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VISITING THE SICK BRINGS
CHRIST'S HEALING SPIRIT

The Editor's Notebook

To Heal the Sick

By David Garick, Editor

This week, *Catholic Times* looks at one of the seven sacraments, the healing of the sick. This is a primary function of the Church. When Jesus began His earthly ministry, one of the principal ways in which He made Himself known to the people was through the healing of the sick. When He sent the disciples out into the world, one of the primary things He told them to do was to heal the sick. St. James, in his instruction to the new church, included the command, “Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up.”

That duty has continued over the centuries. No organization in human history has done more to provide care for the sick than the Catholic Church. Throughout the world, in many places and times, the only hospitals were Catholic hospitals. Religious sisters led the way in developing nursing into the profession that exists today. Modern medical science and enduring spiritual devotion continue to work hand-in-hand to alleviate suffering and to promote healing.

Health care is very much in the news today as government efforts to make insurance coverage more available to people in America have missed the mark. The current federal health care plan threatens to destroy religious freedom to Americans on vital issues related to their duty to protect the human body as the temple of the Holy Spirit and life itself as a gift from God that man has no right to discard.

In this issue, you will read more about dangers posed by the Health and Human Services mandate, which views human fertility as some kind of threat which

must be prevented through contraception, and, in the process, places women at increased risk for real, life-threatening illnesses and exposes unborn children to death through abortion. Under the mandate, every one of us would become complicit in these tragedies because we would be forced to finance them against our will.

Also in this issue, you will read about the ongoing efforts in the diocese to provide the sick, injured, and elderly among us comfort and spiritual healing. All of us are called to visit the sick, to comfort them with our presence and to pray for them. Many of us, as extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, may aid them by bringing the Body of Christ to them in Communion. Finally, the clergy may administer the Sacrament of Healing by anointing them with Holy Oil. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* encourages these ministries, saying, “The sick who receive this sacrament, by freely uniting themselves to the passion and death of Christ, contribute to the good of the People of God. By celebrating this sacrament the Church, in the communion of saints, intercedes for the benefit of the sick person, and he, for his part, through the grace of this sacrament, contributes to the sanctification of the Church and to the good of all men for whom the Church suffers and offers herself through Christ to God the Father.”

We may not all be doctors and nurses. But all of us have a role to play in healing illness through our prayer and our support of those who are ill, and through efforts as citizens to protect religious freedom that is central to health care that operates within God’s holy order.



‘UNIFIED, FOCUSED’
BISHOPS PLEDGE TO
CONTINUE RELIGIOUS
LIBERTY DEFENSE

By Nancy Frazier O’Brien

Catholic News Service

Declaring themselves “strongly unified and intensely focused,” the nation’s top Catholic bishops vowed to continue their multipronged defense of religious liberty in the courts, Congress, and the White House.

A five-page statement titled “United for Religious Freedom” was approved March 14 by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Administrative Committee, made up of the USCCB officers and committee chairmen and an elected bishop representative from each of the geographic regions of the USCCB.

The bishops opened their statement with thanks for “all who have stood firmly with us in our vigorous opposition to this unjust and illegal mandate,” referring to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ requirement that nearly all employers must provide free coverage of contraceptives and sterilization to their employees through health insurance plans.

“This is not about the church wanting to force anybody to do anything; it is instead about the federal government forcing the church -- consisting of its faithful and all but a few of its institutions -- to act against church teachings,” they said. “This is not a fight we want or asked for, but one forced upon us by government on its own timing.”

The debate over the contraceptive mandate is “not a Republican or Democratic, a conservative or liberal issue; it is an American issue,” the bishops added.

Nor is the issue about access to contraception or about “the bishops somehow ‘banning’ contraception,” when the U.S. Supreme Court took that issue off the table two generations ago,” they said.

What especially concerns the bishops about the contraceptive mandate and the narrow religious exemption to it is the “new definition of who we are as people of faith and what constitutes our ministry,” the statement said.

“Government has no place defining religion and religious ministry,” the bishops said. “HHS thus creates and enforces a new distinction -- alien both to our Catholic tradition and to federal law -- between our houses of worship and our great ministries of service to our neighbors, namely the poor, the homeless, the sick, the students in our schools and university, and others in need, of any faith community or none.”

Such a definition creates “a second class of citizenship within our religious community” that could “spread

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DEADLY HEALTH RISKS FOR WOMEN: THE UNSPOKEN SIDE OF THE
GOVERNMENT BIRTH CONTROL MANDATE

By Jenn Giroux, RN

For far too long, there has been an ominous silence across America on arguably the most controversial and devastating issue of the day — birth control. As so often we see in history, oppression gives rise to courage, and, no question, courage is exactly what we are seeing in Church leaders and laymen alike in response to the Obama administration’s recent birth control mandate and more recent unacceptable modifications.

The birth control mandate has forced the issue of contraception to move from being the elephant in the room to center stage. Perhaps, in time, we will see that it was a hidden blessing for our country. For years, pro-life organizations refused to discuss or take on this topic despite the fact that free access to birth control increases the number of surgical abortions (1, 2). Most people repeat over and over that birth control decreases the number of abortions. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

In fact, today, for every child born in the U.S., there are an estimated two children killed in the womb from surgical and chemical abortifacient drug abortions (3). What isn’t being talked about is that the new mandate also predisposes women to serious long-term and permanent health problems. In conjunction with the defense of both religious liberty and the spiritual well-being of women, we must also refute the absurd and deceptive statement that “women are healthier on birth control.”

Providing free hormonal birth control to women under the guise of “preventative services” and “women’s health” is a lie, and women of all faiths deserve to know the truth.

Hormonal birth control methods can enter the body in various ways. These ways include



“the Pill” (by mouth), the Mirena IUD (Intrauterine Device), the implant (placed under the skin), “the Patch” (absorbed through the skin), and the Vaginal Nuvaring. There are many other estrogen-progestin name brands that can be added to this list. Any way you name it, these hormone drugs dispense poison into a woman’s body.

Perhaps HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius should inform her President of the following before he makes additional statements to the press, such as “it is cheaper to prevent than to treat.” Consider this:

— Since 1975, there has been a 400 percent increase in *in situ* breast cancer among premenopausal women less than 50 years old. This mirrors the increased use of birth control over these same years (*In situ* is a medical term which means “at the location.”) (4).

— A Mayo Clinic study confirms that any young girl or woman who is on hormonal birth control for four years before their first full-term pregnancy increases her breast cancer risk by 52 percent (5).

Women who use hormonal

birth control for more than five years are four times more likely to develop cervical cancer (6).

— The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a research arm of the World Health Organization, classifies all forms of hormonal contraception as a Group 1 carcinogen. This group of cancer causing agents also includes cigarettes and asbestos (7). Why is it that the FDA can require cigarette manufacturers to place warning labels and real-life photos of corpses on cigarette packages to warn consumers of the health dangers yet, in turn, take an equally harmful substance (hormonal birth control) and force companies to give it away free to young girls without parental consent and to women of all ages?

— For high school boys and men to take steroid drugs, it is a crime. Whereas, girls and women taking steroid drugs (i.e., hormonal birth control) are now treated as if they are taking a sacred, life-preserving vitamin that women cannot live without (8).

— In October 2010, *The New York Times* carried an article about hormone replacement therapy drugs. It quoted the American Medical Association (AMA) as warning women that these post-menopausal drugs, which were originally marketed as keeping a woman “young and sexy,” were discovered instead to be more likely to cause advanced and deadly breast cancer (9). It stopped short of making one other startling revelation: The only difference between hormone replacement therapy drugs which cause deadly breast cancer and the hormonal birth control drugs now mandated by the Obama administration is that the birth control drugs are six times the dosage — and are the very same drug!

Never before has the U.S. government mandated that private companies must provide services, and it adds insult to injury when this mandate includes substances that harm women and cause them to unknowingly self-abort their babies a certain percentage of the time when they are using these substances.

How is it possible for women to self-abort when birth control is meant to prevent pregnancy? It is possible because many of these birth control methods still allow the woman’s body to ovulate every month. If sexual relations occur during that time, it is possible to get pregnant. Recently, doctors tried to figure out why some women could not get pregnant using artificial insemination. They conducted a study which discovered that the lining of a woman’s uterus must be at least eight millimeters thick for a baby, in its tiniest form, to implant and grow in the womb. They found that the use of hormonal contraception (in any of the forms mentioned above) generally keeps the uterine lining below six millimeters (10).

To be clear, if a baby is conceived by a woman on hormonal birth control, the embryo cannot implant and grow to full gestation of nine months if the integrity of the uterine lining is too thin. Instead, the baby, in its tiniest form, is unknowingly self-aborted by its mother. This is what is meant by the word “abortifacient.” It isn’t just the “morning after” pill or “Ella” that is in the abortion-inducing drug category. It is nearly all of the hormonal birth control that is being mandated.

Since *Roe v Wade*, there have been more than 55 million surgical abortions. These chemical abortions add an estimated 250 million additional abortions to our nation’s holocaust (11).

This is not information that

should be kept from the public. Women deserve to be told the truth. They are not being warned that birth control methods are causing breast, liver, and cervical cancer. They are not being told about the “silent killer” effect which is causing them to unknowingly abort their babies. They are instead being told that they are healthier on birth control because it decreases ovarian and uterine cancer. According to the American Cancer Society, out of 100 women with cancer, 31 have breast cancer, six have uterine cancer, and three have ovarian cancer. This is not a healthy tradeoff of risks that is worth taking (12).

If, indeed, “it is cheaper to prevent than to treat,” then it is time for the White House, Kathleen Sebelius, and all health agencies within the government to sound the warning trumpet to warn women on hormonal birth control about these devastating medical consequences.

Clearly, birth control does not help women at risk, it places women at risk.

Jenn Giroux (pictured), a speaker at the recent Columbus Catholic Women’s Conference, has been a registered nurse for 26 years, allowing her to see the physical and spiritual harm of contraception. She also founded the “Speaking of Motherhood” project to educate women about the harm of birth control and to elevate the profession of motherhood. She and her husband, Dan, live in Cincinnati and have nine children.

