

Is God a Steelers fan?

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FaithLife

Swiss Guard celebrates 500 years

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www.ErieRCD.org

BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

February 5, 2006

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

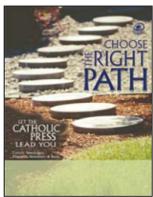
February is Catholic Press Month

"Values permeate all that we do, think and say. These values affect our understanding of events happening in our society. This is why I am deeply grateful to all those who make up the Catholic press in this country. They render a great service to their readers by reporting on events from a faith perspective."

— Bishop Gerald Kicanas of Tucson, Ariz., chair of the USCCB Committee on Communications and honorary president of the Catholic Press Association

Choose The Right Path... Let the Catholic Press Lead You...

Catholic Newspapers, Magazines and Books. This is the winning theme for the 2006 Catholic Press Month poster. The entry was submitted by Lloyd Robichaux of *The Clarion Herald* in New Orleans, La. Visit www.catholicpress.org.



World Day for Consecrated Life – Feb. 5

This annual celebration highlights persons who have made a special consecration in the Catholic Church. In his message for the first World Day for Consecrated Life, John Paul II said the day offers the opportunity to thank God for the gift of consecrated life, to promote knowledge of the life, to invite consecrated people to celebrate what the Lord has accomplished in them, and to acquire more awareness of their mission in the church and in the world.



Boy Scout Sunday – Feb. 5

The Boy Scouts of America designates the Sunday that falls before February 8 (Scouting Anniversary Day) as Scout Sunday, which is the primary date to recognize the contributions of young people and adults to scouting.



World Day of the Sick – Feb. 11

Pope Benedict XVI has chosen Adelaide, Australia, to host the 14th World Day of the Sick honoring the sick and those who care for them. This international event, devoted to health care and human dignity, is expected to attract hundreds of religious leaders and health experts from across the globe. Cardinal Javier Lozano Barragan, who heads the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers, said this year's commemorations will honor "mental health and human dignity."



World Marriage Day – Feb. 12

World Marriage Day honors husband and wife as head of the family, the basic unit of society. It salutes the beauty of their faithfulness, sacrifice and joy in daily married life.

WMD prayer: "Father, we thank you for your tremendous gift of the sacrament of marriage. Help us to witness to its glory by a life of growing intimacy. Teach us the beauty of forgiveness so we may become more and more one in heart, mind and body. Strengthen our dialogue and help us become living signs of your love. Make us grow more in love with the church so we may renew the Body of Christ. Make us a sign of unity in the name of Jesus, our Lord and brother. Amen." — Fr. Bill Dilgen, S.M.M.



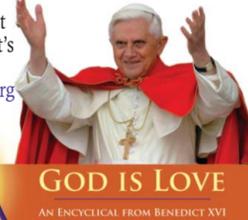
Did You Know?

During his papacy, Pope John Paul II wrote 14 encyclical letters. His many other works are classified as apostolic letters, apostolic exhortations, apostolic constitutions and general catechesis, among others.

To view the writings of John Paul II, Benedict XVI and other popes, visit www.PapalEncyclicals.net on the Web.

www.erieRCD.org
The website of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie

For complete text of Pope Benedict's encyclical, visit www.ErieRCD.org



God is Love

In first encyclical, pope calls for deeper understanding of love

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — In his first encyclical, Pope Benedict XVI called for a deeper understanding of love as a gift from God to be shared in a self-sacrificial way, both at a personal and social level.

The pope said love between couples, often reduced today to selfish sexual pleasure, needs to be purified to include "concern and care for the other."

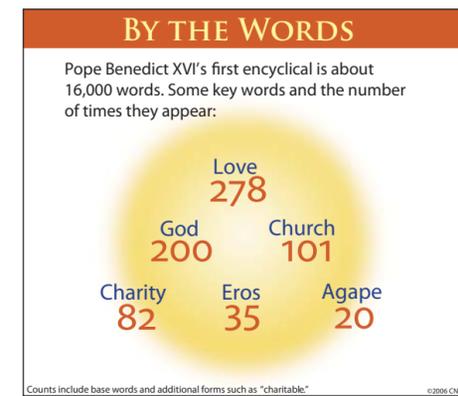
Love is also charity, he said, and the church has an obligation to help the needy wherever they are found — but its primary motives must always be spiritual, never political or ideological.

