

Stem cell research myths and moralities

Dr. Marie Hilliard to speak at Clarion Univ. Jan. 30, page 3.



FaithLife

Caritas Award

Jean Roberts of Punxsutawney receives honor from Catholic Charities, page 4.



Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



Presentation of the Lord



St. Agatha

- Jan. 31 St. John Bosco
- Feb. 2 The Presentation of the Lord
- Feb. 3 St. Blaise, St. Ansgar
- Feb. 5 St. Agatha
- Feb. 6 St. Paul Miki and his companions
- Feb. 8 St. Emiliani, St. Bakhita
- Feb. 10 St. Scholastica

Catholic Schools Week Mass – Jan. 31 at St. Gregory, North East

Bishop Donald Trautman will celebrate a special Mass for Catholic Schools Week at 9:30 a.m. on Wed., Jan. 31 at St. Gregory Parish, North East.



Bishop Donald Trautman

World Day for Consecrated Life – Feb. 4

Love is the only key to understanding a life given completely to God, said Pope Benedict XVI in his reflection on World Day of Consecrated Life in 2006. The pope said many of the saints of history were members of religious congregations, such as St. John of God, St. Camillus de Lellis, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise de Marillac, St. Joseph Cottolengo, St. Luis Orione and Blessed Teresa of Calcutta.



“These men and women, whom the spirit of Christ molded, making them models of evangelical commitment, lead us to consider the importance of the consecrated life as expression and school of charity,” said the pope. The Second Vatican Council emphasized that “the imitation of Christ in chastity, poverty and obedience is totally oriented to attaining perfect charity,” he said.

This year marks the 10th anniversary the church has celebrated World Day of Consecrated Life. “Together we will thank God for the gift of consecrated life and pray that it will continue to be an eloquent sign of his merciful love in the world,” he said.

World Day of the Sick – Feb. 11

The incurably and terminally ill have a right to medical treatment and spiritual assistance to ease their suffering and help them die with dignity, Pope Benedict XVI said in his annual message for the World Day of the Sick. The pope also decried the fact that too many poor people and people in underdeveloped nations are dying of diseases that are curable.



“The church wishes to support the incurably and terminally ill by calling for just social policies which can help to eliminate the causes of many diseases and by urging improved care for the dying and those for whom no medical remedy is available,” he said.

The World Day of the Sick affirms the church's duty to remember and serve the sick and the suffering.

Clergy appointments



The Most Rev. Donald W. Trautman, STD, SSL, Bishop of Erie, announces the following clergy appointments:

Msgr. Andrew Karg, reappointed to serve on the diocesan Clergy Continuing Education and Formation Committee for a term of four years concluding in November 2010.

Msgr. Joseph Riccardo, appointed as Defender of the Bond in the Tribunal of the Diocese of Erie for a term of five years. Effective Jan. 3, 2007.

Catholic Schools Week is Jan. 28-Feb. 3

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

During the week of Jan. 28-Feb. 3, Catholic schools across the United States will celebrate Catholic Schools Week, honoring the mission that Catholic schools accomplish for young people, the church and the community.

This year's national theme is *Catholic Schools – The Good News in Education*. The logo features an open book, symbolizing both the Bible and knowledge and underscoring the Christ-centered, religious foundation and academic excellence of Catholic schools.

Catholic schools throughout the Erie Diocese will celebrate with special events, with many schools holding open houses at this time.

Father Nicholas Rouch, vicar for education, said there is a lot of good news to be proud of in the Erie Diocese.

“Since he was appointed as vicar for education in September by Bishop Donald Trautman, Father Rouch said he is amazed by what he sees during his visits to schools and in meeting with students, teachers, administrators and parents.

“One thing I am struck with is a remarkable degree of ingenuity to do more with less,” he said. “It is remarkable to watch what many



Father Nicholas Rouch



Find out about the 'Good News' at Catholic schools

Many activities, services and updates are occurring annually in all 33 Catholic schools in the 13-county Erie Diocese. To view a 'Good News' report with a sampling of highlights from each school, visit www.ErieRCD.org and click on the 'Good News' button.

schools are doing, very creative, very ingenious ways to excel academically and excel in the faith without a lot of financial resources.”

He said he is touched by the love and dedication he sees in parents, faculty and administrators in all 33 Catholic schools throughout the diocese.

“There is a tremendous amount of dedication from everyone involved in our Catholic schools,” Father Rouch said. “They are here because they want to be here and they choose to be here. Catholic education is important to them. They value it and their hearts are in it.”

Father Rouch cited a very

high level of involvement on the part of parents as one of the many reasons for the success of Catholic schools in the diocese.

“They know what's going on at the schools,” he said. “They're ready to help, and they're proud.”

In keeping with the mission of the Catholic Church, Father Rouch said Catholic schools emphasize that faith isn't just a Sunday experience but rather it is an everyday experience.

“And I see that happening,” he said. “The faith dimension can permeate so many aspects of a child's life and does so very naturally. It isn't an artificial addition but it's a very natural integration of faith with learning.”

