



# The Catholic Register

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## People With Autism Can Be Fully Integrated Into Life Of Parish, Says Conference Speaker

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Photo And Text  
By Bruce A. Tomaselli

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Because of people's fear and a lack of awareness, faith formation for children within the autism spectrum has been slow to evolve.

The numbers of young people affected continues to rise. A lack of understanding and clear pastoral plans, have caused many of these intellectually disabled persons to turn away from their Church and faith.

A personal experience made Deacon Larry Sutton, Ph.D., painfully aware of the situation. "Just after my second year of ordination I saw two children turned away from making their First Communion. My sense of social justice became angered and it started me on this path to helping autistic children."

Deacon Sutton, from the Diocese of Pittsburgh, is also a licensed psychologist. Ordained over 15 years ago, Deacon Sutton, is a renowned advocate for children in the autistic spectrum.

He was the keynote speaker at a mini - conference co - sponsored by the offices of Family Life, Christian Initiation, Religious Education, Sacramental Preparation, and Youth Ministry. The workshop was entitled, "Partners in Faith Formation of



**SPEAKER:** Deacon Larry Sutton Ph.D. shares a laugh with Francine Swope, Director of Religious Education, Youth Ministry and Sacramental Preparation; and Amy Kanich, Family Life director; prior to the Conference held on November 7 and 8 at the Our Lady of the Alleghenies Parish Hall in Lilly.

Children with ASD, IDD and Other Disabilities. It was held on Friday and Saturday, November 7 and 8 at Our Lady of the Alleghenies Parish Hall in Lilly.

The weekend was open to directors of religious education, clergy, parents, and families.

On Friday evening Bishop

Mark L. Bartchak was the celebrant of a special liturgical celebration for intellectually disabled persons, their parents, and friends. Disabled persons carried out all of the ministries at the Mass.

As far back as 1978, the U.S. Catholic Bishops began an

effort toward a broader integration of persons with disabilities into the full life of the Church. That effort has not been fully embraced for a variety of reasons.

Deacon Sutton, is the director of Pre - Theology Formation at Saint Vincent Seminary in

Latrobe. Over the past 13 years he has developed a program to incorporate children with autism and other special needs into parish life.

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**MUSIC PROGRAM:** The Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School, Altoona, instrumental music program under the direction of former BG band director Melvin McConnell has been a great success at area Catholic grade schools. Pictured are five of the 33 students taking instrumental music at Hollidaysburg Catholic. They include (left to right): First row: Bradley Shaffer - 8th grade/trumpet, Brooke Williams - 7th grade/flute, Nicole Himes - 6th grade/clarinet. Second row: Adam Elder - 7th grade/trombone, Ryan McLucas - 6th grade/percussion and Melvin McConnell. The program is also offered at Saint Rose of Lima, Saint Patrick, Altoona Central Catholic and Saint John the Evangelist.



**ROSARY BALLOON RELEASE:** Religious education students at Most Holy Trinity Parish, South Fork, took part in a Rosary Balloon Release on Sunday, October 19. Balloons were linked together to form a giant rosary. Last year, the balloons were reported to have traveled as far west as Pittsburgh. A cross attached to the end of the balloon rosary has the parish name inscribed on it, to make communication with the students possible.

## Community

### Healthy Community Grants

**Dallas:** The Sisters of Mercy of the Mid - Atlantic Community will be awarding grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 for projects designed as healthy community initiatives for residents within the Altoona - Johnstown Diocese. The projects must be consistent with the philosophy and mission of the Sisters of Mercy and the Catholic Church, in that they provide services for persons who are economically disadvantaged, especially women and children. The deadline for submitting proposals is March 1, 2015.

The Sisters of Mercy award grants every two years for projects designed as healthy community initiatives. In 2013, \$24,500 in funding was awarded to nineteen non - profit organizations within the Altoona - Johnstown Diocese.

The grants result from an Endowment established by the Sisters of Mercy within the Independent Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Altoona - Johnstown. The Endowment was

started with a gift of \$250,000 from the Mercy Health System (now Catholic Healthcare Partners) in Cincinnati, which the Sisters of Mercy co - sponsor. With the investment in the Foundation, the Sisters hope to leverage additional funds to promote healthy community initiatives.

For additional information or to request grant application forms, please contact: Healthy Community Initiatives, c/o Colleen Maher, Office of Development, Sisters of Mercy, P.O. Box 369, Dallas PA , 18612 - 0369; by email at cmaher@mercymidatlantic.org, or by phone at (610) 664 - 6650 ext. #525.

## High Schools

### Turkey Trot

**Boalsburg:** A 5K run/walk Turkey Trot and children's event to benefit the Saint Joseph Catholic Academy's Cross Country and Track and Field program will be held Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 27, at 9:00 a.m. at the Pennsylvania Military Museum.

The entry fee is \$25.00. Gobbler Gallup entry fee is \$5.00.



**GENEALOGY CLASS:** Parishioner Dianne O'Shea taught a class on genealogy and discovering family history at Transfiguration Parish, Conemaugh, on Tuesday, October 21. An avid historian and a member of the Johnstown Genealogical Society, O'Shea provided research tips, information sites and suggested books to fellow parish members. Pictured are (left to right) First row: Elaine Sojak, Betty Dugan, Sharon Ponchek, Diane Brence, Kevin Turner. Second row: Dianne O'Shea, Frank Kushner, Barbara Kushner, Dolly Vantroba, Bob Peschok, Nancy Turner, Elizabeth Vantroba, Louise Brezovic and Philip Brezovic.

For more information and to register go to <http://www.imathlete.com/events/EventOverview.aspx?fID=21076>.

### Music Program

**Altoona:** The Bishop Guil-

foyle Catholic High School elementary instrumental program has been a huge success with more than 90 students participating.

Former Bishop Guilfoyle music and band director Melvin McConnell offers weekly

instruction at five Catholic elementary schools – Saint Rose of Lima, Hollidaysburg Catholic, Saint Patrick in Newry, Altoona Central Catholic and Saint John the Evangelist in Lakemont.

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# In The Alleghenies

## Liturgical Reflection: Thanksgiving Day



Thursday, November 27, is Thanksgiving Day and a special day of prayer in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. It is a Day of Prayer for the Harvest and Fruits of the Earth. As our country give thanks for our many blessings, we take time to give God thanks and praise for the many gifts we have received. All are encouraged to participate at Mass this day. Please join in praying the following:

*O God, source of all good things, your gifts of love are countless and your goodness infinite. On this Thanksgiving Day we express our gratitude for your kindness and mercy. Open our hearts to have concern for every man, woman, and child, so that we may share the gifts of time and eternity with our sisters and brothers. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

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McConnell said he's "very encouraged by the numbers. The elementary students and their parents are stoked."

At Hollidaysburg Catholic, 33 students are signed up for the instrumental music program, which has created a buzz in the air for music.

"We could have our own Hollidaysburg Catholic marching band," Hollidaysburg Catholic principal Elaine Spencer said. "This has been so great ... 33 students. Mel McConnell visited our school and he created excitement for music. Bells, flutes, trombones, saxophone, clarinets, percussions ... we have it all."

Bishop Guilfoyle's instrumental music program is one of the many outreach programs offered to the Catholic elementary schools. Other curriculum initia-

tives include foreign languages, religious retreats, math and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) programs.

"Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School is committed to offering an enriched education foundation for our future students," Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic principal Joan Donnelly said. "Bishop Guilfoyle teachers currently provide curriculum opportunities in Spanish and Chinese, instrumental music, summer math enrichment to our elementary students."

### Higher Education

#### Distinguished Alumni

**Cresson:** The Mount Aloysius College Alumni Association has named Marie Little of Hollidaysburg, Distinguished Alumni of 2014. Little received the Award during the 2014 Alumni

Recognition Dinner held in the College's historic Alumni Hall. The dinner was part of the college's combined Homecoming/Alumni Weekend festivities. Mount Aloysius College president Tom Foley and Jacob Claar, president of the Mount Aloysius Alumni Association presented the award to Little.

Marie Little is a 1989 graduate of Mount Aloysius College, earning a Certificate in Commercial Art. She has been known throughout the region for decades as a champion of the arts and an active advocate for education. Her service to the community and to Mount Aloysius College is well-documented. She personifies the college's Mercy values of mercy, service, justice and hospitality.

Raised in Clearfield, she was the oldest of eight children. She credits her parents for setting a strong example on being



**PRESENTS WORKSHOP:** Cathy Lykens, Language Arts and Science teacher in the Junior High Department at Holy Name Elementary School in Ebensburg was among more than fifty presenters selected to offer break-out sessions at the forty seventh annual Keystone State Reading Association Convention in State College. Her workshop entitled "Not Your Run-of-the-Mill Research Project" modeled how to teach students how to research effectively, avoid plagiarizing and to publish creatively while integrating nonfiction text features into their reports. Lykens promotes a writing community within her classroom, scheduling frequent peer conferences and providing scaffolding and mentor texts to help students improve their writing.

positive role models, instilling in her the values of faith, family, education, and community service. All of her brothers and sisters also graduated from college. The family also has close ties to Mount Aloysius College. Little's mother, aunts, and cousins graduated from Mount Aloysius Academy and her daughter, Julie, graduated in 1996 from the college's nursing program. Little also earned degrees from Juniata College, Huntingdon; Marymount College in Arlington, VA; and Montessori International Institute in London, England.

She serves as president of the Hollidaysburg Area Arts Council, which she and her husband, John initiated in 1998. Affiliated with the Borough of Hollidaysburg, the board is made up entirely of volunteers.

Teaching is also a passion of Little. She taught "Survey of Western Art" to adult students through The Mount Aloysius' Graduate and Continuing Education program. Little also served as director of education for the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art (SAM) and was instrumental in introducing art to hun-

dreds of children in area school districts. She has also been involved in organizations such as the Mount Aloysius Art Alliance where she was past president; Art in Common; and Historic Hollidaysburg, where she also served as past board president.

### Artist Featured

**Cresson:** Donald Talbot, Ed.D., associate professor of English, fine arts and visual arts program coordinator at Mount Aloysius College is a featured exhibitor at the University of Rhode Island's (URI) "Art and Healing: Remembering Christiane Corbat The Work Continues" art show.

The exhibit is housed on URI's Feinstein Providence Campus and will be in place until December 12th. The show is a multimedia exhibit of work by healing artists, fine artists, art therapists, rehabilitative artists, and expressive artists.

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# Another Perspective

**By Monsignor Timothy P. Stein  
Enjoy The Moment**

# Point Of View

As they approach the door I can hear their nervous chatter that soon gives way to shy "hellos." As they are warmly welcomed and encouraged by words of kindness, they relax. It's only the first time they enter this happens for when they stay and then leave they know they are truly welcome to come again.

On Friday night, when our home team is playing football, our kitchen table is surrounded by young, teenage, boys, friends of our sons, who are welcomed into our home for a pre - game meal. This wonderful gathering did not begin with any grand plans and no invitations were sent. It only happened because a few hungry boys, who needed a place to rest and relax, showed up at our door. Although, hunger and extra time on their hands brought them to our doorstep, a warm welcome along with a generous helping of love and undivided attention has them promising to come back again. They eat, talk, laugh and more times than not we find them relaxing in our family room just like our own children would after a long day at school.

