



# The Catholic Advocate

Catholic Cemeteries

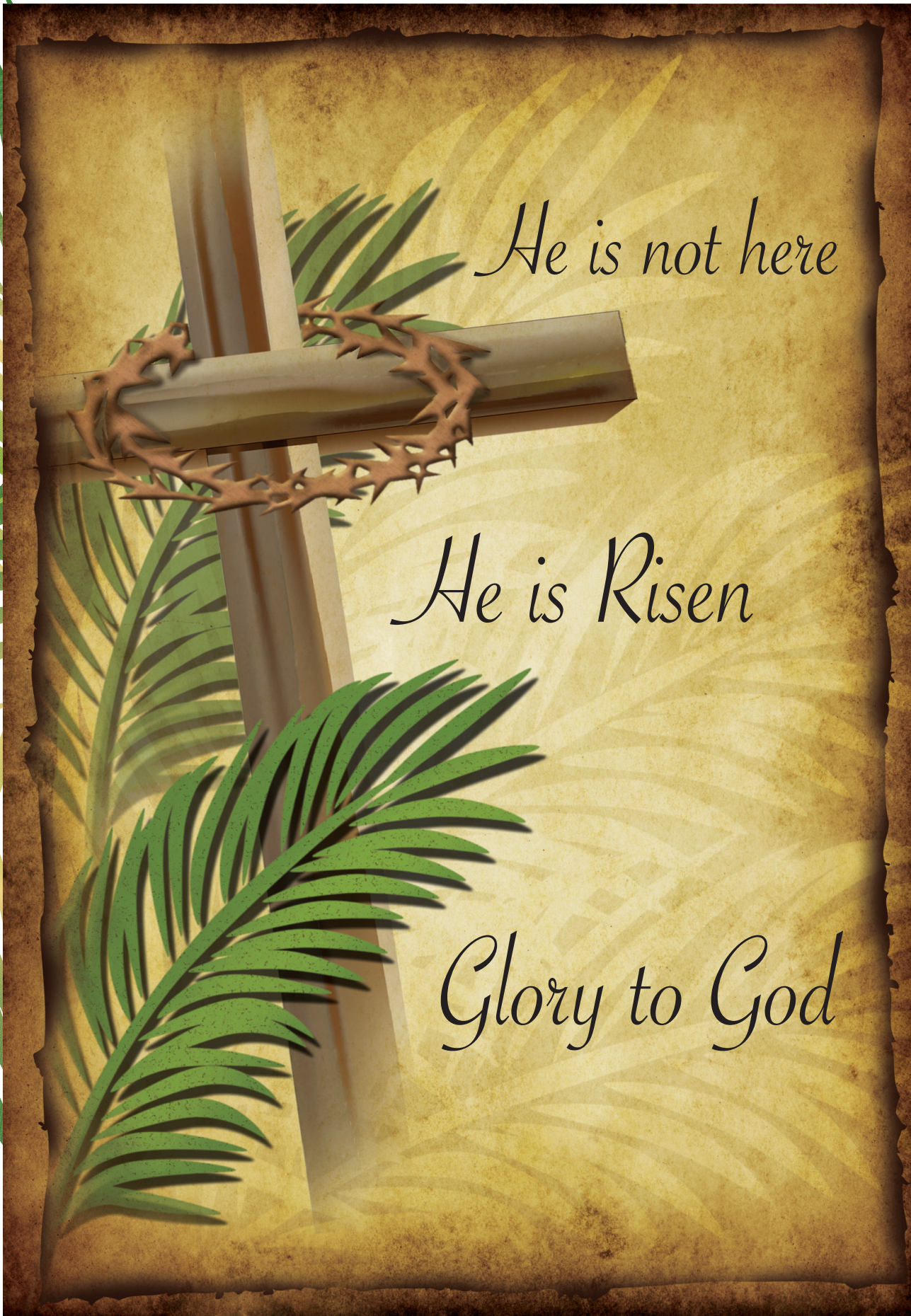


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April 8, 2009



Faithclipart



# Looking inside marble, pondering Nicodemus' faith

In a recent travel show on public television, the host brought the viewer to the Museum of the Cathedral in Florence. One of the masterpieces in this museum is a Michelangelo Pieta—not the one that the artist sculpted when he was in his 20s, and that we all know so well, but rather one sculpted when he was about 80.

Michelangelo never finished this larger-than-life depiction of Jesus taken down from the cross, and I must say that its incompleteness adds to the beauty of the piece.

The statue consists of four figures: Jesus, obviously broken and lifeless; his mother, whose face is not fully visible because she is pressing it against her son, trying as a mother will to comfort a son whose body cannot feel any comfort; Mary Magdalene, faithful and supportive even at the end; and in the center, caressing all three, Nicodemus, the Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin who on Good Friday assisted Joseph of Arimathea in preparing Jesus' body for burial.

We know very little of Nicodemus and what we do know comes to us through the Gospel according to Saint John. He was a member of the Jewish establishment. He kept his interest in Jesus secret, for fear of reprisals by the chief priests. It was Nicodemus who asked Jesus what it meant to be "born again." Yet, when members of the Sanhedrin were considering what to do about Jesus, Nicodemus cautioned them with the words:

"Does our law condemn a person before it first hears him and finds out what he is doing?"

He understood on a very deep and personal level the difficulties of being a Christian, of conducting one's daily life according to the teachings of Christ in a world that finds the challenge of the message of the Gospel hard to accept.

The experts say that Michelangelo modeled the face of Nicodemus on himself. They also say that Michelangelo was able to "see inside" slabs of marble and that his work merely attempted to reveal the figures trapped inside the marble slabs he chose for his work.

I have sometimes wondered why Michelangelo felt the need to identify with Nicodemus and why he placed Nicodemus at the center of the statue, with outreached arms enveloping the three other figures. In our tradition, Nicodemus is not one of the core figures of the Crucifixion. If anyone should be depicted with the Blessed Mother and Mary Magdalene, should it not be Saint John, for instance?

But as I began preparing for Holy Week, reflecting on the Passion of our Lord, His triumph over death, and the hope of the Resurrection that we celebrate at Easter, I am seeing this Pieta in a new light—tied to the renewal of our baptismal promises that we recite at the Easter Vigil.

Each of us suffers from the very human emotion of fear and in today's society some Catholics do not often feel confident enough to say in public with clarity and strength that we stand with Jesus; that we stand with the Church, through which the fullness of faith is found. There are many outside forces that



Sincerely  
in the Lord

By Archbishop John J. Myers



seek to marginalize the Truth, for to the world, the Church and her teachings are an inconvenient truth.

Do we not sometimes hide our faith as Nicodemus did? Do we not struggle at times to understand the fullness of the commitment we have made in our baptismal promises—the act of being born again—or our ability to honor that commitment every day?

I think, as Michelangelo struggled to free the images of this Pieta from the marble slab, that he may have been coming to a deeper understanding of the meaning of his subject and the lesson that this sculpture could convey to the people of Florence and, ultimately, to us all. We all struggle and life indeed does conspire to draw us away from the Truth.

But if we accept that, by His cross and resurrection, Jesus did conquer death and fulfill the promise of eternal life for us, the difficulties can be overcome. We can stand, as Nicodemus did on Good Friday, embracing all that Jesus taught and called us to be, and understand what it is to be a witness to Faith, to be born again.

May you all have a Blessed Easter!



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**FREQUENCY FOR THE YEAR**  
The Catholic Advocate continues to be a bi-weekly publication. Publication dates for 2009 are April 22; May 6, 20; June 10, 24; July 15; August 12, 26; September 9, 23; October 14, 28; November 11, 25; December 9, 23.

NJPA



ISSN# 1084-3213

## Vazquez uses her 'little hands' to juggle demanding vocation

BY MELISSA MCNALLY  
Staff Writer

As executive assistant to Archbishop John J. Myers, Roseann Vazquez spends her days bustling, organizing and ensuring that the Church in Newark's leader is prepared for his daily activities. As a busy wife and mother, she views all three responsibilities as one vocation; a way to strengthen her relationship with the Lord while doing His work.

Vazquez has been at the archbishop's side since he arrived in Newark in eight years ago and has been working at the Archdiocesan Center for 34 years. "I handle the archbishop's travel arrangements, calendar and appointments. I coordinate and supervise the archbishop's office staff. Everything that touches the archbishop has to go through my little hands first. It can be a lot of pressure," she explained.

To keep her focus, she relies on daily prayer. "I begin every day with one hour of prayer. Working in the archbishop's office is like working in a hospital emergency room. You can't hide; it is like being on stage. My prayer in the morning centers me."

Faith has always taken center stage in Vazquez's life. Raised in Newark, her family regularly attended Saint Francis Xavier Parish. "Faith and family went hand-in-hand," she explained. "Faith was the foundation for our family. My parents had my brother and I involved in parish life at a young age."

She continues to be active at Holy Family Parish in Nutley along with her husband, David, and son, David Joseph. An extraordinary minister since the age of 17, she is also a member of the parish's Holy Rosary Society and participates in the food pantry and annual Italian Festival. "The parish is the central part of my family's life; it's like our extended family."

Like her own parents, passing on the values of the Catholic faith to her son has always been a priority for Vazquez. Since the age of two, she brought David to Mass and encouraged him to build relationships with other faithful children.

"I always monitored his friends and made sure they supported his values. I was worried I was being too strict, but it has borne such fruit. His friends today love the faith and are good Catholics. I am extremely hopeful for the future."

*"I just want to get across to others how much God loves us."*

—Roseann Vazquez

Her son is a junior at Seton Hall University majoring in criminal justice. Vazquez always imagined that David would be a priest, but he hopes to work as a U.S. Marshall or FBI agent. She is confident that the values she instilled in him will serve him well, whatever his vocation. The company he keeps today of young, active Catholics is a source of inspiration for her.

"David believes that those who serve law enforcement also serve the Lord by promoting justice. There are so many college-age kids on fire with faith. It is uplifting for me and it does my soul so much good," Vazquez explained.

Her son volunteered last summer with Crosswalk, where he walked from Arizona to Washington D.C. speaking in parishes about pro-life issues. The group slept in trailers and had little access to cell phones and e-mail. In December, he traveled with The Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) to El Salvador where he volunteered at an orphanage for abused girls. Although she is extremely proud of her son, Vazquez worries ceaselessly when he is out of touch. "I trust in God to protect him."

Like most working mothers, Vazquez sometimes wonders whether she is spreading herself too thin. "I feel like I missed out on a lot of David growing up. I had great parents that stayed with him when he was younger. Being a wife, mother and having my career—it is all incorporated into one vocation. I know that through the grace of God, I have been able to do all these things."



Roseann Vazquez

Learning to prioritize and make time for God is essential, she believes, in today's fast-paced society. "We don't need to sit in front of the television for hours everyday. Just take one hour out for something worthwhile, like a Bible study at your church. We have to feed our soul."

Vazquez deepened her own spirituality while she attended a spiritual pilgrimage in France with seminarians from Immaculate Conception Seminary. The 10-day trip last month included visits to Lourdes, Liseux and Ars. The journey enriched her spiritually and being around the young men strengthened her faith.