The nearly 16,000-word encyclical, titled *Deus Caritas Est (God Is Love)*, was issued Jan. 25 in seven languages. Addressed to all Catholics, it was divided into two sections, one on the meaning of love in salvation history, the other on the practice of love by the church.

The pope said his aim was to "speak of the love which God lavishes upon us and which we in return must share with others." The two aspects, personal love and the practice of charity, are profoundly interconnected, he said.

The encyclical begins with a phrase from the First Letter of John: "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him." The pope said the line expresses the heart of the Christian faith, which understands the creator as a loving God and which sees Christ's death as the ultimate sign of God's love for man.

In today's world, however, the term "love" is frequently used and misused, he said. Most commonly, it



is understood as representing "eros," the erotic love between a man and a woman. The church, from its earliest days, proposed a new vision of self-sacrificial love expressed in the word "agape," he said.

At times, the pope said, the church, with all its commandments and prohibitions, has been accused of poisoning eros or of being ready to "blow the whistle" just when the joy of erotic love presented itself.

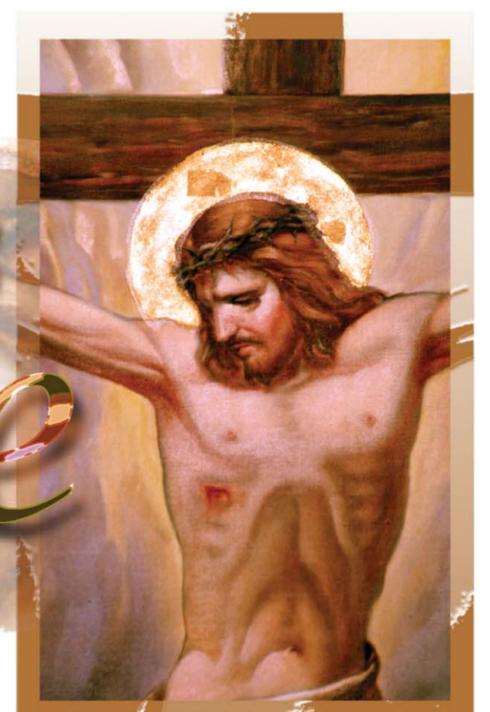
But in modern society, he said, it has become clear that eros itself has been exalted and the human body debased.

"Eros, reduced to pure 'sex,' has become a commodity, a mere 'thing' to be bought and sold, or rather, man himself becomes a commodity. This is hardly man's great 'yes' to the body. On the contrary, he now considers his body and his sexuality as the purely material part of himself, to be used and exploited at will," he

said. Properly understood, he said, eros leads a man and woman to marriage, a bond that is exclusive, and therefore monogamous, as well as permanent.

While it is true that the happiness of eros can give people a "foretaste of the divine," eros needs to be disciplined and purified if it is to provide more than fleeting pleasure, the pope said.

The solution is to rediscover a balance between the



CNS photograph by Rich Papalia

In his first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est (God Is Love)*, Pope Benedict XVI points to Christ's death on the cross as "love in its most radical form."

ecstasy of eros and the unselfish love of agape, he said.

The key to regaining this balance, he said, lies in a personal relationship with God and an understanding of the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ. He said Christ gives the ultimate lesson in "love of neighbor," which means: "I love even the person whom I do not like or even know."

The pope said there was an essential interplay between love of God and love of neighbor.

"If I have no contact whatsoever with God in my life, then I cannot see in the other anything more than the other, and I am incapable of seeing in him the image of God," he said.

"But if in my life I fail completely to heed others, solely out of a desire to be 'devout' and to perform my 'religious duties,' then my relationship with God will also grow arid," he said.

The second half of the encyclical makes two main points:

— As a community, the church must practice love through works of charity and attend to people's sufferings and needs, including material needs.

— The church's action stems from its spiritual mission and must

never be undertaken as part of a political or ideological agenda.

