WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Western Kentucky Catholic, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, Kentucky 42301
Volume 36, Number 2, February, 2009

Bishop John McRaith Retires Jan. 5, 2009

Pope Benedict XVI accepted the resignation of Bishop John J. McRaith, 3rd Bishop of Owensboro, Ky. on January 5, 2009.

Bishop McRaith submitted his resignation to the Holy See under canon 401 §2, which requests a bishop's resignation in the event of health or other serious issues. Bishop McRaith, who is 74 and in his 27th year as Bishop of Owensboro, has been advised by his doctors to reduce his workload: "I do not have a life-threatening illness, but my doctors have advised me to slow down, and I concluded that my resignation was in the best interest of the diocese," he said. Canon 401 §1 requires a bishop to submit his resignation on his 75th birthday.

When a see is vacant and there is no auxiliary bishop, the governance of the diocese is in the hands of the diocesan College of Consultors, a diocesan body of priests that advises the bishop. The College of Consultors must elect an administrator, who will assume diocesan governance, within 8 days of the vacancy. The administrator must be a priest who is at least 35 years old and who is "outstanding in doctrine and prudence" (cc425 §1-2). A new bishop will be appointed by the Holy See in 6-18 months.

Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith was ordained bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro on December 15, 1982. He graduated from St. John's Prep School in Collegeville, Minnesota, and Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa. After graduating from the School of Theology at St. Bernard Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, in 1960, he was ordained a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm, Minnesota, on February 21, 1960. Fr. McRaith served as executive director of the Catholic Rural Life Conference from 1971 to 1978.

Bishop McRaith has served on numerous committees for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), including the Ad Hoc Committee on Stewardship, which was responsible for authoring the Bishops' pastoral letter "Stewardship: A Disciples' Response." In 1986, Bishop McRaith wrote a pastoral letter on the AIDS crisis for the Diocese of Owensboro entitled "Go and Do Likewise."

Bishop McRaith is a member of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky and the Kentucky Council of Churches. In addition to shepherding the Catholic Church of Western Kentucky, Bishop McRaith serves the community as board member for Brescia University, the Daniel Pitino Center, the McAuley Free Clinic in Owensboro,

Continued on page 2

Father Mike Clark celebrated Mass with the diocesan staff Jan 7, 2009 as the news went out that he is our new Diocesan Administrator following the retirement of Bishop John McRaith, standing near the cross in the Catholic Pastoral Center chapel. With them are from left, Fr. Titus Ahabyona, Fr Andy Garner, and Fr. Charles Zmudzinski, CPM. Mel Howard Photo

College of Consultors Selects Father Mike Clark as Diocesan Administrator

The College of Consultors of the Diocese of Owensboro has elected the Very Rev. J. Michael Clark, JCL, as Administrator. Father Clark will administer the diocese until a new bishop is appointed to succeed Bishop John J. McRaith, who resigned for health reasons this week. A new bishop is expected to be appointed by the Holy See in 6-18 months.

When a see is vacant and there is no auxiliary bishop, the governance of the diocese is in the hands of the diocesan College of Consultors, a diocesan body of priests that advises the bishop. The College of Consultors must elect an Administrator, who will assume diocesan governance within 8 days of the vacancy. The Administrator must be a priest who is at least 35 years old and who is "outstanding in doctrine and prudence" (canon 425 §1-2).

"I am honored by this appointment and will humbly serve alongside the College of Consultors to preserve the rich history and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church of Western Kentucky and prepare it to receive a new bishop," said Father Clark.

Appointed Judicial Vicar of the diocese in February 2004, Father Clark also serves as the diocesan Ecumenical Officer and as Pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Utica, Kentucky, where he has been since June 2002. Father Clark was ordained to the priesthood in May 1995. He received a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing (1986) from the University of Kentucky, a Master of Religion and Philosophy (1993) and a Master of Divinity (1995) from Saint Meinrad Seminary, and a licentiate degree in Canon Law from the Catholic University of America in 2002. He also has served as Pastor of the tri-parish cluster: St. Jude Parish in Clinton, St. Edward Parish in Fulton, Sacred Heart Parish in Hickman. Prior to the tri-parish assignment, he was the Parochial Vicar of St. Francis de Sales and its mission, Rosary Chapel, in Paducah.

Father Clark is active in numerous national and local organizations including the Canon Law Society of America, the National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers, the Kentucky Council of Churches, and the Catholic Conference of Kentucky.

Father Clark and the seven-member College of Consultors will serve as the caretakers of the Diocese of Owensboro until a new bishop is installed.

Change Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Owensboro, KY
Permit No. 111
42301

I love you, the Church of Western Kentucky

My Dear Friends,

I have written a letter to you in the WKC each month for well over 20 years, but this is the most difficult one that I have had to write. I write to you now as the former Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro. It took me time to fully realize that I was the Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro. Now it will take time for me to fully realize that I am the former Bishop of the diocese, but that is exactly what I am as I write this letter.

I have always liked the following quotation from St. Augustine, who spoke as Bishop to the people of his diocese: *"With You, I Am A Christian; For You, I Am A Bishop."* I now say to you that "With You, I Am a Christian," remembering that I am no longer serving as your Bishop.

With this in mind, what do I say to you as I write my last letter for the WKC? I begin by thanking you for your faithful commitment to the Church; for your support of me from the day that I was ordained Bishop for the diocese on December 15, 1982; for your immediate acceptance of me as you filled the Sportscenter for the ordination; for all the acts of kindness that you have shown me over these past 26+ years; for your willingness to minister with me as we carried out the mission of the Church together; and for your friendship... There are probably a host of other reasons as well that cause me to be eternally grateful to you — and grateful for the opportunity to serve you and serve WITH you.

I am all too well aware that I have not been the perfect Bishop. This letter gives me the opportunity to ask for your forgiveness for any time that I have hurt any of you by my words, actions, or any decisions made over the years. I do ask for your forgiveness and beg for the Divine Mercy of God as well.

Most Rev. John J. McRaith

You have heard me call everyone—priests, religious, and laity—to be one as Jesus has called us to use our gifts together to carry out the mission that He gave to us all on that first Pentecost Sunday. He called us all to go forth to announce the Good News of God's love, the Good News of our salvation, the Good News of the Risen Christ. I stand with you as we continue to work together in carrying out that mission. I have always been amazed at the many gifts that God has given to each and every one of you. I have been thankful for the ways that you have come forward to share those gifts.

However, we can accomplish the mission Jesus entrusted to us only if we are united. Again, I would like to share with you a quotation from one of the writings of St. Augustine, who wrote: *"In Essential Things, Unity; In Doubtful Things, Liberty; And In All Things, Charity."* This great saint and theologian sums up my prayer for this faithful and faith-filled diocese. At a time of fragmentation and divisions all over the world, a spirit of unity is needed in the Church. As Christ's disciples, we are called to an attitude of mutual respect that recognizes that there's room in this great Church of ours for legitimate diversity. Unity is a powerful and needed gift we can offer to our country and the world. The mission of the Church of Western Kentucky -Diocese of Owensboro—the mission of evangelization and unity—continues to rest in the good hands and hearts of the priests and deacons, religious and laity, who have served tirelessly to carry out the mission in my many years as your Bishop. I am confident that all of you will continue to do so in the years to come.

I leave you as "the Bishop of the Owensboro diocese" with a real sense of sadness, but I also leave with a heart full of joy and gratitude in knowing that the mission given us by Jesus will continue to be carried out in the future. As I write this letter, I am reminded of how loved ones who are about to take leave of one another keep talking long after they should have gone. I want to keep on writing as I take leave of you as your bishop, but the time has come to end.

As former Bishop of Owensboro, I promise my support to the College of Consulters and to Father Mike Clark, the newly appointed Administrator. These faithful servants will shepherd the diocese until a new Bishop is appointed. I promise my support of the new Bishop that Church discernment and the Holy Spirit will send to this great diocese. If he is as blessed here as I have been, he will be the most fortunate Bishop in the country! I promise to continue to serve in this diocese in any way the Lord calls me.

I love you, the Church of Western Kentucky. I end with a heart full of gratitude to you and to our good and gracious God for allowing me to serve you and serve WITH you for over 26 years. I remember saying on December 15, 1982, 'May the Lord give us many years together!' Well, I can only thank God for answering that prayer.

May God be with each and every one of you all the days of your lives, and may we all be joined together in the great banquet that Jesus has promised for all eternity.

Wishing God's blessings on you always, I remain grateful to all!

+John J. McRaith

Most Rev. John J. McRaith
Former Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro

Priests free to return to full, active ministry

Dear Friends,

As many of you are aware, Fathers Richard Powers and Delma Clemons were named in a law suit which was highly publicized. It is important for me to convey to you that the law suit has been concluded. Due to the outcome both priests are free to return to full, active ministry. Thank you for your prayers for all involved in this process.

- Most Rev. John J. McRaith

Bishop John McRaith Retires Jan. 5, 2009

(Continued from page 1)

and Lourdes Hospital Foundation in Paducah.

Bishop McRaith was noted for his pastoral sensitivity. His priorities have included spiritual renewal, evangelization, planning, and establishing diocesan consultative councils.

Statements of the Bishops of the Province of Louisville.

"With esteem I acknowledge the wonderful service to the Church of Owensboro provided by Bishop John McRaith, who today has received word that Pope Benedict XVI has accepted his resignation as Bishop of Owensboro. Since his ordination to the episcopacy more than 26 years ago, Bishop McRaith has served the Church with distinction. His pastoral heart is well known, and I have personally experienced his kindness and love for these last nine years in which we have served as bishops in the Province of Louisville. I join with Archbishop Kelly, who ordained him as a bishop, in thanking God for the gift of Bishop McRaith for more than a quarter century. I look forward to his continued pastoral activities in his retirement."

- Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz, D.D., Archbishop of Louisville

"Bishop McRaith, on an early 1980 visit to the rural area of this Archdiocese, told his listeners that God had given us the earth to care for, not to exploit. He spoke gently but urgently about the stewardship responsibilities of every human being. With the same determination, he has effectively served the Church of Owensboro for over twenty-six years as its Father and Bishop. As he lays down these responsibilities in retirement, may God reward his loving fidelity and pastoral leadership in this great diocese.

- Most Reverend Thomas C. Kelly, O.P., Retired Archbishop of Louisville

"For more than a quarter of a century Bishop McRaith has faithfully served the people of the Diocese of Owensboro with the heart of a true shepherd, in a gentle, caring, and loving manner. Ever faithful to the Lord, he has been a witness to the love and compassion of Christ. He has always been kind to me and welcomed me into the Province with his characteristic warmth, making me feel at home from my first day as a Bishop. I wish him every blessing!"

- Most Reverend Roger J. Foys, D. D., Bishop of Covington

Continued on page 5

Bishop John Thanks All for Prayer, Calls, Cards

My Dear Friends,

In light of my retirement, I want to say thank you to all those who remembered me in their prayers, along with the cards and phone calls. It is much appreciated. I look forward to continuing to see you.

Peace,

+John J. McRaith

Most Rev. John J. McRaith

Bishop John McRaith Commemorative WKC Pages To Be Reader-Written

By Mel Howard, Editor

Bishop John J. McRaith retired for health reasons as the third Bishop of Owensboro effective at 12:01 a.m. January 5, 2009. This diocesan newspaper which he founded in 1985, *The Western Kentucky Catholic,* will be printing pictures and articles commemorating the 26+ years of his episcopacy. This issue features photos and a timeline of activities in his episcopacy since his ordination as our third bishop in the Owensboro Sportscenter on December 15, 1982.

In upcoming issues of *The Western Kentucky Catholic*, we will be commemorating Bishop John's episcopacy and remembering his influences in our faith lives throughout the Church of Western Kentucky.

We wish this effort to be reader-written; that is, we invite readers of The Western Kentucky Catholic to send in your pictures and your reminiscences of times in which Bishop John McRaith shared experiences in your family, school, parish, or Catholic institution.

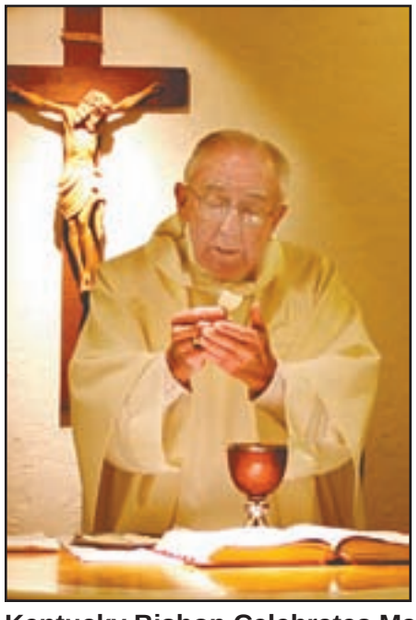
Email your JPEG photo files and written articles with your name, address, and phone number to Mel.Howard@pastoral.org. Or mail your pictures and written articles to Mel Howard, Editor, *The Western Kentucky Catholic*, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY 42301. Phone: 270-683-1545.

Sorry, we will not use unsigned submissions. We need your name, address, and phone number to verify your submission. The Western Kentucky Catholic reserves the right to edit submissions for space and decline entries deemed inappropriate.

THE SOWER

Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith planting sweet corn in his garden at St. Raphael farm. Photo by Patty Blair, June 3, 2003

Diocesan Liturgy Office Offers Prayers For Bishop McRaith and New Bishop Selection



Kentucky Bishop Celebrates Mass In Pastoral Center Chapel

Bishop John J. McRaith of Owensboro, Ky., celebrates Mass in the pastoral center chapel Jan. 5, the day Pope Benedict XVI accepted his resignation. (CNS photo/Mel Howard, Western Kentucky Catholic) (Jan. 8, 2009)

OWENSBORO,Ky. - Martha Hagan of the Diocesan Office of Liturgy has offered parishes in the diocese the following intercessions as well as a prayer for the selection of a new Bishop. She said, "We recommend that any or all of the following intercessions be prayed at Masses at least through February 1, 2009:

• That in his retirement, Bishop McRaith may continue to preach the Gospel and be enriched by God's blessings. We pray to the Lord.

• That those who have received the sacraments and been blessed through the hands of Bishop McRaith, may be strengthened in their commitment to daily follow Christ. We pray to the Lord.

• That the people of this diocese may be led by the Holy Spirit to continue the good works begun by Bishop McRaith. We pray to the Lord."

Ms. Hagan also said, "We also recommend that you begin praying the following or similar intercession at all Masses until a new Bishop is elected:

• For those who are entrusted with the task of selecting a new Bishop for the Diocese of Owensboro, that the Holy Spirit will guide them in providing us with a shepherd who will lead us in faith, love and service. We pray to the Lord.

Finally, we recommend that the following prayer be prayed at meetings and other parish gatherings until a new Bishop is named for the Diocese of Owensboro:

Prayer for the Selection of a Bishop for the Diocese of Owensboro

Almighty God, giver of every good gift, You are our eternal shepherd and guide. In your mercy, grant your Church in Western Kentucky a shepherd who will walk in your ways and whose watchful care will bring us your blessing.

Send your Spirit of wisdom upon those who are to select a new Bishop of Owensboro. Give us a leader of vision and a teacher of your truth. So may your Church be built up and your name glorified.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WKC Reader Writes About Bishop John

By Sister Amelia Stenger, O.S.U.

There are lots of stories, but one I remember took place the first year I was superintendent. I was returning from a school meeting in a parish near Bowling Green in January. It started to rain and then began freezing on the highway. By the time I got back to the office which at that time was at Frederica St. location, I was a nervous wreck. When I got to the office, the Bishop was still there so I asked if he could drop me off at my house on his way home. I was too scared to drive any further. When we got into the car, he drove to the middle of the Lourdes empty parking lot and started doing doughnuts on the ice. He had a great time doing the circles and laughing all the time he was doing them. He said the weather was nothing compared to what they had in Minnesota. I had my eyes closed the whole time and was very glad to get home. He had a playful spirit and the weather never kept him from fulfilling his duty.

Editor's Note: Send your story about Bishop John McRaith to Mel.Howard@pastoral.org. Mail to Mel Howard, Editor, The Western Kentucky Catholic, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY 42301

THE WESTERN KENTUCKY CATHOLIC

Official Newspaper of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Owensboro, Ky. Story Deadline: 15th of month prior to publication. The Western Kentucky Catholic is published monthly except June and July from The Catholic Pastoral Center, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY. 42301

Publisher: Administrator, Diocese of Owensboro, Ky.

Editor: Mel Howard, e-mail:mel.howard@pastoral.org

Adm. Assistant and Spanish Translator: Tami Schneider, Tami.schneider@pastoral.org

Business Address: Catholic Pastoral Center, 600 Locust St., Owensboro, KY 42301 Phone: 683-1545. Fax: 683-6883 Internet Address: www.owensborodio.org Subscription Cost: $10.00 per year

The Western Kentucky Catholic comes to your home as a direct use of your parish assessment dollars. "Those who exercise authority in the Church will take care to ensure that there is responsible exchange of freely held and expressed opinion among the People of God." -Pastoral Instruction Of The Means Of Social Communications, #116, Jan. 29, 1971

Opinions expressed in columns and letters to the editor submitted for publication in the Western Kentucky Catholic are not necessarily those of the publisher or editor of The Western Kentucky Catholic. Please let us know politely if you find proofing or factual errors in items of this publication.

Bishop John said to me, "You Can Dream About Anything You Want to."

By Melinda Prunty

I wasn't Catholic when we moved back to Kentucky in 1984. I had been discerning about joining the Catholic Church for five years, our entire marriage, but I had committed to attending ONLY the Catholic Church when we moved to Greenville. Up to that point I had attended both the Catholic Church and the United Methodist Church. It was time to go to one church as a family. Because I was contemplating this huge step for me, you better believe I was watching very closely. I was very impressed by seeing the article in the M-I regarding the sale of the Bishop's mansion on Frederica St in Owensboro, and Bishop John's move to the duplex on Locust St. I was also very impressed when I saw the article of him on a tractor just being the farm boy he loved to be. His humility came through loud and clear. It was much easier to join a church with such a humble leader.

Pope John Paul II impressed me in many the same ways, but was not as close by.

When I went to the Cathedral for the Rite of Election I was SO tempted to break out of line and go sit beside him and bend his ear about Youth Ministry. He obviously was going to have a long time to wait; there were so many of us that day, but I resisted primarily for Fr. Tony's Bickett sake; I spared him the embarassment. However, after joining the church and assisting with CLI the first year, I finally had an opportunity to sit beside him and speak to him about Youth Ministry, and he was very open to it. He directed me to Fr. John Vaughan, the Vicar General at the time, who informed me that there was a search committee and they were going to offer the position of Director for Youth Ministry to Tony Cooper.

Little did I know at that time that I would some day work for Bishop John. It has been a delight, although a scary one at first, having left the field of physical therapy to embark on a journey I had no idea how long it would last or where it would lead. I could go on and on, however, I will end with the story about the youth camp idea.

I had listened to Bishop John say there were limited resources and all ministries were important, especially Hispanic Ministry as there was a new need to address in that area. I told him I heard him and I wasn't trying to be disrespectful, but the

Bishop John addressing a diocesan Stewardship Workshop on June 7, 2008 at Brescia University. Photo by Missy Eckenberg

Holy Spirit was leading and I was following. After several years of having various signs and encouragements, I finally got up my nerve to ask him if I could form a Camp Dreaming Committee.

He said, "You can dream about whatever you want to." He attended the first two meetings and responded to minutes from the others, making it obvious he was reading the minutes and keeping up. From time to time he would make a comment about how things were going. Our committee finally decided we needed to approach the four bishops of KY to see if there was enough support among them to proceed. He graciously assisted us in getting on the agenda for the Bishops' meeting. After discussing it among themselves at length, the other bishops did not feel they could offer support for the project at that time. I figured it was dead in the water, but he said, "Looks like we're on our own for the camp." I thought, that means it's not dead! Then he gave Donna Mills, YM Administrative Assistant, a letter from Catholic Extension and said, "Here, this may be some money for that camp she keeps talking about." It was a letter describing a one-time grant that had to be for youth ministry and evangelization in memory of Pope John Paul II; that was a no-brainer! We applied and received the grant that was the salary for one year to bring Ben Warrell on board to see if the camp was a viable option, and the rest is history.

It was a spiritual experience the day the Administration Committee decided to purchase the Gasper River property. It was a blessing to observe first hand that financial decisions of the diocese are in the hands of such capable, spirit-filled individuals. It was a good business decision, but it was based on faith. The culmination of that process was what happened the day we closed on the property. Bishop John asked Sister Joseph Angela Boone, OSU, Ben, and myself if we wanted to go buy lunch and eat at the property ..."be the first ones on it as owners." We were going through the Arby's drive-thru in Morgantown when I pulled out a $20 bill to hand to Bishop John to pay for my lunch as Sister JA says to me, "Uh, Melinda, can I borrow some money for lunch; I only brought a million dollars and I've already spent it all." It was a classic moment. Bishop John bought all of our sandwiches (so I didn't get to charge Sr. JA any interest), we drove out to the property and went out on the deck of the lodge. There Bishop John blessed our lunch and blessed the property. It was a beautiful moment to share with him at the culmination of a project that we pray will bless many lives of not only young people and be a source of faith development and Catholic identity building, but also for adults and families as well. He could have said no at any point along the way and he could have just ignored the request as he was so close to retirement; but he never quit being open to the possibilities of the Holy Spirit's promptings and urgings.

He will be sorely and fondly missed.

Reminiscences of Bishop John McRaith

... from Photographer Hubert Powers

I'll Always Remember Him For His Kindness

1/15/2009 -- I met Bishop John soon after he got here, and took some pictures of his ordination in the Sportscneter on Dec 15, 1982. He impressed me right off the bat after meeting him a couple times and he remembered my name each time.

Bishop John was in several pictures I took over the years such as the ones at Father Larry Hostetter's first day as Brescia University's new president.

One main contact I had with Bishop John was that I had done some carpentry work for him at house in Owensboro, and he brought me his bishop's staff for repairs; one of the inserts had pulled out and I used screws to put it back together.

He always seemed complimentary and appreciated every little thing that was done for him. I felt it is was an honor to know the man, and will always remember him for his kindness.

Do I think that he and I share any similarities? Well being Christian …I feel that God is real important in my life as He is in his, and I think this is something really important that we share. I guess you can say we have the same boss.

... From Dan Heckel, former Editor of the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer:

Standing A Bit Taller

I was a young newspaper reporter, and I think I'd met the bishop briefly once. Some years later, I was at a meeting that the bishop was attending, so I decided to introduce myself and say hello. As I approached him, he reached out to shake my hand and said, "Hi Dan." I was amazed he would know who I was. It was a small gesture, but it meant a lot to me, and summed up why people have such affection for the bishop.

In later years, when the church was struggling to get through the abuse scandal, I was always impressed that the bishop never avoided any of the reporters at the Messenger-Inquirer. Anytime a reporter called him, even though he knew it was going to be an unpleasant question, he always made himself available. That's rare these days, but Bishop McRaith has always stood a bit taller than the rest of the crowd.

...From Patty Blair, Director of Office for Lay Ministry and Formation

A Man's Got To Know His Limitations

My husband and I love to play golf. I was discussing the game with Bishop john one day. He said he tried it once, but discovered the frustration of the game would have been an easy way to hell. So, he decided to never try it again!!

Bishop John McRaith praying At Daviess Co. courthouse on National Prayer Day 2008. WKC fie photo

Bishop John McRaith Retires Jan. 5, 2009

(Continued from page 2)

" Pope Benedict accepted Bishop McRaith's request for retirement on the feast of Saint John Neumann, the only canonized U.S. bishop. Like Saint John Neumann, Bishop McRaith has a missionary's heart for all people, and even with his many gifts, he is a man of gentle and humble spirit. He has been a good friend, a strong support, and trusted confidant. Relieved from his administrative responsibilities, may he enjoy many good, healthy years to continue his exemplary episcopal ministry. You have my congratulations and gratitude always, Bishop John."

- Most Reverend Ronald Gainer, D. D., Bishop of Lexington

"The past couple of years as the newly appointed Bishop of Nashville have offered me a number of opportunities to be in the company of Bishop McRaith. I have appreciated so very much the chance to be with this kind and gentle pastor of God's people. I wish him every blessing as he transitions into retirement."

- Most Reverend David R. Choby, D.D. Bishop of Nashville

"What a gift Bishop John McRaith has been to the Church of Owensboro and to the universal Church! A gentle person whose life and ministry radiated stewardship of God's gifts, he has led the Church at Owensboro admirably for well for over twenty-six years. He guided the Church and all of us toward the Kingdom with kindness and love. In his retirement, may he continue to inspire us!"

- Most Reverend J. Terry Steib, S.V.D. Bishop of Memphis

KY Catholic Bishops Announce New Director of Catholic Conference of Kentucky

(Frankfort, KY) The Roman Catholic Bishops of Kentucky have appointed Robert J. Castagna as the Executive Director of Catholic Conference of Kentucky. Mr. Castagna succeeds Edward Monahan who resigned in August to become Kentucky's Public Advocate. Mr. Castagna arrived in Frankfort this week.

Most recently serving as general counsel and executive director of the Aid for Women, Inc. in Chicago, Illinois, Mr. Castagna spent more than 20 years (1984-2006) as general counsel and executive director for the Oregon Catholic Conference. During his tenure in Oregon, Mr. Castagna was noted as for his political skills, knowledge of the Church, and passion on behalf of those in need. He led successful efforts to restore the funding of public assistance for two-parent unemployed families, wrote legislation to address the needs of terminally ill patients, and successfully worked to enact working family child care tax credits and state earned income tax credits. He also led the "Campaign for Fairness" on behalf of 24 social service and statewide organizations, which successfully lobbied to restore $60 million in Oregon's Department of Human Services' budget.

Robert J. Castagna

A native of Brooklyn, NY, Mr. Castagna earned a bachelor of arts from Fordham University and a law degree from the Catholic University of America. He has received a number of awards including the 2003 Harvest of Hope Award presented by Oregon's governor on behalf of the Oregon Faith Roundtable Against Hunger; a 1989 "Service Award" from the Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs; the 1989 Steward of Life Award from the Oregon Right to Life; and the 2002 "Outstanding Advocacy Award" from the Governor's Commission on Senior Services. He has served in a number of professional, community, and church activities, including as president of the National Association of State Catholic Conference Directors, as a consultant for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Migration Committee, and on the board of directors of Maryville Nursing Home and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

In announcing the appointment on behalf of the bishops of Kentucky, Archbishop Joseph Kurtz said, "We are privileged to have someone of Mr. Castagna's stature serving as our public policy leader. His record and accomplishments are outstanding, and it will be a great pleasure to work with him as we continue to keep the Church's positions before the Commonwealth."

The Catholic Conference of Kentucky is the public policy voice of the state's four Roman Catholic Bishops.

A Gospel Explosion

Blessed Sacrament Chapel, 602 Sycamore Street, Owensboro, KY (279-926-4741) will sponsor its Annual Gospel Explosion featuring local gospel choirs and liturgical dancers on Sunday, February 8 at 2:00 PM. Everyone is invited to join us for this rythjmic celebration of praise. Refreshments will be served immediately afterward.

For information, call F. Veronica Wilhite, Parish Life Coordinator at (270) 926-4741

Coming Soon!

RETIREMENT CELEBRATIONS
for
BISHOP JOHN J. MCRAITH

✠

The celebrations will be held in
Bowling Green • Hopkinsville
Paducah • Owensboro

Planning is underway.
More details coming soon!

Hope and Forgiveness -WWW.Com Retreat Session II for Senior Citizens

Ginny Knight-Simon, Diocesan Coordinator of Wisdom and Patty Blair Director of Lay Ministry and Formation are offering Session II of the WWW.Com senior retreat series, themed Hope and Forgiveness.

The series of retreats are offered for seniors in the diocese and offers a one day retreat to come together in peer group, community and faith.

This retreat would be a great way to start Lent!

If you would like more information regarding having this retreat presented in your parish or for your group please contact: Ginny Knight-Simon at 270-6831545 or e-mail @ ginny.knight-simon@pastoral.org

Body Language:

Commentary on the Intersection of Faith, Sex, & Culture By Christopher West

Playboy v. the Vatican

Playboy magazine has sunken to knew lows in mocking the holy. Of course, every edition offers a mockery of the holy – the holy, in this case, being the female body. Precisely because of the exquisite holiness of femininity, the Serpent has had his sights set on woman from the beginning. The ultimate Biblical "woman" of course, is Mary. And now Playboy set its sights on her too.

Reuters reported that the December issue of the Mexican edition of Playboy features a semi-nude Blessed Mother figure standing in front of a stained glass window. The caption below reads "Te Adoramos, Maria" (We love you, Mary). The fact that the posing model's name is also Maria wasn't a sufficient alibi.

The outcry from the faithful of Mexico was swift. In response, the Chicago headquarters of Playboy Enterprises issued the following statement: "While Playboy Mexico never meant for the cover or images to offend anyone, we recognize that it has created offense, and we as well as Playboy Mexico offer our sincerest apologies." (Hmmm... Playboy has been "causing offense" for over fifty years. Are we really to believe the sincerity of such an apology?)

I can't help but juxtapose this news story with an inversely related story from last summer. The Internet was abuzz last June when the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano called for an "artistic and spiritual rehabilitation" of semi-nude portrayals of the Blessed Mother breast-feeding the Christ child.

Catholic News Service (CNS) reported the story as follows: "A vast iconography of traditional Christian art has been 'censored by the modern age' because images depicting Our Lady's naked breast for her child were deemed too 'unseemly,' the [Vatican] paper said June 19. Artists began depicting a fully clothed nursing Mary in sacred art in an attempt to make her seem less 'carnal,' but the depictions unfortunately also diminished her human, loving and tender side 'that touches the hearts and faith of the devout,' the newspaper said."

Artistic portrayals of a bare-breasted nursing Madonna – known as "Our Lady of La Leche" (Our Lady of the Milk) – were plentiful throughout Christian history until the 16th or 17th century. Then, various Protestant reformers were quite critical of what they considered "the carnality and unbecoming nature of many sacred images," wrote Christian historian Lucetta Scaraffia in the Vatican newspaper article. In turn, even though the Catholic Church officially rejected this anti-incarnational view, many Catholic artists – not to mention vast numbers of the Catholic faithful (or, in this case, unfaithful) – were influenced by the reformers' condemnations. "The splintered views concerning the sanctity of the human body were not repaired and therefore an 'artistic and spiritual rehabilitation' of a breast-feeding baby Jesus is needed, [Scaraffia] wrote" (CNS).

So, we must ask – what makes Playboy's semi-nude portrayal of a Blessed Mother figure a terrible offense (even a sacrilege) and what makes the semi-nude portrayal of Our Lady of La Leche a sacred image promoted by the Vatican?

In his Theology of the Body, John Paul II wrote that pornography raises objections not because it exposes the naked body. The human body in itself always retains its inalienable dignity. Rather, pornography raises objections because of the way in which the human body is portrayed (see TOB 63:5). Pornographers portray the body with the explicit intention of arousing lust in the viewer.

That is why seeing a Blessed Mother figure under the headline "Playboy" is so jarring and offensive. The goal of Playboy is to incite lust. The sacred artists' goal in portraying a semi-nude Virgin Mary, on the other hand, is to help us ponder the God-given beauty and dignity of Mary's femininity and sacred motherhood. Mary's body reveals a gloriously sacred mystery, and tasteful, sacred art has the ability to get us in touch with that mystery.

Lucetta Scaraffia "said the sacred image of Mary nursing her child is 'an image so concrete and loving' that it recalls her offering her body for nourishment and giving herself completely to her son as he offers his body and blood in the Eucharist" (CNS). I'm certain that's not what Playboy Mexico had in mind.

Teens Encounter Christ

The Paschal Mystery in the Year of Saint Paul (First and Second Thessalonians)

By Father Eric D Riley, WKYTEC Spiritual Director, wkytec.org

As we continue our journey through the Holy Year of Saint Paul, 28 June 2008-29 June 2009, let us spend some time with the Letters of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians. At the time of Saint Paul's visit in about AD 50 Thessalonica was the capital of Macedonia in Greece.

In his First Letter Saint Paul instructs the people of Thessalonica: "On the subject of mutual charity you have no need for anyone to write you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another…. Nevertheless we urge you, brothers, to progress even more, and to aspire to live a tranquil life, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your (own) hands, as we instructed you, that you may conduct yourselves properly toward outsiders and not depend on anyone" (4:9-12).

