

World Day Of Prayer Event At Majestic Bluffs

World Day of Prayer in Yankton will be at 2 p.m. today (Friday) at Majestic Bluffs west of Yankton. The service will be held in the Independent Living Area.

The prayer service is written by Christian women of Malaysia. The event is open to all women and men in the area. Pictures of Malaysia, Scripture, music led by the choir, and prayer are featured parts of the worship. A time of fellowship and a coffee hour will follow.

World Day Of Prayer At Gayville Church

GAYVILLE — Gayville-Volin United Methodist Church will host a World Day of Prayer event at 2 p.m. today (Friday). Women, men and children in more than 170 countries and regions will celebrate World Day of Prayer today. The women of Malaysia have chosen the theme "Let Justice Prevail." They open the service for 2012 with the greeting "selamat datang" — or "peace and welcome" — a reminder that harmony as a people is rooted in peace and welcome.

Sacred Heart Parish Presents Lenten Mission

"Repent and Believe in the Gospel" is the theme for the Sacred Heart Parish Mission, held during the Lenten season. The Mission will be held on Sunday, March 4; Monday, March 5; and Tuesday, March 6, running from 7-8 p.m. each evening, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 509 Capital Street, Yankton. The Mission will be led by Margaret A. Schlientz, Ph.D., who also earned a Master of Arts degree in Theology. She serves as the Assistant Director of the Institute of Priestly Formation at Creighton University.

Everyone is welcome to participate all three evenings, which will begin with the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and end with Benediction. Preceding the Mission on Monday, March 5, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered for those seeking opportunity for repentance.

Refreshments will be served in the Sacred Heart Parish Community Center following each evening of the Mission.

For more information, call the Sacred Heart Parish Office at 605-665-3655.

Public Discussion On Buddhist Monk Tuesday

The public is invited to participate in a discussion focused on the teaching of Thich Nhat Hanh, a Buddhist monk and author, at 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 6, at the Ability Building Services, 909 West 23rd St., Yankton.

Topics include "bringing mindfulness to our emotions" and teaching about compassion. The event is sponsored by "Fermenting Faith"

St. Rose Of Lima Fish Fry Set For Crofton

CROFTON, Neb. — The St. Rose of Lima Fish Fry will be held at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Crofton, Neb., on Friday, March 9. The event runs from 5-8:30 p.m.

For more information, email djmcfarland01@gmail.com.

Pancake And Sausage Breakfast Planned

WYNOT, Neb. — Sacred Heart Parish Hall in Wynot, Neb., is hosting a pancake-and-sausage breakfast on Sunday, March 25, running from 9 a.m.-noon.

For more information, contact Heather Heimes at 402-640-6473 or heatherheimes@hotmail.com, or visit ccholyfamily.org.

Commentary

Reinforcing The Church-State Wall

BY JIM BURKEE

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American conservatives are deeply divided about Thomas Jefferson. His Democratic-Republican Party embraced many bedrock conservative principles, favoring states' rights, opposing attempts by the Federalists to strengthen the federal government and generally promoting individual liberty and freedom. And for those things he remains a hero and a paragon to the modern Republican Party's fiscally conservative, libertarian and tea party wing.

But many religious conservatives are less comfortable with Jefferson. America's third president was a deist, at best, who authored his own interpretation of the New Testament, removing all references to Jesus' divinity. More significantly, he penned the phrase many social conservatives have in recent decades denounced, advocating a steadfast "wall of separation between church and state."

Republican presidential candidate Rick Santorum revived the debate about separating church and state this week when he talked about a 1960 campaign trail speech given by the nation's 35th president, John F. Kennedy.

Kennedy gave the speech to address fears that he, as a Roman Catholic, would answer to the pope rather than the U.S. Constitution. In it, he said that he believed in "an America where the separation of church and state is absolute; where no Catholic prelate would tell the president (should he be Catholic) how to act, and no Protestant minister would tell his parishioners for whom to vote; where no church or church school is granted any public funds or political preference; and where no man is denied public office merely because his religion differs from the president who might appoint him or the people who might elect him."

That was a sentiment, Santorum said, "that makes me throw up." He excoriated Kennedy, saying that he had "for the first

time articulated the vision saying, 'No. Faith is not allowed in the public square.'"

Santorum was off historically by more than 150 years in his assertion that Kennedy was the first American president to advocate a wall between church and state. And his clear misreading of Kennedy's statement also exposes a deeper misunderstanding by social conservatives of the exceptionalism of American church-state relations.

Keeping government and religion separate in no way has meant that America is not a religious nation. Among advanced Western nations, only the United States continues to experience steady rates of church attendance. Each week, roughly 40 percent of Americans attend religious services, according to most recent surveys.

In Western Europe, by contrast, Christianity is moribund. In Nordic Europe, 3 percent to 5 percent of the population goes to church regularly. In Britain, 1 in 10 attend. In France, 12 percent go to church. And in Germany, home to Martin Luther, 13 percent attend.

