

## Making headlines

Pope Benedict XVI named top newsmaker of 2006, page 2.



# FaithLife

[www.ErieRCD.org](http://www.ErieRCD.org)

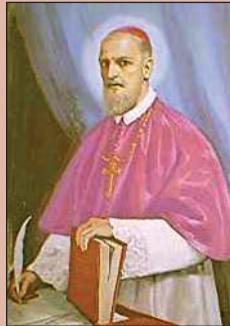
BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

January 14, 2007

## Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

### Feast days



St. Francis de Sales



St. Angela Merici

Jan. 17	St. Anthony
Jan. 20	St. Fabian, St. Sebastian
Jan. 22	St. Vincent
Jan. 24	St. Francis de Sales
Jan. 25	The Conversion of St. Paul
Jan. 26	St. Timothy and Titus
Jan. 27	St. Angela Merici

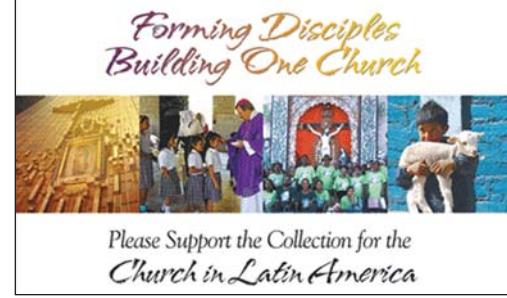
### Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – Jan. 18-25

"They were astounded beyond measure, saying, 'He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.'" (Mark 7: 31-37)

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is celebrated around the world each January and calls Christians to express their growing unity by joining together in responding to human suffering.

The year's theme, prepared by the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Commission for the Promotion of Christian Unity, has its origins in the experience of Christian communities in the South African of Umlazi, near Durban, a region deeply affected by unemployment and poverty but most of all by HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that 50 percent of the residents of Umlazi are infected with the virus.

### Collection for the church in Latin America – Jan. 20-21



Proceeds from this national collection, to be taken on the weekend of Jan. 20-21, are distributed to dioceses, parishes, religious congregations, seminaries and other Catholic institutions throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

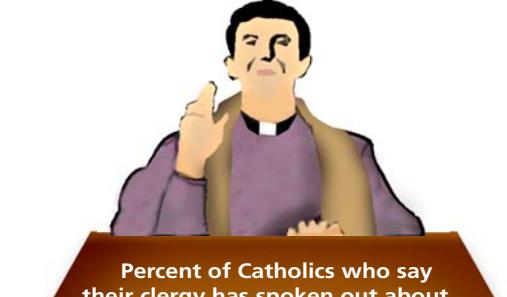
Funds assist in the formation of priests, religious, lay ministers, missionaries, pastoral workers, catechists and youth ministers—fellow Catholics who are rich in faith but lacking in material resources.

"When we contribute to this collection, we are actively living out our call to stewardship, and are participating in a work of solidarity with our Latin American brothers and sisters," said Bishop Donald Trautman.

The collection also helps the Diocese of Erie to continue responding to the basic needs of impoverished people in our Sister Diocese of Yucatan, Mexico.

### Day of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person – Jan. 22

In all the dioceses of the United States, Jan. 22 is observed as a particular day of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion, and of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life.



Percent of Catholics who say their clergy has spoken out about...

Hunger and poverty	96
Abortion	75
Situation in Iraq	51
Laws regarding homosexuality	50
Stem-cell research	38
Immigration	31

From a nationwide survey of adults conducted July 6-19. Based on those who attend service at least monthly. Source: Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life ©2006 CHS

## Diocese announces two elementary school closings

### Catholic education still widely available, bishop assures

By Jason Koshinskie  
*FaithLife* editor

The Diocese of Erie announced Jan. 5 that two diocesan elementary schools will close at the end of the 2006-07 academic year but that all 151 children currently enrolled in these schools will have access to other Catholic schools in their areas.

Sacred Heart School in Erie and St. Titus School in Titusville will close when the school year is completed in June. Both schools are affiliated with Catholic parishes, which remain open and fully operational; only the schools at these parishes are affected by this decision.

Bishop Donald W. Trautman made the announcement at a news conference at St. Mark Catholic Center on Jan. 5, a day after parents, teachers and faculty were informed at each school.

"The decision to close a school is never an easy one," Bishop Trautman said. "I am

well aware of the heartache and disruption that is caused when families must choose a new school and when children must leave the familiar halls of their school environment. I also have a special sense of regret for the wonderful administrators and teachers who are affected by this decision."

Citing declining enrollment and financial pressure, Bishop Trautman said he consulted with Father Skip Davis and Father John Detisch, pastors of St. Titus and Sacred Heart, respectively, as well as the diocesan Office

and Catholic schools as impacting its decision. Bishop Trautman said the decision was also based on assessing other factors, which include but are not limited to financial strength, educational excellence and accreditation,

of Education and other staff members.

No other Catholic schools in the diocese will close in 2007, he said.

Of the two schools that are closing, Sacred Heart has endured a 63 percent decline in enrollment, going from 290 students in 2001-02 to 106 students in the current school year. The enrollment decline at St. Titus over the past five

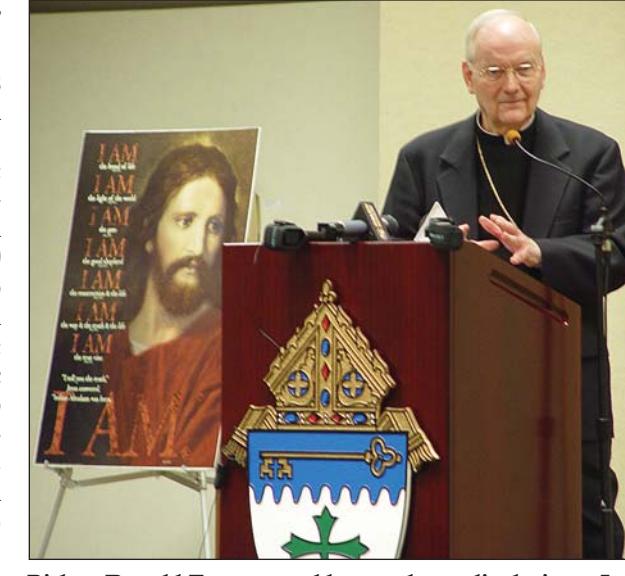
years is 56 percent, going from 102 students in 2001-02 to 45 this year.

The diocese pointed to statistics on population and enrollment within the diocese for both public

and Catholic schools.

