

The Catholic Register



Diocese Of Altoona-Johnstown

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Convocation Highlights Significance of Catholic Social Teaching

By *Tony DeGol*
The Catholic Register

If you had to point out the best kept secret of the Catholic Church, what would it be?

In Doctor Donald Asci's opinion, it is Catholic Social Teaching. So much attention is focused on Church teaching involving contraception, abortion, and other key issues in society, he maintained, but how often do you hear about Catholic Social Teaching?

"The church never gets enough credit for the Catholic Social Teaching that we have and that's wrong because they're some of not only our best teachings, but some of our most expansive teachings," he stressed. "We poured a lot of time and energy in this. This is not one small thing we dabbled in. This should be our flagship, this should be our hallmark – not only what the world should know about us as Catholics and what we do in our Catholic faith, but how we understand ourselves."

And with those comments, the tone was set for a special diocesan-wide convocation on September 20 at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School in Ebensburg.

The packed gathering served as a launch to season three of the diocesan renewal initiative *ARISE Together in Christ*.

Titled "In the Footsteps of Christ," the new season, which began in early October and will continue for six weeks, will focus on Catholic Social Teaching.

In short, Catholic Social Teaching is defined as Catholic doctrines on matters of human dignity and common good in society.

Among the principles are Human Dignity, Respect for Life, Association, Participation, Protection for the Poor and Vulnerable, Solidarity, Stewardship, Subsidiarity, Human Equality, and Common Good.

Asci, a Professor of Theology at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, was the keynote speaker.

He used the opportunity to focus on the deep connection between Catholic Social Teaching and Christian Discipleship.

"Catholic Social Teaching is what we believe about God and our lives together," Doctor Asci explained. "Catholic Social Teaching is the Gospel and its impact and importance in our lives together. It really is how the Gospel can transform the world in which we live."

Catholic Social Teaching is not the Church meddling in the world, he continued. In fact, there is a limit to what the Church can do in the world. Nor is it the Church trying to tell citizens how

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Saint Matthew School Marks 150 Years

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Convocation Highlights Social Teaching

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to vote.

Also, Catholic Social Teaching is not the Church acting as a “know-it-all,” nor is it concrete solutions to very complex problems.

“The Church does not teach the concrete solution, but rather what our faith would lead us to in principle,” Doctor Asci clarified.

Mercy is a key aspect of Catholic Social Teaching, he added.

According to Saint Thomas Aquinas, mercy is not telling people they are fine as they are. Rather, it is that we are deeply moved by the distress of another, and we take steps to alleviate that distress.

Catholic Social Teaching calls us to imitate that sentiment, Doctor Asci insisted.

“In that way, we can be like Jesus in embodying that mercy,” he said.

Rita Redden, a member of Saint Patrick Parish in Johnstown, was among the many who attended the convocation, which was presented at no cost to participants thanks to an Im-

part Grant from the Independent Catholic Foundation. Redden is heavily engaged in ARISE at Saint Patrick.

“I’m being inspired to look at Catholic Social Teaching as an individual rather than as a person who has to solve the world’s problems, so I think I’ll be able to look at it with a fresher perspective and not feel so overwhelmed with the problems that we face every day in this country and in the world,” she offered.

Ryan Beiswenger was encouraged by Doctor Asci’s message that no Catholic – no matter how well-intentioned – can solve society’s problems overnight.

“You can go at it little bits at a time,” said Beiswenger, a member of Saint Joan of Arc Parish in Frugality. “Just try to tackle things that are manageable as one person or as a group.”

Added Allison Gressler of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Altoona: “I think that’s something I needed to hear because I try to tackle everything, so to know it’s just little bits at a time made me feel reassured.”



CONVOCATION: Faithful from throughout the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown gathered for an ARISE Together in Christ convocation highlighting Catholic Social Teaching. Pictured (left to right): Diocesan ARISE Coordinator Sister Linda LaMagna, CCW; Doctor Donald Asci, guest presenter; Bishop Mark L. Bartchak, and Milissa Else of RENEW International, which offers the ARISE program. Below, Rita Redden, a member of Saint Patrick Parish in Johnstown, takes notes during the convocation.