The pope said there was a connection between the commitment to justice and the ministry of charity, but also important distinctions. Building a just social and civil order is an essential political task to which the church contributes through its social doctrine, but it "cannot be the church's immediate responsibility," he said.

"A just society must be the achievement of politics, not of the church," he added. "The church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible. She cannot and must not replace the state," the pope said.

"Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice," he said. The church's role is to make the rational arguments for justice and awaken the spiritual energy needed for the sacrifices that justice requires, he said.

"Christian charitable activity must be independent of parties and ideologies. It is not a means of changing the world ideologically, and it is not at the service of worldly stratagems, but it is a way of making present here and now the love which man always needs," he said.

The pope examined and rejected the Marxist arguments that the poor "do not need charity but justice," and that charity is merely a means of preserving a status quo of economic injustice. He said the church

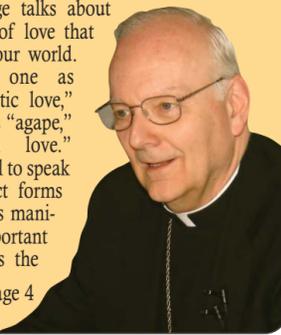
See GOD IS LOVE page 4

Bishop Trautman on God is Love

The new encyclical letter by Pope Benedict XVI is an outstanding treatise on the concept of love and a "must" for all to read. It is truly masterful and needs to be widely circulated. It is a timely message that the world needs to hear.

The first part of the Holy Father's message talks about the two forms of love that are present in our world. He describes one as "eros," or "erotic love," and the other as "agape," or "Christian love." While it is useful to speak of these distinct forms by which love is manifested, it is important to recognize, as the

See BISHOP page 4



Vatican officials say Catholic aid not just response to material need

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Catholic charitable activity is not primarily a response to material needs, but a response to God's love, three Vatican officials said.

The three officials presented Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est (God Is Love)*, at a Jan. 25 Vatican press conference.

Archbishop Paul Cordes, president of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, the Vatican's charity-promotion agency, said work on a letter explaining the theological basis of Catholic charitable activity already had begun under Pope John Paul II, "and I cannot deny my joy that

"Simply, this encyclical opposes a tendency to forget God. It opposes a tendency that is in all of us, (that of) secularism."

— Archbishop Paul Cordes

Pope Benedict has made it his own."

Under Archbishop Cordes' leadership, Cor Unum has been working for years on strategies to strengthen the Catholic identity of Catholic-sponsored development and relief agencies.

Although the archbishop spoke about the risk of secularization faced even by Catholic aid agencies, he and Cardinal Renato

Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and Archbishop William J. Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, also spoke about the need to work with governments and private institutions to meet human needs.

Archbishop Cordes was asked if Pope Benedict

See CHARITY page 4

Special issue of Faith focuses on 2006 CSA

A special extra issue of *Faith* magazine focusing on the 2006 Catholic Services Appeal for the Erie Diocese will be arriving in mailboxes beginning Feb. 13.

This issue profiles people and ministries that have been helped by the CSA and details how funds were spent in 2005.

The theme of this year's CSA is "The Love of Christ Compels Us" from 2 Cor. 5:14. Look for a feature story about the Catholic Services Appeal in the next issue of *FaithLife* on Feb. 19.



March for Life organizer estimates 2006 crowd at 'well over 100,000'

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Although Nellie Gray, organizer of the March for Life, estimates the crowd at this year's event at "well over 100,000," she said a definitive figure will have to wait until she and others can study photographs of the march. "I couldn't see the end (of the march) from the stage," Gray told Catholic News Service Jan. 25. "But I do know that there were three hours of people coming up" to the rally site on the National Mall at Seventh Street, she said. "I would say it was equal to the largest" of past marches, she added. Public information officers for both the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia and the U.S. Park Police, which has responsibility for the Mall and other areas around public buildings in Washington, declined to estimate the crowd for this year's march.



Young people lead the 33rd annual March for Life in Washington Jan. 23. Tens of thousands of people gathered to protest the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 decision legalizing abortion.

