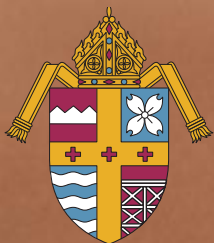


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The East Tennessee

Catholic

News from The Diocese of Knoxville

dioknox.org

February 5, 2012

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Number 6



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Richard
F. Stika

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Christ's light shines through the pro-life cause

Despite cold weather, hundreds turned out to pray near a Knoxville abortion clinic. By Mary C. Weaver

Nearly 500 East Tennesseans—the faithful, sisters, and members of the clergy, led by a cardinal—prayed a rosary for life on Jan. 14, invoking Our Lady of Guadalupe, whose U.S. feast had been celebrated the month before. The third annual event was held at Knoxville's Tyson Park, just across the street from the abortion clinic at 313 S. Concord St.

Cardinal Justin Rigali stood in for Bishop Richard F. Stika, who was called out of town for a cousin's funeral. Before beginning the rosary, Cardinal Rigali said, "We assemble

'Someday this site . . . will instead become a place of profound light and healing.'

to search for that light of which St. Paul speaks in his letter to the Ephesians: 'to bring to light . . . the plan of the mystery hidden from ages past in God, who created all things'" (Ephesians 3:9).



MARY C. WEAVER

Young participant Kimberly Gonzalez of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Lenoir City holds a sign during the rosary for life held in Knoxville on Jan. 14.

That light, he said, "is Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh."

He cited the stark contrast between the brilliant light of Christ, "reflected in every human life," and the "darkness behind closed doors" at the nearby abortion facility. Despite that, he said, the light of Christ "is gathering" and can be seen in all those who serve the Church and who work for the pro-life cause.

Paul Simoneau, director of the Justice and Peace Office, coordinated the event, with help from Lisa Morris of Sacred Heart Cathedral, who with Mr. Simoneau has co-directed 40 Days for Life campaigns.

"The turnout this year exceeded last year's by as much as a hundred or more people," said Mr. Simoneau. "We certainly hope we can continue to increase participation in this annual witness for life."

He added that even though Bishop Stika was unable to attend because of the death in his family, "I know he was extremely grateful for the strong

Rosary continued on page 5



He dwells among us by Bishop Richard F. Stika

Spring training

The penitential practices of Lent prepare us to face the trials and demands of life with joy.

I'm always amazed at how quickly we transition from the joy of the Christmas season to the penitential season of Lent, which begins this year on Feb. 22. But Lent reminds us that there is no real and lasting joy apart from the cross of Christ. An essential part of our ongoing conversion, Lent is meant to bring us ever closer to the joy that is Christ.

In one of those nice coincidences of life, the St. Louis Cardinals will begin spring training this year when Lent begins and will officially open this year's baseball season with their first game on the last day of Lent. The Easter Triduum begins the following day and culminates with the Easter Vigil of Holy Saturday night and the triumph of Easter Sunday on April 8.

Permit me to dwell a moment longer on my love of baseball in speaking of the importance of Lent. Spring training, which actually occurs during the winter, is the time when players take up anew the discipline and sacrifices needed to carry them through the entire baseball season. They hope that the skills they hone and the endurance they gain will take them into the playoffs

and to the World Series—as was the case for the St. Louis Cardinals last year.

But the baseball season is long, and the hardships of the game intensify as the season progresses. During the peak of last year's seemingly endless heat wave, I reflected on summer's "dog days"—which, like Lent, last for 40 days. I wrote then that

Real baseball fans know the importance of the "dog days" of summer . . . [when] teams either renew their passion for the game or succumb to the fatigue of a long season intensified by the heat and humidity. But the teams that advance into the playoffs (like my St. Louis Cardinals always do) embrace the struggle and use it to strengthen and form themselves into a championship team. That's also true in the spiritual life (Aug. 7, 2011, *ETC*).

I could not have been happier to see those words fulfilled in my beloved St. Louis Cardinals, who took the discipline of their 2011 spring training all the way to an incredible game six and seven win in the

World Series. But their victory began with spring training. Likewise, our training in the victory of Christ crucified begins anew each year with Lent, preparing us spiritually for the hard days that lie before us when life and temptations can wear us down.

Our spring training as Catholics traditionally focuses on a triad of penitential practices: fasting, almsgiving, and prayer. These practices express our commitment to our ongoing conversion in the life bestowed upon us in Christ through baptism. Like a trilogy that's incomplete if one of its three stories is ignored, these penitential practices must be embraced together.

Of the three, fasting is perhaps the most underappreciated today, but it was the first discipline required in the garden of Eden, when God commanded Adam to abstain—"you shall not eat"—from just one fruit (Genesis 2:16-17). We thirst and hunger for more than the material things of this world, which can never fully satisfy. Fasting directs us to what truly nourishes and comforts us—and that only God can give (cf.

Bishop continued on page 5

Bishop Stika's schedule

These are some of Bishop Stika's public appointments:

Feb. 5: 9 a.m., confirmation, Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul, Chattanooga

Feb. 8: 7:30 p.m., confirmation, Sacred Heart Church, St. Louis

Feb. 11: 11 a.m., celebration of marriage Mass and banquet, St. Jude Church, Chattanooga

Feb. 12: 10 a.m., installation of pastor and conferral of acolyte, St. Mary Church, Johnson City; 4 p.m., solemn Vespers for World Day for Consecrated Life, Cathedral of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Feb. 14: 11 a.m., Presbyteral Council meeting, Chancery

Feb. 16: 10 a.m., cathedral parish Council of Catholic Women winter coffee, bishop's residence

Feb. 17-20: consistory, Vatican City

Feb. 21: 6 p.m., Knoxville Catholic High School hall of honor banquet, All Saints parish hall, Knoxville

Feb. 22: time TBD, Ash Wednesday Mass, Cathedral of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Feb. 24: Catholic Public Policy Commission meeting, Nashville

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Diocesan policy for reporting sexual abuse

Anyone who has actual knowledge of or who has reasonable cause to suspect an incident of sexual abuse should report such information to the appropriate civil authorities first, then to the bishop's office, 865-584-3307, or the diocesan victims' assistance coordinator, Marla Lenihan, 865-482-1388. ■



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Greeting the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI meets with Bishop Richard F. Stika during the *ad limina* visit of ordinaries from Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, and Kentucky. In the background is Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Knoxville's former bishop. A story on the visit will appear in the March *ETC*, and more photos may be viewed at dioknox.org/home/ad-limina-prayer/.

A prayer for bishops visiting Rome

The U.S. bishops offer a prayer to support those traveling to the See of St. Peter.

Bishops return to the Holy See every five years for an *ad limina* visit to the pope and various officials. The U.S. bishops begin their most recent series of visits in November 2011. Bishop Richard F. Stika and others from the Southeast began their visit on Jan. 23.

The U.S. bishops conference offers the following prayer in support of those making *ad limina* visits:

Blessed Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—you are the source of all life, salvation, and holiness. Together with the bishops of our country, we pray to you as they make their pilgrimage “to the threshold” of the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome. May this be a time of blessing for them, for our dioceses, and for our country.

Jesus, as the glorious Lord and Savior, you are the head of your body, the Church. As you appointed

the 12 Apostles to be the first shepherds of your Church, so now you have appointed the bishops of our country as our shepherds today. May their visits with the Holy Father, the chief shepherd on earth of your flock, and with the offices of the Holy See under his care, be a time of grace and blessing. Lord Jesus, renew the bond of love and strengthen the ties of unity between them and the successor of St. Peter, so that your Church may be truly one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Together with the Holy Father, may our bishops grow in love for the truth of your Gospel, and may they reaffirm their dedication to serve your Church in love.

Christ Jesus, during their visit to the See of St. Peter, confirm within them again the charge that you first gave them when they were ordained bishops—to preach and teach the

truth of the Gospel in love and with conviction and courage, to shepherd their dioceses with wisdom and prudence, and to work diligently for the sanctity of all who are under their care. Drive far from them all fear, worry, and sadness. Fill them instead with your Spirit of joy, peace, patience, and endurance. May they return to our dioceses refreshed to continue to guide your people with the strength and vitality of your Holy Spirit and so lead them to eternal life with you and all of the saints.

We pray especially for our bishop, Richard. May God the Father’s love be upon him as he travels, and may Mary wrap her mantle of protection around him.

Father, through the Holy Spirit, we make this prayer in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you forever and ever. Amen. ■

Diocese offers ongoing Virtus child-protection training sessions

The Diocese of Knoxville’s program for the protection of children and youth—a three-hour seminar called “Protecting God’s Children”—is offered throughout the diocese. The seminars are required for parish and school employees and regular volunteers in contact with children or vulnerable adults.

The following training sessions have been scheduled:

- All Saints Church, Knoxville, 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25
- St. Jude Church, Chattanooga, noon Monday, March 5
- St. Dominic Church, Kingsport, 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 11; 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 6 (session will be held in the parish life center)
- Holy Cross Church, Pigeon Forge, 9 a.m. Saturday, March 10.

Participants are asked to donate \$1 for session materials. To register, visit virtusonline.org. ■

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Feb. 25: 1 p.m., Rite of Election, Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul, Chattanooga; 6:30 p.m., Rite of Election, St. John Neumann Church, Farragut

Feb. 26: 1 p.m., Rite of Election, St. Patrick Church, Morristown; 5:30 p.m., Rite of Election, St. Albert the Great Church, Knoxville

March 2: 8:05 a.m., Mass, Cathedral of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

March 3: 11 a.m., celebration of marriage Mass, St. Mary church, Johnson City

March 4: 9 a.m., confirmation, St. Francis of Assisi Church, Townsend ■

'I always have had a love for things of the Church'

The seeds of Father Mathis's priestly vocation were planted in his elementary and high school days. **By Margaret Hunt**

Father Christian Mathis is pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Lenoir City. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Joseph E. Kurtz on June 3, 2000, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Chattanooga. He enjoys hiking, writing icons, and reading. Father Mathis blogs at blessedisthekingdom.com.

Did you always know you wanted to be a priest?

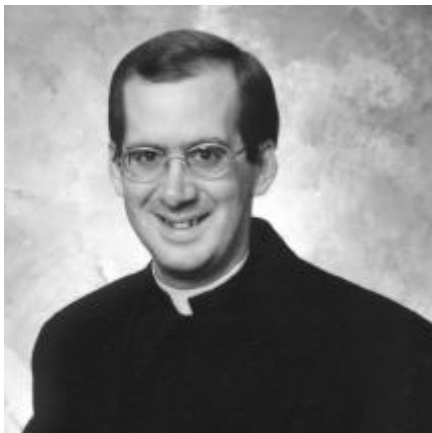
I always have had a love for the things of the Church, probably from the time I began school at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Chattanooga. It was fun learning about the faith. I began seriously considering priesthood during my time at Notre Dame High School in Chattanooga.

Who helped you discern your call to the priesthood?

Father Mike Linder suggested I join a discernment group that was led by then-Father Al Humbrecht when I was in college. A small group of men interested in exploring a vocation to the priesthood would meet once a week for dinner and prayer. It was very helpful to have a group who were all exploring their vocation. Father Mike Nolan was very influential through his ministry at Notre Dame High School and later in supporting me to grow in my ability to do ministry during my time in seminary. I would also say that Father Mike Creson, Father David Boettner, and Father Patrick Brownell had a positive influence in my discernment process.

What's the most difficult part for a young man discerning a call to the priesthood?

Our society is not very supportive of the Catholic Church, much less



Father Christian Mathis

the priesthood. When I was discerning, I didn't want too many people to know about it because they might think I was strange. One incident I remember from my time as a seminarian was at a summer job. I was having a great conversation with someone until he learned I was studying to be a Catholic priest, when he simply stopped talking and walked away. This was before the clergy child-abuse scandal. I am sure the environment is more difficult today. If I were to advise a man who is discerning a vocation, I would first of all recommend regular prayer (including, of course, the sacraments), spiritual reading, and finding a few trusted friends whom he can talk to about the priesthood. It is also helpful to talk with a priest, whether one's pastor or perhaps the vocation director of the diocese.

Was your family supportive of your vocation?

My family was very supportive, though since the clergy sex-abuse scandal there have been a few in my family who are upset with the Church, and that can cause tension. My family helped me most in my formation by teaching me the

faith by word and example. We had symbols of our faith throughout our house. We were encouraged to read the Bible and to study our faith. My parents made many sacrifices for my siblings and me to attend Catholic school. Going to Mass on Sundays and holy days took precedence over everything else.

