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News Brief



Pope Francis greets Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the new apostolic nuncio to the United States. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano)

New US nuncio said ready to listen, learn

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the new nuncio to the United States, said he is ready to learn about the Catholic Church in the country and will try his best to be Pope Francis' emissary, particularly in promoting a church that is close to those who suffer.

The archbishop, who had a private meeting at the Vatican with Pope Francis April 21, gave interviews the next day to English and Italian programs on Vatican Radio.

The 70-year-old French native has been in the Vatican diplomatic corps for almost 40 years and said a nuncio's job is to help the pope fulfill his ministry of building up the local churches, respecting their diversity, while keeping them united with the universal church. "The difficulty or the challenge," he said, is "to listen, to be careful about what's going on, to understand, to exercise dialogue — I think that's very important — to discover the beauty, the richness of the culture of the people, the way the people live (and) to help the inculturation of the Gospel in a particular culture."

At the same time, he said, a nuncio's mission is "to help the pope and those who work with him to understand what's going on."

Official

Msgr. Robert J. Kawa, pastor of St. Bernard Parish, Beverly, has been appointed pastor of St. James Parish, McConnelsville, also.

The appointment by Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton is effective July 1.

St. Bernard and St. James parishes have been clustered, also, effective July 1.

Father Mark A. Moore, pastor of Christ the King University Parish, Athens, and St. Paul Parish, Athens, has been appointed pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Pomeroy, also.

The appointment by Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton is effective July 1.

Steubenville man to be ordained to the priesthood

STEUBENVILLE — Steubenville native Transitional Deacon Matthew W.J. Gossett will be ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Steubenville during a 7 p.m. Mass May 20, celebrated by Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton, at St. Peter Church.

The nearly 30-year-old Deacon Gossett was born May 17, 1986, a son of David and Loretta Campbell Gossett of Steubenville. Deacon Gossett attended All Saints Central School in downtown Steubenville and graduated from Catholic Central High School, Steubenville, in 2004.

Father Michael W. Gossett, Deacon Gossett's brother, was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Steubenville in 2011. The two, also, have a younger sister, Amanda.

Deacon Gossett studied music education at Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio, from which he received a degree in 2008. He continued his education at Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, where he obtained a master's in music in 2010. His plan was, Deacon Gossett said during a recent visit to The Steubenville Register in the chancery in downtown Steubenville, to obtain a doctorate in music and teach. He said he knew he would enjoy educating people and performing — the trumpet was his instrument of choice at that time; he plays the guitar now, mostly, — but the ideas were not totally fulfilling.

While in high school, Deacon Gossett said he had visited the Pontifical College Josephinum, Columbus, Ohio, and considered becoming a religious order priest. After completing undergraduate school, he said he again started thinking about the priesthood. He spent time with his brother, then a seminarian at St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, Pennsylvania. He saw what studying at a seminary was like.

When he was in graduate school, Deacon Gossett said he began working with campus ministry. In 2010, he went on a mission trip to El Salvador with others from the Kent State



(Photo by DeFrancis)

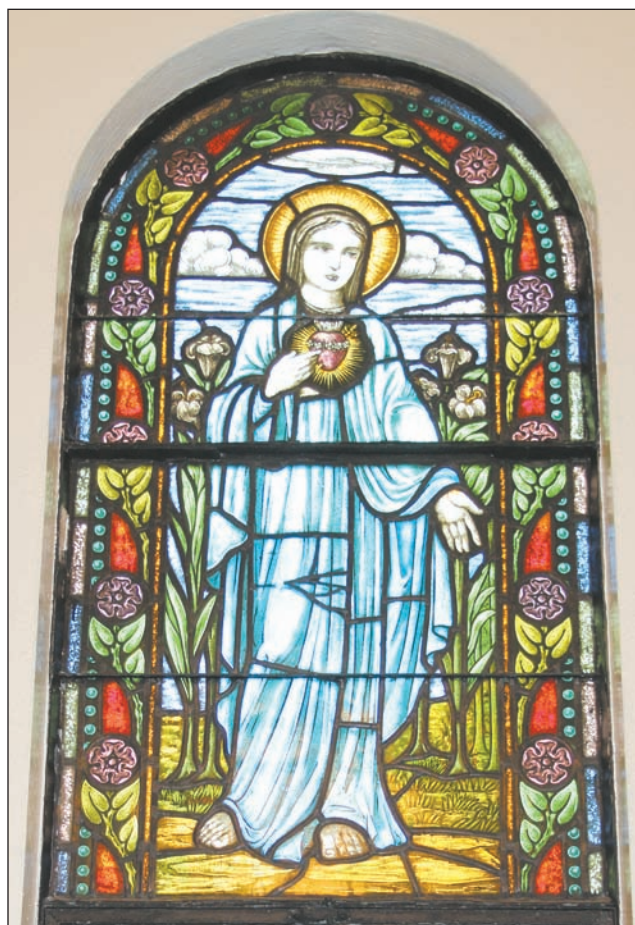
Transitional Deacon Matthew W.J. Gossett

Newman Center.

He, also, spent a summer in Germany, and toured with a band in that country and Italy.

To Page 3

June 4 procession, Mass will open reconsecration



A window of Mary in St. Joseph Church, Bridgeport. (Photo by DeFrancis)

STEUBENVILLE — Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton will open the Year of Reconsecration of the Diocese of Steubenville to the Immaculate Heart of Mary June 4 — the feast of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The diocese's first bishop, John King Mussio, consecrated the Diocese of Steubenville to the Immaculate Heart of Mary during his installation homily May 23, 1945. "With full realization of our great responsibly, of the blessed opportunity offered us to serve God and our country, we hereby declare, as our first official act, the dedication of our newly formed Diocese of Steubenville, of our priests, our religious and our laity to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother of God. Let it be known that we do not dedicate ourselves to Mary in mere words, but in our every decision, our deeds, our plans and in our lives. In her Immaculate Heart, so free from the least taint of sin, so wholly engulfed in the grace of God, so clearly reflecting the Divine Will, we shall see our purpose in life, we shall find a fountain of strength to pursue that purpose, and in the attainment of that purpose we shall, through that same Immaculate Heart of Mary, find ultimate peace in Christ Jesus, Our Lord."

A statue of Mary is being created for a Marian procession, which will begin at 10 a.m., June 4, at St. Peter Church, Steubenville, continue through the downtown and return to St. Peter Church, where Mass will be celebrated at noon by Bishop Monforton. During the year of reconsecration, the statue will be taken to each parish in the diocese.

For more information on the procession or the Year of Reconsecration, contact Family of Jacopa Association Sister Mary Brigid Callan, diocesan director, stewardship and development — (740) 282-3631 or email mcallan@diosteub.org.

'Ask the Bishop'

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

Q: Why do we fast on Fridays during Lent?

**Anthony Leluika
Steubenville**

A: Fasting and abstaining are both profound gifts of the Church for they train our focus on the most important things in life. Both remind us that Jesus is the center of our lives. In the Lenten season, the two principal days of fasting are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday in which we do not eat in-between meals and are very moderate in how much we consume during those meals.

In the United States, we, of course, abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays throughout the Lenten season. Moreover, many continue to abstain from meat on Fridays throughout the rest of the year as well. To abstain from meat, we exercise a penitential practice, preparing our hearts to receive Jesus, for fasting reminds us that Jesus gave his entire self, so that you and I may have eternal life with him.

The practice of fasting and abstinence is the fourth precept of the Church, and when we embrace this practice, we acquire mastery over ourselves and acquire freedom of the heart. Of course, in the end, our hearts are always for Jesus.

Q: Is Jesus considered a saint?

**Makenna Moran
St. Clairsville**

A: Jesus is the source of all saintliness or holiness. A saint is a holy one of God who

is in union with God through the grace of Jesus Christ.

In other words, all saints embrace the way of Jesus Christ and imitate him and the Church. The Church acknowledges the individual as a saint as having received the reward of eternal life. This recognition occurs at the person's canonization. A contemporary example is that of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, who will be canonized by Pope Francis on Sept. 4, in which our Holy Father will state that Teresa of Calcutta is a saint.

On a personal note, I am so grateful to have had the grace to meet Mother Teresa some 20 years ago.

Q: I understand why God lets things happen to people and between people. But why does God let natural disasters happen to us?

**William Thompson
Steubenville**

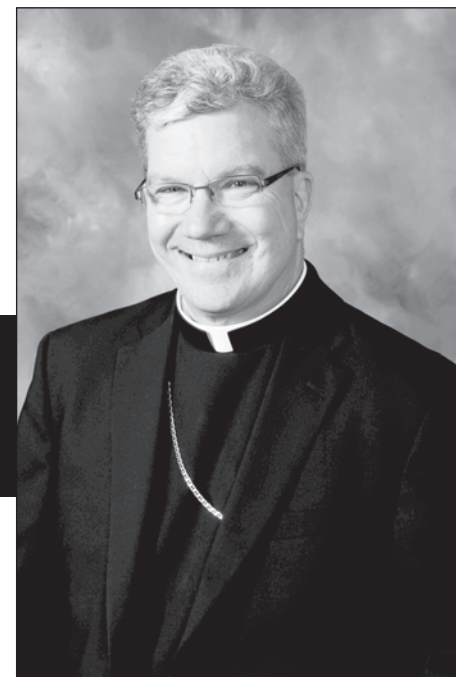
A: This is a very good question, for we know that God loves us more deeply than you and I can imagine. However, we also live in a fallen world, which was severely damaged by Original Sin. As a result, we are at the mercy of the elements, as well as the laws of physics in this world, including the universe in which we find ourselves.

