

THE MAGAZINE
OF THE CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF
JOLIET

Christ is our Hope

Cristo Es Nuestra Esperanza

Keeping the FAITH After losing a JOB

Reflexiones de fe

**La bella niña
de Nazareth**

And

**A Spiritual
Guide
for the
Unemployed**



May 2009 | www.DioceseofJoliet.org



PLUS: Catholics at the Capitol

Prayers of saints offer hope in times of sorrow



Do you have a petition for Bishop Sartain's prayer list? You may send it to him at: Bishop Sartain's Prayer List, Diocese of Joliet; 425 Summit St., Joliet, IL 60435-7193.

A venerable Chinese tale recounts the story of an elderly woman whose only son died. Inconsolable, she went to a holy man to ask how to bring him back to life. Instead of offering false hope, however, the holy man instructed her to bring him a mustard seed from a home that had never known sorrow. A seed from such a home would surely help banish sadness from her life.

Beginning her search, she knocked on the door of a mansion, reasoning that such a home would be just what she was looking for. But the owners quickly told her otherwise. "You have definitely come to the wrong place," they said, for their lives had been filled with sadness similar to hers. She listened with compassion to their story.

"Who better than I," she said to herself, "would be able to help this family, for I understand what they are going through?" Before moving on, she comforted them with love from the depths of her heart, for, indeed, their story was hers.

Soon she discovered that every house, palace and shack knew its share of sadness. At each stop she offered consolation, and soon her sorrow vanished. Her pain had been healed by works of love.

I have always enjoyed reading the lives of the saints, and, as I grow older, my affection for them grows. Aristocrats and paupers; women and men; priests, religious and lay – their

lives often offer the witness of pain and sorrow transformed by faith and love. Our communion with the saints is a vehicle of hope, because, in them, we find life experiences common to many.

“There is no home that has never known sorrow, but Christian history is filled with stories of those who allowed God to turn their sorrow into joy, even when all hope seemed to be lost.”

Rita Lotti was born at Roccaporena, near Cascia, Italy, in 1381, the only child of Antonio and Amata. Her parents were revered as official reconcilers in their small town and earned the title "Peacemakers of Jesus

Christ." Rita eventually married Paolo Mancini, a town watchman who was often caught in physical conflicts between rival factions. According to some accounts, Paolo was harsh and ill-tempered, and married life was difficult for Rita. Two sons were born to their marriage, and, after Paolo was murdered, they vowed to avenge their father's death.

Despite Rita's pleading, her sons would not let go of their desire for revenge, and she placed her anxiety about them in God's hands. By the time they died, both had been reconciled with God. After some years as a

widow known for her works of charity, Rita applied for admission to an Augustinian convent but was refused three times, in part out of fear that the violence surrounding her family would affect convent life.

Taking up the peacemaking role of her parents once again, Rita worked skillfully to reconcile Paolo's family with the family of those responsible for his death, and the two families eventually signed a document formalizing their reconciliation. Rita entered religious life and died in 1457. Canonized in 1900, her feast day is May 22, and many often ask her intercession when praying for reconciliation within their families.

A prayer on feasts of "Holy Men and Women" includes these words: "You are glorified in your saints. ... In their lives on earth you give us an example. In our communion with them, you give us their friendship. In their prayer for the church, you give us strength and protection. This great company of witnesses spurs us on to victory."

There is no home that has never known sorrow, but Christian history is filled with stories of those who allowed God to turn their sorrow into joy, even when all hope seemed to be lost. Holy ones like Rita of Cascia, and the holy ones we have known in our own lives, teach us to place our hope in God. Through love and constancy and faith, God can heal all wounds. But, more than that, when we truly turn our sorrows over to him, he can make us holy too.

Bishop Peter Sartain
Christ is our Hope
May 2009



Una venerable historia china, cuenta sobre una mujer anciana quien pierde a su único hijo. Inconsolable, se dirigió a un santo varón para preguntarle cómo hacer para que su hijo vuelva a la vida. Sin intenciones de darle falsas esperanzas, él le pidió que le traiga un grano de mostaza de un hogar que nunca haya sufrido algún tipo de dolor. Una semilla de un hogar así, podría ayudarla a desvanecer la tristeza de su vida.

Empezando su búsqueda, ella tocó la puerta de una mansión, pensando que un hogar así podría ser lo que justamente estaba buscando. Pero los dueños rápidamente le dijeron otra cosa: "Usted ha llegado a un lugar equivocado, pues, nuestras vidas han estado llenas de tristezas similares a la suya." Ella escuchó con mucha compasión la historia que le narraron.

Ella se dijo así misma: "¿Quién mejor que yo para ayudar a esta familia, puesto que comprendo lo que están pasando?" Enseguida, los reconfortó con amor desde lo profundo de su corazón, porque su historia era la misma que ella estaba viviendo.

En poco tiempo ella descubrió que cada hogar, palacio y choza que iba conociendo albergaban en su interior una porción de tristeza. Y en cada lugar, ofrecía consuelo y pronto su dolor poco a poco se iba desvaneciendo. Su dolor había sido curado por el trabajo de amor que realizaba.

Siempre me ha gustado leer la vida de los santos y mientras crecía,

crecía también mi afición por ellos. El testimonio de dolor y sufrimiento de las vidas de aristócratas y mendigos, mujeres y hombres, sacerdotes, religiosas y laicos, ofrecen esa transformación gracias a su fe y a su amor. Nuestra comunión con los santos es un camino hacia la esperanza, ya que en ellos encontramos experiencias de vidas

comunes a muchas personas.

Rita Lotti nació en Roccaporena, cerca de Cascia, Italia, en 1381, la única hija de Antonio y Amata. Sus padres fueron reconocidos como reconciliadores oficiales en su pequeña ciudad y recibieron el título de "Pacificadores de Cristo." Rita fue dada en matrimonio a Pablo Manzini, un velador del pueblo, quien muchas veces se encontraba en conflicto físico

entre grupos rivales. Según algunas historias, Pablo fue rudo y muy temperamental, y la vida matrimonial con Rita fue muy difícil. Dos hijos nacieron de su matrimonio y, después que Pablo fue asesinado, ellos juraron vengar la muerte de su padre.

A pesar de los ruegos de Rita,

“No hay hogar que nunca haya conocido dolor, pero la historia cristiana está llena de testimonios de aquellos que permitieron que Dios convierta su dolor en alegría, aun en los casos más difíciles, aun en los casos desesperados. Santos como Rita de Cascia y los Santos que hemos conocido en nuestra propia vida, nos enseñan a poner nuestra esperanza en Dios.”

sus hijos no desistían en su deseo de venganza, y ella puso en las manos de Dios su preocupación. Cuando murieron, los dos se habían reconciliado con Dios. Después de algunos años como viuda, conocida por su trabajo de caridad, Rita pidió ser admitida al convento de San Agustín; sin embargo, fue rechazada tres veces, en parte porque la violencia que rodeaba a su familia podría traer conflictos a la vida del convento.

Retomando el papel de pacificadores que tuvieron sus padres alguna vez, Rita hizo lo posible para reconciliar a la familia de su esposo Pablo con la familia de aquellos que fueron responsables de su muerte y, posteriormente, ambas familias firmaron un documento formal de reconciliación. Rita entró a la vida religiosa y murió en 1457. Fue canonizada en 1900, su fiesta es el 22 de mayo, y muchas veces pedimos su intercesión cuando oramos por la reconciliación entre familias.

Una oración en la fiesta de los "Santos Varones y Mujeres" incluye estas palabras: "Tú eres glorificado en tus santos... En sus vidas sobre la tierra Tú nos has dado un ejemplo. En nuestra comunión con ellos, Tú nos das su amistad. En su oración por la Iglesia, Tú nos das fortaleza y protección. Esta gran compañía de testigos nos estimula hacia la victoria."

No hay hogar que nunca haya conocido dolor, pero la historia cristiana está llena de testimonios de aquellos que permitieron que Dios convierta su dolor en alegría, aun en los casos más difíciles, aun en los casos desesperados. Santos como Rita de Cascia y los Santos que hemos conocido en nuestra propia vida, nos enseñan a poner nuestra esperanza en Dios. Con amor, constancia y fe, Dios puede curar todas las heridas. Pero más que eso, cuando realmente le damos nuestros dolores y sufrimientos, Él nos puede hacer santos también.

Mons. Pedro Sartain
Cristo es nuestra
Esperanza
Mayo 2009



¿Deseas que el Obispo rece por alguna intención en especial que tú tengas? Escríbele a: Lista de Oraciones del Obispo Sartain. Diocese of Joliet, 425 Summit St. Joliet, IL 60435-7193

Saint Hilary of Arles

His name is cheerful.

Feast day: May 5
Patron saint: Of France
Meaning of name: Derived from the Latin *hilaris*, meaning cheerful.

Claim to fame: Born in fifth-century France, Saint Hilary entered the abbey of Lérins at a young age. He succeeded his kinsman, Honoratus (Saint Honoré), as archbishop of Arles in 429 when he was 29. Following the example of Saint Augustine, he is said to have organized his cathedral clergy into a congregation, devoting a great part of their time to social exercises of ascetic religion. However, Hilary encountered difficulty in his relationships with other bishops over whom he had some jurisdiction. He unilaterally deposed one bishop. He selected another bishop to replace one who was very ill but, to complicate matters, did not die. Pope Leo I the Great kept Hilary a bishop but stripped him of some of his powers. Hilary was deprived of his rights to consecrate bishops, call synods, or oversee the church in the province, and the pope secured the edict of Emperor Valentinian III. The papal claims were made imperial law and violation of them subject to legal penalties.

El santo Hilary de Arles

Su nombre es alegre.

Día de la fiesta: 5 de mayo
Santo patrón: De Francia
Significado del nombre: Derivado del latín *hilaris*, que significa alegre.

Famoso por: Nacido en Francia en el siglo cinco, San Hilario entró en la abadía de Lérins presidida por su pariente Honoratus. Le sucedió a Honoratus como arzobispo de Arles en el 429 a la edad de 29 años. Siguiendo el ejemplo de San Agustín, se dice que él organizó al clero de su catedral en una congregación, dedicando una gran parte de su tiempo a ejercicios sociales de la religión asceta.

Por qué él es un santo: A insistencia de su pariente, Hilario renunció a su estilo de vida acaudalado y ofreció todas sus posesiones a los pobres. Como arzobispo, continuó viviendo una vida de monasterio estricta, ganó dinero para los pobres haciendo labores manuales, vendió recipientes sagrados para pagar recompensas por los secuestrados, viajaba a todas partes a pie y vestía ropa sencilla poco común para su alto puesto de arzobispo.



Mejor cita: “Quejese lo menos posibles de sus males, pues, como regla general, puede estar seguro de que quejarse es pecado ... porque el amor propio siempre exagera nuestras aflicciones.”

Cómo murió: Se conoce muy poco sobre su muerte que ocurrió el 5 de mayo de 449 a la edad de 49. El Papa Leo el Grande testificó sobre la memoria de San Hilario como un hombre de extrema piedad, quien aprendió por medio de situaciones difíciles cómo ser un arzobispo.

Correction: In the March issue of the magazine, in the Saint of the Month column, the writer incorrectly stated that the remains of Saint Casimir were buried in Vilna in Poland. In fact, his remains are buried in Vilnius, Lithuania. We regret any confusion.

Why he is a saint: Hilary was born to a wealthy family from northern Gaul in 401 and was groomed to enter religious life. At the urging of his relative, Hilary gave up his wealthy lifestyle and offered all his possessions to the poor. He submitted to a life of Scripture study. As archbishop, he continued to live a strict monastic life, earned money for the poor doing manual labor, sold sacred vessels to ransom captives, traveled everywhere on foot and wore simple clothes unusual to his high status as archbishop.

Best quotation: “Complain as little as possible of your wrongs, for as a general rule you may be sure that complaining is sin ... because self-love always magnifies our injuries.”

How he died: Little is known of his death, which occurred on May 5, 449, at the age of 49. Pope Leo the Great testified to Saint Hilary's memory as a man of extreme piety, who learned through hardship how to be a bishop.



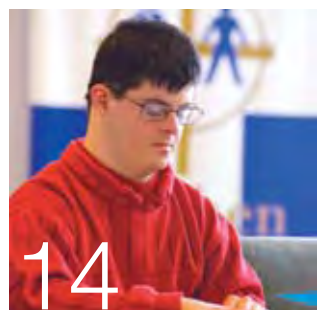
Catholics at the Capitol

Catholics from around the state recently gathered under the dome in Springfield for Catholics at the Capitol day. They lobbied lawmakers regarding seven key issues and *Our Hope* magazine went along to talk with church leaders. – Photography and interviews by Carlos Briceño

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Dear Father Joe: What gives the Church the authority to determine what is right and wrong?

Send your questions to: "In the Know with Fr. Joe" FAITH Magazine,
209 Seymour Ave., Lansing, MI 48933 or e-mail JoelnBlack@priest.com.

