Bishop Ronald Gainer, in conjunction with Father Daniel F. X. Powell, is pleased to announce that St. John Neumann Catholic School will open for this coming school year (2020-2021). Plans to build the school have been years in the making. A pre-K through eighth grade school, St. John Neumann Catholic School will open its doors this August. As part of the proposal first submitted to Bishop Gainer to build the school, St. John Neumann School will replace St. Anne Catholic School, which closed at the end of the current school year (2019-2020).

“The opening of St. John Neumann Catholic School, which from the beginning was to replace St. Anne Catholic School, has been a long time in the making. I am very pleased to see this project nearing completion and to know that St. John Neumann Catholic School will be open for the upcoming academic year,” said Bishop Gainer. “This school will offer the same excellent spiritual and academic formation our St. Anne, St. John Neumann and all Catholic school parents have come to expect.”

“As the Executive Pastor of St. Anne School and the Pastor of St. John Neumann Parish, it is with great joy and excitement that we prepare to welcome the St. Anne School Community to our parish campus as we establish St. John Neumann School,” said Father Powell. “The 96-year St. Anne School tradition will be the foundation upon which we will write the next chapter of our school’s history. St. Anne School is closing, then simply moving to St. John Neumann and reopening with a new name but the same history. While our name and location will change, our history and tradition continue.”

“In the 96 years of its Catholic education mission, St. Anne School has educated and shared the Catholic faith to thousands of students,” said Father Tri M. Luong, pastor of St. Anne Parish, adding the relocation of the school...
to St. John Neumann Parish is a positive step. “It has been more than a decade that St. Anne’s School has been entrusted to the leadership of an Executive Pastor from that parish (St. John Neumann). Therefore, it is our joy to congratulate him and St. John Neumann Parish on this special occasion of new beginnings in caring for and sharing our faith to generations to come.”

“We welcome all our current St. Anne School families and are grateful for your devotion and support. The school will continue to offer a sound Catholic education for all those who are seeking a faith-based environment for their children,” said Father Powell. “We look forward to welcoming new families into our school from the Manheim Township community and other communities in the area. We encourage Catholic and non-Catholic families who are looking for a new and different option for their children to contact us. The process to get to this point has been a long and fruitful one filled with many graces and blessings. The support of our St. Anne School family, St. Anne Parish family, and St. John Neumann Parish family has been incredible. We anticipate many wonderful years to come and invite you to join us as we move forward in faith.”

St. Anne Catholic School, located at St. Anne Parish in downtown Lancaster, has been a joint ministry of St. Anne and St. John Neumann parishes. The pastors of both parishes first approached Bishop Gainer several years ago with a proposal to transition the school from St. Anne Parish to St. John Neumann Parish. Parents currently attending St. Anne School have been kept well informed of the pending change and many families have already committed to transfer to St. John Neumann School.

Due to construction delays caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, St. John Neumann Catholic School classes will temporarily be held in the St. Anne School building. It is anticipated construction on St. John Neumann’s School facility will be finished in the early fall, allowing faculty, staff, students and administration to move into the new facility in September.

As a legal entity independent of the Diocese of Harrisburg, funding for construction of St. John Neumann Catholic School was provided through the very generous support of parishioners, parents, and community supporters.

The schools in the Diocese of Harrisburg enroll nearly 10,000 students and they continue to be recognized for their rigorous academic education while providing moral and faith formation according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. To learn more about Catholic education in the Diocese of Harrisburg, visit www.gocatholicschools.org.
Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

This year, 2020, has proven to be a very different and very difficult time for our Church, our nation, our communities and for individuals. As we were saying “Happy New Year” on January 1, little did we know that a few weeks later we would be quarantined in our homes and that our lives and livelihoods would be disrupted for months. This has certainly not been the worst of times we have faced, but it is not the best of times, either.

This, however, is not a time to be indifferent to the needs of those around the world who are suffering and need to experience the solidarity of other Christians to face the pandemic and life’s harsh realities. Life may not return to “normal” next week, but we will gradually get back there if we continue to pray for one another and assist one another, especially with basic needs.

This Christian solidarity and response to basic needs is at the heart of the Missionary Cooperative Program, which our Diocese sponsors each summer. Welcoming a missionary priest to your parish and listening with an open heart to his story allows each of us to hear the voice of Jesus challenging us to care for the “least ones” among our brothers and sisters in mission lands.

Because of COVID-19, missionaries will not physically fill our pulpits this summer to tell their story, but they will voice their needs in a letter that will soon be communicated to our parishes on a “Missionary Cooperative Sunday.” Our parishioners will still have the opportunity to bring the light of Jesus to those overwhelmed by shadows – to spread a contagion of hope to those who need to feel the powerful love of Jesus and His Church.

Please be as generous as your present means allow and grant hope to the poor, to those living on the peripheries, to refugees, the homeless, and to those who need to hear the Gospel message and know the healing power of Christ’s love.

