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If there are multiple winners, names will be put in a random drawing. Winner will be announced in the Nov. 10 edition.

Special National Collection

Oct. 20, 2013—World Mission Sunday

Bishop Persico meets legislators, bishops

Religious freedom at center of discussion

FaithLife

HARRISBURG—Bishop Lawrence Persico met with state legislators and joined bishops from throughout the state Sept. 25 during the annual meeting of the board of governors of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference (PCC) in Harrisburg.

During a breakfast hosted by the State Council of the Knights of Columbus and the PCC, Bishop Persico and Bishop Emeritus Donald Trautman sat with several members of the state House and Senate. The breakfast is held every other year during the bishops' annual meeting to forge fellowship among the bishops and legislators.

"We weren't trying to force certain beliefs on the legislators," Bishop Persico said. "We were trying to discuss common ground, which is religious freedom."

Bishop Persico's table included: Rep. Ryan Bizzarro (D-3rd District), Rep. Brad Roae (R-6th District), Rep. Kathy Rapp (R-65th District), Rep. Mark Longietti (D-7th

District), Rep. Matt Gabler (R-75th District), Rep. Donna Oberlander (R-63rd District), Sen. Scott Hutchinson (D-21st District), and Sen. Joseph Scarnati (R-25th District).

"It keeps the lines of communication open," Bishop Persico continued.

During the breakfast, the bishops and legislators listened to Bishop David Zubik of the Diocese of Pittsburgh deliver a talk titled, "The Church in the Public Square." He told those gathered that religious freedom has never been as restricted as it is today.

"Religious freedom is our right as citizens to live our faith in the world according to the dictates of our own consciences, not the dictates of secular authorities," Bishop Zubik stated.

According to Bishop Persico, those in attendance were pleased with Bishop Zubik's remarks, saying they were "right on the mark."

"The whole idea of why we were established as a nation was freedom of religion," Bishop Persico said.

FaithLife

BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

POPE QUOTE

INSPIRED WORDS FROM POPE FRANCIS

"You can't know Jesus in first class. You get to know Jesus out and about in your everyday, daily life."

October 13, 2013

#AJO spreads far and wide

Family turns to faith and friends

Mary Solberg
FaithLife

Prayer and faith—bolstered by support from people throughout the world—are the only things getting Jason and Sarah O'Neill through each day as they deal with the loss of their 18-year-old daughter, Alyssa Josephine. Her sudden death in Erie last month set off an international social media movement to raise awareness for epilepsy.

The #AJO movement has nearly 36,000 members on Facebook (adding about 1,000 more each day) and has netted somewhere between \$15,000 to \$20,000 to the AJO Forever Fund set up by the Erie Community Foundation, according to Jason O'Neill.

Despite the international attention—from people as far away as Russia and Australia—their biggest comfort is believing that God is close. "Without a doubt, this has drawn our family closer to God and our faith," O'Neill told *FaithLife*. "We have to hang on to the belief that she [Alyssa] had a greater purpose. Her purpose was spreading awareness of epilepsy on a global level."

The O'Neills singlehandedly started the movement when they decided to do something for others as a way to remember their daughter, who died Sept. 4 from an epileptic seizure. Just the day before, she had asked her mother if they could go to Starbucks to try the new pumpkin spice latte.

In Alyssa's memory, the O'Neills went to Starbucks in Erie to drink the spicy fall coffee. But they ended up buying 40 more for the next 40 customers who came inside the popular coffee spot. Their only request was that Starbucks mark each cup



Contributed photo

Alyssa O'Neill, pictured at top left, died in September from an epileptic seizure. She is seen here surrounded by her loving family, left to right: sisters Ansley and Ava; her parents, Jason and Sarah O'Neill; and brother Jace, a pre-school student at Our Lady of Peace, Erie.

with an #AJO tag so that people could learn more about Alyssa and epilepsy.

Starbucks was so overwhelmed by the "pay it forward" gesture, that it donated another 50 drinks to support the cause. Today, people throughout the world post photos of #AJO on coffee cups, posters, signs, anything that shows their support.

