

Catholic marriage

Pope discusses church defense of marriage, commitment to God's plan, page 2.



FaithLife

WHY CATHOLIC?
JOURNEY THROUGH THE CATECHISM

Year 2

50 parishes set to begin second year of faith-sharing experience during Lent, page 3.

www.ErieRCD.org

BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

February 11, 2007

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



Ss. Cyril and Methodius



St. Polycarp

- Feb. 14 Ss. Cyril and Methodius
- Feb. 15 St. Claude la Colombiere
- Feb. 17 Seven founders of the Order of the Servites
- Feb. 21 Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 22 The Chair of St. Peter
- Feb. 23 St. Polycarp

Ash Wednesday - Feb. 21

At Masses on this day, Catholics are blessed with ashes by the celebrating priest as he marks the forehead of each participant with black ashes in the shape of a cross. The symbolism echoes the ancient tradition of throwing ash over one's head signifying repentance before God. While distributing the ashes, the priest may offer an instruction such as "Remember that you are dust and unto dust you shall return" or "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel."



The ashes are prepared by burning palm leaves from the previous Palm Sunday and mixing them with olive oil. In the Roman Catholic Church, Ash Wednesday is observed by fasting, abstaining from meat and repentance.

Rite of Election - Sun., Feb. 25 in Erie, DuBois

Candidates and catechumens participating in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) program at their respective parishes in the diocese will celebrate the Rite of Election on Sun., Feb. 25, the first Sunday of Lent.

All new members of the Catholic Church will be received into their own parishes at the Easter Vigil on April 7.

The Rite of Election formally acknowledges the readiness of those preparing to receive the sacraments of initiation—baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist.

In the Erie Diocese, the Rite of Election will be celebrated at two sites: Bishop Donald W. Trautman will preside at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie and Vicar General Msgr. Robert Smith will preside at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in DuBois.

Laying their gifts at the feet of the Apostles

Sykesville parish takes Scriptural approach to CSA

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

SYKESVILLE - For the second straight year, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Sykesville is using a method as old as the church itself to explain the meaning behind the Erie Diocese's annual Catholic Services Appeal (CSA).

The approach is rooted in Scripture where a passage from the Acts of the Apostles talks about the formation of a new Christian community:

"The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them, for those who



owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need."

—Acts 4:32-35
Father Mark Mastrian, administrator of Assumption Parish, adopted the approach in 2006 "as a way we could

act out our faith in a ritual way," he said.

"The diocese distributes our financial gifts to many people, agencies and programs. Just as the people of the early church offered their gifts to the apostles, these gifts are for the wider community. We do that in a like manner through the CSA."

The annual appeal provides support for health and social services, education, diocesan administration and pastoral services that serve all 13 counties of the Erie Diocese. Parishes can also benefit from the appeal. Every dollar pledged that exceeds a parish's financial goal stays within the parish.

Using a bishop's crosier—a symbol of the office of the bishop—and placing a basket in front of it, the CSA took on a more spiritual approach, Father Mastrian said. He displayed the crosier and basket near the church's Sacred Heart statue, a prominent place in the sanctuary

See CSA, page 3



By displaying a symbolic bishop's crosier and placing a basket in front of it, the CSA has taken on a more spiritual approach at Assumption Parish in Sykesville. The crosier, basket and a hand-painted verse from Acts are displayed near the church's Sacred Heart statue, a prominent place in the sanctuary. The

display was put together by Assumption parishioners. Rick Witherite forged the metal crosier, which was painted and fastened to a wooden stand by Cliff McAninch. Peg McAninch donated the cross for the crosier, and Wilma Torretti donated the basket. Kim Roman made the calligraphy verse of Acts 4:35.

More than 100,000 March for Life in Washington

Teens from Erie Diocese join growing number of younger marchers

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

WASHINGTON - Buses of people from around the Erie Diocese made the trek to Washington Jan. 22 joining tens of thousands of other participants in the 34th annual March for Life.

