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Refugee admissions increase, but still far below pre-9/11 numbers, page 2.



FaithLife

'To Know and to Serve'



Catholic schools compete in religion competition, page 4.

www.ErieRCD.org

BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

November 16, 2008

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



St. Elizabeth of Hungary



St. Francis Xavier

- Nov. 17 St. Elizabeth of Hungary
- Nov. 18 Dedication of the Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome; St. Rose Philippine Duchesne
- Nov. 21 Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Nov. 22 St. Cecilia
- Nov. 23 Our Lord Jesus Christ the King
- Nov. 24 St. Andrew Dung-Lac and his companions
- Nov. 25 St. Catherine of Alexandria
- Nov. 30 First Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 3 St. Francis Xavier
- Dec. 4 St. John of Damascus
- Dec. 6 St. Nicholas

Confirmation schedule

St. Mark the Evangelist, Lawrence Park – Saturday, Nov. 22 at 5 p.m.

Thanksgiving Day – Nov. 27



GIVING THANKS

Americans cite family most when considering what they are grateful for at the Thanksgiving Day holiday



St. Paul JUBILEE 2008-2009

Pauline feasts

- Nov. 18 – Feast of the dedication of the basilica of St. Peter and Paul in Rome
- Jan. 25 – Feast of the conversion of St. Paul
- Feb. 10 – Feast of St. Paul's shipwreck in Malta
- June 29 – Feast of Ss. Peter and Paul



Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome

In commemoration of the 2,000th anniversary of St. Paul's birth, Pope Benedict XVI has dedicated a jubilee year to the apostle that will run until June 29, 2009. For events and resources for the Year of St. Paul in the Erie Diocese, visit www.ErieRCD.org.

Sisters of St. Joseph, Marketplace Grill to host 20th annual Thanksgiving dinner

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

ERIE — Ask Sister Mary Claire Kennedy, SSI, about the history of the annual Thanksgiving dinner hosted by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Marketplace Grill in Erie and one thing is clear: While the dinner has gotten larger each year, its mission stays the same.

20 years of giving thanks

"It's just grown in terms of numbers," Sister Mary Claire said. "The spirit of the dinner is not just to serve those in financial need but also to bring people together who might be spending the holiday alone." Last year, volunteers served

From left to right, SSI associates Marti Michael, Gert Milkowski and Sister Mary Alice Reed serve up pies at a previous Thanksgiving dinner.

more than 1,000 turkey dinners complete with stuffing, potatoes, vegetables, rolls and pie at two seatings at the restaurant, located at 319 State St., and delivered another 367 to shut-ins and the home-bound.

"It's hard for some people to get out."

In 1989, at the first Thanksgiving, See THANKSGIVING, page 2

"I think that's going to go up this year," said Kristina Huber, development director for the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development Help break the cycle of poverty

There are nearly 37 million people in the United States struggling below the poverty line, and 13 million of those are children. Over a 10-year cycle, about 40 percent of the U.S. population experiences poverty at some time.

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) has worked to create permanent, community-based solutions to the problem of poverty by funding programs that promote self-sufficiency. The majority of CCHD's funding comes through its annual parish collection this weekend, Nov. 15-16.

Out of the contributions, 75 percent go to the CCHD national office to support anti-poverty efforts across the U.S. The remaining 25 percent stays in the Erie Diocese to provide dollars that are greatly needed. This year, St. Elizabeth Center in Oil City has seen a 35 percent increase in its food pantry clients. Many other Catholic Charities agencies have seen similar increases.

To stand in solidarity with the Catholic Campaign for Human Development and to help make a difference, Bishop Donald Trautman has set a diocesan goal of having each working person contribute one hour's wage for this collection. For those retired or not working, any contribution is appreciated.



Pope, U.S. bishops congratulate Obama

By Catholic News Service

Pope Benedict XVI and the U.S. bishops sent messages to President-elect Barack Obama Nov. 5, congratulating him and offering prayers for Obama and for all the people of the United States.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, said that because Pope Benedict's message was addressed personally to Obama, the Vatican did not plan to publish it.

However, he said, the papal message opened by referring to the "historic occasion" of the election, marking the first time a black man has been elected president of the United States.

The pope congratulated Obama, his wife and family, Father Lombardi said.

"He assured him of his prayers that God would help him with his high responsibilities for his country and for the international community," Father Lombardi said.

The pope also prayed that "the blessing of God would sustain him and the American people so that with all people of good will they could build



U.S. President-elect Barack Obama smiles during election night victory rally in Chicago Nov. 4.

a world of peace, solidarity and justice," the spokesman said. Asked if the pope mentioned any specific issues he was concerned about, Father Lombardi

responded, "peace, solidarity and justice."

