



The Steubenville REGISTER

VOL. 72, NO. 26

SERVING 13 COUNTIES IN SOUTHEAST OHIO

AUG. 25, 2017

News Briefs

Pope Francis entrusts victims to Mary

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In a week in which natural disasters, war and racial conflicts dominated the headlines, Pope Francis prayed that Mary would bring peace to a divided world.

After reciting the Angelus prayer on the feast of the Assumption, the pope asked Mary to obtain “for everyone consolation and a future of serenity and harmony. To Mary, Queen of Peace – who we contemplate today in the glory of paradise – I entrust once again the anxieties and sorrows of the people who suffer in many parts of the world due to natural disasters, social tensions or conflicts,” the pope told thousands of pilgrims gathered in St. Peter’s Square Aug. 15.

Pope Francis did not name any specific location, but as he spoke, the search for survivors continued in Sierra Leone after a devastating mudslide engulfed the outskirts of the capital, Freetown, killing more than 300 people. Flooding and landslides also struck southern Nepal, killing at least 70 people. In Charlottesville, Virginia, clashes between white nationalists and protesters resulted in the death of three people, including a 32-year-old paralegal, Heather D. Heyer, who was killed Aug. 12 when a car plowed into a group protesting the white nationalist rally.

Catholics pray for peace amid threats

HAGATNA, Guam (CNS) — The Catholic Church on Guam is urging its members and all people on the island to be prayerful and stay centered in Christ amid threats of missile attacks by North Korea.

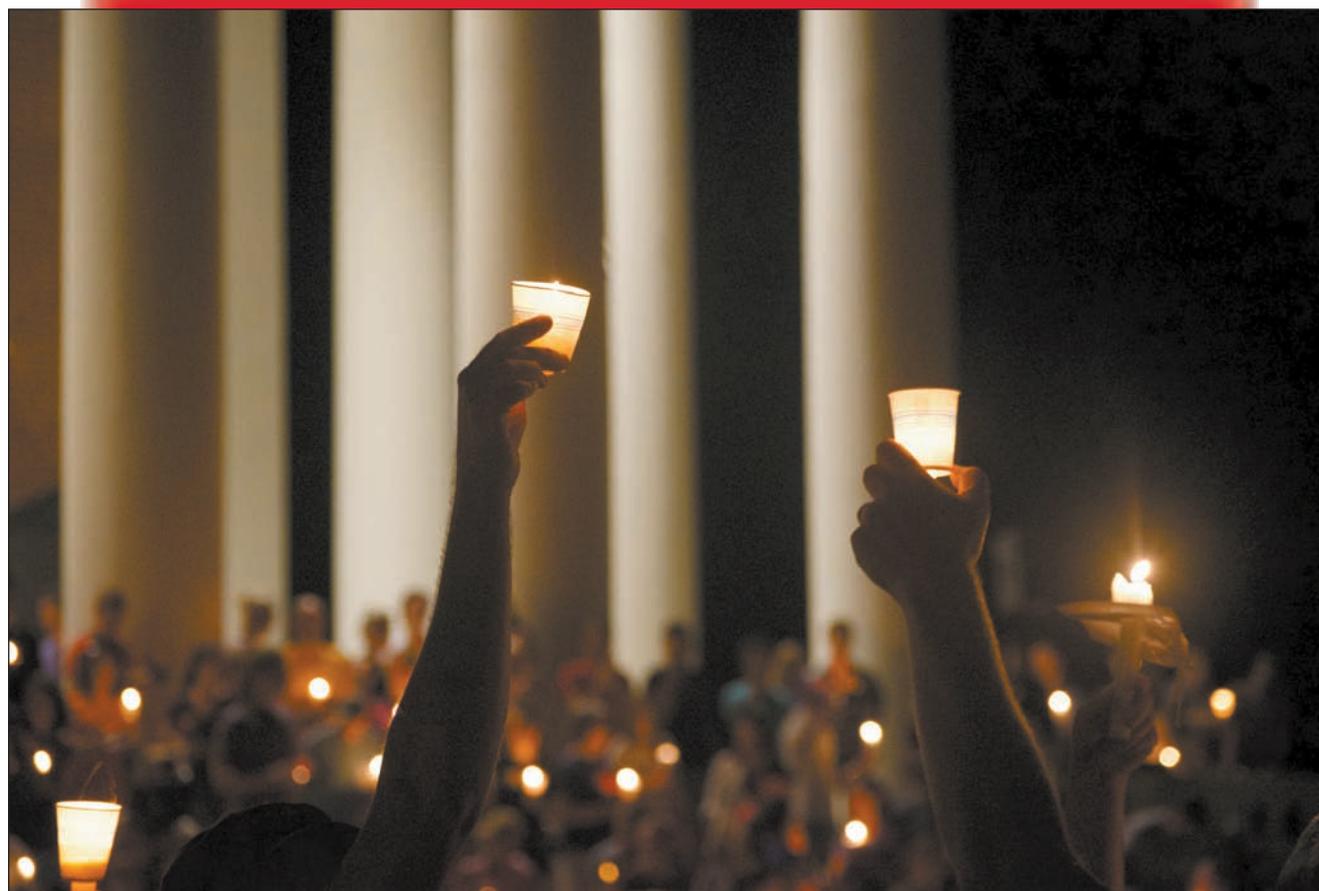
Coadjutor Archbishop Michael J. Byrnes of Agaña asked all priests to promote prayers of peace at all Masses Aug. 13 as tensions continue, following threats by North Korea dictator Kim Jong Un to attack this American territory in the Marianas Islands. “In your Masses this Sunday, especially in the prayer of the faithful, please offer prayers for peace between our nations, just resolution of differences, and prudence in both speech and action,” Archbishop Byrnes said in a message to all priests of the Archdiocese of Agaña Aug. 11.

“Please also offer prayers for the men and women of our military, especially those whom we host on Guam, that they might find grace for diligence and courage as they execute their respective duties,” he said.



(Scanned image)

Rosary Congress
Oct. 7-13
Ironton, Marietta, Steubenville



Community members in Charlottesville, Virginia, hold a vigil for Heather Heyer Aug. 16. She was killed Aug. 12 during a white supremacist protest over a plan to remove the statue of a Confederate general from a city park. (CNS photo/Kate Bellows, The Cavalier Daily via Reuters) • Story/Page 9

Agenda set for September ChristLife conference

STEUBENVILLE — The agenda has been drawn and speakers engaged for the first ever Diocese of Steubenville training conference for “Discovering Christ,” one of three courses in ChristLife – Catholic Ministry for Evangelization.

Steubenville Diocese Permanent Deacon Richard G. Adams, coordinator for ChristLife, announced the schedule for the Sept. 29-30 conference at St. Mary Church, St. Clairsville.

Registration for the “Discovering Christ” conference will begin at 6 p.m., Sept. 29. Dave Nodar, director of ChristLife, which he founded in 1995, will present the first of two talks of the evening, starting at 6:50 p.m. Nodar, who lists his passion to help others to know the love of God the Father in Jesus Christ through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, will focus on “Relaunching Evangelization in the Catholic Church.” An author who has degrees in religious studies and theology, Nodar is married, the father of seven, grandfather of five and resident of Ellicott City, Maryland, with his wife Ely.

Father Michael Saporito, pastor of St. Helen Parish, Westfield, New Jersey, a member of the evangelization commission for the Archdiocese of Newark, who has run the ChristLife series in his home parish, will talk about “What Is ‘Discovering Christ’ and Why Does it Work.” His talk, which begins at 7:45 p.m., will be followed by table discussion.

The Sept. 30 conference begins with 8 a.m. Mass. After a continental breakfast, participants can select a talk by Dianne Davis on “Preparing to Run a Fruitful Course,” or one by Jennifer King on “Facilitating an Evangelizing Small Group.” Davis is ChristLife’s New York regional director, while King is its communications director.

A video on “What is the Meaning of Life?” will continue

the morning’s activities that will include small group discussion, a talk by Father Saporito on “A New Pentecost for the New Evangelization” and prayer.

Once lunch is served, talks will center on “Worshiping in an Evangelizing Environment” and “Where the Rubber Meets the Road.”

Deacon Adams, whose coordination of ChristLife is under the direction of the Office of Christian Formation and Schools, Permanent Deacon Paul D. Ward, director, said the Diocese of Steubenville has never undertaken such an evangelization effort.

Initiated by Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton, ChristLife, which includes “Discovering Christ,” “Following Christ” and “Sharing Christ,” is for the Catholic who needs an awakening of faith, for people not active in their parish and for a person who has no affiliation with the church, Adams said. “Discovering Christ” is described as an invitation to hear

the good news and personally encounter Jesus Christ. “Following Christ” helps those who have completed the initial “Discovering Christ” grow in their relationship with Jesus. The final segment, “Sharing Christ,” trains Catholics to share Jesus with others and invites them to be part of the church.

“This could be a new experience for many Catholics,” Deacon Adams said.

“ChristLife is not just informational,” he added.

“It is transformational.”

After ChristLife, people have said: “God is real to me.” And, another said, “I found out God loves me,” Adams repeated.

ChristLife seems to gain momentum as it continues

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Bryan M. Santin presents a \$500 check to Sister of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd Martha Patricia Escobar, who holds a picture of Santin and his late wife, Lore Denisse Santin. The money will be deposited with the St. Mary School Foundation to provide tuition assistance to Hispanic children attending St. Mary School, Marietta. Sister Martha Patricia is the coordinator of Hispanic ministry in the Diocese of Steubenville and said the school welcomes the money that will provide ongoing scholarships to Hispanic students in Lore Denisse Santin's name. Originally from Mexico, Lore Denisse Santin obtained a master's in environmental science from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, and was a strong advocate for education, her husband, a Toronto native, said. Bryan Santin expressed his appreciation at the outpouring of support on the death of his wife. He said the kindnesses expressed to him caused him to want to do something lasting in his wife's name. Lore Denisse Santin died in May after a two-year battle with cancer. Donations to maintain the scholarship fund indefinitely can be sent to St. Mary School, 320 Marion St., Marietta, OH 45750, and earmarked for the Santin fund. Bryan Santin is the son of Michele A. Santin, director, Diocese of Steubenville, Office of Catholic Charities and Social Concerns, and Bryan Santin. (Photo by DeFrancis)

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STEM students' projects singled out

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Some students in parochial schools in the Diocese of Steubenville are returning to classrooms for the 2017-18 school year with credit for participation in the annual State Science Day at The Ohio State University, Columbus.

