RITE OF ELECTION
Lent is a very exciting time for me. It may seem odd to describe a season of fasting, fasting, and penitence as “exciting.” But it really is. That’s because we use this time to examine the evangelization of the Gospel of Christ. Last Sunday, hundreds of catechumens were confirmed after being transformed from parishes across the diocese to begin the final process of entering the Catholic Church. On Page 3 of this week’s Catholic Times, you will read the welcome message of encouragement given by Bishop Campbell to these new Catholic women.

The beautiful rite of Confirmation that Bishop Campbell administered to the catechumens, and invites them to enter into full communion with the church at the Easter Vigil. The Rite of Election services, at which those publicly declare their intention to join the church, take place each year on the First Sunday of Lent. For the past several years in the Diocese of Columbus, there have been two identical services at the same site to allow adequate time for the number of people taking part.

This year, a total of 543 people – 23 catechumens and 312 candidates, along with their faith partners and sponsors – participated in the rite. Catechumens are people who have never been baptized. Candidates are those who have been baptized in another Christian denomination. Catechumens indicated their desire to join the church by signing the Book of the Elect, giving them the title “members of the Elect.” Candidates participated in the Call to Continuing Conversion that was part of the ceremony and offered the book. Bishop Campbell told the catechumens and candidates that their decision to become Catholics is an answer to a stir in their faith. They have come to a point where they are asking the Lord to make a pledge to continue in this final stage of preparation to enter the Body of Christ,” he said. “This is truth. This is life. The future: “You are called to a different way of life, to a change prompted by the grace of God that will grant you authentic happiness and comfort and profound joy.”

For Celebration of the Rite of Election has two parts: communities thank God for their presence on earth and invite their fellow human beings to join them in this mission. The communities are asked to present a record of their prior experience of the church’s teaching for several months, leading them to entering into full communion with the church at the Easter Vigil. Rite of Election ceremonies, at which these publicly declare their intention to join the church, take place each year on the First Sunday of Lent. For the past several years in the Diocese of Columbus, there have been two identical services at the same site to allow adequate time for the number of people taking part. This year, a total of 543 people – 23 catechumens and 312 candidates, along with their faith partners and sponsors – participated in these ceremonies.

Page 3
Catholic Times

Monday, March 2, 2015

Classifieds

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**Tents**

How tame are those wild beasts after a week of discipline and prayer? It is not easy but like anything else that is so very desirable, it is worth the effort. Over these days we keep up from holiness a lifelong challenge. Some things are more difficult than others, and some just will not go away. We can continue to face the challenge with prayer and recollection, and we can also look for help if we need it. Those beasts surround us, they come and go in face the challenge with prayer and reconciliation, and we can also look and keep us from holiness is a lifelong challenge.

For anything else that is so very desirable, it is worth

In the moment that was so incredibly mesmerizing, Peter speaks up, as privately and humbly as possible, we pray, fast, and give alms through As persecution continues and our goal is to shine brightly as the love of Christ, just like the Paschal Light needs to shine brightly and to be shared. We can do the same. Part of our good Lenten practice is to go to our room and pray to God in private. These are the times for those deserted places. By Rick Jeric

**SILENT RETREAT FOR WOMEN**

The Diocesan Council of Catholic Women will be offering Silent Retreat for Women from 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 24 to noon Sunday, April 26 at St. Therese Retreat Center, 5277 E. Broad St., Columbus. The retreat will have a theme of “Mary: Intimacy with God” and will be directed by Father Walter Oster, STD, vice rector for formation and associate professor at the Pontifical College Josephinum. The offering for the retreat is $100 and is nonrefundable. A minimum deposit of $50 is required, and the registration deadline is Tuesday, March 10.

For more information, go to the diocese website, www.celc.org, and click on the Links to “Offices” and “Diocesan Council of Catholic Women.”

