

Catholic Charities Announces Honorees for 2018 Gala

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Allentown – which provided vital services for more than 20,000 individuals and families last year throughout Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton and Schuylkill counties – will hold its 11th Annual Gala with the goal of increasing fundraising for the less-fortunate in our communities.

This year’s gala will be Sunday, March 4 at 5:30 p.m. at the University Center of DeSales University, Center Valley. The evening will feature live and silent auctions, a special appeal, presentations to the honorees and a special raffle.

This year’s Gala honorees are Msgr. John McCann, pastor of Immaculate Conception BVM Church, Douglassville, and the Honorable William and Rosemary Ford, parishioners of the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown.



Msgr. John McCann

Msgr. McCann

Msgr. McCann graduated from Marian High School, Tamaqua and began his college studies at Allentown College of St. Frances de Sales (now DeSales University).

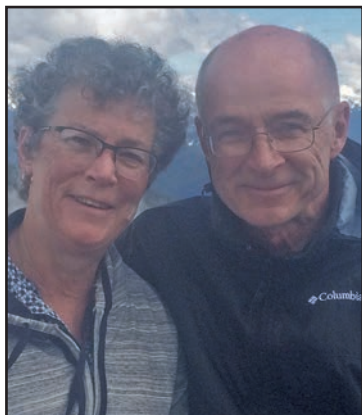
After completing his first year of college, he entered St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Philadelphia to begin his studies for the priesthood.

In 1980 he was chosen by then Bishop of Allentown Joseph McShea to complete his studies for the priesthood at the Pontifical Roman Seminary and the Pontifical Lateran University, Rome, Italy.

Msgr. McCann was ordained to the priesthood in 1985, after which he returned to Rome, where he earned a licentiate in sacred theology from the Pope John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and the Family.

He completed an internship at the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for the Family in 1986. Also that year he was named assistant pastor of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church, Whitehall and served as an advocate on the Diocesan Tribunal.

In 1987 he was transferred to Immaculate Conception BVM Church, Allentown and assigned to the Catholic So-



Judge William and Rosemary Ford

Please see GALA page 8 ▶▶

For 45th Anniversary of Roe vs. Wade

Bishop Schlert Celebrates Pro-Life Mass of Reparation in Ashland

By TAMI QUIGLEY
Staff writer

“Today we continue to commemorate the tragic Supreme Court decision Roe vs. Wade that legalized abortion,” said Bishop Alfred Schlert, main celebrant and homilist of a Pro-Life Mass of Reparation Jan. 21 at St. Charles Borromeo, Ashland.

This year marks the 45th anniversary of the Jan. 22, 1973 Roe vs. Wade U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion in the United States.

Father Paul Rothermel, pastor of St. Charles Borromeo, concelebrated the 11 a.m. liturgy.

Bishop Schlert thanked Father Rothermel and parishioners for the warm welcome he received at the parish.

Reflecting on attending the March for Life in Washington, D.C., two days prior to the Mass, Bishop Schlert said, “It’s so inspiring to see tens of thousands of people, almost all of them young, rejecting the culture of death, and as good Americans using their conscientious and constitutional rights to march so that someday this scourge of abortion might be free of our land.

“Because as a society, as long as we labor under the scourge of abortion, we cannot be the great nation that God calls us to be. We can’t even be the great nation that our forefathers called us to be when they enshrined so many rights in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights.”

Referencing “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” the Bishop said in our nation “life is not protected” due to the scourge of abortion.

“Abortion is painfully present in this country.”



Bishop Alfred Schlert delivers the homily at a Pro-Life Mass of Reparation Jan. 21 at St. Charles Borromeo, Ashland. (Photo by John Simitz)

“It’s good for us to come and ask God’s forgiveness,” Bishop Schlert said.

He spoke of Dr. Robert Spencer (1889-1969), who

Please see REPARATION page 3 ▶▶

Sharing ‘fake news’ makes one an accomplice

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – People have a responsibility to check the source of what they share on social media to ensure it is not “fake news” designed to further prejudices or increase fear, Pope Francis said.

Fake news grabs people’s attention “by appealing to stereotypes and common social prejudices, and exploiting instantaneous emotions like anxiety, contempt, anger and frustration,” Pope Francis wrote in his message for World Communications Day 2018.

The message is a reflection on the theme, “‘The truth will set you free.’ Fake news and journalism for peace.” World Communications Day will be celebrated May 13 at the Vatican and in most dioceses. The papal message was released at the Vatican Jan. 24, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of journalists.

Fake news is so effective, he said, because it mimics real news but uses “nonexistent or distorted data” to deceive and manipulate.

The first to employ the fake-news tactic was the serpent in the Garden of Eden who convinced Eve she

Please see FAKE page 24 ▶▶

"The Allentown Diocese in the Year of Our Lord"

THE A.D. TIMES

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MISSION STATEMENT

As part of the Catholic Press, The A.D. Times is the official newspaper for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allentown, serving Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton and Schuylkill counties. The A.D. Times proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the People of God through evangelization, catechesis and the teaching of the Church, the extension of Christ's presence in the world today. It endeavors to nourish, strengthen and challenge the faith of its readers by continually providing news information, formation, inspiration, religious education and Catholic identification. Under the patronage of Mary, Mother of the Church, The A.D. Times serves the Church so that the Kingdom of God might become a reality in our society transformed by His Good News.

POLICY STATEMENTS

The A.D. Times will consider all editorial copy and photos submitted in a fair and objective manner. The newspaper reserves the right to reject or edit any submission.

Any advertising copy accepted does not necessarily reflect the views, opinions or endorsement of The A.D. Times and/or its publisher. The A.D. Times reserves the right to reject any advertising copy submitted.

DEADLINES

Advertising copy must be received by Monday of the week before publication. News copy must be received by Thursday of the week before publication.

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Twilight Retreats OFFERING: \$25 DEPOSIT: \$15
February 15, 2018

Gospel Companions ~ Icons of the Paschal Mystery

Let us explore the Paschal Mystery in everyday life. We pay attention to what Jesus has done for us through his Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension and also the times when we experience the Paschal Mystery in our own daily life. How do we experience the Paschal Mystery, how does it affect us day by day? How do we become aware of its presence in our lives in a real way? FACILITATOR: **Sr. Nancy lampietro, CPS**
March 20, 2018

Triduum ~ An ongoing Journey to the Great Easter Vigil

The Triduum Services on our Liturgical Calendars every year are the most sacred celebrations of the entire Church Year. They invite us to remember reverently, to enter into fully, and to journey together through the sacredness of Holy Thursday, the mournfulness of Good Friday, and the ongoing joy of the Resurrection of Jesus. This Paschal Mystery is our journey too - our journey through the dyings and risings in our lives. Come and travel with us on this passage to New Life.

FACILITATORS: **Sr. Anita Kuchera & Sr. Barbara DeStefano**

Letting Love In: *From Agony to Acceptance*

March 5, 12, 19 & 26, 2018 6:45 ~ 9:00PM

OFFERING: \$15 PER SESSION/ 4 SESSIONS FOR \$50

Acceptance a key to spiritual freedom and inner peace. We are told to accept ourselves, others, and situations in our lives. God is love, but even His love is not forced upon us. It too must be accepted. On this Lenten journey as we will explore acceptance from many angles, including accepting others, ourselves, pain and suffering. We will also reflect upon God's infinite love and acceptance for us and discern whether we are blocking or fully open to receiving His love. We will learn from Jesus' many examples exactly what true acceptance entails. Each evening will include a guided meditation, presentation, music for reflection, and more
Facilitator: **Nina Corona, MA, CRS**

Simply Prayer

FEBRUARY 6, MARCH 6, 2018 9:00 ~ NOON

Lenten Taize

FEBRUARY 21, 2018 6:45-9:00 PM



Affordable Senior Communities of Catholic Senior Housing Development and Management

A DIVISION OF CATHOLIC SENIOR HOUSING AND HEALTH CARE SERVICES, INC.

**Queen of Peace
Apartments**
777 Water Street
POTTSVILLE
570-628-4504

**Neumann
Apartments**
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ST. CLAIR
570-429-0699

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Apartments**
30 East Bertsch Street
LANSFORD
570-805-4640

**Holy Family
New Philadelphia**
100 Valley Street
NEW PHILADELPHIA
570-429-0699

**Holy Family
Bethlehem Apartments**
330-338 13th Avenue
BETHLEHEM
610-866-4603

**Queen of Angels
Apartments**
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2405 Hillside Avenue
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Affordable senior housing applicants must meet federal guidelines for seniors 62+ and disabled individuals 18+. One bedroom and studio apartments rent limited to 30% of your annual income.

ALL FAITHS WELCOME

**VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR**

The Diocese of Allentown provides assistance to anyone who, as a minor, was sexually abused by a priest, deacon or employee/volunteer of the Diocese/Parish

Parents, guardians, children and survivors of sexual abuse are invited and encouraged to contact the Diocese of Allentown for more information about this program. The fullness of compassion should be extended to these victims by the Church.

To speak directly to the Victim Assistance Coordinator, please call the direct line 1-800-791-9209.

To learn more about the Diocese of Allentown's Youth Protection Programs, Sexual Abuse Policy and Code of Conduct, please visit www.allentowndioocese.org and click on "Youth Protection" at top right.

COORDINADOR DE ASISTENCIA A LAS VÍCTIMAS

La Diócesis de Allentown provee asistencia a cualquier persona que, como menor de edad, fue abusado sexualmente por un sacerdote, diácono o empleado/voluntario de la Diócesis/Parroquia.

Los padres, tutores, niños y los sobrevivientes de abuso sexual están invitados a contactar la Diócesis de Allentown para obtener más información sobre este programa. La plenitud de compasión debe extenderse a las víctimas por la Iglesia.

Para hablar directamente con el coordinador de asistencia a las víctimas por favor llame a la línea directa 1-800-791-9209.

Para obtener más información acerca de los Programas de Protección de la Juventud, Política de Abuso Sexual y el Código de Conducta de la Diócesis de Allentown, por favor visite www.allentowndioocese.org y haga clic en "Protección de la Juventud" en la parte superior derecha.



Reparation

▶Continued from page 4

practiced medicine in Ashland and made the national news upon his death in 1969 for having performed 100,000 abortions there from the 1920s until his death.

“He killed about the population of a large American city,” Bishop Schlert said of the 100,000 victims.

“For almost 50 years, Dr. Spencer practiced here in Ashland, and at the time of his death in 1969, it made national news,” Bishop Schlert said. “People came from all over. We have to admit that in many ways it was an open secret of what was transpiring.

“So we come together today with humility of heart, with imploring God’s mercy and his forgiveness for all of us, not just this town, of course, because all of us bear the brunt of allowing abortion to be part of our American society.

“All of us have a vote. All of us can write to our legislators. All of us can pray

that our justices on the Supreme Court would soften their hearts and understand that God’s laws as the creator supersede our human laws as a created people.

“Whenever we tinker with God’s laws we go astray – our nation has gone astray.”

Bishop Schlert said for those who say abortion is a woman’s “choice,” it’s not true. “Abortion has a tremendous effect on the father, family and entire society.”

“Ever since abortion became legal in our country in 1973, our society has not become more gentle, more loving or more friendly,” Bishop Schlert said, pointing out how society has been negatively affected by Roe vs. Wade.

“In fact, I think we would all agree it has become more coarse, more belligerent, more violent, more tending to fight with each other. It is a natural byproduct of abortion that when we, as a country, cannot guarantee the right to life of the most defenseless and innocent among us, there is no way that our lives, yours and mine, who are able-bodied people, are secure and respected.

The Bishop noted the importance of praying for mothers who chose abortion believing it was their only option.

“We pray for them in charity, not in condemnation or in judgement, but out of love,” he said. “We pray that the Lord will give them peace and that they would know his forgiveness. We pray for fathers and other family members who are caught up in the trauma of abortion. They are victims as well.”

Bishop Schlert noted the day’s vestments were purple, the color of penitence and reparation, “as we ask for God’s mercy.”

“Whenever the Church wears purple, it’s not for a small reason,” the Bishop said. “The Church wears purple for penitence. The Church wears purple often-times at funerals as a sign of mourning. So today is a day of purple. It’s a day to ask God’s forgiveness and mercy upon all of us.



Above, Emily Yuschock presents the offertory gifts to Bishop Alfred Schlert. (Photo by John Simitz)



Left, a family prays during the Mass. (Photo by John Simitz)



Jessie Gill holds her 1-year-old daughter Hanna during the morning liturgy. (Photo by John Simitz)

“We ask him to forgive us and to also comfort us and encourage us so that one day we might, especially the youngest here among us this morning, put an end to this scourge that has overtaken our land, so negatively influenced our society.”

As the Mass drew to a close, Father

Rothermel said, “It’s a day of sadness for the lives lost, but a day of gladness for our parish for the presence of Bishop Schlert.”

Bishop Schlert prayed “The Prayer of Reparation” at the end of the liturgy.



Singing during Communion are, from left, Emily Yuschock, Lauren Bennyhoff and Nevada Rau. (Photo by John Simitz)



Bishop Alfred Schlert, center, gathers in the parish hall after Mass with Father Paul Rothermel and members of the Knights of Columbus. (Photo courtesy of Marie Breininger)

ACT OF REPARATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS PRO-LIFE MASS @ SAINT CHARLES BORROMEEO, ASHLAND 21 JANUARY 2018

All: O Sacred Heart of Jesus, animated with a desire to repair the outrages unceasingly offered to you, we kneel before your throne of mercy, and in the name of all mankind, pledge our love and fidelity to Thee.

The more your mysteries are blasphemed, the more firmly we shall believe them, O Sacred Heart of Jesus!

The more impiety endeavors to extinguish our hope of immortality, the more we shall trust in your Heart, sole Hope of mankind!

The more hearts resist your Divine attractions, the more we shall love you, O infinitely amiable Heart of Jesus!

The more your holy laws are transgressed and ignored, the more we shall delight to observe them, O most holy Heart of Jesus!

The more your Sacraments are despised and abandoned, the more frequently we shall receive them with love and reverence, O most generous Heart of Jesus!

The more the devil labors to destroy souls, the more we shall be inflamed with desire to save them, O Heart of Jesus, zealous Lover of souls!

The more sin and impurity destroy the image of God in man, the more we shall try by purity of life to be a living temple of the Holy Spirit, O Heart of Jesus!

The more the gift of human life is desecrated, rejected, and not valued, the more we shall see the image and likeness of God in our brothers and sisters, O Precious Heart of Jesus!

The more your Holy Church is despised, the more we shall endeavor to be her faithful children, O Sweet Heart of Jesus!

The more your Vicar on earth is persecuted, the more will we honor him as the infallible head of your Holy Church, show our fidelity and pray for him, O kingly Heart of Jesus!

O Sacred Heart, through your powerful grace, may we become your apostles in the midst of a corrupted world, and be your crown in the kingdom of Heaven. **Amen.**

Bishop Schlert

Let us pray:

God our Creator,

Lord and Redeemer of mankind,

we give thanks to you,

who alone have the power to impart the breath of life

as you form each of us in our mother’s womb;

you alone have the power to forgive sins against human life,

and to heal the wounds caused by these sins;

grant the prayers we have placed before you,

and grant that we, your children,

will place all our trust in your Divine Mercy

so that the world and all its inhabitants may be saved.

Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Prayer of Reparation prayed by Bishop Alfred Schlert at the Mass. (Photo courtesy of Jeremy Leidich)

Bishop Schlert Prays at Pro-Life Memorial

Members of the Ashland Knights of Columbus Sarto Council 1322 and Girardville Knights of Columbus Father Sheridan Council 748 provided an honor guard.

Bishop Alfred Schlert had the opportunity to greet parishioners during a time of fellowship in the parish hall after the Mass.

Members of St. Anne’s Guild provided the refreshments.

After the reception, Bishop Schlert prayed a decade of the rosary with Father Paul Rothermel and members of the Ashland and Girardville Knights of Columbus at the Pro-Life Memorial at the parish cemetery of St. Charles Borromeo.

