Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton has announced that Father Thomas A. Nelson will be installed as pastor of St. Ann Parish, Chesapeake, at Mass Jan. 30. Father Nelson is currently parochial administrator of the parish.

Nelson is currently parochial administrator of Parish, Chesapeake, at Mass Jan. 30. Father A. Nelson will be installed as pastor of St. Ann

Missy Glasure, office manager, Sacred Heart Center of Hope, left, and Leah Perdue, social services coordinator, Catholic Charities of Southeastern Ohio, prepare for a Christmas gift distribution, Dec. 20, at Sacred Heart Center of Hope. (Photo by DiCenzo)

Since 1937, St. Joseph Parish, Tiltonsville, has displayed an outdoor Nativity scene on the rectory lawn. The Nativity is pictured Dec. 15 after being lighted and blessed. (Photo by DiCenzo)

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The representation of Peru’s diverse Indigenous communities in this year’s Nativity scene in St. Peter’s Square embodies the joy and hope of their faith, said Peruvian Bishop Carlos Alberto Salcedo Ojeda of Huancavelica, Peru.

The Vatican said the 30-piece Nativity scene from Peru’s Huancavelica region was chosen to mark the 200th anniversary of Peru’s independence.

Statues of Joseph and Mary, as well as the Three Kings, are dressed in the traditional bright, multicolored garments of the region’s Indigenous Chocpea people.

Unlike more traditional depictions of the Magi, trudging to Bethlehem with camels and gifts of gold, incense and myrrh, the Andean interpretation has them accompanied by llamas and bearing sacks of food from the region, including corn, quinoa and potatoes.

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means “God is with us” (Mt 1:23).

Joseph heard these words from an angel instructing him to take Mary, the mother of Jesus as his wife and to be foster father to the King of the Universe. As overwhelming as this may seem to you and me, we know Joseph accepted God’s invitation to be a model for all Christians, men and women alike. At this Christmas time, may you and I deepen our resolve and strengthen our fortitude to embrace Jesus Christ’s invitation to serve him in our brothers and sisters. A little child is born to us and his arrival is for our salvation.

Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton’s Christmas Message 2021

Bishop Monforton
Pope: Eat, give gifts, be ‘merry’ this Christmas, but don’t forget Jesus

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis asked people to celebrate a “real Christmas” by recognizing Jesus in their lives and cultivating peace in their relationships.

“What is Christmas? Is it a tree? A statue of a baby with a woman and a man nearby? Yes, it is Jesus, the birth of Jesus,” he said, so “stop for a bit and think of Christmas as a message, a message of peace.”

The pope’s words were in his Dec. 19, the last Sunday of Advent, on Italy’s Canale 5 in the special program, “Francis and the Invisible: The pope encounters the least.”

The program, recorded in the pope’s residence, featured a televised “dialogue” and interview with four people facing serious challenges in their lives: Giovanna, a mother of four who experienced domestic violence and lost her home and job during the COVID-19 pandemic; Maria, who lives in a shelter after sleeping on the streets; Pierdonato, who is serving two life sentences in prison; and Maristella, an 18-year-old student and Girl Scout who was representing all young people who felt isolated and abandoned because of the lockdowns and restrictions in place during the pandemic.

Each gave the pope a brief account of the challenges they had been facing as well as their ongoing concerns, doubts and questions about what next steps to take.

Giovanna said she lost her faith the day she and her kids managed to escape a life of poverty and violence and asked, “What can we do to regain our dignity?” and how could she give her children strength.

The pope said the abuse of women by their partners “is almost satanic because it is taking advantage of the weakness of someone who cannot defend herself,” and he also criticized the “humiliating” affair of a parent slapping a child on the face.

When reflecting on the dignity of women who have experienced abuse, the pope said the image that comes to mind is Michelangelo’s Pietà with “Our Lady humiliated before her child – naked, crucified and a miscreant in everyone’s eyes.”

“But she has not lost her dignity and to look at this image during difficult times like yours of humiliation and where you feel you’ve lost your dignity, looking at that image gives us strength,” he said.

He said she was already showing her kids’ strength and said the real problem was finding “a concrete way out – a job, a home and this does not depend only on you,” encouraging her to reach out for help and not be afraid of this moment of crisis, made worse by the pandemic.

He told Giovanna he could see the suffering on her face, but also her dignity, “because you would not be here” if she had none left. “You are on a journey, the danger is to give up” and “you are still on your feet like Our Lady before the cross.”

Maria described the risks of having no shelter and how that leads to trying to be invisible for safety, but how sad and demeaning it is to feel invisible and hear criticism when people pass by. “Why is society so cruel toward the poor?” she asked the pope.

It is cruel, he said, “it is the hardest slap in the face for you for society to ignore the problems of others,” perpetuating the culture of indifference which seeks to push aside real problems, such as the lack of housing and employment.

“Indifference is cruel, but do not lose hope, keep walking, keep going, perhaps someone will listen to this and help will arrive, not just material help, but the help of someone who will (touch your) heart and begin to understand the problem,” he said.

Speaking to Pierdonato, who asked whether there was hope for people who wanted to change their lives, the pope said true hope, which comes from God, never disappoints.

“God exists, not in outer space, but next to you because the way of God is closeness, compassion and tenderness,” he said.

God is always with those in prison and those experiencing hardship because his very nature is to be close and a “travel companion,” he added.

But, it is also important that the prison system never close the door on hope by depriving people of the chance to change, which is why “the church is against the death penalty, because with death there is no window,” he said.

Responding to Maristella, the pope encouraged her and her generation to continue to seek “real” dialogue and in-person relationships, not just virtual ones, and he assured her it is normal to have doubts, to question or even be angry about God.

The important thing is to have a heart at peace because “an anxious heart cannot seek God, cannot maintain a relationship with God,” so it is important to find serenity, even when experiencing suffering or difficulties, he said.

It is OK to celebrate, exchange gifts, eat and be merry, the pope said, “but do not forget Jesus. Christmas is Jesus who comes, who comes to touch our hearts, families, homes and lives.”

Pour money into education, not weapons, wars, Pope Francis tells nations

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Governments must pour more money into education and drastically reduce military spending for there to be genuine progress and peace in the world, Pope Francis said in his annual message for the World Day of Peace Jan. 1.

“It is high time, then, that governments develop economic policies aimed at inverting the spending of the world’s economies so that more of it is spent on education and on weaponry,” the pope said.

“The pursuit of a genuine process of international disarmament can only prove beneficial for the development of peoples and nations, freeing up financial resources better used for health care, schools, infrastructure, care of the land and so forth,” he said.

The pope’s message was released Dec. 21 at a Vatican news conference led by Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

The pope’s message, which the Vatican sends to heads of state around the world, invited everyone to “work together to build a more peaceful world, starting from the hearts of individuals and relationships in the family, then within society and with the environment, and all the way up to relationships between peoples and nations.”

