Prayer Vigil
7:00 P.M. at Holy Name of Jesus Church, Harrisburg.
This will include a live enactment of the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary by young people from throughout the Diocese, similar in many ways to the Living Way of the Cross. This event will replace the traditional Palm Sunday Youth Mass and Gathering for 2018. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Opening Mass for the Anniversary Year
10:00 A.M. at Holy Name of Jesus Church, Harrisburg.
Please join Bishop Gainer as celebrant and Homilist to begin the anniversary year celebration. A reception, featuring a sampling of ethnic foods from various ethnic and cultural groups that comprise the faithful of the Diocese, will be held immediately following the Mass.

Pilgrimage to Ireland
Join Bishop Gainer on a twelve-day pilgrimage to the Emerald Isle, sponsored by Catholic Charities. In keeping with the 150th anniversary celebration, the pilgrimage will include a visit to the grave of Saint Patrick, the Patron Saint of the Diocese of Harrisburg. Participation is limited.

Pilgrimage to Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception
SAVE THE DATE for this diocesan pilgrimage to the Basilica in Washington, D.C. Additional details will be forthcoming.

Closing Mass for Anniversary Year
In the afternoon at Holy Name of Jesus Church, Harrisburg.
Please join Bishop Gainer as celebrant and homilist for this special Mass to conclude our year-long anniversary celebration.

For more information: www.hbgdiocese.org/150

Lebanon Catholic Students Witness for Women and Babies at March for Life

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Attending the March for Life for the first time, Allison Lutz didn’t quite know what she would experience on the National Mall and Constitution Avenue in Washington, D.C. But as she boarded a charter bus with 22 fellow students from Lebanon Catholic School on Jan. 18, the wellbeing of women and babies was on her mind.
“There are so many women who haven’t thought of the option of adoption, or really been encouraged with it, and instead sought abortion as a problem solver,” said Lutz, a sophomore.
“Women need to know they’re cared for instead of being shamed for being young or unmarried moms, or pregnant when they’re not ready for a baby,” she said.
Lutz pointed to adoption programs, and pro-life pregnancy centers that offer loving support and options for women.
“Women should be cared for and helped, instead of being judged,” she said. “We need to show them how we can help them, to make good of the situation for moms and for their babies.”

Arriving at the National Mall during the rally, the students sloshed through snowy and wet grounds behind their school’s pro-life banner. Overcast skies gave way to the sun by the time Lebanon Catholic’s group – located near the back of the throng of marchers – made their journey toward the Supreme Court.
Along the way, nearby groups from schools, parishes and seminaries across the country led chants and songs accompanied by guitars and drums. A total of 219 students from Diocesan high schools, and 722 parishioners on 19 parish buses attended the March.
“Coming to the March for the first time, I thought the crowd would be
Bishop Gainer Continues Listening Sessions

Bishop Ronald Gainer will continue to host listening sessions throughout the Diocese of Harrisburg in February. He encourages anyone with questions regarding the Grand Jury Report, the Diocese’s response to abuse, our path forward, or any other questions or concern to attend one of these sessions. Each session will include opening remarks from Bishop Gainer and retired Pennsylvania State Police Capt. Janet McNeal, recently hired to oversee the youth protection efforts of the Diocese. Following their brief remarks, the floor will be opened for questions and comments.

In order to make the sessions welcoming and to encourage discussion, video and audio recording will not be permitted.

If you are unable to attend one of these sessions but would still like to ask Bishop Gainer a question, please email your question to AskBishopGainer@hbgdiocese.org. If you require special accommodations for accessibility, contact Larry Kiley, Office of Ministry with People with Disabilities, at 717-657-4804, ext. 322, or lkiley@hbgdiocese.org.

Bishop Gainer Responds to New York’s Abortion Law

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Our Catholic Church, along with many others who cannot tolerate the culture of death, have worked tirelessly since the Roe v. Wade decision to end abortion. The Pro-Life cause has made progress as we see the number of reported abortions decrease each year. However, the passage of the Reproductive Health Act in our neighboring state of New York last week could change that.

After last November’s elections, control of the New York state Senate changed hands. Immediately, Governor Andrew Cuomo jubilantly announced that his Reproductive Health Act would be given top priority with the new legislature in January 2019. True to his word, on January 22, the 46th anniversary of Roe v. Wade - the tragic Supreme Court decision which made it legal to kill unborn children - the New York legislature passed the bill and immediately Governor Cuomo signed the bill into law to a standing ovation.

This law is dangerous for women and is a death sentence for children. Under this law, abortion is now permitted up to 24 weeks of pregnancy. Children born at this stage of life are viable, that is, are routinely able to survive with medical care. This law also provides broad exceptions that would allow abortion up to moments before birth. It allows doctors and non-doctors to legally perform abortions and removes the protection of infants who are born alive during an abortion procedure.

Gov. Cuomo, who proclaims to be Catholic, did not just sign a bill into law; he signed the death warrant for countless, innocent babies, who can now be killed for any reason through all nine months of pregnancy. How heart-rending it is that these actions were met by many in the New York legislative chamber with resounding applause.

All people who understand the dignity and sacredness of human life are outraged by the provisions of this law. Now more than ever, we must stand together as a unified Church and pray for the mothers, fathers and children of New York. Now is the time to speak for the unborn and do all we can to peacefully advocate for their rights as human beings.

More than ever, you and I must resolve to pray and to work peacefully, yet with firm determination, for the legal protection of the right to life for children in the womb. I pray you will join me in asking our Lord to protect these most innocent and now ever more vulnerable babies’ lives.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Rev. Ronald W. Gainer

Secondary Principal Opportunity
Bishop McDevitt High School, Harrisburg

www.bishopmcdevitt.org

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

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

Desirable Leadership
• Collaborative leadership style with good interpersonal and team-building skills
• Oral and written communication and motivational skills
• Experience in instructional leadership
• Knowledge and application of instructional technology
• Ability to effectively represent the school and the Church

Submit application by March 4:
Livia Riley
Superintendent of Schools
Diocese of Harrisburg
4800 Union Deposit Road
Harrisburg, PA 17117-3710
(717) 657-4804, ext. 222
lrlry@hbgdiocese.org


Bishop Gainer’s Public Calendar

• February 3 – Celebrant for Diocesan Black Catholic Mass, St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, 12:15 p.m.
• February 7 – Stewardship: A Mission of Faith visits to Trinity High School, Camp Hill, 8:30 a.m., and Delone Catholic High School, McSherrystown, 1 p.m.
• February 5 – Stewardship: A Mission of Faith visits to Lancaster Catholic High School, 8:30 a.m., and York Catholic High School, 1 p.m.
• February 6 – Stewardship: A Mission of Faith visits to Lebanon Catholic School, 8:30 a.m., and Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School, Coal Township, 1 p.m.
• February 7 – Stewardship: A Mission of Faith visit to Bishop McDevitt High School, Harrisburg, 8:30 a.m.
• February 9 – St. Catherine Laboure School Gala, Harrisburg Hilton, 6 p.m.
• February 11 – Celebrant for Mass and Anointing for World Day of the Sick, Lebanon VA Hospital, noon.

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Sincerely in Christ,

Most Rev. Ronald W. Gainer
Diocesan Annual Campaign Encourages Faith Forward, Supports those Most in Need

By Rachel Bryson, M.S.
The Catholic Witness

When was the last time you thought about how many ministry programs the Diocese of Harrisburg offers to our communities? Would you be surprised to learn that because of your gifts and the gifts of parishioners throughout our 15 counties, we can support more than 40 ministry programs that directly impact those most in need? These many ministries are coordinated at the Diocesan level, implemented at the parish level and impact our families, friends and community at large. The Diocese is challenged every year to meet the ever-increasing demand for services, while staying within our budget. We would not be able to offer these services without the support of our pastors, parish staffs, volunteers and you, our parishioners.

With these thoughts in mind, today we are announcing a new campaign to support these ministries. The Diocesan Annual Campaign (DAC), which replaces the Bishop’s Annual Lenten Appeal, will be the main funding source for these more than 40 ministries and programs that are visible examples of our call to action — to support and show the love of Christ to families, individuals and our communities.

Whether ministries to support Catholic education at our 9 schools, religious education programs and RCIA classes; or evangelization programs at the 12 colleges and 14 hospitals within the Diocese, as well as the thousands of youth reached through our Catholic Youth Organization athletic programs; or the thousands of individuals and families assisted through our more than 20 human services programs offered through Catholic Charities, gifts to the DAC are vital to provide these services.

