

Pro-life rising

George Weigel speaks on pro-life cause 40 years after *Roe v. Wade*, page 3.



FaithLife

You Otter read

Erie Otters visit, read to students at St. Luke School, page 4.



www.ErieRCD.org

BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

February 3, 2013

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



Presentation of the Lord



Our Lady of Lourdes

- Feb. 2 Presentation of the Lord
- Feb. 3 World Day for Consecrated Life
- Feb. 5 St. Agatha
- Feb. 6 St. Paul Miki and companions
- Feb. 8 St. Jerome Emiliani, St. Josephine Bakhita
- Feb. 10 World Marriage Day
- Feb. 11 Our Lady of Lourdes, World Day of the Sick
- Feb. 13 Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 14 St. Cyril and Methodius

Rite of Election - Feb. 17

Candidates and catechumens participating in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) program at their respective parishes in the Diocese of Erie will celebrate the Rite of Election on Sunday, Feb. 17, the first Sunday of Lent.

The Rite of Election ceremony will be held at 3 p.m. at two locations: St. Peter Cathedral in Erie and Queen of the World in St. Marys. Bishop Lawrence Persico will preside at the cathedral and Bishop Emeritus Donald Trautman will preside in St. Marys.

All new members of the Catholic Church will be received at their own parishes during the Easter Vigil March 30.

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

Clergy appointments

The Most Rev. Lawrence Persico, J.C.L., Bishop of Erie, announces the following clergy appointments:



Father Christopher Barnes, appointed temporary parochial administrator of St. Michael Parish, Greenville, and the mission church of St. Margaret, Jamestown. Effective January 21, 2013.

Father Christopher Hamlett, accepted his resignation as pastor of St. Michael Parish, Greenville, and the mission church of St. Margaret, Jamestown. Effective January 21, 2013.

Diocese responds to HHS lawsuit's dismissal

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

ERIE — A federal judge has dismissed the Diocese of Erie's lawsuit against the federal government regarding its Health and Human Services mandate, saying the diocese's case was "not ripe" for judicial review.

Judge Sean J. McLaughlin of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania ruled Jan. 22 that the diocese's case was not ripe for judicial review because the government has not issued a final rule on the HHS mandate and plans to do so before August 2013.

McLaughlin said diocesan officials' "assumption that they will be subjected to the mandate in a manner that violates their sincerely held religious beliefs is, at most, a contingency which may well never come to pass."

The Most Rev. Lawrence Persico said he was disappointed in the case's dismissal but found encouragement in the judge's decision.

"I was obviously hoping that the court would find

our case ripe for adjudication," Bishop Persico said in a response to the ruling which was issued the same day. "I am, however, heartened by the court's statement that the preventive services mandate as it exists today will never be enforced against the diocesan entities that brought this suit."

The diocese filed a lawsuit May 21, 2012 to prevent the federal mandate from taking place. The lawsuit was one of 12 filed across the country the same day as part of a coordinated, grassroots effort by 43 different ecclesiastical complainants.

In the filing, the diocese contended that the mandate constitutes an "unlawful violation of fundamental religious freedoms."

The diocese is against the moral implications of the HHS mandate which requires employers, including most religious employers, to include coverage for contraceptives, sterilization and some abortion-inducing drugs free of charge, even if the employer

See HHS lawsuit, page 2

Bishop Persico's statement

Editor's note: The Most Rev. Lawrence Persico, bishop of Erie, released a statement following Judge Sean McLaughlin's dismissal of the Diocese of Erie lawsuit against the federal government to prevent the Health and Human Services mandate from taking effect. Here is Bishop Persico's complete statement:



Bishop Lawrence Persico

I am disappointed in today's ruling that the case the Diocese of Erie filed against the government of the United States regarding the healthcare mandate has been dismissed. I was obviously hoping that the court would find our case ripe for adjudication. I am, however, heartened by the court's statement that the preventive services mandate as it exists today will never be enforced against the diocesan entities that brought this suit.

I am also encouraged by the court's belief that the government's statements

within the time frame it promised, we will be free to bring the matter back to the court.

The federal district judge spent a lot of time and effort on this thoughtful opinion. We hope and pray that the government will make the kinds of meaningful changes to these regulations that it has promised so that our Catholic agencies can continue the social services work which they do without fear of fines and penalties or being forced to violate our religious beliefs.

I still believe the action the government has taken in this matter is a violation of our First Amendment right to religious liberty. We anxiously await the promised revisions to the regulations and hope that we will not have to bring the matter before the courts again in order to secure religious liberty—a fundamental American right—for our fellow Catholics.

I take comfort that the dismissal was "without prejudice," which means that if the government does not live up to these commi-

See STATEMENT, page 2

Lenten practices



The observance of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 13, a day of fasting and abstinence for all Catholics. On Ash Wednesday, the imposition of ashes replicates an ancient penitential practice and symbolizes our dependence upon God's mercy and forgiveness.

During Lent, all the baptized are called to renew their baptismal commitment as others prepare to be baptized through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), a period of learning and discernment for individuals who have declared their desire to become Catholics.

Traditional Lenten practices of PRAYER, FASTING and ALMSGIVING and other forms of self-denial are recommended most warmly by the church. Daily Mass is particularly encouraged.

