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Diocesan Students Rise To The Challenge And Raise Record Sum For Hurricane Relief Efforts

Photo And Text
By Bruce A. Tomaselli

At a recent meeting with the diocesan staff, Bishop Mark L. Bartchak smiled proudly when he was able to report that “Our diocesan students raised over \$12,200.00 to aid those devastated by the recent Fall hurricanes.” He was really excited with the work and generosity of the students.

“It’s amazing,” remarked Jo - Ann Semko, assistant director of education, “the kids raised all of that money in less than two and one - half weeks.”

The collection was part of the Student To Student Program: A Catholic Response for Hurricane Relief, sponsored by the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA). One hundred percent of the funds collected will be distributed to Catholic school communities damaged by the hurricanes throughout the nation.

Jo - Ann said the drive began with Hurricane Harvey, which mainly ravaged Texas and Louisiana. The Tropical Hurricane made landfall on August 17. Hurricane Irma made landfall on August 30 in the South Florida Area. On September



AID HURRICANE RELIEF: Grade School and High School students in the Altoona - Johnstown Diocese raised over \$12,200 to aid the victims of three catastrophic hurricanes that United States and Puerto Rico. They presented the check to Bishop Mark L. Bartchak. Pictured (left to right) are: Maddy Whitby of Saint Matthew School in Tyrone; Brandon McNulty of Saint Benedict School in Carrolltown; Kira Angello of Holy Trinity School in Altoona; Aaron Duke of Saint Michael School in Loretto; Bishop Bartchak; Blaine Farabaugh of Saint Benedict in Carrolltown; Nathan Dumm of Northern Cambria Catholic School; Dustin Farabaugh of Saint Benedict School in Carrolltown; Jo - Ann Semko, assistant director of education; and Sophia Simanski of Holy Trinity School in Altoona. The money was raised as part of the Student To Student: A Catholic School Response for Hurricane Relief, sponsored by the National Catholic Education Association.

16, Hurricane Marie devastated Puerto Rico.

The high school and grade school students held a variety of activities to raise funds. Some schools sponsored “Dress

Down” days and others solicited donations from their families and others. Some of the schools took up collections at their football games. They also collected clothing, toys, and canned goods.

“I can’t say enough good things about our students,” Jo - Ann said. They are always eager to help. When they see a need, they never hesitate.” She said the kids went out immediately

to help the victims of the hurricanes.

Semko, and Sister of Charity Donna Marie Leiden, director of education, were absolutely surprised at the amount of money the students raised. The NCEA was hopeful to receive one dollar from each Catholic School student. The Altoona-Johnstown Diocese far surpassed that amount.

“We have 3,800 students,” said Sister Donna Marie, “but we collected three times that amount. It makes us feel so good that these students reach out, and have the ability to understand how these people are suffering.”

Sister Donna said that you could tell that Bishop Mark appreciated the efforts made by the students to help people in need.

“I think they have a sense of how they will their lives as charitable people as they grow into adulthood. I have no doubt they will always be sensitive to the concerns of others.”

Bishop Mark L. Bartchak smiled proudly when he was able to report that “Our diocesan students raised over \$12,200.00 to aid those devastated by the recent Fall hurricanes.”

High Schools

Join Conference

Ebensburg: Bishop Carroll Catholic High School is pleased to announce it has signed an agreement with the members of The Mountain League for football for the 2018 and 2019 seasons. In addition, Bishop Carroll Catholic will become an associate member of The Mountain Conference in 2020. All other Bishop Carroll athletic teams will continue to play in the Laurel Highlands Athletic Conference.

“We are excited for our football program and this opportunity with The Mountain League,” said Bishop Carroll Catholic Athletic Director, Dan McMullen. “We feel this is a beneficial partnership for all programs involved.” Bishop Carroll Catholic Football Coach Sean Billings agrees and is looking forward “to be able to play in a conference with the level of competition that the Mountain League presents.”

Principal Lorie Ratchford added, “We couldn’t have found a better home for our football program, and we’re excited for our student athletes to compete with the great programs in The Mountain League,” she said.

“Our administrative team

and board of trustees have been entirely committed to continuing to give our student athletes the opportunities they deserve to compete in the sports they love,” continued Ratchford. “The partnership with The Mountain League is the direct result of the efforts by many individuals on behalf of our students and families.”

Other members of The Mountain League include: Bald Eagle Area, Bellefonte Area, Central, Clearfield, Huntingdon, Penns Valley, Philipsburg-Osceola, and Tyrone.

Bishop Carroll Catholic High School provides a quality, faith - based education to students in the greater Ebensburg area and surrounding communities. Bishop Carroll strives to educate the whole student in spirit, heart, mind, and body, striving for excellence in these four pillars that form a strong foundation for life inside and outside of school.

Schools

Multimedia Conference

Nicktown: The team of Allison Moriconi and Nathan Dumm of Northern Cambria Catholic School were the first place winners at the annual Multimedia Contest Sponsored by the Altoona - Johnstown Diocese. The event was held on Monday, November 6 at Holy Trinity School in Altoona.

The competition is open to six, seventh, and eighth grade students. This year’s assignment explored Real vs. Fake. They included such topics as Real vs. Fake News; and Real vs. Fake Photos, among others.

Moriconi and Dumm’s presentation examined Real vs.



CERTIFICATION CEREMONY: Thirty - three participants were honored with various Lay Ministry certifications at ceremony held on October 12 at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Altoona. Pictured (left to right) are First row: Randy Fisher, Jr., Norma McGee, Mary Lou Custer, Derek Lang, Jennifer Gill, Lori Nevling, Jerry Nevling, Deacon Michael Russo, Director of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate and Ministerial Coordinator of Lay Ecclesial Ministry; Maria Caroff, and Margaret Jeffreys. Second row: Allan Duman, Monsignor Robert C. Mazur, rector of the Cathedral; Bill Stadtmiller, Janine Anna, Mary Cubbison; and Deacon Michael Anna. The participants were honored with certifications in Basic Lay Ministry and Advanced Tracks in Christian Initiation Team Ministry, Liturgical Foundations, Tribunal Advocate and Hospital Ministry. Betty Rosmus of Most Holy Trinity Parish in South Fork was honored for her 35 years of service as a Religious Education catechist. Bishop Mark L. Bartchak presided over Evening Prayer and the Ceremony of Certification.

Fake Diamonds. The students used a variety of media including computers, video news clips, newspapers, and power point programs to develop their topics and present them to judges. They are students at Northern Cambria Catholic School. Their coach was Lydia Farabaugh.

Dravyn Crowell, Riley Walk, and Angel Jemenez of Saint Matthew Catholic School in Tyrone won second place. They presented Real Superheroes vs. Superhumans. Mickie Byers was their coach.

Savannah Smorto and Shyana Burger of Northern Cambria Catholic School won third place. They discussed Real vs. Fake Smiles. Their coach was Lydia Farabaugh.



S.T.E.M. DAY: Students at Lock Haven Catholic School enjoyed the opportunity put their imaginations to use in creating programs and applications during a S.T.E.M. Day at the school Thursday, November 9.

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(Continued On Page 3.)

In The Alleghenies



RITE OF COMMITMENT: Most Holy Trinity Parish in South Fork held the Rite of Commitment for Confirmation on Sunday, November 5. Pictured (left to right) are: Seth Richardson, Father Joseph C. Nale, pastor; and Gabriel Fyock. Absent from the photo is Nathan Fisher.

(Continued From Page 2.)

S.T.E.M. Day

Lock Haven: Students at Lock Haven Catholic School (L.H.C.S.) were able to use their imaginations, along with other skills at a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (S.T.E.M.), day held on November 9 at the School. The day was sponsored by the PEERS Foundation. Representatives from PEERS spent the day leading the LHCS middle school students through interactive and entertaining activities that focused on STEM concepts and music. The name of the program was "Create: Music".

The students participated in four different mediums. In the Computer Design Lab, students worked with a Verto Studio, which incorporated CAD software and 3D design concepts. They designed a snowman and manipulated the vertices (each angular point) to create a nose. They were able to add different features and textures as well. They even added a cello to the design for a music component. In a Coding Lab the students used a program called "Scratch", which

enabled them to code a drum set in order to play a tune. They also coded a piano to play music.

In the Engineering Lab they used a "LittleBits synth kit. They students created music using electric currents. They studied sound waves and various engineering jobs that utilize the technology. In groups they worked in a "Prototype Lab", in which they applied their knowledge to conceptually design a Application (App) that would play music.

Parishes

Mission Trip

State College: In October, eight members of Good Shepherd Parish traveled to their Sister Parish, Holy Spirit in Maggoty, Jamaica for a one - week mission experience. This is the 17th trip that Good Shepherd parishioners have made to spend time serving at our sister parish. At the Sunday morning Mass, the Holy Spirit Church was filled beyond capacity, with over 300 parishioners. Following Mass, Good Shepherd team joined several of the religious education classes to participate

in teaching the lessons. The high school youth class numbers over 120 students.

Throughout the week team-carried out a variety of service: working in the Holy Spirit Medical Clinic, completing multiple repair and building projects, visiting homebound patients, and helping students in Holy Spirit's after - school tutoring program.

The creative love - filled work that Father Marek Bzinkowski and his mission team consistently offer to the Holy Spirit community has been appropriately recognized recently. Father Marek was awarded the Assisi Award from Saint Francis University, Loretto and was honored by the Jamaican government with the Badge of Honor for Meritorious Service.

Over the past 18 years, Father Marek has initiated many social justice programs in his community. Many Maggoty children and families have benefited from agricultural, educational and work programs run by the mission. The most recent is a Higher Education Scholarship program, that helps highly motivated students go on to a college

or university. Please contact Bill Zierke @ billzierke@comcast.net for more information.

Prayer

Service Project

Johnstown: The Cursillo Community Service Project, sponsored by the 4th Day Committee of the Altoona - Johnstown Cursillo Movement, will hold its annual service project Friday, December 15.

Participants are asked to gather at the home of Nick and Mercedes Smith, 766 Mount Airy Drive, near the Galleria Mall, for an event that will celebrate the birth of Christ and will benefit the Martha and Mary House, the emergency homeless shelter in Johnstown.

