



THE GOOD NEWS

Christmas Message

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Let us celebrate and rejoice in the greatest message ever spoken to our world: that in the fullness of time, God loved the world so much that He sent us His Son, God's Word made Flesh, Who has made His dwelling among us — and with us — through the Church. We rejoice that Jesus is truly present to us in His life-giving Word and in the Sacraments, especially in the Holy Eucharist. May you, and all your loved ones, have a blessed and Merry Christmas. And may God bless all the priests and people of the Diocese of Kalamazoo, as we continue waiting in joyful hope for the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

God bless you now and always!

Bishop convenes priests and special committee to plan for the future

Diocese explores creative options to provide best pastoral care for Southwest Michigan Catholic Community

By Vicki Cessna

Motivated by the desire to meet the pastoral needs of the faithful and armed with the reality of an aging clergy, Bishop Paul J. Bradley convened all priests in the diocese last month to continue work on a Diocesan Pastoral Plan for the future. In addition Bishop Bradley appointed lay leaders and priests from each of the six deaneries to a special Ad Hoc Committee to brainstorm and discuss possible parish collaborations.

Currently in the Diocese of Kalamazoo priests' retirements outpace priestly ordinations. Statistics gathered by Msgr. Michael Osborn, Vicar General, and Very Rev. Robert Creatan, Vicar for Clergy, were shared with both the priests and the Ad Hoc Committee. A sampling of those sobering statistics include:

More than half of the priests in the diocese are over the age of 60. God willing, Bishop Bradley will ordain four men within the coming year but that doesn't outpace the number of expected priestly retirements.

Closing parishes is not an option, according to Bishop Bradley. Instead a creative redistribution of priestly talents and responsibilities and long-term solutions are needed to provide the best pastoral care for



the more than 110,000 Catholics in Southwest Michigan.

Over the past several years Bishop Bradley has instituted a number of structures to promote collaboration among the 46 parishes and 13

missions, starting with the introduction of the deaneries in 2010. In February of 2014 parish partnerships were created with the goal of helping parishes share resources. In addition some parishes have added the staff position of "parish coordinator" to assist the pastor with administrative tasks associated with overseeing a parish.

While these measures have helped enhance pastoral care, the reality exists that more has to be done.

Last month priests in the diocese gathered with Bishop Bradley at St. John Bosco Parish and spent the afternoon reviewing possible solutions. The next step in the process is to bring recommendations back to the Ad Hoc Committee with the hope to have a finalized Diocesan Pastoral Plan by early next year. The first phase of the implementation would then be slated to begin in June, 2016.

Progress and updates on the Diocesan Plan for the Future will be shared in future editions of *The Good News* and on the diocesan website. Visit www.diokzoo.org to submit a question or idea and to see the full list of Ad Hoc Committee members.



Students from across the diocese to participate in annual March for Life

Diocese plans local observance

By Sarah DeMott

Local event planning is underway to mark the anniversary of the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision which legalized abortion in the United States. The day is set aside as a Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. Bishop Paul J. Bradley will celebrate Mass on January 22 at 5 p.m. in St. Augustine Cathedral. After Mass, all are welcome to walk to Bronson Park for an ecumenical prayer service. Hot chocolate and cookies will follow at one of the local churches. United in prayer, parishes across the diocese will also be planning Masses to gather the faithful in prayer.

At a national level, pro-life groups participate in the annual "March for Life" rally in Washington, D.C. This coming January, each of the three Catholic high schools in the diocese, Hackett Catholic Prep, St. Philip Catholic Central High School and Lake Michigan Catholic High School, along with groups from Holy Angels Parish, Sturgis and St. Mary's Assumption Parish, Bronson, will participate.

The theme for the 2016 March for Life is "Pro-Life and Pro-Woman Go Hand-in-Hand."

March for Life began as a protest against the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court ruling and is now the largest annual pro-life event in the world. For more information, visit diokzoo.org/respect-life or marchforlife.org.

Check the diocesan website and Facebook page for up-to-date details. For additional information on how you can help protect the sanctity of life contact: Lisa Irwin, Associate Director, lirwin@diokzoo.org; 269-903-0177.



Local parishioners show support for life during the 2015 local March for Life in Kalamazoo.

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass

Everyone is invited to a Bilingual Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Friday, December 11, 2015 at 7 p.m. at St. Augustine Cathedral, 542 W. Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo. The Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley will preside. We ask families to please bring a flower(s) to offer the Virgin Mary. Participants are encouraged to come dressed in traditional clothing from their native country if they wish. A reception will be held immediately following Mass in the Crowley Center. Sponsored by the Office of Multicultural and Hispanic Ministry and the Office of Christian Worship, 269-903-0197.



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FROM THE EDITOR

By Victoria Cessna

Communication Director & Editor of *The Good News*

Eagerly anticipating the birth of my first child I was determined in my preparation to leave no stone unturned. The baby's room was ready, complete with cheerful zoo animals and matching wall border. The supplies were stocked. The list of family phone numbers were compiled to herald baby Cessna's arrival (pre-internet days).

Nearing my due date I had one task left on my “to do” list: choose a pediatrician. Flexing my best investigative journalist skills I proceeded to “interview” prospective pediatricians over the phone. I don't recall all the questions though I'm sure I culled them from some “What to Expect When You're Expecting”-type book.

There was one conversation though that I recall vividly. It went something like this:

“What books do you recommend I read right now in the last few weeks,” I asked, ready with pen in hand to jot down her recommendations.

“How ‘bout a Danielle Steel,” the young doctor replied, amused.

“Excuse me?” I replied, clearly baffled by why a romance novel would help in my preparation for parenthood.

“There's not a parenting book out there that will make any sense until you have baby in hand,” she explained. “Enjoy this time. Relax. Spend time with your husband. That's my advice.”
Hired!

Sometimes in our zeal to prepare every miniscule detail in anticipation of a major life event we get lost in the weeds and miss the big picture. I'm reminded of this temptation every Advent season. As the catalogs come pouring in through the mail and my email is cluttered with enticing retail sales, I try to take a step back and remind myself that what I'm really preparing for is not a retail marathon but to receive the greatest gift we were ever given: Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And preparing for His arrival should mean a joyous, daily “to do” list of prayer and service to others.

“Don't think that love, to be true, has to be extraordinary,” said Blessed Mother Teresa. “What is necessary is to continue to love. How does a lamp burn, if it is not by the continuous feeding of little drops of oil? When there is no oil, there is no light and the bridegroom will say: “I do not know you”.

One of my favorite bits of wisdom I try to pass along to soon-to-be new parents is this: no amount of preparation will prepare you for how your heart will burst with love for this precious child of God you've been entrusted with. I know that was true for me.

During this blessed Advent season may your own lamps be filled with the right drops of oil and may your preparation lead your heart to a closer union with Jesus Christ as you feel His loving arms embrace you.

Pope Francis DECEMBER Intentions

Universal: That all may experience the mercy of God, who never tires of forgiving.

Evangelization: That families, especially those who suffer, may find in the birth of Jesus a sign of certain hope.



The Good News for the Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo

I hereby designate *The Good News* as the official publication of the Diocese of Kalamazoo. All notices and regulations, appointments, assignments, etc. issued under the caption “Official” are to be regarded as official communications of the Bishop of Kalamazoo. Opinion columns, features and letters to the editor that appear in the publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions held by *The Good News* or the Diocese of Kalamazoo.

+Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley
Bishop of Kalamazoo

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Mission Statement of The Good News: *The Good News* is the official newspaper of the Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo. The Bishop of Kalamazoo is the publisher and president. *The Good News* is an extension in the print medium of the teaching authority of the Bishop. Therefore, it must always and at all times present Catholic teaching in an orthodox, authentic and balanced manner. Its mission and goals proceed from this fundamental reality.

The mission of *The Good News*, therefore, is to enable its readers to grow in their Catholic faith, to develop as mature, well informed Catholics and to deepen their commitment to, and relationship with, the Lord, their Catholic faith and their Church.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley has announced the following assignment for the Diocese of Kalamazoo.



Bishop Paul J. Bradley has appointed Mr. Timothy Meeker to the position of Chief Financial Officer for the Diocese of Kalamazoo. Timothy began his position with the diocese on November 30, 2015. Most recently he worked as Corporate Controller for Borgess Health, Kalamazoo, where he held numerous finance leadership positions since joining the hospital in 1998. Prior to his work for Borgess, Timothy was the Assistant Controller for Three Rivers Health. He began his financial career in the banking industry at various branches of First of America Bank. Timothy earned both a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) from Western Michigan University.

As Chief Financial Officer for the diocese Timothy will report to Bishop Bradley and have responsibility for all diocesan-related financial management. In addition he will serve as Director of the diocesan Business Office, and in that role report to Msgr. Michael Osborn, General Secretary. Timothy is a member of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Portage, and a resident of Mattawan.

Fran Denny retires after more than 25 years with the agency; Timothy Lieser named new CEO of Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo

After more than 25 years leading Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo, Frances Denny will retire from the position of President/CEO effective December 31, 2015.



Fran Denny

“I am grateful for the opportunity I've had to serve others through Catholic Charities,” said Denny. “My unending hope is that the members of our communities will participate in building more generous and caring communities, where each person's human dignity is valued and acknowledged.

I thank all of the many, many people who helped Catholic Charities and me along the way.”

In addition to her work with the agency, Denny provided leadership in a number of organizations to help effect positive social change. She was a member of the Board of Directors of Catholic Charities USA and also served for 27 years on the Social Policy Committee of the Michigan Catholic Conference.

She taught at Nazareth College and served as an internship mentor for many graduate students of Western Michigan University, the University of Pittsburgh and others. **[For more on Fran's legacy see page 5.]**

“Fran's unwavering dedication to help those in need is an inspiration to many,” said Bishop Bradley. “I am grateful for her dedication to Catholic Charities and its mission. The impact of her positive leadership in the Church and the community will be realized for generations to come.”

Succeeding Fran is Mr. Timothy J Lieser who was named CEO of Catholic Charities in October. Lieser has spent his entire working with youth. Most recently he was the director of Catholic Charities Residential and Day Services and prior to that was a program manager for the Intensive Outpatient Services Day Program.



Timothy Lieser

He began his career with the St. Cloud Children's Home, a residential treatment facility for young people ages 9-18, serving males age 9 – 14 and females age 11 – 17. This family-focused, youth-centered and strength-based program has been working with youth for close to 90 years. In addition, Lieser also directed a program of outpatient day treatment for behavioral health matters. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from St. John's University, Collegeville, Minn., and a Master's in Nonprofit Management from Regis University, Denver.



Shown left is Dorothy Day's granddaughter Martha Hennessy as she listens to speakers during the 2015 fall general assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore Nov. 17. Hennessy, 60, is one of Day's nine grandchildren. Hennessy attended the U.S. bishops' annual fall general assembly in Baltimore representing *The Catholic Worker* newspaper as one of its editors. Just three years ago at the meeting, the bishops, by voice vote, endorsed Day's sainthood cause, which was opened in 2000 and she was given the title of “servant of God.”