These words are certainly encouraging to those in the TEC movement. Charity (love) is the primary vocation of every Christian. Christ said that no greater love has one than to lay down one's life for one's friends (John 15:13). According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God" (1822). In charity we are committed to the good of another. Love is necessarily life-giving; it is necessarily self-giving. The gift of one's self must always be given in truth and ordered toward the good of one's self and the other. In other words, one cannot authentically love if sin is a part of the relationship or the end result.

In the Second Letter of Saint Paul to the Church in Thessalonica he instructs the community: "Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral statement or by a letter of ours. May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting encouragement and good hope through His grace, encourage your hearts and strengthen them in every good deed and word" (2:15-17).

In the TEC movement it is essential that we hold fast to the Tradition of the Church as handed down through the centuries from the Apostles to our present day. The Truth of the Almighty God is never changing, yet always new. In every age we are to receive the Word of God anew and bring our lives into conformity to the Eternal Truth. We do this by our study of the Faith and a willing spirit to be disciples (students) of the Holy Spirit Who leads and guides the Church under the Teaching Authority of the Pope and Bishops. Let us seek God's holy will for our lives by being attentive to the spirit of the Paschal Mystery in our lives. In the context of the community of the Church we receive God's direction in obedience

Continued on page 11

Upcoming Events in Youth Ministry

Event	Date	Place
• TEC #163	FEB. 14-16, 2009	St. Charles, Bardwell
(http://www.wkytec.org/ to get applications!)		
• Souper Bowl Of Caring	FEB. 1, 2009	*http://www.souperbowl.org/; http:// www.nfcym.org/index.htm*
• Middle School Lock-in	FEB. 6, 2009	Owensboro Family Y
	Feb. 27, 2009 back-up date	
• Youth 2000	March 6-8. 2009	Brescia University
• CLI	June 21-26, 2009	Mt. St. Joseph Retreat Center
• Camp L.i.f.e.	June 28-july 3, 2009	Gasper River CYC & RC; *All applications to Gasper River, www.gasperriverretreatcenter.org*
• Powerweek '08	June 22-26, 2009	LBL (Tentative)
• YouthServe	TBD	TBD
• One Bread, One Cup	June/July 2009	St. Meinrad, In *www.saintmeinrad.edu/programs_youth_confs.aspx; http://oboc.saintmeinrad.edu/conference_dates.aspx*
NCYC	Nov. 19-21, 2009	Kansas City, Mo
Wyd	August 15-21, 2011	Madrid, Spain
See You At The Pole (SYATP)	Sept. 2009	*http://www.syatp.com/*
ODYC	NOV. 19 & 20, 2010	Bowling Green Convention Center, Mike Patin, Keynote Speaker; Cooper Ray, Emcee.

Western Kentucky Promote Men On Stage

Ben Warrell, center, Charlie Hardesty, left, from Holy Name, Henderson, and Matt Hunt, right, from St.Pius X in O'boro promoting Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center. The ODYC--Owensboro Diocese Youth Conference was a middle/high school (grades 7-12) diocesan youth conference. Notice the banner - the first to be held in a venue such as the Bowling Green Convention Center. YM photo

It Was Just In The Stars For The Gasper River Site To Be Our Youth Camp

Special To The Western Kentucky Catholic

***A History of the High School Camp*/Camp L.I.F.E., eventually known as Gasper River Catholic Youth Camp and Retreat Center in the Diocese of Owensboro**

• **1988** CLI (Christian Leadership Institute) was started by Fr. Hank Cecil, then Director, Office of Youth Ministry; many who attended CLI wanted to come back, but they couldn't ; it is a "one time" experience

• **1990** Tony Cooper became the Director of Youth Ministry

• **1993** Discussion started about trying to develop another "week long" experience for high school students that they could come back to.

• **1994** Kathy Doup named Director of the Office of Youth Ministry; she had a background in Girl Scouts and camping; she was open to exploring the possibilities; only stayed one year in the office; in the process of exploring, Melinda Prunty wrote Loucon and Aldersgate Camps, both United Methodist Camps in KY, for copies of handbooks, etc. "Met" Ben Warrell through the mail; stayed in touch over the years; Ben is a Catholic from Elizabethtown who worked at Camp Loucon in Leitchfield, KY; Ben graduated from Eastern KY University with a Degree in Outdoor Recreation.

• **1995** Fr. Henry Wieder named Director of the Office of Youth Ministry to assess Youth Ministry in the diocese and to establish direction; he was open to exploring the possibility of a high school camp; Camp W.O.W. was found; planned for camp in 1997**,** but it did not happen for various reasons.

• **1998** The first high school camp was held at Camp W.O.W. in Murray, KY, July, 1998; it began with 28 campers, then 22, then 30+; then 60+; holding steady around 60 campers; the first year, the campers discerned the name of Camp L.I.F.E. (Living It For Eternity)

• **2001** Fr. Henry Wieder and Melinda Prunty looked at land in both Marion and Hopkins Counties

• **2002** Jamie Clark of St. Mary Parish, Whitesville, Ky., approached Melinda about the possibility of turning 98 acres of Ricky Barr's farmland into a youth camp, but this land was sold at auction before it could fully be explored; Jamie pledged support for trying to secure land

Melinda had a conversation with Fr. John Meredith and Cliff Russell about PowerWeek, a middle school camp experience sponsored by Lourdes Parish at LBL. They were open to collaborating and working towards having a diocesan camp but did not want to move PowerWeek until the facility could house 120+ and have AC in the sleeping quarters, two things LBL offered.

Melinda spoke with Bishop John about the possibility of considering a camp. He made it clear that he was supportive, but felt that there were limited resources and there were other ministries that would have to come ahead of such a consideration, especially Hispanic Ministry. He had stated that it wasn't the cost of buying the land, it was the building and maintaining that would be the bigger financial burden over time. He felt it much more prudent to rent other facilities and not assume the burden.

In 1994, a NET team member who was on the team serving in our diocese whose home diocese was the Archdiocese of Kansas City, KS, encouraged Melinda to contact Dana Nearmyer from the Office of Youth Ministry for that diocese. They had recently opened an archdiocesan camp that had been developed because both the Archbishop and the Vicar General said they wanted it to be created. He was very encouraging and reported that they had begun their camp with $115, 000 of which only $75,000 was underwritten by the Archdiocese. They had a capital campaign that raised $3 million. They obtained grants from different foundations that support outdoor ministry. He stated that both schools and parishes benefit. After a lapse of several years and post sexual abuse scandal Melinda recontacted Dana who reported that the scandal had not affected them. After the first few years of operation the camp became the focal point of their annual capital campaign and has become a generator of revenues. It is also becoming a generator of vocations to both priesthood and religious life.

• **2003** Bishop John McRaith granted permission to officially form a "Camp Dreaming Committee" to explore the possibilities; the first meeting was held on May 29, 2003. It was at this meeting that Melinda and Ben met in person. Representatives of Catholic scouting, the Glenmary Sisters and various other interested parties were at the table.

• **2005** After approximately a year and a half of meeting and discussing possible visions for location, budgets, etc. it was determined that we needed to approach the Bishops of KY to see where they might stand on the issue of a state-wide camp. On February 22, 2005, Bro. Ken Grondin, Ben Warrell and Melinda Prunty presented to three of the four KY bishops at one of their regular meetings in Louisville. All four bishops discussed it again in May, but the other three in KY did not pledge their support at that time, though they voiced they thought it was a good idea. Bishop John did not let the dream die; he said "it looks like we're on our own for this camp." He then gave Donna Mills a grant application to Catholic Extension for a one time grant in memory of Pope John Paul II that had to be used for youth ministry and for evangelization. He said, "Here, this may be some money for that camp she keeps talking about." We applied for and received a $25,000 grant that

Continued on page 9

First Diocesan Youth Conference (ODYC) A Huge Success

Special to the Western Kentucky Catholic

BOWLING GREEN,Ky. - On Friday and Saturday, November 14-15, 2008, the first diocesan youth conference was held at the Sloan Convention Center/Holiday Inn University Plaza in Bowling Green. There were 241 registered participants that included youth from grades 7-12 as well as adult chaperones representing 25 parishes from around the diocese.

Held every two years, the rally came to Bowling Green for the first time in several years and had as its theme "Follow the Yellow Brick Road" – encouraging community building and molding a young person's Catholic identity.

"Since we're a rural diocese, a lot of kids feel like they're the only Catholics around, so it's important to have this conference to let them get to know people in the bigger church," said Melinda Prunty, director of Owensboro Diocese Youth Ministry.

It was the first time middle and high school youth were gathered together for one event in this type of venue that had various components to it. The components included catechesis, community life, evangelization, pastoral care, leadership development and prayer and worship. These components are outlined in Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry, the US Bishops' "blueprint for the continued development of effective ministry with young and older adolescents" published in 1997.

Ben Warrell, director of the Gasper River Catholic Retreat Center, led one group in a discussion on youth culture. He said his group talked about how media advertises to and preys on the fears of youth from a very early age. "We talked about how to avoid letting that distract from their

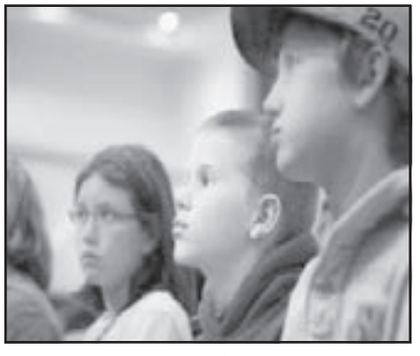
Continued on page 9

Greg Walton, the keynote speaker/a musician from Nashville and, above, right center, Walton with a few folks that came and did an afternoon concert in the middle of the conference. Rev. Mr. Josh McCarty photos this page.

New epiphanies all around: fun, laughing, getting it, catching the Spirit!

David Wathen doing a skit; there were several former Netters (NET team members) from our diocese who came and did skits along with some MFP students from Brescia--- Jessy Hagan, Jordan Hagan, Crissy Stevenson, among others. Rev. Mr. Josh McCarty photos

Awe ...



... and Wonder

ODYC *Continued from page 8*

relationship with God," Warrell said. There was plenty of fun to be had along with the thoughtful discussions.

During the afternoon, the youth danced to the music of Greg Walton, a Catholic singer/songwriter from Nashville who was the keynote speaker for the youth conference.

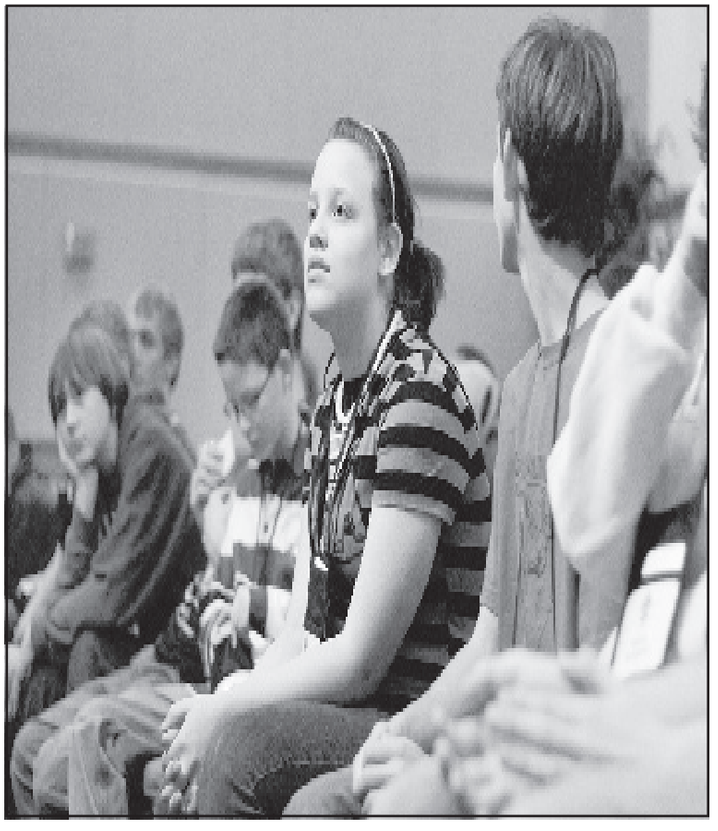
In the lobby of the convention center, tables were set up with literature and brochures about various local Catholic organizations. Also located near the entrance was a life-size cardboard cutout of Pope Benedict XVI.

Emily Rose, 13, traveled here with her group from Sts. Joe and Paul Parish in Owensboro. Rose, wearing a black T-shirt that read "Property of Benedict XVI' on the front, said the conference was a fun way for her to get to know other Catholics in the region. "I think the whole weekend has been pretty fun," said Rose, who saw the Pope when he visited Washington, D.C., in April. "The workshops have been a lot of fun. They're teaching us how to learn to help each other."

The goal of the event was to foster Catholic identity among youth in our diocese as well as to educate and catechize about various topics of interest for the youth. The conference was planned with the vision of exposing youth to a conference experience on a local level. Then, if parishes have the desire and are able to participate in NCYC (National Catholic Youth Conference) they will have some idea of what they will experience on a larger scale. Hence, the name ODYC (Owensboro Diocese Youth Conference) which we intend to host on an every other year rotation opposite NCYC which is a biennial conference.

A major component of the weekend included three keynotes by Greg Walton, a Catholic musician and speaker from Nashville. The theme for the event was Follow the Yellow Brick Road, an exploration of faith based on the movie The Wizard of Oz. Comparisons to our journey of faith were made that young people could relate to in their daily lives based on Psalm 119:105 and John 1:1-5, 14.

Other activities included XLT (short for exalt that included adoration, confession and praise and worship music) along with various other prayer experiences and exploring the life of St. Paul as an example of exploring the lives of saints in a unique way. On Saturday there were eight workshops offered twice so that young people could choose two of the eight to attend, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Topics included TOB (Theology of the Body), vocations, music, stress, youth culture, social justice, surviving middle school and immigration. Various CPC staff, seminarians, lay volunteers, a priest and a religious were presenters. The highlight of the conference was celebrating Mass with Bishop John McRaith on Saturday afternoon.



Above and at right, scenes from ODYC 2008: young Catholics caught up in the awe and wonder of the conference. Rev. Mr. Josh McCarty photos

Melinda Prunty said, "We appreciated everyone's help and support especially those who helped set up, the nurses who volunteered their time to be "on call" for any medical emergencies, all of the priests who came to hear confessions on Friday night, various college students who sacrificed their time to help and all of those who served on the planning committee. We are already booked for November 19-20, 2010, at the Sloan Convention Center for the second ODYC. Mike Patin will be the keynote speaker and Cooper Ray will be the Emcee. So mark your calendars NOW!!"

It Was Just In The Stars *(Continued from page 7)*

was used as Ben's salary to bring him in for a year to see if the idea for a youth camp would be a viable option. During that time various pieces of property were considered including the current property that was eventually purchased.

• **2007** On Friday, June 8, 2007, Bishop John McRaith, Sr. Joseph Angela, Ben Warrell and Melinda Prunty went to Reynolds office in Bowling Green to close on the Gasper River property. After the closing, Bishop John asked if we wanted to go get lunch and go out to the property and be the first ones on it as owners. We drove through an Arby's drive-thru; JA asked Melinda if she could borrow some money for lunch; "I only brought a million dollars and I've already spent it all!" she said. [Bishop John was kind enough to buy lunch for us all!] We ate lunch on the deck overlooking the river and Bishop John blessed the property.

NOTE: We in no way ever wanted to harm the Mt. St. Joseph Retreat Center. However, the MSJ Retreat Center could not house every event, especially when they had community days in the summer, it was not centrally located and it was too expensive for many groups. It was the vision that a diocesan camp could/would potentially be an affordable alternative, hopefully much more centrally located in the diocese and could serve as a referring source. Ben and Melinda went and talked to Sr. Michele Morek and Sr. Amelia Stenger while looking for potential locations and it was determined by both Sr. Michele and Sr. Amelia that they did not have the acreage to accommodate our vision. We continued our search with their blessing.

Some possible suggestions for use of a camp included: Confirmation Retreats, Senior Retreats, Science Field Trips, Summer Camps—High School, Middle School/Jr. High/Elementary School, Parish Retreats, Family Camps/Retreats—Office of Family Life, Handicapped Camps/Retreats, Ecological Camps/Events, Music/Handbell Camps—Office of Music/Worship, TEC, Sexually Abused Camps/Retreats—Fr. Gary Hayes, Dealing with loss Camps/Retreats –Office of Family Life, Marriage Retreats, Outdoor concerts, Chapel Weddings/receptions, Businesses, And MORE!

Along the way, others that expressed an interest in a diocesan camp included Fr. Ken Mikulcik, Fr. Gary Hayes, Kathy Doup, Joan Perry, Steve Garvin, Bro. Ken Grondin, Jamie Clark, Aaron Jahn, Danny May, Rachel Longest, Joe Bland, Sandy Compas, The Glenmary Sisters/Frank Wilford, Mark and Colleen Anderson, Camp W.O.W., Murray, KY. Coach Riley at Brescia was mentioned as a resource by Sr. Nancy Liddy.

A Seminarian's Story

By Missy Eckenberg

PADUCAH,Ky. - Ryan Harpole might be overlooked in a crowd if not for his recognizable black with white collar. His quiet unassuming manner does not draw attention. He is from Henderson, Kentucky and was born March 21, 1977, the oldest of three living children. His youngest sister was killed in an auto accident at 18 years of age.

His parents, Keith and Sandy Harpole nurtured the growth of a devout Catholic family in western Kentucky. Ryan's grandparents were farmers and he spent much of his formative years on a farm where he developed a great love for the land and hunting.

Holy Name Catholic School was Ryan's educational home for grades 1 through 8. Since 8th grade, when voted most likely to become a priest, he described a unique relationship with God by explaining, "He has been calling me to be a priest for many years." He noted his parish priest also suggested that he consider the priesthood.

Ryan's High School years were spent at Henderson County. From there his educational endeavors took him to Western Kentucky University were he focused on completing his studies and then securing employment. He received a degree in agricultural education which prepared him to teach. For 5 years he taught at Webster County High School and became involved with coaching basketball and golf, as well as an advisor to the FFA. Throughout his high school, college, and teaching time he enjoyed his life, but felt something was missing as he continued "to hear the call."

Ryan Harpole in his office at St. Thomas More parish offices in Paducah.

Learning the finer points of making persimmon pudding from Fr. Pat Reynolds

In 2005 Ryan made the decision to contact Fr. Andy Garner, the Diocesan Vocations Director to inquire about becoming a priest. A three hour interview followed with discussion centered on the question, "are you really being called?" After this very in-depth conversation, an appointment was scheduled with Bishop John McRaith to further discern whether he was truly being called for the priesthood.

With positive recommendations provided by the Diocese of Owensboro, Ryan was accepted to attend St. Meinrad School of Theology. He described undergoing extensive psychological testing required by St. Meinrad with the resulting data revealing strengths and weaknesses. The information was then used to find ways to assist him in developing those areas that will help him be successful during his years as a priest.

When asked what his thoughts are about becoming a Catholic priest among the people of western Kentucky, he answered without hesitation, "I feel called to my people". He continued by describing the rural farm land and hunting that fit him perfectly, "It's what I love… where my family's from". He described wanting to be a "good and holy priest" with expectations of serving the people of his parish. "It's pretty simple, I want to get to heaven and I want to help my parishioners get there too."

During his time as a Seminarian at St. Thomas More Ryan described his awareness of how very busy Fr. Pat Reynolds and the other priests are every day. "They are available for so many people all the time. Sometimes I wonder how they can give so much. Where do they find the energy?" He remembered the statistic from his studies that in the first 5 years of religious life a great number of priest leave due to the extreme workload.

Reading to the children in Mother's Day Out. Photos by Missy Eckenberg

Ryan noted the importance of competent staff and parish volunteers to coordinate the ministries of the parish. He described educated individuals that assist with Catechesis efforts such as Bible study leaders, faith formation and RCIA teachers, and Deacons as essential. He mentioned a program that sends interested lay people to St. Meinrad for a Masters degree to develop their knowledge base and teaching skills to assist parishes.

Even as an introvert, Ryan described looking forward to working with various ministries and performing the sacraments. He remembered vividly how at peace he felt when in the presence of those celebrating a wedding and noted what great gifts he will be privileged to impart through the sacraments.

Philosophically Ryan described himself most like theologian Fulton J. Sheen, stating "he's the one I can identify with most closely." He understood even before beginning his time at St. Thomas More that being a priest required great capacity to take on many roles that draw from multiple resources within. Although he understands how very essential fund-raising is to parish and ministry growth, he identified this area as a potential challenge for him.

As a seminarian at St. Thomas More, Ryan described the hope that this would be a year of learning how to pastor to people. He wanted to gain knowledge and wisdom from Fr. Pat Reynolds while learning from staff and ministry coordinators. He described his activities as varied, depending on the day of the week and time of the year.

Talking basketball with St. Mary player Alex Farrell

Each day begins with praying the Liturgy of the Hours, a workout when possible, Mass when scheduled, and a holy hour of prayer and time for God. Certain days have included hospital ministry at Lourdes and Western Baptist, visiting the children at Mother's Day out, First Friday communion calls to 20 to 30 people, teaching RCIA, assisting with Youth Ministry, Confirmation sessions, and providing liturgy assistance as Eucharistic Minister or server. He noted responsibilities also included chaplain to the boys' basketball team at St. Mary High School, assisting with cooking and cleaning the rectory, and of course attending all the meetings that go along with running a parish.

The Young Reach Out to Those Older

PADUCAH,Ky. - The Pre-Kindergarten Faith Formation class at St. Thomas More Parish here made Christmas cards for the residents of Morningside Assisted Living. On December 10, 2008, they then took a field trip to sing Christmas carols for the residents.

Faith Formation's Pre-Kindergarten class with Catechists, Wendy Parrish and aide, Marie Sasseen. Missy Eckenberg Photo

Are you like the Wise Men?

Cursillo: A Part of Your Journey

Have you ever thought that our lives are like that of the wise men who sought out the newborn king of the Jews? First, the wise men saw the light of the star and followed it. They didn't go alone, but took others with them. On the way they stopped and asked for direction. (Matthew 2:2) They were on a mission. Their ultimate goal was to meet the newborn king.

We are on a mission too. First, we follow the Light of the World and in our journey with two or three (or more) gathered in his name (Matthew 18:20) and in seeking direction through Bible study, scripture reading, retreats, etc., we will reach our ultimate goal of meeting our Heavenly Father.

Let Cursillo be a part of your journey. For information regarding Cursillo, please contact Cecelia Hamilton at (270) 926-4176 or Theresa or Charlie Krampe (270) 546-7773.

"Prayer is the best weapon we possess. It opens the heart of God."
– Padre Pio

Now for this brief Bulletin:

The St. Ann Morganfield, Ky. Radio Group is now on the air. You can listen to a Catholic station 7 days a week 24 hours a day, at WEUC - 88.7 fm. Programming from the EWTN Global Catholic Radio Network, featuring a daily line-up for people of al ages and backgrounds. Listeners will find content filled with hope and inspiration. EWTN offers listeners live call-in talk shows, informative teaching series, daily devotions, inspiring prayers and church events. EWTN's strong commitment to original, high quality programming continues to attract listeners from all faith groups.

Father Gets His Wings

Minutes before the school Mass begins, Father Shonis decided to try on one of the angel wings from the second grade. The second grade students participate in the Christmas pageant each year. We all agreed that Father Shonis looked great with the wings! HNS Photo

Teens Encounter Christ

(Continued from page 6)

to the Tradition of the Church.

As members of the TEC movement, let us pray for those who have yet to encounter Christ that they may be drawn to the full participation in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. Let us be examples of Truth in word and in deed so that more may want to have what we have discovered and be drawn to Christ through the TEC movement.

Help us help her and her baby

Usted puede ayudar a ella y a su bebé

Opportunities for Life

Oportunidades por la Vida

Call to find out how you can help her and her baby

Llame para enterarse de cómo usted puede ayudar a ella.

(800) 860-7168 Spanish
(800) 822-9824 English
www.opportunitiesforlife.org

A Pro-Life Ministry of the Catholic Bishops

The Christophers Invite College Students To Enter 22nd Annual Video Contest

NEW YORK, NY December 9, 2008 -- – The Christophers are announcing their Twenty-Second Annual Video Contest for College Students, a competition that challenges students to interpret the theme, "One Person Can Make a Difference," in a short film of five minutes or less. Cash prizes totaling $6,000 will be awarded, including a first prize of $3000.

Past winning films have included narratives, documentaries, animation and even music videos. Entrants represent diverse fields of studies and national origins.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for students to use their creativity to show how individuals can positively influence the world around them," said Mary Ellen Robinson, Vice-President of The Christophers, in announcing the competition.

The contest is open to all students currently enrolled in undergraduate or graduate programs at colleges or universities worldwide. Entries will be judged on overall impact, effectiveness in conveying theme, artistic merit, and technical proficiency. The deadline for entries is June 8, 2009. Winners will be announced in September, 2009. Videos become the property of The Christophers and will not be returned.

Official entry forms are available by writing to: College Video Contest, The Christophers, 5 Hanover Square, New York, NY 10004; by calling the Youth Department at 212-759-4050; or online at www.christophers.org/videocontest .

The Christophers, a non-profit organization founded in 1945 by Father James Keller, uses print and electronic media to encourage all individuals to use their God-given talents to make a positive difference in the world. The Christopher motto is: "It's better to light one candle than to curse the darkness."

St. Paul Parish Hosts Bright Life Farm Residents for Christmas

By George Barber, St. Paul Parish

The Catholic Ladies Group, the Family Aid Society, and St. Paul Parish in Princeton KY hosted a Christmas dinner for the residents of Caldwell County's Bright Life Farm on Sunday, the 14th of December. Fr. Shaiju Thomas presented the idea of conducting special programs with the community in recognition of the year of St. Paul.

Bright Life Farm is an assisted living community for adults with special needs. The farm, located in rural Caldwell County, has two houses with 8 residents each and a resident caregiver. Not dependent on federal and state funds, Bright Life Farm is supported through resident income, local churches, and community members. It provides living accommodations for residents who are able to care for themselves with supervision.

The residents of Bright Life Farm attended mass and then were welcomed at the parish social hall for a potluck dinner and Christmas gifts. The ladies of the parish set a sumptuous dinner of fried chicken, vegetables, and casseroles of various types. Each of the residents was given a gift of pajamas plus a gift certificate so they could do some shopping on their own. The parish joined in to sing "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" and in return Bright Life Farm residents entertained the parish with a special rendition of "This Little Light Of Mine" and "Amazing Grace"

Guests from Bright Life Farm serenade the parish with "This Little Light of Mine"

Joe and Kathy McEnaney lead the parish as they sing along with "This Little Light of Mine"

Theresa Negray helps serve guests from Bright Life Farm. George Barber photos

Fr. Shaiju Thomas with his birthday cake.

Donnie from Bright Life Farm tries to help Fr Shaiju blow out the candles he left.

Larry from Bright Life Farm with Beth Berton, President of St. Paul Catholic Ladies Group

ONCE MORE WITH LOVE

A Marriage Preparation Program for couples preparing for marriage after one or both persons have experienced a divorce or death of a former spouse. Saturday, February 21, 2009, Catholic Pastoral Center, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY 42301 Telephone: (270) 683-1545 ext 357 or betty.medley@pastoral.org

SAINTS AMONG US

A Saint is often an ordinary person who has lived an extraordinary life of virtue and faith. As Catholics we should use these exemplars to inspire us in our daily lives.

Penny Chewning, a long-time member of Sts. Peter and Paul in Hopkinsville, has had a special connection with St. Francis of Assisi for most of her life. Her favorite statue of the saint rests on the riverbank just outside her back door. Photo taken by Dawn C. Ligibel.

"I am Just an Instrument in His Hands"

By: Dawn C. Ligibel

After nearly a lifetime of devotion to St. Francis of Assisi, Penny Chewning, long-time parishioner of Sts. Peter and Paul in Hopkinsville, reached a pinnacle in her relationship with the saint when she recently walked the same ground he walked most of his life.

"It was awe inspiring, very inspirational, very moving. It was absolutely powerful," said Chewning. "I could feel his presence in the little church he restored," she added.

Chewning visited Italy in October as part of a pilgrimage led by Fr. John Thomas, pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul in Hopkinsville. The tour included stops in Vatican City, Rome, Assisi, and Florence. Forty people from the diocese participated in the pilgrimage.

During the stop in Assisi, Chewning enjoyed seeing the remnants of St. Francis' home and the first church he built by hand. "To see the hills he talked about and the groves and the trees made it easy to know his love for nature was nourished there," Chewning said.

> "Begin by doing what is necessary. Then do what is possible. Suddenly you're doing the impossible."
> -- Saint Francis of Assisi

Chewning's love for St. Francis began sometime in high school. "I went to a Catholic School and the holy cards were so popular then. We all collected them," Chewning explained. "I remember when I learned about St. Francis, I felt a strong connection."

Chewning recalls learning about the saint's early life when he was known for "being rather rambunctious." "I think that's why I relate to him so easily," she said with a laugh.

With an innate love for nature and animals, the initial connection grew into an unbreakable bond. "St. Francis stood for everything I love and believe in. I could identify with his life," Chewning explained. "He was such a warm humanitarian person. I wanted to learn more about him and live more like he lived."

After earning a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Social Work from the University of Kentucky, Chewning quickly learned about poverty firsthand when she worked for the state's public assistance office in eastern Kentucky.

Chewning left that job when she married and began her family. She chose to stay at home with her three boys when they were young, always spending a great deal of time outside. She and her family enjoyed boating, canoeing, fishing, hunting and swimming.

"We really enjoyed our love for the outdoors," Chewning said. "St. Francis believed every single thing was a gift from God. I feel that way too. I love the glory of the outdoors!"

In addition to spending time outside, Chewning, her husband and her children also made several attempts over the years to save injured or lost animals. Besides rabbits, birds and raccoons, they adopted two different squirrels. Chewning fondly recalls the day while on vacation when they found "Stormy," a little squirrel who was blown from a tree during a storm. They brought him home and fed him with an eyedropper until he was old enough to eat on his own.

When the Chewnings built the house in which they currently live, they designed it to achieve maximum enjoyment of the scenery surrounding their property. With huge picture windows overlooking a small river bordered by trees, Chewning begins each day with thanksgiving. "It is just a prayer," Chewning exclaimed, "to wake up and be right here in nature is just fantastic."

When her children began attending school, Chewning started working with Pride, Inc., an organization intent on beautifying the city. "Like St. Francis, I've always been an outdoors person and have loved the beauty of the outdoors," Chewning explained. "It's why I worked 22 years for Pride, Inc.," she said. During those 22 years, she worked with inmates in the city's jail to plant trees and flowers throughout the city. "It was a natural extension of what I love," she added.

Beautifying the city wasn't her only passion during the years working for Pride, Inc. "While working with the inmates, I got to know them really well. They had so many problems. Sometimes they just needed someone to talk to; someone to care," Chewning explained. So many of the inmates Chewning worked with over the years simply yearned to be loved. "I don't care what you've done," she said, "you need love."

As someone who has prayed the prayer of St. Francis every day for most of her life, Chewning has seen how it can change lives. "It is such a beautiful prayer to live by and believe. We need to pray it everyday. We're here for a purpose. We should never forget that we need to give back," she implored.

"When I first read about St. Francis and how he gave away everything he owned, I thought 'How could someone give everything away?' He is so far above what I could ever be," Chewning admitted. "He had such a strong belief. I would pray for one ounce of it."

Acknowledging her limitations, however, has not kept her from trying. "We have to be willing to do all that we can," she stated. "We have an obligation. If we have been given gifts, we are supposed to use them."

It was that desire, that quest to always give back, which led Chewning into her current activity. Although she officially retired three years ago from Pride, Inc., she found that retirement didn't suit her. "When I first retired, I felt lost. I prayed, 'God, please give me something to do with more meaning,'" Chewning explained. "All of a sudden one day it came to me, through God. I know it was through God. He said, 'Hey Penny, wake up and look at the need here. Look at the opportunity here.' The Holy Spirit touched me and I felt it. I thought, 'I can be of service right here.'"

Here, according to Chewning, was the inner city of Hopkinsville. "I have always felt a special kinship with people in need," Chewning explained. As a member of the advisory committee of a local service known as Challenge House, Chewning found her niche. "I spend quite a bit of time in the neighborhood (where Challenge House is located). It's a good way to find out about the needs," Chewning explained.