Do you have secular work experience that has helped you as a priest?

I entered seminary immediately following college, but I was employed in the area of social work while on leave of absence from the diocese, and the experience was very good for me. It showed me firsthand many of the struggles families go through and gave me experience working more closely with those in need.

How have you grown in your priesthood?

One of the first lessons of priesthood I learned, having been ordained right before 9/11 and the clergy-sex-abuse scandal, is that we are called to carry the cross. I have also grown to see how essential prayer is and the need for compassion.

How do you meet the challenges of the priesthood?

I try to take them one at a time. There will always be more to do than I have time for, so prioritizing and making choices is important.

What do you enjoy most about being a priest?

You never know what's going to happen from one day to the next, or even from one hour to the next. In the span of a day, I can be leading prayer, participating in a business meeting, teaching a class, visiting a hospital, repairing a water pipe, and playing soccer with kids. It's

not dull. I especially like coming up with and implementing ideas for evangelization. People are hungry for God, and it is our job as priests to lead them to him.

Why did you decide to start writing your blog and what do you enjoy most about writing it?

I started the blog soon after returning to active ministry from my leave of absence. Initially it was a place for me to gather my thoughts for myself, my family, and close friends. Then one day I noticed that other people were reading it, and it took on a more serious and focused tone. The thing I enjoy most is having the opportunity to meet new people who are interested in Christianity and to have an online conversation about our faith. It has been an opportunity to make new friends both online and in real life who share common values.

I also believe that the Internet has great potential as a tool for sharing the Gospel with others. The Internet is not a replacement for coming together in our churches and communities, but I believe it can open the door for those who are beginning to seek, allowing them a safe place to do so.

What would you tell a young man discerning a call to priesthood?

Pray. Find a priest you trust and talk with him about the vocation of the priesthood. Participate fully in the life of your parish. Look for ways to serve others in your community. Learn all you can about our faith. Most of all, continue to deepen your relationship with God through prayer. ■

Mrs. Hunt is the administrative assistant in the diocesan Media Office.

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turnout despite the cold weather and the distances many had to travel.”

Cardinal Rigali noted that the Church’s celebration of Christmas day is followed just three days later by the feast of the Holy Innocents—the male children put to death by King Herod in an attempt to slay the Christchild. Modern-day innocents killed in the state of Tennessee number more than 10,000 each year—about 4,000 in Knoxville alone.

“Through the light of your witness and prayers, someday this site across the street where so much innocent blood has been spilled and so many lives forever wounded will instead become a place of profound light and healing,” he said.

The cardinal added that those who came to pray the rosary were not praying for the unborn alone but also for the healing of mothers and fathers wounded by abortion, those who work in pregnancy-help centers, and “workers in the abortion industry, that they may experience a change of heart.”

Cardinal Rigali began the rosary, and the decades of the joyful mysteries were led by Father David Carter, Deacon Dustin Collins, Sister Angela Nikwobazeirwe, Antonio Dianas, and Larry and Kathy DeWine, respectively. ■



MARY C. WEAVER

‘Witness and prayers’ About 500 people gathered for the third annual diocesan rosary for life, held Jan. 14 at Tyson Park in Knoxville. Cardinal Justin F. Rigali led the event; Bishop Richard F. Stika had been called out of town for a cousin’s funeral. Behind the cardinal are (from left) Father Randy Stice, director of the diocesan Worship and Liturgy Office, and diocesan chancellor Deacon Sean Smith.

Bishop continued from page 2

Matthew 4:4). Fasting disposes us to make the sacrifices we must make if we are to be the face of Jesus to others in need.

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are traditionally days of fast and abstinence, and we should remember that abstinence from meat on Fridays is observed not only during Lent but also throughout the year (unless substituted with another appropriate sacrifice). We should not think of fasting as giving up something but rather as giving something. That leads us to almsgiving.

Almsgiving reminds us that we

are stewards, not masters, of God’s many blessings. We do not live for ourselves but for God and our neighbor. In giving of ourselves and our resources, we increase our capacity for giving as Christ does—without measure.

In addition to continuing your generous financial gifts to your parish church, please participate in Catholic Relief Services’ Operation Rice Bowl. It’s a wonderful way to support the essential work CRS does in helping the poor around the world. Twenty-five percent of what is collected in our diocese will go to Catholic Charities of East Tennessee

Inc. to assist the agency with its vital works of mercy here at home.

On Ash Wednesday a national collection will be taken up to aid the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, a region devastated from decades of harsh communist rule. And on Easter weekend we will take up a special collection for the education of our 17 seminarians—the future of the priesthood in our diocese. But as I ask for your generosity in almsgiving, I above all ask for your generosity in prayer.

The Stations of the Cross is one of the Church’s most beloved devotions. The Stations adorn the walls

of our churches, but they are not for decoration. Instead, they invite us to meditate on the mystery of Christ’s sufferings. It is in the cross of Christ that we find our own cross and the joy with which to bear it.

Fasting is the soul of prayer, as so many saints have observed. And what fasting is for the soul, almsgiving is for the body of Christ. Without prayer, our almsgiving is limited to the little we can give instead of what God can give through us. That harvest produces yields of “thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold” (Mark 4:8). I pray your Lent brings you closer to Christ, our true joy. ■

Couples celebrate sacrament of marriage with Bishop Stika

Husbands and wives gather at Sacred Heart Cathedral and renew their vows in the annual event. By Dan McWilliams

Some 40 couples renewed their wedding vows Jan. 7 at Sacred Heart Cathedral in the diocese's annual bilingual Mass in celebration of the sacrament of marriage.

Bishop Richard F. Stika presided at the Mass, with cathedral rector Father David Boettner and associate pastor Father Andres Cano concelebrating.

Charles and Catsue Pipkin of Sacred Heart were the longest-married couple attending the Mass. The Pipkins celebrated their 64th anniversary Jan. 12. They had the honor of cutting a wedding cake with Bishop Stika at the reception following Mass.

When asked about the secret to such a long union, Mr. Pipkin said, "Just always agree. Even if it's wrong, just always agree."

"There's a lot of give and take, and patience," said his wife.

"You have to be patient day and night," Mr. Pipkin replied.

The Pipkins, who were married at Immaculate Conception in downtown Knoxville, have six children, 20 grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. Both said they enjoyed the marriage celebration.

"We felt honored," said Mrs. Pipkin.

The Mass at Sacred Heart was held for couples in the Smoky Mountain and Cumberland Mountain deaneries. A second Mass for Chattanooga Deanery couples is set for Saturday, Feb. 11, at St. Jude Church in Chattanooga. The Five Rivers Deanery marriage-celebration Mass will be held Saturday, March 3, at St. Mary Church in Johnson City. See the calendar on page 10 for details on how couples may register for the upcoming Masses.

The diocesan Office of Marriage



DAN MCWILLIAMS

Newlyweds help present gifts The gift bearers at the marriage-celebration Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral were the couples most recently married and longest married. Presenting the gifts to Bishop Stika are (foreground) Scott Edward and Jian Su Searle, who have been married four months. In the background are Charles Pipkin and (partly hidden) wife Catsue, who have been married 64 years.

Preparation and Enrichment coordinates the marriage-celebration Masses.

The sacrament being celebrated at Sacred Heart is "in danger" today, said Bishop Stika in his homily.

"The commitment of one man to a woman in the sacrament of marriage is so much in danger that

many people are choosing not to marry at all," he said. "The statistic each year seems to go higher and higher. Or, the amount of those who choose to divorce, for whatever reason, is over 50 percent."

Those who participate in the sacrament of marriage and value it are the ones who "need to teach it the

most," said the bishop.

"We live in a world that so badly needs commitment, so badly needs to see examples of people who really are willing to work at it in those moments of challenge," he said.

Couples renewed their vows after the homily. In doing so, they promised to "seek to nurture and daily

affirm your love and commitment to each other in the light of the love that God has revealed to us in Jesus Christ." They also prayed a prayer of thanksgiving with Bishop Stika, asking that "our homes may be to us, and to friends and strangers, a place of joy and gladness."

The bishop congratulated couples at the end of Mass "for your example of Christian living and Christian marriage."

"I pray that the Lord may continue to bless you," he said, "and as he invites you to serve as an example to others, may you also remember to pray for those others who live the sacrament of marriage and especially for those who find difficulty in their commitment."

Schoolchildren in the diocese made several displays, filled with advice for couples, that were placed around the gym for the reception. Advice from eighth-graders at St. Mary School in Johnson City included: "give all you have 100 percent of the time," "don't fight on holidays," "don't go to bed angry," "be happy when around each other," "go to church together," "come home early from work," and "laugh always." ■



DAN MCWILLIAMS

Cutting the cake Bishop Stika stands at the wedding cake with Charles and Catsue Pipkin, the couple married the longest among those attending the marriage-celebration Mass at Sacred Heart. The Pipkins were married in 1948.

Two talks scheduled on books written by Sant'Egidio founder

"Living Together and Prayer: A Reflection for Lent" is the title of two presentations on the books *Living Together* (New City, 2008) and *The Sant'Egidio Book of Prayer* (Ave Maria Press, 2009) by Andrea Riccardi that will be held in the diocese Tuesday and Wednesday, Feb. 28 and 29.

Both talks will begin at 7 p.m. The Feb. 28 presentation will be held in the Shea Room at Sacred Heart Cathedral. The Feb. 29 presentation will be held at St. Mary Church in Johnson City. Bishop Richard F. Stika will be attending the presentation in Knoxville and will share some observations.

Mr. Riccardi is the founder of the Community of Sant'Egidio, a

recognized lay ecclesial movement within the Catholic Church. The Community of Sant'Egidio focuses on prayer, evangelization, friendship with the poor, and the work of peace. For more information on the community, visit www.santegidio.org.

The books will be presented by Dr. Claudio Betti and Father Michael Cummins. Dr. Betti is professor of conflict resolution at Pontificia Università Seraphicum in Rome. Through his involvement with the Community of Sant'Egidio, Dr. Betti has been involved in many peace mediation processes and dialogues around the world, some of which are ongoing.

Father Cummins is a priest of the Diocese of Knoxville currently serving as vocation director and as chaplain to the Catholic Center at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City. He is a priest-member of the Community of Sant'Egidio.

In addition to the two evening presentations, Dr. Betti will lead a discussion regarding the work of peace and conflict resolution, which is open to the entire university community, at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 29, in the East Tennessee Room of the Culp Center at ETSU in Johnson City.

For more information on any of these gatherings, call the Catholic Center at ETSU at 423-926-7061. ■

Letters to the editor

I enjoyed reading Father Randy Stice's column "Silence in the liturgy" (Jan. 1 *ETC*). In it he states, "One of the favored moments for silence is the time following Communion." He goes on to state that then-Cardinal Ratzinger described this as "the moment for interior conversation with the Lord who has given himself to us, for that essential 'communicating' without which the external reception of the sacrament becomes mere ritual and therefore unfruitful."

However, most of the churches I have gone to outside of my own parish insist on not allowing even a minute of silence during Communion. If the choir's chosen song ends while people are still receiving Communion, they will jump right into a new song. At one church I went to, when the Communion song was over, the choir director even announced that they would now play a special "meditation" song. Thus there wasn't a single moment of silence for personal meditation.

With the increased emphasis of the recently revised *Roman Missal* on returning to a more formal translation of sacred Scripture in our liturgy, this might also be a good time to re-emphasize the importance of silent meditation during Mass, especially during Communion. Recent polls indicate that a majority of Catholics no longer believe that the consecrated bread and wine truly are the sacred body and blood of Jesus. Perhaps allowing us to meditate on what we have just received would help bring about a realization of just how important this part of the Mass is. ■

Jim Connors Spring City

Send letters to the editor to news@dioknox.org. Letters must be 350 words or less and may be edited for clarity and grammar.

Lenten requirements for Catholics

Ash Wednesday, Feb. 22, begins the 40-day season of Lent that calls the faithful to a spiritual journey with the suffering Christ. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (April 6 this year) are days of fasting and abstinence from meat.

Regulations on fasting allow only one full meal during fast days but do not prohibit eating twice more during the day, as long as the two additional meals do not equal one full meal. Other requirements of the season include abstaining from meat on all Fridays during Lent.

