

Archbishop confers papal honors on 24

By John Gleason

Archbishop Charles Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., conferred papal honors on three couples and 18 individuals during an evening Mass Nov. 7.

Four people received the *Benemerenti* ("To a Well-Deserving Person") *Medal*, which is awarded for exceptional service to the Church. The other individuals and three couples were awarded the *Cross Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice* ("For the Church and Pontiff") established by Pope Leo XIII in 1888 to commemorate his golden sacerdotal jubilee. It is given for distinguished service to the Church.

"Those of you who come to this Mass regularly are probably wondering why you had trouble finding a seat?" Archbishop Chaput said, drawing a laugh from the congregation. "It's because we are here to honor people for whom we are grateful that they are among us.

"We are honoring them for their lives of fidelity and generous love," he said. "They live how we should live our lives if we want to make a difference in the world."

"The Christian life is not about seeking or getting awards," Msgr. Thomas Fryar said, "but from time to time the Holy Father recognizes persons for their exceptional service to the Gospel. Papal honors are rare. Tonight the Holy Father recognizes four individuals with the *Benemerenti Medal* and 20 with the *Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*. These two awards are among the highest honors the pope can bestow on any person."

In turn, the honorees were called forward to receive their awards from Archbishop Chaput as Msgr. Fryar made note of their service to the Catholic community.

Those honored with the *Benemerenti Medal*:

Charles Goldberg, senior partner

with Rothgerber, Johnson and Lyons LLP,

Timothy Gray, co-founder and president of the Augustine Institute,

Luis Soto, director of the archdiocese's Hispanic Ministry

Maria del Mar Muñoz-Visoso, founder of the archdiocese's Spanish-language newspaper *El Pueblo Católico*.

Those honored with the *Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*

Alejandro Bermudez, a consecrated layman of the *Sodalitium Christianae Vitae*

Mary Cohen, principal of St. Mary School in Littleton

Martha Downey and Deacon Hugh Downey of Spirit of Christ Parish in Arvada, for medical missionary work in Africa

Socorro Garcia and Deacon Modesto Garcia, for their witness as a diaconal couple

Sean Innerst, instructor at St. John Vianney Theological Seminary and the Catechetical School

Gerald Laber, president and CEO of The Catholic Foundation,

Mary Leisring, director of Black Catholic Ministry,

Marc Lenzini, theology teacher at Bishop Machebeuf High School, **Yolanda Luna**, director of Hispanic ministry at Queen of Peace Parish in Aurora,

Victoria McCabe, longtime instructor at Regis University, for a career of Catholic witness in higher education.

Patricia McDonald, retired executive assistant, for 23 years

of professional support to the archbishops of Denver:

Rosemary Nelson, retired director of the archdiocese's Risk Management Office,

Therese Polakovic, co-foundress and executive director of ENDOW (Educating on the Nature and Dignity of Women),

Theodore Sevier, maintenance volunteer at the John Paul II Center, for service to the many practical needs of the Church.

Katharina Smith and Deacon John Smith: Katharina for encouragement and support to her husband's diaconal service and Deacon Smith, director of deacon formation at St. Francis School of Theology for Deacons,

Loretto Sister Mary Catherine Widger, co-foundress and associate director of the Bridge Community and associate director for Special Religious Education, for service to the mentally and physically disabled.



Sister Mary Catherine Widger, S.L. Sister Widger of the Denver-based Sisters of Loretto is the co-foundress and associate director of Denver's Bridge Community, a group home for adult women with developmental disabilities. For more than 30 years she has also served as associate director of the archdiocese's special religious education program.

"Sister Widger's service has been direct, personal and extremely demanding for more than three decades because the emotional and

continued on page 8

physical needs of persons with disabilities are so high," noted the archbishop. "She is a model of consecrated service to the poorest and most forgotten of the poor."

"Both the Sisters of Loretto and the Archdiocese of Denver have enabled me to engage in a ministry that fills my life and continues to stretch my horizons," Sister Widger said. "I feel very much involved in a mutual ministry with the families with whom I work. For me it is a great honor to serve the Church and

to seek God's will for our Church in these changing times."

Msgr. Fryar told the congregation that the 24th honoree, who asked for anonymity for family reasons, would receive their award in a private ceremony.