"I have a deep love for the

Continued on page 6

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## Divine Mercy Sunday

Sunday April 19, 2009

20th Anniversary

Celebration in Thanksgiving

We will celebrate at: Saint Catharine's Church  
905 South Maple Avenue, Glen Rock, New Jersey



Saint Faustina Kowalska  
of the Most Blessed Sacrament

"My mission will not come to an end upon my death...I will draw aside for you the veils of heaven to convince you of God's goodness" (Diary, 281).

**3:00 PM** - The Divine Mercy Chaplet will be said on Church grounds. Louise Pacos will lead it weather permitting. Chaplet will begin in Church if weather is inclement.

**3:15 - 4:15 PM** - The Divine Mercy Penance Program will begin in Church.

**4:15 - 5:15 PM** - The Divine Mercy Eucharistic Holy Hour will begin. Confessions will be offered at this time.

**5:15 - 6:15 PM** - The Divine Mercy Closing Benediction will follow.

Incensing of The Blessed Sacrament and The Divine Mercy Image

After Closing Benediction

The Veneration of The First Class Relic of Saint Faustina Kowalska to the public.



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## St. Philomena Parish Divine Mercy Sunday

April 19, 2009

386 South Livingston Ave., Livingston  
(973) 992-0994



Fr. Glenn Sudano, CFR

The homilist for the Mass will be Fr. Glenn Sudano, CFR, one of the founding members of the Community of Franciscan Friars of the Renewal.

**1:15** Confessions  
**2:00** Mass  
**3:00** Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Veneration of Relic of St. Faustina and the Image of Divine Mercy

"I want this image to be solemnly blessed on the First Sunday after Easter. That Sunday is to be the Feast of Mercy. On that day, the depths of my mercy will be open."

Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.



CNS photo

Pope Benedict XVI waves to the faithful after celebrating Mass at Holy Face of Jesus Parish on the outskirts of Rome March 29. The pope said that while God calls some people to special forms of service, all Catholics have a duty to keep God's appeal for vocations to the priesthood and religious life constantly in their prayers.

## Trust required to discern vocations

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Embracing a religious vocation is not about feeling worthy or strong enough to be one of God's privileged ministers and witnesses, Pope Benedict XVI said. Instead, it's about trusting God so much that one can answer God's divine call without hesitation, the pope explained in his message for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. "What is asked of those who are called, for their part, is careful listening and prudent discernment, a generous and willing adherence to the divine plan, and a serious study of the reality that is proper to the priestly and religious vocations, so as to be able to respond responsibly and with conviction," he said. The papal message for the day of prayer, which will be observed May 3 in most countries, was released March 31. This year's theme is "Faith in the Divine Initiative—The Human Response." In his message, Pope Benedict said it is God who chooses some to follow His Son, Jesus, more closely and to put themselves fully at the service of the Church. Answering God's call "is never patterned

after the timid self-interest of the worthless servant who, out of fear, hid the talent entrusted to him in the ground," the pope said, citing Matthew's Gospel parable of the talents. Rather, it's a prompt and "ready adherence to the Lord's invitation," which is rooted in complete trust in God's plan. The pope acknowledged the "worrisome shortage of priests" in some parts of the world as well as the difficulties and obstacles the Church can encounter. However, God's children can find strength in their unshakeable faith that God is firmly guiding the Church toward the fullness of the kingdom and it is the Lord "who freely chooses persons of every culture and of every age and invites them to follow Him according to the mysterious plans of His merciful love," he said. "We must pray that the whole Christian people grows in its trust in God, convinced that the 'Lord of the harvest' does not cease to ask some to place their entire existence freely at His service so as to work with Him more closely in the mission of salvation."



## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

April 19, 2009

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(2 blocks from the  
Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart)

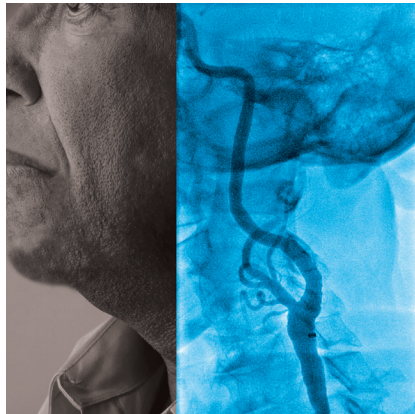
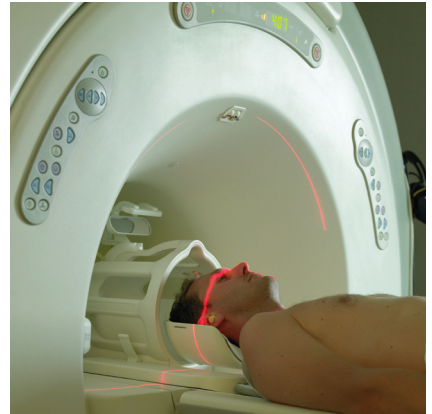
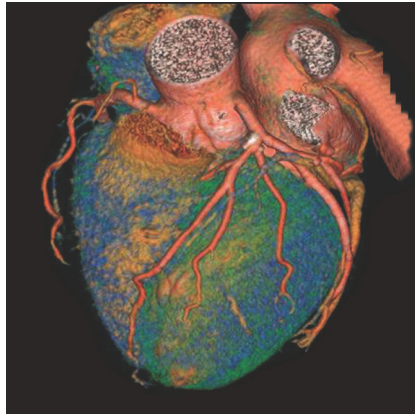
Please join us for The Divine Mercy  
Novena in preparation for Divine Mercy Sunday

First Day	April 10, 2009 • Good Friday • 3:00 PM	Tenth Day	Sunday, April 19, 2009 •
Second Day	April 11, 2009 • Holy Saturday • 3:00 PM		Divine Mercy Sunday
Third Day	April 12, 2009 • Easter Sunday • 1:00 PM	12:15 PM	Mass
Fourth Day	Monday, April 13, 2009 • 6:00 PM	1:30 PM	Exposition & Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, The Divine Mercy Chaplet at 2 PM, 3 PM, 4 PM
Fifth Day	Tuesday, April 14, 2009 • 6:00 PM	1:30-4:00 PM	Confessions will be heard
Sixth Day	Wednesday, April 15, 2009 • 6:00 PM	4:15 PM	Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament
Seventh Day	Thursday, April 16, 2009 • 6:00 PM	4:30 PM	Sunday Mass
Eighth Day	Friday, April 17, 2009 • 6:00 PM		
Ninth Day	Saturday, April 18, 2009 • 7:00 PM		

After Mass: Kissing of the first class relic of St. Faustina  
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# Memories of Easter seasons past color reflections on 'circle of life'

*"Here comes Peter Cottontail, hoppin' down the bunny trail, hippity hopping, Easter's on its way; bringing every girl and boy, baskets full of Easter joy, soon, it will be Easter Day!"*

When I think of Easter when I was growing up, that little tune by Gene Autry, one of TV's cowboys, almost always comes to mind. Except for a petting zoo, I think the first rabbit I ever saw was when I was 10 or 11 and my family rented a house in Manasquan for a week's vacation.

The owner of the house owned a rabbit, usually caged outside, and I remember feeding it lettuce leaves and carrot sticks. I found it odd that it didn't make any real sounds, but just quietly ate.

Since that time, especially now in Bergenfield, I've seen a lot more rabbits hopping around the grassy areas of our property. I don't feed them. They seem to take care of themselves.

Easter bunnies, of course, had a nobler purpose. They were the ones that carried the baskets, which somehow miraculously appeared on Easter morning, filled with chocolate bunnies and crosses, peanut butter and coconut eggs, malted milk balls and marshmallow peeps. It was a delight to see, and even a bigger delight to eat!

Easter Sunday also meant dressing up for Mass with new clothes that had been purchased in the weeks before. I still have a picture of me, my sister Marilyn, and our neighbor Sharon, dressed in our Easter best, standing near our house, many years ago.

After Mass we would come home, enjoy some of the candy and marvel at the aromas coming from the kitchen as mom prepared a leg of lamb dinner with all the trimmings. It was a family day to cherish.

One thing I haven't mentioned yet, though, is the incredible, edible egg. Usually on Holy Saturday, we would gather in the kitchen while mom hard-boiled a dozen or so eggs, and poured some of the boiling water into little cups which already had some colored powder at the bottom. In an instant, reds and greens and yellows and blues and sometimes pinks and oranges would transform the water into vivid pools. We would carefully dunk the eggs into the water with those little wire holders or a pair of tongs, sometimes fully coating the egg, sometimes doing half in one color and half in the next.

We were reminded that we could create our own names or images on the egg if we marked them first with the clear wax crayon included in the set, and, like magic, our marks would appear through the color. These days I've noticed that you also can put all kinds of decals on the egg, too.

Some years the eggs were hidden around the house; other times they simply appeared in the baskets. I thought the Easter bunny was pretty clever to know where to find them in the refrigerator. Of course, they became an instant breakfast for after Easter Sunday Mass, allowing mom to work on the upcoming dinner with more attention.

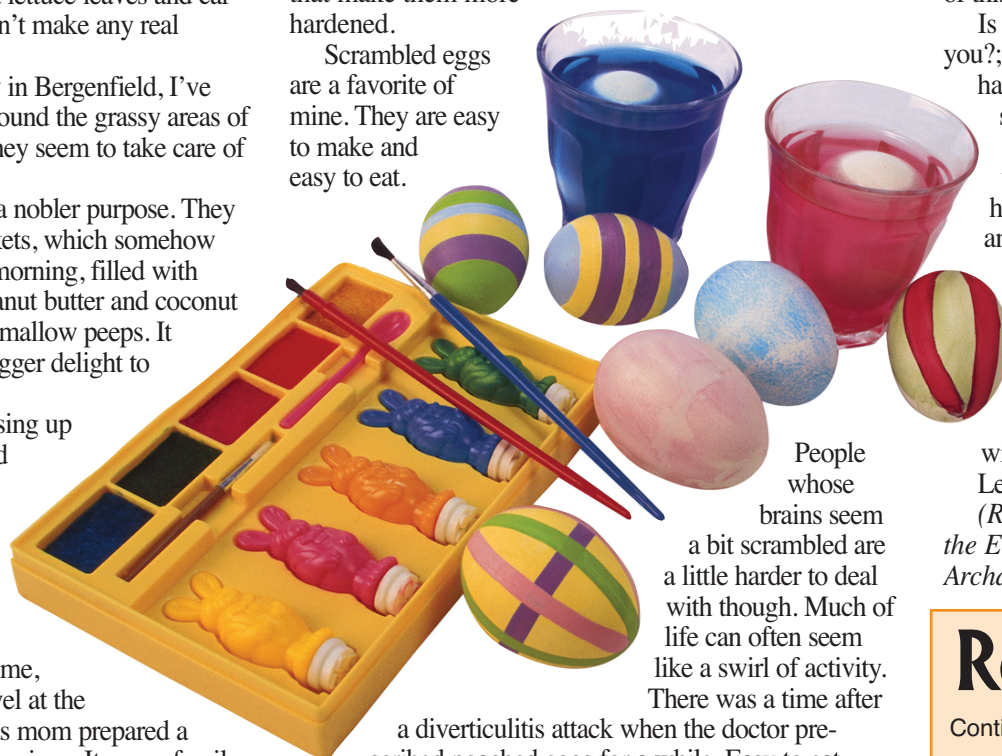
Through the years, I've enjoyed eggs in many ways. My father always liked them sunny side up—not a bad prescription for living either. An old song offered, "Keep on the sunny side, always the sunny side, keep on the sunny side of life; No need to complain when you're out in the rain, just keep on the sunny side, always the sunny side, keep on the sunny side of life."