Pope Francis proposed “three paths” for building that peace: dialogue between generations and concrete projects they can share; education aimed at building freedom, responsibility and development; and dignified labor that protects people’s rights and the environment.

“Great social challenges and peace processes necessarily call for dialogue between the keepers of memory – the elderly – and those who move history forward – the young,” Pope Francis said.

“The global crisis we are experiencing makes it clear that encounter and dialogue between generations should be the driving force behind a healthy politics,” one that “is not content to manage the present ‘with piecemeal solutions or quick fixes,’ but views itself as an outstanding form of love for others, in the search for shared and sustainable projects for the future,” he said.

Young people, he added, also should be given respect and encouragement for their commitment to working for a more just and sustainable world.

Education helps provide the skills and setting for dialogue between generations, cooperation and sharing expertise and experiences for promoting integral human development, he said. However, “there has been a significant reduction worldwide in funding for education and training; these have been seen more as expenditures than investments.”

At the same time, he said, military expenditures “have increased beyond the levels at the end of the Cold War and they seem certain to grow exorbitantly.”

He called on governments to cut military spending, boost investment in education and do more to “promote the culture of care, which, in the face of social divisions and unresponsive institutions, could become a common language working to break down barriers and build bridges.”

Cardinal Turkson told reporters that trying to build security through stockpiling weapons only creates more distrust, which, in turn, feeds a desire for more weapons.

“Working on building trust will help in reducing arms spending, he said, and the more the world develops an increased sense of human fraternity and ‘closeness,’” the more arms will become unnecessary.

The pope said in his message that having dignified work is also part of building and keeping peace as it lets people contribute toward “a more habitable and beautiful world.”

But, the COVID-19 pandemic has hurt many in a labor market that was already facing multiple challenges and it has had a devastating impact on “the informal economy, which often involves migrant workers,” he said.

Many migrant workers and their families “live in highly precarious conditions, prey to various forms of slavery and with no system of welfare to protect them,” the pope said. “Currently only one-third of the world’s population of working age enjoys a system of social protection, or benefit from it only in limited ways.”

The only answer to this and other challenges “is an expansion of dignified employment opportunities” and decent working conditions for jobs that support the common good and safeguard creation, the pope said.

Companies need to respect the fundamental human rights of workers, and this requires “raising awareness not only on the part of institutions, but also among consumers, civil society and entrepreneurial entities,” he said.

Politics has an active role to play here “by promoting a fair balance between economic freedom and social justice,” the pope said, adding that Catholic workers and entrepreneurs can find guidance with the church’s social doctrine.
Franciscan launches largest fundraising effort

STEUBENVILLE — Franciscan University of Steubenville launched the public phase of the most ambitious fundraising effort in its 75-year history — a $75 million capital campaign to help the university continue to respond to God’s call to “Rebuild My Church.”

The campaign was launched Dec. 10 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the opening of the then-College of Steubenville. Over the past year, they helped us reach 87% of their goal. Father Pivonka explained that the campaign theme, “Rebuild My Church” campaign, said, “I have watched Franciscan University to “the next level” with new buildings and programs so it can continue to fulfill its mission in Catholic higher education.

Finally, $1 million (fully funded) supports the development of new courses in Franciscan’s fast-growing Criminal Justice Program.

Paul M. “Mickey” Pohl, chairman of the “Rebuild My Church” campaign, said, “I have watched Franciscan University grow from a small, regional college, whose survival was not clear 40 years ago, to a Catholic university that is now recognized as one of the great Catholic universities in the world.”

With the help of the Holy Spirit, Pohl said, the goal is to take Franciscan University to “the next level” with new buildings and new programs so it can continue to fulfill its mission in Catholic higher education.

Bob Hickey, vice president for advancement, said he is “grateful for those donors who have put their faith in us and provided the momentum needed to move the campaign forward. Our primary goal is to fully fund these campaign initiatives and support Franciscan’s unique mission to educate and send forth graduates who can help transform current and future students.

• Enhance and Expand Academics – $48 million. The “bricks and mortar” centerpiece of the campaign is the new Christ the Teacher academic and conference building. Constructed with two wings, Christ the Teacher will visibly convey the union of reason and faith enshrined in Franciscan University’s mission. The first new academic building in more than 20 years, it will include more than 110,000 square feet of learning space, making it the largest building on campus.

Christ the Teacher will help Franciscan University respond to steady enrollment growth and will provide much-needed room for the expanding business, engineering and nursing programs.

Features include a new welcome center for Admissions, a new boardroom, a conference center, a tiered lecture hall, a state-of-the-art nursing skills lab and eight specialized engineering laboratories.

• Increase Financial Aid and Scholarship – $18 million. To continue attracting smart, capable, faithful young people, many of whom come from large families with limited means, Franciscan University must increase the scholarship and financial aid it offers to current and future students.

• Build Outreach and Evangelization – $5 million. Franciscan University is known worldwide for its summer youth and adult conferences, for the work of the Catechetical Institute, and other evangelical outreaches to dioceses, parishes and schools. This campaign component will expand Franciscan’s efforts to revitalize Catholics and their parishes.

Other identified campaign needs include $2 million for the Center for Leadership and Entrepreneurship (now fully funded) that will ground students in Catholic social teachings and equip them with the business and leadership skills they need to run the own nonprofit and for-profit enterprises.

Another $1 million (fully funded) goes toward a new eight-bed skills lab and four simulation labs with lifelike patient simulators used by the Nursing Department to practice real-world nursing scenarios.

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Hickey added that “prayerful discussions are underway about other initiatives to support should the campaign exceed its $75 million goal.

Franciscan University expects to break ground on the Christ the Teacher building in fall 2022 and to raise the remaining $9.8 million by fall 2023.

Donors can designate which component of the campaign they want to support.

For more information and to donate, visit giving.franciscan.edu.

Bishop Monforton’s Schedule

December
25 Christmas Midnight Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville
30 Catholic Conference of Ohio virtual conference call, 11 a.m.

January
1 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 4 p.m., livestreamed and recorded (Triumph of the Cross Parish and diocesan Facebook pages)
2 Epiphany Sunday Mass, Daughters of Holy Mary of the Heart of Jesus, Steubenville, 10 a.m.
4 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 7 a.m. Annual dinner with priests, Holy Family Church, Steubenville, 5 p.m.
5 Mass, Holy Rosary Church, Steubenville, 8:30 a.m. Radio segment, WDEO 990 AM, 10:15 a.m. Annual dinner with priests, Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, 5 p.m.

7-8 Retreat

Pope advances sainthood causes

By Junno Arocho Esteves

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis recognized a miracle attributed to Blessed Marie Rivier, a French nun who founded the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary, paving the way for her canonization.

During a meeting with Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes, Dec. 13, the pope also signed decrees advancing the sainthood causes of two other women and three men.

