

Heart of St. John Vianney Venerated at St. Clare of Assisi

By TARA CONNOLLY
Staff writer

The incorrupt heart of the patron saint of parish priests was received by Bishop of Allentown Alfred Schlert April 12 at St. Clare of Assisi, St. Clair as part of a national pilgrimage tour sponsored by the Knights of Columbus.

The major relic of St. John Vianney, an 18th century French priest revered for his holiness and sanctity of life, and whose heart has been incorrupt for more than 150 years, was contained in a special reliquary and venerated by the faithful.

"In the history of the Diocese, this will be recorded as a privileged day. It is a great honor for the Diocese to receive with joy and veneration for such a relic," said Bishop Schlert to more than 400 faithful at Mass where the relic was accepted.

The relic was venerated by hundreds of more faithful throughout the day that included the Novena to St. John Vianney and Veneration of the Relic every half hour.

The day also featured Recitation of the Rosary; Praying for Priests through St. John Vianney's Intercession led by Father Adam Sedar, secretary of the Diocesan Secretariat for Clergy; and Stations of the Cross led by Monsignor David James, Diocesan vicar general.

The day concluded with Solemn Vespers presided by Bishop Schlert.

With Holy Week approaching, Bishop Schlert told the faithful that priests recommit themselves to Holy Orders and asked the faithful to keep vocations in mind as they venerated the relic with their personal intentions.

"Here is a heart of a saint that contained the very love of God. We, too, are called as priests and all of you by our baptism – to have the heart of Christ," he said.

Also known as the Cure d'Ars, Bishop Schlert reminded the faithful that the saint did not have a comfortable life, few human accolades and was not the brightest student in the seminary.

"That was a great consolation for many of us in the seminary," he said, drawing laughter from the congregation.

After his ordination and a brief assignment in a parish, St. John Vianney was called to Ars.

"It really can be considered the most menial assignment. But he went with great love and great expectations – with God's help – to reconvert pagans after the French Revolution," he said.

"It can be a message for us priests and seminarians. Sometimes we must persevere and accept assignments that we don't choose," said Bishop Schlert.

He then told the faithful that the day was a time for priests to ask God for perseverance and grace.

"We ask that we are able to accept and do with strength and courage to serve God's people no matter who they are or where they are," said Bishop Schlert.

More than ever, according to Bishop Schlert, priests are

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Evan Holguin, protector of the relic, transports the incorrupt heart of St. John Vianney into St. Clare of Assisi, St. Clair. (Photo by Tara Connolly)



Hope from the Ashes: Leaders Pledge to Rebuild Notre Dame Cathedral

PARIS (CNS) – Church leaders joined government officials in saying they expect that Notre Dame Cathedral's grandeur will be restored as firefighters extinguished the last flames of a fast-moving blaze that seriously damaged much of the iconic structure.

"We are living through an extreme moment. This is Holy Week and it isn't an accident," Paris Archbishop Michel Aupetit said outside of the 850-year-old historic structure late April 15 as firefighters continued to attack the flames.

"Having marked the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are now experiencing our own passion, but we know that after it will come the resurrection. We believe in this and we will proclaim it by rebuilding this cathedral," Archbishop Aupetit said.

The archbishop also appealed for church bells throughout



Paris to be rung in a sign of prayer and solidarity.

French President Emmanuel Macron praised the "extreme courage and great professionalism" of first responders who helped save the facade and towers of the Gothic

Flowers are seen on the ledge of a bridge near Notre Dame Cathedral April 16, 2019, after a fire broke out in the iconic Paris structure. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Bishop Schlert's Statement

Bishop Alfred Schlert issued the following statement April 15.

"As Notre Dame Cathedral burns, it is difficult to comprehend this tragic loss to the cultural patrimony of the world. I pray for everyone in Paris, and around the globe, who will grieve this terrible event. May Our Lady watch over all those battling the blaze."

landmark. He announced that a national reconstruction fund would be established.

Speaking in front of the charred cathedral late April 15, Macron said he understood the feelings of French Catholics in face of the disaster and pledged the whole population would "stand with them" in restoring it.

"Notre Dame de Paris is our history, our literature, our

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Pope Urges Students to Fight Addiction to Phones

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Francis told high school students to break their phone addiction and spend more time on real communication with others and in moments of quiet, personal reflection.

Young people need to learn about "healthy introspection" so they can listen to their conscience and be able to distinguish it "from the voices of selfishness and hedonism," he said.

The pope made his remarks April 13 during an audience with teachers, students and their family members from Rome's old-

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"The Allentown Diocese in the Year of Our Lord"

THE A.D. TIMES

Published biweekly or triweekly
on Thursday by
Allentown Catholic Communications, Inc.
at P.O. Box F
Allentown, PA 18105-1538
Phone: 610-871-5200, Ext. 2264
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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.

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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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2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016,
2017, 2018

POSTAL INFORMATION

The A.D. Times (USPS 004-111) is published on Thursdays, biweekly January to May; triweekly June to September; biweekly October to November; and triweekly in December, at a subscription cost of \$20 per year by Allentown Catholic Communications, Inc. at 1515 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Allentown, PA 18102-4500. Periodicals Postage paid at Allentown, PA and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The A.D. Times, P.O. Box F, Allentown, PA 18105-1538

Because We Are Catholic

Work at Special Learning Center Inspires Conversion to Catholicism

By PAUL WIRTH
Diocesan Communications Staff

Bob Giba has had a varied career, including working with the homeless, with those recovering from addiction and with victims of domestic violence. He's even spent some time away from social work as the person who puts the snacks in vending machines.

It was not until he arrived at St. Joseph Center for Special Learning, Pottsville four years ago, however, that he felt at home, "exactly where I needed to be."

As Director of Programs, Giba oversees the center's work to offer children and adults with special needs Christ-centered, quality education to grow spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally.

The work is rewarding on its own. But Giba has gotten an added bonus: over the past several years, his work in the center's faith-based environment renewed his own personal faith and his own relationship with God.

"Working here was definitely God's plan for me," Giba says. "It has stirred a part of my soul that I was not aware was there, and I'm happy to say that I was inspired to convert to Catholicism."

So God willing, this weekend at the Easter Vigil on the evening before Easter Sunday, Giba will be baptized into the Catholic faith, he will be confirmed, and he will be invited – for the first time – to the altar to receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ.



"Because We Are Catholic" tells the stories of how the people of the Diocese of Allentown make a difference in the lives of others, bringing the Light of Christ to each other and to our community.

Videos of people in the series are available on the Diocesan website at www.allentowndiocese.org/bishop-blog.

Diocese Alert About Text Messages

The Diocese of Allentown is alerting parishioners about an apparent scam.

In the past week a number of people from several different parishes have notified the Diocese that they received a text message on their cell phone from someone pretending to be a Diocesan priest asking them to purchase gift cards for him.

These are not legitimate requests and are not from a Diocesan priest. No Diocesan priest will ever solicit funds by text message.

The Diocese is not aware that anyone has fallen victim to this scam. But it does want to remind everyone if you are concerned about a text message you receive, always verify it before you take any action.

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.allentowndiocese.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.allentowndiocese.org y haga clic en "Protección de la Juventud" en la parte superior derecha.



Palm Sunday Marks Arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem



Catholics at the Palm Sunday 10:30 a.m. Mass watch as the procession moves down the center aisle toward the front of the church.

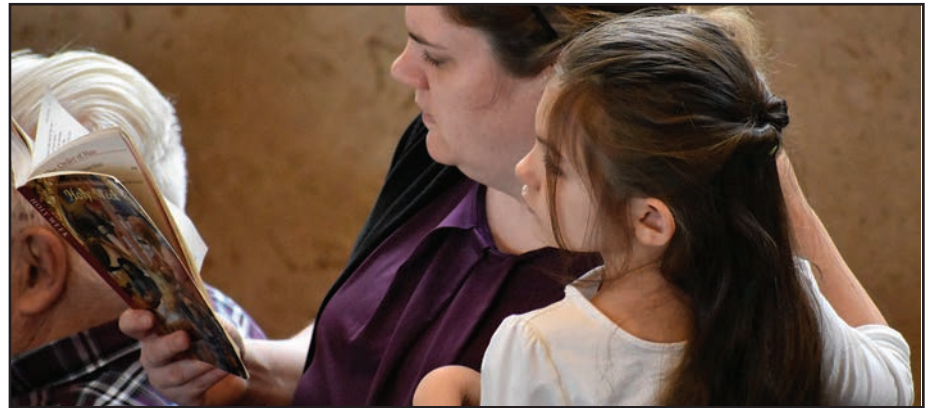


Above, Bishop of Allentown Alfred Schlert, center, carries palms in procession on Palm Sunday, April 14 at the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown. The feast commemorates Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem the week before his passion and crucifixion, when the people paved his path with olive branches as a sign of victory and reverential honor. (Photos by John Simitz)

Left, Deacon John Maria, who is scheduled to be ordained a priest Saturday, June 1, preaches the homily.

Right, among those participating in the Mass are Mary Reynolds and her 5-year-old daughter Charlotte.

Below, Parishioners read along with the Passion of Our Lord on the Feast of Palm Sunday.



The basket of palms to be blessed and taken home by parishioners to symbolize Christ among them throughout the year.

Diocese Awards \$119,000 in Poverty Relief Fund Grants

The Diocese of Allentown has announced that 18 programs and agencies from the five counties that make up the Diocese have been awarded Poverty Relief Fund grants totaling a record \$119,000.

The money is allocated from the proceeds of the Poverty Relief Fund collection taken up in the 84 parishes of the Diocese on the third weekend in November.

Applications for the grants came to \$143,000, more money than was received in the collection.

This year's recipients, their awards and the programs the grant will fund are as follows:

- \$8,000 to Holy Family Manor, Bethlehem for services to indigent residents.
- \$5,000 to Catholic Charities, Diocese of Allentown for counseling services

at schools throughout the Diocese.

- \$5,000 to the Central City Project at Allentown Central Catholic High School for an urban garden and community dinners for the poor.

- \$10,000 to the St. Vincent de Paul Society at the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena Parish in Allentown for basic needs of people in emergency situations.

- \$3,500 to the Bountiful Table Program at St. Matthew the Evangelist Parish in Minersville for its delivery food program.

- \$5,000 to the St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. John XXIII Parish in Tamaqua for its baby food ministry.

- \$10,000 to the St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Joseph Parish in Coopersburg for emergency and longer-term housing needs.

- \$10,000 to the St. Vincent de Paul

Society at St. Anne Parish in Bethlehem for its rental and utility assistance program.

- \$10,000 to the St. Vincent de Paul Society at Notre Dame Parish in Bethlehem for rental, utility and food assistance.

- \$10,000 to the St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Joseph Parish in Summit Hill for community dinners, utility relief, a community garden, clothing and household items support.

- \$1,000 to the Divine Mercy Cenacle at St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Orefield for its food pantry.

- \$2,000 to the Outreach Group at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Allentown for food, clothing and financial assistance.

- \$1,500 to St. Mary Parish in Kutztown to support local ecumenical efforts for the Potato Project.

- \$10,000 to Servants to All, an emer-

gency shelter that offers supportive services to the homeless in Pottsville.

- \$10,000 to the School Sisters of St. Francis in Bethlehem for restoration of an outbuilding at their farm project, which provides vegetables and food for area food banks.

- \$4,000 to Stephen's Place in Bethlehem, a transitional housing program for male inmates to provide recreation activities, life skills and counseling.

- \$4,000 to the Whitehall-Coplay Hunger Initiative through St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish in Whitehall.

- \$10,000 for Clare of Assisi House in Reading, which provides transitional residential services and life skills training for women coming out of prison.

The 2019 Poverty Relief Fund collection will be taken up at all churches in the Diocese of Allentown Nov. 16 and 17.

Heart

►►Continued from page 1

needed today, and people need to be reminded that it is a very noble calling.

"It's a calling to conform our lives to Christ in a unique way. When lived with holiness – it serves the salvation of souls," he said.

Asking his brother priests to not be discouraged or downtrodden, Bishop Schlert told them to never give up on being nourished by the priesthood.

"It's not an easy time in the priesthood. But it is a time that priesthood is needed more than ever," noted Bishop Schlert.

"Vocations to the priesthood are the future of our Church. We need good, holy and healthy men. We need them to be of the highest quality.

"Please pray for us that we may always have grace to live out that calling to service of Jesus, his Church and to you."

St. John Vianney was born in 1786 and served as a simple parish priest in the French town of Ars. He was known to spend as many as 18 hours a day hearing confessions from people who traveled from throughout Europe to see the priest who was known for his holiness and piety. He died in 1859.

Pope Pius XI canonized him in 1925 and proclaimed him patron saint of parish priests in 1929. His incorrupt body and heart are displayed at his shrine in Ars.



Above, faithful venerate the relic of St. John Vianney as part of the national pilgrimage tour sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. (Photo by John Simitz)

Right, hundreds of faithful listen to Bishop Schlert talk about the life of the patron saint of parish priests. (Photo by John Simitz)



Above, seminarians for the Diocese of Allentown sing a hymn during the Mass. (Photo by John Simitz)

Above right, students from Sacred Heart School, Bath participate in the special Mass. (Photo by John Simitz)

Right, Bishop Schlert, center, celebrates Mass with, from left: Monsignor John Chizmar, pastor of St. Peter the Fisherman, Lake Harmony; Father Adam Sedar, secretary of the Diocesan Secretariat for Clergy; Monsignor William Glosser, pastor of St. Clare; and Monsignor David James, Diocesan vicar general. (Photo by John Simitz)



Bishop of Allentown Alfred Schlert venerates the first class relic of the 18th century saint. (Photo by John Simitz)



Flame of Love Consecration to Jesus Through Mary May 31

By TAMI QUIGLEY
Staff writer

The Flame of Love Movement in the United States is planning a Coast to Coast Consecration to Jesus through Mary Friday, May 31.

This special day is the commemoration of three Marian feasts: Feast of the Visitation; Lady of All Nations; and Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces.

Flame of Love has asked the U.S. Bishops to unite with them during this special time of grace to consecrate their respective dioceses to Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary May 31.

"What a beautiful gift to give our Lord Jesus Christ and his mother on the very last day of the month that is dedicated to her," said Monsignor Ralph Chieffo, spiritual advisor for the Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Movement, USA.

"Our world needs her, Holy Mother Church needs her greatly, and the United States of America needs her now, now more than ever."

A Diocesan-wide consecration will take place Friday, May 31 at 7 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown, during a special Holy Hour that Bishop Alfred Schlert will celebrate for the three men who will be ordained at the Cathedral the next morning.

A Diocesan-wide consecration will take place Friday, May 31 at 7 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown, during a special Holy Hour that Bishop Alfred Schlert will celebrate for the three men who will be ordained as priests at the Cathedral the next morning.

Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity (SOLT) Father James Blount, a spiritual advisor of the Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Movement, USA, will celebrate a Healing Mass Thursday, May 16 at 6 p.m. at St. Thomas More, Allentown.

It is recommended people prepare themselves for 33 days beforehand; to consecrate on May 31, the preparation period needs to begin Sunday, April 28, the feast of the Marian saint, St. Louis de Montfort.

This year that day is also Divine Mercy Sunday. It is also the date of the first celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday, attended by St. Faustina herself.

The Diocese of Allentown recommends the faithful prepare by using St. Louis de Montfort's consecration prayer. Those

COAST TO COAST
TOTAL CONSECRATION TO
JESUS THROUGH MARY

PREPARATION BEGINNING
APRIL 28, 2019
DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO
THE BLESSED MOTHER
7 P.M. – MAY 31, 2019

Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena
1825 W. Turner, Allentown, PA



who wish to do so may use the book "Consecration to Jesus" by St. Louis de Montfort, which can be ordered at www.myconsecration.org.

For large orders email raymooney@myconsecration.org. Mooney is a former parishioner of St. Thomas More and national director of parish consecration for www.myconsecration.org.

Books may also be purchased at local religious stores, such as Abundant Graces, 3348 Easton Ave., Bethlehem, 610-865-1702, www.abundantgracesonline.com; and The Way to Emmaus, 1325 Chestnut St., Emmaus, 610-965-8855,

www.waytoemmaus.com. Books may also be purchased online at www.Amazon.com.

Milad Allaham, a regional leader with the Flame of Love and parishioner of St. Thomas More, said, "This consecration presents a wonderful opportunity for our Diocese to unite with the entire country in powerful prayer."

The consecration will be live streamed May 31 from both the National Divine Mercy Shrine, Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and St. Mary Magdalene, Media.

For more information, visit www.flameoflove.us.

New Video, Campaign for Natural Family Planning Launched

Here's a quick quiz: What's organic, easy, inexpensive, more than 99 percent effective, and aligned with Catholic teachings?

The answer is Natural Family Planning, the subject of a new promotional campaign launched by the Diocese of Allentown and aimed at young married couples who are thinking about when to start a family.

The centerpiece of the new communications is a two-minute video packed with information about the family planning method that works equally well for preventing pregnancy and for deciding when to have a baby.

"Starting a family is something that needs time, faith and planning," said Bob Olney, coordinator of the Diocesan Office of Marriage and Natural Family Planning.

"We encourage each couple to discern God's will for their family, and pursue his will in a life-respecting and morally acceptable way," Olney said.

He noted that even NFP cannot be morally used to permanently exclude children from marriage.