Sister Linda LaMagna, CCW, Diocesan ARISE Coordinator, is offering weekly reflections for season three of ARISE Together in Christ on *Proclaim!* TV. *Proclaim!* airs every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. on WATM ABC 23. Sister Linda’s reflections will also be posted on the diocesan website and Facebook page throughout the season.



Around The Diocese

Carmelite Nuns Announce Novena

The 10th Novena of 2019 to Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Saint Therese (the Little Flower) offered by the Discalced Carmelite Nuns of Loretto will open on October 22 and end of October 30. All intentions submitted to the nuns will be remembered with the Novena prayers following the daily Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the nuns’ chapel. Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament is held every Sunday at 4:00 p.m. and every First Friday of the month. Everyone is welcome to attend the Benediction followed by the veneration of the relic of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus of the Holy Face. Those who desire to share in the graces and blessings of these nine days of prayer, and in the private prayers of the Carmelite Nuns during the Novena, are requested to send their petitions to Mother Prioress, Discalced Carmelite Monastery, P.O. Box 57, Loretto, PA 15940.

Patriotic Rosary Planned

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas will sponsor the annual Patriotic Rosary on November 2 at 2:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Altoona with Bishop Mark L. Bartchak presiding. Started during the 2012 election year and held every year since, the purpose is to pray for wisdom in choosing our elected leaders and for their guidance in office. Throughout the recitation of each decade of the Rosary, local elected officials read comments from past leaders in our nation’s history. All are invited.

Choral Program At Our Lady Of Mount Carmel

The Choral Ensemble from Juniata College, under the direction of Doctor Russ Shelley, will be performing “Misa Criolla” on November 2 at 7:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, 1100 8th Avenue, Altoona. Featured in the program will be a duo on Andes instruments. A free will offering will be taken to benefit the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Pipe Organ Campaign. All are welcome to attend.

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Journey Of Grace

An On-Going Series Spotighting The Stories Of Those Journeying To The Catholic Faith

Editor's Note: Each year, the Catholic Church proudly welcomes new members through the Christian Initiation process. In recent years, we have seen impressive numbers of individuals seeking full communion with the Catholic Church. This month, we begin an on-going series spotighting some of those inspirational stories. To learn more about the Rite of Christian Initiation or to guide someone through the journey, contact your parish or the Diocesan Christian Initiation Office at jthompson@dioceseaj.org.

By Lonnie Rietscha
For *The Catholic Register*

In the fall of 2018, nearing completion of session two of ARISE Together in Christ, I came more closely acquainted to a woman by the name of Phyllis Glasco who resided at LaurelWood Care Center, where I also happened to work. Phyllis, whose smile could light up any room and brighten your day with her southern charm, quick wit, and comforting southern accent, asked me a simple question one day that lead to deeper conversation: "How are your girls and wife?"

"Just fine, Miss Phyllis, thank you for asking." We conversed about some upcoming plans I had and the topic of one of the girls (both whom she had knowledge and met prior) serving at Mass come up. "Where do you go to church she asked?" I told her "Saint John Gualbert Cathedral down in town." She said "that must be so nice." I invited her to watch the Mass on *Proclaim!*, and she smiled from ear to ear and said "I would love that."

The next Monday morning I stopped in to see what she thought and found that she wasn't able to find the channel and she had also fallen asleep and took a much needed nap! No worries, if you like, Father will be here soon in a week or so to say Mass for the faith community present here, you can attend in person if you like. She very much wanted to attend and did.

"You know what Lonnie, I've thought about being Catholic before, I just never knew how to" she said after that Mass. "It's pretty easy," I

said. "How do I become Catholic then?" and from there we were on our way to her faith journey.

I've never had anyone ever ask me about joining the Church personally. I had a few questions, though. First, was she really meaning this? Would I be able to even make this happen?, and what would her family think?, just to name a few. So after some prayer to the Holy Spirit, I approached her a few days later to ask if she was really serious about wanting to join the Church. She answered, "I asked, didn't I?" That drew a chuckle from me. "What about your family?," I said. "I'm my own boss, why would they care?," she proudly stated with a big gleaming smile. "How about we have a talk with your family?" JUST to be sure. "That'll be fine. I have a relative that is Catholic so it's nothing new to them."

