Diocese Files for Chapter 11 Protection
Restructuring Process will Lay a Foundation to Build Upon

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

On Wednesday, February 19, Bishop Ronald Gainer walked to the podium and delivered an important update regarding the future of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg.

“Due to a culmination of events, primarily a steady decline in church attendance and the reality of dwindling Church revenues, and after much prayer and discernment, countless discussion with our accountants and attorneys, and in consultation with, and approval from, our Diocesan Finance Council and College of Consultants, our Diocese has had to come to terms with the harsh reality that we no longer have the funds to meet our current obligations,” said Bishop Gainer. “That is why today, we must regretfully announce that the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg has filed for bankruptcy under Chapter 11 of the United States Bankruptcy Code.”

Bishop Gainer explained that this form of bankruptcy is known as Reorganization Bankruptcy and will allow the Diocese to continue its ministry work, while also equitably compensating its creditors.

“Over the past few years, our Diocese has been forced to confront our horrific past regarding clergy sexual abuse. Today, we are facing some difficult financial realities. Despite making every attempt to scale back operations and reduce overhead, we are currently unable to meet our financial obligations,” said Bishop Gainer.

He went on to explain that for several years before receiving the Grand Jury Subpoena in 2016, the Diocese’s financial situation was in a challenging condition.

“Responding to that investigation forced us to incur very heavy legal costs, which has had harsh financial consequences for the Diocese. Those costs were not something the Diocese was able to plan for in our budget, which greatly limited the options available to us to correct the preexisting financial trend,” said Bishop Gainer. “Our current financial situation, coupled with changes in the law both here and in New Jersey, where we are already named in one lawsuit and where we anticipate more to follow, left us with no other path forward to ensure the future of our Diocese. Despite the success of the Survivor Compensation Program, which helped 111 survivors of clergy child sexual abuse, or 96% of those who participated in the Program, we already are in receipt of half a dozen new lawsuits, any one of which could severely cripple the Diocese.”

“As Bishop, I must ensure the Diocese’s core mission is upheld, which is to remain focused on Christ’s mandate to preach, teach, sanctify, and to serve those in need. We must work to bring the Chapter 11 process to a conclusion, as soon as is reasonably possible and in a way that allows us to be present to the community, as we have been for the past 152 years,” added Bishop Gainer.

He stressed that this action does not include the parishes and schools of the Diocese as they are considered separate legal entities.

“When I think about our current situation and the future, I cannot help but think about what it will take to rebuild and strengthen our Diocese as we move forward. You cannot build anything without a strong and solid foundation. As we read in Luke chapter six, verse 48, ‘He is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on the rock; when the flood came, the rivers burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.’ Our Diocese currently lacks that strong foundation; however, at the end of this difficult process, we will again have a solid foundation to build upon,” said Bishop Gainer.

To help answer questions, the Diocese has launched a special page on our website, www.hbgdiocese.org, about our path to a more vibrant and secure future as we look to lay a Foundation to Build Upon.

“I humbly ask for your prayers for our Diocese as we move forward in this process. May God grant us every grace needed during this difficult time. May Mary, Mother of the Church and our Mother, intercede with Her Son to be our strength and support as well,” said Bishop Gainer.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is Chapter 11 Bankruptcy and how does it affect the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg?**

1. **What exactly is Chapter 11?** Chapter 11 is a chapter under the United States Bankruptcy Code pursuant to which a company or entity seeks to reorganize financially under court supervision, with the goals of being able to equitably and proportionally address the financial claims of those to whom it owes money and to emerge with its operations intact. A Chapter 11 filing with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court immediately stops all efforts at collection of debts and legal actions against the entity. A Chapter 11 filing does not mean the entity is going out of business. Under Chapter 11, an entity is able to maintain normal operations and continues to provide employees with salaries and benefits, and retiree benefits.

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*Bishop Ronald Gainer addresses a press conference at the Diocesan Center in Harrisburg on Feb. 19, announcing that the Diocese has filed for bankruptcy under Chapter 11 of the United States Bankruptcy Code.*

*CHRIS HEISEY, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS*
DIOCESAN NEWS

Continued From 1

2. Why is the Diocese seeking reorganiza-
tion under Chapter 11 now? Our Diocese’s financial position has been tested as a result of changes in the laws here and in New Jersey. On December 1, 2019, New Jersey opened up a two year “look-back” window. On June 11, 2019, the Pennsylvania Superior Court issued its “Rice Decision” which has effectively re-animated certain time-barred claims. This decision includes survivors of clergy-sexual abuse, teacher/volunteer-child sexual abuse, and/or other cases of abuse in the Diocese.

These changes in law have resulted in the Diocese being named in multiple claims of abuse by a minor. There are legal costs associated with those cases. A slow, unpredictable and costly process that would require years of court involvement. The first survivor to obtain a judgment will take a tremendous emotional toll on the survivors, their families, and their communities. While the Diocese undertakes the process of organizing the available assets and submitting a Reorganization Plan to satisfy all claims, a survivor’s claim will likely be the first to be heard. The Diocese seeks to quickly resolve all claims equitably and fairly. The Diocese hopes to positively impact parishes so that those claims can be settled in a fair and timely manner.

1. What is the Diocese’s financial position?

The Diocese is in negotiations with its insurers to continue assistance to survivors. Most survivors would likely receive nothing, and the Diocese would face multiple civil lawsuits from going forward. While the Diocese undertakes the process of submitting and obtaining approval of a Reorganization Plan, the Diocese will be required to make regular financial reports of its activities to the Court.

How will Chapter 11 Bankruptcy affect survivors of abuse?

1. What does reorganization mean for survivors of abuse in court cases? This Diocese has limited resources for adequately responding to survivors in the current legal environment. We believe and hope that the Diocese will provide survivors, any other claimants, the Diocese, and its insurers with a place where all of those claims can be settled, and the survivors compensated in a fair and timely manner.

Prior to the filing of the Chapter 11 proceeding, the Diocese provided counseling to anyone seeking it. We intend to continue to provide those services while we are in Chapter 11.

2. Will the Diocese still have to defend itself against lawsuits in civil court during reorganization? No. Chapter 11 prevents all lawsuits from going forward.

How will Chapter 11 Bankruptcy affect Diocesan priests, deacons and employees?

1. How will the Chapter 11 Bankruptcy impact Diocesan priests, deacons and seminarians? Our filing should have no impact on our priests, deacons and seminarians.

2. Will the Diocese be laying any employees off as a result of restructuring and reorganization? While we cannot predict with one-hundred percent certainty that there will be no reductions in staff, that is not our intention.

3. Will the Diocese be able to pay employees as usual as it reorganizes? Yes, the Diocese will continue to pay employees and retirees in the ordinary course of business.

4. Will retired priests and employees still receive their pensions and benefits? Yes, the Diocese will continue to pay retiree benefits.

How will Chapter 11 Bankruptcy affect your parish, school and affiliated agencies?

1. How will reorganization affect the daily operation of your parishes, schools and affiliated agencies? Our parishes and schools are separate legal entities, distinct from the Diocese. Similarly, entities such as Catholic Charities and Catholic Charities are separately legal entities. The ministries and operations of parishes and entities, such as our Catholic Charities agencies, should not be directly affected by the Diocese’s Chapter 11 proceeding.

2. If the Diocese is in Chapter 11 bankruptcy, is my parish or school in Chapter 11 as well? No. Parishes and schools are separate entities and are not part of this bankruptcy filing.

3. Will the Diocese sell parish property or use parish assets to pay its debts? It is our sincere hope and prayer that the celebration of Sacraments and regular parish life will be unaffected by this difficult financial process to resolve claims. One way in which the Diocese hopes to positively impact survivors is to seek a court-approved process which stops any child sexual abuse-related litigation against those parishes so that those claims can be settled in the same way as claims against the Diocese. Future claims against the parishes and Diocese are expected to be resolved through a survivor’s fund established as part of the Diocese’s Reorganization Plan. Thus, all claims would be settled from the same fund. Final decisions regarding our financial plans must be approved by the Court.

How will Chapter 11 Bankruptcy affect any gift I have or will make to my parish or the Diocese?

1. Will Chapter 11 Bankruptcy affect Catholic Charities? Catholic Charities is a separate legal entity and therefore is not part of the bankruptcy. We do not anticipate the effects at Catholic Charities to be impacted.

For more information about Chapter 11 Bankruptcy or to make a claim, who should I call?

1. If we have additional questions regarding Chapter 11 or would like to make a claim, who should we contact? Please call our bankruptcy information line at 1-866-977-9092 or visit https://dm.epiq1.com/RCDD.

Three weeks for delivery.

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Fulfilling his promise to involve more lay members in Diocesan operations, Bishop Ronald Gainer hosted the first meeting of the Diocesan Pastoral Council in early February. This board includes nearly 30 lay members, two religious sisters, two permanent deacons and two priests.

The Council is a consultative board that assists Bishop Gainer by providing advice, presenting his questions to the faithful whom the council members represent, and assisting with researching and coordinating Diocesan programs and activities. This Council also assists the faithful by presenting their concerns to Bishop Gainer, serving as a constructive means of communication between the faithful and Bishop Gainer.