"I saw a need helping these people fix up their homes. I had plenty of friends remodeling their homes and wanting to get rid of vanities, shower doors, tubs, siding, windows, etc. Instead of throwing them away, I started gathering them and giving them to the people who need them," she said.

After three years, Chewning now has two warehouses full of items people can use. One warehouse holds building materials while the other holds household items such as furniture. "It's amazing what you can get done," Chewning exclaimed. "There are so many people who are so generous and want to help. Now these people can take pride in building up their neighborhood all in the name of Jesus."

Chewning emphasized that the entire principle of the Challenge House is faith based. While they are helping individuals in the neighborhoods where the houses are located to get an education, find and hold jobs, cook and eat nutritious meals, they are always evangelizing. "We really want them to understand that God will always be there for them," Chewning explained. "Some of these people feel so hopeless. But when you see someone finally believe, I mean truly believe, it is so beautiful."

Using one of the true great evangelists, St. Francis, as her model, Chewning recognizes her role. "I always tell them, 'I'm not doing it, God put me here to help you. God is doing it. I am just an instrument in His hands."

***Grant me** the treasure of sublime poverty: permit the distinctive sign of our order to be that it does not possess anything of its own beneath the sun, for the glory of your name, and that it have no other patrimony than begging. - St. Francis of Assisi*

***It is not fitting**, when one is in God's service, to have a gloomy face or a chilling look. - St. Francis of Assisi*

Remembering Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith

From The Beginning Of His Episcopacy, We Knew Bishop John As One Of Our Own

By Monsignor George Hancock

After it was announced that Father John Jeremiah McRaith, of New Ulm Minnesota, was to be the new Bishop of Owensboro Father McRaith called Bishop Soenneker to make arrangements for his coming to Owensboro to see what Western Kentucky was like and to make plans for his ordination.

Bishop Soenneker and I met Father McRaith at the Evansville airport one October morning. Coming from the plane, Father was carrying on his left arm a heavy overcoat , like you wear in Minnesota in the winter, and in his right hand his familiar pipe. We greeted him and offered him a Kentucky welcome and then drove back to Owensboro, the see city of his future diocese.

On arrival we went to Bishop Soenneker's residence on Frederica Street for lunch. In the afternoon, a visit was made to the Cathedral and to the Chancery. Arrangements were made for the ordination to be held at the Sportscenter. Father McRaith was shown the Big E which would house the Archbishops, Bishops, and guests for the ordination ceremony. Father was impressed with the facilities that were available.

He spent the night with Bishop Soenneker and the next day met with Archbishop Kelly, the Archbishop of Louisville, Bishop Soenneker, myself and the Diocesan Consulters, to make plans for the Ordination ceremony. I really felt for Father McRaith at that meeting. The only one he knew and that, not very well at the time, was the Archbishop. He must have felt that he was being given the once-over by those old men who were there.

Among the suggestions of the archbishop, I remember one that stands out. He wanted the Chair on which the newly ordained Bishop would be seated during the ceremony to stand out. The Chair would be the symbol of his Episcopal power and authority. This proved to be an interesting suggestion. Father Rhodes found the chair from Bishop Cotton's original throne in the Cathedral. That chair was refurbished and was used for the ordination ceremony.

The Archbishop indicated to Father McRaith how important it would be for him to be able to preach and to be available for many social gatherings. Father McRaith assured the Archbishop that he would have no difficulty in this regard.

Msgr. George Hancock , left, prayed with Bishop John McRaith Nov., 1988 at Saint Anthony of Padua Church in Grand Rivers, Ky. Photo by Mel Howard

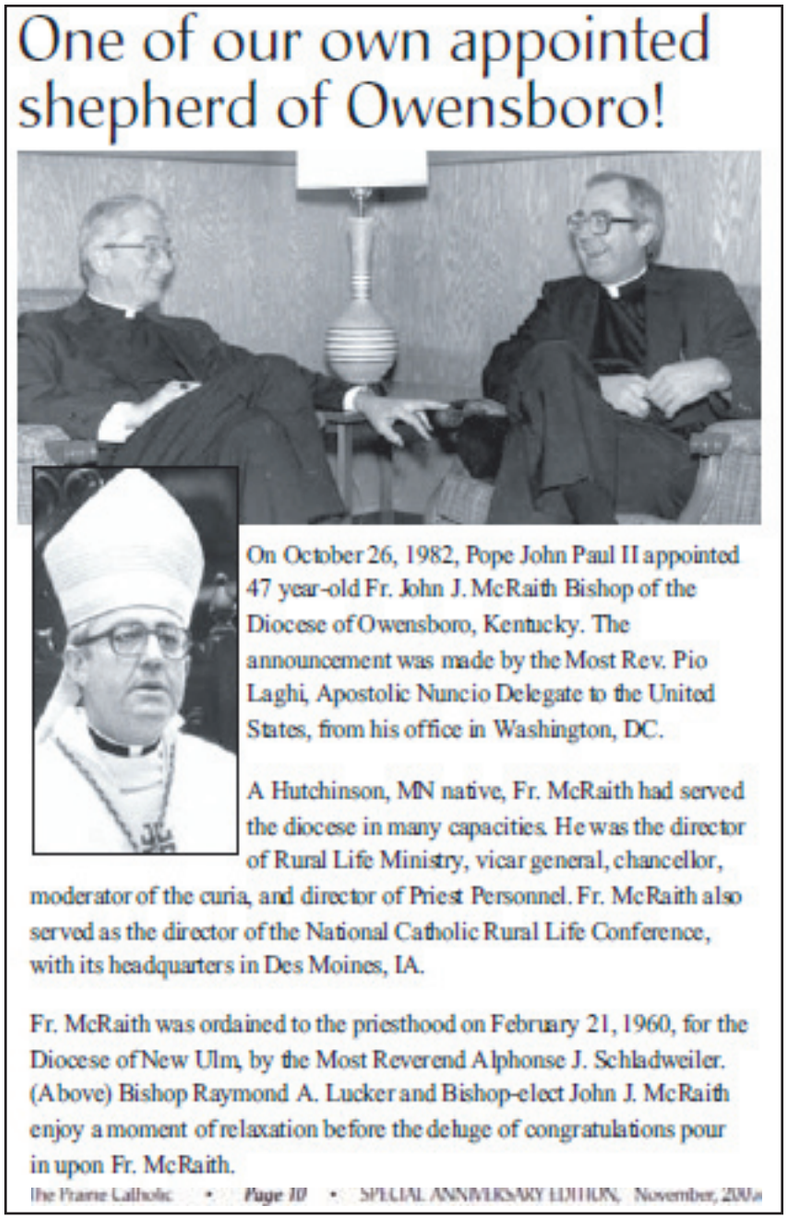
While Father McRaith was in Owensboro, it was my privilege to drive him around in the city, and show him some of the parishes, Brescia College and other items of interest. He was impressed.

I met with Father McRaith to formulate plans for his coming to Owensboro for the Ordination. Bishop Soenneker had appointed me to be in charge of arrangements. The Big E would house and feed the Archbishops and Bishops who would attend the Ordination Ceremony as well as relatives and friends of Father McRaith. A list of persons to be invited would be sent from the Diocese of New Ulm, and we would obtain a list of Catholic Bishops and their addresses from the USCC. We would send out the invitations. There would be a number of phone calls from New Ulm as all the plans were being brought to completion.

A house was being prepared for the future Bishop on Mayfair Avenue near the former Our Lady of Mercy Hospital. A key to the house was given to Father McRaith. He now had a stake in his diocese.

As Father Mcrath returned to New Ulm, I'm sure that he must have wondered what he was getting himself into. Those of us who had met him were sure of one thing; we were getting a good man as our new Bishop.

Continued on page 15



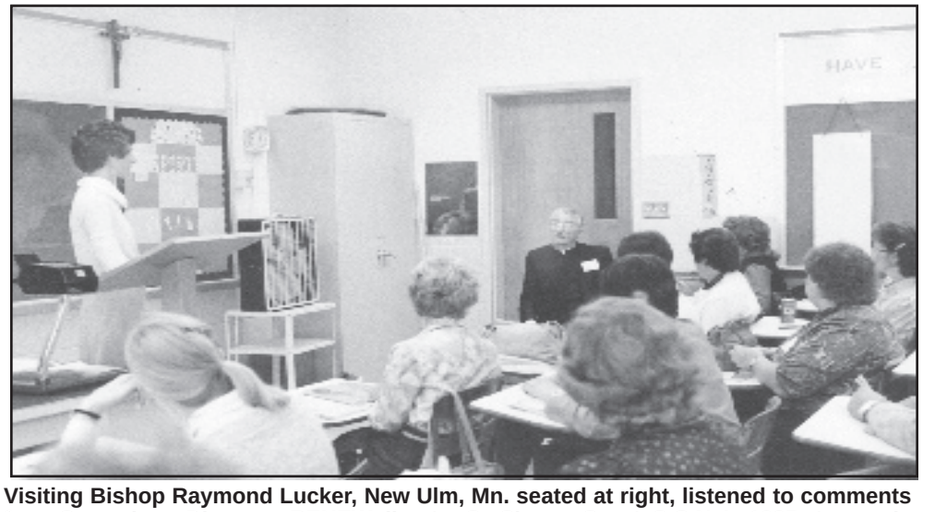
One of our own appointed shepherd of Owensboro!

On October 26, 1982, Pope John Paul II appointed 47 year-old Fr. John J. McRaith Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro, Kentucky. The announcement was made by the Most Rev. Pio Laghi, Apostolic Nuncio Delegate to the United States, from his office in Washington, DC.

A Hutchinson, MN native, Fr. McRaith had served the diocese in many capacities. He was the director of Rural Life Ministry, vicar general, chancellor, moderator of the curia, and director of Priest Personnel. Fr. McRaith also served as the director of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, with its headquarters in Des Moines, IA.

Fr. McRaith was ordained to the priesthood on February 21, 1960, for the Diocese of New Ulm, by the Most Reverend Alphonse J. Schladweiler. (Above) Bishop Raymond A. Lucker and Bishop-elect John J. McRaith enjoy a moment of relaxation before the deluge of congratulations pour in upon Fr. McRaith.

The Prairie Catholic • Page 10 • SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY EDITION, November, 2008



Visiting Bishop Raymond Lucker, New Ulm, Mn. seated at right, listened to comments from Owensboro Diocesan RENEW director Sr. Sharon Grant, S.C.N. In 1985 at an early training session for RENEW trainers. Mel Howard photo

A Tribute To Bishop John McRaith

By Fr. John Vaughan,
St. Stephen Cathedral

In 1982 I was pastor of St. Rose Parish in Cloverport and teaching high school religion at St. Romuald in Hardinsburg. One October evening word had circulated that the next day Pope John Paul was going to name our new bishop. I recall leaving the high school between classes that morning and going to the rectory at St. Romuald to listen to the news on radio. It was then that I first heard the name Father John McRaith who had been appointed as the third bishop of Owensboro. I knew nothing of him, nor of the Diocese of New Ulm where he was Vicar General but it was nonetheless an exciting time. A few days later I received a phone call from a priest classmate in Des Moines who had known Father McRaith when he worked in Des Moines as the Director of the Rural Life Conference of the United States Bishops' Conference. My classmate had wonderful things to say about our new bishop and assured me that we were fortunate to have him as our diocesan shepherd.

Several weeks later Father McRaith came to Owensboro to meet with Bishop Soenneker and other diocesan officials and to make plans for his ordination in December. I did not meet him at that time but one of the priests who did was Father Ezra Willett with whom I had lived and worked in Henderson. After that meeting Fr. Willett remarked on the bishop-elect's youth and that he was "well-met." By that, he meant that he had a pleasing personality and was easy to talk to. These past twenty- six years have proven the truth of that statement.

My first meeting with the new bishop was the afternoon of his ordination in the Owensboro Sportscenter. I had been asked to serve as one of the masters of ceremonies for the evening ordination and we had a practice earlier in the day. He was pleasant and charming and very gracious.

Like so many others, I have such vivid memories of his ordination on the evening of December 15, 1982. The Sportscenter was almost filled to capacity, there was such excitement in the air, and the music and the liturgy were truly inspiring. We knew that night that the Lord had many good things in store for our local Church in the years ahead.

Within a few months after arriving in Owensboro, Bishop McRaith asked me to go to Catholic University in Washington to study Canon Law. After all my years of seminary formation and education I had never imaged – nor desired – to pursue graduate studies, much less, Canon Law! However, I was so impressed with our new bishop and so inspired by his initial leadership that I immediately accepted his request. After receiving my license in Canon Law in 1985 I was appointed Vicar General for the diocese and took up residence with Bishop McRaith. For the next seven exciting years I had the privilege of sharing his life and his ministry on a daily basis. In 1987 we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the diocese and were privileged to have Bishop McRaith's good friend, Cardinal Bernadin from Chicago, with us for that occasion. Several other highlights of those early years in which I participated was RENEW, the establishment of the Diocesan Pastoral Council, and in 1990-91 the celebration of the second diocesan synod. It was also at that time that the diocesan offices were moved from Frederica Street to the present location near the Cathedral on Locust Street. That was a major undertaking that was accomplished by the hard work of everyone on the diocesan staff as well as many others.

Bishop John McRaith and Father John Vaughan standing in the foyer of the Cathedral awaiting the beginning of Mass on Thanksgiving Day, 2003. Photo by Lois Rutigliano

In a talk I gave in 2007 on the occasion of Bishop McRaith's twenty-fifth Episcopal anniversary, I mentioned four qualities or traits of Bishop McRaith that have stood out in my mind through the years. The first is hospitality. So many groups of priests, lay organizations and other individuals have been warmly welcomed to his simple home on Locust Street or to St. Raphael where he has especially enjoyed hosting people. I remember horse-drawn sleigh rides through the snow and hay rides and buggy rides in warmer weather and untold numbers of chickens and hamburgers and pots of soup shared with guests.

The second special characteristic of his ministry has been inclusiveness. Through the years he has accepted, welcomed, and reached out to all groups and segments of people. We can really see this in his initiative toward the Latino community and our international priests who have been welcomed into the diocese.

Third, Bishop McRaith has exercised his leadership in a spirit of collaboration. Throughout the years he has always tried to be truly consultative. Indications of this spirit include the Priests' Council, the clergy Personnel Board, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, Deanery Councils etc. Two initiatives which he embraced as a result of such consultation, contrary to his initial personal preference, are the Diaconate program and the capital campaign "Responding to Today's Need and Tomorrow's Vision."

The fourth special trait I would mention is his familiarity and warmth. He has an ability to remember people's names, his door is always open, and he answers and returns his own phone calls. This is all an indication of his genuine love of people and his desire to be of service in the name of Christ.

In the past twenty-six years there is no one of us who has not made some mistakes or offended others on occasion. Bishop McRaith is no different from us. He has not done everything I wish he had done and undoubtedly has made some decisions with which many of us might disagree. Nonetheless, he has been a humble, zealous bishop who has given over a quarter of century of loving service to the People of God in western Kentucky. I congratulate him as he assumes a new role in our midst. Well done, good and faithful servant. You have preached the Gospel, you have shared your faith, you have loved us all, you have made us laugh and shared our tears. We will miss your leadership but we will enjoy your continued presence among us and we will always thank God for you.

We Knew Bishop John As One Of Our Own

(Continued from page 14)

For the next few weeks, the Chancery Office became a beehive of activity as preparations got underway for the coming of the new Bishop. Various committees were formed to take care of preparations and to make December 15 a special day for the Diocese and its new Bishop.

The verifying and checking lists of names which came from New Ulm, and the sending of invitations fell to Kay Rhodes and myself. Preparations went well and the various committees did an outstanding job.

Father McRaith arrived at his house, unannounced, several days before the Ordination. He had driven from New Ulm pulling, behind his car, a U-Haul containing personal belongings. This gave him a chance to get a feel for his new home.

The ordination ceremony went off with precision and Bishop McRaith was seated on the "special chair" as he took possession of the Diocese of Owensboro as its third Bishop.

It was my privilege to be closely associated with the Bishop during those first months as he went about the task of setting up the Chancery as he wanted it, forming a staff and getting his administration underway. From that association I learned the kind of person Bishop McRaith is kind, compassionate, understanding, completely dedicated to the Church and her people, ever giving of himself. I knew that the people of Western Kentucky had a wonderful man as their Bishop and he has been that way all through the years.

Remembering Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith

Transforming Our Diocesan Church: A Timeline of Accomplishment

1982

- Spring--Bishop Henry J. Soenneker resigns as second Bishop of Owensboro.
- October--Rev. John J. McRaith arrives in Owensboro to become bishop
- December 15--Episcopal Ordination and Installation of Bishop McRaith

1983

- Monsignor Gilbert Henninger retired as Vicar General
- Monsignor George Hancock appointed Vicar General and Chancellor.
- Rev. Henry P. O'Bryan appointed Superintendent of Catholic Schools
- Rev. Joseph Mills named Judicial Vicar
- Rev. Joseph E. Bradley named director of Office of Vocations
- Office of Lay Ministry Established
- Rev. Tony Ziegler named Director of Office of Worship and Spiritual Life
- Marriage Tribunal re-organized, Fr. Joe Mills named as Judicial Vicar
- RENEW introduced by Sr. Sharon Grant, RSM
- "DOCE" Diocese of Owensboro Catholic Educators established
- Mount Saint Joseph Academy closed as school
- Mount Saint Joseph opened as Diocesan Retreat Center
- Rev. Hank Cecil named as Director of Office of Youth Ministry
- Sr. Marie Michael Hayden, OSU, Director of Religious Education
- Catholic Cursillo Movement developed team to start Walk to Emmaus Retreat Program for the Methodist Church
- Rev. Gerald Baker, Rev. Anthony Bickett, Rev. Bruce Fogle ordained May 21
- Rev. Hildebrand Elliott died May 17.
- Sr. Kathleen Kaelin, OSU, headed Pro-life Activities
- Sr. Cheryl Clemons, OSU headed Rural Life and Social Concerns
- Offices of Administration, Catholic Schools, Charismatic Renewal, School Food Services, Ecumenism, Family Life, Music, Ongoing Formation of Priests, Religious Education, Social Concerns, Spiritual Life, Vocations, Worship, Youth Ministry, were formed

1984

- Diocesan Office of Development created with Clark Shackelford as director
- The Commission of Women initiated
- Office of Communications created with Mel Howard as director and editor of Diocesan Newspaper—The Western Kentucky Catholic
- Rev. Jack Kramer, Director of Ministry Formation Program at Brescia College, completed

Continued on page 17

Bishop John McRaith waiting at the back of St. Stephen Cathedral for a Diocesan celebration to begin in 1993. WKC file photos this page

Caring for others and having compassion for everyone whom he met were hallmarks of Bishop John McRaith's episcopacy. In this photo taken at the 1983 Chrism Mass, Bishop John made sure that retired Bishop Henry Soenneker, at left distributing Communion, gave the diocese an example of how to relate with a retired Bishop - always make a place for him at the table, pray with him, and continue to be his friend.

The late Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago traveled to the Owensboro Sportscenter in 1987 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Diocese of Owensboro. Shown here at Mass with the third Bishop of Owensboro, John Jeremiah McRaith, left, and the retired second Bishop of Owensboro, Henry J. Soenneker, at the altar at right, Cardinal Bernardin was widely known for his first remark to his priests when appointed a Cardinal, "I am your brother, Joseph."

A Timeline of Accomplishment

(Continued form page 16)

proposal for Diocesan Formation Program for Lay Ministers

- Mark Vollman hired as Special CPC employee
- Rev. Robert Whelan died Jan. 7.
- Rev. Martin Hayes ordained June 2
- Rev. Frank Ward died Aug. 9.
- Msgr. William Jarboe died Sept. 13.
- Catholic Pastoral Center reorganized with five ministering committees:
- The Office of Family Life
- The Office of Pro Life Activities
- The Rural Life Committee
- The Office of Missions
- The Office of Pastoral Ministry

1985

- Lay Ministry Formation Program is established at Brescia College
- First Season of RENEW began
- Pro-Life Activities, Rural Life, Social Concerns directed by Dan and Laura Robinson
- Marci Allman named as Director of Family Life
- Msgr. John Higgins died Jan. 23
- Rev. John Vaughan appointed Vicar General.
- Rev. Terry Devine, Rev. Gary Payne, Rev. Gregory Trawick ordained May 11
- Rev. Delphin Thomas died June 10.

1986

- Black Catholic Commission formed
- Diocesan Pastoral Council Task Force established
- Bishop Cotton Apartments for retired priests constructed
- Sr. Ruth Gehres is named third president of Brescia College
- "Go and Do Likewise" document developed by Bishop McRaith in response to AIDS Crisis
- Msgr. Peter Braun died Nov. 13.
- Rev. William Borntraeger died Dec. 6.

1987

- Diocese of Owensboro celebrated 50th Anniversary
- Brief history of Diocese published
- Office of Music established with Sr. Maureene Griner, O.S.U., part-time director
- Catholic Schools in Owensboro and West Daviess County begin process of consolidating
- Sr. Amelia Stenger, OSU, appointed Superintendent of Catholic Schools
- Sr. Kathy Gallo, OSU, named director of Religious Education

Bishop John McRaith greetingpeople after the April, 2985 Diocesan Jubilee Mass in St. Stephen Cathedral. WKC file photo

- Rev. Kevin Karl named Director of Office of Vocations
- RENEW 2000 began
- Diocesan Pastoral Council established
- Rev. Larry Hostetter, Rev. Larry McBride ordained May 30
- Rev. Carmen DeChristopher died June 7.

Bishop John McRaith, left, with diocesan Vicar General Fr. Jerry Calhoun at the April, 2006 Diocesan Chrism Mass. Lois Rutigliano Photo

- Bishop Soenneker died Sept. 24 and was buried at Resurrection Cemetery
- Rev. John Bartolomucci, TOR, died Oct. 9

1988

- St. Mark's Priory near Bowling Green closed
- Rev. John Vaughan appointed Chancellor
- St. Mark Priory property purchased by Fathers of Mercy, locating the Generalate and Novitiate on the property.
- Property purchased for Newman Center in Murray
- Rev. Freddie Byrd ordained May 28

Bishop John McRaith prayed with the media at KSP just before the midnight when Harold McQueen was executed July 1, 1997 in the 86-year-old electric chair in Kentucky State Penitentiary, Eddyville, Ky. Harold had been a devout Catholic since 1987. He attended every prison worship service, and prayed daily with a rosary. Harold's rosary belonged to Cindy Stephens, the daughter of Paul Stephens, a volunteer chaplain at the prison. Cindy Stephens was murdered twenty years ago. Her father, Paul Stephens said that "Harold is a source of strength to his fellow prisoners; he counsels them to live in a way God would approve of." Paul Stephens did not believe Harold deserved to be electrocuted; his execution was Kentucky's first since 1962. WKC file photo

1989

- Office of Planning formed
- Second Synod planned
- Owensboro Catholic Consolidated Schools open with Middle School for grades 7 and 8 opened in former Immaculate School building, and Elementary sites of Catherine Spalding (at Lourdes), Angela Merici (at Blessed Mother), Bishop Cotton (at St. Pius X), Bishop Soenneker (at Precious Blood) and Holy Angels (at St. Mary Magdalene – Sorgho).
- St. Mark Parish in Eddyville opens—every county in Diocese now had a Catholic Church
- Parish Hall, St. Michael Parish, Sebree, constructed
- St. Peter Parish Church, Waverly, renovated

Continued on page 18

Remembering Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith

A Timeline of Accomplishment

(Continued form page 17)

- Sr. Martha Keller, OSU, named as Director of Office of Youth Ministry
- James Hansen named Director of Music
- Bishop Cotton Apartments expanded
- Marian Shrine Committee established.
- Rev. Richard Cash, Rev. Dave Johnson, Rev. Tony Jones, Rev. Bruce McCarty, Rev. Darrell Venters, Rev. Henry Wieder ordained May 27
- Rev. George Byers, CPM, Rev. Kenneth Frye, CPM, Rev. John Agapito,CPM, and Rev. Frank Sherry, CPM, ordained Dec. 22.
- Rev. Charles Saffer died Sept. 8.

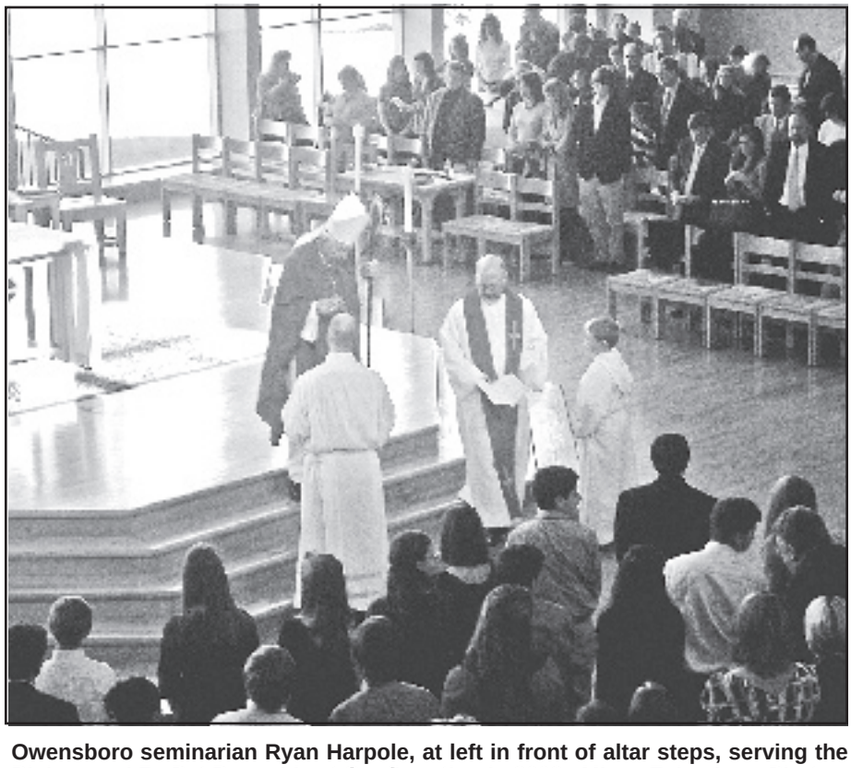
1990

- Diocese divided into six "Lay Deanery Councils"
- Catholic Pastoral Center relocated from 4005 Frederica St. to 600 Locust St.
- Diocesan Archives formed
- Rev. Gerard Glahn died Jan. 18
- Msgr. Gilbert Henninger died March 5
- Rev. Gary Hayes, Rev. Steve Ulrich ordained May 26
- Rev. Boniface Armbruster died April 9.
- Rev. Leo Dienes died July 24.

1991

- Brescia College offers Lay Certification classes in rural areas of Diocese
- Sr. Joseph Angela Boone, OSU, appointed Chancellor
- Joseph O'Bryan appointed Superintendent of Catholic Schools.
- Office of Stewardship created, Tom Lilly named Director
- Diocesan Synod held Oct. 18 - 20
- Charitable Trust Fund established
- New Church constructed for St. Elizabeth Parish, Clarkson
- St. Anthony Parish, Peonia, renovated
- St. Augustine Parish, Grayson Springs, renovated
- Sr. Emma Cecilia Busam, O.S.U., hired as part-time Archivist
- Brescia College had first graduates of Ministry Formation Program
- Glenmary Sisters move national office to Owensboro
- Lourdes Hospital, Paducah, transferred sponsorship to Mercy Health System. (August 31, 1982 - Hospital transferred from Sisters of St. Francis, Tiffin, Ohio to Diocese of Owensboro-- Sisters remained in staff positions.)

Bishop John McRaith tilling his garden at Saint Raphael, Ky. farm in June, 1997. WKC file photo



Owensboro seminarian Ryan Harpole, at left in front of altar steps, serving the Bishop and Fr. Pat Reynolds at Confirmation in 2008. Missy Eckenberg Photo

- Cursillo Community started REC, "Residents Encounter Christ," for women in prison
- Rev. Ray Clark ordained May 25
- Rev. William Casey, CPM, ordained May 31.

1992

- Rev. Joe Mills appointed Vicar General
- TEC, Teens Encounter Christ, celebrated its 100th TEC Weekend at Mount Saint Joseph
- Office of Youth Ministry added first full-time director, Tony Cooper
- Rev. Larry McBride named Director of Office of Worship, Martha Hagan named as Associate Director
- Sr. Pat Froning, OSF, named Director of Office of Lay Ministry; Office of Outreach established
- Theresa Hayden Gilles named Director of Family Life
- New Parish Hall constructed for St. Joseph Parish, Bowling Green
- New Parish Hall constructed for St. Joseph Parish, Leitchfield
- New Parish Hall constructed for St. Leo Parish, Murray
- Sr. Marie Goretti Browning, OSU, named Director of Office of Spiritual Life.
- Pro-Life Activities, Rural Life, Social Concerns directed by Sr. Judy Morris, OP
- Kevin Kinnaird named Director of Office of Music
- Diocese of Owensboro Policy Manual Handbook, and Employee Policy Handbook published
- HIV/AIDS Ministry directed by Rev. Daniel Goff.
- Diocesan Office for Planning established, headed by Cathy Hagan
- Western Kentucky Catholic mailed for first time to all parishioners across Diocese
- CREDO Certification for Catholic School Teachers and Parish Catechists began
- Msgr. Anthony Higdon died Aug. 19
- Rev. E. E. Willett died Dec. 9.

1993

- Four properties purchased for Daniel Pitino Shelter for homeless
- Bishop's Appeal, "Disciples Response Fund," initiated
- Office of African American Ministries formed, Gloria Adams named director
- Parish Hall constructed for St. Stephen Parish, Cadiz
- St. Thomas More Parish Church relocated
- New Parish Hall constructed at Immaculate Parish, Owensboro
- Rev. Daniel Goff died March 5
- Rev. John Thomas ordained May 29
- Rev. Victor Boarman died June 22.

1994

- Pitino Shelter incorporated and received national recognition
- Religious Education Convocation
- Kathy Doup named Director of Youth Ministry
- Rev. J. Patrick Reynolds named Judicial Vicar
- Passionist Nuns relocate monastery to Crisp Road in Whitesville
- Rev. Joseph Bomensatt died Sept. 9.

1995

- Diocesan Social Concerns Committee formed, Leeta Shucraft named director

Continued on page 19

A Timeline of Accomplishment

(Continued form page 18)

- Emergency crisis line formed
- Sr. Vivian Marie Bowles is named fourth president of Brescia College
- Ministry Day held for first time
- Rev. Henry Wieder named Director of Office of Youth Ministry
- Rev. Bradley Whistle named Director of Office of Vocations
- Sr. Darlene Denton, OSU, name Director of Office of Worship and Spiritual Life
- Pro-Life Activities, Rural Life, Social Concerns directed by Leeta Shuecraft
- HIV/AIDS Ministry directed by Rev. Steve Ulrich
- Patty Brown named Director of Music
- Rev. Howard Tucker died May 20.
- Rev. Andy Ausenbaugh, Rev. Mike Clark, Rev. Carl McCarthy, Rev. Stan Puryear ordained May 27.
- Rev. Peter Lauzon died Aug. 11.

1996

- Rev. Brian Roby ordained May 25
- Rev. George Boehmicke died Nov. 6
- Office of Wisdom formed—Ginny Knight-Simon Coordinator
- Melinda Prunty named Associate Director of Office of Youth Ministry

1997

- Office of Hispanic Ministry formed, Rev. Stan Puryear named director
- Preparations began for Jubilee 2000
- Sr. Amelia Stenger, OSU, named Director of Office of Spiritual Life
- Al Thompson employed as first technology coordinator
- Rev. Brian Johnson, Rev. David Kennedy, Rev. Dan Kreutzer, Rev. Mike Williams ordained May 31
- Youth 2000 co-sponsored by Office of Youth Ministry and Marian Shrine Committee held for first time in diocese. (Program started in Texas)

1998

- Office of Television Ministry formed—directed by Rev. John Meredith, Cliff Russell as Broadcasting Consultant. Provided Sunday Mass on local television under auspices of Gideon Productions.
- Brescia College offers courses leading to Masters degrees in business and education
- Brescia College elevated to University status with initiation of Masters degrees in Education and Business fields.
- Rev. Ken Mikulcik ordained Jan. 10.
- Rev. Anthony Ziegler died Feb. 9.

