Men’s Conference, Women’s Day of Reflection Forums offer ‘wonderful picture of Church’

Speakers cite need to ‘plug into grace’

NJCC objects to Senate bill on HHS mandate

A letter to members of the New Jersey Catholic Conference (NJCC), spelled out the NJCC’s strong objections to SR-57, a bill that would express support for the controversial mandate recently issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
St. Rose scholars design ‘Poseidon’s Shield’

SHORT HILLS—How will ocean researchers manage some day to explore the darkest recesses of ocean canyons while surviving the intense water pressure that currently prevents them from swimming that deep? By donning the special wetsuits made from unusual fish fibers that four Saint Rose of Lima Academy students recently designed, of course.

The futuristic wetsuit, designed by Saint Rose sixth graders Samantha Tush, Isabelle Perry, Isabella Vitalo and Claire Galvin—all from Maplewood—has secured them first place regionally in ExploraVision, the national science competition co-sponsored annually by Toshiba Corp. and the National Science Teachers Association.

The Saint Rose project is called “Poseidon’s Shield.” Student research turned up information on the hatchet fish, which lives deep in the ocean and has special gifts and talents,” she said.

Reflection

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Having a deep-seated prayer life with open prayer and reading of Scripture are keys to promoting the prophetic role. “You should pray over your children and have them pray over you. Give them the chance to be powerful and create an environment of love,” Lisa Popcak explained.

In a royal baptismal role, women are encouraged to serve others while being mindful of their own dignity. “A good king or queen serves others, but does not let them defile or disrespect them,” Gregory Popcak said. “They are confident in their authority. Women should use their gifts to encourage greatness in others.”

Sister Marilyn Minter, C.S.S.F., associate director of the archdiocesan Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, engaged the crowd with her presentation “Low Battery? Finding Strength in Weakness.” Sr. Marilyn believes that delving into God’s Word will be a source of strength in times of weakness.

Being anointed at Baptism and Confirmation gives us God’s grace. “Grace flows even in my weakness. God’s gift of salvation has been granted to us. When we are at our lowest place, that gift of grace is within us and we must find it. Sometimes it takes a crisis to encourage faith. Grace is the power of God to do what we cannot do for ourselves. Trust in His power; it’s all about Him.”

People of faith should recognize that God is present throughout our lives, even in times of despair, Sr. Marilyn said. “If you know Jesus as your savior, you are plugged into that power. The Bible has to be the center; be flesh in your lives. We are sacred to the Lord. He is present in every aspect in our lives even when we don’t realize it. You have to trust that Jesus is going to transform your weakness. You will be victorious in the power of His grace. We may not have it all together, but together we have it all.”
CRAFTS FOR CHARITY — Artistic students at Saint Joseph Academy, 131 East Fort Lee Rd., Bogota, use their talents and compassionate hearts to create handmade headbands, bracelets, seasonal pins, hats, scarves, pot holders and clay figurines for a school fund-raiser program known as Crafts for Charity. Crafts for Charity has developed into a popular extracurricular program for academy students, which raises money for Saint Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital, New York, as well as local animal shelters. Three years ago fourth graders in Anita Coppock’s classroom, looking to aid a local charity, originated the program, which now operates throughout the school year. The students who initiated the program have since moved on, but Crafts for Charity has now become a tradition at Saint Joseph Academy. Volunteer parents also contribute to the cause. James Newman is the principal of the Bergen County school, which offers classes for students in Pre-K through eighth grade.

Compassion

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ly after her accident. But the Lord used some of her friends to help her to turn her life completely over to Christ, that He might bear her unbearable burden with her. That accident was 37 years ago.

For the past 30 years she has hosted a syndicated radio program called “Joni and Friends.” The “friends” part continues to be the key to her finding Christ in her profound disabilities. With the help of her loving husband, and the others who assist her in her daily life, she is a living witness to the hope we have in Christ, no matter the trials we face, just as long as we don’t face them alone. Because of her life in Christ, she is not confined or defined by her disabilities, but continues to be a profound blessing to millions of people, including myself, as she reaches out to people throughout the world.

In this holy season, may we resolve to stop at nothing in lifting up one another in loving prayer and sacrificial service. In our limited capacity of time, let us resolve to do what we can to get out of ourselves and learn to reach out to those in need in Jesus’ holy name, in prayer and loving service.

Also, in the poverty of our own sufferings, what ever they may be, we may resolve to humble ourselves enough to cry out to God first, and then seek the assistance of those around us, even as we daily choose to offer up our sufferings to Jesus (through Mary) on behalf of our loved ones who have wandered from the faith, for our “enemies,” and everyone in this broken world, especially those lost in despair.

Lord Jesus Christ, we resolve, with the help of your grace, not to isolate or surrender to discouragement in our suffering. Please help each of us discover the value and meaning of our lives, and grounded in our faith in You, may we help one another in every circumstance, not counting the cost, to discover the unique purpose and plan you have for our lives, that we may together always Choose Life!

(Editor’s note: Father Joseph A. Meagher is the director of the archdiocesan Respect Life Office, based in Linden, and a parochial vicar at Saint John the Baptist Parish, Jersey City.)