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News Briefs

Cardinal Law dies at the age of 86

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Cardinal Bernard F. Law, who had been one of the United States most powerful and respected bishops until his legacy was blemished by the devastating sexual abuse of minors by priests in his Archdiocese of Boston, died Dec. 20 in Rome at the age of 86.

Before the abuse scandal forced his resignation in 2002, Cardinal Law had been a leading church spokesman on issues ranging from civil rights to international justice, from abortion to poverty, from Catholic-Jewish relations and ecumenism to war and peace.

Cardinal Law was buried in Rome. Pope Francis, as is customary for cardinals' funerals, presided over the final rites at the end of Mass.

Pope Francis said, "I raise prayers for the repose of his soul that the Lord God, who is rich in mercy, may welcome him in his eternal peace, and I send my apostolic blessing to those who share in mourning the passing of the cardinal, who I entrust to the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary Salus Populi Romani," the title with which she is honored at Rome's Basilica of St. Mary Major.

Pope Francis says press must be factual

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — People need factual and trustworthy news that avoids sensationalism and whipping up heated reactions, Pope Francis said.

It is important the press not be "constantly at the mercy of easy slogans or improvised information campaigns, which show the intention of manipulating reality, opinions and people themselves, often creating worthless 'media dust storms,'" he told members of the press.

"Your voice — free and responsible — is fundamental for the growth of any society that wishes to call itself a democracy," the pope said.

The pope praised in particular the value, necessity and effectiveness of diocesan weeklies, which he said require "a renewed commitment" from priests and the whole church community, and "kind attention from public authorities."

Chesterton Academy coming to Catholic Central



Steubenville Catholic Central High School Principal Thomas Costello discusses Chesterton Academy curriculum with Jude Lucas, assistant principal. (Photo by Orsatti)

By Dino Orsatti
Editor

STEUBENVILLE — Steubenville Catholic Central High School is looking to attract new students through the Chesterton Academy, a highly innovative, classical and faith-based curriculum that will begin in the fall of 2018.

CCHS Principal Thomas Costello said, "The Chesterton Academy fits our mission statement where academic excellence is fostered through a well-defined curriculum."

The curriculum includes ancient history/literature/religion, philosophy (logic, rhetoric and debate) and Latin.

The classical curriculum is a three-stage learning process where each stage builds on the other. The first stage is learning how to memorize facts effectively and repeat those facts when needed. The second stage is logical reasoning; analyzing the facts, comparing and contrasting the facts to other facts and evaluating the facts. The third stage is rhetoric

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MISSION STATEMENT OF THE DIOCESE OF STEUBENVILLE

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*"For nothing will be impossible for God."
(Lk 1:37)*

Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton's Christmas Message 2017

"Let us celebrate this day not because of the visible sun, but because of him who made this day" (St. Augustine).

May the blessings from the Christ Child, the Prince of Peace, fill your life and the lives of your family members. As we gather together with family and friends, we celebrate joyfully the birth of humanity's Redeemer and we go forth with great joy as Christian ambassadors to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.



Bishop Monforton

'Ask the Bishop'

STEUBENVILLE — Students in kindergarten through 12th grade in the Diocese of Steubenville "Ask the Bishop" Jeffrey M. Monforton.

Q: Who did Cain think was going to hurt him after God punished him by making him wander the earth?

Grace Dutton
St. Clairsville

A: As we celebrate the season of our Lord Jesus' Nativity, also known as Christmas, it is fitting we start with a question which is near the beginning of humanity's salvation history, that is, the first offspring of Adam and Eve. We know from Chapter 4 of the first Book of Genesis that Cain killed Abel out of envy and was consequently punished by God to wander the earth as a fugitive. It is important to recognize that Cain was to wander the earth and he believed that his sin or transgression would follow him to the point that others would recognize him and thus take retribution or vengeance upon him for Abel's death.

God, in turn, had already exacted punishment upon Cain and thus would forbid any further action taken against Cain. The story is quite clear that Cain believed he would encounter others as he wandered the earth and he feared for his life. Who did Cain fear? He feared anyone whom he would encounter because of his sin.

The question specifically focuses on "the others." Cain's concern that others could hurt him permits us to draw the conclusion he believed there were or there would be other people in the world with whom he would encounter. While the Book of Genesis does not expound in great description on how the growth of the human race occurred so quickly, we confidently recognize in subsequent chapters that our earliest of ancestors grew in number quite quickly. Therefore, Cain's concern about his safety would have been expressed through his

anticipation to encounter other people.

We know for a fact that Adam and Eve are humanity's first parents and we also know from the concern Cain had that he would encounter more people in his wanderings. This may not be completely the answer you were looking for, however, we know that Cain would encounter others along his way.

Q: What do you do when you are not preaching?

Simon Englefield
Steubenville

A: As most know, we clergy do not simply "work weekends." In fact, my life as your bishop is as they would say, 24/7 and I would have it no other way. While preaching takes up a brief period of time each day (I am certain that those who hear the homilies appreciate when brevity is respected), in order to preach I have to prepare my homily; work goes into each Sunday homily at least a week ahead of time.

While I do have a desk in my office in which I need to sign and read material, I spend as little time as possible at that desk in order that I make it out to visit our brothers and sisters in the diocese. In fact, I am grateful for the opportunity to visit our Catholic schools and engage in an impromptu "Ask the Bishop" as well as to even engage in conversation with others in the canned food aisle at the grocery store. Yes, I even make visits to the hardware store, sort of my version of a theme park.

More importantly, I take time to pray each and every day, focusing on a Holy Hour to open the day, for I too need to have my "spiritual GPS" set correctly and focused on the face of Jesus each and every morning. I try to take nothing to chance when it comes to serving you as your shepherd. As you can see, I am a person like everyone else and each Christian vocation



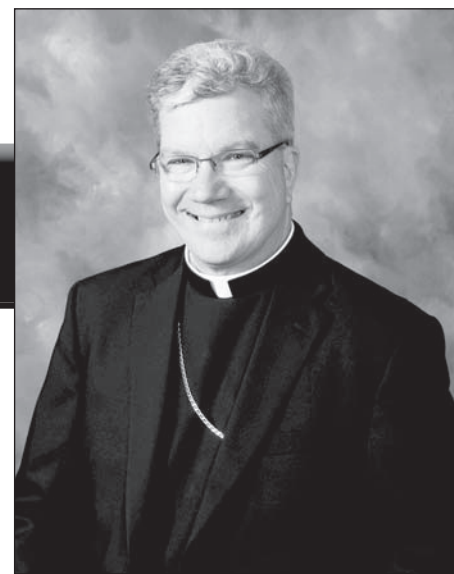
entails preparation and hard work.

Q: Why do we use water when people are baptized?

Carolyn Kuebler
Steubenville

A: We read in the third chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, that Jesus has established the Sacrament of Baptism, and we recognize in our faith water being the material that is filled by the Holy Spirit for our new birth. The story of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan by St. John the Baptist instructs us that we are in union with Jesus Christ in our own baptism.

