

The Catholic Register

Official Publication Of
The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown



Volume 92, No. 41 Published Bi - Weekly (USPS 094 - 280)

www.dioceseaj.org November 26, 2018

Scholarships Help Provide Catholic Education For Bishop McCort Students

Photo And Text By
Tony DeGol

Siblings Jacob and Julia Horwath live in Johnstown.

Deanna Jones and her daughter, Kristin Jacobs, live in Ohio.

Although geography separates them, the four individuals share a bond that will last a lifetime.

The Horwaths, students at Bishop McCort Catholic High School in Johnstown, are the recipients of the Robert J. Jones Memorial Scholarship, established by Deanna Jones in memory of her late husband.

The four had the opportunity to meet and share stories at a luncheon in honor of the 20th anniversary of Bishop McCort's Named Scholarship Program.

Jones, a 1963 McCort alum, said her late husband, Bob, a 1962 alum, loved returning to the school for football games and catching up with former classmates.

When he passed a few years ago, Jones realized that establishing the scholarship was an appropriate way to honor his memory.

"I think he would be proud to be able to continue the legacy of McCort," she admitted. "It's hard to keep these schools alive and thriving, and to be a little part of that, I think he would be exceptionally proud."



MCCORT FAMILY: Deanna Jones (left) and her daughter, Kristin Jacobs (right), spend time with Bishop McCort Catholic High School students Jacob and Julia Horwath. The Horwath siblings are the recipients of the Robert J. Jones Memorial Scholarship, which was established in memory of Deanna Jones' late husband and Jacobs' late father. The four gathered at a luncheon celebrating the 20th anniversary of McCort's Named Scholarship Program.

The Horwaths, members of Saint Benedict Parish in Johnstown, jumped at the chance to thank the Jones family.

"I feel like I wouldn't be the same person without this school," stressed Julia, a sophomore.

"It's just amazing to be able to have the ability and help to go to a Catholic school," added Jacob, a senior. "It's special to be able to celebrate your faith at school. At a public school, you can't do that. We are grateful for the opportunity."

Jacobs enjoyed her first visit

to McCort and was pleased to meet the Horwaths.

"It's kind of amazing to see that this school is still flourishing after decades and decades," she said. "Talking to our two students and hearing their stories was so interesting."

The bond among the four was one of many celebrated at the luncheon as other Bishop McCort supporters engaged with the teens who are benefiting from their generosity and witnessed the students' talent and character in action.

This year, McCort is able to support students through 36 endowments, 79 named scholarships, and 19 businesses that participate in Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, according to Tina Mirilovich, director of advancement at McCort.

Income from endowments over the past 20 years totals more than \$1.5 million, and donations to named scholarships are just shy of \$2.5 million.

"The financial aid these numbers represent make an im-

measurable difference in the lives of many students and their families," Mirilovich emphasized.

Support from the community, Principal Tom Fleming explained, makes dreams come true.

"All of us here today recognize the value of a Bishop McCort education," he told the group. "It is important for the future of our school, for those who are able, to continue to financially support the students who choose to be a part of the McCort family. You have all chosen to be part of our family because of our mutual passion for quality, Catholic, college-preparatory education. Your passions help us all to come together as one. The energy we create, as one, allows our students to achieve their goals."

Certainly the goals of the Horwath siblings are many.

Julia is already thinking about a career in physical therapy, and with graduation just months away, Jacob is considering studying either nursing or architecture after high school. He is looking at attending Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Penn State University, or Saint Francis University.

He also has even more important aspirations.

"I want to get closer to God and try to be the best person I can be," he said.

Parishes Announce Communal Penance Service Schedule

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 upcoming Communal Penance Services at various parishes throughout the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. The schedule is also available on the diocesan website and Facebook page. Please consult individual parishes for other Reconciliation opportunities leading up to Christmas.

NOVEMBER 29

6:00 p.m. – Saint Anthony of Padua Parish, Windber

DECEMBER 2

3:00 p.m. – Holy Spirit Parish, Lock Haven (Saint Agnes Worship Site)

4:00 p.m. – Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Altoona

5:00 p.m. – Saint Joseph Parish, Bellwood

5:30 p.m. – Holy Rosary Parish, Altoona

DECEMBER 5

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

DECEMBER 9

1:30 p.m. – Saint John Gualbert Cathedral, Johnstown

4:00 p.m. – Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish, Bedford

7:00 p.m. – Saint John the Baptist Parish, New Baltimore

DECEMBER 10

7:00 p.m. – Holy Family Parish, Portage

7:00 p.m. – Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Altoona

DECEMBER 12

6:30 p.m. – Transfiguration Parish, Conemaugh

7:00 p.m. – All Saints Parish, Boswell

7:00 p.m. – Saint Augustine Parish, St. Augustine

DECEMBER 13

5:30 p.m. – Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Altoona

6:00 p.m. – Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Windber

7:00 p.m. – Basilica of Saint Michael the Archangel, Loretto

7:00 p.m. – Queen of Archangels Parish, Clarence

7:00 p.m. – Saint Patrick Parish, Johnstown

DECEMBER 15

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

DECEMBER 16

2:00 p.m. – Holy Name Parish, Ebensburg

4:00 p.m. – Saint Mary Parish, Hollidaysburg

5:00 p.m. – Saint Benedict Parish, Johnstown

DECEMBER 17

6:00 p.m. – Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, Johnstown

6:30 p.m. – Resurrection Parish, Johnstown

7:00 p.m. – Saint Matthew Parish, Tyrone

7:00 p.m. – Saint Monica Parish, Chest Springs

7:00 p.m. – Saint Rose of Lima Parish, Altoona

DECEMBER 18

6:30 p.m. – Saint Mary Parish, Nanty Glo

6:30 p.m. – Saint Stephen Parish, McConnellsburg

DECEMBER 19

6:30 p.m. – Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Altoona

7:00 p.m. – Immaculate Conception Parish, Dudley

7:00 p.m. – Saint Nicholas Parish, Nicktown

DECEMBER 20

5:30 p.m. – Sacred Heart Parish, Altoona

7:00 p.m. – Saint Benedict Parish, Carrolltown

7:00 p.m. – Saints Peter & Paul Parish, Philipsburg

Young Adults Seek Genuine Leadership



(CNS photo/Jaclyn Lippelmann, Catholic Standard)

THEOLOGY ON TAP: Bishop Frank J. Caggiano of Bridgeport, Conn., speaks November 13 at Theology on Tap with Sarah Yaklic, director of Grotto Network out of the University of Notre Dame, and Jonathan Lewis, assistant secretary for pastoral ministry and social concerns in the Archdiocese of Washington. Bishop Caggiano, who was a delegate at the October Synod of Bishops on young people, spoke November 14 during the bishops' meeting in Baltimore, outlining ways to continue the synod's momentum at the parish and diocesan levels.

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

BALTIMORE (CNS) -- Near the close of the U.S. bishops' Baltimore meeting, the church leaders turned their attention to the concerns of Catholic youths and young adults.

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano of Bridgeport, Connecticut, who was one of the delegates at the October Synod on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment at the Vatican, spoke to the bishops Nov. 14 about his experience but also what needs to be done now at the diocesan and parish levels to continue the synod's momentum.

And now, the challenge he said is for church leaders to sustain and further develop what began in Rome and what they heard from synod participants. For starters, dioceses could provide assemblies or synods and on a parish level, priests and other leaders should identify mentors for young people, bring youths into church leadership roles and help them to embrace their vocation.

"They do not seek to be given token involvement. They want to exercise genuine leader-

ship in our church," the bishop said, urging that this should happen at every level of church life.

He said a key theme from the synod was the ongoing need to protect the vulnerable. "We must protect our young people and ensure that our ministry for and with them are positive experiences of encounter between church leaders and the young."

The synod also reflected a deep appreciation of the global nature of our church with different challenges and priorities faced by young people around the world and a recognition that many young people face violence and suffering. Also, he said, while some youths and young adults are active in their faith, "many are disaffiliating in growing numbers." The bishop said the church should not only recognize the challenges these young people are facing but also "raise our voices in the public square on their behalf."

The previous night, Bishop Caggiano joined young adults who also had been at the synod for a Theology on Tap presentation in Washington to talk about the synod's impact on the church.

The bishop told the audience about how the synod gave

him an even deeper appreciation for Pope Francis, because of his humility and the difficult role he has of keeping the church's global family together. He said the experience helped him to realize "how beautifully diverse the church is, how complicated the church is, and how much I sympathize and need to keep praying for that man."

He told the group of young adults and the bishops about how the pope would arrive 20 minutes early for each session to meet anyone who wanted to meet him, posing for photos along the way.

He also told the Theology on Tap, sponsored by the Archdiocese of Washington's Young Adult Ministry, that the church today can learn from the early church, which grew from 5,000 Christians in about A.D. 70 to about 23 million Christians in A.D. 312 A.D., during a time when Christianity was a crime, punishable by death.

What helped these early Christians grow in numbers was their personal pursuit of holiness and their supportive community, Bishop Caggiano said.

In The Alleghenies

Diocese Announces Restructuring

The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown issued the following advisory to the media on Friday, November 9.

In an effort to streamline processes and operate cost effectively, the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown has announced a restructuring of staff positions on the diocesan level. The changes come after a formal analysis of each department to determine the necessary structure for the diocese to carry out its mission in the future.