August 18, 1984: Bishop John McRaith listening to Jim Barr of Owensboro, center, as Sr. Sharon Grant, S.C.N., left, and Clark Shackelford, right, diocese's first Development Director, listen at right. Sr. Suzanne Sims, OSU is at near right. The group was on break from a RENEW training session at the 4005 Frederica Street Pastoral Center. WKC file photo

Bishop John McRaith enjoyed meeting people from all across the diocese. Here he greeted Phillip and Ann Smith of Saint Joseph Parish, Leitchfield in October, 1993 after a SUnday liturgy. WKC file photo

- Rev. Gregory Arflack, Rev. Eric Riley ordained May 23
- Rev. Christopher Henderson, CPM, Rev. Peter Stryker, CPM, Rev. Glenn Jarman, CPM, ordained May 31.
- Rev. Thomas Clark died June 26
- Rev. William Allard died July 30.

1999

- Sr. Kathy Gallo, O.S.U., starts "Loaves and Fishes" program
- Mike Bogdan named Director of Music
- Pro-Life Activities, Rural Life, Opportunities for Life Hotline and Social Concerns directed by Rita Brothers
- Edwina Hyland named director of Family Life
- Rev. Charles Wolford died May 17.
- Rev. Henry Willett died July 17.

2000

- Inter-Denominational Celebration, Jubilee 2000, held at Owensboro Sportscenter
- Rita Heinz named Director of Catholic Charities. Catholic Charities was licensed by the Commonwealth of Kentucky to provide adoption services
- HIV/AIDS Ministry directed by Rita Brothers
- Patty Blair named director of Religious Education
- Catholic Charities Adoption Program licensed. Rita Heinz named director.
- Brescia University hosts year-long celebration of its 50th Anniversary
- Rev. James Hite died Dec. 11.

2001

- Richard Murphy named director of Diocesan Social Concerns Committee, directed Pro-life Activities, Rural Life and Opportunities for Life Hotline, HIV/AIDS Ministry
- Relationship with Cornerstone Counseling service initiated by Rita Heinz
- 2001-Catholic Charities began contracting with counselors for services for parishioners
- Established St. Joseph Hall and Paul VI House of Discernment on Brescia Campus
- Rev. Gerald Calhoun appointed Vicar General
- Rev. Gregory Trawick appointed Judicial Vicar
- Rev. Francis Mastrovito, TOR, died May 6.
- Rev. Randy Howard and Rev. Andy Garner ordained May 26
- Rev. Henry O'Bryan died Aug. 13
- Rev. Robert Willett died Nov. 6.
- Rev. Lucian Hayden died Dec. 30

2002

- Office of Television names Cliff Russell as first full-time director
- Diocese initiated Self Insurance Medical Program with Benefit Service of America
- Michael Bogdan named first full-time Director of Office of Music
- Diocese of Mandeville, Jamaica, West Indies became sister diocese with Diocese of Owensboro
- Melinda Prunty named full-time Director of Office of Youth Ministry
- Office of Safe Environment established
- Self Insurance for Medical coverage began
- Sexual Abuse Review Board named
- Rev. James Costigan, CPM, Rev. Charles Zmudzinski, CPM, ordained May 31.
- Rev. Richard Clements died July 9.

2003

- Safe Environment training program for adults and children started
- Tom Mudd Coordinator of Safe Environment
- Kevin Kauffeld named Director of Stewardship
- Rev. Jason McClure, Rev. Ralph Patterson ordained May 24
- Rev. Charles Fischer died July 2.
- Veronica Wilhite hired Sept. 1 as Director of the Office of African American Catholic Ministries
- Rev. Martin Mattingly died Sept. 9

2004

- Owensboro Catholic School System reorganized forming the Owensboro Catholic K-3 Center (at Lourdes), and the Owensboro Catholic 4-6 Center (at Blessed Mother)
- Jim Mattingly appointed Superintendent of Catholic Schools
- Rev. D. Andrew Garner named Director of Office of Vocations
- Rev. Michael Clark named Judicial Vicar

Continued on page 20

Remembering Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith

A Timeline of Accomplishment

(Continued form page 20)

- Donna Sauer Coordinator of Safe Environment
- Sr. Jacinta Powers started working at Catholic Pastoral Center as Americorp Volunteer, eventually founding the Bridge to Hope Program
- Office of Hispanic Ministry moved to Catholic Pastoral Center—Patricia Murphy named as director
- Dedicated the Fr. Leonard Alvey Library on the Brescia Campus
- Rev. William Hagman died March 23.
- Rev. Leonard Arcilesi died April 23.
- Rev. Thomas Sullivan, CPM, ordained May 31, 2004.

2005

- Hopkinsville and Owensboro opened Catholic Low Power FM radio stations independent of diocesan Communication office
- Diocese joined CUPH with Catholic Mutual Insurance Group
- Diocese developed Flexible Spending Plan for employees of parishes, schools, and Catholic institutions in the diocese.
- "Western Kentucky Catholic" expanded to include approximately 48 pages including a Spanish section "Catolico de Kentucky Occidental"
- Office of Vocations becomes full-time position. Fr. Andy Garner named director
- Pope John Paul II died April 2
- April 19, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger elected Pope Benedict XVI

2006

- Rev. Larry Hostetter named fifth President of Brescia University and first non-Ursuline president.
- Molly Thompson named Coordinator of Safe Environment
- Bridge to Hope Program started by Catholic Charities led by Sr. Jacinta Powers

2007

- Bishop John McRaith celebrated 25th anniversary of Episcopal ordination
- Diocese acquires Gasper River Youth Camp and Retreat Center near Bowling Green and names Ben Warrell as Director.
- Office of Religious Education re-named Office of Faith Formation. Elaine Robertson named as Associate Director
- Office of Lay Ministry and Formation formed. Patty Blair named Director.
- Luis Ajú named Director of Office of Hispanic Ministry

2008

- St. John School (K-5) closed
- Rev. Ray Clark appointed Director of the Society of Propagation of the Faith
- Rev. John Thomas appointed Director of the Diaconate Program (20 men begin initial class)
- Catholic Charities opened St. Gerard Life Home
- Bishop McRaith dedicates new Divine Mercy Chapel of Fathers of Mercy in South Union on Aug. 23.

2009

- Jan. 5—Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith announces his retirement, effective 12:01 a.m. this day.
- Very Rev. Mike Clark, J.C.L. apppointed Jan. 7 to be the Administrator of the diocese by the seven-member College of Consultors.

Here is a list of individuals who are current or past employees of the support staff of the Diocese of Owensboro. Two current staff members were employed by the Diocese before Bishop John McRaith was appointed bishop: Mary Margaret Drury, employed since June 10, 1966; and Donna Biggs, employed since June 1975. Kay Rhodes, now retired, was also employed before Bishop McRaith's appointment.

Bishop John hired these diocesan staff : over the years: Fr. Pete Lauzon, (dec.), Fr. Titus Ahabyona, Fr. Greg Trawick, Eileen Payne, Fr Brad Whistle, Fr. Bradley, Kevin Karl, Sr. Kathleen Kaelin, O.S.U., Barbara Roberts, Karen Jarboe, Bettye Ebelhar, Becky Krampe, Lisa Sims, Theresa Ballard, Angie Sims, Sr. Margaret Alokan, OSF, Mary Ann Kurz, Betty Medley, Gayle Strehl, Tonya Barnett, Dorota Majcher, Ernie Taliaferro, Carolyn Sue Cecil, Donna Mills, Elaine Thomas, Sr. Mary Irene Cecil,OSU, Laura Mills Payne, Al Thompson, Molly Thompson, Sharleene Evans, Matt Monsour, Sr. Theresa Marie Wilkerson, O.S.U., Sonya Evans, Sandy Morris, Jack Wilson, Lil Wilson, Donna Ferguson, Donna Murphy, Lisa Gardner (dec.), Louanne Payne, Veronica Wilhite, Patti Murphy Gutiérrez, Eileen Payne, Wanda Williams, Cathy Hagan, Martha Hagan, Norma Hagan, Norma Vella Tipton, Robin Payne, Kay Hardin, Rosa Payne, Rita Hayden, Sr. Jacinta Powers, Christine Howard Ward, Christopher Rhodes, Cliff Russell, Mary Hearth (dec.), Kay Rhodes, Sr. Julia Head, Fr. Maury Riney, Sr. Mary Russell, O.P., Cliff Russell, Charlotte Hedges, Shane Rusher, Sr. Rachel Willett, S.C.N., Tom Mudd, Carolyn Howard, Donna Sauer, Janice Hutchison, Tami Schneider.

At Left, Bishop John giving Communion at the 1991 Chrism Mass to his mother Mary McRaith as CPC receptionist Lil Wilson looks on. WKC file Photo

Bishop John McRaith standing in prayer at a Mass in Blessed Mother Church, Owensboro, July, 2005. Lois Rutigliano photo

Caught up in the Spirit, Bishop John McRaith genuflected before the Body of Christ in the tabernacle of the Cathedral on Holy Saturday, 2005. Lois Rutigliano Photo

My Fondest Experiences with Bishop John

By Pat S. Smith

BOWLING GREEN,Ky. - My husband was reading the Daily News here in Bowling Green and I was lounging in front of the TV when he exclaimed, "Bishop McRaith is retiring!"

I sat up. "What? What's up with that?"

He began reading me the story featured on page one which stated that the Bishop was retiring due to health problems, although not life threatening ones, and that his retirement would be effective immediately. Suddenly I felt that Bishop John appeared to me and I remembered our different meetings, whether donned in his mitre, crozier in hand, walking up the aisle at Mass at Holy Spirit, or just dressed in his regular clerical clothes at outings. He is a great man.

My first real up close and personal experience with Bishop John was at his house at Saint Raphael near West Louisville, Ky. with 15 other Retrouvaille couples and Fr. Jerry Calhoun, in the summer of 1990. What a wonderful man he was to talk to on-a-one on one basis. And how awesome for him to treat the Retrouvaille couples to a cookout and hayride. I loved his two big Clydesdale horses and we all laughed and enjoyed the hay ride so much. After being in troubled marriages, it was a joy to be together again, now that most of the couples had healed. I don't even remember what we talked about, as it has been so long ago, but I immediately loved him. He is so charismatic! That day I learned, as I would see more and more of him through the years, that Bishop John is truly a "people" person.

My next memorable experience was on a cold winter night a few years ago when several of the youth at Holy Spirit were having a "Homeless Night"; they had vowed to live in cardboard boxes, despite the weather, with no conveniences, no real cooking, no heat. This was such a fascinating experiment that our local TV station was even there for the interview and Bishop John, who had come to Bowling Green to support this event, was seen on WBKO news with the teens at 6:00 and 10:00 pm. Luckily, all the kids "survived" and it was a true learning event for them, helping them to feel compassion for the homeless people in Bowling Green and elsewhere. This was when I again observed what deep affection Bishop John has for our youth. He is truly interested in them and their future as the adult Catholics in Western Kentucky. Of all his greatness, I guess this is the one thing I admire about him most: to know he supports our youth.

In 2000, our only son, Tony, was confirmed at Holy Spirit. I will never forget the homily that Sunday and once again, it was directed at the young teenagers who were now professing their commitment to their God and their chosen religion, Catholicism. As he closed his homily that day, he told the newly confirmed, ..."never forget, no matter where you go in life, you can always look to Jesus, the Paraclete, and he will be walking right beside you."

The final personal experience I want to talk about was somewhat sad for me. Bishop John had come to St. Joseph's in Bowling Green to offer his consolation to the Hispanic community. I was there to take photos and write a bit about his visit for Western Ky Catholic. Of course, the entire service was in Spanish so Bishop John had an interpreter and that was GOOD for me, too, as I don't speak Spanish either. A few weeks before, one of the Hispanic couples from St. Joseph parish, a nice upstanding couple, had had a fiery cross burned on their lawn and some rude and crude words left behind. They were also robbed. The couple and their children were terrified and it was so impressive to see how Bishop John's condolences soothed them, how the people cried and then how excited they became afterwards to shake hands with him. Also, the little children were immediately drawn to him as I snapped photos. It was a very heartwarming end to a sad experience for all of us.

So down through the years, I have seen and met Bishop John many times and there are too many memories to recount them all in this short article. But I do want to say, "Bishop John, you have been a great leader and a great man to be around, and you have served us well. We are saddened by your retirement, but you deserve it! Rest well and enjoy life. Know that we will always remember you and you are in our prayers!"

Pat S. Smith has been a parishioner at Holy Sprit Parish for 21 years. She has always respected and felt a deep affection for "her" Bishop.

Bishop John, you gave me more courage to stay strong in my vocation

Most Rev. John J. McRaith, Third Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro

OWENSBORO, Ky.,January 5, 2009 - Bishop John McRaith came into his last Diocesan Staff meeting with a speech in hand. Here is what our third Bishop of Owensboro said to the Diocesan staff in the Catholic Pastoral Center that day:

"I don't know`where to start sharing with you what I have to say. I remember being very nervous 27 years ago when I first started talking to the Staff that was here then and with the priests' council. Now I come before you today with very different feelings — feelings of sadness and loss. I wrote a letter to our Holy Father offering my resignation early for reasons of health. I have been here a very long time, and the Diocese needed new leadership.

"On November 19, 2008, I received a letter from Archbishop Pietro Sambi, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States (informing of the Pope's decision). What does this mean? It means that as I talk to you, I am no longer the Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro. The Holy Father accepted my resignation effective January 5, 2009. It seems strange that this had to be such a secret, but if you look at it this way, it makes sense. The Holy Father, John Paul II, appointed me here in October of 1982, and he was first to announce the appointment. Now, our Holy Father Benedict XVI, has accepted my resignation, and should be the first to announce that decision.

"I can only tell you, the staff, that it is most painful to share this decision and news with you. I have known my retirement would be effective today since November 19, and I have grieved since that day. It is hard to grieve something that you asked for, but I think that this is in the best interests of the Diocese. While painful , this is the best decision for the Diocese, and I pray for me and you that it is best for me and you as well. The diocesan staff has always given me strong support and affirmation, and this present staff could not be better in doing that for me.

"While I will not be leaving the area and hope to continue to minister in the Diocese, this is a painful change for me. Somehow, I did not think it would hurt this bad, because I knew already that my retirement would happen this year. I would have had to resign at the latest by my next birthday."

(Here the Bishop explained about the process of the appointment of an administrator by the Consulters, and that the Administrator will serve until a new Bishop is appointed.)

"I would expect that to happen in a year at the longest. I now give thanks to God for each and every one of you. And I thank God for the wonderful things that have happened to me because there were people like you around for support, friendship, and love.

"In that spirit of thanksgiving, it is only fitting that we will conclude this meeting by celebrating the Eucharist — the very act of thanksgiving for God's many gifts to us and to the Diocese over the past 26 plus years. I couldn't celebrate with anyone that I am more thankful for than all of you who are gathered here today.

I will answer any questions."

At the end of his talk the staff was silent, stunned, some sobbing quietly; not a dry eye in the Catholic Pastoral Center in this moment.

Then one Sister rose to speak to Bishop John. Sr Margaret Alokan, O.S.F., paused a moment, stood tall, did not dry her tears falling from her eyes, gathered herself, and spoke to Bishop John:

"Like everyone here, my heart is broken. My being employed to work with you in this diocese can be likened to taking a spiritual refuge regarding my vocation. You know how tough life has been for me lately but because of my spiritual stubbornness and because of you around me as a spiritual father, my vocation as a religious has been sustained. I just want to wish you a happy retirement and the good health you need to enjoy the rest of your life. I will not lose hope regarding my vocation which I treasure so much and please continue to keep me in your heart in prayer and that will keep me going.

"Whenever I had to share my worries with you, Bishop John, you listened to me with compassion, and you never said much, but I heard a lot from your compassionate look at me. That gave me more courage to stay strong in my vocation."

Sister Margaret Alokan, OSF, serves our diocese in the Tribunal Office as a Defender of the Bond of marriage.

Remembering Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith

Bishop John McRaith with the Diocesan Staff in the Catholic Pastoral Center On January 5, 2009

Back row: **Betty Medley -** Director of Family Life Office, **Donna Mills –** Administrative Assistant for the Offices of Youth Ministry and Ongoing Formation for Clergy**, Richard Murphy –** Director of Social Concerns Office**, Donna Ferguson -** Administrative Assistant for the Office of the Bishop**, Jim Mattingly –** Superintendent of Catholic Schools**, Ginny Knight-Simon –** Director of the Office of Wisdom**, Molly Thompson –** Office of Safe Environment**, Theresa Ballard –** Director of Food Service**, Sonya Evans -** Administrative Assistant for Food Service Office**, Tami Schneider -** Administrative Assistant in the Offices of Communications, Vocations and Hispanic Ministry**, Patti Gutiérrez –** Coordinator of the Justice for Immigrants Campaign**, Matt Monsour –** Coordinator of Technology**, Ben Warrell –** Director of Gasper River Catholic Retreat Center, **Mike Bogdan –** Director of Music**;** ***Middle row:*** **Fr. Andy Garner –** Director of Vocations and Seminarians**, Martha Hagan –** Co-Director of the Office for Worship**, Melinda Prunty –** Director of Youth Ministry**, Veronica Wilhite –** Director of Black Catholic Ministry**, Luis Ajú –** Director of Hispanic Ministry**, Fr. Mike Clark –** Diocesan Administrator, Judicial Vicar, Pastor of St. Anthony's in Brown's Valley**, Donna Biggs -** Administrative Assistant for the Office of Faith Formation**, Louanne Payne –** Auditor/Case Promoter/Notary for Diocesan Tribunal**, Elaine Robertson –** Associate Director of Office of Faith Formation**, Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith, Elaine Thomas -** Administrative Assistant in the Office of Administration**, Rita Heinz –** Director of Programs for Catholic Charities**, Sandy Morris –** Notary for the Tribunal**, Rita Hayden -** Administrative Assistant in the Offices of Lay Ministry and Formation, and Social Concerns**, Karen Jarboe -** Administrative Assistant in the Catholic Schools Office**, Mary Ann Kurz –** Notary for the Tribunal**, Charlotte Hedges -** Administrative Assistant in the Offices of Family Life and Catholic Charities**;** ***Front row:*** **Mel Howard –** ***Director of the Office of Communications and Editor of the Western Kentucky Catholic*****, Mary Margaret Drury –** ***Bookkeeper in the Office for Administration*****, Gayle Strehl -** Receptionist, **Sr. Emma Cecilia Busam, OSU -** Archivist, **Fr. Titus Ahabyona –** Tribunal Judge, Parochial Vicar at St. Pius X in Owensboro**, Kay Hardin –** Assistant Treasurer in the Office for Administration**, Sr. Joseph Angela Boone, OSU –** Director of the Office for Administration**, Patty Blair –** Director of the Office for Lay Ministry and Formation**, Sr. Amelia Stenger, OSU –** Director of the Office for Spiritual Life**, Sr. Margaret Alokan,OSF –** Defender of the Bond for the Tribunal**, Cathy Hagan -** Administrative Assistant in the Office for Stewardship**, Ernie Taliaferro –** Assistant to the Chancellor in the Office for Administration**, Kevin Kauffeld –** Director of the Office for Stewardship, Coordinator of Diocesan Staff. ***Not present:*** **Fr. Jerry Calhoun –** Former Office of the Vicar General**, Fr. Richard Meredith -** Director of Ongoing Formation for Clergy & Pastor of St. Pius X**, Fr. Ray Clark –** Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, **Fr. Ben Luther –** Director of the Marian Shrine Committee and Communion of Marian Chapters**, Fr. Larry McBride –** Director of the Office for Worship**, Jack Wilson –** Mail Clerk**, Mark Vollman –** Diocesan Employee

Saying Goodbye

By Betty Medley

Goodbyes are as much a part of life as the seasons of the year. The story of gain and loss, of joy and sorrow, of life and death, of union and separation, is inside each one of us. The cycle begins at birth, when we were broken loose from our mother's womb. Our forward movement gathered momentum until we pushed farewell and, with a throbbing burst of new life, cried hello again to a vastly different world.

The cycle continues throughout our lives. Who of us has not said farewell to someone and felt a great heartache and a deep sadness, wanting to stop the process and wondering when the ache inside would ever leave? A couple of years ago I accompanied a friend to the airport. She had been away for a few years and was leaving again for a long time. The moment of separation came, that last little space when an onrush of sadness suddenly wells up and causes a great inadequacy of expression.

The word goodbye, originally came from "God-be-with-ye" or "Go-with-God," as recognition that God was a significant part of the going. When you dreaded or feared the journey there was strength in remembering that the One who gave and cherished life would be there to protect and to console. Goodbye was a blessing of love, proclaiming the belief that God went with you, you would never be alone, that comfort, strength and all the other blessings of a loving presence would accompany you. To the traveler it meant: "We cannot keep you from this journey. We hurt deeply...you have made your home in our hearts. Yet, we know your leaving is essential for your growth. So go, go with God. May you always rest in the assurance that 'God will lead you, will be with you, will not fail you or desert you. Have no fear. Do not be disheartened by anything' (Dt 31:8)."

Do we ever get used to saying goodbye? Or should we? I think not. Saying goodbye helps us to experience the depths of our human condition. It leads us to a much deeper understanding of what it means to live life in its mystery and its wholeness. We ought not to be afraid of the partings that life asks of us. Nor ought we to hold back in giving ourselves fully to love, to the wonderful growth opportunities of investing ourselves in people and events.

We may be harshly bruised by life's farewells, but it is possible to be healed. WE can become whole again. I believe that if we are willing to move inside the heart of the experience, to live patiently through the process even as we acknowledge the difficult, painful emotions, that we can experience the wonder of spiritual growth and the marvel of new depths of faith in our relationship with God and with others.

Goodbyes will always be with us. So will hellos. Praying a goodbye can bring us to the doorway of new beginning. The seed of resurrections in our souls will grow again.

An Oldie and a Newby Give Thanks and Remember Bishop John

Special to the Western Kentucky Catholic -

Mary Margaret Drury remembers the exact day she met the Bishop for the first time, over 26 years ago. He hadn't even been ordained yet when he came down to look over the diocesan center and meet some of the priests on November 4th, 1982. "I was in the kitchen cleaning up after the reception we had given him," she recalls. "I had my mouth full of cheese and he popped his head in to ask where everyone had gone. I did my best to signal 'that way.' " The next day, she met Fr. McRaith officially, when he came around to the offices to greet the staff. "November 5th was when I got my first hug," she said with a smile.

At the time, the diocesan offices were located at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and there were fewer than 10 employees. Mary Margaret had already been working there for over 16 years before Bishop McRaith came on board. She was hired on just out of high school. "Bishop John didn't hire me; he inherited me," she said. And not only did he inherit an employee, but a friend. Mary Margaret has been taking care of the Bishop's laundry, cleaning and maintenance of his personal residence since the very beginning and has seen him go through many things throughout the years. "I've been a friend to him and he's been a friend of mine," she commented with much sentiment.

Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith was ordained at the Sportscenter in Owensboro on December 15, 1982, with close to 6,000 people in attendance. "I still remember every aspect of it," Mary Margaret reminisced. "It was the most fantastic thing we had ever put on."

Mary Margaret believes that the Bishop's greatest legacy is his loving and kind character. He will be remembered for his open door accessibility, his kind and caring attitude that was not judgmental toward anyone. He has a wit, a sense of humor and an easy laughter that are contagious. "You can't help but be a better person by being around him," she said. His simplicity, along with numerous hay rides, free vegetables and John Deere memorabilia remind us that he truly is a farmer at heart.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to work with him these past 26 years and to have him for a friend and to be a friend to him. The diocese is a better place because he's been here."

Tami Schneider met Bishop McRaith for the first time in December of 2006. She remembers being led into his office and sitting down to wait for Kevin Kauffeld to come in. "I felt very nervous at first, but right away, I got the impression that I was in very good company," Tami said. She reminisced about how the Bishop leaned back in his chair, lit his pipe, and simply stared at her for a few minutes. "Perhaps he was praying about the hire, thinking of what to say, or simply enjoying the day," she said. Since her father had advised her not to say anything unless she was asked a question, she tried to sit calmly, but claiming that it was nearly impossible, she thought up a few tidbits to chat about.

Bishop John McRaith speaking in the Chapel of The Catholic Pastoral Center on January, 5, 2009, the day of his retirement as the third Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro. Staff Photo

Less than a month later, Tami found herself bearing the title of CPC employee, both an honor and a privilege for her. She started out as a part-time administrative assistant for the Communications Office and expanded to full time 6 months later, adding the Vocations and Hispanic Ministry Offices to her workload. "It took only a few weeks for me to realize what kind of a man our Bishop was. He always had a smile on his face, was quick with a hug and knew me by name. I began to see him as more of a grandfather than a boss," Tami stated with affection.

Although a relatively new employee, Tami's memory is dotted with a few special moments with Bishop McRaith, like her first time at St. Raphael's. She had gone as a chaperone with a group of middle schoolers and he took them all for a hayride through the country with his John Deere tractor. "As I swung my feet from the trailer and watched the fields pass us by, I recall thinking 'Where else and in what other diocese would I be on a hayride with the bishop driving? This is so cool!'" For Tami, it was a true testimony of his down-to-earth character and his simplicity. The Bishop personally invited her back to St. Raphael's over the summer. He stopped by her office one morning and told her she was welcome to stop by any Friday evening. She was shocked!

Tami recalled another morning, when she was up to her eyebrows with stress over a very important Hispanic Ministry event. The locations for both the Mass and the meal had been pulled out from under her only three days before the big day, and people were coming in from all over the diocese. "Just as I was about to pull my hair out, the Bishop walked down the hall, popped his head in and said, 'You look like you need a hug.' Indeed I did! His thoughtfulness helped me to calm down and realize that everything would be ok."

Tami will remember Bishop John as someone who always cared. For the times he stopped in to ask how an activity went. For the times he asked how her family was and how her trip home to Michigan went. For the times he smiled and said good morning and gave hugs. For the time he laughed at someone's joke while she was stirring burgoo with a big wooden stick over a smoking 11-gallon kettle.

"For all the warm memories, thank you, Bishop."

WHEN DOES THE HURTING STOP?

By Betty Medley

The journey through grief is difficult … and painful. We are forever changed by a major loss experience. Clearly, we will never be the same person we were before this loss became part of our lives. The real struggle occurs when we consciously or subconsciously resist the change that must take place if we are to survive and learn to live with our loss. (It is difficult to get to know and accept this new person who is emerging.)

Grief is a complex process, unique to each individual, based on personality type, circumstances of death, and our relationship with the person who died. There are, however, emotions common to almost all bereaved persons. Understanding is the KEY to the tolerance and patience necessary to accept and integrate loss into our lives.

There will be a bereavement support group for anyone who has experienced a death at any time of his/her life. This group will run every Tuesday for four consecutive weeks and is open to all the public at no charge.

A bereavement program

In four weeks sessions, the bereavement program will be held at the Catholic Pastoral Center from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

CONTACT PERSON: Betty Medley (270) 683-1545 ext. 357

• March 10 ***What Grief is Really Like:*** Some common reactions to a situation no one is ever prepared to handle. Why we feel the way we do, and why no one seems to understand.

• March 17 ***Depression:*** Sadness, loss, and the feeling that nothing will ever be the same. Physical symptoms; healing can happen.

Anger: Nice people DO get angry. Recognizing our anger, coping with it and getting over it. (Address suicide and our feelings of outrage and shame.)

• **March 24** ***Guilt:*** Blaming ourselves for what has happened, handling the "what ifs…" and "if onlys…" (touch on suicide, and our responsibility or lack of it.)

From Grief to Living Again: Putting grief in perspective, learning to share our lives with the living and realizing that we will never "get over" our grief, but we can learn to live with it.

• **March 31** ***Memorial Service***

Remembering Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith

Reflections on Bishop John J. McRaith, January, 2009

By Fr Joe Mills, retired

OWENSBORO,Ky. - Mel Howard, our WKC editor, upon inviting us to share some reflections for the paper on our Bishop as he approaches his retirement, spoke of the Bishop as "our Bishop, servant, and friend." In my estimation, these three words encompass perfectly the bishop we know as Bishop John. Since his ordination at the Sportscenter on December 15, 1982, he has become my bishop, servant and friend.

I feel privileged to have worked closely with him at the Catholic Pastoral Center both as judicial vicar and vicar general, and as a pastor, for a number of years. Gratitude wells up within me as I look back over our time together.

Prior to his ordination, I had shared with several priest friends that I wasn't looking forward to working at the Chancery, as it was called in those days, even though I had done some academic work in preparation for this kind of ministry. Two days after Christmas he called me and invited me to come out to the Chancery on Frederica Street. I suspected what he wanted to ask of me. That Saturday morning, we had a wonderful two hours together. When I left his office, he asked me to pray about it and call him on Monday morning. Over the weekend, I pondered every angle of the invitation, and I prayed earnestly about the proposal. When I awoke in my bedroom at Precious Blood Chuch rectory, on Monday morning, my first thought and word to myself was "Of course I'll say yes." I had fallen under his "spell." The Lord spoke to me through our newly-ordained bishop. Looking back now after twenty-six years, I know this was the Lord's will for me I've never regretted it one moment. What a grace that yes was for me!

Bishop John taught me so much about ministry and priesthood. He always showed such respect for each person. He modeled collaborative ministry. As bishop he could have simply written a letter and informed us of a new decree from his office. In fact he believed in letting every one have a say about a proposal or an important issue in the diocese. The process involved having the issue brought before the various collaborative bodies in the dioceses. To me this was the Church in Action, Vatican II style.

Bishop John would entrust a task to you and let you run with it; yet he was always available for discussion, discernment and some tweaking now and then. He was/is a down-to-earth, kind, and approachable man. He was/is a humble, wise and joyful person. I've never known a man who could more effectively craft a joke or appropriate story to drive home a message.

First Day at Work for the Diocese: **Bishop John McRaith speaking in the Owensboro Sportscenter, 1983. Photo by Hubert Powers**

The staff at the Catholic Pastoral Center reflected his own personal charism and spirit. He set the example to our CPC staff: " Remember our task is to minister to the people and the priests in the parishes." A brother priest one day, commenting on the Bishop's published monthly schedule, said to me, "The bishop doesn't have to go to every dog- and-pony show." I replied: "But that's the bishop's way of serving the needs of the people. Better to wear out than to rust out."

In my travels to meetings, conventions, etc, outside the diocese, I've often heard priest confreres, upon learning to what diocese I belonged, say "You've got a great bishop." I would agree. Yes, we've been blessed.

Several images come to mind as I picture our bishop as he comes toward the end of his ministry as our bishop. One is of his presiding at the Chrism Mass at the Sportscenter on those Tuesdays of Holy Week. At that moment he is most a priest, prophet, and servant-leader for his people of the diocese of Owensboro and Western Kentucky as he was wont to put it. The Holy Spirit so often speaks through Bishop John, but never more effectively than at the Chrism Mass, surrounded by the laity, the religious, and the clergy. He was thrilled to be in that position and he couldn't hide it.

A second image I'll treasure: watching Bishop John impose hands on the man about to become a priest of God. Bishop John loves his priests, and he frequently tells us.

Still a third image of our bishop: sitting atop his John Deere, pulling a flatbed-trailer full of delighted, screaming children and others who were young at heart. The Country Boy-turned priest- turned bishop was filled with the Spirit, then as surely as at the altar which he loved so much.

And yes, I've seen him weighed down with crosses that bishops seemingly have to carry, burdened with the anxieties and cares of all the people. Surely he couldn't have imagined on December 15, 1982, how rocky his path would be. But Christ Jesus himself also knew the weight of a cross. Did Jesus know how heavy his cross and ministry would be?

But, Bishop John, how your Yes has graced all of us! Thank you, Bishop-John, Servant-John, Friend-John! Ad multos annos!

Last Day of work at The Catholic Pastoral Center: **Pipe in hand, ready for what the Lord asks him to do next, the Most Reverend John J. McRaith, Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro spent most of January 5, 2009, his last day at the Catholic Pastoral Center in Owensgoro, meeting with the diocesan staff and speaking to the the media Bishop John was educated in a one room school in Minnesota. He graduated from St. Bernard Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, and was ordained a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm, Minnesota, on February 21, 1960. Ordained Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro in 1982, Bishop McRaith. In addition to shepherding the Catholic Church of Western Kentucky, Bishop McRaith served as a board member for Brescia University, the Daniel Pitino Center, the McAuley Free Clinic in Owensboro, and Lourdes Hospital Foundation in Paducah. Photo by Gary Emord-Netzley, Messenger-Inquirer, Jan 5, 2009**

Wisdom From Bishop John

Here are a few quotes from Bishop John spoken at Catholic Pastoral Center morning Mass celebrations ... More coming next month!