The journey we travel is with God, and these moments of natural disasters in which many, many people fall victim are in great need of our missionary outreach. Victims of such natural calamities provide you and me the opportunity to exercise our Christian charity by reaching out to them to the point of sacrificing what we have in this world in order that they may receive comfort and compassion.

We live in a time in which Jesus Christ is making all things new, and he is doing it through you and me, instructing us all

the while to reach out to our brothers and sisters who suffer.

In Jesus' sermons and teachings, he acknowledges the disasters that can happen in this world and all the more reason for you and me to reach out to our brothers and sisters in need. While we do not wish for others to suffer, we must recognize these moments as occasions for charitable works of mercy. God has given you and me the ability to assist those afflicted by natural disasters in order that we may come closer together as a family made in God's image and likeness.



Bishop Monforton

May you and your family have a blessed Ascension Sunday.

In this Confirmation season, and as we approach the solemnity of the Ascension this Sunday, (May 8) and subsequently Pentecost Sunday, the next Sunday (May 15), you and I can meditate on the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit we receive at Confirmation, and God gives us the will and the intellect on how we may employ those spiritual gifts.

To "Ask the Bishop," address questions to Joseph M. Taylor, catechetical consultant, Diocese of Steubenville Office of Christian Formation and Schools. Taylor can be reached via the U.S. Postal Service, P.O. Box 969, Steubenville, OH 43952; email, jtaylor@diosteub.org or telephone, (740) 282-3631.

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Father John F. Mucha, pastor of St. Joseph and St. Anthony of Padua parishes, Bridgeport, and Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton celebrate the anointing of the sick during an April 26 Mass at St. Joseph Church. "We gather," Father Mucha said, "because we know the mercy and love of God," recognize our need for God's mercy and love and, so we might receive that mercy and love and support each other on the journey through life. The sacrament of the anointing of the sick is a continuation of Jesus' ministry of healing. The sacrament, Father Mucha said, strengthens us. (Photos by DeFrancis)

Steubenville man

From Page 1

"It was a pivotal experience," Deacon Gossett said. As he discerned what he would do with his life, he visited beautiful European churches and heard Mass celebrated in languages other than English. "Maybe I am called to the priesthood," he said he mused.

During a second year of graduate school, Deacon Gossett went on a discernment retreat and made a second mission trip to El Salvador, where he said he experienced poverty, as he never had. Then, he made up his mind, he would discern if he should be a priest while in a seminary. Former Steubenville Bishop R. Daniel Conlon assigned Deacon Gossett to St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, Pennsylvania, where his brother was in formation, still. The two brothers spent a year studying for the priesthood together. "Even before I entered the seminary, he was helpful," Deacon Gossett said of his brother.

Because of his love for evangelization, Deacon Gossett began ministry as a chaplain with sports teams at the college attached to St. Vincent's. He prayed with the team members, ate with them, went to their practices, attended their games. He applied what he had learned in the classroom, he said.

The chaplaincy has flourished with the full support of the seminary. "It was one of the highlights of my experiences there – to put the program together, see it grow and be of mutual benefit to those involved," Deacon Gossett said.

While at St. Vincent's, he, too, started Bible study with athletes and began a festival of praise ministry.

After all, Deacon Gossett said, Pope Francis has asked, how can we be disciples of Jesus Christ?

Discerning for the priesthood was a roller coaster, however, Deacon Gossett said. "There were a lot of ups and downs, but now I am very ready for the priesthood and ordination."

As far as having two men from the same family in the priesthood, he said, "It is a sign God is still calling people."

When he graduates May 6 from St. Vincent Seminary, with a Master of Divinity, Deacon Gossett will have an extra Master of Arts in Systemic Theology, which he earned, partially because of a thesis on the domestic church – the family.

As he grew up, his parents were faithful in bringing

the family to Mass at St. Peter Church, of making faith an intentional thing, Deacon Gossett said. In addition, he added, he had the support of the late Msgr. George W. Yontz, longtime St. Peter Parish pastor and other priests. His experiences at Catholic Central, also, made him realize the beauty that can come through living the Catholic faith.

Earlier this year, Deacon Gossett's brother traveled to Italy. While there, he bought a chalice for Deacon Gossett with money their late grandmother, Sophia Campbell, had set aside for the purchase. After ordination, the newly ordained Father Gossett, also, will have a chalice that belonged to his former pastor, Msgr. Yontz.

Father (Michael) Gossett explained that when Msgr. Yontz died, he left his chalice and his brother's, also a priest for the Diocese of Steubenville, to the diocese. Father Michael Gossett was given the chalice that belonged to Msgr. William C. Yontz, a longtime pastor of Holy Trinity Parish, Byesville.

Bishop Monforton's Schedule

May

- 9-13 Region VI bishops' retreat
- 14 Nursing home visit, Holzer Senior Care Center, Bidwell, 1:30 p.m.
Nursing home visits and Communion, Gallipolis area, 2:15 p.m.
Confirmation Mass for Lawrence County parishes at St. Lawrence O'Toole Church, Ironton, 5:15 p.m.
- 15 Confirmation Mass, St. John the Baptist Church, Churchtown, 11 a.m.
Confirmation Mass, the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, 2 p.m.
- 16 "Misa con Hermanas" Spanish Mass, Daughters of Holy Mary of the Heart of Jesus, Steubenville, 11:30 a.m.
- 17 125th anniversary Mass of first Catholic Central High School graduating class, Catholic Central High School, Berkman Theater, Lanman Hall, Steubenville, 9:45 a.m.
- 18 Novitiate vows, followed by lunch, Order of the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Hopedale, 11 a.m.
Baccalaureate Mass for St. John Central High School, at St. John Church, Bellaire, 7 p.m.
- 19 Presbyteral Council meeting, St. Mary Church, St. Clairsville, noon
Baccalaureate Mass for Catholic Central High School, at St. Peter Church, Steubenville, 7 p.m.
- 20 Dinner with ordinandi and priests, Steubenville, 5 p.m.
Priesthood ordinations, St. Peter Church, Steubenville, 7 p.m.
- 21 First Mass, Father Ryan Gray, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 9:30 a.m.
First Mass, Father Matthew W.J. Gossett, St. Peter Church, Steubenville, 12:30 p.m.

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Joe Billante

Bishop Monforton opens ‘Laudato Si’ symposium – says care is operative

STEUBENVILLE — “Care is the operative word here,” Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton said as he opened an April 28 symposium on Pope Francis’ encyclical – “Laudato Si’: On Care for Our Common Home.”

Co-sponsored by the Diocese of Steubenville and Franciscan University’s Veritas Center for Ethics in Public Life and Science and Faith Lecture Series, the 2-9 p.m. symposium in the J.C. Williams Center on the Franciscan University campus featured Kenneth Kunkel, professor of atmospheric sciences, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, and Lonnie Ellis, associate director, Catholic Climate Covenant, Washington, D.C., as well as panelists in the fields of philosophy, theology, engineering, biology, psychology, business, political science and catechetics from Franciscan University.

Prior to the start of the interdisciplinary symposium on the encyclical, a Diocese of Steubenville Task Force, created in response to “Laudato Si’”, met in the chancery in downtown Steubenville.

Task force members include Michele A. Santin, director, Diocese of Steubenville Office of Family and Social Concerns (Catholic Charities); James G. Piazza, executive assistant to the bishop; Pat DeFrancis, editor, The Steubenville Register and director, communications, Diocese of Steubenville; Robert Maher, Joseph McLaughlin and Emilia Alonso-Sameno, Athens Catholic community; Eric Haenni and Paul Symington, Franciscan University of Steubenville; and Eric Fitch, Marietta College.

Ellis offered suggestions to the diocesan task force on implementation of Pope Francis’ “Laudato Si’” in the diocese and provided information on how some dioceses in the United States are dialoguing and ministering on the environment.

Three big ways of thinking “Laudato Si’” are through educating, practicing sustainability and advocating, by, for example, creating care teams, Ellis said.

In the Diocese of Steubenville, task force members have begun writing on “Laudato Si’” and formatting a speaker’s bureau to introduce the encyclical to parishes in the diocese, as well as exchange information on what is being done locally, already, to care for the common home.

Third Order Regular Franciscan Father Sean O. Sheridan, Franciscan University president, opened the symposium with “The Canticle of the Creatures,” portions of which were first created in 1225 by St.



