Pope Benedict Says He Will Serve Church through Prayer, Meditation

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

In one of his last public appearances, Pope Benedict XVI told an overflow crowd in St. Peter’s Square Feb. 24 that his upcoming retirement does not mean he is abandoning the Church, but that he will be serving it in a new way, through prayer and meditation.

At noon, the pope appeared at his window in the Apostolic Palace to pray the Angelus, a papal Sunday ritual that will not be repeated until after the election of a new pope.

Despite the blustery weather, turnout was several times the usual for such occasions — easily more than 150,000, with some estimates as high as a quarter of a million. The crowd filled the square, except where prevented by barricades, and spilled out into the Via della Conciliazione. Many groups held signs expressing gratitude and affection — “You are not alone,” one read — and national flags from countries as far away as Brazil.

Benedict was the “the rock: solid, strong and unwavering and yet kind and compassionate and lov—

Diocese Gathers for Mass of Thanksgiving for Pope Benedict

By Jen Reed
The Catholic Witness

In a Mass of Thanksgiving for Pope Benedict XVI celebrated less than a week before the Holy Father resigned the Office of the Bishop of Rome, Bishop Joseph P. McFadden said one of the pope’s greatest gifts “was his ability to teach and to articulate the truths of the Catholic faith.”

“Throughout the course of his pontificate, he has constantly called the people of God to a deeper growth and appreciation for the truths that are revealed to us in and through Jesus Christ,” Bishop McFadden added. “He has constantly invited us to a deeper encounter with the Risen Lord, and encouraged us to open our hearts and our lives to the healing presence of Jesus and the transforming grace that he desires to share with us that will enable us to become the sons and daughters of God that God the Father longs for us to be.”

The bishop offered his remarks in a homily during the Mass, which was celebrated at St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg on Feb. 22, the Feast of the Chair of Peter.

The feast day originated in the fourth century as a means for the Catholic Church to offer thanksgiving to God for the gift of the leadership of the Bishop of Rome and a successor of St. Peter.

“This feast commemorates the teaching authority of the Vicar of Christ that is within the Church. The source of this teaching authority is Jesus Christ, and resides in the Bishop of Rome and is exercised in conjunction with the bishops throughout the world, who are the successors of the apostles,” Bishop McFadden explained. “The Bishop of Rome, by his office, is the first among equals, and has been given the authority to exercise the duty of shepherding the universal Church as a successor of the Apostle Peter, who was given this authority by Christ himself.”

The bishop said the Feast of the Chair of Peter was an appropriate day to offer thanksgiving to God for the leadership of Pope Benedict XVI, “and to assist him with our prayers as he now transitions to a new moment in his life, which will be one of prayer and deeper meditation on the mystery of Christ as he waits for the Lord to call him to his eternal reward.”

Among those gathered for the Mass was Kelly Cloak and her four young children, who are in kindergarten, first, third and fourth grades.

She brought her children — three boys and a girl — to the Mass to pray for Pope Benedict, who, she

More PRAYER, page 6

More MASS, page 2
Mass

Continued from 1

says, she’ll remember first and foremost as a great teacher of the faith.

“He’s been so articulate in his writing and in his speaking about our faith and about the Church,” said Mrs. Cloak, a member of St. Theresa Parish in New Cumberland. “I think his scholarship will be his legacy.”

Mrs. Cloak reflected on the historic and unusual time for the Church, as Pope Benedict resigns and the Church awaits a conclave for the election of his successor. The mother of four said she is using the occasion to teach her children more about the Church.

“This is a wonderful opportunity to look with them at what it means to sit in the Chair of Peter. It’s a teachable moment to talk to them about the conclave, the importance of the Chair, how a pope is elected and the demands of it,” she said. “It will be wonderful to walk through this time with the kids and teach and guide them along the way, and to use this as a moment for greater understanding about the Catholic Church.”

The Gospel Reading at the Mass was from Matthew 16:13-19, in which Jesus asks the disciples, “Who do you say that I am?”

Peter responds, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” In reply, Jesus says to him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.”

The Gospel Reading, Bishop McFadden pointed out, is what will be read when the newly-elected pope gathers with the cardinals in a prayer service immediately after his election.

The bishop concluded his homily with the prayer that Pope Benedict wrote at the conclusion of his first encyclical, Deus Caritas Est. It’s a prayer, the bishop said, that was likely the motto for the pope’s life:

The bishop’s Episcopal ring comes into focus as he offers prayers of thanksgiving for Pope Benedict XVI. Students from Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School, including sixth-grader Kaitlyn Bartholomew shown here, served at the Mass.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
you have given the world its true light,
Jesus, your Son – the Son of God.
You abandoned yourself completely
to God’s call
and thus became a wellspring of the goodness which flows forth from him.
Show us Jesus. Lead us to him.
Teach us to know and love him,
so that we too can become capable of true love
and be fountains of living water
in the midst of a thirsting world.

An image of Pope Benedict XVI graces St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg, where faithful gathered Feb. 22 for a Mass of Thanksgiving for the pontiff.

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Matthew 25
Grant Applications are now being accepted through March 31, 2013

Any organization in the Harrisburg diocese can apply for a grant provided they address basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter.

All applications must be submitted with an endorsement letter from your pastor.

Applications can be found online at www.hbgdiocese.org/matthew25 or you can obtain a copy from your pastor.

Mail all applications to:
Office of Development
4800 Union Deposit Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111-3710

The Diocesan Matthew 25 Review Committee will notify awardees by May 31, 2013.

The angel is from St. Patrick Cathedral and is a symbol for St. Matthew. Photograph by Chris Heisey

Vuong Nguyen holds the bishop’s staff as Gage McFadden, Long Nguyen and Anelys Cruz serve the bishop.
Across the globe, war, natural disasters, political strife, extreme poverty and human trafficking combine to affect families in ways often unimaginable. Families are separated by migration for long periods of time, sometimes indefinitely. A decrease in the availability of visas makes prompt reunification unrealizable. Unaccompanied minors are exploited. Difficult and expensive legal systems keep families apart.

The Catholic Relief Services (CRS) collection works for families to provide basic humanitarian needs, protect vulnerable children, reunite families and encourage legislation that reflects the importance of family in society.

The collection will be taken in parishes in the Diocese of Harrisburg on March 9 and 10. The theme of this year’s collection, “Jesus in Disguise: How Will You Help?” invites Catholics to help influence the lives of more than 100 million people at home and abroad, particularly families affected by persecution, war and natural disasters.

Catholic Relief Services is the official overseas relief and development agency of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Recent collection funds have helped CRS build water programs in 40 countries around the world. In East Africa, for example, where a terrible drought sent millions of families from their homes in search of food and water, some farmers in Ethiopia stayed home. Their thriving crops and livestock needed tending. Long before the drought struck, CRS built more than 700 water sources that provide clean water to 2.1 million people there.

In Sudan, the youth of West Darfur with little or no access to education have been given a second chance through CRS’ Accelerated Learning project. Since 2005, this project has enabled CRS to build and rehabilitate hundreds of classrooms and has allowed more than 600 CRS-trained teachers to put their good training into practice.

In addition to CRS, the collection funds five other Catholic agencies:

- USCCB’s Migration and Refugee Services, which helps resettle refugees in the United States; USCCB’s Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church, which provides outreach and development approaches to ethnic and cultural groups; USCCB’s Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development, which advocates for poor and vulnerable people and for international justice and peace; Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLIN-IC); and the Holy Father’s Relief Fund, which provides assistance to victims of natural disasters and other emergencies around the world.

For more information on the collection, visit: www.usccb.org/nationalcollections.
Evangelization of Culture

By Sister Geralyn Schmidt, SCC

Some time ago I had the great experience of having a conversation with middle school students about the challenges and different cultures of celebrating Christmas. One student, who was part of this group were 40 children from about 15 different countries of the world. They were first-generation living within the United States and spoke their language of origin at home.

In the midst of this discussion, I asked, “How does your nationality or country have a unique way to celebrate Christmas?” The students shared stories about leaving hay under the bed for the camel driver on the Feast of Epiphany in order for them to receive a gift from him, to the sharing of Oplatki with their extended family. One student proudly stated, “Our Irish custom of the celebration of Christmas ends with my mom throwing the Christmas tree out the window to the curb for recycling.” I answered, “An Irish tradition! Hmm. I misunderstood that before.” When I inquired about this to his mother, she laughed out loud and said, “Irish tradition? Oh that is funny! No, we live on the fourth floor and I just don’t want to clean up all the pine needles!”

You see, this family was the only Irish family living in a predominately Hispanic neighborhood. They were also the only family on the block who had a real tree and the only ones who threw it out the window. This student had a perception that this action was culturally based because they were the only ones who did that.

This story always gets me to reflect on the meaning of culture. According to Wikipedia, culture is:

“Specifically, the term ‘culture’ in American anthropology had two meanings: (1) the evolved human capacity to classify and represent experiences with symbols, and to act imaginatively and creatively; and (2) the distinct ways that people living in different parts of the world classified and represented their experiences, and acted creatively.”