Natural Family Planning is:

- 100 percent natural – It protects the body from the harmful side effects of drugs, devices and chemicals.
- Cost-effective – It costs significantly less than birth control.
- Easy – It only takes a few minutes a day to observe, chart and interpret signs of fertility.
- Effective – It's 99.9 percent effective in achieving the intended outcome – either pregnancy or prevention.
- Life-respecting – It is morally acceptable and aligns with Catholic teachings.
- Good for marriages – It can help enhance a marriage and improve communication on many levels, including spiritual, physical, intellectual and emotional.

The campaign will appear on Diocese social media channels, and everyone is encouraged to share the posts with their



friends. The video is available on the new Natural Family Planning website, www.AllentownDiocese.org/nfp.

The Diocese offers more than 20 free

Natural Family Planning introductory classes, in locations across the Diocese, throughout the year. More information can be found on the diocesan website.

Good Friday Collection Benefits the Holy Land

On Good Friday, the Catholic Church throughout the world will take up the "Collection for the Holy Land." This special collection originated from the Popes' wishes to maintain a strong bond between the Holy Places of the Holy Land and all Christians of the world.

It is the main source of sustenance for life around the Holy Places, and is the tool through which the Custody of the Holy Land is able to sustain and carry forward the important mission to which it is called: to preserve the holy places, the stones of memory, and to favor the Christian presence, the living stones of the Holy Land, through many activities of solidarity, such as the maintenance of pastoral, educational, welfare, health and social structures.

The territories that benefit from the collection are Jerusalem, Palestine, Is-

rael, Jordan, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Turkey, Iran and Iraq.

As a rule, the Custody of the Holy Land receives the greater part of the collection, and what remains goes to the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, and is used for the formation of candidates for the priesthood, support of the clergy, scholastic activity, cultural formation, and subsidies to the different ecclesiastical circumscriptions in the Middle East.

In a recent letter sent to the bishops of the world, Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches, made an appeal for the support of the Good Friday collection:


"The outcry of thousands of persons [living in the Holy Land] who are deprived of everything, at times even of




their own human dignity, continues to reach us, heart-breaking us and inviting

us to embrace them through Christian charity, a sure source of hope."

ARE YOU READY?



Financial and Estate Planning for Women

Hosted by the  Diocese of Allentown

THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2019
6:00 pm- 8:00 pm
DeSales University • University Center

Small plates and sweets will be served

To reserve your spot today, email gdowney@allentowndiocese.org
or call Ginny Downey at (610) 871-5200 ext. 2244

We hope that you will join us for this FREE evening presentation that aspires to empower women with the principles of financial and estate planning!

Join panelists for a discussion about:

- How to become financially independent
- Charitable Giving
- What are some key legal aspects of estate planning
- What impact potential tax and estate changes could have on your finances
- The difference between wills and trusts
- How advanced estate planning strategies could make sense for your family
- What supporting documents you need to effectively plan



HOMBRES DEL REINO
Grupo de Hombres Regional del Lehigh Valley
DIOCESIS DE ALLENTOWN

Próximo Encuentro Regional de HOMBRES DEL REINO

Miércoles 24 de abril, 2019
Hora: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Presentador: : **Diácono Angelino Rodríguez**

Tema: **“La Vocación del Hombre: La Vida en el Espíritu”**
“La persona humana es la única criatura en la tierra a la que Dios ha amado por sí misma” (CIC 1703)


¡Todos los hombres son bienvenidos!

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920 S. 2nd St. Allentown, PA 18103

Contactos: **484-764-0679 / 610-730-5213**
Oficina de Asuntos Hispanos: **610-289-8900 ext. 2025**

“Sean santos, porque yo soy santo”. (1 Pe. 1, 16)

¡TE ESPERAMOS!  oha@allentowndiocese.org
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ALVERNIA UNIVERSITY

Interfaith Prayer Service and Fellowship


A Celebration of Interfaith Dialogue
President Tom Flynn shares his gratitude for the community

Friday, April 26, 2019
3 p.m. at the Physical Education Center

Featuring special guests
Fr. Mike Graham, S.J., President, Xavier University
Rabbi Brian Michelson, Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom
Elsayed Elmazouky, Islamic Center of Reading

Musical groups
Doxa Gospel Ensemble
Fajjr+Al
Alvernia University Chorus

Visit alvernia.edu for more information





Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Bethlehem, PA, seeks qualified organist/pianist/choral conductor to assume direction of established music program in the fall of 2019. This is a part-time position. Duties include but are not limited to: liturgy planning for all parish

liturgies; recruitment, conducting weekly rehearsals, directing, and serving as keyboardist for Adult Choir and Youth Choirs at the 10:00 Sunday liturgy and Christmas, Holy Week, Easter and Holy Day liturgies; keyboardist for weddings, funerals, Stations of the Cross during the Lenten season; overseeing the Contemporary Ensemble; recruitment, training, and scheduling of additional organists and cantors for Sunday 7:30 and 11:30 liturgies; serving as a member of the Liturgy Board; overseeing maintenance of a newly installed Allen organ and concert grand piano. Salary commensurate with experience and qualifications. Please send cover letter and curriculum vitae to abvmrect@ptd.net. EOE M/F/D/V



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DIVINE MERCY MASS SUNDAY, APRIL 28th

3:00 PM

**At Holy Rosary Church
237 Franklin Street
Reading, PA**

Mass & Chaplet
(A Plenary Indulgence may be obtained)
Mass fulfills Sunday obligation.

EVERYONE WELCOME!
Refreshments in Hall after Mass.
For information, please call 610-373-5579

NOVENA FOR THE DIVINE MERCY
BEGINS ON GOOD FRIDAY
Novena booklets can be obtained at Holy Rosary.

Sunday Scripture

Sunday, April 21
Easter Sunday

First reading
Acts of the Apostles 10:34a, 37-43
Responsorial Psalm
Psalms 118:1-2, 16ab-17, 22-23
Second Reading
Colossians 3:1-4
Gospel
John 20:1-9

Sunday, April 28
Second Sunday of Easter

First Reading
Acts of the Apostles 5:12-16
Responsorial Psalm
Psalms 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
Second Reading
Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19
Gospel
John 20:19-31

Prayers for Priests, Deacons, Vocations

Please kindly remember in your prayers all of the living and deceased priests and deacons of our Diocese. Please also pray for our seminarians and for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Prayer for the Perseverance of Vocations

O God, you have constituted your only-begotten Son supreme and eternal priest for the glory of your majesty and the salvation of mankind: grant that those whom he has chosen ministers and dispensers of his mysteries may be found faithful in fulfilling the ministry they have received. We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Serran Prayer for Vocations

O God, who wills not the death of a sinner but rather that he be converted and live, grant we beseech you, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, St. Joseph her spouse, St. Junipero Serra and all the saints, an increase of laborers for your Church, fellow laborers with Christ, to spend and consume themselves for souls through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

Recommended to Your Prayers by Pope Francis

Apostleship of Prayer Intention for May

Evangelization: That the Church in Africa, through the commitment of its members, may be the seed of unity among her peoples and a sign of hope for this continent.

The monthly intentions are also available on video, with a reflection, or download the app at <http://apostleshipofprayer.org>.

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Divine Mercy Sunday Celebration

Second Sunday of Easter – April 28, 2019

SS Peter & Paul Church
260 N. 3rd St., Lehigh, PA 18235



- CHURCH WILL OPEN AT 2:00 PM
- TIME FOR PRIVATE PRAYER
- CONFESSIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE
- EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT WILL BEGIN AT 2:30 PM
- READINGS FROM THE DIARY OF ST. FAUSTINA
- SINGING OF THE DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET
- BENEDICTION
- LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING IN OUR PARISH HALL



"I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners... On that day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment."

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Young Adults Gather for 'Vespers with the Bishop' on Laetare Sunday

By TAMI QUIGLEY
Staff writer

"I'm grateful to be with you this evening on Laetare Sunday – even in Lent, the Church calls us to rejoice, Easter is near," Bishop Alfred Schlert told young adults during "Vespers with the Bishop" March 31 at Holy Guardian Angels, Reading.

Young adults ages 18 to 35 were invited to a solemn vespers with the Bishop during the evening sponsored by the Diocesan Office of Youth, Young Adult and Family Ministry (OYYAFM).

Assisting Bishop Schlert were Father Robert Finlan, pastor of Holy Guardian Angels; and Father Mark Searles, director of the Diocesan Office for Vocations Promotion and chaplain of Allentown Central Catholic High School.

Providing music during vespers were cantor and organist Kolbe Eidle, younger brother of seminarian Keaton Eidle; and Franciscan Sister Martha Zammatore, liaison with the Diocesan Office of Prison Ministry, who alternated with Eidle on the organ.

David Yingling, parishioner of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton served as lector.

Confessions were available after the service.

Those attending included Mary Fran Hartigan, Diocesan Secretary of Catholic Life and Evangelization; Alexa Smith, director of OYYAFM; Father Stephan Isaac, assistant pastor of St. Ignatius Loyola, Sinking Spring and chaplain of Berks Catholic High School, Reading; and Rick Dooley, assistant director of the Diocesan Office of Adult Formation.

A social followed at the parish for an opportunity to meet Bishop Schlert. Alanna Boudreau provided music, and hors d'oeuvres by Boscov's Catering were provided for noshing during the time of fellowship.

"Even in our sinfulness, our Lord attends us, drawing us near," Bishop Schlert said in his homily.

The Bishop said Scripture and the teachings of the Church lead us to a joyfulness.

"It's not the kind of joy a child has opening presents on Christmas morning

"Tonight our rejoicing comes from the depths of faith, from knowing we have a loving father."



Bishop Alfred Schlert presides at "Vespers with the Bishop" March 31 at Holy Guardian Angels, Reading. (Photos by John Simitz)



Young adults raise their voices in song.

– that fades. It's not the joy of not having your bracket busted," he said, referring to March Madness. "It's not the kind of joy that's fleeting. It's the joy of knowing the Lord is near us, attends us."

Bishop Schlert said in the Gospel of the Prodigal Son we see how joy can be fleeting. The son who spent his inheritance, by grace came back; the faithful son felt put by the wayside. "The joy of the father is the joy we hope to have. The father loved both his sons, even in their sinfulness."

The Bishop said loneliness can be part of the life of millennials, and this leads to seeking joys that are fleeting and passing to assuage that loneliness.

"When there is faith, there is the joy we speak of tonight."

"Tonight our rejoicing comes from the depths of faith, from knowing we have a loving father," said Bishop Schlert.

"It's important for each of us to have a spirit of joy, which leads to faithfulness, which leads to hope."

The Bishop said today's world is increasingly cynical, and people are divided.

"Tonight we offer to the Lord our joyfulness, and in return ask him to always make us faithful to him ... and be the joyful person we were created to be."



Right, David Yingling, parishioner of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton, serves as lector.

The Bishop thanked Father Finlan for opening the parish to vespers, and to OYYAFM for organizing the event.

"Thanks to all of you who have come out tonight on this Sunday of rejoicing to worship God in the Liturgy of the Hours."

Vespers, also called Evening Prayer, is part of the Liturgy of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office. In the Liturgy of the Hours, the Church fulfills Jesus' command to "pray always" (Luke 18:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:17). Through this prayer, the people of God sanctify the day by continual praise of God and prayers of intercession for the needs of the world.

The Liturgy of the Hours includes several specified times of prayer. The most important times, called the "hinge hours," are Morning Prayer (which takes place upon the rising), and Evening Prayer (which takes place as dusk begins to fall).

The other hours are the Office of Readings (a service with a biblical read-

Please see VESPERS page 10 ▶▶



Bishop Schlert greets Erin Trautmann, parishioner of St. Joseph the Worker, Orefield, after the service.



Enjoying the social are, from left: Father Stephan Isaac; Ann Bartolacci and Steven Thomas, parishioners of St. Jane; Abby and Jim Maria, parishioners of St. Ignatius Loyola, Sinking Spring; and Yingling. Jim and Abby Maria are the son and daughter-in-law of Deacon John Maria, transitional deacon serving at the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown.

Theology on Tap to Discuss 'Gender and God's Plan for Humanity'

"Gender and God's Plan for Humanity" will be discussed at the next "Theology on Tap Monday, May 13 at 7 p.m. at Hops at the Paddock, 1945 W. Columbia St., Allentown.

In a culture where gender is regarded as a social construct rather than a biological reality, it is easy to lose sight of the beauty of the sexes and the role of complementarity in God's plan.

Join us as Sister GERALYN SCHMIDT of the Diocese of Harrisburg discusses gender theory from the perspective of the foundation of the human person.

The monthly series is sponsored by the Diocesan Office of Youth, Young Adult and Family Ministry (OYYAFM).

The series is designed to welcome married or single young adults ages 21 to 35 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 beverages can be ordered from the menu at the event site.

For more information, visit www.allentowndiocese.org/tot or email Alexa Smith at asmith@allentowndiocese.org.



Logos and Lagers for Berks Young Adults

Join Berks County Young Adults for their Bible Study group, Logos and Lagers.

The group meets the first Thursday of each month from 7 to 8:30 p.m. to discuss the Mass readings for the upcoming weekend, followed by food and fellow-

ship at a local establishment.

The next meeting will be May 2 at St. Ignatius Loyola, Sinking Spring.

For more information, go to Facebook page "Logos and Lagers: A Catholic Bible Study for Young Adults in Berks County."



Inklings Young Adult Book Club to Discuss 'The Story of a Soul'

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 book club for young adult Catholics ages 21 to 35, meets once a month to explore a classic

through the lens of Catholicism.

The next meeting will be Friday, April 26 at 7 p.m., at a location to be announced.

The discussion will be on "The Story of a Soul" by St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

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

Logos and Lagers
A Catholic Bible Study for Young Adults in Berks County

First Thursday Every Month 7:00—8:30 PM
St. Ignatius Loyola Parish, John Paul II Room
2810 St. Albans Drive, Reading

Vespers

►Continued from page 9

ing and a reading from the Fathers or Church writers or a reading related to a saint which may take place at any time of day), a Daytime Prayer (which may take place at midmorning, midday or midafternoon), and Night Prayer (said before going to sleep.)

Bishops, priests, deacons and many men and women in consecrated life pray the Liturgy of the Hours each day. Their work is organized around this prayer, which orients their daily living of their vocations.

Lay people are encouraged to pray the Liturgy of the Hours as well, especially Morning and Evening Prayer. Many parishes in the United States schedule communal Morning and Evening Prayer on a regular basis.

Evening Prayer gives thanks for the day just past and makes an evening sacrifice of praise to God (Psalm 141:1).

Homeschool Mass May 10

There will be a Diocesan Homeschool Mass celebrated by Bishop Alfred Schlert Friday, May 10 at 10:30 a.m. at the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown.

Mass will be followed by a reception with light refreshments.

Homeschool families are encouraged to attend.

For questions, call Kevin Damitz at 610-437-3491.



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Presented by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service Committee of the Diocese of Allentown

Lenten Reflection for Men: The Church Needs Your Masculinity

By JOSEPH NICOLELLO
Special to The A.D. Times

A record number of men packed into the basement of the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown on a beautiful March morning, sharing in conversation, freshly baked donuts and coffee, in preparation for Bishop of Allentown Alfred Schlert to give a Lenten talk upstairs in the Cathedral, followed by Father Bernard Ezaki.

Whereas years prior had seen a normal crowd size ranging between 65 and 100 men, this year saw 165 registered and in attendance.

Deacon Mike Doncsecz led with morning prayer. He prayed for the greater glory of God to be with all the Diocesan men in attendance and across the land, in thought and in deed:

“Teach us to be leaders in our homes, in our communities, at work and in our church.”

The second speaker was Cristian Rojas, who had a pivotal hand in putting the morning’s events together. Rojas advocated the need for men both of youth and experience, of all backgrounds, ignited by love of the faith.

Rojas had the pews in stitches as he recounted how precisely he’d been led to do so, relating a late-night post-pregnancy McDonald’s run – where he both forgot his wallet and bumped into Bishop Schlert.

“It was there, at McDonald’s, that Bishop Schlert not only paid for my cheeseburgers, but told me, ‘I want you to serve on the Commission for Men.’ And when the Bishop says something, you do



Father Bernard Ezaki addresses attendees during a Lenten Reflection for Men March 9 at the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown. (Photos by John Simitz)

it.”

The morning crowd smilingly nodded in approval.

Ascending the ambo, Bishop Schlert read from the Book of Sirach. He then spoke on how this Lenten season we must focus on something unspoken of these days.

“The quote from Sirach speaks about shaking the wheat until the husks are shaken out,” said Bishop Schlert. “Isn’t that really the purpose of Lent? To spiritually examine our lives and see what husks of sin have to be eliminated.”

He pointed out, “The ruggedness of Lent can especially appeal to the masculin-

linity of men.

“The Church needs men’s masculinity as much as the Church needs the femininity of women. Both complement each other and are equal in the life of the Church.

“The model of men as provider and protector is still valid. Too often in society, there is a denial of this role. Society devalues this aspect to our detriment.”

Bishop Schlert used two examples: “In 1912, when the Titanic was sinking, it was ‘women and children first.’ One hundred years later, in 2012, the Costa Concordia capsized off the coast of Italy. While many passengers died, the captain abandoned his ship and fled to shore. Which example of masculinity best serves society?”

“Masculinity, virtuously lived, is necessary in our society. It is not ‘toxic,’ but rather fulfills an essential role in the marriage, in family, in the Church and in our nation.

“Never be ashamed of being properly masculine. It is how God made you, and how he calls you to serve him on earth.”