NOTES:

(1) http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html

(2) Jones RK, Darroch JE and Henshaw SK, Contraceptive use among U.S. women having abortions in 2000–2001,

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Front Page photo:

Sister Marie Glennon, who is in charge of pastoral care of the sick at Portsmouth Holy Redeemer Church and is chaplain of Southern Ohio Medical Center in Portsmouth, visits Holy Redeemer parishioner Monica Binns at SOMC

Photo by Andrew Dodson, Southern Ohio Medical Center



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PRACTICAL STEWARDSHIP

By Rick Jeric

Ian



Have you celebrated your Catholic Faith over the past few weeks? I know that many of us do, and we are not ashamed or afraid to share it. But when we are under attack, there is a time to turn the other cheek and a time to be strong and proactive. I firmly believe that we are living in a time that demands a strong defense of our values, morals, and principles. It needs to be firm, straightforward, proud, and loving. Do we do that now? Can we do it now? Being passive or apathetic will not help. Again, I think the best way to show the world how strong our faith is should motivate all of us to attend Mass on Sunday and at least once during the week. Receive the Eucharist and live the Gospel. Let us be active, good, and faithful stewards.

One of the greatest reasons to be Catholic Christians is our steadfast defense of human life. This issue challenges us each day, and we cannot be the least bit passive. Our Lenten reflections on being pro-life make us stronger. We are fortunate in the Diocese of Columbus to have wonderful resources to support human life at all stages. Our bishops, priests, and deacons are steadfastly pro-life, our parishes have many strong pro-life committees, and we have two Women's Care Centers in Columbus that save the lives of babies each day. Our diocesan Office for Social Concerns, along with Catholic Social Services, help and serve so many of those in need, from young children to our elderly. We can truly be proud of the work that is happening and the good stewardship of treasure that supports these services, but there is always more to do. Sometimes it even helps to meditate upon the experiences of others. Those experiences may be from family and friends, or even strangers. We may not have the chance to be motivated very often to feel in solidarity with those who have unique, daily challenges that unite us as embracing the grace of God in human life. Without that total respect and dedication, we really have nothing. Over the next two weeks, I will share the story of Ian. He is the son of a wonderful couple. His father, Matt, is a high school classmate of mine. Matt wrote an essay a while back and I was very touched by it. I hope you find it as motivational as I did. I have Matt's permission to use it, and I have taken the liberty of rearranging a paragraph or two, for purposes of space over these two columns. Ponder and pray.

“‘Loud, musical chatter, peals of laughter, my eyes open ... more laughter and gentle humming. I roll over. My angelic alarm clock continues. It’s 4 a.m. The cherubic singing brings a profound sense of peace to my heart and I offer a silent prayer of thanksgiving. God is gracious. ‘O Lord, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world! Your praise reaches up to the heavens; it is sung by children and babies.’ (Psalm 8) Unable to walk, crawl, or eat, Ian is legally blind, tube-fed, and dependent on all those around him to meet his every need. He is unable to speak except in a language all his own – a language of perpetual happiness. Oh sure, there are times when he complains. A plaintive whine will catch our ears and we’ll have to go and interpret its meaning. He could be saying ‘roll me over’ or ‘come and snuggle with me.’ Sometimes at Mass if the priest’s homily goes on too long, Ian’s high-pitched whine will emanate from the pew where he is lying on his mat as if to say, ‘C’mon Father, hurry it up, there are Hosannas to be sung; let the Offertory song begin.’ His needs are few and yet he has become the central figure in our home to which all our schedules revolve.”

Our practical challenge this week is to ponder and pray. We have one more full week of Lent, and then Holy Week, including the Sacred Triduum of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Ponder the great joy and the sanctity of life. Pray in earnest to our gracious God, who gives us life. As we approach Palm Sunday, what “palms” will we lay at the feet of Jesus? Our very lives? Let us take these final days of Lent and pray, fast, and give gifts of treasure.

Jeric is director of development and planning for the Columbus Diocese.



Flaget Science Fair Winners

Chillicothe Bishop Flaget School was selected as outstanding middle school at the 2012 Southeast District Science Fair for receiving the highest number of superior ratings for grades seven and eight. Superior ratings were awarded to Cassidy Corcoran, Emily Preston, and Emma Lanning. Excellent ratings were awarded to John Schafer, Gabby Lapurga, and Carly McCloy. Pictured with the trophy the school received are (from left) Corcoran, Lanning, Preston, Lapurga, McCloy, and Schafer. Receiving special awards were: Corcoran, Be WISE Scholarship (\$100), Governor's Award for Excellence in Alternative Energy Research, Engineering Award, and Institute for Sustainable Energy Award; Preston, Be WISE Scholarship (\$100), Biological Sciences Award (\$50), and Broadcom Masters National Science Competition Invitation; and Lanning, first-place Psychology Award (\$50), Be WISE Scholarship (\$100), and Broadcom Masters National Science Competition Invitation

Photo courtesy Bishop Flaget School

Photo courtesy Bishop Flaget School

Associates in Mission with the Dominican Sisters of Peace

Have you considered how prayer, study, community, or ministry might enhance your search for God and strengthen your commitment to the poor and marginalized? Learn more about

Associates -- lay women and men who partner in mission with the Dominican Sisters of Peace -- at www.oppeace.org/associates. To connect with the Dominican Associates or for more information, contact Conni Dubick (cdubick@oppeace.org) or Sister Amy McFrederick (amcfrederick@oppeace.org) toll-free at (1-855) 313-3131 by Monday, April 2.

ENTERING HOLY WEEK: THE GREAT MYSTERY OF SALVATION MADE PRESENT IN THE EUCHARIST

ST. PATRICK'S LENTEN MISSION

Preachers:

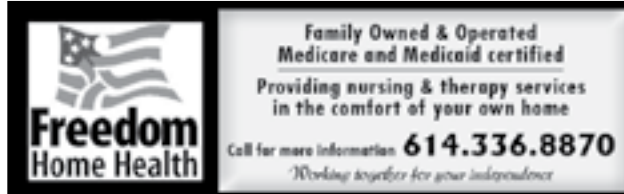
Fr. Giles Dimock, O.P.

Sunday Masses on March 24-25
(5pm Vigil, 7am, 9am, 10:30am and 12 noon)
Weeknights March 26-29 at 7:00 p.m.




Four nights in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament with conferences by Fr. Giles Dimock on how the Eucharist relates to the theology of Pope Benedict (Mon.), as source and summit of our faith in the theology of Blessed John Paul II (Tues.), the Blessed Mother (Wed.), and the Rosary (Thu.).

Visit www.stpatrickcolumbus.com for our Holy Week schedule, including sung Vespers on Mon, Tues, Wed.



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Columbus St. Agatha School sponsored a Wellness Wednesday which involved a day of learning about yoga, Jazzercise, acrobatics, strength and conditioning techniques, nutrition, and techniques to reduce stress. Pictured are (from left) Madison Pickett, Jack Hummel, Jack Prophater, Caroline Buster, and Michael Thomas, who showed students how to use the acrobat swing

Photo courtesy St. Agatha School

Photo courtesy St. Agatha School

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES RECOGNIZES UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON AMONG BEST IN EDUCATING, RESEARCHING, ADVOCATING JUSTICE

Catholic Relief Services considers the University of Dayton among the best of the nation's Catholic institutions in having an established record of commitment to education, research, advocacy, and service in the areas of global justice and peace.

In recognition, CRS, the official relief and humanitarian development arm of the Catholic Church, which serves more than 100 million people in nearly 100 nations, has invited the university to pilot a new Scholars in Global Solidarity program.

“The partnership will build on the strengths of both institutions to develop faculty leadership in solving pressing global issues affecting the poor overseas. Although Catholic Relief Services and each Catholic college and university has its own distinct mission, each shares common concern for social justice and peace and educating for global responsibility. By linking our talents, we become a stronger force with even greater foresight in fighting poverty and injustice,” said Mary Laver, program adviser for CRS.

The University of Dayton, along with the University of San Francisco and St. John's University in New York, will participate in a two-year Phase I to exchange expertise among faculty and CRS overseas staff and technical advisers.

“By sharing assets and resources, Scholars for Global Solidarity will take us to the next level in our work. This is a case when we are more than the sum of our parts. All benefit when social justice education is shared,” said Joan Rosenhauer, CRS executive vice president for U.S. operations, who signed a partnership agreement with UD President Daniel J. Curran on Monday, Feb. 27.

Faculty and technical teams will develop sustainable activities for their campuses that build from existing academic strengths. Faculty will travel with CRS for site studies of programs and to meet staff and partners in the field.

"It's one thing when you talk about solidarity in

the classroom, but it's quite different when you can give students exposure to people on the ground who are directly engaged in peacemaking or development work," said Vince Miller, a teacher of Catholic theology and culture at UD.

Miller anticipates that UD students in human rights studies, international studies, philosophy, religious studies, government, biology, engineering, sociology, anthropology, and other disciplines will benefit from CRS resources. Students participating in Engineers in Technical Humanitarian Opportunities of Service-Learning (ETHOS); The New Abolitionist Movement, which was responsible in part for making human trafficking in Ohio a felony; the UD Center for Social Concern's international summer immersions; and the university's Semester of Service program also will benefit.

“The University of Dayton, in its Catholic, Marianist mission, seeks to develop a deeper sensitivity to the poor, marginalized, and disenfranchised in our global society,” Curran said. “We appreciate Catholic Relief Services for recognizing our commitment and record and look forward to working together to help prepare our students to adapt in a changing world and to use their knowledge and faith to create change that makes a difference.”

Miller added the partnership will complement diversity, social justice, and practical reasoning courses in the university's new common academic program, which will provide a broad undergraduate education based on Catholic, Marianist values. Some cornerstones of the program include providing a knowledge of major faith traditions; an ability to evaluate critically and imaginatively the challenges of the times; an appreciation for diversity through an understanding of the cultures, histories, times, and places of others around the world; and an ability to see their lives as a vocation or calling.

Catholic Relief Services officials hope to expand Scholars in Global Solidarity to more schools in Phase II, starting in 2014.

A quick note from:

THE OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

MORE ON THE SCRUTINIES



The scrutinies invite us to embrace the same spirit of self-searching and repentance that they offer to the *elect*. At Easter, we will renew our baptismal promises as we see the catechumens baptized. In the same manner, during Lent, we are renewed through our repentance as we see the catechumens scrutinized. The scrutinies remind us of the seriousness of our Christian life and inspire us to turn from evil and pursue good. They enliven our commitment to Christ at Easter.

The scrutinies are celebrated on the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent. There are special Gospel stories that are associated with each of these scrutinies. Each of these stories are chosen to inspire a desire for the *elect* to seek purification and redemption through our Lord. Even though there is a three-year cycle of readings for each Sunday of the year, on these three Sundays of Lent, the readings come from *Cycle A* whenever the scrutinies are celebrated.

