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FaithLife

POPE QUOTE

INSPIRING WORDS FROM POPE FRANCIS:

"Peace requires the force of meekness, the non-violent strength of the truth and of love."

www.ErieRCD.org

PAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

December 21, 2014



Photo by Mary Solberg

This porcelain sculpture of the Holy Family was among 129 Nativity sets that were displayed at All Saints Parish in Waterford during Advent. Parishioners Kathy and Howard Johnson contributed this set, which was a gift to them from their son. The Nativity event raised funds and food for two local charities.

BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE Parishes live out hope-filled spirit

Today, more than 2,000 years after the birth of Jesus in a manger, the world still looks upon the Christ Child as a single light of hope for humankind.

Clearly, hope is what we need and how we must live as Christians.

These are not easy times. Millions are displaced by war and terrorist threats. Deadly diseases, like Ebola, continue to spread. Racism, even slavery, persist among us.

Fear can overtake our spirit of hope. But there's Jesus, in the manger, radiant in joy and waiting to be embraced. If we look hard enough, we can recognize his face in the refugee or the disheveled man wandering our city streets alone.

Pope Francis has asked all religious leaders, including me as your bishop, to bring attention to these harsh realities, even during this most joyous season of Christmas. In fact, it is during this special time that we must recognize our frailty and still trust that Jesus has infused us with such enduring virtues as strength and perseverance, mercy and compassion.

I am so proud of many of our people who are living out the message of the Christ Child this winter. The churches of St. John the Baptist and St. Joseph/Bread of Life in Erie are opening their doors as part of Community Shelter Services' overflow shelter project. Local churches of all denominations are taking turns providing dinner, breakfast, a bed—even friendship—to hundreds of homeless in the City of Erie.

In the Shenango Valley, Catholic parishioners are giving toys to about 500 needy children served by the Prince of Peace Center in Farrell. The center also has been able to buy \$1,600 worth of coats,

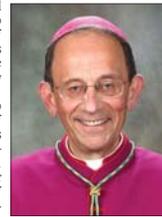
hats, scarves and mittens thanks to the generosity of the parishioners of Immaculate Heart of Mary in Mercer.

In Venango County, all of the parishes in Oil City—St. Joseph, St. Stephen, Our Lady, Help of Christians, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Venantius—have contributed toys and clothes this holiday season for 170 children who live in financially desperate home situations.

In Clearfield, the parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi have collected items every Sunday this Advent for the Clearfield Food Bank, the Good Samaritan Center men's shelter, and women and babies served by Young People Who Care Inc.

I see hope in all parts of our diocese. In so many ways, Christ is born among us every day, and his message is one of joy and peace.

Merry Christmas and God bless you all in the coming year!



Bishop Lawrence Persico

Lawrence T. Persico
Bishop of the Diocese of Erie

Mass attendance declines in diocese

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

The number of people attending Mass in the Diocese of Erie has steadily declined in the past eight years, dropping about 26 percent, according to a count conducted in all Catholic parishes this fall.

Diocesan officials say the numbers point to a need to address the reasons for the slow decline.

"It's important to look at the issues leading to the decline. As Pope Francis says, there's a lot of woundedness out there and we need to see how we can heal these wounds. That's at the heart of these numbers," says Msgr. Robert Smith, vicar general.

In October, the 133 parishes and missions in the 13-county diocese tallied their average weekend Mass attendance.

Diocesan number-crunchers learned that the total number of people attending weekend Mass dropped from 65,858 in 2006 to 48,696 in 2014, or 26.1 percent.

The figures don't show the entire picture, though, since a handful of parishes have merged during that time period.

Demographics have shifted, too, with some parishioners who attended churches in cities moving to the suburbs.

Regardless, Msgr. Smith says the focus still must be on the fact that the number of people attending Mass has declined. Pastoral planning currently underway will take these figures into account.

"We see the numbers as a challenge and an opportunity to look at and do things differently," Msgr. Smith adds. "It's inviting us to not sit back and hope for change, but to invigorate our efforts to proclaim the Gospel."

According to the official count, Mass attendance steadily declined each year since 2006.

Yet there were 46 parishes/missions in 10 deaneries of the diocese that actually saw increases in attendance.

