DIOCESAN RETREAT CENTERS OFFER SERENITY IN A BUSY WORLD
Grant for Foster Grandparent Program

Catholic Social Services (CSS) was awarded a $423,000 grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service to host the Foster Grandparent program. The corporation helps more than five million Americans improve the lives of their fellow citizens through volunteer service which tackles some of the most pressing challenges facing the nation. The Foster Grandparent program engages senior citizens to serve as role models, mentors, and friends for vulnerable children.

“Through the Foster Grandparent program, we saw an opportunity to help our kids do better in school, and that while providing a meaningful volunteer opportunity for our vulnerable seniors; we could supplement their income and support their overall health. Doing these well can truly help the community be stronger,” said Rachel Lustig, CSS president and chief executive officer.

The grant was awarded because of the strength of CSS’ program and strategic partnerships with Columbus City Schools, the YMCA, Columbus Boys and Girls Clubs, the Schools Office of the Diocese of Columbus, the Columbus Early Learning Center, Franklin County, and The Columbus Foundation.

“Our partners agreed to be more than placement sites or funders for the foster grandparents,” Lustig said. “They helped us shape the design to make the program truly impactful and committed to the process with us.”

Dr. Joseph Brettnacher, superintendent of diocesan schools, said, “The Diocese of Columbus Office of Catholic Schools feels blessed to partner with Catholic Social Services on the Foster Grandparent program. The foster grandparents, age 55 and over, will initially work with two of our educational schools. They will consult with administrators and teachers to determine how best to help students with special or exceptional needs and economically disadvantaged students.

“The foster grandparents will receive satisfaction from serving as mentors and tutors to our students in an effort to improve educational outcomes and bridge the achievement gap that currently exists. Students will benefit directly from the seniors by having positive role models as mentors, tutors, and friends. This is a win-win situation. I am looking forward to witnessing the benefits of the foster grandparent program,” Brettnacher said.

CSS is a faith-based social service agency that has been serving central and southern Ohio for more than 70 years. Motivated by faith, the agency helps poor and vulnerable seniors and families reach their potential. CSS offers 11 programs to help address the community’s unmet, pressing needs with compassion.

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Bishops designate Wisconsin site of Marian apparitions as national shrine

By Patricia Kasten
Catholic News Service

Nearly 160 years ago, on Oct. 9, 1859, Mary appeared twice to a young Belgian immigrant living in Kewaunee County, Wisconsin, after appearing to her earlier in the same month.

Today, the place where she appeared is the only approved Marian apparition site in the United States. On Aug. 15, the Feast of the Assumption, the bishops of the United States formally designated the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help in Champion, Wisconsin, as a national shrine.

Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay announced its new status at a news conference before the annual Mass celebrated at the shrine for the feast day.

More than 1,500 people attended the outdoor Mass, which was followed by an annual rosary procession around the shrine grounds.

Archbishop Jerome E. Listecki of Milwaukee was the main celebrant of the Mass, with Bishop Ricken as homilist. Bishop James P. Powers of Superior, Wisconsin, and priests of the Diocese of Green Bay were concelebrants.

“I am deeply thankful for the faith, devotion, and unwavering commitment to all those who have been stewards and caretakers of the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help for the past several generations,” Bishop Ricken said during his homily.

“We carried this message in their own hearts, passing it on from one generation to the next, freely sharing it with all who came seeking, searching, and praying,” he continued.

On Dec. 8, 2010, Bishop Ricken formally approved the apparitions of Our Lady of Good Help to Brise, making the place where those events occurred, located 18 miles northeast of Green Bay, the first apparition site in the United States to receive approval of a diocesan bishop. His decree came nearly two years after he opened a formal investigation into the apparitions.

At the same time, the site officially was recognized as a diocesan shrine, although Catholics in the diocese had regarded it in that way for years.

The national shrine designation by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops “is a testament and an honor to all those who come before us,” Bishop Ricken said in his homily. “Their generous Christian spirit of warmth, hospitality, reverence, and simplicity is very much alive in this holy place.”

According to canon law, “The term ‘shrine’ signifies a church or other sacred place to which the faithful make pilgrimages for a particular pious reason with the approval of the local ordinary.”

On April 30, 2015, Bishop Ricken sent a request asking the USCCB and its committee on divine worship to consider the Champion site as a potential national shrine. Bishop Ricken noted that the “mission of prayer and catechesis is at the very heart of the apostolate of this sacred shrine.”

Since 1992, the U.S. bishops have followed a set of approved norms to designate local shrines as national shrines.

Father Michael Flynn, executive director of the USCCB’s secretariat for divine worship, said that while exact numbers are not known, there are about 70 national shrines in the United States.

To be granted such a designation, a shrine must meet several requirements, including:

- Service as a diocesan shrine and place of pilgrimage for at least 10 years.
- Operation under statutes approved by the diocesan bishop.
- Ease of accessibility, with appropriate facilities for pilgrims.
- Dedication to promoting the faith of the pilgrims by centering on a mystery of the Catholic faith, on a devotion based on authentic church tradition, on revelations recognized by the church, or on the lives of those in the church’s calendar of saints.

A national shrine also must nourish the spiritual lives of pilgrims by offering celebrations of the liturgy and must develop and utilize some form of common prayer, such as the Liturgy of the Hours. It also needs to have enough liturgical ministers to provide adequate pastoral care for pilgrims, especially for various language groups, and to offer sacramental celebrations in various languages.

Walt Fountain, operations manager at the shrine, said visitors to the site have come from approximately 90 nations, including Russia, China, Vietnam, Burma, Ireland, Syria, Ethiopia, South Africa, India, Kenya, Peru, all of the Central American nations, and many European countries.

The shrine also must have a rector. In the case of the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help, he is Father John Broussard, CPM, a member of the Congregation of the Fathers of Mercy. Beginning in July 2011, Bishop Ricken had asked the Fathers of Mercy to care for the shrine. Father Peter Strycker, CPM, was the first rector, serving from 2011 until this past July.

Finally, a shrine cannot serve as a local parish, meaning that baptisms, weddings, and funerals normally cannot take place there. Once approved as a national shrine, its formal statutes must be reviewed by the U.S. bishops’ conference every 10 years.
PRACTICAL STEWARDSHIP

By Rick Jeric

Briefly

Did your being, and the beings around you, experience some loving and social differences over the past two weeks? Our spouses and families are the ones who should be the first to experience our love and care, just as the Holy Family did. Not only are they first, but they are the beneficiaries most often. We love them first and foremost at the same time we love God. The two are inseparable. The true love and honor we have for God is weak and falls short if we do not have the same for our spouses and families. Beyond that, we work hard on doing the same for our friends, co-workers, and everyone with whom we come into contact. It is part of our lifelong challenge and journey. Can you imagine what these challenges were like for the Holy Family? Jesus is God, but He is also human. Did He get sick, tired, impatient, angry, bored, etc.? We know He could not sin. How did He handle human things such as hunger, thirst, curiosity, desires, attractions, or emotions? Mary is the Immaculate Conception, conceived without sin. She is as close to the perfect human being as there is. How difficult was it for her to experience all the human temptations? Poor Joseph! How in the world did He handle being surrounded by all that perfection each day? Every time he hit his thumb with a hammer, got a nasty splinter, or cut himself and uttered a painful word or two, just imagine the looks he must have gotten from Mary and Jesus. We have their godly and saintly examples to help us get through each day.

I want to briefly update everyone on a few miscellaneous items. You may recall two columns I wrote a few years ago regarding a young man named Ian. His parents lovingly raised him and took care of him for the past 32 years after a brain tumor robbed him of most of his normal functioning at four months of age. They are such a wonderful example of love and selfless giving. On July 20, Ian passed away. On Aug. 8, we had another very successful Bishops’ Golf Classic, netting more than $130,000 for tuition assistance for our Catholic school students in greatest need in the diocese. I want to take this opportunity to thank the groups of people: all the sponsors and participants who gave so much of their treasure, and all the staff and volunteers who gave of their time and talent. Even though the Bishop’s Annual Appeal continues, the great majority of gifts and pledges have been made. I want to thank everyone who makes this a great success and such a tremendous example of good and faithful stewardship each year: clergy, parishioners, volunteers, and staff. To date, we have raised more than $7.3 million—well above our $6.3 million goal—and 70 parishes have exceeded their goals. Thank you! Finally, I want to thank everyone for your encouragement and support over the past nine years of my writing this column. This is number 400, and I hope you still enjoy reading.

Our practical challenge this week is to take stock of how very blessed we are. The challenges of daily life can briefly give way to the love of Jesus Christ alive within us. As Ian’s father said, “My little saint and best friend went home to his Heavenly Father. His joyful innocence and laughter filled our home and now fills Heaven. While deeply missed, our sadness is assuaged by the certain knowledge that this young man was a gift entrusted to us by our Father in Heaven to care for and nurture. And now that gift resides in his Heavenly Father’s arms, free of all the pain and suffering that his gentle soul could never comprehend. I love him so much.” Yes, we are all so briefly blessed in many unique and different ways throughout our lives.

