vincent Capodanno, who gave his life during Vietnam caring for his wounded marines. Today, the Brother Knights of the Assembly strive to honor his legacy through dedication to the Catholic faith, the Church and America. The Assembly meets each month at a different parish in its geographic area. It is also home to the Father Capodanno Color Guard and Competition Drill teams, which participate regularly at Masses, funerals, parades and state and national ceremonies. Each year, the Assembly raises and donates money for various causes, including increased vocations to the religious life, pro-life efforts, and the hungry and poor in the Harrisburg area. For information on the Assembly, and to learn more about Father Capodanno, visit www.kofc3167.com.

Some of you have journeyed to be here. You cannot forget the shepherd who was there for you.” After the final blessing at Mass, a lone trumpet played Taps.

In the book “The Grunt Padre” – Father Capodanno’s nickname – Marine Cpl. Keith Rounseville said Father Capodanno “was jumping over my [fox] hole, all the while exposing himself to enemy machine gun fire to try and give aid to a wounded Marine. Chaplain Capodanno looked and acted cool and calm, as if there wasn’t an enemy in sight. As he reached the wounded Marine, Chaplain Capodanno lay down beside him and gave him aid and verbal encouragement and telling him medical help was on the way.”

Marine Cpl. Ray Harton also remembered how he lay wounded and bleeding from a gunshot wound to his left arm. “As I closed my eyes, someone one touched me,” he recounted for the book. “When I opened my eyes, he looked directly at me. It was Father Capodanno. Everything got still: no noise, no firing, no screaming. A peace came over me that is unexplainable to this day. In a quiet, calm voice, he cupped the back of my head and said, ‘Stay quiet, Marine. You will be OK. Someone will be here to help you soon. God is with us all this day.’”

In 2002, Father Capodanno’s canonization cause was officially opened. In 2004, the initial documentation for the cause was submitted to the Vatican’s Congregation for Saints’ Causes. In 2006, a public decree of “servant of God” for Father Capodanno, a native of Staten Island, N.Y., was issued by the military archdiocese.

Recently, the archdiocese established the Capodanno Guild to raise funds and support for the sainthood cause. On Oct. 1, there was a formal opening of the cause to meet the canonical requirements.

2013 FEDERAL TAX CREDIT FOR THE BISHOP’S ANNUAL LENTEN APPEAL

All payments on pledges must be received at the Diocese by Monday, December 30, 2013 in order to receive your tax credit for your generosity to our Annual Appeal.

Make Checks Payable to: Diocese of Harrisburg

Mail Payments to:
Diocese of Harrisburg
4800 Union Deposit Road
HARRISBURG, PA 17111-3710

Payments can be made on-line via Visa or Mastercard
www.hbgdiocese.org/blacc

2013 FEDERAL TAX CREDIT STATEMENTS FOR THE BISHOP’S ANNUAL LENTEN APPEAL

Statements will be mailed the Week of January 13, 2014 for gifts of $250.00 and above.

If you are not scheduled to receive a statement and would like to request one contact the Office of Development

(717) 657-4804 ext 336
Or email your request to
development@hbgdiocese.org

2013 Federal Tax Credit
Collection

Food Clothing Shelter

November 24, 2013

“Four years ago the Matthew 25 Collection began as a solution to a growing need in our diocese for material assistance to help our brothers and sisters who are struggling financially, specifically in the areas of food, clothing and shelter. Twenty-five percent of the proceeds from this Collection are returned to each parish and used to meet the needs of specific parishioners. The remaining proceeds are used to fund larger parish, diocesan and/or community organizations of assistance through a diocesan grant program.”

Very Reverend Robert M. Gillilan, Jr.
Diocesan Administrator, sede vacante

“The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty” (Pope Francis).
Living the Theme of World Youth Day

By Molly Lahr

Special to The Witness

This summer, I participated in World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Three and a half million Catholics came together to ignite their faith, hope and unity. The main objective of the day was to proclaim Christ’s message to the people. This year’s theme originated from the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 28, Verse 19: “Go and make disciples of all nations!” We can live up to the motto by showing the “face” of Jesus Christ to the world during and after World Youth Day.