As part of the changes, diocesan employees were notified today that nine existing support level positions will be eliminated effective December 21, 2018. The affected employees will have the opportunity to pursue seven newly-created positions and any other job opportunities within the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown.

In order to assist employees whose positions are being eliminated, the diocese has scheduled a Rapid Response meeting sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor to aid them through the transition. The di-

ocese is grateful to all of the employees for their years of service to the Church and will offer them continued support throughout this process.

Under the leadership of Bishop Mark Bartchak, the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown has taken various steps in recent years to reduce costs and be good stewards of the resources entrusted to the diocese by the faithful. Those measures include the sale of the bishop's residence in Hollidaysburg and the sale of the Diocesan Administration Center in Hollidaysburg. In the near future, the Diocesan Pastoral Center will be located in the former Our Lady of Lourdes School Building in Altoona. These actions and the staff restructuring announced today will better position the diocese to serve Catholics throughout the eight county region while operating within its financial means.



SFU RECEIVES NURSING AWARD: The Saint Francis University Nursing Department was presented with the 2018 Innovations in Professional Nursing Education Award (IPE) from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) at a gathering in Washington, D.C. Members of the IPE Committee pictured (left to right) are: First row--Brenda Guzic, and Doctor Rita Trofino, associate dean of the School of Health Sciences and Education. Second row: Doctors John Karduck, Kara Kobil, and Donald Walkovic; and Regina Barr. Third row--Doctors Lorie Rowles, and Stephanie Ivory, and Heather Vitko. Absent from the photo are: Doctors Stephen Baker, Carrie Beebout, Kerri Golden, Michael Groman, Theresa Horner, Baruch Vainshelbaim, and Kristofer Wisniewski; Suzanne Black, Gale DeArmin, and Christine Binduga. Saint Francis University received the award, in the small liberal arts school division, from over 800 members nursing programs across the United States. The award was for the "Health Care Team Challenge". As the delivery of healthcare becomes more interrelated, coordinating care between and among all health care disciplines has become progressively more imperative and the Saint Francis University IPE Committee recognized the important role IPE plays in the development of future health care professionals. Following the guidelines for Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice, the committee sought to find ways to have an all-inclusive enduring educational initiative to meet the needs of interprofessional education within each of these disciplines. The 2018 Innovations in Professional Nursing Education Award is, "In recognition of outstanding work re-envisioning traditional models for nursing education and programmatic change". The "Saint Francis University School of Health Sciences and Education Health Care Team Challenge" initiated by the Interprofessional Education Committee has broadened the competencies of nursing and other health science disciplines in improving individual and population health outcomes.

The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown donated \$60,928.81 to the last collection. In 2018, the following religious congregations with central houses located in the diocese received a combined total of \$142,304 in financial assistance made possible by the Retirement Fund for Religious: Carmelite Community of the Word; Saint Bernadine Monastery, Third Order Regular of Saint Francis in Hollidaysburg; and Third Order Regular of Saint Francis in Loretto.

Almost 94% of donations aid senior religious and their communities, with the remaining funds used for administration and promotion of the national appeal.

The 2017 collection raised just over \$28 million, and the NRRO disbursed \$25 million to 360 religious communities of the direct care for of elderly members. Communities combine these funds with their own income and savings to furnish necessities such as medication and nursing care.

Coming Up On Proclaim!

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

December 2 -- New Head of School at Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy in Boalsburg Jennifer Mallett offers her vision for the school.

December 9 -- Carmelite Sister for the Aged and Infirm Philomena Anne, who recently professed her first vows, talks about the path to her vocation and her role at Garvey Manor Nursing Home/Our Lady of the Alleghenies Residence in Hollidaysburg.

Religious Retirement Collection

The annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection will be held on December 8 & 9 in the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese.

Coordinated by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) in Washington, the appeal benefits 31,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.

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THE CATHOLIC REGISTER
SERVING THE DIOCESE OF ALTOONA - JOHNSTOWN

Published Bi-weekly at
925 South Logan Boulevard
Hollidaysburg PA 16648

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

Subscriptions: \$8.00 Parish Based
\$18.00 Individual

Periodical Class Postage Paid At
Altoona PA and other mailing offices.
Postmaster send change of address to:
925 South Logan Boulevard
(USPS 094 - 280)
Member Publication Of
The Catholic Press Association

Publisher:
Most Reverend Bishop
Mark L. Barchak

Manager:
Bruce A. Tomaselli

Secretary:
Frances M. Logrando

Vocation View

By Father Matthew Reese

Diocesan Director Of Vocations



Recently a priest passed away who had a good reputation and was always a positive supporter of those considering becoming a priest. Quite honestly, if he had been in better health, I think he would have made an excellent vocation director. He always made positive comments about the future of vocations despite the grim outlook many seem to have because the numbers show a trend that is not hopeful. I have to admit that after talking to him, you would feel as though everything was going to be just fine.

Unfortunately, I have been losing that hopefulness lately. This is the first year during my tenure as vocation director that I do not have anyone seeking to enter seminary in the upcoming year. There are a lot of reasons we can speculate about why that is the case. They range from the scandals of the Church (local & universal) to the possibility that I may not be doing a good enough job. The reality is that God is the one presenting a man with a calling to become a priest. External factors can aid or dissuade a man from answering that call and seeking guidance on what to do with it, but ultimately that call, and true discernment of that call, begins within the heart of the individual man as a movement of the Holy Spirit.

So does this mean that God is not calling? God is continuing to call men to the priesthood despite the world around us. Maybe things look grim right now because we forget that this is God's calling, not ours. Perhaps we should take advice from this priest who recently passed away but continued in his faithful, positive outlook when he would say, "Don't worry. God will continue to provide."

Father Matthew Reese is the diocesan Director of Vocations. E-mail him at vocations@dioceseaj.org or call him at (814) 695-5579.

Immigrants Not Forgotten By Bishops

By Rhina Guidos
Catholic News Service

BALTIMORE (CNS) -- A small button that said "defend migrants" pinned on the jacket of El Paso Bishop Mark J. Seitz of Texas was one of the few reminders of a topic that dominated much of the 2017 fall meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, but one hardly mentioned just a year later.

While thanking the leadership of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for a July visit to detention centers where migrant children were being held and to shelters helping recently arrived migrant fami-

lies in southern Texas, Bishop Daniel E. Flores of the Diocese of Brownsville reminded bishops gathered for the Nov. 12-14 meeting that the plight of migrants remains a great concern for the church.

"At our last meeting, which seemed like a long time ago, we were very concerned, and rightly so, at the separation of mothers and children," said Bishop Flores, publicly addressing the fall meeting of the USCCB Nov. 13.

"And there was even a delegation from the conference that came to my diocese, which the cardinal (USCCB president Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo)

led, and for which I'm very grateful," Bishop Flores said, "because they saw these young people on the periphery, or in detention centers and who are in very difficult situations. This is to remind us that this continues to be part of the mission of the church."

As policy decisions from Washington brought about the detention of children at the border and the separation of families that caused great outrage in the summer, the U.S. bishops moved into high gear to denounce the practices and drew the public's attention to their plight during a highly publicized visit to the border.

They also have been fierce advocates of youth who came to the United States illegally as children and have called on Congress to find a way to make them legal residents of the country. They have been vocal opponents of a proposed wall along the border with Mexico and called on Congress to help recipients of Temporary Protected Status stay in the country.

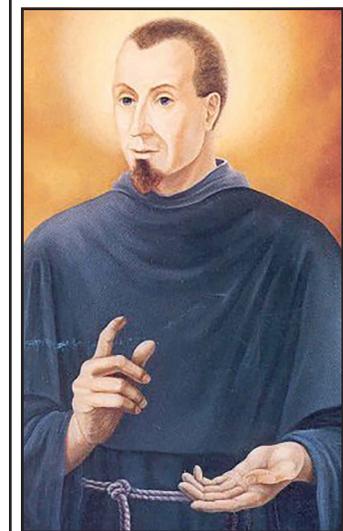
But after the current sex abuse crisis began in earnest this past summer with the publication of a grand jury report detailing decades of claims of sex abuse by clergy and other church workers in Pennsylvania and accusations that an American cardinal may have abused minors and sexually harassed seminarians, immigration seemed to take a back seat.

The sex abuse crisis dominated much of what the bishops discussed in their fall meeting, even as border bishops such as Bishops Flores and Seitz, along with Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller of San Antonio, daily contend with humanitarian responses to welcome migrants running from violence and poverty in Central America and who face a wave of hostility and policy decisions directed

at keeping them out of the land where they're seeking shelter. The "rhetoric" directed at immigrants is what worries Archbishop Garcia-Siller, who says it's important that Christians understand that helping people in need is an important part of following in Jesus' footsteps and that's not a message some Christians are embracing. The task may only become more urgent as conditions in Central America fail to improve and migrants travel in greater numbers headed for U.S. border cities as the Trump administration keeps firing back with threats for immigrants inside the country and

those attempting to enter it. "Young people and their mothers and fathers are still coming through the entire border, from California through Brownsville," said Bishop Flores in a Nov. 12 interview with Catholic News Service.