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

K of C donations to Ohio Catholic Social Services

The Ohio Knights of Columbus recently presented $6,535 checks to Catholic Social Services in each of the six dioceses in Ohio. The presentation for the Diocese of Columbus took place at CSS’ Our Lady of Guadalupe Center on Columbus’ west side. Pictured are (from left): Alma Santos, center coordinator; Gary Eckstein, past K of C state deputy; Ramona Reyes, center director; Kevin Miller, K of C state secretary; Rachel Lustig, CSS president and chief executive officer, and Dennis Shonebarger, past K of C state deputy. The money came from earnings of the Ohio Catholic Social Services Endowed Pooled Trust, which was originally set up by the Knights’ Ohio state council to help people qualify for Medicaid services while protecting their personal assets. The program is overseen by the Ohio Charity Foundation, which is the state council’s 501 (c) (3) charitable arm. In addition to the earnings generated by the pooled trust every year, the Ohio Knights of Columbus have donated $30,000 annually to Catholic Social Services agencies for the last seven years from their statewide “Measure Up” campaign for developmentally disabled citizens. An additional $120,000 in matching funds has been contributed by The Center for Special Needs Trust Administration, which manages the pooled trust for the Knights. The “Measure Up” campaign raises about $450,000 each year, with 80 percent going back to local programs for the developmentally disabled. Photo courtesy Ohio K of C

Charismatic Mass

The diocesan Catholic Charismatic Renewal will sponsor an evening of praise and prayer at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 31 at Columbus St. Matthias Church, 1582 Ferris Road.

It will begin with recitation of the rosary, followed by praise adoration led by the Station 14 band, and Mass at 7:30 celebrated by Father James Coleman. Social time in the parish hall will follow. Individual prayer ministry will be available. For more information, contact Linda Pelino at (614) 582-1721 or visit www.cccrcolumbus.org.

Advancement Associate

The Pontifical College Josephinum is accepting applications for a full-time Advancement Associate for the Advancement Office.

Database skills include the ability to: Maintain accurate constituent records; acknowledge and receipt gifts daily; prepare merge mailings, pledge acknowledgements and reminders; and assist with donor research. Knowledge of Raiser’s Edge software is helpful but not required.

Administrative duties will include administrative support to the Vice President for Advancement and collaboration with Departmental Directors who oversee; development, event planning, communications, public relations, and alumni relations.

The successful candidate has a high level of computer literacy and accuracy, an ability to prioritize and manage time effectively, unconditional commitment to the institution’s mission, meticulous attention to detail, a pleasant demeanor, and willingness to adapt to the changing needs of the department. Occasional evening and weekend presence is required.

Salary is commensurate with education and experience. Send letter, salary requirements and resume to:

Carrie Burson at cburson@pcj.edu
or: 7625 N. High Street Columbus, OH 43235
The Josephinum is an EEO Employer
The Catholic Foundation recently closed the fiscal year, and I’m pleased to announce that for the fourth consecutive year, the Foundation is celebrating a significant growth in its impact. In this Year of Mercy, the Foundation distributed more than 1,400 grants amounting to more than $10 million to support our four pillars: parish life, vocations, Catholic education, and social services. In just five years, its impact through grants has doubled. This is truly a testament to the way in which the faithful in our diocese have strengthened their commitment to keeping their gifts in the faith. This growth is because of you, and we are so thankful for that!

We are excited to see these numbers, but the true value of these funds is demonstrated through the lives we are able to touch and the resulting impact here in the diocese. At our Dei Gratia event in June, I discussed the number of souls we can reach through your gifts. For example, 25 parishes will receive funding through the Foundation to hire youth ministers. In the next five years, more than 15,000 young people from these parishes may build a relationship with Jesus Christ and carry that relationship with them for the rest of their lives.

Additionally, grants that help support adult faith formation programs will touch the souls of 72,000 adults in the diocese. Funding from the Foundation to help support three diocesan seminarians, the supposed average in an ordination class, will bring God’s mercy to more than 250,000 parishioners affected by those priests in the next 25 years.

I look forward to sharing the impact of The Catholic Foundation in more depth in our upcoming annual report. In the meantime, as I reflect on an outstanding year of many blessings, I would like to extend my gratitude to you for your continued support of our Catholic faith through the Foundation. We hope it is evident that your gifts are helping to ignite transformational change. We begin our new fiscal year in full force, and we anticipate making greater strides in furthering our Catholic mission. I encourage you to consider how best to support your parish or Catholic ministry, and the role the Foundation can play in your giving plan. With your help and with Jesus Christ as our guide, The Catholic Foundation will continue to be a resource for the future of our faith and our diocese.

The Catholic Foundation’s mission is to inspire giving and assist donors to provide for the long-term needs of the 23-county Diocese of Columbus. The Catholic Foundation fulfills its mission by seeking donors to establish funds designed to support current and future needs and by distributing earnings according to community priorities and donor intent. It is one of the nation’s oldest and largest Catholic foundations, distributing nearly $100 million in the diocese since 1985. For additional information about The Catholic Foundation, please visit catholic-foundation.org.

Brown is the president and CEO of The Catholic Foundation and a parishioner at Granville St. Edward Church.

New Boston St. Monica Church Celebrates 100th Anniversary

New Boston St. Monica Church is celebrating its 100th anniversary. The building which houses the church was dedicated in 1963; however, the first Mass in New Boston was said to have taken place in 1915.

Records show that the name “St. Monica” was selected for the new parish by Bishop James Hartley, and the Thalian Theater was rented for Sunday religious instruction and meetings.

Four city lots were purchased in 1916. By January 1917, plans to frame a school were adopted. The school was opened on Sept. 10, 1917. During the Depression, the school was closed, a bus was purchased, and children from the parish were sent to Portsmouth St. Mary School.

In 1948, Bishop Michael Ready instructed the pastor of Portsmouth Holy Redeemer Church to remodel the school into a temporary church, with two small rooms provided to the priest.

Father Elmer Boyden came to the parish in 1950. The following year, he purchased the present rectory at 4252 Pine St. In 1959, a new church was planned and the rectory was remodeled. Groundbreaking for the church took place almost a half-century after the church was founded.

The church was blessed for the first time on Feb. 24, 1963, and the building was dedicated on May 5, 1963. Father Joseph Yokum has been pastor of both St. Monica and Wheelersburg St. Peter in Chains churches since 2009.

The St. Monica Catholic Community will be hosting a special celebration Mass at 4 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 27, with Bishop Frederick Campbell presiding. A reception will follow.

Families from all the Catholic parishes of Scioto County and of the neighborhood surrounding the church are invited.

Music and entertainment will be provided by Josh Stewart of Lucasville.
Keeping Lord’s day holy; Positives in the church

QUESTION & ANSWER
by: FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
Catholic News Service

Q. I write to ask for guidelines on the Third Commandment -- keeping holy the Lord’s day. I do not consider some of the things that I do to be work -- cooking, for example, minor cleanups, mowing, trimming, weeding. Does the church look upon all chores as work? I find it very hard not to do some of the things that need to be done around the house.

I am thankful that God did give us this commandment, for I certainly do look upon Sunday as a day of rest -- to spend with family when possible and to simply enjoy the day.

My husband (who is not a Catholic) is a businessman who can work from home. He is in a very challenging situation right now, without sufficient staff. On Sundays, he puts in a good six to eight hours of office work before he rests -- otherwise the remainder of the week’s schedule would be overwhelming. (Chestertown, New York)

A. I credit you for your sincere desire to set Sunday aside as a special day, which honors the fact that even the God of all creation rested on the Sabbath. You have captured the spirit of the Catechism of the Catholic Church that says “Sunday is a day of reflection, silence, cultivation of the mind and meditation which furthers the growth of the Christian interior life” (No. 2186).

Basic household maintenance is exempted from the prohibition against “servile work” on that day. Doing the dishes, preparing a meal and what you describe as “minor cleanups” are certainly permitted. A modest amount of gardening or lawn cultivation can be recreational and surely not “servile.” What the Sabbath command means to avoid is unnecessary shopping or heavy housekeeping that could be deferred.

Employment needs or economic circumstances may prevent one from observing the Sabbath rest, and this the catechism envisions and exempts. Your husband’s current challenge, in my mind, fits in here.

I would hope, though, that his circumstance will only be temporary. While I don’t know his religious history or principles, wisely does the catechism note, “The faithful should see to it that legitimate excuses do not lead to habits prejudicial to religion, family life and health” (No. 2185).

I might point out that among American males, there can be a slavish addiction to Sunday televised sports, doing damage to the Sabbath goals of family time, reflection, and rest.

And finally, nowhere does your question mention Sunday Mass, which must always be the central feature of a Catholic’s Sabbath observance. For 2,000 years, followers of Jesus have come together as a family of faith to celebrate the day of Christ’s resurrection and to be nourished by his body and blood.

Q. I am grateful for the work you do with your question-and-answer column. Your responses reflect both wisdom and patience. And this prompts me to ask the following: What are some of the things in today’s parish or church that you find exciting? Or, to put it another way, what are some changes that you have been happy to see over your years in the ministry? (Virginia Beach, Virginia)

A. Normally, I would not choose to answer an open-ended question like this one. Readers, I believe, are more interested in factual answers than in my musings. But since I have just celebrated my 50th anniversary of ordination, I welcome this chance to share a few thoughts about those years.

Space constraints limit me to two developments that I view as great blessings in Catholic life. First is the broader involvement of laypeople in the work of the church.

When I was ordained a half-century ago, many parishes had two lay organizations: a rosary society, which consisted of several women who offered prayers for the parish and helped out with church decorations, and a Holy Name Society, with men who would make a yearly retreat and sponsor an annual parish smoker.

In the parish from which I just retired, there are now more than 400 lay parishioners who help with the work of the church -- lay catechists; lecturers and extraordinary ministers of holy communion; those who visit and take communion to shut-ins, patients in hospitals and residents of nursing homes; men and women who staff a parish food pantry and host homeless families overnight in a parish facility, etc.

The other great blessing is the 2013 election of Francis as pope. As the editor of Time magazine put it, “He has not changed the words, but he’s changed the music.” Whereas many people may have associated the church in the past with rules and prohibitions, some of those same people now link the church first of all with help to the poor, mercy, and forgiveness.

