

Late Bishop Watson met Pope Paul VI, who was beatified Oct. 19.  
PAGE 2



INSPIRING WORDS  
FROM POPE FRANCIS:

"Remember: What counts is not what enters, but what emerges from the mouth and the heart."

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BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

October 26, 2014

## Election survey nets low response

*Diocese encourages Catholics to vote with 'consistent life ethic'*

FAITHLIFE staff reports

Only 5 percent of the candidates running for public office this fall within the 13 counties of the Diocese of Erie responded to a recent survey distributed by the diocesan Office of Parish Social Ministry and Respect Life.

"It was not a great response," said Erin Landini-Grogan, director of the Respect Life Office. "Candidates are being bombarded with questions on a daily basis. In some cases, I don't know if they want to put their beliefs out there."

Still, Landini-Grogan encourages all Catholics to research where candidates stand on important issues in the Nov. 4 midterm elections. She points to the call by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to develop "faithful citizenship."

"We all have the responsibility to be at the polls," Landini-Grogan said. "We have to have an awareness of the issues of the day. We have to pray about those issues and ask ourselves, 'How do they reflect me as a Catholic and as a voter?'"

Of the 38 candidates in the Diocese of Erie running for state and federal offices, only 7 responded to the diocesan survey. Five respondents were Republican, two were Democrat.

Respondents were:

- U.S. Congressman Mike Kelly, R-3rd District
- U.S. Congressman Glenn Thompson, R-5th District
- State Rep. Brad Roae, R-6th District
- State Rep. Toby Santik, D-66th District
- Juanita Sinusta, a Democrat running against State Rep. Roae in the 6th District
- Parke Wentling, a Republican running for state representative, 17th District
- Luke Lofgren, a Republican running for state representative, 3rd District.

Four of the five Republicans oppose abortion, except when the life of the mother is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest. State Rep. Santik, a Democrat, joined those Republicans. U.S. Congressman Kelly, who is running for reelection to U.S. Congress, is opposed to abortion in all circumstances.

All five of the Republicans responding to the survey oppose same-sex marriage despite the recent passage of Pennsylvania law permitting same-sex unions. The two Democratic respondents support the legalization of same-sex marriage, with State Rep. Santik saying, "It's already passed. I have to support the law."

For more detailed responses to the survey, including questions on state funding for textbooks and instructional materials for non-public school students, go to [www.ErieRCD.org/justice.asp](http://www.ErieRCD.org/justice.asp).

Statewide, the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference, which neither supports nor opposes any candidate for public office, recently invited Gov. Tom Corbett and Democratic challenger Tom Wolf to share their views before the Nov. 4 election.

Gov. Corbett sat down for an in-person interview and completed a written questionnaire. Wolf declined the interview invitation and did not respond to the candidate survey.

Go to [www.pacatholic.org](http://www.pacatholic.org) to see Gov. Corbett's complete interview and survey responses, as well as Wolf's views drawn from his campaign website and public statements.

## 'God continues to call'

*Holy hours for vocations planned in diocese*

In a world full of distractions, vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life are still possible, says Bishop Lawrence Persico. "God continues to call people to serve in this way, but they're not always listening," the bishop says.

In an effort to get people to listen, Bishop Persico has been trying to create what he calls "a culture of vocations" in the diocese. He regularly talks about vocations whenever he visits parishes, and earlier this year he issued a prayer card for vocations.

This November, more action will be taken. The Vocation Office, under the direction of Father Stephen Schreiber, has announced Eucharistic holy hours for vocations to be held throughout the diocese in conjunction with National Vocations Awareness Week, Nov. 2-9. The evenings are open to anyone who wants to pray for vocations and to raise awareness of the need for more vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.

"There is a critical need for new priestly vocations in the diocese, so this is an effort to do exactly what Jesus asks us to do, which is to pray to the master of the harvest that there will be more laborers for the harvest," Father Schreiber says.

Father Schreiber calls holy hours "a time-honored way" to pray for vocations. He has helped to organize six separate holy hours at Catholic high schools and at St. Mark Seminary.

