

Diocese of Scranton

www.dioceseofscranton.org

News Briefing Vol. 7 No. 11 8/11/2011



MISSION STATEMENT

We the Catholic faithful of the Diocese of Scranton, in union with our Holy Father, the Pope, are called through baptism to share in the mission which Jesus Christ has entrusted to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Priests, deacons, religious and laity, under the leadership of our Bishop, cooperate to proclaim the Gospel in accordance with the teaching of the Church, to celebrate the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, for the salvation of all, and to witness by grace to the Kingdom of God so as to promote a culture of life, justice and peace.

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ACTION ALERT

Contraceptive Mandate Violates Religious Freedom

Religious freedom and rights of conscience are threatened by the recent "preventive services" mandate from the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) requiring private health plans to cover female surgical sterilization and all drugs and devices approved by the FDA as contraceptives, including drugs which can kill an unborn child before and after implantation in the mother's womb. HHS is empowered to take this action under the 2010 health care reform law, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA).

Insurance plans will be required to cover these controversial practices without a co-pay from recipients. **Employers and employees who participate will have to pay for contraceptives and abortifacients (drugs that can cause abortions) with their**

premiums, even if it violates their deeply and dearly held moral and religious convictions.

The rule allows an exemption for a "religious employer," which the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) says is defined so narrowly "as to exclude most Catholic social services agencies and healthcare providers."

To correct these problems, the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act was introduced in the House of Representatives (H.R. 1179), and a companion bill was introduced in the U.S. Senate (S. 1467). This measure will ensure that those who participate in the health care system "retain the right to provide, purchase, or enroll in health coverage that is consistent with their religious beliefs and moral convictions."

The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference (PCC) and the Pennsylvania Catholic Health Association (PCHA) are working with USCCB to formulate comments objecting to the HHS interim rules.

Meanwhile, all concerned citizens should visit, call, fax or e-mail our Members of Congress urging them to co-sponsor and support H.R. 1179 or S. 1467.

Visit the link below to take action on this issue:

<http://www.voterveice.net/link/forward/pacc/FKcNi3.aspx>

Support Needed for Emergency Relief; Church in Central & Eastern Europe

Special Collection for Drought and Famine Victim in Horn of Africa

In solidarity with our brothers and sisters in need, the Diocese of Scranton is responding to a request from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to support emergency relief efforts in the Horn of Africa. Parishes in the Diocese will take up a special second collection at Masses on the weekend of Aug. 20-21.

More than 12 million people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia because of what many are calling the worst drought in decades. This severe lack of rainfall has resulted in failed crops, deaths of livestock and critical shortages in food and water.

CRS has worked in East Africa for decades and is on the ground responding to this emergency. In Ethiopia, CRS is expanding its food distribution program to 1.1 million people and is working closely with local partners to provide livelihood support, water and sanitation. In Somalia, CRS is supporting local partners to assist highly vulnerable, displaced families with basic necessities, such as food packages, support for clinics, therapeutic feeding, and shelter. In Kenya, CRS is working both to assist newly arrived refugees with hygiene, sanitation promotion, and protection, and also to provide water, sanitation, and supplemental feeding to drought-affected Kenyan communities.

CRS can use all the help we can offer in this current tragic situation. Through CRS our generosity could literally feed thousands and provide them clean water, shelter and other life-saving goods. Over time, CRS will be able to expand already proven drought mitigation and other development programs that unfortunately are now only available in a handful of villages.

Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe

The Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe will be taken up in the Diocese of Scranton on the weekend of Aug. 27-28. A portion of this collection will be sent in support of the following collections which annually were taken up in Lithuanian, Slovak and Polish parishes:

- The Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid
- The Catholic League for Religious Assistance to Poland
- The Slovak Catholic Federation Appeal

With the theme *Great needs remain*, the collection seeks to highlight the great material and spiritual needs for the Church in the region. In dioceses throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union regions of Asia, aging physical structures, insufficient funding, and a lack of trained lay persons and religious are common challenges.

The Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe provides support for seminaries, social service programs, youth ministry, pastoral centers, church construction and renovation, and the transmission of the Gospel message through television, radio and the Catholic press.

Slovak Catholic Federation Pilgrimage of Faith

In celebration of the centennial of its founding, the Slovak Catholic Federation is sponsoring a Pilgrimage of Faith to St. Vincent's Benedictine Archabbey in Latrobe on Saturday, Sept. 10.

The pilgrimage begins at 11 a.m. with a welcome by Archabbot Douglas Nowicki, O.S.B. and Father Philip A. Altavilla, V.E., national president. Following the recitation of the Rosary, led by members of the Conference of Slovak Religious, lunch will be available. Reservations are necessary at \$10 per person.

During the afternoon, there will be guided tours of various sites on campus. The day will conclude with the Sacrament of Reconciliation at 3 p.m., followed by the celebration of Mass at 4 p.m. (this will fulfill the Sunday obligation).

For more information or to make lunch reservations, please call Dolores M. Evanko at 570-454-5574 or visit: www.slovakcatholicfederation.org

Convocation for Catechists Set for October 15

The Office for Parish Life and Evangelization will sponsor the annual Convocation for Catechists on Saturday, Oct. 15 with the theme, "Vocations: Creating a Culture. Celebrating Our Call."

The day will begin with Mass at 9 a.m. at Our Lady of Fatima Parish in St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church in Wilkes-Barre. Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will be the celebrant.

The day will continue at Holy Redeemer High School. At 10:30 a.m. in the auditorium, Bishop Joseph P. McFadden of Harrisburg will deliver the keynote address. Lunch, a panel discussion on vocations and a variety of workshops, including a *VIRTUS* training session, are planned for the afternoon. The convocation will conclude at 3:30 p.m.

This will be a day of adult faith formation. All DREs, catechists,

youth ministers and any adults in the Diocese who wish to deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith are encouraged to attend.

Registration will begin in September. For more information, call the Office for Parish Life and Evangelization at 207-2213, ext. 1105.

***Disciple* Podcast Up and Running**

In May the Office for Parish Life and Evangelization launched a monthly podcast to educate, encourage and enrich the faithful of the Diocese. Each episode will follow a set structure.

The "Faith in a Flash" segment explains a fundamental aspect of Catholic belief, practice, or spirituality in 20 minutes or less, using one of the Sunday readings as a starting point. The "Living Faith" segment highlights positive ways in which people around the Diocese are living out their Catholic faith. "Friends in High Places" profiles a saint whose feast day falls within that episode's month, and a calendar of events rounds out each episode.

A Podcast is an audio file that can be listened to online, downloaded to an mp3 player (e.g. iPod), or burned to a CD. The *Disciple* Podcast is posted each month on the Diocese's website (see "Adult Faith Formation" under the Parish Life menu tab). This format allows people to listen to each episode in whatever format is easiest for them. Listeners can also subscribe to the podcast through iTunes.

The nature of the mp3 format is such that it will be very easy to pass each episode on to family, friends and co-workers who may find it interesting. *Disciple* could be especially useful for reaching out to friends and family members who may be estranged from the Church or are curious about what Catholics believe.

Theology of the Body

A two-part session on "The Theology of the Body" will be presented by Brendan Murphy, director of adult faith formation in the Diocesan Office for Parish Life and Evangelization, on Sundays, Oct. 16 and Oct. 30, from 12:30 to 5 p.m. at St. Peter Church in Wellsboro.

Blessed John Paul II's *Theology of the Body* is a meditative reflection on what it means to be created male and female and how that relates to the gift of our sexuality.

These sessions are of particular interest to teachers, catechists, youth ministers, married couples/parents, engaged couples or those interested in learning more about the gift the late pope has given the Church.

