News



Rose Murphy and Paul Barber, students at Catholic Central High School in Troy, New York, examine a tax return March 3 while volunteering in the Catholic Charities Volunteer Income Tax program in the Diocese of Albany. (CNS/Kate Costello, The Evangelist)



by Dan Morris-Young

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March 27, 2019

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High school students are among volunteers providing free tax return assistance to lower income persons in the Diocese of Albany, New York, through the Catholic Charities Volunteer Income Tax Program. Certified by the Internal Revenue Service, the students meet with clients at multiple sites, including St. Matthew's Church in Voorheesville, New York. St. Matthew's is also home to a unique youth program, H.O.P.E. Club (Helping out people everywhere). Catholic Charities West Virginia as well as Catholic Charities of Southern Minnesota take part in similar tax return assistance efforts.

St. Pius X Parish in Fairfield, Connecticut, hosts regular dinner-dances for residents and supporters of St. Catherine Center for Special Needs in Fairfield. The most recent was "Mardi Gras-a-Go-Go"and drew more than 120 guests to celebrate Mardi Gras and the beginning of Lent.

Parishes of the Archdiocese of Atlanta are being asked to observe Safe Haven Sunday, April 7, the first Sunday of National Child Abuse Prevention Month, to raise awareness of the dangers of pornography. Both the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph marked Safe Haven Sunday during the weekend of March 2-3. The Archdiocese of New Orleans has also launched a campaign to help families combat pornography. In 2015 the U.S. bishops' conference released the statement "Create in Me A Clean Heart: A Pastoral Response to Pornography."

Members of St. William Parish in Niobrara, Nebraska, Hubert and Naoma Borgmann recount their experience of being trapped in their home by Nebraska flooding, said to be the worst in a half century. The Archdiocese of Omaha is carrying out a special collection for flood victims.



The flooded facility of the Camp Ashland Army National Guard in Ashland, Nebraska, is seen in this March 17 photo. At least three people were reported killed as a result of the extensive flooding. (CNS/Herschel Talley, Nebraska National Guard handout via Reuters)

Two bishops with Spokane, Washington, platforms come down on differing sides and approaches to pastoral and moral issues in the church – current Bishop Thomas Daly and now-Cardinal of Chicago Blase Cupich. In related features, Spokane's Inlander magazine details how Cupich has become an "incendiary figure" despite trying to "crank down the heat of the Catholic culture wars" and interviews Daly about his instructions on Communion for politicians, Catholic polarization, criticism of some bishops as flaccid on church teaching, his respect for papal detractor Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, and concerns about same-sex attracted priests.

Also from Spokane: St. Augustine Parish is a core supporter of Our Place, an ecumenical organization that aims to meet needs of the disabled, young, elderly and homeless in the city's West Central neighborhood.



Ramsey County Attorney John Choi, left, visits Feb. 1 at St. Odilia in Shoreview, Minn., with Fr. Dan Griffith, foreground, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes in Minneapolis, and Mark Umbreit, center, director of the Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking at the University of Minnesota in St. Paul. (CNS/Joe Ruff, Catholic Spirit)

About 100 people took part in a recent "listening session" on the clerical sex abuse crisis at St. Odilia Parish in Shoreview, Minnesota, focusing on restorative justice. Organized by several parishes and supported by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, much of the work of the gathering took place in in small groups called healing circles. Among those attending: Ramsey County Attorney John Choi, raised Catholic, whose office filed criminal and civil charges against the archdiocese four years ago for failure to protect children in the sexual abuse case of then-Fr. Curtis Wehmeyer.

[Dan Morris-Young is NCR West Coast correspondent.]

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