- ***"Life is full of difficult times. But there will come a day when all of our worries will go away."***
- ***"You (educators) have a calling to soften the hearts of the hard-hearted."***
- ***Bishop John's Prayer at Intercessions: "For the people of the Diocese of Owensboro in whose service we are."***

Brescia Reflects on Bishop McRaith's Faithful Service to the University

In response to our beloved Bishop's resignation as Ordinary of the Diocese of Owensboro, Brescia University reflects, with gratitude, on the many years of service John McRaith gave to the people of Western Kentucky and Brescia University. I have heard him say many times that when he became our Bishop in 1982, he was impressed with the presence of a Catholic college in a small diocese. His commitment to Catholic higher education is witnessed by his oft repeated statement that if Brescia did not exist in the diocese, then he would have felt compelled to start a similar school himself.

That commitment was not limited to words. From the very beginning of his time as bishop, John McRaith supported Brescia University with ideas, leadership and financial support. He has served as a member of the Board of Trustees during his time and has been an important part of every major decision made in these last 26 years. Especially significant is his brainchild, the Ministry Formation Program. Animated by a vibrant ecclesiology that embraced the idea of lay ministerial service in the Church, Brescia responded by establishing a Bachelor of Arts in Pastoral Ministry. As the first accredited undergraduate Ministry Formation program, this initiative has produced dozens of lay ecclesial ministers who now serve in a variety of positions in the Church. Moved with gratitude for his ongoing support of the Ministry Formation Program, Brescia University established the John J. McRaith Endowed Chair in Pastoral Ministry in 2006.

Bishop McRaith has also been keenly interested in the pastoral needs of our students as is evidenced by the funding he dedicated to hiring a full time Director of Campus Ministry. Every year we could count on Bishop McRaith to help start the year by celebrating the Opening Mass during the fall semester. Moved by gratitude for all he has done, we are happy to offer Bishop McRaith an office on the Brescia campus where he can hold appointments and, as a Scholar in Residence, continue his reflection and study as he chooses.

Brescia University wishes Bishop John McRaith all the best as he begins the next phase of his life's journey. Brescia is proud to have been a part of his life and ministry and we look forward to being a part of the next chapter. God Bless You, Bishop McRaith!

Fr. Larry Hostetter, President, Brescia University

Grayson County Ursuline Associates Retreat:
Associates of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph from Grayson County enjoyed a private retreat Jan. 9-11 at Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center. Pictured, front row: Sister Mary Louise Knott, Teen Robinette, Carol Hill. Back row: Jean Gutierrez, Brenda Semar, Catherine Gawarecki, and Violet Hamilton. MSJ Photo

Ursuline Sister Annalita Lancaster posed with a crib sceen with a background painting done by J.R. Mass. Sr. Annalita is looking for information about the artist. MSJ Photo

Long forgotten Christmas crib brings joy to Mount Saint Joseph

Ursuline Sister Annalita Lancaster wanted to use the ample gathering space in the Mount Saint Joseph Chapel for a Nativity scene this past Christmas season, and asked about cribs from the community's history.

She was directed to two cribs in a basement, but they were both built for outdoor usage. Then Sister Rita Scott, plant administrator, recalled a crib that was discovered earlier in 2008 when the attic of St. Angela Hall was being cleaned out.

What Sister Annalita found in the attic on Dec. 1 was a Christmas crib with an oil painting of the city of Bethlehem that was created 73 years earlier. The crib was in storage for at least 25 years, because that's how long Mount Saint Joseph Academy had been closed, and no one recalls seeing it since then.

"I was so curious about the oil painting, I started looking through old issues of 'The Mount,'" the school newspaper for the Mount Saint Joseph Junior College and Academy, Sister Annalita said. She found an article from 1935 written by Cyril Mudd detailing "Our New Christmas Crib."

The painting was done by J.R. Mass, "an artist of reputation," the article said, who had been at Maple Mount several days painting the background. The painting depicts a gleaming star over Bethlehem, the hills where shepherds watched their flocks, and caves where the shepherds often spent the night to avoid the cold. One of the small caves is identified as the one in which Jesus was born.

The inspiration for the painting came from Fr. Andrew Zoeller, the article said, who was chaplain at Mount Saint Joseph. Fr. Zoeller had said Mass in the cave of Jesus' birth, and details of the surroundings were fixed in his mind. His goal was to give the artist a true representation of Christ's birthplace, the article said.

"Its primary aim will be to strengthen our piety and give us a deeper understanding of the lowliness and poverty of Jesus' birth," the article concluded.

Sister Diane Marie Payne recalls the crib being on display in the Academy auditorium when she was a student there in 1961. The Academy closed in 1983, so the crib had been in storage at least that long.

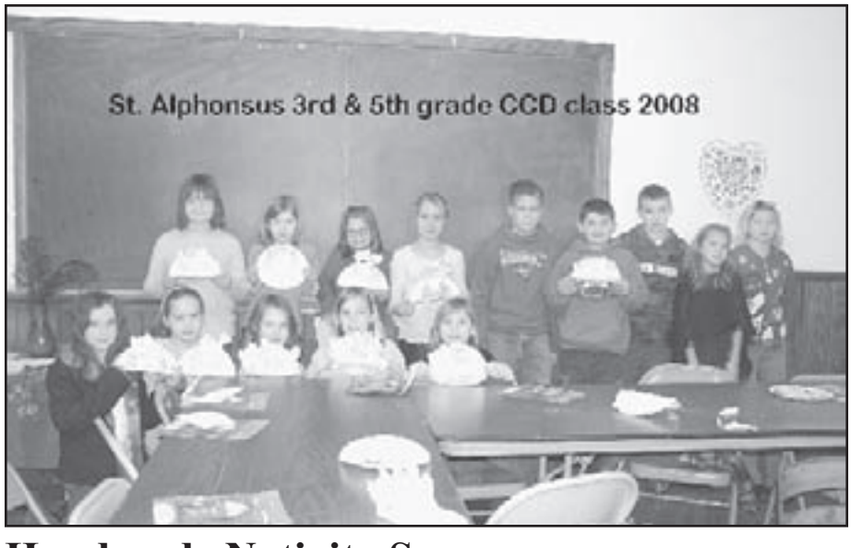
The Nativity characters that normally go on a table in the chapel were placed in the crib. The crib remained on display until Jan. 11, the Baptism of the Lord.

Sister Annalita is curious to learn what became of the artist. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Archives office, (270) 229-4103, ext. 302.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Marriage Celebrations for February, Anniversaries of 25, 40, 50 and Over 50 Years of Marriage

Blessed Mother, Owensboro
Vince & Joan Frey, 50
Thomas & Janice Foster, 53
Charles & Patricia Hamilton 52
Anthony & Mary Brown, 63
Blessed Sacrament, Owensboro
Kenneth & Jean Higgs, 55
Holy Name of Jesus, Henderson
Donald & Sue Fowler, 25
William & Martha Duncan, 55
Bernard & Betty Feltrop, 54
Holy Spirit, Bowling Green
Victor & Martha Billhartz, 40
Robert & Rita Otto, 52
Charles & Martha Peters, 53
Michael & Geri Durchak, 55
Immaculate Conception, Hawesville
Adrian & Velma Wheatley, 55
Our Lady of Lourdes, Owensboro
Eddie & Alo Byrne, 40
William & Joan Dant, 54
William & Marjorie Klee, 56
Parish of the Immaculate, Owensboro
Bruce & Theresa Bennett, 25
James Donald & Barbara Sue Brown, 52
Martin Louis & Mary Ruth Bumm, 56
Silas & Catherine Simon, 62
Earl & Elizabeth Wells, 62
Fred John & Gloria Jean Zinobile, 54
Precious Blood, Owensboro
Jim & Donna Stuerzenberger, 54
Wayne & Linda Winfield, 40
Sacred Heart, Russellville
Ray & Rita Polak, 65
David & Rita Brittten, 25
Sacred Heart, Waverly
Greg & Jennifer Wurth, 25
St. Agnes, Uniontown
Eddie & Karen Clevidence, 25
J. O. & Janet Thomas, 56
St. Alphonsus, St. Jospeh
James & Dorothy Calhoun, 63
George & Martha Taylor, 53
St. Ann, Morganfield
Kenny & Rosie Holt, 40
Joseph C. & Ruth Alvey, 54
Ronald & Mary Davis, 52
Willard & Joyce Greenwell, 56
Franklin & Agnes Hancock, 61
Joe & Florence Henshaw, 63
St. Anthony, Browns Valley
Martin & Theresa Rhodes, 25
Richard & Rose Roby, 40
St. Anthony, Peonia
Clifford & Margie Higdon, 60
St. Augustine, Grayson Springs
Wendell & Mary Vincent, 58
St. Augustine, Reed
Barry & Lori Eblen, 25
St. Benedict, Wax
Quinton & Mildred Johnston, 61
St. Columba, Lewisport
Harmon & Martha Long, 60
St. Denis, Fancy Farm
David & Sandra Hayden, 40
St. Edward, Fulton
John & Elaine Sullivan, 51
St. Elizabeth, Clarkson
Carl & Paula Ball, 52
St. Francis de Sales, Paducah
Charles & Pat Gregory, 50
Gerald & Christine Quigley, 50
St. Henry, Aurora
Al & Pat Kasten, 53
St. Jerome, Fancy Farm
Paul & Ava Buckman, 59
Thomas & Juanita Elliott, 51
Leonard & Jeananne Foss, 54
Richard & Marie Johnson, 59
St. John the Evangelist, Paducah
John & Anna Drury, 40
Robert & Kathleen Hard, 63
St. Joseph, Bowling Green
H. C. & Gustava Thompson,56
Donald & Betty McCormick, 5
St. Joseph, Leitchfield
Arthur & Arlene Bitsky, 53
St. Joseph, Mayfield
Robert & Rose Coplen, 58
Edward & Jane Duda, 63
St. Lawrence, Philpot
James & Frieda Payne, 51
St. Leo, Murray
Robert & Paula Beavers, 50
St. Martin, Rome
Bill & Jane Shelton, 58
Bernard & Jane Payne, 72
St. Mary, LaCenter
Earl & Frances Watson, 63
St. Mary Magdalene, Sorgho
James & Rita Cecil, 40
Sam & Sherri Holinde, 40
Gerald & Agnes Stuart, 60
St. Michael, Oak Grove
Robert & Joan Lancaster, 25
St. Mary of the Woods, Whitesville
Ralph & Rose Ann Bemboom, 40
John & Carolie Morris, 55
St. Peter, Stanley
Herman & Maxine Head, 25
St. Peter, Waverly
Allen Ray & Carolyn Mackey, 57
St. Pius X, Owensboro
Joseph E. & Joan Cecil, 25
Frankie & Betty Clark, 54
William & Martha Zoglmann, 55
St. Romuald, Hardinsburg
William W. & Rita McGary, 54
St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro
John & Jean Carpenter, 66
Virgil & Colene Jennings, 62
Robert & Vurble Mahoney, 52
William & Opal Brown, 57
St. Stephen, Cadiz
Hong & Cathy Khang, 40
St. Thomas More, Paducah
Jerry & Charlene Vandeven, 58
Thomas & Mary Frances Galvin, 59
St. William, Knottsville
James R. & Evelyn Cecil, 54
Robert & Ellen Edge, 50
Sts. Joseph & Paul, Owensboro
Joseph & Patricia Hamilton, 50
Norbert & Nancy Crowe, 53
George & Joyce Moran, 51
William A. & Betty Jo Payne, 53
William & Katherine Thomas, 58
Sts. Peter & Paul, Hopkinsville
John & Lillian Cotthoff, 61



Handmade Nativity Scenes

St. Alphonsus CCD students show the paper plate nativities they made to celebrate the Christmas season. Pictured, Back row L to R ; Emma Clements, Abby Thompson, Hallie McCarthy, Brittany Boyle, Devin Lanham, Shane Hodskins, Caleb Murphy, Alli Schadler, Shelby Warren; Front row; Makayla Thompson, Nicole Glenn, Emily Murphy, Allison Yeckering, Alicia Boyle. Not pictured are 3rd grade, Garrett McCarty, Abbie Green, Preston McCarthy, Jackson Armour. Submitted Photo

Glenmary Sisters

The Glenmary Sisters invite you

Join us for a 12 Day Mediterranean Cruise in June, 2010

Depart from Barcelona, Spain and visit Monte Carlo, Florence, Rome with a Papal audience at the Vatican, Sicily, Greece, And Venice

Watch for more details in Next month's Western KY Catholic

ONCE MORE WITH LOVE

A Marriage Preparation Program for couples preparing for marriage after one or both persons have experienced a divorce or death of a former spouse. Saturday, February 21, 2009, Catholic Pastoral Center, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro, KY 42301 Telephone: (270) 683-1545 ext 357 or betty.medley@pastoral.org

St. Mary Angels Select 8th Grade Royalty

8th Graders Chelsea Howard and Zack Boehmann were recognized at Prince and Princess of the Homecoming held at Whitesville, Ky. St. Mary's on December 10th. Submitted Photo

8th graders Kelsey Armes and Nathan Huff were crowned homecoming King and Queen at Whitesville, Ky. St. Mary's homecoming game on December 10th. Submitted photo

The Heart of Creativity: Part II
Contemplation and Art Mystery Retreat
March 6-8, 2009

This retreat presents to participants a method of meditation that can enable them to develop a contemplative stance toward life. During our time together, we will explore correct looking as a form of prayer, the place of surrender in prayer and the Christian life, "wounds of the heart" that may arise in meditation, the mystery that surrounds us, and the Christ we encounter in prayer.

Michael Moran, C.P., a Brother of the Eastern Province of the Passionist Community, poses beside two of his religious paintings. He is chaplain of the Supportive Care Program of St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City.

Retreat fee:

Residents *(Retreat, materials, meals, snacks, socials, room)* $175
Commuters *(retreat, materials, meals, snacks, socials)* $120
*10% will be taken off if paid in full a month before retreat.
Partial Scholarships, based on need, are available.

For more information,
contact Kathy McCarty at 270-229-0200, ext. 413
or e-mail kmccarty@maplemount.org.

Mount Saint Joseph
Conference and Retreat Center
8001 Summitgate Road
Maple Mount, Kentucky 42356-9000
270-229-0200
www.mjcenter.org

Greenhand Induction Ceremony

The OCHS FFA held its Greenhand Induction Ceremony for first year members. They participate in an "Introduction to FFA" workshop and learn about the motto, mission, creed, history, and official dress. They then take a test reciting many of the things they learn and sign a "Code of Ethics" which qualifies them to receive the Greenhand Degree. This year's honorees are (left to right): Matthew Jacobs, Rebecca Millay, Tyler Grant, Matthew Franey, Kyle Davis, Brittany Nash, and Maddie Zoglmann. Not pictured, Madie Liles. The OCHS FFA Faculty sponsor is Mrs. Susan Zoglmann. OCS Photo

Brescia University

Think it's too late to enroll for the spring semester? Think again!

Weekend, evening and online classes at Brescia begin March 20, so contact us today.

STARS
BRESCIA UNIVERSITY

(270) 663-4190 • stars@brescia.edu
www.brescia.edu • Owensboro, Kentucky

Making a Difference
in the lives of our students • our community • our Church

Diocesan Financial Report for 2007-2008

Riney, Hancock & Co., PSC
Certified Public Accountants & Financial Advisors

7900 Veach Road, Suite 2
Owensboro, Kentucky 42303
270-926-4540
Fax: 270-926-1494

313 Southeast First Street
Evansville, Indiana 47713
812-423-0300
Fax: 812-423-0282

www.rineyhancock.com
E-mail: info@rineyhancock.com

RSM North American Network

ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT

Most Reverend John J. McRaith,
Roman Catholic Bishop of Owensboro

We have reviewed the accompanying statements of financial position of the Catholic Foundation of Western Kentucky, Inc. (Foundation) as of June 30, 2008 and 2007, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. All information included in these financial statements is the representation of the management of the Foundation.

A review consists principally of inquiries of Foundation personnel and analytical procedures applied to financial data. It is substantially less in scope than an audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the financial statements taken as a whole. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

Based on our reviews, with the exception of the matter described in the following paragraph, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

As disclosed in Note 5, the Foundation's financial statements do not disclose the appropriate class segregation of its net assets, which is required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Riney, Hancock & Co., PSC

Owensboro, Kentucky
November 25, 2008

Catholic Foundation of Western Kentucky, Inc.
Statements of Financial Position
June 30 2008 and 2007

	2008	2007
Seminarian Education	$4,419,484.00	$4,960,609.00
Owensboro Catholic High School	$3,924,143.00	$4,346,156.00
Owensboro Catholic Schools	$1,008,808.00	$1,137,991.00
Catholic Education Scholarships	$157,142.00	$188,340.00
Parish/Ministry/Annuities/Trusts	$2,608,441.00	$2,656,904.00
St. Joseph, Central City	$209,131.00	$227,727.00
Immaculate Conception	$35,427.00	$41,848.00
Holy Name School, Henderson	$476,924.00	$489,748.00
St. Ann School, Morganfield	$130,066.00	$147,279.00
St. Alphonsus Cemetery	$115,298.00	$130,576.00
St. Thomas More, Paducah	$554,442.00	$590,023.00
St. Columba, Lewisport	$36,264.00	$42,848.00
St. Denis Cemetery	$48,039.00	$52,311.00
St. Edward	$29,609.00	$33,900.00
St. Joseph School, Mayfield	$38,516.00	$44,165.00
St. Joseph Parish, Bowling Green	$24,402.00	$26,571.00
St. Joseph School, Bowling Green	$582,320.00	$720,310.00
St Charles Cemetery	$15,603.00	$16,990.00
St. Sebastian Cemetery	$7,032.00	$9,240.00
St. Charles, Livermore	$37,925.00	$42,950.00
St. Pius Tenth, Owensboro	$16,995.00	$18,506.00
Sts. Peter and Paul	$151,475.00	$117,672.00
Blessed Sacrament	$6,998.00	$7,620.00
Total Assests as of June 30, 2008 and 2007	**$14,634,484.00**	**$16,050,284.00**

Second Diocesan Area Kentucky Catholic Citizens Forum Held in Bowling Green

By Dennis Meffert

BOWLING GREEN,Ky. - Kentucky Catholic Citizens Forum was held in Bowling Green, Kentucky on January 10, 2009. The second in a series of three to be held in the Owensboro Diocese was hosted by Holy Spirit Catholic Church. The intent was to inform, involve and educate Catholics in our region with issues of social concern. It was attended by a group of 50 concerned citizens, 6 elected legislators and 2 candidates for the open State Senate seat vacated by Brett Guthrie.

After an introduction, by Father Jerry Riney, of Holy Spirit Catholic Church, who gave an overview of Catholic Social Concerns, a series of five speakers made presentations on various subjects.

Speaking first was Father Pat Delahanty, the Interim Director of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky. He spoke on the seven themes of Catholic Social Teachings. These principles include: (1.) The right to life and the dignity of the human person, (2.) Call to family, community and participation, (3.) Human rights and responsibilities, (4.) Options for the poor and vulnerable, (5.) Dignity of work and rights of workers, (6.) Solidarity of the human family, and (7.) Caring for God's creation.

The second speaker was Dr. Marshall Prunty, from Greenville, who spoke on the Sanctity of Life. He gave a brief history of the 35 years since the Roe vs. Wade decision. He stated that Pro Choice advocates and groups direct their resources to make abortion the choice. In opposition, the Catholic view of live births, parenting or adoptions should be the #1 option. Three ways this might be achieved are by establishing an appropriate waiting period, parent notification, and full informed consent.

Mr. Jim Mattingly of Owensboro was the third speaker addressing Centrality of the Family. He briefed the group on four upcoming legislative bills. They are (1.) The family worker opportunity tax credit, (2.) Kentucky earned income tax credit, (3.) Transportation of non -public school students, and (4.) Business tax credit.

Father Delahanty presented the section on Social Justice. He discussed House Bill #68 (an increased tax on cigarettes). A health issue in the eyes of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky, it became a hot item of discussion among the legislators. They all agreed smoking is a health issue, but they split on making it an economic issue.

The last speaker was Mrs. Patti Gutierrez, a pastoral assistant from Webster County, who spoke on Global Solidarity. Mrs. Gutierrez's goal was to raise awareness on human trafficking (modern day slavery), and to form a local anti-trafficking task force/coalition. She also addressed anti-immigration state legislation.

A question and answer forum followed. Kentucky Legislators in attendance were: Rep. Jody Richards, D-Bowling Green; Rep. Martha Jane King, D-Russellville; Rep. Jim DeCesare, R-Bowling Green; Rep. C.B. Embry, R-Morgantown; Rep. Brent Yonts, D-Greenville; and Rep. Wilson Stone, D-Scottsville. Also attending were Mike Reynolds, D, and J. Marshall Hughes, R., the two candidates for the open Senate seat of the 32nd State Senate District, comprised of Warren and Butler counties.

Special thanks to event organizers Paul Witte, Eric Smith, Richard Murphy, Jim Mattingly, Alan Simpson, and John McAllister.

Next Spinning Gathering is Feb. 7 at Maple Mount

Whether you are an experienced spinner, knitter, crocheter, or a beginner, you are welcome to attend the "Arts at the Mount" quarterly spinning gatherings at Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center. Enjoy the fellowship of those who appreciate this traditional skill. Sessions begin at 10 a.m. Lunch is available for $10. Future dates are May 9, Aug. 8, and Nov. 14. Contact Kathy McCarty to register: 270-229-0200 ext. 413 or kmccarty@maplemount.org

Women's Retreat begins Feb. 27 at Maple Mount

A Women's Retreat entitled "Women in the Bible," led by Sister Cheryl Clemons, OSU, will take place the weekend of Feb. 27-March 1 at Mount St. Joseph Conference and Retreat Center. Join us for this spiritual time with God and each other. Sister Cheryl has taught many theology and biblical courses and has a doctorate from The Catholic University of America. Registration is $175 or commuters can attend for $120. Take 10% off if paid in full by Feb. 15. Contact Kathy McCarty to register: 270-229-0200 ext. 413 or kmccarty@maplemount.org

Wisdom

by Ginny Knight-Simon

Nancy Symmonds Gavin
St. William Parish, Marion, KY

"We were meant to be here," Nancy Gavin said as we chatted at the annual Ladies Guild Christmas Cookie Exchange, at St. William's in Marion, Ky. this past December.

"My husband, Mike, and I are both from the Chicago area and we've been in Salem, KY for over 25 years. We met when he was an intern at the hospital where I was working in Chicago. He was "assigned" to me so that I could get him acquainted with the lab and the hospital. That's how we met and we just clicked! We got married and we have two sons. My husband was looking at the position of chief surgeon at a hospital in Chicago. It was a great job, but it wasn't how we wanted to live. There were too many restrictions and we weren't sure we wanted to raise a family in Chicago. He found a need in this area for a doctor, and in 1981 he was put on staff at Livingston Hospital and Healthcare. I stayed behind in Chicago and came down later. I do know that long distance relationships are very hard! We have never regretted our move, we both love it here," said Nancy.

She went on to tell me that they have two daughters-in-law that joined the Catholic Church at the same time. "We have a granddaughter, Emily; I read her Bible stories, and tell her about Jesus. She recently drew a picture of me, her Nana, and she drew me reading the Bible. I thought that was so appropriate."

Emily asked her Nana (Nancy) one day if she was Catholic and Nana said yes. Later she heard Emily say, "Hi, I'm Emily and I am a Catholic."

Nancy has always been involved with the parish through RCIA, Eucharistic Ministry, the Ladies Guild as well as other volunteer activities.

"I think God meant for us to be here to raise our family and be part of this Catholic community." Nancy said.

When I asked, Nancy said her greatest blessing so far in life would be her husband and her family.

Diocesan Financial Report for 2007-2008

Riney, Hancock & Co., PSC
Certified Public Accountants & Financial Advisors

2900 Veach Road, Suite 2
Owensboro, Kentucky 42301
270-926-4040
Fax: 270-926-1494

313 Southeast First Street
Evansville, Indiana 47713
812-423-6500
Fax: 812-423-6202

www.rieyhancock.com
E-mail: info@rieyhancock.com

North American Network

ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT

Most Reverend John J. McRaith,
Roman Catholic Bishop of Owensboro

We have reviewed the accompanying statements of financial position of the Operating Fund of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Owensboro (Diocese) as of June 30, 2008 and 2007, and the related statements of activities and cash flows of the Operating Fund for the years then ended, in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. All information included in these financial statements is the representation of the management of the Diocese.

A review consists principally of inquiries of Diocese personnel and analytical procedures applied to financial data. It is substantially less in scope than an audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the financial statements taken as a whole. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

As disclosed in Note 1, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present only the Operating Fund of the Diocese. Accordingly, the financial statements are not intended to present fairly the financial position, changes in net assets and cash flows of the Diocese overall in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Based on our reviews, with the exception of the matters described in the following paragraphs, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

As disclosed in Note 1, the accompanying financial statements referred to above do not include any activity (support, expenses, assets, liabilities or net assets) related to the "Responding to Today's Need and Tomorrow's Vision" Diocesan campaign.

As disclosed in Notes 3 and 4, a valuation calculating the actuarial present value of plan benefits has not been prepared for the Priests' Retirement Plan or the portion of the Christian Brothers' Employee Retirement Plan attributable to the employees of the Diocese.

Our review was made for the purpose of expressing limited assurance that there are no material modifications that should be made to the financial statements in order for them to be in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The information included in the accompanying schedules on pages 13 and 14 is presented only for supplementary analysis purposes. Such information has been subjected to the inquiry and analytical procedures applied in the review of the basic financial statements, and we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made thereto.

Riney, Hancock & Co., PSC

Owensboro, Kentucky
November 24, 2008

Income

	2007-08	2006-07
Parish assessments	$2,040,831	$1,882,203
Contributions & bequests	44,441	99,790
Fees for services	9,835	9,956
Interest & dividend income	330,848	380,622
Net realized and unrealized gains (loss) investments	(1,600,434)	1,766,669
Income on real estate investments	27,471	45,383
Income for restricted gifts	837,717	650,152
Other revenue	3,023	6,555
TOTAL	**$1,693,732**	**$4,841,330**

Expenses

Office of the Bishop	$145,051	$137,560
Safe Environment	89,643	53,495
Catholic Pastoral Center	150,805	127,527
Technology	65,046	52,195
Diocesan properties	27,099	29,711
Religious education	83,258	81,282
Media center	22,622	22,701
Campus ministry	160,913	154,325
Youth ministry	100,120	96,361
Camp Dream Gasper River	46,505	52,649
Communications	55,161	51,018
Western KY Catholic	101,302	95,024
Catholic Schools Office	153,753	148,684
Home missions	68,524	75,363
Archives	8,927	8,533
Outreach & Evangelization	75,793	46,490
Diocesan Broadcast	96,709	77,947
Worship & Music	121,648	133,984
Spiritual life	34,163	33,378
Catholic Charities	145,788	114,663
Stewardship/Annual Appeal/Wisdom	230,862	242,447
Grants to other organizations	34,235	60,862
Diocesan Good Works	46,811	49,897
Migrant & Hispanic	288,638	198,250
Family Life	82,609	75,095
Bridge to Health	34,330	19,493
Other Social Concerns	31,786	30,826
Vocations & Seminarians	379,266	361,776
International Priests	37,694	62,772
Continuing Education	8,909	7,354
Priest Education Advancement	-	30,485
Diaconate program	39,857	-
Ecumenical Commission	770	894
Diocesan Councils	6,568	7,081
Financial Administration	235,608	221,124
Tribunal	255,576	251,495
TOTAL	**$3,466,349**	**$3,212,741**

2009 Catholic Social Ministry Gathering Will Be February 22-25

WASHINGTON—The 2009 Catholic Social Ministry Gathering will be held February 22-25, at the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill. This annual event brings together over 600leaders of Catholic social ministry from across the United States to discuss issues of justice and peace, including the food crisis, healthcare and economic stability. The theme of this year's gathering is "Christ Our Hope: Healing a Broken World."

Cardinal Francis George, OMI, Archbishop of Chicago and President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), will preside at the opening Mass. Following Mass, Archbishop Pietro Sambi, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, will give the opening plenary address on the place of Catholic social teaching in the life and ministry of the Church.

The gathering will include talks by John Carr, executive director of Justice, Peace and Human Development at the USCCB, who will give an overview of the challenges facing social ministry today, as well as Archbishop John Baptist Odama of Gulu, Uganda, on international issues, and Angela Blackwell Glover, founder and CEO of Policylink, on domestic issues. NewsHour commentator Mark Shields will offer a post-election analysis. Workshops at the gathering will cover topics including immigration reform, the death penalty and violence against women.

A centerpiece of the gathering will be the February 24 visit to Capitol Hill, where each participant will join his or her state delegation in organizing meetings with their Congressional Representatives to discuss issues affecting the poor and vulnerable.

The closing Mass of the gathering will be an Ash Wednesday Mass celebrated by Father David O'Connell, CM, President of The Catholic University of America.

Ballard Family Helps Madisonville Charity Aid Needy Families

A picture of the Ballard family. A big part of this family's Christmas Tradition involves the assembly of fruit baskets that accompany each food basket distributed by the Society. They have been providing this service for over 20 years.

By Daisy Rocha, a member of St Vincent DePaul Society

For Christmas, 2008, the St. Vincent DePaul Society of Christ the King Church in Madisonville gave over 140 baskets of food to needy families in the area. The Eddie and Rae Ballard family provided an equal number of fruit baskets.

There were 140 baskets from the parish. For over 20 years, the Ballard family has provided a fruit basket for each food basket the parish provides. Their children all come home with their own families, and make this effort a huge part of their Chritsmas celebration. They are a great family.

This is a big event every year for the Society. Students at Christ the King School help by collecting canned goods; parishioners donate money through an Angel Tree; and many volunteers are involved in assembling and loading the baskets.

The Society also gives Financial aid to needy families throughout the year, and many families receive help through the thrift store.

Article and pictures submitted by Bob Schaefer; photos taken by Daisy Rocha, a member of the Christ The King parish St Vincent DePaul Society in Madisonville, Ky.

SVDP Budget Store Honors Two Volunteers of the Year

By Edie Keeney

The St. Vincent de Paul Budget Store in Paducah recently awarded "The 2008 Volunteer of the Year Award" to Frank Burch and Richard Hayden. Store manager, Vicky Elliott explained that, being unable to choose between these two men, both were given the recognition. "Both of these men do extraordinary volunteer work above and beyond and this is a way to say 'Thank you' to them," she said.

The St. Vincent de Paul Budget Store opened in Paducah in 1987 or 1988 supported by the 4 Catholic Churches in the Paducah area. It was located in 2 rooms in the old school building next to Rosary Chapel. Betty Tucker was the first store manager and there were 15 to 20 individuals who along with Betty, volunteered many hours sorting, pricing and displaying the donated clothing, household items, furniture, children's clothing and toys, anything that was donated. " Betty commented, "It was a joy to work there, it was a joy for my whole family as we all volunteered there." Ina Sowell was one of the original volunteers and continues to volunteer. "I have been volunteering for more than 15 years. I like coming here, talking and mingling with everyone, making new friends. I also come to represent my church (Rosary Chapel). I just like working here, it makes me happy knowing that I'm helping someone less fortunate than I am."

After 2 or 3 years, having outgrown that location, the store moved to a larger building on Cairo Road. The store moved one more time to its present location just across the road to 2025 Cairo Road. The store is open Tuesday through Friday 10AM to 3PM and 10AM to 1PM on Saturday. Vicky Elliott has been the store manager for approximately 5 years. She started volunteering in 2001 after her husband died. At first she did all of the volunteer jobs but later she was the acting manager and then was hired as the store manager. "I interact with the customers. I have come to know many of them; some have come here for several years. I try to maintain a comfortable atmosphere for the volunteers. We have 33 regular volunteers, several come once a week, some daily and some 2 and 3 times a week," Vicky said.