Christians congregated on the streets, sidewalks and Copacabana Beach in anticipation of the arrival of Pope Francis. As the Popemobile moved through the crowds, everyone chanted “Estar la es juntad del Papal!” which means “This is the youth of the pope!” Witnessing every continent and country come together for the Opening Ceremony of World Youth Day reflected the power of Christ. I brimmed with joy in contemplation of the fact that I was one of those 3.5 million Catholics, for World Youth Day was a life-changing and uplifting event.

As the Popemobile stopped in front of my group at the Opening Ceremony, I could see the same emotions in Pope Francis’ face from seeing all of God’s children come together for World Youth Day. That evening, I realized the connection between me and Pope Francis; for he is my spiritual brother, who is fulfilling God’s duty by spreading His word amongst all nations.

Pope Francis’ words at the Opening Ceremony have a special place in my heart, for he stated, “You, God’s Sons and Daughters, were chosen to be a part of World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro. Here we gather to cause the voice of Brothers and Sisters of Christ.” He presented the 3.5 million with a personal message that evening, “Leave World Youth Day with an open mind, open heart and arms.” His words inspire me to draw my peers closer to Jesus Christ by being a role model towards others in the community and the student body at Bishop McDevitt High School.

The positive emotions and atmosphere of World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, reflect the values I would like to uphold in the future. Since leaving Brazil, I have lived up to this year’s motto; for I see the “face” of Jesus Christ through my peers, family and the faculty and student body of Bishop McDevitt High School. I heed Pope Francis’ words from the Opening Ceremony and I would like to keep the love others close to Jesus Christ during my senior year at Bishop McDevitt High School as well as throughout my future.

(Molly Lahr is a senior at Bishop McDevitt High School in Harrisburg and a member of Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Middletown.)

Christmas Bazaars in the Diocese

Saints Parish in Lillitz, Christmas bazaar, Nov. 22 from 4-8 p.m. and Nov. 23 from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Crafts, wreaths, floral arrangements, knit and handmade items, white elephant sale, children’s room with Santa, bake sale, basket raffle, silent auction 25-cent bingo, fish bowl,antiques for sale, St. James Cafè open Friday. Saturday menu includes light breakfast, soups, sandwiches, homemade pierogies, salads for lunch, ham/turkey dinner in the evening. For information, call the parish at 717-626-5580.

St. Cecilia Parish in Lebanon, Christmas bazaar, Nov. 23 from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at the State Drive social hall. With the exception of strudel, sugar cookies, homemade candies, needlework and crafts, gift baskets, jewelry and handbag boutique, chance booth, flea market items, a children’s store with gifts wrapping available, Christmas booth, lunch.

Mary Mother of the Church Parish in Mount Joy, Christmas bazaar, Nov. 23 from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. in the social hall. Craft vendors, Chinese auction, homemade baked goods and candies, Monk Bread, coffee and muffins, soup and sandwiches. For more information, call the parish office at 717-653-4983.

St. Rose of Lima Parish in York, Christmas festival Nov. 23 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at the parish center. The day will begin with Breakfast with Santa, which is free for children ages 12 and younger. Advance registration is required. Breakfast sandwiches and drinks will be available for others wanting to purchase food. Santa will be available at the breakfast and afterwards for photos. Gift Card Bingo games will be held at 10 a.m. and noon. Tickets are $15 for a family of two adults, tickets each, $5 for both games. Tickets are available for sale at the event and in advance by calling the parish office at 717-846-4935. Throughout the day, there will be children’s games and crafts, Advent activities for families, face painting to all who donate a non-perishable food item, and a silent gift auction basket, with bids closing at 1:15 p.m. Food available for lunch, including soups, sandwiches and baked goods. The day will also include musical entertainment.

St. Mary and St. Francis of Assisi parishes in Harrisburg, joint holiday bazaar, Nov. 23 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Holy Family Parish. Flea market, hand-crafted items, homemade foods, baked goods, live music, face painting, raffles. To rent a table for $10, call Ann at 717-564-9234.

