

March for Life a 'voice for the voiceless'

By Melissa McNally
Editor

"I'm a miracle," Lauren Egan recalled saying after opening a fateful letter a few days before the March for Life in Washington, D.C. "I just burst into tears after I read it."

Egan always knew she was adopted, and spent the last decade searching for her birth mother. On Jan. 1, under a law signed by Gov. Chris Christie in 2014, the records of some 300,000 adopted persons were unsealed.

Egan received her original birth certificate. Along with discovering

her mother's name, records indicated her mother had an abortion two years prior.

"I got chills when I read the letter," Egan explained. "I realized that I have a brother or sister up in heaven. I am so grateful to my birth mother for giving me up for adoption. I don't know if I'm ever going to find her, but I pray for her. I just want to say, 'Thank you.'"

Before she received her adoption records, Egan had already planned to attend the Jan. 27 March for Life for the first time with two of her three children. "I have always been pro-life, had this strong call to go, but I never really made it a priority," she said.

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Submitted photo

Lauren Egan with her 10-year-old daughter, Hope, at the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C.

The 'challenge and blessing' of engaging black Catholics



Submitted Photo
Father Emeka Okwuosa, S.D.V., celebrating Mass in Nigeria.

By Melissa McNally
Editor

Father Emeka Okwuosa, S.D.V., has hit the ground running since he was appointed coordinator of the African-American, African and Caribbean Apostolate last September. Originally from Nigeria, the Vocationist priest was "humbled" by the big responsibility.

"It is a challenge and a blessing," Fr. Okwuosa said. "I only have eight hours in a day to get everything done."

He also serves as parochial vicar at Saint Cecelia Parish in Iselin and is the archdiocesan director of Vocations for Religious Life.

In its mission statement, the apostolate aims to discover and promote leadership among Catholics of African descent in the Archdiocese of Newark. The best way to encourage leadership, according to Fr. Okwuosa, is to engage young people.

"We have to meet people where they are," he explained. "Many of the young people have gifts and talents that are waiting to be put to use." Fr. Okwuosa is helping coordinate activities with young adults from parishes in the archdiocese with a large black congregation, such as Saint Leo in Irvington and Saint Patrick & Assumption/All Saints in Jersey City.

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Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., releases a statement on President Trump's Executive Actions on immigration and refugees



I understand the desire for every American to be assured of safe borders and freedom from terrorism. The federal government should continue a prudent policy aimed at protecting citizens.

I also understand and heed the call of God, who through Moses told the people of Israel: "You shall not oppress an alien; you well know how it feels to be an alien, since you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt" (Ex 23:9). Jesus asks His disciples to go further, calling on us to recognize Him in the stranger: "Whatsoever you did to the least of my brothers, you did to me" (Mt. 25:40).

Wednesday's (Jan. 25) Executive Actions do not show the United States to be an open and welcoming nation. They are the opposite of what it means to be an American.

Closing borders and building walls are not rational acts. Mass detentions and wholesale deportation benefit no one; such inhuman policies destroy families and communities.

In fact, threatening the so-called "sanctuary cities" with the withdrawal of federal funding for vital services such as health-care, education and transportation will not reduce immigration. It only will harm all good people in those communities.

I am the grandson of immigrants and was raised in a multicultural neighborhood in southwest Detroit. Throughout my life as a priest and bishop in the United States, I have lived and worked in communities that were enriched by people of many nationalities, languages and faiths. Those communities were strong, hard-working, law-abiding and filled with affection for this nation and its people.

Here in Newark, we are in the final steps of preparing to welcome 51 refugees from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is only the latest group of people whom Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese has helped to resettle during the past 40 years. This current group of refugees has waited years for this moment and already has been cleared by the federal government.

They have complied with all of the stringent requirements of a vetting process that is coordinated by the Department of Homeland Security. Catholic Charities, assisted by parishes and parishioners of the archdiocese, will help them establish homes, jobs and new lives so that they can contribute positively to life in northern New Jersey. When this group is settled, we hope to welcome others.

This nation has a long and rich history of welcoming those who have sought refuge because of oppression or fear of death. The Acadians, French, Irish, Germans, Italians, Poles, Hungarians, Jews and Vietnamese are just a few of the many groups over the past 260 years whom we have welcomed and helped to find a better, safer life for themselves and their children in America.

Even when such groups were met by irrational fear, prejudice and persecution, the signature benevolence of the United States of America eventually triumphed.

That confident kindness is what has made, and will continue to make, America great.

