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News Briefs

Vatican budgets show billion in assets

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Under new reporting procedures that are more in line with international accounting standards, the Holy See reported \$1 billion in net assets that had never been reported before and in a consolidated form.

The Vatican's final figures for 2014 also showed a continued budget deficit on the part of the Roman Curia and nearly double the profits brought in by entities falling under the separate Vatican City State budget. In fact, the profits coming from the Vatican Museums, "cultural activities" and investments offset the deficit in the consolidated budgets of the Roman Curia and Vatican communications outlets to help the Vatican end the year 37.9 million euros (\$41.3 million) in the black.

The Council for the Economy presented the financial statements, prepared by the Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See, the Vatican's budget management office. The statements were "reviewed and verified" by the Secretariat for the Economy, headed by Australian Cardinal George Pell, as well as by a brand new auditing committee of lay experts and an external auditor.

The 2014 budget reports were the first financial statements to follow sweeping new procedures begun under new rules that went into effect March 1, governing the guidance, oversight and control of Vatican financial and administrative activities, and codifying the mission of the council and secretariat for the economy.

Latino families a rising church presence

WASHINGTON (CNS) — More than half of young Catholic families participating in a recent survey identified themselves as Latino or Hispanic, a finding the president of Holy Cross Family Ministries said will require new ways of ministering in the U.S. Catholic Church.

Overall, 54 percent of young couples in the 25- to 45-year-old age range said they were Latino or Hispanic. That compares with the overall adult Latino/Hispanic Catholic population of 32 percent.

"People may speak English, but culturally they're Latino. That's a big piece of information. We'll have to adjust the kinds of programs. It means we have to be more assertive in looking at the ways we can be of service to these families," Holy Cross Father Willy Raymond said of the findings in the study his organization commissioned.

Two say recommit to end death penalty

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Catholic faith tradition "offers a unique perspective on crime and punishment, one grounded in mercy and healing, not punishment for its own sake," two bishops said in a statement renewing the U.S. Catholic Church's push to end the death penalty.

"No matter how heinous the crime, if society can protect itself without ending a human life, it should do so. Today, we have this capability," wrote Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley of Boston and Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami. The two prelates are the chairmen, respectively, of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities and the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.



Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton discusses plans for the annual diocesan-sponsored youth conference with Joseph M. Taylor, catechetical consultant/coordinator of youth ministry, diocesan Office of Christian Formation and Schools, and Alyson M. Radford, newly hired catechetical consultant in the Office of Christian Formation and Schools. (Photo by DeFrancis)

New name for diocesan youth conference Oct. 11

STEUBENVILLE — When the annual Diocese of Steubenville youth rally opens for its 15th year, it will have a new designation – youth conference – and new name – "Rise Up!" "Let Your Light Shine."

Under the direction of diocesan Bishop Jeffrey M. Mon-

forton the annual youth conference is reinventing itself, said Joseph M. Taylor, Steubenville Diocese's catechetical consultant/coordinator of youth ministry in the diocesan Office of Christian Formation and Schools, Paul D. Ward, director.

To Page 4

Diocesan couple to address World Meeting of Families



Greg and Lisa Popcak are on the radio. (Photo provided)

STEUBENVILLE — Steubenville residents Greg and Lisa Popcak are among the featured speakers at the September World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, which immediately precedes Pope Francis' visit to the Pennsylvania city.

An estimated 15,000-registered participants are expected at the World Meeting of Families, themed "Love is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive."

Inaugurated by St. John Paul II in 1994, this is the eighth World Meeting of Families and the first hosted in the United States. The World Meeting of Families is held every three years in a different city, under the auspices of the Pontifical Council for the Family. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia is this year's co-host.

Members of Holy Family Parish in Steubenville, the Popcaks led a Marriage Enrichment Day in 2014 at two locations in the Diocese of Steubenville. He has psychology and theology degrees, a master's in clinical social work and a doctorate in human services with a specialization in pastoral counseling. Greg Popcak is an adjunct professor at Franciscan University of Steubenville, also.

To Page 4

'Ask the Bishop'

STEUBENVILLE — Kindergarten through 12th-graders in the Diocese of Steubenville "Ask the Bishop," Jeffrey M. Monforton.

Q: Can people from heaven go to hell?

**Nate Snyder
Marietta**

A: Heaven is eternal life with God. So the short answer is *no*. To participate in the communion of love between God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit should be the ultimate goal for each and every human being. Heaven is the definitive happiness. Heaven has no equal. Once we are with God in heaven, there is no temptation to go anywhere else.

Hell, on the other hand, is "the state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God" (Catechism of the Catholic Church). Hell is reserved for those who have made a *free choice* not to believe in God or to be converted from sin. In other words, these individuals would not even have made it to heaven in the first place. They chose not to go to heaven.

Through our Baptism, we have been united with Jesus Christ and have therefore become Children of the Light, that is, citizens of heaven. However, we still must live our lives fitting of the gift of the Holy Spirit we have received.

Q: How is God three people in one person?

**Michael McFarland
Steubenville**

A: Here is a good transition from the previous question. First of all, we should look at the words used to describe the Holy

Trinity: *three persons, one God*. The faith life of every Christian is based on the reality of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus himself revealed this truth in his prayer to his Father and in his teachings to his Apostles. To be Christian is to believe in and to be baptized in the "name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Also, the Holy Trinity is a mystery which we profess as a truth in the Creed every Sunday. Many a book or article has been published concerning this mystery. It is our faith, which complements our ability to reason which provides us the ability to appreciate this truth. The Holy Trinity is an object of faith.

It seems easier to explain what the Holy Trinity is *not*. For instance, there are many components to a computer. Only when all the parts are put together do we have a computer. The screen itself is not a computer. Or, for those of us who know the periodic table from our days in school: When we combine two hydrogen atoms with one oxygen atom, we get water. There are three parts to water. Only when you combine them do you have water. Neither example is an accurate explanation of the Holy Trinity.

All three Persons of the Holy Trinity possess the fullness of God. This is very difficult for us human beings to comprehend with our limited reasoning ability. It requires faith in the words of Jesus to understand that God's plan for us greatly exceeds our human intellect.

Q: What was Jesus' last name?

**Isaac Knowlton
Woodsfield**

A: When Jesus was born, over 2,000 years ago, last names were uncommon. In



Bishop Monforton

ancient times there was little need for a last name. The name of one's father would be one way to describe a person, such as a *son of Zebedee*. Jesus would have been known in reference to his foster father Joseph and his mother Mary. A location also described a person, like *Jesus of Nazareth*.

While you and I find it very helpful, even an honor to possess a last name, Jesus requires no last name. Jesus is the Son of God. The word *Christ* is a title. The word *Christ* describes that Jesus is the Messiah.

On the theme of titles, may you and I be ever grateful for our title of *Christian*. Our very identity has been personally given to us by Jesus himself, true God and true man. Jesus himself has made it possible for you and me to participate in the eternal gift of heaven with the Holy Trinity. In the words

of St. Catherine of Siena, "Holy Trinity, you willed that we share all that you are."

To "Ask the Bishop," address questions to Joseph M. Taylor, catechetical consultant and youth ministry coordinator in the Diocese of Steubenville Office of Christian Formation and Schools.

Address "Ask the Bishop" to Taylor at P.O. Box 969, Steubenville, OH 43952.

Questions can be emailed to Taylor at jtaylor@diosteub.org.

Also, Taylor can be reached by telephone at the chancery in Steubenville, (740) 282-3631.

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Some students may be eligible for free tuition

STEUBENVILLE — Some students who attend parochial schools in the Diocese of Steubenville may be eligible for the Ohio Department of Education Educational Choice Scholarship Program.

The scholarships are available at some parochial schools in the diocese for qualifying students entering kindergarten, first or second grade for the 2015-16 school year.

EdChoice Expansion scholarships cover full tuition and may continue with the student as he or she progresses through school, as long as the family income continues to qualify, said Theresa Danaher, principal of Bishop John King Mussio Central Elementary and Junior High School, Steubenville.

Income guidelines for EdChoice Expansion scholarships are: \$23,540 for one person in a family/household; \$31,860, two people; \$40,180, three; \$48,500, four; \$56,820, five; \$65,140, six; \$73,460, seven; and \$81,780, eight. For each additional person, add \$8,320.

In the Diocese of Steubenville, Bishop John King Mussio Central Elementary School is an EdChoice Expansion provider, explained Danaher. EdChoice is a great opportunity for families desiring a Catholic education for their children, Danaher said.

At St. John Central (Grade) School, Bellaire, some new recipients of EdChoice Expansion scholarships will join students from the previous two years who benefited from the Ohio Department of Education program, said Victoria Nurczyk, principal.

In Martins Ferry, St. Mary Central School Principal Mary Carolyn Nichelson said students can continue to apply for EdChoice Expansion scholarships if they are currently enrolled or entering kindergarten, first or second grades. Students not currently enrolled must meet enrollment guidelines and students entering kindergarten must be screened, Nichelson reminded. Presently, five students at St. Mary Central are eligible for EdChoice Expansion scholarships and four more applications for the dollars are being reviewed, Nichelson said.

At St. Mary Central School, St. Clairsville, seven students already benefit from EdChoice Expansion scholarships, said Nannette Kennedy, principal.

Students at St. Mary School, Marietta, too, use EdChoice Expansion scholarships, Principal Susan T. Rauch said. Four received the scholarship last year, five have been determined eligible presently and three applicants are under review, she said.

For the first time this year, St. Benedict School, Cambridge, students have applied for EdChoice Expansion scholarships, said Jane Rush, principal. Twelve applications have been submitted and are being examined, she said.

At St. John Central School, Churchtown, several students are recipients of EdChoice Expansion scholarships, said Lawrence "Larry" A. Moegling, principal.