I still suggested that she take the first step and talk with them and if all was well I'd be happy to call them and give them more detail and we would go from there.

All went well, and her daughter was in agreement that Mom makes her own decisions, so from there it was onto having a conversation with Father and our RCIA team to see how we could make this happen.

By now Christmas had come and RCIA was already in full swing at the parish so we went into the new year finishing up work at the parish and in late spring members consisting of Sister Honora, CSJ, Rose, Pat, and Elizabeth of the RCIA team began to give visit and official instructions to Phyllis regularly.

The team experienced many wonderful blessings from their sessions and could see as could I



PHYLLIS GLASCO

that Phyllis was ready to receive her First Holy Communion and on July 19, 2019, she made her First Confession and Communion at the Mass surrounded by the loving support of those who assisted her in her journey and the faith community of the nursing center. Miss Phyllis would continue on with her sessions with the team, beaming when she would listened to Sacred Scripture, and hear about the loving earthly mother of Jesus. She would proudly – and I do mean proudly – proclaim "I am Catholic" to all who would listen. We would have one more Mass to attend in August, at which she would receive the Lord again present in the Holy Eucharist before she would graduate to Heaven. In the early morning of September 20, 2019, I received a call and placed a call to Father Crookston to come and anoint her. Phyllis was preparing to answer the Lords call to come home to him.

My heart hung heavy, but I knew God had a plan on this sad day. On September 28, 2019, her loved ones and friends attended her funeral Mass where God's gift of life to her was celebrated and Father summarized in his homily "The best is yet to come." Yes, the best is yet to come, not only for Phyllis but for all of us as we journey through this life that God so graciously gives us and provides many wonderful joys and blessings when we are willing to simply receive them. For Phyllis, this gift was God's gift of Himself present in the Holy Eucharist, which she so desired to receive and did lovingly!

God bless Phyllis and her family.

Mary, Advocate Of Miracles, Highlighted At Marian Celebration



The Statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary

By Bruce A. Tomaselli
The Catholic Register

The change in temperature was very recognizable last night, noted Bishop Mark L. Bartchak at the 52nd Annual Family Marian Celebration held on Sunday, October 6 at Saint Benedict Church in Geistown, Johnstown. "I had to close the window and put on another blanket."

As he continued with his homily, he said there are other actions to which we must attend. "We must put our faith into action. " Faith is just not something we believe, it needs to be passed on in the way of good works. "It is a theological virtue in our hearts, minds, and souls, but it is also real truth, truth we must put in practice."

Bishop Mark reminded that the Blessed Virgin Mary never hesitated when she was told she would bring Jesus incarnate into the world. Her response was a deep act of faith. She put her trust in God.

The theme for the celebration was "Mary, Advocate for Miracles."

Bishop Mark was the principal celebrant of the Eucharistic Celebration and recitation of the Rosary. Father David Peles, pastor of Saint Benedict Parish, was the host and concelebrated the Mass. Also participating were the Saint Benedict Combined Adult Choirs, Ora et Labora Ensemble, arranged and directed by Jerene

Philibin. Joseph Gaunt directed and played keyboards. The Knights of Columbus and The Legion of Mary took part in the celebration.

The Lord spoke of faith the size of a mustard seed in the Gospel reading of Saint Luke, 17: 5-10. Said Bishop Mark, "When the Lord when responded to the Apostles, who asked Him to increase their faith," he replied, "If you have the faith of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

The bishop said there is nothing wrong with asking for more faith. "We must nourish our faith with the Word of God. Our faith is rooted in the sacraments. Faith, hope and love are gifts from our God."

We all have moments when we sit around and think about how little we have in the way of things. The Bishop reminded, "We should be rejoicing for all we are given by God in the way of faith. God's merciful love is always available to us.

"When the gifts are brought to the Altar today think of what you want in the way of faith, and ask the Lord to increase our faith. Ask Our Lady of the Holy Rosary to strengthen our faith.

The recitation of the Rosary preceded Mass. Each of the five mysteries were lead by Anthony Spilka, OFM Conventual, Deacon Gary Dill, Rev. Anthony Sunderson, HGN, Karen Janosik and, Deacon Chris Conner.