"The archdiocese is blessed with many hundreds of people who witness the Gospel in heroic ways every day," he said. "In honoring these deserving persons with the *Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* and

the *Benemerenti Medal* tonight, the Holy Father rightly acknowledges the example of their lives. But he also honors all of our good people, and he invites each of us to follow Jesus Christ with the same unselfish love."

The congregation acknowledged the honorees by a thunderous applause. A reception followed the Mass.

Denver Catholic Register
Denver, CO
October 15, November 10, 2010



WATERwheel
Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics
and Ritual
Volume 21 • Number 3 • 2010



WATER welcomes Emily Cohen of the Loretto Volunteers whose institutional motto is "working for justice, acting for peace." She also works at the Women's Ordination Conference, so she is getting a double dose of feminist work in religion. Emily is a recent graduate of Seattle University with a double major in Theology/Religious Studies and Liberal Studies. She has a wealth of volunteer service and experience in campus ministry.

Sister Johanna arrived at the first Healing Place women's facility on Oak Street looking for a new "ministry." She began her first day as a volunteer and left as part-time, on-call staff in Detox. After her first night she knew this was "truly what God wants me to do."

Over the years she has seen many changes, including the move to 16th and Broadway where she began working in Detox full-time. Helping women break the bondage of addiction and rejoin families and society as free and responsible women has been her reward. Even when the work was often exhausting, she has always felt "I have received much more than I have given."

Hands of Hope
The Healing Place Story
Louisville, KY
1989-2009

Annual vocation dinner draws 350 youth

Editor's note: At the end of the article Maria Visse SL is quoted.

After hearing the speakers the young people were invited to visit displays set up by representatives of different religious communities and speak to them.

Sister of Loretto Maria Visse greeted young women who visited her booth, gave them brochures and reminded them, "The Gospel is not just something you read; you've got to live it."

She also said over and over again to her visitors, "The Sisters of Loretto are close; you should come and visit sometime."

The Record
Louisville, KY
November 4, 2010

Loretto Volunteers live in community in Washington, DC. Emily shares a house with four women who are volunteers at DC Rape Crisis Center, New Ways Ministry, Interfaith Voices, and N Street Village. We welcome these women to the social justice community and congratulate the Loretto Community (they gave us our first grant before these interns were born!) on the success of this much-needed program led by Katie Jones.
page 8

Reprints by Email

If you would like to receive Loretto *Reprints* by email simply contact *Reprints* by Baskin, Baskin@lorettocommunity.org and let us know you want to switch from paper copy to email.

Do consider *Reprints* by email.

Editor's note: This excerpt is from an article about a family making a retreat at the Retreat Center where Pauline Albin SL was in Ghana.

Outgoing board members say goodbye

By Stevie Lowery

Last week's Marion County Board of Education meeting marked the final meeting for Board Chairwoman Sister Kay Carlew and Board Members Alex Ackermann and Brad Mattingly. In January, Ed Hacker, Michael Mullins and Mike Cecil, who won the election in November, will be taking their places on the board.

Chairwoman Carlew has served on the board for 16 years, and during last week's meeting, Marion County Judge/Executive John G. Mattingly read a proclamation and resolution in honor of Carlew.

"We, the leadership of Lebanon and Marion County, do publicly state that the contributions of Sr. Kay Carlew have left an indelible mark, a permanent and lasting impression on Marion County Public Schools," Mattingly read the proclamation during the meeting. "We wish to state our enormous gratitude for her diligent, dedicated years of service to all the students and citizens of Marion County. We wish her much success in any and all of her future endeavors."

Marion County Superintendent Donald Smith said he would be forever endeared to Carlew.

"When I got this job it was



Ackerman Carlew Mattingly

amazing the folk that would say to me throughout the state, 'I don't know if you know this, but you have one of the best board members this state has ever seen,'" he said. "That is awesome."

According to Smith, Carlew will be missed.

"The thing that is going to suffer the most are the kids of Marion County," he said. "I think that they have lost someone special who really, diligently looked at everything before she made a decision. The board members coming on have some tough shoes to fill."

Carlew said she has enjoyed working on such a strong, focused team.

"To the superintendent and the leadership team, you've been our leaders," Carlew said. "You've given us direction. You have worked tirelessly for the kids of Marion County and I'm afraid the public doesn't know how hard each of you works."

