

The Catholic Register



Diocese Of Altoona-Johnstown

Official Publication

June, 2019

Volume 93 No. 9

Newly Ordained Deacons Anxious To Begin Ministry Of Service

By **Tony DeGol**
The Catholic Register

The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown has been blessed with two new deacons, and those new clergy members and their wives have gained a new family.

“You see all the love and the people that were involved with us to get us to this point,” acknowledged the newly-ordained Jerome Nevling of those who walked the formation journey with him – especially his brother deacons and their wives. “The deacons are wonderful. They’re there with us, they’re supporting us and giving us what we need.”

Added his wife, Lori: “We’re beyond blessed to be within this diaconate community. We love this diocese and our diaconate family, and we

hope to do great things.”

Deacon Nevling even admitted he cried about five times during the ordination Mass, but no one saw it.

“It’s just an amazing day, very moving,” he added.

The enthusiasm was equally contagious from the other new deacon.

“I feel full of joy,” exclaimed Allan Duman. “I just want to dance and just enjoy the day – enjoy the Holy Spirit.”

It has been a remarkable journey, assured his wife, Joanna.

“I think it’s an amazing opportunity for the wives to participate in the formation with their husband because it not only gives us an idea of what to expect from our husband, but it also gives us the skills we’re going to need to go forth in our parish and help our

(Story Continued On Page 4)



NEW DEACONS: Bishop Mark L. Bartchak ordained Allan Duman and Jerome Nevling to the Permanent Diaconate on June 1. Pictured (left to right) Deacon Nevling, Bishop Mark, Deacon Duman, and Deacon Michael Russo, Director of the Permanent Diaconate.

Diocesan Offices Moving To Former Our Lady Lourdes School Building

By **Tony DeGol**
The Catholic Register

The new location of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown central offices will soon be open for business.

The diocese plans to move its headquarters from Hollidaysburg to the former Our Lady of Lourdes School in Altoona during the week of June 17.

The new location, called the Mary Mother of the Church Pastoral Center, is located on West Chestnut Avenue, behind the Our Lady of Lourdes church building.

For the past several months, work has progressed to convert the former school into office

space and meet all code and zoning requirements.

Besides the Bishop’s Office, the building will house most other diocesan ministries including the Tribunal, the Office of Communications, and the Education Office. The Family Life Office, currently located in Lilly, will also move to the new pastoral center.

The new location will also house a television studio for production of the diocesan *Proclaim!* TV Ministry.

Beginning on June 17, all mail to the diocese should be sent to the new Altoona address: 2713 West Chestnut Avenue, Altoona,

16601-1720. The main diocesan phone number will remain (814) 695-5579. All e-mail addresses will be unchanged.

Diocesan offices affected by the move will be closed for at least the early part of the week of June 17, and phone and e-mail communication will be interrupted.

The diocese sold its current office complex at 927 South Logan Boulevard in Hollidaysburg to Garvey Manor Nursing Home. The Hollidaysburg campus has served as the diocese’s central offices since 1972.



NEW PASTORAL CENTER: Exterior and interior work continued in early June at the former Our Lady of Lourdes School in Altoona. The building, to be called the Mary, Mother of the Church Pastoral Center, will house most diocesan offices and ministries.

Bishop's Night For Vocations Speaker Greg Schweitz Reminds Parents That Vocations Begin At Home

By Tony DeGol
The Catholic Register

The annual Bishop's Night for Vocations puts great focus on the youth and helping them realize their true vocation in life.

This year's guest speaker had a great message for them, but also crucial advice for the adults in the room.

"Live your faith," Greg Schweitz urged the parents. "The home is the first seminary. It's the first convent. It models Holy Marriage. All the great things that we think of as vocations are modeled in the family, modeled between the mom and the dad, modeled with the way they love each other and the way they love their children."

The Catholic faith, Schweitz contended, must be about more than just going to Mass on Sunday and saying grace before meals, especially in a day and age when religion seems to take a back seat in a secular world.

"The home is where we create the holy and sacred places where young people learn about their faith, ask the tough questions, and are given good answers," he reminded.

