



December 2011

# Office for Social Concerns

## *Catholic Diocese of Columbus*

# Upcoming Events

## December 8 – Night of Prayer for Life

The 22<sup>nd</sup> annual National Night of Prayer for life is December 8, 2011. This night of prayer links the feast days of the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas and the unborn. Catholics across the country will pray in unity in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the holy Rosary, prayer to St. Michael, silent prayer and hymns. Prayer is encouraged from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. with a national hour of unity from 12 a.m. to 1 a.m.

## December 25 – Catholic Charities Collection

The annual collection for diocesan Catholic Charities will be taken up on Christmas. This collection allows the diocese to meet a variety of basic needs directly and through diocesan agencies and organizations including J.O.I.N. (Joint Organization for Inner-City Needs), St. Stephen's Community House, Catholic Social Services, St. Francis Center, St. Lawrence Haven, St. Vincent Family Center, and the St. Vincent de Paul Society. You can help share in this important work by generously supporting the Catholic Charities collection this year.

## January is "Poverty in America Awareness Month"

Today, nearly 44 million Americans are living below the poverty line. Many are our neighbors in our diocese. To bring attention to this national crisis, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) designated January as "Poverty in America Awareness Month." This month of observance, we devote our efforts to heightening the nation's understanding of the scope of the problems of poverty and work to break the cycle. For more information go to [www.povertyusa.org](http://www.povertyusa.org) or call the Office for Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540.

Show me suffering of the most miserable;  
So I will know my people's plight.  
Free me to pray for others;  
For you are present in every person.  
Help me take responsibility for my own life;  
So that I can be free at last.  
Grant me the courage to serve others;  
For in service there is true life.  
Give me honesty and patience;  
So that I can work with other workers.  
Bring forth song and celebration;  
So that the Spirit will be alive among us.  
Let the Spirit flourish and grow;  
So that we will never tire of the struggle.  
Let us remember those who have died for justice;  
For they have given us life.  
Help us love even those who hate us;  
So we can change the world.  
Amen.

Prayer by Cesar Chavez

## January 1 -- World Day of Peace

World Day of Peace is January 1. To read the Holy Father's World Day of Peace message *Educating Young People in Justice and Peace*, visit [www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/war-and-peace/world-day-of-peace.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/war-and-peace/world-day-of-peace.cfm) or contact the diocesan Office for Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540.

## January 6 – Urban Plunge Reception – University of Notre Dame

Alumni of the University of Notre Dame are invited to the Urban Plunge reception on Friday, January 6, 2012. The reception marks the conclusion of the 48-hour Urban Plunge in Columbus for students of the University of Notre Dame. Students who participate in this inner-city immersion experience visit homeless individuals and families in shelters and camps; feed the hungry at soup kitchens, food pantries and through meals-on-wheels; and volunteer at Catholic charities agencies. Alumni from Notre Dame are invited to Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral at 5:15 p.m. and a reception with students following Mass at the Catholic Center, 197 E. Gay Street, Columbus. The Columbus Urban Plunge is an annual program coordinated by the diocesan Office for Social Concerns and the Notre Dame Alumni Club of Columbus. For information call (614) 241-2540.

## January 8-14 – National Migration Week

“Welcoming Christ in the Migrant” is the theme for National Migration Week, January 8-14, 2012. Communities everywhere are called to treat migrants justly and provide a welcoming presence to all people on the move. For online resources for parishes and schools, visit the U.S. Catholic Bishops’ National Migration Week website at [www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/national-migration-week](http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/national-migration-week) or contact the diocesan Office for Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540.

## January 15-22 – Stand Against Violence Week

In 1994, the U.S. Catholic Bishops issued a pastoral letter entitled “Confronting a Culture of Violence: A Catholic Framework for Action.” As a response to the pastoral letter parishes and dioceses across the United States gave focus to peacemaking and policy efforts against violence from January 15<sup>th</sup>, the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and January 22, the anniversary of the tragic Roe v. Wade decision legalizing the violence of abortion.

To learn more about diocesan efforts against domestic violence, gun violence, and other threats to

the dignity of the human person, please contact the diocesan Office for Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540.

