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Students Lob Questions At Bishop At Quad - High Day

Photo And Text
By Bruce A. Tomaselli

Bishop Mark eased himself into a seat among the high school student representatives, and readied himself to answer various questions they presented to him at the annual Quad - High Day.

One of their initial questions revealed much about his character.

“What was your most difficult decision?”, prompted a student. The Bishop thought for a few seconds and answered, “When I have really difficult decisions to make I consult with a lot of people. I certainly don’t know everything on every level,” he explained.

The exchange illustrated Bishop Mark L. Bartchak’s humility and his efforts toward transparency.

“Those kids presented some very serious questions that provided deep spiritual insight,” said Sister of Charity Donna Marie Leiden, director of education for the Altoona - Johnstown Diocese. “Their questions were very serious and current.”

The annual Quad - High Day was held on Friday, March 21 at Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School in Altoona.

Bishop Mark clearly enjoys the sessions with the students. Their questions ranged from concern for the shortage of vocations to his hectic daily schedule.

“It was a great experience for the 40 high school students, freshmen through seniors,” said Sister Donna Marie.

The day always begins with an ice - breaking activity to help raise the comfort level of the students that come together from the Diocese’s four high schools, for the first time. This year’s idea tested their knowledge of the Bible, Sister Donna Marie added.

“As one might expect,” Sister Donna Marie reminded, “Bishop Mark is always very thorough and patient with his answers.”

When questioned about the shortage of vocations, the number of priests who serve the Diocese was discussed.

“I’m very encouraged with our success,” Bishop Mark explained. “Right now we have four seminarians, five preparing to enter the seminary, and 30 more young men thinking about a vocation.” He said he’s pretty optimistic we won’t have a priest shortage in the near future.

Bishop Mark said one of the most serious questions young

people have is the commitment that needs to be made to become a priest or religious.

“They want to know about the sacrifices that must be made,” explained the Bishop. “They want to be sure that a vocation is not a part - time job, and it’s a meaningful life.”

The Bishop continued that “I’ve found through discussions there’s a commitment and a sacrifice young people want to make. They want to be all in. They want to lay down their lives for God and the Church.”

He added he is glad he sacrificed his life to God, and never gave a second thought to what his life might have been like had he not answered God’s call.

One student said he heard that the Bishop wakes up very early each day. “I do. I’m usually up at 5:15 and in the my Chapel praying by 5:45 a.m.,” he said.

“I usually pray for about an hour before I go to the office because my days don’t end until 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. Each day I celebrate Mass in a different place. So, I like the early mornings.”

Of the questions submitted to the Bishop prior to the gathering, one in particular stood out for him. “Someone asked what I thought was the most powerful kind of prayer,” he said.



LISTENING: As Peter (Jiahao) Cao, a student from Bishop Carroll Catholic High School, Ebensburg, sits next to him, Bishop Mark L. Bartchak listens intently to a question posed to him at Quad - High Day, Friday, March 21 at Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School, Altoona.

“Those kids presented some very serious questions that provided deep spiritual insight,” said Sister of Charity Donna Marie Leiden, director of education for the Altoona - Johnstown Diocese. “Their questions were very serious and current.”

“I was really impressed with that question, and it is a very important one.” The most important kind of prayer, he explained, is the prayer you do. “Any act of praying, no matter what kind of prayer it is, it will be powerful because it is our communication with God. There are many ways to speak directly to God throughout the day.” He

said to remember that receiving the Sacraments are forms of prayer, such as Confession.

The students had two discussion sessions with Bishop Mark. He celebrated Mass, which was followed by a lunch of cheese pizza.

Next year the Quad - High Day will be held at Saint Joseph Catholic Academy in Boalsburg.

Higher Education

Moral Choices Lecture

Cresson: Mount Aloysius College invites the general public to the next chapter in their 2013 - 2014 speaker series which is examining the theme, "21st Century Citizenship: The Common Good." The next scheduled event is the Eighth Annual Moral Choices Lecture.

The Moral Choices Lecture for Spring 2014 will be delivered by Sister of Mercy Mary Ann Dillon PhD, former president of Mount Aloysius College. The title of her remarks is "Ethical Considerations of Citizenship

in the 21st Century." She will deliver her address in historic Alumni Hall on Tuesday, April 8th at 7:00 p.m.

Sister Mary Ann currently serves as senior vice president of mission and sponsorship at Mercy Health System in southeastern Pennsylvania. In addition to organizational ethics, she is responsible for clinical and organizational ethics education, programs and processes throughout the System as well as for development and implementation of formation programs for trustees, leadership team members and colleagues.

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PENNSYLVANIA JUNIOR ACADEMY OF SCIENCE: Eight Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School, Altoona, students finished either first or second in their respective categories at the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science Regional Competition. The students qualify for the PJAS state competition at University Park in May. The BG students include (from left): Corey Patterson, first place, perfect score and Judge's Special Award for her in-depth research and understanding of her project; Juliana Burke, first place and six-year perseverance medal; Mary Kate Fochler, second place and four-year perseverance certificate; Jamie Murgas, first place; Jennifer Patterson, first place, perfect score and six-year perseverance medal; Matt Keefer, first place; Nick Nale, first place and three-year certificate; Brennan Nale, first place and six-year perseverance medal.

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GIRLS CHAMPIONS: The Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School, Altoona, junior high girls' basketball team won the Laurel Highlands Athletic Conference championship. Team members include (from left) First row row: Molly Kibler, Kyra Kelley, Beth Yahner, Tessa Crider and Alexis Williams. Second row: Samantha Adams, assistant coach; Laura Frederick, head coach; Devyn Yingling, Harlem Jennings, Ryley Lewis, Aliyah Labriola, Morgan Kiesewetter, Ciara Consiglio, Dale Rogers, statistician.

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BOYS CHAMPIONS: The Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School, Altoona, junior high boys basketball team won the Laurel Highlands Athletic Conference championship with a 20-0 record. Team members include (from left) First row: David Luther, Michael Piccerillo, Noah Trexler, Matt Unpingo and Evan Potter. Second row: Andrew Irwin, Josh Trybus, Tyler Glunt and Ryan Maucieri. Third row: Father Raymond Crosser, athletic chaplain; Joe Muri, head coach; Brennan Hurd, student assistant coach; Evan Chadbourn; Luke Frederick, Kyle Green, Fred Elvey, assistant coach, Dale Rogers, statistician.

In The Alleghenies

Pontifical Schedule For Holy Week 2014

The Most Reverend Mark L. Bartchak
Bishop of Altoona-Johnstown
Celebrant and Presider

Passion (Palm) Sunday

April 13 -- 11:00 a.m.
Blessing of Palm and Pontifical Mass
Saint John Gualbert Cathedral, Johnstown

Monday Of Holy Week

April 14 -- 11:00 a.m.
Chrism Mass
Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Altoona

Holy Thursday

April 17 -- 6:00 p.m.
Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper
Saint John Gualbert Cathedral, Johnstown

Good Friday

April 18
Morning Prayer -- 9:00 a.m.
Celebration of the Lord's Passion -- 12:00 p.m.
Tenebrae Service -- 7:30 p.m.
Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Altoona

Holy Saturday

April 19
Office of Readings -- 9:00 a.m.
The Easter Vigil -- 8:30 p.m.
Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Altoona

Easter Sunday

April 20 -- 11:00 a.m.
Mass of Our Lord's Resurrection
Saint John Gualbert Cathedral, Johnstown

(Continued From Page 2.)