Applications for EdChoice Expansion scholarships are available in school offices, as well as on the Ohio Department of Education website, Danaher said.

The deadline for application for an EdChoice Expansion

scholarship is midnight Aug. 7.

For answers to questions on EdChoice Expansion or to schedule an appointment to discuss participation in EdChoice, telephone or email: Bishop John King Mussio Central Elementary School (740) 264-2550 or tdanaher@bishopmussiojh.org; St. Mary Central School, Martins Ferry, (740) 633-5424 or maryc.nichelson@omeresanet.net; or St. Mary Central School, St. Clairsville, (740) 695-3189 or nannette.kennedy@omeresanet.net.

Other parochial elementary schools in the diocese include: St. John Central (Grade) School, Bellaire, (740) 676-2620 and principal's email victoria.nurczyk@omeresanet.net; St. Benedict School, Cambridge, (740) 432-6751 or jane.rush@omeresanet.net; St. Sylvester Central School, Woodfield, (740) 472-0321 or nsss_rguiler@seovec.org; St. Mary School, Marietta, (740) 374-8181 or susanrauch44@gmail.com; St. John Central School, Churchtown, (740) 896-2697 or larrymoegling@aol.com; and St. Lawrence Central School, Ironton, (740) 532-5052 or pmollett@stjoe.k12.oh.us.

Other schools in the diocese where students can enroll for the 2015-16 school year include the junior high – Bishop John King Mussio Central Junior High School, Steubenville, which can be reached at (740) 346-0028 or via email through the principal, Danaher, tdanaher@bishopmussiojh.org, and the high schools – Catholic Central High School, Steubenville, (740) 264-5538 or Rich Wilinski, principal, rwilinski@steubenvillecatholiccentral.org; St. John Central High School, Bellaire, (740) 676-4932 or Thomas E. Graham, principal, tjmindie74@hotmail.com and St. Joseph Central High School, Ironton, (740) 532-0485 or Paul Mollett, principal, pmollett@stjoe.k12.oh.us.

Registration for Ironton schools will be held from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m., Aug. 4 and Aug. 5, at St. Joseph Central High School, 912 S. Sixth St., Ironton.

In addition, to enroll students in the Ironton Catholic community preschool, telephone the high school, (740) 532-0485.

Also, in Ironton, a tuition donation can be made to the "Angel Fund." The fund provides financial aid to those families who are in need of tuition assistance. Contributions can be restricted to a specific child or family and made as a memorial, also. Donations of any amount will be accepted.

For more information on the Angel Fund, contact Father David L. Huffman, pastor in the Ironton Catholic community and pastoral administrator of St. Lawrence Central School and St. Joseph Central High School. The St. Joseph rectory telephone number is (740) 532-0712.

Paul D. Ward is the director of the Diocese of Steubenville Office of Christian Formation and Schools. His office is located in the chancery, 422 Washington St., Steubenville. He can be reached via telephone at (740) 282-3631 or email ward@diosteub.org.

Bishop Monforton's Schedule

August

- 1 Mass, Franciscan Sister Third Order Regular of Penance of the Sorrowful Mother Katherine Caldwell's 25th anniversary, Toronto, 11 a.m.
- 2 Mass of thanksgiving for the amortization of the debt, the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, 10 a.m.
- 3 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 8:30 a.m.
- 4 Confirmation Mass, Belmont Correctional Institution, St. Clairsville, 2 p.m.
- 5 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 7 a.m.
- 6 WAOB radio segment, 7:40 a.m., 8:40 a.m. and 6:40 p.m.
- 15 Mass, fourth-degree Knights of Columbus, followed by dinner, Holy Family Church, Steubenville, 4 p.m.



William Demjan, left, acting commander, and Larry Wulf, Catholic War Veterans Department of Ohio commander, display the charter for the first Catholic War Veterans Post in the Diocese of Steubenville. The All Saints Post 1970 was authenticated July 26 during a meeting in the Marian Room, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, where Wulf officially inducted post members. The post's officers, also, include Paula Grose, first vice commander; Gerry McKeegan, acting adjutant, and Daniel Grose, acting treasurer. Honorably discharged Catholic veterans and Catholics serving the military can join the All Saints Post. For more information on the organization "For God, For Country, For Home," telephone (740) 346-0850 or visit cwv.org. (Photo provided)

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New name

From Page 1

Alyson M. Radford, newly named catechetical consultant in the Office of Christian Formation and Schools, joined Taylor to announce the Oct. 11 youth conference.

The tradition of youth rallies began in the fall of 2000 in the Diocese of Steubenville. Seventh through 12th graders gather in St. Ambrose Church, Little Hocking, for what is described as fun and fellowship and an opportunity to deepen their Catholic faith.

This year, youth in the diocese's parishes' school of religion and parochial schools were encouraged to name the event, said Taylor. Prizes were promised for the submission's winner.

Some of the youth from St. Bernard Parish, Beverly, led by Yvonne Huck, a more than two-decade catechist, had the word that served as the suggestion for the final name.

Huck said a few of the St. Bernard freshmen through seniors in high school were gathered. While they worked on a project, she said she centered the discussion on the message given youth during World Youth

Day in Canada. There, Huck remembered, St. John Paul II gave a strong message to the youth as salt and light of the world.

As the discussion in Beverly continued, while brainstorming, one of the St. Bernard youth kept tossing out the word "rise," as a possible title for the conference, Huck said.

For the winning entry, St. Bernard youth will be able to attend the October conference free of charge and will receive a basket of what Taylor termed Catholic goodies. Huck said at times more than 30 St. Bernard youth have attended the conference, other times more than 20. She is uncertain, yet, of the number of St. Bernard youth attending this year's event.

In addition, to encourage attendance at the conference, Bishop Monforton will pay for buses to transport the youth to Little Hocking, Taylor said. Two buses will leave from Steubenville. Another bus will be driven from Bellaire for stops in St. Clairsville, Cambridge and Caldwell, before reaching its final destination. A fourth bus will move northward from Ironton and stop in Chesapeake, Pomeroy

and Gallipolis for youth to come aboard.

Registration for the free bus rides will begin shortly.

The schedule of events at the noon to 7 p.m. conference is being drawn, Taylor said.

However, already announced, as the featured speaker is Leah Darrow, a former contestant on the reality television show, "America's Next Top Model," and music will be by John Paul Von Arx.

Darrow, who holds a bachelor's in psychology from the University of Missouri-St. Louis and is studying for a master's in theology at the Augustine Institute, Denver, speaks on modesty, chastity, mercy, conversion and human dignity.

John Paul Von Arx, 22, is a native of Rockford, Illinois. The second oldest of nine, Catholicism and music have been a huge part of his life, he said. At the age of 15, he started his own band with his family. At 19, he joined a regional touring country band. Now, when not studying at Franciscan University of Steubenville, he tours with "The Thirsting," a Catholic rock

band, based out of Portland, Oregon.

"The Lord has blessed me with a love for joyfully spreading the truths of our faith to youth through discipleship, speaking and music.

"I'm truly honored and super excited to be able to meet the participants at the diocesan conference this October and go deeper into the life of faith with them," the musician said.

In her new position with the Diocese of Steubenville, Radford, formerly of New York and presently a Wintersville resident, will be responsible for assisting with the diocesan formation program for catechists and Catholic schoolteachers, as well as diocesan initiatives for youth and youth ministry, Ward said.

Radford has a master's in theology and Christian ministry with a specialization in catechetics from Franciscan University of Steubenville and a bachelor's in communication from the State University of New York at Potsdam.

For more information on the youth conference, www.diosteub.org/Youth.

World Youth Day registration begins; pope is first person to sign-up

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis was the first pilgrim to sign up for World Youth Day to be held in Krakow, Poland, launching the opening of registration.

Accompanied by two Polish teenagers who wore World Youth Day 2016 T-shirts, the pope had to make a couple of attempts pressing the screen of a tablet before his online registration went through.

"There. With this electronic device I have signed up for the day as a pilgrim," he told thousands of people gathered in St. Peter's Square July 26 for his Angelus address.

The pope said, "I wanted to be the one to open registration" in front of everyone gathered for the Angelus and in the company of two teens on the day sign-ups began July 26.

The celebrations July 26-31, 2016, will come during the Holy Year of Mercy, which Pope Francis proclaimed to invite



Pope Francis is flanked by two Polish youths as he uses a tablet to officially open online registration for World Youth Day 2016 in Poland. (CNS photo/Ettore Ferrari, EPA)

people to follow the merciful example of God, the Father. (Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton and youth from the diocese are expected to attend World Youth Day 2016.)

World Youth Day "will be, in a certain sense, a jubilee of youth" during the holy year, as its theme is also about being merciful toward others, the pope said.

God's merciful power through Jesus "heals every ill of body and spirit," the pope said before praying the Angelus.

Reflecting on the day's Gospel reading, St. John's account of the multiplication of loaves and fish, Pope Francis said the story shows how the disciples tried to find a "market"-

based solution by calculating how much money they would need to feed the large, hungry crowd that had gathered by the Sea of Galilee.

"But Jesus substitutes the logic of buy-

ing with another logic, the logic of giving" when he points to the generous gift offered by the boy, Andrew, who offered to give all that he had: five small loaves and two fish.

Even though people could not see how such a small contribution could make a difference, "God is able to multiply our tiny gestures of solidarity and let us participate in his gift," the pope said.

Jesus offers "fullness of life for those who hunger. He satisfies not only material hunger, but also that deeper hunger — the hunger for meaning in life, the hunger for God," Pope Francis said.

Complaining does nothing to solve the many problems in life, "but we can offer that little we have like the boy in the Gospel," he said.