Becoming aware of GOD'S CALL

Vocation Awareness Committee promotes women religious

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

For Sister Mary Rita Kuhn, the cover of a new brochure on discerning a vocation to religious life says it all.

The picture is set amid a tall forest of leafy trees. And its perspective puts the viewer near earth level looking down a long path.

“The picture on it is really indicative of what it's all about—that life is really a journey,” said Sister Mary Rita, the Erie Diocese's vicar for women religious. “Are people being called to that journey to service and holiness by being a member of a religious community and serving God in that fashion?”

The pamphlet, titled *A Journey: Answering God's Call—to Service, to Holiness*, is just one of several new publications made available by the Vocation Awareness Com-

mittee of the Erie Diocese as part of a campaign to educate and nurture vocations to religious life for women.

Over the years, the committee has prepared brochures and prayer cards to promote vocations and made them available to parishes, schools and groups.

The newest materials include information about the different types of religious communities in the diocese and a listing of vocation speakers.

“Most recently we were aware of the fact that we don't have a lot of sisters that can go out and speak about vocations,” Sister Mary Rita said. “We asked sisters if they would be willing to go out and talk about religious life. That's how we developed this little book. We're very grateful to them and very excited about the prospect of their availability to talk about women religious.”

Fifteen women religious,

Materials available from the Vocation Awareness Committee of the Erie Diocese:

- Prayer cards for children, women, a vocation blessing and to encourage church vocations
- *Journey* brochure outlining ways to identify a call to vowed commitment and vocation indicators
- Vocation speakers
- Directory of religious communities of women serving in the diocese
- Vocation choices for Catholics highlighting priesthood, women religious, married life, single life, diaconate
- Invitation brochure to religious life



Sister Mary Rita Kuhn, SSI, vicar for religious, holds copies of new materials published by the diocesan Vocation Awareness Committee.

ner works in formation ministry for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwest Pennsylvania and is one of the vocation speakers. She has already been invited to several areas throughout the diocese including Erie, St. Marys, Ridgway and Titusville.

In her talks, mostly to youth in grades 4-12, Sister Clare Marie said she has tried to emphasize that God is calling everyone to something and suggests how people can respond to that call.

“I always let them know that we have to be open to whatever way God is calling us,” she said.

Her program dissects the different aspects around which religious life is centered: prayer, ministry and community. She also shows

a short video on vocations to the priesthood and the religious life put together by the Knights of Columbus, which is followed by a question-and-answer session.

“Those are always very interesting,” Sister Clare Marie said. “As the children get older, the questions get deeper. ‘How do you know God's calling you? What kind of nudges does God give you?’ The older ones are very open to hearing about this.”

Personal invitation and affirmation also continues to be a good way of leading someone to the discernment process, she said.

“Have you ever thought of ...’ is a viable question and continues to be,” she said.

See GOD'S CALL, page 3

Bush's new plan for Iraq draws support, criticism

From staff and wire reports

WASHINGTON – President Bush's new plan for Iraq, announcing Jan. 10 that he is sending 21,500 more troops, has drawn waves of support and criticism.

A Catholic Army chaplain who was stationed in Iraq and a Christian Iraqi-American military adviser said they stand behind U.S. President George W. Bush's most recent plan to send more troops to Iraq.

But three international policy experts contacted by Catholic News Service sharply criticized the plan and questioned whether it can succeed.

“If this is what the leaders are asking for, then that's what they need,” said Father Brian Kane, who served as an Army chaplain for the 67th Area Support Group at Al Asad Airfield, in the Iraqi Al Anbar region.

Pauline Jasim, a military bilingual and bicultural adviser in Baghdad, Iraq, said it was “about time Washington realized the (number of)

troops were never enough, and more troops are needed in Baghdad.”

Jesuit Father Drew Christiansen, editor of the national Catholic magazine *America* and director of the U.S.

Office of International Justice and Peace 1991-98, said the plan “seems to me too light on the troops” to achieve the goal of sufficient security for a transition to Iraqi control. More importantly, “it ignores the diplomatic elements altogether,” he said.

Maryann Cusimano Love, a professor of politics at The Catholic University of America, Washington, and an expert on terrorism, said Jan. 11: “This is primarily a political battle about winning



President Bush

See IRAQ, page 3

Special issue of Faith focuses on 2007 Catholic Services Appeal

For the second year in a row, the Office of Stewardship and Development has collaborated with *Faith* magazine to publish a special issue highlighting the many people and ministries around the diocese benefiting from the Catholic Services Appeal.

“We tried to choose stories featuring some of the ongoing needs within our diocese that are being met through the Catholic Services Appeal,” said Joseph Hoag, director of the Office of Stewardship and Development. Among those featured in the issue are Darlene Shenk and Cristina McLellan who have expanded the work of the Bereavement Committee at St. Brigid Parish in Meadville, innovative religious educators at St. Leo Magnus Parish in Ridgway and Ss. Cosmas and Damian Parish in Punxsutawney and musicians from eight parishes in the Erie area who gathered together to celebrate their roles and share their music on St. Cecilia Day in November. Father Marc Solomon also reflects on his first year as a priest.