Q What gives the church the authority to determine what is right and wrong? As far as I know, there is nothing on birth control, capital punishment, genetic engineering and/or cloning in the Bible. Doesn't it just hurt the credibility of the church when they are wrong (for instance, Galileo)?

A What a packed question! What we have here is a super-relevant question with a lot of layers, so let's get right to it.

First, let's start by making sure we are on common ground. I am learning that there are basically two groups of people who ask questions such as these. The first group desires to learn God's ways so that they can follow them. The second group asks the question to collect "God's opinion." Then they decide if they agree or disagree with it.

My presumption is that you are in the first group. You, like holy people for thousands of years, say in the words of King David, "Teach me, Lord, your way that I may walk in your truth" (Psalm 86,11). We seek what God teaches so that we can follow it. This is the call of Catholics everywhere and at all times. So, how do we seek those ways?

As you know, Scripture gives us clear explanations of many moral issues. For example, adultery, murder, stealing, etc. are wrong. Caring for the weakest members of society and obeying God are essential. God loves us passionately and intensely. All these

things (and more) are clear. Scripture also gives us clear understanding of God: who he is, his love for us, and his desire that we have abundant life and a future full of hope.

However, seeing as though modern moral issues are, well, modern, they are not mentioned in Scripture. To tackle this problem, we look at the issues that are mentioned in Scripture, and we look at who God is, and what he desires for humanity. When we do this, a clear, consistent vision of life emerges that points us toward the answers to questions not yet asked when Scripture was written. This process is the beginning of Sacred Tradition.

So, who articulates Sacred Tradition? What gives these "know-it-all theologians and bishops" the right to tell us what to do? Now, technically it's not "what" gives the church authority to determine right and wrong; it's "who." As Catholics, we believe that Jesus gave the apostles authority to interpret Sacred Scripture and tradition and guide us in our walk with Christ.

In the end, I hope we take the teachings of Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradi-

tion and write them into our hearts and become people of life. I hope we see and live the words of Scripture that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (by the way, when I got dressed this morning, I noticed I seem to be adding on to my temple). I pray that we see that everyone we meet is someone for whom God laid down his life. I hope we learn that the experience of life is so sacred and blessed that we want to make sure that the

dignity and value of the human person is articulated and defended in all our decisions.

I find it excellent that you brought up our past mistakes (Galileo). We need to remember these mistakes so that we can see that these flawed vessels of God still are capable of offering us a perfect vision. Despite our past sins, the Magisterium (teaching authority of the church) has never erred in declarations of faith and doctrine. As Dr. Cooney at Sacred Heart Seminary put it: "God writes straight with crooked lines." I love that phrase. It reminds me that perfect performance is not a prerequisite for serving God.

We remember our past, not so that we can be paralyzed by guilt, but so that we can be free to accept God's gratuitous, unearned love with pure hearts.

Blessed be the name of God.

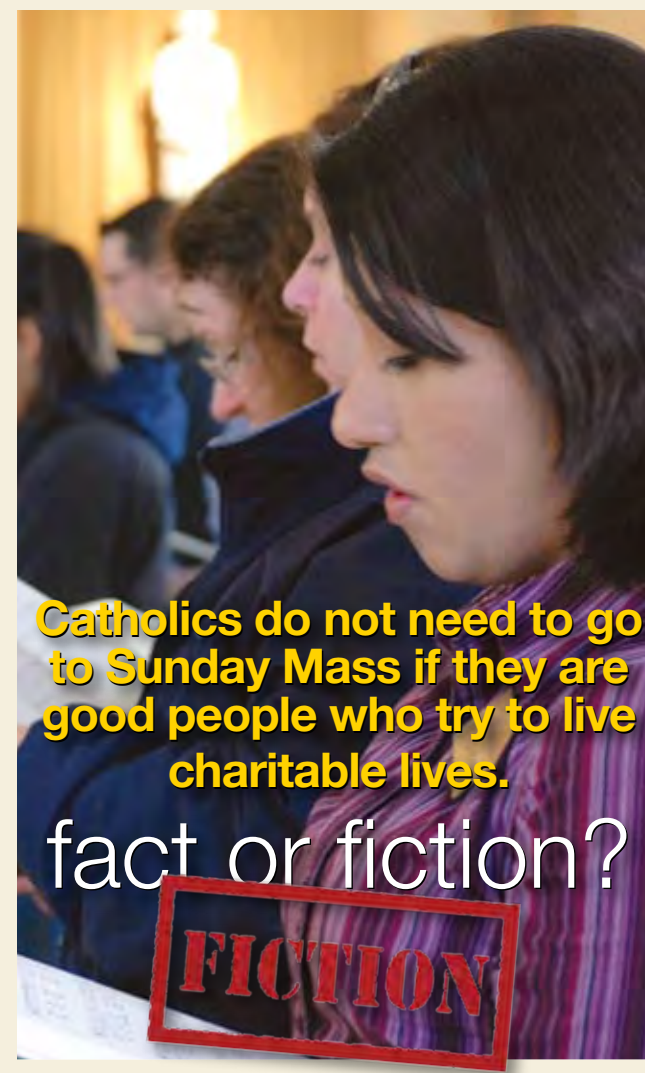
Enjoy another day in God's presence! ☺

P ¿Quién le dio a la Iglesia la autoridad para determinar lo que es recto o no? Según lo que yo sé, no hay nada en la Biblia sobre el control de la natalidad, la pena capital, la ingeniería genética ni la clonación. ¿No cree que se dañe la credibilidad de la Iglesia cuando nuestros líderes están equivocados (por ejemplo, Galileo)?

R ¡Esta es una tremenda pregunta! Lo que aquí tenemos es una pregunta con muchas capas, por eso, vamos de frente al asunto.

Primero, vamos a empezar asegurándonos que todos tenemos la misma perspectiva. He aprendido que hay dos grupos de personas que se hacen este tipo de pregunta. El primer grupo quiere descubrir los caminos que Dios tiene para poder seguirlos. Las personas que están en el segundo grupo, se hacen esta pregunta para conocer la "opinión de Dios". Entonces, deciden si están de acuerdo con Él o no.

Puedo pensar que tú estás en el primer grupo. Tú eres como muchas personas santas, que han dicho a lo largo de miles de años lo mismo que dijo el Rey David: "Tus caminos enséñame, Señor, para que así ande en tu verdad" (Salmo 86, 11). Buscamos lo que Dios enseña para que podamos seguirlo. Esta es la llamada que todos los católicos en cualquier parte del mundo y en todo tiempo debemos seguir. Entonces nos preguntamos, ¿cómo podemos buscar estos caminos?



The facts:

The *Catechism* is clear on this point: "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass" (2180). In fact, the *Catechism* indicates that, unless one is excused for a serious reason (for instance, illness or the care of an infant) or dispensed by one's pastor, he or she commits a grave sin by not fulfilling this obligation (2181).

The foundation of the church's teaching on the obligation to attend the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is the moral commandment "inscribed by nature in the human heart to render to God an outward, visible, public, and regular worship" as a sign of God's goodness to all (2176).

The Sunday Eucharist is indeed the heart of the church's life (2177); the celebration of the paschal mystery – Jesus' life, death and resurrection – through which we are saved and participate in the very life of God. It is not only the foundation of Christian practice; it is the confirmation of this practice (2181).

Participation in the "communal celebration of the Sunday Eucharist is a testimony of belonging and of being faithful to Christ and his church." It is a means of mutually strengthening each other in the faith under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the affirmation of our belief in God's holiness and of our hope of salvation (2182).

In short, Sunday Mass is essential to what it means to be Catholic.

– By Doug Culp, photography by Amy Kiley

Como sabes, las Escrituras nos dan una explicación muy clara de muchos temas morales. Por ejemplo, es malo el adulterio, el homicidio, el robo, etc. Es esencial cuidar de las personas más indefensas de la sociedad y obedecer a Dios. Dios nos ama apasionada e intensamente. Todas estas cosas (y más) son muy claras.

Las Escrituras también nos dan un claro entendimiento de Dios: Quien es Él, su amor por nosotros y su deseo de que tengamos vida abundante y un futuro lleno de esperanza.

Sin embargo, siendo los temas morales modernos-actuales, entonces, podemos decir que ellos no se encuentran en la Biblia. Para resolver este problema, necesitamos examinar los temas que están en las Escrituras y necesitamos examinar también, quien es Dios y lo que Él quiere para la humanidad. Cuando hacemos esto, una visión clara y consistente surge, que nos señala las respuestas a las preguntas que no fueron hechas en el tiempo en que se escribió la Biblia. Este proceso es el comienzo de la Sagrada Tradición.

Entonces, ¿quién articula la Sagrada Tradición? ¿Qué da a estos "teólogos y obispos sabelotodos" el derecho de decirnos lo que debemos hacer?

Técnicamente, la pregunta no es "qué" da a la Iglesia la autoridad de determinar lo que es malo y lo que es bueno, sino "quién" le da a la Iglesia esta autoridad. Como católicos, creemos que Jesús da a los apóstoles la autoridad de interpretar las Sagradas Escrituras y la Sagrada Tradición, y de guiarnos en nuestro camino a Cristo.

Por fin, espero que pongamos en nuestro corazón las enseñanzas de las Sagradas Escrituras y de la Sagrada Tradición y que las escribamos dentro de nuestro corazón y nos convirtamos en personas de vida. Espero que veamos y vivamos las palabras de las Escrituras que dicen que nuestros cuerpos son templos del Espíritu Santo. Pido a Dios para que veamos en toda persona que conocemos a alguien por quien Dios también murió. Espero que aprendamos que la experiencia de la vida es tan sagrada y bendecida, que queremos asegurar que la dignidad y el valor de un ser humano, sean articulados y defendidos en todas nuestras decisiones.

Veo que señalaste un excelente ejemplo de nuestros errores pasados (Galileo). Necesitamos recordar estos errores, para que podamos ver que los instrumentos imperfectos de Dios, todavía nos pueden ofrecer una visión perfecta. A pesar de nuestros pecados, el Magisterio (la autoridad de enseñar de la Iglesia) nunca ha estado equivocado sobre temas de fe y doctrina. Como dijo Dr. Cooney del Seminario del Corazón Sagrado de Detroit: "Dios escribe rectamente con líneas torcidas". Me encanta esa frase. Me recuerda que la perfección no es un requisito para el servicio a Dios.

Recordemos nuestro pasado, no para que nos paralicemos por nuestra culpa; sino para que podamos estar libres del pasado, así aceptar el gran amor de Dios en nuestros corazones puros.

¡Disfruta otro día en la presencia de Dios!

Faith in the divine initiative – the human response

The following is an excerpt from Pope Benedict XVI regarding the 46th World Day of Prayer for vocations to be celebrated in early May:

On the occasion of the next World Day of prayer for vocations to the priesthood and to the consecrated life, which will be celebrated on May 3, 2009, I want to invite all the people of God to reflect on the theme: Faith in the divine initiative – the human response. The exhortation of Jesus to his disciples: “Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Matthew 9:38) has a constant resonance in the church. Pray! The urgent call of the Lord stresses that prayer for vocations should be continuous and trusting. The Christian community can only really “have ever greater faith and hope in God’s providence” (*Sacramentum Caritatis*, 26) if it is enlivened by prayer.

The vocation to the priesthood and to the consecrated life constitutes a special gift of God which becomes part of the great plan of love and salvation that God has for every man and

woman and for the whole of humanity ... In the universal call to holiness, of particular relevance is God’s initiative of choosing some to follow his son Jesus Christ more closely and to be his privileged ministers and witnesses. The divine master personally called the apostles “to be with him, and to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons” (Mark 3:14-15); they, in turn, gathered other disciples around them as faithful collaborators in this mission. In this way, responding to the Lord’s call and docile to the movement of the Holy Spirit, over the centuries, countless ranks of priests and consecrated persons placed themselves totally at the service of the gospel in the church. Let us give thanks to God, because even today he continues to call together workers into his vineyard. While it is undoubtedly true that a worrisome shortage of priests is evident in some regions of the world, and that the church encounters difficulties and obstacles along the way, we are sustained by the unshakable certitude that the one who firmly guides her in the pathways of

time toward the definitive fulfillment of the kingdom is he, the Lord, who freely chooses persons of every culture and of every age and invites them to follow him according to the mysterious plans of his merciful love.

Our first duty, therefore, is to keep alive in families and in parishes, in movements and in apostolic associations, in religious communities and in all the sectors of diocesan life this appeal to the divine initiative with unceasing prayer. We must pray that the whole Christian people grows in its trust in God, convinced that the “Lord of the harvest” does not cease to ask some to place their entire existence freely at his service so as to work with him more closely in the mission of salvation. What is asked of those who are called, for their part, is careful listening and prudent discernment, a generous and willing adherence to the divine plan, and a serious study of the reality that is proper to the priestly and religious vocations, so as to be able to respond responsibly and with conviction.