On the Third Sunday of Lent, the Gospel of the Samaritan woman is proclaimed. Like the woman of Samaria who thirsts for the living waters offered by Christ, these *elect* seek the same living waters through baptism in the life of the Church. The *elect* are asked to turn to the Lord as they hear his word and acknowledge the sins and weaknesses that weigh them down. Through our Lent-

en practices, we, too, reflect on our lives and identify where we fail to live up to our baptismal promises – living lives following Christ's teachings found in the Gospels.

On the Fourth Sunday of Lent, the Gospel of the man born blind is proclaimed. It is through the kingdom of light offered through Christ that the *elect* seek freedom from the false values that surround and blind them. It is the light of Christ that offers truth. While we have the truth through our faith, the Lenten season offers the reflective process to look deep within our hearts and to free ourselves from those activities and values that blind us.

And on the Fifth Sunday of Lent, the Gospel of Lazarus being called forth from the tomb is proclaimed. By this point in their formation, the *elect* not only hear and read in the scriptures, but begin to see Christ as the resurrection and the life. They seek new life through baptism, a life that leads to eternal life. This same Gospel helps us to reflect throughout the Lenten season how our life, baptized in the Spirit, is leading us to eternal life.

During this Lenten season we offer our prayers for the *elect's* progress in their faith journey. Just as the *elect* progress in their understanding of sin and their desire for salvation, we are to reflect upon our own sins and our desire for our salvation during this season of Lent.

IS GETTING A TATTOO OR SMOKING A SIN?



QUESTION & ANSWER

by: FATHER KENNETH DOYLE

Catholic News Service

Q. Since we are only stewards of our bodies until we die, I was wondering whether such things as smoking, getting tattoos, excessive tanning, and working out either too little or too much are sinful, according to the beliefs of the Catholic Church. (Columbus, Ohio)

A. First, there is a solid scriptural basis for your claim that we are only stewards of our bodies. St. Paul asks the early Christian believers, “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? Therefore glorify God in your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

You have answered part of your question by the way you have defined the terms. Excessive tanning is clearly wrong, since it suggests that the consequence could be skin cancer, a nexus which is well-documented medically.

Similarly, “working out too little or too much” implies that one is ignoring the need for physical exercise (thus inviting cardiovascular problems and obesity) or that someone is risking harm by overtaxing the body.

So let's focus here on the two remaining issues: smoking and tattoos.

The only reference to smoking in the church's official teaching would seem to be Section 2290 of the *Catechism of the Catholic*

Church, where we read that “the virtue of temperance disposes us to avoid every kind of excess: the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco or medicine.”

Clearly, if only the abuse is to be avoided, then smoking by itself is not prohibited.

But the catechism was published in 1994, and, since then, evidence has grown about the harm from smoking -- to the smokers and to bystanders subjected to secondhand smoke.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that in the U.S. alone, upward of 400,000 people die annually from smoking-related causes. A study by Emory University showed that pregnant women who smoked a pack of cigarettes a day were 85 percent more likely to give birth to a child who is developmentally disabled.

I think that you can look for the Catholic Church, moving forward, to voice more and more concern over the morality of smoking.

There was an indication of this in a 2004 article in the scholarly Jesuit review *La Civiltà Cattolica*. There, Father Giuseppe De Rosa mentions some of the medical consequences of smoking, and, while stopping short of branding it a sin, says smokers cannot damage their own health and that of others “without moral responsibility.”

The particular significance of the article is that

La Civiltà Cattolica is considered a semiofficial publication, since its articles are screened for doctrinal orthodoxy by the Vatican Secretariat of State.

As for tattoos, there is a line in Leviticus 19:28 where, through Moses, God admonishes the Israelites, “Do not lacerate your bodies for the dead, and do not tattoo yourselves. I am the Lord.”

The particular context, though, was this: God was cautioning the Jews not to adopt the mourning customs of their idolatrous Canaanite neighbors. One verse earlier, the Jews were advised, “Do not clip your hair at the temples, nor trim the edges of your beard” -- and presumably, God does not today oppose getting a haircut or a trim.

So there is no specific church teaching against tattoos. In some cultures, notably in some parts of Oceania, tattoos serve as a necessary rite of passage into adulthood.

Leaving aesthetics aside, the morality of tattoos depends on the attendant circumstances. Is it a health risk, because the particular tattoo parlor uses dirty needles which invite infection? What does the tattoo portray? (Some show religious symbols, while others are vulgar or even demonic.)

Is it excessively expensive, when resources are needed for things more substantial? In the case of minors who are under the authority of their parents, is it an act of disobedience and defiance?

Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, N.Y. 12208.



TEACHER SWAP

As part of Teacher Appreciation Day, Delaware St. Mary School teachers participated in a “teacher swap.” Here, kindergarten teacher Lynn Gary assumes the role of a fifth-grade teacher

Photo courtesy St. Mary School

DCCW Silent Retreat

The Columbus Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (DCCW) will conduct its annual silent retreat on the weekend of Friday, April 27 to Sunday, April 29, at St. Therese's Retreat Center, 5277 E. Broad St., Columbus. The theme for this year's retreat will be “Be Still and Know That I Am God.”

This year's retreat director is Sister Louis Mary, OP. Born in Steubenville, she is a Dominican Sister of Peace. She received her bachelor of arts degree from St. Mary of the Springs College

(now Ohio Dominican University) and her master's degree from Notre Dame University.

She has ministered in education as a teacher, principal, or director of religious education for more than 50 years. She is ministering part time at the Center for Dominican Studies and is also a spiritual director.

There is a \$100 donation for the weekend. Registration forms may be downloaded at www.colsdioc.org/offices/diocesancouncilofcatholicwomen.

Flaget accepting applications

Chillicothe Bishop Flaget School, 570 Parsons Ave., is accepting applications for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten through the end of April. Kindergarten screenings will take place Friday, April 27, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. by appoint-

ment only. There also are limited openings in grades one to eight.

For more information, please call the school at (740) 774-2970 or Flaget principal Laura Corcoran at (740) 253-0433 or lcrcora@cdeducation.org.

DOWLING-FITZPATRICK WILL PLAY SOCCER IN ANKARA



Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School senior Becca Dowling-Fitzpatrick has been selected as a member of the United States team which will play in the World Deaf Soccer Championship tournament from July 16-28 in Ankara, Turkey. She also will play in an exhibition match in Crew Stadium on Saturday, April 28.

She was a member of the school's 2011 state girls soccer championship team, and is involved in Nellie's Club (raising funds and awareness for pediatric cancer), the St. Vincent DePaul service club, the track team, and the Art Club at DeSales. She recently had a piece of art selected for showing in the regional Governor's Art Show. She also was a founding member of her school's American Sign Language Club.

To help pay for her trip to Turkey, she has chosen a charity sponsor, Christians Overcoming Cancer, a non-profit organization that provides emotional support and financial relief to active treatment cancer patients. This charity is helping her raise money for the trip. Everything received beyond her expenses will be donated to Christians Overcoming Cancer.

ODU SCHOLARS PROGRAM FOR BUSINESS MAJORS

In response to the success of its Dominican Scholars Program for education majors, Ohio Dominican University will offer its unique scholars program to students majoring in accounting, business administration, economics, finance, international business, public relations, or sport management.

“The Dominican Scholars Program for education majors has been successful in connecting our exceptional students to teaching professionals – including Ohio Dominican's faculty members – as well as other future education leaders,” said Jessica Hall, Dominican Scholars program coordinator. “The program is a perfect fit for career-focused students, where professional experience, networking, leadership development, and service projects enhance their ability to compete in their respective field upon graduation.”

Hall said the university wants to provide this same opportunity to outstanding business majors. “It will provide a singular experience for ODU business majors to connect what they learn in

the classroom with practices in the real world,” she said. “They also will develop deeper relationships with students, faculty, and future employers.”

The program provides the next generation of business and education leaders with a living-learning community that enhances their personal and professional development. Education and business majors will benefit from programs designed for their success, including leadership training, mentoring, and networking with professionals in their field of study

“Sometimes, the scholar programs at universities have an academic component without a living component, or a living component without an academic component,” Hall said. “We tried to create the best of both worlds with a living-learning community that has both curricular and co-curricular emphases.”

Additional information on the Dominican Scholars Program for education and business majors is available on ODU's website, www.ohiodominican.edu/dominicanscholars.

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Stories by TIM PUET
Catholic Times Reporter

Deacon Tom Johnston of Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral and his wife, Mary Alice, distribute the Eucharist to Bernice Haas at the Bryden Plae nursing home
CT photo by Ken Snow

MINISTRY TO THE SICK

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (paragraph 1503) teaches that “Christ’s compassion toward the sick (is) ... a resplendent sign that God has visited his people and that the Kingdom of God is close at hand. ... His compassion toward all who suffer goes so far that he identifies himself with them: ‘I was sick and you visited me (Matthew 25:36).’

“His preferential love for the sick has not ceased through the centuries to draw the very special attention of Christians toward all those who suffer in body and soul. It is the source of tireless efforts to comfort them.”

Hundreds of Catholics throughout the Diocese of Columbus carry out those efforts today, taking part in visitation of the sick, which is one of the corporal works of mercy, in the spirit of Jesus.

Deacon Tom Johnston of Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral and his wife, Mary Alice, have been ministering to the needs of sick and homebound people since 1985. On the first Friday of each month, they make an 80-mile circuit that includes stops at Nazareth Towers in downtown Columbus and the Bryden Place nursing home near downtown, and extends to south Columbus, Upper Arlington, and Pickerington.

The Johnstons visit 10 to 12 people to distribute the Eucharist to them and to pray and talk, reminding them that even though they may not be able to come to Mass, the Church hasn’t forgotten them, and that they are in the thoughts and prayers of many people.

“It’s a daylong series of stops,” Deacon Johnston said. “We start with Mass in the morning, get on the road around 10 a.m. and go until 6 or 7 at night. It’s pretty tiring by the time we’re done, but it’s a great feeling knowing you represent the Church and are bringing Christ to the people you see.

“I started doing this when I retired. I got the call to this ministry at about the same time that a sister at the cathedral who was doing it was transferred. I took her place and have been doing it ever since, and hope to continue as long as I’m healthy enough,” said Deacon Johnston, who is 86.