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

St. Vincent de Paul Society National Meeting to Take Place in Columbus

The Columbus Diocesan Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul will host the society’s national meeting from Wednesday, Aug. 31 to Saturday, Sept. 3 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 350 N. High St., Columbus. The theme for the event will be “Hear the Cry of the Poor.”

The meeting is an annual opportunity for Vincentians and friends to be energized spiritually and grow in their ministry of outreach and encounter to those living in poverty. Each day, opportunities will be provided for the rosary and morning prayer, Mass, and Eucharistic Adoration.

The first day will be a training day, with Mass at 6 p.m. celebrated by Father Clarence Williams, CPPS, pastor of Columbus St. James the Less Church, and including music by the Gospel choir of Columbus St. Dominic Church and liturgical dance by the Bakhita Dance Ministry of St. Dominic.

The meeting will officially open on Thursday, Sept. 1, with a keynote address on “Intercultural Competence: The Practice of Inclusion” by Dr. Fidelis D’Cunha, a Vincentian leader from Detroit. It will be followed by a Mass celebrated by Father Charles Klinger, pastor of Westerville St. Paul Church and spiritual adviser for the diocesan Vincentian council. Music will be provided by the contemporary musicians of Columbus Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church.

The day will conclude with a concert featuring Nathan Medley of Columbus Our Lady of Peace Church and young Christian musician Audrey Assad. The concert will be the start of a youth and young adult program that will include a service project at Westerville Area Resource Management.

Bishop John Quinn of Winona, Minnesota, national spiritual adviser for the society, will lead a morning program on “Pope Francis and the Vincentian Embrace of the Poor” on Friday, Sept. 2. Mass will be celebrated by Father Josh Wagner, pastor of Columbus St. Dominic and Holy Rosary-St. John churches, with music by the Last Call band of Columbus St. Christopher Church.

Afternoon activities will include a lunch address by Jill Rauh and Susan Sullivan of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops on “Being Communities of Salt and Light.”

A symposium on restorative justice will highlight activities on the event’s closing day. It will be led by former Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Janine Geske, professor at the Marquette University law school and director of Marquette’s restorative justice initiative. Lunch will feature a program on “Protecting and Promoting the Financial Well-Being of Those We Serve,” including a presentation by former Ohio Attorney General Richard Cordray, director of the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Bishop Frederick Campbell will celebrate the event’s closing liturgy at 5 p.m. and lead the annual recommitment ceremony for Vincentians at the close of the liturgy. It will be a vigil Mass for the 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time. Musicians will include organist Sharon Silleck, choral director Sheila Cafmeyer, and the Ohio Dominican University choir. A banquet in the Regency Ballroom will follow.
Birthright Anniversary

Birthright of Columbus is celebrating its 44th anniversary of nurturing expectant women and their babies. Its annual luncheon will take place at 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 17 at Mozart’s Restaurant, 4784 N. High St., Columbus.

The luncheon will include a style show of women’s and children’s clothing. In addition, there will be a silent auction and a raffle of an OSU handmade quilt, a handmade afghan, and a $50 Target gift card. Tickets are $35. The reservation deadline is Friday, Sept. 9.

For information or tickets, call Marge Kilanowicz at (614) 888-0917 or Mary Jo Mayhan at (614) 235-7465.

Louise Summerhill of Toronto, Canada, founded Birthright International, the world’s first pro-life interdenominational pregnancy help center, in 1968.

As legalized abortion loomed, she recognized the need to help women in crisis pregnancies by providing positive support and life-affirming alternatives. There are now more than 450 Birthright centers in North America.

Birthright of Columbus was founded in 1972 by a group of women who believed in Summerhill’s philosophy and mission statement, “It is the right of every woman to give birth and the right of every child to be born.”

The first Columbus Birthright center opened in April 1972. Each Birthright center is chartered separately, follows the same mission statement, and is responsible for its own funding and the management and training of volunteers. Today, Birthright of Columbus has two locations where trained volunteers answer questions and concerns from callers or visitors who are worried about pregnancy and their babies. The centers are at 41 N. Skidmore St. (across from Holy Family Church) and 4768 N. High St. Birthright also operates the In Review Thrift Shop at the High Street address.

If you are interested in learning more about Birthright or in volunteering, call the North Skidmore office at (614) 221-0844 or the North High office at (614) 263-2514.

Answering God’s Call

OTHERS RECOGNIZED DEACON’S CALL LONG BEFORE HE DID

Deacon Doug Mould says other people recognized his call to the diaconate much sooner than he did.

“Unlike a lot of priests and deacons I have talked with, I never grew up thinking about being a priest or a deacon,” said Deacon Mould, who has been a member of Sacred Heart Church in Coshocton since coming to that community in 1981 and has served it as a deacon since 2001.

“Deacon (Robert) Holehouse, a Sacred Heart parishioner, was ordained a deacon shortly after I arrived in Coshocton. I would see him in the office, but didn’t think too much about it. I had grown up Catholic, but didn’t know what a deacon was.

“Deacon Andy Duda, another parishioner, was ordained in 1990 and was assigned to serve with Deacon Holehouse. I began to understand more about the diaconate through watching and listening to him, but it still never occurred to me that I might be called to be a deacon myself,” Deacon Mould said.

“Deacon Andy first mentioned the possibility of being a deacon to me in 1993 at the annual memorial service our parish has for those who died in the previous year. I didn’t know what to think, and he didn’t say anything more about it to me until the next year’s service. Deacon Holehouse had just passed away, and Deacon Duda said he didn’t know what the parish would do without him.

“That’s when I began to think more seriously about being a deacon. I started praying and looking into the subject deeper. I talked to my wife, Susan, about it, and she didn’t seem terribly surprised. I mentioned this to a good friend, and he also wasn’t surprised,” Deacon Mould said.

“As I continued to consider whether I was being called, I went on a silent retreat in 1995 or ’96, then talked to Deacon Frank Iannarino (director of the diocesan Office of the Diaconate). I was concerned because my religious education was limited to four years of elementary school at Columbus Immaculate Conception, then Confraternity of Christian Doctrine classes through high school, but Deacon Iannarino said not to be too concerned about that.

“I kept pretty quiet about the diaconate, but began thinking about it more and more, and would get unsolicited comments from some parishioners about whether I was studying to be a deacon. It was like they knew something I didn’t,” he said.

“Sister Johanna (Eberly, OP), who was school principal at the time, said ‘Oh, I know you’re going to be a deacon.’ I told her ‘How could you? I haven’t told anyone.’ She said that Sister Teresita (Watson, OP), now deceased, said something similar about a week before that. That just floored me.

“So I started taking classes at Ohio Dominican University and doing more with the parish religious education department. I didn’t tell my mom and dad about this until about 1997, and Mom said something like, ‘Oh, I’ve been waiting for this,’ Deacon Mould said.

“Finally I sat down with the pastor here and said I had been waiting for ‘a clear sign, a voice from God.’ His response was, ‘Don’t you think God’s been talking to you through these other people?’ After that, I started the formal process which led to my ordination as a deacon in 2001.”

Deacons Mould and Duda served the Coshocton parish together until 2012, when Deacon Duda was assigned to his current position as deacon administrator of Newcomerstown St. Francis de Sales Church. “I still lean on him in a big way,” Deacon Mould said. “He was a huge influence on my formation and my life, and still is.”

Deacon Mould, 57, grew up in Columbus as the second of six children of Herb and Betty Mould, and attended Columbus Immaculate Conception and St. Anthony churches. “Dad was an architect and was active in the St. Anthony parish council. Mom did tutoring for people and always was one who gave of herself,” he said. “They often would befrend seminarians from the Josephinium and had several priest friends.

“One I especially remember was the late Msgr. Steve Hawkins, who was associate pastor at St. Anthony when I was growing up. He officiated at our marriage and the marriages of some of my brothers and sisters and baptized most of my parents’ grandchildren. He used to come over on Sundays for Dad’s hamburgers. When Msgr. Hawkins came over, the subject of Martha and Mary would often come up. (Mom is a ‘Martha’), which is interesting because I recently preached about that Gospel story.”

Deacon Mould graduated from Columbus Northland High School, received a degree in mechanical design technology from Bowling Green State University in 1981, then went to work for Jones Metal Products Co., a sheet metal forming and manufacturing company in West Lafayette, near Coshocton. He remained with the company until 2003, when he became director of religious education (DRE) and administrative assistant for his parish. Deacon Duda had held the DRE position from 1995-97 and later became principal of Sacred Heart School.

Deacon Mould met his wife in college, and they married soon after his graduation. “All sorts of things changed in about one-and-a-half months of 1981,” he said. “There was graduation, marriage, and moving to Coshocton (my wife’s hometown). Susan surprised me by becoming a Catholic later that year. She had been going through instructions on the faith secretly while living in Avon Lake and teaching in Elyria before we got married.

“If it were not for her encouragement, support, and continuing sacrifice in my ministry as a deacon, there is no way I could do what I do as a deacon. She is a tremendous support and truly helps me live out the sacraments of Marriage and Holy Orders in a special way.”

The couple have three daughters and a son. “The oldest daughter is married and living in Albuquerque, New Mexico,” Deacon Mould said. “The others are single, but all that will change soon. One daughter is getting married in August and one in September, and my son is to be married in the fall of 2017.

“You can credit the children in part for my becoming a deacon, because I didn’t start getting seriously involved with the faith, beyond going to Sunday Mass, until they came along. Another major influence in my discernment was my youngest brother’s death in an airline accident in 1992. That’s the kind of thing that tests people’s faith, and it can either blossom or die. Fortunately for me, it made my faith stronger.”

