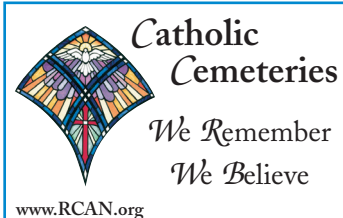




Archdiocese revamps  
program for deacons,  
launches Web site  
See page 10

# The Catholic Advocate



Vol. 56, No. 4

CATHOLIC PRESS ASSOCIATION GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Wednesday, February 21, 2007

## The Living Church

# Spirit of inclusion inspires families with special needs

BY ANNE MASTERS

Special to The Catholic Advocate

A family is at Mass, including their son with autism. They are approached by the usher and asked to take their child and leave. A family friend seeks out parishes that would be more welcoming.

In another church, another mother turns to the person next her to offer the Sign of Peace during Mass. "I don't think so," says the woman. "He," she says pointing to her son with autism, "doesn't belong here."

For families living with disabilities every day, the frustration and hurt from rejection can be overwhelming. This sting is especially painful when that rejection comes from their faith-based community.

As Catholics, we acknowledge that all people are made in the image of God, and further, that all baptized people share in the life and mission of the Church. However, when full participation within the Body of Christ is inhibited or prevented, the Church is incomplete and we, as a people, are diminished.

The Washington, D.C.-based U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has challenged all people of good will, not just Catholics, to re-examine attitudes and practices that marginalize or minimize the humanity of people with disabilities. (Pastoral Statement of the USCCB on People with Disabilities, available online at: [www.ncpd.org/pastoral\\_statement\\_1978.htm](http://www.ncpd.org/pastoral_statement_1978.htm).)

In this statement, the bishops declared that including people with disabilities is

more than a nice thing to do, and that it is a matter of justice, not charity. Justice conforms to truth and what is correct. Charity is typically understood as something done for people in need who are vulnerable by people who have more and are in positions of power.

Although it is certainly nice to help people in need, it is important to realize that each person, regardless of ability or disability, has unique gifts to offer our Church and is equally a part of the Body of Christ.

Throughout the Gospel accounts, we see Jesus reaching out to people at the margins of his society—people who were sick, blind, or deaf. Jesus frequently challenged the power structures of His day and now challenges us to re-imagine how to live out our Baptism and to be Eucharist in our world. This was

the reason Pope John Paul II declared a Year of the Eucharist, saying the authenticity of our Eucharistic liturgies would be judged by how well we live what we proclaim.

Although many people with disabilities live full and active lives, their participation in the Church—its life and the liturgy—is often restricted. To fully embrace our Baptism and to be Eucharist in our world, we must acknowledge and encourage the right of people with disabilities to participate fully in the life of the Church. This begins by ensuring that our sacramental celebrations are open to the full, active and conscious participation of people with disabilities as each is able. It is also important to remember each person, regardless of ability or disability, has unique

Continued on page 2



Sister Rie Crowley guides youngsters during a "Special Needs" Mass held last July at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. The Roseland parish, located at 28 Livingston Ave., will host a support group for "Mothers with Developmentally Delayed Children" on March 1, 7 p.m. Call Sister Rie at (973) 403-8169 for details.

Photo courtesy of Anne Masters



Advocate photo — M. Gabriele

Historic St. John's Parish, 94 Ridge St., Orange, will be the site of a four-part lecture series on Theology of the Body featuring author Christopher West. The series begins on Tuesday, March 6, 7:30 p.m. Call Damon Clarke Owens at (973) 847-0165 for information.

## Theology of the Body provides insights on true meaning of love

BY MELISSA MCNALLY

Staff Writer

NEWARK—Bridging the gap between adult faith formation and the issues facing teenagers and young adults, Theology of the Body explains the Church's philosophy on love, marriage, sex and identity in language to which all audiences can relate.

A leading voice on the subject is Christopher West, an author, lecturer and research fellow and faculty member of the West Chester, PA-based Theology of the Body Institute (Web site: [www.tobinstitute.org](http://www.tobinstitute.org)). West will

bring his knowledge and passion for the subject to a four-part lecture series at St. Joseph Parish, 94 Ridge St., Orange, beginning Tuesday, March 6.

Nationally known speakers like West and David Hajduk—a youth minister, who addressed the Youth Retreat Center in January—encourage their audiences, especially young adults, to follow the teachings first articulated by Pope John Paul II. Theology of the Body is the title given by Pope John Paul II to his 129 short talks for Wednesday audiences, which the pope delivered between

Continued on page 4



## Support for special needs

Continued from page 1

gifts to offer and that there are many ways to contribute to the life of the Church.

There are different reasons why people with disabilities might be excluded. One is the assumption that he or she can't really benefit from being included in the Mass or religious education, because he or she doesn't really understand what is happening. Another assumption is that the behavior can be distracting to other people—and it is certainly valid to be concerned with the needs of the whole community.

The following two examples may serve as a helpful response to address these concerns. First, a parish teaches about Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and they sing a simple song to reinforce all the different lessons they learn. There is a young boy diagnosed on the autism spectrum, whose behavior presented such challenges that he wore a weighted vest to help manage it. During the time together, he never participated in the activities with the other children. He simply lay on the floor, seemingly in his own world. One day his mother was very sad. This young boy, who simply lay on the floor not interacting with the other children, went to his mother and said: "Don't worry. The Good Shepherd will take care of you."

The second example involves Ben, an eight-year-old boy with autism, who has been attending Mass every week with his family since he was five. After learning what he could about the Catholic faith from his family and from participating at Mass, Ben joined a second grade religious education group in his parish this year.

Although Ben attends a special school for children with autism, he is able to be with this group of second graders preparing to celebrate Eucharist for the first time in April. He has had support from his school to learn needed behaviors for Mass and his parish community has been very supportive.

Ben enjoys being with the other children—so much that the threat of not being able to go to religious education is sufficient to keep his behavior in Mass on task. Ben is not only aware of the other children around him, but he clearly enjoys being with them and feels welcomed by them.

When families with special needs are included they feel affirmed, accepted and valued, but they also experience this as part of

what it means to be a Catholic.

Usually, when communities are not welcoming, it is not from a lack of desire, but rather from a lack of understanding or knowing what to do. Those situations are the easiest to face, because providing information yields results quickly. The more challenging situations are those in which hearts and minds are closed to what we are called to be as Christians.

Information alone is not enough. To open hearts and minds, we must all be willing to open ourselves up to what we are called to be. It is not a matter of changing Church teaching because the teaching is already there. It is more a matter of each of us being willing to recognize new possibilities of celebrating God in our world.

This involves recognizing the gifts that God has given to each person and how each gift, no matter how seemingly simple or inconsequential, is important. When we exclude any person because we think he or she is not able, then we are excluding Christ.

*(Anne Masters, M.A., is the director of the archdiocesan Pastoral Ministry with Persons with Disabilities, an office within the vicariate for Pastoral Life.)*



Advocate photo – M. Gabriele

Many Catholics with disabilities find their participation in the Church is restricted. When communities are not welcoming to those with disabilities, typically it is due to a lack of understanding. The vicariate of Msgr. Richard J. Arnolds (left) provides services and outreach programs for families and people with special needs and disabilities. Anne Masters (right), the director of Pastoral Ministry with Persons with Disabilities, leads the effort. She can be reached at (973) 497-4309.

## Distractions and awkward moments? Well yes, but what would Jesus do?

BY REV. MSGR. RICHARD J. ARNHOLS

**H**ow should we deal with persons with disabilities?

The same way we should deal with anyone—with care, concern, welcome and love.