A resident of Omaha, Nebraska, Schweitz is the Immediate Past President of the USA Council of the Serra Club – a global organization of lay Catholics that promotes and fosters vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life.

The Cambria County chapter of the Serra Club is the sponsor of the Bishop's Night for Vocations, along with the diocesan Office of Vocations.

Bishop Mark L. Bartchak serves as host.

The Cambria County Ser-rans invited Schweitz to headline the 2019 BNFV when he visited Johnstown last summer.

Held on May 10 at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School in Ebensburg, the theme was "Open Your Heart to Respond to the Call of God." It was inspired by the relic heart of Saint John Vianney, which was present at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in January as part of a national pilgrimage tour.

Students from Catholic schools and religious education programs were invited to design posters and write essays or poems based on the theme. The winners were recognized at the event.

In his talk, Schweitz highlighted three heroic people who answered the call of God.

Saint Junipero Serra, after whom the Serra Club is named, was a Franciscan missionary from Spain. Despite the obstacles he faced in becoming a priest, "he persisted, and he heard that call in his heart," Schweitz said.

Saint Joan of Arc, he continued, is recognized as a heroine in France for her role during the Lancastrian phase of the Hundred Years' War. She did not express fear because she realized that God was calling her for the mission.

A third role model is none other than the Blessed Mother, who, of course, answered the call of God to be the Mother of Jesus.

"Our own Blessed Mary said 'yes,'" Schweitz reminded. "God invites, you listen to Him, his invitation, and then you can say, 'I am not afraid, I was made for this.'"

Bishop Mark offered words of encouragement based on his exchanges with youth during this Confirmation season.

"Every Confirmation this year, at least one, and in many cases multiple young men asked me questions about discerning a vocation to the priesthood for our diocese," the Bishop reported.

He continues to pray for those young hearts to be open



BISHOP'S NIGHT FOR VOCATIONS: Bishop Mark L. Bartchak welcomed Greg Schweitz, the Immediate Past President of the USA Council of the Serra Club, as the featured speaker at the annual Bishop's Night for Vocations. Pictured (left to right): Father Matthew Reese, Diocesan Director of Vocations; Schweitz; Barbara Bartkovich, President of the Cambria County Serra Club; and Bishop Mark. Below, Bishop Mark and Bartkovich present the Holy Spirit Award to Jenna Stofko of Bishop McCort Catholic High School in Johnstown.

to the Lord's call in the spirit of Saint John Vianney.

"There are signs that the Holy Spirit is alive and present among us," Bishop Mark stressed. "Please do not hesitate to be proactive in inviting young people to think about it and talk about it. All of us can have the opportunity to foster vocations. Spread the word, and don't hesitate to encourage all young people."

Another great moment of the Bishop's Night for Vocations was the Serra Club presentation of the second annual Holy Spirit Award. The award recognizes an inspiring young individual who embodies the Catholic spirit.

The 2019 honoree is Jenna Stofko, a senior at Bishop McCort Catholic High School.

"As long as you pray to God and trust in Him, he will guide you along the right path and you'll make the right choices," Stofko assured.

(Additional Photos On Page 3.)



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Bishop's Night For Vocations

(Continued from page 2.)



POETRY CONTEST WINNERS: Pictured are: Avery Conner, Sophia Wise, Karlie Stiffler, Lauren Malerich, Alivia Nagle, Shelly Yogus, Ava Lonesky, Emma Courdriet. Absent from photo are: Lydia Sorchilla and Maureen Hulburt.



POSTER CONTEST WINNERS: Pictured (left to right) are: First row--Declan Egal, Johann George, Aviana Shockey, Gabriel Gary, Jack Spangler, and Blaire Lewis. Second row--Margaret Yurik, Jonathan Gleason, La'Ryah McGhee, Raigan Myers, Mary Haigh, Clare A. Troll, and Caroline A. Troll. Third row--Jenna Westrick, Melissa Murin, Sarah Kibler, Gracie Havrilla, Kaylie Bradley and Bishop Mark L. Bartchak. Absent from photo are: Emily Cunningham, Maggie Kwisnek, Mya Mielnik, Edith Manfred, and Charlize Davidson.



ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS: Pictured (left to right) are: Front row--Amber Fisher, Caitlyn Bishop, and Madeline Rezk. Back row--Colleen Barnett, Brenna Phister, Kaitlyn Kasisky, Julia Weiser, Megan Lee; and Bishop Mark L. Bartchak. Absent from photo are: Ava Cioffari, Megan Rager, and Ian Coyle.

BCCHS Hosts Field Day



FIELD DAY: Fourth and fifth grade students from Catholic schools in the Prince Gallitzin Quadrant work on a mural as part of Field Day activities at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School.

By **Tony DeGol**
The Catholic Register

skills in music and art and physical activity."

As students filed into the room, Bishop Carroll Catholic High School Music and Band teacher Bradley Scherden hit a few keys on the piano and sang "Welcome to BC." Several times.

He then asked each of the students to identify themselves and their favorite type of music. After each student's response, Scherden and the gang once again belted out "Welcome to BC."

The little jingle was catchy, indeed, and it really summed up the spirit of the day.

The Ebensburg high school welcomed fourth and fifth grade students from Catholic schools in the Prince Gallitzin Quadrant for the first-ever Field Day.

Students from All Saints Catholic School in Cresson, Holy Name School in Ebensburg, Northern Cambria Catholic School in Nicktown, Saint Benedict School in Carrolltown, and Saint Michael School in Loretto engaged in Music, Art, and Phys Ed.

It was an opportunity for these future students to enjoy new friendships and experience the wonderful opportunities on Husky Hill.

"I hope the students come away with a feeling that school is fun," admitted BCCHS Director of Admissions and Social Studies teacher Jonathan Nagy. "Not everything is tests, not everything is burdensome, and they can find out that they have specialized

Throughout the day, the gang divided into three groups. While one bunch tackled an obstacle course and enjoyed friendly competition, another group drew and worked on a mural. And besides singing that charming jingle in the music room, the third group learned about a rondo – music with one main theme heard several times. "It's really great," exclaimed Emma Gailey, an All Saints student. "You get to take a part of Bishop Carroll home because then you know how you're going to feel when you come to their high school."

Andrew Ostinowsky pulled himself away from his artwork to give the gathering a thumbs-up.

"I'm happy I can be here because sometimes you need a break from school and you go to another school, and it's pretty fun here," the Holy Name student surmised.

Although the time is still a few years away, Madison Ciampi, a student at Northern Cambria Catholic School, cannot wait to hopefully attend BCCHS.

"I'll know people here, and it's really fun here," she said.

"Our quadrant is very united," Nagy mentioned. "All five of our grade schools have a strong relationship with Bishop Carroll and this is one more event that we can do to show our unity with the schools and show that Catholic education in this diocese is strong."

THE CATHOLIC REGISTER

SERVING THE DIOCESE OF ALTOONA - JOHNSTOWN

Published Monthly at
925 South Logan Boulevard
Hollidaysburg PA 16648

Phone (814) 695 - 7563
FAX (814) 695 - 7517

Publisher

Bishop Mark L. Bartchak

Editor

Tony DeGol

Layout & Design

Bruce A. Tomaselli

Deacon Ordination

(Continued From Page 1.)

parish flourish," she said.

Bishop Mark L. Bartchak ordained Deacon Duman and Deacon Nevling on June 1 at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Altoona.

A deacon in the Catholic Church is called to serve.

"In that role of being a servant, frustration can occur when the servant does not know why things are a certain way," noted Bishop Mark in his homily. "Jesus clarifies this for us in the Gospel reading when he says, 'I no longer call you slaves. I call you friends, because I have told you everything.'"

The ordination was the culmination of years of preparation for both men – a process the Bishop called being formed and transformed from being a slave to being a true friend of Christ.

"The truth of that friendship defines what it means to be a deacon; a true servant of the Father of Jesus," he said.