In response to “Laudato Si’”, the Diocese of Steubenville has formed a task force, whose members will write and speak to spread the care of the environment to the people. Lonnie Ellis, associate director, Catholic Climate Covenant, Washington, D.C., third from right, stands with diocesan task force members, from left, James G. Piazza, Robert Maher, Joseph McLaughlin, Emilia Alonso-Sameno, Eric Haenni and Michele A. Santin; and, Paul Symington, second from right, and Eric Fitch, right. (Photo by DeFrancis)

Francis of Assisi when he was sick and being cared for by St. Clare and the Poor Sisters. The first section of the sung canticle is on the creatures – sun, moon, stars, wind, water, fire and earth; the second on forgiveness and the third on death.

As he began his introduction to the symposium, Bishop Monforton pointed out that the pope’s encyclical not only includes care for our common home, but also includes care for our neighbor.

A dialogue, the encyclical provides a moral and spiritual challenge, Bishop Monforton said. We, he continued, are given a divine charge to create our world as a home for all.

Acknowledging that we are stewards of the earth, Bishop Monforton said care takes steward to the next level. “Pope Francis uses the word care dozens of times,” he said.

For Kunkel, who has more than 25 years of research centered on climate variability and change, his question to Franciscan University-Diocese of Steubenville symposium participants was, “What is the basis for the climate science statements in ‘Laudato Si’?”

In response, he pointed to the Third National Climate Assessment, released approximately two years ago. With graphics, Kunkel detailed a pattern of decade after decade being the warmest on record, yet.

Checks for Priests’ Retirement Plan can be mailed

STEUBENVILLE — Anyone who wants to send a check to the Diocese of Steubenville Priests’ Retirement Plan can send it to P.O. Box 969, Steubenville, OH 43952, said Father John F. Mucha, chairman of the plan.

The check should be made out to Steubenville Priests’ Retirement Fund, said David A. Franklin, diocesan comptroller.

The plan is separate from any funds controlled by the diocese, and the portfolio for the fund is screened to ensure that any significant holdings are consistent with the moral and ethical teachings of the Catholic Church, Father Mucha said.

The plan, financially supported by parishes also, supports diocesan clergy who retire from active parish ministry at 70.

kel predicted impacts that are more bad than good, because human society and natural ecosystems have optimized around historical climate conditions.

For him, Kunkel said, “Laudato Si’” relates to his profession and his Catholic faith.

Ellis, the youngest of eight children who was raised in Minnesota on a cattle farm, but is a vegetarian now, holds undergraduate and graduate degrees and is a lay member of the Secular Franciscans. In his capacity with Catholic Climate Covenant, an organization formed from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Ellis stopped first in Steubenville and then planned to go to Cleveland and Youngstown dioceses to dialogue on incorporating climate change into real world action, he said. Recently, too, he was in Rome and conversed at the Vatican on “Climate Change and the Year of Mercy.”

United States’ bishops have an energy document that dates to the 1980s, said Ellis, who has been associated with Catholic Climate Covenant for 10 years.

“Laudato Si’” is a faith and morals document, Ellis said. “It has a lot to do with who we are. It’s

about getting ourselves right. ... It’s more about the state of our hearts than how much knowledge we have.”

The moral call in “Laudato Si’” is not a new teaching, Ellis said, but was expressed previously by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and St. John Paul II.

However, Pope Francis said, “If we destroy creation, creation will destroy us,” Ellis quoted.

Pope Francis comes at climate change as a pastor, thus, you are to see, judge and act, Ellis said. “We need one another.” Therefore, Ellis said there is a shared responsibility. “Being good and decent are worth it.” It is possible, he added, to have a simpler yet fuller life and see God in all things.

Panelists concluded presentations by the featured speakers and included John Crosby, philosophy; Patricia Donohue, theology; Justin Greenly, engineering; Haenni, biology; Marita O’Brien, psychology; Michael Welker, business; Benjamin Wiker, political science; and Petroc Willey, catechetics.

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St. Sylvester parishioner looking for a lifesaver – needed, one kidney

WOODSFIELD — Wayne Forshey, Woodsfield native, never imaged he would be looking for a lifesaver.

But, the man who spent his 60th birthday in a hospital, undergoing kidney dialysis, is looking for a donor.

A member of St. Sylvester Parish, Woodsfield, with his wife, Karen, Forshey sat in his Woodsfield home on a recent spring morning and detailed his need to ask for help to save his life.

(His pastor, Father David L. Gaydosik, also pastor in the Monroe County Catholic community, suggested Forshey

let fellow Catholics know about his plight.)

In 1975, Forshey decided that he would follow in his father Sam's footsteps and attend Spartan School of Aeronautics and Technology in Tulsa, Oklahoma. So the 1973 graduate of Woodsfield High School became a 1977 graduate of the aeronautics school.

"I always wanted to fly (a plane)," he said. While learning, Forshey moved to Columbus, Ohio, to work for Rockwell International Corp., which was constructing the B1 bomber.

His career, however, caused him to relocate often. He returned to Tulsa for a job with American Airlines Inc. Karen, whom he married in a civil ceremony in 1986 and in St. Sylvester Church in 1988, was with him this time. Later, the two returned to Ohio, but then he got a job in Indiana. It was while he worked in Indianapolis with United Airlines Inc. in 1997 that Forshey was diagnosed as diabetic, he said. Later, he had a job in Bridgewater, Virginia, and then in 2013 began work, again, in Columbus, where he and his wife, a convert to Catholicism, had been involved previously in Holy Spirit Parish, serving five years on a Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults team.

When driving to Virginia to work during the week and returning to Woodsfield on weekends, Forshey said he noticed his legs were swollen. He attributed the six-hour, two-way drives for a 48-hour visit as the cause.

However, by this time, he had begun using insulin for his diabetes and was told by an endocrinologist that his kidney function had diminished, he related.

During mid-2014 while working in Columbus and staying with his brother during the week, Forshey said he became tired, so much so that he would spend a half hour after work in his truck in the driveway of the house, before being able to enter the home. It was then he was told he needed to be prepared for kidney dialysis, he said. A year later, while in a meeting, he said he was approached by a policeman who said he needed to call his doctor right away. Forshey found out his kidney function was down to 8 percent. After the meeting, he drove himself to the hospital, where his wife was waiting, and received his first dialysis, he said. Until July 2015, he continued to reside with his brother, Ralph, and his wife, Tina, so he could receive dialysis.

Back in Woodsfield full time now, Forshey and his wife drive to Marietta three days a week for his four-and-a-half hours of dialysis.

And, he never is away from his iPhone. "I need to be able

to be contacted if a kidney becomes available," he said. Forshey is on the donor list at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, Columbus. He had an initial interview for placement in July of last year and an in-depth evaluation in November. After having a rigorous gum cleaning and a colonoscopy, he was accepted, he said.

When a kidney becomes available, Forshey has two hours to respond. When that might be is unknown, he said. If the kidney comes from a cadaver, it might be two or three years; if there is a living donor, the transplant can be done right away, Forshey said.

Even though he needs an A negative or O-type donor, if he got offered another kidney, there are exchanges, he explained.

How do you get a kidney? "Some woman put a sign in her car, that says I need a kidney," Forshey quipped.

As he continues dialysis, Forshey, too, continues saying a lot of prayers, he said. He wants a kidney and to be able to return to work to allow his wife to retire.

Family members would donate to Forshey, but health issues preclude it, he concluded.



Wayne Forshey stands on the porch of his Woodsfield home. (Photo by DeFrancis)

More than 99,000 people are on the waiting list for a kidney transplant.

Facts for potential living kidney donors

- Donors do not have to be immediate family members and do not require matching/compatible blood types.
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- Donors return to a normal life with no fluid, diet or physical restrictions.
- Recipient insurance covers donor evaluation, surgery and follow-up care.
- Donor health and life insurance should not be affected.
- For more information contact a living donor coordinator (614) 293-6724 or (800) 293-8965.

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St. John Paul II (More) Words from the Cross

By Diocese of Steubenville
Bishop Emeritus Gilbert I. Sheldon

We come now to the last words of Jesus on the cross. As usual, the Evangelists give the same account, but offer slightly differing details: Matthew says: "... Jesus cried out again in a loud voice and gave up the spirit" (Mt 27:50). In Mark we read: "Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last" (Mk 15:37). Luke has it: "Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Father, into your hands, I commend my spirit'; and when he had said this he breathed his last" (Lk 23:46). Finally, John tells us: "When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' And bowing his head, he handed over his spirit" (Jn 19:30).

St. John Paul comments that the words, "It is finished," express Jesus' "awareness of having fully accomplished the work for which he had been sent into the world. ... Note that this was not so much the awareness of having realized his own plans, as having accomplished his Father's will in obedience even to the complete immolation of himself on the cross."

*... in the Christian view of life and death,
our purpose is to fulfill God's will rather than our own.*

John Paul goes on to say that "the dying Jesus appears as the model of the death of every human being," meaning that, in the Christian view of life and death, our purpose is to fulfill God's will rather than our own. This, of course, is diametrically opposed to the view that "self-fulfillment" is the goal of life!