The message to Obama See OBAMA, page 3

Speaker to make the feminist case against abortion

Feminists for Life president to speak Nov. 20 at Clarion

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

CLARION — Serrin Foster, president of Feminists for Life of America, will present "The Feminist Case Against Abortion" at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 20 at Clarion University's Carlson Library. Foster's lecture will be followed by a question-and-answer session.

The event is co-sponsored by Students for Life, Clarion's Catholic Campus Ministry and the Newman Association.

Foster has led Feminists for Life since 1994. Under her leadership, FFL has advocated the Violence Against Women Act, enhanced child support enforcement and health care for pregnant women. The creator of the Women Deserve Better campaign has focused on developing resources and practical support for underserved pregnant and parenting students.

Her landmark speech, "The Feminist Case Against Abortion," has been recognized as one of the "Great Speeches in History" in an anthology on



Serrin Foster

Women's Rights. She has moderated pregnancy resource forums at top colleges across America, including Harvard, Stanford, Notre Dame and Texas A & M, and internationally at Oxford and Cambridge universities, among others. She sat down with FaithLife recently for a phone interview. Here is that transcript:

Q: As a non-sectarian, non-partisan, grassroots organization, what is the mission or motto of Feminists for Life?

A: "Our mission is to systematically eliminate the causes that drive women to abortion. There are two overarching reasons why women resort to abortion—the lack of resources and the lack of support. We believe that women deserve

better. We're dedicated to educating young women about better choices. Since 1994, we've had a College Outreach Program. Since that time, there's been a 30 percent drop in abortions among college graduates. That statistic is from the Guttmacher Institute, which is a former division of Planned Parenthood. So that to us is the key, to educate and find solutions for women who are pregnant and want to finish school. They deserve a better choice than abortion.

Q: How did you get involved with Feminists for Life?

A: "I was raised in a pro-life family and went to college when the Equal Rights Amendment was the most talked about thing on campus. Abortion clearly hurt women. Living in northern Virginia, there was no legal protection for women until Roe, but we all knew people who went to abortion clinics. From the pro-life community, all I heard about was the baby. And the baby was important, but I didn't hear too much about the woman. I really felt like I had no home, I wasn't at home in the pro-life movement as I knew it, and I

wasn't at home with the feminist movement. But abortion entering the debate just made me sick. To me, abortion was a betrayal of feminism. All people are equal. To me there was a problem being masked by abortion and it's caused a lot of problems for people. There is a high cost for abortion.

Q: Can you talk about some key points of your presentation, "The Feminist Case Against Abortion"?

A: "I'm going to talk about the history of the early American feminists and bring that alive for the students. They may not have an appreciation for what it was like. The rights we enjoy today—the right for slaves to be free, the right to vote and the right to life—were secured by these remarkable women. I'll talk about the 1970s women's movement awakened by 'The Feminine Mystique,' the book by Betty Friedan and how it influenced the founding of NARAL (National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League). I'll also discuss what we can do now to help women who are pregnant and on college campuses right now to sup-

port them and change their thinking.

Overwhelmingly people don't like abortion. Whether it's legal or not, Feminists for Life is going to sit there and problem solve. We're trying to stop abortion and stop the pain that women have. That hasn't been articulated by the pro-life movement. One of our slogans is 'Where have all the pregnant students gone?' They're not dropping out of school; they're going to abortion clinics. For us, it's important to find solutions for women and to educate those who are at the highest risk for abortion, the future leaders of this country, to think about abortion in a different way and problem solve. Right now abortion is legal in this country, and women don't have to accept that. We try to educate the pro-life people, not just the pro-choice people. It's not enough to just say no to abortion; you have to say yes to life. How do you do that? Through education and support."

Q: The results of FFL's survey, 'Perception is Reality, show that information financial aid, healthcare and housing for pregnant

See FEMINIST, page 3



IN THE U.S.

■ **In voting on 2008 ballot questions across the country, the Catholic Church's view against same-sex marriage prevailed, but most Catholic efforts to influence voting related to abortion, assisted suicide, embryonic stem-cell research and gambling failed.** Voters approved California's Proposition 8, which would amend the state constitution to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman, by a 52 percent to 48 percent margin, although opponents said the counting of absentee ballots could change the outcome. Similar proposals were approved in Arizona (57 percent to 43 percent) and Florida (62 percent to 38 percent).

■ **The passage of state constitutional amendments that define marriage as the union of a man and a woman in California, Florida and Arizona mark the end of a battle in those states, but it does not signal the end of the continuing fight over what marriage means.** And that's a fight in which the U.S. Catholic bishops plan to remain engaged for the long term. "It's certainly encouraging that the citizens of Florida, Arizona and California chose to uphold the traditional definition of marriage," said Archbishop Joseph Kurtz of Louisville, Ky., chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' recently created Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage. The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference hopes to pursue a similar amendment for the commonwealth beginning in January 2009.

