

**Bishops roundup**

Papal trip, Iraq, politics, liturgy, new president top USCCB meeting, page 2.



# FaithLife

150 years  
St. Boniface  
marks parish,  
school  
milestone,  
page 3.



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BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

November 25, 2007

## Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

### Feast days



Christ the King St. Nicholas

- Nov. 25 Christ the King
- Nov. 30 St. Andrew
- Dec. 3 St. Francis Xavier
- Dec. 4 St. John of Damascus
- Dec. 6 St. Nicholas
- Dec. 7 St. Ambrose
- Dec. 8 Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Consistory for the creation of 23 new cardinals - Nov. 24



Pope Benedict XVI recently named 23 new cardinals, including U.S. Archbishop John P. Foley, grand master of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher, and U.S. Archbishop Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, the first cardinal from a Texas diocese. The pope will formally install the cardinals during a special consistory at the Vatican Nov. 24. Look for coverage in the next issue of *FaithLife*.

Mass at DuBois Central Catholic High School - Nov. 28

Bishop Donald Trautman will celebrate a school Mass for the students of DuBois Central Catholic High School at 10:45 a.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 28.

Installation of permanent diaconate candidates - Dec. 1

Bishop Trautman will install nine men as candidates for the permanent diaconate at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 1 at St. Mark Seminary Chapel, 429 E. Grandview Blvd. in Erie. These men are fourth-year students in the diocese's permanent diaconate formation program and are scheduled to be ordained deacons in May.

- Lawrence Caggese, St. Leo, Ridgway
- Denis Coan, St. John the Baptist, Erie
- Raymond Ehrensberger, St. Mary, St. Marys
- Frank Lombardo, Holy Rosary, Erie
- John Mang, St. Francis Xavier, McKean
- Thomas Matusiak, Holy Trinity, Erie
- Kenneth Reisenweber, St. Brigid, Meadville
- Owen Wagner, Notre Dame, Hermitage
- John Wren, St. Joseph, Oil City

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception - Dec. 8 (holy day of obligation)

December 8, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, patroness of the United States, is a holy day of obligation in the United States even though it falls on Saturday this year. Vigil Masses in anticipation of the solemnity are celebrated on Friday evening.



Download **Jesse Tree ornaments and reflections** at [www.ErieRCD.org](http://www.ErieRCD.org)

## Giving to those who gave of themselves

Twenty years of stats show religious retirement needs still great

By Jason Koshinski  
*FaithLife* editor

At 95, Sister Margaret Harrison, OSB, is the most tenured member in the community of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie.

In her ministry throughout the Erie Diocese, she has taught piano, violin, orchestra and chorus. That ministry lasted about 40 years.

Today, her joy comes through the use of a sewing machine instead of a piano. Sister Margaret spends her

days in the sewing room at Mount St. Benedict Monastery. She does the community's alterations including clothing, draperies and other items for some interior decorating clients.

These days she has her mind on ecology. In her attempt to conserve plastic grocery bags, Sister Margaret has sewed a cloth bag for each sister at the monastery—114 of them. She has also made 176 bags for the clients of the Emmaus Food Pantry who come in twice a week.

"They're getting me more and more used to it," she says. See GIVING, page 4



Sister Margaret Harrison, OSB, shows off some of her sewing handwork, one of more than 300 cloth tote bags she has made to help

reduce the use of plastic grocery bags. At 95, Sister Margaret is one of 113 retired women religious in the Erie Diocese.

## National Catholic Youth Conference



A crowd of more than 20,000 young people from across the U.S., including 100 from the Erie Diocese, gather Nov. 8 in the Nationwide Arena in Columbus, Ohio, for the opening session of the 2007 National Catholic Youth Conference. The three-day event featured worship, seminars, a Catholic theme park, music and lots of time for fellowship. Look for a full story in the Dec. 9 issue of *FaithLife*. (CNS photo)

## Coming to AMERICA

Pope to visit New York, Washington in April

By Catholic News Service

### BALTIMORE

—Pope Benedict XVI will visit Washington and New York April 15-20. Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States, confirmed the dates of the papal trip and announced the pope's itinerary in remarks Nov. 12 at the beginning of the annual fall meeting of the U.S. bishops in Baltimore.

According to the archbishop, the pope will arrive in Washington April 15 and will receive an official welcome at the White House April 16. That afternoon, coincidentally his 81st birthday, he will address the U.S. bishops.

The following day he will celebrate Mass at the new Nationals baseball stadium in Washington. Later that day he will meet with directors of Catholic universities and colleges and diocesan educational leaders at The Catholic University of America in Washington and then he is to attend an interreligious meeting at the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center.

