

# Social Actions Newsletter

## Winter



## A Tribute to a Quiet Leader!

John Lethert was a quiet man, a man who many times would not be noticed as his voice was quiet and his demeanor very subdued. At times, he seemed to be there just listening, but there was much more to John than a just a listener. John was a very determined person, a champion of Social Justice. He and his wife, Rita, ran the St. Vincent de Paul organization at Mary Help with strong dedication to help those in need and to educate them in finding freedom from being poor. As a member of the Social Actions Committee, he made sure St. Vincent's had the financial support needed to help all those who came for assistance. John was a fighter for other issues too. He was a strong advocate for pro-life and environmental issues and persons unwanted by society. He was a role model for us all demonstrating that sometimes quiet voices are the most powerful. God has taken another good soldier to his place in Heaven and, with Susan Takacs and now John Lethert up there too, we in Social Actions have a powerful team praying for us. We will sorely miss them both.

Pat Banaszak \*

## A Night to SHINE!



A Night to Shine is an unforgettable prom night experience, centered on God's love, for people with special needs ages 14 and older. On one night, February 9, 2018, more than 700 churches from around the world will come together to host Night to Shine for approximately 90,000 honored guests through the support of 175,000 volunteers! Locally the churches involved are Troy Christian Church and Lawrenceville Church of God in Springfield. Tebow, the former football star and aspiring baseball player, created this event through his non-profit foundation for these special youth and adults who are so vulnerable to bullying, being forgotten, being insignificant to the so-called "normal" people. Tebow himself says "The Tim Tebow Foundation exists to bring Faith, Hope and Love to those needing a brighter day in their darkest hour of need."

Both churches, Troy Christian and Lawrenceville Church of God in Springfield are welcoming reservations for special needs teens and adults to join in the fun at this great evening of lights, music, limos, gowns and tuxedos, and best of all, the Red Carpet for the Kings and Queens!

On that same evening 5 churches within the Miami Valley will also hold proms for generally 100-200 special needs youth and adults. The proms are free to all participants and are funded by both the Tebow Foundation, the churches that hold them and by local sponsors. "We know an event of this caliber requires extensive amounts of work by many people, and we want to assure you that we will be there for you every step of the way, praying for you by name, celebrating wins with you and offering any help we possibly can as you prepare to host this incredible night. There is no question... February 9, 2018 will be amazing, and we know your prom will bring such honor and glory to the Lord." These words come directly from Tim, as does the passion for this super event.

**HOW CAN YOU HELP??** Volunteers needed for all activities from buddies for each participant, helpers with the meal, sound specialists and make-up artists, and just people in the crowd outside to welcome the participants in as they arrive. It is an amazing night to make our local guests feel wanted and loved and be the hands and feet of Jesus to them.

If you know of someone who would like to be honored at a night like this or you will volunteer any services or help for the event, please call FYI at 845-0403. We will sign you up for either location. This is a night you will remember forever. When asked why we would want to do this, I think a phrase in the Bible states it quite well. **"Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness." – Psalm 115:1 And all God's people said AMEN.**



Are your children not getting enough exercise? Are they afraid of bugs? Is playing in the dirt a bad thing? Richard Louv's book, "Last Child in the Woods" started a national movement to overcome Nature Deficit Disorder in our children.

*Miami Valley Collaborative of Ohio Leave No Child Inside* is a local group committed to connecting children of our region to nature, through interaction with the outdoors, and giving them opportunities to develop the skills and desire to become stewards of our community green spaces. They have initiated an award program for a "Best in Ohio Connect to Nature School/ Site."

To nominate a school, business, community site go to <https://ohiolnci.org/ohio-regions/miami-valleydayton/certification/> Encouraging outdoor play and exploration can help foster a life-long connection to the natural world and in doing so makes children happier, healthier, and smarter.



**The Culture Project?** Yes, The Culture Project! This is an initiative of young people set out to restore culture through the experience of virtue. These young people seek to understand, live out and to proclaim the dignity of the human person and the richness of living sexual integrity, inviting our culture to become fully alive!

The Human Dignity presentation is crafted to engage students' minds and hearts toward the inherent dignity of the human person through story-telling, real life examples, natural law, and scientific evidence. The Sexual Integrity presentation asks the questions: why do happiness and love so often seem unattainable; and, why do the self-serving promises of today leave our lives colorless, ugly, and unfulfilled? The presentation is designed to dissolve old-world confusion about the virtue of chastity as a "restraining" list of rules and illuminate the freedom found in this lifestyle. We get real about the genuine struggles we experience as young men and women looking for love and happiness.

Members of the team make a commitment of at least one year of their life to enter a program in which they themselves live and pray in community, receive formation and are sent out on mission nationally and internationally. They give presentations to youth about the dignity of the human person and about sexual integrity. Presentations on Human Dignity and Sexual Integrity are suitable for a variety of different settings: classroom, auditorium, youth group, rallies, etc.

For more information about becoming a Culture Project team member, schedule a presentation or offer financial support for the work of the Culture Project: <http://www.restoreculture.com>



Is pornography in your home? Are you part of the problem by watching "main stream" movies that have pornographic scenes? Pornography can become an addiction that has all the human costs of other addictions. The VIRTUS Child Protection program used in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati for employees and volunteers who have contact with children has recently focused on the proliferation of pornography and its social costs.

Recently the U.S. bishops published "[Create in Me a Clean Heart: A Pastoral Response to Pornography](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/pornography/index.cfm)"

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Here are a few excerpts:

- Pornography use hurts the user by potentially diminishing his or her capacity for healthy human intimacy and relationships. It presents a distorted view of human sexuality that is contrary to authentic love, and it harms a person's sense of self-worth.
- Much of pornography is violent and when, for example, men view it, they are more likely to sexually abuse a girlfriend or wife.
- It has been identified by divorce lawyers as a major factor in over half of divorces.
- Being exposed to pornography can be traumatic for children and youth. Seeing it steals their innocence and gives them a distorted image of sexuality, relationships, and men and women, which may then affect their behavior. It can also make them more vulnerable to being sexually abused, since their understanding of appropriate behavior can be damaged.
- Data indicates that children repeatedly exposed to pornography are more likely to sexually harass or molest other children, imitating the behavior they have seen.
- Tragically, children and youth are also victimized by being forced or coerced into participating in the production of child pornography. Child pornography is illegal, abusive, and a form of human trafficking because of a child's inability to consent.
- The Church advocates for a culture in which purity, chastity, and authentic love are esteemed and supported and pornography is resisted and rejected. The Church is grateful to all who are working to acknowledge the harmful and destructive nature of pornography and speaking up against its proliferation. May we work together for laws and for a culture that remove pornography from its prominent and privileged place and counter its numerous injustices, building instead a culture that honors the true dignity and meaning of human sexuality.