## January 18-25 – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

In observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25, 2012, Bishop Frederick F. Campbell will lead a Vespers service which will be attended by leaders and congregants from a number of local Christian Churches and ecclesial communities and other ecumenical organizations. Vespers will be held at the Cathedral of St. Joseph on Tuesday, January 24, 2012 at 7 p.m. A light reception will follow in the undercroft of the Cathedral. All clergy are welcome to attend, and pastors are asked to promote the event in their parish bulletins. For more information, contact Fr. William J. Ferguson at (740) 928-3266.

## January 23 – Respect Life Mass – Day of Penance and Prayer

At 10:30 a.m. on Monday, January 23, 2012, Bishop Frederick Campbell will be celebrant at Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral, 212 E. Broad Street, Columbus, in observance of the “day of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion, and of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life.” This day of penance and prayer falls near the anniversary of the January 22, 1973, U.S. Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*. All are invited to attend. For more information about the Church’s teaching on pro-life issues, visit the U.S. Bishops’ website at [www.usccb.org/prolife](http://www.usccb.org/prolife).

## January 23 – Rally for Life

The annual Rally for Life will be on Monday, January 23, 2012, Noon at the Statehouse west plaza, Columbus. The rally is open to all ages. For more information, contact Columbus Right to Life at (614) 445-8508.

## February 12-15 – Catholic Social Ministry Gathering

The USCCB Catholic Social Ministry Gathering, held on February 12-15, 2012 in Washington, DC, is the annual meeting of social justice ministry leaders from national Catholic organizations and dioceses throughout the nation. The meeting includes inspiring prayer and worship, speakers, and social ministry strategy sessions. In addition, participants receive detailed briefings on priority justice and peace issues. A highlight of the meeting is bringing a common Catholic message of concern for the poor and vulnerable to members of Congress on Capitol Hill. For more information, visit the USCCB Catholic Social Ministry website at [www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering](http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering) or call the diocesan Office for Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540.

## Lent 2012 – Operation Rice Bowl

This year's theme for Catholic Relief Services' Operation Rice Bowl, "For I was hungry," reminds us that when we serve our brothers and sisters in need, we also serve Jesus. This Lent, we answer the call to serve the "least of our brothers and sisters through Catholic Relief Services' Operation Rice

Bowl. Since 1975 Operation Rice Bowl has offered Catholics in the United States a way to connect with our brothers and sisters around the world. This Lenten season, CRS invites Catholics to **pray** with their families and faith communities; **fast** in solidarity with those who hunger; **learn** about our global community and the challenges of poverty overseas; and **give** sacrificial contributions to those in need. Additional materials can be obtained through the diocesan Office for Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540. You may also visit the Operation Rice Bowl website at <http://orb.crs.org>. All are encouraged to participate in Operation Rice Bowl.

## April 6 – Good Friday – Walking Stations of the Cross

The many facets of faith and justice will be the focus of the annual Walking Stations of the Cross. The walk will begin with an opening prayer at St. Joseph Cathedral, 212 E. Broad Street, Columbus, at 8 a.m., Friday, April 6, 2012. Participants will stop at locations throughout downtown Columbus to recognize Jesus Christ's suffering and crucifixion as well as reflect on a current area of social concern. For more information, contact the diocesan Office for Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540 or the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry at (614) 241-2565.

## Action Alerts

For current legislative action alerts visit [www.socialconcerns.colsdioc.org](http://www.socialconcerns.colsdioc.org).

### Life Issues

**The Protect Life Act (H.R. 358)** will bring the new federal health care act into line with policies on abortion and conscience rights existing in other federal health programs. The bill passed the U.S. House and action moves to the Senate. Contact U.S. Senators Brown and Portman today and urge them to pass the Protect Life Act. For more information, visit the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment's website at [www.nchla.org](http://www.nchla.org).

The Governor signed **H.B. 63** on November 4, 2011. It will go into effect on February 3, 2012. H.B. 63 revises Ohio's Judicial Bypass for Parental Consent law. It provides further guidance to judges in determining a minor's maturity to bypass parental consent prior to an abortion.

**H.B. 79** prohibits coverage of abortion in state health insurance exchanges established under the federal healthcare reform bill. Hearings are underway in the Ohio Senate Insurance Committee. The Catholic Conference of Ohio has testified in support of this bill. H.B. 79 passed the House on March 9, 2011. Please contact your Ohio senator today.