Yet in European countries there is a long history of intertwining church and state. In the 19th century, Lutherans came to the United States to escape the arm of state-supported churches. While some European states are now officially secular, to this day the British monarch must be a Protestant, and Norway and Denmark remain officially Lutheran.

The American experience has, at least since the Revolution, been markedly different. The steady strength of America's Christian denominations is their existence in a religious marketplace where, as religious scholar Martin Marty argues, they have consistently had to adapt to a changing cultural and spiritual marketplace or die. The same creative destruction that shapes corporate America also guides American Christianity: Those most responsive to the changing needs of Americans survive and grow, while those who fail to adapt quickly fade.

Christianity does well when the state stays out of its business and allows this mar-

ketplace of ideas to thrive. Historically, it has thrived in the face of benign or even oppositional states, from Imperial Rome to modern China. And it's strange that so many conservative Christians — people who typically defend a free marketplace and oppose government overreach — don't get this.

When the state and religion become intertwined, religion suffers. Across America this year, attorneys for America's largest Christian denominations will be warning their pastors to avoid talking politics from the pulpit. Why? Because most churches accept the federal government's 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, allowing the state to place restrictions on what their pastors and priests can say. Christian colleges that accept federal aid subject themselves to similar restrictions. If you take state money, you risk federal involvement. It's one reason some conservative colleges are now refusing all federal aid, and some of America's best religious-based charities and missions do the same.

Both major political parties are plagued by deep inconsistencies. Democrats who advocate for a strong, regulatory state are often social and cultural libertarians, while free-market, laissez-faire Republicans too often support robust state intervention on social issues.

Conservatives would do well to remember that although Jefferson was inconsistently liberal (he enslaved fellow human beings, after all), he was consistent in his belief that for government to be small anywhere, it has to be small everywhere.

Conservatives should reinforce that wall separating church from state. It is one of the primary reasons American Christianity remains so vibrant.

Jim Burkee is an associate professor of history at Concordia University Wisconsin and the author of "Power, Politics, and the Missouri Synod: A Conflict that Changed American Christianity." He wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.

Spring Theology Institute Announced At SHM

Sacred Heart Monastery announces its Spring Theology Institute, to be held in the Monastery Chapter Room in Yankton on Saturday, March 24 from 9 a.m. to noon. S. Dawn Nothwehr O.S.F. will present "Moral Matters: A Brief Introduction to Key Concepts of Catholic Moral Theology." S. Dawn will introduce us to basic principles of moral decision making and apply these to the ecological issues that we face today.

This Institute will be the first in the series entitled, "Faith Impacting Action." S. Jeanne Weber, event coordinator and Sub-prioress at Sacred Heart Monastery, states "As followers

of Christ, we are faced with complex moral issues which require thoughtful decisions informed by our faith. The purpose of this series is two-fold: to present the foundations of moral decision-making in the Catholic faith tradition and to apply these to particular issues facing us today"

S. Dawn is the Professor of Catholic Theological Ethics and Director of the Certificate Program in Healthcare Mission Leadership at Catholic Theological Union of Chicago, where she teaches courses in moral theology and ethics. She holds an M.A. in Religious Studies from the Maryknoll School of Theology and a

Ph.D. from Marquette University. Her current area of research is global climate change and environmental ethics. S. Dawn is a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Rochester, Minnesota.

All are welcome to attend this free event. For planning purposes, please register by e-mailing S. Jeanne at jweber@mtmc.edu or calling 605-668-6000. For further information or to print out a flyer, you may find the Theology Institute page at http://www.yankton-benedictines.org/PC_TheologyInstitute.html.

CHURCH SCHEDULES

A grid of church schedules organized by denomination: Abundant Life, Alliance of Renewal Churches, Assembly of God, Baptist, Catholic, Church of Christ, Episcopal, Evangelical, Lutheran, Non-Denominational, Presbyterian, Reformed, Seventh-Day, United Methodist, and United Church of Christ. Each entry includes the church name, address, and service times.

Dakota Gutter logo featuring a gutter pipe and the name John Rye with phone numbers 605-668-9312 and 605-661-0068.

Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan logo with the address 319 Walnut • Yankton, SD and phone number 665-7811.

WINTZ & RAY FUNERAL HOME and Cremation Service, Inc. located at Garden of Memories Cemetery.

LEADER CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION INC. offering Basements, Bunkers, Manure Pits, Residential & Commercial services.

Larry's Plumbing Service at 703 Burleigh St., phone number 665-4322.

Simpson Sharp Shop offering sharpening services for all types of tools.

TOPKOTE, INC. providing Asphalt Maintenance at 43439 SD Hwy 50 • Yankton.

KAISER HEATING & COOLING Commercial & Residential services.

Koranda Well Company, LLC offering Well Drilling & Repair services.