“This campaign is about collectively supporting the ministries of the Diocese,” said Kim Roche, director of the Office of Stewardship and Development. “None of us individually can support all of these programs on our own. Only through coming together as one Church can we have a lasting, positive impact on the lives of those most in need in our communities.”

With the Diocese’s commitment to transparency, a new website is being developed specifically for the DAC. This website will show the financial goal of the campaign, the uses for the monies collected and stories from those impacted by the generosity of our members.

“We’ll be sharing stories from the ministries and programs receiving funding, and profiling individuals who directly or indirectly benefited from the generosity of others,” said Roche. “These stories will continue throughout the year, as will updates to the new website, because we really want to show everyone the impacts of their gifts.”

“In my recent listening sessions, I have heard from many of our faithful. I can hear the pain and hurt in their voice. I too am saddened and angered by the actions of so many who were trusted to protect and guide the innocent. I know that for some, supporting the work of the Diocese comes at a difficult time,” said Bishop Ronald Gainer. “Yet, every day, a family or a person in need comes forward to ask for the assistance from programs that the Diocese offers. It could be services provided to someone who is battling addiction or a young family who needs financial counseling to make better decisions regarding their monthly expenses. Our parishes are seeing a rebirth with young adults entering the Church and engaged couples preparing for marriage in their Pre-Cana session. Because of generous and steadfast support from donors like you, we are able to provide these Diocesan led, Parish implemented and Parishioner supported programs and ministries.”

Ninety-five percent of the contributions to this campaign go directly to the ministry programs. The remaining five percent are used for administrative costs. No monies will be used to cover the Diocese’s legal or settlement fees.

Our theme for 2019, Faith Forward, invites all members of the Diocese to move ahead, strengthen our commitment to our faith and continue to be missionary disciples in the Church.

In the coming weeks, each household in the Diocese will receive a letter from Bishop Gainer, along with more details on the Diocesan Annual Campaign. Questions on the campaign should be directed to the Office of Stewardship & Development by calling (717) 657-4804, ext. 336, or via email at development@hbgdiocese.org.

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### IN-PEW COLLECTION: MARCH 10, 2019

Fifty-five percent of your gift to the 2019 Diocesan Annual Campaign goes to Catholic ministries. No monies from the campaign are used for the Diocese’s legal or settlement obligations. The remaining 5% is used for Diocesan Administrative costs.

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### DONOR INFORMATION

- **Company:**
- **Address:**
- **City:**
- **State:**
- **Zip:**
- **Daytime Phone:**
- **Description:**
- **Last Name:**
- **Spouse First & Last Name:**
- **Email:**
- **Telephone:**
- **Cellular:**

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### COMMITMENT INFORMATION

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- **One time gift of $**
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**To be paid**
- **Cash**
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**Amount enclosed**
- **Cash**
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- **Cash**

**Payment(s) to be made by:**
- **Cash**
- **Check**
- **Credit Card (Visa or MasterCard only)**

**Gift Giving Guide**

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**IN-PERSON COLLECTION: MARCH 9, 2019**

- **Parish:**
- **Please return completed form to the collection basket, your Parish Office, or to the Diocese of Harrisburg.**

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**For the Diocese of Harrisburg**

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**Diocesan Annual Campaign – Pledge Form**

Whether providing a warm meal at our many homeless shelters, supporting those recovering from addiction, helping an immigrant family put down roots, teaching a single mother the basics of child care, providing a Catholic education, or supporting the next generation of clergy, the Diocese of Harrisburg can only accomplish these works through your generous support. Together, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of so many living within our Diocese. Please support the Diocesan Annual Campaign.

“A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.” (Proverbs 11:25)
Marchers Urged to Stand Strong, Fight for Life with ‘Compassion, Hope’

By Julie Asher
Catholic News Service

Those who stand up for the dignity of life in all its stages and want to see this respect for all life enshrined once again in U.S. law have a friend in the Pence family and the Trump administration, Vice President Mike Pence told the March for Life crowd on the National Mall Jan. 18.

Pence and second lady Karen Pence were a surprise addition to the roster of speakers at the rally, and after his remarks, the vice president introduced a videotaped message by President Donald Trump, which also was unexpected.

“We gather here because we stand for life and believe as our Founding Fathers did that life born and unborn is endowed with certain unalienable rights, and the first of those is life,” Pence said.

In his message, Trump said the pro-life movement is “founded on love and grounded in the nobility and dignity of every human life. I will always defend the first right in our Declaration of Independence: the right to life.”

Jeanne Mancini, president of March for Life, welcomed the crowd and thanked them for coming once again to march to end abortion, what she called “the greatest human rights abuse of our time.”

She asked the crowd if they will keep marching to fight abortion, to march for the “poorest of the poor” and those who cannot march for themselves until “we no longer need to march” and abortion “is unthinkable.” She received a resounding “yes” to each question.

Looking out from the speakers’ platform, she declared the crowd to be bigger than she has ever seen in her seven years as head of March for Life.

No official crowd counts are available for such events, but ahead of this year’s rally and March, organizers expected more than 100,000 to participate.

“We must keep marching for life every day of the year,” Mancini said, and she asked each marcher to share his or her pro-life story on social media because even those stories about “why we march” can change others’ minds about abortion.

Before she gave her remarks, Mancini introduced Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the U.S. Bishops’ Committee on Pro-life Activities. He offered the opening prayer for the March and also urged the crowd to go “change the world!”

In a statement issued later in the day to mark the Jan. 22 anniversary of Roe v. Wade, Archbishop Naumann called on the faithful “to pray for an end to the human rights abuse of abortion, and for a culture of life, where through God’s grace all will come to know they are made in his divine image.”

The theme for this year’s March for Life was “Unique From Day One: Pro-Life Is Pro-Science,” focusing on how scientific advancements reveal “the humanity of the unborn child from the moment of conception.”

In his remarks, Pence urged the pro-lifers to stand up for God’s creation, spread their message with compassion and hope, and not let their detractors dissuade them.

In 1973 with its Roe decision, he said, the Supreme Court turned “its back on life” but the pro-life movement was born, “motivated by love and truth,” and has been “winning hearts and minds ever since,” he added.

“We know in our heart of hearts, life is winning in America once again,” he said, pointing out the many pregnancy centers helping women across the nation, adoptive families “who open their hearts and homes,” and pro-life leaders who have stepped up to serve in the government.

Other speakers included Ben Shapiro, editor-in-chief of The Daily Wire; three members of Congress – Sen. Steve Daines, R-Montana, and Reps. Dan Lipinski, D-Illinois and Chris Smith, R-New Jersey; a Democratic member of the Louisiana Legislature, Rep. Katrina Jackson; Alveda King, Priests for Life’s director of civil rights for the unborn; and Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, CEO of the Knights of Columbus.

Youth Director Hosts Mini-March

Molly Lahr, Youth Director of St. Peter Parish in Elizabethtown and Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Middle-town, led a Pro-Life Mini-March for youth on Jan. 19.

For the inaugural event, Lahr relied on the camaraderie of councils, ministries and children from both parishes.

Students from Seven Sorrows School led a Respect for Life Rosary of the Joyful Mysteries along with a prayer for the close of an abortion clinic. Following the prayer service, Lahr welcomed parishioners and guests to light refreshments and several exhibits of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Harrisburg and the parishes’ ministries. Some of those exhibits included Lourdeshouse Maternity Home, the Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation and St. Peter’s Respect Life Ministry. Despite the inclement weather, 30 guests were able to be the voice for the voiceless that day.

“We are excited to work alongside some of those mentioned charities year-round, by praying and donating to expectant mothers and new families in central Pennsylvania.

COURTESY MOLLY LAHR
rowdy and angry,” said Lutz. “It’s great to see everyone’s spirit, while still being peaceful and unified.”

Approaching Capitol Hill, the students slowed to take in a large display with photos of aborted babies, video testimonies of women who had an abortion, and information on post-abortion healing.

Michelle Dorsey, a freshman, was struck by the images. “I can’t believe that abortion is so common if people know this is really the result of it,” she said. “Still, it’s good to see people being educated on the reality of it.”

“I look at children, and I couldn’t imagine not having them in our lives,” Dorsey said. “I want to make a difference. I want to help change that…. Our generation is trying to rid the world of something that shouldn’t have been legal in the first place.”