Abstinence applies to those who have reached age 14 and forbids eating meat but not eggs, milk products, or condiments made of animal fat. Fasting is required of those ages 18 through 60. Pastors and parents are to see to it that children who are not bound by the laws of fast and abstinence are educated in an authentic sense of penance.

In addition, *The Code of Canon Law* indicates that at least once during the year Catholics in serious sin should receive the sacrament of reconciliation. "All the faithful who have reached the age of discretion are bound to confess their grave sins at least once a year," Canon 989 specifies.

Interior penance can be expressed in many ways. Scripture and the Church Fathers insist above all on three forms: fasting, prayer, and almsgiving (Matthew 6:1-18), which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others. (See the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 1434.)

The church recommends daily prayer, almsgiving, and performing acts of kindness and charity. ■

New director hired for Stewardship and Strategic Planning Office

Bishop Richard F. Stika announced in a Jan. 13 memo that he had hired John Deinhart as director of the Stewardship and Strategic Planning Office. Mr. Deinhart will begin on April 16.

"John's responsibilities will include the continuing development and management of our stewardship and fundraising efforts, both at the diocesan and parish levels," Bishop Stika wrote. "In addition, John will assist the offices and ministries of the diocese in strategic and long-range planning."

Mr. Deinhart began his professional career in sales with Ralston Purina and for the past 16 years has

worked as a division manager in sales and marketing for Bush Brothers & Co.

He graduated from the University of Rochester, N.Y., and completed the Wharton Business School's executive education program in marketing. He has received training in leadership and organizational development from the Center for Creative Leadership, and he is participating in Indiana University's Certificate in Fund Raising Management program.

Mr. Deinhart is a member of the national board of directors of Friends of the Orphans, chairing the board development and executive

committees.

He is a member of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Lenoir City and has served as chair of the parish council as well as the social action committee and the parish transition team.

He and his wife, Crystal, have been married 17 years and have three children—Jack, 14; Lily, 11; and Molly, 8—who attend St. Mary School in Oak Ridge.

"We are blessed to have John join our talented staff at the Diocese of Knoxville, and I look forward to the gifts he will bring to the ministries of the Church in East Tennessee," the bishop said. ■

Pope emphasizes need for silence in digital world

VATICAN CITY (CNA/EWTN News)—Pope Benedict XVI believes that in a noisy world of constant communication people need silence more than ever. Read the full message at bit.ly/AuUdpT.

He outlined his thoughts in his message for World Communications Day 2012, titled "Silence and Word: Path of Evangelization." The pope's letter was released Jan. 24 at the Vatican press office by Archbishop Claudio Maria Celli, head of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications.

"When messages and information are plentiful, silence becomes essential if we are to distinguish what is important from what is insignificant or secondary," the pope said in a statement that will be read in Catholic churches worldwide on May 20.

"This makes it possible to share thoughtful and relevant opinions, giving rise to an authentic body of shared knowledge," he wrote.

Pope Benedict recommended making this interchange possible by developing "an appropriate environment, a kind of 'eco-system' that maintains a just equilibrium between

silence, words, images, and sounds."

He suggested silence is required to make sense of the constant stream of information people now receive via television, radio, the Internet, and various forms of social media.

"In silence, we are better able to listen to and understand ourselves; ideas come to birth and acquire depth; we understand with greater clarity what it is we want to say and what we expect from others; and we choose how to express ourselves," he said.

Pope Benedict believes the use of silence is "often more eloquent than a hasty answer," he said, because it "permits seekers to reach into the depths of their being and open themselves to the path toward knowledge that God has inscribed in human hearts."

The pope sees the need for silence as a part of Christian life from the earliest times. He pointed to the "eloquence of God's love, lived to the point of the supreme gift," which is seen "in the silence of the Cross," when, after Christ's death "there is a great silence over the earth."

Silent contemplation also "immerses us in the source of that love who directs us toward our neighbors so that we may feel their suffering and offer them the light of Christ, his message of life, and his saving gift of the fullness of love," he writes.

Archbishop Celli summed up the pope's message as reminding everyone that real communication involves pairing "words and silence" so that people are not "overwhelmed by the sheer volume of communication itself."

Monsignor Paul Tighe, secretary of the social communications council, explained to CNA that the pope's message "reminds us that the relevance of silence is equally important within the context of a digital environment."

"Especially when we now find ourselves continually bombarded by messages, by ideas, by opinions, by news.

"The pope is saying we need silence if we're going to judge that, integrate it, make it our own, and not simply be caught up in a flow of information." ■

Annual Bishop's Appeal launches

Bishop Stika urges the faithful to make gifts that will 'touch the lives of thousands throughout East Tennessee.'

As this year's Bishop's Appeal (formerly the Annual Catholic appeal) begins, Bishop Richard F. Stika has invited the faithful throughout the diocese "to make a difference for our brothers and sisters in East Tennessee."

The theme is Coming Together in Christ, and the bishop noted that "as members of the Body of Christ, we share in the work of the Church."

Parishes do so much for those in need, he said, but the Bishop's Appeal provides for vital ministries that no single parish can offer.

"Gifts to the Bishop's Appeal touch the lives of thousands of people throughout East Tennessee," Bishop Stika said.

"It is by coming together that we form the body of Christ reaching out to the world."

In a letter to be distributed to the faithful, the bishop said that many people in our diocese "are in need of help, physically, emotionally, and spiritually."

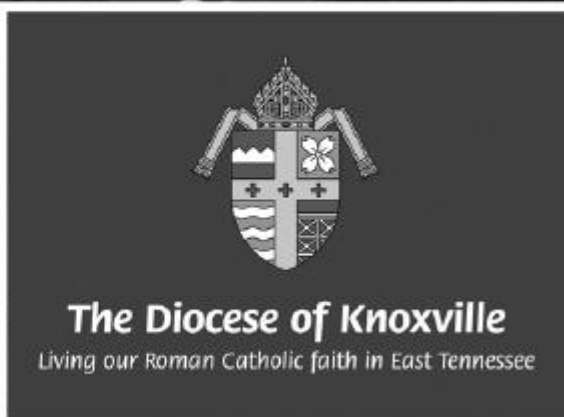
"There are people paralyzed by the loss of a job or those scared because they do not know where they will find shelter or food to feed their family," he wrote. "There are countless folks who have no church home in East Tennessee or people who have become inactive in their faith. Who will help bring them to Jesus?"

Although these needs might seem overwhelming, he said, they can be met if all of Catholic East Tennessee works together as a diocese.

Following is a breakdown of how Bishop's Appeal donations will be used:

Catholic Charities of East Tennessee, 29 percent

The agency is on the frontline of



The Diocese of Knoxville

Living our Roman Catholic faith in East Tennessee

of programs, including counseling, Family Support Services, the Interfaith Senior Service, Parent Place, Pregnancy Help Services, Samaritan

Place, and the Seton Thrift Store.

Place, and the Seton Thrift Store.

Clergy formation, 26 percent

These funds will provide for the intellectual, spiritual, human, and pastoral formation of the priests, deacons, and seminarians of the diocese.

Christian Formation Office, 24 percent

More than 6,000 students in East Tennessee's Catholic schools and parish religious-education programs need help in learning about the faith and coming to know Jesus Christ. The office trains the catechists who reach out to these children. Other crucial programs include RCIA, through which about 300 catechumens and candidates of all ages enter full communion with the Church every year.

Youth, young adult, and university campus ministry, 16 percent

The appeal will expand the efforts of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry so it can do more to proclaim the Gospel and provide ministries to the young, who often live in a culture hostile to the faith.

Justice and Peace Office, 5 percent

This office's vital programs promote understanding of Catholic social teaching on critical contemporary issues through education, evangelization, and advocacy, including the 40 Days for Life program.

Gifts may be made by check, by direct debit from a bank account, by credit card (single or recurring payments), or online at donate.dioknox.org.

For more information, call 865-584-3307 or e-mail stewardship@dioknox.org. ■

Diocesan calendar

by Toni Pacitti

“Frazzled in the Vineyard,” the 10th annual catechetical leadership retreat, will be held Friday and Saturday, Feb. 17 and 18. The retreat leader is Sister Mary Timothea Elliott, RSM, director of the diocesan Office of Christian Formation, sponsor of the event. The retreat will begin at 7 p.m. Friday with a reflection and wine-and-cheese social at the Comfort Suites Knoxville West conference room, 811 N. Campbell Station Road in Farragut. The retreat will continue from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at St. John Neumann Church in Farragut. Cost for the two-day event is \$40; Saturday only is \$25. Lunch is included. For hotel reservations, call 865-675-7585 and ask for the Diocese of Knoxville special rate. Registration deadline is Friday, Feb. 3. To register, e-mail Jenn Perkins at jperkins@dioknox.org or call her at 584-3307.

A holy hour for Knoxville seminarians under the patronage of St. Charles Borromeo, patron saint of seminarians, will be held from 7 to 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 3, at St. John Neumann Church in Farragut. Eucharistic adoration, Vespers, and benediction will be held, and Father Doug Owens will bless throats. A reception will be held afterward.

Bishop Richard F. Stika will celebrate **two more bilingual Masses throughout the diocese to honor the sacrament of marriage**. Couples will have the opportunity to renew their vows during Mass and continue to celebrate with family and friends at a luncheon afterward. Included with the luncheon, provided by the diocesan Office of Marriage Preparation and Enrichment, are mementos of the celebration: a certificate and a photo with the bishop for couples who register in advance. The first Mass is set for 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 11, at St. Jude Church in Chattanooga. Register by Friday, Feb. 3. The second Mass will take place at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 3, at St. Mary Church in Johnson City. The registration deadline is Friday,

Feb. 24. To register, call Karen Byrne at 865-584-3307, extension 5739, or e-mail kbyrne@dioknox.org. Couples should provide their names as they want them to appear on the certificate, number of years married, and how many in their party for the luncheon.

The fourth annual **Catholic Student Day on the Hill** will take place Tuesday, March 20, in Nashville. The annual **Catholic Day on the Hill for adults**, scheduled for Tuesday, April 24, has been canceled because the legislature plans to have concluded its session by then. It was not possible to move the date back because organizers could not reserve a location that could accommodate everybody. The Tennessee bishops will meet with the governor and his key leadership on March 7. Reservations for the student day are made through students' schools. For more information, contact Paul Simoneau at 865-584-3307 or psimoneau@dioknox.org.

The Rite of Election will be held in each deanery on the first weekend of Lent. At 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25, the Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul will host the rite for the Chattanooga Deanery. The rite for the Cumberland Mountain Deanery will be held the same day at 6:30 p.m. at St. John Neumann Church in Farragut. The Five Rivers Deanery rite is set for 1 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 26, at St. Patrick Church in Morristown. The Smoky Mountain Deanery rite follows the same day at 5:30 p.m. at St. Albert the Great Church in Knoxville.

The International Catholic Lay Leadership Forum, sponsored by the Springtime of Faith Foundation, is set for April 27 through 29 in Nashville and Brentwood. The Saturday schedule includes talks by Monica Ashour, president of a group promoting the theology of the body to young Catholics; Tom Peterson, founder of Catholics Come Home Inc.; Chris Jansing, an MSNBC host and anchor; Jimmy Murray, Ronald McDonald House co-founder and former NFL general manager; and Bishop Martin Uzoukwu of the Diocese of Minna in Nigeria.

Cardinal Francis Arinze will receive the foundation's lifetime achievement award on Saturday. Mass at the Cathedral of the Incarnation is scheduled for Sunday morning, with Nashville Bishop David R. Choby as homilist. Cost is \$90 for the forum only and \$150 for the forum plus a lunch and dinner package, for those registering by Tuesday, Feb. 7. Costs are \$100 and \$160 after Feb. 7. For details, e-mail CatholicEventServices@gmail.com.

The Knoxville Diocesan Council of Catholic Women is sponsoring an **organ concert** at 7 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 12, at the Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul in Chattanooga. There is no charge to attend, but a collection will be taken up during the concert. All proceeds will be used to assist seminarians of the Diocese of Knoxville. Father Tom O'Connell is the guest organist. For details, e-mail Linda Lambert at rhllcl@yahoo.com.

The Knoxville Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting's **13th annual Bishop's Gathering and Adult Recognition dinner** is set for 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, March 24, in the parish hall at All Saints Church in Knoxville. Costs are \$15 per person or \$30 for family, with clergy admitted free. A barbecue meal will be served. Scouts will be participating in the "Bishop's Dessert Cook-Off," the "People's Choice Dessert Award," and a "Living Display Showdown." For contest information, Scouts and Scouting units can visit kdccs.org. RSVPs may be sent to George LeCrone Sr., 10700 Leeward Lane, Knoxville, TN 37934, with checks made out to KDCSS.

