A kindergarten student kneels in front of a model altar in one of two rooms called atriums at St. John the Baptist School in New Freedom. Reverently, she prepares the altar, arranging the linen, the candles, the crucifix, and the chalice and paten. When the Eucharistic table is readied, she nods to a catechist nearby, who kneels next to the child and lights the candles as they sing “Lord Jesus, Come,” a song that links the image of the Good Shepherd with the bread and wine. The model altar is one of numerous detailed and scaled-down versions of items in the atriums at St. John’s, where students as young as three years old are coming to know and love Jesus through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. A hands-on Montessori-based approach to Catholic religious education, the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd fosters children’s growth in their relationship to God via Scripture and liturgy. Designed for children ages 3-12, it was developed in Rome in 1954 by Catholic educators Dr. Sofia Cavaletti and Gianna Gobbi, who discovered the profound religious intuition of younger children and their ability to receive and enjoy the most essential elements of the faith. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd occurs within an atrium, a specially-designed room or portion of a classroom with attractive, colorful and mostly-handmade materials that children utilize as they reflect on lessons that catechists present in each session. “Ultimately, it is designed for young students to let them fall in love with Jesus,” said Patty Howell, formation catechist for the parish and school. She is also a Level I Formation Leader in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. St. John the Baptist has been utilizing the program in its religious education classes for a decade, and in its Catholic school for the past few years. There are two atriums there; the facility was designed with a dedicated space for one of them, noted Susan Mareck, school principal. “As time went on, we realized that one atrium wasn’t enough, so we dedicated an additional room. The atriums are such blessings to all of our kids and their families,” she said. The atriums are filled with miniature versions of ambos, Paschal candles and vestments, and engaging pieces children can use to fashion a liturgical calendar, the Creation Story, the City of Jerusalem and the Last Supper. Yet the atriums are sacred spaces, and the children treat them as such. In the atriums, the children aren’t playing with toys; they are engaging in meaningful work as they converse with God. The sessions begin with a lesson offered by the catechist – such as a Parable or a teaching about a part of the liturgy. After the lesson, children are asked, “What work does God want you to do in the atrium today?” said Barbara Fletcher. This question reminds them that they’re not playing with toys, but rather speaking to Jesus, she said. In the atrium, children also learn reverence, responsibility and fine motor skills, noted Susan White. “We spend a lot of time developing routines so that they learn how to unroll and fold fabrics, pour water, handle glassware and put items in their proper places,” she noted. “The children take wonderful care of the atrium.” Each session in the atrium concludes with prayer that brings together the entire class. “The program teaches the children in the
Candidates
Continued from 1

tors. The bishop then, in his homily, offered an instruc-
tion about the rite before each candidate knelt before
him and was presented with the Holy Scripture.
“Take this book of Holy Scripture, and be faithful
in handing on the Word of God, so that it may grow
strong in the hearts of his people,” Bishop Gainer in-
structed the men as they accepted the book.
During the homily, as he sat before the men, seated
together in the first several rows of pews, the bishop
noted that the rite is “a major step in the installation
into the Ministry of the Word, a preparation for the
fullness of the Ministry of the Word that will be yours
when, as deacons, you proclaim the Gos-
pel and your voice becomes the voice of
Jesus to his gathered people.”
He reminded the candidates and those
in the congregation that when we read
Scripture, we’re not reading a history
lesson or being reminded of what has
already taken place. “When the Word of
God is proclaimed, whether we read it
individually or in small groups, when we
reflect and pray on that Word, it is always
‘today.’ It is a living Word, where God
speaks to us in the present moment,” he
said.
“As you take on this new and for-
mal relationship to the proclamation of
the Word,” he told the candidates, “it is
foremost to remember that as your voice
gives sound to the revealed Word of God,
it is done in this present moment, and in
that proclaimed Word we encounter God
present with us.”
“Scripture is no longer a subject to be
simply studied, or something to be mas-
tered as another lesson,” Bishop Gainer
remarked. “Rather, the Living Word of
God, in all of our lives, ought to be that
which masters us and transforms us.”
The Diocese of Harrisburg announced
a new class for the permanent diacon-
ate in February of 2015, from which a
period of application and selection fol-
lowed. The first year of the program was
one of aspirancy, during which the men
focused on discernment of their call to
ordained ministry. They were formally
accepted as candidates through the Rite
of Admission to Candidacy for Holy Orders last Sep-
tember, and are continuing studies including pastoral,
spiritual and human formation in preparation for or-
dination in 2020.
There have been three previous classes of deacons
ordained for service in the Diocese of Harrisburg;
they were in 1978, 1983 and 2010.

Several of the candidates are seen during the Liturgy of the
Eucharist.

The Candidates

Steven L. Auchey
Thomas W. Ballinger
David A. Barto
Shawn A. Biter
Alex A. Bogdanoff
Virgilio A. Centenera
Joseph Cingle
Chris J. Darrup
William G. Davies, Jr.
Michael R. Deros
Brian G. Fabian
Carl B. Freidhoff
Denis R. Gangloff
David M. Grady
Joseph M. Gusherowski
Thomas A. Hewitt
James V. Koch
Walter J. Kozlowski
Frank A. Kuchinski
James P. Lawson
William Paul Leavens
Christopher D. Livelsberger
Patrick A. McCormack
Michael D. McGovern
Randy T. Mentzell
Jorge L. Nazario
Samuel D. Nicola
Thomas T. Owinski
Carlos Pichardo
Stephen P. Pichler
Henry J. Reese
Chad M. Reigel
Jorge L. Reyes
William D. Roesch
Scott A. Root
George B. Salzmann
Richard D. San Severino
Richard F. Satriale
Daniel R. Signore, III
Francis J. Skorija
Armando Torres, Jr.
Anthony J. Weaver, Jr.
Terry A. Willoughby, Jr.
Robert P. Wislock

Bishop Ronald Gainer presents candidate Jorge Reyes with
the Holy Scriptures during the Rite of Institution of Lectors.

The candidates in the diocese’s permanent diaconate formation pose for a group photo with Bishop Ronald Gainer following the Solemn Mass with the Rite of Institution of Lectors Nov. 18.
You Can Assist Aging Sisters, Brothers and Priests in Religious Orders

Collection for Retirement Fund for Religious is Dec. 9-10

Catholics in the Diocese of Harrisburg will have the opportunity to “give to those who have given a lifetime” as part of the collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious, to be held in parishes Dec. 9-10. Coordinated by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) in Washington, D.C., the annual appeal benefits 32,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests whose religious congregations lack adequate retirement funding.