The shelter is in need of donations of deodorant, tooth paste, toothbrushes, mouthwash, shampoo, conditioner, soap,

shower gel, combs, nail files, baby wipes, chap stick, disposable razors and feminine products.

Cash donations to purchase these items will also be accepted.

Those taking part are asked to bring a covered dish, as they will enjoy a meal and prayer together before organizing the donations.

Donations may be brought in advance to the Smith residence.

(Continued On Page 6.)

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Another Perspective

By Monsignor Timothy P. Stein
Christ The King

Readers of this column will not be surprised to know of my interest in and respect for members of Royal Families, most especially the United Kingdom's Royal House of Windsor, headed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

My interest in all things royal began when I was a kid, and started with Philadelphia's own Grace Kelly, who became Princess of Monaco. It was further fueled by the story of Grand Duchess Anastasia, the lost daughter of Russia's Tsar Nicholas II. Did she really escape the firing squad that murdered her family, and live out her last years as a housewife in Virginia? But it was when at age 12 I read Robert K. Massie's biography of Anastasia's parents, Nicholas and Alexandra, that my interest became more focused. Seeing the family trees that showed England's Queen Victoria as the common link among Europe's royal dynasties, I embarked on a lifelong pursuit of all things involving the British Royal Family.

I am just back from eight days in London, where I again saw the Queen, her husband Prince Philip, and various members of their family at a Remembrance Sunday service at the Cenotaph - a war memorial in Whitehall, adjacent to Downing Street and Parliament Square. Last Monday, the Queen and Prince celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. And it was 70 years ago, on her 21st birthday, that the then Princess Elizabeth made speech in which she said to the people of Great Britain and the British Commonwealth of Nations "I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service."

That theme, and that interest in royalty, came home to roost as I considered yesterday's liturgical celebration of the Solemnity of Christ the King. And of all the images of Christ the King, my favorite is of Christ, the Little King, the Infant Jesus of Prague, which delivers its own powerful message about what royal dignity and a life of service is all about.

The Infant of Prague is depicted as a barefoot child; He is a pilgrim and a beggar, a mendicant wandering the earth asking for us to work with Him, to cooperate with Him in the great work of salvation. He is shown with His right hand raised in blessing; He is a man of prayer, He is clothed in royal vestments, a symbol of His sovereignty and of His service. He bears the mantle of Kingship not for His own sake, but for ours. He is there at our service.

On the day of our baptism, each of us was anointed with Sacred Chrism, and with that anointing came the reminder that as Christ was anointed priest, prophet and king, so, we too, by virtue of our baptism, share in those vocations. If we are members of Christ's family - if we are His brothers and sisters, then we are members of a Royal Family - His Royal Family - and we are obliged to act accordingly; living lives of service and of prayer, lives spent on pilgrimage seeking the good of others before our own.

We are to be Kings and Queens, Princes and Princesses of a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a people set apart to praise and worship Him, and to give Him honor and glory by lives of faithful service in imitation of Him.

Yes, we can learn a lot by studying the ways of royalty, especially by studying Him whom we acknowledge as Lord and King.

Point Of View

This season sparkles with joy. We open our homes to family and friends, greeting each other at wreath-decked doors under twinkling lights.

But a small moment often catches in our throat. We set one less place for Thanksgiving dinner. Or we cross a name off this year's Christmas list.

Wherever we gather around holiday tables this year, there will be holes left by those who aren't there. Relatives who have died. Loved ones lost to addiction. Babies who never got to be held. Families divided by divorce. Gaping holes left by grief.

Other changes are temporary but still weigh heavy on the heart. The kid not coming back from college this year. The family members deployed. The friends on the other side of the globe.

Holidays often set this truth in stark relief: Our families - and our lives - don't always look the way we expected or planned.

I learned - after infertility and miscarriage and child loss - that smiling faces on Christmas cards don't tell the whole story. Maybe the parents lost so many babies before they finally got to bring one home. Maybe they never wanted a huge brood, but the kids kept coming. Maybe their marriage is crumbling and no one knows.

Human nature is quick to judge what we see on the surface, quick to idealize others' lives. But the truth runs deeper.

I look at my own family, and I ache for my children



Faith At Home

By Laura Kelly Fanucci
**The Ones
Who Won't Be Home
For The Holidays**



Photo By Msgr. Timothy P. Stein

who aren't here and my brother who's long gone. I want to set three more places at our table, even as I delight in those around me.

But here's a truth worth celebrating in a season of wonder: We keep going.

Suffering and grief are met by an even stronger force: that God made human hearts resilient. We do not have to despair when our reality does not match our hopes or others' expectations. We can still embrace the good work of living out our callings.

Even amid the dreams that have died and the shadows of what might have been, we can still show up and choose joy.

Think about the holiest of families. Mary and Joseph could never have imagined how parenthood would begin for them.

But both embraced the life that God set before them, even

with its suffering and heartache. They must have known great joy, too. Holiness was caught up in all of it.

So do not fear this year if your heart aches for the ones who aren't here. You are not alone.

In a month that starts with All Saints and All Souls and ends in Thanksgiving, we can be grateful that our struggles are part of a greater mystery: The communion of saints in which the living and the dead are held together in the love of God.

Together we are only - but always - joined in this sacred wholeness: "We believe in the communion of all the faithful of Christ, those who are pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven, all together forming one church" (Pope Paul VI, "Credo of the People of God," in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 962).

Look around the table at those here to celebrate with you. Remember those who are gone. When you find yourself holding them together - the living and the dead, the lost and the found - then you enter more deeply into this holy mystery.

Even in absence, we can love in the present tense.

How Do I Recover? Trauma And Its Effects On The Body, Mind, And Spirit.

By Amanda Pease, Clinton County Women's Center

Experiences, whether positive or negative, that people go through in their lives, help shape who they are as a person. For every action, there is a reaction. The body, mind, and spirit can all react differently depending on the trauma experienced. Trauma is an emotional response to a life-changing event, such as an accident, rape or natural disaster.

To help sexual assault survivors—or to help ourselves if we've been victimized, it is beneficial to understand the effects of trauma. The effects of trauma can occur after a single event or after reoccurring events. It's not unusual for people who have experienced traumatic events to have flashbacks. Flashbacks can occur anywhere, any place, at any time and may occur in situations that are unrelated to the original experience. During a flashback, an individual may experience an elevated heart rate or restlessness. Other effects can include difficulty sleeping or the emergence of an eating disorder. Flashbacks often make the survivor feel like they're reliving that traumatic event.

These effects can be scary for a person dealing with

trauma. They may feel scared, alone, and isolated, but effects can vary from person to person. There is help available from trained, non-judgmental staff at your local rape crisis center. The people that surround a survivor following a traumatic event have an effect on how the person recovers. Many survivors need positive emotional support from their family, loved ones, and friends when recovering from a traumatic event.

Trauma can affect a person spiritually by causing the person to question who they are or what their purpose in life is. The psychology of the brain is what enables the PTSD to occur. Post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, is a condition that can occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a life-changing event (such as a natural disaster, serious accident, war, violent personal assault such as rape, etc.) In result, it is common to experience PTSD after trauma has occurred, because trauma can affect a person physically, mentally, and spiritually.

It is like a scar on the brain. Think of a stab wound on your leg. You know the scar is there and when you look at it, you remember what happened. Triggers, which remind you of the trauma directly or indirectly,

can enable an episode of PTSD. Relaxation techniques such as meditation help reduce the stress experienced in PTSD and can provide relief for survivors. In turn, the mind, body, and spirit will react positively and maximize the potential for healing.

Advocates at rape crisis centers across the state can help those recovering from sexual violence. Free and confidential counseling services are available 24 hours a day. In-person and hotline counseling are available for victims, families, friends, partners or spouses of sexual abuse survivors. Counselors can help survivors overcome their trauma through one-on-one counseling, support groups, and other forms of advocacy. They can intervene or act on behalf of the survivor's wishes and needs, and assist in navigating the processes within the medical, police, and court systems.

It is important to remember that recovering from a traumatic event is possible. Family, friends, and professionals can help. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual abuse and you want more information, please call the 1-888-772-7227 to speak with a victim advocate.

Support For Survivors

Support for survivors of sexual abuse is always available throughout the Diocese of Altoona-Johnston. Survivors are encouraged to seek help for recovery through any of the sexual assault centers in their area. All of the sexual assault centers offer:

- * 24/7 Hotline Services
- * Crisis Intervention
- * Case Management
- * Individual Counseling
- * Legal Advocacy and Accompaniment
- * Medical Advocacy and Accompaniment
- * Prevention and Awareness Education Programs
- * Sexual Assault Response Team (emergency medical care, emotional support, and medical/ legal examination)
- * Professional Trainings
- * Information and Referrals to other community services

Bedford County

Your Safe Haven Inc.
(800) 555 - 5671
Yoursafehaven.org

Also offers: * Safe Shelter and/or Transitional Housing
* Transportation * Additional Services for Domestic Violence Survivors

Blair County

Family Services, Inc.
(814) 944-3585
Familyservicesinc.net

Also offers: * Therapy/ Therapeutic Counseling * Transportation * Additional Services for Domestic Violence Survivors

Cambria-Somerset Counties Victim Services, Inc.
(814) 288-4691 and (800) 755-1983
Victimservicesinc.org

Also offers: * Therapy/ Therapeutic Counseling * Support Groups * Group Counseling

Huntingdon - - Mifflin - - Juniata Counties

The Abuse Network
(717) 242-2444
Abusenetwork.org

Also offers: * Crisis Counseling * Support Groups * Group Counseling * Safe Shelter and/or Transitional Housing * Transportation * Additional Services for Domestic Violence Survivors

Clinton County

Clinton County Women's Center (
(570) 748-9509
Ccwcsafe.org

Also offers: * Therapy/ Therapeutic Counseling * Support Groups * Safe Shelter and/or Transitional Housing * Transportation * Additional Services for Domestic Violence Survivors

Franklin - - Fulton Counties

Women in Need/ Victim Services
(717) 264-4444
Winservices.org

Also offers: * Support Groups * Group Counseling * Safe Shelter and/or Transitional Housing * Transportation * Additional Services for Domestic Violence Survivors

Centre County

Centre County Women's Resource Center
(814) 234-5050
Ccwrc.org

Also offers: * Support Groups * Therapy/ Therapeutic Counseling * Safe Shelter and/or Transitional Housing * Transportation * Additional Services for Domestic Violence Survivors * Civil Legal Representation in family, law, immigration or Title IX matters * Safe Custody Exchange and Supervised Visitation

Reporting Child Abuse

Bishop Mark L. Bartchak and the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown are firmly committed to protecting children and young people. If you have any information concerning suspected sexual or other abuse of minors, you are urged to report it immediately to:

- PA Child Line 1 - 800- 932 - 0313 (intake is available 24/7)
- Pennsylvania Attorney General Hotline (888) 538 - 8541
- Pennsylvania State Police Headquarters (717) 783 - 5599 or your local Pennsylvania State Police Station
- Your local police department

If there is an indication of imminent danger, you should call 911 immediately.