More than 1,200 students, in grades five through 12, competed at the end of the 2016-17 school year for nearly \$700,000 in sponsored awards and scholarships, said Michael E. Woytek, CEO of The Ohio Academy of Science.

Students who were among those from 335 schools throughout Ohio who exhibited their science, technology, engineering and mathematics projects from parochial schools in the Steubenville Diocese were: Abby Anderson, St. Mary School, Marietta; Shelby Anderson, St. Mary School, Marietta; Trey Brown, St. Mary School, Marietta; Brianna Nicole DeChristopher, Bishop John King Mussio Central Junior High School, Steubenville; Kelly Goggin, St. Benedict School, Cambridge; Spencer Helms, St. Mary Central School, Martins Ferry; and Trey Helms, St. Mary Central School, Martins Ferry.

Also, exhibiting projects, which had won awards earlier in the school year to get to the state competition, were: Mark Hodges, St. Lawrence Central School, Ironton; Alexis Hood, St. Mary Central School, Martins Ferry; Liliana Hunt, Bishop John King Mussio Central Elementary School, Steubenville; Elsie Leonard, Catholic Cen-

tral High School, Steubenville; Brandi Li, Bishop John King Mussio Central Junior High School, Steubenville; Nathan Lucas, Bishop John King Mussio Central Junior High School, Steubenville; and Nate McManus, Bishop John King Mussio Central Junior High School, Steubenville.

Competitors from the Diocese of Steubenville included, too: Antony Melem, St. John Central School, Churchtown; Francesca Moore, St. John Central High School, Bellaire; Johnny O'Karma, Bishop John King Mussio Central Junior High School, Steubenville; Jacob Tyler Richards, St. Mary Central School, Martins Ferry; Ellen Rohde, Bishop John King Mussio Central Elementary School, Steubenville; Matthias Sacco, St. Mary Central School, Martins Ferry; Zachary J. Vargo, St. Mary Central School, Martins Ferry; and Ava Zelek, St. Mary Central School, Martins Ferry.

The Ohio Academy of Science is a membership-based, volunteer-driven, not-for-profit organization. Founded in 1891, the Ohio Academy of Science's mission is to foster curiosity, discovery, innovation and problem-solving skills in Ohio, Woytek said.

For 69 years, State Science Day, hosted by Ohio State and a program of the Ohio Academy of Science, has been a defining experience in STEM-education throughout Ohio, Woytek said. "Through inquiry-based research, students learn scientific methodology and become critical thinkers and problem solvers."

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Bishop Monforton's Schedule

- Aug. 25 Oath of Fidelity Mass, Franciscan University of Steubenville, 4 p.m.
- 29 Franciscan University of Steubenville, 6 p.m.
- 30 Radio segment WDEO 990AM, 10:15 a.m.
- 31 Mass, Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, 7:45 a.m.
- Sept. 1 Mass, Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, 7:45 a.m.
- 5 Episcopal installation Mass, Bishop Nelson J. Perez, Diocese of Cleveland, 2 p.m.
Franciscan University of Steubenville, 6 p.m.
- 7 Opening prayer and talk, Friendship Room, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Steubenville, 7 p.m.
- 8 Luncheon with staff, in honor of fifth anniversary of episcopal ordination, Steubenville, noon
- 9 Final profession Mass, Sister Maria Ecclesiae, Daughters of Holy Mary of the Heart of Jesus, Steubenville, 10 a.m.
Confirmation Mass, St. Mary Church, Martins Ferry, 4:30 p.m.

Plans are being completed for an annual Blue Mass, which will be celebrated at 10 a.m., Sept. 10, at St. Peter Church, Steubenville, by Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton, to honor police, fire and emergency personnel and their families. Alexandra, left, and Eric, second from left, Hart organize the Mass. The Harts and Bishop Monforton are joined at the grotto, outside St. Peter's in the downtown, by Carlo Capaldi, Steubenville fire chief, and Jessica Moore, an emergency medical technician with Ambulance Service Inc., Steubenville. Attendees at the Blue Mass should be at the church by 9:45 a.m., in uniform, for a group photograph with Bishop Monforton, the Harts said. A reception in the church undercroft will follow Mass. Bishop Monforton will bless safety vehicles, if asked, also, after Mass. (Photo by DeFrancis)



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Former diocesan resident ministering in Churchtown



(Photo by DeFrancis)

Father Timothy Davison

CHURCHTOWN — Father Timothy Davison is on a home leave from the Diocese of Tulsa (Oklahoma) and enjoying serving as administrator of St. John the Baptist Parish, where he is getting to know parishioners and the St. John Central School community, he said, on a recent afternoon in Churchtown.

Originally from Gallipolis, Father Davison's mother,

Harriet, 98, continues to reside in Gallia County. He said he has been able to visit her four times, already, in the month that he has been back in the Diocese of Steubenville.

Ordained a priest for the Diocese of Tulsa May 31, 1985, the 32-year priest graduated from St. John Vianney Seminary, Bloomingdale, and then went on to obtain degrees in social work and theology and a licentiate in

sacred theology. He said he studied for the Tulsa Diocese, because the Southwest had a great need for priests, and at the time of his ordination, the Steubenville Diocese was doing well with vocations to the priesthood.

It was a good choice, he said, of the diocese where he has served as vocations director, ministered as a chaplain for a high school and university, worked with international priests, handled priestly life ministry and been the pastor of two parishes, both with mainly Hispanic parishioners.

As well, for the last five years, Father Davison said he has celebrated the traditional Latin Mass, which leaves him with a great spirit of joy.

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Franciscan Sisters preparing for annual fundraiser, additional ministry

TORONTO — As plans are being made for the Franciscan Sisters Third Order Regular of Penance of the Sorrowful Mother annual fundraiser Sept. 16, work continues on a hermitage, which will become another aspect of the association's ministry.

Franciscan Sister Carrie Ann McKeown, a member of the Franciscan Sisters General Council, announced the fourth yearly fundraiser, themed "The Power of Prayer."

Franciscan Sister Mary Ann Kessler serves the TORs as reverend mother.

As the director of donor relations and stewardship, Sister Carrie Ann, who serves, also, as the local superior of professed sisters, said the evening's theme will enable the sisters to share their way of life with banquet attendees.

In turn, she said, it is hoped that the sisters will draw people into their lifestyle, which they then will develop a passion to support.

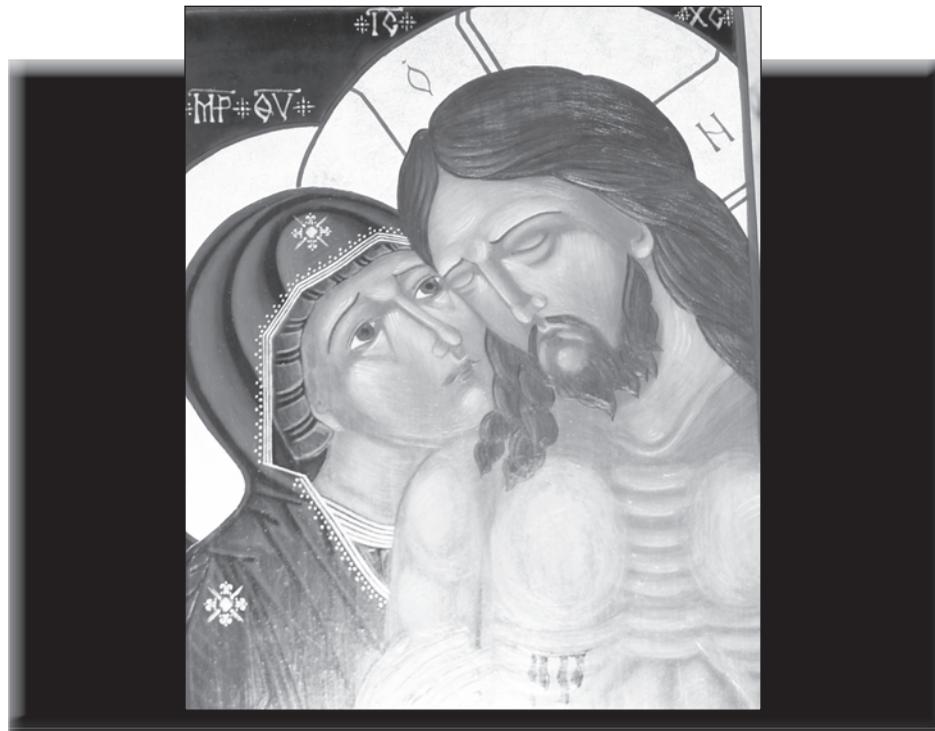
Since the gathering is a tool for evangelization, hopefully, TOR supporters can get excited about sharing Christ, just as the 40 sisters go out and spread the good news, Sister Carrie Ann acknowledged.

Founded at Franciscan University of Steubenville in 1988, the Franciscan Sisters, who take a vow of poverty, rely heavily on donations to continue their ministries.

The annual event begins with a 4 p.m. Mass in the Father of Mercy Chapel, 369 Little Church Road, on the grounds of the Franciscan Sisters Our Lady of Sorrows Monastery. Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton will celebrate the Mass.

Following Mass, guests will travel to Florian Hall, Wintersville, for a silent auction, dinner, sharing, prayer and an appeal for support.

The deadline for reservations for the evening is immediate. Telephone Ashley Felock, mission advancement assistant for the association, at (740) 544-5542, extension 115. The cost to sponsor a table is \$350. Other sponsorship levels are



This icon, created on a piece of brightly colored wood, is one of the items up for bid at the annual Franciscan Sisters Third Order Regular of Penance of the Sorrowful Mother annual fundraiser. (Photo by DeFrancis)

\$250, \$500 and \$1,000. All donations are accepted.

Many of the items at the auction are handmade by the sisters, such as paintings, or their family members, including pieces crafted from wood.

A highlight for this year's bidding is an icon, donated by Christ the Bridegroom Monastery, Burton, Ohio. The brightly colored image was worked on for an entire year, Sister Carrie Ann said.

Donations for the silent auction should be made by Aug. 30.

During the evening, three TOR Sisters will speak, via video, on intercessory prayer. One of the testimonies will reveal how such prayer helped a person in the sister's family.