The council members include:
• Most Rev. Ronald W. Gainer, DD, JCL
• Very Rev. David L. Danneker, Ex-Officio
• Sister Mary Joseph Albright, SCC, Sisters’ Council
• Deacon Gregory Amarante, Council of Deacons
• Ms. Cheryl Bannon, Franklin Deaney
• Mr. Joseph Brokus, Northumberland Deaney
• Ms. Rebecca Davis, Young Adult Ministry
• Mrs. Mai Do, Multicultural Ministries (Vietnamese)
• Mrs. Margarita Elorriaga, Adams Deaney
• Mr. Mike Gauthier, York Deaney
• Rev. Leo Goodman, Presbyteral Council of Priests
• Ms. Barbara Goss, South Lancaster Deaney
• Deacon Peter Jupin, Council of Deacons
• Mrs. Kelly Krakowski, Dauphin Deaney
• Mr. Sangkook Lee, Multicultural Ministries (Korean)
• Mrs. Judy Machesic, Northern Deaney
• Mrs. Angelé Mbassi, Multicultural Ministries (Black Catholic)
• Mr. John McGeary, Northern Deaney
• Mrs. Frances McGuire, Northumberland Deaney
• Ms. Beth McMasters, Adams Deaney
• Ms. Barbara Murdocca, York Deaney
• Sister Michael Ann Orlik, SSCM, Sisters’ Council
• Mr. Gary Parzanese, Renewal Movements (Cursillo)
• Mr. Christopher Pastal, Lebanon Deaney
• Rev. Charles Persing, Presbyteral Council of Priests
• Ms. Joseph Plum, Lebanon Deaney
• Ms. Francine Redman, North Lancaster Deaney
• Mrs. Cecilia Ritchey, Renewal Movements (Charismatic)
• Mrs. Terri Rosenstein, Cumberland/Perry Deaney
• Mrs. Joseph Sabol, Cumberland/Perry Deaney
• Mrs. Noelia Saez, Multicultural Ministries (Hispanic)
• Ms. Roseanne Settino, North Indian Deaney
• Mr. Gary Zemba, Dauphin Deaney
• Rev. Charles Persing, Presbyteral Council of Priests
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• Ms. Roseanne Settino, North Indian Deaney

This council will consider various ministry areas, including liturgical and sacramental life, works of charity, evangelization, social concerns, religious education and administration.

Youth Protection Program
To report suspected abuse of a minor, call the toll free PA Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-932-0313
To report suspected abuse of a minor by a church official, employee or volunteer, also please call the Diocese of Harrisburg Youth Protection Hotline: 1-800-626-1608 or email: ReportAbuse@hbgdiocese.org
For reportar la sospecha del abuso de un menor, llame al número de teléfono gratuito Línea de Ayuda Abuso del Niño Pennsylvania 1-800-932-0313
Para reportar la sospecha del abuso de un menor a manos de un oficial, empleado o voluntario de la iglesia, también llame al número de teléfono gratuito de ayuda diocesana: 1-800-626-1608 o envíe correo electrónico: ReportAbuse@hbgdiocese.org

Annulment Presentations Scheduled
The Tribunal of the Diocese of Harrisburg will offer presentations concerning divorce and annulments from the Catholic perspective in the coming months. These presentations will be helpful for divorced Catholics, divorced people who wish to marry Catholics, parish leaders involved in the RCIA process and those who have a vested interest because of family or friends.

March 12 at 7 p.m., St. John Neumann Parish, Lancaster
March 25 at 7 p.m., Diocesan Conference Center, Harrisburg
April 22 at 7 p.m., Corpus Christi Parish, Chambersburg
May 19 at 7 p.m., St. Joan of Arc Parish, Hershey
Presentations will include a question-and-answer session and an opportunity for private conversation with Tribunal staff and representatives. For more information, call 717-657-4804 or send an email to tribunal@hbgdiocese.org.

We will have a more in depth story on the Diocesan Pastoral Council and their first meeting in the March 6 issue of The Witness.
World Day of the Sick Uplifts in Prayer Those Who are Ill

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Each February 11, the Catholic Church celebrates the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, commemorating the Blessed Mother’s appearances to young Bernadette in 1858 in Lourdes, France, today a pilgrimage site where people find healing in the holy waters that flow from the grotto where Mary appeared.

In one of her 18 apparitions to Bernadette, who suffered from asthma, Our Lady encouraged that the faithful unite their suffering with the sufferings of Christ.

The feast day is also World Day of the Sick, established by St. John Paul II on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes in 1991 as a special time of offering one’s suffering for the good of the Church, and reminding the faithful to see the face of the suffering Christ in those who are ill.

In observation of World Day of the Sick, Bishop Ronald Gainer visited UPMC Pinnacle West Shore Hospital in Mechanicsburg on Feb. 11, where he offered the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick to several Catholic patients.

During the sacrament, a prayer is prayed over the individual, and sacred Chrism is marked in the sign of the cross on their foreheads and palms. The sacrament offers strength, peace and courage, and assistance from the Lord by the power of the Holy Spirit for healing of the soul, and of the body if such is God’s will (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1520).

After visiting with patients, the bishop celebrated Mass for a number of hospital staff, patients, volunteers and visitors.

The bishop began his homily with a reflection on the Gospel reading from St. John which recounts the Wedding Feast at Cana. This passage emphasizes the role of the Blessed Mother in our lives, Bishop Gainer said.

At the Wedding Feast, Mary intercedes on behalf of the newly-married couple, to save them from the embarrassment of running out of wine.

“Her maternal care for this couple is so evident, and it is multiplied through the centuries through her maternal intercession for us,” the bishop said.

“We honor Mary as someone who truly has maternal love for all of us, and who will intercede before her son, that his power of healing might be realized in our infirmities,” he said.

For this reason, the World Day of the Sick is observed on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

“Today we celebrate that miraculous place at Lourdes, France, where many have come with great faith and experienced some healing, not always the healing of their bodies, but certainly spiritual, emotional or mental healing,” Bishop Gainer said.

“Let us remember the sick, as we always do in prayer, and on this day in particular,” he said. “We lift them up for God’s blessing, for God’s healing, and we thank God for all of those who have devoted their lives to the care and the cure and the healing of those who are ill.”

CHRIS HEISEY, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

Cantor Krista Leach leads the congregation in song during Mass celebrated at UPMC Pinnacle West Shore Hospital in Mechanicsburg on the World Day of the Sick.

Alice Wuslum receives Holy Communion from Bishop Ronald Gainer on the Feast of World Day of the Sick, Feb. 11.

Bishop Ronald Gainer prays over Kathy Step of Queen of Peace Parish in Millersburg during the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.
Blessings Flow during Bishop’s Visit to St. Bernadette in Duncannon

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Pastoral visits from the Diocesan Shepherd give reason to celebrate and demonstrate the dedication and faithfulness of parishioners, and such was the occasion on Feb. 16, when Bishop Ronald Gainer celebrated Mass for the people of St. Bernadette’s in Duncannon, along the Susquehanna River in Perry County.

A Mission of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Marysville, the Duncannon congregation dates to 1939, when a priest began celebrating monthly Masses there. Eventually, after several years of Masses in a rented storeroom, the faithful built a church in 1954, dedicating it to St. Bernadette of Lourdes.

The congregation’s welcome of Bishop Gainer extended to include his blessing of the church’s newly-purchased Stations of the Cross, and of outdoor statues of Jesus, Our Lady and Bernadette. As well, St. Bernadette’s and the bishop recognized the talent and dedication of longtime keyboardist, Ruth Anne Wilson, who serves both weekend Masses. Father Dijo Thomas, MSFS, pastor, praised the active congregation and their involvement in various ministries, including the Council of Catholic Women, the Knights of Columbus, the prayer shawl ministry, the choir and the social committee. Collaborations and support of Lenten fish dinners, pro-life efforts and a Cemetery of the Innocents are hallmarks of St. Bernadette’s and Our Lady’s.

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The Just Man is a Light in Darkness

By Chris Heisey
The Catholic Witness

Woven in the collective memory of this nation is the tragic terror African Americans have long endured. One hundred and sixty years ago, more than four million blacks were slaves in America. One hundred and twenty years ago, more than a thousand blacks were lynched, hanged from a tree for daring to vote or speak to racial injustice. Fifty-five years ago, black leaders were assassinated in cold blood with their killers never facing justice, as witnesses did not dare speak the truth for fear of retribution. To be a just man, it would seem fitting that truthfully remembering history means not just celebrating the light, but also not forgetting the darkness.

In a beautiful celebration of Black History Month, more than 700 faithful gathered in St. Patrick’s Cathedral in Harrisburg where Bishop Ronald Gainer celebrated Holy Mass on Feb. 9. The Mass, organized by the Diocesan Office of Multicultural Ministries and the Black Catholic Apostolate, featured sung prayer by the Diocesan Gospel Choir as well as visiting musicians from Lancaster’s Swahili choir, which offered deeply moving renditions of African spirituals from Kenya and The Congo, along with French hymns of praise.

The homilist was Father Anthony Eseke, an assistant professor of communications at Messiah College in Grantham and parochial vicar at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Mechanicsburg. Father Eseke is a native of Nigeria, where he attended St. Peter and Paul Seminary and then earned masters and doctorate degrees from the University of Florida.