**BISHOP READY PLACEMENT EXAMS**

The placement examination for incoming freshmen at Columbus Bishop Ready High School will be given at the school, 7075 Salisbury Road, from 8:45 a.m. to noon Saturday, March 7. The scholarship exam will be given on either date, March 14 and 21, from 9 to 11 a.m.Incoming freshmen may take the scholarship exams on either date. Returning Ready students may take the scholarship exam on March 21 only, and call the school at (614) 276-5266.

**PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR CANDIDATE**

Columbus Bishop Ready High School senior Jack Chatas is one of approximately 20 chosen for the talent competition in the nation’s largest and longest-running national scholastic competition. The Presidential Scholars program does not provide scholarships, but is a recognition program. As many as 150 scholars will be selected for the honor each year. Presidential Scholars receive an expense-paid trip to Washington in June, where they are awarded a medal at a ceremony sponsored by the White House. During their visit to Washington, they also have access to national and regional political leaders, government officials, educators, authors, musicians, and scientists.

Presidential Scholar candidates do not apply for this honor themselves, nor are they invited to do so based on their scores on the SAT or ACT college entrance exam. The nomination by a chief state school officer, the year of their high-school graduation, and their citizenship status is required. The nomination is based on the basis of academic achievement, with approximately 20 chosen for the talent they have demonstrated in the visual arts, the performing arts, or creative writing.

Among the students a member of the program in secondary-school report, in recognition of his or her talent in one of the nation’s largest and longest-running national scholastic competition.

**CHIEF OF STAFF**

By Rick Jeric

**PRACTICAL STEWARDSHIP**

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

**SPLENDING BEE PARTICIPANTS**

Students from 12 parochial schools in Franklin County and the religious communities who have qualified for participa- tion in the regional spelling bee at Ohio University in Athens on Satur- day, March 14.

The winner of the regional bee, which will include students from Frank- lin, Delaware, Licking, Madison, and Pickaway counties, will advance to the Scripps National Spelling Bee, which will take place from Sunday, May 24 to Friday, May 29 in National Harbor, Maryland. Participants in the regional bee ob- tained a score of at least 15 on an online test. Participants from diocesan schools will be included in the regional bee. Those beasts surround us, they come and go in face the challenge with prayer and reconciliation, and we can also look and keep us from holiness is a lifelong challenge.

Those beasts surround us, they come and go in face the challenge with prayer and reconciliation, and we can also look and keep us from holiness is a lifelong challenge.

**CHRISTIAN MOTHERS OFFICERS INSTALLED**

The Columbus Holy Family Church chapter of the Confraternity of Chris- tian Mothers and Audrey Grill installed its officers for 2015 following the program in mid-April, and desires that more people apply for the program in secondary-school report, in recognition of his or her talent in one of the nation’s largest and longest-running national scholastic competition.

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We've lowered our Car Loan Rates! Now That's something to SMILE about.
Dominican Sisters of Peace Open House

The Dominican Sisters of Peace will host an open house from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 14 at 2520 Airport Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43229 to prepare young women to consider a vocation to the Dominican Sisters of Peace.

If you are a young woman between the ages of 18 and 25 who is seeking to discern your religious calling, you may be interested in the Dominican Sisters of Peace. They are a Roman Catholic order of women who have been serving the Church and the world in the United States since 1838.

**Questions may include:**
- How do you discern your vocation?
- What is the Dominican life like?
- How do you determine if you are called to religious life?

**Contact:** 614-473-1751 Ext. 308

Outreach event helps seniors who need help

Service Saturday, a twice-yearly event sponsored by Catholic Social Services, will take place on Saturday, May 16. This is one of the key community events organized by Catholic Social Services each year. Through this effort, volunteers help seniors who need assistance with tasks such as yard work, painting, cleaning, and home repairs.

If you know of someone who may benefit from a service, please call 614-877-2451 to arrange the volunteer help.

Questions may include:
- How can I join Service Saturday?
- How can I volunteer to help seniors?