Hennessy reminded the bishops that two months earlier Pope Francis singled out her grandmother as one of four Americans who had made the country better in his speech to a joint meeting of the U.S. Congress. Coincidentally, when the pope was making this address, Hennessy was in the middle of a three day fast and vigil across the street from the United Nations with a group advocating their solidarity with the pope's messages about caring for the poor and the environment.

For more on USCCB's General Session Meeting see page 5.

IN MEMORIAM



Sr. Mary Louise Maertens, CSJ, passed away last month. Mass of Christian Burial was held at Holy Family Chapel, Nazareth. Mary Louise Maertens was born in Detroit on May 3, 1923, the daughter of Leon and Jeanine (Van Oost) Maertens. Mary Louise was a member of St. Gertrude Parish in St. Clair Shores, Mich., at the time of her entrance into the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Nazareth on February 1, 1942. Sr. Mary Louise earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Nazareth College and Master certification in Religious Studies and Scripture from Mundelein College. For twenty-eight years she taught in several schools of the Congregation including St. Anne, Detroit; St. Mary, Flint;

St. Catherine, Algonac; and St. Agnes, Flint. In 1970, due to poor health, Sister Mary Louise returned to Nazareth where she worked as a receptionist for ten years in the Nazareth General Office. She moved to the SSJ Public Relations/Development Office in 1979 and continued working there until she retired.

THE BISHOP’S PERSPECTIVE

Endings and New Beginnings

If November is the month when the Church asks us to pray for the faithful departed and to reflect on “the Last Things” (death, judgment, Hell and Heaven) in terms of our own spiritual futures, these months of December/January are times when the Church challenges us to reflect on endings and new beginnings. The Liturgical Year came to an end right after Thanksgiving and the new Liturgical Year just recently began on November 29th with the First Sunday of Advent. At the same time, December brings 2015 to an end, while January 1st launches the New Year of 2016. The new Church Year also will bring all the new spiritual possibilities that await us as well, and wonderful new opportunities to grow in holiness and to deepen our faith. December rings out the old; January brings in the new. Advent urges us to prepare our hearts to celebrate the Birth of Christ once again; the Christmas Season opens our hearts to live the Good News of Christ’s abiding Presence with us with joy and in hope.

During this month, we also have another wonderful new opportunity to experience God’s grace and mercy in an extraordinary way as, on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on December 8th, the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy will begin, and will continue until the conclusion of this new Church Year on the Solemnity of Christ the King on November 20, 2016.

These two very important times in the Church’s new liturgical year — Advent/Christmas and the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy — complement each other beautifully. It is through the birth of Jesus Christ — the Word of God made Flesh — that the fullest expression of God’s mercy for all of us is expressed. By sending His Son into the world with the ultimate mission of reconciling and saving the world, God’s unconditional and saving love for the world, and for all people to ever live, has been demonstrated for all time. As Pope Francis put it so distinctly, Jesus’ Birth puts a human Face on God’s mercy, His love and his abiding Presence. The reason why we celebrate Christmas with such joy is because we are eternally grateful to God for giving us such an incredible treasured gift as His Son, Jesus, our Savior, Lord, and Brother.

So, in the midst of all the other ways that we are trying to prepare for Christmas through shopping, wrapping, decorating, baking and merry-making, I would like to suggest that we find ways to prepare our hearts for the “endings and new beginnings” potentially coming our way through the new Church Year, the new calendar year and the new Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. I would suggest that we consider what I call “the four P’s”: 1) Prayer, 2) Pilgrimage, 3) Personal attitudes, and 4) Practice.

Prayer: Pope Francis, in his Bull of Indiction calling for the Extraordinary Jubilee Year entitled “The Face of Mercy,” urges us to slow down and take time reflecting on God’s holy Word, who (as we know) is Jesus, the Word of God made Flesh. While we might take time to read scripture and to say daily prayers, we may find that our scripture reading and our prayers can become rote and dry if we do not periodically slow down and truly reflect on what we are reading and praying. Pope Francis points to one of the beautiful psalms as an example. Psalm 136 is a wonderful summary of salvation history. Interspersed between each stanza of that psalm is this beautiful refrain: “*For His mercy endures forever.*” This powerful prayer, repeated continually in “litany-style,” Pope Francis writes, helps us “break through the dimensions of space and time, inserting everything into the eternal mystery of love.” During this year, just as the Holy Father invites us to meditate on this refrain, we should find new ways to spend time with God whether it is by meditating on the psalms, praying the Liturgy of the Hours, or using a daily book of devotions and meditations. Keeping in daily and regular conversation with God will keep your hearts, mind and soul open to receive the wisdom and grace He wants to bring into your life.

Pilgrimage: During the hectic holiday months the media focuses much attention on the back-ups from holiday travel, the long lines at airports, the high cost of transportation and other tedious details of the season. However, travel and transportation are far different than pilgrimages. We are all “pilgrims” traveling through this world to a desired destination, with our ultimate destiny being our eternal reward in Heaven. As Pope Francis writes, “the practice of pilgrimage...represents the journey each of us makes in life.” It is for that reason that “the Holy Door” is such an important symbol during this Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. On December 8th, Pope Francis will open the “Holy Year Door” in Rome. At the same time, each Bishop will open a “Holy Year Door” in each Diocese. By making a pilgrimage to the Holy Door, whether one makes a major pilgrimage to the Holy Door in Rome or a shorter pilgrimage to the Holy Door at our Mother Church, St. Augustine Cathedral, in Kalamazoo *[see related article on Holy Door, page 7], the pilgrimage will bring us graces and blessings to help us in our life journey.

Personal Attitudes: A holiday season isn’t complete without a viewing of “A Christmas Carol” featuring the main character Ebenezer Scrooge — perhaps one of the most popular redemption stories in literature. This classic story helps us to witness the conversion and transformation of an old curmudgeon who goes from living his life in a miserly way to a life of joyful and generous largess. During the entire Year of Mercy, beginning with the season of Advent, we are called to conversion — to a change of heart. Every change starts with adjusting or revising our personal attitudes. Are we merciful as our Father is? Are we kind?



LA PERSPECTIVA DEL OBISPO

Finales y nuevos comienzos

Si noviembre es el mes en el cual la Iglesia nos invita a orar por los fieles difuntos y reflexionar sobre “las últimas cosas” (muerte, juicio, infierno y cielo), en términos de nuestros propios futuros espirituales, estos meses de diciembre / enero son tiempos en los cuales la Iglesia nos invita a reflexionar sobre finales y nuevos comienzos. El Año Litúrgico llegó a su fin justo después del día de Acción de Gracias y el nuevo Año Litúrgico recientemente comenzó el 29 de noviembre con el primer domingo de Adviento. Al mismo tiempo, diciembre trae el 2015 a su fin, mientras que el 1º de enero lanza el año nuevo del 2016. El nuevo año eclesial también traerá todas las nuevas posibilidades espirituales que nos esperan, y nuevas oportunidades maravillosas para crecer en santidad y profundizar nuestra fe. Diciembre despide el año viejo con campanas; enero trae el nuevo. El Adviento nos invita a preparar nuestros corazones para celebrar el nacimiento de Cristo, una vez más; el tiempo de Navidad abre nuestros corazones para vivir la Buena Nueva de la presencia permanente de Cristo con nosotros con alegría y con esperanza.

Durante este mes, también tenemos otra nueva oportunidad maravillosa de experimentar la gracia y la misericordia de Dios de una manera extraordinaria ya que, en la solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción el 8 de diciembre, se iniciará el Año Jubilar extraordinario de la Misericordia y continuará hasta la conclusión de este nuevo año eclesial en la solemnidad de Cristo Rey el 20 de noviembre del 2016.

Estos dos momentos muy importantes en el nuevo año litúrgico de la Iglesia — Adviento / Navidad y el Año Jubilar Extraordinario de la Misericordia — se complementan uno al otro muy bien. Es a través del nacimiento de Jesucristo — el Verbo de Dios hecho carne — que la máxima expresión de la misericordia de Dios para todos nosotros es expresada. Al enviar a su Hijo al mundo con la misión última de la reconciliación y la salvación del mundo, el amor incondicional y salvador de Dios para el mundo y para todas las personas que desde siempre han vivido, ha sido ha demostrado para todos los tiempos. Como el Papa Francisco puso tan claramente, el Nacimiento de Jesús pone un rostro humano a la misericordia de Dios, su amor y su presencia permanente. La razón por la que celebramos la Navidad con tanta alegría es porque estamos eternamente agradecidos a Dios por darnos un regalo atesorado tan increíble como su Hijo, Jesús, nuestro Salvador, Señor y Hermano.

Así, en medio de todas las otras formas en las que estamos tratando de prepararnos para la Navidad a través de compras, envolver regalos, decorar, hornear y festejar, me gustaría sugerir que encontremos maneras de preparar nuestros corazones para los “finales y nuevos inicios” potencialmente viniendo hacia nosotros a través del nuevo año eclesial, el nuevo año calendario y el nuevo Año Jubilar Extraordinario de la Misericordia. Yo sugeriría que consideramos lo que yo llamo “las cuatro P”: 1) oración (prayer), 2) Peregrinación, 3) actitudes personales, y 4) Práctica.

Oración: El Papa Francisco, en su bula de convocación pidiendo el Año Jubilar Extraordinario titulado “El rostro de la Misericordia”, nos insta a frenar y tomarnos tiempo para reflexionar la santa Palabra de Dios, que (como sabemos) es Jesús, la Palabra de Dios hecha carne. Si bien podremos tomarnos tiempo para leer las Escrituras y decir oraciones diarias, podemos encontrar que nuestra lectura de las Escrituras y nuestras oraciones pueden llegar a volverse secas y de memoria si no frenamos periódicamente y realmente reflexionamos sobre lo que estamos leyendo y orando. El Papa Francisco apunta a uno de los salmos hermosos como un ejemplo. Salmo 136 es un maravilloso resumen de la historia de la salvación. Intercalados entre cada estrofa de ese salmo es este hermoso estribillo: “Para siempre es su misericordia.” Esta poderosa oración, repetida continuamente “al estilo de letanía,” el Papa Francisco escribe, nos ayuda a “romper a través de las dimensiones de espacio y tiempo, insertando todo en el misterio eterno del amor.” Durante este año, así como el Santo Padre nos invita a meditar en este estribillo, debemos encontrar nuevas maneras de pasar tiempo con Dios bien sea meditando los salmos, rezando la Liturgia de la Horas o usando un libro diario de devociones y meditaciones. Manteniendo a diario y regularmente una conversación con Dios mantendrá sus corazones, mente y alma abiertas a recibir la sabiduría y la gracia que Él quiere traer a sus vidas.