“A Jubilee Pilgrimage to France” is planned for April 16 through 27, under the spiritual direction of Father Alberto Sescon and Father Peter Iorio, with Mercy Sister Albertine Paulus as group coordinator. The itinerary includes visits to Rouen, Lisieux, the Normandy beaches, Caen, Paris, Chartres, and Lourdes. The group will depart from Atlanta. Cost is \$3,539 (cash-discount price) or \$3,758, plus airport taxes, fuel surcharges, and tips. To request a color brochure and

registration form, contact Sister Albertine at 865-545-8270, 207-4742, or smaevang@yahoo.com.

Fathers David Carter, Tom Moser, and John Dowling will lead a pilgrimage to Italy from June 30 through July 8. Sites on the tour will include Rome, the Vatican, four major basilicas, the catacombs, the Coliseum, Tuscany, Florence, Assisi, and Venice. To register or learn more, visit www.proximotravel.com or call 877-994-8259 or 508-854-9370.

Father Patrick Resen will lead a pilgrimage to Ireland and Scotland from April 28 to May 10. Contact Rich at rdelmotte@hotmail.com or 615-533-5954 for more information, or visit bit.ly/s1b68b.

A charismatic Mass will be celebrated by Father Dan Whitman at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 19, at Holy Trinity Church in Jefferson City. Prayers for healing will follow the Mass. All are invited to attend.

Mass in the extraordinary form (“traditional Latin”) is celebrated at 1:30 p.m. each Sunday at Holy Ghost Church in Knoxville, at 3 p.m. on first and third Sundays at St. Thérèse of Lisieux Church in Cleveland, and at 3 p.m. on second and fourth Sundays at St. Joseph the Worker Church in Madisonville. Visit www.knoxlatinmass.net for updated information.

The St. Thomas the Apostle Ukrainian Catholic Mission **celebrates Divine Liturgy** at 10 a.m. Sundays in the chapel at the Chancery office in Knoxville. All services are in English. Call Father Richard Armstrong at 865-584-3307 or visit www.saintthomasknoxville.org for details.

Holy Resurrection Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Mission has **Divine Liturgy celebrations** at 9:30 a.m. Sundays at the old Holy Ghost Church, 1031 N. Central St. in Knoxville. For times of holy-day services or for more information, visit www.knoxbyz.org or call Father Thomas O'Connell at 865-256-4880. ■

Chattanooga Deanery calendar

Paul and Karen Schulz of St. Jude Parish in Chattanooga will facilitate a **Catholic marriage enrichment program, "A Marriage Made for Heaven: The Secrets of Heavenly Couplehood"** on Sunday evenings beginning Feb. 12 in the St. Jude parish life center. Sessions will meet from 6 to 8 p.m. and continue on second Sundays through Dec. 9. The cost of the workbook and supplies is \$20. Child care will be available on site at an additional cost and must be arranged in advance. To register or learn

more, call Kyra Ross in the parish office at 423-870-2386.

St. Jude School, Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, and Notre Dame High School will host **"ChattiGras," a Mardi Gras "Chattanooga style,"** on Saturday, Feb. 18, at the Chattanooga Trade and Convention Center. The event will benefit all three schools and the tuition-assistance fund. Tickets cost \$50. Contact Kathie Etherton at 423-877-6022 or ketherton@stjudechattanooga.org. ■



COURTESY OF PAULA REILAND

New box for traveling chalice

Father Gilbert Diaz of St. Stephen Parish in Chattanooga on Dec. 18 presents Marilyn Bianculli with a wooden box to hold a traveling chalice, which rotates throughout the parish and is presented to hosting individuals or families each week at Mass. They host the chalice by displaying it in their home and praying daily for vocations during the week. The new wooden box replaces a cardboard container. Jim Bianculli (Marilyn's husband), a member of St. Stephen for more than 30 years, led the ministry for three years. He died Nov. 20, 2011. Jim Sims made the new box, and Patricia Bodnar coordinated the process. Both are parishioners of St. Stephen. The box is inscribed "In loving memory of Jim Bianculli" and contains a vocations prayer, chalice, and paten. St. Stephen Parish has two men in seminary, Ray Powell and Adam Royal.

Parish notes: Chattanooga Deanery

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Chattanooga

Paul Acosta finished first in the school geography bee. Lucan Mullin placed second and Richard Ballard third.

James West, a seventh-grader, won fourth chair trombone in the seventh-grade honors band during the Lower Southeast Junior Clinic Band held at Lee University in December.

St. Augustine, Signal Mountain

Amanda Varnell, host of Cooking Live classes in the Chattanooga area, gave a cooking demonstration Jan. 12 in the parish life center.

The 22nd annual "Christmas @ Merv's Get Together," co-chaired by parishioner Jim Bach, raised \$11,510 to benefit the Chattanooga Community Kitchen.

New parish youth minister Catherine Wiedeman was welcomed at a meet-and-greet social Dec. 11.

St. Catherine Labouré, Copperhill

The parish Epiphany party was held Jan. 8.

St. Jude, Chattanooga

A day of prayer and penance for life was observed Jan. 23 for the legal guarantee of the right to life and as penance for acts of abortion.

St. Stephen, Chattanooga

Anniversary: Tom and Marie Harris (65)

Sts. Peter and Paul, Chattanooga

Chris Wesson and Alex Cooze provided technical assistance to Ann May in constructing the new parish website, www.stspeterandpaulbasilica.com. ■

Parish notes: Cumberland Mountain Deanery

All Saints, Knoxville

Deacon David Luchon is offering an eight- to 10-week class called "Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist: Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper" at 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays in the parish hall.

A Mardi Gras dance to benefit Catholic Charities, for adults 21 years and older, will be held from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 11, in the parish hall. A donation of \$10 is requested. Respond by e-mail to gbemail@charter.net or call Gail at 865-399-7617.

St. Francis of Assisi, Fairfield Glade

Blessing of throats will be available before and after Mass on Friday, Feb. 3, and before and after all weekend Masses on Feb. 4 and 5.

World Marriage Day will be celebrated at Masses on the weekend of Feb. 11 and 12. A blessing will be given to all married couples.

The Council of Catholic Women will hold its monthly meeting after the 8 a.m. Mass on Wednesday, Feb. 15. The guest speaker will be Father John O'Neill, a former pastor, who will speak about his missionary experience in Pakistan.

Men's prayer breakfasts will be held after the 8 a.m. Mass on the first and third Saturdays in February. The meetings begin with a continental breakfast followed by discussion of issues of concern to men in their everyday life.

The Knights of Columbus will lead the Stations of the Cross at 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 24. The Knights will provide a soup supper in the church hall afterward.

Anniversaries: Chris and Lu Theodore (61), Peter and Betty Staab (61), Greg and Shirley Penrod (61), Tom and Nancy Flagg (55), Paul and Barbara Thrower (55), Ronald and Janice Cashner (53), Charles and Carol Fisher (53), Robert and Lenora Price (53), Dick and Helen Gerlach (52), Gerald and Barbara Phillips (50)

St. Joseph, Norris

Confirmandi at St. Joseph and St. Therese in Clinton collected apples, oranges, breakfast bars, and candy to fill 400 goody bags for the children's Christmas party at the Crazy Quilt Friendship Center in Newcomb. They also held a baked-goods and quesadilla sale to benefit Catholic Charities. In addition, confirmandi worked at Second Harvest Food Bank, sorting and shelving food.

St. Mary, Oak Ridge

The junior high youth group is now using the Challenge (for girls) and Conquest (for boys) program for students in fifth through eighth grade. The clubs are designed to help children grow in virtue, friendship, and the Catholic faith.

The family of the month for December was Dr. Rod and Becky Daigle and their children, Alexander, Cora, Charlotte, Patrick, John Paul, Sarah, and Simon.

St. Thomas the Apostle, Lenoir City

The women's guild hosted its first meeting of the year Jan. 23. New officers were welcomed, and various charities were presented monies earned in the past year. Deacon Tom Bomkamp spoke on "The Eucharistic Prayer in the Liturgy." ■



COURTESY OF ELIZABETH CONWAY

Treppards celebrate 50th anniversary

Carl and Pat Treppard of Holy Spirit Parish in Soddy-Daisy recently marked their 50th wedding anniversary. Their grandchildren joined them for the celebration. With the couple in front are Charlie and Maggie Gilluly. Standing (from left) are Alex Treppard, Emma Gilluly, Matt Treppard, Jessica Treppard, James Treppard, and Jake Gilluly. The Treppards are native Chattanooga who both retired from TVA. They joined Holy Spirit in 2005 through the RCLIA program and are active members.

Brother Silas Henderson, OSB, named editor

Oak Ridge native Brother Silas Henderson, OSB, has been named the new managing editor for Abbey Press Publications and *Deacon Digest*, a bimonthly magazine published by Abbey Press of St. Meinrad, Ind.

Brother Silas, a Benedictine monk of St. Meinrad Archabbey, which owns Abbey Press, takes the helm as former managing editor Phil Etienne becomes the new director of publications for Abbey Press.

Among his responsibilities will be assisting Mr. Etienne in selecting new titles and developing new products for Abbey Press Publications; working with the authors of CareNotes, Prayer Notes, Elf-Help Books, Elf-Help Books for Kids, CareNotes for Kids, CareNotes for Teens, and Caring Reflection Books; and overseeing the development of Just for Me Books, a new series for children, which will

launch in May 2012.

The new editor has a bachelor's degree in philosophy from St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict, La., and a master's in theological studies from St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology. He has worked at Abbey Press in various roles since 2006, except for 18 months when he served as director of lifelong formation at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Louisville, Ky. He is the author of several books, articles, and reflections on Mary and the saints.

Brother Silas graduated from Clinton High School in 1996. He was a member of St. Mary Parish in Oak Ridge, where he served as a choir director, director of music, and choir/liturgy teacher for the parish school.

He joined the monastery at St. Meinrad Archabbey in 2002 and took solemn vows as a Benedictine monk in 2007. ■

Five Rivers Deanery calendar

St. Dominic Parish in Kingsport will host a mission featuring **Father David Knight** from Saturday, March 24, through Wednesday, March 28. Father Knight has written several books and has given

talks, missions, retreats, and workshops in Australia, Canada, England, Ecuador, Germany, and the United States. For more details, visit www.saintdominicchurch.catholicweb.com. ■

St. Mary Parish holds 'Pennies for Life' collection

The Respect Life Committee of St. Mary Parish in Johnson City marked the January anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision with mourning and a special "Pennies for Life" collection at all Masses on the weekend of Jan. 21 and 22. This year's collection totaled \$1,117.70.

The Pennies for Life concept was copied from a diocesanwide annual project in the Diocese of Peoria that has yielded more than \$20,000 annually to finance the pro-life work of its Family Resources Center.

St. Mary parishioners were asked to contribute one cent for each year of their life in appreciation for being

born. The funds are used for pro-life projects in the parish.

Pennies for Life was introduced at St. Mary in January 2000.

In subsequent years funds from the St. Mary's Pennies for Life collection have financed parish participation in the diocesanwide crisis pregnancy hotline, helped to finance the installation of the "monument to the unborn" near the church entrance, and provided material assistance to women facing crisis pregnancies.

The committee maintains a regular collection of baby supplies to dispense in response to requests from local mothers. ■



COURTESY OF MEGAN LOCKE

Judge Susano visits KCHS

Knoxville Catholic High School alum Judge Charles Susano recently visited the school and spoke to members of the We the People Club and government students. Judge Susano, who sits on the Tennessee Court of Appeals, spoke to students about his experiences as a lawyer and judge in East Tennessee. He also discussed the importance of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and why they are worthy of study. Judge Susano encouraged students to study hard, learn to write well, and be grateful for the opportunity to attend a Catholic school.

Parish notes: Five Rivers Deanery

Holy Trinity, Jefferson City

The Knights of Columbus served their annual Sunday brunch Jan. 22.

On Jan. 7 and 8 the parish hosted 30 students from Syracuse University who were on a trip to help with a Habitat for Humanity project in Louisiana.

