



A project FOR THE ages

More than a decade ago a North Carolina man went looking for his family's roots in Wilmington. Many volunteer hours later, local Catholics have a valuable genealogical tool online — parish sacramental records from before 1900.

▶ **Story, page 10**



Quelling immigrants' census fears

Church groups
address myths

By Gary Morton
Staff reporter

Church ministries and other faith-based organizations in Delaware that serve immigrants and other underserved populations are trying to counter some myths as they promote participation in the 2010 Census.

Census forms are being mailed this month as part of the government's effort every 10 years to get an accurate count of the people living in each state. April 1 is Census Day, which the Census Bureau uses as a target date for returning completed forms by mail.

Maria Velasquez, community organizer for the Hispanic advocacy group Voices Without Borders, urges all people to answer the 10 questions on the form when it arrives. Among the questions are how many people live at an address, their names and sex, and other demographic information.

One of the major myths Velasquez battles among many Latinos and other immigrants, especially those without proper documentation, is that Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers will use the information to deport them. By law, Velasquez said, census information "can't be used for immigration issues or anything like that. I don't think the community is aware of that." None of the questions asks whether the respondent is a citizen or has proper documentation.

Voices Without Borders, which has offices at St. Paul Parish in Wilmington, is one of several church ministries and

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Ten receive papal honors

Seven laypeople, two priests, and one sister cited for service

Dialog report

Ten men and women, including two religious-order priests, one woman religious, and seven laypeople, have been awarded papal honors by Pope Benedict XVI for service to the church, Bishop Malooly has announced.

Receiving the Benemerenti Medal are Thomas Connelly Jr., Carl Danberg, Brother Ronald Giannone, Sister Maria Mairlot, Father Joseph McLaughlin, Jack Raughley, and Darryl Simms, who is being honored posthumously. The Benemerenti ("good merit") Medal recognizes individuals for exceptional accomplishments and ser-

vice to the church. Created in 1791 by Pope Pius VI, it depicts the image of Christ on a gold Greek cross.

Receiving the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Cross are Dorothy Arthur, Anthony Flynn, and Dr. Eileen Schmitt. The Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice ("for church and pope") Cross was established in 1888 by Pope Leo XIII and is given for distinguished service to the church. The medal includes a Greek-shaped cross with an image of saints Peter and Paul in the middle.

The recipients will be formally honored during a ceremony May 30 at 4 p.m. at St. John the Beloved Church in Wilmington, along with four priests who were recently named chaplains to

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The awards are the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Cross (left) and the Benemerenti medal.

Major study of U.S. parish life underway.

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Bishop Malooly's schedule



SATURDAY, MARCH 6

• Confirmation, Ss. Peter and Paul, Easton, Md., 11 a.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 7

• Mass and Knights of Columbus Breakfast of Champions, Christ Our King, Wilmington, 10 a.m.

MONDAY, MARCH 8

• Mount St. Mary's Univer-

sity board meeting, Emmitsburg, Md., 9 a.m.

TUESDAY, MARCH 9

• Catholic Diocese Foundation meeting, 1626 Union St., Wilmington, 1 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10

• Diocesan Finance Council, 1626 Union St., Wilmington, 12:30 p.m.

On the cover

Photograph of St. Mary's in Wilmington (top, circa 1905) courtesy of the Delaware Historical Society; Photo of The Cathedral of St. Peter by Don Blake/The Dialog.

Census

Continued from page 1

organizations in the diocese working with the Census Bureau on this year's count. Others include the diocesan Ministry for Black Catholics, Hispanic Ministry, Catholic Charities, and Seton Center, a Catholic Charities outreach center in Princess Anne, Md. They are providing brochures and other information and encouraging their clients to participate.

"From a social justice standpoint, the census is important in that it impacts how federal resources are allocated" for schools, roads, and social services, said Andy Zampini, director of Catholic Charities' Parish Social Ministry. "It is important for all to participate, but it is especially important for underserved populations to participate so that they are counted for when it comes to the allocation of resources."

After April 1, census workers will visit households that did not return a form. The bureau is required to provide population information to Washington in December. That information will be used to distribute \$400 billion



The Census Bureau has produced material for people who work with immigrants.

in federal funding.

Alejandro Aguilera-Titus, assistant director for Hispanic affairs for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said three groups are historically undercounted: "the new immigrant, those who are isolated due to little knowledge of English, and the low-income."

The church, through ministries such as Seton Center in Somerset County, Md., reaches out to people in the categories Aguilera-Titus cited. Somerset County is the poorest in Maryland, with a per capita annual income of \$24,053.

"They trust us," Sister Regina Hudson said of the center's clients. "If we share with them it's OK to tell how many people are living in your house, they say 'Oh, OK.' They realize it's going to be alright."

In Wilmington, Velasquez understands some of the concerns new arrivals have; she came to the U.S. from Colombia 10 years ago. "It's hard for some Latinos to understand a government doing something good," she said, since some come from nations with corrupt governments.

Within Hispanic communities, she said, frustration over immigration issues sometimes leads to a feeling "that undocumented immigrants can't even be counted as real people in this country."

"Here's a chance to be counted for something that matters," Velasquez said. "This is only to count you as a human being living and breathing and sometimes even working in this country. It's a count of the population and how many of each ethnicity is in the country."

Catholic Charities' needs food to restock pantries in diocese

Dialog report

The harsh winter weather has taken a toll on food supplies at Catholic Charities' food distribution outlets in the diocese. Demand is up and donations are down. Through its "Stock the Pantry" program, the agency is again asking for contributions of non-perishable food and grocery store gift cards that can be dropped off at Catholic Charities locations and 11 churches in the diocese starting Saturday and ending March 28.

"The heavy snowfall and cold temperatures, along with the continuing poor economic climate, have placed great demands on our emergency pantries and our food distribution programs," said Richelle Vible, Charities' executive director. "Over the last two years, our communities have donated over 20,000 pounds of food. Unfortunately, Catholic Charities distributes that much food in one month. The need is constant."

Catholic Charities coordinates food cooperative programs at Casa San Francisco in Milton, Bayard House in Wilmington, and Seton Center in Princess Anne, Md. Those programs distribute food monthly to qualified participants, along with information about shopping on a budget, menu planning, and nutrition. Casa San Francisco and Seton Center also operate emergency food pantries; demand at

those pantries doubled from 2008 to 2009, the agency reported.

Donations may be made Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. at the following locations:

Catholic Charities' main office, 2601 W. Fourth St., Wilmington, 655-9624

Bayard House, 300 Bayard Ave., Wilmington, 654-1184

Kent County office, 1155 Walker Road, Dover, 674-1600

Sussex County office, 406 S. Bedford St., Suite 9, Georgetown, 856-9578

Casa San Francisco, 127 Broad St., Milton, 684-8694

Eastern Shore office, 1201 Pemberton Drive, Suite 1-A, Salisbury, Md., (410) 749-1121

Seton Center, 30632 Hampden Ave., Princess Ann, Md., (410) 651-9608

Casa San Francisco and Bayard House can accept donations 7 days a week. Call ahead before making a donation.

Monetary donations also are accepted. Online donations may be made at www.cdow.org/ccdonation.html; choose "Food Distribution Programs" as the designated ministry.

For food distribution program guidelines, call

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THE DIALOG
Official newspaper of the Diocese of Wilmington
(USPS - 152440)
Publisher - MOST REV. W. FRANCIS MALOOLY

Member: **Catholic Press Association**
The Dialog is published 45 weeks per year (biweekly in June, July & August) by The Catholic Press of Wilmington, Inc. Offices at 1925 Delaware Ave., Wilmington, Del.
Subscription price is \$20 annually.
Periodicals postage paid at Wilmington, DE
Office Hours: Mon.—Fri., 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Mailing Address: The Dialog, P. O. Box 2208, Wilmington, DE 19899-2208

TELEPHONE: Newsroom (302) 573-3109
Advertising (302) 573-3112 FAX (302) 573-6948
E-Mail: news@thedialog.org
advertising@thedialog.org
Website: www.cdow.org/dialog.html
Send all news releases and photos to mailing address above. Send address changes to The Dialog, P.O. Box 2208, Wilmington, DE 19899. Not responsible for unsolicited materials.

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Honors

Continued from page 1

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI and given the title of monsignor: Msgrs. Charles Brown, George Brubaker, John Hopkins and Daniel McGlynn.

Bishop Malooly said the new honorees, like the new monsignors, were selected from a list he developed with his predecessor Bishop Michael A. Saltarelli's help last summer, just months before Bishop Saltarelli died in October.

"We tried to think of men and women, laity and outstanding religious, who were active during his 12 years and during my 10 months. I felt this was an opportunity to honor those who served him so well and people I was finding out were serving me well."

The bishop said Simms' papal honor had been approved in Rome before his death in December at age 56; members of his family will participate in the May 30 ceremony.

Here are brief descriptions of the honorees' service to the church:

• **Dorothy Arthur**, a member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Wilmington, was a founder of the first radio ministry of the diocese, "Catholic Forum of the Air," for which she wrote scripts and helped produce for 25 years. She was also a television pioneer in the diocese with the Catholic Television Guild, which produced a weekly half-hour show with Catholic themes from 1950 to 1957. At St. Anthony's, Arthur helped revive the Lenten drama *Via Crucis*, writing the script 50 years ago for the annual presentation of the Passion of the Lord and directing it for 44 years. Now retired, she lives in West Grove, Pa.

• **Thomas M. Connelly Jr.**, a member of St. Joseph on the Brandywine Parish in Greenville, is executive vice president and chief innovation officer at the DuPont Co. He formerly served on the board of directors of Catholic Charities and has been a member of the Circle of Honor of the Diocese of Wilmington for his support of the Annual Catholic



Appeal. In May 2008 he was named a co-chairman of Vision for the Future 2008, a \$6 million major-gifts campaign to raise endowment funds for tuition assistance to Catholic schools. He taught religious education at St. Joseph's and was involved in youth ministry at St. Ann's in Wilmington in the 1980s.