As the clocks ticks down to game time, the boys express their gratitude and say their goodbyes. We wish them luck. Give them a word of encouragement and silently pray a prayer of protection upon them. As they walk out the door, my husband turns and smiles at me, no words need to be spoken, for we both know in our hearts that God showed up at our door today wearing a football jersey, waiting for the game to start.



## Family Matters

**By Amy Kanich  
Imperfect Blessings**

Lately, a lot of people ask my husband and I how we have time do all that we do. I laugh! In fact, just this past week, I was stopped by three people who asked the same question. The truth is we do not have all the time in the world nor do we have it all together. There are many times in our life we drop the ball. For we know it is only by God's strength and a good sense of humor we make it through our crazy life.

But, if we could give a piece of advice to those who really want in their hearts to do more to serve God, but seem not to find the time, it would be this - "Let it go." Let go of the need for everything in your life to be in order before you serve. Let go of the need for perfection. Let go of unrealistic expectations. We learned that no matter what comes in life, if we wait for our lives to be perfect, or wait for the perfect moment then we will miss some wonderful opportunities to serve God.

Some people would shudder over having a group of people at their home, on a Friday afternoon, right after work, ready to host and serve a meal. Believe me a few years ago we did the same thing! Yes, there was a time that we would not invite

anyone over to our house unless we could be sure it was perfectly clean, the table elegantly set and a four course meal ready to be served.

But this is not who we are today. We do have the house presentable, set a simple table and prepare a home - made meal. We do not drive ourselves crazy with the need to have everything in perfect order in order to serve.

I know some people who will not serve on the altar of God because they may not look perfect. Perfect hair, perfect clothes and even for some the perfect weight. I know some are afraid to volunteer to teach CCD because they may not be perfectly qualified. Some don't join the choir because they don't have the perfect voice. I even know people who tell me God has been calling them for many years to serve but are waiting for the perfect moment to act.

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It's true, it's true: the older you get, the faster time seems to fly. It was a real shock to my system when I turned the calendar a few weeks ago and realized that the month of November was at hand. Wasn't it only yesterday that the 2014 calendar went up on my bulletin board? How can it possibly be that we find ourselves halfway through the eleventh month of the year? No way am I ready for 2015! Where did the time go?

When I was a kid I lived in a state of perpetual anticipation. I would mark off the days on a calendar looking ahead to some special event. I would walk around saying "The day after the day after tomorrow I am going to . . ." and in response I would hear my mother say "Don't go wishing your life away." My mother knew whereof she spoke. How I wish I could slow things down and recover some of those days that are now long past.

I am particularly aware of swiftly time flies as I look around and see signs of the "holiday season" springing up all over the place. Everyone is in such a rush to get from one season to another, from one holiday to the next! I swear that this year some of the jack o'lanterns were wearing Santa Claus hats, and the Pilgrims were decked out in elf costumes! I wonder if the most practical greeting at this time of year shouldn't be "Happymerry Hallowgivingmas." One might just as well kill three birds with one stone, and if you can stuff one of those birds and serve it up for your holiday dinner, so very much the better.

I agree with the popular song that says this is "the most wonderful time of the year," but I have to wonder sometimes just what time of the year it is. When Christmas trees and Christmas lights are going up before the pumpkins have been taken down, and when Thanksgiving turkeys and Christmas hams are advertised in the same commercial, we run the risk of being so utterly confused as to not know what time of year it is at all. If the lights are on the tree before the clocks have been turned back an hour, we're in big trouble.

All of these examples might seem a bit extreme, and some of them just a bit far - fetched, but none of them are too far off the mark. We don't want to anticipate anything anymore. We don't want to wait. We don't like to take our time. Patience may be a virtue, but it is no longer ours. The prevailing attitude is one of rush, rush, rush, and take no prisoners as you go. The race is to the swiftest, and anyone who stops to smell the roses, or who lingers to appreciate the change in the seasons will be left far behind in the dust.

Sadly, we even rush through Christmas, because we're in such a hurry to get to the next big thing. I will guarantee that every parish in the Altoona - Johnstown Diocese will soon start to receive calls asking what time the earliest Mass will be said on Christmas Eve. Do people really want to pray and celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus, or is Christmas Mass just one more task to be crossed off of a list - - something "to go and get it over with" -- before we get down to the feasting and the unwrapping of Christmas presents. Heck, if we get Mass over and done with soon enough, we could even have time to take down the Christmas tree, clean up the holiday mess, and get ready to celebrate New Year's Eve!

As the days dwindle down to a precious few (one of my favorite lyrics!) we would all do well to slow down and appreciate the wonder of each new day as it unfolds. Rushing headlong into whatever is on the horizon means we will surely miss what is right in front of us right now. There is beauty and wonder in this moment - - beauty and wonder that will never be again. Time goes so very swiftly. There is no need at all to speed it up. Don't go wishing your life away.

Enjoy what you have right now.



POPE FRANCIS

CNS Photos/Paul Haring

# Look To His History To Understand Pope Francis, Says Cardinal Kasper

**By Patricia Zapor**  
Catholic News Service

**WASHINGTON (CNS)** -- Pope Francis is clearly "a pope of surprises," German Cardinal Walter Kasper said in an address in Washington Nov. 6, and those who would try to understand the pontiff, he added, should remember his Argentine roots and how they influence his theology and his world view.

The president emeritus of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, Cardinal Kasper was at The Catholic University of America to accept the Johannes Quasten Medal for Excellence in Scholarship and Leadership in Religious Studies.

In a 45-minute address about the pope's ecclesiology and ecumenical vision to a crowded hall that included many seminarians, Cardinal Kasper said that Pope Francis has, "succeeded in a short time in brightening up the gloomy atmosphere that had settled like mildew on the church."

However, he acknowledged, every pope has his "proponents and his enemies." Likewise, Pope Francis has his own detractors, the cardinal said. Those who do not trust his new style or new enthusiasm and may "decide to sit this papacy out."

"What for some is the beginning of a new spring, is for others a temporary cold spell," he said.

Cardinal Kasper said Pope Francis "is the first pope to have grown up in a multicultural megalopolis in the southern hemisphere." That shaped him with some European influences, but he also was strongly affected by Argentine culture, including its films and music.

The cardinal compared the theological influences on Pope Francis with those of his prede-

cessor Pope Benedict XVI. Pope Benedict comes from the best European theological traditions, seeking to put the doctrine of the faith into practice.

"Pope Francis works differently," Cardinal Kasper said, and not necessarily in the way in which he is sometimes portrayed. "He's not a Franciscan in disguise, he's a Jesuit, through and through." That means, according to the cardinal, that he begins with a concrete situation and seeks to assess it according to the rules for discernment drawn from the Ignatian spiritual exercises, before arriving at a concrete action or position.

That method corresponds to the approach of St. John XXIII during the Second Vatican Council, he said, "reading the signs of the times."

Understanding Argentina's variant of liberation theology also is instructive for those who wish to understand Pope Francis, he said.

The same "see, judge, act" approach of the Jesuits describes Argentine liberation theology, Cardinal Kasper said.

While in other places in Latin America, the approach focused on the social and political conditions that led to societal inequality, sometimes in a Marxist manner, "Argentinian liberation theology is a theology of the people and their culture."

It proceeds from a historical and cultural analysis of popular culture, in which people are unified by shared conscience, he said. "It does not want to instruct people, but listen to their wisdom."

Cardinal Kasper said the pope is a deeply spiritual man who is convinced that the light of the Gospel is the only thing that can help people fully understand and interpret reality.

For Pope Francis, he said, "faith is a light, but not like a lighthouse which expels all dark, but a lighted torch which guides our steps into the night."

That insight helps to understand how Pope Francis operates, from a basis of the Gospel as an instrument of joy and of reform.

"Pope Francis stands in a great tradition," Cardinal Kasper said. "He does not represent a liberal tradition, but a traditional position," as in going back to the Gospels as the source and strength of renewal for the church.

"He does not represent a traditionalist or a progressive scheme," he said, "but builds a bridge back to the origins. He has constructed a bridge to the future."

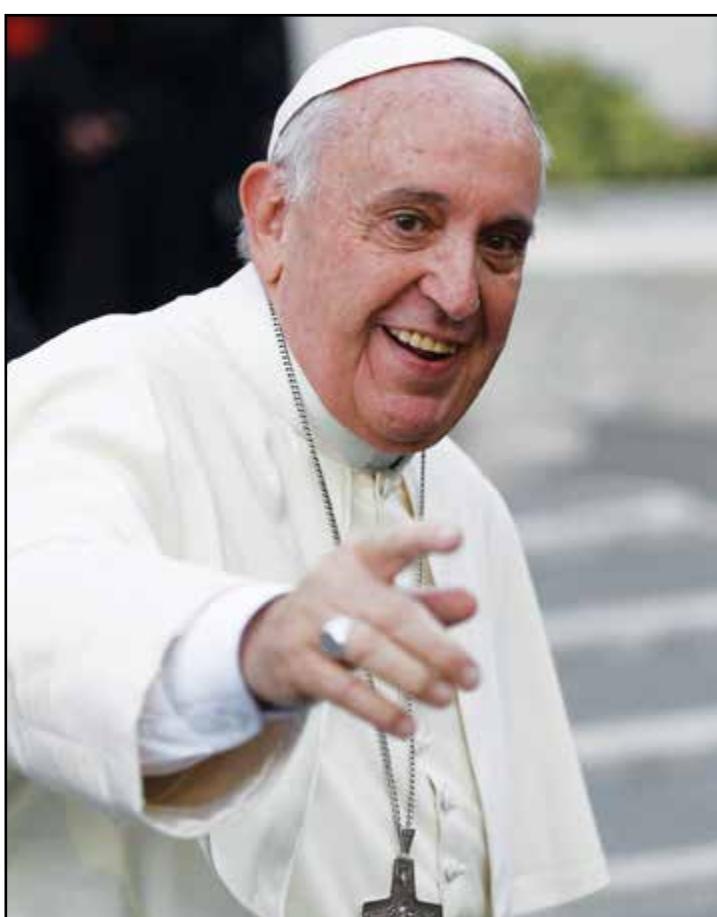
Pope Francis doesn't intend to revolutionize faith and morality, as "he wants to lead faith and morality back to their original center," to the heart of the Gospels, the cardinal said.

Particularly through his constant message of the need for mercy, Pope Francis emphasizes that, as St. Thomas Aquinas said, "God is not bound by our views of justice," but only to God's own desires. "God allows himself to be moved by the needs and sympathies of man."

"For him, a new beginning and a new chance are always possible. It's impossible that any human being can fall into a hole from which there is no way out."

Cardinal Kasper said another message of Pope Francis is that it is important that the church not be so self-centered.

"A self-centered person is sick," Cardinal Kasper said. "A self-centered church is a sick church." Pope Francis wants to leave behind the self-centered, self-pitying church immersed in its own suffering, he added.



## In The Alleghenies



**GIFT:** Inco Beverage CEO Jim Kilcoyne presented an EITC tax credit contribution to Altoona Central Catholic School students and co-principals Pat Labriola (left) and Sherry Buck. Inco's generous gift will benefit Catholic schools in Blair, Bedford, Cambria and Somerset Counties. For more information about how businesses can reduce tax liability by earning tax credits, please contact the Second Century Scholarship Fund at (814) 695 - 5577.