"No bishop wants to close a school, but we have to be open to the changing demographics. Our hope is to maintain the number of Catholic schools that we have,"

– Bishop Donald Trautman



Bishop Donald Trautman addresses the media during a Jan. 5 news conference at St. Mark Catholic Center. The diocese announced Sacred Heart and St. Titus elementary schools will close at the end of the 2006-07 school year.

proximity to other Catholic schools and community support.

"No bishop wants to close a school, but we have to be open to the changing demographics," Bishop Trautman said.

On the subject of regionalization, Bishop Trautman said that while the diocese operates several regional schools, in some geographical areas it is not possible.

See SCHOOLS, page 3

## Youth teams have hand in planning own rallies

### Middle school rally set for March 24 at OLP

By Jason Koshinskie  
*FaithLife* editor

HERMITAGE – For the nearly 500 youth and leaders who attended the annual Senior High Youth Rally held in November at Kennedy Catholic High School in Hermitage, it was a chance to get together for prayer, worship and fun.

For members of the youth leadership team, it was an opportunity to have a hand in planning the rally for their peers.

The youth leadership team was a new aspect to this rally. Senior high youth were part of the planning and operation of the rally in a variety of roles including emceeing and coordinating games, a service project, musicians for adoration and witness talks. Team members also held an overnight retreat the night before the rally.

Involving youth in leadership roles is central to youth ministry, said Greg Baker, director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Erie Diocese.

"I often tell parishes that if you want to predict whether a youth event will fly or flop, just look at the planning team," Baker said. "If a bunch of well-intentioned adults plan the event for youth, it is a safe bet that not many youth will show up. On the other hand, when youth are invited to dream up and plan events, you are guaranteed that the event will be designed in a way that is exciting, fun and meaningful for the youth. Good money has it that more than a handful of youth will show up."

He cites the energy and creativity youth offer, unique perspectives, willingness to try new things and ability to bond with people of faith of other ages or parishes among the many benefits of having them involved from beginning to end.

They also have a refreshingly strong faith in Jesus Christ, Baker said.

To find out more about the Middle School Youth Rally on March 24 or the National Catholic Youth Conference Nov. 8-11 or to register, visit [www.ErieRCD.org/youth.asp](http://www.ErieRCD.org/youth.asp) and click on Programs & Events. Visit NCYC on the Web at [www.cdeducation.org/ncyc](http://www.cdeducation.org/ncyc).

Students attending the *We Believe!* youth rally in Hermitage in November make blankets for those in need as part of the rally's service project. Students made close to 100 blankets that were shared between the Pregnancy Crisis Center and John XXIII nursing facility.

The location of the diocesan youth rallies rotates each year between the three vicariates.

This year is the Northern Vicariate's turn to host the Middle School Youth Rally, which will be held Sat., March 24 at Our Lady of Peace Parish in Erie.

The theme of this rally will focus on image and how dignity and beauty come from God and not media sources. Because of the benefits of involving youth as leaders, involving youth as peer ministers and leaders has become a more formal and permanent aspect of the rallies.

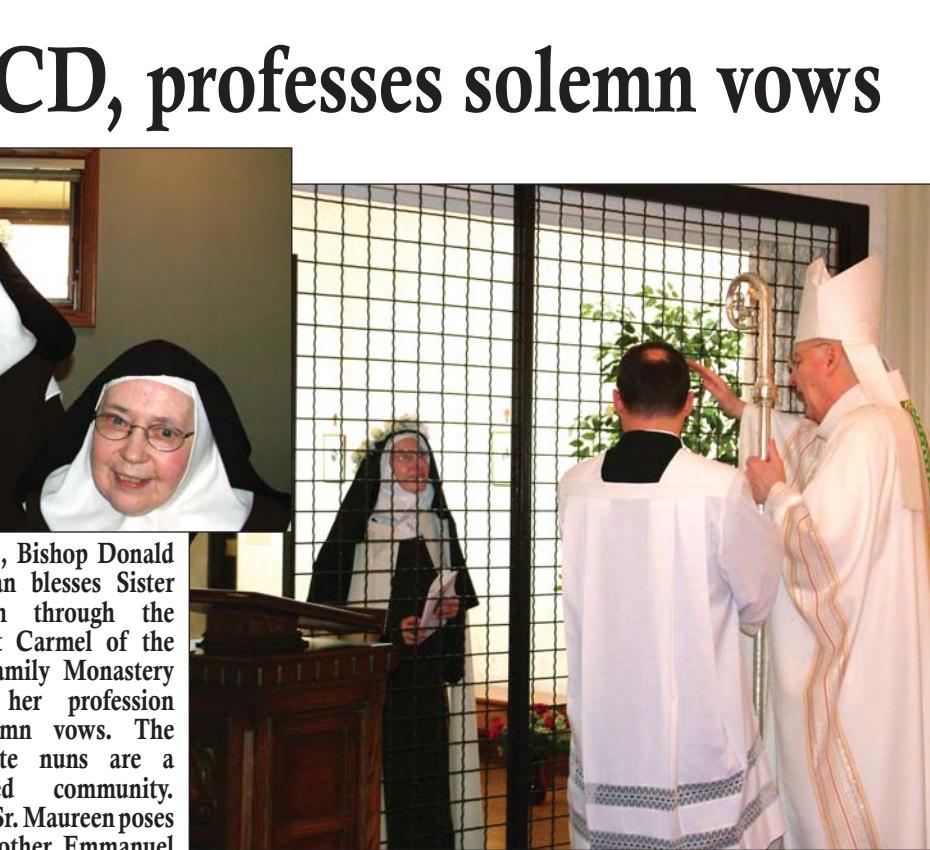
"I have learned that the more effort I place in inviting youth to plan for diocesan

youth rallies, the better the event will be," Baker said.

A unique opportunity the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Office is planning is a trip to the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) Nov. 8-11 in Columbus, Ohio. The event features the best of Catholic youth speakers and musicians and is expected to be attended by more than 17,000 youth from across the nation. NCYC is open to high school age young people and their chaperones.

The Erie Diocese is limited to the first 200 reservations. This event will take place of the traditional senior high youth rally in the diocese for 2007.

Photos by Rich Papalia



Students attending the *We Believe!* youth rally in Hermitage in November make blankets for those in need as part of the rally's service project. Students made close to 100 blankets that were shared between the Pregnancy Crisis Center and John XXIII nursing facility.

