Calling All Teens: Come To FUSION!!!

Our Mission is to:

Help teens grow in their FAITH

Allow them to connect with one another in FELLOWSHIP

Give them a place where they can learn and have FUN

*During the School, Fusion holds bi-monthly Youth Nights on the second and fourth Saturdays of every month*

*During the summer, Fusion hosts Dynamic YOU every Sunday night.*

For more information, call or email Paul Oakes: (717) 259-0611 ext.8 or poakes@hbgdiocese.org
SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY

MASS INTENTIONS

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2019
5:00 PM + Jim Drummer

SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2019
8:15 AM – People of the Parish
11:15 AM + Pasquale R. Lery

MONDAY, APRIL 29, 2019
NO MASS

TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 2019
9:00 AM + Bill Bray

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 2019
9:00 AM + Sue Klunk

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2019
9:00 AM + Deceased Members of the Wykpis Family

FRIDAY, MAY 3, 2019
9:00 AM + John Potocki

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2019
9:00 AM + Michael Wehler
5:00 PM + Theron & Brenda Menges

SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2019
8:15 AM + John Melhorn
11:15 AM – People of the Parish

NEXT SUNDAY’S READINGS
Revelation 5:11-14
John 21:1-19


PRAYER FOR Vocations – “As the Father has sent Me, so I send you.” Do you have a growing interest in sharing the Lord’s saving mission as a priest, deacon or in the consecrated life? Talk to Fr. Marcos or Fr. Brian Wayne, Director of Vocations, at 717-657-4804 frbwayne@hbgdiocese.org or check out www.dioceseanpriest.com.

APRIL 28, 2019

WEEK-AT-A-GLANCE
April 28th-May 4th

Sunday, Apr. 28th – Religious Education from 9:30 – 11 AM
Sunday, Apr. 28th – Adult Enrichment Class in the social hall, 9:30-11 AM
Monday, Apr. 29th – Cub Scouts, 6:30 PM
Monday, Apr. 29th – Legion of Mary in Rel Ed Bldg room 4, 7 PM
Monday, Apr. 29th – Charismatic Prayer Group in the social hall, 7 PM
Tuesday, Apr. 30th – Bible Study in Den, 9:30 AM
Wednesday, May 1st – Boy Scouts 6-9 PM
Thursday, May 2nd – Faith Sharing Group in the Den after 9:00 AM Mass
Thursday, May 2nd – “Healing Hearts” in the Den 6 – 7:30 PM
Thursday, May 2nd – Finance Council in REC, 6:30 PM

MISSION FOR LITURGY AND WORSHIP

ALTER SERVERS for Sat/Sun May 4-5
5:00 PM Mass: Harrison, Landon & Ella Smith
8:15 AM Mass: Ethan Aiello, Mary & Joe Murphy
11:15 AM Mass: Audrianna Dusseau, Nora & Margaret Mailey

Coordinator is Dianne Giampietro.

LECTORS for Sat/Sun May 4-5
5 PM MASS – Joe Schwar
8:15 AM MASS – Cathy Heiman
11:15 AM MASS – Sharon Ward

Coordinator is Dianne Giampietro.

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION (EMHC) for Sat/Sun May 4-5
5:00 PM: Rose Dietz, Barb Redding, Paul & Marjorie Oakes, Mary Margaret Thorne
8:15 AM: Bill Bowker, Ken Glass, Pat Robinson, Elaine & Mitch Walton
11:15 AM: Andy Altolbelli, Diane & John Schlaline, Pat Spiridonoff, Leland Steinke

Coordinator is Claire Wentz.

Evangelization – Prayer of the Week
Dear Father in Heaven: I ask You in Jesus’ Name that RCIA catechumens and candidates will remain open to God’s grace and will always receive from their parish church sound teaching, warm welcome, and a true sense of belonging.
FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK

Divine Mercy Sunday

1. A special thank you to all those who assisted in any way with the liturgies during Holy Week. There is always much work to be done for and during these Masses and services, and I appreciate all those who helped make them truly inspiring and beautiful. Also, thank you for the cards and goodies that you gave me.