Everyone has some kind of talent or skill as well as time, he said. "If we are willing to put them in the Lord's hands, they will be enough so that there will be a little bit more love, peace, justice and above all joy in the world."

Diocesan couple

From Page 1

Together, the Popcaks have authored books and founded CatholicCounselors.com, a tele-counseling practice that provides more than 10,000 hours yearly of pastoral counseling to Catholics around the world.

The Popcaks will be on stage at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia from 11:45 a.m. until 12:45 p.m., Sept. 23, with a presentation titled "See How They Love One Another: The Family and The Faith."

During their presentation at the World Meeting of Families — which Greg Popcak sees with a goal to give all families the opportunity to gather the resources they need to face the challenges of being a family today — the two will describe ways attendees can strengthen family bonds, increase family satisfaction and be empowered to

become agents of change in the wider community.

"It's an incredible honor to be invited to speak," Lisa Popcak said.

In addition to their formal talk, during the World Meeting of Families, the Popcaks will be live-broadcasting More2LifeRadio, a call-in advice program they host. The program airs five days a week on more than 35 stations across the United States.

Greg Popcak has another role at the World Meeting of Families, also. When Father Robert Barron, auxiliary bishop-elect of Los Angeles, takes to the podium, it will be after an introduction by Greg Popcak. Father Barron will give the opening keynote at 2:30 p.m., Sept. 22, "Living as the Image of God: Created for Joy and Love."

During the World Meeting of Families, Lisa Popcak, too, will moderate a panel,

"Family and Demographic Dynamics in the World."

Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton will attend the meeting, also.

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Call out to welcome 'Flat Francis' to US

CHICAGO — Catholic Extension, a 110-year-old national fundraising organization that works to make visible the power of faith in America's most marginalized communities, is welcoming Pope Francis to America with the launch of its #FlatFrancis campaign.

The social media campaign, which began prior to Holy Week, is designed to create excitement around the pope's three-city tour of America scheduled for September and culminating in the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, said a spokeswoman for Catholic Extension.



Since its launch, the campaign has received nearly 1,500 photos of #FlatFrancis from all 50 states in the United States, which are displayed at the website www.flatfrancis.org.

The goal is to get all 195 dioceses in the United States to participate, the Catholic Extension spokeswoman said.

Already, many individuals including bishops, priests, nuns, brothers and celebrities, as well as groups and organizations including the Knights of Columbus, the Girl Scouts of America, Catholic youth groups, church young adult groups, Catholic grade schools and high schools, and Catholic Charities branches in several states have posted photos.

Flat Francis has been taken on service trips, retreats, field trips and family vacations. He has been to Major League Baseball games, was photographed with the Stanley Cup and even went to Disneyland.

He has been featured in media, including national news stations and newswires, local network television affiliates and national Catholic media outlets, the spokeswoman pointed out.

"We're thrilled to launch this campaign to welcome the Holy Father to the U.S. and show him not only the face of American Catholicism, but also the excitement surrounding our faith," said Father Jack Wall, president of Catholic Extension. "We hope people will participate as a way to share their enthusiasm for our pope while, at the same time, spread awareness about the mission of Catholic Extension, which works to build up the Catholic faith in the poorest communities of the U.S. — something that Pope Francis has called all of us to do."

The concept behind the campaign is for people to take a photo with Flat Francis, which can be obtained via a downloadable PDF available at FlatFrancis.org, and post it on social media using the hashtag #FlatFrancis.

Those who are not on social media can participate by emailing their photos to socialmedia@catholicextension.org.

Catholic Extension is a papal society that makes visible the power of faith in America's most marginalized communities by strategically investing in people, infrastructure and ministries, its spokeswoman said.

Since its founding in 1905, Catholic Extension has distributed more than \$1.2 billion in today's dollars to provide funding and resources to dioceses and parishes that cannot support themselves.

For more information visit www.catholicextension.org; follow Catholic Extension on Facebook at [facebook.com/catholicextension](https://www.facebook.com/catholicextension) or twitter at @CathExtension.



Mackenzie Jeffery receives a Knights of Columbus Council 11380 scholarship from Greg Rhodes, grand Knight, as her pastor, Father Victor P. Cinson, observes. The \$1,000 scholarship, which is named in honor of the late Msgr. Cronan T. Molloy, is offered by the Knights to a high school senior who is an active member of St. Francis Xavier Parish, Malvern, or St. Gabriel Parish, Minerva. Father Cinson is pastor of both parishes. Msgr. Molloy was a Diocese of Steubenville priest who served not only as a parish pastor, but also as rector at the diocesan seminary, St. John Vianney, Bloomingdale, and as superintendent of diocesan schools in the 1960s. The scholarship recipient is one of 10 children, who range in age from 25 to 2, of Douglas and Megan Jeffery of Minerva. The Jeffery children are home schooled. The Jefferys are members of St. Gabriel Parish. At the parish, Mackenzie sings in the choir, volunteers at fish fries, is a member of the parish youth group and participates in vacation Bible school. She plays guitar, sings in the Canton Symphonic Chorus and went on a mission trip to Guatemala this spring. Mackenzie is enrolled at Walsh University, North Canton, Ohio, for the fall. Walsh University is one of only three colleges in Ohio to be recognized nationally as a 2015-16 Catholic College of Distinction. Walsh joins the University of Dayton and Xavier University as the only Ohio colleges recognized by Colleges of Distinction for offering environments that are conducive to spiritual growth while preparing students for the future, said a Walsh University spokeswoman. (Photo provided)

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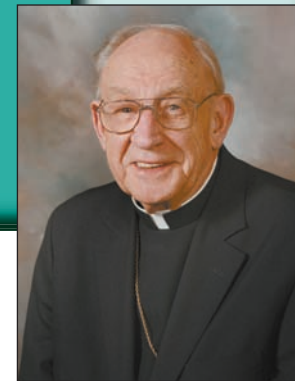
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St. John Paul II Faith in Jesus



Bishop Sheldon

By Bishop Emeritus Gilbert I. Sheldon

Having reflected on the many aspects of the life of Jesus, St. John Paul II next examines the question of our own faith in Jesus and how it comes about. He notes that the faith of the church is expressed in “creeds,” ancient formulations of faith that were expressed and preserved from the early days of the Christian church. As we know, it is an elaboration of one of them, the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, that the late pope based his series of talks of which these articles are an exposition.

The creeds, in turn, are based on *testimonies*, those of real persons who actually witnessed and in some cases actually figured in some of the accounts of Jesus’ life. These persons are the apostles and disciples of Jesus who accompanied him during his public life. Later, they did as Jesus commanded them just before leaving this world: “... Go therefore and

make disciples of all the nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to carry out everything that I have commanded you. And know that I am with you always, until the end of the world” (Mt 28: 19-20).

We should note that Jesus did not tell them to go out and tell everyone to buy a Bible and read it. For one thing, there was no Bible, as we know it, at this time. The Jewish Scriptures (which we now refer to as the Old Testament) were available, but they do not tell about Jesus as such, although, as we have seen, they contain many prophecies and allusions referring to Jesus that became evident only after Jesus appeared. Also, we must take into account the fact that literacy was not common in the time of Jesus. What Jesus did tell the apostles was to *preach*, i.e., tell the world about him and his message. Literacy could not be taken for granted until centuries later. However, among those who could read and write, much of what the apostles said was preserved in writing and circulated. Later, collated and edited, these writings would serve as the basis of the

... as we become familiar with Jesus Christ through the Gospels, we accept and trust him. ...

New Testament that we know today. They include the four Gospels and the letters (epistles) of St. Paul and several of the other apostles and disciples. Together with the Jewish Scriptures, they constitute the Bible, as we now have it. Quite obviously, the oral word or “apostolic tradition” preceded the written Gospels and epistles and served as their basis.

Let’s look at some of the “testimony” that we find in the New Testament. We have seen much of it already. Consider Peter’s “confession” when asked by Jesus who people said he was. Peter replied: “You are the Christ (Anointed One or Messiah), the Son of the living God” (Mt 16: 13-15). Mark, known to be a disciple of Peter, began his Gospel, “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mk 1: 1). The Apostle John ended his Gospel with these famous words: “It is this same disciple who is witness to these things; it is he who wrote them down, and

his testimony, we know, is true. There are still many other things that Jesus did, yet, if they were written about in detail, I doubt there would be room enough in the entire world to hold the books to record them” (Jn 21: 24). But these have been recorded to help you believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this faith you may have life in his name” (Jn 20: 31).

St. Paul’s letters include a great deal of testimony about Jesus. “But when the designated time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, ... so that we might receive our status as adopted sons” (Gal 4: 4-5). “He (God) rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved Son. Though him we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creatures. In him everything in heaven and on earth was created ...” (Col 1: 13-16). “Your attitude must be that of Christ: Though he was in the form of God, he did not deem equality with God something to be grasped at. Rather, he took the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of men ... and it was thus he humbled himself, obediently accepting even death, death on a cross”

(Phil 2: 6-8).

In the Letter to the Hebrews, we read: “In times past, God spoke in fragmentary and varied ways through the prophets; in this, the final age,

he has spoken to us through his Son” (Heb 1: 1-2).

As human beings, we tend to accept as true what we hear from those we respect and trust. Such is the case, under normal circumstances, with our own parents. We respect and trust them, so we have little trouble accepting their views and even their prejudices! Analogously, as we become familiar with Jesus Christ through the Gospels, we accept and trust him, even though some of the things he taught and commanded we cannot grasp, (e.g., his dual nature as God and man, the Eucharist, his redemptive death, etc.). Moreover, we welcome the message he brought: the promise of God’s love and forgiveness and his offer of eternal life. This, in essence, is the “good news,” the Gospel. Thus we are said to be “evangelized,” introduced to the good news. Afterward comes the “catechesis,” in which we learn the details of the Gospel message and the duties that it implies for us. We accept them for the same reason. (By way of a footnote it might be pointed out that some youngsters are “catechized” before they have been “evangelized.” Such is the case when they begin religion classes without having learned the faith “at their mother’s knee,” i.e., in the home. This could explain at least some of the failures in religious education.)