On April 18, the pope will be in New York to address the United Nations in the morning and attend an ecumenical meeting in the afternoon. The following day he will celebrate Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in the morning and meet with youths and seminarians in the afternoon.

While in New York the pope will visit ground zero on the morning of April 20. Ground zero is the site where the twin towers of the World Trade Center stood before they were brought down by terrorist attacks Sept. 11, 2001. In the afternoon, he will celebrate Mass at Yankee Stadium, which will be the final event of his U.S. trip.



## Priests, parish reps gather in Oil City to study marriage amendment

By Anne-Marie Welsh  
*FaithLife*

As the first step in asking members of the Erie Diocese to support the Pennsylvania Marriage Protection Initiative, Bishop Donald Trautman asked all pastors and parochial administrators to attend a two-hour workshop in Oil City earlier this month. All were asked to bring two representatives from their parishes interested in learning about the initiative and promoting the grassroots action necessary to amend the commonwealth's constitution to define marriage as "between one man and one woman and no functional equivalent union."

Approximately 100 people gathered Nov. 9 at St. Joseph Parish to hear the presentation by staff members of Pennsylvania for Marriage, an advocacy group established under the Pennsylvania Family Council. Coordinated by the Family Life Office, the heart of the event was a presentation by Christine O'Donnell of Pennsylvania for Marriage.

The bishops of Pennsylvania

and the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference, are endorsing the effort to bring the initiative before the legislature again, after it failed to pass in the last session of the senate. Amending the constitution requires passing an initiative in two consecutive legislative sessions before placing it on the ballot to be voted on by citizens across the commonwealth.

O'Donnell said Pennsylvania currently has a Defense of Marriage Act which states that marriage is a civil contract by which one man and one woman take each other for husband and wife. But she warned the act could be overturned as it has been in other states, and that an amendment is necessary to protect the law from court challenge.

Twenty-seven states, mostly to the west of Pennsylvania, have passed marriage amendments. O'Donnell pointed out a number of cases in which the civil rights of religious organizations have been challenged as a result of court rulings, most notably in New Jersey, where a lesbian couple sued for the right to hold a ceremony for a civil union on the private property of a United Methodist Church camp-



Priests and parish representatives throughout the Erie Diocese listen to a presentation from Christine O'Donnell of Pennsylvania for Marriage (right) Nov. 9 at St. Joseph in Oil City. Approximately 100 people attended the workshop on the Pennsylvania Marriage Protection Initiative.

ground retreat. (The church is counter-suing, claiming the right for a religious group to determine how they use their privately-owned facilities.) Joe Cicero, who was invited to attend as a representative of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Girard, plans to help spread the word about the Marriage Protection Amendment Initiative among his fellow parishioners.

"I'm a guy that reads the paper all the time," he said. "I listen to national and local

news and I wasn't even aware that they're trying to get this initiative on the ballot. This seems like a pretty important piece of legislation so I want to get behind it."

Also speaking in Oil City was Msgr. Mark Bartchak, judicial vicar of the Erie Diocese, who provided a theological framework for the church's understanding of sacramental marriage. Relying primarily on the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Msgr. Bartchak also cited several Scripture refer-

ences to marriage, noting that the Bible begins with the creation of man and woman in the image and likeness of God and closes with the vision of the wedding feast of the Lamb in the Book of Revelation.

"Marriage is an important concept in our essential faith document," he said. "It is woven throughout Scriptures and is an image used to teach about other mysteries of our faith." Focusing on the idea of marriage as between one man and one woman, he said, "It's not something we invented, it's not something the church



### IN THE U.S.

■ With the Diocese of Buffalo acknowledging they have no way of knowing if merging city parishes will stem the tide of massive membership losses and prevent further church closings in the future, according to a report in the Nov. 1 edition of *The Buffalo News*. The diocese's restructuring plan, which includes several consolidations and closings, has met with resistance. Suburban residents who attend urban churches out of an attachment to a particular building, pastor or congregation often end up joining another Catholic parish closer to where they live. If the city church closes, said Sister Regina Murphy, diocesan director of research and planning. The dramatic changes in the diocese may cause some Catholics to leave the church altogether, but Sister Regina doesn't foresee a large-scale exodus. The population of Catholics, she said, will continue to shrink in western New York at its current rate of attrition, in line with larger demographic trends. Diocesan officials have stressed that by merging parishes, they hope to create larger congregations with more vibrant worship.