Hardly discussing immigration during the bishops' meeting was "unfortunate," said Bishop Seitz, because it's important "to have a voice (on the topic) on a national stage" given the current tide against immigrants. The focus on the current sex abuse crisis all but silenced the prelates' collective voice on immigration issues at the meeting.



Francis Anthony of Lucera

1681-1742

FEAST November 29

Giovanillo 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.



Jesus Is Found In Faces Of Others



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Behold I Stand at the Door and Knock
By Paul Ashton, Psy.D., D.Min.

“Jesus keeps knocking on our doors, the doors of our lives. He doesn’t do this by magic, with special effects, with flashing lights and fireworks. Jesus keeps knocking on our door in the faces of our brothers and sisters, in the faces of our neighbors, in the faces of those at our side.”

—Pope Francis

I was anxiously waiting in line at a wake to give my condolences to a mother and father who had lost their son, Tom (name changed to protect privacy). He had struggled and fought a long battle against the ravages of cancer that tormented his body. Moving away in his early twenties, he had recently come home to be reunited with his family. He was home a short year and died peacefully with his family at his bedside. I remember it as if it were yesterday, but it was 23 years ago when I was involved with ministry to those living with, or affected, by HIV/AIDS.

Behind me in line at that funeral home were fifteen members of the support group I facilitated. They came from all walks of life, but for two hours each Tuesday night they were bonded together as they came to the parish where I worked to share and gain support for their trials. I remember when Tom came to the meeting for

the first time and how anxious he was. He called ahead of time and said he’d heard of the support group, and didn’t know if the meeting was for him as he hadn’t been to church in a long time. I told him that he was most welcome and all would be well. He came that first night and stayed in the threshold of the room a long while before he obtained the courage to enter. He was greeted by a co-facilitator who sang out “Enter, Rejoice and Come In!” This was her trademark battle-cry welcome and it made everyone smile.

Tom came to the weekly meetings, gained and offered support, and everyone loved him. No judgments were made, no questions, just loving support. Over the weeks and months you could see his heart melt, although his body was giving way to the disease. He had a “touch and go” relationship with God, and the people in the group surrounded him with love. It was very sad for all of us when he died. We learned his family was having a wake for him on the night of the support meeting, so I asked the group what they wanted to do, and they said there was no choice but to go to the wake. The group worried about anonymity and what his family might say, and then one member said “If they ask, we will just tell them that we are his friends from the Church.” I smiled at this. Although the group was located on Church property in a Church building, the group didn’t refer to themselves as that, although everything I know to be Church was fully lived in each of the meetings.

When we arrived at the funeral home I decided to go first, and while I was anxious to meet his family, they were gracious, warm and so grateful. I explained that we were the group that Tom came to each Tuesday. His mother and father beamed, and she said “We are so

happy that Tom went back to Church when he came home.” I smiled back, and said “I didn’t know that he was going on Sundays.” And his mother responded “Oh, no, he went on Tuesdays with you.” I said “Of course, of course, and he was so loved and generous with his support.”

Jesus came to Tom’s door and knocked. Tom let Him in. Tom came to us and knocked, and we opened the door. After that first step over the threshold, it was all so very easy. Even the difficulties, the pain, the sorrows, the heartbreak—it was easy to bear when the burdens were lightened.

So many victims come to our doors. So many stand on the sidewalk and look in through the windows in fear. Good Pope Francis has reignited the fire within each of us and empowered us to look for Jesus in the faces of our brothers and sisters who have been hurt, victimized and taken advantage of. We meet Jesus every day in them.

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For inquires on youth protection and safe environment efforts within the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown please contact Cindy O’Connor at (814) 695-5579, extension 2621 or via email at coconnor@dioceseaj.org.

Assistance And Resources For Victims And Survivors

The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown is committed to the safety and protection of children and youth, and to supporting the victims and survivors of sexual abuse. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) and trained professionals serving local agencies greatly assist with the needs of victims of sexual assault and their loved ones in the healing process.

In an effort to educate the public and raise awareness of the support available in our community, the diocese continues to refer victims and survivors to the resources provided by PCAR and the local centers to help spread the word. The diocese’s collaboration with these agencies is limited to our mutual desire to help those who are suffering and is not an endorsement of other policies or positions the agencies may hold.

No one should suffer alone. If you need of help, please take advantage of the contact information on this page. Please join the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown in praying for all those who have been affected by sexual abuse in our society. May God grant them healing and peace.

PCAR partners with a network of rape crisis center programs to bring help, hope and healing around issues of sexual violence to all 67 counties in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. To find services within Pennsylvania call **PCAR at 1-888-772-7227**.

For information on Sexual Abuse Victim Assistance and Service Agencies within the eight counties of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown (Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clinton, Fulton, Huntingdon and Somerset) please refer to:

Bedford County: Your Safe Haven Inc. (800) 555-5671 or (814) 623-7664

Blair County: Family Services, Inc. (800) 500-2849 or (814) 944-3585

Cambria/Somerset Counties: Victim Services, Inc. (800) 755-1983 or (814) 288-4691

Centre County: Centre County Women’s Resource Center (877) 234-5050 or (814) 234-5050

Clinton County: Clinton County Women’s Center (570) 748-9509

Franklin/Fulton Counties: Women in Need/ Victim Services (800) 621-6660 or (717) 264-4444

Huntingdon/Mifflin/Juniata Counties: The Abuse Network 24-Hour Hotline (717) 242-2444. Toll-Free PA Hotline (888) 810-2444; Mifflin County Office (717) 242-0715; Juniata County Office (717) 447-1885 and Huntingdon County Office (814) 506-8237 or (717) 242-2444

Catholic Charities Inc. of The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown: Victim Assistance Coordinator (814) 944-9388, extension 204.

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**.

All Saints Soldier And Father Amazed At Love Shown To Veterans By School Each Year

Photos And Text By Tony DeGol

What a difference a year makes for Robert Luther.

When students from All Saints Catholic School in Cresson sponsored their annual salute to veterans in November 2017, Luther was deployed in Iraq for the United States Army.

Loved ones back home sent him video of the touching tribute.

"I had tears rolling down my face," he remembered.

This year, no video was necessary. He had a front row seat.

Luther, who has two children who attend All Saints Catholic School, was among many veterans on hand for the 2018 salute on Wednesday, November 14.

Mass was celebrated at Saint Francis Xavier Parish in Cresson, after which the entire student body lovingly sang patriotic songs to the veterans and recognized branches of the military. A reception followed in the parish hall.

Luther, who returned home in June, loved seeing his children – fourth grader

Isac and kindergartener Ilayna – participate.

"It means a lot," he admitted. "To see all these veterans here, it's amazing that the school does this."

David Humm, a veteran of the United States Airforce, echoed Luther's comments.

"We love the kids – especially their singing," he mentioned. "We're just proud to be here and be part of this ceremony."

All Saints Catholic School has a long tradition of recognizing the contributions of the military. Teacher Robin Zavada is the founder of Project Smile, a program that supports soldiers serving overseas. Through the program, ASCS students routinely send greetings to the troops.

"They usually write back and seem happy to hear from us," said eighth grade student Teresa Golden.

The annual November tribute to veterans also offers the students a valuable lesson.

"The importance of having this Mass for our children is to really make them aware of all the blessings they have – living in a country with such great abundance – and to be thankful for all these blessings," said Father Matthew Reese, temporary administrator of All Saints Catholic School. "I think our young people really got that message today and were so grateful for the

presence of so many of our men and women who have honorably served."

Stephen Kelley, who has 34 years of combined service with the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, admitted that the students taught him something valuable.

"Having the kids up there gave me a reminder of what I've done, the sacrifices I've made, and who it was for," he said. "The kids did a great job today."

And even though Veterans Day has once again come and gone, the words of one ASCS eighth grader are something all Americans should never forget.

"It's important to recognize the veterans in your area," said Thomas Urbain. "They are the ones who have kept this country safe and protected our freedoms so we can live safely in everyday life. Whenever you see a veteran, just thank them for their service. That'll put a smile on their face and make their day – that you care about what they did for you."

Certainly Urbain's fellow school mates Isac and Ilayna Luther would agree, as they cherish having their dad back home again.



PROUD OF DAD: All Saints Catholic School students Isac and Ilyana Luther welcome their father, Robert Luther, a member of the United States Army, to the school's annual tribute to veterans on Wednesday, November 14.



HONORED GUESTS: Among the veterans attending the All Saints Catholic School tribute to veterans were (front row, left to right): Herk Stevens, Air Force; Jerry Lee, Navy; Tom Sutton, Air Force; Debbie Humm, Air Force; and Jim McMullen, Marines. (Back row): Robert Luther, Army; Dave Humm, Air Force; Stephen Kelley, Army; Dave Seymore, Army; and Tom Zentack, Air Force.



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"What a Pharmacy Was Meant To Be"

Saint Bernard Food Pantry Opens On November 17

Photos And Text By
Tony DeGol

Ah, these days after Thanksgiving when our scales remind us that we really did not need to indulge in those extra helpings of turkey, stuffing, and pumpkin pie.

Some people only wish they had that problem.

According to Benedictine Father Thaddeus Rettger, Pastor of Saint Bernard Parish in Hastings, about one in four families in the northern part of Cambria County qualify for some type of food assistance.

That is why he and a dedicated group of volunteers are so eager to spread the word about a great new resource to feed the hungry.