Taking this idea in mind, then, every group of human beings, in a sense, can have their own distinct culture. Teachers can use this information in the beginning of the school year since their class comes with a culture in how the students learn and interact with each other. However, teachers have a distinct responsibility in the formation of the culture within the classroom. In addition, each school has a distinct environment that can be easily experienced upon visiting. Yet, each parish has a specific culture that can be seen in the songs that they sing and the way they actually celebrate liturgy. Every workplace and every department within that workplace can also have a way of “doing things” and “dealing with people.”

In the New Evangelization: Overcoming the Obstacles (Boguszlawski, Steven, ed., Paulist Press, 2008), Cardinal Francis George, OMI, writes, “One could be said to be the non-biological inheritance that creates our life. Culture, like faith, shapes our very lives. Both culture and faith tell us how to behave and what to believe. Bringing people, therefore, to know and love and accept Christ in his Church is easier or harder, depending upon what their culture tells them is good to know and to love and to accept.” (pg. 43)

When I first read the above statement from Cardinal George about culture shaping our behavior and what we believe, my heart jumped within me. What happens when a culture proclaims a set of norms that is perfectly acceptable according to its point of view while faith teaches something that is quite contrary? This question is often wrestled with by parents and teachers as they navigate social topics and happenings to which young minds are exposed because of media. Teens and the young adults not only often grapple with trying to find their niche in their future career but also to discover and personalize their faith and spirituality. How can one be a member of the culture but independent enough to stand true to belief taught by faith?

In Evangelii Nuntiandi (Evangelization in the Modern World, December 8, 1975) Pope Paul IV states: “every effort must be made to ensure a full evangelization of culture or, more correctly, of cultures. They have to be regenerated by an encounter with the gospel.”

Cardinal George adds to this notion when he states: “… when believers recognize demonic elements in their culture and work to disarm or eradicating them, the dialogue between faith and culture turns into evangelization of culture. Culture is the object of our evangelization and not just the sea in which we swim. To form gospel-shaped people, the Church [that means US] must work to create gospel-friendly cultures.”

I can hear you say, “Ok, I get what you are saying, but where do I start?” Cardinal George says that this must begin in personal habitual prayer. I don’t mean the invocation of God’s help when the alarm clock goes off. What I am suggesting is a deepening of faith through a personal commitment to prayer and study that takes place within our everyday schedule.

This is what Pope Benedict says in Porta Fidei during the announcement of the beginning of the Year of Faith: “We must rediscover a taste for feeding ourselves on the Word of God, faithfully handed down by the Church, and on the bread of life, offered as sustenance for his disciples (cf. Jn 6:33)” (53) He continues, “We want this Year to arouse in every believer the aspiration to profess the faith in fullness and with renewed conviction, with confidence and hope. It will also be a good opportunity to intensify the celebration of the faith in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist which is “the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed;…”” (59)

In a recent movie, Courageous (Sherwood Pictures, 2011), the main characters take a pledge to honor God in every aspect of their lives. One of the students in the midst of the season of Lent and preparing for the celebration of Easter, why not take the effort to bring Christ anew into our hearts and the culture of our homes and workplace?

(Seem of Christian Unity, Sister Geralyn Schmidt, is the Faith Area Network Coordinator for the Diocese of Harrisburg and a member of the IT Department. An educator for 28 years, she is responsible for Professional Development Programs for every age learner. In addition, Sister blogs for Powerful Learning Practices, a company providing in-service opportunities for educators. Through her presentations, she challenges her audiences to be the individual God has called them to be.)

March 3: What does Canon Law say about a pope’s resignation? This week on Catholic Perspective, listeners will hear about this rare and curious topic in an in-depth interview with Msgr William J. King. He will share what the law of the Church says about this situation and give an overview of the legal aspects that deal with the election of a Roman Pontiff. Msgr. King is Pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Mechanicsburg and an Adjunct Professor of Canon Law at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

March 3: On the evening of Thursday March 3rd the Diocese of Harrisburg invited the public to a “Renaissance Night” at the PA Grand Opera House in Harrisburg. The evening included a screening of the new film “Pope: The Faith of a Leader” and an all-day conference on the life and work of Pope John Paul II. The event was free and open to the public.

If you would like to know more about this event or about the Diocese please call the office at 717-657-7673.

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Catholic Perspective is produced in cooperation with the Office of Communications of the Diocese of Harrisburg and WHYF AM 720. The program is heard Mondays at noon and Sundays at 3 p.m. on WHYF AM 720 and on Sunday mornings on WLAM-1390, Lancaster at 7:30 a.m.; WHFL-AM 960, Carlisle at 8 a.m.; WYFR-AM 1280, Hanover, at 8 a.m.; WKOK-AM 1070, Sunbury, at 6:30 a.m.; WIEZ-AM 670, Lewisburg, at 8 a.m.; WWSM-AM 1510, Lebanon, at 7 a.m.; and WEEF-AM 88.3, Elizabethtown at 9:30 a.m. It is also available on-line at www.hbgdiocese.org.

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On the Shoulders of Giants

By Father John C. Kemper, S.S.  
Special to The Witness

The first few months of 1963 saw dramatic changes within the pastoral leadership of the Catholic Church in the North- ern tier of the Diocese of Harrisburg. Beginning with the death of Bishop Petrovits on January 3, 1963, followed by the death of the Most Rev. Lawrence Schott on May 29, 1969, two months later on March 11, the death of these two dedicated pastors was felt throughout the Bishopric and other faiths in the area.

Collectively, these two men served the spiritual needs of two vital parish communities within the Kulpmont-Mount Carmel area for well over 60 years. It is fitting that on marking the 50th anniversary of their deaths that we remember.

Joseph Petrovits was born in 1886 in Graz, Hungary. With his high school and college completed in his home country of Hungary, he came to the United States in 1911, when he began his studies for the priesthood at St. Charles Seminary, Overbrook, Pennsylvania. He was ordained to the priesthood at St. Charles that he received all his minor orders leading to priesthood and was ordained a priest on May 29, 1909. From the day of his ordained priestly ordination, until the fall of 1914, Father Petrovits served as an Assistant Pastor in several parishes within the Diocese of Harrisburg. In the fall of 1914, the Bishop assigned Father Petrovits to doctoral studies at The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. For the next six years, this young priest would flourish in the hallowed halls of the academic world of the university. He was a good scholar and an accomplished wordsmith in the language of his new home. Many senior priests who remember him refer to him as a "Layman." Father Petrovits was never more than an arm's reach from a good English dictionary.

In his personal formation, successively, he successfully completed two Pontifical Doctorates, the first in Sacred Theology (S.T.D.) and the second in Canon/Church Law (J.C.D.).

Responding to the cultural unrest within Saint Mary’s Parish, Kulpmont, on December 12, 1919, Bishop Philip McDevitt recalled Father Petrovits from the university to become pastor in Kulpmont. Fluent in several languages, he was the perfect candidate to spread a balm of peace and tranquility over the cultural unrest taking place within the small parish in the anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania.

At the fall of 1914, Father Petrovits, as he was commonly referred to then and now, served as pastor of St. Mary’s from 1919 until his death in 1963. His scholarly writings in theology included two published works, the first on Church Law pertaining to the Sacrament of Marriage and the second on the Theology of Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Though geographicaly separated from the university in which he was very much at home, he invested his energy in building up the Kingdom of God and the local area as well. At his death in 1963, the Shamokin News-Dispatch wrote: “He displayed a keen interest in civic affairs and was instrumental in securing the first sewer system in the community [in 1921]. Through his efforts the former Coloney Colliery at Natalie was saved from abandonment, thus preserving approximately 1,000 jobs for almost three years.” By his own admission, the building of the new church on the corner of Scott and 8th Streets was one of his greatest accomplishments and it was dedicated in 1959. The church and rectory are now part of Holy Angels Parish.

The second death to impact the Kulpmont-Mount Carmel area was that of Bishop Lawrence Schott on March 11, 1963. Lawrence F. Schott was born on July 26, 1897, to Thomas and Emma (Hofer) Schott of Danville. His primary and secondary education was provided by St. Hubert and St. Joseph parish schools of Danville. He entered St. Vincent’s Seminary in Latrobe, Pa., for his priestly formation; during his seminary years (1924-1935) he received both a Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees. Having received all of his minor orders at St. Vincent’s Seminary, he returned home to St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg on June 15, 1935, and was ordained a priest by the Most Rev. Philip R. McDevitt, Bishop of Harrisburg. His first assignments following ordination (1935-1949) were largely as an assistant pastor in Columbia, Carlisle and later as principal of the Catholic high school in Harrisburg (later named for Bishop McDevitt).