Peregrinación: Durante los agitados meses festivos los medios de comunicación centran mucha atención en los embotellamientos por los viajes para celebrar las fiestas, las largas colas en los aeropuertos, los altos costos de transporte y otros detalles tediosos de la temporada. Sin embargo, viajes y transporte son muy diferentes a peregrinaciones. Todos somos “peregrinos” que viajamos a través de este mundo a un destino deseado, siendo nuestro destino final nuestra recompensa eterna en el Cielo. Como el Papa Francisco escribe: “la práctica de peregrinación...representa el viaje que cada uno de nosotros hace en la vida.” Es por ello que “la Puerta Santa” es un símbolo tan importante durante este Año Jubilar extraordinario de la Misericordia. El 8 de diciembre, el Papa Francisco abrirá “La Puerta del año Santo” en Roma. Al mismo tiempo, cada obispo abrirá un “La Puerta del año Santo” en cada diócesis. Al hacer una peregrinación a la Puerta Santa, se haga una peregrinación mayor a la Puerta Santa en Roma o una peregrinación menor a la Puerta Santa en nuestra Iglesia Madre, la Catedral de San Agustín, en Kalamazoo * [ver el artículo relacionado en Puerta Santa, página 7], la peregrinación nos traerá gracias y bendiciones que nos ayudaran en nuestro viaje de la vida.

Seminarian Spotlight



Jeffrey Hanley

SS John & Bernard Parish, Benton Harbor,
St. Joseph High School, St. Joseph
Pontifical North American College, Rome

When did you first feel the call to become a priest? Was there an event or person who was heavily influential in your decision?

I was 14 when I first felt the call to the priesthood. During the summer before I entered High School, I attended a Franciscan Youth Conference on the campus of Franciscan University in Ohio with my youth group. It was there that, with the many speakers witnessing to their faith and particularly with an opportunity to be with Our Lord in the Eucharist in Adoration, I first encountered the call to the priesthood in a conscious way.

What is a typical day like at the seminary?

A typical day in the Seminary begins at 6:15 a.m. with Community Morning Prayer and Mass. We eat breakfast and then head out for class at our University in the city. The walk to class is about 35 minutes and a typical route takes you by the churches of St. Philip Neri, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, and St. Catherine of Siena. The morning is filled with classes and we return to the Seminary for a communal lunch. In general, afternoons are free for prayer, homework, apostolic works in the city, formation meetings, sports, or our everyday chores. In the evenings, we have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for an hour before we all gather together again for Community Evening Prayer at 6:45 p.m.

What would surprise people the most about being a seminarian?

I think that seeing the variety of backgrounds which Christ calls us from would surprise people. Some have experience in business, others turned down professional sports to come to Seminary. Some have experience in drama and music while others are very skilled with the newest technology. We have all different sorts of interests and abilities, yet God has called us each by name to follow Him in a radical way.

What is your favorite place on campus at the seminary?

My favorite spot on campus is on the roof of the Seminary. From there we can see St. Peter's Basilica as well as the skyline of the city.

What most draws you to become a priest?

I'm drawn to the priesthood through a desire to celebrate the sacraments. Christ's love for us is communicated most perfectly in the sacraments. Particularly, I want to forgive sins through the celebration of Penance and to celebrate the Eucharist with and for the People of God.

What would your best advice be to a young man who thinks he may have a calling to the priesthood?

As Christ Himself invited His future disciples in the Gospel of John, “Come, and see!” Ask your parish priest or a priest friend what it is like or talk to them about how they knew Christ was calling them. Don't be afraid to ask the Lord what He wants for you in your life. You'll never know if you never give the Lord a chance to speak.

Who is your favorite saint? Why?

My favorite saint is St. Thérèse of Lisieux. She is my favorite because of her childlike love of God, her “little way” to heaven as she describes it. Her little way shows us just how loving and tender God the Father is to us His children when we place our trust in Him.

Who has been the most influential priest in your life?

If I could only name one, I would say Msgr. Osborn has been the most influential priest in my life. I began working for him in High School and it was through him that I fell in love with Jesus and His Church.



The Bishop's Perspective

Continued from page 3

What lengths do we go to reject sin in our lives? Are we grateful? Are we living our lives as Jesus came to show the world how to live? Are we practicing in our own lives the same works of charity and mercy which Jesus lived? Are we the miserly Scrooge, or can we change to be the joyful and generous renewed Scrooge?

Practice: Praying, making a pilgrimage, adjusting our personal attitudes are all important “P’s” but we’re also invited to a fourth “P” — practice. Our Holy Father encourages us during this Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy to live our faith with joy and to put our faith into practice through the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy [see listing below]. A deep and personal relationship with Jesus is necessary, and we demonstrate that personal relationship by caring for and reaching out in loving service to our fellow “pilgrims” on our life’s journey. We are to be so steeped in God’s love and mercy that “we can go out to every man and woman, bringing the goodness and tenderness of God.” The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops has a number of wonderful resources to help you practice the spiritual and corporal works, including meditations and reflections on mercy. In addition, it would be good to check out the social media campaign, #mercyinmotion on Twitter, to help raise awareness and excitement for those wonderful examples of people demonstrating what it means to be the “face of God’s mercy” in real life situations.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, as we go through these endings and new beginnings during these two special months, our focus should be on the great blessing of preparing our hearts for the greatest gift God gives us — His only-begotten Son — Who came into the world as an Infant to save all of humanity. As we prepare for this Gift, and for the coming Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, let us embrace this opportunity to be purposeful in our devotion, to allow our hearts to be converted by God’s love, and allow our lives to shine as brightly as the Christmas Star when the Angels announced the Good News of Jesus’ birth: “*Glory to God in the Highest and on Earth, Peace to all people of good will.*”

May God bless you now and always.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Actitudes personales: Las fiestas no están completas sin ver “A Christmas Carol” (Un cuento de Navidad), con el personaje principal Ebenezer Scrooge — tal vez una de las historias de redención más populares de la literatura. Esta clásica historia nos ayuda a ser testigos de la conversión y la transformación de un viejo cascarrabias que pasa de vivir su vida de una manera miserable a una vida de alegre y de generosa largueza. Durante todo el Año de la Misericordia, comenzando con la temporada de Adviento, estamos llamados a la conversión — a un cambio de corazón. Todo cambio comienza con el ajuste o revisión de nuestras actitudes personales. ¿Somos misericordiosos como lo es nuestro Padre? ¿Somos amables? ¿Hasta dónde vamos para rechazar el pecado en nuestras vidas? ¿Somos agradecidos? ¿Estamos viviendo nuestras vidas como Jesús vino a mostrarnos que vivamos? ¿Estamos practicando en nuestras propias vidas las mismas obras de caridad y misericordia que vivió Jesús? ¿Somos el avaro Scrooge, o podemos cambiar para ser el alegre y generoso renovado Scrooge?

Práctica: Rezar, hacer una peregrinación, ajustar nuestras actitudes personales son importantes “P”, pero estamos también invitados a una cuarta “P” — práctica. Nuestro Santo Padre nos anima durante este Año Jubilar extraordinario de la Misericordia a vivir nuestra fe con alegría y poner en práctica nuestra fe a través de las obras espirituales y corporales de misericordia [ver lista más abajo]. Es necesaria una relación profunda y personal con Jesús, y demostramos esa relación personal cuidando y llegando en servicio amoroso a nuestros semejantes “peregrinos” en el viaje de nuestra vida. Debemos estar tan empapados del amor y misericordia de Dios que “podemos salir a cada hombre y mujer, llevando la bondad y ternura de Dios.” La Conferencia Católica de los Obispos de los Estados Unidos tiene una serie de recursos maravillosos para ayudarles a practicar la obras espirituales y corporales, incluyendo meditaciones y reflexiones sobre la misericordia. Además, sería bueno revisar la campaña de medios sociales, #mercyinmotion en Twitter, para ayudar a crear conciencia y emoción hacia esos ejemplos maravillosos de personas que demuestran lo que significa ser el “rostro de la misericordia de Dios” en situaciones de la vida real.

Queridos hermanas y hermanos en Cristo, a medida que avanzamos a través de estos finales y nuevos comienzos durante estos dos meses especiales, nuestro enfoque debería estar en la gran bendición de preparar nuestro corazón para el regalo más grande que Dios nos da — Su Hijo unigénito — Quien vino al mundo como un infante para salvar a toda la humanidad. Mientras nos preparamos para este regalo, y para el próximo Año Jubilar Extraordinario de la Misericordia, abrasemos esta oportunidad para ser decididos en nuestra devoción, para permitir que nuestro corazones sean convertidos por el amor de Dios, y permitir que nuestras vidas brillen tanto como la estrella de Navidad, cuando los ángeles anunciaron la buena noticia del nacimiento de Jesús: “*¡Gloria a Dios en las alturas y en la tierra paz a los hombres de buena voluntad!*.”

Que Dios los bendiga ahora y siempre.
Fielmente suyos en Cristo

THE CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY • Feed the hungry • Give drink to the thirsty • Clothe the naked • Shelter the homeless • Visit the sick • Visit the imprisoned • Bury the dead

THE SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY • Admonish the sinner • Instruct the ignorant • Counsel the doubtful • Comfort the sorrowful • Bear wrongs patiently • Forgive all injuries • Pray for the living and the dead.

Borgess closes 125th Anniversary with special time capsule opening and prayer event with Bishop Bradley December 8

The 125th Anniversary of Borgess Health concludes Tuesday, December 8, the historic day Borgess Hospital officially opened as Kalamazoo's first hospital in 1889. At 4:30 p.m., a time capsule opening ceremony will take place, followed at 5 p.m. by a public prayer service with Bishop Bradley in the Lawrence Education Center.

In a 1989 event celebrating the first 100 years of Borgess, a time capsule was placed in the Lawrence Education Center lobby. It was filled with newsletters, special documents and even a Lake Doster hole-in-one scorecard from Martin Verzi, former president and CEO, Borgess Medical Center. The time capsule will be opened for the first time, inspected and then additional items will be added, space permitting.



Pray for Vocations

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Statement on pornography, politics take center stage at USCCB

By Catholic News Service

BALTIMORE (CNS) — The U.S. bishops approved a formal statement on pornography and additions to their quadrennial statement on political responsibility at their Nov. 16-19 fall general meeting in Baltimore.

The 2015 version of political responsibility document, “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” passed 210-21 with five abstentions, and a separate vote on the statement’s introductory note passed 217-16 with two abstentions; two-thirds of diocesan bishops, or 181 votes, were needed for passage.

Additions to the document were made to reflect the teachings of Pope Francis and the later encyclicals of Pope Benedict XVI.

The pornography statement, “Create in Me a Clean Heart: A Pastoral Response to Pornography,” says that “producing or using pornography is gravely wrong” and is a “mortal sin” if committed with deliberate consent and urges Catholics to turn away from it. Approval of the statement came on a vote of 230-4 with one abstention, with 181 votes needed for passage.

The bishops approved priorities and strategic plans for 2017-20 in a 233-4 vote Nov. 17. The document emphasizes five major areas: evangelization, family and marriage; human life and dignity; religious freedom; and vocations and ongoing formation.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops met in the shadow of the Nov. 13 terror attacks in Paris. Auxiliary Bishop Eusebio Elizondo of Seattle, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Migration, issued a statement Nov. 17 from the floor of the meeting. “I am disturbed,” Bishop Elizondo said, “by calls from both federal and state officials for an end to the resettlement of Syrian refugees in the United States” in the wake of the attacks. “These refugees are fleeing terror themselves — violence like we have witnessed in Paris.”