Born in 1768 in Montpezat, France, Blessed Rivier was devoutly religious throughout her life, especially during the time of the French Revolution in which religious activities were outlawed.

While many Catholic convents were closed, she founded the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary in 1796. The religious order continued to grow and their works expanded, including the opening of an orphanage in 1814.

She died in 1838 and was beatified by St. John Paul II in 1982.

The other decrees approved by Pope Francis recognized:

• a miracle attributed to Italian Maria Carola Cechin, member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo. She was born in 1877 and died in 1966.

• the heroic virtues of Spanish Father Andrés Garrido Perales, a member of the Mercedarians. He was born in 1663 and died 1728;

• the heroic virtues of Capuchin Father Carlo Maria da Abbiategrasso. He was born in Italy in 1825 and died in 1859;

• the heroic virtues of Comboni Father Bernardino Sartori. He was born in Italy in 1897 and died in Uganda in 1983; and

• the heroic virtues of Polish Sister Ludwika Banas, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth. She was born in 1896 and died in 1966.

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THE STEUBENVILLE REGISTER  DEC. 24, 2021

MOURNING, prayer and a resolve to rebuild follow devastating tornadoes

MAYFIELD, Ky. (CNS) — Mourning, prayer and a resolve to rebuild shattered lives, homes and businesses in Mayfield followed one of the most powerful twisters in U.S. history that leveled the city of 10,000 in western Kentucky overnight Dec. 10.

The Bluegrass State was the worst hit as numerous devastating tornadoes traveled across it and its neighboring states of Illinois, Tennessee, Arkansas and Missouri, leveling entire communities. As of Dec. 20, at least 78 people were confirmed dead in Kentucky, including a 2-month-old infant.

At least 14 other people were killed in the other states: six in Illinois, four in Tennessee, and two each in Arkansas and Missouri.

As members of two of Mayfield’s faith congregations came together to pray Dec. 12 amid rubble — piles of brick, metal and glass — prayers for their city and all of those affected by the ferocious mid-December twisters came from far and wide, including from Pope Francis and the U.S. Catholic bishops, and from close to home – Bishop William F. Medley of Owensboro, whose diocese covers western Kentucky.

A papal telegram conveyed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, said Pope Francis “was saddened to learn of the devastating impact of the tornadoes” in the Midwest and the South.

“He offers heartfelt prayers that Almighty God will grant eternal peace to those who have died, comfort to those who mourn their loss, and strength to all those affected by this immense tragedy,” it said.

“Their sacrifice does not go in vain. We promote the cause of their brotherhood,” the Vatican message continued.

With gratitude for the tireless efforts of the rescue workers and all engaged in caring for the injured, the grieving families and those left homeless, Pope Francis invokes upon all engaged in the massive work of relief and rebuilding the Lord’s gifts of strength and generous perseverance in the service of their brothers and sisters,” said the telegram, which Cardinal Parolin sent to Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the apostolic nuncio in the U.S.

Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, said the destruction and devastation was “heartbreaking” and called for prayer and assistance for all those who were in the path of the storms.

“During this Advent season where we await in joyful anticipation for the birth of Our Lord, we pray for those who have been injured, for those who have lost their lives, and for their grieving families and communities,” said Archbishop Gomez and Coakley. “May those who have been impacted by these storms find peace, comfort and hope in our faith and in God’s endless love.

“We also pray for the emergency responders and those who have begun the work of providing for the needs of the impacted in these communities in the recovery efforts,” they said in a statement issued late Dec. 11. “We entrust all our brothers and sisters in harm’s way to our Blessed Mother, and we ask for her continued protection and for her intercession in comforting those who are suffering.

“The two prelates urged Catholics and all people of goodwill to donate to recovery efforts and financial help for tornado victims by supporting the work of Catholic Charities USA: https://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/campaign/ccusa-disaster-relief/

Bishop Medley in a Dec. 11 statement called on the Catholic community of the diocese “to unite in prayer ... for all of the suffering that was caused by this disaster.

Parishes took up a special collection over the Dec. 11-12 weekend to aid tornado victims.

The bishop also took note of the leveling of Mayfield’s candle factory, where 110 employees were working around the clock, which is customary during the Christmas season, according to news reports.

Initially, city officials feared the death toll among factory workers would reach 70. Late Dec. 12, a company representative told reporters that eight workers were confirmed dead, and a stay later the workers who had been missing were accounted for.

“Many of those injured in the Mayfield factory were parishioners, and others represented migrants and the marginalized in our communities,” Bishop Medley said in his statement.

He added that through its Catholic Charities office, the diocese planned “to offer immediate help and services” for those displaced by the tornado and/or in need of immediate emergency financial help.

“I am proud of the many ways that your generosity always allows the Catholic Church to respond to the suffering and to families in crisis,” Bishop Medley said.

“So I thank you in advance for your generous response to this terrible devastation. God will bless our generosity.”

In a Dec. 12 tweet, Bishop Medley said he visited the Catholic community of St. Joseph Church in Mayfield: “Fr. Eric Riley, the pastor, preached on the Advent and Our Lady of Guadalupe themes of hope and joy. Neighboring parish St. Jerome of Fancy Farm welcomed them.”

At a news briefing Dec. 12 in Mayfield, Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear noted one tornado traveled 227 miles. “It didn’t take a roof, which is what we’ve seen in the past. It exploded the whole house. People, animals ... just gone.”

“The very first thing that we have to do is grieve together,” he said, “and we’re going to do that before we rebuild together.”

Franciscan University of Steubenville marked the start of its year-long 75th anniversary celebration with a campus-wide Mass on Dec. 10. At the closing of the Mass, Steubenville Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton congratulated Franciscan University on the milestone, saying he has been “grateful for the collaboration and cooperation” between the university and the diocese over the last 75 years. (Photo provided)

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Vatican releases Latin text for installing catechists, explains ministry

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Catholic men and women formally installed in the new ministry of catechists are not simply religious education teachers but are engaged in “the proclamation and transmission of the faith, carrying out this role in collaboration with the ordained ministers and under their guidance,” said a letter accompanying the Latin text of the Rite of Institution of Catechists.

Archbishop Arthur Roche, prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, released the Latin text and a letter Dec. 13, seven months after Pope Francis instituted the “ministry of catechist” as a formal office and vocation in the church.

Bishops’ conferences will be responsible for translating the rite into their local languages and seeking Vatican approval for local adaptations, which are expected given the rite into their local languages and seeking Vatican action, so much so that it is difficult to give it a unitary and synthetic description.”

In different parts of the world, he said, formally recognized catechists can be found “guiding community prayer, especially the Sunday liturgy in the absence of a priest or deacon; assisting the sick; leading funeral celebrations; training and guiding other catechists; coordinating pastoral initiatives; human promotion according to the church’s social doctrine; helping the poor; fostering the relationship between the community and the ordained ministers.”