National Speaker Matt Fradd to Offer Two Presentations in Diocese

Author, speaker and podcaster Matt Fradd will offer two presentations at DeSales University, Center Valley. The free events are being sponsored by the Diocese of Allentown Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization.

"The Man Talk" will be offered for men, especially fathers and sons, Tuesday, Feb. 6 at 7 p.m. Fradd will lay out a vision for authentic Catholic masculinity and a plan for how to achieve it.



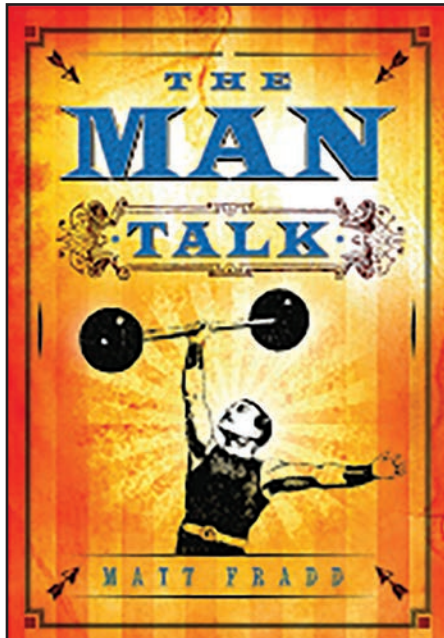
Fradd

"Parenting the Internet Generation" will be offered Wednesday, Feb. 7 at 7 p.m. Fradd will offer parents a detailed look at the way pornography harms us and offer practical strategies that parents need to implement to protect their children from the lies of an over-sexualized culture.

Registration is free, at www.allentowndiocese.org/family-ministry.

Fradd speaks to tens of thousands of people every year on the dangers of pornography and how to be free from it.

He is author of several books, including "Does God Exist?: A Socratic Dialogue on the Five Ways of Thomas Aquinas" and "The Porn Myth: Exposing the

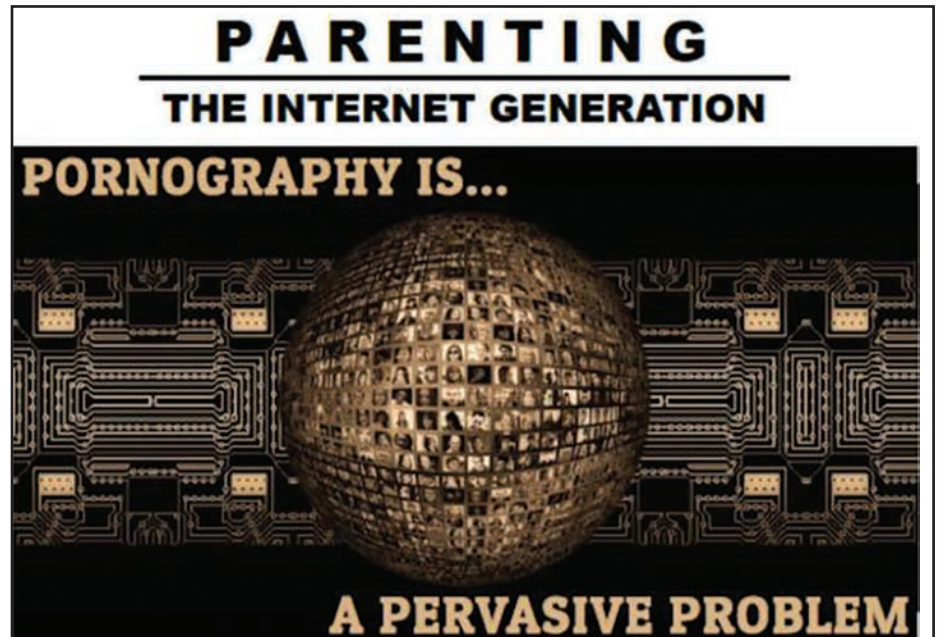


Reality Behind the Fantasy of Pornography," a No. 1 best-seller on Amazon.

He is the co-creator of "Victory," an app that provides a strategic battle plan for winning the struggle against pornography.

His podcasts "Love People Use Things" and "Pints With Aquinas" are listened to by tens of thousands of people every month.

Born in Australia, Fradd experienced a



profound conversion at World Youth Day in Rome in 2000. He earned undergraduate and master's degrees in philosophy from Holy Apostles College, Cromwell, Connecticut.

Fradd is the founder and executive director of "The Porn Effect," a nonprofit ministry of "Stewardship: A Mission of Faith." "The Porn Effect" is an apostolate dedicated to helping men and women break free from pornography.

He is the editor of "Delivered: True Stories of Men and Women Who Turned From Porn to Purity" and coauthor of "Victory: A Strategic Battle Plan for Freedom in the Struggle Against Pornography."

Fradd lives with his wife, Cameron, and their children in the mountains of North Georgia.

More information is available at www.mattfradd.com/.

Encounter Lent: Hear How Your Rice Bowl Sacrifice Helps Feed the Poor

The number of people living in extreme poverty around the world continues to drop, and some economies in poorer countries are seeing growth. That's certainly great news, but threats to cut foreign aid could derail that progress, and there are still millions around the world who don't have enough to eat.

Thomas Awiapo of Catholic Relief Services (CRS) will talk about how programs like CRS Rice Bowl are saving lives and building brighter futures for those still living in poverty, Wednesday, Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. at the University Center



Awiapo

of DeSales University, Center Valley.

Awiapo literally owes his life to CRS Rice Bowl. Orphaned at age 10 and struggling to survive in his village in Ghana, Thomas decided to go to school because he was hungry and heard they were serving food there.

It turned out to be a school feeding program run by CRS and funded by CRS Rice Bowl. Awiapo found not only food at that school. He found education. He found faith.

Eventually he came to the United States for a master's degree and went back to Ghana to work for CRS. Now retired from that job, he is working to open a school for children facing the challenges that CRS Rice Bowl helped him overcome.

The event is also part of "Share the Journey," Pope Francis' campaign in support of migrants and refugees.

'Share the Journey'

Pope Francis launched "Share the Journey," a global, two-year campaign in support of migrants and refugees, Sept. 27, 2017.

He opened his arms wide in a loving gesture and said, "Christ urges us to welcome our brothers and sisters with our arms truly open, ready for a sincere embrace, a loving and enveloping embrace."

In collaboration with Caritas Internationalis, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Catholic Charities USA, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and countless organizations and individuals across the country are reaching out to love our neighbors by joining the "Share the Jour-



Share the Journey
#sharejourney

ney" campaign in the United States.

Together we will challenge negative myths and perceptions regarding migrants and refugees by sharing stories, meeting migrants and refugees, and finding our common ground, our shared humanity.

For more information, visit www.sharejourney.org.

Culture of Encounter: Family Holy Hours

The Office of Youth, Young Adult, and Family Ministry is partnering with 12 parishes in each deanery to offer a monthly Eucharistic holy hour specifically for families from November 2017 through October 2018.

Bring your whole family to encounter Christ. Stay for a few minutes or for the whole hour. Babies, toddlers, children, teens, young adults, and adults are all welcome.

Prayer resources will be provided for both children and adults in Eng-

lish and Spanish. Some Holy Hours will provide an opportunity for silent prayer, while others will have planned prayer services. Holy Hours at parishes with a large Hispanic population will be bilingual.

Pick up a postcard at the parish for the schedule, or visit www.allentowndiocese.org/encounter. To sign up for text message reminders, text your Deanery's code to 81010: @Berks-FHH, @LehighFHH, @NorthFHH, @SchuylCar.

The next two holy hours in each deanery:

Berks Deanery – Sunday, Feb. 25, 1 p.m., St. John Baptist de la Salle, 420 Holland St., Shillington; Sunday, March 11, 1 p.m., St. Ignatius Loyola, 2810 St. Albans Drive, Sinking Spring.

Northampton Deanery – Sunday, Feb. 25, 11 a.m., St. Anthony of Padua, 900 Washington St., Easton; Sunday, March 18, 1 p.m., St. Rocco 658

School St., Martins Creek.

Lehigh Deanery – Sunday, Jan. 28, 11:15 a.m., Assumption BVM, 2181 Washington Ave., Northampton; Sunday, Feb. 18, 11:30 a.m., Annunciation BVM, 122 W. Union St., Catasauqua.

Schuylkill-Carbon Deaneries – Sunday, Jan. 28, noon, Sacred Heart, 259 Lafayette Ave., Palmerton; Sunday, Feb. 11, 12:30 p.m., St. Joseph at St. Ann, 49 N. Line St., Frackville.

Cultura del Encuentro: Horas Santas Familiares

La Oficina de Juventud, Adultos Jóvenes y Ministerio de Familia se ha asociado con las doce parroquias en cada decanato para ofrecer mensualmente una Hora Santa de Adoración Eucarística específicamente para las familias desde noviembre de 2017 hasta octubre de 2018.

Traiga a toda su familia al encuentro de Cristo. Quédense unos minutos o durante toda la hora. Bebés, niños pequeños, niños, adolescentes, adultos jóvenes y adultos son bienvenidos.

Se proporcionarán recursos de oración para niños y adultos en inglés y español. Algunas Horas Santas brindarán una oportunidad para la oración silenciosa, mientras que otras tendrán servicios de oración planificados. Las horas santas en las parroquias con una gran población hispana serán bilingües.

Recoja una postal en la parroquia para el horario, o visite www.allentowndiocese.org/encounter.



The Shroud of Turin

PRESENTED BY:

Sister Rose Bernadette Mulligan, I.H.M.

**Monday,
February 26, 2018
TIME: 6:30 PM**

PJ Whelihan's Pub
1101 Rocky Road
Westlawn, PA



What is the Shroud of Turin?

Where does it come from?

What can relics like this tell us about Christ?

Questions? Contact the Office of Adult Formation
at 610-289-8900, Ext. 2021
or email at adultformation@allentowndiocese.org



**Are you in need of continuing education credits?
Attending this event counts!!**



Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Helps Healing From Abortion

Are you carrying the emotional hurt associated with a past abortion? God in his mercy wants you to experience forgiveness and peace.

Come to a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat sponsored by Catholic Charities of the

Diocese of Allentown. The next retreat will be the weekend of March 9-11.

For more information or to register, call 610-332-0442, ext. 2019 or 1-866-3Rachel, or email projectrachel@allentowndiocese.org.



Retiro del Viñedo de Raquel™

*Una jornada espiritual íntima para los que
buscan sanación después de un aborto*

del 9 al 11 de marzo del 2018

En un ambiente seguro, de apoyo, sin prejuicios usted puede centrarse en este momento de dolor en su vida y entrar en el proceso de sanación. Mediante lecturas bíblicas, meditaciones dirigidas y las actividades que fluyen de las meditaciones usted puede experimentar la compasión y el perdón de Dios.

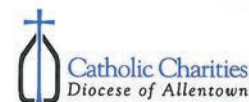


Para obtener información de inscripción contactarse con:

Hna. Margaret
1-866-3 RACHEL (Línea gratuita)
610-372-9652 x 3
ihmcurac@yahoo.com

* Plazo de Inscripción es el 26 de febrero del 2018

Para más información acerca de la experiencia del retiro, visite el sitio web nacional www.rachelsvineyard.org



'Faith and Spirits' to Discuss Shroud of Turin

What is the Shroud of Turin? Where does it come from? What can relics like this tell us about Christ?

These questions and more will be discussed during "Faith and Spirits" Monday, Feb. 26 at 6:30 p.m. at P.J. Whelihan's Pub, 1101 Rocky Road, West Lawn.

The informal discussion will be presented by Sister Rose Mulligan of Immaculata University.

"Faith and Spirits" was created by the Diocesan Office of Adult Formation to provide a forum for all adult Catholics to learn more about their

faith in a comfortable setting. It is offered at various locations throughout the Diocese with a variety of engaging speakers and intriguing topics.

All adults are welcome. There is no charge for attending and no registration is required. There will be menus available for ordering food and drink at your expense.

For questions or more information, visit www.allentowndiocese.org/faith-and-spirits or contact the Office of Adult Formation by email adultformation@allentowndiocese.org or call 610-289-8900, ext. 2021.



Parish Makes Advent Wreaths

St. Patrick Parish, Pottsville held its annual Advent Wreath Workshop Dec. 2. Using live greens, 20 families used their creativity to make their own wreath. Children helping Msgr. Edward O'Connor, pastor, get started on his are Quincy Clews, Parker Fishburn, Hudson Clews and Andrew Verchick.

Sacred Heart Villa

Personal Care Community

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Sunday Scripture

Sunday, Jan. 28
Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First reading
Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Responsorial Psalm
Psalms 95:1-2, 6-9
Second Reading
1 Corinthians 7:32-35
Gospel
Mark 1:21-28

Sunday, Feb. 4
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading
Job 7:1-4, 6-7
Responsorial Psalm
Psalms 147:1-6
Second Reading
1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23
Gospel
Mark 1:29-39

In Memoriam

Please remember these clerics of the Diocese of Allentown in your prayers during February, the anniversary month of their death.

- 1 – Father Stephen Flynn, 2009
- 2 – Father Joseph Barnes, 2009
- 3 – Msgr. Raymond Lechner, 1985
- 4 – Msgr. Charles Allwein, 1995
- 5 – Msgr. Leonard Miconi, 1972
- 7 – Father C. Norbert Dick, 1996
- 10 – Father Michael Romagno, 1997
- 12 – Father John Sheridan, 2002
- 13 – Father Stephen Ponisciak, 1969
- 16 – Father Robert Dressler, 2005
- 17 – Father Peter Laumakis, 1975
- 18 – Father Leo Buehler, 1992

- 18 – Father John Nugent, 1995
- 19 – Bishop Thomas Welsh, 2009
- 20 – Father James O'Brien, 1976
- 20 – Deacon Stephen Andrusisian, 2005
- 20 – Father William O'Donnell, 2015
- 21 – Deacon Robert McManus, 2006
- 21 – Father Larry Hess, 2014
- 22 – Father Bernard Creemers, 1966
- 22 – Father Paul Bradley, 1974
- 22 – Father John Matlos, 1988
- 23 – Father Francis Fox, 2000
- 24 – Father John Basinski, 1984
- 26 – Msgr. Michael Messaros, 2003
- 26 – Father Michael Briggman, 2016
- 27 – Father James Donohue, 1973
- 27 – Msgr. Casimir Klevance, 1973
- 27 – Father John Smigielski, 1984
- 28 – Deacon Thomas Reichard, 2008
- 28 – Msgr. John Auchter, 2010
- 29 – Msgr. James Mulligan, 2016

Recommended to Your Prayers by Pope Francis

Apostleship of Prayer Intention for February

Universal: Say "No" to Corruption – That those who have material, political or spiritual power may resist any lure of corruption.
The monthly intentions are also available on video, with a reflection or download the app at <http://apostleshipofprayer.org>.

Prayer Requests for Priests

Please pray for our Holy Fathers, our Bishops and these priests serving in the Diocese of Allentown during each designated date of February.

- 1 – His Holiness Pope Francis
- 2 – Pope Emeritus Benedict
- 3 – Bishop Alfred Schlert
- 4 – Bishop Emeritus Edward Cullen
- 5 – Father Thomas Buckley
- 6 – Father George Bur
- 7 – Father Douglas Burns
- 8 – Father Christopher Butera
- 9 – Msgr. Albert Byrne
- 10 – Father Floyd Caesar
- 11 – Msgr. Aloysius Callaghan
- 12 – Father E. Michael Camilli

- 13 – Msgr. John Campbell
- 14 – Father William Campion
- 15 – Deceased priests
- 16 – Father Thomas Carney
- 17 – Msgr. Michael Chaback
- 18 – Msgr. John Chizmar
- 19 – Father Donald Cieniewicz
- 20 – Seminarians
- 21 – Father Richard Clement
- 22 – Msgr. Robert Coll
- 23 – Father Edward Connolly
- 24 – Father James Connolly
- 25 – Msgr. Edward Coyle
- 26 – Father Harold Dagle
- 27 – Father Charles Dene
- 28 – Msgr. Thomas Derzack

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Spotlight on Seminarians for the Diocese of Allentown

Giuseppe Esposito, Third Theology, St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Philadelphia

By TARA CONNOLLY
Staff writer

Describe why you entered into discernment for the priesthood or when you heard the call from God.