AROUND THE WORLD

■ **The Vatican and Botswana established full diplomatic relations Nov. 4, raising to 177 the number of countries that exchange ambassadors with the Vatican.** A Vatican statement said that although just over 5 percent of Botswana's 1.6 million people are Catholic, good relations exist between the government and the Catholic Church. "The church is particularly involved in assistance

to the sick and orphans, in the prevention of disease and in opening new schools," the statement said. Botswana enjoys a stable multiparty democracy, but a high percentage of its people are living with the HIV virus. The Vatican said Catholic missionaries first arrived in the southern African country in 1850, but only opened their first school and mission in 1928. Currently, the country has one diocese and one apostolic vicariate, 27 diocesan priests, 38 parishes, 40 religious-order priests, four religious brothers, 77 sisters and about 300 lay catechists.

■ **The model of church-state separation that allows cooperation but rejects control by one or the other "is fighting for its life" in U.S. society,** said Mary Ann Glendon. The U.S. ambassador to the Vatican spoke Oct. 28 at a conference in Rome on "Religion and Freedom: The United States and Europe." Glendon told her audience that in the United States public officials still speak openly of faith, as President George W. Bush did when Pope Benedict XVI visited the White House in April or as Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., and Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., did in August with the pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif. "It would be difficult to imagine any English, French or Italian candidate who would agree" to speak on television to a pastor about personal beliefs while running for high office, Glendon said, adding that former British Prime Minister Tony Blair recently said "a politician in England is considered 'weird' if he speaks about religion."



Vatican



Botswana

■ **Closing the Synod of Bishops on the Bible by preaching a lesson on love of God and neighbor, Pope Benedict XVI said the word of God must be put into practice through service to others.** The concluding liturgy came after the pope accepted 55 final synod propositions, including a proposal that women be admitted to the official ministry of lector, or Scripture reader, at Mass. Joined by more than 250 bishops at a Mass Oct. 26 in St. Peter's Basilica, the pope said the synod had highlighted a fundamental truth: that the church's missionary activity will fall flat unless it is nourished by scriptural reading and understanding.

PEOPLE OF FAITH

■ **Pope Benedict XVI plans to make his first trip to Africa in March,** visiting Cameroon and Angola. The pope will make the trip to help prepare for the Synod of Bishops on Africa, scheduled for October 2009, and to mark the 500th anniversary of the evangelization of Angola. Sub-Saharan Africa has not hosted a pope since 1998, when Pope John Paul II visited Nigeria. Pope Benedict said his intention was to meet with representatives from African bishops' conferences in Cameroon and hand-deliver the African synod's "instrumentum laboris," or working document. The Synod of Bishops will be the second for Africa and is scheduled to take place in Rome. The theme is "The Church in Africa at the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace."



By the Way...

Carl Anderson, the Knights of Columbus leader, had an interesting comment on the results of the presidential election. Anderson said one reason why Barack Obama won the presidential election may be that he was more forthright than John McCain concerning his religious beliefs.



Jason Koshinski

"Sen. Obama gives every impression of being serious about his religion, that religion is important to him, that Christianity changed his life," Anderson said Nov. 6 at a news conference preceding a speech in Columbus, Ohio.

"Perhaps he made a stronger case for that than John Kerry or Al Gore (the losing candidates in the preceding two presidential elections) did. I don't believe Sen. McCain made quite the same case as President (George W.) Bush did in his two elections and President (Ronald) Reagan did earlier," said Anderson, supreme knight of the 1.75-million-member international organization of Catholics.

Anderson, who was a presidential assistant during the Reagan administration, said this does not mean the Democratic senator from Illinois is a better Christian than his Republican opponent. He said Obama made a stronger public presentation of his faith, while "McCain was more reticent about it."

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the death of Trappist monk and author Thomas Merton, Gannon University is sponsoring an Advent lecture and discussion series on Merton's life and work. Presentations by distinguished Merton scholars will be given on the four Sunday evenings of Advent, at 7 p.m., in Room 219 of the Waldron Campus Center on the Gannon campus.

On Nov. 30, J.S. Porter will speak on "Bonding with Readers: Merton's Voice of Friendship and Intimacy"; on Dec. 7, "Thomas Merton and Jubilee: A Likely Partnership" will be the topic of Mary Anne Rivera; Patrick F. O'Connell will speak Dec. 14 on "Awakening in Eden: Thomas Merton and the Return to Paradise"; the series concludes Dec. 21 with Bonnie Thurston's "Thomas Merton's Advent: Lessons and Carols." All events are free and open to the public.