Sister Mary Ann Dillon came to Mercy Health System in 2011 after a long career in higher education. Before her tenure at Mount Aloysius College, she was dean of general education at Saint Francis University where she also served as assistant professor of philosophy and religious studies.

The Mount Aloysius College Moral Choices Lecture for Spring 2014 is open to the general public free of charge.

Red Mass/Law Day

Loretto: Saint Francis University will host its annual Red Mass / Law Day on Friday, April 25. Bishop Mark L. Bartchak, J.C.D., will serve as

the celebrant for the Red Mass. Third Order Regular Franciscan Father Gabriel Zeis., president of Saint Francis, will serve as the homilist. The Honorable David J. Hickton, United States Attorney, Western District of Pennsylvania, will give the keynote address at the luncheon.

Hickton co-founded Burns, White & Hickton, LLC, in 1987. Prior to that, he was an associate attorney at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote where he practiced in the areas of transportation, litigation, commercial, and white collar crime. His legal career began as a law clerk for the Honorable United States District Judge Gustave Diamond from 1981 to 1983. In addition, Mr. Hickton taught antitrust for more than a decade as an adjunct professor of law at Duquesne University School of Law.

Hickton is a fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers and a fellow of the Academy of Trial Lawyers of Allegheny County. He has been

admitted before the United States Supreme Court, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania, and several of the U.S. Circuit Courts.

The Red Mass will begin at 10:30 am in the Immaculate Conception Chapel followed by lunch at the John F. Kennedy Student Center.

All area judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, friends, and area residents of all faiths are invited to participate in Red Mass/ Law Day. For more information or to register, please contact Vickie Soyka at (814) 472 - 3001 or vsoyka@francis.edu.

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Point Of View

I could hardly watch the events going on in front of me. My heart wrenched and my guts turned about. I wanted to cry, but my tears seemed to be frozen. My heart did not want to believe what I was watching but my mind knew otherwise. "This couldn't be happening! Please don't let this be real," my heart ached. The pain and agony in front of me paralyzed my very being. This person is a mother and that was her only child. "Please stop," my heart cried, "I can't take much more." And the movie went on.....

I have always made it a tradition in my house, that sometime during Lent I would watch the "Passion of the Christ." Although there were many scenes in the movie that moved me to tears, there was one in particular that just literally knocked the breath out of me.

The scene involved Mary laying in the pool of her son's blood, after being scourged, using a white cloth to soak up every drop of her son's pain. As tears fell from her eyes and pure grief shown on her face, she wailed as her precious son was being brutally killed right in front of her eyes. All she could do was surrender to the pain and try to collect the very last drops of His very being.

Mary a mother! A mother who felt her baby's first kick in her growing womb. A mother who cried at the sight of her newborn son first smile. A mother who rejoiced at His first step. A mother who taught Him to read. A mother who would do anything to protect her son from



Family Matters

By Amy Kanich
Mary Was A Mother



CNS Photo/Ed Zelachoski, Catholic Accent

the bruises and bumps of childhood. A mother, like all mothers, who would give her very life to save her very child's. A mother whose heart broke in a million pieces as she probably prayed to allow her to take His place. A mother who stood their helpless, as she knew in her heart God had other plans.

I think sometimes we under-estimate the pain that Mary experienced as she watch the events of the Passion unfold. I believe Mary, although without sin, still had every human emotion and feeling of every mother and her pain and grief experienced during Christ's Passion and death was no less than excruciating! Excruciating as she stood there and cradled her

son's lifeless body in her hands, the same baby boy she held so tenderly on the first Christmas day. Excruciating as she ran her fingers through his soft hair, the same tussles she combed loving when He was a small boy.

Excruciating as her hands touched His bruised back, the same frame she used to hug and hold tight, whispering into his ears, "Be careful" as He went off to play. Excruciating has she kissed His cheek, the same tender way she would kiss him goodnight. Excruciating has she caressed His hands, the same hands that held a fistful of wildflowers, a sweet childhood gift for His mom. Excruciating as she held him close to say, "I love you son" and to now hear silence replace the familiar, "I love you too mom!"

Nothing less than excruciating. Excruciating pain and deeply felt grief. Mary was a mother! A mother who cried for the loss of her only son. A mother who did not understand. A mother who trusted. A mother who did not know about Easter Sunday. A mother who simply loved her Son and her God more than life itself! Holy Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us Sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.



Another Perspective

By Monsignor Timothy P. Stein
In The Midst Of Death, We Are In Life

Although we have now passed the fifth Sunday of Lent, and are looking ahead to Holy Week, my thoughts keep going back to the second Sunday of Lent, when we read the gospel story about one of my favorite incidents in the life of Jesus: the Transfiguration.

I like to speak of the Transfiguration as a "preview of coming attractions." The Lord Jesus and His disciples were making their way to Jerusalem when this manifestation of His glory occurred. The Lord was already walking the road that would take Him to the cross when He was transfigured on the mountain. The Transfiguration was a preview of the glory of His Resurrection. To men facing the certainty of His death, it provided a window of hope.

When I preached on that gospel story, this year, I spoke of the Anglican **Book Of Common Prayer**, a masterpiece of English literature composed by Thomas Cramner, the first post-Reformation Archbishop of Canterbury, during the reign of the boy-king, Edward VI. Cramner had a powerful gift of poetic expression. In his funeral rite, he coined the phrase, "in the midst of life, we are in death" - a masterful way of giving voice to the boundless grief we feel when a loved one passes away.

But, I pointed out in my homily, that phrase "in the midst of life, we are in death," also exposes the inadequacy of Cramner's theology. Our Christian faith compels us to go on and complete the thought. Our faith in the Resurrection of Jesus, so beautifully prefigured in the mystery of His Transfiguration, demands that we say "In the midst of death, we are in life." Our faith tells us that death is not the end, nor will death emerge as the victor. For God's faithful people, life is changed, not ended. Life will always be victorious.

Our parish community learned that lesson later that week, when a tragic accident took the life of a young man well-known to us all. As members of the parish community rallied around his bereaved mother and father, many of them said to me "Now I know what your homily was all about." In the midst of death, we were in life as we came together as a family to support one another in the midst of a great grief that devastated many in our community. The promise, the hope of Resurrection loomed large in our hearts, minds and souls as we grieved together, prayed together and worked together. Life was changed, not ended. We understood Transfiguration and Resurrection as we never had before.

This has not been an easy Lent in our parish, for many reasons. We are facing the closing of our 125-year-old school building, and are looking for other, appropriate uses for that space. But the strength of a parish is not in the buildings it owns and maintains. The strength of a parish family, a true faith community, is in how it witnesses together to the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are strong enough to face changes in our parish life and ministry because we have learned together that in the midst of death, we are in life. As a parish family, we have shown that we know that to be so.

As Lent draws to a close, may the same be true for all of you, in all of your parish communities, throughout our Diocese.

Pope, President Discuss Religious Freedom, Life Issues, Immigration At First - Ever Meeting

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS)

-- In their first encounter, Pope Francis received U.S. President Barack Obama at the Vatican March 27 for a discussion that touched on several areas of tension between the Catholic Church and the White House, including religious freedom and medical ethics.