The TOR Sisters are contemplative-active, dedicated to prayer and intercession, service to the poor and the sick and evangelization.

After their beginnings on the Franciscan University campus, the sisters relocated to convents and houses in Steubenville before moving to Toronto and establishing the places they continue to occupy, there.

Another hermitage will dot the hilltop grounds, which the sisters purchased in 1994 and where they established their motherhouse and built a chapel.

Named San Damiano, which is the place where St. Francis is said to have heard

Christ speak to him to restore the Catholic Church as a whole body, the new hermitage is in a private residence, purchased by the sisters. The house sits on property the sisters bought in April 2016 that is near the entrance to Little Church Road.

The sisters who reside in San Damiano will live a more contemplative way of life, said Sister Carrie Ann. They will live the Franciscan charism of prayer and penance more thoroughly. Through fasting and prayer, they will offer their lives in a deeper way to the salvation of souls.

Their work is expected to center on religious articles and altar bread; and their ministry will include spiritual direction.

Initially, two sisters will reside in the new hermitage, probably beginning at the end of September. Eventually, four sisters are expected to live there.

Presently, the house is being renovated to reflect the contemplative life, Sister Carrie Ann said. Work on the building was started in April. Much of it, such as installing dry wall and updating the plumbing, is being done by the family members of the sisters.

Once selected, a sister will be assigned to the hermitage for a year or two years, she added.

Each of the places the sisters reside has a different emphasis, but all have the elements of a contemplative and active religious association. Most of the sisters live in the monastery in Toronto. Others are in mission houses in downtown Steubenville and on college campuses in Steubenville, Florida and Austria.

Bishop Monforton to preside at White Masses

STEUBENVILLE — Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton will celebrate a third annual White Mass in Wintersville and another in Athens.

The Mass, to honor the health care profession, will be held at 11 a.m., Sept. 17, at Blessed Sacrament Church,

Wintersville, and at 10 a.m., Oct. 15, at Christ the King University Parish, Athens.

The tradition of the White Mass dates to the early 1930s in the United States. It is named for the color worn by those in the healing profession, who will be given a special blessing at the Mass.

Agenda set

From Page 1

throughout the years in a parish and regular parishioners deepen their relationship with God, Deacon Adams said. "In four or five years, the actual culture of the parish begins to change," he said.

"People can talk about their faith."

There is no cost to register for the confer-

ence. Anyone 18 and older can sign up with his or her pastor or by contacting Deacon Adams via telephone (740) 283-4564 or email radams@diosteub.org.

Parishes committed, already, to ChristLife include ones in Cambridge, Carrollton, Ironton, Lowell, Marietta, St. Clairsville, Steubenville and Wintersville.

ChristLife is expected to begin in parishes in the Steubenville Diocese in January.

To date, 70,000 people in 730 parishes in 37 states in the United States and nine foreign countries have participated in ChristLife, Deacon Adams said.

It is an apostolate of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Initially, ChristLife includes seven sessions that offer a meal, prayer time, video teaching and small group discussion. Subsequent seven-week sessions do not include a meal.



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Steubenville Diocese priest leads effort to design flag that flies for priests

LUDLOW FALLS, Ohio — When Msgr. William R. Myers retired as an active parish pastor in the Diocese of Steubenville, he left Gallipolis, where he had served as pastor of St. Louis Parish for more than 30 years, and returned to his roots.

Because of Msgr. Myers, flags fly outside St. Louis Church, and now, under his initiation, flags mark Melchizedek Village, where he resides with other priests, and the men's individual condominiums.

The youngest of seven children of Walter E. and Mary C. Myers, Msgr. Myers grew up in Dayton and attended grade and high schools there. After three years of seminary study in Cincinnati, Msgr. Myers enrolled in St. John Vianney Seminary, Bloomingdale, and was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Steubenville, May 17, 1969, at Holy Name Cathedral, Steubenville, by Bishop John King Mussio.

A friend, whom he had grown up with, introduced him to the idea of returning to the Dayton area, after retirement from active parish ministry. So, in 2011, Msgr. Myers moved to Transfiguration Center. The 10 housing units in the village are home to retired priests from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Msgr. Myers explained. They were built in the early 2000s, by the Catherine Lange estate.

Proud to tell people that he "belongs to the Diocese of Steubenville," Msgr. Myers now, like most of the other priests who reside in the units, assists pastors in nearby parishes.

This year, after Easter, Msgr. Myers said he got permission to start a project for the village – designing a flag to represent it.

Since the village is named for the first priest mentioned in the Bible, the flag is a flag of Christ's priesthood and a flag for ordained priests, Msgr. Myers and fellow priest Father Robert "Rob" Waller, a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, said.

Father Waller, who assisted with the flag design, said the predominant colors of the flag are red, white and gold.

"Jesus Christ is priest, prophet and king, Catholic priests are ordained to share in the priesthood of Jesus Christ," Msgr. Myers and Father Waller said.

The red represents Christ the priest, pouring out his blood on the cross of Calvary and on the altar of Eucharist. It is the color of his sacrifice, which brings reconciliation and freedom.

White represents Christ the prophet, purifying everything by his words and his miracles. It is the color of his truth, which brings gratitude and hope.

Gold represents Christ the king putting everything in right and proper order, according to God's original design. It is the color of his kingdom, which brings victory and justice.

The chalice and host, the book and the stole on the flag are signs of the priesthood.

Sharing in the priesthood of Christ, a priest is ordained for a ministry of sacraments and service, preaching and teaching, and leadership and presence, Msgr. Myers and Father Waller said. The three-part ministry of the priest is reflected in the colors of the flag, also; red, presiding; white, preaching, and gold, presence.

The flag "alpha" and "omega" – the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, meaning that Jesus is the beginning and the end of all things – and the "chi" and the "rho" superimposed on each other – the first two letters of "Christos," the name of Christ in Greek – indicate that the book is the word of God, who is Jesus Christ.



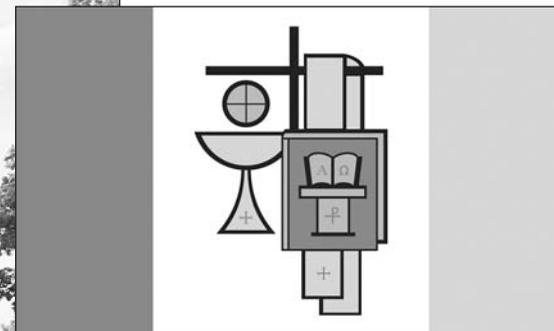
Msgr. William R. Myers, right, stands in front of a flag that he and Father Robert "Rob" Waller, left, designed for the village where they reside with other priests. (Photos provided)

Father Eric Bowman, pastor of Transfiguration Church, West Milton, Ohio, approved the design of the flag, paid for by the Lange estate, at the instigation of Dennis Hile, Transfiguration business manager.

The flag was raised for the first time Aug. 3, the eve of the feast of St. John Vianney, the Cure of Ars, patron saint of parish priests.

Michael Mayor, under the supervision of Bob Iames, horticulturist at the Lange estate, dealt with the landscaping for the flag, as his Eagle Scout project.

At the ceremony to dedicate the flag, Msgr. Myers said, "All flags have a few important things in common. First, they communicate. They contain meaning, expressing a message about a nation or organization, values and purpose. Secondly, they celebrate/commemorate events, anniversaries, history and significant places. Thirdly, they help create community, the special bond that signifies what the group has in common."



This flag flies on the pole in Melchizedek Village. A smaller version blows in the breeze outside each priest's condominium in the village in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. (Photo provided)

"With regard to this flag, it identifies this group of priests here at the Melchizedek Village, but even more that which we have in common with all priests in this archdiocese and around the world. ... (I)t communicates our Lord Jesus Christ as priest, prophet and king.

"This flag then is used for the purpose of celebrating feasts and seasons, as well as commemorating those days in the church year, which are appropriate, for example, the solemnity of the Transfiguration, Aug. 6, after which this center is named.

"Finally, this flag salutes the special bond of the priesthood we are privileged to share in the service of our Lord and his church."

Residents of Melchizedek Village, approximately 20 miles from Dayton, represent 358 years of ministry as priests.

In addition to Msgr. Myers, 48 years, and Father Waller, 42 years, they are Father Jerry Bensman, 53 years; Father John Porter, 61 years; Father Ken Baker, 55 years; Father Dave Vincent, 53 years; and Father Dave Brinkmoeller, 46 years.

Parishes or priests can order flags, Msgr. Myers said.

Father Waller said the flag is about Christ and about priesthood. "It is a flag for all priests. It is about unity and community ... and about the work and hope that we share under the banner of Christ."

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By Diocese of Steubenville
Bishop Emeritus Gilbert I. Sheldon

The Gospels tell us that Jesus, after his experience in the desert, and his temptations by the devil, immediately launched out on his mission of calling the people to faith in him and repentance. With his preaching went miracles. One might assume that the power to work miracles was "built-in," so to speak, to his human nature. St. John Paul II explains that such was not exactly the case. His human nature was just that – human – like our own. It was the Holy Spirit working in him and through him that provided such preternatural power. Jesus pointed this out himself in one of his first appearances publicly in the synagogue at Nazareth, when he said: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord" (Lk 4:18). Of course, as God, he and the Father were sending the Holy Spirit to work through his human nature. The same is true of any miracle that was worked before or since. God does not confer divine power on humans, but he does exercise that power through them, including Jesus himself. However, it is not just anyone who is so favored, but only those who are close to God through prayer and contemplation. This does not imply only contemplative religious, but, potentially, anyone to whom God is an ever-present reality – something that should be true of all baptized Christians! Jesus himself met that requirement perfectly in the practice of prayer that pervaded his whole life. How often the Gospels tell us that Jesus went apart to pray to his Father (e.g., Lk 5:16, 6:12, 9:29, etc.).

The Father was always present to him in his heart and thoughts,

not only when he was alone in prayer. Ideally that can and should be the case with all of us! The pope calls it "an habitual state of contemplation." God should be real to us as we go about our daily activities, whether work or play. It is the Holy Spirit, again, that moves us in this direction. Jesus told us that this gift of the Spirit would be given to all

"The Father was always present to him in his heart and thoughts, not only when he was alone in prayer. Ideally that can and should be the case with all of us!"

who ask for it (see, Luke, Chapter 11, Verse 13), especially when facing persecution: "Do not worry beforehand about what you are to say ..." (Mk 13:11). "The Holy Spirit will teach you at that moment what to say" (Lk 12:12).