It was during this first decade of pastoral ministry that Father Schott became actively involved in serving the spiritual needs of our men in the Armed Forces within the Harrisburg Metro area. His genuine care and concern for the men in the U.S. Armed Forces was publicly acknowledged by Bishop Francis J. Spellman, Military Vicar of the Military Ordinariate, on September 22, 1941, with his official appointment as Military Chaplain in service to the bases within the Harrisburg area. It is important to note that this pastoral service to the U.S. Military forces was in addition to his diocesan assignment as principal of the Catholic high school in Harrisburg, which was his pastoral care of the U.S. Armed Forces that took Father Schott’s notoriety beyond the boundaries of the Diocese of Harrisburg and gave him a larger venue for his ministry.

Father Schott’s service to our military personnel flourished with his appointment as Chaplain in the Military Ordinariate. On the last Sunday of October 1943, he gave a talk on the popular radio program the National Catholic Hour, the talk entitled “The Church and the Service-Men.” In his address, Father Schott spelled out the mission of The National Catholic Community Service (NCCS) and its role as a Chaplain to the Personnel. The NCCS provided many of the same services offered by the popular U.S.O. x, but within a Catholic faith environment. Father Schott commmunicated his pastoral concern for the men in the armed forces in the following words: “In times of war, because of the souls of so many young men go hurriedly and untimely before the Eternal Judge, it is critically important that no moment be lost in ushering souls into the Divine intima- cy which is the state of grace.” In 1946, Our Sunday Visitor Press published a collection of inspirational articles written by Father Schott for the Catholic servicemen, the book entitled “Mail-Call.” The book sold out and its popularity required a second printing.

In May 1949, Father Schott was assigned as pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish and Dean of the Mount Carmel area. On March 1, 1956, during his tenure as pastor of Our Lady’s Parish, he was named Auxiliary Bishop of Harrisburg by Pope Pius XII. For his remaining years he served as both pastor of Our Lady’s Parish and Auxiliary Bishop of Harrisburg, with his official residence being the parish rectory. Bishop Schott traveled throughout the Diocese celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation within many parishes. During that time, there were several presentations from the Kulpmont-Mount Carmel area. Many of the senior priests from the Mount Carmel area continue to speak eloquently of Bishop Schott’s acts of kindness and expressions of hospitality when they returned home to the area. As one senior priest noted, “He always had a room at his table for a brother priest!” He truly made the Mount Carmel region his home and took pride in the faith of the people of the area.

In a letter to the Apostolic Delegate in Washington, D.C., dated May 16, 1959, Bishop Schott wrote: “The faithful of our dear Diocese are still our proudest boast and our priceless riches. These good people have remained close to the Church throughout all the economic hardships that have been visited upon the hard-coal region. Their vibrant Catholic religion has been their one great treasure.” Bishop Schott was blessed to attend the first session of the Second Vatican Council. He noted in his audience with Pope John XXIII, he spoke of the people of the area. The pope was impressed with the name of the town, noting its bib- lical roots. Bishop Schott died in March 1963 and neither saw the final outcome nor the fruits of the Second Vatican Council he was privileged to attend.

As winter gives way to spring, and the pages of our new 2013 calendar year get turned, let us all remember these two good pastors for their contributions to their individual flocks and to the civic and cultural developments of the area we call home.

(Father John C. Kemper, S.S., is a native of Kulpmont, a priest of the Diocese of Harrisburg and a member of the Society of St. Paul, currently assigned in Baltimore, Md.)

Annulment Presentations Scheduled

The Tribunal of the Diocese of Harrisburg will offer presentations concerning divorces 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.

Presentations will include a question-and-answer session and an opportunity for private conversation with Tribunal staff and representatives. For more information, call 717-457-4858 or write to the Diocesan Tribunal.

• March 7 at 7 p.m. – Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg (Room 103)
• April 30 at 7 p.m. – St. Joseph, York
• May 6 at 7 p.m. – St. Joseph, Danville
• June 6 at 7 p.m. – St. Patrick, Carlisle

Solemn Lenten Vespers

March 3, 10 and 17

All are invited to celebrate Solemn Lenten Vespers with Bishop Joseph McFadden on the following Sundays of Lent: March 3, 10, and 17. Vespers begins at 4 p.m. at St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg and will include a homily offered by Bishop McFadden, the presentation of the St. Benedict Medal to several distinguished Catholics in the Harrisburg area. On March 15, 1956, during his tenure as pastor of Our Lady’s Parish, he was named Auxiliary Bishop of Harrisburg by Pope Pius XII. For his re- maining years he served as both pastor of Our Lady’s Parish and Auxiliary Bishop of Harrisburg, with his official residence being the parish rectory. Bishop Schott traveled throughout the Diocese celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation within many parishes. During that time, there were several presentations from the Kulpmont-Mount Carmel area. Many of the senior priests from the Mount Carmel area continue to speak eloquently of Bishop Schott’s acts of kindness and expressions of hospitality when they returned home to the area. As one senior priest noted, “He always had a room at his table for a brother priest!” He truly made the Mount Carmel region his home and took pride in the faith of the people of the area.

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MARCH 1, 2013, THE CATHOLIC WITNESS - 5
Prayer

Continued from 1

Prayer doesn’t mean isolating one’s self from the world and its contradictions,” the pope said in his commentary on the day’s Gospel reading (Lk 9:28-36). “Prayer leads one back to the path, to action. “Christian existence,” he said, “consists in a continuous climbing of the mountain for an encounter with God, in order to descend again bearing the love and strength derived from it, so as to serve our brothers and sisters with the same love of God.”

If the relevance to his Feb. 28 resignation was not already clear, the pope made the connection explicit: “I feel that this word of God is directed in particular to me, in this moment of my life. The Lord calls me to climb the mountain, to dedicate myself even more to prayer and meditation. But this does not mean abandoning the Church; on the contrary, if God asks this of me it is precisely so that I may continue to serve [the Church] with the same dedication and the same love with which I have done so till now, but in a way more suited to my age and strength.”

Speaking these words, Pope Benedict was interrupted twice by applause, and afterward received an ovation 30 seconds long. He smiled broadly, thanked the crowd, and added, “Let us thank God for the bit of sun he has granted us.”

Pope Thanks Curia for Helping ‘Carry the Burden’ of the Papacy

By Cindy Wooden

At the end of their weeklong Lenten retreat, Pope Benedict XVI thanked members of the Roman Curia “for these eight years during which you have helped me carry the burden of the Petrine ministry with great competence, affection, love and faith.”

During the retreat Feb. 17-23, the pope and members of the curia spent hours each morning and evening praying in the Redeemptoris Mater Chapel in the Apostolic Palace and listening to 17 meditations offered by Italian Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, president of the Pontifical Council for Culture.

The annual retreat took on a different character this year, beginning just six days after Pope Benedict announced his intention to resign effective Feb. 28.

At the end of the retreat, the pope said that while his close collaboration with the curial officials would end, their “spiritual closeness” would remain, as would “a profound communion in prayer.”

“With this certainty, let us move forward, certain of the victory of God, certain of truth, beauty and love,” he said.

Cardinal Ravasi had dedicated his talks to the interplay between prayer and belief, looking specifically at what the Psalms say about prayer, about the one praying and about God.

Pope Benedict said the cardinal’s meditations “and our daily experience” also showed how the beauty of God’s creation “is permanently contradicted in this world by evil, suffering and corruption. It seems almost like the Evil One wants to permanently -ly muddy creation to contradict God and make his truth and beauty unrecognizable.”

To counter evil, he said, God’s love and beauty must reflect the world’s suffering. God’s son is “crowned with a crown of thorns,” and in that tragic figure of the suffering son, he said, “we begin to see the most profound beauty of our creator and redeemer.”

“In the silence of the dark night we can listen to his word,” Pope Benedict said. “To believe is nothing other than to touch the hand of God in the dark night and, in silence, listen to the Word and see love.”

Vatican Radio said Cardinal Ravasi ended the retreat by telling the pope that other members of the curia wanted him to express their affection for the pope and some “told me to ask forgiveness for the ways we were unable to support you in your ministry.”

The cardinal said it was most appropriate, though, simply “to thank you for your teaching and your ministry.”

Cardinal Ravasi said the pope’s “ministry will continue in a different form, with what the cardinal described as the pope’s “hiding” or withdrawal from public life.

‘Beginning Experience’ Weekends Planned

The Beginning Experience Team for the Diocese of Harrisburg has booked Camp Hebron in Halifax, Pa., for weekends April 26-18 and Nov. 8-10 this year.

Beginning Experience weekends are an approved Roman Catholic program for those suffering the loss of a spouse through death, divorce or separation. The weekend is led by people who have lost a spouse through death or divorce and who are trained in facilitating a weekend.

To learn more, visit www.hbdioocese.org and click on the Marriage and Family link, or go to www.beginningexperience.org. Information can also be received by contacting the Beginning Experience Team at 717-512-2718 or harrisburge@gmail.com.