During an unusually long 50-minute meeting, the two leaders discussed "questions of particular relevance for the church in (the U.S.), such as the exercise of the rights to religious freedom, life and conscientious objection as well as the issue of immigration reform," the Vatican said in statement.

The mentions of religious freedom and conscientious objection presumably referred to the contraception mandate in the new health care law, which has become a major source of conflict between the administration and the church.

According to the Vatican statement, Pope Francis and Obama also had an "exchange of views on some current international themes, and it was hoped that in areas of conflict, there would be respect for humanitarian and international law and a negotiated solution between the parties involved."

In September, Pope Francis launched a high-profile campaign against Obama's proposal for military strikes to punish the government of President Bashar Assad for its presumed use of chemical weapons. The pope wrote to Russian President Vladimir Putin, host of a G-20 summit, decrying the "futile pursuit of a military solution," and a few days later led a prayer vigil for peace in Syria that drew some 100,000 people to St. Peter's Square.

The Vatican did highlight two points of harmony with Obama in the discussions: immigration reform, on which the ad-

ministration's position is closer to that of U.S. bishops than that of the Republican opposition; and a "common commitment to the eradication of trafficking in human persons in the world."

Later in the day, at a joint news conference with Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, Obama said he had spent the "largest bulk of the time" with the pope discussing "issues of the poor, the marginalized, those without opportunity and growing inequality" and the "challenges of conflict and how elusive peace is around the world," particularly in the Middle East.

Obama said Pope Francis "did not touch in detail" on the contraception mandate, but that in the president's subsequent meeting with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, "we discussed briefly the issue of making sure that conscience and religious freedom was (sic) observed in the context of applying the law."

"I pledged to continue to dialogue with the U.S. conference of bishops to make sure we can strike the right balance" on the issue, Obama said.

At the end of their talk, Pope Francis gave Obama a bound edition of his apostolic exhortation "Evangelii Gaudium" ("The Joy of the Gospel"), published last November. The gift prompted the president to respond: "You know, I actually will probably read this in the Oval Office when I am deeply frustrated, and I am sure it will give me strength and will calm me."

"I hope," the pope replied with a laugh.

Pope Francis also presented Obama with a pair of bronze medallions, one commemorating the 17th-century construction of the colonnades around St. Peter's Square; another portraying an angel that brings together the world's North and South in "solidarity and peace founded on justice."

The president's gift to the pope was a selection of fruit and



CNS Photo/Stefano Spaziani, Pool

POPE AND PRESIDENT: U.S. President Barack Obama walks with Pope Francis during a private audience at the Vatican Thursday, March 27.

vegetable seeds from the White House garden, in a box made from reclaimed wood used to build Baltimore's Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the first Catholic cathedral in the United States.

The president's motorcade entered the Vatican a few minutes after 10 a.m., under cloudy skies with temperatures in the low 50s. Archbishop Georg Ganswein, prefect of the papal household, greeted him in the San Damaso Courtyard of the Apostolic Palace, then led him upstairs to the pope's private library, followed by Obama's entourage, which included U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry; Susan Rice, the national security adviser, and Ambassador Ken Hackett, the U.S. envoy to the Holy See.

The pope greeted the president outside his library a few minutes before the appointed time of 10:30.

"Wonderful meeting you, I'm a great admirer," Obama told the pope as they shook hands.

Spanish, could be heard telling the president: "I'd like you to feel really at home here."

After his meeting with the pope, Obama met with Cardinal Parolin for more than half an hour. Kerry, Rice and Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, the Vatican's foreign minister, also participated in that meeting.

The Obama administration requires that nearly all health insurance plans, including those offered by most Catholic universities and agencies, cover sterilizations, contraceptives and some abortion-inducing drugs, all of which are forbidden by the church's moral teaching. The U.S. bishops have strenuously opposed the contraception mandate and have rejected existing exemptions as inadequate.

Legalized abortion and embryonic stem-cell research, which Obama supports and Catholic teaching forbids, have also been sources of conflict between the president and the church since the start of his administration, and were among the major topics of discussion during Obama's 2009 visit with Pope Benedict XVI.

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In The Alleghenies

(Continued From Page 3.)

Luddy Scholarship

Altoona: The Monsignor Joseph M. Luddy Scholarship Foundation is accepting applications for its annual awards. The following criteria will be utilized in the selection process:

1. Applicants must be current or former residents of Blair County, Pennsylvania.

2. Financial need, established scholastic achievement and faculty recommendations will be considered.

3. Attendance or acceptance into a graduate education program in the fields of social work or the Roman Catholic priesthood. The social work program must be accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and the priesthood - training program must be sanctioned by the Roman Catholic Church.

Application forms are available at colleges and universities in Pennsylvania and surrounding states. Students may also obtain scholarship application forms from the Monsignor Joseph M. Luddy Scholarship Foundation c/o The Greater Altoona Jewish



CARROLLTOWN SCIENCE FAIR: Saint Benedict School, Carrolltown, students competed for awards in the school Science Fair. Winners in fourth through eighth grades in the front row are (left to right) Fourth Grade: Isabella Barrett, Brandon McNulty, Aydin Swander, Blaine Farabaugh; Fifth Grade: Julie Westrick, Edwin Maykovich, Ethan Cunningham, and Emma Farabaugh. In the back row are Seventh Grade: Eric Farabaugh, Nathan Lamb, Kelsey Krug, Julie Snedden; Eighth Grade: Mariah Farabaugh, Sam Cunningham, Matthew Behe, Lauren Dvorchak; and Sixth Grade: Adam Link, Mavrick Farabaugh, Nicholas Witham, Jacob Sharbaugh.

Federation 1308 17th Street, Altoona, PA 16601. Completed applications and transcripts are to be submitted by Thursday, May 1. Announcement of the award will be made in July.

The Foundation was established as a memorial to Monsignor Luddy's work in the fields of social services and the Roman Catholic priesthood. He was serving as the Director of Catholic Social Service for the

Altoona - Johnstown Diocese as well as Chaplain at Garvey Manor at the time of his death in 1984.

The intent of the Foundation is to offer an annual scholarship award. Individuals, fraternal, and civic organizations who wish to donate to the Foundation can send their tax deductible contributions to the Monsignor Joseph M. Luddy Scholarship Foundation c/o The Greater Al-

toona Jewish Federation 1308 17th Street, Altoona, PA 16601.

Life And Justice

Poverty Workshop

Cresson: Jesus calls us to care for the poor in our society. But how do we answer his call? What does it mean to care for the poor? Is it enough to donate to

the local food pantry? Or give to the collection at Mass? Both of those actions support the work of others who are caring for the poor, but is it really all that we can do?

Caring for the poor means understanding those who live in poverty first. Caring for the poor means lifting people out of poverty.

(Continued On Page 15.)

Carmelite Community of the Word 12th Annual Paschal Festival

Friday, April 25, 2014

Holy Name Parish Hall
500 N. Julian St.
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Tickets: Adult \$30
Children 13 & under \$15

Deadline for Tickets April 11

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Holy Land/Italy: Jun 2-15, Jun 9-22, Jun 16-29, Jun 23-Jul 6...

Holy Land: Jun 2-12, Jun 9-19, Jun 16-26, Jun 23-Jul 3, Jul 2-12...