We might consider here what Jesus meant when he said that, "Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven" (Lk 12:10). What is this "unforgivable sin?" John Paul explains: "Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit ... is the sin committed by the person who claims to have a 'right' to persist in evil – in any sin at all – and who thus rejects redemption. One closes oneself up in sin, thus making impossible one's conversion and consequently the remission of sins." He observes further: "The totality of Jesus Christ's preaching and action flowed out of his union with the Holy Spirit."

St. John Paul has been pointing out the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of Christ, beginning with the Annunciation to Mary. He now focuses on that role in the death of Christ, culminating Jesus' life before its transformation at the resurrection. He notes that Our Lord's last words, as reported in Luke's Gospel, "Father, into your hands, I commend my spirit" (Lk 23:46), is a paraphrase of Psalm 31, in which the speaker is praying to God to save him from death. "Jesus, on the other hand, is accepting death and is turning his spirit (that is, his life) over to his Father." The pope refers us to the Book of Hebrews by way of explanation wherein the author is comparing the Old Testament practice of offering animal sacrifices to God to that of Christ on Calvary, and says: "For if the blood of goats and bulls ... can sanctify those who are defiled ... how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself

unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works to worship then living God" (Heb 9:13-14)? What a far cry from the superficiality of the sacrifices of the Old Testament!

John's Gospel presents Jesus' last words as "... 'It is finished,' and bowing his head, handed over the spirit" (Jn 19:30). The pope explains: The full context of John's Gospel and especially of its pages devoted to Jesus' death on the cross seem rather to indicate that (his) death marks the beginning of the sending of the Holy Spirit as the

gift handed over at Christ's leaving." We see here once again how the different evangelists highlight different aspects of the same event or reality. John Paul goes on: "... (T)he Holy Spirit acted in a special way in this absolute self-giving of the Son of Man, in order to transform this suffering into redemptive love."

We read also in the Old Testament of fire coming down from heaven to consume sacrifices of animals on the altar of the temple (see, Leviticus, Chapter 9, Verse 24; 1 Kings, Chapter 18, Verse 38; 2 Chronicles, Chapter 7, Verse 1; etc.). "By analogy," the pope says, "one can say that the Holy Spirit is the 'fire from heaven' which works in the depth of the mystery of the cross. In the Old Testament, fire from heaven came down to consume the sacrifice, signaling its acceptance by God. In the Gospels, we see the Trinity itself at work: the Son offering the sacrifice of himself, the Holy Spirit conveying it to the Father."

We might view the death of Jesus on the cross in the wider aspect of the story of the creation of mankind and its fall into original sin. God created out of love – in order to share with other rational creatures the basic good: that of existence itself. Mankind's sharing of it depended on his accepting it as God intended, that is, in conformance with God's will. Mankind, however, refused to do so, as symbolized by the eating of the "forbidden fruit." Rather than abandoning man to his own fate, God chose to undo mankind's disobedience through his eternal Son who would take on human nature himself and submit to his Father the ultimate act of obedience by accepting suffering and death – the very result of sin – and accepting it in a most excruciating way. However, all three persons of the blessed Trinity had a part in the process of redemption, and as always, in actions outside the Trinity itself, the Holy Spirit was at work!



Bishop Sheldon

The Mysterious Church on the Edge of the World

By Bishop Robert Barron

Even though I lived in France for three years while doing my doctoral studies, I never managed a visit to Mont Saint-Michel, the mysterious, mystical and hauntingly photogenic abbey situated on a promontory just off the Normandy coast between Caen and St. Malo. But (recently), in connection with the filming for my "Catholicism: Pivotal Players" series, my team and I made the pilgrimage. I first spied

the mount from the backseat of the van, when we were still many miles away. It looked like a great ship, moored on the line of the horizon. As we got closer, the place became increasingly impressive, sometimes looming like a fortress, other times seeming to float on the sea.



Bishop Barron

When we entered the gates ... to commence our work, we stepped out of our world and into the Middle Ages. Our climb to the top – arduous and steep – mimicked that of thousands of pilgrims and monks and spiritual seekers over the centuries.

To grasp the religious significance of the mount, we have to remember that it was built on the edge. Like the Irish monks who constructed their simple dwellings off the harsh western coast of their homeland, the religious who gave rise to Mont Saint-Michel felt that they were doing their work, quite literally, at the ends of the earth. Jesus told his disciples to proclaim the Gospel everywhere and not to stop until they had gone all the way. Cardinal Francis George loved to relate the story of his brothers in the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who, taking Jesus at his word, declared the resurrection to every village and hamlet in the Yukon, until they came finally to the people who said, "There's no one beyond us." Mont Saint-Michel was intended to be a monument to the thoroughness of the Christian missionary effort. Hence it was, to me, a vivid reminder that we need to pick up our game today and to go to what Pope Francis has famously termed the "periferia," a border country more existential than geographical.

I have discovered now through direct experience,

though I had certainly sensed it through photographs, that it is practically impossible to gaze at Mont Saint-Michel
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The Steubenville Register

Biweekly publication of the Diocese of Steubenville
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Steubenville, OH 43952-5160
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Telephone (740) 282-3631; FAX (740) 282-3238
Subscription rate \$15 per year in state of Ohio;
\$17 per year outside the state of Ohio;
\$24 per year to all foreign countries

Periodicals postage paid at Steubenville, OH 43952 SSN 0744-771X

'There Always is Hope'

By Diocese of Steubenville
Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord" (Lk 4:18-19; Is 61:1-2).

There Always Is Hope

In the play "Romeo and Juliet," William Shakespeare poses the question, "What's in a name?" I ask, "What's in an announcement?" Our experiences instruct that announcements make indelible marks in our memory, such as the announcement of a child's birth, or the child learning to speak, saying such words as "mommy," "daddy," or, of course, "no." These announcements can take on various forms from the family home to one's business, even to the announcement of one's vocation that they have decided to enter religious life or to enter the seminary to study for the priesthood. Most certainly parents and family members cannot forget that announcement.

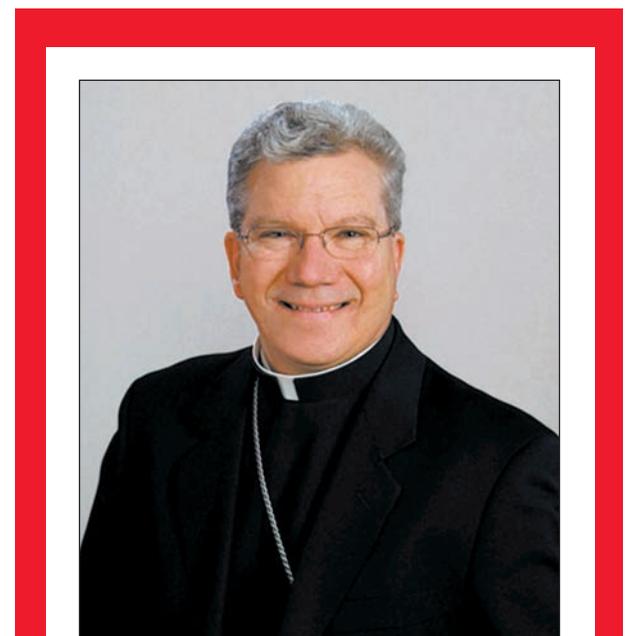
Each one of these announcements carries different weight, but each has been seared into our memories for one reason or another. For instance, when we hear the announcement of the beginnings of Jesus' ministry among God's chosen people, Jesus quotes the Prophet Isaiah himself. So, what is an announcement, we ask? For one, it is a public notification or declaration. In sacred Scripture we have a plethora of *hope-filled* announcements.

For instance, the announcements in the Book of Genesis teach us that creation was made to the good. There was an announcement that, though childless and advanced in age, Abraham and Sarah will have so many descendants that they cannot be numbered. It is announced that the Israelites are God's chosen people, and lest we forget the great announcement from Gabriel, the archangel, that the Virgin Mary will give birth to Jesus, our Lord and Savior. And Jesus shares with his friends that he must suffer, die and rise from the dead for our salvation. These announcements focus on hope in a compassionate God, in an unfinished world where his indwelling love changes everything.

The New Testament instructs we all are called to that one hope in Jesus Christ. This hope is meant to be proclaimed by each one of us. The very integrity of our faith community depends on how our community proclaims hope. Our hearts, first of all, must be replete with hope, before we can convey that very same hope. When we proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, encounter with Christ is vital, for we can't share someone we don't know.

Recent violence in Steubenville and Charlottesville, Virginia, to a number of terror attacks overseas can cause despair. These circumstances provide us all the more reason to be proclaimers of hope in Jesus Christ, to be children of the light. As children of the light, we ask ourselves, how may we share that sacred gift of hope? It begins with the simple acknowledgement and announcement of Who is the source and summit of all of these gifts.

In the Gospel according to Luke, Jesus announces eternal hope in the midst of a people oppressed and seemingly in perpetual darkness. Instead, the Savior of the world informs the chosen people that glad tidings have been brought to them, and they will be set free and even will recover their sight as the chosen people. They will be set free of their



Bishop Monforton

tribulations and transgressions, and in their midst is a year acceptable to the Lord.

That year acceptable to the Lord remains with us in 2017, and Jesus' presence among us is evidence that the Scripture passage has been fulfilled in our hearing. As ambassadors of Jesus Christ to the world, we can share with our brothers and sisters that there always is hope.

May God bless you and your family, especially our younger brothers and sisters beginning the academic year.

Our Utmost in Dealing With Our Faith

By Father Ron Rolheiser

The complexity of adulthood inevitably puts to death the naivete of childhood. And this is true, too, of our faith. Not that faith is a naivete. It isn't. But our faith needs to be constantly reintegrated into our persons and matched up anew against our life's experience; otherwise we will find it at odds with our life. But genuine faith can stand up to every kind of experience, no matter its complexity.

Sadly, that doesn't always happen, and many people seemingly leave their faith behind, like belief in Santa and the Easter Bunny, as the complexity of their adult lives seemingly belies or even shames their childhood faith.