Anniversary: Darryl and Judy Hall (50)

Newcomers: Laura Bruno, Kevin and Shirley Graff, Kathleen Shannon and daughters Layla and Abby

Notre Dame, Greeneville

The Knights of Columbus joined with the national Knights to raise funds for the purchase of ultrasound equipment to be used in pro-life pregnancy care centers. The fundraiser began on the weekend of Jan. 21 and 22 and will end on Feb. 11 and 12.

The recent fifth annual madrigal dinner netted \$3,415 for the building fund.

St. Dominic, Kingsport

The parish needs volunteers to coordinate the rummage sale and parish-night dinners, substitute for the organist as needed, and help maintain the grounds. Call the office at 423-288-8101 or e-mail stodomchurch@aol.com.

St. Henry, Rogersville

The women of St. Henry hosted a "Happy Birthday, Jesus" party at the Boys and Girls Club of Rogersville on Dec. 21. Thirty-five children received treats and gifts.

Anniversary: Jerald and Lucy English (40)

St. Mary, Johnson City

Father Peter Iorio will be installed as pastor by Bishop Richard F. Stika during a bilingual Mass at 10 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 12. During the same liturgy Bishop Stika will confer the ministry of acolyte on seminarian Arthur Torres, who is serving at St. Mary.

The St. Mary Council of Catholic Women made lighted Christmas trees in bottles, which extraordinary ministers distributed to the homebound and those in nursing homes. The CCW also assisted the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry in preparing 31 Christmas food boxes for the needy.

St. Patrick, Morristown

The annual St. Patrick International Dinner was held Jan. 28. Donations were accepted for the leper colony in Ghana that Father Joseph Hammond helps support.

The spiritual-life committee is sponsoring "Lenten Longings," a six-week study of Scripture. Sessions will begin Sunday, Feb. 19, and end Friday, March 30. ■

Parish notes: Smoky Mountain Deanery

Blessed John XXIII, Knoxville

New Missals are on sale in the lobby for \$3.

Holy Ghost, Knoxville

The parish gathered addresses of active military personnel serving away from home and sent greetings during the holiday season.

Immaculate Conception, Knoxville

Father Bill Brimley, CSP, pastor from 1987 to 1995, visited the parish in January.

In advance of the parish's medical mission trip in February, Visitation Hospital in Haiti has requested donations of Tylenol syrup and pills, iron sulfate, Claritin, Benadryl, and hydrocortisone cream. Checks will be accepted to defray trip costs and purchase medicine.

Our Lady of Fatima, Alcoa

Paul Haug was named Knight of the month for January. John and Ferrel Smith were named family of the month.

Sacred Heart, Knoxville

The parish needs volunteers willing to be trained to run the sound system at Mass. Teens and adults are welcome. Call Faerie Pabich at 865-588-4145.

The five-year strategic pastoral plan is available in the church vestibule and the parish office and can be found on the parish website, www.shcathedral.org. ■

Smoky Mountain Deanery calendar

A parish mission with the theme "A Giving Heart" will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25, at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Townsend. Paul Simoneau, director of the diocesan Office of Justice and Peace, will be the presenter. Registration is required by Monday, Feb. 20. Sign up in the church or call Father Shelton at 865-448-6070.

A Seekers of Silence Contemplative Saturday Morning will be held Feb. 4 at Blessed John XXIII Catholic Center in Knoxville. Father Tom Ryan, CSP, will give a talk titled "Interreligious Prayer: Finding Our Way Forward." Coffee and tea will be served at 8:30 a.m.; the workshop will run from 9 a.m. to noon. Bring a bag lunch. RSVP at 865-523-7931. ■



COURTESY OF DEB PEACHEY

Giving tree benefits 37 families

Each year the Council of Catholic Women at St. Mary Parish in Gatlinburg puts up a giving tree. The council collects names from three local schools of children whose families need help at Christmas. Members make ornaments and put them on the giving tree for parishioners who want to help the families. Once gifts are returned to the church, the CCW delivers them to the schools so they can be given to families in need. This past Christmas 37 names were displayed on the giving tree. Pictured with the gifts are (from left) Diann Simonis, Deb Peachey, and Eileen Widmer.

Sacred Heart Cathedral School helps Glenmary

Sacred Heart Cathedral School's latest missions project will benefit Glenmary Home Missioners.

During Catholic Schools Week Jan. 29 through Feb. 3 the school challenged each class to raise money to purchase folding chairs for the new Glenmary missions in Maynardville,

Rutledge, and Unicoi County. The donated funds will purchase folding chairs at \$10 each and padded folding chairs at \$16 each.

Sacred Heart's December missions project collected baby items for Catholic Charities' Pregnancy Help Centers. ■

Spell-a-thon helps LaFollette food pantry

St. John Neumann School first-graders earn canned goods with their spelling skills.

Each year St. John Neumann School in Farragut collects food for Father Joe Campbell, the pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in LaFollette and a former associate pastor of St. John Neumann.

The food is distributed through the food pantry in LaFollette. As a way to earn cans, the first-grade students participated in a spell-a-thon. The first-graders had to spell as many words as they could correctly in 30 minutes. The parents were asked to make a pledge of canned goods or money to provide hams for the families in LaFollette.

The first-graders completed 96 words in 30 minutes. A total of 2,847 were spelled correctly by all the students. The students earned more than 500 cans and \$200 for the food pantry. ■



COURTESY OF MICHELLE DOUGHERTY

Wagonload of pledges First-grade student Ryan Theobald wheels in his collected can pledges after the spell-a-thon. With him are (from left) Nathan Cozart, Angel Wade, and Abbey Arnold.

Parvuli Dei for Daniel

During the 10 a.m. Mass at All Saints Church in Knoxville on Dec. 4, Daniel Eshleman received his Parvuli Dei (Child of God) Scouting award from George LeCrone Sr. and associate pastor Father Miguel Vélez. Mr. LeCrone is the chairman of the Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting. The Parvuli Dei is Daniel's second religious award, and he plans to earn all four as he grows in his faith. Pictured with Daniel are (from left, front) siblings Alex and Sofia and Father Vélez, and (back) Mr. LeCrone and Daniel's parents, Gina and Troy Eshleman.



COURTESY OF GEORGE LECRONE SR.

Knoxville Catholic swimmers take fifth in KISL finals

The Knoxville Catholic High School swimming and diving team finished in fifth place overall Jan. 20 and 21 at the Knoxville-area Interscholastic Swim League championship meet, held at the Allan Jones Aquatic Center on the University of Tennessee campus.

Ellen Bradford won both the 200-meter individual medley and the 100 breaststroke. Emily Boone won the 1-meter diving.

In other girls diving results, Caylyn Reed placed sixth and Natali Knight ninth for KCHS. In boys diving, Derek Connolly placed ninth for the Fighting Irish.

In girls swimming events, KCHS's Ellen, Marisa Connolly, Caroline Gettelfinger, and Ali Gilbertson placed third in the medley relay. Ali, Katie McCarty, Lucy Fortune, and Caroline took second in the 200 freestyle relay. Martha Dinwiddie, Katie, Lucy, and Ellen finished fourth in the 400 free relay. Lucy placed third in the 200 free and second in the 500 free.

Katie was 10th in the 200 free. CC Hermes took 10th place in the 100 backstroke. Ali placed fourth in the 50 free. Caroline took seventh in the 50 free and sixth in the 100 free. Marisa recorded a 10th-place finish in the 100 free and a second-place time in the 100 breast. Alex Kellet came in seventh in the 500 free.

In boys swimming, Kevin Nicholson, Jake Dovgan, Matt Dovgan, and Derek took sixth place in the medley relay for KCHS. The same foursome finished fourth in the 200 free relay. Jake placed ninth in the 200 IM and fifth in the 100 butterfly. Derek finished fourth in the 50 free. Kevin came in seventh in the 50 free. ■

Weekday Readings

Sunday, Feb. 5: Job 7:1-4, 6-7; Psalm 147:1-6; 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23; Mark 1:29-39

Monday, Feb. 6: Memorial, Paul Miki and companions, martyrs, 1 Kings 8:1-7, 9-13; Psalm 132:6-10; Mark 6:53-56

Tuesday, Feb. 7: 1 Kings 8:22-23, 27-30; Psalm 84:3-5, 10-11; Mark 7:1-13

Wednesday, Feb. 8: 1 Kings 10:1-10; Psalm 37:5-6, 30-31, 39-40; Mark 7:14-23

Thursday, Feb. 9: 1 Kings 11:4-13; Psalm 106:3-4, 35-37, 40; Mark 7:24-30

Friday, Feb. 10: Memorial, Scolastica, virgin, 1 Kings 11:29-32 and 12:19; Psalm 81:10-15; Mark 7:31-37

Saturday, Feb. 11: 1 Kings 12:26-32 and 13:33-34; Psalm 106:6-7, 19-22; Mark 8:1-10

Sunday, Feb. 12: Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46; Psalm 32:1-2, 5, 11; 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1; Mark 1:40-45

Monday, Feb. 13: James 1:1-11; Psalm 119:67-68, 71-72, 75-76; Mark 8:11-13

Tuesday, Feb. 14: Memorial, Cyril, monk, and Methodius, bishop, James 1:12-18; Psalm 94:12-15, 18-19; Mark 8:14-21

Wednesday, Feb. 15: James 1:19-27; Psalm 15:2-5; Mark 8:22-26

Thursday, Feb. 16: James 2:1-9; Psalm 34:2-7; Mark 8:27-33

Friday, Feb. 17: James 2:14-24, 26; Psalm 112:1-6; Mark 8:34-9:1

Saturday, Feb. 18: James 3:1-10; Psalm 12:2-5, 7-8; Mark 9:2-13

Sunday, Feb. 19: Isaiah 43:18-19, 21-22, 24-25; Psalm 41:2-5, 13-14; 2 Corinthians 1:18-22; Mark 2:1-12

Monday, Feb. 20: James 3:13-18; Psalm 19:8-10, 15; Mark 9:14-29

Tuesday, Feb. 21: James 4:1-10; Psalm 55:7-11, 23; Mark 9:30-37

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Living the readings by Father Joseph Brando

A month of contradictions

February's Sunday readings help prepare us for Lent.

Some say it's a good thing that February is the shortest month of the year. In our temperate climate, its weather arguably is the most difficult to tolerate. February has the further negative of occurring after Christmas and well before Easter.

Perhaps the month's best asset is that it serves as a buffer between the Advent-Christmas and Lent-Easter cycles of the liturgical year. In fact, until the 1969 reform of the Roman Rite under Pope Paul VI, the Sundays of this month were called Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima, respectively, counting down the days to Easter (x minus 70, then 60, then 50 days until Easter). Although they are now numbered as Sundays in ordinary time, they still have readings that prepare us for the soul-searching personal renewal we should take on during Lent.

In 2012 the first three Sundays of February prepare us for Lent, which begins on the last Sunday of the month. All four Sundays present us with contradictions we must meditate on if we are to progress in the spiritual life. The first three act as a sort of gentle incline or ramp we walk up gradually to reach the high level of Lenten preparation needed to achieve the spiritual heights of Easter. By that time we should have attained a high state of relationship with our risen Savior. But that's unlikely to happen if in early February we don't start to meditate wholeheartedly on the Scriptures of the Liturgy of the Word.

Feb. 5: slave and free

Our uphill journey this month begins with the pain of Job's suffering. He who was respected as the richest and best man in his city had been

given over to Satan to be tempted into cursing God. Satan had taken away his wealth, his livestock, his children, and his health.

Having hit bottom, Job complains about the human condition he is now experiencing. All his previous possessions served only to cover the reality of basic human life. In only six verses Job describes life on earth as drudgery, slavery, misery, and hopelessness. And to boot, life is short.

Like the wind, the years of life flee quickly, never to be seen again. Job laments his woes deeply, but he never once curses God. Nevertheless, his understanding of life is as clouded in his misery as it had been when he enjoyed wealth.

Paul counters, in the second reading, from the point of view of a man with little of the world's riches. He states that he willingly took on the status of a slave without experiencing the pain of Job. Dedicating his life to preaching deprived Paul of the chance to get rich, but it gained him the joy of winning people to the Lord. So, Paul wrote, "woe to me if I do not preach it."

He gave himself up to become all things to all men so that some might accept the Gospel. That was a good deal for Paul. It's good for us too. A life dedicated to others for the sake of the kingdom is a meaningful and fulfilling life. From that point of view, experiencing the poverty of a slave committed to bringing life to others is far superior to spending all one's short allotment of time on earth trying to amass material stuff that will soon disappear.