Father Ezaki spoke next, with a talk centered on five Lenten pillars:

1. Spiritual benefits. “By saying no we increase our ability to turn away from illegitimate pleasures. Satan himself thought Jesus would be at his weakest at the end of his 40-day fast – Satan was wrong.”

2. Help us to appreciate the bless-

ings we normally take for granted. “In this way we can relish what we have and learn gratefulness. The evil one hates gratitude.”

3. Fasting, abstinence make us more compassionate (to others and as humans altogether). “St. Teresa of Avila loved pears. During Lent she kept one all day on her desk. When asked why she would torture herself so, she responded, ‘If I cannot resist a pear, how will I resist Satan?’”

4. Rid ourselves of self-deception of self-sufficiency. “We are dependent on other human beings – even bread and wine are social products.”

5. Blessing from above. “We empty ourselves out for blessings the way a whaling ship used to make way for capture by doing away with the ballast.”

“And so with these pillars established we have also five fingers with which to give the devil a big, fat knuckle sandwich.”

In closing, attendees were left with these illuminating words from Deacon Anthony Campanell:

“May the ashes of Ash Wednesday turn into the fire of the Holy Spirit in our hearts to bring masculinity back into the Church, society, and further bring others to encounter Jesus Christ, both leading by example and walking alongside our families, brothers and sisters in the faith, and God Almighty. Amen.”



Deacon Mike Doncsecz welcomes the men to the morning event.



Cristian Rojas talks to the group about the Commission for Men, which sponsored the Lenten event.



Men listen during the talk by Bishop Alfred Schlert.



Father Ezaki chats with Roy D'Ginto, left, and Tim Haring.

Despite Criticism from Pro-Abortion

Catholic Pro-Life Commitment Extends Far Beyond the Womb

By TAMI QUIGLEY
Staff writer

The Catholic Church is committed to the pro-life cause of preventing the loss of life through abortion.

Many who are pro-abortion criticize the Church and other pro-lifers

as caring only for the unborn child and not for the woman or the child once he or she is born.

But the Church's commitment extends far beyond the womb, to help babies and children in their young lives. And in the Diocese of Allentown, there are an array of organizations to do just that.

Diocesan Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns

As part of the Diocesan Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization, the Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns coordinates activities and programs within the Diocese and assists parishes in implementing pro-life activities, including educational, pastoral, public policy programs, and prayer and worship.

The office partners with the Knights of Columbus to sponsor the annual "Stand Up for Life" essay contest each January, and participates in the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. and the March for Life in Reading.

Mary Fran Hartigan is secretary of the Diocesan Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization and director of the Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns. For more information, contact mhartigan@allentowndiocese.org or 610-289-8900 ext. 2026, or visit www.allentowndiocese.org/pro-life-and-social-concerns.

DIOCESE OF ALLENTOWN

Stand Up For Life

Abortion Statistics

Pennsylvania's Abortion Control Act requires that the State Department of Health prepare and distribute annually a comprehensive report on abortion. The report for 2017 was released in late December 2018.

Mary Fran Hartigan, secretary of the Diocesan Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization and director of the Office of Pro-Life Activities and Social Concerns, shared the summary of the report, which states there were 30,011 abortions in 2017 – a decrease of 870 from the prior year. It is also the lowest number of abortions ever recorded in Pennsylvania. The highest number was 65,777 abortions in 1980.

The largest age group having abortions was 20-24 (30.1 percent) of all abortions. But there were 810 abortions committed on minors under 18, including 10 on girls 12 and under.

Approximately 43 percent (12,865) of abortions were committed on African-American women. This remarkably high number remains a serious cause for concern as only about 6 percent of women in Pennsylvania are of African-American descent.

Every county in Pennsylvania had at least one resident who had an abortion in 2017 with Philadelphia having the highest number, accounting for 39 percent of all abortions (11,140). The county with the second highest number was Allegheny (3,120). Bradford and Sullivan had the fewest with two each.

Of all counties, 32 (47.8 percent) showed a decrease in abortions from the previous year.

In 2017 there were 11,496 medical (non-surgical) abortions. This number continues to increase each year (in 2016 that number was 11,420).

In addition, 1,627 of the surgical abortions were by the dilation and evacuation (D & E) method. A D & E abortion is generally committed in the second trimester and actually involves dismembering the child in the womb and then removing the fetal parts. It is a barbaric act prohibited in SB 3, which was vetoed by the governor at the end of 2017.

Also, 14,172 abortions (47 percent) were on women who had at least one prior abortion, with 1,082 of these women having had four or more prior abortions.

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Allentown

"Catholic Charities, Diocese of Allentown has a Pregnancy and Parenting Support Services program that provides guidance, understanding, and support to women, men, and families during and after pregnancy in exploring the positive options of parenting and adoption," said

Rob Nicolella, interim executive director of Catholic Charities and county administrator of Catholic Charities' Lehigh-Northampton Counties Office, Allentown.

"These services are available to any person within the Diocese of Allentown."

The services to be provided are: problem-solving and decision-making guidance; free, confidential pregnancy test; pregnancy support counseling and education; assistance with baby-related items (as available); adoption planning; parenting support; and referrals for pre- and post-natal care.

Nicolella said Catholic Charities recently hired a new employee to increase the ability to provide Pregnancy and Parenting Support to all five counties. "Sister Bernardine Lomema comes to us from the Sisters of the Precious Blood," said Nicolella.

Contact the county offices of Catholic Charities to schedule an appointment: Berks, 610-376-7144; Lehigh-Northampton, 610-435-1541; and Schuylkill Carbon, 570-628-0466; or email Teri Dakuginow, tdakuginow@allentowndiocese.org.

Adoption services, offered in all offices, provides home studies and placement services for infants; Search and Reunion requests accepted from adult adoptees. Contact Teri Dakuginow, programs director, tdakuginow@allentowndiocese.org.



Mary Hoban, right, discusses stress and positive parenting skills during a Pregnancy Support Parenting Workshop in 2011 that was also attended by Bishop John Barres, then Bishop of Allentown, third from right, and Father Brian Miller, now pastor of St. Joseph, Frackville and chaplain of Marian High School, Tamaqua, left. (File photo)

Catholic Charities also provides mental health counseling free of charge to Catholic schools, and has a community center that runs programs and events for children.

Love Saves Lives Baby Shower

Pro-lifers gathered July 29, 2018 to celebrate lives in a special way by throwing a Love Saves Lives Baby Shower for several women who chose not to abort their babies through the prayerful efforts of these pro-life groups who pray outside of Planned Parenthood.

This shower, as was a similar one held Oct. 22, 2016, was held at the Quakertown home of Christopher and Maggie Sweet, regional coordinator of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign in the Lehigh Valley.

Maggie Sweet and her husband have two parishes. They spend time at Holy Infancy, Bethlehem, where her parents are parishioners, and their local parish, St. Agnes, Quakertown, Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

The pro-life campaigns that gave the shower were Lehigh Valley Pro-Life Futures, Helpers of God's Precious Infants, Silent No More Awareness Campaign in the Le-

Please see SHOWER page 13 ►►



Marisol, one of the young women in whose honor the baby shower was given, with her baby daughter. (Photo courtesy of Maggie Sweet)



Karliss, one of the young women in whose honor the baby shower was given, gave birth to a baby boy. Another young woman, Yjaira, had a baby girl but could not attend the shower. (Photo courtesy of Maggie Sweet)

Shower

►►Continued from page 12

high Valley, 40 Days for Life, Rachel's Vineyard and Pennsylvanians for Human Life. This is love put into action, which demonstrates the care for women who are in a vulnerable situation," said Hartigan.

"Praise God. His graces continue to pour out upon the Lehigh Valley's Gospel of Life campaigns," said Sweet.

Sweet said early in 2018, Jeanne Mancini, president of March for Life, discussed how the 45th annual March for Life's theme, "Love Saves Lives," embodies the mission of the pro-life movement.

"Choosing life is not always easy, but it is the loving, empowering and self-sacrificial option. Love is universally attractive because it is directed toward others. Love is what we all strive for because deep-down we are all drawn to give of ourselves in this way. Love saves lives in countless ways," said Mancini.

"And so it has," Sweet said. "With prayers, daily Mass and frequent visitation to the Eucharist, we had four women turn away from Planned Parenthood in Allentown, choosing life."

"This past spring the 40 Days for Life campaign united together elevating this year's theme by bringing it to the source and summit where love truly begins ... in the Holy Eucharist."

"It's not so much that four babies were saved, it's more like 'wow,' how God's presence was truly felt even among the unbelievers – from abortion-minded women, asking us to remove ourselves from their sight – to choosing life within minutes of counseling, and wondering how this type of love could exist."

Speaking of the July 29 baby shower, Sweet said the pro-life groups came together to "shower these families with a love they will never forget ... a baby shower."

"This year we began with a live performance from the beautiful Gilbert family, 'Sing for America,' opening with the Star Spangled Banner as children waved their



Volunteers gather at the baby shower, from left, Jessica Herr, Maggie Sweet, Kathleen Malek and Melissa Dziemitko. (Photo courtesy of Maggie Sweet)



Sing For America shares its gift of music at the shower, from left, Teara, Tasia and Taryn Gilbert. (Photo courtesy of Maggie Sweet)

flags," Sweet said.

In addition to snow cones, there were plenty of games and activities for all the children, such as the cow milking contest, face painting, arts and crafts, and swimming. Sweet said several of these children even volunteered their time as lifeguards.

Sweet said several vendors who have found a way to work from home and still evangelize the Gospel of Life were invited, such as Theresa Shemanski (coordinator of 40 Days for Life in the LV/Berkshire Hathaways), Anne Foose (pro-life speaker, Young Living Oils) and Sal Rizzo (Pennsylvanians for Human Life).

Each of the mothers received brand new cribs, car seats, high chairs, play pens, strollers, baby clothes and enough diapers to last an entire year. "This year we even had a donation room full of clothing for each of the families," Sweet said.

"It's been several years these campaigns have been sharing this type of love for mothers who choose life. In each event they discover ideas networking with other campaigns in counties like Bucks, Montgomery and Berks."

"Not only were families restored, but one post-abortive mother in attendance signed up for hope and healing with Rachel's Vineyard," Sweet said. "Also in attendance were previous Planned Parenthood workers who have also joined our campaign as their newfound 'best friends.'"

"A profound thank you to our dear Lord and the entire community for your generosity and support."

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock, and it will be open to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened," Sweet said, quoting Matthew 7:7-8.

Mary's Shelter, Reading and Cay Galgon Center, Bethlehem

Mary's Shelter and the Cay Galgon Center – now known as the Cay Galgon Life House – are residences for pregnant, homeless young women. Galgon, the Bethlehem site's namesake, was a champion for the unborn and those with learning disabilities.

Christine Folk, executive director of Mary's Shelter, said the shelter opened in 1995 and moved to its new building at 615 Kenhorst Blvd., Reading in March 2018.

In 2018 it housed 41 expectant young women, their newborns and 28 toddlers; through Provide Pantry services (clothing, formula, diapers, etc.) helped over 800 low-income families; and as site of the Greater Berks Diaper Bank served 165 low-income families, providing diapers for 455 children ages 2 and older.

Mary's Shelter started YESS (Youth Empowerment Supportive Services) program Jan. 10, 2019, which provides emergency shelter housing to homeless and runaway youth ages 14 to 17. Mary's Shelter offers Drop-in-Center services on Mondays and Wednesdays.

The Cay Galgon Center, Bethlehem opened in 2012. In 2018 it housed 11 expectant young women, their newborns and five toddlers; and through Provide Pantry services helped over 400 low-income families.

Contact Mary's Shelter at 610-603-8010, chris@marysshelter.org or <https://marysshelter.org/>.

Contact the Cay Galgon Life House at 610-867-9546, cgc@marysshelter.org or <https://www.caygalgonlifehouse.org/>.



A baby who was helped by Mary's Shelter, Reading. (Lynn Rose Photography)

Client Story from Mary's Shelter

'I feel safe, and I feel loved'

The following is a client story from Mary's Shelter (name changed).

"My name is Maria. I am 21 years old and three months pregnant. When I first found out, I was actually excited. I had been with my boyfriend for over a year and I thought this would cement the relationship. I thought he would be excited. That was my dream world, then reality hit. He was not excited, and he wanted me to 'take care of the problem.'"

"I said, 'It's a baby, not a problem,' and the arguing began. I came home one day to find my things in the hall and the locks changed."

"I called my family who said, 'You're an adult now, grow up and take care of it yourself.' All I thought was 'it' is a baby. I stayed with a friend for a few weeks but was asked to leave when I lost my job. I couldn't contribute money anymore."

"No one wanted to hear excuses about doctor's appointments or morning sickness, which lasted all day. They weren't excuses, I felt exhausted and awful all the time. How could this be happening to me? Unemployed, homeless, pregnant and alone, I just cried all the time. I really wanted this baby, but...."

"Then one day on the bus, a young girl and her baby got on and smiled at me. The baby, 6 months old, was so cute. I just started to cry. The girl asked me what was wrong, and I blurted out everything between sobs. She smiled at me

Please see SAFE page 14 ►►

Safe

►Continued from page 13

again and said, 'I have just the place.'

"She told me she had lived at Mary's Shelter and everything they did for her. She

then grabbed my hand and wrote the number on my palm saying, 'this way you won't lose it.' As she got off the bus she yelled back, 'Call them.' I rode the bus for a whole circuit, thinking, crying, smiling and staring at my palm.

"I called Mary's Shelter the next day, and the person who answered was so nice. I told my story (between sobs again) and she just listened and let me get through it. I got an interview that afternoon. I do not know what my future holds, but for the first time in a long time I feel safe, and I feel loved."

Lifeline of Berks County

Lifeline of Berks County, Inc. is a pregnancy center started by lay Catholics in 1972 to assist women facing an unplanned pregnancy.

"In the beginning, women would go to homes in the city and county to provide pregnancy tests and peer support, along with material items that women needed to choose life for themselves and their children," said Stephanie Giles, executive director of Lifeline and parishioner of Sacred Heart, West Reading.

Father Stephan Isaac, assistant pastor of St. Ignatius Loyola, Sinking Spring, is a Lifeline board member.

Each year, Lifeline serves approximately 600 women. In 2017, Lifeline provided material services 872 times to its clients and referrals to 511 of its clients for community services that Lifeline does not provide.

Lifeline continues to serve women facing an unplanned pregnancy from its office at 612 Reading Ave., West Reading, PA 19611.

"For 48 years, the Lifeline staff has provided free services thanks largely to the Catholic community in Berks County," Giles said.

Lifeline offers an array of services, all at no charge, including urine pregnancy tests with verification from a nurse so clients can get health insurance; and ultrasound confirmation of pregnancy for women who are considering abortion or who are at-risk of considering abortion due to life circumstances.

There is options education where Lifeline is able to help the client see the risks of abortion (medical and emotional), as well as education about life-affirming alternatives to abortion, including adoption.

Clients are able to find out what information they need to make the best decision for themselves and their babies, and they are given space to think about their values, hopes and dreams, and to be listened to. Clients are shown the support that is available in the community and at the center to parent their children.

There is also one-on-one mentoring to assist the client in putting together a support system before the baby is born. That often includes helping a client see her strengths and opportunities within her family and community. It can mean working on relationships with family members or the father of the baby, and learning skills like budgeting, creating nutritious meals, goal-setting and planning.

"We offer prayer and spiritual counseling to clients who desire it and help clients assess the current state of their faith life. More than half of our clients have no faith life," Giles said.

Lifeline offers parenting education and classes, referrals to local medical providers for care to increase healthy pregnancy outcomes, prenatal vitamins for mothers throughout their pregnancies and during breastfeeding, and testing for gonorrhea and chlamydia with referral for treatment.



The pantry at Lifeline of Berks County is filled with supplies for expectant mothers. (Photo courtesy of Stephanie Giles)

"This allows us to assess a client's sexual behavior and educate them about the risks," Giles said. "It also offers an opportunity to teach clients about the benefits of chastity as a way of life that will prevent pregnancy and disease while simultaneously providing time to improve relationships – romantic and all others – set goals, and make plans to achieve them."

"Sexual integrity education includes fertility education, not as a means of spacing births (we refer for that when needed) but to teach women how their bodies work and the impact of their reproductive health on their social, emotional, and spiritual health," Giles said.

"It also includes education and mentoring to improve relationships, seek true reproductive health that will promote health and future fertility, and understand the risks of contraceptives and encourage the practice of chastity."

Lifeline provides material services like food, formula, diapers, clothing, and other baby furniture and accessories. For women who have had an abortion and feel that it has impacted their lives negatively and are seeking healing, it provides abortion recovery services.

For those in the community who would like to volunteer, Lifeline has the following opportunities: processing donations (clean, sort and prepare) to get them from donor to client; development volunteers to join the banquet or golf committees and help raise funds to empower women to choose life; parish liaisons who can keep the brochures stocked at their churches, inform Lifeline of needs at their parish that Lifeline can fill, and help Lifeline with events at their church.

Also, event volunteers at the banquet, golf and baby bottle events; pantry volunteers to box up food for clients; layette volunteers to put together layettes for Lifeline's expecting clients; church groups to work with Lifeline in putting together ongoing community support to help families get to know Jesus Christ while making changes in their lives; and church groups to provide gifts that show women how precious they are in God's eyes and to encourage them to choose life.

"As Catholics, we know that all lives are sacred and must be protected from conception to natural death. Lifeline is on the front line of that seamless garment, and we know that hearts and minds must be changed for our culture to change," Giles said.