Educators Recognized for Commitment to Catholic Schools

By **Tony DeGol**
The Catholic Register

When Gary Evangelisto began his teaching career in Catholic education, there was no internet or social media, students used encyclopedia instead of Google searches, and the only Smartboard in the classroom was the chalkboard.

Obviously, times have changed, but Evangelisto's dedication to his vocation has not.

The Holy Trinity Catholic School Math teacher was recognized for 45 years of service in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown during the annual diocesan educator in-service on September 27 at Our Lady of Victory Parish in State College.

"It's something I planned on doing my whole life – being a Catholic school teacher," Evangelisto reflected. "I realized God called me to be here and as I learned more and more about the kids and their families, I knew this was where I was supposed to be."

Evangelisto began teaching in 1973 at the former Saint John the Evangelist School in Altoona. He served as principal of the school for a period of time before returning to the classroom there.

When Catholic schools in Altoona and Hollidaysburg regionalized into Holy Trinity Catholic School in 2015, Evangelisto was hired to continue his teaching career at the middle school campus.

After more than four decades of impacting students' lives, Evangelisto, who is also a coach, proudly admits that he keeps in touch with many former pupils – even some from his first year of teaching.

He encourages fellow

teachers to truly know their students.

"There's two parts to their life: the one you see every day and what goes on behind the scenes that you don't know about," Evangelisto stressed. "You need to get to know who they are so that you can be there and give them direction. If you're going to do it right, you've got to be involved with the kids."

Not far behind Evangelisto in years of service are teachers Donna Shank of Lock Haven Catholic School and Margaret Sindleri of Divine Mercy Catholic Academy in Johnstown. Both were recognized for 40 years of service.

Educators marking five, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years were also lauded. Two educators – Jill Harris, principal at Saint Peter School in Somerset, and Mary Frances Truscello, teacher at All Saints Catholic School in Cresson – were saluted for reaching Master Catechist status.

"My sincere congratulations to those we just honored with these awards," offered Bishop Mark L. Bartchak, who was a high school teacher in the Diocese of Erie immediately after his priestly ordination. "Teaching is a profession – a vocation – that I cherish. In fact, my Catholic education had everything to do with my vocation to the priesthood, so I want to thank all of you for the encouragement that you give, especially by handing down the faith to our young people."

For Evangelisto, his teaching vocation has been the journey of a lifetime.

"I really enjoy what I'm doing," he added. "There's not a lot of people who can say it's not a job, it's my vocation. I love being with the kids and the families."



45 YEARS OF SERVICE: Bishop Mark L. Bartchak; Gary Evangelisto, Holy Trinity Catholic School; JoAnn Semko, Diocesan Director of Education; and Peggy Beck, Executive Program Assistant.



40 YEARS OF SERVICE: Bishop Mark; Margaret Sindleri, Divine Mercy Catholic Academy; Donna Shank, Lock Haven Catholic School; Semko; and Beck.



30 YEARS OF SERVICE: Beth Damiano, Holy Trinity Catholic School; Bishop Mark; Angela Gardner, Holy Trinity Catholic School; Semko; Elaine Spencer, Holy Trinity Catholic School; Beck; Suzanne Provenzano, Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School; and JoAnne Venturino, Our Lady of Victory Catholic School. Absent: Lorie Regan, Bishop McCort Catholic High School; and Sheila Ulerich, Saint Peter School.

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Saint Matthew School Begins 150th Anniversary Festivities

By Tony DeGol
The Catholic Register

Saint Matthew School in Tyrone is celebrating its 150th anniversary – a milestone that boggles Grace Naylor’s mind.

“It’s crazy!,” laughed the sixth grader. “Even my pap wasn’t alive then!”

Naylor, her classmates, and the entire school family will be celebrating the entire year.

“We have many things planned that will involve not just the students, but the whole school community – the parish, the families, and the faculty,” said Principal Debbie St. Pierre.

“Every month we’re going to have one or two different celebrations within the community and for the outside community,” added the Pastor, Father Jozef Kovacik.