US Music common denominator for homeless people recruited for choir

CHICAGO (CNS) — On a recent Sunday, the choir at Old St. Patrick's Church in Chicago underwent a transformation. Mixed in with its predominantly white, more affluent regulars were the "unmonied" members of Harmony, Hope and Healing. The church's transformed choir sported an Irish tenor and an African-American mezzo-soprano; songs in high, medium and low register; blues and music of a more European flavor. Overall, the singers sounded comfortable together. After Mass, the choir members — the regulars and the visitors — sat down to eat and talk. Harmony, Hope and Healing is a creative music program for people served by various Catholic-run shelters and community outreach programs in the Chicago area. "If we are willing to learn, listen and not be afraid to join into song, we can learn more about one another," said the program's executive director and music director, Marge Nykasa.



Hope and Healing: Cherisse Ellis sings Nov. 27 with the Harmony, Hope and Healing choir at Old St. Patrick's Church in Chicago.

PEOPLE Would-be papal assassin ordered back to prison

ROME (CNS) — The Turkish terrorist who shot and seriously wounded Pope John Paul II was ordered to return to prison, where he was expected to remain for several years. On Jan. 20 the Turkish Supreme Court overturned a lower court's release of Agca eight days earlier. Agca's release had prompted widespread criticism in Turkey and around the world. Agca, 48, was apprehended by police at his home and offered no resistance when he was taken back into custody. As he entered a police station in Istanbul, he shouted in several languages, "I am Messiah. I am not the Son of God, I am Messiah," according to Turkish news reports. Agca has frequently made wild and fanatical claims to the press and to justice officials. Agca had served 19 years in Italian prisons for shooting the pope in 1981. He was extradited in 2000 to Turkey, where he served five years for the 1979 murder of a liberal Turkish newspaper editor.



Back in jail: Mehmet Ali Agca, the man who shot Pope John Paul II in 1981, displays an issue of *Time* magazine as he is freed from a Turkish prison Jan. 12. He returned to prison Jan. 20.

Hockey-playing bishop dubbed 'holy goalie'

CHICAGO (CNS) — The puns are obvious: "Who IS that masked man?" "Stick with me, kid." And, of course, "Hey, fella, you're on thin ice." But in this case, the "fella" would be Chicago Auxiliary Bishop Thomas J. Paprocki — all dressed up in a Chicago Blackhawks uniform and ready to take to the ice at the United Center. Neither is it all for show. Bishop Paprocki, 53, has been involved with hockey for a long time — as a fan and a player. He was profiled in the December issue of *USA Hockey* magazine, where he was pictured in his episcopal robes holding a hockey stick and helmet. The article's headline, appropriately enough, was "Holy Goalie." Bishop Paprocki has been playing hockey — floor hockey — since he was a boy, but it's only been in the past decade, he told the magazine, that he's taken to the ice. Now, twice a week he plays at McFetridge Ice Center stopping pucks in an over-30, no-check league.



Holy goalie: Chicago Auxiliary Bishop Thomas J. Paprocki prepares to get on the ice after suiting up to practice with the Chicago Blackhawks Jan. 12.

WORLD Pope, church officials have full schedule of ecumenical events

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — By mid-January, Pope Benedict XVI and the Roman Catholic Church already had a full schedule of ecumenical events planned for 2006. The Catholic-Orthodox international commission is scheduled to meet in September for the first time in six years. Commission members plan to return to the theological discussion of church authority and primacy. The Catholic-Lutheran dialogue is nearing completion of a document on "the apostolicity of the church," looking at the continuation of church teaching and tradition from the time of the apostles. The Catholic-Methodist dialogue is scheduled to finish work by July on a statement about how far each community can go in recognizing the church of God present in each other. The World Methodist Council also is scheduled to vote in July on formally adopting the 1999 Catholic-Lutheran agreement on justification. The Catholic Church and a group of Pentecostal churches are working on a document explaining what both mean by "baptism of the Holy Spirit" and its role in the salvation of individual Christians.

Pope sports red 'camauro'



Pope Benedict XVI wears a red velvet cap, known as a "camauro," as he arrives to lead a recent general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. The "camauro" was last worn by Pope John XXIII.