Hoping to see the pope? Diocese plans pilgrimage to Philly next September

BY ANNE-MARIE WELSH | FAITHLIFE

Now that Pope Francis has announced his intention to join participants at the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia next September, the Diocese of Erie has secured hotel rooms and buses for those who would like to participate in the historic event.

In an effort to keep costs reasonable, the diocese has put together a four-night package, leaving at noon on Thursday, Sept. 24, and returning Monday, Sept. 28. The plan is to participate in the final day of the World Meeting of Families on Sept. 25, as well as the Festival of Families on Sept. 26 and the outdoor papal Mass on Sept. 27. Because the Mass is expected to be held late in the day that Sunday, travelers will return to the Diocese of Erie on Monday, Sept. 28.

The World Meeting of Families is held once every three years and is expected to draw tens of thousands of people from around the world for several days of meetings and events. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia estimates as many as 1.5 million people could descend upon Philadelphia for the weekend events featuring the pontiff.

Beginning Dec. 29, go to www.ErieRCD.org/WMF.htm

Details of the diocesan pilgrimage will be available at www.ErieRCD.org/wmf.htm beginning Dec. 29. Once details are posted, reservations for the block of 75 rooms, which can accommodate about 200 people, will be accepted only by mail and on a first-come, first-served basis. A 50 percent non-refundable deposit will be required with reservations; full payment will be due March 9.

The package will include bus transportation to and from Philadelphia, four nights of hotel accommodations in Exton, Pa., a one-day pass to the World Meeting of Families, four breakfasts, and transportation from the hotel to the point of entry for the events in Philadelphia each day. The cost for the four

WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES
2015 Philadelphia

days is expected to be in the range of \$800 per person for a room shared by four people to about \$1,600 for a single room.

Details on the Holy Father's plans to visit New York and Washington, D.C., have not yet been made public. The Dio-

cese of Erie does not expect to make group arrangements for those visits.

More affordable arrangements are being made for youth groups interested in attending just the Saturday and Sunday papal events.



CNS photo

Pope Francis talks with Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Philadelphia during his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Nov. 19. The pope had earlier confirmed his visit to Philadelphia for the World Meeting of Families next year.

New youth Bible is inclusive

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The *African American Youth Bible*, set to hit bookstores in January, contains both African-American history and the history of the Catholic Church.

Modeled after the *Catholic Youth Bible*, this new volume includes commentaries, footnotes and artwork geared toward educating young African Americans about Scripture. It features themes that are relevant to African-American youth.

The Bible was developed by retired Bishop John H. Ricard of Pensacola-Tallahassee, Fla., who is president of the National Black Catholic Congress and of St. Mary's Press. The publication has been in the works for more than four years.

"We wanted to have something that would appeal to our youth and we wanted to make it as relevant as possible

to their lives," said Bishop Ricard in a phone interview with Catholic News Service. "After many years of exploring, we thought that this would be an effective way of doing it."

According to Bishop Ricard, the *African American Youth Bible* underwent much research before publication.

"We did research on African-American history, we looked for documents and explored the church fathers and mothers and the extensive study of the Bible of those days, relying on the experience of African-American youth ministers," he said.

To develop the Bible, a team of more than 200 authors, an editorial board and illustrators were involved.

St. Mary's Press, based in Winona, Minn., is a leading Catholic publisher of Bibles and religious curricula.

JOLLY OLD ST. NICK VISITS STUDENTS



Photo by Mary Solberg

Six-year-old Dakota Carney, a kindergartner at St. Luke School, Erie, tells Santa Claus that she's been a good girl this year. St. Nick, portrayed by St. Luke parishioner Tim Spaeder, visited the east Erie school during a day of festivities this month. During Advent, students also enjoyed a special ceremony in which they formed a human wreath on the floor of the school gym, and were blessed by their pastor, Father John Malthaner.

Christmas around the world



CNS photo

VIENNA (CNS)—A visitor to the popular Christkindlmarkt in Vienna's Rathauspark Dec. 8 checks out some of the handcrafted Christmas ornaments at one of the many shops. Vienna is known for its outdoor Christmas markets.