He added, “Moreover, refugees to this country must pass security checks and multiple interviews before entering the United States — more than any arrival to the United States. It can take up to two years for a refugee to pass through the whole vetting process. We can look at strengthening the already stringent screening program, but we should continue to welcome those in desperate need.”

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano of Bridgeport, Connecticut, in a Nov. 17 presentation, said 13,000 people were already registered for World Youth Day, to be held July 25-31 in Krakow, Poland, with U.S. registration expected to top 30,000.

On Nov. 16, the bishops discussed how the U.S. Catholic Church can move forward in response to the Supreme Court’s ruling on same-sex marriage this year. To that end, the bishops are planning to develop a pastoral plan for marriage and family life. The pastoral plan, according to Bishop Malone, will seek the bishops’ input.

Contributing to this roundup were Nancy Frazier O’Brien, Dennis Sadowski and Carol Zimmermann in Baltimore, and Mark Pattison in Washington. Videos to accompany this story can be viewed at https://youtu.be/_J0eZqPTbTc, https://youtu.be/AvHTILh_ScA, <https://youtu.be/RC1kJK6G3Ms>.



Bishop David A. Zubik of Pittsburgh and Bishop Paul J. Bradley, left, shares a light moment with a fellow bishop during the 2015 fall general assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore Nov. 17. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

Diocesan Heating Assistance Program assists those in need during brutal winter months

The Diocesan Heating Assistance Program (DHAP) will operate from Monday, January 4, 2016 through Wednesday, March 28, 2016 or until no funds remain. If you know of someone needing heating assistance, call your parish or mission. Heating Assistance Volunteers will screen all those who come in for assistance. The maximum amount of assistance is \$250 per household per heating assistance season.

Anyone still wishing to make a contribution to the 2015-2016 Diocesan Heating Assistance Program may send a check (payable to the Diocese of Kalamazoo / Memo: DHAP), 215 N. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49007-3760.

If you have questions about the program, please contact Kerry Williams at kerrywilliams@ccdok.org.



DIOCESAN
HEATING
ASSISTANCE

2015 Christmas Liturgy schedule St. Augustine Cathedral

Monday December 21, 2015
Regular Daily Mass Schedule
Individual Reconciliation
6:30-7:30 p.m. in the Cathedral

Tuesday December 22, 2015
Regular Daily Mass Schedule
Individual Reconciliation
6:30-7:30 p.m.
in the Cathedral

Wednesday December 23, 2015
Regular Daily Mass Schedule
Masses will be held in the
Keating Chapel in the
Crowley Center
Individual Reconciliation
6:30-7:30 p.m. in the Cathedral

Christmas Eve

Thursday December 24, 2015
7 a.m. Mass
Daily Mass in the Keating Chapel
in the Crowley Center

4 p.m. Mass — Traditional Carols,
Organ and Cantor

6 p.m. Mass — Traditional Carols,
Organ and Cantor

11:30 p.m. — Traditional Carols,
Cathedral Choir with Brass

Midnight Mass
Solemn Pontifical Liturgy

Christmas Day

Friday December 25, 2015
The Nativity of Our Lord

9:30 a.m. Mass
Traditional Carols,
Organ and Cantor

11:30 a.m. Mass
Solemn Liturgy of Christmas Day
Cathedral Choir



The Other Six Days | By Jane Knuth

Mary-Therese and Virginia: Faith in the Fifties



I asked two women, “How is faith part of the other six days of your week?”

Mary-Therese — My name is actually a testament to faith: the faith of my Catholic parents and at least three nurses. I was born three months early and way too tiny (1 lb 15 ozs), more than fifty years ago in a Catholic hospital in Detroit. Back then, babies that small rarely survived. A nurse baptized me in the delivery room as I was not expected to live. Within days my weight dropped to 21 ounces. My lungs weren’t fully developed so I often just stopped breathing (years later a nurse recalled of me, “she died five times on me!”). One of the nurses told my parents she would pray for me to the Blessed Virgin; another to St. Therese of Lisieux; and a third to St. Jude. That’s how I got my name: Mary-Therese Judith.

God is in my prayer times of each day: morning prayer, the daily Mass readings and a reflection to start, and evening prayer to close. My faith goes beyond prayer, though: it’s about God being everywhere. Some people hate grocery shopping but I love it. Seeing all the colorful produce at Meijer, aisles of foods from around the world, fresh meats and seafood — how blessed we are to have such bounty. It’s too crowded? Look at all the different people — skin color, clothing styles, accents, what’s in their carts — every person has a story, every one matters. Traffic jam on the way home? Let someone in ahead of you, and watch: they will usually do the same for someone else. If not — oh, well, it doesn’t undo the kindness.

Virginia — For me, God has always spoken through music. I am a professional musician performing traditional music from the Celtic traditions of England, Ireland, Scotland and the United States. Part of living my faith involves getting music to people who would love to hear it but can’t afford tickets to concerts. Anyone can take their gifts and talents and give them back to their local community. I feel led to that. Playing music live to people can be very healing.

School cafeteria workers create mural of thanks

A giant turkey with “feathers” representing grateful wishes from students adorned the wall of St. Monica’s last month. The creative artwork was the idea of St. Monica cafeteria staff: Darcy Campbell, Jenny Wallace and Stacy Lukas.

“The kids have been so excited. They keep coming down to see the feathers that have been added each day,” said Wallace. “When we started this, we didn’t care if we had 70 feathers with “Mom” written on them. We just wanted to do something meaningful for the children that we serve in the cafeteria each day.”

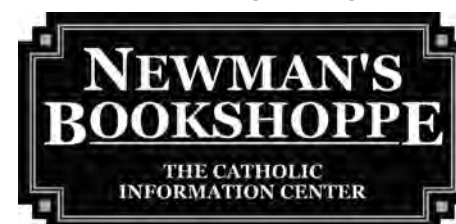
Shown above from left are: Jenny Wallace, Stacy Lukas and Darcy Campbell.



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While keeping the “Christ” in Christmas don’t forget to keep the “Preparation” in Advent

By Sarah DeMott

The liturgical season of Advent is the season of preparing for the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is a time to slow down, wait and prepare for the celebration that is to come.

Following are just a few tips for keeping the preparation in Advent

Savor the season: Wait to put up/decorate your Christmas tree until Christmas Eve, or only put lights on, adding ornaments on Christmas Eve.

Simplify: Make simple meals, avoid meat on Fridays, skip dessert. Donate the leftover grocery budget to a charity or your parish.

Unplug: Designate time each day to unplug from tv and social media. Spend that time in prayer or pick up an Advent devotional.

Pray: Adopt special prayers during the season such as an Advent novena, Christmas Anticipation prayer (see aside) or rosary as a family.

Get crafty: Make an Advent wreath to light at dinner each night. If you have young children, use a Jesse Tree or Advent Calendar to help them countdown to Christmastide. Add pieces to your nativity set one day at a time to foster excitement of what is to come.

Be a pilgrim: Make a pilgrimage to a local Marian Shrine (close options include Our Lady of Lourdes Shrines at the Assumption Grotto Church in Detroit or St. John Vianney Parish in Wyoming, Mich.)

Help those in need: Devote extra time to community service or volunteering. Help out a soup kitchen or homeless shelter as a family.

Stock up on grace: Go to confession at least once during Advent.



What is a Jesse Tree?

Isaiah 11:1: “A shoot shall come out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.”

A perhaps lesser known tradition than the Advent wreath and calendar, the Jesse Tree is an Advent tradition symbolizing Jesus’ family tree. Jesse was the father of King David, and is considered the first person in the genealogy of Jesus. The “tree” can be as simple as a tree drawn and cut out of paper, or as elaborate as a mini Christmas tree. Ornaments are made or bought, representing verses relating to Jesus’ ancestors and events



Christmas Anticipation Prayer – Recited 15 times each day throughout Advent

Hail and blessed be the hour and moment

In which the Son of God was born

Of the most pure Virgin Mary,

At midnight, in Bethlehem, in the piercing cold.

In that hour vouchsafe

I beseech Thee, O my God,

to hear my prayer and grant my desires,

[mention your request]

Through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ,
and of His blessed Mother. Amen.

leading up to His birth. Each is associated with a different story from Scripture (an apple ornament for the story of Adam and Eve, etc.). There are several simple tutorials available online.

Feast days to celebrate during Advent

- Dec. 3 – St. Francis Xavier
- Dec. 4 – St. John Damascene
- Dec. 6 – St. Nicholas
- Dec. 7 – St. Ambrose
- Dec. 8 – Immaculate Conception (holy day of obligation)
- Dec. 9 – Blessed Juan Diego
- Dec. 12 – Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Dec. 13 – St. Lucy
- Dec. 14 – St. John of the Cross

Outgoing Catholic Charities CEO calls three-decades of service a blessing

Fran Denny, President and CEO, will retire December 31, 2015 after 27 years

By Vicki Cessna

The seeds of her life’s work were sown in Fran Denny when she was a wide-eyed five year old girl. It was at that time in her life when her family moved from Camden, NJ to the Philadelphia suburbs. Trips back to family in NJ involved traveling through the depressed neighborhoods of the city of brotherly love. As a little girl Fran watched out the back seat windows and the many men loitering in doorways.

“As my parents would tell me years later, on one trip I asked them ‘who’s going to help these men?’ Looking back she realized that her life’s mission was to do just that—help people.

This month Fran bids farewell to her position as President/CEO of Catholic Charities, an organization that she has been a part of for more than 27 years in the Diocese of Kalamazoo and 8 years in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. She leaves joyfully and without fear, trusting that she’ll continue to listen for God’s plan for this next stage of her life.

Ironically when Fran first came to Kalamazoo she originally intended to stay about three to five years. That plan changed when the Executive Director of the organization resigned four months after she arrived.

Looking back on her life’s vocations she remembers starting out on a different path. “Originally I thought I’d be a math teacher,” she muses. “However, I’ve been so blessed to have many, many wonderful people in my life that helped mentor me.”

During college Fran changed her major to social work, earned her degree from West Chester University and by age 30 was working as a family therapist at Catholic Charities. It was during this time that she worked with Sr. Teresa Barchie a Sister of Mercy who Fran describes as a “brilliant woman. She walked along with me as I was guided into the

Everyone is invited to join Bishop Bradley and Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo in celebrating two special events on December 6th at the Fetzer Center on WMU’s campus.

- Join us in celebrating **St. Nicholas Day** from 3:30 p.m. - 5 p.m.. During the celebration, Bishop Bradley will share the real story of St. Nicholas and his life and work. There will also be special crafts for children to enjoy and delicious treats for all.

- Join Catholic Charities in celebrating the retirement of our **President/CEO, Fran Denny** from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

RSVP’s encouraged but not mandatory.
Please call: 269-381-9800.

Catholic Church.”

There were many signs along the way gently guiding her conversion to Catholicism but Fran remembers one time in particular. It was during a staff meeting where a priest started off his talk asking everyone to answer the first question in the Baltimore Catechism.