We are all created by God with an intention in mind. God gives us the gift of free will and intellect so that we can freely accomplish his intention for us. This intention from our Creator is our vocation, and is our supreme joy and purpose.

We all have one thing in common as each and every one of us is called to the vocation of holiness. This vocation consists of knowing, loving and serving God in this life and being with him forever in the next. How this life of holiness is lived out day-to-day branches into three different vocational states of life.

Most are called to live out a vocation of married life. Those who are married are called to be signs of Christ's union with and love for his bride the Church, which is all of us.

Then there are those who lay down their lives by taking religious vows so as to more closely live as Christ lived, such as cloistered nuns, sisters and brothers.

Along with those in the religious life, there are those called to imitate Christ in a unique way through their ordination as deacons, priests and bishops.

Looking back, there were three moments in which I heard the call to the priesthood. The first time I was a junior at Marian High School, Tamaqua. On one of the days in the spring, our class had a priest and a sister come to talk to us about vocations.

The underlying message of their talk was that of service. They spoke of how one of the major facets of the priesthood and religious life focuses on helping the helpless and being there with those going through a crisis by giving them the hope of Jesus Christ.

When I heard this message, I experienced a pull at my heart to live a life as a priest, totally in service to others. However, after reflecting more on the experience, I decided to help others as a work vocation rather than a religious vocation.

The second time I experienced God's call to the priesthood I was a junior again, but this time at DeSales University, Center Valley. As a junior in college and a science major who thought he knew everything, I began to drift away from the Church. Fortunately, God was able to break through my apathy, using the very discipline that caused the rupture, that of science.

Concluding that God must have created matter at the beginning of time or else we would fall into the trap of infinite regress, the reality of God became palpable in my life. Through this experience I decided to enter semi-

nary studies for the first time. I entered St. Charles Seminary and spent three years in studies and formation until I discerned God was not calling me to the priesthood, at least not at that time.

My final call to the priesthood happened while working as a registered nurse. After leaving the seminary, I still felt an intense desire to help those who needed it most. I decided to go to nursing school, and after a few short years I began my work as a nurse at the hospital level.

It was during this time of being there with families going through crisis I felt God calling me back to the priesthood. In many beautiful ways God showed me his love through the patients I treated.

Since love is desiring another's highest good, I prayerfully began to discern the greatest way I can love God and others. My prayerful conclusion through quietly listening to the Lord's call is to bring people Christ through my actions, words and most especially the sacraments as his priest.

Describe your parents, family and friends that have been important to your life.

My friends and family have always been supportive, even those who are not particularly religious. Deep down, all of us are hardwired to support those we love to attain their goals and highest potential, as long as it falls within the parameters of what we see as good and true in life. I am blessed to have that caliber of friends and family surrounding me in my pursuit of the priesthood.

What are some of your interests or hobbies?

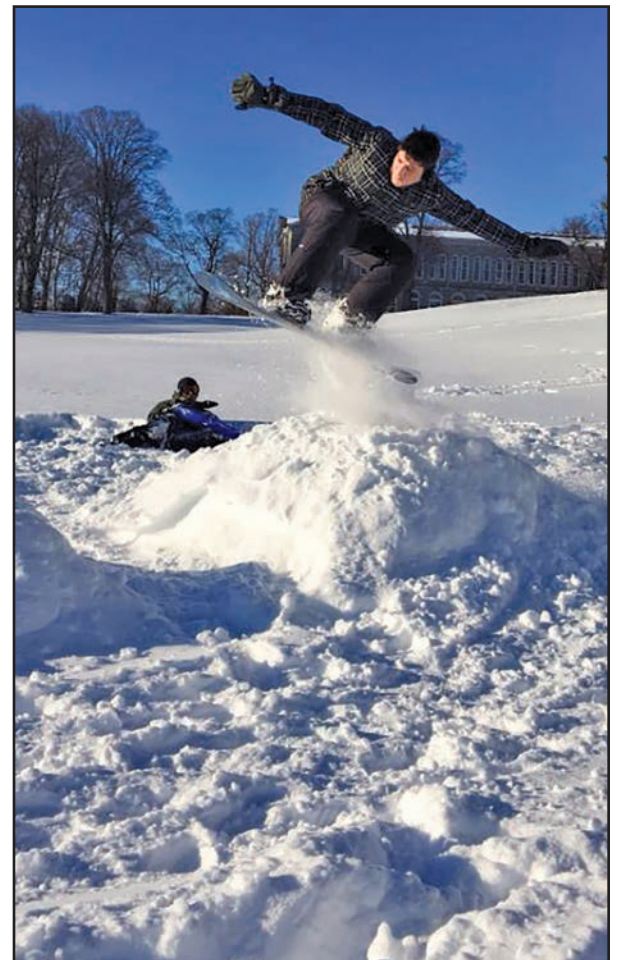
My interests and hobbies vary widely. In terms of athletic interests, I enjoy snowboarding with my friends, lifting weights and long-distance running. A few months ago I completed the Philadelphia Half Marathon, running with about 25 of my fellow seminarians.

Academically, I enjoy reading, especially the classics. Musically, I have played guitar for about 15 years now. Also, I am part of a band at the seminary, and we play for the biannual "Theology on Tap" that St. Charles hosts.

Finally, my spiritual hobbies consist of hiking outdoors, where I experience a strong connection to God through his creation, and reading great spiritual works, such as "The Imitation of Christ" and anything by Pope Benedict XVI.

What is life like as a seminarian?

Life at the seminary is challenging and rewarding. I have made some of my best friends going through my years of formation to the priesthood.



Giuseppe Esposito, Diocesan seminarian, snowboards on the grounds of St. Charles.

The seminary has devoted time for communal prayer and three beautiful chapels on the grounds, which are always open to spend time with Our Lord.

Seminary teaches us how to give ourselves to the present moment issues and stresses while being rooted in God through prayer.

With only a year and a half left until priesthood ordination, God willing, I am thankful for the seminary formation to equip me in spreading the Gospel of Christ in a world that has, in many ways, lost hope of the transcendent.

Gala

►Continued from page 1

cial Agency (now Catholic Charities) and Social Action Bureau of the Diocese of Allentown, where he held a variety of direct service and administrative posts.

In 1992 he was awarded a master's degree in social work from The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

Msgr. McCann was appointed executive director of the Catholic Social Agency of the Diocese of Allentown in 1994.

In 1995 he was named a Chaplain of His Holiness by Pope John Paul II.

In addition to his leadership role at the Catholic Social Agency, Msgr. McCann also served as a member of the Social Welfare Department of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference 1994-98. He served as moderator of this department 1995-98.

In 1998 newly installed Bishop of Allentown Edward Cullen appointed Msgr. McCann vice chancellor of the Diocese of Allentown and secretary to the bishop. He was appointed secretary for clergy and chancellor of the Diocese in 1999.

Msgr. McCann was named pastor of the Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Sacred Heart churches, Nesquehoning; and to his current position as pastor of Immaculate Conception BVM Church, Douglassville in 2006.

In 2007 Msgr. McCann was named a Prelate of Honor by Pope Benedict XVI.

Msgr. McCann has been active in a variety of community-based organizations, serving as both a member and officer of various governing and advisory boards. He also serves as a member of the Berks County Mental Health-Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board.

William and Rosemary Ford

Rosemary Ford attended Allentown Central Catholic High School High, Immaculata College and DeSales University.

When the couple's youngest child went to school, Rosemary began work as a kindergarten aide at the Cathedral School, now St. John Vianney Regional School, Allentown.

A current member of Women's Alliance of the Cathedral, she served on its board for more than 30 years. She also is a member of the parish's St. Vincent de Paul Society and serves as a Eucharistic minister.

William Ford served for 24 years as a trial judge on the Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas.

He began his legal career in the U.S. Marine Corps as an officer in the Judge Advocate General (JAG) Division, where he was trial counsel at courts-martial. After his military service, he entered the private practice of law. He also prosecuted all manner of criminal cases as an assistant district attorney.

He was elected judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Lehigh County in No-

vember 1991 and retained for a second 10-year term in November 2001. He retired in 2015.

For 15 years he was an adjunct faculty member at DeSales University and at Chestnut Hill College in its graduate program.

He has served on the boards of the Lehigh County Bar Association, Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown Central Catholic High School and DeSales University. He also has done other church and community work, including 30 years as a coach with the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO).

The couple was married in 1971 at St. Francis of Assisi Church, Allentown, and has 11 children and 32 grandchildren.

Gala information

"We couldn't be more excited to be honoring Msgr. McCann and William and Rosemary Ford, who, throughout their lives, have exemplified and supported the mission and services of Catholic Charities in their communities," said Diane Bullard, Catholic Charities' executive director.

Evelyn and Anthony Carfagno will serve as gala chairpersons for the second year.

Other committee members are Lina Barbieri, Patty and Paul Huck (past co-chairs), Sister Janice Marie Johnson (past honoree), and Sabina and Stephen Olenchock (past co-chairs).

All proceeds from the gala will support Catholic Charities' programs and services in Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton and Schuylkill counties.

Services include: emergency food pantries; soup kitchens in Allentown, Reading and Pottsville; family counseling; employment and housing assistance; parenting and pregnancy support; support services for veterans and their families; support for older adults; adult day care in Orwigsburg; immigration services; infant adoption; and support services for victims of human trafficking.

You can help support Catholic Charities' annual gala, thereby funding the vital services it provides, by attending the gala, becoming a sponsor, purchasing an advertisement in the gala program book, purchasing raffle tickets, or making a direct gift to Catholic Charities.

For more information, contact Julie Scheck, Catholic Charities advancement director, at 610-871-5200, ext. 2216 or jscheck@allentowndioocese.org.

The 11th annual gala will support critical community services for those in need throughout Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton and Schuylkill counties.

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SECOND ANNUAL GALA



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Patron: \$10.00 (Event Recognition)

Parishioner Displays Over 100 Nativity Sets

St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish in Mahanoy City recently hosted a Nativity Exhibit for people to see over 100 Nativity sets. Parishioner Natalie Morrison has collected the sets since she was 3 years old, and has over 300 displays in her collection. From the traditional to the different/unique, Morrison's collection inspired many people about the real reason for the season.



Spring 2018 Confirmation Schedule

The Diocesan Office for Divine Worship has announced the spring 2018 confirmation schedule as follows. All confirmations will begin at 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 1 – Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, St. Paul and St. Francis of Assisi, all Allentown.

Thursday, Feb. 8 – St. Ann, Emmaus.

Tuesday, Feb. 20 – Immaculate Conception BVM, Our Lady Help of Christians, St. John the Baptist, and SS. Peter and Paul, all Allentown.

Wednesday, Feb. 21 – St. Peter, Coplay, Holy Trinity and St. John the Baptist, both Whitehall.

Thursday, Feb. 22 – Sacred Heart of Jesus, Allentown.

Tuesday, Feb. 27 – Notre Dame of Bethlehem.

Wednesday, Feb. 28 – St. Anne, Bethlehem.

Thursday, March 1 – St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Whitehall and Annunciation BVM, Catasauqua.

Tuesday, March 6 – St. Thomas More, Allentown.

Wednesday, March 7 – St. Rocco, Martins Creek and St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Pen Argyl.

Thursday, March 8 – Assumption BVM and Queenship of Mary, both Northampton; St. John Fisher, Catasauqua.

Tuesday, March 13 – St. Joseph the Worker, Orefield.

Wednesday, March 14 – St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, Hellertown; St. Ursula, Fountain Hill; Sacred Heart, Holy Ghost, Incarnation of Our Lord, and SS. Simon and Jude, all Bethlehem.

Wednesday, March 14 (rescheduled from Wednesday, March 21) – St. Peter the Fisherman, Lake Harmony; SS. Peter and Paul, Lehighton; Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph, both Jim Thorpe.

Thursday, March 15 – St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton.

Tuesday, March 20 – Assumption BVM, Bethlehem.

Thursday, March 22 – St. Joseph, Coopersburg.

Tuesday, April 10 – Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Bethlehem.

Wednesday, April 11 – All Saints, McAdoo; St. Richard, Barnesville; St. John XXIII, Tamaqua.

Thursday, April 12 – St. Joseph, Summit Hill.

Tuesday, April 17 – St. Ambrose, Schuylkill Haven.

Wednesday, April 18 – Holy Infancy, Bethlehem.

Thursday, April 19 – St. Mary, Hamburg and St. Mary, Kutztown.

Tuesday, April 24 – Most Blessed Trinity, Tremont; St. Matthew the Evangelist and St. Michael the Archangel, both Minersville.

Wednesday, April 25 – St. Clare of Assisi, St. Clair; Holy Cross, New Philadelphia; St. Stephen, Port Carbon; St. John the Baptist and St. Patrick, both Pottsville.

Thursday, May 3 – Snow date.

Upcoming Issues of The A.D. Times

Publication Date	Advertising Deadline	News Deadline
Feb. 8	Jan. 29	Feb. 1
Feb. 22	Feb. 12	Feb. 15
March 8	Feb. 26	March 1
March 22	March 12	March 15
April 5	March 26	March 29
April 19	April 9	April 12
May 3	April 23	April 26
May 17	May 7	May 10
May 31	May 21	May 24
June 21	June 11	June 14

Publication Date	Advertising Deadline	News Deadline
July 12	July 2	July 5
Aug. 2	July 23	July 26
Aug. 23	Aug. 13	Aug. 16
Sept. 13	Sept. 3	Sept. 6
Oct. 4	Sept. 24	Sept. 27
Oct. 18	Oct. 8	Oct. 11
Nov. 1	Oct. 22	Oct. 25
Nov. 15	Nov. 5	Nov. 8
Nov. 29	Nov. 19	Nov. 22
Dec. 20	Dec. 10	Dec. 13

Seminar to Discuss 'The Beauty of Love'

Everyone is invited to join the Diocesan Office of Adult Formation for the last of several "Theology of the Body" seminars, rescheduled from December.

"The Beauty of Love" will take place Saturday, Feb. 3 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Religious Education Building of St. Mary Parish, Kutztown.

Presenter Dr. William Hamant of DeSales University, Center Valley will discuss the different vocations of love that we are all called to and will show how each points to our ultimate end in God's loving embrace.

This seminar is for anyone recognizing the need for a restored relationship with God, others and the created world.

Cost is \$20 per person. Register at www.allentowndioocese.org/icf. For questions, email adultformation@allentowndioocese.org or call 610-289-8900, ext. 2021.

Valentine Quiz

Valentine's Day is just a few weeks away. Do you remember what you gave each other last year?

A Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend would be the perfect gift for married couples in love. The effects will last longer than anything you can buy.

For more information, call 1-732-904-9636 or visit www.aweekendforyourmarriage.org.

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St. Anne School Dedicates Aquinas Learning Support Program Classroom

The years of work and dedication of Samuel Errera to the Diocesan Aquinas Learning Support Program for students with disabilities was lovingly remembered by St. Anne School during a classroom dedication Dec. 6, 2017.

Errera, a St. Anne parishioner for many years, was one of the first and most beloved Aquinas Program teacher aides for the first Aquinas Program.

After retiring, Errera, spent much of his retirement working with students with disabilities at the former SS. Cyril and Methodius School, Bethlehem.

Current St. Anne School Principal Karen Bentz taught with Errera then and fondly remembers the love the students had for him, and the hard work and dedication he showed.

"It was such a labor of love for Sam," she said. "He came each day with a smile, beautiful sincerity and a vision to assist students who learned differently and needed extra support. I found it a great honor to know and work with him."

"He was a wonderful teacher and a wonderful man, and I miss seeing him in the classroom. We are so thrilled to be able to dedicate our Aquinas Program classroom in his memory."

The Aquinas classroom dedication and blessing was attended by his wife, Jane Errera, director of music ministry for St. Anne Church; school and Diocesan administrators; invited guests; and the St. Anne School Aquinas Program students.