In his homily, Father Eseke shared a story of when he had just arrived in the United States in 2005 and was out for a walk in a Moyous state of mind for all the abundant blessings in his life. But that light was soon replaced by darkness, when he was confronted by a man on a bicycle who asked him, “What are you doing here? You live in this neighborhood? Really?” The tone was terrorizing, Father said, and if “eyes could kill, his would have killed me.” The sober reality of American racism was the dark scare he now would have to live with in his new home.

Augustus Tolton could well relate, though his brush with fear occurred in 1862 as civil war raged in Missouri. Tolton, an eight-year-old slave, along with his mother Martha Jane and two younger siblings, escaped from their Missouri plantation when word reached the family that the Tolton children were going to be sold separately to slave buyers. Their father, John Paul, had escaped months earlier and joined the Union army to provide monies for the family; he would die of dysentery just days after joining the army, far from his family. Martha Jane would receive his $11 monthly pension for the rest of her life.

Now, the rest of the Tolton family fled to seek freedom, but they were soon captured by Confederate raiders who knew they were runaway slaves.

More JUST MAN, page 7
By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness
Tramping the muddy upturned earth at the groundbreaking ceremony for their new school, students from St. Anne’s in Lancaster had reason to cheer on Feb. 2.

It wasn’t because of Punxsutawney Phil’s prediction of an early spring that day, or even the burst of flurries from a snow squall as they pitched shovels into the ground. Rather, the excitement centered on the promise of a new chapter in St. Anne’s history.

The school, founded and located on the north side of Lancaster city since 1924, is moving to the suburban grounds of St. John Neumann Parish four miles away, where renovation of the Education Center is underway to welcome school students this August.

St. Anne’s is the parish school for both St. Anne and St. John Neumann parishes.

**Ground Broken at St. John Neumann to Welcome St. Anne School**

“Ground Broken at St. John Neumann to Welcome St. Anne School” said Suzanne Wood, principal. “The move to St. John Neumann will enable us to build on the traditions that have evolved at St. Anne School for over 95 years; continue the spiritual and academic education of our students as defined through our Catholic Identity; and move our students and school into the future.”

To welcome school students this fall, additions and renovations will be made to St. John Neumann’s Education Center, which is home to religious education classes. Wohlsen Construction Company is taking on the project.

“ar will include the construction of nine additional classrooms, restrooms and offices for St. Anne School. Renovations will also expand and update the lobby and increase security and accessibility.

“We recognize that our children play an important role in our parish families, for they are the present and the future of our Church,” said Father Daniel Powell, pastor of St. John Neumann and executive pastor of St. Anne School. “Providing them with instruction in the Catholic faith is not only crucial to their sacramental growth but is an investment in the future of our collective faith.”

“Our Education Center should be the place where our children learn about their religious heritage and grow in their Catholic faith – whether through weekly Religious Education classes or by attending Catholic school,” he said.

(For information about St. Anne School, visit www.stannelancaster.org or call 717-334-6711.)

Students join in the ceremonial groundbreaking. From left are Emily Reynolds, Sara Reynolds, Cole Dankenbring, Will Dankenbring, Caitlin Reynolds, Anisa Matson and Elaina Nguyen.

Natalie and Lucy Mazur react to the site of mud at the groundbreaking.

School and parish leadership dig up the ground during a Feb. 2 snow squall. From left are Suzanne Wood, principal of St. Anne School, and Father Steven Arena, parochial vicar, and Father Daniel Powell, pastor, of St. John Neumann.

**JUST MAN**
Continued From 6
After being roughed up, Martha Jane managed to escape again with the three children in tow, crossing the Mississippi River in twilight in a floundering rowboat as Confederate-fired musket balls at the fleeing family hunkered down in the skiff.

The family made it to free soil in Illinois, where young Augustus began his schooling at an all-white Catholic school. Parishioners soon wanted the pastor removed for allowing a black student in the school. Rocks were hurled through the church and rectory windows – the family could not stay in such a hostile climate. So the family moved and found a parish more welcoming to them, and that is where young Augustus took root under the Sisters of Saint Lawrence and Father Peter McGirr – an Irish immigrant priest who lovingly began to foster Augustus’ love for God, the Church and a priestly vocation. On April 24, 1886, Augustus Tolton was ordained a priest at St. John Lateran Church in Rome, and a day later on Easter Sunday, he celebrated his first Mass – nearly 24 years to the day he was shot at by those angry southerners in a rowboat with his terrified slave mother of three frantically rowing in the gathering dark. One hundred and thirty years later, Father Tolton’s sainthood cause is being sponsored by the Archdiocese of Chicago.

“As a 12-year-old in Africa, I did not know where America was – it seemed like a fairy tale to me,” Father Eseke shared. “I had no idea about the problems of America…. What does it mean when Jesus asks us to be the light of the world…? We have tunnels of darkness. It may not be slavery today, but we have meanness of public discourse, nastiness of tweets. But I remind you that you are light, I am light that brings peace to our culture. We are the essence of what is good in the world. Love, it comes from the heart.” he said.

“There are two types of Christians,” Father Eseke said, quoting Dr. Martin Luther King. “There are thermometers and there are thermostats. One is a product of the environment and takes the temperature. The other controls the temperature,” Father Eseke said. “The Lord wants us to just become thermostats.”

*The just man is a light of darkness, Psalm 112 states. It was the Responsorial Psalm all sung together by the faithful at the Black History Mass.*
Philadelphia’s New Archbishop Sounds Call to ‘Welcome the Outcast’

By CatholicPhilly.com

Archbishop Nelson J. Perez placed a mark of familiarity on the formality of rites in the Mass that installed him as the new archbishop of Philadelphia Tuesday, Feb. 18 in the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia. Ascending to the basilica’s cathedra, the Greek word for the chair of authority as bishop of a diocese, Archbishop Perez, 58, became the youngest archbishop in the United States and its third archbishop of Hispanic heritage. His parents emigrated from Cuba.

A full-throated roar rising from the overflowing congregation in the basilica and its adjoining chapel of more than 2,000 people plus countless more viewing on television and the internet confirmed not a mere welcome for an archbishop, but a welcome home for a native son.

Archbishop Perez was ordained a priest for the Philadelphia Archdiocese in the same cathedral in 1989.

In a break with protocol in which the celebrant waits at the rear of a procession into church, prior to the Mass Archbishop Perez stood by the door into the cathedral greeting each of the hundreds of archdiocesan and religious priests with warm handshakes, hugs and smiles. He was among his own, and it was not the first such expression of the day.

"Once a Philadelphia priest, always a Philadelphia priest," he said during his homily, a 26-minute address delivered not from the elevated marble pulpit but from the first step of the sanctuary.

"I need you," he told the hundreds of priests and deacons in attendance directly, referring to his brother priests as "us." He did not shy from the clergy sexual abuse crisis, which he called "a sad betrayal of some of our own who deeply hurt those they were supposed to be serving."

"We are deeply sorry," he said, pledging to "work with hope, that we will be the source of healing."

Hope, in particular “Jesus, hope for the world,” was the theme of Archbishop Perez’s homily.

"The source of our hope is Christ," who has "traversed 20 centuries of history" with his people, "sometimes rejoicing, sometimes saying, 'these people are a piece of work,'” the archbishop said.

Throughout that history, Christ’s word and his body and blood in the Eucharist "where he feeds us food for the journey" have remained, Archbishop Perez said.

He built his theme to a crescendo with a challenge for the faithful in the archdiocese “Wherever you find yourself on the journey, it is time — time to reach out and grab the Lord’s hand.”

Just as in the Gospel of Matthew (9:20) a woman with a hemorrhage touched the Lord’s garment and was healed, so now “it is time to reach out to him — he is there,” said the archbishop.

"It is time to reach out, to come back to church, to the Lord in his..."
ARCHBISHOP

Continued From 8

Word and to the altar.”

As to his plan for a pastoral vision as he begins to shepherd the Philadelphia Archdiocese, “I have no plan,” he said. “I want to visit, listen and learn. I do embrace the vision of Pope Francis in ‘The Joy of the Gospel.’”

The pope’s 2013 apostolic exhortation called for “a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ” and, as Archbishop Perez echoed, for a “church which goes forth as a community of missionary disciples.”

These are disciples “who know that the Lord has taken the initiative,” the archbishop said. “He has loved us first and therefore we can move forward boldly, making the initiative to go out to others, meet those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast. That is the vision.”

He concluded by asking the people to remember a short sentence that he also asks the young people he sacramentally confirms, “Never underestimate the power of the Spirit of God working in you, through you and despite you,” he said.

The Mass proceeded with music both festive and sublime, performed by the archdiocesan and cathedral choirs, Philadelphia Catholic Gospel Mass Choir and the Coral Hispana de Filadelfia, along with talented musicians.

Numerous groups representing the many facets of Catholic life in the Philadelphia Archdiocese lined up to greet the archbishop during the Mass, including families, ethnic groups, religious, students, educators, Catholic social workers, young adults, ecumenical and interfaith representatives, and clergy.

One of them reflected on the day’s moving experience in the spirit that might please the new archbishop.