A Spanish version of the statement is available on our website: www.rcan.org

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March for Life

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A former drug and alcohol counselor with The Bridge Inc. in Caldwell, she was appointed associate director of Family Life Ministries for the Archdiocese of Newark last May. Egan learned the Knights of Columbus had a bus of about 50 people heading to Washington, D.C. from Immaculate Conception Parish in Montclair. Along with her 13-year-old son, Christian, and 10-year-old daughter, Hope, she made the trek to our nation's capital.

Egan said she was struck by the thousands of people at the march. "There was this great sense of comradery at the March for Life. As a Catholic, sometimes you feel isolated because of your beliefs," she said. "Being (at the march) made you feel like you are not alone. It was great for my kids to see that. The march gave my kids the confidence to stand up for what they believe in."

Christina Kotowski, a student at Seton Hall University, echoed Egan's sentiment. She attended the march along with other students, religious, priests, missionaries and professors.

"The mood was powerful and a special time of community and prayer," Kotowski said. "I really saw God working through myself and others by the amount of determination of all the marchers that day. It was like the good Lord was right there with us the whole time."

Although this was Kotowski's fourth march, this year the atmosphere was "a little different."



Submitted photo

"I feel there was an extra burst of enthusiasm as Vice President Mike Pence took the stage to address the thousands of marchers," Kotowski recalled. "I feel marchers were motivated to really make a stand this year. The thousands of people became one voice, the voice for the voiceless. Having Vice Pres-

ident Pence present among us gave me a sense of unity; I felt he was one of us. It made me, and countless others, proud to be part of such a historical march once again this year."

The day after the march, Jan. 28, happened to be Egan's birthday. Usually, she downplays the day, as it

is a reminder of her unknown birth mother. For the first time in a while, she said she felt the weight lifted from her.

"I usually feel down on my birthday; I really don't celebrate it. This year, I felt like a different person. I found some clarity knowing that God has a plan for me."

Engaging black Catholics

Continued from page 1

Patrice Maina, youth coordinator at Christ the King Parish in Jersey City, continues to innovate ways to bring young people back to the Church. From panel discussions and talent shows, to scavenger hunts and Bible talks, she has kept the momentum going to empower young black Catholics.

Trying to stay connected with college-age students is a special focus for Maina. "We try to find things that they want to do and incorporate spirituality," she said. "These young people went to Mass when they were younger, but

moved away from the Church as they got older. Trying to get them back is a challenge."

Tying together different cultures within the black Catholic Church can also be a difficult task. "I believe in inclusiveness, not uniformity," Fr. Okwuosa explained. "We all must bring what we have to the table."

Fr. Okwuosa also encourages black Catholics to promote the cause of their saints. There are a few Catholics of African descent on the road to sainthood: Pierre Toussaint, a slave born in Haiti who became a notable New York philanthropist; Mother Mary Elizabeth

Lange, believed to be Cuban-born of Haitian descent; Henriette DeLille, a free woman of color from New Orleans; and Father Augustus Tolton, a former slave who was baptized and ordained a Catholic priest in 1886.

"We must talk about these saints and let more people know about them. We have to pray to God through them," Fr. Okwuosa said.

A source of inspiration for Fr. Okwuosa is Bishop Joseph A. Francis, an auxiliary bishop of Newark for 19 years who was one of the first black priests in the Church to speak out against racism. This year marks the 20th anniversary of his death. Bishop Francis, the fourth black Roman Catholic bishop in

the country, helped pen the pastoral letter "Brothers and Sisters to Us," completed in 1979.

"The apostolate really tries to continue what Bishop Francis stood for," Fr. Okwuosa said. "What he wrote in that pastoral is still relevant today—not much has changed. The fight is still there."

The African-American, African and Caribbean Apostolate plans to host a Mass in honor of Bishop Francis in September at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark. A dinner/dance in celebration of Black Catholic History Month will be held in November.

"(Black Catholics) have to be active," Fr. Okwuosa said. "It is up to us to make our presence felt."

Strong prayer life influences vocation, study suggests

WASHINGTON—Nearly all religious men and women who professed perpetual vows in 2016 had a strong prayer life prior to entering their religious institute, according to a survey conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University. The survey results were released Feb. 2 to coincide with the annual celebration of World Day for Consecrated Life.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations commissioned CARA to conduct the annual survey.

The large percentage of newly professed religious who responded to the survey is the result of the cooperation of religious institutes across the United States.

"The participation in the survey by religious communities is remarkable," said Cardinal Joseph Tobin, C.Ss.R., archbishop of Newark and chair of the USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. "The Church is grateful for those women and men who have given their lives to Jesus Christ through the profession of final vows. Their participation in this survey and the information gained from it helps the Church's work to encourage all to listen for God's call."

The survey polled women and men religious who professed perpetual vows in 2016 in a religious congregation, province or monastery based in

the U.S. CARA received a response from 610 of 759 major superiors, for an overall response rate of 80 percent among religious institutes.