The Bishop went on to elaborate on a perception among some that the role of most people in the Church is to pray, pay, and obey.

"To pray means to lift up your whole mind, heart and soul to the Lord God," Bishop Mark explained to the pair. "To really pray is to have the level of conversation that has nothing to do with being a slave. It has everything to do with being a friend with a true friend."

To pay, he continued, does not mean to reach in our pocket hoping to satisfy the poor by giving them cash.

"The best model of what it means to pay as a servant of the Lord God is the example of the Lord Jesus who said and did everything so that others could encounter the love of his Father," Bishop Mark reminded.

Obeying involves listening. "Each of you can immediately recognize the sound of the voice of your wife, children, or closest friend," he said. "Make sure that you never close your mind and your heart to hearing the voice of the Father."

Deacon Duman, a member of Saint Mary Parish in Hollidaysburg, said the idea of service is not at all new to him. He served his community as a police officer, his country as a member of the military, and his Church as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

"This is just another step that the Holy Spirit is calling me to do," he said.

The Bishop has appointed him to diaconal service at Saint Mary.

Deacon Nevling, who has been assigned to his home parish of Saints Peter and Paul in Philipsburg, cannot wait to engage in his new ministry.

"We're ready to get started now," he stressed. "We've been working in the parishes before ordination, but we're excited to get out now and do what we've been formed to do. It's like the old song: 'Put me in coach. I'm ready to play!'"



ORDINATION: As part of the ordination, Bishop Mark lays his hands on the head of Jerome Nevling (above) and presents the Book of the Gospels to the newly-ordained Deacon Allan Duman (below).



'Love In The Age Of Loneliness' Scheduled At Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy

Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy in Boalsburg will host "Love in an Age of Loneliness," a day-long retreat on the family on June 22.

The event will include inspiring sessions to encourage families to build Christ-centered homes and communities despite the challenges of modern life.

Bishop Mark L. Bartchak

will celebrate Mass. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the Sacrament of Reconciliation will also be offered.

The cost is \$25 per person; \$35 per couple. For more information or to register, visit stjoeacad.org/love-in-an-age-of-loneliness/ or contact Doctor James Merrick at SJCA.



Visit the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown's e-news site, *Proclaim!: The Good News of Altoona-Johnstown*. Access the site at proclaim.dioceseaj.org and sign up for regular e-mail updates of diocesan news and information.



SUPPORTING THE MINISTRY: Representing the Hands and Hearts Haiti Ministry outreach from Saint Stephen Parish in McConnellsburg are (left to right): Sister Judith Karlak, CCW, Karen Leisinger, Joanne Evans, Karen Croft, Mary Ann Books, and Sister Martha Burbulla, CCW.

CCW Haiti Ministry Born Out Of Hands and Hearts

By Tony DeGol
The Catholic Register

“If you think you are too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito in the room.”

In the heart and mind of Sister Marilyn Welch, CCW, that old quote sums up her commitment to helping some of the poorest people on earth.

For decades, Sister Marilyn and her fellow Carmelite Community of the Word sisters have been tirelessly devoted to meeting the basic needs of their brothers and sisters in Haiti.

The CCW sisters call it their Hands and Hearts Haiti Ministry, an extension of their cherished relationship with the Little Sisters of the Incarnation in the island nation.

The ministry, the relationship, and the support of so many others from throughout the diocese were highlighted recently at the annual CCW Haiti Fet. The word *fet* is Haitian for celebration or party.

Held every year during the Easter season, the event showcases various aspects of the ministry, educates supporters about the needs in Haiti, and even features a Haitian-inspired

meal.

“It is a time for us to raise some funds to help us continue our mission with them, and it is also a time for us to raise the awareness of what is going on in Haiti and what kind of help they need from us,” Sister Marilyn added.

The Little Sisters of the Incarnation, she explained, care for about a thousand children in a variety of ways. The CCW tries to provide essentials like socks and underwear.

“All year we collect new items,” Sister Marilyn noted. “We have a sewing group that meets every week in the summer and sews brand new skirts and shorts and fitted diapers for the babies and little stuffed toys. It’s a project that is really born of our hands and our hearts.”