With this in mind, I recommend a recent book, "My Utmost, A Devotional Memoir," by Macy Halford. She is a young, 30-something, writer working out of both Paris and New York, and this is an autobiographical account of her struggle as a conservative Evangelical Christian to retain her faith amidst the very liberal, sophisticated, highly secularized, and often agnostic, circles within which she now lives and works.

The book chronicles her struggles to maintain a strong childhood faith which was virtually embedded in her DNA, thanks to a very faith-filled mother and grandmother. Faith and church were a staple and an anchor in her life as she was

growing up. But her DNA also held something else, namely, the restlessness and creative tension of a writer, and that irrepressible energy naturally drove her beyond the safety and shelter of the church circles of her youth, in her case, to literary circles in New York and Paris.

She soon found out that living the faith while surrounded by a strong supportive faith group is one thing, trying to live it while breathing an air that is almost exclusively secular and agnostic is something else. The book chronicles that struggle and chronicles, too, how eventually she was able to integrate both the passion and the vision of her childhood faith into her new life. Among many good insights, she shares how each time she was tempted to cross the line and abandon her childhood faith as a naivete, she realized that her fear of doing that was "not a fear of destroying God or a belief; (but) a fear of destroying self." That insight testifies to the genuine character of her faith. God and faith don't need us; it's us that needs them.

The title of her book, "My Utmost," is significant to her story. On her 13th birthday, her grandmother gave her a copy of a book which is well-known and much used within evangelical and Baptist circles, "My Utmost for His Highest," by Oswald Chambers. The book is a collection of spiritual aphorisms, thoughts for every day of the year, by this prominent missionary and mystic. Halford shares how, while young and still solidly anchored in the church and faith of her childhood, she did not read the book daily and Chamber's spiritual counsels meant little to her. But, her reading of this book eventually became a daily ritual in her life and its daily counsel began, more and more, to become a prism through which she was able to reintegrate her childhood faith with her adult experience.

At one point in her life, she gives herself over to a serious theological study of both the book and its author. Those parts of her memoir will intimidate some of her readers, but, even without a clear theological grasp of how eventu-

ally she brings it all into harmony, the fruit of her struggle comes through clearly.

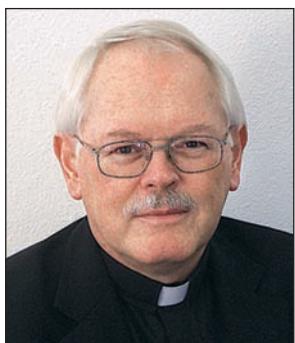
This is a valuable memoir because today many people are undergoing this kind of struggle, that is, to have their childhood faith stand up to their present experience. Halford simply shows us how she did it, and her struggle offers us a valuable paradigm to follow.

A generation ago, Karl Rahner famously remarked that in the next generation we will either be mystics or unbelievers. Among other things, what Rahner meant was that unlike previous generations where our communities (family, neighborhood, and church) very much helped carry the faith for us, in this next generation we will very much have to find our own, deeper, personal grounding for our faith. Macy Halford bears this out. Inside a generation within which many are unbelievers, her memoir lays out a path for a humble but effective mysticism.

The late Irish writer John Moriarty, in his memoirs, shares how as a young man he drifted from the faith of his youth, Roman Catholicism, seeing it as a naivete that could not stand up to his adult experiences. He walked along in that way until one day, as he puts it, "I realized that Roman Catholicism, the faith of my childhood, was my mother tongue."

Macy Halford eventually regrounded herself in her mother tongue, the faith of her youth, and it continues now to guide her through all the sophistications of adulthood. The chronicle of her search can help us all, irrespective of our particular religious affiliation.

Father Rolheiser, a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate priest, is president of the Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio. He is an author, a retreat master and a widely circulated newspaper columnist. More information on Father Rolheiser's ministry is available on his website: www.ronrolheiser.com.



Father Rolheiser

Book collects John Paul II's notes from 41 years of spiritual retreats

By Agostino Bono

"In God's Hands: The Spiritual Diaries of Pope St. John Paul II" by Pope St. John Paul II. HarperCollins (New York, 2017), 482 Pages, \$34.99.

St. John Paul II was a churchman known for his public activism and as a major world figure during the latter part of the last century.

As a priest, bishop and cardinal in communist-ruled Poland, he learned how to deal with an authoritarian atheist regime, helping to keep faith alive and flourishing in the historically Catholic country. As pope, he was instrumental in the fall of the Soviet empire and the end of the cold war, chipping away at the Iron Curtain with his constant calls for religious liberty and respect for human rights.

As head of the Catholic Church, St. John Paul updated Catholic social teachings,

especially concerning such politically hot-button issues as protecting the environment, economic and political globalization and support for democracy as a form of government.

Yet underneath all of this was a very spiritual man, the spirituality driving his insertion of the Catholic Church into the post-Second Vatican Council modern world. Only nine years after his death, he was declared a saint. This book aims to explain the pope's spirituality in his own words, but it falls short.

Although the subtitle describes the book as the pope's "spiritual diaries," it is not. The book is a collection of notes the pope jotted down during years of spiritual retreats (1962-2003) as a Polish clergyman and then as pope during the annual Lenten retreats he took at the Vatican.

Some of the notes are labeled meditations and are several paragraphs long. But

much of the book is composed of isolated sentences and phrases, things people jot down to jog their memories later on; and it is unclear whether these notes reflect the pope's thinking or are a quick recording of the retreat master's thoughts. The pope, in his will, requested that these notes be burned, but they were saved by his personal secretary, Msgr. Stanislaw Dziwisz – later the cardinal-archbishop of Krakow, Poland – who saw them as glimpses into the pope's spirituality.

The most important glimpse, perhaps, was the pope's ability to shut out his worldly concerns while on retreat to concentrate on his inner life. Except for a few simple references to the need for world peace and the threats posed by Marxism, communism, atheism and secularism to the church's work in the modern world, the notes are devoted to spiritual issues.

Key among them is the pope's devotion to Mary, the mother of God, exemplified in

his motto "totus tuus," Latin for "entirely yours," taken from a Marian prayer. He shows interest in understanding her relationship to Jesus as her son and as God. During his life, he often referred to her as being responsible for saving his life during the assassination attempt in St. Peter's Square May 13, 1981. However, he only alludes to this once by naming his would-be assassin, Mehmet Ali Agca, in a brief section on forgiveness. The pope did visit Agca in prison and forgave him.

Another interesting point is his conviction, from his early years as a bishop, that the primary role of the episcopate is pastoral. While the notes may help scholars understand some of the spiritual issues important to the pope, it does not provide an in-depth look. Such a book has yet to be written.

Bono, a retired Catholic News Service staff writer, was Rome bureau chief during part of St. John Paul II's pontificate.

Review

Eclipse a way to appreciate creation, Vatican astronomer tells audience

By Dennis Sadowski

HOPKINSVILLE, Ky. (CNS)—A total solar eclipse is a rare event, something to appreciate and enjoy in the mind of Jesuit Brother Guy Consolmagno, director of the Vatican Observatory.

So as the first eclipse crossed the country from coast to coast in 99 years Aug. 21, Brother Consolmagno wasn't going to do anything but take it in and think about the beauty and mystery of God's creation.

The astronomer urged an audience in a packed Sts. Peter and Paul Church during a pre-eclipse program in this southwestern Kentucky town near the point of maximum eclipse to take the time to reflect on what the two minutes and 40 seconds of totality means to them.

"Pray for good weather," he said to laughs. "But also pray for what God wants you to learn from the experience."

Tens of thousands of people had descended on Hopkinsville, a city of 33,000 an hour northwest of Nashville, Tennessee, by late Aug. 20. Thousands more were expected the morning of the eclipse.

Brother Consolmagno said he was as

excited as anyone to view the blackening of the sun.

He also said that as a scientist and a person of faith, he is guided by inquisitiveness to explore the heavens and the desire to better understand how God put the universe together. There is no conflict between science and the faith, he said.

"Being a scientist can be a way of worshipping God," he said.

He repeated a similar message to reporters during a news conference before his presentation.

"We're here not just to remind my fellow scientists who are used to me by now, but also to show religious people how important it is to be able to praise the Creator by studying creation, studying it honestly, finding out

how God really created this place. There's never going to be a shortage of marvels for us to discover or surprises for us to experience," he said.

"We can come to know the Creator by seeing the things of his creation."

He said by understanding the cycle of solar eclipses – occurring about every 18 months and 11 days – people can see the rhythms of the universe and the continuing nature of creation and have an experience "that fills the soul with joy."

Brother Consolmagno made the trip to Hopkinsville at the invitation of Father Richard Meredith, pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Church.

Father Meredith told Catholic News

Service he contacted the Vatican Observatory soon after he learned a few years ago that the eclipse path would pass over the town.

Parishioners prepared for more than a year, having established a committee to welcome visitors and host Brother Consolmagno.

"Being a parish with a parochial school, we stress the unity of truth," Father Meredith said. "This (eclipse) is a major opportunity to reflect that, as science and faith work together serving to manifest the Lord."

"The eclipse is a wonder and these wonders praise the creator.

"This could very well be the only planet around the only star whose moon is at the right distance and size to give a total solar eclipse," the priest said.

He introduced Brother Consolmagno by reading from Psalm 19: "The heavens proclaim the glory of God; the sky proclaims its builder's craft."

"This isn't only Catholic," he told Catholic News Service. "This is a tradition inherited from God's revelation in the Old Testament."



(CNS photo/Dennis Sadowski)

Jesuit Brother Guy Consolmagno

The Mysterious Church

From Page 6

without falling into mystical reverie. I would challenge anyone to come here and walk the causeway leading up to the mount and not find himself beguiled into thinking of things higher and more eternal. The mountain itself, and then the architecture piled so exquisitely on top of it, draw the viewer's eyes up and up, beyond this world. And when you climb to the top, you look out on the trackless and seemingly endless sea. From Plato, through Dante, to James Joyce, the trope of the open sea has been used to evoke the transcendent goal of the searching heart. The art, the sacraments, the doctrine and the saints of the church are meant to lure us to the edge of the ordinary and to allow us at least a glimpse of that open sea of God's eternity. They are, accordingly, the enemies of Charles Taylor's "buffered

self," the modern person so thoroughly shaped by secularist ideology that she no longer hears the rumors of angels. It has always struck me as curious that a religious person is seen as somehow conventional and nonthreatening, a little fussy Ned Flanders. Authentic Christians are in fact edgy folks, more than a bit dangerous. Mont Saint-Michel, standing on the border between heaven and earth, is just the kind of place those dangerous types like to go.