St. Aloysius Parish in Littlestown, holiday bazaar, Nov. 30 from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Breakfast, lunch and snacks. Baked goods, fudge, unique crafts and raffles. Vendors include Avon, Bath & Body Works, Tupperware, Simply Cuddle Road, Origami Owl, Stampin’ Up, Azuli Skye, Creative Memories, Jamberry Nails, IT Works, Crocheted and Knitted items, Cookie Lee, Celebrating Homes, B-K Woods, Scentsy, Pampered Chef, Spellbound Dragons, TownM video&Computer, Mary Kay, Stretchy Bracelets, Nitehiles, A&B Religious items, Scissors Palace, Paracord items, JuicePlus, Towergardens, Baby Bibs, Compelling Creations, Wild Tree and Tealightful Products. Photos with Santa from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. For more information, or to purchase a table for $20, contact Karen at 410-346-6855.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Spring Grove, 30th annual Christmas bazaar, Dec. 7 from 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Breakfast and lunch served, also homemade soup and pies. Stop by to shop more than 300 vendors and vendors. For more information, call Lisa Weaver at 717-747-5720.

St. Rita Parish in Blue Ridge Summit, annual Christmas Mart sponsored by the Women’s Society, Dec. 7 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. in the parish hall on Montery Lane. Handcrafted live wreaths and arrangements, crafts, baked goods and raffle items as well as lunch will be available. A religious articles sale will be held in conjunction with the Mart as well as following the week-end Masses (4:30 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 and 11 a.m. on Sunday). Grave blankets for $35 must be preordered. For questions or pre-orders, call Faith Ulzheimer at 301-241-4953.

St. Philip the Apostle Women’s Auxiliary in Millersville, Christmas craft show, Dec. 7 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the parish gym and classrooms. More than 50 crafters, used book sale by the Lancaster Friends of the Library, kitchen open for sandwiches, soups, snacks and baked items.

St. Joseph Parish in Mechanicsburg, Christmas Festival, Dec. 7 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and 6-9 p.m. St. Nicholas, silent auction, raffle, bingo, food and baked goods, entertainment, children’s games, face painting, Christmas crafts, religious items, 18-inch doll clothes, jewelry, accessories, cosmetics, candles, cross-stitch, kitchen and glassware. For more information, contact Valerie Spangler at vdpsm@verizon.net or 717-790-9172.

St. Leo the Great Parish in Rohrers- town, Advent Festival, Dec. 7 and 8. Saturday from noon-4:30 p.m. features a Christmas market, bake sale, alternative gift giving, craft vendors and wine sales. Saturday from 5:30-8 p.m. includes a pasta dinner, wine sales and tasting, musical entertainment featuring Women at the Well, alternative gift giving and craft vendors. Sunday, after 9:15 and 11 a.m. Masses, includes coffee, donuts, alternative gift giving and vendors, pictures with St. Nicholas and children’s crafts. Free admission and activities. Donations accepted and will benefit the Parish fitness program.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Abbottstown, Christmas bazaar, Dec. 14 from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. in the parish social hall. Breakfast and lunch will be available for purchase.
**Spiritual Offerings**

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for Children will take place every Tuesday in Advent from 4-5:30 p.m. at St. Theresa Parish. Children of all ages and abilities are welcome. If you have the gift of music or want to volunteer, or if you want to learn about the rosary, please contact Mary Jane Rose, [717-564-7709](tel:7175647709) or [mrose@call.com](mailto:mrose@call.com).

The program: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will be presented Dec. 12 from 6-30 p.m. at York Catholic High School. Learn about all aspects of financial aid, including state and federal loan, work-study, and scholarship programs. Parents and students who have not yet had the opportunity to complete the 2014-15 financial aid forms will find the information extremely valuable. Register by calling 717-846-8871, ext. 43.

**Shelter**

**Parishes & Organizations**

St. Richard Parish in Manheim is seeking a CRE/DRE. If interested, send a resume to St. Richard Church, 201 Aide Ave., Manheim, PA 17545. Ask: Father Michael. The Lebanon Catholic Girls’ Basketball Team is organizing “Coats for Kids.” All Lebanon Catholic students from grades 5-12 are encouraged to bring in (defeasible) outgrown coats through Dec. 9. These coats will be distributed to our own students who don’t have them. Contact: Mr. Andrea Laney, Lebanon County Head Start and St. Benedict Parish. If any children are in need of coats, please contact Janet Quigley, [717-564-7709](tel:7175647709) or [jcoleicons@call.com](mailto:jcoleicons@call.com).

**Events & Fund-Raisers**

St. Bernadette School will hold its second annual Cookie Exchange and Advent Tea Dec. 7 from 4-7 p.m. in the social hall. Bring a dozen cookies per person, and we’ll donate to the tea treat the tea. RSVP to Pam Kotz at 717-238-6173 or pamela.kotz@gmail.com or contact the parish office at 717-238-5014. This year we will have a free-will offering. Donations for the parish food bank will be accepted at the door.