• **Carl Danberg**, a member of St. John's-Holy Angels Parish in Newark, is commissioner of the Delaware Department of Correction, taking office three years ago. Delaware's attorney general from December 2005 to January 2007, he serves on the boards of directors of Mount Aviat Academy in Childs, Md., and the St. Patrick's Day Society, which supports the St. Patrick's Senior Center in Wilmington through activities such as an annual Communion breakfast. He is an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist at his parish, a member of the Knights of Columbus, and serves in the Delaware National Guard.

• **Anthony G. Flynn**, a member of St. Ann's Parish in Wilmington, is a partner at Young Conaway Stargatt & Taylor, legal counsel for the Diocese of Wilmington, a member of the National Diocesan Attorneys Association

and a founding member of the diocesan St. Thomas More Society, a Catholic organization for those in the legal profession. At St. Ann's he has served on the parish council, including as president; the parish census committee; and the Centennial Committee. A graduate of Archmere Academy, he is legal counsel to that school, a member of its executive committee and former member of its board of trustees. In 2001, he chaired the executive committee of the Committee to Save Archmere. He is a former executive officer of the Diocese of Wilmington's pastoral council and served on the diocese's planning task force on parishes and schools in the 1990s.

• **Brother Ronald Giannone** is the founder and executive director of the Ministry of Caring, a network of social-service facilities and programs in Wilmington. Brother Ronald, a Capuchin Franciscan priest ordained in 1990, began the ecumenical Ministry of Caring in 1977. Since then, the ministry has grown to include more than 20 facilities and offers food, shelter, job placement, education, child care, before- and after-school programs, and affordable housing for seniors.

Brother Ronald received the Msgr. Thomas J. Reese Award from Catholic Charities in 1994 for his "deep commitment to promoting and restoring the well-being of people."

• **Sister Maria Mairlot**, a member of the Carmelites of Charity Vedruna, is active in Hispanic ministry at St. Michael the Archangel in Georgetown, where she directs the Spanish-language choir and the Hispanic religious education program for adults and children. She and fellow Carmelite Sister Rosa Alvarez moved to Georgetown in 1995 to help meet the needs of Latinos. She serves on the board of directors and volunteers at La Esperanza, a Georgetown outreach program to help migrants assimilate into society, and has worked for Delmarva Rural Ministries. Sister Maria received a Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Award in Delaware in 2003.

• **Father Joseph McLaughlin** is in his second stint as headmaster of Archmere Academy in Claymont, a post he has held since 2006. Ordained in 1970, he came to Archmere that year to teach English, public speaking and religion. He became headmaster in 1983, serving in that post until

1996. The Norbertine priest returned to Archmere in 2001 and was its chaplain until his selection as headmaster. He will step down as headmaster at the end of this school year but will remain at Archmere as chaplain and director of mission and heritage.

• **John "Jack" Raughley** is a past state deputy for the Delaware Council of the Knights of Columbus. He is a member of the Christopher Council and the Bishop Thomas J. Mardaga Fourth-Degree Assembly, both in Claymont. As a fourth-degree knight, he helped coordinate transportation for visiting bishops for the installation of Bishop Malooly and the funeral of Bishop Michael Saltarelli. He also was in the color corps for Pope Benedict XVI's Mass at Nationals Stadium in Washington two years ago. He is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Wilmington, where he has been involved in perpetual adoration since its inception more than a decade ago. He is a retired financial and systems manager in the insurance industry.

• **Dr. Eileen Schmitt** is known for her medical outreach to the poor and homeless throughout the diocese. After leaving her position as president and chief executive officer of St. Francis Hospital in 2001, she became medical director of the St. Clare Medical Van for six years, making rounds throughout the Wilmington area to provide free health care to those who could not afford it. She received the Msgr. Thomas J. Reese Award from Catholic Charities in 2006 and serves on the diocesan board that reviews allegations of sexual abuse. She is now in private practice.

• **Darryl Simms**, director of the Ministry for Black Catholics for the diocese from 2003 to 2009, died in December at age 56. He was a member of St. Joseph's Parish on French Street in Wilmington and served as president of its parish council. He also sang in the parish choir and with the diocesan gospel choir. He was a Knight of Peter Claver, Knight of Columbus, member of the diocesan school board and a founding member of the Delaware Alliance of Catholic School Parents.

Faith and the family

What are your family's faith traditions?

The Dialog wants to hear about your family's faith traditions, past and present. Besides attending Sunday Mass together, what traditions connected to your Catholic faith have developed in your family over the years?

Is there a religious item treasured by family members over the years? Do you recite the rosary or other prayers

as a family at home? Do you celebrate first Communions with a traditional gift or other family custom? Does your family gather at a favorite place for a meal after Mass on Sundays? Is there a retreat house favored by the family? A devotion to a particular saint? A parish event or social service venue where family members faithfully volunteer?

Describe your family's faith tradition and its significance to your family in 200 words or less and send it by **March 8 to Elissa Serrao at eserrao@thedialog.org** or to **Family Faith Traditions, The Dialog, Box 2208, Wilmington, DE 19899**. Photographs illustrating your tradition are also welcome.



Parish life in U.S. is subject of major study

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Researchers are working on an in-depth study of Catholic parish life in the United States.

The study is being conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, based at Georgetown University in Washington, on behalf of the Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership Project.

"This research will provide the U.S. church with the most comprehensive and accurate picture of parish life" since a Notre Dame study of parishes was conducted in the 1980s, said Mercy Sister Mary Bendyna, CARA's executive director and senior research associate.

"Among other things," she said the study will "examine the

new models and new structures for parish ministry that are emerging as parishes are reorganized and the people they serve are more diverse."

The first phase of the research — currently under way — involves a series of surveys that have been sent to representative samples of Catholic parishes in the United States. The initial surveys will be followed by an in-depth study of parish leaders and parishioners at approximately 60 parishes, including a sample of 35 parishes that reflects the diversity of geographic region, demography, and size of U.S. parishes.

The study also will examine parishes that do not have pastors because of a lack of priests as well as multicultural parishes and parishes using multiple-

parish ministry.

An interim analysis of the research results is expected in the late spring, with a full report to be issued by early summer, said Trish Sullivan Vanni, project director for the Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership Project, which commissioned the study.

The second of three phases of the research, the in-depth study at 60 parishes, would begin around September, with initial results due in January or February of 2011, she said. Initial results of the third phase, the in-pew parishioner study, are expected in mid-2011, with a full report on the research findings to follow in late 2011.

Researchers hope the data will provide pastoral leaders with a comprehensive overview of Catholic parishes and a detailed

picture of emerging trends in areas such as:

- Opportunities and challenges in multicultural parishes.
- Young adult involvement in parish life and pastoral leadership.
- Changing patterns in parish staffing and compensation.
- Ministry in parishes that share a pastor and/or staff.
- The roles of business managers and finance councils.
- Experiences of parishioners in parishes administered by parish life coordinators.

The Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership Project is an initiative of the Washington-based National Association for Lay Ministry with the Conference for Pastoral Planning and Council Development in New York City; the National Association of

Church Personnel Administrators, based in Cincinnati; the National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association, which has offices in Washington and the Chicago area; and the National Federation of Priests' Councils, which is in Chicago.

The project is funded by the Lilly Endowment, and recently received a \$1 million renewal grant from Lilly for research initiatives focused on parish leadership.

Since 2004, the Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership Project has conducted a series of research symposiums and surveys on such topics as the best practices of pastoral leaders; pastoring multiple parishes; the next generation of pastoral leaders; human resources; and diversity in Catholic parishes

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Food

Continued from page 2

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Churches accepting donations are: St. Ann, St. Catherine of Siena, and Immaculate Heart of Mary in Wilmington; St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Bear; Holy Cross, Dover; St. Polycarp, Smyrna; St. John the Apostle, Milford; St. Bernadette, Harrington; St. Jude, Lewes; St. Edmond, Rehoboth Beach; and St. John Neumann, Berlin, Md. Check with the parish for drop-off times.

Suggested donation items include:

Canned goods like spaghetti, chicken, chili, tuna, salmon, beef stew, corned beef hash, beans, soups, vegetables, and fruit; boxes of pasta, macaroni and cheese, crackers, cereal, oatmeal, and pancake mix; jars of peanut butter and jelly; juice, coffee, tea, hot cocoa mix, instant breakfasts; shelf-stable milk, either dry or evaporated; baby food and cereal; condiments like spreads, ketchup, mustard, relish, barbecue sauce, pickles and syrup.

Fire destroys historic rectory

Dialog report

HOCKESSIN — The 198-year-old rectory of the first Catholic Church in Delaware was gutted by fire Feb. 10.

The three-story stone farmhouse, on Lancaster Pike south of Hockessin, sits on the site of the Coffee Run Mission, established in 1772. The house was built as a rectory in 1812 under the supervision of Father Patrick Kenny, pastor of the church that was named St. Mary of the Assumption about 1790. The house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The fire has been ruled arson by the Cranston Heights Fire Company and was being investigated, according to a report in the Feb. 28 Community News. The property's owner — WCNJ, LLC, managed by commercial redevelopment company Harvey Hanna and Associates — said the building was no longer economically viable for restoration and would be torn down as a safety hazard, according to the news report. A stone barn and other structures on the property survived the blaze, which occurred dur-



The Dialog/Don Blake

A three-story stone farmhouse near Hockessin that served as the rectory of the first Catholic Church in Delaware was gutted by fire Feb. 10. The farmhouse, built in 1812, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.


ing the Feb. 10-11 major snowstorm, but a demolition permit had been issued for those buildings prior to the fire, according to the report.

The original St. Mary's log church was replaced in 1850 by another log structure that

was used until 1882, when St. John the Evangelist Church opened to the north in Hockessin. That church became the current St. Mary of the Assumption in 1965.

Father Kenny died in 1840 and is buried at Coffee Run

Cemetery, adjacent to the farmhouse property. The cemetery is closed but is still maintained by the Diocese of Wilmington. The 1850 church was razed in 1908, and the diocese sold the rectory in 1912.