**The Heartbeat Bill: H.B. 125** prohibits an abortion of an unborn human individual with a detectable fetal heartbeat. This bill passed the Ohio House on June 28, 2011. Hearings are expected to occur in the Senate by early next year. The Catholic Conference of Ohio is working to help resolve concerns and differences regarding specific language and constitutional interpretations. There has been considerable debate, both within the legislature and

among well-intentioned pro-life advocates, whether such legislation will be found constitutional and able to be implemented. Some legal experts fear that court rulings on this bill may make it more difficult to protect unborn babies. Changes continue to be discussed to help unify pro-life advocates around this legislation.

**H.B. 298:** This legislation was recently introduced in the House. It will redirect millions of taxpayer dollars away from abortion-providing groups like Planned Parenthood and towards the hundreds of health centers that provide responsible health care for women, their children and unborn children.

For additional legislation and further information about life issues visit the Catholic Conference of Ohio's life issues link at [www.ohiocathconf.org/I/AB/abortion.htm](http://www.ohiocathconf.org/I/AB/abortion.htm).

### **Death Penalty**

The Death Penalty Study Committee established by Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor, held its first meeting on November 3, 2011. Their report is due by the end of 2012.

**H.B. 160** was introduced in the Ohio House earlier this year. This bill will replace the death penalty with life without parole. A hearing is scheduled in the House Criminal Justice committee in December 14, 2011. If you are able, please attend the hearing to show your support. Also, contact your state legislator and the governor. This year the Ohio Catholic Bishops called on Governor John Kasich and the General Assembly to stop executions in Ohio.

For more information on the Church's teaching on the death penalty, visit the Catholic Conference of Ohio's death penalty webpage at [www.ohiocathconf.org/I/DP/deathpenalty.htm](http://www.ohiocathconf.org/I/DP/deathpenalty.htm).

### **Domestic and International Issues**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops urge action on a number of domestic and international issues which include conscience protection and religious freedom, domestic and international poverty assistance programs, and deficit reduction discussions. To view policy positions and action alerts, visit [www.usccb.org/jphd](http://www.usccb.org/jphd).

The Catholic Conference of Ohio's Department on Social Concerns developed a Poverty Report, providing information regarding poverty in Ohio and throughout the United States. For more information, link to the Catholic Conference of Ohio's webpage on poverty at [www.ohiocathconf.org/I/PO/poverty.htm](http://www.ohiocathconf.org/I/PO/poverty.htm).

### **Immigration Issues**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops urge Congress to block the extension of the **E-Verify Program** in the absence of comprehensive immigration reform. The conference also urges passage of the **DREAM Act**. For more information about these issues visit the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Justice for Immigrants Campaign at [www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org).



Rally at the Ohio Statehouse.

## Your Help is Needed

### Catholic Social Services' Our Lady of Guadalupe Center

Catholic Social Services' Our Lady of Guadalupe Center helps with basic needs with a special focus on the Latino population in central Ohio. The center is in need of the following items: vegetable oil, sugar, salt, dry black beans, dry pinto beans, maseca/corn flour, tuna, condensed milk, hygiene products (toothpaste, toothbrushes, bar soap, shampoo), dish soap (not dishwasher soap), household cleaning items (laundry detergent, disinfectants). Please call (614) 340-7061 with questions.



Volunteers at St. Vincent de Paul Society clothing center.

### J.O.I.N. Wish List (Joint Organization for Inner-City Needs)

Please remember J.O.I.N. (Joint Organization for Inner-City Needs) when you shop for Christmas. Winter always brings special needs: household cleaning products keep environments clean and healthy, personal care products keep people comfortable, warm clothing given to St. Vincent de Paul Society (behind J.O.I.N.'s offices, 578 E. Main Street, Columbus) extra large clothing is needed, gift cards for teens and adults are special at Christmas, clothing and toys for children will bring smiles to small faces, your financial gifts are always welcome. For information about J.O.I.N. visit [www.join.coltsdioc.org](http://www.join.coltsdioc.org) or call (614) 241-2530.