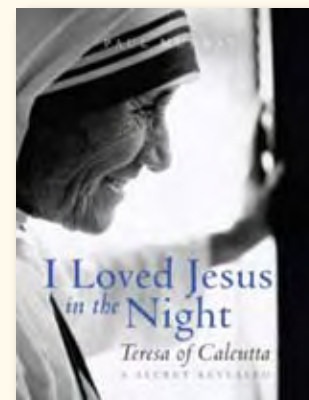
– The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

The spiritual struggles of Blessed Mother Teresa

Father Robert Barron’s website is www.wordonfire.org. He is a priest in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

I just finished reading Father Paul Murray’s astonishing little book on Blessed Mother Teresa’s interior life, called “I Have Loved Jesus in the Night.” Father Murray, a Dominican professor of spiritual theology at the Angelicum University in Rome, was a close confidant of the saint of Calcutta. In this brief and eminently readable text, he has woven together a number of personal reminiscences with an insightful reading of the famous “dark night” undergone for nearly sixty years by the woman who, during her own lifetime, was almost universally acknowledged as a saint. Father Murray states the paradox of Blessed Mother Teresa succinctly: he had never known anyone more radiantly joyful than this woman who, in hundreds of private letters and notes, admitted to an almost unremitting inner darkness, a practically unrelenting sense of the absence of God.

I’ve known Paul Murray for many years, and just a few months ago, when I was in Rome, we all sat down for a lovely, long dinner with him at a cozy restaurant not far from the Pantheon. In time, the conversation turned to Blessed Mother Teresa and this puzzle of her dark night. In the course of this exchange, we all got a wonderful sneak preview of the book.



A member of our group was a devout Methodist, a woman with a strong Biblical sensibility, and she expressed her bewilderment at this phenomenon of the saint who seemed at times even to doubt the existence of God. “Maybe Mother was just depressed because of her difficult work,” she suggested. Father Murray immediately clarified that Blessed Mother Teresa was not a depressive — as the rich accomplishment of her life and work bears witness — and that the dark night, in the strict sense, has little to do with emotional melancholy. Rather, he said, the dark night of the soul is like the shadow cast by the overwhelming light of the indwelling God. Especially when he deigns to come close, God floods the faculties of the mind and the heart so that they are

incapable of processing and understanding in the ordinary sense. The eye can see objects illuminated by the sun, but it becomes dysfunctional, even to the point of blindness, when it turns to gaze at the sun itself. So it is with the soul that has been invaded by God. Perhaps this is why, Father Murray hinted, so many of the greatest saints report the experience of the dark night.

Next, someone asked about Saint John of the Cross, the Spanish mystic who wrote most extensively about what he called “la noche oscura” — the dark night. Father Paul reminded us that Saint John of the Cross saw the dark night as a cleansing and purifying process, initiated and directed by God himself. We find ourselves, Saint John of the Cross taught, in the midst of a good and beautiful world, but we are meant finally for union with God. Therefore, the soul had to become free from its attachments to finite things so as to be free for communion with God. This purification involves, first, what the saint called “the night of the senses,” that is to say, the letting go of physical and sensual pleasures, and it continues with the “night of the soul,” which is a detachment from the thoughts, ideas, and mental images that one can use as a substitute for God. Like all purifications, this one is painful, especially if one’s attachment to these finite things is intense. It will often manifest itself, Saint John of the Cross said, as dryness in prayer and a keen sense of the absence of God, even of God’s active abandonment. In this process, God is not toying with the soul; rather, he is performing a kind of surgery upon it, cutting certain things away that its life might intensify. This aspect of the dark night, Father Murray said, was present in Blessed Mother Teresa as well.

Toward the end of the evening, after lots of give and take, our Dominican friend offered another interpretation of Blessed Mother Teresa’s experience. It was perhaps, he said, a vivid participation in the desolation that Christ Jesus felt on the cross when he said, “God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” We can say, blithely enough, that the spiritual life consists in allowing Christ to live his life in us. But this means that he will live his passion in us, that he will permit us fully to feel what he felt at the bitter end of his earthly life. In Blessed Mother Teresa’s case, this participation was particularly intense, precisely because her ministry was to the lonely, the poor, the hopeless and the abandoned. She identified with their physical and psychological suffering, but her terrible sense of isolation from God allowed her to identify even with their spiritual suffering. And from that solidarity flowed her compassion.

I’m just giving you a sense of Father Murray’s wisdom in regard to Blessed Mother Teresa. Do buy his book if you want to understand more fully the woman who said, “If I ever become a saint, I will be a saint of darkness.” ☩

Roll with the changes

Ted Zale, a veteran financial counselor, guides you through economically troubled times.

ominous headlines about layoffs. Soaring prices at the pump. “For sale” signs and plummeting stock markets. Everywhere you turn lately, you see a test of your financial faith. Never fear. Here are common-sense tips to survive the current money crunch:

Facing the new economic



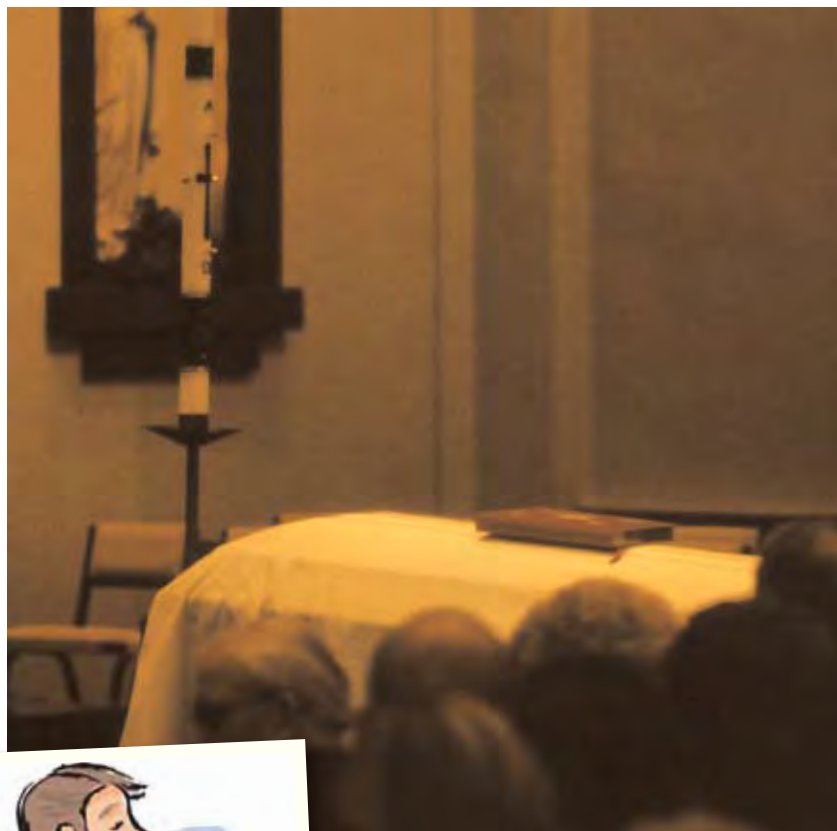
Many people are in the midst of job transitions these days. If you’re one of them, don’t forget about the 401(k) fund from your previous employer. If you worked at the old job long enough to be vested, the money is yours -- and you



want it to keep flowing. Roll the cash into the 401(k) plan offered by your new company or, if that’s not an option, into a self-directed IRA. Don’t choose a Roth IRA unless you’re ready to pay taxes on your 401(k) fund balance immediately. A standard IRA, on the other hand, will allow the money to simply transfer tax-free and continue to grow. You pay taxes when you withdraw the money at retirement.

Funeral liturgies

Column by Elizabeth Solsburg | Illustrations by Bob Patten



The death of someone we love is one of life's most heart-rending moments. We are often numb with shock and filled with grief. The Catholic Church's funeral liturgies offer mourners consolation, hope and faith in the resurrection. They usually occur in three parts: the vigil, the Mass of Christian Burial, and the rite of committal or graveside service.

The vigil takes place for one or more days prior to the funeral. It used to be the custom for the vigil, or wake, to be held in the home of the deceased. Now, it is more customarily held in a funeral home. Recently, there has also been a growing trend to celebrate the vigil in the parish church or hall; it is very moving to receive the condolences of friends and family in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and in a place where the deceased person worshipped in community. It is common for the evenings of the wake to close with the recitation of the rosary or a Scripture service. The vigil is also the most appropriate place for eulogies, in which stories and memories of the dead person are shared.

The Mass of Christian Burial is the fulcrum of the funeral liturgies. At the beginning of the Mass, the priest welcomes the body at the entrance to the church. Family members place a white pall over the casket, representing the white garment in which the person was clothed at his or her baptism. The body is carried to the front of the church, where members of the family place a crucifix and a Bible on it, symbolizing the person's Christian faith.

Changes in the funeral rites since Vatican II mean that we focus on the joy of resurrection rather than the sorrow of loss. The vestments are white, symbolizing joy, rather than their former black. The emphasis is on eternity, not on our present grief.

The Liturgy of the Word has readings chosen by the family; they are selected for their consolation and hope of eternal life. The priest or deacon preaches on the readings, offering a homily, not a eulogy.

Why do we do that?

Singing

"Shout joyfully to God!" You'll notice that the Scripture (Psalm 66) mentions joy, not pitch or key. Singing is an important part of worship

and some elements of the Mass are specifically designed to be sung. Examples are the Sanctus ("Holy, holy, holy" prayer) and the great Amen. Singing is a wonderful way for a congregation to express unity since they are singing the same words at the same time and in approximately the same tone. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) extols the importance of congregational singing and stresses its necessity at Sunday and holy day Masses. Everyone present is urged to sing out with great joy, not just those who can carry a tune!

Who's in the sanctuary?

Cantor:

The cantor is the liturgy's chief singer. In monastic choirs, this was an office of high honor and the cantor often carried a staff to indicate rank. The cantor leads the congregation in song, frequently proclaiming the verses of the responsorial psalm. You may see the cantor move to the ambo for the proclamation of this psalm.



Bible quiz

Tell me a story
A parable quiz

1. Upsets our expectations of strict fairness at the final judgment. All who respond to the call of Jesus, whether early in life or late, will inherit the kingdom. It is a pure gift and cannot be earned.
2. Probably Jesus' first parable and the central thought on which the Sermon on the Mount was based. Inflexibility of traditional systems can't adapt to the freedom of Jesus' new way.
3. Dangers of putting our trust in possessions instead of recognizing our dependence on God.
4. Refers to the reception given to God's revelation. Some accept it; others do not.
5. Union with Jesus is necessary for fruitfulness.
 - a. **The Rich Fool** (Luke 12: 16-21)
 - b. **Workers in the Vineyard** (Matt 20: 1-6)
 - c. **The Sower and the Seed** (Matt 13: 1-13)
 - d. **I am the Vine** (John: 15: 1-8)
 - e. **New Wine in Old Wineskins** (Mark 2: 21-22)

Answers: 1: b; 2: e; 3: a; 4: c; 5: d

The Liturgy of the Eucharist follows, reminding us of Christ's passion, death and resurrection. We are offered the hope of eternal life – for our loved one and for ourselves. Members of the family may serve as extraordinary ministers of Communion, readers and altar servers. After Communion, a friend or family member may be invited to share a brief reflection on the life of the departed.

There is a final procession to the place of committal, the cemetery. At the graveside, the priest or deacon offers a final commendation and prayers of farewell are said. If there has not been a eulogy, one may be offered at this point.

Occasionally, the family may have chosen to cremate the body. The Catholic Church permits cremation and, since 1997, it has been permissible in the United States to have the cremated remains present for a funeral liturgy. Afterward, the remains should be treated with the same respect as a body would be – not kept in the home, but interred in a cemetery or entombed in a columbarium.

The Catholic celebration of a person's life, coupled with the community's consolation to that person's loved ones, is one of the most profound ways the church acts as Christ in the world. ☩



What's the season?

Holy Days of Obligation:

Various feasts throughout the church year are so important they have been designated as holy days of obligation on which the faithful must attend Mass. Each country has its own list of holy days. In most dioceses of the United States, they are Jan. 1, the Solemnity of Mary; Aug. 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption; Nov. 1, the Solemnity of All Saints; Dec. 8, the Solemnity of Immaculate Conception; and Dec. 25, the Solemnity of Christmas. If Jan. 1, Aug. 15, or Nov. 1 fall on a Saturday or Monday, the obligation to attend Mass is normally dispensed.



Pectoral Cross:

The bishop wears a cross called a pectoral cross. Its name comes from the Latin word *pectus* – or breast. Rules dictate how the cross is worn, depending on the bishop's garments. If he's in a suit and collar, the pectoral cross is usually placed in the vest pocket with the chain showing; that's why you'll often see the bishop with a chain across his chest.