One might also ask why it is that two people, hearing the same Gospel message, can react so differently to it? We find this to be the case sometimes with siblings raised and educated in the same family. The difference depends on another factor we call God’s grace. Grace is a gift of God. It is a mystery to us and will always remain so while we are in earthly life. While we believe that God gives sufficient grace to each soul for his or her salvation, we also believe that God leaves us free to accept or reject his grace. This will be discussed again when we come to consider the work of the Third Person, the Holy Spirit, among us.

A Prophetic Pope and the Tradition of Catholic Social Teaching

By Father Robert Barron

In the wake of the publication of Pope Francis’ encyclical letter “Laudato Si” and of the pope’s recent speeches in Latin America, many supporters of the capitalist economy in the West might be forgiven for thinking that His Holiness has something against them. Again and again, Pope Francis excoriates an economy based on materialism and greed, and with prophetic urgency, he speaks out against a new colonialism that exploits the labor of those in poorer countries. With startling bluntness, he characterizes the dominant economic form in the developed world as “an economy that kills.” Moreover, in a speech delivered in Bolivia, a country under the command of a socialist president, the pope seemed, almost in a Marxist vein, to be calling on the poor to seize power from the wealthy and take command of their own lives. What do we make of this?

Well, a contextualization is in order. Pope Francis’ remarks, though strong, even a bit exaggerated, in the prophetic manner, are best understood in the framework of Catholic social teaching. One of the most significant constants in that tradition is a suspicion of socialism, un-

derstood as an economic system that denies the legitimacy of private property, undermines the free market, and fosters a class struggle between the rich and the poor, or if I can



Father Barron

use the more classical language, between capital and labor. The modern popes, from Leo XIII to Benedict XVI, have all spoken clearly against such systems, and it is hard to deny that experience has borne them out. Economies in the radically socialist or communist mode have proven to be, at best, inefficient and, at worst, brutally oppressive. Robert Sirico, Michael Novak, Arthur Brooks, and many others are therefore right in suggesting that Catholic social teaching does not represent a “tertium quid” beyond capitalism and socialism; rather, it clearly aligns itself against socialistic arrangements and clearly for the market economy. John Paul II appreciated the free market as the economic concomitant of a democratic polity, since both rest upon the dignity of the individual and his right to self-determination.

But this valorization of the market by no means implies

that the church advocates an unfettered capitalism. The modern popes have consistently taught that the market functions properly only when it is circumscribed both politically and morally – and it is precisely in this context that Pope Francis’ remarks should be understood. Let us

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Jesus, the Abundance of God (18th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

By Father Paul J. Walker

The 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Aug. 2) puts us in Jesus' long discourse in John's Gospel on the sign of the multiplication of the loaves and fish (Chapter 6). By this time and next Sunday (Aug. 9), Jesus has been using ordinary, everyday words as metaphors to describe a reality far beyond human understanding. In answering his disciples questions, Jesus is drawing them deeper into his Father's master plan for the salvation of the world. He says that no one comes to him unless drawn by the Father – a gift of grace. All who come to Jesus will be raised up to eternal life. The power that will accomplish this is already at work in the world in Jesus and continues moving toward fulfillment.

Jesus says that the manna in the desert that sustained Israel on her long sojourn, and the multiplied loaves were earthly food, but they prefigure the true bread yet to be given. The reason for the delay is that this bread is the very body of Christ – he cannot give it over now. He will give over his flesh as real food in the future in the fixing of that flesh to the cross as it becomes bread for the life of the world that the world might live, now in him.

Here it might be helpful to share German biblical scholar Gerhard Lohfink's reflection in his wonderful book "Jesus of Nazareth" (2012). Lohfink, in speaking of Mark's account (Chapter 6, Verses 1-15) of the multiplication of the loaves, notes that the "feeding of the 5,000" is something of a misnomer, making the event sound like someone hand-

ing out food to a lot of hungry people. Lohfink suggests that Mark clearly wants to tell us about a *banquet* as he has Jesus telling his disciples to see that everybody *reclines*, i.e., takes their place for a *banquet* – a feast where everyone may eat all they want (and more). As at a banquet, there is always more prepared than can be eaten by all present, so there were "12 baskets full of leftovers." Celebrating and banqueting always included more than just enough!

These multiplication narratives in the Gospels are pointing to Jesus, the abundance of God. In his book "Introduction to Christianity," Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI) called this the "law of excess or superfluity" (Page 257). He notes that it runs throughout the Gospels and overflows in Jesus: "He is the righteousness of God which goes far beyond what need be ..." (Page 260). Superfluity, excess and extravagance are therefore signs of the reign of God.

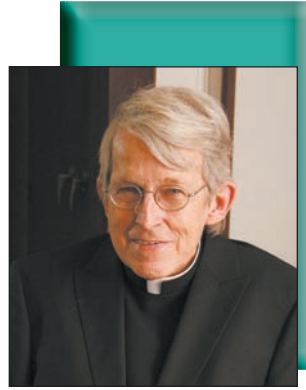
Here we are at the heart of the mystery of the Eucharist – what sacrifice is all about – Christ's body freely handed over, given up for the life of the world: that "handing over"

continues in his body, the church, in us, the members of his body. The Eucharist is a public profession or commitment. It is what our lives are all about: being bread (life) for others.

The Letter to the Church at Ephesus (Second Reading) sets a model for this. It has recently baptized Christians in mind, as it names the things which "sadden and grieve the Spirit" (Second Reading, Aug. 9). They are bitterness, shouting and clamor, wrath, anger, etc. The author notes opposite attitudes, like kindness, mercy, forgiving generously, walking in love. The point made is that living this way sets one against the tide of the times. It demands sacrifice – a daily giving over of our life. Thus the community (parish) itself becomes the symbol of God's nourishment and life among his people, a community who in the Eucharist offers its very life, with Jesus, the servant-son, to the Father, for the life of the world.

The manna in the wilderness was certainly a gift from God, but now a greater and more wondrous gift is being offered. Jesus is the source for a new kind of sustenance – one that is not temporary or just physical, but one that springs up into eternal life.

Father Walker is a Diocese of Steubenville priest, retired from active parish ministry, who resides in McConnellsville and continues to celebrate Mass at St. James Church, there. He served the diocese, also, as a director of the Office of Worship.



Father Walker

Mark's Gospel Part 9

By Msgr. Thomas C. Petronek

Mark's Gospel divides nicely into two halves reflecting the two designations for Jesus in Chapter 1, Verse 1 – "Christ" and "Son of God." Peter confesses Jesus to be the Christ in Chapter 8, Verse 29 (halfway through the Gospel) and the centurion confesses Jesus to be the Son of God in Chapter 15, Verse 39 (almost at the end of the second half).

So far in this series, we have examined elements of the first half of Mark's Gospel to see what led Peter to confess Jesus as the Christ in Chapter 8, Verse 29. We cannot do the same for the second half of the Gospel. There is no indication that the centurion knew – let alone witnessed – anything of what we find in the second half of Mark's Gospel, until his involvement in the Crucifixion in Chapter 15, Verses 16-47.

Then who is expected to immerse him/herself in the pieces of narrative in the second half of the Gospel and confess that Jesus is the Son of God? *You and I!* Mark expects us to keep our eyes open in the second half of his Gospel for the clues that will lead us to confess Jesus as the Son of God and become his disciples.

There are two "mighty deeds" of Jesus restoring sight to blind eyes in the second half of Mark's Gospel. Both stories function within Mark's narrative as a prompt to the reader to see at a deep level what is being revealed about Jesus, so that we can make the confession "Son of God" with the centurion in Chapter 15, Verse 39, and become his disciples.

The first of the stories about a cure of blindness (Mark 8: 22-26) takes place right before Jesus asks his disciples who they think he is, and Peter answers, "The Christ." None of the other Gospels repeat this story about blindness cured. Why? Because by the time the other evangelists wrote their

versions of the Jesus story, it would have been unthinkable to say that Jesus did not get it right the first time.

But that is exactly what happens in Mark, Chapter 8, Verses 22-26. The blind man of Bethsaida is cured of his blindness in two stages. He is able to see after Jesus lays his hands on him but his vision is distorted. Jesus lays his hands on him a second time, and he sees everything clearly.

Apparently Mark is not concerned that he is relating a story in which Jesus does not get it right the first time. I don't think he even tells this healing story as he tells so many other stories of Jesus' "mighty deeds" (healings) as a fulfillment of ancient Hebrew prophecies – reincorporating "exiles" into the unity of God's family. Confer Parts 3 and 4 of this series about Jesus' reason for healing so many diverse illnesses.

Then how does the story in Chapter 8, Verses 22-26 – the blind man healed in two stages – function in Mark's narrative? It is a nod to us, his readers, that if (like Peter) we stop at our confession of Jesus as the Christ (8: 29) and do not go on to "Son of God" dead on the cross (15: 39), we have a distorted view of who Jesus is and a faulty notion of discipleship.

Where does Peter demonstrate a myopic view of who Jesus is? Right after he says: "You are the Christ." Right after Jesus begins "to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and the

chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." Right after Peter rebukes Jesus for talking about being crucified and Jesus says: "Get behind me, Satan" (8: 27-33).