CNS photo

BETHLEHEM (CNS)—Fireworks explode over the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem Dec. 6. Palestinian hopes for a tourism windfall following Pope Francis' spring pilgrimage did not pan out because the Gaza war broke out shortly after his visit, Palestinian Tourism Minister Rula Ma'ay'a said.

Newsmakers



Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world

from Catholic News Service

Vatican lifts ban on married priests for Eastern Catholics

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican has lifted its ban on the ordination of married men to the priesthood in Eastern Catholic churches outside their traditional territories, including in the United States, Canada and Australia.

Pope Francis approved lifting the ban, also doing away with the provision that, in exceptional cases, Eastern Catholic bishops in the diaspora could receive Vatican approval to ordain married men. In recent years, however, some Eastern Catholic bishops proceeded with such ordinations discreetly without Vatican approval.

The new law states that the pope concedes to Eastern Catholic bishops outside their traditional territory the faculties to "allow pastoral service of Eastern married clergy" and "to ordain Eastern married candidates" in their eparchies or dioceses, although they must inform the local Latin-rite bishop in writing.

"We are overjoyed with the lifting of the ban," Melkite Bishop Nicholas Samra of Newton, Mass., told Catholic News Service in November.

The Vatican decree explained that in response to protests of the Latin-rite bishops in the U.S., the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples in 1890 prohibited married Ruthenian priests from living in the United States. In 1929-

30, the Congregation for Eastern Churches extended the ban to all Eastern-rite priests throughout North America, South America and Australia.

The 1929 prohibition, known as *Cum data fuerit*, had significant repercussions for the Eastern Catholic churches in the United States. Cardinal Sandri's decree noted that soon after the law was promulgated, about 200,000 Ruthenian faithful became Orthodox.

Bishops approve grants totaling more than \$2 million

WASHINGTON (USCCB)—The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Subcommittee on Aid to the Church in Central and Eastern Europe approved 79 grants for a total of \$2,854,878 in aid to finance pastoral projects in Central and Eastern Europe. The subcommittee evaluated and approved grant proposals for 2015 during the bishops' annual fall General Assembly on Nov. 9 in Baltimore.

The projects focus on rebuilding Catholic schools and orphanages, charitable programs, formation programs for seminarians, and the preservation and dissemination of Catholic education and intellectual life. These grants are funded by the annual Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe.



Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

When it comes to Christmas gifts, walking in someone's shoes can go a long way toward spreading the true spirit of the season.

The families and religious education teachers from the Eastside Catholic Faith Formation Ministry in Erie took this sentiment literally when they recently shipped off more than 70 pairs of shoes to the poor of Nicaragua. They had just been inspired by Kathleen Kutz, the director of the program, who traveled in November to Nicaragua with the Volunteer Missionary Movement-USA.

Kutz spent a week in Nicaragua, the second poorest country in this hemisphere, as part of VMM's effort to respond to Vatican II's call for "full and active involvement in the church's life and mission." She met VMM founder, Edwina Gateley, and Father Fernando Cardinal, SJ, who was the coordinator of the National Literacy Campaign for Nicaragua in the 1980s.

During her stay, she visited several sites in and around Managua, including an indigenous village, an organic farm, and a mission, Batavola Norte Cultural Center,

where faith is at the heart of outreach to the poor. During her visit to Batavola Norte, Kutz noticed that the children and youth there needed shoes.

When she returned to Erie, she met with Eastside Catholic Faith Formation families and teachers, suggesting that they donate new shoes to the center. Eastside Catholic Faith Formation Ministry includes the following east Erie churches: Holy Rosary, Holy Trinity, Our Mother of Sorrows, St. John the Baptist, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, St. Patrick, and St. Stanislaus.

Seventy pairs of shoes were collected and sent to Nicaragua, with a Christmas note attached, of course.

Catholic News Service has reported that there may be an alternative to frankincense, the traditional incense burned in religious ceremonies for purification and sanctification. One of the gifts of the magi, frankincense can act on the brain to lower anxiety and diminish depression, but it also affects people with respiratory problems.

Mercy Sister Janice Marie Johnson, coordinator of the Office for Ministries with Persons with Disabilities for the Allentown Diocese, has researched alternative incenses that can be used in churches. She found a hypoallergenic incense called Trinity Brand that is available on the Internet and is available through church supply companies.

According to Sister Janice Marie, the scents are flowers, forest and powder.