In Erie, businesses and schools—including

Our Lady of Peace School on Erie's west side—are sponsoring fundraisers for the AJO Forever Fund. Alyssa's four-year-old brother, Jace, attends pre-school at Our Lady of Peace, and her two sisters, Ava, 8, and Ansley, 6, attend religious education classes there on Sundays.

Robin Wilson, a parent of another pre-schooler

See #AJO SPIRIT, page 2



Our Lady of Peace School, Erie, supports the O'Neill family with an #AJO sign.

ER nurse shares prayer shawls, compassion

Mary Solberg
FaithLife

Editor's Note: October is Respect Life Month. The theme this year is "Open your hearts to life!" According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, people can open their hearts by first showing unconditional love, acceptance, affirmation, and consolation. The following is a story of someone imitating Christ in the Diocese of Erie.

Sue Reilly, an emergency room nurse at UPMC Hamot in Erie, always has a few crocheted blankets and shawls in her car. They're not for an unexpected mishap on the road, but rather for emergency prayers.

"I always have a couple shawls in my car because I never know when I might need to give them away," says Reilly,

52, a licensed practical nurse who has worked for 30 years at Hamot's oncology floor and now its emergency room.

Reilly regularly gives away the shawls that are knitted or crocheted by women who participate in the Sisters of Mercy Prayer Shawl Ministry in Erie. Women from 11 parishes in the Diocese of Erie get together once a month to pray while they create the shawls and blankets.

"We knit or crochet the shawls and then give them to caregivers or people who are suffering serious illnesses, be it physical, mental or spiritual," says Mercy Sister Pierre Dembinski, who organizes the ministry from the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse on Erie's east side.

Reilly, a parishioner of Sacred Heart Parish, Erie, does not make the shawls herself, but picks them up from Sister Pierre and distributes them to those she



Photo by Mary Solberg

Mercy Sister Pierre Dembinski, left, enjoys a conversation with Sue Reilly about the Sisters of Mercy Prayer Shawl Ministry in Erie. Reilly, an emergency room nurse at UPMC Hamot, shares handmade shawls with many people in need of prayers and comfort.

meets on a daily basis. She once gave a shawl to a veteran who had been under treatment at the hospital. She's wrapped them around a little boy battling brain cancer, a mother whose baby had just died, and a young woman who regularly came to the emergency room for various emotional and physical problems.

When she asks a patient if they would like to have a shawl, they usually say yes.

"I say to them, 'Wrap the prayer shawl around you. God is wrapping his arms around you and people are praying for you,'" Reilly says.

Reilly has come to see how fortu-

nate she has been in her own life. A single mother of three grown children, she is thankful for her health and happiness.

"This isn't about me at all," Reilly says. "There are so many people out there going through difficult times. I am blessed. I always told my children that we will always have food on our table. We may not have a lot of gadgets, but when you have your health, you are blessed."

Ofentimes, Reilly will meet people in the emergency room, but will make it a point to visit them after they are admitted. That's when she usually offers a prayer shawl. While the Prayer Shawl

Ministry in Erie has distributed about 500 shawls to people needing comfort, Reilly figures she personally has given out up to 50 in the past few years.

"We need to treat people the way we want to be treated. This is just my very tiny way to give people comfort," Reilly says.

To learn more about the Sisters of Mercy Prayer Shawl Ministry or to request a shawl, contact Sister Pierre at 814-824-3920 or send her an email at srmpierre@yahoo.com. Request forms also are available at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse, 444 East Grandview Blvd., Erie.

What do Americans think of Pope Francis?

	Catholics		General Public	
	March 2013	September 2013	March 2013	September 2013
Favorable	84%	79%	57%	58%
Very	43%	37%	22%	21%
Mostly	41%	42%	35%	37%
Unfavorable	5%	4%	14%	12%
Can't rate	11%	17%	29%	30%

Source: Pew Research Center, 2013



■ Congolese nun wins U.N. prize

WASHINGTON (CNS)—“It is not my work only. It is the Lord’s.”