The grand opening of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul/Saint Bernard Food Pantry was held on Saturday, November 17.

The effort began more than a year and a half ago when the SVDP Food Pantry in Carrolltown was on the verge of closing, Father Rettger recalled.

The parish stepped in to help, and eventually learned that the pantry would have to relocate.

It was determined that it would be more cost efficient to build a new building rather than rent space in an existing building.

The new pantry, located at 139 Huber Street in Hastings, serves residents in Hastings, Carrolltown, Nicktown, Northern Cambria, St. Benedict, and surrounding areas.

“With a new facility, we intend to serve our people far into the foreseeable future,” Father Rettger assured. “The need is great.”

The numbers prove it.

Each month, the pantry serves about 144 families, 253 individuals, 97 children, and 60 seniors.

“We see the image and likeness of God in the hungry, and we intend to give them food,” promised Father Rettger.

Volunteers have been the backbone of the transition from the former location to the new site.

“We’ve been really lucky, really blessed,” admitted Nancy

McMullen, director of the pantry. “It’s gone quite smoothly, and we’re really proud of the new facility and that it has come together so quickly.”

Among those who are partnering with the pantry are Food for Families, the Greater Food Bank of Pittsburgh, the Johnstown Food Bank, United Way, several government programs, local churches and schools, farmers, and civic organizations.

The pantry is seeking support through private monetary donations. Individuals and groups are also invited to collect non-perishable food to donate to the pantry.

“Food is one of the biggest expenses, obviously, with the pantry, and we’re always looking for new avenues to receive some items,” McMullen said.

Folks are also encouraged to donate their time and talent by volunteering at the site.

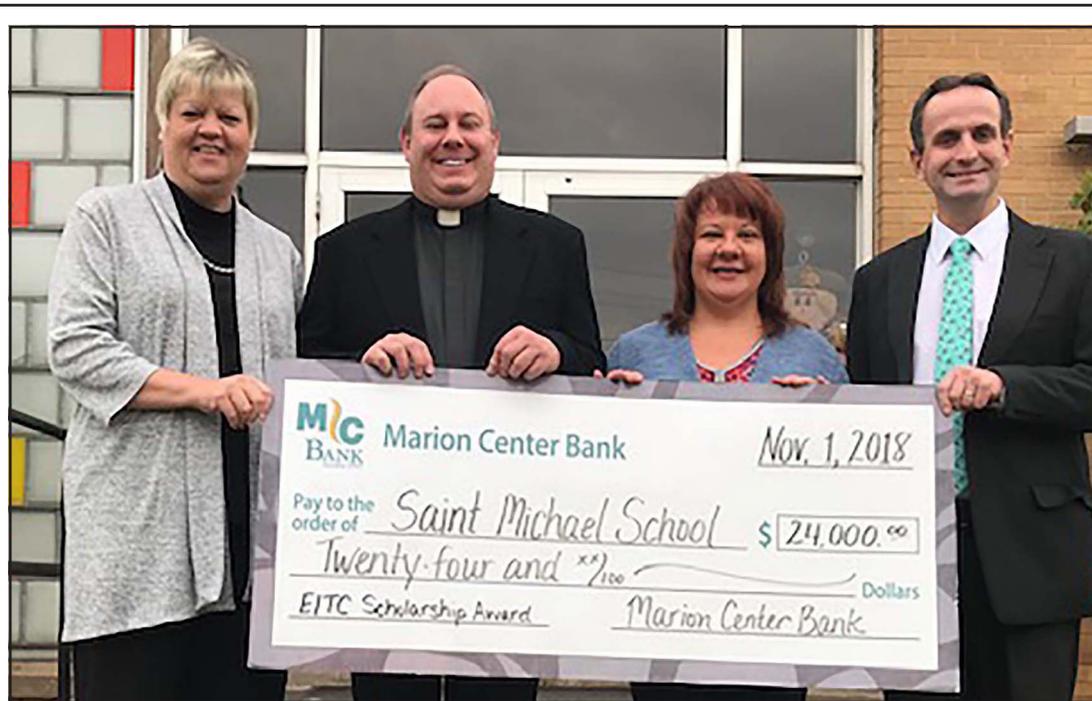
And, of course, prayers are always welcomed.

The new food pantry comes at a time of year when everyone seems a little more determined to make sure no one goes hungry, and the commitment on the part of Father Rettger and the volunteers is strong.

“Those that need it, we’re here,” offered Father Rettger. “Our heart and soul are in it.”



OUTSIDE AND INSIDE: The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul/Saint Bernard Food Pantry celebrated the grand opening of its new location in Hastings. Food is piled high inside the new facility, and organizers welcome food and cash donations to assist them in serving as many individuals as possible.



CHECK FOR EDUCATION: Marion Center Bank donated \$24,000 to Saint Michael School in Loretto. Accepting the check pictured (left to right) are: Deborah Lrise, Marion Center Bank; Father John Byrnes, Rector Saint Michael Basilica in Loretto; Renee Phister, principal; and George Karlheim, Marion Center Bank President. The money is administered through The Second Century Scholarship Fund. The Diocesan fund assists students that want to participate in a Catholic education. The fund is part of the Educational Income Tax Credit assistance program.

The Remains Of Portage MIA Walter Mintus WWII Hero Are Laid To Rest With Mass And Military Honors

By Bruce A. Tomaselli

It took nearly 75 years, but former Portage resident and WWII navy man Walter Mintus finally made it home. An aviation navy radio operator, Mintus's plane was shot down during a bombing mission on the Japanese base at Malakel Harbor on July 27, 1944.

His remains were found this past February by Project Recover, a non-profit team that searches for MIA's. DNA tests confirmed his identity along with the Ordnanceman Otis Earl Ingram. They were part of Navy Torpedo Squadron 51.

The plane was found in 100 feet of water in the channel portion of Malakel Harbor. A third member of the three-man team, the pilot, Lieutenant Houle, parachuted from the plane and was captured by the Japanese.

Franciscan Father Thomas Stabile, pastor of Holy Family Church in Portage, celebrated a funeral Mass on Saturday, November 10. Committal was held at the Sacred Heart Cemetery with military funeral rites by the United States Navy. Mintus was born on July 28, 1921, and was a member of the former Sacred Heart Parish.

Ryan Williams of Portage served six years in the Army and National Guard including a year in Afghanistan and he felt it very important to be at the funeral. "It's important to be here because he probably doesn't have a lot of family and friends around here anymore," he said.

Ryan hoped that as many people as possible would pay their respects. "If it were me in the same situation I would hope other military persons would pay their respects. It's one of the core values of the military to always help a fellow soldier."

On Friday, November 9, Mintus's remains were brought to the Holy Family Parish, where the community paid their respects. Members of the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association's Altoona Branch accompanied Mintus's remains. It was a very cold and rainy weekend in Portage.

Walter "Bert" Mintus was

the son of John and Caroline of Benscreek outside of Portage. "I was only five years old the last time I saw Uncle "Bert," remembers Richard Kozak of Conway, PA near Pittsburgh. "I have some fond memories of him. He used to play King of the Hill with us on the hay piles. I remember he had one of those old Indian Company Motorcycles and he used to take us for rides up and down a long dirt road on our farm."

Kozak remembers going with his parents to his grandma's house in Benscreek when they got the news his uncle's plane went down. "I remember it being a very emotional time. I really didn't understand the impact at the time," Kozak said. "My aunt Kay always said that someday her brother would come home, and she was right." Kozak did much of the planning for the funeral Mass and Committal ceremony.

Upon making the discovery of the remains, the Navy contacted a great niece of Kozak in Texas. She suggested they get in touch with him because he knew much more about his Uncle Bert. So, Uncle Bert was brought home and laid to rest with his mom and dad.

Army Specialist 5, Steve Nagy of Portage served in the army from 1972-75. He attended the funeral. Asked why he thought it was important, he said, "For one thing he gave his life for this country; he made the ultimate sacrifice."

Nagy said young people need to understand that our freedoms don't come free and people have sacrificed to maintain our way of life. "Mintus gave his life to allow people the freedom to express an opinion, perhaps, those that were different than his. That's the beauty of the United States."

He said military people enjoy a life-long bond. "It truly is a band of brothers. After all of these years I still stay in touch with four of my best army buddies."

Pursuit Productions from Santa Monica, CA attended the funeral to film the proceedings for a documentary about finding lost airmen who were shot down during the Mariana and Palau



Mintus's Navy Torpedo Squadron 51



NAVY RADIOMAN 3RD CLASS
WALTER "BERT" MINTUS

Islands campaign. It was one of the bloodiest battles in the South Pacific.

The film has been in production for five years and is based on the work of Patrick Scannon who went diving for recreation and found wreckage of WWII planes at the bottom of the bay in the South Pacific.

According to Adam Zimmer, a producer of the California-based company, the film is based on Scannon's 25-year commitment to finding the remains of the 200 American aircraft shot down during the war.

In the documentary film summary it is noted that this film is not Scannon's alone:

"His work has attracted a volunteer army of individual

volunteers, each possessing unique talents and disciplines and each with a personal story to tell.

"Together they have become Project Recover, a collaborative effort to enlist 21st century science and technology in a quest to find the underwater resting places of Americans missing in action since World War II, to provide recognition for their service, and bring closure to their families."