Hoag says he finds tremendous inspiration in this year's CSA theme, “Of one heart and mind.”

“The diocese is made up of parishes—124 in our case—and each parish is made up of individuals,” he pointed out. “When we join our hearts and minds together in support of the CSA, we are able to accomplish great things.”

Look for a feature story about the Catholic Services Appeal in the next issue of *FaithLife* on Feb. 11. The CSA 2007 issue of *Faith* will arrive in all registered Catholic households in the diocese during the first week of February.



NEWS BRIEFS

U.S.

Catholic Charities aims to cut poverty in America in half by 2020

WASHINGTON — Catholic Charities USA Jan. 10 launched an ambitious campaign to cut poverty in America in half by 2020. "The poor do belong to us. ... They are our brothers and sisters," Father Larry Snyder, Catholic Charities USA president, told an overflow crowd at a Capitol Hill briefing announcing the Campaign to Reduce Poverty in America. Noting that 37 million Americans — 12.6 percent of the population — currently live below the poverty line, he said Catholic Charities USA and its affiliates, working in partnership with government, the private sector and other non-profits, will launch "a concentrated, systematic effort to cut poverty in half by 2020." Briefing participants received the newly released Catholic Charities USA policy paper, "Poverty in America: A Threat to the Common Good." It sets the moral and analytic framework for the campaign and spells out specific policy proposals for a sustained drive to reverse the growth of poverty in the United States. The briefing was held as the U.S. House was debating a bill to raise the minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour to \$7.25 an hour by 2009.

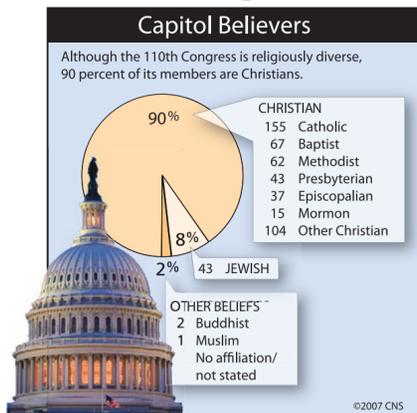


Father Larry Snyder

Bishops' agency seeks to raise poverty awareness

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Catholic Campaign for Human Development has been waging a new media campaign to raise awareness in the nation, especially among the nation's Catholics, about the extent and impact of poverty in America. "Right now in America 37 million people are working to become independent while struggling to afford the very basics necessary for survival — food, shelter, clothing, child care and medical care," said Timothy Collins, CCHD executive director. "It's a bitter fact that 13 million of our nation's poor are children," he added. With January designated as Poverty in America Awareness Month, CCHD has launched print and broadcast public service ads to help bring home the message that one out of every eight Americans is living below the poverty line. The print ads feature images of men, women, children and whole families dangling in midair, hanging desperately to a rope labeled the "poverty line," coupled with messages in English and Spanish about who is affected by poverty in America.

Congress more religiously diverse; Catholics still well represented



WASHINGTON — With one Muslim and two Buddhist members, the 110th Congress is the most religiously diverse ever. Catholics remain the largest denominational group in Congress, with 155 members — 25 in the Senate and 130 in the House. But there are fewer Catholic Republicans in both houses since the 109th Congress and many more Catholic Democrats. In the last Senate, Catholic members were nearly evenly split between the parties, with 11 Republicans and 13 Democrats. Now there are 9 Catholic Republicans and 16 Catholic Democrats in the Senate. In the House at the start of the 109th Congress, there were 129 Catholics — 57 Republicans and 72 Democrats. Although the total number of House Catholics in the 110th Congress is nearly the same at 130, the current group includes 42 Republicans and 88 Democrats. Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., a Muslim who was sworn in as a member of Congress using a Quran once owned by President Thomas Jefferson, was raised a Catholic. He became a Muslim while in college at Wayne State University in Detroit.

Musicians, people in pews differ on what encourages singing in church

WASHINGTON — People in Catholic music ministry and Catholics in the pews hold slightly different opinions on what helps congregations sing, according to a survey conducted by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. Participants included 1,541 people who said they were involved in church music ministry, and 808 people who said they were not involved in music ministry. All respondents were asked to choose from up to 14 different factors that help them sing in church, and only two were cited by a majority of Catholics in the pews: a familiar melody and "easy to sing." In contrast, more than

half of Catholics in music ministry voted for five choices. "Leadership of organ or instruments" and "meaningful text" garnered the votes of close to two-thirds of these respondents, while "leadership of cantor or director," "linked to liturgy of the day or season" and "enthusiasm of the congregation" got smaller majorities. "Familiar melody" and "easy to sing" placed seventh and eighth, respectively. The survey was conducted online through the organization's Web site at www.npm.org.