They came from Erie, Sharon, St. Marys and other areas for the two-hour rally on the National Mall before marching peacefully around the Capitol to the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court.

With temperatures hovering right around freezing, the marchers packing several square blocks of the Mall and overflowing onto side streets turned the previous day's snowfall into acres of muddy slush.

The theme of this year's march was "Thou shalt protect the equal right to life of each innocent human in existence at fertilization. No exception! No compromise!"

Organizers estimated the crowd at more than 100,000 with marchers stretching from the speakers' stage down the Mall about the length of four city blocks and spilling onto several streets.

At a press conference two hours before the march, leaders of the National Right to



Students from the St. Marys area are pictured on the lawn in front of the U.S. Capitol Building prior to the March for Life.

Photo by Aaron Pfoutz

Life Committee called the high court's 1973 abortion decisions a contradiction of

the Declaration of Independence's pronouncement that life is among the unalienable,

God-given rights which govern. See MARCH, page 4

Global Fast '07

Young Catholic urges donation of money saved from Ash Wednesday fast

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Rich Halvorson is counting on 10 million Americans to fast with him Ash Wednesday, Feb. 21, and to donate the money they would have spent on food to what he terms "highly efficient" charities.

Halvorson, a 25-year-old Catholic from Boise, Idaho, believes the donations could reach \$50 million. The charities he's contacted are themselves willing to match funds donated to accomplish specific projects.

The Ash Wednesday program is called Global Fast '07.

Halvorson, a Harvard University graduate who has written on international politics before embarking on Global Fast, said the idea came to him as he conducted a five-day fast last year; a friend of his was conducting an even longer fast.

Halvorson's benchmark for "highly efficient" charities is those that spend an overwhelming amount of



donations on the mission of their particular charity with little overhead. His Web site, www.gr07.com, lists 15 faith-based charities, all of whom spend at least 75 percent of their funds on such projects.

He told CNS he had already lined up seven charities to serve as Global Fast partners, and that he hoped to line up more.

In approaching a charity partner, Halvorson said, "We say, 'What is your area of greatest need? What are you willing to match?'" Halvorson said one charity partner, the Deerfield, Fla.-based Food for the Poor, told him, "There are people living in a trash dump in Haiti, and we're willing to do whatever it takes to get them off of that trash dump and into some kind of livable housing." The project may require millions of dollars, but Food for the Poor is willing to match funds raised through Global Fast.

See GLOBAL FEST, page 3

Lenten regulations 2007

The season of Lent begins this year on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 21 and concludes when the Paschal Triduum of the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord begins prior to the start of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday evening, April 5.

The following regulations are promulgated and binding for all Latin Rite Catholics in the Diocese of Erie for Lent and the Paschal Triduum, 2007. Eastern Rite Catholics who may be attending Latin Rite parishes have their own proper regulations and should consult their own eparchy or parish.

1. Traditional Lenten practices of PRAYER, FASTING and ALMSGIVING and other forms of self-denial are recommended most warmly by the Church.

2. The faithful observance of Lent should manifest itself especially in the imitation of Christ in daily life and in the readiness to sacrifice time and talent whenever possible in personal, parish and community efforts on behalf of those in spiritual or material need. The spiritual hunger of the unchurched locally and in mission lands can be the focus of prayer and charitable giving.

3. ASH WEDNESDAY and GOOD FRIDAY are days of abstinence from meat for those 14 years of age and older. They are also days of fasting for those ages 18 to 59 inclusive. (Those bound by the law of fasting may take one full meal. Two smaller meals, sufficient to maintain strength according to one's needs, are also permitted. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or work is seriously affected, the law does not oblige.)

4. ALL FRIDAYS IN LENT are days of abstinence from meat for those 14 years of age and older. In their planning for observances, organizations and individuals are requested to offer meatless alternatives for Catholics in attendance.

5. ALL FRIDAYS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR (except solemnities) outside of Lent remain days of penance. The United States bishops highly recommend the traditional abstinence from meat, together with fasting, for the cause of peace in the world. However, some other practice of voluntary self-denial or personal penance may be substituted.