I found out you didn't get so much runny yolk on your

toast, though, if you asked for those eggs "over easy." It is amazing what a little more careful attention and time can produce. If only we could treat people a little easier more of the time.

Soft-boiled eggs gave you that same swishy yolk, although the little egg cup was cute. You had to be more careful, though, as you cracked the shell, to make sure you didn't let any fall in. Hard-boiled eggs were easier to eat, although the taste was much different. You could bounce the egg on the table and pull off the shell piece by piece, and enjoy the egg within. Some people are more sensitive than others; some have built up defenses that make them more hardened.

Scrambled eggs are a favorite of mine. They are easy to make and easy to eat.



People whose brains seem a bit scrambled are a little harder to deal with though. Much of life can often seem like a swirl of activity. There was a time after

a diverticulitis attack when the doctor prescribed poached eggs for a while. Easy to eat, gentle on the stomach, a far cry from more exotic dishes like eggs benedict.

An omelet is a welcoming concoction. It allows all manner of other foods to be joined to it and somehow become one with it. Not a bad image of what the Church is and should be.

Cracked eggs are usually danger signs, leading to rotten eggs if left too long in the box. And how about those cartons, generally keeping the eggs nicely lined up and safe from collateral damage.

Perhaps the most extraordinary example of what can be done with eggs exceeds most expectations: the Faberge Egg. The insides are so carefully removed through a pin prick. The outsides are so richly decorated that they become a source of exceptional examination of an artistic masterpiece.

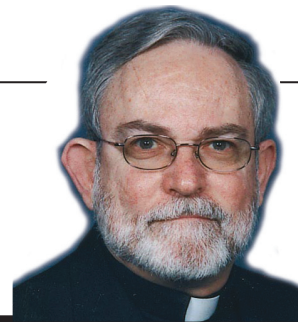
Even if none of these things were done to an egg, though, first and foremost it is an example of existence, of being itself. Were the eggs fertilized and kept warm, they would become new life, what spring and what Easter are all about. Whether they become the new life of a baby chick, or, through our eating them, part of our human life, they are magnificent reminders of the womb of mother earth, created by Father God, bringing us and all things into being.

The circle of life is reflected in God's creation. The dormancy of winter gives way to the resurgence of spring blooming. This reaffirms our hope that summer is not far behind, with greater freedom, more daylight, and happier times.

It makes sense then that our lives do the same. Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection reveal to us that God

## SEEING & BELIEVING

By Rev. Msgr.  
Richard J. Arnolds



moves through the circle of life with us. We have every reason to trust that God is with us and recognize that, even if we are in the midst of despair and darkness, there is every reason to be hopeful that new life awaits us. For more than 2,000 years, Christians have been gathering together to celebrate Jesus' Paschal mystery and our participation in it. All the Church's sacraments are celebrations of this mystery.

Is there a new resurrection that needs to take place in you?; some burden that you've been carrying?; some habit that you think is almost impossible to change?; some person in your life who is especially on your mind? This Holy Week and Easter is a privileged time of grace, a time to let the "Son shine in" to our hearts and souls and raise us to a new sense of hope and purpose.

Amid the struggles of life, and perhaps even of faith at times, the Risen Christ invites us to look beyond the immediate to the eternal. With our sights on Him and on heaven, we can weather any storm, meet any challenge, endure any difficulty, knowing that the One who overcame death is with us, at Easter and always.

Let us rejoice!

(Rev. Msgr. Richard J. Arnolds is pastor of St. John the Evangelist parish in Bergenfield, and Archdiocesan Vicar for Pastoral Life.)

## Roseann Vazquez

Continued from page 3

priesthood. I believe it is such a gift. Spending time with the seminarians (in France) was the shot in the arm I needed. There were no e-mails, no cell phones. I left the Blackberry at home. I am always so busy and my head is so congested. This trip let me just concentrate on prayer. I felt such a deep sense of peace. I am just in awe that God allowed me to be there," she recalled.



David Joseph Vazquez

Bathing in the healing waters in Lourdes was an especially profound moment for Vazquez. At first hesitant, she immersed herself in the cold water and then offered prayers for family members and friends. "The women at the bath were so wonderful; it is such a beautiful vocation. I was crying the entire time. Afterwards, a warm, peaceful sensation overcame me. It was an amazing experience."

The Blessed Mother and Mother Teresa are inspirations for Catholic womanhood, according to Vazquez. She prays to them to them for their grace and views her work with the Archbishop as a blessing. In 2003, Archbishop Myers appointed her as a Lady of the Holy Sepulcher, a papal honor.

"My job can be draining at times, but it is truly a gift," she said. "Everyone has to work, but to work here is icing on the cake. I have met so many wonderful priests through my job. I hope to grow in understanding. I just want to get across to others how much God loves us."



# Interfaith energy brightens urban academy

BY MICHAEL C. GABRIELE  
Editor

JERSEY CITY—Mary Baier sits at the helm of Our Lady of Czestochowa Elementary School and Little Harbor Academy. The schools are located at the cross-roads of the Garden State’s second-largest urban center. The education mission involves a creative, interactive approach to developing 21st century curriculum in a faith-based environment, which is populated by students of many nationalities, cultures and religions. Welcome to the kaleidoscopic world of a New Jersey Catholic school principal.

Faith plays a central role for Baier’s approach to Pre-K and elementary school education. She said it is at the heart of her spiritu-

al grounding and her vision as an educator, as well as in the street-wise attention to detail and negotiation skills that are required of her profession. The two schools operate under one roof as an outpost in a world of complex, diverse inner-city demographics. The financial crisis that continues to unfold in the power corridors of Wall Street—just across the Hudson River—is a long stone’s throw from the school’s main entrance at 248 Luis Marin Blvd. Five years ago Baier knew her school needed to do “something different” in order to survive and thrive. That something different was establishing Little Harbor Academy, a Pre-K program for children ages two to five. Baier, in 2004, launched a pilot program—

an early education Montessori effort that was composed of 15 two year olds. Today the Pre-K program has a headcount of 220 and a long waiting list of parents looking to enroll their children.

“Father Tom Iwanowski allowed it to happen,” Baier said, citing the faithful support of the pastor of Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish. “His visionary collaboration empowered me

to develop the Little Harbor Academy program. I’ve grown from the support of the school and our pastor.” The Montessori approach to education respects the independence and individuality of each student; “child-directed” programs Continued on page 18

## Chastity educator to address April 24 pro-life youth rally

SOUTH ORANGE—The Salesians of Don Bosco will host New Jersey’s sixth-annual pro-life youth rally Friday, April 24, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., at Seton Hall University. High school students are invited to take part in the rally, which is the largest gathering of pro-life youth in the state. Visit the Web site [www.salesianym.com](http://www.salesianym.com) or call (973) 761-0201 to register for the rally. Jason Evert, a chastity educator, will be the keynote speaker for the rally. The author of six books, Evert is a member of the Office of Respect Life Education for the Archdiocese of Boston. In addition, Father Bill Halbing of Saint Antoninus Parish, Newark, will celebrate Mass. Other activities include a pro-life skit to be presented by students of Seton Hall Prep and Lacordaire Academy, Montclair, morning liturgy to be lead by the Holy Family Academy and music to be performed by the “Notes of Redemption,” an ensemble of high school students from Immaculate Conception, Hudson Catholic and Becton Regional. Father Steve Ryan, S.D.B., will serve as the coordinator for the event, as he has for the past six years. “Young people count on the Church to provide them the truth about human life and guide them towards more life-giving relationships,” Fr. Ryan said, explaining the mission of the rally.

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*With Rev. Jerome Murphy-O’Connor*

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*With Dr. Marilyn Kravatz*

#### ❖ Week Two Classes: July 13-16 ❖

**History of Irish Spirituality**  
*With Dr. Phyllis Zagano*

**Trinity & Transformation: A Doctrine That Makes a Difference**  
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## Cathedral concert to benefit schools

NEWARK — The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra returns to the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart for a concert to benefit Catholic education on Sunday, April 19 at 4 p.m. Proceeds of the event will be distributed to archdiocesan schools.

Tickets for the concert are priced at \$30 per person and \$50 per couple. Call (973) 412-7500 or e-mail [nbutler@united-minds.com](mailto:nbutler@united-minds.com) for more information.

The concert is part of the annual Newark Cherry Blossom Park Festival in nearby Branch Brook Park.

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**Hudson County** - April 22, 2009 St. Aloysius School 721 West Side Avenue, Jersey City  
**Bergen County** - April 23, 2009 Queen of Peace Elementary 21 Church Place, No. Arlington  
**Bergen County** - April 28, 2009 Visitation Academy 222 Farview Avenue, Paramus  
**Essex County** - April 30, 2009 Archdiocesan Center 171 Clifton Avenue, Newark

## Bishops' Holy Week Schedule

**Most Rev. John J. Myers**  
Archbishop of Newark

(All at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart, Newark)

**Holy Thursday**, April 9, 7:30 p.m., Mass of the Lord's Supper

**Good Friday**, April 10, 3 p.m., Celebration of the Lord's Passion

**Easter Vigil**, April 11, 8:15 p.m.

**Easter Sunday**, April 12, noon, Mass

**Most Rev. Peter L. Gerety**  
Archbishop Emeritus of Newark

(All at Queen of Angels Parish, Newark)

**Holy Thursday**, April 9, 7:15 a.m., Mass

**Good Friday**, April 10, 3 p.m., Celebration of the Lord's Passion

**Holy Saturday**, April 11, 8:15 p.m., Easter Vigil

**Most Rev. Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V.**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Newark

**Holy Thursday**, April 9, 8 p.m., Mass of the Lord's Supper, Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Newark

**Good Friday**, April 10, 3 p.m., Celebration of the Passion and Death of Our Lord, Saint Peter Parish, Belleville

**Easter Vigil**, April 11, 8 p.m., Saint Anthony Parish; Belleville/Newark

**Easter Sunday**, April 12, 11:30 a.m., Mass, Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Newark

**Most Rev. Thomas A. Donato**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Newark

(All at Saint Henry Parish, Bayonne)

**Holy Thursday**, April 9, 7:30 p.m., Mass

**Good Friday**, April 10, 7:30 p.m., Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion

**Easter Vigil**, April 11, 7:30 p.m.

**Easter Sunday**, April 12, 8 a.m., Mass

**Most Rev. John W. Flesey**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Newark

(At Most Blessed Sacrament Parish, Franklin Lakes)

**Easter Vigil**, April 11, 8 p.m.

**Most Rev. Manuel A. Cruz**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Newark

**Holy Thursday**, April 9, 7:30 p.m., Mass in Spanish, Saint Rocco/ Saint Brigid Parish, Union City

**Good Friday**, April 10, 3 p.m., Liturgy, Saint Teresa of Avila Parish, Summit

**Good Friday**, April 10, 7 p.m., Seven Last Words service, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Newark, in Spanish

**Easter Vigil**, April 11, 8 p.m., Saint Rocco/Saint Brigid Parish, Union City, in Spanish

**Easter Sunday**, April 12, 10 a.m., Mass, Saint Aloysius Parish, Jersey City, in Spanish

**Most Rev. Dominic A. Marconi**  
Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of Newark

**Holy Thursday**, April 9, 7 p.m., Mass, Saint Adalbert Parish, Elizabeth

**Good Friday**, April 10, 7:30 p.m., Celebration of the Lord's Passion, Saint Margaret of Cortona Parish, Little Ferry

**Holy Saturday**, April 11, noon, Blessing of Easter Food, Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus Parish, Linden

**Easter Vigil**, April 11, 7:30 p.m., Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, West Orange

**Easter Sunday**, Mass, April 12, 9 a.m., Saint Theresa Parish, Kenilworth

**Most Rev. David Arias, O.A.R.**  
Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of Newark

**Holy Thursday**, April 9, 7 p.m., Mass, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Newark

**Good Friday**, April 10, 6:30 p.m., Procession from SS. Peter and Paul Parish to Our Lady of Grace and Saint Joseph parishes, Hoboken; Liturgical Service, 7:30 p.m., Saint Joseph Parish, Hoboken

**Easter Sunday**, April 12, 11:15 a.m., Mass, Sacred Heart Parish Vailsburg (Newark)

**Most Rev. Charles J. McDonnell**  
Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of Newark

(All at Holy Trinity Parish, Hackensack)

**Holy Thursday**, April 9, 7:30 p.m., Mass of the Lord's Supper

**Easter Vigil**, April 11, 8:30 p.m.

**Easter Sunday**, April 12, 12:30 p.m., Mass



# Caldwell trustees tap Blattner as president

CALDWELL—The Caldwell College board of trustees has selected Nancy H. Blattner, Ph.D. as its eighth president—the first lay president in Caldwell College’s 70-year history.