“One of the most rewarding parts of being a deacon for me comes from being the parish DRE. It allows me to help people become Catholics through the RCIA process or deepen their faith through adult education,” he said. “It challenges me to look more closely at my own faith. I love seeing how RCIA affects both people involved in it, and how the sponsors often seem to get as much out of it as those they are leading toward becoming Catholic. It reminds me that whether we are lifelong Catholics or new Catholics, all of us are constantly going through a conversion process.

“One important thing to remember about being a deacon is that you’re a deacon all the time, not just when you’re wearing the dalmatic. You have to present yourself well and be an agent of God to everyone, whether on the street, in the office, or at church. You don’t try to convert everybody, but just to be God’s servant, to be present and be available to people.

“Ultimately, you just have to trust God and rely on the church, and by that, I mean the people,” Deacon Mould said. “They really have lifted me, since before my formation began. God called me through them.”
Logan St. John Church continued the “Welcome, Celebrate, Remember” theme of its 175th anniversary celebration as it hosted a picnic and ice cream social.

Father William Ferguson, pastor, welcomed honored guests Msgr. William Dunn (a former pastor, now retired from full-time ministry) and Father William Hahn (who grew up in the parish and is pastor of Chillicothe St. Peter Church). Children and adults took part in games including a water balloon toss and a watermelon eating contest, and parishioners danced along to “classics” such as the Hokey Pokey and the Chicken Dance.

Other anniversary events which have taken place in the past year have included an Octoberfest, an organ concert, and slide shows and displays of bulletin articles from the parish archives.

The celebration will conclude on Sunday, Sept. 11 with a 10 a.m. Mass celebrated by Bishop Frederick Campbell, with Father Kevin Lutz as guest organist. It will be followed by a reception which will include a catered meal, with former pastors and religious from the parish, as well as priests and deacons from the Fairfield-Hocking-Pickaway Deanery, in attendance.

St. Matthew Programs

Gahanna St. Matthew Church, 807 Havens Corners Road, will offer support-group sessions beginning in September for those affected by the pain of divorce and for people grieving the loss of a loved one.

The DivorceCare group’s first meeting will be from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 18 in the parish’s St. Michael Room, with meetings continuing every Sunday through Dec. 18. The GriefShare group will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Mondays from Sept. 19 to Dec. 12 in the St. Raphael Room.

Both programs will be conducted by friendly, caring people who will walk alongside you through one of life’s most difficult experiences. They will be led by people who understand what you are going through and want to help. There is a one-time fee of $30, which includes a workbook, for either program.

For more information on the divorce support group or to register, contact Mike Workman at (614) 269-7098 or Loretta Seipel at (614) 575-1507 or lseipel1947@yahoo.com. For the bereavement group, the contact is Mary Lager at mary0613@hotmail.com.

De Porres Center Events

The Martin de Porres Center will sponsor programs on Thursday, Sept. 8 on “Guided Meditation Practices” and Saturday, Sept. 10 on “Falling in Love with Earth Again.”

The Sept. 8 session, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., will examine the many benefits of meditation, especially to relieve stress and find inner peace. Participants will practice the steps of meditation, and are asked to wear comfortable clothes and bring a mat or towel. There is a $10 suggested donation.

The Sept. 10 program, sponsored by the Dominican Alliance Eco-Justice Committee, will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., with lunch provided. It will focus on humanity’s deeply embedded relationship with Earth, presenting different avenues that can renew people and remind them of who they are as part of the living Earth.

For more information, call (614) 416-1910. The center, a ministry of the Dominican Sisters of Peace, is located at 2330 Airport Drive, Columbus.
Small Things Mean A Lot

What do you think of when you think of strength? Do you think of masculinity? Muscles? Brawn? Bravery? Many people think along these narrow lines. They believe we can make a difference in this world only through the mentality of a brute. Others take a more controversial view. They believe strength can come in gentler forms, such as being sacrificial toward others and being willing to do the right thing, regardless of the consequences. To love and to forgive can be as strong an experience as anything ever encountered.

Many groups of people have dedicated their lives to the small sacrifices each of us make every day. I belong to a group that practices a daily life of prayer and distinguishes what may be needed over what is wanted. Through this sacrifice, we bring humility and a sense of belonging to others who seek out the truth in their own faith lives.

I am constantly amazed by the number of ordinary people throughout the church’s history who have made an extraordinary impact. They walked a path that seemed commonplace. But by their effort to commit to something that was beyond their understanding and to make a leap of faith, they were able to reach out to a larger world hungry for change and enlightenment.

I am reminded of the devotion St. Clare had toward Christ and toward St. Francis of Assisi’s way of life. She was not tall in stature. She was not influential in the way rulers are. She did not go out of her way to be recognized. She once said, “Our body is not made of iron. Our strength is not that of stone. Live and hope in the Lord and let your service be according to reason.” She was, in a way, the epitome of the servant to whom life meant little if she could not submit fully to God and His teachings.

Great people throughout the centuries have lived out their lives in relatively humble circumstances. They were noticed by others, not because of the monetary wealth they obtained or their influence on rulers of the time, but because of the way they carried themselves and by the virtues they had shown. They were as humble as they were kind, in their actions and in the eyes of those who surrounded them.

Here is a challenge I give all of you. Take yourself down to the very essence of who you are and be truthful. Do you like what you see? Does a life of utter poverty scare you? Are you uncomfortable with what you are seeing? Each one of us takes a journey of self-discovery throughout our lives. I hope that I am as strong and courageous, in an intolerant and frequently violent world, as the people I mentioned above.

May the life of St. Clare and what she stood for guide us in our own humility. May the Lord give us His strength to carry our own crosses, and may His peace be with you always.

Joseph Thomas, a member of Gahanna St. Matthew Church, is a freelance writer and is active in many diocesan and church activities.

Moderation and Consistency

I heard a priest say recently that he does three things every day: pray, celebrate Mass, and exercise.

The first two are obvious, but why exercise?

He wants to keep his body and mind strong and healthy so he can vigorously serve his flock.

Exercise, when done moderately and consistently, can be a wonderful way to increase our physical and mental energy to be God’s hands and feet in the world. Since diocesan priests are serving their parish 24/7, good health and physical vigor is truly a blessing.

It’s funny that the word “moderation” can sometimes feel countercultural.

A few years ago, I posted “Moderation and Consistency are the Keys to Fitness” on the whiteboard at my gym.

One of our gym members strongly disagreed with this sentiment. He told me it sounded weak. His philosophy was to go all out all the time. Unfortunately, he had many former injuries from extreme exercise, so maintaining the habit of moderate and consistent exercise proved to be challenging for him and he ended up quitting altogether.

Unfortunately, our go-go-go culture can make us feel we must always do more and push harder.

There are circumstances where extreme physical preparation might be necessary; for example, in the military and in law enforcement, where your job is to protect and save lives. However, the average person will benefit greatly from doing most activities with moderation and consistency.

The principles of moderation and consistency can guide our spiritual lives as well.

While we may desire to pray silently at home every day for an hour, that might not be compatible with how God is calling us to serve in our vocation. We might not start to pray at all until we have a full hour — but if you are like me, that might not happen very often. We can become discouraged and stop praying altogether, so setting realistic expectations is the key.

At my weekly Holy Hour last week, I was distracted. I had a hard time praying, reading, or even really being present to the Lord. So much was going on in my mind about family and work. I know that God sees and loves our desire to pray, even when we do it imperfectly, so we have to keep trying.

Like the priest I mentioned who prays, celebrates Mass, and exercises daily, we can greatly benefit from maintaining healthy habits, in a spirit of moderation and consistency, to serve God and the people God places in our lives.

Lori Crock is a wife, mother, Plain City St. Joseph Church parishioner, strength and movement coach, and owner of MoveStrong Kettlebells in Dublin. Lori is online at movestrongkbs.com and holyandhealthy-catholic.com.
Retreats have been part of the Catholic faith since its beginning. In fact, it can be said that Jesus himself made the first Catholic retreat when he spent 40 days in the wilderness after his baptism. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke note that at the end of that period, Satan tempted Jesus three times, offering him all the kingdoms of the world if he would fall down and worship the devil. The kingdoms were all the riches and power the world could give. But Jesus resisted these temptations and affirmed his God and his Father’s will. Thus, he showed people how to resist the devil, how to be strong in faith and be supported by his power.

The retreat tradition was developed by Jesus himself and continued into the early church. The early church was a community living in truth and love, where the needs of body, mind, and spirit were cared for. The Christian faith is such a retreat and place where the needs of body, mind, and spirit are cared for.

For 85 years, St. Therese’s Retreat Center has been a special place. When it opened in 1931, its location on the eastern edge of Franklin County was considered too far out for the countryside. Today, it is surrounded on all sides by urban life, yet it remains what its director, Mary Murphy, described as “an oasis in the midst of a bustling, crowded world.”

“People really regard St. Therese’s as a holy ground,” said Murphy, who has been a staff member of the center since 1971 and was brought to Columbus by the Stella Niagara Franciscan Sisters in 1971 and was brought to Columbus by the Stella Niagara Franciscan Sisters in 1971 and was brought to Columbus by the Stella Niagara Franciscan Sisters in 1971. “You really regard it as a holy ground.”

The other is Sts. Peter and Paul Retreat Center, located on 500 acres of rural wooded grounds in Licking County. It’s a mile-and-a-half from State Route 70 and six miles from Interstate 70, but it doesn’t take long for those busy high-rhythm of life.