The Diocese reports all information regarding sexual abuse of minors to law enforcement. You are urged to do the same. Anyone may and should report suspected child sexual abuse.

To report to the Diocese any suspected abuse of a minor, please call Jean Johnstone at (814) 944 - 9388.

Cursillos Scheduled

Ebensburg: The Cursillo Movement of the Altoona - Johnstown Diocese announces that Men's Cursillo #121 will be held April 19 - 22, 2018, and Women's Cursillo #122 will be held April 26 - 29, 2018.

The retreat begins Thursday evening and concludes Sunday afternoon. Mass is celebrated daily, and talks are presented by spiritual advisors and laity, followed by discussion and summaries of the day.

Participants are housed in private dormitory rooms. The price is \$200.00, which includes room, all meals, snacks and supplies.

For more information contact Pre - Cursillo chairpersons Mike and Juanita Kissell at MJKissell73@Gmail.com, or Cursillo lay director Jo - Ann Semko at jsemko@dioceseaj.org.



CNS Photo/Lisa A. Johnston, St. Louis Review

Communal Penance Services – Advent 2017

During the season of Advent, Catholics are encouraged to seek God's healing and forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The following is a schedule of Communal Penance Services at various parishes throughout the Diocese. For updates, please visit the Diocesan website at dioceseaj.org. Please consult individual parishes for other Reconciliation opportunities leading up to Christmas.

December 3 3:00 p.m. – Holy Spirit Parish, Lock Haven 4:00 p.m. – Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish, Bedford 5:00 p.m. – Saint Joseph Parish, Bellwood

December 5 6:00 p.m. – Saint Stephen Parish, McConnellsburg

December 6 6:30 p.m. – Saint Joseph Parish, Renovo

December 10 1:30 p.m. – Saint John Gualbert Cathedral, Johnstown 2:00 p.m. – Saint Bernard Parish, Hastings

December 11 7:00 p.m. – All Saints Parish, Boswell 7:00 p.m. – Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Altoona 7:00 p.m. – Prince of Peace Parish, Northern Cambria 7:00 p.m. – Saint Matthew Parish, Tyrone 7:00 p.m. – Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish, Ashville

December 12 6:30 p.m. – Church of the Transfiguration, Conemaugh 7:00 p.m. – Good Shepherd Parish, Port Matilda 7:00 p.m. – Queen of Peace Parish, Patton

December 13 7:00 p.m. – Queen of Archangels Parish, Clarence 7:00 p.m. – Saint Nicholas Parish, Nicktown

December 14 7:00 p.m. – Basilica of Saint Michael the Archangel, Loretto 7:00 p.m. – Most Holy Trinity Parish, Huntingdon 7:00 p.m. – Saint Benedict Parish, Carrolltown 7:00 p.m. – Saint Patrick Parish, Johnstown

December 16 10:00 a.m. – Saint Therese of the Child Jesus Parish, Altoona

December 17 2:00 p.m. – Holy Name Parish, Ebensburg 2:00 p.m. – Our Lady of Victory Parish, State College 4:00 p.m. – Saint Mary Parish, Hollidaysburg 5:00 p.m. – Saint Benedict Parish, Johnstown

December 18 6:30 p.m. – Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, Johnstown 5:30 p.m. – Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Johnstown 7:00 p.m. – Saint Rose of Lima Parish, Altoona

December 19 6:30 p.m. – Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, Johnstown

December 20 6:30 p.m. – Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Altoona 7:00 p.m. – Saint Demetrius Parish, Gallitzin 7:00 p.m. – Immaculate Conception Parish, Dudley

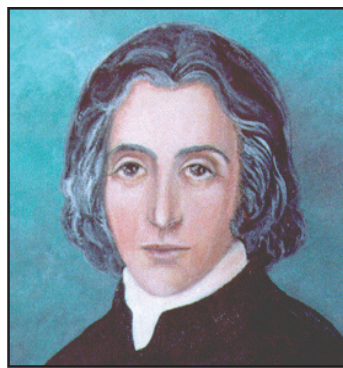
December 21 5:30 p.m. – Sacred Heart Parish, Altoona 7:00 p.m. – Saints Peter & Paul Parish, Philipsburg

December 22 7:00 p.m. – Saint Aloysius Parish, Cresson

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Mass Formally Opens Cause For Black Elk

By Catholic News Service

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (CNS)

-- During a Mass to formally open the sainthood cause for Nicholas Black Elk, the Native American was described as someone who merged the La-

kota and Catholic culture in a way "that drew him deeper into the mystery of Christ's love and the church."

Black Elk's love for God and Scripture led him to become a catechist, fulfilling the mission of all disciples, said Bishop Robert D. Gruss of Rapid City in his homily at the Oct. 21 Mass

at Holy Rosary Church in Pine Ridge.

The bishop said that for 50 years Black Elk led others to Christ often melding his Lakota culture into his Christian life. "This enculturation can always reveal something of the true nature and holiness of God," he said, adding that Black Elk always "challenged people to renew themselves, to seek this life that Christ offers them."

Bishop Gruss said Black Elk's life as a dedicated catechist, spiritual leader and guide "inspired many to live for Christ by his own story." With the formal opening of his cause, Black Elk now has the title "servant of God."

Black Elk was born sometime between 1858 and 1866. He died Aug. 19, 1950, at Pine Ridge.

The bishop said the process for the sainthood cause for Black Elk is a long one. First, he must show a reputation for holiness that spread to others.

The first phase involves gathering testimony about his life and his virtues. Bishop Gruss said Black Elk's public and private writings are currently being collected and examined. This documentary phase can take many years.

"Where the process ends is now up to the Holy Spirit and Congregation for the Causes of Saints. Our task now is to continue to gather more information, testimony about his life, and to pray that he is found worthy to have his cause moved forward," he said.



CNS Photo/Courtesy Marquette University

NICHOLAS BLACK ELK

The road to canonization involves three major steps: First is the declaration of a person's heroic virtues, after which the church declares the person "venerable." Second is beatification, after which he or she is called "blessed." Third is canonization, or the declaration of sainthood.

In general, two miracles must be accepted by the church as having occurred through the intercession of the prospective saint; one must occur before beatification, and the other after beatification.

The bishop also encouraged the congregation to follow Black Elk's example stressing that all Christians are called into the missionary field.

"Like Black Elk, if we are docile to the Lord's will, devoting our lives to him, we will be out working for his kingdom of mercy, love and peace," he said.

The bishop also stressed that today's Catholics should not live "isolated religious lives" but instead should recognize they

are called to be "God's servants and instruments of Christ's love in building and advancing his kingdom. Each of us has to decide how we can participate," he added.

Last February, Bishop Gruss appointed Bill White, as the diocesan postulator of Black Elk's sainthood cause. White is an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Deacon Ben Black Bear from St. Francis Mission is translating some of Black Elk's writings from Lakota to English.

Deacon Marlon Leneau, Rapid City's diocesan director of Native Ministry, described Black Elk as a revered holy man among the Lakota who bridged the gap between traditional native spirituality and Catholicism.

"He showed his people that you did not have to choose between the two, you could be both. He did not abandon his native ways when he became a Christian. To him it was together -- praying to the one God."

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

+ + +

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Word of Life



The Pope Teaches

By Pope Francis
Invest In Love

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- People have a basic choice in the way they live: either striving to build up treasures on earth or giving to others in order to gain heaven, Pope Francis said.

"What we invest in love remains, the rest vanishes," the pope said in his homily Nov. 19, the first World Day of the Poor.

Between 6,000 and 7,000 poor people attended the Mass in St. Peter's Basilica as special guests, the Vatican said. While almost all of them live in Europe, they include migrants and refugees from all over the world.

Among the altar servers were young men who are either poor, migrants or homeless. The first reader at the Mass, Tony Battah, is a refugee from Syria. Those presenting the gifts at the offertory were led by the Zambardi family from Turin, whom the Vatican described as living in a "precarious condition" and whose 1-year-old daughter has cystic fibrosis.

In addition to the bread and wine that were consecrated at the Mass, the offertory included a large basket of bread and rolls that were blessed to be shared at the lunch the pope was offering after Mass. Some 1,500 poor people joined the pope in the Vatican's audience hall for the meal, while the other special guests were served at the Pontifical North American College -- the U.S. seminary in Rome -- and other seminaries and Catholic-run soup kitchens nearby.

Preaching about the Gospel "parable of the talents" (Mt 25:14-30), Pope Francis said the servant in the story who buried his master's money was rebuked not because he did something wrong, but because he failed to do something good with what he was given.

"All too often, we have the idea that we haven't done anything wrong, and so we rest content, presuming that we are good and just," the pope said. "But to do no wrong is not enough. God is not an inspector looking for unstamped tickets; he is a Father looking for children to whom he can entrust his property and his plans."

If in the eyes of the world, the poor they have little value, he said, "they are the ones who open to us the way to heaven; they are our 'passport to paradise.' For us it is an evangelical duty to care for them, as our real riches, and to do so not only by giving them bread, but also by breaking with them the bread of God's word, which is addressed first to them."

Where the poor are concerned, the pope said, too many people are often guilty of a sin of omission or indifference.

Thinking it is "society's problem" to solve, looking the other way when passing a beggar or changing the channel when the news shows something disturbing are not Christian responses, he said.

"God will not ask us if we felt righteous indignation," he said, "but whether we did some good."