“I was the only person in the room that couldn’t recite the answer by heart,” she recalls. “I knew then that I wanted to learn more and it was God guiding me along.”

Working with those at society’s margins for close to three decades gives Denny a unique perspective. The changes in society, the business world and Southwest Michigan have been dramatic since she first began. She is encouraged by the growing awareness of challenges such as homelessness and human trafficking and while Catholic Charities is blessed by a great team of dedicated staff, Denny stresses how much more help is really needed.

“Everyone can make a difference,” she explains. “From volunteer s to donors to those who pray for us to those who are simply being kind to their fellow human beings.”

When asked what she’s most proud of, Denny counts the



Bishop Bradley and Fran Denny choose rocks to write on for Caring Network’s Prayer Place.

success of Caring Network, an outreach to pregnant woman, now in its 26th year, as one of the highlights. Just recently she was surprised by a former client who had stopped by the agency with her eight-year-old and husband in tow.

The client then proceeded to express her gratitude and detail what a difference her case worker and the agency had made in her life.

“We rarely get the opportunity to see the long-term outcomes of our work with clients. But no one who does this work is in it for the immediate effects. You’re here to help and love that person in the moment create hope and serve all.”

When asked what she’s most happy about as she looks back on her time she says, “I think I was given a mission very early in life. And to be able to live out that mission goes beyond my wildest dreams. I just feel so immensely blessed to have had the life I’ve had so far.”

Vatican Christmas stamps feature manuscript painting of Holy Family

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — This year’s Vatican Christmas stamps feature a 15th-century manuscript illumination of the Holy Family. Flanked by a lowing ox and a donkey, Mary and Joseph pray over baby Jesus as angels sing above and poor shepherds approach. The image, painted by an unknown artist, is from the Codices Urbinae Latini 239 (1477-1478) from the Vatican Library. The special edition stamps went on sale Nov. 19 in two denominations of 80 euro cents and 95 euro cents in sheets of 10.

The Vatican post office and Philatelic and Numismatic Office also offer a collector’s booklet containing four 95 euro-cent stamps and commemorative cover for 3.80 euro. All order requests should be made by email to: order.ufr@scv.va. The Vatican stamp office will then send a proper order form and methods of payment.



Diocese to sponsor healing retreat for those suffering from an experience with abortion

Rachel’s Vineyard retreat program offered February 5-7, 2016

By Vicki Cessna

“Participants come in feeling fearful and unworthy and leave with a enormous weight lifted,” says Maggie Walsh when describing a common occurrence for those participating in a Rachel’s Vineyard retreat. The two-day spiritual retreat is a program of Project Rachel and locally is served by Catholic Charities West Michigan. In February, the Diocese of Kalamazoo, will sponsor the retreat in the Kalamazoo area.

The program, which began in 1986 by Theresa Karminski Burke, Ph. D., was one of the first therapeutic support groups for post-abortion women. In 1994, *Rachel’s Vineyard: A Psychological and Spiritual Journey* for Post Abortion Healing was first published. It was a unique support group model for counselors, offering a concrete, emotional experience for women who were grieving the loss of their aborted children. In 1995, Theresa adapted and expanded the curriculum into a format for weekend retreats. Today more than 700-800 retreats are offered worldwide. And while word of mouth has helped bolster the healing ministry, Walsh notes that it’s still very challenging to reach those who need the program the most.

“Some are just so fearful to open the wound and others may have left the Church altogether,” she notes. “The most important thing to note with this retreat is that healing does happen. It’s not a magic pill but it propels a person’s healing journey.”

And the retreat is not restricted to those women who have had an abortion but is open to anyone who is suffering from an experience with abortion including men, parents, grandparents or friends. “Sometimes we have parents who’ve learned about a child’s experience with abortion or other times it could be someone who helped in the process,” adds Walsh.

While it’s not common to have single men attend it does happen and Walsh notes that each group has its own dynamic.

“God weaves together what needs to be. Sometimes a person’s witness or testimony will be just what another participant needed to hear.” The retreat typically begins on a Friday afternoon and concludes on a Sunday. The program consists of spiritual and psychological exercises, a memorial service and the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. At least half of the members of the presenting team have a related experience with abortion. The cost is \$140 but Walsh is quick to point out that no one is turned away.

And the healing continues after the retreat. Participants can choose to be involved in a variety of options from a monthly support group to additional personal counseling to online support resources. Oftentimes even while participants can acknowledge God’s love, they struggle with forgiving themselves.

“I had one participant who told me she woke up every day for 37 years with a huge weight pressing on her. After the retreat she said it was if the weight disappeared and she could feel hopeful,” said Walsh.

For more information on Rachel’s Vineyard or Project Rachel, contact Maggie Walsh, Project Rachel and Social Justice Coordinator, CCHD and CRS Diocesan Coordinator, Catholic Charities West Michigan, (616) 340-1824 or (800) 800-8284 (MI only); mwalsh@ccwestmi.org

Holy Door at St. Augustine Cathedral will be opened December 12th

During the Year of Mercy pilgrims encouraged to go through Holy Door to gain indulgence

O God, by means of Moses, you instituted for your people a jubilee year and year of forgiveness, grant that your Church may live with joy this opportune time during which you open up for us, your faithful, the holy door, that they may enter and lift up to you their prayers and thus receiving forgiveness and indulgence and the full remission of their sins, they may walk speedily into a new life in accordance with the Gospel of your Son and may reach the heavenly glory of your house.”

— Blessed Paul VI, Prayer for Opening of the Holy Door Vatican City, 1975



A designated “Holy Door” was sealed at St. Augustine Cathedral by Msgr. Thomas Martin, rector of the Cathedral, on November 28th. Shortly before the 4 p.m. Mass on December 12th, the Holy Door will be unsealed and opened by Bishop Paul J. Bradley in solidarity with the Holy Door opening by Pope Francis in Rome.

A holy door, or *porta sancta*, has been used since the fifteenth century as a ritual expression of conversion. Pilgrims and penitents pass through it as a gesture of leaving the past behind and crossing the threshold from sin to grace, from slavery to freedom, and from darkness to light. Often these rituals are associated with prayer, pilgrimage, sacrifice, confession, and indulgences.

But the door finds meaning only when the believer associates the door with Christ. In the words of Pope Francis, “There is only one way that opens wide the entrance into the life of communion with God: this is Jesus, the one and absolute way to salvation. To him alone can the words of the Psalmist be applied in full truth: ‘This is the door of the Lord where the just may enter’ (Ps 118:20).”

Saint John Paul II offers a similar exhortation: “To focus on the door is to recall the responsibility of every believer to cross its threshold. To pass through that door means to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord; it is to strengthen faith in him in order to live the new life which he has given us. It is a decision which presumes freedom to choose and also the courage to leave something behind, in the knowledge that what is gained is divine life [cf. Mt 13:44-46]” (Saint John Paul II, *Incarnationis Mysterium*, 8, in the year 2000).



John’s gospel clearly depicts this relationship between Jesus and us. “Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life, and have it more abundantly” (John 10:7-10).

It is fitting that a Holy Door be situated within a church building. The door of the Church is the *ianua ecclesiae* — “the silent witness to all the moments of our lives” (USCCB, *About the Jubilee Door*, 1999). Often sacramental rituals begin at the door — here, the priest or deacon welcomes the parents as they bring their child for baptism; here, he greets the bride and groom as they begin the wedding liturgy; here, he greets the catechumens at the Rite of Acceptance; and, finally, the priest greets the casket at the beginning of the funeral liturgy.

In order to gain a plenary indulgence for the Year of Mercy one of the requirements is to make a pilgrimage to a Jubilee shrine or place (such as a cathedral) and walk through the designated “Holy Door” and participate in a liturgical celebration or devotional exercise.

Pictured left is the The Holy Door at the Basilica of St. John Lateran. The Holy Doors of Rome’s four papal basilicas will be opened during the Holy Year of Mercy, which begins Dec. 8. In Catholic tradition, the Holy Door represents the passage to salvation — the path to a new and eternal life, which was opened to humanity by Jesus. It also symbolizes an entryway to God’s

mercy — the ultimate and supreme act by which he comes to meet people. Mercy is “the bridge that connects God and humanity, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness,” the pope wrote in *Misericordiae Vultus* (“The Face of Mercy”), instituting the Holy Year of Mercy. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

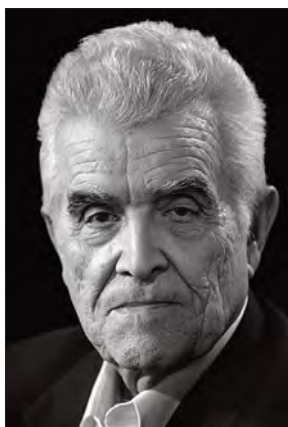


By Bishop Robert Barron

RENÉ GIRARD, CHURCH FATHER

René Girard, one of the most influential Catholic philosophers in the world, died last week at the age of 91. Born in Avignon and a member of the illustrious Académie Française, Girard nevertheless made his academic reputation in the United States, as a professor at Indiana University, Johns Hopkins University and Stanford University.

There are some thinkers that offer intriguing ideas and proposals, and there is a tiny handful of thinkers that manage to shake your world. Girard was in this second camp. In a series of books and articles, written across several decades, he proposed a social theory of extraordinary explanatory power. Drawing inspiration from some of the greatest literary masters of the West—Dostoevsky, Shakespeare, Proust among others—Girard opined that desire is both mimetic and triangular. He meant that we rarely desire objects straightforwardly; rather, we desire them because others desire them:



as we imitate (mimesis) another's desire, we establish a triangulation between self, other, and object. If this sounds too rarefied, think of the manner in which practically all of advertising works: I come to want those gym shoes, not because of their intrinsic value, but because the hottest NBA star wants them. Now what mimetic desire leads to, almost inevitably, is conflict. If you want to see this dynamic in the concrete, watch what happens

when toddler A imitates the desire of toddler B for the same toy, or when dictator A mimics the desire of dictator B for the same route of access to the sea.

The tension that arises from mimetic desire is dealt with through what Girard called the scapegoating mechanism. A society, large or small, that finds itself in conflict comes together through a common act of blaming an individual or group purportedly responsible for the conflict. So for instance, a group of people in a coffee klatch will speak in an anodyne way for a time, but in relatively short order, they will commence to gossip, and they will

find, customarily, a real fellow feeling in the process. What they are accomplishing, on Girard's reading, is a discharging of the tension of their mimetic rivalry onto a third party. The same dynamic obtains among intellectuals. When I was doing my post-graduate study, I heard the decidedly Girardian remark: “the only thing that two academics can agree upon is how poor the work of a third academic is!” Hitler was one of the shrewdest manipulators of the scapegoating mechanism. He brought the deeply divided German nation of the 1930's together precisely by assigning the Jews as a scapegoat for the country's economic, political, and cultural woes. Watch a video of one of the Nuremberg rallies of the mid-thirties to see the Girardian theory on vivid display.