Of the 216 identified women and men religious, a total of 81 sisters and nuns and 96 brothers and priests responded to the survey—representing a response rate of 82 percent.

Some of the major findings of the report include:

- Nearly nine in 10, or 86 percent, of responding religious regularly participated in some type of private prayer activity before they entered their religious institute. About two-thirds participated in Eucharistic Adoration, prayed the rosary, or attended retreats before entering.
- Almost half of responding religious (46 percent) attended a Catholic elementary school, 38 percent attended a Catholic high school and 37 percent attended a Catholic college.
- The average age of responding religious is 39. Half of the responding religious are age 36 or younger. The youngest is 26 and the oldest is 86.
- Two-thirds of responding religious (66 percent) identify as white, more than one in six (16 percent) identifies as Asian, and more than one in ten (11 percent) identifies as Hispanic.

The survey and more information can be found at www.usccb.org/consecratedlife.

On Jan. 29, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin celebrated Mass and took possession of his "titular" church in Rome, Santa Maria delle Grazie a Via Trionfale (Saint Mary of the Graces), located close by Saint Peter's Basilica and the Vatican Museums. According to Church tradition, a cardinal is considered an honorary member of the clergy of the Diocese of Rome. Each cardinal is given a title to a church in the city, serving in a sense as its honorary pastor. A cardinal's relationship with that church continues until his death, even after he may have retired from ministry. As a sign of that relationship, a cardinal will periodically celebrate liturgies there and contribute financially to its upkeep or ministries that it sponsors.



Photo by Junno Arocho Esteves, CNS

Bishops urge Secretary Tillerson to pursue peace

WASHINGTON—In a letter congratulating Secretary Rex Tillerson on his confirmation as secretary of state, Bishop Oscar Cantú, chair of the Committee on International Justice and Peace of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, called on the secretary to work for peace in Israel and Palestine.

Bishop Cantú, who recently participated in a solidarity visit to Israel and Palestine, enclosed a joint statement by bishops from Europe, Canada, South Africa and the United States. The bishop notes

that "2017 marks the 50th anniversary of a crippling occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza, crippling for both peoples."

Quoting the joint statement of the bishops, he goes on to state that "the occupation violates 'the human dignity of both Palestinians and Israelis.' Settlement expansion on occupied Palestinian lands undermines a two-state solution, destroying the homes and the livelihoods of Palestinians as well as the long-term security and future of Israelis."

Decrying "egregious injus-

tices and random acts of violence," Bishop Cantú expressed the opposition of U.S. and international bishops to Israeli settlement expansion and confiscation of Palestinian lands. In addition, he implored the secretary to maintain the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv. He wrote, "Moving the embassy to Jerusalem would erode the U.S. commitment to a two-state solution, and is a threat to pursuing peace and ending conflict. Its impact would incite and destabilize the area, compromising U.S. security. As Pope

Francis declares, 'the two-state solution must become a reality and not merely a dream.'"

Bishop Cantú called on Secretary Tillerson to work "to end 50 years of occupation and build a brighter future for both Israelis and Palestinians." He concluded, "The United States has always provided leadership and support to the peace process. We continue to profess hope for a diplomatic solution that respects the human dignity for both Israelis and Palestinians and advances justice and peace for all."

The Newark Parade

The 82nd Year of the Saint Patrick's Day Parade



Grand Marshal
Rev. Edwin D. Leahy, O.S.B.
Headmaster, St. Benedict's Prep



Deputy Grand Marshal
Elizabeth "Betty" Sheehan Teevan
Alumna, Saint Vincent Academy

Dedicated to
†John J. Murphy

Friday afternoon
March 17 - 1:00 pm

PruCenter - NJPAC - St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral - Newark Museum



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Mount Saint Mary Academy students visit elderly sisters

WATCHUNG—Throughout the year, students, parents, faculty and staff from Mount Saint Mary Academy plan activities to brighten the spirits of residents at the McAuley Hall Health Care Center.

For seniors Devon Smith and Kalyn Womack, visiting with many of the retired Sisters of Mercy who reside at McAuley is especially rewarding and fulfills their commitment to serve others.

They make crafts with the residents, share stories and join the residents for McAuley's annual flower show. At Halloween, the girls helped organize an annual play based on the "Three Little Pigs."

"I've been volunteering since April," shared Smith, saying the residents being Sisters of Mercy adds a special touch to the experience. The sisters are a daily presence on Mount Saint Mary's campus with the core values of their founder, Sister Catherine McAuley (justice, compassion, integrity, service and respect), instilled at the very start of each student's experience at the high school.

"McAuley is not an old-folks home, but a community where everyone gets involved and is connected to each other," Smith said.

