

Empty seats, broken hearts

BY MICHAEL C. GABRIELE

Editor

There is nothing unusual about an empty seat on a train, bus or trolley car. But in the post 9/11 world, everyday scenes take on a new meaning. Familiar images, once easily overlooked, now become unmasked, forcing us to ponder disturbing questions.

It has been four years since that sad, terrible day. Sept. 11 has become a pivotal date, much like Dec. 7 or Nov. 22. We all remember where we were and what we were doing. This reporter was walking south on Hudson Street in New York that sunny Tuesday morning. Three men in a parking lot, frozen like statues, pointed to a hideous trail of smoke in the sky. Unfortunately, you know the rest of the story.

No doubt those who perished that day felt forsaken. It is frightening to imagine ourselves trapped on the 96th floor of the North Tower, or spinning out of control in the skies over Shanksville, PA. After reams of media commentary and government inquiries, we still struggle to grasp the meaning of the tragedy.

Those who can, must speak out and say more, however difficult the words may be. The pain endures for those who lost loved ones.

As was seen in towns throughout New Jersey,

If we are honest in our quiet moments of reflection, we know Sept. 11 continues to test our faith.



Advocate photo- M. Gabriele

the Church worked along side government agencies and civic organizations four years ago, providing compassionate support. In a page-one story in this issue of *The Catholic Advocate*, the former mayor of

Ridgewood shares her memories from those days and describes the spiritual network in her community that rose to the occasion during the crisis.

If we are honest in our quiet moments of reflection, we know Sept. 11 continues to test our faith. The weight of events, the magnitude of the loss has been overwhelming. But rather than wallow in angst, anger and uncertainty, we can act with courage in quiet, powerful ways to help those in need. A comforting word, a knowing smile, the friendly clasp of a hand, a phone call, a greeting card. These, too, are everyday things that now take on significant new meaning in the post 9/11 world. Such gestures, however simple, can be profound expressions of faith; acts of kindness to help someone get through a day and bear a Cross—especially this coming Sunday.

There is nothing unusual about an empty seat on a train, bus or trolley car. But in this post 9/11 world we are compelled to take a second look at the familiar images that surround us and confront the unsettling events in the world. These vacant seats serve as unmistakable reminders of a day that shattered thousands of lives. They have been transformed into sacred places that might have been occupied by commuters on their way to work; people in good moods and bad moods, reading newspapers and novels, using cell phones and laptop computers, thinking about career decisions and where to meet friends for lunch. Such is the stuff of daily life, but what cuts to the core is that we no longer can take such “ordinary” activities for granted.

The enduring sadness is that 700 residents from New Jersey—many who lived in the archdiocese—never came home that day. Some people, literally, disappeared from the face of the earth. Their seats remain empty and that void continues to gnaw at us.

Perhaps those who were lost that day were people we never knew, but surely these are people we must never forget.

Stewardship

Stewards of the gift of God's Presence

BY DANIEL CONWAY

President of RSI Catholic Services Group

One of the most consistent themes in the writing of Pope Benedict XVI is the absolute importance of keeping our focus on God. Whether he is writing about worship, church teaching, social justice or principles of Catholic theology, the Holy Father always makes certain that God is the center of our attention.

Here are a few things our new pope has said about God:

- God speaks quietly, but He gives us all kinds of signs. If I remain alert, then slowly I begin to feel how God is guiding me.

- A powerless God is a contradiction in terms. If He cannot act and cannot speak and be spoken to, He cannot be “God” as we understand this term.

- In many ways, God wants to prod us into taking things a bit more lightly, to see the funny side of things, to get down off our pedestals and not forget our sense of fun.

- God is far too great for one idea or a single book to comprehend. Only in many experiences, even

contradictory experiences, can He give us reflections of Himself.

- God's glory and peace on earth are inseparable. When God is excluded, there is a breakdown of peace in the world. Peace can never last on earth if God becomes meaningless to people.

One thing is clear: without God, things cannot go well. On the one hand, it seems obvious. As people of faith, we know that God comes first. We are called to love Him with all our minds and hearts and strength. On the other hand, as sinful people living

in an increasingly godless world, we all too often forget about God, who seems absent or at least distant from our daily lives.

According to Pope Benedict XVI, “The true problem of our times is the ‘Crisis of God,’ the absence of God disguised by an empty religiosity.” Evangelization is speaking about God; proclaiming the glad tidings that “God is alive” and that we can meet Him face-to-face in the person of Jesus Christ (in communion with all our sisters and brothers in the one family of God, the Church). “God exists. God is alive. God is present and acts in the world, in our/my life. God is the most

present and decisive reality in each and every act of my life, in each and every moment of history.”

This is not a lukewarm faith. This is faith on fire. This is faith that is consumed by the presence and the power of God in every moment of our daily lives, and in every social, political and economic issue of our time.

Do we bring this kind of faith to the challenges of daily living? To the difficulties of marriage and family life? To the problems of poverty, homelessness, and inadequate health care in Indiana and throughout the nation? To the serious global problems of terrorism, the AIDS epidemic, hunger and war?

One thing is clear (as the Pope reminds us): without God things cannot go well. Without God, my life cannot go well for my family, my parish, my community, my country or the family of nations worldwide.

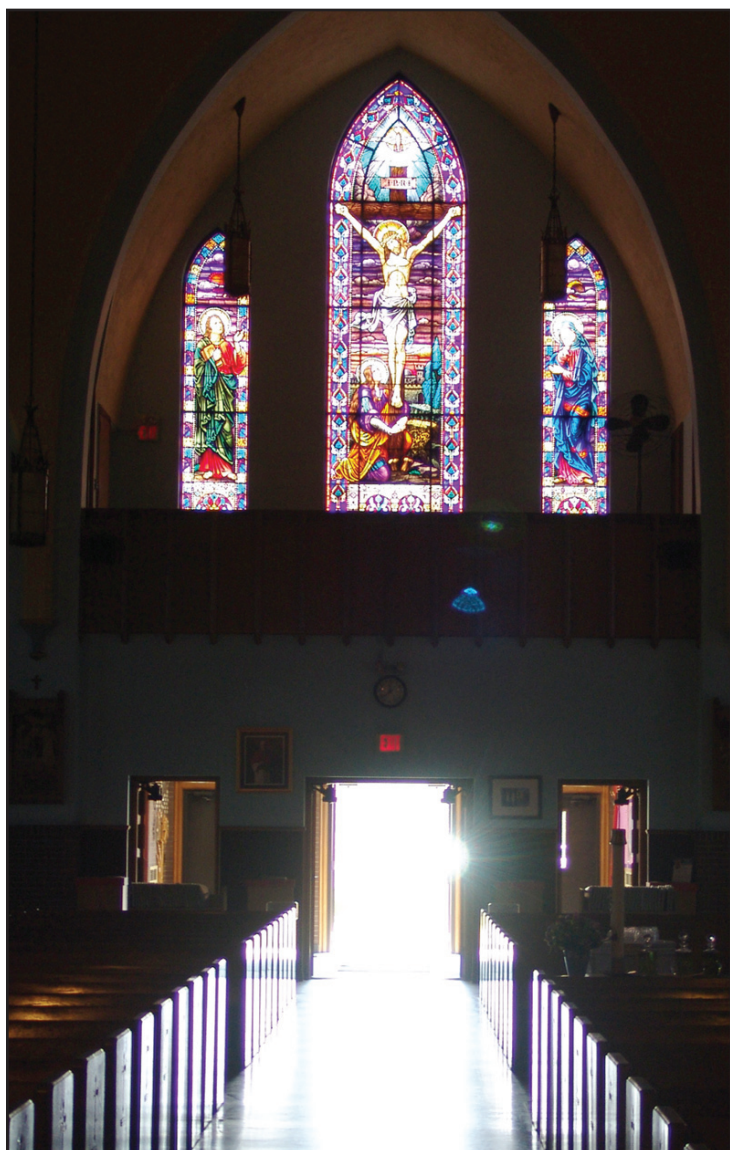
Daniel Conway, the president of RSI Catholic Services Group, Dallas, has been writing on stewardship themes for nearly 15 years. Dan's reflections on stewardship are now available in a new book entitled: *What Do I Own and What Owns Me? A Spirituality of Stewardship*. For more information, call Saint Catherine of Siena Press at 1-888-544-8674. Copyright © 2005 Daniel Conway. Used with permission.



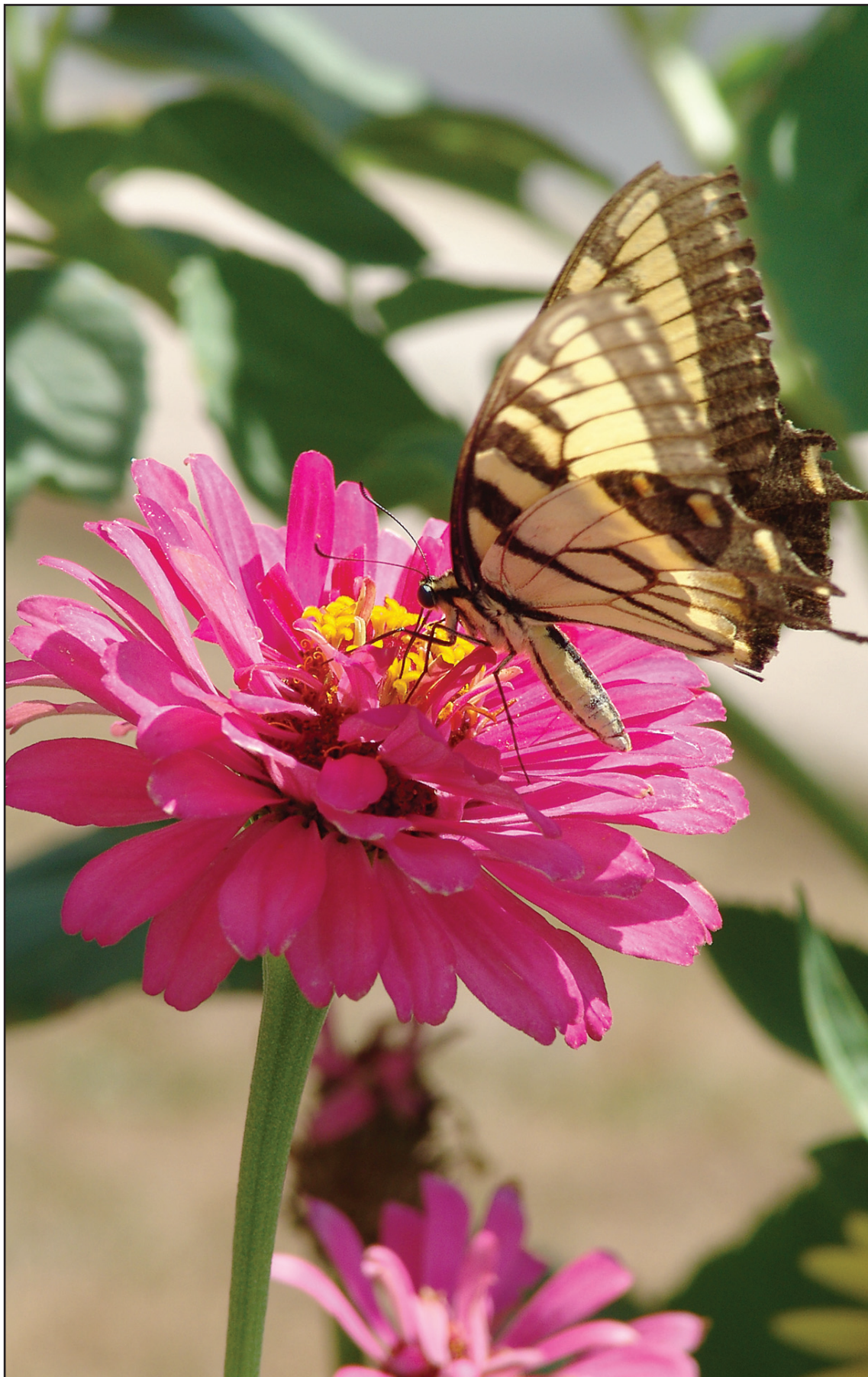
A quiet summer morning at the corner of George Street and Emerson Avenue

PLAINFIELD INTERMEZZO—It was Wednesday, 11:24 a.m., give or take a few minutes. The air was still, seasonably warm, just slightly humid. A soft, hazy sky provided an al fresco canvas for the rich colors in the rustic gardens of St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Within the sanctuary, barely audible, almost-erie musical tones—an adagio stream of lilting, complex sound fragments—gently drifted throughout the empty pews, creating variations on a theme. The pastor's column in the church bulletin, on display from the previous Sunday, opened with a reference to the Robert Frost poem "Mending Wall" and opined "fences have to come down if we are to be followers of Jesus." Meanwhile, a lone butterfly, casually flutter dancing in between long sips of nectar, demonstrated a distinct preference for reddish flowers. This peaceful creature, its translucent yellow and black wings filtering abstract patterns of light and shadow, obviously concurred with Father Frank on the topic of fences. Just another quiet summer morning at the corner of George Street and Emerson Avenue, with lots of curious sounds and sights to enjoy.

—Michael C. Gabriele



Advocate photos- M. Gabriele



Archdiocese to celebrate Catechetical Sunday, Sept. 17-18

AREA—The Archdiocese of Newark will join parishes across the country in celebrating Catechetical Sunday with commissioning of catechists the weekend of Sept. 17-18.

The annual event spotlights the importance of the formal teaching ministry in the Catholic Church. The theme of this year's event is

"Life Is Christ."

More than half a million catechists serve in the 19,000 Catholic parishes, missions, and schools across the country. These men and women are instrumental in introducing more than 4,000,000 children and youth to the faith and traditions of the Catholic Church. In the Archdiocese of Newark,

this translates into more than 10,000 catechists of children and adults and more than 60,000 children in catechetical programs. In addition, these catechists provide opportunities for study, reflection, and faith enrichment to a large number of adult Catholics.

The Archdiocese of Newark will observe Catechetical

Sunday with a rite of commissioning for catechists in most parishes during Sunday Mass. As part of these celebrations, parents and guardians will be recognized for the important role they play in handing on the faith to the next generation.

Ronald Pihokker, director of the Catechetical Office of the Archdiocese, noted that

Catechetical Sunday highlights a central ministry within the Catholic Church. "The work of these catechists—most of whom volunteer their time—is vital to the life of the Church. This celebration gives us a chance to recognize the importance of those who share their faith with so many in our parishes and schools," he said.

Four new pastors receive assignments

Archbishop John J. Myers has appointed four new pastors throughout the Archdiocese of Newark.

Father Joseph Hertel, O.F.M., has been appointed pastor of St. Joseph Parish, East Rutherford, effective Aug. 1.

Father Hertel grew up in the Paterson Diocese, attending St. Bonaventure Parish, as well as grammar school, high school, and St. Bonaventure University, Olean, NY, graduating with a BA in philosophy.

Father Hertel entered the Franciscan order in Lafayette, NJ, on July 14, 1959. His date of profession is July 15, 1960, and he was ordained March 5, 1966, at the Shrine of the Holy Land, Mt. St. Sepulcher, Washington, DC.