■ In a statement for Veterans Day, the U.S. military archdiocese paid tribute to "every man and woman who faithfully served in the noble causes of securing peace and freedom in the military service of our great nation." The statement, issued by Auxiliary Bishop Richard B. Higgins, archdiocesan administrator and vicar for veterans affairs of the Washington-based U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, said, "To our courageous and honorable veterans, we thank you. The same

devoted spirit that drove our patriotic ancestors to fight alongside Gen. George Washington in the Revolutionary War and Gen. George Patton in World War II still rings true for those who fight alongside our current generals in Iraq, Afghanistan and wherever American troops are deployed."

### AROUND THE WORLD

■ Chilean Catholic bishops have defended a Chilean pharmaceutical company's right to refuse to sell the morning-after pill because it considers the drug abortive. Auxiliary Bishop Fernando Chomali Garib of Santiago, a member of the bishops' bioethics commission, wrote in early November that forcing the pharmaceutical industry to sell the drug is wrong. At least one pharmaceutical company said the government is forcing it to sell the drug. In mid-October, the Chilean Health Ministry fined three pharmaceutical companies that control 90 percent of the Chilean market for not selling Levonorgestrel 0.75 as required by law. The companies are appealing the fines.

■ The Catholic Church's stand against prostitution and trafficking puts it in the middle of public policy debates heating up in Eastern Europe. Pope Benedict XVI's homeland, Germany, has legalized prostitution and is accused of luring women from poorer countries — mainly the Czech Republic, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine — into brothels and sex clubs. Earlier this year in Bulgaria, legislation proposing the legalization of prostitution emerged from a working group involving the Interior Ministry and the National Tourism Board. In Romania, a top adviser to the president began advocating legalized prostitution a year ago. A draft law was circulated through ministries and was signed by a high-profile female minister of justice who is currently an official of the European Union. In Moldova, the media reported in February that a law to legalize prostitution was under consideration by the government. To date, it has not been formally proposed. The Catholic Church op-

poses to legalize prostitution in each country.

### PEOPLE OF FAITH

■ The sainthood cause of Blessed Damien de Veuster took a significant step forward when the medical commission of the Vatican Congregation for Saints' Causes ruled that the healing of a Hawaiian woman of lung cancer more than 10 years ago was "unexplainable according to available medical knowledge." The woman prayed to Blessed Damien and made pilgrimages to Kalaupapa, where he ministered and where in 1994 a portion of his remains were brought from his final resting place in Belgium. The woman's healing still has to be approved as a miracle by a commission of theologians, a commission of bishops and cardinals and ultimately by the pope. The Belgian missionary went to the Hawaiian islands in 1873 to care for the permanently quarantined victims of Hansen's disease.



Blessed Damien de Veuster

■ A top Vatican official beatified Ceferino Namuncura, the son of a Mapuche Indian chief who embraced Catholicism in the 19th century. The Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, presided over the Nov. 11 beatification Mass in Blessed Namuncura's hometown of Chimpay, Argentina. More than 200,000 people attended the ceremony. Blessed Namuncura already enjoyed a popular saintlike status among the Argentine poor. He was a Salesian novice when he died of tuberculosis in Rome in 1905 at the age of 18.



Blessed Ceferino Namuncura

## By the Way...

Bishop Donald Trautman, the outgoing chair of the U.S. bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, was one of 10 nominated candidates when the bishops voted for their conference's new president Nov. 13. The bishops elected Cardinal Francis George of Chicago as their president and Bishop Gerald Kicanas of Tucson, Ariz., as their vice president. While Bishop Trautman said he wasn't campaigning for the office, he added it was an honor to be nominated by his brother bishops.



Jason Koshinski

Many parishes and church groups have supported our troops overseas the last few years. Nov. St. Brigid in Meadville wants to help their families. The parish is beginning a support group for military families. The first meeting will take place on Monday, Dec. 10 at 7 p.m. beginning with a special service in the church. The group is non-denominational and open to the public. "As we got into this, we're finding out there are a lot of people interested in this type of a group," said Father Mark O'Hern, parochial vicar at St. Brigid. "We don't have a firm goal for the group, but we're going to start with this idea and see where it takes us."

The first meeting will be a prayer service followed by a reception where organizers hope to glean from attendees what they would like to get out of the group. One goal would be to meet monthly. "The best thing we can hope for is for this to spread to other places and have people follow this up in their own areas," Father Mark said. Alumni from St. Paul School and CCD classes in Erie are planning an "all class" reunion scheduled for May 10, 2008. Alumni can contact Kathy Cirillo at 814.873.1398 or [kcirillo@sys-online.org](mailto:kcirillo@sys-online.org) and Jeannette DelleCurti at 814.838.2145 or [jmdcjr@roadrunner.com](mailto:jmdcjr@roadrunner.com) for further details.