Fee: \$30, which includes the book by Christopher West, *The Theology of the Body for Beginners*. To register, call 207-2213, Ext. 1107.

Get the Word Out About Faith Formation Opportunities

Do you have an adult faith formation event taking place in your parish? Do you want to get the word out to parishioners around the Diocese? If so, please e-mail your events to Brendan-Murphy@dioceseofscranton.org and we'll include them on the calendar of events listing on the Adult Faith Formation page. This will enable parishioners around the Diocese to find faith formation opportunities near them. Please be sure to include a brief description of the event; dates/times; a contact phone number/e-mail; and cost (if applicable).

Workshop Will Prepare Faithful to Receive the New English Texts of *The Roman Missal*

The Diocese of Scranton Pastoral Formation Institute is sponsoring a workshop on "The Mystery of Faith: Preparing to Receive the New English Texts of *The Roman Missal*."

Monsignor Dale R. Rupert, director of the Diocesan Office for Divine Worship, will present the workshop in four locations:

Sept. 17 - St. John Evangelist Church, E. Stroudsburg, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sept. 24 - St. Joseph the Worker Church - Fleming Hall, Williamsport, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Oct. 1 - Annunciation Parish Hall, Hazleton, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Oct. 8 - Fatima Renewal Center, Dalton, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Each workshop will cover several topics. There will be presentations on the process of translation of liturgical texts from the original Latin into English, how the Church's doctrines are reflected in the new texts of the Mass, and the deeply spiritual and very scriptural characteristics of these liturgical texts.

Mass will be celebrated at the beginning of each workshop.

The fee for the Oct. 8 workshop at Fatima Renewal Center \$30, which includes lunch provided at the Center. For the other three locations the fee is \$15, which includes a light lunch.

Advance registration is required and can be made by calling the Pastoral Formation Institute at 570-207-2213, ext. 1107.

Natural Family Planning Instruction

A public Natural Family Planning (NFP) class will take place on Aug. 17 at 7:30 p.m. in the basement of St. Peter's Cathedral Rectory (315 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton). The class will be lead by Megan Murphy, C.N.F.P.I. and will last about two hours. The cost for the training is \$45 and includes materials and a basal body thermometer (the cost is \$35 if you already have the thermometer). Please call 207-2213, ext. 1133 to register.

NFP is a non-contraceptive and morally sound form of family planning. Safe, effective, and completely natural, NFP can be used by all women, whether they have short/long/irregular cycles, are post-partum, or perimenopausal. Major scientific studies on the effectiveness of NFP done by such organizations as the University of Heidelberg, the British Medical Journal, the World Health Organization, and the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare have shown NFP to be over 99% effective in helping couples to postpone pregnancy. Unlike any other form of birth control, NFP can also help couples achieve pregnancy by giving them the tools necessary to identify the most fertile periods in a woman's cycle.

Monthly classes and one-on-one instruction are available through the Diocese for a minimal fee. For more information or to find a certified NFP instructor near you, please call 570-207-2213, ext. 1133 or e-mail Brendan-Murphy@dioceseofscranton.org. You can also explore the Natural Family Planning page at the diocesan website.

Free Adult Faith Formation Resources Available

The August edition of the monthly adult faith formation (AFF) resource, *Disciple*, is now available. This month's issue features

commentary on the Sunday Gospel readings; a look at Catholic belief about the Pope and bishops; a listing of upcoming adult faith formation opportunities in the Diocese and reviews of the book *Light of the World* and the film *Of Gods and Men*.

Also available on the Adult Faith Formation page is the next installment of *AD: Anno Domini* which looks at the key events occurring in the life of the Church from A.D. 1300-1400 (previous installments, beginning with A.D. 30-100 are cataloged online).

The August edition of the monthly family resource, *Familia Fidelis*, is also available. This month's issue features a reflection for parents on how family is the "first transmitter of the faith;" a look at purgatory for teens; a review of *Ducks in a Row* for children, and a look at this month's "Friend for Families," St. Monica.