The Lebanon Enterprise
Lebanon, KY
December 22, 2010

The family that prays together stays together

Fr. Anthony Akumah, OFM Conv

When we finally reached the retreat centre Sr. Pauline was there to welcome us. Her big smile and the loud "Akwaaba" that greeted us, made us all feel at home. The atmosphere we found changed the mindset of all of us. The serenity that surrounds the retreat centre caught the attention of each one of us and I saw the attitude of the entire family changed. So we began the retreat as a family.



Catholic Messenger
Ghana
September 2010

Pakistan Christian Post Picture of the Day—December 13, 2010



Faisalabad: Naseem Anthony, Jaffar Hassan Mubarik, George Clement, Sr. Nasreen Daniel, Syed Mujahid Hussain Gillani, Nazia Sardar, Shazia George, Iftikhar and Arif Ayaz during public forum to observe National Human Rights Day.

Christian Mom Faces Execution

by Asra Q. Nomani



Aasia Bibi at a prison in Sheikhupura, Pakistan, on Nov. 20. (AP Photo)

The email zipped across the globe from a Catholic nun of the Sisters of Loretto, living in rural Pakistan, to Sister Anna Koop, who was visiting their home order in rural Kentucky. The subject line: “Punjab: Christian Woman Sentenced To Death For Blasphemy.”

Sent Nov. 11, the nun’s message told the story of a Catholic farm worker, Aasia Bibi, convicted of violating antiquated blasphemy law propped up by Pakistan’s Islamist political parties. Allegedly, when some women workers pressured Aasia to renounce her Christian faith and accept Islam in the summer of 2009, Aasia responded that Jesus had died on the cross for the sins of humanity and she asked them what Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, had done for them. Her crime, blaspheming the prophet, carries a mandatory death sentence.

Koop, a 72-year-old nun who signs her emails “Peace to you,” was horrified by the news. Last year, she left the homeless shelter where she lives and works outside Denver to visit the four Pakistani nuns in her order living in Pakistan, and she feared not only for Aasia, a mother of five, but also the sisters in her order and the country’s other estimated 2.8 million Christians, who make up about 2 percent of the population.

page10

Last year, the Sisters of Loretto in Pakistan pooled their resources to give the archdiocese of Faisalabad a 21st century-style gift for the 50th anniversary of the archdiocese: a website, complete with a catchy jubilee sing-song in Urdu, the national language of Pakistan. A website message they wrote: “We Hope this online experience will touch your heart and soul.”

“There is so much violence directed toward Christians” in Pakistan, says Koop. “It’s hard to know where that might strike next.” She tapped away at her keyboard, sending emails around the world, trying to raise the alarm. On Nov. 17, Pope Benedict XVI called for Aasia’s release in his weekly public audience, saying that Christians in Pakistan are “often victims of violence and discrimination.”

The case of Aasia Bibi underscores the challenge of forging an Islamic identity in the 21st century that expresses a tolerant interpretation of Islam. The showdown is coming down to a sad clash of the nuns and the mullahs. And it’s a battle in which the mullahs must lose. My mother grew up going to St. Joseph’s Convent in the hill station of Panchgani, India, her brother going to St. Peter’s, and there is something valuable we can learn about other faiths—and ourselves—just by living peacefully together.

And there is something divinely radical that connects rebellious women within Islam and Catholicism. We both face an imbedded patriarchy. Catholic women have had more advances than we have had in Islam, but we have it easier on one front: We don’t have a Vatican. Last month, I spoke at the national conference of Call to Action, a Catholic group seeking reforms in the church. The title of my talk: “Bad Girls of Faith: The Daughters of Sarah and Hajar Standing Together to Reclaim the Feminist Tradition.” Thousands of years ago, our common histories say that Sarah and Hajar (or Hagar as she is known in Christianity and Judaism) feuded in, essentially, a chick fight that

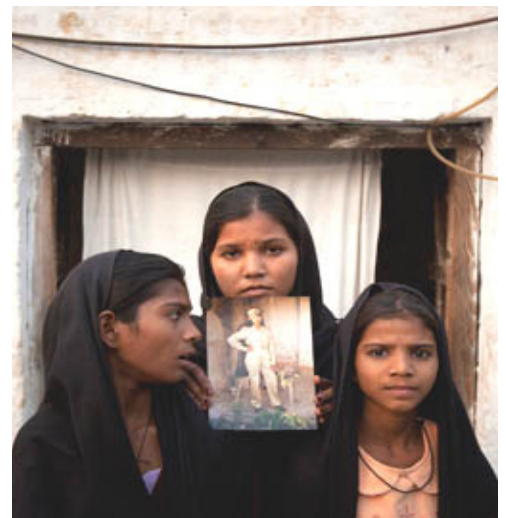
was a precursor to the interfaith troubles we have today. My theory: We could see progress if we stood together now. Soon after, I got one of the emails sent out by Sister Anna, the nun running a homeless shelter outside Denver.

