A Journey Through Addiction

Stacey Mueller reflects on her path to recovery as she looks out a window at Evergreen House, Catholic Charities’ residential program for women in recovery from substance abuse. Mueller successfully completed the program in November.

One Woman’s Story of Recovery through Evergreen House

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Six months ago, Stacey Mueller was in the midst of a 17-day hospital stay, hallucinating as she withdrew from methamphetamine. Today, the 40-year-old mother is a graduate of Catholic Charities’ residential treatment program for women, and is looking forward to her new life. The CDC’s latest statistics show that more than 63,600 people died from a drug overdose in 2016. Evergreen House is one program helping women in that fight.

Looking out a window at Evergreen, a treatment facility in suburban Harrisburg, Mueller smiles as she considers a future free from addiction, sickness and unhealthy relationships.

“I have a job. I’m getting ready to go to a new place. I’m learning to love myself again,” Mueller said.

Evergreen House is one of Catholic Charities’ three residential programs. It provides a safe and nurturing environment for women recovering from substance abuse. The program helps women achieve long-term recovery, housing and stable jobs.

Evergreen serves more than 100 women a year, with treatment spanning four to six months.

Clients are referred by county drug and alcohol agencies. Some come by court order. Others come from prison.

“I Couldn’t Live without the Drug”

Mueller grew up in a typical suburban family. Her dad worked for the State, her mom stayed at home part-time to care for three children, and the family attended church services weekly.

But Mueller didn’t do well academically, and often felt like a failure. She

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CHRIS REISEY, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

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The Newspaper of the Diocese of Harrisburg

For a Lasting Remembrance

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More RECOVERY
Retired State Police Captain to Oversee Youth Protection Programs

By Rachel Bryson, M.S., The Catholic Witness

She is a mother, grandmother, safety training expert and a member of the United Methodist Church. She has also investigated sex crimes and ran Pennsylvania’s Megan’s Law Section of the Pennsylvania State Police. Captain Janet McNeal, who retired with 26 years of investigative and policy development experience, was recently contracted by the Diocese to oversee its Safe Environment programs.

“Capt. McNeal brings a wealth of experience with her,” said Bishop Ronald W. Gainer. “As a contractor with the Diocese, she is a neutral party, with no conflicts of interest.”

Capt. McNeal has dedicated her entire professional career to seeing that justice is served and that survivors of a range of crimes, but specifically sexual crimes, are heard and supported.

As part of her contract with the Diocese, McNeal will review every reported case of abuse as a means of determining what went wrong and develop programs to reduce the risk of future abuse.

A Fresh Start

Advent is the beginning of the Church year and offers all Catholics the chance for a fresh start. McNeal will bring another fresh, external, unbiased opinion and oversight to the Diocese’s operations.

“I’m a mother, a grandmother, a police officer, a Protestant and I’ve dealt with sex offenders for most of my career,” McNeal said. “I’m here for the survivors. I want to hear their stories, learn what stage of healing they are in, and work with them so they are no longer a victim of abuse, but are victorious at finding healing.”

McNeal has a three year contract with the Diocese. Under her agreement, she will operate independent of the Diocese and will report her recommendations directly to Bishop Gainer. McNeal has been granted complete access to all the Diocese’s records and will make recommen-

dations on future steps the Diocese should take to reduce the risk of future abuse.

“I’ll be dealing with the past, present and future of sexual abuse in the Church,” McNeal said. “I’ll be reviewing every case reported and will speak with the survivors. I want to hear their stories and help them on their path to healing. Already in my short time working with the Diocese, it is clear that Bishop Gainer is serious about correcting the mistakes of the past, ensuring survivors receive the support they need and the safety of our children.”

In addition to being another resource for survivors of clergy abuse, McNeal will also be investigating what went wrong within the Diocese that allowed clergy abuse to occur and offer solutions to reduce the risk of those mistakes being repeated.

“For several years (during my time with the State Police) I conducted internal audits checking for compliance with existing policy, and development of new policy when a policy void or a changing circumstance arose,” McNeal said. While at the rank of Lieutenant, she was assigned as the chief administrator for the Megan’s Law Sexual Offender Registry for the entire Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

“That was a high profile and highly controversial position,” McNeal said. “I proposed legislation and developed policy for various agencies, always mindful of the possibility of civil litigation. I also developed and conducted training on all aspects of sex offender registration, including educating the public.”

In addition to her career with the State Police, McNeal has served on crisis response teams and ecumenical taskforces for the United Methodist Church. She is also licensed as a private investigator.

“I truly believe that I’ve been called to do this,” McNeal said. “I’ve been involved in the church my entire life. I’ve been married to a member of the (Methodist) clergy for 45 years. My role is to determine where we need to improve and make sure survivors are finding healing.”

A Safe Environment

Working toward an even safer environment than what we have today is the goal of the Diocese and McNeal will strive to accomplish this goal. As the Safe Environment Coordinator for the Diocese, she will oversee all youth protection related activities, including ensuring compliance with the 2002 Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

McNeal will also collaborate with law enforcement to assist them in their investigations of any abuse allegations.

A major responsibility for McNeal will be to work with parish pastors/administrators, parish staff, school administrators/principals and appropriate Diocesan department heads to ensure that all adults who come in contact with minors are effectively screened and trained, according to the Diocese’s regulations, policies and procedures. She will also ensure that children in the Diocese’s Catholic schools and Religious Education programs participate in the required Safe Environment training program.

To learn more about McNeal and the Diocese’s Safe Environment Program, please visit www. YouthProtectionHbg.com.
Frequently Asked Questions
Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report – Diocese of Harrisburg

1. The Grand Jury report was extensive. Can you break down the Harrisburg section?
The Grand Jury report named 38 accused Diocesan priests. Of those, 30 are deceased. Seventeen were already deceased when the accusation against them was made. Of the eight still living, all have been removed from ministry.

2. What services does the Diocese provide to survivors of abuse?
The Diocese’s foremost concern is for healing for survivors. The Diocese offers spiritual, pastoral, and mental health assistance to all survivors of abuse. The Diocese provides the financial means for survivors to receive the counseling services they need. Also, early in 2019, survivors will be able to participate in our Survivors’ Compensation Program, which will provide additional financial support.

3. What is the Survivors’ Compensation Program?
This program, which is independent of the Diocese, will expedite the claims process so that survivors can receive compensation much faster than going through the court system. Our expectation is that survivors will complete a claims form and, after review by the Administrator (Attorney Kenneth Feinberg), the Diocese will be informed how much compensation each survivor is to receive.

4. How do I know the money I put into the collection basket is going where I intend?
Parish collections are used to finance parish operations and expenses, including maintenance of parish property, utility expenses, parish staff salaries, parish ministries, religious education expenses, and educational supplies and expenses. If a parish has a budget shortfall, the Diocese will loan that parish money to cover the shortfall. If a parish has a surplus, these funds can be deposited into the parish’s savings account with the Diocese, or used as a cash balance to start the next fiscal year.

5. Where is the money coming from for the Survivors’ Compensation Program?
The funding for this program will come from the Diocese’s available assets, including investments, earnings from investments and recovery from insurance. In addition, the Diocese will also borrow money and, if needed, will sell Diocesan assets to fund this program.

6. What does the Diocese currently do when it receives a report of abuse?
The Diocese reports every accusation to ChildLine and to the appropriate District Attorney Office. If law enforcement does not conduct an investigation or indicates to the Diocese that it can conduct its own independent investigation, then the Diocese employs former law enforcement agents to review any such report of abuse.

7. Are there any priests still in ministry against whom there is a credible allegation of sexual abuse of a minor?
No. Any priest with a credible allegation of abuse is permanently removed from ministry. He may not work or volunteer for the Diocese or its parishes, schools, or other programs. He may not celebrate Mass publicly, administer the sacraments, wear clerical garb, or present himself publicly as a priest. Any priest with a credible allegation is also responsible for his own legal expenses.

8. Why haven’t priests been criminally charged for sexual abuse of minors?
In the Diocese of Harrisburg, most of the accused priests are deceased or the laws of our Commonwealth prevent these charges. We do support legislation that would remove the statute of limitations on criminal charges for those who abuse children.

9. What is the Diocese Youth Protection Program?
This program is a comprehensive policy detailing the Diocese’s youth protection program. It explains how abuse reports should be made; who needs clearances and which types of clearances; prevention programs in place; outreach to survivors; how reports of abuse will be handled; and the roles of various Diocesan offices in the implementation of the program. The full policy can be found on our website, www.YouthProtectionHBG.com.