2. This Sunday, April 28th, the universal Church celebrates Divine Mercy Sunday. Our risen Lord Jesus Himself appeared to St. Faustina Kowalska, a Polish nun (1905-1938) and spoke to her about God’s Divine Mercy. These apparitions (which are recorded in her diary, Divine Mercy in my Soul) led the Church to establish this feast of mercy as a very special day when “all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened” (Diary 699). Our Lord made a great promise for this feast that all those souls who would go to Confession and then receive Him in Holy Communion on the Feast of Mercy would “obtain the complete forgiveness of sins and punishment” (699). The big banner located in the baptistery area of the church (up front) is the image of Divine Mercy, and the closest representation of what St. Faustina herself saw when Jesus appeared to her! St. Vincent’s in Hanover will be hosting Divine Mercy devotions this year for our deanery on Sunday, April 28th at 2 PM.

3. For those of you who have not heard the news, this year I will be transferred from Immaculate Heart of Mary to St. Joseph’s, Danville. The transfer date will be June 17 this year, but due to my vacation schedule, my last day will be June 9 (Pentecost Sunday). It has truly been an amazing blessing serving you here at IHM! Please keep me in your prayers in this time of transition, and know that you will certainly continue in mine.

4. On Saturday, May 4th at Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Hanover, I will be leading a special service to offer burial rites to babies who were not born alive. This “shared burial” is coordinated by Dr. Jess Socrates of our parish, and is in conjunction with Hanover Hospital and Panebaker Funeral Home. The service will take place at 11am in the baby section of the cemetery. All are invited to attend.

5. On Saturday, May 11 from 10 am - 3 pm, our parish will host an exciting event – Come to the Banquet. It will be a wonderful day of spiritual renewal that will bring our parish family together and strengthen our faith as a community of believers. Activities will start in the morning with an engaging and dynamic preaching by Fr. Stan Fortuna, a founding member of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal. This will be followed in the afternoon by a colorful food festival where you will enjoy a variety of delicious ethnic dishes. The day will conclude with a delightful music concert by Fr.

God bless you and your week – Fr. Marcoe

VIV DINNER – Our appreciation dinner for the volunteers of our parish will be held on Friday, May 17, 2019 at 6:30 PM. Use the sheets on the window sills or the back ledge to sign up. Deadline to sign up is May 5, 2019.

ABBOTTSTOWN/EAST BERLIN FOOD BANK – The food pantry in East Berlin held on April 3rd served 59 families which included 148 individuals. The number of families served at the Abbottstown location on April 4th was 40 for a total of 68 individuals. The link to the Time to Sign Up page for the food pantry on Wednesday, May 1st at the East Berlin location is www.volunteersignup/ PKW43 and Thursday, May 2nd at the Abbottstown location is www.volunteersignup/H39B4. Please remember to drop off health/beauty aid items, such as soaps, toothbrushes, diapers, as well LAUNDRY DETERGENT, etc. and place them in the food pantry barrels.

SPAGHETTI DINNER – The Respect Life Ministry and the Knights of Columbus are sponsoring a fundraising spaghetti dinner on Saturday, May 25th after the 5 PM Mass to support the ministry, Undefeated Courage. Undefeated Courage is a ministry partnered with Sidewalk Advocates for Life. They are devoted to saving mothers and their babies from the violence of abortion through peaceful, prayerful outreach on the sidewalks of abortion clinics. To expand this much needed outreach, Undefeated Courage is fundraising for a mobile Ultrasound bus. This bus will park outside of Planned Parenthood, offering mothers the gift of free ultrasounds, counseling and information on other community services that will help support them in choosing life for their child. Currently they have raised $135,000.00 towards their goal of $337,845.00. No donation is too small when the goal is saving lives! So please, come and enjoy a great meal while supporting a great cause. Tickets will be available for purchase after all weekend Masses until May 19th. For further questions about the event or ministry, please contact Sabrina Smith, Respect Life chair at sasmith19@msn.com or call (717)586-9449.