(Continued From Page 3.)

Featured pieces represent the use of art in healing, inspiring, transforming and overcoming illness. The URI "Art and Healing" exhibition is sponsored by their Urban Arts and Culture Program.

Dr. Talbot is coordinating Arts in Healing regionally. Earlier this semester he coordinated a panel discussion on the topic in the Mount Aloysius College Wolf - Kuhn Gallery. And more recently regional healing artists displayed their work in the newly dedicated Athletic Convocation and Wellness Center's East Hall, gaining popularity among artists for its wealth of natural light and open space. Currently work by local artist Emily Lainsky is exhibited there.

Last spring, Dr. Talbot exhibited his own work – an exhibit of complex and striking textile art. His show was titled "Based on Beverly: A Post - mortem

Creative Collaboration." The exhibit was a visual and tactile treatise and homage to his valued mentor, the late Beverly J. Semmens, professor emeritus, University of Cincinnati, who died in August of 2010.

Dr. Talbot resides in Altoona and maintains a season studio (Atelier 9) in Lisbon Falls, Maine.

After completing undergraduate and graduate degrees in humanities and English, Dr. Talbot taught secondary English for 16 years. He returned to school to refocus on the visual arts and leadership studies. A two - year degree in Professional Crafts from Haywood Community College in North Carolina led to graduate studies at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) where he explored in his doctoral dissertation, "leader vision and organizational storytelling as it impacts on an organization undergoing radical change."



### Vocations

#### Young Ladies Retreat

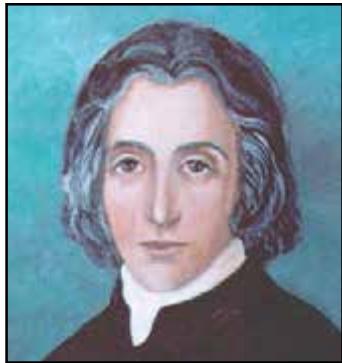
**Portage:** A discernment retreat for young ladies ages 16 - 29 will be conducted by the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred

Heart of Jesus at Sacred Heart Center, 1872 Munster Road.

The program will begin Friday, November 28 at 5:30 p.m., and will conclude on Sunday, November 30 at noon. The suggested donation for the weekend is \$25.00.

**MEMORIAL MASS:** Prince Gallitzin Assembly of the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus held their annual Memorial Mass and Communion Breakfast on Sunday, October 26 at Prince of Peace Parish in Northern Cambria. The event also provided an opportunity for the presentation of several awards and gifts. In the top photo, Joseph Hines, faithful scribe (left) presented Michael Zabinsky Jr., faithful navigator, with an award honoring the Prince Gallitzin Assembly for selling the most tickets for the Vocations Project benefitting diocesan seminarians. In the middle photo, Color Corps Commander Barry Ludwig (left) and Zabinsky, presented Father Larry Lacovic, chaplain, with a chalice inscribed with the names of deceased members of the Fourth Degree. In the bottom photo, Zabinsky presents a scholarship award to Deanna Capelli. The daughter of James and Wendy Capelli, she is a sophomore majoring in business administration at Mount Aloysius College, Cresson. Pictured (left to right) are James Capelli, Deanna Capelli, Zabinsky and Hines.

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# A Prince In The Service Of The Great King

## The Servant Of God Demetrius Augustine Gallitzin 1770 - 1840

## Father Tolton's Cause Heads To Vatican

By Michelle Martin  
Catholic News Service

**CHICAGO (CNS)** -- With prayers, songs and sealing wax, Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago formally closed the investigation into the life and virtues of Father Augustus Tolton Sept. 29 in a ceremony in the St.

## Prayer For Father Gallitzin's Intercession

O God, light of the faithful and shepherd of souls, who sent Servant of God Demetrius Gallitzin to serve God's people in the Allegheny Mountains, feeding your sheep by his words and forming them by his example, pour out your Spirit to sow seeds of truth in people's hearts and to awaken in them obedience to the faith.

May the Gospel continue to be preached and the Sacraments bring power and grace to the faithful. By the example of this man of faith, Demetrius Gallitzin, may your people advance in the path of salvation and love.

Confident of your faithfulness to us, we humbly ask you, our God, to grant us the favor of (name your intention).

May Christ's saving work continue to the end of the ages, and may we feel a more urgent call to work for the salvation of every creature. We pray this, as did your priest Demetrius Gallitzin, through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

+++

Kindly send information about favors granted to:  
**The Cause for the Servant of God  
Demetrius Augustine Gallitzin  
Diocese Of Altoona - Johnstown  
927 South Logan Boulevard  
Hollidaysburg PA 16648**



THE SERVANT OF GOD  
AUGUSTUS TOLTON

ments collected by supporters of his cause in the Archdiocese of Chicago will be analyzed, bound into a book called a "position," or official position paper, and evaluated by theologians, and then, supporters hope, passed on to the pope, who can declare Tolton "venerable" if the pope determines he led a life of heroic virtue.

Auxiliary Bishop Joseph N. Perry, the postulator of the cause, said the collected evidence -- which includes everything from newspaper articles to correspondence to eyewitness testimonies -- certainly indicates that is the case.

"Everything in the record of the case demonstrates that we had a saint among us and we hardly noticed," Bishop Perry said. "Father Tolton leaves behind a shining example of perseverance."

He was born a slave in 1854 on a plantation near Brush Creek, Missouri. His father left to try to join the Union Army during the Civil War. In 1862, his mother escaped with her three children by rowing them across the Mississippi River and settling in Quincy, Illinois.

Young Augustus had to leave one Catholic school because of threats; he found a haven at St. Peter parish and school, where he learned to read and write and was confirmed at age 16.

He was encouraged to discern his vocation to the priesthood by the Franciscan priests who taught him at St. Francis College, now Quincy University, but could not find a seminary in the United States that would accept him. He eventually studied in Rome and was ordained for the Propaganda Fidei Congregation in 1886, expecting to become a missionary in Africa. Instead, he was sent back to Quincy, where he served for three years before coming to the Archdiocese of Chicago in 1889.

He spearheaded the building of St. Monica Church for black Catholics, dedicated in 1894, and died after suffering heat stroke on a Chicago street on July 9, 1897.

Springfield Bishop Thomas J. Paprocki, whose diocese includes Quincy, attended the ceremony, as did representatives of the Diocese of Jefferson City, Missouri, where Brush Creek is located.

Cardinal George, who is to retire when his successor, Archbishop Blase J. Cupich, is installed Nov. 18, called the opening of Father Tolton's cause one of the most important, if not the most important, thing he has done in his more than 17 years as archbishop of Chicago.

"The church, over the centuries, has ordained many priests, most of them quite holy, in some ways, some in great ways," the cardinal said.

Father Tolton was one such holy priest, who "devoted himself to his people, quietly and in his own way," he said, despite great difficulties and setbacks.

"Virtue has consequences, and virtue is stronger than evil," Cardinal George said. "History is what God remembers. The rest passes."

During the ceremony, Bishop Perry thanked members of the Father Tolton Guild, who are working to move the cause forward; members of the historical commission, who examined the records of his life; and members

of the theological commission, who examined his writings to make sure that they are free of doctrinal error.

Neither commission found any reason for holding the cause back.

"Father Tolton demonstrated himself to be humble yet courageous, faithful to his priestly vows, welcoming to both black and white," Bishop Perry said.

If the pope declares that Father Tolton indeed led a life of historic Christian virtue and is to be called venerable, Bishop Perry said, the next step is to look for evidence of a miracle attributed to Father Tolton's intercession. The dossier sealed Sept. 29 includes letters already written to Cardinal George telling of favors granted after praying for Father Tolton's intercession, Perry said.

In general, one confirmed miracle is needed for beatification, and a second such miracle is needed for canonization.

Andrew Lyke, director of the archdiocese's Office for Black Catholics and a member of the Father Tolton Guild, said he will continue working to spread the word about the cause. His office and the Augustus Tolton Pastoral Ministry Program at Catholic Theological Union sponsor pilgrimages to sites significant in Father Tolton's life and ministry, both in Missouri and Quincy and in Chicago, and the guild encourages everyone to pray for the priests intercession for whatever their needs are.



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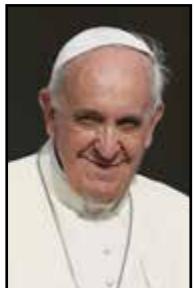
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# Word of Life



## The Pope Teaches

**By Pope Francis**  
**Bishops Must Be Servants**

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)** -- The world's bishops are called to be servants and shepherds who use their position to care for people and the faith, not to seek power and boost their pride, Pope Francis said.

The church has no place for men with a "worldly mentality" who are seeking a career, he said at his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square Nov. 5.

"It's sad when you see a man who seeks this office and who does so much to get there and when he makes it, he doesn't serve, but struts like a peacock, living only for his own vanity," the pope said.

The catechesis began with a reading from St. Paul's Letter to Titus (1:5-9) in which the apostle lists the virtues the bishop must hold and the vices he must avoid, such as arrogance, irritability and greed.

"We all heard that, right?" the pope said, looking around him with a smile at the bishops who were attending the audience.

"It's not easy" to live up to St. Paul's advice "because we are sinners, but we trust in your prayers so at least we can move closer" to these ideals, he told the other pilgrims and visitors.

Through the sacrament of holy orders, he said, bishops, priests and deacons exercise the church's maternity by generating new children of God with baptism, giving them new life in Christ, raising them in the faith, guiding them to the arms of a loving Father and nourishing them with the Eucharist and the word of God.

"This maternity of the church is expressed in particular in the person of the bishop," who leads his community as "guarantor of their faith and as a living sign of the presence of the Lord in their midst."

This is why the role of a bishop "is not a position of prestige or an honorary office," he said. "It is a service. Jesus wanted it to be like this."

"There must be no place in the church for the worldly mentality," the mindset where men are seeking an "ecclesiastical career," he said.

"No, the church must not be a place for this mentality," he said. "The episcopacy is a service, not an honor to show off."

Every bishop must have Jesus as his model and guide, who, as the good shepherd, "came not to be served, but to serve," and gave his life for his flock, he said.