People please God in a similar way to how they please anyone they love. They learn what that person likes and gives that to him or her, the pope said.

In the Gospels, he said, Jesus says that he wants to be loved in "the least of our brethren," including the hungry, the sick, the poor, the stranger and the prisoner.

"In the poor, Jesus knocks on the doors of our heart, thirsting for our love," he said. True goodness and strength are shown "not in closed fists and crossed arms, but in ready hands outstretched to the poor, to the wounded flesh of the Lord."



ONE MORE TIME: Pictured in 1963 are the members of the choir at Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Mount Union. Founded in 1913, the parish was celebrating its golden jubilee that year.

There's a quote that observes, "History doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes."

I'm starting to hear the rhymes in a lot of the current debates in the church about papal leadership.

Almost 40 years ago, a Polish pope, a man from a far country, came to Rome with a new vigor and a new attitude. He not only told us not to be afraid, he energized us with his vitality and his willingness to take on big challenges facing the church. I was one of many attracted to his self-assured vision of what some called a "Catholic restoration."

He challenged the politically powerful in the East and helped to topple governments. He shook his finger at political clerics he judged disobedient. He was not afraid to discipline theologians. He appointed new bishops and called synods to address the major issues of the day, invariably pleasing some and outraging others.

Not everyone embraced him. Some said he was too Polish, too much a product of the church-state conflicts of his communist homeland, with an insularity that was insensitive to Western democracies. Others said he was busy appointing bishops in his own image, and they worried that the church would be irreversibly locked into what they saw as an anti-modern agenda.

Some claimed he had abandoned the Second Vatican Council, at least as they understood it. When critics challenged him



Amid The Fray

By Greg Erlandson
A Tale Of Two Popes

in public forums, his defenders fought back. They talked about papal authority and the deference all Catholics owed the supreme pontiff and suggested his critics were disloyal and dissenters.

Fast - forward a few decades, and I start to hear the rhyme. We have another pope from a far country, Argentina. He was not a young man when he was elected, but he riveted the world with his humility, with his willingness to eschew the trappings of the office, to reach out to the poor, the disfigured, the marginalized.

He emphasizes the joy of the Christian life, and railed against sourpuss Pharisees. His use of concrete images to describe a pastoral reality has been electrifying: the shepherd who smells like the sheep, the church as field hospital.

People are drawn to his emphasis on joy and mercy, but his emphasis on pastoral concerns, while pleasing to some, worries others. He has challenged powerful forces in the church by reorganizing the Vatican, or trying to, and by appointing new bishops who are often in his mold.

He has called the synods to

talk about the crisis of the family and about youth. He also has challenged the politically powerful. He has shaken his finger at Catholics who seem more interested in political influence than in helping those on the periphery.

Not everyone has embraced him. Some say he doesn't understand the United States, that he has a Latin American bias. Others worry that he is embracing the heresies of modernity, or undermining doctrinal teaching. His defenders fight back, asking that there be more deference to papal authority, that he has the right to pursue his vision of a truly Vatican II church, and that those who attack him in public forums are disloyal and even dissenters.

Catholicism has never been without theological debate, and these debates rarely spare even popes. Those quick to criticize papal authority and decisions 30 years ago have changed places with those quick to criticize now. The rhyme may not be perfect, but a bit of humility would seem to be in order lest our own hypocrisy give greater scandal than that which we claim to protest.

Question Corner

By Father Kenneth Doyle
**Agoraphobia
 And Mass Attendance**

Q. Togetherness seems to have become such an integral part of Catholicism, and extroverts tend to look disdainfully at those who prefer to sit at the end of the pew, are shy about grasping hands, shudder at the thought of being hugged or have difficulty with extemporaneous small talk. For me, being squashed in the center of a pew is agonizing, and there is no way I can focus on the Mass in that situation.

About once every two or three months, I feel compelled to go into our parish's adoration chapel during Mass and follow the prayers and readings from there - - or I find it necessary to stay at home and follow the Sunday Mass on television from my den. If that counts as missing Mass, there's just nothing that I can do about it.

Agoraphobia is no joke, and even those of us with milder forms suffer greatly. But I believe that we are also loved by God. (Nokesville, Virginia)

A. No, your behavior does not count as missing Mass. And yes, you are surely loved by God. Agoraphobia is a very real disease, affecting as many as 1.9 million U.S. adults at some level in a 12-month period. It is characterized by significant anxiety in places where crowds gather, especially in situations where one might feel trapped and unable to escape.

This disease can justify one's absence from Mass as certainly as would a high fever or a contagious cold. If it is more comfortable for you to pray in a side chapel, by all means do that. (Perhaps you might want to mention your situation to your pastor to help him to understand, and you might benefit by his words of approval.)

Or, if sometimes you find it necessary simply to stay at home and pray, do that. I credit you for your desire to share in the Eucharist to the extent you are able.

Your letter serves, too, as a reminder to us all to forgo judging the behavior of oth-

ers -- those, for example, who insist on sitting at the end of a nearly vacant pew or those who choose to stand in the back of the church. They could well be suffering from the same sensibilities you have described.

Q. I have been attending one Catholic parish in my hometown for several years now. As far as I know, this is the only Catholic church where parishioners do not shake hands at the sign of peace. I can understand churchgoers declining to shake hands if they have a cold or other ailment - - or at times of widespread sickness.

However, at this particular parish, the congregation will not even turn around and greet others - - let alone, shake hands. It is not really a big deal for me, but I do find it a little odd. Is there an explanation for this, or are parishes simply not required to follow the practice of shaking hands? (Portland, Oregon)

A. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal in section No. 82 indicates that the rite of peace should be a regular part of the liturgy in which "the faithful express to each other their ecclesial communion and mutual charity" before receiving the Eucharist. As to the actual gesture to be used, the general instruction leaves that up to national bishops' conference, to be determined in accord with local culture and customs.

For the United States, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has noted that this would typically be done by shaking hands. So while this ritual can be eliminated in particular circumstances - - a flu epidemic, for example - - it should not be skipped regularly.

In 2014, the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments reminded Catholics that a certain restraint should mark the ritual so as not to distract from receiving Communion, that the gesture of peace should be extended by the faithful only to those nearest them and that such abuses as "the movement of the faithful from their places" should be avoided.



For The Journey

By Effie Caldarola
The Future Of Migrants

Imagine you are threatened with deportation from the country you love.

You've been here for 20 years, legally accepted, worked hard, bought a house, started a family. Now, you face expulsion. Put yourself in those shoes.

To do just that, I joined a group at the Urban Abbey, an innovative coffee shop/bookstore/worship space run by the Methodist Church in Omaha's Old Market, to hear real people tell of the desperate fear they have of deportation.

If you've never heard of Temporary Protected Status, you're not alone. It hasn't received much publicity. Until now, that is, as a chilly wind of exclusion blows across our country and the program's continuance is being questioned by high-ranking administration figures. Cutoff dates have just been announced for Temporary Protected Status recipients from Nicaragua, with Hondurans getting an extension.

Temporary Protected Status was passed by Congress in 1990, and it allowed people from certain countries who have experienced natural disasters (think Haiti's massive earthquake), armed conflict or some other extraordinary condition, to seek temporary haven in the U.S.

Ten countries qualified and currently the U.S. provides Temporary Protected Status to over 400,000 foreign nationals from these countries.

At the Urban Abbey tonight, it is a group of Salvadorans, our neighbors in town, who share their stories.

Wilfredo came here in 1999. Like many Salvadorans, he worked as a roofer. Eventually, he moved to a beef packing plant, where, from a lowly position, he advanced to a supervisory role and was able to buy a house.

"We are good people," he told us as we sipped our lattes. "We do good things."

His two youngest children were born here and are citizens.

Mario, a dark-skinned man with a deeply lined face belying his youthfulness, helped organize a van expedition to Washington, D.C., to meet with Nebraska's congressional delegation to plead for permanent residency.

"I own a house, I've always paid my taxes," he said. "I have never asked for welfare. We came to this country to work."

A woman who has cleaned houses and worked 12-hour overnight shifts in bakeries and processing plants said, "Because of the war in El Salvador, I am an orphan. If I am separated from my (American-born) daughters, they will suffer as I did."

Her Salvadoran hometown's mayor was kidnapped for ransom; it is a fate that potential deportees fear as they return perceived as "rich" Americans.

The secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with other members of the Trump administration, has the authority to end a country's Temporary Protected Status. A local immigration law professor told our group the secretary's decision will not be subject to judicial oversight.

Because Congress has repeatedly failed to address immigration, no clear path to citizenship exists for Temporary Protected Status beneficiaries.

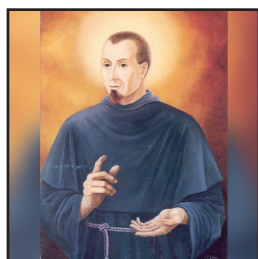
Rules are rules, a voice in my head murmurs. Then I hear another voice: Jesus excoriating the Pharisees. "They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them" (Mt 23:4).

Can we as Americans show mercy for these families who may be brutally torn apart? Can we undo their heavy burdens?

Despite the decision resting with the administration, contacting our congressional delegation is important, said the law professor.

"Political pressure might be the only thing we can do," he said.

Saint Francis
 Anthony Of Lucera
 1681 - 1742
 Feast - November 28



Giovaniello Fasani's foster father sent him for his education to the Franciscans in Lucera. At fifteen he joined the order and took the name Francis Anthony after the great sainted friars. In 1705, he earned a doctorate in theology. Then he began to teach at the Franciscan college in Lucera, where he spent the rest of his life. Renowned for his preaching and teaching, the townspeople called Francis Anthony "Padre Maestro." And his reputation for mercy drew many to his confessional. "I was indulgent, I don't deny it," he said, "but it was You who taught me to be so." Francis Anthony showed particular concern for the well-being of prisoners. And he initiated an annual Christmas collection of goods for the poor.

Detroit Capuchin Friar Beatified

(Continued From Page 16.)

“For hours upon hours, he patiently received, listened and counseled the ever-growing number of people who came to him.”

The friar saw people “as human beings, images of God. He didn’t pay attention to race, color or religious creed,” the cardinal said.