FUSION - Fusion is Immaculate Heart of Mary’s youth ministry; open to all teenagers in grades 8 to 12. Challenge of the Week: Consider volunteering with Fusion! April 27, 6 - 8:30 PM: Youth Night with Adoration May 5, 4:30 – 7 PM: Reel Talk: Coco (2017) May 7: Deadline to register for Day by Day Retreat - $10 per person May 11, 10AM – 3 PM: Come To The Banquet! - $5 (adults) & $2 (children)

For more information, please call or email Paul Oakes: (717) 259-0611 ext.8 or poakes@hbgdiocese.org
THANKS TO
GROCERY CERTIFICATES – Please know how very grateful we are to all of you who support our Grocery Certificate Program and ultimately our Religious Education Program. IHM receives a 5% profit from the sale of all the grocery cards purchased. **Before going for groceries, please consider purchasing Weis or Giant cards after each Mass at the front entrance.** Cards can also be purchased in the parish office during the work week. Thank you for your support of this wonderful program! During the week of April 14, 2019 we sold $1240 for a profit of $62.00.

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RUTH’S HARVEST – There has been a change in the April date for Ruth’s Harvest. Remaining dates for this school year are now April 10th and May 22nd at 10 AM at the Abbottstown Fire Hall.

CONGRATULATIONS to the following students at Delone Catholic High School for achieving honor roll status:
FIRST HONORS: Audrey & Abigail Sell, Christian Powell and Julia O’Brien
SECOND HONORS: Harrison Smith & Avery Kuntz
COMMENDABLE EFFORT: Christian Powell & Avery Kuntz

MARCH FINANCIAL REPORT –
Monthly Budget $45,000.00
Income for March 3rd $11,035.02
March 10th 12,810.75
March 17th 8,798.20
March 24th 10,052.50
March 31st 8,628.91
TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME $51,325.56
ADDITIONAL COLLECTIONS:
Capital Improvements 1,785.00

SAVE THE DATE! Vacation Bible School will be here before we know it! Mark your calendars so that your child/children don't miss this wonderful week. The theme for our 2019 Vacation Bible School is “CAMP HEALING” and will be held Monday, July 15th to Friday, July 19th from 6:00-8:30 PM. More information will follow in upcoming bulletins.

WELCOME! We welcome the following to our parish family:
Andrew & Amanda Johnson & family, Dover
Jeff & Stephanie Wirfel & family, Spring Grove

PARISH CARING COMMITTEE – Assists parishioners on an as needed basis, in times of need or stress and provides visitation, care giver relief, meals, errands, light household chores and local transportation. To request assistance or to become a Caring Committee Volunteer, contact Jen Gentile at 717-225-5059.

HEALING HEARTS is a support group for widows/widowers. The group will meet once a week on Thursday nights from 6 pm to 7:30 pm in the Den of the Religious Education Center starting April 4, 2019. The meetings will consist of prayer/bible study, share time, Christian music, group social outings, like going to see a Christian movie, attending a Christian Concert, or listening to a Christian Speaker. The support group goal is to help heal the broken heart and replace sorrow with joy, by finding peace through a personal relationship with the Lord. Contact Kim Aiello by calling (717)476-7504 or emailing her at jkilo1@hotmail.com.

You are cordially invited to "Come to the Banquet"!
On Saturday, May 11, 2019 from 10 am - 3 pm, our parish will host this exciting event that will “feed both soul and body.” This wonderful day of renewal will feature in the morning Fr. Stan Fortuna, an engaging speaker and a highly talented musician. He is a founding member of the Community of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (CFR) based in the Bronx, New York. He will inspire us with his dynamic preaching and touch our hearts with his music.

