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BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

February 14, 2016

DIOCESAN NEWS

School plan to be announced this week

Bishop Lawrence Persico this week will unveil the final version of the pastoral plan for Catholic schools of the Diocese of Erie.

The final plan, according to Bishop Persico, will reflect some of the concerns submitted by more than 1,200 people during a feedback period that ended in December.

"Much good work has been done by the Education Task Force and the Catholic Schools Office to refine the plan," the bishop says. "The process has been energized by the deep love for Catholic school education among our people. It has also renewed a sense of hope for the future. I look forward to sharing the plan with the diocesan family."

The bishop's decision on schools will be announced in the Eastern and Western Vicariates on Feb. 16, and in the Northern Vicariate, which includes Erie, on Feb. 17. He will meet first with diocesan priests and school presidents and principals, and then will release the news to the public.

The final plan comes after almost two years of intense self-reflection and study of schools and parishes in the diocese.

Decisions are being based on significant feedback from school communities, as well as data on enrollment, baptisms and population projections.

Father Nicholas Rouch, vicar for Education, says the diocese is now ready to move forward.

"I'm hearing from many people that they are experiencing a fresh excitement about Catholic schools," Father Rouch says.

Diocese heads to Supreme Court



Bishop Persico to attend proceedings during Holy Week



Photo by Mary Solberg

Erie Bishop Lawrence Persico is planning to attend the March 23 Supreme Court oral arguments on the Affordable Care Act.

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE AND CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON (CNS)—This Holy Week promises to be one-of-a-kind for Bishop Lawrence Persico, who will attend oral arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court March 23 regarding appeals to the Affordable Care Act.

Supreme Court justices will hear seven pending appeals in lawsuits brought by Catholic and other faith-based entities against the Obama administration's contraceptive mandate. The Diocese of Erie joins the Diocese of Pittsburgh as the lead case before the high court.

"The case is to be argued during Holy Week, one of the holiest times of the year for Christians. It is a week when we celebrate Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection," Bishop Persico said. "While I might have hoped for different timing, I'm sure participating in this important case will provide many opportunities for meditation and prayer this year."

The cases to be argued before the Su-

preme Court are being referred to collectively as *Zubik vs. Burwell*. Bishop David Zubik is the bishop of the Pittsburgh Diocese; Sylvia Mathews Burwell is the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Besides the dioceses of Erie and Pittsburgh, other plaintiffs are the Little Sisters of the Poor, the Archdiocese of Washington, Priests for Life, Southern Nazarene University and Texas Baptist University.

Under the federal Affordable Care Act, most employers—including religious ones—are required to cover employees' artificial birth control and sterilization, even if employers are morally opposed to such insurance coverage.

In all of the cases to be argued before the Supreme Court in March, appellate courts in various jurisdictions sided with the Obama administration. The rulings said the religious entities' freedom of religion was not burdened by having to comply with the mandate as they have argued, because the federal government has in place an accommodation, or "work-

around," for a third party to provide the contested coverage.

These employers must notify HHS in writing of their religious objections. Then HHS, or the Department of Labor, tells insurers and third-party administrators that they must cover the services at no charge to employees.

But the religious groups object to third-party notification, saying they still would be complicit in supporting practices they oppose.

While appeals worked their way to the high court, the government has not been able to force the

groups to comply with the mandate or face daily fines for non-compliance.

Only those religious employers that meet narrow criteria set by the Obama administration are exempt from the mandate. Houses of worship are exempt, but most Catholic schools, agencies and other religious employers are not.

"I am very grateful our case is going before the Supreme Court of the United States. It's an important and historic opportunity to defend our religious liberty," Bishop Persico said.

Seven priests named 'ministers of mercy'

FAITHLIFE staff report

Following the lead of Pope Francis during the Holy Year of Mercy, Bishop Lawrence Persico has named seven priests as "ministers of mercy" for the Diocese of Erie.

The priests will serve as visible, active signs of mercy throughout the diocese during the Year of Mercy, which ends Nov. 20. They will be available to speak at penance services and other Year of Mercy events. They may be sought out for confession, or contacted directly by individuals in need of healing and direction—particularly those estranged from the church.

"All priests, by their ordination, are ministers of God's mercy, but Bishop Persico has asked these seven to be particularly visible and active in the work of mercy during this special jubilee year," explained Father Christopher Singer, chancellor. "These men are asked to seek out the lost sheep of God's flock and help guide them home."