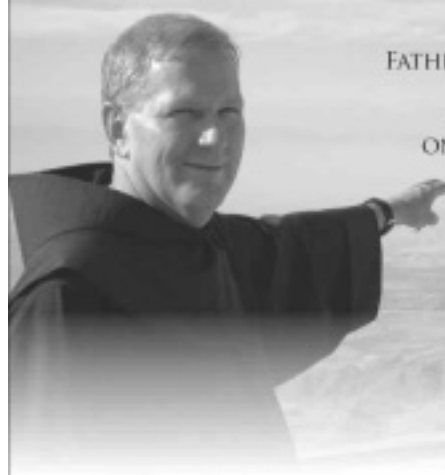
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“Celebrate Life Day” scheduled for April 18 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

WILMINGTON — The diocesan Office for Religious Education will hold its annual “Celebrate Life Day” for people with special needs and their families and friends on April 18 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, 345 Bear-Christiana Road, Bear.

The day includes Mass with Bishop Malooly at 4 p.m. and a light supper to follow. Those who plan to attend are asked to bring two or three cans of food for the parish food closet.

To register, call the Office for Religious Education at 573-3130 by March 24.

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Md. bishops oppose recognizing same-sex unions from other states

By Catholic News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Maryland’s Catholic bishops took “strong exception” to a Feb. 24 opinion by Maryland’s attorney general stating that state agencies should recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states.

“We trust our legislature and the people of Maryland will also object, and will act accordingly to counteract this opinion,” said a joint statement released Feb. 24 by Archbishop Edwin F. O’Brien of Baltimore, Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl of Washington and Bishop W. Francis Malooly of Wilmington, whose dioceses include parts of Maryland.

The statement was released by the Maryland Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the state’s bishops, based in Annapolis.

Attorney General Douglas Gansler issued the opinion on same-sex marriage in response to a legislator’s request he look into a question some say is unclear in state law.

Maryland is one of 41 states with a statute that defines marriage as only between a man and a woman. Measures to allow same-sex marriages in Maryland have failed, although the state’s lawmakers have extended some benefits to same-sex couples.

Although it will not change state law, Gansler’s opinion can guide Maryland officials. The attorney general’s office, for example, can defend a state agency in court for recognizing a same-sex marriage from another state.

Legislation stating that Maryland would recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states

has not made it through the General Assembly.

The bishops noted that the General Assembly has “repeatedly and explicitly upheld Maryland’s definition of marriage ‘between a man and a woman’ even as certain limited benefits have been extended to same-sex couples.”

They said the attorney general’s opinion “chips away at our society’s foundational institution” and demonstrates a “fundamental disregard for the nature and purpose of marriage and its impact on society, as well as for the expressed will of the legislature and previous attorney general opinions.”

“We urge lawmakers, the governor and the courts to uphold the definition of marriage through all appropriate means,” the bishops stressed.

The bishops said they “respect the dignity of homosexual persons and roundly reject all unjust discrimination against them,” but noted that Maryland’s marriage statute reflects the “convictions of Maryland’s citizens and their legislators.”

They noted marriage between a man and a woman is not “merely a fact of religious faith or an institution established by civil authorities” but is “invariably reserved to the union of one man and one woman because of their unique ability to bring children into the world, thus forming a stable and secure foundation for our society.”

“Allowing the decisions of out-of-state jurisdictions or courts to dictate public policy in Maryland undermines the proper role of the legislature and the citizens they represent,” the bishops added.

Maryland’s bishops say the attorney general’s opinion demonstrates a fundamental disregard for the “nature and purpose of marriage.”



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Church won't fault Spain's king for signing abortion law

By Catholic News Service

MADRID, Spain — If King Juan Carlos of Spain signs a new law easing restrictions on abortion, as he is constitutionally required, the country's bishops will not take action against him, the general secretary of the Spanish bishops' conference said.

As the law was being debated, Spain's bishops had said Catholic members of parliament who vote to liberalize abortion would place themselves outside the church and should not receive Communion.

"That his majesty the king must sanction this law with his signature is a unique situation. No other citizen would encounter this," and so "general principles" cannot be applied, said Auxiliary Bishop Juan Antonio Martinez

Camino of Madrid, conference general secretary.

Bishop Martinez spoke to the press at the end of a meeting of the permanent commission of the bishops' conference Feb. 25, which also was the day after Spain's Parliament narrowly approved a law easing longstanding restrictions on abortion.

In a vote of 132-126, members of Parliament passed the law removing all restrictions on abor-



CNS/Reuters
Spain's King Juan Carlos greets Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Vatican's secretary of state, during the cardinal's visit to Madrid last year.

tion up to the 14th week of pregnancy and extending legal abortion to 22 weeks of gestation if the life of the mother is at risk or if the fetus shows signs of serious malformations.

asked repeatedly about church sanctions against the king and against Catholic members of Parliament who voted for the law, Bishop Martinez said the bishops "have excommunicated no one," but those who actively supported the law have seriously separated

themselves from the church and should not receive Communion.

The situation of a politician who can vote and the king who must sign the law "are different considerations," he said.

Pro-life Catholics have begun an Internet-based petition drive to convince King Juan Carlos not to sign the law.

"Please, Your Majesty, do not sanction this new holocaust with your signature," the petition said. By noon Feb. 26, the Internet site reported receiving almost 57,700 signatures.

The late King Baudouin of Belgium faced a similar dilemma in 1990 when his nation's Parliament passed a bill liberalizing abortion.

Saying his conscience and Catholic faith would not allow him to sign the bill, he worked

out an agreement with parliament allowing him to resign for less than 48 hours. During his temporary abdication, the country's council of ministers assumed the king's powers and signed the bill. Parliament then reinstated the king.

Ending their spring meeting Feb. 25, members of the Spanish bishops' conference said Spain's new law takes "attacks on the life of those about to be born, converting them into a right."

The statement also said the bishops wanted to remind "women tempted to abort or who have already experienced this tragedy that they always will find mercy and comfort in the Catholic community. As a mother, the church understands their problems and will not leave them on their own."

Legionaries official asks forgiveness for founder's acts

By Catholic News Service

MEXICO CITY — The general secretary of the Legionaries of Christ asked for forgiveness from the people who were harmed by the "immoral actions" of the order's founder, Father Marcial Maciel.

"We ask forgiveness because we are sincerely sorry for what the church and people have suffered," Father Evaristo Sada said during the Youth and Family Encounter in the Mexican capital Feb. 20.

The comments were the most recent in an effort by the order to overcome allegations of sexual abuse of seminarians by Father Maciel and the subsequent revelation that the Mexican priest fathered at least one child.

Father Maciel died Jan. 30, 2008, at 87. In 2006 after its investigation, the Vatican ordered the then-frail Father Maciel to withdraw to a life of prayer and penance. The Vatican has since ordered an apostolic visitation of the Legionaries. Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Denver is visiting Legionaries seminaries and religious houses in the U.S.

Father Sada said an apostolic visitor asked him if he felt as if the rug had been pulled out from under him when his superiors told him "about the immoral behaviors in your founder's life."

"I answered, 'I was not founded on our founder,'" he said. "My human handles collapsed, and that is hard, but the rock I'm founded on is firm. It is the rock of God's love. I am founded on the certainty that this work is from God and that I consecrated myself to God."

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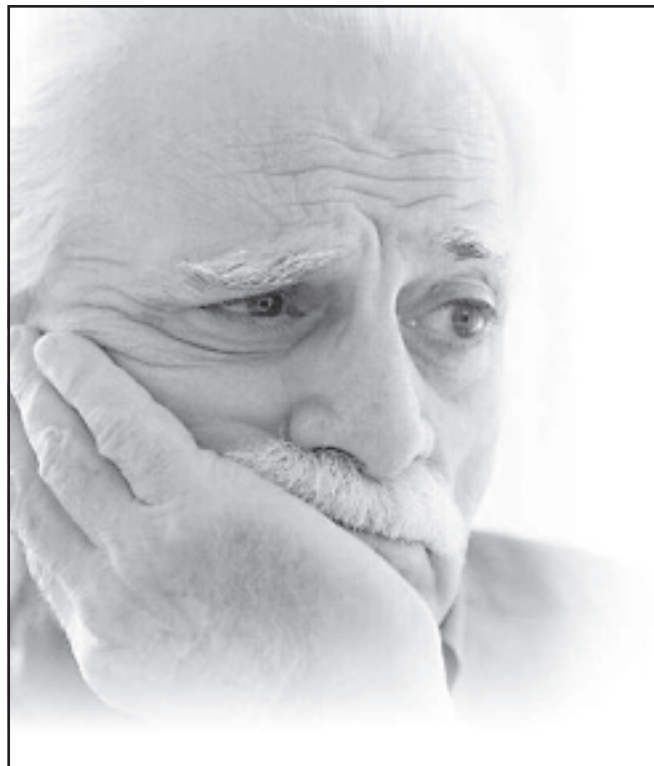
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Church workers struggle to aid rural Chileans after quake

By Barbara J. Fraser
Catholic News Service

LIMA, Peru — While media attention focused on looting in Concepcion, the largest city near the epicenter of the magnitude 8.8 earthquake Feb. 27, Catholic Church workers struggled to reach quake victims in rural areas who are far from the spotlight.

"We are receiving funds to help the poorest people, who are in the countryside," Father Waldo Alfaro, head of the Caritas Chile office in Linares, said in a telephone interview Monday. Linares is in the Maule region, where most of the quake deaths occurred.

"The entire coast was hard-hit, but this is an area where the poorest rural residents live," Father Alfaro said. "Aid is not reaching them because these are very small villages."

Three trucks left Linares early Tuesday to distribute supplies, especially food and water, to residents of far-flung villages in the farming region. The greatest need is for milk, water, food, fuel and cots for victims, as well as assistance in rebuilding houses that collapsed in the quake, Father Alfaro said.

The adobe houses common in the poorest rural regions "are the ones that collapsed," he said. The

Linares office of Caritas, the church's social assistance agency, is compiling an inventory of damaged and destroyed homes.

Meanwhile, buckled and cracked highways complicated aid distribution.

"Roads are passable, but dangerous," Father Alfaro said.

The national government is sending aid to the region by ship to bypass the buckled roads, damaged bridges and crowds of people who swarm vehicles arriving in urban areas, he said.