Finally, to understand this sacred place, we should remember its name and the figure who stands on the pinnacle of the spire, namely, Michael the Archangel. Michael is invariably depicted in the armor of a warrior, for he is the general of the angelic army that stood athwart the legions of Lucifer, who had dared to arrogate to himself the prerogatives of God. He

fought, not with sword and spear, but with the unanswerable challenge of his own name: Micha-el (Who is like God?). Now we should recall that the mount is situated precisely on the western border of Europe, looking out toward the setting sun. In the medieval imagination, the land of the setting sun was associated with the powers of darkness, which helps to explain why the great cathedrals of the Middle Ages were, almost without exception, oriented, situated toward the east. They symbolized the church turned toward the light of the risen Christ and away from sin and death. So the stronghold, named for and topped by the fighter angel, and erected on the western edge of the world, represents the power of Christ's church turned against the forces of darkness, both visible and invisible.

As we were filming at Mont Saint-

Michel, armies of tourists were making their way through the myriad nooks and crannies of the place. As they passed by altars, sanctuaries and monastic cells used by monks long ago, many of them, I would venture to say, probably saw the ensemble as redolent more of Harry Potter than of St. Anselm. Come here if you can, or at least find a good photo of the mount on the internet, but don't look at it in the manner of a tourist. Rather, see it as its builders would have seen it: as a beautiful and holy monument on the edge of the world.

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

Catholic leaders, groups urge all Americans to confront 'sin of racism'

WASHINGTON (CNS) and STEUBENVILLE — Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton joined with Catholic bishops, other church leaders and various groups throughout the United States when he said, "The common good for all demands respect for all."

Bishop Monforton's statement and ones from others called for peace after three people died and several others were injured following clashes between pacifists, protesters and white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia.

"There is no place in the world for racism, prejudice, hatred or violence, each a tragic rejection of the demands of love," Bishop Monforton said.

"We must confront these social evils of our time as one people, appealing to the respect and dignity of all.

"In order to attain the peace for which we strive, we first must acknowledge that evil is unacceptable and that violence never solves problems."

Bishop Monforton's statement came as the Franciscan Action Network called on all Americans, "especially ourselves and those who have benefited from white privilege," to look within themselves "and confront America's original sin – the sin of racism."

"White Americans must no longer stand silent as we continue to benefit from the attitudes and structures that put us ahead of African-Americans and other minority groups," the organization said in an Aug. 14 statement issued in reaction to a chaotic and hate-filled weekend in Charlottesville, Aug. 11 and 12.

Franciscan Action Network officials said they were "deeply saddened" by the loss of life and injuries Aug. 12 and were praying for those "whose lives have been tragically altered by this violence" and praying for "greater justice and peace."

The group's statement also asked for forgiveness from "our African-American and Native (American) brothers and sisters" for all the injustices done to them in the nation's history and also for times when the Franciscan Action Network itself has "fallen short" in standing up for justice for them.

"FAN has not done enough to address" the ongoing issue of police brutality against African-Americans "and other issues of systemic racism. From this point forward, we vow to do better," the statement said.

The National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus in an Aug. 14 statement strongly condemned "the hateful and racist actions and rhetoric that has taken place in our country this past weekend. We not only agree with those who have been saying that the positions proposed by the white nationalist groups are opposed to American values, we also say that they are opposed to Christian values."

The organization prayed for those who lost their lives and those injured in Charlottesville and for their families and friends. Heather D. Heyer, 32, was killed Aug. 12 when a car plowed into a counterprotest of the white supremacists. Two Virginia State Police troopers also died when a helicopter they were in crashed while trying to help with the violent events on the ground. Nineteen others were injured in the clash.

"And we pray that the Holy Spirit may act

once again to bring together the diversity of people that make up our country so that we can live up to our national motto: 'E pluribus unum,'" said the statement, signed by Father Kenneth Taylor, president of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus.

Catholic bishops across the country were quick to issue a condemnation of the racism and hatred on display in Charlottesville. Among them were Bishop Francis X. DiLorenzo of Richmond, Virginia, whose diocese includes Charlottesville (the bishop, 75, died Aug. 17); Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington, Virginia; Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Florida, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Bishop Martin D. Holley of Memphis, Tennessee; Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Philadelphia; Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore; Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey; Bishop James D. Conley of Lincoln, Nebraska; Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond of New Orleans; and Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of Atlanta.

"The angry and violent mob which gathered in Virginia this past weekend by word and deed contradicted our national creed and code of civil conduct," said Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley of Boston, adding that neo-Nazism, racism and threats against all people of color and efforts to "banish immigrants" from this country "dishonor the basic convictions" of the country's political and constitutional traditions. "They must be opposed in word and deed," he said.

In Arizona, Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson said: "Like Charlottesville, we are a community that will not tolerate racism, bigotry, fascism and white supremacy. These stand in contradiction to the values we hold as a nation and as a people of faith.

"We must strive even harder to break down these barriers (these groups) seek to erect and increase our efforts to educate all, especially young people, to put aside prejudice and hatred and work to build unity among us," he added.

Bishop Daniel E. Thomas, apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Cleveland, called Catholics and others to join him in praying "for an end to the evil of racism, hatred and violence" and examining "our own hearts and remove any bias that does not honor and respect others as created in God's image."

"It is only in this way that together, as families, neighborhoods and communities, we can strive to eradicate the root causes of racism," he said.

The Archdiocese of St. Louis in a statement said: "Our country has a detestable history with regard to the treatment of its citizens, including discrimination and hatred that

,undermine the God-given dignity of every human person. Unfortunately, some of our fellow citizens cling to these detestable ideas which continue with hate and ignorance. We must boldly march forward to a time when 'love and truth will meet; justice and peace will kiss' (Ps 85:11)."

The statement also recalled that in the midst of the 2014 protests in Ferguson, Missouri, over the fatal police shooting of a young black man, 18-year-old Michael Brown, St. Louis Archbishop Robert J. Carlson said that "our nation must deal with the sin of racism. That remains true. Racism is a sin because it is contrary to human dignity. What we have seen in Charlottesville, Baltimore, Ferguson, and elsewhere, is the result of a society that has put racism, fascism, nationalism, socialism, individualism, and other ideologies in place of God."

The General Council of the Adrian Dominican Sisters deplored "the acts of white supremacist terrorism in Charlottesville," adding: "Hatred and bigotry are anathema to civil discourse, the rule of law and the ideals of our democracy. As women of faith, we add our voice to those calling for an end to racist violence in our country and pray that we awaken to the loving imperative of our being created equal in the image of God."

"This bold display of hateful rhetoric and action (in Charlottesville) impels us to call on elected leaders, and all people, to explicitly and publicly condemn white supremacy and racism and the organizations that embolden and encourage the movement," said a statement from the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.

"May this grieving time call us to search our hearts and ask what are the ways in which we perpetuate this culture of violence and fear? What actions will we take in response? What truths will we speak to contribute to dialogue that brings unity, peace and comfort to those who are afraid? We must continue to act," it said.

The Ignatian Solidarity Network, a national social justice education and advocacy organization, posted on its blog statements from the leaders of Jesuit-run colleges and universities and other institutions. "Our common humanity calls on each of us to speak out against racism, violence, prejudice and hatred," said a post by Jesuit Father Stephen V. Sundborg, president of Seattle University.

A group called Christian Ethicists Without Borders likewise issued a condemnation of the racial hatred and violence on display and issued a statement – signed by dozens and dozens of professors of Christian studies, ethics and theology – declaring: "The evil of white supremacy and racism must be brought face-to-face before the figure of Jesus Christ, who cannot be confined to any one culture or nationality. Through faith we proclaim that God the Creator is the origin of all human persons."

"We will bring the best of our (religious) traditions to an ecclesial and societal examination of conscience where rhetoric and acts of hatred against particular groups can be publicly named as grave sins and injustices," it said.

"We commit – through our teaching, writing and service – to the ongoing, hard work of building bridges and restoring wholeness. ..."

There is no place in the world for racism, prejudice, hatred or violence, each a tragic rejection of the demands of love.

We must confront these social evils of our time as one people, appealing to the respect and dignity of all.

In order to attain the peace for which we strive, we first must acknowledge that evil is unacceptable and that violence never solves problems.

The common good for all demands respect for all.

– Bishop Monforton

Pope Francis leads prayers for an end to 'inhuman violence' of terrorism

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — "Let us beg the Lord, God of mercy and peace, to free the world from this inhuman violence," Pope Francis prayed after a week of deadly terrorist attacks in Africa and Europe.

Reciting the Angelus prayer at midday, the pope asked an estimated 10,000 people in St. Peter's Square to pray in silence and then to join him in reciting the Hail Mary for the victims of the attacks the previous week in Burkina Faso, Spain and Finland.

At a restaurant in Ouagadougou Aug. 13, gunmen opened fire on people eating outside. Authorities in Burkina Faso said 18 people died and 20 were injured. The gunmen were believed to be part of a group known as "al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb."

In Spain, 13 people died after a van mowed down pe-

destrians Aug. 17 on Barcelona's famous Las Ramblas street and another woman died in a vehicle attack the next day in Cambrils. Five suspects were killed by police and other members of what authorities described as a 12-man terrorist cell were being sought.

In Turku, Finland, Aug. 18, two women were stabbed to death and eight other people were injured in what police described as a terrorist attack.

Among the pilgrims in St. Peter's Square for the midday prayer were the 50 first-year students of the Pontifical North American College, the seminary in Rome sponsored by the U.S. bishops. Pope Francis gave them a shoutout before wishing everyone in the square a happy Sunday.

In his main Angelus talk, the pope spoke about the day's Gospel reading from St. Matthew about the Canaanite

woman who persistently asks Jesus to heal her daughter.

"This woman's interior strength, which allows her to overcome every obstacle, can be found in her maternal love and in her trust that Jesus can fulfill her request," the pope said. "This makes me think of the strength of women. With their strength they are able to obtain great things. We've know many women like this."

In the Gospel story, when the woman first cries out, Jesus seems to ignore her, the pope noted. But she is not discouraged and continues to call out to him.

In the end, Jesus recognizes her great faith and answers her request, the pope said. "Her insistence in invoking Christ's intervention stimulates us never to be discouraged and not to despair when we are oppressed by the harsh trials of life."