In 1986, at about the same time Deacon Johnston began his ministry to the sick, Sister Marie Glennon, PBVM, a member of the Presentation Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary, came from Fargo, N.D., to Portsmouth to serve as one of four full-time chaplains of various faiths at the Southern Ohio Medical Center.

Because of economic setbacks in Scioto County over the years, she now is the only person still employed by the hospital as a chaplain, working there on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for a total of 20 hours weekly. Losing her full-time hospital position enabled her to become pastoral associate to the sick and homebound for Portsmouth Holy Redeemer Church about three years ago. She works in the parish office on Thursdays and keeps in constant touch with parishioners who are unable to come to church because of their health.

“Right now, there are three or four people from the parish I call on regularly at home,” she said. “I also have about the same number of other parishioners who prefer not to have home visitors, but who I stay in contact with because it’s important to remind them they’re part of the parish and that we’re here if they need us.

“I was a nurse for 18 years and have been a chaplain here in Portsmouth for the last 27 years. I started out working in child care and with young boys, but found providing pastoral care has given me the greatest satisfaction,” Sister Marie said.

“At the hospital, I probably see 12 to 14 people a day who have been admitted, plus patients in the emergency room. Most are not Catholics, and some have no religious affiliation, but it’s important to remind all of them of God’s loving presence.

“You’re working with people at their most vulnerable times, and this is a message that often has great impact. There have been many times when people have told me they were baptized Catholics and haven’t been part of the Church for years, and it’s been most satisfying to bring them the Eucharist and have a priest see them for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick.”

Peg Barry, who lives in the Stratford Place community for senior citizens, takes Communion from Rosemary Capretta of Columbus St. Cecilia Church

CT photo by Tim Puet



“Sister Marie’s ministry, as an extension of the parish, has become very important for those she touches and, peripherally, their families,” said Teri Schlosser, secretary at Holy Redeemer. She said that in her three years at the parish, Sister Marie has organized what had been sporadic attempts to stay in touch with parish members who were either homebound or in hospitals or care facilities.

Sister Marie has created a list of these parishioners and has formed a six-member group which assists her in sending weekly “get well” cards and Christmas and Easter greetings from the parish staff. Group members also are assigned specific people with whom they maintain contact through either personal visits or phone calls, at the person’s request.

Many parishes have similar groups. One of the largest in the diocese is at Columbus St. Andrew Church, where secretary Pat Hardesty said nearly 90 people are involved in ministry to the sick in some way. Ministry coordinator Carole Maxwell said teams of two or three, and sometimes as many as five, people go to each of four nursing homes within the parish boundaries. Teams make the weekly visits on a rotating basis, with each group being called on about once a month. In addition, one-on-one visits are made to homebound individuals by other ministers to the sick on a weekly or an as-needed schedule.

Parishioner Sarah Smith is one of five people who take turns visiting the Abbingdon assisted living facility in Upper Arlington for a weekly communion service at 10:30 a.m. Sunday. She said the six Catholics living there come to the service each week

and are enthusiastic about the opportunity the service gives them to stay connected with the larger faith community.

“People express such gratitude that we are willing to come,” she said. “It’s a real privilege to be able to do this. I feel this gives me a chance to ‘pay forward’ and hope that one day, when my turn comes to be in the position of the people living at Abbingdon, someone will be in the position to do that for me.”

Rosemary Capretta of Columbus St. Cecilia Church said the gratitude of fellow Catholics for her visits provided her with great encouragement during the more than 20 years she spent visiting the sick at Doctors Hospital as a Eucharistic minister.

“Most patients were so very grateful,” said Capretta, who is 87. “That’s one of the reasons I kept on going there. I hoped the Lord would allow me to continue to do it, and he did for many years. Now I’m getting older and I know there are a lot of other giving people in the parish, so it’s time for some of them to take the hospital visits over.”

Capretta visited the hospital every Thursday and saw all patients who identified themselves as Catholic, whether or not they received Communion, said parish secretary Barbara Cunningham. She continues weekly visits to parishioner Peg Barry, who lives across the street from the church in the Stratford Place community for senior citizens, and to other individuals listed by the parish as being ill. “She is not asked to do this,” Cunningham said. “She just feels that she should.”

Joyce Wrasman of Kenton Im-

See **MINISTRY**, Page 12



COUNSELING WITH ADDED DIMENSION

No one is immune to problems. Everyone is dealing with some kind of difficulty involving relationships with family, friends, or business associates, or with a stressful life situation of some kind. Most of the time, we find a way to deal with those problems as they occur, but sometimes a situation may happen in anyone’s life which may require the help of a professional counselor.

Spirit of Peace Clinical Counseling offers such assistance with an added dimension. “We approach each individual we serve not just from the traditional biological, psychological, and social viewpoints, but from a spiritual dimension as well,” said Mary Anne Jepsen, one of the practice’s eight counselors. She and three of the others are Catholic, and the other four are active members of other faith communities.

“All of us feel that if you don’t integrate spiritual aspects into a counseling practice, you are working with the proverbial hand tied behind your back.”

“When working with individuals, couples, and families, we are sensitive to and respect the spiritual dimension of each person in the healing process,” the service’s mission statement says. “When working with individuals, couples, and families, we are sensitive to and respect the spiritual dimension of each person in the healing process.

“We value the Word of God, excellence, integrity, respect, responsibility, self-discipline, loyalty, and gratitude, and these values guide the way we approach counseling with our clients. While there is much stress and turmoil in our world today, we believe peace is possible – peace with God, peace with self, ad peace with others.”

The practice was founded in 2009 by Michele Melaragno, who has a master’s degree in clinical pastoral counseling and previously spent six years with Wellspring Counseling, a similar faith-based organization in Columbus. Its other counselors are associate director Pat Scholz, Jepsen, Lynn Henderson, Jeannette Manchester, Carlotta Hughes-Culp, Jodi Schermerhorn, and counselor trainee Joe Geig.

Spirit of Peace has offices in Columbus on Old Henderson Road, just off Kenny Road, with satellite offices at Gahanna St. Matthew and Sunbury St. John Neumann churches, as well as NewLife Community Church in Canal Winchester and the Grove City Church of the Nazarene. For a time, it also had an office at Powell St. Joan of Arc Church.

“We hope to reach out to more Catholic parishes,” said Jepsen, who also has a master’s in clinical pastoral counseling and was assistant to the director of pastoral formation at the Pontifical College Josephinum from 2004 to 2006. Her voice is a familiar one to area radio listeners because she is the host of St. Gabriel Radio’s “Local Spotlight” show at 4 p.m. most Tuesdays.

“Several Christian churches from Protestant denominations have adopted this concept of having counseling offices as part of the church offices, but it’s a fairly new idea for Catholic churches,” she said.

“We are a traditional psychological practice, offering client-centered solutions through cognitive behavioral therapy,” Henderson said. “Put more plainly, when a client comes in, we look at his or her behavior, the whole pattern of thinking. We examine things like what your family was like and how they handled certain matters, how your perceive your own environment, and how that affects your interaction with others. To that, we add a Catholic Christian focus that brings in the sacramental aspect.”

“A standard psychological

practice won’t place people’s actions in the sacramental context of sin and the sense of woundedness which results,” she said. “We do. This is a key to many of our actions. Out of this woundedness come people’s thoughts and perceptions.”

“There are a couple of analogies we often use which help people look at what’s going on in their lives,” Jepsen said. “One is a backpack. Everyone is walking around with a backpack full of various problems and concerns, and each backpack is different. Some of the questions we ask are ‘What’s in your backpack?’ and ‘How do I lighten your backpack?’

“Another example we often give is a dump truck. You can take all the stuff that’s been happening to you and load it on the truck, then you can come home to your family and dump it all on them. Or you can put the same load on the truck, let the truck take off and be free of that load. It also can work the other way, with a person putting family problems on the truck and either dumping them at work or letting them go.

“We’re trying to help our clients not bring stuff on that truck to home or to work, but to let it go.”

Every new client of the practice is asked to fill out an assessment which includes a portion asking whether he or she is or has been active in church and community activities, whether there are cultural or religious issues contributing to his or her problems, and how important faith is as part of the counseling process.

“Whether spirituality is part of the healing process depends on the client’s response,” Henderson said. “If spirituality isn’t a part of the client’s life, we honor that. But if we have the knowledge that a person is open to spiritual suggestions, we work with it.

“In the case of Catholic clients, after spending some time with them, I’ll often encourage them to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation or take part in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, or I might ask someone to speak with a priest and work with him as part of therapy.”

The practice uses the dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit, as part of its logo. “The spiritual disciplines we practice help bring a sense of God’s grace to our work,” Geig said. “We frequently use prayer and Scriptural references with clients, often opening and closing counseling sessions with a prayer.”

“Many of the Catholics I’ve worked with say they’re out of practice when it comes to prayer,” Henderson said. “We encourage them to resume an active prayer life and to see that prayer can be more than just a formal set of words.”

“People sometimes want to blame God for all their problems,” Geig said. “We help them look at God in a different manner and realize that the problem is with their concept of God and that he is a god of love. This sometimes help people return to the active practice of their faith.

“Forgiveness is often a big issue. Once you can get people to forgive themselves and others for things that have happened to them, it’s a big step. Working through the Scriptures to reach that point can be very helpful.”

“Being counselors has made us more appreciative of God’s working through people’s lives and of the sacraments. We pray individually that our words might be his words and our actions his actions.

“One of us prepares a devotional each month for our team meetings,” Geig said. “You won’t get that in a secular practice.”

“One of the supportive aspects of that practice is that we uplift and support each other,” Jepsen said. “We pray often and discern about any new colleagues through prayer. It’s who we are that’s important, rather than what we do. We’re just God’s instrument.”

Henderson said the counselors see about 160 clients per week, which is about the maximum number a practice of that size can adequately deal with, so it may be growing soon. Jepsen said most clients are dealing

See **COUNSELING**, Page 16



Joe Geig of Spirit of Peace Clinical Counseling talks with a client. Geig is a counselor trainee who is studying for his master of science degree in marriage and family counseling from Wright State University CT photo by Tim Puet

MINISTRY, continued from Page 10

maculate Conception Church has been involved with ministry to the sick for 22 years and said that of the many people she has visited in that time, one stands out.

“Her name was Claire Wagner and she was 106 years old when she died last year,” Wrasman said. “She was quite a colorful lady. She lived so long, and she was sassy and opinionated right to the end. She really appreciated life and she wondered why she was still around. I think her attitude had a lot to do with it.