Advent, the season of expectant waiting leading us to Christmas, is almost upon us. For Advent resources such as an activities calendar from Catholic Charities and downloadable Jesse Tree ornaments, visit www.EreCD.org.

FaithLife will adjust its schedule for the holidays. The final two issues of the year will be published the weekend of Dec. 6-7 and Dec. 20-21, the Sunday before Christmas. Publication will then resume the weekend of Jan. 18-19 in 2009.

Jason Koshinski is editor of FaithLife. Contact him at JKoshinski@EreCD.org or 814.824.1171.

Refugee admissions increase, but still far below pre-9/11 numbers

Erie Diocese reunites families, resettles 'free cases'

From staff and wire reports

The number of refugees admitted to the United States in the fiscal year ending in September increased substantially over the previous two years, though it still falls far short of resettlements before the 2001 terrorist attacks brought changes to admission requirements.

Of the more than 60,000 refugees admitted between October 2007 and September 2008, nearly 30 percent — 17,283 people — were resettled through Migration and Refugee Services of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In 2007, the U.S. admitted just 48,281 refugees, compared with 94,222 who arrived in the 2000 fiscal year, before post-9/11 security concerns changed the vetting system for refugees. Since then, the annual admissions number has dipped as low as 39,201 in 2003.

By comparison, MRS on its own processed tens of thousands of refugees each year in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1980 alone, MRS handled the entry of 132,000 of the 207,000 admitted nationwide. Most of them came from Vietnam.

The U.S. figures for 2008 include 13,823 Iraqi refugees. Of those, 4,234 — 31 percent — came in through the MRS network, according to Mark Sloan, associate

director of processing operations for MRS.

As of June, with a quarter of the fiscal year to go, the U.S. had admitted only about a third of its target of 12,000 Iraqi refugees, so more than 8,000 came in the last three months.

Sloan said there currently are about 1.5 million and 2 million Iraqi refugees in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and other parts of the region.

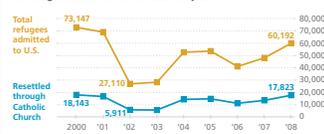
A target admissions quota set by the White House in September would allow 80,000 refugees this fiscal year. That includes 37,000 from the Near East region that includes Iraq. Sloan said the majority of those will be Iraqis, followed by Bhutanese and Afghans.

Another 5,000 visas are available for Iraqis who are classified as "special immigrants." That includes people who worked for the U.S. government or U.S. contractors in the region and are considered to be at risk because of that association.

Sloan said so far MRS sees no reason the U.S. would not meet next year's target for Iraqi refugee admissions. He cautioned that in a volatile region, refugee resettlement could be hampered

Refugee Resettlement

The Catholic Church resettled 30 percent of refugees admitted to the U.S. this year.



The church's refugee resettlement is handled by Migration and Refugee Services of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and its diocesan affiliates. The drastic drop in refugee admissions in 2002 and 2003 was a result of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

by changes in political climate brought on by events such as a recent U.S. military raid into Syria targeting an arms-smuggling network.

In an Oct. 22 press release with the MRS data, Johnny Young, executive director of MRS, said diocesan agencies, parishes and other community entities "went above and beyond the call of duty to help refugees find new lives."

In the Erie Diocese, refugee resettlement is done through the Catholic Charities Counseling and Adoption Services on West 10th Street in Erie. During the MRS fiscal year, Catholic Charities has been assigned 50 "free cases," which are persons who have no anchor family in the U.S., said Father John Santor, coordinator of the diocese's Catholic Refugee Ministry.

Prior to this year, Catholic Charities refugee resettlement was only dealing with family reunifications, Father Santor said, handling about five to seven cases per year.

The bulk of resettlement in Erie has been done by the International Institute, he noted, which prior to 9/11 had roughly

450 free cases per year. The third resettlement agency in the area is the Jewish Council for Families and Children, and they were reuniting about five to seven families per year from what Father Santor said he's been told.

"This year, more have come in and there are more on the way," Father Santor said. "We have three Catholic Iraqi families. They are being persecuted—all Christians are in Iraq—not for religious reasons but to confiscate their property so the money can be used to buy weapons. These warlords are trying to get as much money and power as they can."

MRS also noted that the "unaccompanied minor" program for 190 children who were in the United States without an adult guardian and for another 43 unaccompanied child refugees whose arrival is anticipated. Only about 50 unaccompanied minors are typically expected in one year, it said.

Sloan said the majority of refugees expected to arrive this year are from Bhutan, Burma and Iraq.

SSJs, Marketplace Grill to host Thanksgiving dinner



A line forms for the annual SSJ Thanksgiving Dinner at the Marketplace Grill.