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A Financial Report To The People Of The Diocese Of Altoona - Johnstown

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In this edition of **The Catholic Register**, we are providing you an annual report on the finances of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2013. And, once again, the certified public accounting firm of Reilly, Creppage & Co., Inc., has given us an unqualified opinion as to our financial management.

This is a time of great excitement and opportunity in the universal Church, and certainly here in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. Recently, I announced a new model for Catholic education, which includes organizing our 20 elementary schools within four quadrants. The goal of this arrangement is to keep our Catholic schools available, accessible, and affordable for years to come by sharing resources and working together to meet the challenges of operating efficiently and effectively.

I am happy to share with you exciting news regarding vocations in our Diocese. When I arrived three years ago, there was only one seminarian in formation for the Priesthood. Today, four men are in seminary formation, and several young men are in the process of applying for admission to the seminary. In fact, the diocesan Director of Vocations, Father Matthew Reese, and I are currently in contact with about 30 young men who are considering a priestly vocation. I have also spoken to many young women exploring the possibility of religious life. Indeed, the Holy Spirit is at work as these individuals and others prayerfully discern how the Lord is calling them to fulfill their vocation in life.

This past year has also seen significant progress in the Cause for Canonization for the Servant of God Demetrius Gallitzin. We concluded the Diocesan phase of the inquiry last fall, and now the Roman phase of the Cause is underway. Other ministries continue to thrive, as well, thanks to your support. The Office of Youth Ministry celebrates our faith with more and more teens every year through events including Camp Timothy, Camp Zacchaeus, Junior High Youth Day, and the Senior High Youth Conference (SHY-CON). Through our Christian Initiation ministry, we welcome men, women, and children who have said "yes" to the Lord's call to full communion in the Catholic Church.

As you can see, God's grace is at work in our Diocese. Challenges remain, however. We are in the midst of a year of Pastoral Planning during which we recall Pope Francis' message to journey with God in our life; to build His Church here on earth; and to profess His Good News. Together, you and I will take this opportunity to look toward the future and ensure the strength and growth of our Diocesan Church while always being good stewards of the valuable resources entrusted to us.

As we continue on our Lenten journey and prepare for Christ's glorious resurrection at Easter, I thank you, as always, for your prayers and support. May the Lord richly bless you and the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Rev. Mark L. Bartchak
Bishop of Altoona-Johnstown

REILLY, CREPPAGE & CO., INC.
A Pennsylvania Corporation
Chartered Public Accountants

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222
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Independent Auditor's Report

Most Rev. Mark L. Bartchak, Bishop
Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown
125 South Beaver Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15204

Your Excellency:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown (the "Diocese") for the years ended June 30, 2013 and 2012, and the related statements of assets and liabilities for the year ended 2013, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements
Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility
Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. These standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making these risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the audit, not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the diocese's internal control. Additionally, we express no such opinion on the effectiveness of internal control, the design or implementation of internal control, or the reasonableness of accounting estimates prepared by management, as well as evaluated the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Member - Pennsylvania and American Institutes of Certified Public Accountants

Opinion
In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown (the "Diocese") as of June 30, 2013 and 2012, and the changes in net assets and liabilities for the years ended 2013 and 2012, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Emphasis of Matter
The 2013 financial statements were audited in conjunction with the 2013 audit of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, which was audited by Reilly, Creppage & Co., Inc. The 2013 financial statements were audited in conjunction with the 2013 audit of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, which was audited by Reilly, Creppage & Co., Inc.

Other Matter
Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The schedules of fund balance presented for purposes of addenda, schedules and reports are not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was not audited and related directly to the underlying accounting and other matters used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures, including auditing and substantiating such information directly to the underlying accounting and other matters used to prepare the financial statements in the financial statements themselves, and other auditing procedures or procedures with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

**DIOCESE OF ALTOONA-JOHNSTOWN
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE BY FUND
JUNE 30,**

	CURRENT FUND	MAPT FUND	PLANT FUND	SELF INSURANCE HEALTH CARE FUND	CUSTODIAN FUND	SELF INSURANCE FUND	MEDICAL RETIREMENT PLAN FUND	ELIMINATIONS	2013 TOTAL	2012 TOTAL (restated)
Assets										
Cash and cash equivalents	\$334,472	\$0	\$779,041	\$2,221,153	\$380,078	\$2,209,450	\$1,133,557	\$3,868,735	\$1,656,058	\$2,218,308
Cash and cash equivalents held in trust	C	755,712	0	993,656	0	0	0	0	1,749,368	4,905,085
Accounts and interest receivable, net	1,572,054	0	0	0	285,801	224,448	797,975	-214,367	2,640,801	2,711,350
Contributions receivable, net	503,745	0	872,882	0	0	0	0	0	1,438,003	1,900,813
Notes receivable-Mutual-Aid-Plan held in trust	C	8,995,488	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Notes receivable-other	184,304	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1,374,631	7,220,947	7,078,156
Investments	186,233	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	164,304	173,003
Investments held in trust	0	0	0	0	0	761,159	0	0	949,363	912,186
Other assets, including prepaid expenses	42,517	15,815,520	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,815,520	11,811,337
Other assets held in trust	0	0	0	214,800	0	555,537	0	0	838,454	803,027
Property, plant and equipment, net	0	0	7,734,807	0	0	0	0	0	7,734,807	7,098,548
Total Assets	\$2,883,228	\$24,966,709	\$8,847,520	\$3,420,208	\$851,284	\$3,028,335	\$1,931,532	\$1,992,623	\$40,097,050	\$22,561,414
Liabilities										
Accounts payable	\$214,323	\$0	\$73,453	\$8,289	\$1,000	\$4,454	\$0	\$0	\$251,490	\$297,190
Line of credit held in trust	0	3,425,156	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$3,425,156	\$3,853,000
Accrued liabilities	22,746	0	0	140,209	0	878,303	0	0	1,041,258	1,052,740
Accrued liabilities held in trust	0	0	0	234,985	0	0	0	0	234,985	0
Accrued pension costs and PRBO	0	0	0	0	15,028,400	0	8,478,035	0	23,502,835	14,157,438
Agency liabilities	0	0	0	0	106,388	0	0	0	106,388	100,394
Deferred revenues	324,820	0	0	122,815	0	414,123	1,174,011	0	2,035,758	1,965,844
Deposits payable-Mutual-Aid-Plan-held in trust	0	18,747,865	0	0	0	0	0	0	18,747,865	18,117,422
Notes payable other	0	0	1,593,888	0	0	0	0	-389,735	1,593,888	0
Total Liabilities	\$501,889	\$22,173,027	\$1,617,341	\$566,195	\$15,127,786	\$1,298,220	\$9,650,046	\$1,992,623	\$38,969,591	\$30,844,028
Net Assets										
Unrestricted undesignated	\$1,897,138	\$1,046,037	\$7,230,189	\$2,920,014	\$14,476,017	\$1,025,745	\$7,718,514	\$0	\$11,226,423	\$1,054,482
Unrestricted board designated	0	1,747,570	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,747,570	0
Temporarily restricted	606,212	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	606,212	1,011,878
Permanently restricted	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Net Assets	\$2,503,350	\$2,793,607	\$7,230,189	\$2,920,014	\$14,476,017	\$1,025,745	\$7,718,514	\$0	\$13,679,805	\$2,066,360
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$2,885,219	\$24,966,709	\$8,847,520	\$3,420,208	\$851,284	\$3,028,335	\$1,931,532	\$1,992,623	\$40,097,050	\$22,561,414