We can meet this challenging moment in history with generosity and love, remembering in a special way those who are most in need.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

Reverend Robert F. Sharman
Diocesan Director, Office of Pontifical Missions

Missionary Cooperative Sunday
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the decision was made to cancel in-person appeals for the summer Missionary Cooperative Program, and instead institute a “Missionary Cooperative Sunday” in each individual parish wherein the pastor will read an appeal letter from the missionary organization and take a special collection for its needs.

There is also an option for online giving at www.hbgdiocese.org/missions; click on the Donate button and choose “Missionary Cooperative Appeal.”
Religious Freedom Week Calls Catholics to Prayer, Action ‘For the Good of All’

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

Each June, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops calls Catholics to join in the celebration and observation of Religious Freedom Week.

The week begins June 22, coinciding with the Feast of Saints Thomas More and John Fisher, martyrs who refused to recognize King Henry VIII’s Act of Supremacy over the Catholic Church in England.

The observance, “For the Good of All,” is an opportunity for Catholics across the country to pray and act for the freedom to serve faithfully and integrity. Throughout the week, the USCCB devotes days of prayer to various efforts and ministries, including: freedom to serve in health care and respect for houses of worship, religious minorities, efforts in adoption and foster care, and Catholic schools.

“Religious freedom means that all people have the space to flourish. Religious freedom is both an American value and an important part of Catholic teaching on human dignity,” the U.S. Bishops say at www.usccb.org/ReligiousFreedomWeek. “When we promote religious freedom, we promote the common good and thus strengthen the life of our nation and the community of nations.”

“All people desire to know their Creator,” the USCCB says of Religious Freedom Week. “All people have a natural impulse to seek the good and to live in accordance with that good. All people can flourish when they pursue the truth about God and respond to the truth.”

Among those working for religious freedom in the Diocese of Harrisburg are the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference and the St. Thomas More Society of Central Pennsylvania.

The PCC is the public affairs arm of Pennsylvania’s Catholic bishops and the Catholic Dioceses of Pennsylvania. It has broad objectives regarding issues such as Catholic education, faith and politics, health care, the dignity of human life, marriage and family, religious liberty and social justice.

The St. Thomas More Society was established in 1990 by a group of Catholic lawyers, named for its patron, a devout Catholic lawyer who was beheaded by the order of King Henry VIII for refusing to sign the king’s Act of Supremacy and Act of Succession.

The society works to promote the spiritual and intellectual wellbeing of its members, including the study of Canon Law and principles of the Church, and to acquaint its members with the life and ideals of St. Thomas More.

“Religious freedom to me means to be able to practice

An image of St. Thomas More, patron of lawyers and statesmen, is seeing during Mass on Feast Day in June of last year.

CHRIS HEISEY, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS

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USCCB: Supreme Court Has ‘Redefined’ the Meaning of ‘Sex’

From The Catholic News Agency

The president of the U.S. bishops’ conference on June 15 lamented the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in a case that considered whether federal civil rights law considers sexual identity and gender identity to be covered by laws prohibiting employment discrimination based upon sex.

“I am deeply concerned that the U.S. Supreme Court has effectively redefined the legal meaning of ‘sex’ in our nation’s civil rights law. This is an injustice that will have implications in many areas of life,” Archbishop Jose Gomez said.

The Supreme Court ruled June 15 that employers cannot fire workers because of their sexual orientation or self-determined gender identity, even while dissenting justices opined the Court was legislating from the bench.

The decision considered a trio of discrimination cases before the Court, two of which involved employees who said they were fired because of their sexual orientation in Bostock v. Clayton County and Altitude Express, Inc. v. Zarda.

A third case, Harris Funeral Homes, Inc. v. EEOC, involved a man who lost his job at a Michigan funeral home after he had gender-transition surgery and returned to work dressed as a woman; the funeral home had sex-specific dress code policies for employees.

The question at issue was whether or not protections against sex discrimination in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act also applied to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

On Monday, the Court’s

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continued from 4

your faith without being hindered by government or society, to be able to practice the tenets of your faith without being compelled by law or state action to do anything that would preclude this practice,” said Joseph Cardinal, Esq., President of the St. Thomas More Society. “I think in today’s society the popular view is that religious freedom means freedom from religion. It seems that in our society’s effort to be sensitive to everyone’s beliefs we sometimes end up taking a hostile view towards all religion, which was never the intent of this country’s founding principles.”

In seeking to pray and act for religious freedom, the Society holds two annual events in particular: the Red Mass to coincide with the start of the U.S. Supreme Court’s term in October, and an annual membership meeting with speakers who address current issues of religious freedom in the state and in the country.

The Society’s annual Feast Day Mass is June 22 at noon, and will be streamed live on the Diocese of Harrisburg’s YouTube Channel.

“The Feast Day Mass is one of our big events during the year, and it is a very important Mass for us to celebrate together,” Cardinale said. “It was difficult to make the decision to make the Mass live-streamed only instead of offering an in-person option. But the safety of our members and everyone else who likes to attend this Mass is paramount, and it just wasn’t possible this year.”

Cardinale extended an invitation to the public to participate in the Mass, as a means of observing Religious Freedom Week.

“I think religious freedom is something that still needs to be defended in this country,” he said.