The survival of the blasphemy of laws in Pakistan is a window into just how medieval aspects of Pakistan continue to be, betraying at least one example from the life of the prophet Muhammad. In one hadith, or tradition from the life of Muhammad, it’s said that when a man threw dirt on the prophet’s face, he just ignored the smear.

What’s more, by refusing to take on the Islamist political parties that back Pakistan’s outdated blasphemy law, secular leaders from Gen. Pervez Musharraf to the current president, Asif Ali Zardari fail to live up to the moderate, tolerant vision of the country’s birth.

The case of Aasia Bibi underscores the challenge of forging an Islamic identity in the 21st century that expresses a tolerant interpretation of Islam.

The Daily Beast
On-line
December 14



The daughters of Pakistani Christian woman Aasia Bibi pose with an image of their mother while standing outside their residence in Sheikhupura located in Pakistan’s Punjab Province. (Adrees Latif / Reuters)



Fr. Peter Urban is a Co-member of Loretto

Father Peter Urban-81 and still ministering

By John Gleason

"If I was forced to just sit and do nothing, I think I'd just start to cry!"

Father Peter Urban might make this statement with a deep laugh, but the idea is clear. He's not one to sit around and let the grass grow under his feet. Retirement may be a word to some, a state of being to others. But to Father Urban, it's just a transition: you minister, you retire—then you minister at something else.

"I retired about 20 years ago," he said, "and then kept on going. I can trace this back to my mother who was fond of saying, 'Don't say you can't; say you will.' It's kind of hard to forget."

A native of Wallace, Kan., Father Urban was ordained in 1958 and served at several parishes on the Eastern Plains. In addition to his pastoral duties, he became involved in Hispanic ministry.

Granted a medical disability in 1994 didn't slow Father Urban down one bit. Always one to jump into new projects, the following year, he got involved with the San Alfonso

Mission, a nonprofit organization established to bring hope to the poor in the city of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

Juarez is often referred to as the most dangerous city in the world (outside a war zone), the population in constant peril by an ever intensifying drug war. Despair, hopelessness and death are a daily occurrence.

"This is a place where the children live with violence everyday," he said, "Our goal is to bring peace and social justice to the people of Juarez one person at a time."

In order to do that, the San Alfonso Mission begins with education. To help achieve social justice, the children of Juarez must be educated to raise themselves out of the poverty and dire conditions that exist. Through the help of San Alfonso Mission donations and volunteers, today there are 100 students in class from primary grades through college. Counseling services to families and day-care centers have been opened so that parents who often work 12-hour shifts know their children are safe.

"It's a blessing that cannot be measured," Father Urban said.

Dan Schell is president of the San Alfonso Mission board of directors and a longtime friend of Father Urban. Asked what drives the priest to do what he does, Schell pointed to Father Urban's love of people.

"Truthfully, he's a people person," he said. "He loves being with them and working with the. He's a caring individual who doesn't judge and he finds the best in everyone."

Schell noted one example of how the people of Juarez responded to Father Urban.

"He made them a deal," Schell said.

"He said he'd put up the money for a piece of property if the people would maintain it until it was ready to be developed.

They agreed and today there is a community center where once there was a vacant lot. He cares and he brings out the best in people."

These days, the 81-year-old priest doesn't get to Juarez as much as he'd like, although he's still active in the ministry and fundraising. Today, you'll find him helping out at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Denver, saying Masses and working on a program designed to help more Hispanic males complete their high school education.

"You know the graduation rate for Hispanic males (in Denver) is just 20 percent," Father Urban said. "When I heard this I was devastated and knew I had to do something."