Frank Burch, Vicky Elliott, and Richard Hayden. Edie Keeney photo

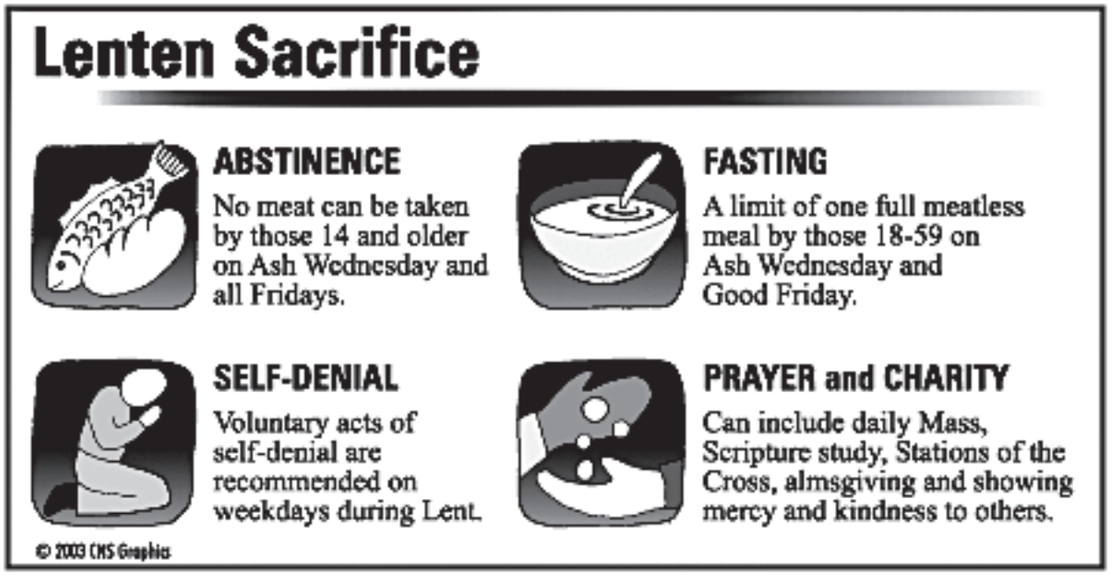
Debbie Conors is a long-time volunteer. About 9 years ago she was a customer at the store and after a year and a half she began volunteering. "With my children in school, I was setting in the house all day and it drove me crazy so I started volunteering. I am here 5 days a week. After the assistant manager quit to go back to school someone suggested that I should ask for the job. I love this place; some customers come in everyday and we talk and I get to know them. Some of them tell me about their lives and their problems. I enjoy working with all of the volunteers, we always have a good time," Debbie said. Jackie Harris and her daughter, Tammy are also long time volunteers. "In 1992 I saw in the church bulletin that St. Vincent needed volunteers so we both came and volunteered 3 days a week. Tammy has special needs and the rehab program she was in helped some but here is much better for her. She needs supervision but she works hard here and does a good job. She relates very well to people, she has an innocence about her that allows her to relate to all different people without judging them. We come 5 days a week now. By helping others I help myself. I have met so many wonderful people here," Jackie explained.

Jeff Briggs is another full time volunteer. In 1985 Jeff was in a car accident that killed his wife and his brother. Jeff received a serious head injury and his family was told he wouldn't recover but remain in an unresponsive state. Jeff has recovered but he has problems and also needs supervision but he keeps working to improve his condition. "If something needs a little repairing, I fix it, and then put it out for sale. I also do custodial work, empty the trash, clean bathrooms and the floors and anything that needs doing that I can do. The more I work here the more I like it," Jeff said.

Ruby Wenzel may be the oldest volunteer. "I began volunteering in 1995 for 3 for days a week but now I am lucky to get here once a week. I love to work here; I wish I were able to work more. I like all of the people I work with. Ida (Sowell) and I are best friends; we have worked together for so long. I hate to quit working here but I am 81 years old and I know there will be a time when I won't be able to come," she explained.

The two Volunteers of the Year joined the volunteer team more recently. Frank Burch and his wife, Nancy, have been volunteers 1-2 days a week for about 3 years. Frank usually drives the store truck to make pickups of donations from private homes and from several consignment stores that donate items that have not sold. "I enjoy working here. I meet the people that come in to buy and the people that work here. That is what I like best; it's easy to work with people that have open hearts and all of the people that work here have open hearts," Frank commented.

Continued on page 34



Lent Is A Good Time For A "Faith Lift"

Sister Margie Lavonis, CSC

I always love to read the signs outside of churches. Once I saw a clever one that asked, "Do you need a faith lift?" It was a good question that made me stop and think about my own faith life and where I need some spiritual Botox.

Now that we are in the dark dreary time of the year when life is cold and monotonous, at least in the Midwest, and we probably have broken many of our New Year's resolutions, it is a good time to reflect on how we need our spiritual life lifted. Lent is a perfect season for renewal.

What in our faith needs to be renewed? How do we need to deepen or recharge our relationship with Jesus and the Church?

Faith, like all relationships, is never stagnant. It either grows or regresses. We might ask ourselves "what would help me to strengthen my relationship with Jesus and help me grow in my faith?"

One biggie for some might be simply to spend more time with the Lord in prayer. For others it might be to say fewer "ready-made" prayers and give Jesus a chance to speak to us in the quiet of our hearts. Sometimes we can be so busy rattling off the same litany of prayers each day that God can't get a word in edgewise.

Maybe we need to start praying. It is difficult for our faith to deepen and grow without it. It is like not making time for a good friend. He or she probably wouldn't be a close friend for very long! (Thank goodness God never abandons us even if we slack up on our side of the relationship!)

Another way to deepen our spirituality is to be faithful to weekly Mass attendance. Do we share the Eucharist with Jesus regularly? It would be awful to have a friend that rarely accepts our invitations to share a meal with us. Eucharist is the center of our Catholic faith. Our faith would be pretty lame without it. Lent is a good time to attempt to attend Mass more than once a week.

And what about our relationships with others?? How seriously do we practice the teachings of Jesus regarding forgiveness? Are there people in our lives we need to forgive or from whom we need forgiveness? Who do we avoid at school or work because we need reconciliation? Where won't we go if we know so and so will be there? It is a good time to start the process of making up.

Does our faith life end at the Church doors or do we take seriously what is said at the end of Mass when the priest commissions us to "go and serve the Lord and one another"? Do we try to live out what we claim to profess? Do we strive to reach out in love to others regularly or only when there is something in it for us? It might be the time to work on the "love your neighbor" part of the great commandment.

There are other things we can also do to give our faith a shot in the arm such as participating in a good retreat, a Lenten program, a Scripture or theology course, or get involved in a parish or campus ministry program. This could be just what we need to boost our faith. Faith does not grow automatically. It takes cooperation with God's grace.

Lent is an opportune time to do a self-assessment and determine what area of our spiritual life we would like to change or grow in during this season of renewal? Don't try for a complete makeover. Remember the old saying that Rome wasn't built in a day! It takes a lifetime to develop a deep relationship with God.

Operation Rice Bowl Starts Ash Wednesday, Feb. 25

National Program Raises Awareness of Global Hunger, Poverty

Every year, millions of Catholics participate in Operation Rice Bowl (ORB), Catholic Relief Services' annual Lenten program that starts Ash Wednesday (Feb. 25, 2009). Each Lent, Catholic parishes and schools from more than 13,000 communities use symbolic rice bowls as the focal point for their prayer, fasting, and learning — and to help people in poverty around the world.

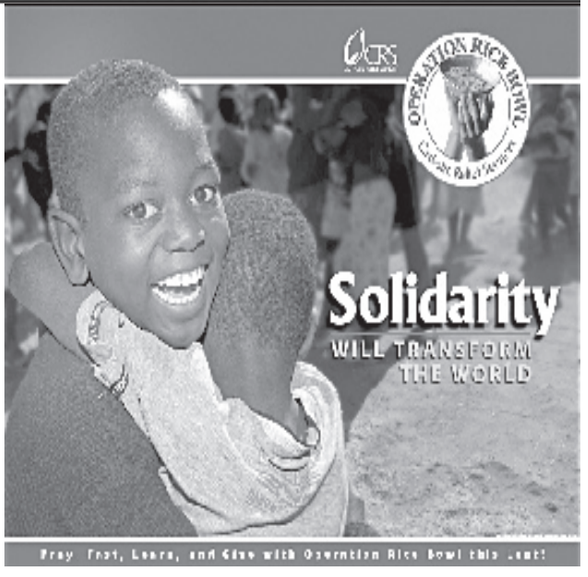
Participants in Operation Rice Bowl make the small sacrifice of preparing simple, meatless recipes each week, putting the money they would have spent on a big meal into symbolic rice bowls. That money goes to support CRS' mission to fight global hunger and poverty. An Operation Rice Bowl calendar provides daily reflections and learning opportunities — told through the eyes of people helped by the program — that reinforce ORB's message and mission.

"Having the Rice Bowl as the focal point for their Lenten observance helps families to think beyond their daily realities and to focus on making a difference in the lives of others," says Beth Martin, program manager for Operation Rice Bowl. "The program also includes an educational component, sharing stories of people from developing countries that benefit from ORB."

Last year, Catholics raised more than $7 million through Operation Rice Bowl, 75 percent of which is used to fund hunger and poverty projects in 40 countries. The remaining 25 percent stays in U.S. dioceses to support food pantries and soup kitchens.

Since its beginning in 1975, ORB has raised more than $167 million to fund CRS' development projects. With participation in almost every diocese in the U.S., many communities and families have adopted ORB as a way to observe Lent.

Contact ORB: by E-mail: education-programs@crs.org; By Phone:, 1-800-222-0025.



Laura Bush Visits Little Flower, A Blue Ribbon Catholic School

Early Visit for Catholic Schools Week Is Her Last as First Lady

Washington, D.C. – First Lady Laura Bush made a visit to Little Flower Catholic School in Bethesda, Maryland in honor of the upcoming National Catholic Schools Week 2009, which will be celebrated nationwide January 25-31.

The theme for this year is "Catholic Schools Celebrate Service," a message that coincides with the two million service hours performed by Catholic students last year in honor of Pope Benedict's visit to the U.S.

Mrs. Bush thanked the Catholic community for its support for Catholic schools, in this country and around the world, and noted Catholic education's long history in the United States. She noted the reputation of Catholic schools for excellent academics and strong civic values. In particular, she commended the church's work of educating disadvantaged students in inner city schools, and encouraged church leaders to continue this important mission.

Karen Ristau, NCEA president, noted, "On behalf of the 200,000 Catholic educators represented by NCEA, we are delighted that Mrs. Bush chose a Catholic school for this final school visit of President Bush's administration. Laura Bush has been a strong and articulate advocate for Catholic education and its mission. We are grateful that she again has put the spotlight on the contributions the almost 7400 Catholic schools in this nation are making to the future of our country."

Mrs. Bush listens to children singing her a song.NCEA Photo

According to the First Lady, "The United States can thank our Catholic schools for the great work that you do all over our country and all over the world, really. And it's also a time for us to talk to our leaders about the importance of Catholic education."

Little Flower Catholic School was named a 2008 Blue Ribbon School, one of only 50 non-public schools to be so honored.

Mrs. Bush visited Holy Redeemer Catholic School during Catholic Schools Week 2008, on National Appreciation Day For Catholic Schools, January 30, 2008.

The NCEA, founded in 1904, is a professional membership organization that provides leadership, direction and service to fulfill the evangelizing, catechizing and teaching mission of the church. NCEA members include elementary schools, high schools, parish religious education programs and seminaries.

Mrs. Bush hugs second-grader Giovanna McBride. NCEA Photo

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Good News in Education

Catholic Schools Week was celebrated January 25 – 31, 2008 in the Diocese of Owensboro. The theme is "Catholic Schools Celebrate Service." 2009 is the 36th time Catholic Schools Week has been held; the first celebration was in 1974. Our diocesan schools are invited to send in pictures from their Catholic Schools Week celebrations to The Western Kentucky Catholic for the next edition; deadline is February 15, 2009. Email: mel.howard@pastoral.org

CELEBRATE SERVICE

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Our Catholic Schools Share Duty And Delight of Giving Back

The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2009, "Catholic Schools Celebrate Service," emphasizes the duty and delight of giving back. Each and every day, the 4200 students in our eighteen Catholic schools experience an incomparable gift – that of learning how Christ's teachings through the Gospel can form and transform their lives, both now and far into the future. This is why the entire Catholic community makes sacrifices in order to give students the gift of a Catholic education.

Our schools are each excellent academic institutions, as evidenced by consistently high scores on standardized assessments such as the ACT, EXPLORE, and Terra Nova. The schools have strong parent support that serves as the foundation for teaching and learning. Students go to school each day in an environment that is family-like, safe, and secure. With all of these gifts, students grow up in the knowledge that they are prepared to be the future leaders, parents, and servants to the community our future Church needs.

Catholic Schools Week 2009 is a time not only to "Celebrate Service", but also to give thanks to the Catholic Church of western Kentucky for supporting the ministry of Catholic education. These priceless gifts keep on giving, through charity and service to the larger community and through the gifts that the students themselves return to the Church in their later lives.

- Jim Mattingly, Superintendent of Schools, Diocese of Owensboro, Ky.

Wisdom *by Ginny Knight-Simon*

Nancy Brock
St. William Parish, Marion, KY

I met Nancy Brock at the annual Ladies Guild Christmas Cookie Exchange at St. William Parish in Marion, Ky in December.

"All the women of the parish are members of the Ladies Guild by just being a member of the parish. We all brought six dozen cookies each to exchange with others. It's always fun and you get such a variety of cookies to go home with." Nancy said.

Nancy grew up in the Marion area, but met her husband, Robert, while she was living in Louisville. "We were both teachers at the same school - we had a planning period together- that's how we met. We've been married 30 years now and have three children."

"I went to the Baptist Church when I was young and later I started going to the Methodist church. My husband and I wanted to go to church together, we felt that it was very important and I joined the Catholic Church.

The stillness and the reference of the church before and after Mass is something that is very appealing to me." Nancy explained.

"I have a lot of family and we spend quite a bit of time with them since we are retired. Both of my parents are 89 years old and my mother is not in good health. So I am there with them much of the time.

My husband and I both like to garden and travel. I spent a year in Germany and taught there. I also do some water color paintings and I love animals." Nancy said with a smile.

We have no seniors group here at the parish, but our Ladies Guild is a good group. Our meetings are centered around fun and helping others.

Coming Soon!

RETIREMENT CELEBRATIONS
for
BISHOP JOHN J. MCRAITH

✠

The celebrations will be held in
Bowling Green • Hopkinsville
Paducah • Owensboro

Planning is underway.
More details coming soon!

Entre Amigos

Of Illegal Immigration And The Right To Life

By Mar Muñoz-Visoso

I was shocked. Finally someone said it loud and clear: "Immigration is the greatest civil rights test of our generation…It is very close to the right to life." And he said it with the authority that, in the Church, comes with the teaching office. It happened at a meeting of the Missouri Catholic Conference where Archbishop José Gomez of San Antonio, Texas, delivered a speech on continuing to fight for comprehensive immigration reform as soon as the new president and congress are sworn in.

What was surprising was not so much the "civil rights test" portion of the message—around which the Justice for Immigrants campaign of the U.S. Catholic Bishops has been building awareness for a few years now—but the fact that he put this issue right up there with the right to life. And he is right, migration, whichever form it takes, is always about the right to life. Whether immigrants flee political or religious persecution, mass genocide or hunger and poverty, their human spirit of survival and the sense of responsibility to take care of your own, even if it comes at the price of never seeing them again, is all about seeking life, preserving life and improving life. It is about the right to exist and to do so in dignified human conditions.

I am not going to summarize here the archbishop's talk. I think it should be read in its entirety (a copy can be obtained at www.originsonline.com).

Over the years I've been moved when hearing the compelling reasons why most people emigrate. I was at one point an immigrant myself. It has little to do with a sense of adventure. And yes, ideally, people ought to emigrate legally. But what happens when the "come-here-legally" window is practically closed for business but a big colorful sign that reads "help wanted (lots of it!)" sits right next to it suggesting a crack in the wall? That is what has been happening for decades with our immigration laws, which have proven inadequate to our labor needs, and trade policies that liberalized the movement of merchandise across borders but not the movement of labor.

Restrictionist policies fence people in. They have led to millions of people living in the shadows of our society, and have left employers, as we say in Spanish, entre la espada y la pared (between the sword and the wall) . While I lived in Colorado I met farmers, fast food restaurant and construction company owners who struggled after failing to interest enough nationals to work in their trade (some of them were offering more than a decent wage) and were not able to obtain enough visas for foreign workers. The current system was clearly not working for them. The dilemma was to let their crops rot, go into a mere economy of survival, close their businesses and cut off the livelihood of their families, or hire the plentiful immigrant labor at hand, even if illegally.

Clearly our immigrant program is in shambles. Responsible reform offers hope for individuals and our nation. I will feel more secure, and our nation will benefit from knowing the actual composition of its work force and social fabric. An increase of several million taxpayers almost overnight won't be bad medicine for our ailing treasury either. Turning anonymous people into law abiding citizens could benefit the country as a whole.

We are a no-nonsense nation, but on this issue of illegal immigration I have heard enough nonsense already. Don't expect Catholics to be silent about it anymore.

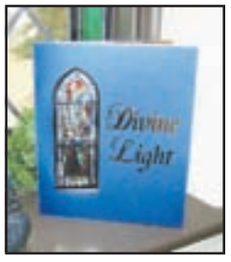
Comprehensive immigration reform now! Yes we can! Sound familiar?

Editor's Note: The USCCB Office of Media Relations will offer Entre Amigos, as a monthly column with a Latino flavor to run in English and Spanish. Mar Munoz-Visoso is Assistant Director Office of Media Relations.

United with Christ, people have nothing, no one to fear, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- While people lacking faith in God may dread numerous dangers and hostile forces in the world, those who are firmly united with Christ have nothing and no one to fear, Pope Benedict XVI said. Jesus Christ is above every form of domination and "he is the true Lord of the world," the pope said Jan. 14 at his weekly general audience. With an estimated 4,000 people gathered inside the Paul VI hall, Pope Benedict continued his audience talks about the life and teaching of St. Paul, focusing on the theme of Christ as the head of the church and the universe. In his letters to the Colossians and to the Ephesians, St. Paul gives Christians an enormously positive and important message: that Christ is above "every form of power that might aim to humiliate the human being," said the pope. He said St. Paul taught that Christ, as head of the church, is the leader and Lord of the Christian community and guides it with his example and teaching.

History of the Ursuline Sisters' Chapel Windows now available



"Divine Light: The Story of the Windows and Appointments of the Motherhouse Chapel of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph" is available for sale at Mount Saint Joseph.

The 48-page booklet details the story behind each of the beautiful windows in the Motherhouse Chapel, including background on the saints pictured, the significance of their actions that are depicted, the meaning of religious symbols used, and information on the people who made the windows possible. The booklet also includes information on the appointments in the chapel, such as the altar, organ, baptismal font, Stations of the Cross, etc.

"Divine Light" was researched and written by Sister Annalita Lancaster, OSU, a former superior of the congregation and an Ursuline Sister for 66 years. She continues to volunteer her time in the community Archives office with Sister Vickie Cravens, where much of the research was done.

"Divine Light" is available for $10 (tax included), and can be purchased through the Archives office by contacting Sister Vickie Cravens at (270) 229-4103, ext. 302; via e-mail at archives@maplemount.org; or in person at Saint Michael Hall on the Motherhouse campus, 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, KY, just off Kentucky 56.

Come join us for an Ursuline Way of Life Weekend

March 20-22

WHO? Single Catholic women ages 18 and over

WHERE? Mount Saint Joseph Motherhouse, Maple Mount, Ky. (12 miles southwest of Owensboro, Ky., on Hwy. 56)

WHAT? A weekend experience to pray, learn about Saint Angela Merici, relax, explore, reflect, and to meet other women who are seeking to know where God is leading them. It's also a time to meet women who have followed call to be Ursuline Sisters.

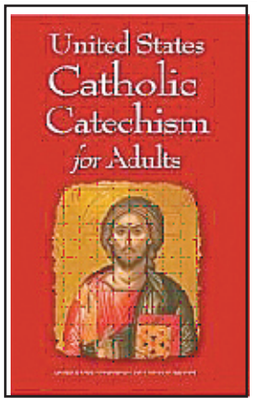
WHEN? March 20-22, 2009
Friday, 7:30 p.m., to Sunday, 1 p.m.

COST? Overnight accommodations and meals provided. Please bring your own toiletries.

To register, contact Sister Alicia Coomes
270-229-4103, ext. 214
E-mail: vocations@maplemount.org

Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph

ADULT FAITH FORMATION



Do you want to know more about your faith?

How can you respond to questions from Protestant friends and co-workers?

The A GIFT Program can help. Adults Growing In Faith Together. A study of the United States Catechism for Adults, A GIFT is conducted on Saturdays, two times a year for three years. Each session covers a portion of the Four Pillars of the Catechism:

- The Creed: The Faith Professed
- The Sacraments: The Faith Celebrated
- Christian Morality: The Faith Lived
- Prayer: The Faith Prayed

Presenters include Priests, Religious, Pastoral Associates, Diocesan Staff, Catholic Teachers, Ministry Formation and Theology Students.

To schedule A GIFT for you parish, cluster of parishes or deanery, contact Patty Blair, Office of Lay Ministry and Formation. You schedule the time and place, and arrange lunch. We will do the rest. E-mail: patty.blair@pastoral.org Phone: 270-683-1545.

"WOMEN IN THE BIBLE" WOMEN'S RETREAT

Presenter: Sister Cheryl Clemons, OSU

Join us for this spiritual time with God and each other

Residents: $175 (includes: retreat, materials, meals, snacks, social, and overnight accommodations)
Commuters: $120 (includes: retreat, materials, meals, snacks, social)
Get a 10% discount if paid in full by Feb. 15, 2009
Partial scholarships, based on need, are available from the Msgr. Bernard Powers Retreat Fund.

To register or for more information, contact Kathy McCarty
(270) 229-0200, ext. 413 • kmccarty@maplemount.org

Mount Saint Joseph
Conference and Retreat Center
8001 Cummings Road
Maple Mount, Kentucky 42388-8999
270-229-0200
www.mjcenter.org
mjcenter@maplemount.org

Volunteers of the Year *(Continued from page 30)*

Hayden and his wife, Brenda, also are there 1-2 days a week volunteering for about 2 years. "I like volunteering here because it makes me feel like I am doing something worthwhile. I think of the Scripture where Jesus and his disciples were followed by thousands of people and they had no food to eat. When the disciples tell Jesus that the people need to eat, He tells them, 'Feed them.' I feel like I am helping people with food and their bills. I feel like I am not only physically feeding them but also spiritually feeding them," Richard said.

The need for more volunteers continues to grow as the need grows. More donations can be utilized if there were more volunteers to work with them. There are all kinds of volunteer jobs and all of the work that is done provides food, clothing, and money to help pay critical bills for the individuals who rely on the St. Vincent de Paul Budget Store to make their lives a little easier. As little as 1 day a week or even 1 day every other week would be beneficial. Please consider helping. Paducah has a St. Vincent store but many other cities that this paper reaches have similar stores that need volunteers. Volunteer; you will be greatly blessed and richly rewarded.

Priest recalled as spiritual patriarch who influenced faith of many

NEW YORK (CNS) -- Father Richard John Neuhaus died Jan. 8 at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. Father Neuhaus, 72, was a spiritual patriarch whose "priestly and fatherly soul generated sons to the order of grace and begat many who labor even now to make his beloved America a morally great nation," according to Father Raymond J. de Souza.

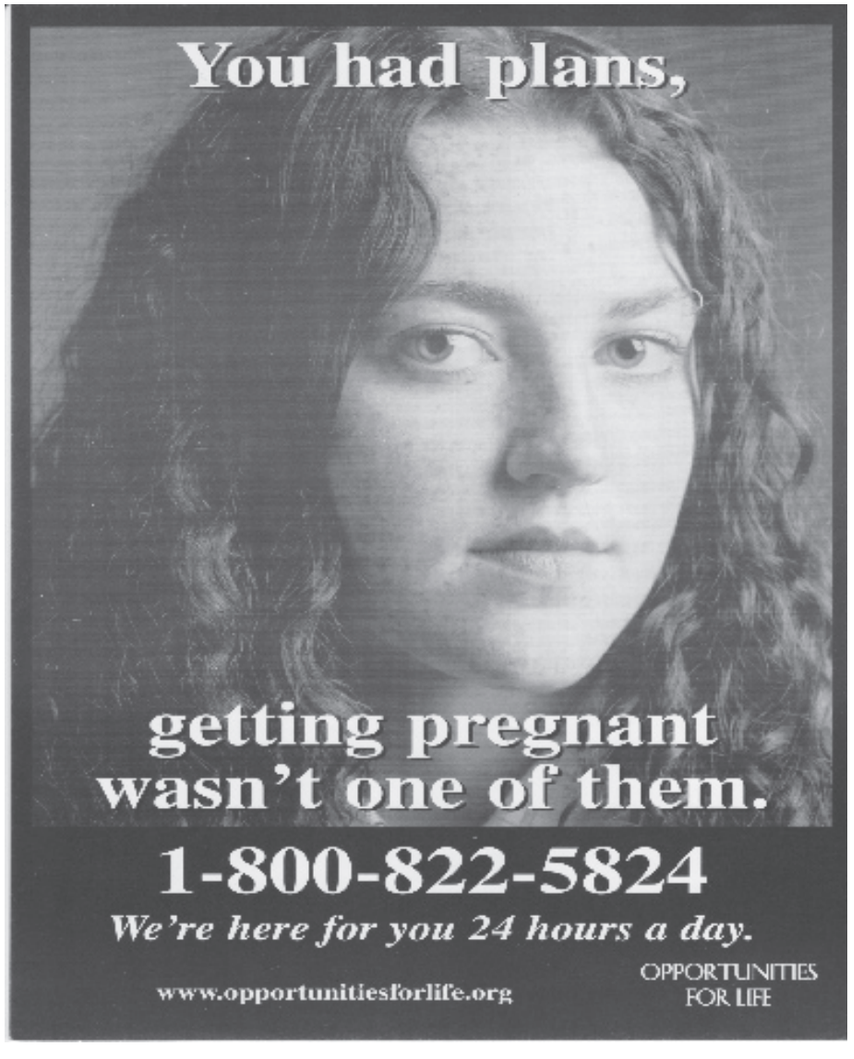
Father de Souza made the comments in his homily at the standing-room-only funeral Mass for Father Neuhaus Jan. 13 at Immaculate Conception Church in New York. Father Neuhaus, a former Lutheran minister who became a Catholic priest and ardent defender of church teaching on life issues, died Jan. 8 after a recurrence of cancer. He was a parochial vicar at Immaculate Conception.

The Canadian-born Father Neuhaus was an author, lecturer and the founder of First Things, a journal published by the Institute on Religion and Public Life. According to its mission statement, the magazine is "an ecumenical journal whose purpose is to advance a religiously informed public philosophy for the ordering of society."

Father de Souza, a priest of the Archdiocese of Kingston, Ontario, said Father Neuhaus "never ceased to call upon the Lord of life for those most vulnerable."

Father Richard John Neuhaus, founder of the journal First Things, smiles after speaking at the National Press Club in Washington in 2004. Father Neuhaus died Jan. 8 at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York.(CNS file photo/Bob Roller) (Jan. 8, 2009)

Worth Thousands of Words, a picture from Paducah St. Francis de Sales Church: elementary All Saints Day/Halloween Celebration. Fr. Brian Roby is reading the kids his favorite Halloween story (On October 26th) Photo by Zach Ault, Director of Youth Ministry, St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church



Praying With The Church 2009

Pope Benedict XVI's Prayer Intentions

FEBRUARY

• **General: Church Pastors,** docile to the Spirit, That the Pastors of the Church may always be docile to the action of the Holy Spirit in their teaching and in their service to God's people.

• **Mission: Promotion of Peace in Africa.** That the Church in Africa may find adequate ways and means to promote reconciliation, justice and peace efficaciously, according to the indications of the Synod of the Bishops' II Special Assembly for Africa.

Rachel's Vineyard

Pray To End Abortion

Hurting from abortion? Know someone who is? Rachel's Vineyard is here to help. Rachel's Vineyard of Bowling Green offers post-abortion healing weekend retreats for women and men who are suffering from the effects of abortion.

Rachel's Vineyard retreats are conducted at the St. Joseph Monastery and Retreat Center, home of the Passionist Nuns of Whitesville, KY. This retreat center is situated on 170 scenic acres. All retreat participants have private rooms with their own showers, and accommodations for the physically challenged are provided.

Two lives depend on it!

Contact: info@hopeafterabortionky.com; www.hopeafterabortionky.com; call Colleen @ 270-776-6177

St. Thomas More Children's Christmas liturgy:

Fr. Patrick Reynolds invites the children to gather around as Shepherds visit the Holy Family, A multitude of angels surround Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. Jim Hess, Director of Music and Liturgy plays piano for the children's choir, and Maggie Langston provides narration for the children's Mass. Missy Eckenberg Photos

St. Mary Students Give Generously at Christmas

Students at St. Mary Middle and High School made the Christmas wishes of 43 children come true this year through the Salvation Army Angel Tree project.

The school received Angel Tree tags for 43 families who had requested assistance providing Christmas presents for their children. All 43 tags were snatched up by students before they had even been put on the tree! Each tag had a short list of toys that the child wanted for Christmas. On one tag, a little boy had asked for a bicycle. Instead of simply getting the boy one of the smaller items on his list, the generous St. Mary family that had his tag got him the bike he had wanted. Everyone was thrilled that this little boy was going to get the biggest present of all. But then someone had a thought, "What if this little boy has a sibling also on the Angel Tree?" Sure enough, he had a little brother that had also asked for a bicycle. So that the younger brother wouldn't feel left out, the St. Mary senior class decided to use money from their own class account to buy him the bike he wanted. That family had a wonderful surprise Christmas morning thanks to the generosity of St. Mary students.

Owensboro Serra Club Invites You To Adopt A Priest

The Serra Club of Owensboro has launched a program to provide prayerful support for the priests of our Diocese called ADOPT A PRIEST. A lapel pin has been designed as shown. The initials of the priest and his date of ordination have been engraved on the back of each pin. Along with each pin, a card and envelope will be included, designed especially to be sent by the wearer to the adopted priest. The Serra Club is asking that you pray daily for your adopted priest.

To order a pin, send a check or money order for $15.00 to: Serra Club of Owensboro, 4213 Spring Bank Drive, Owensboro, KY 42303

Sail with Fr. Ray Goetz

From Ft. Lauderdale, Florida,
Sunday, May 3-9,2009
On Carnival Cruise Line's New Ship,
The Freedom!

Rates start from just $573.39 including taxes and each cabin will receive a $50 on board credit!
For more information contact Fr. Ray Goetz, 270-764-1983

Hurting from abortion?
Know someone who is?
Rachel's Vineyard is here to help

Rachel's Vineyard of Bowling Green

Rachel's Vineyard of Bowling Green offers post-abortion healing weekend retreats for women and men who are suffering from the effects of abortion.

Next Retreat:
Jan. 30 - Feb. 1, 2009

Retreat Location:
St. Joseph Monastery
(Passionist Nuns)
Whitesville, KY

Contact:
info@hopeafterabortionky.com
www.hopeafterabortionky.com
Debbie: 270-683-6933

Students Perform Christmas Program in January

By Dawn C. Ligibel

"Welcome to our 'Post-Christmas, Epiphany, Baptism of the Lord Program,'" Fr. John Thomas, pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul in Hopkinsville, said with a laugh on January 8. The program, which was originally scheduled for December 15 and was cancelled due to inclement weather, was nonetheless performed by the students of Sts. Peter and Paul School with a great deal of Christmas spirit.

"I am always moved to tears by the Christmas program performances of our students, and this year was no exception," said Principal Scott Marks.

The program began with the pre-school children singing two songs under the direction of their teacher, Patty Mitchell. For the second song, Fr. Thomas sang the majority of the lyrics while the children sang "a Partridge in a Pear Tree" and "Five Golden Rings" when indicated.

"Fr. John singing with the pre-schoolers was priceless," exclaimed Marks. "Every parish should be blessed with a pastor that cherishes and demonstrates the importance of a Catholic school education as much as Fr. John does," he added.

For the remainder of the program, children in grades kindergarten through eighth narrated and sang twelve songs under the direction of the school's new music teacher, Marleda Upton. "The title of the program is 'Waiting for Love,'" explained Upton. "It is a poetic narrative of the beginning of creation through the returning of Christ. Tucked within are songs of Advent and Christmas," she said.

"Much of the music was different from most Christmas programs I have attended," Marks noted. "The pieces were complex and went beneath the surface of the traditional announcement of the birth of Christ. These songs delved into the entire reason for the birth of Christ," Marks explained.

Another unique aspect of this year's program was the number of students selected to sing solos or in small groups. "Thirty children were afforded the opportunity to showcase their talents as soloists or in small ensembles," explained Upton.