WORLD

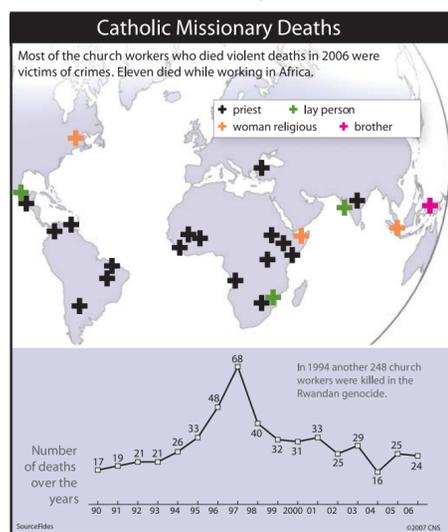
Warsaw archbishop's resignation prompts Vatican embarrassment, relief

VATICAN CITY — The resignation of Polish Archbishop Stanislaw Wielgus of Warsaw has prompted embarrassment and disappointment in the Vatican, along with a sense of relief that Pope Benedict XVI did not allow the awkward drama to continue a single day longer. In an official statement, the Vatican praised the "humility" of Archbishop Wielgus, who resigned Jan. 7, two days after admitting he had once cooperated with the secret police of Poland's former communist regime. Privately, however, several Vatican officials expressed irritation that the archbishop had apparently not been fully frank about his past from the beginning. They also questioned how the Vatican's normally exhaustive vetting process broke down in one of Eastern Europe's most important episcopal appointments. "When Msgr. Wielgus was nominated, we knew nothing about his collaboration with the secret police," Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, head of the Vatican's Congregation for Clergy, bluntly told the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*.



Archbishop Stanislaw Wielgus of Warsaw

Vatican agency says 24 church workers died violently in 2006



VATICAN CITY — Catholic Church personnel continue to be killed as they work in mission lands or among society's most disadvantaged groups, although they are more often the victims of violent crimes than of persecution for their faith. Fides, the news agency of the Vatican's Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, said that over the course of 2006 it had registered the deaths of 24 priests, religious and lay workers "who lost their lives in a violent way." The murdered church workers, it said, are often "the victims — at least apparently — of aggression, robbery or theft perpetrated in social contexts marked by particular violence, human degradation and poverty, which these peacemakers tried to alleviate with their presence and their work." The total of 24 murdered church workers was just one less than that reported in 2005, it said.

Pope says Christians show ecumenical commitment through charity

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI offered prayers for this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, saying Christians need to demonstrate their ecumenical commitment through concrete acts of charity. The pope, speaking at his weekly general



By the Way...

Several busloads of marchers from the Erie Diocese braved the winter weather Jan. 22 and gathered with other pro-lifers on the Mall in Washington for the 34th annual **March for Life**. The march, a collective effort of grassroots pro-life Americans to assure that laws protect the right to life of each human being, is held annually on the anniversary of the date of the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion across the country. Look for a story about our local marchers in the next issue of *FaithLife*.



Jason Koshinski

The **2006-07 posters** with photos of the diocesan seminarians are now available for anyone who would like one. Please call the Vocation Office at 814.824.1200 or e-mail Father Edward Lohse at Seminary@ErieRCD.org. The posters, which include the home parish and year of study for each seminarian, have already been spotted at many parishes and schools and are a great reminder to pray for these young men discerning God's call.

C. Angela Bontempo, president and CEO of St. Vincent Health System in Erie, has been named as the vice-chairperson of the Pennsylvania Catholic Health Association's (PCHA) 2007 board of directors. Bontempo, the first layperson CEO of St. Vincent, previously served on the PCHA board in 2002.

St. Vincent College in Latrobe has announced the completion of a \$75 million comprehensive development campaign.

"On behalf of the entire Benedictine community and everyone associated with St. Vincent College, I express grateful thanks for partnering with us as we continue to provide the opportunity for a Catholic, Benedictine, liberal arts education of the highest quality for today's students as well as for generations to come," said Archabbot Douglas Nowicki, chancellor of St. Vincent.

St. Vincent is one of several colleges and seminaries attended by our diocesan seminarians.

A recent out-of-town visitor to www.ErieRCD.org said she read the stories on the **Blue Mass** in the **St. Marys Deanery** and in **Tidioute** in our archives on the Web. Traditionally, the Blue Mass honors local police and law enforcement officials. She informed our webmaster that she is sending the idea on to her home church in the Archdiocese of Seattle and to her son in Phoenix, who just became a police officer there after leaving the Air Force.

As of this writing, the **2007 Directory of the Diocese of Erie** was scheduled to be available by the end of this month. The directory includes contact names and numbers for parishes, schools, administration and agencies throughout the 13-county diocese. This year's cover photo is from the dedication Mass of the new **All Saints Parish** in Waterford.

To order a copy, download an order form at www.ErieRCD.org or contact the Office of Communications at 814.824.1161 or e-mail BWilliams@ErieRCD.org.