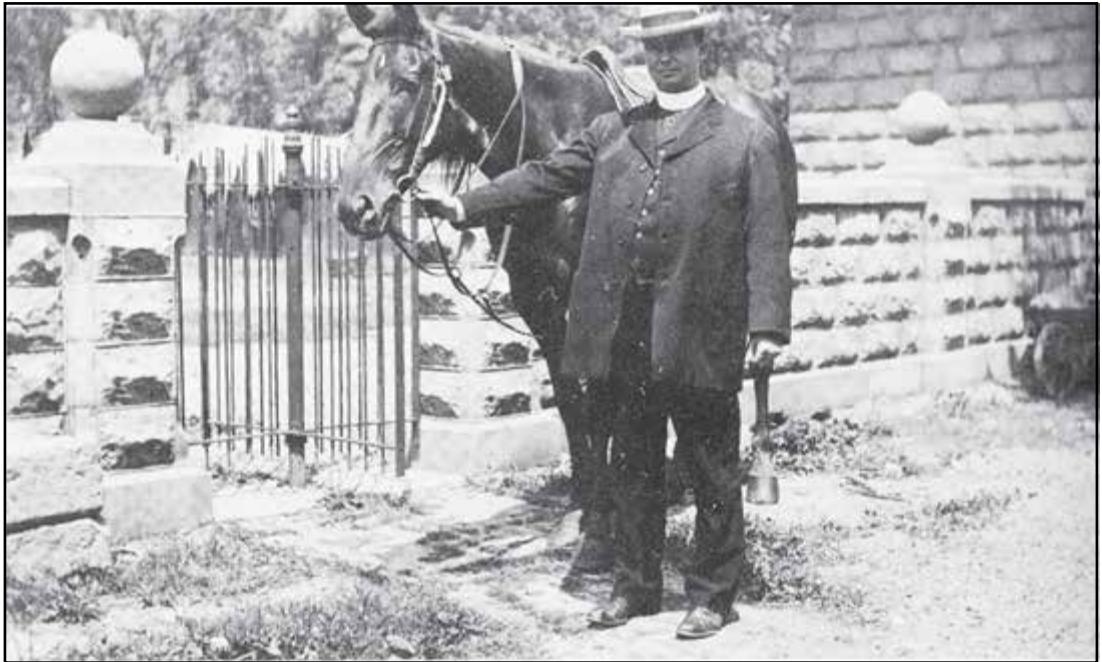
In the history of the church, the pope said, many holy bishops have shown that "this ministry is not sought, not requested, not bought, but is welcomed in obedience, not to elevate oneself but to lower oneself like Jesus."

The other important feature is the unity bishops display with one another and the pope, who is "custodian and guarantor of this deep communion," he said. "When Jesus chose and called the apostles, he imagined them -- not separate from each other, everyone for himself, but together, that they be with him, united as one family."

"How beautiful when the bishops with the pope express this collegiality and try to be more and more and more like servants for the faithful, more like servants for the church," he said. The Synod of Bishops on the family was one experience of collegiality.

Despite the geographical distances that normally separate them and the differences in cultures, the world's bishops "listen together to the Lord and the Spirit" in prayer, scrutinizing the hearts of today's men and women and reading the signs of the times, the pope said.

The entire Christian community, he said, is "called to nurture a sincere and deep communion" with their bishops, he said.



**ONE MORE TIME:** Father Patrick Vereker, pastor of Saint Mary Parish, Hollidaysburg from 1900 - 1922, was the last pastor to stable a horse, for travel throughout the parish, on parish property. The stable still stands, and is today used as a garage.

Pope Francis has been going to great lengths to spread love around the world, and he is quick to tell you that his love comes from the "free and gracious initiative of God," as he put it in his apostolic exhortation "Evangelii Gaudium."

The simple truth is that love flows from person to person, or it doesn't flow at all. It flows using the Gospel in daily encounters, daily opportunities to preach using various techniques.

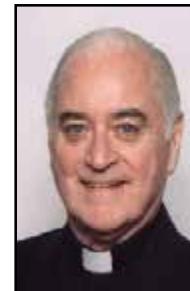
In the pope's document, translated as "The Joy of the Gospel," he writes: "Today, as the church seeks to experience a profound missionary renewal, there is a kind of preaching which falls to

each of us as a daily responsibility. It has to do with bringing the Gospel to the people we meet, whether they be our neighbors or complete strangers."

The way he explains this is really down to earth.

Pope Francis talks about a certain kind of preaching, that "takes place in the middle of a conversation, something along the lines of what a missionary does when visiting a home."

The missionary is always a disciple and is "constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street,



## Spirituality For Today

**By Father John Catoir**  
**Preaching The Gospel Through Dialogue**

in a city square, during work, on a journey."

The pope goes on to give us good advice. He says the first step is to engage via a "personal dialogue, when the other person speaks and shares his or her joys, hopes and concerns for loved ones, or so many other heartfelt needs. Only afterward is it possible to bring up God's word, perhaps by reading a Bible verse or relating a story, but always keeping in mind the fundamental message: the personal love of God who became man, who gave himself up for us, who is living and who offers us his salvation and his friendship."

The pope continues: "If it seems prudent and if the circumstances are right, this fraternal and missionary encounter could end with a brief prayer related to the concerns which the person may have expressed. In this way they will have an

experience of being listened to and understood; they will know that their particular situation has been placed before God, and that God's word really speaks to their lives."

I'm sure that at one time or another you've been a disciple to a dear friend. Women minister to other women all the time, on the phone, over the kitchen table. I think women are more intuitive and empathetic than men, but men do open up when the pain of life becomes too much.

You may have noticed that I have not yet used the word "evangelization," but that's essentially what's taking place. Using dialogue, we become actively engaged in evangelization and in spreading love.

"Indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love," the pope said.

# THE INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC FOUNDATION

*For The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown*

VOL. 14 NO. 2

Fall 2014

## What is Catholic Investing?

On July 1 of this year, the Foundation changed portfolio managers to Christian Brothers Investment Services (CBIS). This change was made after an almost year long search. The primary reason (along with their past investment results) was because of their adherence to Catholic values; they are defined here.

Catholic Responsible Investing (CRI) is an investment strategy designed specifically to help Catholic institutions pursue their missions by providing sound financial returns

while remaining faithful to the teachings of the Church.

Specifically, CRI includes:

- Catholic Investment Screening
- Active Ownership
- Diversified Asset Management

Catholic Responsible Investing extends a faith-based mission to encompass the management of an investment portfolio — allowing the two to work in harmony. Too often, investments are viewed separately from the rest of the organization, solely as a means of funding

activities. CRI is a powerful management process that allows an organization to express its Catholic beliefs through its investments. By targeting financial return and social return, fiduciaries can establish a broad vision for an organization's mission and can demonstrate that all aspects of the organization can be integrated into it.

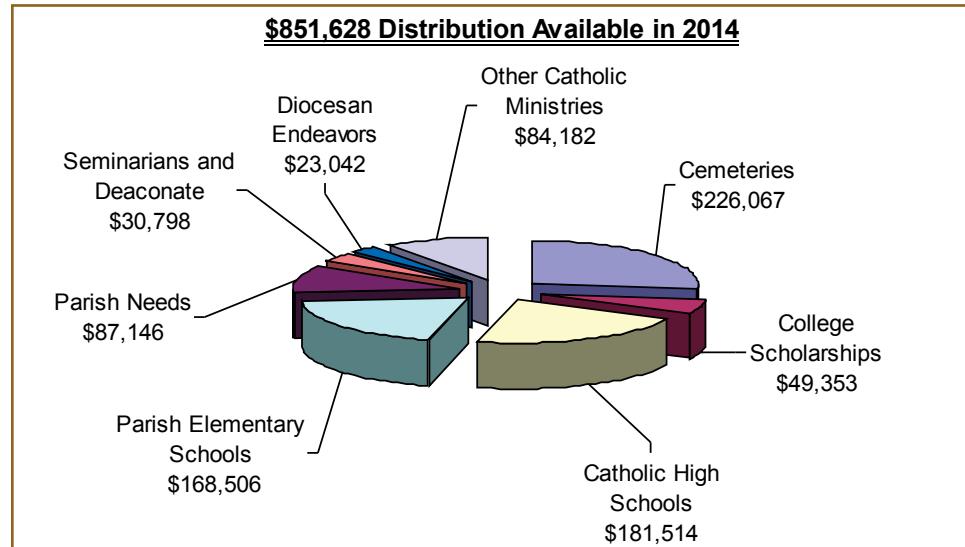
You may learn more about our investment managers by visiting: <http://cbisonline.com/us/>



## Over \$850,000 available to Diocesan Ministries

Acting on the recommendation of the Finance Committee and our external consultants, the Board of Trustees of the Foundation announced a 4 1/4 % distribution of funds for the fiscal year that ended June 30. The distribution available, based on a percentage of the monies in the investment portfolio totaled \$851,628. This amount is calculated as a percentage of the market value of each individual endowment that comprises the Foundation's assets under management. This year's

distribution represents over \$134,000 or almost a 19% increase from last year's available funds. The portfolio value for this calculation was over \$20.4 million and is based on the last three year average of each endowment. Once again the independent catholic and diocesan schools and their students were the main recipients of the funding. Educational pursuits were eligible for almost half of this total followed by Diocesan cemeteries.



## From the President and Executive Director

As we greet the crisp and cooler days of fall, we wanted to visit again through this edition of the Foundation's newsletter FOCUS. It has been a busy time since we visited in the early summer. This edition of the newsletter is about "success cases". We feature several instances of what is possible when faith and finance come together and how the Foundation can facilitate that meeting. We ended the fiscal year on June 30th having had another great fiscal year. We were blessed with over \$1.1 million

in contributions to new or existing endowments, and for the first time in the Foundation's history had assets under management of over \$23 million. This milestone was achieved through the above mentioned contributions and significant investment returns. The funds distribution availability of over \$851,000 was a record. We are humbled by this success and pray that God continues to smile on our efforts. Another significant change was the move to Christian Brothers Investment Services as

our portfolio manager (see related article above). We hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter and trust it provides insight on how you can remember your parish or favorite Catholic ministry in your estate planning. Please feel free to contact our office or any Trustee to discuss how we may be of service.

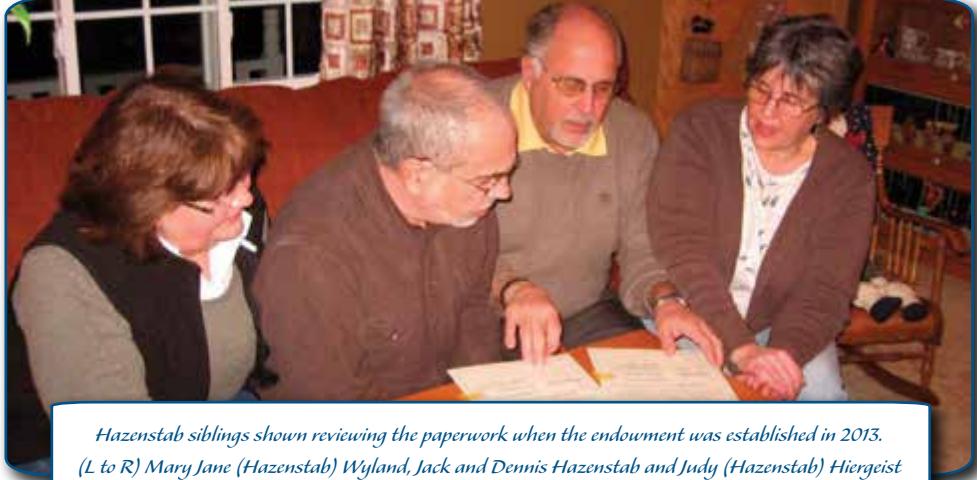
*Dino S. Persio, Esq., President  
Bill Hiergeist, Executive Director*

**Page 1**

## SUCCESS AS SIBLINGS HONOR THEIR PARENTS

In the summer of 2013 edition of FOCUS we featured four Hazenstab siblings who funded an endowment to honor their parents. John & Kathleen Hazenstab had been long time parishioners of St. John the Evangelist in Lakemont. John passed away in March 2008 and Kathleen passed in January 2012. The four children used their mother's passing and the disbursement of the estate, as an opportunity to honor their parents in a meaningful way. This past August the first annual distribution was made to the parish and school; the first of distributions that will be paid annually, forever. "We were amazed that if each of us contributed a modest amount from our portion of the

estate that the payout would begin so soon and would be a meaningful amount to the parish" commented one of the daughters. "And it will go on forever; what a tribute to our Mom and Dad" she continued. Many people think permanent endowments are a tool of the wealthy. This is a great example of how they are available to almost anyone. The minimum to create a named endowment is \$10,000 and can be funded over several years during a persons lifetime. An endowment (or scholarship) can also be created through a planned gift during a person's estate planning or by their heirs as in the above example. Details are available at the Foundation office.



