

Bishop's Annual Appeal

Faith - Hope - Charity

MARCH 2009 NEWSLETTER **A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF ALLENTOWN**



FROM OUR BISHOP

Dear Friends,

In this Holy Season of Lent I am reminded of the many blessings that are a part of our diocese. One of the many highlights of our ministry over the past few years has been the work of the Institute for Lay Ministry through the Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization.

Catholic Life and Evangelization assists parishes with implementing programs for Evangelization, including ongoing faith development for Catholics; outreach to inactive and alienated Catholics, and those with no church affiliation. The office provides Marriage preparation programs, enrichment programs for married couples, families, the separated, divorced and widowed, Anniversary Mass celebration, Youth Ministry, prison ministry outreach and much more. One of the mandates from the Synod calls us to "Strengthen Catholic Family Life" I am pleased to share with you now just one aspect of how your BAA dollars are needed to achieve this goal.

Thank you again for your continued generosity and support of these important programs. May the Season of Lent continue to bring you closer to the spirit of faith, hope and charity.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Edward P. Cullen, D.D.
Bishop of Allentown



USCCB Conducts Site Visit of Diocesan Ministry Formation Program

By Mrs. Jeanine Breault, M.A., Catholic Life and Evangelization

On November 20-21, 2008, four representatives from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Commission on Certification and Accreditation conducted a site visit of the Ministry Formation Program offered through the Institute for Lay Ministry (ILM) here in the Diocese of Allentown administered by the office of Adult Formation. This visit followed a three-year self-study of the process conducted by the ILM staff and members of a self-

study group. The self-study report, which was written during the three years, demonstrates how our ministry formation program meets the standards set forth by the Bishops' commission.

The site visit was very affirming for all those involved in the program and for our diocese. It has shown that the program is well grounded theologically, spiritually and pastorally and reflects well its Mission Statement: "Guided by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, the Ministry Formation Program sponsored by the Institute for Lay Ministry of the Diocese of Allentown provides education and formation in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council for laymen and laywomen desiring to live their baptismal call through ministry and service to the people of God." The goals and components of the program are reflective of the expectations listed in the Bishops' document, Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord. It is expected that accreditation will be granted by April of this year.

There are currently 120 participants in the three-year ministry formation program, which is held at three locations in the diocese on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. At the present time there are 115 Commissioned Pastoral Ministers who have completed the program. They are involved in a variety of ministries in our diocese. Applications are being accepted for September 2009.

BAA Joins Facebook: As we reported last month, the BAA launched a facebook group page in an effort to build community among our parishioners. As of today, we have 25 members of this page and 128 friends in our profile page "Diocese of Allentown." In addition, we have created a more generalist facebook group page called "Allentown Diocese Catholics." Feel free to join and spread the word as we build community through this new medium of social networking in our diocese. A free facebook account is all that is required. Join our BAA facebook Group now.