We use water for baptism because Jesus has made it so. At Jesus' baptism, God the Father was present, the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus as witness to Jesus being the Son of God, and the three Persons of God at that moment teach us that



Bishop Monforton

at baptism we have participation in the life of the Trinity (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraph 268).

Questions for "Ask the Bishop" are channeled through the Diocese of Steubenville Office of Christian Formation and Schools, Permanent Deacon Paul D. Ward, director.

To "Ask the Bishop," contact Carolyn A. Crabtree, catechetical consultant, Diocese of Steubenville, Office of Christian Formation and Schools, P.O. Box 969, Steubenville, OH 43952; 422 Washington St., Steubenville; telephone (740) 282-3631; email ccrabtree@diosteub.org.

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Sixth- through eighth-grade student council members from St. Mary School, Marietta, and their advisors Lori Estes, Jennifer Ireland, and Washington County Children's Services representatives Diane Laderosa and Alice Stewart, are pictured with gifts for those in need that were recently collected during a community service project. The students coordinated, shopped and collected money to provide gifts for 18 children from the Washington County Children's Services; five gifts to seniors at the O'Neill Senior Center, Marietta; 30 gift baskets to St. Vincent de Paul; and three boxes of toys to Washington County Community Action. (Photo provided)

Chesterton Academy

From Page 1

—research, analyzation, writing and speaking about a subject.

Ninth- and 10th-grade students will have the option of taking the academy classes within the existing school.

The mission of the academy is to build a generation of joyful leaders, educated in the classical tradition and truths of the Catholic faith. Costello said, "Because faith is at the core of the academic program, all subjects are taught through the lens of the church. That endeavor is what makes the Chesterton program unique."

The program is designed to improve critical thinking skills, as well as to challenge students to logically think and critically analyze information. It will also give the students the tools to communicate effectively and persuasively. Costello said the Chesterton program "embraces the gift of salvation offered to us through Jesus Christ and his church and sees how God has been working throughout history."

Catholicism is central to the mission as every day starts with the celebration of Mass.

Students at Chesterton Academy enjoy a cohesive, content-rich education. A broad exposure to many different disciplines helps students avoid the pitfalls of specializing

too early. The Socratic method is used in the classes to draw students to true conclusions by questioning their assumptions.

The Chesterton mission does not end with providing better preparation for success in college. It prepares students for life, which includes finding their vocation and helping them discern and follow God's calling for their lives.

There are only eight Chesterton academies throughout the United States and none are near Steubenville.

Costello said he would hire teachers, as needed, to fill positions.

Named for the great English writer G.K. Chesterton who once wrote, "Education is the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to the next." It is that concept, they strive to pass on.

Costello said a meeting will be held Jan. 11, at 7 p.m., in Berkman Theater, Lanman Hall, open to everyone, to discuss the options for students for the Chesterton Academy curriculum at CCHS and the benefits of the program.

Bishop Monforton's Schedule

January

- 1 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 10 a.m.
- 2 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 7 a.m.
Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 5 p.m.
Dinner with diocesan seminarians, Steubenville, 5 p.m.
- 3 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 8:30 a.m.
Radio segment WDEO 990AM, 10:15 a.m.
- 7 70th anniversary Mass, Blessed Sacrament Church, Wintersville, 11 a.m.
- 9 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 7 a.m.
Annual dinner with priests, Steubenville, 5 p.m.
- 10 Diocesan Finance Council meeting, chancery, Steubenville, 9 a.m.
Annual dinner with priests, Marietta, 5 p.m.
- 12-16 Retreat

Project Rachel retreat set for Jan. 27

STEUBENVILLE — An "Entering Canaan" day of prayer and healing retreat for women will be hosted by Project Rachel, a ministry in the Diocese of Steubenville, Jan. 27.

The retreat, led by Theresa Bonapartis — an author who has written a book on her own experience of healing — is for women who are suffering from a past abortion. The retreat is free to attend, but a freewill offering will be taken up at the retreat.

Ginna Dombrowski is the coordinator of the Project Rachel ministry for the diocese.

For additional information regarding the Project Rachel ministry or to make reservations for the upcoming retreat, telephone or text the confidential line at (740) 275-7038. Also, reservations can be made by emailing projectrachel@diosteub.org.

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St. Lucy Parish celebrates the feast of St. Lucy with light and prayer

By Matthew A. DiCenzo
Staff writer

YORKVILLE — In the midst of a snowy evening, St. Lucy Parish, Yorkville, celebrated the feast of St. Lucy, Dec. 13. St. Lucy parishioners lined all the sidewalks and the ramp of the church with approximately 100 luminaries, which were purchased by parishioners and members of the community. Luminaries were lit “in memory of” or a “special prayer intention for” a loved one.

The light from the luminaries led the parishioners inside the church for the celebration of Mass, followed by refreshments downstairs in the church hall.

Father William D. Cross, pastor of St. Lucy Parish, and St. Joseph Parish, Tiltonsville, was the celebrant at the Mass. Father Cross, who is also the judicial vicar for the Diocese of Steubenville, spoke of how St. Lucy is a saint for all people of faith to follow as an example.

St. Lucy, virgin and martyr of Syracuse in Sicily, Italy, is the patron saint of the blind and eye disorders. Lucy’s name, Lucia, means “light” in Latin. The luminaries were lit at the celebration of Mass as a symbol of St. Lucy.

Father Cross said in his homily, “Lucy knew of the heroism of earlier virgin martyrs. She remained faithful to their example and to the example of the Jewish carpenter, who she believed to be the Son of God. The moral courage of St. Lucy shines forth as a light, just as bright for us today, as it was in A.D. 304.”

Before the reform of the Gregorian calendar in the Middle Ages, the original feast day for St. Lucy was celebrated Dec. 21, the winter solstice, which is the shortest



St. Lucy Parish, Yorkville, line the sidewalks of the church with luminaries during the celebration of the feast of St. Lucy, Dec. 13. (Photo by DiCenzo)

day of the year. It was later moved to Dec. 13, which was the day of her martyrdom.

St. Lucy was raised a devout Christian, according to tradition, and did many charitable works. At the time, bishops, priests and deacons were arrested and martyred for their faith. St. Lucy was known for carrying food to Christians, who hid in underground catacombs from persecution. When entering the underground spaces, St. Lucy wore a wreath on her head with candles to light her way to the people while carrying food to those in hiding.

Pascasio, the Roman governor, was angered by St. Lucy’s actions. Although the Romans tried many ways of killing or shaming her, they were unsuccessful, and St. Lucy continued to not deny her faith.

It is unclear if St. Lucy gouged out her own eyes or if she was punished by gouging out her eyes for refusing to deny Jesus

and her faith. St. Lucy’s death was a result from a Roman soldier stabbing her in the neck with a sword, Dec. 13, A.D. 304.

It was later discovered that St. Lucy’s eyes were restored after her death. Statues and icons represent this by showing her with eyes, while holding a plate with eyes. In addition, St. Lucy statues and icons are shown holding a palm branch, a symbol of her victory over death and her martyrdom.