Here is the holy hour schedule:

- Nov. 3 at 7 p.m.—St. Mark Seminary, 429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie (Bishop Lawrence Persico will participate. The communities of Mercyhurst Preparatory School, Cathedral Preparatory School and Villa Maria Academy are encouraged to attend this event.)
- Nov. 3 at 7 p.m.—Kennedy Catholic High School, 2120 Shenango Valley Freeway, Hermitage
- Nov. 3 at 7 p.m.—Venango Catholic High School, 1505 West First St., Oil City
- Nov. 3 at 6:30 p.m.—DuBois Central Catholic High School, 200 Central Christian Road, DuBois
- Nov. 4 at 7 p.m.—St. Michael Church, 811 Chestnut St., Emlenton
- Nov. 5 during school hours only—Elk County Catholic High School, 600 Maurus St., St. Marys.

### Clergy by the numbers in the Diocese of Erie

160	active priests
22	over 80 years old
39	between 70-79
46	between 60-69
33	between 50-59
11	between 40 and 49
15	under 40

## Pope Francis leads historic meeting

*Tradition affirmed, controversial questions left open*



CNS photo

Pope Francis greets throngs of people this month at the Vatican as the world focuses on family issues facing the Catholic Church.

BY FRANCIS X. ROCCA | CNS

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—After several days of animated debate over its official midterm report, the Synod of Bishops on the family agreed on a final document more clearly grounded in traditional Catholic teaching. Yet the assembly failed to reach consensus on especially controversial questions of Communion for the divorced and civilly remarried and the pastoral care of homosexuals.

The synod's last working session, Oct. 18, also featured a

speech by Pope Francis, in which he celebrated the members' frank exchanges while warning against extremism in the defense of tradition or the pursuit of progress.

Discussions in the synod hall had grown heated after the Oct. 13 delivery of a midterm report that used strikingly conciliatory language toward people with ways of life contrary to church teaching, including divorced and civilly remarried Catholics, cohabiting couples and those in same-sex unions.

The summaries of working-group discussions, published Oct.

16, showed a majority of synod fathers wanted the final document to be clearer about relevant church doctrine and give more attention to families whose lives exemplify that teaching.

The final report, which the pope ordered published almost immediately after the synod's conclusion, featured many more citations of Scripture, as well as new references to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the teachings of Pope Paul VI, St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict VI.

Synod fathers voted on each of the document's 62 paragraphs.

All received a simple majority, but three failed to gain the two-thirds supermajority ordinarily required for approval of synodal documents.

Two of those paragraphs dealt with a controversial proposal by German Cardinal Walter Kasper that would make it easier for divorced and civilly remarried Catholics to receive Communion. The document noted disagreements on the subject and recommended further study.

The section on homosexuality,

See Synod, page 3

## Friends find peace on Camino de Santiago

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

For five friends from Erie, walking 72 miles on the famed Camino de Santiago in Spain last month drew them closer to each other, the earth and their God.

The Camino, also known as The Way of St. James, is a Christian pilgrimage dating to the Middle Ages and made popular in recent years by the 2010 movie "The Way," starring Martin Sheen. Although these friends admit that the film first inspired them to walk the Camino, the actual experience moved them in unexpected ways.

"For most people, God is in the back of your mind all the time. Life is so hectic that we only get to scratch the surface of our spirituality," says one of the pilgrims, Barb McNamara, 58, a parishioner of St. George Parish, Erie, and director of development for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Erie. "All we were doing was walking. We had no plan. There is a freedom in that."

McNamara's husband, Jim, 64, also walked the Camino, along with three others from Erie: Joan Fels, 74, of Our Lady of Peace Parish, and Tom Elliott, 66, and his wife, Sue, 58, from St. Patrick Parish. Fels' nephew, Gregory Germaine of Buffalo, N.Y., and the McNamara's friends, Jim and Karen Hibey of Washington, D.C., rounded out the group.