From 1966 through 1973, Father Hertel served as pastor at a number of parishes in the Diocese of San Juan, Puerto Rico. In 1973, he began serving on the team ministry at St. Elizabeth

Parish, Wyckoff, and at Sacred Heart Parish, Rochelle Park, as parochial vicar. From 1976 to 1982, he was pastor at Holy Cross Parish, Bronx, NY, and from 1982 to 1985, as pastor of St. Bonaventure Parish, Paterson.

In 1985, he began working in the development office at the Franciscan Missionary Union Office in Boston. From 1990 to 1992, he served as pastor at Queen of Peace Parish, West Milford, and as pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Manhattan, from 1992 to 1996. From 1996 to 2005, he served as director of development at St. Anthony's Guild for the Franciscans of Holy Name Province, NY.

Msgr. Neil J. Mahoney, pastor of St. Patrick Pro-Cathedral, Newark, has also been appointed pastor of St. John Parish, Newark, effective July 1.

Msgr. Mahoney, a Bayonne native, was ordained in 1970

after completing studies at Seton Hall University and Immaculate Conception seminary. He has an MA from Seton Hall University, an STL in Sacred Theology from Gregorian University in Rome, and a PhD in counseling from Fordham University.

He has served at St. Leo Parish, Irvington; Queen of Angels Parish, Newark, and as a counselor at the Union County office of the Mt. Carmel Guild. In 1981, Msgr. Mahoney was named director of the New Jersey Boys Town in Kearny. In 1990, he was named pastor of St. Patrick Pro-Cathedral.

Father Frank J. Rocchi, pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Maplewood, has been appointed pastor of the newly created Parish of the Good Shepherd, Irvington, effective July 1.

Father Rocchi grew up in Drexel Hill, PA, and attended St. Francis College, in Loretto,

PA. He attended St. Francis Seminary and the Toronto School of Theology. He was ordained on May 29, 1982.

Father Rocchi's first assignment was as parochial vicar to St. Henry Parish, Bayonne. He was appointed parochial vicar to St. Anne Parish, Jersey City, in 1991, and as parochial vicar to Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Maplewood, in June 1993. In July of 2002, he was named pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary.

He has also served on the Respect Life and Pro-Life Commission of the Archdiocese of Newark.

Father Eugene J. Field, administrator of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Ridgefield Park, has been appointed pastor effective Aug. 9.

Father Field, whose home parish is St. John the Evangelist, Bergenfield, earned a BA in business administration from

the University of Dayton, OH, in 1986. He earned an MA in church history from Immaculate Conception Seminary in 1998.

Father Field was ordained on May 28, 1994. After ordination, He was appointed parochial vicar of St. Andrew Parish, Bayonne. In July 1996, he was appointed assistant director for Vocations Awareness for the Archdiocese of Newark, for a period of three years. In October 1996, Father Field was appointed Chaplain for Boy Scouts (Hudson Liberty Council), Catholic Committee on Scouting, for three years.


In March 1997, Father Field was named associate director of Vocations for the Archdiocese of Newark, and in November 1997, he was appointed parochial vicar of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Ridgefield Park. In October 1998, he was appointed secretary in the archbishop's office, and in May 1999, he returned to St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Ridgefield Park as parochial vicar. He was named administrator last July.

Archbishop at BCHS

ORADELL — Archbishop John J. Myers will celebrate Mass on Sunday, Sept. 11, 3 p.m., at St. Joseph Parish as part of the 50th anniversary celebration of Bergen Catholic High School.

Expected to attend are academic administrators, Church and local figures and religious leaders from other denominations.

The church is located at 268 Grove St., a mile and a half from the high school.



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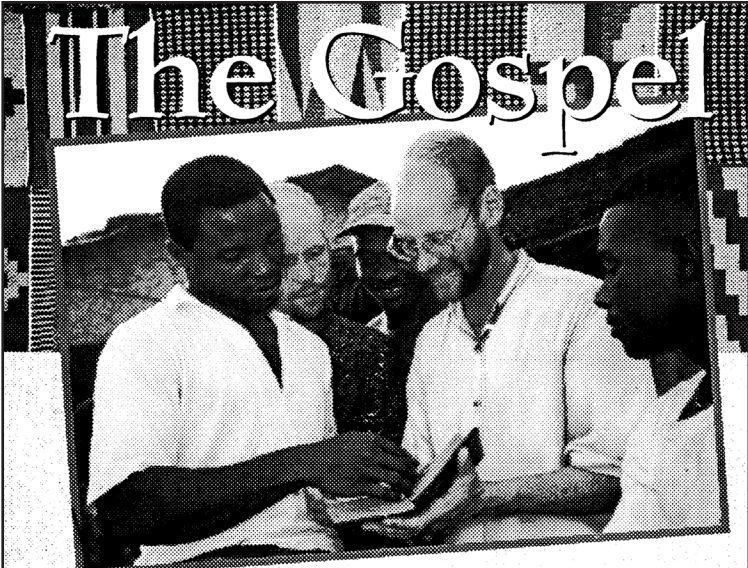
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Fall Programs at Xavier Center

What is Spiritual Direction?

with Ellen Carmody, PBVM

Sat., Oct. 1 • 10am-Noon

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with Ellen Carmody, PBVM

Oct. 12, Nov.9, Dec. 14

7:00pm-8:30pm

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with Loughlin Sofield, ST & Carroll Juliano SHCJ

Thur., Oct. 13 • 9:30am-3:30pm

Social Teachings: Conversation at the Center

with Bishop Thomas Costello

Mon., Oct. 24, 2005 • 7:00pm

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Presenter: Most Rev. Thomas Costello

Tue., Oct. 25 • 9:30am-3:30pm

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MISSION NEWS


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WHAT'S ALL THE FLAP ABOUT?

The Holy Childhood Association (HCA) has a new **website** for kids and a new **mission education program** designed for schools, parishes and families — **HCA AROUND THE WORLD**. Contact your local mission office for more information about getting your "passport to adventure" or log onto **www.worldmissions-catholicchurch.org**.

For more than 160 years, children in the United States have made a *real difference* in the lives of children in the Developing World through their prayers, sacrifices and financial help. *Won't you, too, offer prayer and sacrifice to help the smallest among us learn about the love of Jesus?*



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September 11

Assumption College for Sisters, Mendham, Middle Eastern music concert by Jewish and Arabic artists, 3 p.m. (973) 543-6528.

Our Lady of the Valley Parish, Orange, parish feast day and ministry fair following noon Mass. (973) 674-7500.

St. Phil's Singles, Livingston, softball game, 386 South Livingston Ave., dinner, 2 p.m. (732) 382-5242 after 6 p.m.

Ascension Parish, New Milford, 8 a.m.-noon. Cost \$6, children under 3, free. (201) 836-8961.

September 12

Christian Foundations for Ministry, Archdiocese of Newark, classes on the Old Testament and Spirituality, the Church, Spirituality and Ministry, at nearby parishes. (973) 497-4350 or stantovi@rcan.org.

Ascension Parish, New Milford, Rosary Altar Society, 7:30 p.m. in multi-purpose room of school. (201) 836-8961.

September 13

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Bloomfield, "Responding to the DaVinci Code," presented by Father Greg Hann. Call Bob Miller at (973) 338-9190 ext. 29.

Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Bayonne, bereavement support group facilitator training in Spanish, 7:30 p.m. Call Reina Basualdo at (973) 497-4326.

September 14

St. Aloysius Rectory, Caldwell, register for English as a Second Language (ESL), 10 a.m.-noon, 7-9 p.m. Free. Call John Dillon at (973) 228-3591.

Church of the Presentation, Upper Saddle River, Catechumenate inquiry, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Contact Joe Nuzzi at (201) 327-1313, ext. 31 or jnuzzi@churchofpresentation.org.

Family Life Ministries and Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Newark, annulment information evening, Archdiocesan Center, 7:30 p.m. (973) 497-4327.

St. Philomena Parish, Livingston, parish carnival, 386 South Livingston Ave., through Sept. 18. (973) 992-0994.

September 15

Office of Family Life Ministries, Archdiocese of Newark, "Destructive cults and how they affect the family," Spanish-language seminar, St. Francis Xavier Parish, Newark, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Additional dates: Sept. 22, 29. Cost: \$15. Call Reina Basualdo at (973) 497-4326.

September 16

St. Walburga Monastery, Elizabeth, "Awareness of God's Presence," weekend retreat for women. (908) 353-3028.

St. Helen Parish, Westfield, "Evening of Prayer," sponsored by Respect Life Committee, 8-10 p.m. (908) 232-1214.

College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, "Fall Parish Staff Day," 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Cost: \$25. (973) 290-4300/4364.

September 17

St. Phil's Singles, Livingston, hiking and dinner, 1 p.m. Bring swimsuit and snack. (973) 696-1809. Or, "Night Moves" at Turtleback Zoo, 8 p.m. (973) 731-5800, ext. 221.

College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, "Ministry Renewal Day," 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Cost: \$15. (973) 290-4300/4364.

Knights of Columbus, Washington Township, "Punt, Pass and Kick Contest," 79 Pascack Rd., boys and girls 8-15. Visit www.ppk-NFLyouthfootball.com. Call Charlie Devine at (201) 664-3333 or (201) 259-5359.

Shrine of St. Joseph, Stirling, Annual Fun Festival with flea market and country auction, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (908) 647-0208.

September 18

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Mountainside, Widowed Persons Association (WPA), dinner at Vivace Plainfield. Cost: \$40. Call Janice at (908) 781-1315.

Holy Family Parish, Union City, 8th annual international festival, 11:30 a.m.-8 p.m. Mass at 10:30 a.m. (201) 867-6535.

**September 20**

College of St. Elizabeth, Morristown, New Jersey Symphony String Quartet, Mahoney Library, 7:30 p.m. Visit www.cse.edu/events or (973) 290-4450.

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Bloomfield, start of yearlong Bible-study of book of Revelation, meeting first and third Tuesday, morning or evening. Call Bob Miller at (973) 338-9190, ext. 29.

September 21

Legatus, a Catholic organization for business people, Mass at St. Anne's Villa, Florham Park, 6:30 p.m., dinner at Morris County Golf Club. Topic: "Theology of the Body." Call Michael Fitzpatrick at (973) 394-0052.

September 22

Holy Family Parish, Nutley, 14th annual Italian festival, through Sept. 25. Italian-language Mass each day at 7 p.m. and festivities. (973) 667-0026.

September 23

Holy Rosary Parish, Jersey City, Feast Day of San Pio, 6:30 p.m. Mass. Call Theresa at (201) 433-9606.

September 24

St. Phil's Singles, Livingston, sports and activities day, 386 S. Livingston Ave., 2 p.m. (973) 340-4001.

Notre Dame Parish, North Caldwell, support group for bereaved fathers, 10 a.m. Pre-registration requested. (973) 497-4327.

September 25

Sisters of St. Dominic, Caldwell, benefit for Genesis Farm, 5 p.m. Cost: \$20, and children: \$5. (908) 362-6735 or (973) 228-1720.

United Holy Name Societies of Bayonne, 19th annual mini-parade, Mass and communion breakfast, St. Henry Parish, Bayonne, 8:15 a.m. Cost: \$15 for adults, \$8 for children. (201) 436-0857.

October 7

St. Philomena Parish, Livingston, Respect Life Mass, 7 p.m. (973) 992-0994.

October 8

Bloomfield Knights of Columbus, Amish Country bus tour. Cost: \$60; children under 12, \$40. Bus departs from 190 State St. at 7 p.m. Call Carmine Maccarone at (973) 429-0795 or Claire Graziano at (973) 748-3424.

Other

St. Michael Parish, Cranford, is looking for vendors and crafters to participate in annual Christmas Craft Fair, Nov. 5, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Deadline for applications, Oct. 15. Call Celeste Kirkikis at (908) 931-9723.

Family Life Ministries, Archdiocese of Newark, support groups for bereaved parents at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Bloomfield, on first Wednesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. and St. Peter the Apostle Parish, River Edge, every third Monday, 7:30-9:30 p.m. (973) 497-4327.

Fall 2005 High School Information Night

Presented by The Catholic High Schools of the Archdiocese of Newark

Back by popular demand! Due to large attendance at our Spring High School Information Nights, we have added one High School Information Night this Fall.

**Tuesday, September 20
7:00 PM-9:00 PM**

**Archdiocesan Center
171 Clifton Avenue, Newark**

No pre-registration is required and siblings are welcome. Visit our website for directions and a list of participating Catholic High Schools.

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COOP Admissions Exam

Friday, Nov. 11, 2005 for Sept. 2006 admission.

Our Policy

To publicize an upcoming event at your parish, school or organization on the "Around the Archdiocese" page, please note:

- Submissions must include the name of the sponsoring organization, a phone number for the contact person and event specifics, including the date, place and time.
 - Deadline for submission is 10 days prior to publication date.
- The Catholic Advocate publishes submissions as space allows and cannot print an item more than once.
- Contact by **email**: mielejos@rcan.org, **fax**: 973-497-4192, or **mail**: The Catholic Advocate, Around the Archdiocese, P.O. Box 9500, Newark, NJ 07104



CNS photo

CATHOLIC CHARITIES MOBILIZES—In the aftermath of the unprecedented death and destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina when it slammed into the southeastern United States on Aug. 28, Catholic Charities USA, including the office in the Archdiocese of Newark, is mobilizing to help the many victims of natural disaster. Both short and long-term assistance is planned.

Please pray for Angel’s mom

Editor,
As chair of the Women’s Commission and long-time pro-life advocate, I spend much of my time talking about the dignity of the human person in all stages and states of health. I recently encountered some real heroes of the Culture of Life.
A few weeks ago I attended the funeral of a six-year-old girl. This was an event that seems utterly unnatural to us all: the death of a beautiful little child of God. For our purposes, I’ll call her Angel.

Angel spent her years with a physical condition considered by most people to be helpless and hopeless. But her mom and dad are not “most people,” and it is clear from their stories and photos that they never felt helpless or hopeless. They recognized and loved the child of God.

Angel’s mom, I’ll call her Mary for she seems to embody true motherhood, witnessed to the dignity of her daughter at the Mass of Christian Burial. She spoke of the many gifts her child gave to and received from her family and community. Angel’s siblings miss her. I miss her and I never actually met her before her funeral Mass.

Now Mary is very sick. She and her husband are grieving the loss of Angel and comforting four grieving children. She is determined to “be the mom” despite her illness. She is praying for

The Catholic Advocate welcomes letters from readers. Due to space and time limits, there is no guarantee that a letter will run. Readers’ opinions do not necessarily represent the opinion of the newspaper or the Archdiocese. All letters must be typed, and are subject to editing. Include name, address and daytime telephone number.

Send to: The Catholic Advocate, P.O. Box 9500, Newark, NJ 07104-0500 or email mielejos@rcan.org

divine intervention, perhaps the intercession of John Paul the Great—that holy advocate of the Culture of Life—to make her well. She is my hero.