“Secular society is changing rapidly, and people of faith need to be vigilant in making sure that as secular society progresses, the faith and beliefs of people are not marginalized and cast aside.”
By Al Gnoza

PA Catholic Conference

On Dec. 15, 1791, 39 U.S. delegates signed the Bill of Rights, which was written by future President James Madison. The First Amendment to the relatively new U.S. Constitution was this: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

The First Amendment prohibits laws establishing a national religion or impeding the free exercise of religion for its citizens. The American Civil Liberties Union says this means the government can’t penalize someone because of their religious beliefs.

Over the last couple of years, however, the Wolf Administration has done exactly this in what we see as obvious defiance of freedom of religion.

There is a concerted effort by the Wolf Administration to overrule Catholic beliefs in the placing of children through adoption. The restrictions imposed by the governor and his administration have crippled the ability of Catholic adoption agencies to do their work.

Pennsylvania requires adoption agencies to place children with same-sex parents in order to receive funding. These agencies are part of Pennsylvania’s Statewide Adoption & Permanency Network, also known as SWAN. The requirement by Governor Wolf would be in direct contrast with the long-standing Catholic belief that marriage is between a man and a woman. It is that parental combination, Catholics believe, that is the best way to raise a child.

The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference appealed to the Wolf Administration for a religious exemption. It was denied in 2018, causing most adoption efforts by Catholic organizations in Pennsylvania to grind to a halt. Similar regulations have been shutting down Catholic adoption agencies across the United States ever since Boston Catholic Charities did so in 2006.

The efforts by the PCC to remove this burden continued on both the state and federal level. The PCC sent an appeal to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHS) in Washington to grant a religious exemption. The PCC worked closely with U.S. Congressman Mike Kelly on getting federal relief. A number of state senators and representatives sent a letter to President Trump and DHS asking for relief.

There is a continuing court case that began in Pennsylvania that may provide some relief for Catholic adoption agencies. Just over two years ago, the city of Philadelphia put out an urgent call for 300 foster families to help try to find homes for at least some of the 6,000 children in Philadelphia’s foster care system. But city officials barred Catholic Social Services from placing children in homes.

What purpose does this serve? Thousands of children in search of homes are being kept “in the system” so bureaucrats can use them to further their political agendas. For them, it is not about the kids. It’s about the ideology.

Even if this case is settled in our favor, it may be much too late. Sadly, many Catholic adoption agencies have shut down, waiting for a reversal from the government. In the meantime, many concerned employees have sought and found other jobs.

The Adoption Network Law Center writes that a Gallup poll from 2014 found that a majority of Americans say same-sex couples should have the legal right to adopt a child. Catholic agencies are not contesting that legal right. But why force someone to facilitate that when it goes against their beliefs? There are other agencies in Pennsylvania that already specialize in same-sex adoptions/foster care.

The answer is clear: once again, it’s about principle for many of those in power. It’s not enough for us to respect their beliefs in a “agree to disagree” mindset. No, we must actually validate and live their beliefs at the expense of our own.
majority ruled that “An employer who fires an individual merely for being gay or transgender violates Title VII.”

In November, the U.S. bishops’ conference had asked the Court not to extend Title VII protections to sexual orientation and gender identity, because to do so would “redefine a fundamental element of humanity.”

“Words matter,” the statement from leading U.S. bishops said. “‘Sex’ should not be redefined to include sexual inclinations or conduct, nor to promulgate the view that sexual identity is solely a social construct rather than a natural or biological fact.”

Gomez echoed that sentiment on Monday.

“By erasing the beautiful differences and complementary relationship between man and woman, we ignore the glory of God’s creation and harm the human family, the first building block of society. Our sex, whether we are male or female, is part of God’s plan for creation and for our lives. As Pope Francis has taught with such sensitivity, to live in the truth with God’s intended gifts in our lives requires that we receive our bodily and sexual identity with gratitude from our Creator. No one can find true happiness by pursuing a path that is contrary to God’s plan,” the archbishop said.

“Every human person is made in the image and likeness of God and, without exception, must be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect. Protecting our neighbors from unjust discrimination does not require redefining human nature.”

Critics of the Court’s decision have argued that, in addition to reinforcing the transgender ideology, they could undermine the religious liberty of religious employers and business owners.

Justice Neil Gorsuch, writing for the Court’s majority, acknowledged religious freedom concerns for employers in the Court’s decision. Religious organizations and employers do have certain protections from discrimination lawsuits under the First Amendment and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), his decision said.

However, the religious freedom question would be a matter of future consideration since “none of the employers before us today represent in this Court that compliance with Title VII will infringe their own religious liberties in any way,” Gorsuch wrote.

To report suspected abuse of a minor, please follow these two steps:

1. Call the toll-free PA Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-932-0313
2. Report suspected abuse of a minor by a church official, employee or volunteer by calling the diocesan toll-free hotline at 1-800-626-1608

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE WITH BOTH LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE DIOCESE.

Email: ReportAbuse@hbgdiocese.org

Diocese of Harrisburg Youth Protection Program  www.YouthProtectionHBG.com
Tell us where you grew up, and about your childhood and family.