The other "mighty deed" of Jesus restoring sight to blind eyes in the second half of Mark's Gospel is found in Chapter 10, Verses 46-52 – the story of blind Bartimaeus. Like the story of the blind man healed in two stages, Mark does not tell Bartimaeus' story as he tells other stories of Jesus' healings with the intent of fulfilling Old Testament prophecy – reincorporating "exiles" into a returned-from-exile Israel. Then why is it included? Read on.

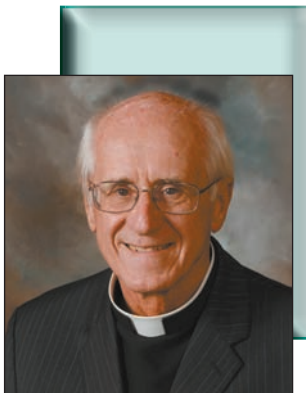
These two stories of healing blindness bookend a section of Mark's Gospel at the beginning of the second half of that Gospel – bookend one in Chapter 8, Verses 22-26, and bookend two in Chapter 10, Verses 46-52.

Four themes between the two bookends repeat the same sequence three times:

- Jesus predicts his suffering, death and resurrection.
- The disciples reject/misunderstand him.
- Jesus teaches about discipleship.
- Jesus has the power to form real disciples.

The story of the blind man of Bethsaida healed in two stages (bookend one) alerts us to the necessary connection between Christology (Christ plus Son of God) and authentic discipleship – God's plan. The story of the healing of blind Bartimaeus (bookend two) alerts us to the possibility of connecting Christology (Christ plus Son of God) and authentic discipleship – God's "mighty deed."

Msgr. Petronek is a Diocese of Steubenville priest, retired from active parish ministry, a former missionary priest and a two-time director of the diocesan Office of Worship. He resides in Wheeling, West Virginia.



Msgr. Petronek

The pope's 'staycation': Correspondence, trip preparation fill his days

By Cindy Wooden



Pope Francis smiles on board papal plane during his return to Rome from Asuncion, Paraguay. New Gallup poll shows pope's favorability has dropped among Americans. (CNS photo/Alessandro Bianchi, Reuters)

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Returning to the Vatican in the midst of a heat wave after an eight-day, three-country trip to South America, Pope Francis took the kind of vacation he said he prefers: what has become known as a “staycation.”

With the exception of a July 21 meeting with a group of mayors from around the world and the Sunday recitation of the Angelus, Pope Francis' schedule was cleared of meetings, audiences and public appearances July 13-Aug. 4.

August is the heart of vacation time in Italy and at the Vatican, so the pope's schedule will continue to be lighter than normal, but he will resume holding his weekly general audiences Aug. 5.

In the meantime, he is “serene and happy,” said Msgr. Guillermo Karcher, an Argentine priest and close aide to Pope Francis.

“Every morning I see him and he's content,” the monsignor told Vatican Radio July 24.

The pope spends much of the day with “his hands occupied, full of papers and correspondence,” he said.

Personally responding to letters, especially from friends and acquaintances, is something Pope Francis did as archbishop of Buenos Aires and does as much as possible as pope, he said.

“Then there are the documents and projects for events in the immediate future,” Msgr. Karcher said, including for Pope Francis' Sept. 19-27 visit to Cuba and the United States.

The pope had told reporters traveling with him to Ecuador, Bolivia and Paraguay in early July, that “studying” for the September trip was on the top of his staycation to-do list.

Msgr. Karcher said, “this is a beautiful year” because Pope Francis' travels will “embrace” all the Americas — from South America in July to Cuba and the United States in the north in September.

“It is really important, especially because it can shape and make concrete and visible that which was a very diplomatic and very pastoral effort” of encouraging Cuba and the United States to take the steps necessary toward normal relations, he said. The presidents of both nations credited Pope Francis and the Vatican with helping them with the negotiations.

“I think this makes this trip much more interesting; in addition to being a pastoral visit, it is almost a visit thanking the two nations for extending a hand to each other,”

the monsignor said.

While Msgr. Karcher said the pope's lighter schedule has given him time to catch up on correspondence and paperwork, he also confirmed that Pope Francis does miss his regular interaction with groups.

Vatican Radio also asked Msgr. Karcher, as an Argentinian, about mate, the herbal tea that he, Pope Francis and millions of people in Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil and Chile drink regularly.

The tea, often made in gourds and sipped through a metal straw, is made from the dried leaves of the yerba mate shrub, which is a member of the holly family. It does contain caffeine and Pope Francis told reporters traveling to South America with him that he found it helpful for dealing with the rigors of travel and with the altitude.

Msgr. Karcher told Vatican Radio it also “helps lower cholesterol and for those of us who eat a lot of meat, it's very healthy.”

In Argentina, he said, drinking mate is a social event — sharing the same cup or at least sharing a mate break. People start drinking it as children — usually lukewarm and with milk.

Also, he pointed out, the drink is associated with the Jesuits, who promoted its use among the indigenous peoples, including as a way to combat alcoholism. Jesuit missionaries to South America in the mid-17th century domesticated the yerba mate plant and began farming and selling it, expanding its use throughout the region.

A Prophetic Pope

From Page 6

look first at the political circumscription. Pope Leo XIII and his successors have deeply felt the suffering of those who have been exploited by the market or who have not been given adequate access to its benefits. And this is why they have supported political/legal reforms, including child labor laws, minimum wage requirements, antitrust provisions, work day restrictions, the right of workers to unionize, etc. All of these legal constraints, they have taught, should not be construed as erosions of the market, but rather as attempts to make it more humane, more just and more widely accessible. To be sure, people of intelligence and good will can and do disagree regarding the precise application of these principles, debating for example just how high the minimum wage should be fixed, just how stringently antitrust laws should be interpreted, just how the rights of labor and capital should be balanced, etc. And neither popes nor bishops nor priests should get into the nitty-gritty of those conversations, best leaving the details to those expert in the relevant disciplines. But popes, bishops and priests can indeed call for political reforms if a market has become exploitative and hence self-destructive.

The second circumscription that the popes speak of — the moral — is even more important than the first. A market economy enjoys real legitimacy if and only if it is set in the context of a vibrant moral culture that forms its people in the virtues of fairness, justice, respect for the integrity of the other and religion. Indeed, what good are contracts — fundamental to the functioning of a market economy — if people are indifferent to justice? What good is private property if people don't see that stealing is wicked? Won't wealth destroy the rich man who doesn't appreciate the value of generosity or fails to develop sensitivity to the suffering of the poor? Won't the drive for profit lead to the destruction of nature, unless people realize that the earth is a gift of a gracious God and meant to be enjoyed

by all? This is precisely why the moral relativism and indifferentism that holds sway in many parts of the West — fostered by the breakdown of the family and the attenuating of religious practice — poses such a threat to the economy.

In light of these clarifications, we can hear the pope's words with greater understanding. He asks, “Do we realize that that system has imposed the mentality of profit at any price, with no concern for social exclusion or the destruction of nature?” He is not speaking here of the market as such, but of a deeply immoral attitude that has seized the hearts of too many who use the market. And he complains, “An unfettered pursuit of money rules. The service of the common good is left behind. Once capital becomes an idol and guides people's decisions, once greed for money presides over the entire socioeconomic system, it ruins society, it condemns and enslaves men and women.” These are strong words indeed, but we notice again that the pope's attention is not so much on the mechanisms of capitalism, but rather on the wickedness of those who are using the market economy in the wrong way, greedily making an idol of money and becoming indifferent to the needs of others. In his call for an ethical circumscription of economic life, Francis' language is, if anything, milder than Leo XIII's (“once the demands of necessity and propriety have been met, the rest that one owns belongs to the poor”) or St. Ambrose's (“if a man has two shirts in his closet, one belongs to him; the other belongs to the man who has no shirt”).

Therefore, we should attend to Pope Francis' prophetic speech and allow it to bother us. But we should always situate it in the context of the rich and variegated tradition of Catholic social teaching.

Father Barron is the rector of Mundelein (Illinois) Seminary, founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries and has been appointed an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.



Franciscan University of Steubenville students, from left, Benjamin Erste, Emma Ruminski and Carlo Fabian deliver school supplies to the Diocese of Steubenville Office of Family and Social Concerns (Catholic Charities). The students collected the supplies, which will be distributed to those in need in the diocese, during summer conferences on the Franciscan University Campus. Michele A. Santin is director of the diocesan office. Ruth Ann Turner is social service coordinator. (Photo by DeFrancis)

Advocates applaud federal court orders to release detained families

By Patricia Zapor

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A federal judge ruled July 24 that the government's immigrant family detention system violates a settlement agreement dating to 1997 over how juveniles in the custody of the immigration agency are treated.

Advocates for the thousands of families being held in compounds run by for-profit prison companies hailed the ruling and said it should mean the end of the policy of Immigration and Customs Enforcement to lock up families while they pursue asylum and other types of protection from deportation.

Judge Dolly Gee of the Central California District Court found ICE violated a court settlement reached in 1997 with a strategy enacted last summer of detaining women and their children as a deterrent to others who might try to cross the U.S. border at Mexico. The Obama administration was given until Aug. 3 to officially respond to Gee's ruling.

The detention centers have been harshly criticized by attorneys, members of Congress and advocates such as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The US-CCB and the Center for Migration Studies issued a scathing report in May based on bishops' visits to two family detention centers in Texas. It decried conditions and recommended dismantling the whole system, replacing it with less drastic ways of keeping track of immigrants who are awaiting the outcome of legal cases.

More than 55,000 families were among a surge of Central American immigrants across the U.S.-Mexico border last summer. Along with 57,000 unaccompanied minors, the families were fleeing violence and other dangers in their home countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. ICE had in 2009 closed another family detention center amid strong criticism. But it opened new centers and expanded an existing one to hold women and their children. Current capacity is for more than 3,000 people, primarily at two detention centers in Texas, including one built specifically to house 2,500 women and children.