The Aquinas Learning Support Program has been developed for students with learning disabilities. The program offers unique emphasis on learning strategies, fosters independence, and challenges students to learn self-acceptance and other skills.

For program details and registration information, call 610-868-4182 or email ebrida@stannebethlehem.org.



Participating in the dedication are, from left: Kathleen Zavacz, assistant teacher, Aquinas classroom; Ashely McManus, Aquinas teacher; Sister Janice Marie Johnson, director of the Diocesan Office for Ministry with People with Disabilities and Aquinas Program founder; John Bakey, chancellor of education; Jane Errera; Karen Bentz, principal; Brooke Tesche, assistant superintendent of special education; and Joan West, former principal of the former Seton Academy.



Father Anthony Mongiello, pastor, talks at the dedication with Jane Errera and Karen Bentz.

Plan a Retrouvaille Weekend for Your Marriage

Is your marriage going down the right road? Or is it a little off track?

Life can be difficult, and so can the challenges you face in marriage.

Does the distance between you seem wide? Are you already separated? Looking for a better way?

Retrouvaille can help and offers hope for a better relationship. Retrouvaille is

a peer ministry of volunteer couples that can help you learn the tools of healthy communication, build intimacy and heal, just as they have done in their own marriages.

It is Christian-based, and Catholic in origin, but welcomes couples of all faiths, as well as nonreligious couples.

The next program will begin the weekend of Feb. 16 at the Family Life Center in Malvern. Additional weekends will be held in April and August.

For more information, or to register for a weekend, visit www.HelpOurMarriage.com or call 1-800-470-2230. All inquiries are kept strictly confidential.



St. Nicholas Day Party

St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish, Minersville held its annual St. Nicholas Day party Dec. 5 for all parish children. Pictured at left, St. Nicholas and Father Leo Maletz, pastor, give "treats" to some of the children. Pictured at right, part of the celebration was a magic show for the children featuring magician Eddy Ray.

January-February Catholic School Open House Dates

The following Catholic schools of the Diocese of Allentown will offer open houses starting during Catholic Schools week, Sunday, Jan. 28 through Saturday, Feb. 3.

For more information about the schools, including contact information and directions, visit the Diocese of Allentown website at www.allentowndiocese.org/index.php/education/about-catholic-education.

Saturday, Jan. 27

Lehigh County

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.: Notre Dame of Bethlehem School.

Northampton

10 a.m.-noon: Notre Dame High School, Easton.

Sunday, Jan. 28

Berks County

9 a.m.-1 p.m.: Immaculate Conception Academy, Douglassville.

9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.: Holy Guardian Angels Regional School, Reading.

9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: La Salle Academy, Shillington.

10 a.m.-noon: St. Ignatius Loyola Regional School, Sinking Spring.

10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: St. Margaret School, Reading.

10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.: St. Catharine of Siena School, Reading.

11 a.m.-1 p.m.: Sacred Heart School, West Reading.

11:15 a.m.-1:15 p.m.: St. Francis Academy, Bally.

2-4 p.m.: Berks Catholic High School, Reading.

Carbon County

10 a.m.-1 p.m.: St. John Neumann Regional School, Slatington and Palmerton campuses.

Lehigh County

9 a.m.-1 p.m.: St. Joseph the Worker School, Orefield.

10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: St. Ann School, Emmaus.

10:15 a.m.-1:30 p.m.: St. Thomas More School, Allentown.

10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.: St. Elizabeth Regional School, Whitehall.

11 a.m.-noon: St. Michael the Archangel School, Middle School Open House (Grades 5-8), Bethlehem.

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.: St. John Vianney School, Middle School Showcase, Allentown.

Northampton County

10 a.m.-1 p.m.: Holy Family School, Nazareth.

10 a.m.-1 p.m.: Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, Bethlehem.

10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Good Shepherd Regional School, Northampton.

10:45 a.m.-1 p.m.: St. Theresa School, Hellertown.

11 a.m.-3:30 p.m.: Immaculate Conception School, Pen Argyl.

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.: St. Anne School, Bethlehem.

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.: Notre Dame of Bethlehem School.

Noon-1 p.m.: Sacred Heart School, Bath.

Noon-2 p.m.: St. Jane School, Easton.

Schuylkill County

9 a.m.-1 p.m.: St. Ambrose School, Schuylkill Haven.

11 a.m.-1 p.m.: St. Jerome Regional School, Tamaqua.

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.: Assumption BVM School, Pottsville.

12:30-3 p.m.: Marian High School, Tamaqua.

Monday, Jan. 29

Berks County

9-11 a.m.: Sacred Heart, West Reading.

Carbon County

6-8 p.m.: St. Joseph Regional Academy, Jim Thorpe.



Catholic Schools

Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed.

Lehigh County

9-11:30 a.m.: St. John Vianney School, Elementary School Showcase, Allentown.

9:30-11 a.m.: St. Michael the Archangel School, Elementary School Open House (Grades PreK-4), Coopersburg.

Tuesday, Jan. 30

Lehigh County

9-11:30 a.m.: St. John Vianney School, Allentown.

Northampton County

9-11 a.m.: St. Jane School, Easton.

Thursday, Feb. 1

Lehigh County

5-6:30 p.m.: St. John Vianney School,

Allentown.

Northampton County

8:30-10 a.m.: Holy Infancy School, Bethlehem.

5-6:30 p.m.: St. Jane School, Easton.

6-8 p.m.: Bethlehem Catholic High School.

Sunday, Feb. 4

Lehigh County

10:30 a.m.-noon: St. Michael the Archangel School, Elementary School Open House (Grades PreK-4), Coopersburg.

Sunday, Feb. 11

Lehigh County

2-4 p.m.: Allentown Central Catholic High School.



Wreath-Making Fundraiser at Assumption BVM, Slatington

Parishioners (elves) of Assumption BVM Parish, Slatington – along with Father Eric Arnout, pastor, back center – continued their third annual Christmas fund-raising effort making wreaths for sale at the church. The project starts with freshly cut Frazier fir trees. “Cutters” cut the branches into 6- to 10-inch lengths. “Bunchers” form fist-sized clumps of the cuttings and hand them to the assemblers, who make the wreaths using clamping machines. Finally handmade bows are tied to the wreaths. Duties are rotated to give everyone a chance to try their hand at making a wreath. The annual project is hard work and gets a little sticky from the tree sap, but friendship, Christmas carols, pizza, a few laughs and the good cause make it a lot of fun. All proceeds go to the church, which this year netted over \$800.



Toy Drive for Needy Children

Students of St. Joseph the Worker School, Orefield participate in the “Joe’s Kids” toy drive Dec. 2. This was the fourth year the students collected toys. Claire Grace, middle school religion teacher, coordinates with the eighth-grade mission representatives. Also a student draws artwork for the poster every year. “Joe’s Kids” is in remembrance of Joseph Mark “Joe” Foley, who died in 1998. In 1985 he was responsible for founding Project Children of the Lehigh Valley, to bring kids from war-torn Northern Ireland to the Lehigh Valley for a six-week break. Each year around the holidays he hosted a party and invited guests to bring a toy for kids less fortunate. Over the years “Joe’s Kids” raised more than \$50,000 for programs such as Project Children and Mercy School for Special Learning, Allentown. The annual event is presented by Ancient Order of Hibernians, Lehigh Division 1 at Jack Callaghan’s Ale House. Toys collected are taken to Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Allentown for distribution to families in need. At left is Joe’s brother, Jim Foley.

'Becoming Saints' Discussed at Diocesan Intercollegiate Retreat

A total of 32 students from five colleges in the Diocese of Allentown attended the Intercollegiate Retreat Nov. 10-12, 2017.

The students were led by retreat master Father Stephan Isaac, assistant pastor at St. Ignatius Loyola Parish, Sinking Spring.

Assisting Father Isaac were Father Richard Brensinger, Diocesan director of campus ministry and Catholic chaplain at St. Christopher Catholic Newman Center at Kutztown University and Albright College, Reading; and Father Kevin Gualano, Catholic chaplain for Muhlenberg College, Allentown.

The group was welcomed by the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters at the Villa of Our Lady of the Poconos in Mount Pocono.

Theme of the retreat, "Becoming Saints: The Universal Call to Holiness," emphasized that we are all called to be saints.

"The world needs saints because the world needs Christ," said Father Isaac.

Referencing "Lumen Gentium," he quoted, "All are called, each in his own way to holiness, according to their own state in life."

He continued, "Many times, we lament the age in which we live in because of how much evil, sin and suffering is in the world. But we are reminded by St. Augustine that we are not to complain about the times in which we live, because we are the times.

"So with the help of God's grace, we have to strive to sanctify and transform the world as best as we can. Christ is our eternal hope, no matter how bad things look, and he has already won the war over all of the evil and suffering in the world."

The question was asked, "What is holiness?"

Various answers were offered, but the responses given most often were "love" and "sacrifice."



Students from five colleges in the Diocese of Allentown gather with leaders at the intercollegiate retreat in November.

"Love is not a feeling, but rather it consists of freely seeking the authentic good of another purely for the sake of the other," clarified Father Isaac.

"We are created for love, and it follows that we were created for relationship – first and foremost with God and then with one another."

"Therefore, it is completely devoid of selfishness. We are created for love, and it follows that we were created for relationship – first and foremost with God and then with one another."

During the Eucharistic Holy Hour, Father Gualano suggested that "we mistakenly think that because of our brokenness and sin, that God can't make us holy. And that is certainly not the case."

He recalled the parable of the shepherd who leaves the 99 sheep to go find the one that is lost. Father Gualano emphasized, "For God, the loss of 1 out of 100 is not acceptable. God wants all to be saved."

Father Isaac suggested that part of Christ's call to holiness for us was an invitation to allow him to lovingly heal our

wounds. All in attendance were reminded that there is no sin too great for the infinite mercy of God. But we must be truly sorry and willing to reform our lives.

As St. Josemaria Escriva put it: "A saint is a sinner who keeps on trying."

"Our faith manifested through our works helps to demonstrate holiness, which is a visible sign of God's love," said Father Isaac.

"Holiness itself may be defined as intimacy with Christ that is manifested through a life of love and virtue. Holiness is not self-contained, but radiates outward."

Retreatants were challenged to allow God to sanctify them (to make them holy), thereby transforming them into the best version of themselves.

It was mentioned that many times in our quest for holiness, we are called to suffer.

Father Isaac emphasized that we are made holy precisely through our struggles and crosses, and that we don't endure suffering for its own sake, but so that God can sanctify us through our suffering.

He continued that we need to be able to identify our crosses as opportunities

for spiritual growth and allow God to enter through our wounds. When we do this, we are carrying our crosses in union with Jesus and his cross.

The question was raised whether holiness was even possible and how it can be accomplished. Several means were given, such as the necessity of grace and one's cooperation with grace, the sacraments, the Church and her teachings, prayer, the lives of the saints, sacred Scripture, and devotion to Mary, the Mother of God.

The students were taught that it is through Mary that we are most likely to encounter Jesus. All the graces we need to become holy come from Jesus through Mary, who is considered the "Mediatrice of all Grace." Through her total surrender and cooperation with the grace and will of God, she shows us what it means to love and serve Jesus as a faithful and holy disciple.

In closing comments, the group was reminded that God made us for holiness and that he doesn't command us to do the impossible, but always gives us the grace to do what he asks of us. Therefore, holiness is not only possible, but it is our call as disciples of Jesus.

Scout Attains Eagle Rank

Alexander Strohl, son of Barry and Lynda Strohl, has achieved Boy Scouting's highest rank, Eagle Scout.

Strohl, 16, is a member of Boy Scout Troop 150, sponsored by St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Orefield, under the leadership of scoutmasters Rick Bishop, Joseph Turner and Scott Walker.

Strohl began his scouting career as a Tiger Cub with Pack 79 in Coplay and continued through Cub Scouting to achieve the highest award, the Arrow of Light.

As a member of Troop 150, Strohl has held numerous leadership positions, including instructor, historian, patrol leader, assistant patrol leader and senior patrol leader. He has earned 38 merit badges, attended National Youth Leadership Training, was inducted into the



Strohl

Order of the Arrow in June 2015 and has earned two palms.

Strohl has attended many camp outings at Akelaland and Camps Trexler, Minsi and Bayshore. He has attended two high adventures, including SeaBase at St. Thomas and Philmont in New Mexico, and is scheduled to attend the Northern Tier in June.

For his Eagle service project, Strohl brought the Buddy Bench program to his elementary school, St. Joseph the Worker. Not only did the project involve the installation and landscaping of the bench, but he also scripted, directed and produced an instructional video, cast third- and fourth-graders, to be viewed every year for the school's virtues program.

He also created curriculum materials and in-serviced staff, students and parents on the meaning and purpose of the bench. In total, the project took more than 400 manhours.

The A.D. Times featured the bench when it was dedicated at the school Sept. 1, 2016.

Strohl reached his goal of Eagle on June 28, 2017 and received his Eagle at a Court of Honor ceremony Sept. 24, 2017. He is a junior at Allentown Central Catholic High School and continues to be an active member of Troop 150.



Scouting Committee Presents Eagle Recognitions

Newly invested Eagle Scout Alex Thomulka receives a certificate of recognition from Fred Flemming, representing the Allentown Diocese Catholic Committee on Scouting (ADCCOS), at an Eagle Court of Honor Dec. 30, 2017 in Macungie. Thomulka is a member of Troop 71 in Macungie and a parishioner of St. Ann, Emmaus. ADCCOS provides recognition certificates to Catholic Eagle Scouts who request them on their website, www.adccos.org.

Feb. 12 'Theology on Tap' on 'Protecting the Pope'

The next Theology on Tap, "Protecting the Pope: What We Knew Then, What We Know Now," will be Monday, Feb. 12 at Bar Louie in the Promenade Shops, 2960 Center Valley Parkway, Center Valley.

While St. John Paul II was loved and adored by many during his papacy, there are always dangers associated with being a public figure. In the next Theology on Tap presentation, Father Frederick Riegler, pastor of St. Isidore Parish, Quakertown, will speak about his experience assisting the Secret Service in their protection of now St. John Paul II during his 1979 visit to Philadelphia.

Father Riegler's testimony will touch on the 1981 assassination attempt and what we know now about the parties who threatened the safety of St. John Paul II during his papacy.

Theology on Tap is a monthly series sponsored by the Diocesan Office of Youth, Young Adult and Family Ministry (OYYAFM). The series is designed to welcome all young adults, single or married, together in a casual setting where they can grow in the faith and share community with one another.

Theology on Tap events are free of charge. Food and beverage can be ordered from the menu at the event site. For more information, visit www.allentown-diocese.org/tot or email Alexa Doncsecz at adoncsecz@allentowndiocese.org.

Monthly Theology on Tap
For married & single young adults

February 12, 2018 @ 7 PM

Protecting the Pope
What We Knew Then, What We Know Now

Rev. Frederick Riegler,
St. Isidore Parish, Quakertown

Bar Louie
2960 Center Valley Pkwy., Center Valley

Christmas Around the World in Mahanoy City

Meghan Macleary and Kody McKenzie paint walnuts at the Netherlands station during "Christmas Around the World" at the Christmas Tree Lighting in Mahanoy City Nov. 25. The community event was sponsored by ACTION (Active Christian Teens in our Neighborhood) Youth Group from St. Teresa of Calcutta Church, Mahanoy City and St. Richard, Barnesville, in cooperation with the Mahanoy Area Ministerial Association, the Teens in the Religious Education Program from St. Teresa, Teens from Trinity Academy Grade School, and other community members.



Macie Mazalusky and John Wiekrykas serve fortune cookies and tea at the China station, one of 18 countries represented. Families who attended were able to taste, see, smell, hear and touch different things and experience the cultures of the various countries. Clad in ethnic costumes, the teens helped the children with crafts associated with their station. Each child received a passport and got it stamped at each country. There was a Live Nativity to complete this religious event.



Madison Ansbach and Casin Casserly help create the Star of David at the Israel station.



Upcoming Confirmation Rallies

Have you registered your seventh- or eighth-graders for "Confirming Faithful Families" yet?