A congregation of more than 60,000 filled Ford Field, home of the NFL’s Detroit Lions, which was transformed for the Mass. The altar, placed at midfield, was created originally for St. John Paul II’s visit to the Pontiac Silverdome in 1987. To the right of the altar was a large painting of Blessed Solanus. It was unveiled after the beatification rite, which took place at the beginning of the Mass.

Dozens of bishops, priests and deacons processed into the stadium for the start of the liturgy. The music was provided by a 25-member orchestra and a choir of 300 directed by Capuchin Franciscan Father Ed Foley. The singers were members of parish choirs from across the Detroit metro area.

Cardinal Amato was the main celebrant, joined at the altar by Detroit Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, and Boston Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley, himself a Capuchin Franciscan.

In the congregation were 240 Capuchin friars and at least 300 members of the Casey family from across America and their ancestral country of Ireland. The Casey family’s Irish roots were reflected in the Irish hymns chosen as part of the music for the liturgy.

“What a witness was our beloved Solanus,” said Father Michael Sullivan, provincial minister of the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph in Detroit, as the ceremony began “He opened his heart to all people who came to him. He prayed with them, he appreciated them, and through him, God

loved them powerfully again and again.”

“For decades countless faithful have awaited this moment,” said Archbishop Vigneron before asking Cardinal Amato to read the decree from Pope Francis declaring Father Solanus “Blessed.”

He is the second American-born male to be beatified, after Blessed Stanley Rother, a North American priest from Oklahoma who in 1981 was martyred while serving the people of a Guatemalan village. He was beatified Sept. 23 in Oklahoma City.

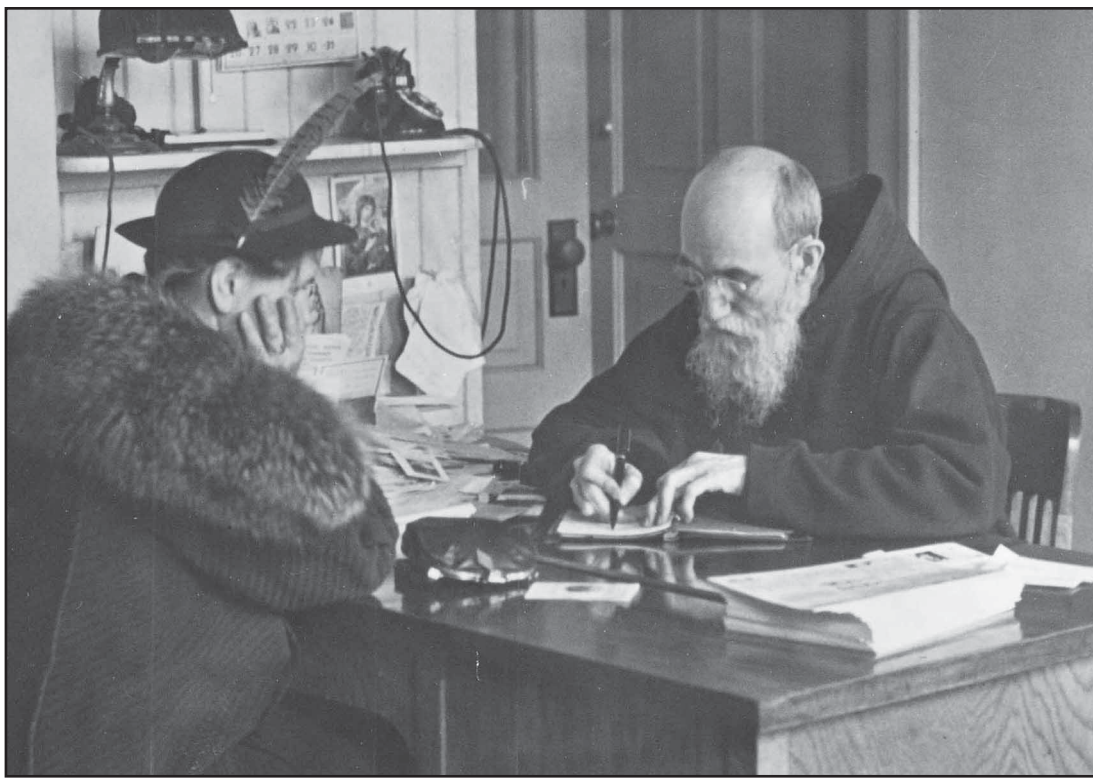
As a fellow Capuchin, Cardinal O’Malley was inspired that one in his ranks is now “Blessed.” “It’s very encouraging to see the first American to be beatified in our community (the Capuchins). It’s a great honor for us,” he told The Michigan Catholic following Mass.

Among the hundreds, if not thousands, of healings attributed to Blessed Solanus during and after his lifetime, Pope Francis recognized the authenticity of a miracle necessary for the friar to be elevated from venerable to blessed after a review by the Vatican’s Congregation for Saints’ Causes was completed earlier this year.

The miracle involved the healing -- unexplained by medicine or science -- of a woman with an incurable genetic skin disease, Paula Medina Zarate of Panama. She was only recently identified publicly and she was at the Mass. As it began, she walked up to the altar with a reliquary holding a relic of Blessed Solanus.

Zarate was visiting friends in Detroit and stopped at Father Casey’s tomb to pray for others’ intentions. After her prayers, she felt the strong urging to ask for the friar’s intercession for herself, too, and received an instant and visible healing.

The miraculous nature of her cure in 2012 was verified by doctors in her home country, in Detroit and in Rome, all of whom confirmed there was no scientific explanation. Father



CNS Photo/Archdiocese of Detroit

BEATIFIED: Blessed Solanus Casey, who was beatified during a Mass November 18 at Ford Field in Detroit, records a note from a woman who visited him at St. Bonaventure Monastery in Detroit in 1941. The Capuchin Franciscan friar kept dozens of notebooks filled with prayer requests and favors from the thousands who visited him each year.

Casey himself died of a skin disease July 31, 1957.

Born Nov. 25, 1870, in Oak Grove, Wisconsin, Bernard Francis Casey was the sixth of 16 children born to Irish immigrants Bernard James Casey and Ellen Elizabeth Murphy. He enrolled at St. Francis High School Seminary near Milwaukee in 1891 to study for the diocesan priesthood. But because of academic limitations, he was advised to consider joining a religious order instead.

He went to Detroit to join the Capuchin order in 1897. He was given the religious name Solanus.

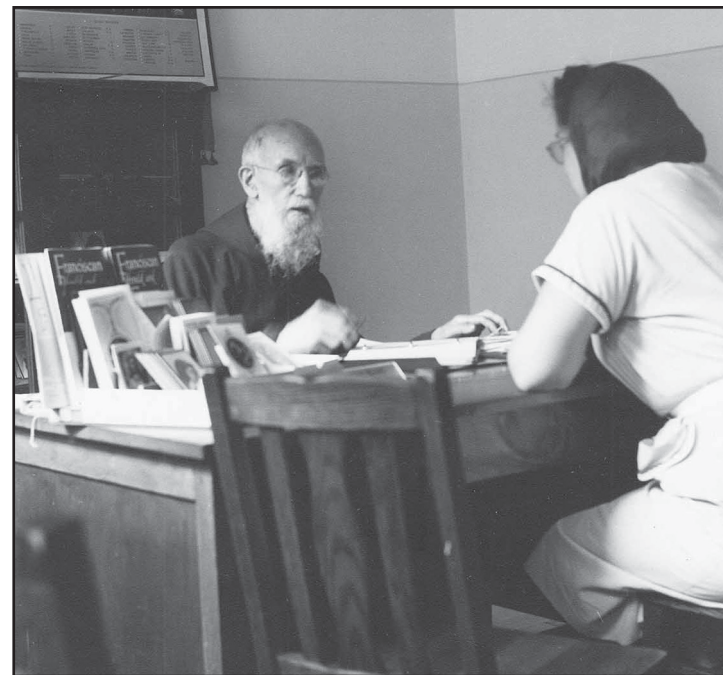
He continued to struggle academically but was finally ordained in 1904 as a “simplex priest,” meaning he could celebrate Mass but could not preach doctrinal sermons or hear confessions.

He went to New York and served for two decades in friaries and churches there and was transferred back to Detroit in 1924, where he began working as the porter, or doorkeeper, of St. Bonaventure Monastery.

Father Casey co-founded the Capuchin Soup Kitchen in 1929 and today it serves the

Detroit metro area by providing food, clothing and human development programs to the people of the community. In addition to preparing and serving up to 2,000 meals a day, the facility has an emergency food pantry, service center and a tutoring program for children.

He spent his life in the service of people, endearing himself to thousands who would seek his counsel. From 1946 to 1956, he was at the Capuchin novitiate of St. Felix in Huntington, Indiana, then was transferred back to Detroit for what was the last year of his life.



CNS Photo/The Michigan Catholic

FATHER SOLANUS: Blessed Father Solanus Casey, a Capuchin priest in Detroit, Mich., is seen talking to a woman in this 1954 file photo. During his lifetime, countless men, women and young people came to him seeking wisdom, counsel and aid.



CNS Photo/Bob Nichols, Catholic Moment

YOUTH CONFERENCE: Victoria Hermann of Tucson, Ariz., adds her name and comment Nov. 17 to a wall in the Thematic Village at the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis. The biennial conference draws some 20,000 Catholic teenagers from across the country.

Youth Urged To Recall They're 'Beloved Children Of God, Called By Name'

By Natalie Hoefler
Catholic News Service

INDIANAPOLIS (CNS) --

The sound of more than 20,000 teens screaming and singing along with raucous music of Christian hip-hop band TobyMac was loud.

The sound of the same number of youths in silent prayer was deafening.

These external and internal forms of praise formed bookends to the opening general session of the National Catholic Youth Conference Nov. 16 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

After two hours of music, entertainment -- including cultural dancing by the Vietnamese Eucharistic Youth Movement -- and an entrance procession of banners from each diocese present, the participants were greeted by Indianapolis Archbishop Charles C. Thompson.

Although each person came "from many dioceses, many states ... and with many titles," he said, "we are first and foremost children of God. And that God who knows us desires to be known by us. ... God wanted us to know him ... through a personal relationship with a human being, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

"We are beloved children of God, called by name, claimed by Christ," he continued, referring to the conference theme of "Called." "We begin this NCYC weekend by embracing that reality of who we are."