Sacred vessels:

The chalice is the cup in which the wine that becomes the blood of Christ is contained. The ciborium is the container for the hosts that will be consecrated at Mass and reserved in the tabernacle; it may be shaped somewhat like the chalice, but has a fitted lid. In medieval times, the word ciborium also referred to a canopy over the tabernacle, but that is no longer the case. The pyx is a small container that holds a few consecrated hosts. Extraordinary ministers of holy Communion use a pyx to take Communion to the sick and homebound.

All of these vessels are to be made of sacred metal or material approved by the Bishops' Conference. They should be treated with reverence due to their sacred functions.





Serra Members help build a vocation culture

Members of the U.S. Council of Serra International promote vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. Serra members in the Diocese of Joliet meet once a month to attend a Mass, pray the rosary and listen to a speaker talk about something related to vocations. They help the diocesan vocation director, Father Burke Masters, with various events, such as days to give youths more information about vocations and the Seminarian Send-off event on Aug. 16 at 1:30 p.m. at Benedictine University in Lisle. This annual event brings together all the seminarians in the diocese to show support for them before they resume their studies in the fall.



Renee Schuessler, parishioner at St. James Parish in Glen Ellyn: The theme that ran through a lot of [Blessed

Bishop Peter Sartain: Even though Junipero Serra was born in Spain, he was sent to Mexico City after he was ordained ... to work with the people in the New World. Eventually, he requested to go up to the missions of California because of the great zeal he had for the Gospel and the preaching of the Good News. I think that is why he was chosen as the patron of the Serra Club – because the Serra Club is all about promoting vocations to priesthood and religious life. Therefore, it's all about evangelization – bringing the good news of the Lord Jesus to people and helping those same people to turn to Christ and to turn their lives over to him.

Blessed Junipero Serra was born in 1713 and became a member of the Franciscan order. After he left Spain for the New World, he spent eight years in the Sierra Gorda mountains near Santiago de Querétaro, learning the language of the local Pame Indians, instructing them in Christianity and the Catholic faith and helping them become skilled in various trades. He also served as president of a five-mission chain.

Junipero Serra's work was he wanted to secure souls for the church. And when you belong to the Serra Club, I feel like, with the amount of prayer we do, if we can help one individual, to me that is enough. No matter what we can do, no matter how small or great, if we can make a difference in someone's life, then to me it's worth it all.

While he was in Mexico, Father Serra suffered an injury to his leg from which he suffered for the rest of his life. Despite the injury, he walked many miles when he traveled. Estimates show that he traveled more than 5,500 miles on land during his missionary travels.

Joan Mowry, parishioner at St. Petronille Parish in Glen Ellyn, whose son is now a seminarian in the diocese: I've always felt drawn to pray for vocations to the priesthood. And that started with a parish priest at Visitation Parish in Elmhurst. The pastor there gave a homily, saying, "If you parents out there are praying for my children to become priests, we're all in trouble. You need to be praying for your own children to have a vocation." At the time my son, David, was a year old. And I thought, "Well, ok, I've always kind of generically prayed for vocations to the priesthood, but now I have a son, so I guess I should be praying for him to have a vocation if that is God's will for him."

Father Serra ended up being in charge of missions throughout California and was the founder of nine missions. He baptized more than

6,000 people and confirmed more than 5,000 others, most of whom were Indians.

Bishop Peter Sartain: Junipero Serra was tireless in preaching and tireless in visiting all of the missions of California, both those he founded and those that had been founded by other people. For him, the main focus of his entire life was always the Gospel of Jesus Christ and bringing people to the Gospel. Of course, that is exactly what priests and religious are all about. Everything about the lives of priests and religious is focused on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Father Serra wrote to a fellow Franciscan before leaving Spain for the New World: "We must allow nothing in this life to cause us sadness. Our clear duty is to conform ourselves in every way to the will of God so as to prepare well for death. Nothing else really matters. If this is done, it matters little if everything else besides is lost."



George Carr, parishioner at St. Michael Parish in Wheaton: If you love the priesthood and love the Eucharist, and you want to have the availability of priests and the Eucharist in our lives on a regular basis, we all need to do more for vocations. One of the tools to do that

is the Serra Club.

Junipero Serra was known for his zeal in trying to follow God's will. He was persistent and endured many hardships. One of his favorite sayings – for which he became well known – was: "Always to go forward and never to turn back."

Father Burke Masters, diocesan vocation director: Some people take for granted that priests show up on church on Sunday to celebrate Mass. They don't always realize the whole process behind the idea of fostering vocations within a parish and the diocese. Guys just don't always show up because God calls them. We need people who are out there praying for vocations, who are tapping young men and women on the shoulders and saying, "I see special gifts in you. Have you ever thought about becoming a priest, a brother or a sister?" And it's not just the job any longer of the bishop or priests. It's the job of the entire church to support vocations through prayer, direct contact, through fostering a culture of vocations, which is what the Serra Club is all about.

Junipero Serra died in 1784. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1988 and is considered "blessed," which is when a candidate for sainthood is

credited with being responsible for a miracle, attributed to the person's intercession after the person has died. The next step in the process is the possibility of being canonized as a saint – if another posthumous miracle is verified.

Sister Lovina Francis Pammit, OSF, vocation coordinator for her community: I see developing more and more [in the Serra Club] that vocation awareness extends to all, not just church vocations, but to encourage every member of the church to realize and to look at their options – not just marriage, because everyone kind of thinks of getting into that – but lay ministry in the church and to realize their gifts and to see if religious life and the priesthood is for them.

The Serra Club was founded in 1934 in Seattle. It has since spread to more than 1,109 clubs in 46 countries with total memberships of more than 19,000 people on six continents. Its objectives are to foster and promote religious vocations to the priesthood and religious life and to encourage its members to fulfill their own Christian vocations to service.

George Carr: We like to say the Sierra Clubs [an environmental group] hug trees, while we Serrans hug priests and seminarians and religious. ☺

To join Serra, or for more information on the 35th Annual Seminarian Send-off event, or to advertise in the event's souvenir program, please contact Ron Beaumont at rboards@aol.com or 630-858-4646. The Seminarian Sendoff will be held on Sunday August 16 beginning at 1:30 PM at the Krasa Center at Benedictine University in Lisle. For more information on the U.S. Council of Serra International, go to www.serra.us.org

Loving people with disabilities

Doctor Madonna Wojtaszek-Healy writes on the board at St. Mary Immaculate School in Plainfield, where she teaches.

About **90 percent** of prenatal tests that are positive for Down syndrome result in abortions. According to a 2008 study, Illinois ranks **last** (51st among states and Washington, D.C.) for the way it houses people with disabilities. Meanwhile, the National Organization on Disability indicates people with special needs are **18 percent** less likely than those without disabilities to attend religious services – and that attendance rate has **declined 7 percent** since 1986.

Though society often fails to embrace people with disabilities, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has said, “We call upon people of good will to reexamine their attitudes toward their brothers and sisters with disabilities and promote their well-being, acting with the sense of justice and the compassion that the Lord so clearly desires. Further, realizing the unique gifts individuals with disabilities have to offer the church, we wish to address the need for their integration into the Christian community and their fuller participation in its life.”

That means, as reality and ideals clash, the church is calling for action.

Who Has a Disability?

The U.S. Census Bureau reports more than one-fifth of Americans have one or more disabilities.

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, “The term ‘disability’ means, with respect to an individual, (A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; (B) a record of such an impairment; or (C) being regarded as having such impairment.”

The 1978 “Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities” specifies that people in this category are “our neighbors who are blind, deaf, mentally [challenged],

emotionally impaired, who have special learning problems, or who suffer from single or multiple physical handicaps – all those whom disability may set apart.”

The Church's Perspective

In Biblical times, society marginalized people with disabilities, but Christ drew them near.

One reason for the ostracism was the belief that sin caused disabilities. When a blind man approached Jesus in John

9, the disciples asked, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Christ responded, “Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him.” Christ then healed the man so others could witness God’s mercy and power.

In Mark 2:1-12, a paralytic literally came through the roof to see Jesus. Christ enabled the man to walk and forgave his sins – again, using someone marginalized by disability as a vehicle for God’s message.

Even in modern times, a 2000 Vatican document explained, God continues to use people with disabilities to show that his love for humanity is not dependent upon ability or productivity. The document – prepared for the Jubilee Day with persons with disabilities – stated, “The Church continues the revealing mission of Christ [in a] society often indifferent to the cry of persons with disabilities. . . . The Church, to be truly the bride of Christ, must consider the persons with disabilities and those around them, as theological places where ‘God works his wonders,’ realizes his love for mankind and invites the community to conversion and to discernment of Gospel values.”

Given such a mission, the U.S. bishops gave *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities* in 1995. Then, in 1998, they reaffirmed their advocacy of rights for people with disabilities. They wrote, “These include the right to equal opportunity in education, in employment, in housing, and in health care, as well as the right to free access to public accommodations, facilities and services.”

The 2005 *National Directory for Catechesis* indicated, “[People with disabilities] are not just recipients of catechesis – they are also its agents. All persons with disabilities or special needs should be welcomed in the church. Every person, however limited, is capable of growth in holiness.”

Steps Toward Solidarity

Given the church’s call for solidarity, Catholic experts are offering advice on how to achieve loving reform:

1. Create relationships: Cindi Birse-Swanson is the director of disabilities and family outreach for Holy Spirit Catholic Community in Naperville. Blind and the mother of a man with Down syn-

drome, she suggested, “Start creating relationships. Sit down next to people [with disabilities] and start talking. . . . Ask the person with the disability how they can be helped – what they need.”

2. Don’t ostracize: “I don’t want to be in a room with a bunch of disabled people. I’m sure they’re all lovely, but I want to sit next to you!” Swanson said. She pointed out that parish initiatives that give special spaces to people with disabilities can exclude the very people they mean to welcome. Doctor Madonna Wojtaszek-Healy is the former diocesan Religious Education Office special needs consultant. Her three sons have Attention Deficit Disorder, so, growing up, they tended to be rambunctious in church. “There’s nothing more isolating than being in a cry room,” she said. “I remember thinking, ‘This has to be what hell is like.’” When sitting in the pews, she added, “You know there are always people who are looking at you thinking, ‘Get out of here or slap that kid.’”

3. Be understanding: Healy said people are less likely to show compassion for “invisible disabilities” like ADD because those disabilities are not readily apparent. She suggested people refrain from judging others, especially if they do not know the cause of a faux pas. “You would never tell a person who has diabetes, ‘Just tell your pancreas to shape up,’” she said. Swanson noted, in a situation like Healy’s, “The parents didn’t say [to their children], ‘I want you to act like a little creep when you come into Mass. . . . We need to be supportive.’” She said she tells people with disabilities to sit in the same pew each Sunday. Parishioners who find joy in the presence of special needs worshippers often choose to sit nearby. Less tolerant parishioners find other seats.

4. Accommodate: “If you have stairs, you’re telling everyone in a wheelchair they can’t come,” Swanson said. She explained that even churches with no registered parishioners in wheelchairs should build ramps and use handicap signs. “It’s kind of build it and they will come,” she said. She noted that accommodations for the blind and deaf have similar effects.

5. Encourage participation: Like all Catholics, disabled parishioners are called to participate in the Mass – and that might mean in ministerial roles. “Assume competence,” Swanson said. Her church uses an adjustable ambo to let people in wheelchairs serve as lectors, she said, and her son with Down syndrome has volunteered as an altar server. “You always have to remember that it’s praise and worship,” she said. “It’s not a Shakespearean performance, and I think God will be happy with how it comes out.”

6. Work for solidarity outside church: Swanson enumerated the negative statistics on treatment of people with disabilities and said, “The numbers are high and, as a church called to do justice in the richest country in the world, we have to look at how we do things inside of church and outside of church.” She added, “It has to go past the walls of the church. I mean, we can’t be 60-minute-a-week Catholics.” That might mean advocating justice or simply living with love and compassion. She noted, “We could be the ones to welcome people and celebrate all their gifts.”

Disability in the church, then and now

On a recent Sunday morning during our usual 11 a.m. Mass, the sight of a young altar server moved me deeply. Why? Because this little girl was recognizable as a person with Down syndrome, and her role as an altar server brought back memories.

My son, Kevin, who also has Down syndrome, was an altar boy more than 35 years ago. And his presence in that role was not easily won in the 1960s.

Our son’s baptism was one of the first challenges that we encountered in his spiritual life. My husband, John, and I already had welcomed Kevin into our family as an equal partner with his brothers and sisters, even though medical options had been offered as to possible placement away from home. Now here we were a few days later hearing an incredible question about his baptism. “Do you want a private ceremony?” In other words, did we want “segregation” due to his disability?

Of course, we did not want a private ceremony. We wanted Kevin to be a part of the regular group of babies who were to be baptized.

Hindsight acknowledges that a young priest with limited experience had raised the question, but, within months, we acquired a lot of new information. Other children and adults with cognitive disabilities were being denied access to the sacraments of Holy Eucharist and confirmation.