Last year, the people of the Diocese of Harrisburg contributed $55,335.75 to the appeal. Women and men religious who serve or have served in the diocese but whose communities are based elsewhere may benefit from the annual collection. Additionally, the Diocese of Harrisburg, in conjunction with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Allentown, also distributes funding to local religious communities to support retirement needs.

The 2016 collection raised almost $30.7 million. Roughly 94 cents of every dollar aids senior religious. In June, the NRRO distributed $25 million to 390 religious communities across the country. Communities utilize these funds to bolster retirement savings and subsidize expenses, such as prescription medications and nursing care. Throughout the year, additional funding is allocated to assist religious communities with the greatest needs and to promote ongoing education in retirement planning and eldercare delivery.

“We are humbled and profoundly grateful for the love and support of Catholics across the nation,” said Presentation Sister Stephanie Still, the NRRO’s executive director.

Despite this generosity, many religious communities still struggle to provide for aging members. Only 41 of the 539 communities submitting data to the NRRO in 2016 were adequately funded for retirement. Traditionally, Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests—known collectively as religious—served for small stipends that did not include retirement benefits. Today, hundreds of religious communities lack sufficient retirement savings. Compounding the funding shortfall are the rising cost of care and the decrease in income that has resulted from the declining number of religious able to serve in compensated ministry.

In addition to providing assistance for day-to-day needs, collection proceeds support initiatives to help religious communities address the factors underlying their retirement shortfalls. These efforts have facilitated solutions such as collaborative care facilities, strategic partnerships with health-care providers and numerous cost-saving measures.

“I visit many religious communities and see the good works that members young and old provide,” said Sister Stephanie. “Generosity to the annual collection ensures our office can furnish support to help these communities care for older members while continuing their ministries and witness.”

Visit www.retiredreligious.org to learn more.

Father Robert McDade Laid to Rest

Father Robert McDade, M.S.S.C.C., of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Linwood, N.J., who formerly served in the Diocese of Harrisburg, died Nov. 4 at Atlantic Care Medical Center. He was 73.

Father McDade was born in Pawtucket, R.I., son of the late Robert and Julia (Hefferman) McDade. He received a B.A. from St. Mary’s College, Winona, Minn., in 1969 and received an M.R.E in 1975 and M.Div. in 1984-1991.

He returned to Linwood in 1997 and served as Dean of Men, Holy Apostles Seminary, Cromwell, Conn., from 1983 to 1984. He was named Pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Linwood, from 1984-1991. In 1995, he was appointed Associate Pastor of Immaculate Conception BVM Parish in Fair- field, Pa., which is staffed by the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts. He returned to Linwood in 1997 and became Chaplain at Our Lady’s Residence in Pleas- antville, and began working with Covenant House in Atlantic City, where he held the position of Pastoral Minister from 1999 until 2004. Due to health prob- lems, he retired in 2008. For many years, Father Mc- Dade was a Chaplain to Serra Club and Knights of Columbus in the Linwood area as well as the Knights of Columbus in Waynesboro.

Father McDade is pre-deceased by parents and a brother. He is survived by two sisters and a brother. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Nov. 9 at Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Linwood, N.J. Burial was in Holy Cross Cemetery, Mays Landing. Condolences may be extended to the family at www.ghwimberg.com.

BISHOP GAINER’S
PUBLIC CALENDAR

November 28 – Mass and Stewardship of Mission Visit, York Catholic High School, 10 a.m.

November 29 – Stewardship of Mission Visit with Advent Prayer Service and Wreath Blessing, Delone Catholic High School, McSherrystown, 9:30 a.m.

December 3 – Mass and Pastoral Visit, St. Peter Church, Columbia, 10:30 a.m.

December 4 – Attend Knights of Columbus Father Capodanno Assembly Meeting, Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg, 7:30 p.m.

December 5 – Stewardship of Mission Assembly, Bishop McDevitt High School, Harrisburg, 8:30 a.m.

December 9 – Solemn Profession of Vows, Carmel of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Elysburg, 10 a.m.

Diocese of Harrisburg Youth Protection Program

To report suspected abuse of a minor, call the toll free PA Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-932-0313

To report suspected abuse of a minor by a church official, employee or volunteer, also please call the Diocese of Harrisburg Youth Protection Hotline: 1-800-626-1608 or email: ReportAbuse@hbgdiocese.org

For reportar la sospecha del abuso de un menor, llame al número de teléfono gratuito Línea de Ayuda Abuso del Niño Pennsylvania 1-800-932-0313

Para reportar la sospecha del abuso de un menor a manos de un oficial, empleado o voluntario de la iglesia, también llame al número de teléfono gratuito de ayuda diocesana: 1-800-626-1608 o envíe correo electrónico: ReportAbuse@hbgdiocese.org
Keeping God before Us

By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC
Special to The Witness

Some time ago, as I was channel surfing, I came across a National Geographic program about monkeys and great apes. I was intrigued to learn how stubborn a monkey’s nature actually is!

In order to test higher cognitive skills of primates, scientists put together several problem-solving “tests.”

One of the scenarios was this: A large piece of fruit, the favorite of one of the monkeys, was placed in a large clear jar with a lid enclosing it. The lid had a hole just big enough for the primate to pass its hand into the jar and grab hold of the precious fruit. In the test, the monkey could not hold on to the fruit and pass it through the hole. He would scream, jump up and down, but would not let go of the fruit. After it had to do was let go of the fruit, flip over the jar and the fruit would fall out. But because of its inability to let go of something it wants, a primate is a prisoner of its desire.

I was reminded of this story as I read a passage in a book called Strange gods: unmasking the idols in everyday life. The author, Elizabeth Scalia, states, “To place anything – be it another deity or something more we want – above the Word of God is the sign of a rebellious heart. We must assimilate it in faith and prayer, and put it into practice. We must also examine our conscience before the sacrament of Reconciliation, we humbly acknowledge our short comings and receive forgiveness as well as the grace to be better! Is that cool, or what?”

So ends the Ten Steps about Putting God first. As I stare at the blinking cursor of my computer, I can hear the words of my dear husband, “We’ve got tomorrow.” Yes, we have tomorrow, and for the rest of the year, and for the rest of our lives, God feeds us with spiritual food, and our hearts beat one with the Trinity. When we go to prayer, service to others, cherishing family and friends, we are reaching out to him as he so gratuitously gives us.

I’m sure that each of us could come up with our own little thanksgiving lists that would probably have some similarities and differences. With this in mind, and with the Thanksgiving season here, what follows is a little personal litany of thanksgiving.