Blattner, who is currently vice president and dean for academic affairs at Fontbonne University, St. Louis, will succeed Sister Patrice Werner, O.P., Ph.D., who is retiring June 30 after 15 years as Caldwell College’s president (see *The Catholic Advocate*, Jan. 21, 2009 and Oct. 8, 2008). Blattner assumes her duties as Caldwell’s president July 1 and a formal inauguration will be scheduled in the fall.

“I am delighted to be chosen as president at Caldwell College, because the institution has an outstanding reputation as a liberal arts college with strong career-based programs,” Blattner said. “I look forward to strengthening or building upon the many successes that Sister Patrice has accomplished during her 15-year tenure as the president at Caldwell.”

Blattner and her husband Tim are the parents of three adult children. She brings over two decades



Nancy Blattner

of experience in Catholic and public higher education. At Fontbonne University, she has been responsible for leadership of the entire academic affairs division, including all departments, faculty and curriculum, the library, the office of institutional research and assessment, the registrar’s office and studies abroad. Her experience also includes serving as interim associate provost for graduate studies.

In addition, she spent 15 years at Southeast Missouri State University, working in positions such as academic associate, office of the provost and associate dean, school of university studies.

Sr. Patrice praised Blattner as “a passionate, inspiring leader, who will continue Caldwell’s tradition of outstanding academics, excellence in teaching and commitment to social justice, while keeping alive the Catholic Dominican mission that is the heart and soul of Caldwell College.”

# Parishes to celebrate Divine Mercy

AREA—Parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Newark have scheduled services, masses, novenas and speaker programs to celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday—April 19. Call the parishes listed below to verify times and dates of activities.

Saint Catharine Parish, 905 South Maple Ave., Glen Rock (phone: 201-445-3703), will mark the 20th anniversary of its Divine Mercy shrine with a service of thanksgiving on April 19. The day begins at 3 p.m. with recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet (weather permitting) on the church grounds; inclement weather would move the chaplet into the church. The Divine Mercy Shrine was dedicated on June 24, 1989, the birthday of Saint John the Baptist. A Divine Mercy penance program will take place in the church from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m.

Saint Catharine also will offer a Eucharistic holy hour from 4:15 to 5:15 p.m., which will include the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Incensing of the Blessed Sacrament and Divine Mercy Image

will be included in the closing benediction from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. After the closing benediction, veneration of a relic of Saint Faustina Kowalska is scheduled.

Saint Philomena Parish, 386 South Livingston Ave., Livingston (973-992-0994), will mark Divine Mercy Sunday with the Sacrament of Reconciliation at 1:15 p.m. and Mass celebrated at 2 p.m. There will be exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and veneration of a relic of Saint Faustina following Mass. Father Glenn Sudano, C.F.R., will serve as the guest homilist at Saint Philomena. Fr. Sudano, Father Benedict Groeshel and Father Andrew Apostoli are founding members of the Community of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal.

The Feast of Divine Mercy will be celebrated April 19 at Assumption of Our Blessed Lady Parish, 143 First St., Wood-Ridge (201-438-5555), at 2:30 p.m. with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Divine Mercy praises, Divine Mercy Chaplet and Benediction.

Several sites and parishes will encompass a Divine Mercy novena program of prayer, chaplet, reflections and benediction. The schedule begins on Good Friday, April 10, at 9:30 a.m. with Stations of the Cross at the Englewood Center for Women, an abortion clinic in downtown Englewood.

The following day, Holy Saturday, April 11, services will be held at Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, 668 Ridgewood Rd., Washington Township (201-664-6624), at 1 p.m. The parish has set aside Easter Sunday, April 12, for private prayer and reflection.

Saint Lucy Parish, 118 Seventh Ave., Newark (973-482-6663) begins a novena on Good Friday, April 10, 3 p.m. The parish also will celebrate Mass at 12:15 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Divine Mercy Sunday. In between the two masses that day there will be adoration and recitation of the rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Continued on page 28

# Ethics confab to weigh moral choices

RUTHERFORD—Felician College will host its third annual ethics conference Saturday, April 18, 9 a.m., at Sammartino Hall. The event is open to the public and the cost to attend is \$10. Contact Dr. Irfan Khawaja by e-mail (khawajai@felician.edu) or phone (201) 559-6288 for more information.

Dr. Holly Smith of Rutgers University will serve as the keynote speaker, discussing “Error and

Uncertainty in Moral Decision-Making.” The plenary commentator is Dr. Melinda Roberts of The College of New Jersey.

The conference will feature presentations on ethical issues regarding warfare, organ donation, environmental policies, family values and a special session of contemporary artists discussing the ethical implications of their artwork.

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Medjugorje “Journey to Peace” .....	Oct 23-30
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ENGLAND, SCOTLAND & IRELAND .....	Oct. 5-16, 2009	Father Charles Perricone
FRANCE .....	July 5-17, 2009	Fathers Bob Colaresi, O. Carm.
GREECE .....	May 15-24, 2009 Oct. 22-30, 2009 Oct. 22-30, 2009	Father E. Fuchs & B. Prado Father Brendan Williams Father P. Funesti & J. Weiner
HOLY LAND .....	May 18-27, 2009 Nov. 7-15, 2009	Father Anthony Ciorra Father John McCrone
HOLY LAND & ROME .....	May 18-28, 2009	Father Antonio Kuizon
ITALY (ROME, ASSISI & SOUTHERN ITALY) .....	Sept. 19-29, 2009	Father Gerald Buonopane
ROME .....	Nov. 6-15, 2009	In the Footsteps of St. Lucy
ROME & ASSISI .....	May 1-8, 2009 June 27-July 4, 2009	Msgr. John Gilchrist Father Paul Manning
OBERAMMERGAU .....	July 15-24, 2010 Aug. 8-18, 2010	Father Bob Colaresi, O. Carm. Father Ron Sordillo

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Advocate photo — Ward Miele

**FOR THE POOR**—Members of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary and Saint Michael Parish in Elizabeth visited the Archdiocesan Center in Newark on April 1 to present Archbishop John J. Myers (seated, center) with a \$20,000 check to help the poor and disadvantaged throughout the archdiocese. Making the presentation to Archbishop Myers were (left to right) Father John E. Wassell and parishioners Jose Navas, Donis Santana, Sotera Zayas and Pubzio M. Perez.

## Seminary to hit ‘Notes of Distinction’

**SOUTH ORANGE**—The sixth annual “Notes of Distinction,” a benefit concert sponsored by the Saint Andrew’s College Seminary at Seton Hall University (SHU), will be held Tuesday, April 28, 7 p.m., in Jubilee Hall. The concert will feature a performance by the Newark Boys Choir.

Highlighting the evening will be presentation of two awards in recognition of efforts to assist

the college seminarians in discerning a call to the priesthood. The Achievement Award will go to Father James B. Sullivan, Ph.D. who has been a priest over half a century, while the Humanitarian Award recipient is Serra International, District 22 of the Archdiocese of Newark.

The concert is open to the public. For additional information call the SHU seminary office at (973) 761-9420 or e-mail reillyjr@shu.edu.

## Students, parents invited to visit high school expos

**AREA**—The “High School Expo” program, organized by the archdiocesan Schools Office, will provide students and parents with the opportunity to learn about Catholic high schools of the Archdiocese of Newark.

Each expo in April will run 7 to 8:30 p.m. (see dates and locations below). Pre-registration is not required and the expos are open to the public. For additional information go to the Web site [www.rcan.org/schools](http://www.rcan.org/schools) (click on “High School Expo” hotlink) or call Laura Cristiano, director of marketing and public relations for the archdiocesan Schools Office, at (973) 497-4258.

This schedule includes April 21, Saint Genevieve School, 209 Princeton Rd., Elizabeth; April 22, Saint Aloysius School, 721 West Side Ave., Jersey City; April 23, Queen of Peace Elementary School, 21 Church Pl., North Arlington; April 28, Visitation Academy, 222 Farview Ave., Paramus; and April 29 at the Archdiocesan Center, 171 Clifton Ave., Newark (adjacent to the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart).

## Dinner to honor Padre Pio

**NUTLEY** — Holy Family Parish will hold its fifth annual dinner dance in honor of Saint Padre Pio on Sunday, April 19 at Hanover Manor, 16 Eagle Rock Ave., East Hanover.

The event begins at 4 p.m. with cocktail hour, wine, beer soda and cash bar. Dinner will include pasta, salad, a choice of three entrees (prime rib, chicken francese or broiled salmon), and a Viennese table featuring international coffees, teas and gourmet desserts.

Tickets are priced at \$75 per person. Call Giovanni Giacometti (201-933-3262), Lina Manetta (973-667-2673), Eva Tanelli

(973-759-8692), Rosa Russo (201-896-4114) or Marina Perna (973-284-0442) for reservations and information.

## Additional donations

Additional 2008 donations to the Retirement Fund for Religious (see *The Catholic Advocate*, March 25) include funds from: Saint Michael The Archangel Parish, Union, \$2,351; and Our Lady of Victories Parish, Jersey City, \$909.

# Challenged by change, Catholic women rely on faith

**BY BOBBIE HUNT**

*Special to The Catholic Advocate*

**T**he National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW), founded in 1920, is an organization that represents a history of faith in action. It mirrors the lives and work of women in every diocese in this country and tells us a lot about who we are and where we’re going.

Today, American Catholic women not only manage homes and volunteer in churches, schools and communities, most will work outside the home at some point in their lives. Many work for the Church. In 2005, 80 percent of the over 30,000 paid lay ministers in the United States were women.

When NCCW was founded 89 years ago, members were challenged to unify “our great social works, our moral works...the child welfare problem...the problem of public health, of public morality...the thousands (who seek) the protection of the Stars and Stripes.” Considering this list, we might ask: does nothing

change? Housing, education, health and immigration still figure high on the list of national concerns.