Such was the summation of Sister Angeline Namaika, a member of the Augustine Sisters of Dunga and Duruma, as she spoke to reporters in an international conference call upon winning the Nansen Refugee Award bestowed annually by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

Sister Angeline has been working for the past four years with women forced to leave their homes in the northeastern Congolese bush because of the ongoing civil strife in the Congo. She estimates that she has helped 2,000 women in her ministry.



Sister Angeline Namaika embraces a child at a site for internally displaced people in the Congo.

■ Faith-based contractors use own funds during federal shutdown

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Social Security, food stamp, and Medicare benefits continued, but the federal government shutdown over a congressional budget impasse was putting other aid and nutrition programs at risk and forcing some faith-based contractors to use their own funds to keep them operating.

Thousands of organizations dug into reserves to continue to provide Head Start programs or food vouchers for children.

On Oct. 2, a long list of Catholic and other Christian leaders signed a statement decrying the shutdown. A day earlier, three U.S. bishops with the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops joined others in criticizing the effects of the shutdown on the poor.



A teaching assistant reads to a girl at the Baltimore Catholic Charities Head Start program in Edgewood, Md.

■ Pope, advisers looking at major overhaul of Roman Curia

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis and his newly formed international Council of Cardinals are laying out plans to completely overhaul the Roman Curia, underlining its role of “service to the universal church and the local churches,” a Vatican spokesman said.

At an Oct. 1-3 meeting, the pope and eight cardinals discussed the role and responsibilities of the Vatican secretary of state, the revamping of the world Synod of Bishops, and the Vatican’s attention to the role and responsibility of laity.

The eight cardinals brought to the meeting suggestions they received from church leaders around the world. One of the topics mentioned most often, Father Lombardi said, was concern for the role of the laity in the church and the world.

■ French nuns carry on tradition of continual 24/7 adoration

SAINT-LOUP-SUR-AUJON, France (CNS)—The moment a monstrance bearing the Blessed Sacrament was fixed high over an altar in a convent church in a remote French valley, a nun stepped forward to start the process of eucharistic adoration—one the sisters hope will continue day and night, week after week and year after year.

Mother Marie Xavier McMonagle thus began the perpetual adoration of the “Tyburn Nuns,” an order of enclosed contemplative Benedictine nuns established to worship the “eucharistic heart of Jesus.”

This community, the 12th to be established in less than a century, has eight members, each of whom will spend a minimum of one hour a day in adoration.



Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

Remember when people used to wear bracelets printed with the acronym “WJJD?” It was a personal motto, originating among evangelical Christians, asking, “What would Jesus do?”

I have been thinking of that question a lot lately and have decided to modify it to “WVFPD?” This is an acronym for “What would Pope Francis do?” It’s a relevant question, considering how much press the Holy Father has gotten in recent months.

Not a day goes by when someone doesn’t ask me what I think of Pope Francis and his characteristic frankness on such topics as gay rights, atheism, and Catholic moral teaching. His forthright speech and aversion to the luxuries of the papacy (he lives in a simple apartment and makes his own phone calls) have made headlines. Last Holy Thursday, Pope Francis broke with tradition by washing the feet of prisoners, women, and non-Christians.

I join Leonard Pitts Jr., a columnist with the *Miami Herald*, who wonders why Christians have been so surprised by the speech and actions of our new pope. After all, Pitts wrote, Pope Francis seems to be doing exactly what Jesus did. He asks us to be non-judgmental, humble, merciful, and most especially, concerned for the poor and suffering of our world.

In a recent letter to an atheist journalist, Pope Francis explained that he first encountered Jesus through his community of faith which gave him the opportunity to explore sacred Scripture, participate in the sacraments, and serve the poor, “who are the true image of the Lord.”

The next time we are conflicted by how to respond in a difficult situation, just ask, “What would Jesus do?”

I think Pope Francis can help us with an answer.