Father Cross said at Mass, “Even though very little is known about the life of St. Lucy, because of her choice to remain steadfast in her commitment to Christ, we know of her today, over 1,700 years after her death. How many other 15-year-

old girls from Sicily in A.D. 304 do you know? We know about St. Lucy because clearly her example of faith and courage left a significant impact on the people of her time. She would be included in the Roman Canon – the precursor of ‘Eucharistic Prayer I.’”

Judy Peckens, a longtime parishioner of St. Lucy Parish, played a special “Santa Lucia” hymn on the keyboard at the Mass, a hymn that she wrote for the parish. Peckens was the organist at St. Lucy Parish for around 25 years, and wrote the hymn in 1989, which at the time was St. Lucy Parish’s 25th anniversary. Peckens said the inspiration for the lyrics was based on the people of the parish community and the events at the parish.

When speaking about writing the hymn, Peckens said that she “wanted to help the young parishioners to better understand how important St. Lucy is to the people of the parish, and try to help them understand her martyrdom.” Although there are traditional “Santa Lucia” hymns, Peckens said the lyrics of the hymn she wrote are more specific to the parish and apply to the people in the faith community.

Peckens said that many of the parishioners, especially the people who suffer from eye disorders, often pray through the intercession of St. Lucy.

St. Lucy is more than just a patron to the people of St. Lucy, Peckens said, she is someone who all of the parishioners honor, admire and try to imitate.

Pope Francis: Coldest hearts can be warmed by Christmas cheer

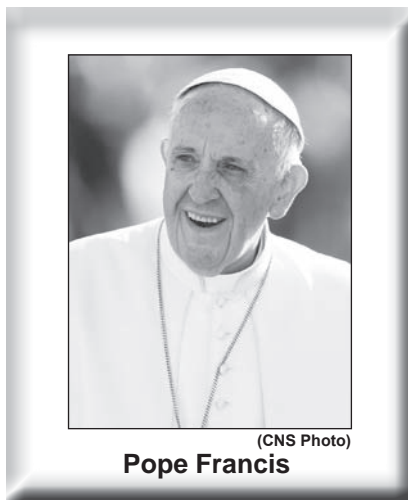
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christmas joy expressed through music brings a message of peace and brotherhood for those most in need, Pope Francis said.

Meeting with organizers and artists participating in a benefit Christmas concert at the Vatican, the pope said the talents of musicians and artists during the festive season “is a formidable way to open the doors of the mind and heart to the true meaning of Christmas.”

“Christmas is a heartfelt feast, participatory, capable of warming the coldest hearts, of removing the walls of indifference toward one’s neighbor, of encouraging openness toward the other and giving freely,” he said.

The proceeds of the concert, which is sponsored by the Pontifical Congregation for Catholic Education, will be donated to two organizations – Scholas Occurrentes and the “Don Bosco in the World” Foundation – to benefit children’s programs in Argentina and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The pope thanked the artists and the event organizers for donating their time and talents to “the needs of the needy and disadvantaged who beg for



(CNS Photo)
Pope Francis

help and solidarity” and for promoting peace and compassion through music.

Pope Francis said he hoped the concert would be “an occasion to sow tenderness – this word that is often forgotten today. Violence, war, no! Tenderness! That it may sow tenderness, peace and hospitality which flows from the grotto in Bethlehem.”

Among the international cast of musicians meeting the pope and performing at the concert were Annie Lennox and Patti Smith.

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Historic tax bill passes amid concerns about future effects on poor

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Republican lawmakers joined President Donald Trump in cheering passage of the most significant overhaul of the federal tax system in three decades, even as the chairman of the U.S. bishops' domestic policy committee called on the president to work with Congress to fix "unacceptable problems" in the law.

Republicans hailed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act as the stimulus needed to get the economy rolling into high gear as they expected corporations to reinvest in America with the middle class benefiting from lower taxes, higher wages and greater job opportunities.

Critics contend the law will provide a windfall for people with the highest incomes and corporations that already are seeing record profits and that there will be limited benefit to low- and middle-income families, who will see their taxes rise beginning in 2025.

Meanwhile, Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Florida, chairman of the bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, said that while the law "achieves some laudable things," it also "contains a number of problematic provisions that will have dramatic negative consequences, particularly for those most in need."

Bishop Dewane expressed concern that the law will raise taxes for people and families with lower incomes while cutting taxes for the wealthy.

"This is clearly problematic, especially for the poor," he said. "The repeal of the personal exemption will cause larger families, including many in the middle class, to be financially worse off."



U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin, speaks after the House of Representatives passed tax reform legislation on Capitol Hill in Washington. (CNS photo)

The law "also is likely to produce up to a \$13 billion drop in annual charitable giving to nonprofits that are relied upon to help those struggling on the margins. This will also significantly diminish the role of civil society in promoting the common good," Bishop Dewane added.

The legislation passed along party lines in both chambers, with Democrats unanimously lining up against it.

The tax reform plan affects virtually every American family. An analysis by the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center released Dec. 18 found that 95 percent of taxpayers would see lower taxes in 2018 with 5 percent paying

more next year.

Families earning less than \$25,000 annually would see \$60 in tax savings, while those earning \$733,000 would see a cut of \$51,140 on average, the analysis showed.

In 2025, 9 percent of taxpayers would pay more; by 2027, 53 percent — largely middle- and low-income earners — would pay more, according to the analysis. Higher earners would continue to see cuts in 2027 compared with current law, although at a lower rate.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin, told reporters after the Dec. 19 vote that the rollback of the cuts was necessary by 2027 in order to comply with Senate rules. Ryan, who is Catholic, said he expected a future Congress to keep the cuts in place.

Other provisions of the law include doubling of the standard deduction while ending the personal exemption; reducing the top corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent and making it permanent; expanding the child tax credit; a cap on deductions for state and local taxes; and reducing the deduction for mortgage interest.

The bill also ends the individual mandate under the Affordable Care Act that required people to buy health insurance or face a penalty.

As the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said early on, "This bill appears to be the first federal income tax modification in American history that will raise income taxes on the working poor while simultaneously providing a large tax cut to the wealthy. The bishops go on to say, this is simply unconscionable."

Pope urges Catholic groups to work together to defend human dignity

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis encouraged a wide variety of Catholic organizations to work together to defend human dignity and promote the full integral development of all people.

"I encourage you to work always in a spirit of communion and cooperation with other Catholic Non Governmental Organizations and with the representatives of the Holy See as an expression of the church's commitment to the building of a more just and fraternal world," he said to delegates taking part in a forum in Rome.

"I express my deep appreciation for your efforts to bring the light of the Gospel to the various peripheries of our world in order to defend human dignity, to promote the integral development of peoples and to meet the material and spiritual needs of so many members of our human family," he said in remarks at the end of his general audience talk.

The forum looked at how Catholic-inspired organizations, including Catholic schools, can better protect and promote the human person in a rapidly changing world.

The forum organizer, Johan Ketelers, said over 100 organizations were represented, ranging from groups focused on peace, immigration, education, development and pro-life issues.

"You can't talk about migration without talking about economics, human rights," law, development and justice and peace, said Ketelers, former secretary-general of the International Catholic Migration Commission.

