Bishops consider plans to ‘transform’ Catholic education

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic bishops, including Erie Bishop Lawrence Persico, are looking to “transform” Catholic schools in response to decades of decline, a trend that has forced hundreds of schools to close.

A report released by the Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Religious Education this month offers a wide-ranging look at issues facing Catholic schools.

In the 13 counties of northwest Pennsylvania, including Erie, the Catholic Church has about 10,000 students in its nearly 70 Catholic schools. The average student enrollment at Catholic schools is currently 101, according to the report by the Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Religious Education.

The report comes as part of an initiative of Bishop Persico to explore ways of “transforming” Catholic education in the Erie diocese.

Sponsored by the University of Notre Dame, the January meeting at USCCB headquarters was the sixth in a series since 2009 looking at the future of Catholic education.

The bishops and educators focused on four trends:

¢ Charter school expansion.
¢ Expanding access to Catholic schools through educational choice.
¢ Church school partnerships, including those between bishop and pastor, parishioners and principals, and principals and teachers.
¢ The evolving landscape of Catholic school governance as more advisory boards of lay leaders take shape.

The pastoral planning process underway in the diocese the past few years prompted the Communications Office to evaluate each platform it uses to spread Christ’s message of faith, hope and love to the nearly 190,000 Catholics residing in the 13 counties of northwest Pennsylvania.

In addition to FaithLife, the January meeting at USCCB headquarters, Communications currently maintains the diocesan website and its social media presence. It is responding to what Welch describes as the “sea change in how information is delivered in our world.”

The Catholic Press Association of the United States and Canada, the Press Club of Western Pennsylvania, and the Erie chapter of the Public Relations Society of America all have best-seller homes on FaithLife.

In 2016, FaithLife editor Mary Solberg received the Catholic Press Association’s Editor of the Year award.

Solberg has been named editor of Faith magazine, effective with the September 2018 edition.

“I look forward to all Mary will bring to the publication,” said Welch, who is relinquishing her role as editor to concentrate more fully on her duties in the Communications Office.

The Communications Office also publishes a directory and an annual FaithLife Nurtures edition that honors clergy and religious anniversaries.

FaithLife Nurtures will cease publication this year, too, but editors continue to be recognized in another format.

A news bulletin when it was first published in February 2001, pictured at right, today, is a broadcast newspaper.

The decision to end FaithLife was made with input from Presbyteral Councils and the bishops of the Diocese of Erie. The goal was to offer its signature range of feature stories, inspiration and news, with a plan at this time to expand from its current 34 pages to 36 in order to provide more localized coverage and allow parishes and schools ample space to publicize events.

This spring, the diocese will launch its new website, which will include enhanced news coverage, along with features and photos. It also will include national and international Catholic news and Vatican news.

Erie Bishop Lawrence Persico talks at USCCB meeting.

Defending LIFE

WASHINGTON — Several members of the Catholic Community of Meabville, including their young people from St. Agatha Parish, participated in the national March for Life in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 19. The event ended with a Mass at the Basilica of the Americas, followed by the annual March for Life.

More than 200 people gathered Jan. 19 for the dedication of Gannon University’s newly renovated Nash Library in Erie.

“I hope that students find a place they like to study,” said Linda Wagner, vice president for finance and administration.

Bishop Lawrence Persico formally blessed the building and was joined by other civic, church and school dignitaries celebrating the occasion.

The 87,400-square-foot building was first opened in 1953 and named in honor of Msgr. Wilfrid Nash, former president of the university.

“I think of it as the partnership and capacity building coordinator for CRS in Burka Faso and neighboring countries,” Msgr. McSweeney said. “Our faith is enhanced in the process of this evolution rather than just simply clinging to old methods.”
**LENTEN PRACTICES AND REGULATIONS**

The season of Lent begins this year on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14, and concludes with the start of the Paschal Triduum, which begins with the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, March 22.

**Traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving and other forms of self-denial are recommended by the church. Daily Mass is particularly encouraged.**

**Lenten observances:**

- Ash Wednesday and all Fridays during Lent and Good Friday are days of abstinence from meat for those 18 years of age and older.

- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are also days of fasting for those ages 18 to 59, inclusive. On those 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, also are permitted, and liquids including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or work is seriously affected, the law does not apply.

**Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world**

Katie Prejean-McGinley

In this 2016 file photo, priests pray the Lord’s Prayer as the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday begins with the spewing columns of ash as high as one mile. Fatso eruption of Mount Mayon in Albay province.

**Newsmakers**

**WASHINGTON (CNS)—**A religious brother, a campus ministry director and a youth minister who is a wife and new mother have been named to represent the United States as young adult delegates at a pre-synod gathering in Rome in March.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops announced Jan. 25 that the delegates are: Lafeedian Christian Brother Javier Hanan, a religion teacher at Catholic High School in El Paso, Texas; Nick Lopez, director of campus ministry for the University of Dallas; and Katie Prejean-McGinley, a wife, mother, youth minister and a popular speaker from the Diocese of Lake Charles, La.

Last October, Pope Francis invited Christian and non-Christian young people from around the world to a meeting in preparation for this October’s Synod of Bishops, which will have as its theme: “Young people, faith and vocational discernment.”

**The Lord’s Prayer examined**

**ROME (CNS)—**After special study, the German bishops’ conference decided to retain the traditional wording in the Lord’s Prayer while the Italian bishops’ conference decided to retain the new translation at Pentecost last June. The common Spanish translation already is in use at some parishes in Spain, or “do not let us fall into temptation.”

The issue got wider attention after Pope Francis discussed the line, “And lead us not into temptation,” with Father Marco Pozza, a Catholic prison chaplain, Dec. 8, as part of a television series on the Lord’s Prayer.

**Philippine church seeks help during volcano eruption**

**LEGAZPI, Philippines (CNS)—**The social action arm of the Catholic Church in the Philippines has promised donations for relief and rehabilitation of families affected by the on-going eruption of Mount Mayon in Albay province.

The decision comes after the French bishops decided that beginning in early December last year, French Catholics would change the line, “Lead us not into temptation,” to the equivalent of “do not let us enter into temptation.”

French-speaking Catholics in Benz and Belgium began using the new translation at Pentecost last June. The common Spanish translation already is in use at some parishes in Spain, or “do not let us fall into temptation.”

The issue got wider attention after Pope Francis discussed the line, “And lead us not into temptation,” with Father Marco Pozza, a Catholic prison chaplain, Dec. 8, as part of a television series on the Lord’s Prayer.

These words from the pope can inspire us—just as the “Prayer of St. Francis”—“if we take time to read them again and again, but, especially, before we read the news or engage in discussions about world events.

According to Pope Francis, the first to employ the fake-news tactic was the serpent in the Garden of Eden, who convinced Eve that she would not die by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree.

“Treating in falsehood,” the pope said, “can have dire consequences.”

**Luther Mans Jr.**

Luther Mans Jr., at age 90, was likely the oldest graduate of Gannon University to attend the recent March for Life in downtown Erie.

“Luther Mans Jr. is the editor of FaithLife. Email: mansbjg@eriercd.org. Call 814-824-1171. Twitter (@ERIERCDooberg)

**Congratulations to Matthew Clark, administrator of the Office of Worship, whose article on the diocesan pastoral planning process will appear in the spring edition of All magazine. All covers liturgical topics and is published in English and Spanish. The title of Clark’s article is, “Praying through the Process of Change.”**

**Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world**

Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world

Katie Prejean-McGinley

In this 2016 file photo, priests pray the Lord’s Prayer as the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday begins with the spewing columns of ash as high as one mile. Fatso eruption of Mount Mayon in Albay province.

**Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world**

Katie Prejean-McGinley

In this 2016 file photo, priests pray the Lord’s Prayer as the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday begins with the spewing columns of ash as high as one mile. Fatso eruption of Mount Mayon in Albay province.

**Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world**

Katie Prejean-McGinley

In this 2016 file photo, priests pray the Lord’s Prayer as the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday begins with the spewing columns of ash as high as one mile. Fatso eruption of Mount Mayon in Albay province.

**Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world**

Katie Prejean-McGinley
**DISCLOSURE**

The Pre-Cana scheduled at St. Therese Church in Titusville has been moved from March 17 to March 18. The updated schedule can be viewed at www.ErieRCD.org or by contacting the Parish Life Office at 814-428-5491 or at Cathyslife@ErieRCD.org.

**Vocation dinners**

St. Therese Church is hosting a dinner for young men preparing to embrace the vocation to the priesthood and to brotherhood. Those interested may pre-register by phoning Father Michael Polinek, director of Vocations, at 814-438-1240.

**Mardi Gras**

St. Francis Xavier Parish invites everyone to its annual Mardi Gras Night Feb. 10 beginning at 6 p.m. at the Parish Center. The beautiful menu of $15 includes entry into a raffle and food and beverages. Those attending must be 21.

**Western Vicariate parishes**

Bishop Lawrence Persico will offer the opening Mass of Lent at various Western Vicariate parishes beginning at 11 a.m. Feb. 11 at St. Peter Cathedral, 30 N. 10th St., and at 5:00 p.m. Feb. 11 at the Parish Center, 300 S. East St., Meadville. Both Masses will conclude with a blessing of the Cross. Participants are encouraged to join in the Stations of the Cross at each of these Masses. A light meal will be served. The entire week of worship at the cathedral and in all other churches of the Diocese: Guided tours of the cathedral, including the Crypt, will be offered. Social time will include coffee and donuts.

**Requiem**

Cathedral Prep and Villa Maria Academy will preside over the funeral Mass of Father John A. Lavin, OSB, at St. Peter Cathedral, 30 N. 10th St., at 11 a.m. Feb. 13. Burial is in the Diocese of Erie, for, on Feb. 11, Mass on Feb. 11 at 3:00 p.m. at the Cathedral, and at 2:00 p.m. on Feb. 12 at the Cathedral. The public is invited to attend the Mass and to sign the book of condolences that was televised on the popular Ed Sullivan Show in 1967. Following her musical career, she worked in several capacities in the Business Department at Mercyhurst University in Erie. She was a trained professor (music and the FACE program) and director of the Business Development and International Development Programs. Through the years, she has been involved in cultural community initiatives and for a period of time served on the monastic council and in monastic formation. In 1999, Sister Jean began ministry at St. Benedict Education Center as a faculty member in life skills and as the director of St. Benedict contemplative prayer retreats. As a Fullbright Scholar, Sister Jean traveled worldwide. At the time of her death, she was engaged in the ministry of prayer and presence. Besides her parents, she was preceded in death by her brother, William, and sister, Anna Jean Lavin, OSB. Survivors include members of her Benedictine community, including her sisters in religion from St. Matthias Abbey, OH, sister-in-law, Ruth Lavin, and a brother-in-law, Matthew Lavin and nieces and nephews. A Mass of Christian Burial was held at St. Benedict Monastery Community in Erie. Interment was at Timmy Cemetery. Memorials may be made to the Benedictine Monastery Community, 1010 East Lake Road, Erie, PA 16511.

---

**Serra Club, seminarians gather in Erie**

The Serra Club of Erie hosted a Jan. 10 banquet for seminarians staying at St. Mark Seminary. Featured, from left, are guest speaker Donnieee, Serra member Donnamon Donnamon, and seminarians Christian Enemis and Daniel Manis. Tim seminarians attended the event, along with Father Michael Kneckt, rector. Father Nicholas Rea, vice rector; and Father Nicholas Polick, vocation director.

---

**EVENTS**

**Sister Agnes Jean Lavrin, OSB**

Sister Agnes Jean Lavrin, OSB, 93, died Jan. 17 at Mount Saint Benedict Monastery in Erie. She was in her 73rd year of religious life.

A native of Sharon, Sister Agnes Jean, known to many as Sister Jean, was the daughter of the late John and Agnes (Dean) Lavrin. She entered the Benedictine Sisters of Erie in 1944, pronounced her first vows in 1945, and her perpetual vows in 1948.