Lenten observances:

■ **ASH WEDNESDAY, ALL FRIDAYS IN LENT and GOOD FRIDAY** are days of abstinence from meat for those 14 years of age and older.

■ **ASH WEDNESDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY** are also days of fasting for those ages 18 to 58 inclusive. (On these days, 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.)

PRAYER: The church asks us to surrender ourselves to prayer and to the reading of Scripture. More time given to prayer during Lent should draw us closer to the Lord. We might pray especially for the grace to live out our baptismal promises more fully.

FASTING: The fasting observed during Lent is a sign of discipline—fasting for certain periods of time, fasting from certain foods, but also fasting from other things and activities. Fasting is more than a means of developing self-control. It is often an aid to prayer, as the pangs of hunger remind us of our hunger for God.

ALMSGIVING: Works of charity and the promotion of justice are integral elements of the Christian way of life we began when we were baptized. Almsgiving is a sign of our care for those in need and an expression of our gratitude for all that God has given to us.

The key to fruitful observance of these practices is to recognize their link to baptismal renewal. We are called not just to abstain from sin during Lent, but to true conversion of our hearts and minds as followers of Christ. We recall those waters in which we were baptized into Christ's death, died to sin and evil and began new life in Christ.

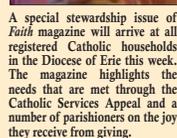
(From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Catholic.org)

'Sharing the Light' 2013 CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

In a world of uncertainty and darkness, there is light. It's a light that shines in 60,000 households in the 13 counties of the Diocese of Erie. And it illuminates thousands more lives of friends, relatives, neighbors, strangers and people in need.

The theme of the 2013 Catholic Services Appeal is "Sharing the Light—Light up Lives through Giving." More than 90 ministries and services are supported by the Catholic Services Appeal, and the needs met by the diocese are far reaching. Thousands of people in 117 parishes and beyond are impacted by CSA funds.



A special stewardship issue of *FaithLife* magazine will arrive at all registered Catholic households in the Diocese of Erie this week. The magazine highlights the needs that are met through the Catholic Services Appeal and a number of parishioners on the joy they receive from giving.

"I've only been serving the Diocese of Erie for a few months, but the kindness of the people of these 13 counties has been immediately apparent," said the Most Rev. Lawrence Persico.

By supporting the CSA, here are just a few diocesan ministries you assist:

- Catholic Charities' nine affiliate agencies and multiple programs: More than 57,000 people of all faiths received services last year.
- Scholarships/tuition assistance for Catholic school students in need.
- Support for administrators and teachers at 38 Catholic schools.
- Continuing education opportunities for catechists.
- Youth rallies and programs.
- Rural ministries.
- Family life and support programs.
- Adult faith formation.
- Campus ministry.
- Bishop's Breakfast Program for the homeless.
- And many more

"It is truly amazing to witness the hope and care we are able to provide together united in the love of Christ."

Most parishes throughout the diocese will conduct Commitment Sunday for the Catholic Services Appeal at Masses Feb. 16-17. Last year, parishioners throughout the di-

See CSA, page 2

CRS renews Rice Bowl campaign as part of worldwide effort to end hunger

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

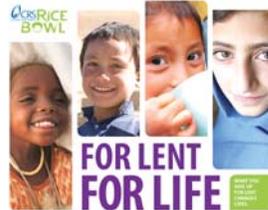
Catholic Relief Services' popular Lenten Rice Bowl campaign has a new name and a new look.

Now called CRS Rice Bowl, the program encourages greater connection between Americans and millions of people around the world struggling to overcome hunger.

"It is not enough just to commit funds. We must also strive for new solutions to also address hunger," said CRS President Carolyn Woo. "Through prayer, sacrifice and donations, the CRS Rice Bowl enables our actions to make a difference in the lives and well-being of others."

The cardboard "rice bowl" has been placed on family tables and in classrooms for 37 years. CRS has developed a series of resources to supplement the Lenten tradition. CRS Rice Bowl also focuses on a new message: "For Lent, for Life: What you give up for Lent changes lives."

Accompanying each rice bowl is a Lenten spiritual guide which highlights CRS' work in a different country. For 2013, the program will look at improving harvests in Burkina Faso, stopping tuberculosis in East Timor and



providing clean water in Pakistan among others.

Each week also highlights a food recipe people can try from the featured country. Meals include black bean soup from the Dominican Republic, mixed vegetable tihari from Pakistan and pap with spicy vegetables from Lesotho.

The Rice Bowl campaign collects about \$8 million annually, with 25 percent of funds staying in local diocesan communities to alleviate hunger and poverty. The remaining 75 percent funds CRS anti-hunger efforts around the globe.

St. Patrick Haven, an Erie shelter for homeless men under the direction of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwest Pennsylv-

ania, was the recipient of CRS Rice Bowl funds last year.

"We got the check in November and didn't know it was coming," said Sister Mary Fromknecht, SSI, who oversees the day-to-day operations of St. Patrick Haven. "It was a real gift."

The shelter is using the funds to assist in paying utilities, Sister Mary said. "Utilities are very expensive in a place such as St. Patrick Haven," she said. "The men are freezing when they come in during the winter, so the temperature has to be set higher than you might normally have in your home."

More information about *CRS Rice Bowl* can be found online at www.crsricebowl.org.

IN THE U.S.