Gee had issued a preliminary ruling in May, telegraphing her intentions to find the detention system unacceptable. In response, ICE had begun releasing more families on bond and with ankle-bracelet monitoring systems, but hundreds of families are still in the centers.

Most of the families in the centers have met the first legal hurdle in applying for asylum. Of the tens of thousands of other families apprehended at the border, a majority have not been detained, but are released on bond pending adjudication of their attempts to be allowed to remain. But some families have been held in the centers for more than a year.

In her July 24 order, Gee said she found it "astonishing that the defendants have enacted a policy requiring such expensive infrastructure without more evidence to show that it would be compliant with an agreement that has been in effect for nearly 20 years or effective at achieving what defendants hoped it would accomplish."

The 1997 settlement in Flores v. Reno

set out standards for treatment of juveniles who were apprehended by the Border Patrol. The unaccompanied minors picked up in last year's surge, for instance, were put into the care of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, a division of the Department of Health and Human Services, and placed into a system of foster homes and similar non-detention settings while efforts were made to unite them with family members.

But a whole different set of policies has been applied to children who arrive with their mothers. Those who arrive with their fathers typically are released together or separated and put into the system used for unaccompanied children, attorneys have told Catholic News Service.

Gee said the children who are picked up by the Border Patrol while traveling with their mothers should be treated with the same level of care as those who arrive on their own. She said ICE failed to provide any evidence to support the agency's argument that it was necessary to detain families as a deterrent.

Gee ordered the administration to release children and parents unless there's a determination that there is "a significant flight risk, or a threat to others or the national security which cannot be mitigated by an appropriate bond or conditions of release."

She also ordered ICE to come up with standards for conditions under which immigrant children, including those with their parents, are held in even temporary conditions.

Auxiliary Bishop Eusebio L. Elizondo of Seattle, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Migration, welcomed Gee's ruling and urged the administration to comply with it expeditiously.

"Appealing the decision would only prolong a flawed and unjust policy of treating this vulnerable population as criminals," said a July 27 statement from Bishop Elizondo.

The temporary conditions addressed by Gee's order included frigid, overcrowded holding cells, inappropriate food, inadequate medical care and other problems for how immigrants have been held by Customs and Border Patrol.

In a July 27 letter to ICE director Sarah Saldana, the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, known as CLINIC, and other immigrant legal services agencies called for ICE "to account for the cascade of due process violations and detrimental practices at the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, Texas, and at the Karnes County Residential Center in Karnes City, Texas."

A press release about the letter to Saldana said that over the past weeks, attorneys and volunteers "have witnessed ICE officials coercing women into accepting ankle monitors, denying access to legal counsel and impeding pro bono representation, along with mass disorganization and confusion in implementing the new release policy for mothers who fled violence and who are pursuing protection in the United States."

The National Immigrant Justice Center also lauded Gee's ruling and urged the administration to comply immediately.

"Rather than double down on a costly

policy that has been plagued with problems, including suicide attempts, inadequate medical and mental health care, prolonged periods of detention, and extremely limited access to counsel, (the Department of Homeland Security) must use the least restrictive alternatives to detention to mitigate concerns about flight risk," said a statement from the center. Such alternative "will enable these mothers and children to reside with family members in the United States and retain legal counsel to help them tell their stories and seek protection in immigration court."

Among the religious organizations commenting about the ruling, Sister Patricia

McDermott, president of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, asked the Obama administration to end "the shameful policy of incarcerating refugee women and children." Scott Wright, director of the Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach, said that "a policy that blames women and children for fleeing violence, puts them in detention, and then expedites their deportation directly contradicts our values as people of faith and a nation of immigrants." Sister Louise Gallahue, of the Daughters of Charity of the Province of St. Louise, commended Gee's ruling, calling it consistent with Catholic social justice teaching.

BASILICA AND NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF LEBANON

50th Annual Assumption Pilgrimage

Aug. 13, 14, 15

Thursday, Aug. 13

- 9 a.m. Shrine opens
- 3 p.m. Cedar Hall opens – food available
- 7 p.m. Pontifical Divine Liturgy: Roman Rite
Celebrant: Bishop George V. Murry, Diocese of Youngstown, Ohio
* Procession and blessing with Icon of Our Lady of Lebanon
* Choirs from Our Lady of Mount Carmel/St. Anthony
- 8 p.m. Candlelight procession

Friday, Aug. 14

- 9 a.m. Shrine opens
- Noon Cedars Hall opens – food available
- 2 p.m. Spiritual Conference: John Horvat II – "Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother, the Key to Bringing America Back to Order"
- 2-5 p.m. Confessions/Adoration
- 7 p.m. Pontifical Divine Liturgy: Byzantine Rite, Melkite Liturgy
Celebrant: Bishop Nicholas Samra, Eparchy of Newton, West Roxbury, Massachusetts
- 8 p.m. Procession to the Tomb and the Prayers for the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin: Msgr. George Appleyard

Saturday, Aug. 15

- 9 a.m. Shrine opens
- 10 a.m. Tridentine Missa Cantata High Mass – Celebrant: Msgr. Anthony Spinosa
Choir: Schola Basilicorum and St. Cecilia Chorale
- 11 a.m. Cedars Hall opens – food available
- Noon Maronite Divine Liturgy "Anointing of the Sick"
Celebrants: Bishops Gregory Mansour, Elias Zaidan and Robert Shaheen
- 1-4 p.m. Rosary/Adoration (Tower Chapel)
- 2 p.m. Music: String Quartet (Prince of Peace Basilica)
- 2-5 p.m. Confessions/Adoration
- 4 p.m. Spiritual Conference: John Horvat II
"Mary Calls Us to a Way-of-the-Cross Society"
- 5:30 p.m. Lowellville Band Concert (Cedars Hall)
- 7 p.m. Pontifical Divine Liturgy: Maronite Rite
Celebrants: Bishops Gregory Mansour, Elias Zaidan and Robert Shaheen
* Procession and blessing with Icon of Our Lady of Lebanon
* Choir: Basilica Jubilee Choir
- 8 p.m. Candlelight procession

*** Special Note*** Sunday, Aug. 16, Celebration of the feast of St. Rocco:
10 a.m. Maronite Divine Liturgy; 11 a.m. procession with statue of St. Rocco; 11:30 a.m. light lunch provided



For additional information contact:
The Basilica and National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon
2759 N. Lipkey Road, North Jackson, OH 44451
(330) 538-3351
www.ourladyoflebanonshrine.com
email: office@ourladyoflebanonshrine.com



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Athens — An introductory session for the Creighton Model FertilityCare System will be held at 7:30 p.m., Aug. 4, at Holy Family Catholic Center at Christ the King University Parish. For additional information or to register, email FreedomFertilityCare@gmail.com or FreedomFertilityCare.com.

Bellaire — A steak fry, sponsored by the St. John Central Football Moms, will be held from 6-11 p.m., Aug. 22, at Forest Hills Community Center, 359 Wagner Ave. Meet the team will take place at 5 p.m. A donation of \$20 will include dinner, which will consist of steak, potato, salad, roll and dessert. Beverages will be available to purchase. Call (740) 296-0064, to purchase tickets.

Buchtel — St. Mary of the Hills CWC will sponsor an Adopt-A-Shelter project for the benefit of the Hocking Hills Inspire Shelter, a new homeless shelter in Logan, Ohio. Tags will be hung on trees in the vestibule of the church listing an item/items that can be donated to the project. Donations can be taken to the church hall through Aug. 4. For additional information, or to have a member of the CWC shop for you, telephone (740) 591-5584.

Gallipolis — St. Louis Parish will sponsor a spaghetti dinner from 4-8 p.m., Aug. 22, at St. John Paul II Parish Center. Tickets will be sold at the door and cost \$8 for adults; \$5, teens; \$4, children, 4-12 years of age; children 3 years of age and under eat for free. Freezable quart plastic containers of sauce will be sold for \$6. Music will be provided by Gene France. Also at the event, there will be a silent auction, split the pot and raffle ticket drawing.

To view the new St. Louis Parish Web page, log on www.stlouiscatholicchurchgallia.org.

Little Hocking — The 6 p.m. Mass on Wednesdays at St. Ambrose Church will not be celebrated during the summer months.

St. Ambrose CWC will resume meetings Sept. 3. Father Robert A. Gallagher, pastor of St. Ambrose Parish, will cook for the 6:30 p.m. meeting.

“Renew Your Spirit Ladies Retreat Day” has been scheduled for Oct. 3. The retreat will begin at 8:30 a.m. and continue until 2:30 p.m. at St. Ambrose Church. The day will include speakers, music, an opportunity for the sacrament of reconciliation, a contemplative walk, group discussion, praying the rosary and lunch. For reservations or more information, telephone Rita Rodgers (740) 423-5697 or email her drrogers2417@gmail.com, or phone Becky Hennen (740) 989-2460.

Marietta — An inquiry session for anyone interested in learning more about Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and the Catholic Church will take place at 7 p.m., Aug. 17, in the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption social hall.

The Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption parishioners are collecting gently used men’s, women’s and children’s shoes, which will be given to Faithlink. According to information from the basilica bulletin, Faithlink is a local volunteer caregiving program in the mid-Ohio Valley whose mission is to help keep senior citizens independent and in their homes. It assists primarily individuals who are 60-plus years of age, or those with a physical disability or chronic illness, to maintain their independence. Faithlink receives funds for shoes collected to continue its mission. The program is sponsored by funds2orgs.com. For additional information, visit the website, www.faithlinkwv.org or call Melissa Ogden, (304) 485-9238, extension 31.

St. Clairsville — St. Mary Central School will begin classes Aug. 24, for the 2015-16 school year. An open house will be held at 6 p.m., Aug. 23. A parents’ meeting will take place at 6:45 p.m.