Hazenstab siblings shown reviewing the paperwork when the endowment was established in 2013.  
(L to R) Mary Jane (Hazenstab) Wyland, Jack and Dennis Hazenstab and Judy (Hazenstab) Hiergeist

### Gifts of Appreciated Stocks

With the robust growth in the stock markets over the past several years, many people are owners of highly appreciated stocks. This may be an excellent way to support a favorite catholic ministry. If you have owned the equities for longer than one year, you can avoid capital gains taxes by donating the appreciated stock directly to the Foundation. The Foundation receives the proceeds of the sale of those equities and the donor receives full credit of the appreciated value of the donation. Check with your tax advisor for the best way to accomplish this.



Bishop McCort Catholic High School has the distinction of receiving the largest single check that is delivered each year by the Foundation. In August of this year, a check for almost \$118,000 was delivered to Principal Tom Fleming. The one check represents almost 15% of all available funds. The Bishop McCort development department is responsible for the creation of nine new scholarship endowments in just the last two years. This check represents the funds made available from 27 different scholarships, some originating over 20 years ago. The purpose of the scholarships, of course, is to aid with tuition, but additionally they were created to

honor a teacher by former students, celebrate the anniversary of graduation, or to honor parents or family. Several recent scholarships were created through estate planning.



Scholarship recipients at Bishop McCort High School

## SUCCESS OF A PARISH



*Executive Director Bill Hiergeist and Msgr. Lockard*

After educational pursuits, support for parishes and their cemeteries is the second largest category of distribution, accounting for well over one-third of the monies available. Holy Name Parish in Ebensburg is an example of what is possible. Holy Name has three separate endowments with the Foundation: parish support, school support and a third for perpetual care for their cemetery. When all three endowments are totaled, they represent the parish with the most funds invested with the Foundation. This translates

to the single largest distribution check to any single parish. Shown in the photo is Foundation Executive Director Bill Hiergeist delivering that check. Their first parish endowment was funded in the early 90s; the other two slightly later. Starting with now retired Msgr. Arnold Gaus and continuing with current pastor Msgr. David Lockard, the parishioners work hard every year and make substantial additions to each endowment, thus increasing the income stream back to the parish. Msgr. Lockard continues to be a strong supporter of the Foundation having seen the benefits while at his last assignment in State College.

## SUCCESS FOR A PARISH IN MANY WAYS

The parishioners of St. Matthew Church in Tyrone and the students attending their school are blessed. Blessed, not only because of their pastor and the great teachers in the school, but blessed because past generations of parishioners have remembered the parish and school in their estate planning. St. Matthew's has endowments to provide income to the parish, the parish cemetery, the elementary school and several that provide college scholarships to parishioners. It

is not uncommon for a parish to have multiple endowments. However, it is uncommon in that St. Matthew's has multiple endowments for college scholarships. Recently a parishioner of St. Catherine Parish (Mt. Union) created a college scholarship for students of that parish in his estate plans. That endowment should begin to offer scholarships in the 2015-16 academic year. Information on how to remember your parish in your will is available at the Foundation office or from any Trustee.



*St. Matthew Church; Tyrone, PA*

This chart represents actual performance over the past ten years. If someone would have created an endowment (or scholarship) in 2003 with \$10,000 the market value of that endowment would have grown to over \$13,000. Additionally, during those same years the beneficiary would have received over \$4,800. "Over growth and income, that's pretty amazing" commented one pastor as he and Director Hiergeist were talking about creating an endowment for his parish. A gift to a permanent endowment is a gift forever!

Growth and Distribution Over The Past Ten Years  
June 30, 2003 - June 30, 2014

Year	Market Value	Annual Income Stream
2003	\$10,000	
2004	\$10,444	\$350
2005	\$10,742	\$358
2006	\$11,097	\$416
2007	\$12,270	\$484
2008	\$11,587	\$512
2009	\$ 9,872	\$466
2010	\$10,467	\$450
2011	\$11,975	\$439
2012	\$11,499	\$431
2013	\$12,132	\$453
2014	\$13,351	\$491
10 Year Distribution		\$ 4,849

## WELCOME AND THANKS

At its June meeting, the Foundation welcomed a new Trustee. Joining the board for a three year term is Matt DiFrancesco. Matt is owner of DiFrancesco Financial Concierge in Johnstown. He and his wife are members of Our Mothers of Sorrows. Outgoing President Vince Barbera also offered a special thanks to Tom Taricani for his years of service. Tom, a past president, was leaving the Board because his term had expired.

He also welcomed our incoming President Dino Persio.



*Trustees attending the annual meeting in June at the Blairmont Club in Hollidaysburg*

### *Please Note*

In all instances it is advisable to speak with legal counsel, a Financial advisor and/or a tax consultant. No information contained in this newsletter or on the Foundation website should be considered legal advice.

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Somerset  
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### *Think About It*

Have you left the Church in your Will? Because The Independent Catholic Foundation is legally separate from the Church, we are the ideal entity to serve as the fiduciary intermediary for you to leave a legacy of your faith. The Foundation is a unique resource. Our portfolio is invested according to our Morally-Responsible Investment Policy, in compliance with Catholic doctrine. We can assist in designing the most appropriate giving instruments, such as Donor-Advised Accounts, offering security and growth for your donated funds.

To learn about other opportunities and funds that have been established or to establish a fund for your parish or ministry, or to discover a variety of giving options for you and your family, including some that produce income for you, contact the Foundation office.

### *Separate from, but committed to, the Diocesan Church*

The Foundation is an independent entity – legally separate from the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown – committed to the long-term strength and viability of Catholic institutions within the eight-county diocese. The Foundation is overseen by a board of trustees comprised of 17 lay men and women. The Diocese (as a legal entity) and the Diocesan Bishop have no role in the management of the Foundation, which is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization [a public charity]. Endowment funds are owned by the Foundation and can not be attached for Diocesan operating funds or any needs of the Diocese.

### **For more information:**

Individuals, businesses, organizations or parishes are welcome to inquire about the Independent Catholic Foundation by contacting any Trustee or our office. Executive Director, Bill Hiergeist can be reached at the Foundation office.

Please visit our web-site at [www.icfdaj.org](http://www.icfdaj.org)

All inquiries are held in the strictest confidence.

Bill Hiergeist, Executive Director (814) 201-2080 (814) 201-2092 (fax) (E-mail address) [Bill@icfdaj.org](mailto:Bill@icfdaj.org)  
3618 Fifth Ave., Suite 1 • Altoona, PA 16602



## Question Corner

**By Father Kenneth Doyle  
Changes Instituted By  
A New Pastor**

**Q.** For many years, ever since I moved into our neighborhood, our parish was staffed by Franciscan Friars. But due to a shortage in their ranks, they have now been replaced by diocesan priests. With that change, parishioners have been asked to make some significant adjustments.

Contemporary music has been eliminated; the choir has been replaced by an organist and a cantor; Communion under both species at Sunday Masses has been eliminated or offered to only a portion of the congregation. Most disturbing, two or three times during the past year a whole week of daily Masses was cancelled because the pastor and vicar were both on retreat or on vacation.

I am now considering changing parishes, but that would be a major move since I have been involved here for 20 years as an extraordinary minister, member of a men's Bible study group, volunteer worker at bereavement meals, etc.

I have tried praying and asking for guidance, but I am not hearing any. What advice can you give me? (City of origin withheld)

**A.** In most cases, with any change of pastors there comes some modification in leadership style and in liturgical preferences. Normally parishioners anticipate this, show some flexibility and can weather successfully a period of adjustment.

It is important, however, that a new pastor be sensitive to the comfort level of parishioners, especially long-term ones, and not move hastily, and that any significant changes be filtered through an advisory group, usually the parish council.

My guess is that you would be best off in a different parish, one where your prayer experience will be positive and where your worthy volunteerism will find new outlets. Before you do that, though, why not sit down with your present pastor and tell him frankly why you are making

a move? In fairness, he needs to know; at least it might help him in the future.

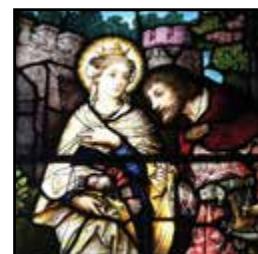
**Q.** At what age should young people be introduced to such subjects as abortion and terrorism? I understand that we cannot shield our children forever from the harsh realities of life, but I would like to preserve their innocence for as long as we can. I raise the question because recently my daughters attended Mass with their grandparents, and the priest focused on the evil of abortion and its connection with terrorism, explaining that it is because we murder innocent babies that terrorists will continue to attack.

My daughters came back to me with some uncomfortable questions that I would have preferred to save for a time when they had both the cognitive and emotional maturity to process that information. I know that all Masses cannot be "children's Masses," but I do expect all Masses to be "family friendly" with regard both to language and subject matter.

How are we to teach our youth the joy of "celebrating" the Lord's Supper when going to Mass frightens them? (Johnstown, Pennsylvania)

**A.** I am not opposed to the link that the priest was making. A society that does not cherish life is quick to apply violent solutions to a range of problems: warfare and terrorism to settle disputes between nations or sects; abortion to resolve unwanted pregnancies; the death penalty to show that killing people is wrong.

As always, though, the issue is how this point is made -- how to do it effectively and strongly but without giving offense. I'm inclined to believe that, especially from the pulpit, less graphic is better. (There is a wide span of ages in nearly every Sunday congregation.) But it's also true that, with the pervasiveness of the media -- and you point this out -- you cannot shield young people forever from harsh realities. Your daughters are privileged to have someone like you to help them process what they are learning.



**Elizabeth  
of Hungary  
1207 - 1231  
Feast - November 17**

Elizabeth's short life was nonetheless full; she had a happy marriage and children, was a secular Franciscan, and was so devoted to the poor and sick that she gave away royal robes and founded hospitals. The daughter of a Hungarian king, Elizabeth married a nobleman of Thuringia, Louis, at age 14. He complained about the expense of her many charities until he witnessed a miracle involving Elizabeth, bread and roses. After he died during a Crusade, she became a Third Order Franciscan at Marburg, Germany, where she founded a hospital to care for the sick. Elizabeth, who was declared a saint in 1235, is the patron of bakers, young brides, widows, those falsely accused, countesses and secular Franciscans.

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## For The Journey

**By Effie Caldarola  
As The World Turns,  
From One Crisis To Another**

I work for an advocacy group, and we're laboring to abolish the death penalty in our state. That means I frequently drive down to our capital city, Lincoln, where our main offices are located.