Archbishop Roche said people should not be surprised by the “breadth and variety of functions” associated with catechists because “the exercise of this lay ministry fully expresses the consequences of being baptized and, in the particular situation of the lack of a stable presence of ordained ministers, it is a participation in their pastoral action.”

“This is what the Code of Canon Law affirms when it provides for the possibility of entrusting to a non-ordained person a share in the exercise of pastoral care in a parish, always under the moderation of a priest,” he wrote. “It is necessary, therefore, that the catechist be close to the people, that he does not see the catechist as a substitute for the priest or deacon, but as a member of the lay faithful who lives their baptism in fruitful collaboration and shared responsibility with the ordained ministers, so that their pastoral care may reach everyone.”

Those chosen for the ministry of catechist, he said, are to be called by their bishop and instituted in what the church calls a “stable” way. While the specific terms of their ministry are up to the local bishop, they are installed in the ministry only once and for a substantial period of time.

Archbishop Roche also included a list of those who “should not be instituted as catechists”:

• those who have already begun their journey toward holy orders and in particular have been admitted among the candidates for the diaconate and the priesthood, because the ministry of catechist is a lay ministry;
• men and women religious — irrespective of whether they belong to institutes whose charism is catechesis unless they act as leaders of a parish community or coordinators of catechetical activity;
• those who carry out a role exclusively for the members of an ecclesial movement” since that role is assigned by leaders of the movement and not by the diocesan bishop; and
• those who teach Catholic religion in schools, unless they also carry out other ecclesiastical tasks in the service of the parish or diocese.

The pope’s institution of a formal ministry of catechist, he said, also should not end the practice of all a parish’s or school’s religion teachers being commissioned and given a mandate at the beginning of each school year.

Deacon Thomas A. Vennitti, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Joseph parishes, Toronto.
St. John Paul II Obedience

By Diocese of Steubenville Bishop Emeritus Gilbert I. Sheldon

St. John Paul has revisited the vows of poverty and chastity that he treated in detail earlier. He does so now with that of obedience. His model, as always, is that of Christ, himself: always acting with perfect obedience to the Father. Hence, the common saying among religious: “The will of the superior is the will of God.” The human will is one of those qualities of human beings that make them different from the other living creatures of God. The lower animals act out of instinct. We don’t. Normally, we make up our own minds. There may be some debate about some of our instincts, e.g., the need for food and drink and that of self-preservation. Perhaps these might be considered “mixed” instinct: part automatic and part instinctive. We don’t have to be told when to eat and drink, and when we’re threatened with a blow, we “instinctively” put up an arm to ward it off.

The use of freewill is considered to begin in parallel with that of reason, i.e., about the age of 6-8, when youngsters are considered to have acquired the “use of reason.” That usually takes place about those ages along with it. For that reason, youngsters are introduced to First Communions and confession at approximately that age. There’s some controversy over the wisdom of this practice, but we won’t try to settle it here.

The theory, generally, is that when a youngster is able to use reason, he or she is also able to understand the consequences of their decision, and is therefore responsible for it. Such capacity is usually referred to as “knowing the difference between right and wrong.” It is the criterion for determining guilt or innocence of those who claim mental illness as an excuse for apparent crimes. There are youngsters, we know from experience, who don’t seem capable of making the connection, and we might add, some adults, too. Many of those addicted to alcohol, for example, fall into that category. We use the term “irresponsible” to describe them.

Well, we’ve drifted away, somewhat, from our subject, which was the vow of obedience, as practiced in religious life. It’s not hard to imagine the consequences of such a vow and its cost to the person making it. Let’s consider a case (hypothetical, of course) of an order of teaching sisters, who staff several high schools. Sister X’s heart is in English literature, but she has been told that St. Whatchamacallit High School needs a math teacher. Her superior directs her to enroll at such-and-such university to pursue an advanced degree in mathematics, which she always hated. So, contrary to her own wishes, she spends the next several summers at that university studying the intricacies of calculus, etc., when she would much rather be on Shakespeare and Byron. A sacrifice? You bet! If he or she were a lay teacher, she could choose her own career, but not as a religious under vows. It means when, even though we have a will of our own, we don’t say, “No, I won’t.”

John Paul says: “We know from the Gospel that, in virtue of this attitude, Jesus placed himself completely at the disposal of the Father’s will. He went so far as to allow himself to be put to death by one of the most fiendish methods man, in his most perverse moment, could contrive: crucifixion. It meant placing oneself at the disposal of the Father with no strings attached!”

Religious, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, subject themselves in faith to their superiors who hold the place of God. Under their guidance, they are led to serve all their brothers and/or sisters in Christ, just as Christ himself in obedience to the Father, laid down his life as a ransom for many. Jesus lived obedience to the Father without excluding human intermediaries. As a child, he obeyed Joseph and Mary (see, Luke, Chapter 2, Verse 51). For the religious, it means putting oneself at the disposal of the superior. Of course, in today’s church, consultation is prized and respected. One’s own wishes may and do come into consideration to some extent.

John Paul calls attention to the third temptation of Christ in the desert: to take a swim dive off the top of the Temple in Jerusalem, where a crowd was always milling about, and have the angels catch him. Jesus would gain immediate attention, not to say notoriety, or in today’s Hollywood terms, “celebrity.” It was an appeal to that very human welcome for a pat on the back. We all feel it. The baseball player would like to achieve the Triple Crown in batting, unless he’s a pitcher who might enjoy pitching a no-hitter in a World Series game. (We might want to check with George Will on that to learn if it did ever happen and how many times.) Servicemen might wish to be entitled to wear the light blue ribbon of the Congressional Medal of Honor and be saluted — even by generals! We could go on and on. There’s no end to awards and titles in human fields of endeavor. Plenty of “pats on the back” are waiting to be given. Some seek them and some do not. (Some just feel, “What’s the use?”)

The will is a powerful faculty for mankind. It works both ways: positively and negatively. For those in religious life, the positive side is controlled by the virtue of obedience. For the rest of us, it is that of the positive side that might be a problem. The virtue involved here is that of “modesty” which applies not only to clothing, but to human desires such as for approbation as well. Those who lack modesty may follow the slogan: “If you got it, flaunt it.” The will is heavily influenced by the senses. How much is the sense of beauty is involved in “falling in love?” A youngster may be enthralled by his first taste of candy and want more and more of it. An adult may be influenced by his or her first taste of sex. He or she, too, may want more and more of it. But, the circumstances under which they seek it may be legitimate or not. The will may be influenced by the senses, but should not be controlled by them. That’s where “will power” comes in, both in the case of the child and the adult. Like other human facilities, exercise is required to develop it!

Heavenly Reflections

By Father Jonas A. Shell

During Advent, one of the many beautiful prayers after Communion says, “May these mysteries, O Lord, in which we have participated, profit us, we pray, for even now, as we walk amid passing things, you teach us by them to love the things of heaven and hold fast to what endures” (Roma Missal, 3rd edition). All of these pithy prayers of the church are packed with meaning and food for thought. This one struck me as a good springboard to talk about heaven.