■ Cardinal Stafford: 40 years after Roe, 'I weep for the United States'

Forty years of legalized abortion have profoundly demoralized American society, not only weakening respect for human life but undermining marriage, parenthood and individuals' sense of duty to others, said U.S. Cardinal Francis Stafford. The cardinal, a former archbishop of Denver and former head of two Vatican offices, said that the legalization of abortion was itself a result of flawed ideas about freedom deeply rooted in American history. Cardinal Stafford, 80, spoke with Catholic News Service shortly before the Jan. 25 March for Life marking the 40th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision that lifted most legal restrictions on abortion.

He said that Roe was one of a series of cultural, social, political and legal upheavals during the 1960s and early 1970s that left him deeply disillusioned with his native land and alienated from a country that he said once offered unparalleled openness to the proclamation of the Gospel. Yet those upheavals, the cardinal said, trace their origins to certain "viruses" present in American political culture from the very beginning of U.S. history, particularly the understanding of liberty enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and implicit in other founding documents.



Cardinal Francis Stafford

■ New York Archdiocese to close two high schools, 22 grade schools

This June, the New York Archdiocese will close two high schools and 22 out of 26 elementary schools labeled "at risk." Last November, the archdiocese announced that 26 of its Catholic elementary schools might close, but officials have since determined that four of the schools — that submitted proposals with viable long-term plans — will remain open. Local boards and ad hoc reconfiguration committees conducted in-depth discussions with local pastors, principals, administrators and elected officials. The groups, in consultation with archdiocesan officials, recommended the school closings. The decision follows several months of reviewing enrollment, finances and local demographics. Under a strategic plan, most parish elementary schools will align into geographic regions governed by boards.

■ Catholic education sways decision for religious life, new survey shows

Catholic education in high school and college is a significant factor for men and women choosing to enter a religious order, according to an annual survey of sisters and brothers who recently professed final vows. The report, "New Sisters and Brothers Professing Perpetual Vows in Religious Life," is based on a survey conducted by the Georgetown University-based Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate and

commissioned by the U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. Researchers surveyed religious who professed perpetual vows in 2012.

Major findings showed: The average age of religious of the professional class of 2012 is 39. Most respondents (71 percent) were born in the United States. About four in 10 religious (43 percent) attended a Catholic elementary school, a rate similar to the U.S. Catholic adult population (42 percent). These respondents were more likely than other U.S. Catholics to have attended a Catholic high school (36 percent of the religious, compared to 22 percent of U.S. adult Catholics overall) and much more likely to have attended a Catholic college (33 percent of the religious, compared to just 7 percent of U.S. adult Catholics overall).

AROUND THE WORLD

■ Belief in God leads to values that can be counter-cultural, pope says

To believe in God means allowing his commandments to guide the concrete choices one makes every day, even when the values reflected in the choices are counter-cultural, Pope Benedict XVI said. "To believe in God makes us bearers of values that often do not coincide" with those of popular culture and which give believers criteria for judgment that nonbelievers may not share, the pope said Jan. 23 at his weekly general audience. "A Christian must not be afraid to go against the current in order to live his faith, resisting the temptation of conformity," he said. Beginning a series of Year of Faith audience talks about the creed, Pope Benedict said that "believing in God implies adhering to him, accepting his word and joyfully obeying" his commandments. Believers today, like Abraham in the Old Testament, must show trust in the God they profess to believe, even when God's ways appear mysterious, he said.



Pope Benedict XVI

PEOPLE

■ Pope names successor to head of church in Ireland

Pope Benedict XVI named Msgr. Eamon Martin as coadjutor archbishop of Armagh, Northern Ireland, making him the designated successor to Cardinal Sean Brady as the head of the Catholic Church in Ireland. The Vatican announced the appointment Jan. 18. In brief remarks to the media in Armagh, Archbishop-designate Martin said, "There is need for renewal in the church, so that the message of Christ, in all its richness, is presented in ways which engage a new generation. There is a need for a mature relationship between church and society, in both parts of this island, and people of faith have a vital role to play. It would hugely impoverish our faith if we were expected to 'leave it at home' or 'keep it for Sundays,' excluding it from our conversations and actions in daily life," he said.



Archbishop-designate Eamon Martin

By the Way...

George Weigel's talk at People for Life's 35th annual Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast was impressive. An author and political and social activist, Weigel received numerous ovations from the crowd of nearly 600 pro-life supporters.



Jason Koshinski

During his stay in Erie, Weigel visited the Carmelite nuns at Carmel of the Holy Family Monastery. The nuns know Weigel through his many appearances through Catholic and secular media outlets as well as "Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II." While not an "official" biography of the late Holy Father, it is recognized as the definitive and authoritative record of Blessed John Paul II's life.

While in town, Weigel stayed with Msgr. Tom McSweeney, pastor of Holy Trinity Parish and former director of communications for the Diocese of Erie. The two became acquainted in 2005 while serving as church analysts and contributors to MSNBC during the death of Pope John Paul II and the papal transition.

Congratulations to Arco Wasserman, a parishioner at St. Brigid Parish in Meadville, who was installed Jan. 26 as president of the diocesan Cursillo movement for 2013. Cursillo is celebrating its 50th anniversary in the diocese this year.