Change challenges us, but faith is the constant that helps Catholic women to meet changes in their lives, ministries and careers. Faith gives us the courage and reason to change. How? God’s gift of redemption through the life, death and resurrection of his son Jesus teaches us that life has meaning and purpose: There is value in every person we encounter, meaning in every challenge we face, and the grace and opportunity to align ourselves with God’s purpose. Catholic women are rooted in a faith that gives us the courage to meet the challenges of the present day with Gospel energy.

When I was young and pregnant with my first child, I was constantly sick and was admitted to a Catholic hospital to be given IVs and medication a number of times. We had a very healthy baby boy and the Sisters from the hospital were invited to the baby’s baptism. One of them said to me after the



Bobbie Hunt

baptism: “You were so ill I never thought this baby would survive.” That thought had never entered my mind. Why? I knew God was with me and my baby. Although I didn’t realize it at the time, that was the beginning of my conscious journey of faith.

For others a terrible loss may begin or interrupt their faith journey. A friend once told me: “One of the first challenges that I faced was the death of my mother while I was in grammar school. Being the oldest child, this loss complete-

ly changed my life and the lives of my siblings. My faith enabled me to call upon Mary, the mother of Jesus, to be a mother to me. Her intercession with her son brought me courage and love.”

Who better to model courage for us? We say of Mary, “blessed are you among women,” yet the challenges she faced may look more like tragedy than blessing. We can imagine her fear and confusion at the Annunciation even while she put her trust in God. How hard it must have been to see her son leave home for his life as an itinerant preacher. How devastating to watch him die a criminal’s death. Yet she trusted God’s purpose in all of this.

Whatever we do in life, whatever path or career we follow, our faith guides us to show love in the way we treat others and in the service we give. No matter where our faith begins, it helps us walk our life journey with God. Scripture tells us, “So you see it isn’t enough just to have faith. You must also do good to prove that you have it. Faith that does not

show itself by good works is no faith at all” (James 2:17).

The Catholic women I meet are busy doing good works and being a blessing to others. Their efforts start in their youth and extend throughout every professional and volunteer activity imaginable.

History tells us a lot about who we are; faith shapes who we will be. How will we respond to the needs of the world tomorrow? Probably in ways that haven’t been invented yet—or that only young adults recognize so far.

The world needs our hands and hearts. There are people who die alone, unloved and unremarked, life values to be “caught and taught,” vocations to be encouraged, children to be fed, troubled pregnancies and troubled hearts. It is a blessing to be given the grace to live as a Catholic woman of faith serving our Lord.

(Editor’s note: Bobbie Hunt is president of the NCCW, which is based in Arlington, VA. Call 703-224-0990 or visit the Web site [www.nccw.org](http://www.nccw.org) for more information on the group.)



# Faithful bowler inspired to create legacy donation

BY ANNE DEVIVO DEMESA  
Special to The Catholic Advocate

Tom Ahearn is a very pragmatic person. His faith is deep, but what motivated him to give a gift to the Church was the attractive rate of return on a special kind of investment. With a little background information, you'll understand the source of his inspiration.

Once upon a time Tom didn't know about ways to give to the Church beyond his weekly contribution at Sunday Mass. But one day, as the Holy Spirit would have it, Tom was bowling with friends when a simple conversation introduced him to a different kind of gift, a planned gift, with the Archdiocese of Newark. He was bowling with a man whose brother-in-law worked as the director of the Planned Giving for the archdiocese.

Tom called the archdiocese to learn more about charitable gift annuities (CGAs) and discovered a person can make a legacy donation through a CGA and receive a portion of it back in the form of a fixed payment for life. The rate of return is based on one's age and the amount given to the charity, combined with the discount rate offered in this type of arrangement by the government. The older a person is at the time of their gift, the more they will receive in the form of an annuity payment. A CGA also can provide significant tax benefits. At the end of the person's life, the remainder of the principal passes to the charity.

This was a very practical way

for Tom to help the Church as well as create a steady stream of income for himself—a source of revenue that he could never outlive. He was so happy with his first CGA, he inquired about calculating the rate of return on a second one. He was using appreciated securities, as he had for the first CGA, and had figured out how many shares of the particular stock he was using to fund the second CGA.

Tom found a way to be tax smart in his charitable giving. He was inspired by the tax benefits and to help the archdiocese in its charitable mission. Without writing a check or taking away from the income he needed for living expenses and future commitments, he made a gift through his investments to help the Church,



Tom Ahearn

while creating a source of income to supplement his retirement.

A member of the faith community at Saint John the Evangelist Parish in Bergenfield, Tom, a wid-

ower and the father of seven, ran his own business from 1988-2000 as a customs house broker, dealing with U.S. Customs. Prior to that, he worked for Union Carbide.

He has lived in Bergenfield for over 40 years. His wife, Mary Anne, was a heart transplant patient and she lived with her new heart for 12 years before succumbing seven years ago.

One year after Mary Anne's death, Tom's children surprised him with a moving tribute to their mother. Working in partnership with the cardiac transplant program at the hospital where she had her surgery, they put together a memorial event called "Ma's Walk." Every September, for the past six years, Tom, along with his seven children and seven grandchildren, gather at

Verona Park to remember their beloved wife, mother and grandmother and raise money to support other families going through the same trauma. Each year the family has been able to raise \$20,000 for the program.

What's your story of faith? What will your legacy be? If you would like to open a charitable gift annuity to benefit either your parish or the archdiocese, contact the archdiocesan Office of Major Gifts/Planned Giving by phone at (973) 497-4048 or e-mail (deme-saan@rcan.org), or visit the Web site (www.rcan.org/plannedgiving) to learn more.

(Editor's note: Anne DeVivo DeMesa is the director of gift planning in the archdiocesan Office of Major Gifts/Planned Giving, Development.)

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Amount	Ingredient	Preparation Method
2 each	puff pastry sheets	
1 Pound	whole milk ricotta cheese	
8	eggs	
12 ounces	grated parmesan cheese	
12 ounces	mozzarella cheese	shredded
14 ounces	prosciutto	diced
	black pepper	to taste
1	egg	for egg wash

**NOTES:** preheat oven to 350.  
Beat eggs, black pepper and ricotta in together on medium speed in mixer for 6 minutes.  
Slowly incorporate grated parmesan and mozzarella cheese. Fold in diced prosciutto.  
Place one sheet of puff pastry on bottom of a 9-inch spring form pan and add the mixture spreading it evenly.  
Cut the other sheet of puff pastry dough to form top of pie and place over the filling.  
Cut excess dough off and crimp the edges with a fork.  
Brush top of pie with an egg wash and bake in 350-degree oven for 1 hour until top is golden brown.  
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# Bishops press Trenton on urban scholarship bill

BY PAULA GLOVER

Special to The Catholic Advocate

TRENTON—Most Rev. Thomas A. Donato, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark, led a diverse

coalition of faith-based leaders who addressed lawmakers at the Statehouse on March 25, urging support for the long-stalled bill designed to aid low-income students in underperforming inner-

city school districts.

The Urban Enterprise Zone Jobs Scholarship Act (A-2897; S-1607) is a five-year pilot program that would allow eligible low-income children in Camden,

Elizabeth, Jersey City, Lakewood, Newark, Orange, Paterson and Trenton to receive scholarships to attend a public or non-public school. The program is paid for by tax credits for contributions on state corporate business tax filings, which would bring \$24 million to participating public and private schools in the first year of the pilot program, in an attempt to improve the education for underserved urban students.

The Senate version of the bill remains frozen in a budget committee, after passing through the economic growth committee last May. The bill so far has not been scheduled for introduction in the Assembly. Last May Most Rev. Edgar M. da Cunha, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark, addressed legislators and spoke in favor of the bill, which is opposed by the New Jersey Education Association (see *The Catholic Advocate*, May 21, 2008).

"This bill would enable the students to receive the quality education that is their right," Bishop Donato declared last month during a press conference. Bishop Donato, who also serves as the regional bishop for Hudson County, represented the Catholic bishops of NJ at the hearing.

"Catholic education in New Jersey has provided quality education, saving the state millions of dollars, Bishop Donato said. "This bill will allow our children, especially those in the urban areas and who are minorities, to receive a good education."

After the press conference, Bishop Donato noted the bill has the potential to save local school districts millions of dollars. Usually, whenever Catholic schools close, local school taxes increase because the students from closed Catholic schools migrate to public schools.

In emphasizing the quality of Catholic schools, Bishop Donato indicated that the primary reason for students leaving Catholic schools is that their parents cannot afford the tuition, even though the parents may be working two or even three jobs.

Unlike parents in more affluent communities, who might be able to move to a school district with better schools or perhaps be able to afford to send their children to private schools, the typical parent of a Catholic school student in an urban area does not have the money to move or to send their children to private schools.

The bottom line, according to the bishop, is that passage of the



Bishop Thomas A. Donato

Urban Enterprise Zone Jobs Scholarship Act (A-2897; S-1607) would decrease the taxpayer burden for the public school system, while at the same time providing help to keep Catholic schools open and offering an excellent educational alternative to students.

Bishop Donato noted that more than 80 percent of New Jersey Catholic children attend public schools; consequently, the Church supports the improvement and success of all public schools. "We made a strong plea, and we are hopeful this bill will pass," he said.

Rev. Reginald T. Jackson, executive director of the Black Ministers Council of New Jersey, was the primary speaker at the press conference. In strong terms, he condemned the New Jersey educational system, particularly as it relates to urban minorities.

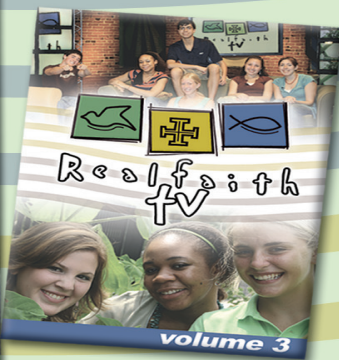
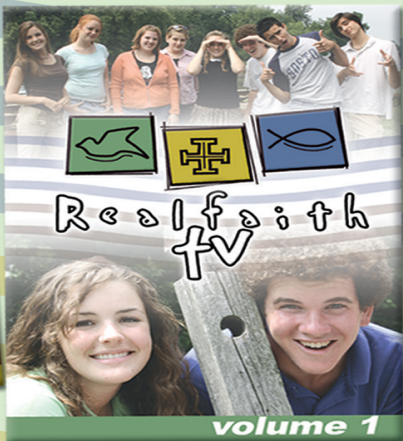
"The minority community demands that our leaders act on principle, not on expediency," Rev. Jackson said. "We must do what is best for our children."

Also addressing the press conference was Martin Perez, president of the Latino Leadership Alliance of New Jersey, who told those assembled that the minority community would no longer support politicians who did not support quality education for minority children.

(Editor's note: Paula Glover is the photo and online editor for *The Monitor*, the newspaper of the Diocese of Trenton.)

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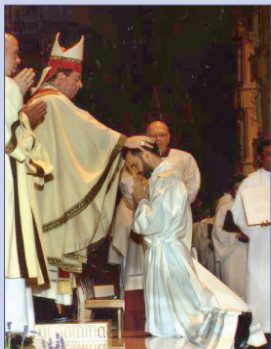
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John 1:38-39

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## Vocation News

# Seminararian becomes acolyte

ROME—H. Ray Cho, a seminararian from the Archdiocese of Newark, was among 44 seminararians from the North American Pontifical College installed as acolytes during a celebration of the Eucharist on March 15.