In a broad sense, “mysteries” can refer to God’s intervention in history in which we can participate by grace.

“It means when, even though we have a will of our own, we don’t say, “No, I won’t.””

This includes all the saving acts of God spanning from the creation of the world (which is the stage for salvation history), to all the salvific events and images of the Old Testament, culminating in the entire life of Jesus Christ, the one through whom God accomplished his saving work. At Mass, the mystery of the whole salvific work of Jesus Christ is made present, especially the culminating events of his life, namely, his passion, death, resurrection and ascension. These events were only possible because of his Incarnation, which began in time at the Annunciation of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary. This is a reason why the church focuses on different parts of salvation history throughout each year in the different liturgical seasons, so that we can once again enter into the various mysteries of the life of Christ. This mystical connection to the life of Christ, granted to us by our incorporation into his mystical body, helps us to be more like Christ. The goal is as St. Paul says so dramatically, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:20). As the above prayer mentions, this life in Christ on earth, the mysteries in which we participate, help us to love the things of heaven and hold fast to what endures while walking amid the passing things of earth. The things that endure are those things that won’t get burnt up by the purging fire of Christ’s love. These are our good deeds and our interior likeness to Christ (this is a simplification). But, what are the things that Page 8

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The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord” (Lk 2:10-11).

A Solemn Proclamation

The angel’s proclamation to the shepherds in the field underscores the fact the celebration of Jesus’ Nativity is not exclusive to one people. All humanity celebrates our Lord’s birth. The Virgin Mary conceiving our Savior and giving birth to him was an intentional loving act by God himself.

Christmas is of divine design. God made it so. The center of the universe has made earth his home and comes before us as a small newborn child. The angel in no small way indicates the future Jesus has in store for the human race and all of reality. The creator is our Redeemer, our Savior. In time, humanity will come to the realization that Jesus Christ is its only and certain hope. In the meantime, the Infant Jesus will be part of a family, with a loving mother in Mary and a loving adoptive father in Joseph: the Holy Family.

The Infant Jesus: Promise Fulfilled

It is in the person of Jesus, this newborn child, where all hope comes together for eternal life with God and the reality that this day heaven meets earth. Christmas is not simply an annual remembrance of a moment 2,000 years ago. Christmas cannot simply be relegated to a time of year in which we become increasingly generous with one another or our eager attempt to drive up the electric bill with festive lighting. Christmas is more than good will. Christmas is greater than any gift humanity can muster.

Christmas is a promise fulfilled. The conception of Jesus and his subsequent birth informs us that God cares. Every one of us, from conception in our mother’s womb, are precious in God’s eyes. The Infant Jesus illustrates that you and I matter. The Infant Jesus is proof-positive that each one of us is created to be good, if only we permit ourselves the chance.

While there have been a great number of saintly people throughout human history, none of them are in the same league as Jesus Christ. We learn from sacred Scripture Jesus does more than ask us to imitate him; he provides us the very ability through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus will never leave us.

There Always is Hope

The Solemnity of Christmas is a great beacon shining for all to see God’s enduring love. Christmas is a reminder that humanity is not a failed experiment, but instead a success in God’s eyes. Jesus’ birth, his earthly ministry among us, his passion and death, his resurrection and ascension to the Father has made it so. At Jesus’ birth, the angel proclaims that humanity will never be the same. There always is hope.

May you have a blessed Christmas.

Stay holy; stay healthy; stay safe.

Do We Have Guardian Angels?

By Father Ron Rolheiser

As a child, I was taught that I had a guardian angel, a real angel given to me by God to accompany me everywhere and protect me from danger. I remember a pious holy card given to me by my mother, showing a young boy playing dangerously close to the edge of a cliff and an angel protecting him there. Most Roman Catholics of my generation, I suspect, remember a pious prayer we prayed each day asking for the guidance and protection of our guardian angel: Angel of God, my guardian dear... What’s to be said about guardian angels? Do such personified spirits really exist or are guardian angels simply creatures of our imagination created to be helpful in the religious development of children? Are we meant to outgrow our belief in them?

Whether or not we are meant to outgrow that belief, the fact is that today for the most part, we have outgrown it. Most adults, within all Christian denominations, either see the existence of guardian angels as pious fantasy or are simply indifferent to the idea.

Are we still meant to believe in guardian angels? If yes, in what exactly are we meant to believe? Are angels real personified beings or simply another word for God’s presence in our lives?

Scripture scholars don’t give us a definitive answer, but rather suggest that the question can be answered either way. In Scripture, the word “angel” might be referring to a real personified spirit or it might be referring to a special presence of God in some situation. Church tradition affirms more strongly that angels are real. Here angels have a rich history and for the most part are taken to be real persons (“albeit spirits”). Christian iconography and music abound with angels, and the Roman Catholic Church has major feasts celebrating angels and guardian angels. The Fourth Lateran Council (taking place in 1215, long before the Protestant Reformation) stated that belief in guardian angels is implicit in Scripture. The Catechism of the Catholic Church affirms that “from infancy to death, human life is surrounded by their (guardian angels’) watchful care and intercession. Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherding leading him to life.”

Where does that leave us? Divided. Conservative Christians generally assert the existence of angels as a dogmatic teaching. Angels are real. Liberal Christians tend to doubt that or at least areagnostic about it for them. “Angel” more likely refers to a special presence of God. For example, they take the statement in the Gospels where the evangelist tells us that while Jesus was praying “an angel came and strengthened him” to mean that God’s grace came and strengthened him. Who’s right? Perhaps it doesn’t matter since the reality is the same in either case. God gives us revelation, guidance, protection and strength and does so in ways that are “angelic,” that are beyond our normal conceptualizations.

Those who believe that angels are real have a strong case. Even if we just look at the origins and dimensions of physical creation (whatever scientific version of this you subscribe to) mystery immediately dwarfs our imaginative capacities. It is all too huge to grasp! We know now that there are billions of universes (not just planets) and we know now that our planet earth, and we on this planet, are the tiniest of minute specks inside the unthinkable magnitude of God’s creation. If this is true, and it is, then this is hardly the time to be skeptical about the extent of God’s creation, believing that we, humans, are what is central and that there can be no personified realities beyond our own flesh and blood. Such thinking is narrow, both from the point of view of faith and from the perspective of science itself.

However, the agnosticism of those who doubt the existence of angels is ultimately benign. When Scripture tells us that the Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce her pregnancy and when it tells us that after Jesus had exhausted himself with struggle in Gethsemane, an angel came and strengthened him, it makes little difference whether this occurred via the modality of a personified spirit or via some other modality of God’s presence. Either way, it was real. Either way, it was a particularized, real entry of God into someone’s life.