Kozak still has strong recollections of the day they learned his Uncle Bert's plane was shot down. "I remember we gathered together as a family to listen to a message Uncle Bert had recorded on a phonograph record for his family during the war.

"There was a lot of crying. I remember them playing that record."



(CNS photo/David Maung)

MIGRANT CARAVAN: Part of a group of about 350 Central American migrants sit on the U.S.-Mexico border fence Nov. 13 in Tijuana, Mexico. The group split from and advanced ahead of a larger caravan making its way to the border. By barring people who arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border from receiving U.S. asylum unless they request it at an official U.S. port of entry, President Donald Trump is directly contradicting existing U.S. law on the matter, Catholic leaders said November 14. "While our teaching acknowledges the right of each nation to regulate its borders, we find this action deeply concerning," the leaders said in a joint statement. Reiterating that it is not a crime to seek asylum, they urged the administration to seek other solutions to improve the U.S. immigration system.

California Prelates Urge Prayers, Humanitarian Aid For Victims Of Devastating California Fires

By Catholic News Service

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (CNS) -- By midday Nov. 16 firefighters had gained more ground in trying to contain the Camp Fire in Northern California, which is north of Sacramento and one of the deadliest blazes in the state.

The same day in Southern California, more residents displaced by Woolsey Fire near Los Angeles were being allowed to return to their homes. Both fires started Nov. 8, but authorities have not determined the cause.

Fueled by low humidity and strong winds, the Camp Fire has destroyed over 11,000 buildings across over 140,000 acres. The entire population of Paradise, about 30,000, were forced to evacuate Nov. 9; the town was destroyed. The death toll stands at 66 and at least 631 people are missing.

"The tremendous loss from the Camp Fire ravaging parts of the diocese is devastating," said Bishop Jaime Soto of Sacramento. "The families in Paradise and the surrounding communities affected by the fire can rely on the support of our prayers.

"We also pray for the brave men and women responding to this disaster and battling the fires," he added in a statement posted on the diocesan

website, www.scd.org. "May all those who have died in this catastrophic inferno be granted eternal repose in the merciful hands of the Lord Jesus."

Bishop Soto was to celebrate Mass Nov. 18 at St. John the Baptist Parish in downtown Chico for all those affected by the Camp Fire. He especially invited the community of St. Thomas More Parish in Paradise; their church was in the direct line of fire.

Many of St. Thomas' parishioners have lost their homes. The Sacramento Diocese has confirmed that church and school buildings have survived the fire. The new rectory, old rectory and parish hall were destroyed.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul and Northern Valley Catholic Social Service were working with partner organizations on local relief and recovery efforts. Donations can be made through the Sacramento Diocese by visiting www.scd.org/donate (choose the Fire Assistance Fund).

In a Nov. 14 statement, Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez asked all people of faith and goodwill to join him in offering prayers and support for everyone affected by the fires in Southern California.

"The devastation of the wildfires continues throughout our state. We need to keep pray-



(CNS photo/Terray Sylvester, Reuters)

RUINS: A house destroyed by the Camp Fire is seen in Paradise, Calif., November 17. Pope Francis at his Angelus November 18 prayed for the victims of the California wildfires.

ing for those who have lost their lives and their homes and livelihoods, and for all the men and women fighting the fires," said Archbishop Gomez.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles has started a fund to help the victims of these fires. Donations can be made at www.archla.org/fires.

"These funds will assist families within our parish communities in their recovery ef-

orts," he said.

The archdiocese of Los Angeles has been providing support to the communities affected by the fires through Catholic Charities of Los Angeles and local parishes and schools.

As of Nov. 16, these are the facts about each of the fires, according to Cal Fire and local officials:

-- Northern California: Camp Fire, Butte County:

142,000 acres burned; 45 percent contained; 63 fatalities confirmed; and 11,862 structures destroyed (including homes).

-- Southern California: Woolsey Fire, Los Angeles County, Ventura County: 98,362 acres burned; 69 percent contained; three fatalities confirmed; and 616 structures destroyed, 57,000 in danger.



(CNS photo/Noah Berger, pool via Reuters)

VIGIL: Laura Martin mourns her father, TK Huff, during a vigil for the lives and community lost to the Camp Fire, at the First Christian Church of Chico in Chico, Calif., on November 18. Pope Francis at his Angelus November 18 prayed for the victims of the California wildfires.

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Pope Francis Offers Prayers To Victims Of Wildfire, Death Toll Climbs

By Catholic News Service

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (CNS) -- Cal Fire officials reported that the death toll had reached 77 in the Camp Fire north of Sacramento, one of the deadliest blazes in the state. The number of people who are missing has reached almost 1,000.

At the Vatican Nov. 18, Pope Francis said, "A special prayer goes to those affected by the fires that are plaguing California. ... May the Lord welcome the deceased in his peace, comfort their families and support those who are involved in relief efforts.

As of Nov. 19, 150,000 acres had been scorched and 12,794 structures destroyed by the Camp Fire. Containment of the fire was 65 percent to date and full containment was expected Nov. 30.

"The tremendous loss from the Camp Fire ravaging parts of the diocese is devastating," said Bishop Jaime Soto

of Sacramento. "The families in Paradise and the surrounding communities affected by the fire can rely on the support of our prayers."

The entire population of Paradise of about 30,000, was forced to evacuate Nov. 9; the town was destroyed.

"We also pray for the brave men and women responding to this disaster and battling the fires," the bishop added in a statement posted on the diocesan website, www.scd.org. "May all those who have died in this catastrophic inferno be granted eternal repose in the merciful hands of the Lord Jesus."

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The Society of St. Vincent de Paul and Northern Valley Catholic Social Service were working with partner organizations on local relief and recovery efforts. Donations can be made through the Sacramento Diocese by visiting www.scd.org/donate (choose the Fire Assistance Fund).

Residents of Southern California have been coping with the Woolsey Fire near Los Angeles, which started Nov. 8, the same day as the Camp Fire. Both fires were fueled by low humidity and strong winds.

As of Nov. 16, resi-

dents displaced by the Woolsey Fire were being allowed to return home. Full containment of the fire was expected by Nov. 22. It burned close to 97,000 acres in Los Angeles and Ventura counties, destroyed 1,452 structures and damaged another 337. Three fatalities were confirmed.

In a Nov. 14 statement, Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez asked all people of faith and goodwill to join him in offering prayers and support for everyone affected by the fires in Southern California.

"The devastation of the wildfires continues throughout our state. We need to keep praying for those who have lost their

lives and their homes and livelihoods, and for all the men and women fighting the fires," said Archbishop Gomez.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles has started a fund to help the victims of these fires. Donations can be made at www.archla.org/fires.

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LIVING ROSARY: (above) The third grade students at Saint John The Evangelist School in Bellefonte performed a living Rosary. Pictured (left to right) are: Front Row-- Andrew Pifer, Reagan-May Merlino, Megan Weiser, Madelyn Williams, Stella Puhala, Henry St. Amant. Back Row: Kooper Booher, Nolan Hockenberry, Sophie Smith, Bridget Dechow, Madison Bohn, James Wierbowski Jr., Parker Clute. Pictured below--The second grade class dressed as Saints for All Saints Day.



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Catholic Extension Donates \$25,00 In Emergency Funding To Aid Migrants

By Catholic News Service

CHICAGO (CNS) -- Catholic Extension has given \$25,000 in emergency funding to a facility in the Diocese of El Paso, Texas, and is urging donors around the country to provide aid to meet the needs of migrants being released from detention daily.

The Chicago-based national organization, which financially supports Catholic ministries among the poor and marginalized, announced the funding Nov. 15. It said it was just an initial amount and that it plans to make subsequent grants to other migrant ministries in the months ahead.

The \$25,000 is going to Annunciation House, which has been serving migrants in the El Paso area since 1978.

A news release from Catholic Extension about the funding said the facility has had to step up its efforts due to a recent increase of migrants being

released from Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention.

They are being released prior to their immigration court hearing and without places such as Annunciation House, they would "have nowhere to go for assistance," the release said.

"In court, they will attempt to establish credible fear of returning to their home country, in hopes of eventually receiving asylum," said Catholic Extension, which described the current situation at the U.S.-Mexico border as a "humanitarian crisis."

The funds for Annunciation House will help meet migrants' basic needs, such as warm meals, clothes, showers, a place to sleep and phone calls to family. Hundreds are being released daily by ICE.

Catholic Extension officials visited the El Paso Diocese the week of Nov. 5 and saw the needs firsthand of people seek-

ing legal asylum in the U.S.

"Most of the people we met were parents, clinging to their children," said Father Jack Wall, president of Catholic Extension. "They told us stories of the extortion, kidnappings, and threats of violence to them and their children that they endured in their home countries."

"We could see the terror and pain in the eyes of the parents, many of whom were escaping criminals who promised to kidnap, rape or disembowel their children," said Joe Boland, Catholic Extension's vice president of mission.