1. For the deposit of faith…thank you, Lord!
2. For our priests, deacons, and consecrated religious…thank you, Lord!
3. For our dear faithful departed…thank you, Lord!
4. For my dear wife and our precious children…thank you, Lord!
5. For my brother and sisters and their families, so dear to me…thank you, Lord!
6. For all people of good will…thank you, Lord!
7. For gifts and talents you have given, which are all from your hand…thank you, Lord!
8. For those who serve valiantly in our military and all who protect us…thank you, Lord!
9. For those who serve the common good in any way…thank you, Lord!
10. For our neighbors and all who have done us acts of kindness…thank you, Lord!
11. For my co-workers…thank you, Lord!
12. For friends, need I say more?…thank you, Lord!
13. For difficult people, for providing us opportunities to grow in holiness…thank you, Lord!
14. For my mom and dad, whom I can never repay…thank you, Lord!
15. For my brother and sisters and their families, so dear to me…thank you, thank you, Lord!
16. For my dear wife and our precious children…thank you, Lord!
17. For our dear faithful departed…thank you, Lord!
18. For our holy father and the gift of the papacy…thank you, Lord!
19. For our bishop and the gift of the episcopacy…thank you, Lord!
20. For our priests, deacons, and consecrated religious…thank you, Lord!
21. For the deposit of faith…thank you, Lord!
22. For the Eucharist, which means “thanksgiving,” and all the sacraments…thank you, Lord!
23. For the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass…thank you, Lord!
24. For the gift of prayer…thank you, Lord!
25. For the diversity of saints, who intercede and act as models for us…thank you, Lord!
26. For the angels, who watch over us, serve you and sing your praises…thank you, Lord!
27. For our Blessed Mother, our Mother in Heaven and Queen of All Saints…thank you, Lord!
28. For your Incarnation…thank you, Lord!
29. For your Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension…thank you, Lord!
30. For the sending of the Holy Spirit…thank you, Lord!
31. For the holy, Catholic Church…thank you, Lord!
32. For the communion of saints…thank you, Lord!
33. For the forgiveness of sins…thank you, Lord!
34. For the resurrection of the body and life everlasting…thank you, Lord!
35. And especially, to our one, true God…thank you for Yourself!!

“Now thank we all our God, with heart, and hands, and voices!” (Jim Gontis is the Director of the Diocesan Office for Evangelization and Catechesis, and the Director of Sports Ministry for the Diocese of Harrisburg.)

Giving Thanks

By Jim Gontis
Special to The Witness

Have you ever found that most of your prayers involve asking God for things, blessings, etc., for yourself and your loved ones? If so, I can relate. I find that a lot of my time in prayer is petitioning God. I don’t think that is such a bad thing. At least it means that we are reaching out to him, and that we realize our utter dependence upon him for every good thing. Realizing this dependence on God is a big part of what it means to fulfill the first of the Beatitudes, namely, being “poor in spirit.” But we are called to more. God creates us to be in communion with him and others. He wants us to draw close to him, to burn with cords of love. Do we spend a portion of our prayer each day in praise and adoration of him, the only true God? Do we pray in contrition to him, as an act of sorrow for having offended him by our sins? This is why a daily Act of Contrition is so important. Finally, we thank our human friends for the goodness and kindness that they extend to us. It is good to regularly pray in thanksgiving to God for all the many blessings that he so gratuitously gives us.
Speaker Urges Catechists to Welcome Intoxication and Heartburn from the Holy Spirit

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Hold up imagery of tongues of flame descending upon the apostles at the first Pentecost, the keynote speaker at this year’s Diocesan Catechetical Conference introduced the goal of his presentation: “My job is to give you heartburn.” Joe Paprocki, DMin., a faith formation consultant, author and blogger addressed the several hundred catechists gathered at the Cardinal Keeler Center in Harrisburg on Nov. 11 for the annual event.

While Dr. Paprocki comes from a family of pharmacists – his grandfather developed Paprocki’s Antacid Powder and founded a pharmacy in 1919 – he wasn’t referring to acid reflux and indigestion, but rather the joy and zeal of the apostles as they set out to proclaim the Good News.

Dr. Paprocki is a national consultant for faith formation at Loyola Press, an author and frequent speaker, and a blogger at www.catechistsjourney.com. He is the brother of Bishop Thomas Paprocki of the Diocese of Springfield. His keynote address focused on “Cultivating the Right Kind of Heartburn” to set hearts on fire for Jesus Christ.

“Go back to the apostles gathered in the Upper Room on the first Pentecost. They were so fired up that even though their lives were in danger, they left the Upper Room and went into the center of Jerusalem to proclaim Jesus Christ, and 3,000 people were added to their number,” he pointed out.

“What was it that made those 3,000 people say, ‘I want what you’re having?’ It had to do with the fact that the apostles were on fire,” Dr. Paprocki remarked. “They should have been afraid. Their leader had been executed…. They should have been sad, yet they were joyful.”

While doubters accused the apostles of being drunk, Peter would explain it is the joy that the apostles had about the miracles he is doing in our world.

In his address, he presented nine points:

• Point out that the current reality is a change.
• Proclaim Jesus’ mighty deeds. Talk about the miracles he is doing in our life, so that others will want the same.
• Boost of the Cross as the means to eternal life. Celebrate selfless love and the laying down of our lives for others by setting aside our own needs.
• Share the Good News of the Resurrection. Tell others that Jesus is alive and present to us today.
• Invite others to follow Christ more closely as a disciple. Identify their gifts, and encourage them to serve – perhaps as a lector, a cantor, or in the work of social justice.
• Encourage repentance and forgiveness. Be clear that following Jesus requires a change.
• Encourage commitment to Christ. Teach others that following Christ requires a full commitment, not just cheering from the sidelines.
• Call others to discipleship and evangelization. Send others forth to share the Good News, perhaps by asking students to lead parts of a class.
• “When we invite people to follow Christ, we should lead with joy,” Dr. Paprocki remarked. “The apostles did this when they went into the streets and proclaimed the Gospel with kerygma. This is what needs to be at the heart of all of our catechesis,” he said.
• “You and I are not teachers of a subject. We are facilitators of an encounter. We are inviting people to encounter Jesus,” Dr. Paprocki told the catechists. “It’s the difference between ‘I want to tell you about Jesus’ and ‘I’d like to introduce you to someone I know.’”
• “Be under the influence of Jesus. Be more kerygmatic,” he challenged. “Be people who lead with joy when they encounter other people. Go out and give the world heartburn!”

The Catechetical Conference opened with Mass celebrated by Bishop Ronald Gainer, who thanked the catechists for being his collaborators in ministry.

“No one of us is sufficient for the life of the Church. All of us together in the Body of Christ, God has gathered and given each particular gifts,” he said in his homily.