## Sister Maureen, OCD, professes solemn vows

By Jason Koshinskie  
*FaithLife* editor

ERIE – On Dec. 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Sister Maureen of the Precious Blood, OCD, made her solemn profession and veiling at Carmel of the Holy Family Monastery in Erie.

Sister Maureen is the newest member of the Carmelite Sisters, a cloistered contemplative community of sisters who reside at the monastery, located at 510 E. Gore Road in Erie. The charism, or spiritual focus, of the Carmelite Order is contemplative prayer. The order also has a strong Marian devotion.

The monastery chapel was filled with family, friends and guests.

"Lord, you have called me. Here I am," Sister Maureen said during her religious profession.

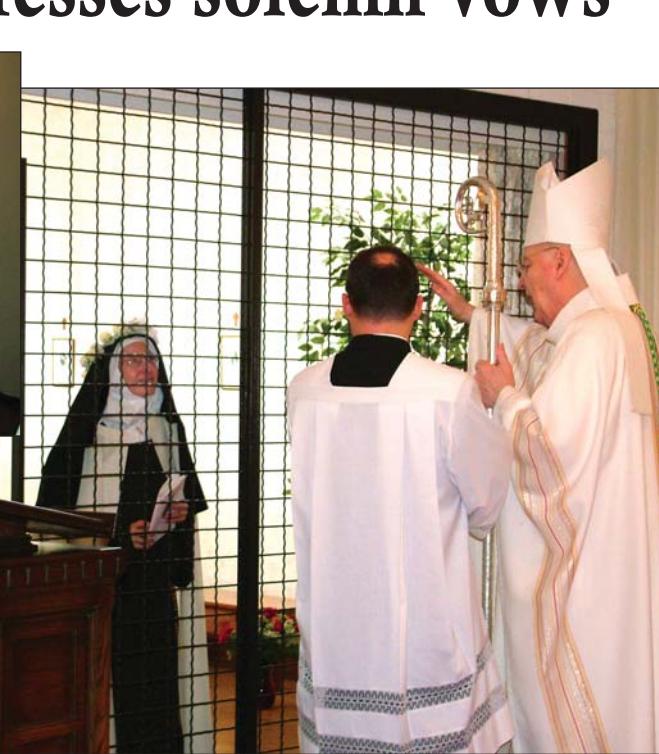
During the bestowal of the veil, Bishop Donald Trautman blessed it with holy water before Mother Emmanuel Smith, superior of the community, placed it on the head of Sister Maureen.

Bishop Trautman presided at the Eucharistic liturgy for the solemn profession and veiling. Concelebrants included Msgr. John Snyder, chaplain

of the Sisters of Mercy; Father Michael Kesicki, rector of St. Mark Seminary; Father Nicholas Rouch, vice rector of St. Mark Seminary; Father



At right, Bishop Donald Trautman blesses Sister Maureen through the grille at Carmel of the Holy Family Monastery during her profession of solemn vows. The Carmelite nuns are a cloistered community. Above, Sr. Maureen poses with Mother Emmanuel Smith, OCD, superior.



Photos by Rich Papalia

Edward Lohse, vice chancellor of the Diocese of Erie; and Father Kevin Joseph Fimian, parochial vicar at St. Agnes Parish in Arlington, Va.

## Relations with Islam, Pope Benedict named top story, person of 2006

WASHINGTON — Catholic editors voted Islam's relations with church and society as the top religious news story of 2006, followed closely by continuing debate over immigration reform in second place and the Iraq War in third. Pope Benedict XVI, in the first full year of his papacy, was far and away the editors' choice as newsmaker of the year. President George W. Bush was second and Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, Wash., was third. The poll was the 45th annual survey of Catholic News Service client newspapers. When the editors' poll was first conducted in 1962, the overwhelming choice for top story was the opening of the Second Vatican Council. Last year, editors chose the death of Pope John Paul II as the top religious story of the year and Pope John Paul as the top newsmaker.



**TOPNEWS**

**STORIES**

1. ISLAM
2. IMMIGRATION
3. IRAQ
4. CHURCH FINANCES
5. 'THE DA VINCI CODE'

**NEWSMAKERS**

1. POPE BENEDICT XVI
2. PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH
3. BISHOP WILLIAM S. SKYLSTAD
4. ST. MOTHER THEODORE GUERIN
5. JUSTICE SAMUEL ALITO JR.



### NEWS BRIEFS

U.S.

#### Death penalty support wanes as life without parole gains public favor

WASHINGTON —

As 2006 came to an end, capital punishment was making headlines for what it is not doing: overall declining use, waning support and recent challenges at the state levels about how it is conducted. Shifting public support for capital punishment is a "ray of good news" for Frank McNeirney, co-founder of Catholics Against Capital Punishment, who said he hopes the trend continues. Death penalty statistics in a year-end report from the Death Penalty Information Center in Washington offered



reasons for optimism among opponents of capital punishment. For starters, the group noted the results of a newly released Gallup Poll showing that more Americans support alternative sentences of life without parole over the death penalty as punishment for murder. The center also reported that U.S. death sentences are the lowest they have been in 30 years; executions have sharply declined and the number of people on death row has decreased. During 2006, 53 people were executed, down from 60 in 2005 and 98 in 1999, the report said.

#### Up to 25 U.S. bishops could retire for age reasons in 2007

WASHINGTON — Up to 25 U.S. bishops, including five cardinals, could retire because of age this year. There are 14 still-active U.S. bishops, including three cardinals, who have already turned 75. Eleven more, including two cardinals, will celebrate their 75th birthday in 2007. At age 75 bishops are requested to submit their resignation to the pope. Cardinal Adam J. Maida of Detroit turned 75 March 18, 2005. He was bishop of Green Bay, Wis., before he was made archbishop of Detroit in 1990. Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore turned 75 last March 4. Formerly bishop of Harrisburg, Pa., he has been archbishop of Baltimore since 1989. Cardinal Bernard F. Law, archpriest of St. Mary Major Basilica in Rome, turned 75 Nov. 4. Cardinal Edward M. Egan of New York, whose 75th birthday is coming up April 2, will celebrate 50 years as a priest later this year. He was made a New York auxiliary bishop in 1985, bishop of Bridgeport, Conn., in 1988, and archbishop of New York in 2000. Cardinal F. James Stafford, a Baltimore native who will mark his 75th birthday July 26, has been the Vatican's major penitentiary since 2003. He was made a Baltimore auxiliary in 1976 and bishop of Memphis, Tenn., in 1982. He became archbishop of Denver in 1986, and president of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, 1996-2003.