Attending the March for Life for the first time, she said the uplifting mood was different from what she anticipated. “I like that the March isn’t a sad experience, but that we’re joyful in trying to make a difference for life.”

Senior Rachel McCarthy, who attended two previous Marches, said she is involved in the pro-life movement “because of the truth of abortion.” She said she attends the March to demonstrate her stance for life, leading by example rather than with words. “I hope my generation becomes the most pro-life one, and that we continue to appeal to youth to take a stand for life,” McCarthy said.

Lauren Shuyler, a religion teacher at Lebanon Catholic School, led the students on the March, alongside co-chaperone Monica Simmers, who teaches math, chemistry and earth science.

Shuyler, a 2003 graduate, said Lebanon Catholic’s participation in the March for Life speaks to the school’s identity. Its patroness is the Blessed Mother, “the most perfect example of being pro-life that we have in the Church,” she said.

“I was thrilled to see such a large group of our student population attending the March because it helps them see that they are not alone,” Shuyler said. “It puts into perspective for them what they say and do, who they pray for, what they support, who they will vote for and, choices they make have a real impact. These young people are the future of the pro-life movement in our country. It’s their generation that has been robbed of a third of its members through the horror of abortion.”

“Having the opportunity to take them on the March for Life is a great privilege,” Shuyler said. “It is not an easy day. It is not an excuse to get out of school. It’s hard, exhausting, cold, daunting, and 100% worth it. These students give me great hope for the future.”

Hope for the future was on Lutz’s mind too as she and her peers boarded the bus for their return home. “Seeing all those young kids there, I really think our generation will be the final push to end abortion,” she said. “In the media, you don’t see the pro-life side to the issue, or even conservative views. Seeing all these people come together for the pro-life cause, I feel like we will make the difference.”

Above: Andrew Dove, Josh Hartman, Kassandra Mancino, Shamar Lawrence and Allison Lutz lead fellow students in the March for Life.

Below: Rachel McCarthy and Maya Skettini react to images of aborted babies displayed along the sidewalks. The display also offered information for women seeking healing after an abortion.
Diocese Celebrates Life at Annual Respect Life Mass

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

“At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by, ‘I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in.’”

These powerful words by St. Teresa of Calcutta set the tone for the Diocese of Harrisburg’s annual Respect Life Mass, held on Sunday, Jan. 20 at Good Shepherd Church in Camp Hill. This Mass is celebrated every year to commemorate the lives lost to abortion since 1973 and to pray for building a stronger culture of life in our nation, from conception to natural death.

Celebrated by Father Stephen Kelley, pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in Columbia, those gathered at the Mass heard that Christ’s love is inseparable from His truth.

“One of my favorite quotes is from Dr. Peter Kreeft, that the moral teaching in the Scriptures makes more sense when you think of it, not as a set of rules that we must obey to get into heaven, but rather as a school of human formation,” said Father Kelley. “Because for us to get to heaven, that is, for us to want what heaven is, we need to be a certain kind of person.”

We may think that God wants certain types of actions, but he actually wants a certain type of people, he said.

“Mother Teresa once said, ‘Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use violence to get what they want,’” said Father Kelley, who is chaplain of the Diocese’s Rachel’s Vineyard ministry for post-abortion healing. “What kind of people are we? What kind of people should we be? Should we be people who love sacrificially, who accept suffering for the sake of love, or should we be people who use violence to get what we want?”

The Church will always be a place which offers healing and hope for those wounded by abortion, he added. “But wouldn’t it be better to stop the thing that’s shattering people into broken pieces in the first place?” he asked.

“The time of being lukewarm Catholics has to end. The time of punching the clock for the minimum required time in church has to end. St. Catherine of Siena said, ‘Be who God meant you to be, and you will set the world on fire,’” said Father Kelley. “My brothers and sisters, we need to set the world on fire. Not to destroy, but to give life. Not with violence, but with the transforming power of divine love. Only light can scatter darkness. Only God’s love poured out can heal sin. We are the Church. We are the bride of Christ.”

The Diocese has many Respect Life Ministries, which are overseen by the Office of Family and Respect Life. This office provides education to parishes, schools and other groups on the sanctity of life; encourages parishes and individuals to be more involved in pro-life groups and issues; and encourages individuals to petition their legislators for pro-life and pro-family value legislation.

This office also works with several pregnancy resource centers to assist women, and men, faced with an unplanned pregnancy. For more information on the Office of Family and Respect Life, turn to page 13 and visit www.hbgdiocese.org/respectlife.
By Mariah Chuprinski

Special to The Witness

The story starts much the same way: “I was looking for a Catholic women’s community, like the Protestant ones I’ve seen. I was looking for a Bible study for younger women. I was looking for something other than a moms’ group.”

“I was looking. When women in the Diocese of Harrisburg were looking to God in prayer, he answered abundantly with a new women’s ministry called Blessed Is She.

“We had moved a lot our first few years of marriage, and I was looking for community. I came across Blessed Is She online—it popped up on my Instagram. It was a ‘God moment’, and I thought, this is cool!” said Heather Moran, the leader of the East Shore group based at Holy Spirit Parish in Palmyra, one of two Blessed Is She groups in the Diocese.

“One reason I walked away from the Church [as a young adult] is because the Church didn’t have something for my age group. I wasn’t getting married, I didn’t have kids, I wasn’t retired—any of the groups that the Church really does take care of. That support is so important for people. If you don’t have that, there’s no reason to stay,” said Natalie Promio, who co-leads the West Shore Blessed Is She group alongside Rebecca Davis at St. Katherine Drexel Parish in Mechanicsburg. Both groups began in the fall of 2017.

Instagram, a photo-sharing social media site, is one of the tools Blessed Is She uses to spread encouraging devotional content for Catholic women online. It also produces daily e-mail reflections written by a team of Catholic women around the country.

The ministry also offers studies for a parish to purchase called “Blessed Conversations,” for women to read, pray about and discuss together in a parish hall or living room setting. The studies take passages from the Catechism and Scripture, as well a poignant reflections and guided discussion questions.

Many participants cited an increased commitment to prayer, greater charity toward other women, and a commitment to continual catechetical learning as positive outcomes they’ve noticed after getting involved with Blessed Is She.

But it’s the therapeutic, supporting nature of the group that has borne the greatest fruit, most women noted.

“Sometimes, the first couple times that people come, all they do is cry. It’s almost like they needed that space to cry, vent and release all of that in a safe place. You can’t just do that at the mall. The group allows you to let that out and also receive support, and help someone else in a similar situation,” said Promio, who is in her early 30s.

Though Blessed Is She is marketed as a younger women’s ministry, several older women attend the two groups in the Diocese, making the age range equal to almost 45 years.

“At first I wondered if I belonged because I’m a grandma. But I feel there’s something for everyone. I think we bless each other by listening to everyone’s stories,” said Kathy McQuaig, who attends the West Shore group.

Mary Krikorian, who attends the East Shore group, is in her 50s, and has five children, agreed. “We have women of different ages and generations who might not otherwise have reason to interact, but we have found that our common faith is a stronger bond than age or stage of life.”

“It’s nice to see older women’s perspective, telling us, ‘It’s going to be OK, I went through this and I was fine.’ It’s great to hear that reassurance from someone you’re not related to, from someone who is also Catholic and living in this culture as we are,” said Hannah Riffe, in her early 20s, who drives almost an hour from York to attend the West Shore group.

At times, some difficult issues are brought up. The West Shore group had an unexpected, profound moment when completing a study on the Blessed Trinity.

“We found that a lot of the women really struggled with identifying God as a father,” said Promio. “And working through a meditation led by one of the women in our group, we came to the realization that due to issues or traumas stemming from their earthly father, there was a deep void in the relationship we can have with God as our heavenly Father.”

Moran said the East Shore group often focuses on the negative nature of social media. “Many of us are realizing that it cannot take the place of face-to-face interaction and can give us a false idea of what our lives are supposed to look like,” she said.

The ministry was created in the Diocese of Phoenix, Arizona, in 2014 by a young woman who was seeking similar things as many of the women in our Diocese: a community for Catholic women. Since then, it has spread across the country and even abroad, and is known for its online presence which draws women into in-person, authentic, Christian relationships.

The ministry also sells devotional materials for solitary retreats around the country and produces online webinars on faith-based topics if a woman chooses to purchase a membership.

Blessed Is She also moderates Facebook groups, separated by region, where women post prayer requests and share encouraging words. The groups create a space where a woman can socialize and ask questions online, even if she can’t make it to an in-person group.