"We can no longer work vertically, one organization by itself, parallel to others," but must work "transversally," crisscrossing domains and sharing expertise and ideas, he said. That means that dialogue and strong partnerships, which are already "tools for Christianity," are essential, he said.

One of the panelists at the forum was Helen Alvare, pro-

fessor of law at the Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University in Arlington, Virginia, and adviser to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, D.C.

Alvare said that some people at the forum were interested in her approach of empowering women and Catholics on the local level to speak up for themselves, their values and beliefs. As president of Reconnect Media, Alvare actively promotes the organization's two projects: "Women Speak For Themselves" and "IBelieveInLove.com."

While the "I Believe in Love" online community shares real stories about seeking stable relationships and parent-

ing, WomenSpeakForThemselves.com is a nationwide grassroots movement of women voicing the negative effects that contraception, abortion and other phenomena, including pornography, have on dating and marriage.

Alvare said these methods of sharing real people's stories of struggle and hope are what informs, unites and motivates people best.

"Social welfare, we're all for it, but if you leave family structure out of social welfare, you're doomed," Alvare said. "The Catholic Church is one of the few places that always holds it all together properly."

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St. John Paul II The Spirit of Unity

By Diocese of Steubenville
Bishop Emeritus Gilbert I. Sheldon

Thus far, St. John Paul has been discussing the Holy Spirit as a person of the Blessed Trinity and its implications within the life of the triune God. He next addresses the question of the Spirit's part in our lives and that of the church. The Holy Spirit can be described as the "life-giving principle" of the church. We saw earlier when considering *Jesus, son and savior*, that Jesus gathered around himself a group of disciples, and from among them, chose twelve to be "apostles," as the prime witnesses to his work and teaching and its conveyors to the world. He also enjoined upon them the celebration of certain functions, notably baptizing and repeating his own action at the Last Supper, that of changing bread and wine into his body and blood, so as to make continuously present to mankind his redeeming death. He also conferred on mere human beings the power to forgive sin. Moreover, before leaving them and the world, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to remain with them as another "advocate" and helper.

As the role of Son of God was completed, the next step in the plan of the Father was to be the role of the Holy Spirit, working in and with those who accept and transmit the teaching of the apostles – not only the original Twelve, but their successors as well. Just as the Holy Spirit gave divine life to the humanity of Jesus, so the Spirit would infuse life into the body of those called together as Christian believers (*"ecclesia,"* meaning *those called together*). For this reason, the church is aptly seen as the "mystical body of Christ," because the Holy Spirit infuses into that body the same divine life that he infused in the human body of Jesus. For this reason, too, the Holy Spirit is considered the "soul of the church" by analogy with the soul as the life-giving principle of human life. It remains only an analogy because the human soul is a separate entity in each human being, whereas the Spirit is a one being in the body of believers. Nevertheless, just as the soul is conceived as

"As the role of Son of God was completed, the next step in the plan of the Father was to be the role of the Holy Spirit, working in and with those who accept and transmit the teaching of the apostles – not only the original Twelve, but their successors as well."

the life-giving principle of human life, so the Spirit is seen as the life-giving force in the church.

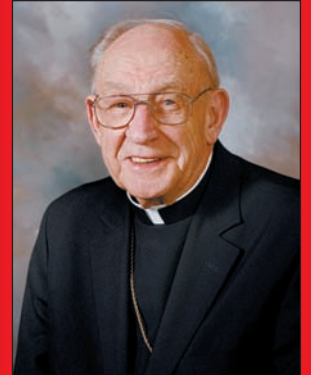
Among the manifestations of that "life" with which the Spirit endows the church are *holiness and light*. "Holiness" is the attribute of being properly related to God. It is observable primarily in the public prayer life of the church (the "liturgy") and in the private prayer life of individuals in all its forms. "Light" in this context refers to knowledge of *truth*: the truths of faith. As we have seen, Our Lord did not leave a written document such as a "constitution" with the apostles. Understanding human nature, he knew that the written word can be distorted, forgotten or misunderstood. Instead he gave them the Holy Spirit to "guide them in all truth" (Jn 16:13). Unity is evident in the certainty with which the church holds its teachings. In John Paul's words, "(T)he power of the Spirit who is life-giving and unifying love is stronger than all human weakness and sin." The pope now looks more closely at this quality of unity: Unity is one of the identifying characteristics or "marks" of the church. It is the flip side of another mark, that of "Catholicity," or universality. Its connection with the Holy Spirit is clearly indicated in sacred Scripture, especially in the writings of St. Paul: "In one Spirit we were all baptized into the one body ... and we were all given to drink of the one Spirit" (2 Cor 12:13). The analogy of a body is described very explicitly by Paul: "As a body is one though

it has many parts, and all the parts of the body are one, though many, so also is Christ" (1 Cor 12:12). The

pope comments: "Unfortunately, the unity of and in the Holy Spirit, which is proper to the body of Christ, runs up against sin. Thus it came about that during the course of the centuries Christians have experienced quite a few divisions. These divisions are explained – but not justified – by the weakness and limitation which are part of our fallen human nature." These remain and are committed by the members of the church including her leaders as well. "However, we must proclaim our conviction, based in the certainty of faith and the experience of history, that the

Holy Spirit is working tirelessly to build up unity and communion, despite our human weakness." John Paul calls attention to the ecumenical activity taking place among many denominations throughout the Christian world and commends their efforts at unification. He calls attention to the Catholic Church's own Second Vatican Councils "Decree on Ecumenism" (*"Unitatis Redintegratio,"* 1964), in this regard. He points out that the Holy Spirit has created "a universal openness" among the entire human family that is most encouraging. An accepted fact among the Fathers of the Church is that there are "seeds of the word" contained in various cultures, including non-Christian ones, that further assists the hope of unity. He quotes St. Thomas Aquinas who wrote that, "Every truth, no matter who says it, comes from the Holy Spirit who infuses the natural light (of intelligence) and involves the person to understand and express the truth" (*"Summa Theologica"*). The pope goes on to explain that "the Holy Spirit intervenes with the gift of grace added to nature, when it is a question of knowing and expressing certain truths, and especially the truths of faith." St. Paul affirms much the same when he wrote: "No one can say 'Jesus is lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3).

John Paul puts a fresh "spin," so to speak, on the missionary activity of the church when he says: "Discerning and bringing to light in all their richness the truths and values present in the fabric of cultures is a fundamental task of missionary activity, nourished in the church by the Spirit of Truth, who, as Love, leads people to a more perfect knowledge in charity. The Holy Spirit pours himself out into the church as love, the saving force which tends to draw together all people and all of creation."



Bishop Sheldon

Priests, Prophets, Kings

By Bishop Robert Barron

A classic characterization of Jesus is that he is priest, prophet, and king. As priest, he sanctifies, that is to say, he reestablishes the lost link between divinity and humanity; as prophet, he speaks and embodies the divine truth; and as king, he leads us on the right path, giving guidance to the human project. You might say that, as priest, he is the life; as prophet, he is the truth; and as king he is the way.