Contact:** 614-877-2451 Ext. 308

Real presence in the Eucharist: Naked infant in creche

**QUESTION & ANSWER**

**By Father Kenneth Doyle**

**Catholic New World**

**Video**

The Pontifical College Josephinum is hosting a live-in weekend from Thursday to Sunday, March 12 to 14, for high-school juniors and seniors who have an interest in exploring a vocation to the priesthood.

The Pontifical College Josephinum is an international Catholic seminary for young men who desire to discern if they are called to the vocation of the priesthood.

For more information about the weekend, contact Father Robert DeStefanis at 614-963-2254 or deStefanis@josephinum.edu.

**Events for the weekend:***
- Thursday: Dinner and orientation.
- Friday: Morning: candidates pray the Saturday Mass in the Church, and are questioned by the seminarians. Afternoon: candidates have a chance to reflect in prayer and discussion. Evenings: candidates can relax and make friends with the other candidates.
- Saturday: Morning: candidates pray the Sunday Mass in the Church. Afternoon: candidates have an opportunity to talk to priests and seminarians about their personal experiences. Evening: candidates are free to relax and enjoy themselves.
- Sunday: Morning: candidates pray the Sunday Mass in the Church. Afternoon: candidates have a chance to reflect in prayer and discussion. Evening: candidates are free to relax and enjoy themselves.

**Contact:**
- 614-963-2254
- deStefanis@josephinum.edu

**About the College:**

The Pontifical College Josephinum is a coeducational seminary and a Roman Catholic college located in Columbus, Ohio. It is the only college in the United States that offers education to men and women of all ages and faiths.

**Questions may include:**
- How do I apply to the Pontifical College Josephinum?
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“The Nonviolent Jesus: His Way of Nonviolent Love”

St. John Chrysostom Byzantine Catholic and Holy Resurrection Malite Catholic churches of Columbus are hosting a conference titled “The Nonviolent Jesus: His Way of Nonviolent Love” on Friday and Saturday, April 17 and 18, at St. John Chrysostom, 5858 Cleveland Ave.

The conference will explore the teachings of Jesus and how we can live them in our daily lives. These are the original traditions of the Church and are known by most through the stories of the early saints, the lives of the apostles, and the Gospels.

The conference will take place from 9 a.m. Saturday, April 19, to 11 a.m. April 20. Father McCarthy will be the keynote speaker at a Mass in the school at 9:30 p.m., Saturday, April 19. People of all faiths are invited to the event. There is no cost for attending, but free-will donations are welcome.

For more information, contact St. John Dean at (614) 286-0921 or samuel.dean9@yahoo.com

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL

www.colsdioc.org

100th Day Celebration at St. Anthony

Columbus St. Anthony School kindergarten and first-grade students celebrated their 100th day of the academic year in February. The students made 100-day crowns, front loop necklaces, and mosaic pictures, counted 100 gumballs in a gumball machine, made books with 100 words, and had their picture taken in an aging gumball machine, made books with 100 words, and had their picture taken in an aging gumball machine.

LIGHTS SOUND BY stephen G. straw

Today over two thousand years ago We still see Jesus bleeding on the cross, Pinned tight by spikes for some, It is a show of failure, madness, folly, pointless loss. Sound the fatal’s three, Hope, love, life Hangs sapless on the tree and yields to night: Death’s trophy, visage sightless, sickly, grim. Out goes this speaking sun, our brave new light.

Over both tomb and gloom: Dawn did not die! Hangs sapless on the tree and yields to night:

Pinned tight by spikes. For some, it is a show Of failure, madness, folly, pointless loss.

High heaven heeds His stark, dejected cry.

Of failure, madness, folly, pointless loss.

He has spoken throughout the world on the relationship of faith and violence, and has written three books and many articles on the subject of violence and religion. His life’s work, on behalf of peace within people and among people has been acclaimed internationally.