Speaking of St. Brigid, Bishop Lawrence Persico will celebrate the 150th anniversary Mass of the parish Feb. 17 at 9 a.m.

We've already heard from a number of people inquiring about Faith magazine's Year of Faith pilgrimage to Italy Sept. 12-21. Stops include Florence, Siena, Assisi and Rome. Cost is \$3,990, which has been adjusted downward since the initial announcement in our Jan. 20 issue. Visit www.ErieCDO.org for the full itinerary. To reserve your space, call Unitors at 800.777.7432, referencing "Erie pilgrimage."

Due to a water main break, thousands in the Erie area were without water Jan. 23-25, interfering with work at St. Mark Catholic Center, home to the diocese's administrative offices and St. Mark Seminary. Deacon John Mang, maintenance director of St. Mark's, asked the Carmelite nuns to pray for Paul Vojtec, head of Erie Water Works. After nearly three days, within ten minutes of Vojtec hearing the news that the nuns were praying for him, the lead was found. Of course, the nuns had been without water as well.

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

Diocese responds to HHS lawsuit's dismissal

HHS lawsuit, from page 1

is morally opposed to such services.

"At bottom, all of these proposed harms... share a common premise: the assumption that the (diocese's) religious liberties can only be adequately accommodated by exempting (the diocese) from the mandate altogether rather than by altering the terms of the mandate itself," McLaughlin said in his ruling.

"However, that assumption is unwarranted given that the future form of the mandate is yet unknown. Indeed, this uncertainty precisely illustrates why the pending dispute is unfit for review."

McLaughlin said he considers the government's "promise to engage in further rule-making as a good faith, binding commitment," but he did dismiss the diocese's case "without prejudice,"

Bishop Persico's statement

STATEMENT, from page 1

low citizens and for future generations.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that the Catholic Church has advocated for healthcare reform for many decades, with special concern for the poor, the inclusion of legal immigrants and always with the absolute necessity that it respect the life and dignity of every person, from conception to natural death.

which means the diocese can bring the case back to court if the government does not accommodate the needs of religious organizations.

'Share the Light'—2013 Catholic Services Appeal

CSA, from page 1

cess pledged \$6,168,826.

Parishes also benefit from the appeal. Each parish is assessed a financial goal. Once a parish reaches its goal, every dollar pledged over that amount stays within the parish for local projects. Last year, more than \$2.3 million in CSA dollars was kept by parishes for local projects.

Catholic Charities Counseling & Adoption Services (CCCAS) is one of the agencies that truly shows the scope and reach of the Catholic Services Appeal. CCCAS has 11 offices throughout the diocese (Bradford, Clearfield, DuBois, Erie, Greenville, Grove City, Meadville, Oil City, St. Marys, Sharon and Warren).

"If you have a need or have a friend that has a need and you want to look to Catholic Charities for help, one of our offices is nearby," said Joe Haas, executive director of Catholic Charities Counseling & Adoption Services.

Funds from the CSA go to all CCCAS office locations. "They all benefit in some way from the support of the larger diocese," Haas said. "We need that continuing support for our services."

The offices offer a number of services including individual, couples, family and pregnancy counseling, adoptions—which include a small number of infants but mainly older children, sibling

groups or kids who came into the system later in life—and refugee resettlement.

"If there's one program that epitomizes what we do and who we are as an agency, it would be the refugee resettlement program," Haas said.

He added that the agency finds its mission in Matthew 25:40—"... whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."

"I think that's found most profoundly in our refugee resettlement program," Haas said. "It's not that the refugees are least among us. But when they come to this country, they walk off a plane with two suitcases in hand. That's all that they own. They really need the help and support of our agency and really our whole diocese."

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is the largest resettlement agency in U.S. The USCBB has asked CCCAS in the Diocese of Erie to take on more refugees in the last few years, particularly from the Nepal and Bhutanese communities. The agency resettled 30-some refugees in 2004. Last year, the number was 340. Currently, Erie is the second largest Bhutanese resettlement community in the United States, Haas said.

"We have developed a relationship with parishes, local colleges and a volunteer network to really try and reach out and welcome



Please visit www.ErieCDO.org/CSA.asp to watch a video message from Bishop Lawrence Persico as well as others who see Catholic Service Appeal dollars at work throughout the diocese.

the refugees to Erie," he said. "I think that has worked well. It's a matter of being a welcoming presence and being ministerial toward them, but it's also a matter of meeting basic needs."

CCCAS helps set refugees up with housing and enrolling children in local schools. The agency guides them in finding medical care, shows them around the city, prepares them for job opportunities and helps them overcome language barriers.

"Once they're here and established, they're able to thrive," Haas said. "Many of the refugees are great employees. Some of them start their own businesses

and they really contribute actively to the Erie community."

He defined a refugee as someone who has been displaced from their own country through no reason of their own, be it religious, political or gender discrimination. And they come to the U.S. legally.

"Many people say, 'Why don't they go back home?'" Haas said. "They would love to go back home, but there is no home for them to go back to. We have a legal, moral and ethical duty, as well as a spiritual one, to take care of the people who need to be taken care of and the refugees need somewhere to go."

FaithLife
The official news bulletin of the Catholic Diocese of Erie
Volume 9, Issue 2
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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 1974. 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.