Not only is this munus triplex (triple office) a rich way to characterize the Lord; it is also a very good way to designate who the baptized are supposed to be. According to Catholic theology, baptism is much more than merely a symbolic sign of belonging to the church. It is the

means by which a person is incorporated into Christ, becoming a member of his mystical body. Baptism, accordingly, makes the baptized an alter Christus, another Christ. This is precisely why, for example, every candidate for baptism is anointed with oil, just as, in the Old Testament, priests, prophets and kings were anointed upon assumption of their offices.

So what does this look like in practice? How does it show itself in the lives of ordinary believers? Let us look at priesthood first. A priest fosters holiness, precisely in the measure that he or she serves as a bridge between God and human beings. In ancient Roman times, the priest was described as a pontifex, bridge-builder, and this remains a valid designation in the Christian context. The reconciliation of divinity and humanity produces in human beings a wholeness or integration, a coming together of the often warring elements within the self. The same dynamic obtains on a grander scale as well: When cities, societies, cultures rediscover a link to God, they find an inner peace. And, therefore, baptized priests are meant, first, to embody the harmony that God wants between himself and those made in his image and likeness. They affect this through their own intense devotion to prayer, the sacraments and the Mass.

In their cultivation of a real friendship with the living Christ, they act out their priestly identity and purpose.

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The Steubenville Register

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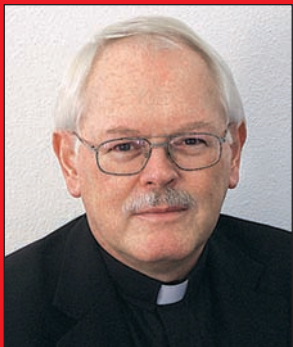
Bishop Barron

The Christ – Child of the Year

By Father Ron Rolheiser

Every year Time magazine recognizes someone as “Person of the Year.” The recognition isn’t necessarily an honor; it’s given to the person whom Time judges to have been the newsmaker of the year – for good or for bad. This year, instead of choosing an individual to recognize as newsmaker of the year, it recognized instead a category of persons, the Silence Breakers, namely, women who have spoken out about having experienced sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Part of the challenge of Christmas is to recognize where Christ is being born in our world today, where 2,000 years after the birth of Jesus we can again visit the stable in Bethlehem, see the newborn child, and have our hearts moved by the power of divine innocence and powerlessness. For Christmas this year, I suggest we honor refugee children as the “Christ – Child of the Year.” They bring as close to the original crib in Bethlehem as we can get within our world today because for them, as for Jesus 2,000 years ago, there is no room at the inn.



Father Rolheiser

Jesus’ birth, like his death, comes wrapped in paradox: He came as God’s answer to our deepest desire, badly wanted, and yet, both in birth and in death, the outsider. Notice that Jesus is born outside the city and he dies outside the city. That’s no accident. He wasn’t born a “wanted” child and

he wasn’t an accepted child. Granted, his mother, Mary, and those with genuine religious hearts wanted him, but the world didn’t, at least not on the terms on which he came, as a powerless child. Had he come as a superstar, powerful, a figure so dominant that knees would automatically bend in his presence, a messiah tailored to our imagination, every inn door would have opened to him, not just at birth but throughout his whole life.

But Christ wasn’t the messiah of our expectations. He came as an infant, powerless, hidden in anonymity, without status, uninvited, unwanted. And so Thomas Merton describes his birth this way: Into this world, this demented inn, in which there is absolutely no room for him at all, Christ has come uninvited. But because he cannot be at home in it, because he is out of place in it, and yet he must be in it, his place is with those others for whom there is no room.

There was no room for him at the inn! Biblical scholars tell us that our homilies and imaginings about the heartlessness of the innkeepers who turned Mary and Joseph away on Christmas Eve miss the point of that narrative. The point that the Gospels want to make here is not that the innkeepers in Bethlehem were cruel and calloused and this singular, poor, peasant couple, Joseph and Mary, were treated unfairly. The motif of “no room at the inn” wants rather to make a much larger point, the one Merton just highlighted, namely, that there’s never room in our world for the real Christ, the one who doesn’t fit comfortably into our expectations and imaginings. The real Christ generally shocks our imagination, is a disappointment to our expectations, comes uninvited, is perennially here, but is forever on the outside, on the periphery, excluded by our imaginations and sent packing from our doors. The real Christ is forever seeking a home in a world within which there’s no room for him.

So, who best fits that description best today? I suggest the following: millions of refugee children. The Christ Child can be seen most clearly today in the countless refugee children who, with their families, are being driven from their homes by violence, war, starvation, ethnic cleansing, poverty, tribalism, racism and religious persecution. They, and their families, best fit the picture of Joseph and Mary, searching for a room, outsiders, powerless, uninvited, no home, no one to take them in, on the periphery, strangers, labeled as “aliens.” But, they are the present-day Holy Family and their children are the Christ Child for us and our world. Where is the crib of Bethlehem today? Where might we find the infant Christ to worship? In many places, admittedly in every delivery room and nursery in the world, but “preferentially” in refugee camps; in boats making perilous journeys across the Mediterranean; in migrants trekking endless miles in hunger, thirst and dangerous conditions; in people waiting in endless lines to be processed in hope of being accepted somewhere, in persons arriving at various borders after a long journey only to be sent back; in mothers in detention centers, holding their young and hoping; and most especially, preferentially, in the faces of countless refugee children.

The face of God at Christmas is seen more in the helplessness of children than in all the earthly and charismatic power in our world. And so today, if we want, like the shepherds and wise men, to find our way to the crib in Bethlehem, we need to look at where, in this demented inn, the most helpless of the children dwell.

Father Rolheiser, a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate priest, is president of the Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio. Additional information about Father Rolheiser’s ministry is available on his website at www.ronrolheiser.com.

Priests, Prophets, Kings

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Then, they are sent out into families, communities, places of work, the political and cultural arenas, etc., in order to carry the integration they have found like a holy contagion. If baptized priests stop praying, stop going to Mass, stop frequenting the sacraments, they will become, in short order, like salt that has lost its savor.

What does it mean for the average baptized person to be a prophet? A person is a prophet in the measure that he or she bears the truth of God. G.K. Chesterton said that in an upside-down world such as ours, the prophet is the one who stands on his head so that he might see things aright. This is why, of course, prophets have always appeared more than a little insane. In fact, the Hebrew word for prophet, “nabi,” has the overtone of madman. Well, of course: in a world that has lost its bearings, those who speak the divine truth will, perforce, appear unhinged. How does one cultivate this salutary madness? Baptized prophets should exercise their brains by studying philosophy, theology, spirituality, church history and the lives of the saints. And they can’t be satisfied with reading superficial tracts designed for children. Augustine, Origen, Bernard, Thomas Aquinas, Ignatius, John Henry Newman, Chesterton, and Ratzinger beckon.

If those classic authors are a bit intimidating, Fulton Sheen, C.S. Lewis, Peter Kreeft, George Weigel and Robert Spitzer provide more accessible but still meaty fare. Having been illumined, these prophets are then sent out into their worlds as beacons of light. God knows that in our increasingly secularized society, such illumination is desperately needed, but if baptized prophets stop studying and stop speaking, they are like lamps over which a bushel basket has been placed.