“It was a very hope-filled and joyful day,” said Father Keith Chylinski, a Philadelphia priest on the faculty of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. “There was a sense of coming home to the Lord’s church, where we are at home. In our relationship with the Lord, we are home. We come to a place of infinite hope, despite the challenges.”

Archbishop Perez was born in Miami, Florida, on June 16, 1961 to David and Emma Perez and is the brother of the late Dr. David Perez and Louis Martin Perez. He was raised in West New York, N.J. and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Montclair State University in 1988 and 1989, respectively.

He was ordained a priest for Philadelphia on May 20, 1989.


His work in education included teaching psychology and religious studies at La Salle University (1994-2008) and developmental psychology at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary (2011).

Named a monsignor by Pope John Paul II in 1998 and a prelate of honor by Pope Benedict XVI in 2009, he was ordained an auxiliary bishop for the Diocese of Rockville Centre, N.Y., in 2012. He was installed as the 11th bishop of the Diocese of Cleveland on Sept. 5, 2017.

As a member of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Perez serves as chair of the Bishops’ Standing Committee on Cultural Diversity, former chair of the Bishops’ Sub-Committee for Hispanic Affairs, served as the lead bishop for the V Encuentro process for the USCCB and is a former member of the Bishops’ Sub-Committee for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

He currently serves as a member of the Administrative and the Religious Liberty Committees for the USCCB. In November 2018, he began a three-year term as the bishop liaison for the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM).
Respect Equals Success for Retired Crusaders’ Coach Kauffman

By Chris Heisey
The Catholic Witness

Grit requires longevity to prove it true. When you drive over Chickies Hill and descend the long funneling way into Columbia, Lancaster County, what strikes you as you peer down upon the industrial town along the Susquehanna River is the tenacity it houses. In a very good way, Columbia is gritty, and it is quite easy to have respect for that kind of discernable toughness.

Coach Lamar Kauffman is Columbia – born and raised – where he learned how to compete and excel in sports. He played basketball at Columbia High School in the 1950s and then was an assistant at the school under Coach Elmer Kreiser. There coaching for the Crimson Tide, Coach Kauffman learned the lessons of playing hard all 2 minutes, and it’s where his trademark full-court trapping defenses were born.

After stints as head boys’ varsity coach at Columbia and Manheim Central, Coach Kauffman landed at Lancaster Catholic in 1982 to take the reins of the girls’ basketball program. When he retired in 2014, the legendary coach had amassed 764 wins against just 183 losses – that’s 947 basketball games and a remarkable 80 percent winning percentage. In 32 years of leading the Crusaders, his teams won 18 Lancaster-Lebanon section league titles, 10 league championships, 12 District 3 championships and two PIAA state championships in 1989 and 1996.

“The worst thing about new books is that they keep us from reading the old ones,” Coach John Wooden of UCLA said after winning one of his 10 NCAA men’s championships. He also said at the same time, “A coach is someone who can give correction without causing resentment.”

In an interview at his home on the west end of Columbia, Coach Kauffman and his wife Carolyn graciously shared their wisdom and memories of a coaching career steeped in success. “I think the most important thing in coaching is respect – if you have respect for your players, they will respect you,” Coach Kauffman said.

A barometer for testing if a team respects their coach is to watch whether the team’s eyes are on their coach listening during a timeout. They are not digging for a water bottle, looking into the stands or chatting amongst themselves. To a player, a Lancaster Catholic timeout was Coach Kauffman’s time, and it was unmissable to see the respect and command he had with his players – hundreds and hundreds over the three-plus decade career at Lancaster Catholic.

“The reason everyone bought in is because of the style of play we played with,” Coach Kauffman stressed. “Whether the best player or the number 12 player on the team, you knew that you were going to get a chance to play at any moment or any time.”

The style of play the Crusaders unleashed on opponents was a relentless full-court press. That press was never static; it could be man-to-man, 1-2-2 zone trap or a 2-2-1 soft zone meant to trap at mid-court. In addition, his teams could fall back into half court trapping defense to pounce on a team that had broken the initial press. The result: turnovers which Lancaster Catholic turned into easy baskets in transition. But most importantly, playing full throttle the entire game meant players gave 100 percent, knowing the bench was always there to spell them if they were gassed by the pace.

The Crusaders’ practices were full speed. The champion is a champion because she practices like one, is another maxim this outstanding coach preached. “If a player was not on board with our style of play, I would call them aside and talk to them,” Coach Kauffman said. “I would say, ‘Do you want to play for Lancaster Catholic, then this is the way we play,’ I never had a player not respond and want to be a part of the team.”

Arguably, the most important trait of a coach is to be able to correct without fostering that deep-seeded resentment that causes a cancer on the team. When you win dozens of championships, it is proof that your young people bought into what you were telling them.

“I had some very good players play for me over the years,” he said. “We played with discipline, you have to have that also, which comes out of respect. You cannot win without discipline. But, if you respect them first they will respect you back, and then you get that disciplined way of playing.”

On the bus going to a game there was never a peep out of the players. It was Coach Kauffman’s rule – you can speak on the way home and have fun if you win. Needless to say, there are an awful lot of happy bus rides home when you win more than 80 percent of the time.

“I miss coaching very much,” he said. “I loved coaching at Lancaster Catholic, and I really do miss teaching young people.”

Coach Kauffman still attends games, and his former players and current students always come up and greet him and make him feel welcome. At Christmas time, greeting cards and well wishes are sent to him every year since he has retired. What more proof is needed that respect is a two-way street in Columbia, where true grit still lives in a very good way.

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**Respect All Fear None**

The legacy of Coach Kauffman lives on at Lancaster Catholic.

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Chris Heisey, The Catholic Witness

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**Diocesan Youth Conference**

Balancing Life, Faith, Family, and School

Sunday, March 15, 2020 - 12:30 PM - 5:00 PM
Bishop McDevitt High School

Speakers:
Fr. Jonathan Sawicki 
Vocations Director and 
Kelsi Chuprinski 
Assistant College Campus Minister

Adoration, Praise, Social with DJ & More!
:: Open to any 8 to 12 grade youth ::

$20.00 per person (includes T-Shirt & Food)

**Join us for an afternoon of Faith, Fellowship, Food, & Fun!**

Diocese of Harrisburg - Office for Youth & Young Adult Ministries
Additional information visit www.hbgdiocese.org/youthchurch
Phone (717) 657-4804 Email: areifer@hbgdiocese.org
PARISH LENTEN FISH DINNERS

Enjoy fellowship, good food and friendly service at the many parish fish dinners this Lent. An updated listing will also be available at www.hbgdiocese.org. Submit your parish’s information via e-mail to communications@hbgdiocese.org.

Holy Infant Parish in Manchester, fish dinners on Feb. 28, March 6 and 13 from 4-7 p.m. in the social hall.

Holy Angels Parish in Kulpmont, fish dinners on Fridays in Lent from 4-6 p.m. in the activity center. Baked fish, potato, vegetable, potato soup and salad, dinner and beverage. Cost is $10 for adults, $5 for children 12 and under.

Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Elysburg, fish dinners Feb. 28, March 13 and March 27 from 4-6:30 p.m. Eat in or take out. Baked haddock with lemon and butter, roasted potatoes, vegetables, coleslaw, dessert and beverage. Cost is $10 for adults, $5 for children ages 6-12, free for children ages 5 and under.

St. Rose of Lima Parish in York, seafood fundraiser begins Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26, from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Lunches and dinners every Friday through April 3 from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., and 4-7 p.m. Menus and information at www.stroseoflimayork.org.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Mechanicsburg, fish dinners on Fridays from Feb. 28-April 3 from 4-6:30 p.m. $12 for adults, $6 for special menu for children 11 and under. Weekly specials $5. A la carte desserts and ice cream. Eat in or take out. Soup, fish, side dish, salad, roll and butter; fish sticks for children’s menu; drinks free with eat-in meals. Weekly specials feature crabcakes, stuffed shrimp, salmon, and stuffed flounder. Stations of the Cross and Mass after dinner.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Cornwall, fish dinners on Wednesdays, Feb. 12 through April 1 from 4-7 p.m. Cost is $10. Baked or fried fish, baked potato or fresh cut fries, applesauce or coleslaw, coffee or tea. Bernie’s Bakers’ homemade desserts. Eat in or take out.

St. Francis Xavier Parish in Gettysburg, fish dinners on Feb. 28 and March 6, 13 and 20 from 5-7 p.m. in Xavier Center. Eat in or take out. Children under five eat free. Haddock, cod, shrimp, clams, haluski, mac and cheese, potatoes, roasted vegetables, pizza, dessert and beverage. No reservations required. Call 717-334-4048 or visit www.stfxc.org.

Holy Spirit Parish in Palmyra, fish dinners on Fridays from Feb. 28 through April 3 from 3-7 p.m. North Atlantic haddock (baked or fried), crab cakes, shrimp, clam strips, pierogis, soup, mac and cheese, homemade desserts.

St. Ann Byzantine Parish in Harrisburg, fish and perogi dinners hosted by the Knights of Columbus, Wednesdays in Lent from Feb. 27 to March 27 from 4-6:30 a.m.. $10 for adults, $5 for children, free for children five and under. Take out available.