Today's feast of Christ the King marks the final Sunday of Ordinary Time and the end of the church year. Next week is the First Sunday of Advent. An Advent family calendar from Catholic Charities is available on the diocesan Web site at [www.ErieCatholic.org](http://www.ErieCatholic.org). The printable calendar includes a Scripture verse, reflection and activity for every day of the season.

Also, to help bring a message of hope and a call to action, Catholic Charities has launched an Advent appeal to support diocesan agencies that provide help to those in need. Donors can make a contribution to the agency of their choice: Good Samaritan Center, St. Martin Center, Prince of Peace Center, St. Elizabeth Center, Counseling & Adoption Services, Christ the King Manor, John XXIII Home, Harborcrest Youth Services, Better Homes and Catholic Charities pastoral services. For more information, log on to [www.ErieCatholic.org](http://www.ErieCatholic.org) or call 1.800.374.3723 ext. 250.

Jason Koshinski is editor of FaithLife. Contact him at [JKoshinski@ErieCatholic.org](mailto:JKoshinski@ErieCatholic.org) or 814.824.1171.

## Advent and Christmas events

### Young adult retreat

ERIE—"Waiting: Who Me? For What?" an Advent retreat for young adults ages 21-40, will be held on Sat., Dec. 1 from 1-8:30 p.m. at Mount St. Benedict Monastery, 6101 East Lake Road, Erie. Sponsored by the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, the retreat will be led by Sister Dorothy Stoner, OSB, and Sister Janet Goetz, OSB.

For more information or to register, contact Sister Dorothy by Mon., Nov. 26 at 814.899.0614 ext. 2511 or e-mail [formation@msbenedict.org](mailto:formation@msbenedict.org)

### Catholic Rural Ministry Advent country walk

PORT ALLEGANY—The sisters of Catholic Rural Ministry are sponsoring the Annual Family Advent Country Walk on Sat., Dec. 1 at the Catholic Rural Ministry Center, 472 Sartell Creek Road in Port Allegany. The event will take place from 2-4 p.m. and include the walk, evening prayer, reflection and refreshments. RSVP by Thurs., Nov. 29 by calling 814.544.8017 or e-mail [crm@qzotomedia.net](mailto:crm@qzotomedia.net).

### Monastery gift & ceramic shop holiday open house

ST. MARYS—The Trifles and Treasures Gift Shop and Sister's Ceramic Shop at St. Joseph

Monastery, 303 Church St. in St. Marys, will host its 3rd Annual Holiday Open House on Saturday, Dec. 1 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. including a bake sale and music.

Managed by Sister M. Margoretta, OSB, Trifles and Treasures offers a wide range of religious and secular gifts for the Christmas season and beyond. Sister's Ceramic Shop, founded in 1964 by Sister M. Augustine, OSB, also offers a wide range of unique pieces. This year, Sister Augustine has created a limited edition of 100 ornaments titled *The Peace*. For more information about the open house, call Sister Margoretta at 814.834.2267.

### Guitarist Peter Mayer to perform at St. Jude

ERIE—Peter Mayer, the lead guitarist for Jimmy Buffett's Coral Reefer Band, will perform a "Stars and Promises Alive" concert on Mon., Dec. 10 at 7 p.m. at St. Jude Parish in Erie.

Mayer and his band will also be joined by the chorus and hand bell choir from Our Lady's Christian School 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 Erie Bank locations. Tickets at the door are \$20 and \$15, respectively. Doors open at 6 p.m.

## Papal trip, Iraq, politics, liturgy, new president top USCCB meeting

By Catholic News Service

BALTIMORE — The announcement of dates and locations for Pope Benedict XVI's U.S. visit next year highlighted the U.S. bishops' Nov. 12-15 fall general meeting in Baltimore. The April 15-20 trip will include visits to New York and Washington and an address at the United Nations.

On Nov. 13, for the first time in 36 years, the bishops elected a cardinal — Francis E. George of Chicago — as their next president. Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, Ariz., was elected vice president.

The same day, with the approval of the body of bishops, a new statement on Iraq was issued in the name of the bishops' outgoing president, Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, Wash. It says that some U.S. policymakers "seem to fail to recognize sufficiently the reality and failures in Iraq and the imperative for new directions."