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Athens/Pomeroy — Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults will begin for St. Paul Parish, Athens, Christ the King University Parish, Athens, and Sacred Heart Parish, Pomeroy. Anyone interested in learning more about the Catholic faith can telephone Nancy Sand at (740) 592-2711.

The Athens Catholic community women's study group will meet at 9:15 a.m., Sept. 12, in Holy Family Center, located at Christ the King University Parish. The book titled "Between the Dark and the Daylight," by Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister, author and speaker, will be discussed. For additional information or to join the group, telephone (440) 781-7410 or (740) 593-8081.

Barnesville/Temperanceville — Anyone interested in learning more about the Catholic faith and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults can telephone Father David J. Cornett, pastor of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Barnesville, and St. Mary Parish, Temperanceville, at (740) 381-4415.

Cambridge — Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Wednesdays, in the Marian room, at St. Benedict Church. Anyone interested in learning more about the Catholic faith can telephone the parish office at (740) 432-7609.

Carrollton/Morges — Our Lady of Mercy Church, Carrollton, and St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church, Morges, will begin Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Anyone interested in learning more about the Catholic faith can telephone (330) 627-4664.

Fulda — St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish is sponsoring an 87th annual Labor Day homecoming picnic Sept. 4. The day begins with the celebration of Mass at 9 a.m. Dinner will be served from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.; takeout dinners will be available. A cornhole tournament begins at 1 p.m., weather permitting. There will be games for all ages, bingo and a refreshment stand throughout the afternoon. Homemade noodles and baked goods will be for sale. Drawing for the raffles will take place at 4 p.m. A round and square dance will be held from 2:30-5:30 p.m., with music provided by the Deep Down Country Band. For additional information, telephone (740) 732-4129.

Glouster — A bake sale will be held at Holy Cross Church, in support of the CWC, Sept. 3, following the celebration of the 9 a.m. Mass.

Little Hocking — St. Ambrose Parish and surrounding churches in the Belpre area will sponsor a gathering from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Sept. 9, at Civitan Park, 1600 Blennerhasset Ave., Belpre. The event will include food and entertainment. For additional information, telephone (740) 423-7422.

St. Clairsville — Anyone interested in registering his/her child for the 2017-18 school year at St. Mary Central School can telephone the school office at (740) 695-3189.

Steubenville — An inquiry session, for anyone interested in learning more about the Catholic faith, will be held at 7 p.m., Aug. 27, at Holy Rosary Church, in the Marian Room. For additional information, telephone (503) 851-4622 or email toni.k.hendricks@gmail.com.

Steubenville — A bake sale, sponsored by St. Peter Parish CWC, will be held the weekend of Sept. 2-3. Proceeds will be donated to men discerning a vocation to the priesthood. For addition information, telephone Bea Antol at (304) 723-1850.

The St. Peter Parish Book Club will resume meeting at 10 a.m., Sept. 16, in the former All Saints School building. Michael O'Brien's novel "Island of the World" will be discussed. For additional information, telephone the rectory/parish office at (740) 282-7612.

Tiltonville/Yorkville — Anyone interested in learning more about the Catholic faith and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults can telephone Father William D. Cross, pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Tiltonville, and St. Lucy Parish, Yorkville, at (740) 859-4018.



A second annual fundraising dinner for the Friendship Room, a Catholic Worker house in downtown Steubenville, will be held at 7 p.m., Sept. 7, in Hellenic Hall, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 300 S. Fourth St., Steubenville, said Molly McGovern, urban missionary. She is joined by the Rev. Jason Elliott, pastor, First Westminster Presbyterian Church, Steubenville, left, who will be the featured speaker at the banquet. He said he will look at discipleship through a relational lens – transformational ministry versus transactional ministry. Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton will offer the prayer at the event for which doors open at 6 p.m. The Rev. Nick Halkias, right, is pastor of the host church. McGovern, along with her husband Bill, opened what became the Friendship Room in January 2014, as a warming center. The two said that membership from more than 30 local churches now assist in some way in the operation of the room, based on the premise of Matthew 25 – "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me. ..." For more information on the fundraiser in support of the Friendship Room, which the husband and wife say is to bring hope to people who have lost hope, telephone (740) 314-5095. (Photo by DeFrancis)

Wintersville — A 13-week GriefShare program will be held at Blessed Sacrament Church, Lower Sargus Hall. Sessions will be held from 10 a.m. until noon, Saturdays, beginning Sept. 2. The sessions will include a video seminar, support group discussions and personal study and reflections in a workbook. Cost for the workbook is \$15. For additional information, telephone Dolly Young at (740) 264-9948 or Don Heiss at (740) 264-1823.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish CWC will begin selling 50/50 raffle tickets Sept. 3, following the celebration of the 9:30 a.m. Mass. Tickets are 2 for \$1. The winning ticket will be drawn at the end of each month.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish CWC will participate in a bake sale Sept. 13, at 10 a.m., in front of Diamond Drug Pharmacy, 503 Cadiz Road. It coincides with the health fair being held at the pharmacy that day.

Around and About

Athens — The 11th annual Pregnancy Resource Center fundraising banquet will be held Sept. 26, in the Baker University Center ballroom, on the Ohio University campus. Shawn Carney, a national pro-life speaker, executive director of Coalition for Life, and author will be the banquet speaker. For additional information, telephone (740) 592-4700, visit athenspregnancy.com, or contact Kamie Dixon at kdixonathensprc@gmail.com.

Independence, Ky. — A one-day conference featuring speaker Scott Hahn, professor at Franciscan University of Steubenville, will be held at St. Cecilia Parish, 5313 Madison Pike, Sept. 9. Admission tickets are \$20. For additional information, telephone (859) 363-4311.

Russell's Point, Ohio — A Christian concert will

take place at 7 p.m., Sept. 16, at Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, 261 Chase Ave. Free parking is available at St. Mary of the Woods Church, 464 Madison Ave., with shuttles starting at 5:30 p.m.

Steubenville — A back to school interdenominational hour of prayer for mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, guardians and women of prayer will be held from 6:30-7:30 p.m., Sept. 14, at Grace Point Ministries, 4244 Sunset Blvd. The event will include a time of praise and worship by Cantate, a talk by the Rev. Ashley Steele, director of Urban Mission Ministries, intercessory prayers and Scripture readings. For additional information, telephone or text Beth Rosaschi at (914) 494-6675.

A hero 5K run/walk will be held Sept. 16, at
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Ecumenical prayer service, noon, Aug. 25, St. Peter Church, 425 N. Fourth St., Steubenville, at the initiation of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton

Deadline set for application request for diaconate

STEUBENVILLE — Sept. 1 is the deadline for requesting an application packet for the permanent diaconate for the Diocese of Steubenville.

Permanent Deacon Mark A. Erste said that completed applications for the diaconate must be submitted by Oct. 2.

Men between the ages of 32 and 60 can apply for the diaconate, said Deacon Er-

ste, director of diaconal ministries for the diocese.

All men interested in the permanent diaconate must take a theology of diaconate class in September.

For questions, telephone Deacon Erste at (740) 512-4135.

Formation for the next Diocese of Steubenville diaconate class begins in January.

Women's retreat planned at St. Ambrose Church

LITTLE HOCKING — The annual "Renew Your Spirit Ladies Retreat Day" will be held Oct. 14 at St. Ambrose Church.

Father Robert A. Gallagher is pastor of the parish.

At the retreat, from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m., at the church at 5080 School House Road, women will be able to listen to speakers, hear music, offer confessions, participate in group discussions, pray the rosary and lunch.

For more information or reservations, telephone Rita Rodgers at (740) 423-5697 or email her at rrodgers2417@gmail.com or telephone Becky Hennen at (740) 989-2460 or email her at becky1097@windstream.net.

Cost of the retreat, planned by the parish women's prayer groups and its Catholic Woman's Club, is \$10. Checks are payable to St. Ambrose CWC; mail to Rodgers, 2417 Norris Ave., Belpre, OH 45714.

Around and About

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Jim Wood Park, Canterbury Boulevard, to benefit the AIM Women's Center. In addition to the 5K run/walk, the event will include a free 1K fun run for children, carnival games, face painting, music, food and prizes. Registration begins at 8 a.m.; participants are asked to dress as their favorite hero. To register or make a donation, visit www.crowdrise.com/HERO5KRUN. For additional information, telephone Shannon Wiley at (740) 283-3636 or (240) 283-4010.

A conference for Catholic social scientists will be held Oct. 27-28 at Franciscan University of Steubenville. The conference will examine political, social and economic issues. Registration fees for the conference, which includes all sessions, is \$50 for non-Society of Catholic Social Scientists members and \$15 for full-time students.

The banquet is \$25 and the luncheon is \$18. To register or for additional information, visit catholicsocialscientists.org.

Weirton, W.Va. — St. Paul Christian Mothers will sponsor an autumn glory card party at 2 p.m., Sept. 24, in St. Paul cafeteria, 140 Walnut St. Door prizes, raffles and a silent auction will be part of the event; a luncheon will be served. Tickets are \$10. For additional information, telephone (304) 723-5755.

Zanesville, Ohio — The sixth annual Beauty of the Feminine Catholic Women's Conference will be held Oct. 7 at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, 144 N. Fifth St. The theme is "Anchored in Hope." To register for the conference, visit thebeautyofthefeminine.weebly.com, telephone (740) 453-3309, or email thebeautyofthefeminine@gmail.com. There will also be registration at the door the day of the conference.



St. Ambrose, Little Hocking, summer activities included focusing on missions, on call from Pope Francis. Places where St. Ambrose parishioners have served include Ghana, Botswana, Peru and Belize, said their pastor, Father Robert A. Gallagher. People have assisted with building a convent in Ghana and houses in Belize, as well as teaching in Botswana and Peru and nursing in Peru, participants in the summer event are told. (Photos provided)

Obituaries

Bernard L. Brandon, a member of the Diocese of Steubenville Catholic Charities Board, died Aug. 13.

The 66 year old from Jacobsburg was born Aug. 7, 1951, in Bellaire, a son of Bernard and Norma Meister Brandon. He was a caseworker for the Department of Jobs and Family Services and attended St. John Church, Bellaire.

A funeral liturgy outside Mass was held Aug. 17.

Brandon's survivors include his wife Patty and son Jason.