Unquestionably, each type of disability brings with it particular circumstances and challenges which in their own way must be addressed, but ultimately every human being, created in God's image and likeness, desires welcome and acceptance. While true of society in general, it should always be a reasonable expectation in the community of the Church.

We've added ramps to many church entrances to accommodate the elderly and those who are wheelchair bound. Some churches have even installed elevators or lifts. Most have also dedicated areas of special seating within. Those with poor sight or hearing appreciate effective sound systems. In some parishes, the Mass and other sacraments are interpreted in American Sign Language.

We've had special religious education programs in a number of parishes throughout the archdiocese for many years, and with the rise in cases on various parts of the autism spectrum, more parishes are regularly seeking assistance in beginning such a program.

Certain young adults the Special Ed program of my own parish (St. John the Evangelist, Bergenfield) stand out. A young man named Tommy often seems called to raise his arms like a director from the pew when the hymns are played at Mass.

While perhaps a distraction to someone who doesn't know him, Tommy's enthusiasm indicates that he is participating in the Mass and encouraging the rest of us to really get into the celebration, too.

Every time I see Walter, he asks me for a blessing—sometimes twice in the same conversation. While it seemed a bit awkward to me at first, after a while I realized that this was one way for both of us to be reminded that

God is in our midst, and He can use anyone to bring out the good in another.

Sara is completely paralyzed. She understands and answers by blinking her eyes. Though she can't physically enjoy our annual parish carnival, her mom always brings her in her wheelchair to take in the sights and sounds.

Being more of a listener than an initiator in a conversation, I often don't approach her; or if I do, just say but a few words to her and her mom. I keep thinking I should be more welcoming, yet even just giving it some thought is a step closer for me to that goal.

Last fall, at a conference on Advocacy and Autism at Fordham University, New York, one of the speakers—herself an autistic college student—described the anguish of having super-sensitive hearing, so much so that every cell phone ring would seem even more aggravating to her than to the average person, and that a well-deserved round of applause was deafening and ear-splitting.

Listening to this young woman made me conscious of all the noises in a typical church setting, from full organ, to banging kneelers, to common prayer. How difficult it must be for some, and those who care for them, to fully worship in such an environment.

For some, the task of trying to accommodate every person with a disability may seem to be a daunting, full-time job—but isn't that what Jesus would do? He brought an understanding of people to situations where others had prejudged them, due to illness, lifestyle or occupation. He encouraged people's dinner invitations be extended to "the poor and the crippled, the blind and the lame" (Lk 14:13).

Jesus invites us all to His eucharistic banquet. May we make every effort to thoughtfully and lovingly encourage anyone and everyone to take their rightful place in our parishes and in our lives.

*(Rev. Msgr. Richard J. Arnolds, a regular columnist for The Catholic Advocate—"Seeing & Believing"—is the pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Bergenfield and the archdiocesan vicar for Pastoral Life.)*

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## FREQUENCY FOR THE YEAR

The Catholic Advocate continues to be a bi-weekly publication. Publication dates for 2007 are: March 7, 21; April 4, 18; May 9, 23; June 6, 20; July 18; August 8, 22; September 5, 19; October 10, 24; November 7, 21; December 5, 19.

NJPA



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# Ordinarily, you might expect to hear a different way to describe sainthood

BY MICHAEL C. GABRIELE  
Editor

When asked to explain the essence of a saint, Bishop Thomas A. Donato, D.D. — the featured speaker at the Jan. 25 Theology on Tap session in Montclair—gave an extremely ordinary answer.

But that was precisely the point.

Addressing a crowd of over 50 Theology on Tap fans at the Office Bar and Grill, Bishop Donato offered, quite literally, a down-to-earth definition on the heavenly topic of sainthood. A saint, he said, was a person called by God “to live and see life in an ordinary way.”

However, his use of the word “ordinary” was compelling and profound. He referred to women and men who are able to truly see God present in the everyday moments of life as people who are worthy of sainthood. A saint, according to Bishop Donato, is a person “open” to the ordinary; someone who is able to unmask the commonplace moment and see in it the love of God and the essence of humanity.

Using the bishop’s train of thought, there really is no “ordinary” in life. Every moment, however seemingly mundane, is actually a blessing in disguise; an opportunity for people to connect with their spirituality. A saint, therefore, is a person able to grasp the beauty and mystery in every situation, with the vision to see the dignity of everyday life, every day.

These epiphanies can occur when we least expect it. He cited “quiet heroes” who live faithful lives and have the courage to confront the daily grind, without fanfare. In one example, Bishop Donato described a dedicated, hard-working father who drags himself out of bed at 3 a.m. to comfort his crying baby. The anonymous man in this anecdote wanted his exhausted wife to rest after a hard day of caring for the child.

Such a scene plays out every day for families everywhere. The man in this story fits Bishop Donato’s definition of a saint: someone who is true to themselves and others, with the conviction to faithfully rise to the occasion and respond to life’s challenges—small and big.

“That’s the call to sainthood,” the bishop explained. “You do what you are called to do. Be true to yourself and live faithfully in your world, because there are many vocations. It’s when you find that sense of joy in life, whenever God calls you. It’s in those ordinary happenings that you will see God.”

Bishop Donato challenged members of the Theology on Tap crowd to consider today’s overlooked saints; friends, family members or business colleagues who have touched their lives in a meaningful way. “Do you know any saints?” he asked. After posing the question, he told those in the audience to think carefully—reminding them that, over the years, saints who have been canonized by



Advocate photo — M. Gabriele

Bishop Thomas A. Donato challenged those attending the Jan. 25 Theology on Tap session in Montclair to rethink their definition of a saint. In doing so, he praised “quiet heroes”—people with the vision to recognize God in the most mundane moments of everyday life.

the Church were all people who once lived ordinary lives, but somehow were able to accomplish extraordinary things.

He readily acknowledged there are numerous temptations and character flaws that can sabotage saintly conduct. Then there are hardships faced by those who are burdened by lives of isolation and despair. All of these challenges were reflected in the formal title of the bishop’s presentation: “Living Spiritually in a Material World.” It suggests an underlying conflict or moral dilemma—inescapable roadblocks on the journey to sainthood.

“Pay less attention to sinfulness; pay more attention to the blessings of the day.” Bishop Donato advised.

Born in Jersey City on Oct. 1, 1940, Bishop Donato received his Masters of Divinity degree at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Darlington and was ordained to the priesthood on May 29, 1965. Pope John Paul II, in 1996, named him a “Prelate of Honor” with the title reverend monsignor.

Bishop Donato served as the spiritual director of Immaculate Conception Seminary, Seton Hall University, South Orange.

The Holy See appointed him titular bishop of Jamestown and auxiliary bishop of Newark on May 21, 2004. He became the pastor of St. Henry Parish in Bayonne in 2004 and also serves as the regional bishop for Hudson County.

This was the seventh Theology on Tap evangelization program sponsored by

*‘Be true to yourself  
and live faithfully in your  
world. It’s in those  
ordinary happenings  
that you will see God.’*

—Bishop Thomas A. Donato

Sacred Heart Parish in Bloomfield, in conjunction with the Kearny-based Archdiocesan Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry. The Montclair session was part of the Young Adult Month slate of activities organized by the Kearny center (see *The Catholic Advocate*, Dec. 20, 2006).

Father Richard P. Kwiatkowski is the pastor of Sacred Heart Parish. Sister Loretta DeDomenicis is the center’s director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries.

The core team at Sacred Heart that organized the forum here included Father Ranulfo D. Docabo, parochial vicar; Nancy Plate; Ann Leccese; Luisa Witter; Jasmin Arzadon; and Guy Meir, Jr. Arzadon and Witter received awards for their involvement with the Theology on Tap.