In the words, "Father, into your hands, I commend my spirit," the pope sees a development of Our Lord's own reflection on his crucifixion. His earlier words, "My God ... why have you forsaken me?" have matured to resignation to the will of the Father. Again, we have here a model for all of us to accept the death we must all face, knowing that it is part of a divine plan for our own good, the full understanding of which we will never have in this life. The words are also a quotation from Psalms, suggesting that all or most of the recorded words of Our Lord on the cross were an expression of a continuing prayer (see, Psalm 31).

John Paul comments further: "In order to understand Jesus' words and cries on the cross, one must consider

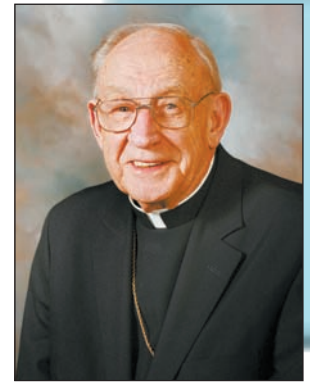
them in relation to what Jesus himself had announced beforehand in the prophecies of his death and in his teaching on man's destiny in a new life. For all, death is a passage to existence beyond the grave. ... Death ... always has the character of the dissolution of the human composite, which arouses revulsion." That reaction is normal and natural. Jesus felt it just as we do. However, he saw beyond death to a new and better existence, and bids us follow in his footsteps through death to eternity. This is the essence of the "paschal mystery" to which John Paul so often refers. At the time of our own death, when we are called upon to "give up the spirit," instead of despair at the apparent meaningless of human life, we are to abandon ourselves in a total gift of self to the Father, who is, as Jesus so often told us, indeed, "Our Father."

John Paul moves now from the words of Jesus himself on the cross to some things that were taking place at the crucifixion. Among them were the reaction of the centurion, the Roman officer in command of the soldiers who carried out the execution. His statement, "Truly, this man

was the Son of God" (Mk 14:39) implies, says the pope, "that in that moment the Roman centurion had a clear intuition about the reality of Christ, an initial perception of the fundamental truth of faith." The pope refers to it as an "intuition," because that is what faith is: an insight, a conclusion (sometimes called a "leap of faith") based on what the mind has perceived thus far – assisted by a prompting of the Holy Spirit. This came at a time when the disciples of Jesus were themselves confused and disappointed, perhaps on the verge of despair over what was happening to their Master. The centurion, on the contrary, reacts entirely differently. As such, he represents the throng of pagans who will embrace Christianity, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles.

"On his part, the centurion had placed the indispensable condition to receive the gift of faith: objectivity. ... He looked, he saw, and he believed in the reality of the facts, and for this, he was granted the gift of faith. ... It was the first sign of redemption accomplished." Something like

this happened also to one of the two other men who were crucified with Jesus. The "good thief," as we call him, simply said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus confirmed the man's faith by responding, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Lk 23:42-43).



Bishop Sheldon

Another incident took place at Jesus' death: "One of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water" (Jn 19:34). This was not a "coup de grace" as would be done in later centuries at an execution. It was a confirmation that Jesus was dead. It was also the fulfillment of a messianic prophecy: "Not one of them (the bones) shall be broken" (Ps 34:21). Pilate ordered the execution to be speeded up in deference to the wishes of the Jews who did not want the execution to be prolonged into the Jewish Passover that began at sundown. The soldiers therefore broke the legs of the other two men, but omitted doing so to Jesus who was already dead. In the account of the original Passover, the Hebrews were ordered to slay a lamb and eat it as their last supper before departing Egypt, and to mark their doors with its blood to warn off the "avenging angel." However they were forbidden to break its bones (see, Exodus, Chapter 12, Verse 46). There is much more symbolism here, as the pope points out: the complete emptying of the life of Jesus on behalf of mankind; the pouring out of the graces of Christ's redemption; the prefiguring of the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist. Physiologically, it is a symptom of the actual bursting of the heart, suggesting that the actual cause of death of Jesus was that of a broken heart! The Evangelist insists that he himself was a witness to these things and that we can accept them as truth (see, John, Chapter 19, Verse 35). We, too, can therefore make that "leap of faith!"

Resurrected, Ascended ... With Us Still

By Father Paul J. Walker

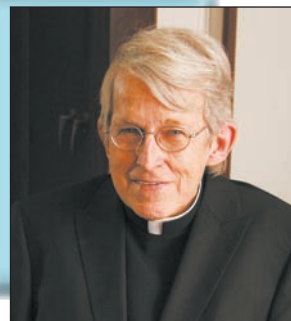
Placing the solemnity of the Ascension on the Seventh Sunday of Easter has proven to be a wise move since, typically, holy days are no longer the drawing card they used to be. This has been unfortunate, since it means a significant number of Catholics will not hear these readings unfolded as homilies, thus perpetuating a somewhat incomplete or misleading understanding of Jesus Christ's resurrection/ascension.

The post-Resurrection accounts offered in the Gospels of Eastertide, along with the narrative in Acts and Ephesians, lay out before us the nascent church's attempt to understand the Death-Resurrection-Ascension event that energized it at the outset of its journey.

Right here at the beginning we recognize a problem that will remain, ever accompanying the church traveling this side of eternity: the problem of language in our relationship to God. How do we express that which is inexpressible? The more we speak, the deeper we can cloud the mystery. Even the biblical narratives are limiting, as they depend on human words and images to relate that which lies beyond human expression. We experience some of this difficulty in our ordinary parlance, one to another. Language is what we have to express who we are, what we feel, and

what we believe. Yet we often find language very limiting and restrictive in expressing "how we really feel." We especially have a big language problem when it comes to expressing what we believe about God. The more we talk, the more we can confuse and obscure the mystery, creating the possibility that we are no longer saying what we *really* believe or what the church authentically teaches.

So – what do we understand by the post-resurrection "appearance narratives" and the description of Jesus' ascension? A fundamentalist or strictly literalist understanding gives us a description of "what happened," rather than an attempt to uncover the meaning of the disciples experience of the risen and ascended Lord. The theology of Ephesians helps interpret Luke's narrative in Acts and the appearance stories of the Gospels. The birth, life, passion, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus was not a "visit" of a divine being from above and his return to his "heavenly home."



Father Walker

The Gospel stories and the narrative in Acts reveal God's way of fundamentally effecting creation and human life forever – sending it in a new direction, "Godward," toward fulfillment. The appearance and ascension accounts give us the story of Jesus moving from being an objective, matter-of-fact object (he can be seen, heard, touched)

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Jubilee of Mercy Part 6

By Msgr. Thomas C. Petronek

The third parable of mercy in Chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel is likely the most quoted and referenced of all of Jesus' parables. That parable, of course, is the one we call "the prodigal son." I think a title like "The Merciful Father" would also be a good title, if not a better one, since the father is found in all the scenes of the story.

Recall that the reason for Jesus telling the three parables of Luke 15 is found in Verse 2: "The Pharisees and the scribes murmured, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'" The parable of the prodigal son is the third "defense" of Jesus' ministry of mercy.

The younger son brazenly asks for his share of the family wealth while his father is still living. Apparently, his self-defining creed is: "I want it now." The father, without questioning the boy, gives it to him. The son is greedy, and the father is generous – amazingly generous. We might say, "generous to a fault."

The younger son wants what his father has, rather than a relationship with his father. He breaks off the father-son relationship with his move to a far country with everything he owns. Apparently, he has no intention of ever coming back.

We are told he squanders everything on loose living and ends up with a job feeding swine – not all that glamorous for a Jewish lad. His own hunger reminds him of his extravagantly generous father who provides for his servants better than the boy is faring in the far country. He longs for food, not

a renewed father-son relationship. He is willing to be a servant back home to get something to eat.

During the son's absence, what is his father doing? We note first what the father is not doing. He does not send his servants or the police to find the boy and drag him back in hopes of recovering some of his wealth. He wants his son back.

The father lives in hope of his son's return. And, so, he waits. I would imagine he looks in the direction of the far country several times a day. I can imagine his walking down the lane toward the main road each evening and waiting in hope of a small cloud of dust being kicked up by his son's bare feet.

I had mentioned that the father is present in all the scenes of the parable, including the scene in the far country. He is present in the far country via the memory of himself that he has left in his son's heart. When the son "comes to his senses" his memory of his father is that of a very, very generous man – so much so that all the servants have plenty to eat.

When the boy does come to his senses, he rehearses a little speech, which he plans to speak to his father when he gets home. It is actually a confession and an act of contrition. He will admit that he has sinned against God and his father. He will plead to be readmitted to the household, but now as a servant not a son. And, he sets off for home from the far country.

What kind of greeting will the boy receive from his father? I am sure to the Pharisees and scribes, who object to Jesus' ministry of seeking out those who have distanced themselves from God, the father's actions are unbelievable.