WORLD

#### After Saddam hangs, Vatican says execution not way to justice

VATICAN CITY — Executing someone guilty of a crime "is not the way to restore justice and reconcile society," the Vatican spokesman

said after Saddam Hussein was hanged Dec. 30. Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi said, "A capital execution is always tragic news, a motive for sadness, even when it involves a person found guilty of serious crimes." In a formal statement issued shortly after Saddam's death was announced, Father Lombardi said, "The position of the Catholic Church against the death penalty has been reaffirmed many times." The death penalty not only will not restore justice in Iraq, but also can "increase the spirit of vengeance and sow new violence," he said. "In this dark time in the life of the Iraqi people one can only hope that all leaders will make every effort so that in such a dramatic situation spaces will open for reconciliation and peace," he said.

#### More than 3.2 million attended papal events in 2006

VATICAN CITY — With two public events still to go in 2006, the Vatican reported Dec. 28 that more than 3.2 million people attended papal audiences and liturgies during the past year. Almost 1.3 million people joined Pope Benedict XVI for the recitation of the Angelus on Sundays and feast days at the Vatican and at the papal summer residence in Castel Gondolfo, the Vatican reported. The statistics, compiled by the Prefecture of the Pontifical Household, do not include figures from Pope Benedict's four trips abroad in 2006, or from his trips to Italian cities. The Vatican said 539,200 people had attended papal liturgies at the Vatican and at Castel Gondolfo during the year. Another 357,120 people took part in special audiences for particular groups. In addition, the Vatican said a total of just over 1 million people attended one of the pope's weekly general audiences on Wednesdays at the Vatican or Castel Gondolfo.

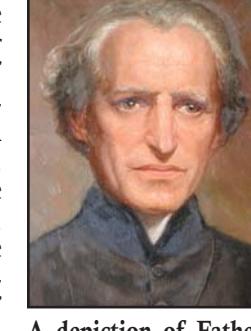
#### Pope says secret to living full life lies in opening up to baby Jesus

VATICAN CITY — The secret to living a life full of peace, joy and love lies in opening up one's heart to the baby Jesus, Pope Benedict XVI said. "Everyone discovers in the baby of Bethlehem (that he or she) is freely loved by God" and sees "God's infinite goodness," the pope said in his first general audience of 2007. With his birth, Jesus "abundantly spread among all people the gifts of goodness, mercy and love," the pope said. "Only the baby that lies in the crib holds the true secret of life." The Christ Child wants everyone to welcome him and "make room for him in our homes, our cities and our society," he added. Wishing some 9,000 pilgrims packed into the Paul VI Hall a "Happy New Year," the pope dedicated his weekly catechesis to the First Letter of St. John the Apostle. God's love for humanity is so great, he said, that not only did God send his only Son to redeem the sins of mankind, he also has called people to be his own children.

PEOPLE

#### Father Moreau, founder of Holy Cross order, to be beatified

VATICAN CITY — The French founder of the Holy Cross priests, brothers and sisters will be beatified in his home diocese in September, the religious order announced. The Vatican Secretariat of State informed the order Dec. 7 that Father Basile-Antoine Marie Moreau will be beatified Sept. 15, 2007, in Le Mans, France. Beatification is a major step in the church's sainthood process. Born Feb. 11, 1799, he was a priest of the Diocese of Le Mans and a seminary professor. He established two societies of the Association of the Holy Cross — one for men and one for women — with a focus on educating young people and evangelizing. Members of the Holy Cross family continue to operate schools around the world, including the University of Notre Dame in Indiana.



A depiction of Father Basil Anthony Moreau, founder of the Holy Cross priests, brothers and sisters.

## By the Way...

Happy New Year!

Many churches throughout the diocese had blessed chalk available for parishioners to take home and use above their doorways as part of an Epiphany custom. It is customary for the faithful to bless their homes by writing over the front door: 20 + C + M + B + 07. The digits appearing at the beginning and end designate the new year. "CMB" stands for the traditional names of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar). The CMB also conveniently stands for the Latin prayer Christus Mansionem Benedict, meaning "May Christ bless this house."



Jason Koshinski

We have received quite a bit of feedback on the Jesse Tree ornaments, which were featured in the November/December issue of *Faith* magazine and are available to print or download at [www.ErieRCD.org](http://www.ErieRCD.org), the official Web site of the diocese. The ornaments have become quite popular from folks not only in the Erie Diocese but throughout the country. We received feedback from readers as far away as Ireland.

Speaking of *Faith* magazine, Patrick O'Brien, president and CEO of Faith Publishing Service, which helps design *Faith* for the Erie Diocese, has sent word that the Catholic Church Extension Society has joined the *Faith* family, bringing the total circulation of the 13 *Faith* publications to 526,500. Others already on board include the dioceses of Erie, Lansing, St. Augustine, Saginaw, Raleigh, Portland, Manchester, Laredo and Grand Rapids, the archdioceses of Chicago and Boston and a national edition produced by Lansing.

The Erie Diocesan Cursillo Movement has openings for their "short course in Christianity" weekend for women Feb. 8-11 at Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Harborcreek. Please visit [www.eriecursillo.org](http://www.eriecursillo.org) or call 814-456-2948 for more information.

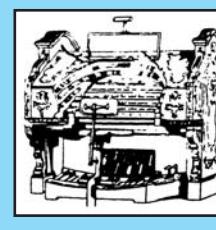
Selah Praise Band of Our Lady of Peace Parish will give a concert of praise and worship music, followed by Mass at Blessed Sacrament Parish, Erie, on Jan. 21. The concert will begin at 6:45 p.m., with Mass to follow at 7:30. Selah's current CD will be available for purchase before and after the event. All are welcome to come and enjoy an evening of uplifting music and fellowship.

Catholic Relief Service Projects is offering a 12- to 17-day tour of Kenya and outreach opportunity in July. The trip includes visits to national parks, Mt. Kenya, schools, villages, tea and coffee farms and an optional stay behind time. To find out more, call Sister Marian Wehler, OSB, at 814-372-4784 or 449-3624.

Jason Koshinski is editor of *FaithLife*. Contact him at [JKoshinski@ErieRCD.org](mailto:JKoshinski@ErieRCD.org) or 814-824-1171.

We sponsor BUS TOURS to Pittsburgh, Cleveland, North Tonawanda and Buffalo to hear *The Mighty Wurlitzers*

\$40 for members, \$45 for non-members



Price includes show ticket, and round trip bus.

Erie Area Theatre Organ Society

Call Joe Luckey at 871-7276

Leave your number for a return call.