Contact Lifeline at 610-374-8545, sgiles@lifelineofberks.org or www.lifelineofberks.org.



Debbie Baker, director of client services at Lifeline of Berks County, Reading, teaches a parenting class. (Photo courtesy of Stephanie Giles)

Client Story from Lifeline

'She cried to see her child moving and very much alive'

Stephanie Giles, executive director of Lifeline and parishioner of Sacred Heart, West Reading, shared the following client story from Lifeline.

"Princess M walked into our office and requested an ultrasound. Debbie (a staff member) explained to her that an ultrasound was a medical procedure and that we would need to have a positive pregnancy test and talk about her situation and options first. Debbie took her back to her office to get information and to listen to her story.

"Debbie found that Princess M was happy about the life inside her but not happy about her current situation. She and the baby's father had been together for two years, but over the last year he had changed and become abusive to her. Debbie discussed future goals with Princess M and found that she wanted to have children in the future. Debbie and Princess M discussed the impact of the abortion decision on her reproductive health and Princess M didn't want to risk future problems by having an abortion now.

"In subsequent visits, Princess M voiced conflicting thoughts about her relationship with the baby's father; she knew it was not a healthy one. He wanted her to give up her goal to own her own business, and he began separating her from her friends.

"At the same time, her aunt who was a mentor to her was pressuring her to abort her baby so she could focus on her career. Princess M wanted to parent her baby, and Debbie became her initial support system. At 12 weeks, Princess M saw her little one again during an ultrasound visit, and she cried to see her child moving and very much alive.

"Debbie and Princess M continued to meet and talk about healthy relationships. Debbie gave information to the baby's father about fatherhood and the importance of his role in the baby's life. Within a few months, he became excited to become a father. Debbie provided continued support and material services to Princess M. When Princess M gave birth to her son, she brought him to visit with Debbie.

"Princess M has not yet achieved all of her goals, but her son has a father who is involved in his life and she works nights to save money for the store she wants to open. She will do it, too because she is working for a little prince who has brought her great joy."

You Are Not Alone (YANA)



Sister Janice holds baby Savannah, whose family celebrated her life with the help of the You Are Not Alone Ministry. (File photo)

You Are Not Alone Ministry is available in the Diocese of Allentown to support those of any faith who are facing a poor prenatal diagnosis, which carries with it feelings of fear and uncertainty.

Some parents debate whether to carry to term, knowing their child will face severe medical challenges.

According to Sister Janice Marie Johnson, a Sister of Mercy and director of the diocesan Office for Ministry with Persons with Disabilities, five couples and two individuals from various parts of the Diocese have been trained as peer ministers, a network of concerned parents and professionals who have experienced or worked closely with issues surrounding poor prenatal diagnosis.

The free service of practical guidelines and compassionate care focuses on meeting the needs of expectant parents as they seek to honor the life of their baby, no matter how frail or how brief that life may be.

The ministry provides resource materials, assistance with birth plans, and referrals to other community-based services and support groups.

To expectant parents the ministry offers unique insight and sensitivity regarding such difficult issues as mourning the loss of the anticipated baby, maintain hope when a prognosis is poor, medical decision making during pregnancy and beyond, still birth, and neonatal critical care.

Sister Janice said information on the ministry has been distributed to hospital chaplains and maternal fetal medicine divisions of hospitals throughout the Diocese, ob-gyn offices, college campus ministers, high schools, retreat centers and Knights

You Are Not Alone Ministry



of Columbus councils. Information was also placed in bulletin inserts, and cards and posters were placed in parishes.

In addition, volunteers have made blankets and booties to give to parents for their little angels to wear, no matter how long they are here.

Information is also available in Spanish.

"Some parents debate whether to carry to term, knowing their child will possibly face severe medical challenges," Sister Janice said.

"The free service of practical guidelines and compassionate care focuses on meeting the needs of expectant parents as they seek to honor the life of their baby, no matter how frail or how brief that life may be," said Sister Janice.

"One expectant mother, whose baby's early prenatal diagnosis was Down syndrome, actually did not give birth to a baby with this syndrome. Her baby girl's original diagnosis was incorrect. Imagine if the mother had not carried this gift of life to term."

YANA is under the auspices of the Diocesan Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization.

For support contact Sister Janice, 610-289-8900 ext. 245, jjohnson@allentowndiocese.org. Information is also available at www.allentowndiocese.org/pwd.

Special Learning Centers

Sister Janice said the three special learning centers in the Diocese are another way the Diocese supports children after they have been given life.

The Diocese offers three special learning centers designed for students with intellectual, developmental or learning disabilities that require more than the support available in the traditional classroom: John Paul II Center for Special Learning, Shil-

lington; Mercy School for Special Learning, Allentown; and St. Joseph Center for Special Learning, Shillington.

For more information on registration and admission, call the Office of Education, 610-866-0581.

Services Planned for Divine Mercy Sunday

The first Sunday after Easter, this year April 28, the Feast of Divine Mercy will be celebrated throughout the Diocese.

Pope John Paul II established this feast at the canonization of St. Faustina April 30, 2000, and the official decree from the Sacred Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments came just days later on May 5, 2000.

Not only did he establish this Feast of Divine Mercy, but he died on the vigil of that feast, just five years later on April 2, 2005.

The Feast of Divine Mercy is preceded by participation in a Novena of Chaplets to the Divine Mercy. For more information, visit website www.divinemercysunday.com.

Locations in the Diocese that have announced Divine Mercy Sunday services are below.

Holy Rosary, 237 Franklin St., Reading – 3 p.m., Mass and Chaplet of Divine Mercy (a plenary indulgence may be obtained), Mass fulfills Sunday obligation, refreshments after Mass in hall, novena for the Divine Mercy begins on Good Friday, novena booklets can be obtained at the parish, 610-373-5579.

St. Ignatius Loyola, 2810 St. Albans Drive, Sinking Spring – Divine Mercy Sunday Devotion, Eucharistic Adoration 2 p.m., talk by Father Stephan Isaac 2:30 p.m., Divine Mercy Chaplet 3 p.m.; novena prayer and chaplet will begin publicly in the church April 19 and end Saturday, April 27; participants may start novena and chaplet on their own April 19-21; Di-

vine Mercy pamphlets available in parish office; 610-678-3767, www.stignatius-reading.org.

St. Jane Frances de Chantal, 4049 Hartley Ave., Easton – Divine Mercy Sunday, Mass noon; Eucharistic adoration and confessions 1 p.m.; Divine Mercy Chaplet sung by St. Jane Choir 3 p.m., followed by Eucharistic Procession and closing with Benediction; Divine Mercy Chaplet booklets will be available in the gathering space; easy access for the disabled; confessions also Saturday, April 27, 3:45-4:45 p.m., before 5 p.m. Mass; 610-253-3553, www.stjanesofeastonpa.com.

St. Joseph the Worker, 1879 Applewood Road, Orefield – 2:30 p.m., 610-395-2876, www.stjw.org.

St. Matthew the Evangelist, 139 Spruce St., Minersville – Divine Mercy Devotions, 3 p.m., Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Scripture Service, Sung Chaplet of the Divine Mercy, Benediction; confessions begin 2 p.m.; Monsignor William Handges, pastor emeritus, St. Peter, Coplay, will be guest confessor, homilist and presider; first class relic of St. Faustina will be offered for veneration at conclusion of services; 570-544-2211, www.stmatthewtheevangelistparish.org.

SS. Peter and Paul, 260 N. Third St., Lehighton – Divine Mercy Sunday Celebration, church opens 2 p.m., time for private prayer, confessions available; Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 2:30 p.m.; readings from the diary of St. Faustina, singing of Divine Mercy Chap-



let, Benediction, followed by light refreshments in parish hall, 610-377-3690,

www.peterandpaulchurch.com.

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat for Anyone Seeking Healing After Abortion

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat, an intimate spiritual journey for anyone seeking healing after abortion, will be the week-end of June 21-23.

In a safe, supportive, nonjudgmental environment, you can focus on this painful time in your life and enter into the process of healing. Through Scripture readings, guided meditations, and activities flowing from the meditations, you can experience God's compassion and forgiveness.

Deadline for registration is Thursday, June 13.

For registration information, contact Sister Meg Cole at 1-866-3 RACHEL (toll free), 610-332-0442 ext. 2019 or projectrachel@allentowndiocese.org.

For information about the retreat experience, visit the national website, www.rachelsvineyard.org.

*An intimate spiritual journey for anyone
seeking healing after abortion*

June 21-23, 2019

In a safe, supportive, non-judgmental environment you can focus on this painful time in your life and enter into the process of healing. Through scripture readings, guided meditations, and activities flowing from the meditations you can experience God's compassion and forgiveness.



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Cardinal Ribat Brings Lenten Message and Gratitude to Holy Family

By TARA CONNOLLY
Staff writer

"We must pray for true repentance, changes of minds and changes of heart so Lent will be a fruitful blessing in the Church," said Cardinal John Ribat, archbishop of Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, March 24 at Holy Family, Nazareth.

Cardinal Ribat, the first member of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to be named a cardinal, celebrated Mass at the parish, which has been served by MSC priests for most of its history.

Bishop of Allentown Alfred Schlert was the principal concelebrant. Concelebrants were Father Joseph Tobias, pastor; Father Richard Kennedy, USA Provincial Superior of MSC, Aurora, Illinois; and visiting priests.

Cardinal Ribat, who was named a cardinal of Papua New Guinea in 2016 by Pope Francis, is under age 80 and eligible to vote in papal conclaves. He told the faithful how he received the news of his new appointment.

After conferring the sacrament of confirmation at a local parish, he said he returned home to rest, only to get a call from a nuncio telling him he was on his way to see him.

"I immediately started to wonder what I did wrong," said Cardinal Ribat.

The nuncio and then-Bishop Ribat discussed diocesan business before he learned Pope Francis had named him one of 17 new cardinals.

"I was shocked. I was silent. I didn't know what to say. This was never in my mind," he said.

"I also thought, if it's God's will – he will give me strength," said Cardinal Ribat.

He told the faithful that during the era of the Early Church, parish priests in Rome used to elect the pope due to prox-



Cardinal John Ribat, archbishop of Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, second from left, celebrates Mass at Holy Family, Nazareth. Concelebrants are, from left: Father Richard Kennedy, USA Provincial Superior of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Aurora, Illinois; Bishop of Allentown Alfred Schlert; Father Joseph Tobias, pastor; and Father Ben Fleming, Port Moresby Diocese vicar general. (Photos by John Simitz)

imity and said he was honored to be part of a strongly connected global church.

With an estimated two million Catholics in Papua New Guinea, the country is divided into 19 dioceses and four archdioceses. Cardinal Ribat oversees more than 200,000 Catholics facing threats from rising sea levels and undersea mining for valuable metals.

In his homily, Cardinal Ribat said climate change has affected Papua New Guinea and noted the Carteret Islands have been facing rising sea levels for more than two decades and decreasing their size.

"Our survival and existence is in danger," he told the faithful.

Thanking the faithful and the MSC community for supporting the Archdiocese of Port Moresby, he said their con-

tributions have brought aid to the region, helped build schools and health care centers, and provided seminarian education for future priests.

"Thank you to all of you in the United States. You have been very generous supporters in the work of MSC priests in their mission," said Cardinal Ribat.

Father Tobias said Cardinal Ribat's visit was in conjunction with his role as a member of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. The dicastery promotes the values of justice, peace and the care of creation in accordance with the Gospel message.

"His visit shows the universality of the Church. And this celebration shows the beauty of the Holy Family community," he said.

During Cardinal Ribat's pastoral visit, he also celebrated Mass and met with guests and MSC sisters March 25 at the MSC Motherhouse, Reading.

The MSC order of men founded the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus who established their Motherhouse in Reading in 1908. It is the headquarters for the United States Province of MSC, which includes Mexico.

The celebration observed the Feast of the Annunciation and Foundation Day for the MSC Sisters who celebrated its 119th anniversary of the order's founding in Germany.



Cardinal Ribat preaches the homily at Holy Family during his pastoral visit to the United States.



Above, children from the religious education class welcome Cardinal Ribat to Holy Family.

Right, Cardinal Ribat, right, meets with Father Kennedy, left, and Bishop Schlert during his visit to Holy Family.

Padre Pio Centre to Present Play About St. Faustina

The National Centre for Padre Pio in Barto will present "Faustina: Messenger of Divine Mercy," a one-woman play by acclaimed producer Leonardo DeFilippis of St. Luke Productions, Friday, May 3 at 7 p.m.

In "Faustina: Messenger of Divine Mercy" audiences experience firsthand the spirit and life of Polish mystic St. Faustina, whose personal encounters with Jesus have inspired a world-wide devotion to Christ's Divine Mercy.

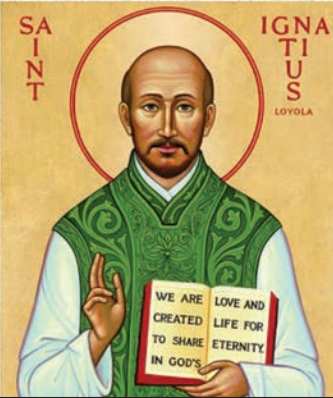
A parallel modern story within the drama offers audiences a compelling personal connection to the moral issues of our times. Audiences are calling the production a "wake-up call."


The play runs 90 minutes, and is suitable for ages 13 and up.

Tickets – general admission \$15, children 14 and under \$10 – are available on the website, www.PadrePio.org, Facebook page, www.facebook.com/PadrePioInc and in the gift shop.



**St. Ignatius of Loyola and
The Discernment of Spirits**





Monday, May 6, 2019

TIME: 6:30 PM

Braveheart Highland Pub
430 Main Street
Hellertown, PA

‘Faith and Spirits’ to Discuss St. Ignatius Loyola

Father Christopher Walsh, pastor of St. Raymond of Penafort, Philadelphia, will explore the “Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola” at the next “Faith and Spirits.”

“St. Ignatius Loyola and the Discernment of Spirits” will be Monday, May 6 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Braveheart Highland Pub, 430 Main St., Hellertown.

Who is St. Ignatius Loyola? What is discernment, and how do we know if we are doing it correctly? These questions and more will be discussed.

“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 com-

fortable 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.





Cris Carter
Former NFL Player
Hall of Fame, 2016
In Recovery

College and high school students,

University staff, friends and family

are welcome to attend!

Evening with Cris Carter on Addictions

“DeSales Cares: An Evening with Hall of Fame wide receiver Cris Carter on Addictions and Support,” will be Thursday, April 25 from 6 to 8 p.m. at DeSales University, Center Valley, in the Trexler/Hurd Room.

Carter is a former wide receiver for the Philadelphia Eagles (1987-89), the Minnesota Vikings (1990-2001) and the Miami Dolphins (2002) football teams.

Carter and Joe Ashdale of Ambrosia Treatment Center will provide support and information to help combat this epidemic that affects us all.

College and high school students, university staff, friends and family are welcome to attend.

For immediate help, reach out to Michael Ritchie at michael.ritchie@desales.edu or 888-391-3265.

Course on ‘The Church’

The Institute for Catechesis and Formation is offering the following course. ICF courses are meant for any adult Catholic looking to grow deeper and learn more about the faith. There are no prerequisites for these courses. Cost is \$30. Register at www.allentowndiocese.org/icf.

ICF 106 - The Church

The Church is the place of encounter between God and his people on earth.

This course will provide a brief overview of the origins of the Church; her identity as one, holy Catholic and apostolic; and what it means to be “the Body of Christ” on earth.

This course will be presented by Cassie Boccardi and is scheduled from 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursdays, May 2, 9, 16 and 23 at St. Francis Center for Renewal, Bethlehem.

Cost: \$30. Register at www.allentowndiocese.org/icf

*Usted, su familia y amigos están
invitados a una velada con
Vísperas de
Sanación
Para aquellos
que han
experimentado
un trauma*



El reverendo Alfred A. Schlert, D.D., J.C.L.
Presider y Homilista

Vespers for Healing

On Monday, April 29 at 6:30 p.m. there will be Vespers for Healing for those who have experienced trauma.

All are invited to join in an evening of prayer with Bishop of Allentown Alfred Schlert as presider and homilist at Holy Ghost Church, 417 Carlton Ave., Bethlehem.

hem.

After vespers there will be a Holy Hour of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament and the opportunity for confession. The evening will conclude with Benediction at 8 p.m.

Vísperas de Sanación

El lunes 29 de abril a las 6:30 p.m. habrá vísperas de sanación para aquellos que han experimentado trauma.

Todos están invitados a unirse en oración con el muy Reverendo Alfred A. Schlert como presider y homilista en la

iglesia del Holy Ghost, 417 Carlton Ave., Bethlehem.

Después de las vísperas, habrá una hora Santa de oración ante el Santísimo Sacramento y la oportunidad de confesiones. La noche concluirá con la Bendición a las 8 p.m.

Hesburgh Lecture Rescheduled for April 29

The annual Hesburgh Lecture at DeSales University, Center Valley, postponed from Feb. 20, has been rescheduled for Monday, April 29 at 7 p.m. in the University Center.

Speaker will be Dr. Thomas Noble, professor emeritus of history and fellow of the Nanovic Institute for European Studies at Notre University, Indiana.

Topic for the lecture will be “Faith Taking Shape: Early Christianity and the Arts.”