“The heart of catechesis isn’t information. The heart of catechesis is a person: Jesus Christ,” Bishop Gainer said. “Our work is to be in communion with Christ in the fullest possible sense, and then to impart that union – through knowledge, through example – to those we serve in catechesis.”

The event also featured numerous vendors from various diocesan ministries, as well as educational and religious items. Three afternoon sessions offered workshops on a variety of topics, including apologetics, conveying the faith to adolescents, the role of Godparents and sponsors, and catechesis for persons with disabilities.

Outstanding Service. The diocese plans to present this award on an annual basis.

Parish in Mechanicsburg, as recipients of the inaugural Catechetical Award for outstanding Service. The diocese plans to present this award on an annual basis.

Calling on upon catechists to lead with joy when they invite others to follow Christ, keynote speaker Joe Paprocki, DMin., points to a quote by Pope Francis: “Christians must not be sourpusses.”

Dolores Evans of St. Margaret Mary Parish in Harrisburg listens to the keynote presentation offered at the Diocesan Catechetical Conference on Nov. 11 at the Cardinal Keeler Center.

JEN REED, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS
Lourdes Regional Celebrates $1 Million EITC Milestone, 51% Enrollment Increase

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

The numbers tell the story.

Five years ago, Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School in Coal Township was in a dire position. There were 350 students enrolled in the PreK-12 school, and area parishes were funding 40 percent of its operating budget. The school was losing students after their eighth and ninth grade year, as tuition costs increased. EITC funding to support tuition assistance for families was at $14,000.

There were rumors that the school would close.

Lourdes needed a lifeline.

Working with school administrators, businessman and 1975 graduate Tony Varano developed a business plan, which included a push for more companies to get involved in the EITC program. An acronym for Pennsylvania’s Educational Improvement Tax Credit program, it offers tax credits to eligible businesses contributing to a scholarship organization, thus assisting families with financial assistance and retaining – and attracting – students in the school that best meets their needs.

As CEO of DSG, Inc., in Malvern, Pa., Mr. Varano led the charge in participating in the EITC program and calling forth other businesses to do the same. To date, his business has contributed $1,061,000.

To celebrate this milestone, Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School held an EITC celebration on Nov. 8, welcoming Bishop Ronald Gainer, as teacher, administrator and principal at Our Lady of Lourdes Regional High School. On the occasion of his retirement this month, Lourdes has established the Deacon Martin P. McCarthy Building Fund. Sister Maureen, who is the elementary principal there, will serve as interim administrator during the transition.

“Several years ago, the Chairperson of the Accreditation for Middle States called Our Lady of Lourdes a beacon on the hill, and truly it is,” remarked Deacon Martin McCarthy, principal, who is retiring this month after 25 years in Catholic education.

He commended the community, faculty and staff, school board, parents, grandparents, alumni and leaders who have supported the school.

The EITC program helps hundreds of families every year here at Lourdes,” Deacon McCarthy said. “In 2011, where five years ago, students were leaving Lourdes before their high school years because of cost, “kids are now coming from all over the area because they want to be here,” he said, noting a current enrollment of 530.

Speaking about “a program that I truly believe in,” Rep. Masser called the EITC program a joy for the region.

“I see what EITC means for parents who are able to send their children to a school that they truly believe in,” he remarked. “There are large classes here at Lourdes Regional, and it’s great to see… We want to see Lourdes Regional continue to thrive and grow.

“Mr. Varano expressed gratitude “for what the Pennsylvania legislators have done to make this program available to business communities.”

“It’s a great program, but a lot of people aren’t aware of it, and so we have to spread the word,” he said. “I am grateful to the PA legislators that, as a business leader, I can give to this school and take advantage of this great state program.”

Speaking at the conclusion of the event, Bishop Gainer pointed out, “So many of our Catholic school students in this diocese would not be in our schools if it were not for the advantages that their families have to get assistance through the EITC program.”

“We are so fortunate that this legislation program is available in Pennsylvania, and it is an advantage to the business community and for our students.”

(Learn more about Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School by visiting www.lourdes.k12.pa.us. To find out more information about business participation in the EITC program through the diocese’s Neumann Scholarship Foundation, visit the “Giving and Development” link at www.hbgdiocese.org or call the Diocesan Office of Development at 717-657-4848, ext. 245.)

Students fill the gymnasium Nov. 8 to celebrate the $1 million milestone in EITC funding from businessman and 1975 graduate Tony Varano. In the past five years, Lourdes has increased its scholarship assistance through EITC from $14,000 to $315,000, and its enrollment from 350 students to 530.

As a loving festive tribute, the Diocesan Office of Catholic Cemeteries is hosting a memorial program that will place a wreath or flowers at your loved one’s final resting place for the Christmas season. To arrange for your remembrance, please visit your local Diocesan cemetery office or online at www.hbgdiocese.org/cemeteries.

All memorial tributes will be reverently placed on or about the second week in December. Please ensure that your order is received by December 4, 2017. All memorial tributes that remain in good condition will be displayed until February 28, 2018.

On behalf of the Diocesan Office of Catholic Cemeteries, we wish you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.
Update: U.S. Bishops Take on Immigration, Racism at Fall Assembly

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

At the start of their annual fall assembly in Balti-
more Nov. 13, U.S. Catholic bishops faced some big
issues – immigration and racism – straight on and
zeroed in on how to raise the national level of discussion
on these topics starting in the church pews.

They acknowledged the current polarization in the
country and divides within the Catholic Church and
stressed their responsibility as Church leaders to pro-
mote immigration reform, educate parishioners on
justice issues and listen to those affected by “sins of
racism.”

On immigration, Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin,
Texas, who is chair of the Committee on Migra-
tion by voice vote to issue a statement calling for
comprehensive immigration reform.

The bishops were keenly aware that their defense of
immigrants was not necessarily the view of the U.S.
Church at large. For example, Chicago Cardinal Blase J.
Cupich spoke of dangers of Catholics falling prey to
and believing “poisoning rhetoric” about immigrants
that demonizes them.

“There’s something wrong in our churches, where
the Gospel is proclaimed, and yet people leave our
worship services, our Masses on weekends, with that
rhetoric still echoing in their hearts,” he said.

Several bishops also brought up the notion of pru-
dential judgment – referring to the view Catholics
could take on immigration that differs from the bish-
ops – since it is not a specific matter of Church teach-
ing parishes plenty of resources through a pastoral
plan based on the text would get more people to
read the entire document and “read it slowly.”

A new pastoral plan for marriage and families
would not be “the pastoral plan,” as in the be all
discussion happening at diocesan and parish levels, and several bishops commented
about them as well noting that these discussions are
not easy, but so necessary to bring about healing.