I beg of you to pray for this family. They witness to faith with their every breath. Mary needs our prayers to deal with her illness. Her husband needs our prayers, so that he will continue to trust in the Lord and will have the strength to love and support his wife and their children.

This family needs our prayers for the grace to trust that Angel is resting in His Everlasting Arms. And we all need to pray for each other that we, like this family, will truly see the dignity and value in each beautiful child of God.

Pamela Swartzberg, Chair
Women’s Commission
Archdiocese of Newark

A World Youth Day salute

Editor,
We salute the youth of the Archdiocese of Newark and their mentors who attended the World Youth Day activities in Germany. May they be a mustard seed for the new evangelization and the new springtime of the faith called for by Pope John Paul II. May our new Pope inspire the youth of the world to return to their countries unafraid to live committed Christian lives in accordance with the perennial teachings of our Catholic faith, uncompromised by the relativism and secularism so brilliantly analyzed by the Pope in his address to the Cardinals at the recent conclave.

Arthur E. Lavis
Montvale

Recalling a day of national tragedy

Time does not diminish the pain. On Sunday it will be four years since the unspeakable happened with the terrorist attacks on the United States.

No one will forget where they were that terrible Tuesday morning when jumbo jets crashes into the World Trade Center twin towers, the Pentagon and an open field in western Pennsylvania.

That crystal clear early September day in the metropolitan area was especially devastating to many families who call the Archdiocese of Newark home.

It was horrific enough to see the towers collapse on television. But many living and working on both sides of the Hudson River actually saw them come down as it happened.

The nation will pause on Sunday to remember the thousands of innocent Americans lost that terrible day. We join in prayer for the souls of those killed and for the families trying to cope with their loss. God bless them all.

Deciding on the right high school

Second chances don’t come around often but the first-ever fall High School Information Night program later this month is one of those times.

With a special eye toward eighth graders who were unable attend the annual program held this past spring, the schools’ office has scheduled an encore effort on Tuesday, Sept. 20 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the auditorium of the Archdiocesan Center in Newark. Students in grades 5-8 are encouraged to attend.

The quality, values-based benefits of a Catholic education speak for themselves. To determine which high school is best for them, students and their parents can meet with representatives of those schools in an informal yet informative atmosphere.

Where to go to high school is the first major decision in a young person’s life. A visit to information night will ensure that it is an informed decision.

A question box about faith and practice

Today’s Question: When did our Lord Jesus implement the sacrament of Holy Orders? – Donna Campesi, St. John’s, Bergenfield.

While several events recorded in Scripture can be seen as part of the institution of Holy Orders, (among them the call of the Apostles, the entrusting of Peter with the “keys of the kingdom,” the Easter night empowerment to forgive sins, the pre-Ascension commission to “go forth and make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them”), the Church traditionally sees the events of the Last Supper as the pivotal moment of the establishment of Holy Orders.

When Jesus first consecrates the bread and wine of the Passover meal, saying “This is my Body...This is my Blood,” and follows this with the words, “Do this in memory of me,” we believe that the sacrament was established. To this day, priests renew their commitment to priestly service at the Chrism Mass, traditionally on Holy Thursday morning, although it may be transferred to another

What’s the Matter?

By Rev. Msgr.
Richard J. Arnholds



time in Holy Week, as we do here in Newark on the Monday of Holy Week, so that more of the faithful may attend.

Bishops, priests and deacons are all recipients of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. All are called, in their own degrees and with their own responsibilities, to also exercise the charity, which Jesus demonstrated at the Last Supper, when He washed the Apostles’ feet. “I have given you an example. As I have done, so you also must do.” (John 13:15).

The Catholic Advocate welcomes questions from its readers about our Catholic faith and how it is practiced. Email your questions or comments to us at advnews@rcan.org. Please give your name and parish.

How to report abuse

The Archdiocese of Newark takes very seriously any and all credible complaints of sexual misconduct by members of the clergy, Religious and lay staff of the archdiocese. We encourage anyone with knowledge of an act of sexual misconduct to inform the archdiocese immediately so that we may take appropriate action to protect others and provide support to victims of sexual abuse.

Individuals who wish to report an allegation of sexual misconduct may do so by calling the Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection at (201) 407-3256.

A revelation for those in the religion business

Last time we spoke of the study, *Soul Searching, The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*.

As you remember, the study revealed that Catholic teenagers are 5 to 25 percent less religious than teens in all other major religious congregations in the United States. The question is: "Why?"

First, it is important to know that far from being rebellious, or alienated from religion, or dropping out of their faith congregations, the opposite is true. Today's teens are happy to be a part of the religion in which they were raised. Very few are "spiritual seekers;" that is, wanderers, hunting for new religious experiences.

The problem is that they have an attitude of "Whatever! It's okay." Religion simply doesn't mean that much to them. They "go along to get along."

The study does show that Catholic teens who are devout in their faith drink less alcohol, smoke less, cut class less, do better academically and are less apt to have temper tantrums. Those disengaged from religion watch more TV, use the internet more for porn and video games, and 56 percent have had some form of sexual activity.

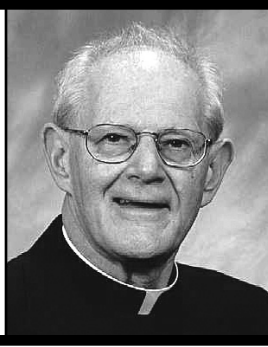
Devout teens are more happy (54 percent), do not feel alone (52 percent), do not feel invisible (59 percent), they think more about the meaning of life (47 percent), and feel that life is meaningful (56 percent).

But what about the causes for lack of religion among Catholic teens? Let me list the causes according to the study.

Parents are the single most important influence on teens. "They get what they are." Teenagers will deny parental influence. They all believe they are "individualists." But it is not true. Parental behavior and attitude

Voices

By Rev. Msgr. John Gilchrist



absolutely influence teenage belief and action.

In youth ministry, 86 percent of non-Catholic churches have youth programs. Sixty-seven percent of Catholic churches have a youth ministry. Of these, only 21 percent are full-time and paid. Seventy-six percent of our teens are not involved in any type of youth group.

There is a clear impression that youth ministry is not a priority in the Catholic Church; that the Church is weak in devoting attention and resources to teens.

"CCD" or religious education classes are largely ineffective. One of the clearest indicators of religious ignorance among Catholic teens was the absolute inability to coherently express their faith. One boy, asked about God said: "I don't know. All I know is that He is really big and He is always there." As for CCD, one of the boys said, "It's been OK. I mean CCD was just a chance to clown

around on Sunday after Mass. I didn't like it. You couldn't like it."

This study also points to Catholic religious education in Catholic schools. It quotes J. Frasier Field as saying that "most Catholic teachers are poorly equipped to appreciate the positive and cultural impact of Catholicism 'because' they themselves have been trained in secular universities and, except for religion, use the same textbooks as public schools." They are trained for math or science, but not math or science in a Catholic context.

Remember, 59 percent of Catholic teens seldom, if ever, attend any kind of religious education program.

The study states that in 1975 and 1980 the Catholic Bishops abolished the National Center of Religious Education. Since then the work of religious education has been piecemeal at best in the United States.

Lastly, the social milieu affects the young people. The study would claim that they live in what the author calls a "moralistic therapeutic Deism." That means God is far off.

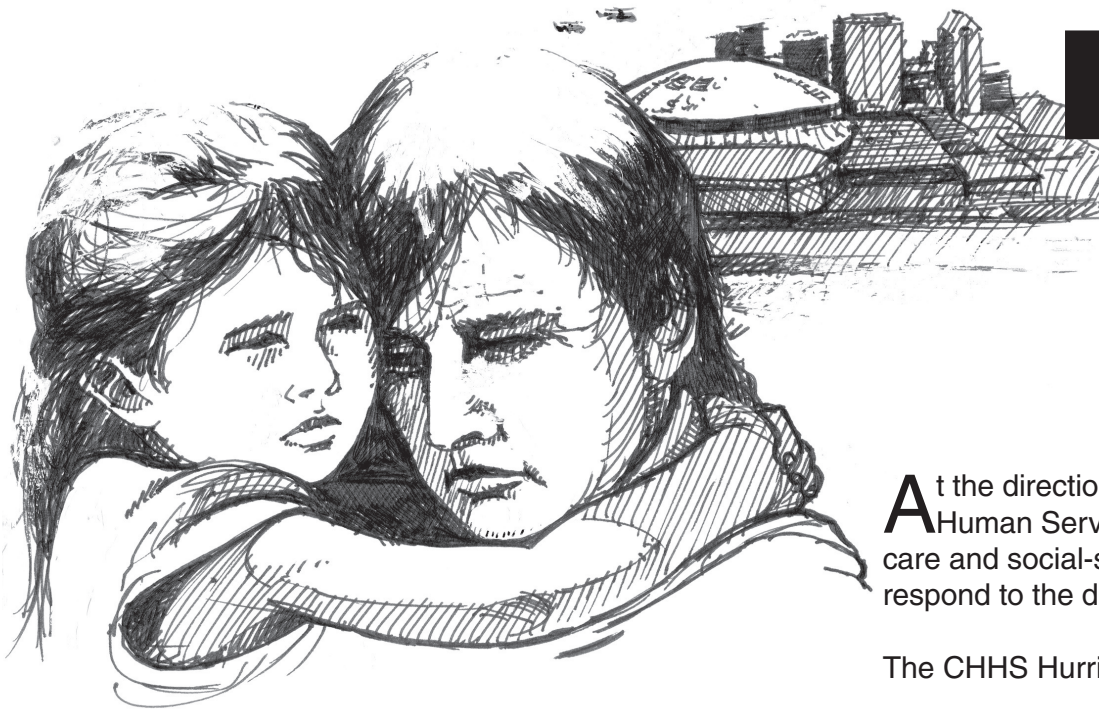
He is useful to pray to when you are in trouble. And that, while religious practices and organizations help shape peoples lives, religion is not a "big deal" for them.

I am going to end this here. But this book is like a revelation for us in the business of religion. Let us pray that the Church has a new epiphany as we try to bring God into the lives of our young people. They are our "tomorrow."

(This is the third installment in a three-part series.)

Rev. Msgr. Gilchrist is pastor of Holy Cross Parish, Harrison.

*Today's teens are happy
to be a part of the religion
in which they were raised.*



Hurricane Relief: How You Can Help

At the direction of Archbishop John J. Myers, Catholic Health and Human Services Corporation (CHHS) — representing the health-care and social-service ministries of the Archdiocese — is taking steps to respond to the dire needs of Hurricane Katrina's many Gulf Coast victims.

The CHHS Hurricane Relief Initiative offers a number of ways to help:

Donate blood — On Friday, September 9, 2005, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saint Michael's Medical Center will conduct a blood drive at Mother Schervier Hall. The public is invited to participate. Directions to the hospital are available online at www.cathedralhealth.org.

Volunteer to provide health-care services and grief counseling — The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is recruiting health-care professionals (physicians, nurses, technicians, et al.), qualified grief counselors, and mental-health professionals to volunteer for duty at one of the 40 field hospitals being established in the affected area. Register through the American Hospital Association web site at www.AHA.org.

Donate funds to support our volunteers — CHHS is collecting donations, through Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark, specifically to support the men and women who volunteer for service in the stricken areas. Please make checks payable to **Catholic Charities, c/o CHHS Hurricane Relief Initiative, 1160 Raymond Boulevard, Newark, N.J. 07102 — Attention: Paul Huegel.**

Special prayers for Katrina’s victims

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI expressed his spiritual closeness and concern for all those affected by Hurricane Katrina in the United States, and he offered special prayers for those engaged in relief efforts.

He assured all those affected by what was considered the most destructive storm to hit the country in decades of “his closeness in prayer” and “divine blessings of strength and consolation.”

In a telegram sent by the Vatican’s secretary of state, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the pope said he was “deeply saddened by the tragic consequences of the recent hurricane.”

The Vatican released a copy of the telegram Aug. 31. “The Holy Father commends the deceased to the loving mercy of almighty God, and upon their grieving families he invokes divine blessings of strength and consolation,” the telegram said.

Pope Benedict also offered special prayers for rescue workers, “and all those involved in providing assistance to the victims of the disaster.”

He “encouraged them to persevere in their efforts to bring relief and support,” said the text.

While hundreds were feared dead, millions of people were in need of assistance—including some who

remained stranded on rooftops—as widespread flooding and storms rendered homes inhabitable, downed power lines and blocked major roads. Food and clean water were running low in the hardest hit areas of New Orleans, where 80 percent of the city remained under water, and in Mississippi and Alabama.

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI assures all those affected of his closeness in prayer.

Here is the text of the telegram:

Deeply saddened by the tragic consequences of the recent hurricane in the United States of America, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI assures all those affected of his closeness in prayer. The Holy Father commends the deceased to the loving mercy of almighty God, and upon their grieving families he invokes divine blessings of strength and consolation. His Holiness likewise prays for the rescue workers and all involved in providing assistance to the victims of this disaster, encouraging them to persevere in their efforts to bring relief and support.

Cardinal Angelo Sodano
Secretary of State

Editor’s Note: Contributions may be sent directly to: 2005 Hurricane Relief Fund, Catholic Charities USA, P.O. Box 25168, Alexandria, VA 22313-9788.

The Pope Speaks

Pope Benedict XVI



Children God’s ‘gifts’

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Children are gifts from God, and they offer joy and support for parents and society, Pope Benedict XVI said in his weekly general audience.

Nations with declining birthrates are missing “the freshness, the energy, the future” brought by children, he added.

In his Aug. 31 audience in St. Peter’s Square, the pope reflected on Psalm 127, which celebrates the Lord’s gift of children, “who are seen as a blessing and a grace” and as a source of support for parents in their old age.

The pope flew by helicopter from his papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, 20 miles away, to hold his weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square to accommodate the large number of pilgrims in attendance.

Some 11,000 people gathered in the square to hear the pope and receive his blessing.

“Whatever we do or undertake can only bear fruit if it has God’s blessing,” he said.

“A strong society is, of course, built out of the labor of its members, but it also needs the blessing and support of God who, unfortunately, is instead often excluded or ignored,” said the pope.

A person’s efforts also need divine grace in order to be fruitful, he said.

“The peaceful and faithful relinquishment of our freedom to God renders our activity to be solidly based and capable of long-lasting fruit,” he said.

Forgiveness as a demand of love

Readings: Sir 27:30-28:7; Ps 103; Rom 14:7-8; Mt 18:21-35.

Anniversaries not only provide an occasion for marking the passage of time, they also allow the family or a larger community to take stock regarding the spiritual progress being made in a given period.

Usually the anniversary is an occasion for rejoicing. However this coming Sunday, four years since the dastardly attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, reminds us rather of the heavy burdens borne by a free society. Principles and practices based on a positive assessment of human decency were abused by people with a virulent hatred and a twisted understanding of religious convictions.

The U.S. response by armed force in Afghanistan and the increased surveillance of certain groups locally was not intended to disrupt or destroy the lives of innocent people, but to root out the source of terror. The right intention is always a central aspect of the response of a nation or of individuals to criminal actions. How do we grapple with the emotions that were evoked by this tragedy or other adverse events in our lives?