I was born in a little town in western Pennsylvania called Sharon on the Ohio and Pennsylvania border, kind of the very southern end of the Diocese of Erie. I went to Catholic schools in grade school and high school – the high school is now called Kennedy Catholic. Of course, that was the 1960s when every parish seemed to have its own school and there were a lot of kids in the schools at that time. They are way down now, unfortunately.

I have a brother and a sister. My brother has a daughter, and he is a teacher about ready to retire. I have a sister who is a finance professional that works at a local hospital near Sharon. She has four kids, and all four graduated from Penn State. I am the oldest of the three, and there was a study done a while ago that shows that a lot of times the oldest in the family is the one that pursues a religious vocation. I know that is not always true by any means, but there is evidence to that being the case.

I went to LaSalle University in Philadelphia and got a degree in English Education, and I taught for two years at Bishop McDevitt. I was actually offered a job at Trinity at the same time as McDevitt, but I had already said yes to McDevitt. It was a very good experience at McDevitt. It was a great place, and I met a lot of great people there.

**What years were you there?**

I graduated from college the bicentennial year of 1976 in Philadelphia and taught at McDevitt from 1976 to 1978. That is how I ended up in the Diocese of Harrisburg. I then attended Mount St. Mary’s in Emmitsburg where I studied pre-Theology. In those days, pre-Theology was a brand new kid. It was not very structured, and I lived at the college so I could get my philosophy requirements and then stayed on campus for the last four years of seminary.

**Who were some of your classmates at the Mount?**

I had a couple from this Diocese. One was Father John Kemper, who just recently passed away. Phil Burger, who is now pastor at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Abbottstown. Also Bishop Rhoades was a classmate, along with Father King and Father Frank Karwacki. My class at the Mount had 55 guys in it, with seminarians from as far away as Montana, from Vermont, Allentown, Pittsburgh, Erie and Altoona. Some were from the southern Unites States as well. I was ordained in 1983 by then-Bishop Keeler because Bishop Daley was not well and he died in September after I was ordained. So the future Cardinal Keeler ordained me both a transitional deacon and a priest.

**When did you begin thinking about pursuing a priestly vocation?**

When I was a kid, we went to 9 a.m. Mass every Sunday, and you sat in the pew in the grade that you were in. We went every Sunday faithfully, and at the end of Mass the priest would come out and ask us questions while our parents waited in the back of the church or outside. The priest would ask questions, and I would happen to be the one who answered a lot of the questions. I thought about it a while growing
up and I think my pastor knew that I was thinking about it. In the confessional one day, he asked me, “Do you want to go to the seminary?” I said, “No, Father, not really.” My parents were not keen on me going into the seminary after eighth grade, even though the diocese did have a high school seminary that you could attend at the time. So I went to Kennedy and then off to college.

But, after two years of teaching, I thought to myself that I better somehow make a decision about a vocation because time goes on, and it would take me too long. I should mention that when I was at LaSalle, I was an aspirant to the Christian Brothers at the school and I would go on retreats with them. I lived at the Scholastica house and I really thought about becoming a brother because of their teaching. But I decided against that feeling; it was not for me and not something I was called to do.

Growing up in Sharon, you do pretty much what everybody else did. You go to basketball games, plays and dances, and I can’t say I was busy all the time, but I was busy enough. My Class of 1972, we still get together for reunions, and the last time we got together was for our 65th birthdays. My Catholic high school was built in 1963 and it was a little dated when it was built. It was, though, at the height of Catholic schools in this country. It is actually where my brother teaches today. I did not live a very exciting life growing up, at least I did not think so.

It was small-town America?

Oh, yes, absolutely, and my parents worked hard. My father worked for Westinghouse in their transformer division. At the height of their work force they employed more than 10,000 people. Now it is just a memory and the place is empty. My mom was a maintenance person at the hospital – Sharon Regional – and that basically meant scrubbing and cleaning floors, which really meant she was doing that so my parents could afford to send us to Catholic schools and pay tuition. When we first started out in elementary school, it was $125 to go to school, but as time went on the cost went up and up. If I can say it this way, I am a mixture of Italian and Slovak on my mother’s side, which was Eastern Rite. I have fond memories of going to Mass with my grandparents on my mother’s side and I did not know what to make of it, but I was still there and it intrigued me. The cool thing about that was that the parish would send a school bus for us to go to church, because the old Slovak people did not drive. The bus was driven by the pastor, and he would pick the people up and then another person would drop them off at home after Mass. On Sunday night, the bus would come back and take everybody back to church for Sunday night bingo. No lie, I would get on the bus and the old ladies would be there with their babushkas. They would be talking in Slovak and they would be using my name, and I knew they were talking about me. I never knew what they were talking about. It was a memorable place to grow up, to say the least.

You decided while you were teaching to begin pursuing a priestly vocation.