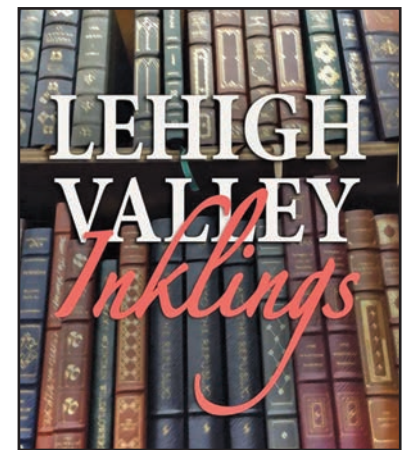
Rallies for confirmation candidates throughout the Diocese are sponsored by the Diocesan Office of Youth, Young Adult and Family Ministry, and retreat teams from the Diocesan Catholic high schools.

Upcoming rallies are (all Saturdays):
Feb. 3 at St. Thomas More, Allentown.
Feb. 24 at Notre Dame High School, Easton.

March 10 at St. Ambrose, Schuylkill Haven.

Parish leaders are asked to register their group by emailing Alexa Doncsecz at adoncsecz@allentowndiocese.org.

Parents are asked to register at <http://www.allentowndiocese.org/cff>.



New Book Club Forming for Young Adult Catholics

From Tolkien to Thomas Merton – from Shakespeare to St. Augustine – from Jane Austen to Julian of Norwich – great works of literature have the power to challenge and strengthen our Christian faith.

"Lehigh Valley Inklings," a new book club for young adult Catholics ages 21 to 35, will meet once a month to explore a classic through the lens of Catholicism.

The next meeting will be Friday, Jan. 26 at 7 p.m. at Whole Foods (Coffee Bar), 750 N. Krocks Road, Allentown.

Join the group for a discussion of J.R.R. Tolkien. The reading for this meeting is the short story "Leaf by Niggle."

The themes of this story resonate with Tolkien's work in crafting the world of "Lord of the Rings" and "The Hobbit."

For more information, visit the group's Facebook page, "Lehigh Valley Inklings: Young Catholic Book Club."

'Stand Up for Life' Student Essays Promote Pro-Life Culture

By TARA CONNOLLY
Staff writer

"One of the things gumming up our conscience is that children, at best, are sometimes seen as an inconvenience, and at worst, a punishment," said Father Bernard Ezaki, assistant pastor of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton, Jan. 14 to the finalists in the annual "Stand Up for Life" essay contest award ceremony at St. Francis of Assisi, Allentown.

"High Schools and Planned Parenthood" was this year's Senior Division theme; "Personal Choice, My Body, My Right" was the Junior Division theme.

The contest, a joint effort of the Knights of Columbus and the Diocesan Office of Pro-Life and Social Concerns, drew more than 500 submissions.

Father Ezaki was born legally blind as the result of being given too much oxygen following his premature birth. That led to "retinopathy of prematurity," a blinding eye disorder that can affect premature infants and lead to lifelong vision impairment and blindness.

Years later, when he was 26 and about to enter the seminary, a doctor told him that his blindness was a punishment from God for his mother deciding to leave her life as a religious order novice and marry his father.

"Today I am not just talking about Roe v. Wade that made abortion legal in every state or the legalization of birth control. I am talking about the insidious prejudice that has invaded the hearts and minds of good people," said Father Ezaki.

To his shock, he said, the doctor was a good man who cared for inmates from concentration camps. To his dismay, he was disheartened that the doctor shared the same "crass and unfeeling opinion" with his mother.

"This doctor was imbued with the idea that children could be a punishment from God. I don't get it. How can children be anything but a blessing? Sometimes



Mary Fran Hartigan, secretary of the Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization, welcomes winners and family members to the annual "Stand Up for Life" essay contest banquet at St. Francis of Assisi, Allentown. (Photos by John Simitz)



Father Bernard Ezaki, assistant pastor of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton, offers his talk at the banquet.

blessings come wrapped in unexpected packages," said Father Ezaki.

He also shared the tale of the people of Sparrow Courthouse, who were always

putting on airs and purchased a fancy clock from Europe for the courthouse steeple. Over time, the sun was rising and setting earlier every day and the townspeople attributed it to the sun behaving in a peculiar way.

"Instead of regulating our lives to natural law, we have been running our lives to a conscience like the people of Sparrow Courthouse," said Father Ezaki.

In his talk, he also pointed to a part in "The Muppet Movie" (2011) when Walter asked Kermit what is the greatest gift.

"Kermit first said ice cream, then laughed before saying children," said Father Ezaki.

"Let's remember that always and teach it to our children. Let's teach our children how easy it is to gum up our conscience. And let's teach them that children are better than laughter and even better than ice cream," he said.

For the essay contest, four winners were chosen in each deanery, a first- and second-place winner in each division. Eight students received honorable mention in the Junior Division and four students received honorable mention in the Senior Division.

Senior Division (grades 9-12) essay winners were: first place Katie Hawkins,

"Today I am not just talking about Roe v. Wade that made abortion legal in every state or the legalization of birth control. I am talking about the insidious prejudice that has invaded the hearts and minds of good people."

Please see ESSAYS page 16 ▶▶

Katie Hawkins, Senior Division, First Place

The ongoing debate between contraceptives and Planned Parenthood has always been a dire situation, but now more so than ever.

With the Reading Area High School considering adding a confidential Reproductive Health Center for student access to contraceptive products, as well as counseling at the expense of state taxpayers, it is time for people to stand up and address the consequences of these potentially harmful actions head on, in hopes that Planned Parenthood centers might be eradicated for good.

Adding a Reproductive Health Center to Reading High School would not help students; the center would only cause a chain reaction among the local schools, students would be more reckless, and contraceptives would not be as successful as they might seem.

A domino effect must be anticipated among other local schools if this center is to be established in Reading Area High School.

With Planned Parenthood Keystone providing services in 37 counties in the eastern portion of Pennsylvania, any ground gained for them in Reading will only spread their unfortunate popularity to the other counties in Pennsylvania ("Reading School District Postpones Sex Ed Decision.")

Multiple students and other members of the local community express their concerns, worrying that the addition of this center would only provoke more risky behavior and a spread of acceptance to these harmful methods.

With constant access to contraceptives, students would be more reckless and would not look into the long-term consequences of their actions. This center would allow confidential access to contraceptives for students at Reading High School.



Katie Hawkins reads her award-winning essay.

Because of this, students would feel like they have the freedom to do whatever they feel like doing.

According to local Julia Coopa, this center would "set the bar too low for young people by displaying a lack of confidence in us ... and discouraging us from pursuing relationships that are real and lasting versus transient things" ("Reading School District Postpones Sex Ed Decision").

Instead of talking to students and personally thinking of solutions to these problems, they would have instituted a supposed 'easy' fix to this growing epidemic. Feeling completely alone and with no experienced support, students given contraceptives would make stupid mistakes that they would regret for the rest of their lives and that may also cause a drastic change in their ordinary lives.

Even if this center was added to Reading High School, statistics show that the contraceptives they would be providing to students are not as successful as originally presumed. With more students involved in risky behavior, the risk of pregnancy also rises.

According to the article "Greater Access to Contraceptives Does Not Reduce Abortions," a study conducted in 2007 showed that a 63 percent increase in availability of contraceptives was coupled with a 103 percent increase in the rate of elective abortions. These statistics show that even though more people had access to methods that were supposed to reduce the risk of pregnancies, more women were becoming pregnant and having abortions.

Additionally, from the same source, "in the first 12 months of contraceptive use, 16.4 percent of teens will become pregnant." Also, with a failure rate of nearly 50 percent for birth control pills and condoms, contraceptive methods are clearly not as safe and reliable as Planned Parenthood and other organizations advertise them to be.

Adding a Planned Parenthood Center to Reading High School would not help the students in any way; it would only hurt them. It would express acceptance to the use of contraceptives and other behaviors throughout the state, leading to more centers in multiple schools.

Also, with more contraceptives readily available to students, more students will participate in harmful and risky behaviors. However, these contraceptives are not as successful as these students believe they are to be, leading to more pregnancies and possible abortions.

Because of all of this supporting evidence, I believe that Reading High School should not add a Reproductive Health Center to their school for the health and safety of not only the students but also the community and other schools in the state.

Essays

►Continued from page 15

Bethlehem Catholic High School (Becahi); and second place Emily Carpenter, Nativity BVM High School, Pottsville.

Junior Division (grades 7-8) essay winners were: first place Chloe Palm-Rittle, St. Ignatius Loyola School, Sinking Spring; and second place Andrew Hines, St. Thomas More School, Allentown.

Honorable mention in the Senior Division were: Jonathan Bonomo, Marian High School, Tamaqua; Patrick Buerke, Berks Catholic High School, Reading; Kayla Corrado, Becahi; and Bridget Ehrig, Becahi.

Honorable mention in the Junior Division were: Isabella Bautista, Our Lady of Perpetual Help (OLPH) School, Bethlehem; Katherine Buerke, St. Ignatius; Marissa Calantoni, OLPH; Shannon Dougherty, St. John Neumann Regional School, Palmerton; Lauren Ferhat, Assumption BVM School, Pottsville; Caitlyn Kratzer, St. John Neumann; Joshua Tray, Assumption BVM; and Leah Wishard, St. Thomas More.



Winners in the "Stand Up for Life" essay contest and Diocesan officials are, from left: front, Chloe Palm-Rittle; Leah Wishard; Lauren Ferhat; Marissa Calantoni; Isabella Bautista; and Kayla Corrado; back, Katherine Buerke; Mary Fran Hartigan; Caitlyn Kratzer; Shannon Dougherty; John Fitzpatrick, Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus and contest coordinator; Jonathan Bonomo; Andrew Hines; Katie Hawkins; Emily Carpenito; Joshua Tray; Dr. Philip Fromuth, superintendent of Catholic education; Bridget Ehrig; and Patrick Buerke.



Overall division winners, Diocesan officials and guests are, from left: front, Chloe Palm-Rittle, first place Junior Division; Katie Hawkins, first place Senior Division; Andrew Hines, second place Junior Division; and Emily Carpenito, second place Senior Division; back, Mary Fran Hartigan, Father Bernard Ezaki, John Fitzpatrick and Philip Fromuth.



Father Ezaki offers the invocation at the banquet.

Chloe Palm-Rittle, Junior Division, First Place

Abortion is becoming a growing threat to humanity. Since 1973, 59.1 million babies have been aborted in the United States alone ("Statistics").

Abortion sends the wrong message to society by showing that the killing of the weak, and killing in general, is acceptable in our everyday world. The Catholic Church has made it clear that it believes that abortion, and any other type of killing, is unacceptable, and does not follow God's laws (John Paul II).

Pro-choice advocates may say that abortion is the choice of the woman alone because no one can really say when a fetus becomes a person. The Catholic Church believes that a fetus is a person from the very first moment of conception. Scientific evidence has shown that a fetus begins to feel pain at twenty weeks of gestation.

Every baby has a right to freedom, and the choice of the gift of life. Our Church believes people cannot be dominated by others. Abortion is not the individual choice of the mother because all life comes from God. All of mankind is created in the image of God. A woman does not have the authority to take the life of a fetus because, like her, the fetus is created in God's image (John Paul II).

A common argument is that each and every woman has a right to control her body and make her own choice. It is true that God gave humans free will, but then again, he also gave us rules. One of these rules is "You shall not kill," which applies to babies, too. The value of human life is truly inestimable, and a mother does not have the right to put a value on this life by having an abortion.

This choice is a threat to human dignity, and we must learn how to make the choice of good or evil. In this world, we live in a culture of the weak, even a culture of death. People who cannot stand up for themselves do not even get a chance to have the choice of life. We are all created to share in the life of God, and that right cannot be taken away because of a more powerful person's choice (John Paul II).

People may say that a fetus is part of a mother's body because it is dependent on her for survival. Just because a baby may be an inconvenience to the mother does not mean she has the right to end its life. The mother is powerful, while the fetus is weak, and cannot survive without her nurturing. A family is supposed to be a safe place, but it can never be if a woman makes the choice that endangers her baby's life.

A woman cannot use force to rid herself of something that is an inconvenience to her. Someone who is strong cannot use the power of choice against the choice-less and powerless. The fetus' life cannot be orchestrated by the mother's self-interest. A mother must obey God by sharing the gift of life with her baby (John Paul II).

Many people in the United States agree that the government should not interfere in this very personal issue of a woman. Under the Constitution, every person has an inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

This procedure is a crime against the right of life given to us by the Constitution. The United States' government says that this crime is acceptable, and legislation does not punish these crimes against life.

Our Church believes that any destruction of life must be followed by consequences, but unfortunately the act of abortion is justified by the government. As a Catholic community we believe that it is the public's duty to stand up for the rights of the unborn. America's public must protect the weak's right to life. We are called to tell the truth and protect those who cannot protect themselves (John Paul II).

Every 1.8 seconds a baby is aborted somewhere in the world ("Statistics.") So many lives are lost in just one day due to abortion. I believe that if we work together as one Catholic community, one country and one society, we can eliminate threats to life once and for all.

New Elevator Addition for Parishioners of St. Peter, Coplay



St. Peter, Coplay had a beautiful Elevator Blessing and Dedication Ceremony Nov. 12 after the 10:30 a.m. Mass. Many parishioners and friends of the parish attended. Left, taking the "first ride" in the elevator was Msgr. John Martin, pastor, and parishioner Anna Wechsler, the oldest and the most senior parishioner (number of years as a member), who turned 101 on Nov. 19. (Photo courtesy of Kristina Libricz)



Right, Msgr. Martin blesses the new elevator addition that goes from the church down to the social hall. Not only is the church now fully accessible, but so is the social hall. People of all abilities can fully attend parish dinners, pierogi making, bingo and other events. (Photo courtesy of James Kern)



Right, guests listen to a toast made by Msgr. Martin during the celebration of the new elevator addition. The parish gave special thanks to Msgr. Martin, the Parish Finance Committee, the Parish Pastoral Council, and all the parishioners and donors who made the project a reality. In the near future, a commemorative plaque will be placed in the elevator addition, listing those who have been memorialized and all donors to the campaign. As pledges are fulfilled, these donor names will be placed on the plaque. (Photo courtesy of James Kern)



Above, the new ramp that goes into the elevator addition. (Photo courtesy of Kristina Libricz)



Diocesan Members at Holy Sepulchre Event

Members of the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem from the Diocese of Allentown attended the Mass of Investiture Oct. 21, 2017 at St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City. Pictured at the ensuing banquet at the Grand Hyatt Hotel are, from left: front, Sir John Spirk, KHS; Lady Dr. Linda Lapos, LCHS; Paul Wirth, guest; back, Sir Michael Toohey, KHS; Sir Michael McGovern, KHS; Sir Eugenio Melendez, KHS; Bishop John Barres, KC*HS, of Rockville Centre, New York, former Bishop of Allentown; Msgr. William Bayer, KCHS; and Sir Dr. Arnold Traupman, KHS.

Calendar

Editor's note: E-mail, fax or mail church-affiliated items for the Calendar page (Calendar, Retreats, Socials, Festivals, Bazaars, Trips) to: e-mail, adtimes@allentowndioocese.org; fax, 610-439-7694; THE A.D. TIMES, P.O. Box F, Allentown, PA 18105-1538.

Items must be received by Thursday of the week before publication.

Please type or print. Please notify THE A.D. TIMES if bingos and other regularly listed events are cancelled for the summer or other holiday periods, and again when they resume.

THE A.D. TIMES publishes only newly announced, church-affiliated trips on a regular basis. The entire previously announced repeating trip list is published only as space permits. Please notify THE A.D. TIMES when seats are filled for a trip so it can be removed from the repeating list.

Please do not send items again after they are published. For more information, e-mail adtimes@allentowndioocese.org or call 610-871-5200, ext. 2264.

Thursday, Jan. 25

Heritage Week Kraft Memorial Lecture with special guest Father Thomas Kevin Kraft, discussing the influence of St. Francis de Sales in the married spirituality of Elizabeth Leseur, University Center, DeSales University, Center Valley, 8 p.m., 610-282-1100, ext. 1244, www.desales.edu/salesian, free and open to public, no tickets required.