Between 30 and 40 churches and chapels in the Linares Diocese were badly damaged or destroyed, along with two orphanages. In coastal villages, churches that remain standing have been turned into makeshift morgues.

The official death toll is nearly 730, with 542 of the confirmed deaths in the Maule region. But "many people are still missing," Father Alfaro said. "There are many bodies that have not been identified."

The last weekend in February marked the end of summer vacation for students, and many families were spending a few final days on the coast, camping on the beach or visiting small resort and fishing villages.

The earthquake, which struck at 3:34 a.m., triggered a tidal



CNS/Reuters

A resident looks at San Francisco de Curico Church March 1 after it was damaged Feb. 27 in a major earthquake in Curico, Chile.

wave that was more than 30 feet high in places and which swept more than a mile inland. While some people reached high ground, others were washed away. Cars were left piled on top of houses, Father Alfaro said.

While church leaders mourned the deaths, they also called for solidarity and condemned the looting of stores and businesses.

Archbishop Ricardo Ezzati Andrello of Concepcion called the pillaging a "second earthquake." Bishop Alejandro Goic Karmelic of nearby Rancagua, president of the Chilean bishops' conference, said it "strikes our

conscience" and "raises questions for us about deeply held values."

Chilean President Michelle Bachelet imposed a curfew in Concepcion and sent military troops to stem the looting. Curfew hours were extended to noon Tuesday.

President-elect Sebastian Pinera, who was to take office March 11, faces the task of reconstruction, which he estimated could cost between \$15 billion and \$30 billion. Up to 500,000 houses were badly damaged or destroyed.

In a statement issued Monday, Bishop Goic said the church was "praying for the eternal rest" of

those who had died and asking "the God of life for consolation and hope" for their families.

"We love this country, which has recovered from earthquakes, tidal waves, volcanic eruptions and floods, a people that has risen in peace from death and violence so many times in its history," he said. "At a time of understandable desperation, we call for calm and solidarity, and intense family and community prayer."

In the United States, Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, offered prayers for earthquake victims in a March 1 letter to Bishop Goic.

"I write to assure you of my prayers and those of my brother bishops in the United States for all who have been affected by this tragedy," Cardinal George wrote. "I assure you also of our prayers for the church and for our brother bishops of Chile."

He told Bishop Goic that Catholic Relief Services, the U.S. bishop's international relief and development agency, "stands ready to be of assistance to you and your Caritas groups as they work to alleviate the suffering caused by the earthquake."

Donations to CRS can be made through its Web site at www.crs.org/chile/maule-quake.cfm.

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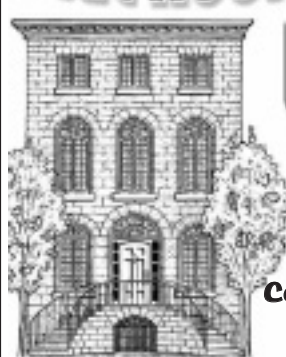
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Wilmington man inducted into chivalric order

Stephen L. Hyde of St. John the Beloved Parish in Wilmington was recently inducted into the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem by Cardinal Edward Egan in New York City.

The Knights of the Holy Sepulcher is an order of chivalry under the patronage of the Holy See.

Hyde has served on the boards of Ursuline Academy and the diocesan Catholic Youth Organization and on the parish council of St. John the Beloved. He is a member of the parish's finance council and a board member at St. Mark's High School and the Catholic Leadership Institute.

Local Brief



Bud Keegan Images

Banding together for Haiti

High-school students gathered Saturday night at Ursuline Academy in Wilmington for Shake the Quake, a fundraiser for Haiti earthquake relief. The event, with performances by high school bands, raised almost \$9,000, which will be given to the American Red Cross, according to Ursuline. Organizers estimate that about 800 students from Ursuline, Padua, Salesianum, Tower Hill, Tatnall and Wilmington Friends participated. Shown standing from left are: Amanda Doughten, Erika Stroh, Rachel Samples, Adria Rebbecchi, Emily Berg, Candace Galentine, Fiona Curtis and Paige Gugerty. Kneeling from left are: Noel Monzo, Olivia DiAntonio and Gab Perrotti.

Obituary

ASTON, Pa. — Sister Alma Francis Collins, who was a teacher and principal at Corpus Christi School in Elsmere from 1967-69, died Feb. 21 at Assisi House. A professed Sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia for 70 years, she was 89.



Sister Alma Francis Collins

A native of County Cork, Ireland, Sister Alma Francis served primarily in elementary education, mainly in the archdioceses of Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. She also worked at the San Damiano Retreat Center in Aston from 1985-89 and was house treasurer at Our Lady of Angels Convent from 1989-2005.

Services were at Assisi House on March 2, with burial in Our Lady of Angels Cemetery. Donations in her name can be made to the Sisters of St. Francis Foundation, 609 S. Convent Road, Aston, PA 19014.

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A project FOR THE ages

Search for one man's family history led to 10-year effort to put pre-1900 baptism and marriage records from parishes online.

Clockwise from lower left: Anna and Michael Lally were married in 1878 at the Cathedral of St. Peter, Wilmington; parish registry from St. Joseph's in Cordova, Md.; St. Mary Church, Sixth and Pine streets in Wilmington, circa 1905.



Church photo courtesy Delaware Historical Society

By Joseph Ryan
Assistant editor

On May 8, 1878, Anna Hart walked down the aisle of the Cathedral of St. Peter in Wilmington to marry Michael Lally, a grocer who was born in Ireland's County Roscommon. Soon after, Father John A. Lyons dutifully recorded the Hart-Lally nuptials in the parish register.

Anna and Michael couldn't have imagined it back then, but more than a century later, Joseph M. Lalley, one of their grandsons, would look for information on his grandparents and find their marriage recorded in St. Peter's sacramental register.

And that's why the Diocese of Wilmington now has older parishes' baptismal and marriage records up to the year 1900 available online.

Anyone researching Catholic family histories in the diocese can visit the archives section of the diocesan Web site — cdow.org/archives.html — and click on "Searchable Parish Sacramental Records" to find links to baptisms and marriages listed by parishes and surnames. Donn Devine, archivist for the diocese, believes no other U.S. diocese offers parish records that are so thoroughly indexed, searchable and free.

The site, a godsend for Catholics tracing their family history, is the result of 10 years of persistence and work by Joe Lalley, a retired North Carolina school headmaster, and some 40 volunteers, all amateur genealogists from the diocese, other states and as far away as Ireland.

From one man's search, project takes root

Michael and Anna Lally moved to Philadelphia and raised eight children. After finding his grandparents' marriage in St. Peter's register during a visit to Wilmington in the 1990s, Joe Lalley (the family added an "e" to its name since his grandparents' time) became interested in the history of the

Find the records

To find the records go to cdow.org/archives.html and click on "Searchable Parish Sacramental Records."

Irish in Wilmington and his family connections in the area. As he gathered family information, Lalley posted it on his own Web site.

During one of Lalley's visits to the Historical Society of Delaware, Nancy Lyons, who lives in St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Hockessin and who was researching her own family history, overheard him discussing his First State connections.

"Are you connected with John Lalley who married my grandfather's sister?" Lyons asked.

Lalley wasn't, but he and Lyons pooled their efforts to investigate all the Lalleys and Hart family members who had Wilmington connections. Lalley had help developing his family-information Web site from Michael Carroll, an IT expert who works for an Irish bank in County Galway.

In 2000, Lalley, Lyons and Carroll met with Devine to discuss a massive project.

"Our goal was to transcribe all the sacramental records of the diocese," Lalley said.

Over lunch, the four agreed to try transcribing the Cathedral parish's baptismal records to Lalley's Web site, www.lalley.com, as a first step toward their larger goal. "We did it in a month," Lalley said.

Soon others were drawn to the project. "We started recruiting volunteers just by word of mouth," Lalley said.

"People would see something of interest on the site and come forward as volunteers," Devine said. Often they were people who had stopped at the diocesan archives

next to St. Joseph on the Brandywine Church in Greenville to do family research.

From microfilm to Web site

With Lalley living in North Carolina and Carroll in Ireland, it was Lyons who coordinated volunteers as they transcribed parish records from archival microfilm or parish books for the Web site.

"My part in this was because I do a lot of genealogical research," said Lyons, who gives talks on Irish family research.

She gave Lalley the names of the first people who would be part of a group that transcribed the records.

Lyons volunteered to "download" parish register pages from microfilm, copy them and distribute the copies to volunteers who entered the records of marriages and baptisms onto an Excel spreadsheet template that Carroll developed for Lalley's site.

On the page of volunteer profiles on Lalley.com, Lyons is acknowledged as a prime mover of the sacramental records project. "She has spent countless hours photocopying microfilm records of the baptismal and marriage records for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Wilmington and distributing them on her own time and at her own expense to our volunteers as well as to our site's Web master," it says.

Said Lyons: "I know the importance of the church records for providing parents' records and place of origin information. Catholic church records play a huge role in finding that information."

Lyons said her ongoing quest to find information about her own ancestors — Mentons, Matthews, Carlins, Casidys, O'Neills, McKibbins, Duffys, Devanneys, McDonalds and O'Devlins — spurred her enthusiasm to help put parish records online.

"If you can do Irish research, you can do anything," Lyons said, "because of the scarcity of the records and political problems in Ireland."

The project led the volunteers down some interesting paths. Mary Roddy Morris and her sister, Kathy Connor, volunteered for the sacramental records project because they were researching their own family.

"I did mostly baptism records," Morris recalled. "The last time I did something was about a year ago, at least, a couple of pages from St. Patrick's on the Eastern Shore (the Pilottown, Md., mission of Good Shepherd in Perryville)."

Connor, principal of Corpus Christi School in Elsmere, said she and her sister have researched their Roddy family roots back to the people who left Ireland around the 1850s.

Some of the diocesan records Connor transcribed were from St. Francis Xavier in Warwick, Md.; established in 1704, it's known as Old Bohemia shrine and is now a mission of St. Joseph Parish in Middletown.

Connor noticed in the old records that slaves were being baptized, and often the parish records didn't include a last name. "I found that very fascinating."