# Theology of the Body

Continued from page 1  
1979 and 1984. The discussions were a biblical reflection on the human body, sex, marital love and larger issues such as the meaning of life. The teachings of Pope John Paul II also focused on the biblical origin of marriage and sexuality.

According to a Theology of the Body study guide written by West, we are called to live in communion and the human body is an example of ultimate spiritual reality. "The marriage of Adam and Eve echoes the marriage of Christ and the Church. However, our culture is filled with images and propaganda emphasizing a purely physical and non-spiritual idea of love," he wrote.

The themes of identity and sexuality appeal to young adults and those growing into their faith. Theology of the Body also covers the vocation of marriage and can be used to heal and deepen existing relationships. "Marriage exists only as a sign that is meant to point us to heaven. According to the analogy, the wife is symbol of the Church and the husband is a symbol of Christ," West wrote.

West believes that this new approach to discussing sexuality

draws more people into rediscovering their faith. "I think there is a new sexual revolution underway. It's picking up speed and it can't be stopped. Our world is so starved for love that often it is willing to eat out of a dumpster (pornography) to satisfy that hunger. The good news of the Theology of the Body is that it presents the banquet that truly satisfies the hunger," he explained.

For Hajduk, tracing the biblical reference to love, marriage and sexuality is essential. "Pope John Paul II believed that we have to go back to the beginning in order to show what went wrong (with human beings), the nature of sin, its impact on God's plan and how to restore God's plan for us," Hajduk said.

*By knowing our own self,  
we come to know God.'*

—Damon Clarke Owens

Theology of the Body is appealing, according to Hajduk, because it covers universal questions and ideas. "Everybody wants to be happy and have a fulfilled life. Everyone wants to find true love. For most, finding true love

is equated to happiness."

For young people searching for meaning and love in their lives, the message of Theology of the Body appeals to their sensibilities, Hajduk said. "There is a lot of disillusionment and heartache. Theology of the Body reaches people's hearts and points them in the direction of the love they longed for. That is why it is so popular. It is hitting people where their heart is."

Church teachings on morality and sexuality can seem repressive and old-fashioned, but using Pope John Paul II's philosophy examines Christian beliefs in a more understandable fashion. "Theology of the Body explains the 'whys' behind the 'whats.' It explains things using both heart and intellect, which is why I think the message is so moving. Pope John Paul II had a great sense of young people's desires," he said.

Hajduk used his experiences educating young people about the pope's teachings to write the book "God's Plan for You: Life, Love, Marriage and Sex," which was published last year. "The teenagers I work with are asking life questions such as: 'who am I and what is my future?' They are also coming to terms with their body and have a desire to be loved

and affirmed. I wanted to bring this message to them and try to reach them in their language. Young people are bombarded with false messages of the meaning of sex and marriage."

As a former high school theology teacher and youth minister, Hajduk gave talks on chastity and family life before discovering Theology of the Body. "The teachings of Pope John Paul II had a profound impact on my life," he said. "When I started to read, I wanted to gobble up everything. Theology of the Body put a language to everything I had ever dreamed of expressing."

Opposing the societal pressures of premarital sex can be difficult for young adults, but Hajduk believes that his message is being heard. "Young adults really want to know what life is about. There is nothing more human and rational than wanting to know the meaning of life and love."

A resident of Warren County, Hajduk maintains a Web site: ([www.davidhajduk.com](http://www.davidhajduk.com)).

Damon Clarke Owens of Joy-Filled Marriage (Web site: [www.joyfilledmarriage.org](http://www.joyfilledmarriage.org)) an organization based in West Orange, was instrumental in bringing the message of Theology of the Body to the archdiocese. As a national speaker and head of the archdiocesan Natural Family Planning (NFP) office, Owens asked West to speak in the March lecture series.

Owens is working with West on a book about faith-filled marriage. "Theology of the Body approaches all aspects of Catholic faith and what it means to be a human person," Owens said. "It is a philosophy about what it means to be created and expressed in authentic love. It is the understanding that our bodies express and



Damon Clarke Owens

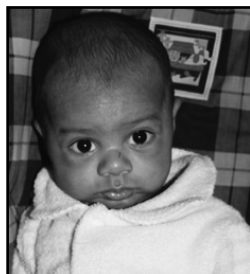
reflect who we are—made in the image and likeness of God. By knowing our own self, we come to know God. The body is not simply biological; it is theological."

Fourteen years ago Owens and his wife first learned about natural family planning and found that it enriched their lives. Now giving over three dozen talks a year throughout the country, Owens sees how the message of Theology of the Body has expanded. "It is a compelling and digestible way to view everything in our creed."

A Theology of the Body lecture was held last year at St. Philomena Parish, Livingston, sponsored by the archdiocesan Women's Commission (see *The Catholic Advocate*, April 12, 2006).

Call Owens at Joy-Filled Marriage (973) 847-0165 or 866-420-3017 for more information on the four-part series next month at St. John's Parish featuring West. The series begins on March 6 and continues March 13, 20 and 27. All four Tuesday evening programs begin at 7:30 and are slated to run for two hours.

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Photo courtesy of Council 12769

Academy Gospel performance

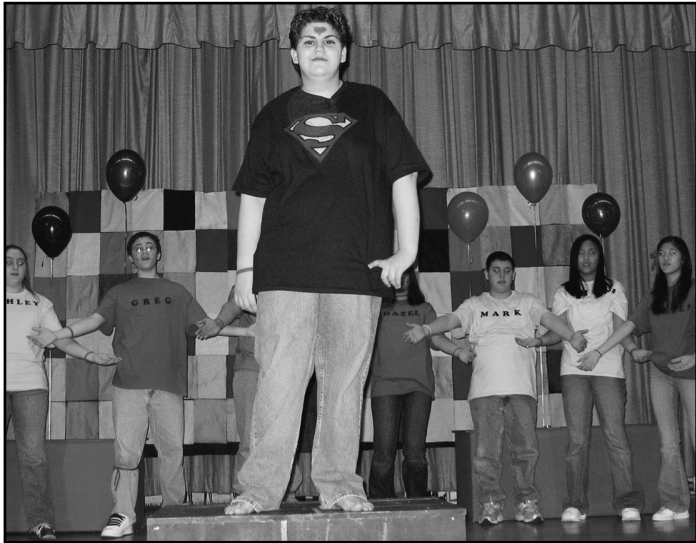


Photo courtesy of Pam Zippoli

**SHEPHERDS OF GOOD NEWS IN EDUCATION**—Good Shepherd Academy, Nutley, trumpeted the “good news” in education during National Catholic Schools Week, held Jan. 29 to Feb. 3. Activities included a Mass celebrated at Holy Family Parish, along with an open-house reception for parents, faculty and students. Special programs featured a performance by the OKRA Dance Co., demonstrating a spectrum of dance styles from Africa to Broadway. A highlight of the festivities that week was when eighth graders performed the Gospel according to Matthew (pictured here). Sister Domenica Troina, M.P.F., is the principal of Good Shepherd Academy.

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St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Center  
60 Byrd Avenue, Bloomfield

**Guest speaker:**  
**Dr. Dianne Traflet**  
Associate Dean, Immaculate Conception  
Seminary School of Theology  
Co-Director, Institute for Christian Spirituality  
Please call the parish center  
to preregister by Feb. 20 (973-338-9190)  
(Donations accepted at the door.)

**DEFEND LIFE CHAIN**—On Sunday, Jan. 21, the eve of the 34th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, the Secaucus Knights of Columbus, Mary Immaculate Council 12769, held its first Defend Life Sunday event at Immaculate Conception Parish. Under the guidance of Douglas Christmann, council church director, council members, the Respect Life Committee, The Catholic Daughters of America Court 1552 and the Holy Name Society formed a “Life Chain” in front of the church praying the rosary and holding up signs in support of life. Father James Tucker, a third-degree knight of Council 12769, lead a prayer service and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament inside the church. Msgr. Peter B. O’Connor of Assembly 1543 was his Honor Guard.