On Nov. 14, the last public day of the four-day meeting, the bishops approved the document "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility From the Catholic Bishops of the United States."

The document rejects politics based on "powerful interests, partisan attacks, sound bites and

media hype" and calls instead for "a different kind of political engagement." That engagement must be "shaped by the moral convictions of well-formed consciences and focused on the pursuit of every human being, the dignity of the common good and the protection of the weak and vulnerable," it said.

The bishops also approved several liturgical agenda items Nov. 14, a document on liturgical music, an English-language version of a document on weekday celebrations of the Liturgy of the Word and a Spanish-language version; and revised readings during Lent.

The music document, "Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship," had originally been proposed as a document that would have required Vatican approval and would have been binding on bishops in their dioceses. But Erie Bishop Donald Trautman, outgoing chairman of the bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, said the committee decided to recommend the document only as a guideline for bishops, not as "normative law."

The bishops voted overwhelmingly Nov. 13 to draft a brief policy statement on embryonic stem-cell research and a pastoral document on reproductive technologies. Earlier that day, the bishops took the final steps to formalize the new USCCB

structure and approved a \$147.7 million budget for 2008 and a 16 percent reduction in the diocesan assessment to fund the USCCB.

### MEETING AT A GLANCE

At their fall general meeting in Baltimore, the U.S. bishops...

- ✓ Received details of Pope Benedict XVI's April 15-20 visit to the United States.
- ✓ Authorized a new statement on Iraq that says some U.S. policymakers "seem to fail to recognize sufficiently the reality and failures in Iraq and the imperative for new directions."
- ✓ Elected Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago as their new president, and Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, Ariz., as vice president.
- ✓ Heard a briefing on an ongoing study of the "causes and context" of clerical sexual abuse.
- ✓ Voted to draft a brief policy statement on embryonic stem-cell research and a pastoral document on reproductive technologies.
- ✓ Approved a \$147.7 million budget for 2008 and a 16 percent reduction in the diocesan assessment that funds the USCCB.
- ✓ Issued the 2008 version of their quadrennial "Faithful Citizenship" election statement.
- ✓ Approved legislation specifying when a bishop must get the consent of his diocesan finance council and college of consultors before certain financial transactions or commitments. The legislation needs Vatican approval.
- ✓ Approved three liturgy related documents concerning music, celebrations of the Liturgy of the Word, and revised readings during Lent.
- ✓ OK'd a curriculum framework for catechetical materials for high school students.
- ✓ Approved a document on stewardship and tithing.
- ✓ Approved guidelines for catechetical instruction on chaste living for children and teens.



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*Daniel Cabanillas*

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**Thursday, December 27, 2007**  
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Tickets are available today at the rectory: 814-864-0622  
Also available at *Largie Floral Design*, 3857 Peach Street  
Questions? Please call Jackie at 814-864-7046

Festive Reception immediately following event.  
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Highlighting Daniel's CD: *Oh Night of Love*  
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## Briefly

### Parishes to host *Why Catholic?* retreats

Five parishes in the Erie Diocese will host *Why Catholic?* retreats beginning Dec. 1 and running through Dec. 6. The retreats are open to all *Why Catholic?* faith sharing groups, as well as any parishioners at the respective parishes. No registration is necessary.

*Why Catholic?* is a four-year program that focuses on Scripture related to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Small faith-sharing groups meet once a week during two six-week sessions each year. Groups have just finished the second six-week session for 2007. Year three of the program will begin during Lent 2008.

The theme of the retreats is "Eucharist: Bread for the Journey." Sister Kathleen Collins of RENEW International will lead the retreats.

### *Why Catholic?* parish retreats – Eucharist: Bread for the Journey

Sat., Dec. 1 ..... St. Joseph, Force ..... 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Mon., Dec. 3 ..... St. Bridgid, Meadville ..... 7-9 p.m.

Tues., Dec. 4 ..... St. Michael, Greenville ..... 7-9 p.m.

Wed., Dec. 5 ..... Holy Cross, Fairview ..... 10 a.m.-noon

Thurs., Dec. 6 ..... St. Jude, Erie ..... 7-9 p.m.

## People in the News

### Greg Baker named director of campus ministry for Mercyhurst College

Greg Baker, director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Erie Diocese, has been named the new director of campus ministry for Mercyhurst College.

"My time with the diocese has been a pleasure and a privilege working with the youth and religious education leaders of the diocese, as well as the youth, young adults, pastors, principals and campus ministers."

Citing a desire to have more direct contact with young people, Baker described the decision as bittersweet. Baker served the diocese since 2004.