Connor eventually visited the shrine and took pictures of the gravestones in the cemetery there. "I just wanted to see if people were there whose records I was transcribing."

In late January in Ireland, Carroll entered online the final records of the 10-year project — marriage records up to 1900 for St. Joseph Mission in Cordova, Md. Coincidentally, the project was completed on Jan. 24, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron of the Diocese of Wilmington.

More than 83,000 records

The cost of 10 years of transcribing records by volunteers amounted to a \$100 grant from the diocesan archives for the project, said Lalley, who said Lyons absorbed most of the cost of copying the records.

Continued on next page

Records: Site should prove handy for family historians

From previous page

The server where all the information exists through the archives' link to lalley.com is in Ithaca, N.Y., where it's tended by Lalley's son, Joseph M. Lalley III, who works for ClarityConnect, an Internet service provider.

The fact that the online search engine is free is one of the reasons volunteers were attracted to the project, Lalley said. "The Diocese of Brooklyn contacted me and they were horrified we don't charge a fee, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is very tight about what they let you see."

An archives office typically charges a fee to do family research the old-fashioned way, Devine said, but since the full records up to 1900 on lalley.com are interactive for users, meaning they can be searched by parish or family surnames, a fee isn't necessary.

Parish baptismal and marriage records after 1900 are still available only on microfilm or paper through the diocesan archives, Devine said. "But one thing we don't charge for is searching for records for canonical purposes," such as when Catholics need their

baptismal or marriage records for sacramental reasons.

As for the security of the information on lalley.com, Lalley said his son in Ithaca has assured him he'll take care of maintaining it, and Lalley intends to back up the information on CDs.

Lalley estimates that the site includes more than 83,000 pre-

Parish baptismal and marriage records after 1900 are still available only on microfilm or paper.

1900 records from the diocese. The site also includes passenger lists of immigrants who came to the United States from certain counties in Ireland during the mid 1800s, limited death and cemetery records from Wilmington and census and other records from Counties Galway, Mayo and Donegal in Ireland.

"I had no intention of getting into genealogy," Lalley said when asked about adding parish records

after 1900 to the site. "This has been 10 years and if I were asked to do more, I would probably be hung by my wife." No efforts are underway in the diocese to tackle the post-1900 records, Devine said.

The 10-year project is complete but its benefits will continue. Last month, Kath Murphy, who lives in Providence, R.I., and has been attempting to trace her family roots, went online to find information about her great-grandfather William Windish, who she believed moved from Pennsylvania to live in Wilmington in about 1872.

When she searched the Internet for records from Catholic parishes in Wilmington, she discovered Lalley's site.

"Many of my family were there," Murphy told *The Dialog*, "in Sacred Heart and St. Mary's parishes, starting with a baptism of a second child in 1873 and ending with her grandmother's birth in 1888."

Murphy e-mailed a note of thanks to Lalley for the Web site. "I'm very much encouraged with what your site gave me today," she wrote. "You've inspired me to keep trying."



The Dialog/Don Blake

Two key figures in the project were diocesan archivist Donn Devine and Nancy Lyons of Hockessin, an avid genealogist who coordinated the efforts of local volunteers.

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'The Sacred Made Real'



CNS/Peter Lockley

Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States, views "Christ as the Man of Sorrows" by Pedro de Mena as he tours "The Sacred Made Real" exhibit Feb. 19 at the National Gallery of Art in Washington. The exhibit of religious paintings and sculptures from the Spanish golden age runs until May 31.

Letters reveal writer who served 'cause of the supernatural'

"The Abbess of Andalusia: Flannery O'Connor's Spiritual Journey" by Lorraine V. Murray. St. Benedict Press (Charlotte, N.C., 2009). 233pp., \$16.95.

By David Gibson
Catholic News Service

In her book, "The Abbess of Andalusia," Lorraine Murray aims to "uncover the self-portrait

Book Review Flannery (O'Connor) created in the daily stream of letters

that poured out of Andalusia," the Georgia farm where the writer lived for 13 years until her death in 1964, when she was only 39.

That this Southern Catholic novelist, perhaps remembered better for her short stories, was a prolific letter writer is well known. Nonetheless, the self-portrait that emerges here is refreshing. O'Connor is viewed as a woman of robust humor, a dedicated friend to many, a disciplined composer of fiction and



CNS

Flannery O'Connor

someone who experienced suffering firsthand, diagnosed with lupus when she was 25.

Apparently, though, if poor health found ways to consume her physically, it never consumed her spiritually.

For Murray, the spirituality manifested in O'Connor's self-portrait is paramount. O'Connor's letters reveal "an extraordinary spiritual life beneath the deceptively ordinary surface," Murray writes. O'Connor, she notes, "recognized the sacramental element in all of life."

Murray brings to the fore the Catholic dimension of O'Connor's life as a writer and as a person for whom the Eucharist was "the center of existence."

O'Connor comes forward as profoundly Catholic, yet not reluctant to criticize what she termed "pious pap."

O'Connor criticized priests who offered "oversimple solutions to complex problems," Murray notes. Other times O'Connor was "quick to defend the clergy against ... unfair attacks," expressing an understanding of the burdens placed on priests' shoulders.

Murray describes O'Connor as "fiercely Catholic," a woman convinced that "all human life is precious" and that "love always triumphs over suffering."

How O'Connor's Catholicism factored into her writing continues as a topic of interest. Murray recalls O'Connor writing of her sense "that being a Catholic has saved me a couple thousand years in learning to write."

Murray's includes a comment made just days after O'Connor's death in August 1964 by Atlanta's Archbishop Paul Hallinan, who praised her in an archdiocesan newspaper column.

Archbishop Hallinan called O'Connor a writer who served "the cause of the supernatural by a working knowledge of the secular."

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Oscar, schmoscar: Here are the best movies of 2009

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

This year, for the first time since 1943, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences allowed for 10 best-picture Oscar nominees instead of five. At the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Office for Film & Broadcasting, the tradition of selecting 10 top films each year, based on spiritual, moral and artistic criteria, dates to 1965.

Since some of these films are appropriate only for adults, the office also compiles a list of the 10 best family films of the year.

As we await Sunday night's Oscar ceremony, here in alphabetical order are the USCCB film office's selections for 2009, with their USCCB classifications and Motion Picture Association of America ratings:

Based on real events, **"The Blind Side"** recounts how a wealthy white couple, portrayed



"The Blind Side"

by Sandra Bullock and Tim McGraw, offered shelter to a homeless black student. Unapologetically Christian tale of human solidarity is funny, shrewd and uplifting (A-III, PG-13).

The French-language docu-drama **"The Class"** re-creates the experiences of an idealistic literature teacher over the course of an academic year. Film is an engrossing meditation on social and class divisions and on the possibilities of an educator's vocation (A-III, PG-13).

"Fantastic Mr. Fox" — a droll stop-motion animated adventure — tells how the titular creature tries to recapture his wild past as a chicken thief. Clever, lovingly crafted film offers abundant fun for youngsters and a few insights for adults as well (A-I, PG).

A fact-based comedy, **"The Informant!"** follows the exploits of an agribusiness executive (Matt Damon) who turns whistle-blower. Offbeat tale benefits from Damon's intense performance as a sympathetic egomaniac (A-III, R).

In **"The International"** a dogged Interpol agent (Clive Owen) and a New York prosecutor (Naomi Watts) investigate



CNS

Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon star in "Invictus."

the leaders of a global bank implicated in murder. Sleek conspiracy yarn focuses on the frustrations of operating within the law and the perils of acting outside it (A-III, R).

The fact-based drama **"Invictus,"** starring Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon, charts South African President Nelson Mandela's campaign to unite his country behind the national rugby team. Movie chronicles how Mandela used sporting enthusiasm to break down racial prejudice (A-III, PG-13).

"Julie & Julia" is the charming dramatization of the lives of master chef Julia Child (Meryl Streep) and Internet blogger Julie Powell (Amy Adams). (A-III, PG-13).

"Star Trek" sees the youthful James Tiberius Kirk (Chris Pine) forgoing his delinquent ways to join the crew of the Starship Enterprise. Well-executed action sequences are balanced with an absorbing story (A-III, PG-13).

USCCB Movie Classifications	
A-I	General patronage
A-II	Adults and adolescents
A-III	Adults
L	Limited adult audience, films whose problematic content many adults would find troubling
O	Morally offensive.

The animated instant classic **"Up"** tells the story of a grumpy widower (voiced by Ed Asner), who decides to relocate his home to South America with the help of thousands of balloons. This touching fable offers lessons on love, loss, marriage and perseverance (A-I, PG).

In the fantasy **"Where the Wild Things Are,"** a runaway (Max Records) sails to the island abode of a community of giants. This subtle adaptation of Maurice Sendak's classic book is a meditation on the interior struggles of childhood (A-II, PG)

The top 10 family films

"Astro Boy," an animated adventure about a scientist who replaces his dead son with a robot replica, only to rejects his creation, leaving the innocent 'bot vulnerable to widespread prejudice. (A-II, PG).

"Bandslam" is a comedy with music about a newcomer at a high school who overcomes his socially disastrous past when befriended by a popular fellow student. (A-I, PG).

Disney's eerie animated adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic **"A Christmas Carol"** features Jim Carrey as the voice of Ebenezer Scrooge. Largely faithful retelling is unabashed about the Christian context (A-I, PG).

The animated fantasy **"Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs"** concerns a young inventor who fashions a machine that makes food fall from the sky. Cautionary



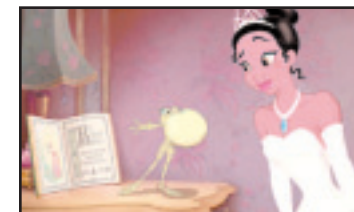
"Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince"

tale warns against overindulgence and extols the virtues of persistence (A-II, PG).

The romance **"Hannah Montana the Movie"** tells how a teen singer (Miley Cyrus), is forced by her father to retreat to the Tennessee farm where she grew up. Delightful idyll emphasizes the primacy of family obligations over professional goals (A-I, G).