Now precisely because this mechanism produces a kind of peace, however ersatz and unstable, it has been revered by the great mythologies and religions of the world and interpreted as something that God or the gods smile upon. Perhaps the most ingenious aspect of Girard's theorizing is his identification of this tendency. In the founding myths of most societies, we find some act of primal violence that actually establishes the order of the community, and in

the rituals of those societies, we discover a repeated acting out of the original scapegoating. For a literary presentation of this ritualization of society-creating violence, look no further than Shirley Jackson's masterpiece “The Lottery.”

The main features of this theory were in place when Girard turned for the first time in a serious way to the Christian Scriptures. What he found astonished him and changed his life. He discovered that the Bible knew all about mimetic desire and scapegoating violence but it also contained something altogether new, namely, the de-sacralizing of the process that is revered in all of the myths and religions of the world. The crucifixion of Jesus is a classic instance of the old pattern. It is utterly consistent with the Girardian theory that Caiaphas, the leading religious figure of the time, could say to his colleagues, “Is it not better for you that one man should die for the people than for the whole nation to perish?” In any other religious context, this sort of rationalization would be valorized. But in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, this stunning truth is revealed: God is not on the side of the scapegoaters but rather on the side of the scapegoated victim. The true God in fact does not sanction

a community created through violence; rather, he sanctions what Jesus called the Kingdom of God, a society grounded in forgiveness, love, and identification with the victim. Once Girard saw this pattern, he found it everywhere in the Gospels and in Christian literature. For a particularly clear example of the unveiling process, take a hard look at the story of the woman caught in adultery.

In the second half of the twentieth century, academics tended to characterize Christianity—if they took it seriously at all—as one more iteration of the mythic story that can be found in practically every culture. From the Epic of Gilgamesh to Star Wars, the “mono-myth,” to use Joseph Campbell's formula, is told over and again. What Girard saw was that this tired theorizing has it precisely wrong. In point of fact, Christianity is the revelation (the unveiling) of what the myths want to veil; it is the deconstruction of the mono-myth, not a reiteration of it—which is exactly why so many within academe want to domesticate and de-fang it.

The recovery of Christianity as revelation, as an unmasking of what all the other religions are saying, is René Girard's permanent and unsettling contribution.

Program offers tools for navigating the holidays

By Phyllis Florian

For many people the holiday season can be challenging to navigate as family gatherings ignite painful memories. Memories of fights, loneliness, or unspeakable abuse at the hands of a relative, or confusing and painful relationships with parents or other loved ones can resurface.

The Diocese of Kalamazoo understands how complicated family life may be. Through the Trauma Recovery Program, people

with histories of trauma, abuse or neglect in childhood may find a safe place to explore how past hurts affect current relationships and family functioning. The program invites participants to learn about new tools that help survivors feel safe, respected, and capable of navigating the complex relationships in their lives. While the program acknowledges that past events may have hurt us deeply, the focus of the “survival” work is on present situations and relation-

ships. In this way, participants learn to contribute new methods of handling the holidays and every day differently.

The program offers tools that work for a lifetime, helping people feel empowered when they used to feel helpless, increasing self-esteem and positive relationships. Often, we hear from past participants who describe the program as the beginning of changes that have positively affected many aspects of their lives. Program “graduates”

often refer back to materials and find these resources are applicable to everyday situations including the holidays.

The hope for the future is brighter for participants in the Trauma Recovery Program. If you believe that this program may benefit you, please contact Phyllis Florian at (269) 381-8917, ext. 223. There are still spots available for the next Trauma Recovery Program session, which begins on January 25, 2016.

Winter 2016 Dates:

*All classes meet on Mondays, except the special Saturday session, which meets on March 19 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Classes are held in the morning (9:30 a.m. to 12 noon) or evening (7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.).

January 25

February 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

March 7, 14

March 19*

March 21

Participants must call 381-8917 ext. 223 to register. Currently we still have openings for both morning and evening classes.

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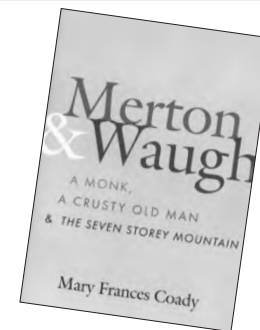
Letters between Trappist and his editors explore obedience, conscience

By Mitch Finley, Catholic News Service

“Merton & Waugh: A Monk, a Crusty Old Man & ‘The Seven Storey Mountain’” by Mary Frances Coady. Paraclete Press (Brewster, Massachusetts), 155 pp., \$22.

As published, the complete letters of Fr. Thomas Merton (1915-1968) — the well known Trappist monk, author, social critic and poet — come to five hefty volumes. To read these, however, means to get only one side of the conversation. Turning to Fr. Merton's correspondence with Evelyn Waugh (1903-1966), the two men — both of whom left the Anglican Church for Catholicism as adults — wrote these letters between July 1948 and February 1952. Waugh agreed to edit the American edition of “The Seven Storey Mountain” for British readers, and this version appeared in 1949 with the title changed to “Elected Silence.” Father Merton wrote 13 of the letters in this book, Waugh wrote seven. Editor Mary Frances Coady contributes a prefatory editor's note, an Introduction and eight commentaries that shed welcome light on the letters themselves.

In this compact volume we find the young Merton prior to, during and just after the publication of his autobiography. Twelve years older than Merton, and already a hugely successful novelist, the Waugh of these letters appears as something of a mentor to the younger man. Father Merton expresses gratitude to Waugh for skillful editing of his work, and Waugh appears as both a big fan of Father Merton and a more experienced writer who is willing to share constructive criticism.



A Joyful Noise – The Role of Music Ministry in Catholic Liturgy

By **Sarah DeMott**

“He who sings prays twice,”
— St. Augustine

“The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art,” states the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Why is music such an integral part of worship?

According to Dave Reilly, Associate Director of Worship and Liturgy for the Diocese of Kalamazoo, music is a unifier, as is the sacrament of the Eucharist. Like friends and family gathering to sing a rousing chorus of “Happy Birthday,” regardless of their talent level, the chants and songs during

the liturgy are meant to heighten the senses and bridge the gap between peoples, unifying them in their love and devotion to Christ.

Mass was originally meant to be chanted and sung. Vatican II reintroduced the importance of music in the Mass and as a component of a parish. One can also look to the Bible for countless examples of the importance of singing and music: God handed songs down to the Israelites through Moses. Jesus and his apostles sang a hymn before their journey to the Mount of Olives.

Beth McElhone has been the music director at St. Joseph Parish in Kalamazoo for 31 years. For her, music is the best way she

knows to pray.

“Knowing that the music we create helps and invites people to pray is a tremendous gift,” she says. “Music allows many people to get to the heart of their faith, sometimes better than the written or spoken word. I am privileged to be part of that.”

Joe Schreck, who has been singing at St. Augustine Cathedral for more than 26 years, agrees.

“I have always felt that the power of music helps convey the message in a way that sometimes the spoken word can’t,” Schreck says. “One of the highlights of the liturgical season for me every year is the Tenebrae service on Good Friday. It is a solemn and intimate service of music and readings. For several years I have had the opportunity to sing a set of lamentations, which I find particularly moving.”

Having a solid music ministry at a parish doesn’t require a trained musician or even an organ. As long as there are leaders who can guide a congregation through the celebration of the Mass, their role can be fulfilled.

“There’s more to music ministry than having a good voice,” says Reilly. “It is more important

to have an attitude of being unified in leading a congregation through the liturgy.”

According to Sing to the Lord by the USCCB, the quality of participation in sung praise has more to do with the desire to sing together because of our love of God than it does with actual musical abilities. The importance of music in the liturgy is tied to the way it connects the congregation and lifts up praise, not in exposing who can sing well and who cannot.

“God loves the sound of His people praying together as one as they lift their voices in song,” says Mike Kiebel, Music Mission Steward at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Portage. “As we pray together through music, we also minister to one another, regardless of how good or bad we consider our voice. Music has the power to do wonderful, transforming things when we use it as prayer.”

Those involved in the music ministry give a lot of themselves. Many attend every Mass, along

with weddings and funerals. They generously give of their time and talents to serve their parishes and glorify God. For special liturgies and seasons, such as Easter and Christmas, they spend hours outside of Mass practicing and preparing.

“I truly feel honored to have been part of significant liturgies at different times of people’s lives,” says Schreck. “Funeral masses, weddings, anniversary celebrations and ordinations, if I have in some way been able to enhance those liturgies then I feel like I am honoring the gift I have been given.”

The future of the music ministry, says Reilly, lies with our students.

“It is key to nurture musical leadership within a parish proactively,” says Reilly. “Start with your schools and build up leadership and skill. Children’s choirs are an excellent way to involve children, and their parents. It is a great way to provide education and formation for youth in the parish.”



Nature serves as backdrop for men’s “Into the Wild” weekend retreat

By **Peter Mallett**

I recently attended the second “Into the Wild” men’s retreat weekend held in the Diocese of Kalamazoo at the Rota-Kiwan Scout Reservation. More than 60 men participated, including several father and son pairs along with 20 men serving on the leadership team, including Chaplain Rev. Tom McNally, Parochial Vicar, St. Joseph Parish, St. Joseph and diocesan personnel Deacon Kurt Lucas, Timothy McNamara and Jamin Herold. The retreat was created by the apostolate The King’s Men, located outside Philadelphia. Founder and President Mark Houck, as well as Executive Director Chuck Harvey, participated.

The four-day retreat began with check-in on Thursday evening followed by dinner and Mass. The evening closed with a beautiful procession of the Holy Eucharist, installing the Blessed Sacrament in a small individual cabin to begin two days of onsite ‘round the clock adoration. Throughout the weekend, the men silently adored and prayed with our Lord in this makeshift chapel.

Each day participants listened to an inspiration talk and engaged in activities centered on a theme. Friday was “Leader Day” and the talk was given by Deacon David

Guido, St. Martin Parish, Vicksburg. During the day we practiced our orienteering skills and were encouraged to engage in spiritual discussion with our teammates. Saturday’s talk was centered on the theme of “provider” and presented by Deacon Louis Zemlick, St. John Bosco Parish, Mattawan. The day was spent fishing and cooking. On our last day, Sunday, Deacon Kurt Lucas, Executive Director, Parish Life and Lay Leadership for the diocese, gave a talk on the theme of “Protector” encouraging us to spiritual battle in protecting and defending our Catholic faith.

Throughout the weekend there were many opportunities for prayerful reflection and participation in the liturgy and sacraments. Bishop Bradley celebrated Mass Friday evening and Fr. McNally concluded our weekend with Mass

on Sunday. The beauty of the Eucharistic procession to our church was inspirational against the natural setting. Each morning began with the praying of the rosary and each evening concluded with what was termed a “Training by Torchlight” during which men shared their stories with others encouraging and praying for them around a bonfire near the lake.

The weekend was a great success as I witnessed and experienced great fellowship and spiritual growth through faith sharing through this unique outdoorsman experience.

NOTE: Into the Wild is scheduled to return in the fall 2016. Contact Deacon Kurt Lucas, dllucas@diokzoo.org for more information. Peter Mallett is a parishioner of St. Joseph Parish, Kalamazoo and a student in the Lay Ecclesial Ministry Institute.