The festivities began with a Mass with Bishop Mark on September 23. After the liturgy, a drone flew over the school to take a photo of the students in



ANNIVERSARY VISIT: In honor of the 150th anniversary of Saint Matthew School in Tyrone, Bishop Mark visited classrooms and chatted with students after he celebrated an all-school Mass.

the shape of 150. Lunch included a special treat – cupcakes and ice cream.

“It’s a very special occasion, obviously, and something unique that we don’t experience a lot,” Father Kovacik said. “It is a joy to

see parishioners who themselves have gone through Saint Matthew School – many of them – and now we have our current staff and children attending.”

The school remains committed to upgrading technology and

making other enhancements so children can grow academically and spiritually, Father Kovacik stressed.

Reaching 150 years is a huge achievement for a Catho-

lic school, reminded Diocesan Director of Education Jo-Ann Semko.

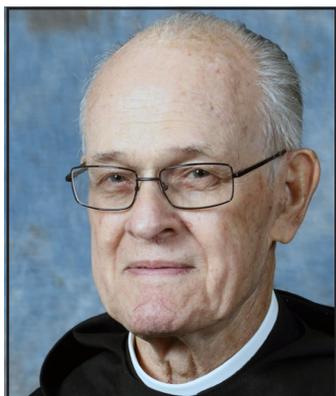
“While teachers and uniforms have varied throughout the decades, anyone who has been part of the Saint Matthew School community can attest that this school has been, and continues to be, a great treasure,” Semko said. “It has given many students, their families, and society many gifts of leadership and Catholic values as it has enriched the lives of the entire Saint Matthew/Tyrone community.”

One of the keys to Saint Matthew’s success has been remaining true to its core commitment of offering a stellar education in a wholesome Catholic environment, Semko added.

“It is with great pride that the Diocesan Education Office congratulates Saint Matthew School families both present and past,” she offered. “Here’s to the next 150 years!”



May They Rest In Peace



FATHER DANIEL WOLFEL, OSB

Father Daniel C. Wolfel, O.S.B., 91, a monk of Saint Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, and a native of St. Marys, died Thursday, September 12, 2019 in the monastic infirmary. He was born October 1, 1927, the son of the late Edward Wolfel, Sr. and the late Amanda (Wolfe) Wolfel. Father Daniel made simple profession of monastic

vows on July 2, 1948, and solemn profession of vows on July 11, 1951. He was ordained a priest on May 22, 1954. Father Daniel has served in the parish apostolates in the dioceses of Greensburg, Pittsburgh, Altoona-Johnstown, and Erie; and Youngstown, Ohio, and has also served at Saint Vincent College and Archabbey.

Father Daniel was appointed pastor at parishes including Saint Bernard Parish, Hastings (1980-1987), and Saint Nicholas Parish, Nicktown (1988-1992). In 1992 he was named the administrator of the clustered parishes of Saint John the Baptist, Summerhill, and Immaculate Conception, New Germany, and then in 1993, he was named pastor of these parishes, serving there until 1998.



SISTER BEVERLY HMEL, IHM

Sister Beverly Hmel, IHM, (formerly known as Sister M. Philip) of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary died on Friday, September 13, 2019 at Our Lady of Peace Residence in Scranton, PA.

She was born on March 14, 1934 in Altoona, PA. She was the daughter of the late Bartholomew G. and Thelma McClain Hmel.

She entered the IHM Congregation on September 7, 1951 and made her temporary profession of vows on August 2, 1954 and her final profession of vows

on August 2, 1957.

Sister Beverly served as a teacher at various schools including Bishop Guilfoyle High School in Altoona, PA, from 1978 to 1985 and 2014 to 2017.

Sister served as a principal at St. Paul High School in Scranton, PA, from 1967 to 1969. She was the assistant principal at Bishop Guilfoyle High School in Altoona, PA, from 1985 to 2014.



SISTER M. MONICA BYRNE, IHM

Sister M. Monica Byrne, IHM, of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary died on Saturday, September 14, 2019, at Our Lady of Peace

Residence, in Scranton, PA.

She was born on May 12, 1926, in Spangler, PA, and given the name Rita Marie. She was the daughter of the late Michael and Gertrude Nagle Byrne.