In **"Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince,"** the teenage wizard (Daniel Radcliffe) ingratiates himself with a Hogwarts instructor who once taught his archenemy. This sixth adaptation of the novels is a richly textured narrative in which good and evil are clearly delineated (A-II, PG).

In the animated comedy



"The Princess and the Frog"

"Monsters vs. Aliens," a trio of kindly monsters and a woman who became a giant combat an evil alien. Celebrates teamwork and the heroic potential of people (A-II, PG).

"Ponyo" is the enchanting English version of a Japanese animated fable about a determined goldfish who comes under the protection of a plucky 5-year-old boy. Masterful artistry recaptures the innocence and wonder of childhood (A-I, G).

The animated **"The Princess and the Frog"** shows the effects of a voodoo sorcerer's spell. The lavish hand-drawn romance emphasizes the value of love over material wealth (A-I, G).

"Shorts" is a clever children's fantasy about a rock that grants the wishes of anyone holding it. Film carries messages about the dangers of power and the isolating effects of contemporary technology (A-II, PG).



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VIEWPOINTS

Stranger, can you spare a dime?

Many dioceses have offices to assist immigrants, especially those from Third World countries or those seeking asylum for political reasons.

With fences being built to keep out our neighbors to the

Liz Quirin

south and patrol boats in our southern waters to discourage our Caribbean friends as well, our bishops write about welcoming strangers and being Christ to one another even though many of us don't always know what language to use as we greet these newest members of our communities.

Over the last 10 years or so, the influx of Latinos has coincided with decreasing diocesan budgets, especially when more and more people are losing their jobs in the present economy.

Jobless parishioners contribute less to a parish or diocesan bottom line. And, as everyone knows, ministry costs money, real money, and can't be paid for with good intentions, although volunteers can make a world of difference in almost any situation.

With more people needing more services from a parish that takes in less revenue, tensions mount between those in need and those covering the costs. Finances always play a role in decision-making, especially now during difficult economic times, but the welcoming issue trumps finances.

In today's economy, parishes face troubling questions: Do we spend more money on immigrant services even as other poor, homeless or indigent parishioners come to the door? What about the capital campaign to build or repair parish buildings? Is that more important than caring for immigrants?

No easy answers come quickly to mind when the various groups are lined up in front of us. In some cases, what happens is that welcoming strangers means letting the parish ministers take care of "them" instead of everyone stepping up to be part of that welcoming committee.

One parish that has a relatively new and significant Latino population that was more or less unwelcome when it began arriving about a dozen years ago now has a regular Spanish Mass. The pastoral associate has been trying to bridge the cultural and language abyss between the immigrants and nonimmigrants.

Finally, last year the Latinos sponsored a dinner after a liturgy and invited the whole parish to gather at the table. Not a single non-Latino parishioner showed up for the meal. Not only did those folks miss a wonderful meal, they lost an opportunity to share their faith and learn about their fellow parishioners.

We can only hope that this is not the usual or customary way our immigrant brothers and sisters are treated, but it does open a window on the difficulties clergy face, whether they speak from the pulpit or the seat of the diocese: Just because someone says it — or even shouts it from the rooftops or church steps — doesn't make it true or real for the folks in the pews.

Like any relationship, the bond begins to form between two people and spreads out from there. Put another way, people relate to each other at the grass-roots level; a top-down model generally doesn't work, even if the "top" has the purest of motives.

The message is clear: Welcome immigrants; but translating that message into reality requires, in some cases, a changing or opening of hearts to people from a different culture.

That doesn't change the need to make a place at the table, nor does it relieve us of the responsibility to take action on our own, one at a time, to see others not as strangers but as friends and members of our community whom we will now have the great good fortune to know as brothers and sisters in Christ who deserve not only our help but also our respect.

Liz Quirin, editor/general manager of The Messenger in Belleville, Ill., writes for Catholic News Service.

Extend the peace of the Olympics to the world

It's good to see nations battling it out, aggressively striving for world dominance.

But the battles I'm referring to are not the bloody conflicts fought with bullets, bombs and missiles, but rather the nonviolent competitions waged with skis, skates and bobsleds.

The 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada, showed a world hungering for peace where countries of all sorts can compete on the sports field instead of on the battlefield. But the Olympics offer far more than nonviolent national glory.

In his Olympic message to Archbishop J. Michael Miller of Vancouver, Pope Benedict XVI said sports can contribute to "peaceful understanding between peoples and to establishing the new civilization of love."

Olympic speedskater Joey Cheek showed the world how. Winner of gold and silver medals at the 2006 Olympic Games in Turin, Italy, Cheek donated his entire \$40,000 medal bonuses to Right to Play.

Founded by Norwegian Olympic champion Johann Olav Koss, Right to Play (www.righttoplay.com) uses sports and play as a way to teach children teamwork, respect, communication, self-esteem and conflict resolution.

Operating in 23 poor and/or embattled countries like Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, the Palestinian territories and Israel, the organization strives to translate the best practices of sport and play into opportunities to promote development, health and peace.

Cheek is also the co-founder and president of Team Darfur (www.teamdarfur.org), an international coalition of athletes committed to raising awareness of and bringing an end to the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Sudan.

Cheek and like-minded athletes are continuing to selflessly use their skills and position to improve the lives of the poorest of the poor and to promote

world peace. These Olympic humanitarians are showing us, as Pope Benedict suggested, how sports can indeed contribute to "peaceful understanding between peoples and to establishing the new civilization of love."

This new civilization of love will not be realized until we begin seeing each other as belonging to the one human family.

In his 2008 World Day of Peace message titled "The Human Family, a Community of Peace," the Holy Father wrote that all people are "called to build relationships of solidarity and cooperation among themselves, as befits members of the one human family."

The Olympics offer us a wonderful glimpse of the world looking like one human family. While it's sadly true that even during the Olympics wars and internal conflicts do not cease, nonetheless, as we see nations across the globe gathering in peace to compete in peace, a joyful hope rises up within us, encouraging us to believe that peace is possible! Then, the games are over. Like a meteor, a bright hope for world peace is quickly gone and the darkness of war and preparation for war returns.

Why do we allow the Olympic Games to be simply games when they have the potential to lastingly contribute to peaceful understanding between peoples?

We can keep the peaceful spirit of the Olympics burning in our hearts by following the Christ-like example of Olympians such as Joey Cheek who continue long after the games are over to build a peaceful world based on selfless solidarity with the earth's poor and war-torn.

The motto of Right to Play should be the motto of the world: "Look after yourself! Look after one another!"

Tony Magliano, a pastoral associate in Baltimore, writes for Catholic News Service.

Tony Magliano

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

State must keep interests of all students in mind

I am writing in response to last week's letter regarding the possibility of the governor rescinding the transportation credit to parochial and private school parents.

I have three school-age children, two of whom attend Brandywine Springs School (a public school in the Red Clay School District) and one who attends a Catholic school.

Sending a child to Catholic or private school is a choice parents make. Parents often make sacrifices (financial, travel distance, etc.) when choosing to opt out of the public schools. Nevertheless, it is a choice.

We are living in uncertain financial times, where our elected politicians and our governor are forced to make tough financial decisions. Taking away the

transportation credit seems like an obvious choice to me. As long as the funds from the transportation credit are used for educational purposes, I have no problem with that.

The letter writer commented that Catholic schools are of the highest quality because they are allowed to have God in their classrooms. As a devoted Catholic, I believe that those who truly believe in God carry that belief in life wherever they may be, not just in a Catholic school classroom. I spend a lot

of time volunteering at Brandywine Springs School and I feel as much Christian spirit and kindness there as I feel at my oldest son's Catholic school. Every teacher I have encountered in my experience with the public school has been caring, kind, fair and absolutely dedicated to the children.

I hope that the governor makes his decision with the best interests of all school children in mind.

**Christine Pelillo
Wilmington**

About letters

Letters should be typed or neatly written and include the writer's name, address and telephone number. They should not exceed 250 words and should focus on one topic. **Shorter letters stand a better chance of being published.** They may be edited for style, size or content. The opinions are the letter writers' and do not necessarily reflect those of The Dialog or the Diocese of Wilmington. Fax letters to (302) 573-6948, mail to P.O. Box 2208, Wilmington, DE 19899-2208 or e-mail to news@thedialog.org.

VIEWPOINTS

Turning 'jobs' into work with sense of purpose

Don Peck, writing in *The Atlantic* (March 2010), paints a dismal picture about the future of employment in America.

The national economy lost 10 million jobs since the beginning of this recession; many of those jobs will return only slowly.

With population growth and new people entering the job market, Peck says, our economy needs to add 1.5 million new jobs a year, roughly 125,000 per month, to avoid slipping back further. To grow from 10 percent unemployment to the 5 percent level we experienced before the recession would require creating 600,000 jobs per month, double the strong job-creation rate of the mid-to-late 1990s, and even that would take about two years.

Employment is shifting. The construction and finance industries, absent the housing bubble, will probably not regain their former share of the economy, and employment in the auto industry will offer fewer opportunities. Manufacturing jobs are continuing to move offshore, but now they are joined by outsourcing many white collar jobs.

Economists see one bright spot about unemployment coming through innovation as some laid-off workers become entrepreneurs. A Labor Department report identifies 10 occupations that will add the most jobs by 2016, and hence offer the most creative business opportunities. They include: orderlies and nursing-home aides, personal and



CNS photo/Shannon Stapleton, Reuters

Waiting in a job fair line in New York City in December.

home-care aides, registered nurses, retail salespeople, customer service representatives, food preparation and serving workers, office clerks, accounting clerks, janitors, and postsecondary teachers.

These types of service jobs cannot move offshore. However, aside from nurses and postsecondary teachers, most of these jobs pay too little to meet a small family's basic needs unless they are unionized.

While market resiliency will continue to produce more business opportunities, this

will happen by requiring different skills. Many unemployed workers will need to be retrained, which means starting over in terms of earning level. Upward mobility for many seems stalled.

For people of faith, high unemployment triggers a pastoral concern for workers and their families. The unemployed face spiritual, psychological and social problems besides their economic ones. Research shows the unemployed suffer more alcoholism and drug abuse, more spousal and

child abuse, more cardiovascular problems and hypertension, and the children of the unemployed are sick more often and longer.