The Church’s choice of readings for the 24th Sunday provides a context for our reflection and prayer as communities of faith devastated by the events of Sept. 11. How to deal with the violence that has continued to escalate within the various circles of civil society? The modern world has been blessed with myriad advances of science and technology, but we still need to fine tune the ethical foundations for their use.

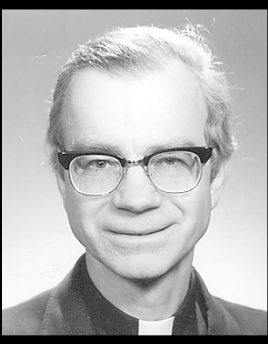
The general tendency to retaliate in like terms against wrongdoers should be evaluated time and again. The pervasiveness of this response is recorded from early records of human affairs. Today’s Gospel parable recalls this for us.

“I have killed a man for wounding me, a boy for bruising me. If Cain is avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold” (Gn 4:23-24). This ancient boast expresses the adage “might makes right.” The

Sunday Readings

24th Sunday
of Ordinary Time
(Sept. 11, 2005)

By Father Lawrence Frizzell



fact that so many people and nations operate on this level makes us aware that civilization is very fragile.

During antiquity, Hebrew law tried to limit retaliation by strict controls. “An eye for an eye...” (Ex 21:22-24; Lv 24:17-22) was a great improvement over Lamech’s attitude. And before the time of Jesus it was replaced by monetary fines, which made more sense.

Sometimes it is said that Judaism lacks a teaching of forgiveness. The beautiful passage from Jesus ben Sira, a sage from early in the Second Century B.C., shows that this statement is inaccurate. The familiar commandment to love one’s neighbor as oneself is preceded by these words: “Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against your fellow countryman” (Lv 19:18). Of course, both Jews and Christians need continuing education in the sources of their faith and way of life.

Sira knows that our relationship with God demands that we treat all those created in his image and likeness the way we would like to be treated by God. “Should a person nourish anger against a neighbor and expect healing from the Lord?” This is an example of the principle “measure for measure” in the moral life. “The measure with which you measure will in turn be meas-

Jesus knew that forgiveness is one of the most difficult challenges in human life.

ured out to you” (Lk 6:38, with Mk 4:24 indicating that God will not be outdone in generosity).

Jesus knew that forgiveness is one of the most difficult challenges in human life. The Lord’s Prayer demands imitation of divine love by focusing on forgiveness. This is the only petition that required an explanation. “If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive you and your transgression” (Mt 6:14-15).

The discussion about “fraternal correction” (Mt 18:15-18) led Peter to inquire if there are limits to the demand of forgiveness. Seven is the number that symbolizes totality and perfection, so Peter wondered if that is sufficient. Jesus refers back to Lamech’s boast and showed, as in his own suffering and death, that far greater (spiritual) strength is shown by the one who is persecuted and forgives than by the person who seeks revenge.

The parable about the unforgiving servant (Mt 18:21-35) makes the same point as the explanation of the petition, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” (Mt 6:12, 14-15).

Again and again we need the cleansing power and strength provided by the Blood of the new and eternal Covenant to enable us to live this aspect of the commandment of love in our daily lives.

Father Lawrence Frizzell is Director of the Institute of Judaean-Christian Studies at Seton Hall University.

Once tiny parish flourishes

BY CATHY HAUSSMANN
Special to The Catholic Advocate

In a small store on the southwest corner of Washington and Industrial Avenues, patrons stand in line to purchase their pizzas at Positano's. One wonders if any of them realize that just after the turn of the 20th century, in that very same building, they would have been standing in line downstairs to buy dry goods and upstairs to receive Holy Communion.

Back then, the store was owned by Sam Goodman, a generous man who offered his upstairs quarters to the handful of his Catholic friends seeking to establish a place of worship. Marked by a wooden cross, erected at the top of Goodman's store, it was the humble beginning of the parish of St. Margaret of Cortona in Little Ferry, which today serves Little Ferry and Moonachie.

St. Margaret's was officially incorporated on Aug. 24, 1912. Too small to necessitate a resident pastor, St. Margaret's was administered by St. Mary's Parish in Hackensack (Immaculate Conception) for over a quarter century.

On December 18, 1940, St. Margaret's was established as a canonical parish of the Archdiocese of Newark, with the appointment of its first pastor, Rev. Robert F. Marnell of Holy Trinity Parish in Hackensack.

The family names of many of the founders, a tiny congregation of 50 parishioners, mostly farmers, are still an integral part of the parish. The current roster of 1,300 households reflects

numerous nationalities and people from all walks of life, a true melting pot of God's creativity.

The parish's mission statement affirms that "[We are] a praying, worshipping and teaching faith-community... We believe that we are created for greatness by God our Father... We accept the challenge of being disciples... We are also responsible stewards who seek to offer time, talent and treasure for the benefit of all God's people..."

teach the Word of God to the parish's children and prepare them for the Sacraments. There is also an active

St. Margaret of Cortona, Little Ferry

R.C.I.A. program at the parish.

Ushers greet parishioners with a warm smile and an open door. On alternate weekends and at all special liturgies, the adult choir leads

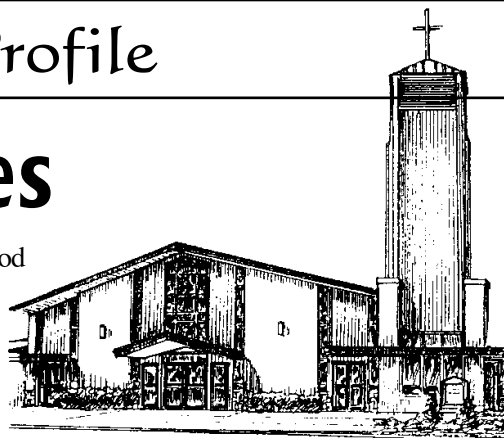
The Rosary Society, together with the adult choir, plans an annual Eucharistic Day, with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament following noon Mass, and concluding with the Rosary for Peace in the evening. St. Margaret's Rosary Society is the oldest parish society still functioning, having been organized on Easter Sunday, April 13, 1941.

Outreach is an area where the parish really shines. A parish food pantry is maintained to help the community's poor. It is run by two volunteers who interact with the recipients twice monthly, and two volunteers organize groups of parishioners to stock the pantry shelves with the grocery items collected monthly after the four weekend Masses.

In September 2003, the Finance Council and Stewardship Committee presented the parishioners with a capital campaign to maintain St. Margaret's parish complex, "Restoring His House, Renewing Our Hearts." Pledges were solicited and the goal for proceeding with the project was surpassed, thanks to the generosity of St. Margaret's parishioners.

The project will include, among other things, restoring structural damage in the church, rectory and bell tower; replacing the roof of the church and rectory, and refurbishing the church organ. These changes will be under the direction of the Building & Grounds Committee, with help from the Archdiocese.

The first phase of the project took place this July when the organ was removed from the church and restored to solid state. The 23-rank instrument, built by the Schantz Organ Company of Orrville, Ohio, in 1947, has journeyed over the years from the choir loft of the original church to the choir loft of today's church, to its present location alongside the altar. While further work will be done on the organ, now that it is back in the church, its improved sound is already making "a joyful noise unto the Lord."



Bill Ebenau, Fred and Lucille Millar, Midge Behrens, Brian Stout, Terry North, Sophie Greux, Carol Dapic and Cathy Haussmann get ready to serve great food at the parish picnic.

The disciples and stewards of St. Margaret's are numerous, and many are enthusiastically involved in more than one area of ministry to the church and each other.

Religious education has always been the foremost concern of St. Margaret of Cortona Parish. Sister Dorothy A. Donovan, S.S.J., has been pastoral associate of Catechetics for eleven years. Under her guidance, dedicated lay catechists

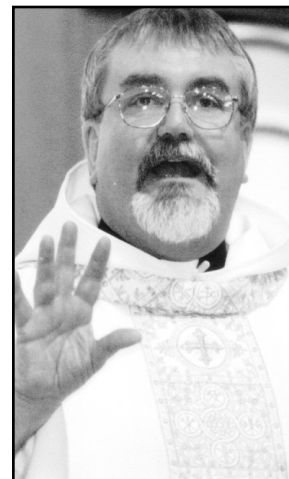
the congregation in song, not only with classical sacred standards but also contemporary, Gregorian chant, Taizé and spiritual selections, and presents annual "Lessons & Carols" at Christmas.

Several groups serve the spiritual life of St. Margaret's parish, including a Bereavement Support Team, an Adult Faith Formation Board, and a recently begun Young Adults Group.



Candidates prepare for Confirmation during their Fall Retreat Day.

Meet the Pastor



Father Arthur F. Humphrey

Date of Birth: Dec. 7

High School: Salesian Junior Seminary, Goshen, NY

College/Seminary/

Graduate School: Seton Hall University; Immaculate Conception Seminary, Mahwah, NY; Theological Seminary, NYC; Montclair State University

Date of Ordination: May 31, 1975

Heros: My parents, Frank and Ann

Favorite Saints: Francis of Assisi, John Bosco

Favorite Sport: NJ Devils Hockey

Favorite Food: Roasted Rosemary chicken

Favorite Subject in

School: Roman history

Favorite Movie: *Field of Dreams*

Last Book Read: *Lifeguard* by John Patterson and Andrew Gross

Proudest Moment: Ordination

Occupation if I weren't a Priest: Counselor or teacher

Looking to our future, the Pastoral Advisory Board has already begun discussions concerning the New Energies guidelines and their impact on the parish.

St. Margaret of Cortona Church is located at 31 Chamberlain Ave., Little Ferry, and serves the communities of Little Ferry and Moonachie. The writer, Cathy Haussmann, is a lifelong parishioner. She is the author of "In Harmony All Things Grow," written for the celebration of the parish's 75th anniversary in 1987, and also penned the parish bio for the Archdiocese's jubilee commemorative book.

Archdiocesan efforts gather to aid victims of hurricane

BY MICHAEL C. GABRIELE
Editor

NEWARK — Local efforts mobilized this week to aid the desperate victims of Hurricane Katrina as tensions grew in the Gulf Coast region.

Archbishop John J. Myers authorized emergency special collections this weekend at parishes in archdiocesan parishes.

The Catholic Health and Human Services (CHHS) Hurricane Relief Initiative of the Archdiocese of Newark has developed programs to aid storm victims. There will be a blood drive on Friday, Sept. 9, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Saint Michaels Medical Center, Mother Schervier Hall, located at 268 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is recruiting healthcare professionals for volunteer assignments at various field hospitals being established in the Gulf Coast region. Doctors, nurses

and medical technicians can register through the American Hospital Association (AHA) web site at www.AHA.org. The DHHS is also recruiting mental-health professionals to volunteer for grief-counseling duties.

Donations through Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark, specifically earmarked to support volunteers in the

stricken areas, can be made by checks payable to Catholic Charities, to the attention of Paul Huegel, care of CHHS Hurricane Relief Initiative, 1160 Raymond Boulevard, Newark, NJ 07102.

Television news reports on the catastrophe have focused on the devastation and stalled government relief efforts in New Orleans, but other areas, such as

Biloxi, MS, also were hard hit by the monster storm.

According to information on the website of the Alexandria, VA-based national organization, Catholic Charities USA (www.catholiccharitiesusa.org), volunteers from Catholic Community Services of Baton Rouge are providing support services to storm victims, while

teams from Catholic Charities agencies in Florida have moved into the front lines of Louisiana and Mississippi, where people are suffering from storm and flood damage.

In addition to immediate emergency relief efforts, Catholic Charities USA indicated its agencies will provide long-term aid for hurricane victims.

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Kathy DiFiore-Founder

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South Jersey Health Care Center
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Sept. 11

Continued from page 1

as mayor at that time, she became involved in the lives of many residents who were in mourning and shed her share of tears. However, she was proud to share the image of hundreds of people in Mount Carmel spontaneously singing the haunting Irish ballad in tribute to a beloved village son as her most vivid memory.

A graduate of Seton Hall University with a degree in Theology, McGinley, 40, was the oldest of five brothers and the father of five children (three boys and two girls). He worked as a senior vice president for Keefe, Bruyette & Woods, which was located on the 89th floor of the South Tower. His widow, Peggy, still resides here.

Like other New Jersey towns with commuters who never returned from New York that fateful day, Ridgewood emerged from the swirl of Sept. 11 media coverage due to its loss. Many cities in the archdiocese, like Hoboken and Jersey City, also suffered significant casualties. In all, around 700 Garden State residents were killed.

Reilly was the mayor here from 2000 to 2004 and currently serves as the communications coordinator of the town's public schools. She admitted that today it's "almost surreal" to discuss the desperate hours following the terrorist attack. Life goes on here, but the painful memories continue to lurk below the surface, hitting



Advocate photo: M. Gabriele

Former Ridgewood Mayor Jane Reilly said the town decided "the best way for us to recover and heal was to grieve in a communal way." She had special words of praise for the support provided by Msgr. Ronald Rozniak of Our Lady of Mount Carmel parish.

people when they least expect it. "It's always there," she observed.

"The spiritual component was so critical for us in finding some type of resolution," Reilly explained. "We needed that connection." She credited the work of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim and Hindu religious leaders here, saying that the village has an active, ecumenical clergy. She said it was this spiritual infrastructure that helped the town to react so quickly to the crisis, offer-

ing comfort to residents overwhelmed by events. Families here, amid the chaos and fear, "felt they were in a safe place," she recalled.

She had special words of praise for Msgr. Ronald Rozniak, the pastor of Mount Carmel as a key provider of this community support. "He was incredible," she said of Msgr. Rozniak. "He was a joy to work with. He really stepped up and provided enormous comfort to the families." The church, adjacent to Memorial Park at Van Neste Square, became a spiritual focal point for residents, while the town's public library served as a 24-hour drop-in center for many months.

The village's police and fire departments also went beyond the call of duty, she said. At one ceremony, Reilly recalled the heartfelt words of William Corcoran, the town's chief of police. "In all of our collective years of public service, this is the most important thing we'll ever do," Corcoran said to Reilly at the time.

The village dedicated a special plaque in Memorial Park, which reads: "In memory of the Ridgewood residents who perished in the World Trade Center terrorist attack September 11, 2001." A tomb containing personal effects from all 12 residents was buried beneath the huge stone where the plaque is mounted. Tragically, the remains of many victims were never found in the World Trade Center rubble.

After 48 months, Reilly said the lasting legacy for her town is that those who were lost will never be forgotten. "An important element that was driving what we did was the recognition that everyone in the community, regardless of the magnitude of their own personal loss, was in pain, and the best way for us to recover and heal was to grieve in a communal way," she said.

In addition to McGinley, Mount Carmel parishioners who died in the terrorist attack included Richard M. Blood, Jr., Michael T. Carroll, Charles Murphy, Steven B. Paterson, Michael San Phillip, Bruce E. Simmons and Christopher W. Wodenshek. The list also includes two Glen Rock residents who were parishioners at Mount Carmel: Grace Cua and David Meyer. Other Ridgewood residents who perished include James D. Munhall, Steven Frank Strobert, Gina Szejnberg and Jon C. Vandevander.