By order of the Most Reverend Donald W. Trautman,

Donald W. Trautman
Bishop of Erie

Did You Know?

During the past 10 years* of the Catholic Services Appeal, \$13.5 million has stayed within parishes of the Erie Diocese.

*Eight CSAs were conducted during that time, with two years devoted to the diocesan Capital Campaign

Be Mine

2.2 million marriages take place in the United States each year.

212,500 Catholic marriages took place in the United States in 2006 — about 10% of all marriages.

women 25
men 27
Average age of modern-day brides and grooms

women 57%
men 60%
Americans 18 or older who are married

Source: U.S. Census and The Official Catholic Directory 2006
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NEWS BRIEFS

U.S.

Religious leaders seek more vigorous U.S. role in Mideast peace



Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington, responds to a question during a press conference in front of the U.S. State Department in Washington after meeting with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice Jan. 29.

WASHINGTON — After meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice Jan. 29, a delegation of U.S. Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders said they think the United States should take a more vigorous leadership role in promoting a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington, said the group met with Rice “to reiterate our strong commitment to a two-state solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict” and to discuss “the urgent need for United States leadership to restart and successfully conclude negotiations for a lasting and just peace between Israel and the Palestinian people.”

Parishes, schools realigned in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey

WASHINGTON — Faced with rising costs and shifting populations, several dioceses in the Northeast United States announced reorganization plans in mid-January that involve closing or merging many of their parishes and schools. “For the past three years, the Department of Catholic Education has been engaged in an effort to right-size our Catholic elementary school system,” said Bishop Edward U. Kmiec of Buffalo, as he announced Jan. 20 that 14 Catholic schools in the diocese would close at the end of the school year.

Bishop lauds Bush’s desire for comprehensive immigration reform

WASHINGTON — The chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Migration applauded President George W. Bush’s advocacy during his Jan. 23 State of the Union address for comprehensive immigration reform. “I welcome the remarks of President Bush,” said Bishop Gerald R. Barnes of San Bernardino, Calif., in a Jan. 25 statement. “Comprehensive immigration reform is clearly a high priority for our nation and should be high on the agenda of the 110th Congress,” he added.



Bishop Gerald R. Barnes

“Bush, in his address, asked Congress for “a serious, civil and conclusive debate so that you can pass — and I can sign — comprehensive immigration reform into law.” Bishop Barnes said, “In part because of inaction at the federal level, states and localities are moving to adopt their own laws in this area. Americans throughout the country strongly desire that Congress solve the problem of illegal immigration.”

Cardinal says his committee’s work is to be faithful defender of life



Philadelphia Cardinal Justin Rigali, chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, celebrates the vigil Mass for life Jan. 21 in Washington.

PHILADELPHIA — The priorities of the U.S. bishops’ Committee for Pro-Life Activities today are “the priorities we’ve had for years, along with new challenges to life,” said Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia, who is now chairman of the committee. “We are simply trying to be faithful defenders of life at this juncture in the history of the U.S. and the world,” said the cardinal. Cardinal Rigali was chosen chairman-elect of the pro-life committee during the bishops’ November 2005 general meeting, and took over as chairman at the end of the bishops’ fall meeting in 2006, succeeding Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore.

Six regional Mercy communities to merge, form West Midwest community

OMAHA, Neb. — Six regional communities of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas will be one next year — and it will all happen in Omaha. As of July 1, 2008, the Sisters of Mercy will form one West Midwest community, which will include nearly 900 sisters and more than 500 Mercy associates and Companions in Mercy.

WORLD

Pope discusses church defense of marriage, commitment to God’s plan

VATICAN CITY — The Catholic Church defends marriage as the permanent bond of a man and a woman because matrimony corresponds to human nature and to God’s divine plan, Pope Benedict XVI said. When a man and a woman enter into a Catholic marriage, their commitment to each other surpasses their feelings at the moment and becomes a commitment to maintaining the bond God has created between them, the pope said Jan. 27 in his annual meeting with members of the Tribunal of the Roman Rota, a Vatican court dealing mainly with marriage.