Buying all of these necessary items would be too costly, so sewing them enables the community to have a greater impact.

“You don’t have to be able to sew,” Sister Marilyn stressed. “If you can stuff fiberfill into dolls, we’ll take you. If you can iron, we’ll take you. If you use a pair of scissors and cut patterns out, we’ll show you how, and you’ll be part of the group.”

And there are many other ways to support the effort.

Throughout the summer, for example, volunteers sort and label all of the clothing and package everything for a sea container shipment in the fall.

A delegation also travels to Haiti in January.

Bernadette Sikorsky made the journey twice, and both visits were eye-opening.

“It really showed me what they needed over there, and I felt that I needed to help them, and I really learned to appreciate what we have here in the United States,” she said.

A parishioner at the Basilica of Saint Michael the Archangel in Loretto, Sikorsky helps pack the sea container, and she does a lot of sewing, particularly quilts for the children’s beds.

“Each year we make a different kind of doll,” she added. “This year we’re going to make some stuffed animals, also.”

A few years ago, Stephen Gerko spent about two weeks in Haiti.

“Our mission was to build a dormitory and meeting room,” he recalled.

He plans to return in January, and his son-in-law may join him.

“If I were to describe the Haitian people in one word, it would be ‘joyous,’” Gerko remarked. “It just rubs off on you.”

That joy has obviously touched the life of Sister Marilyn, too.

“The Little Sisters have become like sisters to me,” she stated. “We are two separate communities, but over the years I have come to know each of the sisters personally, and as we meet with them every year, we learn more and more about their lives.”

Also revealed is a valuable lesson in a culture in which we Americans simply pick up neces-

sities at our favorite store.

“Haitians don’t have that access, so what it tells me is that I need to be grateful for the gifts God has given me, but I also need to share whatever I can with the poor, and the Haitians are so obviously poor that it doesn’t take much to figure out what they need,” mentioned Sister Marilyn.

So as each of us figure out that need, each of us – just like that one mosquito – can make quite an impact.



LABRIOLA SCHOLARSHIP: Olivia Kline is the recipient of the 2019 Saint Rose of Lima Labriola Scholarship at the Altoona parish. Pictured (front row, left to right): Charlene Labriola; Tony Labriola; and Judy Rossi. Back row: Father Brian Saylor, Pastor of Saint Rose of Lima; and Kline.

Pilgrimage To National Centre For Saint Padre Pio

Join Father David Peles and Deacon Michael Russo of Saint Benedict Parish in Johnstown for a day-long pilgrimage to the National Centre for Saint Padre Pio on June 26.

Located in Barto, Pennsylvania, the National Centre for Saint Padre Pio is a scenic destination filled with the peace and prayerfulness of Padre Pio’s spirit. Built to resemble Padre Pio’s friary in San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy, the Centre offers a number of outdoor statues, a magnificent chapel,

and a full museum filled with cultural and religious relics.

Buses will leave Saint Benedict Parish on June 26 at 7:00 a.m. and depart from the Padre Pio Centre at 4:30 p.m. The round trip bus fare is \$55.00 per person (based on 40 passengers).

Lunch is \$21.00 per person. All gratuities are included.

For more information contact Deacon Michael Russo at (814) 288-3036 or michael.russo@atlanticbb.net.

Annual Remembrance Mass Provides Comfort To Living Spouses

By Tony DeGol
The Catholic Register

Like most widows and widowers, it is hard for Anne Zelnosky to explain her emotions over the past few months.

Richard, her husband of more than 60 years, passed in February.

“His loss has meant more than I can express in words, but the support and encouragement and spirituality that I experienced today in the company of all of the people in attendance has been very helpful to me,” she said. “It makes things at least tolerable.”

Zelnosky is referring to the annual day of prayer and remembrance for widows and widowers.

Every year, the Family Life Office of the Diocese of



FELLOWSHIP: Helen Tomassetti enjoys conversation during a luncheon that followed the annual Mass celebrated for widows and widowers to commemorate their loved ones. The lunch is an opportunity to make new friends and encourage each other to continue on their journey to the Kingdom. The annual Mass was held on May 8 at the Immaculate Conception Church in New Germany.