The ministers of mercy and their contact information are:

- **Father Christopher Barnes**—St. Mary Parish, 117 Lencer Drive, Crown, PA 16220; 814-744-9919; samarch@zoominternet.net.
- **Father Raymond Gramata**—St. Bernard Parish, P.O. Box 2394, Bradford, PA 16702; 814-362-6825; fatheraygramata@gmail.com.
- **Father William Laska**—Immaculate Conception Parish, 129 Graham Ave., Brookville, PA 15825; 814-849-8697; icbrookville@windstream.net.
- **Msgr. Richard Mayer**—Blessed Sacrament Parish, 1626 W. 26th St., Erie, PA 16508; 814-454-0171; rmayer34@live.com.
- **Father Nicholas Rouch**—Vicar for Education, St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie, PA 16504; 814-824-1220.
- **Father Matthew Ruvechan**—St. Stephen Parish, 210 Reed St., Oil City, PA 16301; 814-677-3020; ruvechanmm@aol.com.
- **Father George Strohmeyer**—Gannon University, 109 University Square, Erie, PA 16541; 814-871-7436; strohmey002@gannon.edu.

On Ash Wednesday at the Vatican, Pope Francis designated more than 1,000 priests as "missionaries of mercy" from all over the world to preach and teach about God's mercy this Holy Year. He gave them special authority to pardon sins that carry penalties that only the Holy See can lift.

The ministers of mercy in the Diocese of Erie are not among the Vatican-appointed missionaries.

Teaching piano across generations

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

More than 30 years ago, Bill Speros of Erie learned his flats, sharps and scales from Sister Mary Irene Lunger, SSI.

Today, the Erie attorney is happy that his two daughters also had a chance to learn from the piano master, if only for a short while. Sister Mary Irene, 80, retired from Villa Maria Elementary School on Feb. 1.

"It's bittersweet," Speros, 44, said. "Not only do I remember taking music lessons from her, but I was heartened that my daughters took lessons from her. She's been such an icon at the school that you forget that someone will actually retire."

Over 43 years, Sister Mary Irene has taught more than 1,000 students to play the piano. Speros, his older sister, Polly, and his two daughters, Colette, 6, and Isabella, 8, are among that number.

When Speros attended one of Colette's final lessons, Sister Mary Irene—ever the gentle, but firm piano teacher—complimented him for practicing with his daughters.

"He's been a good help, you can tell," she said. "The students advance faster because they are getting help at home. If the parents have had lessons, they know their children need to practice."

Colette mastered the songs "Christopher Columbus" and "Funny, Sunny Day" under the watchful eye of Sister Mary Irene. She faithfully practiced her lessons at home.

"I don't want her to retire because she's always a great piano teacher," Colette said. "I want to keep taking lessons."

That, perhaps, is Sister Mary Irene's legacy: Generations of



Photo by Mary Solberg

Sister Mary Irene Lunger, SSI, plays a melody with former piano student Bill Speros, and his daughter Colette, a current student at Villa Maria Elementary School. Sister Mary Irene, 80, retired Feb. 1 after 43 years of teaching piano and organ.

children were inspired to keep alive their love of music.

Speros, who took piano lessons from about first grade to fifth grade at Villa, said Sister Mary Irene's influence contributed to his own lifelong interest in music. For several years, he was active in musical theater through youth productions at the Erie Playhouse.

"The best part of the way she teaches is not only that she instills the desire to learn and do well, but the student doesn't want to let her down," Speros said.

On Jan. 26, many former and current students, parents, faculty and staff attended a farewell party for Sister Mary

Irene at the W. 8th Street school. Such attention wasn't easy for Sister Mary Irene, whose only goal has been to share her love of music with young people.

"I tried to instill music into them as an outlet for their emotions," she said. "If they get angry, they can play. If they're lonely, they can go play. If they're happy, they can play."

A Sister of St. Joseph for 63 years, Sister Mary Irene first taught elementary school music and piano lessons at St. Andrew and Villa Maria Elementary schools in Erie. For 20 years, she also found time to be a foster mother to babies waiting to be adopted through Catholic Charities Counseling and Adoption Services.

"I love little children," she said. "They teach me patience."