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Holy Land: Apr. 1-11, Apr. 8-18, Apr. 15-25...
Holy Land/Italy: Apr. 1-14, Apr. 8-21, Apr. 15-28, Apr. 22-May 5, Apr. 29-May 12, May 6-19, May 13-26...
Italy South: Apr. 27-May 9, May 4-16, May 11-23...
Austria/Germany/Switzerland: May 4-16, Jul. 6-18...

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Executive Director

Briefly

Pro-Life of Mercer County presents 11th annual prayer breakfast

HERMITAGE — Pro-Life of Mercer County will sponsor its 11th annual prayer breakfast on Saturday, Feb. 9 from 9-11:30 a.m. at the Hickory VFW, 5550 E. State St. in Hermitage.

The keynote speaker will be Lia Mills, a 10th grade student from Toronto, Ontario. Mills is a recipient of the Susan B. Anthony Young Leaders Award and the Toronto Right to Life Media Award. She is the spokesperson for Teen Defenders and Student Life Link.

Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$5 for children. The deadline to purchase tickets is Feb. 6. For tickets, call Kathy Jack at 724.264.4439 or Joan Walker at 724.962.1402.



Lia Mills

Retreat at St. Leo, Ridgway

RIDGWAY — St. Leo Parish, 111 Depot St. in Ridgway, will hold a five-day retreat Feb. 17-21. Father James Campbell and Father Joseph Campbell will present on the theme of "Saved."

The retreat will begin each evening at 7 p.m. with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament followed by a talk and Scripture reading. Confessions will be heard each evening followed by a light reception in the parish social hall.

Lenten vigils at Mount St. Benedict, Erie

ERIE — The Benedictine Sisters of Erie welcome guests to Mount St. Benedict Monastery, 6101 E. Lake Road in Erie, for Lenten vigils every Saturday during Lent. Vigils begin at 7 p.m.

Reflections will be given by:

- Feb. 16 — Sister Jean Wolbert, OSB
- Feb. 23 — Sister Stephanie Schmidt, OSB
- March 2 — Sister Kathryn Dishrow, OSB
- March 9 — Sister Therese Glass, OSB
- March 16 — Emma Krueger (obit.)
- March 23 — Sister Colette Korn, OSB



Enrichment series at Mount St. Benedict presents 'Death: The Great Adventure'

ERIE — Dr. Mary Hembrow Snyder will present "Death: The Great Adventure" on Monday, Feb. 18 at 7 p.m. at Mount St. Benedict Monastery, 6101 E. Lake Road in Erie.

The event is part of an enrichment series at the Mount and is sponsored by the Benedictine Sisters of Erie. This event is free and open to the public.

The topic is an invitation to reflect on death in an adult manner and to see it differently in the light of provocative insights gleaned from contemporary theology, evolutionary biology and quantum physics.

Dr. Snyder has spent the past 26 years at Mercyhurst University and is presently professor of religious studies and director of the Center for Mercy and Catholic Studies. She is a teacher, scholar and administrator who holds a BA in English literature, an MA in systematic theology and a PhD in Theology.

YCEA — Young Church Eucharistic Adoration

Young Church Eucharistic Adoration — (ya-kee-ah), is a new effort of the Diocese of Erie's Youth and Young Adult Ministry to bring the young people of the diocese together once a month in front of the Blessed Sacrament. YCEA evenings include praise and worship music, exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, short reading and reflection, reading of youth intentions, benediction and fellowship.

Join YCEA in February at the following locations:

- Feb. 20 — Elk County Catholic High School in St. Marys at 6 p.m.
 - Feb. 20 — Our Lady of the Lake in Edinboro at 7 p.m.
 - Feb. 20 — St. Mark Catholic Center in Erie at 7 p.m.
- YCEA sites will be listed at www.ontehvine.us with dates and times for youth adoration programs.

Family Honor offering 'Real Love & Real Life' program in Erie, St. Marys

Family Honor is again offering its "Real Love & Real Life" program to families in the Diocese of Erie. Entering its sixth year in the diocese, this faith-based, family-centered chastity program is geared for 7th and 8th grade teens and their parents, and is an opportunity to come together and connect on important life issues.

This interactive program explores many topics relevant to all teens, including communication, dating, self-control, self-worth, chastity, peer pressure and risky behaviors and explores God's gift of sexuality and fertility protection.

- Upcoming programs include:
- St. Joseph Parish/Bread of Life Community in Erie Feb. 22 from 6-9 p.m. and Feb. 23 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 - Elk County Catholic High School in St. Marys Tuesdays April 9, 16, 23 and 30 from 7-9:15 p.m.

To register for one of these programs, learn more about Family Honor or book a program in your parish, contact Laurey Kraus at 814.781.6746 or visit www.familyhonor.org.

Pro-life rising — 40 years after Roe v. Wade

George Weigel recounts blessings, strengths of pro-life movement



Noted author and public policy expert George Weigel was the guest speaker at People for Life's 35th annual Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast Jan. 19 at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie.

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

ERIE — Days before the 40th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion, George Weigel recounted the blessings of the pro-life movement.

"We should all be equally grateful to God for his grace in our lives," Weigel told nearly 600 champions for life. "Thank all of you for all that each one of you had done for the cause of life and for those acts of compassion, care and witness."

Weigel, a noted author and public policy expert, was the guest speaker at People for Life's 35th annual Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast Jan. 19 at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie.