Altoona-Johnstown welcomes those mourning the passing of a spouse to a Mass and luncheon.

It is an opportunity for our Diocesan Church to reach out to those coping with the loss and assure them that they are not alone on their journey, explained Family Life Office Manager Donna Cook.

This year’s gathering was held on May 8 at Immaculate Conception Parish in New Germany.

“This has been more than comforting, it has been reassuring and uplifting spiritually,” confirmed Zelnosky, a member of Saint Patrick Parish in Newry.

Helen Tomassetti, a member of Saint Michael the Archangel parish in Hollidaysburg, attended for the first time, too.

Her husband, Ernest, passed in 2015.

“I hesitated coming other years, I don’t know why, but I read about it in the church bulletin, and I thought this would be something super-nice to go to, and I’m so happy I’m here,” she stated. “When you look around, you feel you’re not the only one hurting.”

Tomassetti and Zelnosky were among the 144 attendees – a record crowd, according to Cook.

The event, she added, typically attracts about a hundred people.

All spouses received a small lantern when they arrived and had the opportunity to place it on a table in front of the altar. Each lantern included a tag remembering their loved one.

Father Leon Hont, OSB, Pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish, highlighted that symbolism in his homily.

God has given us life, he reminded the faithful, and Jesus is

the light of life, and He promised that he will never abandon us.

“So hopefully today you’ll walk out of here with a lighter heart and with your lanterns reminding you that your spouse was Jesus living his promise to be the light of your life,” Father Hont said, stressing that life is just a transition to another form of eternity.

“So when you look at your spouses, whose lanterns are in front of the altar, you walk away from here knowing they are not

dead,” he added.

During the Liturgy, Family Life Director Andre McCarville read the names of the deceased and their surviving spouses. As always, those moments evoked quiet and stillness throughout the church.

Following Mass, widows and widowers enjoyed a delicious meal, musical entertainment, and, of course, delightful conversation.

Cook received an outpouring of gratitude from those who attended.

“A woman told me that people do not ask about her deceased spouse anymore, but by attending this event, others asked about him and she recalled stories about him, and it made her realize that he was still important,” Cook commented.

The gathering was once again a poignant time for DeLores Tomaselli, a widow for 23 years.

“I came to the very first one and I’ve never missed any yet,” noted Tomaselli, a parishioner at Holy Family in Portage. “It’s a special remembrance for my husband.”

Like the other widows and widowers surrounding her that day, she felt a sense of comfort.

“You have to accept life as it is and go on, and you know your loved one that you lost would want you to do this,” Tomaselli remarked.



FAITH: Anne Zelnosky receives Holy Communion at Mass during the annual day of prayer and remembrance for widows and widowers.

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HTCS Students Part of Inaugural NJHS Induction



INDUCTEES: Inducted into the inaugural class of the Holy Trinity Catholic School chapter of the National Junior Honor Society were (left to right): Andrew Abraham, Melayna Steward, Lia Simanski, Ava Taddei, Grace Broadrick, Sarah Geishauser, Kieran Fox, Edith Manfred, Melayna Steward, and Ian Bennett. Joining the students were Gary Evangelisto (left) HTCS faculty adviser, and William Noye, HTCS faculty representative.

*By Tony DeGol
The Catholic Register*

She has not even started high school yet, but Grace Broadrick already seems to know the secret to success.

“Keep pushing yourself, keep working hard, and never give up, just never give up,” she maintained. “You’ll be happy in the end with what you do if you just keep pushing yourself and working hard.”

Certainly that credo propelled Broadrick to be one of 10 inaugural inductees in the National Junior Honor Society at Holy Trinity Catholic School in Altoona.

The middle school just launched the chapter – the first Catholic elementary school in the diocese to do so. An induction ceremony was held on May 13 at Saint Rose of Lima Parish, which houses the HTCS middle school campus.