Pope Francis visits Mexico Feb. 12-17

Pope Francis will celebrate Mass at the U.S.-Mexico border to draw attention to migration issues. He is meeting with some of the employers and workers from the maquiladoras, factories for exports that underpin the economy but cause complaints over low wages and questionable labor conditions.



Newsmakers



Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world

from Catholic News Service

■ Mexican prison prepares for pope

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (CNS)—Pope Francis on Feb. 17 will visit the prison in this once-violent city that borders El Paso, Texas. Local leaders are hoping to shed the image of the town as the murder capital of the world.



Everardo Gamboa, an inmate at the Chihuahua state prison in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, holds palm trees he will plant at a chapel at the prison before the pope's visit.

The prison visit is expected to draw attention to the shortcomings of Mexico's prison system—the credibility of which was challenged by cartel kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, who tunneled out of a maximum security facility in July and was recently recaptured.

■ Catholic bishops in Haiti push for more peaceful politics

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (CNS)—Haiti's Catholic bishops urged political leaders to reach a negotiated solution to the country's looming political crisis as President Michel Martelly's term ended Feb. 7 and elections to find a successor have been indefinitely delayed.

"It is high time that the people know how we will run the country after that date," the bishops said in a statement released Feb. 1 after meeting in an extraordinary assembly.

■ USCCB files friend of the court brief in abortion case

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Texas Catholic Conference

joined other faith-based groups in filing a friend of the court brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in support of a Texas law requiring health and safety standards protecting women who undergo abortions.

The filing comes in the case of *Whole Women's Health vs. Hellerstedt*, on which the Supreme Court has agreed to hear arguments on two provisions of the law regulating abortion clinics in the state.

■ German, Austrian bishops urge continued welcome to refugees



A group of migrants from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, on their way to seek asylum in Germany or Austria, walk Jan. 24 along the frozen route from the border between Serbia and Macedonia to a temporary camp for migrants.

BERLIN (CNS)—Catholic bishops in Germany and Austria have urged their countries to continue accepting refugees, despite demands for new restrictions after New Year's Eve violence in Cologne and other cities.

"We need a reduction in numbers, but fixing an upper limit would be difficult," Bishop Stephan Ackermann of Trier told the *Trierischer Volksfreund* Jan. 27.

"We also need flexibility. But it's up to politicians to say how this can be achieved in practice, and it can't be done only at a national level," he said.



Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

"Paul of Thebes" lost all of the hermit crab races at the Kennedy Catholic Family of Schools Key West fundraiser Jan. 30. That's too bad. The staff of the Office of Communications for the Diocese of Erie thought "Paul of Thebes" had a good chance of winning. We named and sponsored the crab in recognition of the first Christian hermit, commonly known as Paul, the First Hermit or Paul the Anchorite.

Despite Paul of Thebes' poor showing, the crab races alone raised about \$2,500 at the Key West fundraiser. The Kennedy Catholic Family of Schools in Hermitage raised more than \$20,000 at the event.

Congratulations to Adam and Erica Wilcox who won the Key West vacation raffle.

Congratulations to Martin Auel, Randy Kondrik, Matthew Ochalek and Glenn Bailey who were accepted as candidates for the permanent diaconate in the diocese Feb. 13 at St. Mark Catholic Center.

Acceptance as a candidate is the second step in the five-year permanent diaconate process.

Good luck to Erie native Kayla McBride, a graduate of Erie's Villa Maria Academy, who will vie for a spot on the 2016 U.S. Olympic women's basketball team.

McBride is expected to attend the Feb. 21-23 training camp conducted by the USA Basketball Women's National Team at the University of Connecticut.

A former star on the Villa Maria basketball team, McBride went on to become an All-American at Notre Dame. She is entering her third season in the WNBA with the San Antonio Stars, and spent the past off-season playing professionally in Russia.

The 12 spots on the U.S. Olympic team are expected to be selected later this year.

National Catholic Reporter recognized Nancy Gregg, a religious education volunteer for 32 years at Holy Cross Parish, Fairview, for her outstanding volunteer work. She was among several people throughout the country who were honored in the Jan. 15-28 print edition of NCR.

NCR featured Gregg in a special section devoted to volunteers who "enlightened and challenged young minds about the Catholic faith, or made them excited to go to church."

Gregg was nominated by Peg Mallin, who told NCR: "Nancy's classes are always well-prepared and the activities and projects help to make the faith come alive for her students."