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

audience Jan. 17, said the road to Christian unity was a long and difficult one, but the important thing is not to become discouraged. Prayer is essential for ecumenical progress, he said. "Every Christian worthy of the name should unite with their brothers and sisters to implore the gift of unity and communion," he said. The pope, who addressed about 6,000 people in the Vatican's audience hall, was scheduled to close the Jan. 18-25 Christian unity week by presiding over a vespers liturgy with other Christian leaders in the Rome Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. He said the theme of this year's prayer week, "Open our ears and loosen our tongues," referred to Christ's healing of a deaf man and to the missionary responsibilities of all Christians.

Filipinos mark 400th anniversary of feast of the Black Nazarene



MANILA — Thousands of people take part in a procession marking the 400th anniversary of the feast of the Black Nazarene in Manila, Philippines, Jan. 9. The highly regarded ebony statue of Christ was brought to the Pacific islands by Spanish priests early in the 17th century. An annual feast brings thousands of pilgrims to Manila.

JOIN YOUR CATHOLIC CHAPLAIN FATHER PAUL COCHRAN

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 to 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!

ERIE DIOCESAN CEMETERIES
HELPING FAMILIES CONTINUE THEIR CATHOLIC TRADITIONS SINCE 1869

- Calvary • Gate of Heaven
- Trinity • Mary Queen of Peace

For more information
(814) 838-7724

CLOCK REPAIR

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

FaithLife
The official news bulletin of the Catholic Diocese of Erie

Volume 3, Issue 2
General Information: (814) 824-1160
Fax: (814) 824-1170
E-Mail: 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.

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
Connected with the restoration of the Sheas Theatre Pipe Organ project.
Call Joe Luckey at 871-7276
Leave your number for a return call.

Becoming aware of God's call

GOD'S CALL from page 1

According to Sister Mary Rita, there are 388 women religious serving in the Erie Diocese. She is hopeful, with the new vocation awareness campaign, that people can have a real understanding of who women religious are in the church.

"I think years ago, people expected sisters to be teachers in schools, which they were, or nurses or to work in social services with the poor in some fashion. But the communities, in their desire to serve people and their needs today, have really branched out into a broad variety of ministries."

Through the years, people became familiar with seeing sisters working in large numbers at a school or hospital, she said, but today that isn't the scene. Today, sisters are more scattered, many doing individual projects or

working in small groups because those are the needs they find in contemporary society.

"There's a great presence of people who care about passing on the Gospel message, and today that's how we do it," Sister Mary Rita said. "Women religious see a need and try to respond to that need."

Sisters are still working in education and health and social services, but many have become involved with other ministries such as religious education, music ministry and offering retreats and prayer programs.

Among the materials created by the committee is a new directory of religious communities of women serving in the Erie Diocese. This directory outlines the different types of communities and explains their spiritual direction such as monastic, contem-

What life is Jesus calling me to?

2007 Open House and Discernment Retreat schedule to celebrate vocations to priestly and religious life

Open Houses

Anawim Community

Frenchville
Explore community life and ministry in Clearfield County. Anawim is a community of both men and women who live and work with the poor in the spirit of the beatitudes. Meet others who join in this ministry on April 27-29. Join the community for a reflection weekend May 4-5. Each weekend begins at 7 p.m. Call 814.263.4855 or e-mail anawimco@pennswoods.net

Benedictine Sisters of Erie

Sat., March 24
Time: 3-8 p.m.
Place: Mount Saint Benedict
6101 East Lake Road, Erie

Guests are invited to a tour, dinner, Lenten prayer vigil. For more information or to make a reservation, call Sister Dorothy Stoner at 814.899.0614 ext. 2511 or e-mail vocations@mstbenedict.org

Sisters of St. Joseph

Sat., Feb. 3
Time: 7 p.m.
Place: Villa Maria Living Center
5031 West Ridge Road, Erie
Guests are invited to liturgy and sharing. For more information or to make a reservation call Sister Clare Marie at 814.836.4212 or e-mail s.cbeichner@ssjerie.org

Discernment Retreats

St. Mark Seminary

Sat., Feb. 17
Time: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Place: St. Mark Catholic Center
429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie
Discernment retreat for young men. Reservations required. For more information call Father Edward Lohse, vocation director, at 814.824.1200 or e-mail vocations@eriercd.org

Benedictine Sisters of Elk County

June 9-11 and July 13-15
Time: Arrive Friday afternoon or evening
Place: St. Joseph Monastery, St. Marys
use Route 255 Maurus St. entrance
For more information or to make a reservation, call Sister Victoria at 814.834.2267 or e-mail svallimont@hotmail.com



plative cloistered and apostolic.

"Those are important words because there is a difference in communities," Sister Mary Rita said. "All religious communities are not the same. In fact, they're

quite different because they are living some aspect of the Gospel life that is unique to them. But they're all in the process of meeting the needs of people."

To download or order materials, visit www.eriercd.org/women_materials.asp on the Web or contact Sister Mary Rita Kuhn at 814.824.1125 or e-mail mkuhn@eriercd.org.

Briefly

Dr. Marie Hilliard to speak on stem cell research in Clarion Jan. 30

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 and Moralities* at Clarion University on Tues., Jan. 30. The incorrect date was published in the Jan. 14 issue of *FaithLife*.