The long, low Japanese-style buildings that make up the center originally were built by the Peace Missionary Sisters (PMSM) in an acronym for the Latin words which translate in English into Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions), which used the site as a retreat center from 1965 until the Diocese of Columbus purchased it in 2003. Because it contained housing for semi- and men religious sisters, it was able to host large groups. Center director Bob Overman and his wife, Kathy, came to Ohio in 2008 at the invitation of a retreat participant from a retreat participant who wanted Overman and his wife to run their own center.

The center has a chapel, outdoor Stations of the Cross, an outdoor dining area, and an outdoor assembly area, as well as a large dining room and a large conference room, six smaller meeting rooms, a large common living-room areas, Two dormitories, each holding 55 people, also are available for large groups.

Center director Bob Overman and his wife, Kathy, came to Ohio in 2008 at the invitation of a retreat participant who wanted Overman and his wife to run their own center. Their experience in leading people turn away from the temptations of the world and toward spiritual refreshment and help in multiple ways to seem farther away than that for days were where they can experience much- and secular groups.

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St. THERESE’S, continued from Page 11

in many other ways. The men sponsor three or four weekends per year and the women sponsor two full weekends, as well as evenings of reflection. Sometimes individuals request time to spend a day or two in private retreat or prayer. If the calendar permits, the center is glad to welcome them.

Murphy is assisted by Sister Elaine Ballmann, SND-deN, who has been at the center since 1987; Daniel Reichert, cook and gardener; and part-time staff members Steve Blubaugh and Sue Hundley. “During our workdays, job titles do not really mean much here,” Murphy said. “We all pitch in to do what is needed so we can make our guests feel at home, whether they are here for a few hours or a few days.”

The center has 55 sleeping rooms. They are comfortable and simply furnished. All bed linens and towels are provided. Guests share restroom and shower facilities. The large conference room, the dining room, and the chapel are air conditioned; however, sleeping rooms are not. The center has a full service kitchen to provide meals.

The Chapel of St. Therese of Lisieux is the heart of the center. It retains a unique quality that seems to call each person who enters to prayer, and an air of sanctity which cannot be denied. In addition to the chapel, there are outdoor stations of the cross, a stone grotto dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, and out-of-the-way spaces where guests can find a place of solitude. “One regular retreat participant recently commented that she surely hopes the center will be here for her grandchild, who just made her first holy Communion,” Murphy said.

St. Therese’s is located at 5277 E. Broad St. in Columbus. It was part of a 75-acre tract of land acquired by the Diocese of Columbus from the estate of Martha Deshler in 1926. Bishop James Hartley dedicated it to St. Therese of Lisieux, who was canonized in 1925. The original name of the center was St. Therese’s Shrine, House of Retreats. The name was changed in 1970 to the Shrine Center for Renewal in response to the call for renewal in the post-Vatican II church. In 1998, shortly after St. Therese was named a doctor of the church, its name was changed to St. Therese’s Retreat Center.

Part of the center’s original 75-acre plot was split off in 1998 to answer the need for housing for senior citizens. That land is now the site of two facilities owned and operated by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm – the Villas at St. Therese, which provides both independent and assisted living, and Mother Angeline McCrory Manor, a skilled nursing facility.

“We have wonderful relationships with the residents, sisters, and staff of the Villas and Mother Angeline. In a sense, we are a microcosm of the church – a community serving one another with love and mercy.”

Although St. Therese’s is a 24/7 operation, its regular business hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday for scheduling and information.

For more information about the center, go to http://www.coldsdioc.org/Offices/DeptforAdministrationPersonnel/StThereseRetreatCenter/ContactUs.aspx. You can also email mmurphy@columbuscatholic.org or call (614) 866-1611.

Sts. PETER & PAUL, continued from Page 10

In recent weeks, it’s been used at various times by Presbyterian, United Methodist, and Church of the Nazarene groups, Denison University, the Sunbury St. John Neumann Church staff, and the sisters of the Missionary Servants of the Word from Columbus Christ the King Church. Other longtime users are a group known as the Blue Heron Ladies and a women’s serenity group. The center also can be used for individual retreats. It hosts Saturday spirituality programs, usually led by a member of the Dominican Sisters of Peace, three or four times a year.

The center may be a place to get away from modern life, but it does have WiFi connections. “So many retreat programs depend on material that has to be accessed from the Internet that you can’t be without it,” Overman said. “Something like the St. John Neumann staff retreat is an example. They brought their own projectors and equipment to link to the net, but they also had a campfire at the fire pit, which is about as low-tech as you can get.

“Since we have Wi-Fi, there’s always the temptation to go online and not really get away from the world, but most people are able to keep things in balance. The youth ministers who come here are especially good in making sure the young people they’re working with turn off their cell phones and concentrate on the purpose which brought them here for a retreat.”

“The center has been here for 60 years and has been in its current form for 13 years, but a lot of people still don’t know about us,” Overman said. “We’d like people to pay a visit and see what we offer, then come here and take time to sit, reflect, and pray and get to know their creator better.” More information on the center, located at 2734 Seminary Road S.E. in Newark, is available at www.stspeterandpaulretreat-center.org or by calling (740) 928-4246.
LET'S TALK.
Call us to learn about including your parish or ministry endowment fund in your will.

866-298-8893
catholic-foundation.org

IS GOD PART OF YOUR FAMILY?
Many of us include our family in our wills and trusts. As stewards of God's gifts, we should include our Catholic faith, too.

A group of parishioners from Chillicothe St. Peter Church recently returned from Mexico, where they made a pilgrimage and carried out mission work. The group traveled to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe and passed through its Holy Doors of Mercy in honor of the Jubilee Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis last December. The majority of the group's mission work was with Mater Filius, a nonprofit organization with multiple homes in Mexico and the United States for unwed expectant mothers. The group visited the Mater Filius house in Mexico City and completed painting and repairs to a new house in Puebla to ready it for guests. Group members also took their faith to the streets by praying in front of an abortion clinic in Mexico City. During this time, a young woman who had been considering an abortion decided to join the Mater Filius home in Puebla. Before leaving Mexico, Father Michael Hartge, parochial vicar at St. Peter (at top left in back row), and the group enthroned the Puebla Mater Filius house to the Sacred Heart.

Photo courtesy St. Peter Church

Chris Stefanick Coming in November
Nationally known Catholic speaker Chris Stefanick, founder of Real Life Catholic, will be at Columbus St. Peter Church, 6899 Smoky Row Road, for a gathering titled “Reboot! Live!” from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 17.
The multigenerational event is for anyone aged 12 or older, Catholics and non-Catholics alike, and will be a fun, inspiring, and practical experience of applying the beauty and genius of the Gospel to every aspect of life — prayer, spirituality, work, dating, marriage, parenting, health, and more.
For more information, go to http://reallifecatholic.com/reboot-live-participants or contact Holly Jo Monnier at (614) 889-2221, extension 104.

Photo courtesy St. Peter Church

Annual St. Dominic Day Event
The Columbus St. Dominic Church Altar Rosary Society and Rosary Group sponsored the parish's third annual St. Dominic Day event earlier this month. Attendees gathered for prayer at 3 p.m., with a focus on the welfare and protection of children as they prepared to return to school. After a presentation on St. Dominic, games and lunch were provided to children in the east Columbus neighborhood surrounding the parish.

Photo courtesy St. Dominic Church
Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Cycle C)

Jesus presents practical wisdom, but not a parable


Sirach also is known as Ecclesiasticus (or “church book”) because the early church drew on its wisdom often in the writing of the New Testament. Sirach comes from the Greek form of the author’s name. It originally was written in Hebrew, but has been handed down in the Greek language. Ongoing archeological efforts have continued to find Hebrew parts of the book; about two-thirds of it is available in Hebrew. It was completed in about 175 BC, but was not translated into Greek until 117 BC by the author’s grandson. Its author loved Jewish wisdom and everything to do with the Temple and the Law and priesthood.

Sunday’s text is addressed to sons, who are told to act humbly in order to be loved more than a giver of gifts. The greater one is, the humbler that person should be. Unfortunately, these words are not recognizable in today’s world.

The author encourages the reader not to seek out what is beyond the person’s strength. Yet today, we are constantly striving to push the barriers of what we know in every direction. There are some who even argue that there is nothing which we cannot know. But for the pious Jew of Sirach’s time and place, it was enough to be content with learning the Law (of Moses) and occupying himself with how to live by that law.

The mind of a sage may appreciate proverbs. They and occupying himself with how to live by that law. enquire enough to be content with learning the Law (of Moses) and occupying himself with how to live by that law. The passage culminates in the saying “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.” Luke will repeat this saying in Luke 18:14 at the conclusion of the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector who both go into the Temple to pray. It is also virtually the same in Matthew 23:12, although Matthew uses the saying in a different context.

This leads into an instruction Jesus gives to the Pharisee himself on who should be included on the guest list. It is precisely the ones who are unable to return the invitation who should be invited – the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind. These guests are to be preferred to the ones who would naturally be obliged to return the invitation, such as relatives, and friends. In neither verses 7-11 nor in verses 12-14 is there a “parable” to be found. However, there are some who might point to Luke 14:15-24 as the parable referred to. That would be stretching things, although it is possible. In addition, this ignores what Jesus had said (“noticing how they [the invited guests!] were choosing places of honor at the table”), which was the whole reason for commenting on it in the first place.

We are left wondering why Luke wrote that Jesus told “a parable.” He was expressing common advice about social graces and adding a wisdom saying to which we can agree, but finding a parable here is not evident.