“It’s definitely a great honor having the amazing teachers guiding us, and our parents, and all of us being here together,” said Broadrick of the prestigious accolade.

The inductees were chosen based on five pillars: scholarship, leadership, service, character, and citizenship.

“They are very hard categories to maintain, but I always push myself to do the best I can,” admitted inductee Andrew Abraham.

Added inductee Edith Manfred, “It’s just really inspir-

ing to know that people see what you’re doing and people recognize that as something good.”

The process of establishing a chapter of the National Junior Honor Society began by looking at all seventh and eighth grade students and determining their cumulative grade point average, explained William Noye, HTCS teacher and faculty representative to the school’s NJHS chapter.

“In order to move forward in the process, these students had to have a 94 percent or better GPA,” he stated.

The faculty then evaluated the students on the five pillars. Again, students had to achieve a 94 percent rating.

Then, Noye continued, students were informed that they were candidates, and they were asked to fill out a large packet of information. A faculty council then voted on membership.

“We set things up so there is no wiggle room,” he stressed. “These students have shown themselves to rise above the rest of our outstanding collection of students at Holy Trinity and they earned the honor of being inducted into this National Junior Honor Society.”

HTCS teacher Gary Evangelisto is the advisor to NJHS chapter. He displayed great joy in seeing his students reach this point.

“This is the true student you’re seeing here,” assured Evangelisto. “They weren’t prompted, they didn’t know what

we were doing as far as what was being asked of them. This is what they do on a regular basis. It’s good to see some values that have started at home and continued with the kids. It gives me pride to see and be able to continue what the families have started.”

Noye, also, celebrated the inductees’ accomplishments.

“I hope for all of our students to achieve and succeed, but these young men and women went so far above and beyond what we could have ever dreamt of asking of them,” he boasted. “It fills my heart with such gladness that God put these young men and women in a place where I could be one of the formative influences on their lives.”

Both educators agree the standard set by this first class of inductees is one for all students to emulate.

“Make the person around you better and you yourself will become a better person,” Evangelisto insisted. “Always work hard, give the best that you’ve got, and don’t ever look down on anyone else.”



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STATE REGENT: Shirley Hall, a member of Saint Matthew Parish in Tyrone, was elected Pennsylvania State Regent for the Catholic Daughters of the Americas. Her term began on May 7, 2019, and runs for two years. It is the first time since 1968 that Tyrone is the home court of the woman who achieved this honor. As State Regent, Hall, a lifelong member of Court Saint Rita #523, will lead 60 local courts of more than 4,000 Pennsylvania women.



SPELLING BEE CHAMPS: Winners of the annual Diocesan Spelling Bee, held on May 2 at Lock Haven Catholic School, are (left to right): first place – Jonathan Bishop, Saint Benedict School in Carrolltown; second place – Anthony Kowalski, Holy Trinity Catholic School in Altoona; and third place – Katrina McCann, Divine Mercy Catholic Academy in Johnstown.

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Jubilarians Give Thanks And Celebrate 60 Years Of Priestly Ministry

By Tony DeGol
The Catholic Register

It was a reunion 15 years in the making, and one that chokes up Father Carl Spishak to this day.

One afternoon many years ago, while he was in his parish office, a man came to the rectory door. The visitor told the secretary he was looking for a “Father Carl.”

When the two came face-to-face that day, the gentleman shared that he had been looking for Father Spishak since the two crossed paths 15 years earlier.

At the time of their original meeting, Father Spishak was ending a military assignment in Norfolk, Virginia, and the man reached out to the priest.

He was greatly troubled, and although he did not admit it to Father Spishak at that time, was apparently contemplating suicide.

During their reunion, the man reminded Father Spishak how he took the time to listen and direct him to help. He also reminded Father that he urged him to not take his life.

In gratitude and wonder all those years later, the man asked Father Spishak, “How did you know I had a gun under my seat?”

Powerful encounters such as that are flooding back to Father Spishak as he and five of his brother diocesan priests mark the 60th anniversary of their ordination.

Each year, the six priests gather to mark another milestone. This year, however, the celebration was especially reminiscent.