Mount Carmel will celebrate a special Mass this Sunday at 6:30 p.m. to honor the victims of Sept. 11.

Contact:
Fr. Brian Plate
Vocations Director

The Vocations Office
(973) 497-4365
171 Clifton Ave., P.O. Box 9500
Newark, NJ 07104-0500

When **Jesus** turned around
and noticed them following him,

He asked them,
"What are you looking for?"

They said to him, Rabbi,
where do you stay?"

"Come and see,"
He answered.

John 1:38-39

Have you
considered
following
after Jesus
as a Priest,
Sister or Brother...?

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sung by the Parish Choir

works of Shephard, Hancock,
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Sunday, September 11, 2005

4 o'clock

“Whether in Life or in Death, We are the Lord’s”

Romans 14: 7

**Most Reverend John J. Myers, J.C.D., D.D.
Archbishop of Newark**

Pastoral Letter on Death and Dying

I. Introduction

Many of us have experienced the sadness and suffering of standing close by as the life of a loved one fades and comes near the end of the time ordained for this world. My father, my sisters and brothers and I knew this ordeal when we had to make a variety of decisions as my mother’s life faded and she underwent a series of medical emergencies. The occasions and the discussions were difficult, even wrenching. Fortunately, the family is close and our relationships have remained good. Finally, in God’s time, He took her to himself. We have been deeply comforted by the faith which we shared with her, and which she nurtured in us.

In this spirit, I wish to share some reflections with those in the Archdiocese of Newark who may now or sometime in the future seek comfort in Jesus Christ’s victory over sin and over death.

The words from St. Paul’s letter to the Romans, in the title, direct us toward the very heart of Christianity. Jesus is sent by the Father to reveal the Mystery of God as a community of persons in a relationship of loving communion. As the revelation of the Father, Jesus, through His humanity, shines light on what it means to be a person created in the image and likeness of God, what it means to be truly human. By His death and resurrection, Jesus redeemed us and made us His own, giving us the means necessary to experience here and now what we will live fully when we have passed from death into eternal life. The Gospel celebrates the truth that “Whether in life or in death, we are the Lord’s.”

For the Christian people, Jesus remains “the glory of man fully alive.” Christ alone completely reveals what it means to express the love from which and for which we were created. Through the Church, God continues to reach out to us in the person of His Son. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God enables us to understand just what it means to live as men and women created in the divine image. The invitation of Christ is a call for all men and women to encounter the Divine Presence. This encounter affords us the opportunity to bring the most troubling and heart-wrenching questions of human existence to the One who provides us the way to understand and to address the most difficult circumstances of life.

The revelation of God proclaimed by Jesus was expressed most perfectly and definitively through His own willingness to suffer and to die. Jesus is, therefore, precisely the one to whom we should turn when we find ourselves confronted by the reality of death in our own lives or in the lives of those we love. He didn’t simply talk about suffering and death; He endured them and He prevailed over them. Jesus teaches us not only what it means that “in life and in death, we are the Lord’s.” He also enables us to live the truth of the words St. Paul has spoken.

II. What We Must Ask Ourselves

Earlier this year, our nation, indeed the world, watched with stunned fascination the unfolding of death in the life of one American family. The death of Terri Schiavo saw unparalleled media scrutiny. Although we may not know all the facts, we do know that many questions remain, including, for some, confusion about Church teaching in these matters. At the center of our confusion lies a set of important questions:

- What is the nature and meaning of personhood?
- What is our moral responsibility to provide food and water to those who are unable to care for themselves?

- What is the role of competent medical authority in assessing the condition of those who seem incapable of human response?

- What are the obligations of a democratic society to safeguard the lives of those most vulnerable and in need of care?

In order for all of us in the Church to be able to make informed and morally licit decisions when our own health is seriously diminished or death is imminent, we need to review the Church’s teachings on these important questions.

Every day in our country, feeding tubes are removed or refused without garnering even local media attention. What set the case of Terri Schiavo apart, what indeed made this situation so unusually tragic, was the struggle between two groups. One group considered Terri as a person who existed with them in loving relationship; the other group considered that her personhood had ended long ago. One group felt that the loving thing to do was to continue caring for Terri; the other group seemed convinced that it was an act of love to move her from life with God here to life with God in heaven.

In the midst of the overwhelming media coverage of Terri Schiavo’s dying and of her death, many of us perhaps stopped seeing her as a person but rather as an idea or as a cause, or in a worst-case scenario, as a political tool. In the midst of this confusion, we cannot allow ourselves to forget that beneath all the arguments was a living human being.

We all need to keep in mind that Terri Schiavo was and is a person, a sister in our faith. Though much that transpired in the process of her death was disordered, she is with the Lord and she has become, in a sense, a symbol of the confusion in America over the tension between individual autonomy and communal responsibility. Certainly, this experience underscores the need of making one’s wishes known in writing and in a form which is recognized in particular jurisdictions.

III. Death is Our Reunion with Christ

We need to remind ourselves that death is not an evil that should be feared. In the words of the ancient preface of the funeral liturgy, “Lord, for your faithful people, life is changed, not ended; and when the body of our earthly dwelling lies in death, we gain an everlasting place in heaven.” Death is not only an end to “earthly” existence; it also is the passageway to eternal life. Unnecessarily prolonging death, clinging at all costs to this life, can be an attempt to reject what our faith boldly proclaims,

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“Death has no more power over Christ!”

It is a virtuous practice to pray for a happy death, and many Christians have implored St. Joseph to obtain for them what each priest and religious prays for every night, “a peaceful death.” While we should not hasten our death, we must not fear it either. St. Benedict reminds us to pray for death each day, as if it were to come tomorrow; for we know neither the time nor the hour of its approach. Our hope is not to live our mortal lives without end, but to live for all eternity with God.

The mystery that shrouds death causes fear for many. Faith nonetheless strengthens what is lacking in our human frailty and gives us the courage to embrace what we cannot change. Faith also recognizes the necessity to be fearless in the face of death. “Where I am going you know the way,” Jesus tells His apostles. We must live with confidence that Christ is preparing a place for us and will indeed return to unite us with Himself.

While we live as God’s children now, we long for the moment when we shall become like Him and see Him face to face. The way we respond to the suffering and death of those whom we love, the way in which we embrace our own mortality, speaks volumes about the way in which we have accepted that Jesus Christ is Lord of the living and the dead. The inability to accept that suffering is redemptive, or the inclination to immediately end the pain of those who are suffering, reveals that we have not yet accepted the Way for us to live the fullness of our humanity. Likewise, the refusal to accept that death comes to all, shown by attempts to maintain biological vitality at all costs, also reveals a failure to place our hopes in Christ. Christians always must embrace life here and now with their hearts and minds set on a world that will never end, a world in which every tear will be wiped away.

IV. Forming End-of-Life Decisions

Our attitude toward death must be an extension of our attitude toward life. Living now for God will determine how we will face the moment when we pass from this world to the next. In order to help the faithful put in place appropriate and clear legal and medical directives, the Church has articulated a set of principles derived from the most fundamental teachings on the dignity of the human person and the inherent dignity of each human life. Just as every individual human life is unique and unrepeatable, from conception until natural death, so too the physical suffering and medical condition of each person is unique and cannot be generalized. The following ethical principles of the Church respect this aspect of our individuality as children of God.

They are meant to serve as a helpful guide to end-of-life decisions, allowing us to embrace suffering and death in freedom, and with peace of mind.

Our Obligation for the Proportionate Means of Preserving Life

Life is sacred, for it is a gift from God. As recipients of this precious gift, we are always morally obligated to use ordinary means for maintaining and insuring physical health. “Proportionate means” describes those medical remedies and procedures that in the judgment of the patient and competent medical authority, in light of the Christian understanding of the dignity of human persons, offer a reasonable hope of benefit. Many of us employ this principle without much thought as we consider to what extent we wish to experience the side-effects of over-the-counter remedies for such common ailments as the flu, a cold, a sore throat, a headache or



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muscle pain. At times we forgo a remedy in favor of letting the illness “take its course” because we do not wish to be hindered by the side-effects of the remedy being considered.

This common-sense approach to illness, one with which we are all familiar, is to be applied to those illnesses that are more severe and life threatening. Our reasonable hope in the benefit of a proposed treatment should not reflect an attitude of preserving life “at all costs.”

The Presumption in Favor of Providing Nutrition and Hydration

As members of the human family, every man or woman, regardless of age or socio-economic condition, requires a set of fundamental human goods, among which are those required for maintaining life: food, air and water. Without these primary goods, other basic human needs become inconsequential.

To insure that the human dignity of every person is respected, there must always be a presumption in favor of food and hydration, even for those patients who require assistance for the delivery of those goods. When specific medical conditions indicate that a medical treatment may place excessive burdens on the patient without a sufficient benefit, the decision not to undertake such a treatment can be morally licit. When such a decision is made, continued care must be extended, including offering food and water to the extent to which the patient is able to receive them.

The presumption for food and hydration must also be carefully weighed, however, in consideration of both perceived benefit and excessive burden. This is especially true when a feeding tube has already been inserted. Depending upon the assessment in light of proper ethical principles and in consultation with proper medical professionals regarding the condition of the patient and the capability of human response, it may be morally licit not to undertake artificial nutrition and hydration, providing that the intention is not to bring about the death of the patient and that basic care is continued. For instance, if the food and hydration in fact harms the patient, then capping or removing the feeding tube

would be a prudential judgment to relieve unnecessary pain and suffering. The patient himself or herself or the designated surrogate are the proper persons to make any required decisions.

Forgoing Extraordinary or Disproportionate Means of Preserving Life

Often when it is time to make a decision to forgo extraordinary means of preserving life, families and loved ones are overwhelmed by the situation at hand. They may be pressed for decisions on whether or not to harvest organs, whether or not to remove life support or assisted respiration, or whether or not to accept a diagnosis of “brain death.” In such moments, when there is little time to work through the facts and the emotions of the situation, it is important to realize that the Church’s teaching is not “life at all costs.” A discussion of reasonable hope and excessive burden is not a denial of love and care for the person who is suffering.

Whether or not a proposed medical procedure is “extraordinary” or “disproportionate” can only be determined with reference to a specific medical condition of one given individual. Not all cancer patients, not all non-responsive individuals, not all persons facing imminent death can be assessed under a predetermined protocol. An informed judgment can only be made by the patient or legal surrogate in close concert with medical professionals in the light of Church teaching.

The intensity of emotion can inhibit our ability to assess either the hope of benefit of the proposed treatment or any potential burden that treatment might inflict on the patient and on those responsible for providing the care—the family, doctors, nurses and aides who are tied in love and charity to the patient. It is essential to establish a loving human relationship between the medical caregivers and the patient in order to insure that the dignity of that person is appropriately respected. Always, provisions should be made that the person receive the sacraments of the Church, including the Apostolic Blessing reserved for those near death. The family and friends should have the benefit of the ministry

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of the Church, and representatives of the Church should encourage them with prayer and by sharing our faith in Jesus and the salvation He offers.

The Importance of Making a Free and Informed Judgment

In order to assure a patient or a chosen legal surrogate that the decisions made regarding the end of life are licit and expressive of faith in Jesus Christ, the Church encourages all the faithful to seek guidance from medical professionals and from pastoral caregivers.

An informed decision should include competent medical authority. We must welcome and embrace all that has been learned by those who practice the medical arts as a vocation of human relationship. The development of this relationship will help remind all parties involved that the decisions to be made are always moral, as well as scientific.

No one should feel alone or incapable of deciding what best respects the individual dignity of the person suffering. When fully informed by the teaching of the Church, each Christian's prudential judgment regarding end-of-life issues is an exercise of that same freedom we experience in our sacramental union with Christ. It is the same freedom we feel having celebrated the sacrament of Penance, the same freedom we feel receiving the Eucharist, and the same freedom we feel in the loving company of those whom Christ has gathered around him in friendship.

On the Nature and Meaning of Human Personhood

Those whose lives are dedicated to the medical arts can also help us understand the Church's teaching on the nature and meaning of being a person. The advances in our knowledge of the workings of the mind and body as a compact unity affirm that which the Church has always held: being a person is a gift of having been created in the image and likeness of God. While all created reality serves God's purpose, only human beings are able through their physiology and spirituality to participate with God in the work of creation. Likewise, the medical arts are a supreme example of our ability to work with nature as we journey toward our completeness in physical health and through a "long stretch of days." Medicine, when rightly practiced, seeks to insure that all men and women can experience their humanity with vitality and fullness.

While all living creatures reveal the mystery of God in a way unique to each, only human beings reveal the mystery of God in a way not determined or limited by physiology alone. Only human beings can act in such a way that their life in the body conforms to their hearts, their minds and their wills. This is why a human being is rightly called a person, for human beings are more than the aggregate of physiological integrity. They have a spiritual life as well, and are capable of thought and decision, even though in the embryo or fetus these abilities are present potentially.

When assessing the mental state or physical condition of a developed human being, competent med-

ical authorities seek to determine the extent to which everything physically required for an individual to express him or herself, beyond merely bodily response, is functioning appropriately. Our medical professionals try to ascertain whether or not, in some appreciable measure, the individual is capable of communicating, "I am present." While this diagnostic communication is taking place, we should all encourage our doctors to be open and honest with us as patients, family, and friends. Participating in a genuine relationship with our doctors requires that we trust their professional judgment, especially when the situation is deemed life-threatening.

When facing end-of-life situations, we should never forget that personhood and human life are inextricably bound together. The Catholic Church teaches that the dignity of personhood is an innate dimension of being human. Personhood and human life can never be separated, for they are a unity willed by God. The Church looks to the advances made in the medical arts to understand better those situations in which the unity willed by God is no longer viable.

Each human person, therefore, is always more than the sum total of biological integrity. While it is true that human beings can be physically and mentally

ments over end-of-life issues do not intentionally or unintentionally allow for the direct termination of a human life. What a person experiences in embracing suffering and death informs and instructs others about the responsibility we have to one another in love. Human life will only be cherished and sacred to the extent that the commitment we make to respect, care for, and love one another is unwavering.

V. The Sacrament of Presence

For the Catholic faithful, the gift of each life is essentially a "sacrament" of presence. His teaching emanates from the fact of God becoming man in the person of Jesus. The abiding sign of the Church's belief in the dignity of the human person is the belief in the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. By Jesus' words and the power of the Holy Spirit, the Eucharist is the means by which Jesus' real presence remains with us until the end of time. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the goods of creation are used to permeate the whole of human history with the Presence of divinity. What appears as simple bread and wine communicates a Presence that transcends our human senses.

In the same way, human life is able to communicate a Presence that transcends what we sensibly perceive. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, individual human lives are incorporated into the life of Christ in such a way that they become the means by which His Presence is encountered and experienced in the world. Just as we cannot reduce the elements of the Eucharist only to that which we are capable of sensing, we must likewise never reduce a human life to what is merely biological.