**Reconciled to Joy**  
**Fifteenth Annual Spirituality Convocation**  
March 24, 2007  
**Keynotes:**  
"Become a Saint (In Less than an Hour)" with Rev. James Martin, SJ, Jesuit priest, author, and Associate Editor of *America Magazine*  
"Radical Gratitude: Living with Spirit" with Dr. Mary Jo Leddy, author, speaker, theologian, social activist, and founding editor of the *Catholic New Times*  
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**Week 1 Classes July 9-12**  
featuring Ann Garrido, D. Min.; Dr. Paul Lakeland; Dr. Joseph Martos; Dr. Lucinda Nolan; Dr. Sylvia McGeary; Dr. Phyllis Zagano  
**Week 2 Classes July 16-19**  
featuring Dr. William T. Cavanaugh; Dr. Doris K. Donnelly; Dr. Paul Lakeland; Dr. Joseph Martos; Dr. Phyllis Zagano; Carol J. Dempsey, OP, Ph.D.; Dr. Sylvia McGeary; Rev. Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, OP  
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# AJC mourns death of Father Drinan

Editor,

We at the American Jewish Committee (AJC) mourn the passing of the Rev. Robert Drinan, a respected Jesuit priest, brilliant legal scholar and teacher, effective political leader and beloved friend of the Jewish people and Israel.

Rabbi James Rudin, American Jewish Committee's senior advisor on Interreligious Affairs, worked with Father Drinan for many years and told me he was not only a joy to work but was, indeed, a righteous Christian in his generation.

Father Drinan passionately believed in the promise of the Second Vatican Council and its call for positive Catholic-Jewish relations. He was a relentless foe of all forms of anti-Semitism and a lifelong supporter of Israel, deeply committed to the Jewish state's survival and security.

He was a founder, in 1972, of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, an international leader in behalf of human rights and religious liberty, and a staunch supporter of the State of Israel. His book, "Honor The Promise: America's Commitment to Israel," is a testament to Catholic understanding of and support for the Jewish state.

During his illustrious career, as a priest and later as a member of Congress, he was a cherished ally of the American Jewish Committee on a host of vital issues. May his memory be a blessing to us all.

Allyson Gall  
NJ Area Director, American Jewish Committee, Millburn

*(Editor's note: Father Robert Drinan, 86, died on Jan. 28. He represented Massachusetts in the U.S. House of Representatives. An outspoken critic of the Vietnam War, he was elected in 1970 and served for 10 years. In addition, he was a law professor at Georgetown University Law Center.)*

## Prayers requested

Editor,

President George W. Bush is a much-weakened position. We are, as country, better off with a strong president, able to deal effectively with foreign leaders than with a weak president who is not respected by foreign leaders.

Therefore, I respectfully ask all readers of *The Catholic Advocate* to pray on a regular basis for the president.

James Lynch  
Livingston

# 'Pilgrim Road' takes a fresh look at the Benedictine journey of Lent

NEWARK—Many look at Lent as a gloomy time of the year during which Christians do penance for their sins by fasting, abstaining from meat and giving up certain pleasures. It is difficult for many contemporary Christians to relate to this sort of approach to their faith.

In "Pilgrim Road: A Benedictine Journey Through Lent," (Morehouse Publishing, 2007, \$10.95), popular religious author Father Albert Holtz, O.S.B.—a Benedictine monk of Newark Abbey working here at St. Benedict's Preparatory School—makes Lent accessible to contemporary Christians.

Recently there has been a renewed interest among lay Christians in monastic spirituality and especially the wisdom of Saint Benedict, whom Pope Benedict XVI honored by taking his name.

In "Pilgrim Road" Father Holtz applies Saint Benedict's monastic wisdom to the everyday concerns and aspirations of modern Christians. His book helps contemporary spiritual seekers keep Lent as a positive, meaningful and fruitful experience.

In this much earlier spiritual tradition, Lent is marked less by external observances such as fasting and self-denial, and more by a deepening of one's relationship with God, and includes a wide variety of positive actions, such as the practice of charity, holy reading and prayerful introspection.

Father Holtz teaches New Testament at his monastery's inner-city prep school.



Father Albert Holtz

At the abbey, he has served as master of novices for 25 years and as a retreat master for Benedictine communities around the United States. He is also the author of "Downtown Monks" and "Street Wisdom."

Newark Abbey (phone: (973) 792-5800; Web site: [www.newarkabbey.org](http://www.newarkabbey.org)) is a monastery of 20 Benedictine monks. Founded in 1857 as St. Mary's Priory and later St. Mary's Abbey, the monastery has sponsored and staffed St. Benedict's Preparatory School on its grounds since 1868. Besides ministering to St. Mary's parish church here on Martin Luther King Boulevard, the monks also provide pastoral assistance to several neighboring parishes.



A recent survey by The Gallup Organization for the Spiritual Enterprise Institute shows that the general adult population differs from people who identify themselves as highly spiritually committed.

## Support Operation Rice Bowl

It is hard to believe that hunger exists right here in the Archdiocese of Newark. It does and families here and worldwide with not enough to eat are increasing.

What to do?

An effective way to combat hunger comes during the Lenten season with Operation Rice Bowl, which is sponsored by Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

In a recent letter to principals of schools within the Church in Newark urging participation in Operation Rice Bowl, Sharon Reilly-Tobin, the director of the Emergency Food and Nutrition Network (EFNN)—a unit of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark—was blunt. She said that over the past four years emergency pantries, shelters and soup kitchens in the archdiocese have reported "steady increases" in the amount of people coming to those facilities for food assistance. They include people with disabilities and working families with children.

A full 25 percent of contributions to Operation Rice Bowl are used by the EFNN right here in the Archdiocese of Newark to purchase supplies for its 75-member pantry network. Last year over 51,000 persons were helped.

The EFNN, along with a Food Pantry at Blessed Sacrament/St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Newark, were featured on page one of the Nov. 22, 2006 edition of *The Catholic Advocate*, regarding outreach efforts during the Thanksgiving season.

Hunger remains a major problem in the United States—a glaring tragedy in a nation of wealth and abundance. According to national estimates, every day more than 30 million Americans go to bed hungry. Hunger hurts and the children of poverty, in particular, are at risk.

Operation Rice Bowl is a profound way to put one's faith in action. Contact the EFNN at (973) 266-7941 for more information.

## Celebrating marriage anniversaries

The cynical among us might very well believe that marriage in the United States is becoming passé. It is not.

One need look no further than the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark. This time each year the Office of Family Life Ministries celebrates the faith-filled union between archdiocesan men and women of all ages.

The joy and commitment of anniversary couples will shine forth at special masses in the coming weeks. Silver and fifth anniversaries will be honored on March 4. Golden anniversaries and beyond will be recognized March 25 (Essex and Union counties) and April 15 (Bergen and Hudson counties.) All masses will be celebrated by Archbishop John J. Myers.

The annual celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage comes as the Civil Union Act became law Feb. 19 in the Garden State. Marriage as the union between one man and one woman under is clearly under legislative attack. Catholic dioceses in New Jersey and their faithful are determined to meet the threat.

Whether it is a couple joined by God just five years ago or more than a half-century, the moving experience of being called to married life is a wondrous atmosphere that permeates the anniversary masses.



# Fatigued priests endure the unseen war over rules

Life is warfare.

That adage applies to parish priests—even more than to the average parishioner in a Catholic church.

Let me explain.