10. What screening is in place for priests that have already been ordained?
Each member of the clergy, as well as all the Diocese’s staff, volunteers and vendors, must fulfill all state requirements for background checks and training programs. All clergy must obtain PA State Police, PA Child Abuse History and an FBI fingerprint check every five years. Clergy from outside the Diocese have to provide current clearances or obtain these clearances before they can begin their service here. Also, clergy from outside the United States, in addition to the clearances previously mentioned, also have to have an Interpol clearance check.

11. What is the screening process for seminarians?
The application process includes a written statement of the candidate’s discernment history; an autobiography; a review of the candidate’s work, school, and financial history and understanding of the pillars of the Catholic Faith; completed State Police and FBI background checks and state-certified safe-environment training; four to six letters of recommendation; an in-depth physical examination; and a full psychological evaluation, completed over a two-day period.

12. What is the training process for seminarians today?
After acceptance into the seminary, which is in itself an intensive process, each candidate will spend the next 6 to 9 years preparing for the priesthood. Each candidate has a formation advisor who meets regularly to ensure he meets the many goals required of him, including his healthy psychological maturing. Each man undergoes a full psychological evaluation a second time, half way through his time in formation, in order to help explore where he has grown and areas where he still needs help. Seminarians also participate in 6-8 summer/yearly pastoral experiences. With each experience, we require five or six members of the parish to complete an evaluation for these men. At the end of every year, the seminary’s formation team meets to examine each candidate carefully, to determine whether to vote him through to the next year or to ordination. Each seminarian knows that the Diocese can dismiss him for various reasons, but most especially in breaching the code of conduct expected of him. The bar is not set at “do not sin,” but at “be beyond reproach.”

13. Does the Diocese of Harrisburg engage in confidentiality agreements with survivors?
No. The Diocese of Harrisburg has not engaged in confidentiality agreements since 2002. Bishop Gainer, in an effort to bring healing and transparency, has waived the confidentiality agreements of any settlements previous to 2002.

14. What is the Diocese’s stance on Pennsylvania’s Statute of Limitations?
The Diocese has previously said that we do support a reform in the State’s Statute of Limitation laws going forward, which would allow survivors a longer time to make reports and receive compensation, so long as any changes are not in violation of the Commonwealth’s Constitution.

15. What should I do if I have suffered abuse?
Please report your abuse by calling ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313. And also report the abuse to the Diocese by calling 1-800-626-1608 or ReportAbuse@hbgdiocese.org. It is important to report abuse to both law enforcement and the Diocese so we may take immediate action regarding the accused.
Advent Penance Services in the Diocese

Churches in the Diocese of Harrisburg will hold Penance Services during the season of Advent. These services typically include an opening hymn, Scripture readings, and time for an examination of conscience prior to going to confession. The following is a list of services submitted to The Catholic Witness from the parishes. Find additional resources for Advent and for the Sacrament of Reconciliation at http://www.hbgdiocese.org/advent/.

### Advent Penance Services in the Diocese

- **Abbotsburg**
  - Immaculate Heart of Mary Church
  - December 18 at 7 p.m.

- **Benton**
  - Christ the King Church
  - December 12 at 7 p.m.

- **Berwick**
  - Immaculate Conception Church
  - December 13 at 7 p.m.
  - St. Joseph Church
  - December 17 at 7 p.m.

- **Bloomburg**
  - St. Columba Church
  - December 11 at 7 p.m.

- **Camp Hill**
  - Good Shepherd Church
  - December 19 at 7 p.m.

- **Chambersburg**
  - Corpus Christi Church
  - December 18 at 7 p.m.

- **Abbeville**
  - Holy Trinity Church
  - December 16 at 7 p.m.
  - St. Peter Church
  - December 18 at 7 p.m.
  - Cornwall
  - Sacred Heart of Jesus Church
  - December 11 at 7 p.m.
  - Danville
  - St. Joseph Church
  - December 17 at 7 p.m.
  - Duncannon
  - St. Barnadette Church
  - December 20 at 7 p.m.

- **Elizabethtown**
  - St. Peter Church
  - December 23 at 7 p.m.

- **Ephrata**
  - Our Mother of Perpetual Help Church
  - December 19 at 7 p.m.

- **Fairfield**
  - Immaculate Conception Church
  - (In conjunction with St. Rita in Blue Ridge Summit).
  - December 15 at 10:30 p.m.

- **Hanover**
  - St. Vincent de Paul Church
  - December 16 and 23 from 9-10 a.m.

- **Hankover**
  - St. Benedict the Abbot Church
  - December 16 at 2 p.m.

- **Jonestown**
  - Our Lady of Fatima Church
  - December 16 at 2 p.m.

- **Lancaster**
  - Assumption BVM Church
  - December 16 at 6:30 p.m.
  - Sacred Heart of Jesus Church
  - December 10 at 7 p.m.
  - San Juan Bautista Church
  - December 20 at 7 p.m.
  - St. Anne Church
  - December 9 at 7 p.m.
  - St. Anthony
  - Padua Church
  - December 17 at 7 p.m.
  - St. John Neumann Church
  - December 13 at 7 p.m.
  - St. Joseph Church
  - December 19 at 7 p.m.

- **Lebanon**
  - Assumption BVM Church
  - December 16 at 2 p.m.

- **Mechanicsburg**
  - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church
  - December 13 at 7 p.m.
  - St. Katharine Drexel Church
  - December 9 at 2 p.m.

- **Millmont**
  - St. Jude Thaddeus Church
  - December 9 at 7 p.m.

- **Milton**
  - St. Joseph Church
  - December 20 at 7 p.m.

- **Mount Joy**
  - Mary, Mother of Jesus Church
  - December 19 at 7 p.m.

- **Myerstown**
  - Mary, Gate of Heaven Church
  - December 10 at 7 p.m.

- **New Cumberland**
  - St. Theresa Church
  - December 9 at 7 p.m.

- **Palmyra**
  - Church of the Holy Spirit
  - December 12 at 7 p.m.

- **Quarryville**
  - St. Catherine of Siena Church
  - December 18 at 7 p.m.

- **Rohrerstown**
  - St. Leo the Great
  - December 11 at 7 p.m.

- **Selinsgrove**
  - St. Pius X Church
  - December 19 at 7 p.m.

- **Shippensburg**
  - Our Lady of the Visitation Church
  - December 19 at 6:30 p.m.

- **Spring Grove**
  - Sacred Heart of Jesus Church
  - December 11 at 7 p.m.

- **Sunbury**
  - St. Monica Church
  - December 18 at 7 p.m.

- **Trevorton**
  - St. Patrick Church
  - December 13 at 7 p.m.

- **Waynesboro**
  - St. Andrew the Apostle Church
  - December 19 at 6:30 p.m.

- **York**
  - St. Rose of Lima Church
  - December 17 at 7 p.m.

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### How to Go to Confession...

**May the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints, whatever good you do and suffering you endure, heal your sins, help you grow in holiness, and reward you with eternal life. Go in peace.**

**Rite of Penance, no. 93**

1. **PREPARATION:** Before going to confession, take some time to prepare. Begin with prayer, and reflect on your life since your last confession. How have you—in your thoughts, words, and actions—neglected to live Christ’s commands to “love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind,” and to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt 22:37, 39)? As a help with this “examination of conscience,” you might review the Ten Commandments or the Beatitudes (Ex 20:2-17; Dt 5:6-21; Mt 5:3-10 or Lk 6:20-26).

2. **GREEETING:** The priest will welcome you; he may say a short blessing or read a Scripture passage.

3. **THE SIGN OF THE CROSS:** Together, you and the priest will make the Sign of the Cross. You may then begin your confession with these or similar words: “Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been a year, months, or years since my last confession.”

4. **CONFESSION:** Confess your sins to the priest. If you are unsure what to say, ask the priest for help. When you are finished, conclude with these or similar words: “I am sorry for these and all my sins.”

5. **PENANCE:** The priest will propose an act of penance. The penance might be prayer, a work of mercy, or an act of charity. He might also counsel you on how to better live a Christian life.

6. **ACT OF CONTRITION:** After the priest has forgiven your penance, pray an Act of Contrition, expressing sorrow for your sins and resolving to sin no more. A suggested Act of Contrition is:

   My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I freely intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. (Rite of Penance, no. 45)

7. **ABSOLUTION:** The priest will extend his hands over your head and pronounce the words of absolution. You respond, “Amen.”

8. **PRAISE:** The priest will usually praise the mercy of God and invite you to do the same. For example, the priest may say, “Give thanks to the Lord for he is good.” And your response would be, “His mercy endures for ever” (Rite of Penance, no. 47).

9. **DISMISSAL:** The priest will conclude the sacrament, often saying, “Go in peace.”

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**Advent is Time of Vigilance, Prayer, Pope Says**

**By Cindy Wooden**

**Catholic News Service**

Christians can turn Christmas into a “pagan” or “mundane” holiday by focusing on the gifts and the tree rather than on the birth of Jesus and his promise to come again, Pope Francis said.

