

THE CATHOLIC VOICE

speaking for the vulnerable in Maryland's public square

March 24, 2017

Annapolis, MD

Cardinal Keeler Passes



Cardinal William H. Keeler (Photo credit: Owen Sweeney, Catholic Review)

William Cardinal Keeler, who served as Archbishop of Baltimore from 1989-2007, died Thursday morning at St. Martin's Home for the Aged in Catonsville. He was 86.

Among Cardinal Keeler's accomplishments during his tenure in Baltimore were the historic visit of Pope John Paul II in 1995, his leadership of the restoration of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, America's First Cathedral, and his skill in improving Catholic-Jewish relations.

Cardinal Keeler served as the Conference's chairman throughout his tenure as Archbishop of Baltimore.

"Cardinal Keeler was a beloved friend and mentor to my predecessor Dick Dowling, and outstandingly kind and supportive to all of the Conference's staff," said Mary Ellen Russell, the Conference's executive director. "He championed the values of the Church in the public square with compassion, respect and collaboration, and his example will continue to be a blessing on our work in Annapolis for many years to come."

Cardinal Keeler will lie in state at the Basilica on Monday, March 27 from 1-7 p.m. with the funeral mass held Tuesday, March 28 at 2 p.m. at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen. His body will be brought back to the Basilica for internment.

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has a detailed look on the life and legacy of Cardinal Keeler: <http://cardinalwilliamkeeler.com/>

General Assembly Roundup

There are less than 20 days remaining in the 2017 General Assembly. The Maryland Catholic Conference has worked on more than 100 bills during the session. You can find a list of all the testimony written by our lobbyists on our website at: <http://www.mdccathcon.org/2017testimony>. This week there was movement on a few key pieces of legislation.

BOOST Headed To Conference Committee

The Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) program passed another hurdle this week when the Maryland Senate restored nearly \$7 million in funding for the next fiscal year (which begins July 1). Funding for the program was cut down to \$2 million by the House of Delegates two weeks ago. Since the Senate has restored the funding, the amount allocated for BOOST will be decided in a conference committee between the two chambers next week.

Last year, the General Assembly expanded educational options for low-income students, who qualify for free and reduced price lunch, to attend the school best fit for their educational needs by providing scholarship assistance toward attending a Catholic or nonpublic school. The program is helping nearly 2,500 students this school year.

Trust Act Passes House

The House of Delegates passed an amended version of the Maryland Law Enforcement and Governmental Trust Act (HB 1362) by an 83-55 vote on Monday. The bill is now in the Senate Judicial Proceedings committee.

The Maryland Catholic Conference supports The Trust Act and our immigrant communities throughout the state. The Trust Act does not alter the criminal justice system from running its normal course, nor does it defend any criminal activity. Rather, it defines state and local police involvement in federal civil immigration enforcement activities, and seeks to restore trust between immigrant communities and local and state police.

Women's History Month



In celebration of Women's History Month in March, the Conference is honoring the women of the Church by sharing a new story every week of inspiring female figures. We continue this celebration by honoring Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American-born saint.

Seton was born Elizabeth Ann Bayley in New York City in August 1774 to a prominent Episcopal family. At age 19, she married William Seton and together they had five children. Her husband passed away in 1803. While at the side of her dying husband, she witnessed the teachings of Catholicism and entered the Church two years later, much to the disapproval of her own family and friends.

She moved to Maryland in 1809 after accepting an invitation from the Sulpician Fathers at St. Mary's Seminary. Seton settled in Emmitsburg where she founded the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph's, the first community for religious women established in the United States. A year later, she established the Saint Joseph's Academy and Free School, a school dedicated to the education of Catholic girls.

Mother Seton died in January 1821 at age 46. She was canonized on Sept. 14, 1975 in St. Peter's Square by Pope Paul VI. She is marked in history as the first citizen born in the United States to be given the title of "Saint." She is buried at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg: <https://setonshrine.org/>

March for Life Rescheduled for April 3

The Maryland March for Life has been rescheduled for Monday, April 3, 2017 on Lawyer's Mall in Annapolis. The event was originally scheduled for the evening of March 13 but postponed because due to the pending arrival of Winter Storm Stella that brought snow and blizzard-like conditions to the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan areas.

[To register click HERE.](#)

Because We Are Catholic

During the General Assembly's Legislative Session, the Conference produces a short feature on the good things happening in the Church in the state of Maryland. This week's story features next-door neighbors who are now dedicating their lives to serving the Lord: <http://bit.ly/2mvYsC6>