Chris Stefanick, an internationally acclaimed author, speaker and founder of Real Life Catholic, used humor and life experience to speak about the reality of who we are and of God's love for each person.

He spoke of the "love story" upon which the Catholic faith is founded.

"When you remove the love story, what are you left with?" he asked. "Rules that we have to follow. Rituals that we're not sure why we keep them alive but they take a lot of time. Doctrines that have nothing to do with your life. That's how the world has come to see Catholicism. ... The world has forgotten the love story, and so often we've forgotten the love story."

That story, he said, "begins very simply with the words '(I) believe in one God.'"

So many youths today chose not to believe, he said, including an atheist who once told him that belief that God created the universe "is as stupid as a kid coming down on Christmas morning and, seeing presents under the tree, thinks, 'There are presents, therefore there must be a Santa...'"

"You say there's no God?" Stefanick asked. "That's like a flea not believing in the dog. That's like a kid coming down on Christmas morning and seeing presents under the tree and saying, 'Oh look! Presents! They must have exploded themselves here!' ... Just so, the universe did not put itself here, and the more we learn about the universe, the more it shouts to us about the existence of God."

And because God's love created us, he said, no other form of love will satisfy.

"We feel so small in this world," he told the crowd that came from as far away as Hawaii and Alaska. "We feel so insignificant in this universe.

"I think God looks down from heaven and says, 'You are huge next to all this.' As big as a mountain is, can it know some-

one? As big as an ocean is, can it make a choice? As big as a galaxy is, can it choose to love? No, but you can. ... You're a huge deal!"

But because of human rejection of God, Stefanick continued, sin and brokenness entered the world. To applause and shouts of "Amen!" he modified the words of John 3:16 to note that therefore, "God so loved you that he gave his only Son." Whoa. ..."

This love story -- which continues in the sacraments, Stefanick noted -- "doesn't just show you who God is. It shows you who you are."

... 'Who am I?' 'I'm precious.' 'What am I worth?' 'I'm worth dying for,' " he said in a solo dialogue. "... Sin is not your name—Jesus gives you your name. And what is your name? 'Beloved.' I don't matter because of who I am—I matter because of whose I am. I'm not somebody, I'm somebody's. I'm precious and I'm worth dying for. This is the best news ever."

He encouraged the crowd to use their will to "say 'yes' to the love that created space and time and perpetually invites us to himself."

Father Joseph Espallat, a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, who was one of the evening's emcees, led the more than 20,000 present through a period of silent prayer to close. He suggested using the word "pray" as an acronym to guide their prayer -- "P" for praising God, "R" for

repenting of sins, "A" for asking God for needs rather than wants, and "Y" for yielding to his will.

It was this prayer time more than any of the evening's other events that most affected Abby White of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky.

"I thought it was really powerful," she said of the quiet time. "I like saying that you're sorry to God. It's been awhile since I've been to confession, and I really want to go to confession this weekend. I felt like that [prayer time] empowered me to want to go."

While Abby has attended NCYC before, Garrett Randel of Seneca, Kansas, was exuberant with the joy of one experiencing the event for the first time.

"I thought it was really cool," he said of the opening session. "The speaker was really inspiring. I thought it was one of the best experiences I've had in my Catholic faith."

Caitlin Dusenbury of the Diocese of Lansing, Michigan, couldn't agree more. The NCYC first-timer's eyes lit up and a smile brightened her face when she spoke of her experience that evening.

"I really like it so far," she told *The Criterion*, newspaper of the Indianapolis Archdiocese. "It's impacted me a lot. I've never seen so many Catholics together.

"The highlight for me was Chris speaking. 'It's not who you are, but whose you are' -- that quote stuck with me."



CNS Photo/Bob Nichols, Catholic Moment

LEAD ACTIVITY: Emily Wilson and Father Joseph Espallat II lead a group activity during the Nov. 16 opening session of the National Catholic Youth Conference at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis.

New Museum Tells The Story Of The Bible, Chapter And Verse

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Hey, Smithsonian, there's a new kid on the block.

It's the Museum of the Bible, just a few blocks from the National Mall in Washington. With its opening to the public Nov. 18, it will tell visitors how the Bible -- both Old Testament and New Testament -- has intersected society and at times even transformed it.

The people behind the museum say that if visitors were to read the card behind every artwork, saw every video, heard every song and took part in every interactive experience -- including a Broadway-style musical called "Amazing Grace" about the song's writer, John Newton, and the biblical inspiration behind the abolitionist movement -- it would take them 72 hours to do it all.

But visitors can take their time, because there is no admission charge to the museum.

The museum was the brainchild of Steve Green, chairman of the museum's board of directors and president of the Hobby Lobby chain of arts and crafts stores. It was Hobby Lobby that successfully argued before the Supreme Court in 2014 that, as a closely held company, its owners based on their religious beliefs should not have to comply with a federal mandate to cover all forms of contraceptives because some act as abortifacients.

"It's exciting to share the Bible with the world," Green said at a Nov. 15 press preview of the museum, which is just one block from a subway stop serving three of the Washington-area subway system's six lines.

The \$500 million museum had its coming-out party in 2011 at the Vatican Embassy in Washington before a gathering of business, government, academic and religious leaders.

Museum backers found a circa-1923 refrigeration warehouse that had been repurposed for other uses, bought the building and set about expanding it, adding two stories and a skylight to the top of the structure and a sub-basement for storage space.

The result: six floors of exhibits, not to mention the theater, gift shop and restaurants.

Most of the exhibits, when necessary, use the designations "B.C." and "A.D." -- Before Christ and Anno Domini, Latin for "year of the Lord" -- to refer to the timeline of civilization marked by Jesus' birth. Museum brass had discussions on the topic, Susan Jones, curator of antiquities for the museum, told Catholic News Service. "They decided that's the way they wanted to go," she said.

Most researchers, Jones noted, prefer the designations "B.C.E" and "C.E." -- Before the Common Era and Common Era -- because "they're more neutral." Also preferring the latter names is the Israeli Association for Antiquities, which has a 20-year deal with the museum to supply artifacts in a fifth-floor exhibit space. "You're in Israel now," she told a visitor as a tour guide was boasting that he had his hand on a rock from the Western Wall in Jerusalem in the exhibit.

There are a number of items on loan to the museum from the Vatican Museums and the Vatican Library. They're in a tiny space on the museum's ground floor -- relatively speaking, since the museum totals 430,000 square feet. What can't be seen in person can be accessed by two dedicated computers in the exhibit area, one for the museums and one for the library.

Brian Hyland, an associate curator for medieval manuscripts at the museum, told CNS the Vatican donations will be around for six months, then replaced by other artifacts. One of his favorite items currently in the exhibit space is the first volume of a facsimile of the Urbino

Bible, which dates to the 15th century; the second volume will replace the first volume at some point in 2018.

Despite the Bible's status as the best-selling and most-read book in history, one exhibit speaks of "Bible poverty," and the fact that roughly 1 billion people have never read the Bible in their native tongue.

An organization called Illu-

miNations, a collaborative effort by Bible translation agencies, is trying to change that. The aim is to have, by 2033, 95 percent of the world's peoples with access to the full Bible, 99.9 percent with at least the New Testament, and 100 percent with at least some parts of the Bible translated into what museum docent William Lazenby called "their heart languages."

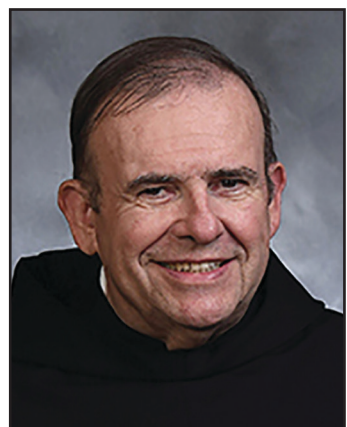
The exhibit space touting this endeavor is stocked with Bibles and New Testaments in various languages. Hardcover books with blank pages in the exhibit represent the untranslated languages. Wholly untranslated languages are represented by yellow covers, and partially translated tongues are represented by covers with a redder hue.



BIBLE MUSEUM: Capital letters representing the 89 chapters of "The Four Holy Gospels" are seen inside The Art of the Gospels by Makoto Fujimura gallery at the Museum of the Bible in Washington November 15.

CNS Photo/Tyler Orsburn

May They Rest In Peace



**Father M. Gerald Gordon
T.O.R.**

Father M. Gerald Gordon, of the Third Order Regular Franciscans of the Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Loretto died Friday, November 10, at Garvey Manor, Hollidaysburg after an extended illness. He was 76, and a member of the community of Saint Francis Friary - Mount Assisi, Loretto.

He was born June 17, 1941, in Philadelphia son of the late Michael F. and Anna Maria (O'Keefe) Gordon. He graduated from Nativity B.V.M. Grade School, Port Richmond, Philadelphia, and graduated from Saint Joseph Prep, Philadelphia. After high school graduation, he attended Providence College, Providence, RI, for three years.

Father Gerald became a postulant in the T.O.R. community in September 1962, when he entered Mount Assisi Friary, Loretto. On June 30, 1964, he entered the novitiate at Sacred Heart Friary, Winchester, VA. As a novice, he received the religious name, Bro. Kieran. Father Gerald professed his first vows on July 1, 1965, at Sacred Heart Friary, Winchester, VA., and professed his solemn vows at Immaculate Conception Chapel, Loretto on July 1, 1968. In May 1964, he received a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy degree from Saint Francis College, and completed his studies in Theology at Saint Francis Seminary, Loretto, in 1969, and was ordained to the priesthood on May 17, 1969,

at the Immaculate Conception Chapel, Loretto by the late Bishop James J. Hogan, of the Altoona - Johnstown Diocese.

Father Gerald attended summer school at Villanova University and studied history. In 1975, Father Gerald received a Master of Arts degree in Franciscan Studies from the Franciscan Institute, Saint Bonaventure University, Saint Bonaventure, NY. He was the first T.O.R. friar to receive this degree.