Between 300 and 1000 B.C., Christian theologians developed a vocabulary and conceptual framework for talking about God. In those same centuries, as Christian art developed and spread, Christians also learned how to talk about art. There are surprises and ironies in these two parallel developments.

Noble earned his bachelor of arts degree at Ohio University, and his master of arts and doctorate degrees at Michigan State.

For 41 years he taught classical and medieval history at Texas Tech, the University of Virginia and at Notre Dame. He has published and lectured widely on both Europe and the Mediterranean world.

He is author or editor of 12 books and a fellow of the Medieval Academy of

America. He won the University of Virginia’s Alumni Distinguished Professor Award in 1999; Notre Dame’s Edmund P. Joyce, C.S.C., Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in 2008; and the Charles Sheedy, C.S.C., Award for Excellence in Teaching in the College of Arts and Letters in 2011.

Inspired by the late Father Hesburgh’s example of lifelong learning, the Hesburgh Lecture Series has brought university faculty to Notre Dame clubs and their local communities since 1986. The lectures, presented by mostly tenured faculty, showcase the depth and breadth of Notre Dame’s academic expertise in research and teaching through an accessible format suitable for a general audience.

The Hesburgh Lecture Series furthers the mission of the Alumni Association to provide meaningful continuing education opportunities to Notre Dame alumni and friends.

The lecture is free and open to the public. No tickets are required.

For more information, contact Lore McFadden at the Salesian Center for Faith and Culture, 610-282-1100 ext. 1244 or lore.mcfadden@desales.edu, or visit website www.desales.edu/salesian.

Bishop's Annual Appeal Kicks Off in Lehigh County

By TAMI QUIGLEY
Staff writer

"There's no better way to start our efforts with the Bishop's Annual Appeal (BAA) than with the greatest prayer of all – the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass," said Bishop Alfred Schlert, main celebrant and homilist of an evening Mass April 3 at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Whitehall that kicked off the 2019 BAA in Lehigh County.

The Diocese of Allentown and BAA Trust Advisory Board hosted the evening that launched this year's appeal, "Because We Are Catholic," which has a goal of \$4.6 million to help those in need.

The liturgy was followed by a reception in the parish hall, which included presentations by two BAA Trust Advisors: Deacon Michael Laroche, who serves Holy Trinity, Whitehall; and Ron Derstine, parishioner of St. Joseph, Limeport for over 25 years.

The appeal always begins after Easter. Principal concelebrants of the liturgy were Father John Pendzick, pastor of St. Elizabeth of Hungary; and Monsignor Daniel Yenushosky, pastor of Holy Trinity.

Also concelebrating were other priests of the Lehigh Deanery: Monsignor Edward Coyle, pastor of St. Ann, Emmaus; Father John Gibbons, pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Conception BVM, Allentown; Monsignor Gerald Gobitas, pastor of St. John the Baptist, Whitehall; Monsignor Thomas Hoban, in residence at St. John the Baptist; Monsignor David James, Diocesan vicar general; Monsignor John Martin, pastor of St. Peter, Coplay; and Monsignor Francis Schoenauer, pastor of the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown.

In his homily, Bishop Schlert said Catholics, and all Christians, grew up thinking of God as the Father, but "the Jewish people didn't think of him in



Left, Deacon Michael Laroche speaks during the Bishop's Annual Appeal (BAA) kickoff in Lehigh County April 3 at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Whitehall. (Photos by John Simitz)

Right, Rod Derstine offers his presentation during the kickoff reception.

Below, Bishop Alfred Schlert, center, celebrates the Mass with, from left, Msgr. Edward Coyle, Monsignor John Martin, Monsignor Thomas Hoban, Monsignor David James, Father John Pendzick, Monsignor Daniel Yenushosky, Monsignor Francis Schoenauer, Father John Gibbons and Monsignor Gerald Gobitas.



"As the song says, 'they will know we are Christians by our love.'"

such endearing terms." He referred to the evening's Gospel, John 5:17-30, when the Jews wanted to kill Jesus even more because he called God his own father – Jesus said he can do nothing without his Father.

"As we make up our Catholic communities of families, we work in concert with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit," Bishop Schlert said. "We believe our faith and Church is guided by the Holy Trinity."

"Just like Jesus, we can do nothing without the Father. And without the co-operation of each other, it's hard to get things done."

"As we come together as a Roman Catholic family of faith, we're reminded that's what binds us, and enlivens our faith and works."

The Bishop thanked everyone for their efforts with BAA, and asked them, in this season of Lent, if there is anything keeping them from living in concert with the Holy Trinity.

"Together we can do so much." As the evening segued into the reception, Father Pendzick led those gathered in a prayer and Paul Acampora, secretary of the Diocesan Secretariat for Stewardship and Development, offered words of welcome.

Acampora said news stories say that

people are not giving to the Church, but said that's not true.

The event included a screening of the BAA video.

In 2018, BAA supported community services with \$2,153,000, education \$846,000, vocations \$508,000, parish life \$423,000, parish sharing \$370,000 and administration \$300,000.

Rod Derstine

As Derstine addressed the group as it noshed on tasty offerings, he said the BAA Board of Trust Advisors was formed in 2012, and all gifts are received

Please see APPEAL page 20 ►►



Faithful of the Lehigh Deanery attend the evening liturgy.



Enjoying the evening are, from left, Elizabeth and Joe Bechtel, parishioners of Assumption BVM, Slatington; and Rosemarie and Joe Rieker, parishioners of Annunciation BVM (St. Mary's), Catasauqua.

Appeal

►►Continued from page 19

and administered by the trust advisors.

Derstine focused on the protection and segregation of trust assets, explaining they are only for the appeal fund.

The 12-member board of volunteer community leaders and parishioners from across the Diocese of Allentown was appointed by the Bishop. There is always at least one representative of every county in the Diocese.

Derstine said he and Deacon Laroche are representatives of Lehigh County. "We are the spokespeople of the appeal to the community."

Deacon Laroche

"We give to the appeal because we are Catholic. That's what we do as followers of Christ," Deacon Laroche said. "Because Catholics feed the hungry, we've served 42,000 people in soup kitchens and pantries."

BAA, he said, provides such things as housing services, helps seniors, provides counseling, and aids faith development through the Secretariat for Catholic Life and Evangelization, including ministry to youth and young adults. It also helps the Diocese's three special learning centers, including Mercy School for Special Learning, Allentown.

Deacon Laroche said BAA also helps seminarians, noting there are nine men in Lehigh County preparing to be priests.

"If a parish exceeds its goal, 50 percent of that money is returned to the parish," Deacon Laroche said. In BAA, "only 6 percent of the money is used for administrative expenses – well below the national average."

"Thank you for coming tonight as we begin what we hope is another wonderful year," Deacon Laroche said.

"As the song says, 'they will know we are Christians by our love.'"

Bishop Schlert

As Bishop Schlert addressed the gathering, he noted, "Sometimes we lose sight of all that is done every day."

Humbly, Bishop Schlert made clear he doesn't like the focus on "bishop" in the appeal. "It's the Catholic Community Appeal. It's all the people who do the work in the Diocese, and the people who are served," he said.

Bishop Schlert noted even the BAA logo is smaller on this year's BAA materials, with the focus on "Because We Are Catholic."

"'Because We're Catholic' is the real key to the appeal."

Bishop Schlert referenced the Diocesan mission statement, "A Roman Catholic family of faith, centered in the Holy Eucharist, faithful to the Church's teaching, bringing the light of Christ to each other and to our community."

"We approach services and life as Catholics with different views sometimes, and we're proud of that," Bishop Schlert said. "Because we're Catholic we do great things with God's blessing and guidance. Anyone with a need can come to us and be served. Because we're Catholic we do God's work day in and day out."

"I thank you and God bless you."

The Spear Family

The evening was a real family affair for Mike and Emily Spear, parishioners of the Cathedral, who attended with their eight children, from 13 years to 12 weeks old: Theodore, Bernadette, Adelaide, Teresa, Veronica, Phoebe, Leo and Rosemary.

Emily Spear noted St. Adelaide is the patron of large families.

"It was wonderful to receive an invitation to this Mass, it's always special to spend time with Jesus in the Eucharist," Emily Spear said. "This one was even more special with the Bishop."

"We're excited to give back to the community at large," Emily Spear said of BAA, as her husband added, "Catholic Charities is not just for the Catholic Church." The Spears are involved in volunteering at a soup kitchen and nursing home, noting all these things are important.

"Giving back to the community is not important in some abstract sense, but because Jesus is present in every human individual, so we are excited to give back to the community, to Jesus in everyone around us, and as Mike said, that means that Catholic Charities is not just about Catholics," Emily Spear said.

"One of our children said it was an extra special Communion today because there were nine priests," Mike Spear said.

"Tonight is joyful," Emily Spear added. "It is great to be with so many people who want to work together



The Spear family, parishioners of the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown, enjoy the evening, clockwise from left, Bernadette, Phoebe, Adelaide, Emily, Theodore, Veronica, Michael holding Rosemary and Leo with his "best smile" on.

to do good.

"We are involved with the BAA out of love and gratitude. We see donating to the BAA as an opportunity to show our gratitude to God for everything he has given us."



The Rodriguez family, parishioners of St. Paul, Allentown, enjoy the evening, from left, Alfred, Samuel, Seria, Matthew and Raysa.



Deacon Christopher and Cathy Kinsella of St. Thomas, More, Allentown celebrate the kickoff.



Enjoying the celebratory evening are, from left, Mary Ann and Bob Kulhamer and Helen Wolfer, parishioners of St. Elizabeth of Hungary.



Deacon Carl and Peg Readinger of St. Joseph the Worker, Orefield enjoy celebrating the kickoff.

Death

Religious Sister

Sister Margaret Kelly, 92, a member of the Sisters of Mercy (RSM) since 1944, died April 14 at McAuley Convent.

Sister Margaret taught in elementary and high schools for 25 years in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Allentown, including four years at St. John Baptist de la Salle, Shillington and one year at Sacred Heart School, Nesquehoning.

She also served as a principal and an

associate director of campus ministry. Her extraordinary talent on the harp was shared at many community celebrations.

Among her survivors is her cousin, Sister of Mercy Joanne Whitaker.

Viewing will be Wednesday, April 24 at 10 a.m. at Convent of Mercy, Merion, followed by Mass of Christian Burial at 11 a.m. and burial in the convent cemetery.

St. Benedict, Mohnton to Host Sacred Relics

St. Benedict Church, 2020 Chestnut Hill Road, Mohnton will host a special exposition of sacred relics Saturday, May 4 from 3 to 7 p.m. and Sunday, May 5 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

More than 100 holy objects will be on display in the Family Life Center.

Included will be pieces of the True Cross of our Lord, relics of St. John the Baptist, St. Anthony of Padua, St. John Neumann, St. Katherine Drexel, St. Therese, St. John of the Cross, St. Damian of Molokai, St. Pope John Paul II,

St. Teresa of Calcutta, Venerable Fulton Sheen, Servant of God Father Walter Ciszek and many others.

Admission is free, but donations will be accepted to forward to Father Jason Kuzlinski, who protects and cares for these relics at Holy Martyrs Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

All are invited to attend. For more information, contact the parish office, 610-856-1006 or Secretary@churchofsaint-benedict.org.

Calendar

Editor’s note: E-mail, fax or mail Church-affiliated items for the Calendar page (Calendar, Retreats, Socials, Festivals, Bazaars, Trips) to: email, adtimes@allentowndiocese.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. Please do not send items again after they are published.

For more information, e-mail adtimes@allentowndiocese.org or call 610-871-5200, ext. 2264.

Good Friday, April 19
Collection for Shrines of Our Faith in the Holy Land.

Tuesday, April 23
Serra Club of Bethlehem Dinner Meeting, Monocacy Manor, 6 p.m., speaker Father Mark Searles.

Wednesday, April 24
We Are Remembered Ministry Easter Mass, St. John the Baptist, Allentown, 7 p.m., register name of loved one by Wednesday, April 17, see page 7 for details.

“The Gospel of John,” Bible study group begins, St. Paul, Allentown, rectory basement, Wednesday evenings 6:30-8 p.m., join anytime, 610-797-9733, ldurback@gmail.com.

“The Gospel of John,” Bible study group begins, Assumption BVM, Bethlehem, Finnegan Room, Wednesday mornings 10-11:30 a.m., join anytime, 610-867-7424 ext. 12, ldurback@gmail.com.

Bereavement Support Group, St. Benedict, Mohnton, Family Life Center, 6:30-8 p.m., 610-775-7782 or 610-856-1006, Wednesdays through May 22.

Thursday, April 25
“DeSales Cares: An Evening with Hall of Fame WR Cris Carter on Addictions and Support,” DeSales University, Center Valley, Trexler/Hurd Room, 6-8 p.m.; for college and high school students, university staff, friends and family; for immediate help, reach out to michael.ritchie@desales.edu or 888-391-3265.

Friday, April 26
Catholic Scout Activity Weekend, Camp Trexler Settlers Camp, Kunkletown, all Catholic Scouts welcome, through Sunday, www.adccos.org/bsr.htm.

Retrouvaille Weekend, for couples to rediscover the love in their marriage, Family Life Center, Malvern, www.HelpOurMarriage.org, 215-766-3944, 800-470-2230, all inquiries strictly confidential.

Interfaith Prayer Service and Fellowship, Alvernia University, Physical Education Center, 3 p.m., Alvernia President Tom Flynn shares his gratitude for the community, www.alvernia.edu.

Rummage Sale, Sacred Heart, Bethlehem, Father King Hall, 1817 First St., 2-7 p.m., also Saturday, April 27, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Saturday, April 27
Yard Sale, Men’s Club, St. Ambrose, Schuylkill Haven, parish center, 7 a.m.

Sunday, April 28
Divine Mercy Sunday, see article page 15.

Health Fair, St. Francis of Assisi, Allentown, church hall, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Spring Welcoming Tea, for Irish-Catholic women by birth or marriage, Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, at Columbian Home, 1519 Greenleaf St., Allentown, 2-4 p.m., wear Kentucky Derby hat, 610-509-0444 or maurar1117@msn.com.

Spaghetti Dinner, Cedar Hill for Wreaths Across America, Fullerton Memorial Playground, 3-6 p.m., adults \$10, seniors and children \$8. kathy.wreaths@gmail.com.

Monday, April 29
Healing Vespers, Holy Ghost, Bethlehem, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 1
Community Spaghetti Dinner, Knights of Columbus Monsignor Bornemann Council #16066 of Sacred Heart, West Reading and Holy Rosary, Reading, at Victor Emmanuel II, 311 Hazel St., Reading, 4:30-7 p.m., adults \$10, children \$7.

Boston Market Fundraising Event, St. Michael’s Byzantine, Allentown, location 385 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., 4-8 p.m., tickets 484-553-3828.

Friday, May 3
Pro-Life Town Hall Tour, Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation, at SS. Simon and Jude, Bethlehem, church hall, 7-9 p.m., no registration required, BEPHL1973@gmail.com.

Golf Outing, St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton, CYO at Riverview Golf Course, register www.sjhawks.com.

Friday, May 3
Life in the Spirit Seminar, Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service Committee of Diocese of Allentown, St. Michael Hall, 829 Main St., Northamp-

ton, 6-9 p.m., breakfast and lunch provided, register adp480@ptd.net; also Saturday, May 4, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 4
Exposition of Sacred Relics, St. Benedict, Mohnton, Family Life Center, 3-7 p.m., also Sunday, May 5, 9 a.m-1 p.m., 610-856-1006 or secretary@churchofsaintbenedict.org.

Oldies Dance, St. Mary, Hamburg, Ave Maria Hall, 6:30-9:30 p.m., tickets \$10, at door \$12, no BYOB/BYOF, 610-562-7657, www.stmaryham-burg.org.

Sunday, May 5
Spaghetti Dinner, St. Patrick, Pottsville, parish center, 11:30 am.-2:30 p.m., adults \$8, children \$3.50, 570-622-1802.

“No Phones in Medjugorje,” documentary, BLD Charismatic Group and Marian Prayer Group, at St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton, Monsignor Gobitas room, 1 p.m., begins with light lunch, dessert and discussion follows, reservations required, free will donations. 267-261-2122.

Berks/Reading March for Life, Berks Catholic High School, Reading, speakers 2 p.m., march 3 p.m., baby items requested for donation.

May Crowning, St. Anthony of Padua, Easton, 6:30 p.m., living rosary, crowning of Mary and novena prayers to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, followed by refreshments in school hall, 610-253-7188.

Friday, May 10
Diocesan Homeschool Mass, Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena, Allentown, 10:30 a.m., celebrated by Bishop Alfred Schlert, reception follows, 610-437-3491.

Saturday, May 11
May Days Dance, St. John the Baptist, Allentown, social hall, 7-10 p.m., \$5, BYOB, 610-432-0034 or 610-432-3505.

Thursday, May 16
Financial and Estate Planning for Women, DeSales University, Center Valley, University Center, 6-8 p.m., reservations 610-871-5200 ext. 2244 or gdowney@allentowndiocese.org.

Saturday, May 18
Garage Sale, Holy Ghost, Bethlehem, parish garage on side of school building, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., rain date Saturday, May 25.

Sunday, May 19
“Desire,” concert, Roxy Theater, Northampton, 1:30-3:30 p.m., \$10, sponsored by Knights of Columbus 14464 of Sacred Heart, Bath, tickets at door \$10, information 610-837-1702.