The University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown is starting the program in your parish, contact Patricia Wang, St. John the Evangelist Church, 307 West Shore Parish Young Adults will gather Dec. 19 at 7:30 p.m. at Centralia St. John the Evangelist Parish. Please bring a book and join us for a CRE/DRE.

Santa’s Run Dec. 14 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. in one-mile walk will be held at noon. The family event will take place on a course through the school campus. Registration is $30 for adults and $15 for students before Dec. 2, $35 and $20 thereafter. Pre-registration under 5 is free. Registration includes a Santa hat and shirt. Prizes will be awarded to the top male and female runners. For information, or to register, visit www.stjoanhershey.org.
The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:

BUCHANAN VALLEY – St. Ignatius Loyola: F. L. Johnson.
CAMP HILL – Good Shepherd: Clara Letman, Karen Thomas.
CARLSLE – St. Patrick: Donald J. Rowland.
CHAMBERSBURG – Corpus Christi: David Hallen, Sarah Horveramate, Muriel Weaver.
COAL TOWNSHIP – Our Lady of Hope: Jack P. Reiprish.
COLUMBIA – Holy Trinity: Mary S. Eulinger.
FAIRFIELD – Immaculate Conception BVM: January “Jv” Creighton.
GETTYSBURG – St. Francis Xavier: James Dooley, James Sanders, Norman Williams.
HANOVER – St. Joseph: Susanne Alwine, Helen West.
HARRISBURG – St. Catherine Labouré: Josephine Pugliese; St. Francis of Assisi: Vincent Chiarella.
HERShey – St. Joan of Arc: Fannie DiDomenico.
KULPMONT – Holy Angels: Mary M. Hess.
Lancaster – St. Anne: Brenda G. McDonald, James L. Murphy, Sr.
MCCHERYSTOWN – Annunciation BVM: Christine Neiderer.
MECHANICSBURG – St. Joseph: Margaret Mary Milford.
MIDDLETOWN – Seven Sorrows BVM: Richard Schmidt.
MILLERSVILLE – St. Philip the Apostle: John E. Story.

Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School Receives $38,800 in Scholarship Assistance

Bridge Educational Foundation recently kicked off its fall statewide scholarship announcements with the award of $38,800 in Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) scholarships aid to Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School. The scholarship assistance was made possible in part from Aegis Security Insurance and Malady & Wooten. Students gathered in Bishop Rhoades Hall at St. Patrick Cathedral for the celebration. Governor Tom Corbett, a strong proponent of Pennsylvania’s educational tax credit programs, joined the event.

Pennsylvania’s EITC program provides companies with a 75 percent tax credit - 90 percent for a two-year commitment – for funds donated to approved, non-profit scholarship or educational improvement organizations. Businesses may donate up to $750,000 per year though the K-12 program.

“The entire Harrisburg Catholic community thanks the Bridge Educational Foundation, as well as the donors: Aegis Security Insurance and Malady & Wooten,” said David Rushinski, principal of Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School. “Due to their generous donations, our scholarship fund, many families are able to provide the educational experience they want for their children.”

Bridge Educational Foundation is a scholarship organization recognized as an approved 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and was established under the Educational Improvement Tax Credit program of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Foundation’s core mission is to partner with families and schools with Pennsylvania businesses to provide scholarship opportunities throughout Pennsylvania.

LANCASTER CATHOLIC STUDENT PERFORMS IN ALL-NATIONAL HONORS BAND IN NASHVILLE

Alex Ringlein, a student at Lancaster Catholic High School, was selected as a member of the 2013 NAfME All-National Honor Band sponsored by the National Association for Music Education. Alex joined more than 670 of the most musically talented and skilled high school student in the United States to perform at a gala concert at the Grand Ole Opry Hotel in Nashville.

These exceptional students students prepared remarkably challenging music that they performed under the baton of four of the most prominent conductors in the United States: Dr. Peter Boobesh, Miriam Burns, Rollo Dilworth and Rodney Whitaker.

Alex represented Lancaster Catholic at the PMEA All-State Festival last year in Altoona, Pa., and was chosen after a demanding audition process to participate in this prestigious honor band. He is the first student from Lancaster Catholic to present to the school at a national music event. Tony Brill, Fine and Performing Arts Director at Lancaster Catholic, has expressed his pride in Alex and commended him for being such a talented musician.