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 trourke@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.ncbcenter.org.



Dr. Marie Hilliard

CCS diocesan Communion breakfast for scouts Feb. 11

ERIE – The 2007 CCS diocesan Communion breakfast for scouts will be held Sun., Feb. 11 at St. Luke Parish in Erie.

Mass is at noon with the luncheon served immediately after.

All scouts and leaders should arrive at the church at 11:30 a.m. in full Class A uniform to prepare for procession into the church. Troops should bring their troop flags and flag stands, with the stands labeled with troop name and number.

Cost is \$10 per person; children under 5 free.

Reservations and payment are due by Feb. 2. For more information, call 814.825.4158 or e-mail slscommbrkfst@hotmail.com.

Bush's new plan for Iraq draws support, criticism

IRAQ from page 1

hearts and minds. And the military measures that he presented (Jan. 10) don't do anything to address the underlying problems in Iraq and, I'm afraid, are unlikely to succeed."

Gerard F. Powers, director of policy studies at the University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for Peace and head of the bishops' Office of International Justice and Peace 1998-2004, said there "are some positive proposals" in the Bush plan and "the stated goal is the right one -- a united, stable, nonsectarian government." But he said the "modest increase in troops" announced by Bush is another case of "willing the ends but not the means."

Locally, the Benedictine Sis-

ters of the Americas, Regional Community of Erie; the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania have released a statement saying the escalation of U.S. troops in Iraq will have a "detrimental" effect.

The sisters say "escalation will be detrimental to our men and women in the armed forces, the Iraqi people and the surrounding region, the desires of people of the United States, and the economic future of the United States."

"We oppose the proposed escalation of U.S. troops in Iraq noting that prior escalations have not resulted in increased peace and stability," the sisters said in their statement. "Troop escalations in Baghdad in the late



Crosses set on a hill Jan. 11 in Lafayette, Calif., recall U.S. service men and women who have died in Iraq. The hill was the site of an evening demonstration against the war that drew several hundred people.

summer and early fall of 2006 and death for both U.S. soldiers resulted in increased violence and Iraqi civilians."

Educational improvement tax credits aid Catholic education

By Amy Beisel
Pennsylvania Catholic Conference

Parents, in virtue of their participation in the fatherhood of God, have the first responsibility for the education of their children and they are the first heralds of the faith for them. (Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church No. 460)

Education is one of the most important responsibilities entrusted to parents. Parents must provide the necessary foundation for their children to thrive and grow into good citizens, leaders and problem solvers. The future of our entire community depends on the education of today's youth.

Catholic schools offer excellent educational opportunities; but how can families pay for it?

In 2001, Pennsylvania established the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program. The EITC provides businesses with a tax credit for donating to nonprofit scholarship or educational improvement organizations. These groups grant scholarships to students giving parents the economic means to

choose the learning environment they believe is best for their children.

Scholarships are awarded according to the scholarship organization's criteria. Minimally, scholarships go to families with an annual household income of \$50,000 or less with an additional \$10,000 allowance per student and each other dependent living in the same home. Each diocese has its own program criteria.

Tax credits are not deductions; they are an actual reduction in the tax liability of a business. A onetime donation to a K-12 scholarship program earns a 75 percent tax credit; a two-year commitment yields a 90 percent tax credit. A business contributing to a pre-kindergarten scholarship program receives a 100 percent tax credit for the first \$10,000 and a 90 percent credit thereafter. To be eligible for a tax credit, a business must pay at least one of Pennsylvania's busi-



Amy L. Beisel

ness taxes.

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) will begin accepting applications for businesses renewing their EITC donations on May 15, 2007. New business applications begin July 2, 2007. Tax credits are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. In 2005, the available tax credits ran out within a few weeks.

Currently, more than 25,000 students in Pennsylvania are benefiting from EITC scholarships and nearly 2,200 companies participate. This year, \$44 million is earmarked in the Pennsylvania state budget for EITC.

But the demand is much greater. Many more families could benefit from scholarships; and, many businesses are willing and ready to contribute. Governor Ed Rendell expressed his support for the program during an interview with the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference (PCC) last

summer. When asked if he would support allocating more money for EITC he said, "Yes. My record speaks for itself. We have doubled it during my time as governor. I support it and I think it is a good idea." Contact the governor and thank him for his support and urge him to push for more funding. Contact your state legislators and ask for their support. Let them know that EITC is helping families fulfill their responsibility for educating their children in your community. Log on to www.pacatholic.org to send an e-mail.

For more information about the EITC, visit their Web site at www.paschoolchoice.org.

Amy L. Beisel, APR, is communications director of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference – the public affairs arm of Pennsylvania's Catholic bishops and the Catholic dioceses of Pennsylvania.

Mercy Center of the Arts
PRESCHOOL
will host an **Open House**
on **Sunday, Feb. 4**
from **1 until 3 pm.**
444 E. Grandview Blvd. • 824-2519

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** **1-800-507-4393**

GC Gen-See Capital Corporation
1-800-507-4393

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

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

it's more than just a job.