Father Urban said many of those caught in this trap are youths who came here from Mexico and Central America. Most have little or no grasp of English and have trouble keeping up in school. Also, parents need these youngsters to get jobs when they turn 17 to help out with the family. Those who do rarely return to school.

"I need to go into the homes of these families and encourage these men to return to school, graduate and hopefully go on to college," he said. "Also I talk to the parents about the importance of their involvement in the school, too. I want them to know that there's more out there for their children than dead-end jobs."

As far as Father Urban is concerned, young people deserve a chance. And if he has anything to say about it, every one of them in his path will get it.

Denver Catholic Register
Denver, CO
October 20, 2010

MO finds family, friends, self in Ireland

As many of you know, when I transitioned off SOCM staff last fall, many members sent donations for a surprise going-away gift -- a trip to Ireland! I was, and still am, overwhelmed by the generosity of this gift and its unique personal value to me. My grandfather Dave O'Connell was an immigrant to the U.S. in the early 1900's and a few of his brother Maurice's children still live in Ireland, so visiting Ireland is visiting family as well as experiencing and learning more about the culture and history of my family's roots.

The donations that came in from SOCM friends were so generous that I knew I would have at least a little to share with others. Last spring I contacted my 10 brothers and sisters and explained that if any of them wanted to consider a trip to Ireland I would be paying for expenses like a rental car, gas, and other common travel expenses, and would have a little to share on other expenses. My brother Tom was the only one able and available to make the trip, so we set off for a two-week trip to Ireland on July 17,

We spent the first days visiting the home of my dad's first cousins Tadg and Margaret O'Connell in Dublin. On a couple of occasions Tadg and Margaret's four children and families joined us in a wonderfully loud, caucus gathering with crackling bursts of laughter that reminded me exactly of O'Connell gatherings with my immediate family here in the States - must be genetic or cultural!

Tom and I had planned to spend several days in Bantry in County Cork with Marcus and Glenda Keyes, friends from Tennessee who are spending the summer in Ireland. The nature of the time changed when Marcus's brother Rafe died suddenly in the States. Tom and I were privileged to represent Marcus and Glenda's

many friends in the States by attending the wake and removal, and the funeral of Rafe Keyes, a Catholic priest from Bantry who spent most of his years in Peru serving the poor and working for justice. The whole town of Bantry turned out for the funeral, which included powerful testimony to Rafe's prophetic life and some songs including a last lament in the Irish language.

We were able to spend some visiting time with the Keyes and one of Tom's favorite moments is when Marcus took us to a field full of cows (including many bulls!) to see the Bantry Stone, a several thousand year old monument. A fence to keep the cows away surrounded the Stone. As Marcus finished speaking eloquently of the history and meaning of the engravings; we turned around to find about 50 cows lined up listening intently to Marcus! Then there was the navigating through the bulls to get out of the field.

My brother Tom's interest in learning more about the family history led us on a treasure hunt and discovery of the names of our great-great grandparents - Tom O'Connell and Kate Casey, the names of all our grandfather's 13 brothers and sisters, including the six who died young, the new knowledge that both our great-grandmother Mary Murphy's family and Tom O'Connell's family were tenant farmers of an English and an Irish landlord during the years of the Famine that decimated Ireland's population between 1844 to 1848.

With good help from folks we met we gathered census information from the 1901 Irish census, looked through baptismal records, located information in Tralee, the county seat of County Kerry, and talked with several great people.

In Ireland signs of the harsh history remain as well as monuments and heritage centers that celebrate the struggles for a free Ireland. Tom and I visited some of these heritage centers as well as a churchyard with mass graves from the Famine and ruins of old poor houses and workhouses, the last resort for the landless and destitute.

Tom and I traveled through Ireland in a small rental car - on the left side of narrow roads with no shoulder and bordered by stone hedgerows usually covered with greenery. The margin of error was small especially when a big tour bus rambled down toward us on the right - sometimes one just has to stop to angle the inches between two cars passing. Tom likes fresh air and more than once gasped at how close we would get to the hedgerows (on his side of the car) as he fended off branches invading his open window! I thought of folks at SOCM often during this great visit to the land of my family's ancestors. You made the trip possible and I thank you so much.

Thank you so much and "Slan agus beannacht." "Goodbye for now and Blessings to you!"

Maureen is a Sister of Loretto



Tom, Maureen and Glenda Keyes

The SOCM Sentinel
Fall 2010