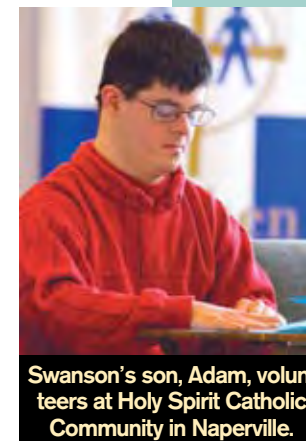
With our awareness of cognitive disabilities, special contacts began to surface. We discovered that, in a nearby area, people had come together to provide a special religious education program for their family members. One compassionate young priest was working with this group. At a funeral Mass for a child with a cognitive disability, this priest’s sermon inspired many others by recognizing the value of the child as a symbol of love.

Eventually the role of altar boy became an additional part of the religious education program. The intent was to provide the youngsters with the opportunity to participate in the regular parish Masses, not just segregated special liturgies. The ultimate goal of the entire religious education program was to dissolve the specialized instructional sessions and integrate the students with cognitive disabilities into the general parish population.

Currently, the presence of that wonderful little girl as an altar server was a dividend for the incredible amounts of effort put forth by a great number of dedicated volunteers many years ago. To see our goal implemented currently without fanfare was a real joy. This recent Sunday morning episode was a beautiful example of community acceptance of a person with a cognitive disability.

I was pleased and proud due to her participation. All that I could think about was the history that had gone before this one simple act of inclusion as part of the parish family. And I must admit I had a special feeling that my husband and I and our group of dedicated volunteers, way back in the 1960s, perhaps had made the moment possible.

– Marjorie Sullivan Lee and her son, Kevin, are parishioners at St. Daniel the Prophet Parish in Wheaton.



Swanson's son, Adam, volunteers at Holy Spirit Catholic Community in Naperville.

Catholics from around the state recently gathered under the dome in

Springfield for Catholics at the Capitol Day. They lobbied lawmakers regarding seven key issues and *Our Hope* magazine went along to talk with church leaders.

Doug Delaney, director of communications for the Diocese of Joliet, discussed the importance of prayer when dealing with legislators and the political process:

“Prayer should be first and foremost in our lives. Cardinal [Francis] George said there is always time for prayer. You can always pray. Prayer brings about results – there is no doubt about that. It has to be a combination of things: your prayer life, hopefully, will lead you to action, and your action will lead you to further prayer if you feel fulfilled in your actions.

The Catholic Conference of Illinois indicated the seven key issues of the day were:

- **Legislation** to double the Education Expense Tax Credit utilized by Catholic school parents.
- **Budget relief** to ensure federal and state reimbursements are provided to Catholic health care and nursing homes on a timely basis.
- **Opposition to legislation** equating same-sex unions to marriage.
- **Legislation** or budgetary action to provide prompt payments for Catholic Charities and other social service providers.
- **Budget support** for community organizations and parishes to provide English classes to immigrants.
- **Legislation** to abolish the death penalty.
- **Legislation** mandating that a woman seeking an abortion be offered the opportunity to view a sonogram before the procedure.

Bob Gilligan, executive director of the Catholic Conference of Illinois, talked about why

Catholics at the Capitol



Catholics went under the dome at the capitol in Springfield for Catholics at the Capitol day.

Catholics should be active in the political process: “I think it’s important for Catholics to be more in tune to their obligation to participate in civic affairs. There are too many people out there who have an uniformed notion about the separation of church and state. The founding fathers wanted vibrant debate from

moral traditions to influence policy. Unfortunately, the mainstream media and too many Catholics seem to think we should not be involved in the political arena and in public policy debate. We need a more vibrant participation as a Catholic community because we approach these issues from an entirely different framework

than what’s currently going on today. Part of the problem today is that it’s all generated from self interest. Much of the debate is what’s better for me as an individual. There’s not enough attention to what the Catholic perspective is, which is what is in the best interest of the common good. We need to be screaming that as loud as

we can. Catholics need to understand Catholic social teaching and be more engaged in the political process and not less.”

Bishop Peter Sartain discussed why Catholics should always have hope during the political process: “The most important thing is we never

give up. That we continue to express our views. That we continue to bring the truth. I think that is the most important thing to recognize – that we are coming forth and we are witnessing to what is true. It is not something we are making up. It’s not just your opinion. It’s not just our view. We are actually teaching and expressing the truth and that itself has its own weight because it comes from God. Therefore, we never give up hope. We do have to always proclaim the truth in season and out of season, no matter what.

The bishop also discussed why Catholics should be active in the political process:

“The Lord Jesus gives us the gift of faith, but he also says we have to witness to the faith, and we don’t witness to the faith only in church. We have to witness to the faith in every aspect of our lives – as they say, ‘In the public square.’ And what better than to come than this place [the Capitol] today and tell the people of our state, and your legislators, what our faith means to us.”

“The most important thing is we never give up. That we continue to express our views. That we continue to bring the truth.”

Delaney talked about how Catholics can and should engage in the political process: “The first thing is to vote. If you don’t vote, you don’t have a reason to complain. [Write] a letter or, if you’re asked at church, make a telephone call or send in a postcard. Just take five minutes and make those simple acts. It might seem like a simple act, but if it’s multiplied by thousand and thousands, others take notice. ☺

 **Visit these websites to promote Catholic issues in politics:**

www.catholicconferenceofillinois.org/

www.faithfulcitizenship.org/



Chelsea Ryan sits next to Kathy and Pete while her mother, Amy Boone, holds Joey.

Choosing life: A story of adoption

At the age of 15, Chelsea Ryan became pregnant. Pro-life from a young age, the Saint Mary of Gostyn parishioner gave up her baby for open adoption. Today, Chelsea is a senior at Downers Grove North and is still in touch with her child and his adoptive parents. She is a volunteer counselor at Woman's Choice Services, a pro-life center, and she has spoken to teenagers at local high schools about choosing life. She recently told her story to Carlos Briceño:

I found out I was pregnant when I was 15. I had been dating my boyfriend for about six months. He, at first, wanted me to have an abortion, but I said no because my family has always been pro-life. So we didn't go through with that. I finally told my mom and dad during an emergency family meeting after I had taken three or four pregnancy tests. They called a deacon friend at our parish, St. Mary of Gostyn in Downers Grove. Deacon Al referred us to Sunny Ridge Family Center in Bolingbrook. We called them right away. They're a pregnancy counseling agency, along with an adoption agency. My version of adoption in my head was from the Lifetime movies where they take away your child, and you never see them ever again. We went to Sunny Ridge, and we met with our counselor, Becky. The first thing she said to us was we have nine months to figure this out so just relax. After that, we started talking about all our options. We learned about open adoption. There is a whole

spectrum of openness. Mine is all the way on the far end of the most open that you can possible have. The center gave me profiles that describe families who want to adopt. I was given three. One of the three was Kathy and Pete. I really liked them. Everything I wanted for my child they had. I decided to meet them on December 15, 2006. My mom met them too. My boyfriend wasn't involved. He broke up with me when I was five months pregnant, and he had a new girlfriend the next month. After I met Kathy and Pete, I decided they were the ones.

I had Joey on March 29, 2007, and that is the birth date of Pete, his adopted father. He was supposed to be born on March 25. Pete was always joking, because he was like, "You should just wait a little more and have the baby on my birthday."

Before I got pregnant, I was going down a bad path. I had a bad relationship with my boyfriend. And so, through the pregnancy, I prayed to God so hard because I was so

scared about everything and about making the wrong decision. We asked for a sign. All my mom asked for was a sign that we would know we were doing the right thing. As soon as we found out that Joey was born on Pete's birthday, that was what we needed.

I can relate to high schoolers because I'm still in high school. Honestly, many people have sex in high school. I'm with girlfriends all the time who think they're pregnant. One of my best friends had an abortion over the summer. It's horrible. I can't stand to watch girls go through an abortion. None of your decisions are easy. I just want girls to know that you can do this – give your baby up for adoption. I'm so thankful to God for everything he's given me because my life could've turned out so differently. I have always been against abortion, but I was against it because people told me to be against it. I had never been forced with having to actually act on my belief. I think I'm extremely pro life-now. Extremely. ☩

Interview by Carlos Briceño | Photography by Miles Boone / www.milesboonephotography.com

God's
**HELP
WANTED**

A multi-story special feature

on **faith** and the economic crisis.

Turning to God during tough economic times



The faltering economy has been on the minds of many people for the past several months. In bad times, people turn to God because they seek solace and rely on their faith to help them cope. *Christ is our Hope* magazine interviewed two couples about their recent struggles due to job losses within their families. Here are their stories:

For 18 years, Pat O'Hara held an administrative position in healthcare that ended Dec. 31. He has been out of work ever since. It was not the only shock he has encountered over the past few months. His mother died last October, and his brother was diagnosed with level four colon cancer in January. He admits he was scared when he lost his job, and he stayed in his home for several weeks, trying to come to grips with being unemployed. Then he started looking for work. His wife, Terri, works full-time, and they have four children. The youngest is a sophomore in college whose expenses they are helping to pay. They are parishioners at Holy Family Parish in Shorewood.



Pat: Those early days and weeks after I left the job, people out of the

blue would stop by and say, "How are you doing?" I would get a card from someone that said, "Let's praise the Lord for the good that he does." In our prayer each day, my wife and I pray to give glory to the Lord for the job that is waiting for me. That helps us to look ahead.

Terri: It's easier to have a sense of trusting in the Lord when I'm not struggling with something or when there's not a problem. But when there's a problem, it's pretty big stakes to be trusting in the Lord. Sometimes, it's a struggle for me.

Pat: The Lord is present to us. We have a sense of being carried along. There are so many people praying for us. And it is in our prayer, my wife and I, where we talk about the job loss and thank the Lord for so many who support us in their prayers. We believe that God is out there, and he will have a job for me, and we will get through this. We

see things along the way. A couple of weeks ago, I had a terrible day, and the next day I go to Mass, and there are messages waiting for me on the phone to come and interview with other companies when I got home. The Lord is there, taking care of us.

Terri: We will often pray together. I think that it's helpful for us to hear the other pray. It helps me along in trusting the Lord to hear Pat praying with confidence and conviction. That bolsters my faith. If he can do it, then I can too.

“It's easier to have a sense of trusting in the Lord when I'm not struggling with something or when there's not a problem. But when there's a problem, it's pretty big stakes to be trusting in the Lord.”

Pat: The reality is we do continue to have days that are sad. My wife and I talk about it. What we do two-to-three times a week

when we're having dinner, we'll say, "How are you doing today?" Kind of checking in with each other. There are other days that are good days that propel us. We get excited and get back on track.

Terri: I think my faith is more personal. It's more internal. This need [Pat looking for work] and the various tragedies make it all very personal, the whole faith experience. It's something we live here at our house, drawing strength from God.

Pat: When we're at a crossroads in our life, it's an opportunity. Even though it's been hard at times, I see this as an opportunity, not only for a different job, but also an opportunity to spend time with the Lord. To have that as my foundation so I can go forward in steady steps. My biggest change has been my really trying to invite the Lord into our



The following parishes offer job ministries to help those who are looking for work:

- St. James Parish in Glen Ellyn: <http://www.stjosephministry.org/>
- St. Thomas the Apostle in Naperville: www.grizwiz.com/jobs/
- St. Mary Immaculate Parish in Plainfield: <http://www.smip.org>

Photography and interviews by Carlos Briceño

lives and really working at that. To ask the Lord, "What do you think?"

Terri: When life is going good and I'm busy and even if I'm going to church every week, I'm less aware of my need for God. I have a sense of less relying on him, and I'm more self reliant. And when difficulties come along and I have a greater need, then my trust in the Lord and my awareness of him and my need for him becomes more personal and real. That is probably a little bit of a change at this time -- to be more willing to let the Lord enter into the difficulty.

Mark Bonucchi worked at USG Corp. for 25 years. He was the director of finance for their ceilings division until he was laid off on Dec. 9, 2008. His wife, Sue, works part-time. They have three children, two in college and one in high school. They are parishioners at Holy Spirit Catholic Community in Naperville.



Mark: My manager came in my office at around 9 a.m. with his suit on. He said, "Mark, we need to talk." We went down the long hall to a small little conference room where there was a human resources person. I told them, as soon as I walked in, "I don't think this is going to be a good day." He said, "I'm sorry, this is not going to be a good day." They gave me a couple of hours to clean out my office and then two days later I was able to go back and get more of my personal files.

Prayer for the Unemployed

Heavenly Father, your son Jesus invited all who are weary and find life burdensome to come to him for rest and support. Lord, I am worn out by my inability to find work.