"Forty years ago on Jan. 22, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down *Roe v. Wade*, one of the two worst decisions in its history," Weigel said. "The court's first mega-error, the 1857 decision in *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, declared an entire class of human beings beyond the protection of the laws."

The Supreme Court's *Dred Scott* decision held that the federal government had no power to regulate slavery in the territories and that people of African de-

cent, both slave and free, were not protected by the Constitution and were not U.S. citizens.

"*Roe v. Wade* declared another class of human beings—the unborn—beyond legal protection," Weigel said. "*Dred Scott* helped precipitate the Civil War. *Roe v. Wade* led to a vast expansion of the pro-life movement, the largest movement of social reform in America since the civil rights movement and the natural successor to that effort to repair the lingering damage done by *Dred Scott*."

He called the unborn who have lost their lives under *Roe* "the new Holy Innocents."

"As we remember them, we can be confident that they are our intercessors around the throne of God," Weigel said.

Weigel, a Catholic, said the ecumenism found in the pro-life cause is an "unexpected blessing," uniting Christians—and non-Christians—through the belief that all life is sacred.

The battle to build an America in which every child is protected in law and welcomed in life continues, he said.

"There are many reasons for us to find the courage and strength to continue this great cause," Weigel said.

One of them, he noted, is the

Ten comforts of the pro-life cause

At the pro-life breakfast Jan. 19, George Weigel said the pro-life movement can cite at least 10 reasons why it may, in time, carry the day. "There is reason for a measure of satisfaction, if not exultation, on *Roe*'s 40th anniversary," Weigel said. Here is the list in Weigel's own words:

1. Abortion has never been accepted as part of the mainstream medical practice.
2. The science of human reproduction and gestation has confirmed the pro-life position that the product of human conception is a human being and rendered the "science" of *Roe* risible.
3. A sonogram, not available 40 years ago, has been a cultural, psychological and moral game-changer.
4. The people of the United States have decisively rejected the Supreme Court's 1992 *diktat* in *Casey v. Planned Parenthood*, wherein the court instructed the people to end the abortion debate.
5. The pro-choice world has always been right; it now displays an increasing desperation. The pro-choice world has resisted the efforts of pro-life organizations to create situations of "informed choice."
6. The pro-life movement is getting younger while the pro-choice opposition is graying.
7. Pro-lifers have had increasing success at the state legislative level in recent years and can anticipate more success in this phase of the battle in the immediate future.
8. The sheer implausibility of the legal argument in *Roe v. Wade* has become clearer over time.
9. The humane service rendered to hundreds of thousands of women in thousands of crisis pregnancy centers across the country has demonstrated, time and again, that the pro-life movement is the party of compassion in this debate.
10. A 2012 Gallup poll found that 50 percent of the American people self-define as "pro-life."

young involved in the pro-life cause.

"What really alarms the pro-Roe forces in American politics about the annual March for Life in Washington is not just its impressive aggregate numbers, although those are very impressive," Weigel said.

"You see the community, the compassion and concern and care and it gets younger and younger every year."

He said that an eyeball estimate last year shows that half of the several hundred thousand marchers were under 30 years of age.

"That's an enormous sign of hope for the future," he said.

"That youthful vitality is not limited to one cold January day in the nation's capital. There are new pro-life organizations among younger physicians and attorneys. All of which suggests that the pro-life movement is American civil society at its robust and self-revitalizing best."

In 2011, Weigel said 92 abortion regulating laws were passed in 24 states—a record number for

a single year since *Roe v. Wade*. He called it a sign of "new legal and political maturity" in the pro-life movement which is becoming "very skillful at working inside the cracks left open to us by the Supreme Court."

In the years since the Supreme Court's decision, Weigel said few serious legal scholars defend the legal reasoning in *Roe*.

"Even honest liberal scholars agree with one of *Roe*'s dissenters, Justice Byron White, who labeled the decision an exercise in 'raw judicial power,'" he said.

"The legal foundations of *Roe v. Wade* are crumbling as we meet here in Erie this morning and that's a good sign."

Weigel, a Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., is the author of 20 books.

Following his talk, Weigel signed copies of "The Cube and the Cathedral: Europe, America and Politics Without God" and his newest book, "Evangelical Catholicism: Deep Reform in the 21st-Century Church."