Friday, Jan. 26

Lehigh Valley Inklings, book club for young adult Catholics ages 21-35, Whole Foods Coffee Bar, 750 N. Krocks Road, Allentown, 7 p.m., discussion this month on short story "Leaf Niggle" by J.R.R. Tolkien, Facebook Lehigh Valley Inklings: Young Catholic Book Club.

Saturday, Jan. 27

Collection for Catholic Relief Services, at Diocese of Allentown parishes, also Sunday, Jan. 28.

Spaghetti Dinner, parish hall, St. Elizabeth Regional School, Whitehall; seating times 4, 5:30 and 7 p.m.; advance tickets adults \$9, children 5-12 \$7, under 5 free; at door \$10 and \$8; early seating special 4 p.m. \$9 and \$6; 917-251-9696, celest-edee05@gmail.com.

Snowball Dance, social hall, St. John the Baptist, Allentown, 7-10 p.m., \$5 per ticket, kitchen open, BYOB, 610-432-3505

Wednesday, Jan. 31

"An Evening with St. Thomas Aquinas – the Theologian," Bishop Barren's "Catholicism: Pivotal Players," St. Francis of Assisi, Allentown, 7-9 p.m.

Charismatic Healing Mass, SS. Philip and James, Phillipsburg, 7 p.m., celebrant Father Cliff Bishop of Diocese of Allentown, 732-514-7160, dmhealing@aol.com, enensley@aol.com, 908-200-6763.

Saturday, Feb. 3

"The Beauty of Love," Theology of the Body seminar, Religious Education building, St. Mary, Kutztown, 9:30-11:30 a.m., \$20 per person, www.allentowndioocese.org/cf_adultformation@allentowndioocese.org, 610-289-8900, ext. 2021.

Tuesday, Feb. 6

"The Man Talk," speaker Matt Fradd on vision for authentic Catholic masculinity, sponsored by Diocese of Allentown Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization, McShea Building, DeSales University, Center Valley, 7 p.m., no charge, register www.allentowndioocese.org/man-talk; questions 610-289-8900, ext. 2028.

Wednesday, Feb. 7

"Parenting the Internet Generation," speaker Matt Fradd, sponsored by Diocese of Allentown Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization, University Center, DeSales University, Center Valley, 7 p.m., no charge, register www.allentowndioocese.org/family-ministry, questions 610-289-8900, ext. 2028.

Sunday, Feb. 11

Spaghetti Dinner, parish center, St. Patrick, Pottsville, 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., adults \$8, children \$3.50.

Monday, Feb. 12

Friendly Fifties, social hall, St. John's Byzantine, Northampton, 1 p.m., guitarist Bill Fye will entertain, no meeting if Northampton schools cancel, start late or dismiss early.

Saturday, Feb. 17

Collection of the Catholic Home Mission Appeal, including Black and Indian Missions, also Sunday, Feb. 18.

Night with the Lehigh Valley Phantoms, PPL Center, choir of St. Francis of Assisi, Allentown will be singing the national anthem before the game, \$20 per ticket, 610-433-6102, ext. 31, agamble@stfrancisallentown.org, deadline with payment due by Sunday, Jan. 28.

Monday, Feb. 19

Patriotic Rosary for President's Day, St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton, after 8:15 a.m. Mass.

Sunday, Feb. 25

St. Paul Gala, The Inn at Reading, cash bar 5 p.m., dinner 6 p.m., \$50 per ticket, presenter George Meiser IX, speaking on Msgr. George Bornemann, One Family Award to the IHM Sisters, serving in Reading since 1859, 610-372-1531, stpaulsrc-church@comcast.net, reservation deadline Monday, Feb. 12.

Monday, Feb. 26

"Shroud of Turin," discussion for "Faith and Spirits," PJ Whelihan's Pub, 1101 Rocky Road, West Lawn, presented by Sister Rose Bernadette Mulligan, registration not required, food and drink available for purchase, questions 610-289-8900, ext. 2021, adultformation@allentowndioocese.org.

Retreats

First Tuesdays

"Simply Prayer," mornings of prayer, reflection and sharing, St. Francis Center for Renewal, Bethlehem, 9:30 a.m.-noon, free will offering, 610-867-8890, stfranciscenter@gmail.com, www.stfranciscctr.org.

Friday, Jan. 26 – Sunday, Jan. 28

Weekend Directed Retreat, Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, Wernersville, \$200, register www.jesuitcenter.org, questions mleonowitz@jesuitcenter.org, 619-670-3642.

Wednesday, Feb. 14

"Lent: A Season of Grace" Ash Wednesday program, Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, Wernersville, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (includes lunch) or 5-9 p.m. (includes dinner), \$50, register www.jesuitcenter.org, questions mleonowitz@jesuitcenter.org, 610-670-3642.

Thursday, Feb. 15

"Gospel Companions – Icons of the Paschal Mystery," twilight retreat, St. Francis Center for Renewal, Bethlehem, 6:45-9 p.m., \$25, 610-867-8890, stfranciscenter@gmail.com, www.stfranciscctr.org.

Wednesday, Feb. 21

Lenten Taizé, Retreat Center Chapel, St. Francis Center for Renewal, Bethlehem, 6:45-9 p.m., free will offering, 610-867-8890, stfranciscenter@gmail.com, www.stfranciscctr.org.

Mondays, March 5, 12, 19 and 26

"Letting Love In: From Agony to Acceptance," St. Francis Center for Renewal, Bethlehem, 6:45-9 p.m., \$15 per session, 4 session \$50, 610-867-8890, stfranciscenter@gmail.com, www.stfranciscctr.org.

Friday, March 9 – Sunday, March 11

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat, for anyone seeking healing after abortion, registration information 1-866-3 RACHEL (toll free), 610-332-0442, ext. 2019, projectrachel@allentowndioocese.org, deadline for registration Monday, Feb. 26, information about retreat experience www.rachelsvineyard.org.

Friday, March 16 – Sunday, March 18

"Who Cares for the Caregiver?" weekend retreat for personal and professional caregivers, Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, Wernersville, \$200, register www.jesuitcenter.org, questions mleonowitz@jesuitcenter.org, 619-670-3642.

Tuesday, March 20

"Triduum – An Ongoing Journey to the Great Easter Vigil," twilight retreat, St. Francis Center for Renewal, Bethlehem, 6:45-9 p.m., \$25, 610-867-8890, stfranciscenter@gmail.com, www.stfranciscctr.org.

Friday, March 23 – Sunday, March 25

"Standing on the Edge of Holy Week," weekend retreat, Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, Wernersville, \$200, register www.jesuitcenter.org, questions mleonowitz@jesuitcenter.org, 619-670-3642.

"Keys to Life: Easter Here and Now," St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, \$215, facilitator Father Kevin Bobbin, with guest speaker Father Bernard Ezaki, 610-867-5039, fideljasa@gmail.com.

Socials

Sundays

Bingo, St. Joseph, Summit Hill, 6:30 p.m.
Bingo, Immaculate Conception School, Pen Argyl, 1 p.m., doors open 11 a.m., 610-863-4816.

Second Sundays

Bingo, Most Blessed Sacrament, Bally, 12:30 p.m., doors open 11 a.m.

Thursdays

Bingo, St. Joseph, Summit Hill, 6:30 p.m.

Sundays, Feb. 4, 18; March 4, 18; April 8, 22; May 6, 20; June 3, 24; July 8, 22; Aug. 5, 19; Sept. 9, 23; Oct. 7, 21; Nov. 4, 18; Dec. 2

Bingo, Knights of Columbus Council 618, St. Stephen's Hall, Shenandoah, 2 p.m., doors open noon, food and refreshments available, 570-590-3270, 570-590-1188.

Sunday, Feb. 11

Mardi Gras Bingo, St. Vincent de Paul, Society, Incarnation of Our Lord, Bethlehem, 2 p.m., doors open noon, advance \$20, at door \$25, 610-866-3391.

Sunday, Feb. 18

Meat Bingo, social hall, St. John the Baptist, Allentown, 1 p.m., doors open noon, \$11 for 15 games, refreshments available, 610-432-3505.

Sunday, March 11

Designer Handbag Bingo, parish hall, St. Francis of Assisi, Allentown, 1 p.m., doors and kitchen open noon, \$20, tickets available in parish office, 610-433-6102.

Thursday, May 16

Bingo, Knights of Columbus Council 4397, Family Center, St. Thomas More, Allentown, 6:30 p.m., doors open 6 p.m.

Trips

Editor's note: Trip listings include sponsoring group, destination, cost and contact information. Call the sponsor

for other details, such as times, dining location, itineraries and what is included in the cost. Send church-affiliated trips to adtimes@allentowndioocese.org by Thursday of the week before publication.

Newly announced

Tuesday, Feb. 13

Outreach Committee, St. Francis of Assisi, Allentown to Mohican Sun, Wilkes-Barre, \$22, 610-515-5975, 610-433-6102.

Thursday, March 8

St. Thomas More, Allentown to Philadelphia Flower Show, \$68, 484-951-0440, johara2179@aol.com.

Saturday, March 24

St. Thomas More, Allentown to Broadway (choice of "Hello Dolly" \$150, "Carousel" \$147, "Wicked" \$142), 484-951-0440, johara2179@aol.com.

Saturday, May 19

St. Thomas More, Allentown to Broadway (choice of "My Fair Lady" \$153, "Anastasia" \$152, "Mean Girls" \$185, "Come From Away" \$164), 484-951-0440, johara2179@aol.com.

Tuesday, June 26

St. Thomas More, Allentown to Yankees at Phillies, section 112, \$60, 484-951-0440, johara2179@aol.com.

Tuesday, June 26 – Friday, June 29

Fellowship Group, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Bethlehem to New Hampshire White Mountain Indian Head Resort, \$485, 484-456-6818, 484-767-8669.

Saturday, June 30

St. Thomas More, Allentown to Nationals at Phillies with fireworks, section 419, \$30, 484-951-0440, johara2179@aol.com.

Wednesday, Aug. 22

St. Thomas More, Allentown to "Sponge Bob Square Pants" on Broadway, \$134, 484-951-0440, johara2179@aol.com.

Previously announced

Thursday, Feb. 1 – Thursday, March 1

Travel Club, Assumption BVM, Slatington to Costa del Sol, Spain, \$3,411, 610-767-3036.

Monday, Feb. 19 – Friday, Feb. 23

Bethlehem Catholic High School, alumni cruise from Miami, Florida to the Bahamas, \$399, 610-866-0791, ext. 322 or 323.

Wednesday, March 14

Golden Agers, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Whitehall to "Steel Magnolias," Hunterdon Hills Dinner Theatre, \$89, 484-264-7723.

Tuesday, March 20

Friendly Fifties, St. John Byzantine, Northampton to "Neil Diamond," Mount Airy Casino, \$65, 610-767-4881.

Tuesday, March 20 – Wednesday, March 21

Prime Time Club, St. Thomas More, Allentown to Atlantic City, three casinos (Sugar House, Resorts and Tropicana), \$125, 610-965-9960.

Wednesday, March 21

St. Joseph the Worker, Orefield to "Jesus," Sight and Sound Theatre, Lancaster, \$112, deadline Wednesday, Feb. 28, suemueller45@gmail.com, 610-392-2957.

Thursday, March 22

55+ Club, Notre Dame of Bethlehem to Hollywood Casino, Grantville, \$30, 610-866-0360.

Friday, March 23

Travel Club, Assumption BVM, Slatington to "Jesus," Sight and Sound, Lancaster, \$115, 610-767-3036.

Thursday, April 5 – Saturday April 14

MSC Sisters, Reading to Lourdes, Paris and other sites in France, <https://mscreading.org/>, request a brochure 610-929-2802.

Wednesday, April 11

"Seniors in Action" Holy Trinity, Whitehall to "Jesus," Sight and Sound Theatre, Lancaster, \$86, 610-262-6058.

Tuesday, April 17

Prime Time Club, St. Thomas More, Allentown to "The Duprees," Mount Airy Casino, Mount Pocono, \$59, 610-965-9960.

Tuesday, April 17 – Friday, April 20

St. Joseph the Worker, Orefield to Ark Encounter and Creation Museum, \$634, suemueller45@gmail.com, 610-392-2957.

Tuesday, April 24

Prime Time Club, St. Thomas More, Allentown to "Jesus," Sight and Sound Theatre, Lancaster, \$98, 610-965-9960.

Thursday, May 3

St. Francis of Assisi, Allentown to "Jesus," Sight and Sound Theatre, Lancaster, \$106, 610-433-6102.

Tuesday, May 22

Friendly Fifties, St. John Byzantine, Northampton to "Elvis Jailhouse Rock," Mount Airy Casino, \$65, 610-767-4881.

Wednesday, May 30

St. Joseph the Worker, Orefield to "Cruise Around Manhattan," \$108, suemueller45@gmail.com, 610-392-2957.

Wednesday, June 13

Golden Agers, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Whitehall to "Jesus," Sight and Sound Theatre, Lancaster, \$113, 610-264-3721.

'The Body of Christ'

Jan. 25 – The Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul

Saul was a zealous Hebrew who strove to keep the Jewish faith pure and undefiled. He demanded strict adherence to the orthodox practice of the faith. Every statute and command of the Law of Moses was to be diligently kept. The Pharisees' interpretation of the Scriptures and the Jewish traditions was to be strictly observed.

Saul firmly believed that his love for God demanded that any variation or deviation from the orthodox practice of the Jewish faith had to be suppressed and eliminated.

Not surprisingly, Saul was quite disturbed when he heard of a growing number of Jews who were embracing the Way of Jesus. Convinced that Jesus was the long-awaited Savior, they committed themselves to new practices of worship and new forms of community life.

It was Saul's assessment that these followers of the New Way were perverting the authentic faith given to us by the one, true God. While Saul had never met Jesus, he was sure that Jesus had led people astray.

In Sacred Scripture, we first encounter Saul at the execution of Stephen, the first Martyr of the Church. Saul not only was present at the stoning of Stephen, he wholeheartedly approved of the act. If Stephen would not concede that he had become an apostate of the Jewish faith by following Jesus, then he deserved death.

Saul actively became involved in the persecution of the followers of Jesus. He joined in the pursuit of these apostates and sought their arrest and imprisonment – men, women and children. He was willing to go to wherever communities of these "new believers" arose so he could help crush them out of existence.

When Saul was on his way to Damascus in Syria to persecute a community of followers of the New Way, he encountered Jesus himself. Jesus appeared to him as a blinding light.

The first words Jesus spoke to him were a question, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" Saul responded with a question, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply shook Saul to his core, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting!"

Saul's faulty vision was taken away from him so that he could gain a clear and correct vision of the truth. Guided by followers of Jesus, who ministered to Saul's physical and spiritual needs, and through his own personal encounter with Jesus, Saul gained a new insight: the New Way is the

right and true Way to Salvation.

Saul was drawn into a deep and unshakable understanding that Jesus is the Savior. He requested the gift of Baptism so that he could become one with Christ.

Because of his subsequent missionary work among the Gentiles in spreading the Catholic Faith, we usually refer to Saul by the Greek form of his name, Paul.

While the conversion experience of St. Paul is both dramatic and inspiring in itself, the theology that flowed from that experience is even more inspiring.

The Letters of St. Paul reveal that he continually reflected on the meaning and significance of the first words Jesus spoke to him, "Why are you persecuting me?" Paul was persecuting Jesus' followers, so why did Jesus ask, "Why are you persecuting me," instead of why are you persecuting them?

While truly different persons, Jesus makes it clear that there is no separation between us and him, between us and everyone else. We are united in a communion of life and love.

Paul emphasizes over and over again in his letters that we, the Church, are the Body of Christ. Paul definitively speaks of this as a reality, not as a metaphor for understanding our relationship with Christ and with one another. Paul does not say we are like a body, he says we are a body – and not simply a body, but a "capital-B" Body.

Paul instructs us that through Baptism we are joined not only to Christ, the Head of the Body, we are also joined to one another, that together we are the Body of Christ.