Guide my steps to the right path; give me the patience to find opportunities with a future. Calm my worries

Sue: I had a strong faith life before. I don't know if it's any stronger now. I'm depending on it more. In this situation, I have put it more into God's hands as opposed to trying to control it. I kind of feel like I have to take a back seat because it's Mark who has to do all the work in pursuing a job. I have to support him and cope with my family and our situation. I do feel responsible for part of the finances. I feel like I have to contribute more.

Mark: My faith life has given me a positive attitude. We have a lot of great friends who are praying for us, and we help other couples who have lost their jobs, and we pray for them. I know that it's kept me in a positive attitude, knowing that, when God shuts one door, he will always open a window. We just don't know exactly where or when it's going to be or with whom.

Sue: I was raised the oldest of six in a family that didn't have a whole lot. My dad was a blue-collar worker, and my mom always worked too -- as a nurse. In my family we always had to work for what we had. I always appreciated that we have a pretty good lifestyle. I tell myself that we really need to count our blessings in a really big way. We've got a lot to be grateful for. Even though we are in a situation we did not choose, we have to be grateful for the things we have.

and fears as my financial responsibilities mount. Strengthen my resolve; embolden my heart to open doors; open my eyes to see life beyond rejections. Help me to trust in you.

Teach me new ways to bring about your kingdom on earth. Let me grow as a person and always give you the glory. I make my prayer through Christ, our Lord, amen.

Mark: Before my job loss, I knew there were people who were probably unemployed, but, to be honest, I didn't think much about it. Now, when you go to an event and you see hundreds and hundreds of people just like you, who don't have a job and it's affecting their lives and they have a hard time making their mortgage payments or car payments and they don't know how they're going to pay their bills next, when you're there in it, you look at it differently. You appreciate those people and the challenges they go through and the heartaches they have to face, the same as I do.

Sue: I don't know how people do it without faith. I truly believe that everything happens for a reason, and we'll get through it. We just don't know what it's going to look like when we get through it. We don't know where we will be and what we will be doing and when is probably the hardest question. I have to put it in God's hands because, if I didn't, I think you really could go off the deep end. I think you could be so full of anxiety and frustration and anger and those feelings could go on and on. I'm actually relieved and glad to be able to do that -- to be able to hand it over and say, "Hey, God, this is your deal. I'm going trust that you're going to take care of us because it's way too big for me." ☺

As a way to facilitate prayer and hope for people throughout the diocese who are going through tough economic times, *Christ is our Hope* magazine has created a Yahoo group where people can join and offer their prayers; offer advice and hope to others; talk respectfully about how faith is helping them through the tough times; share networking information or job leads; or vent about their frustrations so others can offer their prayers. It is free to join, and it is as easy as going to the following site -- <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Hopemagazine111> -- and signing up online.

Lessons in hope from the Great Depression



When thinking of the Great Depression, one rarely thinks of hope. The real gross domestic product (GDP) fell about 30 percent from 1929 to 1933, unemployment soared and people went hungry.

Still, one ray of hope for today is that – so far, at least – the present recession has not been as bad. The GDP fell at an annual rate of 6.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008, and governmental programs that did not exist in the 1930s have been helping people who have lost their jobs and homes.

Beyond numbers the *people* who lived during the Great Depression offer a different kind of hope. After all, they survived to tell their stories.

Bill Reynolds

“I remember the Depression very, very well,” said 89-year-old Bill Reynolds. “We were the poorest family in the area.”

The resident of the Arthur Merkle-Clara Knipprath Nursing Home in Clifton said he came from a 14-person family. When the Great Depression hit, they had to move into an abandoned house with a sagging floor.

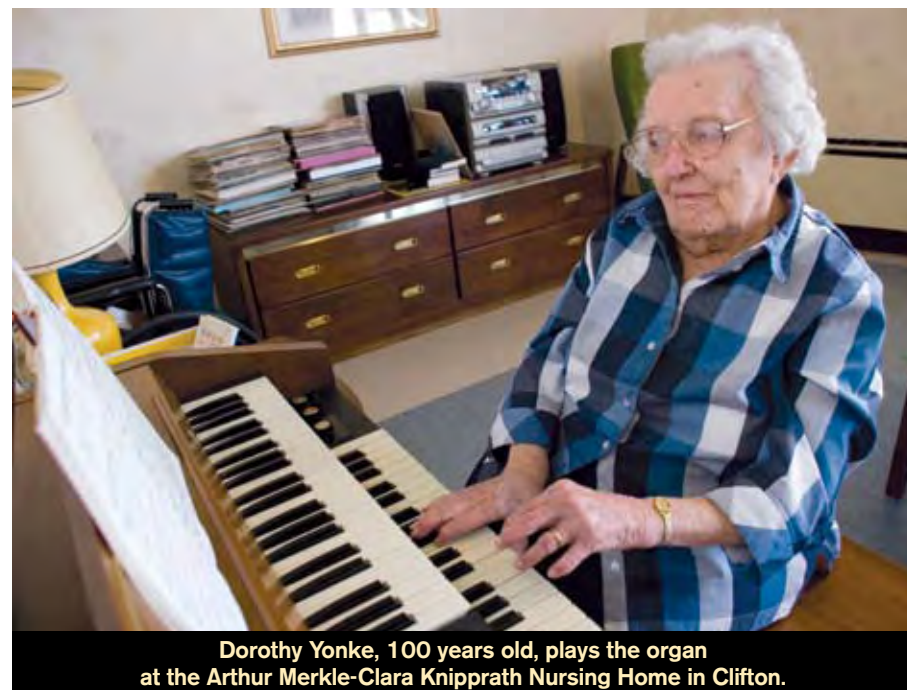
His father mined about a ton of coal a day, which he traded for a dollar's worth of food. Reynolds said other family members helped out when they could: “We would drown gophers out of the hole, and we would take their tails off. One weekend we got 100 gophers, and we went down and traded them in for \$10, and then we used it to buy our groceries.”

To survive the difficult times, Reynolds said, “My mother would pray with us kids. That's where I learned to say my prayers.”

Since the family lived in the country, they could only attend Mass the third Saturday of each month. Reynolds recalled fasting before the liturgy and then taking a team of horses to town.

These days, Reynolds said, he carries his rosary with him almost everywhere, praying it daily. He advised people facing job and home loss to, “Pray for better times, that's all, but give thanks for what you do have.”

“Have faith that things will get better. We, all of us, had that,” he said, adding, “It was through God's will that



Dorothy Yonke, 100 years old, plays the organ at the Arthur Merkle-Clara Knipprath Nursing Home in Clifton.

I made it where I'm at. ... My faith got me through.”

Dorothy Yonke

At the same Catholic nursing home, 100-year-old church musician Dorothy Yonke strained to recall the Great Depression. “After it's all over, you kind of put away the bad stuff. You kind of push it to the back of your memory and keep it there. That's the only way to survive,” she said.

Still, she agreed to fish out some unpleasant recollections to help others facing the economic troubles of today.

Yonke said, during the Great Depression, her husband lost his job at a

train depot, so they moved out to her father's farm near Ashkum to begin working the fields. “You knew how to survive or you had to learn how to survive,” Yonke recalled.

She said her music helped her through the Depression and other difficult times, calling church music a comfort and a prayer. “I would just sit down at the piano. You know what I would play? The opening line of ‘Amazing Grace,’” she said.

In general, when faced with tough economic times, Yonke said, “It helps to have a good religious outlook. ... You need a faith of some kind to help you keep your perspective.” ☪

Story and photography by Amy Kiley

A Spiritual Guide for the Unemployed



Being unemployed can be a very traumatic experience. If you find yourself feeling depressed, demoralized and overwhelmed by the experience, you are not

alone. In this troubled economy, not only are you a part of an ever-widening cross-section of the population, you are bombarded daily with the statistics of fewer available jobs and more job-seekers. It's understandable that feelings of hopelessness and panic can set in at a time when you need all of your strength and optimism most. This short spiritual guide is meant to add encouragement by focusing on your gifts and blessings and, most importantly, on God's love and caring.

1. Remember God's promise not to abandon you.

Trust him. Ask him to send you assistance with your situation and strength to sustain you during the rough times. Place your trust in the one who is all-powerful and you will not be disappointed.

2. Read Matthew 6:24-34. This scripture contains God's reassurance that life is so much more than the material and that we should not worry.

3. Pray and fast. We know that prayer, especially prayer and fasting, can bring about miracles. No prayer goes unanswered.

4. Count your blessings. Sometimes we tend to focus on what we don't have; try to spend some time thinking of all the blessings you have been given. Praying for those less fortunate – and there are always those less fortunate than ourselves – can help us to gain a proper perspective on our own troubles.

5. Know that times of trouble will strengthen you.

The saints who have gone before us have stated repeatedly that their greatest times of struggle were also their greatest times of growth. God may be giving you these trials now in order to build your strength and holiness. He has great plans for you!

6. Offer up your suffering. Sometimes a lack of work can make us feel unproductive and worthless. Remember that offering up pain and suffering to God can bring

about great graces for our families and others and help bring about God's plan for the world. What job can be more important than that? If we can take up our cross and follow Christ, we will be doing as he asks and will know the value of our suffering when we see its fruits in heaven!

7. Exercise humility – ask for help. It's often hard to ask your family and friends for help. If they were in need, you would want them to feel they could come to you. Allow your loved ones the opportunity to extend a little charity toward you for their own advances in holiness. Jesus was humble and asks us to be too. Let others help.

8. Assess your gifts and listen to see where God may be calling you. Sometimes we are given the gift of a break in our hectic pace in order to slow down and meditate on our lives and what God may be asking us to do. Use this opportunity of “downtime” to think about the gifts you have been given and how they may benefit others. Perhaps God is inviting you to a new career or direction or reminding you of all you have to offer.

9. Volunteer. Most people say they would volunteer if they had more time. During this break in your normal routine, spend some time in service to others. It will help you get your mind off your own troubles by helping someone else. You will keep your own situation in perspective by seeing how blessed you really are and by contributing to something worthwhile.

10. Spend some time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Just as we can't spend time in the rays of the sun without them warming us, so we cannot spend time before the Son of God in the most Blessed Sacrament without his graces falling upon us! Thank him for all he has done for you. Tell him how much you love him. Bring him your cares and worries; he will restore your peace.

11. Be hopeful and joyful! Our greatest adversary in times of crisis can be our own discouragement. Scripture repeatedly tells us to “be not afraid” and to give our worries to Jesus. Employers are looking for people who exude a positive attitude. Network with other positive people who will keep you feeling inspired and uplifted. Don't fall prey to despair. If the Lord is master of your life, what can you fear? Be at peace.

— Connie Sanfilippo is a member of the job ministry at St. Mary Immaculate Parish in Plainfield.



Paul's Letters Assure Us of God's Grace

Clifford M. Yeary is the associate director of the Little Rock Scripture Study. This article was originally published in the Arkansas Catholic newspaper and was reprinted with permission. For more information on the series on Saint Paul, go to www.littlerockscripture.org.

Experts debate whether babies learn to recognize a smiling face very early in life or are, in fact, born with the capacity to recognize it as part of their genetic makeup.

In either case, a baby's joy in recognizing a smiling face seems to be an important part of a bonding relationship between parent and child. This puts the baby on the path toward forming healthy relationships with other humans throughout life. Greeting a smiling face first thing in the morning is a joy at any age and can be experienced even by those who live alone – if they possess a mirror!

In a letter addressed to the Christians of Philippi, perhaps as early as the year 55, Paul greeted all who would read or heard it with words meant to cheer them: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." In every letter he wrote, Paul prayed for the recipients to receive the blessings of "grace" from God.

Of all the words that might characterize Paul's thought, few could compete with grace and the many ways he used it. On a surface level, the Greek word for grace simply means "favor." But from its deepest roots in the Old Testament, where there is more than one Hebrew word that would be translated into Greek as grace (*charis*), there is a very warm picture drawn for us of what it means to enjoy God's favor.

In Psalm 31:17 a supplicant begs God, "Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your kindness." In Numbers 6:25, the blessing of God is pronounced upon Israel in this way: "The Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you." The graciousness of God, the grace of God, begins with the image of a face benevolently shining upon those who are humble of stature. It is hard to imagine a face shining without a smile.

Imagine how a shining face might have been an experience of unexpected and unearned joy in ancient biblical times. A servant in a large household has dropped a clay pot on the floor, shattering it and spilling its precious contents in the master's presence. Looking up in fear of the master's response, the servant discovers

that his master is smiling, his face shining graciously. The servant has found "favor" with the master, at a time in which he might have only expected punishment.

Grace is God's favor. Grace is discovering that God welcomes us into a loving, life-giving relationship without us having done anything to earn that favor. In fact, for any one of us who might examine our lives carefully, it is quite evident that God's favor is undeserved.

Grace is not, however, an act of indulgence on God's part. God is not a doddering old uncle who finds everything we do, no matter how careless or offensive, something to reward with his famous smile.

For Paul God's grace comes to us through the violent infliction of an unjust death: the crucifixion of God's son, Jesus Christ. "While we were enemies," Paul tells us in Romans, "we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son" (5:10).