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Día Mundial del Emigrante y Refugiado y Semana Nacional de la Migración

El Santo Padre Francisco ha convocado a una Jornada mundial por el emigrante y refugiado para el 17 de enero del 2016 con el lema: “*Los emigrantes y refugiados nos interpelan. La respuesta del Evangelio de la misericordia*”.

Y los Obispos de Estados Unidos invitan como todos a la Semana Nacional de la Migración del 3 al 9 de enero del 2016 con el tema: “*Dar acogida al forastero*”. (Mateo 25,35).

Los Obispos ofrecen la siguiente oración para rezar en familia y comunidad:

Padre Amoroso,

Oremos para que les brindes tu divina protección a todos los migrantes, en especial a aquellos que deben dejar sus hogares debido a la guerra o la violencia, a los que son desarraigados a causa de la degradación ambiental y del cambio climático o cuya pobreza material los empuja a buscar oportunidades en otro lugar. Muéstranos la manera de acercarnos a estas poblaciones vulnerables y ayudarles a empezar una nueva vida en un nuevo hogar. Abre nuestro corazón para que podamos ofrecerle hospitalidad a todo aquel que viene en busca de un refugio. Concédenos la valentía para acoger a todo extranjero como si fuera Cristo en medio de nosotros. Te lo pedimos por Cristo, Nuestro Señor, quien vive y reina contigo, en unidad del Espíritu Santo, un solo Dios, por los siglos de los siglos. Amén.

“Iglesia Domestica” Boletín Electrónico

“La Iglesia Domestica” es un boletín electrónico de la Diócesis de Kalamazoo (Ministerio de la Iglesia Doméstica) que se publica mensualmente para compartir recursos sobre tres importantes temas: el matrimonio, la familia, la oración.

Si gusta recibir este boletín directamente en su buzón de correo electrónico – favor de contactar a Socorro Truchan al

(269) 903-0199 o por mensaje electrónico a: struchan@diokzoo.org



Calendario/Calendar

Diciembre/December

5 (Sábado) 10 a.m.-12 m. **Comité Diocesano de Pastoral Hispana**, Centro Pastoral Diocesano (*Hispanic Ministry Diocesan Pastoral Committee meeting, Diocesan Pastoral Center*), Kalamazoo.

11 (Viernes) 7 p.m. **Misa Bilingüe, Celebración de Nuestra Sra. De Guadalupe**, Catedral de San Agustín, Kalamazoo, MI, Preside el Señor Obispo Paul J. Bradley (*Bilingual Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Augustine Cathedral, Kalamazoo, MI. Presiding Bishop Paul J. Bradley*).

16 (Miércoles) **Comienzan las Posadas y Novenas Navideñas en las Parroquias**. (*Beginning of the Posadas and Christmas Novenas in the Parishes.*)

Enero/January

3 – 9, 2016 **Semana Nacional de la Migración** (*National Migration Week*).

8 (Viernes) 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. **Reunión de Migrant Resource Council** (agencias que ofrecen servicio a la Comunidad Migrante). (*Migrant Resource Council Meeting, agencies that offer services to the Migrant Community*)

17 **Día Mundial del Migrante y Refugiado** (World Day of Migrants and Refugees)

Febrero/February 2016

10 (Miércoles) **Miércoles de Ceniza**. Comienza la Cuaresma. (*Ash Wednesday. Lent begins.*)

12 (Viernes) 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. **Reunión de Migrant Resource Council** (agencias que ofrecen servicio a la Comunidad Migrante). (*Migrant Resource Council Meeting, agencies that offer services to the Migrant Community*)

20 (Sábado) 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. **Instituto San Agustín — Programa de Formación Pastoral y de Liderazgo, Segundo Año de Formación**. Tema: Ética y Moral por el Padre Steve Cron. (*Instituto San Agustín - Hispanic Pastoral Leadership Formation Program, Second Year of Formation. Topic: Ethics and Moral by Fr. Steve Cron.*)

Marzo/March 2016

29 – Marzo 2 **Reunión Nacional sobre el V Encuentro**. Facilitado por la Secretaría de Asuntos Hispanos de la Conferencia de los Obispos. (*National Meeting regarding the V Encuentro. Facilitated by the USCCB's Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs.*) Los Angeles, California.

Fortaleciendo las Familias en la Fe (Reflexión #18)

Por Verónica Rodríguez

¡Feliz Navidad y Prospero Año Nuevo!

Actividad para hacer en familia este mes de Diciembre y Enero: Diciembre es un mes lleno de ricas tradiciones y costumbres como hispanos/latinos. También es un tiempo para hacer un alto en nuestras vidas, respirar profundo y hacer una reflexión en cuanto a nuestra espiritualidad en familia. Al recordar el nacimiento del Niño Jesús, también reflexionemos sobre lo que estamos haciendo nosotros como familia. Muchas de las veces nos dejamos guiar por propagandas y olvidamos lo más importante, el amor y servicio de Jesús. Tomemos este tiempo para hacer ese alto en nuestras vidas y recordar con nuestros hijos el caminar de la Sagrada Familia y el nacimiento de Jesús. En muchas de nuestras parroquias tienen novenas, celebraciones o mañanitas a nuestra Sra. de Guadalupe, el 12 de diciembre, las Posadas comenzando el 16 de diciembre, la Misa de Media Noche del 24 de diciembre; sería muy bueno participar en familia en estas celebraciones y enseñarle a nuestros hijos con el ejemplo el amor de Dios con la solidaridad hacia el prójimo.

En enero, la Iglesia Católica de Estados Unidos dedicará la semana del 3 al 9 de Enero 2016 como la Semana Nacional de la Migración, con el lema: “*Fui Forastero y Me Diste la Bienvenida*”. Nuestro llamado como cristianos a darle la bienvenida al forastero toma un papel muy importante en nuestras vidas. El migrante que se mueve de un país a otro (o de un estado a otro) es un verdadero forastero en medio de todo. Muchas de las veces no conoce la lengua del nuevo país y mucho menos las costumbres. El migrante necesita una mano amigable de la comunidad local para que pueda conocer y familiarizarse con su nuevo lugar. La Iglesia Católica de Estados Unidos ha tomado este tema de la bienvenida para la Semana Nacional de la Migración y nos llama a cada uno para que demos la bienvenida al forastero entre nosotros, “...Fui forastero y ustedes me recibieron en su casa” (Mateo 25:35). Tomemos un tiempo y veamos a nuestro alrededor, quizás entre nuestra comunidad ha llegado alguien nuevo y necesite de esa mano amigable. Para más información sobre la Semana Nacional de Migración y material en inglés y español, pueden ir a la página de los Obispos de Estados Unidos al www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/national-migration-week/index.cfm

“El hogar es el lugar correcto para que la fe se convierta en vida, y para que la vida se convierta en fe”. (Papa Francisco, Homilía en la Misa de conclusión del Encuentro Mundial de Familias, Filadelfia 2015)

Al Tiempo de Dios — Una Reflexión sobre el Encuentro Mundial de las Familias

Por Socorro Truchan, Director Asociado, Iglesia Doméstica

“Durante la semana que participé en el Encuentro Mundial de Familias en Filadelfia en Septiembre de 2015, me sentí como si estuviera viviendo al tiempo de Dios, rodeada de miles de personas – todas ellas formaban parte de mi gran familia universal – la Iglesia Católica. Uno de mis primeros momentos de gracia fue un encuentro casual con la Dra. Emanuela Molla, hija de Santa Gianna Beretta Molla. Le di un abrazo y platicamos como si fuéramos amigas de toda la vida. Mi conexión con ella había comenzado hacía unos años cuando me escribió una carta donde también me envió una reliquia de su madre.

Santa Gianna Beretta Molla (octubre 4, 1922 – abril 28, 1962), una pediatra italiana, es uno de los santos laicos de la Iglesia. Cuando sufría de una enfermedad que le amenazaba la vida durante un embarazo, ella rechazó la idea de tener un aborto para salvar su propia vida y prefirió dar su vida para salvar la de su cuarta hija, Emanuela. Este ejemplo heroico, tanto en su vida como en su muerte, la llevó a convertirse en un santo patrón de los no nacidos, y ahora tiene muchos devotos en todo el mundo — los milagros y gracias concedidas por su intercesión continúan hasta en nuestros días. Gianna Beretta Molla fue canonizada por el Papa (Santo) Juan Pablo II en 2004.



Sínodo sobre la Familia

Por la Dra. Fanny Tabares

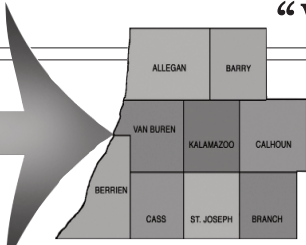
El Sínodo sobre la Familia terminó el mes pasado con conclusiones que reafirman la doctrina de la Iglesia y resaltan belleza de la familia. El texto de conclusión saldrá más adelante.

Entre muchos puntos quisiera atraer la atención de uno en particular: la atención a las familias de refugiados y migrantes, prófugos y perseguidos. Los obispos afirman que “la **historia de la humanidad es una historia de migrantes**: esta verdad está inscrita en la vida de los pueblos y las familias. También nuestra fe lo reafirma: todos somos peregrinos”. Afirman también que la migración forzada es “fruto de situaciones de guerra, de persecución, de pobreza, de injusticia, marcada por las peripecias de un viaje que pone con frecuencia en peligro la vida, traumatiza a las personas y desestabiliza a la familia”. “**El acompañamiento a los migrantes exige una pastoral específica** con las familias en migración, pero también con los miembros de los núcleos familiares que se quedan en los lugares de origen”. Los obispos piden que las diócesis y parroquias trabajen para que se respete la dignidad de estas las personas.



Here & There

Here & There publishes parish, Catholic school and diocesan sponsored events. Submissions should be sent to Vicki Cessna, Email: vcessna@diokzoo.org



CENTRAL DEANERY
Kalamazoo
Dec. 6: St. Nicholas Day with Bishop Bradley, Fetzer Center, Western Michigan University Campus, 3:30 – 5 p.m. Bishop Bradley will share the story of St. Nicholas’ life and work. Crafts will be available for children. Refreshments will be served. RSVP encouraged but not required, 269-381-9800.

Dec. 6: Retirement party for Fran Denny, Fetzer Center, Western Michigan University Campus, 5 -7 p.m. Reception honoring Fran Denny, who will step down as President/CEO of Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo. RSVP encouraged but not required, 269-381-9800.

Dec. 8: Year of Mercy Opening Mass with Bishop Bradley, St. Augustine Cathedral, 12 p.m.

Dec. 8: Time capsule opening and service with Bishop Bradley, Lawrence Education Center at Borgess Hospital, 4:30 p.m. capsule opening; 5 p.m. Liturgy of the Word Service. Come celebrate the conclusion of Borgess Health’s 125th anniversary.

Dec. 11: Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass with Bishop Bradley, St. Augustine Cathedral, 7 p.m. Please bring flowers to offer to the Virgin Mary and share with those who cannot bring flowers. Participants are encouraged to come dressed in traditional clothing from their native country. Reception will immediately follow Mass in the Crowley Center. All are invited.