I went to the Vocation Director, and he was very encouraging to me. You must sit in front of the Seminary Board, and I did not know what to expect. Growing up, my pastor was a good guy, but he was not the type to really associate with us and you were not his buddy. I just did not know what to expect when I met with the board. You had Bishop sitting at one end of the table and priests all around a long table. I do not remember who all was sitting there, but I do remember Msgr. Leech asking me what I would do if I was a priest at a little rural place in the middle of nowhere. How would I handle it? Little did I know that it would come true.

Do you remember how you answered?

No, I really don’t. I do remember saying that I would do whatever it takes. You must rely on the people, the parishioners of any parish no matter where you go or are assigned, and they are the ones who make you feel at home. That is really no different any place
you go. Any place you are assigned, you must get to know “Where do I go to get a good pizza? "Where are the cleaners?” Things like that.

**Where were your first assignments?**

My first assignment was at St. Theresa’s in New Cumberland for four years, where I was also chaplain at Trinity High School. Then I went to St. Joe’s in Lancaster and I was also chaplain at F & M College. Then I went to St. Joe’s in Mechanicsburg and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, also in Mechanicsburg, before serving at Seven Sorrows in Middletown. I served at Danville at Geisinger Hospital for a year as chaplain. I was in McSherrystown just temporally before I was assigned to Holy Name of Jesus in Harrisburg in 1997. I have moved around quite a bit.

Following that, I was named pastor at St. Joe’s in Berwick and that was my first pastor assignment. I was there for a little before being transferred to St. Andrew’s in Waynesboro for a short time and then back to Berwick, and now I am here at Our Lady of Mercy where I have been pastor for three years now.

**Being a pastor at a small parish, you get to know your parishioners well?**

Well, I do, and certainly the ones that are here all the time. That is obvious. Father Mannion was here for 28 years, and in his last years he was rather incapacitated. In a respectful way, Father lived a very simple life here and the people just loved him. And I respect that as a pastor. Every pastor has his own way of doing things, and that is something to be respected. One of the legacies he left is the parish picnic, which is a big deal all over this valley. People come from all over to attend the picnic. Of course with this year being what it is, there will be a cap or restrictions on certain things, but I try and remember where people sit and what Mass they go to. If they are not at Mass, I try and ask them if they are ok or if something is wrong if I have not seen them at Mass. That is a way to connect. I had one guy one time tell me that he thought that it was astounding that I remember where he sits and whether he was at Mass or not.

Father Mannion told me when I started here that I must remember that half of this parish is related to the other half. The family ties here go back many years. It reminds me an awful lot of how I grew up. I lived in a town with many Italian names – except for the O'Brien’s – and we were all related.

But certainly the sacraments are extremely important, and I try to make every Mass one to be remembered and that it is not hurried or rushed. I try and make sure the people know what the Church wants them to know, especially in the teaching. Preaching is a big thing for me also.

**How do you prepare for a homily?**

What I try to do is read the Scriptures way ahead of time because I am also working on the bulletin. I have a ton of books that give me many ideas for homilies, but then I also try use some of my own experiences to relate to them. This week, people were talking about how great it was to get out again after the pandemic restrictions eased. I spent 45 minutes standing in line at Marshall’s for something I could easily have come back for another time or that I really did not need at that moment. But the experience, I related to the Holy Trinity and the experience was useful to share something much larger and make a point more profound. That is a way to connect with people. On weekdays, I do the readings myself so I can speak the words
from the Lectionary and tie them into making a
point to my Mass-goers. Preaching is enjoyable
for me. Of course, the Eucharist is vitally
important to me.

What do you like to do in your free time?
I like to travel locally often. I do not go too far.
I actually have no particular hobbies. I used to
collect things or certain items, but I do not do that
so much anymore. Eventually somebody has to
get rid of it all, and it seems worthless if you really
look at it. So why do it? I do like shirts, so I go
shopping for various shirts. I am like my father in
that respect. He used to like to do that. My father
– this is no lie – if he had one shirt, he had 900.

I also like to people watch. I am a huge people
watcher. I just watch people walk by at a mall or
somewhere in public and just think about their
circumstances. I find it extremely entertaining
because people come in all shapes, sizes and
colors, and their interactions sometimes just
fascinate me. It is very revealing. I was once
at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York and they
have weddings there on the hour, so you better
be ready when your time is on. I saw this couple,
and I knew they were Italian and they were
arguing and screaming over this and that. I said
to the people I was with, “I must watch this.” It
was just hilarious the way they were interacting.
I get that from my dad. He would do the same
thing and then we would have a discussion about
it. It is a way to learn about people.

Do you have any favorite books or movies?
I do not go to the movies much. I usually watch
them later when they come out. I tend to get
restless, so I would rather watch a good episode
of an old sitcom like McHales’s Navy or Hogan’s
Heroes or Perry Mason or Wings.

Books, I do not read so much for pleasure,
but I like books that talk about what happened
on this day in history or that sort of thing. I get
a number of Catholic newspapers, and I enjoy
staying informed. That has changed a lot now,
since you can get many online. I used to have a
bunch come in the mail. I was just interested in
what was going on in different dioceses. Brooklyn
still has a weekly newspaper, and I enjoy reading
their paper. They are sure going through a
tough time also. I have classmates who are

Is there anything else you want to share?
People often ask me why I am named Dennis.
My mother had the responsibility of naming me,
sort of the way things were, and I was born on
St. Patrick’s Day, and she did not want to name
me Patrick. She did not want me to be called
Little Patsy because my grandfather was called
that, since he was named Pasqual, and she just
did not want a thing like that. She picked Dennis,
which really does not go with our last name.