In Romans 5 Paul traces the history of sin in the world. He tells us how death – which is far more than just the fact of our mortality, but rather the ultimate reality of our estrangement from God – came into the world through an original act of sinfulness.

Beginning with the first sin and extending to our own most recent sins, the deadly effects of sin have contaminated the entire human race.

Death reigns victorious everywhere due to sin. Despite the multitude of sins and the universality of death, by the grace of God, the single righteous act of one man – Jesus Christ – will bring all who believe to eternal life. This act was Jesus enduring his crucifixion, which was a direct result of his obedient faithfulness to God.

Paul was personally convinced that grace is the power of God to transform us into the image of Christ even as we struggle with our weakness and imperfections in this life (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Paul gives thanks that the grace given the Corinthian Christians is such that they will not be denied any spiritual gift they need until the Lord's return.

This grace is something extremely powerful in our present lives as well. We, like the Corinthians, are assured that the one who gave us the son will give us anything needed to reach our inheritance as children of God. ☩

“For Paul God's grace comes to us through the violent infliction of an unjust death: the crucifixion of God's son, Jesus Christ. "While we were enemies," Paul tells us in Romans, "we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son"”

Need a refuge from mass marketing? Make it about Mary

By Michelle Sessions DiFranco | Photography by Philip Shippert

As a relatively new mom, I am growing more and more sensitive to the corrosive effects of crude marketing and indecent media. On one recent occasion, I visited Best Buy to get some rechargeable batteries but drifted off-course toward the sea of flashing flat-screen TVs that made up a third of the store. I stopped in my tracks, looked up at one of them and started to daydream. I imagined the Iron Chef plating his chateaubriand with béarnaise sauce on the nice 42-inch plasma that would be hanging above my fireplace.

I pictured large vistas of the Italian Alps on the Travel Channel filling my living room. But in a moment, the spell was broken as I shuddered at the thought of my children seeing 42 flat-screen inches of the inappropriate shows and commercials that permeate TV. Discouraged, I continued to walk toward those boring rechargeable batteries. Often, when we turn on a TV, launch the internet or tune into our iPods, we come in contact with lots of messages and imagery that are contrary to what is really good for us. Our culture makes it a challenge to be chaste before marriage or even in marriage. We are told it is unfashionable to be decent when it comes to what we wear. Where in today's world do we look to find imagery that honors God? Where can we find role models who exhibit self-control, decency, or purity?

Thankfully, as Catholics, we don't have to look very far. There is no better role model of grace and purity than the Blessed Mother. Is it a coincidence that May is the month of Mary as well as the month that celebrates Mother's Day? After all, she is the spiritual mother of all of us. When we find ourselves tempted to stray from God through our actions or words, we can look to her for strength. Whether we pray a whole rosary or a quick Hail Mary, we can ask her to intercede before God for us. Here are a couple of cool projects that lend themselves to such prayer. One is a rosary box and the other is a framed image to hang on a wall or place on a table. Both involve collage, which is one of my favorite art techniques. Collage is basically an assembly of different images to create a new whole image. These in particular have a shabby chic look and feel, but don't limit yourself to that style. You can do almost anything, since there are thousands of different papers and stamps out there.

Whatever your design, consider it art to add to your own home or to give as a gift on Mother's Day. Most importantly, consider it imagery that does honor God as well as our Blessed Mother.



For both projects, you will need the following:

- A small, unfinished wood box
- An unfinished wood picture frame
- Several sheets of scrapbook or collage paper for the background
- A prayer card or any printed image of the Blessed Mother
- Floral or ornamental stamps
- Inkpads (for stamping)
- Decoupage medium (for adhesive and finishing)
- A medium-sized paintbrush

For the rosary box, simply cut out background paper and adhere it (with decoupage medium) to all sides and the top of the unfinished wood box. Stamp any design you wish in order to add more color and to texture to your collage. Cut the contour of the Blessed Mother image and adhere it on top of box lid. Using a paintbrush, apply a coat of the decoupage medium all over the finished box and let dry.

For the framed image, cut out background paper and adhere to the front and sides of the unfinished wood frame. Stamp any design you wish for additional color and texture. Apply a coat of the decoupage medium all over the finished frame and let it dry. For the image inside, create a collaged design using background papers, stamps and the printed image of the Blessed Mother. Frame the final image.

More ideas:

- Don't limit your collage to just paper and stamping. Use any recycled findings, such as metal charms or pieces from a board game.
- Since rubber stamps are sometimes pricey, use scrapbook paper with printed images instead. There are several out there.

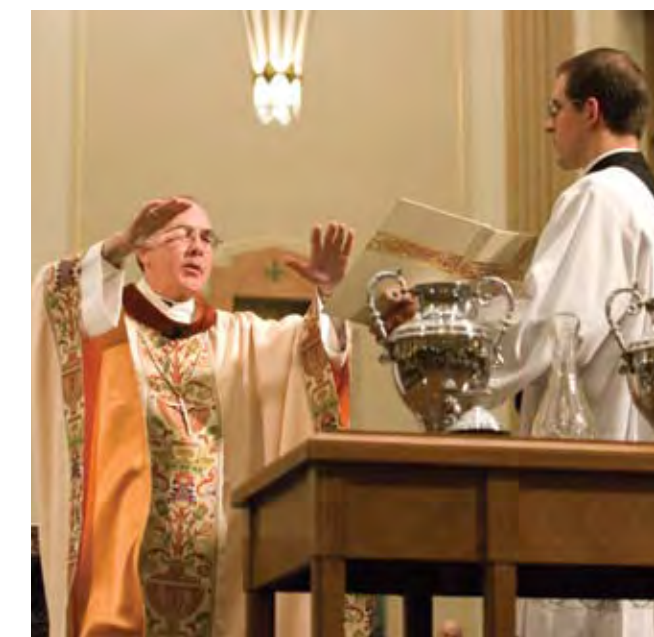
Catholic programming to air on local cable channel

The Diocese of Joliet has been given some free air time on the local Joliet Public Broadcast Channel, and, as a result, the diocese has decided to broadcast, free of charge, Catholic programs produced by Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation. Salt + Light Television is Canada's official Catholic television network that offers content examining issues affecting the Church and society. The foundation is endorsed by national and international Catholic leaders and organizations, including the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, www.dioceseofjoliet.org.



the Vatican Television Centre (CTV), many departments of the Vatican, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. To learn more about it, go to www.saltandlighttv.org.

Channel Six in Joliet has live streaming capabilities. Go to www.jctv6.com to watch the diocesan programming live. The programming on Channel 6 in Joliet will broadcast at 9 a.m.; noon; 7 p.m.; 1 a.m.; and 3 a.m., Mondays through Fridays. Plans are in the works for Channel 6 in Shorewood, Crest Hill, Lockport, Plainfield, Romeoville, and Frankfort to begin broadcasting on those channels soon. For programming updates, go to www.dioceseofjoliet.org.



The Chrism Mass was celebrated last month at the Cathedral of St. Raymond Nonnatus in Joliet. Bishop Peter Sartain blessed the oil of catechumens, the oil of the sick and the oil of chrism. The first oil is used for adult catechumens and infants; the second for the anointing of the sick; and the third one for baptism, confirmation, the ordination of priests and the consecration of altars. The Mass also acknowledged the ministry of priests; they renewed their commitment of service and received prayers and support from the people at the Mass. In these photos, deacons and priests from around the diocese enter at the start of the Mass; Bishop Sartain blesses the oils; and a view of the altar during the Mass.



La bella niña de Nazareth

Miguel Moreno es el Director de la Oficina Diocesana del Ministerio Hispano. Usted puede comunicarse con él a mmoreno@diocesefjoliet.org.

El mes de mayo se conmemora en muchos países el día de la Madre, el ser que como dice el poema “nos dio la vida con llanto, sudor y sangre”. Mes también en que la historia nos recuerda las apariciones de Fátima y donde la Iglesia celebra la presencia de la bella niña de Nazareth.

Han transcurrido 2000 años de vida cristiana y donde sea que se anuncia a Jesús como el Salvador, se escucha también suave y repetidamente, el “sí” de la bella niña de Nazareth ... mi pequeña niña de Nazareth.

¿Cómo no hablar de ti hoy? ¿Cómo no mencionar tu ejemplo y entrega maternal? ¿Cómo poder anunciar a Jesús sin mencionarte? ¿Cómo poder decir que Jesús se hizo carne sin mencionar el lugar donde se encarnó?

Mi pequeña niña de Nazareth, ¿cómo no ensalzar lo que Dios hizo en ti? ¿Cómo podría silenciar mi canto, si lo que canto es la grandeza de Dios reflejada en tu ser? ¿Cómo olvidar o ignorar tu llanto, tu sudor y tu sangre?

En este mes, donde recordamos a nuestras madres, también tu imagen como modelo de sacrificio, humildad y entrega, se presenta ante todos los que reconocemos que Cristo es el Salvador de todos los seres humanos.

Fue Él quien te presentó a nosotros como Madre, cuando en la tarde de aquel viernes dijo: “Mujer, ahí tienes a tu hijo”. Después dijo al discípulo: ‘Ahí tienes a tu madre’. Y desde aquel

momento el discípulo se la llevó a su casa” (Juan 19, 26-27).

¿Cómo yo que soy un discípulo de tu Hijo, no voy a llevarte a la casa? ¿Cómo no voy a alojarte en mi humilde hogar? Al contrario, tu presencia me recordará constantemente a mi Salvador y Señor Jesucristo.

Nosotros, comunidad hispana, sabemos bien el compromiso que aceptamos al pie de la cruz, el compromiso de tener a María siempre a nuestro lado, por eso, la llamamos Madre de Jesús y Madre nuestra. No importa por donde nos encontremos, ella siempre está a nuestro lado. ... Ella peregrina con nosotros.

Y este es el tema de la Conferencia Teológica, “La Virgen Peregrina con el Pueblo Hispano”, que está organizando la Oficina del Ministerio Hispano de nuestra diócesis. Esta Conferencia Teológica se realizará el sábado 27 de junio en el Centro Pastoral San Carlos (402 S. Independence Blvd., Romeoville, 60446).

Contará con la participación de nuestro obispo, Mons. J. Pedro Sartain, y del obispo auxiliar de la Arquidiócesis de Detroit, Mons. Daniel E. Flores. Junto a ellos, nuestro hermano Tony Meléndez, quien nació sin brazos, compartirá con nosotros su testimonio de amor y esperanza en la Virgen María. Los boletos para este evento se han distribuido a través de los líderes parroquiales. Si quieres participar y no has conseguido boletos, por favor, llámanos al (815) 834-4037; si encontramos un boleto disponible, nos estaremos comunicando contigo.

Para este evento, nuestro obispo, Mons. J. Pedro Sartain, ha preparado una oración que nos invita ya, a reflexionar en ese peregrinaje que la Virgen María realiza con la Iglesia, especialmente en la comunidad hispana. Les invito a recitar conmigo la siguiente oración y a pensar en la grandeza de Dios:

La Virgen María Peregrina Con el Pueblo Hispano Oración de la Conferencia Teológica

Poderoso y Eterno Dios, Padre nuestro, en tu gran amor nos diste a tu único Hijo como Salvador, el Cordero de Dios que quita los pecados del mundo;

en tu sabiduría escogiste a la Virgen María para ser la madre de tu Hijo, y Él se la dio a la Iglesia como Modelo y como Signo del Poder de tu Gracia.

De una manera especial, María se ha

dado a conocer al Pueblo Hispano para guiarnos a tu Hijo, Jesús. Ella es la pobre y humilde sierva, quien confió solamente en su Señor. Ella es la primera y mejor discípula, quien se dejó envolver en el Misterio de la salvación en Jesucristo.

Con compasión y bondad, ella abre su corazón para que podamos volvernos a ti, y nos enseña a mantener nuestros ojos puestos en Jesús.

Te damos gracias, Padre celestial, por tan bondadosa y amorosa Madre.

¡Ella fortalece nuestra esperanza!

¡Ella nos une a ti!
Ella nos enseña que las personas de cada nación, son tus hijos e hijas y, por lo tanto, ¡Nuestros hermanos y hermanas!

Que en tu Plan de Salvación, siempre valoremos su misión, mientras le pedimos su amorosa intercesión, y mientras te alabamos por siempre con vidas de amor, fidelidad y paz.

Te lo pedimos por nuestro Señor Jesucristo, tu Hijo, que vive y reina contigo en la unidad del Espíritu Santo y es Dios, por los siglos de los siglos.

Amén.

What in the world?

The top-10 recent Catholic news events

1 Pope condemns killings in Northern Ireland – Pope Benedict XVI condemned “in the strongest terms” the recent murders of two British soldiers and a policeman in Northern Ireland, calling them “abominable acts of terrorism.”

