

**› BISHOP GIVES THANKS FOR MINISTRY OF CONSECRATED PERSONS**

In observance of World Day for Consecrated Life, celebrated Feb. 2, Bishop David M. O’Connell, C.M., issued a statement honoring the essential contributions of consecrated men and women to the faith-filled legacy of the Diocese of Trenton that continues today.

He wrote: “Since its establishment in 1881, the Diocese of Trenton has grown and flourished in countless ways thanks to the presence, prayer and apostolic works of scores of religious women and men who have generously served here in our four counties. We are profoundly in their debt. Our Catholic schools and programs of religious educa-



tion, our hospitals and nursing homes, our works for the poor, the needy and the elderly, our parishes and diocesan offices could not have succeeded in their mission without the contributions of sisters, brothers and priests in consecrated life.

“Along with the prayers and service

of consecrated virgins and widows, women and men religious have given the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Trenton a legacy of love and light that endures to the present day. They deserve our grateful prayer and support. With God’s grace, may our Diocese be a source of new vocations to consecrated life, of new and dedicated laborers in the vineyard of the Lord.”

World Day for Consecrated Life was instituted by Pope John Paul II in 1997, in conjunction with the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, commemorating the coming of Christ, the Light of the World. Similarly, consecrated men and women are called to spread the light and love of Jesus Christ through their unique witness of selfless service, such as caring for the poor, the contemplative work of prayer, or through their professional careers.

**› BISHOP, FAITHFUL STAND UP FOR SANCTITY OF LIFE LOCALLY AND IN WASHINGTON**

In a week of solemn commemoration that marked the 47th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, Bishop David M. O’Connell, C.M., and



hundreds of the faithful took part in Masses and prayerful witness to proclaim the sanctity of every human life, especially the unborn.

Bishop O’Connell issued a message in advance of the Jan. 22 anniversary in which he states:

*There is one thing we all have in common. Regardless of our race or place of natural origin; regardless of our religion or absence of it; regardless of our age or status or station in life: God gave us the gift of life, which our mothers carried until the day of our birth. We were allowed to live!*

*Every human being who has ever walked the face of this earth shares that one thing in common. And from the moment of our conception until the day of our natural death, we celebrate with gratitude our God-given right to life. Nothing is more fundamental and more precious than that one human right. ...*

The Bishop celebrated Mass Jan. 22 in St. Mary of the Assumption Cathedral in Trenton, along with Cathedral rector and homilist, Msgr. Joseph Roldan, in advance of a Rally for Life outside the New Jersey State House Annex. Two days later, hundreds of parishioners of all ages boarded buses at some 20 sites around the Diocese early Jan. 24 to travel to Washington, D.C., for the annual March for Life. Catholic youth were well represented in the diocesan delegation, including students from Catholic high schools.

**For news reports and photos from this special witness for life, visit [TrentonMonitor.com/March-for-Life](http://TrentonMonitor.com/March-for-Life).**

# THE MONITOR NEWS UPDATE

## A LOOK BACK AT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK 2020

Catholic Schools Week was observed in a myriad of ways throughout the Diocese, including spelling bees and science fairs, fundraisers for good causes and special events to honor those who make a difference in our communities. In keeping with his custom, Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., marked this annual observance by visiting some of the schools to celebrate Mass and spending time with the students, faculty and parents. This year, the Bishop visited St. Jerome School, West Long Branch; Sacred Heart School, Mount Holly, and St. Gregory the Great Academy, Hamilton Square, taking the time to tour classrooms; chat with students about their lessons; share a meal and even participate in some fun activities.



To view comprehensive coverage of Catholic Schools Week 2020 – in stories, photos and videos from many of our schools – visit [TrentonMonitor.com/CatholicSchoolsWeek](http://TrentonMonitor.com/CatholicSchoolsWeek) or [CatholicSchoolsHaveItAll.org](http://CatholicSchoolsHaveItAll.org).

## BISHOP ASKS FLOCK TO SHARE CHRIST WITH OTHERS THROUGH SUPPORT OF ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

Where would we be without an awareness of God in our lives?" That is the question that Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., asks in his video message for the 2020 Annual Catholic Appeal that is set to launch in all parishes Feb. 15 and 16.



In introducing the Appeal, Bishop O'Connell reflected on its theme – a message taken from St. Augustine:

"God gives where he finds empty hands."

"As Christians, we are called to do the same," he said, and "this year's Annual Catholic Appeal is a new and impactful way you can share Christ with others."

The video, which will be screened at all Masses on Appeal Weekend, will highlight the many ministries and programs supported by the campaign, which has a goal this year of \$7 million. According to campaign organizers, changes have been made to the 2020 Appeal to give donors the opportunity to customize their gift, selecting the specific ministry/ministries they wish to support. They may choose from the following areas of ministry: (1) Priests, Deacons and Religious; (2) Community Outreach; (3) Teaching the Faith, or (4) donors may ask that their gift be directed to support the ministry where it is most needed.

Parishioners will also be invited to make their in-pew contribution on Appeal Weekend by using the pledge cards that have been provided. Parishioners who wish to discern their contribution may do so by reviewing other promotional resources that have also been made available, including a brochure and letter from Bishop O'Connell that were mailed to all Catholic households within the four-county Diocese or by viewing the website: [dioceseoftrenton.org/catholicappeal](http://dioceseoftrenton.org/catholicappeal).

The February issue of The Monitor Magazine dedicates its special IN FOCUS section on Lent 2020 – including all that you need to know for a fruitful Lent.



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