A colorful food festival starting from 12 noon - 2 pm will follow in the social hall where a variety of delicious

May 18, 8AM - 6 PM: Day by Day Retreat at Mount St. Mary’s Grotto
May 19, 6 - 9 PM: Game Night/ Unlock the Truth: The Catacombs
May 19: Deadline to register for Dynamic YOU
ethic dishes will be on sale. Fr. Fortuna will conclude the day with a delightful music concert from 2 pm - 2:45 pm. Proceeds from the admission fee and food ticket sales will benefit the Friar's homeless shelter and youth center programs for the poor.
Admission Tickets: Adults- $5.00 Children 5 and under- Free
Children (6-12) $2  Teens (13-17) $3
Come and share the good news! Bring your family and friends. Experience the spiritual blessings of that day-faith, friendship and fellowship of our parish as a caring community of believers for a worthy cause.
For more details, questions and information about the event and how you can help and participate, contact Luz Socrates at luzvsoc@gmail.com and call or text her at 717-873-3650.

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PRAYER AT MASS
From a letter by Bishop Gainer: “The challenges of our present time have shaken the faith and broken the hearts of many of the Catholic faithful throughout the Church. I have had opportunities to listen to the cries of outrage and concern at deanery gatherings, after visits to parishes, and through the many letters I have received… Over the last several months, many parishes have begun to recite the prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel at the celebration of Mass and many other parishes and individuals have asked me to mandate the use of the prayer throughout the Diocese. After discussing the issue with the Council of Priests and in light of those many requests, I am asking that all parishes throughout the Diocese of Harrisburg begin to recite the Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel either before or after Holy Mass… Brothers and sisters in Christ, broken members of the Body of Christ: let us agree to pray for healing and heavenly help that, together, in the company of all the angels and saints, we may purify the Church of infidelity and pursue the path to heaven with perseverance.” Here at Immaculate Heart of Mary, we will begin praying this prayer on the First Sunday of Lent.

PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL
St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snare of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

NEW ENTRANCE PROCEDURE FOR THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CENTER –
I want to let you know about a new entrance procedure that we now have in place when coming to the parish office and the Religious Education Center. You will now find that the doors will be locked. We ask that you please ring the bell on the wall outside the door and you will be buzzed into the building. This safety system which now allows the staff to see who is at the door was installed this last week.

THE DIOCESAN CONFERENCE OF HEALTH CARE MINISTERS AND HELPING MINISTRY (PARISH CARING COMMUNITY AND PARISH NURSING PROGRAM) will resume their quarterly meetings. Some of you may be familiar with these meetings. The meetings were a great opportunity for enrichment on ministry specific topics, for resource sharing and to network with other health care ministers. If you know of any new ministry members that would like to be part of these meetings, please share this information with them. The following are the meeting dates and topic for each date.

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019 – Topic: Compassionate Mental Health Care. Presenter: Lori Peters, Counselor for TrueNorth Wellness Services
Tuesday, May 7, 2019 – Topic: Boundaries for Thriving in Ministry. Presenter: Marianne C. Sailus, BCC, PA Society of Chaplains
Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2019 – Topic: Assisted Suicide. Presenter: Maria Gallagher, PA Pro-Life Federation.
All meetings will be at 10:30 AM at the Diocesan Center in Harrisburg. To confirm your participation, please send an email to jcurran@hbgdiocese.org or call Jackie Curran at 717-657-4804, ext. 313.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES COUNSELING SERVICES:
Depression and anxiety can occur when we have a loss or a major change in our life. A licensed skilled therapist can help you by listening, processing, and giving you the power to make positive change. Catholic Charities Counseling Services is accepting new clients for four office locations throughout the Diocese. Catholic Charities Counseling is for anyone: children, adolescents, adults, and couples. Services are provided in a confidential office setting. Services include individual and family therapy, marital counseling, and parent-child counseling. We accept Medical Assistance, or clients can pay for services (discount fee schedule available). Just call for an appointment: Capital Region 717-233-7978; Lancaster 717-299-3659 or 717-392-2113 (Espanol); York 717-845-2696; Paradise School Office (Abbottstown) 717-259-9537. Visit www.cchbg.org for more information.