Also, I really learned to love the liturgy when I
went to college in Philadelphia and I would take
the subway from LaSalle down to the Cathedral
of Sts. Peter and Paul to center city and go to
Mass. The music was just unbelievable, and I
really did not know that Catholic Church was like
that. It is why I am into that now. And now, with
the pandemic, we are not singing or using books,
and I miss it very much. I like loud organs and
great music. The liturgy is where people come
to learn and feel the faith. Saying Mass to an
empty church is fine, but having the people there
is important, and it was very different for sure. I
like to move, and I have not been able to do that.
I would like to go out and see my mom, who still
lives in a care facility in Sharon. I have not seen
her since Christmas, so I miss seeing her very
much. I go across Interstate 80 to get to her, but
I like to take different ways home sometimes, just
to see different things and places. I take Route
6 across the northern part of the state and that
takes you through many of the small towns, that

(Interview conducted by Chris Heisey, The
Catholic Witness.)
A Crock Pot of Patience
By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC
Special to The Witness

I am always surprised when the Holy Spirit “pokes” me to enlighten me about my faux pas – it must give my Beloved a really good belly laugh!

On one occasion as I prepared a slow-cooker dinner, I gathered and browned the meat, peeled the vegetables and put all the various ingredients in the crock pot. I thought, “This raw food looks absolutely gross. It looks like the compost pile I have outside! Patience, Geralyn! This will be a delicious meal!” I began to prepare homemade bread to go with the stew I was cooking. As I put the dough aside to rise, once again, I thought, “PATIENCE!”

An hour later, I looked at the crock pot; no change! The dough had just begun to rise. I felt the child within me scream, “Patience, Geralyn! I SO want that and I want it NOW!” I could hear a far-off chuckle and a whisper within my heart: “It doesn’t work that way. It’s a process and it takes a lifetime.”

The lesson the Holy Spirit reminded me of that day is one we all need to re-learn now and then. Patience. Max Lucado, in his book Grace for the Moment, writes, “I choose patience … I will overlook the inconveniences of the world. Instead of cursing the one who takes my place, I’ll invite him to do so. Rather than complain that the wait is too long, I will thank God for a moment to pray. Instead of clinching my fist at new assignments, I will face them with joy and courage.”

I can hear you say, “Yeah, yeah. My mom used to demand patience from me as a child. It’s still hard and I still am no closer to acquiring it.” I can’t agree more with that sentiment!

In response to these ponderings, I searched “the virtue of patience” online. One of my search results gave me an article from The Rosary and Light and Life Magazine, originally printed back in 1994, entitled, “The Virtue of Patience.” Upon reading it, I was led to pause, pray and reflect.

According to the author, every virtue has two specific qualities: a natural one and a supernatural one.

The natural aspect of a virtue comes to us through the use of our reason. The supernatural aspect comes through the use of reason that has been enlightened by faith.

The author goes on to explain, “The word “patience” is derived from the Latin word pati, which means to suffer, to endure, to bear. Already that tells us much about the nature, meaning and necessity of the virtue of patience.”

Please read those words over again. When something happens to us that is disagreeable, annoying, or irritating, this virtue gives us the strength to control the harsh feelings and impulses that we might feel or want to do. This virtue changes those snarky actions and words into something different; something other “worldly.”

Look at it this way. The supernatural virtue of patience is an act of love for God shown by the disregard of one’s own circumstances or feelings at any given time. It is another form of self-gift. It’s the ability to profoundly trust in the providence of God, the belief in the core of our being that nothing happens to us that God doesn’t foresee, allow, or bring good out of. ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.

This is in stark contrast to the spirit of the world that screams “NO!” to every adversity, pain or inconvenience. In short, it is the ability to stand wherever you are, through whatever is happening and look toward heaven knowing that God is there!

Why am I going on and on about patience? I believe that it is THE virtue that we need as we venture out from sheltering in place – both the natural and supernatural kind.

Face it, we are not patience people, or a patient society. Didn’t we “invent” fast food and the assembly line? Technology was supposed to save us time so we can do more things! Our lives were lived at a breathtaking speed. That was many months ago!

Yes, we are American, but you who are reading this are also Catholic Christians, who stand in time with our eyes facing heaven. Patience grows...
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.