“She had lost much of her hearing and sight and she stayed at home in her last years, but she could still see things like the shape of a deer outside the house. She just kept being involved and asking questions until going into decline for about the last year or so of her life.”

Wrasman began ministry to the sick after her husband was sent to the Medical

College of Ohio in 1989 to recover from a hip injury resulting from an auto accident. “He was given the Eucharist every day, and that made a big difference,” she said. “Besides helping him spiritually, I think it speeded up his physical recovery. It meant so much to both of us that I decided I wanted to bring God to people in the same way.”

The work of others in that role also made Connie Vincent of Dennison Immaculate Conception Church become a minister to the sick. “I’ve been going to the Beacon Point nursing home in Uhrichsville for a few years,” she said. “My mother was treated with such and respect and dignity while living there that it made me want to serve others in the same way.

“Once you start this, it doesn’t take long to develop a real bond with the people you see. I have a good friend and neigh-

bor who lives there, and others I’ve developed friendships with. It’s important to all of them to stay in touch with the rest of the world and to hear what’s going on with the people they know, and you provide that link.”

Ed Baltz of Lancaster St. Mary Church said he takes 35 consecrated hosts with him when he visits sick people at the Fairfield Medical Center, and at a nursing home and individual homes on Wednesdays. He generally doesn’t have any left when he has completed his rounds.

He said his visits at the nursing home to a pair of men are especially poignant. Both are now middle-aged and have been unable to speak since being injured in auto accidents when they were much younger. “They thank you, even if they can’t say it,” he said. “I can see it in their

eyes. They can’t talk, but you know how grateful they are.

“This is why I began to visit the sick after I retired. You know it brightens people’s days, and it just makes you feel good to be involved in people’s lives this way.”

Vincent said she encourages anyone interested in visiting the sick to enter the ministry because of the benefits it brings to everyone involved.

“So many people at the nursing home don’t have someone who regularly comes to visit, so they’re just so happy to see me,” she said. “For them to know that people still care and that they’re not forgotten, especially in the case of those without families, is something very fulfilling. You see their smiles and that makes it all worthwhile.”

A whole parish participates in a Passion play

Columbus Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church, 5225 Refugee Road, will present “The Heart of the Passion: The Way to Calvary,” a Passion story that will draw on a broad range of talents of parishioners, at 7 p.m. Sunday, April 1.

The account, directed by parishioner Joanne Farrell, will look at the moments leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus, focusing less on the historical account of

the Gospels and more on the emotional reaction of those who witnessed Christ’s death.

The talents of the entire parish have contributed to the presentation in a variety of ways, including lighting, sound, scenery, costumes, publicity, photography, ushers, and hospitality.

A “meet the cast” party will follow the program until 10 p.m.

LOCAL CATHOLIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION STANDS AGAINST HHS HEALTH CARE MANDATE

By DR. MICHAEL PARKER

At Easter, we come together as the Catholic Church to celebrate the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who sacrificed His life so that we may live our lives with the hope of being with Him in eternity. Fifty days from now, we will celebrate the birth of our Church here on earth at the great feast of Pentecost. Even from these early beginnings, the Church has been under attack by those who wish to destroy her for what she believes. Once again in our time, we find the Church under attack by secular forces who wish to subvert her mission on earth to witness to the Truth in regards to our cherished religious liberties by using contraception to divide us.

For almost 2,000 years, the Church has condemned the use of artificial contraception as intrinsically evil, because it runs contrary to God’s plan for mankind. The Church has stood as a sign of contradiction to the world in this matter because of her desire to protect the dignity of women, the sanctity of marriage, and preservation of the family. Widespread use of contraception, it cannot be denied, has brought about lowering of moral standards, the denigration and subordination of women as objects of sexual desire, breakdown of families and the institution of marriage through divorce and infidelity, given temptation to many to embrace disordered views on sexuality, and rationalized the tragedy of abortion.

Millions of dollars each year are spent treating contraception-related diseases and procuring abortions when contraception fails. Despite this, there are many who wish us to believe that the use of contraception is a societal and individual good that must be encouraged and promoted.

At issue is the alleged “right” of women to have access to (so-called) “comprehensive women’s health care” as a “preventive service.” To rephrase, all women and men who engage in intercourse must have these elective products provided and paid for (“right”) by someone else, including medications that can cause abortion of a developing human life, halt the proper functioning of a normal and healthy body process, or permanently mutilate the body with sterilization, and then call it ‘comprehensive women’s health care.’ The mandate imposed by the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services requires all employers to cover the cost of all FDA-approved methods of contraception, sterilization, and abortion-inducing drugs. These medications, in virtually all cases, are not required for prevention of disease. They are legal, and will remain so, regardless of the outcome of this debate, and will continue to be cheaply and readily available to all women who desire to use them, as they have been for years. What is really at the heart of this national discussion is that there is little to no exception for religious organizations, such as the Catholic Church, and individuals of conscience who find these services contrary to their beliefs and morally repugnant. While presented as a perceived good for society, the HHS mandate actually represents an attack on our God-given right to practice our Faith, on our individual freedoms, and on the sanctity of human life.

This attack was prophesied in 1968 by Pope Paul VI in an encyclical letter titled *Humanae Vitae* (“On Human Life”), when he warned us about the dangers of widespread acceptance of contraception, enumerated above. We should embrace this teaching and must resist this affront to our religious liberties with everything we can muster. God’s law must never be subordinated to manmade laws. We must not be willing to give away our birthright of religious freedom as Americans for political expediency and an uneasy truce.

For now, the requirements of the State will be for our Catholic institutions (or their insurance surrogates) to pay for contraception of all types, sterilizations, and abortion-causing contraceptive devices and the like. What a future president or Congress might require of us remains to be seen. In calling all faithful Catholics throughout the Diocese of Columbus to greater interest and activism against the infringements of government on our religious and civil liberties, we as health care professionals will recommend to all of you to always remember this famous quote by Lutheran pastor Martin Niemoller:

“First they came for the Jews, and I did not speak, because I was not a Jew.

“Then they came for the Communists, and I did not speak out, because I was not a Communist.

“Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out, because I was not a trade unionist.

“Then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak out for me.”

As members of the John Paul II Guild of the Catholic Medical Association, we stand united with Bishop Campbell and other Church leaders to provide a coordinated effort to defend our faith, individual freedoms, and sanctity of life. We urge you to join us in this spiritual and political battle. We must pray fervently for protection against the forces of evil and for the conversion of secular society. We must exercise our right to civil protest and demand that our representative government respect our religious freedoms. We must defend the value of human life by refusing to participate in this unjust mandate.

We must rise up and let our voices be heard.

May the blessings of our Risen Savior, Christ Jesus, remain always with you, this day and forever.

In Christ and His Holy Catholic Church.

LIBERTY, continued from Page 2

throughout federal law, weakening its healthy tradition of generous respect for religious freedom and diversity,” they added.

The bishops said their Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty plans to publish a statement on religious liberty that will “address the broader range of religious liberty issues.”

The upcoming document “reflects on the history of religious liberty in our great nation, surveys the current range of threats to this foundational principle, and states clearly the resolve of the bishops to act strongly, in concert with our fellow citizens, in its defense.”

The bishops closed their statement by calling on Catholics and other people of faith “to join us in prayer and penance for our leaders and for the complete protection of our first freedom -- religious liberty -- which is not only protected in the laws and customs of our great nation, but rooted in the teachings of our great tradition.”

“Prayer is the ultimate source of our strength -- for without God, we can do nothing; but with God, all things are possible,” they added.



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Fifth Sunday of Lent (Cycle B)

A ‘new covenant’ within the Old Testament



Father Lawrence L. Hummer

Jeremiah 31:31-34
Hebrews 5:7-9
John 12:20-33

Some commentators think this passage from Jeremiah is the heart and soul of the entire Old Testament. That may be overstating the case, but not by much.

Jeremiah sees a “new covenant” to be entered into with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. This is the only time in the Old Testament that the expression “new covenant” occurs. The covenant at Sinai was written in stone, but this covenant will be written on the hearts of the covenant partners.

That means it will become so much a part of them that they will instinctively know God. The concise summary of the entire covenant follows: “I shall be their God, and they will be my people.”

The idea is that no one will have to teach anyone, because each one will know the Lord reflects Jeremiah’s idealism.

A prophecy like this lends itself to Christian appropriation because of the human heart of Jesus, which embodies Jeremiah’s vision.

The letter to the Hebrews reminds us that Christ Jesus was “in the flesh.” He became the source of salvation for all who obey him, having learned obedience himself from what he suffered. There is an important lesson there for us, who cannot abide suffering.

John mentions the celebration of Passover for the third time in this Gospel (this actually began with John11:55). That means the passage of at least two years between when Jesus expelled the money changers from the Temple (Gospel for the Third Sunday of Lent) and his final arrival in Jerusalem before his ar-

rest and crucifixion.

The Greeks mentioned were probably Gentiles in Jerusalem for Passover who had heard of Jesus and wanted to meet him. Of course, in John’s Gospel, nothing is left to chance, and when they say “We want to see Jesus,” they mean it on more than one level. This is because “seeing” in John often means believing.

Why the Greeks came to Philip with their request is never said. Ironically, the Greeks never seem to get to “see Jesus.” Instead, their request to see him leads Jesus to announce that “his hour” has arrived.

Readers have waited for his hour to come since he first said that to his mother at Cana at the wedding feast. Now it has.

John relates Jesus’ glorification to his death, illustrated by the parabolic saying “unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains a grain of wheat.” In death, though, the grain produces much fruit, as will the glorified Christ after his death.

“I am troubled now,” reads literally “My psyche is troubled now.” The meaning is that he is greatly troubled by what he sees happening, and yet, asking to be saved from it would defeat the purpose for which he came, and so he prays: “Father, glorify your name.”

As if to answer it, a “voice” from heaven is heard: “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.” The crowd obviously did not understand, some saying it was thunder, others that it was an angel’s voice. John interprets it as the voice of judgment upon the world, when the “ruler of this world” will be driven out.

Once again, Jesus mentions being lifted up, as he had in his dialogue with Nicodemus in last week’s Gospel. Here, it unambiguously refers to his being lifted up on the cross, and he will thereby draw all people to himself.

There’s a certain tenderness in that scene, as well as power, as the crucified one hangs there helpless on the one hand, but represents the power of God on the other. May it be ever so!

