



## NEWS BRIEFS

CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

### Like companies, Church needs good leadership, management

PHILADELPHIA. Effective organizations need good leadership and good management, but because "individuals frequently are much better at one than the other," successful organizations make sure both skills are well represented on their leadership team, said business leader Frederick Gluck. He spoke during the annual meeting of the National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management June 26-27 in Philadelphia. Gluck, a member of the round-table's board of directors who is a former managing partner of the international consulting firm McKinsey & Co., told the meeting's 90 participants that while leaders and managers in the church might sometimes wish they could escape their responsibilities "there is no escaping them." One can, however, take steps to define "leadership" and "management" to create a balance between them that works for a given individual. Participating in the Philadelphia meeting were 10 U.S. bishops, along with business and financial leaders, pastors and lay pastoral ministers, philanthropists, educators and others. They discussed ways to promote excellence in the leadership and management of Catholic dioceses and parishes.

### Pope's World Peace Day 2009 message to focus on combating poverty

VATICAN CITY. Pope Benedict XVI's message for World Peace Day 2009 will focus on the connection between poverty and a lack of peace in the world, the Vatican said. Poverty and malnutrition are signs that too many people have ignored the obligation to promote the common good, a commitment that is essential for promoting peace, said the Vatican's July 1 statement. World Peace Day is celebrated Jan. 1 each year. The theme for the celebration is announced in July to allow time for local preparations. A papal message on the theme usually is released in early December. The 2009 theme, "Combating Poverty, Building Peace," is meant "to underline the need for an urgent response by the human family to the serious question of poverty, understood as a material problem, but even more as a moral and spiritual problem," the Vatican statement said. "The scandal of poverty demonstrates the inadequacy of current systems of human coexistence for promoting the realization of the common good," the statement said.

### Church official says despair engulfs Zimbabwe as Mugabe retains power

CAPE TOWN, South Africa. Zimbabweans are in widespread despair as the country's longtime ruler Robert Mugabe was sworn in as president for a sixth term, a Catholic Church official said. In rural areas of the southern African country, the June 27 runoff election, in which Mugabe was the only candidate, "was masterminded by thugs" loyal to the ruling party, said Alouis Chaumba, who heads the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe. Mugabe was sworn in

## University's poverty course takes students to Appalachia

CAROL ZIMMERMANN CNS

Less than two weeks after taking their final exams this spring, a group of students at Jesuit-run Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., crammed into a van for the 19-hour ride to the Appalachian region of West Virginia.

The trip did not mark the start of their summer but instead was part of a three-credit course on poverty in America.

Pre-med student Breanna Byrnes said that when the group arrived in Clayton, W.Va., she mentally asked their teacher, "What did you get us into?"

The group was warmly greeted by the members of Bethlehem Farm, a Catholic community that coordinates volunteers' work in the local area. It didn't take Byrnes long to realize that what they "got into" was far more than the group of five students imagined when they signed up for the senior perspective course.

For three weeks the students – rising seniors whose majors represent a broad range of fields, such as Greek, psychology, political science and athletic training – were immersed in repairing houses, visiting local families, doing farm chores, praying and reflecting, and doing lots of research and writing.

As part of the experience they also were asked to live simply. That meant no television, radios, cell phones, computers or iPods for three weeks. They also ate vegetarian meals made from local produce, did not wear watches so as to be conscious of "God's time," and conserved water, keeping showers to two per week, one indoors and one a bucket shower outdoors.

The students only broke with the request to live simply when they took their laptops into town to work on their required 20-page class papers.

This was the first time the course was offered, and it was led by Alice Smith, an instructional designer at Creighton's School of Medicine. She called it a success.

June 29. "People know if they disobey they will be beaten up," Chaumba said in a June 30 telephone interview with Catholic News Service. "The level of brutality in the rural areas has reached unimaginable proportions." While many people in Zimbabwe's cities did not turn up at the polling stations, people in rural areas "were warned that they had to go and vote," he said. "They were not allowed into the booths on their own but were made to tell the electoral officers that they were unable to read or write and then were given folded ballots (for Mugabe) to hand in," he said.

### Pope opens year of St. Paul, says apostle should serve as model

ROME. Joined by other Christian leaders, Pope Benedict XVI opened the year of St. Paul and said the apostle's courageous witness to the faith should serve as a model for contemporary Christians. "Paul is not a figure of the past that we remember with veneration. He is also



CNS photo/courtesy of Creighton University

Jason Hinze, left, a senior from the University of Creighton in Omaha, Neb., helps Colleen Fitts, a staff member from Bethlehem Farm, a Catholic community in Clayton, W.Va., put a new roof on the White Sulphur Springs, W.Va., home of a man with Alzheimer's disease. Five Creighton students and their teacher spent three weeks in West Virginia as part of a three-credit course studying poverty in America.

"The students immersed themselves the whole time; they wanted to absorb as much as they could," she told Catholic News Service in a recent telephone interview.

Smith said the group included one student who had "never picked up a hammer before," but soon learned the skill. She also said the entire group caught on quickly to what service is really about.

As she put it: "Service is different than helping. It is being in relationship with people. It means respecting them."

So even though the students repaired roof shingles and remodeled bathrooms, their primary focus was to talk with those they were helping.

Byrnes, a 21-year-old Creighton senior who was not sure she could cope with the two-showers-per-week practice, noted that when the volunteers fixed the roof of a man suffering from

Alzheimer's disease the focus was not "to do something" about the roof but "just to be with him."

Byrnes said the three-week course "had a profound effect" on her, not just because she bonded with people she hadn't known before and challenged herself to live simply, but because she made the connection between their immersion in service and the faith she learned about in years of Catholic schooling.

"I'm relating everything back to my Catholic faith," she told CNS. "For me, I saw love."

She said she has frequently heard the message "God is love" but found a deeper meaning of it working with people of different faiths and meeting people whose care for one another far outweighed their lack of material goods.

"You just felt God's love," she said. "It was very cool." ☩

our teacher, an apostle and a herald of Jesus Christ for us, too," the pope said at an evening prayer service June 28 in the Rome Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. The liturgy had a strong ecumenical tone. Accompanied by Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople and representatives of Orthodox and Anglican churches, the pope lit the first candle from a large lamp that will burn in the basilica's portico throughout the coming year. Then the pontiff led a procession through the "Pauline door" into the church, which was built near the site of St. Paul's martyrdom and holds his tomb. It was the inaugural event of a jubilee year that will run until June 29, 2009, in commemoration of the 2,000th anniversary of the apostle's birth.

### Single state is gift to use 'powerfully in service,' says speaker

LA JOLLA, Calif. Society "treats singleness like a disease," but it is

actually "a gift, not to be wished away, but to be used powerfully in service," a keynote speaker said at the National Catholic Singles Conference June 27-29 in La Jolla. "When we serve, we develop a deeper understanding of self, which prepares us for any relationship that might be in our future," said Matthew Kelly, an author and motivational speaker. "You're never going to have a better opportunity to serve than you do as a single person." About 500 people came from dioceses throughout the United States for three days of spiritual and social events specifically designed for Catholic singles. It was the second such conference of the year; the first was in April in Chicago. Among the speakers at the La Jolla gathering were Jason Evert, who is also an author and popular conference speaker; Lino Rulli, host of "The Catholic Guy" show on Sirius satellite radio's Catholic Channel; and Kerri Caviezel, wife of actor Jim Caviezel, who portrayed Jesus in "The Passion of the Christ." ☩