Paul was well aware of our human tendency to see differences as separations rather than as unique expressions of our individual personhood. Paul guides us to see differences in a new light, in the Light of Christ.

When we look at our physical body, there are unique parts: arms, hands, legs, feet, heart, lungs, stomach, etc. But while we can focus our attention on the individual parts of our body, together they are one body. No individual part on its own can claim to a complete body. If any part is missing, the entire body is incomplete, the entire body suffers.

There are many different traits and characteristics in the human family. While ethnic and cultural groups have common traits and characteristics that make them distinct from other groups, this does not make them any more human or

By Father Jerome Tauber, pastor of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, Hellertown.



any less human. There is one human family.

While the majority of Catholics practice the Faith using the Latin Rite, there are many other rites that are part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, for example the Byzantine Rite and the Maronite Rite. No rite is better than the other rites or less than the other rites. While each is a unique way to express the Catholic Faith, they all express the same Catholic Faith.

Even within the same rite there are different forms. While the majority of Latin Rite Catholics celebrate the Mass using the current Ordinary Form of the Mass, there are many Latin Rite Catholics whose spirituality draws them to the Extraordinary Form of the Mass, the form of the Mass prior to the liturgical changes of Vatican II. There are also Latin Rite Catholics who use the Ambrosian Form and the Mozarabic Form.

While the basic structure and the essential parts of the Mass have remained the same through the entire life of the Church, the prayers and rituals used to express these have changed over the centuries.

While there are unique ways in which the Mass is celebrated by the different rites and by the different forms within the same rite, they all make present to us the same Paschal Mystery – Christ's passion, death, resurrection and ascension – in the Eucharist.

We also know that there are many Christians who are not in full communion with us but who are also part of the Body of Christ because they are one with us in the Sacrament of Baptism.

While we could go on and on about the differences in the Body, St. Paul's message is louder and more profound: there is only one Body of Christ.

Let us embrace more fully what St. Paul himself learned from his conversion experience. While we cannot ignore our differences, our attention should not be so much on the differences, it should be on our oneness in the Body of Christ.

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Tree Lighting for 275th Anniversary Honors Oldest Alumni



St. Francis Academy, Bally held its annual Christmas tree lighting prayer service Dec. 8 after the 9 a.m. Mass. In honor of the school's 275th anniversary this year, they invited their oldest alumni to partake, in the golf cart, from left: Rita Hartman, 94, and Gertrude Snyder, 92, driven by fellow alum Joseph Melcher, 88. SFA was founded in 1743 by Father Theodore Schneider.



Representatives from each grade, pre-k through 8, placed handcrafted 275th anniversary ornaments on the tree. Five additional representatives from each grade placed red and silver Christmas balls on the tree. Pictured, Anika Snyder, back, helps Michael Lehr and Kiera Burr place ornaments on the school's tree.



Above, Gertrude Snyder lights the spotlight for the number 275 at the St. Francis Academy tree lighting.

Right, the oldest (back right) and youngest students (front left) frame alumni Rita Hartman, Gertrude Snyder and Joseph Melcher in the golf cart at the tree lighting ceremony at St. Francis Academy in Bally.



Guidance About Civil Marriages

Editor's note: Catholic Q&A is a regular column in The A.D. Times from the Diocese of Allentown Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization. Please email your questions about the Catholic faith to CLE@allentowndioecese.org. Questions for the column will be chosen from those submitted and answered in the next possible issue. Questions may be edited for space, clarity or other considerations. Questioners must include their name and town or parish, but questions will be published anonymously.

Question: If a practicing Catholic marries a non-Catholic in a civil marriage ceremony is that considered a valid marriage in the eyes of the Church? If a couple who is Catholic and non-Catholic marries without a religious ceremony and lives together, is the Catholic partner committing a mortal sin if they receive Communion?

Answer: Thank you for writing and asking questions about the teachings of the Church in two important areas – civil marriage and a marriage between a Catholic and non-Catholic.

All Catholics (and in the situation you raise, namely a Catholic and non-Catholic) who exchange vows in the presence of civil officials are not considered validly married in the eyes of the Catholic Church. If they marry in a civil ceremony and are living with their spouse, they should not present themselves to receive Holy Communion.

The Catholic Church invites couples who are married civilly to the graces of the Sacrament of Matrimony, to bless them in the vocation of marriage and dedicate themselves to sharing God's love. This is called a convalidation.

The couple should contact a priest who can assist them in preparing for the Sacrament of Matrimony. More information about convalidation can be found at <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/convalidation-bringing-your-marriage-into-the-church/>.

You also ask a question about marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic.



The Church supports interfaith marriages where one of the spouses is a baptized non-Catholic or a non-baptized non-Christian, but recognizes many of these couples face unique pastoral challenges.

Someone who is Catholic should marry in a Catholic ceremony. Out of pastoral care for the couple and a respect for the faith of the non-Catholic party, there are occasions when a Catholic and non-Catholic are permitted to be married in the Church of the non-Catholic spouse.

In these cases, the Bishop of the Diocese grants a special dispensation (permission) for the wedding to validly take place outside of the Catholic Church.

Information that can assist these couples with their preparation for marriage and provide guidance in selecting the appropriate marriage rite for the wedding ceremony can be found at <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/catholic-marriage/church-teachings/interfaith-marriages/> and <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/catholic-marriage/planning-a-catholic-wedding/>.

45th Anniversary of Roe vs. Wade Highlighted in Speaker's Personal Journey

By TAMI QUIGLEY
Staff writer

On the 45th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, the U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion in the United States, Yvonne Florczak-Seeman shared her powerful and emotional journey of being a young girl who had five abortions to being a tireless crusader for the unborn.

"The sanctity of a woman's womb – where our maker decided it to be the most sacred place to be born – is worth fighting for," Florczak-Seeman said, presenting "The Dignity of Woman, I Am Pro-Woman."

The lecture recognized the 45th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade at the Forum on Biomedical Ethics Jan. 22 at DeSales University, Center Valley.

Florczak-Seeman is an author, anti-abortion activist and educator. She is the president and founder of Love from Above, Inc. and A Time to Speak.

The forum celebrated St. Francis de Sales as the Christian Humanist. The evening event in the University Center was part of Heritage Week, sponsored by the Salesian Center for Faith and Culture at DeSales.

Lore McFadden, director of programs for the center, welcomed the audience.

Those attending included Mary Fran Hartigan, secretary of the Diocesan Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization and director of the Diocesan Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns.

"Abortion was shoved down on our country in 1973, and it was a bad law from the beginning. The other side knows it, and fights night and day to stop it from being overturned."

"Abortion was shoved down on our country in 1973, and it was a bad law from the beginning. The other side knows it, and fights night and day to stop it from being overturned,"

said Florczak-Seeman.

"We have got to do what is right regardless of what politics tells us. If not, who will?"

"Each one of us will stand before our maker. When we do, how cool would it be to say, 'I was all over that Roe vs. Wade,'" she said.

"Let today's anniversary mark in time the change you will make to make a difference for your future and children's futures."

God, Florczak-Seeman said, can give us the words to articulate the issue to change hearts and minds.

"Many women are hurting out there," she said. Florczak-Seeman said she's even met women in their 90s seeking God's forgiveness for abortions they had



Above left, Yvonne Florczak-Seeman presents "The Dignity of Woman, I Am Pro-Woman," recognizing the 45th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, at the Forum on Biomedical Ethics Jan. 22 at DeSales University, Center Valley. (Photos by John Simitz)

Above, right, those gathered listen to Florczak-Seeman's emotional presentation at the evening event that was part of Heritage Week, sponsored by the Salesian Center for Faith and Culture at DeSales.

before it was legalized.

Florczak-Seeman said it's been proven that it's a baby in the womb, not tissue. "Let's get on the bandwagon, and talk about women's medical and spiritual aftermath after having an abortion."

She said former pro-choice women are now on her team. "Validate women's pain and loss, and we'll find an awakening, a change in women."

Sharing the motto from the Love From Above movement, Florczak-Seeman said, "We are not Republicans or Democrats, we are independent thinkers; we are not blacks, whites or Hispanics, we are human beings; we are not Protestants or Catholics, we are children of God; we are not rich or poor, we are fighters for social justice; we are not pro-life, nor pro-choice, we are pro-woman."

"When you are pro-women, you will save those babies," she said.

Now the married mother of four children, Florczak-Seeman had five abortions between ages 16 and 20.

When she arrived at Planned Parenthood for her first abortion, Florczak-Seeman said, she really believed it was a legal procedure and it was her right.

The abortions left her suffering from depression, suicidal, and abusing drugs and alcohol.

"Planned Parenthood never once gave me information to empower me to make an informed decision," Florczak-Seeman said of her abortion provider. It never told her antibiotics would cancel the effects of the birth control pill. "I wasn't a patient for them, I was a client that kept bringing money to the bottom line."

"When I had my daughter, I knew I had to speak," said Florczak-Seeman, 54, who has been sharing her story for the past 15 years. Doctors had previously told the mother of four she would never

carry a child to full term due to the scar tissue from the abortions.

Florczak-Seeman said after having her fifth abortion at age 20, she walked to a Chicago bar with the intent to later take some pills and end it all.

"God, did you not have a plan for my life? I knew you at age 5 and loved you. How did I become this monster?" she prayed while at the bar. She also thought about the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

A much older man asked her what was a pretty girl like her doing in a place like that. As they spoke, he told Florczak-Seeman she was there because "God has a plan for your life," and that God had been waiting for her to ask about the plan.

When Florczak-Seeman looked outside for the man after he left, there was no trace of him. "He just vanished."

That night, she went home, got down on her knees and prayed.

Divine intervention saved her life, but for the next 19 years the aftermath of abortion left Florczak-Seeman with failed marriages, and problems with drugs and alcohol. "I was wreckage."

"The healing began through Project Rachel," she said, referring to the post-abortion reconciliation and healing program with trained priests and counselors.

Florczak-Seeman, who had been Protestant, converted to Catholicism in 2000. "There's power in the sacrament of reconciliation," she said.

Florczak-Seeman recounts her personal story at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxztI-yeZKE>.

For information about Project Rachel, see page 5.



Mary Fran Hartigan, back row left, is among those attending the forum.

Death

Religious Sister

Sister Mary Florence Hawe, 86, a member of the Sisters of Mercy (RSM) Mid-Atlantic Community, died Jan. 17 at McAuley Convent, Merion.

An elementary educator, in the Diocese of Allentown she served two times as teacher and principal at St. Joseph School, Summit Hill, and 1986-2003 as a pastoral associate at St. Stanislaus and St.

Joseph parishes, Summit Hill.

During her 34 years in Summit Hill, Sister Mary Florence formed enduring relationships. At the time of her death, she was in written communication with 40 people from this beloved mission. She was known as the "Angel of Summit Hill" and had a prayerful presence with the sick and dying.

She also served in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia; Dioceses of Raleigh, North Carolina and Portland, Oregon; and summer staff at St. Norbert's College, DePere, Wisconsin.

Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Jan. 23 at Convent of Mercy, Merion, with burial at Sisters of Mercy Cemetery.

Bendita Criatura

Por DIÁCONO JOSÉ M. SANTOS

El hombre busca incansablemente a su creador; como por instinto va detrás de su fin. Hay veces que tropieza con dioses falsos, creyendo haber encontrado algo bueno, termina corrompiéndose, y llega a destruirse a sí mismo.

Otros, por el conocimiento de ideas erróneas se organizan para imponer sus criterios, por la fuerza aplastan a los más débiles e ignorantes. Para mantener el poder son capaces de asesinar hasta a los indefensos. Por placer arrancan el derecho de otros; ignoran cual derecho defendido por otros, les dio existencia.

Al ser humano no se le puede quitar lo que tiene, lo que cree, aun estando en el error, sino se le ofrece algo mejor, que le ayude a superarse. Pretendo presentar algo mejor que ayude al lector a analizar, reflexionar, y sacar conclusiones; obtenga su libertad, la que lo llevará a vivir sin sombras la felicidad.

Las personas debemos encontrar el equilibrio del ser, entre la materia y el espíritu, el cuerpo y el alma. Si no se logra un balance, hasta alcanzar el ideal, nos parecerá vivir en un desajuste, en un desplazamiento incomprensible.

Por lo general, nos encontramos muchas veces, con una porción mínima del lado de la espiritualidad; y demasiado cargado en las cosas de la materia, lo que nos preocupa, produce distanciamiento desde la realidad necesaria para cada día.

Benditos desde el vientre

Tus palabras son espíritu y vida; en el evangelio de San Lucas 1, 42 dice: "Bendito es el fruto de tu vientre." Dios puso en boca de Santa Isabel esta frase que

repetimos al rezar el Ave María. Jesús es la bendición para este mundo desde el momento de su concepción. María su madre, fue elegida para ser el instrumento de Dios para salvar al mundo de los pecados.

El dogma de fe de la inmaculada concepción proclamado por el Papa Pío IX en el año 1854 enseña la verdad que se venía estudiando por siglos. Desde el libro del Génesis (1, 15) y anunciado por los profetas y salmos indican que María la madre de Jesús fue preservada sin pecado desde el vientre de su madre, Santa Ana.

Cuando María visita a Isabel, por las montañas, comunica un saludo de paz y alegría a su prima; responde Isabel: "Desde que tu saludo llegó a mis oídos, la criatura saltó de alegría en mi vientre" (Lc 1, 41).

Verdaderamente, Isabel quiere decir, que en aquel momento algo grande ha sucedido. ¡Sí! Jesús, desde el vientre de María, está consagrando a Juan para la misión futura. Es algo parecido a lo que sucedió, cuando Jesús preguntó; ¿Quién me ha tocado? Y luego la mujer hemorroísa da testimonio de su curación. (Mc 5, 30-34).

De Juan el Bautista hizo Jesús esta afirmación: "El más pequeño en el reino de los cielos, es más grande que Juan, y él, es el más grande de los profetas." Cuando analizamos el Antiguo Testamento encontramos como Dios bendice a la mujer y la criatura que lleva en su vientre.

* Sara, la esposa de Abraham, Dios la bendijo, y a Isaac, el hijo de la promesa (Gn 18, 9-15).

* La madre de Sansón, el defensor del pueblo de Israel frente a los Filisteos



(jueves capítulo 13).

* Jeremías, antes que tú nacieras te conocía y te consagré (Jr 1, 5).

Testimonio

Un servidor, diácono permanente, es fruto de una bendición del Señor a través de un sacerdote. Un día estaba rezando el rosario con los ojos cerrados, llegó a mi mente esta imagen; Veía a un niño en el vientre de su madre, luego apareció una joven señora que me decía: "Yo te consagré a mi Hijo desde el vientre." Era María la madre de Jesús y madre mía.

En aquel momento me sentí lleno de alegría y de mucha paz; tuve la curiosidad, días después pregunté a mi madre Aurelinda: ¿Mamá, alguna vez usted me consagró al Señor? Su respuesta. "Sí, yo siempre que estaba embarazada iba al sacerdote para la bendición de la criatura."

El engaño de Satanás

En Egipto, el faraón quiso matar a todos los varones recién nacidos para reducir el crecimiento de la población del pueblo de Israel, que crecía más que los egipcios y mantener el poder opresor (Ex 1, 15-20).

En Belén, Herodes trató de matar al Salvador del mundo, no lo consigue, y derrama la sangre de los niños inocente,

impulsado por la fuerza del mal (Mt 2, 13-14).

Hoy, el poder económico de las naciones desarrolladas, impulsado por las mismas fuerzas oscuras de este mundo, promueve una reducción del crecimiento poblacional, alegando que no hay comida para tanta gente, quieren imponer la ley del aborto como solución. La verdad, el mundo está destruyendo su mayor riqueza; el ser humano, que es lo más valioso de toda la creación. Por esta razón la vida hay que defenderla desde el momento de la concepción.