St. Bernadette Parish in Duncannon, fish dinners on Feb. 28, March 13 and March 27 from 4-7 p.m. in the social hall. Fried pollock/baked cod, macaroni & cheese, corn or green beans, stewed tomatoes, bread roll, beverage, dessert. $10 for adults, $5 for children ages 4-10, free for children ages three and under. Eat in or take out. Sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council #8151.

The Knights of Columbus and The Christopher Club in Mount Carmel, Ash Wednesday fish fry, Feb. 26, Soup, fish platter and dessert. Open from 4 p.m. until sold out.

St. Catherine Laboré Parish in Harrisburg, Feb. 28-April 3 in the school gymnasium from 4:30-7 p.m. Baked or deep fried fish dinners, fish fry bites, sampler of fish fillet plus beer battered shrimp and scallops, and crab cake dinners, including choice of baked potato, French fries or salad, plus coleslaw, and dessert. Homemade pierogis available. Handmade chocolate eggs (peanut butter and coconut) available for purchase. Eat in or take out. Stations of the Cross in the Shrine Church at 7 p.m.

St. Louis DeRoumiere Parish in Enola, baked fish, mac & cheese and pierogi dinners, Fridays Feb. 28-April 3 from 4-7 p.m. in the school. Seasoned baked cod, church-made baked macaroni & cheese, church-made pierogi, veggie or stewed tomatoes, coleslaw, roll, coleslaw, and coffee or punch. Baked fish $12, mac & cheese, and pierogi dinners $10. Children are $5, any meal. Eat in or take out. Reservations not needed. Acoustical music provided by Nate & Friends.

Holy Name of Jesus Knights of Columbus Council #14081 in Harrisburg, fish dinners in the social hall, Fridays Feb. 28-April 3 from 5-7 p.m. Baked or pan battered fish dinner with sides. Weekly special meals also offered.

St. Peter Parish in Elizabethtown, Lenten dinners on Fridays Feb. 28-April 3 from 4-7 p.m. in the parish center. Baked and fried fish, homemade clam chowder, macaroni and cheese, fresh cut French fries. Weekly pasta specials. Dinner includes drink and dessert. $10 for adults, $5 for children under 12. Stations of the Cross follow dinner. Contact Pat Minick at 717-367-5370 or check the parish website.

St. Peter Parish in Columbia, fish fry on Fridays Feb. 28-April 3 from 4-6:30 p.m. in the parish center. Fish platters and non-meat dishes prepared by the women of the parish. Platters include coleslaw, macaroni and cheese, a vegetable, French fries and coffee or tea. Homemade soups, weekly specials, a la carte items and desserts available. Eat in or take out.

Knights of Columbus of St. Jude Thaddaeus Parish in Millcreek, fish dinners in the social hall on Fridays Feb. 21-April 3 from 4-7 p.m. All-you-can-eat fried and baked fish, popcorn shrimp, fried clams, French fries, macaroni and cheese, stewed tomatoes, corn, green beans, coleslaw, applesauce, rolls, puddings and homemade desserts. Pay at the door; $13 for adults, $6 for children ages 6-12, free for children five and under. Contact Joe Zarnowski, 908-892-0271.

Seven Sorrows BVM Parish in Millcreek, fish fry on Fridays Feb. 28 through March 27 from 3-5:30 p.m. in the school cafeteria. All-you-can-eat battered-dip fish (eat-in only) plus lemon-pepper fish, crab cakes, jumbo fried shrimp, macaroni and cheese, pierogies, lobster mac and cheese, crabby cheese fries and sandwiches. Dinner in or order take out at 717-944-5488 after 4 p.m. (All orders must be received by a volunteer; phone messages not accepted). Chocolate eggs available for $1 each. Information and full menu at www.ssbvm.org.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, Spring Grove, seafood dinners on Fridays, Feb. 28 through April 3 from 4-7 p.m. Crab cakes, hand-pattened oysters, baked and fried combos, haddock, salmon and shrimp entrees and sandwiches. Meats include applesauce, coleslaw and dinner roll. Children’s menu. Eat in or take out. Option to order and pay online. Visit www.sacredheartsbg.com special-events.

St. Monica Parish in Sunbury, Lenten dinners on Fridays, Feb. 28-April 3 in the parish center from 4-6 p.m. Weeks 1 and 4, fried/broiled fish, French fries, mixed vegetables, coleslaw, bread & butter, dessert. Weeks 2 and 5, fried/broiled fish, macaroni & cheese, stewed tomatoes, coleslaw, bread & butter, dessert. Weeks 3 and 6, cheese ravioli with marinara sauce, tossed salad, apple sauce, bread & butter, dessert. Adults $10, children 12 and under and $5. Stations of the Cross at 7 p.m. in the church, except for Good Friday Stations at noon.

St. Anne Parish in Lancaster, Lenten meals in the parish library, Fridays Feb. 28 through April 3 from 4:30-6 p.m. and 6:30-7:30 p.m. Reservations not required, but helpful for planning purposes. Free-will donation accepted. For menu information, visit www.stannechurch.org or call the parish at 717-392-2225.

St. Jean of Ancs Knights of Columbus Parish Council #6693 in Hershey, fish dinners March 6 and 20 and April 3 from 5-8 p.m. in the school cafeteria. Fried or baked fish, French fries or homemade mac & cheese, coleslaw or applesauce. Drinks and desserts available.

Good Shepherd Parish in Camp Hill, fish fry on Fridays, Feb. 28 through April 3 from 4-7 p.m. Fried or baked fish, pierogies, French fries, baked potatoes, mac-n-cheese, coleslaw, apple sauce, homemade desserts and beverages. Dinner packages & a la carte. Eat in or take out. Platters $10. Kids’ meals $6 (with toy prizes). Handicap accessible. Credit cards accepted. Visit www.thegoodshep.org.

St. Joseph Parish in Hanover, Lenten dinners Feb. 28, March 13 and 20, and April 3 from 4-7 p.m. Baked haddock, fried shrimp, mac & cheese, French fries, stewed tomatoes, homemade coleslaw, pizza, desserts, beverages. Prepared by Knights of Columbus Council 871 (English) and 16069 (Spanish).

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Enola, fish fry and Stations of the Cross in the parish hall on Fridays Feb. 28 through April 3 from 4-7 p.m. in the social hall. A variety of seafood, both baked and fried, plus sides and dessert. Call 717-453-9931 to order take out. No fish Fry on Good Friday.

Knights of Columbus Council #15137 of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Parish in Harrisburg, fish dinners on Fridays, Feb. 28 through April 3 from 4:30-7 p.m. in the community center in the church basement. Beer-battered haddock, seasoned oven-baked cod or large breaded shrimp. Two item combo plates and half portions available. Fish sticks for kids. Dinners include coleslaw, choice of homemade mac & cheese, baked potato or French fries, beverage and dessert. Adults dinners are $10, kids’ meals are $5. Take out available. Stations of the Cross at 7:15 p.m. every Friday.

The Harrisburg Diocesan Council of Catholic Women invites women from the Diocese to their 9th Annual Prayer Shawl Retreat

March 21 at Good Shepherd Parish in Camp Hill from 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.


Mail your check (payable to Kathy Kokoski) to Kathy Kokoski, 6209 Westover Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050, with your e-mail address or phone number.

Contact Kathy at 717-448-8899 or kokoko120@comcast.net with questions. Prayer Shawls will be collected for Rachel’s Vineyard Retreats in Columbia. Bring any prayer shawls you would like to donate and any shawls you wish to display and patterns to share.
The Called
*A series of profiles on clergy and religious*

Father Edward Quinlan

**Hometown:** Pennsauken and Cinnaminson, N.J.

**Education:** St. Peter School in Merchantville, N.J., Cinnaminson High School, Rutgers University, Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md.

**Current Assignment:** Pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Harrisburg

I think the ultimate key is to have some kind of prayer life. I didn’t have a focused or deep, meditative prayer life, but a lot of times I’d take my motorcycle and go riding down through the Pine Barrens in Jersey and mull over life. It was as close as I would have gotten to some kind of reflection or meditation. A lot of those times, you realize that you maintain that openness to God. Do what you think you need to do, but maintain that openness to God. Eventually, he will help you to see what you need to see.

**How did you end up becoming a priest for the Diocese of Harrisburg, and where have you served?**

My family moved here in 1974, and my early pastoral assignments from the seminary were in the Diocese. So I decided to transfer over, realizing my parents were settled here. I was ordained in 1978 by Bishop Daley. Good Shepherd in Camp Hill was my first assignment. It was a wonderful assignment with an active school. The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart were there in the school. Then I went to the Cathedral as assistant and Harrisburg Hospital as chaplain. It was a wonderful assignment, to have that opportunity to take care of the pastoral needs of the sick. My first pastorate was at St. Joseph in Danville, with a big community with the Geisinger Medical Center. I was also in Mount Carmel as administrator of Holy Spirit School and part-time assistant at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish. And I was pastor at St. Matthew’s in Dauphin. Now I’m here at Holy Name.

I wound up going to Marywood University to work on my administrative degree in education, then I went to Bishop McDevitt as assistant principal, then on to Delone as principal, and then back to McDevitt as principal. Then I spent 22 years as Diocesan Secretary for Education, succeeded by Dan Breen in 1999.

We are so blessed in this Diocese to have so many good people working in Catholic schools. Our principals, our teachers, our parents who are devoted. We’ve been very blessed, and I think in many ways we still have a strong system of Catholic schools.