Monday, May 20
“Seek Always the Light of Christ,” discussion on effects of pornography, Lumen Christi Commission, at St. Francis of Assisi, Allentown, church hall, 7 p.m., adults only, 610-433-6102 or www.st-francisallentown.org.

Lenten Events

Through end of Lent, Thursday, April 18
“Lent 2019: A Time of Enlightenment and Reconnecting,” free online noncredit course for spiritual enrichment, offered by Salesian Center for Faith and Culture, DeSales University, Center Valley, <https://t.co/ZpAH8deqS8>, 610-282-1100.

Good Friday, April 19
Dramatic Stations of the Cross, St. John the Baptist, Pottsville, 7:30 p.m., doors open 6:30 p.m., preludes begin 7:15 p.m., free will offering, 570-622-5470.

“Who Do You Say That I Am?” new passion drama by Monsignor John Murphy, St. Thomas More, Allentown, Wednesday 7:30 p.m., Thursday 1 p.m., 610-433-7413, ext. 18.

Scriptural Good Friday Rosary, St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton, chapel, noon; quiet prayer in church until 3 p.m. Good Friday Service; 610-253-3553.

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.

Monday, April 29
“Living from an Enfleshed Heart,” mini-retreat, St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, dinner 6 p.m., presentation 7-9 p.m., \$30, 610-258-3053 ext. 10, www.stfrancisretreathouse.org.

Tuesday, April 30
“A Pilgrimage Called Life,” twilight retreat, St. Francis Center for Renewal, Bethlehem, 6:45 a.m.-9 p.m., \$25, 610-867-8890, www.stfranciscctr.org.

Friday, May 10
“Priests Forever: A Retreat Day for Priests in

the Trenches,” Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, Wernersville, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., www.jesuitcenter.org/PriestsForever.

Saturday, May 11
“Creating Art and Beauty,” Salesian Center, DeSales University, Center Valley, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free, register www.desales.edu/salesian.

“Spiritual Spa Day: Spring Day of Prayer,” Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, Wernersville, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., www.jesuitcenter.org/Spiritual-Spa-Day.

Monday, May 13 – Tuesday, May 21
“8-Day Directed Retreat,” Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, Wernersville, www.jesuitcenter.org/directedretreats_bylength.

Friday, May 31 – Sunday, June 2
“Weekend Directed Retreat,” Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, Wernersville, www.jesuitcenter.org/directedretreats_bylength.

Monday, June 17 – Sunday, June 23
5-Day Directed Retreat, www.jesuitcenter.org/directedretreats_bylength.

Sunday, June 23 – Thursday, June 27
“Rooted in the Graces of the Exercises,” www.jesuitcenter.org/IgnatianLeadershipforMission.

Festivals/Bazaars

Sunday, April 28
“MSC Fest: Oktoberfest in April,” Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, at Crowne Plaza Reading, 1741 Paper Mill Road, 2-6 p.m., sponsorships and reservations www.mscreading.org, 610-929-2802, cwhitmoyer@mscreading.org.

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.

Third 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.

Thursday, April 25; Wednesday, May 15
Bingo, Knights of Columbus Council 4397, Family Center, St. Thomas More, Allentown, 6 p.m., doors open 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 27 – Sunday, April 28
Basket Raffle/Tricky Tray, Our Lady of Mercy, Easton, Women’s Guild, Saturday 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sunday 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., 610-252-7381.

Sundays, April 28; May 19; June 2, 23; Aug. 4, 18; Sept. 8, 22; Oct. 6, 20; Nov. 3, 17; Dec. 8
Bingo, Knights of Columbus Council 618, St. Stephen Hall, Shenandoah, 2 p.m., doors open noon, 570-590-3270 or 570-590-1188.

Saturday, May 11
Cash Bingo, Knights of Columbus, Holy Family, Nazareth, 6:45 p.m., doors open 6 p.m., \$20 for 11 games.

Sunday, May 19
Meat Bingo, St. John the Baptist, Allentown, social hall, 1 p.m., doors open noon, \$11 for 15 games, 610-432-3505.

Designer Handbags, Baskets and Cash Bingo, Bethlehem Chapter of UNICO, at St. Francis Center for Renewal, Bethlehem, cafeteria, 1:30 p.m., doors open noon, advance tickets \$20, at door \$25, tickets 610-691-1338, 610-865-2419.

Trips

Editor’s note: The A.D. Times publishes newly announced, Church-affiliated trips in every issue. The entire previously announced list is repeated as space permits.

Send Church-affiliated trips to adtimes@allentowndiocese.org by Thursday of the week before publication. Please notify The A.D. Times when seats are filled for a trip so it can be removed from the repeating list.

Trip listings include sponsoring group, destination, cost and contact information. Contact the sponsor for other details, such as times, dining location, itineraries and what is included in the cost.

Newly announced

Thursday, June 13
Holy Guardian Angels, Reading, HGA Seniors to “Mamma Mia,” Fulton Theatre, Lancaster, \$100, 610-921-1515 or 610-929-0384.

Wednesday, June 19
St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Whitehall, Golden Agers to Resorts, Atlantic City, \$40, 610-264-3721.

Thursday, Aug. 22
Notre Dame of Bethlehem, 55+ to Atlantic City Cruise and Casino, \$70, 610-866-0360.

Thursday, Oct. 10
Notre Dame of Bethlehem, 55+ to “Streisand/Sinatra,” Penn’s Peak, Jim Thorpe, 610-866-0360.

Previously announced

Wednesday, April 24
St. Joseph, Coopersburg, Prime Time to “Take Me Away,” Sherlock Holmes musical mystery, Hunterdon Hills Dinner Playhouse, \$98, 610-797-6240.

Thursday, April 25
Notre Dame of Bethlehem to Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre, Mount Hope Estate and Winery, Manheim, \$84, 610-866-0360.

Sunday, April 28
Holy Trinity, Whitehall, Seniors in Action to Phillies game, \$68, 610-262-6058.

Thursday, May 2
St. Thomas More, Allentown to Philadelphia Art Museum, \$115, 484-951-0440.

Tuesday, May 7
St. Ann, Emmaus, Prime Timers to “The Ultimate Johnny Cash Tribute,” Penn’s Peak, Jim Thorpe, \$85, 610-530-8186.

Wednesday, May 8
St. Thomas More, Allentown, Prime Time to Hollywood Casino, Grantville, \$25, 610-791-1758.

Thursday, May 9
Queenship of Mary, Northampton, Cenacle to “Jesus,” Sight and Sound Theater, Lancaster, \$92, 610-262-1663 or 610-262-2838.

Monday, May 13 – Friday, May 17
St. Matthew the Evangelist, Minersville, Travelers to Cape Cod and Boston, Massachusetts, \$659, 570-544-5231, 570-628-5413.

Tuesday, May 14
St. Thomas More, Allentown, Women’s Guild to National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Middletown, New York, \$32, 484-707-7531.

Saturday, May 18
St. Thomas More, Allentown to New York City Ballet: Balanchine, \$114; Broadway: “Kiss Me Kate” \$168 or “Tootsie” \$188; 484-951-0440.

Tuesday, May 21 – Friday, May 24
St. Joseph the Worker, Orefield to Thousand Islands, \$559, suemueller45@gmail.com, 610-392-2957.

Tuesday, May 28 – Wednesday, May 29
St. Thomas More, Allentown, Prime Time to Dover Downs, Delaware, 610-791-1758.

Wednesday, June 12
St. Thomas More, Allentown, Prime Time to Mohegan Sun, Wilkes-Barre, \$25, 610-791-1758.

Thursday, June 13
St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Whitehall, Golden Agers to “Mama Mia,” Fulton Theatre, Lancaster, \$99, 484-264-7723.

Notre Dame of Bethlehem to Mohegan Sun Casino, Wilkes-Barre, \$30, 610-866-0360.

Wednesday, June 19
Holy Family, Nazareth, Golden Agers to “Tribute to the Beach Boys,” Mount Airy Casino, Mount Pocono, \$66, 610-759-0576.

Friday, June 21
Holy Trinity, Whitehall, Seniors in Action to “Guys and Dolls” Shawnee Playhouse, Shawnee on the Delaware, \$71, 610-262-6058.

Monday, June 24
St. Thomas More, Allentown to New York Mets at Phillies, \$75 or \$60, 484-951-0440.

Tuesday, June 25 – Friday, June 28
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Bethlehem, Fellowship Group to Villa Roma, New York, \$505, 484-456-6818, 484-767-8669.

Saturday, July 13
St. Thomas More, Allentown to Washington Nationals at Phillies, \$60, 484-951-0440.

Thursday, July 25
St. Thomas More, Allentown, Prime Time to “Annie,” Dutch Apple Theater, Lancaster, \$90, 610-791-1758.

Notre Dame of Bethlehem to Hunterdon Hills, \$97, 610-866-0360.

Tuesday, Aug. 13
Holy Family, Nazareth, Golden Agers to Skyline Cruise of Atlantic City, New Jersey, \$90, 610-759-0576.

Saturday, Aug. 17
St. Thomas More, Allentown to Indians at the Yankees, \$125 or \$150, 484-951-0440.

Upcoming Issues of The A.D. Times

Publication Date

May 2
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Advertising Deadline

April 22
May 6
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Prefiguraciones Eucarísticas

Por DIÁCONO JOSÉ SANTOS

Hay varias prefiguraciones eucarísticas en la Biblia, ellas anuncian el sacramento de la Eucaristía a través del cual Jesús quiere salvar a toda la humanidad. La prefigura, podemos compararla al rayo y el trueno; el rayo es la luz, que anuncia lo que vendrá. Cuando comienza a nublarse pensamos que puede llover.

“Cuando Abram regresó, después de haber derrotado a Quedorlaómer y a los reyes que lo acompañaban, el rey de Sodoma salió a saludarlo en el valle de Savé, que es el valle del rey. Melquisedec, rey de Salem y sacerdote del Dios altísimo, sacó **pan y vino** y bendijo a Abram con estas palabras: ‘Que te bendiga el Dios altísimo, creador del cielo y de la tierra; y alabado sea el Dios altísimo que te hizo vencer a tus enemigos.’ Entonces Abram le dio a Melquisedec la décima parte de lo que había recobrado” (Gn 14, 17-20).

Partiendo de este pasaje antiguo encontramos las materias que Jesús usa en la última cena para enseñar lo que Dios quiere que se haga hoy, en cada asamblea del pueblo del Dios que le ama, le busca y le adora.

Después de algún tiempo, Dios puso a prueba la fe de Abraham. Lo llamó por su nombre, y él contestó: Aquí estoy. Y Dios le dijo: Toma a Isaac, tu único hijo, al que tanto amas, y vete a la tierra de Moria. Una vez allá, ofrécelo en holocausto sobre el cerro que yo te señalaré.... Al tercer día, Abraham

alcanzó a ver el lugar desde lejos.... Abraham construyó un altar y preparó la leña; luego ató a su hijo Isaac y lo puso en el altar, sobre la leña; pero en el momento de tomar el cuchillo para sacrificar a su hijo, el ángel del Señor lo llamó desde el cielo: ¡Abraham! ¡Abraham! Aquí estoy contestó él. El ángel le dijo: No le hagas ningún daño al muchacho..., (Gn 22, 1-12).

Dios Padre ofreció por la salvación de tu alma, lo que más quería, su propio Hijo; como pidió a Abraham ofrecer lo que el más quería, a ti y a mí nos pide dejar lo que tanto nos gusta y que hace daño a nuestras almas para salvarnos. Jesús obedeció a su Padre y se ofreció a sí mismo, **su propio cuerpo**, su vida por la tuya.

Entonces el Señor le dijo a Moisés: Voy a hacer que les llueva comida del cielo. La gente deberá salir cada día, y recogerá sólo lo necesario para ese día. **Quiero ver quién obedece mis instrucciones y quién no.** El sexto día, cuando preparen lo que van a llevar a casa, deberán recoger el doble de lo que recogen cada día. Moisés y Aarón dijeron entonces a los israelitas: Por la tarde sabrán ustedes que el Señor fue quien los sacó de Egipto, y por la mañana verán la gloria del Señor.... Los israelitas llamaron maná a lo que recogían. Era blanco, como semilla de cilantro, y dulce como hojuelas con miel (Ex 16, 4-7, 31).

Dios Padre es quien provee todo lo necesario; a Él le agrada que le obedezcan y guarden sus mandamientos. El



problema que vemos con frecuencia: es un hijo, una hija rebelde que no quiere obedecer a Dios y vivir de cualquier manera rompiendo las normas que afectan, incluso a quien las viola.

Las prefiguraciones eucarísticas están en la Biblia, tanto en el antiguo testamento como en el nuevo testamento, para preparar a los fieles a la celebración de éste misterio tan grande, muchos todavía están a mitad de camino para vivir en el Reino de los Cielos, ya presente en la tierra.

Los discípulos comentaban entre sí que no tenían pan. Jesús se dio cuenta, y les dijo: ¿Por qué dicen que no tienen pan? ¿Todavía no entienden ni se dan cuenta? ¿Tienen tan cerrado el entendimiento? ¿Tienen ojos y no ven, y oídos y no oyen? ¿No se acuerdan? **Cuando repartí los cinco panes entre cinco mil hombres**, ¿cuántas canastas llenas de pedazos recogieron? Ellos contestaron: Doce. **Y cuando repartí los siete panes entre cuatro mil**, ¿cuántas canastas llenas recogieron? Contestaron: Siete. Entonces les dijo: ¿Todavía no entienden? (Mc 8, 16-21).

Los milagros de la multiplicación de los panes, cuando el Señor dijo la bendición, partió y distribuyó los panes por medio de sus discípulos para alimentar la multitud, prefiguran la sobreabun-

dancia de este único pan de su Eucaristía. El signo del agua convertida en vino en Caná anuncia ya la Hora de la glorificación de Jesús. Manifiesta el cumplimiento del banquete de las bodas en el Reino del Padre, donde los fieles beberán el vino nuevo convertido en Sangre de Cristo (CIC 1335).

El primer anuncio de la Eucaristía dividió a los discípulos, igual que el anuncio de la pasión los escandalizó: “Es duro este lenguaje, ¿quién puede escucharlo?” (Jn 6, 60). La Eucaristía y la cruz son piedras de tropiezo. Es el mismo misterio, y no cesa de ser ocasión de división. “¿También ustedes quieren marcharse?” (Jn 6, 67): esta pregunta del Señor resuena a través de las edades, como invitación de su amor a descubrir que sólo Él tiene “palabras de vida eterna” (Jn 6, 68), y que acoger en la fe el don de su Eucaristía es acogerlo a El mismo (CIC 1336).

Es impresionante, meditar en esos momentos de la historia del pueblo de Dios, y como el Señor quiere de una y otra manera ayudarnos, para que creamos cada vez más de su presencia entre nosotros. La gloria de Dios se muestra en cada celebración de la Eucaristía en la tierra. Aprovecha cada oportunidad disponible, que Jesús te ofrece para estar con Él en este agosto sacramento.



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40 Days for Life Director of Outreach Speaks in Lehigh Valley

By TAMI QUIGLEY
Staff writer

Spring is the season of new life, and therefore the perfect time for Sue Thayer, former Planned Parenthood manager and current 40 Days for Life director of outreach, to bring the message of “the beginning of the end of abortion” to the Lehigh Valley April 2.

Thayer shared her story of transformation with approximately 30 people at noon in front of Planned Parenthood, 29 N. Ninth St., Allentown. That morning she spoke at Allentown Women’s Center, 31 S. Commerce Way, Bethlehem.

The talks were two of several Thayer gave April 1-4 in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

This spring’s 40 Days for Life campaign ran March 6 through April 14.

“It’s an interesting story, what God did,” Thayer said of her journey from working for Planned Parenthood to being an ardent pro-lifer, during her lunchtime talk in Allentown.

40 Days for Life is an intensive campaign that focuses on 40 days of prayer and fasting for an end to abortion, peaceful vigil at abortion facilities, and grassroots educational outreach.

Since 40 Days for Life began, 15,256 mothers have chosen life for their children, 186 abortion workers have quit their jobs and 99 abortion centers where 40 Days for Life vigils have been held have gone out of business.

Thayer worked for nearly two decades at a Planned Parenthood facility in Storm Lake, Iowa. When the abortion giant began selling controversial and dangerous webcam abortion procedures, she spoke out and was fired. Thayer believed she was finally free of the abortion industry, but God had other plans.

In 2011 she reluctantly signed up to lead a 40 Days for Life campaign in front of her former workplace. Soon after the Planned Parenthood facility shuttered its doors.

No one in the pro-life world has been inside Planned Parenthood longer than Thayer. Having been a center manager for nearly 18 years, she believed she was helping women. But that all changed when she was informed she would soon be trained to do webcam abortions at her small rural Iowa center.

Stunned, her concerns fell on deaf ears. She began to see the abortion giant

in a new light and ultimately shared her insider’s knowledge. Her vast experience coupled with her changed heart and bold faith has led to a whistle-blower lawsuit, currently in litigation.

Thayer led Storm Lake’s first 40 Days for Life campaign at the very clinic she had supervised. Soon after completing the prayer vigil, that Planned Parenthood closed its doors forever. Storm Lake was the first of 21 Iowa Planned Parenthoods to close.

Thayer is founder and former director of Cornerstone for Life Pregnancy Center in Storm Lake. She is passionately pro-life with a deep desire that the whole world understand the abortion industry, particularly the evils of webcam abortion.

According to Iowa Right to Life, with a webcam abortion a woman goes to a Planned Parenthood where there is no doctor physically present; she consults a doctor only via webcam.

