

**OFFICE FOR ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS  
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA**



NEWSLETTER FOR PARISH ECUMENICAL REPRESENTATIVES

**September, 2008**

In his homily in the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside-the-Walls on June 28, 2007, Pope Benedict XVI said, "I am pleased to announce officially that we shall be dedicating a special Jubilee Year to the Apostle Paul from 28 June 2008 to 29 June 2009, on the occasion of the bimillennium of his birth, which historians have placed between the years 7 and 10 AD."

In that same homily, the Pope addressed the ecumenical aspects of the Pauline Year. "Lastly there is one particular aspect to which special attention must be paid during the celebration of the various moments of the 2000<sup>th</sup> Pauline anniversary: I am referring to the ecumenical dimension. The Apostle to the Gentiles, who was especially committed to taking the Good News to all people, left no stones unturned for unity and harmony among all Christians."

Speaking at First Vespers for the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul on June 28, 2008 in the presence of His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, Pope Benedict recalled Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. "The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." The Holy Father continued, "Before the Face of Christ, these words become at the same time an urgent plea: Bring us together from all our divisions. Grant that this may once again become reality today..."

Let us join our prayer with that of the Holy Father, that we may be brought together from all our divisions, and that the "one body" which partakes of the "one bread" may indeed become a reality once again.

We extend a warm welcome to Sister Judith Kreipe, IHM who has joined the staff of our office as Assistant Director. Sister Judith has enjoyed many years as an educator with grade and high school youth as well as with adult faith formation. She is looking forward to being part of the Archdiocesan efforts to bring about mutual understanding and respect among all peoples, especially people of faith.

*Rev. Msgr. Michael J. Carroll*

## **SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Interfaith Dialogue at Graterford – June 12–July 24**

This annual six-week dialogue program at Graterford State Correctional Institution brings together Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Muslim inmates to share, listen and learn about their own and each other's religious traditions, in order to foster mutual respect and understanding.

### **Interreligious Leadership Institute – July 10-17**

Monsignor Michael Carroll attended this event sponsored by the USCCB Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs which was held at Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois. The program focused on Catholic foundations for interreligious dialogue as well as beliefs and practices of world religions represented in the United States.

### **Bearing Witness Program – July 28-31**

A professional development program co-sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia was attended by Catholic school teachers from Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey. Daylesford Abbey hosted this intensive four-day seminar which covers an understanding of Judaism, the history of anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, and related issues of prejudice and discrimination. Auxiliary Bishop Robert Maginnis addressed the group on the second day of the program.

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### **Jewish-Catholic Institute, St. Joseph's University**

This institute has facilitated dialogue among Christians and Jews in the Philadelphia area for 41 years. On August 15, Philip A. Cunningham, Ph.D. succeeded Rev. Donald Clifford, S.J. as the institute's director. The first program to be offered by the institute this year is *Religion, Politics and Moral Decision-Making*.

Date: Wednesday, September 10, 2008 - Reception 6:30 PM / Program 7:30 PM

Place: Haub Center, McShain Hall, St. Joseph's University

Speakers: Rabbi Lance J. Sussman, Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel

Rev. Thomas Massaro, S.J., Professor, Boston College

Admission is free and open to the public. For further information, call (610) 660-1439.

Deadline for next newsletter: October 17, 2008.  
To send information, call (215)587-3624, mail or  
e-mail to [ecumen@adphila.org](mailto:ecumen@adphila.org)

**COMING EVENTS**

### **Encountering Other Faiths**

This is an introductory seminar for faith communities/parishes desiring to explore principles and practices for interreligious dialogue and engagement. It is scheduled to take place in two locations:

Our Lady of Hope Parish will host the program for interested parishes in Cluster 19 on Tuesdays from August 26 through October 7 from 7:00 to 8:30 PM.

For information contact Imelda Cruz, PER, Our Lady of Hope: imelda12535@aol.com

St. Isaac Jogues Parish will host the program for interested parishes in Cluster 53 on Saturdays from September 13 through October 18 from 10:00 AM till noon.

For information contact Pat Gerberding, PER, St. Isaac Jogues at (610) 382-9289.

### **September 2 – Month of Ramadan begins**

Muslims observe a special period of fasting, with an emphasis on prayer, charity and self-accountability. It concludes on October 2 with the celebration of “Id al-Fitr,” the Breaking of the Fast.

### **Interfaith Service of Remembrance of 9/11**

Sponsored by Bustleton Ministerium on September 11, 2008. The service begins at Maternity BVM Church, 9220 Old Bustleton Avenue and concludes at Temple Beth Ami, 9201 Old Bustleton Avenue.

### **“Christian Unity,” An Interfaith Religion Special**

To be broadcast Sunday, **September 21**, on the CBS Television Network. The special is produced with the cooperation of the National Council of Churches, The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, The Islamic Society of North America, the Union for Reform Judaism and the New York Board of Rabbis. Contact your local CBS Television station to express interest in the program and ascertain its exact time.

### **Faithful Citizenship and the Public Church**

An ecumenical forum sponsored by the Pennsylvania Conference on Interchurch Cooperation to discuss what Christians believe and teach about their place in politics.

Date: Monday, September 29, 2008, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

Place: Cardinal Keeler Center, 4800 Union Deposit Road, Harrisburg, PA

Who: Presenters from USCCB and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Panelists from Anabaptist, Anglican, Evangelical and Orthodox traditions

Registration: \$20.00 (by September 19) Call 717-657-4804.

### **Catholic Life Congress**

Theme: Disciples on the Journey

Date: November 8, 2008

Place: Archbishop Carroll High School, Radnor, PA

Brochure is enclosed.

**Papal Messages at World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia**

To Ecumenical Representatives:

*I think you would agree that the ecumenical movement has reached a critical juncture. To move forward, we must continually ask God to renew our minds with the Holy Spirit who speaks to us through the Scriptures and guides us into all truth. We must guard against any temptation to view doctrine as divisive and hence an impediment to the seemingly more pressing and immediate task of improving the world in which we live. In fact, the history of the Church demonstrates that praxis is not only inseparable from, but actually flows out of didache or teaching. . . .*

*Opening ourselves to accept spiritual gifts from other Christians quickens our ability to perceive the light of truth which comes from the Holy Spirit. . . .*

*As we promote Christian values, we must not neglect to proclaim their source by giving a common witness to Jesus Christ the Lord*

To Interreligious Leaders:

*In a world threatened by sinister and indiscriminate forms of violence, the unified voice of religious peoples urges nations and communities to resolve conflicts through peaceful means and with full regard for human dignity. One of the many ways religion stands at the service of mankind is by offering a vision of the human person that highlights our innate aspiration to live generously, forging bonds of friendship with our neighbors. . . .*

*The universality of human experience, which transcends all geographical boundaries and cultural limitations, makes it possible for followers of religions to engage in dialogue so as to grapple with the mystery of life's joys and sufferings. In this regard, the Church seeks opportunities to listen to the spiritual experience of other religions. We could say that all religions aim to penetrate the profound meaning of human existence by linking it to an origin or principle outside itself. . . . Christians believe that God has revealed this origin and principle in Jesus, whom the Bible refers to as the "Alpha and Omega."*

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**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

Theme for January 18-25, 2009

*"That They May Become One in Your Hand"*

We have enclosed the usual order form for the resources that will enable you to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in your parishes. Please note that the materials which formerly were combined into a single resource packet are now available on the web site, as indicated in the first column of the order form: [www.geii.org](http://www.geii.org)  
Pastors will receive the order form in October.