PEOPLE

Bishop Murry of Virgin Islands named to head Youngstown Diocese

WASHINGTON — Pope Benedict XVI has named Bishop George V. Murry of St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands to head the Diocese of Youngstown, Ohio. Bishop Murry, 58, succeeds Bishop Thomas J. Tobin, who was appointed bishop of Providence, R.I., in March 2005. The appointment was announced Jan. 30 in Washington by Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States.



Bishop George V. Murry

as bishop of Youngstown, and I look forward to meeting and working with the priests, deacons, religious and laity of the diocese,” Bishop Murry said in a statement. He will be installed March 28. Bishop Murry, who is one of 10 active U.S. black Catholic bishops, had headed the Diocese of St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands since June 1999. He first went to the diocese when he was appointed coadjutor bishop in May 1998.

By the Way...

The Pennsylvania General Assembly honored Pennsylvania’s Catholic schools on Jan. 29 with resolutions recognizing Catholic Schools Week. Rep. William Adolph (R-Philadelphia) with 88 co-sponsors and Sen. Robert T. Regola, III (R-Westmoreland) with 35 co-sponsors introduced similar resolutions, which were adopted by the House and Senate, respectively.



Jason Koshinski

The resolutions (House Resolution 31 and Senate Resolution 15) recognize the more than 180,000 elementary and secondary school students who are educated in Pennsylvania’s Catholic schools annually and notes that Catholic schools save taxpayers more than \$1 billion each year.

Catholic schools were also recognized by the national government. The House of Representatives unanimously passed a resolution Jan. 23 praising Catholic schools “for their ongoing contributions to education and for the key role they play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for this nation.”

Catholic Schools Week was celebrated Jan. 28-Feb. 3. The theme for this year is “Catholic Schools: The Good News in Education.” To find out about the good news at Catholic schools in the Erie Diocese, visit www.ErieRCD.org on the Web and click on the “Good News” button for a report on each school.

The Runnin’ Revs, a basketball team made up of priests, deacons and seminarians from the Erie Diocese, will play the Blessed Sacrament CYO team at 5:15 p.m. Feb. 11 at the parish’s gym in Erie. The Runnin’ Revs are using their basketball games versus parochial CYO teams as a way of promoting vocations in the diocese.

Parishes interested in hosting a Runnin’ Revs vocation program should contact Father Rich Toohy at Notre Dame Parish in Hermitage at 724.981.5566.

St. Mark Parish in Lawrence Park has launched its own Web site at www.stmarksip.org. The site features a welcome from pastor Father Scott Katren, a comprehensive history of the parish, contact names and numbers, a calendar of parish events and directions to the church. Visitors can familiarize themselves with the parish’s ministries and outreach programs, including Angel Food Ministries, which is dedicated to providing grocery relief and financial support to communities.

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

Good Shepherd Catholic Church in State College, PA, is seeking a part-time youth minister to develop, coordinate and run our junior high and senior high youth ministry programs. A bachelor’s or master’s degree in youth ministry or pastoral ministry is preferred; a degree in a youth-related field such as education, child psychology or human development will also be considered.

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Briefly

Blessed Sacrament parish mission Feb. 17-20

ERIE – Blessed Sacrament in Erie will host a parish mission on stewardship Feb. 17-20 under the direction of Father Daniel Mahan. All are invited to attend.

A priest from St. Louis Parish in Batesville, Ind., Father Mahan is the author of *More Than Silver or Gold: Homilies of a Stewardship Priest* and is a well-traveled speaker who will offer his reflections on the spirituality of stewardship.

Father Mahan was the keynote speaker for the diocesan Stewardship Days in 2005.