Cho is in his second year of theological studies. Most Rev. Edmund Cardinal Szoka, Archbishop Emeritus of Detroit, was the principal celebrant of the liturgy and instituted the seminararians. The seminararians



**H. Ray Cho**

have now received both the ministry of lector and acolyte in anticipation of their diaconal and then priestly ordination.

The Pontifical North American College, founded in 1859, is the American house of studies in Rome, where priests are formed near the heart of the Church for service in the United States and Australia. Archbishop John J. Myers is the chairman of the board of governors and president of the college.

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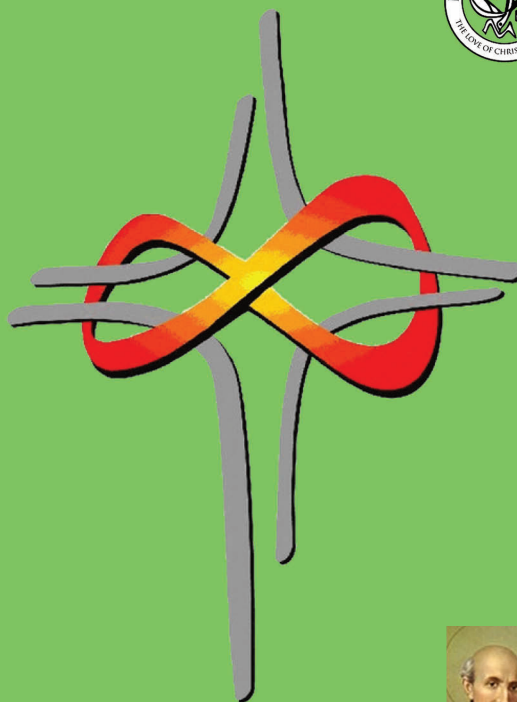
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## Sisters, Brothers, Priests & Laity



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*John J. Myers*

✠ Most Reverend John J. Myers  
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## Mary Baier

Continued from page 7

for learning, Baier explained, adding that it lays the foundation for critical thinking. Montessori methods are designed to spark creativity, responsibility and at Little Harbor it's all done from the perspective of a Catholic, value-centered environment.

The focus on faith cultivates a multicultural education and chemistry; half the students are Catholic, the balance represents other faiths such as Christian,

Muslim, Buddhism, Hindu and Jewish. The enrollment at the school and academy reflects families who have relocated here from countries in Asia, Africa and South America.

"As a principal, my scope of responsibilities encompass not only academics, religion and spirituality, but must also include rigorous development, marketing and mission identity," she said. "I am competing with many private schools in the area. We must come to terms with that and explain what it means to educate children of a global society in today's

Catholic school environment. This is something that sustains our schools and is a great service to the needs of our community.

"We are a school very sensitive to and respectful of all our differences and appreciate each one's special unique personalities and talents," Baier continued. "We have great school spirit. We walk the talk. We are all about faith-filled children. We open our minds to knowledge and our hearts to Jesus."

The interfaith environment forms a much-needed common ground when the topic shifts to the



Advocate photo – M. Gabriele

Principal Mary Baier critiques a colorful creation from aspiring artists at Little Harbor Academy. Baier was a finalist for the 2008 national "Principal of the Year" award from the National Catholic Education Association, Washington, D.C.

mechanics and cost of education. "There are very high expectations," she said. "Parents are of a different generation and as such are more expressive in their concerns and needs. We are located near the hub of the world's financial center. Parents tend to be competitive and want to see innovative programs, challenging curriculum and enrich-

ing extracurricular activities. They are integral in the education partnership with our school."

The challenges come with the territory for Baier and ultimately serve a positive purpose, keeping her focused and open to new ideas. "You can't be restful, not if you strive to set a standard for educational excellence," she said.

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# Paschal Vigil: readings speak to new life of grace

BY FATHER LAWRENCE FRIZZELL  
*Catholic Advocate Columnist*

The rich selection of biblical passages proclaimed during the Paschal or Easter Vigil may be approached from several angles. The pattern in Jewish and Christian worship is to ground the celebration in relation to the past and to look forward to the ultimate goal of God’s plan in the future, while acknowledging the need for divine mercy and protection in the present.

The Church’s choice of biblical texts for the Easter Vigil follow the pattern of past, present and future. Each reading is followed by a psalm response and a collect, a prayer by the priest that applies aspects of the passage to our circumstances. In this essay we will consider these prayers. All seven readings from the Old Testament will be discussed; even though only three or more selections may be heard, the ideal would be to have all seven before the Gloria.

### Genesis 1:1-2:2

The beautiful hymn of creation may seem to be long, but it lays the foundation for the human vocation with the challenge to imitate God, who rested on the seventh day. Faith in God the Creator implies an understanding that the role of human beings as agents of God demands a moral response. In the image and likeness of God, every human being participates in a royal dignity, with the duty of cooperating respectfully in the development of the world’s potential.

The collect acknowledges that the order of nature, with its wonderful beauty and order, is the foundation for the life of grace. The obedience of Jesus, in stark contrast to the sin of our first parents, is the foundation for the new creation. “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation...God has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and has given us a ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor 5:17-18).

As the Paschal Lamb, Jesus has rescued His people, all the baptized, from slavery to sin and His cross is the bridge to a life of peace in the presence of the Father. The human vocation to serve God in the world is completed by the challenge to imitate Christ as the peacemaker par excellence.

### Genesis 22:1-18

The difficult passage about the sacrifice of Abraham offers lessons about God’s vehement rejection of human sacrifice and is a basis for the Israelites to understand the demand for animal sacrifice in the Temple. However, the Church relates this test of obedience of Abraham and Isaac to the self-giving of Jesus on the Cross. “Is it possible that God, who did not spare His own Son, but handed Him over for our sake, will not grant us all things besides?” (Rom 8:32).

The prayer reminds us that Abram is the first believer, to whom God made a promise to bless all the nations in his name (Gen 15:6; 12:3). His new name, Abraham, means “father of a multitude of nations” (Gen 17:4), to which Saint Paul referred when he described the baptized as descendants of Abraham, inheriting all that was promised (Gal 3:29). As the favored time for adults to be received into the Church, the Easter Vigil celebrates the triumph of Jesus as the foundation for “the new life of grace.”

### Exodus 14:15-15:1

This is the key passage for Christians to grasp the Paschal Mystery of Jesus’ death and resurrection; so it must be proclaimed because it provides the pattern for interpreting the work of Jesus as the Lamb of God. The liberation of Israel from Pharaoh began the transition from slavery to freedom, from servitude to the service of God in the Land. This is the paradigm for Christians to understand the hour of Jesus, when He passed over from this world to the Father, providing the gifts necessary for the baptized to find forgiveness of sin and the fullness of life.

The prayer makes this point and links the Exodus motif to the vocation of Abraham. The baptized from all nations are to become true, i.e. faithful, children of Abraham and thus to prove worthy of the dignity of Israel. This reminds us that Jesus chose 12 Apostles to indicate the continuity of the Father’s plan.

### Isaiah 54:5-14

The readings now move from the past to the present and future. The history of Israel during the centuries of residence in the Land was linked by the prophets to the example of a woman in marriage. The Covenant was a call to intimacy with the one God, but the people often failed, so the sins of idolatry were likened to adultery. The God of Israel chose Jerusalem to be the place of the Temple, the favored context for worship and divine revelation of the glorious Name of God. The collect notes that the increase of the faithful fulfils divine promises and evokes a deepening confidence or trust in God’s Word, since the fidelity of God is the foundation for our hope in divine promises.

### Isaiah 55:1-11

When people break the commandments, this is an affront to their Covenant with God. The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 586 B.C. was interpreted by

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The

Resurrection

A Season of Eternal Life



# As seasons change, cemeteries soothe souls

BY MSGR. JOHN GILCHRIST  
Catholic Advocate Columnist

There is no place more silent, solemn and grim than a cemetery in winter. On a bitter cold day the mourners come to the gravesite and usually they hold hands and cling to one another. It is partly through shared grief and partly to keep warm.

On a frigid winter morning the wind can whip mercilessly across countless rows of gravestones and monuments. There is nothing to break the breeze and the sorrow of the moment and it is made more intense by the cutting bite of the air.

The priest will utter his words a little more quickly and even shorten the service. The funeral director will do his or her best to deliver the family and friends more quickly back to the warmth of the waiting limousines and cars. As the cortege moves away, the workmen move in quickly to lower the casket and begin the work of filling in the grave.

The cemetery in winter can become an allegory that depicts the worst fears of the

human race—the loss of life and the end of our feeble existence in this vale of tears. Ancient graveyards, especially non-Catholic ones, often exhibit tombstones that carry poems and solemn messages that warn the passerby of the brevity of life. Thus a cemetery in the dark of winter reinforces the reality of a brief mortal existence before we “shuffle off this mortal coil.”

Oh, but come back to the same cemetery in spring. Suddenly all is changed. The ice and snow are gone. The grass is green and the trees are sporting their leaves. The birds sing out their welcome. The air is warm and the breeze can caress your cheeks with a gentle stroke. The stones no longer seem so hard and sad. They are reminders of the beloved people who sleep beneath them.

Visitors can be seen. Some bring flowers, others place small plants as a sign of their love and devotion. The cemetery becomes a place of life and hope for all who believe. It says to all: “Be happy and content, those you love have left their bodies here. I will keep them until one day—just as surely as the sun comes up in morning—the Redeemer will come from the East. Then they will rise. They shall shine like the sun in the king-

dom of the Father. They will live in the glory of God.”

The cemetery in winter is a metaphor for me. A moral winter has swept across the land. People have lost faith in God. A recent poll found that 15 percent of Americans have neither religion nor belief in a creator, the immortality of the soul, or any hope in eternal life. What is even more telling is that 25 percent of people under 50 years of age have no connection to any established religion.

How did this occur? What has caused such a decline in religious life? It is not difficult to trace the roots and the spread of godlessness among so many.

It came from Europe like a slowly spreading infection that touched first the minds of the so-called “intelligentsia” and then reached into the hearts and minds of the masses. It received a name from the philosophers of the 18th century. They called it the “Enlightenment.” I believe that it should be called, when it refers to philosophy, as the “darkening” of the intellect. Today, whether they call themselves “liberals,” “modernists,” “free-thinkers,” “utilitarian,” “materialists,” “agnostics,” “skeptics,” “atheists,” “positivists,” “empiricists,” “existentialists,” “Marxists,” “pragmatists,” “secular hu-

Continued on page 24



Advocate photo – M. Gabriele



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# Father Mario Balbi succumbs; beloved Stella Maris chaplain

BY FATHER MIKE MENDL  
Special to The Catholic Advocate

AREA—Father Mario Balbi, S.D.B., died Feb. 23, at Stella Maris Chapel at the Port of Newark. He was 88 years old. Funeral arrangements on Feb. 26 included services at Stella Maris Chapel and Our Lady of the Valley Parish, Orange. He was buried in the Salesian Cemetery, Goshen, NY.