Other key issues of the day where Church leaders
are responding include health care, taxes and abor-
tion, mentioned by Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of
Galveston-Houston in his first address as USCCB
president. He took office at the close of last year’s fall
assembly.

“We are facing a time that seems more divided
than ever,” Cardinal DiNardo said. “Divisions over
health care, conscience protections, immigration and
refugees, abortion, physician-assisted suicide, gender
ideologies, the meaning of marriage and all the other
headlines continue to be hotly debated. But our role
continues to be witness to the Gospel.”

He explained that the National Catholic War Coun-
cil, created by the U.S. bishops in 1917 in response
to the world refugee crisis that emerged from World
War I and the forerunner to the USCCB, was formed
to address great national and international needs at a
time not unlike today.

The cardinal emphasized other modern challenges
such as recent natural disasters and mass shootings.

But the problems of the day should not overwhelm
Church leaders who should recognize signs of new
hope in the Church, mentioned by the papal nuncio,
Archbishop Christophe Pierre, who addressed the
bishops at the start of the meeting and encouraged them to make time for prayer amid “burdens of the
office.”

He told them to be adventurous in the “new frontier
of faith” and to make a strong effort to accompany young people who often question their faith.

The bishops also heard from the Vatican secretary
of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, at a Nov. 12 Mass
where he was the main celebrant and the homilist, and
at a dinner celebrating the USCCB’s 100th anniver-
sary.

The cardinal told the U.S. bishops that the Church
needs them today to “bring not only material assis-
tance but also the spiritual balm of healing, comfort
and hope to new waves of migrants and refugees who
come knocking on America’s door.”

He also urged them to follow the pope’s call to ac-
company the modern Church.

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

U.S. Catholic bishops acknowledged that Catho-
lies and married couples need more support
from the Church at large and hope to offer it by giv-
ing parishes plenty of resources through a pastoral
plan for marriage and family life.

A proposal for such a plan was introduced to the
bishops on the second day of their annual fall as-
sembly in Baltimore Nov. 14 and was approved by
paper with 232 votes in favor

The pastoral plan was described by Bishop Rich-
ad J. Malone of Buffalo, New York, a member of the
bishops’ Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family
Life and Youth, as a response to Pope Francis’ 2016
apostolic exhortation “Amoris Laetitia” (The Joy of
Love).

Bishop Malone, who introduced the idea to the
bishops, was filling in for Philadelphia Archbishop
Charles J. Chaput, the committee’s chairman, who
was in Rome for preparatory meeting for the Synod
of Bishops in 2018.

The bishop said he hoped the pastoral plan would
encourage long-term implementation of the pope’s
exhortation and also encourage a broader reading of
it. Several bishops who spoke from the floor echoed
this sentiment, emphasizing that the document was
more than just one chapter – referring to Chapter
8’s focus on the possibility of divorced and remar-
rried Catholics receiving communion which gained
a lot of media attention.

Auxiliary Bishop Robert E. Barron of Los Ange-
les, founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries,
said a pastoral plan focused on the exhortation lets
the Catholic Church “seize control” of its message
after the “blogosphere was forcing us to read it in
another way.”

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ken-
tucky, similarly noted that the exhortation’s Chap-
ter 8 “got all the headlines” and he hoped a new
plan based on the text would get more people to
Bishops to Put Together Pastoral Plan
for Marriage, Family Life Ministry

Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Fran-
cisco, the committee’s chairman, who

Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Fran-
sisco, who is chairman of the Committee on Migra-

Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami said the
bishops’ defense of immigrants, as brothers and sis-
ters who are law-abiding, tax-paying and contribut-
ing to our society.”

Other key issues of the day where Church leaders
are responding include health care, taxes and abor-
tion, mentioned by Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of
Galveston-Houston in his first address as USCCB
president. He took office at the close of last year’s fall
assembly.

“We are facing a time that seems more divided
than ever,” Cardinal DiNardo said. “Divisions over
health care, conscience protections, immigration and
refugees, abortion, physician-assisted suicide, gender
ideologies, the meaning of marriage and all the other
headlines continue to be hotly debated. But our role
continues to be witness to the Gospel.”

He explained that the National Catholic War Coun-
cil, created by the U.S. bishops in 1917 in response
to the world refugee crisis that emerged from World
War I and the forerunner to the USCCB, was formed
to address great national and international needs at a
time not unlike today.

The cardinal emphasized other modern challenges
such as recent natural disasters and mass shootings.

But the problems of the day should not overwhelm
Church leaders who should recognize signs of new
hope in the Church, mentioned by the papal nuncio,
Archbishop Christophe Pierre, who addressed the
bishops at the start of the meeting and encouraged them to make time for prayer amid “burdens of the
office.”

He told them to be adventurous in the “new frontier
of faith” and to make a strong effort to accompany young people who often question their faith.

The bishops also heard from the Vatican secretary
of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, at a Nov. 12 Mass
where he was the main celebrant and the homilist, and
at a dinner celebrating the USCCB’s 100th anniver-
sary.

The cardinal told the U.S. bishops that the Church
needs them today to “bring not only material assis-
tance but also the spiritual balm of healing, comfort
and hope to new waves of migrants and refugees who
come knocking on America’s door.”

He also urged them to follow the pope’s call to ac-
company the modern Church.

Bishops to Put Together Pastoral Plan
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Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Anchorage,
Alaska, said the Church should look for ways to
lift up marriage and thank couples for all they do.

Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Fran-
cisco said the Church should offer more than just
marriage preparation programs and should provide
something for couples after they are married.

They should know about marriage before they
come to Church to set up their wedding, he said,
emphasizing that catechism needs to start much
earlier.
way that Jesus taught—through Parables,” noted formation catechist Pam Freidhoff. She, too, is a Level I Formation Leader in the program.

“We tell the students that when they’re working in the atrium, they should think about Jesus. The idea of their work time is to carry through on the lesson they’ve just heard.”

One of the prominent lessons in the Level I Atrium, for children ages three to six, is the Parable of the Good Shepherd. The story is reaffirmed visually with wooden replicas of a pasture, sheep and a shepherd. As the children replace the sheep with figurines of people, and the shepherd with an image of Jesus, they come to discover their relationship with the Good Shepherd.

“Even the youngest students are open to hearing the Parables from the Bible, and it draws their faith out so that they can express themselves through prayer and through their love for Jesus,” Mrs. Howell remarked.

The catechists have seen the fruits of the program. Diane Losasso, who taught sixth grade for a number of years, observed that “the students who had been in the Good Shepherd program in their early childhood had more of a foundation of love for Jesus, and it deepened in them through the years.”

