

U.S. poverty called a major moral, policy challenge

WASHINGTON (CNS) – “Poverty remains our nation’s most serious political blind spot and one of our nation’s most profound moral failings,” says a new policy paper of Catholic Charities USA, “Poverty in America: A Threat to the Common Good.” The policy paper, published in the form of a 28-page booklet released Jan. 10 at a briefing on Capitol Hill, sets the framework for Catholic Charities’ new Campaign to Reduce Poverty in America.

Author looks to increase women’s Catholic fiction

LOS ANGELES (CNS) – The message that women are worth more than their appearance, social status or monetary income is something that Catholic author Cheryl Dickow has tried to get across in her nonfiction books and now hopes also to do through fiction writing. The author of “Reclaiming Your Christian Self in a Secular World: A Woman’s Bible Study” and “Raising Christian Children in a Secular World: Christian Parenting,” has started a new publishing company, Bezalel Books, to address the dearth of women’s Catholic fiction.

SGA officers more than figureheads

When Jessica Butler of Hamilton was elected freshman class president at Towson Catholic High School last November, she didn't realize how much work was involved. As the 14-year-old freshman thought about her demanding high school studies and sports events, on top of the planning sessions, constituent service time and Student Government Association meetings, she said the workload can seem overwhelming. "Most people don't appreciate how much time and energy goes into being in student government," Jessica said. "I know I didn't beforehand."

Sweethearts reunite after 50 years

Bernie Anderson met Catherine (Ashby) Anderson while attending Towson Catholic High School, Towson, some 50 years ago and after all those years, "she is still a beautiful lady," Mr. Anderson said about his new bride. On Nov. 25, in front of more than 100 family, friends and old classmates, 75 year-old Mr. and Mrs. Anderson wed in the sun-filled chapel at the Carmelite Monastery in Baltimore.

Catholic Charities aims to cut poverty in half

WASHINGTON (CNS) - Catholic Charities USA Jan. 10 launched an ambitious campaign to cut poverty in America in half by 2020. "The poor do belong to us. ... They are our brothers and sisters," Father Larry Snyder, Catholic Charities USA president, told an overflow crowd at a Capitol Hill briefing announcing the

Campaign to Reduce Poverty in America. Noting that 37 million Americans – 12.6 percent of the population – currently live below the poverty line, he said Catholic Charities USA and its affiliates, working in partnership with government, the private sector and other nonprofits, will launch “a concentrated, systematic effort to cut poverty in half by 2020.”

Bishops reject embryonic stem-cell bill

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The U.S. bishops have urged the House of Representatives to reject an embryonic stem-cell bill that would fund research that involves the destruction of human embryos. Instead, they said, Congress should support research that would use available stem cells from adult tissues, cord blood, amniotic fluid and placentas. In a letter dated Jan. 9 and released Jan. 10, Philadelphia Cardinal Justin Rigali, chairman of the bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, urged House members to “consider the fundamental moral line” they would cross if they approved legislation on embryonic stem-cell research scheduled for a vote Jan. 11.

Using technology to proclaim Christ

ChristLife, an apostolate of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, has hit the podcasting waves in the archdiocese and is now providing young adults with practical ways to evangelize with the latest technology available: podcasting. The podcast can be downloaded onto a PC or iPod and can be accessed bi-weekly, free of charge.

Speaker Pelosi does not advance church agenda

Rep. Nancy Pelosi hardly deserves mention as being an asset in advancing church agenda (CR, Jan 11). I find nothing commendable in her being helpful on “certain” issues. Her stand on abortion represents a scandal of monumental proportions considering the number of lives lost in our nation’s abortion clinics. That some bishops remain mute on her ilk’s stand on abortion is no less a scandal.

Mercy hangs tough in 2007

It’s a new year and a new team for the Mercy Magic this season. Returning eight varsity players from 2005-2006, head coach Mary Ella Marion, in her 23rd season, has expanded her roster to 14, bringing up new energy and young talent from the junior varsity this year. The Magic compete in the IAAM A Conference, along with top ranked St. Frances Academy, Baltimore, Towson Catholic, Archbishop Spalding, Severn and The Seton Keough High School, Baltimore. Indeed, it’s a tough league and Mercy, Baltimore, is hanging tough, posting a 3-3 conference record, 8-6 overall.

Why Catholic? program receives rave reviews

When Muriel Johnson started her Why Catholic? group at St. Cecilia, Baltimore, she had 12 people attending. The program quickly expanded, and eventually Mrs. Johnson ran out of materials for all of the people gathering on Sunday mornings before church. She said her group used the African American and Archdiocesan versions of Why Catholic? and is very excited to pick up their materials again for the spring session. The Archdiocese of Baltimore's four-year Why Catholic? program started in early September and was created to help adults rediscover why they became Catholic. Through readings, discussions and individual sharing parishioners remember what they learned in school years ago and get answers to nagging questions about their faith.

New year, new Congress, but a familiar agenda awaits

WASHINGTON (CNS) - It's apt that the start of the new congressional term coincides with the time of year when people are optimistically making New Year's resolutions. Lose weight, get to the gym more often, pass comprehensive immigration reform, raise the minimum wage, make sure the farm bill reauthorization helps protect family farmers ... you know, the usual. With Democrats controlling both houses of Congress for the first time in 12 years, the dynamics behind what legislation advances will differ from what they have been under the Republican majority, which could be good news for some long-standing wish lists.

Boston cardinal calls abuse ‘dark truth’ in church

BOSTON (CNS) – In a column marking the fifth anniversary of the crisis over clergy sexual abuse of children, Boston Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley said that scandal was a “dark and unrelenting truth” that had to be confronted. Cardinal O’Malley’s comments appeared Jan. 7 as an opinion piece in the Boston Globe, the daily newspaper whose unrelenting expose of child sex abuse by priests in the Boston Archdiocese turned the secret of such abuse into a national crisis five years ago.