Finally, what does it mean for the ordinary Catholic to be a king? In the theological sense, a king is someone who orders the charisms within a community so as to direct that community toward God. In this way, he is like the general of an army or the conductor of an orchestra: He coordinates the efforts and talents of a conglomeration of people in order to help them achieve a common purpose. Thus, a Catholic parent directs her children toward the accomplishment of their God-given missions, educating them, shaping them interiorly, molding their behavior, disciplining their desires, etc. A Catholic politician appreciates the moral dimension of his work, and legislates, cajoles and directs accordingly. A Catholic private equity investor saves a company that provides indispensable jobs in a declining neighborhood, etc.

How does one grow in the capacity to exercise kingly leadership? One can do so by overcoming the cultural prejudice in favor of a privatized religion. Most of the avatars of secularism would accept religion as a personal preoccupation, something along the lines of a hobby. But such an attenuated spirituality has nothing to do with a robustly biblical sense of religion. On the Catholic reading, religious people – the baptized – come forth boldly and publicly and are more than willing to govern, to be kings, out of religious conviction. If you are looking for examples of what I’m describing here, look no further than William Lloyd Garrison, Fulton Sheen, Martin Luther King or Dorothy Day. Baptized kings who refuse to reign are like a hilltop city covered in clouds.

The key to the renewal of our society is a recovery of the deepest meaning of baptism, to become priestly, prophetic and kingly people.

Bishop Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He is the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries, headquartered in Des Plaines, Illinois. A nonprofit global media apostolate, additional information is available on his website: www.wordonfire.org.

During October, people in the pews in diocesan churches counted

Parishes	Persons	Families	**Seating Capacity		1st Mass	2nd Mass	3rd Mass	4th Mass	5th Mass	6th Mass	7th Mass	2016	2017
	(from IT Census)	(Census)										Average Attendance	
Adena, St. Casimir	251	142	313		54	64						129	118
Amsterdam, St. Joseph	162	97	120		55	68						137	123
Athens, Christ the King	839	390	320		96	232	151					534	479
Athens, St. Paul	581	265	236		152.3	129.3						262	282
Barnesville, Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary	447	265	260		75	85	86					258	246
Bellaire, St. John the Evangelist	1,017	529	548		127	121						283	248
Belle Valley, Corpus Christi	126	70	106		105							94	105
Beverly, St. Bernard	779	310	252		91	99	194					329	384
Bridgeport, St. Anthony	179	102	200		74							78	74
Bridgeport, St. Joseph	503	285	246		106	88	99					303	294
Cadiz, St. Teresa of Avila	220	122	162		68.75	79.75						152	149
Caldwell, St. Stephen	573	289	348		102	218						321	320
Cambridge, Christ Our Light	1,702	874			112.5	134.25	255	80				608	582
Cambridge, St. Benedict	see above	see above	361										
Lore City, Sts. Peter & Paul Oratory	see above	see above	220										
Carlisle, St. Michael	132	64	152		95							83	95
Carrollton, Our Lady of Mercy	281	157	275		59	158						197	217
Chesapeake, St. Ann	238	135	133		140	189	267	28	230	12		164	866
Churchtown, St. John the Baptist	769	311	222		86.25	123	192					649	401
Colerain, St. Frances Cabrini	554	309	330		112	146						261	258
Dillonvale, St. Adalbert	344	203	244		115							108	115
Fulda, Immaculate Conception	247	129	412		88	156						210	244
Gallipolis, St. Louis	462	193	136		52	76	126					247	253
Glouster, Holy Cross	168	98	222		29	101						118	130
Harriettsville, St. Henry	109	47	168		70							77	70
Hopedale, Sacred Heart	152	62	126		68.5							57	69
Ironton, Catholic Community:			837										
St. Joseph	818	396			170	225.5						394	396
St. Lawrence O'Toole	714	321					205.5					237	206
Little Hocking, St. Ambrose	524	285	394		76	91	118					317	285
Lowell, Our Lady of Mercy	349	155	200		83	108						216	191
Malvern, St. Francis Xavier	425	208	248		75	130						231	205
Marietta, Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption	1,977	949	568		303	214	369	310				1,265	1,196
Spanish Mass									31			5	31
Martins Ferry, St. Mary	403	321	274		97	87						187	185
McConnelsville, St. James	109	81	100		33	33						79	65
Miltonsburg, St. John the Baptist	186	103	182		81							86	81
Minerva, St. Gabriel	704	300	292		70	152						229	222
Mingo Junction, St. Agnes	855	503	392		95	197						272	293
Morges, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception	90	66	132		31	37						75	68
Neffs, Sacred Heart	306	163	176		29	60.25						100	90
Nelsonville, St. Mary of the Hills	99	63	130		29	40						79	69
Pomeroy, Sacred Heart	255	149	332		34	105						162	139
Powhatan Point, St. John Vianney	90	54	166		39							43	39
Richmond, St. John Fisher	214	122	165		61	76						178	137
St. Clairsville, St. Mary	2,345	1160	424		232	323	307					801	861
Shadyside, St. Mary	546	266	266		70	106						192	176
Steubenville, Holy Family	1,695	722	305		203	384	531					1,106	1,118
Steubenville, St. Peter	1,066	557	552		191	251	403	185				1,034	1,030
Steubenville, Triumph of the Cross:	2,443	1,209			183	176	235	196	241			1,068	1,031
Holy Name Cathedral	see above	see above	504										
Holy Rosary	see above	see above	337										
Temperanceville, St. Mary	93	63	154		60							46	60