Along with Father Spishak, the other jubilarians are Father Sylvester Bendzella, Father Donald Boslett, Monsignor Arnold Gaus, Father Paul Robine, and Monsignor Samuel Tomaselli.

Three other men – now deceased – were also ordained in 1959, making it the largest ordination class in diocesan history.

On their anniversary, Father Spishak celebrated Mass at Saint Rose of Lima Parish, where he is a senior priest in residence. After Mass, the six enjoyed fellowship and dinner.

Monsignor Gaus cited his 11 years teaching at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School in Ebensburg as among the best years of his priesthood.

“It taught me something about communities in the areas where the students were living,” he recollected. “I always felt that when I’m assigned to an area, I’m not just assigned to a church, I’m assigned to a community, so that got me involved in community activities wherever I was assigned.”

Among that engagement were two terms as Mayor of Tunnelhill Borough.

Monsignor Gaus has also devoted much of his priesthood to raising money and caring for the needs of our brothers and sisters in Haiti.

“We were able to serve the people and people appreciated our service,” said Father Boslett as he looked back at six decades.

“I’ve been happy because I have served in many different ways in the diocese,” noted Father Robine. “This is what I have enjoyed and what I love to do.”

Like Monsignor Gaus, Father Robine also recalled his years teaching at Catholic high schools as good ones.

“It seems the great variety that God gave me brought the joys of life,” he added. “I hope in God’s sight I have done worthy service and practical service that would have been of help to Jesus.”

All of the priests recognize that they have had the good fortune to be present for others at key moments in their lives, such as Baptism and Marriage.

“A priest strengthens his own faith and strengthens others’ faith to lead them to the Kingdom,” Father Bendzella explained.

And, oh, how times have changed since these priests were seminarians.



CELEBRATING SIX DECADES: Diocesan priests marking the 60th anniversary of their ordination to the priesthood gathered for Mass and fellowship on May 23 at Saint Rose of Lima Parish in Altoona. The jubilarians are (left to right): Monsignor Arnold Gaus, Father Sylvester Bendzella, Father Carl Spishak, Father Paul Robine (seated), Father Donald Boslett, and Monsignor Samuel Tomaselli.

“I was in the seminary for 12 years and my total bill was \$10,000,” Father Bendzella recalled. “That won’t even get you a year in a seminary today.”

During the homily at their Mass of Thanksgiving, Father Spishak read from some past homilies of the late Monsignor

Linford Greinader – a longtime Pastor of Our Mother of Sorrows Parish in Johnstown.

In one of his homilies, Monsignor Greinader spoke about the characteristics of priests, and he invoked the profiles of some of the priests now marking 60 years.

It was a trip down Memory

Lane.

“Gentleman, I feel honored to be able to read this again on this occasion,” Father Spishak addressed his brother jubilarians. “I don’t know how long we can keep getting together. This tradition was started almost 60 years ago. Thanks for coming.”

Saint Peter School Honors Pastor Emeritus

The Saint Peter School family in Somerset recently celebrated their annual Sports Day but took some time out to honor their Pastor Emeritus and long-time servant of Saint Peter Parish, Monsignor Samuel Tomaselli, on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. Monsignor Tomaselli is still very present to the school community.

The school often likes to surprise Monsignor with gifts and hand-made banners and other celebration fare, but when this anniversary came around, all agreed that their prayers were what he wants the most. When he helps with the school confessions or says the occasional children’s Mass, he always closes with “Remember to pray for me.”

So on a breezy May afternoon after a morning of Sports Day fun and activities in their Faith Families, the students picked up a Rosary and gathered in the parish courtyard with a special banner and along with their teachers, rectory staff, parent volunteers, and Father Angelo Patti (Pastor), circled around Monsignor and bowed their heads to pray the Luminous Mysteries with and for a shepherd whose life work has illuminated so many lives. Father Patti led the Rosary and afterwards Monsignor gave all in attendance a special blessing. The afternoon was a special event not to be forgotten by all – young and old.

--Jill Harris
Saint Peter Principal