Vatican nuncio to U.S. known for affable manner

JERUSALEM (CNS) — The new Vatican nuncio to the United States is known for his warm and affable manner, sense of humor and easy laugh in both Palestinian and Israeli circles. Italian Archbishop Pietro Sambi, who will take up his new post in February, is an excellent choice for the nuncio in Washington, given his record of being open and ready to listen to people, said Franciscan Father Peter Vasko, president of the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land. "The expertise he has shown here with the Palestinians and the Israelis will go a long way toward dealing with the American hierarchy and American Catholics," Father Vasko said.



Italian Archbishop Pietro Sambi

By the Way...

At a Jan. 10 meeting in Washington, the U.S. bishops' Committee on Education approved a set of questions to guide local dialogues nationwide between diocesan bishops and the presidents of Catholic colleges and universities in their diocese.



Jason Koshinskie

The dialogues are part of Ex Corde Ecclesiae, Pope John Paul II's 1990 apostolic constitution on Catholic higher education, which sets norms to assure the Catholic mission and identity of Catholic colleges and universities.

One of the topics listed for discussion is the "mandatum," or authorization to teach, that the norms say a Catholic theologian must have to teach in a Catholic institution of higher learning. That discussion should be a short one in the Erie Diocese.

All of the theology professors at Gannon University have been certified and received the mandatum, required by all Catholic colleges in the United States. Mercyhurst College does not have a theology department; it has a religious studies program. Religious studies does not fall under the qualifications of the mandatum.

"All of the professors at Gannon University are totally orthodox, and we are very proud of that," Bishop Trautman says, noting that the mandatum is implemented to prevent professors from labeling their opinions as teachings of the church.

March 1 is Ash Wednesday and marks the beginning of Lent. Small faith-sharing groups will also begin their journey through the *Why Catholic?* program at this time. The program focuses on Scripture related to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Approximately 50 parishes will take part in *Why Catholic?*, and many have already started sign-ups for group formations.

With the Pittsburgh Steelers playing in Super Bowl XL, many fans throughout the diocese are excited about the big game. That includes clergy, too. Here is a version of a joke that several priests have used in their homilies the past few weeks. It goes something like this:

Peyton Manning died and went to heaven. God said, "Peyton, I am a great football fan so I am giving you a great honor. You will have your own house here in heaven." God showed him a modest house with a small Colts flag in the window. Peyton was pleased until he looked up the hill and saw a massive black and gold mansion, with Terrible Towels in every window and a huge Steelers flag outside. Peyton said, "God, I don't like to complain, but how come I have such a small house and Ben Roethlisberger has such a big mansion?" God replied, "That's not Big Ben's house! That's where I live!"

Jason Koshinskie is editor of FaithLife. Contact him at JKoshinskie@ErieRCD.org or 814.824.1171.

Catholic home founder closer to sainthood

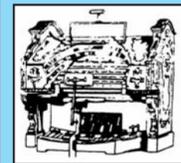
EAST CHICAGO, Ind. (CNS) — The staff at St. Joseph's Carmelite Home for Girls has certainly witnessed growth in recent years, adding facilities for emergency care and a center for infants and toddlers. The staff is now awaiting news of a possible church honor for the home's founder. Pope Benedict XVI signed decrees Dec. 19 recognizing miracles attributed to the intercession of nine individuals. Among those now ready for beatification is Mother Anna Maria Tauscher, also known as Mother Maria Teresa of St. Joseph. The German-born founder of the Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus also founded St. Joseph's Carmelite Home for Girls in East Chicago — one of a number of facilities still in operation that she founded on a trip to America.



At play: Carmelite Sister Maria Dell Perez plays with preschoolers at the Holy Innocents Center in East Chicago, Ind.

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Sr. Catherine Marie... I loved being a pediatric nurse, but after ten years I started to wonder: is there more I should be doing to live an authentic Christian life? Was God calling me to religious life? I visited the Hawthorne Dominicans. While praying in the chapel at Rosary Hill, I knew — and here I am.