"Stewardship is misunderstood in the church today," he said. "It's often seen as just secular fundraising in sheep's clothing. But stewardship is about much more than money – it's a way of life, deeply rooted in the person of Jesus Christ. My hope is that the parish mission will make clear not only the true meaning of stewardship, but also will inspire parishioners to live the spirituality more fully."

Father Mahan will preach at each weekend Mass (5:15 p.m. Saturday; 7:30, 9, 11 a.m., and 7:30 p.m. Sunday) and at the hour-long mission sessions Sunday at 4 p.m. and Monday and Tuesday at 7 p.m.

For a complete schedule or more information, contact the parish office at 814.454.0171.



Father Daniel Mahan

Organ concert at cathedral Feb. 18

ERIE – St. Peter Cathedral will present an organ concert with Erik Meyer on Sun., Feb. 18 at 4 p.m.

Meyer, the son of two musicians, began his musical studies on piano at the age of 5. When he was 13, he attended an American Guild of Organists-sponsored pipe organ encounter in Philadelphia. He then made the switch from piano to organ, playing in two local churches and studying under Lutheran pastor, organist and composer J. Bert Carlson.

Meyer earned a BM and MM in organ performance from the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore, where he studied under Donald Sutherland.

Meyer has participated in a number of organ and composition competitions. He has also performed numerous solo recitals. Currently, he is cantor at Luther Memorial Church in Erie.

Lenten retreat at St. Thomas More House of Prayer Feb. 25

CRANBERRY – Father Chris Singer and Msgr. Max Karg will lead a Lenten retreat at the St. Thomas More House of Prayer in Cranberry on Feb. 25 from 2-8:15 p.m. The priests will offer inspiration, confession and time for recollection and prayer.

Cost is \$15 and includes dinner. Call 814.432.4275 or 676.5652 to register, as seating is limited.

For more information of the St. Thomas More House of Prayer, including directions, visit www.liturgyofthehours.org on the Web or call 814.676.1910.



Father Chris Singer

50 parishes set for second year of faith-sharing experience

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

Parishioners in the Erie Diocese will be delving deeper into the meaning of the liturgy and the sacraments during Lent.

The second year of *Why Catholic?* is set to begin at 50 parishes throughout the 13-county diocese.

Why Catholic? is a four-year program that focuses on Scripture related to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Small faith-sharing groups at participating parishes meet once a week during two six-week sessions each year.

The first session of year two will begin at most parishes the first

Why Catholic? sign-ups are going on in parishes now. Contact your parish if you like to be part of a small faith-sharing group. If your parish is not participating in *Why Catholic?* and you would still like to participate, contact Sister Nancy Fischer at 814.824.1217 or e-mail NFischer@ErieRCD.org.

week of Lent. Ash Wednesday is Feb. 21.

After a year of sharing and learning about the Apostle's Creed and the profession of faith, small group discussions for year two will focus on the liturgy and the sacraments.

Sister Nancy Fischer, director of community formation and lay minister training for the diocese, said that the subject matter for the second year of *Why Catholic?* may resonate more with participants.

"It might be easier for people to relate to because most people have experienced the sacraments," Sister Nancy said. "This year we'll discuss liturgy,

which we participate in every Sunday and every time we go to Mass. It's going to go deeper into something in which people already have a beginning understanding."

The first session includes topics on liturgy, an overview of sacraments and specifics on baptism and the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) and how people come into union with the church. The rest of the sacraments will be covered in the second six-week session, which will begin in the fall.

"I think the discussions for this year will be easier for people to apply to their lives because, with the liturgy and the Eucharist,

it's something we experience every Sunday," Sister Nancy said. "Hopefully we will all celebrate liturgy better as a diocese as we grow in a better understanding of it."

"The liturgy is very complex. It can seem like sometimes we might be going through the motions. But each one of those motions is well planned and has a deep meaning. Learning more about the liturgy can only enhance our experience on Sundays."

Approximately 5,000 people participated in the first session of *Why Catholic?* last year. That number decreased slightly for the second session, said Sister Nancy, but she expects more people to join in the experience for Lent.