In today's Gospel, Mark relates the first miracle story of Jesus recorded in the Synoptic Gospels: the cure of Peter's mother-in-law. She puts Paul's lesson into practice. She

who had been as incapacitated as Job by her fever, once freed of it, got up immediately and began to attend to the needs of everyone in the house. Her service to others was her thanks to the Lord for curing her. She was a happy woman in her servitude.

A few hours later the Sabbath was over, and Jesus was presented with a decision that was to determine the remainder of his newly begun public ministry. After word of Jesus' miracle circulated through Capernaum, the townspeople brought every ailing person for miles around to Peter's house to be cured. Jesus spent the night curing many and casting out demons.

The problem was whether Jesus was to be penned up in one house with the whole world coming to him with their sick. What kind of Messiah would that be?

What Jesus decided to do in response was even more amazing. After praying about it before the next dawn, Jesus decided no—he would not be caged in one place. He would go to the towns and bring the good news directly to people's hearts. Jesus chose a life of service as a sign to us that such servitude is freedom.

Feb. 12: healer and leper

The first reading this Sunday presents the Old Testament law regarding leprosy. Any person suspected of being a leper had to go to a priest of the order of Aaron. The priest would decide whether the person had the disease. If the verdict was yes, the leper had to tear his garments, bare his head, muffle his beard, cry out "unclean, unclean" whenever anyone came near, and dwell outside the camp (or away from any place where other people dwell). He would be sentenced to a life of misery.

The Gospel for the day describes how Jesus had the tables turned on him by a leper. One day, early in his public ministry, Jesus met a leper and was "moved with pity." Jesus

cured him, freeing him from the miserable life he had been living. But before Jesus let the man go to the priest to be declared free of the malady, he warned him not to tell anyone.

But how many people could hold in the story of such a marvelous, life-changing event? Accordingly, the man spilled the beans and told the world that Jesus had the power to cure leprosy.

Mark reported that the result of this “leak” was to render Jesus incapable of entering a town openly because people kept coming to him. He had to live in deserted places. How ironic! The man who cured lepers had to suffer the lot of a leper and stay outside inhabited areas. The healer now had to live the life of a leper.

Despite Jesus’ clear intention that this should not happen, he accepted his new position. Jesus had no place to lay his head. He made that sacrifice out of pity for the sick and marginalized. He truly took on our infirmities.

Paul wrote, in the second reading, that whatever we do should be done for the glory of God. One example of this is Jesus’ behavior in the Gospel. Another is Paul’s behavior. He brashly wrote, “Be imitators of me as I am of Christ.” So should we do. But we can do so only if we have developed some of our Lord’s pity and his radical self-giving love.

Feb. 19: stuck yet free

Isaiah gave us great advice for life when he wrote in the first reading today, “remember not the events of the past.” This insight harkens to the admonition God gave Lot and his family not to look back when fleeing Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot’s wife did and turned into a pillar of salt.

That is not a quaint story. It happens even now as people who have the opportunity to leave an evil situation try to do so but make the mistake of looking back. They become

stuck. Unable to get closer to safety, they are pulled back to their former situation. There are many pillars of salt among us. They did not believe God when he said, “I wipe out your offenses.”

Paul teaches us, in the second reading, that our God is a God of “yes.” Paul was admonishing the Corinthians to turn from their mistaken ways and their lack of love. Getting back is easier than we expect. We need only realize the love of God—and that God always offers us a hearty “yes.” We are free. All we have to do is receive God’s “yes” with joy. Then we lose our “pillar of salt” status and become flexible possessors of God’s gift of freedom.

The poor paralytic, the focus of Sunday’s Gospel, was incapable of moving any part of his body, and his friends were stuck in the crowd and unable to move him closer to Jesus. Fortunately, his bearers knew of God’s “yes.”

They were flexible enough not to take no for an answer. Instead, they tried plan B: they got on top of Jesus’ house and audaciously broke through the roof. Jesus’ immediate response was to grant forgiveness.

Lack of forgiveness causes spiritual paralysis and often even physical immobility. In this case, upon further review of the scribes, Jesus affirmed his ruling on the field by freeing the man from his physical paralysis as well.

All were astounded and glorified God. No doubt we could add that everyone there—not just the former paralytic—became much more active, jumping for joy and shaking one another’s hands in joy.

Feb. 26: true repentance

Finally Lent arrives, and our horizon is much wider, thanks to the spiritual climbing we’ve accomplished during the first three weeks of February. We should be ready for big-league piety and leaps in our faith as we get in shape for Easter.

The Liturgy of the Word begins

with a deluge. The flood that inundated the world at the time of Noah had just ended. God spoke, establishing a new covenant with Noah, his sons (including us), and all the animals. Can you imagine that?

Read the passage from Genesis for yourself. It was a momentous occasion. The world had just been destroyed by water. Every living being, except those in the ark, had died. That had the makings of a trauma that would affect not only the survivors but also their descendants down to the present.

Any time a thunderclap was heard or rain started falling, some primordial memory would frighten us and all sentient creatures. Our instinct, ingrained since the flood, would take charge of our emotions. The concept of God would be frightening for many of us.

But God wanted to mitigate this possible aftereffect. He proposed a sign of his benevolence. It’s the rainbow: a sign God will not destroy the earth again. If we look at it and all the other signs of God’s beauty, we can be cured of any deep-seated fear of God.

When the Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert for 40 days (the same length of time as the flood), look at who was with Jesus. Mark emphatically makes the theological point that Jesus was with the wild animals as well as angels who ministered to him. Yes, Satan was with him too. The whole cast of creation was on stage. Mark does not tell us what happened out there. He merely tells us the result of the 40 days on Jesus.

Jesus was changed. He began an energetic public ministry. He had a message, namely, the Kingdom of God is at hand. He told the world to “repent and believe in the good news.” Despite John the Baptist’s incarceration in a prison he would never leave alive, Jesus told us to see good news all around us.

Peter, in the second reading, told us more about repentance. He ex-

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Wednesday, Feb. 22: Ash Wednesday, Joel 2:12-18; Psalm 51:3-6, 12-14, 17; 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday, Feb. 23: Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1:1-4, 6; Luke 9:22-25

Friday, Feb. 24: Isaiah 58:1-9; Psalm 51:3-6, 18-19; Matthew 9:14-15

Saturday, Feb. 25: Isaiah 58:9-14; Psalm 86:1-6; Luke 5:27-32

Sunday, Feb. 26: Genesis 9:8-15; Psalm 25:4-9; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:12-15

Monday, Feb. 27: Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18; Psalm 19:8-10, 15; Matthew 25:31-46

Tuesday, Feb. 28: Isaiah 55:10-11; Psalm 34:4-7, 16-19; Matthew 6:7-15

Wednesday, Feb. 29: Jonah 3:1-10; Psalm 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19; Luke 11:29-32

Thursday, March 1: Esther C:12, 14-16, 23-25; Psalm 138:1-3, 7-8; Matthew 7:7-12

Friday, March 2: Ezekiel 18:21-28; Psalm 130:1-8; Matthew 5:20-26

Saturday, March 3: Deuteronomy 26:16-19; Psalm 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8; Matthew 5:43-48 ■

Marriage enrichment: your creation story

By Marian Christiana

Every couple has their own creation story, the story of how they met. In Genesis 2 we learn how the first couple, Adam and Eve, met. Adam had not found a suitable partner in any of the creatures created by God. God understood Adam's plight and created a woman who was truly part of Adam's being: she was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. From that day on, Adam had a partner to share life's joys and sorrows.

My husband and I met at a Fourth of July beach party, and I persuaded him to lend me his bicycle. I proceeded to crash the bike and break the front wheel. Without his bicycle, he no longer had a way to get home from the party. Believe me, I've been hearing about our "creation story" ever since.

What is your creation story? How did you and your spouse become a couple? It's important for us to remember our beginnings so we can reflect on how far we've come in living out our sacrament of marriage.

Since 1983 the second Sunday of February has been set aside as World Marriage Day. This day honors the faithfulness and joy of daily married life. This year Valentine's Day happens to coincide with this worldwide celebration of marriage. What a perfect time to reflect on our "creation" story and our marital journey.

■ Set aside some time to reminisce about how you met. Did someone introduce you? Do you still visit the location of your first meeting?

■ Spend some time sharing your story with your family. Children

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Life and dignity by Paul Simoneau

Works of mercy

Our charitable works must address both man's material and spiritual poverty.

Few in our past century understood poverty as well as Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta. But she whom Blessed John Paul II called "an icon of the Good Samaritan" also understood that poverty is not just of the material realm.

In a 1975 interview she said that "the spiritual poverty of the Western World is much greater than the physical poverty of our people" (see bit.ly/zvgw8q). Commenting on "the millions of people [in the West] who suffer such terrible loneliness and emptiness," she said, "what they are missing really is a living relationship with God."

This is why the Church has traditionally recommended works of mercy that minister to both the corporal and spiritual poverty and suffering of man.

Pope Benedict XVI, taking up Mother Teresa's observation that "the worst poverty is not to know Christ," reminds us that "he who does not give God gives too little" (message for Lent, 2006). If indeed man "does not live by bread alone" (Matthew 4:4), "we always give too little when we just give material things" (*Jesus of Nazareth* [Doubleday, 2007], p. 199). Indeed, the spiritual works of mercy are the soul of the corporal works—together they treat the "whole person."

Asked what the works of mercy are, many have little trouble listing most of the corporal works, but few can recall even one of the spiritual works. And perhaps the more obvious reason for this is that we can more easily recognize the signs of physical hunger and thirst in others, their exterior sufferings and poverty, than we can those that are spiritual and thus less discernible to us.

Together there are 14 works of

mercy—seven corporal (cf. Matthew 25:35-40) and seven spiritual. The tendency is to approach these two categories separately—the physical and material first, then the spiritual. However, it is not until we pair each of the seven corporal works with their corresponding spiritual work that we get a true sense of how interrelated and inseparable they are.

In their paired order, corporal and spiritual, they are as follows: feed the hungry, counsel the doubtful; give drink to the thirsty, instruct the ignorant; clothe the naked, admonish the sinner; shelter the homeless, comfort the afflicted; visit the sick, forgive offenses; visit the imprisoned, bear wrongs patiently; and bury the dead, pray for the living and the dead.

We need both bread and the "bread of life" (John 6:35), clean water and "living water" (John 4:10); clothing and to be clothed in Christ (Galatians 3:27); shelter and "the Father's house" (Luke 2:49); to visit the poor in body and in spirit and to visit Christ in the Blessed Sacrament; to visit the imprisoned and to be merciful to those who have offended and those spiritually enslaved; to bury the dead and die to oneself (Luke 9:23-24; Romans 6).

Blessed Mother Teresa ministered to the bodily needs of the poor but never neglected to give something of Jesus to the soul as well. She never worried whether she would have enough food or money to bring to the poor, but she did worry whether she would have enough love to give to them. She never neglected her prayer, especially the Rosary, nor her daily holy hour before the Blessed Sacrament.

In the Eucharist she found the "great school of charity, justice, and peace" (*Dies Domini*, "On Keeping

the Lord's Day Holy," No. 73). She would have known what Benedict XVI meant when he wrote, "We can recognize Jesus himself in the poor only if we have already become well acquainted with his face, and this face is very close to us especially in the mystery of the Eucharist" (*On the Way to Jesus Christ* [Ignatius, 2005], p. 29). As Benedict XVI said in his message for Lent in 2007, "Christ 'draws me to himself' in order to unite himself to me so that I learn to love my brothers with his own love."

If our works of mercy are to nourish the corporal and spiritual needs of man, we must first be nourished by God. Benedict XVI reminds us that "Prayer, as a means of drawing ever new strength from Christ, is concretely and urgently needed. People who pray are not wasting their time, even though the situation appears desperate and seems to call for action alone. Piety does not undermine the struggle against the poverty of our neighbors, however extreme. In the example of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta we have a clear illustration of the fact that time devoted to God in prayer not only does not detract from effective and loving service to our neighbor but is in fact the inexhaustible source of that service" (*Deus Caritas Est*, "God is Love," No. 36).

Though it is possible to give something of our own resources to address the corporal needs of man, if we are to nourish man's spiritual hunger and thirst we need what only Christ can give, through us: his love.

Closing with my traditional play on the words of Pope Paul VI, "if you want peace . . .," give God and bread. ■

Mr. Simoneau directs the diocesan Office of Justice and Peace.