"I am most grateful to Bishop Trautman and the good people of the diocese for entrusting me with this important position," he said. "My prayer for this diocese is that all of us may continue to pour ourselves out for young people, inspiring them to grow in passion for the mission of the Gospel."



Greg Baker

## St. Boniface celebrates 150 years of church, school

By Jason Koshinski  
FaithLife editor

Ever since Father Joseph Oberher began teaching a handful of students in 1857 at the rectory of St. Boniface in Erie, the parish and school have coexisted as a thriving faith community. Many of the names listed in the current membership can be traced back to the German and Irish families living in Greene Township at the time of the parish's inception.

Since March, St. Boniface Parish and School have been celebrating their 150th anniversary with a total of 44 events. The celebration culminated Oct. 28 with an anniversary Mass and dinner.

"It's a very active, busy place with more than 800 families," said Father Jay Schultz, who has been the pastor of St. Boniface for more than a year. "Many people think of us as a little country parish; it's a lot different than that."

And it is an exciting time for the St. Boniface community. The parish will meet with Bishop Donald Trautman shortly to discuss possible renovations, which would include expansion of the church and the addition of an office wing.

"We're meeting weekly as a parish, so it's definitely coming fast," Father Schultz said. "Everything's growing—the parish, school enrollment, the township. We're trying to position ourselves for the future, too, by being a little pro-active."

An official announcement is expected shortly.

Some of the anniversary events throughout the year have included a family movie series, a first-ever Harvest Fest, a parish garage sale, an anniversary auction and a Forty Hours observance. Nearly 500 people attended the parish anniversary dinner.

"We celebrate the 150 years of the risen Jesus, the Christ, here at St. Boniface," Bishop Trautman said during the anniversary Mass homily. "It is the response of the



Top: St. Boniface dedicated a new brick walkway around its Blessed Mother shrine for the parish's anniversary; Bottom right: Deacon Tim Good, Msgr. Cas Bogniak, Bishop Donald Trautman, Father Ray Hahn and Father Jay Schultz at the anniversary Mass Oct. 28.



people of this parish, your faith and good works, your discipleship and witness for Christ that we celebrate today."

In addition to Bishop Trautman and Father Schultz, Msgr. Cas Bogniak, Father Ray Hahn and Deacon Tim Good were in attendance.

After Mass, the color guard of the parish's Knights of Columbus council led a procession to the statue of the Blessed Mother located between the church and school. The bishop then blessed the statue's garden area and new brick walkway completed by the St. Boniface Knights.

For their brick project, the Knights committed to donating \$10 for each engraved brick sold. After the blessing, the Knights presented Father Schultz and the parish anniversary committee with a check for \$580 to help offset some of the expenses for the year-long celebration. Three special brick monuments recognized the parish's anniversary, the unborn and the Knights' dedication to Mary.

"We wanted to help clean up the area around the statue," said John Altman, grand knight of the St. Boniface Knights of Columbus. "With the anniversary, we tried to find a way to finance it and honor it at the same time. We wanted the bricks to be here for the next 150 years."

When Barbara Portenier first started teaching at St. Boniface School in 1986, there was no science lab, just desks and books. Today, she is the principal of 12 years, and the school has been established as science oriented with a hands-on lab that extends to all students in K-8.

"Our niche, first and foremost, is the Catholic education of the children," Portenier said. "We're also concentrating on science and math. We're not putting any of the subjects aside, but kids are really interested in science. If you put them in a hands-on lab, they can do anything."

The school is also focusing on fine arts and music. In the last four years, the number of

students in the music program has quadrupled, Portenier said. Forty students are involved in chorus while 20 are in band with private lessons. St. Boniface also has a hand bell choir.

"Four years ago, we had a chorus of about six kids," she said. "Now it has just taken off."

With students from Erie, Millcreek, Harborcreek, Ft. LeBoeuf and Watsburg, Portenier said the school is truly the lifeblood of the parish. Volunteers, whether they have children or grandchildren who attend the school or graduated years ago, offer their service. They help clean, do repairs and office work, work in the cafeteria and read to the children.

"It's always busy and active, and it just keeps the parish young," she said. "One of the things that I notice about the community in general is that they are so supportive of Catholic education in the school. They're so involved. There's a sense of community within the parish and the school."

## Priests, parish reps gather in Oil City to study marriage amendment

MARRIAGE from page 1

decided: it's the teaching of God we have known from the beginning of creation." He asked those in attendance to get involved with the initiative as a way to promote the truth about marriage as it is understood by nature and as it is revealed by God.