*Father Lawrence L. Hummer, pastor at Chillicothe St. Mary Church, may be reached at hummerl@stmarychillicothe.com.*

Annual Blue Mass

Columbus St. Timothy Church, 1088 Thomas Lane, and Knights of Columbus Council 14345 will host the diocese’s annual Blue Mass at 5 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 8. Bishop Frederick Campbell will be the celebrant and homilist.

The Mass is an opportunity to honor and pray for all active, retired, and deceased police, firefighters, and emergency medical service personnel. It also is an occasion to remember the 2,973 people who died in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

All active and retired police, fire, and emergency medical service personnel in the greater Columbus area and their families are invited.

Men’s Luncheon Club

After taking a summer break, the Catholic Men’s Luncheon Club will resume its monthly meetings on Friday, Sept. 2, with a talk by attorney Don Brey on “Faith and Politics.”

The event will take place following the 11:45 a.m. Mass at Columbus St. Patrick Church, 280 N. Grant Ave., and will conclude by 1 p.m.

No reservations are necessary. A $10 donation is requested to cover the cost of the lunch and meeting.

For information on the Catholic Men’s Luncheon Club, contact its president, Tim Merkel, at htm@ejhlaw.com.

The Weekday Bible Readings

**MONDAY**

1 Corinthians 2:1-5
Psalm 119:97-102
Mark 6:17-29

**TUESDAY**

1 Corinthians 2:10b-16
Psalm 145:8-14
Luke 4:31-37

**WEDNESDAY**

1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Psalm 33:12-15,20-21
Luke 4:38-44

**THURSDAY**

1 Corinthians 3:18-23
Psalm 24:1b-4b,5-6

**FRIDAY**

1 Corinthians 4:3-5
Psalm 37:3-6,27-28,39-40

**SATURDAY**

1 Corinthians 4:6b-15
Psalm 145:17-21

**SUNDAY MASSES**

10:30 a.m. Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com. Mass with the Passionist Fathers at 7:30 a.m. on WWHO-TV (the CW), Channel 53, Columbus. and at 10:30 a.m. on WHIZ-TV, Channel 18, Zanesville. Check local cable system for channel listing.

Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Birmingham, Ala., at 8 a.m. or EWTN (Time Warner Channel 385, Insight Channel 382, or WOW Channel 378). (Encores at noon, 7 p.m., and midnight).

Mass from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee at 6:30 a.m. on ION TV (AT&T U-verse Channel 195, Dish Network Channel 250, or DirecTV Channel 305).

**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 (AM 820), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.

We pray Week II, Seasonal Proper of the Liturgy of the Hours.
August 28, 2016

God and Brexit

Ever since the United Kingdom decided in June to leave the European Union, contending (and sometimes overlapping) explanations have been offered for a vote that stunned the world’s opinion makers: a perceived loss of national sovereignty to a transnational organization; concerns over current EU immigration policy and the effect of open EU borders on jobs and the rule of law; aggravations with petty bureaucratic regulation by EU mandarins in Brussels. Together, these amount to what’s often called the EU’s “democracy deficit,” which seems to me real enough.

I’d like to suggest another, perhaps deeper answer to the question of the EU’s current distress, though: to put it bluntly, the “democracy deficit” is a reflection of Europe’s “God-deficit.” Let me connect the dots.

The founding fathers of today’s European Union – which began with the European Coal and Steel Community before morphing into the European Common Market and then the EU – were, in the main, Catholics: Italy’s Alcide de Gasperi, West Germany’s Konrad Adenauer, France’s Robert Schuman. Appalled by the self-destruction Europe had wrought in two world wars, they sought an answer to aggressive nationalism in economic partnerships that would bind the West Franks (the French) to the East Franks (the Germans) so that war between them would be inconceivable. It was a practical idea, it worked, and it was understood to be the first step toward forms of political partnership and integration.

The wager underlying this project, as these men conceived it, was that there was enough of Christian or biblical culture left in Europe to sustain democratic pluralism in a “union” of sovereign states that would respect national and regional distinctiveness. And that Christian or biblical “remainder” involved the Catholic social-ethical principle of subsidiarity: the idea that decision making should be left at the lowest possible level (as in classic American federalism, where local governments do some things, state governments do other things, and the national government does things that local and state governments can’t do).

Subsidiarity is a check against the tendency of all modern states to concentrate power at the center, which explains why the principle was first articulated by Pope Pius XI in 1931, as the shadow of totalitarianism lengthened across Europe. Respect for the social-ethical principle of subsidiarity also implies respect for cultural difference. And that, in turn, assumes that human beings get to universal commitments – such as respect for basic human rights – through particular experiences, not through generalized abstractions. Or as Polish editor Jerzy Turowicz said to me 25 years ago, Pope St. John Paul II was a “European” because he was a Cracovian, the heir of a particular experience of pluralism and tolerance, not despite the fact that he came from a unique cultural milieu.

When biblical religion collapsed, as it manifestly has in most of Old Europe and too much of New Europe after 1989, commitments to subsidiarity and its respect for differences imploded as well. The vacuum was then filled by a monochromatic, anti-pluralist notion of democracy. Embodied in EU law and enforced by unaccountable bureaucrats and EU courts, the results of this decayed democratic idea went far beyond idiotic regulations on the shape of tomatoes and bananas to include a concerted attempt to impose a single political culture in Europe, best described as the culture of personal autonomy – the culture of the self. That pseudo-culture is the hollowed-out shell of the Christian personalism that once inspired de Gasperi, Adenauer, Schumann, and the mid-20th-century Christian Democratic parties of Europe. And its political byproduct is the EU’s “democracy deficit.”

Forty years ago, German constitutional scholar Ernst-Friedrich Beockenfoerde argued that the modern liberal-democratic state faced a dilemma: it rested on the foundation of moral-cultural premises – social capital – which it could not itself generate. Put another way, it takes a certain kind of people, formed by a certain kind of culture to live certain virtues, to keep liberal democracy from decaying into new forms of authoritarianism – more pungently described in 2005 by a distinguished European intellectual, Joseph Ratzinger, as a “dictatorship of relativism.” The Beockenfoerde dilemma is on full display in the European Union, which is in deep trouble because of a “democracy deficit” that is, at bottom, a “subsidiarity-deficit” caused by a “God-deficit.” Americans would be very foolish to think ourselves immune to a similar crisis of political culture.

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

Centering Prayer Workshop

Father Vinny McKiernan, CSP, will present an introduction to centering prayer at noon and 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 15 in the Columbus St. Thomas More Newman Center, 64 W. Lane Ave.

Centering prayer is a form of prayer that begins with an act of faith and the intention to be present to the mystery of God and the mystery of God’s unconditional love for the mystery of us.

Its rationale is found in the 14th-century classic The Cloud of Unknowing. The anonymous author writes of a “blind desire,” “a naked intent” to go to the infinite God without thought or feeling, to be present with pure faith to the God who is mystery, beyond complete understanding. This teaching also is found also in the works of John Cassian, a fifth-century monk.

Father McKiernan, a priest for 59 years, is a longtime practitioner and teacher of centering prayer. He has been at the Newman Center, which serves The Ohio State University and the surrounding neighborhood, since 1990. For more information, call (614) 291-4674, extension 106.
Edward J. Fulcher

Funeral Mass for Edward J. Fulcher, 81, who died Tuesday, Aug. 9, was held Tuesday, Aug. 16 at Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel of St. Joseph Cemetery, Columbus.

He was born April 21, 1935 to George and Mary Fulcher.

He was a graduate of Columbus St. Charles Preparatory School, served in the Army, was employed by Shell Oil Co., and retired in 1994.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Bishop George Fulcher of Lafayette, Indiana, former auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Columbus; Father John Fulcher, a priest of the diocese; William, and Richard; and sisters, Mary Lou Snyder, Julie Murrin, and Ellen Merullo. Survivors include his wife, Dolores (Gauthier); son, Eddie; daughters, Lorrie (Dick) Kondras and Jodie (Bob) Moore; and four grandchildren.

Marilyn S. Russell-Bates

Funeral Mass for Marilyn S. Russell-Bates, 78, who died Friday, Aug. 5, was held Thursday, Aug. 11 at Westerville St. Paul Church. Burial was at Greenlawn Cemetery, Portsmouth.

She was a graduate of Portsmouth Notre Dame High School and was employed at various times by Ranco Inc., Bank One, and Mid-Ohio Obstetrics. She was an organist and choir director at St. Paul Church, and held similar positions later at Columbus St. Elizabeth and Hilliard St. Brendan churches.

She was preceded in death by her parents, George and Alma Russell. Survivors include a son, Bryan Bates; a daughter, Kendra (Charley) Curran; brothers, James (Barb) and George (Kathy); sisters, Caroline Gemperline, Arlene Osborne, Patricia Barry, and Melissa (Tim) Dearfield; and three grandsons.

Deacon William Davis

Funeral Mass for Deacon William J.F. “Bill” Davis, 86, who died Tuesday, Aug. 9, was held Monday, Aug. 15 at Powell St. Joan of Arc Church. Burial was at Resurrection Cemetery, Lewis Center.

He was born in Fall River, Massachusetts, on May 30, 1930 to William and Gertrude (Kepple) Davis.

He graduated from Msgr. James Cole Catholic High School in 1949 and received a bachelor’s degree in political science from Providence (Rhode Island) College in 1953. He served in the Army, retiring with the rank of sergeant major in 1990, and was president and owner of the Lauterbach and Eilfer Insurance Agency until 1989. He entered the diocesan CHRISM lay program in preparation for studies for the permanent diaconate.

He was ordained a deacon of the Diocese of Columbus on Feb. 1, 1997 by Bishop James Griffin in Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral, serving in diaconal ministry at Westerville St. Paul Church until 2003, when he was assigned to Columbus St. Peter Church.