The conference will take place from 9 a.m. Saturday, April 19, to 11 a.m. April 20. Father McCarthy will also be the main celebrant at a Mass in the school at 9:30 p.m., Saturday, April 19. People of all faiths are invited to the event. There is no cost for attending, but free-will donations are welcome.

For more information, contact St. John Dean at (614) 286-0921 or samuel.dean9@yahoo.com

Praying through Gritted Teeth

Who were involved with it

And yet, I couldn’t get over the fact that it was Just. Turn. Shut.

There are all too many instances of my prayer coming out through gritted teeth. My approach to God’s plan in my life and to the obstacles I may have to face each day is to rebel, to question, to argue. Rather than embracing it, I fake it from it.

I get my teeth and let the anger and frustration wash over the certainty that God knows what’s best, closing the truth with my own whims and desires. I rail and complain, hide and run away. Maybe I’ll keep fiddling forward, but my inner attitude is the kind of thing I would not stand from my own children.

And then, when things work out, I’m shocked. My spiritual director has reminded me, many times, that God can take it when I’m angry and frustrated. He has said to me, “Just let him have it,” citing the Psalms as perfect examples of just how to do it.

I’ve found, over the years, that however—it just isn’t fair—I turn to God, whether through gritted teeth or with a joyful heart, he is there. Just as I am for my own children. Whether they are being little beacons of good behavior or examples of what not to do. Whether they are stalling or dancing through the house.

No matter how smelly the hurdle I face (and they are all smelly in my small, I’m afraid, God is just waiting for me to ask. His help may not be what I have in mind, but it will not may be what I have planned. In the end, though, despite my gritted teeth and bad attitude, it always leads me closer to that divine goal of sanctified life and with him.

“Finding Faith in Everyday Life”

Catherine barton

BRANDON SHULL
National Merit Scholarship Finalist

Brandon Shull, a senior at Lancaster Catholic High School and South Johnstown High School, has been selected as a finalist in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program. He is one of 5,300 finalists across the United States and will be considered for a National Merit Scholarship in the spring.

To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, students must fulfill several requirements to advance to the final competition.

Academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received are all considered for the Merit Scholarship award application.

Shall plays the violin, mandolin, and piano and is a member of the Newman- Granville Youth Symphony Orchestra.

Brandon Shull is the author of Catholic Family Fun: A Guide for the Adventurers, Overwhelmed, Creative, or Clueless.
Despite seven-inches of snowfall that set a record for the day, about 1,300 women gathered at the Voinovich Center on the state fairgrounds to be inspired by speakers at the eighth annual Columbus Catholic Women’s Conference on Saturday, Feb. 21. More than 2,000 had registered to attend.

Bishop Frederick Campbell began his homily at the conference’s opening Mass by praising the women for their perseverance in overcoming hazardous road conditions so they could get to the event. “You are certainly a hardy group,” he said. “Today reminds me of Minnesota caregivers at the Sisters of Loreto in 1946 when, on a trip to Columbus was a memorable one for them, because of a snowstorm. She would be the first to say that the fruit of her impact blossomed not in spite of her death. The conference featured talks by Dr. Edward Sri, a theologian, author, and speaker who appears regularly on EWTN and Catholic radio and television; Emily Wilson, whose ministry of talks and music offers encouragement to young women in their search for identity; and Colleen Carroll Carroll, a frequent spokesperson for President George W. Bush, secular newspaper columnist, and EWTN news anchor, who writes on both spiritual and cultural matters.

Sri, talking, titled “Walking with Mary: A Biblical Journey from Nazareth to the Cross” and based on his recent book of the same name, took up the passage of the Bible concerning Mary and offered insights into her faith and devotion that women can apply to their daily lives. “You braved the bad weather and stepped into the unknown to come here today and share a faith, and that in its own way was quite heroic,” Sri said. “Mary also was constantly stepping into the unknown, and that can be kind of scary.” When you think of Mary, think of how you felt as mothers when you saw your children take their first steps, he continued, using his own observations of his daughter, Josephine, in such a moment.