Parish in North East. Steve Cash, a former master of the Knights, 4th degree, drove the bishop to the North East ceremony and has been a mentor to him on all things related to the K. of C.

“The Knights in our diocese are a group of very dedicated men. They have a great love of the church and I’m proud of the good works that they do,” Bishop Persico told me.

Also, congratulations to the bishop on being elevated this summer to Knight Commander with Star with the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. The Knights of the Holy Sepulchre support the work of Christians in the Holy Land. Bishop Persico has been a member of that organization since 2010, and attended a ceremony in July at St. Patrick Cathedral in New York City.

The Millcreek Mall Catholic Chapel in Erie got some attention online recently when Fiat Ministries of Geneva, Ohio, aired a live interview with Sister Catherine Manning, SSJ, vice chancellor of the diocese. Fiat’s Kent Kuhlowski not only talked to Sister Catherine about her personal spiritual journey, but he also discussed the impact the chapel has had on people’s lives. To view the interview, go to YouTube and search Sister Catherine Manning.

Father Rocco Tito may be 86 years old, but he is still going strong. A resident of Westbury Retirement Community in Meadville, Father Tito makes it a point to say three Masses a week at the center.

Julie Hofmann, owner of Hofmann’s Church & Religious Goods in Erie, is anticipating a busy Advent and Christmas season. She has graciously offered a \$75 gift certificate to Hofmann’s to the person who wins a FaithLife contest that begins today. When you read this edition (Oct. 13), online or hard copy, count the number of times the word “pope” is used. Then just email us at faithlife@eriecd.org to submit your answer no later than Oct. 25. If there are multiple correct answers, names will be put in a random drawing to select the winner. Start counting!

It looks like Bishop Lawrence Persico has been busy being knighted. On Sept. 13, he became a third-degree member of the Knights of Columbus, St. Peter Cathedral chapter, during a ceremony at St. Gregory

Mary Solberg is the editor of FaithLife. Email: msolberg@eriecd.org Call 814-824-1171 Twitter: twitter.com/ERIERCDSolberg

Blessing of the pets gets wet



Photo by Mary Solberg

Seventh-grader Matthew Whitman of Our Lady of Peace School, Erie, winces as his pet Lucy is sprinkled with holy water by Bishop Lawrence Persico during the Blessing of the Pets ceremony on Oct. 4. Lucy is a Cavalier King Charles mixed with Papillon. Hundreds of people brought their pets to be blessed on the feast day of Saint Francis.

#AJO spirit

#AJO SPIRIT, from page 1

student, asked Our Lady of Peace principal, Mary Beth Ek, if the school could use its Oct. 9 dress down day to collect money for the #AJO Forever Fund. Students can wear purple for epilepsy awareness and give a contribution.

“I wanted to bring good to this tragedy,” Wilson explained.

According to Ek, the effort is one way to fulfill the mission of Catholic education.

“I think this is beautiful,” Ek said of the school-wide fundraiser. “It’s why we send our children to a Catholic school: to teach them to do as Jesus did, which is to help people and reach out.”

For Jason O’Neill, the religious education his three young children receive at Our Lady of Peace reinforces the belief that Alyssa is in God’s embrace. He also regularly listens to an audio book, *Heaven is For Real*, with 8-year-old Ava. The book is about a little boy who almost dies in surgery but awakens to tell his family that he saw Jesus.

“I can see her [Ava’s] eyes light up. She asks, ‘Is that really true?’” O’Neill said. “We keep trying to remind them that Alyssa is in heaven.”

Chris Proper, Alyssa’s grandmother, is a

parishioner of Sacred Heart Parish in Erie. She is grateful to the church and school communities for their support since Alyssa’s death a month ago. She regularly receives sympathy cards, sometimes from people she doesn’t even know.

“To be nice to somebody else, to go out of yourself is what it’s really all about,” Proper said.

The O’Neills are busy most days now keeping up with the media attention given to the #AJO movement. Just a week ago, *Inside Edition*, a nationally syndicated television program, ran a segment on the family’s loss and subsequent place at the forefront of epilepsy awareness.