Blessed Is She in the Diocese of Harrisburg is under the support of Father Anthony Dill, pastor of Holy Spirit Parish, and Father Kenneth G. Smith, pastor of St. Katherine Drexel Parish.

For more information about the two Blessed Is She groups that currently meet, or for advice on starting your own group, e-mail Heather Moran at hmoran225@gmail.com or Natalie Promio at NPromio@skdparish.com. To connect with the local Blessed Is She group online, search “Blessed Is She // Central PA” on Facebook.

(Mariah Chuprinski is a member of St. CatherineLabouré Parish in Harrisburg. She is a part of the leadership team of Harrisburg’s Theology on Tap group, and is coordinating feature stories for The Catholic Witness on young adult ministry in the diocese. Mariah can be reached at mchuprinski@gmail.com.)

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Blessed Is She: A New Ministry for Women in the Diocese of Harrisburg

By Mariah Chuprinski

Special to The Witness

The story starts much the same way: “I was looking for a Catholic women’s community, like the Protestant ones I’ve seen. I was looking for a Bible study for younger women. I was looking for something other than a moms’ group.”

“I was looking. When women in the Diocese of Harrisburg were looking to God in prayer, he answered abundantly with a new women’s ministry called Blessed Is She.

“We had moved a lot our first few years of marriage, and I was looking for community. I came across Blessed Is She online—it popped up on my Instagram. It was a ‘God moment’, and I thought, this is cool!” said Heather Moran, the leader of the East Shore group based at Holy Spirit Parish in Palmyra, one of two Blessed Is She groups in the Diocese.

“One reason I walked away from the Church [as a young adult] is because the Church didn’t have something for my age group. I wasn’t getting married, I didn’t have kids, I wasn’t retired—any of the groups that the Church really does take care of. That support is so important for people. If you don’t have that, there’s no reason to stay,” said Natalie Promio, who co-leads the West Shore Blessed Is She group alongside Rebecca Davis at St. Katherine Drexel Parish in Mechanicsburg. Both groups began in the fall of 2017.

Instagram, a photo-sharing social media site, is one of the tools Blessed Is She uses to spread encouraging devotional content for Catholic women online. It also produces daily e-mail reflections written by a team of Catholic women around the country.

The ministry also offers studies for a parish to purchase called “Blessed Conversations,” for women to read, pray about and discuss together in a parish hall or living room setting. The studies take passages from the Catechism and Scripture, as well a poignant reflections and guided discussion questions.

Many participants cited an increased commitment to prayer, greater charity toward other women, and a commitment to continual catechetical learning as positive outcomes they’ve noticed after getting involved with Blessed Is She.

But it’s the therapeutic, supporting nature of the group that has borne the greatest fruit, most women noted.

“Sometimes, the first couple times that people come, all they do is cry. It’s almost like they needed that space to cry, vent and release all of that in a safe place. You can’t just do that at the mall. The group allows you to let that out and also receive support, and help someone else in a similar situation,” said Promio, who is in her early 30s.

Though Blessed Is She is marketed as a younger women’s ministry, several older women attend the two groups in the Diocese, making the age range equal to almost 45 years.

“At first I wondered if I belonged because I’m a grandma. But I feel there’s something for everyone. I think we bless each other by listening to everyone’s stories,” said Kathy McQuaig, who attends the West Shore group.

Mary Krikorian, who attends the East Shore group, is in her 50s, and has five children, agreed. “We have women of different ages and generations who might not otherwise have reason to interact, but we have found that our common faith is a stronger bond than age or stage of life.”

“It’s nice to see older women’s perspective, telling us, ‘It’s going to be OK, I went through this and I was fine.’ It’s great to hear that reassurance from someone you’re not related to, from someone who is also Catholic and living in this culture as we are,” said Hannah Riffe, in her early 20s, who drives almost an hour from York to attend the West Shore group.

At times, some difficult issues are brought up. The West Shore group had an unexpected, profound moment when completing a study on the Blessed Trinity.

“We found that a lot of the women really struggled with identifying God as a father,” said Promio. “And working through a meditation led by one of the women in our group, we came to the realization that due to issues or traumas stemming from their earthly father, there was a deep void in the relationship we can have with God as our heavenly Father.”

Moran said the East Shore group often focuses on the negative nature of social media. “Many of us are realizing that it cannot take the place of face-to-face interaction and can give us a false idea of what our lives are supposed to look like,” she said.

The ministry was created in the Diocese of Phoenix, Arizona, in 2014 by a young woman who was seeking similar things as many of the women in our Diocese: a community for Catholic women. Since then, it has spread across the country and even abroad, and is known for its online presence which draws women into in-person, authentic, Christian relationships.

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St. Patrick School in Carlisle Focusing on Developing LEADers

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

As Catholic Schools Week got underway Jan. 28, St. Patrick School in Carlisle was using the weeklong celebration to further the theme for its school year: L.E.A.D.

The acronym for “love, excel, act, dream” is being woven into classrooms, activities and teacher development. Catholic Schools Week afforded St. Patrick’s School with ample opportunity to shine a light on the mantra.

The week began with a visit from Bishop Ronald Gainer, who visited classrooms to read with students before enjoying lunch with them. Fourth and fifth grades shared a book they created about life at a Catholic school.

“The Bishop’s visits to our school are always a wonderful opportunity for students to get to see the man behind the title,” said Antoinette Oliverio, principal. “Bishop Gainer’s time with the students – whether it’s reading a book, sharing stories or breaking bread in the cafeteria – are a great reminder of how Jesus interacted with the people as both a leader and a peer.”

The L.E.A.D. theme extended throughout the week. The school’s community outreach project benefited Project Share, a local ministry that provides basic food and financial assistance to more than 1,000 families each month.

St. Patrick students also participated in a Living Rosary, a community day with first responders and a presentation on parables about love and forgiveness. The school community closed Catholic Schools Week with a schoolwide Mass.

Oliverio said the L.E.A.D. theme will continue with a leadership training program for students and faculty to be implemented this spring, made possible through a community grant.

“We are working to make ourselves a leadership school, giving our middle school students, in particular, opportunities to strengthen and demonstrate their leadership skills in the school and community,” she said.

Choose Catholic Schools

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Catholic Schools

Choosing A School For Your Child?
Consider Catholic Schools

Excellent Academics
95% of our Elementary students score above the national average in Language skills.
90% of our Elementary students score above the national average in Reading.
85% of our Elementary students score above the national average in Math.

Affordable Tuition
We are committed to making Catholic education an affordable option for families. Financial Aid and Scholarship programs are available to help with the cost of attending our schools.

High Graduation Rates
Over 98% of our students graduate from High School.

College Scholarships
Annually over $40 Million in scholarship funds are offered to graduates of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Harrisburg.

Tuition Assistance and Scholarships are available. Learn more at a school near you.
Find a school at www.GoCatholicSchools.org
Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg • 4800 Union Deposit Road • Harrisburg, PA 17111 • (717) 657-4804
Our Mother of Perpetual Help Students Successful in Stock Market

COURTESY OF OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP SCHOOL

Students from Our Mother of Perpetual Help School in Ephrata recently competed in the Fall Competitive session of the Stock Market Game. The contest is for students in grades six through eight. It is an online simulation of the global capital markets that engages students in the world of economics, investing and personal finance. Eighth-grade students Edward Oresch, Matthew Mercer and Daniel Titi earned first place in their region and first place in the Pennsylvania state level competition.

Resurrection Students Host Culture Fair

COURTESY OF RESURRECTION CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Sixth-grade students at Resurrection Catholic School in Lancaster invited the entire school Jan. 11 to a food tasting in their classroom as their end-of-unit project on the study of Western Europe.

Chocolates, cakes, bratwurst and breads abounded as students moved from one station to the next, more interested in the food but getting informed about European countries nonetheless.

Facts emerged during the Culture Fair: Belgium purchases more than 220,000 tons of chocolate annually; French macarons are meringue-based and never include coconut; Irish soda bread helped feed the population after the potato famine; Monaco is the second smallest country in the world and its national dish is a Swiss chard-filled pastry called the barbajiuans.

The most popular stop? Arguably, the Belgian chocolate truffles table. “It’s chocolate covered in chocolate, and I’m pretty sure you can’t go wrong with that,” said Sarah Hernandez.

More Catholic Schools Week Coverage!