"There are two reasons why I chose to do this," Upton continued. "First of all, the children are so talented and I believe it is my responsibility to be looking for that talent in all of my students so that I can nurture it and build confident, experienced musicians. Secondly, part of my responsibility as a music teacher in a Catholic school environment is to teach the children about music in the Church. I am trying to prepare our students to be cantors and musical leaders."

"The many different soloists were outstanding," agreed Marks. "To have so many different ones participate in the program demonstrates the dedication and discipline of Miss Upton and the students, along with the range of talent and ability of our student body," he added.

The students of Sts. Peter and Paul School in Hopkinsville gathered under the direction of their music teacher, Marleda Upton, on the evening of January 8 to perform their Christmas program which had been postponed from December 15 due to inclement weather. In the picture at left, third-grade student Addy Jewell was one of the 30 students who sang solos or in small ensembles during the Christmas program. Photos by Dawn Ligibel

"There are a lot of talented kids in this school," exclaimed Helen Watson, mother of a sixth-grade student who sang one of the many solos. "This is the first program since Allison was in kindergarten that there were multiple soloists from different grades." The soloists, in fact, ranged from first grade through eighth.

"I had no idea that Sts. Peter and Paul had so much talent," commented Michael Ligibel, a sophomore in high school who was graduated from Sts. Peter and Paul.

"What I am most proud of, first of all, is that as a small Catholic school we have such a strong music program," said Fr. Thomas. "The second thing is the fact that thirty children sang some sort of solo," added Fr. John. "It is wonderful for their confidence, their self-esteem and for building each other up. It makes me proud," he admitted.

In addition to pulling forth so many soloists, Upton also called on numerous students to narrate the program. "The readers auditioned. We began the program with nine second graders reading the first narrative. There were nineteen readers in all. The children love to read and this, too, is another way of preparing strong readers for Mass," explained Upton.

"I thought the readers made an excellent contribution by providing a background for the songs and basically preparing the audience for what the next song was about," said Marks.

At the conclusion of the program, the crowd showed their appreciation by giving the students and Upton a standing ovation. "You can tell they practiced very hard," said Jennifer Chaudoin, who has grandchildren in the school. "She certainly explores their talents,"

"That was some little show," commented Steve Carlton, Jr., who has a son in kindergarten.

"It was uplifting and upbeat," agreed Steven Kinnard, father of two children in the school.

"I enjoyed the fact that the focus was on the Lord," said Jo Ashley Hall, mother of seventh-grade student Hunter.

"I could not be more proud of our students and our faculty for their wonderful efforts with the program," admitted Marks.

"The connection that the music instructor has with her students is obvious," said George Gregory, grandfather of a student in the fifth grade.

Working with that connection, Upton surprised her students earlier that day. "Today at rehearsal I told them that they couldn't have their folders with the musical scores for the program," Upton explained. "When they heard this, some of them went into a panic! Nonetheless, I know I made the right decision. Without them shuffling music, they were able to truly worship and lead the congregation in an experience with God. Without the scores, they all watched me more closely which meant the audience could see their shining faces!"

Vatican secret confession tribunal opens up

The court handles sins so grave only the pope can grant absolution

Article by Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The crimes the Catholic Church considers to be most serious are investigated and punished by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, but the Vatican also has a specific office for helping the guilty find forgiveness and reconcile with God and the church.

In matters related to the conscience of individual Catholics, the work of the Apostolic Penitentiary, headed by U.S. Cardinal J. Francis Stafford, is probably the most secret of any Vatican office.

Even the tribunals dealing with delicate situations involving requests for the annulment of marriages publish annual reports giving the number of cases opened and resolved during the year.

But the Apostolic Penitentiary does not release that kind of information because its work is covered under the sacramental seal of confession.

The low profile of the office combined with the seriousness of the sins brought to its attention probably explains why members of the media flocked to a Jan. 13-14 symposium on the history of the Apostolic Penitentiary and of the sacrament of penance.

Cardinal Stafford told reporters Jan. 13 that the penitentiary deals with five specific cases: a man who directly participated in an abortion and later wants to enter the priesthood; priests who have broken the seal of confession; priests who have offered sacramental absolution to their own sexual partner; desecrating the Eucharist; and making an attempt on the life of the pope.

The "very serious sin" of clerical sexual abuse is not one of the sins over which the penitentiary has competence, the cardinal said; those cases are handled by the doctrinal congregation.

Forgiveness of the five sins listed by Cardinal Stafford is what the church describes as "reserved" to the Holy See, so in order to receive absolution for them, it is not enough to go to one's local priest for confession, said Bishop Gianfranco Girotti, regent of the Apostolic Penitentiary.

A detailed account of the case is sent to the penitentiary, which studies it to ensure the true repentance of the sinner and which recommends "an appropriate, proportionate penance," Bishop Girotti said.

The penitentiary also has other responsibilities, including choosing, training and coordinating the work of the priests who hear confessions in the major basilicas of Rome; promoting appreciation of the sacrament of penance; coordinating the offering of indulgences; and offering an annual course for priests and seminarians on administering the sacrament of penance.

Cardinal Stafford told reporters Jan. 13 that he organized the symposium to increase public awareness of the penitentiary's work over the past 830 years.

"Today we talk a lot about God's forgiveness, which is a motive for joy and happiness. But I am a bit worried about the lack of awareness of the connection between this joy and the forgiveness of sins," he said.

"We all know the burden of sin in our personal lives, which is why the sacrament of penance really is the sacrament of reconciliation given by Christ to his church. It is a sacrament full of the mercy, charity and love of God," he said.

Vatican report: Most U.S. seminaries are generally healthy

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- An apostolic visitation team concluded that U.S. Catholic seminaries and houses of priestly formation are generally healthy, but recommended a stronger focus on moral theology, increased oversight of seminarians and greater involvement of diocesan bishops in the formation process. "This visitation has demonstrated that, since the 1990s, a greater sense of stability now prevails in the U.S. seminaries," the report said. "The appointment, over time, of rectors who are wise and faithful to the church has meant a gradual improvement, at least in the diocesan seminaries." The report, sparked by the sexual abuse crisis that hit the U.S. church, concluded that seminaries appeared to have made improvements in the area of seminarian morality, most notably with regard to homosexual behavior. The report was dated Dec. 15 and signed by Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, head of the Congregation for Catholic Education, which deals with seminaries. It was published on the Web site of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to coincide with National Vocation Awareness Week, which began Jan. 12.

Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center
Calendar of Events February 2009 - July 2009

February 2009
- 6-8 Catholic Engaged Encounter
- 6-7 Brescia Students
- 7 Yarn Spinners
- 20-22 St. Joseph Parish of Central City Senior Retreat
- 27-28 Brescia Student Retreat
- 27-1 Women's Retreat

March 2009
- 6-8 Heart of Creativity Retreat
- 10-13 Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center Quilter Friends
- 13-15 Catholic Engaged Encounter
- 20-22 Centering Prayer for Beginners
- 22 Our Lady of Lourdes RCIA
- 24-27 Quilt Guild - Paducah
- 27-3 St. Meinrad Retreat Week

April 2009
- 3-5 Christian Women's Retreat
- 6-7 4-H Youth Retreat
- 14-16 Theological Reflections Glenmary Associates
- 17 Leadership Development Workshop
- 17-19 Catholic Engaged Encounter
- 18 Our Lady of Lourdes Confirmation Retreat
- 20-24 Spiritual Direction Institute Week 3
- 24-25 Scrapbooking
- 27-30 RiverValley 4 Day Workshop

To register or to schedule your event, call Kathy McCarty 270-229-0200, ext. 413 or e-mail kmccarty@maplemount.org

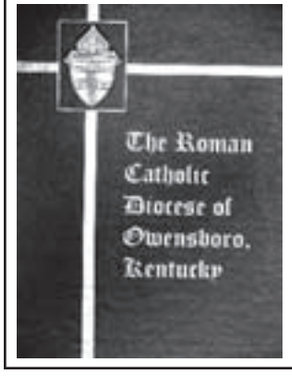
The Center is located 15 miles west of Owensboro on Highway 56 at 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, Kentucky 42356

May 2009
- 1-3 Retrouvaille Training Weekend
- 9 Yarn Spinners
- 9 Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center Fund Raiser Dinner
- 16-17 Mount Saint Joseph Academy and Junior College Alumnae Reunion Weekend
- 23 Private Wedding Reception

June 2009
- 6-8 Circle of Friends
- 8-13 Arts at the Mount, Discover Music and Nature for children ages 10-12 years old
- 14-19 Agri-Eco Camp for children ages 10-12 years old
- 21-26 Christian Leadership Institute
- 26-28 Associates Retreat Weekend

July 2009
- 8-10 Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph Community Days
- 12-15 Conference and Directed Retreat
- 19 Centering Prayer Retreat
- 25 GREENing Western Kentucky Expo at Brescia
- 27-31 Spiritual Direction Institute Week 4
- 31 Scrapbook Swarm

Center-sponsored programs in bold.



Diocesan History Books
For Sale At
Catholic Pastoral Center

$20.00

Contact Diocesan Chancellor
Sister Joseph Angela Boone, OSU,
at 270-683-1545 for information.
Or e-mail Joseph.Boone@pastoral.org

Vocation

Mission, as a witness of divine love, becomes particularly effective when it is shared in a communitarian way, so that the world may believe.

Seminarians Make Annual Visit to Passionist Nuns

From the Cloister:

By Passionist Postulant Shannon Shoppe

All of the Passionist Nuns were anticipating our official visit with the seminarians, along with their director, Fr. Andy Garner, which would take place on the last night of their annual three-day retreat here at St. Joseph Monastery. What a joy and blessing it was to finally have the opportunity to meet and greet the young men who are constantly in our prayers as they continue on their individual journeys toward their final ordinations!

We reveled in their strong and encouraging presence on the public side of our chapel during our daily celebration of the Holy Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours. The sound of their voices chanting with ours from across the water channel which divided us was a real experience of the unique unity that exists between the prayer of priests and religious (whether ordained, professed, or discerning). I had to pause several times as we chanted the Liturgy of the Hours together in order to savor this awesome reality. We were also blessed to be able to hear homilies at Mass given by newly ordained Deacons Daniel Dillard and Josh McCarty.

Our official visit with the seminarians was filled with joy, laughter, and smiling faces . We so enjoyed this brief but bright window into the characters and gifts of each of the young men we were introduced to. Particularly memorable were the comical stories they shared with us about their experiences in the seminary. It was truly a pleasure to witness the real sense of friendship and brotherhood they share amongst themselves.

We left our visit with smiles, a handful of handshakes, mutual promises of remembrance in prayer, and gratitude for our God's gift of vocation. How encouraging and exciting to see such a large and lively group of young men seeking to give their loving ALL to God and His Church!

The Diocesan Seminarians took part in an annual Winter Brotherhood Retreat Dec. 21-23 at the Passionist Monastery in Whitesville over Christmas break. During that time they were able to visit with the Passionists Sisters as shown in the photo above. Photo by Rev. Mr. Josh McCarty.

Retired Bishop John McRaith visited the seminarians at the Passionist Monastery during their Winter Brotherhood Retreat. Above, he visits with major seminarian Deacon Daniel Dillard, minor seminarian Gary Clark, Director of Vocations, Fr. Andy Garner, and a potential candidate for seminary. Photo by Deacon Josh McCarty.

From the Seminary:

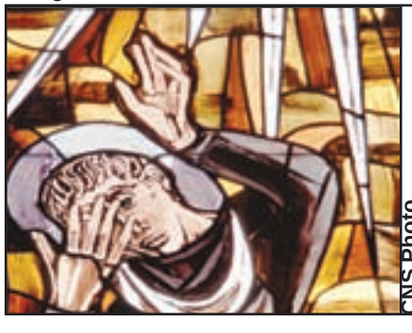
By Byron (Paco) Macias

The Seminarians of our Diocese gathered for their Winter Brotherhood Retreat on December 21st – 23rd at the Passionist Nuns Monastery. All of us (with the exception of seminarian Basilio Az who was in Mexico) enjoyed of three days of prayer, fellowship, and good moments. The highlights of the retreat included dinner with Bishop John, remarks and pearls of wisdom by Fr. Andy Garner, our Diocesan Vocation Director, and a visit with the Passionist Nuns at the Visiting Parlor, one of the most life-giving events of the retreat, and spaces to share good moments among seminarians through Frisbee, a run around the monastery, movies, and memorable conversations.

The Winter Brotherhood Retreat is a great opportunity for us to catch up with each other and to share our vocational and formation experiences. During this retreat we were also honored to have Deacons Daniel Dillard and Josh McCarty preaching during the Masses. It is indeed a blessing to be given opportunities like this, which strengthen our vocations. We thank the Diocese, Fr. Andy and all the generous people who support us as we prepare for the diocesan priesthood in Western Kentucky.

Prayer for Vocations

Lord, through Your Holy Spirit, we ask for Your blessing as we pray for vocations. Inspire many men and women to hear Your call to serve God and the Church as priests, deacons, vowed religious and lay ministers. Give them courage, renew their faith and inspire them with confidence to answer Your call. We ask this through Jesus' name. Amen.



CNS Photo

"Year of Saint Paul Pilgrimage for Young Men"

The Diocesan Office of Vocations invites young men of the Diocese of Owensboro to make a pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Saint Paul in Saint Paul, Minnesota and visit Saint John Vianney College Seminary during February 12 – 15, 2009. In addition to many graces, the pilgrimage offers an opportunity for young men ages 15 to 21 interested in priesthood and seminary formation to visit one of the largest and most historic churches in the United States; to experience seminary life first-hand; and to explore the who, what, where, when, and why of a vocation to the Roman Catholic Priesthood. Please register by Wednesday, February 4. For registration and further information contact the Office of Vocations at (270) 683-1545 or email Father Andy Garner at fr.andy.garner@pastoral.org.

A Tribute to The Precious Blood Fathers and Brothers Who Served In Our Diocese

Article Contributed by The Owensboro Dicoesan Archives

A Society of Apostolic Life, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood (C.PP.S.), priests and brothers, was founded by St. Gaspar del Bufalo in 1815 in the Papal States. The purpose of the institute was the renewal of the clergy and laity through the preaching of popular missions and retreats. Del Bufalo had been inspired to a devotion to the Precious Blood by Francesco Albertini, who had established an Archconfraternity of the Precious Blood in the church of St. Nicola in Carcere in Rome in 1808.

The Missionaries of the Precious Blood (C.PP.S.) is a Society of Apostolic Life of priests and brothers. They share a common mission of service to the Church, live a community life, and are sustained by a spirituality of the Blood of Christ. It is these three pillars - mission, community, and spirituality - which support their life and work together.

Among the notable members of the CPPS in America have been Bp. Joseph Dwenger, one of the major architects of the Catholic parochial school system, and pioneering biblical exegete Edward Siegman. In 2000, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood numbered about 530 members, serving in eighteen countries around the world. The CPPS in North America in 2000 numbered 314 members. The chief work of the order is the giving of missions and assisting the secular parish clergy on occasions such as tridua, Forty Hours devotions, retreats, etc. The novitiate is at Burkettsville, Ohio. Their website is http://www.cppsmissionaries.ca/index.php

The Archives of the Precious Blood Fathers in Carthagena, Ohio, seat of the provincial, sent this record to our Owensboro Diocesan Archives Office:

Precious Blood Fathers who served in our-Diocese

• **Axtel, Ky**., St. Anthony Church, and then mission Holy Guardian Angels, Irvington: 1924 Oct. - Jan. 1938 - J. Hoepf, pastor; 1939 Jan. - Nov. 1946 - H. Friedel; 1946 Nov. - Sept. 1951 - A. Zumberge; 1951 Oct. - Apr. 1952 - E. Murphy ; 1952 Apr. - June 1958 - M. Storm; 1958 June - Aug. 1968 - A. Meiring; 1968 Aug. - July 1979 - J. Minch; 1979 July 1 - July 1984 - W. Donohoe.

• **Calvert City, Ky**., St. Pius X Church: 1976 Aug. 1 - Oct. 1978 - L. Telegdy

• **Central City, Ky.**, St. Joseph Church: 1984 July 18 - 1988 - C. Wise, Pastor

• **Hardinsburg, Ky**., St. Romuald Church: 1924 Nov. - Apr. 1948 - M. Rosenrarten; 1947 July - July 1947 -R. Beckman, substitute; 1947 July - Aug. 1947 - K. Dreiling, substitute; 1948 Apr. - Aug. 1948 - W. Roth, pastor; 1948 Aug. - Aug. 1948 - H. Hasson, substitute; 1948 Aug. - Sept. 1956 - L. Hoying, pastor; 1956 Sept. - June 1964 - C. Bihn; 1964 June - July 1968 - L. Mertes; 1968 July - Aug. 1968 - A. Migoni; 1968 Aug. - July 1979 - A. Mering; 1979 July 1- June 1983 - J. Miller, Pastor.

• **Hawesville, Ky**.,Immaculate Conception Church: 1983 June 7 - May 1986J.Mc Cabe, Pastor; 1986 May 20 - July 1987 - A. Ruschau, Administrator; 1987 July 15 - July 1988 - S. Reale, Pastor; 1988 July 11 - July 1991 - E. Schuwey, Pastor.

• **Henshaw, Ky. and Sturgis, Ky**, St. Ambrose - 1988 July 11 - Sept. 1988 - S. Reale, Pastor; 1988 Sept. 1 - July 1994 - A. Reed, Pastor

• **Lewisport, Ky. (and Hawesville, Ky**.), St. Columba: 1983 June 7 - 1986 - J. McCabe, Pastor; 1986 May 20 - 19887 - A. Ruschau, Administrator; 1987 July 15 -July 1988 - S. Reale, Pastor; 1988 July 11 - July 1991 - E. Schuwey, Pastor

• **Mayfield, Ky.,** St. Joseph Church: 1987 July 15 - 1988 - P. Chiodo

• **McQuady, Ky**., St. Mary of the Woods Church - 1924 Nov. - Sept. 1926 - L. Landoll, pastor1926 Sept. - Sept. 1931 - R. Monnin;1931 Sept. - Aug. 1936 - L. Pottkoetter; 1936 Aug. - May 1936 - A. Bauer; 1938 May - July 1958 - J. Byrne;1958 Aug. - July 1943 - F. Stock; 1943 Aug. - July 1951 - A. Kaiser; 1951 July - Jan. 1958 - H. Wibbels (died Jan. 17); 1958 Jan. - July 1958 - H. Renner; 1958 July - Sept 1959 - J. Wilson subst. p.t.; 1958 Sept. - July 1959 - G. Brenkus; 1959 July - June 1969 - H. Balster; 1969 June - Feb. 1972 - F. Koch; 1972 Apr. - Sept. 1982 - C. Fenton; 1982 Sept 1 - July 1987 - J. McCabe

• **Paducah, Ky.**, Lourdes Hospital : 1976 Mar 1- Nov. 1981 - O. Diller; 1976-1992 - H. Diller

• **Russellville, Ky**., Sacred Heart Church: 1974 Aug.1 - Aug.1,1976 - L. Telegdy

• **Sturgis, Ky**.,(and Henshaw, Ky), St. Francis Borgia Church & Missions (St. Ambrose, Union County; St. William, Marion): June 1972 - 1974 - L. Telegdy, Administrator; 1988 July 11 - S. Reale, Pastor; 1988 Sept. 1 - July 1988 - A. Reed, Pastor.

• **Uniontown, Ky.**, St. Agnes Church: June 7, 1983 - Jan. 1985 - J. Miller; Jan. 1985 - July 1994 - H. Frantz.

RI Catholic to help employers, jobless connect

Posted Dec 25, 2008 PROVIDENCE, R.I. –

With Rhode Island's unemployment the highest in the nation, The Most Rev. Thomas J. Tobin, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence and publisher of Rhode Island Catholic, the second largest newspaper in the state, today announced a new weekly feature to connect unemployed Rhode Islanders with companies offering jobs.

Beginning in late January, Rhode Island Catholic will publish help wanted advertisements free of charge to help unemployed Rhode Islanders find a new job. The newspaper will also publish, free of charge, information from those who are seeking employment. The diocese will launch an outreach effort to area employers, chambers of commerce, human resources professionals and other agencies informing them of this cost-efficient opportunity.

"The Diocese of Providence, through Rhode Island Catholic, is pleased to offer free employment listings to assist Rhode Islanders affected by this ominous economy," said Bishop Tobin. "Rhode Island families and individuals face very difficult situations and choices, especially as we enter a new year filled with challenges. This is but one way the Catholic Church can help Rhode Islanders during these difficult times."

Each Thursday, the weekly newspaper will publish help wanted advertisements free of charge from local companies with open positions alongside information from Rhode Islanders seeking employment. The newspaper will also post the listings on its website each Saturday morning at www.thericatholic.com. As a courtesy, print subscribers will receive listings in the newspaper on the regular delivery days of Thursday and Friday.

This is one of many efforts launched by the diocese to help Rhode Islanders cope with the current economy. Earlier this year, Bishop Tobin launched the 4th Annual Keep the Heat On campaign that provides heating assistance to those Rhode Islanders who have exhausted all other public and private forms of assistance. The Diocese also sponsored the Catholic Charity Fund RIPTIK Program this summer as gas prices exceeded $3.50 to help those in need of transportation to work, school, grocery stores, and doctors' appointments. Last week, the Bishop awarded $75,000 in Emergency Assistance Grants to local homeless shelters, meal sites, and food pantries using funds donated by an anonymous donor.

- Rhode Island Catholic, Faith, Family & Life since 1875.

Diocesan Review Board Members Ready To Respond To Calls

The members of the Board who deal with sexual abuse allegations in the Diocese of Owensboro are as follows: Ms. June Bell, Chair, Mr. Ken Bennett, Dr. Charles Bohle, Ms. Susan Clark, Rev. Pat Connell, Mr. Jeff Ebelhar, Mr. Nicholas Goetz, Ms. Teresa Henry, Vice-Chair, Dr. Carroll Howard, Mr. Dan Howard, Sr. Eula Johnson, SCN, Rev. Pat Reynolds, and Dr. Michele Thomas. Ms. Louanne Payne serves as the Diocesan liaison to the Review Board.

Any person who wishes to communicate with the Diocesan Review Board is asked to call the Catholic Pastoral Center at 1-270-683-1545 and ask to speak with a member of the Review Board. To speak with a particular member of this Board, tell the receptionist. In either case, the receptionist at the Catholic Pastoral Center will give the caller's information to the member of the Review Board for follow-up. Callers may choose to remain anonymous for the initial call to the Catholic Pastoral Center receptionist. The phone numbers of the members of this Board will not be made public.

You may also contact the Board via email at reviewboard@pastoral.org. Be sure to include your contact information. No direct response will be given by email because confidentiality is never guaranteed when using email. Follow-up will be made by telephone.

The Office of Wisdom presents

Washington, DC, our Nation's Capital Motorcoach Tour

April 30 to May 5, 2009

Come join us for a 6 day and 5 night trip to Washington, DC and Baltimore, Maryland. The spacious, motorcoach will depart from Paducah, KY (place to be determined) at 8 a.m. on Thursday, April 30th and return on Tuesday. May 5th. Pick Up of riders is also available in Hopkinsville. The cost is $575 per person, double occupancy. Included in the one low price: transportation, 5 nights lodging, including 3 consecutive nights in Washington, DC, 5 continental Breakfasts and 3 dinners, 2 full day guided tours of Washington, DC. Evening Guided Memorial Tour. Tours feature the new WW II Memorial, Capitol Hill, Embassy Row, Kennedy Graves, The Smithsonian, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, and more. We will also visit the Baltimore Inner Harbor and more!

Final payment is due 2/22/09.

Come alone, or bring some friends for a wonderful Spring Trip! For more information and to register call Ginny Knight-Simon at 270-683-1545

Holy Name School 4th/5th Grade TIP Qualifiers, 2008-2009

By cmcfarland@holynameschool.org

The following Holy Name Students have qualified for Duke University's Talent Identification Program by scoring at or above the 95th percentile on specific subtests of their CAT6 test. Through the TIP program, these students will be offered the opportunity to take the EXPLORE test, an 8th grade level test made by ACT. In addition, they will receive educational newsletters and academic camp guides, as well as recognition for their outstanding performance.

Fourth graders: Abigail Arnold, Sidney Cain, Hadleigh Comer, Josh Duncan, Adrian Ettensohn, Chris Galbraith, Isaac Gary, Sam Gibson, Maria Gonzalez, Cameron Hagan, Will Hardy, Tyler Holliday, Wyatt Jenkins, Jackson Jennings, Katelin Maggard, Taylor Martin, Jack Mayo, Mary Jane Mayo, Ian McGowan, Forrest Morton, Rachel Payne, Casey Sartore, Conner Sauer, Kristen Schreiner, Kevin Sosa, Liv Thomas

Fifth graders: Matthew Beaven, Shelby Benson, Mason Clement, Justin Darr, Tess Floyd, Grace Hodge, Morgan Horter, Spencer Johnson, Wil Johnson, Madison Krampe, Amanda Marlin, Davis Mitchell, Jacob O'Nan, Miranda Phipps, Luke Reynolds, Autumn Sellars, Ashley Shires, Connor Smith, Blake Stewart, Melinda Thomas, Brooke Vowels, Renner Wehr, Cheyenne Warren, Grant Wilson, Will Wimber, Heidy Zamora

Mandeville Mission Immersion Trips for 2009 Announced

By Richard Murphy

The Diocese of Owensboro has confirmed with our Sister Diocese of Mandeville Jamaica the schedule for two trips in 2009. The first Mandeville Mission Immersion Trip is scheduled for May 20 to May 26, 2009, and the second trip is scheduled for October 6 to October 12, 2009. Both of these trips will have flights originating out of Nashville Tennessee and flying to Montego Bay Jamaica.

Perhaps you have considered a trip to our Sister Diocese in Mandeville Jamaica for some time, or are just now doing so. Maybe you know and have talked with one of the many people that have been so far, or read about past trips as described in the Western Kentucky Catholic of these wonderful life changing experiences. Now, how about considering going yourself?

The cost for the trip run about $500 to $700 for airfare, depending on the cost of aviation fuel, and demand for flights, $300 for room, board, and travel costs around the island, and between $50 to $100 for incidental expenses such as a meal out and tips for those serving the group during the journey. Others may wish to bring extra cash for gifts, etc. You will need a passport to go to Jamaica and return to the United States, so there could be additional cost if you do not already have one. Scholarships are available, however an application process is necessary to receive one.

To apply to go and represent the Diocese on an upcoming trip, please submit an application to the Diocesan Sister Diocese Committee. An application can be obtained in one of three ways. Call Richard Murphy at 270/ 683-1545; Email him at richard.murphy@pastoral.org and request that a form be forwarded to you; or go to the diocesan website at www.owensborodio.org and download an application. This can be done by clicking on Diocesan Offices, and locating the office of Social Concerns, and click on it. Once there, find the section on Mandeville Sister Diocese and click on it. You'll find an application on the upper left of the page. Complete the application and mail it to: Richard Murphy, 600 Locust Street, Owensboro KY 42301.

We invite you answer the call to a Spirit-led adventure that will provide a lifetime of memories of sights and experiences, and to lead you on in your walk with the Lord.

Catholic leaders hopeful that Obama will change US immigration policy

MEXICO CITY (CNS) -- Senior Catholic leaders participating in the Sixth World Meeting of Families expressed optimism that the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama would usher in more favorable immigration policies that include putting an end to the workplace raids that often separate parents from their children. "There are many aspects that have to be considered, but I hope that the new president will have the cooperation of the Senate and other bodies to think deeply about this question and the higher position of the United States," Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers, told Catholic News Service Jan. 15. The archbishop added that the new U.S. administration had the opportunity to regain authority in the areas of "human rights, freedom and justice." His comments were echoed by others attending the Jan. 14-18 Vatican-sponsored meeting of families in Mexico City. "We foresee and we hope that the new administration will organize migration in the right way, with contracts and limited-time (stays)," Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, told CNS.

New Catholic Charities Web page examines poverty-racism connection

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- As part of its continuing nationwide campaign to cut poverty in half by 2020, Catholic Charities USA is ramping up efforts to help people understand the ties between poverty and racism. The Alexandria, Va.-based agency is utilizing the Internet, prayer and a study guide to help Catholics open meaningful discussions on how better to address the needs of the poor, especially in minority communities, and take action to reduce the incidence of poverty locally. Precious Blood Father Clarence Williams, senior director of racial equality and diversity initiatives at Catholic Charities USA, said Catholics must begin to understand the depth of poverty and take significant steps to alleviate it across racial lines. "We're showing how blacks are overrepresented in the poor," he said. On Jan. 15 Catholic Charities introduced a section on its Web site -- www.catholiccharitiesusa.org -- that will help parishes, prayer groups and study circles open the conversation about race and poverty. Called "E Pluribus Unum," the online resource offers discussion points, prayer and Scripture readings.

Jesuit journal praises Facebook, but offers some cautions

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- From smoke signals to the telegraph, from telephones to Facebook, methods for keeping in touch with others far away are helpful, but they are never a substitute for meeting in person, said an Italian Jesuit magazine. Jesuit Father Antonio Spadaro, who belongs to the Internet social networking site Facebook, wrote about the site in La Civilta Cattolica, a magazine reviewed by the Vatican before publication. "Basically, Facebook incarnates a utopia: that of always staying close to those people we care about in one way or another and of getting to know others who are compatible with us," he wrote in the article published in mid-January. Even with e-mail and news groups, the Internet was basically a collection of linked pages of information, Father Spadaro said, but with Facebook and other social networking sites, it has become "a network of people." However, he said, there is a serious risk of people being isolated at their computers for hours on end as they "chat" with their Facebook friends, read their profiles and comment on their photographs.

Sister Walter Louise Lush, OSU, 94, Died Dec 23, 2008

Maple Mount, Ky. - Sister Walter Louise Lush, 94, an Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph, died December 23, at Mount Saint Joseph, in her 72nd year of religious life.

A native of Wax, she was born Lura Mae Lush, the daughter of Leo and Ida Johnston Lush. She was an educator for 32 years.

Her ministry included St. Anthony School, Browns Valley (1950-51), St. Lawrence School, St. Lawrence (1951-56), St. Rose of Lima School, Cloverport (1955-61), St. Joseph School, Central City (1961-65), St. Mary Magdalene School, Sorgho (teacher and principal, 1973-79), and St. Romuald School, Hardinsburg (1979-82). She also ministered in the Archdiocese of Louisville and in Nebraska. From 1986-91, she was parish minister at St. Romuald Parish, Hardinsburg. From 1991-95, she served in outreach ministry in Caneyville. She retired in 1995.

Sister Walter Louise enjoyed listening to music and participating in group activities, such as bingo and kickball. She loved to talk with all the sisters and attend retreats.

Survivors include two sisters, Audrey Wortham, Leitchfield, and Mildred Toon, Little Rock, Ark.; and a brother, Joseph Arnold Lush, Georgetown, Ky.; nieces and nephews, and the members of her religious community.

The funeral Mass was Saturday, Dec. 27, at Mount Saint Joseph, with burial in the convent cemetery.

Glenn Funeral Home, Owensboro, was in charge of arrangements.

Gifts in memory of Sister Walter Louise Lush may take the form of donations to the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph, 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, KY 42356.

Sister Rose Emma Monaghan, OSU, 93, Died Dec. 27, 2008

Maple Mount, Ky. - Sister Rose Emma Monaghan, 93, an Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph, died Dec. 27 at Mount Saint Joseph, in her 75th year of religious life.

She was a native of Percival, Iowa. Sister Rose Emma especially enjoyed teaching high school, teaching at St. Denis School, Fancy Farm (1935-36), St. William High School, Knottsville (1939-42), St. Alphonsus High School, St. Joseph (1942-47), St. Joseph High School, Central City (1951-58), and St. Peter of Alcantara School, Stanley (1958-59). She also taught in the Archdiocese of Louisville and in Nebraska. >From 1959-86, she served as Postmaster of the U.S. Post Office at Maple Mount. She was very devoted to that role, and enjoyed meeting other postmasters. She retired in 1986, and remained a steadfast presence with her family.

Survivors include nieces and nephews, and the members of her religious community. The funeral Mass was Dec. 30, at Mount Saint Joseph, with burial in the convent cemetery. Glenn Funeral Home, Owensboro, was in charge of arrangements.

Gifts in memory of Sister Rose Emma Monaghan may take the form of donations to the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph, 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, KY 42356.