While he was at St. Peter, Bishop Griffin asked him to become the diocese’s first deacon administrator under the supervision of a priest moderator, serving in that role at Columbus St. Agnes and St. Aloysius churches. He helped set the standard for deacon administrator guidelines developed by Bishop Frederick Campbell for the diocese.

He retired from diaconal ministry in 2007. After his retirement, he visited the sick and homebound of St. Joan of Arc Church until he moved to The Inn at Olentangy Trail in Lewis Center, where he died.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his wife of 46 years, Anne. Survivors include daughters, Mary, Anne, Linda, and Margaret; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Jeanne I. Young

Funeral Mass for Jeanne I. Young, 97, who died Thursday, Aug. 11, was held Thursday, Aug. 18 at Columbus Our Lady of Peace Church. Burial will be later at Resurrection Cemetery, Lewis Center.

She was born Sept. 9, 1918, to Frederick and Mimi Morris.

She was a former administrative assistant at the Pontifical College Josephinum and also was employed by the city of Columbus as an office manager and by Franklin County as assistant zoning administrator, and was a real estate agent. She was a member of the Third Order of the Carmelites.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Robert; son, Jeffrey; brothers, Bill and Don; and sisters, Marjorie and Rita. Survivors include sons, Robert, Michael, Andy, Christopher, and Richard; daughters, Diana, Barbara, Theresa, and Denise; 21 grandchildren; and 21 great-grandchildren.

Pray for our dead
### AUGUST

**25, THURSDAY**  
**Cenacle at Holy Name**  
6 p.m., Holy Name Church, 154 E. Patterson Ave., Columbus. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, with prayers in the Cenacle format of the Marian Movement of Priests.  
**Holy Hour of Reparation at Columbus Sacred Heart**  
7 to 8 p.m., Sacred Heart Church, 893 Hamlet St., Columbus. Eucharistic Holy Hour following Holy Hour of Reparation prayer format, concluding with Benediction and social period.  
614-372-5249

**26, FRIDAY**  
Shepherd’s Corner Ecology Center Open House  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Shepherd’s Corner Ecology Center, 987 N. Waggoner Road, Blacklick. Center, a ministry of the Dominican Sisters of Peace, will be open, weather permitting.  
614-866-4302

**27, SATURDAY**  
**Life and Mercy Mass in Plain City**  
9 a.m., St. Joseph Church, 140 West Ave., Plain City. Saturday Life and Mercy Mass, followed by rosary and confession.  
**Retreat for Married Couples**  
9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Immaculate Conception Church, 414 E. North Broadway, Columbus. Retreat for married couples, sponsored by diocesan Office for Marriage and Family Life, with Mass, reflection by Bishop Frederick Campbell, and presentations by Deacon James Keating, author of “Spousal Prayer: A Way to Mantal Happiness.” Cost $65 per couple, including breakfast, lunch, book.  
614-241-2560

Shepherd’s Corner Garden Workshop  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Shepherd’s Corner Ecology Center, 987 N. Waggoner Road, Blacklick. Garden workshop with staff member Leslie Markworth on harvesting and food preservation, cleanup, and planning for next year. Suggested donation $5.  
614-866-4302

DeSales Class of 2006 Reunion  
7 p.m., Flanagan’s Dublin, 6835 Caine Road, Columbus. Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School Class of 2006 10th-anniversary reunion. Contact Trent Sheumaker at sheumaker@desales.edu.

### SEPTEMBER

**1, THURSDAY**  
**Cenacle at Holy Name**  
6 p.m., Holy Name Church, 154 E. Patterson Ave., Columbus. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, with prayers in the Cenacle format of the Marian Movement of Priests.  
**Holy Hour at Holy Family**  
6 to 7 p.m., Holy Family Church, 584 W. Broad St., Columbus. Holy Hour of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by meeting of parish Holy Name and Junior Holy Name societies, with refreshments.  
614-221-4323

**Holy Hour of Reparation at Columbus Sacred Heart**  
7 to 8 p.m., Sacred Heart Church, 893 Hamlet St., Columbus. Eucharistic Holy Hour following Holy Hour of Reparation prayer format, concluding with Benediction and social period.  
614-372-5249

**Fundraising Concert at Church of the Resurrection**  
7 p.m., ministry center, Church of the Resurrection, 6300 E. Dublin-Granville Road, New Albany. Fundraising concert for local musicians to benefit Reagan McGee, a four-year-old girl with Sanfilippo Syndrome, a rare genetic disease with no cure or treatment. Snacks, wine, soft drinks available. Tickets $15.  
614-204-8794

**2, FRIDAY**  
**St. Cecilia Admission of Blessed Sacrament**  
St. Cecilia Church, 434 Norton Road, Columbus. Begins after 8:15 a.m. Mass; continues to 5 p.m. Saturday.  
**Monthly Adoration of Blessed Sacrament**  
Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church, 5225 Refugee Road, Columbus. Begins after 9 a.m. Mass; continues through 6 p.m. Holy Hour.  
**Shepherd’s Corner Ecology Center Open House**  
5 to 7 p.m., Shepherd’s Corner Ecology Center, 987 N. Waggoner Road, Blacklick. Center, a ministry of the Dominican Sisters of Peace, will be open, weather permitting.  
614-866-4302

**Catholic Men’s Luncheon Club**  
12:30 p.m., St. Peter Church, 6899 Smyrow Road, Columbus. Mass in Spanish.  
**Spanish Mass at Columbus St. Peter**  
7 p.m., St. Peter Church, 6899 Smyrow Road, Columbus. Mass in Spanish.  
706-761-4054

**3, SATURDAY**  
**Padre Pio Prayer Group at St. John the Baptist**  
12:30 p.m., St. John the Baptist Church, 168 E. Lincoln Ave., Columbus. Padre Pio Prayer Group meeting, including rosary, devotion, and 1 p.m. Mass.  
614-294-5319

**Prayer Group Meeting at St. Mark**  
7:30 p.m., St. Raymond Room, St. Mark Center, 324 Gay St., Lancaster. Light of Life prayer group meeting.  
740-654-6928

**31, WEDNESDAY**  
**Charismatic Mass, Music, Prayer at St. Matthias**  
6 p.m., St. Matthias Church, 1582 Ferris Road, Columbus. Praise and prayer evening sponsored by diocesan Catholic Charismatic Renewal, with rosary, praise and adoration led by Station H band, individual prayer ministry, and Mass at 7:30 celebrated by Father James Coleman.  
614-582-1721

**3-SEPT. 3, WEDNESDAY-SATURDAY**  
**St. Vincent de Paul Society National Meeting**  
Hyatt Regency Hotel, 350 N. High St., Columbus. St. Vincent de Paul Society’s 2016 national meeting, with vendor booths and daily talks, workshops, rosaries, morning prayer, Eucharistic adoration, and Mass.  
614-221-3554

**Three Bags Full Consignment Sale**  
6 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday (selected items half-price Friday night and Saturday; early shopping at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday with purchase of $10 advance ticket), Franklin County Fairgrounds, 4100 Columbus St., Hilliard. Three Bags Full consignment sale of children’s items. Unsold and unclaimed items are donated to Catholic and pro-life charities.  
614-561-5300

**Friday**  
**Abortion Recovery Network Group**  
7 p.m., Pregnancy Decision Health Center, 665 E. Dublin-Granville Road, Columbus. Abortion recovery network group meeting for anyone interested in recovering from abortion or who has been through a recovery program and wants to stay connected.  
614-721-2100

### Happenings

**‘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 Catholic Times ‘Happenings,’ 197 E. Gay St., Columbus OH 43215  
Fax to 614-241-2518  
E-mail as text to tpuet@columbuscatholic.org

1st Saturday Mass for world peace and in reparation for blasphemies against the Virgin Mary, as requested by Our Lady of Fatima.  
614-221-1890

Centering Prayer Group Meeting at Corpus Christi  
10:30 a.m. to noon, Corpus Christi Center of Peace, 1111 E. Stewart Ave., Columbus. Centering prayer group meeting, beginning with silent prayer, followed by Contemplative Outreach DVD and discussion.  
614-512-3731

Filipino Mass at St. Elizabeth  
7:30 p.m., St. Elizabeth Church, 6077 Sharon Woods Blvd., Columbus (note new location). Mass in the Tagalog language for members of the Filipino Catholic community.  
614-891-0150

**4, SUNDAY**  
**Exposition at Church of the Resurrection**  
Our Lady of the Resurrection Chapel, Church of the Resurrection, 6300 E. Dublin-Granville Road, New Albany. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, beginning with procession following 11 a.m. Mass and continuing to 5 p.m.  
**Prayer Group Meeting at Christ the King**  
5 to 7 p.m., Christ the King Church, 2777 E. Livingston Ave., Columbus (enter at daily Mass entrance). Weekly parish prayer group meeting for praise, worship, ministry, and teaching.  
614-886-8266

**Spanish Mass at Columbus St. Peter**  
7 p.m., St. Peter Church, 6899 Smyrow Road, Columbus. Mass in Spanish.  
706-761-4054

**5, TUESDAY**  
**Crading Christianity Dinner at St. Agatha**  
5:30 p.m., Msgr. Kennedy Hall, St. Agatha Church, 1860 Northam Road, Columbus. 3rd annual Crading Christianity fundraiser for Christians in the Holy Land, beginning with Mass celebrated by Father Peter Vasko, OFM, president of the board of trustees of the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land. Keynote speaker: EWTN news director and anchor Raymond Arroyo.  
614-890-6996