She entered the IHM Congregation on September 8, 1945 and made her temporary profession of vows on August 2, 1948 and her final profession of vows on August 2, 1951.

Sister Monica served as a teacher at various schools including Saint Bernard School in Hastings from 1995-1997. She was principal at various schools including Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in Altoona from 1973-1977.

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“What a Pharmacy Was Meant To Be”

Campus Ministry Keeps College Students Rooted in Faith

By Tony DeGol
The Catholic Register

When Rachel Hall arrived at Saint Francis University, she did not really engage in the campus ministry scene. As time passed, classes became increasingly challenging, and her stress level increased.

"I had no one to talk to or go to for help or to pray with," recalled Hall, a graduate of Bishop McCort Catholic High School in Johnstown and parishioner at Saint John Gualbert Cathedral in Johnstown.

That is when she gave Campus Ministry a shot.

"I feel it has taken over my life," admitted the sophomore. "My advice to my peers would be to definitely get involved on campus with your faith because it will help you through everything. It has helped me through all of my schooling so far. I feel that all my successes are because I pray and ask Jesus to help me and ask God to help me to get through this week, this exam, things like that."

As a bonus, Hall has made great friends and found a supportive community.

Countless other Catholic



COMMISSIONING: Bishop Mark L. Bartchak commissioned those engaged in campus ministry at colleges and universities throughout the diocese during a Mass at Saint Francis University. Pictured (first row, left to right): Rachel Hall, Saint Francis University; LaDonna McCrary, University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown; Hannah Labar, University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown; Corrin Dagostin, Mount Aloysius College; Becca Labar, Mount Aloysius College; Amy Kanich, Mount Aloysius College, and Lisa Baer, Juniata College. Second row: Reverend David Griffin, OSB, Penn State University; Lisa Georgiana, Saint Francis University; Kevin Hoppel, Saint Francis University; Patrick Sprigler, Saint Francis University; Monsignor Michael Becker, Diocesan Coordinator of Campus Ministry; and Father Peter Lyons, TOR, Saint Francis University. Third row: Reverend Kevin Queally, TOR, Saint Francis University; Reverend Christopher Dobson, TOR, Saint Francis University; Reverend James Puglis, TOR, Saint Francis University; Bishop Mark; Reverend Malachi Van Tassell, TOR, President of Saint Francis University; Father Jason Wooleyhan, TOR, Saint Francis University; and Brother Matthew Simons, TOR, Saint Francis University.

students at colleges and universities throughout the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown have enjoyed similar experiences through their involvement in campus ministry.

That success was celebrated

during the annual commissioning of campus ministers by Bishop Mark L. Bartchak during a Mass on September 18 at Saint Francis University's Immaculate Conception Chapel.

"The persons that you interact with in Catholic Campus Ministry are not only looking to get a college diploma, they are searching for the Truth," reminded the Bishop in his homily. "The Truth is a real person. The Truth is the

person of Jesus Christ."

Bishop Mark urged the ministers to ask God to help them truly listen to the questions of students who will seek their guidance.

"Be prepared to assist them in their search by constantly seeking God's love and wisdom at every moment," he continued. "Encourage each other not to avoid learning and growing in your awareness and understanding of the Word of God who became flesh

in order to reveal the mystery of God's kingdom. Stay close to the Lord Jesus who comes so close to us at this altar."

The diocese sponsors campus ministry programs at the non-Catholic schools in the eight-county region: Juniata College, Lock Haven University, Penn State Altoona, Penn State University, and the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. Mount Aloysius College and Saint Francis University also offer campus ministry opportunities.

Most campus ministry teams include a priest who celebrates Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation on campus, an adult ministry leader, and volunteer student leaders.

Throughout the academic year, each program offers various faith enrichment opportunities for the students, in addition to Mass.

Besides keeping students rooted in their Catholic faith, Monsignor Michael Becker, Diocesan Coordinator of Campus Ministry, explained another benefit of campus ministry.

"It gives some students the opportunity to minister to other students," he noted. "Peer to peer ministry is an important dimension of campus ministry. It's not just the campus minister or the priest. It is students ministering to students in helping them stay strong in their faith."

