

Keynote speakers set for inaugural Mid-Atlantic Congress for Pastoral Leadership

Bishop Gerald Kicanas, Jesuit Father James Martin and Dr. Adele Gonzalez will be the keynote speakers at the inaugural Mid-Atlantic Congress for Pastoral Leadership (MAC) set for March 8-12 in Baltimore.

The conference's theme is "Witness Hope!"

"We want and need great leaders," said Paul Henderson, co-chairman of the MAC's core committee. "Those of us in pastoral ministry want to be great leaders, to make the kingdom of God come alive in our world, in our church today."

Paulist Father John Hurley, co-chairman and director of the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Department of Evangelization, said the congress will explore the significance of being a great leader in the church today, taking the virtue of hope as the central focus.

"A leader is someone who is a hopeful person," he said, "and who instills hope in others."

Bishop Kicanas will open the MAC March 8, speaking on "Seeing Hope." Bishop Kicanas, bishop of the Diocese of Tucson, chairs the board of directors of Baltimore-based Catholic Relief Services.

In a March 9 talk on "Feeding Hope," Father Martin will explore the relationship between Christian joy and the new evangelization. Father Martin is the author of "My Life with the Saints" and "The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything." He is also the unofficial chaplain to the "Colbert Report" program on Comedy Central.

Gonzalez will give witness to her own experiences with suffering and hope in a March 10 talk on "Being Hope." Gonzalez is the author of "Life is Hard, but God is Good." She has been involved in the formation and training of lay ministers for more

than 30 years.

The MAC will be held at the Hilton Baltimore. It is co-sponsored by the Association of Catholic Publishers and the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Department of Evangelization. The new annual conference focuses on mission and the needs of pastoral leaders amidst the challenges of a growing, changing church at the parish, diocesan and national level.

To register, sign up for email updates or for additional information, visit the MAC website at www.midatlanticcongress.org.