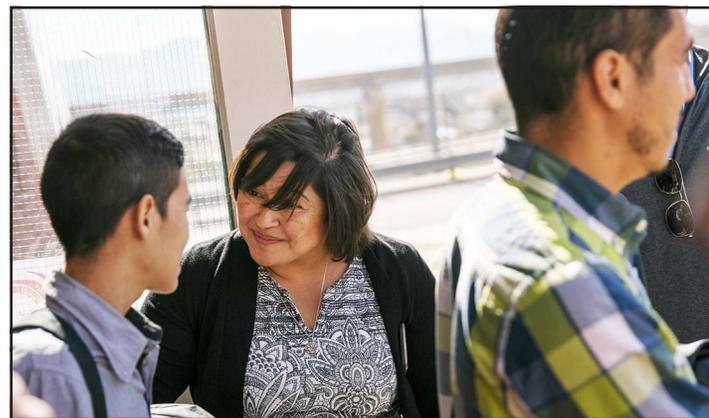
Boland added: "As a church, we must do our part to help these parents protect the innocent little ones. We thank God for the ready hospitality provided by these church-run shelters, which sprang into action to help restore hope and human dignity among these migrants who have been through so much."

In the past two weeks, nu-



(CNS photo/Rich Kalonick, courtesy Catholic Extension)

LISTENS TO MIGRANTS: Father Jack Wall, president of Catholic Extension, listens November 8 to one of the migrants who were legally paroled from detention by Immigration and Customs Enforcement in El Paso, Texas.



(CNS photo/Rich Kalonick, courtesy Catholic Extension)

FUNDING PROVIDED: Veronica Rayas, director of the office of religious formation for the Diocese of El Paso, Texas, greets migrants at diocesan offices November 11.

merous temporary shelters have opened, coordinated by Annunciation House, to accommodate the increase in numbers of released migrants. These shelters have collectively served 2,400 per week for the past several weeks "with no signs of slowing down," according to Catholic Extension.

Many in the shelters are parents with young children seeking to reunite with their family members throughout the U.S. while awaiting their court dates.

"Our whole purpose here is to provide hospitality know-

ing that, as Jesus comes to our door as an immigrant in need of food and shelter, we provide that," said Veronica Rayas, director of the office of religious formation for the Diocese of El Paso.

Rayas has been running a temporary shelter out of Centro San Juan Diego, which normally functions as an after-school center for children.

Catholic Extension said the funds it is supplying come from a Family Reunification Fund it created earlier this year to help families separated at the border.

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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Who We Are:

On August 29, 2016, under the guidance of our Board and administrators Holy Trinity Catholic School opened its doors for the first time to 425 students. Building on the foundation of four parish “legacy schools” Holy Trinity Catholic School was formed. This long standing history of commitment and dedication of educating students in their faith as well as academically continues at HTCS. Using our past as a foundation we continue to shape our future by merging our talents and gifts as we journey to continue to form our history as Holy Trinity Catholic School.

HTCS is located in the Altoona quadrant of the Altoona Johnstown Diocese. We have two elementary buildings that enthusiastically encourage our younger students in pre-school through fourth grade to be creative and compassionate learners. Our elementary school buildings are located

in Altoona and Hollidaysburg. Our middle school offers a strong, quality education for students in fifth through eighth grade. We are proud of all of our programs but especially our new math series, Math in Focus, and our STREAM program (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Math). Students collaborate to complete missions and projects using hands-on materials. Holy Trinity Catholic School garners financial and spiritual support from thirteen area parishes. Our Mission Statement: “The mission of Holy Trinity Catholic School is to foster an environment of spiritual and intellectual growth by integrating Catholic teachings throughout the educational process. This is accomplished by the promotion of Gospel values, charitable service, and academic excellence in order to prepare our students to be compassionate, creative, and critical thinking citizens.”

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Leadership: Elaine Spencer Principal HTCS
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FRIENDSHIP: These happy first grade students have added new friendships to their faith families. The smiling girls pictured (left to right) are: Lauren Elvey, Ruby Craw, and Camryn Colledge.

“Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for kindness.”

~St. Mother Theresa~

At HTCS Altoona we are laying the ground work for the type of person our students will become through our Virtue of the Month program. It is a systematic approach to fostering character formation in our students. The Virtues instill in each child a desire to practice Catholic virtues both at home and at school. Although specific, structured lessons are presented on a regular basis, the core of the virtues program is the recognition of the many “teachable moments” that arise each day. The goal is to make the practice of Catholic virtues not just another subject but a way of life for each student.

This year we are able to incorporate the virtues with the new Diocesan “Christ is R.I.C.H. in Me” initiative. There is no better way to help each child grow in their relationship with God than pairing them with an older student and providing them with opportunities to celebrate our faith and enjoy fun activities together.

To open our year with our new initiative, Christ is R.I.C.H in Me

and Faith Families, we gathered as one for a prayer service focusing on Saint Mother Theresa and the kind works she had done throughout the world. We then focused on the book “What Do You Do with a Chance?” identifying ways to seize an opportunity to show kindness and help those around us. In October we gathered together again to take on the lives of Saints. Students gathered with their respective families beginning with a prayer service and then worked on a special Saint craft. We will continue to meet monthly to learn, grow, and have fun but at the same time cultivating the lives of our students to be respectful, responsible, and resembling God in all they do.

Leadership starts young at Holy Trinity Catholic Altoona. Our students in grade four have the opportunity to develop leadership skills in many ways. Students serve as active members of our newly established Student Council, as well as leading weekly liturgy and morning prayer, and are prayer pals with pre-k students. These young leaders have taken on multiple challenges in both school and community. The playground initiative has been at the forefront of one of

the school improvement ideas. The playground at HTCS Altoona floods when we get heavy rains. Students were able to meet with the city highway department to identify and develop solutions to solve the problem. They are eagerly waiting for the next rain storm to see if the first solution was effective.

Students at HTCS Altoona are moving beyond the daily classroom basics and embracing the concepts of STEM. The HTCS Altoona STREAM program is centered around innovation, collaboration, communication, and creativity. Linking learning across subjects and working together to create solutions in a collaborative effort. Our students are constantly working on problem solving and 21st century skills that transcend to our own community.

The rain garden project with the Blair Conservation District was a wonderful learning experience. HTCS Altoona fourth grade students first learned the importance of the rain garden and then assisted in planting over 500 plants and flowers. It was an opportunity to give back to the community and help impact the environment in a positive way.



FAITH FAMILY: Evan Schmminger lends a helping hand to Ty Rishel.

Question Corner

By Father Kenneth Doyle

Where Do Singles Fit?

Q. Where do single people “rank” within the Catholic Church? Many times we are asked to pray for those who are married or who have followed a calling to the religious life -- but how many times has anyone in any parish been asked to pray for those who are single?

Are we singles shut out, are we to be ignored until we follow one of the other life paths? What if the single person truly believes that his or her calling is to be single? Who is asked to pray for the single person?

A. I couldn't agree more with your eloquent plea. I feel strongly that some are called to the single state as a true vocation -- a deliberate choice made to give them more time to serve both God and other people. Traditionally the church has identified three vocations: holy orders, marriage and consecrated life; but lately I find increasing references to the notion of the “single vocation.”

The website of the Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin, for example, says this: “Life as a single person can be a vocation from God. ... Single women and men usually have more freedom than those in other vocations. ... The vocation to the single life is a gift to the church!”

And the Archdiocese of Melbourne in Australia explains that “they may be a carpenter, office worker, scientist, dentist, train driver, who has a fulfilling personal relationship with Jesus which they feel able to live out more fully if they are not tied to other relationships.”

Like you, I believe that those who have responded to this noble calling deserve regular mention in the public prayers of the church.

Q. How far must one go in pro-life issues to be a good Catholic? May one support a charitable organization if one of its services is to do abortions? I have long supported Doctors Without Borders for its lifesaving work through-

out the world.

But in a recent magazine article, they admit supplying women victims of rape with abortifacients and “safe termination of pregnancy.” I would appreciate your advice. (Middletown, New Jersey)

A. Doctors Without Borders -- also known by its French name Medecins Sans Frontieres -- has, since its founding in 1971, brought lifesaving care to many sick and wounded people caught in war, epidemics and other disasters. Sadly, though, I do not believe that faithful Catholics should donate to this organization.

On its own website, Medecins Sans Frontieres concedes that since 2004, it has been offering abortions on request at some of its field sites and that its responsibility is to “respect the reason the woman or young girl gives for wanting to have an abortion.”

As to whether Catholics may assist Medecins Sans Frontieres financially, one might turn to “Guidelines on Giving to Charitable Organizations,” published by the National Catholic Bioethics Center.

Asked whether a Catholic may donate to an organization that supports research that destroys human embryos to procure stem cells, the center said, “The answer is no. By donating to a research institute or drug manufacturer that funds research that destroys human beings, one would be cooperating immorally in the act of destroying young human life.”

Some might argue, I suppose, that Catholic donors to Medecins Sans Frontieres could specify that their own contributions be used only for medical care and not for abortions; but that, I feel, is an artificial distinction since it would simply free up other donations to be used for immoral purposes.

Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.



By Effie Caldarola

Choose To Hope

What is the nature of hope? Are we born to be either a pessimist or an optimist? Or is it up to us to decide?

At a day of reflection, a Sister of Mercy discussed the environmental threat to our planet. Then she asked us to stand up and choose a side -- were we hopeful for the earth's future, or were we despairing? I ambled over to stand with hope, but I was amazed at many of my friends who headed to the negative side.

Why was I hopeful? Not because I don't worry that we're headed for ecological disaster, but because, like Julian of Norwich, I affirm that “All shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.” God is hope, and that's where we have to pitch our beleaguered tents, even if we know storms lie ahead.