Congratulations to graduates of Gannon University who were presented degrees at the winter commencement ceremony at Gannon's Hammemill Center Dec. 14. Gannon awarded 186 degrees. Keynote speaker, Margaret (Meg) VanderLaan of the Class of 1989, was awarded a doctor of humane letters. She is a member of Gannon's board of trustees and is chief communications officer of MWH Global, Broomfield, Colo.

Mary Solberg is the editor of FaithLife. Email: msolberg@erieRCD.org Call 814-824-1171 Twitter: @ERIERCDsolberg

Upheaval on the streets
God waits for us to see his image in others



Guest Commentary
Deacon Stephen Washek

I sat in on a Jesuit tradition class taught this fall by Gannon University theology professor James Menkhaus. He began the semester by delving into the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius. In the first week of the spiritual exercises, one prays for the grace to know that God is in all things and that God loves us unconditionally. God desires to have a personal and unique relationship with each of us.

I was reminded that I must be open to receiving the grace of this relationship with God. As I continued through the semester, I noticed a shift in my own thought and prayer.

This Advent, I have been struck by the concept that God is waiting for us. We hear over and over again during this holy season that we are waiting for God, but I have been praying that God is waiting for

me! I also have become more aware that God has made each one of us in his image and likeness, and that he has created us for love and to be in relationship with each other.

As events began to unfold over the last several weeks about racial discrimination in the United States, I became even more aware of being made in God's image. God sees each of us as his beloved son or daughter. If we are to imitate God—as we are called to do in Scripture—then we must see the divine in others.

As events in Missouri, New York City and Cleveland continue to unfold, I need to be engaged with this situation in some way. Is this where God is waiting on me?

But what can I do? What should I do? I can (and have) to be committed to praying publicly for all involved, but especially for justice. I can continue to educate people on what the systemic issues are that promote racism in our country. Many people I speak with do not understand what is meant by the term "white privilege," and I believe that plays a huge role in these situations. We have an opportunity to find ways to fix these attitudes and circumstances.

Dr. Ansel Augustine writes in his article "Does Black Life Matter" that we need to see racism as something "that affects the WHOLE Body of



CNS photo

More than 300 U.S. theologians issued a statement Dec. 8 decrying the "pervasive sin of racism" and vowing to fight for justice for African Americans and other minorities.

Christ." He writes about the recent tragic killings of a black youth and a black man by white police officers.

"For some, especially those who cannot relate to the victims of these deaths, this is just another news story. But for many others—especially those in the African-American community—it is

more than that," Augustine states. The deaths, Augustine writes, are familiar stories, but "as church folk, we need to reach out and listen, mourn together, and try to understand (not criticize, judge, or assume) with the community."

Advent is a time for preparing to meet Christ who came into the world to bring healing and peace.

God so loved us that he did not spare his only son for our sake. God weeps with the injustices of our world, and God is waiting for our response.

Deacon Stephen Washek is the campus minister at Gannon University in Erie. He also serves as a deacon at St. George Parish, Erie.

FaithLife
The bi-weekly newspaper of the Catholic Diocese of Erie.
St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 East Grandview Blvd.
Erie, Pa. 16504
Publisher: The Most Rev. Lawrence T. Persico

Executive Editor: Annie-Marie Welsh
Editor: Mary Solberg
Graphic Designer: Rich Papalia
Advertising Manager: Brenda Williams
Advertising Designer: Elizabeth Butterfield

Website: www.ErieRCD.org
Volume 10, Issue 22
Member of the Catholic Press Association
Subscription: \$10/year
Periodical postage paid at Erie, PA
Postmaster: Send address changes to: FaithLife at St. Mark Catholic Center
Erie, PA 16504

Email: FaithLife@ErieRCD.org
Editorial: 814-824-1171
Advertising: 814-824-1168
General Information: 814-824-1161

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News Briefs

Seminarians instituted as acolytes

LATROBE—Eleven men—including two from the Diocese of Erie—were instituted into the Ministry of Acolyte at Saint Vincent Seminary in November.

Acolytes are appointed to aid the deacon and to minister to the priest. It is the acolyte's duty to attend to the service of the altar and to assist the deacon and the priest in liturgical celebrations, especially in the celebration of Mass.