“All great saints were called to take a leap of faith and step into the unknown or all their lives, and so was Mary. We put her on a pedestal, but we forget her humanity,” he said.

Sri’s book notes nine key moments in Mary’s life for which God invited her to “take another step” and she willingly did so, knowing what it would cost. God’s greeting to her, her acceptance of God’s plan as she became the mother of Jesus, her visit to her cousin Elizabeth, the birth of Jesus, his presentation at the Temple, with the prediction of the prophetic Simon that “a sword will pierce your heart”; her three-day search for Jesus when he stayed behind at the Temple at age 12; the weaving feast at Cana; stand- ing by the cross at Jesus’ crucifixion; and her crowning as queen of heaven after being taken there body and soul, following the tradition of biblical times in which the queen of a kingdom was the king’s mother, not his wife.

“The Gospel of Luke says Mary was ‘greatly troubled’ when Gabriel greeted her, but she wasn’t controlled by her fears and approached God with an open heart,” Sri said. “She responded in a spirit of joyful sacrifice and continued to do so.”

Even after she knew she would be God’s mother, she didn’t hide behind an image but asked God for help. “I am the servant of the Lord. May it be to me according to your word,” she cried.

Sri said Mary’s response to God was “Comparison focuses on what we don’t have, rather than what we are, and it blinds us to God saying ‘Look at who you are and what you have. You are more than enough, just the way you are made. Look at the woman I created you to be.” She spoke of the sinful woman who wiped Jesus’ feet with her tears and said, “sometimes, we can feel like that sinful woman because we have so many regrets. This woman felt that way, but she stopped at nothing to get to Jesus, and she must be like her. Others saw her as a sinner. Jesus saw her awful past, her humble present and her glorious future, and covered her with mercy.”

Wilson also talked about the New Testament woman who was hounded by haram 12 years, reached out to touch Jesus’ cloak, and was cured. “She was willing to get to her comfort zone,” she said.

The story shows God has a timeline for everything, although it can be frustrating for us. God’s never in a hurry. The woman never lost hope. “She balled the Lord of glory with her need” and was rewarded.

Campbell, who spent part of her childhood in Columbus and graduated from St. Timothy School, based her talk on her book “My Sisters, the Saints,” in which she examines the lives of St. Teresa of Avila, St. Therese of Lisieux, Mother Teresa, St. Teresa Benedicta (Edith Stein), St. Faustina Kowalska, and the Virgin Mary, and how their examples can help women today.

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The conference featured six in various ways followed five key precepts: “Bloom where you are planted, follow God’s lead, embrace the cross, cultivate joy, and prioritize prayer.”

Sri’s opening talk, her closing talk used Mother Teresa as a prime example of following God’s prompting no matter where it might lead. Campbell noted that Mother Teresa did so despite a 50-year “dark night of the soul” which she kept hidden from the public, while being hailed as a “living saint,” and which only became known to the public with the publication of her memoirs in 2007, 10 years after she died.

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St. Aloysius St. Bernard
St. Leo
St. Catharine
and Holy Rosary-St. John Churches
By Father Joshua Wagner
Church Tour. In that first year, we took a spiri-
tuous saint, while here in Columbus, we dedi-
we visited the “second generation”

St. Dominic
St. Mary Magdalen, St. Aloysius, St. Leo, St.
newly nato-

St. Catherine

Immaculate Conception

St. Mary Magdalen
St. Aloysius
St. Leo
St. Francis of Assisi
St. Catharine of Siena
Immaculate Conception
St. Nicholas

The Root of Catholic Tour includes St.

St. Mary Magdalen, St. Aloysius, St. Leo, St.

City St. Patrick, the Church of the Atonement in
Columbus, Somerset Holy Trinity, and the old-
catholic church in Ohio, Somerset St. Joseph.

The Root of Catholic Tour includes St.