Dec. 12: Fighting Porn in Our Culture and Winning, St. John Bosco Church, Mattawan, 9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Conference featuring founder of

“Integrity Restored”, Dr. Peter Kleponis; \$15/person or \$25/married couple. Register at: diokzoofightingporn.eventbrite.com.

Dec. 12: Opening of Holy Doors, St. Augustine Cathedral, 4 p.m.

Jan. 16-17: Joy-Filled Marriage Weekend, Transformations Retreat Center. Marriage Preparation weekend for engaged couples. Should be completed minimum of 6-9 months prior to wedding. Cost is \$175. Additional 2016 dates: March 12-13, May 14-15, July 16-17, Sept. 24-25, Nov. 12-13. Contact: Socorro Truchan, 269-903-0199, struchan@diokzoo.org.

Feb. 26-28: The Presence, Hackett Catholic Prep. Weekend conference for high school students. Contact your parish youth minister for more information. Registration packets now being accepted, available at thepresencekalamazoo.org.

Portage
Jan. 16: Monthly Energizer, St. Catherine of Siena Parish, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. An evening of fun, faith and more for the whole family. Topic is Spiritual Works of Mercy. Additional dates: Feb. 20 – Corporal Works of Mercy; March 12 – Divine Mercy; April 16 – Indulgences.

EASTERN DEANERY
Battle Creek
Dec. 9: Midweek Faith Lift with Fr. John Fleckenstein, St. Philip Parish Center, 6-7:30 p.m. Topic is Pope Francis – In his own words, encyclicals. Third talk: Dec. 16 – In his own words, U.S. visit.

Marshall
Dec. 9: Day of Recollection for Priests, St. Mary Parish, 1:30 p.m.

NORTHERN DEANERY
Wayland
Dec. 11: Discovering Your Experience of God, St. Therese Parish, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Deacon Jeff Ryan to present discussion on how to discover God’s impact in your life.

SOUTHEAST DEANERY
Sturgis
Dec. 6: Angeles, Creacion de Dios (Spanish) – The Glory of Angels Advent Faith and Art Exhibition, Holy Angels Church, 5 p.m. Presented by Rev. Raul Gomez.

Dec. 13: Angels and the Catholic Doctrine – The Glory of Angels Advent Faith and Art Exhibition, Holy Angels Church, 5 p.m. Presented by Most Rev. Bishop Emeritus James A. Murray.

Dec. 19: Angels and Popular Devotion– The Glory of Angels Advent Faith and Art Exhibition, Holy Angels Church, 7 p.m. Presented by Very Rev. Bob Creagan, V.E.

Vicksburg
Dec. 12: Alanna Boudreau Live in Concert, St. Martin of Tours Church, 5:30 p.m. Mass, dinner to follow, 7:30 p.m. concert. No cost; donations will be accepted.

PENANCE SERVICES

Central Deanery
Augusta
Dec. 16 – St. Ann Parish, 6:30 p.m.

Kalamazoo
Dec. 9 – St. Monica Parish, 7 p.m.

Mattawan
Dec. 9 – St. John Bosco Parish, 6:30 p.m.

Paw Paw
Dec. 13 – St. Mary Parish, 5 p.m.

Portage
Dec. 15 – St. Catherine of Siena Parish, 7 p.m.

Eastern Deanery
Battle Creek
Dec. 15 – St. Joseph Parish, 7 p.m.

Hastings
Dec. 14 – St. Rose of Lima Parish, 7 p.m.

Marshall
Dec. 14 – St. Mary Parish, 6:30 p.m.

Lakeshore Deanery
St. Joseph
Dec. 20 – St. Joseph Parish, 2:30 p.m.

Watervliet
Dec. 11 – St. Joseph Parish, 6 p.m.

Northern Deanery
Byron Center
Dec. 10 – St. Mary’s Visitation Parish, 6 p.m.

Southeast Deanery
Coldwater
Dec. 20 – St. Charles Borromeo Parish, 4 p.m.

Three Rivers
Dec. 13 – Immaculate Conception Parish, 3 p.m.

Southwest Deanery
Berrien Springs
Dec. 20 – St. Gabriel Mission Parish, 3:30 p.m.

Niles
Dec. 13 – St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish, 3 p.m.

Congregation of St. Joseph

Transformations

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A Gentle Stretch: Yoga & Centering Prayer Retreat

Fri. & Sat., January 22-23

Nancy Diment & Betsy Meagher, CSJ

A focus on gentle yoga interspersed with experiences of Centering Prayer, invites us into a deeper place of wholeness and sacred peace.

Our 2016 Icon
“Elijah Under the Broom Tree.”

Beyond Words: An Icon Retreat with Diane Hamel & David Van Eck

Mon. - Fri., February 1 - 5

Whether you are a beginner or an experienced artist, writing an icon is a richly rewarding experience. Time will be spent in prayerful learning as you create a beautiful and meaningful icon, with experienced direction, that you can take home and enjoy.

More info & register at
TransformationsCenter.org
269-381-6290 x327

Vatican Nativity scene, tree to be unveiled early for Year of Mercy

By **Carol Glatz**, Catholic News Service
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Christmas tree and Nativity scene in St. Peter’s Square will be set up and unveiled earlier than usual this year to be ready for the opening of the Year of Mercy.
In preparation for the extraordinary event, which begins Dec. 8 with the opening of the Holy Door in St. Peter’s Basilica, Vatican workmen broke through the masonry that had walled off the door.
Cardinal Angelo Comastri, archpriest of the basilica, led a small ceremony that included prayers and a procession Nov. 17, the eve of the anniversary of the basilica’s dedication in 1626.
Four Vatican workmen then used a pickaxe to break through a portion of the wall that covers the Holy Door from inside the basilica. They removed a sealed metal box that, in keeping with tradition, had been embedded in the wall at the end of the Jubilee Year of 2000.
The zinc box, which was opened with a blowtorch, contained the keys and handles for opening the holy door, commemorative medals and a papal gold coin marking the last Holy Year.
The Vatican also announced Nov. 18 that the traditional tree and Nativity scene that dominate the center of St. Peter’s Square would be ready by Dec. 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception.
The 82-foot spruce fir comes from Germany’s Bavaria region. The decorations this year were to include painted ceramic ornaments made by children receiving oncological care in a number of Italian hospitals.



The Nativity scene was donated by the northern Italian province of Trent. The 24 life-sized figures carved from wood included Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus, the Three Magi and a man bending over to help an elderly man in an act of mercy. The surrounding scene and figures were to represent life in the Dolomites in the 1900s.

The Christmas tree is positioned in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Nov. 19. The tree is an 82-foot spruce fir from Germany's Bavarian region. It arrived earlier than usual to be ready for the Dec. 8 opening of the Holy Year of Mercy. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Making a Report of Sexual Misconduct

A report of sexual misconduct may be initiated at the Diocese of Kalamazoo’s Sexual Misconduct Question and **Reporting Line: 877-802-0115**.
A caller will be requested to provide his or her name and telephone number. All calls regarding sexual misconduct will be returned, usually within one hour. This toll-free telephone number has been established as a part of the diocese’s effort to protect children, young people and other vulnerable people in our schools, parishes and ministries. This line is for reporting suspected sexual misconduct or child abuse within diocesan institutions and ministries only. If you have some other concern about diocesan schools, parishes or ministries, please contact the appropriate diocesan school, parish or office directly. In all cases of sexual abuse you are encouraged to report all cases to the local police or protective services.

SPOTLIGHT

The Church's response to protecting God's children

13k+ background checks have been run by the Diocese of Kalamazoo since 2002. It is also the number of clergy, Church employees and volunteers who have undergone "Protecting God's Children" training.

2.4M adults and children nationwide who have participated in Safe Environment training

background checks for clergy, employees and volunteers nationwide 2.4M

300+ people in the diocese have participated in the Trauma Recovery Program since Fall 2002.

Know the facts

The Catholic Church has in place the strongest measures in the world for protecting children and young people.

Art contest returns with new theme

Diocese accepting student art submissions on “The Merciful Family” through February 15

The second Diocese of Kalamazoo National Student Art Contest highlights the Year of Mercy with the theme “The Merciful Family”. The diocese is accepting art, prose, poetry, music and video submissions through February 15 from students nationwide in grades 4 through 12. Submissions should focus on how we are called to be merciful within our families and communities. Winners will receive a monetary scholarship award courtesy of the Michigan Knights of Columbus, and an official Diocese of Kalamazoo award signed by Bishop Paul Bradley. For more information or full criteria, visit diokzoo.org/national-student-contest. Contact Socorro Truchan with any questions at struchan@diokzoo.org.

Mail submissions to: National Student Contest,

Diocese of Kalamazoo, 215 N. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49007



The Angels are Coming to Holy Angels Parish, Sturgis

This Advent, explore all things angels with The Glory of Angels Faith and Art Exhibition at Holy Angels Parish in Sturgis. Based on the book, The Glory of Angels by Edward Lucie-Smith, illustrations, short stories and quotes from saints and theologians will be on display, highlighting guardian angels and the archangels. Special exhibit features explore the use of music as the voice of angels, angels in the lives of saints, angels and the last judgment, and more. The exhibit is open Monday through Thursday, 1 p.m. – 6 p.m. and Friday through Sunday, 1 p.m. – 8 p.m. through December 20. Tour guides will be available to lead guests through the art exhibit in the church hall. All events are open to the public. Special programming will feature speakers from around the diocese.



Special programming:

December 5: Music of Angels Concert with the children of St. Joseph Parish and crafts, 7 p.m.

December 6: Angeles, Creacion de Dios (Spanish) – 5 p.m.

December 13: Angels and the Catholic Doctrine with Bishop Murray – 5 p.m.

December 18: Angels Musical – 6 p.m.

December 19: Angels and Popular Devotion with Very Rev. Bob Creagan, V.E. – 7 p.m.

December 20: Youth Night, Praise and Worship – 5 p.m.

Hackett Catholic Prep receives Michigan Milestone Award for 50 Years of service

State and local dignitaries gathered in the library of Hackett Catholic Prep on November 10 to close out the school's 50th anniversary year with a special award ceremony. Chong-Anna Canfora, of the Historical Society of Michigan, presented school principal Brian Kosmerick with a special Michigan Milestone Award, honoring Hackett for its 50 years of service to the greater Kalamazoo community. A tribute from the U.S. Congress was made by U.S. Representative Fred Upton. Michigan Representative Jon Hoadley read a second tribute commissioned by the Michigan House and Senate. Very Rev. Larry Farrell, pastor of St. Monica Catholic School and Parish, and Bishop Paul Bradley, opened and closed the ceremony with a blessing and benediction.



Hackett seniors took on the project of applying for this special historical distinction, and they both researched and wrote a history of the school as part of the application process. The plaque will eventually hang, with other historical photos and memorabilia, in the lobby of Hackett Catholic Prep. The school officially opened its doors in October of 1964 under the name Monsignor John R. Hackett High School. The school changed its name at the start of the 50th anniversary year.

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