**What do you enjoy in your free time?**

Not long after I was appointed to the Education Office, the Norbertines were leaving some assignments in the Diocese, so Bishop Dattilo asked if I would go to St. Matthew’s in Dauphin as pastor. It’s a wonderful place in the mountains. When I had some time on a Saturday morning or Sunday afternoon, I would hike through the game lands and the ridgetops. I used to love going fishing, especially down at the Jersey Shore. That’s one of the things we grew up with. I also have a motorcycle and I occasionally like to go out for a ride.

Workaholics don’t do themselves or anybody else any favors. The reality is, with the demands, sometimes you just can’t say no. We do look for opportunities to take a little break from time to time.

**What is your horizon now as pastor of Holy Name?**

We just started a capital campaign, and we’re going to be working on some building projects. One of the things is, I have no office, the assistant has no office, and we share a little meeting room to meet with people in the middle of the parish office. Our plan is to build a new residence, convert the parish office, renovate the cafeteria and social hall, and complete the lower level of the old church into meeting space.

Tell me a little about your childhood and your education.

I was born in Philadelphia, but we grew up in New Jersey, two little spots called Pennsauken and Cinnaminson. I have two brothers and two sisters, and one of my sisters has since passed away.

In Pennsauken, we were part of St. Peter’s Parish in Merchantville in the Diocese of Camden. I went there for grades 1-4 and then we moved to St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Cinnaminson, and it was founded the year we moved there. At that point, we moved into public school, and I stayed there through high school.

Then I went on to Rutgers in Camden, and I did three years there studying history. During my third year is when I finally made my decision to study for the priesthood. At Rutgers, I had some philosophy courses, but my concentration was history, so they sent my records to a couple places, and Mount St. Mary’s in Emmitsburg came back with an ambiguous reply. I drove there to meet with Father Harry Flynn, and I was able to finish the necessary philosophy courses, plus finish the degree in my senior year.

**When did you first consider the priesthood?**

It was fourth grade. We had wonderful Franciscan Sisters from somewhere up in New York. In those days, it was not uncommon to go to the seminary after eighth grade. Very clearly, there was something drawing me at that point.

When we moved and I went to public school, I got away from having to think about that. But every now and then, it would keep coming back up.

When I was preparing for college, I was really thinking of a military career. I had applied to West Point, and the Army had given me an offer to go to a prep school at Fort Benning with the prospect of next year heading up to the academy. I was impatient, so I went to Rutgers because I was accepted there. But in the fall of my sophomore year, I went to see the people at the Naval Yard in Philadelphia and we talked. They had a program where you would do summer training, then you would be commissioned when you graduated. I signed up in January 1972. I was sworn in to the Reserves, and received my instruction to report for training in June.

There were two busloads of us that came from the Philadelphia area to Quantico for summer training. As I got there, there was a distinct sense that I’m missing something. I think I was slowly coming to the awareness and was really trying to avoid answering the question about a priestly vocation. I went back to school and worked at the A&P grocery store, and just continued to wrestle with the question. There were several things that were kind of coming together.

The regional vice president approached me and asked if I would be interested in management in the company.... Then, that Sunday at Mass, the priest in his homily said, “Just a couple of thoughts about vocation. There are those out there who have a vocation but either don’t know it or choose not to respond.” I sat in the pew and thought, “Oh goodness, he’s talking directly to me.” By January of that year, I went to see the vocations director.

**What advice would you give a young person who is exploring the different options on the table?**

I think the ultimate key is to have some kind of prayer life. I didn’t have a focused or deep, meditative prayer life, but a lot of times I’d take my motorcycle and go riding down through the Pine Barrens in Jersey and mull over life. It was as close as I would have gotten to some kind of reflection or meditation. A lot of those times, you realize that you maintain that openness to God. Do what you think you need to do, but maintain that openness to God. Eventually, he will help you to see what you need to see.

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Create a Safe, Sacred Space for Listening

By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC
Special to The Witness

One of the pictures I treasure from my childhood is of me when I was probably two years old. I was dressed in a bright pink frilly dress and my thin blond hair was a mass of wispy, unruly ringlets. My sister, who was ten at the time, stood holding me, dressed in the same dress as me. We were both next to a spindly cherry tree in full bloom with pink blossoms.

As the tree and I both grew, I discovered that I found a sacred place under its boughs. You see, the root system of this tree grew very close to the surface. Within its twisted and turns, I found a spot that perfectly supported not only my back but also my neck and head. Under this tree, I learned how to read, how to sew invisible stitches on a hem and how to play chess. Under its boughs, I felt God’s protective love because, nestled within its root system, I discovered a safe space.

Kay Lindahl, author of The Sacred Art of Listening: Forty Reflections for Cultivating a Spiritual Practice, describes the importance of safe places “to facilitate listening when sensitive or controversial issues are being discussed.” In short, it is how true listening takes place. She describes two foundational aspects of creating such a space: finding a common ground, and having respect for each other in the differing ways of expression. The aspects below are the author’s; the explanations are mine.

Common ground. As a Catholic Christian, our common ground that every person is created in God’s image and likeness. Because of this, every person has a fundamental right to be respected, even if we don’t agree with their politics or their belief system. They ARE a child of God even if they don’t know that! Can we gaze on them with eyes of our Creator and love them? If we can, that creates sacred space.

Respect for each other and their differing ways of expression. Have you ever looked back at old pictures and thought, “How could I ever have worn that in public?” Our clothes as well as our words change, not only due to cultural pressures but also with different perspectives. These perspectives might be alien, but nevertheless are reality to the person with whom we engage. Reverence that. God can work through differences and His glory can be found within those gaps! If we really begin to live like this, not only do we begin to listen differently, but also we begin to find the hidden roots of being a child of God. I invite you to find your own sacred spot nestled within the roots of the tree of life!


(Sister Geralyn Schmidt is the Wide Area Network Coordinator at the Diocese of Harrisburg and the Director of Formation for Wives in the Diaconate Program. An educator for 30 years, she is responsible for Professional Development Programs for every age learner. Through her presentations, she challenges her audiences to be the individual God has called them to be.)

Saint Spotlight

Venerable Pierre Toussaint
June 27, 1766 - June 30, 1853

(People by Angela M. Orsini)

Pierre Toussaint was born in San Domingue on the island of Hispaniola and was a slave on the plantation owned by Jean Berard, who taught Pierre to read, write and have access to the library. In 1787, Jean left for New York with his wife, Marie, and a few servants, including Pierre. In New York, Pierre did the shopping and arranged parties. At the suggestion of Jean, Pierre began to apprentice as a professional coiffeur. He started to cut and style children’s hair, then those of the society ladies in elaborate styles of the time.

Worried about his home in San Domingue, Jean returned to find it ravished. Upon receiving a note that Jean eventually died of pleurisy and his fortunes gone, Madame Berard fell into a deep depression. Pierre was able to pay the household bills from the money he earned from hairdressing, thus keeping her from bankruptcy. He purchased manumission papers for his sister and several others, but chose to remain a slave, feeling he could be of greater service. Pierre opened his own shop and styled customers at their homes. As Madame Berard was dying, she had her lawyer draw up papers for Pierre’s freedom. He became free on July 2, 1807, and in 1811 married Juliette Noel. Pierre continued as a hairdresser and became a friend and confidant to many elite of New York society. Pierre attended daily Mass at St. Peter’s on Barkley Square where he was a member of the Society of St. Peter. He attempted to start an orphanage for white children, and Bishop John Connolly wrote to Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, Md., to send three of her Sisters of Charity. Pierre undertook many charitable ventures, such as nursing the sick during the Yellow Fever outbreak, housing homeless black boys in his basement where they were well taken care of and offering apprentice- ships in some of the society homes.

When the old St. Patrick’s was opened with a ceremony in 1842, Pierre and his wife were stopped at the door because there were not any “colored seats.” A few days later, he received an apology note from one of the trustees, “In the house of the Lord there is no distinction. God looks at the heart but never the color of the skin.” Juliette died in 1851, and Pierre became weak and bedridden. He died at 87 and was buried from St. Peter’s on Barkley Square. On the centenary of his death, a plaque was placed on the steps of St. Peter’s. After his Cause for Canonization was opened, he was the first layman interred in the crypt below the main altar of the current St. Patrick's Cathedral on 50th Street, an honor usually reserved for the Archbishops of New York.
Lancaster County Court of Peace #1023 of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Lancaster retreat for all women, March 15 from 1-4 p.m. at St. Philip the Apostle Parish in Millersville. St. Joseph's, Lancaster and the Daughters of Mary understand the spiritual retreats and encourages them to attend. Free-will offering accepted. RSVP to mgjordano.sltuzbach@gmail.com or 717-390-9035.

Lenten retreat, “Listen to God in His Sacred Silence,” March 7 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at San Juan Bautista Church in Lancaster. Led by Deogratias Kwesiga. Concludes with Mass at 1 p.m. Light refreshments. A Pastoral Council of Multi- mercial Ministries at 717-657-4804, ext. 313, or 717- 608-0718.