### St. Francis Center – Helping our Brothers and Sisters in Vinton County

St. Francis Center in MacArthur feeds our brothers and sisters in need of Vinton County through its food pantry. Also, through the clothing center, the St. Francis Center allows people to obtain gently used clothing, furniture and other needed household items. If you can help call (740) 596-5820.

### St. Stephen's Community House Christmas Care One New Toy Program

The St. Stephens Community House Christmas Care program has been in existence for over 61 years and manages to reach over 2900 families during the holidays. The Christmas Care program gives a hand to families during the holiday season who find themselves in a critical position due to situations such as fixed incomes, job lay-offs and/or family illness. In an effort to minimize some of the hardship felt by families, St. Stephens will collect non-perishable food items, new toys or financial contributions towards the purchase of needed items. Please make a donation of toys and food leading up to the weekend of December 17 & 18. For information as to how you can support their efforts, call (614) 264-6347.

### St. Vincent de Paul Society – Helping Our Neighbors with Basic Needs

The St. Vincent de Paul Society has many parish-based programs that address the needs of the poor. They have food, clothing, housing, and material assistance ministries across the diocese. To help, contact your local St. Vincent de Paul Conference or call the diocesan office for more information at (614) 221-3554.

### St. Vincent Family Center – Adopt a Family Program

St. Vincent Family Center Adopt a Family program will thankfully provide generously donated holiday gifts to the children they serve and their siblings. They still have many children who have not yet been matched with donors. If you would like to help, please contact them as soon as possible so that they may assure they will receive gifts this year. If you would like to participate, visit [AdoptAFamily@svfc.org](mailto:AdoptAFamily@svfc.org) or call (614) 252-0731 ext. 1219.

## Resources

For additional resources visit [www.socialconcerns.colsdioc.org](http://www.socialconcerns.colsdioc.org).

### Advent and Christmas Traditions

The diocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life's Advent and Christmas Traditions is an excellent resource for Catholics during this time of year. To access the resource online, visit

[www.colsdioc.org/Offices/MarriageandFamilyLifeOffice/MarriageandFamilyEnrichmentResources.aspx](http://www.colsdioc.org/Offices/MarriageandFamilyLifeOffice/MarriageandFamilyEnrichmentResources.aspx).

### Catholic Conference of Ohio Poverty Report

The Catholic Conference of Ohio recently released a report on poverty in Ohio. People in Ohio are facing extraordinary hardship during the current economic crisis. The resource also provides a brief snapshot of the Church's charitable efforts in the state. To read the report, visit the conference's website at

[www.ohiocathconf.org/I/PO/2Povertystatistics%202011.pdf](http://www.ohiocathconf.org/I/PO/2Povertystatistics%202011.pdf).

### Catholic Relief Services Education

Lesson plans, prayer services, and other resources to explore global issues through the lens of solidarity and Catholic social teaching. Visit Going Global with Youth at <http://crs.org/education>.

### Food Fast

A 24-hour hunger awareness retreat that focuses on global poverty and offers a journey of solidarity.

[www.foodfast.org](http://www.foodfast.org).

### CRS Fair Trade

Through our purchasing choices, we can promote economic justice, reduce poverty, and care for creation.

[www.crsfairtrade.org](http://www.crsfairtrade.org).

### Faithful Citizenship

It appears the campaign season is gearing up which provides us an opportunity to reflect on the priority issues for our nation. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops reissued their statement *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, which provides Church teaching about political responsibility and the important issues of our day. To read the statement and supplementary materials, visit [www.faithfulcitizenship.org](http://www.faithfulcitizenship.org).

### Respect Life Program

Resource materials about life issues from abortion to assisted suicide. Visit [www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program](http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program).

### Toolkit for Ministry with People with Disabilities

Did you know there are resources available to help in your ministry efforts with people with disabilities? The National Catholic Partnership on Disability created a toolkit webpage covering a wide-range of topics. Visit their toolkit page at [www.ncpd.org/toolkit](http://www.ncpd.org/toolkit).

### Information and Response Network

If you would like to receive legislative action alerts and upcoming events from the diocesan Office for Social Concerns via email, subscribe to the

Information and Response Network. Please send an email to [socmailbox@colsdioc.org](mailto:socmailbox@colsdioc.org). Don't forget to visit our website at [www.socialconcerns.colsdioc.org](http://www.socialconcerns.colsdioc.org).