Several years ago, members of a 1998 men's Cursillo in the diocese were inspired to organize the Community Outreach Group's annual Clothing Distribution Party in Erie. In December, the event helped more than 2,000 people in need, says Tim Nowakowski.

A lot of credit for the event's success goes to two men: Mark Kilbert and Ed Jaglowski, both of whom have recently retired.

Villa Maria Academy sophomore Sara Prischak understands the importance of history.

Last month, she and her teammates on the school's winning swim team took the first jump in the new pool at the David M. Hallman III Aquatics Center in Erie.

Sara says she'll be able to tell her own children about the experience, just like her grandmother, Isabel Prischak, who talks about the excitement of being in the first VMA graduating class in 1954.

It was great to see all of the priests and religious who talked about vocations at St. George School in Erie during Catholic Schools Week. Seventh-grader Taylor Francis attended a talk by Father Steve Schreiber.

"I feel like it was a good opportunity for all of the students to see what God might be calling us to do," Taylor says.

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

Who was St. Valentine?



BY CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

How Feb. 14 came to be celebrated as the feast for lovers is somewhat a mystery. What little is known of the feast's namesake can be attributed to the lives of two martyrs: one a priest, the other a bishop.

Their lives have no connection to the contemporary holiday. The priest Valentine reportedly was beheaded on this date in 269 by Emperor Claudius II. The bishop, known for healing, was martyred earlier. It's probable that a medieval custom of sending messages of love on this day somehow merged later with the feast.

The custom also stems from the medieval belief that birds choose their mates on this day.

Paying it forward

Sacred Heart kids use cash to help others

FAITHLIFE staff report

An Advent project at Sacred Heart Parish in Erie netted such positive reviews that the Office of Religious Education for the Diocese of Erie and others recommend it as an activity for parishes throughout the year, even during Lent.

Envelopes containing \$5 in cash were distributed last December to all parish children, who were asked to "do something nice for someone else." Forty-six young people—and even two adult parishioners—participated in the effort, using the money to buy items for local charities or simply to make a get-well bag for a neighbor who had surgery.

Lisa Priestap, a longtime parishioner, organized the "Pay it Forward" project as part of three different Advent activities at the west Erie parish. The response, she says, was "phenomenal."

"We need to include kids and teenagers more as part of our parish family. What

amazing things kids can do if you give them a chance," Priestap says.

Logan, Aubree and Ethan Wells put their money together and bought flowers for a woman and "comfort food" for her family. Khloe, Kaleb and Karter Kleckner purchased toys for Toys for Tots; and Addison and Sydney Twobig donated their cash to the Anna Shelter in Erie.

Father Mark O'Hern, pastor, and Joe Stretti, director of the Office of Religious Education for the diocese, recommend such a project for other parishes.

"It struck me as a great way for parishes to stay in touch with their kids and inspire these young people to develop a sense of the larger community and its needs," Stretti says.

For Father O'Hern, the "Pay it Forward" project got students thinking beyond themselves.

"It's like Rice Bowl, sacrificing for the sake of someone else, so Lent is also an appropriate time to do a project like this," Father O'Hern says.

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EVENTS

Holy Rosary stirs up Soup/Chili Cook-Off

ERIE—Holy Rosary Parish in Erie is hosting its Soup/Chili Cook-Off March 5 at 5 p.m. at Hastings Hall, E. 28th Street and East Avenue. The cost is \$8 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$5 for children 6 to 12, and free for children 5 and under.



2232 Men's Conference scheduled for March

ERIE—Online registration is now available for the third annual Erie Men's Conference, a Catholic outreach to men of faith in northwest Pennsylvania and adjacent regions. The event will be held March 12 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Warner Theatre in downtown Erie. The conference is hosted and organized by 2232 Men, an evangelization outreach of The Reason for Our Hope Foundation of Erie. The day's guest speakers include NFL Pro-Bowl center Matt Birk; evangelist Tim Staples of Catholic Answers; and Deacon Ralph Poyo, founder of the New Evangelization Ministries. Erie's own Father Larry Persico, a national speaker, author and retreat master, will emcee the event. Bishop Lawrence Persico will preside over the opening ceremonies and closing Mass. He will be available throughout the event. The cost for the conference is \$40, which includes lunch and free parking. Group rates and student rates are available. For more information or to register, visit www.2232men.com or call 814-455-7364.