Ann Badach, director of the diocesan Family Life Office, also took the opportunity to familiarize attendees with the U.S. bishops' National Pastoral Initiative for Marriage, a multi-year effort to communicate the meaning and value of married life for both the church and society. A national research project is currently underway involving input from focus groups including married couples, separated and divorced persons, single



"I listen to national and local news and I wasn't even aware that they're trying to get this initiative on the ballot. This seems like a pretty important piece of legislation so I want to get behind it."

— Joe Cicero  
St. John the Evangelist Parish in Girard

young adults, couples who are remarried and priests and deacons from throughout the country. The bishops are also engaged in ongoing dialogues with social scientists and theologians.

At this stage in the initiative, the U.S. bishops have identified marriage as a priority and intend to promote and improve the pastoral ministries that strengthen marriage and family life.

"In particular," Badach said, "there are plans for an emphasis on ministries and outreach that can take place within parishes." She recommended visiting the new page on the U.S. bishops' Web site, [www.foryourmarriage.org](http://www.foryourmarriage.org), for more information.

## Making your voice heard

"Advocating for an issue with your legislator is extremely simple," according to Erin Landini-Grogan, director of the Parish Social Ministry Office for the Diocese of Erie. Landini-Grogan was one of several presenters at the educational session on the marriage amendment initiative held recently in Oil City. She listed three steps people should take when advocating for an issue:

- 1. Educate yourself on the issue for which you are advocating.** This can involve everything from examining your personal beliefs to studying the church's position. For information on the marriage amendment initiative, Landini-Grogan recommended visiting the Web site of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference, [www.pacatholic.org](http://www.pacatholic.org).
- 2. Contact your legislators.** To find your legislators and their contact information, simply visit [www.legis.state.pa.us](http://www.legis.state.pa.us) and enter your zip code for a complete listing as well as direct links. Consider a personal visit to legislators' offices in your area, e-mails, phone calls and letters.
- 3. Spread the word.** Landini-Grogan considers this one of the most important aspects of the process. "Legislators listen to their constituents," she said. Eleanor Rossman of Pennsylvania for Marriage, an advocacy group under the Pennsylvania Family Council, concurs. "We've heard people say that five visits and ten phone calls change a vote," she said.

Christine O'Donnell, also of Pennsylvania for Marriage, clarified the role churches can play by emphasizing that although churches are not allowed to endorse candidates, they are allowed to speak out on specific pieces of legislation. Parishes are also free to publish contact information for area legislators in their bulletins.

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Saturday, December 8th  
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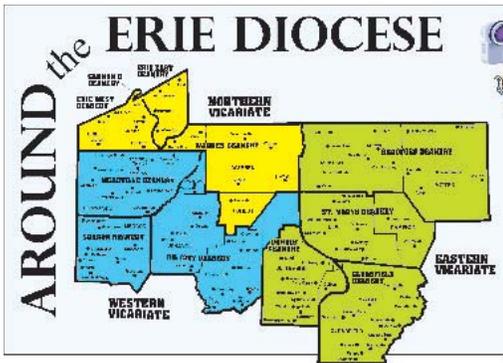
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All parishes, missions, schools and groups are encouraged to choose a correspondent who can regularly e-mail news items to "Around the Erie Diocese" at [FaithLife@ErieRCD.org](mailto:FaithLife@ErieRCD.org)

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### Cathedral Center, Erie



Cathedral Center 3rd graders recently went blueberry picking at Conn's Farm in North East. Students picked 65 pounds of blueberries which were donated to the Emmaus Soup Kitchen. Pictured are Lauren Miller (left) and Lauren Andrychowski.

ERIE — Cathedral Center has added several new staff members this year, including principal Kathleen Lane. During the 2007-08 school year, Cathedral Center will be going through its third reaccreditation with Middle States. The school has also upgraded its technology with a mobile computer lab consisting of 28 laptops and technology instruction from pre-school through 8th grade. The fall musical, Disney's "Alice in Wonderland Jr.," is under the direction of Almi and Shawn Clerkin. Students will also participate in the annual Young Authors' Party, Biography Tea and Ice Cream Social.

### St. Anthony in Sheffield honors veterans



SHEFFIELD — On Nov. 11, Veterans Day, the religious education students at St. Anthony in Sheffield honored the veterans of the parish (below) by serving them breakfast following the 9 a.m. Mass. Students also presented readings and songs.

At the microphone is Anna Stanko (above), who read the welcome and a poem by Ralph Waldo Emerson. Savannah Klyler read "Twas the Night Before Christmas for a Soldier."