**DIOCESE OF ALTOONA-JOHNSTOWN
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE BY FUND
for the year ended June 30,**

	CURRENT FUND	MAPT FUND	PLANT FUND	SELF INSURANCE HEALTH CARE FUND	CUSTODIAN FUND	SELF INSURANCE FUND	MEDICAL RETIREMENT PLAN FUND	ELIMINATIONS	2013 TOTAL	2012 TOTAL (restated)
Revenue and gains										
Catholicism	\$1,566,888	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,566,888	\$1,614,882
Education Evangelization	2,139,770	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,139,770	2,154,210
Contributions and pledges	2,823,400	0	0	0	0	0	41,771	0	2,865,171	2,875,022
Program revenues	1,271,085	0	0	4,284,394	822,139	1,592,418	1,786,978	0	9,714,814	9,268,415
Investment income, net	5,731	580,535	0	0	0	1,420	0	0	6,111,072	2,153,240
Interest income on notes and accounts	C	385,973	0	0	0	23,377	0	0	409,350	362,338
Other-including transfers	376,956	77,833	133,725	0	815,509	0	0	-62,313	303,688	376,355
Total revenues and gains	6,141,883	1,024,167	133,725	4,284,194	1,837,648	1,615,795	1,830,178	-1,219,539	17,480,051	18,826,248
Net assets released from restrictions	0	0	1,274,893	0	0	0	0	0	1,274,893	2,903,250
Total revenues, gains and other support	6,141,883	1,024,167	1,348,588	4,284,194	1,837,648	1,615,795	1,830,178	-1,219,539	18,662,914	19,729,508
Expenses and losses	6,329,822	568,678	458,073	3,728,614	9,038,170	2,236,064	3,948,393	0	27,087,175	18,089,813
Increase (dec) in unrestricted net assets	-187,939	457,489	890,515	555,580	-7,201,472	-622,269	-2,118,215	0	-8,424,284	839,695
Change in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	24,508	0	784,889	0	0	0	0	0	809,397	457,083
Contributions and other increases	0	0	1,215,883	0	0	0	0	0	1,215,883	2,903,250
Net assets released from restrictions	0	0	-430,174	0	0	0	0	0	-430,174	-2,446,167
Increase (dec) in temporarily restricted net assets	24,508	0	-430,174	0	0	0	0	0	-405,666	-2,446,167
Change in Permanently Restricted Net Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contributions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net assets released from restrictions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Increase (dec) in permanently restricted net assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	\$2,503,350	\$2,793,607	\$7,230,189	\$2,920,014	\$14,476,017	\$1,025,745	\$7,718,514	\$0	\$13,679,805	\$2,066,360

**DIOCESE OF ALTOONA-JOHNSTOWN
STATEMENTS OF EXPENSES AND LOSSES
SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE BY FUND
for the year ended June 30,**

	CURRENT FUND	MAPT FUND	PLANT FUND	SELF INSURANCE HEALTH CARE FUND	CUSTODIAN FUND	SELF INSURANCE FUND	MEDICAL RETIREMENT PLAN FUND	ELIMINATIONS	2013 TOTAL	2012 TOTAL (restated)
Expenses										
Charistry	\$1,011,391	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,011,391	\$1,110,382
Communications	87,051	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	87,051	78,028
Tribunal	77,150	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	77,150	74,531
Catholic Ministry	456,266	0	137,788	0	0	0	0	0	594,054	568,374
Education	212,898	0	0	0	0	0	0	-57,925	154,973	1,068,378
Diocesan Formation	137,503	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	137,503	341,647
Fullon County Mission	81,484	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	81,484	106,466
Liturgy	74,490	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	74,490	77,071
Office of Ongoing Formation	100,870	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100,870	98,360
Prize Vocations	190,103	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	190,103	122,486
Ordnal Manor	94,122	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	94,122	181,742
Family Life	175,724	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	175,724	77,060
Parish Life	100,533	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100,533	192,297
Finance	839,060	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	839,060	90,522
Maintenance	243,933	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	243,933	589,781
Development	358,063	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	358,063	228,021
Information Technology	348,564	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	348,564	360,881
Religious Education	42,457	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	42,457	330,150
Youth Ministry	165,549	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	165,549	40,646
Catholic Charities, Inc.	659,826	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	659,826	170,560
Diocesan High Schools	1,458,114	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,458,114	659,826
Diocesan Elementary Schools	178,750	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	178,750	1,962,411
Mutual-Aid-Plan	0	586,878	0	0	0	0	0	0	586,878	200,000
Insurance Programs-Medical	0	0	0	3,728,614	0	0	0	-130,424	3,598,190	617,723
Insurance Programs-Property/Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-65,892	3,532,298	3,598,403
Presc's Medical Retirement Program	0	0	0	0	0	2,236,064	0	-76,789	2,155,275	1,613,284
Law Retirement and other Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,948,393	0	3,948,393	2,283,730
The Catholic Register	320,354	0	0	0	9,038,170	0	0	0	9,038,170	2,682,037
Depreciation	0	0	318,235	0	0	0	0	0	318,235	314,253
Transfers to Other Funds	908,509	0	0	0	0	0	0	908,509	318,235	255,979
Total	\$8,329,822	\$568,678	\$458,073	\$3,728,614	\$9,038,170	\$2,236,064	\$3,948,393	\$-1,219,539	\$22,087,175	\$19,089,916

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Short Pontificate, Long Impact: Blessed John XXIII Launched Many Church Reforms

By Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS)

-- Although he served as pope for less than five years, Blessed John XXIII left one of the most lasting legacies in the Catholic Church's history by convening the Second Vatican Council.

A plump, elderly, smiling Italian of peasant origins, the future pope had an illustrious career as a papal diplomat in Bulgaria, Turkey and postwar France.

He became pope amid the dismantling of colonialism, the rise of the Cold War and on the cusp of a technological transformation unlike anything the world had seen since the Industrial Revolution.

Citing the Holy Spirit as his source of inspiration, he called the Second Vatican Council to help the church confront the rapid changes and mounting challenges unfolding in the world -- and, by inviting non-Catholics to the council, to work toward Christian unity.



CNS Photo/Catholic Press Photo

BLESSED POPE JOHN XXIII

Although he served as pope for less than five years, Blessed John XXIII left one of the most lasting legacies in the Catholic Church's history by convening the Second Vatican Council.

As pope from 1958 to 1963, Blessed John launched an extensive renewal of the church when he convoked the council, which set in motion major reforms with regard to the church and its structure, the liturgy, ecumenism, social communication and Eastern churches.

After the initial session's close in 1962, he set up a committee to direct council activities during the nine-month recess. Subsequent sessions -- the final one ended in December 1965 -- produced documents on the role of bishops, priestly formation, religious life, Christian education, the laity and interreligious dialogue.

He produced a number of historic encyclicals, including

"Mater et Magistra" on Christian social doctrine and "Pacem in Terris," issued in 1963 at the height of the Cold War, on the need for global peace and justice.

He established the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law, which oversaw the updating of the general law of the church after the Second Vatican Council, culminating in publication of the new code in 1983.