Father Lawrence Hummer, pastor at Chillicothe St. Mary, can be reached at hummerl@stmarychillicothe.com.

The Weekday Bible Readings

MONDAY
Isaiah 7:10-14;8:10
Psalm 40:7-11
Hebrews 10:4-10
Luke 1:26-38

TUESDAY
Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 102:2-3,16-21
John 8:21-30

WEDNESDAY
Daniel 3:14-20,91-92,95
Daniel 3:52-56 (Ps)
John 8:31-42

THURSDAY
Genesis 17:3-9
Psalm 105:4-9
John 8:51-59

FRIDAY
Jeremiah 20:10-13
Psalm 18:2-7
John 10:31-42

SATURDAY
Ezekiel 37:21-28
Jeremiah 31:10-13 (Ps)
John 11:45-56

DIOCESAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION MASS SCHEDULE
WEEK OF MARCH 25, 2012

SUNDAY MASS
10:30 a.m. Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio (820 AM), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.
Mass with the Passionist Fathers at 7:30 a.m. on WWHO-TV (the CW), Channel 53, Columbus. Check local cable system for WWHO’s cable channel listing.
Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Birmingham, Ala., at 8 a.m. on EWTN (Time Warner Channel 385, Insight Channel 382, or WOW Channel 378)
(Encores at noon, 7 p.m., and midnight).
Mass from Kenton Immaculate Conception Church at 10 a.m. on Time Warner Cable Channel 6 (Hardin County).
Mass from Portsmouth St. Mary Church at noon on Time Warner Channel 24 in Scioto County.

DAILY MASS
8 a.m., Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Birmingham, Ala. (Encores at noon, 7 p.m. and midnight) See EWTN above; and on I-Lifetv (Channel 113 in Ada, Logan, Millersburg, Murray City and Washington C.H.; Channel 125 in Marion, Newark, Newcomerstown and New Philadelphia; and Channel 207 in Zanesville); 8 p.m., St. Gabriel Radio (820 AM), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.

We pray Week I, Seasonal Proper of the Liturgy of the Hours

Religious freedom: It’s not just Pakistan and China

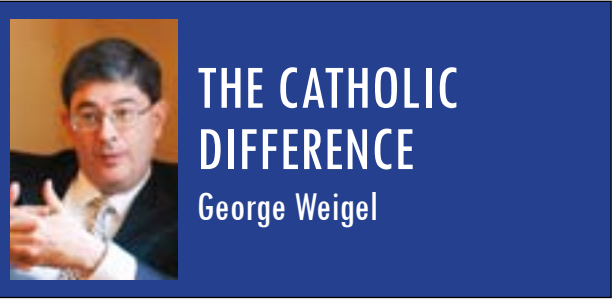
Thirty-some years ago, I spent a fair amount of time on religious freedom issues, which meant, in those simpler days, trying to pry Lithuanian priests and nuns out of Perm Camp 36 and other Gulag islands. Had you told me in 1982 that one of my “clients,” the Jesuit Sigitas Tamkevicius, would be archbishop of Kaunas in a free Lithuania in 2012, I would have thought you a bit optimistic. If you had also told me, back then, that there would eventually be serious religious freedom problems in the United States, I would have thought you a bit mad.

But you would have been right on both counts.

To be sure, Americans of conviction and conscience are not under the same threats that made a martyr of Shahbaz Bhatti in Pakistan a year ago. American believers in biblical religion and its moral teachings do not face the relentless pressure visited upon Chinese Christians who refuse to concede that the Church is a subdivision of the state. But religious freedom is, nonetheless, under assault in these United States. The assault is both cultural and legal. It is shameful that the present administration underwrites the former while being a major actor in the latter.

I try to unravel some of the cultural aspects of the problem—the attempt to erect an empty “shrine” at the heart of western democracy—in the Spring 2012 issue of *National Affairs*, in an article whose title is taken from the Book of Daniel: “The Handwriting on the Wall.” (The article is available online, after March 21, at www.nationalaffairs.com.) As for the administration’s legal assault on religious freedom, consider the following:

1) The recent HHS mandate—which requires that



all employers (including religious institutions with moral objections and private-sector employers with religiously informed moral objections) facilitate the provision of contraceptives, sterilizations, and abortifacient drugs such as Plan B and Ella to their employees—is an effort to bend religious convictions to the government’s will. Under the mandate, the federal government will impose its understanding of “preventive health care” on all of American society. And if that tramples the right of religious freedom enshrined in the First Amendment and the provisions of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, then, too bad—or, as the administration seems to believe, all the better. The administration is likely to lose this battle legally, but the underlying intent to erode religious freedom is all too clear.

2) The gross overreach of the HHS mandate is of a piece with other administration policies, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s remarkable claim that the First Amendment’s religion clauses offer no protection against EEOC’s reach into the hiring practices of religious institutions. In January, the Supreme Court batted that claim down, 9-0; thus, the constitutional firewall held. But the

administration’s intent to break it down was, again, unmistakable.

3) The Justice Department has refused to do its constitutional duty and defend the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in the federal courts. Why? One can reasonably conclude that the refusal to do what the law requires the administration to do is based on the administration’s agreement with the claim of DOMA’s critics: that genuine support of traditional marriage (as distinguished from the president’s ever-meeker lip service to it) is irrational bigotry—a slander the administration seems willing to see applied to American citizens who once marched on Washington to support civil rights and thus make the election of an African-American president possible.

4) Then there is the State Department, which now refers to “freedom of worship” rather than “religious freedom” in discussing U.S. international human rights policy. This dumbing-down is bad enough in its abandonment of men and women of conscience around the world. But it now seems to have seeped back into domestic policy: for aren’t the cases cited above efforts by the administration to hollow out religious freedom and reduce it to a privacy right that accommodates certain weekend recreational activities?

These questions should be at the center of the conversation between now and Election Day.

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

Weigel’s column is distributed by the Denver Catholic Register, the official newspaper of the Archdiocese of Denver. Phone: 303-715-3215.

Dr Seuss birthday celebration at Immaculate Conception, Dennison



Students at Dennison Immaculate Conception School celebrated Dr. Seuss’s birthday on Friday, March 2. Students from preschool to second grade gathered in the cafeteria to listen to guests read different Dr. Seuss books and performed activities relating to the books. One guest was Mayor Tim Still, a former student at the school. His mother, Betty Still, was its first lay principal. The mayor read “Green Eggs and Ham” and, when he was finished, everyone tried the green eggs made by the children

Photo courtesy Immaculate Conception School

MANDATE, continued from Page 3

Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health, 2002, 34(6):294–303

(3) International Pharmacists for Life 2003;http://www.prolifephysicians.org/abortifacient

(4) www.cancer.org

(5) Kahlenborn et al., “Oral Contraceptive Use — as a risk factor for pre-menopausal breast cancer: a meta analysis,” Mayo Clinic proceedings 2006 pp. 1290-1320, 2006

(6) Bosch, et al, “Effect of oral contraceptives on risk of cervical cancer ...” International Agency of Research on Cancer, 2002

(7) International Agency for Research on Cancer, a

research arm of the World Health Organization, 2010

(8) http:www.mayoclinic.com/health/performance-enhancing-drugs/SM00045

(9) New York Times, Oct. 19, 2010

(10) Rabe T et al The Effects of Monophasic and Triplasic Oral Contraceptives on Ovarian Function and Endometrial Thickness Eura J Contra Reproductive Care 1997 2, 39-51

(11) Kuhar et al,”Infant Homocides through Contraceptives,” International Pharmacists for Life, 5th Edition 2003

(12) www.bcpinstitute.org

Pray for our dead

BISHOP, Lorraine A., 78, March 13
St. Aloysius Church, Columbus

BRAY, Shirley M., 82, March 12
St. Mary Church, Marion

BUSKIRK, Gary L., 49, March 16
Ss. Augustine & Gabriel Church, Columbus

CAMPBELL, Charles L., 91, March 19
St. Mary Church, Columbus

CAVALLARO, Charles, 55, March 13
St. Catharine Church, Powell

CHANG, Consolacion, 77, March 18
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

CHILDS, Anna L., 92, March 17
St. Matthew Church, Gahanna

CRAWFORD, Daniel, 75, March 12
St. Agnes Church, Columbus

CYRE, Ronald G., 68, March 11
Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Marysville

DITTOE, William M. Jr., 72, March 13
St. Matthias Church, Columbus

DOBBS, William M. "Mo," 78, March 12
St. Stephen Church, Columbus

DURANT, Nancy L., 73, March 12
St. Nicholas Church, Zanesville

DVORACZKY, Stephen, 87, March 17
St. Brendan Church, Hilliard

ELDER, Twila M., 92, March 12
St. Christopher Church, Columbus

FLOM, Roger D., 75, March 12
St. Matthew Church, Columbus

FLYNN, Elizabeth P., 85, March 19
Our Lady of Peace Church, Columbus

HAFNER, Nivarde, 93, March 18
Sacred Heart Church, Coshocton

HAMMEL, John J., 92, March 14
Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Buckeye Lake

HARDY, Mary I., 90, March 15
St. Matthias Church, Columbus

HASSELO, Albert, 83, March 13
St. Matthew Church, Gahanna

HAWLEY, Mary J., 72, March 16
St. Andrew Church, Columbus

IZOLD, Dennis A., 79, March 17
St. Matthew Church, Gahanna

JOHNSON, June L., 88, March 14
St. Patrick Church, Columbus

JUSTUS, Marlene, 85, March 13
Christ the King Church, Columbus

KINSEY, Robert, 72, March 19
Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Glenmont

MACOMBER, Joseph, 62, March 18
St. Mary Magdalene Church, Columbus

MARSHALL, Rose M., 83, March 12
Our Lady of Victory Church, Columbus

MELFI, Betty, 89, March 16
St. Mary Magdalene Church, Columbus

MITCHELL, Roger W., 88, March 14
St. James the Less Church, Columbus

PISONY, Dolores J., 81, March 16
Sacred Heart Church, New Philadelphia

RIFFLE, Betty I., 90, March 13
St. Mary Church, Groveport

SCHMIDT, Mildred I. "Peg," 89, March 14
St. Joan of Arc Church, Powell

SHIFFLET, Rose, 92, March 14
St. John the Baptist Church, Columbus

SHUST, Jeanne M., 86, March 13
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Grove City

THOMPSON, Marian R., 85, March 13
Ss. Augustine & Gabriel Church, Columbus

VITALE, Rose B., 93, March 17
St. John the Baptist Church, Columbus

YOUNG, Mary, 77, March 18
St. Matthew Church, Gahanna

Rena K. Poyma

Funeral Mass for Rena K. Poyma, 75, who died Monday, March 12, was held Friday, March 16, at Columbus Holy Spirit Church.