Unemployment also offers a chance to rethink our expectations about success and work. Many of the unemployed report they have become less materialistic and more financially responsible. Their idea of success has shifted from riches and purchases to family and relationships. Some avoid undue stress by revising their work life from "making money" to "earning a livelihood."

Many unemployed people volunteer more and have discovered satisfaction in helping others through community projects. Herein might lie an important discovery from our national crisis.

Since the recession came largely from the get-rich housing bubble and hocus-pocus financial transactions, business investment needs to shift to innovation that strengthens community. Investment that preserves creation, like retrofitting houses and developing green energy, keeps employment local while giving workers a sense of purpose. Designing programs that support people, like universal health care and continuing education, builds a safety net and offers a ladder up.

This crisis offers a unique opportunity to change the uncritical cry for jobs to a demand for good work with a social purpose.

Father Rausch is a Glenmary priest who writes, teaches and organizes in Appalachia.



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Is the Lord in the midst of Haiti and Guatemala or not?

**READINGS FOR MARCH 7
Third Sunday of Lent
Exodus 17:3-7; Romans 5:1-2, 5-8;
John 4:5-42**

As I read this week's first reading from the Book of Exodus, I could not help to think about the situation in Haiti following the earthquake in that country. I also thought about the families in the village of Caserio Yalu in San Marcos, Guatemala, as I witnessed the dedication of a potable water project in that community.

In today's Old Testament reading, we can certainly feel the fear, anger, and despair of the Israelites as they were experiencing their plight in the desert. They needed water to live and there was none and they knew they couldn't make it back to Egypt. With each passing moment they could feel the life being sapped out of them. What could they do? They complained to Moses, "Why did you ever make us leave Egypt? Was it just to have us die here of thirst with our children and our livestock?" The emotions were palpable.

I can imagine that the people in Haiti must be experiencing many similar emotions — fear of finding out that your loved ones may be among those hidden under a white sheet lined up on the street; anger about the sporadic distribution of food and water; despair as you have no place to live or a job to help feed your family and rebuild your home. The chaotic reality must be overwhelming and difficult to accept.

Moses was facing hundreds of thousands of people who were desperate for water. Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people?" And, as we hear in the readings, the Lord answered Moses and provided him the means to obtain the precious element essential for survival.

SUNDAY READING



ANDY
ZAMPINI

In Guatemala, the availability of clean water is not a given. In fact, many children die each year from infections they contract from contaminated water they use in their villages. Thanks to the generosity of parishioners in our diocese, the village of Caserio Yalu, as well as two other communities, has for the first time potable water dispensed at each home in the village. It was priceless for me to witness the faces of adults and children as they turned the spigot at their homes and were able to drink clean water for the very first time. They finally didn't have to walk several miles to gather water to bring back home.

As I thought about the reading from Exodus, and the situations in Haiti and Guatemala, I was drawn to the verse, "Is the Lord in our midst or not?" The answer is unequivocally, yes. I saw it first hand in Guatemala. Amid staggering poverty and facing incredible hurdles in just about every aspect of their lives, the people I encountered were filled with joy, hope and most of all faith in God.

While the people of Haiti are understandably troubled and filled with so many anxieties, most of which we can probably never relate to, I understand from reports from Catholic Relief Services, that the faith of the Haitian people is a paramount factor sustaining them during this extremely difficult time.

This week's reading from the Book of Exodus is one we've heard many times over the years. As you read it this week, consider difficult situations in your life or in the world, and ask, "Is the Lord in our midst or not?" You will find the Lord is definitely with us.

Andy Zampini is program manager of Catholic Charities' division of Parish Social Ministry.

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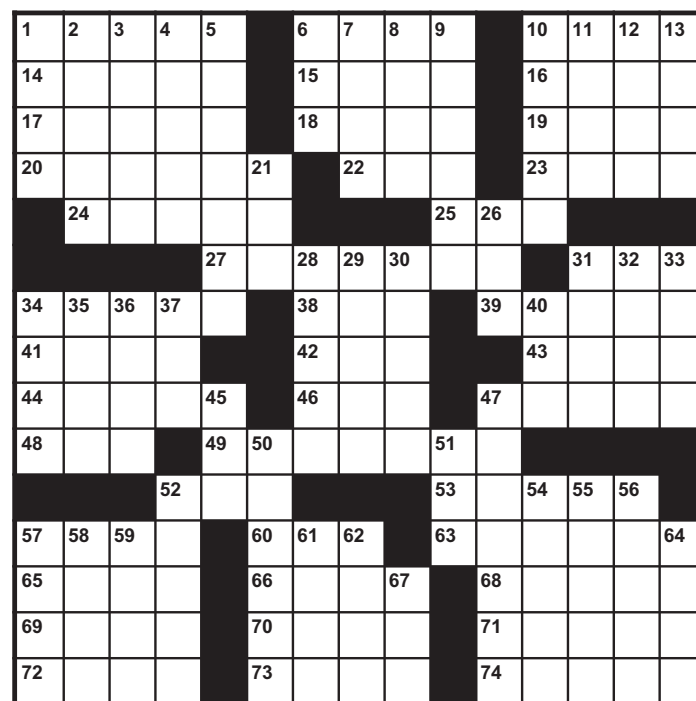
- 1 Trembling poplar
- 6 Pertaining to the non-ordained members of the Church
- 10 "...the Lord is with ____."
- 14 First name in puppetry
- 15 Actress Lancaster
- 16 Sub ____: secretly, as the appointment of a cardinal
- 17 Wading bird
- 18 Biblical measure
- 19 Diamond arbiters
- 20 Affirmatives
- 22 Rev.'s alma mater
- 23 Housing for a patriarch
- 24 Annoy
- 25 NT epistle
- 27 Ardently
- 31 Alphabet string
- 34 David married his widow
- 38 Wood sorrel
- 39 The last John
- 41 Monetary unit of South Africa
- 42 Avril follower
- 43 "____ ideal world..."
- 44 Tendon
- 46 Sea eagle
- 47 18th letter of the Greek alphabet
- 48 Roker and Capone
- 49 Determined

DOWN

- 1 Pale
- 2 "Feed my ____." (Jn 21:17)
- 3 Analyze, as a sentence
- 4 Uneven
- 5 Jonah's destination (Jon 1:1-2)
- 6 There have been 13 popes with this name
- 7 Donation to the poor
- 8 Words of understanding
- 9 Mount ____
- 10 "I am the way and the ____ and the life." (Jn 14:6)
- 11 Nazareth, to Jesus

12 Sports buff's TV station

- 13 Cain traveled this direction from Eden (Gn 4:16)
- 21 Jonah was thrown into this
- 26 Container for communion host
- 28 Wife of the prophet Hosea
- 29 americangreetings.com product
- 30 And the ____ came
- 31 Sign of papal office
- 32 Former name of Thailand
- 33 Ike's ex
- 34 ____ Minor
- 35 Church divider
- 36 Taverns
- 37 Summer drink
- 40 Number of apostles, in Roman numerals
- 45 Catechism question: ____ made me?
- 47 Church spire
- 50 Season before Christmas
- 51 Tree
- 52 Paul surprised a soldier when he spoke this (Acts 21:37)
- 54 "The bombs bursting ____..."
- 55 Gadget
- 56 Despised
- 57 Catholic Hollywood costume designer
- 58 Native American
- 59 Jars



www.wordgamesforcatholics.com

- 61 Drooling dog of comics
- 62 Departed

- 64 Suffix with Congo
- 67 Burns' "no"

Answers to this week's puzzle: page 19

How to return to the church

Q. I have two friends who left the Catholic Church years ago, one because he became disillusioned with a priest, and the other just stopped attending Mass. Now they both want to return but don't know how. Someone said they must go through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process, which doesn't make sense to me. Another said they must talk with a priest, make a good confession and that is all.

I'm sure other former Catholics would also like to know how to come back. (Maryland)

A. You are right. Many Catholics have departed from the practice of their faith and sometime later wish to return, but are discouraged because they envision some complicated process to do so.

Most of us don't realize how hesitant and afraid Catholics can be who have been away, perhaps feel some guilt and frequently see themselves as somehow unworthy to be active in the church again.

Encouragement and support from people such as you is invaluable. I thank you for being interested in their struggle, and I hope other Catholics who have friends like this will follow your example.

The second person you refer to is basically correct. Theoretically, all one needs to do is return to the sacraments — penance and the Eucharist — and resume a prayer life and regular participation in the Mass.

In practice, however, most of the time something more is at least helpful, if not practically necessary. If one has been away for a number of years, for

example, much may have happened in the intervening time that could be unfamiliar; they need to catch up.

Particularly, anyone who has not been to Mass for the past 30 years or so will have missed many changes in the liturgies of the Mass and sacraments that will confuse them if they're not prepared.

Perhaps most obviously, experiencing and trying to participate in the Mass in English will be puzzling unless someone helps them understand reasons for those changes and how they enhance and enrich our Catholic worship.

Another factor in helping them return could be the reason they stopped living a Catholic life in the first place. A real or perceived injury suffered from a priest or other representative of the church, or just a serious misunderstanding, is the reason a huge number of Catholic people stay away, often for years. They need help in healing.

Whatever the reason, I believe it is well worthwhile for "former" Catholics to meet with a parish priest or other parish minister to find out what is necessary and ease their return.

Of course, a priest will also be able to help such individuals deal appropriately with other possible factors, previous marriages for example, that will necessarily be involved in renewing their practice of the Catholic faith.

Questions for this column may be sent to Father Dietzen at Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61651, or e-mail: jjdietzen@aol.com.

Catholic News Service



Father John Dietzen

It is well worthwhile for "former" Catholics to meet with a parish priest.



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Lenten sacrifice

Fridays in Lent are days of abstinence from meat for those 14 and older. Good Friday — April 2 this year — is also a day of fasting for those ages 18-59, who are limited to one full meatless meal that day.



Lent is also a time for voluntary acts of self-denial and acts of prayer and charity, which can include attending daily Mass, Scripture study, Stations of the Cross, almsgiving and showing mercy and kindness to others.