This week’s edition went to press Tuesday morning of Catholic Schools Week. We’ll have much more coverage of schools’ activities in our next edition. In the meantime, follow the Diocese of Harrisburg on Facebook to see more about Catholic Schools Week.

St. Teresa Students Follow Record Journey across Antarctica

Earlier this winter, as adventurer Colin O’Brady made his record-setting 932-mile journey across Antarctica, students at St. Teresa of Calcutta School in McSherrystown traveled with him in their science class.

The sixth and seventh graders in Tiffany Stultz’s science classes monitored O’Brady through his GPS, and recorded his time and distance traveled each day. O’Brady, a native of Portland, Ore., started “The Impossible First” journey Nov. 3, and completed his mission Dec. 26.

Traveling solo with a 400-pound sled of supplies, O’Brady connected with followers on Instagram and Twitter. Students in schools around the world followed his journey and submitted questions. O’Brady answered one student question per day.

On two occasions, he answered questions submitted by students from St. Teresa. Connor asked how O’Brady managed to keep his water from freezing. The adventurer said he did so by boiling water at night and in the morning and pouring it into his thermos, and by placing Nalgene bottles inside his jacket to receive body heat.

To Gabe’s question of how he would protect himself from a wild animal, O’Brady noted that inland Antarctica was too cold for animals to survive.

Stultz said the interaction with O’Brady was “such an awesome experience for myself and my students. It was an event that made history, and we were a part of this awesome event.”
HDCCW Prayer Shawl Retreat
February 23
Good Shepherd Parish, Camp Hill

The Harrisburg Diocesan Council of Catholic Women invites women of the Diocese to their 8th annual Prayer Shawl Retreat.

The retreat will begin with Mass at 9:30 a.m., followed by knitting/crocheting, praying the Rosary, fellowship, and lunch. The retreat will conclude at 2:30 p.m. Beginners are welcome to this day of sharing and fellowship in this special ministry.

Cost of $10 includes lunch. Advance registration is required.

Call or text Kathy Kokoski at 717-448-8899 or Debbie Black at 717-514-8815, or email them at kakoko120@comcast.net or mvdbo1@verizon.net to register.

RSVP deadline is Sunday, February 10.

Pope Invites Young People to Join Global Prayer Network Online

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

Pope Francis helped launch a new mobile app and online platform connecting people around the world in prayer.

The pope presented “the official platform of the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network: Click to Pray,” Jan. 20 after praying the Angelus with visitors gathered in St. Peter’s Square.

Joined by Jesuit Father Frederic Fornos, head of the international prayer network, holding a tablet displaying the platform, the pope said it would be “here that I add my intentions and prayer requests for the Church’s mission.”

The prayer network, formerly called the Apostleship of Prayer, is a Jesuit-run special ministry. The web can also help us pray as a community, to pray together,” he said.

“Internet and social media are a resource in our era, a chance to stay in touch with others, to share values and plans and to express the desire to be a community. The web can also help us pray as a community, to pray together,” he said.

The website www.clicktopray.org and the mobile app — available for Android and iOS — are offered in six languages: Spanish, English, Italian, French, Portuguese and German. A version will soon be available in Vietnamese and Chinese, the site said.

Users are invited to “pray with the pope” using his monthly prayer intentions, to “pray every day” by receiving notifications and inspirational thoughts for prayer or reflection three times a day and to “pray with the network” where users, including Pope Francis, can share their prayers with others.

ITIAN MASS FOR THE FEAST OF SAINT JOSEPH
LA SANTA MESSA PER LA FESTA DI SAN GIUSEPPE

Sunday, March 17 at 1 p.m.
Church of the Holy Spirit • 300 West Pine Street, Palmyra, PA 17078

Father Joshua R. Brommer and Father Anthony Dill, Concelebrants

Special thanks to:
Father Joshua R. Brommer, Chaplain for the Italian Apostolate Ministry
Father Anthony Dill, Pastor of Holy Spirit Parish
Mario Billow of Daily Funeral Home

Through the generosity of the Collura and Manzella families, we will have a traditional St. Joseph Altar created in the social hall where the Italian Apostolate Ministry Committee will provide a dinner reception after Mass

For more information, contact:
Maria DiSanto, 717-554-5698, disanto1@comcast.net
Mariella Amato, 717-278-9420

Featuring Christopher West and Mike Mangione
April 2 at 7 p.m. • Bishop McDevitt High School, Harrisburg

The national touring event, “Made for More: Visions of the Promised Land,” weaves music, video, images and the spoken word into a message of hope. Join Christopher West, world-renowned teacher of St. John Paul II’s Theology of the Body, and folk/Americana musician Mike Mangione as they offer a vision of the Gospel like you’ve never heard.

The evening is hosted by St. Joan of Arc Parish in Hershey and is co-hosted/sponsored by St. Catherine Labouré Parish in Harrisburg, Holy Spirit Parish in Palmyra, St. Matthew Parish in Dauphin, Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Harrisburg, and Real Alternatives, which administers the Pregnancy and Parenting Support Services for the states of Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Indiana.

Tickets are $20.
Contact Lou Felice at 717-215-4175 or mathfamily1@yahoo.com.

HOLY MASS WITH THE RITE OF INSTITUTION OF ACOLYTES

Please join Bishop Ronald W. Gainer as Celebrant and Homilist for this special Mass to install the Candidates in formation for the Permanent Diaconate into the Ministry of Acolyte

Sunday, February 24, 2019 2:00 p.m.
Saint Catherine Labouré Parish
4000 Derry Street
Harrisburg, PA 17111

An instituted acolyte is specially appointed by the Church to assist the deacon and to minister to the priest. His duty is to attend to the service of the altar and to assist as needed in the celebration of the Mass. This is an important step along our candidates’ formation path.
Pope Wants Abuse Summit to Lead to Clarity, Action

By Carol Glatz

Catholic News Service

At the upcoming meeting on protecting minors, Pope Francis wants leaders of the world’s bishops’ conferences to clearly understand what must be done to prevent abuse, care for victims and ensure no case is whitewashed or covered up.

“The pope wants it to be an assembly of pastors, not an academic conference – a meeting characterized by prayer and discernment, a catechetical and working gathering,” Alessandro Gisotti, interim director of the Vatican press office, told reporters Jan. 15.

The Feb. 21-24 meeting on the protection of minors in the Church “has a concrete purpose: The goal is that all of the bishops clearly understand what they need to do to prevent and combat the worldwide problem of the sexual abuse of minors,” Gisotti said, reading from a written communique in Italian and English.

“Pope Francis knows that a global problem can only be resolved with a global response,” he said.

The pope announced in September that he was calling the presidents of the world’s bishops’ conferences, the heads of the Eastern Catholic churches and representatives of the leadership groups of men’s and women’s religious orders to the Vatican to address the issue.

In a separate communique, the Vatican press office said the meeting’s organizing committee met with Pope Francis Jan. 10. The committee members are Cardinals Blase Cupich of Chicago and Oswald Gracias of Mumbai, India; Archbishop Charles Scicluna of Malta, adjunct secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; and Jesuit Father Hans Zollner, president of the Centre for the Protection of Minors at the Pontifical Gregorian University and a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.

The members informed the pope about their preparations for the gathering, which will include plenary sessions, working groups and moments of common prayer and listening to testimonies.

Pope Francis has asked Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the former director of the Vatican press office, to moderate the plenary sessions.

The meeting will include a penitential liturgy Feb. 23 and a closing Mass Feb. 24, Gisotti said.

“Pope Francis guaranteed his presence for the entire duration of the meeting,” the communique said.

The organizing committee has already informed participating bishops that they should prepare for the gathering by meeting with survivors of abuse.

“The first step must be acknowledging the truth of what has happened. For this reason, we urge each episcopal conference president to reach out and visit with victim survivors of clergy sex abuse in your respective countries prior to the meeting in Rome to learn firsthand the suffering that they have endured,” said the committee in a letter released to the public by the Vatican.

Without “a comprehensive and communal response” to the abuse crisis, the committee said, “not only will we fail to bring healing to victim survivors, but the very credibility of the Church to carry on the mission of Christ will be in jeopardy throughout the world.”

The members also had sent participants a questionnaire so they could “express their opinions constructively and critically as we move forward, to identify where help is needed to bring about reforms now and in the future, and to help us get a full picture of the situation in the Church.”