The Roman Catholic Church is an institution. As such it has all sorts of laws and decrees. We have a Canon Law that contains 1,752 rules and regulations on every aspect of Catholic life. In addition, there are liturgical laws, diocesan regulations and even civil laws that govern how the parish—a non-profit entity—must be run.

The parish priest is the one caught in the middle between the institution on one side and an often-rebellious laity on the other. It is not publicized, but this is the reason why so many older priests are longing for retirement. They are literally burned out and tired of trouble.

May I give three examples, though there are many more. The first is on the subject of weddings. I once wrote a series of seven articles on the problems priests face with weddings and almost every priest I know agreed with the assessment.

Briefly, while there are many lovely and good couples, the priest is faced more than half of the time with the following situation. A couple arrives at the rectory door. Their true intention, unrealized even by themselves, is to “rent” a church and “hire” a priest.

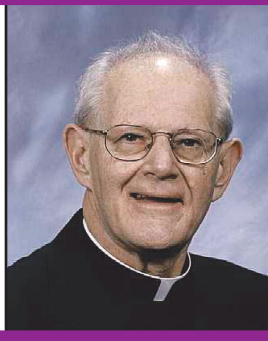
They usually do not attend Mass, are living together and are at the church for one of three reasons. The parents want them to marry in church, or they need the money so they throw a wedding, or the bride has seen a wedding in the movies or on television and she wants a “Hollywood-style event.”

The wedding has nothing to do with faith or God. They are playing a game with all that goes along with it. They simply and reluctantly endure the priest and the church rules. They regard the church regulations as a necessary nuisance.

They have their own agenda and so the debate begins on every aspect of the event—the readings, the music, the photographers (there usually are two or more), the number

## Voices

By Rev. Msgr. John Gilchrist



of people in the procession, etc. They want their way and are ready to fight for it.

Secondly, there is Confirmation. The archdiocese has rules. The candidate must attend Mass, attend class, do community service, and go on a retreat. They must do this for two years. The rules are explained to them over and over again. Invariably at the end of the year—near the date for Confirmation, there are some who have not attended Mass, nor class, nor done the community service. When they are told that they cannot receive Confirmation all hell breaks loose.

The mother arrives screaming. The father arrives pushing his weight around. They demand to see the pastor. They remind the pastor of the money they have given to the church. They threaten the priest that they will go to the bishop. The pastor and the director of religious education take the abuse.

The third example is the criteria for being a sponsor at Confirmation or a godparent at baptism. The people are told the requirements. For a priest to certify that a person is worthy he must sign a paper and seal it with the

parish seal that says two things: first, this person is a member of the parish; and secondly that the person is a practicing Catholic—that is, he or she attends Mass and receives the sacraments.

Often a parent or a relative arrives at the rectory door. The following conversation unfolds: “My son (or daughter) needs this paper signed.”

“Where is he (or she)?” asks the priest.

“Oh, he (she) lives down the shore. But he (she) made his Confirmation here.”

“Where is his (her) parish?” questions the priest.

“This is his (her) parish,” is the answer.

“He doesn’t go to Mass here,” replies the priest.

“But this is his (her) parish,” is the answer.

The truth is that the person has not been to church since he or she received Confirmation. Now they are demanding that a priest certify that he or she is a practicing Catholic.

When the priest won’t sign the paper, a riot breaks out. “How dare you not sign that paper!” The statement is

hurled at the priest like an accusation of wrongdoing.

An older priest in his sixties said to me recently: “I wish I could retire at 65. I would get out tomorrow.”

Sadly, that is the way that many priests feel. As one priest said: “Who needs the grief?”

I agree with him. No one needs the strife and abuse. It is often a “true war” to serve as a parish priest today. The poor guys are in the trenches. The parish priest must gird himself for battle every day.

Of course, Jesus had the same problems. “How long must I put up with you?” He asked. We are left with the same question.

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

*The wedding has nothing to do with faith or God. They reluctantly endure the priest and the church rules. They regard the regulations as a necessary nuisance.*

# Uncovering the KGB campaign against Pope Pius XII

Call me skeptical, but I suspect that what my friend Joseph Bottum christened “The Pius War” will never be resolved.

Controversy over Pope Pius XII’s role during the Second World War and the Holocaust is too juicy a topic, involving too many interests (and academic reputations), to ever die down. The Pius War may eventually outstrip the Hundred Years’ War in duration.

No serious scholar believes that Eugenio Pacelli, elected pope on Feb. 2, 1939, was an anti-Semite, harshly indifferent to the fate of European Jewry. No serious scholar contests the evidence that Pius XII took direct and indirect measures to save Jews from the Nazi death machine.

Visiting Castel Gandolfo this past September, I walked past the places where thousands of persecuted Jews had been hidden on the papal summer estate, and I remembered that Jewish children (some named “Eugenia” or “Eugenio” in honor of their benefactor) had been born in the pope’s bedroom.

Heeding the advice he was receiving from resistance leaders, and after the Nazi roundup of Jewish-born Dutch Christians which followed a sharp critique of Nazi practice by the Dutch bishops—the roundup that began Edith Stein’s journey to Auschwitz, and eventual canonization—Pius XII seems to have concluded that direct public protests from him would endanger both Jews and Catholics.

Even so, his public criticisms of racial persecution, which mirrored the Holy See’s anti-Nazi commentary throughout the 1930s, were understood by both the Nazis and, mirabile dictu (“wonderful to relate”) *The*

## The Catholic Difference

by George Weigel



*New York Times*, to be directed at Berlin.

It is also reasonably well-established that Hitler wanted to kidnap Pius XII. On his death in 1958, Pius XII was praised by Golda Meir, then foreign minister of the State of Israel.

Reasonable people can debate whether Pius’ strategic decision to avoid an explicit, public condemnation of Nazism, precisely for the sake of saving lives, was the correct one. But it takes a certain bias, contradicted by many facts, to conclude that this decision was taken on the basis of cowardice. It takes even worse bias to conclude that it was taken because of anti-Semitism.

Why, then, the campaign of defamation?

Serious scholars have long suspected that the origins of that campaign lie in the anti-Catholic machinations of the KGB, the Soviet intelligence service. Confirmation of that thesis now comes from General Ion Mihai Pacepa,

a former Romanian intelligence officer and the highest-ranking Soviet bloc spymaster ever to defect, in an article posted on *National Review Online* on Jan. 26.

According to General Pacepa, the Soviets, stung by the public relations bludgeoning they had taken because of the persecution of Catholics in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and elsewhere decided to accelerate the anti-Catholic propaganda offensive they had launched toward the end of World War II by depicting the Church as a bulwark of Nazism. Pius XII was the primary target because, as the KGB liked to say: “Dead men cannot defend themselves.”

So the KGB concocted a scheme whereby its Romanian ally would penetrate the Vatican archives, using agents disguised as priests; certain Vatican officials, it seems, took the bait.

No documents incriminating Pius XII were found, but the plot now shifted. In 1963, a senior Soviet intelligence official told his Romanian colleagues that the centerpiece of the anti-Catholic offensive would now be a play defaming Pius XII: “The Deputy.” Its author, Rolf Hochhuth, was a former Hitler Youth turned communist fellow traveler. A lifelong communist produced the play. The results for *The Deputy* was the Pearl Harbor of the Pius War—vindicated KGB chairman Yuri Andropov’s conviction that the gullible find smut easier to believe than holiness.

Don’t bet the mortgage money that this new evidence will appear in *The New York Times* anytime soon.

(George Weigel is a senior fellow of the *Ethics and Public Policy Center* in Washington, DC.)