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AKL ENTERPRISES

Archmere senior dives into service activities

By John Knebls

When told that she came highly recommended by faculty members as an uncommonly well-rounded individual, Archmere Academy senior Lizzy Profita appeared bewildered.

"Are you sure you have the right person?" she said with a sheepish smile.

Yes indeed.

A co-captain for the Auks swimming team, Profita is also Archmere's community service president and an important advocate for the school's retreat program. Her teachers and peers collectively describe her as a diligent worker who has maintained a low profile despite an impressive resume that includes a 3.7 grade-point average.

When told that Profita appeared a tad stunned after being asked for an interview, Archmere campus minister Mike Johnson wasn't surprised.

"She doesn't seek out the limelight," said Johnson. "She does things merely out of the goodness of her heart."

As a junior Profita was one of 17 underclassmen who attended Archmere's Kairos retreat program last March. This past September, Profita was selected as a Kairos leader and, according to Johnson, did a "tremendous" job.

"She was a fine example to the retreatants as a person of great compassion for others," said Johnson. "She's a person with a great heart, a great faith, and a great soul."

Denise O'Meara, Archmere's community service moderator for the past 16 years, raved about Profita's contribution to both Archmere and the surrounding area. She labeled Profita as "one of the best" service leaders in school history.

"Lizzy doesn't do things

because it looks good or because it will help out her career in college," said O'Meara. "She truly loves service."

"She started getting involved when she was a freshman and I can't think of anything that she hasn't helped with. She leads by example beautifully. She does whatever she can to help others' needs. She consistently does her work humbly, and that is the key."

'Lizzy doesn't do things because it looks good or because it will help out her career in college. She truly loves service.'

— Denise O'Meara, Archmere's service coordinator

A graduate of Ursuline Academy grade school and a lifetime parishioner of St. Joseph's on the Brandywine, Profita admitted to feeling awkward when her classmates occasionally compliment her for spending so much time with people in need.

Whether it's tutoring youngsters at Serviam Academy or Harlan Elementary, working with the mentally challenged at the Mary Campbell Center, or playing bingo with AIDS hospice residents at the House of Joseph or the elderly at Eden Rock Assisted Living, or feeding the hungry at St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia, Profita views service as a privilege rather than a sacrifice.

"It's just a normal part of my day, and I always look forward to it," said Profita. "When I was

playing three sports (as an underclassman), I still tried to do service when I could, even on Saturdays. I really missed it."

"The people we meet are just regular people who enjoy being around other people and like to hang out and have fun. And if I help brighten their day, that's great. They're brightening my day, too, and reminding me that I should appreciate everything I have."

Profita was dealt a major emotional blow last August when her paternal grandmother, Kean Profita, died after battling cancer. During the school year, Profita had visited her grandmother almost every day and would usually eat dinner with her and play the piano. She would also spend most of her summers at her grandmom's house at Bradley Beach, N.J.

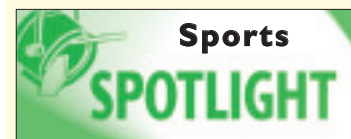
Spending quality time with her grandmother, says Profita, taught her the values of patience and fortitude.

"I miss her," she said. "She was an important part of my life. Some of my friends are not very close to their grandparents, so I feel fortunate to have so many great memories."

While trying not to be overbearing, Profita tries to encourage other Archmere students to give service a try. She also tries to persuade the Archmere seniors to make sure they experience a Kairos retreat before they graduate.

"My sister (Archmere graduate Katie) loved hers and kept telling me to go," said Profita. "After I went, I understood why people loved to go so much. You see people in a completely different light."

Profita is leaning toward attending the University of Hawaii. Her parents are understandably concerned about their daughter traveling roughly 5,000



This is one in a series of profiles The Dialog will publish on high school student-athletes. These profiles focus on students' activities and achievements outside of sports along with their involvement in athletics.



The Dialog/Don Blake

Lizzy Profita

School: Archmere Academy
Hometown: Wilmington
Parish: St. Joseph's on the Brandywine

miles away.

If she goes, the 50th state will be lucky to have "one of the

best" from the first.

(John Knebls can be reached at knebs@aol.com.)



Bud Keegan Images

Sals again the big fish

Salesianum senior Zach Pryor swims to a seventh-place finish in the 200 individual medley at Saturday's swimming and diving state championship meet in Newark. Pryor also was part of Salesianum's first-place 200 medley relay team and placed third in the 100-meter butterfly. Sallies won its fifth straight swimming state championship, easily outdistancing runner-up Charter School of Wilmington. The Sals' 439 points were the highest in the state meet since 2001.

St. Peter's wins CYM wrestling

St. Peter the Apostle won the team championship in the CYM wrestling tournament, which was held Feb. 21 at St. Mark's High School. St. Peter's finished with 104 points. The other teams, in order of finish, were St. Mary Magdalen, 76; Holy Angels, 62; and St. Edmond's Academy, 21.

Individual champions: Colin Walker, St. Peter's, 65 lbs.; Michael Hanley, St. Mary Magdalen, 70 lbs.; Matthew McCurnin, Holy Angels, 75 lbs.; Austin Walker, St. Peter's, 80 lbs.; Justin Engelmann, Holy Angels, 85 lbs.; Brendan Lamey, St. Mary Magdalen, 90 lbs.

Paul Groome, St. Mary Mag-

dalen, 95 lbs.; Patrick King, St. Mary Magdalen, 100 lbs.; Louis Fedele, St. Peter's, 105 lbs.; Thomas Otlowski, Holy Angels, 110 lbs.; Kyle Reaume, St. Peter's, 115 lbs.; Tyler Szymanski, St. Peter's, 120 lbs.; Anthony Roe, St. Peter's, 126 lbs.

Nico Palomo, St. Peter's, 133 lbs.; Mike Albanese, St. Peter's, 140 lbs.; Anthony Mancini, St. Peter's, 150 lbs.; Luke Hernandez, St. Peter's, 170 lbs.; Gus Gallegos, Holy Angels, heavy-weight.

Complete results of the championship and consolation rounds are available at cdowcym.org/athletics/Sports%20Folders/Wrestling/2010CYMWrestlingChampionshipResults.pdf.



THE YEAR FOR PRIESTS

June 19, 2009 - June 19, 2010

This is one in a series of interviews with local priests that The Dialog will publish through the end of the Year for Priests in June 2010.

What kind of Catholic home did you grow up in?

In Italy, when I was growing up ... Catholicism was as common as pasta. Everything you did was Catholic. Since very early, pretty much in middle school, I took religion to a whole different level. I was involved in parish activities, was going around preaching, because I wanted to live the Gospel.

When did you think you might have a vocation to the priesthood or religious life?

The first time I thought about the priesthood was in middle

school. I did one year of minor seminary. Then I left, and I didn't think about it until after I entered religious life [with the Holy Cross brothers]. What became important was for me to give myself totally to God, work for God, and that's what led me to religious life.

The one who got me to think about the priesthood seriously was Bishop Saltarelli, who in a way was my vocation director. I was in religious life when he invited me to think about becoming a priest. [He approached me] several times, which made the brothers a little upset. I remember my superior said, "Bishop, Brother Stanislao is a member of our congregation." Bishop Saltarelli said, "I'm just inviting him to think about the priesthood." And I remember that question stuck.

Did you have a priest you looked up to in your youth?

My pastor played an important role. The pastor who baptized me was also the pastor who celebrated my first Mass. He was in the same parish for my entire life. So when I was ordained and I went back to Italy to celebrate Mass there, he was still pastor of the same church.

THE YEAR FOR PRIESTS | PROFILE

Father Stanislao Esposito

Age: 41

Current assignment:
Associate pastor, Immaculate Conception, Elkton
Hometown: Naples, Italy
Ordained: 2003



Is there a priest today that you look up to or turn to for advice?

When I became a priest, I surrounded myself with priests that in my opinion are quite grounded and solid. We founded a support group, and we get together once a month. We just sound things off; we try to be as fraternal as possible. In times of crisis we call on one another, and in times of rejoicing.

What did you envision your priesthood to be?

Honestly, I always have seen the priest being another Jesus. Therefore, when I study the Gospel, I always was surprised that Jesus did mostly two things: presented the kingdom of God,

but brought people together, created communities, and reconciled them to the Father and to one another. So I always envisioned the priesthood to be based on this — reconciliation and creating communities through the preaching of the Gospel and sacraments.

What has played a bigger role in your work than you expected?

I think the role of being a listener. I realize that people just need someone who loves them and who is there listening to them without expecting anything in return.

What is the most difficult thing in your ministry?

Balancing time, so that every-

thing gets done and everybody has enough fair time.

What is your greatest joy in ministry?

Let's say ordinary joys would be celebrating the Eucharist and preaching the Gospel. But I get a kick out of celebrating baptisms. When I do baptisms, there is a level of joy that is awesome.

What do you tell someone who is considering the priesthood?

I would say live your life as if you were called. One thing that is very important is that we do not call ourselves. It's a discernment. So give it a try. Live your life as though you are called to this life of priesthood, and then discern with people who are in charge, and trust them. You don't have to do all the work by yourself.

How often do you go back to Italy?

According to my parents, not often enough. I'm trying to make it every other year. When they had the lira, I was the rich uncle coming from the States. Change the dollar into lira, wow, I was inviting everybody to dinner. Now with the euro, it is very expensive.

Do you have a favorite devotion?

The rosary. And my favorite form of prayer, outside liturgical ones, is lectio divina, which I've been doing since '86.

Do you belong to any religious groups?

I'm a Knight of Columbus, and I belong to this group called Focolare [a lay movement that promotes world unity through the living witness of Christian love and holiness in the family and small communities] and my priest support group.

What do you do to relax?

I play guitar, and I do taekwondo. I'm a martial artist. If I don't get kicked too much it's quite relaxing.

Describe a good day at work.

A good day would be when everything is done and the unexpected happens, and I'm still smiling.

It would surprise people to know ...

... that I'm preparing to test for my black belt, which should be in April.

— Mike Lang, The Dialog

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