**Catholic War Veterans Post 1936 Meeting**  
7 p.m., Red Room, St. Peter Church, 6899 Smyrow Road, Columbus. Catholic War Veterans Post 1936 meeting. For those who served three months, were honorably discharged, or were on active duty.  
614-221-7601

**Abortion Recovery Network Group**  
7 p.m., Pregnancy Decision Health Center, 665 E. Dublin-Granville Road, Columbus. Abortion recovery network group meeting for anyone interested in recovering from abortion or who has been through a recovery program and wants to stay connected.  
614-721-2100

**Prayer Group Meeting at St. Mark**  
7:30 p.m., St. Raymond Room, St. Mark Center, 324 Gay St., Lancaster. Light of Life prayer group meeting.  
740-654-6928

**8, THURSDAY**  
**Women to Women Listening Circle at Corpus Christi**  
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Corpus Christi Center of Peace, 1111 E. Stewart Ave., Columbus. Women to Women program for women of all ages and life circumstances. Begins with soup lunch at noon, followed by listening circle. No child care available on-site.  
614-312-3731

**Cenacle at Holy Name**  
6 p.m., Holy Name Church, 154 E. Patterson Ave., Columbus. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, with prayers in the Cenacle format of the Marian Movement of Priests.  
**Holy Hour at Holy Family**  
6 to 7 p.m., Holy Family Church, 584 W. Broad St., Columbus. Holy Hour of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by meeting of parish Holy Name and Junior Holy Name societies, with refreshments.  
614-221-4323
How we came to be one nation under God

By Eugene Fisher
Catholic News Service


The author of this readable and informative volume studied law and theology at the University of Notre Dame and is the founder of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, so is well qualified to take on what was a central set of questions for the founders of the American republic -- questions still being debated today.

He begins with legal cases challenging the “under God” phrase in the Pledge of Allegiance recited in public schools and other events. Does this amount to the establishment of a religion or of religion itself?

The author takes the reader on a quick tour of Western philosophy, from Aristotle and Plato through St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas and philosophers Maimonides and Spinoza. The intersection of these classical thinkers and believers is their efforts to understand what exists as having been “created” by something or someone prior to and transcendent of all that we can experience with our senses.

This survey sets up an understanding of the Enlightenment as the backdrop by which to understand the thinking of the founders of our American republic. He notes the influence of the thinking of Isaac Newton on Thomas Jefferson and the emphasis of James Madison on the need for balance in government, with three co-equal branches, the point of which was and is to make legislation difficult, in contrast with the easy ability of European kings to rule by personal fiat.

Hasson notes in passing that Abraham Lincoln added “under God” to his second inaugural address, perhaps one of the most important in American history in redefining “the Union” of the United States after the Civil War had shaken the nation to its core.

Hasson’s point is that our founders emphasized that every human and every citizen of our nation is endowed by the Creator with inalienable rights. These rights come before those granted by government and limit the role of government to ensuring and protecting these rights. Government does not give them to us. They are ours by reason of nature and our own human nature.

Underlying this was the search for a philosophical theism, which is not religious but the result of human reason and logic. Hence, he concludes, when the founders appealed to the Creator, they were not “establishing” any particular religion, or religion in general. Atheists and agnostics have equal rights, as humans and citizens, with all other Americans. This limits the authority of government, vesting it equally in all citizens.

Fisher is a distinguished professor of theology at St. Leo University in Florida.
Protecting the innocent ‘is a matter of justice,’ says head of Knights

By Julie Asher
Catholic News Service

Protecting the innocent “is a matter of justice that imposes an obligation on all members of society,” said Supreme Knight Carl Anderson of the Knights of Columbus, adding that abortion is not just another political issue.

“It is time to stop creating excuses for voting for pro-abortion politicians,” said Anderson (pictured).

“I do not see how it is possible to find another issue that can ‘balance’ the devastation of 50 million human beings killed by abortion,” he told Catholic News Service in an email. “There simply is no other moral issue of that magnitude confronting us today. ... Catholics should draw a bright line between themselves and abortion by refusing to vote for any candidate who supports abortion rights.”

He added, “We will never build a culture of life by voting for politicians who support a culture of death. It is time we make the right to life non-negotiable.”

Anderson made the comments in response to questions from CNS sent as a follow-up to his report to the 134th international convention of the Knights of Columbus in Toronto, which took place earlier this month.

In that report, Anderson also highlighted the organization’s charitable contributions, its protection of Catholic families, the need to defend religious liberty at home and around the world, and the Knights’ advocacy work on behalf of persecuted Christians in the Middle East.

Regarding abortion, he told CNS that Catholic politicians who support keeping abortion legal are out of touch with many of their Catholic constituents on the issue, noting that “at a rate of three to one, practicing Catholics overwhelmingly agree that abortion is morally wrong.”

“The confusion arises on the question of what to do about it politically,” he continued. “I think some politicians have sought to encourage that confusion by treating the issue of abortion as a matter of faith rather than a matter of justice. Catholic teaching maintains it is always wrong to intentionally kill an innocent human being as a requirement of justice.

“And it is science -- not faith -- that leads us to conclude that the life developing in the mother’s womb is a human being.”

With regard to restrictions on abortion, “the national consensus favors substantially restricting abortion,” Anderson said.

Here is a portion of the CNS question-and-answer session with Anderson:

Q: There are those people who always say, “Well, Catholic politicians might be opposed themselves to abortion, but aren’t they supposed to represent their constituents even if those constituents are for legal abortion?” Otherwise, isn’t the Catholic lawmaker imposing his/her religious views on his/her district, the nation?

A: This argument -- that a politician can be personally opposed to abortion but support its legality so as not to impose his or her own morality on the country was laid out in 1984 at Notre Dame by the late governor of New York, Mario Cuomo. The argument is even more problematic today than it was then for two reasons.

First, I can think of no other issue where it is acceptable to say “I believe that this action is the taking of innocent human life, but I am not going to legislate to stop it.” Pope Francis has reminded us that human life is an absolute value and our laws have always recognized that principle when it comes to killing the innocent. Also, look at it another way. Imagine saying you’re opposed to racism, but you refuse to work to end apartheid, or that you are for equal rights for women, but refuse to vote for equal pay for equal work. The position is essentially incoherent. When fundamental issues of justice are involved, it cannot be simply a matter of majority opinion. On these issues, politicians must exercise moral leadership. I recognize that this takes courage, but this is the kind of leadership we desperately need.

That said, today the argument makes even less sense. Thirty years ago, the argument rested on the contention that Catholics, as a religious minority in America, should not attempt to impose their “minority” views on the rest of the nation. But polling we commissioned with Marist demonstrates that now the opposite is actually true. Today, by more than 20 points (60 percent to 37 percent) a strong majority of Americans say abortion is immoral. About eight in 10 want substantial restrictions on abortion, and a majority want it restricted to -- at most -- the rarest of cases: rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother.

Catholic politicians who say that they have to follow the national consensus need to take a second look. A problem with their position is that the national consensus favors substantially restricting abortion.

Given the polling on this subject, it is time for these politicians to follow both their conscience and the national consensus. Otherwise, they are following neither. More importantly, what they are really doing is imposing on us the view of the one in 10 or so Americans who don’t want abortion restricted. It makes absolutely no sense.

Q: The Catholic Church has spoken against the immorality of abortion for its whole existence -- why is it, then, do you think some Catholics don’t “get it” and insist on supporting legal abortion?

A: At a rate of three to one, practicing Catholics overwhelmingly agree that abortion is morally wrong. The confusion arises on the question of what to do about it politically. I think some politicians have sought to encourage that confusion by treating the issue of abortion as a matter of faith rather than a matter of justice. Catholic teaching maintains it is always wrong to intentionally kill an innocent human being as a requirement of justice. And it is science -- not faith -- that leads us to conclude that the life developing in the mother’s womb is a human being.

I don’t see where “belief” enters into it. Just because the Catholic Church teaches a moral rule does not make it a matter of faith. No one wants to impose matters of religious faith on anyone, but the protection of the innocent is a matter of justice that imposes an obligation on all members of society. I would urge every Catholic public official to prayerfully read St. John Paul II’s 1995 landmark encyclical Evangelium Vitae, where this is made very clear.

Q: So many “pro-choice” people constantly say that the Catholic Church might be against abortion and for saving babies, but what about the mothers? They seem to think the Church has no outreach to pregnant women in need. Can you highlight a few ways the church helps pregnant women in need, single mothers, families with children who can’t make ends meet?

A: This is a great slander against Catholics. First, the Catholic Church is one of the greatest private sector providers of social services in the country. Period. And women, especially mothers, are at the forefront of many of these services. Individually, Catholics are incredibly generous volunteers to help pregnant women in need through thousands of crisis pregnancy centers.

I see this every day with the volunteer work of the Knights of Columbus. Many dioceses do this as well, directly or through Catholic Charities. Look also at the work of, say, the Nurturing Network, the Gabriel Project, and the Sisters of Life, just to name a few examples. Local parishes are also active on an individual basis quietly helping families and mothers in need. I know many families that have taken in single pregnant women or young mothers who needed a helping hand and have done this without fanfare.

Perhaps we could do a better job of telling our own story. But do we really think that “pro-choice” organizations do anything for women after they have had an abortion? Catholics, on the other hand, have developed extensive programs for post-abortion healing. This is needed and Americans understand it, with a strong majority telling our pollsters that they believe that in the long run, abortion does a woman more harm than good.
BISHOP HARTLEY CLASS OF 1961 REUNION

Pictured are members of the Columbus Bishop Hartley High School Class of 1961, the school’s first graduating class, at their recent 55th-anniversary reunion at the Jefferson Country Club in Gahanna.

Photo courtesy John Rees