The new acolytes from the Diocese of Erie are: David E. Carter of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Erie; and David A. Whiteford of St. Boniface Parish, Erie. Both are 2013 graduates of Gannon University.

Carter is the son of the late Kenneth and Shirley Carter. He is a 1972 graduate of Baltimore Polytechnic Institute and earned a bachelor's degree from Towson State University, Towson, Md. He studied at Loyola University, Maryland, from 1987-91 and did additional graduate work at Saint Mary's Seminary and University, Baltimore, from 2007-11.

Whiteford is the son of Gerald and Susan Whiteford of Waterford. Before earning his degree at Gannon, he graduated in 2009 from Collegiate Academy, Erie.

Both men were instituted into the Ministry of Acolyte by Bishop Ronald W. Gainer of Harrisburg at Saint Vincent Seminary.



Pictured at the acolyte ceremony, left to right, are: Archabbot Douglas R. Nowicki, OSB; Father Michael Kesicki, rector and director of diocesan seminarians at St. Mark Seminary; seminarian David Whiteford; Bishop Ronald Gainer of Harrisburg; seminarian David Carter; Father Timothy Whalen, rector, Saint Vincent Seminary; and Father Dan Hoffman, pastor of Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Edinboro.

People for Life plans events in January

ERIE—Three pro-life events are scheduled in the Diocese of Erie next month.

Those wishing to attend the March for Life rally in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 22 are encouraged to sign up for the chartered bus that will leave Erie on Jan. 21 at 11 p.m. and return about 2 a.m. on Jan. 23.

Reservations should be made as soon as possible. Send \$54 per seat to People for Life, P.O. Box 1126, Erie, PA 16512. Pay by Dec. 22 and get a \$9 early bird discount (\$45 per seat).

On Jan. 17, People for Life will host its annual Pro-Life Breakfast at the Erie Bayfront Convention Center. The main speaker will be Dr. Paul Kenyon, a professor of political science and the executive director of the Center for Vision and Values, Grove City College. Tickets are on sale now and must be purchased by Jan. 12. The cost is \$14 for regular tickets, and \$7 for children ages 3 to 12. Children under 3 are free. Free babysitting will be available. Payments may be mailed to People for Life, P.O. Box 1126, Erie, PA 16512.

On Jan. 10, Erie's March for Life will begin at the Perry Square gazebo in downtown Erie at 11 a.m. and conclude with brief remarks at the gazebo.

For more information, or to make credit card payments, call 814-882-1333 or go online at www.peopleforlife.org.

Pastor to lead pilgrimage to Italy's shrines

MEADVILLE—Father Marc Solomon, pastor of St. Mary of Grace Parish, Meadville, is leading a pilgrimage to the Shrines of Italy July 7-17, 2015.

The pilgrimage will include visits to Rome, the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, and many other sites. The cost includes round-trip air fare from Pittsburgh International Airport, hotel accommodations, daily breakfast and dinner with wine, guided sightseeing, hotel transfers and taxes. An early booking discount is available until Jan. 8. For more information, call St. Mary of Grace at 814-333-6161 or visit [Collette Gateway Travel online](http://ColletteGatewayTravel.com).

Journey to priesthood

The Rev. Mr. Trocchio ordained transitional deacon

FAITHLIFE staff report

Thomas Nicholas Trocchio is one step closer to becoming a Catholic priest.

On the Feast of St. Nicholas, Dec. 6, Trocchio became the Rev. Mr. Trocchio, having been ordained a transitional deacon for the Diocese of Erie by Bishop Lawrence Persico.

The Rev. Mr. Trocchio is expected to be ordained a priest next June 5 at St. Peter Cathedral.

"I'm excited and joyful," the Rev. Mr. Trocchio said after the ceremony at St. Mark Seminary's chapel in Erie. "I just am looking forward to serving the people of God and his church."

The Rev. Mr. Trocchio is a member of St. Patrick Parish, Franklin. Since graduating from Gannon University in 2010, he has been assigned to Saint Vincent Seminary, Latrobe. He took his pastoral year from 2012-13 at St. Joseph Parish, Warren, and completed his 2014 summer assignment at St. Luke Parish, Erie.