Child sacrifice in 21st-century America

The 'slaughter of the innocents has been going on for almost four decades.'

The Hebrew Bible is not for the squeamish. And its harshest maledictions are called down upon those who practiced the abomination of child sacrifice.

Thus the Psalmist:

They sacrificed their sons and daughters to the demons, they poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood. Thus they became unclean by their acts, and played the harlot in their doings. Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against his people, and he abhorred his heritage. . . . they were rebellious in their purposes, and were brought low because of their iniquity (Psalm 106:38-40, 43).

And the prophet Ezekiel, delivering the word of the Lord:

And you took your sons and your daughters, whom you had borne to me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. Were your harlotries so small a matter that you slaughtered my children and delivered them up as an offering by fire to them? . . . Behold, therefore, I stretched out my hand against you, and diminished your allotted portion, and delivered you to the greed of your enemies . . . (Ezekiel 16:20-21, 27).

Thirty-nine years after *Roe v. Wade* created an unrestricted abortion license in the United States, during the week when hundreds of thousands of Americans pray and march for life, all Americans ought to ponder these words—and the kind of country to which *Roe v. Wade* led.

It was supposed to be a country in which women were liberated; it

became a country in which women were ever more the victims of predatory and sexually irresponsible men, left alone with their “rights” to find a technological “fix” to the dilemma of unwanted pregnancy. It was supposed to become a more humane country; it became a coun-

For every 1,000 African-American babies born to teenagers [in New York City], 2,630 were aborted.

try in which morally coarsened pundits can describe as “extreme” and “weird” the faith-filled response of the Santorum family to the loss of a newborn shortly after birth. It was supposed to be a country of greater equality; it became a country in which the fantasies of those who believed that America was for white Anglo-Saxon Protestants only, with emphasis on “white,” were realized beyond the wildest imaginings of the most crazed racists and eugenicists of the 1920s.

Abortion in New York City

These hard truths have too often been hidden, especially where abortion is widely prevalent. Thus it is to the immense credit of the New York-based Chiaroscuro Foundation that it has compelled the New York City Department of Health to itemize separately abortion and pregnancy statistics in its annual reports. The 2010 numbers, just released, would make both the Psalmist and Ezekiel blanch:

Of the 208,541 pregnancies in New York City in 2010, 83,750 were terminated by abortion: four in 10. Among non-Hispanic blacks, there were 38,574 abortions and 26,635

live births: thus for every 1,000 African-American babies born, 1,448 were aborted. Those numbers were even more chilling among non-Hispanic black teenagers: for every 1,000 African-American babies born to teenagers, 2,630 were aborted. The overall teenage abortion rate was 63 percent in a city where 16 percent of all pregnancies were teen pregnancies.

Reasons for hope

New York City is not America, of course. And there is encouragement on various fronts in the battle for life. The national abortion rate is down over the past several decades.

Science has vindicated the pro-life position. The pro-life/pro-choice opinion balance has tilted, if slightly, in favor of the pro-life cause. Younger people are more likely to be pro-life than aging baby-boomers. Legislated regulation of the abortion industry has driven abortuaries out of business in many places.

Yet the fact remains that America is a country in which almost one in four pregnancies ends in the willful, violent death of the unborn child. And this slaughter of the innocents has been going on, often in higher percentages, for almost four decades.

As the Psalmist and Ezekiel might have told us, feeding the demons inevitably leads to a terrible hardening of sensibilities. The warnings from ancient Israel about where that hardening leads are worth pondering in this election year, and indeed in every year. ■

George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

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enjoy knowing their parents' history. You might consider writing down your “creation” story for your family to keep.

■ Remember the time of your first meeting. Where were you on your faith journey? How has your marriage helped you grow in your faith? Share your spiritual growth with your family as well.

These simple exercises are easy ways to share your sacrament with your loved ones.

There are still two opportunities to attend a Marriage Celebration Mass and luncheon with Bishop Stika if you'd like to renew your marriage vows. Both Masses begin at 11 a.m., with a free luncheon immediately following.

■ Saturday, Feb. 11, St. Jude Church, Chattanooga

■ Saturday, March 3, St. Mary Church, Johnson City

To make reservations, contact Karen Byrne at kbyrne@dioknox.org or 865-862-5739.

You can read more about World Marriage Day at wmd.wwme.org/purpose-history.html. ■

Mrs. Christiana is coordinator of the diocesan Marriage Preparation and Enrichment Office.



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plained that Christ's death was an invitation for us to follow him through death to eternal life in the Spirit. Could that not have been the vision Jesus saw in the desert?

There with the wild animals, the angels, and Satan, Jesus put it all together and saw what role the Father had established for him. As the Son of God, Jesus would lead us back to something greater than the Garden of Eden. He would lead us to the kingdom, the New Jerusalem. He would lead us through evil and death—destroying them in the process—to eternal happiness.

We can enter this reality now, said Peter, by means of baptism. Yet Peter warns us that baptism is not a cleansing. First, it was a two-step process of being “put to death in the flesh” and “brought to life in the spirit.”

Jesus' baptism also included his descent to the dead to take the righteous to heaven. For us baptism is “an appeal to God for a clear conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ who has gone to heaven.” We're going with him.

We never have to look back. But with divine assurance we know our future, as Jesus learned it in the desert. All the problems of this world will be rectified. We'll live in that new world after we follow Christ through death to new life. So we can live in this world, living in the Spirit with a whole new attitude of freedom, constantly affirming the glory of God. ■

Father Brando is the pastor of St. Mary Parish in Gatlinburg.



Understanding the sacraments by Father Randy Stice

Receiving the life of God

The power of Christ's saving mystery reaches us through the sacraments.

Christ's Paschal Mystery—his suffering, death, and resurrection—brought salvation to the whole world. However, the crucial question for us is this: How does the power of this saving mystery reach us, transform us into the image of Christ, and give us eternal life?

The short answer? Through the sacraments.

To understand this, we must begin with Jesus' public ministry. Jesus' words and actions during his earthly ministry anticipated the saving power of the Paschal Mystery. In these events Christ announced and prepared what he would give the Church when all had been accomplished (John 19:30).

Risen and ascended, Christ is now present in and acts through the Church. The Church is the body of Christ, and he is its head (Ephesians 1:23). For this reason, the New Testament clearly teaches that the Church “is the pillar and support of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:16). Furthermore, it is through the Church that the manifold wisdom of God will be made known (Ephesians 3:10).

Thus the Church, as the pillar and support of the truth, reflected on the saving words and deeds of Christ during his earthly ministry and identified seven as having a unique saving power.

He himself was baptized by John in the Jordan, and he commanded his disciples to baptize new believers. He celebrated the Last Supper with his disciples and commanded them to celebrate it often.

He commissioned and empowered his followers to continue his ministry. He healed the sick and forgave sinners. He affirmed that

marriage was divinely instituted by God.

He imparted to the Twelve a special power and authority to act in his name.

Over time the Church, in her role as the pillar and support of the truth, came to recognize in these actions the seven sacraments: baptism, Eucharist, confirmation, anointing of the sick, reconciliation (confession), marriage, and holy orders (ordination).

The first three—baptism, Eucharist, and confirmation—are called the sacraments of initiation because they introduce us into the life of God. Reconciliation and anointing of the sick are the sacraments of healing, physical but especially spiritual. Marriage and holy orders are the sacraments of vocation.

These seven sacraments touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life: they give birth (baptism) and increase (marriage and holy orders), healing (Eucharist, penance, and anointing of the sick) and mission (Eucharist and confirmation) to our life of faith.

The sacraments are the work of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places” (1:3).

The whole of God's work, from the beginning until the end of time, is a blessing. His supreme blessing is the gift of his Son, through whom we share in the very life of the Trinity—“partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4), which is communicated to us through the sacraments. Through the Holy Spirit the love of God is poured into our hearts (Romans 5:5), God's first gift,

which contains all others.

In summary, we may say that Christ's Paschal Mystery is made present in the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit through the sacraments for our sanctification to the glory of the Father.

Every time a sacrament is celebrated according to the teaching and intention of the Church, the recipient receives the very life and power of God—what the Church calls grace. Christ always acts in his sacraments to communicate the grace specific to each sacrament, such as the forgiveness of sins in the sacrament of reconciliation.

Although the sacraments are effective every time they are celebrated, their fruitfulness can vary. This is because the fruitfulness of the sacrament depends on the disposition of the one who receives it.

The sacraments bear fruit in our lives to the degree that we love God and seek to do his will, not ours. God's grace is always communicated, but its fruitfulness in our lives depends on us.

St. Leo the Great wrote, “What was visible in our Savior has passed over into his mysteries [sacraments].” Today Christ continues the same saving words and works that are so wonderfully depicted in the Gospels: granting new life, healing, forgiving, blessing, and empowering.

Through the sacraments we receive the salvation Christ accomplished for us in his Paschal Mystery. Through them we encounter the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, so that we might be filled up to all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19). ■

Father Stice directs the diocesan Office of Worship and Liturgy.



Once upon a time by Monsignor Xavier Mankel

The Oak Hill story

St. Mary's Medical Center 'has been a great blessing to East Tennessee.'

People of all religious persuasions lamented the sale in 2011 of St. Mary's Medical Center to a for-profit entity. It is not so much that new management will do a poorer job in the practice of the healing arts. Indeed, things might be even better than before, as new blood and new ideas continue to make the science of 21st-century health care simply marvelous.

No, I think a major cause of the unrest is that our sense of complacency has been shattered. We all know what a great blessing St. Mary's has been to East Tennessee, and more people have been exposed to traces of Catholicism through our Catholic hospitals than perhaps through our pulpits and even our schools. St. Mary's Hospital definitely made its mark on the people of these parts, and for the more than three-quarters of a century that this great impact was made, we are grateful.

Where did it all begin? Did Eve, the mother of all the living, treat wounds on her children? Does the array of equipment literally unearthed by modern archeologists bear witness to the practice of the healing arts? Does the importance of the ship's barber or an army's medics hint at the development of what we term modern medicine?

It was not in 1927, as momentum continued toward the erection of the first of many buildings and wings on Oak Hill Avenue, but in 1827 in far-off Dublin that Catherine McAuley opened a refuge for women and

children called the House of Mercy. In a trail that leads across a century, an ocean, and a good part of our country, the years leading up to April 22, 1930, are ones of adventure, faith, divine providence, and promise.

Seven of Catherine's family of women religious came to Pittsburgh in 1843, and by 1847 the first Mercy Hospital in the world opened. On Oct. 31, 1866, Sisters of Mercy came to Tennessee—first to Nashville, then on to Knoxville, where the Sisters of Mercy were operating St. Mary School next door to Immaculate Conception, Knoxville's only Catholic Church at that time.

Shortly after the First World War some Knoxville doctors began an initiative to expand health care beyond that provided by Knoxville General Hospital and the clinic-like Howard Henderson Hospital (the building still stands at the corner of Kingston Pike and Concord Street, just a few hundred feet from the abortion mill where lives are taken, not saved).

Father Francis D. Grady, the pastor of Immaculate Conception, was approached about the Catholic Church's being a part of improved hospital care. Doctors were willing to underwrite \$20,000 of what would become an enterprise of nearly one-third of a million dollars. Common sense would indicate that the proposal should die, yet momentum for a church-run hospital in Knoxville continued.

In the late '20s the Daniel DeWine property on Oak Hill (old North

Knoxville) was given to the Diocese of Nashville (Knoxville did not become a diocese until 1988). The bishop, Alphonse Smith, gave the property to the Sisters of Mercy but made it clear that the church would not be able to offer further financial help. Mercy Sisters Mary Pauline Gray and Mary Thomas Daumer co-founded St. Mary's. Mother Pauline withdrew five sisters from schools and missioned them to schools as students to prepare them to staff the new hospital. Sister Mary Annunciata Dannaher studied business and hospital administration; Sister Mary Magdalen Clarke prepared for x-ray; Sisters Mary Celeste O'Rourke, Rose O'Keefe, and Bernard Fleming studied nursing.

The sisters were helped in no small way by Knoxville's two Catholic pastors, Father Louis Kemphues of Holy Ghost (in whose territory the new hospital would be built) and Father Grady, who was also facilitating the beginnings of Knoxville Catholic High School.

Things were popping all around. Then came black Tuesday and the Great Depression. Through it all the Sisters of Mercy, the Catholics of Knoxville, and many other people of great good will worked and worked and worked to make what would become in just a few years great institutions. ■

Monsignor Mankel is a vicar general of the diocese and the pastor of Holy Ghost Parish in Knoxville.