She was born in Galena, graduated from Columbus South High School, and was employed by the Ohio Bell Telephone Co.

She later worked for several years in the office of Columbus Christ the

King Church and was a lector and a school volunteer, conducted bingo activities, and was a member of the Happy Spirits senior citizens group at Holy Spirit.

She is survived by her husband, Michael; sons, Michael and Mark; daughter, Katherine Otten; brother, Ralph Fox; sister, Vera Moore; and five grandchildren.

COUNSELING, continued from Page 11

with what could be called life adjustment issues involving relationships in general. Common problems include depression, anxiety, and bereavement issues.

Marital difficulties frequently cause people to visit the counselors. Jepsen said communication, conflict resolution, trust, and finances are the most common issues causing friction among married couples. When dealing with marriages involving one or two Catholics, the counselors often ask a couple to talk to their pastor as part of the effort to strengthen the marriage.

Besides individual counseling, the practice offers group sessions for people trying to stop smoking and for single parents. It also conducts DivorceCare and GriefShare programs at the two parishes with which it works.

These are 13-week, Christian-focused

support sessions for people dealing with the effects of divorce or the death of a loved one. They include a series of DVDs and a workbook, individual and group discussions, and prayer, with a priest taking part in the closing session. A similar program called DivorceCare for Kids is designed for children dealing with their parents' divorce or separation.

The practice has just purchased a program titled "The Catholic's Divorce Survival Guide" by Rose Sweet, one of the authors of the DivorceCare series. It plans within the next few weeks to begin Armor of Light, a closed, confidential program for people trying to fight an addiction to pornography.

For more information about Spirit of Peace Counseling Services, call (614) 442-7650 or go to www.spiritofpeace-clinicalcounseling.com.

Corrections- A story in the March 18 Catholic Times which said Father Adam Streitenberger would be leading an Oct. 29 pilgrimage to Medjugorje was incorrect. He will be accompanying the pilgrims on that trip, but will not be the leader of the pilgrimage. A story in the March 11 issue listed an incorrect date for the "Carry the Cross" walk sponsored by Wilderness Outreach. The correct date is Saturday, April 7.

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ST. GABRIEL CATHOLIC RADIO AM 820

SAME GREAT CATHOLIC LOCAL AND NATIONAL PROGRAMMING
REACHING ALL OF CENTRAL OHIO AND BEYOND

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YOUR FAITH!

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AM 820

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H A P P E N I N G S

CLASSIFIED

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH
1033 W 5th Street, Marysville
ANNUAL LENTEN FISH FRY DINNERS
Fridays, Feb 24 - Mar 30 - 5 to 8 p.m.
Both fried and baked fish, with fries or
baked potato, coleslaw or applesauce;
pizza and mac-n-cheese available
\$10 all-u-can-eat, \$8 regular, \$6 seniors, \$5 kid's

LENTEN FISH FRY'S - COME JOIN US
ST. ANDREW CHURCH
1899 McCoy Rd. Upper Arlington
FEBRUARY 24, MARCH 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
4:30 - 7:00 P.M.
BAKED COD OR DEEP FRIED PERCH
SIDES, DESSERT & BEVERAGE INCLUDED
ALSO CHEESE PIZZA & MAC 'N CHEESE
ADULT \$8, CHILD (UNDER 12) \$4
CARRY OUT \$7 (NO DESSERT OR BEVERAGE)

ST. CATHARINE'S K OF C FISH FRY
500 S Gould Rd, Columbus
FRIDAY, MARCH 9 & MARCH 23, 5 - 8PM
ALL YOU CAN EAT- Dine-in, Carry-out and Drive-thru
Adults \$9; Seniors (65+) \$7 & Children (under 18) \$5;
Family Special \$25 (2 adults and all children under 18 in
family) Fried Ocean Perch, Baked Cod, Fries, Macaroni,
Coleslaw, Applesauce, Rolls, Dessert and Beverage

All fund-raising events (festivals, bazaars, spaghetti dinners, fish fries, bake sales, pizza/sub sales, candy sales, etc.) will be placed in the "Fund-Raising Guide." An entry into the Guide will be \$18.50 for the first six lines, and \$2.65 for each additional line. For more information, call Deacon Steve DeMers at 614-224-6530 or 800-511-0584.

'Happenings' submissions

Notices for items of Catholic interest must be received at least 12 days before expected publication date. We will print them as space permits. Items not received before this deadline may not be published.

Listings cannot be taken by phone.
Mail to: The Catholic Times
Happenings,
197 East Gay St., Columbus, OH 43215
Fax to: 614-241-2518
E-mail as text to tpuet@colsdioec.org

ST. CHRISTOPHER CHURCH
LENTEN PASTA DINNER
1420 Grandview Ave / Trinity School Cafeteria
Fridays, Feb 24 - Mar 30 / 5PM - 8PM
\$ 7 ADULTS / \$ 4 KIDS / \$ 25 PER FAMILY
SAUCES PROVIDED BY LOCAL RESTAURANTS
MARCH 23 — TAT Ristorante
MARCH 30 — Trattoria Roma

ST. ELIZABETH CHURCH
6077 Sharon Woods Blvd, Columbus
LENTEN FISH FRY EVERY FRIDAY
Feb 24 - March 30, 5-7PM
BAKED & FRIED FISH, AND FISH SANDWICHES,
SHRIMP, GRILLED CHEESE, PLUS PIEROGIES
Cost is: \$8 adult, \$6 Fish Sandwich & Pierogies, \$5 child
Carryout is available • Come enjoy and have fun

ST. JOAN OF ARC PARISH
10700 Liberty Rd, Powell
WEEKLY FISH FRY
FRIDAYS FEB. 24 — MARCH 30, 5:30 — 7:30 PM
(SPONSORED BY KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS)
ALL YOU CAN EAT MEAL INCLUDES
BAKED & FRIED FISH, FRENCH FRIES,
MAC & CHEESE, GREEN BEANS,
COLE SLAW, ROLLS, SOFT DRINKS
Adults: \$8.50, Seniors: \$7.50, Children: \$4, Carry-out: \$8.50

ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA CHURCH
1600 N. Hague Ave, Columbus
14TH ANNUAL
"BEST FISH FRY DINNER IN TOWN!"
Fridays, Feb 24 - March 30, 4:30 - 7:30 PM
Fried Perch or Baked Cod, French Fries, Baked
Potato, Baked Steak Fries, Cole Slaw, Applesauce,
Roll & Butter, Desserts. Free seconds & coffee!
Adults - \$9.00; Seniors - \$8.50; Children (10 & under) - \$4.00
POP, BEER, & CARRYOUTS AVAILABLE • Info: 279-1690

ST. MATTHEW CHURCH
807 Havens Corners Rd - Gahanna
Mar 23rd, 5:15-7:30 PM
FRIED & BAKED COD WITH FRIES
Mac-n-Cheese, Beverage & Dessert
Dine in -or- Carry Out - Discounts for Families & Seniors.
Sponsored by K of C • www.GahannaKnights.org

LENTEN FISH FRY
FRIDAYS 5-8 pm, Feb 24 - Mar 30
ST. MICHAEL CHURCH
5750 N. High St., Worthington
FISH DINNER: REG/\$8; SMALL/\$6
MACARONI-CHEESE DINNER/\$6
Dine In, Drive Thru & Carryout

ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR CHURCH
4131 Clime Road, Columbus
WEEKLY LENTEN FISH FRY
Fridays, Feb 24 - Mar 30 - 5:30-7:00 pm
ALL YOU CAN EAT FISH (fried or baked),
CHOICE OF TWO SIDE DISHES, BEVERAGE
AND DESSERT INCLUDED
\$9/adults, \$8/seniors, \$4.50/ages 4-12 (family discounts available)
For further information call 614-272-5206

MARCH

DAILY THROUGH APRIL 1
40 Days for Life
Continuous, sidewalk in front of Complete Healthcare for Women, 5888 Cleveland Ave., Columbus. 40 Days for Life Lenten vigil at abortion clinic. 614-445-8508
22, THURSDAY
20s Group Meeting at Columbus St. Patrick
7 p.m., St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., Columbus. Weekly meeting of parish's new 20s Group. All young adults invited. Begins with Holy Hour, followed at 8 by program. 614-406-9516
'Courage' Support Group Meeting
7:30 p.m., A Catholic organization providing support for individuals with same-sex attractions.
Mary Louise 614-436-8676
Philosophy Lecture at Josephinum
7:30 p.m., Jessing Center, Pontifical College Josephinum, 7625 N. High St., Columbus. Public lecture on "The Philosophical Question of Christ in St. Anselm, Dante, and Chesterton" with Josephinum philosophy chair Caitlin Gibson. 614-885-5585

23, FRIDAY
Living Stations at Marion St. Mary
7 p.m., St. Mary Church, 251 N. Main St., Marion. Living Stations of the Cross presented by St. Mary School children. 740-382-2118

23-24, FRIDAY-SATURDAY
DeSales Presents 'Anything Goes'
7 p.m., St. Francis DeSales High School, 4212 Karl Road, Columbus. School drama department presents Cole Porter's "Anything Goes." 614-267-6822

24, SATURDAY
Day of Retreat at St. Elizabeth
8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., St. Elizabeth Church, 6077 Sharon Woods Blvd., Columbus. Day of retreat featuring "A Biblical Walk Through the Mass," a five-part presentation of the Great Adventure Catholic Bible study series. 614-891-0150

Life and Mercy Mass in Plain City
9 a.m. Mass, St. Joseph Church, 140 West Ave., Plain City. Saturday Life and Mercy Mass, followed by rosary and confession. 614-565-8654
Bishop Ready Scholarship Exam
9 to 11 a.m., Bishop Ready High School, 707 Salisbury

Road, Columbus. Scholarship exam for incoming freshmen. 614-276-5263

St. Charles Father-Son Mass and Breakfast
9:30 a.m., St. Charles Preparatory Schoool, 2010 E. Broad St., Columbus. Father-son Mass and breakfast for school alumni fathers, uncles, and grandfathers and their sons, nephews, and grandsons. Incoming eighth-graders, prospective and current students and their fathers also are welcome. Free; reservations requested. 614-252-9288
Spring Open House at Josephinum
10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Pontifical College Josephinum, 7625 N. High St., Columbus. Spring open house, with 45-minute tours leaving every half-hour. 614-885-5585