Smith formed a special bond with Sister Margaret Mary San Antonio, R.S.M. "I have always liked older people. I get a lot of wisdom from them. After I graduate from the Mount, I definitely want to come

back and visit with her. She has already had me promise to send her postcards," Smith said.

"The sisters are really amazing and care for one another so much and most of their friendships date back to when McAuley was first built," Smith added. "So, I find it inspiring and special to see how their sisterly bonds are never to be broken. They share their eventful life stories, which I am so thankful for because it grants me wisdom for the life which I want to live."

Womack has volunteered at McAuley since August. "I can't quite think of the most rewarding part, but I find that sharing my talents makes the sisters feel good about seeing a new face that is happy to see them," she said. "I feel good about caring for the elders who many not have visitors who see them regularly," she added.

"Sister Margaret Mary and Sue Harding, a Mercy Associate, are the cutest when they are together. They're like best friends and I love talking to them," Womack added.

"I definitely want to visit more nursing homes, including McAuley," Womack explained. "It's important to visit the elderly and sick because you never know how you can make someone's day even if you are a stranger. They taught me how important family is and how family can extend beyond blood relatives."



Submitted photo
 Sister Margaret Mary San Antonio, R.S.M., and retired Mercy Associate Sue Harding are pictured with Mount Saint Mary Academy seniors Devon Smith (second from right) and Kalyn Womack (far right) during the Halloween play at McAuley Hall Health Care Center.

Caldwell students learn valuable lessons during trip to Belize

A group of Caldwell University students, faculty and staff spent a week in January volunteering in an impoverished village in Belize.

The group helped repaint a school, spent time playing with the children and were treated to gracious hospitality and home-cooked meals.

This was the first trip to Belize for senior Marisa Juliano. "I saw things that broke my heart a little and things that were so beautiful," she said. Working with the school-children made her heart grow 10 times bigger she added. "As soon as I met them I wanted to do 10 times more. I wanted to paint the whole town for them."

The most recent mission trip was the third for senior Sean Puzzo. The villagers are not rich in material things, he said, but they are certainly rich in "community, spirit and respect."

People who live in the village "don't have half of what we have, but they have joy in their simple life," sophomore Zachary Weinberg noted.

In the evenings, the group was treated to Belizean meals prepared by Miss Olive, a woman Caldwell students have gotten to know over the years. "She taught us how to cook some of the traditional items, and it was really nice to have that in-



Marisa Juliano with children at the Saint Peter Claver Parish and School in the Toledo district.



Submitted photos

Caldwell University students Zachary Weinberg and Marisa Juliano repainting a school on a mission trip to Belize.

teraction," said senior Crista Cattano. "We call her our Belizean mom. She takes such good care of us."

The students stayed at a retreat house in Punta Gorda run by Jesuits, and were off the grid from technology, eating dinner at night and sharing the day's activities for hours. "I love being disconnected for the week," Cattano said. "They have a simple way of living. You become very present to the environment you are in and why you are there."

Henrietta Genfi, Caldwell's director of advisement, was one of the

chaperones. She said the students were grateful for the opportunity to help others and learned that happiness lay in human connections and not in material things. "Service helps us all realize that no matter how far apart in distance we are from each other, we are all one community," she said.

In addition to their service work, the group attended Mass at Saint Peter Claver Parish in Punta Gorda. Since 2013, the university has sponsored mission trips to the Toledo district of the Third World nation on the Caribbean Sea.

Holy Angels' robotics club attends qualifying meet

DEMAREST—Six members of AngelBots, the robotics club from the Academy of the Holy Angels, recently attended the club's inaugural FIRST Tech Challenge qualifier meet in Hightstown. The students field tested the robot the club designed. They also built and programmed against robots made by teams from other schools.

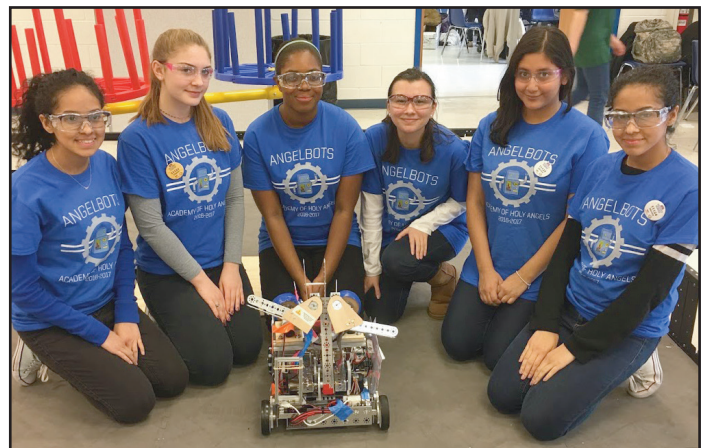
The Tech Challenge was developed for students in grades seven through 12. Participants design and construct their own robots, which are used to play a game.

FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is a non-profit founded by Dean Kamen to encourage students to develop problem-solving, building,

science, technology and engineering skills. The organization is comprised of multiple programs that include robotics and LEGO competitions. Participants have the opportunity to earn college scholarships for their work.

All 36 teams that attended the event underwent hardware and software inspections, a complete engineering notebook review and a 10-minute interview before they entered their robots in the multi-round competition.

"It was a great success even though we did not make it to the state (level)," said Holy Angels mathematics teacher Jing Loo, who is now serving her second year as the club's adviser. She noted that AngelBots



Submitted photo

was the newest participant at the meet, and she is delighted with what the club has accomplished so far.

"They did well. I am so proud of them," she added.

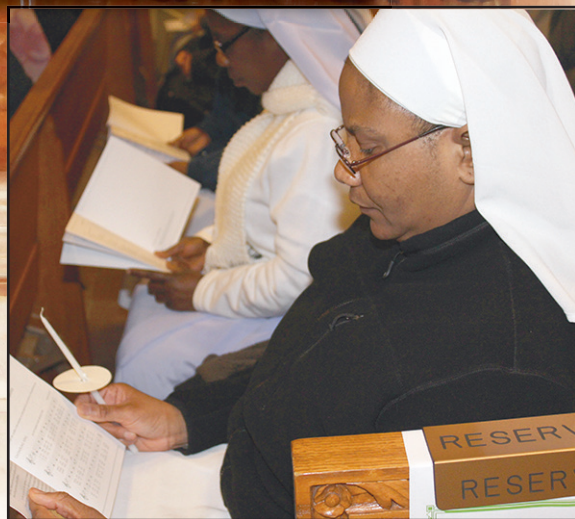
Loo, along with science teacher Sharon Jureller, and parent volun-

teer Charles Sommers, escorted the AngelBots during the event. The group gathered at the high school at 6:30 a.m. and returned to Demarest at 5:30 p.m. "It was a fun, long, tiring and rewarding day," Loo said.



World Day for Consecrated Life

On Feb. 2, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin led religious, priests, and faithful from around the archdiocese in evening prayer at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark to celebrate the World Day for Consecrated Life. Attendees blessed and lit candles during the prayer service that also honored jubilarians celebrating anniversaries this year. In 1997, Saint John Paul II instituted a day of prayer for women and men in consecrated life. This celebration is in conjunction with the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. This feast day is also known as "Candlemas Day," where candles are blessed symbolizing Christ, the light of the world.



February 18

Felician University, Rutherford, free income tax preparation services to those who qualify, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., also on March 4 and March 18, call Joseph Lizza at (201) 559-3321 or e-mail lizzaj@felician.edu.

February 19

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Ridgewood, career ministry fall/winter workshop, 1 p.m., call Carol Shea at (201) 447-4215 or Tom Lewis at (201) 445-1864.

February 22

Caldwell University, "The United States of Narcissism: Reading the Signs of the Times in the Light of Christian Spirituality," lecture by Dr. Christopher Cimorelli, 4:30-6:30 p.m., call Colette M. Liddy at (973) 618-3209 or e-mail cliddy@caldwell.edu.

February 26

St. Mark Lutheran Church, Morristown, "Meditation for All People of Faith and No Faith," program by Fr. Robert E. Kennedy, S.J., 3:30 p.m., call (908) 272-9088 or e-mail info@votfnj.org.

February 28

Lumen Center, Caldwell, "Stress as a Spiritual Teacher," supper at 5:30 p.m., presentation 6:15-7:45 p.m., \$25-\$35, call (973) 403-3331 ext. 25 or e-mail lumencenter@caldwellop.org.

March 2

Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, "Lenten Morning of Prayer, Passing through the Thresholds of Lent," 9:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m., e-mail lpchello@scnj.org or call (973) 290-5470.

March 4

Lumen Center, Caldwell, "Worship and the New Cosmology," breakfast at 9 a.m., retreat from 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m., \$35-\$45, call (973) 403-3331 ext. 25 or e-mail lumencenter@caldwellop.org.

St. Therese of Lisieux Parish, Cresskill, Lenten parish mission, with Fr. Ricky Manalo C.S.P., at all weekend Masses and Monday-Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m., call (201) 567-2528 ext. 313 or e-mail asoltys@stthereseccresskill.org.

Office of Family Life Ministries, Archdiocese of Newark, support group for fathers who have lost a child, at Notre Dame Parish in North Caldwell, 10 a.m.-noon, call Lauren Egan at (973) 497-4327 or e-mail eganlaur@rcan.org.