Hannah Labar is the President of Catholic campus ministry at UPJ.

Campus Ministry is a great way to make friends and begin a good path, she said.

"Even if you're not looking right away to establish a relationship with Jesus, you can meet people that have similar stories and backgrounds, and they can help you reach that relationship with Jesus, they can help bring you to Mass or bring you to all of our events," Labar mentioned.

For Corrin Dagostin, campus ministry is a place for her to be herself.

"I don't have to pretend and put up a façade around other people, and I can express my faith the way I have been raised to do so," the Mount Aloysius student said. "It's just an extremely nice feeling that I get to know that my faith is also being expressed with other people throughout the college and community."

Harvest Tea and Basket Auction Benefitting the Carmelite Community of the Word Hands and Hearts Haiti Ministry

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COLLECTIBLES AND GIFTS, Food For Thought
BOOKS, JEWELRY & Sister Basil's Lollipops

Altoona Cathedral To Host Legendary Vienna Boys Choir

By Tony DeGol
The Catholic Register

In the history of the world, Cathedrals have served not only as places of worship, but also as marvelous sites to celebrate God's gift of the arts.

"How do we evangelize people for Christ?," asked Leslie Thayer, Music Director of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Altoona. "It's not always going out and beating on doors or having five Masses each weekend and daily Mass. Of course that brings in people, but beyond that, the Cathedrals of the world have historically been centers of the arts, centers where people can come and experience Christ."

In that spirit, the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament will host the world-renowned Vienna Boys Choir on October 27 at 7:00 p.m.

The concert, according to Thayer, will be a unique opportunity for the Cathedral to welcome individuals of any faith tradition to the sacred and architecturally stunning structure.

"They will experience Christ in a very spiritual and interior way and have an opportunity to hear an international choir that will, indeed, be singing the praises of Christ in addition to the more fun parts of their concert," she added. "This is part of the ministry of a Cathedral."

Recognized as one of the finest vocal ensembles in the world, the Vienna Boys Choir frequently performs throughout North America in houses of worship and great concert venues such as New York's Carnegie Hall and Chicago's Symphony Hall.

"The choir is comprised of 100 young boys from the ages of 8-14 or until their voices change," explained Thayer. "The choir itself is broken up into four subsections and two of those subsections tour at any given time, and two remain in Vienna, and then they all return to Vienna for the annual Christmas concert that many people associate them with on international television."



BEAUTIFUL MUSIC: The Vienna Boys Choir will perform at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Altoona on October 27.

So how did the Cathedral become fortunate enough to host such a prestigious group of musicians?

"It's such a story, and so totally out of the blue," Thayer said.

As part of a fall tour, the choir has upcoming concerts scheduled in Scranton and then West Virginia. Since there are rules that limit how much time children can travel, scheduling

a stop between the two locations became necessary, she explained.

A New York representative of the Vienna Boys Choir reached out to a professor of Music at Penn State University, who recommended the Cathedral as a possible venue.

"They needed to make the stop, and here we are today," laughed Thayer.

The October 27 performance

promises to delight the audience.

"They will start out with sacred pieces, and then they're going to branch off into "Music of the Americas," which would include folk songs from many traditions in various languages," Thayer noted. "They're going to do a piece of music from movies here in the United States. It's just going to be a varied program

that people will enjoy, and we're hoping to fill the Cathedral with folks who have liturgical interest and just want to have fun with children and music."

Perhaps best of all, there is no ticket charge to attend the concert thanks to generous benefactors such as the Independent Catholic Foundation, which has made a sponsorship commitment to the Cathedral's Concerts Under the Dome series.

"Throughout Europe and in many United States dioceses, the local Cathedral serves as a hub for expressing sacred music in its full glory," stated Chris Ringkamp, President and CEO of the Independent Catholic Foundation. "We are honored to support Leslie Thayer's efforts to restore a similar vision at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament."

A free-will offering will be taken at the concert to support Concerts Under the Dome.

"Everyone is welcome to come to this place of God, this house of Christ, and experience the Vienna Boys Choir and every other opportunity for worship and art that the Cathedral has to offer," Thayer insisted.