They walked 72 miles of the 490-mile Camino, which stretches from the foothills of the Pyrenees in France to the shrine of St. James the Great in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain's Galicia region. Tradition has it that the remains of the saint are buried at the cathedral.

For them, the walk was also a way to raise money for a favorite charity, St. Joseph Neighborhood Network, an outreach of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania. Sponsors and



Contributed photo

Friends Tom Elliott, Sue Elliott, Joan Fels, Barb McNamara and Jim McNamara enjoy the pastoral views of the Camino de Santiago in Spain.

individuals gave \$5,000 toward the Camino fundraiser.

"From the outset, if I'm going to be honest, I had mixed motives for wanting to do the Camino," says Jim McNamara, an attorney with Erie Insurance. "First, it was an adventure. Second, it was an opportunity for some spiritual enrichment. And third, I hoped to use it for a reason bigger than ourselves, to generate money for charity."

Not only did they raise money, but the group carried the petitions of many of their friends, co-workers and family members. The day they finished their journey, they attended an evening pilgrims' Mass at the shrine in Santiago,

where they exposed the petitions to incense. The next day, they drove to Finisterre, the westernmost tip of Spain overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, and burned the petitions at an outdoor shrine to St. James.

"It was just a completion of the whole walk," says Fels, who is a fitness instructor at Nautilus in Erie.

For Fels, the Camino was personally cathartic, too. Her husband died in May 2013, and she was searching for what she calls "spiritual healing."

"Everyone has their own Camino," Fels says. "I am feeling so much more at peace now."

Tom and Sue Elliott found

time during their long, challenging days of walking to reflect more on their spiritual lives.

"If you're out walking for seven or eight hours, you have time to slow down and communicate with God or the people you've devoted your walk to on a particular day," says Tom Elliott, who retired as a senior vice president at Saint Vincent Hospital.

Sue Elliott, also retired, said she prayed the rosary along the hilly terrain of the Camino.

"I think with me being a Catholic, to go on the St. James Walk made me think about the world, the poor people who don't really have anything," she says. "I got a lot of inspiration."



**■ Military mandates prayers for pope**

MANILA, Philippines (CNS)—The head of the Armed Forces of the Philippines this month ordered all military chaplains to dedicate their daily rosary for the safe visit of Pope Francis to their country in January.

Gen. Gregorio Catapang Jr. gave the directive during an Oct. 13 Mass at the military headquarters cathedral to commemorate the 97th anniversary of the date of the first Marian apparition in Fatima, Portugal.

In a statement from the military, Catapang also asked all Catholic service members to pray a rosary daily for the pope's safety when he visits the Philippines Jan. 15-19. In September, reports surfaced that the Islamic State was targeting the pope, possibly during his travels to the Philippines.

**■ Genocide survivor urges California students to respect life**

CARSON, Calif.—Immaculee Ilibagiza, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide, told a crowd of more than 6,000 junior and senior high school students that if she can forgive the person who killed most of her family in the 1994 massacre, then "anybody can forgive."

"I have gone to the prison to meet the person who killed my family and I offered forgiveness, truly in peace," she said to the crowd gathered Oct. 14 at StubHub Center in Carson.

"You are the light of the world. Go and shine brighter, and brighter and brighter," she told the youths.

Students from 80 schools in Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties participated in a half-day field trip called "Christian Service 4Life," a joint effort of LIFEsocial, a pro-life group founded by local students and families, and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles' Office of Life.



*CNS photo*  
**Immaculee Ilibagiza, a Rwandan genocide survivor, urges students to embrace forgiveness, prayer and love.**

**■ Pope beatifies Blessed Paul VI, the 'great helmsman' of Vatican II**

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Beatifying Blessed Paul VI at the concluding Mass of the Synod of Bishops on the family, Pope Francis praised the late pope as the "great helmsman" of the Second Vatican Council, as well as a "humble and prophetic witness of love for Christ and his church."

The pope spoke during a homily in St. Peter's Square at a Mass for more than 30,000 on Oct. 19.