March 11

Seton Hall University, South Orange, career summit, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., call Laurie Pine at (973) 378-2638 or e-mail laurie.pine@shu.edu.

March 15

St. Joseph by the Sea Retreat House, South Mantoloking, "Touched by an Angel," 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., \$45, call (732) 892-8494.

March 19

St. Luke Parish, Ho-Ho-Kus, "From Galway to Broadway," a St. Patrick's Day concert with Ciaran Sheehan, 3 p.m., \$25/adult and \$15/seniors/military/police/fire, call (201) 444-0272.

March 24

Office for Evangelization, Archdiocese of Newark, Discovering Christ Training Conference, at St. Helen Parish in Westfield, led by founder of ChristLife Dave Nodar, 7-9 p.m., also on March 25 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m., \$50, RSVP by March 17, e-mail evangelization@rcan.org or call (973) 497-4137.

Obituaries

Sister Mary Agnita Chonko, S.C.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Jan. 26 at The Villa at Florham Park for Sister Mary Agnita Chonko, S.C., 85, who died Jan. 21.



Born in Bayonne, Sister Mary Agnita entered the Sisters of Charity on Oct. 1, 1950 and was a member for 66 years.

Sr. Mary Agnita served as a teacher at the following archdiocesan schools: Saint Patrick, Jersey City; Saint Peter, Belleville; Saint Cecilia, Englewood; Holy Trinity, Hackensack; Our Lady of Visitation, Paramus; Sacred Heart, Rochelle Park; Saint Lucy, Jersey City; and Saint Mary, Jersey City.

In 1966, Sr. Mary Agnita retired to Saint Anne Villa, Convent Station, where she resided until her death.

Elizabeth, Convent Station.

Sr. Mary Catherine served throughout New Jersey, Massachusetts and Florida. In the city of Newark, she served as a teacher at Saint Rose of Lima School, Saint Aloysius School, Sacred Heart School and Saint Antonius School.

Sr. Mary Catherine also taught at Holy Name of Jesus School, East Orange; Our Lady of Sorrows School, South Orange; and Saint Teresa School, Summit. She was a resource center staff member at Mother Seton Regional High School, Clark.

In 1976, Sr. Mary Catherine began her ministry of prayer, spiritual direction and inner healing. She served the people of God for 30 years in communities including Lord's House of Prayer, Montclair; Sacred Heart Institute, Caldwell; Mount Saint Dominic, Caldwell; and Mount Saint Andrew Villa, Paramus.

Rochelle, N.Y.

Sr. Virginia entered the Franciscan Sisters Sept. 8, 1953 and professed final vows July 11, 1960. Her teaching assignments in the Archdiocese of Newark included Holy Family in Union and Saint Leo School in Elmwood Park. She was also a pastoral associate at Saint Joseph Parish, West New York.

Sister M. Bernadette Ann Bozak, O.S.F.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Jan. 31 in Bethlehem, PA, for Sister M. Bernadette Ann Bozak, O.S.F., 83, who died Jan. 26.



Formerly Sister Thomas, Sr. M. Bernadette Ann entered the Sisters of Saint Francis in 1950 and professed her first vows in 1952. She attended Carlow College in Pittsburgh, PA, and earned a master's degree in counseling from Seton Hall University, South Orange.

Sister M. Bernadette was a teacher in the Archdiocese of Newark for more than four decades, teaching several grades at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in Jersey City; Saint John Nepomucene School in Guttenberg; and Saint Mary School in Closter.

Upon her retirement from education, she ministered to the sisters at Villa Clare in Bethlehem, PA.

Sister Mary Catherine Regan, S.C.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Jan. 27 at The Villa at Florham Park for Sister Mary Catherine Regan, S.C., 98, who died Jan. 23.



Born in New York City, Sr. Mary Catherine entered the Sisters of Charity on Sept. 8, 1935, and was a member for 81 years. She graduated from the College of Saint

Sister Virginia Waters, F.S.P.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Jan. 27 in Hartsdale, NY, for Sister Virginia Waters, F.S.P., 81, who died Jan. 24.



Formerly Sister Marita Therese, Sr. Virginia attended Ladycliff College, Highland Falls, NY, and earned a master's degree in pastoral counseling from Iona College, New



Submitted photos

In the first round of academic competition in the New Jersey Science League, three teams from Mother Seton Regional High School in Clark captured first place victories. Advanced Placement Chemistry II, Chemistry I and Advanced Placement Physics took home the top prize. Second place victories were achieved in Biology I and Biology II. The first of four statewide competitions was held at Cranford High School. Competing in the event along with the team from Mother Seton, were Cranford High School, Arthur L. Johnson High School in Clark and Union High School.