The Root of Catholic mission, I had an opportunity to go to some

The state’s oldest Catholic church stands tall

Last summer, I had an opportunity to go to Som-
matter of my favorite churches in the diocese, Zanes-

The Root of Catholic Church Tour

Last year, something wonderful happened: Pope John Paul II canonized a saint! Some people in the Diocese of Columbus were able to make a pilgrimage to Rome to venerate this fan-

The Church Tour includes St.

The Root of Catholic Church Tour

The Root of Catholic Church Tour

The Root of Catholic Church Tour

This retreat will explore the transitions

In her workshop, she talked about the obvious direction that young adults are taking today in regards to religious af-

As I did research, I found out that Pew Coun-
city St. Patrick, the Church of the Atonement in
Crooksville, Somerset Holy Trinity, and the old-

The Root of Catholic Church Tour

The Root of Catholic Church Tour

The Root of Catholic Church Tour

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CULTIVATING YOUNG PARISHES

The Catholic Foundation is the only foundation in the diocese that invests your gifts in alignment with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Our portfolios follow the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ guidelines, and we carefully screen all charitable organizations that we fund to make sure they also follow Catholic values.

ARE YOUR GIFTS IN FAITH ALIGNED?

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The state’s oldest Catholic church stands tall

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CONCERT

Renaissance Music in Lent

The music comes from the latter half of the 16th century, but there is some mystery about whether it was written to honor Queen Elizabeth I or her predecessor, the Catholic Queen Mary.

In any event, the text is based on the Historia Judith, a condensed version of the Book of Judith, adapted to be sung at Matins in the month of September in the Roman Catholic rite. The passage is the prayer spoken by Judith as she sets out on a heroic mission.

Now, an amazing new film takes audiences into this complex and beautiful city in a spectacular way through a 3D giant screen adventure produced by National Geographic Films and currently showing at the Columbus Center of Science and Industry (COSI) IMAX theater.

The film, which took five years to produce, is directed by Daniele Terrapi- son and narrated by Benedict Cumberbatch. But the real star is the city of Jerusalem itself. This film is not a travelogue, although Jerusalem is certainly a popular tourist destination. It is not a history, although the film does place the evolution of Jerusalem in perspective. It is not a film that promotes any specific religion, although it explores the religious roots that lie at the soul of this holy city. The spectacular visuals that spring from the giant screen provide a breathtaking opportunity to soar above and to immerse oneself into the deeply textured life of Jerusalem.

Our guides on this journey are three young women who call Jerusalem home: one Muslim, one Jewish, and one Christian. They all live within an area of less than a square mile. Their lives are remarkably similar. Yet their lives never intersect. Their communities, both ancient and modern, exist in the same space, but seemingly in different dimensions.

The story of Jerusalem is a story for all mankind: a quest for peace, love, and a connection to God in a world where man’s fallen nature creates conflict and division. Jerusalem symbolizes for us the promise that God has always offered to man: hope.

The film Jerusalem runs at COSI until May 31, with 3D showings at noon and 4 p.m. and a 2D showing at 2 p.m. Ticket prices range from $4 to $8.

Learn more at http://www.cosi.org/exhibits/theater.

JERUSALEM

I replayed when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD.” And now our feet are standing within your gates, Jerusalem. Jerusalem, built as a city, walled round about. ... For the peace of Jerusalem pray: “May those who see you bless you.”

Jerusalem is a city sacred to more than half the people on earth. Seen as the closest place to God on this planet, Jerusalem stands as a tower of heavenly peace, yet it has been the focus of conflict for thousands of years.

Over 5,000 years, this “City of Peace” has been conquered more than 40 times. Today, this holy city is deeply divided by people who worship the same God, but have vastly different times. The film does place the evolution of Jerusalem in perspective.