The Rev. Mr. Thomas Trocchio, center, stands with Bishop Lawrence Persico and members of the Trocchio family after the ordination ceremony at St. Mark Seminary chapel Dec. 6. The Rev. Mr. Trocchio is expected to be ordained a priest next June.

Happy anniversary to you!

St. Luke, Erie

60

Founded on Sept. 4, 1954, St. Luke Church is located at 421 E. 38th St., Erie. Before the church building was constructed, Masses were held in the chapel at Mercyhurst University. To mark the historic affiliation, a Eucharistic procession—led by Boy Scouts and the Knights of Columbus—was held Oct. 19 from Mercyhurst to St. Luke. Many parish organizations and a large group of parishioners, students, Sisters of Mercy and members of the clergy (including alumni Father Nicholas Rouch and Msgr. Robert Brugger) joined in the procession.

Father John Malhaner, pastor, was joined by two former pastors, Msgr. Thomas Snyderwine and Msgr. Richard Stack. In its 60-year history, St. Luke has produced four priests and five sisters.

The parish will continue celebrations into 2015, when there will be a parish dinner, a dance, and a Legacy Gala at which Msgr. Robert Goodill, founding pastor, will be honored posthumously.



Our Lady, Help of Christians, Oil City

100

On Nov. 8, Bishop Lawrence Persico officiated at a Mass to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Our Lady, Help of Christians Church, 564 Colbert Ave., Oil City. Originally a mission church of St. Joseph Church, Oil City, Our Lady, Help of Christians currently has 104 families.

The parish first held Masses in a chapel to accommodate the elderly who found it difficult to attend nearby St. Joseph Church, which is located at the top of a hill on Pearl Avenue. The new church was blessed Nov. 8, 1914, with a Mass celebrated by Father Peter Sheridan, who generously funded the construction of the first chapel. Father Alexis Fischer was the first full-time pastor.

Currently, Father T. Shane Mathew is the pastor at Our Lady, Help of Christians. The parish has produced four priests and two sisters.



St. Casimir, Erie

100

Sto Lat! That's Polish for "Here's to 100 years!"

St. Casimir Church, 629 Hess Ave., Erie, was founded by Polish immigrants in November 1914. Its first pastor was Father John C. Dembinski, a native of Poland.

Today, St. Casimir is one of three churches that comprise Our Mother of Sorrows Parish: St. Ann, St. Casimir and Holy Family, under the pastorate of Father James O'Hara.

Today, the St. Casimir community still enjoys singing Polish hymns and conducting Polish devotions throughout the year. Father Joseph Gregorek hears confessions in Polish. The spirit of this longtime Erie parish produced 19 priests, two brothers, and 14 sisters.



St. Joseph, Oil City

150

Bishop Lawrence Persico and Greensburg Bishop Lawrence Brandt joined 18 other priests Nov. 16 in celebrating the 150th anniversary Mass at St. Joseph Church, 35 Pearl Ave., Oil City. Dedicated in 1894, the Venango County church had been home to Auxiliary Bishop Edward McManaman, who served as pastor from 1948-64.

During its 150th anniversary year, St. Joseph—under the pastorate of Father Justin Pino—has recognized several people who served the parish over the years. Four parishioners were honored for their long-time service, and the Benedictine Sisters of Erie were recognized for their ministry of teaching the children of Irish and German immigrants of the parish. Sister Joan Chittister, OSB, was presented the Bishop McManaman Medal for her "outstanding dedication, extraordinary service and continued support of St. Joseph Parish."

St. Joseph Parish produced 28 priests and 66 sisters during its distinguished history in Oil City.



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Nativity sets displayed at All Saints Parish



WATERFORD—Cathy Rosenthal, left, and Marge Worley prepared a special Advent treat at All Saints Parish in Waterford. They collected 129 Nativity sets from parishioners and friends and displayed them in early December. Titled "No Room at the Inn," the display included sets ranging from 1-inch high to large table sizes. Visitors were asked to donate food for the Waterford Food Pantry or money to benefit the Mercy Center for Women in Erie. More than \$350 was collected.