"Lent is a time where people choose to do something spiritual, so I would envision the numbers will pick back up during this session," she said.

Global Fast '07

GLOBAL FAST from page 1

If 10 million indeed take part in Global Fast and "if the average donation were just \$5, that's \$50 million, and if we have charity partners that are highly efficient, that could turn into \$100 million," Halvorson said. "That's a huge impact."

Getting to 10 million committed fasters will require commitment by volunteers at "the workplace, high school, junior high, sports teams," Halvorson said. "Take a sign-up sheet around. If they sign up 100 fasters, if they decide 'I'm going to sign up 100 fasters,' that's the equivalent of taking a family and moving them off that trash dump in Haiti, or digging a well in Africa. And the prayer part of that has an impact we can't even see."



CNS photo

Rich Halvorson, a 25-year-old Catholic from Boise, Idaho, left, visits with a priest as a patient looks on at an AIDS clinic and orphanage in Haiti. Halvorson, who is founder of Global Fast '07, is hoping 10 million Americans will fast with him Ash Wednesday, Feb. 21, and donate the money they would have spent on food to what he terms "highly efficient" charities.

About Global Fast '07

"The fast God desires is this: to loosen the chains of injustice, to set the oppressed free, to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor with shelter." – Isaiah 58

- One day (Wed., Feb. 21) to change the world
- 10 million people are invited to fast and pray on Ash Wednesday of 2007
- Global Fast—fast and pray to feed the poor, fight injustice and foster peace
- Fasters pledge one day's food cost to support an approved charity
- 100% of the donations go directly to charity
- For more information, visit www.gf07.com

Assumption Parish in Sykesville takes Scriptural approach to CSA

CSA from page 1

where people's attention would be drawn to the visual aides.

"The bishop, since the time of the early church, is the successor of the Apostles," Father Mastrian said. "I wanted to have our people lay their gifts in the basket because it's symbolic of them laying their gifts at the feet of the Apostles."

During his homilies in the weeks prior to Commitment Sunday, Father Mastrian spoke about the different aspects of giving of one's time, talent and treasure. Since his parish was preparing for the penitential season of Lent, he also spoke about prayer, fasting and almsgiving, with almsgiving focusing on the parish's CSA goal.

"The Catholic Services Appeal is truly an appeal to our spiritual life as we prepare for the holy season of Lent," Father Mastrian said. "It is an appeal to our personal prayer life. It is an appeal to the areas of our lives that need to change. It is an appeal to joyfully discover how to

share our gifts with the larger Christian community."

On Feb. 18, Commitment Sunday, Father Mastrian will walk the congregation through a CSA and Lenten flier which includes a menu of items to do for Lent listed under the headings of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Prayer items include personal prayer, Stations of the Cross, adoration, a parish penance service and many others. Abstaining from meat, skipping a full meal and participating in the corporal works of mercy are listed under fasting. Almsgiving includes what parishioners want to give in the Sunday offering, as well as the CSA pledge.

A large paper cross attached to the flier represents what the parishioners have chosen to do from the list. After tearing the cross from the flier, one by one parishioners will place them in the basket beneath the crossier.

"By placing their cross in the basket, it reminds them of Jesus' suffering and sacrifice and they recall that and participate

in that by giving him their pledge and their cross from their flier," Father Mastrian said.

He said the spiritual approach has lifted the parish, which has 240 registered families, in numerous ways.

First, it was the most successful appeal the parish has had. Eighty-five percent responded with their pledge, and another 10 percent responded with their monthly envelopes for the CSA.

"We had not been reaching our goal in years," he said. "But when we introduced this new approach, we had a great immediate response."

On Commitment Sunday, parishioners pledged \$12,000 of the parish's nearly \$16,000 goal. Since then, the pledges have kept coming in, enabling the parish to come the closest it has to reaching its goal. Father Mastrian is



hopeful that will happen this year.

Once parishes reach their assessment of the CSA, all funds raised over that assessment stay within the parish. Some projects Assumption Parish has its eye on is to fix the drainage system behind the rectory and to seal and line the parking lot.