The NAfME All-National Honor Ensembles, consisting of a concert band, symphony orchestra, mixed choirs and jazz ensembles, are organized by the National Association for Music Education. The concert band and symphony orchestra included some 150 instrumentalists, the jazz ensemble featured 20 instrumentalists, and the mixed choirs included approximately 150 vocalists. Eligible students have qualified for their state-level honor ensemble program and competed against top students for a spot in these national ensembles.

MEMORIAL FOR PRE-BORN TO TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO MARCH FOR LIFE

Join pro-life leaders from across the nation for the interdenominational 20th annual National Memorial for the Pre-born and their Mothers and Fathers, to be held on the morning of the March for Life, Jan. 22, at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C.

DAR Constitution Hall is located at 1776 D Street, NW. Doors open at 7 a.m., Mass is celebrated at 7:30 a.m., followed by a service at 8:30 a.m. and conclusion at 10:30 a.m.

The memorial will include hymns, Scripture readings and inspirational sermons in memory of the 55 million babies killed by abortion since 1973.

The event is free, and is sponsored by the National Pro-Life Religious Council, Priests for Life, Gospel of Life Ministries, National Pro-Life Center on Capitol Hill, Faith and Action, and National Pro-Life Radio. Learn more at www.nationalprayervservice.com.

SISTERS FROM EASTERN EUROPE BEGIN YEAR OF MINISTRATION IN DANVILLE

Two Sisters from Eastern Europe have joined the Sisters of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Danville for one year of shared ministry. Sister Jana Maria Polakova, from Turzovka, Slovakia, and Sister Edita Lenka Navratilova, from Brno, Czech Republic, will live and minister with the Sisters in Danville during the 2013-2014 school year. The visit is part of a number of activities sponsored by the Danville Sisters marking the 1150th anniversary of brothers, Sts. Cyril and Methodius coming to Eastern Europe to evangelize.

Sister Jana Maria, trained in religious studies and history, and Sister Edita Lenka, trained in English, religious studies and the Czech language, will serve as teacher aides in the St. Cyril Preschool and Kindergarten in Danville. They will also share Parochial and outreach to the elderly and sick.

While the community names of the Sisters in Danville and the Sisters in Velehrad in the Czech Republic are the same, they are different communities. Their histories are similar, however, with both being founded in the early 1800s, and both are primarily in education, parish work and care for the sick and elderly. Sister Michael Ann Ortik, General Superior of the Sisters of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Danville, in inviting the Sisters from Eastern Europe to this collaboration says, “such a connection will nurture the faith life and mission to service of both of our groups.”

Sister VACLAVA DUDova, General Superior of the Sisters of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Velehrad, Czech Republic, is accepting the offer, applauded the opportunity for increased cooperation between the two congregations of Sisters during the Jubilee 1150th Anniversary of the arrival of Sts. Cyril and Methodius to Moravia.

The Sisters of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Danville currently serve in seven states: Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, South Carolina, Indiana, Illinois, and Texas. During the year, the visiting Sisters will have the opportunity to visit and assist at some of these ministries.
Statue of Our Lady of Fatima Brings Message of Peace to Diocese

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

The International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima visited the Diocese of Harrisburg throughout most of November, delivering the same message that the Blessed Mother gave to three shepherd children when she appeared to them in Portugal in 1917.

The message is one of bringing about peace in the world through prayer, penance and conversion.

The International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima was sculpted in 1947 by Jose Thedim, and is based on the description given by Lucia, who – along with Jacinta and Francisco – saw Our Lady each month from May through October in 1917.

The statue was blessed in 1947 by the Bishop of Leiria at Fatima to travel the world to bring a message of hope and peace.

Its visit to the dioceese this month was made possible by the efforts of the Council of Catholic Women of Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Middletown, which sponsored the statue’s visit.

“"The message of Fatima to bring about peace by means of prayer, penance and conversion is so important in our troubled and violent world."
- Donna Schneiderman-Fox, President of the Council of Catholic Women at Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Middletown, which sponsored the statue’s visit.

Ten months out of the year, the pilgrim statue travels for 21 days at a time, under the protection and care of custodians, most notably Carl Malburg, who has been traveling with the statue for 20 years.