"When we look to this great pope, this courageous Christian, this tireless apostle, we cannot but say in the sight of God a word as simple as it is heartfelt and important: 'thanks,'" the pope said, drawing applause from the congregation.

Sister Giacomina Pedrini, a member of the Sisters of Holy Child Mary, carried up a relic: a bloodstained vest Blessed Paul was wearing during a 1970 assassination attempt in the Philippines. Sister Pedrini is the last surviving nun who attended to Blessed Paul.



*CNS photo*  
**Sister Giacomina Pedrini carries relic of Blessed Paul VI.**

**■ Liberians feel 'God has forsaken us'**

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (CNS)—A Liberian bishop has urged his fellow bishops to use their influence to help West African families in their enormous suffering caused by Ebola.

"Whole families are being decimated," Bishop Anthony Fallah Borwah of Gbarnga, Liberia, said in an Oct. 17 telephone interview.

"It is the poor who have been most harmed" by the Ebola outbreak that, since March, has killed more than 4,500 people, "and it is the poor who are the church's priority," said Bishop Borwah, who was set to represent the Liberian bishops' conference at the Synod of Bishops this month.

With restrictions on travel from Ebola-affected countries, Bishop Borwah was unable to get to Rome. Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea are the countries mainly affected by the worst Ebola outbreak on record.



**Editor's Notes**

Mary SOLBERG

This month's extraordinary synod on the family at the Vatican surely gave members of the press throughout the world—even locally—a lot on which to speculate.

A report issued midway through the discussions in Rome prompted many questions about whether the Catholic Church was changing longstanding doctrine on divorce, same-sex unions and Communion. Of course, the report was just that: a report of discussions about these sensitive issues facing the church today.

Bishop Lawrence Persico put it plainly when questioned by members of Erie's media after the report was released Oct. 13.

"This is a conversation. That's all it is, a conversation," the bishop stated.

Janet E. Smith, a member of St. Joseph Parish, Warren, and the Father Michael J. McGivney Chair of Life Ethics at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, Mich., graciously agreed to share her thoughts about the synod with *FaithLife* readers. (Read her guest commentary at the bottom of this page.)

Pope Francis, whose efforts toward transparency have come to personify his papacy, said he actually welcomed the disagreement that surfaced during the synod.

"Personally, I would have been very worried and saddened if there hadn't been these temptations and these animated discussions, if everybody had agreed or remained silent in a false and quietistic peace," the pope said.

The pope acknowledged that some media even had talked about how the church was "quarreling, one part against the other, even doubting the Holy Spirit."

As the future unfolds, there can be no doubt about the movement of the Spirit.

The people of St. Joseph Parish in Force are getting a taste of **Father Bill Sutherland's** brand of enthusiasm. Parishioner **Esther Miller** credits Father Bill, who was recently installed as pastor of St. Joseph, as inspiring nearly the entire congregation to sign up to participate in the parish's first 40 Days of Life campaign.

Gannon University in Erie has been exploring international connections in its medical programs this fall. With the Ebola crisis widening in the world today, it's clear that international collaboration is essential in health care.

Gannon and Sacred Heart Nursing College in India have recently established an exchange program that involves undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty and administration. Gannon recently welcomed representatives from Sacred Heart to the downtown Erie campus.

The agreement will enable Gannon faculty to teach at Sacred Heart through faculty exchanges and to collaborate in scholarship. Gannon students will have the opportunity to interact with students in India.

**Steve Mauro**, Ph.D., dean of Gannon's Morosky College of Health Professions and Sciences, has called the opportunities "tremendous."

Gannon also has announced the official opening of its new 3+4 accelerated medical affiliation with the University of Medicine and Health Sciences, a college of medicine located on the island of St. Kitts in the West Indies.

**Dr.Carolynn Master**, provost at Gannon, and **Dr. Lisa Nogaj**, director of Gannon's pre-professional program, recently welcomed representatives of the St. Kitts medical college to campus.

**JoAnn Scheppe**, advancement director of St. Luke School, Erie, is proud of the 375 students who walked with faculty and parents at the annual Walk to School event Oct. 8. As they got the walk in before the snow flies.