Jason O’Neill said he would trade it all just to have his daughter back again. But the only consolation, he added, is to keep passing on goodness and light to others.

“The greatest thing we can do is to give rather than receive,” O’Neill said. “Jesus was one of the first people to pay it forward, and he did it in the ultimate way.”

To make a contribution to the #AJO Forever Fund, send a donation to the Erie Community Foundation, 459 W. 6th St., Erie, PA 16507. Write AJO Forever Fund in the memo line or submit a letter stating where you would like the funds to be placed. An endowment fund has been established.

The #AJO website is www.ajoforever.com.

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Briefly

Cancer awareness Mass scheduled at St. Paul Church, Erie

ERIE—A cancer awareness Mass will be held at St. Paul Church, 1617 Walnut St., Erie, on Wednesday, Oct. 23, at 6 p.m. The celebrant will be Father Alex Amico, assisted by Deacon Anthony Alleruzzo. There will be a special litany to St. Peregrine, the patron saint of cancer, and St. Agatha, the patron saint of breast cancer. Anyone who has been affected by cancer—whether personally or through the illness of a loved one or friend—is encouraged to attend.

Italian Fest celebrated today in Oil City

OIL CITY—Our Lady, Help of Christians Church in Oil City will celebrate its 13th annual Italian Fest on Sunday, Oct. 13. The festivities will be held at the Oil City Knights of Columbus, located at 111 Petroleum St., Oil City, from noon to 3 p.m.

Support group for separated, divorced, widowed held at St. Mark Catholic Center

ERIE—Transitions, a monthly support group for separated, divorced, and widowed persons, will meet monthly through December at St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 East Grandview Blvd., Erie. All meetings will be held on Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. and will include a short presentation, discussion, and refreshments.

Here are the remaining dates and topics:

- Oct. 27—Facing Finances as a Single Person
- Nov. 24—Coping with Life Alone During the Holidays
- Dec. 29—Looking Back on Life's Lessons.

For more information on Transitions, call 814-824-1265 or email familylife@ErieRCD.org. Visit the Transitions website at www.eriecd.org/transitions.asp. Reservations are not needed to attend.

Father Ralph DiOrio Jr. to speak in DuBois

DUBOIS—Father Ralph DiOrio Jr. will lead an afternoon seminar and healing service at DuBois Area Middle School, 404 Liberty Blvd., DuBois, on Sunday, Oct. 27, from 1 to 5 p.m.

Father DiOrio's topic is, "The Sacred Wounds of Christ." His mission is to teach faith in the person of Jesus Christ. All who may be questioning their faith in God are encouraged to attend this service and experience Father DiOrio's healing touch.

Tickets are required and can be ordered in advance by calling Tillie at 814-371-4116, Marie at 814-375-4667, Bill at 814-371-1765, or Jeff at 814-541-4913. Seating is limited. Free-will donations will be accepted.

World Apostolate of Fatima hosts retreat

CRANBERRY—The World Apostolate of Fatima-Erie Division will hold its 11th annual retreat at St. Thomas More House of Prayer, Cranberry, on Saturday, Nov. 2.

Father David Poulson, pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Cambridge Springs, will give a talk at 10:15 a.m., followed by a Mass at 11:15 a.m. The guest speaker this year is Father Ladis Czizk, who served as national executive director and vice president of the World Apostolate of Fatima from 2000-03. Father Czizk will speak at 1 and 2 p.m.

Bring a bag lunch or buy a meal that will be provided. Make reservations for meals and attendance no later than Nov. 1 by calling 814-474-2753 or 814-790-2002.

DuBois Central Catholic School hosts its 4th Grand Gala Celebration

DUBOIS—DuBois Central Catholic School will host its 4th Grand Gala Celebration on Nov. 9 at the school, 200 Central Christian Road, DuBois.

The evening begins with dinner at 6:30 p.m., followed by an interactive dinner theatre, "Audition for Murder." The evening will end with a live auction and the grand prize drawing: a trip for two to New York City.