Pope Francis, they had said, “is convinced that through collegial cooperation, the challenges facing the Church can be met. But each of us needs to own this challenge, coming together in solidarity, humility and penitence to repair the damage done, sharing a common commitment to transparency and holding everyone in the Church accountable.”

Resource Not Risk: Pope Reflects on Using Social Media for Good

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

Social media are anti-social, anti-human and anti-Christian when they are used to increase differences, fuel suspicion, spread lies and vent prejudice, Pope Francis said in his message for World Communications Day.

The Catholic Church and all people of goodwill see great potential in social media when the “net” and “networks” bring people together, help them share useful information and educate one another, he said.

But, the pope wrote, people’s “social web identity is too often based on opposition to the other, the person outside the group: We define ourselves starting with what divides us rather than with what unites us, giving rise to suspicion and to the venting of every kind of prejudice – ethnic, sexual, religious and other.”

Pope Francis’ message for World Communications Day, which most dioceses will celebrate June 2, cites a passage from Ephesians, “We are members of one another,” and focuses on moving “from social network communities to the human community.”

Using social networks to form and promote “community,” the pope said, implies encouraging interaction, support and solidarity.

Pope Francis’ latest foray into social media aims to promote that. During his Angelus address Jan. 20, he launched a new mobile app and online platform where he shares his prayer intentions, and people around the world can “click to pray” with one another.

The online and on-phones prayer community joins the much larger papal social media accounts on Twitter and Instagram.

Begun under Pope Benedict XVI, the @Pontifex Twitter account operates in English, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, French, Polish, Latin, German and Arabic. As of Jan. 23, the accounts had a combined total of almost 48 million followers.

The Instagram account, Francisus, opened in March 2016 and has more than 5.8 million followers.

In his World Communications Day message, Pope Francis said that forming strong communities, even online, requires people who are “animated by feelings of trust” and are pursuing a common objective. “The community as a network of solidarity requires mutual listening and dialogue based on the responsible use of language.”

And he cautioned that while social media can promote “the meeting is a stage along the painful self-isolation,” a risk to which young people are particularly vulnerable.

Opposing cyberbullying, isolation and division, he said, Christians are called to manifest that communion which marks our identity as believers. Faith itself, in fact, is a relationship, an encounter, and under the impetus of God’s love, we can communicate, welcome and understand the gift of the other and respond to it.

Virtual communities are worthy of the name community and of Christian participation only if they strengthen a personal encounter “that comes alive through the body, heart, eyes, gaze, breath of the other,” the pope wrote.

“If a family uses the net to be more connected, to then meet at table and look into each other’s eyes, then it is a resource,” he said. “If a Church community coordinates its activity through the network and then celebrates the Eucharist together, then it is a resource.”

And, he said, “if the net becomes an opportunity to share stories and experiences of beauty or suffering that are physically distant from us in order to pray together and together seek out the good to rediscover what unites us, then it is a resource.”
Real Alternatives Helps Pregnant Moms Make the Right Choice

From the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference

There is encouraging news for Catholics as far as abortion goes. The number of abortions performed in Pennsylvania during 2017 was the lowest number ever recorded – just more than 30,000. It’s a decrease of 870 from the prior year and way down from the all-time recorded high of nearly 66,000 in 1980.

That news was reported just last month by the PA Department of Health. It is definitely a case of the glass being half-full or half-empty. While 30,000 marks a low point, it is still 30,000 too many. There is still work to be done.

One of the groups doing that work – and one that likely deserves credit for bringing the number of abortions down – is Real Alternatives. It’s a group that has been offering free pregnancy support services for 24 years.

You may not recognize them by name. You may not even recognize them by their toll free 1-888-LIFE AID phone number. But over the last 23-plus years, they have served more than 300,000 clients. The group spread nationally after starting in Pennsylvania, where it continues to flourish. Ninety-one percent of Pennsylvania is still work to be done.

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Consecrated Life
‘They Do Exist!’

By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC

One of my favorite TV commercials depicts the M&M guys, Yellow and Red, sneaking down to their living room late on Christmas Eve. Yellow questions, “Do you think Santa will like these red and green M&M’s?” Red snarls, “I don’t know! I never met the guy!” Red turns around, sees Santa, and exclaims, “Wha! He does exist!” Santa points to Red and Yellow and gasps, “They do exist!” With that, Santa and Red both faint.

Recently, I had a “They do exist!” moment. It was Thanksgiving Day. My brother and I were standing in the lobby of a convention center in Camp Hill waiting to be called to the banquet hall to partake in our Thanksgiving Dinner. A boy around ten years of age looked at me, turned to his mom and pointed at me.

“I turned to my brother and say, “I have some evangelization to do.” I approached the mother and child and said, “Hi! My name is Sister Geralyn. What’s yours?” The boy kept his eyes downward as he rocked back and forth, and replied, “Dolan.” I responded, “I am a Roman Catholic Sister; a Christian. Do you have any questions for me?”


I glanced at mom, who told me Dolan, who has Autism, was working on talking to people he didn’t know. She was beaming with joy. I turned to Dolan and proclaimed, “Good job!” and then walked back to my brother.

I could not help think of this as we celebrate World Day for Consecrated Life on Feb. 2. “In 1997, Saint John Paul II instituted a day of prayer for women and men in consecrated life. This celebration is attached to the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord on February 2nd. This Feast is also known as Candlemas Day; the day on which candles are blessed symbolizing Christ who is the light of the world. So too, those in consecrated life are called to reflect the light of Jesus Christ to all peoples. The celebration of World Day for Consecrated Life is transferred to the following Sunday in order to highlight the gift of consecrated persons for the whole Church.”

In response to God’s call, I have been gifted with a heart that belongs entirely to Him. I came across a blog that describes what “the call” is all about. “We know that God has designed all vocations in the Church out of love for us. Each person, created by God with a unique identity, discovers that he works out circumstances and opportunities for us to recognize and be able to respond to the particular role we are to live in Salvation History. … The key, then, is to find the right ‘fit.’ For those called to marriage, the right fit might be ‘Mr. Right,’ or ‘Miss Right.’”

The right “fit” for me was the Sisters of Christian Charity that I first met 40 years ago in college;

I am humbled and blessed that so many men and women would pray not only for me but all those in consecrated life. Speaking for them, we deeply depend on your prayers!

They Do Exist!’

‘Thoughts from a Catholic Evangelist’

Know Your Diocese

A Look at Diocesan Offices, and How They Serve

The Diocesan Office of Family and Respect Life Ministries

In 2017, the Marriage and Family Life Office and the Respect Life Office were combined to form the Office of Family and Respect Life Ministries. The office now has two distinct duties of any family life office is marriage preparation. Throughout the Diocese, hundreds of couples are married every year, and all couples required to go through marriage preparation. The heart of marriage preparation includes learning about marriage as a sacrament and a vocation, as well as exploring the Church’s teachings on the human person (i.e. Catholic anthropology) and how those views inform human sexuality. Moreover, good marriage preparation is always animated by a spirit of evangelization, and typically involves instruction on life skills like communication, parenting and finances. Our marriage preparation programs include God’s Plan for Love, Catholic Engaged Encounter, parish-based mentor couples and Natural Family Planning.

The office also supports couples in struggle, wounded, and widowed, those whose marriages have ended. Retrouvaille, meaning “rediscovery” in French, is a weekend program designed to help couples in difficult marriages to rediscover the love, intimacy and communication that originally brought them together. We also support Beginning Experiences, a weekend program that helps separated, divorced and widowed spouses to heal and cope with the loss they have experienced. Finally, we keep a list of more than 30 Catholic psychotherapists who serve clients – both Catholic and non-Catholic – throughout our region.

In terms of respect life, our office offers direct support to mothers and babies by raising money to support local pregnancy resource centers, and aims to help them in their mission of serving these vulnerable populations. We also support education and advocacy on pro-life issues, as well as large pro-life events like the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., and the Respect Life Mass and the White Mass celebrated here in the Diocese. Finally, recognizing the devastating effects that abortion wreaks on those wounded by it, through programs like Rachel’s Vineyard and Project Rachel we help women and men cope with the trauma, grief and guilt that follows an abortion, whether those feelings are experienced right away or decades later.

Visit our pages on the Diocesan website, www.hbgdiocese.org, for more information. Tom O’Neill is the Director of Family and Respect Life Ministries, and Kate Neri serves as the Administrative Assistant. To contact the office, write to familyministries@hbgdiocese.org or call 717-657-4804, ext. 317.