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Fisher Catholic Wins First Fairfield County Battle of the Fans

Lancaster Fisher Catholic High School recently demonstrated that it’s not the size of the school that matters, it’s the size of the spirit. When the Lancaster Eagle-Gazette announced a contest to see which local school had the most team spirit, the Fisher Catholic Irish accepted the challenge. Representatives from the newspaper attended home boys basketball games of the various schools to judge the student sections on organization, creativity, and sportsmanship.

Fisher Catholic made it into the semifinals against Bloom-Carroll and Liberty Union.

Student section leaders coordinated with the cheerleaders, staff, and school principal Maureen Beck to plan an “Irish Army” theme for a game against Grove City Christian. Students, teachers, and parents dressed in camouflage, American flags were waved, and the gym was decorated with camouflage and mosquito netting. The section leaders even coordinated with parents to have a smoke machine and a National Guard tunnel set up as the team entered the court.

Judges from the Eagle-Gazette praised the Fisher Catholic students for their halftime skits, which included a drill sergeant inspecting “recruits” for the Irish Army. The Irish mascot had a sword fight with the Grove City Christian Eagle, which ended with a friendly handshake.

Fisher was declared the contest winner by representatives from the Eagle-Gazette, who presented the Fisher Catholic students with a trophy which will be displayed until next year, and the opportunity to once again claim the title of “Best Fans in the Land.”

Photo by Leo Thimmes

Catholic Moms Online Conference Gains Popularity Over the Web

Catholic mothers have a chance to take part in a free online conference that will take place from Friday to Monday, March 6 to 9, at www.CatholicConference4Moms.com. Unlike other conferences which may require mothers to drive long distances, give up some cash, and arrange the logistics of a busy family, this one promises the ultimate in convenience. Not only is it free, but it is available on computers, tablets, and mobile devices.

Unlike other online seminars in which the presentation is running live and you have to tune in at a certain time, these video presentations have been prepared far in advance. Conference organizer Tami Kiser says, “For most of us busy moms, it’s very hard to predict when we are going to have a chunk of time during the day to listen to a presentation. This online conference is different. For any given day of the conference, moms can pull up any of the presentations available that day at any time. They can even listen to part of the talk now and finish it later. With all of the presentations lasting about 20 minutes, this makes it very convenient.”

More than 25 speakers will take part in the conference, and the presentations will range from “Managing Stress” to “Talking to Your Children about Sex” to “Family Meals.” The speakers are experts in their fields and passionate about their topics, but come across as though they are speaking to each participant individually in their living rooms or kitchen tables.

Uniting so many mothers together from across the nation was an exciting prospect that helped presenters Stephanie Wood Weinert decide to be a part of this project. “I love anything that can unite Catholic moms, especially moms from such diverse backgrounds and ages,” she said. “We can all see that we have the same struggles, the same hopes, and the same desires.” More than 60 affiliates who have agreed to help support this conference. Most are Catholic “mom bloggers,” with an audience of Catholic mothers who use the Internet for support, inspiration, and education.

The bloggers make a conference like this possible. Because of their powerful role in ministering to Catholic mothers, Kiser hopes to help them. “After the conference is over, it will be available for sale. Not only will the affiliates be able to offer the conference at a discount price, but they will also make a profit on each conference that they sell. This money can go back into their ministries,” she said.

Packaged versions of the conference can be used in a group setting to help mothers develop meaningful friendships and support one another. During their presentations, many of the speakers will refer to the importance of developing these kinds of relationships with other mothers. Susie Lloyd, award-winning author and speaker, will do an entire presentation about Catholic friendship titled “Café Confidante --Why Women Need Girlfriends.” Blogging and Facebook may be helpful ways that mothers connect, but nothing can replace a live, meaningful relationship.

The conference will be bundled into a convenient package, including some bonuses including e-books, podcasts, downloads, coupons, and discussion questions, so that it can be used in mothers’ support groups. The conference is free and will be online for those who have registered through the website www.CatholicConference4Moms.com. It will be available for purchase afterward at the website or at an affiliate Catholic mom’s blog or website.