The deadline for reservations for the spring weekend is March 29, and the deadline for reservations for the fall weekend is Oct. 11.

Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat for Those Suffering from Abortion

A Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat for those suffering the pain and hurt of an abortion will be held March 15-17 at the Canna Inn Bed and Breakfast in Etters, Pa. If you are the mother, father, grandparent, sibling or medical personnel involved with this experience, this weekend is for you. Rachel’s Vineyard is a safe place to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion. Retreats offer a supportive, confidential and non-judgmental environment where women and men can express, release and reconcile painful emotions to being the healing process.

All inquiries are confidential. For more information, or to register, contact Joy at 717-788-4959, send an e-mail to RVpamd@gmail.com, or visit www.rachelsvineyard.org.

Catholic Charities

‘Soup, Salad and Sermon’

March 20 at Noon

Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg

All are invited to join Bishop Joseph P. McFadden and the staff from Catholic Charities to learn about the important ministry provided through the agency. The Lenten lunch is complimentary. A free-will offering will be taken RSVP to Chris Meehan by March 13 at 717-657-4904, ext. 284, or cmeehan@hbgdiocese.org.

All Women and Priests of the Diocese,

“SAVE THE DATE”

Monday, April 15, 2013 • 9 A.M. – 4 P.M.

Harrisburg Diocesan Council of Catholic Women’s 88th Annual Convention

Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg

Convention Theme …. “Year of Faith”

Awakening - Deepening - Renewing

Sources: CNS, HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism and New Catholic Encyclopedia

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Pope Asks Continued Prayers in These ‘Unusual’ Days for Church

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

Calling this an unusual time for him and for the Church – but not specifically mentioning his resignation – Pope Benedict XVI thanked people for their affection and asked them to continue their prayers.

A roar of applause rose up from more than 50,000 people gathered in St. Peter’s Square Feb. 17 as Pope Benedict came to his studio window to lead the Angelus prayer.

People came to St. Peter’s in larger numbers than normal for a Sunday Angelus because it was the first completely public, no-tickets-needed event since the pope announced Feb. 11 that he was stepping down Feb. 28.

He greeted groups of pilgrims in their native tongues. Addressing Spanish speakers, he said, “My heartfelt thanks . . . for your prayers and affection in these days. Continue to pray for me and the next pope.”

And he told Polish speakers, “Thank you for your prayerful support and spiritual closeness in these days that are so unusual for the Church and for me.”

Before leading the Angelus prayer, Pope Benedict commented on the beginning of Lent and the day’s Gospel reading about the temptation of Jesus.

He said Lent is a time for Catholics to renew their spiritual lives and turn to God, “renouncing pride and selfishness to live in love.”

Making God the center of one’s life, he said, requires “spiritual battle” because the devil doesn’t want people to be holy and “tries to detour us from the path toward God.”

The Gospel account of the temptation of Jesus in the desert, he said, shows just how “subtle” the devil can be: he does not try to trick Jesus directly into evil, but tempts him with “a false good.”

When power or material goods, even basic necessities, become the most important priorities, “God becomes secondary,” the pope said. “In the final analysis, faith is at stake with temptations because God is at stake. In the decisive moments of our lives, we face a juncture: do we want to follow the ego or God, individual interests or the one who is truly good?”

The good news, the pope said, is that Jesus has defeated the devil for us, “therefore, we are not afraid to take up the battle against evil; what is important is that we do so with him, with Christ, the victor.”

For many Roman families, joining the pope for the recitation of the Angelus is a normal part of a Sunday or holyday stroll, and Feb. 17 they were joined by Gianni Alemanno, mayor of Rome, and members of the city council.

With large crowds expected, officers from a variety of Italian and Rome police forces, as well as paramedics and even garbage collectors had deployed along the broad avenue leading to St. Peter’s Square and along the square’s perimeter by 10 a.m.

Pope Benedict XVI waves after celebrating Ash Wednesday Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican Feb. 13. The service was expected to be the last large liturgical event of Pope Benedict’s papacy.

O God, eternal shepherd, who governs your flock with unfailing care, grant in your boundless fatherly love a pastor for your Church who will please you by his holiness and to us show watchful care.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

An hour before the Angelus, thousands of people were already in the square. The young staked out places by sitting on the cold cobblestones. Others previewed their banners for the press, including some that said: “You are Peter. Stay” and “Thank you, Holy Father. We love you very much.”

Pope Benedict ended his remarks by asking for special prayers for himself and his top aides in the Roman Curia as they were about to begin their annual Lenten retreat that evening.

Prayer for Pope Benedict XVI

O God, true shepherd of all the faithful, look with kindness on your servant Pope Benedict XVI, whom you set as head and shepherd of Your Church.

We give you thanks for your grace at work in him as he had led us by word and example: in his teaching, in his prayer and in his great love.

Grant him your strength in frailty, comfort in sorrow, and serenity amid the trials of his world, and guide your Church, built on the rock of Peter, with the power of your Spirit as we continue on the path that leads to you.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for the Election of a New Pope

O God, eternal shepherd, who governs your flock with unfailing care, grant in your boundless fatherly love a pastor for your Church who will please you by his holiness and to us show watchful care.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.
Pope Benedict’s Resignation Sets in Motion a Period of Transition

Catholic News Service

While the surprise resignation of Pope Benedict XVI is a first for the Church in centuries, it also leads to a complicated period of transition that ends in the election of a new pope.

Regulated by ancient traditions and recent rules, the period between popes – known by the Latin term “interregnum” – began exactly at 8 p.m. Rome time Feb. 28, a date and time Pope Benedict stipulated in a declaration he made Feb. 11 for the first time since the Sea of Rome and the Sea of St. Peter would be vacant.

Normally the interregnum begins with a pope’s death and is followed by a period of mourning.

This time the pope resigned from his ministry and will spend a short period of prayer and reflection at the papal summer villa in Castel Gandolfo, south of Rome, before moving to a monastery at the Vatican.

The Roman Curia, the pope’s network of administrative offices, loses most of its cardinal supervisors and cannot handle any new business.

The College of Cardinals is to deal solely with “ordinary business and matters which cannot be postponed.” At present, there are 209 cardinals, and all of them are asked to meet in Rome to help administer the transition period.

The College of Cardinals does this through two structures: a general congregation, in which all the cardinals are to meet daily, and a particular four-member congregation consisting of the chamberlain of the Holy Roman Church, Cardinal Tauran, as adviser, and a rotating team of three cardinal assistants.

Only those cardinals under age 80 will be eligible to vote in the coming conclave. Cardinals who are age 80 or over by the time the “sede vacante” began Feb. 28 are excluded from the closed-door proceedings. There are 117 cardinal-electors of that age.

As chamberlain, Cardinal Bertone is to administer the goods of the Church and its temporal rights during the interregnum. The chamberlain leads a three-member commission, which oversees physical preparations for the conclave and leads what is called a “particular congregation.”

One of three other cardinals chosen by lot – to conduct the minor day-to-day business of the Vatican until a new pope is elected.

The cardinals to Rome and presides over their daily meetings before the conclave. Because Cardinal Sodano is over 80 and ineligible to enter the conclave, the dean’s duties inside the Sistine Chapel will be handled by Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, the top-ranking cardinal-bishop of those under 80. Inside the chapel, Cardinal Re will administer the oath of secrecy and preside over the conclave.

If a candidate achieves a two-thirds majority vote, the dean – in the name of the entire college – asks the candidate if he accepts the election and what name he wishes.

Cardinal Angelo Sodano is the current dean. As dean, he calls the cardinals to Rome and presides over their daily meetings before the conclave. Because Cardinal Sodano is over 80 and ineligible to enter the conclave, the dean’s duties inside the Sistine Chapel will be handled by Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, the top-ranking cardinal-bishop of those under 80. Inside the chapel, Cardinal Re will administer the oath of secrecy and preside over the conclave.

If a candidate achieves a two-thirds majority vote, the dean – in the name of the entire college – asks the candidate if he accepts the election and what name he wishes.

A pope is elected when he obtains a two-thirds majority vote, is asked if he accepts the office – he is encouraged but not bound to do so by the current rules – and is asked to choose a name.

Traditionally, the senior member of the cardinal deacons – currently Cardinal Tauran, 69 – announces the successful election and leads the public recitation of the Angelus. A pope is elected.

At a time designated by the pope, usually a few days later, he officially opens his ministry with an investiture Mass at St. Peter’s. The new pope is no longer crowned with a papal tiara, but receives pallium or stole, in recognition of his authority.

Election Terminology

Dioceses are also called sees. The Latin for “when the see is vacant” is “sede vacante.” When the see is vacant, the Diocese of Rome elects a special captain of the See, such as the person who appoints cardinals.