As always, past issues of these newsletters can be found on the Adult Faith Formation and Family Life pages of the Diocesan website (www.dioceseofscranton.org).

"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"

A disabilities awareness program, "Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors," will be presented Wednesday, Aug. 31 from 6:30 -8:00 p.m. in the Parish Center of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church, Our Lady of Fatima Parish, 134 South Washington Street, Wilkes-Barre.

In this session, Sister Mary Beth Makuch, SS.C.M., director of Ministry with the Deaf and Persons with Disabilities, will explore ways to make our parish communities welcoming and open to all, especially persons with disabilities and their families.

Clergy, ministers of hospitality, DREs, catechists, ministry leaders, and anyone wishing to create a more vibrant and welcoming parish community will find this presentation helpful. All are welcome!

The Parish Center is fully accessible from the South Washington Street entrance. Parking is available in the lot adjacent to Holy Redeemer High School, 159 S. Pennsylvania Blvd.

Advance registration is requested so that adequate materials are available. For more information and to register, contact the Diocesan Office for Parish Life and Evangelization at 207-2213, ext. 1105.

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Training

Monsignor McHugh Elementary School, Cresco
Sept. 15, 22, 29 (Thursdays), 6 to 8:30 p.m.
Father Joseph Kopacz and Father Gregory Loughney

Diocesan Center, Scranton
Oct. 4, 11, 18 (Tuesdays), 6:30 to 9 p.m.
Monsignor Dale Rupert

Good Shepherd Academy, Kingston
Sept. 12, 26, Oct. 3 (Mondays), 6:30 to 9 p.m.
Deacon Thomas Cesarini

Fee: \$30. To register: call 570-207-2213, ext. 1107

Basic Skills for Catechists

St. Jude Parish Hall, Mountaintop
Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27, Nov. 3 (Thursdays), 6 to 9 p.m.
Carmella Faust

Fee: \$30 (flat group rate of \$85 for three or more from one parish). To register: call 570-207-2213, ext. 1107

Pastoral Formation Institute Course Offerings

The Pastoral Formation Institute in the Diocese of Scranton announces its offering of Level III courses for the Fall 2011 semester. Level III courses are designed for Catholic school teachers, catechists, parish coordinators, or for those seeking personal enrichment. The course schedule is as follows:

101 -Introduction to Sacred Scripture (two locations): Holy Cross High School, Dunmore, Sept. 21-Nov. 23 (Wednesdays); 3 to 6 p.m. Instructor: Kathy Yaklic; and Notre Dame High School, East Stroudsburg, Sept. 27-Nov. 29 (Tuesdays); 3 to 6 p.m. Instructor: Helen Findlay.

201 -Fundamental Teachings of the Church (two locations): St. John Neumann High School, Williamsport, Sept. 6-Nov. 8 (Tuesdays); 3 to 6 p.m. Instructor: Father David Bechtel; and Holy Redeemer High School, Wilkes-Barre, Sept. 8-Nov. 10 (Thursdays); 3 to 6 p.m. Instructor: Father Brian J.T. Clarke.

301 - Sacraments in General: Diocesan Center, Scranton, Sept. 15-Nov. 17 (Thursdays); 6 to 9 p.m. Instructor: Monsignor Dale Rupert.

401 - Introduction to the Spiritual/Moral Life, Holy Cross Parish/Kelly Hall, Olyphant, Sept. 20-Nov. 22 (Tuesdays); 6 to 9 p.m. Instructor: Father James Dougher.

Please note: If class falls on a holy day of obligation or a holiday, the instructor will advise on make-up dates. Registration fee for all courses is \$150 (audit: \$65). To register, call 570-207-2213, ext. 1107 or e-mail: sister-leonita-duhoski@dioceseofscranton.org.