Saint Vincent College plans summer program

LATROBE—Saint Vincent College in Latrobe will host the sixth annual Faith and Reason Summer Program, an intensive, one-week introduction to the Catholic, liberal arts tradition, from June 12-17. The program is directed by Dr. Michael P. Krom, associate professor and chair of the Philosophy Department, and is designed for advanced high school and first-year college students who are seeking an opportunity to come to a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith and its integration in college education.

Limited scholarship funding is available. For more information, contact Dr. Krom at 724-805-2844 or michael.krom@svincent.edu. Students may register online at www.vincent.edu/faithandreason.

DuBois parish to host Lenten prayer services

DuBOIS—Lenten evening prayer services—featuring music and guest speakers—will be held at St. Catherine of Siena Parish, 116 S. State St., DuBois. The schedule is as follows:

- Feb. 14 Bishop Emeritus Donald Trautman
- Feb. 21 Maureen Horan, professor at Penn State, DuBois
- Feb. 28 Father Christopher Singer, chancellor of the Diocese of Erie
- March 6 Vesta Siple, co-director of RCIA, St. Catherine of Siena Parish
- March 13 Pastor Kelley Schanley, Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, DuBois.

Each service begins at 6:30 p.m.

Enrichment class scheduled at St. Catherine

DuBOIS—St. Catherine of Siena Parish in DuBois is offering an adult enrichment class: "The Psalms: The Prayers of the Church," Mondays from Feb. 15 through March 21, from 1 to 2 p.m., at the parish center, 116 S. State St., DuBois.

Participants will experience the timeless power of the psalms through six lectures that explore Scripture, theology, prayer, and the connection of the psalms to the life of the Catholic Church. To register, call 814-371-8556 or email stcatpa@yahoo.com.

Sacred Heart Grade School plans 50th reunion

ERIE—The Class of 1966 from Erie's Sacred Heart Grade School is planning a 50th reunion this year. Classmates are encouraged to contact Tim Edkin at tedkin@edkin.net.

Churches open for '24 Hours for the Lord'

Seven churches in the Diocese of Erie that have been designated as pilgrimage sites during the Holy Year of Mercy will celebrate "24 Hours for the Lord," an initiative of the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization.

The event is designed to welcome not only the active faithful, but also those estranged from the Catholic Church. The designated churches will mark the 24-hour period March 4-5 with special services. The initiative focuses on the sacrament of reconciliation and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

During the Year of Mercy, people are encouraged to promote and invite others who may be waiting for an invitation to the sacrament of reconciliation.

The following pilgrimage sites in the Diocese of Erie are celebrating the 24-hour event: St. Peter Cathedral, Erie; St. Bernard, Bradford; St. Cosmas & Damian, Punxsutawney; St. Joseph, Warren; St. Michael, Greenville; Sacred Heart, St. Marys; and Our Lady of Mercy, Harborcreek. Contact each church for times of services.

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\$2 million pledged to Mercyhurst

Donors committed to Catholic mission

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

An estimated \$2 million pledged recently to Erie's Mercyhurst University will help the 90-year-old Catholic institution fulfill its mission of mercy, according to the school's new president.

President Michael Victor, who came to Mercyhurst last August with a solid reputation as a successful fundraiser, said donations are "critically important" to Catholic higher education.

"We're trying to make Catholic education as affordable as possible. It's critical for the future of Catholic higher education," Victor told FaithLife. "We're mission-driven. We are trying to welcome all of those who may not be able to afford it."

In January, Victor announced that the university raised \$1.2 million over a six-month period for scholarships, a computer lab, the Career Path Program in its autism initiative, and the Mercyhurst Ice Center.

In the next couple of months, Victor plans to announce an additional \$1 million in pledges that also will be used for scholarships and to help fund a digital scoreboard, the autism initiative, and other individual and capital projects.

School officials believe the contributions together amount to the most successful major-gifts fundraising period in school history.

"It's pretty significant," Victor said.

About \$250,000 of the funds announced in January will go toward the second phase of renovations to the Mercyhurst Ice Center. That work will include, among other things, new locker rooms and meeting rooms.

"These upgrades will also serve the entire community," Victor said.

In 2008, Mercyhurst created its Career Path Program for students with autism. The new funds will support the program by introducing those students to the workplace through shadowing and/or working on and off campus.

So far, none of the recent donors have been identified.



Contributed photo/Mercyhurst University

Mercyhurst University President Michael Victor already has raised about \$2 million dollars in his short tenure.