2 Argentine archbishop calls for promotion of women – Archbishop Andres Stanovnik of Corrientes sent special greetings to the women of Argentina to mark International Women’s Day (March 8) and called for the promotion of their dignity without ideological distortions.

3 Bishop receives death threats – Bishop José Luis Azcona of Marajo, Brazil, has received death threats for denouncing the sexual exploitation of human trafficking rings in which “politicians, businessmen and police officers” are implicated.

4 Hindu fundamentalists threaten Catholic schools – Catholics in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh have expressed their grave concern over threats made against Christian schools by the Hindu fundamentalist group Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarti Parishad.

5 Church in Taiwan launches evangelization mission – As the 150th anniversary of the evangelization of the country is marked, the church in Taiwan is encouraging the laity to be a “bridge church” with the Chinese mainland and bring back to the faith those who have fallen away.

6 First prison chapel for Christians inaugurated in Pakistan – The maximum-security prison of Adiala in the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi now has a chapel, which was built with the support of the government, the Catholic Church and other Christian institutions.

7 Pro-life experts ask Obama not to push abortion in Latin America – The Latin American Post-Abortion Care Network has sent an open letter to President Barack Obama asking him to reverse his efforts to fund abortion in the region.

8 Connecticut bill regulating Catholic Church pulled – Following a deluge of phone calls and e-mails, the bill introduced in the Connecticut Senate to reorganize the financial and pastoral structure of the Catholic Church has been pulled and tabled for the rest of the legislative session.

9 Catholics United denies group formed to cover for pro-abortion polls – Father Bernard Healey, the editor of the Rhode Island Catholic, has written an editorial accusing the group Catholics United of being formed to “give cover to pro-abortion policy-makers.”

10 Study reports on U.S. Catholic population – A new study on American religion finds Catholicism is facing a “stunning” decline in the northeast U.S. as the population center of Catholics shifts to the southwest.

Executive order on embryonic stem cells “a sad victory of politics over science and ethics,” says Cardinal Rigali

Cardinal Justin Rigali, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, called President Obama’s recent executive order on embryonic stem cell research “a sad victory of politics over science and ethics.” Under the order, for the first time in U.S. history, federal tax dollars will be used to encourage researchers to destroy live human embryos for stem cell research. Excerpts from Cardinal Rigali’s statement follow:

“President Obama’s new executive order on embryonic stem cell research is a sad victory of politics over science and ethics. This action is morally wrong because it encourages the destruction of innocent human life, treating vulnerable human beings as mere products to be harvested. It also disregards the values of millions of American taxpayers who oppose research that requires taking human life. Finally, it ignores the fact that ethically sound means for advancing stem cell science and medical treatments are readily available and in need of increased support. – Zenit

Bishop Sartain thanks those who helped oppose proposed abortion legislation

Bishop Peter Sartain wishes to express his sincere gratitude to those who contacted their legislators expressing opposition to HB 2354, the state’s Freedom of Choice Act proposal. The bill has been defeated and will not be called for a vote. This great accomplishment would not

Things to do:

Catholic women’s retreat: Women from across the diocese are invited to join women from the Cathedral of St. Raymond in Joliet for a retreat May 15-17 at the Bellarmine Jesuit Retreat House, 420 W. County Line Road, Barrington. Contact Liz Sallese at (815) 436-9010 or Ann McDaniel at (815) 577-7254.

Ordination to the priesthood: Three seminarians – Deacons Dindo Billote, Alejandro Flores and Matt Nathan – will become ordained to the priesthood on June 6, 11 a.m., at the Cathedral of St. Raymond, 604 N. Raynor Ave., in Joliet.

Discernment retreat: The Joliet Area Vocations Association will sponsor a discernment retreat for vocations for young adults – males and females from 18-35 – on June 14 from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. at the Portuncula Retreat House, 9201 W. St. Francis Road, in Frankfort. Call (815) 834-4004 for more information.

World Day of Prayer for Priests: An outdoor Mass will celebrate the priesthood and the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 19 at 6 p.m. at Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, 36 N. Ellsworth, in Naperville. The main celebrant at the Mass will be Father Mitch Pacwa. The Mass will feature a combined choir from parishes around the diocese; the guests of honor will be priests from the diocese. After the Mass, there will

have happened without decisive action by the Catholic faithful in the Diocese of Joliet and across the state of Illinois.

We now have the opportunity to contact our legislators once again. This time we need to ask our elected officials to vote yes on HB 3700, a bill that will truly reduce the unnecessary taking of innocent human life. HB 3700 would mandate that an ultrasound be

be a block party picnic in Naperville City Park across from the church. Seminars by Father Pacwa will take place on June 20. For more information and to find out about purchasing tickets, go to www.wdppjoliet.org

Collegiate Leadership Conference: All college-age young adults – 18 to 23 – are invited to the 2009 Collegiate Leadership Conference (CLC) from June 26-28 at Lewis University in Romeoville. The conference will be hosted by the Diocese of Joliet and will be focused on building up young leaders for their campuses, for the Church, and for the world. For more information about the event or about the costs, or to register for this conference, go online to www.dioceseofjoliet.org/yam/clc2009.asp or e-mail clc@dioceseofjoliet.org.

Franciscan anniversary musical celebration: To celebrate the milestone of the founding of the Franciscan Order by Saint Francis of Assisi in 1209, Chiesa Nuova, a Franciscan ministry in Chicago for performing arts, will present a concert on June 26 and 27 at Lund Auditorium in the Performing Arts Center of Dominican University, 7900 Division St., River Forest. Along with other orchestral and solo works, the featured work will be the oratorio, Dialogue of Francis and Clare, by Father Robert Huttmacher, O.F.M. The role of Saint Francis will be sung by world-renowned bass-baritone Alan Held, and mezzo-soprano Stacey Eckert will sing the role of St. Clare. Tickets are top-left. For tickets or more information, call (312) 226-0983 or visit www.chiesanuova.org.

offered to an expectant mother prior to an abortion.

If you would like to receive additional updates on this bill, or on other matters affecting the Catholic Church’s public policy agenda in Springfield, please call 312-368-1066, or go to www.catholicconferenceofillinois.org. Thank you for your actions and prayers.

Collections reveal diocese’s generosity

Doug Delaney is the diocesan director of communications and associate publisher of *Christ is our Hope* magazine.



The generosity of the people of the Diocese of Joliet was extremely obvious once again last year. In March of 2008, the people of the diocese responded admirably to the national Catholic Relief Services’ (CRS) collection. The funds collected through the CRS support six vital Catholic programs that share in the church’s mission of promoting the sacredness of human life and the dignity of the human person. They provide hope to people faced with overwhelming circumstances, reminding us that Christ is present in those who suffer – and in those who respond compassionately to their needs. The parishes in our diocese collected \$297,264. This was one of the largest dollar amounts of any diocese or archdiocese in the country.

There were numerous natural disasters in 2008 that had a severe impact on millions of people. In June 2008, parishes in the diocese were asked to take up a volunteer collection to help alleviate some of the suffering caused by severe flooding in the Midwest, which caused massive devastation and suffering to some of our close neighbors. Parishioners were also asked to help victims of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar and the earthquake that devastated Sichuan, China. Thanks to the generosity of parishioners, the special collections taken up for those affected for those disasters totaled \$63,740. This includes \$2,254 collected at a Diocesan Youth Leadership

Conference. These funds were distributed equally to Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) to assist Midwest flood victims and to CRS to help victims in China and Myanmar.

More devastation by other weather-related events followed. Last summer, the effects of hurricanes Gustav and Ike were staggering. Multiple counties in Texas and Louisiana were declared disaster areas, and 2 million people were displaced. The hurricanes also adversely affected Cuba with major floods throughout the island. More than 3 million were evacuated, and more than 63,000 residences were demolished. Severe weather patterns throughout the Caribbean also caused

havoc on Haiti, the Western Hemisphere’s poorest nation. Floodwaters forced mass evacuations, leaving millions stranded. For some, CCUSA was the only source of help.

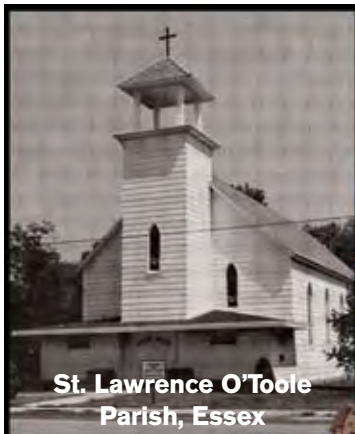
Once again, the parishes of the diocese were asked to take up another completely voluntary collection. The proceeds – \$53,033 – were divided equally between CCUSA and CRS.

Another program has also benefited from people’s generosity. Steps Toward Eliminating Poverty (STEP) is the name of an anti-hunger, anti-poverty program in the diocese. It is an annual multi-parish event/walk that raises funds for local and global poverty-related issues. It also raises awareness and

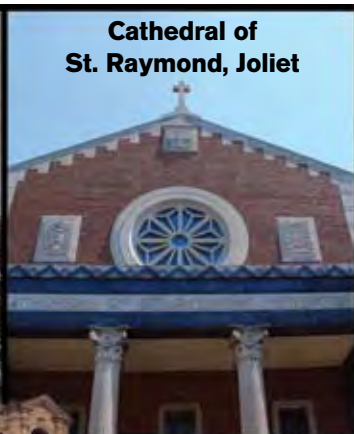
stimulates action. In 2008, STEP raised \$26,675, with 25 percent of the funds going to local food pantries and 75 percent sent to CRS for needs in more than 80 countries around the world.

Overall, the total donated last year to CRS and CCUSA by people from the diocese was \$440,712.

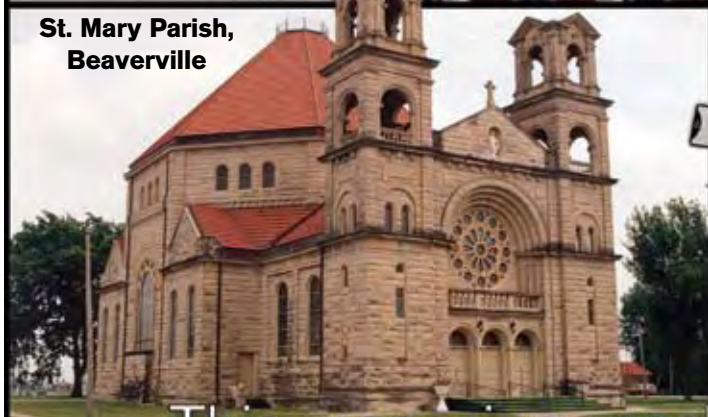
Bishop Peter Sartain stated that he is proud that the people of the Diocese of Joliet are so willing to share their resources with those in such need. Every gift is a blessing. I would also like to offer a special thank you to all of the parishioners and the pastors who took up these special collections. On behalf of those who are the recipients of your generosity, I thank you.



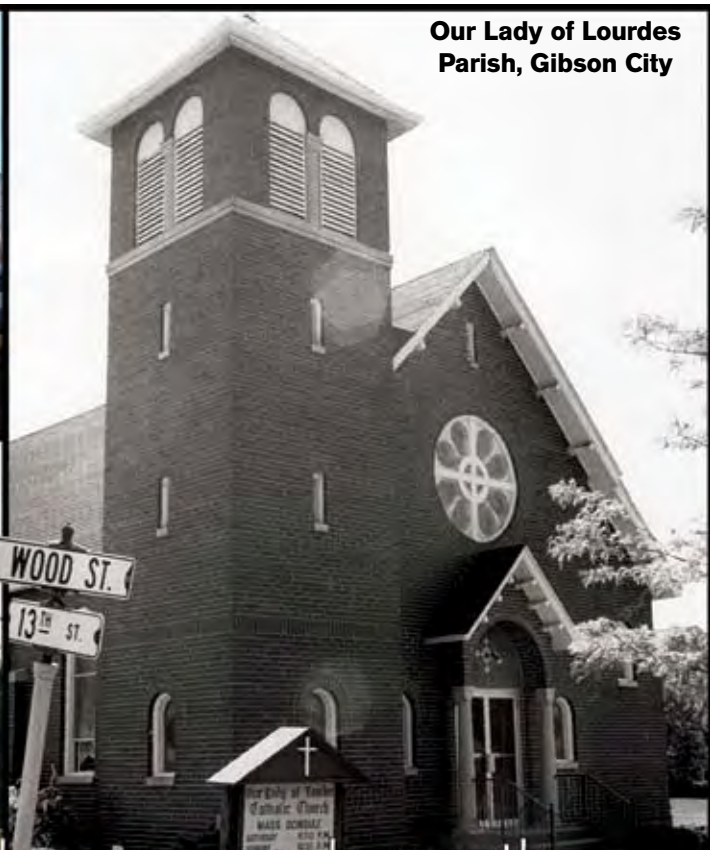
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Parish, Essex**



**Cathedral of
St. Raymond, Joliet**



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**Our Lady of Lourdes
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