Fr. Balbi had served as a port chaplain since 1991 and up to his last days he was offering his priestly ministry daily to the sailors and other personnel at the port. He was largely responsible for getting the port's permanent chapel built. It was dedicated in 2002 to Mary, Star of the Sea (Stella Maris).

"We have known Fr. Mario as a man who, even though elderly, briskly climbed the gangplanks of ships so that young sailors far from home would know God traveled with them, and that in His love they could always find safe haven," Father James Heuser, S.D.B., Salesian provincial superior, said of Fr. Balbi.

Fr. Balbi belonged to the Salesian community at Our Lady of the Valley Parish and the Don Bosco Residence, both located in Orange, since 1999. From 1991 to 1999 he resided with the Salesians at Saint Anthony Parish, Elizabeth.

Born March 25, 1920, in Manaus, Brazil, Fr. Balbi entered the Salesian school there at age 12 and five years later started his year of novitiate in Pernambuco, Brazil. He made his first religious profession as a Salesian on Jan. 28, 1938, at Pernambuco.

As a young Salesian, Fr. Balbi earned a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy at the Instituto Pedagogico Salesiano in Jabotão, Brazil, in 1940. He later earned master's degrees at the University of Cearu, Brazil, in the physical sciences (physics, chemistry, biology) and Anglo-Germanic languages. In addition to his native Portuguese, he spoke Spanish, French,



Father Mario Balbi

Italian, German, Latin, and English.

He began his theological studies at the Instituto Teologico Pio XI, in São Paulo in 1944. He was ordained there on Dec. 8, 1947. Fr. Balbi taught in Salesian schools in Brazil and the United States. In 1981 he became a member of the New Rochelle Province of the Salesians. He taught Latin and French at Benedictine Military School in Savannah, GA, from 1969 to 1981 and was chaplain of the Port of Savannah, from 1974 to 1990. He used his language skills very effectively to minister to sailors from all over the world.

Bishop J. Kevin Boland of Savannah, who is also the Bishop Promoter

of the Apostleship of the Sea, praised Fr. Balbi's work with seafaring men and women. "Fr. Balbi not only took care of their spiritual needs, but was greatly influential in making sure that these men had good social outlets in regard to sports and other activities during their short stays," Bishop Boland said.

An avid student of Salesian history and the life of Saint John Bosco, Fr. Balbi took a sabbatical year in 1990-1991 at the Institute of Salesian Studies in Berkeley, CA, and he attended several international conferences of Salesian historians and had translated into English *Don Bosco Inedito* ("The Unpublished Don Bosco"), a collection of anecdotes and family history on Saint John Bosco preserved as oral tradition until collected by the Italian Salesian Father Michele Molineris.

Father Stephen Leake, S.D.B., Fr. Balbi's superior in Orange, wrote that Fr. Balbi "was a great inspiration of pastoral zeal and hard work. He lived up to his own unofficial motto *Labor omnia vincit* ("Labor conquers all things").

(Editor's note: Fr. Mike Mendl is the coordinator for province communications at the Salesians of Don Bosco, New Rochelle, NY.)

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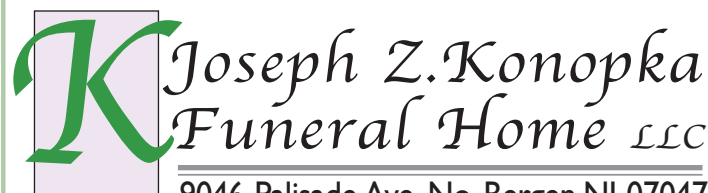
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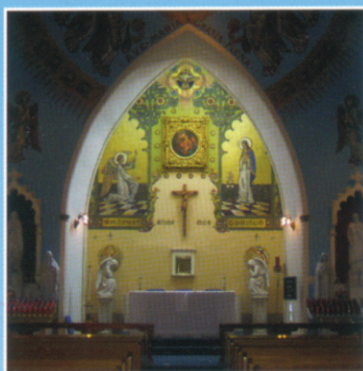
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## Cemeteries

Continued from page 18

manists” or any one of a dozen other names. They are all children of the Enlightenment.

My mother had a saying about these intellectuals who abandon common sense and in their arrogance and pride enter into the dark path that leads to a negation of the creator. She said: “They are so smart they are stupid.” She was

exactly correct! While many of them are natively brilliant, their own ego leads them astray into a life that is empty, self-centered and illusionary because they reject true reality.

Let me demonstrate briefly the slide into today’s “rationalism,” which resides and rules in academia, in the media, in society, in our government and even in our Church where large numbers call themselves Catholic but absolutely reject the institutional

Church, the Church’s teachings on morality and even parts of the Nicene Creed.

First, there was the breakup of religion during the Reformation of the 16th century. The 17th century was the “Age of Science.” Human beings began to feel that they could understand and master nature. In the 18th century a host of philosophies emerged. Learned men were filled with questions about knowledge. They doubted the ability of the mind to know re-

ality at all. The concept of a providential God began to fade among them. They were called “idealists” because for them the true world was a phantom of their mind.

By the 19th century, Nihilism and Materialism had spread throughout academia. For many, God began to disappear like the sun behind the clouds. Nietzsche could announce that “God is dead.”

During the early 20th century, Lenin and Stalin would make the results of atheism of communism into a horrible reality. But, yet, artists, writers, professors and pseudo-theologians could still preach their cynicism about man’s ability to know anything concerning God to the masses. In the 1930’s many embraced the communistic creed. (I, as a boy, delivered *The Daily Worker*.)

By the second half of the 20th century, all of these European movements had invaded the United States. They had left many in Europe after the Great War feeling like the writer Camus who said, “Nothing is certain but uncertainty.” He also said, “The only ethical question is whether to com-

mit suicide or not.” In America, the “Playboy” philosophy began to emerge and prevail. Young people could say, “Trust no one over 30.” Some people would later say, “I want it all; I want it all right now.” By the way, many of these same people have also caused the current fiscal crisis in our country. After all, didn’t Wall Street tell them that “greed is good?”

The motto of today’s “modernist” can be summed up in three sentences. “I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul.” And, “No one tells me what to do or what to believe.” Life, for them, is truly a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

That is why the cold wind of reality is beginning to blow over them like the icy wind in a December cemetery. The warmth of God’s love has left their innermost psyche. They are left to their loneliness. The winter of their disbelief is upon them. Matthew Arnold can say of them, “The disease of the world is divorce from one’s self.” They lack deep identity.

Continued on page 29



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# Bishops defend 'conscience liberty' in healthcare

(The following is a statement by the Catholic Bishops of New Jersey, expressing strong opposition to the proposed rescission of the federal regulations entitled "Ensuring That Department of Health and Human Services Funds Do Not Support Coercive or Discriminatory Policies or Practices in Violation of Federal Law.")

**W**e the Catholic Bishops of New Jersey, shepherds to over 3.5 million Catholics in seven dioceses, submit these comments to ask the federal government to retain the conscience regulations protecting the right of healthcare providers to serve patients without violating their moral and religious convictions.

These conscience rights are human rights—not rights created or granted by Congress. The

federal government has a special responsibility to ensure that these human rights are fully protected.

We emphasize that freedom of conscience and religious liberty have been building blocks of American society since the nation's founding. Our nation respects conscientious objection for those opposed to war and we respect the objection of physicians opposed to taking part in capital punishment. We can do no less for those who oppose abortion.

The fact is that the current conscience regulations do not threaten anyone's access to healthcare. Rather, the regulations allow healthcare providers to serve the public without violating their consciences. As such, the regulations enhance access to healthcare, by ensuring continued participation of dedicated health professionals

who will not be forced to violate their consciences.

Forcing health professionals to be involved in abortion activities against their will would irreparably damage our healing professions and undermine efforts for healthcare reform. Moreover, abortion cannot be seen as "standard" healthcare. Abortion is a direct attack not just on the health but on the life of the defenseless unborn, whose right to life must be protected.

Please register our opposition

to the rescission of the current conscience regulations as proposed in the March 10, 2009 Federal Register.

(Editor's note: Patrick R. Brannigan, executive director of the New Jersey Catholic Conference, issued the statement on April 1, which was signed by Most Rev. John J. Myers, Archbishop of Newark; Most Rev. William C. Skurla, Bishop of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic; Most Rev. Joseph A. Galante, Bishop of Camden; Most

Rev. Paul G. Bootkoski, Bishop of Metuchen; Most Rev. Arthur J. Serratelli, Bishop of Paterson; Most Rev. Edgar M. da Cunha, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark; Most Rev. John M. Smith, Bishop of Trenton; Most Rev. Thomas A. Donato, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark; Most Rev. John W. Flesey, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark; Most Rev. Manuel Aurelio Cruz, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark, Our Lady of Deliverance Syriac Catholic Diocese—currently vacant).

## Gala to salute Madzarov, assist Catholic Charities

NEWARK—Archbishop John J. Myers, together with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark, will host the fourth annual "Archbishop's Gala" Tuesday, May 5, 6 p.m., at Nanina's in the Park, 540 Mill St. (at the corner of Franklin Avenue), Belleville.

Proceeds from the event will support the programs and services of Catholic Charities, Mount Carmel Guild Behavioral Health and Mount Carmel Guild Schools of the Archdiocese of Newark.

The gala will salute Clifton resident Slavco Madzarov with its "Humanitarian of the Year" award. Madzarov, the president and chief executive officer of Slavco Construction Inc., has been committed to helping the less fortunate throughout his career and over the years his charitable contributions have benefited many programs of Catholic Charities.

Dr. Phillip Frese, president and

chief executive officer of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark, praised Madzarov—who came to the United States from Macedonia—as a generous businessman who demonstrates "a diligent work ethic and strong faith in God and himself. Success has not gone to his head, but to his heart."

In addition, Archbishop Myers will present "Spirit of the Heart" awards to individuals who, through hard work and perseverance, have benefited from the programs that Catholic Charities and its affiliates offers. The award recognizes those who have improved their life through determination and made a commitment to serving others.

For details about tickets or sponsorship opportunities, contact Catholic Charities' development office at (973) 639-6531 or visit the Web site ([www.ccannj.org](http://www.ccannj.org)) for more information.



## Time for tea

The annual Legacy Society tea and prayer service will be held Tuesday, April 28, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart, 89 Ridge St., Newark. The event begins at 2 p.m. with a prayer service in the cathedral's Lady Chapel, followed by light refreshments in the archbishop's residence. Archbishop John J. Myers will serve as the host. The Legacy Circle Tea honors members of the archdiocesan Legacy Circle/Planned Giving Society. Membership is extended to those who have made a special provision in their will, established a gift annuity, trust or other planned gift that will benefit the Church. Call the Planned Giving Office at (973) 497-4048 for more information.



Advocate photo — Ward Miele

**GIRL SCOUTING SALUTED**—Archbishop John J. Myers presided over the annual Girl Scout Awards service March 8 at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark. In his homily the archbishop told the Girl Scouts they are discovering themselves through sharing. "You are our beloved children," he declared. Girl Scouts from throughout the four counties of the archdiocese, dressed in their colorful uniforms, attended the service with family and friends. Archbishop Myers handed out various Girl Scout awards and began the service with a special mention of Annette Feltz, who died Dec. 19, 2008. Feltz, the wife of Gabe Feltz, director of the archdiocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting, served as Girl Scout coordinator.