## RELIGIOUS TOURS

### April 17-25: Footsteps of Pope John Paul II and Saint Faustina

Warsaw, Krakow, Zakopane

and other sites.

For a packet of details: 800-242-0728

or e-mail: [padre16201@yahoo.com](mailto:padre16201@yahoo.com)

When Interest Income Counts, It's Time To Call Gen-See

7.1%  
Annually

Earn More  
Worry Less

Go with experience  
you can trust...



Since 1975, Gen-See investors

have done better for 5 great reasons:

- Regular monthly checks • No fees or commissions
- Low minimum initial investment...\$5,000 • Term 3, 4 or 5 years
- Rate of interest guaranteed for term of certificate

Make a fresh start...RIGHT NOW

7.1% Annually

I-800-507-4393



Gen-See Capital Corporation

1-800-507-4393



extraordinary people, extraordinary programs  
assisting people with disabilities in Erie, Crawford and Venango counties to live rich and fulfilling lives.

phone 814/454-1534 and begin a rewarding new career at EHCA

[www.ehca.org](http://www.ehca.org)

Available at  
Giant Eagle  
Riverside  
BiLo  
and fine delis.

Looking for a meaningful, unique gift?  
**Hofmann's has it!**

420 E. 26th St., Erie, PA 16504  
814.455-8094 • fax: 814.454.6418  
[www.hofmannserie.com](http://www.hofmannserie.com)

**FaithLife**  
The official news bulletin of the Catholic Diocese of Erie  
Volume 3, Issue 1  
General Information: (814) 824-1160  
Fax: (814) 824-1170  
E-Mail: [FaithLife@erieRCD.org](mailto:FaithLife@erieRCD.org)  
Editorial: (814) 824-1171  
Advertising: (814) 824-1168

Member of the Catholic Press Association. Published bi-weekly. Owned and operated by the Bishop of Erie. Subscription \$10/year.  
For more information, call (814) 824-1161.  
The Office of Communications has been serving Catholics in the Diocese of Erie since 1874. Offices are located at St. Mark Catholic Center 429 East Grandview Blvd., Erie, Pa. Periodical postage paid at Erie, Pa.  
Postmaster: Send address changes to FaithLife at St. Mark Catholic Center.

**CLOCK REPAIR**  
**Burdie's Clock Shop**  
238 South Main St.  
Cambridge Springs, PA 16403  
(814) 398-8263  
"We Make House Calls"

©2006 CNS

## Briefly

### Sisters of Mercy open house Jan. 14

ERIE — The Sisters of Mercy are having an open house Jan. 14 at 10:30 a.m. to celebrate vocations to religious life. Guests are invited to Sunday liturgy followed by a brunch and group gathering at the motherhouse, 444 East Grandview Blvd. For information or to make a reservation, call Sister Teresa Okonski at 814.824.2476.

### Dr. Marie Hilliard to speak on stem cell research in Clarion Jan. 20

CLARION — Dr. Marie Hilliard, director of bioethics and public policy of the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia, will make a presentation titled *Stem Cell Research: Myths & Moralities* at Clarion University on Sat., Jan. 20.

The program will begin at 7:30 p.m. at Hart Chapel on the university's campus.

For more information, contact Dr. Thomas Rourke at [t\\_rourke@clarion.edu](mailto:t_rourke@clarion.edu) or call 814.393.2369.

Clarion University is located off Exit 62 (Rt. 68E) off of I-80. Free parking is available on campus.

The National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) conducts research, consultation, publishing and education to promote human dignity in health care and the life sciences, and derives its message directly from the teachings of the Catholic Church. The results of this research are available at [www.ncbicenter.org](http://www.ncbicenter.org).



Dr. Marie Hilliard

### Trip planned for March for Life in Washington Jan. 21-22

WASHINGTON — The annual March for Life in Washington, the collective effort of grassroots pro-life Americans to assure that our laws protect the right to life of each human being, will take place Jan. 22.



People for Life, a volunteer pro-life organization based in Erie, has organized a bus trip to Washington to take the pro-life message to the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court on Mon., Jan. 22. The crowd at last year's march was estimated at more than 100,000.

Buses will leave Erie on Sun., Jan. 21 at 11 p.m. and return just a little after midnight Jan. 23. The cost of a bus seat is \$38. Reserve seats now by sending payment along with name, address and telephone number to People for Life, Inc., P.O. Box 1126, Erie, Pa. 16512.

A limited amount of financial assistance for students and families is available. Call 814.882.1333 for more information.

### Erie March and Motorcade for Life set for Jan. 20

ERIE — This annual march and motorcade to mark the anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision (Jan. 22, 1973) that legalized abortion in the United States will assemble at Perry Square in downtown Erie and begin at 11 a.m. on Jan. 20.

Participants should arrive between 10:30 and 10:45 a.m. Those who arrive early will be welcome to gather in the lobby of the Gannon University Hammermill Auditorium (entrance on Peach Street) where they will be able to stay warm and have access to restrooms. Gannon University Students for Life will be on hand to offer hospitality between 10:30 and 11 a.m. The march and motorcade will proceed south on State Street to 18th Street, passing by the American Women's Service abortion facility before making its way back to Perry Square for a brief memorial service at the gazebo.

The entire activity is expected to take just more than an hour. Call 814.882.1333 for more information.

### 29th annual Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast set for Feb. 3

ERIE — The 29th Annual Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast, sponsored by People for Life, will take place at 9 a.m. on Sat., Feb. 3, at the Avalon Hotel in downtown Erie.

The main speaker will be Atty. Edward J. Gilhooley, executive director of the Legal Center for Defense of Life in Morristown, N.J.

Tickets for the event are on sale now for \$8.50 and \$5.50 for ages 3-10. Tickets are not required for younger children. Tickets may be purchased at either of People for Life's offices, 1625 W. 26th St. or 1611 Peach St., Suite 321 or through the mail by sending payment to P.O. Box 1126, Erie, Pa. 16512.

**The 2007 Diocesan Directory is coming soon**

Reserve your copy today  
814-824-1161

**RAS AUTO BODY**  
Since 1947  
All your collision needs.  
Special Wash & Wax...\$50  
**453-6185**

Dave Ras owner  
Amy Ras office  
Carol Ras office  
Jim Winarski mgr.