Silent, 24 Hour Bio-Spiritual Focusing Retreat, March 6 -7 at the Saint Cyril Spiritual Center, Danville. Presented by Fr. Jean Marie Holup, SS.C.M. Experience one session of “Bio-Spiritual Focusing” to tap into body-spirituality while honoring the incarnate nature of God. Fee $75 due by registration deadline, Feb 28. Visit www.scssm.org or call 570-275-0910.

Perohi and kielbasa sale at St. Ann Byzantine Catho- lic Church in Harrisburg. Wednesdays from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., as well as from 4 -6 p.m. on Wednesdays and on Saturdays from 12 p.m.-3 p.m. All items loose from. Perohi (pierogi) sold by the dozen for $6.50 and kielbasa in ring or sticks for $7. Perohi fillings include potato and cheese, farmer cheese, sweet cabbage, sauerkraut, prune and apple. 530AnnByz@gmail.com or 717-652-1415.

St. Richard Parish in Manheim, spaghetti dinner on Feb. 21 from 4:30-8 p.m. $9 for adults and 19 and older, and $5 for children. RSVP to 717-652-2754 or register at http://www.marianumahanheim.org. For reservations, please make check payable to “St. Richard Parish” and mail to 2210 North 3rd, Manheim, PA 17545. Winner’s choice designer bag Bingo, sponsored by Res- urrection Catholic School PTO in Lancaster. April 26 in the school cafeteria. 20 games, 3 specials, door prizes, raffles, 50/50 and food. Official start is 2 p.m., early bird game at 1:45 p.m. For tickets, contact nalgavarado1990@gmail.com or 717-341-3387, $20 in advance or $25 at the door.

St. Columbus School in Bloomsburg’s Leprechaun Loop 5k, 10k, and 26.2 half-marathon was held on March 7. All entrants will receive a free t-shirt. The race is in Blooms- burg in your Irish apparel. Individuals, families and groups are welcome. Visit http://www.stcolumbusschools.org/ leprechaun-loop.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Williamsport, home- made halushki sale. Orders are $9 per pound, for pickup in the church social hall on Feb. 25 after 1 p.m. Call Dawn at 717-647-9124 or John at 717-647-2287 to order.

Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Marysville, spa- ghetti dinner, March 12 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 4-7 p.m. Includes homemade sauce and two meatballs, bread, pepper- se pol or applesauce and dessert. Take out available. $9 for adult meal, $6 for children. Under 6 for free. Info, call 717-957-2662.

St. Joseph School in York, new family registration, Feb. 28, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at St. Joseph School in York, and Feb. 24 beginning at 9 a.m. for all other families. Packets available at http://www.sjsy.org/ho/towapadypip or in the school office. Admission fee, $10, 2-11 p.m. on school days. Contact Kristin Baker, Development Director, at 717-755-1979 or development@ sjy.org.

St. Joseph School in York, Indoor golf fundraiser to benefit our faculty, Mini golf course set up in the school. Tee times available Feb. 29 from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Cost is $5 per person. Reserve time at https://www.signupgenius.com/ go/1c0c4afa92a20a7a7-indoor. Adults-only preview on Feb. 28 from 6-9 p.m. with apps, beverages, games and a silent auction. Contact Kathy Baker, Development Director, at 717-755-1979 or development@sjy.org.

St. Monica Parish in Sunbury, spaghetti and meatballs dinner, Feb. 23 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. in the parish center. Eat in or take out. Salad, bread and dessert included. Cost is $10 for adults, $5 for children under 12.

Knights of Columbus of Christ the King Church in Ben- ton, pasta dinner on March 29. Tickets $8. Pick up “take outs” from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., or dine in from 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

AOF of Cumberland County, St. Patrick’s Day Party, March 14 at the West Shore Elks Club. Show at 5 p.m. Irish dinner at 6 p.m. Includes corned beef, bangers (Irish Sausage) and cabbage. Featuring The Lena McGinley Irish Dancers and Down by the Glenauise. Cash bar. Benefits di- vision’s Trinity High School Scholarship Fund. Tickets $35; purchase by March 1 through Zugay at 717-761- 2950 or Zugay1958@gmail.com.

Bishop McDevitt High School in Harrisburg, “A Starry Night Over the Continent: A Popes Concert and Art Exhibit,” March 7. Exhibit of students’ visual art at 6 p.m., Pops Concert at 7 p.m. featuring student solo and group perfor- mances, and the Bishop McDevitt bands and choirs. Tickets are $10 for adults, $5 for students (children five and under are free) and refreshments will be served.

Holy Infant Parish in Manchester is selling chocolate peanut butter and coconut eggs. Cost is $1 each or $12 dozen. Call the parish at 717-266-5286 to order.

Shrove Tuesday pancake supper at St. Joseph Parish in Hanover, Feb. 25 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Pancakes, apple-casserole, fastnachts, desserts and drinks. Cost is $6 for adults, $3 for children 12 and under and free for children under 3. Proceeds benefit the parish.

“Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat,” March 19-21 at 7 p.m. and March 22 at 2 p.m. at Lancaster Catholic High School’s Old Main Auditorium. Cost is $17 for reserved seating, $15 for general admission, $7 for student general admission. Tickets available at the door, or mail payment and self-addressed envelope to Tony Brill, Lancaster Cath- olic High School, 650 Juliette Ave, Lancaster, PA 17601. Make checks to LCSHS Fine & Performing Arts Department.

Seven Sorrows BVM Parish in Middletown, selling chocolate eggs through Easter. Available in peanut butter, butter cream, coconut, and peppermint, dipped in white, dark or milk chocolate for $1. Order at www.ssbvm.org, or by mail or e-mail (ifortunato@ssbvm.org) to the school or parish office, with flavor, chocolate, quantity, name, phone number and pick-up location (school, after Mass or at a fish fry). Allow 48 hours to fill order.

St. Patrick’s Day Dance at Seven Sorrows BVM Parish in Middletown, featuring Class Act featuring Rita, March 14. Tickets $15 in advance or $20 at the door. Call the parish at 717-939-7494; or email dstoudt312@gmail.com. No one under 21 admitted.

York Catholic High School’s spring musical, “You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown,” Feb. 28 at 7 p.m., Feb. 29 at 7 p.m. and March 1 at 2 p.m. All seats are general admission. Tickets are $10 for adults, $8 for students (age 5-18); and $40 for a family. Tickets at the door or in advance at www.yorkcatholic.org. Children can picnic with the Peanuts, Feb. 29 from noon-2 p.m. in the cafeteria. Cost is $5 per person. Registration is not required.

“Bingo for Babies” fundraiser for the Carlisle Area Family Life Center, hosted by Knights of Columbus #4057, March 6 at St. Patrick Parish’s Activity Center, Carlisle. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., light dinner at 6 p.m. and games at 6:30 p.m. Cost is $25 and include dinner, and can be purchased at the center. Prizes include gift cards, tick- ets and certificates from local and area businesses and attractions. Two black-out games with cash prizes up to $500. Contact the center at 717-243-6544 or info@ carlisleareafamilylifecenter.org.

Ephrata Knights of Columbus, annual spaghetti dinner, Feb. 29 at Our Mother of Perpetual Help in Ephrata from 4-7 p.m., unless sold out. Spaghetti with homemade meat sauce, tossed salad with an available homemade dressing, bread and desserts. Beer, soda and wine available at extra cost. All-you-can-eat dinner is $9 for adults, $6 for children. Tickets at the door. Take outs available.

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Digital Notebook continues on page 15
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
Fred Miller

Annville
St. Paul the Apostle
June Brestensky
Elaine Kile
John Moyer
Jeanette Ritter

Berwick
Immaculate Conception BVM
Dennis Horsefield
Joseph Jarski

Buchanan Valley
St. Ignatius Loyola
Andrew Crossland
Anna Jacob

Camp Hill
Good Shepherd
Anna Farrell
Allene Nichols
Angela Romeo

Carlisle
St. Patrick
Jeffrey Rudolph

Columbia
St. Peter
John Good

Elizabethtown
St. Peter
Andrew “Bing” Horvath

Gettysburg
St. Francis Xavier
Doris Hankey
Rose Marie Hydock

Harrisburg
Holy Family
Ralph Kohr

Holy Name of Jesus
Peter J. Hammes
St. Catherine Labouré
Troy Mace

St. Francis of Assisi
Adelina Gonzalez
Alisha Watson

Hershey
St. Joan of Arc
Joyce Nantz

Kulmpton
Holy Angels
Jean Cherniak

George Goodeniuas
Charles Nevius
Diane Rompaio
James L. Stellar
Paul J. Ventilli

Lancaster
St. John Neumann:
Patrick Bagley
John Berard
John Engle
Jerome Gbur
Leon Neice
Gene Ventilling

St. Joseph
Judy Guarino

New Freedom
St. John the Baptist:
Joe Allulis

Palmyra
Holy Spirit:
Starr Skisikhalley

Rohrerstown
St. Leo the Great:
John M. Ganse, III
Judith Guarino
William R. Trumble

Shamokin
Mary Catherine:
Leanne Krieger

Shippensburg
Our Lady of the Visitation:
Col. Lawrence William
Hoffman

York
St. Joseph:
Martha Brunner
LaVerne McDonald
Thong Quoc Nguyen
Kenneth Pasch
Eileen Zappia

St. Patrick:
Madelyn Chervenitski

Dorothea Gallagher
Martha Masek

St. Rose of Lima
Rita Senft

Sister Marian D. Frantz, IHM
Sister Marian D. Frantz, IHM, died in Camilla Hall in Immaculata, PA, Jan. 14. She was 84.
Born in York, her home parish was St. Patrick’s. She entered the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1954. She assisted at Immaculate Heart Academy in Fountain Springs; Incarnation, Philadelphia; St. Maria Goretti in Hatfield, Holy Saviour in Norristown; St. Joseph Annex in Downingtown; and Our Lady of Charity in Brookhaven.
From 1959-1983, Sister Marian taught French at Our Lady’s in Mount Carmel, PA; Our Lady of Lourdes in Shamokin; Immaculata, Somerville; Villa Maria Academy in Malvern; York Catholic; and Bishop Hafez. Sister was Coordinator of Studies at York Catholic and Associate Vicar for Religious during the 86-87 year while at York Catholic.
From 1987-2000, Sister Marian was the Director of the Office for Religious for the Harrisburg Diocese. She then served in the Camden Diocese as Spiritual Director of Programs before entering Camilla Hall in 2015.
The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at Camilla Hall on Jan. 21. Burial was in Immaculata Cemetery.