During October, people in the pews

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Tiltonsville, St. Joseph	409	244	400	118								119	118
Toronto, St. Francis of Assisi	475	284	360	74	128							221	202
Toronto, St. Joseph	246	139	287	113								117	113
Wintersville, Blessed Sacrament	1,623	814	450	170	129		196					521	495
Wintersville, Our Lady of Lourdes	590	278	350			118.25						125	118
Woodsfield, St. Sylvester	363	204	272	83	86							186	169
Yorkville, St. Lucy	164	103	200	80								93	80
Missions:													
Freeport, St. Matthias	33	31	92	39.5								38	40
Pine Grove, St. Mary	112	52	150	83								89	83
Sardis, St. John Bosco	24	19	75	24								30	24
Other:													
Apostolate for Family Consecration				230	226							31	456
Youth Mass, Marietta								291				279	291
Youth Mass, Little Hocking												0	0
Christ the King Chapel, Franciscan University				57	97	630	68	46	50	40		1,404	988
2017 Totals	31180	15832		5,448	5,729	4,285	1,064	839	62	40		17,314	17,467
Previous Year	Persons	Families		1st Mass	2nd Mass	3rd Mass	4th Mass	5th Mass	6th Mass	7th Mass		Previous Years Totals	
2016 Totals:	35,232	15,422		5,843	6,284	3,706	1,146	335	-	-		17,314	
2015 Totals:	33,769	15,519		6,020	5,992	3,810	1,227	216	240			17,505	
2014 Totals:	34,847	16,006		6,097	6,285	3,888	1,139	443	252	-		18,286	
2013 Totals:	35,603	16,412		6,303	6,268	3,676	1,360	570	222	220		18,619	
2012 Totals:	36,030	16,722		7,418	6,347	3,776	1,029	260				18,823	
2011 Totals	36,738	17,134		7,499	6,547	3,888	866	225				19,023	
2010 Totals:	37,793	17,590		7,723	6,801	4,273	979	231				19,931	
2009 Totals:	38,593	17,888		7,431	7,901	4,757	1,088	287				20,708	
2008 Totals:	39,385	18,311		7,527	7,528	4,978	1,109	287				21,432	
2007 Totals:	39,103	18,388		8,100	8,101	5,614	1,320	269				27,065	
2006 Totals:	39,145	18,628		8,640	8,081	5,823	1,124	283	-			22,161	
2005 Totals:	39,543	19,032		9,053	8,279	6,098	1,927	320	-			24,509	
2004 Totals:	40,117	19,453		8,059	7,281	5,986	2,013	300	-			23,639	
2003 Totals:	40,001	19,139		9,146	7,496	6,140	2,113	300	-			24,718	
2002 Totals:	40,066	19,274		10,062	9,150	7,690	3,282	313	-			25,837	
2001 Totals:	40,562	19,650		8,476	8,384	6,545	1,445	552	-			25,474	
2000 Totals:	40,340	20,091		8,510	8,577	6,495	1,647	378	-			25,690	
1999 Totals:	41,229	20,755		8,572	8,931	6,638	1,684	672	138			26,315	
1998 Totals:	41,460	20,882		8,883	8,800	6,739	1,508	908	143			26,867	
1997 Totals:	42,080	21,301		8,806	8,867	6,966	1,679	1,301	428			27,953	
1996 Totals:	40,334	21,137		8,877	9,202	6,525	1,721	1,235	195			28,230	
1995 Totals:	38,708	21,779		8,746	8,731	7,641	2,730	1,639	203			28,276	
1994 Totals:	38,548	21,432		8,456	8,171	7,551	2,688	1,489	208			28,500	
1993 Totals:	37,789	21,252		8,435	7,360	7,832	2,835	1,777	457			28,695	
1992 Totals:	38,676	21,692		9,048	7,583	8,254	3,044	1,268	159			29,318	



Students at St. Benedict School, Cambridge, perform their Christmas program “Families Shine On” at St. Benedict Church, Cambridge. Pictured in the left photo, from front left, are Jacob Banister, Tatiana Rochus and Rhonda Masters. Pictured, from back left, are Franciscan Sister of Christian Charity Carol Juckem, Xander Daniels, Carol Anne Kranz and Bryson Bradley. Pictured, right, are students performing during the program. Sister Juckem was the composer and director of the program, and Janine Bock directed the band. Students carried vigil lights after their last song as a sign for all to “let their light shine.” (Photos provided)

Cambridge — In recognition of the 50th anniversary of Blessed Pope Paul VI's "of human life" encyclical, "Humanae Vitae," the Diocese of Steubenville will host an event, Feb. 10, at St. Benedict Church, 701 Gomber Ave. Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton and natural family planning instructors throughout the diocese will celebrate the teachings on married love and the gift of new life with married couples and families. The celebration of Mass will take place at 11 a.m. at the church, followed by a potluck meal. To make reservations for the number of people attending, telephone Joseph A. Schmidt, director of the diocesan Office of Marriage, Family and Respect Life, at (740) 373-3643, or email jschmidt@diosteub.org.

Marietta — "Discovering Christ," an eight-part presentation on developing a relationship with the Lord, will begin Jan. 21, from 4:30-7 p.m., and continue on Sundays through March 11. The evenings will include dinner, a film presentation and group discussions. For additional information or to register, telephone Shelly Medley at (740) 525-6360.

A pre-Canva session is scheduled March 10 at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption. The session fulfills the diocesan marriage preparation requirement. For more information, or to register for the day, telephone the basilica parish office at (740) 373-3643.

Adult faith formation seminar Jan. 27

STEUBENVILLE — Catechists and Catholic school teachers in the Diocese of Steubenville can earn credit toward their initial or ongoing catechist's certification and Catholic identity contact hours during a Jan. 27 faith formation seminar at Christ the King University Parish, Athens.

Kevin Miller, a professor of theology at Franciscan University of Steubenville, and Carolyn A. Crabtree, catechetical consultant for the Diocese of Steubenville Office of Christian Formation and Schools, will speak during the seminar.

The schedule is as follows:

- 8:45 a.m. — Christian Anthropology I
- 9:00 a.m. — Christian Morality I
- 10-11:15 a.m. — brunch break
- 11:15 a.m. — Christian Morality II

For additional information or reservations, telephone Crabtree at (740) 282-3631 or email ccrabtree@diosteub.org.

Around and About

Columbus, Ohio — A "Building a Culture of Life Conference: Respect Life, Bioethics, Leadership" will be held Jan. 26-27 at St. Peter Church, 6899 Smoky Row Road. For more information or to register, visit www.gcril.org/lifeconference or telephone (614) 241-2540.

Obituaries

Michael A. Bodnar, 90, Toronto, St. Joseph, Dec. 17.

Jeffrey D. Castner, 50, Triumph of the Cross, Steubenville, Dec. 6.

Charles D. Clark, 82, Triumph of the Cross, Steubenville, Nov. 26.

Helen Marie Kalivoda Grimm, 71, Toronto, St. Joseph, Dec. 8.

James Hughes, 75, St. Sylvester, Woodfield, Dec. 12.

Catherine F. Letcher, 91, Steubenville, St. Peter, Dec. 10.

Ruby Letzelter, 94, Amsterdam, St. Peter, Steubenville, Dec. 3.

Richard J. Otte, 84, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Morges, Nov. 11.

Marylynn Ricci, 62, Holy Family, Steubenville, Dec. 17.

Louis Scott, 68, Holy Family, Steubenville, Dec. 12.



Jean Bahen, Deanah McGinnis and Isabella Cashioli, students from the Catholic Daughters Club at Catholic Central High School, Steubenville, deliver gifts to the Diocese of Steubenville Office of Catholic Charities and Social Concerns. (Photo by DiGenzo)



Students at St. Mary School, Marietta, visit with "St. Nicholas" Dec. 6, the feast of St. Nicholas. Students received candy canes during the visit. (Photo provided)



Bishop John King Mussio Central Elementary School fifth- and sixth-grade band students perform during a Christmas concert at the school. (Photo provided)



St. Francis Xavier Parish, Malvern, and St. Gabriel Parish, Minerva, Catholic Woman's clubs hold an annual Christmas dinner party at the Great Trail Golf Course, Minerva. Father Victor P. Cinson, pastor of the parishes, is seated left, with St. Francis and St. Gabriel parishioners. Entertainment was provided by P.J. Chavez, a musician, who performed traditional and original Christmas songs. Attendees at the dinner received Christmas gifts from the CWC of both parishes. (Photo provided)



St. Francis of Assisi and St. Joseph parishioners, Toronto, deliver Christmas gifts to the Diocese of Steubenville Office of Catholic Charities and Social Concerns. Parishioners delivering the gifts are, from left, Jim Orsini, Mike Heiss, Michele Barnes, Gloria Zamborski, Janet Olesky and John Olesky. Bob and Mary Lou Deku, not pictured, coordinated the gift deliveries for the parishes. Father Thomas A. Vennitti is pastor of the Toronto parishes. (Photo by DiCenzo)



The Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court 367 and St. John Parish Catholic Woman's Club, Bellaire, pictured holding Christmas stocking gifts, at a Christmas dinner, in the church hall. (Photo provided)

Pope's New Year priorities: refugees, youth, trips, more Curia reform

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Foreign trips, a focus on the rights and needs of migrants and refugees and a Synod of Bishops dedicated to young people all are on the 2018 calendar for Pope Francis.