The period between popes is called an interregnum – between reigns – even though Pope Paul VI set aside many of the regal trappings of the papacy and references to a papal “reign” gradually fell into disuse. Pope Paul inaugurated his ministry in 1963 with the Latin command, “all outside,” orders everyone who is not a cardinal or non-Catholic dignitary to leave before the conclave starts.

Only cardinals under the age of 80 who are able to go to Rome are eligible to vote. Even if he is retired from other Church posts, if a cardinal is under 80 he is considered an active cardinal for the purposes of the conclave. As of Feb. 28, there are 117 cardinal-electors.

Conclave

A meeting of cardinals to elect a new pope is a conclave. The sacred word – from the Latin “cum clave” (with key) – means under lock and key. In 1268, cardinals couldn’t decide on a new pope. After the vote, the people finally locked them up and cut their rations. The man elected, Pope Gregory X, ordered that in the future the conclave be sequenced from the start, and eventually the practice of setting a time to elect a pope.

Camel lost

Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, as camerlengo, is the chief of the Holy Roman Church, assisted by the vice camerlengo and a canonical adviser, in charge of safeguarding the temporal goods of the Church and its temporal rights during the interregnum. The camerlengo leads a three-member commission, which oversees physical preparations for the conclave and leads what is called a “particular congregation.”

After a new pope has been elected, he is asked if he accepts the office – he is encouraged but not bound to do so by the current rules – and is asked to choose a name.

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Wherever journalists and bookmakers may be getting the names on their lists of top candidates for the next pope, it’s no surprise the cardinals would actually vote in the election. Both custom and canon law forbid the cardinals to discuss the matter in detail with outsiders.

Moreover, the true “papabili” – literally, pope-makers – would likely be chosen only after all the world’s cardinals – not just the 117 who will be under 80 and eligible to vote – begin meeting in Rome in the coming days.

One thing is already clear, however: because of their experience and the esteem they enjoy among their peers, certain cardinals are likely to serve as trusted advisers to the rest in the discussions and election.

Here, in alphabetical order, are 12 cardinals expected to have a major voice in the deliberations:

- Conventional wisdom has long held that the cardinals will never elect an American pope, lest the leadership of the Church appear to be linked with the United States’ economic and geopolitical dominance. But he was already widely mentioned as a possible pope before the 2005 conclave that elected Pope Benedict.

- Argentine Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, 69, was born to parents of Italian descent and has maintained strong ties with both Italy and Argentina. As prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches, he is familiar with the challenges facing Eastern Catholics and the pastoral concerns of the Church in the Middle East. He has worked in the Vatican for more than a dozen years, and previously served as nuncio to Venezuela and then Mexico. His sole experience in a parish was a brief assignment shortly after his ordination as a priest.

- Guatemalan Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga, 69, was born to parents of Italian descent and has maintained strong ties with both Italy and Argentina. As prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches, he is familiar with the challenges facing Eastern Catholics and the pastoral concerns of the Church in the Middle East. He has worked in the Vatican for more than a dozen years, and previously served as nuncio to Venezuela and then Mexico. His only experience in a parish was a brief assignment shortly after his ordination as a priest.

- Guinean Cardinal Robert Sarah, 67, is president of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, which promotes Catholic charitable giving.

- He has used his leadership to emphasize Pope Benedict’s teaching that Catholic charitable activity must not be simple philanthropy, but an expression of faith, rooted in prayer and Catholic identity. A scripture scholar and former dean of the pontifical Seminary of Rome, he moved to Rome in 1994 with the Institute and worked as an official of the Congregation for Bishops from 1994 to 2001.

- Austrian Cardinal Christoph Schonborn, 68, has known Pope Benedict for almost 40 years, having studied under him at the University of Regensburg, Germany. Even before his predecessor became pope, the cardinal was well known at the Vatican and in wider Church circles. He was invited in 1996 to preach Blessed John Paul II’s Lenten retreat and was the main editor of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, published in 1991. As the Church in Austria has struggled with declining attendance and calls for change in some of its most basic disciplines, Cardinal Schonborn’s response has received increasing attention as he moves toward the papacy. Schonborn is another “papabile” who is popular among his peers. He is respected for his pastoral and pastoral sensitivity, and others calling for more decisive action.

- Italian Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, 80, was the archbishop of Milan, the archdiocese led by Blessed John XXIII before the 2005 conclave that elected Pope Benedict. Although he did not receive his red hat until November 2012, he has already made a name for himself at the Vatican and in Catholic circles. He was invited in 1996 to preach Blessed John Paul II’s Lenten retreat and was the main editor of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, published in 1991. As the Church in Austria has struggled with declining attendance and calls for change in some of its most basic disciplines, Cardinal Schonborn’s response has received increasing attention as he moves toward the papacy. Schonborn is another “papabile” who is popular among his peers. He is respected for his pastoral and pastoral sensitivity, and others calling for more decisive action.

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Benedict Will Be Prayerful Presence in Next Papacy, Spokesman Says

By Carol Glatz and Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

Even though Pope Benedict XVI will spend his retirement near Rome and then inside Vatican City, he will not play any role in the upcoming election for a new pope, and will not interfere with the responsibilities and decision-making activities of the new pontiff, the Vatican spokesman said.

“Rather, the new pope will have the prayerful support and empathy of someone who understands ‘more than anyone in the world’ the burden and responsibilities of being a pope,” said Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman.

The spokesman also confirmed that Pope Benedict has a pacemaker and has had it “for some time.” He said the battery recently was changed, but that the procedure had nothing to do with the pope’s decision to resign.

Father Lombardi made his remarks Feb. 12, the day after the 85-year-old pope announced that, because of his age and waning energies, he was resigning Feb. 28.

In response to questions about how a conclave and a new papacy will be played out while a former pope is still alive and living in the vicinity, Father Lombardi said, “there will be absolutely no problem” because Pope Benedict is a discreet and “extremely scrupulous” person. No one “would expect from him any interference or comments that would cause even minimal awkwardness or problems for his successor,” he said.

“Rather, his successor will feel supported by the prayers and intensely loving presence and interest from someone who, more than anyone in the world, can understand and be interested in the worries of his successor,” the priest said.

“Pope Benedict will surely say absolutely nothing about the process of the election,” the spokesman said, “and not intervene in any way in the process,” he said.

“It is totally sure that the cardinals will be autonomous in their decision in deciding on the next pope, he added.

Father Lombardi added that the pope was free to decide where he wanted to live in his retirement. A monastery in the Vatican Gardens is currently being renovated for the pope’s future residence. It will “guarantee him a certain autonomy and freedom,” but at the same time, allow him to remain in the Vatican.

It was not clear who would be moving in with the pope to serve as his assistants, but Father Lombardi said the residence is small and number of staff would be, too.

When asked why the pope chose the exact hour of 8 p.m. Rome time to step down from his office, Father Lombardi said that was the hour the pope normally ended a normal work day and was not according to any “juridical rule,” but more to reflect an established routine.

The Vatican spokesman said the pope’s fourth encyclical, a letter on the theological virtue of faith, was unlikely to be ready for publication “in the usual form of an ‘juridical rule,'” but more to reflect an established routine. “I think obviously that if they are things or objects tightly connected with the Petrine ministry, well then, these things should be removed because this pope no longer exercises his ministry” after Feb. 28, he said.

Concerning what the pope will be called after he steps down, that, too, needs to be determined, though it was certain he would not hold the title of cardinal, nor would he be eligible to hold any office in the Roman Curia, because he is over 80 years old.

However, it was conceivable that he could be referred to as “bishop emeritus of Rome,” he said.

While Pope Benedict will not be attending World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro in late July, the weeklong gathering is a time for youth to be with the pope and, it is very likely the new pope will be there, Father Lombardi said.

When the pope told organizers he “confirmed the presence of a pope, he did not promise that it would be here, Father Lombardi said.

According to rules governing a conclave, the College of Cardinals can begin proceedings for a papal election 13 days after the start of a “sede vacante,” which begins Feb. 28 at 8 a.m., and no later than 20 days after that date, which puts the dates at March 15-20.

Father Lombardi said the pope certainly was careful about choosing a date that would allow the cardinals time to deliberate in a conclave and election without interfering with their duties back home leading Holy Week and Easter celebrations.

Father Lombardi said he expects there will be a new pope by Easter, March 31, reminding journalists that Pope Benedict was elected just 17 days after the “sede vacante” that began after Blessed John Paul II’s death.

Pope Benedict to Live in Vatican Monastery Established by Blessed John Paul

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

The Vatican monastery where Pope Benedict XVI intends to live began its life as the Vatican gardener’s house, but was established as a cloistered convent by Blessed John Paul II in 1994.

When Pope Benedict, 85, announced Feb. 11 that his age and declining energies prompted his decision to resign Feb. 28, the Vatican said he would move to the papal villa in Castel Gandolfo while remodeling work was completed on the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery in the Vatican Gardens.

Pope Benedict said it was his intention to “devotedly serve the holy Church of God in the future through a life dedicated to prayer.”