So, do we have guardian angels? At birth or at baptism does God assign a particular angel to journey with us throughout our lives, giving us invisible, heavenly guidance and protection? Yes, we do have a guardian angel, irrespective of how we might imagine or conceive of this. God is closer to us than we are to ourselves and God’s solicitous love, guidance and protection are with us always. At the end of the day, it matters little whether this comes through a particular personified spirit (who has a name in heaven) or whether it comes simply through God’s loving omnipresence.

God’s presence is real – and we are never alone, without God’s love, guidance and protection.

Father Rolheiser, a Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate priest, is an author, a retreat master and a newspaper columnist. More information about his ministry is available on his website: www.ronrolheiser.com.
**Heavenly Reflections**

From Page 6

of heaven? What is the place, or mode of being to which we say as Catholics that we are striving for? "In my days," says St. Paul, "we do not yet know about heaven."

The catechism puts it this way: This mystery of blessed communion with God and all who are in Christ is beyond all understanding and description. Scripture speaks of it in images: life, light, peace, wedding feast, wine of the kingdom, the Father's house, the heavenly Jerusalem, paradise (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraph 1027).

Thus, for us to obtain some grasp of the reality of heaven, we must turn to the images provided by Scripture while bearing in mind that it is only an image. It is something we see dimly, a vision of the unknown world through the images of the world that is known.

The Book of Revelation tells us of angels and elders, thrones, thunder and lightning, great multitudes beyond counting, praises of God, an altar and incense, books and scrolls and various other images (see, Revelation, Chapters 4-7). The reason that same book, there is talk of a new heaven and a new earth where the heavenly Jerusalem will descend from heaven. This city is large and cubical, with beautiful foundation stones, pearl gates and streets.

All the light will come from God, and the lamp of the lamb (see, Revelation, Chapter 21 ff). These are beautiful images that are given to us for reflection and meditation, but these are only images that give us a glimpse of heaven. These are the persons in heaven. In heaven, these are the people we will know. In heaven, there will be no more weeping, nor sin, death. We will enjoy the company of the angels and all the other saints. Most importantly, we shall see God. This is the primary bliss of heaven, the vision of God as he is. "Beloved, we are God's children; we do not yet know what we shall be, but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn 3:2).

This vision of God is that reality which is impossible for us to know or describe because it will be unlike anything we have ever known. We receive small hints of it now when we are struck by beauty, goodness and truth found in the created world. Even the experience of ecstasy is only a small glimpse of the complete satisfaction that we will experience in the presence of God. I've heard that St. Catherine of Sienna described heaven as a place where we are always satisfied, but never full. The vision of God will fill us with light and life eternal. For now though, as we walk amid passing things, and until we see him face to face, we still have that wonderful mystery experienced at Christmas, where we seek to join all those who sat in darkness, but have seen a great light (see, Isaiah, Chapter 9, Verse 2). We join the Magi, the angels, the shepherds, the animals, Joseph and Mary, and the great procession of all those who have come after Christ. We join them on a cold, starry night to enter the cave at Bethlehem and gaze upon him whom heaven and earth could not contain. We seek to find heaven in the face of the Christ Child.

Father Shell is a Diocese of Steubenville priest and the pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Carrollton, and St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish, Morges.

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**Doctors: Advances since Roe confirm abortion ‘takes life of unborn child’**

By Jodi Marlin

**Catholic News Service**

WASHINGTON — At 15 weeks’ gestation, a fetus responds to touch. The neurotransmitters and nerves needed to process and transmit pain signals have formed, and most of the spinal column has hardened into bone.

As early as 21 weeks, the fetus can survive outside the womb.

None of these realities were known in 1971, when a case came before the Supreme Court and would give a mother the right to abort her unborn child.

During the past 50 years, advances regarding the biological genesis of humans have disproven the basis on which the court, in Roe v. Wade, presumed a lack of justifiability of a ban on abortions — except to save the life of the mother — that was in place in the defendant’s home state of Texas.

The court’s 1973 decision legalizing abortion nationwide rested on the use of the word “person” in the 14th Amendment, which protects the mother’s privacy. Notably, there was great disagreement over when an unborn child becomes a living being whose rights compete with those of the mother. Since then, techniques in research tools and prenatal surgery, advancements in viability and the proliferation of support options for mothers with unexpected pregnancies have conspired to erode many of the arguments offered then and now for the right to terminate life in the womb.

The many layers to comprehending the humanity of an early gestation fetus begins with the “absolutely critical” advancements in science over the last five decades, according to Dr. Tara Sander Lee, senior fellow and director of life sciences for the Charlotte Lozier Institute, an organization that brings the power of science, medicine and research to bear in pro-life policies and public awareness.

Fifty years ago, expectant parents could barely see their unborn child in the womb because ultrasound technology was fairly new and rudimentary, Sander Lee explained.

Now, ultrasound technology gives physicians better and faster diagnostics and new tools that can not only detect, even treat malformations of the baby, assess the anatomy and determine if her sex far earlier than could be done just two generations ago could do.

“So those involved in abortion cannot say this is a ‘blob of tissue’ — they know this is a baby, and that abortion takes the life of an unborn child,” she said.

If an early ultrasound or test determines the presence of a malformation in the fetus, the most severe ones — including spina bifida and twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome, which can result in the death of both babies — has been done as early as 15 weeks in these pregnancies. In the latter situation, it proven to be a lifesaving procedure for one, if not both babies.

“This ability to be able to better visualize the inside the womb has really allowed us to be able to then treat some of these conditions early on,” said Sander Lee.

In terms of viability, it was known at the time of Roe v. Wade that it was only possible to save premature babies born between 24 and 28 weeks: That clock has been moved up as well.

“We know now that we can save babies routinely at 22 weeks, and sometimes even younger as early as 21 weeks,” said Sander Lee. The world’s most premature baby, born at 21 weeks, celebrated his first birthday this summer.

The Catholic Medical Association argues that the 24- to 28-week criterion for viability is unworkable, demonstrating the flaws in predicting viability, especially if the person responsible for such a prediction is the abortion provider, whose interest is not in protecting life.

“The viability standard for protecting human life is arbitrary,” said Dr. Marie Hilliard, co-chairperson of the association’s ethics committee.

“Much is based on access to prenatal and high quality post-natal care,” she said. “Current technology available to diagnose prenatal conditions, and treat the most complex neonatal conditions, were unimaginated in 1973 (when the Roe decision was handed down), easily moving viability to as early as 22 weeks’ gestation.”

“These facts are irrefutable, indicating that even earlier that 22 weeks’ gestation, there is the presence of ‘potential’ human life. … Science now clearly demonstrates that from the moment of conception the unborn baby is a human being, not a ‘potential’ human being.”

Fifty years of research also has provided a much deeper understanding of fetal pain and suffering.