Secondly, by taking this approach to the CSA, the parish has experienced a spiritual renewal.

Parishioners responded immediately. There was an increase in the involvement and participation of parishioners in activities such as the parish prayer services during Lent and the annual Lenten fish dinners. The parish, which began its *Why Catholic?* experience after Easter, had 41 people participate in the small faith-sharing communities.

"Our approach to the CSA was a springboard for people to go deeper into their prayer life," Father Mastrian said. "It really did spur people on."

After hearing about the success Assumption Parish has had, several other parishes in the diocese have adopted this Scriptural approach for the 2007 CSA.

According to Joseph Hoag, director of the diocese's Stew-

ardship and Development Office, conducting the annual CSA is Scriptural and allows Bishop Donald Trautman to more effectively be a servant of the church.

"We're basically following Acts 4," Hoag said. "It's a matter of understanding why you give. The crossier is a symbol that he is a successor of the Apostles but also a servant. To take care of the larger church that he is responsible for, the bishop has to ensure that we have the resources to serve the people of the diocese."

Hoag said the needs are there every year and they're growing, which is why the appeal is conducted annually.

"The funds that come in through the CSA go out, they get used and spent and are distributed," he said. "It's not a matter of it happening once. The needs are always there. They're ongoing. We conduct this appeal to meet those ongoing needs."

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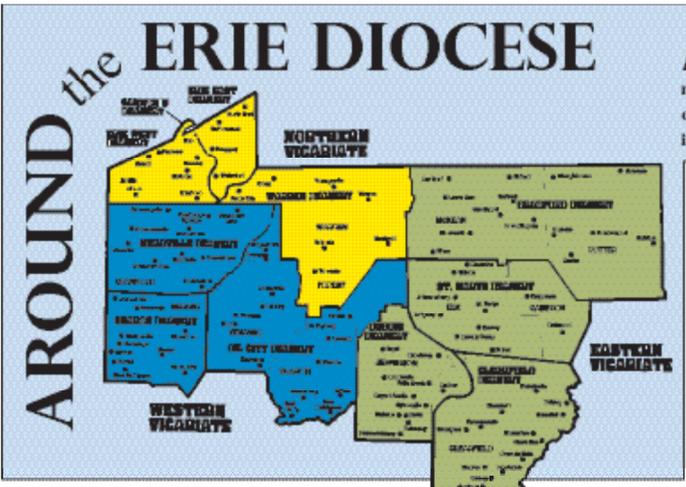
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DACS student designs welcome sign for Catholic Schools Week

DUBOIS — Jill Brosky, a senior at DuBois Area Catholic School, stops to add her signature to the Catholic Schools Week 'welcome sign' she designed for the entrance to D-Wing at the DACS. Brosky, a three-year art student of Mrs. Sharon Aaron, was sure to include the national theme in her creation. The 3-by-9-foot sign greets students and visitors as they enter the high school wing of DuBois Central Catholic.



St. Callistus first-graders learn how 'Jesus Loves Me'

KANE — First grade students at St. Callistus in Kane took part in a Jan. 10 retreat with the theme of "Jesus Loves Me." In creating a craft, children made flowers from paper plates, foam and construction paper showing ways they love Jesus. After the retreat, students met their parents in parish hall for a social. Parents brought their children's favorite dish to share with other families.



SSCD students aid St. Vincent de Paul Society

PUNXSUTAWNEY — As part of their faith-based education, Ss. Cosmas and Damian students are always encouraged to remember the needs of others. At Christmas each class chose a special organization or group for its service project. The sixth grade decided to help the local St. Vincent de Paul Society by having a Christmas raffle and by sponsoring five dress down days. Students and teachers wore holiday shirts for a change of pace from their daily uniforms, while at the same time giving generously to a worthy cause.



right are Cullen Jenary, sixth grade teacher Liz LaBance, Jalene Burkett and St. Vincent de Paul representatives Mike Cekovsky and Franklin Stockdale.