Steubenville — A “Holy Hour for Vocations” will be prayed following the celebration of the 8:30 a.m. Mass, until 10 a.m., Aug. 6, at Holy Rosary Church.

Steubenville — The Catholic Central High School basketball team will hold a fundraiser of-



Some members of the Catholic Woman’s Club of Triumph of the Cross Parish gather in the auditorium at Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, to prepare information on a raffle that is part of a CWC fall card party, Sept. 20, said Mary Ann Bushlow, Vera Paulowski and Francesca Veltri, Triumph of the Cross CWC executive committee. The card party, for which doors open at 1 p.m., will be held in Holy Rosary Church auditorium, Rosemont Avenue. Admission for the card party, where lunch will be served at 2 p.m., is \$6. There will be door prizes, a 50/50, raffle prizes, bingo, card games and a bake sale. Anyone willing to bake for the event should contact Lil Meronoff, (740) 264-5782. Everyone who wants to donate a prize for the CWC card party raffle, should leave the item at the Triumph of the Cross Parish Office, 200 Rosemont Ave., Steubenville. Questions on the event can be asked by telephoning the parish office, (740) 264-6177. Father Thomas R. Nau is pastor of Triumph of the Cross Parish. (Photo by DeFrancis)

fering girls an opportunity to purchase gently used homecoming and prom gowns. The event will be held from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Aug. 8, in the school gymnasium, 320 West View Ave. Tables can be purchased for \$40 and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Sellers keep the proceeds from individual sales. For additional information, contact Jess Looman, jlooman12@gmail.com or Jessica Meadows, jessicameadows83@yahoo.com.

The Catholic Central High School Athletic Boosters will hold a reverse raffle from 5-8 p.m., Aug. 22, at the Polish Athletic Club, upper shelter house, 433 N. Seventh St. Tickets, which cost \$50 per ticket, per couple, include food, water and pop; a \$4,000 payout is guaranteed; winner need not be present. To purchase a ticket, contact the school office at (740) 264-5538; Tom Kakascik, (740) 346-6002; or Bob Bottegal, (740) 381-6223.

Around and About

Cambridge — Knights of Columbus Council 1641 has appointed new officers for the new program year – Father Paul E. Hrezo, pastor of Christ Our Light Parish, Cambridge, chaplain; John Powell, grand Knight; John Sprouse, deputy grand Knight; Steve Stansbury, financial secretary; Mike Abbott, treasurer; Dick Baker, recorder; Ed Alexsonshk, chancellor; Don Wissmar, warden; Jim Schaeffer, inside guard; Todd Callahan, outside guard; Dick Baker, Ron Ginnetti and Sprouse, trustees. To join the Knights, telephone Alexsonshk, (740) 432-1677.

Carrollton — A “So You Think You Can Dance Fun Day” will be held Aug. 14, on the grounds of St. John’s Villa, 701 Crest St. It will include a dunking tank, water balloon toss, face painting, dance contest, DJ, buffet lunch and more. Tickets cost \$10, which includes a fun day T-shirt. For additional information, to be a sponsor or to make a donation for the event, telephone Michelle Simpson or Susan DeChiara at (330) 627-9789.

St. John Villa will hold a car and craft show Aug. 29, at the villa, which is located at 701 Crest St. The car show will run from 11 a.m. through 3 p.m.; registration fee is \$10. The craft show will begin at 9 a.m. and continue through 3 p.m.; table fee is \$20. Crafters will be able to set up tables beginning at 7:30 a.m.

Mingo Junction — Knights of Columbus Msgr. Joseph F. Dooley Council 4361 will attend a 1:35 p.m. Pittsburgh Pirates vs. Los Angeles Dodgers baseball game Aug. 9. Tickets cost \$25 each. To purchase a ticket, send a check for the correct dollar amount for the number of tickets ordering, made payable to Mingo Knights of Columbus, and mail to Shawn Zarych, P.O. Box 217, Mingo Junction, OH 43938. For questions, telephone Zarych at (740) 381-1385.

North Canton, Ohio — Mary Queen of Heaven

and Earth Chapter of Magnificat will sponsor a breakfast Aug. 29 at Walsh University, Barrette Center, 2020 E. Maple St. Doors open at 8:30 a.m.; breakfast will be served at 9 a.m. Cost is \$18; make checks payable to Magnificat of Stark County and send to Andrea Singarella, 1531 Radford NE, North Canton, OH 44720. Reservation deadline is Aug. 22. Mass will be celebrated in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Chapel, Walsh University, at 8 a.m. For more information, call Shirley DeOrto at (330) 305-1146.

Parkersburg, W.Va. — An “Open Kitchen” dinner will be held at 6 p.m., Aug. 14, at the Parkersburg Knights of Columbus hall, 1010 Market St. Hot dogs, hamburgers and fries will be available.

Steubenville — The third and final Fidelity and Freedom Conference, celebrating the late St. John Paul II’s “Ex corde Ecclesiae” will be held Sept. 18-19 at Franciscan University of Steubenville. Third Order Regular Franciscan Father Sean O. Sheridan, Franciscan University president, will host the symposium and speak on “Embracing the Gift of ‘Ex corde Ecclesiae’ to Challenge the Culture.” Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton will speak on “The Bishop and the Catholic University: Cultivating Dialogue and Cooperation.” Also presenting will be Anne Hendershott, sociology professor at the university, whose topic of discussion will be “In Service: Shaping the Culture, Serving the Church,” and professor, author and editor of more than 40 books, Scott Hahn.

The symposium is free and reservations are not required. For additional information, including the schedule, or to register, log on www.franciscan.edu/fidelityandfreedom.

Wheeling, W.Va. — Our Lady of Perpetual Help Ukrainian Church, 4136 Jacob St., will hold a summer festival from 7-11 p.m., Aug. 7 and Aug. 8. Music will be provided by a DJ. There will be

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Around and About

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bingo, games for children, a 50/50 raffle, drawings for gift certificates and a baked goods stand at the event. Cabbage and noodles, pierogi, kielbasa, cabbage rolls, hot sausage, funnel cakes and pizza will be served, beginning at 6 p.m.

Wheeling, W.Va. — The Appalachian Institute will offer a “Farmer’s Market” from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Tuesdays in August, on the Wheeling Jesuit University campus, behind Kirby Hall, rain or shine. For additional information or to check on delivery of vegetables, with advance notice, telephone (304) 243-4361.

Wheeling, W.Va. — The West Virginia Auxiliary of the Congregation of St. Joseph will hold a summer social Aug. 23, at Mount St. Joseph, 137 Mount St. Joseph Road. The day will begin with the celebration of Mass at 11 a.m.; brunch will follow. Tours of the buildings, provided by the sisters and members of the auxiliary board, will be available following brunch. Reservations, which are due by Aug. 15, are necessary and can be made by telephoning Tammy Poppe at (304) 233-6600; walk-ins cannot be accommodated.

Youngstown, Ohio — Registration for a second annual Youngstown Marian Pilgrimage on Foot and Youngstown Children’s Pilgrimage for Families with Small Children, Aug. 15, can occur by email, GS.OhioValley@gmail.com, or in person at 8 a.m. the day of the pilgrimage at the Shrine of Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted, 517 S. Belle Vista Ave. The pilgrimage will begin with 9 a.m. Mass at the shrine. Walking will start at 10:15 a.m. There will be a stop for morning prayer and lunch at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Austintown, Ohio, at 12:30 p.m. After catechesis for children, families with small children, who have prepaid, can visit a children’s museum in Youngstown. The final destination for walkers is the Basilica and National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon, 2759 N. Lipkey Road, North Jackson, Ohio. Dinner will be on sale, followed by Mass at 7 p.m., a candlelight procession and fireworks. Walkers are advised to bring plenty of drinking water, a substantial bag lunch and money to buy dinner at the shrine. Participants in the children’s pilgrimage need \$5 per person for admission to the children’s museum.

Conference will promote healthy attachments

STEUBENVILLE — A list of authorities are on the program for the 25th annual conference on promoting healthy attachments, said Michele A. Santin, director, Diocese of Steubenville Office of Family and Social Concerns (Catholic Charities).

The conference, which is coordinated by Santin in conjunction with Project Attach (the association for the treatment and training in the attachment of children), will be held Nov. 23-24 at Wilson Lodge, Oglebay

Resort and Convention Center, Wheeling West Virginia.

Speakers from California, Texas, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Colorado and West Virginia will be among the presenters on such topics as “Hurt Kids, Healing Parents”; “Creating Sexual Safety – A Prerequisite for Healing” and “Mindsight and Healing Trauma.”

For more information, contact Santin, via email, msantin@diosteub.org or telephone, (740) 282-3631.

St. Joseph, Bridgeport, Catholic Woman’s Club marks each month of year

BRIDGEPORT — For more than a dozen years, the Catholic Woman’s Club of St. Joseph Parish has staged a calendar party.

This year, the women asked women members of their neighboring parish, St. Anthony of Padua, and friends to attend, too.

Father John F. Mucha, pastor of St. Joseph and St. Anthony parishes, was a guest

of honor at the calendar party.

Nancy Morris, St. Joseph CWC, coordinated the party, which some women remembered started as a mother-daughter affair.

Each of the approximately 100 women arrived at the early-evening event with a covered dish. There were dozens of foods to choose from – cabbage rolls to salads to yummy desserts.

Each table at the party was decorated to reflect the months of the year.

One person at each of the multi-seat tables was in charge of decorations.

The decorations centered on a theme. January was marked for the Magi. February, of course, was centered on Valentine’s Day. St. Patrick’s Day was the theme for March.

The butterfly, a symbol of the Resurrec-

tion, stood on April’s table.