WORLD DAY OF THE SICK PRAYER
Generous Lord, with love beyond all telling, Jesus sends us to shower your love on those most in need,
particularly in our ministry to the sick. In the spirit of Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta, inspire us to serve with courage, love and generosity. Give us courage to guard the dignity of those who are abandoned and discarded, especially the dying, unborn, migrant and refugee. Let those among us whose voices are strong raise them in defense of the weak. Give us love that unveils the face of Christ in the face of every individual we meet, particularly in those we find most difficult to care for. Give us generosity born from the knowledge that all good things are gifts of your love and, through us, are to be shared with the world. Amen

Pope Francis

SAVE THE WEEK
2019 Vacation Bible School will be held Monday, July 15th through Friday, July 19th from 6:00-8:30 PM for children ages 4 up to and including those finishing 6th grade. Please mark your calendars now so that your children don't miss the opportunity to attend “CAMP HEALING.”

Don't Get Scammed!
Scammers are now posing as priests and other clergy. In this latest scam, you might receive an email or a text message that appears to be from your Pastor or another priest that you may know. The scammer asks you to help someone in need by purchasing a gift card and to provide the codes on that card.

Here’s how to protect yourself from being scammed.
1. Know that scammers are out there. Be suspicious of any request for funds of any type via an email message or a text message. Verify any request with a call to the person who supposedly sent it or a call to the phone number of the text that you received.
2. Know that any email from a priest should be from a diocesan or parish email account. Messages sent from free services, such as Gmail or Yahoo, are more likely to be scammers.
3. Many clergy do not share their cell phone numbers publicly. If you receive a text message from someone not on your phone’s contact list, be suspicious.
4. Know that priests will NEVER ask for financial transactions via email or text messages.

GUIDED PRAYER APP – Alessandro DiSanto, a Holy Name of Jesus parishioner, has worked with a few friends to build an app aiming to help people grow in their faith lives through guided prayer and meditation sessions. The app is called Hallow and offers guided audio sessions through a variety of prayer types, including Christian Meditation, the Examen, Lectio Divina, and Spiritual Writing. To learn more, visit www.hallow.app or feel free to reach out to Alessandro at alessandro@hallow.app. The app is available on both the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

SURVIVING DIVORCE – St. John the Baptist Parish, New Freedom, is pleased to announce another session of Surviving Divorce, a ministry that will bring hope and healing to those who have experienced the pain and loneliness of a broken marriage. This program includes 12 video presentations featuring a psychologist, priests, and personal testimonies from Catholic men and women who have experienced the breakdown of their family. Topics covered include shock and grief, anger and forgiveness, money issues, dealing with children and a former spouse, and annulment and remarriage. Surviving Divorce is for the newly separated and divorced as well as those who are still struggling many years later. It will help them find answers to their questions, restore their hope and begin authentic healing.

This program is based on the teachings of the Catholic Church and is open to anyone who needs comfort, counsel, and clarity after divorce. For more information about this program, visit http://www.catholicsdivorce.com and the parish website www.sjbnf.org.

The 12 week Surviving Divorce program begins on Feb. 6, 2019 at 6:45 PM. A $25 fee includes the Surviving Divorce Personal Guide and all program materials. Please email facilitators, Deb Cousin at deb.cousin@verizon.net or Pat Smith at dontel972@aol.com or call the parish office at 717-235-2156 for more information.

IMPORTANT CHANGE FOR HANOVER HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS – The Hanover Hospital – UPMC
Pinnacle Health has issued the following changes to their policy effective December 2018.