# Flynn's inspired efforts yield guide for Divine Mercy Sunday

Several years ago, Diane Flynn wanted her fellow parishioners of St. Paul Parish in Ramsey to experience a deeper relationship with Jesus, just as she had experienced through the message of Divine Mercy.

With her pastor's permission (Msgr. Lawrence W. Cull), Flynn organized novenas, placed articles in the parish bulletin and distributed pamphlets and prayer cards that explain the Divine Mercy message and devotion.

Additionally, she has helped with her parish's celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday held the Sunday after Easter. She admits that it's been a lot of work.

A year ago, Flynn got to thinking about the thousands of lay people and clergy around the world who, like her, are attempting to bring Divine Mercy Sunday and the message of Divine Mercy itself to their parishes. She thought: "Wouldn't it be nice to have a guide explaining how to do this?"

Flynn approached the Marians of the Immaculate Conception who, since 1941, have been promoting the Divine Mercy message and devotion in its authentic form from their apostolic center at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, MA.

Now, thanks to Flynn and the Marians, there is such a guide.

"Celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday in Your Parish: A Practical Guide for Parishes" is intended to answer questions of pastors and laypeople such as: What is Divine Mercy Sunday? How should it be celebrated?

What options can be considered proper to make this Sunday a spiritually enriching experience?

Thanks to the generosity of the Marians of the Immaculate Conception, which donated the printing, the guide has been sent to each parish in the Archdiocese of Newark. Archbishop John J. Myers directed the Office for Evangelization to coordinate the distribution effort.

A cover letter from Bishop Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D., archdiocesan vicar for evangelization, explaining the purpose of the program, accompanied the material sent to the parishes.

Why is Divine Mercy Sunday so important? Pope John Paul II proclaimed it at the canonization of St. Faustina on April 30, 2000. Then the Holy See officially established it. In order to draw the attention of the faithful to God's great love and mercy, manifested in such a wonderful way in the Paschal mystery, the Church offers a plenary indulgence on Divine Mercy Sunday.

"Because of their lack of staff and because of some uncertainty regarding the status of Divine Mercy Sunday, many parishes are still not celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday in a more special way," Flynn said. "This guide will serve as a 'how-to' to help parishioners and the clergy."

The 130-page guide identifies the extraordinary spiritual benefits and blessings associated with Divine Mercy

Sunday and Christ's promise of complete forgiveness of sins and punishment due to sin made available on Divine Mercy Sunday. Visit the Marians' Web site ([www.thedivinemercy.org](http://www.thedivinemercy.org)) or call (800) 462-7426 for more information or to order a copy of the guide.

Celebrating Divine Mercy offers a useful resource to pastoral ministers and those who coordinate Divine Mercy Sunday celebrations. Specifically, it addresses how to incorporate properly the Divine Mercy forms of devotion into Eucharistic devotions, such as Holy Hours, expositions and benedictions.

In His revelations to Saint Faustina, Jesus expressed His desire that we celebrate this Sunday as Divine

Mercy Sunday. "The Feast of Mercy emerged from My very depths of tenderness. It is My desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy" (Diary of Saint Faustina, 699).

Our Lord revealed to Saint Faustina His desire to literally flood us with His graces on that day. Consider each of the promises and desires Christ expressed about Divine Mercy Sunday, recorded in passage 699 of Saint Faustina's Diary: "On that day the very depths of My tender Mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon these souls who approach the Fount of My mercy (the Sacraments of

Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist).

"The soul that will go to confession (beforehand) and receive Holy Communion (on that day) shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which grace flows are opened."

(Information on the life of Saint Faustina is available online at: [www.vatican.va/news\\_services/litgy/documents/ns\\_lit\\_doc\\_20000430\\_faustina\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/news_services/litgy/documents/ns_lit_doc_20000430_faustina_en.html) and [www.marian.org/divinemercy/faustina](http://www.marian.org/divinemercy/faustina))

Divine Mercy Sunday graces flow not from particular devotional practices but from the Eucharist and its worthy reception. It is the living Lord, who is truly present in the Eucharist, who pours out special graces of regeneration on those who unite themselves to Him in Holy Communion on this particular Sunday.

Pope Benedict XVI underscored the importance of the Divine Mercy message with unmistakable clarity when he said: "The cult of Divine Mercy is not a secondary devotion, but an integral dimension of a Christian's faith and prayer."

Father Kaz Chwalek, M.I.C., the Marians' director of evangelization, said the guide can assist people in deepening their understanding of God and His mercy, which He wishes to bestow upon all, even the greatest of sinners.

"In this relationship with Him, we receive healing, we receive encouragement and hope." Father Kaz said.

## The Pope Speaks

Pope Benedict XVI



## 'A faithful disciple'

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today, as we near the end of our reflections on the earliest Christian witnesses in the New Testament, we turn our attention to the women who played an important role in spreading the Good News. Above all, we remember the Virgin Mary, who cooperated in a unique way in our redemption. As a faithful disciple of her son, Mary manifested her complete trust in Him at Cana. She received a special mission from Him at the foot of the cross.

Others who assisted Our Lord were Mary Magdalene – the first to announce His resurrection—as well as Joanna, Susanna and the sisters Mary and Martha. Indeed, the history of Christianity would have developed much differently if it were not for the generous contribution made by so many women. Today, let us give thanks to God who, through baptism, continues to use the gifts of both men and women for the good of the entire Church.

## Podcasts to distribute homilies at St. Joseph

MAPLEWOOD—Homilies from Saint Joseph Parish are available as podcasts, featuring the 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. masses from Jan. 28.

Archival material includes Parish Mission Night from Jan. 21 through Jan. 25 and the opening 9 a.m. Mass on Feb. 21.

The parish Web site is [www.stjosephmaplewood.org](http://www.stjosephmaplewood.org). To download the podcast, locate the "popup" on the homepage and right click on the title and select "Save Target As." This will save the MP3 file to your hard drive. Then drag the file to your portable music device or listen to the podcast with a digital music player such as iTunes.

(Some computers may have popup "blockers" installed as a screening feature to prevent online virus attacks.)

Saint Joseph Parish is located at 767 Prospect St. Very Rev. Michael A. Saporito, V.F., is the pastor of the parish. Call the parish at (973) 761-5933 for more information.

## Church offers Lenten regulations

The Archdiocese of Newark has released Lenten regulations for 2007. The days of both fast and abstinence during Lent are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence.

On a day of fast, only one full meal is permitted. Those between the ages of 18 and 59 are obliged to fast. On a day of abstinence, no meat may be eaten. Those who have reached the age of 14 are obliged by the law of abstinence. The obligation to observe the laws of fast and abstinence "substantially" or as a whole is a serious obligation.

The Fridays of the year, outside of Lent, are designated as days of penance, but each individual may substitute for the traditional abstinence from meat some other practice of voluntary self-denial as penance.

The time for fulfilling the Paschal Precept (Easter Duty\*) extends from the First Sunday of Lent, Feb. 25, to the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity, June 3. (\*Canon 920: All the faithful, after they have been initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, are bound by the obligation of receiving Communion at least once a year.)



Liliana Soto, Coordinator of the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization, and Bishop Edgar M. da Cunha

Advocate photo-M. Gabriele





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<sup>††</sup>New York residents will be charged a mortgage recording tax equal to 3/4 of 1% of the maximum credit line amount.

<sup>1</sup>Consult your tax advisor.

# Archdiocese revamps program for deacons, launches Web site

BY WARD MIELE

*Managing Editor*



**Deacon John McKenna**

NEWARK — The Permanent Diaconate program in the Archdiocese of Newark is adjusting to the times.

Under the leadership of Father James Teti, parochial vicar at St. Teresa of Avila Parish in Summit, and Deacon John McKenna, director of deacon personnel for the archdiocese, revamping is under way.