However, in the next couple of months, as Victor announces other pledges to the university, some benefactors will be named.

"Some want to remain anonymous and some not. Some wish to inspire others to donate," Victor said.

Those who give to Mercyhurst, he explained, include alumni, friends and businesses.

"It shows that people deeply believe in Catholic education and what it can do to change the world," Victor said.

Lifeguards for life



Contributed photo

DuBOIS—Bad weather couldn't keep DuBois Central Catholic students from participating in their own pro-life march on the school campus in January. Several students had planned to attend the March for Life in Washington, D.C., but a winter storm on the East Coast forced them to cancel the trip.

Campus Minister Becky Dutra and a group of the students coordinated a "march for life" around the school grounds. All students and teachers from Grades 9 through 12 participated. The walk ended in the school gym for a prayer service led by Father Ed Walk, assistant headmaster.

SSJs reject Villa property proposals

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania have rejected all of the proposals submitted for purchase and development of its Villa Maria campus property in Erie, according to a statement released by the religious order Feb. 3.

In June 2015, the Sisters of St. Joseph listed the 17.1-acre property for sale. Villa Maria Elementary School is situated on the parcel, as are a separate gymnasium, an administration building and two other smaller buildings.

Several proposals for purchase and development were received, but were declined after "serious consideration," the statement explained.

When the sale was first announced, the religious order expressed its desire that future development be in line with the mission of the congregation.

"The sisters are grateful to those who put forth time and effort in preparing the proposals. All the proposals are confidential; as such, we are not free to disclose who submitted them," the statement said.

According to Stephanie Hall, spokesperson for the Sisters of St. Joseph, the property is still for sale, although proposals are no longer being sought.

"Villa Maria Elementary School continues to be a sponsored ministry of the sisters," Hall said.

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Lego robotics team honored at Behrend



ERIE—The Lego robotics team at St. James School, Erie, captured first place in teamwork and second place overall at the robotics competition at Penn State Behrend in December. Forty schools from northwest Pennsylvania participated in the event. Pictured, from left, are: Joseph Capan, Garrett Glowacki, John Campbell, Cayden Lombard, Zachary Suranofsky, Mario Bruni, Ryan Bello and Michael O'Laughlin. Coaches were Allen Madura, Dennis Cooper, Gregory Helminski and Mark Razanauskas.

Religious educators recognized for work



ERIE—The Department of Religious Education in the Diocese of Erie recently held a recognition dinner for religious educators and small community facilitators who have served from 10 to 40 years. Bishop Lawrence Persico and Father Nicholas Rouch, vicar of Education, presented the honorees with gifts of appreciation. Greg Baker, director of Campus Ministry, offered a reflection.

Among those in attendance, seated (from left), were: Pat Marshall of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Erie; Sister Rose Kuzma, OSF, of St. Boniface Parish, Erie; Sue Dahrouge of St. Cosmas & Damian Parish, Punxsutawney; David Jaquetel of Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Harborcreek; and Barb Murray of St. Mary Parish, Reynoldsville.

In the back row, from left, are: Bishop Persico; Shari Bronson of the combined parishes of Meadville; Irene Lucas of Our Lady of Mercy, Harborcreek; Pam Davis of Our Lady Queen of the Americas, Conneaut Lake; TC Marshall of St. Patrick Parish, Franklin; Kathleen Kutz of East Side Faith Formation, Erie; Sister Marie Kebort, SSJ, of St. Patrick Parish, Erie; Deacon Frank Luciani of St. Michael Parish, Greenville; and Carol Hoffman of St. Andrew Parish, Erie.

Erie couple honored for pro-life volunteerism



ERIE—People for Life of Erie recently recognized Jim and Mary Ann Toohey, parishioners of St. George Parish, Erie, for their longtime dedication, commitment and service to pro-life efforts. The Tooheys are the parents of Father Rich Toohey, pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Warren. They were presented the Joanne and Michael Wagner Award at the 38th annual Pro-Life Breakfast at the Erie Bayfront Convention Center Jan. 16.

Thanks to the Tooheys and the resources of the Quinn Law Firm of Erie, People for Life is now able to receive tax-deductible contributions to help fund its educational initiatives.