Celebrating the beginning of Advent, Dec. 2, with the recitation of the Angelus prayer and at morning Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae the next day, the pope focused on the attitudes of vigilance and prayer that should characterize the Advent season and preparations for Christmas.

“If we think of Christmas in a consumeristic climate, looking at what we can buy to do this or that, as a mundane holiday, then Jesus will pass by and we will not find him,” the pope said before reciting the Angelus with an estimated 20,000 people in St. Peter’s Square.

In the day’s Gospel reading from the 21st chapter of Luke, Jesus tells his disciples to be careful that their hearts “not become drowsy,” but to “be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man” at the end of time.

“Be vigilant and pray — this is how to live this time from today until Christmas,” the pope said.

Advent, he said, “is the opportune time to open our hearts and to ask ourselves concrete questions about how we spend our lives and for whom.”

Christians must hold fast to their identity, including at Christmas, by keeping the focus on Jesus and fighting the temptation to “paganize” the Christian feast, he said at the Angelus.

Returning to the theme at Mass Dec. 3, Pope Francis said Christians do well to remember they are not celebrating “the birth of the Christmas tree,” which is a “beautiful sign,” but the birth of Jesus. “The Lord is born, the redeemer who came to save us is born,” the pope said. Of course, Christmas is a celebration, but “there is always the danger, the temptation to banalize Christmas,” to stop focusing on Jesus and get caught up in “shopping, gifts and this and that.”

Advent, he said, is a time to purify one’s focus, remembering that Jesus came into the world to save people from sin, that each person will stand before him at the end of his or her life and that Jesus will come again.

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Trinity Students Guaranteed College Admission and Scholarships

By Katie Phelan
Special to The Witness

Students at Trinity High School in Camp Hill now have the benefit of knowing they are guaranteed admission to any one of nine colleges or universities if they meet academic thresholds, including grade point averages (GPA) and standardized test scores (SAT/ACT).

Carlow University, Gwynedd Mercy University, Immaculata University, King’s College, La Roche College, Mercyhurst University, Misericordia University, Mount St. Mary’s University and St. Bonaventure University have partnered with Trinity in this initiative.

John W. Cominsky, Trinity’s principal, arranged the partnerships with the idea that it would help alleviate some of the stress students and families experience when considering post-secondary options.

“Ninety-eight percent of Trinity students matriculate to higher education, which means admittance into a fine college or university, and having the financial ability to pay for it is something that affects nearly every member of our student body,” Cominsky said. “We also want to stress that Catholic colleges and universities are affordable options for our graduates.”

The majority of Trinity students have the GPA to earn admittance to these schools. Students can have a fairly good idea from early in their high school careers that they will earn acceptance at an excellent college with a substantial scholarship. They also know from the time they’re 13 years old and enroll at Trinity that their education has been given a vote of confidence by a number of prestigious schools.

For Trinity’s current students, the partnerships have opened up opportunities, and many students are considering these colleges that weren’t previously on their radar.

Trinity’s college counselor, Kautiln Walsh, said there has been a rise in applications submitted to these colleges and universities. For example, there has been a 230% increase in applications to King’s College.

Michele Stager, an English teacher at Trinity, has two seniors who have added La Roche College to their visitation list. “They’re interested in pursuing a degree in film, and the major is available there,” Stager said. “Before Trinity announced the partnership, we hadn’t considered the school, so the partnerships are expanding options for our students.”

Trinity is partnering with Catholic colleges because a commitment to holistic growth is a major emphasis of the school. “We care for our students in mind, body and spirit, and we want that for their future, too,” Cominsky said. “At a Catholic college, we can be assured that students will continue to have access to religious formation and challenging academics, along with the same family-like atmosphere they’re accustomed to at Trinity.”

In addition to admissions and merit scholarships, some schools have granted Trinity students automatic admission into entry-level programs. Misericordia University will admit Trinity graduates to entry-level programs that include Doctor of Physical Therapy, Master of Speech-Language Pathology, and Doctor of Occupational Therapy. King’s College is granting Trinity students automatic admission to their physician’s assistant and engineering programs, with slightly higher GPA and SAT scores over regular admittance.

Valerie Cap, a Trinity parent of two current students, was excited about the opportunity for acceptance to these pre-professional programs, calling it “tremendous.” As a physical therapist herself, she knows how competitive these programs can be.

“This is yet another fine example of how Trinity has effectively paved the way for greater opportunities for their students,” Cap said. These programs have “an excellent outlook for future employment,” Cap attested.

Many of the colleges and universities have offered to waive the application fee for Trinity students, as well.

The partnerships vary from school to school. The admittance details include:

- Carlow University: 3.0 GPA and 1060 SAT/21 ACT composite; $40,000 over four years
- Gwynedd Mercy University: 3.0 GPA and 1080 SAT or 22 ACT composite; $68,000 over four years
- Immaculata University: 2.5 GPA and 990 SAT; $44,000 over four years
- King’s College: 3.0 GPA and 1000 SAT; $64,000 over four years
- La Roche College: 3.0 GPA and 1080 SAT/22 ACT; $64,000 over four years
- Mercyhurst University: 3.0 GPA; $64,000 over four years
- Misericordia University: 3.0 GPA and 1080 SAT/22 ACT composite; $60,000 over four years
- Mount St. Mary’s University: 3.0 GPA and 1080 SAT/21 ACT will receive $88,000 over four years
- St. Bonaventure University: 3.25 GPA and 1000 SAT/22 ACT; $72,000 over four years

(Trinity High School is a co-educational Catholic high school on the West Shore of Harrisburg, seeking to educate students in mind, body, and spirit, while encouraging them to pursue the “highest good.” Visit www.thsrocks.us and go to “Academics” for more information. Trinity expects to conclude other collegiate partnerships during the month of December.)

Delone Catholic Senior Receives Good Citizen Award

Noah Roeder, son of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Roeder of Westminster, Md., represented the senior class of Delone Catholic High School in McSherrystown as the recipient of the Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen award for 2018-19.

Faculty and students chose Noah as the senior who best exemplifies outstanding qualities of leadership, dependability, service and patriotism among his classmates at Delone Catholic.

Noah will compete with Good Citizens from other local high schools who must complete competitive examination materials on personal activities, service, interest, national and state government, patriotism and citizenship. Local winners can advance through divisional competition up to state and national competition. The first place winner of the national competition will receive a $5,000 scholarship award and a silver engraved bowl presented at the National Continental Congress in Washington, D.C.

Ninety-eight percent of Trinity students matriculate to higher education, which means admittance into a fine college or university, and having the financial ability to pay for it is something that affects nearly every member of our student body,” Cominsky said. “At a Catholic college, we can be assured that students will continue to have access to religious formation and challenging academics, along with the same family-like atmosphere they’re accustomed to at Trinity.”
Culture Day Brings Home Motto at Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School

By Chris Heisey
The Catholic Witness

Look at the back of a nickel or quarter, and you will see in fine print the Latin motto “E pluribus unum,” which translates as, “Out of many, one.” It is America’s motto, adopted in 1782 by Congress, five years before our Constitution was crafted by the 13 original colonies. While the coins’ front may feature the busts of slaveholder presidents, the motto struck on the reverse is well worthy of more mention.

That is exactly what Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School did during a cultural day in Johnnie Hicks’ social studies class Nov. 29. Students prepared short presentations for their classmates while they ate delicious lunch morsels of long passed-on family recipes. The class learned about a hundreds’ year old Bible passed through a Mexican family, the intricacy of African stitchery in clothing and jewelry, and a student’s grandmother who courageously faced hatred in her struggle for Civil Rights justice in the 1960s.

“Culture is part of our curriculum here at Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School,” Hicks said. “Culture is changing daily and it is important to let the kids know what their heritage is.”

Hicks teaches several subjects but his favorite is social studies. “I can speak to the mistakes we have made in our nation’s past here in this school. We are such a close-knit family here at this school,” Hicks said, touching his heart.

That truth is rather easy to discern to even a casual eye, as the students politely listened to their classmates relate family traditions that date back long ago in countries all over the world. They gave attention while eating a lunch of foods that would be on lunch plates in far away schools on other continents. Many cultures were shared in that second floor classroom on a cold November day in downtown Harrisburg.

Having a cultural day here, Hicks said, allows the students to be a family; it allows them to share how their family lives with their school family. “We preach to our kids that sometimes they are here at school with their school family more than they are with their actual family at home,” he stressed. “We appreciate each other here; we appreciate our spirit to be different.”

At Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School, out of many, one is the culture.

Learn more about Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School at www.hbgcatholic.org.

Students at Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in Middletown constructed amusement park rides as part of their study of force and motion. Working together in a hands-on activity that combined computer-generated models with building sets, they crafted roller coasters and other rides to successfully and safely carry cars on the tracks. The amusement park project is one of the school’s STEM activities.