Like many people, especially in these rugged political and social times, I am not naturally or easily hopeful. I wake at night with anxiety, and I know this is the opposite of hope. I struggle to hope. I have to choose hope.

That's why I was so inspired by a presentation I attended recently at Creighton University given by Stephanie Sinclair, a Pulitzer Prize winning photo-journalist. Sinclair is a unique talent. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then her evocative and sometimes painful photography could fill volumes.

She has covered the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. But her most powerful work is in sensitive gender issues like female circumcision, practiced in many developing countries, and the plight of girls who escaped from Boko Haram, the terrorist organization in Nigeria that subjected them to horrendous rape and abuse. She has made a long study of child marriage, the coerced pairing of girls as young as 10 with older men.

These are not easy, light-hearted subjects. Sinclair's stunning visual depictions of these female experiences bring their

brutality home powerfully. Her pictures of married couples, tall, imposing older men alongside terrified little girl brides, render a gut punch.

Another topic she has covered is albinism -- the genetic condition that reduces melanin in the skin, hair and eyes, resulting in porcelain-like skin and striking white hair. In many places in the world, albinos are considered a curse upon a family. They often face ridicule and exclusion.

Sinclair is petite, blonde and exudes hope, joy, energy and enthusiasm. Someone in the audience asked a question that basically amounted to, “How do you do it?”

I do not know if Sinclair embraces a particular religious faith, but the Spirit must embrace her. She told the audience that she knows that her activism in these issues, and her ability to bring them to the world's attention, makes a difference.

She is, for example, the

177 Project

Saint Clement Parish in Johnstown will host the 177 Project at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, November 30.

The 177 Project is Adoration Artists, a group that uses music as an evangelization tool. It's traveling to all 177 dioceses in the United States this fall.

Mandy Vigna, the director of Religious Education at the parish jumped at the opportunity to get the group in Johnstown.

The evening will include praying the Rosary and a Holy Hour with time before the Blessed Sacrament.

After Adoration, two nationally-recognized musicians traveling as part of the 177 Project-Connor Flanagan and Taylor Tripodi-will present the concert.

The parish has invited various priests from throughout the diocese to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the Holy Hour.

founding executive director of a nonprofit organization called Too Young to Wed, based on her photo-documentary series of the same name. Too Young to Wed strives to protect and empower girls and end child marriage.

In another remarkable example of commitment, Sinclair and her husband have adopted two albino children from a Chinese orphanage.

People like Sinclair, who plunge into activism for social justice, are people of hope. If standing on the sidelines induces our despair, action impels us to hope.

In 2017, Pope Francis gave a group of young people extensive advice on how to remain hopeful. He might have been speaking of Sinclair, or of all of us called to service, when he said, “The world goes on thanks to the vision of many people who created an opening, who built bridges, who dreamed and believed.”

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Now Showing

“Dr. Seuss’s The Grinch” Good Holiday Movie



(CNS photo/Hat Tip Films LLC)

This adaptation of Theodor Geisel’s 1957 children’s fable “How the Grinch Stole Christmas!” is an extravagant animated adventure, directed by Scott Mosier and Yarrow Cheney and narrated by Pharrell Williams. The eponymous grump (voice of Benedict Cumberbatch) lives high above the hamlet of Whoville with his loyal dog by this side. With a heart “two sizes too small,” he wants nothing more than peace and quiet and to be left alone. Determined to put a halt to the incessant joy and goodness of the Whos, he strikes on the idea of masquerading as Santa Claus and stealing every Christmas present, tree and decoration in sight. One intrepid girl (voice of Cameron Seely), has plans of her own, however. With a few welcome nods to the true religious meaning of Christmas, this is perfectly acceptable holiday fare for all ages with a core lesson about the redemptive power of kindness and forgiveness. Mild cartoonish action. The Catholic News Service classification is A-I -- general patronage. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children

Sunday Mass

*Broadcast Live From
The Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament
Altoona*

10:00 a.m. WFBG radio, 1290 AM

Sunday Mass

*Broadcast Live From
The Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament
Altoona*

10:00 a.m. WFBG radio, 1290 AM



(CNS photo/United States Holocaust Memorial Museum)



(CNS photo/United States Holocaust Memorial Museum)

KRISTALLNACHT: (left photo) On the morning after Kristallnacht, or the “Night of Broken Glass,” local residents watch as the synagogue in Ober-Ramstadt, Germany, is destroyed by fire in 1938. That year, from November 9 to November 10, Nazis in Germany torched synagogues and vandalized Jewish homes and schools. Germans pass by the broken shop window of a Jewish-owned business in Berlin that was destroyed in 1938 during Kristallnacht.

Old, Scratched Archive Record Reveals Catholic Protest Against The Nazis In 1938

By *Mark Pattison*
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Jews worldwide will remember the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht.

In a direct German translation, it means “Crystal Night,” but it is more commonly thought of as “Night of Broken Glass,” as Nazis and their sympathizers rampaged through Nazi Germany -- which by this time had absorbed Austria and the Sudetenland -- the night of Nov. 9-10, 1938.

More than 7,000 Jewish-owned stores and businesses were damaged, more than 250 synagogues destroyed, more than 3,000 Jews arrested and sent to concentration camps, and nearly 100 more killed during the rampages, which shocked the world.

Father Charles Coughlin, the “radio priest” during the Depression, had been for years salting anti-Semitic commentary into his weekly broadcasts, which reached tens of millions of people, despite the grumblings of several U.S. bishops who wanted him off the air.

But it was the discovery in The Catholic University of America’s archives in 2004 of an old, scratched record, labeled only “Catholic Protest Against Nazis -- Nov. 16, 1938,” that set the wheels in motion for a long-overdue reconsideration of Catholic attitudes toward anti-Semitism in general, and

Kristallnacht in particular.

The record, which was unplayable with the university’s own equipment, had to be sent elsewhere to be digitized. What it contained was a half-hour program featuring Catholic bishops from across the nation, and former New York Governor Al Smith, who became the first Catholic presidential nominee of a major political party in 1928, roundly condemning the Nazis’ actions and expressing solidarity with Jews under the Nazis’ rule.

CUA education archivist Maria Mazzenga said, “This was something huge. ‘It’s changed the literature on Catholic responses to the Holocaust -- distinctly Catholic responses.’”

Further fruits from the recording netted a front-page New York Times article on the broadcast the day after it aired on both NBC and CBS -- a joint presentation unusual even then for competing networks.

Mazzenga also was able to track down five legal-size pages featuring the full transcript of the broadcast distributed by CNS’ predecessor, National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service.

In a Nov. 25, 1938, letter to Cardinal Dennis Dougherty of Philadelphia, Irving Sherman-head of the Atlas Publishing and Novelty Co. of New York City wrote: “I, and I believe millions of others, cannot believe in your sincerity to teach democracy while you have a Father Coughlin openly preaching hate against his fellowmen,” with the “e”

printed by hand over the typed “a.” He eventually was forced off the air in 1939 because of his pro-fascist and anti-Semitic rhetoric.

Later, in a missive to Catholic University rector Father Joseph Corrigan -- later a bishop -- Sherman complained about the “so called man of God Father Coughlin.”

Father Corrigan wrote back: “Those who would stigmatize the Catholic Church for such conduct of one individual come very close themselves to the standard of judgment which they deplore when applied to themselves. It would be a wrong, and it truly is, to condemn Jews for the culpable actions of some Jews.”

Thus began a fairly fruitful exchange between the two. In a letter to Father Corrigan dated Sept. 15, 1939 -- two weeks after World War II began in Europe -- Sherman sounded hopeful. “Our mayor is now taking evidence so as to prosecute the speakers who incite to riot and I think that now that Russia and Germany have aligned themselves together, these conditions of which I complain of may be eliminated.”

He added that fellow members of the Jewish War Veterans of America were planning to sue Father Coughlin for his on-air remarks. It took another year, but Father Coughlin was forced off the air. The priest was silenced by the Vatican in 1942.

Priesthood, People, And Pittsburgh Penguins Were The Center Father Dan O'Neill's Existence

By Tony DeGol

For the late Father Daniel O'Neill, life seemed to center around three P's: the priesthood, people, and the Penguins.

Father O'Neill, pastor of Saint Peter Parish in Somerset and dean of the Southern Deanery, passed on October 29 after complications from an extended battle with cancer. He was 68 years old.

Born in Carbondale, Pennsylvania, and ordained a priest in 1976, Father O'Neill served at various parishes throughout the diocese, including pastorates at the former Our Lady of Mercy and Saint Barnabas Parishes in Johnstown, the former Saint Gregory Parish in Johnstown, and the former Immaculate Conception Parish in Lock Haven.

He served as Pastor of Saint Peter since 2008 and Dean since 2010. Over the years, he was also engaged in prison ministry.

His friend of four decades did not have to think long when asked to summarize Father O'Neill's legacy.

"If you knew him, he made you a better person, a better priest," said the Very Reverend Leonard Voytek, VF, pastor of Saint Mary Parish in Nanty Glo and dean of the Prince Gallitzin Deanery. "To know him was to be closer to God."

The two men initially bonded through the priesthood and their love of hockey – specifically the Pittsburgh Penguins. Eventually, their friendship evolved into being great sources of support for each other.