1. Clergy will not be able to view denominational lists at the front desk.
2. Clergy will not be able to obtain patient information at the front desk unless they have the patient’s name.
3. If the patient indicates a congregational affiliation in the admissions interview, the Chaplain will call the congregation. If the patient indicates to the Chaplain on his or her rounds that he or she belongs to a particular congregation and gives permission the Chaplain will call the congregation.
4. In an emergency situation if the patient or family indicates a congregational affiliation to the Chaplain or other staff and gives permission to call the congregation, every effort will be made to notify the congregation.

Because of these changes, it is very important that a family member contacts the parish when someone is admitted.
WEEKDAY MASS PARKING – Anyone attending the weekday Masses are asked to park in the lot beside and behind the Church whenever there is snow and ice. This parking area will be made ready first for anyone on the property.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT – It has been noted that some people, who are dropped off or picked up for Mass, are doing so at the steps right along West Canal Road. Especially at night, and given the adjacent hill, it is deemed this is unsafe given the speed and flow of traffic. For accessible and safe access to the Church at all times, please use the side social hall doors. Thank you.

FLOWERS – Looking for a way to memorialize a loved one or celebrate a special occasion? A beautiful way would be to order flowers on the altar. Most weekends are available from now through the end of the year. Please call Anita in the parish office to make arrangements.

MASS INTENTIONS – Mass intentions are a wonderful way to celebrate a special occasion, remember those who have died or are sick and in need of our prayers. Please consider this as a “gift” for someone. Call Anita in the Parish Office to arrange your Mass intentions.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY – CAN YOU DONATE NEW YARN? During the last year, the Prayer Shawl Ministry has made over 50 items for our own parishioners, Rachel’s Vineyard retreatants, Cross Keys Village Skilled Nursing patients, Spiritrust Lutheran hospice and Hanover Hospital Maternity. We rely on your donations to help with our yarn expense. We can always use red, white and blue yarn for military veterans in hospice care. Please drop off your donations in the covered gray boxes at the entrances to the church. If you know of anyone who would benefit from a prayer shawl, please call the parish office at 717-259-0611. Thank you!

Check out our new website at www.ihmparadise.org.

AERO ENERGY HOUSE OF WORSHIP PROGRAM – This program was established to provide Aero Energy customers an opportunity to give to our church. To participate, Aero Energy customers sign up by phone or online and Aero Energy donates 4 cents for every gallon of fuel they use to us. Please call if you are not already part of this wonderful program. It’s an easy way to benefit Immaculate Heart of Mary. Call 888-827-17136.

FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK

SUGGESTION CARDS are available on the back ledges and at the entrances of the church. If you have any suggestions on how to make our parish better, please fill one out and return it in the collection basket.

SUMMER WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE: Saturday 5 PM, Sunday 8:15 AM and 10:15 AM

LOST AND FOUND – Please check our Lost and Found bin in the sacristy for any items you may have left in Church. Any unclaimed items will be discarded.

BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION – Please keep collecting and sending in those BoxTops for Education for St. Teresa School. If you’d like to help out trimming those BoxTops, please contact kwenger@hotmail.com. All help is appreciated!

EVENT NOTICE – I have been a parishioner at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church for more than 40 years and employed in the newspaper business for more than 20 years. We have many wonderful events happening here at our parish and we’d like to get the word out to the public. Please feel free to send me any events that would be of interest to our local community – from Lenten dinners to youth events to Bible studies and everything in between! You can send information to: 6fletch@embarqmail.com. Don’t forget to tell me the following: WHAT is the event? WHO is invited? WHEN is the event? WHERE is the event? WHY should people attend? HOW can they get more information? If you have any questions, fee free to call or text me at 717-357-8051. Thank you! Holly Fletcher

HEARING IMPAIRED – Anyone who is hearing impaired may find it helpful to sit in Pew #9 on the Sacristy side. You will notice “hearing impaired” stickers on the side of the pew to indicate the best place to sit if you are hearing impaired.
HANDICAP PARKING – Please note that handicap parking spaces are available for parking near the social hall entrance to the Church. If you are attending the 11:15 AM Mass, in order to avoid the traffic associated with religious education letting out, the following two options are recommended: EITHER come in the EXIT lane BEFORE 11 AM, OR come in the usual entrance way AFTER approximately 11:07 AM.