2013 Lenten Dinners

<p>ALL SAINTS PARISH 11264 Route 97 North, Waterford February 15, 22 / March 1, 8, 15, 22 4:30-7:00 pm Adult \$9.00, Child 12 and under \$4.00 Toddlers FREE</p> <p>BAKED OR FRIED WHITE FISH Includes choice of baked potato or French fries, coleslaw, applesauce, homemade desserts and drink *Takeout available beginning at 4:30 pm, call (814) 796-3023</p> <p>BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH School Cafeteria 1626 West 26th Street, Erie February 15 / March 1, 15 4:30-7:00 pm</p> <p>BAKED SCROD, MACARONI AND CHEESE OR CHEESE RAVIOLI Adult \$8.50 Fish or Cheese Ravioli Adult \$5.00 Macaroni and Cheese Child 12 and under: \$3.00 Fish or Cheese Ravioli \$3.00 Macaroni and Cheese *Takeout, (814) 454-0171</p> <p>DUBOIS CENTRAL CATHOLIC 4th Annual Ash Wednesday Fish Dinner School Cafeteria 200 Central Christian Road, DuBois February 13 4:30-7:00 pm or until sold out Baked Stuffed Fish, Fried Fish or Fried Shrimp</p> <p>FISH OR SHRIMP Includes baked potato, coleslaw, roll and butter, dessert and beverage *Takeout available *Lenten prayer service and ashes in chapel at 5:15 pm</p> <p>KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS Knights of Columbus Hall 1342 S. Center St. Ext. (Rte. 208W) Grove City February 15, 22 / March 1, 8, 15, 22 4:30-7:00 pm Adult \$9.00, Child 5-12 \$5.00, Under 5 FREE</p> <p>ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT FRIED FISH AND SIDES Baked fish also available (1 piece per order) *Dine in or take out!</p>	<p>KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS St. Paul Center Route 6 (Saybrook) Sheffield February 15, 22 / March 1, 8, 15, 22 5:00-7:00 pm Large \$8.00, Small \$5.00</p> <p>DEEP FRIED HADDOCK Includes French fries, coleslaw, rolls, desserts and beverage *Takeout available; \$0/50 each night!</p> <p>OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL Scheffner Hall 1553 East Grandview Boulevard, Erie February 2 / March 8, 22 4:00-7:00 pm Adult \$9.50, Child \$4.50</p> <p>FRIED FISH AND/OR CHEESE PIEROGI Includes choice of French fries, potato salad or macaroni and cheese, coleslaw or green beans and sherbet dessert; (814) 825-7313</p> <p>ST. BONIFACE SCHOOL School Cafeteria 359 Main Street, Kersey Ash Wednesday, February 13 and every Friday during Lent 4:00-7:00 pm or until sold out Fish: Large \$9.50, Small \$8.50 Chicken fingers: Adult \$8.00, Child \$4.00</p> <p>HADDOCK FILLET Includes baked potato or French fries, coleslaw or macaroni salad, homemade dessert and beverage</p> <p>ST. BRIGID PARISH St. Brigid Parish Center 383 Arch Street, Meadville February 15, 22 / March 1, 8, 15, 22 4:30-6:30 pm Adult \$8.00, Child \$4.00</p> <p>BAKED OR FRIED ICLANDIC HADDOCK Includes scalloped potatoes, coleslaw, green beans, applesauce and ice cream bar (\$1.00) MACARONI AND CHEESE OR GRILLED CHEESE \$5.00 *Takeout available</p>	<p>ST. JOSEPH PARISH 17735 Bennetts Valley Highway, Force Ash Wednesday, February 13 and every Friday during Lent Noon-6:30 pm</p> <p>BAKED OR FRIED HADDOCK Includes choice of French fries or baked potato, cup of soup, dinner roll, coleslaw, dessert and drink Adult \$10.00, Child 12 and under \$5.00 *Eat in or take out (soup and drink not included) (814) 787-4819 *We deliver in Bennetts Valley!</p> <p>ST. LUKE PARISH Msgr. Robert Goodill Council #11229 School Cafeteria 421 East 38th Street, Erie February 15, 22 / March 1, 8 5:00-7:00 pm Adult \$9.00, Child 6-12 \$5.50 5 and under free</p> <p>YUENGLING BEER BATTERED ICLANDIC HADDOCK Includes choice of pierogies or macaroni and cheese, French fries, coffee, tea, milk and soft drinks *Info: Jamie Bickerstaff, Grand Knight (814) 403-2797</p> <p>ST. STANISLAUS PARISH 516 East 13th Street, Erie February 15 / March 1, 15 4:00-7:00 pm</p> <p>FISH OR PIEROGI Adult \$10.00, Child 6-12 \$5.00 5 and under FREE *Takeout: \$10.25, (814) 452-6606</p> <p>ST. TERESA PARISH Parish Center 9 Third Avenue, Union City February 15, 22 / March 1, 8, 15, 22 4:30-7:00 pm</p> <p>BAKED OR FRIED HADDOCK Includes choice of baked potato, French fries or macaroni and cheese, coleslaw or applesauce, dinner roll, homemade dessert and beverage Adult \$9.00, Child \$4.00 *Takeout: (814) 438-2783 Info: (814) 438-2000</p>
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If a parish is not listed, please contact them directly for their Lenten Dinner information.

2013 Catholic Men's Conference Saturday, March 9, 2013

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Faith: Are You Connected?

John Pridmore - Former Gangster turned Evangelist

Rev. Msgr. James E. Wall - Men's Spirituality Advocate and Leader

Justin Fatica - Hard An Nails Ministry
(Graduate of Cathedral Preparatory High School, Erie, PA)

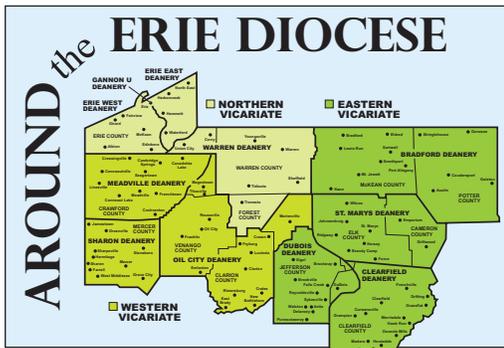
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Photo Tips

Quick, important tips for taking good digital pictures. <http://www.ErieRCD.org/faithlife.asp>



Mercyhurst Prep students plan retreat for fifth graders

ERIE — Under the direction of Mercyhurst Preparatory School's chaplain, **Father Steve Schreiber**, seven MPS sophomore students planned and ran a retreat for fifth graders at St. Luke School on Jan. 11.