En muchos países se promueven leyes para aprobar el aborto. Según los datos celestiales, dicen los mensajes de la Virgen, Reina de la Paz en sus apariciones en Medugorje: Entre 50-60 millones de abortos se realizan cada año en el mundo; los datos que nos llegan de las Naciones Unidas dicen: "La población mundial crece alrededor de unos 50 millones cada año.

No cabe duda que a principio del siglo XXI, se está asesinando la mitad de los niños y niñas que Dios crea en el vientre de las madres. Hay que hacer algo para reducir el castigo que la humanidad merece. Las plagas en Egipto tenían una razón que Dios conoce, y entre ellas estaba la muerte de los primogénitos. Señor ayúdanos a cambiar el mundo.

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Basilica Title Honors Church's Role in Diocese, Nation's Founding

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (CNS) – The Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments declared St. Mary Church in Alexandria a minor basilica, Bishop Michael Burbidge of Arlington announced during Mass Jan. 14.

"It is an extraordinary honor to announce that the Holy See has designated St. Mary's in Old Town to be the newest basilica in the United States. This historic announcement recognizes the important role St. Mary's has played in the Diocese, the city of Alexandria and even the very founding of our country," he said.

To be named a basilica, a church must have architectural or historic value and meet liturgical requirements, such as an adequate amount of space in the sanctuary and a fitting number of priests.

There are only four major basilicas, all in Rome – St. Peter's, St. John Lateran, St. Paul Outside the Walls and St. Mary Major.

There are thousands of minor basilicas throughout the world, including the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

A committee from St. Mary began to research the application process for becoming a basilica last January, according to Father Edward Hathaway, pastor. Bishop Burbidge approved the application in June, and sent it to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Divine Worship. USCCB officials approved the plan in July, and sent it to the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments.

"The naming of St. Mary as a minor basilica brings honor to the entire Diocese and to Roman Catholics throughout the country," said Father Hathaway. "As the first Catholic parish in Virginia and West Virginia, learning its history is to gain a greater insight into the spread of the Catholic faith in the former English colonies and throughout our nation."

In 1788 an Irish aide-de-camp of George Washington, Col. John Fitzgerald, held a fundraiser in his home for the construction of a Catholic church. Washington was the first to donate. In 1795 St. Mary was established as a mission of Holy Trinity Church in Georgetown. Eventually a church was built on South Royal Street, where the contemporary church stands, and was dedicated by Jesuit Father Francis Ignatius Neale in 1827.

Today St. Mary has 7,100 registered parishioners and dozens of liturgical, fellowship and service ministries.

The new basilica will be marked with special signage indicating its status. As with all basilicas, St. Mary will install an "ombrellino," a silk canopy designed with stripes of yellow and red – the traditional papal colors – and a "tintinnabulum," a bell mounted on a pole and carried during some processions.

"Crossed keys, which are the symbol of the papacy, will be placed prominently on the church exterior," said Father Hathaway.

St. Mary also has designed a seal, which all basilicas have. The symbols pay homage to the Diocese, the Jesuits who founded the parish and to Mary. In the bottom right quadrant of the shield is a ship, representing Alexandria's role as an important port town in colonial times. The vessel further represents the frigates that brought Catholic immigrants to the New World.

"The Ark and The Dove were the two famous ships, chartered by Cecil Calvert to transport 140 colonists to the shores of Maryland," according to a statement from St. Mary. "Similar ships brought the Jesuit founders, as well as many Irish and Scottish merchants, to the port city of Alexandria."



People gather outside St. Mary Church in 2017 in Alexandria, Virginia, the country's newest basilica. (CNS photo/Ashleigh Kassock, Catholic Herald)

84 Basilicas Now Designated in United States

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The naming of St. Mary Church in Alexandria, Virginia is the 84th such creation of a basilica in the United States. In all, 33 states and the District of Columbia have churches designated as minor basilicas.

Basilicas in Pennsylvania and its neighboring states are (there are none in Delaware):

Pennsylvania – Conewago Township, Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, 1962; Danville, Basilica of SS. Cyril and Methodius, 1989; Latrobe, St. Vincent Archabbey Basilica, 1955; Loretto, Basilica of St. Michael the Archangel, 1996; Philadelphia, Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul, 1976; Scranton, Basilica of the National Shrine of St. Ann, 1997.

Maryland: Baltimore, Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption BVM, 1937; Emmitsburg, Basilica of the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, 1991.

New Jersey: Newark, Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart, 1995.

New York: Brooklyn, Basilica of Regina Pacis, 2012; Brooklyn, Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 1969; Brooklyn, Cathedral Basilica of St. James, 1982; Lackawanna, Our Lady of Victory National Shrine and Basilica, 1926; Lewiston, Basilica of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, 1975; New York, Patrick's Old Cathedral, 2010; Olean, Basilica of St. Mary of Angels, 2017; Southampton, Basilica of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, 2011; Syracuse, Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, 1998.

Ohio: Carey, Basilica and National Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation, 1971; Canton, Basilica of St. John the Baptist, 2012; Marietta, Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, 2013; North Jackson, Basilica and National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon, 2014; Youngstown, Basilica of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 2014.

West Virginia: Charleston, Basilica of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, 2009.

Young Adults Want to be Heard by the Church, Study Finds

LINTHICUM, Md. (CNS) – It's no secret that for years, teenagers and young adults have been leaving the Catholic Church, putting aside organized religion for a more personal spirituality, another faith tradition or no faith at all.

A new study by St. Mary's Press looks at the reasons for such religious disaffiliation, asking teenagers and young adults ages 15 to 25: Why did you leave the church?

The answers in the study, "Going, Going, Gone: The Dynamics of Disaffiliation of Young Catholics," vary widely with respondents citing sociological, familial and spiritual reasons, as well as opposition to organized religion.

What's key to the study, said John Vitek, CEO and president of St. Mary's Press, is that the process gave young people a voice.

"We wanted to hear in young people's own words their lived experience and their stories. So we spent time listening to young people throughout the country, to hear their story in their own words, uncensored and unfiltered," he said Jan. 16.

The study's release coincided with a 90-minute symposium that included two young adults, a priest, a sociologist who studies religious affiliation trends and an audience of about 200 people from parishes and dioceses throughout the country.

The two-year study found that religious disaffiliation is a process and often begins with questions about faith, doubts and hurts that accumulate "until it's too much," Vitek said. The process begins at an early age, sometimes as young as 10

years old.

The study also found that the median age for young people to leave the church was 13 even though teenagers may have continued attending Mass with their families.

Father Edmund Luciano, director of development in the Diocese of Metuchen, New Jersey, and a former diocesan director of youth and young adult ministry, said that age 13 is too young to "be allowed to make decision like that."

"I see a breakdown in this in the home and in the parents," Father Luciano said. "They are the primary teachers of the faith. They are the role models and the examples. I don't think the kids are doing anything wrong. I look to the parents wondering why they're not supporting the growth of their kids."

The priest and others suggested that the Church must better equip parents, teachers and ministry leaders to not shy away from questions young people have about faith.

Panelist Father Joseph Muth, pastor of St. Matthew Parish in Baltimore, said teenagers often have many questions about life and that personal religious life was no exception.

"It's the normal process of growing up. In that moment we need someone to trust the questions being asked and to be equipped to give an answer," he said. Many in the audience nodded in agreement.

Christina Hannon, young adult engagement officer with the Coalition with Young Adults in Northeast Ohio, who was in the audience, said she has learned

that young adults are looking for a place to be welcomed. If a parish is not welcoming, she suggested, a young person may decide to abandon the Church altogether.

The conversation returned repeatedly to the question of whether young people are heard by Church leaders or others who can guide them through the questions they have.

Often the questions young people have challenge religious institutions, said panelist Josh Packard, associate professor of sociology at the University of Northern Colorado, whose work includes studies on how religion drives people away from church but not from God.

He said the challenge facing religious institutions is not to change tenets but to make sure that they adhere to core values "about who we serve and what we're here for" so that young people do not feel ignored.

The study began in 2015 when St. Mary's Press, based in Winona, Minnesota, contracted with the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University in Washington to conduct a survey of young people from 15 to 25 years old who left the Catholic Church. It started with a pool of 3,450 randomly selected young people of which 1,435 completed the screening process.

The full report resulted from interviews with 204 young people – 20 teenagers and 184 young adults – who once self-identified as Catholic but now do not.

From the sample, the study estimated that 12.8 percent of U.S. young adults between 18 and 25 years old and 6.8 percent

of teenagers 15 to 17 years old are former Catholics.

In the larger pool, 20 percent said they were no longer Catholic because they stopped believing in God or religion; 16 percent cited an issue with family or parents leading to their decision to leave; 15 percent changed faiths on their own while their family remained Catholic and 11 percent said they left Catholicism because of growing opposition to the church or religious institutions in general.

The study also found that 74 percent of the sample said that they no longer identified themselves as Catholic between the ages of 10 and 20 with the median age being 13. More than one-third, 35 percent, have no religious affiliation, 46 percent joined another religion and 14 percent said they were atheists or agnostics.

The study broadly categorized respondents into three categories – the injured, the drifters and the dissenters – based on the reasons given for leaving the church.

It also outlined a series of reasons respondents gave for their religious disaffiliation including family disruption; hypocrisy within the church; disconnection between belief and practice of the faith; lack of companions on a spiritual journey; disagreement with church teachings, particularly same-sex marriage, abortion and contraception; issues with teachings about the Bible including salvation, heaven and life after death; and disillusionment and frustration that their questions about faith were never answered or that they never had the opportunity to ask them in the first place.

Cardinal invokes Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in March Vigil Homily

WASHINGTON (CNS) – New York Cardinal Timothy Dolan invoked the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. during a homily at the Jan. 18 Mass that opened the National Prayer Vigil for Life.

Like “Pastor King,” as Cardinal Dolan referred to him throughout his homily, “our belief in the dignity of the human person and the sacredness of all human life propels us to concern for human life wherever, whenever, and however it is threatened, from racial antagonism to justice for immigrants, from the war-torn to the hungry,” the prelate said.

And, like Rev. King, whose life was the subject of a national holiday three days prior, “our prayers and witness are about civil rights: the civil right to life and to equal protection under the law, guaranteed by our Constitution, for the most fragile, marginalized and threatened – the tiny, innocent baby in the womb,” Cardinal Dolan said.

The Mass, which has attracted more than 10,000 in recent years, was celebrated at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

Rev. King “would be marching with us in the defense of unborn life were not the dignity of his own person and the sanctity of his own life tragically violated 50 years ago this spring,” Cardinal Dolan said, referring to the civil rights figure’s assassination in Memphis, Tennessee, April 4, 1968.

“Pastor King would often begin his stirring speeches, which still move us, by asking his listeners, ‘Why are we here?’” Cardinal Dolan said.

Answering the question himself, the cardinal gave a variety of reasons. “We are here to advocate and give witness, to advocate for those who cannot yet speak or walk with us, the pre-born baby, whose future is in jeopardy and can be ended by a so-called choice, and to give witness that millions, mostly young people, share a passion for the belief that that little baby has civil rights,” he said.



Clergy process at the opening Mass of the National Prayer Vigil for Life at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception Jan. 18 in Washington. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

Another reason, he said, was “to lobby for life,” sharing “passion for a society to assist and protect all vulnerable life ... because, to borrow my brother pastor’s refrain, ‘We shall overcome,’” to which the Mass crowd applauded. “And there is one final reason why we are here,” Cardinal Dolan said. “To pray!”

The opening Mass featured more than 300 clergy concelebrants, including 34 bishops and archbishops, and six U.S. cardinals. Retired Cardinal Theodore McCarrick of Washington did not join in the processions, but instead got to the shrine’s sanctuary a few minutes before Mass with the aid of a walker.

While Washington has not been immune to wintry weather for the overnight vigil and next-day March for Life in recent years, this year’s events were met with relatively mild temperatures compared to the frigid and slick conditions north, west and – surprisingly – south of the nation’s capital.

At the Jan. 19 morning Mass that closed the vigil, Bishop Edward Burns of Dallas told the story of a young boy who saw an online advertisement for a baseball glove. Wanting the glove but not having the money to pay for it, he wrote a letter to his mother that took the form of an itemized bill for the chores he did around the house – with the total equaling the cost of the glove.

Knowing his mother must have seen the envelope addressed to her at her place at the dining room table, the boy, a few days later, saw a box at his own place at the table. In the box was the glove he had wanted. But as he was trying it on, he spotted an envelope addressed to him at the bottom of the box.

In the letter was his mother’s list of services rendered to him – giving birth to him, changing his diapers, tucking him in at night, drying his tears, bandaging his wounds and holding him tight – and after each entry came the words “no charge.”

Coverage of Diocese of Allentown participation in the March for Life will be in the next issue of The A.D. Times, Feb. 8.

Fake

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would not die by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, he said. The Bible story shows that “there is no such thing as harmless disinformation; on the contrary, trusting in falsehood can have dire consequences.”

Pope Francis praised educators who teach young people how to read and question the news and the information they see presented on social media. He encouraged efforts to develop regulations to counter fake news and he praised tech and media companies for trying to improve ways to verify “the personal identities concealed behind millions of digital profiles.”

But, he insisted, individuals always will have the final responsibility for discerning what is real news and what is helpful to share on social media.

“We need to unmask what could be called the ‘snake tactics’ used by those who disguise themselves to strike at any time and place” like the serpent in the Garden of Eden.

The snake’s power grows as people limit their sources of information to one outlet, especially if that outlet is a social media platform whose algorithms are based on providing users with more information like they have just read, the pope said.

“Disinformation thus thrives on the absence of healthy confrontation with other sources of information that could effectively challenge prejudices and generate constructive dialogue,” he wrote.

People who repost or retweet such false information, the pope said, become “unwilling accomplices in spreading biased and baseless ideas.”

One way to know if something should be checked and not shared, he said, is if it “discredits others, presenting them as enemies, to the point of demonizing them

and fomenting conflict.”

In the modern world, with the rapid and viral spread of news and information – both real and fake – lives and souls are at stake, he said, because the “father of lies” is the devil.

True discernment, the pope said, means examining information and keeping what promotes communion and goodness, while rejecting whatever “tends to isolate, divide and oppose.”

“We can recognize the truth of statements from their fruits: whether they provoke quarrels, foment division, encourage resignation; or, on the other hand, they promote informed and mature reflection leading to constructive dialogue and fruitful results,” Pope Francis wrote.

Journalists, he said, have a special responsibility in the modern world amid the media “feeding frenzies and the mad rush for a scoop.”

Pope Francis asked media professions to promote “a journalism of peace,” which does not mean ignoring problems or being saccharine. It means “a journalism that is truthful and opposed to falsehoods, rhetorical slogans and sensational headlines.”

A journalism of peace is at the service of all people, “especially those – and they are the majority in our world – who have no voice,” he said. It is “a journalism committed to pointing out alternatives to the escalation of shouting matches and verbal violence.”

Pope Francis ended his message with his own adaptation of the “Prayer of St. Francis” for both those who report the news and those who read or watch it.

“Where there is shouting, let us practice listening,” the prayer said. “Where there is ambiguity, let us bring clarity.”

“Where there is prejudice, let us awaken trust,” it continued. “Where there is hostility, let us bring respect; where there is falsehood, let us bring truth.”

Pope Francis' Prayer for Countering "Fake News"

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Help us to recognize the evil latent in a communication that does not build communion.

Help us to remove the venom from our judgments.

Help us to speak about others as our brothers and sisters.

You are faithful and trustworthy; may our words be seeds of goodness for the world:

Where there is **shouting**, let us **practice listening**;

Where there is **confusion**, let us **inspire harmony**;

Where there is **ambiguity**, let us **bring clarity**;

Where there is **exclusion**, let us **offer solidarity**;

Where there is **sensationalism**, let us **use sobriety**;

Where there is **superficiality**, let us **raise real questions**;

Where there is **prejudice**, let us **awaken trust**;

Where there is **hostility**, let us **bring respect**;

Where there is **falsehood**, let us **bring truth**.

Amen.

– Pope Francis, message for World Communications Day 2018

At the end of his message for World Communications Day 2018, Pope Francis included this prayer he wrote adapted from the “Prayer of St. Francis.” (CNS illustration/Joanna Korhorst)