Every human life bears the dignity of the Creator. No human life is ever considered to be the mere sum of biological and physiological processes. These natural processes ordered toward and directed by the brain, allow a person the sense of being present. Because of advances in medical technology, the precise time of death can be difficult to ascertain. Both ethical and medical criteria should be applied, often in dialogue with those with special training. Again, the patient or proper surrogate should make any decisions, fully informed of the teaching of the Church.

For the Christian people, baptism empowers the original dignity of personhood to become an active and innovative sign of God's love as a present reality. That is why the Church speaks of the "quality" of a human life as something greater than one's emotions or reflexive responses. The quality of each human life lies in the fact of its presence as a living, existing reality that remains an incarnate sign of the God who created all things.

Therefore, special and loving care must be extended to each human being, especially those no longer experiencing life as the compact unity that God intended. For them and for those who have died, we have a singular responsibility to insure that our treatment of them is worthy of the dignity they

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disabled by imperfections of the mind or body, it is never true that the physical or mental diminishment of a human being means that an individual is no longer a person. Personhood must never be thought of solely as a judgment imposed by others. Being a person is the ultimate gift of having been created by God in such a way that one can choose to share God's life. To make such choices, we must first have a degree of mental and physical health that enables us to do so.

On the Question of Euthanasia

Many Catholics have shared the experience of tending to their loved ones in their last days and know the complexity of the emotions and questions which can arise. Their love for the Creator and His will offers sure guidance and comfort in protecting life appropriately, even when the situation is beyond our understanding.

We must be careful as a nation that the laws we enact to promote and protect our prudential judg-

Education outlook

Continued from page 1

“Any organization needs to reinvent itself from time to time,” Sister Dominica said. “We need to examine the founding principles behind our schools and ‘re-found’ them. People have to understand that it’s not business as usual anymore.”

She acknowledged that conditions in the field have changed drastically in recent years. “Catholic schools historically have served immigrant populations, especially in urban areas,” she said. “But now many of the new immigrant groups are not Catholic. (Our schools) can stay in the communities only if they choose us.”

Catholic schools, going forward, must reaffirm their educational faith ministry for students, she said. “We need people with an understanding of the church, of young people and the needs of society,” she continued, indicating that strategic conversations about the future of schools are taking place in “pockets” of archdiocesan communities. However, these discussions now must expand into a “more coordinated conversation throughout the archdiocese,” she said.

“It’s not just what I think or

what a group of pastors think,” she declared, citing the need for all participants, especially community lay people, to come forward, candidly voice their concerns, address the big picture and embark on new sustainability strategies.

Perceptions, reality and emotions often collide when it comes to the sensitive topic of school closings in the shifting landscape of the archdiocese. “No school closes overnight,” Sister Dominica explained. “It is a gradual process over the years. When people make assumptions about school closings, they often miss the underlying reasons behind the closings, because they are too close to the situation.”

Now in her 14th year as the superintendent of schools here, Sister Dominica said gradual change in a community sometimes goes unnoticed by those closest to the situation. Offering personal testimony, she said she grew up in the East Harlem section of New York during the 1950s, moving away at age 13. Obvious ethnic and cultural shifts occurred in that neighborhood in the ensuing years—changes that were readily apparent to her

when she occasionally would return to visit family and friends. However, she recalled that the people she knew in East Harlem, those who remained entrenched in the neighborhood after she had left, had no “outside” perspective and were less aware of the changes over the years.

“No school closes overnight.”

—Sister Dominica

Yardsticks that measure all New Jersey schools have been recalibrated in recent years. Typically, financial woes are at the heart of the matter. For Catholic schools here, financial pressures are especially complex, given the reorganization of parishes as part of the ongoing “New Energies Initiatives,” which was outlined in the July 27 issue of *The Catholic Advocate*.

“Ideally, schools should be where parishes are,” Sister Dominica said, underscoring the need for spiritual guidance and financial support. Traditionally, the education ministry of a Catholic school is connected to a parish. The two institutions operate as a coordinated partnership, serving a community well defined by ethnic or geographic

boundaries. However, considering the realities of the New Energies Initiatives, where parishes must face decisions on merging or closing, the traditional church/school connection is being severed in some communities. This broken connection represents one of the key dynamics that will require “creative thinking” in order to sustain schools—in their education ministries as well as their financial health—Sister Dominica said.

New models for financial sustainability of schools must be an imperative, Sister Dominica declared. “We will need a whole new way of financing schools here,” she said, noting that in the Archdiocese of New York—where she served for 12 years as high school superintendent prior to her current position—the busi-

ness community provides a strong percentage of annual funding for schools. “We have tremendous infrastructure costs to maintain and rehabilitate our schools,” she said.

By way of comparison, public schools in New Jersey have seen their share of problems. Garden State parents, students, educators and community advocates recently were stung by the revelation that vital construction projects in over 200 schools here and in cities like Gloucester, East Orange and Perth Amboy, were put on hold indefinitely. Reports in *The Star-Ledger* in July indicated the state’s \$6-billion school construction program had expired, sparking charges of budget mismanagement by the N.J. Schools Construction Corp., the agency established to manage the program.

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Crossroads

Continued from page 21

In recent years, the archdiocese gradually has begun to understand the “true cost analysis” for Catholic schools, she said, explaining that a key part of the analysis involves the salaries for lay educators and administrators. In the past, the cost structure for Catholic schools was premised on donated services of religious brothers and sisters. Today, however, lay men and women represent 93 percent of the teaching staff for archdiocese elementary schools; 89 percent for secondary schools.

Nine schools in the archdiocese will merge into four “area” schools this year, as reported in the March 2 edition of *The Catholic Advocate*. It’s possible that additional mergers or closures will be necessary in the near term.

Schools in some communities in the archdiocese already have been transformed. Ironbound

Catholic Academy, here, and St. Patrick Academy, Elizabeth, for example, have merged, recasting themselves for a new education mission in their respective communities (see related stories below and on pages 23 and 24).

Meanwhile, St. John’s Academy in Hillsdale is enjoying the benefits of new and upgraded facilities, including a computer lab, a library/media center, playground and religious education resource rooms, which were unveiled one year ago, as reported in the Sept. 22, 2004, edition of *The Catholic Advocate*. The Aug. 24 and May 4 issues of *The Catholic Advocate* discussed the possible launch of a new urban high school based on the nationwide “Cristo Rey” model.

This is the first installment in a special report on archdiocesan schools, identifying critical issues and challenges. Part two will appear in the Sept. 21 edition of The Catholic Advocate and will discuss potential solutions and new approaches.

Do the math: enrollment sags while operating costs increase

BY MICHAEL C. GABRIELE

Editor

NEWARK—Enrollment in archdiocesan schools (grades K to 12) has slipped nearly 19 percent to 45,767 students for the 2004-05 school year, compared with 56,390 students in 1995-96. During that period, high school enrollment has risen slightly to a current level of more than 16,000 students, while the elementary school student population has tumbled nearly 30 percent to just over 29,000 students.

Annual costs to operate parish and co-sponsored schools registered \$124.5 million in fiscal 2004, a 34-percent increase compared with costs of \$92.9 million recorded in 1996. These dollar totals do not include “private” schools (those operated by religious orders) in the archdiocese.

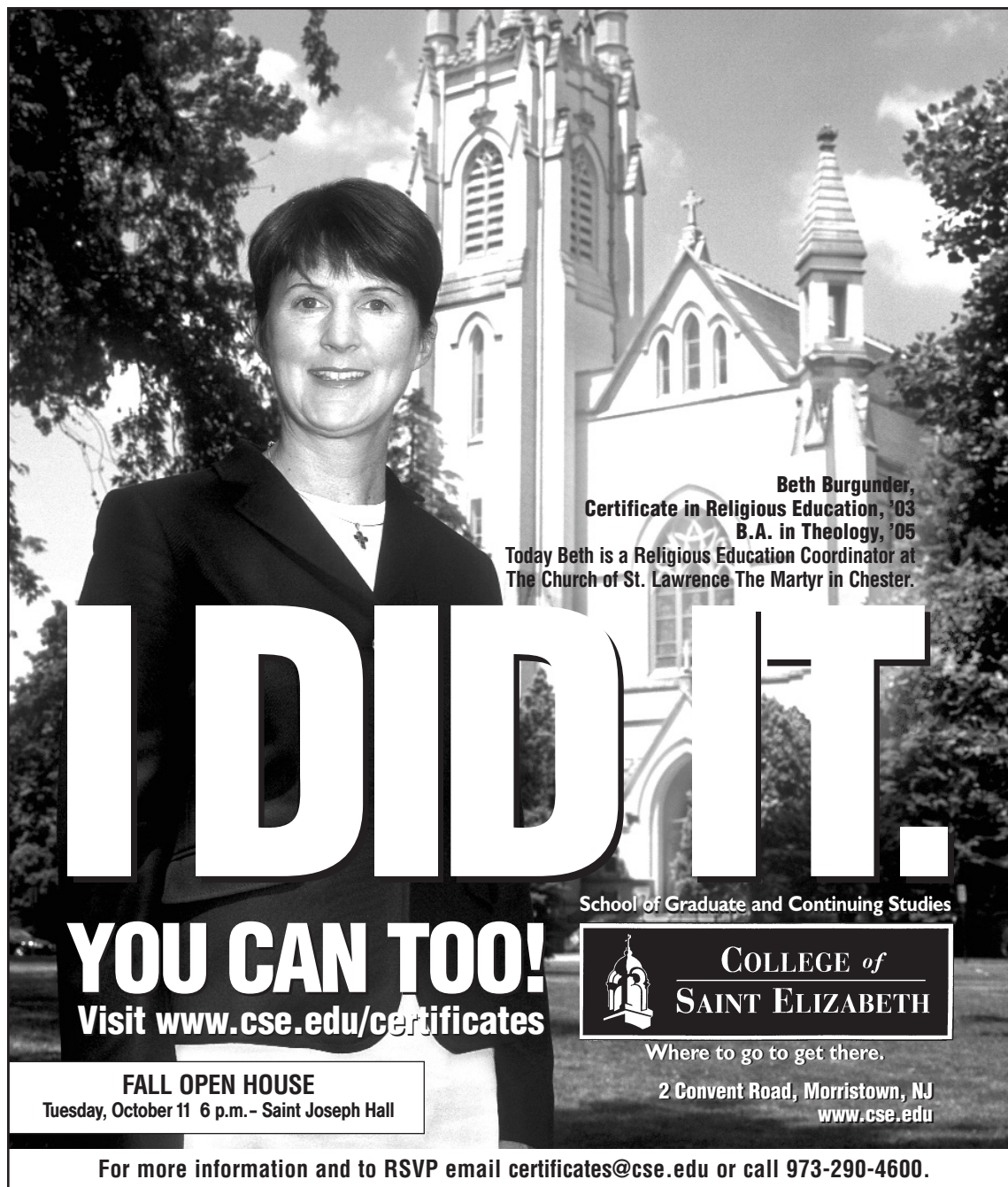
Breaking down the overall 2004 dollar figure (the most recent total available), the cost to operate archdiocesan elementary schools was \$105.3 million (up 32 percent from 1996), while the cost to operate high schools was just over \$19 million (up nearly 50 percent from 1996).

Currently, there are 36 Catholic high schools in the archdiocese, compared with 39 in 1994-95. Median tuition for high school students is \$6,150. Forty-seven percent of the high schools are in suburban settings, compared with 53 percent in urban areas (the same distribution holds for elementary schools). For archdiocesan high school students in the Class of 2004, 97 percent are pursuing a college education, a figure that is consistent with national averages for Catholic school students.

Catholic elementary schools in the archdiocese totaled 121 during the 2004-05 school year, compared with 153 elementary schools in 1994-95. Seventy-one percent of elementary school students will attend a Catholic secondary education. Median tuition for elementary school students is \$2,700.

(Note: the archdiocesan offices of education and finance provided figures on annual costs, student population and schools.)

National trends also illustrate significant changes for Catholic schools in recent years. A 2005 report by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Inc., citing the National Catholic Education Association statistics (both groups are based in Washington), indicated that since 1990 there has been a net loss of more than 850 Catholic schools in the United States, even though over 400 new schools have been opened during that same period. In addition, there has been a net loss of 170,000 Catholic school students nationwide.



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St. Pat's Academy to the rescue

BY WARD MIELE
Managing Editor

ELIZABETH—A Catholic elementary school education will continue to be available in the port section of the city.

Immediately after Elizabethport Catholic School closed in June, the victim of

dwindling enrollment and escalating financial difficulties, the board of trustees and administration of nearby Saint Patrick High School swung into action. The result is St. Patrick Academy (SPA).

While Elizabethport Catholic, which opened in 1996, was a K-8 school, SPA will, at least

initially, be a middle school for grades 5-8. It is housed on the first floor of the elementary school. If all goes well the lower grades could be added as early as the fall of 2006.

SPA is fully accredited with a computer lab, library, gym, science lab and cafeteria. A staple of the education program is the incorporation of technology as a learning tool with such courses as Algebra and Spanish. Activities will include chess, drama, choir, student council, basketball, track and volleyball.

Response to St. Patrick Academy, according to school director, Christian Brother Daniel McCulloch, is out there. The return rate of former Elizabethport Catholic students has been "very good," he said, adding "we still have room for at least an additional 20 students who will benefit from our educational program."

The decision to go with grades 5-8 at the outset, principal Joseph Picaro pointed out, "would form a nucleus for future expansion." Most of the Elizabethport Catholic teachers have been rehired.

Principal Picaro emphasized the fact that St. Patrick

Academy will be "separate and distinct" from the high school and have "its own identity."

Asked the key to success at St. Patrick Academy, Brother

McCulloch used one word, "prayer." As Principal Picaro sees it, "we need to prove to the community what a wonderful job we are doing." Both stressed the importance of continuing to serve the educational needs of the area.

Expanding on that point, the principal said he went to Catholic school in Elizabeth at a time when there were 14 Catholic schools. Now, he lamented, there are only four. Without St. Patrick Academy, the principal noted, there would be no Catholic school from the waterfront to Routes 1 and 9.

Brother McCulloch said "providing quality education to the inner-city is so important regardless of religious denomination." Citing the role of Gospel values in a Catholic education, he said that is why Catholic schools are "sought out."

Steve Mango, a teacher at St. Patrick High School, commented, "while we are saddened to see Elizabethport Catholic close after 10 years of service to the port community, we are happy to welcome these students into Saint Patrick Academy. Hopefully they will be joined by others who wish to learn in an exciting community where faith-based values are shared and moral education is taught."



Photo by Chris S. Chevannes

Jhamar Youngblood, going into his senior year at St. Patrick High School, was among several high school students fulfilling their community service by helping to prepare the first floor for Saint Patrick Academy. He painted and moved equipment during over 100 hours of service.

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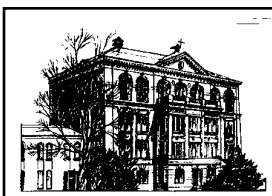
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FALL OPEN HOUSE

Monday, September 19, 2005
7 P.M.