As part of the program, students undergoing sacramental preparation at St. John the Baptist School and through the parish religious education program gather with their families for contemplative prayer in the church. This allows entire families to enjoy formation together.

“The Good Shepherd Catechesis has helped create unity between the religious education students and the school students,” noted St. Joseph Sister Jane Keller, Director of Religious Education at St. John’s Parish. “It has drawn us all together.”

Bonnie Campbell is a mother of five, all but four of whom have gone through the Good Shepherd Catechesis at St. John’s. This past summer, she took part in the adult formation course that the More CATECHESIS PROGRAM, page 9

During an adult formation course in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd held at St. John the Baptist in New Freedom this past summer, participants work with materials connected to the Parable of the Good Shepherd.

Patty Howell offers guidance in the atrium during an adult formation course on the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd this past summer.

Above: Images and materials assist children in learning about the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Right: Containers display the liturgical colors, with which students can work in the atrium.

Students in Mrs. Miller’s first-grade class display the trace-and-color artwork they created in one of the atriums at St. John the Baptist School in New Freedom.

After working with materials associated with the Parable of the Good Shepherd, a student in Mrs. Gringow’s kindergarten class places the sheep in their wooden storage box.
Bishop Blesses Icon of Patron Saint of the Deaf at Mass for People with Disabilities

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

During the annual Mass celebrating the gifts of people with disabilities, held at St. Joseph Church in Mechanicsburg on Nov. 18, Bishop Ronald Gainer blessed an icon of St. Francis de Sales, the patron saint of persons who are deaf.

The icon, written by iconographer Jody Cole, shows the saint teaching sign language to a young deaf and mute man named Martin, whom St. Francis de Sales took under his wing for 16 years. As a result of the saint’s education of the young man in the faith, Martin made his first Confession and first Communion.

The striking icon is a gift for the deaf Catholic community, which worships at St. Joseph Church, where Father Thomas Rozman, pastor, celebrates the Mass in sign language.

In his homily during the Mass, Bishop Gainer remarked that one of the undeniable aspects of Christ’s love was his inclusiveness of others. “No one was excluded from the love of Christ. His heart and his arms were open to all,” the bishop said.

“If our job as disciples of Christ is to grow to be more and more Christ-like, then our love too must be inclusive,” he said.

During the Mass, people with disabilities shared their gifts and talents as greeters, altar servers and lectors as the people of St. Joseph Parish welcomed them for the celebration.

To learn about the ministry and activities of the Diocesan Office of Ministry with People with Disabilities, contact Larry Kiley, Director, at lkiley@hbgdiocese.org or 717-657-4804, ext. 322, or visit the Disabilities Ministry link under the Outreach tab at www.hbgdiocese.org.
Students at St. Joseph School in Mechanicsburg recently participated in a student-led event called SOCKTOBER. Students collected and donated 2,702 socks to help the homeless. The socks were donated to the Interfaith Shelter for Homeless Families in Harrisburg. This initiative was planned and organized by four fourth-grade students.

The York Symphony Orchestra invited students from grades 3-12 to participate in the 2017 Student Song Writing Contest. Songs were judged in three age-appropriate categories: elementary, middle school, and senior high school.

Mason Kovach, a freshman at York Catholic High School, won the 2nd Place award in the Senior High School division for his instrumental composition for the trumpet. Mason plays trumpet in York Catholic’s Marching Band, Jazz Band, Concert Band, Musical Pit, and Brass Choir. He is also a member of the York Junior Symphony Orchestra.

Miranda Kovach, a 9th grade student at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Elementary School and Mason’s sister, won the 2nd Place award in the elementary category. Miranda composed an instrumental piece for piano.

Mason and Miranda are the children of Marc and Jill Kovach of Dover.

Resurrection Students
Share Art with Community

Resurrection Catholic School students in Lancaster recently completed the first of three projects to be displayed in the community as part of programs that feature student artwork.

On Nov. 1, fourth-grade students at Our Mother of Perpetual Help School in Ephrata received the form of Chrome Books. Each receive their own iPad.

A few days later, another surprise was delivered to upper grades in the form of Chrome Books.

Students in grades 4-8 at Sacred Heart of Jesus School in Lancaster are using technology every day. Students in grades 4 and 5 received a big surprise recently when they learned that they would each receive their own iPad. A few days later, another surprise was delivered to upper grades in the form of Chrome Books.

Sacred Heart now offers one-to-one technology in grades 4 through 8.

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Pumpkin Drop Reinforces STEM Lessons at Corpus Christi School

By Jen Reed

The Catholic Witness

With teachers Amy Fetterhoff and Amanda Blough securing at the top of a firetruck ladder 95 feet above the school playground on Nov. 13, students at Corpus Christi in Chambersburg squealed and cheered in delightful anticipation.

“Five! Four! Three! Two! One!” the student body shouted, then held their breath as Mrs. Fetterhoff and Mrs. Blough teetered boxes on the edge of the ladder before sending them on a 95-foot drop.

Inside each box was a pumpkin – packed and secured by teams of four students as part of a STEM activity to discover effective (and sometimes ineffective) ways to keep the squash from, well, being squashed as a result of the drop.

Some boxes were filled with bubble wrap, others attached to a tarp or a sheet that perfectly billowed as a parachute, and even one was affixed with a dog bed as a landing pad.

The pumpkin drop, now in its third year at Corpus Christi School, is one of the highlights of the school year, and while the entire student body enjoys the excitement and laughter of the activity, they also learn lessons in the engineering-design process – in this case, energy transfer.

Students in grades 3-5 participate in the pumpkin drop by creating secure boxes, while the rest of the student body watches. In teams of four, they work in class to discuss and create their box, and bring in their own materials to execute a successful drop.

“It’s been really exciting to watch their thought process, especially as they talk to each other about what they’ve learned from past years and the success their peers have had,” noted fifth-grade teacher Amy Fetterhoff.

“They start in third grade with basic designs, and boxes filled with soft materials that they think will absorb the energy. Then by fifth-grade, they are designing elaborate boxes with parachutes and different materials that they know from experience will reduce the amount of energy transferred from the pumpkin,” she said. “As a teacher, it’s been really wonderful to see how they’re progressing with this project.”

“I’ve watched them collaborate,” she said. “If one student is dead set on using bubble wrap, and another wants to use cotton balls, they have to find a way to compromise, and that’s real-world application. Yet they work through, by putting the materials side by side and examining the pros and cons of each to come to a decision.”

Discussion and compromise was part of the project for one team of fifth-grade girls this year.

“We had some respectful disagreement at some points in the project, especially regarding a landing pad,” said Mya Trotty, as she waited for the pumpkin drop to begin. “We had different thoughts on that, but in the end we all came together and learned about having trust in our teammates.”