THANKSGIVING, from page 1

giving dinner, Huber said guests numbered about 140.

Once again this year, Sister Mary Claire will greet guests at the door for servings at 11 a.m. and noon. The meal is free, and reservations are not required.

Individuals who are homebound can have dinners delivered to their homes between 10 a.m. and noon on Thanksgiving Day. Arrangements for home delivery must be made by calling 814.836.4100 on Wednesday, Nov. 26 between 9-11 a.m.

Peter Lyons, owner of Marketplace Grill, and his staff prepare the meal, which is served by the sisters and volunteers. While the dinner has built itself up over the years, Huber said the response from those who want to donate their time in serving, cleanup and delivery is quite remarkable.

"We have four shifts of volunteers because there are so many people who want to do it," she said. "They start signing up in

early October. They want that rewarding experience, and many of them come back year after year."

While there are enough volunteers to staff the dinner, donations of pies are accepted at the Sisters of St. Joseph Community Living Center on Nov. 26 from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. or at Marketplace Grill on Thanksgiving morning. Any leftovers go to area food banks.

Sisters usually accompany an SSJ associate or volunteer for the deliveries, Huber said.

"We try to have the sisters out there as much as possible," she said.

But the sisters' outreach extends beyond Thanksgiving dinner. Huber said they try to touch base with people throughout the year, sending greeting cards for the feast of St. Joseph and other holidays.

As for the future of the dinner, Sister Mary Claire said that as long as the need is there, the sisters will try to meet it.

"We'll be thankful for the next 20 years, too," she said.

Want to help?

The Thanksgiving dinner is supported annually through corporate and individual donations. Financial contributions to the SSJ Thanksgiving Dinner Fund can be sent to the Sisters of St. Joseph Community Living Center 5031 W. Ridge Road, Erie, PA 16506-1249.

All donations benefit the dinner and provide food and other items to those in need.

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Fax: (814) 824-1170
E-Mail: FaithLife@EreCD.org
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Briefly

Liturgical minister workshop

EMLENTON — St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Emlenton will host a workshop for lecturers and extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist on Saturday, Nov. 15 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The theme of the workshop will be: "We thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you." Deacon Jerry Beaman from the Diocese of Erie, St. Bernard of Clairvaux Parish, will be the guest speaker for the workshop. Lunch will be provided and reservations are required. Please call 724.867.2422 for more information.

Prep presents 'Man of La Mancha'

ERIE — Cathedral Prep High School in Erie presents "Man of La Mancha," the musical and classic inspiring story of Don Quixote. Performances will be held in the Cathedral Prep Auditorium on November 20, 21 and 22 at 7:30 p.m. and November 23 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for seniors and students. Father Michael DeMartino, campus minister, directs.



Taizé prayer around the cross

ERIE — Ecumenical Christian Taizé prayer around the cross is planned for 7 p.m. on Fri., Nov. 21 at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse, 444 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie. The gatherings include chanting, Scripture reading and silence. For more information, contact Sister Rita Panciera, RSM, at the House of Prayer in Erie, 814.456.1802.

Family day of reflection

FRENCHVILLE — To prepare for Advent and Christmas, Bethany Retreat Center in Frenchville will host a family day of reflection Sunday, November 23 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Adult retreat presenters include Father Philip Billotte, Sister Therese Dush, CA, and Sister Karen Willenbring, CA. Children's retreat presenters include Sister Suzanne Thibault, CA. All ages of children are welcome.

The day includes Mass, conferences, sacrament of reconciliation, personal prayer time and meals. The children's retreat program includes age appropriate activities to deepen the faith of participants.

To register or for more information, call 814.263.4855, e-mail bethanyadult@openwoods.net or go online at www.bethanyretreatcenter.org.

Silent directed retreat

CLINTON, Ohio — "Intimacy with God: A Silent Retreat Experience" is open to those ages 20-35 who seek to grow closer to God, want to consider life decisions and desire to find and be open to God's presence in their lives.

This retreat, conducted January 2-4 at Loyola of the Lakes Retreat Center in Clinton, Ohio, includes personal and communal prayer, short talks and presentations, guided meditations and one-on-one meetings with a spiritual director.

Cost is \$100, which includes room, board and materials. Scholarships are available.

Registration is due Nov. 23 with a \$10 deposit required. Make checks payable to Gannon University. Limited spaces will be filled as applications and deposits are received. Once all spots are filled, there will be a waiting list.

To register, contact Deacon Steve Washek at Gannon University at 814.871.7435 or e-mail washek003@gannon.edu.