For Mississippi, the point at which fetal pain is possible is 15 weeks; the state’s law banning abortions after 15 weeks is currently under review by the U.S. Supreme Court, which heard oral arguments in the case — Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization — Dec. 1.

But, sometimes the fetus feels pain earlier. “It’s incredible, but they may feel pain from as early as 12 weeks’ gestation — and definitely by 18 weeks,” said Sander Lee. “We didn’t really understand how much suffering these babies could go through inside the womb in 1973.”

In an amicus brief filed in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization, the Catholic Medical Association and co-respondents expressed the opinion that the court should “extricate itself from the arbitrary line-drawing that Roe and Casey engaged in while attempting to settle the abortion controversy. Any arbitrary line that the court might seek to replace the viability cut-off with would simply amount to yet another act of judicial legislating.”

“Casey” referenced in the brief is Casey v. Planned Parenthood, the high court’s 1992 decision that affirmed Roe and also stressed that a state regulation on abortion could not impose an “undue burden” on a woman “seeking an abortion before the fetus attains viability.”

The culmination of five decades of medical and research advancements rests in the simple truth that during pregnancy, there are two patients, said Sander Lee.

“We have the unborn child, who is a separate patient from the mother,” she said.

“So we need to treat both patients, and our ability to do that has come miles since Roe.”

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**Bishop celebrates Mass at CCHS**

Mass attendance for the parishes/missions of the Diocese of Steubenville

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2021 Totals: 3,951 3,985 2,555 947 362 110 1,191
‘St. Nicholas’ visits Gallipolis

Jeff Fowler, dressed as “St. Nicholas,” stands with Father Thomas F. Hamm, pastor of St. Louis Parish, Gallipolis, during St. Louis Catholic Woman’s Club bazaar, Dec. 4. During the event, “St. Nicholas” visited and took photos with the children and taught the history of St. Nicholas. (Photo provided)

Choir performs at St. John Church

The St. John Parish, Bellaire, and St. Mary Parish, Shadyside, adult choir presents a program of Advent lessons and carols, Dec. 12, at St. John Church. The evening included scriptural readings and Advent music. Father Daniel Heusel, pastor of St. John and St. Mary parishes, led the congregation in prayer. Narrators for the program were Mary Ann Young and Annemarie Dimmick. The choir is under the direction of Joe DeGenova and is accompanied by Rosalind Fitch. Members of the choir include Karen Kahl, Lynne Devendra, Jeanine Timko, Mallory Coup, Janey Ruskowski, Carol LeMasters, John Coup, Dom Moscato, Doug Fitch, Susie Gibson, Andrea Schamp, Lisa Clegg, Kelli Shalhouch, Valerie Patterson, Denise Peters, Mary DeGenova, Debbie Respole, Mary Ann Kiss and Katie Ball. Soloists at the program were Kelli Shallock and Mary DeGenova. Special guest soloist was Brent Kimball, music instructor at St. John Central Academy, Bellaire, who sang a song that he wrote titled, “Bethlehem Waiting.” (Photo provided)

K of C awards ‘Lady of the Year’

Knights of Columbus Council 478, Marietta, recognizes Sandy Bickert as the “Lady of the Year” for 2021 at the council’s “Ladies Appreciation Dinner,” Dec. 7. Bickert was presented with an engraved plaque with the prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Bickert has served the Knights council, Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, and St. Mary School, Marietta. Pictured presenting the plaque are, from left, Pete Saliba, Grand Knight; Sandy Bickert and her husband, Randy; and Vince Stollar, Knights of Columbus community activities director. (Photo provided)

St. Mary Central donates gifts

St. Mary Central School, Martins Ferry, students, faculty and staff donate socks and new or gently used toys to the Salvation Army to help make Christmas better for children in need. Pictured are eighth-grade students gathering the donations for pickup with Michalene Munas, a religion teacher, pictured fourth from left. Students pictured are, from left, Keyuri Morgan, Paul Stecker III, Athena Litwin and Addison Wagner. For their donation, they got to hang an ornament on the tree and earn points for their houses. (Photo provided)

Obituaries

Franky J. Alex (Aleksiejczyk), 90, Mingo Junction, St. Agnes, Dec. 12.
Judy L. Angus, 65, Triumph of the Cross, Steubenville, Nov. 11.
Donna J. Arnold, 70, Our Lady of Mercy, Lowell, Dec. 2.
LeRoy “Lee” Bryant, 85, Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, Dec. 3.
Olga DeSantis, 91, Triumph of the Cross, Steubenville, Nov. 29.
Mary A. Ferroni, 91, Mingo Junction, St. Agnes, Dec. 7.
Gerald E. “Jerry” Littlefield, 87, Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption, Marietta, Nov. 27.
Patrick “Paddy” McCort Jr., 85, St. Mary, Templemanville, Nov. 17.
Mary A. McCoy, 86, Triumph of the Cross, Steubenville, Dec. 13.
Rick W. Mendell Sr., 76, St. Francis Xavier, Malvern, Dec. 12.
Joseph J. Mrzolek, 72, Bridgeport, St. Anthony of Padua, Dec. 19.
Vince Palleschi, 79, St. Francis Xavier, Malvern, Dec. 3.
Anna M. Remic, 97, Triumph of the Cross, Steubenville, Nov. 16.
Richard “Shak” Roshak, 72, St. Joseph, Tiltonsville, Dec. 5.
Dolores “Dee” Smolira, 83, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Barnesville, Nov. 29.
Marianna M. Yanko, 64, Triumph of the Cross, Steubenville, Dec. 9.
STEUBENVILLE — Catholic Central High School, Steubenville, hosted a benefit show Nov. 27, which raised $25,000. The funds benefited Catholic Central’s chapel renovation project and the Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley. Ticket proceeds from the show benefited the Mark Eddie Rockin’ Juvenile Diabetes Fund, which is part of the Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley. This fund, established by Eddie and his wife, Cyndi, financially supports families/children with Type 1 diabetes. November was National Diabetes Awareness Month.

Eddie, who is a Catholic Central High School alumnus (Class of 1982), hosted the show, which featured Jim Krenn, comedian and former WDVE (102.5 FM) morning show host; Tracie Jayne, comedian and Wintersville native; Carlo Volhl, guitarist for “U.S. Kid”; and Greg Hahn, a comedian from Comedy Central and “Tosh.0.”

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, a temporary chapel was established in the school’s library to accommodate space for the students. The current temporary chapel seats approximately 75 people.

Dalton C.L. Haas, director of marketing and communications, said this temporary setup has been useful for Eucharistic adoration and smaller Masses, but it is “not ideal to have a space for prayer that only feels temporary.” He said the chapel is an “essential part” of Catholic Central and “students can often be found making a visit to the chapel during their free time.”

Father Michael W. Gossett, chaplain of Catholic Central High School and pastor of Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady of Lourdes parishes, Wintersville, spends two lunch periods a week hearing confessions.