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M.C.

O VIRGIN MOTHER OF GOD,

Mary Immaculate, We dedicate and consecrate ourselves to you under the title of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. May this Medal be for each one of us a sure sign of your affection for us and a constant reminder of our duties toward you. Ever while wearing it, may we be blessed by your loving protection and preserved in the grace of your Son. O Most Powerful Virgin, Mother of Our Savior, keep us close to you every moment of our lives. Obtain for us, your children, the grace of a happy death; so that in union with you, may we enjoy the bliss of Heaven forever. Amen.
M.C.

PRAYER TO ST. LUCY

Saint Lucy, Whose beautiful name Signifies light. By the light of faith which God bestowed upon you, Increase and preserve His light in my soul, So that I may avoid evil, be zealous in the performance of good works, and abhor nothing so much as the blindness and the darkness of evil and sin. Obtain for me, by your intercessory with God, perfect vision, for my bodily eyes and the grace to use them. For God's greater honor and glory and the salvation of souls. St. Lucy Virgin and martyr, here my prayers and obtain my petitions Amen. Prayer to be Published in gratitude
M.C.

PRAYER TO ST. CLAIRE

Ask St. Claire for three favors; one business and two impossible. Say nine Hail Mary's for nine days with a lighted candle. Published the ninth day "May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, adored, and glorified today and every day." Requests will be granted no matter how impossible they seem. Publication must be promised.
G.F.

O EVER IMMACULATE VIRGIN,

Mother of mercy, health of the sick, refuge of sinners, comfort of the afflicted, you know my wants, my troubles, my sufferings; deign to cast upon me a look of mercy. By appearing in the Grotto of Lourdes, you were pleased to make it a privileged sanctuary, whence you dispense your favors, and already many sufferers have obtained the cure of their infirmities, both spiritual and corporal. I come, therefore, with the most unbounded confidence, to implore your maternal intercession. Obtain, O loving Mother, the grant of my requests. I will endeavor to imitate your virtues, that I may one day share your glory, and bless you in eternity. Amen.
M.C.

Union Catholic student wins local poetry contest

SCOTCH PLAINS—Union Catholic's Grace Kane received a pleasant surprise when she found out she won a contest for a poem she wrote in her writing class.

Kane won The Woman's Club of Westfield's Youth Poetry and Short Story Contest for her poem, "A Dark Night," which expressed Elie Wiesel's experience as a young boy in the Holocaust.

"When I got called down (to the counseling office) and I was told (by English teacher Michele Donegan) that I won a writing contest. I was so surprised," said Kane, who's a freshman. "I didn't even know about it. Mrs. Donegan entered my poem."

According to Donegan, poetry entries were any style and judged on content, organization and form. Kane's poem was an original.

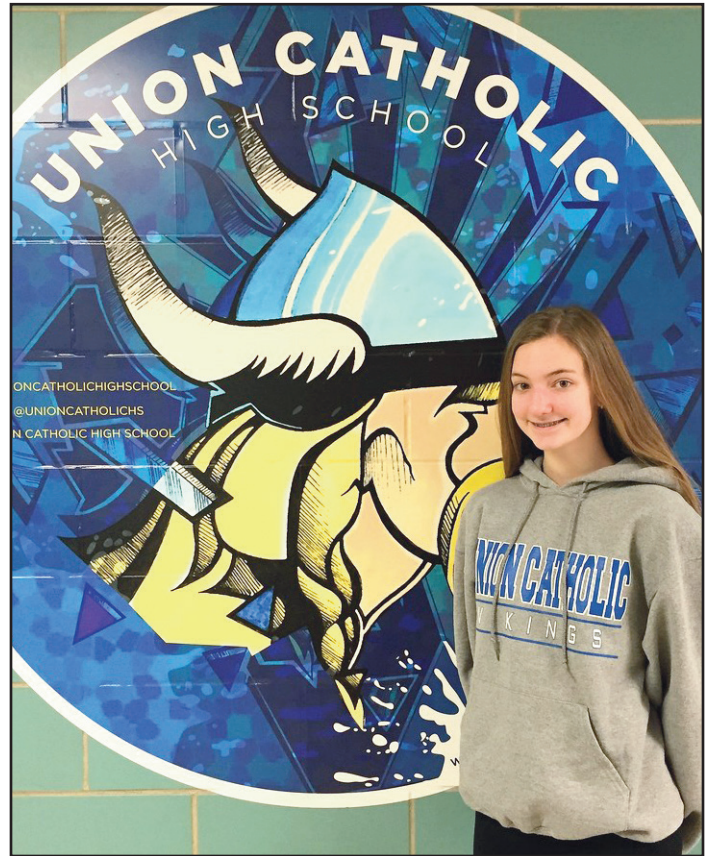
"Grace's poem was very well written," she said. "It touched upon a lot of points that Elie Wiesel dealt with in the Holocaust as a young boy. It was a very heartfelt poem, and was very touching. It's a very well deserved award. I am so proud of Grace."