Sister William Margaret Romen, OSF
Sister William Margaret Romen, OSF, 78, died in Assisi House in Aston, Pa., on Jan. 20.
Born in Philadelphia, she professed her first vows in 1963 and earned a B.A. in English from Neumann University. She ministered primarily in elementary education and eldercare in the Dioceses of Harrisburg and Trenton, and in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, she taught at St. Joseph School in York and St. Joseph School in Lancaster.
Since 1986 Sister William Margaret served as part of the support staff at Assisi House, the congregation’s retirement residence in Aston.
The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in Assisi House on Jan. 27. Burial was in Our Lady of Angels Cemetery in Aston.

Sister Florence Marcin, SS.C.M.
Sister Florence Marcin, SS.C.M. (formerly Sister M. Hilary) died Jan. 28 at Emmanuel Center in Danville. She was 93.
Born in Swoyersville, Pa., she entered the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Danville in 1944. Sister Florence received a B.S. in education from Marywood College, an M.S. in English from DePaul University, Chicago, IL, and a B.S in nursing from Cornell University, New York. She also studied at Bloomsburg University.
Sister Florence served in education ministry in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and in New Jersey, Connecticut, South Carolina and Illinois. She also served as superior and principal for six years. After receiving her R.N., Sister Florence spent the rest of her life in ministry as a nurse at Maria Joseph and Maria Hall in Danville. Later, she worked in Medical Records and performed clerical duties before embarking on the ministry of prayer and hospitality at Maria Hall.
The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in Maria Hall on Feb. 1. Burial was in the Sisters’ cemetery.

DECEASED CLERGY

Please pray for the following clergy who died in February during the past 25 years:

Deacon Stephen Bankos, 1996
Father Paul Miller, 2004
Father Joseph Celia, 2005
Deacon Matthew Culley, 2005
Father Philip DeChico, 2006
Father Robert Strome, 2007
Msgr. Lawrence Overbaugh, 2008
Father Brian Conrad, 2011
Deacon James Sneeeringer, 2011
Father Joseph Hilbert, 2014
Father Louis P. Ogden, 2015
Deacon Robert Mack, 2018
Deacon Martin McCarthy, 2019

Child Abuse and FBI. Submit résumé and cover letter to smareck@njbf.org.

St. Joan of Arc School in Hershey seeks a full-time custodian, Monday-Friday from 2:30-10:30 p.m. Duties include cleaning and maintaining good order in one or more of our generally large facilities. Includes physical activities such as lifting, stretching, bending, climbing stairs, operating cleaning and garden equipment. Valid drivers’ license and clearances are required. Contact Matt Dunkle at 717-533-7168, ext. 127; 717-533-2854, ext. 127; 717-585-5140, or mdunkle@joanhshey.org.

St. John the Baptist School in New Freedom, principal’s position opening for the school year 2020-21. Candidates must be able to obtain a pastor’s recommendation: have their PA Instructional Certification and Administrative certification; obtain clearances including PA State criminal record, complete PA Criminal, PA Child Abuse, and FBI Criminal History background checks and youth protection training. Send résumé to fmsullivan@sschpa.org.

C/O MARY MARKS

St. Rose of Lima
Rita Senft

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Mark Your Calendars!

Next Deadline: February 26

Want to share an announcement for the Notebook page? The deadline for submissions for the March 6 edition is Wednesday, February 26 at 4:30 p.m. Submit your written announcement via e-mail to witness@hbgdiocese.org. Limit 70 words. No ads, posters or PDFs, please.
A link to the submission deadlines for all editions in 2019 is posted on The Catholic Witness page at www.hbgdiocese.org.

Diocesan Notebook continued from page 14

Pennsylvania Pre-Life Federation’s essay and oratory contests for students. Cash prizes for top winners; top two winners published in the summer edition of LifeLines, the Federation’s newspaper. Contest offers an all-expense paid trip to the 2020 National Right to Life Convention this summer to witness#hbgdiocese.org. Limit 0 words.

No ads, posters or PDFs, please.

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PARISH NEWS
LENTEN PENANCE SERVICES

Parishes throughout the Diocese offer Penance Services during the Lenten season. These services typically include an opening hymn, Scripture readings and time for an examination of conscience prior to Confession. The following is a list of Penance Services provided by the parishes. The Diocesan website, www.hbgdiocese.org, will include an updated listing as additional parish information is received, or contact your parish for information.

ABBOTTSTOWN
Immaculate Heart of Mary
April 7 at 7 p.m.

ANNVILLE
St. Paul the Apostle
March 12 at 7 p.m.

BLUE RIDGE SUMMIT
St. Rita
March 21 at 11 a.m.

CAMP HILL
Good Shepherd
April 1 at 7 p.m.

CARLISLE
St. Patrick
March 8 at 7 p.m.
Marsh Drive Church

CHAMBERSBURG
Corpus Christi
March 25 at 6:30 p.m.

CORNWALL
Sacred Heart of Jesus
March 22 at 2 p.m.

DALLASTOWN
St. Joseph
March 29 at 2 p.m.

DANVILLE
St. Joseph
March 30 at 7 p.m.

DUNCANNON
St. Bernadette
March 31 at 6 p.m.

HANOVER
St. Joseph
April 8 at 7 p.m.

HARRISBURG
Holy Name of Jesus
April 7 at 7 p.m.
St. Catherine Labouré
April 2 at 7 p.m.
St. Margaret Mary
March 26 at 7 p.m.

HERSHEY
St. Joan of Arc
March 29 at 7 p.m.

JONESTOWN
Our Lady of Fatima
March 22 at 2 p.m.

LANCASTER
Assumption BVM
April 5 at 6:30 p.m.
St. Anne
March 29 at 7 p.m.
St. John Neumann
April 2 at 7 p.m.
St. Joseph
April 2 at 7 p.m.

LEBANON
Assumption BVM
March 22 at 2 p.m.
St. Benedict
March 22 at 2 p.m.
St. Cecilia
March 22 at 2 p.m.

LEWISTOWN
Sacred Heart of Jesus
March 15 at 3 p.m.

LITITZ
St. James
April 7 at 7 p.m.

MARYSVILLE
Our Lady of Good Counsel
March 26 at 7 p.m.

MECHANICSBURG
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
March 24 at 7 p.m.
St. Joseph
April 5 at 2 p.m.

MILFLINTOWN
St. Jude Thaddeus
March 15 at 7 p.m.

MILLERSVILLE
St. Philip the Apostle
March 15 at 2 p.m.

MOUNT JOY
Mary, Mother of the Church
April 1 at 7 p.m.

MYERSTOWN
Mary, Gate of Heaven
March 23 at 7 p.m.

NEW BLOOMFIELD
St. Bernard
March 16 at 7 p.m.

PALMYRA
Holy Spirit
April 1 at 7 p.m.
Mass at 6:30 p.m.

SHIPPENSBURG
Our Lady of the Visitation
April 1 at 6:30 p.m.

TREVERTON
St. Patrick
April 2 at 7 p.m.

YORK
St. Rose of Lima
March 23 at 7 p.m.

HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION

1. Prepare by examining your conscience and reflecting on your sins before you enter the confessional. You might review the Ten Commandments or the Beatitudes.

2. Begin your Confession with the Sign of the Cross: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” You may then say, “Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been [give days, months or years] since my last Confession.”

3. Confess your sins to the priest. If you are unsure of what to say, ask him for help.

4. The priest will propose your penance – such as something for you to do or a prayer to pray.

5. Pray the Act of Contrition as a means of expressing sorrow for your sins and resolving to sin no more.

6. The priest will give absolution by extending his hands over your head. After he says the Prayer of Absolution, respond “Amen.”

7. Go in peace. At dismissal, the priest may say, “God has freed you from your sins. Go in peace.” You can respond, “Amen.”

If it has been awhile since your last Confession, do not be afraid. The priest will help guide you. You can ask him to walk you through it.

You can find additional resources at www.hbgdiocese.org/confession

THE ACT OF CONTRITION

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 firmly 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. Amen.