Seven Sorrows also has an instructional focus led by middle school science teacher Kerri Rapp, whose participation in a NASA workshop has led to interactive studies on space. Learn more about Seven Sorrows School at www.ssbnm.org/school.
Recovery

Continued from 1

didn’t consider herself worthy of love, and began drinking socially in high school. When she was 16, someone at a party encouraged her to try cocaine. She abused the drug for two years and dropped out of high school.

Her life turned around after graduating from the United Methodist Home for Children in Mechanicsburg. She enrolled in the Academy of Medical Arts and Business. She stopped using drugs when she found out she was pregnant, and got married.

But demanding work as a CNA in a long-term care unit and the challenges of motherhood left Mueller exhausted. Tired and seeking to lose weight, she turned to Stacker 3 and soared on its ephedrine-caffeine combination.

“That’s when I got hooked,” Mueller said. “I couldn’t go to work if I didn’t take them. But soon they weren’t enough, so I went to my doctor and convinced him I needed Adderall.”

She abused the simulant drug – commonly used to treat ADHD – for nearly 20 years. When she suffered headaches as a side effect, she turned to Vicodin, a narcotic pain medicine. She hopped from doctor to doctor, and to Emergency Rooms, to get it.

Mueller and her husband divorced. She moved in with her parents and convinced them the drugs were for fibromyalgia. She hid her addiction as time went on.

Her drug addiction worsened two years ago, after the death of her boyfriend, who crashed while driving drunk. “It was a difficult time for me and I didn’t know how to deal with the emotions, plus the Adderall wasn’t working anymore after 20 years,” she said.

She turned to methamphetamine. “It was amazing. It took all my fears, problems and pain away,” Mueller said. “It was an easy way out of the difficulties.”

She started dating her drug dealer, and moved in with him. “He was abusive, but I couldn’t leave him because I was addicted to the meth,” she said. “I was scared to leave because I couldn’t live without the drug.”

“Your brain tells you that you need the drug in order to survive,” she said of addiction. “When you don’t have it, you feel like you’re dying.”

A year ago, Mueller began to suffer frightening meth-induced hallucinations. She couldn’t discern between real and imaginary images and sounds.

Last spring, while riding in a car, she heard voices saying her boyfriend was going to kill her. She jumped out of the car and ran.

Her daughter, now 20, visited, much to Mueller’s humiliation. “I’m feeling much stronger, having turned to a higher power here,” said Stacey Mueller, who completed the program in November.

And her release spent 17 days in the hospital to detox.

“Since coming to Evergreen, I’ve learned patience. I’ve learned that I can have healthy relationships. I’ve learned that addiction is a disease, and something I have to deal with every day. I’ve learned that life isn’t perfect, but I can deal with situations without using.”

~ Stacey Mueller, 40
Former Evergreen House Resident

“Are You Done Yet?”

Mueller doesn’t remember much of what happened after that. She was arrested for possession, and after her release spent 17 days in the hospital to detox.

Her daughter, now 20, visited, much to Mueller’s humiliation. “I didn’t want my daughter to see me,” Mueller said. “I was in and out of awareness, still hallucinating. I was ashamed. I had lied to her. She didn’t know I was using meth; she thought it was just Adderall.”

Someone suggested Mueller go to Evergreen House. She was willing.

“I knew it would be a four- to six-month program, but I figured it took me 20 years to get where I was, so what was six months for help,” she reasoned.

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Evergreen House Offers Hope and Health to Women in Recovery

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

More than 100 women recovering from drug and alcohol addiction are treated each year at Evergreen House.

Turning away from bottles, pills and needles, the women in the residential treatment program chase a new high: sobriety. Located in suburban Harrisburg, Evergreen is a program of Catholic Charities.

Women come to the program from area drug and alcohol agencies. Some arrive after their release from prison. Evergreen helps them secure long-term recovery, stable housing and a job while undergoing therapy and learning accountability.

“We have women as young as 18, up to 60 years old. Some started using at the age of 12. Others started using later in life after getting addicted to narcotics following injury or surgery,” said Lydia Thomas, program director.

“There is no typical addict profile when it comes to gender, age, socioeconomic or ethnic backgrounds,” she said.

Length of treatment at Evergreen House is typically four to six months. Women receive referrals for mental health and vocational rehabilitation, transportation to doctor appointments and 12-Step meetings, and family visits designed to create support networks.

“We go right to work as soon as a woman comes in. Some come with their own agenda – a job, a car, their own place, money,” Thomas said.

“But our agenda is that you’re sick. Your mind is sick, your heart is sick, your body is sick. We’re going to send you to doctors. We’re going to treat you,” she said.

“Stacey Mueller, addicted to Adderall and methamphetamine when she came to Evergreen in June, had her own agenda when she arrived.

“I had just stopped the drugs, and I felt like I just needed to get a job instead, that I’d be fine,” she said.

“But Evergreen taught me that I needed to heal myself first. I needed to learn to love myself again. I completely lost myself to addiction. I didn’t know who I was anymore. I didn’t know how to be a mom, a daughter, a friend,” she said.

Evergreen’s structured meetings, meals, chores, family visits and social outings help women build trust, responsibility and confidence.

Thomas said the program is successful because it includes a spiritual component that emphasizes Christian values.

“Because we are a charitable religious organization, we can take a spiritual approach,” Thomas said. “We talk about God and Jesus. We preach and talk about Christian principles. We reference the Bible. We encourage women to pray, and to bring God into their lives,” she said.

Evergreen requires the women to have a willingness to complete the program and abstain from drugs and alcohol.

“It’s not a place to just hang out all day and watch TV or sleep,” Mueller said. “We’re not supposed to get so comfortable that we want to stay. We have work to do while we’re here, we have goals to achieve. If you surrender to the program, you will succeed.”

Mueller is proof. When she arrived at Evergreen six months ago with only the clothes she was wearing, she walked with her head down, unsure of how to interact with the women there.

She found motivation in those who were near completion of the program. “They had it together. They walked confidently. They were strong. I wanted what they had, so I knew I was going to do whatever it took,” she said.

Today, Mueller is a model for newcomers to Evergreen. “I have a job. I don’t need to ask people for money, I’m moving into a new place, and I’m staying away from the drugs,” she said. “I’m not afraid to tell my story because I’m not embarrassed anymore.”

Thomas acknowledges that Evergreen’s treatment program is not easy, but its challenges yield to a new life of hope and health.

“We make them work at their addiction. We make them get a sponsor, build a support system, address their spirituality. It’s work that they’ve been avoiding most of their lives,” Thomas said.

“As soon as something hurts or becomes difficult, they want to use drugs. Most people develop coping skills to wade through pain or challenges, but for people who discovered drugs at a pretty early age, they take a needle or pill to feel better instantly. That’s what we’re competing against,” she said.

“The work we’re asking them to do is painful, but the light at the end of the tunnel is that we’ll give tools that will last forever,” Thomas said. “That’s the product we’re pushing. When you buy it like Stacey did, you have joy, hope, a positive attitude and a relationship with God, and tools to never use drugs again.”

Support Evergreen House
You can help women in recovery from substance abuse with wish-list items.

Contact Lydia Thomas at lthomas@cchbg.org or 717-412-4594.

Monetary donations can be made through the “Donate” button at Catholic Charities’ website, www.cchbg.org.

Select “substance abuse services” while donating.

Wish-List Items
Undergarments
Toiletries
Bath Towels
Entertainment Cards (movie theaters, mini golf)
Bus Passes

Catholic Charities Receives Two Accreditations

Catholic Charities is one of two agencies in the state that maintains both a state-wide accrediting entity, the Pennsylvania Association of Non-Profit organizations (PANO) and an international accrediting body, the Council on Accreditation (COA).

It recently received accreditation in both.

“The Standards for Excellence Accreditation program is granted to well-managed, responsibly governed organizations that are deserving of the public’s trust,” explained Tish Mogan, Standards for Excellence Director for PANO. “The board and staff of Catholic Charities have shown an extensive level of commitment to this process, and their pursuit of the Seal of Excellence confirms that they believe strongly in promoting a culture of ethics in their operations and governance.”

Although the agency already has multiple accountabilities that include funders, government, the agency board, auditors and licensing entities, accrediting bodies add another layer of oversight and review.

“It is about best practice,” said Pete Biasucci, who spearheaded the effort for the agency. “The standards that are held out by accreditors measure the depth of compliance in a number of areas and offer the current thinking in terms of administrative policies and service practice.”

Although there is some overlap in the reviews, the PANO reaccreditation process focuses largely upon governance, fiscal and board responsibilities, while COA is much more broad and service focused.