Bonneauville
St. Joseph the Worker:
Marie A. Arthur

Carlisle
St. Patrick:
William J. Bailey

Hanover
St. Vincent de Paul:
Peggy Moul
Dale Thomas
Carl Groft

Harrisburg
Holy Name of Jesus:
Patricia Ann Reed
Sandra K. Groce
Michael D. Cirillo
Capt. Robert J. Miller

Littlestown
St. Aloysius:
Opal L. Redding

Middletown
Seven Sorrows BVM:
Elizabeth Diffendall

New Freedom
St. John the Baptist:
Leonard Moleskie
Madeline Kurtinitis

Hershey
St. Joan of Arc:
Vito Amato

Lancaster
Assumption BVM:
Joan Carpenter

Lebanon
Assumption BVM:
Guy Hartman
Gail Rusnak
Margaret “Betty” Edkin

York
Immaculate Conception BVM:
Andrew Kolsovsky
John Borsa
St. Joseph:
Vincent Shyblowski
Madeline Lutz
Priscilla “Pat” Korcuba

Deceased Clergy
Please pray for the following clergy who died in June during the past 25 years:

Msgr. Francis Taylor, 1997
Father Augustine Zan, 1999
Father Joseph Kelly, 2000
Father Robert Burns, Jr., 2001
Father Thomas J. Gralinski, 2005
Father William Geiger, CSSR, 2007
Father T. Ronald Haney, 2012
Father Andre J. Meluskey, 2013
Father Francis T. Menei, 2019.

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when we don’t turn away from what we experience at our feet, but love as we live in heaven. This stance gives us the grace to become leaven within the society that demands, “Give it to me now!”

Is this really possible? Yes! It demands to live a life steeped in prayer, meditation on the life of Christ as well as His passion. In a sense, He is the crock pot, changing the hardness of our life into a savory meal. All it requires is patience and time!

2 http://www.rosary-center.org/l47n2.htm

‘Beginning Experience’ Weekend for Those Struggling with Loss of Spouse
The Beginning Experience Team for the Harrisburg Diocese has reserved Camp Hebron in Halifax, Pa., for a Beginning Experience Weekend, Nov 6-8, 2020.

The ecumenical Beginning Experience weekends are designed for those suffering the loss of a spouse through death, divorce or separation. Hundreds of persons have been helped to move towards successful, productive, happy lives by attending one of these weekends.

The weekend is led by persons who have lost a spouse through death or divorce and are trained in facilitating a weekend.

Beginning Experience is your Church at work to provide help, healing and spiritual restoration. Visit www.hbgdiocese.org and go to marriage and family, check www.beginningexperience.org or contact the Harrisburg Beginning Experience Team at 717-379-0800 or harrisburgbe@gmail.com.

*Masks and social distancing will be required.
Pope Francis: The Eucharist Gives Us Christ’s Healing Love

By Courtney Mares
Catholic News Agency

Christ’s presence in the Eucharist heals wounds and transforms bitter negativity into the joy of the Lord, Pope Francis said in his homily for the Solemnity of Corpus Christi Sunday.

“The Eucharist brings us the Father’s faithful love, which heals our sense of being orphans. It gives us Jesus’ love, which transformed a tomb from an end to a beginning, and in the same way can transform our lives. It fills our hearts with the consoling love of the Holy Spirit, who never leaves us alone and always heals our wounds,” Pope Francis said June 14.

“Every time we receive him, he reminds us that we are precious, that we are guests he has invited to his banquet, friends with whom he wants to dine. And not only because he is generous, but because he is truly in love with us. He sees and loves the beauty and goodness that we are,” he said in St. Peter’s Basilica.

Pope Francis offered Mass for the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, a feast established in the 13th century following a Eucharistic miracle that led a host to bleed at the words of consecration.

“The Eucharist is not simply an act of remembrance; it is a fact: the Lord’s Passover is made present once again for us. In Mass, the death and Resurrection of Jesus are set before us,” Pope Francis said in his homily for the feast.

The Solemnity of Corpus Christi, meaning the “Body of Christ” in Latin, is traditionally celebrated on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday or, in some countries including the United States and Italy, on the Sunday following that feast.

The feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ provides an opportunity for the Church to focus on Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist, which Pope Francis said satisfies the deepest desires of our hearts.

“The Lord, offering himself to us in the simplicity of bread, also invites us not to waste our lives in chasing the myriad illusions that we think we cannot do without, yet that leave us empty within,” he said.

“The Eucharist satisfies our hunger for material things and kindles our desire to serve. It raises us from our comfortable and lazy lifestyle and reminds us that we are not only mouths to be fed, but also his hands, to be used to help feed others.”

Pope Francis said that Jesus approaches gently “in the disarming simplicity of the Host.”

“Only love can heal fear at its root and free us from the self-centeredness that imprisons us. And that is what Jesus does.”

“He comes as Bread broken in order to break open the shells of our selfishness. He gives of himself in order to teach us that only by opening our hearts can we be set free from our interior barriers, from the paralysis of the heart,” he said.

Many people have been hurt by lack of affection and “bitter disappointments caused by those who should have given them love and instead orphaned their hearts,” Pope Francis said.

“We would like to go back and change the
World Day of Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests Encourages Reflection on Vocation

From the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

The World Day of Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests will be celebrated by the universal Church on June 19. Occurring annually on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the World Day of Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests was established by Pope St. John Paul II in 2002 and encourages priests to reflect upon the importance and dignity of their vocation.