Sister Emily Zent, OSU, 97, Died Dec.30, 2008

Maple Mount, Ky. - Sister Emily Zent, 97, an Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph, died Dec. 30, 2008, at Mount Saint Joseph. She was in her 78th year of religious life.

A native of Mott, N.D., she was an Ursuline Sister of Belleville, Ill., before the merger of that community with the Ursulines of Mount Saint Joseph in October 2005.

Sister Emily was a teacher for 39 years in schools in Illinois and North Dakota, and enjoyed getting children ready for their first Holy Communion. She retired in 1976 and became a resident of Saint Joseph Villa at Maple Mount in 2002. In her retirement, she took on the ministry of writing to prisoners and interceding for them with the authorities. She loved children and animals, and enjoyed reading the comics.

Survivors include a brother, Joseph Zent of Mott, N.D., several nieces and the members of her religious community.

The funeral Mass was Jan. 3 at Mount Saint Joseph, with burial in the Motherhouse cemetery. Glenn Funeral Home, Owensboro, was in charge of arrangements.

Gifts in memory of Sister Emily Zent may take the form of donations to the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph, 8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, KY 42356.

Come, Walk in the Footsteps of Saint Paul

To celebrate the 2,000th anniversary of St. Paul, Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish is planning a spring trip to Greece and Turkey. The tour will leave Owensboro April 14th and return on Apr. 24th. The price is $3,638.00 plus air tax. Deposits of $399.00 are being taken now and final payment is due Jan. 31st.

Scenic highlights will be in Athens, Cornith, Thessalonika, Veria, Meteora and a three-night cruise to Mykonos, Rhodes, Patmos and Kusadasi (Turkey).

Contact the Sts. Joseph and Paul office (683-5641) or Carol Alvey (929-7006) for more information concerning the trip, the travel meeting or to get a brochure.

Celebrate Paul of Tarsus

Sts Joseph & Paul Parish Center, 609 E. Fourth Street, Owensboro
Friday, February 20th 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. Movie: Paul the Emissary
Saturday, February 21st 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Fr. Noel Mueller, O.S.B, "Rabbi Paul: The Jewish Background," "The Apostle Paul: Itinerant Missionary, " "Paul's Ecclesiology: The Body of Christ, " and "Paul the Mystic."

Sponsored by the Marian Shrine Committee www.marianshrineky.org For more information call: Joy or Bill Bach at 270-685-3743. Celebrate with Word, Meditation, Reconciliation, Eucharist and the Opportunity for a Plenary Indulgence. Reconciliation Available Mass at 4:30 p.m. at Sts Joseph & Paul Catholic Church.

Registration Fee $20.00 per person
Includes Continental Breakfast & Lunch

Must be Pre-paid by February 16

Number of people attending - _____

Total Amount Enclosed _____

No charge for Priests or Religious

Mail your tax deductible donation to:
Marian Shrine Committee
4213 Spring Bank Drive
Owensboro, KY 42303

Fr. Noel Mueller, O.S.B.

Fr. Noel Mueller, O.S.B., a monk at Saint Meinrad Archabbey, has an MA in English Literature and a Master of Divinity. He has worked in hospital ministry, Marriage Encounter, seminarian formation, and with youth and disabled persons. He spent 10 years in the Peruvian Andes at Saint Meinrad's mission there and taught 13 years in the seminary college at Saint Meinrad. For 8 years he was Director of the Sabbatical Program at St. Meinrad School of Theology, and has been a popular retreat master and spiritual director over his 40 years of priesthood. Presently, he is the Archabbot's personal secretary.

The Western Kentucky Catholic
600 Locust Street
Owensboro, Kentucky 42301

Católico
de Kentucky Occidental

Volumen 36, Número 2
Febrero, 2009

La Comunidad Hispana Despide al Obispo John McRaith, Agradeciéndole por Sus 26 Años de Servicio y Su Acogida a Los Hispanos

Por Luis Ajú

El día 5 de Enero 2009, el administrador del Personal del Centro Pastoral de la Diócesis de Owensboro, el Sr. Kevin Kauffeld, nos llamó a una reunión regular del personal de la misma Diócesis. La única directiva era que se iniciaba a las 8:30 AM en el sotano del edificio, seguidamente sería la Santa Misa, esto incitaba a algo no regular.

Llegamos todos, como había citado el administrador, el Obispo John McRaith dió inicio con la oración, iba con su Cruz pectoral, lo que en meses anteriores no lo hacia, como uno de sus gestos de sencilles, pero hoy sí lo llevaba. Sigue el presentimiento que algo nuevo o raro estaba pasando.

Al final el Obispo dijo: No sé por donde empezar, estoy nervioso como cuando inicié mi labor como Obispo hace 26 años. En fin, siguió su presentación y abrió la sorpresa, a lo mejor para algunos ya no era sorpresa pero para varios sí, lo fue. Nos informó que hace varios meses inició el trámite de su retiro como Obispo de la Diócesis a las oficinas eclesiásticas a donde corresponde, estos a su vez enviaron a la Santa Sede de Roma. Nos leyó la respuesta de su renuncia dada por estas entidades, la respuesta que El había esperado, era la aceptación de su renuncia, por lo que el Obispo por un lado agradecido por eso, y por el otro lado muy conmovido de dejar el Obispado y de ver a muchas personas que lloraron por su partida como Obispo de nuestra Diócesis.

Sin duda alguna deja un enorme vacio en todos los departamentos que compone las oficinas centrales de la Diócesis, sin mencionar lo que será en las parroquias, porque después de lo mucho o poco tiempo de conocerlo lo teníamos como el Padre, el amigo, el Pastor, de toda la comunidad Católica.

Obispo John McRaith, antes de decirle otra cosa, le queremos expresar algo que viene de nuestro corazón. Usted merece una felicitación grande. Ha terminado su tiempo, pero queremos decirle "Bien hecho su trabajo." Va lleno de una riqueza de servicio al prójimo, lleno de una experiencia de amor, al final una pastoral completa. Gracias por compartir su Vocación con nosotros y con las comunidades de toda la Diócesis de Owensboro. Estamos seguros que cualquier cosa que podemos hacer por usted, estaremos todos listos para servirle así como nos sirvió a nosotros. Voz y corazón de las comunidades Hispanas de la Diócesis. Dios lo bendiga Obispo John J. McRaith hoy y siempre.

Una niña de la Comunidad Hispana de Henderson le presenta un ramo de rosas al Obispo John McRaith el día 12 de diciembre durante la celebración de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en la Parroquia del Santo Nombre de Jesús. Foto por Luis Ajú.

La Comunidad Hispana le da la Bienvenida al P. Mike Clark Como Nuevo Administrador Diocesano!

El P. Mike Clark ofrece la Misa para el personal del Centro Pastoral el 7 de enero, después de que lo nombraron Administrador Diocesano. Foto por Mel Howard.

El Obispo John McRaith Se Jubilea Después de 26 Años de Servicio en la Diócesis de Owensboro

Por Mel Howard
Traducido por Tami Schneider

El Papa Benedicto XVI ha aceptado la resignación del Obispo John J. McRaith, tercer Obispo de Owensboro.

El Obispo McRaith sometió su resignación al Santo Sede bajo el canon 401 §2, lo cual pide que el Obispo se resigne en el evento de asuntos de salud u otros asuntos graves. El Obispo McRaith, quien tiene 74 años e inició su 27imo año como Obispo de Owensboro, ha sido aconsejado por los doctores a reducir su carga de trabajo. "Sé que no tengo una enfermedad terminal, pero mis doctores me han aconsejado a reducir mi trabajo, y he concluido que mi resignación era dentro de los mejores intereses de la diócesis," dijo. El canon 401 §1 requiere que un Obispo somete su resignación al cumplir los 75 años de edad.

Cuando un sede sea vacante y no hay obispo auxiliar, el gobierno de la diócesis cae en las manos del Colegio de Consultores Diocesano, un grupo de sacerdotes diocesanos que aconseja al obispo. El Colegio de Consultores tiene que seleccionar a un administrador, quien asume el gobierno de la diócesis, adentro de 8 días de la vacancia. El administrador tiene que ser un sacerdote que tiene por lo menos 35 años de edad y quien es "extraordinario en la doctrina y la prudencia" (cc425 §1-2). Un nuevo Obispo será nombrado por la Santa Sede dentro de 6-18 meses.

El Obispo John Jeremiah McRaith fue ordenado obispo de la Diócesis de Owensboro el 15 de diciembre del 1982. Se graduó de La Escuela Preparatoria de San Juan en Collegeville, Minnesota, y Loras College en Dubuque, Iowa. Después de graduarse de la Escuela de Teología en el Seminario de San Bernardo, Dubuque, Iowa, en 1960, fue ordenado sacerdote de la Diócesis de New Ulm, Minnesota, el 21 de febrero del 1960. El P. McRaith sirvió como director ejecutivo del Conferencia Católica de la Vida Rural de 1971 a 1978.

El Obispo McRaith ha servido en numerosos comités para la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos

Continuado en la página 4

Con Un Corazón Lleno de Gratitud a Ustedes y a Nuestro Señor Bueno y Bondadoso

Mis Estimados Amigos,

Yo les he escrito una carta en el *Católico* cada mes por más de 20 años, pero esta es el más difícil que he tenido que escribir. Les escribo ahora como el antiguo Obispo de la Diócesis de Owensboro. Me tardé un tiempo en darme cuenta de que era el Obispo de la Diócesis de Owensboro. Ahora me tardaré un tiempo para darme cuenta completamente que no lo soy, sino el Obispo *antiguo* de la diócesis, pero eso es exactamente lo que soy mientras les escribo esta carta.

Siempre me ha gustado la siguiente cita de San Agustín, quien habló como Obispo al pueblo de su diócesis: "CON USTEDES, SOY CRISTIANO; PARA USTEDES, SOY OBISPO." Ahora les digo que 'Con ustedes, soy Cristiano,' recordándome de que ya no estoy sirviendo como su Obispo.

Con esto en mente, ¿qué les puedo decir mientras les escribo mi última carta para el *Católico*? Empiezo agradeciéndoles por su fiel compromiso a la Iglesia; por su apoyo para conmigo desde el día que fui ordenado Obispo para la diócesis el 15 de diciembre, 1982; por aceptarme de inmediato al llenar el Sportscenter para la ordenación; por todos los actos de bondad que me han demostrado a través de estos últimos 26+ años; por su disponibilidad en ser ministros conmigo mientras juntos llevamos acabo la misión de la Iglesia; y por su amistad... Probablemente hay una multitud de otras razones también que me causan ser eternamente agradecido con ustedes — y soy agradecido por la oportunidad de servirles y de servir CON ustedes.

Soy muy consciente de que no he sido el Obispo perfecto. Esta carta me da la oportunidad de pedirles perdón por las veces que le he lastimado a cualquiera de ustedes con mis palabras, acciones o decisiones que he hecho a lo largo de los años. Les pido perdón y le imploro también a la Divina Misericordia de Dios.

Me han oído llamarles a todos —sacerdotes, religiosos y laicos—a ser uno, como Jesús nos ha llamado a usar nuestros dones juntos para llevar acabo la misión que El nos dio a todos en el Primer Domingo de Pentecostés. Nos llamó a todos a ir a anunciar la Buena Nueva del amor de Dios, la Buena Nueva de nuestra salvación, la Buena Nueva del Cristo Resucitado. Estoy con ustedes mientras continuamos trabajando juntos para llevar acabo esa misión. Siempre me he quedado asombrado por los muchos dones que Dios le ha dado a cada uno de ustedes. He sido agradecido por las maneras que se han adelantado para compartir esos dones.

Sin embargo, solamente podemos llevar acabo la misión que Jesús nos confió si estamos unidos. De nuevo, me gustaría compartir con ustedes una cita de los escritos de San Agustín, quien escribió: "EN LAS COSAS ESENCIALES, UNIDAD; EN LAS COSAS DUDOSAS, LIBERTAD; Y EN TODO, CARIDAD." Este gran santo y teólogo resume mi oración para esta diócesis tan fiel y llena de fe. Durante un tiempo de fragmentación y divisiones por todo el mundo, un espíritu de unidad es necesario en la Iglesia. Como discípulos de Cristo, somos llamados a una actitud de respeto mutuo que reconoce que hay espacio en esta gran Iglesia nuestra para la diversidad legítima. La unidad es un don poderoso y necesario que podemos ofrecer a nuestro país y el mundo. La misión de la Iglesia de Kentucky del Occidente –la Diócesis de Owensboro—la misión de evangelización y unidad —sigue recayéndose en las buenas manos y corazones de los sacerdotes, diáconos, religiosos y laicos, quienes han servido sin descanso para llevar acabo la misión durante mis muchos años como su Obispo. Confío que todos ustedes seguirán haciendo lo mismo en los años por venir.

Los dejo como "el Obispo de la Diócesis de Owensboro" con un sentimiento de tristeza real, pero también los dejo con un corazón lleno de alegría y gratitud sabiendo que la misión que Jesús nos dio seguirá llevándose acabo en el futuro. Mientras escribo esta carta, me acuerdo de cómo, cuando los seres queridos se están despidiendo, siguen hablando mucho más de lo debido. Quiero seguir hablándoles mientras me despido como su Obispo, pero el tiempo ha llegado a su término.

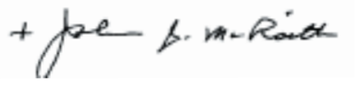
Obispo John McRaith, Obispo retirado de la Diócesis de Owensboro, celebró la misa con el personal del Centro Pastoral Católico el 5 de enero después de anunciarles su jubilación. Foto por Mel Howard.

Como el antiguo Obispo de Owensboro, le prometo mi apoyo al Colegio de Consultores y al Padre Mike Clark, el Administrador recién nombrado. Estos siervos fieles van a pastorear la diócesis hasta que nombren a un nuevo Obispo. Prometo mi apoyo al nuevo Obispo que el discernimiento de la Iglesia y el Espíritu Santo nos mandarán a esta gran diócesis. Si es tan bendecido aquí como yo he sido bendecido, ¡será el Obispo más afortunado del país! Prometo seguir sirviendo en esta diócesis de cualquier manera que el Señor me llame.

La amo, la Iglesia de Kentucky del Occidente. Termino con un corazón lleno de gratitud a ustedes y a nuestro Señor bueno y bondadoso por permitirme servirles y servir CON ustedes por más de 26 años. Me acuerdo que dije el 15 de diciembre del 1982, '¡Que el Señor nos regale muchos años juntos!' Pues, simplemente le puedo agradecer a Dios por contestarme esa oración.

Que Dios esté con cada uno de ustedes todos los días de su vida y que un día seamos todos unidos juntos en el gran banquete que Jesús nos ha prometido por toda la eternidad.

Deseándoles la bendición de Dios siempre, ¡permanezco agradecido con todos!



Más Rev. John J. McRaith
Antiguo Obispo de la
Diócesis de Owensboro

P.D. A la luz de mi jubilación, quiero decirles gracias a todos los que me han recordado en sus oraciones, junto con las tarjetas y llamadas telefónicas. Se los agradezco mucho. Anticipo seguir viéndoles.

Palabras del Obispo John McRaith a los Líderes de la Comunidad Hispana

Simplemente quiero hacerles saber que me alegra mucho que ustedes forman parte de Iglesia Católica de Kentucky del Occidente. La Diócesis de Owensboro y yo les damos una cálida bienvenida a todos ustedes que se encuentren aquí el día de hoy.

Ante todo, quiero agradecer a todos ustedes por tomar el tiempo dentro de sus vidas tan ocupadas para asistir a todas las sesiones para entrenarse en el ministerio con nuestros hermanos y hermanas en la Comunidad Hispana. Ese hecho me dice mucho de la profunda fe que tiene y su compromiso total a la Iglesia. Al estar comprometidos en la Iglesia como lo son ustedes, tendrán la oportunidad de compartir lo que haya aprendido con muchos otros hispanos, y contestaron la llamada de ser líderes no solamente en la Comunidad Hispana pero en la Iglesia Católica entera específicamente en la Diócesis de Owensboro.

Ahora su papel va a ser él de dar forma al futuro de la Comunidad Hispana y a toda la Iglesia para el futuro. La Iglesia nunca va a ser igual ahora que cuenta con su presencia en la Diócesis — va a ser una Iglesia *mejor*, llevando acabo juntos nuestra misión que nuestro Señor nos dio en el primer Pentecostés – la cual es, anunciar la Buena Nueva del Cristo Resucitado, la Buena Nueva de nuestra Salvación, la Buena Nueva del amor de Jesús para con nosotros y también del amor tan grande que nuestra Santa Madre tiene para con cada uno de sus hijos.

Así que, mientras se termine esta Misa, pongo en sus manos el desafío de ser buenos administradores de los dones que Dios les ha dado mientras sigan compartiendo la Buena Nueva con todos y especialmente con la comunidad hispana.

Que Dios esté con todos ustedes ahora y por toda sus vidas mientras juntos nos preparamos para pasar toda la eternidad con Dios – con Jesús, con su Santa Madre y con nuestros hermanos. Ustedes son un gran regalo a todos nosotros.

La Hermana Fran (Panchita) Wilhelm Celebra 80 Años de Vida y 20 Años de Servicio con la Comunidad Hispana de Owensboro

El P. Carl McCarthy, Pastor de la Parroquia de Santos José y Pablo, le presentó a la Hermana Panchita con un Certificado de Apreciación por sus 80 años de vida y los 20 añs de servicio a la Comunidad Hispana en Owensboro. Todos respondieron con un fuerte aplauso.

Por Cristóbal Gutiérrez

Hermana Panchita, agradecemos mucho a Nuestro Buen Padre Dios por la vida que le ha regalado durante estos ya 80 años. Al mismo tiempo que la felicitamos, rogamos también a Dios le conceda *muchos, muchos, muchos* años más de vida en su servicio. GRACIAS por compartir de su vida en servicio desinteresado a toda esta comunidad hispana – latina por tantos años. Usted, como pocas personas, nos ha dado a todos testimonio de 'Cómo es que se SIRVE de verdad a ejemplo de Jesucristo'. Gracias por estos ya casi 20 años de servicio EJEMPLAR y HUMILDE en nuestra región.

¿¡Cuántas interpretaciones y traducciones!? ¿¡Cuántas horas en hospitales!? ¿¡Cuántos bebés hispanos!? Que al nacer no vieron solo *una* madre, pero una segunda que los acompañaba al ver la luz de este mundo por primera vez. ¿¡Cuántas visitas a las cárceles!? ¿¡Cuánta compasión y caridad hacia quienes han estado y siguen presos a causa de adicciones al alcohol o la droga!? ¿¡Cuántas horas de sueño interrumpidas!? ¿¡Cuántos bienes no solo espirituales pero materiales desparramamos en bien y provecho de los más pobres y necesitados!? ¿¡Cuánto esfuerzo por encontrar trabajo para todos!? ¿¡Cuántas llamadas de "Oiga… quería saber si me podría hacer un favor"!? En fin. Cuánto AMOR regado por donde quiera y de tantas formas….

Y es que muchas de las veces algunos de nosotros no hemos en ocasiones sabido SER AGRADECIDOS con usted. Discúlpenos, o bien, perdone nuestra ingratitud, o bien falta de agradecimiento y acepte en nombre de esta comunidad de Owensboro y sus alrededores, nuestro más sincero agradecimiento. Nosotros somos algunas veces malos para corresponder como se debe; mas sin embargo Dios, que todo lo ve y toma nota minuciosa de todo, sabemos le pagará y doble en comparación de cómo podríamos nosotros. Usted ha sido y es, una bendición para nuestras vidas. Gracias. Y no solamente por ser la Hermana Panchita, pero mucho más. La Madre Panchita, todos la queremos mucho… Feliz cumpleaños y que Dios la bendiga.

La Hermana Elaine Burke,OSU se acerca para ponerle un billete en la bufanda. Este evento era semejante al baile de dólares que hacen en las bodas, pero esta vez los fondos iban para ayudar al ministerio del Centro Latino.

Una familia hispana se acerca para despedirle a la Hermana Panchita al final de la fiesta. Ella ha ayudado personalmente a muchas de estas familias a encontrar trabajo o servicios de ayuda o ofrecer su tiempo para servir como intérprete.

El Obispo Jubilado, John McRaith, ofreció unas palabras de agradecimiento antes de ofrecer la oración antes de la comida. "La agradecemos por ser un don tan grande a todos nosotros," le dijo. El nuevo Administrador Diocesano, el P. Mike Clark, también estuvo presente y le dijo a la Hermana Panchita, "Regocijamos en usted y la atesoramos. Usted nos inspira a todos." Fotos por Tami Schneider.

Continuado de la Página 1

de Estados Unidos (USCCB), incluyendo el Comité Ad Hoc sobre la Administración de los Bienes, lo cual era responsable por escribir la carta pastoral de los Obispos "La Administración de los Bienes: La Respuesta de un Discípulo." En 1986, el Obispo McRaith escribió una carta pastoral sobre la crisis de la CIDA para la Diócesis de Owensboro intitulado "Ve y Haz lo Mismo." ("Go and Do Likewise")

El Obispo McRaith es miembro de la, y la Conferencia Católica de Kentucky y El Concilio de Iglesias de Kentucky. Además de pastorear la Iglesia Católica de Kentucky del Occidente, el Obispo McRaith sirve a la comunidad como miembro del consejo de Brescia University, del Daniel Pitino Center, del McAuley Free Clinic en Owensboro, y de Lourdes Hospital Foundation en Paducah.

El Obispo McRaith ha sido elogiado por su sensibilidad pastoral. Sus prioridades han incluido la renovación espiritual, la evangelización, la planificación, y el establecimiento de concilios consultores diocesanos.

Comunicados de los Obispos de la Provincia de Louisville:

"Con estima reconozco el servicio maravilloso a la Iglesia de Owensboro proveído por el Obispo John McRaith, quien hoy ha recibido la noticia que el Papa Benedicto XVI ha aceptado su resignación como Obispo de Owensboro. Desde su ordinación al episcopado hace más de 26 años, Obispo McRaith ha servido a la Iglesia con distinción. Es bien conocido su corazón pastoral, y yo he experimentado personalmente su bondad y su amor por estos últimos nueve años, dentro de los cuales hemos servido como obispos de la Provincia de Louisville. Me uno con el Arzobispo Kelly, quien lo ordenó obispo, en agradecerle a Dios por el don del Obispo McRaith por más de un cuarto de siglo. Anticipo su seguimiento en las actividades pastorales durante su jubilación."

- El Más Reverendo Joseph E. Kurtz, D.D., Arzobispo de Louisville

"Obispo McRaith, durante una visita al área rural de esta Arquidiócesis a inicios de los 1980's, le dijo a sus oyentes que Dios nos había dado la tierra para cuidarla, no para explotarla. Les habló suavemente pero con urgencia sobre las responsabilidades de stewardship de cada ser humano. Con la misma determinación, ha servido efectivamente a la Iglesia de Owensboro por más de 26 años como su Padre y Obispo. Mientras deja a un lado estas responsabilidades en su jubilación, que Dios le premie por su fidelidad cariñoso y su liderazgo pastoral en esta diócesis.

- El Más Reverendo Thomas C. Kelly, O.P., Arzobispo Jubilado de Louisville

"Por más de un cuarto de siglo, Obispo McRaith ha servido fielmente al pueblo de la Diócesis de Owensboro con el corazón de un pastor verdadero, de una manera suave, cuidadosos y cariñoso. Siempre fiel al Señor, ha sido testigo del amor y la compasión de Cristo. Siempre me ha sido bondadoso, me ha dado la bienvenida a la Provincia con su calidez característica, haciendo que me siente en casa desde mis primeros días como Obispo. ¡Le deseo cada bendición!"

- El Más Reverendo Roger J. Foys, D. D., Obispo de Covington

"El Papa Benedicto aceptó la petición del Obispo McRaith para su jubilación en la fiesta de San Juan Neumann, el único obispo estadounidense canonizado. Igual que San Juan Neumann, Obispo McRaith tiene un corazón misionero para todas las personas, y aún con sus muchos dones, es un hombre de espíritu tierno y humilde. Ha sido un amigo bueno, un apoyo fuerte, y un confidente leal. Liberado de sus responsabilidades administrativos, que disfrute muchos años buenos y saludables para seguir su ministerio episcopal ejemplar. Usted tiene mis felicitaciones y mi gratitud siempre, Obispo John."

- El Más Reverendo Ronald Gainer, D. D., Obispo de Lexington

"Los últimos años, como el Obispo de Nashville recién nombrado, me han ofrecido varias oportunidades de estar en la compañía del Obispo McRaith. He apreciado tanto la oportunidad de estar con este pastor bondadoso y dulce del pueblo de Dios. Le deseo cada bendición mientras hace la transición a la jubilación."

- El Más Reverendo David R. Choby, D.D., Obispo de Nashville

"¡Que don el Obispo John McRaith ha sido a la Iglesia de Owensboro y a la Iglesia universal! Una persona suave quien irradió su vida y su ministerio hacia la administración de los dones de Dios, ha guiado la Iglesia en Owensboro admirablemente por mucho más de 26 años. El guió la Iglesia y todos nosotros hacia el Reino con bondad y amor. Durante su jubilación, ¡que nos siga inspirando!"

- Most Reverend J. Terry Steib, S.V.D., Obispo de Memphis

El Colegio de Consultores Nombra al Padre Michael Clark Como Nuevo Administrador Diocesano

El Colegio de Consultores de la Diócesis de Owensboro ha nombrado al Muy Reverendo J. Michael Clark, JCL, como Administrador. El Padre Clark administrará la diócesis hasta que nombran a un nuevo Obispo para suceder al Obispo John J. McRaith, quien renunció por razones de salud esta semana. Se espera que la Santa Sede nombre a un nuevo obispo dentro de 6-18 meses.

Cuando un sede sea vacante y no hay obispo auxiliar, el gobierno de la diócesis cae en las manos del Colegio de Consultores Diocesano, un grupo de sacerdotes diocesanos que aconseja al obispo. El Colegio de Consultores tiene que seleccionar a un administrador, quien asume el gobierno de la diócesis, adentro de 8 días de la vacancia. El administrador tiene que ser un sacerdote que tiene por lo menos 35 años de edad y quien es "extraordinario en la doctrina y la prudencia" (cc425 §1-2).

"Estoy honrado por este nombramiento y serviré humildemente al lado del Colegio de Consultores para preservar la historia y tradición rica de la Iglesia Católica Romana de Kentucky del Occidente y prepararlo para recibir a un nuevo obispo," dijo el Padre Clark.

Nombrado Vicario Judicial de la diócesis en febrero del 2004, el Padre Clark también sirve como el Oficial Ecuménico diocesano y como Pastor de la Parroquia de San Antonio en Utica, Kentucky, donde ha estado desde junio del 2002. El Padre Clark fue ordenado al sacerdocio en mayo del 1995. Recibió una Licenciatura de Administración Comercial en Marketing (1986) de la Universidad de Kentucky, una Maestría de Religión y Filosofía (1993) y una Maestría de Divinidad (1995) del Seminario de San Meinrad, y una carrera licenciada en Ley Canónica de la Universidad Católica de America en el 2002. También ha servido como Pastor del grupo de tres parroquias: la Parroquia de San Judas en Clinton, la Parroquia de San Eduardo en Fulton, y la Parroquia del Sagrado Corazón en Hickman. Antes de esa asignación en las tres parroquias, era Vicario Parroquial de San Francisco de Sales y su misión, la Capilla del Rosario, en Paducah.

El Padre Clark es activo en numerosas organizaciones nacionales y locales incluyendo La Sociedad de Ley Canónica de America, La Asociación Nacional de Oficiales Ecuménicos Diocesanos, El Concilio de Iglesias de Kentucky, y la Conferencia Católica de Kentucky.

El Padre Clark y los siete miembros del Colegio de Consultores servirán como cuidadores de la Diócesis de Owensboro hasta que instalen a un nuevo Obispo.

El P. Mike Clark celebra la misa para el personal diocesano después de ser nombrado el nuevo Administrador Diocesano el 7 de enero. Concelebrando son : P. Titus Ahabyona, Obispo McRaith, P. Andy Garner y P. Chuck Zmudzinski, CPM. Foto por Mel Howard.

Rosa y Elidad participaron en la dramatización de la Pastorela en la Parroquia de San Miguel en Sebree el 21 de diciembre. Ellas representaron nuestra lucha contra la invitación al mal, aunque en la vida actual no viene vestida tan real como demonio, sino con aparencia de algo atractivo. Foto por Luis Ajú.

En la Noche Buena de la Navidad se celebró una novena en la comunidad de Lewisport que pertenece a la Parroquia de Santos José y Pablo. Acudieron muchas personas a la Novena. Foto por el Luis Ajú.

Al lado se ve un grupo de niños y adultos que participaron en la drama-tización de la historia de la aparición de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe a Juan Diego. Tomó lugar en la Parroquia del Santo Nombre de Jesús el 12 de diciembre. el P. Anthony Shonis celebró la misa con el Obispo John McRaith en su visita pastoral. Foto por Ashley Wilkerson.

El día 21 de diciembre, se celebró la Posada en la Parroquia de San Miguel en Sebree. Arriba, unos jóvenes y un bebé representa a la Sagrada Familia. La mayoría de las parroquias con comunidades hispanas tienen posadas del 16 al 24 de diciembre en preparación para la gran celebración del Nacimiento de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo.
Foto por Luis Ajú.

Algunos Eventos Especiales en la Parroquia de Santo Tomás Moro, Paducah

A nuestros niños se les explicó sobre el sentido del adviento y el significado de la corona. Al terminar ellos realizaron su trabajo manual guiados por sus catequistas. Foto sometido por la Hermana Imelda Quechol, MAG.

(Arriba) El 31 de Octubre la Parroquia, como cada año, organizó la convivencia para los niños de Halloween. En esta convivencia, la mayoría de niños hispanos participaron y se sintió un ambiente de unidad, ya que las dos comunidades estuvieron reunidas. A los padres se les invitó a que vistieran a sus hijos con trajes típicos y a nuestros niños de catequesis se les explicó el porque en nuestros países se celebra de otra manera estos días.

(Foto a la izquierda) El 16 de Noviembre se realizaron las confirmaciones en esta Parroquia, y en este grupo de confirmandos la Señorita Brenda fue confirmada por el Obispo John McRaith. Sus Padres y familiares estuvieron presentes en esta ceremonia. El Padre Pat, Párroco de esta Iglesia felicitó a Brenda ya que fue la única hispana de este grupo. Fotos sometidos por la Hermana Imelda Quechol, MAG.

Calendario de Actividades del Ministerio Hispano

9 de febrero, 2009
- Reunión trimestral de los Agentes de Ministerio Hispano en Santos José y Pablo en Owensboro

26-27 de febrero, 2009
- Retiro bianual de los Agentes de Ministerio Hispano

14 de marzo, 2009
- Inicio del curso de sacramentos

17-18 de abril
- Retiro Juvenil en Gasper River

31 de mayo - 6 de junio
- Celebración de la Semana Nacional de Migración

Los Miembros del Comité de Revisión Diocesano Están Listos para Contestar Llamadas

Los miembros del Comité quienes tratan las alegaciones de abuso sexual abuse en la Diócesis de Owensboro son los siguientes: Larry Abel, Chair, Ms. June Bell, Vice-Chair, Dr. Charles Bohle, Sr. Vivian Bowles, OSU, Ms. Susan Clark, Rev. Pat Connell, Mr. William Craig, Jr., Dr. Carroll Howard, Sr. Eula Johnson, SCN, Sr. Jacinta Powers, OSU, y Rev. Pat Reynolds. Ms. Louanne Gelarden sirve como enlace entre el Obispo y el Comité de Revisión.

A cualquier persona que quiera comunicar con el Comité de Revisión Diocesano se le pide que llame al Centro Pastoral Católico al 1-270-683-1545 y pregunte por un miembro del Comité de Revisión. Si quiere hablar con un miembro particular del Comité, lo puede mencionar a la recepcionista. En cualquier caso, la recepcionista en el Centro Pastoral Católico entregará la información de la persona que llamó al Comité de Revisión para seguimiento. Los que llaman pueden escoger mantenerse anónimos para la primera llamada a la recepcionista del Centro Pastoral Católico. No se harán públicos los números telefónicos de los miembros del Comité.

También pueden comunicarse con el Comité por email al: reviewboard@pastoral.org. Asegúrense de incluir su información personal. No les contestaremos directamente por email porque nunca se puede garantizar la confidencialidad al usar email. Nos comunicaremos con ustedes por teléfono.