Weather doesn't keep these kids down



GREENVILLE—Eighth-graders from St. Michael School and Parish held their own pro-life event after their trip to the March for Life in Washington, D.C., was canceled last month due to severe weather. Pictured, front to back on the left, are: Katie Addison, Sophia Geving, Madison Murphy, Victoria Harcourt, Hannah Leonard, Shai Hargrove and Hannah Brewer. Standing at right are John Michael Yursic, Logan Stanfa, Nicole Lacey and Jack Johnson.

Several families consecrate themselves to Jesus through Mary



ST. MARYS—Fifty-two people consecrated themselves to Jesus through Mary at St. Mary's Parish in St. Marys on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe in December. The consecration followed a retreat based on the book *33 Days to Morning Glory*, by Father Michael Gaitley, MIC. This retreat is part of the "Hearts Afire Parish Program."

Freed from the storm



MEADVILLE—Catholics from Meadville, Emlenton, Clarion and Cranberry are all smiles as they head for home after attending the March for Life rally in Washington, D.C., last month. The group was stranded for 22 hours on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, along with several other buses from the region.

Youngville parishioners attend pro-life event



ERIE—Members of St. Luke Parish in Youngville attended the recent People for Life Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie. Pictured, from left, are: Mary Ann Devore, Sandi Minewasser, Alice Harlan, Darrell Harlan, Vince Pillar, Carol Pillar, Tom Kollar and Carol Knapp. Not pictured are Ryan Marino and Lisa Marino.

FISH & SHRIMP MAC & CHEESE 2016 LENTEN DINNERS PIEROGI & CRAB PIZZA & RAVIOLI

ALL SAINTS

11264 Route 97 North, Waterford
February 19, 26 / March 4, 11, 18
4:30-7:00 pm

BAKED OR FRIED WHITE FISH
Adult \$9; Child (12 and under) \$4
Toddlers FREE
Includes choice of baked potato or French fries, coleslaw/applesauce, homemade desserts and drink.
*Takeout available. (814) 796-3023

BLESSED SACRAMENT

School Cafeteria, 1626 West 26th Street, Erie
February 26 / March 11
4:30-7:00 pm

BAKED SCROD, MAC AND CHEESE OR CHEESE RAVIOLI
All fish dinners include French fries, mac and cheese, green beans, coleslaw, roll with butter, sherbet and beverage.

FISH OR CHEESE RAVIOLI Adult \$9
MACARONI AND CHEESE Adult \$5
Child (12 and under)
FISH OR CHEESE RAVIOLI \$5
MACARONI AND CHEESE \$3
Bake sale, too!
*Takeout available. (814) 454-0171

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY
Scheffner Hall, 100 Penn Avenue, Mercer
February 19, 26 / March 4, 11, 18, 25
5:00-7:00 pm

FRIED FISH: Adult \$9; Child (12 and under) \$4
3 and under FREE
Includes French fries, coleslaw, bread and butter, coffee, tea, lemonade and cake.
*Takeout available.
(724) 662-2999

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL
Scheffner Hall, 1533 East Grandview Blvd., Erie
February 19 / March 4, 18
4:00-7:00 pm

FRIED FISH AND/OR CHEESE PIEROGI
Adult \$10; Child \$5
*Takeout 50 cents extra.
Includes choice of French fries, potato salad or mac and cheese, coleslaw or green beans and ice cream dessert. (814) 825-7313

OUR LADY OF THE LAKE

Social Hall, 128 Sunset Drive, Edinboro
February 19, 26 / March 4, 11
5:00-7:00 pm

BAKED OR FRIED FISH
Adult \$9; Child donation \$4
Includes baked potato or mac and cheese, coleslaw, green beans, bread, refreshments and dessert.
*Tickets and takeout available at the door. (814) 763-8507 or jchfarm@hotmail.com

SS. PETER AND PAUL BYZANTINE

Social Hall, 3415 Wallace Street, Erie
February 26 / March 11
4:30-7:00 pm

BAKED FISH AND/OR PIEROGI
Adult \$10; Child (6-12) \$5; Child under 6 FREE
Includes choice of baked cod, potato/cheese pierogi or combo. **Nut roll bake sale, too!**
*Takeout available. (814) 825-8140

ST. ANTHONY
Church Hall, Sherman Avenue, Sharon
Every Friday, February 19 through March 25
4:00-7:00 pm

FRIED OR BAKED FISH
Includes choice of baked potato or French fries, applesauce or coleslaw, cookie and beverage.
Palacinkas too! Takeout available.
(724) 342-7391