Mary was the center of May’s table; Flag Day, June; Independence Day, July.

Since August is a month without a national holiday, watermelons marked the table – placemats, tableware, giant drinking cups with straws and on and on.

There was a tea party at the September table; Breast Cancer Awareness at October’s, and, of course, Thanksgiving at November places.

It was a “Country Christmas” for December table-goers.

At the end of the party, after singing, table decorations were there for the taking, by the guests.

Obituaries

Paul Tripodi, 81, of Wintersville – father of Deborah Cook, a Diocese of Steubenville chancery employee – died July 18.

He was a son of Peter and Mary Urso Tripodi, a member of Triumph of the Cross Parish, Steubenville, and a bricklayer.

In addition to Cook, Tripodi is survived by his wife, Gloria G. DiAlbert Tripodi, another daughter, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

A funeral Mass was celebrated July 22 at Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville; burial in Mount Calvary Cemetery, Steubenville.

Margaret “Peg” Bell, 91, Mingo Junction, St. Agnes, July 24.

Victor DiCarantonio, 79, Steubenville, Holy Family, July 23.

Philip F. Dolan Jr., 80, Steubenville – brother of Richard E. Dolan of St. Clairsville who is a member of the Diocese of

Steubenville Finance Council – July 18, St. Peter Church.

Joann S. Evano, 86, Triumph of the Cross, Steubenville, July 16.

Esther Turner Fogle, 85, Toronto, St. Francis of Assisi, July 8.

Dolores M. Souillard Gorence, 76, Lansing, St. Joseph, Bridgeport, July 14.

Dale J. Huck, 88, the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, July 11.

Michael L. Kompier, 58, Barton, St. Joseph, Bridgeport, July 16.

Jeffery J. McDevitt, 52, Mingo Junction, Holy Family, Steubenville, July 19.

James T. “Tom” McInnis, 74, Steubenville, Holy Family, July 19.

Zachary T. Michael, 23, Triumph of the Cross, Steubenville, July 14.

George E. Sinclair, 91, Mingo Junction, St. Agnes, July 20.

Ralph J. Straker, 81, Venice, Florida, Holy Family, Steubenville, July 18.

Back-to-school shopping may be tax free

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Shoppers will be able to save money on many of their purchases Aug. 7-9, during Ohio’s first-ever “sales tax holiday” on clothing, footwear and back-to-school items.

“Our members are already hearing good things about the holiday from their customers and friends,” said Ohio Council of Retail Merchants President and CEO Gordon Gough.

“There’s a considerable list of items exempt from sales tax,” added Gough.

“Eligible items include everything from shirts and shoes to lab coats, belts and socks to disposable diapers.

“Plus, the back-to-school exemption covers pens, paper, school books and workbooks,” Gough said.

“Research from the National Retail Federation says Americans will spend about \$68 billion for back-to-school items this year.

“This means Ohio’s tax-free holiday promises great savings for consumers,” Gough concluded.

The tax holiday is the result of legislation passed last year that exempts consumers making purchases in Ohio from paying state and local sales tax on all clothing and footwear up to \$75 per item, as well as school supplies and instructional materials up to \$20 per item Aug. 7-9.

Eligible items are tax free in Ohio retail stores to anyone purchasing them, however, online sales are only tax free to purchasers residing in Ohio.



The tables are set to mark a month of the year at the annual St. Joseph Catholic Woman’s Club annual calendar party. Mary was the center for one month; watermelons were the feature for another and St. Patrick’s trinkets dominated a third at the party, staged in Bridgeport, where the church is located and Father John F. Mucha is pastor. (Photos by DeFrancis)



Catholic officials, others react to Boy Scouts' decision on leaders

By Mark Pattison

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The top leaders of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting have made an uneasy peace with the Boy Scouts of America's decision July 27 to allow openly gay troop leaders and employees to serve in their ranks at the national level.

The Boy Scouts' decision does not affect decisions about leaders made by local troops and councils and also permits religiously chartered Scout troops to choose leaders whose values are consistent with those of the sponsoring faith.

"It is not entirely clear how these rights will be squared with previous policy changes the Boy Scouts have made ... but it appears that the resolution respects the needs of Catholic-chartered organizations in the right to choose leaders whose character and conduct are consistent with those of Catholic teaching," said a July 27 statement from Edward Martin, national chairman, and Father Michael Hanifin, national chaplain, for the National Catholic Committee on Scouting.

"At the same time, we express strong concern about the practical implications of this resolution, especially for our young people in Scouting, and whether the term

'sexual orientation' will be correctly understood and applied only in reference to sexual inclination and not to sexual conduct or behavior," they said.

"The resolution also affirms a chartered organization's right to select its unit leaders based on its religious principles, rejects any interference with that right, and provides that local Scout councils will not interfere with chartered organizations' rights in this regard," said a July 28 statement from Bishop Robert E. Guglielmone of Charleston, South Carolina. "As chartering organizations, individual parishes, institutions and Catholic schools have always had this right."

In their statement, Martin and Father Hanifin said they also were concerned that the new resolution "articulates a position on adult sexual conduct that does not make clear that sexual behavior should be reserved to a husband and a wife in marriage."

They described an "increasingly challenging" situation with regard to differences in religious and societal beliefs that led to the policy change, but added: "We recognize the vital importance of providing a Catholic emphasis to Catholic Scouts and Scouters seeking ways to live out their 'duty to God.'

"Our youth don't want to leave Scouting. ... Let's continue this important journey together and pray for the future of Scouting!" Martin and Father Hanifin said.

About 70 percent of Boy Scout troops are run by faith-based groups.

The Mormon church, whose troops account for 17 percent of all Boy Scouts, strongly criticized the policy change.

"The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is deeply troubled by today's vote," said a July 27 news release. "When the leadership of the church resumes its regular schedule of meetings in August, the century-long association with Scouting will need to be examined."

The statement said the church has been examining alternatives, especially for Mormon boys who live in areas without a Boy Scouts presence.

The new policy was crafted by the Scouts' top leaders, including Robert Gates, the former defense secretary who is now the Scouts' president. According to the Scouts, 79 percent of its executive board members on a July 27 conference call approved the new policy.

The numbers of Boy Scouts has been slipping in recent years. Faced with criticism over the organization's policies toward gays, as well as lawsuits against

the Boy Scouts and declining business support, the Scouts allowed openly gay youths to join in 2013. Membership dropped 6 percent that year, and slipped another 7 percent last year to 2.4 million. The drop was attributed to departures by some evangelical churches over the 2013 policy change.

When a Boy Scouts committee unanimously recommended July 13 that the ban on gay troop leaders and employees be rescinded, the Southern Baptist Convention looked askance at the move.

Russell Moore, president of the denomination's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, predicted an even greater exodus of Baptists from the Scouts, and expressed skepticism the Scouts would hold the line on protecting the rights of churches and other religious institutions.

"At every point, the Scout leadership tells us that they will go this far and no farther, but here we are again — so it's hard for me to believe, in the long term, that the Boy Scouts will allow religious groups to have the freedom to choose their own leaders," Moore told Baptist Press July 14. "In recent years I have seen a definite cooling on the part of Baptist churches toward the Scouts. This will probably bring that cooling to a freeze."

Researcher says success rate in use of adult stem cells documented

NEW ORLEANS (CNS) — Adult stem cells, easily harvested from human bone marrow, umbilical cord blood and fat tissue, have a successful track record in treatments for more than 90 medical conditions and diseases, including sickle cell anemia, multiple myeloma cancer and damaged heart tissue.

Stem cells can be retrieved and used in treatments while doing no harm to donor or recipient.

So why do so many Americans, including some physicians, continue to champion research involving embryonic stem cells when this type of intervention has no documented cases of improving health and also requires the destruction of human life in its youngest form? That question was pondered by David Prentice July 10 at the

National Right to Life Convention during his presentation "Adult Stem Cells: Saving Lives Now." Prentice, vice president and research director for the Washington-based Charlotte Lozier Institute — the education and research arm of the pro-life Susan B. Anthony List — reported that more than 70,000 patients throughout the world are receiving adult stem-cell transplants annually, with an estimated 1 million total patients treated to date.

"How many people have been cured using embryonic stem cells?" Prentice asked his audience. "Zero," he answered, noting that misinformation in the media and the Internet continues to promote "fairy tales" about the promise of embryonic stem cells in curing disease and being the elusive "fountain of youth" for mankind.

"You've got to destroy that young human being to get the embryonic stem cells," Prentice said of the over-hyped technology. Conversely, adult cells — undifferentiated cells that already exist among the differentiated cells that make up specific tissues or organs — can be isolated and deployed to various parts of the body to regenerate and repair diseased or damaged tissue.

There is more good news about adult stem cells besides its ethical supremacy, Prentice said. Unlike embryonic stem cells, adult stem cells are readily available to the majority of patients. Many types of adult stem cells can be harvested in relatively painless, outpatient procedures. For example, adult stem cells from bone marrow, once accessible only by deep needle extraction, can now be collected

in a process akin to giving blood. Another source of stem cells — fat tissue — can be tapped via liposuction.

Also, despite being tagged as "adult," children can receive the therapy as early as the in-utero stage, and the donors of adult stem cells do not have to be adult at all. "Babies are born with (adult) stem cells throughout their body," said Prentice, an adjunct professor of molecular genetics at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at The Catholic University of America. "The umbilical cord that we cut off after the baby is born is rich in what we call adult stem cells."

As adult stem cell treatments gain credibility in science journals, insurance companies increasingly are covering the procedures, Prentice notes.

Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton celebrates the closing Mass at the July 26 Defending the Faith conference at Franciscan University of Steubenville. (Photo by Evan Schmittgen/Franciscan University)