**29th Annual PRO-LIFE Prayer Breakfast**

Keynote Speaker  
Edward J. Gilhooley, Esq.  
Executive Director, Legal Center for Defense of Life- Morristown, NJ

**FEBRUARY 3, 2007 • 9:00AM • Avalon Hotel, Erie**  
Adults \$8.50 • Ages 3-10 \$5.50 • Make your reservations now!

Mr. Gilhooley's work as a pro-life lawyer has enabled him to probe inside the abortion industry and acquire first-hand knowledge about its people and practices.

## Diocese announces two elementary school closings

SCHOOLS from page 1

The Erie Diocese currently operates seven high schools, two middle schools and 33 elementary schools across its 13-county area in northwest Pennsylvania. In the 2007-08 school year, the number of elementary schools will drop to 31. However, other Catholic elementary schools in the area will be able to absorb the incoming student populations of the two closing schools, said Father Nicholas Rouch, the diocese's vicar for education.

Five Catholic elementary schools are located within a three-mile radius of Sacred Heart School, and the remaining Catholic schools in the City of Erie and Erie County are available to accept students. In rural Crawford and Venango counties, the closest Catholic school to St. Titus is St. Stephen School in Oil City, which is 15 miles away.

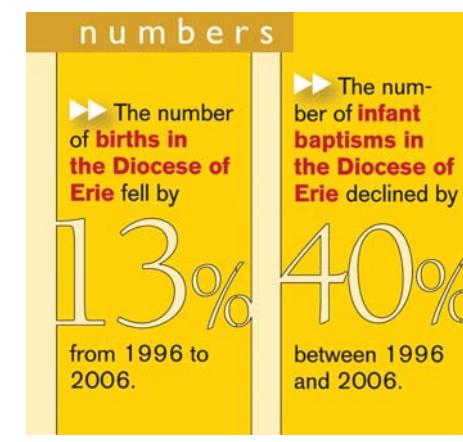
At the meetings held at each school, officials assured parents and teachers that the diocese will assist in making the transition as smooth as possible for families and others. This includes helping with transportation of current students at St. Titus school if

there is enough interest.

"We were most concerned with assuring that the teachers and staffs of the schools had an opportunity to receive this information and ask questions, and that the parents had an opportunity understand how the decision was made," said Father Rouch. "News such as this is hard to take and we are deeply concerned that those affected are supported through the transition to come."

Pastors will consult with diocesan officials to determine the best use of the facilities formerly occupied by their schools. In the past when schools have closed, parishes have used the buildings as religious education centers and additional parish offices.

Father Rouch said the diocese is considering a number of efforts and strategies to strengthen its Catholic schools including a shared marketing plan to attract more students, as well as streamlining operational resources to achieve better cost values.



"We have nearly 10,000 students in the Catholic school system of the diocese," Father Rouch said. "Catholic education is not going away. It will always be a vital mission of the church. We intend to educate and nurture every student we have."



For a complete report, visit [www.ErieRCD.org](http://www.ErieRCD.org) on the Web or see the January/February issue of *Faith* magazine, mailed to every registered household in the diocese.

- enrollment chart
- the overall state of Catholic education in our diocese
- how population trends impact our Catholic schools
- criteria for viability
- and more questions answered

### DEATH NOTICES

#### Father Joseph F. Finucane dies at 72

ERIE — Father Joseph F. Finucane, 72, died Dec. 27, 2006 at St. Mary's Home East in Erie.

Father Finucane was born on

Jan. 2, 1934, in Erie, a son of the late Joseph P. and Anne Koenig Finucane.

He graduated from Holy Rosary Grade School, Erie, in 1947 and from Cathedral Preparatory School, Erie, in 1951. He attended Gannon College and St. Mark Seminary in Erie from 1951 to 1953 and then earned his bachelor's degree at St. Mary Seminary and University in Baltimore in 1955. He completed his seminary studies at Catholic University in Washington in 1959 and later

pursued further graduate studies there during the summers from 1961 to 1966.

He was ordained a priest on May 7, 1959 at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie by Auxiliary Bishop Edward McManaman.

His home parish was Holy Rosary Parish in Erie.

Father Finucane was assigned



Father Joseph Finucane

to the faculty of Cathedral Prep from 1959 until 1973, during which time he also served as the weekend assistant at St. John the Baptist Parish, Erie. From 1971 to 1973, he served simultaneously as director of the Diocesan Office of Research and Development for Religious Education. From 1973 to 1981, he served as pastor of St. John Parish in Tidewater and St. Anthony Mission in Tionesta. In 1981 he became pastor of Holy Redeemer Parish in Warren, remaining there until 1985 when he was named director of the Diocesan Renewal Office with residence at Holy Rosary Parish in Erie. From

1987 to 2000 he served as pastor of St. Elizabeth Parish in Corry. He also served as administrator of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Corry from 1998 to 2000. In 2000, he was named pastor of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Lawrence Park. He retired from active ministry in 2004.

Father Finucane was very active in the Cursillo movement, having worked 35 Cursillos, as well as the Marriage Encounter retreat program. He served as a judge on the diocesan marriage tribunal and was a member of the board of directors of Community Counseling Services in Corry.

#### Father John R. Erickson, OSB, dies at 81

LATROBE — Father John R. Erickson, O.S.B., a monk of St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, died Dec. 26, 2006.

Father Erickson was born in

Erie on Sept. 25, 1925, a son of the late John and Gertrude (Schwab) Erickson.

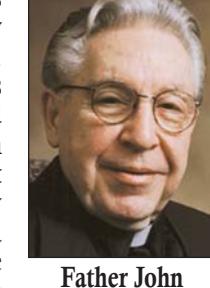
He attended St. Mary Parochial School and Cathedral Preparatory School, Erie. He

was a 1943 graduate of St. Vincent Preparatory School, and received a bachelor's degree in philosophy from St. Vincent College in 1948. His priesthood studies were at Saint Vincent Seminary, where he received a master of arts degree in theology in 1950. He undertook graduate studies at Fordham University (1965), Seattle University (1966), Columbia University (1969-1970), and Biblical Archaeology at Oxford, England (1990 and 1991).

He entered the Benedictine monastic community of St. Vincent Archabbey in 1944. He

made simple profession of vows on July 2, 1945, and solemn profession of vows on July 11, 1948. He was ordained a priest in St. Vincent Archabbey Basilica by the late Bishop John Deardon on Pittsburgh on June 11, 1950.

His pastoral experience included serving as assistant pastor at St. Joseph Parish, Covington, Ky. (1950-1952), St. Mary Parish, St. Marys (1954-1961), and Fourteen Holy Martyrs Parish, Baltimore, (1961-1964); associate pastor and hospital chaplain at Sacred Heart Parish, Jeannette (1968); administrator of Sacred Heart Parish, Youngstown, Ohio (1978); and pastor of St.