Mass is celebrated every Wednesday and Friday morning. On every other Wednesday evening, students attend Eucharistic adoration in the chapel. Haas said, “Each CCHS student utilizes the chapel for prayer and quiet reflection every week through their theology classes” and noted that the Wednesday evening adorations have consistently exceeded capacity.

Catholic Central High School staff plan to transform the temporary chapel space into a permanent chapel, which will seat 120 people. Haas said, “This chapel, at the heart of the school, will be a place for the students to pray and worship the Lord and continue to grow in their faith.”

For additional information, contact Jennifer Parker, director of advancement, by telephoning (740) 264-5538.
Parishioners donate more than 2 million dollars to the 2021 DPSC

MOTHER OF HOPE DEANEY
ST JOSEPH AMSTERDAM 14,162 8,527 60% 8,527 60%
* ST TERESA CADA 12,529 30,316 242% 27,966 222%
* OUR LADY OF MERCY CARROLLTOWN 20,834 28,385 136% 26,385 127%
* ST MATTHIAS FREEPORT 3,693 7,310 150% 6,781 122%
* SACRED HEART KOPEDALE 6,213 34,949 132% 34,949 559%
* ST FRANCIS XAVIER MALVERN 28,241 27,718 98% 27,718 98%
* ST GABRIEL MINerva 25,668 39,925 154% 39,925 154%
* ST AGNES MINGO JUNCTION 32,307 47,781 148% 47,781 148%
* ST MARY MORESE 9,049 10,500 116% 10,500 116%
* ST JOHN FISHER RICHMOND 10,165 13,190 129% 12,800 128%
* HOLY FAMILY STEUBENVILLE 61,970 65,289 100% 64,649 104%
* TRUMPH OF THE CROSS STEUBENVILLE 61,285 107,838 175% 107,425 175%
* ST PETER STEUBENVILLE 52,422 41,448 80% 40,444 78%
* ST FRANCIS TORONTO 22,178 32,893 147% 22,526 154%
* ST JOSEPH TORONTO 14,013 19,960 142% 19,910 142%
* BLESSED SACRAMENT WINTERSVILLE 49,648 59,504 119% 58,081 116%
* OUR LADY OF LOURDES WINTERSVILLE 13,162 15,786 120% 15,786 120%

MOTHER OF HOPE DEANEY TOTALS 446,116 591,167 562,702

NATIVITY OF MARY DEANEY
* CHRIST THE KING ATHENS 34,768 42,223 121% 41,977 121%
* ST PAUL ATHENS 32,847 47,550 146% 47,400 145%
* ST ANN CHESTEE 24,200 18,335 76% 18,335 76%
* ST LOUIS GALLIPOLIS 35,152 26,049 77% 26,040 71%
* HOLY CROSS GLOUSTER 11,006 13,310 121% 13,310 121%
* ST JOSEPH IRONTON 16,318 145,237 890% 143,406 879%
* ST LAWRENCE IRONTON 7,338 118,483 1615% 117,325 1599%
* ST MARY NELSONVILLE 6,640 7,385 113%
* ST MARY PINE GROVE 2,463 11,976 486% 11,906 483%
* SACRED HEART POMEROY 22,245 24,414 110% 24,385 110%

NATIVITY OF MARY DEANEY TOTALS 192,675 453,933 450,431

PRESENTATION DEANEY
* ST CASIMIR ADENA 13,085 17,452 133% 17,452 133%
* ASSUMPTION BARNESVILLE 28,357 46,652 165% 46,544 164%
* ST JOHN BEALLAR 23,098 28,597 126% 28,680 124%
* ST ANTHONY BRIDGEPORT 11,988 17,325 145%
* ST JOSEPH BRIDGEPORT 22,354 28,880 129% 28,880 129%
* ST FRANCES CAININ COLUMAN 20,710 33,778 163% 33,778 163%
* ST ADALBERT DILLONVALE 18,667 26,172 139% 26,172 139%
* ST MARY MARTINS FERRY 10,549 36,190 350% 36,190 350%
* ST MARY SHADESIDE 11,844 23,745 200% 23,520 199%
* ST MARY ST CLAIRSVILLE 99,909 121,208 121% 120,599 121%
* ST MARY TEMPERANCEVILLE 7,496 7,791 104% 7,761 104%
* ST JOSEPH TILTONSVILLE 11,104 31,097 280% 30,667 278%

PRESENTATION DEANEY TOTALS 288,359 419,287 417,588

VISITATION DEANEY
* CORPUS CHRISTI BELLE VALLEY 10,767 12,560 117% 12,510 116%
* ST BERNARD BEVERLY 25,350 77,371 305% 77,371 305%
* ST STEPHEN COLDSTOWN 36,668 41,251 112% 41,186 112%
* CHRIST OUR LIGHT CAMBRIDGE 79,465 73,652 93% 72,597 91%
* ST MICHAEL CARLISLE 11,649 13,233 114% 13,233 114%
* ST JOHN CHURCHTOWN 27,651 60,412 221% 60,102 218%
* IMMACULATE CONCEPTION FULDA 15,110 32,483 215% 32,483 215%
* ST HENRY HARRIETTSVILLE 9,705 12,849 132% 12,820 132%
* ST AMBROSE LITTLE HOCKING 34,300 76,693 220% 76,693 220%
* OUR LADY OF MERCY LOWELL 19,865 33,500 169% 33,000 166%
* ST MARY MARIETTA 108,498 149,693 138% 148,451 137%
* ST JAMES MCCONNELLSVILLE 10,688 29,990 272% 28,880 271%
* ST JOHN MILTONSBURG 8,954 7,101 79% 7,100 79%
* ST JOHN BOSCO SARDES 1,842 2,955 162% 2,965 162%
* ST SYLVESTER WOODFIELD 17,653 18,410 104% 18,410 104%

VISITATION DEANEY TOTALS 418,051 641,122 637,686

GRAND TOTAL ALL DEANEYs (including parish rebates)
* GOAL AMOUNT AMOUNT % OF % OF % OF GOAL PLEDGED RECEIVED RECEIVED RECEIVED
1,340,000 2,105,510 197% 2,085,666 106%

TOTAL PARISH REBATES ISSUED TO DATE: 791,101

TOTALS FOR PARISH REBATES
* GOAL AMOUNT AMOUNT % OF % OF % OF GOAL PLEDGED RECEIVED RECEIVED RECEIVED
1,340,000 1,299,573 97% 1,257,565 97%

*This parish has met their goal. All revenue received above the goal is returned to the parish.

Why do we have a diocesan parish? How is this money used?
In addition to the supporting the parishes (through rebates), the DPSC provides funding for essential diocesan ministries and services, including: educating seminarians (your future priests), caring for retired priests, training religious educators, feeding families in need, promoting the sanctity of life, providing administrative and facilities support for parishes and schools, and so much more. These funds make it possible to continue the mission of the Church here in the Diocese of Steubenville.