His activities and the passions that drive them are familiar by now. In fact, March 13 will mark the fifth anniversary of his election as pope, succeeding retired Pope Benedict XVI.

Pope Francis, newly 81, will begin 2018 with a focus on Mary and on migrants and refugees.

As with all modern popes, Pope Francis' Marian devotion and his concern for people forced to flee their homes have been a constant in his ministry.

But Pope Francis is the first to dedicate a celebration of World Peace Day specifically to the theme of migrants and refugees. On Jan. 1, for the 51st time, the Catholic Church will begin the new year

praying for peace. The day also is the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and while Pope Francis sent a message to heads of state in November reflecting on the peace day theme, his homily at the Mass is likely to focus on Mary.

The pope's focus on migrants and refugees will come to the fore again Jan. 14 when he adds to the normal papal liturgical calendar a special Mass for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

In both his message for the Jan. 14 celebration and his message for World Peace Day, Pope Francis urged Catholic involvement in the drafting of the U.N. global compacts for migrants and for refugees.

Approving the development of the compacts in September 2016, "world leaders clearly expressed their desire to take decisive action in support of migrants and refugees to save their lives and protect their rights," the pope said in his message.

He urged Catholics to get involved by lobbying their governments to include in the compacts proposals that would ensure the welcome, protection, promotion and integration of migrants and refugees.

On Jan. 15, Pope Francis will set off for a six-day visit to Chile and Peru. As is his style, the trip will include meetings with government authorities and large public Masses, but also a visit to a women's prison and to a home for children at risk.

Vatican officials have said it is almost certain Pope Francis will travel to Dublin in late August for the World Meeting of Families; on the same trip, he is likely to be the first pope to visit Northern Ireland.

One month of the pope's calendar already is booked solid. The Synod of Bishops focusing on young people and their vocations will be held at the Vatican Oct. 3-28. The Vatican has asked bishops' conferences around the world to nominate

young people to attend a presynod gathering March 19-24 in Rome.

Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, secretary-general of the synod, said Pope Francis hopes about 300 young people would attend the gathering. Many of them will speak to the group about the hopes and concerns of young people and what they need from the church.

The fifth anniversary of Pope Francis' papacy also means 2018 is the fifth anniversary of his international Council of Cardinals and the effort to reform the Roman Curia.

Changes have been made, new laws have been passed, offices have been combined to cut down on duplication. But 2017 ended without a clear indication of when a document presenting a global vision of the Curia and each of its offices would be ready.

Perhaps that is what Pope Francis wants for Christmas 2018.

First-class relic of St. John Paul II on display at the basilica for viewing

VATICAN CITY/MARIETTA — The Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, has received a first-class relic of Pope John Paul II. The relic is a small piece of the cassock he was wearing when he was shot in St. Peter's Square. The relic has a portion of his blood from the gunshot wound. The relic was venerated in a special ceremony at the basilica earlier this month.

The relic has been placed inside the altar for viewing purposes. Pilgrims can seek St. John Paul II's intercession, receive spiritual graces for their families and loved ones and obtain the courage and spiritual strength to imitate his saintly life and persevere in their Christian witness to the Gospel.

Msgr. John Michael Campbell, rector of the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, said, "The presence of this relic in our basilica will draw additional numbers of pilgrims to the basilica. Pilgrims and their families will be renewed in their daily striving for holiness of life and in faith, hope and charity."

Only relics that have been certified as authentic can be exposed for veneration by the faithful, said a new Vatican instruction.

Published Dec. 16 in Italian by the Congregation for Saints' Causes, the instruction clarifies and details the canonical procedures to be followed by local bishops in an effort to verify the authenticity of relics and the mortal remains of saints and blessed, as well as better guarantee a relic's preservation, approve and track its movements, and promote its veneration.

The instruction replaces the appendix, "Canonical



A relic of a portion of the blood-stained cassock of St. John Paul II is on display at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta. (Photo provided)

Recognition of the Mortal Remains of the Servant of God," included with "Sanctorum Mater," the congregation's "Instruction for Conducting Diocesan or Eparchal Inquiries in the Causes of Saints," released in 2007.

The new instruction outlined the specific procedures

and personnel necessary for the canonical recognition of the authenticity of the relics or remains of a saint or anyone on the path to sainthood. It also specified that any action taken regarding the relics or remains must also conform with local government laws and have the consent of the saints' congregation and the person recognized as the deceased's "heir."

In the case of an upcoming canonization or beatification, some small pieces or fragments already separated from the body can be removed and later given to the postulator or vice postulator for placement in a properly sealed reliquary, the instruction said.

But "the dismemberment of the body is not allowed" unless the bishop has obtained permission from the saints' congregation, it said.

The sale or trade of relics remains "absolutely prohibited" as well as exposing them in "profane" or unauthorized locations, it said.

Some of the rules also include:

- Rigorously avoiding any sign of veneration for the remains of a servant of God or venerable before beatification;
- Obtaining written consent from the congregation and every bishop or proprietor that would be involved in the moving of, in transferring the ownership of, or in the pilgrimage of any relics and mortal remains of the saints and blessed;

- Getting the consent of the saints' congregation, the relevant patriarch and his permanent synod for the alienation or transfer of ownership of relics and precious icons of the Eastern churches.

Celebration of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Marietta



Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton celebrates Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, bottom right, assisted by, from left, Permanent Deacon Lee V. Weisend, assigned to assist Msgr. John Michael Campbell, rector of the basilica; Msgr. John Michael Campbell; Father Thomas A. Nelson, parochial vicar to Msgr. Campbell; visiting priest from Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity in Michigan; Father Timothy Davison, administrator of St. John Parish, Churchtown; and Father H. Christopher Foxhoven, pastor, St. Mary of the Hills Parish, Buchtel, and Holy Cross Parish, Glouster. The Mass included dancers, upper left, symbolic of the Indians who danced in 1533 when a Mexican bishop led a procession of Spaniards and Indians to consecrate the chapel he built in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Bishop Monforton processes behind Permanent Deacon Weisend, bottom left; mariachi band performs, upper right; and Angel Uriel Reyes processes with flowers, center. Angel represents Juan Diego who, in the 1500s, brought flowers from Mary to the bishop of Mexico with the request that a church be built on the Hill of Tepeyac in her name. It is said that when Juan Diego opened his tilma to present the sign that the bishop requested, flowers fell down and the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe was on the tilma. (Photos provided)