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, told reporters Feb. 12 that he did not know when the remodeling work would be completed, but did expect Pope Benedict could move in. He said, however, that because the monastery is in the pope’s ownership, the pope would be joined by a small staff, but another community of cloistered sisters would not be moving in.

The monastery — a building of about 4,300 square feet — had 12 monastic cells and a chapel. The complex, mostly hidden from view by a high fence and hedges, includes a vegetable garden. It occupies about 8,600 square feet on a hill to the west of the apse of St. Peter’s Basilica.

Over the past 19 years, different orders of cloistered nuns have spent fixed terms of three-five years in the monastery. The first community was Poor Clares, then Carmelites, Benedictines and, most recently, the Visitandine nuns of the Secular Carmelites. The Visitandine community left in November, and by early December the Vatican press office had told Catholic News Service that the monastery would be remodeled before anyone else moved in.

Father Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, told reporters Feb. 13 that Pope Benedict would set up a rotation system for the monastery and then look for ways to “highlight the variety of women’s religious orders dedicated totally to prayer and manual labor.

The Maler Ecclesiae Monastery, where Pope Benedict XVI will live in the Vatican Gardens Feb. 19. The monastery is secluded but has an impressive view of the dome of St. Peter’s Basilica.

The rules of the Mater Ecclesiae convent specified that the aim of the community living there is “the ministry of prayer, adoration, praise and reparation” in silence and solitude “to support the Holy Father in his daily care for the whole Church.”

An article in the Vatican newspaper announcing the foundation of the monastery in 1994 said, “The presence of a community completely dedicated to contemplative life represents a richness and a treasure which the Church does not intend to renounce.

A small core of the current building began its life as the gardener’s house and included some ruins of a medieval tower that may have been part of the Vatican walls at the turn of the 13th century. In 1960, Blessed John XXIII invited his new archeological research institute to have its base there. Father Lombardi said the building also was used for a time by Vatican Radio and was even briefly the residence of now-Cardinal Roberto Tucci, a Jesuit and long-time official at the radio.

CNS/Paul Haring

CNS/Paul Haring
The names of the following deceased persons have been submitted by their parishes:


BOLLEAUVILLE — St. Joseph the Worker: Robert E. Clabaugh, Sr.

CAMP HILL — Good Shepherd: Raymond R. Garbackic, Virginia Rollins.


COLUMBIA — Holy Trinity: Michael McVeay, David Miller.

CONNELLEY — Sacred Heart of Jesus: James A. Baumgardner, Mary Cornbowl, Donald J. McKim.

CORNWALL — Sacred Heart of Jesus: Martha Rahn.

DANVILLE — St. Joseph: Jim Deegan, Henry Stroh.

ELIZABETHTOWN — St. Peter: William Korschik.

GETTYSBURG — St. Francis Xavier: Timothy M. Magdalene Fanucci, Josephine Verroca.

HARRISBURG — St. Catherine Labouré: Mildred B. Davis, Michael Pfiefer, Donald Sivrist.

HERSHEY — St. Joan of Arc: Jane Dawson, Margaret Hannagan, Mark McQuatin, Anthony Moeller, James Ross, Richard Sandtner, Thomas Zidak.

LACKAWARNA — Assumption BVM: R. Everett Hohman; St. Anne: Lorraine Kushner, Lorraine Kedziora, 2002

LANCASTER — Assumption BVM: R. Everett Hohman; St. Anne: Elizabeth Galliello.

LEBANON — Assumption BVM: William J. Hasula, Christine A. Beard, Anna Cuhna, Edward S. Elliot, Mary Alice Feinstein, Wylene Louise Frank, Ernie Scott Verke.


MECHANICSBURG — St. Elizabeth Ann Seton: Grace Fedyk, Elpe Fico, Barbara Lumbry.

MIDDLETOWN — Seven Sorrows: BVM: Eleanor Cavanaugh, Betsy Durborow, Vito Mataz.

MILLERSBURG — Queen of Peace: Margaret Armott.

MOUNT CARMEL — Divine Redeemer: Arlene M. Fisher; Our Lady of Rosleio, Michael Molesevic.

NEW CUMBERLAND — St. Therese: George Gentile, Lawrence Bower, Jr.

NEW FREDOM — St. John the Baptist: Ray Ellicker, Dorothy A. MacLeavy.


ROHRENSTOWN — St. Leo the Great: Thomas Bowers.

SELNSINGROVE — St. Pius X: Jack Leintinger.

SHAMOKIN — Mother Cabrini: Lawrence Bartol, Agnes T. Bucellini, Angela Cibula, Mary Matrus, Maria Danahak, Barbara Karr, Lorraine Kushner, Eveline Metz, David Goodman, Carl Matruski, Madalyn McIndoe, Mary Miller, Elizabeth Ozeski, Arthur Schicatano, Charles T., Alice Wysock, Jeanne Zyla.

STEELTON — Prince of Peace: Judith Senanoko, Josephine Verroca.

YORK — St. Joseph: Jack M. Bentivegna, Nick J. Spagonla.

Sister Mary Rosalia Auth

School Sisters of Notre Dame Sister Mary Rosalia Auth died Feb. 19 at Maria Health Care Center in Baltimore. She was 99 and had been a professed member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame for 75 years.

Born in Washington, D.C., she entered the Congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in 1934. During her years in education ministry, she taught at schools in Maryland, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. She spent more than 40 years teaching in Puerto Rico. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, she taught at St. Margaret Mary School in Harrisburg from 1961-1979. In 1981, she served in parish ministry in Baltimore. She retired to Villa Assumpta in Baltimore County in 2003.

Sister Rosalia earned a master’s degree in history and education from College of Sacred Heart in Puerto Rico, and a master’s in education from Catholic University of America.

She was preceded in death by several nieces and nephews, and was preceded in death by a sister, Mary Bernarde Auth, SSND.

The funeral Mass was celebrated Feb. 23 at Villa Assumpta in Baltimore. Burial was in Villa Assumpta Cemetery in Oval Arm, Md.

Sister M. Magdalene Fanucci

Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy Sister M. Magdalene Fanucci died Feb. 16 at Misericordia Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in York. She was 84.

Born in Germantown, N.J., she entered the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy in York in 1944. She earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from College Misericordia, a master’s degree in secondary education from Catholic University of Scranton, and a master’s degree in library science from the Catholic University of America.

During her years in education ministry, Sister Magdalene taught at schools in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, she served as principal of St. John of Arc School in Hershey and St. Joseph School in Berwick, and was a member of the Diocesan Education Board and the Sisters Advisory Council.

She was preceded in death by two brothers, and is survived by a brother, and is survived by several nieces and nephews.

The funeral Mass was celebrated at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Peckville, Pa., on Feb. 25. Burial was in the Catholic Cathedral Cemetery, Scranton, Pa.

When students and parents from St. Patrick Catholic School in York learned that the parish mission team would be returning to Guatemala in 2013 for a second time, they rallied to provide eager support through their time, talent, and treasure.

Led by Father Samuel Houser, pastor, the 16-member mission team from St. Patrick Parish departed York on Jan. 12 carrying extra suitcases filled with school supplies and personalized cards that had been collected and created by the entire student body. While working at the San Lucas Mission in the village of San Lucas Toliman, at the edge of Lake Atitlan, Guatemala, the team visited the parish elementary school, Colegio San Lucas, which houses PK-6th grade. It serves approximately 625 students.

Promotion of education and literacy for the indigenous Mayan people was a focus of the work promulgated by Msgr. Gregory Shaffer (“Padre Gregorio”), a priest of the Diocese of Neul, Minn., who was the spiritual father of the parish for 48 years before his death last May.

In December, profits from St. Patrick School’s book fair were earmarked for Colegio San Lucas. During the team’s mission visit, a check for $2,300 was presented by Father Houser to the Colegio’s school administrator to be used for the purchase of books. While visiting classrooms, the team distributed individual bags to each student that included colorful cards with messages of friendship, student photographs, pencils, toothbrushes, and more.

Along with groups representing colleges and high schools from around the United States, the St. Patrick parish team worked in other mission programs started by Father Shaffer.

In a country in which 3% of the population owns 92% of the land, the Juan Ana Coffee program plays an important role in local economic development by providing adequate, sustainable coffee and fair pay for over 600 participating families. Working in the coffee fields, the team picked ripe “coffee cherries,” sorted beans, and learned about each phase of coffee production. A labor-intensive effort, it took 20 people two hours to fill a single 100-pound bag of coffee cherries.

In typical Guatemalan homes, families who do not own a stove improvise by placing three cinder blocks together on the dirt floor of the house or outdoors, build a fire in the center, and place a skillet on top to be used as a cooking surface. Two fuel-efficient stoves, or “poyos” as they are known, were built by the team during the week from cinderblock, firebrick, tile, and cement chimney tubes. In one household the stove would serve the needs of seven families.