Mary Solberg is the editor of *FaithLife*.  
Email: [msolberg@ErieRCD.org](mailto:msolberg@ErieRCD.org)  
Call 814-824-1171  
Twitter: @ERIECDsolberg

**Synod on family was just beginning**



**Guest Commentary**  
Janet E. Smith

was released Oct. 13, there was a huge outcry, since many of those who want the church to make radical changes believed it was calling for such, while others held that the church can't and shouldn't make these changes.

In reality, the interim report has no teaching authority; it may be some time, even years, after the Ordinary Synod of 2015, before a final document is released.

There seems to be some agreement within the church today that procedures for annulments should be streamlined. Also, there is consensus that the church should find language to present its teaching in a more comprehensible and less offensive manner than the philosophically technical terminology inherited from the past.

October's extraordinary synod on the family began on St. Francis' feast day and closed with a Mass that beatified Pope Paul VI, the author of *Humanae Vitae*. Such timing cannot have been coincidental. St. Francis was known best for his embrace of humility, poverty and chastity, and for having been exhorted by Jesus in a vision to "repair my church."

His namesake, Pope Francis, is attempting to undertake a repair of the church, starting—it seems—with an effort to fortify marriage and the family. The beatification of Paul VI complements Pope Francis' insistence that clearly there will be no changes in doctrine; certainly no reversals (which is impossible), nor even any developments (which often happens). All recommendations will be pastoral.

We should all patiently await the final outcome of the process and trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

*Professor Janet E. Smith, a member of St. Joseph Parish, Warren, is the Father Michael J. McGivney Chair of Life Ethics at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, Mich.*

**From the archives**

*Late Bishop Watson met Pope Paul VI, who was beatified Oct. 19*



*Archives, Diocese of Erie*  
The late Bishop Alfred Watson of Erie is shown in this 1965 photo with Pope Paul VI during the final session of the Second Vatican Council in Rome. Pope Paul VI was beatified during the closing Mass of the extraordinary Synod of Bishops on the family Oct. 19. Pope Francis has said that Paul VI "nourishes within us the flame of love for Christ, love for the church and the drive to proclaim the Gospel to the people of today with mercy, patience, courage and joy." Beatification is the third of four steps in the canonization process. A person who is beatified is given the title "Blessed."

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Advertising: 814-824-1168  
General Information: 814-824-1161

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Carmela Manago  
Executive Director

## News Briefs

### Catholic Rural Ministry to hold retreat

LUDLOW—An overnight Everyday Spirituality retreat will be held at Olmsted Manor in Ludlow from Nov. 2 at 2 p.m. to Nov. 3 at 2 p.m.

Join Mercy Sister Tina Geiger and Benedictine Sister Marian Wehler of Catholic Rural Ministry for this important retreat experience. Guest presenter will be Mercy Sister Rita Panciera, director of the House of Prayer, Erie. Call 814-677-2032 to register. Send your name, address and phone number to Catholic Rural Ministry, 7 Pulaski St., Oil City, PA 16301, along with a non-refundable deposit of \$25. The full cost is \$50 per person, or \$60 for a private room.

### Annual Villa Vegas Night scheduled Nov. 1

ERIE—The public is invited to attend the second annual Villa Vegas Night Nov. 1 from 7 to 11 p.m. at Rainbow Gardens in Erie. Tickets are \$15 each, which includes entrance fee, food/beer (guests also can bring their own), and a chance to win a trip for two to Las Vegas. The evening will include table games and card games, horse racing, 50/50s, wine and basket raffles, and much more. This year's event also will include a Texas Hold'em Tournament with a \$100 buy-in. Players must pre-register for the event by calling the school.

For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Jessica Nelson, director of development, at 814-838-5451, ext. 223, or send an email to [jessica.nelson@vmelementary.com](mailto:jessica.nelson@vmelementary.com).