It's a pleasant drive. There's never much traffic at the times I travel, and the scenery is rolling hills and farmland. I bask in the changing seasons and the occasional hawk flying overhead looking for prey.

I grew up on a farm, so I never tire of looking at the corn making its yearly advance from tiny green shoots to worn out, depleted husks. The drive reminds me of life's rhythms and enduring cycles.

Sometimes, I say the rosary on my journey, but often I listen to National Public Radio.

As we all know, 2014 has been a bad news year. So many terrible events have happened that each eclipses the last. Doesn't it seem like a long time ago that we saw thousands of poor kids flocking to our border from Central America?

Even though the news cycle has moved on, many still languish in detention centers, and although the tide has slowed, thousands still yearn for freedom in Honduras and Guatemala.

From that crisis, we were suddenly alerted to something called ISIS. The Islamic State was media-savvy enough to start beheading people and that made Americans pay attention, whereas mere torture and execution by other means might not keep us glued to CNN.

The horrors of the Ebola crisis in Africa took a while to capture our attention, but a handful of cases in Texas made us flock to the TV. Somehow, the misery and intense suffering of people on the other side of the globe doesn't always rivet us.

That's why, one day on my pleasant drive, I was struck to hear a Yazidi being interviewed right down the road in Lincoln. Remember the Yazidis?

The Yazidi crisis was our first glimpse of ISIS. The Yazidis, who for all I knew a few months ago could have been characters from a Dr. Seuss book, are followers of a small religion with roots in Zoroastrianism and Sufi Islam.

That mixture makes them anathema -- devil worshippers -- to the extreme jihadists who have perverted the Muslim faith. The Yazidis have been persecuted, their women forced into sexual slavery, their men killed.

For one brief moment, Yazidis captured the media spotlight as thousands of them fled to a mountaintop to stave off death and capture. It's why the U.S. got involved trying to deliver humanitarian goods and deliverance to the Yazidis.

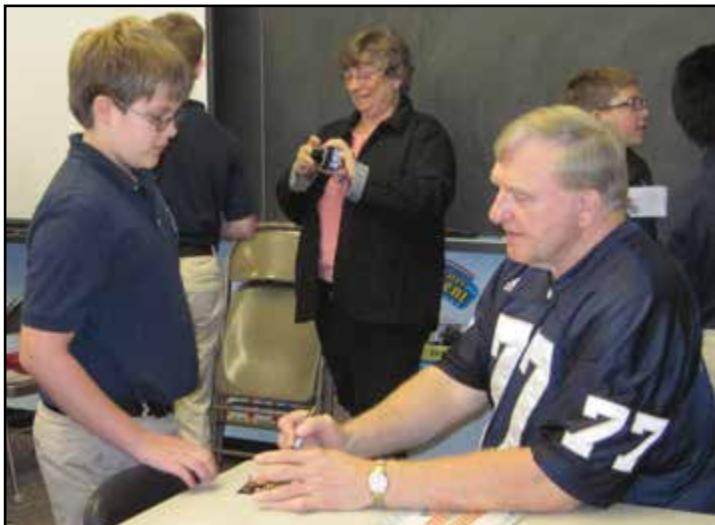
Lincoln, Nebraska, has over 100 Yazidi immigrant families. When I heard the articulate young Yazidi woman in Lincoln being interviewed on NPR, I realized she could be my next-door neighbor. In many ways, she is my neighbor.

Why did that make the Yazidi plight so much more personal to me?

Recently, a Jesuit with years of experience in refugee camps offered three pieces of advice for people concerned with this world's suffering. Pray intensely for the world, he said. Secondly, pay attention. Don't just get wrapped up in the crisis du jour. And finally, commit yourself to spend time with the poor, hours a week, or a weekend a month.

The poor suffer throughout the world, but the suffering of those close to us, like the Yazidi woman who suddenly entered my peaceful drive, helps us connect with all suffering.

Finding God in all things means finding God in the poor.



**ATHLETE VISITS:** Mike McCoy, a former Notre Dame University and NFL football player visited Lock Haven Catholic School on Tuesday, November 4. McCoy won a National Championship with Notre Dame and played in the NFL for 11 years. McCoy said that he loved playing football for many years but he loves what he is doing now even more; he created the Mike McCoy Ministries which reaches out to students in Catholic schools. He delivers a message of faith, hope, and encouragement: enabling them to make better decisions in their lives. McCoy told the students, "We're not born winners or losers. We're born choosers." He encouraged students to make good choices in life because, "Decisions determine our destiny." His visit to Lock Haven Catholic School was made possible by the Notre Dame Club of Williamsport.

(Continued From Page 6.)

The Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus are devoted to extending the glory and the Kingdom of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus through prayer and service to the most needy. The Sisters are a contemplative - active congregation within the Franciscan family. The apostolate of the congrega-

tion includes teaching, catechetical formation, nursing, service to the poor, evangelization, parish and retreat ministry, and youth ministry.

Registration for the retreat must be made by Monday, November 24; it may be made by e-mailing Mother Jacinta Miryam at [sisterjacinta@gmail.com](mailto:sisterjacinta@gmail.com), or by calling her at (814) 505 - 2290.

**RED RIBBON WEEK:** Lock Haven Catholic School participated in Red Ribbon Week. The theme for the week was "Love Yourself, Be Drug Free." Students wore red ribbons all week. The middle school students decorated classroom doors and made posters to promote Red Ribbon Week and also performed skits for the younger grades to help explain what Red Ribbon Week was all about. Students and faculty all wore red on Thursday, October 30 to show their support for the cause.



**HIGH SCHOOLS RECEIVE GIFT:** Bishop Mark L. Bartchak, Sister of Charity Donna Marie Leiden and representatives from four Catholic High Schools, and Saint John the Evangelist School in Bellefonte recently accepted an EITC tax credit contribution from First National Bank's Greg Winger and Brad Anderson. Businesses interested in earning tax credits to offset tax liability and support Catholic school students can contact the Second Century Scholarship Fund at (814) 695 - 5577.

## Pope Chides 'Pagan' Christians

**VATICAN CITY (CNS)**  
-- People who go to church on Sundays, but spend the rest of the week cultivating their attachment to money, power and pride are "pagan Christians," Pope Francis said.

When St. Paul wrote his Letter to the Philippians, the Christian community was composed of two groups, real Christians and those who were "enemies of the cross of Christ," the pope said Nov. 7 during his homily at Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae where he lives.

"Both groups were in the church together, they went to Sunday Mass, praised the Lord and called themselves Christians," he said, according to Vatican Radio. But some of them were "worldly Christians, Christians in name only, with two or three Christian characteristics, but nothing more. Pagan Christians!"

Today, the pope said, "there are many of these. And we, too, must be careful not to slip" into being Christians in name only. Being half-hearted Christians, "accustomed to mediocrity" is a danger for all, he said.



**SAINTS:** Students and religious education teachers, dressed as their favorite saints, took part in the "Invasion Of The Saints" during the 9:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, October 26 at Saint Francis of Assisi Parish in Johnstown. Conventual Franciscan Father Anthony Francis Spilka is pastor.



**FAITH AND LIGHT:** Members of the Diocesan Faith and Light group act out a scene from the Gospel at a reception following a Mass for individuals with special needs, Friday, November 7 at Our Lady of the Alleghenies Parish in Lilly.

## Conference Focused On Faith Formation For People With Special Needs

(Continued From Page 1.)

That program has developed into a religious education program, and has become a book: **How To Welcome, Include, And Catechize Children With Autism And Other Special Needs.**

The research and development of this program has made Deacon Sutton a highly sought after speaker in this country and throughout the world.

There wasn't much information out there when his effort began. Deacon Sutton realized there was a critical need to create a resource for integrating persons of need into the faith.

"I wanted to give people some place to start in their search for information," Deacon Sutton said of his book dealing with autism. "I wanted to speak about autism -- what it is and what it isn't, and ways to deal with it. I wanted it to be a re-

source for volunteers. I see it as a starting point.

"When I began on this path there was very little information, and I wanted to give people a place to turn for help." He said it has been his experience that persons who are afflicted with various forms of autism, can in many instances become important members of their faith community.

Many of those at the Friday afternoon session shared their personal experiences with autism. Some were heartbreaking and others uplifting, but the message was the same: it's important to them that their children are fully initiated into the Catholic faith.

"The Altoona - Johnstown Diocese does not turn any special needs children away, we integrate them into our curriculum," said Francine Swope, diocesan director of Religious Education.

"We want to serve families and children with special needs in their faith formation so they can become active participants in their parishes."

Deacon Sutton has centered his program around the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Program, which is an accepted and approved Catholic Preparation curriculum. He found that these intellectually disabled children responded well to high school students as teachers. The high school students are trained to work one - on - one, and each weekly session is supervised by administrators.

Visual learning works best with autistic children. Pictures help them see a concept, which can lead them to understand and store new information. "These methods aren't rocket science" explained Deacon Sutton, "they just take a little common sense."

Autism is a developmental disorder; a neurological disor-

dered that can't be cured. With great emphasis Deacon Sutton said, "It can be managed and these persons can be viable members of their parish and community."

There is no real, clear answer as to why autism occurs. It has been documented that environmental issues can play a large role in the disorder. Sadly, it is projected that every one out of six children born will be affected in some way by the disease. A study completed in San Diego

claims the impairment can be detected in children as early as seven to eight months old.

Autistic persons have impairment in any of four domains: developmental onset; language, social behavior and sensory perceptions.

"This is certainly not something I started out to do," smiled Deacon Sutton. "I just want people to know there are resources out there to help them deal with this difficult situation."

## Bishops' Role Is To Serve Families

By Patricia Zapor  
Catholic News Service

**BALTIMORE (CNS)** -- Acknowledging that families come with complications, the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops reminded his fellow bishops Nov. 10 that their role is to accompany their family of the church through their fears and concerns.

"Evangelizing means witnessing to our hope in Jesus," said Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, in opening the USCCB's annual fall general assembly in Baltimore. It was his first address as conference president.

"As pastors, we accompany so many families who face their own fears and concerns and who yearn to experience the love of Jesus in and through his loving family -- the church," he said. "Together, brothers, we seek to walk with these families and to build their confidence in faith."

Archbishop Kurtz framed his remarks around a conversation he had recently with Italian journalist Paolo Rodari, who has a brother with Down syndrome. Archbishop Kurtz for many years was responsible for the care of his late brother, who also had Down syndrome.

The two discussed how they learned to communicate with their brothers through the things that were important to their siblings -- film and books -- and

that they otherwise could be difficult to understand.

"Paolo has learned to understand Giovanni, because they're family," Archbishop Kurtz said, continuing the metaphor as an example of what the bishops are called to do -- "walk with our brothers and sisters, helping them grow closer to Jesus through his mercy."

He noted that Pope Francis has said the church is "a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel."

Archbishop Kurtz spoke about the recently concluded extraordinary Synod of Bishops on the family, saying it resulted in positive steps to "witness to the beauty of church teachings on marriage," to "deepen the way we accompany those struggling with the many challenges families face today," and encourage married couples to "have confidence in their ability to faithfully live the Gospel of the family."