Begun in 1975, the reforestation project was begun to reverse the rapid rate of deforestation taking place in Guatemala. The St. Patrick Parish team worked alongside other missionaries on projects that earn income to support the forestry program such as the creation of multi-sized and shaped wooden spoons, while others filled orders of trees and plant life that would eventually go to schools and other organizations for the prevention of soil erosion, to create ornamental gardens, or produce lumber and firewood for future use.

During Catholic Schools Week, the St. Patrick student body gathered with mission team members to view a slide show of the cross-cultural experience while Father Houser and team organizer, Dennis Goodwin, narrated. Samples of Guatemalan textiles hand-woven by local women were on display, as well as wooden products and other goods. The children were fascinated by the Mayan people’s use of so many bright colors and eagerly asked members of the team about their questions, sparking later conversation and classroom questions.

Father Houser and his team are planning a return to the San Lucas Toli man Mission in 2014 and each year parish interest increases. “This was our fourth mission trip,” Father Houser said, “and each year the size of the group grows.”

Team member David Olsavsky at St. Patrick School students are shown in the submitted photo, packing school supplies and cards for the Colegio San Lucas.
Tyshawn White was overwhelmed by the size and noise of the crowd gathered at Hersheypark Arena for the District 3 wrestling championships on Feb. 23. It was the freshman’s first time wrestling in such a venue and on such a large stage, and he was nervous.

But by the time his AA championship bout at 106 pounds had finished, White was traversing that crowd, weaving through spectators to celebrate his gold-medal win with his parents in the stands.

“It was a great moment for me to celebrate with them,” White told The Catholic Witness after stepping off the top of the medals stand. “The atmosphere here was crazy and I was nervous, but my parents told me I could do it, and they gave me the confidence I needed.”

White, who is Bishop McDevitt’s first gold medalist in wrestling, topped Upper Dauphin’s Coy Campbell, 9-3, in the championship round. He said he’s also gained confidence this year through the leadership of coach Scott Lindsey, who has been working to build the program that returned to the mat just four years ago following a 30-year hiatus.

“He’s a great coach. He tells me what I can work on, and shows me what I can improve. He’s very supportive of us,” White said.

He’ll join his district finalist teammates David Pipa at 113 pounds and Terrence White at 120 pounds in this weekend’s Southeast Regional Tournament to compete for spots in the state tournament the following weekend.

“I hope this shows that just because we started this program a few years ago doesn’t mean that we can’t have progress and success,” said White. “Hopefully this shows other McDevitt wrestlers that if I can [win district gold], so can they.”

Diocesan high school wrestlers went 4-for-4 in the AA district finals. Joining White at the top of the podium were Trinity High School’s heavily-favored seniors Ryan Diehl at 126 and Adam Geiger at 195, and Lancaster Catholic’s Stephen Loiseau at 182.

Loiseau’s bid for gold came down the wire, as he scored a takedown on a last-ditch effort to win 3-1 over Brandywine Heights’ Adam Mackie, who had bested him in a previous match. Loiseau will join fellow Crusaders Joe Lobeck at 106 and John Lobeck at 120 in competition at the Southeast Regional Tournament.

Diehl, last year’s state champion at 113, cruised through his title match, scoring a technical fall over Boiling Springs’ Kyle Shoop with two seconds left in the first period. Geiger, a district champion for Trinity in 2011, topped Bermudian Springs’ Brock Linebaugh 15-7 on his way to gold. Diehl and Geiger will be joined by teammates Chase Drawbaugh at 106 and Devon Bentley at 120 in this weekend’s regional tournament.
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for children of all ages will be held Wednesdays from 4:30 to 5 p.m. in the Perpetual Adoration Chapel at St. Joseph Parish in New Oxford. For information, call Deacon David L. Hall, Ph.D.

A pro-life Mass in the Extraordinary Form will be celebrated by Father Richard Zuluaga at Our Lady of the Rosary Parish in York City, March 2 at 8 a.m. At Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Church.

St. Peter Parish in Elizabethtown will have a Year of Faith Lenten Mission, “Keeping the Faith in Times of Unbelief and Op- position,” Mass 3:30 p.m. at 7 p.m. in the church. Hymns, prayer and preaching each evening, presented by Deacon David L. Hall, Ph.D.

Mass with prayers for healing will be celebrated by Father Warren Forrey March 5 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Theresa Church in New Cumberland. Sponsored by the Prayers of Life and Love in the Life of Jesus. For information, call Mary Ann at 717-584-7079 or Loreta at 717-737-7551.

Caelorum at St. Joan of Arc Church in Hershey will be held March 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the church. The prayer group will speak in Esperanto and experience the power of Eucharistic Adoration and prayer & worship music. A reception will be held immediately afterward in the church hall. For information, call 717-535-0240.

St. Jude Thadeus Church in Millstown will host a monthly mission healing Mass celebrated by Father Warren Forrey March 7 at 6 p.m.

St. John Neumann Parish in Lancaster will host a Renewal March 11-13 with the theme “No Greater Love” featuring Fr. Blaise Kopp, C.P. The three-day retreat will include talks, prayer, homilies within the 9 a.m. Mass followed by special prayer. Retreat registration is $15 per person with prizes. Call 717-299-8900 to register. For information, visit www.stjohnneumann.org. Registration deadline is March 5.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on the Wednesday evening program 7-8 p.m. will feature talks with prayer over the faith, followed by Eucharistic adoration and Confessions heard in English and Polish. The evening begins at 7 p.m. at St. John Neumann Church on Tuesday, and closing Mass with a reception will be held on Wednesday.

An Italian Mass for the Feast of Saint Joseph, San Giuseppe, will be celebrated March 17 at 10 a.m. at St. Anthony in Mechanicsburg.

Travel to Italy Wide & Switzerland with Father Timothy Mar- coe May 25 to June 6, 2013. Includes the destinations of Rome, Florence, Venice, Lake Como, Milan, and the Swiss Alps. For more information, contact Father Timothy at marcoe@hbgdiocese.org.

Year of Faith Pilgrimage to Marian Shrines in Spain, France, and Germany, May 17-27, 2013. Includes the basilicas of Fatima, Lourdes and Aparecida, the Lateran, San Callisto Catacombs, and much more. We hope to attend a Papal Audience and experience the Scenic tour, subject to availability. Cost is approximately $1000 is available until May 15. For details, contact Getaway Tours, 609-566-7499, salesj@getawaytours.com or Karen Hurley, m.hurley@gmail.com.

Travel to Rome, Assisi and Florence. Three days in Assisi and 5 days in Rome on a 10-day pilgrimage coordinated by Karen Hurley, with chaplain Father Kenneth Smith. Cost: Father Smith at Immortal Heart of Mary Parish, Abbottstown at 717-729-8501. The pilgrimage will be Nov 5-14, 2013. Cost is $3,499 per person (single occupancy add $545). Call to place your name on a list. There will be an informational meeting at Immortal Heart of Mary Parish in Abbottstown at 7 a.m. and 3 a.m. 4-3:45 p.m.

Lenten Dinners

Lenten dinners featuring broiled fish and Perch will be available Wednesday evenings from 4:40 to 6:30 p.m. at St. Ann Parish, 409 S. Front St., York City. The Fish Dinner and Perch Dinner will be held each Thursday from 4:40 to 6:30 p.m. at St. Thomas More Parish, 1572 S. George St., York City. For more information, call 717-744-1302.

Lenten Dinners

Lenten dinners for small adult dinners and $4 for child’s (10 & under) fish dinner. Call 717-759-9227.

Holy Angels Parish in Kulpmont will hold its Lenten Fish Dinners on Fridays from March 22 from 4:40 to 6:30 p.m. Prepared by the women of the parish. In eat or take out. Stations of the Cross are held in the church at 7 p.m.

The Knights of Columbus of St. Jude Thadeus Parish in Millstown will serve its annual Lenten Fish Dinners in the church hall on Fridays from March 22 through March 29. All are welcome to attend. Ka- can-eat. Adults $10. ages 6-12 $5. children under 5 free.

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Church in Harrisburg will host Fish Dinns from March 22 from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Eat in or take out. Take-out orders must be placed by 10 a.m. Call 717-729-8501.

St. Francis Xavier Parish in Gettysburg will hold its Lenten Fish Fry on Fridays through March 22 from 5-7 p.m. at Xavier Center on Table Rock Road. There will be adult, senior and reduced portion menus. Call the church at 717-334-4045.

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Church in Harrisburg will serve Fish Dinners Fridays through March 22 from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Call 717-729-8501.

Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Elizabethtown will serve Lenten pastas Dinners March 1 and March 15 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Cost is $9 for adults, $5 for children under 14, and for free for children 14 and under. A meatless soup will also be available. Call 717-767-2419.

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Parish in Harrisburg will hold Fish Dinns from March 22 from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Eat in or take out. Take-out orders must be placed by 10 a.m. Call 717-729-8501.