The verse describing the father's greeting of the prodigal son is worth quoting in its entirety. "But, while he was yet

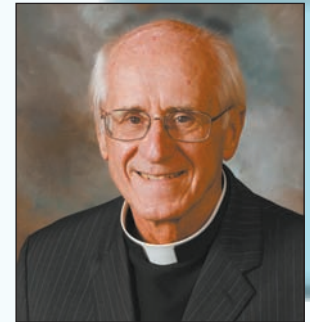
at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him."

The boy is at a distance, which implies that the father has regularly been looking for his son's return. The father's living in hope of his younger son's return has been fueled by *compassion*, by *mercy*. The merciful father runs toward his son – not to scold – but to hug him and kiss him. Apparently, the father does not stand on ceremony, but runs – to many a Pharisee or scribe an unseemly action on the part of an older man and surely of a father – to greet his son.

I would suggest that the mercy demonstrated by the father includes forgiveness of the son's sin against God and himself and pity for the son's bedraggled condition. He must have been a sorry sight. But his father had him back for which he had held out such great hope.

I would suggest that the mercy demonstrated by the father includes forgiveness of the son's sin against God and himself and pity for the son's bedraggled condition. He must have been a sorry sight. But his father had him back for which he had held out such great hope.

Msgr. Petronek is a Diocese of Steubenville priest, retired from active parish ministry. He resides in Wheeling, West Virginia. A regular columnist for The Steubenville Register, he is a former two-time director of the diocesan Office of Worship and served as a missionary priest.



Msgr. Petronek

Challenging the Throwaway Culture – Reflections on 'Laudato Si'

By Greg Kremer

"These problems (with lack of care to our common home) are closely linked to a throwaway culture which affects the excluded just as it quickly reduces things to rubbish" ("Laudato Si", Paragraph 22).

Spring in Southeast Ohio brings the smell of lilacs, the sight of redbuds, and the taste of asparagus. These signs of new life call us to appreciate the fruits of the earth. In contrast, the busyness of our lives tempts us to choose convenience over connection, to accept a throwaway mindset that labels things as disposable, disconnected from the eternal cycle of life. In the introductory section of "Laudato Si", Pope Francis writes: "It is hard for us to accept that the way natural ecosystems work is exemplary: plants synthesize nutrients, which feed herbivores; these in turn become food for carnivores, which produce significant quantities of organic waste, which give rise to new generations of plants. But our industrial system, at the end of its cycle of production and consumption, has not developed the capacity to absorb and reuse waste and by-products. We have not yet managed to adopt a circular model of production capable of preserving resources for present and future generations."

We make many decisions each day that can support or harm the cycle of life that Pope Francis promotes. The de-

cision about disposable cups is one example.

It is easier and quicker at many events to have disposable cups rather than washing reusable cups, but is that choice better? The Institute for Lifecycle Environmental Assessment estimated twice as much energy is required to make a Styrofoam cup than to wash a reusable cup, and Styrofoam has a 500-year decomposition time. Paper cups decompose faster, but they require several times more energy to produce than Styrofoam, and if they are "thrown away" they join the estimated 1,800 pounds per person of waste landfilled each year. With common landfill practices these resources are essentially removed from the cycle of life, from the process of regeneration. The earth's ability to support life is depleted.

It may be inconvenient to think about promoting the cycle of life when all we want is a cup of coffee, but if we cannot challenge the throwaway mindset at the level of disposable cups, how can we at the level of disposable mountains, disposable forests and disposable species. Pope Francis offers us a challenge: "Our goal is ... to be-



Greg Kremer

come painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it" ("Laudato Si", Paragraph 19).

So what can we do?

- Make or buy things that last, and reuse and recycle everything you can.

- Stop buying and using disposable things, or if you have to use them, at least try to reuse them and keep them out of the landfill. Beyond cups, plates, utensils and bags, think about avoiding the need for paper towels and napkins by carrying a spare handkerchief to use instead, or at least composting all paper towels to keep those resources in the cycle of life.

- Take time to enjoy the glorious world we live in, recognize it as a gift that is worthy of a lasting relationship, and stay connected to the web of life.

A member of St. Paul Parish, Athens, Kremer has lived in Athens, since 1998, in a house powered by renewable electricity. He is the robe professor and chair of the Mechanical Engineering Department at Ohio University, Athens, and leads the "Designing to Make a Difference" community outreach program. He is active in social and environmental justice groups in the community and St. Paul and Christ the King University Parish, Athens.



Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton joins Knights of Columbus at the 59th anniversary of the Msgr. Joseph F. Dooley Council 4361, Mingo Junction. Robert F. Collins, second from right, state deputy, Knights of Columbus; Donald L. Hall, left, vice supreme master fourth-degree Knight; and Baci Carpico, right, past state deputy and Knights' trustee, were among those gathered for the dinner in the hall, which was built in 1971. The first meeting of the council, which has had 37 grand Knights, was held in the undercroft of St. Agnes Church, Mingo Junction. Bishop Monforton thanked the Knights for all that they do for the church.



When the Knights of Columbus Msgr. Joseph F. Dooley Council 4361 annual banquet was held April 29 at the Mingo Junction council, Shawn Zarych, grand Knight, standing left, presented awards to, seated from left, Matthew Hedmond, Knight of the year; Mary Ellen and Anthony Colabella, family of the year; Mary Karovic, lady of the year; and Taylor Bennington, youth of the year. Also singled out for awards and congratulated by Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton and Michael Potenzini, deputy grand Knight, standing third from right, were John Fabian, standing second from left, the Larry B. Campbell award for his dedication to the community and the council; Bill Della Penna, standing third from left, volunteer of the year; Jim Raha, standing center, blue coat of the year; and Father James M. Dunfee, standing second from right, chaplain of the year. (Photos by DeFrancis)

Resurrected

From Page 6

to being "taken from their sight" (*not from them*) by a cloud. The cloud has Old Testament antecedents: the symbol of God's presence is something that conceals (cloud), absence becomes the sign of God's presence ... a cloud, the biblical symbol of the presence of God, who is now "seen" by faith. The ascension accounts are not about Jesus being taken away from us, but of Jesus being given to us for all times, all places – no limits (time and space) to his presence now. As Paul notes, "he puts all things beneath his feet ... the one who fills all things in every way." Augustine will remind us that this Jesus is closer to us than we are to ourselves. The space-time continuum restricts; there are now no restrictions for the one who "fills the universe in all its parts."

The appearance and ascension accounts are a proclamation of the exultation of Jesus – the man of sorrows who bore our brokenness and pain, bringing it to exultation with him. Our hurts, pains, brokenness and failures are now lodged in the heart of God and are redeemed.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, in the second volume of his marvelous work, "Jesus of Nazareth," offers a closing *epilogue* (see, Pages 278-293) wherein he reflects on, "ascended into heaven ... seated at the right hand of the Father ... will come again in glory." The Holy Father's focus here rests in the understanding that Jesus' resurrection is not a resuscitation, not a return to his previous life, and his ascension does not describe a "disappearance far away into an inaccessible heaven." Looking at the experience of the disciples does not mean that

Jesus departed "... into a remote region of the cosmos but, rather, the continuing closeness that his disciples experience ... becomes a source of lasting joy." Of course, this means adjusting our understanding of God. Being at "the right hand of God" is not sitting or standing in some "place," distant off in cosmic space. He explains, "God is not in one space alongside other spaces ... he is the premise and the ground of all the space there is, but himself is not part of it. God stands in relation to all spaces as Lord and Creator." Benedict notes that the creedal profession placing Jesus as "sitting at God's right hand means that Jesus now participates in this divine dominion over space." Let me finish with a quote from the end of his epilogue. Benedict notes that Jesus takes leave of his followers while blessing them:

He goes while blessing, and he remains in that gesture of blessing.

His hands remain stretched out over this world.

The blessing hands of Christ are like a roof that protects us ... they are a gesture of opening up, tearing the world open so that heaven may enter in, may become "present" within it.

"Jesus of Nazareth"

Volume 2, Pages 292-293)

Father Walker is a Diocese of Steubenville priest, retired from active parish ministry who continues to reside in his hometown of McConnellsville and celebrate Masses at St. James Parish there, as well as serve as a regular columnist for The Steubenville Register.

Ohio seminary approves changes

By Tim Puet

COLUMBUS, Ohio (CNS) — Three initiatives designed to strengthen the admissions process at the Pontifical College Josephinum have been approved by the school's board of trustees.

The initiatives include a formal recommendation to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to establish a national database listing all applications to each seminary and houses of formation in the United States; hiring a qualified private investigative agency to assist in verifying the integrity of all applicants, including a review of their social media postings; and interviews for all applicants with a representative of the seminary's admissions committee and the seminary's director of psychological evaluation and counseling.

School officials plan to have the new practices in place for the 2016-17 academic year.

The admissions changes were proposed by Msgr. Christopher Schreck, the seminary's rector-president, in March in response to criminal allegations against Joel Wright, 23, a former seminarian at the Ohio school and the Diocese of Steubenville.