From the Paraclete: St. Joseph Missals

By Bethany Marinac

Some of our customers placed orders for the new *St. Joseph Sunday Missal* 10 months ago. That says quite a bit about the importance of the Sunday and daily Missals in our lives. The good news is that Missals are starting to arrive. We are filling orders in chronological order and will have Sunday Missals on the shelf very soon. If you would like to reserve a copy of the *St. Joseph Sunday Missal and Hymnal* (Catholic Book Publishing, \$21 to \$32), we will have editions in vinyl and in leather with a zippered cover. We expect weekday editions to begin arriving in March.

We also have the *Daily Roman Missal*, third edition (Scepter). It comes in vinyl, hardcover, and leather editions (\$59.95, \$74.95, and \$94.99). It contains the complete order of the Mass in English and Latin as well as traditional prayers and all common Masses, including the propers of the saints. It also features a catechetical section intended to offer further education on the liturgy.

It's beginning to look a lot like Communion and confirmation at The Paraclete. We're starting to display products for these sacraments as well as for baptism. Communion and confirmation may seem distant now, but with Ash Wednesday coming up on Feb. 22, they will be here sooner than we think. Shop early for the best selection. ■

Visit the Paraclete at 417 Erin Drive in Knoxville; call 865-588-0388; or visit the store's Facebook page at bit.ly/theparaclete.



heaven can't wait

Fight for religious liberty linked to abortion struggle

Cardinal DiNardo urges March for Life participants 'not to be compromised in your dedication.' **By Mark Pattison**

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Participants at the annual March for Life were urged in advance of the march not to let themselves be compromised in their beliefs as the federal government pursues regulations that Catholic leaders say constitute an attack on conscience and religious liberty.

"I beg and pray for the young people present and all youth and young adults not to be compromised in your dedication to the protection of life of each human person, born and unborn," said Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston.

"Keep it before your eyes and in your hearts immediately. Threats against life and against the consciences of those who say yes to life must be met with timely and unwavering action, in our families and institutions, and yes, in the public square."

Cardinal DiNardo, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, made his remarks during his homily at the Jan. 22 opening Mass for the National Prayer Vigil for Life. The overnight vigil, which included a closing Mass Jan. 23 and hourly Holy Hours in between, was conducted at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

The cardinal linked the 39-year struggle to end abortion on demand with the Jan. 20 announcement by U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius that most religious organizations would have to cover contraceptives and sterilization free of charge in their employee health plans, rejecting appeals from Catholic groups to widen the exemption.

"Never before in our U.S. history has the federal government forced



CNS PHOTO/GREGORY L. TRACY, PILOT

D.C. march Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley of Boston participates in the annual March for Life in Washington Jan. 23. The annual pro-life demonstration marks the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion across the nation.

citizens to directly purchase what violates our beliefs," Cardinal DiNardo said, adding that the issue is "the survival of a cornerstone constitutionally protected freedom that ensures respect for conscience and religious liberty."

Cardinal DiNardo said Pope Benedict XVI addressed the issue when meeting with U.S. bishops from the Mid-Atlantic.

"Many of you have pointed out that concerted efforts have been made to deny the right of conscientious objection on the part of Catholic individuals and institutions with regard to cooperation in intrinsically evil practices. Others have spoken to me of a worrying tendency to

reduce religious freedom to mere freedom of worship without guarantees of respect for freedom of conscience," he quoted Pope Benedict as saying.

"In light of last Friday's announcement about health-care mandates, it seems that the Holy Father has nailed the issue in advance," Cardinal DiNardo said. "His calls for courage to counter a reductive secularism which would de-legitimize the church's participation in public life and debate have targeted the issues we face in our pro-life efforts to defend those who defend human life and to defend their religious liberty."

Cardinal DiNardo pointed to

gains made by pro-lifers, including "a record number of state laws that now restrict abortions. State prosecutors have begun to prosecute late-term abortionists who deny life and injure and maim women."

Cardinal-designate Timothy M. Dolan of New York, who celebrated the closing Mass, repeatedly lauded the "radiant inspiration" generated by the marchers who gather at the shrine each year.

He said that after nearly 40 years of legalized abortion, "we might be tempted to give up."

But "not us," said Cardinal-designate Dolan, president of the U.S. bishops. "Not for thousands who have stayed up all night here in prayer. Not for hundreds of thousands who will march today with the word we have received ringing in their ears."

For participants who spent the night in the shrine, Cardinal Dolan brought two bits of "good news": "The New York Giants did win last night to go to the Super Bowl," and weather around Washington prompted a delay in the regular opening time for the federal government. "That leaves less chance to pass a new anti-life regulatory rule," he said.

Recalling the story of King David, whose anointing as king of Israel was part of the Old Testament reading for the Mass, Cardinal-designate Dolan noted that little David killed Goliath. "The New York Giants may have won, but Goliath the giant did not," he said.

The two-hour and 37-minute opening Mass featured a 39-minute entrance procession with four cardinals, 31 other bishops, 300 priests, 75 deacons, and 700 priesthood and diaconate candidates and altar servers—among them perhaps the first



Dedicated to life A young woman holds a sign during the annual March for Life rally in Washington Jan. 23.

woman in liturgical attire to take part in such a procession for the National Prayer Vigil for Life. Cardinal DiNardo said near the end of the Mass that he had invited altar servers from the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston to come to Washington to take part.

The closing Mass Jan. 23 was a much shorter affair, lasting only 70 minutes with a seven-minute entrance procession. Cardinal-designate Dolan was joined by three

other bishops, 63 priests, five deacons, and 10 servers.

Seventeen television monitors were set up around the shrine so worshipers could see the Masses from any vantage point. The number was up from 14 last year. "It seems that this just keeps getting bigger and bigger," said shrine spokeswoman Jacquelyn Hayes. ■

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Our seminarians: Adam Royal

By Dan McWilliams

Adam Royal is in his second year of philosophy at St. Meinrad School of Theology in St. Meinrad, Ind. He is the son of Sandra Royal of Ooltewah and Lonnie Royal of Albertville, Ala.

What is your most challenging course in seminary and why?

Advanced Latin is my most difficult course. It is the most difficult because the medieval Latin mind is very different from mine. They found beauty in five-line run-on sentences using subtle tricks of the Latin grammar. I don't often find such sentences in English, so it takes a lot of time to sort through [such Latin sentences].

What is your favorite course?

My favorite course is Greek. In taking Greek I've been given a new perspective on the Scriptures, and it has allowed me to more easily see their richness.

What do you most look forward to in your future life as a priest?

The celebration of the sacraments, most especially the sacrament of penance. Living in a society concerned with worldly affairs, it is easy to feel alienated from God. Frequent reception of the sacraments is the cornerstone of my overcoming of this and building a relationship with God, so I look forward to bringing these gifts to others.

When did you first consider the priesthood?



Adam Royal

I was a sophomore in college when someone first suggested the idea to me.

Who has inspired you?

One of my biggest inspirations is the group of priests at the Newman Center in Pittsburgh. They were all zealous and holy priests who worked tirelessly to serve the college students there.

What things about you have changed the most as a seminarian?

My increased love of the Scriptures. In my first semester of philosophy one of the professors explained to us how the Holy Spirit speaks to us in meditation on the words of the Scriptures, and ever since I have been inspired to spend more time with them. ■

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HHS delays but doesn't change rule on contraceptive coverage

USCCB president says the Obama administration has 'drawn an unprecedented line in the sand.' By Nancy Frazier O'Brien

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Although Catholic leaders vowed to fight on, the Obama administration has turned down repeated requests from Catholic bishops, hospitals, schools, and charitable organizations to revise its religious exemption to the requirement that all health plans cover contraceptives and sterilization free of charge.

Instead, Kathleen Sebelius, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, announced Jan. 20 that nonprofit groups that do not provide contraceptive coverage because of their religious beliefs will get an additional year "to adapt to this new rule."

"This decision was made after very careful consideration, including the important concerns some have raised about religious liberty," Sebelius said. "I believe this proposal strikes the appropriate balance between respecting religious freedom and increasing access to important preventive services."

But Cardinal-designate Timothy M. Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the Obama administration had "drawn an unprecedented line in the sand." The U.S. bishops, he said, "are committed to working with our fellow Americans to reform the law and change this unjust regulation. We will continue to study all the implications of this troubling decision."

U.S. Cardinal-designate Edwin F. O'Brien, pro-grand master of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre and apostolic administrator of the Baltimore Archdiocese, called the decision "shocking and disturbing" in a Jan. 20 statement from Rome.

Saying it would force individuals and religious organizations "to surrender their beliefs—rooted in long-

held Judeo-Christian tradition and practice—for the sake of political and financial expediency," he called on Catholics "to pray for our elected officials and to work to reform this unjust regulation."

Sebelius announced the mandate and a narrow religious exemption to it Aug. 1, 2011. Under the plan, after Aug. 1 of this year, new or significantly altered health plans will be required to provide all FDA-approved contraceptives, including some that can cause abortions, without co-pays or deductibles.

The only exempt religious organizations would be those meeting four criteria: "1. has the inculcation of religious values as its purpose; 2. primarily employs persons who share its religious tenets; 3. primarily serves persons who share its religious tenets; and 4. is a nonprofit organization" under specific sections of the Internal Revenue Code.

Those sections "refer to churches, their integrated auxiliaries, and conventions or associations of churches, as well as to the exclusively religious activities of any religious orders," according to a footnote to the interim final rule.

Catholic groups, including the USCCB, the Catholic Health Association, and Catholic Charities USA, called that exemption too narrow, saying it would require Catholic groups to stop all services to those who were not Catholic and would inappropriately involve the government in decisions about whether an organization is "religious enough" to be exempted.

"It is unlikely that any Catholic college or university will be exempt," said Michael Galligan-Stierle, president of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities.

Holy Cross Father John I. Jen-

kins, president of the University of Notre Dame, described the Obama administration's decision as "profoundly disturbing on many levels" and called for "a national dialogue among religious groups, government, and the American people to reaffirm our country's historic respect for freedom of conscience and defense of religious liberty."

Sebelius' announcement brought an outcry from Catholic leaders and a sigh of relief from groups such as Planned Parenthood and NARAL Pro-Choice America, which had opposed any moves to weaken the contraceptive mandate or strengthen the religious exemption.

In a video posted on the USCCB website (at bcove.me/ob5itz9v), Cardinal-designate Dolan said the decision put the Obama administration "on the wrong side of the Constitution" and should be rescinded.

"In effect, the president is saying we have a year to figure out how to violate our consciences," the cardinal-designate said in a separate statement. "To force American citizens to choose between violating their consciences and forgoing their health care is literally unconscionable. It is as much an attack on access to health care as on religious freedom. Historically this represents a challenge and a compromise of our religious liberty."

Franciscan Sister Jane Marie Klein, board chair of Franciscan Alliance, a system of 13 Catholic hospitals, characterized the decision as "nothing less than a direct attack on religion and First Amendment rights."

Father Larry Snyder, president of Catholic Charities USA, said he was "extremely disappointed" that the administration chose to ignore calls from religious institutions to broaden the exemption.

"Just as the identity of Catholic Charities is firmly rooted in the teaching of [the] Church, the identity of this nation includes a mandated respect of religious beliefs," Father Snyder added. "It is this long-standing history that gave us hope that as a religious institution we would be granted the freedom to remain faithful to our beliefs while also being committed to providing access to quality health care for our 70,000 employees and their families across the country."

Bishop Robert N. Lynch of St. Petersburg, Fla., who had earlier said he would be forced to stop offering health insurance to his employees if the HHS mandate remained unchanged, said, "The callous disregard for long-held personal and ecclesial beliefs augurs a chilling moment for believing and practicing Catholics in these United States."

"I hope that no Catholic voting adult will soon forget this egregious and insensitive intrusion by our government into our rights of conscience," he added.

Even the *Washington Post*, in a Jan. 22 editorial, called the decision "unproductive can-kicking that fails to address the fundamental problem of requiring religiously affiliated entities to spend their own money in a way that contradicts the tenets of their faith."

"Requiring a religiously affiliated employer to spend its own money in a way that violates its religious principles does not make an adequate accommodation for those deeply held views," the editorial added. "Having recognized the principle of a religious exemption, the administration should have expanded it." ■

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