St. Catherine Laboure Parish in Harrisburg will hold Lenten Soup Suppers Wednesdays during Lent until 20, begin- ning with Mass in the church at 5:30 p.m. Each week, we share the stories of the Saints who lived during the period and discussion of the Catholic video series.

St. Theresa Parish Knights of Columbus in New Cumber- land will be holding their Let’s Lenten Family Fish Fry Dinners from 5-6 p.m. All you can eat for $8. Children under 12, free. Fish fry is French fried or broiled fish. Children under 3 years old sit at a table. Take-out items also available. For information, contact Tony Miller at 717-936-6945.

Event & Funds-Raiser

York Catholic High School presents the Spring Musical, “SEACE” Thursday through Saturday evenings and Sunday, March 21-24. All in the high school auditorium. General admission tickets are avail- able at the door a cost of $5 for adults, $6 for senior citizens and $6 for students and children.

St. Joseph Parish in Hanover is hosting its annual Indoor Yard Sale March 16 and 17. Table spaces are available. Call 717-524-6655 for more information.

The St. Anne’s Retirement Community Auxiliary in Colum- biana will be holding its annual Spring Yard Sale March 16 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at St. Anne’s Retirement Community in Columbia. There will be craft vendors and refreshments. To reserve a vendor space, call 717-684-8155. Baked goods may be brought to St. Anne’s on March 8 or 9.

Lebanon Catholic School will host its annual International Food Festival March 21, 2013. Tickets are $24 for adults and $15 for children for a sampling of foods from Germany, France, Italy, the Carib- bean and Latin America. For https://www.lebanonschools.org/. For more information, please contact the St. James School Office. Catholic favorites. Food is available for take out. Tickets are available in $5 booklets on the day of the event.

York Catholic Youth Athletic Association is hosting Bingo March 10 at the high school. Doors open at 12 noon and games begin at 2 p.m. Cost is $30 at the door. Package includes 15 drinks, 2 tickets, 1 bag of chips and one serving of each of the two courses. Two Jackpots of $200 and one $1,000 Jackpot. Refreshments available. Tickets available at the school office or from the school during school hours from 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. at 717-867-8871 x15.

Our Dance will be held at St. Benedict the Abbot Parish Center in Lewisburg, PA on March 10. Doors will open at 5 p.m. and Will close at 11 p.m. Adult tickets are $10. Children 12 and under are free. For more information, call 570-759-9227 or visit our website. Women of the parish office after 9 a.m. Sunday Mass or call 717-838-7581.

Earl David Reed will perform at StandUp Comedy Night held March 15 at the St. Joseph Parish Center, 435 N 12th Street. Tickets are $17.00 (tax). Reed has opened for Tim Allen, Jay Leno, Kevin James, and more. St. Joseph Parish and general admission seats are $35. Tickets include admission, snacks, and beverages and are available at St. Joseph Parish Center, 435 N 12th Street or online at seatyourself.com. Ticket sales will only be admitted to the show. Proceeds from this event benefit York Catholic High School.

Catholic Charities’ “Soup, Salad and Sermohn” Lenten lunch will be held March 20 at noon at the Cardinal O’Hara School. To register, RSVP to Christine Meehan at 717-687-4804, ext. 284 by March 13.

The benefit dinner at Cathedral-Berwick Catholic Elementary School will be held April 20 at the Harrisburg Country Club. Bishop Joseph McFadden will be in attendance. A served dinner dinner, a double entry of first wrapped in bacon and chicken, a vegetable, a dish of pasta, a salad, and a dessert. Themenu is available at the benefit dinner for a $25 donation. Tickets are available now for $100 per person. To reserve your place, or for information, call Mariann at 717-332-6892 or at 717-597-294, or email m.meeker@ hbgdiocese.org.
“Man’s best friend” is often used to describe our beloved pet, the dog. We think of Charlie Brown and Snoopy; Mickey Mouse and Pluto. Here in the Diocese of Harrisburg, it’s Anna Shoop and her English Springer Spaniel, Cameron.

Anna is an eighth-grade student at St. Theresa School in New Cumberland. Around the age of 7, she started accompanying her aunt and cousin to various dog shows. And since competing in her first show as a junior handler in 2008, she has won more than 100 different placements.

To be a junior dog handler takes patience, discipline and a great deal of responsibility, and this young student exhibits all these qualities.

“I do it because I love my dogs, and I like to have fun with them,” said Anna. She considers this both a job and a hobby, and competes with several different breeds of canine. She has an English Springer Spaniel and a Brittany Spaniel. She also competes with dogs borrowed from other handlers; such breeds include the Smooth Fox Terrier, the Beagle and the German Shorthaired Pointer. Some of these show dogs are borrowed from local handlers Howard and Heidi Huber, who work as professional dog handlers and with whom Anna trains.

As a junior dog handler, Anna is scored strictly on her skills to show the dog. It is not until the adult level that the judging is completed based on the American Kennel Club’s breed standards. Anna grooms her participating dog a week before the show and bathes them the day before competition. She also has to brush and prep them just moments before stepping into the show ring. During the show she must present the dog, and the presentation she uses depends on the breed of the dog.

She recently participated in the Eukanuba National Championship in Florida. In order to qualify for this show, a junior competitor must place first in five different shows. Anna made it to the final line but was cut before the winners were selected. She hopes to be back next year as she already has four out of the five needed qualifications.

Last year Anna finished third in the United States as a junior handler with her English Springer Spaniel, Cameron. She usually competes in three shows a month throughout the year and hopes to qualify someday for Westminster. In order to qualify for the prestigious competition, she must earn seven best in shows.

Anna described her feelings as “kind of nervous, but happy because it’s what I love to do,” as she stands in front of the judges. Her advice to other youth who might be interested in dog handling is “just enjoy what you’re doing, don’t take it too seriously. Have fun with the dogs and learn as much as you can in juniors.”

Frances of Rome
1384–1440
March 9

This laywoman and foundress, born a Roman aristocrat, married Lorenzo Ponziano when she was 13; they had several children. In 1409, their palazzo was pillaged by Neapolitan soldiers and Lorenzo was exiled for five years, returning home a broken man. He died in 1436. Frances, known for her great charity during epidemics and civil war, organized a ladies society dedicated to self-denial and good works. It became the Oblates of Tor de Specchi, which she directed for her last four years. She is the patron saint of motorists, perhaps because she was guarded for 23 years by an archangel visible only to her. Her last words were: “The angel has finished his work. He is beckoning me to follow.”

Diocesan World Youth Day Celebration on Palm Sunday
For High-School Aged Youth
Sunday, March 24 from 3-7 p.m.
At the Capitol Steps, St. Patrick Cathedral and Strawberry Square in Harrisburg
Main Celebrant and Homilist: Bishop Joseph P. McFadden
Pre-Liturgy Music by St. Patrick Church Life Teen Music Ministry
Liturgy Music by Youth Instrumentalists and Vocalists
Concert by DJ Bill Lage

For more information, contact your parish youth ministry or Catholic Campus Ministry leader, or the Diocesan Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry at 717-657-4804, ext. 327, or oyyam@hbgdiocese.org. Information can also be found at www.hbgdiocese.org/youngchurch.
Twenty-four years ago, in 1989, St. Leo the Great School in Rohrerstown celebrated its first Vocations Day for students. The annual celebration was first held because the religious sisters who were assigned at the school had been directed elsewhere, and the faculty and staff felt it was important for the youth to be exposed to vocations of all kinds. And so on Feb. 22 of this year, priests, sisters, brothers, and deacons gathered to continue the tradition of sharing their vocation stories with the students.

According to Alan Schwartz, the school’s development director, Vocations Day is a part of St. Leo’s fabric. “Each Catholic school has a Catholic School DNA, and part of ours is to partner with parents to foster the discovery of children’s gifts and talents,” he said. He went on to explain that Vocations Day offers the students a chance to explore their options and to ask questions.

The youth were visited by more than ten different priests, sisters, and deacons. During classroom discussions, the visitors shared their vocation story of how they heard God’s calling, they highlighted their specific order of religious life, and most importantly shared with the students how to be still and silent to listen to God’s calling.

The day also included Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the church, afternoon trivia games and time to reflect and pray together.

Vocations Day is celebrated biyearly. To learn more about a Catholic school education at St. Leo the Great School, visit http://www.stleos.org.
The annual Rite of Election is a significant step in the process of Christian Initiation. It formally enrolls those catechumens into the Book of the Elect as they prepare to receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

On the first Sunday of Lent, 136 catechumens representing 47 parishes gathered at St. Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg for the Rite of Election. It marked the first time in the diocese’s celebration of the rite that catechumens were able to individually greet the bishop. As Bishop Joseph P. McFadden greeted them, he said, “You are elect.”

During the Rite of Election, the presence of the Diocesan Church represents the ongoing prayer and support offered by every member of the faithful on behalf of those to be newly initiated at Easter.