Presented by Parent Teacher Association
Location (In the School's Gymnasium)



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William Wordsworth

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November 12 at 8:00 a.m.

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September 15, 10:00 AM
Kenilworth Inn
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Cross St./The Blvd.

Essex - Newark

September 20, 9:00 AM
Hilton Newark Gateway
1 Gateway Center - Raymond Blvd.
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Compliance Safety & Health Officer

Responsible for compliance w/federal, state, local regulations. Deals w/regulatory agencies, develops compliance strategies. Oversees seven cemetery locations. Manages all functions related to safety of cemetery employees in accordance w/applicable state/federal law outline w/in OSHA guidelines. Monitors employee attendance. Provides safety training for employees, reviews training methods. Implements new safety practices as necessary. Sets up/heads safety committee. Creates employee safety manual. Develops programs, monitors, evaluates all safe work practices. **Required:** Strong organizational, written, oral, interpersonal skills required. Superior knowledge of OSHA federal/laws, regulations/guidelines related to safety. Licensed in appropriate areas. **Education/Exp:** College degree & computer experience required. Prior safety experience preferred. Bi-lingual a plus.

Customer Service Rep.

Assists the public, funeral directors & vendors w/their needs as they relate to Catholic Cemeteries. Answer phones, take funeral orders, process interments, data entry, process monument paper-work. **Required:** Articulate with superior communication skills & a strong attention to detail; communication w/our Catholic families in time of mourning. Excellent computer skills & familiar w/office equip & procedures. **Education/Exp.:** College degree preferred. HS diploma w/at least 3 to 5 yrs admin/sec experience a must.

Executive Secretary

Provides executive level and secretarial support to the offices of the Executive and Assistant Directors. Processes incoming mail, manages phones, organizes schedules/calendars for appts, prepares daily agendas, handles meetings w/vendors, builders, etc. Types letters & memos. **Required:** Strong organizational, written, oral skills. Excellent computer skills in Excel, Word and Power Point. Must maintain confidentiality. **Education:** College degree or 2 yrs post HS diploma related to business admin. Bi-lingual (Engl/Span) a plus.

Grounds & Landscape Specialist

Leads & conducts review, planning, maintenance of daily/seasonal activities re upkeep & aesthetic beauty of cemetery grounds & exterior spaces at seven locations. Determines need, creates/prepares landscaping plans for scheduling of renovation & renewal of grounds. Develops schedules/timetables for fertilizing; performs soil testing. **Required:** Strong organizational skills. Ability to identify problems before they become unmanageable. Computer skills essential. License w/state DEP for pesticide control & use of fumigants required. **Education/Exp:** College degree required w/3 yrs experience directly related to above requirements. A related higher degree from accredited institution may be substituted for up to 2 years exp.

Anyone interested in applying for any of these positions should email the office of Human Resources at floresra@rcan.org or fax 973-497-4103 by September 9, 2005. Please indicate position of interest in cover letter.

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STAFF WRITER/REPORTER
The Catholic Advocate newspaper
The Archdiocese of Newark

Job Description: The staff writer will be responsible for generating editorial content for each issue of *The Catholic Advocate*. This involves basic reporter duties of completing news assignments on deadline, covering Archdiocesan events under direction of managing editor, editing news copy, conducting interviews and rewriting press releases. Photography skills are a plus.

- Qualification/Skills:**
- Basic knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Church.
 - Strong writing, editing, reporting skills.
 - Strong interpersonal skills.
 - Complete computer literacy.
 - Photography skills.
 - Valid driver's license and working automobile.

Education and/or work experience: Journalism degree or equivalent work experience; 1 to 3 years on a weekly or daily newspaper. Will also consider a recent college graduate. **Physical demands:** The physical demands are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the functions of this job in a normal office environment. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Location: *The Catholic Advocate* office is located at 171 Clifton Ave., Newark, N.J. 07104-0500, adjacent to the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Please submit cover letter, resume and writing samples to: Ramona Flores, Associate Director
Office of Human Resources
The Archdiocese of Newark
171 Clifton Ave., PO Box 9500
Newark, NJ 07104-0500

The Catholic
Advocate

Bookkeeper

St. Stephen's Church in Kearny is seeking a full-time bookkeeper to work in conjunction with the parish account. The position includes:

- Complete responsibility for payroll/benefits for parish and school
- Payment of all parish and school bills in a timely manner
- Banking responsibilities
- Ability to work collaboratively
- Computer literacy
- Some secretarial responsibilities in cooperation with staff secretary
- Understanding of the role and mission of the Catholic Church
- Other responsibilities as determined by the pastor

Position offer salary commensurate with experience, and benefits as defined by the Archdiocese. Please send resume, salary history, and 3 letters of recommendation no later than September 15th to:
Rev. Richard E. Cabezas, Pastor
St. Stephan's Church
141 Washington Avenue
Kearny, NJ 07032

IMMEDIATE OPENING

Part time Driver/Warehouse Assistant – Emergency Food and Nutrition Network, Monday-Friday, 9am-2pm. Benefits included. Wanted: person with an excellent driving record, good interpersonal and organizational skills. Heavy lifting involved. Valid N.J. driver's license a must. Bilingual preferred. Great opportunity for a college student. Call (973) 266-7966 to schedule an interview.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COURAGE

An Archdiocesan sponsored spiritual support group for persons experiencing same-sex attractions who desire to lead a chaste life in accord with Catholic teaching on homosexuality. For information, call 973-509-7839 (All calls confidential)

Music Director

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church is seeking a music director and a leader of song/cantor for a congregation of 900 families. Knowledge of piano and organ is a plus. The position has possibilities to grow under the creativity and leadership of the individual. There already is an organist/pianist on staff. The parish has existing adult and youth choirs as well as one adult bell choir. Salary will be commensurate with individual's education and experience. The individual should possess full knowledge and understanding of Catholic Liturgy. A copy of the job description is available upon request. The position is available after September 1, 2005. Please send a letter of interest and a resume to:
Father Robert J. Gordon,
Our Lady of Mount Carmel R.C. Church
910 Birch Street, Boonton, New Jersey 07005
Phone: 973-334-1017 • Fax: 973-335-1833
or email: RJGordon@aol.com

Secretary

St. Stephen's Church in Kearny is seeking a full-time parish secretary. The position involves:

- Complete computer literacy
- Ability to work collaboratively with priests and staff
- Excellent phone skills
- Reception at front door
- Sacramental paper work/filing
- Preparation of letters and other communication
- Maintenance of office supplies
- Coordination of student office help
- Working relationship with parish bookkeeper and accountant
- Other responsibilities as determined by the pastor

Position offer salary commensurate with experience, and benefits as defined by the Archdiocese. Please send resume, salary history, and 3 letters of recommendation no later than September 15th to:
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NOVENAS

PRAYER TO THE
BLESSED VIRGIN

Oh most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the Sea, help me and show me that you are my mother. Oh Holy Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to secure me in my necessity (make request). There are none that can withstand your power. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. I place this cause in your hands. Amen. Say this prayer for 3 consecutive days. Novena is published in gratitude. Thank you. **R.E.**

PRAYER TO THE
BLESSED VIRGIN

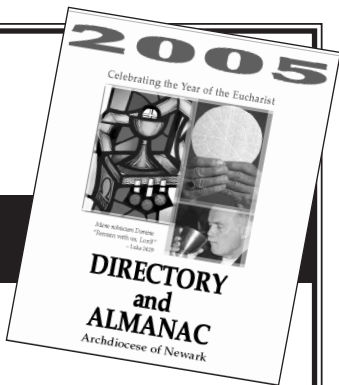
Oh most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the Sea, help me and show me that you are my mother. Oh Holy Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to secure me in my necessity (make request). There are none that can withstand your power. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. I place this cause in your hands. Amen. Say this prayer for 3 consecutive days. Novena is published in gratitude. Thank you. **S.L.**

PRAYER TO ST. JUDE

Most Holy Apostle, St. Jude, faithful servant and friend of Jesus, the church honors and invokes you universally as the patron of hopeless cases, of things almost despaired of. Pray for me, I am so helpless and alone. Make use I implore you, of that particular privilege given to you, to bring visible and speedy help where help is almost despaired of. Come to my assistance in this great need that I may receive the consolation and help of heaven in all my necessities, tribulations, and sufferings and that I may praise God with you and all the elect forever. I promise, O blessed St. Jude, to be ever mindful of this great favor, to always honor you as my special and powerful patron, and to greatly encourage devotion to you. Amen. **C.Q.**

NOVENA TO ST. JUDE

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us. St. Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us. St. Jude, helper of the hopeless, pray for us. Amen. Say this prayer nine times a day for nine days. Published in gratitude. Thank you, St. Jude. **B.W.**



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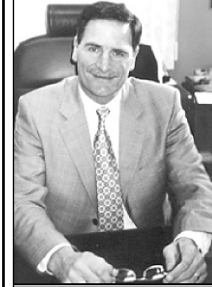
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St. Peter Claver celebration set

MONTCLAIR—St. Peter Claver Parish will celebrate the Silver Jubilee of its St. Peter Claver Day Homecoming at the Sunday Mass on Sept. 11. The entire weekend of Silver Jubilee events will take place Sept. 9-11. Guest speaker at the 11 a.m. Eucharist will be Father Nigel R. Mohammad, parochial vicar at St. Teresa of Avila Parish, Summit. A luncheon on the Green will follow Mass. On Friday, Sept. 9, the parish will host a children’s teaching Mass at 7 p.m. followed

by an ice cream social. A thanksgiving Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, Sept. 10, at 5:45 p.m. The Mass will begin an evening of cultural activities. Planned events include exhibits, dances and a special presentation on parish history. The Silver Jubilee concludes on Tuesday, Sept. 13, with a healing Mass at 7 p.m. followed by a reception. The entire celebration is open to the public. The parish is located at 56 Elmwood Ave.

Giving Real Estate

A vacant lot. A vacation home. A few acres of raw land. Many people in the Archdiocese of Newark have real estate like this. They have property and they don’t quite know what to do with it.

One possibility is to donate all or a portion of the property to the Archdiocese, either as an outright gift or in exchange for a lifetime of income.

Consider Mr. and Mrs. Benson. They had five acres of raw land in Pennsylvania that appraised for \$100,000. They purchased it years ago for \$10,000, thinking they might build a house on it someday. That plan never materialized, but they continued to hold the land.

They thought of selling it more than once, but the idea of paying capital gains tax on the sale slowed them down. Also, they were overwhelmed just thinking about all the time and trouble it would take to market and sell the property. And so they just let it sit there.

Then they learned that the Archdiocese of Newark was willing to receive the land and to sell it, using the proceeds to create an endowment fund in their name. They were also pleased to discover that they would receive an income tax charitable deduction for the gift.

Another couple, the Andersons, gave a vacation home to the Archdiocese in trust, and made arrangements to receive income from the trust for the rest of their lives. Like the Bensons, they avoided capital gains tax and obtained an immediate income tax charitable deduction.

The Archdiocesan associate director of planned giving, Ken DiPaola, is available to assist you in thinking through the opportunities and issues related to real estate gifts. He will be happy to come to your home or talk with you on the phone. You can even come to his office if you wish. Ken is a knowledgeable gift planner and you will like him because he listens well and keeps confidences.

To arrange a meeting with **Ken DiPaola** and/or to request our free brochure on giving real estate, use the coupon below. You can also reach Ken by phone, at (973) 497 - 4332. Or visit our Web site at www.rcan.org.



Dear Mr. DiPaola,

- ☐ Please contact me for a personal visit.
- ☐ Please send me information about various ways to give to my parish or the Archdiocese of Newark.
- ☐ Please send me information about how to make a will that works.
- ☐ Please send me information about giving through charitable remainder and lead trusts.

Name(s) _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Please return this form to: *Office of Planned Giving, Archdiocese of Newark*
171 Clifton Avenue, PO Box 9577, Newark, NJ 07104
Fax: (973) 497-4031 • email: dipaolke@rcan.org



9-7-05



Advocate photo- M. Gabriele

RENEW GOLF OUTING—Renew International will sponsor a golf outing Sept. 22 at the Fiddler’s Elbow Country Club, Bedminster. The event will celebrate the Plainfield-based organization’s 25th anniversary and features sports celebrities such as baseball legends Bobby Thompson and Ralph Branca, as well as former N.Y. Giants football stars Ottis Anderson, Mark Bavaro, Bart Oates, Jim Burt and Billy Ard. The outing will include a cocktail reception and awards dinner. Pictured above are event coordinators Bill Reilly and Beverly O’Malley, who also serve as directors at Renew, a not-for-profit Catholic group that provides training, educational resources and consulting services for dioceses around the world. Contact Renew at (908) 769-5400 for registration information on the golf outing.

Priest pens textbook

SOUTH ORANGE—What is the nature of truth? Of interpretation? Of language about God? What is the proper relationship between faith and reason?

Foundations of Systematic Theology, a new textbook by Father Thomas G. Guarino, S.T.D., professor of Systematic Theology at Seton Hall University, considers these fundamental issues that are the basis

of all theological reflection. It examines in-depth those foundational issues at the heart of systematic thinking about Christian faith.

The book is intended for graduate students and advanced undergraduate students studying philosophy and theology.

For more information, contact Father Guarino at guarinth@shu.edu.

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Rain or Shine

Papal organist performing Sept. 9 at Queen of Peace

NORTH ARLINGTON — James Goettsche, principle papal organist, will give his only area performance on Friday, Sept. 9, at Queen of Peace Parish at 7:30 p.m.

Goettsche performs at Christmas and Easter Masses, the ordination of bishops and cardinals, beatifications and canonizations. He performed at the funeral of Pope John Paul II and the installation of Pope Benedict XVI.

A native of Omaha, NE, Goettsche has lived in Rome the past 30 years. Following graduation from St. Cecilia Conservatory in Rome in 1968, he became the official organist at the Church of St. Francis of Rome. In 1989, Goettsche was elected organist at St. Peter's Basilica and the organist for papal liturgies at the Vatican.

Goettsche's local performance is sponsored by the Music Ministry of the parish.



Papal organist James Goettsche will perform Sept. 9 at Queen of Peace Parish in North Arlington. Call 201-997-0700 for more information.

Advanced tickets are available at the parish rectory for \$5. Tickets purchased the night of the performance will cost \$10. The church is located at 174 Ridge Road. Call 201-997-0700 for more information.



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“Whether in Life or in Death, We are the Lord’s”

Romans 14: 7

**Most Reverend John J. Myers, J.C.D., D.D.
Archbishop of Newark**

Pastoral Letter on Death and Dying

I. Introduction

Many of us have experienced the sadness and suffering of standing close by as the life of a loved one fades and comes near the end of the time ordained for this world. My father, my sisters and brothers and I knew this ordeal when we had to make a variety of decisions as my mother’s life faded and she underwent a series of medical emergencies. The occasions and the discussions were difficult, even wrenching. Fortunately, the family is close and our relationships have remained good. Finally, in God’s time, He took her to himself. We have been deeply comforted by the faith which we shared with her, and which she nurtured in us.