Apply today!

EHCA Erie Homes for Children & Adults

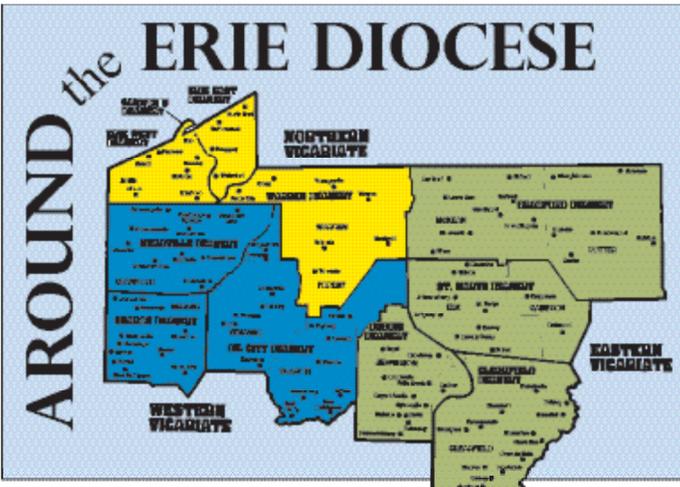
extraordinary people, extraordinary programs assisting people with disabilities in Erie, Crawford and Venango counties to live *rich and fulfilling* lives.

phone 814/454-1534 and begin a rewarding new career at EHCA
www.ehca.org

IS HE CALLING YOU BY NAME?
HOW WILL YOU ANSWER?

THE DOMINICAN SISTERS OF HAWTHORNE
invite single Catholic women, between 18-50, to attend our
DISCERNMENT WEEKEND - FEBRUARY 2-4, 2007

For information: Sr. Alma Marie at: 914.769.4794 (0114) or E Mail: SrAlmaMarie@aol.com
Rosary Hill
600 Linda Avenue, Hawthorne, NY 10532
www.hawthorne-dominicans.org



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

Jean Roberts named recipient of 2006 Caritas Award

PUNXSUTAWNEY — Jean Roberts, a parishioner at Ss. Cosmas & Damian Parish in Punxsutawney, was recently named the recipient of the 2006 Caritas Award given by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Erie. Following a Mass at Ss. Cosmas & Damian, the award was presented by Bishop Donald Trautman at a dinner and reception at the parish. The Caritas Award, given annually since 1992, was created for those who have shown "devoted and unselfish commitment to the mission and ideals of Catholic Charities," which includes the actions of service, advocacy and collaboration in its mission. Roberts is an active member of her parish where she serves as a Eucharistic minister and is a member of the Catholic Daugh-



ters of America and Rosary Altar Society. Her service encompasses leadership roles with the Fresh Air and Foreign Exchange programs, the Jefferson County Association of Retarded Citizens, the Helping Hands and Auxiliary Candy Strippers programs at the local hospital and numerous church committees. Pictured from left to right are Mary Maxwell, executive director of Catholic Charities, Bishop Donald Trautman, Jean Roberts and her husband Bill Roberts.

St. Callistus raises \$5,000 during benefit dinner

KANE — St. Callistus Parish in Kane held a chicken and biscuit dinner on Jan. 7 to benefit a family of the parish. The event, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus and the parish religious education program, raised \$5,000 for the family. "We are very grateful and thankful for all who supported this event," said Sister Frances Therese, parish coordinator of religious education.



DCC students learn about Aztec calendar

DUBOIS — Thirty students at DuBois Central Catholic recently completed their study of the Aztec calendar by creating tiles that are replicas of the various day symbols used in the 20-day calendar. According to language teacher Rita Himes, the students learned that the Aztecs used symbols instead of numbers for each day of the month, quite unique from the American conception of what a calendar should look like. Several DCC students pose with their Aztec calendar tiles. Kneeling: Mrs. Rita Himes, Jennifer Liedl, Maria Zaffuto, Jessica Edwards; standing: Alysha Jordan, Brekka Stough-



ton, Jenn Pothoven, Rachel Wells, Kyle Mann, Kylie Huegen, Sammi Wright, Ashley Edwards, and Sarah Boyce.

OLC students help set reading record

ERIE — About 100 students at Our Lady's Christian School joined more than 550,000 readers in all 50 states and 27 different countries in setting a new Guinness World Record for "Most People Reading Aloud Simultaneously." Students in grades 2-4 gathered in the OLC library and began reading a passage from Charlotte's Web aloud exactly at noon on Dec. 13. OLC librarian Nancy Andersen described the record-setting attempt as "a great way to keep students interested in reading."



Pictured are OLC 3rd graders Natalia Munoz, Anna

Sweeny, Jack Mahoney, Logan Finney, Peter Jeffreys and Brandon Sauers who participated in the record-breaking event.