Wright was arrested in San Diego in January on federal felony charges. He pleaded guilty April 13 to one charge of attempted enticement of a minor as part of a plea agreement in which he said he traveled to Mexico with the intent of molesting children. He is to be sentenced July 1. The charge carries a minimum sentence of 10 years and a maximum sentence of life in prison.

Msgr. Schreck said in March that "due diligence was carried out" by the seminary and the diocese in checking Wright's background and psychologically testing him under then-existing admission procedures.

The database proposed by the seminary rector would track all formal applications to U.S. dioceses, seminaries and religious orders and list the status of such applications as being admitted, deferred, rejected or withdrawn.

In a memorandum proposing the idea to the USCCB's Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, Msgr. Schreck pointed out that although seminaries usually know whether an applicant might have been admitted to and departed from another seminary, "there is currently no way to know if an applicant had previously applied to another diocese or seminary and had been deferred or rejected, independent of the applicant's truthfulness in answering the questions on the application form."

Background checks of applicants to the Josephinum, the only seminary outside of Italy with pontifical status, would allow for more thorough vetting of potential students and would have "the extremely beneficial effects of adding a further independent professional lawyer to the process and of deterring any attempt to present falsehoods in an application," Msgr. Schreck's memorandum said.

The planned pre-admission interviews would take place during the summer before admission for applicants living within a day's round-trip drive of the seminary. Applicants living farther away would be interviewed just before the orientation period before the start of fall classes.

"Thus," Msgr. Schreck's memorandum said, "all acceptances are provisional (as, in fact, they are already), pending successful completion of the interview process and successful passage of the fingerprinting and criminal background check completed here and the required Virtus training" related to prevention of sexual abuse.

All Catholics have role in renewing marriage, family life, cardinal says

By Mark Zimmermann

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl said Pope Francis' new apostolic exhortation encourages a renewal of marriage and family life through a "pastoral accompaniment" on the part of the church and its members, bringing God's love and mercy to individuals and families in all stages of life, especially when they are facing difficulties.

"For the Holy Father, the pastoral mission of the church, focused on the lived expression of mercy and love, is expressed in these four principal activities: listening, accompanying, discerning and evangelizing," the cardinal told an audience April 27 at The Catholic University of America.

In "Amoris Laetitia" ("The Joy of Love"), Pope Francis "also draws attention to stages of life where this pastoral accompaniment of families is especially important: in preparing for marriage, in the first years after marriage, during times of crisis, in cases of marital breakdown, and when families are touched by death," the cardinal told about 150 people.

Cardinal Wuerl's address on the document was part of a special presentation to a class on the virtues taught by John Garvey, university president.

The cardinal, who as archbishop of Washington serves as the university's chancellor, also occasionally gives talks in classes in his role as CUA's William Cardinal Baum professor of theology, a position named for the Washington archbishop from 1973 to 1980 who was a noted theologian and ecumenist.

Cardinal Wuerl noted that listening, accompanying and helping in the discernment of people who might feel themselves apart from the church is an evangelizing outreach for all Catholics. "Such an effort can take place among friends, co-workers, even among family members," he said. "As in most efforts to evangelize, to bring another closer to Christ, the very activity itself brings the evangelizer that much closer to the Lord."

In his talk, Cardinal Wuerl emphasized how the document was a "consensus exhortation" reflecting the agreement of the world's bishops who worked together with Pope Francis in two synods of bishops in 2014 and 2015 that examined challenges facing married couples and

families in today's world.

The cardinal, who participated in both synods, noted that last fall's gathering "affirmed that there is a difference between the teaching on the indissolubility of marriage (that is, that marriage endures until death), a doctrine of the church, and the pastoral judgment concerning individuals' relationships to the sacraments. The two realities are greatly related, but they are not the same thing."

Providing an overview of the document, Cardinal Wuerl noted that for Pope Francis, the starting point for strengthening and renewing marriage and family life is God's love.

The pope "reminds us of the vocation of the human family, which is revealed in the infinite love of the Lord who was made incarnate in a human family. So great is God's love for us that when he chose to become one of us, the context was a family," the cardinal said.

Another key point of the pope's document, the cardinal added, is that renewing marriage and families is the work of the whole church, and of every family.

"Without claiming to present an entire pastoral plan, our Holy Father calls for family apostolates that would offer more adequate catechesis and formation, that would be directed not only to engaged and married couples and their children, but also a renewed catechesis on the importance of families and marriage (directed) to priests, deacons, seminarians, consecrated religious, catechists, teachers, social workers, medical professionals and other pastoral workers," he said.

Underscoring how Pope Francis' exhortation is in continuity with Catholic teaching and reaffirms church doctrine regarding marriage, the cardinal said, "The teaching on marriage and human love of Blessed Paul VI, St. John Paul II and Benedict XVI is featured prominently in the document. Particularly notable is the rich use of John Paul II's catechesis on the body and on human love," the cardinal said.

He noted that the exhortation includes numerous citations from the teachings of St. John Paul II, the Second Vatican Council, St. Thomas Aquinas, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. "While we can refer to 'Amoris Laetitia' as a consensus document, we might also name it a continuity exhortation," he said.

Cardinal Wuerl also emphasized that many consider the heart of the document to be its pastoral implications for

married couples and families and for the priests and others who serve them. The tone of the document reflects Pope Francis' approach to his ministry, the cardinal said.

"Pope Francis approaches his teaching ministry first and foremost as a pastor of souls," Washington's archbishop said. "Indeed, in many places in the document, one hears the voice of a pastor speaking directly to members of his flock, sharing his own experience and wisdom formed from many years of service to God's people."

Cardinal Wuerl noted that the document also underscores how the church's pastoral ministry to families is helping them discern their situation, and "a key part of discerning is the formation of conscience. ... One aspect of this formation is presenting the teaching of the church in all its fullness and without compromise, though in language which is welcoming rather than defensive. But it is families themselves who must be invited to understand how to apply and begin to live out this teaching in the particularity of their own situations."

The cardinal then addressed a point that has dominated media coverage of the exhortation: the question of whether the document points to an opening for some divorced and remarried people to receive Communion.

"Those in irregular situations, such as the divorced and civilly remarried, should be invited to deeper inclusion in the life of the church, but the Holy Father is clear that he is in no way changing the church's doctrine nor making general changes to its sacramental practice or canon law," Cardinal Wuerl said. "He is inviting such families and the pastors who accompany them to discern what it means for them to walk the path of conversion."

The cardinal also noted, "The teachings of the church on marriage and the family, conscience and moral decision-making, remain unchanged. The role of the priest in listening and offering affirmation or challenge to persons as they work through their own understanding of their situation, is not the same as absolving from the law (of the church)."

The cardinal concluded his talk by noting how fitting it was that Pope Francis issued his apostolic exhortation on marriage and the family in the Catholic Church's Jubilee Year of Mercy. "As we read and apply, discern and appropriate the teaching of 'Amoris Laetitia,' we must always remember both God's loving truth and his saving mercy," Cardinal Wuerl said.

Petitioners want UN to respond to Islamic State attacks on Christians

UNITED NATIONS (CNS) — A petition signed by more than 400,000 people called on the United Nations to act to stop the Islamic State group in its endless attacks on Christians and other religious minorities.

Presented to U.N. officials April 29 by Ignacio Arsuga, president of CitizenGo, an advocacy organization that works to defend and promote life, family and liberty around the world, the ceremony was part of three days of programming that examined the plight of religious minorities in the Middle East.

With signatures gathered online, the effort seeks to have the U.N. declare the Islamic State's actions as genocide and for the world body to pursue legal action in international courts.

The presentation took place a day after a Holy See-sponsored event at the U.N. in which victims of atrocities spoke of their experiences while being held by the militant organization.

Bishop Joseph Danlami Bagobiri of Kafanchan, Nigeria, and Greek Melkite Catholic Archbishop Jean-Clement Jeanbart of Aleppo, Syria, joined Arsuga in the presentation.

Bishop Bagobiri said during a session April 28 organized by the office of the Vatican's permanent observer to the U.N. and the organization In Defense of Christians that, "Christians (in parts of Nigeria and the Middle East) are becoming an endangered species."

He described how Christians are fleeing northern Nigeria because of attacks by Boko Haram insurgents, saying that

2014 was particularly worrisome as communities were destroyed during night raids.

Archbishop Jeanbart pleaded for help to end the five-year-long civil war in Syria and for aid to flow to the thousands of Syrians injured and displaced by violence.

People are losing hope in the world because other nations have not stepped up to end the hostilities, he said. The archbishop urged the U.N. to immediately act to save more innocent people from being harmed.

"We have seen people killed, slaughtered, women violated, priests and bishops kidnapped, houses destroyed, churches and convents invaded," Archbishop Jeanbart said, "but we persist with the help of God and with the help of those who help us."

Reconciliation with God, others is key to peace, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — For peace in the family, community and nation, people need to recognize their faults and ask forgiveness, Pope Francis told thousands of pilgrims, including hundreds of soldiers, sailors and police officers from around the world.