He ministered in most of the works of the province. In high school work, he taught at Bishop Egan High School, Fairless Hills and at Saint Francis Prep School, Spring Grove. In college work he ministered at Saint Francis University, Loretto and Franciscan University of Steubenville, OH. In retreat ministry, he was Director of the Franciscan Center, White Post, VA, Saint Francis Retreat Center, Easton, and San Pedro Retreat Center, Winter Park, FL. In parish work, he ministered at the following: Immaculate Conception Church, Jenkintown, Saint Paul Church, Wilmington, DE, Saint Gabriel Church, Marlboro, NJ, Saint Stephen Church, Ona, WV, Saint Elizabeth of Hungary Church, Baltimore, MD, Sacred Heart Church, Bradenton, FL, Saint Thomas the Apostle Church, Fort Worth, TX, Saint Andrew Church, Fort Worth, TX.

For the Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Fr. Gerald served as Director of Vocations; Director of T.O.R. Missions; and Instructor in Franciscan for T.O.R. novices. He was widely sought to give retreats to sisters' communities throughout the country, and was a well-respected spiritual director. Because of poor health, Father Gerald returned to the motherhouse in Loretto where he served in the ministry of prayer in 2015.

He is survived by his brothers, Richard M., John F., and his sisters Eileen Behm and Nancy Campbell, all of Philadelphia, and numerous nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grand-nephews.

The Funeral Mass for Father M. Gerald Gordon T.O.R. was celebrated Thursday, November 16 at 11:00 a.m. at Saint Francis

Friary - Mount Assisi, Loretto with Father Richard L. Davis, T.O.R., Minister Provincial, as principal celebrant. Committal was in the Franciscan Friars' Cemetery, on the campus of Saint Francis University.

Memorial contributions may be made to support retired T.O.R. Friars, c/o T.O.R. Retirement Fund, Saint Francis Friary, P.O. Box 137, Loretto, PA 15940.

Paul Hornick Jr.

Paul Hornick Jr., 91, Johnstown, died Thursday, November 16, at Cambria Care Center, Ebensburg after an extended illness.

He was born April 13, 1926, in Johnstown, son of the late Paul Sr. and Gertrude Hornick. Preceded in death by sisters, Dorothy Glasson, Florence Baker, Ruth Ward; and brother, Dr. Richard Hornick. Survived by brother, Gerry; loving wife of 65 years, Eleanor; sons, Paul and wife Karen, Deacon Dave and wife Pat, Mark and wife Suzanne, Jeff, and daughter, Debby Pearce. Also survived by grandchildren Dan and wife Stacy, Emily, William, Nicholas, Luke; and great-grandchildren Daniel and Madelyn.

He proudly served in the Army Air Force during World War II as a B - 29 Superfortress crew chief. One of his fondest memories was shaking hands with then Chief of Staff General Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1945 beside a B - 29 nicknamed the "General Ike." Served in the postwar reserves, and was recalled to active duty during the Korean conflict. Maintained a private pilot's license during the 1950's.

Paul was the owner of Hornick's Hardware & Sporting Goods store for over sixty years. An avid shooter, Paul and his father won the family trophy at the 1962 Pennsylvania State Trapshooting Championship. Was runner-up in the senior division at the 1992 Grand American Handicap national championship, and compiled a lifetime average of 96.68 out of 100 on 75,000 Amateur Trapshooting Association registered clay targets shot. A life member of the

NRA and the Ruffsdale (PA) Gun Club, and past president of the Johnstown Rod & Gun Club. An ardent supporter of sportsmen's and conservation groups on both the national and local levels, including Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, National Wild Turkey Federation, Daisytown Sportsman's Club, St. Clair Tremont Club, and Quemahoning Trap & Skeet Club.

Named 2006 Sportsman of the Year by the Johnstown Sportsmen's Association, he enjoyed bowling for many years at Billow's Park Lanes. A charter member of the West End Lions Club and a member of the Grandview Cemetery Board of Incorporators. A true gentleman and a member of the "Greatest Generation," he was always willing to help those in need, even if it meant giving from what he didn't have. The family sincerely thanks Senior Life in Johnstown and Ebensburg and Cambria Care in Ebensburg for their compassion and care during Paul's illness. Donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association.

The Funeral Mass for Paul Hornick Jr. was celebrated Saturday, November 18 at Our Mother of Sorrows Church, Westmont, Johnstown. Committal was at Grandview Cemetery, where Conemaugh Valley Detachment 287 Marine Corp. League Ritual Team performed military honors.



**Father Alexander Mary
Bombera T.O.R.**

Father Alexander Mary Bombera, 98, of the Third Order Regular Franciscans of the Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, died Thursday,

November 16, at Saint Francis Friary - Mount Assisi, Loretto, after an extended illness.

He was born January 21, 1919, in Stevens Point WI, the son of the late John and Mary (Somberg) Bombera. He graduated from Stevens Point High School, Stevens Point WI, and attended Saint Mary's College, Orchard Lake MI for two years. He entered the T.O.R. postulancy at Raymond Hall, Saint Francis College, Loretto on September 14, 1940. He entered the novitiate at Raymond Hall on July 9, 1941, and received the name Alexander Mary. He pronounced his first vows on July 10, 1942 in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at Old Main, the Motherhouse of the Province; he pronounced solemn vows on July 10, 1945, at Mount Assisi Monastery, Loretto.

Father Alexander Mary was ordained to the priesthood on August 15, 1946, by the late Bishop John King Mussio, Bishop of the Diocese of Steubenville, Ohio, (the first priestly ordination performed by Bishop Mussio) at the Holy Name Cathedral, Steubenville, OH.

He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy, from Saint Francis College (University), Loretto in May 1942. He completed Theological Studies, at Saint Francis Seminary, Loretto in 1946.

(Continued On Page 15.)



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In Cinematic 'Novitiate' Convent Life Isn't Habit - Forming

By Sister Hosea Rupprecht
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) -- Writer-director Margaret Betts takes a stab at a genre that always seems to fascinate people, even those with no religious affiliation: nun movies.

Unfortunately, "Novitiate" (Sony Classics) falls short of presenting a well - rounded picture of what it is - - or, in this case, was -- like for a young woman to enter religious life and discern whether it's right for her.

The year is 1964 and the Second Vatican Council is in full swing. 17-year-old Cathleen (Margaret Qualley) decides to enter the convent after "falling in love" with God. Although she has not been baptized, she has attended Catholic school and

found solace and peace in the church's ritual and prayer.

Cathleen joins the (needless to say, fictional) Order of the Sisters of Blessed Rose where the strict and formidable Reverend Mother (Melissa Leo) lords it over her charges with an iron rod. Especially dedicated to silence, Reverend Mother has little tolerance for those young women who cannot toe the line.

This historical drama is also a coming - of - age story, as Cathleen and the other novices undergo training and struggle with questions of faith, sexuality and the changes the church faces in the wake of Vatican II. An artistic film with compelling performances, especially by Leo and Qualley, "Novitiate" nonetheless reveals its creator's lack of familiarity with Catholicism.

The movie also ultimately takes a stand viewers of faith are bound to reject.

"Novitiate" relies heavily on the "Bride of Christ" metaphor for religious life and speaks, sometimes eloquently, of the love nuns have for their spouse, God. It also presents times past when emphasis was placed on sacrifice and denial of self, especially through a practice known as the Chapter of Faults.

At these group meetings, the novices kneel in a circle on the floor while one of them moves to the middle of the gathering and tearfully confesses her failings to Reverend Mother. Her sisters are then invited to make accusations about any misbehavior they may have observed on the part of the penitent.

This aspect of monastic life was meant to encourage rigorous morality, and keep the community healthy by cleansing it of festering secrets. Yet, as portrayed here, it will certainly strike even some Catholics as extreme. All the more so, since Reverend Mother manipulates the process to her own ends.

Betts, who admits she never gave religion much thought, was inspired to write "Novitiate" after reading the letters of St. Teresa of Kolkata and learning how intimate the bond between a nun and God actually is -- and how much work goes into that relationship. She was also fascinated by the way Vatican II affected religious life and the fact that many nuns chose to leave the convent as the result of its reforms.

Unfortunately, the fact that Betts relied on ex - nuns as her consultants shows in some of the more outrageous aspects of the film.

The movie gets its subject matter wrong on many levels. An unbaptized person, for instance, would never be allowed to enter a convent, no matter how devout or in love with God she might be. And if a nun burst into the dining room naked, railing against the church - - as happens at one point here - - there would be more than snickering from her sisters in response.

The characterization of the evil, repressed Reverend Mother, moreover, is stereotypical, as is that of Sister Mary Grace, the younger, more open-minded nun



CNS Photo/Sony Pictures Classics

NOVITIATE: Melissa Leo stars in a scene from the movie "Novitiate." The Catholic News Service classification is O - - morally offensive. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R - - restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

who clashes with her, played by Dianna Agron of "Glee" fame.

Additionally, Betts fully, albeit implicitly, partakes of contemporary society's misguided notion that chastity is both unhealthy and unattainable and that all consensual sexual expression is somehow liberating.

The sight of two sisters violating their vows of chastity - - although treated discreetly - - is bound to be distasteful to Catholic moviegoers. Even more disturbing, however, is the conclusion one of them draws from the experience. Namely, that there is

something greater to be found in this world than the love of God.

The film contains strong sexual content, including full nudity, same - sex kissing, implied masturbation and lesbian sexual activity, one use of profanity, several instances of rough language and at least one crude term. The Catholic News Service classification is O - - morally offensive. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R - - restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

Coming Up On 'Proclaim!'

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

December 3 - - On this First Sunday of Advent, Conventual Franciscan Father Anthony Francis Spilka, pastor of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, Johnstown, joins Bishop Mark to discuss how the faithful should use this Advent season to spiritually prepare for Christmas.

December 10 - - Allison Moriconi, an 8th grade student at Northern Cambria Catholic School in Nicktown, joins Bishop Mark as part of his Student Spotlight series.

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

**Sunday Mass Telecast
Live from Saint John Gualbert Cathedral
Downtown Johnstown
11 a.m. - Noon WATM - TV ABC Channel 23**

**Proclaim!
10:30 a.m.**

A half - hour of local Church news and features

May They Rest In Peace



to his first mission in India in 1946, and served there until 1968. Father Alex was the last of the pioneer friars who served in India; and thanks be to God for their hard work; there are now three thriving provinces of the Order in India.