He said the bishops "must especially seek out those who suffer under the weight of the difficulties of seeking to come closer to Christ," quoting Pope Francis' call to approach the coming year before the synod work continues as "joyful messengers of challenging proposals, guardians of the goodness and beauty which shine forth in a life of fidelity to the Gospel."

# Tears, Anger Greet New York Archdiocese's Plan For Parish Mergers

By Beth Griffin  
Catholic News Service

**RYE, N.Y. (CNS)** -- First there was dead silence and then there were tears.

That's how Father Robert J. Verrigni described the reaction of parishioners at St. Ursula in Mount Vernon to the Nov. 2 announcement that their parish would merge with another and cease to celebrate weekly Masses after Aug. 1, 2015.

The Archdiocese of New York will merge 112 of its parishes into 55. Twenty-four of the merged parishes will use two sites for scheduled Masses. St. Ursula is one of at least 31 churches that will be open only for occasional Masses and celebrations.

Father Verrigni, the parish administrator, told Catholic

News Service that longtime parishioners were most upset, but children in the religious education programs also approached him to ask where they would receive their first Eucharist and confirmation.

"I told everyone, 'Right now, this is the way the church is going and we have to trust God's will for the future,'" he said.

St. Ursula is one of six parishes in Mount Vernon. After the mergers are complete, there will be three.

"Part of me is just empty," said Maria Paulercio, a parishioner at St. Ursula for 55 years. "Tears started rolling from my eyes when we heard. I feel it was a done deal from the beginning of the process. The cardinal knew what would happen, but they were trying to give the parish time to accept it," she said.

"I feel sorry for the people who gave their hearts and time and minds to the meetings," Paulercio added. The five-year planning process, known as Making All Things New, was instituted by New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan. It sought input from 368 parishes clustered into 75 groups, as well as a 40-person advisory committee, the archdiocesan Priests' Council and archdiocesan staff.

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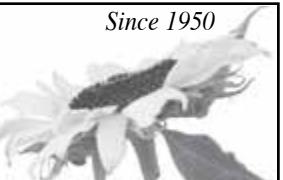
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CNS Photo/Gregory A. Shemitz

**NEW YORK ARCHDIOCESE TO MERGE PARISHES:** Jesuit Father Mark Hallinan greets a young girl following a Spanish - language Mass at St. Mary of the Assumption Church in the Staten Island borough of New York Sunday, November 2. Founded in 1877, St. Mary is one of more than 30 churches the New York Archdiocese will close by August 2015 as part of a reorganization initiative that will merge 112 parishes into 55.

In Port Chester, a village of 29,000 people, four parishes established to serve various immigrant communities will merge into one, with two worship sites. The Nov. 2 merger announcement did not identify which churches will continue to have scheduled Masses. The new parish will be under the care of Salesian priests, who already administer two parishes, one established by Italian immigrants and the other that draws from the village's growing Hispanic population.

Harry Florentine, a lifelong parishioner of Our Lady of Mercy, which traditionally served Irish-Americans, said the merger "has the possibility of creating a stronger multiethnic, multicultural church community in Port Chester. Instead of having the divisions we now see, there would be more unity."

Regina Kowrach, who worships at Sacred Heart in Port Chester, said the people who heard the merger news at the Polish-language Sunday Mass wondered what would become of the \$12,000 raised at a parish party two weeks earlier. She said it was intended for general support of a parish that was re-

vitalized by the appointment last summer of a tri-lingual administrator.

At St. Roch on Staten Island, lifelong parishioner Mary Lou Sanginari said, "I'm devastated. I think it's a disgrace to the Catholic Church. We'll do anything to keep this church open. My daughter's an attorney. I'm going to see if she can draw up some papers and start a petition."

St. Roch is slated to be merged and its church will not be used for scheduled Masses.

Sanginari was one of several people who said they may go to a non-Catholic church if their church closes.

Eileen Mulcahy, director of the parish planning office for the Archdiocese of New York, said other dioceses found many of the people who left after the mergers later returned. "People are angry in the moment, but it's short term," she said. "This process is not one of abandoning people. The people are the ones we're focusing on."

St. John in the Bronx is the receiving parish for a merger with Visitation. Father Michael Kerrigan, the St. John administrator, said, "It's easier for us,

but we can understand the sense of sadness and if the roles were reversed, we'd be sad, too."

Father Kerrigan said people appreciate that the neighborhood demographics have changed and the church adapts itself to the present concerns. The merger is "a wonderful opportunity to strengthen our parish life," he said.

A letter to the parishioners from Cardinal Dolan asked the receiving parish to recognize the merger "not as 'them' having to fit into 'your' parish, but as two parishes coming together, in the Lord's name, to become a new worshipping family."

Jesuit Father Mark Hallinan is pastor of two Staten Island parishes that will merge into one. His parishioners are predominantly Mexican immigrants, some of whom lack legal status.

He said the hardest part of the announcement "is these people have had the experience of not being cared for. I wanted to make sure that they understand the archdiocese is not abandoning them. I want to be as present as I can for them and make this transition as smoothly as I can for them."

# Archdiocese Of Baltimore, Nation's Oldest, Celebrates 225th Anniversary

**By Christopher Gunty**  
Catholic News Service

**BALTIMORE (CNS)** -- In a day "full of joy" for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Catholics from Maryland and beyond packed the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore, Sunday, November 2, for a Mass to celebrate the 225th anniversary of its founding as the first diocese in the United States.

Before the Mass, Archbishop William E. Lori, 16th archbishop of Baltimore, said he was grateful for those who had gone before.

"We're standing on their shoulders," he said, "and I'm hopeful for the future."

The two-hour celebration began with a procession of banners from all the schools in the archdiocese and a large Knights of Columbus honor guard. About 200 seminarians joined the procession, followed by deacons, priests, an archbishop and nine bishops, plus Cardinal Edwin F. O'Brien, a former archbishop of Baltimore.

In greetings at the beginning of Mass, Cardinal O'Brien, who is now the grand master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, based in Rome, recalled joining Pope Francis for a Mass last spring in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, where Jesus established the Mass and the Eucharist.

He noted that Pope Francis wondered how much love and goodness had flowed from that Upper Room into the centuries.

"That river of goodness and charity touched our American shores almost 700 years ago with the arrival of Christian explorers and missionaries," the cardinal said. "Rivers of goodness and charity nourished the first secure planting of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States right here in Bal-

timore 225 years ago."

He added that the original Diocese of Baltimore, established Nov. 6, 1789, with about 25,000 Catholics, now encompasses 195 dioceses with 65 million Catholics.

In his homily, Archbishop Lori noted that Archbishop John Carroll, America's first bishop, accepted a huge challenge to shepherd a region that stretched from Canada to Florida and Louisiana, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi.

"In 1789," Archbishop Lori said, "there were about 25,000 Catholics, only a few priests, and a few churches, and most of these churches were in disrepair with little financial support in sight."

Bishop Carroll "accepted the challenge of helping the Catholic Church make its way in a new republic that was itself an experiment in democracy and freedom; even so, Catholics would face an uphill climb in becoming part of this new society."

Archbishop Lori praised the clergy and men and women religious who had contributed to the growth of the church and its mission to educate and minister to those who are ill or poor.

"Yet the story of the Archdiocese of Baltimore isn't written only by priests and religious," Archbishop Lori said. "Mostly, it is written by you, the lay women and men of this archdiocese. It is being written in the homes you have established where the faith is handed on from generation to generation."

"That history is being written by young people who are coming of age in the church and taking their rightful place within it."

He called on the faithful of the archdiocese to be missionary disciples, "relentlessly asking the questions: What does the mission require of us? How

should we be present in every neighborhood of this local church?"

He said the archdiocese needs to continue to assist families as the center of evangelization, to reach out to diverse cultures and to promote the dignity of all human life.

"What should we do to make our parish communities vibrant, our schools solid and our charities signs of Christ's compassionate love for the vulnerable?" the archbishop asked.

Ruth Vinga, a parishioner of St. Gabriel in Woodlawn who is originally from Cameroon, joined a group of women dressed in bright skirts featuring the image of Mary as they gathered around the archbishop at the end of Mass. They sang and danced as the archbishop laughed with them.

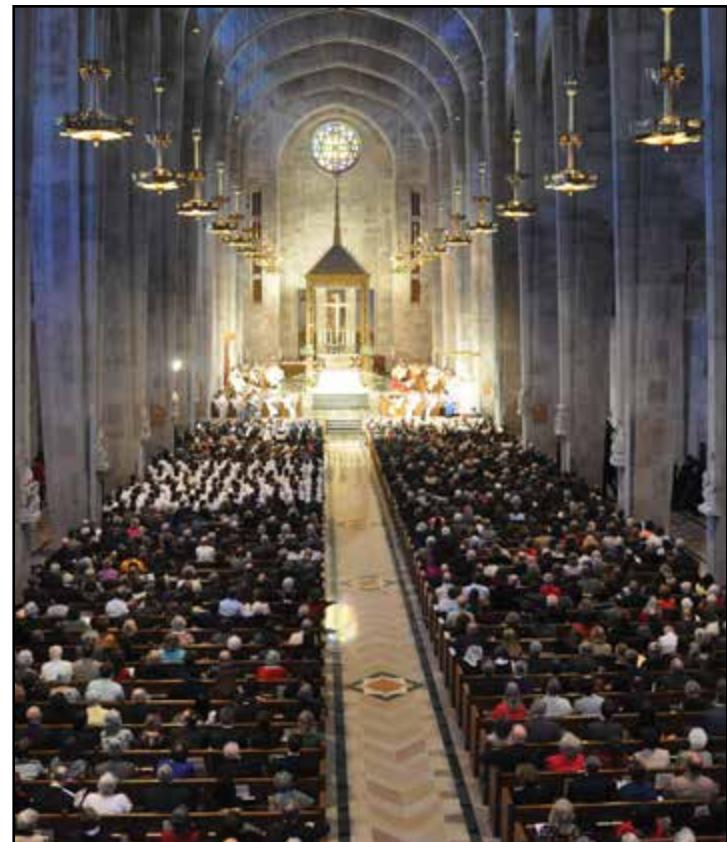
Vinga said she was excited to participate in the Mass because the archdiocese has accepted immigrants from Cameroon and their culture.

"They accepted our devotion to our Blessed Mother," she told the *Catholic Review*, Baltimore's archdiocesan newspaper. "Archbishop Lori has been very supportive of us."

Rob Judge, executive director of the National Shrine of Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, came to the Mass with his wife, Kathleen, and their seven children.

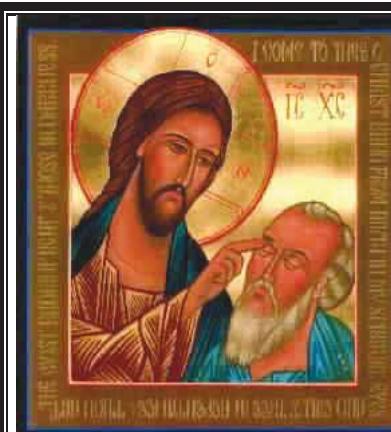
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, who founded the Sisters of Charity, established what is recognized as the first Catholic school in the United States and is the first American-born saint. Judge said he was glad to celebrate the 225th anniversary with other Catholics.