"In your families, in the various areas where you work, be instruments of reconciliation, builders of bridges and sowers of peace," the pope told the police and military attending his Year of Mercy audience April 30 in St. Peter's Square.

Most of the military and police participating in the special Holy Year pilgrimage were from Italy, but in his remarks to English-speakers, the pope also greeted uniformed representatives from the United States, Canada, Kenya, South Korea and the Philippines as well.

Pope Francis urged members of police forces and mili-

tary not to give into discouragement even when war and violence seem to "harden hearts" and increase hatred. "Continue your faith journey and open your hearts to God, the merciful father, who never tires of forgiving us. In the face of the challenges each day brings, let shine your Christian hope, which is the certainty of the victory of love over hatred and peace over war."

In his main audience talk, the pope told pilgrims that people often act as if God moves away from them when they sin, but in fact it is the sinner who is moving away from God. "He, seeing us in danger, comes looking for us even more," the pope said.

The Year of Mercy, Pope Francis explained, is a time for people to turn back to God, knowing that he is always ready to forgive.

As he does frequently, the pope pleaded with priests to be welcoming and patient in confession, recognizing just how hard it is for many people to face their sins and acknowledge their need for forgiveness.

"May no one stay far from God because of obstacles placed in their path by men," the pope said. "I'm underlining this — it goes for confessors, too. Please, do not place obstacles before those who want to reconcile with God. The confessor must be a father!"

Pope Francis told the crowd at the audience that once they experience reconciliation with God, they should look around them and see where else they need reconciliation, particularly if there are tensions within their families.

"This year is the year of reconciliation with God and among us," he said.

Belle Valley — Beginning May 8, Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m., at Corpus Christi Church.

Corpus Christi Parish will hold an annual bake sale for relay for life May 29, following the celebration of the 10 a.m. Mass.

Caldwell — Infant of Prague prayer devotions will be held at 7 p.m., May 9, and continue Mondays, through June 27, at St. Stephen Church.

Caldwell/Fulda — Beginning in May, and continuing through September, First Saturday devotions will be held in Noble County parishes. Mass will be celebrated at 9 a.m., May 7, at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church, Fulda, and at 9 a.m., June 4, at St. Stephen Church, Caldwell.

Cambridge — Christ Our Light Parish is forming a junior high youth group called "Young Shepherds." Catholics and non-Catholics can join; refreshments will be provided. For additional information, telephone Tricia Oswald, (740) 509-2258, or Jacob Padden, (740) 680-3125.

Christ Our Light Parish will have a series of presentations at 6:30 p.m., Mondays, in St. Benedict Church Marian Room, on making a "Marian consecration." The series will conclude with making a Marian consecration June 4, the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, patroness of the Diocese of Steubenville, following the celebration of the 8:35 a.m. Mass at St. Benedict Church. The presentations are also available online. For additional information, telephone (740) 432-7609.

Carlisle — A chicken barbecue dinner and raffle will be held from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., May 29, at St. Michael Church hall. Bingo will be played in the afternoon; a dance will follow from 8-11 p.m.

Churchtown — A St. John Central School four-man sports boosters' golf tournament will be held June 4 at Oxbow Golf Course, 500 St. Andrews Blvd., Belpre. Registration will be held at 7 a.m.; the shotgun will begin at 8 a.m. Cost for 18 holes, with cart, is \$50 per person; lunch, beverages, dinner and a raffle will be included.

Marietta — Transitional Deacon Ryan Gray, who will be ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Steubenville, May 20, at St. Peter Church, Steubenville, will celebrate his first Mass at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, at 3:30 p.m., May 22; a reception will follow. The newly ordained priest will serve as parochial vicar to Father Thomas R. Nau, pastor of Triumph of the Cross Parish, Steubenville, and rector of Holy Name Cathedral, Steubenville.

Marietta — An open house retirement celebration in honor of Paula Sewell, teacher at St. Mary School, who will retire at the end of the academic year, will be held from 5:30-7:30 p.m., May 13, in the Msgr. Kakascik Parish Center at the school, which is located at 320 Marion St. Light hors d'oeuvres, cake, punch and fond memories will be shared throughout the evening.

Martins Ferry — The Ladies of St. Mary's are accepting donations of red, white and blue items to make up baskets, which will be raffled at the Daily Bread Center salad luncheon fundraiser from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., June 16, in St. Mary Central School auditorium, 24 N. Fourth St. Items can be taken to St. Mary Church rectory, prior to May 10.

Pomeroy — Mass will be celebrated in Spanish at 6:30 p.m., May 8, at Sacred Heart Church. A meal will follow in the church undercroft.

St. Clairsville — Mass will be celebrated in Spanish at 2:30 p.m., May 15, at St. Mary Church. The sacrament of reconciliation will precede Mass, at 2 p.m.

The Saturday book club will meet at 11 a.m., May 14, in the St. Mary Parish offices. The group will discuss the introduction of Pope Benedict XVI's book "Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration."

Vacation Bible school will be held from 9 a.m.-noon, June 6 through June 10, at St. Mary Parish offices. Titled "Fiesta," children in kindergarten through sixth grade can attend. There will be



Megan Riley, center, is the recipient of the Knights of Columbus Bishop Watterson Council 1405, Ironton, \$1,000 scholarship. After receiving the financial award for school tuition, Riley, a junior at St. Joseph Central High School, Ironton, stands with her mother Kathy Riley; Larry Anderson, grand Knight of Council 1405, front right; Jim Colegrove, district deputy, Ohio State Knights council, back left; and Father David L. Huffman, pastor in the Ironton Catholic community. (Photo provided)

games, stories, crafts and food at the program. For additional information, telephone Mike Zabrecky, director of religious education at St. Mary Parish, at (740) 695-9993.

Steubenville — Bishop John King Mussio Central Elementary and Junior High schools are conducting a recycling fundraiser. Old cell phones, ink-jet cartridges, iPads, Smartwatches, gold, silver or platinum jewelry can be taken to the elementary school office, 100 Etta Ave. Contact Lorrie Raymond with questions at lraymond@bishopmussio.org.

Toronto — A representative from the Area

Agency on Aging Region 9 will speak on Medicare's free wellness and prevention benefits May 19, at 1 p.m., in St. Francis Church hall. The event is being sponsored by the St. Francis of Assisi and St. Joseph CWC. The agency received a grant from the Ohio Department of Aging to help beneficiaries apply for extra assistance through Social Security's Extra Help Program. The grant is part of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act. There is no cost to attend the presentation; the public is invited. For additional information, telephone DeDe Kidder at (740) 632-3018, or email dkidder@brdband.com.

Around and About

Malvern/Minerva — Knights of Columbus Council 11380 will sell tickets for an upcoming "Super Cash Bonanza" raffle. Proceeds will benefit parish projects that promote the Catholic faith in St. Francis Xavier, Malvern, and St. Gabriel, Minerva. The drawing will be held May 21. For additional information, telephone (330) 868-4498.

St. Meinrad, Ind. — Responding to Pope Francis' call for a more incisive presence of women in the church, two Indiana Benedictine institutions are co-hosting "Women of the Church: Strength of the Past. Hope for Tomorrow. A Catholic Leadership Conference." Hosting the conference, which is open to Catholic men and women, are St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Meinrad, and the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana. The event will be held Oct. 7-9 at 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. For the schedule or additional information, visit www.womenofthechurch.org.

Steubenville — A natural family planning class will be offered by NFP International May 29 at St. Peter Church. For additional information or to register, telephone Steve or Ann Craig at (740) 457-9663. An online course is available

at www.nfpandmore.org.

Steubenville — A 12-step review women's healing group will meet at 7 p.m., May 6, May 20, June 3, June 17, Aug. 5 and Aug. 19, at Holy Rosary Church Marian Room. For additional information, telephone Carla Bensie at (740) 314-4429.

Weirton, W.Va. — The FertilityCare Center of the Upper Ohio Valley Inc. and Weirton Catholic Community Pro-Life Association will sponsor a memorial Mass for infants who died prior to birth at 7 p.m., May 13, at Sacred Heart of Mary Church, 200 Preston Ave. The sacrament of reconciliation will be offered at 5:30 p.m. For additional information or to make a reservation, telephone (304) 723-0478 or (304) 723-0688.

Wheeling, W.Va. — Our Lady of Perpetual Help Ukrainian Church Apostleship of Prayer will sponsor a roast pork dinner from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., May 15, in the church hall, 4136 Jacob St. The menu will consist of roast pork, mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetable, coleslaw, applesauce, dessert and beverage. Cost for adults to eat is \$8; children 6 through 12 years of age eat for \$4; children under the age of 6 eat for free. For carryouts, call (304) 232-1777.



Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton joins Steubenville Bishop Emeritus Gilbert I. Sheldon, right, at the Knights of Columbus Immaculate Heart of Mary Council 472 anniversary dinner April 24 at the K of C council hall in Wintersville. Frank DiCarlantonio, second from right, served as dinner chairman. Robert F. Collins, state deputy, Knights of Columbus, left, lauded the council's longevity, and said it was formed only 18 years after the organization was founded. "Think of all the people who have passed through this council in 116 years and the deeds that have been done," Collins said. Other program participants included Donald L. Hall, vice supreme master fourth-degree; Chris Allen; attorney Craig J. Allen, toastmaster; and James W. Marquis, grand Knight.



Each year, Knights of Columbus Immaculate Heart of Mary Council 472 gives awards. Recipients include, seated from left, Elaine M. Hall, lady of the year; Lee Ann Emmerling, family of the year; and Sophia Bodo, youth of the year; and, standing from left, Msgr. Gerald E. Calovini, religious of the year; Thomas S. Wilson, Knight of the year; John DiBacco, blue coat of the year; Jim Emmerling, family of the year; and Father John J. "Jack" McCoy, chaplain of the year. Also singled out were D.L. Romel, volunteer of the year; and local high school football programs – Catholic Central High School, Steubenville, Steve Daley, coach; Steubenville High School, Reno Saccoccia, coach; and Indian Creek High School, Wintersville, Andrew Conner, coach. (Photos by DeFrancis)

Diocesan women in convention June 8

HARRISVILLE/TORONTO — For the first time ever, the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women annual convention will be held in its entirety in a church in the diocese.

The 71st annual convention will be held June 8 at Holy Family Church, 2565 Alexander Ave., Steubenville (Msgr. Gerald E. Calovini is pastor of Holy Family Parish).

Pamela Ambrose, DCCW president, and DeDe Kidder, DCCW publicity chairwoman, announced the convention, which will open with a 9 a.m. business meeting in the church hall, after registration, which begins at 8:15 a.m. there.

"Mercy – the Heart of It All" is the theme of the convention, which will include an 11 a.m. Mass, celebrated by Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton, in Holy Family Church. A memorial service, to honor recently deceased DCCW members, will precede the Mass.

After Mass, the conventiongoers will return to the church hall for lunch and an afternoon program, during which Catholic Woman's clubs in parishes will receive recognition for projects undertaken, based on volunteer service to God, family, church and community.

Family of Jacopa Association Sister Rose Catherine Marshall is the featured speaker during the annual convention, announced Ambrose and Kidder. She will talk on "Compassion in the Year

of Mercy." Born in 1956 in Cleveland, the widow and mother founded the Family of Jacopa Association last year in the Diocese of Steubenville. She is its reverend mother. The association's apostolates are prayer and service, especially to widows, priests, the elderly, mothers and families.

A DCCW preconvention dinner will be held at Froehlich's Classic Corner, Fifth and Washington streets, Steubenville. The dinner begins at 7 p.m., June 7, after a 6:15 p.m. social hour.

Registration for the convention should be made at the parish level, or by contacting Kidder, P.O. Box 31, Toronto, OH 43964; email dkidder@brdband.com; telephone (740) 632-3018.

Checks are to be made payable to DCCW.

Reservations are due by June 1.

For women who must travel a longer distance to the convention, special room rates are available at The Best Western Plus University Inn, 1401 University Blvd., Steubenville. Reservations for rooms should be made directly with the inn (740) 282-0901. The deadline for a discounted room rate is May 11. To obtain the discounted rate, callers must identify themselves as being with the DCCW.

For questions or more information about the convention, contact Ambrose (740) 546-3685, pambrose49@hotmail.com or P.O. Box 234, Harrisville, OH 43974.



(Photo by DeFrancis)
Sister Rose Catherine

Obituaries

Sister Charity "Mary Elizabeth" Gocshar – a Sister of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd for 74 years – died April 22 at the convent in Carrollton.

Born April 21, 1918, in Rochester, New York, she was the daughter of Charles and Lillian Berigan Gocshar.

Sister Charity entered the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity in 1942 in Rochester and professed her final vows in 1947. A graduate of Rochester Business Institute and Empire State (New York) College with a Bachelor of Science in social welfare, the 98-year-old had served as program director for 23 years at Holy Angels Home in Rochester. The facility was a residential program for court-appointed teenage girls experiencing difficulties in their lives. Sister Charity, also, served similar agencies of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity in New York and Erie, Pennsylvania, and visited 14 adolescent programs of her congregation in England, Ireland, France and Italy to enhance their offerings.

She, too, held leadership positions in the religious congregation.

A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated April 26 in the convent chapel, interment followed in the sisters' cemetery.

She is survived by several nieces and cousins, as well as the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd.

Anthony D. Boiarski, 97, Adena, St. Casimir, April 24.

Mary Borkowski Boothe, 87, Wintersville, St. Adalbert, Dillonvale, April 20.

Patricia M. Feeney Hedderick, 92, the

Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, April 14.

George J. Hodovanic Sr., 101, Toronto, St. Joseph, April 24.

Donna L. Karas, 80, Mingo Junction, St. Agnes, April 20.

Steven E. Kovach, 84, New Marshfield, Christ the King University Parish, Athens, April 22.

Antonette Lascaro, 103, Steubenville, Holy Family, April 21.

Stephen Marmo, 81, St. Francis Xavier, Malvern, April 20.

Marlene J. Lust Martin, 78, Wheeling, West Virginia, St. Mary, Martins Ferry, April 12.

William J. Massie, 70, 2200 S. Fourth St., Ironton, St. Joseph, April 6.

Barbara E. McGraw, 67, Toronto, St. Francis of Assisi, April 22.

Wilbert Miller, 78, 300 W. 38th St., Shadyside, St. Mary, April 20.

Margaret E. Sheridan Perry, 80, Athens, St. Paul, April 15.

Veronica "Tiny" Compliment Runyan, 88, 2444 S. 10th St., Ironton, St. Joseph, April 15.

Rita M. "Sue" Schafer, 95, 6 N. Fourth St., Martins Ferry, St. Mary, April 25.

Gregory J. Taglieri, 45, Blessed Sacrament, Wintersville, April 14.

Desiderio Vallar, 94, Piney Fork, St. Adalbert, Dillonvale, April 15.

Jane Straka Voorhees, 67, Toronto, St. Francis of Assisi, April 22.

Laurelie Fox Welday, 79, Smithfield, St. Adalbert, Dillonvale, April 19.

Thomas H. Whaley, 92, 2824 S. 10th St., Ironton, St. Lawrence O'Toole, April 6.

Street work begins to make pedestrian plaza at Holy Name Cathedral

STEUBENVILLE — When the Diocese of Steubenville celebrates 75 years in 2019, anticipation is that Masses will center in a newly renovated, restored and renewed Holy Name Cathedral, Steubenville.

As he travels around the diocese, Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton continues to update parishioners on the project he initiated.

Most recently, traffic changes in the area of South Fifth and South Sixth streets in Steubenville occurred, as work commenced to create a pedestrian-friendly space in front of the cathedral.

James G. Piazza, executive assistant to Bishop Monforton, and D. Scott Yarman, project manager on the cathedral renovation, restoration and renewal, announced that the road was closed to through traffic at the South Fifth and South Sixth Street intersection.

In cooperation with the city of Steubenville, through traffic was detoured and South Fifth Street became accessible to two-way traffic, from Slack Street to the closure at the South Fifth and South Sixth streets intersection.

A cul-de-sac will be created on South Fifth Street to allow easy parishioner access to the cathedral.

Earlier this year, Bishop Monforton, who announced the renovation, restoration and renewal of the cathedral, gave the go ahead for the site work. James White Construction Co., Weirton, West Virginia, demolished the cathedral parking lot, among other things, and dealt with utilities



Workers from Concrete Coring Co., Butler, Pennsylvania, cut pavement around Holy Name Cathedral in preparation for installation of a cul-de-sac and pedestrian-friendly walkway. In the background, Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton, his executive assistant, James G. Piazza, and D. Scott Yarman, project manager on the cathedral project, survey the work. (Photo by DeFrancis)

underneath the streets that surround the South Fifth Street cathedral, prior to the street work.

The site work is expected to be completed in mid-June. By that time repaving of streets in the vicinity of the cathedral is expected to have occurred.

Estimated cost of the site preparation, which includes street work, is \$1 million.

Meanwhile, design work continues on the cathedral, which will feature a pitched roof and freestanding bell tower, Yarman said.

However, Piazza stressed that city of Steubenville approval is needed prior to bids being sought on additional phases of

the cathedral project.

Before beginning work on the cathedral itself, Bishop Monforton said the soup kitchen, open now in the undercroft of the cathedral, will be relocated to a building nearby.

At the same time, articles continue to be removed from the cathedral, Piazza said. Stations of the Cross that line the walls of the cathedral, the crucifix that hangs in the front of it and pews that sit in the interior of the church will be transported to other locations for restoration.

Efforts continue to raise money for the cathedral project. Family of Jacopa Association Sister Mary Brigid Callan is the diocesan director of stewardship and development. She can be reached in her office in the chancery in Steubenville, 422 Washington St., telephone, (740) 282-3631, email, mcallan@diosteub.org.

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