In his Holy Thursday homily on April 9, 2020, Pope Francis reminded priests that in order to serve others, they must first allow themselves to be served by Christ. Just like St. Peter, priests must be willing to be washed by Christ, forgiven by Christ, and loved by Christ so that they, in turn, may be dispensers of divine forgiveness and love to others. The Holy Father also remembered those courageous priests in hospital ministry who have died in service to their brothers and sisters suffering from coronavirus. He also commended those priests who serve prisoners and those ministering in remote parts of the world.

Bishop James F. Checchio of Metuchen, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations echoed Pope Francis' gratitude for priests during this time of pandemic. "We give thanks to priests who are continuing to serve the people of God in this challenging time. Priests are the face of Christ and allow people to encounter Jesus, especially through the celebration of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. On this World Day of Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests, I encourage my brother priests to contemplate with gratitude the great gift Jesus has given us in our vocation. I ask the faithful to pray for all priests that they may be filled with joy and strength as they continue their important work of shepherding God's people."


(Photo by Chris Heisey, The Catholic Witness.)

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past, but we cannot," he said. “God, however, can heal these wounds by placing within our memory a greater love: his own love.”

“The Lord knows that evil and sins do not define us; they are diseases, infections. And he comes to heal them with the Eucharist, which contains the antibodies to our negative memory. ... We will always remember our failures, troubles, problems at home and at work, our unrealized dreams. But their weight will not crush us because Jesus is present even more deeply, encouraging us with his love,” he said.

God gave the world the gift of the Eucharist because he knows how easily people can forget him in their weakness, the pope said. “God knows how difficult it is, he knows how weak our memory is … He did not just leave us words, for it is easy to forget what we hear. He did not just leave us the Scriptures, for it is easy to forget what we read. He did not just leave us signs, for we can forget even what we see. He gave us Food, for it is not easy to forget something we have actually tasted. He left us Bread in which he is truly present, alive and true, with all the flavour of his love.”

The pope said that the Mass is a “treasure” that should “take precedence both in the Church and in our lives.”
Virtual Caelorum event on Facebook, July 1 at 7 p.m. Live praise, worship and Scripture reflection. A link to the live event will be available at the Caelorum Facebook page. Call Lou at 717-215-4175 with any questions.

Resurrection Catholic School in Lancaster will hold its annual Golf Outing on Sept. 15 at Meadia Heights Golf Course in Lancaster. For information on registering as a foursome, or if you would like to become a sponsor, contact Amanda Lyda at 717-475-6330.

St. John the Baptist in New Freedom is holding its inaugural Annual Summer Bazaar & Yard Sale on June 20 from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. This outdoor and indoor event will feature garden, outdoor and Christmas decorations, a women’s boutique, furniture, art, baked goods, gift baskets, yard sale items, crafts and a silent auction. Food will be for sale by Knights of Columbus Council #8891.

St. Patrick Parish in Carlisle is holding a Father’s Day Food Truck Sunday in the PAC Parking lot on June 21 from noon-3 p.m. Trucks include Mad Dash, Brickers Famous French Fries, Potato Coop, Farm Show Milkshake Truck and Stocks on 2nd. Give dad a break from the grill, relax and celebrate dads, grand dads, uncles, sons... everyone! Come and join us at 87 Marsh Drive, Carlisle.

York Catholic High School, educating students in grades 7-12, is hosting a Virtual Open House on June 24 from 6-7:30 p.m. Speak with our dedicated faculty and administration to learn about all YC has to offer. Chat with our athletics and music staff to learn about our extra-curricular activities. Sit in on a virtual class with a student to experience our teachers and classes. Visit www.yorkcatholic.org to sign-up to receive the link to join us. For more information, contact York Catholic High School at 717-846-8871, ext. 220.


Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Cornwall is seeking a handy-man to work part-time cleaning and doing repair work which may require electrical and plumbing basics. If you or someone you know may be interested, please call 717-273-1574.

Employment opportunities available at Our Mother of Perpetual Help School in Ephrata. Technology Education & Integrated Technology Teacher (Grades K-8), Physical Education Teacher (Grades K-8), Art Education Teacher (Middle School Grades 6-8), After School Clubs Program Supervisor, and substitute teachers. If interested in any position, send a cover letter, résumé, transcripts, and pastor letter to Mrs. Patricia A. Foltz, Principal, at pfoltz@omph.org.

Resurrection Catholic School in Lancaster is seeking a full-time middle school math and science teacher. All applicants must complete the Harrisburg Diocese Professional Employment Application, submit three current letters of reference, and obtain the proper clearances. To be considered for an interview, applicants must also provide a Pastor’s letter of reference from the church that they currently attend. If interested, please submit a cover letter, résumé, letters of reference, Pastor’s letter of recommendation, and transcripts to Mr. Jeffrey Hughes, Principal, Resurrection Catholic School, at jhughes@rcspa.org or mail information to Resurrection Catholic School, 521 E. Orange Street, Lancaster, PA 17602. The application packet found on the Diocesan website must be completed and submitted. Please see the link to the Harrisburg Diocese Professional Teaching Application: https://www.hbgdiocese.org/catholic-schools/employment-applications/.