Monument business wins national awards

Mary Solberg
FaithLife

LEEPER, Pa.—Bud Williams didn't want just a flat granite marker to remember his father at Wildwood Cemetery in Williamsport, located in Lycoming County in central Pennsylvania.

With the help of his 88-year-old mother, Josephine, they came up with an idea that would capture the spirit of his father, who loved pink dogwoods and often recited Joyce Kilmer's famous poem, "Trees." Josephine agreed to help design a cemetery monument that she eventually would share with her husband, Leo.

Wouldn't it be meaningful, they thought, to carve a Blessed Mother into the stone, along with a dogwood? And on the opposite side, they could engrave Kilmer's poem into the granite, beginning with the words, "I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree."

This monument at Riverside Cemetery in Tionesta was awarded "Best Etched Memorial" by the Monument Builders of North America.

So Bud Williams went from monument builder to monument builder throughout the region, having been told three times that it couldn't be done. Then, he happened upon Borland Memorials in Leeper, located in northern Clarion County of the Diocese of Erie.

"Nobody else would tackle it, but I always love a challenge," said Greg Borland, co-owner with his wife, Kimberly, of Borland Memorials.

Parishioners of St. Joseph Parish, Lucinda, the Borlands also own Borland Funeral Home in

Contributed photo



Leeper. They are in a business that requires sensitivity and creativity. As more and more funeral homes encourage mourners to display photographs and show home movies of their loved ones, people are increasingly opting to use technology during the grieving process. Grave sites, too, are going more high-tech.

Borland, 54, has about 26,000 different designs on his computer software program that can be used to etch almost anything on a gravestone. He does most monument work in-house—everything from sandblasting, lettering, design, and carving—but he hires someone else to do sculpture work. Once the details are complete, Borland uses epoxy cement and pins to bond the pieces of granite together.

The Williams monument—at 46 inches tall—took up to three years to complete. It was worth the wait, especially for the Williamses, who were thrilled with the results.

"It turned out as good or better than I had hoped," Williams said.

And Borland is happy, too. The monument recently captured the "Editor's Choice" award from Monument Builders of North America, a national trade associa-

tion. The unique monument for Josephine and Leo Williams was featured in the September edition of *MB* magazine.

In that same edition, the Monument Builders of North America awarded Borland the "Best Etched Memorial" for another monument that he designed for Kathy Whitton of Sanford, N.C. Whitton hired Borland to create a monument that features an etching of a white Ford Mustang convertible traveling along a winding road toward the heavens. Her husband, Stephen, always wanted to own a sports car.

The Whitton monument—at 44 inches tall—is located in Riverside Cemetery in Tionesta, where Stephen Whitton grew up. When she talked to Borland about creating a monument, she told him, "I want my stone to look like no other."

Borland was willing to accommodate.

"I think people want to say a little more about their loved ones who have passed," Borland said. "They want to tell a story about them."



Contributed photo

This monument, created by Borland Memorials in Leeper, features the Blessed Mother and a pink dogwood tree. It won the "Editor's Choice" award from Monument Builders of North America.

New seminarians study in Diocese of Erie

The Diocese of Erie welcomed three new seminarians this academic year at St. Mark Seminary and Gannon University. They join eight returning seminarians.

The new seminarians are: Mark Dunnire of St. Margaret Mary Parish, Diocese of Greensburg; John Hepinger of St. Andrew Parish, Erie; and Michael Pleva of Holy Rosary Parish, Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown.

"I've never been more at home than where I am right

now," Dunnire told *The Catholic Accent*, newspaper of the Diocese of Greensburg.

The eight returning seminarians are: Andrew Boyd, Kevin Holland, Ian McElrath, Robert Nicastro, and Jerry Stumpf, all of the Diocese of Erie; Daniel Carr of the Greensburg Diocese; and Ben Knopf and Aaron Kulczyk both of the Diocese of Buffalo.

The seminarians at St. Mark Seminary in Erie range in age from 18 to 30.