Robert J. "Bob" Gill, a former administrator at Catholic Central High School, Steubenville, has died.

Born April 1, 1948, in Steubenville, a son of Thaddeus and Mary Corsi Gill, the 69 year old held degrees from West Liberty (West Virginia) State College, West

Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia, and Dayton (Ohio) University. The long-time educator served as assistant principal of Catholic Central from 1975-85 and as its principal from 1985-89.

A funeral liturgy with Mass was celebrated at St. Joseph the Worker Church, Weirton, West Virginia, Aug. 18 for Gill who died Aug. 14.

Among Gill's survivors are his wife Sandy, son Robert, daughter Jaime and two grandchildren.

Francis P. "Frank" Kolesar — brother of Diocese of Steubenville priest Msgr. John C. Kolesar, pastor of St. Casimir Parish, Adena, and St. Adalbert Parish, Dillonvale — has died.

Born Jan. 25, 1943, a son of John C. and Mary Skolosh Kolesar of Bergholz, the 74 year old who served in the Vietnam War

and was employed for the city of Canton, Ohio, for 30 years, died Aug. 7.

He is survived not only by his brother, Msgr. Kolesar, but also his wife Helen, son David, daughters Sharon and Sheila, 10 grandchildren and a sister, Dominican Sister Barbara Kolesar of Columbus, Ohio.

A funeral liturgy with Mass was celebrated Aug. 10 at Little Flower Church, Canton. Burial followed in Warstler Cemetery, Canton.

Raymond S. Buratynski, 92, Toronto, St. Francis of Assisi, Aug. 7.

Simone C. Canu, 94, St. Stephen, Caldwell, Aug. 7.

Mabel M. Denbow, 87, Woodsfield, St. Sylvester, Aug. 11.

John L. Fraley, 74, 409 Wyanoke St., Ironton, St. Lawrence O'Toole, June 8.

Wayne Harmon, 76, 2622 S. Fourth St.,

Ironton, St. Lawrence O'Toole, June 8.

Michael P. Olenick, 89, Weirton, West Virginia, St. Peter, Steubenville, Aug. 10.

Anita Perry, 82, St. Clairsville, St. Mary, July 31.

Mary E. Pierson, 102, 306 N. Second St., Ironton, St. Lawrence O'Toole, April 3.

Allison Payne Rose, 31, 607 S. Fifth St., Ironton, St. Joseph, July 6.

Arthur R. "Art" Schockling, 63, St. Stephen, Caldwell, July 30.

Martin Sulek, 64, St. Clairsville, St. Mary, Aug. 10.

Garrett L. Tornes, 20, Waterford, St. Bernard, Beverly, Aug. 4.

Carmella L. "Carm" Wheaton, 89, Mingo Junction, St. Agnes, Aug. 11.

Pearl J. Willis, 89, 2107 N. Second St., Ironton, St. Joseph, June 11.

For 20 million people, conflict added to drought means no food to eat

By Bronwen Dachs

Conflict and drought are threatening more than 20 million people in four countries with the prospect of famine, and the U.N. has called this food crisis the largest humanitarian crisis since the world body was formed more than 70 years ago.

Additional resources and funding are needed “to pull people back from the brink of famine” in Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and northeast Nigeria, the U.N. Security Council said in an Aug. 9 statement that commended efforts by international donors to provide humanitarian assistance for the crises in these countries.

Catholic church officials and representatives of Catholic aid agencies spoke with Catholic News Service about the enormous efforts being channeled into meeting the needs of those most vulnerable.

Governments “are reducing aid, while needs are skyrocketing,” said Elizabeth Carosella, who works for the U.S. bishops’ Catholic Relief Services in Abuja, Nigeria.

Humans cannot control the weather patterns, such as drought. But increasingly, aid officials find access to areas of need blocked by ongoing conflicts or inaccessible because of poor infrastructure.

Jerry Farrell, country representative in South Sudan for CRS, was Save the Children’s country director in Yemen until mid-2014. He called the situation in Yemen “horrific,” a famine that is entirely man-made. Seventy percent of the country’s 14 million people need some form of humanitarian aid.

Yemen has relied entirely on imported food since 1991 and “now it is sealed off from the rest of the world,” Farrell said. Yemen has been embroiled in civil war since 2015, which includes a Saudi-led blockade of the country.

Yemen’s food system has collapsed, Farrell said, noting that even hospitals have been bombed, and it is “as difficult to get medical supplies into the country as it is to get food in.”

The World Health Organization reports 436,000 cases of cholera in Yemen.

Bishop Paul Hinder, who heads the Apostolic Vicariate of Southern Arabia from Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, told CNS that the blockade of Yemen hinders the reconstruction of the destroyed sanitary system.

“As long as the minimal infrastructure in many parts of the country is not functioning, we cannot expect that the cholera can

be stopped” or that “the starving people” can be properly fed, Bishop Hinder said.

“Without bringing people again around the table” to agree on a cease-fire, “there will be only killing and destruction with disastrous consequences for the civilian population,” he said.

“As the church is reduced to a tiny group without any structure, little can be done from our side at present,” he said.

“As I believe in the power of the prayer, I can only ask the faithful around the world to keep in mind the suffering people in Yemen – Muslims as well as the few remaining Christians, including the Missionaries of Charity,” Bishop Hinder said.

In South Sudan, nearly 2 million people are on the cusp of famine, Farrell said, and it is hard to get food to the hungry because the country has “virtually no infrastructure.” South Sudan, a country slightly smaller than Texas, has only 12,000 miles of road, which is “more like track than road,” said Farrell, noting that “the lack of infrastructure can’t be separated from the conflict.”

In the fertile land of South Sudan’s Western Equatoria state, which has avoided the drought afflicting other parts of the country, little grows because of the war, he said. And even if the residents were still able to grow mangoes and papayas in this “breathtakingly beautiful place,” there are no roads to get any excess food to people outside, he said. “Fresh food rots because it takes weeks to get it out of there with tracks to follow instead of roads, and one can expect frequent ambushes along the way,” Farrell said.

In distributing food airdropped by the World Food Program, CRS finds “some places very difficult to get to because of active conflict,” he said. Other places are unreachable for many months because of flooding. People often walk four or five miles to food distribution points in South Sudan, he added.

About 200,000 of the 2 million internally displaced people in South Sudan are in U.N.-run camps, Farrell said. The rest have fled into the bush or into neighboring communities, “and they all want to go home to their land.”

Farrell said the tragedy of South Sudan “tires me out more and fills me with more sorrow” than even Yemen’s situation did. In 2013, two years after gaining independence from Sudan, South Sudan was caught up in a civil war.

“South Sudan is a new country, rich in resources, and all this suffering is preventable,” said Farrell, who is based in the capital, Juba.

“Education is what matters most for young people because they will be the new leaders,” he said. Instead, because of the conflict and violence, all efforts need to be directed into emergency feeding programs, “while 75 percent of women in the country cannot read or write,” he said.

Maryknoll Father John Barth, who is based in Eastern Equatoria state,

told CNS South Sudanese “are giving up hope and moving to the camps in northern Uganda by the thousands; I see them along the road when I drive back and forth across the border.”

Uganda is hosting about 1 million refugees from South Sudan. They move because “they have no food,” Father Barth said.

Teachers and others with government jobs have not been paid their monthly salaries in five months, and “even if they had been paid it would be the equivalent of about \$6, because the 500 percent inflation has ruined the value of the South Sudanese pound,” Father Barth said.

In northeastern Nigeria, the effects of violent conflict as well as changing weather patterns have exacerbated poverty and led to 5 million people in need of emergency food aid, Carosella told CNS, noting that deaths from famine-related causes have already occurred in Borno state. Since 2009, more than 20,000 people have been killed and 2.7 million forced to flee their homes by the Boko Haram insurgency, aimed at creating an Islamic state in northeast Nigeria.

Carosella said while the severity of the region’s hunger crisis is caused by conflict, the shorter rainy season of recent years has dramatically reduced harvests, and much of Lake Chad has dried up, partly because of shifting climate patterns.

Many of those forced to flee the violence have sought refuge among communities in remote rural areas, she said, noting that these communities are themselves among

the most vulnerable in the region and depend on humanitarian aid to survive. Remote rural communities hosting people displaced by Boko Haram attacks have been “immensely generous despite their own poverty,” she said.

Carosella said Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state, “used to be a trade hub, but its markets have been destroyed” by the Boko Haram attacks.

“People have lost their livelihoods and now can’t afford food and have no access to even basic services,” she said.

Even where food can be found, it is unaffordable for most people, she said.

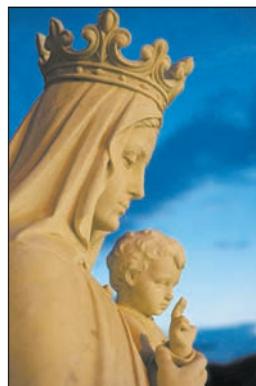
Somalia’s “continuous conflict and instability,” along with changing weather patterns, are responsible for its current crisis, Lane Bunkers, CRS country representative for Kenya and Somalia, told CNS.

The conflict started in 1991 when clan-based warlords overthrew dictator Siad Barre, then turned on each other. Today, the security threat posed by al-Shabab activity in south-central Somalia makes it difficult for CRS and others running emergency food programs to reach remote rural communities, Bunkers said.

Somalia is a “very undeveloped country that relies on rain, with rain-fed pasturelands,” and there has been insufficient rain for two years in a row, Bunkers said.

Drought conditions in Somalia are expected to continue, and recovery will not be until at least 2018, CRS said in a statement. More than 766,000 people have been displaced by the drought since November, it said.

A NEW DAY IS DAWNING



THE GRAND OPENING OF
Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church
- CARROLLTON, OHIO -

*All Are Welcome to an
Open House
Sunday, September 10, 2017
at 4:00 in the afternoon*

We will open wide the doors for you to tour our beautiful, new church -
which is filled with *Christ's Light and Love!*

Then, as a Christian Community, we shall listen to the
first refrains of our restored pipe organ!

Victor Marsilio, Master Organist,
will share his great talent in a concert, titled *"From Bach to Broadway."*



A boy guards a row of water jugs in the Rhino Refugee Camp in Uganda. Water can only be obtained during the day because pumps are solar-powered. Uganda is housing 1 million refugees from South Sudan. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)