"It started out as something fun, but we were there for each other through a lot of things," recalled Father Voytek.

Tasked with delivering the homily at Father O'Neill's funeral Mass, Father Voytek focused on another P: passion.

"Father O'Neill was a very passionate person," he offered. "He was very passionate about people and his faith. He never did things half-heartedly. He really cared about people."

That passion was evident, even in the last months of Father



TOUR: Father O'Neill had a special fondness for all ages of parishioners. He always got a big kick from the young people. Here he enjoys himself during a tour of the church with the first grade students from Saint Peter School.

O'Neill's life when his illness began taking a greater toll. Nevertheless, Father O'Neill maintained his busy pastoral schedule and remained present to others.

"I think he was identifying with Christ in his final weeks because of the suffering," continued Father Voytek. "His faith never suffered. God doesn't do anything half-hearted, and that's the way Danny was. Even sick and dragging, he would find a way to do things."

Jon Wahl, a friend of Father O'Neill's and parishioner at Saint Peter, agreed.

"In the face of that suffering, his devotion to service remained his foremost thought and action," he commented. "His commitment to our parish, the prisoners, the sacraments, and Jesus, our Lord, didn't waiver regardless of his personal agony."

Those who knew Father O'Neill also remember him as a learned man.

Friend and parishioner Dave Greene shared a love of reading with his pastor.

"He loved historical books, especially those dealing with the Irish, of course," joked Greene. "We spent a lot of time comparing what we had read and sharing

new works. He could also devour the *Economist* and the *Wall Street Journal* in quick time."

Saint Peter Parish is home to a vibrant school – something that brought Father O'Neill much joy.

"Whether it was during a visit to the school, teaching a class, or celebrating Mass with us, his love for the school left everyone with a smile on their face," noted Principal Jill Harris. "We are all so much better because of him. We remind our students each day

that it is the small, loving acts of service that changes hearts, and Father was proof of that for so many. We miss him dearly, and we feel so blessed for having known and loved him."

Father O'Neill spoke about the delight a parish school can bring during a 2017 appearance on the diocesan *Proclaim!* television ministry. The show features an occasional segment called "Answering the Call," during which clergy and religious discuss their vocation.

"Catholic schools are a tremendous blessing," he mentioned on the segment. "When you're having a bad day, you go over to the school, and the young people have that ability to make your day."



During the TV interview, Father O'Neill also offered some thoughts on the responsibility of priests to inspire others. His message was one that hopefully resonates with his brother priests and any man discerning a priestly vocation.

"We have to reflect an optimism, we have to reflect a joy,"

he insisted. "We have to reflect that we enjoy being priests. This is what we're called to do. We're bringing Christ to people and how wonderful and joyous that is. We find joy in our relationship with Jesus Christ. We have to project that to our people."

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Mikayla's Mission Provides Holiday Meals

Photo And Text By
Bruce A. Tomaselli

About eight years ago Mikayla Yanchik became saddened when she realized that some people would have little to eat during the holidays. She established Mikayla's Mission which became an Advent effort to provide holiday meals for those people.

"My mission," explained Mikayla, "is for all families in need to have a nice meal at Christmas just like I have." A great gesture by a 12-year old. "I feel really bad for people that don't have a good meal during the holidays," she said.

But, by age 14 Mikayla could no longer enjoy that Christmas feast with her own family. Crohn's Disease, colitis and finally gastroparesis (intestinal failure) claimed her body's ability to process food through her system.

A cruel irony taken to a whole new level.

Life-sustaining nutrients must now be administered 18 hours each day through a Broviac line that rests near the tip of her heart. The line is tethered to a Total Parenteral Nutrition Bag (TPN), which is her lifeline.

Mikayla is a fighter with a deep faith in God. Sure, she gets sad and angry and sometimes wonders why, but those feelings don't rule her existence. "My faith in God pulls me through and He is always there," says Mikayla. "It never fails. When my doctors can't seem to be a help to me God always comes through."

She feels sick almost all of

the time and never feels really good. She easily tires, she's anemic, and regularly suffers with stomach bleeding. She's suffered through two spinal fusion operations at ages 10 and 11; and had her gall bladder and appendix removed at age 14. Her ailments don't define her existence. As a matter of fact she is studying to be a phlebotomist at the Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center.

"I've spend time at the Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh and there are a lot of (kids) people worse off than I am," said Mikayla. "They are always in my prayers."

She and her mom, Sharon, are members of Saint Mark Parish in Altoona. "Without my mom and my MeMa I would never make it. I love my mom so much. She's never left my side through all of this and even slept in my room during my hospitalizations." The two are a team.

Mikayla enjoys attending Mass, and singing hymns makes her feel better, she says. When she feels sick, she attends Mass. "Singing my favorite hymns always makes me feel so much better," she added.

She attended Mount Carmel Parochial school in kindergarten through first grade. The onset of a bout with psoriatic arthritis required her to be home schooled from second to sixth grade. She ventured out to attend seventh and eight grades, but problems developed, and she was home-schooled during her high schools years. Her weakened system required that she stay away from public places.

"I wasn't one of those kids that didn't have a social life," asserted Mikayla with a smile.

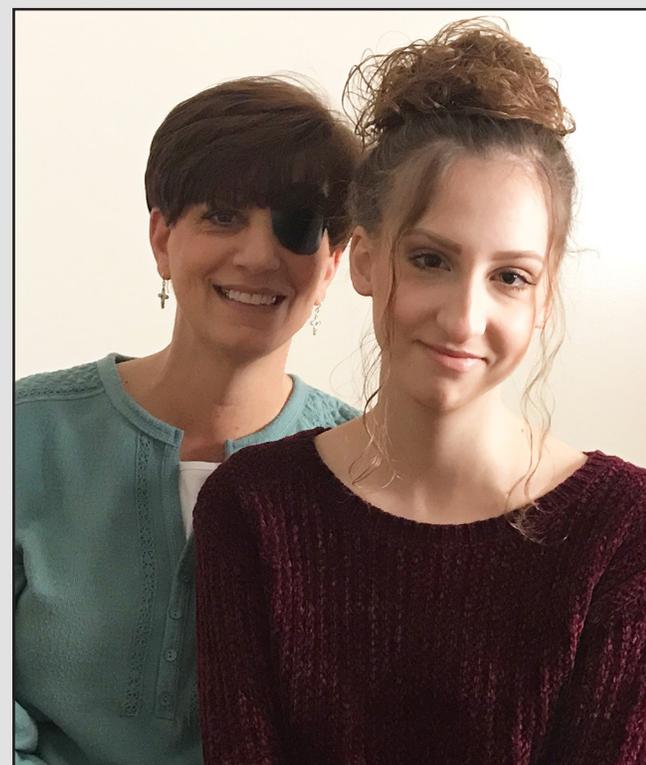
Even though she was home schooled she bonded with her classmates. Her disease slowed her, but it didn't stop her. "I went to all of my proms and dances at Altoona Area High School," she said. She participated in the school musicals and plays and made many new friends in the process. Mikayla attended daily Mass up until about the age of 12 when her immune system began to fail her. She and her mom continue to sing in the choir. Each year she sings *Away in a Manger* at Christmas Eve Mass. She also volunteers at the church fish fries and helps decorate the church for Christmas. In addition, she volunteered at UPMC during her senior year of high school and the following year until her health deteriorated. She said she really enjoyed those years.

"Mikayla hasn't lived a normal life as a teenager, but she's been able to do a lot," said her mom. "People don't know what she goes through every day."

At Christmas time Mikayla is especially sensitive to the needs of others. Mikayla's Mission is an Advent effort that begins on December 2 this year. Last year she raised \$1,750 worth of gift cards that helped many families.

The Mission collects \$25 gift cards from various grocery stores. "Once again I'm asking that you to open up your hearts and donate \$25 gift cards to Weis Markets, Giant Eagle, Martin's or Walmart," Mikayla said. The gift cards will be collected by December 17 so they can be distributed before Christmas.

To show her appreciation for all who volunteer with



MIKAYLA (RIGHT) AND HER MOM SHARON

Mikayla's Mission she plans a Mass at Saint Mark Church to be held at 4:30 PM on January 26.

Mikayla and Sharon have a great admiration for Bishop Mark L. Bartchak. "I looked forward so much to making my Confirmation with my class in 2015, but I was just too sick." They were delighted that Bishop Mark made a special visit to Saint Mark's to say Mass and Confirm her. "Many of my classmates participated that day. It was so special that the bishop would go out of his way and do that for me."

Dealing with doctors, nurses and hospitals forced Mikayla to mature at an early age. Because of that she has a great rapport with adults, too. "When you are ill you grow up much faster," Mikayla said. "I just signed ad-

vance directives. Twenty-year old's shouldn't have to deal with that."

Mikayla's sweetness is what you first notice upon meeting her. She's not bitter, but hopeful, and concerned for others. "You have to reach out to others who are more in need. There's always people that are worse off than you," she reminded.

Her deep faith in God enables her to be hopeful about the future. "My dream," she says, "is to be able to eat solid food again." If her system doesn't respond to medicine, she will need surgery. A stomach and intestinal transplant is a possibility. She looks forward to that surgery.

"I lean on my faith in God and try not to dwell on myself," Mikayla said.

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