Mark Dunnire
Pre-theology Major
St. Margaret Mary Parish
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Raffle at Spaghetti Dinner on Oct. 27th at St. Jude Church

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Each of us, as a baptized Catholic, has a role to play. World Mission Sunday is a day for all Catholics to recommit to the Church's missionary activity through prayer and sacrifice. Please contribute through your parish collection.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith
Mrs. Pat Marshall, Director • PO Box 10397, Erie, PA 16514
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ECCHS senior class attends annual retreat



ST. MARYS—The senior class at Elk County Catholic High School recently attended its annual retreat.

The theme of the event was "Great Cloud of Witnesses," referring to Hebrews 12 that states, "Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and

sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith."

The class traveled to Parker Dam State Park, where they completed a variety of service tasks.

Pictured are seniors **Tori Gleixner**, left, and **Hayley DaCanal**.

SMCMS students learn million-dollar lesson

ST. MARYS—Sixth-graders in Mary Rettger's religion class at St. Marys Catholic Middle School learned all about trusting in God recently when they discussed the impact of the penny and its motto, "In God We Trust." Miss Rettger decorated her classroom bulletin board with pennies.

The youngsters are learning to put God in their school lives as well as in their spiritual lives.

Pictured, left to right, are: **Isabelle Grunenwald**, **Maddie Taylor**, **Will Uberti**, **Ben Hoffman**, **Carly Renwick**, and **Leo Gregory**.



Women religious of diocese enjoy picnic

FAIRVIEW—Nearly 70 sisters from various religious communities attended this year's picnic for women religious at Camp Notre Dame in Fairview on Sept. 21.

The Hilbert family of Erie has sponsored the event for more than 10 years as a way to thank the sisters for their ministries.

Pictured are **Sister Mary Herrmann**, president of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania, and **Bill Hilbert Jr.**, a member of the Erie Serra Club.

Several Serra Club members and their families also attended the event, which included a Mass celebrated by Father Michael Kesicki.



New Holy Name Society formed at St. Bernadette Mission

SAEGERTOWN—The founding chapter of the Holy Name Society of St. Bernadette Mission, Saegertown, recently received its official charter from the Dominican Order, allowing it to induct members, install officers, and enjoy the spiritual benefits of affiliation.

Fourteen men from St. Bernadette participate in the organization, which has been meeting monthly for prayer and lectures.

Pictured in the front row, left to right, are: **Robert Bowler**, **Gary Haibach**, **James Nichol**,



Father David Poulson, **John Weagraff**, **Joseph Drda**, and **Marc Kirshner**.

In the back row, left to right, are: **Steve Sada**, **George Beisler**, **Jim Peters**, **Dennis O'Donnell**, **John Weber**, and **Daniel Nowak**.

Missing from the photo are **Stanley Styborski** and **Robert Brunot**.

Villa Maria Elementary harvests food for Second Harvest

FAIRVIEW—Villa Maria Elementary Principal **Damon Finazzo** carries a box of corn in the rain to the Second Harvest Food Bank truck at a farm in Fairview recently.

He led fourth- through eighth-graders at the school in a service project at the farm. They picked 6,331 pounds of corn that will be served in thousands of meals, according to Second Harvest.

"I am proud of our VME students, their teachers, and their parents for once again putting others before themselves to help out the Second Harvest Food Bank and the many people that they serve every day," Finazzo said.



Bulletin board welcomes visitors to DuBois Central Catholic Elementary

DUBOIS—Three kindergarten sections at DuBois Central Catholic Elementary School in DuBois made a wall of handprints to welcome visitors to their school.

Several students pose by the display that loudly proclaims that they were "hand picked by God."

Pictured, left to right, are: **Jordyn Wilson**, **Natalie Alicia**, **Ethan Gray**, **Isaac Barber**, **Julia Sebring**, and **Krishiv Bansal**.



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St. Paul's Special Mass for Cancer Awareness

October 23 6:00 p.m.

St. Paul Church
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Rev. Alex Amico
with Deacon
Anthony Alleruzzo



St. Agatha
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