Before he was elected pope, he served as a Vatican diplomat. His work in Bulgaria and Turkey put the future pope in close contact with many Christians who were not in full communion with the Catholic Church and inspired him to dedicate so

much effort as pope to try to recover the unity lost over the centuries. It was Blessed John who, as pope in 1960, created the Vatican's office for promoting Christian unity.

With his humility, gentleness and active courage, he reached out like the Good Shepherd to the marginalized and the world, visiting the imprisoned and the sick, and welcoming people from every nation and faith.

He visited many parishes in Rome, especially in the city's growing suburbs. His contact with the people and his open display of personal warmth, sensitivity and fatherly kindness earned him the nickname, "the Good Pope."

Blessed John brought a humble yet charismatic, personal style to papacy. He placed great importance on his modest upbringing in a village about 25 miles northeast of Milan, saying: "I come from the country, from poverty" that he said was "happy and blessed poverty -- not cursed, not endured."

Born in Sotto il Monte, Italy, in 1881, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli was one of 13 children in a family of sharecroppers. He entered the minor seminary at the age of 11 and was sent to Rome to study at the age of 19.

He was ordained to the priesthood in 1904 and, after several years as secretary to the bishop of Bergamo, he was called to the Vatican. In 1925 he began serving as a Vatican diplomat, first posted to Bulgaria, then to Greece and Turkey and, finally, to France. He was named a cardinal and patriarch of Venice in 1953.

After more than five years as patriarch of Venice, then-Cardinal Roncalli was elected pope Oct. 28, 1958.

He died of cancer June 3, 1963.

Blessed John was beatified in 2000, by Blessed John Paul II, with whom he will be canonized April 27.

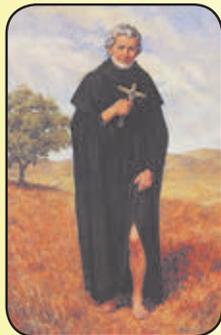
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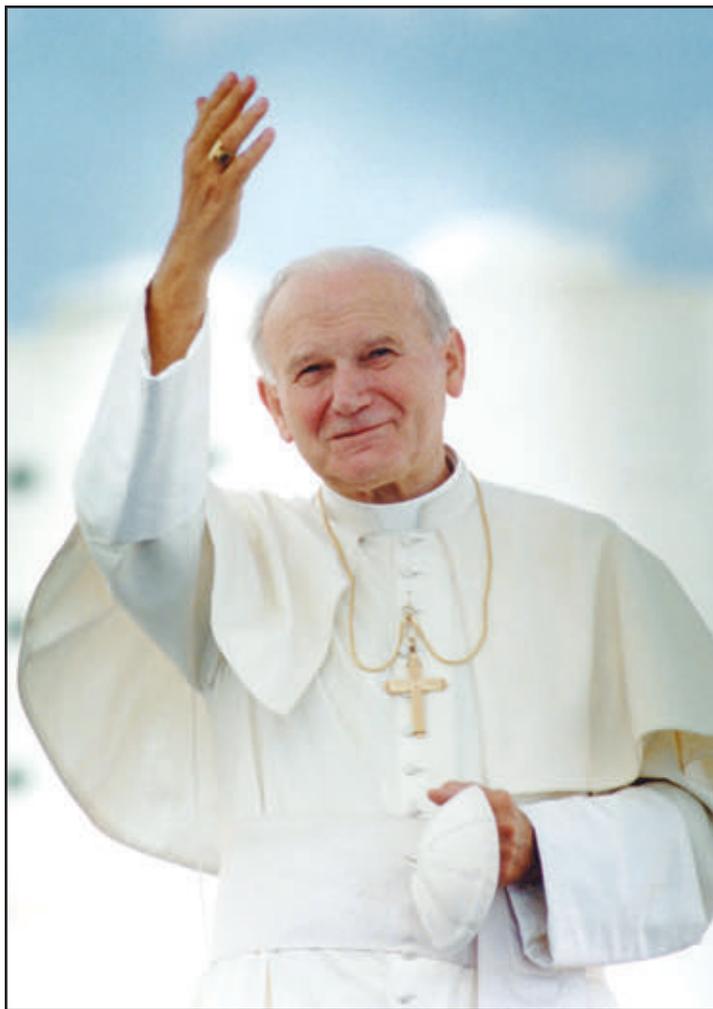
Father Barry Baroni and the faith community at Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish Invite you to send your prayer intentions to the new Shrine of Saint Peregrine at their parish church. The suggested donation for a candle to burn at the Shrine is \$3.00; a novena booklet may be obtained for \$1.00. All intentions will be remembered at every Mass celebrated at the parish for a period of 30 days.

Please remember my intentions at the Shrine:

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Intention: _____



CNS Photo/Joe Rimkus Jr.

BLESSED POPE JOHN PAUL II

Blessed John Paul II Brought Moral Force, Intellect And Flair To World Stage

By Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Blessed John Paul II, who will be canonized April 27, was one of the most forceful moral leaders of the modern age.

He brought a philosopher's intellect, a pilgrim's spiritual intensity and an actor's flair for the dramatic to his role as head of the universal church for more than 26 years.

The Polish pope was a tireless evangelizer and forceful communicator, speaking to millions in their own languages. But toward the end of his life, his powers of speech faltered with his worsening illness, which left

him often unable to even murmur a blessing.

The first non-Italian pope in 455 years, Blessed John Paul became a spiritual protagonist in two global transitions: the fall of European communism, which began in his native Poland in 1989, and the passage to the third millennium of Christianity.

As pastor of the universal church, he jetted around the world, taking his message to 129 countries in 104 trips outside Italy -- including seven to the United States.

Within the church, the pope was just as vigorous and no less controversial. He disciplined dissenting theologians, excommunicated self-styled "traditionalists," and upheld often

unpopular church positions like its opposition to artificial birth control. At the same time, he pushed Catholic social teaching into relatively new areas such as bioethics, international economics, racism and ecology.

In his later years, the pope moved with difficulty, tired easily and was less expressive, all symptoms of the nervous system disorder of Parkinson's disease. Yet he pushed himself to the limits of his physical capabilities, convinced that such suffering was itself a form of spiritual leadership.

He led the church through a heavy program of soul-searching events during the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, fulfilling a dream of his pontificate. His long-awaited pilgrimage to the Holy Land that year took him to the roots of the faith and dramatically illustrated the church's improved relations with Jews. He also presided over an unprecedented public apology for the sins of Christians during darker chapters of church history, such as the Inquisition and the Crusades.

His social justice encyclicals, including his landmark document, the apostolic letter "Novo Millennio Ineunte" ("At the Beginning of the New Millennium"), made a huge impact, addressing the moral dimensions of human labor, the widening gap between rich and poor and the shortcomings of the free-market system. He called for a "new sense of mission" to bring Gospel values into every area of social and economic life. At the pope's request, the Vatican published an exhaustive compendium of social teachings in 2004.

As a manager, he set directions but often left policy details to top aides. His reaction to the mushrooming clerical sex abuse scandal in the United States underscored his governing style: He suffered deeply, prayed at length and made brief but forceful statements emphasizing the gravity of such sins by priests. He convened a Vatican-U.S. summit to address the problem, but let his Vatican advisers and U.S. church leaders work out the answers. In the end, he approved changes that made it easier to laicize abusive priests.