Father John R. Erickson

tor of the St. Vincent Museum (1982-1983) and was caretaker of the museum collections from 1984 until his retirement. His career as an educator included serving as professor of religious studies at St. Vincent College (1964-1967), visiting professor at San Beda College in the Philippines (1967-1968) and professor at St. Vincent College in anthropology (1970-1998) and geology (1987-1998). He was founder of the anthropology major and minor programs at St. Vincent.

At Saint Vincent, he was a prefect in the Preparatory School (1945-1950), food service director (1952-1954), manager of the college bookstore (1964-1967), seminary prefect (1964-1965), college prefect (1965-1967), cura-

Mount Saviour Monastery  
EXTENSIVE RELIGIOUS SHOP FEATURING BOOKS, GIFTS, CARDS & MORE  
CALL to arrange individual or Group Retreats. Available year-round

Our Lord's words to His disciples:  
"Come aside and rest awhile. Watch and pray"

Apply to us in our day as well. Watch and pray together with us..."that we may share some spiritual gift and be mutually encouraged by one another's faith, yours and ours."

-Romans 1:11-12

231 Monastery Rd., Pine City, NY 14871 • 607-734-1688

Visit our web site: [www.msaviour.org](http://www.msaviour.org)

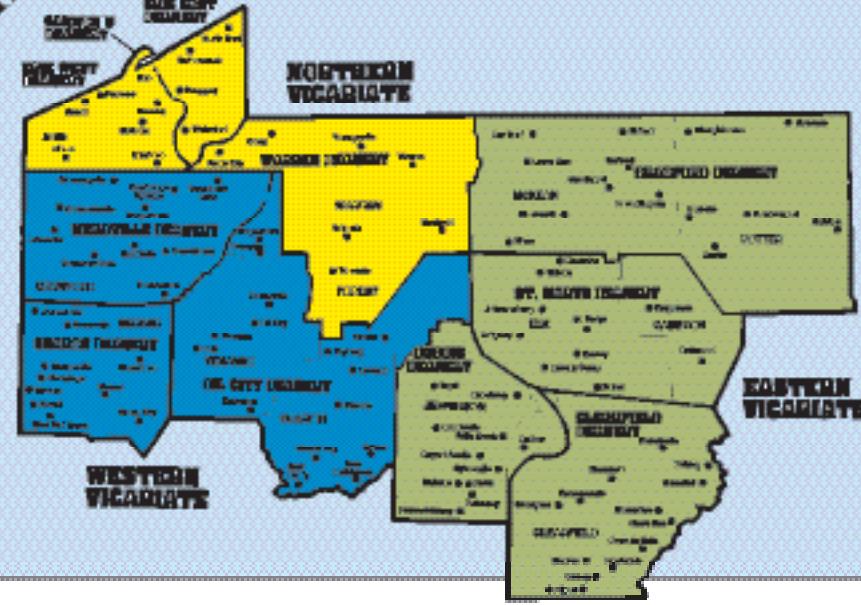
**Erie MARCH & MOTORCADE For LIFE**  
January 20, 2007 • 11 a.m.  
Begins at Perry Square, concludes with a brief Memorial Service at the Perry Square Gazebo  
Be a voice for the voiceless!  
Walk peacefully with friends and neighbors through downtown Erie in memory of the more than 47 million lives taken by abortion in the United States since the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. We march to affirm the dignity and value of every human life. We also emphasize the importance of addressing the needs of every woman who is facing a challenging pregnancy or struggling with the emotional burden of a previous abortion.

**March For Life BUS TRIP**  
Leave Erie Sunday evening: January 21st at 11:00PM  
March in Washington: Monday, January 22nd  
Attend a reception hosted by Congressman Phil English  
Return Tuesday morning: January 23rd about 1:00AM  
Church and student groups welcome. Seating may be limited. Make Reservations Now!  
\$38.00 per seat  
Some sponsorships for students and families on tight budgets are currently available

PEOPLE FOR LIFE  
1625 West 26th St./1611 Peach St., Ste. 321  
Mailing Address: PO Box 1126, Erie, PA 16512  
(814) 459-1333 • (814) 882-1333

office@peopleforlife.org  
[www.peopleforlife.org](http://www.peopleforlife.org)

# AROUND the ERIE DIOCESE



## Cathedral Center 'Robo-Dragons' take first place

ERIE — The Cathedral Center "Robo-Dragons" took first place out of 26 teams from the Erie area at the Walnut Creek FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Lego League Competition on Nov. 11.

FIRST Lego League is an international program for children ages 9-14 that combines a hands-on, interactive robotics program with a sports-like atmosphere. Teams consist of up to 10 players with the focus on such things as team building, problem solving, creativity and analytical thinking.

The Cathedral Center team worked during the prior eight weeks on its presentation in the area of nano-technology and stain-resistant fabric.

The Robo-Dragons also par-



ticipated in the Western Pennsylvania State Lego Tournament Dec. 2 at the Carnegie Mellon Robotics Institute in Pittsburgh. Members of the team include: 5th graders Matthew Brown, Caroline Cipriani, Ellie Hart-

## Parish correspondents

*FaithLife* encourages all parishes, missions, schools and groups to choose a correspondent who regularly submits news items to *Around the Erie Diocese*.

## E-mail your parish news

Many parish correspondents have found e-mail to be a quick and easy way to send news to *FaithLife*.  
**FaithLife@ErieRCD.org**

## OLC collects for Kids Café

ERIE — Members of Our Lady's Christian School's student council collected items for Emmaus Ministries' Kids Café by sponsoring a "Jeans Day" on Dec. 13. Anyone who wore jeans to school that day was asked to contribute 50 cents or an item for the Kids Café. Approximately 450 faculty, staff and students contributed more than 400 items and \$300 in cash. The donated items were placed in a Christmas store at the café where needy children could shop for their family members.

Pictured are OLC student council members (front row) Kara Mihalic, Billy Motsch, Jenna Bekeny, Jake McLaughlin, (back row) Sean Bloomstine and Hillary Krill showing a few of the items donated to the Kids Café.