In 1968, he was assigned to the missions in Brazil, and served faithfully until 1978.

Upon his return to the States, he was assigned to the home missions in South Dakota. From September 1978

until 1986, he was pastor of Saint Joseph Church, Wessington Springs, SD; from February 1986 to May 2007, he was pastor of Saint John Church, Plankinton, SD. For his exemplary service, the State of South Dakota honored him by placing his name in the state Hall of Fame.

From June 2007, until the present, he resided at Saint Francis Friary - Mount Assisi, where he served in the ministry of prayer.

Father Alex held the honor of being the senior member of the Province, and the last friar to have lived at Old Main on the campus of St. Francis University, which was destroyed by fire in 1942. He was predeceased by seven brothers and sisters. He is survived by nieces and nephews, and his Franciscan brothers.

The Funeral Mass for Father Alexander Mary Bombera T.O.R. was celebrated Monday, November 20 in Saint Francis

Chapel - Mount Assisi, Loretto with Father Richard L. Davis, Minister Provincial, as principal celebrant. Committal was in the Franciscan Friars' Cemetery, on the campus of St. Francis University, Loretto.

Memorial contribution may be made to support retired T.O.R. Friars, c/o T.O.R. Retirement Fund, Saint Francis Friary, P.O. Box 137, Loretto, PA 15940.

Franciscan Sister Antona Ebo, Civil Rights Leader Who Marched At Selma, Dead At 93

By Catholic News Service

ST. LOUIS (CNS) -- Sister Mary Antona Ebo, a Franciscan Sister of Mary whose courageous words during the 1965 march in Selma, Alabama, became a rallying cry for many in the civil rights movement, died Nov. 11 at a retirement community outside St. Louis. She was 93.

St. Louis Archbishop Robert J. Carlson celebrated her funeral Mass Nov. 20 at St. Alphonsus Liguori Church in St. Louis. A private burial took place in Resurrection Cemetery in St. Louis.

"We will miss her living example of working for justice in the context of our Catholic faith," the archbishop said in a statement.

The archdiocesan Peace and Justice Commission said in a statement that Sister Antona's "courage and work to end the injustice of racism provided the inspiration and guidance" the commission's members needed in their work.

Sister Antona was the only African-American sister to march with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., in the legendary protest for voting rights in Selma March 10, 1965. The march took place just days after what has been called "Bloody Sunday" when state troopers assaulted demonstrators with clubs and tear gas.

She told the crowd: "I'm here because I'm a Negro, a nun, a Catholic, and because I want to bear witness."

In 2007, a PBS documentary aired that chronicled the march and the group of women religious who participated. It was called "Sisters of Selma: Bearing Witness for Change."

Sister Antona continued to take a stand for justice throughout her life. Even in her 90s, she offered a reflection at a St. Louis archdiocesan prayer service in Ferguson, the scene of protests after an unarmed black teenager was shot and killed in an altercation with police in 2014.

This summer, the Missouri History Museum honored her in a special "Celebration of Sister Antona Ebo, FSM," as part of the exhibit "#1 in Civil Rights: The African-American Freedom Struggle in St. Louis."

Sister Antona's given name was Elizabeth Louise, but she went by the name Betty. She was born April 10, 1924, in Bloomington, Illinois, as one of three children.

Her mother died when she was 4 and in the next two years, during the height of the Depression, her father lost his job and the family home. The Ebo siblings were placed in the McLean County Home for Colored Children in Bloomington, where she lived from 1930 to 1942. She was baptized a Catholic Dec. 19, 1942.

She was determined to attend a Catholic nursing school but

She faced numerous rejections because of race until she attended St. Mary's Infirmary School of Nursing in St. Louis, run by the Sisters of St. Mary. In 1946, she also became one of the first three African-American women to enter the Sisters of St. Mary. She received the name Sister Mary Antona and professed final vows in 1954. In 1987, the Sisters of St. Mary merged with the Sisters of St. Francis of Maryville, Missouri, as the Franciscan Sisters of Mary.

Sister Antona earned a bachelor's degree in medical records and a master's in hospital executive development at St. Louis University. She went on to studies in clinical pastoral education, earning a master's degree in theology of health care and becoming certified as a chaplain through the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.

She was a founding member of the National Black Sisters' Conference and served as its president. In 1989, the conference awarded her the Harriet Tubman Award for being "called to be a Moses to the people." Sister Antona received honorary doctorates and many awards and recognition for her courage and insight on civil rights issues.

In a 2011 interview with Catholic News Service about the new memorial to Rev. King in Washington, she said she hoped the 30-foot likeness of the civil rights leader would prompt soul-searching.

"If we have to keep talking about keeping the dream alive, then what have we been doing for it still to be a dream?" she said. "Martin was our dreamer;

his dream was for his time. Who are our dreamers today? You have to search kind of hard to find people with new dreams appropriate for our time."



CNS Photo/Bettman/Corbis/PBS


LEADER: Franciscan Sister Mary Antona Ebo, who risked her well-being to participate in the legendary 1965 civil rights protest in Selma, Ala., died Nov. 11 at the Sarah Community in Bridgeton, Mo., at age 93. She is pictured during the 1965 protest in Selma.

DYK: a QCD counts as an RMD?

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Beloved Capuchin Friar, Father Solanus Casey, Beatified November 18 In Detroit

By Catholic News Service

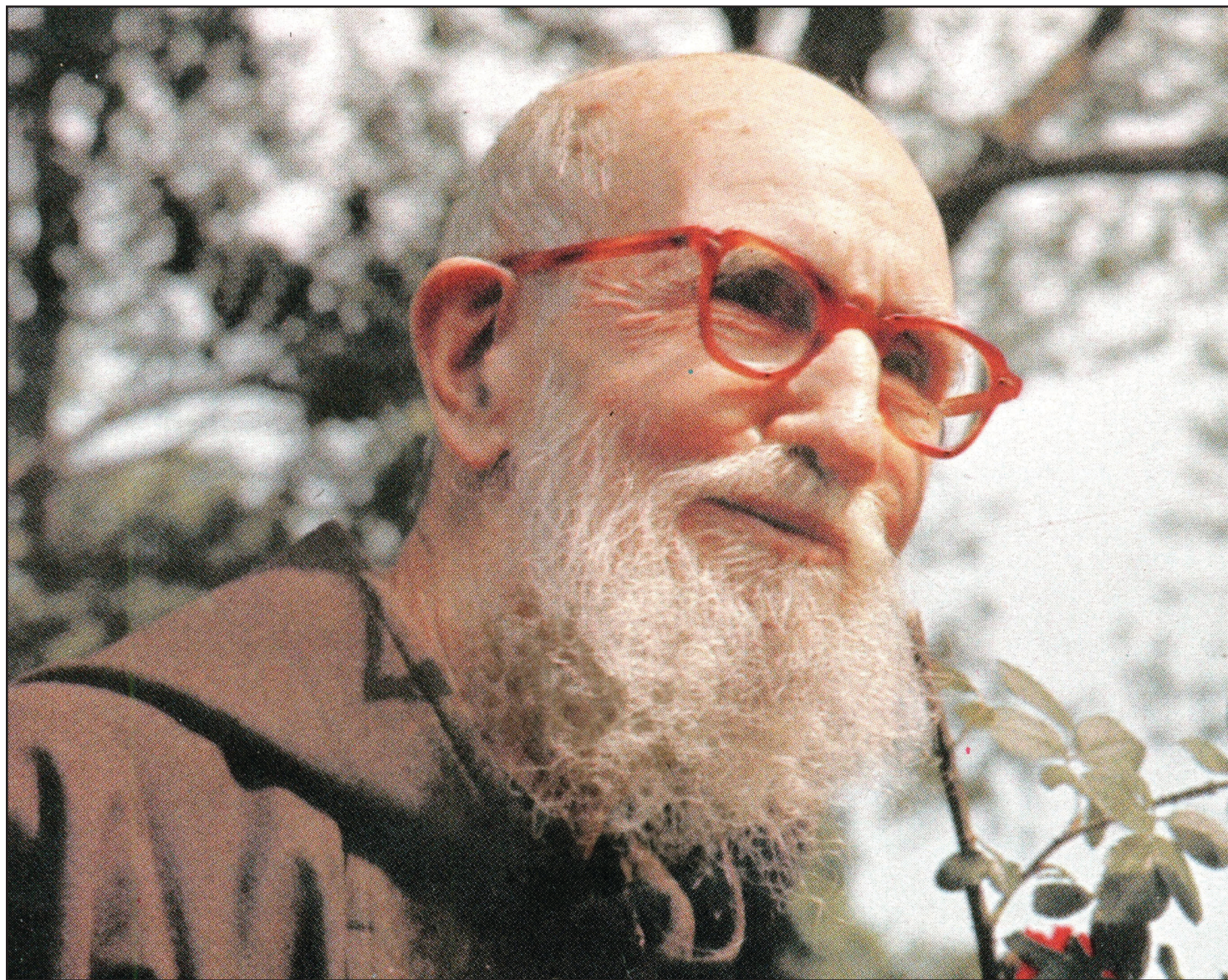
DETROIT (CNS) --

Blessed Solanus Casey always said that "as long as there is a spark of faith," there can be no discouragement or sorrow, said Cardinal Angelo Amato, head of the Vatican's Congregation for Saints' Causes.

His words were accompanied by "the concrete practice of faith, hope and charity in his everyday life," said the cardinal in his homily during the Nov. 18 beatification Mass for the beloved Capuchin Franciscan friar who was known for his cures and wise counsel.

"He came from an Irish family of profound Catholic convictions. Faith for him was a very precious inheritance for facing the difficulties of life," Cardinal Amato said. "When the young Bernard (his given name) Casey, entered the Capuchins, he passed from one community of faith to another."

Blessed Solanus "focused on the poor, the sick, the marginalized and the hopeless," Cardinal Amato said. "He always fasted in order to give others their lunch."



CNS Photo/The Michigan Catholic

BLESSED FATHER SOLANUS CASEY O.F.M. CAP.

(Continued On Page 10.)

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The Catholic Register

**Official Publication of the
Diocese of Altoona - Johnstown**