One of the major changes is expansion of the preparation period to five years from four years. The first year is for discernment with the remaining four focusing on classroom instruction coordinated through the School of Theology at Immaculate Conception Seminary on the campus of Seton Hall University in South Orange.

The permanent diaconate in the archdiocese, Father Teti explained, is undergoing a “restructuring.”

The first class under the new format, with 50 candidates, begins the four-year study phase on the road to ordination in September. The focus, Father Teti added, is “spiritual, pastoral and theological.”

Under the new “comprehensive” approach the “resources and institutions” of the Archdiocese of Newark, such as professors, will be utilized to the fullest, Father Teti

Continued on page 11



## What are you doing Friday night?

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**PRAYER SERVICE AT CATHEDRAL**—Most Rev. Edgar da Cunha, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Newark, presided at this year's World Day for Consecrated Life evening prayer service, held Feb. 2 at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark. Bishop da Cunha, who began the service by blessing the Religious in attendance, said it was a day to thank them for their "gift" of consecrated life to the Church. He cited the vital role they play in the Church's mission, calling the priests, brothers and Sisters in the pews "a light" to others. He said they "represent Jesus Christ to the world" just as Mary and Joseph did in their time. Speaking the same day in Rome, Pope Benedict XVI said consecrated men and women have been called by God to dedicate their lives to Him.

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\$45.00 (pre-paid) per person includes bus transportation (climate-controlled and lavatory)

- Continental Breakfast and Registration (7:30 am - 8:45 am)
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Registration begins at 7:30 A.M.

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*Join us as we visit the incomparable treasures of four of our churches located in Hoboken, Jersey City and Bayonne*

*The Tour will visit:*

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**Register early - Space is Limited so please RSVP before March 22, 2007!**

**Contact - Theresa Lynch • Phone: 973-497-4042 • Fax: 973-497-4031**

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## Bishop da Cunha celebrates Consecrated Life blessings

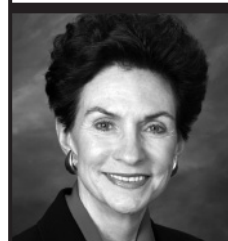


Advocate photos — Ward Miele



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Photo courtesy of Ed Civinskask

**FATHER WASHINGTON MASS**—St. Stephen's Parish in Kearny held a special Mass on Feb. 4 to honor the memory of Father John Washington, a hero chaplain who died during World War II. Most Rev. John W. Flesey, auxiliary bishop of Newark (second from right) delivered the homily. Pictured with Bishop Flesey are (left to right) Father Joseph Mancini, the parochial vicar of St. Stephen; Budd Melanson; and Stas Liszewski. Father Washington was the Catholic chaplain on board the U.S.A.T. Dorchester—a military transport ship that was torpedoed by a German sub and sank off the coast of Greenland on Feb. 3, 1943. He and three other chaplains gave up their life jackets to save the sailors. As the ship was sinking, the four chaplains stood together, praying arm in arm.

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# Father Evans to celebrate Mass at St. Peter Claver

BY MICHAEL C. GABRIELE  
Editor

MONTCLAIR—Saint Peter Claver Parish will conclude its celebration of Black History Month with a special 11 a.m. Mass on Sunday, Feb. 25, featuring guest celebrant Father Larry Evans.

Father Evans—a parochial vicar at Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Jersey City, and a member of the Archdiocesan Stewardship Advisory Committee—holds masters degrees in Divinity and Systematic Theology. He completed his seminary studies at Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall University, South Orange.

A reception in the parish's Martin Luther King Hall, in honor of Father Evans, will follow the Mass.

This month, as part of its celebration of Black History Month, St. Peter Claver's church bulletins included special sections highlighting the notable achievements of African-Americans in politics, education, arts, science and sports. The parish also featured exhibits that illustrated the contributions of its early members. In addition, students in the parish's Religious Education Program studied the lives of Black Saints.

The parish is named in honor of St. Peter Claver (born 1580;



Advocate photo — M. Gabriele

Saint Peter Claver, born 1580 in Catalonia, Spain and depicted in this wood statue that adorns the historic Montclair parish, is the patron saint of Black missions. Father Larry Evans, a parochial vicar at Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Jersey City, will be the guest celebrant at Saint Peter Claver Parish on Sunday, Feb. 25.

died 1654), the patron saint of Black missions. His feast day is celebrated on Sept. 9. The parish, located here at 56 Elmwood Ave., marked its 75th anniversary last October (see *The Catholic Advocate*, Sept. 20, 2006). Father Jose Gamba is the pastor of St. Peter Claver parish.

According to information found on various Web sites, St.

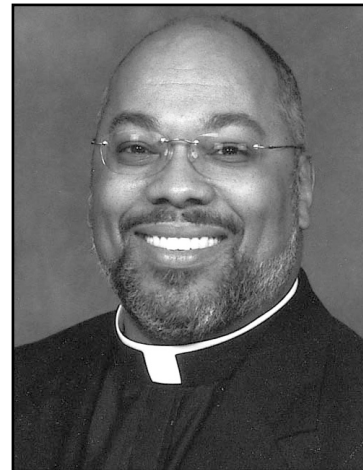
Peter Claver, the son of impoverished farmers in Verdu, Catalonia, Spain, studied at the Jesuit college of Barcelona, entered the Jesuit novitiate at Tarragona in 1602 and took his final vows on Aug. 8, 1604.

Six years later he arrived in Cartagena (modern Colombia), which was the principle slave market of the New World. It was there

that he dedicated himself to the service of African slaves—a ministry that lasted for 33 years. During that time he worked for the salvation of the slaves (baptizing more than 300,000) and the abolition of the slave trade. He was beatified on July 1850 and canonized on Jan. 15, 1888.

African Americans founded the landmark, multicultural Montclair parish (Web site: [www.saintpeterclaverchurch.org](http://www.saintpeterclaverchurch.org)) in pursuit of free worship during a period of racial prejudice. As indicated on the parish Web site, a family of eight African-Americans met in the basement of Immaculate Conception Church in Montclair on Jan. 14, 1931, to begin weekly instruction in the Catholic faith. The group of converts grew and the St. Peter Claver Mission was established.

The community continued to expand and on Nov. 5, 1939, the cornerstone was laid for St. Peter Claver Church. After 43 years as a mission, St. Peter Claver was officially designated as a self-sustaining parish on Dec. 1, 1973, with Father Charles H. McTague serving as the pastor. (Father McTague died on Jan. 13 at the age of 87 and a feature on his fascinating life appeared in the Feb. 7 edition



Father Larry Evans

of *The Catholic Advocate*.)

Over the years, St. Peter Claver has grown in membership and diversity. Since 1972, St. Peter Claver has been the parish home for the Haitian community, which celebrates weekly Mass in Creole. Today the parish offers a wide variety of programs and services to meet the needs and interests of its community. The Parish Life Committee encompasses Black Catholic Concerns, fellowships for men and women, social events and cultural celebrations for the local Haitian and Latino communities. The parish's Social Concerns Committee operates a food pantry and an AIDS ministry.

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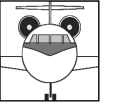
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C.K.

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C.K.

**PRAYER TO ST. CLAIRE**

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

C.K.

**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.

G.R.

**PRAYER TO ST. JUDE**

Oh, Holy St. Jude, Apostle and Martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, near Kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke your special patronage in time of need, to you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg to whom God has given such great power to come to my assistance. Help me in my present and urgent petition (make request). In return I promise to make your name known and cause you to be invoked. Say three Our Fathers, three Hail Marys and Glorias. St. Jude, pray for us all who invoke your aid. Amen. This Novena must be said for 9 consecutive days. Thank you for answering my prayer.