Sister Jean was an accomplished musician and held both a bachelor’s and a master’s in piano performance from the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, N.Y. She also earned a master’s in psychology from the Central States University, Denver, Colorado, and a doctorate in education in system development and adaptation, Boston University.

For 25 years, she was on the faculty as instructor at various schools in the Diocese of Erie, including St. Stephen’s High School and St. Michael in Fryburg, Sacred Heart in Sharon and St. Benedict Academy in Erie. She then became an assistant professor of music and the acting chairperson of the piano department at Youngstown State University in Ohio.

She is well known for producing and directing “Sisters ’63,” a fundraising musical production by the Erie Benedictines that was televised on the popular Ed Sullivan Show in 1967. Following her musical career, she worked in several capacities in the Business Department at Mercyhurst University in Erie. She was a trained professor (music and the FACE program) and director of the Business Development and International Development Programs. Through the years, she has been involved in cultural community initiatives and for a period of time served on the monastic council and in monastic formation. In 1999, Sister Jean began ministry at St. Benedict Education Center as a faculty member in life skills and as the director of St. Benedict contemplative prayer retreats. As a Fullbright Scholar, Sister Jean traveled worldwide. At the time of her death, she was engaged in the ministry of prayer and presence. Besides her parents, she was preceded in death by her brother, William, and sister, Anna Jean Lavin, OSB. Survivors include members of her Benedictine community, including her sisters in religion from St. Matthias Abbey, OH, sister-in-law, Ruth Lavin, and a brother-in-law, Matthew Lavin and nieces and nephews. A Mass of Christian Burial was held at St. Benedict Monastery Community in Erie. Interment was at Timmy Cemetery. Memorials may be made to the Benedictine Monastery Community, 1010 East Lake Road, Erie, PA 16511.

---

**Special event**

**Bake sale!**

For more information, contact wartman@yahoo.com and click on Father-son under the theme, “Lord, Make Me.”

---

**ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

1400 N. Lake Road, Erie

**FEB. 23 and MARCH 2, 9, 16, 23, 30**

BAKED or FRIED FISH

Adul: $10 Child (12 and under): $5

Includes sides and beverage.

*Take-outs begin at 4:45 pm

**SHRIMP BASKET**: $7

Includes sides and beverage.

*Take-outs begin at 4:45 pm

**GRILLED CHEESE**: $4.50

Includes sides and beverage.

*Take-outs begin at 4:45 pm

**CAPTAINS PLATTER**: $12

Includes sides and beverage.

*Take-outs begin at 4:45 pm

**SISTER ANNE’S TREATS**: $2

Includes sides and beverage.

*Take-outs begin at 4:45 pm

---

**SISTER MARY LOU KOSZAK, OSB, MARCH 17**

Dance fundraiser

All are welcome to attend. The winter dance fundraiser benefices Young People Who Care, Inc., at the Aqueduct Avenue, Clarfield. Purchase kid-friendly food and drinks at the following prices.

- Child (12 and under): $5
- Adult: $9

**Mother Mary Brey**

Of Clarfield, PA, Feb. 17, 2018, in her 91st year of religious life, and to register, go to www. ErieRCD.org/chastity.htm

---

**The Pre-Cana scheduled at St. Therese Church in Titusville has been moved from March 17 to March 18. The updated schedule can be viewed at www.ErieRCD.org or by contacting the Parish Life Office at 814-428-5491 or at Cathyslife@ErieRCD.org.**
New principal named to DCC Elementary

Erie—Several students at Mercyhurst Preparatory School in Erie attended the annual Girls Worked in December at the Hope House retreat center in Union City. Presentations focused on the love Jesus has for each person and how that love overcomes forces that work against finding self-acceptance and true joy.

Knights announce contest winners

CURWENSVILLE—The St. John XXIII Knights Council #1609 of Curwensville and Grampian held its “Keep Christ In Christmas” poster contest at the end of last year. The contest was open to faith formation classes at both St. Timothy Parish in Curwensville and St. Bonaventure Parish in Grampian. Standing with winners Adrianna McCrudden, Ralph Dunn and Emily Wink are, from left, Knight Rick Carley, Father Steven Collins, Knights Emcee, and Knight Bernie Carfl ey.