25, SUNDAY
St. Christopher Adult Religious Education
10 to 11:15 a.m., St. Christopher Parish Center, 1420 Grandview Ave., Columbus. "Happy Are We: The Teachings of Jesus," Part 2 of Father Robert Barron's "Catholicism" series. 614-488-9971
Praise Mass at Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal
11 a.m., Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church, 5225 Refugee Road, Columbus. Praise Mass with upbeat contemporary music. 614-861-1242
St. Catherine of Bologna Secular Franciscans
2:30 to 5 p.m., St. Francis of Assisi Church, 386 Buttles Ave., Columbus. Rosary, Liturgy of the Hours, followed by general meeting, ongoing formation, and social. Elizabeth Bowen, SFO 614-276-1953
Altar Server Awards Service at Cathedral
3 p.m., St. Joseph Cathedral, 212 E. Broad St., Columbus. Bishop Frederick Campbell presents awards to diocesan altar servers at annual service sponsored by Serra Club.
Spanish Mass at Columbus St. Peter
7 p.m., St. Peter Church, 6899 Smoky Row Road, Columbus. Mass in Spanish. 706-761-4054
'The Book of Jonah' at St. Joan of Arc
7 p.m., St. Joan of Arc Church, 10700 Liberty Road, Powell. "The Book of Jonah," an organ concert by Matthew Mel- oche. 614-761-0905

26, MONDAY
Passover Seder at Marion St. Mary
6:30 p.m., St. Mary Church, 251 N. Main St., Marion. A Catholic version of a traditional Jewish Passover seder. 740-382-2118
Bethesda Post-Abortion Healing Ministry
6:30 p.m., support group meeting, 2744 Dover Road, (Christ the King Church campus), Columbus. 614-718-0277, 614-309-2651, 614-309-0157
Our Lady of Peace Men's Bible Study
7 p.m., Our Lady of Peace Church, 20 E. Dominion Blvd., Columbus. Bible study of Sunday Scripture readings. 614-459-2766

26-29, MONDAY-THURSDAY
Parish Mission at St. Patrick
7 p.m., St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., Columbus. Parish mission conducted by Father Giles Dimock, OP, chaplain of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist. 614-224-9522

27, TUESDAY
'Catholicism' Series at St. Pius X
7 to 8:30 p.m., St. Pius X Church, 1051 Waggoner Road, Reynoldsburg. Video of "A Vast Company of Witnesses: The Communion of Saints," Part 9 of Father Robert Barron's "Catholicism" series, followed by discussion. 614-866-2859



MOVIE REVIEW



OCTOBER BABY: a life affirming film

Reviewed by Doug Bean

“October Baby” is a film about an abortion survivor.

Those two words – abortion survivor – don’t seem to go together. At least that’s what Jon and Andrew Erwin thought.

The filmmakers had never heard of such a person until they listened to the inspiring testimony of a woman who survived the procedure.

The brothers found the topic so compelling that they decided to make their first feature film. The result is “October Baby,” which opens Friday in 365 theaters nationwide, including Easton Towne Center 30, Georgesville Square, Crosswoods 17, Polaris 18, Pickerington 17, and Wilmington Plaza.

And it’s not what you think.

It’s not a documentary or a grim expose of the abortion industry. It’s not going to browbeat anyone with a political sermon on a sensitive subject.

It’s a powerful story of forgiveness. It’s a story of healing. It’s a story that will make you laugh and make you cry. It’s entertaining. It’s a beautiful love story – a love of all human life – that will captivate audiences and forever change hearts and minds in a subtle but captivating way.

“Through the eyes of a victim, it becomes a human story, not a political story,” said Andrew Erwin, director and executive producer. “We tried to look at it a little more nuanced through the eyes of complicated people. And I think there’s a humility that comes with that.”

Hannah, played by Rachel Hendrix, is a college student who learns at age 19 that she survived a failed abortion attempt.

She has struggled with a hollow feeling that something is missing in her life and is angry that her adopted parents, Jacob and Grace (John Schneider from “Dukes of Hazard” fame and Jennifer Price), have never revealed the truth.

She wants answers about her past. She wants to find her birth mother. So Hannah tags along with friends on a spring-break odyssey in an old Volkswagen van driven by B-Mac (Chris Sligh). Always standing by her side is Jason (Jason Burkey), a special lifelong friend.

Hannah locates a medical assistant named Mary (Jasmine Guy) who worked for the abortion doctor. She recounts to Hannah the failed procedure and also reveals a surprise – a twin brother who survived for a short time. The meeting is one of the more gripping encounters with Hannah’s past. Guy’s portrayal is memorable.

“Talk about a lightning-rod scene,” Erwin said. “It definitely could have been, but I wanted somebody (Guy) that wasn’t going to take on the role from a political stance, but a very human stance. It was important that none of the characters be portrayed as villains. The villain in the story is the abortion industry itself.”

When Hannah finally meets her birth mother, Cindy (Shari Rigby), the response is underwhelming. A successful lawyer, Cindy didn’t want to be burdened. And so she ignored Hannah. But, in the end, there is a dramatic healing that parallels the veteran actress’ own life.

When the Erwins cast Rigby in the part and sent her the script, they discovered that 20 years earlier, as a young legal assistant, she had undergone an abortion that no one outside her family and a few

close friends knew about. Rigby told the producers/directors that she felt as though God had called her to play this role.

“She said, ‘How did you know?’ We said we honestly didn’t,” Erwin said. “It’s really a small part in the film that has profoundly impacted a lot of men’s and women’s lives that are struggling with being post-abortive.”

Hannah experiences her own moment of healing in a Catholic cathedral, where her adoptive mother had prayed when she learned the aborted twins were available. A priest tells Hannah, a Baptist, that it’s time to let go of the past, to forgive her birth mother and adopted parents, and to move forward. It’s her cathartic moment.

“The thing that’s really been amazing is the amount of preteen girls and girls who have fallen in love with the story through the limited release,” Erwin said.

The Erwins chose the Cathedral of St. Paul in Birmingham, Ala., because of its intrinsic beauty and their admiration for the Catholic Church’s being on the forefront in the fight for the dignity of life.

“The way they have championed the cause of life over the years, I am deeply grateful for and I deeply admire,” Andrew said. “I think it’s time to stand and applaud.”

What’s unique about “October Baby” is that it ties together important elements of the life movement – adoption, healing for women who have terminated a pregnancy, the effects of abortion on families, and reconciliation.

It’s also thought-provoking. Erwin hopes the film will stimulate discussions similar to one he had with an atheist who came to

a prescreening last fall.

“She said, ‘I’m pro-choice. I don’t agree with your premise,’” Erwin said. “‘But I can’t deny the person in your movie was a victim and I don’t know what to do with that. It really forces me to rethink what I believe.’”

It’s a miracle in itself that the film found its way to big screens around the nation. Most independent productions never make it through the theater doors, but with the help of Provident Films (“Courageous,” “The Mighty Macs”), “October Baby” secured a distributor.

“On paper, there’s no way our film should be where it’s at,” Erwin said. “The percentage of films that are made every year that flop or don’t go anywhere is astronomical. And you add in the idea of the subject we chose, it just shouldn’t have worked.”

Erwin said the response during pre-screening last fall was inspirational. He’s hoping the film will be embraced when it debuts Friday to a national audience.

“My desire with ‘October Baby’ is that we would get past all the politics of polarizing viewpoints and start looking at it as a human issue, a human life issue, and be able to engage with it emotionally, long enough to profoundly impact the audience’s opinion of life and raise that in a positive light,” Erwin said.

To purchase tickets or learn more about the film, visit www.octoberbaby.net. The website includes Catholic pro-life resources.

The movie is rated PG-13 for mature subject matter. There are no graphically explicit or immoral scenes.

NEWS IN PHOTOS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Egyptian Christians gather to mourn the death of Coptic Orthodox Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria outside the Abbasiya Cathedral in Cairo on March 18. Pope Shenouda, who served as patriarch of the Coptic Orthodox Church for 41 years, died March 17 at the age of 88
CNS photo/Mohamed Abd El-Ghany, Reuters



Wilhelmina “Billie” Mobley, president of the Te Deum Foundation; Mother Dolores Marie of the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration, abbess of St. Joseph Monastery; and Bishop Peter J. Jugis of Charlotte, N.C., look over a topography map of newly acquired property for the foundation and the Poor Clares in Portsmouth in the Diocese of Columbus until 2010, and the Te Deum Foundation have jointly acquired land for a new monastery and a future seminary
CNS photo/SueAnn Howell, Catholic News Herald



Seminarians pray at St. Joseph Pontifical Seminary of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church in India’s Kerala state on March 8. Vocations to religious life in India’s Eastern Catholic churches are strong and a sign that the missionary spirit of St. Thomas the Apostle flourishes, said the president of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association
CNS photo/Msgr. John E. Kozar, courtesy of CNEWA

ANNUAL ST. TARCISIUS PROGRAM



Thirty young people and adults took part in the annual St. Tarcisius program sponsored by the diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting at Marion St. Mary Church, receiving medals at its completion. The program, the oldest of four awards activities sponsored by the committee, is for anyone age 11 and older. It is designed to make participants more aware of the real presence of God in their lives through its focus on the Eucharist. Participants take part in a variety of activities, discussions, and skits during the two-day event, which concludes with a Saturday evening Mass. The program is hosted by Boy Scout Troop 50, sponsored by St. Mary Church. This year's participants were, in alphabetical order, Ed Brown, Katherine Crosswell, Rachel Crosswell, Sara Crosswell, Danny Edgington, Anthony Hayes, Eunice Hayes, Josh Hoy, Mike Hoy, Trevor Jones, Victoria Kiraly, Allison Lush, Aidan McGinn, Liam McGinn, Marty McKew, Theresa Mehringer, Matt Nutter, Zach Nutter, Christopher Obert, Ricci Obert, Anthony Oden, Annie Resetar, Ben Russ, Alec Sherman, Ed Sprigler, Patrick Sprigler, Haylee Starzyk, Lynn Starzyk, Jacob Thompson, and Lydia Wolf.

Photo courtesy Mike Watson

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