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For more information call Acadia House, the center's bereavement and grief counseling facility based in Scotch Plains, at (908) 654-3711 or go to [www.centerforhope.com](http://www.centerforhope.com).

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BAYONNE—Catholic War Veterans' Memorial Post 1612 of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish will hold the first of three blood drives this year on March 10 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at post headquarters, located at 18 West 23rd St. Call Post 1612 at (201) 858-9405 for details. Breakfast and lunch will be served to donors.



Photo courtesy of Marist High School

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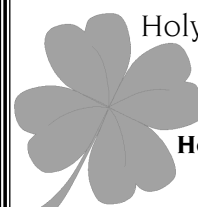
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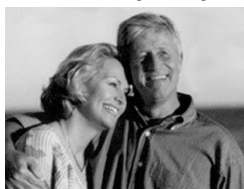
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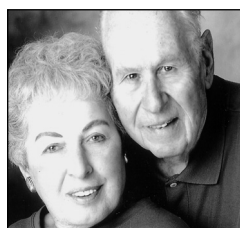
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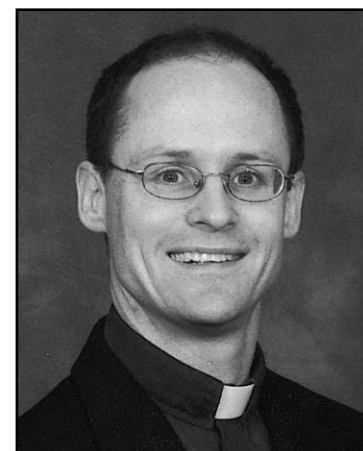


## Respect Life director will address Birthright Luncheon set for March 22

UPPER MONTCLAIR—Father Joseph Meagher, the director of the Archdiocese of Newark Respect Life Office, will be the featured speaker at the annual Birthright of Essex County spring luncheon.

The luncheon will be held here Thursday, March 22, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Woman's Club of Upper Montclair, 200 Cooper Ave.

The event will feature a spring boutique, sweepstakes gift raffle, a 50/50 raffle and gourmet lunch. The luncheon is open to the public and tickets are \$27. Call Pam Rafferty (973) 669-5957 or Jeanne Scott (973) 746-7895 to make reservations.



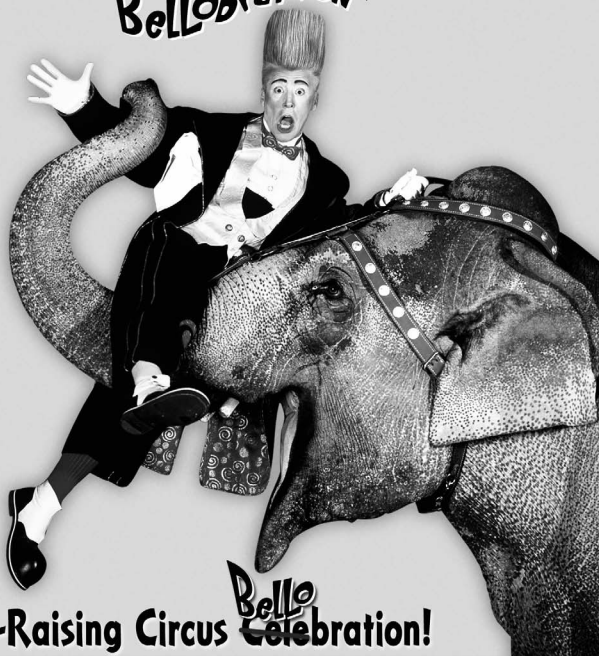
**Father Joseph Meagher**

Proceeds from the luncheon will benefit Birthright of Essex County, a non-profit pregnancy crisis center located at 623 Bloomfield Ave., Bloomfield (phone: (973) 743-2061). The Bloomfield center is a unit of Birthright International (Web site: [www.birtheright.org](http://www.birtheright.org)).

Birthright provides free, confidential community and social services such as maternity homes, medical and pre-natal care programs and free baby clothes. Birthright of Essex County has been serving women and teens in Essex, Hudson and Union counties for over 30 years.

(Father Meagher, in addition to being the director of the archdiocesan Respect Life Office, also serves as a parochial vicar at Saint John the Apostle Parish in Linden and is a columnist for The Catholic Advocate.)

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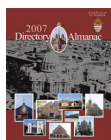
Photo courtesy of Angela Veilky

**STUDENTS WITH AN EXTRA-SWEET HEART**—Students at Mount Saint Dominic Academy, Caldwell, recently made decorative Valentine's Day candy baskets to raise money for a charity of their choice. Members of the school's Christian Concern Organization and The Spirit Committee (left to right) Megan Howley of West Caldwell; Katie MacTaggart of East Hanover; Alexandra Rogers of Roseland; Christina Giaquinto of Little Falls; Alexa Kelly of Nutley; and Danielle Cobianchi of Belleville were among the students taking part in the fund-raising program. Mount Saint Dominic Academy (Web site: [www.msdacademy.org](http://www.msdacademy.org)), established by the Sisters of Saint Dominic of Caldwell, is a Catholic, college preparatory school for young women.

**The 2007 Directory & Almanac is here!**

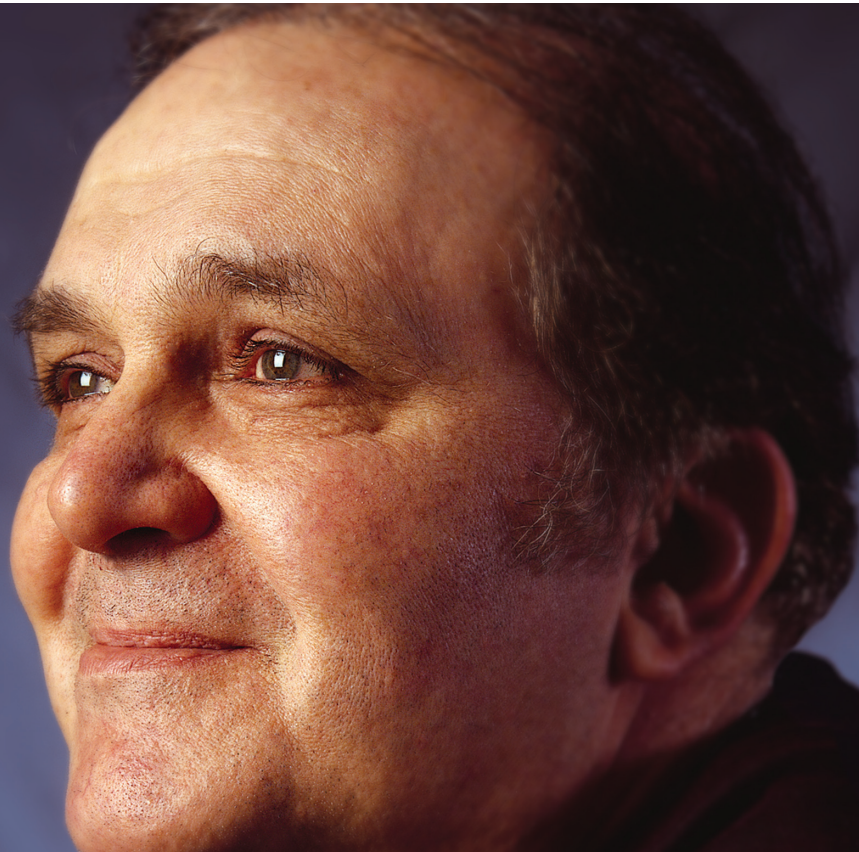
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To make an appointment with a Holy Name Hospital cardiologist, call 877-HOLY-NAME (465-9626).



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