### Dads & Lads designed for boys ages 11 to 13

OIL CITY—Fathers and sons are invited to attend the first Dads & Lads event at Venango Catholic High School in Oil City Nov. 8 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The day includes food, games, talks and time for conversation between fathers and sons, ages 11 to 13. Topics will include growing into manhood, sacredness and dignity of human life, listening to God's call, and the beauty of married love.

Dads & Lads is a companion program to mother/daughter teas that have been held in the Diocese of Erie the past 20 years.

Register now for the Nov. 8 event by going to the diocesan website ([www.ErieDCD.org](http://www.ErieDCD.org)) or sending the father's name, son's name and age, home phone and parish to St. Mark Catholic Center, NFP/CE Office, P.O. Box 10397, Erie, PA 16504. More than one son can be included. The cost for the day is \$20 per family before Oct. 27 and \$25 after that date. Checks may be made payable to NFP/CE.

## Tradition affirmed

Synod, from page 1

which also fell short of supermajority approval, was significantly changed from its counterpart in the midterm report.

The original section heading—"welcoming homosexuals"—was changed to "pastoral attention to persons with homosexual orientation." A statement that same-sex unions can be a "precious support in the life of the partners" was removed.

The final report quoted a 2003 document from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: "There are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God's plan for marriage and family."

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, told reporters that the absence of a supermajority indicated a lack of consensus and a need for more discussion, but stressed that none of the document carried doctrinal weight. The synod's final report will serve as an agenda for the October 2015 world synod on the family, which will make recommendations to the pope.

Pope Francis said he welcomed the assembly's expressions of disagreement.

"Personally, I would have been very worried and saddened if there hadn't been these temptations, these animated discussions, if everybody had agreed or remained silent in a false and quietistic peace," the pope added.

"So many commentators, or people who talk, imagined they saw the church quarrel, one part against the other, even doubting the Holy Spirit, the true promoter and guarantor of unity and

**“Pope Francis realizes that family life is a concern that needs to be looked at. It's not easy to be a family today, with so many difficulties. I think that the more we put on the table, the more we can discuss what is happening.”**

— Bishop Lawrence Persico on the extraordinary synod

harmony in the church," he said. While reassuring the assembly that the church's unity was not in danger, Pope Francis warned against several temptations that he said had been present during the two-week synod.

One of the temptations he cited was that of "hostile rigidity" that seeks refuge in the letter of the law, "in the certainty of what we know and not of what we must still learn and achieve." This temptation, he said, is characteristic of the "zealous of the scrupulous, the attentive and—today—of the so-called traditionalists and also of intellectuals."

Another temptation for the synod fathers, the pope said, was that of "destructive do-goodism, which in the name of a misguided mercy binds up wounds without first treating and medicating them; that treats symptoms and not causes and roots."

## OBITUARIES

### Sister Anna Mae Kuzma, OSF, native of Holy Family

PITTSBURGH—Sister Anna Mae Kuzma (formerly known as Sister Roseleen), a member of the School Sisters of St. Francis, United States Province, died Oct. 13 at Vincennes Home, Pittsburgh, in her 66th year of religious life. She was 83.

A native of Holy Family Parish, Erie, Sister Anna Mae was the oldest of 11 children born to the late Joseph and Anna Kuzma.

Sister Anna Mae entered her religious community in 1944, and professed her first vows in 1948 at Mount Assisi Convent Chapel, Pittsburgh. She earned a bachelor's degree from Carlow University, Pittsburgh, and master's degrees in education and religious education from Duquesne University, also in Pittsburgh.

Before suffering a stroke in 1996, she served for about eight years as campus minister at Penn State-Behrend, Erie. In her early years of ministry, Sister Anna Mae taught in parish schools in New Castle, McKees Rocks, Canonsburg, Northampton, and Clymer, Pa. She later taught at Mount Assisi Academy from 1961-68. She spent 10 years coordinating parish catechesis programs in Canonsburg, Center Township and in Erie. From 1981-85, she served as vocation director for the former Pittsburgh Province.