CATHOLIC COMMENTARY
February 1, 2019 • The Catholic Witness - 13

By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC

Special to The Witness

sister geralyn schmidt, scc

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Crossword

Answers on page 15

55 Peter caught one off
56 Looked at

ACROSS
1 Take the rind off
5 Cooking measurement
8 Noah’s boat
11 Sin
13 Atmosphere
14 Next Pope John Paul
15 “The ___ of God”
16 Compass point
17 “of Joseph”
18 Spots
20 Thin
22 Different forms of an element
26 Greek god of war
27 “It is not impotent; it is not ___”
28 Once more
30 Vane direction
31 Poem
32 Moses ___ the people
35 Taunt
36 Torah table
37 Branch of learning
39 Quick dinner option
41 Naaman came to him
43 Sport’s official
44 Help
45 Choose
47 Gambling game
51 Price sticker
52 River (Spanish)
53 “Love is not ___”
54 South southeast

DOWN
1 Dowel
2 Make mistake
3 Epoch
4 Find
5 Beige
6 “Christ died for our ___”
7 “Fight against you but not ___”
8 Church walkway
9 What a mob does
10 Cattle
12 Remake
19 Shovel
21 Sea eagle
22 Wraith
23 Joshua made it stand still
24 Poem
25 Moses’ river
29 “An ember from the ___”
30 Toward the shore
32 Popular papal name
33 Flightless bird
34 Magnetic audio tape
35 Belonging to a thing
36 John came ___ Jesus
37 False name
38 Where two slopes meet
39 Seaweed
40 Food
41 Food
42 Capital of Western Samoa
46 Rocky hill
48 Child’s plaything
49 “Spy ___ of Holy Week
50 Mismatched

Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC

“Thoughts from a Catholic Evangelist”

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**Diocesan Notebook**

Compiled by Jen Reed

**Spiritual Offerings**

**Holy Hour of Reparation** hosted by St. Peter Parish, Columbia, 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 Lititz 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 Kalpmont 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**. St. Joseph Church, Mechanicsburg. Position of the Blessed Sacrament at 7 p.m. with Evening Prayer, followed by prayers for victims of abuse and prayers for healing for the Church. Concludes with Night Prayer and Benediction at 8:30 p.m.

**Mass with prayers for healing**, Feb. 5 at 7 p.m. at St. Theresa Church in New Cumberland, celebrated by Father William Forrey, Sponsored by the Pilgrims of Praise and Life in the Spirit prayer groups. For information, call Loretta at 717-737-7551 or Mary Ann at 717-564-7709.

**Caelorum at St. Joan of Arc Church in Hershey**, Feb. 6 at 7 p.m. Praise, worship and adoration Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. A reception follows in the cafeteria. For more information, call 717-583-0240.

**Healing Mass and Holy Hour with Father Ariel Hernandez**, Good Shepherd Church in Camp Hill, Feb. 15 at 5:30 p.m. Eucharistic adoration and Holy Hour, followed by healing Mass at 6:30 p.m. for all youth of the Diocese. Life Teen Ministry will provide music.

**Pilgrimages & Retreats**

**Join Father Kenneth Smith for a pilgrimage to Greece** in the footsteps of St. Paul, Sept. 24-Oct. 5, 2019. Roundtrip motorcoach from Mechanicsburg, roundtrip airfare from Washington Dulles to Athens, 7 nights accommodation in First Class/4 star hotels (Athens, Thessaloniki, Kalambaka), 3 night/4 day Greek Island cruise in outside cabins, breakfast and dinner daily, land transportation by private deluxe motorcoach, all entrance fees, daily Mass, and more for $4,145 per person/double occupancy. Contact Karen Hurley at k.m.hurley1@gmail.com or George’s International Tours at 1-800-566-7499. Deposit due by March 15.

**Travel presentation on pilgrimage to Fatima**, Feb. 11 at 6 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul Parish auditorium/library, Hanover. The 12-day pilgrimage to Fatima, Santiago de Compostela, San Sebastián de Garabandal, Lourdes, and Barcelon is March 20-31, 2020. Father Michael Reid, pastor of St. Vincent’s, will lead the pilgrimage through Collette Faith Travel. Land tour and airfare, plus person, double occupancy is $3,979. Travel insurance is $315. A $500 deposit is due upon registration. Call 717-637-4625 and ask for an information packet and to reserve your seat for the presentation on Feb. 11.

**Join Father Dwight SchlaLINE on a pilgrimage to the Oberammergau Passion Play**, May 20-30, 2020. Trip will also include Budapest, Vienna, and Prague. For more information, contact Travis Detwiler at travisedtwiller@gmail.com or 717-809-0672.

**Iconographer Jody Cole is conducting a Byzantine icon writing (painting) retreat** April 1-5 at the Jesus Center in Wernersville, PA. The total cost of the retreat, which includes all supplies, room and board, is $500. Participants will be able to choose from a 9 x 12” of Christ of Divine Mercy (detail), Mother of Mercy (Ostra Brama) or Christ the Bridgroom (detail). To register, contact Melinda Leonowitz 610-670-3642 or go online at jesuitcenter.org. For more information, contact Jody Cole at 717-919-8791 or jcoleicons@aol.com.

**Education & Enrichment**

**St. John the Baptist in New Freedom**, adult formation course in the Catechism of the Good Shepherd-Level 1, Montessori-based religious education for children. The course grounds the catechist in the theory and praxis of the Catechism of the Good Shepherd and how to develop and facilitate an Atrium for 3-6th graders. Course dates: March 2-3, April 6-7, May 18-19, Aug. 24-25, Sept. 7, Oct. 12 and Nov 16. Contact Sister Jane Keller at 717-235-2439 or srjkeller@sjbfn.org to register or to observe a session.

**“The St. Valentine’s”** presentation by Father Kenneth Roth at St. Joan of Arc Parish cafeteria, Feb. 13 at 7 p.m. Hosted by the “I Thirst Prayer Group.” For more information, call 717-583-0240.

**Surviving Divorce program at St. John the Baptist Parish, New Freedom**, beginning Feb. 6 at 6:45 p.m. The 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.sjbfn.org. Cost is $25. Contact DeB Cousin at deb.cousin@verizon.net. Pat Smith at domn9722@aol.com or the parish office at 717-235-2156.

**Bishop McDvitt High School in Harrisburg is hosting musician Steve Angrisano**, Feb. 11 at 7 p.m. The evening of music and reflection will be in Finestra Hall. For information on his ministry, visit www.steveangrisano.com.

**Theology on Tap in Lancaster**, Feb. 14 at 7 p.m. at Annie Bailey’s Irish Pub. Father Steven Arena will speak on “Beware the Noonday Devil, the Unnamed Evil of Our Time.” Theology on Tap is an outreach ministry of the Diocese of Harrisburg. All young adults (20s and 30s) are welcome to attend.


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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.

Abbottstown
Immaculate Heart of Mary:
Beverly Hershey

Annville
St. Paul the Apostle:
Barb Arnold
Louis “Gene” Mongelluzzi

Berkwic
Immaculate Conception BVM:
Alfred Stola

Bonneville
St. Joseph the Worker:
Burnell L. Jago

Buchanan Valley
St. Ignatius Loyola:
Mary Jane Kump

Camp Hill
Good Shepherd:
Samina Felix Alexander
James Connor

Chambersburg
Corpus Christi:
Walter Heeger
Edward Masse
Virginia Sauter
Christopher Tejeda
William F. Williams

Conewago
Sacred Heart of Jesus:
Frederick E. Gallagher
Louise A. Kuhn

Danville
St. Joseph:
Joan Campbell
Paul Diehl
Catherine Kifolo

Dauphin
St. Matthew the Apostle and Evangelist:
Lucille Marshall

Elizabethtown
St. Peter:
Adelina Roat

Fairfield
Immaculate Conception BVM:
Leonard Martin
Fred Randt

Gettysburg
St. Francis Xavier:
Mildred E. Cunliffe
Jeannene E. Glen
Pius Hess
Lucy Ann Vasquez

Hanover
St. Vincent de Paul:
Donald E. Bielczynski
John Edward Lang, Jr.
Lucy Ann Vasquez

Harrisburg
Cathedral Parish
of St. Patrick:
Albert Schmidt

Holy Name of Jesus:
Glady's R. Cunjak
Helen T. Grimoors
Brendan A. McShane
Barbara A. Romanowski
Michael John Williams
St. Catherine Labouré:

Marie Fleischmann
Anna Gunnett
St. Francis of Assisi:
Jim Schiffler

Hershey
St. Jane of Arc:
Helen Gildea
Albert Snyder

Kulpmont
Holy Angels:
Gloria A. Mikulak

Lancaster
Assumption BVM:
Georgette Rhinier

Lewistown
Sacred Heart of Jesus:
Michael J. Stravolo

Littlestown
St. Alphonsus:
Dorothy M. Barnes
Frances W. Miller

McSherrystown
Annunciation BVM:
Teresa Murren

Millersville
St. Philip the Apostle:
John Lavellie
Regina Trolson

Milton
St. Joseph:
Joseph Kruper

New Cumberland
St. Theresa:
Josephine “Jo” Melfako
Kelly Soule

New Freedom
St. John the Baptist:
Charlie Hickey
William Hrubovcak
Richard E. Rufo

O B I T U A R I E S

Sacred Heart Preschool in Lancaster, American Girl Bingo on March 1. Early bird game at 6:15 p.m. for 2019 Doll of the Year, regular bingo at 6:30 p.m. for dolls, pets, furniture and accessories. Doors open at 5 p.m. Drawings, food, prizes, toll hair salon. Tickets are $24 for adults, $12 for children accompanied by a paying adult. Event is at Hambright Elementary School, Lancaster. Call 717-486-1101 for tickets or information.

Lancaster Catholic High School’s Fine and Performing Arts Department, Swing Dance Night, Feb. 25 at 7 p.m. in the school cafeteria. Temple Avenue jazz quintet will provide music, with dance lessons from the Lancaster Swing Dance Club. Admission by donation to the FPA Program. Snacks and drinks provided. Please RSVP by Feb. 20 to Tony Brill at thrill@lchsyes.org or 717-509-0313.

Lancaster Catholic High School, Mardi Gras celebration, March 5 at 6:30 p.m. Jazz concert with music composed by Dr. J. Albert Schulz ‘56 and Mass celebrated by Father Steve Arena. Reception with fastnachts, coffee, tea and hot chocolate. RSVP by March 1 at 717-509-0313 or email Betty at bisaacson@lchsyes.org.

JOB OPENINGS

St. Joseph Parish, Mechanicsburg, seeking a Parish Manager to oversee the day-to-day operation of the parish. Areas of responsibility include personnel, building and grounds, contracted services, liaison with Parish Administrative Committees and budget management. Position reports to the pastor. Call the parish office at 717-766-9433 for a copy of the job description. Interested candidates should send a letter of interest, résumé and pastor’s recommendation form to St. Joseph Parish, Office 410 East Simpson Street, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, Attn: Finance Administrator, or e-mail to finance@stjosephpmech.org by Feb. 22.

Morning Star Pregnancy Center training new volunteers, male and female advocates to counsel men and women who use the center’s services. Sessions are at the center’s Harrisburg office, Feb. 11, 25 and March 4 (March 11 snow date) from 6-7:30 p.m. Volunteers needed to provide music, with dance lessons for dolls, pets, furniture and accessories. Doors open at 6 p.m. For more information, contact Diane at ddevan@morningstarclinics.com or 717-901-2799.

Venango Region Catholic High School in the Diocese of Erie, seeking a President. Position will lead and direct operations of the school system. A history of effective fundraising, fiscal responsibility and ability to lead processes are required. Applications accepted until position is filled. Visit www.ErieRCD.org/schools/Administrator.html for job description and application instructions.

Submission Deadlines

The deadline for submissions for the February 15 edition of The Witness is Wednesday, February 6 at 4:30 p.m. Submit written announcements via e-mail to witness@hbgdiocese.org. Limit 60 words. No ads, posters or PDFs, please.

2018 Statements for the Bishop’s Annual Lenten Appeal

Statements will be mailed after January 15, 2019, for gifts of $250 or more. Donors who wish to receive a statement for gifts below $250 should contact the Diocesan Office of Stewardship & Development at 717-657-4804, ext. 336, or e-mail their request to development@hbgdiocese.org.
Like Mary, Be ‘Influencers’ for God, Pope Urges at World Youth Day Vigil

By Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

Although Mary would not be considered an “influencer,” like many social media personalities, she still became the most influential woman in history by trusting “in the love and promises of God, the only force capable of making all things new,” Pope Francis told young people at the World Youth Day prayer vigil in Panama Jan. 26.

“Are you willing to be an ‘influencer’ like Mary, who dared to say, ‘Let it be done?’” he asked. “Only love makes us more human and fulfilled; everything else is a pleasant but useless placebo.”

Despite sweltering temperatures in Panama City, hundreds of thousands of young men and women made their way to St. John Paul II Park on the penultimate day of World Youth Day. Six pilgrims from the Diocese of Harrisburg were among the crowds. They brought sleeping bags and tents, prepared to spend the night – praying, making new friends and encouraging one another.

During his popemobile, Pope Francis made his way through a sea of colorful flags and banners people waved excitedly.

After the pope took his place on the stage, young adults from Panama and the Palestinian territories gave their experiences of finding faith and hope amid doubt, sickness and addiction. Erika de Buckron, a 42-year-old mother of four from Panama, spoke of the fear and difficulties she faced when doctors said her pregnancy was at high risk after diagnosing her unborn daughter with Down syndrome.

Throughout her pregnancy, she said, she and her husband abandoned themselves in God’s hands and, after the birth of their daughter, decided “to love her with all our hearts, without making any difference with our other children, who also welcomed her with so much love.”

Panamanian Alfredo Martinez Andron, 20, recalled his experience of falling into a life of drugs and crime. His addiction, he said, ultimately led to a 12-month prison sentence. Despite attempts to reform following his release, he fell back again into drug use.

Ultimately, he found help at a Catholic-run halfway house that helped and encouraged him “in my path toward reintegration.”

“I want to tell the young people of the world that God loves us and never abandons us. We are the masters of our own actions, but if we are with God, everything will be OK,” Martinez said.

Nirmeen Odeh, a 26-year-old Palestinian woman, gave the final testimony of the evening, recalling that despite being born and raised in the Holy Land, she was apathetic to Christianity, especially coming from “a place where many of my simple rights are violated.”

“I thought it was better to be distant from Christianity so as not to be bothered by others,” Odeh said. “With all the struggles and weariness of daily life, I wasn’t interested in faith. However, I was curious about the idea of God! It fascinated me.”

After participating in World Youth Day 2016 in Krakow, Poland, Odeh said she took a “leap of faith” and began receiving the sacraments.

“And here I am today, three years later in Panama, excitedly praying for him [God] to lead me on my next journey,” she said.

After listening to their experiences, Pope Francis addressed the youths, saying that their experiences reflected the risk Mary took to say “yes” to God.

The salvation that God wishes to give his children, he said, isn’t a file in the cloud waiting to be downloaded or the latest app, but rather is an invitation to be “part of a love story interwoven with our personal stories; it is alive wherever we are and with everyone all around us.”

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**Early registration price**
$4,399 + $499* per person from Washington Dulles if deposit is paid by 3-1-19

Base price $4,499 + $499* per person after 3-1-19

*Estimated Airline Taxes & Fuel Surcharges subject to increase/decrease at 30 days prior

Call for a brochure or to register:
800.713.9800

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**Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Harrisburg, PA**

ITALY, AUSTRIA, GERMANY & OBERAMMERGAU

SEPTEMBER 6-17, 2020

This 12-day pilgrimage explores the traditions of our faith in beautiful churches, chapels and shrines in Italy, Austria, & Germany. Includes the Oberammergau Passion Play!

**Spiritual Director:**
Most Reverend Ronald W. Gainer (Bishop of Harrisburg)

**TRAVEL BY:** Pentecost Tours, Inc.
PO Box 280, Batesville, IN 47006
800.713.9800

**Travel Dates:**
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**CLOSING MASS for the 150TH ANNIVERSARY of the DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG**

Please join Bishop Ronald W. Gainer as Celebrant and Homilist for this special Mass to conclude our year-long anniversary celebration.

**Sunday, March 3, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.**

Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Camp Hill

Following the Mass there will be a festival of ethnic foods in the parish hall.

For additional information, please visit: www.hbgdiocese.org/150

If any special accommodations are needed, please contact Larry Kiley at (717) 657-4804 ext. 302 or lkiley@hbgdiocese.org. Requests should be made by February 15, 2019.