CHILDREN’S CHAPEL – For everyone’s information, especially for those who may be new to our parish, there is a so-called Children’s Chapel or Cry Room here in the Church. It’s located in the front left corner of the church, where a restroom is also located. As a parish family, we want children and families to be welcome here at Mass, and so it’s important to have an appropriate place in the church for babies and young children when they get fussy and need extra attention. We really want to encourage parents to use this space to tend to their children as needed. Please, feel free to just get up when need be from the body of the church, and utilize this space. Then you can better tend to your children without feeling like you’re being watched. And this will also allow the other parishioners to be able to more fully focus on worshipping.

CREMATION
Since 1963, Catholics have been allowed to choose cremation over burial as a means of laying a loved one to rest. Cremation is a popular choice since it is less expensive and more manageable than a full burial. Cremation, like death, is final. But that doesn’t mean you won’t have second thoughts. Susan Skiles Luke, a marketing consultant in Columbia, Missouri, had her mother cremated and buried in a family plot. Now, she wishes it was her mother’s body and not just the cremated remains that was in the grave. “When I go there, which isn’t often, I want to feel like her body is under ground, right alongside my grandparents and beloved great aunt, all dressed up in their Sunday best…”

Although creation is permitted, some Catholics have not been dealing properly with their loved ones remains. Common practices include scattering ashes, parting ashes out to friends and relatives, and keeping the ashes in a common area, such as a living room. While scattering ashes may seem romantic to some (but is also contrary to Catholic teaching), there’s something to be said about keeping your loved one in once place, and then marking that place with a name. “We mark the graves of our loved ones with a headstone to memorialize them, so we don’t forget them”. When visiting that person’s grave, just seeing his or her name can give comfort.

To instruct the faithful in this regard, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has issued updated guidelines. According to these, burial is still preferred, but cremation is an option. When a loved one has been cremated, their ashes must be kept intact, the same as one would treat a body. The ashes may not be separated or scattered. Instead, they should remain in a proper vessel that is interred in a proper place, such as a cemetery or church. Finally, the document stresses that Catholics who choose cremation for reasons contrary to the faith, (e.g., to have their ashes scattered) must be denied a Christian funeral.

In the end, whether cremation or burial is chosen, we await from the grave the second coming of Jesus Christ and the blessed Resurrection of the Dead.

Tips for talking to children about difficult subjects/news reports

The topic of sex abuse, particularly child sex abuse, is a daunting one for parents. Every parent must consider many factors including the best age-appropriate way to discuss the topic. Below are some points to consider adapted from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, and First Things First.

1. Make sure you are composed before you talk with your child.
2. If you believe your child is aware of news concerning abuse in the diocese, start the conversation. Not talking about a difficult event can make the event even more threatening in your child’s mind.
3. Listen carefully to what your child is asking or talking about.
4. Clarify just what any concerns are before you answer. Sometimes we make assumptions and give far more information than what the child needs.
5. Keep your answers simple and brief. Don’t answer questions that have not been asked. Do not overload your child with information that is beyond his/her level of understanding.
6. Assure your child that you and other adults that are in charge are doing everything possible to make sure they will be safe. This will give them a sense that adults are actively taking steps to protect those who are currently suffering.
7. Don’t make guarantees that such a thing can never happen again. Words like “never” and “always” should be used very carefully because small children trust that this is a promise from you.
8. Explain that we do not know why people treat other people badly.
9. Try to limit your child’s exposure to media coverage. A child believes what he or she sees on television, or in the newspapers is always true.
10. Let your children know about successful community efforts. You may want to share positive media images, such as reports of individuals helping those in need.

Additional information is available at www.YouthProtectionHBG.com