St. Bernard School students win scholarships

BRADFORD — Two eighth grade students from St. Bernard School in Bradford scored the highest in the Archbishop Walsh High School entrance exam. The exam was given to eighth graders at Southern Tier Catholic School in Olean, N.Y. and St. Bernard School. The top two places were taken by Toni Ogundayo and Patrick Washington.



The test measures skills in mathematics, science and English and is designed to develop the students' individual academic program. Since the close of Bradford Central Catholic High School, Bishop Trautman has encouraged students from Bradford and McKean counties to attend Archbishop Walsh High School. The Diocese of Erie provides tuition assistance to the families of students from St. Bernard School who attend the New York state Catholic high school. Pictured from left to right are: Toni Ogundayo, scholarship winner; Father Barry Al-

laire, principal of Archbishop Walsh; Patrick Washington, scholarship winner; Father Leo Gallina, pastor of St. Bernard Parish; and Kimberly Mooney, principal of St. Bernard School. Photo by Francie Long.

MPS announces Aura Scholarship

ERIE — Mercyhurst Preparatory School has announced a new scholarship opportunity for Hispanic girls. Through the generosity of donors Betsy and Marco Monsalve, who provided the initial funding for this scholarship, one Hispanic freshman girl will be selected each year for the next 11 years to receive the Aura Scholarship, covering all tuition and fees for four years at Mercyhurst Prep. The Monsalves said they established the scholarship to help Hispanic-American girls to continue their educations through college and become dynamic professional women influencing American life. The scholarship was founded to honor the Monsalves' mothers, Aura Maria Romero de Monsalve and Marie Elizabeth Austin Roeback. Additional dollars for the Aura Scholarship donated by the Sisters of Mercy, the Diocese of Erie and a match from the MPS Capital Campaign will



not only enhance scholarship monies for Hispanic girls but will also provide scholarship opportunities toward tuition for a Hispanic male student attending Mercyhurst Prep. For more detailed criteria specifications in regard to these scholarships, interested parties

should contact the school at 824-2210. Signing the scholarship agreement from left to right are (seated) Sr. Mary Ann Bader, RSM, president of Mercyhurst Prep, Betsy Monsalve, (standing) Marco Monsalve and Dave Agresti, director of institutional advancement at MPS.

Catholic Schools Week Jan. 28 - Feb. 3

VILLA MARIA ACADEMY 2403 West Eighth Street Erie, PA 16508 814-838-2061 www.villamaria.com 114 years of FAITH FAMILY EXCELLENCE TRADITIONS

Open House Sunday, January 28th 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Learn more about our outstanding academic programs experienced faculty, foreign language and extensive technology. See how it all fits in an environment where God is at the center of all we do. Learn more at www.ourladyschristian.com Our Lady's Christian School 606 Lowell Ave. 814-838-7676

Saint George School Open House 51st & Peach Street (814) 864-4821 • www.sgs-online.org Sunday, Jan. 28th • 1 - 3 p.m. • Preschool (3-4 yrs) through Grade 8 • Full & Half-day Kindergarten • Summer Program • Before & After School Programs

St. Gregory Multi-Age School Where Faith and Knowledge Meet 140 W. Main St., North East, Pa. 16428 (814) 725-4571 • Fax: (814) 725-4572 gregory1@stgregs.net www.stgregs.net As a student of St. Gregory School: I believe in myself and my ability to do my best at all times. I am responsible for my life and for all my actions. I believe that God is my driving force, and that I can grow in my faith daily.

DuBois Central Catholic Quality Instruction from Pre-School through Grade 12 • State-of-the-art educational complex (www.cchs.pvt.k12.pa.us) • Accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges & Schools • Member of National Network of Partnership Schools • Advanced Standing Program through St. Francis University • Partnership for College Credit through Butler Community College • Block Scheduling in operation for 9 years on the Secondary Level • 29 credits required for graduation • Over 50% of all students in '06-'07 qualified for tuition assistance • Numerous Financial Aid Programs make Catholic education affordable DuBois Area Catholic School, Inc. 814.371.3060

saint luke school excellence together Catholics Catholic community challenging academics certified faculty open house dates: Sunday, January 28 1:00-3:00 Sunday, March 18 1:00-3:00 Where tomorrow's in the making. St. Luke School, 425 E. 38th St. Erie, PA 16504 (814) 626-7105 www.slerie.org

MERCYHURST PREPARATORY SCHOOL We have it all! 538 East Grandview Boulevard Erie PA 16504-2697 PH: 814-824-2210 FAX: 814-824-2116 www.mpslakers.com An International Baccalaureate School 80 years of excellence

VENANGO COUNTY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS St. Patrick School 952 Buffalo St. Franklin, PA 16323 (814) 432-8689 St. Stephen School 214 Reed St. Oil City, PA 16301 (814) 677-3035 Venango Catholic High School 1505 West 1st St. Oil City, PA 16301 (814) 677-3098 Our mission is to educate students in their spiritual, intellectual and emotional development. In our faith-filled environment, we strive to help all children reach their full potential as they prepare for lives of Christian service and responsible citizenship. REGISTRATION BEGINS: March 2007