The pope approved a universal catechism as one remedy for doctrinal ambiguity. He also pushed church positions further into the public forum. In the 1990s he urged the world's bishops to step up their fight against abortion and euthanasia, saying the practices amounted to a modern-day "slaughter of the innocents." His sharpened critique of these and other "anti-family" policies helped make him *Time* magazine's choice for Man of the Year in 1994.

The pope was a cautious ecumenist, insisting that real differences between religions and churches not be covered up. Yet he made several dramatic gestures, including: launching a Catholic-Orthodox theological dialogue in 1979; visiting a Rome synagogue in 1986; hosting world religious leaders at a "prayer summit" for peace in 1986; and traveling to Damascus, Syria, in 2001, where he became the first pontiff to visit a mosque.

To his own flock, he brought continual reminders that prayer and the sacraments were crucial to being a good Christian. He held up Mary as a model of holiness for the whole church, updated the rosary with five new "Mysteries of Light" and named more than 450 new saints.

The pope lived a deep spiritual life -- something that was not easily translated by the media. Yet in earlier years, this pope seemed made for modern media, and his pontificate has been captured in some lasting images, like huddling in a prison-cell conversation with his would-be assassin, Mehmet Ali Agca, who shot the pope in St. Peter's Square May 13, 1981.

Karol Jozef Wojtyla was born May 18, 1920, in Wadowice, a small town near Krakow, in southern Poland. He lost his mother at age 9, his only brother at age 12 and his father at age 20.

An accomplished actor in Krakow's underground theater during the war, he changed paths and joined the clandestine seminary after being turned away from a Carmelite monastery with the advice: "You are destined for greater things."

Following theological and philosophical studies in Rome, he returned to Poland for parish work in 1948, spending weekends on camping trips with young people. When named auxiliary bishop of Krakow in 1958 he was Poland's youngest bishop, and he became archbishop of Krakow in 1964. He also came to the attention of the universal church through his work on important documents of the Second Vatican Council.

Though increasingly respected in Rome, Cardinal Wojtyla was a virtual unknown when elected pope Oct. 16, 1978. In St. Peter's Square that night, he set his papal style in a heartfelt talk -- delivered in fluent Italian, interrupted by loud cheers from the crowd.

After more than 26 years as pope, Blessed John Paul died at the age of 84 at the Vatican April 2, 2005, the vigil of Divine Mercy Sunday.

Divine Mercy Sunday had special significance for Blessed John Paul, who made it a church-wide feast day to be celebrated a week after Easter. He was beatified by Pope Benedict XVI on Divine Mercy Sunday, May 1, 2011, and will be canonized by Pope Francis on the same feast day, April 27, 2014, together with Blessed John XXIII, the pope Blessed John Paul beatified in 2000.

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Now Showing

‘God’s Not Dead,’ But This Movie Doesn’t Help His Cause

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) -- A classic bit of impertinence from 19th-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche notwithstanding, it seems that “God’s Not Dead” (Freestyle).

While that may be a welcome piece of news to those who were entertaining any doubts, the message movie that endeavors to proclaim such reassurance from the big screen turns out to be earnest but ineffective.

Pity poor college freshman Josh Wheaton (Shane Harper). No sooner does Josh stroll onto the picturesque campus of his new university than he encounters Professor Radisson (Kevin Sorbo), the militantly atheistic faculty member who presides over the introductory philoso-

phy course for which committed believer Josh has ill-advisedly registered.

Nearly the first order of business in Radisson’s class is for each student to write out, sign and pass to the end of the row the succinct formula: “God is dead.” Not surprisingly, Josh demurs; astoundingly, no one else in the packed lecture hall seems to have the least objection to fulfilling so flagrantly inappropriate a requirement.

Josh’s stand-out obstinacy drives his infuriated instructor to challenge him to a multipart debate on the subject of the Almighty’s existence, with Josh’s classmates as the jury and the lad’s grade for the course hanging in the balance.

Josh takes up the gauntlet, despite the active discouragement of his believing but ambitious girlfriend Kara (Cassidy Gifford), who thinks he should



CNS Photo/Icon Media Group

GOD’S NOT DEAD: Willie and Korie Robertson star in the movie “God’s Not Dead.” The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.

go with the flow to avoid ruining their perfect future together. He is pre-law, after all.

So the stage is set for a rather dreary exchange of views -- angry on Radisson’s side, meek but steadfast on Josh’s -- during which such names as Charles Darwin and Stephen Hawking get bandied about for one side’s benefit or the other’s. Josh -- no flat-Earther he -- insists that both the Big Bang theory and the hurried pace of early evolution weigh on the side of a Creator and correspond to the symbolic details contained in the Book of Genesis.

Subplots abound around this core story. One involves strictly brought-up Muslim lass Ayisha (Hadeel Sittu). Though she dislikes the headscarf her traditionalist father makes her wear, and ditches it as soon as he drops her off on campus each morning, her inclusion in the movie seems, initially, to hold out the hope that the filmmakers are taking a broad view, and that believers of all stripes are eventually to be seen rallying to the cause. Take that, Professor Radisson!

Alas, not a bit of it. Ayisha harbors a secret, one that only reinforces the rigid presuppositions on offer here.

Other characters being

made to conform to the script’s cramped and caricatured worldview include crassly materialistic business exec Mark (Dean Cain), his hippy-dippy main squeeze Amy (Trisha LaFache) and Josh’s fellow student and newfound pal, People’s Republic of China-bred Martin (Paul Kwo) -- to whom any mention of matters divine apparently comes as a shock.

On the side of the angels, meanwhile, lurk the local minister, Rev. Dave (David A.R. White), his missionary best friend, Rev. Jude (Benjamin Ochieng), as well as Radisson’s beleaguered (and possibly live-in) love interest Mina (Cory Oliver), a semi-closeted Christian for whose timidly proffered ideas her companion has only scorn.

There might be the kernel of an intriguing documentary buried within director Harold Cronk’s stacked-deck drama, given the extent of real-life academic hostility toward religion. But even faith-filled moviegoers will sense the claustrophobia of the echo chamber within which this largely unrealistic picture unfolds.

The film contains mature themes, brief domestic violence, a potentially upsetting accident scene and vaguely implied cohabitation. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may be not suitable for children.

Coming Up On ‘Proclaim!’

Upcoming guests on “Keeping The Faith,” Bishop Mark L. Bartchak’s segment of “Proclaim!” will include:

April 13 -- Serra Club members Louise Fisher and Mary Beyer preview the annual Bishop’s Night for Vocations.

April 20 -- On this Easter Sunday, Kevin and Jen Sheridan, members of Saint Clement Parish in Johnstown, share their inspirational story of choosing life for their young son.

Sunday Mass
Broadcast Live from
the Cathedral of
the Blessed Sacrament, Altoona
10:00 a.m. WFBG Radio, 1290 AM

Sunday Mass Telecast
Live from Saint John Gualbert Cathedral
Downtown Johnstown
11 a.m. - Noon WWCP - TV FOX Channel 8

Proclaim!
10:30 a.m.

A half - hour of local Church news and features



FATHER MARK S. BEGLY

Father Begly Is Bishop's Night Speaker

Father Mark S. Begly, pastor of Our Mother of Sorrows Parish in Johnstown and vicar forane of the Johnstown Deanery, will be the keynote speaker at the 16th annual Bishop's Night for Vocations Dinner. A priest of the Altoona – Johnstown Diocese since 1984, Father Begly, in addition to his leadership in all of the organizations of the parish and school, also teaches a course on Priestly Spirituality at Saint Vincent Seminary in Latrobe. Before being assigned to Our Mother of Sorrows in July 2010, he served for nine years as pastor of Saint John the Evangelist Parish in Altoona.