Throughout her religious life, she was known to encourage young men and women to enter religious life. Her nephew, John Paul Kuzma, OFM, Cap., credits her for encouraging him to become a Franciscan priest.

She spent her remaining years



in prayer ministry and writing at Mount Assisi Motherhouse in Pittsburgh. She wrote the following books: *Tales of Franciscan Calls—The School Sisters of St. Francis; The Faith Journey of a god Jr.; The Shadow of a Great Rock and Surviving a Stroke with Style and Grace*. She also spent her time writing to shut-ins, the elderly and others.

Besides her religious community, she is survived by five brothers: Francis (Elaine), Deacon Glenn (Carol), Paul (Frances), Joseph (Roberta) and Michael (Linda); five sisters: Therese Taft, Sister Rose Kuzma, OSF, Mary Ellen Haynes (William), Pauline Kiesel (Ernie), and Marilyn Moore; numerous nieces and nephews; and many cousins, including Sister Ellen Grescock, OSF, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Oct. 17 at Queen of Angels Chapel, Mount Assisi Convent in Pittsburgh.

### Sister Mary Edith Hirsch, RSM, was longtime educator

Sister Mary Edith Hirsch, RSM, died Oct. 14 at Saint Vincent Hospital in her 67th year of religious life. She was 98.

Born in Erie, Jan. 2, 1916, she was the daughter of the late Frank and Elizabeth (Roh) Hirsch.

In 1947, she entered the Sisters of Mercy at St. Joseph Convent, Titusville, from St. George Parish, Erie. She professed perpetual vows on June 21, 1953. In 2007, she celebrated her diamond jubilee.

Sister Edith began her academic studies at Mercyhurst University, where she received a bachelor's degree in elementary education. She later earned her master's degree in religious education from Gannon University in 1977. She also studied at Indiana University (Bloomington), Kansas State University, and Carlow University, Pittsburgh.

For much of her life, Sister Edith taught in Erie diocesan schools: St. Catherine (DuBois), St. Cosmas & Damian (Punxsutawney), Immaculate Conception (Brookville), St. Walburga and St. Titus (both in Titusville), St. George (Erie), and St. Thomas (Corry). She also taught at St. Justin School, Pittsburgh, and volunteered in the Inner City Neighborhood House and Saint Martin Center for summer programs in Charleston, S.C.

For about 30 years, she loved ministering to the people of Titus-



ville, where she was a teacher and principal of St. Titus School, then pastoral minister at St. Titus Parish. In August 1998, she was honored by the City of Titusville with its proclamation of Sister Edith Hirsch Day. She also received the Humanitarian Award from the Titusville Area Health Center and was listed in *Who's Who Among America's Teachers* for Titusville.

Besides her religious community, survivors include her sister-in-law, Jean Hirsch; and nieces and nephews. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by three brothers: F. Carl, Leo and Neil B. Hirsch.

A funeral Mass was celebrated Oct. 20 in the Sisters of Mercy Chapel in Erie. A rite of departure was held at the Mercy Motherhouse on Oct. 21, with the rite of committal at Gate of Heaven Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Sisters of Mercy Ministry Fund, 444 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie, PA 16504.

## 1:38 Women's Conference draws 1,000

About 1,000 women—from as far away as Indiana, Ohio, New York and Canada—converged on the Warner Theater in downtown Erie Oct. 4 for the inaugural 1:38 Women's Conference.

"This was not just an Erie thing," says Mary Therese Craig Menger, executive director of The Reason for Our Hope Foundation, which oversaw the event. "We're really excited."

The Reason for Our Hope Foundation, based out of St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community, Erie, promoted the conference on its website, which has a national following. Radio and newspaper ads also helped bring in the high numbers.

Activities included speakers, fellowship, Mass, private prayer and the opportunity to go to confession.

"We had people there who had been away from the church for 30, 40 and 50 years," Menger says. "If that event was for one person who was away for 50 years, then it was worth it."



Photo by Steve LaJohn

Women who attended the 1:38 Women's Conference were invited to participate in private adoration before the Blessed Sacrament in a chapel on the second floor of the Warner Theater.