ST. ANTHONY
St. Paul Center, Sponsored by St. Anthony Knights of Columbus; Rt. 6 (Saybrook), Sheffield
February 19, 26 / March 4, 11, 18, 25
5:00-7:00 pm

FISH FRY Adult \$9
Includes large portion of haddock, French fries, coleslaw, roll, beverage and homemade dessert; **50/50 drawing!**
(814) 968-5915

ST. BONIFACE SCHOOL
School Cafeteria, 359 Main Street, Kersey
February 19, 26 / March 4, 11, 18, 25
4:00-7:00 pm

FRIED OR BAKED FISH Adult \$10
CHICKEN FINGERS Adult \$8; Child \$4
Includes baked potato or French fries.

macaroni salad or coleslaw and homemade dessert.
(814) 885-8093

ST. BRIGID

St. Brigid Social Hall, 383 Arch Street, Meadville
February 19, 26 / March 4, 11, 18, 25
4:30-6:30 pm
FISH Adult \$9; MAC AND CHEESE OR GRILLED CHEESE Child (5-12) \$4
ICE CREAM BAR \$1.50
(814) 336-4459

ST. JOSEPH

17735 Bennetts Valley Highway, Force
February 19, 26 / March 4, 11, 18, 25
Noon-6:30 pm

BAKED OR FRIED HADDOCK
Adult \$11; Child (10 and under) \$6
Includes choice of French fries or baked potato, cup of soup, dinner roll, coleslaw, dessert and drink. *Eat in or takeout available (soup and drink not included with takeout).
(814) 787-4819; Delivery in Bennetts Valley!

ST. JOSEPH

Route 66, Lucinda, PA
Every Friday, Feb. 19 through March 25
4:00-7:00 pm

FISH, SHRIMP OR CRAB LEG
Adult \$8.25; Child 4.25; Pre-school FREE
Crab leg dinners \$13
Includes choice of baked or fried fish, shrimp or crab legs, choice of sides (French fries, baked potato, mac and cheese), coleslaw and dessert.

LUNCH SPECIAL: FISH SANDWICH (\$6) OR HOAGIE (\$8.25); 11 am-1 pm
Includes coleslaw and French fries.
*Only available as takeout. (814) 226-8310

ST. LUKE

Knights of Columbus
Msgr. Robert Goodill Council #11229
School Cafeteria; 421 East 38th Street, Erie
February 19, 26 / March 4
5:00-7:00 pm

FISH/PIEROGI/MAC AND CHEESE/SHRIMP
Adult \$9; Child (6-12) \$5.50;
5 and under FREE
(continued on next column)

Includes French fries and green beans.

SHRIMP BASKET \$7; CAPTAINS PLATTER \$12
*Takeout available starting at 5:00.
(814) 434-4167

ST. SEVERIN

Social Hall, 6786 Kylertown-Drifting Hwy., Drifting (Exit 133 on I-80, 5 mi. N. on Rt. 53)
February 19, 26 / March 4, 11, 18
4:00-6:30 pm

BAKED OR FRIED FISH
Adult \$10; Small \$6; Includes parsley potatoes, vegetable, coleslaw or applesauce, mac and cheese, stewed tomatoes, roll and butter, dessert and beverage.
*Eat in or takeout available. (814) 345-6665

ST. STANISLAUS

516 East 13th Street, Erie
February 26 / March 11
4:00-7:00 pm

FISH OR PIEROGI
Adult \$10; Child (6-12) \$5; Under 6 FREE
*Takeout available \$10.25. (814) 452-6606

ST. TERESA

Parish Center, 9 Third Avenue, Union City
February 19, 26 / March 4, 11, 18
4:30-7:00 pm

BAKED OR FRIED HADDOCK
Adult \$9; Child \$4
Includes choice of baked potato, French fries or mac and cheese, coleslaw or applesauce, dinner roll with butter, homemade dessert and beverage. *Takeout available. (814) 438-2783
More info (814) 438-2000

VENANGO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
1505 West First Street, Oil City
February 19, 26 / March 4, 11, 18
5:00-7:00 pm

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT FISH FRY
Adult \$10.50; Senior \$10; Child under 12 \$8;
Child under 5 \$4; Includes baked potato or French fries, coleslaw, rolls, dessert and beverage. **PIZZA \$3/slice.**
*Takeout available. (814) 676-9429