Allegheny Forest Ministries

Allegheny Forest Ministries recently held a print raffle to benefit its Kinzua Retreat House. The print, by Jeri Klein of Erie, is titled "Guardian Eagle." The winner of the print was Krista Perkins of Marshburg. Allegheny Forest Ministries is a non-profit organization looking to provide a spiritual retreat center for youth amid the setting of the Allegheny National Forest. The Kinzua Retreat House is located in rural McKean County between Warren and Bradford. Krista decided to donate the print to the Kinzua Retreat House in memory of her grandmother, Dorothy Hushon. The print will be placed in a prominent place in the house. Pictured from left to right are



Krista Perkins, Denise Perkins, Our Lady of Peace Parish in Erie. For more information on Allegheny Forest Ministries, contact Darrell Meyers at 814.835.9013 or e-mail nmeyers@adelphia.net.

More than 100,000 March for Life in Washington

Teens from Erie Diocese join growing number of younger marchers

youth joined 500 other students for Mass at their host parish of St. Anthony of Padua in Gaithersburg, Md. Prior to the Monday march, they toured the sites in D.C. including the Holocaust Museum. "When I planned the trip, I wanted to show them that there is dignity for all human life, not just the beginning," said Life Teen youth minister Aaron Pfoutz. "They can see that millions of people can be killed just because of the hardening of hearts." Pfoutz said it's great for the students to see they are part of a bigger event such as the march itself. Thirty-six students and five chaperones from Cathedral Prep High School in Erie made the trip for the march. Prep students have gone every year since 1999. "We try to tie the entire trip into the concept of respecting life," said Father Scott Jabo, Cathedral Prep headmaster and trip organizer. After arriving Sunday, the students' first stop was at the National Archives to see the

Constitution. They also visited the Holocaust Museum, Ford's Theatre, the Lincoln Memorial and several war memorials. By touring these sites, Father Jabo said students get an idea that the concept of respecting life includes issues such as abortion but also war, genocide, slavery and other violent acts against human life. Prep students joined the students of Georgetown Prep, an all boys Jesuit School which hosted the Erie group, for Mass in the school's chapel before attending the march. Afterward, they visited Arlington Cemetery, the Kennedy gravesite and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier before returning home. "They come away from there with a deeper appreciation for life issues but the necessity to stand up for those who are less powerful and those who are suffering and being victimized or oppressed in some way," Father Jabo said.

St. Marys chapter of World Apostolate of Fatima in its second year

ST. MARYS — Now in its second year, the St. Marys Chapter of the World Apostolate of Fatima is growing. Shown in the photo are spiritual directors Father Anthony Anthappa and Sister Roberta Ochs along with a few of the more than 50 members. The Wednesday night cell meets weekly from 7 to 8 p.m. in the chapel at St. Joseph's Convent, St. Marys. Prayers for peace, the rosary, a spiritual reflection from Father Anthony and prayers of petition for the community and world are all a part of this Holy Hour. The apostolate also has a Friday afternoon cell which meets each week at 1 p.m. at the St. Mary Parish annex building. In addition, the youngest members of the group have formed



a cadet program of their own and meet once a month in the basement of St. Joseph's Convent. The cadets recently sang Christmas carols for residents at Pine Crest Manor. Apostolate members attend the annual rosary marches in Clearfield and Erie and are represented at the Corpus Christi

procession and other local devotions in St. Marys. This chapter of the apostolate is involved in the home enthronement ceremony. For further information on how to start a rosary cell in your community, call Sister Roberta at 814.834.2267 or Bonnie Housler at 814.834.3214.

Polish Mardi Gras

Holy Trinity Parish
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Festivities: Noon - 5pm in the Social Center

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In addition to his experience as Pastor and Rector, Fr. Canice ministered for five years at the St. Luke Institute and has served as the Executive Director for the Southdown Treatment Center, Secretary of Planning and Management for the Archdiocese of Baltimore and President of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men.

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