The doctor remotely activates a drawer that opens and provides the woman with two bottles of abortion pill drugs. The first pills, which kill the baby in the womb, are taken by the woman in front of the webcam. She takes the other pills home to take later to expel the baby.

As Thayer spoke to the pro-lifers in downtown Allentown, she explained how she was very vocal with her thoughts against webcam abortion procedures, especially when told nonmedical staff had to do transvaginal ultrasounds.

“That was a really bad idea,” she said.

When Planned Parenthood fired her in 2008, “It was a relief to know I’d never be part of that,” she said of webcam abortions.

“I did a lot of bad stuff in my time there,” Thayer said of her time with Planned Parenthood. “They kept goals for abortion, and if you didn’t meet them, you had to explain why.”

To help meet the “goal,” women who came in were told such things as “If you can’t afford \$10 for a pregnancy test today, how can you afford a baby?” and workers emphasized the high cost of car seats.

“Thirteen weeks and six days is pretty far along – that’s what goes on here,” Thayer said, her eyes focused on the Planned Parenthood building in front of her where abortions are performed until a little over 13 weeks into a pregnancy.

Thayer said after being fired from Planned Parenthood, she shared with Iowa Right to Life what Planned Parenthood was doing with webcam abortions.

“Planned Parenthood is in the business of selling abortions.”



Sue Thayer brings the message of “the beginning of the end of abortion” to downtown Allentown April 2 as she gives a lunchtime talk in front of Planned Parenthood, 29 N. Ninth St. (Photos by John Simitz)

“I wasn’t pro-life or pro-choice – I was just glad to be out.”

But when pro-lifers in her hometown wanted to know what went on at Planned Parenthood, she explained the webcam abortions and how horrible they are.

She said women could find out they were pregnant and have the abortion in the same visit. “There was no waiting period. Planned Parenthood doesn’t like waiting periods. Planned Parenthood likes that the webcam abortions are done all in one visit.”

The webcam abortions cause many problems, such as women often wind up in the emergency room with heavy bleeding.

“Planned Parenthood doesn’t use the word baby – they say ‘contents of the uterus’ or ‘tissue.’ The ultrasound screen is always turned away with the sound down so you don’t hear the baby’s heartbeat,” Thayer said.

“They are not pro-choice, they’re pro-

abortion; if they were pro-choice, they’d share information on adoption.

“Planned Parenthood is in the business of selling abortions.

“It galls me that as taxpayers we fund their killing machine with \$5.42 million a year.”

Thayer said as she ran her first 40 Days for Life campaign she doubted there would be enough people in her small rural community to fill the slots to pray 12 hours a day. But a 40 Days for Life worker gave her sage advice: “Sue, you don’t want to limit God.”

Sure enough, they had more than enough people, but it took Catholics, Protestants and Evangelicals working together – not an easy task in their small farm community. They complained they didn’t pray the same way.

After a bumpy start, the squabbling stopped and they worked together. “I

Please see 40 DAYS page 25 ►►



Pro-lifers gather in prayer in front of Planned Parenthood, from left, Maria Klucar, Amy Clark, Milad Allaham, Judy Clark, Alena Clark, Joan Cavanaugh, Maryanne Pol, Quinn Allen and Rita Ender. That morning Thayer spoke in front of Allentown Women’s Center, 31 S. Commerce Way, Bethlehem, which also provides abortions.



“I’m excited to know prayer works and God heals,” Thayer says as Mike Kornafel listens at right.

9th Annual Berks/Reading March For Life

Unique From Day One



ProLife is Pro-Science

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Georgette Forney – Silent No More

Stephanie Giles – Executive Director
of Lifeline of Berks County

*"Our lives begin to end the day we
become silent about things that matter."*

-Martin Luther King Jr.

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Sunday, May 5th

Speakers @ 2PM

March @ 3PM

Where?

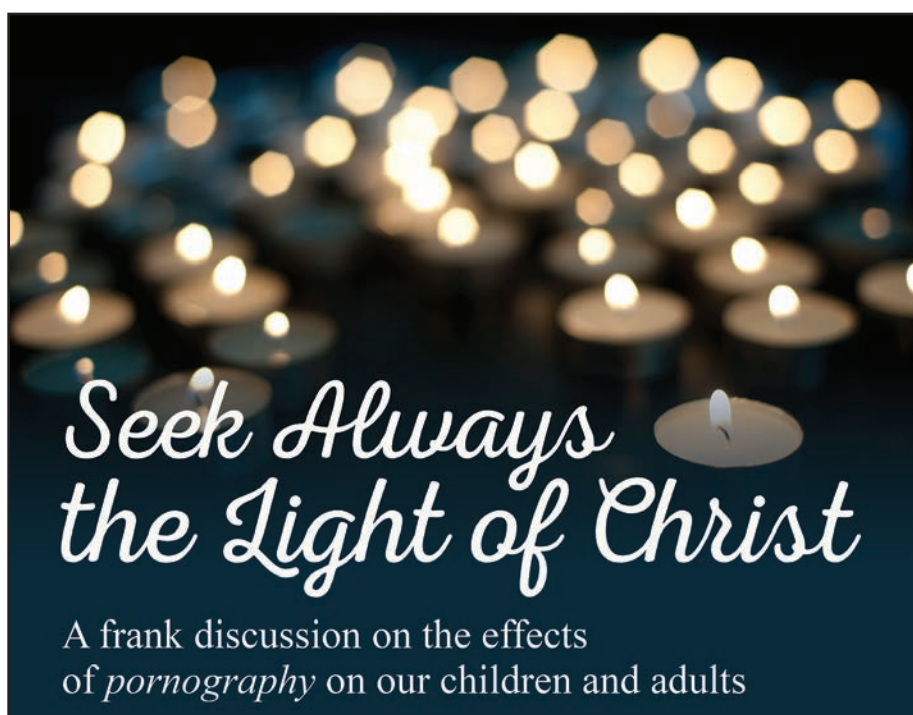
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of all ages!

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celebration of life, and
our united stance in the
fight for the rights of
the unborn!



Seek Always the Light of Christ

A frank discussion on the effects
of pornography on our children and adults

May 20, 2019 | 7:00 p.m. | ADULTS only

Saint Francis of Assisi Roman Catholic Church – Parish Hall

1046 West Cedar Street, Allentown, PA 18102 | 610-433-6102 | www.stfrancisallentown.org

All are welcome – Any persons who are or may be parents or grandparents, aunts or uncles, brothers or sisters; any persons who work with children of any age, in any capacity; any Catholic or non-Catholic adult who is interested in learning about the effects of pornography on our society and ways to effectuate change to protect ourselves and our families.

Learn the Harmful Effects of Pornography

"Seek Always the Light of Christ," a frank discussion on the effects of pornography on children and adults, will be Monday, May 20 at 7 p.m. at St. Francis of Assisi Church, 1046 W. Cedar St., Allentown, in the parish hall.

The event will be for adults only – any parents or grandparent, aunt or uncle, brother or sisters; any persons who work with children of any age, in any capacity; any Catholic or non-Catholic adult who is interested in learning about the effects of pornography on our society and ways to effectuate change to protect ourselves and our families.

Speaker will be Father Allen Hoffa, chair of the Lumen Christi Commission of the Diocese of Allentown.

Bishop of Allentown Alfred Schlert established the Lumen Christi Commission "to help in the pastoral planning of addressing the burgeoning issue of por-

nography."

It provides education, training, encouragement and resources to break free from pornography, heal relationships, and assist parents in preventing and responding to pornography exposure, which is so devastating in the lives of children.

For more information, visit website www.adlumenchristi.org, and follow on Facebook "Lumen Christi Commission," Twitter @ADLumenChristi and Instagram @adlumenchristi.

The hotline can be reached at 610-871-5200 option 1 for Lumen Christi. For questions or more information, email ADLumenChristi@allentowndiocese.org.

For more information about the May 20 event, call St. Francis Church at 610-433-6102 or visit www.stfrancisallentown.org.

Reading/Berks March for Life Set for May 5

The ninth annual Reading/Berks March for Life is scheduled for Sunday, May 5 at Berks Catholic High School, 955 E. Wyomissing Blvd., Reading.

The rally will begin at 2 p.m. with guest speakers Georgette Forney from the Silent No More Awareness Campaign and Stephanie Giles, director of Lifeline of Berks County.

The March for Life will begin promptly at 3 p.m.

Participants will march across the

Penn Street bridge into Reading.

A prayer vigil will be held outside of Planned Parenthood.

Then marchers will proceed to Holy Rosary Church. Buses will be provided to transport participants back to Berks Catholic.

Baby items are requested for donation to crisis pregnancy centers in Reading.

Food and drink will be available for sale at the school before and after the rally.

40 Days

►Continued from page 24

prayed they'd get along. God worked it out," Thayer said, adding she asked them to pray Psalm 139. "For the next 35 days or so for every minute we had at least two people there." Today, the churches all work together and get along.

Thayer said God answered their prayers that the Storm Lake Planned Parenthood would close, despite the fact that it made a lot of money and had a lease through 2023. "Since then they have just kept on closing.

"I'm excited to know prayer works and God heals."

Thayer said 40 Days for Life leaders from across the country ask her how she did all this, "and I told them to pray."

"We're on the right side of the divine here for sure."

Thayer said God impressed on her the need for a pregnancy center, which became a reality. Thayer and her group

found a spot to rent and quickly raised \$10,000 "because God's people are abundant and generous." So Cornerstone Pregnancy Center in Storm Lake became a reality.

"We've gone from a culture of this," Thayer said, looking at the Planned Parenthood building, "to a culture of life."

Speaking of the movie "Unplanned," Thayer said she knows Abby Johnson, on whose book the film is based. Now an ardent pro-life speaker, Johnson was a director at Planned Parenthood in Bryan Texas, the college town of Texas A&M.

"The movie is very accurate in how they perform abortions. The scenes are very accurate – babies are dismembered in the womb," Thayer said.

"God is really counting on us to be the hands and feet of Christ here. You are planting seeds, you are making a difference," Thayer told those gathered.

"I had typical hardness of heart doing what they do here – selling murder," Thayer said of Planned Parenthood.

She described 40 Days for Life as wonderful, peaceful and prayerful.



Thayer, second from left, chats with Judy Clark, Amy Clark and Quinn Allen.

"We're standing for life."

"It's hard to argue with someone holding a sign, smiling and saying, 'Jesus

loves you.'"

To learn more about 40 Days for Life, visit www.40daysforlife.com.

Victim Assistance Coordinators Comfort in a Behind-the-Scenes Ministry

Editor's note: This is the third story in a series from Catholic News Service called "Children at Risk" on child sexual abuse in the United States.

By DENNIS SADOWSKI
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) - Their work begins with a phone call.

Whether the call is from someone who is angry, embarrassed, unsure of what to do or needs a friendly ear, diocesan and eparchial victim assistance coordinators are the face of the church's response to victims of sexual abuse by a church worker — clergy or otherwise.

It's a line of work that is public in one sense but not all that well known in another. While their names often appear in parish bulletins, the faithful aren't always sure of the role they play in the life of the church.

Most importantly though, coordinators told Catholic

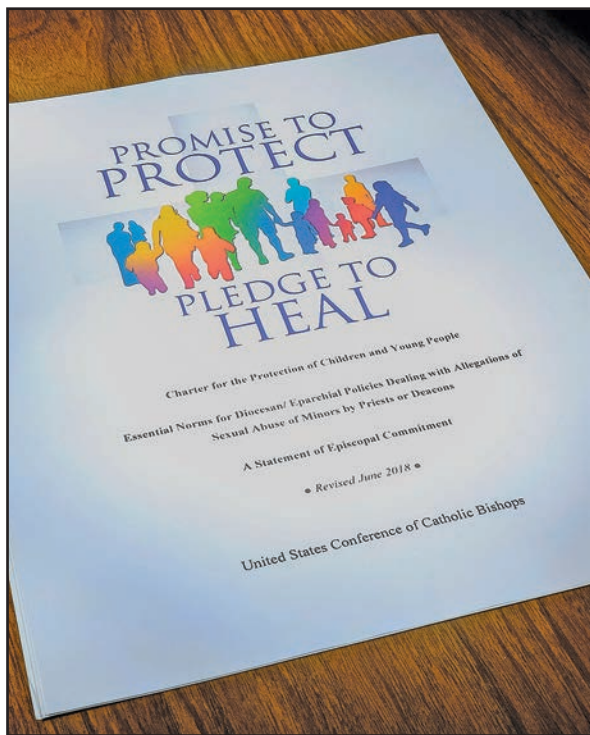
News Service, theirs is a ministry built on compassion, created to show that the Catholic Church wants to help people in recovery and reconciliation after an appalling violation of their human dignity.

"It's about listening and communicating and identifying needs," Kathleen Chastain, victim services coordinator in the Office of Child and Youth Protection in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri, said of her work.

"There are calls now and then where people are just angry and venting, but the vast majority are people who are trying to find the way to reconciliation," said Frank Moncher, a clinical psychologist who is victim assistance coordinator in the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia. "They're hurt, they're wounded. They're obviously upset about the way things were handled in the past. But here they are looking for a way of finding peace."

For Heather Banis, a clinical psychologist who is victim assistance coordinator for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the idea of ministry is foremost in her work.

"My sense is that this is doing the right thing. When we couple what we do for healing with what we do for prevention,



The cover of the USCCB "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People." (CNS photo illustration/Rick Musacchio, Tennessee Register)

I feel like we're moving steadily to a safe and more authentic response in regard to prevention and recovery needs," she said.

The position of victim assistance coordinator was established in the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" adopted by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in response to the sexual abuse crisis that exploded in 2002. Article 2 of the charter states that "dioceses/eparchies are to have a competent person or person to coordinate assistance for the immediate pastoral care of persons who report having been sexually abused as minors by clergy or other church personnel."

Deacon Bernard Nojadera, executive director of the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection at the USCCB, said all 197 U.S. dioceses and eparchies have such a coordinator in place.

"In some cases, these are actually diocesan employees. In some cases, they are using an outside third party like Catholic Charities or a local mental health agency to provide these services. But there is someone they (survivors) can connect with, that can accompany the survivor victim on their journey toward healing,"

Deacon Nojadera said.

Victim assistance programs are meant to show that the church cares about abuse victims, he added.

"Opening transparency is a big thing that needs to be carried out. Victim assistance coordinators are one way that that's being carried out. They're communicating that they're promising to protect, promising to heal," he said. "The victim assistance coordinator is one of the ways that the church is doing that, one of the ways of helping the bishops keep that promise of transparency."

Banis, Chastain and Moncher know that when a victim reaches out to their office, it is a high bar to get over. Victims may have self-doubt, serious unmet mental health needs or skepticism that the church really will help. No matter the situation, they credited survivor victims for taking an important step.

"Somebody on their first call, it may be very unsettling. It's not easy. It's hard to do. There's a lot of anxiety about that," said Banis, who has been in her role since 2016 and has worked with the Los Angeles Archdiocese assisting with abuse claims for a decade.

Chastain, a onetime business consultant whose work in abuse awareness and prevention at her parish led to her appointment as coordinator, has been in the position for three years. She works side-by-side with an independent ombudsman in determining a survivor victim's needs. The ombudsman is charged with understanding the facts of the allegation while Chastain's role is to support the victim.

"We could accompany them to the police for a statement and pulling in any professional counselor or spiritual adviser. Sometimes it's sitting with the bishop. And it's figuring out what it is that they need to help them on their journey," Chastain said.

"For the most part, the victims are very grateful (for what we do)," she added.

Moncher, in his position for six months, said he has found that most of the survivors who call the office are "people of strong faith."

"They've been asked, 'Why haven't you given up on the church?' Their answers have been, 'It's the people who made the mistake. The church is still the church,'" he said.

Such deep faith in the church has been inspiring for the coordinators. They said that while survivor victims want justice from the church, they also desire to stay connected with the broader Catholic

community, the body of Christ.

In some cases, the coordinator's office regularly convenes support groups of survivor victims. In Arlington, the gatherings differ from meeting to meeting. One may offer advice on healing and the next may be a holy hour of prayer and reflection.

"The benefit of the group is fighting against the isolation that they feel when they're going through this, Moncher said.

Banis keeps a list of survivors whom she can contact to air ideas for outreach and programs for support. "We are doing our best to stay relevant and authentic in these efforts," she told CNS.

The coordinators agreed that the entire church has a role in helping abuse survivors achieve healing and reconciliation and working to help perpetrators face the harm they have committed.

"We're the body of Christ together and that we as a community can heal together if we recognize each and every member and hold those who have harmed accountable in a reconciliatory manner," Chastain said. "And we need to believe and validate and support and care for these survivors, who, even if they've left the church, are a part of our community."

Banis closed by offering advice to those who criticize survivor victims for waiting years to report their abuse.

"I want people to take a moment to think about what it would be like to be a child and to have heard from their parents that this person (abuser) is one of the most respected persons you will ever meet and a representative of God," Banis said. "To be harmed by that person, perhaps threatened by that person or perhaps in some way made to feel complicit is a powerful deterrent to a small child who is afraid, who has been frightened and is afraid of what could happen next and who has been told not to be expected to be believed."

"This is something that changes people's lives. It changes what they feel about themselves, their families and certainly how they feel about God."

She continued, "I want to caution people before we're quick to judge and dismiss and ask, 'Why now?' Just remember what it's like to be 6 or 7 years old or 12 or 13 years old and to be caught up in something you cannot possibly understand. I just feel like we need to have more compassion."