"This is a real celebration of the faith and God's mercy -- to continue to be a vehicle for God's grace," the parishioner of St. Mary Parish in Hagerstown said after the Mass.



CNS Photo/Ann M. Augherston, *Catholic Review*

**BALTIMORE CATHOLICS CELEBRATE:** A capacity crowd of 2,000 fills the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore Sunday, November 2 for a Mass celebrating the 225th anniversary of the founding of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore was the main celebrant of the Mass. Founded November 6, 1789, the Diocese of Baltimore was the first established in the United States.



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# Now Showing

## Sprawling Space Epic 'Interstellar' Aims High

**By John Mulderig**  
Catholic News Service

**NEW YORK (CNS)** -- As befits a sprawling space epic, "Interstellar" (Paramount) aims high.

While its ambitions are admirable, and its visuals dazzling, the film's roughly three-hour running time tries patience. Other aesthetic miscalculations, combined with morally problematic elements, ultimately make for something of a flawed liftoff.

Director and co-writer (with his brother Jonathan) Christopher Nolan charts the exploits of a crew of astronauts who use a wormhole to speed their travel

to distant planets. Their critical goal is to find a habitable refuge for the entire human race, which is facing worldwide starvation back on a dystopian, dustbowl-plagued version of Earth.

Leading the mission is former test pilot and engineer-turned-unwilling-farmer Cooper (Matthew McConaughey). With society's need to cultivate crops having displaced interest in advancing technology, Cooper, a widower, has been forced to pursue an agricultural lifestyle on the farmstead he shares with his cranky father-in-law Donald (John Lithgow), his placid teen son, Tom (Timothee Chalamet), and his precocious, adoring daughter, Murph (Mackenzie Foy).



CNS Photo/Melinda Sue Gordon/Paramount

**INTERSTELLAR:** (Left to right) Timothée Chalamet, Matthew McConaughey and Mackenzie Foy star in a scene from the movie "Interstellar." The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

So when an unusual turn of events results in the opportunity for Cooper to command a space expedition, he essentially jumps at the chance, despite the fact that the prospect of his prolonged absence is nothing short of crushing to Murph.

Cooper is joined on the journey by astrophysicist Romilly (David Gyasi) and science officer Amelia Brand (Anne Hathaway). The latter's father (Michael Caine) -- a renowned professor who was once Cooper's mentor -- conceived the rescue program and is its overall supervisor.

Just as protracted separation tests Cooper's bond with Murph (played in adulthood by Jessica Chastain), so Amelia's relationship with her idolized dad is eventually subjected to other strains.

"Interstellar" has most of its values in good order as it weighs familial ties against the sacrifices necessary to advance the common welfare and ponders the place of love within a worldview shaped by quantum mechanics and Darwinian evolution. But both the film's implicit message about the dire consequences of overpopulation and a subplot involving frozen

embryos call for moral discernment.

Cinematically, unnatural situations resulting from the relativity of time and other environmental factors create a distance from ordinary reality that blunts the impact of the movie's human element. In this respect, "Interstellar" stands in contrast to Nolan's masterful 2010 mind-bender "Inception."

In that earlier picture, different strands of events simultaneously unfolding within varied chronologies made for suspense and excitement. Here the playful feel of "Inception" is absent, as too is the driving sense of ur-

gency. Instead, like the character central to the climax of "Interstellar," moviegoers are likely to feel trapped by the theoretical paradoxes of boldly going where no man -- or woman or movie director, for that matter -- has gone before.

The film contains ethical issues, some bloodless violence, a handful of profanities and occasional crude and crass language. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

## Coming Up On 'Proclaim!'

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

**November 23** -- As Thanksgiving nears, Tim Behe, a member of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus Parish in Altoona, shares his uplifting story of why he is especially grateful this year.

**November 30** -- This first Sunday of Advent also marks the beginning of a Year of Consecrated Life. Conventional Franciscan Father Anthony Francis Spilka, the Bishop's Vicar for Religious, talks about the significance of this observance and the role of Religious in our Diocese.

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# Mercy Sister Ministers As Pediatrician

(Continued From Page 16.)

When she's not traveling, the 51-year-old sister who lives in Silver Spring says morning prayers with the sister she lives with when their schedules allow.

"I get up and go to work and she goes to work," she said, pointing out that it is different that she works at a hospital and not a school or church, seen a more traditional roles for women religious. But she also notes that she's been at the hospital 15 years and her colleagues are used to her.

"It's just kind of like, oh that's just Karen; she's our nun," she said.

She said Sisters of Mercy "take a fourth vow to serve poor, sick and ignorant and we can ba-

sically do any ministry that will fulfill that fourth vow."

"I can't think of anything better to do than to be a physician, helping the poor and being with the sick," she said, adding that she also does a fair amount of teaching not just with medical students but also giving parents and caretakers advice.

Sister Karen was born and raised in Long Island, New York, and that distinct accent still comes through when she is sitting on hospital beds talking to patients.

She attributes her medical passion to her mother, an emergency room nurse who came home with incredible stories and who also ended up taking care of neighbors who asked for Nurse Marion: a man who cut his hand

with a saw, a baby with a fever, a child after a bike crash, a woman who went into early labor and the boy across the street with diabetes.

Sister Karen came to her vocational calling after joining a parish youth group as a high school junior -- praying with them and doing good works together.

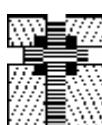
When she told people she thought it seemed like a great idea to live in community and pray with people and do good works with them, everyone assumed she wanted to be a woman religious.

Her response was: "No way, I'm too normal."

But then she began volunteering at a soup kitchen run by Sisters of Mercy and admired what they were doing.

"Maybe I do want to be a nun!" she said, surprising herself before she "tried it out for one year and then another" and now she's been a sister 31 years.

Initially, she thought she'd have to give up her dream of becoming a doctor to be a sister, but after meeting a group of sister doctors and realizing she could do both, she applied for medical school after making her



## May They Rest In Peace

### Sister Conleth Brannan C.S.J.

Sister Conleth Brannan, 87, died Sunday, November 9 at Villa Saint Joseph, Baden, in her 69th year as a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Baden.

The daughter of Faber and Rita (Donoughe) Brannan, Sister Conleth entered the Congregation from Saint Patrick Parish, Gallitzin. For more than 25 years Sister Conleth ministered as a teacher in the Altoona - Johnstown, Pittsburgh, Columbus OH Dioceses, and in Florida.

In 1978 Sister Conleth began ministering to the handicapped as assistant director for the Apostolate for the Deaf in Fort Lauderdale FL. Sister Conleth traveled to parishes in South Florida to interpret religious services and coordinate social events for the deaf community.

She and Father Jim Vitucci

were co-founders and co-directors of the Schott Memorial Center for the Deaf, now known as Schott Communities. She remained there until 2012 serving in various capacities. In March of 2012 she received the Schott Communities Heroes Tribute which honors individuals who make a difference in the disabled community.

In 2012 Sister Conleth retired to the Motherhouse; due to declining health, she became a resident of Villa Saint Joseph in 2014.

Sister Conleth is survived by two brothers, Pat and Maurice, both of Altoona, and a sister, Elaine Dillon, Cresson, nieces and nephew, grandnieces and grandnephews and the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Baden.

The funeral Mass for Sister Conleth Brannan C.S.J. was celebrated Wednesday, November 12 in the chapel of Saint Joseph Convent, Baden. Committal was in the Sisters' Cemetery on the Motherhouse grounds.

Donations in the name of Sister Conleth may be sent to the Sisters of St. Joseph Memorial Fund, Saint Joseph Convent, 1020 State Street, Baden, PA 15005.

## Family Matters

(Continued From Page 4.)

Our life is not about perfection and it is not about presenting a false front to make it seem perfect. For my husband and I have learned when we decide to remove the barrier of needing to be perfect, it unlocks the opportunity to serve God more. To be truthful, I think we are more of an authentic witness to our faith, when people see us being real, completely real. My husband and I have learned putting on fronts, doesn't help anyone, especially ourselves. For many times the need for perfection becomes an excuse to not step out and do the very thing God is



**SISTER KAREN SCHNEIDER R.S.M.**

CNS Photo/Bob Roller

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# Medical, Spiritual Worlds Combine For Mercy Sister

In 2013, Pope Francis declared that a Year of Consecrated Life be celebrated throughout the world.

The Year of Consecrated Life will begin on the First Sunday of Advent, the weekend of November 29, 2014, and end on February 2, 2016, the World Day of Consecrated life. The year also marks the 50th anniversary of *Perfectae Caritatis*, a

decree on religious life, and *Lumen Gentium*, the Second Vatican Council's constitution on the Church. Its purpose, as stated by the Vatican is to "make a grateful remembrance of the recent past" while embracing "the future with hope."

The following article is one in an occasional series articles for this special year.

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**By Carol Zimmermann**  
Catholic News Service

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**BALTIMORE (CNS)** -- At Johns Hopkins University Children's Center, Mercy Sister Karen Schneider -- a physician and an assistant professor of pediatric emergency medicine -- is occasionally asked if she is a nun.

That may be because of the silver cross she wears over her scrubs or because word has gotten around that "there's a sister at Hopkins."

If she tells patients she is a Sister of Mercy, they give her a blank look. "They think it's a band group," she said. If she clarifies to say, "I'm a Roman Catholic sister," the blank looks remain.

But when she says she's a nun -- which she points out is not technically correct, since she doesn't live in a cloistered or semi-cloistered setting -- people understand, but they are still baffled.

But for Sister Karen, being both a doctor and a woman reli-



gious makes perfect sense.

"It all comes together," she said, noting that she is a "pediatrician -- which is my work, my ministry which I love" and also is a Sister of Mercy, she told Catholic News Service Oct. 21 in her office in a wing adjacent to the constant flow of patients, doctors and nurses in the busy emergency room.

Sister Karen's office walls and bookshelves display certificates, photos of family members and children she's cared for from Samburu tribes in Kenya. The wall that you don't see until you are completely in the office she calls her "Sister of Mercy wall." It has a simple cross over the door, a list of spiritual and corporal works of mercy and quotes of Mother Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy.



CNS Photo/Bob Roller

**MERCY SISTER IS PEDIATRICIAN:** Mercy Sister Karen Schneider, who is a pediatrician, talks with the mother of a child in the emergency room at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore October 21.

Behind her desk, a small refrigerator is filled with lime Diet Cokes and some leftovers. Floor space is stacked with piles of towels, baby formula and supplies for a medical trip she was planning the following week to Kenya.

For the past several years, she has taken teams of medical students on four trips a year to Guyana, Haiti, Kenya or Nigeria as part of a Johns Hopkins University course she teaches called Pediatric Tropical Medicine.

These trips began when Sister Karen was a medical student and volunteered in Guyana in the midst of a malaria epidemic. She has since worked in Haiti immediately after an earthquake and also after a hurricane.

She said bringing free medical care to people who have had little or no contact with doctors has been "profound and life changing."

On a practical level, the trips give medical students an experience "of what medicine is

like outside of Hopkins" on dirt roads, without electricity, running water, CT scans or X-ray machines.

"Plus, we're a workforce, taking care of hundreds of patients a day."

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