Mercyhurst girls attend annual weekend retreat at Hope House in Union City

Erie—Several students at Mercyhurst Preparatory School in Erie attended the annual Girls Worked in December at the Hope House retreat center in Union City. Presentations focused on the love Jesus has for each person and how that love overcomes forces that work against finding self-acceptance and true joy.

Erie Otters players meet with St. Luke students

Erie—Every year, students at St. Luke School in Erie collect stuffed animals for the annual Erie Otters “Teddy Bear Toss,” a project in which toy animals are distributed to needy children for Christmas. The school community donated 628 stuffed animals this year. The students pictured above named a pizza party with Erie Otters players Anas Ollon (40) and Jordan Sandrock (94).

FaithLife — February 4, 2018

Carol Bernat, left, headmaster of DuBois Central Catholic, welcomes Gretchen Caruso, DuBois—

Knights announce contest winners

CURWENSVILLE—The St. John XXIII Knights Council #1609 of Curwensville and Grampian held its “Keep Christ In Christmas” poster contest at the end of last year. The contest was open to faith formation classes at both St. Timothy Parish in Curwensville and St. Bonaventure Parish in Grampian. Standing with winners Adrianna McCrudden, Ralph Dunn and Emily Wink are, from left, Knight Rick Carley, Father Steven Collins, Knights Emcee, and Knight Bernie Carley.

Mercyhurst girls attend annual weekend retreat at Hope House in Union City

Erie—Several students at Mercyhurst Preparatory School in Erie attended the annual Girls Worked in December at the Hope House retreat center in Union City. Presentations focused on the love Jesus has for each person and how that love overcomes forces that work against finding self-acceptance and true joy.

Erie Otters players meet with St. Luke students

Erie—Every year, students at St. Luke School in Erie collect stuffed animals for the annual Erie Otters “Teddy Bear Toss,” a project in which toy animals are distributed to needy children for Christmas. The school community donated 628 stuffed animals this year. The students pictured above named a pizza party with Erie Otters players Anas Ollon (40) and Jordan Sandrock (94).

FaithLife — February 4, 2018

Carol Bernat, left, headmaster of DuBois Central Catholic, welcomes Gretchen Caruso, DuBois—

Knights announce contest winners

CURWENSVILLE—The St. John XXIII Knights Council #1609 of Curwensville and Grampian held its “Keep Christ In Christmas” poster contest at the end of last year. The contest was open to faith formation classes at both St. Timothy Parish in Curwensville and St. Bonaventure Parish in Grampian. Standing with winners Adrianna McCrudden, Ralph Dunn and Emily Wink are, from left, Knight Rick Carley, Father Steven Collins, Knights Emcee, and Knight Bernie Carley.

Mercyhurst girls attend annual weekend retreat at Hope House in Union City

Erie—Several students at Mercyhurst Preparatory School in Erie attended the annual Girls Worked in December at the Hope House retreat center in Union City. Presentations focused on the love Jesus has for each person and how that love overcomes forces that work against finding self-acceptance and true joy.

Erie Otters players meet with St. Luke students

Erie—Every year, students at St. Luke School in Erie collect stuffed animals for the annual Erie Otters “Teddy Bear Toss,” a project in which toy animals are distributed to needy children for Christmas. The school community donated 628 stuffed animals this year. The students pictured above named a pizza party with Erie Otters players Anas Ollon (40) and Jordan Sandrock (94).

FaithLife — February 4, 2018

Carol Bernat, left, headmaster of DuBois Central Catholic, welcomes Gretchen Caruso, DuBois—

Knights announce contest winners

CURWENSVILLE—The St. John XXIII Knights Council #1609 of Curwensville and Grampian held its “Keep Christ In Christmas” poster contest at the end of last year. The contest was open to faith formation classes at both St. Timothy Parish in Curwensville and St. Bonaventure Parish in Grampian. Standing with winners Adrianna McCrudden, Ralph Dunn and Emily Wink are, from left, Knight Rick Carley, Father Steven Collins, Knights Emcee, and Knight Bernie Carley.