“Our COA review lasted a year beginning with a survey of agency clients, board members, staff, contractors and community members. The process then moved to the creation of a self-study that involved each agency program and the submission of more than 400 documents, followed by a four day on-site review,” Biasucci said.

Mark Totaro, agency CEO, summed up the effort. “This simultaneous reaccreditation by the two organizations was a monumental task. The amount of time and effort spent by our entire staff was incredible. It is a good check and balance to incorporate best practices both organizationally and programmatically. We proudly display both organizations’ logos on our business cards and stationery. Furthermore, it informs donors and funding sources that we have been through the scrutiny and have met the requirements and standards to ascertain compliance and certification.”


Monetary donations can be made through the “Donate” button at Catholic Charities’ website, www.cchbg.org.

Select “substance abuse services” while donating.

Wish-List Items
Undergarments
Toiletries
Bath Towels
Entertainment Cards (movie theaters, mini golf)
Bus Passes
Fight against Addiction Calls Catholic Charities Program, Personnel to Action

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

“The opium that you sent is pure and of good quality. I hope you will take care of the seed,” Dr. Thomas Bond of Philadelphia wrote to a Pennsylvania farmer on August 24, 1781.

Opiates were legally and freely accessible in the United States from physicians, drug and grocery stores, and mail order by the 1800s. Elixirs containing opium and morphine, the chief active ingredient in opium, were marketed freely. Still, the powerful addictive properties of the drugs did not go unnoticed.

An article in Catholic World from September 1881, “The Opium Habit,” provided two paths for recovery: “One consists in immediately giving up the use of the drug and suffering the consequences. The other contemplates a gradual lessening of the dose until a barely perceptible quantity is taken. … While the battle for liberty is being fought the patient should be treated as a sick man – which he really is – and his misfortunate habit referred to as a misfortune, not a crime, which it is not.”

Addiction to opioids is not new. But the number of individuals and families impacted by the drug has created an epidemic in the United States.

Heroin, introduced in 1874, is a semi-synthetic opioid made from morphine. Between 2010 and 2016, the rate of heroin-related overdose deaths increased by a factor of 5 – more than 15,469 people died in 2016.

Fentanyl, first made in 1960, is a synthetic opioid that is 80-100 times stronger than morphine. In 2017, it became the most widely used synthetic opioid in medicine.

The most recent statistics on opioid overdose from the CDC are sobering:
• Around 66% of the more than 63,600 drug overdose deaths in 2016 involved an opioid.
• In 2016, the number of overdose deaths involving opioids (including prescription opioids and illegal opioids like heroin and illicitly manufactured fentanyl) was 5 times higher than in 1999.
• On average, 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.

Those statistics are for opioid-related deaths alone. They don’t account for numerous other substances, like cocaine, methamphetamine or alcohol.

Addiction is a topic that’s miles wide and miles deep,” said Dr. John Pagana, a family physician who received special training in drug and alcohol treatment from the Betty Ford Center in California. Pagana runs a free clinic in Sunbury where he treats people with substance abuse addictions. He is also a member of Catholic Charities’ Board of Directors.

“Treatment starts with the understanding that addiction is a disease, not a disgrace,” he said.

“Addiction is addiction, regardless of your drug of choice – pills with extreme amounts of caffeine, whiskey, opioids,” he said. “Addiction is a complex disease, and it changes the biochemistry of the brain. The brain convinces the user that the drug is necessary for survival.”

For this reason, people with addictions will do things they normally wouldn’t in order to get their fix – like steal or lie. It also makes quitting difficult.

Pagana said 12-Step programs like Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous offer successful paths to recovery.

Some people say, ‘They’ve caused it themselves. They deserve everything they get.’ First, that’s not a Christ-like attitude, and it doesn’t help the person. Second, it doesn’t change the fact that addiction is a chronic, progressive and terminal disease. It takes a lifetime to treat – just like diabetes and heart disease.”

~ Dr. John Pagana, Family physician certified in drug and alcohol treatment

In 12-Step programs, you’re turning your life over to a greater power. You’re being held accountable and finding support and fellowship,” he said.

Evergreen House, Catholic Charities’ residential program for women in recovery, incorporates 12-Step programs into treatment.

Lydia Thomas, director at Evergreen, said there are countless ways to attack addiction.

It starts with prevention and early intervention. Experimentation is the first stage of addiction.

“We need to prevent use,” Thomas said. “If a kid is using at age 12, why is that? Are his parents using? Is he home alone? Is he skipping school? We need to look at what we’re doing to help him.”

Education is also a key component. Thomas spoke of increased efforts nationwide to help people find access to treatment, and know the signs and risks.

Increased use of Medication-Assisted Treatment is also helping in the battle. Clinics and physicians are turning to methadone or naltrexone to help people transition away from the substances they’re addicted to.

“Many treatment options exist, but the person first has to make up their mind that they’re going to give up the drug,” Pagana said. “And the community at large needs to be behind the fight.”

He cautioned against blaming people for their addiction.

“So many people say, ‘They’ve caused it themselves. They deserve everything they get.’ First, that’s not a Christ-like attitude, and it doesn’t help the person. Second, it doesn’t change the fact that addiction is a chronic, progressive and terminal disease. It takes a lifetime to treat – just like diabetes and heart disease,” he said.

Armed with prevention, education and intervention programs, communities, agencies and health care professionals continue the fight.

“We’re addressing patterns of family history of addiction, of pre-teens experimenting, and of doctors writing unnecessary and dangerous prescriptions,” Thomas said. “We keep fighting the monster.”

“There is no cure for addiction, and it can strike anyone,” Pagana said. “We can’t blame people for having the disease, but we must hold them responsible for getting treatment.”

(Contributing to this story was Pete Biasucci, Assistant Executive Director of Catholic Charities.)
The talk in early August when the air was still hot and stuffy and the football season was about to start, was players and coaches of Bishop McDevitt expressing confidence that they had the goods to compete for a second state championship that has eluded them for more than two decades.

Who could argue? With speedy wide-outs like Nazir Burnett and T’nyis Becker and running back CJ Reyes-Diggs along with seasoned quarterback Chase Diehl, the pieces of the puzzle were spread out neatly on the table, needing only to be fit together.

With only one blemish on their regular season record, the Crusaders cruised into the District 3 Class 4A championship game against Berks Catholic the day after Thanksgiving at Manheim Township High School in a rematch of last year’s final that saw the Saints beat the Crusaders by a few touchdowns.

Top, left: Bishop McDevitt’s CJ-Reyes-Diggs punches in one of the Crusaders’ seven touchdowns against Berks Catholic in the district final.

Top, right: Crusaders’ fullback Devyn Clair plows forward for a big gain as a host of Saints tacklers try to bring him down.

Left: Bryce Barnes, offensive lineman, clutches McDevitt’s 2018 District 3 trophy.

Right: Crusaders’ defensive back, Ben Marsico, tries to break up a Saints’ pass play that turned the game’s momentum in the fourth quarter.

CHRIS HEISEY, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS
In this year’s big game, one McDevitt had clearly waited 365 days to avenge, the Crusaders beat the Saints, 41-31, in a physical and entertaining game on a dank day on which the mercury never climbed above freezing. With the Crusaders leading by 17 points going into the fourth quarter, the Saints hit a long homerun touchdown pass that changed the game’s momentum. On the ensuing kickoff, McDevitt fumbled inside their own 20, and Berks Catholic scored two plays later to close the gap to 34-31. It took only 37 seconds to stun the Crusaders.

What followed was “the drive,” arguably one of the best ever for McDevitt football given the moment. The drive, 18 plays, 69 yards, ate up more than eight minutes of clock before the clinching touchdown on a fourth and five pass play from Diehl to Burnett to seal the win. It was a drive that featured a clutch fake punt to erase another fourth and five; there was also a nifty third and 16 curl route to Becker that kept it alive.

It was the 14th District 3 title for the Crusaders. They are 55-8 all-time in district playoff games. That’s an extraordinary mark set by this program.

But the road to Hershey and the summer-set goal of the state final leads through Erie these days. Erie Cathedral Prep, defending state champ, easily rolled through their district bracket to set up a Nov. 30 tilt at Mansion Park in Altoona. These two programs have met multiple times in recent years, and the Ramblers beat McDevitt a few years ago to begin their late run of state final appearances.

The momentum of the Crusaders’ drive of the week before got lost somewhere on the 165-mile trek to Mansion Park and the football-perfect 39-degrees and calm winds. The Ramblers struck for three scores in the first eight minutes and the Crusaders found themselves at the bottom of an immovable mountain. And great, playoff tested teams like Erie Cathedral Prep pounce on teams that are battling tenseness on the big stage. Once down, the Crusaders could not use their effective running game. The final score was 48-7.