Advent vigils at Mount St. Benedict

ERIE — The public is invited to attend the 7 p.m. Advent vigils offered each year at Mount St. Benedict Monastery, 6101 East Lake Road, Erie. As part of the vigils, the invited sisters and oblates will offer reflections each Saturday.

- Nov. 29 — oblates Nancy Sabol and Jo Clarke
- Dec. 6 — Sister Ann Hoffman, OSB
- Dec. 13 — Sister Sister Claire Hadert, OSB
- Dec. 20 — Sister Christine Vladimiroff, OSB, prioress

Peter Mayer 'Stars and Promises' concert

ERIE — Peter Mayer, the lead guitarist for Jimmy Buffet's Coral Reefer Band, will perform his "Stars and Promises" Christmas concert at 7 p.m. on Wed., Dec. 3 at St. Jude the Apostle Parish in Erie.

Mayer and his band take sacred and secular Christmas music, rearrange it and throw in a bevy of original songs for the program. The sounds of Native American flute, piano, percussion from around the world, and violin are added to the distinctive acoustic guitar and vocal work Mayer is known for. Visit www.littlelockmusic.com to listen to samples.

Mayer will be backed by an ensemble of musicians including Mark Holland, a Native American flute player; Scott Bryan (formerly with Sheryl Crow) on percussion; Chris Walters (former keyboardist for Alabama); and teen violin prodigy Maggie Estes. The chorus and handbell choir from Our Lady's Christian School will also perform with the band on several songs.

Advance tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students 18 and under or with college ID and are available at the St. Jude rectory and Our Lady's Christian School office and all First National Bank locations. Tickets at the door are \$20. Doors open at 6 p.m.

Fourth Annual Holiday open house at St. Joseph Monastery

ST. MARYS — The Trifles and Treasures Gift Shop at the St. Joseph Monastery, 303 Church St. in St. Marys, will kick off the Christmas season by hosting the convent's fourth annual Holiday Open House on Saturday, December 6, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

One of the largest religious gift shops in the area, Trifles and Treasures offers a wide range of religious and secular gifts for the Christmas season and beyond, including statues, medals, rosaries and more. Open house activities include a stitchery shop, Sweet Shop bake sale and music.

This year's Holiday Open House will also honor the artistry of the late Sister M. Augustine, OSB. Before her death this year, Sister Augustine had started two new limited edition ornaments for 2008, the Love Dove and the Nativity Angel. They will be released during the Christmas season, as there will be 50 of each ornament available Nov. 6 at the gift shop and the remaining 50 at the open house.

For more information about the convent's Holiday Open House, contact Sister Margareta at 814.834.2267 or visit www.benedictine-sistersofelkcounty.org.

Speaker to make the feminist case against abortion

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or parenting students is either difficult to find or not communicated clearly. Are resources on-campus and in society getting better?

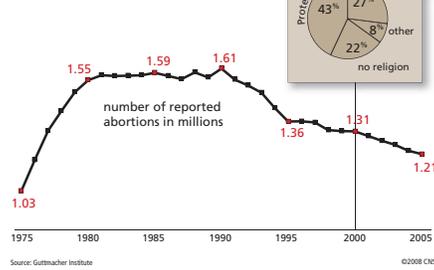
A: "That's the real question. What we know now is that the resources that need to be on campus are not there. Our focus is to help the schools that can afford to make these changes. Georgetown University has designed housing for students with children and started Hoya Kids, which is a child development and preschool facility for children of students, faculty and staff of Georgetown. That all came as a result of pregnancy resource forums on campus. Clarion had a pregnancy resource forum last year."

Q: One of the statements on the FFL Web site says, "We believe that we should hold responsible those who profit from women's pain—especially the abortion industry." How do you do about this?

A: "You have to eliminate the reasons why women have abortions. The best way to help them is to eliminate their desperation and not have them end up at a clinic. The emphasis isn't going to be just the no to abortion; it's going to be saying yes to life. One of the best ways to do that is to demonstrate support for life by giving pregnant and parenting students better options than abortion."

Abortions Decline

The number of reported abortions began to gradually decline in 1991 and continued to fall.



Q: Is there a particular event or encounter from your travels that has touched you or stayed with you?

A: "I was at the University of Pittsburgh, and after I spoke this woman came up said, 'Have you ever changed anybody's mind?' and I said yes. She looked at me and said, 'Well, you changed mine.' She told me she came to Pitt to go to med school to be-

come an abortion provider. She said, 'You changed my mind completely. Not only will I not ever perform an abortion but I will never refer anyone to an abortion clinic.' These are students who have never known a day without legalized abortion."

To find out more about Foster and Feminists for Life, visit www.feministsforlife.org. For more information about the lecture at Clarion, contact Dr. Thomas Rourke at 814.226.4872.