Bishop's Night for Vocations is a joint effort of the Diocesan Vocation Office and the Serra Clubs of Cambria County and Altoona. Bishop Mark L. Bartchak, will be the host for the evening. Student winners of the contests in essay, poetry and prose, sponsored by the Diocesan Vocation office, will receive their awards at the event.

The dinner will be held on Wednesday, May 7 at Our Lady of Loretto Community Hall in Loretto, with a social at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner and program at 6:00 p.m. Tickets for the event may be obtained by sending a \$30.00 check to Joyce Dailey, Bishop's Night Treasurer, 500 Diamond Boulevard, Johnstown PA 15905. Checks are to be made payable to the Serra Club of Cambria County. All seats are reserved. Deadline for requests is Thursday, April 25.

Junior High Day

(Continued From Page 16.)

As always, the day included fun and games.

For the third consecutive year, Bishop Mark, Diocesan priests, and religious order priests heard Confessions.

And new this year, students from each parish or school made a scrapbook-style poster, which they signed and hung on the wall.

For Anna DeRubeis, Junior High Youth Day is an opportunity to share her Catholic faith with peers from throughout the Diocese.

"I feel like young people my age often want to stay home and want to stay on their phones and not talk to others," said the Saint Mark, Altoona, parishioner. "I think this is a really good opportunity to talk to different people and make friends because you share similar beliefs."

Added Swope, "It's important for the students to deepen their relationship with Jesus, but also to come together and let that faith grow outside of just their parish."

In The Alleghenies

(Continued From Page 6.)

All this and more will be the topic of the diocesan Commission for Life and Justice's workshop: Bridges out of Poverty.

Last fall, participants of the poverty simulation were able to "walk in the shoes" of a person living in poverty and see what life is like in poverty. The hands-on, interactive Bridges out of Poverty Workshop, will open our minds to the culture of poverty – to enable us to see poverty in a new lens and provide us with resources to eradicate poverty in our communities. With that new lens and a new understanding, we will be empowered to create a positive impact on the lives of those living in poverty – providing them with a hand-up, not a hand out.

The workshop will be at Mount Aloysius College on Saturday, April 12 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. with lunch at noon. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. with a light breakfast. Registration is \$15.00. Cost includes all materials, breakfast food and lunch.

To register, send payment, with your name, address, email and phone number to Commission for Life and Justice 5379 Portage Street, Lilly Pa 15938 or by calling (814) 886 - 5551.

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Prayer

Retreat

Gallitzin: The Carmelite Community of the Word is conducting a retreat, "Breathe In Me, Holy Spirit," Friday, May 2, at 7:00 p.m. to Saturday, May 3 at 3:00 p.m. Conferences, private and communal prayer, and time for private reflection, as well as opportunity for spiritual

direction will be included. Donation is \$45.00, and includes two meals, overnight lodging in a private room, and materials. Pre-registration is required by Tuesday, April 29; \$10.00 non-refundable deposit due with registration.

Sessions are held at Incarnation Center, 394 Bem Road. To register, get directions, or for more information, call (814) 886 - 4098.

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DIVINE MERCY NOVENA

APRIL 18-APRIL 28 Saint Francis Xavier Parish
211 Powell Avenue, Cresson

All who seek God's Mercy for themselves, for their loved ones and for the whole world are invited to Saint Francis Xavier Church in Cresson to participate in The Divine Mercy Novena. This novena, which focuses on the power of Jesus' Passion, Death and Resurrection, begins on Good Friday, April 18.



Jesus told St. Faustina: "Encourage souls to place great trust in My fathomless mercy. Let the weak, sinful soul have no fear to approach Me, for even if it had more sins than there are grains of sand in the world, all will be drowned in the unmeasurable depths of My Mercy." (Diary 1059).

Good Friday

7:00 PM Novena Prayers, Chaplet & Reflection

Holy Saturday

3:00 PM Novena Prayers, Chaplet & Reflection

Easter Sunday

7:00 PM Novena Prayers, Chaplet & Reflection

Monday-Saturday

7:00 PM Novena Prayers, Chaplet & Mass

Divine Mercy Sunday

8:00 AM & 10:30 AM Masses

Junior High Youth Day Participants Challenged To Seek Friendship With Jesus

**Photo And Text
By Tony DeGol**

Did you ever see the movie "Diary Of A Wimpy Kid"?

It is a comedy, but it deals with an issue that is no laughing matter, said Bishop Mark L. Bartchak to sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students gathered for the annual Junior High Youth Day.

The film is about an eleven year old boy named Greg who lost his best friend because Greg was more concerned about himself and being popular.

The Bishop recalled watching the movie recently with his nieces and nephews.

"The moral of that story is that if you take advantage of others and use them, you are probably going to experience negative consequences," he warned. "The more that you take away from others, the more you will end up losing what you want and who you are."

Bishop Mark's message stemmed from the theme of Junior High Youth Day 2014, "What Would You Do for Your Friends? Take Up Your Cross and Follow Me."

According to Francine Swope, coordinator of the Office of Youth Ministry and principle organizer of the event, the idea comes from the scripture read-



JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH DAY: Bishop Mark L. Bartchak poses with a group from Saint Francis Xavier Parish in Cresson at Junior High Youth Day on Sunday, March 23. Almost 300 students from 28 parishes and schools participated in the day - long event.

ing about laying down your life for a friend.

"Jesus is our friend and He laid down his life for us, so we have to take up our cross and be Jesus for others," she said. "Could we lay down our lives for our friends?"

Referring to the Gospel story of the day, Bishop Mark mentioned the meeting between Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

He noted that Samaritans

and Jewish people did not associate.

"This Gospel story tells us that Jesus went there to make new friends with people who would never expect to be friends with a Jewish person," Bishop Mark said. "And Jesus went there to make new friends with people who would never expect to meet the Son of God this way."

The meeting between the two, said the Bishop, teaches us

ways we can deepen our friendship with the Lord, including daily prayer, inviting Jesus to be part of our lives, and introducing Him to other young people.

"You don't do it to brag so that you can be popular," he added. "You do it because you know that the Lord Jesus is the only friend who can give as much of Himself to everyone as he gives to you. A lot of time, friendship can be very exclusive. And a lot of times those exclusive friend-

ships really don't make you happy. The love and friendship that we find in Jesus is inclusive. It is supposed to be shared with others."

Held at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School in Ebensburg, about 300 students from 28 parishes and schools participated in Junior High Youth Day, Swope said.

Besides Mass with the Bishop, the day included two keynote addresses by nationally-recognized speaker Bob Perron, the so-called STOOGE-4-CHRIST.

Perron drove home the message that Jesus is our friend so much so that He died on the cross for us, and we have to give back the love He showed for us to others.

Students gave Perron rave reviews.

"He can connect with kids easily and help you understand Jesus is your real father, and He's there whenever you're in trouble," said Juliana Smeddler, a member of Saint Benedict Parish in Carrolltown.

"He motivated you to get closer to God," added Abby Farabaugh, also a Saint Benedict parishioner.

(Continued On Page 15.)

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