In this spirit, I wish to share some reflections with those in the Archdiocese of Newark who may now or sometime in the future seek comfort in Jesus Christ’s victory over sin and over death.

The words from St. Paul’s letter to the Romans, in the title, direct us toward the very heart of Christianity. Jesus is sent by the Father to reveal the Mystery of God as a community of persons in a relationship of loving communion. As the revelation of the Father, Jesus, through His humanity, shines light on what it means to be a person created in the image and likeness of God, what it means to be truly human. By His death and resurrection, Jesus redeemed us and made us His own, giving us the means necessary to experience here and now what we will live fully when we have passed from death into eternal life. The Gospel celebrates the truth that “Whether in life or in death, we are the Lord’s.”

For the Christian people, Jesus remains “the glory of man fully alive.” Christ alone completely reveals what it means to express the love from which and for which we were created. Through the Church, God continues to reach out to us in the person of His Son. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God enables us to understand just what it means to live as men and women created in the divine image. The invitation of Christ is a call for all men and women to encounter the Divine Presence. This encounter affords us the opportunity to bring the most troubling and heart-wrenching questions of human existence to the One who provides us the way to understand and to address the most difficult circumstances of life.

The revelation of God proclaimed by Jesus was expressed most perfectly and definitively through His own willingness to suffer and to die. Jesus is, therefore, precisely the one to whom we should turn when we find ourselves confronted by the reality of death in our own lives or in the lives of those we love. He didn’t simply talk about suffering and death; He endured them and He prevailed over them. Jesus teaches us not only what it means that “in life and in death, we are the Lord’s.” He also enables us to live the truth of the words St. Paul has spoken.

II. What We Must Ask Ourselves

Earlier this year, our nation, indeed the world, watched with stunned fascination the unfolding of death in the life of one American family. The death of Terri Schiavo saw unparalleled media scrutiny. Although we may not know all the facts, we do know that many questions remain, including, for some, confusion about Church teaching in these matters. At the center of our confusion lies a set of important questions:

- What is the nature and meaning of personhood?
- What is our moral responsibility to provide food and water to those who are unable to care for themselves?

• What is the role of competent medical authority in assessing the condition of those who seem incapable of human response?

• What are the obligations of a democratic society to safeguard the lives of those most vulnerable and in need of care?

In order for all of us in the Church to be able to make informed and morally licit decisions when our own health is seriously diminished or death is imminent, we need to review the Church’s teachings on these important questions.

Every day in our country, feeding tubes are removed or refused without garnering even local media attention. What set the case of Terri Schiavo apart, what indeed made this situation so unusually tragic, was the struggle between two groups. One group considered Terri as a person who existed with them in loving relationship; the other group considered that her personhood had ended long ago. One group felt that the loving thing to do was to continue caring for Terri; the other group seemed convinced that it was an act of love to move her from life with God here to life with God in heaven.

In the midst of the overwhelming media coverage of Terri Schiavo’s dying and of her death, many of us perhaps stopped seeing her as a person but rather as an idea or as a cause, or in a worst-case scenario, as a political tool. In the midst of this confusion, we cannot allow ourselves to forget that beneath all the arguments was a living human being.

We all need to keep in mind that Terri Schiavo was and is a person, a sister in our faith. Though much that transpired in the process of her death was disordered, she is with the Lord and she has become, in a sense, a symbol of the confusion in America over the tension between individual autonomy and communal responsibility. Certainly, this experience underscores the need of making one’s wishes known in writing and in a form which is recognized in particular jurisdictions.

III. Death is Our Reunion with Christ

We need to remind ourselves that death is not an evil that should be feared. In the words of the ancient preface of the funeral liturgy, “Lord, for your faithful people, life is changed, not ended; and when the body of our earthly dwelling lies in death, we gain an everlasting place in heaven.” Death is not only an end to “earthly” existence; it also is the passageway to eternal life. Unnecessarily prolonging death, clinging at all costs to this life, can be an attempt to reject what our faith boldly proclaims,

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“Death has no more power over Christ!”

It is a virtuous practice to pray for a happy death, and many Christians have implored St. Joseph to obtain for them what each priest and religious prays for every night, “a peaceful death.” While we should not hasten our death, we must not fear it either. St. Benedict reminds us to pray for death each day, as if it were to come tomorrow; for we know neither the time nor the hour of its approach. Our hope is not to live our mortal lives without end, but to live for all eternity with God.

The mystery that shrouds death causes fear for many. Faith nonetheless strengthens what is lacking in our human frailty and gives us the courage to embrace what we cannot change. Faith also recognizes the necessity to be fearless in the face of death. “Where I am going you know the way,” Jesus tells His apostles. We must live with confidence that Christ is preparing a place for us and will indeed return to unite us with Himself.

While we live as God’s children now, we long for the moment when we shall become like Him and see Him face to face. The way we respond to the suffering and death of those whom we love, the way in which we embrace our own mortality, speaks volumes about the way in which we have accepted that Jesus Christ is Lord of the living and the dead. The inability to accept that suffering is redemptive, or the inclination to immediately end the pain of those who are suffering, reveals that we have not yet accepted the Way for us to live the fullness of our humanity. Likewise, the refusal to accept that death comes to all, shown by attempts to maintain biological vitality at all costs, also reveals a failure to place our hopes in Christ. Christians always must embrace life here and now with their hearts and minds set on a world that will never end, a world in which every tear will be wiped away.

IV. Forming End-of-Life Decisions

Our attitude toward death must be an extension of our attitude toward life. Living now for God will determine how we will face the moment when we pass from this world to the next. In order to help the faithful put in place appropriate and clear legal and medical directives, the Church has articulated a set of principles derived from the most fundamental teachings on the dignity of the human person and the inherent dignity of each human life. Just as every individual human life is unique and unrepeatable, from conception until natural death, so too the physical suffering and medical condition of each person is unique and cannot be generalized. The following ethical principles of the Church respect this aspect of our individuality as children of God.

They are meant to serve as a helpful guide to end-of-life decisions, allowing us to embrace suffering and death in freedom, and with peace of mind.

Our Obligation for the Proportionate Means of Preserving Life

Life is sacred, for it is a gift from God. As recipients of this precious gift, we are always morally obligated to use ordinary means for maintaining and insuring physical health. “Proportionate means” describes those medical remedies and procedures that in the judgment of the patient and competent medical authority, in light of the Christian understanding of the dignity of human persons, offer a reasonable hope of benefit. Many of us employ this principle without much thought as we consider to what extent we wish to experience the side-effects of over-the-counter remedies for such common ailments as the flu, a cold, a sore throat, a headache or



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muscle pain. At times we forgo a remedy in favor of letting the illness “take its course” because we do not wish to be hindered by the side-effects of the remedy being considered.

This common-sense approach to illness, one with which we are all familiar, is to be applied to those illnesses that are more severe and life threatening. Our reasonable hope in the benefit of a proposed treatment should not reflect an attitude of preserving life “at all costs.”

The Presumption in Favor of Providing Nutrition and Hydration

As members of the human family, every man or woman, regardless of age or socio-economic condition, requires a set of fundamental human goods, among which are those required for maintaining life: food, air and water. Without these primary goods, other basic human needs become inconsequential.

To insure that the human dignity of every person is respected, there must always be a presumption in favor of food and hydration, even for those patients who require assistance for the delivery of those goods. When specific medical conditions indicate that a medical treatment may place excessive burdens on the patient without a sufficient benefit, the decision not to undertake such a treatment can be morally licit. When such a decision is made, continued care must be extended, including offering food and water to the extent to which the patient is able to receive them.

The presumption for food and hydration must also be carefully weighed, however, in consideration of both perceived benefit and excessive burden. This is especially true when a feeding tube has already been inserted. Depending upon the assessment in light of proper ethical principles and in consultation with proper medical professionals regarding the condition of the patient and the capability of human response, it may be morally licit not to undertake artificial nutrition and hydration, providing that the intention is not to bring about the death of the patient and that basic care is continued. For instance, if the food and hydration in fact harms the patient, then capping or removing the feeding tube

would be a prudential judgment to relieve unnecessary pain and suffering. The patient himself or herself or the designated surrogate are the proper persons to make any required decisions.

Forgoing Extraordinary or Disproportionate Means of Preserving Life

Often when it is time to make a decision to forgo extraordinary means of preserving life, families and loved ones are overwhelmed by the situation at hand. They may be pressed for decisions on whether or not to harvest organs, whether or not to remove life support or assisted respiration, or whether or not to accept a diagnosis of “brain death.” In such moments, when there is little time to work through the facts and the emotions of the situation, it is important to realize that the Church’s teaching is not “life at all costs.” A discussion of reasonable hope and excessive burden is not a denial of love and care for the person who is suffering.

Whether or not a proposed medical procedure is “extraordinary” or “disproportionate” can only be determined with reference to a specific medical condition of one given individual. Not all cancer patients, not all non-responsive individuals, not all persons facing imminent death can be assessed under a predetermined protocol. An informed judgment can only be made by the patient or legal surrogate in close concert with medical professionals in the light of Church teaching.

The intensity of emotion can inhibit our ability to assess either the hope of benefit of the proposed treatment or any potential burden that treatment might inflict on the patient and on those responsible for providing the care—the family, doctors, nurses and aides who are tied in love and charity to the patient. It is essential to establish a loving human relationship between the medical caregivers and the patient in order to insure that the dignity of that person is appropriately respected. Always, provisions should be made that the person receive the sacraments of the Church, including the Apostolic Blessing reserved for those near death. The family and friends should have the benefit of the ministry

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of the Church, and representatives of the Church should encourage them with prayer and by sharing our faith in Jesus and the salvation He offers.

The Importance of Making a Free and Informed Judgment

In order to assure a patient or a chosen legal surrogate that the decisions made regarding the end of life are licit and expressive of faith in Jesus Christ, the Church encourages all the faithful to seek guidance from medical professionals and from pastoral caregivers.

An informed decision should include competent medical authority. We must welcome and embrace all that has been learned by those who practice the medical arts as a vocation of human relationship. The development of this relationship will help remind all parties involved that the decisions to be made are always moral, as well as scientific.

No one should feel alone or incapable of deciding what best respects the individual dignity of the person suffering. When fully informed by the teaching of the Church, each Christian's prudential judgment regarding end-of-life issues is an exercise of that same freedom we experience in our sacramental union with Christ. It is the same freedom we feel having celebrated the sacrament of Penance, the same freedom we feel receiving the Eucharist, and the same freedom we feel in the loving company of those whom Christ has gathered around him in friendship.

On the Nature and Meaning of Human Personhood

Those whose lives are dedicated to the medical arts can also help us understand the Church's teaching on the nature and meaning of being a person. The advances in our knowledge of the workings of the mind and body as a compact unity affirm that which the Church has always held: being a person is a gift of having been created in the image and likeness of God. While all created reality serves God's purpose, only human beings are able through their physiology and spirituality to participate with God in the work of creation. Likewise, the medical arts are a supreme example of our ability to work with nature as we journey toward our completeness in physical health and through a "long stretch of days." Medicine, when rightly practiced, seeks to insure that all men and women can experience their humanity with vitality and fullness.

While all living creatures reveal the mystery of God in a way unique to each, only human beings reveal the mystery of God in a way not determined or limited by physiology alone. Only human beings can act in such a way that their life in the body conforms to their hearts, their minds and their wills. This is why a human being is rightly called a person, for human beings are more than the aggregate of physiological integrity. They have a spiritual life as well, and are capable of thought and decision, even though in the embryo or fetus these abilities are present potentially.

When assessing the mental state or physical condition of a developed human being, competent med-

ical authorities seek to determine the extent to which everything physically required for an individual to express him or herself, beyond merely bodily response, is functioning appropriately. Our medical professionals try to ascertain whether or not, in some appreciable measure, the individual is capable of communicating, "I am present." While this diagnostic communication is taking place, we should all encourage our doctors to be open and honest with us as patients, family, and friends. Participating in a genuine relationship with our doctors requires that we trust their professional judgment, especially when the situation is deemed life-threatening.

When facing end-of-life situations, we should never forget that personhood and human life are inextricably bound together. The Catholic Church teaches that the dignity of personhood is an innate dimension of being human. Personhood and human life can never be separated, for they are a unity willed by God. The Church looks to the advances made in the medical arts to understand better those situations in which the unity willed by God is no longer viable.

Each human person, therefore, is always more than the sum total of biological integrity. While it is true that human beings can be physically and mentally

ments over end-of-life issues do not intentionally or unintentionally allow for the direct termination of a human life. What a person experiences in embracing suffering and death informs and instructs others about the responsibility we have to one another in love. Human life will only be cherished and sacred to the extent that the commitment we make to respect, care for, and love one another is unwavering.

V. The Sacrament of Presence

For the Catholic faithful, the gift of each life is essentially a "sacrament" of presence. His teaching emanates from the fact of God becoming man in the person of Jesus. The abiding sign of the Church's belief in the dignity of the human person is the belief in the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. By Jesus' words and the power of the Holy Spirit, the Eucharist is the means by which Jesus' real presence remains with us until the end of time. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the goods of creation are used to permeate the whole of human history with the Presence of divinity. What appears as simple bread and wine communicates a Presence that transcends our human senses.

In the same way, human life is able to communicate a Presence that transcends what we sensibly perceive. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, individual human lives are incorporated into the life of Christ in such a way that they become the means by which His Presence is encountered and experienced in the world. Just as we cannot reduce the elements of the Eucharist only to that which we are capable of sensing, we must likewise never reduce a human life to what is merely biological.

Every human life bears the dignity of the Creator. No human life is ever considered to be the mere sum of biological and physiological processes. These natural processes ordered toward and directed by the brain, allow a person the sense of being present. Because of advances in medical technology, the precise time of death can be difficult to ascertain. Both ethical and medical criteria should be applied, often in dialogue with those with special training. Again, the patient or proper surrogate should make any decisions, fully informed of the teaching of the Church.

For the Christian people, baptism empowers the original dignity of personhood to become an active and innovative sign of God's love as a present reality. That is why the Church speaks of the "quality" of a human life as something greater than one's emotions or reflexive responses. The quality of each human life lies in the fact of its presence as a living, existing reality that remains an incarnate sign of the God who created all things.

Therefore, special and loving care must be extended to each human being, especially those no longer experiencing life as the compact unity that God intended. For them and for those who have died, we have a singular responsibility to insure that our treatment of them is worthy of the dignity they

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disabled by imperfections of the mind or body, it is never true that the physical or mental diminishment of a human being means that an individual is no longer a person. Personhood must never be thought of solely as a judgment imposed by others. Being a person is the ultimate gift of having been created by God in such a way that one can choose to share God's life. To make such choices, we must first have a degree of mental and physical health that enables us to do so.

On the Question of Euthanasia

Many Catholics have shared the experience of tending to their loved ones in their last days and know the complexity of the emotions and questions which can arise. Their love for the Creator and His will offers sure guidance and comfort in protecting life appropriately, even when the situation is beyond our understanding.

We must be careful as a nation that the laws we enact to promote and protect our prudential judg-