## Saint Peter's Prep to host '144 Grand' event April 18

JERSEY CITY—The annual "144 Grand Gala," sponsored by Saint Peter's Prep to benefit the school's student financial assistance program, will be held Saturday, April 18 at the Teaneck Marriott at Glenpointe, located at 100 Frank W. Burr Blvd. Teaneck,

With more than 40 percent of the student body receiving financial assistance, the 2008 gala raised over \$190,000.

Tickets for the event, featuring live music, dinner, dancing and a silent auction, are priced at \$144 per person. For additional information contact Ginny Needham-Doyle, director of special events for Saint Peter's Prep, by phone at (201) 547-6420 or via e-mail ([events@spprep.org](mailto:events@spprep.org)).

## Felician to celebrate Founder's Day

LODI and RUTHERFORD—Felician College will honor the Unanue family and Larry Inserra at its 27th annual "Founder's Day Gala," which will be held Thursday, April 30, at The Venetian, 546 River Dr., Garfield.

The gala will begin with cocktail hour at 6 p.m., followed by dinner and the program. All proceeds from the event go to support Felician's Student Scholarship Fund and the New Jersey Food Council scholarship. Jessica Long, a resident of Howell, is this year's recipient of the council's scholarship.

"The Unanue family, founders of Goya Foods Inc., and Larry Inserra, president of Inserra Supermarkets Inc., will receive the 2009 Franciscan Legacy

Award," said Dennis Daniels, vice president, Wakefern Foods Inc. and chairman of the event.

Sponsorship opportunities for the gala are available for businesses and individuals through ads in the commemo-

rative journal, underwriting support, or attendance at the dinner. For additional information or to make reservations, contact Lauren Ryan, Felician associate director of special events, at (201) 355-1308.

## Queen of Peace to stage 4 performances of 'Annie'

NORTH ARLINGTON—Queen of Peace High School (QPHS), 191 Rutherford Pl., will present the popular Broadway musical 'Annie' April 24 and 25 and May 1 and 2. Curtin time for all performances is 8 p.m.

The production, directed by Robert Russell, with musical direction by Edward Ginter, will feature a professional orchestra. Russell and Ginter will mark their 25th anniversary as musical directors for QPHS productions.

Tickets, priced at \$10, are available by calling (201) 998-8227, ext. 39. Order forms and playbill ad forms can be accessed online at the QPHS Web site ([www.qphs.org](http://www.qphs.org)).



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T.J.

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M.S.

PRAYER TO THE  
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY  
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Oh most beautiful flower of Mt. 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 show me herein, you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth! I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh, show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3X). Holy Spirit you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in eternal glory. Thank you for your mercy towards me and mine. The person must say this prayer 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor is granted.

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T.M.

THANK YOU ST. THERESE

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised and glorified now and forever throughout the world. Amen. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. St. Theresa of the Child of Jesus, pray for us. Thank you St. Therese for prayers answered. God bless us all.

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PRAYER TO ST. THERESA

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M.M.



# Our God invites us to step into land of the living

BY FR. ANSELM I. NWAORGU  
Special to The Catholic Advocate

**T**he resurrection story always brings to my mind the beautiful and powerful statement that the two men in dazzling garments—who encountered the women who had gone to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus—made on that fateful Easter morning. “Why do you seek the living one among the dead? He is not here, but He has been raised” (Luke 24:5-6).

For human beings, life always has a way of creating painful spots in our history—regretful events and mournful periods in our lives, disappointments and frustrations in our engagements, adversity and unfairness in our relationships, and even sometimes generational ailments in our genes. As the years pass us by, we find we are a people with lots of baggage.

While our past can act as a caution for present and future action, hanging onto the past can also be a drag. It can prevent us from seeing what the Lord is doing right here and now and the blessings that are going on in the present moment. No wonder the angels inquired why the women were still hanging onto Good Friday while Christ had moved on to Easter glory. “Why are you looking for the living among the dead?” God Himself reminds us: “Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” (Isaiah 43: 18-19).

Yet we are too often tempted to live in the shadow of our past and to let past relationships, events and family history color our present experience. I once had a man in therapy who told me that he never would marry again because of his experience with his first marriage. Another man said that because his mother and father died of cancer, he was sure cancer was going to kill him. Every slightest pain in his body caused him to worry. He was adamantly convinced that he would not live to be 50 years old.

Another person I knew had tremendous difficulty dealing with the death of her mother, because while she had stepped out to find something to eat, her mother passed. In her mind, her mother died lonely because “I was not there for her when she needed me most all because of my selfishness,” she concluded. Working with a depressed seven-year-old boy, I found out that one of the things that drove him into



Father Anselm Nwaorgu

depression was the constant bashing from his mother that he was “just as dumb and stupid as his father.”

The joy of Easter lies in the fact that God has taken our ugly past and crucified it and has brought us to a glorious resurrection; a new place of life and joy. When we carry burdens—past mistakes, regrets, relationships that have gone sour and unresolved grief—it prevents us from making changes that are necessary for success in our lives, simply because those changes would challenge “the way things have always been.” Because of this, we negate and condemn present blessings.

The Lord tells us: “I make a pathway in the desert; in the wasteland I put water.” In other words, God is saying that He makes new things happen where they never existed and introduces new blessings where people never experienced them before. Our God is in the business of recreating life and is constantly inviting us to step into the land of the living instead of wallowing in an ugly past.

In this season of Easter, we need to focus our minds on what the Lord is doing for us right here, right now. Remember that God does not need your past for present blessings. It was even while we were sinners that He sent His only begotten Son to redeem us.

The resurrection is a declaration of present blessings and a letting go of the past. “He is not here, He is risen” declared the angels. No wonder Saint Paul said: “Forgetting what lies behind let’s strain forward to what lies ahead, and continue our pursuit toward the goal, the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13-15).

Christ’s resurrection is an invitation for us to forge ahead no matter what adversity we may encounter; to hold on to hope in the

face of hopelessness; to focus on what God is doing right here and now in our lives. The windows of opportunity are all around us, but if we keep looking back we won’t see them.

Therefore, pray we can let go of our past hurts. Let us release the

sorrows of our grief and bereavement, our anger and wrath, our disappointments and broken heartedness, our failures and insecurities. Instead, let us embrace the Alleluia of Christ’s glorious resurrection. Let us begin to seek God’s blessings among the living.

(Father Anselm I. Nwaorgu, Ph.D., is the pastor of Blessed Sacrament/Saint Charles Borromeo Parish, Newark, and the former president of The African Conference of Catholic Clergy and Religious in the United States.)

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## Divine Mercy

Continued from page 9

Guest speakers will appear at various parishes to share thoughts on Divine Mercy Sunday celebrations. On April 13, Father Mark Baron, M.I.C., will appear at Saint Joseph Parish, 300 Elm St., Oradell (201-261-0148), at 7:30 p.m. On the same day, also at 7:30 p.m., Saint Paul Parish, 200 Wyckoff Ave., Ramsey (201-327-0976), will host Father Donal Calloway, M.I.C.

The speaker series continues April 15, 7 p.m., with Fr. Calloway visiting Saint Philip the Apostle Parish, 777 Valley Rd., Clifton, (973-779-6200) in the Diocese of Paterson. On April 16 at 7:30 p.m., Father Joseph Roesch, M.I.C., will address Church of the Presentation Parish, 271 West Saddle River Rd., Upper Saddle River (201-327-1313).

Father Mariusz Koch of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, Newark, will speak at 7 p.m. on April 17 at Saint Rocco Church, 212 Hunterdon St., Newark (Saint Rocco is merged



**Fr. Mariusz Koch**

as part of Parish of the Transfiguration; (973) 642-4217).

On April 18, following noon Mass, there will be a prayer service at the Carmelite Chapel of Saint Therese at the Bergen Mall, Route 4 East and Forest Avenue, Paramus. A prayer service will take place at Saint Paul Parish, Ramsey, on April 19 beginning at 3 p.m. On the same day, also at 3 p.m., Saint Teresa of Avila Parish, 300 Morris Ave., Summit (908-277-3700), will conduct a holy hour service to recite the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, exposition of

the Blessed Sacrament, veneration of the image of Divine Mercy and benediction. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available at 4 p.m.

Saint John the Apostle Parish, Linden/Clark, 1805 Penbrook Terr., Linden, (908 486-6363), on April 19 will have a Divine Mercy Sunday celebration beginning at 2 p.m. It will include eucharistic adoration, the rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet and confession. Mass will be celebrated at 3 p.m.

Pope John Paul II proclaimed Divine Mercy Sunday at the canonization of Saint Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938) on April 30, 2000. In order to draw the attention of the faithful to God's great love and mercy, manifested in the Paschal Mystery (the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus), the Church offers a plenary indulgence on Divine Mercy Sunday.

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

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# Paschal Vigil

Continued from page 17

Jeremiah and Ezekiel as a sign that God had departed from the Temple and rescinded the Sinai Covenant. However, they and other teachers offered hope that the Covenant would be renewed and the Land restored (see Jer 31:31-34; Ez 36:22-28).

The prophet Isaiah emphasized the importance of the Davidic dynasty at the service of God and His people (Isa 7:14; 9:5-6; 11:1-10). The faithful will benefit from an everlasting Covenant and be a witness to the nations of God's mercy and forgiveness. The prayer implicitly acknowledges human fickleness and frailty when it calls God "only hope of the world." The prophets are understood by the Gospel and the Church to offer hints about the mysteries (i.e. the unveiling of God's plan in Christ) celebrated in the Easter Vigil.

**Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4**  
As secretary to Jeremiah, Baruch shared that prophet's commitment to the task of teaching the commandments, admonishing the wayward and offering hope for divine forgiveness. The

## Cemeteries

Continued from page 24

But what of us, the believers? Is not Easter the confirmation of all our hopes and dreams? Are we not filled with joy at the words of Jesus? He said: "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you also may be" (John 14:1-3).

Should we not be almost out of our heads with an ecstasy of happiness at the thought of the future? My loved ones did not die. I shall see them again. All my hopes and dreams shall be realized.

And, as for my personal life, I can repeat the words of Saint Paul: "For those who love God, all things work together unto good."

Yes, the cemetery for us is a place of peace and expectation. No sadness, no grief awaits me there. As surely as my Redeemer lives, so also do those who sleep here. We shall rise again. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

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

prayer applies this call to all the people who are seeking God's will, especially those who are baptized in order to be cleansed from sinfulness and uplifted by God's free gift.

**Ezekiel 36:16-28**  
Divine judgment on the sins of Israel has been severe, but in exile the people were mocked by


their conquerors; they profaned God's Name because they claimed that the God of Israel is weak. Ezekiel assured the repentant people that God would restore them to their Land in order to vindicate his holiness. The collect asks that the mercy and grace of God infuse the Church with signs of His presence. In spite of human sinfulness, the world

should see "the fallen lifted up, the old made new and all things brought to perfection."

**Conclusion**  
The readings, psalms and collects of the Easter Vigil offer participants in the Easter Vigil a wide panorama of biblical history with applications to the Church and the world today. As with other

parts of the Holy Week Liturgy, there is too much to be absorbed in any one time. We are encouraged to find new depths of meaning and nourishment for spiritual growth as we enter into this special time in the Church's calendar.

(Father Lawrence Frizzell is the director of the Institute of Judaean-Christian Studies at Seton Hall University, South Orange.)




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