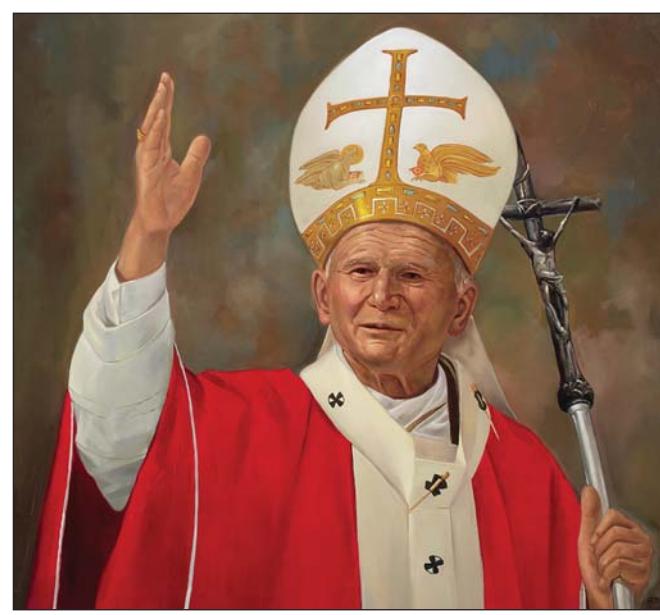
## Holy Trinity offers John Paul II portraits

ERIE — Holy Trinity Parish in Erie is offering museum quality prints of a portrait of Pope John Paul II that was commissioned for the parish.

At the request of parishioners, the parish commissioned Father Peter Gray, an artist and Erie native, to paint a portrait of the late Holy Father. The 4-by-5-foot portrait, which captures the saintly image of Pope John Paul II, is now on permanent display in the church, along with a portrait of St. Maximilian Kolbe.

"Father Gray is a brilliant and gifted artist who also helped our parish's church enhancement committee pick out new colors for the interior of the church," said Deacon Marty Eisert, who serves at Holy Trinity. "Since we are a Polish parish, he suggested some artwork of John Paul II and Maximilian Kolbe. The portraits are very commanding and stunning."

The portrait of John Paul II hangs on the church's west wall near the choir loft. The portrait of Maximilian Kolbe hangs on



the east wall, opposite John Paul II.

The 14-by-18-inch John Paul II prints were produced from the original oil painting by a Pittsburgh company that specializes in creating museum quality reproductions of many of the masterpieces that hang in various

galleries throughout the United States. Father Gray has signed and numbered each print. Only 100 prints will be sold. The cost of a print is \$125.

To obtain a print visit Holy Trinity or send a check to Holy Trinity Parish, 2220 Reed St., Erie, Pa. 16503.

## DACS students take senses field trip

DUBOIS — Kindergarteners at DuBois Area Catholic School recently took a "senses" field trip to Parker Dam State Park, taking in the sights, sounds and textures during the autumn months. Pictured from left to right are Makenzie Park, Ashey Wruble, Mrs. Pompeii, Paige Dushac, Alssa Bittner and Courtney Dehaven.



## St. Luke phone book recycling aids Second Harvest

ERIE — Students at St. Luke School have been collecting phone books from their families and parish members to help the Second Harvest Food Bank. Pictured are Jared Nowak, Sean Drabic and Stephen Kupniewski, seventh grade students who took charge of this project. They are assisting Mike Kapper and Father Joseph Dougherty who are transporting the 2,000 pounds of phone books to Erie Energy Products. Erie Energy Products will then donate money from this recycling project to the Second Harvest Food Bank.



## Immaculate Conception students learn about citizenship

CLARION — In October, the 6th through 8th grade classes at Immaculate Conception School in Clarion paid a visit to the Clarion Chamber of Business and Industry. Tracy Becker, director of the chamber, led the students on a tour of the building followed by a history of the organization.

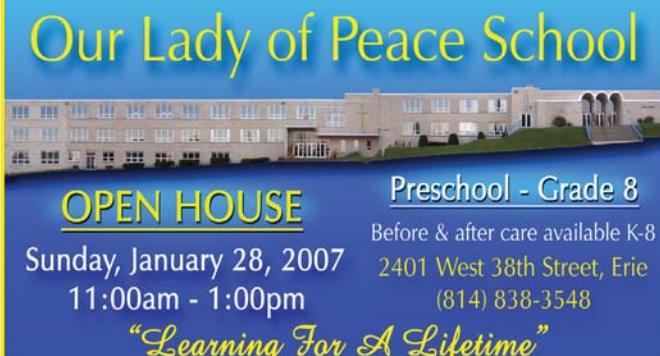
At the time, the Clarion community was celebrating its 53rd Autumn Leaf Festival. This festival includes a week-long cultural event along with a parade. Becker informed the students that a great deal of man-power is needed for festivals and this is done by volunteers in the community.

Learning about citizenship in both social studies and language arts classes, the students know that volunteering in their community is first in the "Top Ten Ways



To Be A Good Citizen." Immaculate Conception students are pictured holding Autumn Leaf Festival collector glasses, which they were given at the end of their field trip.

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OPEN HOUSE



## Alaska Cruise & Northwest Tour Including Lake Tahoe and San Francisco

15-Days from \$1898\*

Join your Spiritual Director Father Paul Cochran departing Friday, August 24, 2007. Father Cochran is pastor of two parishes: St. Mary's in Alexandria, Indiana; and St. Joseph's in Elwood, Indiana. This will be his eighth trip as a Roman Catholic Chaplain. **Mass will be celebrated daily aboard ship and some days on tour.** Start in Seattle for one night with an included city tour. In Seattle board your Norwegian Cruise ship, the "Star" for your 7-day inside passage cruise to Ketchikan; Juneau; Sawyer Glacier; Skagway; and Prince Rupert, BC. Enjoy total freedom with NCL's Freestyle cruising. You pick what wear, and where and when to dine from 10 different restaurants. Next, your Catholic group will travel to San Francisco through Washington State. See the Columbia River; Mt. St. Helens, and Mt. Rainier. Travel through Oregon; then spend two nights in the beautiful Lake Tahoe/Reno area. Explore one of the most beautiful lakes in the world. Next, take a scenic drive to San Francisco for your final two nights where you'll see the Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman's Wharf, and lots more on your included city tour. Fly home from San Francisco. \*Your price of \$1898 (per person, double occupancy) includes the 7-day cruise on NCL's "Star", 7 nights hotels, baggage handling, taxes, port charges and lots of sightseeing. Add \$650 for round trip airfare from Erie.

Family and friends are welcome.

\$100 deposits are now due.

For information, reservations, brochure and letter from Fr. Cochran call 7 days a week:

'YOUR MAN' TOURS 1-800-968-7626

America's First Choice for travel since 1967!