Kane, who began writing poetry in sixth grade, will receive a certificate from the Woman's Club for her achievement.

"To write something so meaningful and be honored for it is such an incredible achievement," said Kane, who also plays volleyball at Union Catholic. "I've been working hard on my writing, so this is very encouraging."

Kane has written several pieces about the Holocaust.

"It's a very strong subject that not a lot of people realize how big of an event it was in the world," she added.



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Submitted photo

On Jan. 28, the dance team from Saint Dominic Academy in Jersey City participated in a charity showcase for Project Linus. The non-profit organization provides homemade blankets which are knitted by adults and children, to those in need. At the event, the dance team was recognized for having donated the most skeins of wool. Also, during the Christmas season, team members decided that in lieu of exchanging gifts with their coaches and each other, they would make a donation to The Pajama Program. Each dancer purchased a book and a pair of pajamas for the program, which introduces "a caring bedtime ritual" into the lives of children.

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Oak Knoll coach named NJ Coach of the Year

SUMMIT—Ali Good, head varsity field hockey coach at Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child, was named New Jersey Coach of the Year in field hockey by the Coaches Association of the National Federation of State High School Associations.

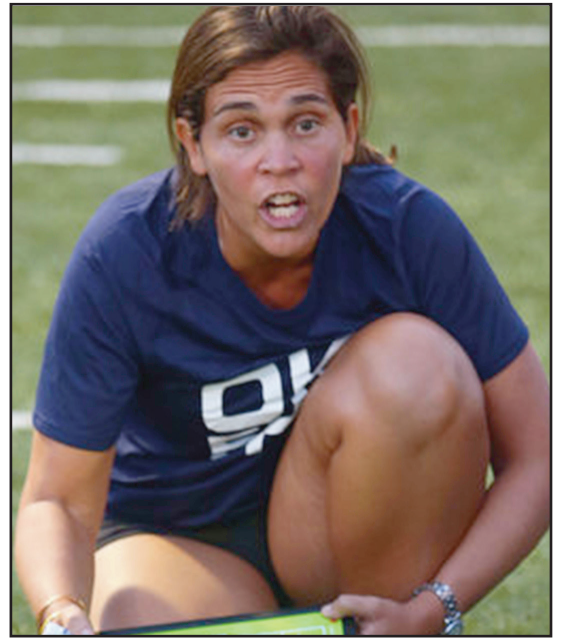
"This honor is a testament to my team. I would not be receiving this recognition without their hard work and dedication," Good said. "I am so fortunate to be part of a program that continues to define success through the balance of passion, intensity and fun. I've learned so much through all of my players and these valuable lessons have shaped my coaching journey."

Good said there were many lessons she and the team learned from the season in which the squad won the NJSIAA/Investors Bank North Jersey, Non-Public tournament before ultimately falling to Bishop Eustace in the championship game.

"We had another great season capped off with hard earned wins and championships, but we also learned from our defeats and gained insight on how we can continue to improve our team," Good said.

During Good's tenure, the Royals field hockey team won the Tournament of Champions in 2010 and have been tournament finalists on multiple occasions.

"I am so thankful for the support my players, their families and Oak Knoll have provided through the years. It's a special program and I'm so proud to be part of it," she added.



Submitted photo



Submitted photos



In celebration of Catholic Schools Week, students from Holy Trinity Academy in Westfield participated in a retreat Feb. 2. The retreat's theme, "And it was Good," highlighted how the children could connect to God through his creations. About 150 students in grades K-5 assembled in the school's gym, while the older children (grades 6-8) spent the day at the Shrine of Saint Joseph in Stirling. Chair of the Children's Retreat Committee Krystyna Monczka-Allen explained that the young students attended different "stations" that focused on God's many creations, including plants and animals. Volunteers from the Pocono Wildlife Rehabilitation & Education Center even brought a great horned owl to show the children.

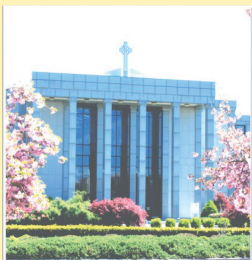
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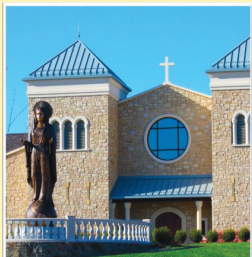
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