Bishop Lawrence Persico celebrated the closing Mass. The Reason for Our Hope Foundation and a volunteer core

committee of 1:38 Women are already planning for next year's conference. In the meantime, they are encouraging attendees to stay in touch via email, the 1:38 website and to look for Bible studies and gatherings.

The 1:38 website is undergoing some restructuring to provide

more resources for women. "We want people to have the opportunity to grow in their faith until the next conference," Menger says.

Visit [www.138women.com](http://www.138women.com)

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## Picnic for religious held at Camp Notre Dame



FAIRVIEW—Members of all religious orders in the Diocese of Erie attended the annual picnic for religious Sept. 20 at Camp Notre Dame in Fairview. Joining the sisters were members of the clergy—including Bishop Lawrence Persico—and members and guests of the Serra Club of Erie. The picnic is hosted annually by the Hilbert family. Pictured enjoying the picnic were **Sister Jean Baptiste DiLuzio, SSI**, and **Jim Toohy**, a longtime member of the Serra Club.

## VMA students collect food for emergency supply



ERIE—Villa Maria Academy students held a week-long drive to collect non-perishable food items for the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network emergency food supply. A competition among classrooms was supervised by one of Villa's theology teachers, Matthew Durney. More than 1,100 items were collected in only four days. Pictured with some of the donations, left to right, are: **Katelyn Gourley, Danielle Mason, Stephanie Hornaman** and **Maria Colt**.

## Visiting the fields in Clarion County



CLARION—Fifth- and sixth-graders from Immaculate Conception School in Clarion enjoyed an agricultural field trip Oct. 3 to Sandy Ridge Farms, the Beichner Dairy Farm and Long Acres Potato Farm, owned by the Beck family. Students learned about the milking process, the basic anatomy and diet of a dairy cow, milk production, and various pieces of farm equipment. Pictured is **Bryan Beck**, who is instructing students on the maintenance of the growing fields at Long Acres Farm.

## School choir performs at flag dedication



CLARION—The choir of Immaculate Conception School, Clarion, is pictured performing "America the Beautiful" under the direction of **Bonnie Champion**, music teacher and director of both voice and chime choirs, during the dedication of a new flag pole at Immaculate Conception Church Cemetery last month. The flag pole, flag and accessories were donated by the Woodmen of the World. Dan Siegel spoke at the ceremony on behalf of the Woodmen. Also in attendance were the Knights of Columbus, Fourth Degree Assembly #982.

## Central Catholic benefits from Drive 4UR School Program



DUBOIS—DuBois Central Catholic joined forces with Murray's Ford of DuBois for the Drive 4UR School Program held this summer at the local dealership. Joining in the check presentation, left to right, are: **Gretchen Caruso**, elementary principal; **Michael Armani**, headmaster; **Blake Sechman**, general sales manager of Murray's Ford; and **Dawn Bressler**, secondary principal. Ford was able to donate \$900 to DCC's operating budget for the 2014-15 school year.

## Knights hold first Soccer Challenge



BROOKVILLE—The Knights of Columbus Brookville Council #3966 hosted the first annual Soccer Challenge recently. Thirty-five boys and girls from the Brookville Area Soccer League ages 9 to 14 competed; 11 earned the right to compete at the district level. The winners gathered for a photo after the event. Kneeling in the front row, left to right, are: Knights field agent **Richard Bowser**, **Autumn Mitchell**, **Alayna Haight**, **Colie Lobbstaal**, **Avery Gilhousen** and **Sydney Miller**. In the second row, left to right, are: **Thomas Bowser**, **Garner McMaster**, **Timothy Steele** and **Brian Pangallo**. In the back row, left to right, are: **Kon Battaglia**, **Mike Rakovan**, **Paul Ruffner** and **Grand Knight John Palmer**. Competitors missing from the photo are **Bryce Kunselman** and **Hannah Rittenhouse**. Other K of C members who helped with the event were **Jim Dougherty**, **Dan Fiscus** and **Mike Tattersall**.



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