The team wrapped their pumpkin in several plastic shopping bags and filled their box with packing peanuts, Easter grass, and bubble wrap.

“Last year at the pumpkin drop, we didn’t use much bubble wrap, and so this time we decided that we should increase the amount,” explained Gabrielle McClister.

“This time, we also used the wrap with the larger bubbles because we knew they would be more durable and absorb the impact.”

Their plan was a success. The teammates opened their box to find their pumpkin intact and scratch-free.

The pumpkin drop is just one aspect of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) integration throughout Corpus Christi School. Mrs. Fetterhoff is working with Mrs. Blough, fourth-grade teacher, on a grant for a classroom set of Sphero SPRK++, which are ball-shaped waterproof robots that can be programmed with an iPad to light up, make noise and change direction. Other STEM kit materials at the school include a weather station and an astronomy program complete with three telescopes that the students can take home to enjoy with their families.

“In teaching STEM lessons, I’ve noticed that the students are more willing to accept failure, and it ultimately pushes them further to succeed. That’s the kind of learners that we need for our future workforce,” Mrs. Fetterhoff remarked.

Younger students are enjoying STEM activities, too. Second-grade teacher Beth Lechleitner has set up a “Maker Space” room adjacent to her classroom, filled with materials that students can use to create everything from artwork to inventions.

“There are so many STEM activities that can be introduced into the classroom – it’s just a matter of siftining through them for what you’re teaching,” Mrs. Lechleitner said.

She leads an after-school STEAM Club – A is for arts – and Math Club that are maxed with participants excited and prepared to step up to challenging projects.

Through these clubs, students in grades K-2 are learning about pattern repetition, balance, and mathematical concepts like slopes and fulcrums.

“In so many instances, they think that they’re playing, when actually they’re learning science, technology, engineering and math. They’re also learning to look at why projects failed and what they have to do to fix it,” Mrs. Lechleitner noted.

“Hands-on activities to get the students involved will help stimulate them in the classroom,” she said.

It’s an approach that has been adopted throughout the school, spanning science studies, art, music and religion classes as well.

“The STEM integration in our school is something we want to be in the forefront of what we want to accomplish,” Mrs. Fetterhoff said. “We are able to easily integrate STEM lessons into all of our subjects, and the students can see how everything in our world is connected.”

( Learn more about Corpus Christi School at www.cccschambersburg.org or call 717-263-5036.)
Far from home, playing in front of a partisan crowd cheering loudly for the Freeport Yellow Jackets, it looked for a moment that Delone Catholic girls’ volleyball team was going to capture their second state Class 2A championship in four years at Richland High School in Johnstown on Nov. 18.

After Delone won the first set 25-23 to gain momentum, Freeport seized control of the match by dominating the second set before winning the next two to take the best-of-five-set match.

Seeming to win every key point, Freeport played a strong match at the net, blocking Delone’s outside strikers throughout the match. And when Delone did achieve a clean strike, the Yellow Jackets’ digging and passing game was fundamentally rock solid. It was not that the Squirettes lost the match; it was more the fact that Freeport won the match with their excellent play on the big stage of a state final, while in front of a packed gym filled with their fans. Given Freeport is only 30 miles from Johnstown, the Yellow Jackets had a distinct home court advantage.

But Delone didn’t seem like a team apt to make any excuses. Champions don’t do that. For sure, a few referee calls went against them, but they battled and rallied to the very last point. In a match that featured many long, beautifully played rallies, that truth made the loss all the more disappointing.

“This was not our most talented squad,” a disappointed head coach Jason Leppo said afterwards. “But I think this is one of our greatest teams.” It was a team, Coach Leppo said, that bought into each other and was very close, and he said that this is a team that should be remembered and celebrated for that more important greatness.
In a rematch of last season’s District 3 Class 2A football championship game, York Catholic again battled the Buffalos of Newport High School on a cold, but calm Nov. 11 at Boiling Springs High School.

In last year’s contest, the Fighting Irish racked up 51 points on nearly 500 yards of rushing to cruise past Newport.

This year, only trailing 13-7 at halftime, the Fighting Irish had gained momentum after scoring a late touchdown on a nifty blocked punt in the second quarter to set up a play to make it a one-score game. And starting the second half with the ball gave the Fighting Irish hope despite struggling mightily to move the football in the first half.

But the Fighting Irish could not sustain a drive or run the ball with any success against a stout Newport defensive line. When you can’t run the ball, it means your defense is on the field for too many minutes. York Catholic only gained three yards rushing all game.

On the other hand, Newport’s Ethan Rode, not a speedy or breakaway runner, grinded out 197 yards on 36 carries, which wore down York Catholic over four quarters. In uncharacteristic fashion, York Catholic did not tackle well against a running back that was quite determined to fight for every yard. Tack on four turnovers by the Fighting Irish, and a disappointing 26-7 loss finished off their otherwise solid season at 8-3.
The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes. Please remember in your prayers the happy repose of these recently departed souls and the consolation of their loved ones.

BUCHANAN VALLEY — St. Ignatius Loyola: Patricia “Pat” Brandstatter.

CAMP HILL — Good Shepherd: Paul Bradigan, Margaret LaVita, Helene Pendol, Daniel Speca.


COLUMBIA — Holy Trinity: Holly Otman.


DANVILLE — St. Joseph: Dr. Joseph Mowad, Thomas Sharkey.

ELIZABETHTOWN — St. Peter: Mildred “Mickey” Peters.

GETTYSBURG — St. Francis Xavier: Juana Carbalaj.

HANOVER — St. Joseph: George Long, Jeffrey Morrison, Mary Papilon, Jerome Thomassy; St. Vincent de Paul: Earl Schuman.

HARRISBURG — Cathedral Parish of St. Patrick: Cleopatra Pherribo; St. Catherine Laboure: John McElwee, Charles Kraih; St. Francis of Assisi; Jean Jones; St. Margaret Mary: Paul Day, Louise Quinn, James Rutter.


JONESTOWN — Our Lady of Fatima: Thomas Kaley.


NEW CUMBERLAND — St. Theresa: Natalie Gehosky, Cyril F. Pippin.

NEW OXFORD — Immaculate Conception BVM: Ruth Black, John Overbaugh, Terry Young.

PALMYRA — Holy Spirit: Loretta Emerick, Steven Forti, Kathryn J. Kaylor.

SELINSGROVE — St. Pius X: Edwin F. Ryan, John Whitmer.

WILLIAMSTOWN — Sacred Heart of Jesus: George E. Bugby, Charles (Budd) Carr.

 YORK — Immaculate Conception BVM: John Ream; St. Joseph: Edward A. Colloss; St. Rose of Lima: Bridget DeLia.