Knowing the Crusaders had to throw to mount a comeback, the Ramblers covered well in the secondary and gave Diehl less time to find his receivers. It was not that Erie Cathedral Prep put more talent on the field; however, football is a game all about momentum, and the Ramblers captured it on the first series and never gave it back.

This school year, as part of the SportsLeader program in Diocesan high schools, classmates and teammates are participating in Rosary Rallies. Students at Bishop McDevitt High School in Harrisburg held their Rally on Nov. 20. It included Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament led by Father Kevin Coyle, chaplain, and worship music led by the school choir.

Students prayed the World Mission Rosary, with each decade of colored beads representing a different continent. A Diocesan initiative of evangelization through sports, the Rosary Rallies are a component of the SportsLeader apostolate, which is based out of Kentucky and is in more than 100 high schools across the country. Two years ago, the Diocese of Harrisburg became the first in the country to implement the SportsLeader program in all of its high schools.

SportsLeader has 4 basic pillars: virtue formation, Catholic identity, mentoring and ceremonies. The Rosary Rallies are part of the Catholic identity pillar.
Tell me about your childhood.

My mom was Catholic. My dad was not initially. He came into the Catholic Church when I was in high school. I have three siblings and we all were raised in the faith. We went to Mass every Sunday and we did different things at church here and there. I recognized myself as Catholic in a public school in a rural area were there weren’t many Catholics. I considered myself being unique in that way.

I had a good experience in the faith. I learned about it, and had good and somewhat powerful experiences at Mass. I wouldn’t say the faith was the absolute center of my life in grade school and high school, but it was important to me.

Father Robert Sharman was my pastor at St. Bernard Parish in New Bloomfield. I got to know him more while I was in college and during seminary. I also got to know young priests while I was in college at the University of Pittsburgh.

In college, you had an encounter with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

There were a lot of big moments in my life in college, not only growing in my faith but also discerning what God was calling me to enter into. I had a particular moment in front of the Blessed Sacrament that was in the midst of my discernment. I was discerning whether or not to graduate college and work as an engineer for a while. I was discerning to be a missionary on a college campus and had started the application process for that. I had a powerful encounter in front of the Blessed Sacrament where I had this experience of feeling the peace of God calling me to priesthood in the middle of my decision making. I realized not only was it an option, but something in which I would be fulfilled. It was a huge moment in prayer, realizing that if I’m called to this, I will be fulfilled.

What was the transition to seminary life like after your time in college?

It is a big leap for most guys because you’re coming into a regimented lifestyle where you are encouraged to pray for two or three hours a day – not only in daily Mass but in the Liturgy of the Hours several times a day, and also a silent Holy Hour. And then you have coursework and pastoral experiences on top of that.

For me, coming from electrical engineering into philosophy was a big change because I went from all math classes to reading and writing. The seminary is a very special place because of the quality of the guys who are there. At Mount St. Mary’s, you have 150 seminarians and most of them have already had a college experience in some way. You’re all pursuing the same thing – first holiness and then this vocation. There’s really an authentic fraternity of guys. You have good friendships, you build each other up, you learn theology and philosophy together, you’re doing all these natural things together as far as teaching children, visiting hospitals or nursing homes. You’re able to do social things with them as well – like football, book clubs – which is healthy as well. Seminary is a formative experience in a lot of ways.

You were ordained six months ago. What have you most enjoyed about being a priest?

You never know what the experience of celebrating Mass is going to be like until you do it. You never know what hearing Confessions is going to be like until you do it. Those two things are the most fulfilling and beautiful things for me.

Getting to know families at the parish and being with them is really beautiful and it’s one of the greatest joys to be a spiritual father to a lot of families. And I’m part of a parish family. We have a school, so I get to spend time with the kids, see them grow and teach them religion. That’s an awesome aspect that I wasn’t expecting.

One of the bigger challenges was being with people who are sick and suffering, close to death. Those are difficult things, powerful things, meaningful things, and so to give the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and to be with a family is something I wasn’t expecting to be such a part of.

You are a campus minister. What does that role entail?

I’m at York College a day and a half every week and Sundays for Mass. The biggest thing is just to get to know the students. We have a Bible study that has been really beautiful to talk about our faith, to pray together on a regular basis and in an intentional way. It’s getting to know the students and then encouraging them to grow in the faith in the midst of the challenges of the college experience. I want to encourage them to build each other up as a family on campus.

It’s a neat experience for me, being in college for four years and then seminary for six years. I know what the kids are going through and I’m wanting to help them out and encouraging them in their studies. I want them to know Jesus Christ because the faith is such an important part of our lives, not only in helping us make big decisions, but also as they go out into the world.

My friends in college were huge parts of my journey. I made really close friends in college. I talk to a lot of high school and college students about cultivating friendships. We need good, healthy friendships that are centered on the faith and growing closer to God. It’s so important to have friends who encourage you, keep you accountable and grow in the faith. It’s so lost in our society, and it’s critical to reclaim.

What’s an interesting fact about you?

When I was in engineering, I worked in Rugby schools for three different semesters where I was working full-time. In my second semester, my boss said, “In the project you’re working on, we’re trying to interface with a company in England, so we can send you there for a month.” I was in the town where a rugby was invented. It was a neat little town. I got to go with the guys I was working with to a local club. It was an awesome cultural experience and I got to travel while I was there. I didn’t get to a rugby game, but I got to a soccer game in Premier League, and that was a lot of fun.

I’m a big sports guy. I grew up playing baseball, football and basketball. I also like to watch sports. Growing up, I enjoyed the outdoors, hunting, fishing, going for a hike. As a priest, looking for ways to do that – to hike and go for runs – is a little more difficult. I cheer for the University of Pittsburgh in all sports. You need human things as part of our life as a priest to keep balance and to live a fulfilled life. It’s important for staying healthy and for leisure.
The Spirituality of Looking at Your Feet, Part II

By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC

Special to The Witness

Some time ago, I had the wonderful experience of participating in liturgy on Holy Thursday at a parish in another state. If you recall, in the liturgy on Holy Thursday the universal Church commemorates and celebrates the priesthood, as well as the institution of the Eucharist. For me, this liturgy has always been very meaningful. On this occasion, it was particularly so. The uniqueness of this specific celebration began with the entrance procession. As the deacon and priest journeyed up to the sanctuary, I noticed that they were not wearing shoes or sandals.

As the liturgy continued and the moment came for the washing of the feet, the parish reenacted it in a way I had never before experienced. The deacon took off his vestments and bent down to wash the feet of the priest who was sitting in a chair in front of the altar. The priest got up and the deacon took his place on the chair. A second-grade student who was wearing his first Holy Communion suit got up, took off his jacket and bent down to wash the feet of the deacon.

The boy took the deacon’s place. The oldest member of the parish got up, took off his jacket and washed the feet of the second grader. This process continued 12 times. Finally, the pastor washed the feet of one of his parishioners.

During the homily, the priest focused on the meaning of “common priesthood.” The Catechism of the Catholic Church says it this way: “The whole community...is...priestly. The faithful exercise their baptismal priesthood through their participation, each according to his own vocation, in Christ’s mission as priest, prophet, and king.” (p. 1546)

I could not help think about this as I continue discussion on the spirituality of looking at one’s feet.

Our feet ground us to the earth. This grounding makes us physically present to a specific time and place. In a sense, it makes us present to the now. In addition, because of our baptism, we are also made for heaven. Our eyes and our hearts should be focused heavenward.

If we live with this perspective, we are actually building the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. What we experience in liturgy, in service to others, can be en-

Retrouvaille Weekend for Troubled Marriages

January 11-13, 2019

Do you feel lost, alone or bored in your marriage? Are you frustrated, hurt or angry with your spouse? Are you constantly fighting? Or, do you simply shut down? Have you thought about separation or divorce? Does talking about it only make it worse?

Retrouvaille provides marriage help!

The next Retrouvaille weekend is scheduled for January 11-13, 2019. The program is under the auspices of the Diocesan Office of Family and Respect Ministries.

For more information and to register, visit www.retrouvaille.org or call 717-356-2185.

THE EPIPHANY ITALIAN MASS

EPIFANIA DEL NOSTRO SIGNORE

Sunday, January 6, 2019 at 12:15 P.M.

The program is under the auspices of the Diocesan Office of Family and Respect Ministries.

For more information and to register, visit www.retrouvaille.org or call 717-356-2185.

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Diocesan Notebook

Compiled by Jen Reed

Spiritual Offerings

Holy Hour of Reparation hosted by St. Peter Parish, Camp Hill, at St. Mary’s Chapel, Wrightsville, the first Friday of the month at 7 p.m. Spend an hour in prayer in the presence of the Lord. For information, contact David at StPetersBible@gmx.com.