PARISH SAFETY: The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown sponsored a Parish Safety Preparedness Workshop on September 29 – the Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel – at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School in Ebensburg. Individuals with expertise in security and related fields educated ushers, hospitality ministers, and others about what to do in the event of a mass casualty event at a parish or school. Pictured (left to right): Trooper B.J. Kunsman, Pennsylvania State Police in Ebensburg; Dorthea "DeeDee" McGowan, Damsel in Defense; Father Brian Warchola, Pastor of Holy Name Parish in Ebensburg; Dean Gittings, Gittings Protective Security, Inc.; Michelle Rager, Cambria County Children and Youth Services; Thomas Causer, Stop the Bleed; Trooper Frank Lasinsky, Pennsylvania State Police in Ebensburg; Chief Terry Wyland, Ebensburg Borough Police.

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Couples Mark Milestone Anniversaries At Two Special Liturgies

By Tony DeGol
The Catholic Register

Little Aidan and Ava Kent surely melted hearts at this year's Wedding Anniversary Liturgies, and they were not even the guests of honor.

The precious siblings also had the opportunity to witness something equally precious: their parents reaffirming their commitment to marriage and family.

In celebration of their fifth wedding anniversary, Shawn and Lisa Kent joined other couples who are also marking milestone wedding anniversaries this year for one of two Masses.

Sponsored by the Family Life Office of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, the first Liturgy was on September 15 at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Altoona; the second was on September 22 at Saint John Gualbert Cathedral in Johnstown.

Husbands and wives celebrating their first, fifth, 10th, 25th, 40th, 50th, 55th, and 60th+ anniversary were invited to register for either Mass.

Bishop Mark was the celebrant and homilist at both Liturgies, and he personally greeted each couple.

The Kents, members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Altoona, were among the youngest couples. The event gave them an opportunity to reflect on the blessings of their five year union.

"One of the things that we always talk about is that we're a very good team, so we do pretty much everything together," Lisa stated.

Juggling their careers and home life can be challenging, the Kents admitted, but they prioritize family time and their relationship with the Lord.

"We rely on our faith daily," Shawn stressed. "We pray together often and we try to make Jesus part of every day of our life."

Alongside the Kents were couples who can boast many

more years of marital experience, including those with six decades or more under their belt.

John and Jennie Frank are celebrating 66 years, and they, too, rely on their Catholic faith.

John is a regular at daily Mass at their parish, Saint Michael the Archangel in Hollidaysburg, and Jennie savors her prayer time in the morning.

"Take one day at a time and enjoy," urged Jennie when asked what advice she would offer younger couples.

Perseverance is the key, reminded Bruce Crawshaw. He and his bride of 60 years, Shirley, are members of Immaculate Conception Parish in Dudley.

"Most of the ones I've seen give up too quickly," Bruce observed. "They don't appreciate each other and they don't give in to anything."

Bishop Mark touched on the importance of staying steadfast through the tensions of married life.

"Too many persons would say the only way to resolve it is just to call it quits," he remarked in his homily. "But as Pope Francis reminds us in his reflections on marriage and the family, it is essential to be aware that God is present in a relationship, and in a real sense, God is one of the partners in a marriage."

Love is always a work in progress, the Bishop explained.

"And all of you here today to celebrate your anniversaries know that married life is very much a work in progress," he added.

Frank and Kay Roscia are perennial delights at the Wedding Anniversary Liturgies, and this year was extra special. Members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Altoona, they are celebrating their 75th anniversary.

Not far behind with 71 years were Paul and Mary Katch, members of Saints Cyril and Methodius Parish in Windber.

By contrast, Kevin and Kelli Slonka, parishioners of Saint John Gualbert Cathedral in Johnstown, were the most junior pair. They are marking one year.



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY: Shawn and Lisa Kent were among the couples participating in the Wedding Anniversary Liturgies sponsored by the Family Life Office of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. Members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Altoona, the Kents are marking their fifth anniversary. They were joined by their children Aidan and Ava. Below, Bishop Mark L. Bartchak greets Ernie and Sylvia Eneyd, members of Holy Family Parish in Portage. They Eneyds are celebrating 40 years.