Banis added, "It's a community effort to live up to our responsibilities to make the healing begin."

Mother Tells How Daughter Became Victim of Sex Trafficking, Lost Her Life

Editor's note: This is the fourth story in a series from Catholic News Service called "Children at Risk" on child sexual abuse in the United States.

By ELEANOR KENNELLY GAETAN
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) - Yvonne Ambrose had one of the worst experiences any mother can suffer: Her daughter Desiree, age 16, was found in a garage on Christmas Eve 2016 murdered by a man who beat her, slashed her throat and left her to die, painfully alone, in the Chicago cold.

The internet was the key element that turned Desiree from a happy "A" student to a tragic victim of sexual violence.

First, she met a man in his early 20s on Facebook. He "groomed" her, a technique used by exploiters to earn trust to manipulate or control a potential victim of sex abuse.

Desiree ran away from home in late November that year.



Soon after, her new "boyfriend" sold her for \$250 to a pimp who took photos of her, advertised her on Backpage.com

— an internet platform that earned the vast majority of its multimillion revenue from ads selling human flesh until it was

shut down by federal investigators eight months ago — and drove her to "dates," where she was raped for money. It was a sex buyer, Antonio Rosales, 32, who murdered Desiree. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, child sexual abuse includes commercial sexual exploitation as well as using children in pornography and exposing them to por-

shut down by federal investigators eight months ago — and drove her to "dates," where she was raped for money.

It was a sex buyer, Antonio Rosales, 32, who murdered Desiree.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, child sexual abuse includes commercial sexual exploitation as well as using children in pornography and exposing them to por-

Please see TRAFFICKING page 27 ►►

Trafficking

►Continued from page 26

nographic material – whether or not there is physical contact.

In her new book “Invading the Darkness: Inside the Historic Fight Against Sex Trafficking in the United States,” former Congresswoman Linda Smith, R-Washington, describes how she first encountered girls and women kept as captives in brothels in Mumbai, India.

Touching the face of a child no older than 11, condemned to endless assault by men using her body, Smith committed herself to combating the phenomena of international sex trafficking. She started Shared Hope International in 2000 as a faith-based nongovernmental organization providing shelter and services for survivors abroad.

But “I was missing something essential,” she told Catholic News Service. “Something that made my blood run cold. The fact that child trafficking was happening in our own neighborhoods. I had a global view, not realizing this was a domestic issue too.”

Under U.S. federal law, any minor exploited in the commercial sex industry is a victim of human trafficking, but until about 10 years ago, especially at the state and local level, children who got caught up in prostitution were blamed for what happened to them.

“As a matter of routine, kids were being arrested, charged, and convicted for



CHILDREN at RISK

prostitution,” recounted Smith, “They were called ‘bad kids,’ runaways, or worse. Yet, they were all victims.”

Shared Hope International did one of the first studies of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking for the U.S. Department of Justice in 2006.

She continued, “Meanwhile, a man would go to an ATM, drive to a designated location to receive the product he bought and commit a premeditated crime – the rape of a child – but instead of being seen as a violent predator, he’s an anonymous ‘John.’ It’s the child who’s usually considered a criminal, while the ‘John’ goes home.”

To prevent child sex trafficking, Smith advocates for stronger state laws including harsher penalties against sex buyers to shrink the demand for vulnerable bodies.

In 2007, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant

took a similar view about stronger laws directed at sex buyers, or “clients,” who the council said “need help in solving their most intimate problems and in finding suitable ways of directing their sexual tendencies.”

“Buying sex’ does not resolve the problems that arise primarily from frustration and lack of authentic relationships, and from the loneliness that characterizes so many situations in life today,” it said. “An effective measure toward cultural change with respect to prostitution could derive from associating criminal law with social condemnation.”

The Catholic Church has designated Feb. 8 as an annual International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking and invites people to host or attend a prayer service that fosters awareness of and support for victims of trafficking.

The annual day, created with Pope Francis’ encouragement in 2015, is the

feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, who was kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery in Sudan and Italy.

Covenant House, which shelters homeless youth in 14 states most ages 16-20, estimates that 20 percent of the young people it serves have been victims of human trafficking. On the streets, too often, they have sold, or bartered, access to their bodies in exchange for food, drugs, alcohol or a bed.

Ninety-five percent of all sex trafficking victims reported childhood experiences of abuse, according to a study commissioned by Covenant House from the University of Pennsylvania’s Field Center for Children’s Policy, Practice & Research.

“Traffickers can sense (past sexual abuse),” said Angela Aufdemberge, president of Vista Maria, a social services organization in Dearborn Heights, Michigan, told an anti-trafficking conference in Washington last May. “The biggest need is to address maltreatment in homes and regulating who our kids are communicating with on the internet.”

Ten months ago President Donald Trump signed a new law making it illegal for online platforms to knowingly facilitate sex trafficking. It was a law Yvonne Ambrose had helped lobby for in Congress.

Standing next to him as he signed the measure in the Oval Office was a bitter-sweet experience for her.

Ambrose told the president: “Our fight against online sex trafficking has made a change – a change that will save the life of someone else’s daughter.”

Phones

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est classical lyceum – the Ennio Quirino Visconti Lyceum-Gymnasium. Some notable alumni include Eugenio Pacelli, the future Pope Pius XII, and Jesuit Father Matteo Ricci.

The pope told the high school students to “please, free yourselves from your phone addiction!”

Looking up at his audience as they applauded, the pope said he knew they were aware of the many forms and problems of

addiction. But, he warned, an addiction to one’s mobile phone was something “very subtle.”

“Mobile phones are a great help, it marks great progress. It should be used, and it is wonderful everyone knows how to use it” for the “wonderful” activity of communication, he said.

“But when you become a slave to your phone, you lose your freedom,” he said.

“Be careful because there is danger that this drug – when the phone is a drug – the danger of communication being reduced to simple ‘contacts’” and not true communication with others, he said to more applause.

He told them to not be afraid of silence and to learn to listen to or write down what is going on inside their heart and head.

“It is more than a science, it is wisdom, so as to not become a piece of paper” that moves in whatever direction the wind blows, he said.

The pope also told the teenagers that God gave everyone the ability to love.

“Don’t dirty it” with shameful behavior, but rather, love “cleanly” with modesty, fidelity, respect and a big generous heart.

“Love is not a game. Love is the most beautiful thing God gave us,” he told

them, so be vigilant, protect people’s dignity and defend “authentic love, so as not to trivialize the language of the body.”

He asked them to help their school remain free from all forms of bullying and aggression, which are “the seeds of war.”

And he encouraged them to reject mediocrity and indifference, and instead, “dream big,” living with passion and embracing diversity.

“Dialogue among different cultures, different people, enriches a nation, enriches one’s homeland,” he said. It helps people move forward in mutual respect and be able to see the world is “for everyone, not just for some.”

Assisted Suicide Now Law in Jersey; Cardinal Calls it ‘Morally Unacceptable’

NEWARK, N.J. (CNS) – Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark called New Jersey’s new law allowing assisted suicide regrettable, saying “whatever its motives and means,” it is “morally unacceptable.”

“Every gift of human life is sacred, from conception to natural death, and the life and dignity of every person must be respected and protected at every stage and in every condition,” the cardinal said in a statement April 12, the day Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy signed the Medical Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill Act, effective Aug. 1.

“Those whose lives are diminished or weakened deserve special respect. Sick or disabled persons should be helped to lead lives as normal as possible,” Cardinal Tobin said.

Under the new law, which goes against the Catholic Church’s fundamental teaching on the sanctity of all human life, adults who receive a terminal diagnosis would be allowed to obtain self-administered medication to end their lives. Murphy is Catholic.

It passed the Assembly 41-33 and the Senate 21-16 March 25. As the measure awaited Murphy’s signature, pro-life groups and other opponents urged state residents to contact the governor and ask

him not to sign the bill into law.

In his statement the day of the signing, Murphy said that “allowing residents with terminal illnesses to make end-of-life choices for themselves is the right thing to do.”

“By signing this bill today, we are providing terminally ill patients and their families with the humanity, dignity, and respect that they so richly deserve at the most difficult times any of us will face,” he said, and he thanked the Legislature “for its courage in tackling this challenging issue.”

One of the opponents of the measure who testified at the Statehouse March 25, Dawn Teresa Parkot, who did not mince words when speaking about the Aid in Dying bill.

“I firmly believe that assisted suicide is homicide and those who assist, regardless of their intentions, are guilty of taking a life just as surely as if they participated in a state-sanctioned execution,” said Parkot, a quadriplegic motivational speaker with athetoid cerebral palsy. She uses a computer-based communication system to speak.

It’s In the Cards for ‘Perfect Pitch’ Sister

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The perfect pitch Dominican Sister Mary Jo Sobieck threw prior to a Chicago White Sox game last summer not only went viral but is still out of the park.

First, there was a bobblehead in her image and now, she has her own baseball card.

Not bad for a theology teacher at arian Catholic High School in Chicago. And in baseball terms, it’s a double, because the money she gets for the cards goes directly to her school’s scholarship program.

Sister Mary Jo also got to throw out the pregame pitch April 11 at Busch Stadium in St. Louis before the Cardinals’ game against the Los Angeles Dodgers, which isn’t bad for the sister who also happens to be a Cardinals’ fan.

According to news reports, the Twins rank at the top for the sister who grew up in Minnesota, followed next by the White Sox, but her favorite team in the National League is the Cardinals, whom she discovered and went to plenty of games to see, when she moved to Springfield, Illinois, to join the Dominican sisters there in the 1993.

On April 8, she signed 260 limited-edition baseball cards bearing her image in the gym at Marian Catholic High School. The baseball card company, Topps, contacted her after her famous

pitch last August and said a card picturing her would be perfect for their Allen & Ginter series, which also features pop culture icons and historical figures in its packs.

The image on the card is when she came off the mound pointing at White Sox pitcher Lucas Giolito, who caught her pitch. She is wearing a Marian Catholic T-shirt over her white habit with the number “60” on it for the school’s 60th anniversary.

She was chosen to throw out the first pitch that night because it was Marian Catholic Night at the park.

For the card deal, Sister Mary Jo receives \$1,000, which she is donating to the Sister Mary Jo Endowed Scholarship fund, established after she threw out the now-famous pitch. The school has promoted the fund on social media noting that Sister Mary Jo is asking for matching funds for those who support Catholic education.

All of this fame might be new to the Dominican sister, but she’s hardly new to the sport that brought her to this level. In elementary school, high school and college she played softball, basketball and volleyball.

She certainly never imagined she would be on a baseball card.

Cathedral Called Symbol Not Just Of Faith, But 'Fact All Humans Have Souls'

PHILADELPHIA (CNS) – Here is an April 16 column on the Notre Dame Cathedral fire from CatholicPhilly.com, the news website of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. It was written by M. Jean Duchesne, a French Catholic guest columnist, and appears in place of Archbishop Charles Chaput's regular column.

Duchesne co-founded the French edition of the *Communio* international theological journal and served as special assistant to the late Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger of Paris for more than 25 years.

The author of numerous books and articles on the faith, active in Jewish-Catholic dialogues and a consultant to Cardinal Lustiger's successors, "he has been a friend to the church in the United States for decades," writes Archbishop Chaput. "He and his family live in Paris. I'm grateful for his willingness to offer his thoughts here on the Paris Holy Week fire."

Duchesne's column follows:

Seeing Notre Dame de Paris burning and threatening to collapse is a shock that leaves everyone voiceless – including President Emmanuel Macron, who canceled a speech dealing with the social unrest in France over the past few months.

The cathedral towering above the island on the Seine that was the cradle of the city is more than a venerable medieval building, more than an exceptionally beautiful architectural masterpiece.

It has been for centuries the heart not only of Paris, but of the whole nation, the place where even atheistic presidents and ministers came to pray because they could not think of anything else to do when France was victorious (in 1918), defeated (in 1940) or liberated (in 1944).

It was desecrated during the French Revolution and turned into a temple of the goddess Reason, but Napoleon realized he had to give it back to the church and be crowned there if he was actually to become an emperor.

It also is a vibrant reminder of the faith of our ancestors, which shaped the monument and inspired every detail as a facet of God's revelation and gifts as well as the overall design. It was meant and has survived as a representation of the celestial abode that everyone openly hopes for or secretly dreams of.

That something so ancient should defy time and remain so mysteriously mean-



A reliquary containing what tradition holds is Jesus' crown of thorns is displayed during a ceremony at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris March 21, 2014. (CNS photo/Philippe Wojazer, Reuters)

ingful is perceived as a miracle that no science can either deny or explain. This is why even nonbelievers feel affected. The Paris cathedral is the symbol not just of the Catholic faith, but of the fact that all humans have souls.

Rather strangely, non-Catholics lament more noisily than Catholics. They fear the damage is irreversible. Can it be repaired? How much will it cost? Can it be afforded?

A fund has already been started to raise the money that is needed. But will this be enough to restore everything as it was? Is it possible to rebuild the roof's oak framework that had resisted the elements since the 13th century? Will Notre Dame ever be the same again?

The faithful are less pessimistic, though they quite reasonably could be. The late Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger had centered the Paris Archdiocese's life in and around the cathedral and refash-

ioned the interior with an elegant modern altar in the middle.

The loss of all this might seem to be the last blow after all the sex abuse scandals that have hit the church recently, and all the sociological studies highlighting the plummeting numbers of baptisms, ordinations and religious vocations, or revealing that the younger generations are simply unsure what Christians commemorate at Easter or what a parish is exactly.

On top of it all, this happens just at the beginning of Holy Week, the most sacred time of year for Christians: Where will the archbishop gather his priests for chrisom Mass? And finally, why did God allow this?

Notre Dame on fire and perhaps unusable for months if not years is undoubtedly a trial. But faith does not allow to see this as a punishment or the confirmation of a decline and fall.

There is some comfort to be found in

the massive sense of affliction and solidarity of non-believers, since it proves that for them, however irreligious they are, the visible church is not a mere remnant of the past, but a vital part of the scenery, without which they themselves miss something. Yet, in the end, this support does not make that much of a difference.

What is decisive is the knowledge that Jesus Christ the groom will never abandon his bride the church – which does not mean that her faithfulness will never be tested.

The Temple on Mount Zion was destroyed, rebuilt and destroyed again. St. Peter's in Rome was plundered several times. The crusaders lost Jerusalem. What ultimately matters is not the signifier (the cathedral), but the signified (God's glory) which remains forever fertile and will forever inspire those who long for it.

Hope

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imagination, the place where we have experienced our great moments, the epicenter of our life," said Macron, who was accompanied by the archbishop, French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe, and Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo.

"We built this cathedral over centuries, raising it up and improving it, and I now state solemnly that we will, all of us together, reconstruct it. This is undoubtedly part of the French destiny," Macron said.

Up to 500 firefighters battled for 15 hours to save the cathedral after flames erupted in the structure's attic about 6:30 p.m. local time. The blaze quickly consumed two-thirds of the 13th-century oak roof and brought down the cathedral's 300-foot spire. Authorities said much of the cathedral's wooden interior was destroyed and its masonry was seriously scorched.

The La Croix daily newspaper re-

ported much of the building continued to smolder April 16, as thousands of onlookers continued to pray and sing hymns in nearby streets.

Rescue teams formed a human chain to remove many of the cathedral's priceless artworks and sacred objects, including the crown of thorns relic from Jesus' crucifixion and a gold tunic of St. Louis, the report said.

Noted art historian Jean-Michel Leniaud told the newspaper April 16 it was too soon to assess the extent of the fire damage but said it would certainly represent "a major blow and terrifying mutilation of the country's history."

The cathedral symbolized "relations between religion and political power," he said, adding that he believed the French state should "take charge of its reconstruction."

Meanwhile, offers of support in rebuilding the cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage site, came from church leaders and governments around the world, including Donald Tusk, European Council president, who said April 16 that he

hoped the European Union's 28 member-states would all help share the costs.

French newspapers said the Pinault family, whose consortium owns the Gucci and Saint-Laurent fashion brands, had pledged 100 million euros (US\$113 million) overnight, while the LVMH group, which includes Moët Hennessy-Louis Vuitton, had promised 200 million euros (US\$226 million).

In a television interview in the wee hours of April 16, Archbishop Aupetit said the cathedral symbolized "the soul and history of France," as "a site traversing the centuries which was always a place of faith."

He explained how the disaster had stirred "deep emotions" throughout France, adding that he had received messages of sympathy from faith leaders worldwide, including many Muslims.

The newly elected president of the French bishops' conference, Bishop Eric Moulin-Beaufort of Reims, told the *Famille Chretienne* weekly 16 the cathedral also represented "national unity during all tests," and would be "an immense

loss" to the whole world.

"Something from the best of humanity went up in flames yesterday evening, and I sense a large part of humanity is in communion with our grief," Bishop Moulin-Beaufort said.

"But cathedral edifices have been burned before and every time they've been rebuilt even more beautifully. So I see in this tragedy the occasion for a national restart and a sign of resurrection for the whole nation," he said.

Paris prosecutors said they had opened investigations into the cause of massive fire and were questioning workers carrying out an eight-year restoration project, launched in January.

Notre Dame's chief organist told the BBC the fire had been reported shortly after an April 15 early evening Mass. He said he and other members of the cathedral staff were "devastated."

He added that there was no news as yet about the state of the cathedral's historic 8,000-pipe 18th-century organ, but said he still hoped it could be preserved after lengthy repairs.