Public square Rosary rallies on the square in New Oxford the second Saturday of the month, in Littlestown the third Saturday of the month, and in Hanover the fourth Saturday of the month. For information, call Grace at 717-624-2180.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the St. Pauline Center at 1150 Chestnut Street in Kulpmont on Fridays from noon-10 p.m., and Saturdays from 5 a.m.-7 p.m. The Chaplet of Divine Mercy is prayed in the chapel on Fridays at 3 p.m.

Friday evening prayers for healing in the Church.

The Order of Malta, Lancaster Region, Sanctity of Life Mass on Jan. 21 at St. Leo the Great Church, Rohrerstown. Celebrant and homilist is Rev. James J. Greenfeld, OSFS, president of DeSales University, certified pastoral counselor and author of articles on religious life, lifelong faith formation and the intersection of spirituality.

Inter-religious candlelight remembrance service for those who have experienced the death of a loved one to suicide, Dec. 9 at 6 p.m. at Sacred Heart Basilica, Hanover. Light refreshments in the parish hall following the service. Come together and you know you are not alone.

Education & Enrichment

Become the woman of grace God created you to be. The Women of Grace Foundational Study takes a multi-media approach to dig deeply into Catholic teaching using the study text, “Full of Grace,” Scripture, the Catechism, citations from Vatican II and other magisterial documents, and the biographies of 16 Catholic women saints. New nine-week study begins Jan. 12 from 9:30-11:30 a.m. in the former Holy Name of Jesus Church, Harrisburg. Contact Chris Arnold at carnold@womenofgrace.com or 717-379-6041.

Discernment workshop for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Jan. 12 from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 at St. John the Baptist School, New Freedom. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a Montessori-based approach to Catholic religious education where children as young as three can become aware of Jesus’ love for them through Scripture and the gestures of the Liturgy. Workshop is open to principals, Catechists, teachers and catechists of Pre K-3. RSVP by Dec. 15 to Sister Jane Keller, SSJ, at 717-235-2439 or sjkeller@sjbnf.org.

Theology on Tap – Lancaster, Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. at Tellus 360, located on King St. Kathy Alton, chair of the Theology Department at Lancaster Catholic High School, will speak on “The Holiday Dinner Table: Keeping Peace without Evading Truth.” Theology on Tap is a young adult ministry and evangelization outreach of the Diocese of Harrisburg. All young adults (single, married, Catholic or not) are invited to attend. Visit www.hbgdiocese.org/tot.


Six-week women’s Bible study, “Walking with Purpose: Living in the Father’s Love,” at Holy Infant Parish, Manchester, Tuesdays Jan. 22-Feb. 26 from 6:45-8:30 p.m. Discover just how much God loves you and how the Gospels are deeply relevant to our relationships. Contact Donna Gibereti by Jan. 13 at OurFaith1208@aol.com or 717-916-2275 to provide your name, email address and phone number. A donation of $15 will be collected on the first night for the book “Living in the Father’s Love.”

“Surviving Divorce” program at St. John the Baptist Parish, New Freedom, beginning Feb. 2 at 6:45 p.m. Twelve-week program includes videos featuring a psychologist, priests and personal testimonies. Topics include shock and grief, anger and forgiveness, money issues, dealing with children and a former spouse, and annulment and remarriage. Visit www.catholicsdivorce.com and www.sjbinfo.org. Cost is $25. Contact Deb Cousin at deb.cousin@verizon.net, Pat Smith at donte972@aol.com or the parish office at 717-235-2156 for information.

“Deeply Rooted,” a workshop for families, Jan. 12 from 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Mechanicsburg. Snow date is Jan. 19. Registration fee of $30 includes workshop sessions, babysitting (up to age 4), programming for children in K-6 and worship. Register at www.steas.net/family.

Manger Blessing at Christopher Club Featured during Mount Carmel Christmas Festivities

The Knights of Columbus, The Christopher Club, in Mount Carmel will conduct a traditional Blessing of the Manger on Dec. 8 at 7 p.m. in the club social rooms. Area priests participate in the ceremony, which is followed by Christmas caroling directed by a local vocal ensemble and a social with traditional holiday ethnic food, cookies and dessert.

This event is in conjunction with the events of Mount Carmel Downtown, “Christmas on Oak Street” and the Santa Claus Parade, which features vendors, crafts and food. Downtown events are from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. The parade is at 1 p.m., with gifts distributed to children.

Priests participating in the activities and the Manger Blessing include Father Frank Karwacki of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Father Ryan Fisher of Divine Redeemer, Father Andrew Stahmer of Holy Angels, Father Michael Huiskos of St. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church and Father Ignatius Hunter of St. Michael’s Church.

The Knights of Columbus. The Christopher Club rooms are decorated with seasonal pieces, lights, a wall mural, traditional and contemporary seasonal items and a hand-built manger with figurines depicting the Infant Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Sir Knight Michael White has directed the decorating of the club for many years.

The event is an opportunity for the entire community to begin celebrating the season by participating in a program which celebrates the true meaning of the season, the Birth of Christ.

Fundraisers & Events

Lebanon Catholic School needs host families. The school is welcoming ten students from Buenos Aires, Argentina, Jan. 6-Feb. 9. The students are 16 years old and attend Catholic school. Host families provide room, board and transportation to and from Lebanon Catholic School. A stipend is provided.

Adults 18 and older in residence need to obtain clearances. Contact Linda Ferrara at 717-343-1102 or OLBSDEACON@gmail.com.

Volunteers needed for Communion services and catechesis at Dauphin County Prison. Extraordinary Ministers and catechists are needed, as well as volunteers who can pray the Rosary and assist with services or visit with inmates at Chapel Talks. For information, attend a volunteers meeting and dinner, Dec. 11 at 6 p.m. at St Francis of Assisi Parish Hall, Harrisburg. Contact Deacon Jim Doyle at 717-647-2287 or sdolinski@team.nacelopendoor.org.

Volunteers needed for Cottage Art and Gift Shop at The Cottage Art and Gift Shop at the Harrisburg Catholic Center, Dec. 7. The event is an opportunity for the entire community to begin celebrating the season by participating in a program which celebrates the true meaning of the season, the Birth of Christ.


Noreen Netz Memorial 10K and 5K Run and Sufficiently Radical 1-Mile Walk, Dec. 15 at St. Francis Xavier School, Gettysburg. Race starts at 10 a.m., 1-mile walk at 10:15 a.m. Medals for 10K finishers. Prizes to top winners in each age category. Proceeds benefit the St. Francis Xavier School Development Fund and the Noreen Netz Scholarship Fund. Register at https://www.sfxcs-pa.org/ or email nmscholarship@sfxcs-pa.org.

York Catholic High School’s Christmas concert. Senior high concert is Dec. 9 at 6 p.m., and junior high concert is Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. Admission is free.

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OBITUARIES

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.

Camp Hill
Good Shepherd
Michael Moore

Catawissa
Our Lady of Mercy
Bella Marie Bressi

Elizabethtown
St. Peter
Frank H. Ember

Fairfield
Immaculate Conception BVM
Mary Carroll

Gettysburg
St. Francis Xavier
Patricia Baker
Mary King
Herman J. Redding, Sr.

Hanover
St. Vincent
Regis Joseph Lawrence

Harrisburg
Cathedral Parish of St. Patrick
Francis “Frank” Chupa
Holy Family
Jim Tadych, Sr.
Eugene Verano

Holy Name of Jesus
Elmer “Butch” Hughes
Dolores A. Slinker
Tina L. Yingling
St. Catherine Laboure
Mary Ellen Negrete
St. Margaret Mary
C. Nick Spagnolo

Hershey
St. Joan of Arc
Philip Deny, Sr.
Matthew Prang
Marion Prestia

Kulpmont
Holy Angels
Anthony Bressi
Charles Mannello

Lancaster
St. John Neumann
William Albright, Jr.
Harry Ball
Phyllis Burey

New Cumberland
St. Theresa
Carl Manning

Robert Shelton
George Wassum

Lebanon
St. Cecilia
John Eggert
Frances Lenovich

Lewisburg
Sacred Heart of Jesus
Arleen Stefan

Littlestown
St. Aloysius
Shirley Clarke

Mscherrystown
Annunciation BVM
Sylvia Masemer
Anthony Shradar

Mechanicsburg
St. Joseph
Edward Lechthanski
St. Katharine Drexel
Laura Winkelbauer

Millersville
St. Philip the Apostle
Karl Bunz
Robert Joline
Thomas Malloy
Dorothy Penrose

Deacon Manuel Velazquez, Sr.
Deacon Velazquez was a Catholic chaplain at the State Correctional Institution in Camp Hill. He assisted the Catholic Tribunal, was an active member of the Hispanic Apostolate and served in the formation of current and aspiring deacon candidates.

He was a United States Army veteran. Ranked as a Corporal, he served as a paratrooper for the 82nd Airborne and was stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C., and in Germany.