The attentive elementary students participated in Mass, prayers, games, singing and dancing and readily grasped the meaning of an updated skit dealing with the prodigal son parable.

Father Schreiber said he was pleased with the event, noting the sophomores exceeded his expectations. Plans are in the works for students to offer retreats in February and March for other grades.

Mercyhurst Prep students (pictured left to right) **Rosie Pregler**,



Libby Federici, Sierra First, Taylor Pletz, Mady Mehler, Emily Stoicovy, Alex Kruzewski and Gaetano Carvelli capture the attention of fifth graders at St. Luke School.

EMT students intent on learning at DuBois Central Catholic

DUBOIS — Seniors **Gabby Ridenour, Leha Hansen, Danny Leroy, Garrett Hoover, Fran McAninch, and Leah McKay** at DuBois Central Catholic High School listen to **Pat Cooley**, a member of the instructional team that comprises the teachers who are working with science students enrolled in this year's Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course at DCC.

Students enrolled in this year-long course receive a science credit for their participation. When students pass both the state's written exam as well as the mandated practicum, they will also receive EMT state certification.



DuBois Central Catholic is the only high school in its section of the state that offers this course during the school day as part of

the science curriculum, according to DCC science teacher, **Jenn Graeca**. This is the third year of the program at Central.

Catholic Daughters, K of C donate items for veterans

ERIE — The Catholic Daughters of America Court Erie 515 recently collected items for the Pennsylvania Soldiers' & Sailors' Home and the Veterans Administration Hospital in Erie. The project was coordinated with the Knights of Columbus Council 13427 from St. Boniface Parish in Erie. Items donated included toiletries, socks, board games, puzzles, cards, Bibles, DVDs, books and cross stitch kits. The items were valued at more than \$2,200.

A collection of books, including a number of Reader's Digest condensed books from court member **Kathleen Levis** of Craneyville was made to the Soldiers' & Sailors' Home. Making the presentation on Levis' behalf are **Marge Lorei**, vice regent of Court Erie 515 (left); **Mary May**,



regent (second from right); and **John Altman**, grand knight of Council 13427. Second from left is **Barb Raymond**, commandant of the Pennsylvania Soldiers' & Sailors' Home.

St. Michael students excel in Presidents competition

GREENVILLE — Twenty-eight students from St. Michael School in Greenville traveled to Slippery Rock University on Jan. 15 to participate in the academic game, Presidents. Students must identify a United States president based on clues about their lives, families, administrations and historical events that occurred during their terms.

Eighth grade students **Madison Fattman** and **Matt Mathias** were both undefeated, with Mathias receiving the highest score in the 7th-8th grade division. Their team, "The Fighting Irish," also took second place. The team also included **John Cianci, Abram Shannon** and **Jack Toth**.

Sixth grade student **Alex Harpst** and 5th grade students **Trey Groleau, Sophia Geving** and **Madison Murphy** were also undefeated. The team, "Bush's Shrubs," which included **Harpst, Owen Cianci, Groleau, Jake Johnson** and **Hannah Brewer**, received a 5th-place team win in the 5th-6th grade division.

The six students who achieved



Pictured left to right are St. Michael students who participated in Presidents: (first row, seated) **Logan Stanfa, Hannah Brewer, Trey Groleau, David Cianci**, (second row, seated) **Owen Cianci, Jacob Johnson, Alex Harpst, Sophia Geving, Justin Osborne, Hannah Leonard, Caroline Hoover, Madison Murphy**, (third row) **Ed Cianci, Anna-Marie Berger, Jack Toth, Katie Leonard, Matt Mathias, Madison Fattman, Lily Svirbly, Rachel Miesky, Gina Maloney, Allie Suhar**, (fourth row) **Leah Mariacher, Kathy Williams, Andrea Emmett, John Cianci, Abram Shannon** and **Makayla Utiak**.

the undefeated status now qualify to compete at Triboli, the state competition, in March. Mathias and Alex Harpst had previously

gone undefeated in November in the game. Propaganda, and their second undefeated streak in Presidents has qualified them to participate in the national competition which will take place in Charlotte, N.C., at the end of April. This will be Mathias' third year to qualify for nationals.

Erie Otters visit, read to students at St. Luke School

ERIE — St. Luke School in Erie was recently visited by a couple Otters.

Goaltender **Oscar Dansk** and defenseman **Spencer Abraham** from the Ontario Hockey League's Erie Otters paid a visit to St. Luke on Jan. 16 to read to students and talk about their on-ice experiences. The players visited a number of classrooms and read several editions from the Brady Brady series of hockey books by **Mary Shaw** (author) and **Chuck Temple** (illustrator), which follow Brady Brady and the Icehogs. They also dropped by the art room to draw with the kids.

Pictured are Dansk (left) and Abraham reading to 4th graders.



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2 p.m. Selah Praise Band	Renegade Roosters
3 p.m. Leaving September	5 p.m. Burnett, Firth & Moore

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