### Kane area Catholic Daughters celebrate 100 years



KANE — Bishop Donald Trautman celebrated the 100th anniversary Mass for the Catholic Daughters Court in the Kane area on Sept. 23 at St. Callistus Parish in Kane.

Pictured (left to right) are: Dolores Croyle, state treasurer; Alice Cizek, district deputy; Laraine McGinnis, state regent; Bishop Trautman; Margaret Novak, first vice state regent; Letty Calvetti, national director; Sue Hutchins, regent of Court St. Callistus; and Margaret Guckin, second vice state regent.

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas is the largest national organization of Catholic women in the world dedicated to strengthening their spiritual life through Christ and the church. Members include Catholic lay and religious women 18 years

or older who support the church and wish to participate in social and charitable activities. For more information on the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, visit [www.catholicdaughters.org](http://www.catholicdaughters.org).

### Giving to those who gave of themselves

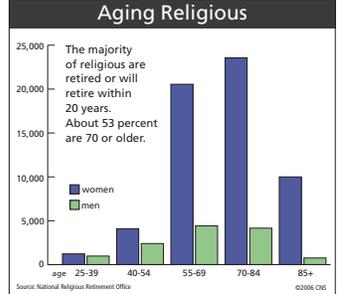
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material," Sister Margaret says proudly with a smile. All in all, she's made more than 300. The sewing of each bag takes her 15 to 20 minutes once the material is cut. Making her way through the monastery, she is aided by a motorized cart which also carries a supply of oxygen. She is one of the many sisters throughout the diocese who continue to give so freely of themselves, even in retirement.

Sister Mary Rita Kuhn, SSI the diocese's vicar for religious, visits the infirmities of the local congregations, which provide skilled and intensive care for women religious.

"I am always impressed with what good spirits those sisters are in and how they continue to take care of their own health needs as best they can," Sister Mary Rita said. "Their ministry really is prayer ministry now. And these are people who were extremely active and took care of us many years ago."

The annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection, designed to reduce the unfunded retirement liability of the nation's religious orders, will be taken up the weekend of Dec. 8-9 throughout the U.S. For 20 years, it has proven by far to be the most generous special collection in U.S. Catholic history. The money collected in December is given to the commu-



nities that are eligible in the form of basic grants for the personal care of elderly or infirm members.

The National Religious Retirement Office is the coordinating body that oversees the collection. The office is jointly sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men and the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious.

But despite steady support by American Catholics for the national Retirement Fund for Religious, the unfunded liability for the care of elderly U.S. men and women religious continues

to grow, according to a new report.

Annual national collections since 1988 have raised more than \$529 million for the needs of retired religious, with more than \$507 million being distributed to more than 500 religious congregations, the June statistical report of the National Religious Retirement Office showed.

But a December 2006 survey of 327 women's institutes and 154 men's institutes showed that only 11 percent of women's congregations and 12 percent of men's congregations reported being "adequately funded" for the retirement needs of their members.

The report showed that 91 percent of women religious and 86 percent of men religious over age 70 receive Social Security benefits, but the average annual benefit for religious was \$4,209, compared to more than \$12,000 for the average U.S. beneficiary.

### Bouquets of prayers at Kennedy Catholic

HERMITAGE — A new tradition began at Kennedy Catholic High School in Hermitage following the school's annual homecoming celebration. Instead of having the flowers from the Oct. 13 festivities go to waste, students brought them to school on the following Monday and placed them at the foot of the Kennedy Catholic chapel altar.

The flowers and prayers were offered as a gesture of sharing and thanks, said religion teacher Mary Reimold.

"Here at Kennedy, we had these huge, elaborate bouquets, and we had been talking about homecoming and how much of a waste it was to have all these flowers just go to one evening," Reimold said. "On Monday, the students brought them in and the flowers were still fresh."

For from, there is already talk of placing flowers outside at the school's shrine to the Blessed Mother.



Anne Sommerfeld (left) and Cassie Fill place their homecoming flowers at the foot of the Kennedy Catholic chapel altar.

### Retirement Fund for Religious

Please give generously in your parish on December 8-9, 2007. 814-824-1125

Sister Therese invested wholeheartedly in a religious life of prayer, service, and simplicity. At 91, she's still at it. Her community, like many others nationwide, asks for your help with today's high costs of elder care.

Sister Therese of the Infant Jesus Daughters, 91, Discalced Carmelite Nuns © 2007 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. All Rights Reserved. Photographer Jim Judkis.

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