Smethport parish donates \$400 to Catholic Rural Ministry



SMETHPORT—Father Vincent Cieslewicz, pastor of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church in Smethport, presents a \$400 check to Sister Mary Hoffman, OSB, and Sister Phyllis Schleicher, OSB, of Catholic Rural Ministry of Port Allegany. The funding was part of donations made at the 11th annual St. Elizabeth of Hungary feast day dinner earlier this fall. Also pictured are some of the church's religious education students who served the meal.

In the second row, left to right, are: Brooke Morgan, Anna Nelson, Justin Tanner and Emma Ruoff. In the back row, left to right, are: Stephen Ness, Ryan Woodring, Sam Dibble, Nick Dibble and Jared Pavlock. Another check was presented to Christian Community Services in Smethport for the local food bank.

Villa Elementary students organize diaper drive



ERIE—For the second year in a row, the seventh-grade religion class at Villa Maria Elementary organized a diaper drive to benefit the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network. Pictured with the students are Principal Damon Finazzo and theology teacher, Maureen Bell.

\$1,000 donated toward March For Life bus



MEADVILLE—Members of seven Meadville Catholic organizations have donated \$1,000 to help cover transportation expenses for a bus trip to the March For Life Rally in Washington, D.C., in January. Pictured, from left to right, are: Gaynell Mailliard, treasurer of Meadville Knights of Columbus; Scott Hamilton, K of C grand knight and treasurer of St. Agatha Men's Club; Jeanette Kitch, president of St. Agatha Church Altar Rosary Society; Sue Kelly, treasurer of Catholic

Daughters of the Americas; Barbara Burkett, coordinator of a local March For Life bus trip; Janet Stets, chairman of St. Brigid Respect Life Committee; Father Matthew Kujawinski, pastor of St. Agatha and St. Mary of Grace parishes; Stephanie Grinnell, president of St. Mary of Grace Altar Rosary Society; Mary Holzer, vice president of St. Brigid Altar Rosary Society; Richard Albaugh, K of C warden and pro-life advocate; and Ted Jastromb Sr., a K of C trustee.

St. Joseph School families prepare Thanksgiving meal



WARREN—St. Joseph Parent Teacher Union (PTU) families, led by Suzy Walker, prepared a Thanksgiving meal for the students, faculty, staff, volunteers and church staff.

A brief program preceded the meal, featuring the new student choir led by Rachel Harvey. Students made their own turkey-shaped rolls and butter. Pictured, clockwise from left, are: fifth-graders Isabel Wortman, Sophie Olson, Alyssa Andersen, Lauren Walker and Katie Beyer.

Young readers busy at St. Luke School



ERIE—Students at St. Luke School in Erie celebrated National Young Readers Week in November. Two members of the Erie Otters hockey team served as celebrity readers and many students dressed up as their favorite book characters. Teacher Vicky Bayle is pictured here with her fourth-grade students, left to right: Noah Sacco, Matthew Reitz, Emily Stewart, Sadie Messer and Mallory Gruza.



POSITION OPENINGS
DIOCESE OF ERIE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

- Administrative Assistant for the Catholic Schools Office (full-time)
- Special Assistant to the Vicar for Education (part-time)

For more information, please go to www.ErieRCD.org or call (814) 824-1220.

PRO-LIFE ACTIVITIES

ERIE MARCH FOR LIFE
 January 10, 2015 • 11 A.M.
 Gather at the Perry Square Gazebo by 10:45. March and Closing Program take about an hour.

PRO-LIFE BREAKFAST
www.facebook.com/ProLifeBreakfast
 January 17, 2015 • 9 A.M.
 Special Guest Speaker
DR. PAUL KENGOR
 Professor of Political Science, Grove City College
 Erie Bayfront Convention Center
 Purchase tickets by January 12.
 Regular \$14 • Ages 3-12 \$7 • Free under 3

MARCH FOR LIFE BUSES
www.facebook.com/MarchforLifeBusTrip
 Attend the incredible Washington, DC March for Life on
January 22, 2015
 Buses leave Erie January 21 at 11 p.m. • Seats: \$54 (\$45 until Dec. 22)
 Sponsorship Inquiries (and sponsors) are welcome!

PEOPLE FOR LIFE
 P.O. Box 1126 • Erie, PA 16512
 (814) 882-1333 (voice or text) • office@peopleforlife.org
www.facebook.com/PeopleforLife
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