Pope, U.S. bishops congratulate President-elect Obama

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was sent through the office of Mary Ann Glendon, the U.S. ambassador to the Holy See, he said. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican secretary of state, also sent a message.

Father Lombardi said it is likely a formal message also will be sent on the occasion of Obama's Jan. 20 inauguration; in past years, the Vatican custom has been that the pope congratulates a new U.S. president only when he formally takes office.

Cardinal Francis George of Chicago,

president of the U.S. Catholic bishops, congratulated Obama on his "historic election" as the first African-American to win the White House.

"The people of our country have entrusted you with a great responsibility," the cardinal said in a letter to Obama on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. "As Catholic bishops we offer our prayers that God give you strength and wisdom to meet the coming challenges."

"The country is confronting many uncertainties," he said. "We pray that you will use

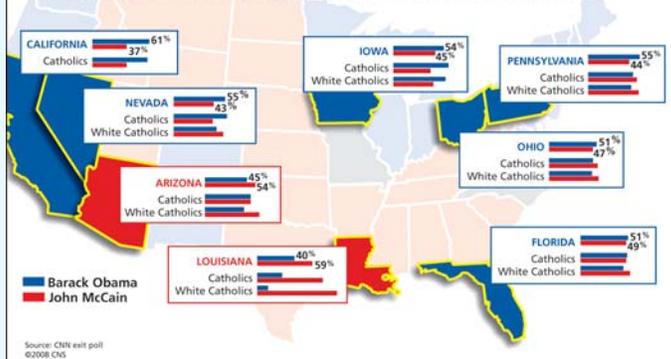
the powers of your office to meet them with a special concern to defend the most vulnerable among us and heal the divisions in our country and our world.

"We stand ready to work with you in defense and support of the life and dignity of every human person," he added in the letter, released by the USCCB in Washington Nov. 5.

"May God bless you and Vice President-elect (Joseph) Biden as you prepare to assume your duties in service to our country and its citizens," Cardinal George said.

Catholic Presidential Vote

In most cases, Catholic voters reflected all voters in their choice for president.



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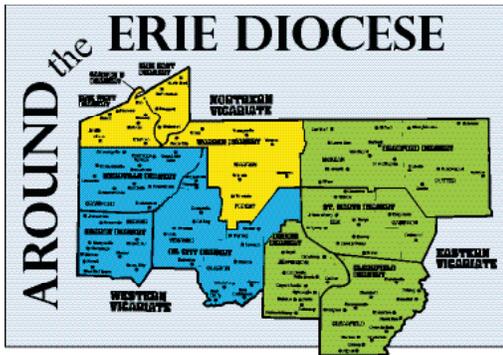
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St. Joseph float wins awards at Autumn Leaf Festival



LUCINDA — St. Joseph School in Lucinda entered a float in the 2008 Autumn Leaf Festival Parade organized by the Clarion Area Chamber of Business and Industry. The float won second place in the Kiddies Parade and won Best of Parade and first place in the community float competition in the Tournament of Leaves Parade in Clarion.

Pictured are St. Joseph students on their float. Inset: Tracey Becker, executive director of the Clarion Area Chamber, presents St. Joseph School with its awards. Pictured from left to right are: (front row) Lucas Baker, Beth Bauer, Rachel Baker, Cassie Kriebel, (back row) Tracey Becker, Eric Baker, Lisa Marano (art teacher, float art work) and Devon Farmer.

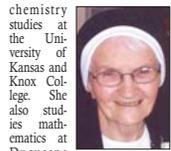
Mercy sister honored for 75th jubilee

Sister Mary Clare McWilliams says she loved the Sisters of Mercy from the first day she entered the community.

"Throughout the years, they recognized the gifts I received from God," Sister Mary Clare said. "They provided me with opportunities to serve in ministries that were life-giving. God's love has been in my heart all these years."

Sister Mary Clare was honored at a Mass and reception at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse in Erie Oct. 26.

She earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry and music from Mercyhurst College and furthered her



Sister Mary Clare McWilliams, RSM

before earning her nursing degree from Clarion University in 1975 when she was in her early 60s.

Sister Mary Clare taught at several schools in the Erie Di-

ocese: St. Edward, Corry; St. Adrian, Delancy; and St. Cosmas and Damian, Punnusutawney. She was principal at St. Michael, Greenville, and St. Patrick, Franklin. She also taught at St. Justin, Pittsburgh.

During her nursing career, she served at St. Francis Hospital, Pittsburgh; DuBois Hospital, DuBois; the infirmary of the Sisters of Mercy, Erie; and Chinle Hospital and Indian Health Service on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona.

From 1963-69, she was the general superior of the Sisters of Mercy, Erie.