In coordinating the diocesan-wide visit, the ladies of Seven Sorrows’ CCW worked with the many coordinators at each location to organize the visits, arrange offerings such as processions and the praying of the Rosary, and offer meals and lodging for the custodians.

The International Pilgrim Virgin Statue has traveled the world, visiting more than 100 countries to bring the message that is often called Our Lady’s “peace plan from heaven” – her request that people pray the Rosary every day and be devoted to her under the title of Immaculate Heart of Mary.

“The message of Fatima to bring about peace by means of prayer, penance and conversion is so important in our troubled and violent world,” Mrs. Schneiderman-Fox told The Catholic Witness. “This is a simple way to regain peace and defeat the evils of our time – selfishness, pride and greed, among others – which are so prevalent in our modern society that abandons God and prayer.”

She hopes that, through the statue’s visit, the people of the diocese “receive the graces we need through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”

“The desire is that every pilgrim who visits Our Lady will also be touched by her in a very profound way,” she said, noting the significance of the sign that accompanies the statue: Do not touch her, she will touch you.

(For more information on the International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima and the Fatima message, visit www.pilgrimvirginstatue.com.)
Emily M. Albert  
*The Catholic Witness*

As I drove up the entrance of Indian- 
town Gap National Cemetery on a blus- 
tery and crisp fall November day, I saw 
flowing American flags raised high up 
on flag poles. They seemed to dance in 
the air, celebrating, “We are American, 
and we are proud.”

This was not my first time entering un- 
der these magnificent streamers of red, 
white and blue. Just seven years ago, my 
grandmother departed us and was laid to 
rest in the cemetery. Three years later, 
I went back to the cemetery since my 
grandparents were buried. And sitting 
over again.

I can vividly remember both days, one 
a warm May afternoon, sitting with my 
grandfather, my Pappy, was placed beside her. 
the love of her life and Korean War Vet- 
ery. Just seven years ago, my 
grandfather was a staff sergeant 
in the Air Force and was part of a crew 
that would fly into areas where Ameri- 
can soldiers were stationed and drop off 
provisions. I also remember him talking 
about being a cook, and for some reason 
the story of peeling hundreds of pota- 
toes. Now I wonder if that was a punish- 
ment.

My grandparents use to visit often. 
They lived literally through the woods 
from my parents’ house. They would 
stop by on a whim, dropping off cream 
filled doughnuts, or just to say hello. 
They owned a farm and were either lost or de- 
stroyed in one of their many moves.

I remember my grandparents telling 
me the story of their engagement. My 
Pappy proposed before he was to be de- 
ployed to Japan; he told him to ask her 
when he came back! I’m sure at the time 
this was heartbreaking for my Pappy to 
hear, but whenever they told the story, they laughed. He 
emailed the picture to her.

While stationed in Japan, my Pappy posed with the photo- 
graph of my grandmother that he kept at his bedside, and 
posed with a handmade pearl ring from 
Japan. My grandmother looked beautiful 
in pearls and Pappy often gifted her with 
them.

My grandfather was a staff sergeant 
in Japan. My grandmother looked beautiful 
posing in pearls and Pappy often gifted her with 
them.

This Veterans Day was the first that 
my grandparents were buried. And sitting 
here, listening to the great stories of 
soldiers present and past during the Vet- 
erans Day celebration, I realized how 
much I missed my grandparents’ stories. 
But I felt honored to be there and proud 
to represent a Korean War Veteran. My 
grandfather was proud of his service, 
and when we were out he would often 
salute a soldier in uniform. He wore his 
Korean War Veteran hat almost always, 
even when it snowed or if the Mets 
were playing. He was a member of the 
VFW and always looked forward to a 
good conversation with another veteran. 
The Veterans Day service at Fort In- 
diantown Gap on Sunday, Nov. 10 was 
beautiful, and I felt proud to be there to 
photograph the day’s events. Six young 
ladies from St. Theresa School in New 
Cumberland sang a special tribute song, 
“Thank You Soldiers,” and followed it 
by singing “Happy Birthday” to the U.S. 
Marine Corps, which celebrates its 238th 
anniversary this year.

Even sitting on a cold cement step 
with the wind blowing straight through 
my many layers of clothing, I felt warm 
inside. I was so proud to be there, to cel- rate the many men and women who 
continue to serve our country proudly 
and to sit next to the veterans who wear 
their hats, pins and colors with such hon- 
or. I was happy to remember my Pappy.