Deacon Velazquez is survived by his wife of 58 years, Basilia, six daughters, two sons, 21 grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, seven nephews, and seven nieces. He was predeceased in death by his parents, six brothers, and two sisters.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Dec. 4 at Assumption BVM Church in Lancaster. Burial was at St. Mary’s Cemetery, Lancaster.

New Freedom
St. John the Baptist
Sharon Lumpkin
Esther Grace Schuchart
Mary Brenda Sulpizio

Palmyra
Holy Spirit
Josephine Kline

Selingsgrove
St. Pius X
Richard Moyer

Sunbury
St. Monica
Corrado “Lou” DiCeglie

Trevorton
St. Patrick
Francis J. (Mick) Sager

York
St. Joseph
Barbara Ann McDonnell
St. Rose of Lima
Roger Harris
Calogero Iati

Father Thomas Mannion
Father Thomas I. Mannion, 82, died Nov. 25 at UPMC Pineville Community Osteopathic Hospital, Harrisburg.

He was born Feb. 4, 1936, in Mount Carmel, a son of the late Joseph and Helen Jakubowski Mannion.

He graduated from St. Charles College in Catonsville, Md., in 1956, and from Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md., in 1965. He was ordained May 15, 1965, at St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg by Bishop George L. Leech.

Throughout the course of his priesthood in the Diocese of Harrisburg, he served as assistant pastor of St. Margaret Mary Parish in Harrisburg, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Lancaster and the Cathedral Parish of St. Patrick in Harrisburg. He served as pastor at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Abbottstown and at Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Catawissa from Aug. 1989 until his retirement in June 2017.

Father Mannion also served as the Catholic chaplain of Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill, Lancaster General Hospital, Harrisburg General Hospital and Danville State Hospital.

While stationed in Lancaster in 1968, together with his friend Nikita Zervanos of Lancaster General Hospital, he helped to create a drug prevention program for Lancaster and a treatment and rehabilitation center known as “Manos” – “Man” from Father Mannion’s last name and “Os” the last syllable of Dr. Zervanos’ last name. Spanish for “helping hands.” The program continues today.

Father Mannion was survived by his youngest brother, James, of Bristol; nine nephews; and a niece. He was preceded in death by his parents, and two brothers, Joseph and Francis.

Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Dec. 6, at Our Lady of Mercy Church. Burial was to be at St. Mary’s Cemetery, Mount Carmel.

Sister M. Jamesann McCue
Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister M. Jamesann McCue died Nov. 26 at Our Lady of Peace Residence in Scranton, Pa.

Born Aug. 15, 1928, in New York, N.Y., she entered the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1952.

Sister Jamesann served as a teacher at Cathedral Elementary School in Scranton, and in New York, North Carolina, Florida, Peru and Maryland. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, she taught at St. Joseph School in Danville from 1968 to 1970.

Sister Jamesann also served as an assistant in the IHM Business Office at the IHM Center in Scranton from 1987 to 1996, and pastoral care coordinator at Holy Family Parish in St. Peters burg, Fla., from 1996 to 2006.

From 2006 until the time of her death, Sister Jamesann was a prayer minister at Holy Family Convent in St. Petersburg and later at Our Lady of Peace Residence in Scranton.

She received Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in elementary education from Marywood College.

Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Nov. 30 at Our Lady of Peace Residence from 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. for a short time after Masses Dec. 15 and 16. Cookies, cakes, pies and holiday breads.

St. James Parish in Lititz, Christmas choral concert, Dec. 8, at 7:30 p.m., featuring Voices of the Valley, under the direction of Gregg Mauroni. The Choir

celebrates its 41st season with excerpts from Handel’s Messiah, carol settings by Mack Wilberg, and a cappella works by Olaf Christiansen. Free-will offering accepted.

Job Openings
Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Harrisburg seeks full-time Parish Business Manager. Position assists pastor in the overall administration of the parish with respect to personnel, finance, buildings and grounds, parish committees and organizations, and scheduling. A Bachelor’s degree in accounting or business administration or its equivalent is required as well as a minimum of three years of experience in business administration and personnel supervision. Send résumé and salary requirement to holynameofjesusparishharrisburg@hbgdiocese.org or Holy Name of Jesus Parish, 6150 Allentown Boulevard, Harrisburg, PA 17112.

DECEASED CLERGY

Father Stephen Rolko, 1993
Msgr. Joseph Bradley, 1996
Father John Aurentz, 1997
Father Viate Leonard Casey, 1999
Father Joseph Blascovich, 1999
Father Robert Kobularik, 1999
Deacon Sabino “Sam” Moschella, 2013
Deacon Joseph H. Fennessy, 2015
Deacon Andrew Fine, 2018.

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Holiday bake sale at Holy Family Parish in Harrisburg, Dec. 15 from 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and for a short time after Masses Dec. 15 and 16. Cookies, cakes, pies and holiday breads.

The Catholic Witness • December 7, 2018
Pope Offers Prayers for Victims of Wildfires; Death Toll Climbs

Catholic News Service

Cal Fire officials reported in late November that the death toll had reached 77 in the Camp Fire north of Sacramento, one of the deadliest blazes in the state. The number of people who are missing has reached almost 1,000.

At the Vatican, Pope Francis said, “A special prayer goes to those affected by the fires that are plaguing California. ... May the Lord welcome the deceased in his peace, comfort their families and support those who are involved in relief efforts.”

Some 150,000 acres had been scorched and 12,794 structures destroyed by the Camp Fire.

“The tremendous loss from the Camp Fire ravaging parts of the diocese is devastating,” said Bishop Jaime Soto of Sacramento. “The families in Paradise and the surrounding communities affected by the fire can rely on the support of our prayers.”

The entire population of Paradise of about 30,000, was forced to evacuate; the town was destroyed.

“We also pray for the brave men and women responding to this disaster and battling the fires,” the bishop added in a statement posted on the diocesan website, www.scd.org. “May all those who have died in this catastrophic inferno be granted eternal repose in the merciful hands of the Lord Jesus.”

Bishop Soto celebrated Mass Nov. 18 at St. John the Baptist Church in downtown Chico for all those affected by the Camp Fire. He especially invited the community of St. Thomas More Parish in Paradise; their church was in the direct line of fire.

Many of St. Thomas’ parishioners have lost their homes. The Sacramento Diocese confirmed that the church and school buildings survived the fire. The new rectory, old rectory and parish hall were destroyed.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul and Northern Valley Catholic Social Service were working with partner organizations on local relief and recovery efforts. Donations can be made through the Sacramento Diocese by visiting www.scd.org/donate (choose the Fire Assistance Fund).

Residents of Southern California have been coping with the Woolsey Fire near Los Angeles, which started Nov. 8, the same day as the Camp Fire. Both fires were fueled by low humidity and strong winds.

Residents displaced by the Woolsey Fire were being allowed to return home. The fire burned close to 97,000 acres in Los Angeles and Ventura counties, destroyed 1,452 structures and damaged another 337. Three fatalities were confirmed.

Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez asked all people of faith and goodwill to join him in offering prayers and support for everyone affected by the fires in Southern California.

“The devastation of the wildfires continues throughout our state. We need to keep praying for those who have lost their lives and their homes and livelihoods, and for all the men and women fighting the fires,” said Archbishop Gomez.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles has started a fund to help the victims of these fires. Donations can be made at www.archla.org/fires.

“These funds will assist families within our parish communities in their recovery efforts,” he said.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles has been providing support to the communities affected by the fires through Catholic Charities of Los Angeles and local parishes and schools.

MARCH FOR LIFE

Baby Shower

Do you want to support local mothers? Are you unable to attend the March for Life, or want to support local pro-life efforts? Contribute to the March for Life Baby Shower!

Where: Holy Name of Jesus, Harrisburg, PA 17112 (Social Hall, Old Church)
When: Sunday, January 20, 2019, 2 - 4 pm
Needs: Diapers; formula/food; equipment; clothes (new or gently used)

All material gifts will support local pregnancy resource centers. All financial gifts will support “Pennies for Life.” Event sponsored by the Harrisburg Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (HDCCW) and The Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Harrisburg.

46th Annual March for Life

Friday, January 18 • Washington, D.C.

“Unique from Day One: Pro-Life Is Pro-Science”

The 46th annual March for Life, the world’s largest annual human rights demonstration, will be held January 18, on the National Mall at 12th Street.

10:00 a.m. — 11:00 a.m. Ben Shapiro Live Podcast
11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Musical opening with Sidewalk Prophets
12:00 p.m. Rally Program, featuring Abby Johnson
1:00 p.m. March up Constitution Avenue to Supreme Court and Capitol Building

For detailed information about the March, related events, transportation and parking, visit www.marchforlife.org