Schools match wits in To Know and to Serve religion competition

ERIE — Five teams from elementary schools in the Erie Diocese that won their regional To Know and to Serve religion competitions met at St. Mark Catholic Center Oct. 30 for the diocesan competition.

The To Know and to Serve project combines religious education and service for sixth grade students in the Diocese of Erie's Catholic school system. The project encourages students to enhance their knowledge of the Catholic faith through a competitive setting.

One of the project's goals is to increase the interaction between sixth grade students and social service agencies in an attempt to provide additional opportunities for service projects, said Kim Lytle, director of curriculum for the diocese's Office of Education.

Each elementary school in the diocese shared a five-member team of sixth graders and competed at the regional level. The entrance "fee" had each class adopt a social service agency. At the local and deanery levels, winning teams received \$100 to donate to their sponsored agency. The team winning the diocesan competition received an additional \$100 for its agency.

The five teams that won their



regional competition included: St. Joseph, Sharon; St. Marys Catholic Middle School, St. Marys; Ss. Cosmas and Damian, Punnusutawney; St. James, Erie; and Blessed Sacrament, Erie.

The diocesan competition featured six rounds of 10 questions. Each team scored higher than 50 out of 60 during the final. However, the winning team from St. James missed only one question, scoring 59 out of 60.

Pictured from left to right are: Sister Colette Hilow, CDS, principal of St. James School, St. James team members Rosemary Campbell, Theresa Fachetti, Alexandra Lombard, Alaina Kusseusko, Shamus Brady and Alex Madura, Lytle and Father Nicholas Rouch, vicar for education.

All material for the questions came from the fifth and sixth grade RCL textbooks.

Each student received a certificate, a bookmark imprinted with the Beatitudes and a medal blessed by Bishop Donald Trump.

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DEATH NOTICE

Sister Rosemary Murphy, RSM, dies at 83 Served as elementary school teacher

Sister Rosemary Murphy, RSM, died October 31, 2008, at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse in Erie. She was in her 64th year of religious life.

For many years she was known as Dorothy Ann. She was born July 15, 1925, in Titusville, a daughter of the late Michael Joseph and Blanche Mangel Murphy. On September 24, 1944, she entered the Sisters of Mercy at St. Joseph Convent, Titusville, from St. Walburga Parish, Titusville. She professed perpetual vows on June 15, 1952. In 1972 she celebrated her silver jubilee; in 1995, her



Sister Rosemary Murphy, RSM

golden jubilee; and in 2005, her diamond jubilee. She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Mercyhurst College and a master's degree from Fredonia State College as a reading specialist.

Throughout her life, Sister Rosemary served as an elementary teacher at St. Justin, Pittsburgh; St. Michael, Greenville; St. George and St. Luke, Erie; Ss. Cosmas and Damian, Punnusutawney; St. Catherine, DuBois; and St. Patrick, Franklin. She also served as director of the curriculum library at Mercyhurst College and faithfully visited the Erie County Prison.

She was employed by the Intermediate Unit as a reading specialist at St. George and St. Luke schools, Erie; and the Greenville School District.

Sister Mary Jude McCluskey, RSM, dies at 80 Ministered in education, pastoral care

Sister Mary Jude McCluskey, RSM, died October 29, 2008, at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse in Erie. She was in her 51st year of religious life.

She was born August 19, 1938, in DuBois and baptized Leona, a daughter of the late William and Stella Vneski McCluskey. On September 8, 1957, she entered the Sisters of Mercy at St. Joseph Convent in Titusville from St. Catherine of Siena Parish in DuBois. She professed perpetual vows on August



Sister Mary Jude McCluskey, RSM

13, 1965. In 1985, she celebrated her silver jubilee; in 2007, her golden jubilee.

She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Mercyhurst College. She taught at St. Walburga School, Titusville; St. Michael School, Greenville; Immaculate Conception School, Brookville, and the former St. Justin School, Pittsburgh. She was principal at St. George School, Erie.

She was certified in theology and psychology of pastoral ministry from Erlange, Ky., and in the National Association of Catholic Chaplains. She served as pastoral care manager and chaplain at DuBois Regional Medical Center. At ShadySide Hospital in Pittsburgh, she worked with heart, cancer, neurology and diabetic patients.

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About 58% of women and men religious are past age 70; 7% are past age 90. More than 4,900 need skilled nursing care. Even at advanced ages, many work in compensated or volunteer ministry that benefits others.

Religious institutes are financially autonomous and responsible for the support of their members. Income sources include compensated ministry, government benefits and investment return.

Most elderly religious receive, on average, a Social Security benefit of just \$4,402 per year. Community living provides some economies of scale, but health care and living costs in most religious communities far exceed income.

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