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St. Catherine Labouré to Host ValLimar Jansen
St. Catherine Labouré Parish in Harrisburg will be presenting “An Advent Evening of Music, Stories & Prayer with ValLimar Jansen” on Dec. 6 from 7-9 p.m. in the church. Admission is free. A freewill donation is requested, a portion of which will be titled to The Daughters of Charity, Puerto Rico.

“Amazed by the power of her presence...” these words of testimonial best describe the passion that is ValLimar Jansen. Blessed with an extraordinary voice, ValLimar is a highly-regarded singer, composer and recording artist. Her presence on stage commands attention and her music draws people into the Word of God in a new and deeper way.

ValLimar has presented at some of the largest gatherings of Christians in recent years including: An international papal prayer service for over 300,000 Roman Catholics, The March for Life, The National Catholic Women’s Conference, The National Catholic Youth Conference, the Mid-Atlantic Conference, and World Youth Day.

ValLimar has been singing professionally since the age of six and holds degrees in music and performance and professional degrees in the Arts from Howard University, California State University and the University of California. She and her husband, talented keyboardist/songwriter/arranger Frank Jansen, have recorded several CDs, including their latest work, “Give God the Glory.”

Their works are influenced by Gospel, contemporary Christian and Jazz, although she sings a wide variety of music including traditional organ based hymnody. Her music will be available for purchase after the performance in the narthex of the Shrine.

For more information, call the parish office at 717-564-1321 or e-mail jkelly@sclhbg.org.

St. Francis Xavier to Hold Annual Noreen Neitz Memorial Run and Walk
St. Francis Xavier School in Gettysburg will be holding its Fifth Annual Noreen Neitz Memorial 10K and 5K Run and Sufficiently Radical 1 Mile Walk on Dec. 16. We pleased to announce the addition of a 10K route! The 10K and 5K race will begin at 10 a.m., and the 1-mile walk will begin at 10:15 a.m. Same-day registration will be accepted beginning at 8 a.m. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged, and t-shirts are guaranteed for all runners and walkers registered by Dec. 1. Pre-registration information can be found on the school development Web site. The race and walk will begin and end at St. Francis Xavier School, Xavier Center at 465 Table Rock Road, Gettysburg.

Noreen Neitz was the spiritual leader of the St. Francis Xavier youth group and a strong advocate for service to others when she lost her battle with cancer on July 10, 2013. During her last months, Noreen spent much of her time writing on her blog titled “Sufficiently Radical” and continued to stay active by walking wherever she could within a mile of her house. With Noreen’s tenacious spirit in mind, a scholarship fund was developed in her name, encouraging youth to dedicate their time and service to be active members of the church and community.

Proceeds from this event will be divided equally between the St. Francis Xavier School Development Fund and the Noreen Neitz Scholarship Fund. The Noreen Neitz Scholarship Fund will award a portion of their funds to 8th grade students attending St. Francis Xavier Catholic School who show service to the community and are active members of the parish and its youth group. The remainder of the proceeds will be used to provide assistance to St. Francis Xavier School families in need with tuition cost. Those interested in more information or scholarship opportunities should call St. Francis Xavier Catholic School at 717.334.4221, visit the school website http://www.sfxc-pa.org/ or e-mail mscholarship@sfxc-pa.org.

All 10K finishers will receive a medal. This year’s 5K race will again award prizes to the three top winners in each age category. The overall top finishers (male and female) of the 10K and 5K will receive pies and cash prizes. The awards will be distributed at approximately 11:15 a.m.

St. Joseph Council 12788 in Mechanicsburg Earns Star Council Award for Second Year in a Row
St. Joseph Council 12788 in Mechanicsburg has attained the prestigious Knights of Columbus Star Council Award for the second consecutive year. For the past two years, under the leadership of Francis Bludis (Grand Knight 2015-2016) and Frank Crupi (Grand Knight 2016-2017), the council fulfilled the requirements for Star Council by performing the mandatory church, council, family and community projects, plus reaching their quota for new regular and insurance members. Past Grand Knight Francis Bludis, Father Thomas Rozman, pastor, and Grand Knight Frank Crupi are pictured with their awards.

Grand Knight Crupi would like to thank all members of the council for their support in attaining the award. From the moment of its founding in 1882, the Knights of Columbus have espoused charity as their first principle. In 2016, the Knights of Columbus set a record in charitable giving for the 18th consecutive year with charitable donations of $177,500,673. In addition, the Order achieved its highest level of charitable service by volunteering more than 75 million service hours. As Knights of Columbus, Catholic men are able to put their faith into practice.

St. Joseph Council 12788
Mechanicsburg Earns Star Council Award
for Second Year in a Row
Es un Ecumenismo, Inter-Religioso Candelight Remembrances: una ocasión para el recuerdo. Ha estado el tiempo. Ha sido el amor. Ha experimentado el afecto de un amigo, familia, amigo o novio. Han sido los mejores momentos de su vida. Este servicio de velas llevará a los presentes a recordar y a celebrar la diversidad del amor. Este evento se llevará a cabo el 31 de octubre, a las 7:30 p.m. en St. Martin’s Episcopal Cathedral. Para más información, llame al 717-723-9000.
Bishop Blesses New Spaces for Parish Center, Convent at St. Joan of Arc in Hershey

By Jen Reed  
The Catholic Witness

With a vision for renovations and addressing needs for additional space, St. Joan of Arc Parish in Hershey recently completed a project involving its parish center and convent, moving the former convent into a new facility and relocating the parish center to the former convent.

“The parish was in need of additional space, especially for meetings, and so we worked with facilities available to us,” explained Father Al Sceski, pastor. The original convent, built in 1955, was constructed to accommodate 21 religious sisters; three members of the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy were residing there. So when a house at the end of the parish grounds became available, St. Joan’s opted to convert it into a convent.

With the space in the former convent available, rooms were converted to house the parish center: former bedrooms have been renovated into offices, and common areas fashioned into meeting space. The convent chapel, the St. Lucy Chapel, was also renovated, and now houses a handsome painting, designed by Father Sceski, of the Madonna and Child surrounded by patrons of the parish. The painting was done by Neilson Carlin, the artist who painted the image of the Holy Family for the 2015 World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia.

Bishop Ronald Gainer celebrated Mass at St. Joan of Arc Church on Nov. 19, after which he blessed the new parish office and convent.

Father Sceski expressed his gratitude to parishioners for their support of the project, as well as the Council of Catholic Women for their assistance in the chapel renovations, the Knights of Columbus who assisted with preparations, and an anonymous parishioner who donated the cost for the painting.