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For more information, call Sr. Alma Marie at 914.769.4794 or e-mail vocationdirector@hawthorne-dominicans.org www.hawthorne-dominicans.org

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This will be Monsignor Renken's third cruise as YMT's Catholic Chaplain. He is co-pastor for six parishes in the Diocese of Springfield, Illinois.

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For information, reservations, letter from Monsignor Renken with his phone number, and brochure call 7 days a week:

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NET travels throughout diocese

The National Evangelization Team (NET) will travel throughout the Erie Diocese conducting retreats at several parishes Feb. 1-9. Eleven young adults will minister to the youth (grades 7 through 12) in the following parishes: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sykesville; Bradford Deanery parishes, St. Stanislaus, Sharon; Our Lady, Queen of Americas, Conneaut Lake; St. Francis of Assisi, Clearfield; St. Joseph, Lucinda; and St. Mark, Emporium. Each parish was able to choose a retreat theme which include *Who are You?*, *Firm Foundation, Cling to Christ!*, *Why Faith?* and *Confirmation*. The goal of the NET Team is to challenge young Catholics to love Christ and to embrace the life of the church.

Youth rally set for March 25

Elk County Catholic in St. Marys will host the Middle School Youth Rally on March 25 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The theme of the rally is *Saving Grace* with activities of the day focusing on defining and using symbols of grace. The keynote speaker is the dynamic and hilarious Bob Perron of Stooze 4 Christ Ministries. Musical entertainment will be provided by the popular Christian band Who Do You Say I Am from the Cleveland area. Other activities include Name that Station game and Letters from Home service project. Communication will be the topic of the adult workshop offered in the afternoon. Contact Linda Lecce, program coordinator for the Department of Religious Education, at 814-824-1218 or visit the Web at www.eriecd.org/youth.asp for additional information.

Clergy Appointments

The Most Rev. Donald W. Trautman, S.T.D., S.S.L., Bishop of Erie, announces the following clergy appointments:

Fr. Michael Kesicki, rector of St. Mark Seminary, Erie, reappointed to a four-year term on the Clergy Continuing Education and Formation Committee, concluding in Nov. 2009.

Msgr. H. Desmond McGee, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Clearfield, reappointed to a four-year term on the Clergy Continuing Education and Formation Committee, concluding in Nov. 2009.

Fr. Mark O'Hern, parochial vicar of St. Michael Parish, Greenville, reappointed to a four-year term on the Clergy Continuing Education and Formation Committee, concluding in Nov. 2009.

Msgr. Richard Siefer, pastor of St. Catherine of Sienna Parish, DuBois, reappointed to a four-year term as Director of Clergy Continuing Education and Formation, concluding in Nov. 2009.

Fr. Chris Singer, parochial vicar of St. George Parish, Erie, reappointed to a four-year term on the Clergy Continuing Education and Formation Committee, concluding in Nov. 2009.

Fr. Thomas Suppa, pastor of St. Teresa of Avila Parish, Union City, and a member of the Presbyteral Council of the diocese, appointed to fulfill the remaining term of Fr. John Malthaner, whose duties as headmaster and teacher of Venango Catholic prevent his continuing as a member. Among other things, Fr. Suppa will represent the people of the Warren County Deanery. By church law, each diocese must have a Presbyteral Council whose responsibilities include assisting "the bishop in the governance of the diocese . . . in order that the pastoral welfare of the people of God entrusted to his care may be promoted as effectively as possible." (Canon 495)

Fr. Brian Vossler, (correction from previous announcement) Campus Minister, Edinboro University and weekend sacramental assistant at Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Edinboro with residence at Our Lady of the Lake Rectory. This assignment became effective on January 17, 2006.

PCC supports amendment protecting marriage in Pennsylvania

By Amy L. Beisel
Pennsylvania Catholic Conference

HARRISBURG — Over the years and across cultures and very different religious beliefs, marriage has been and is the foundation of the family. The family, in turn, is the basic unit of society. Thus, marriage is a personal relationship with public significance. Catholic doctrine teaches that marriage is both a natural institution and a sacred union because it is rooted in the divine plan for creation. As instituted by God and supported by the needs of human nature, marriage is a faithful, exclusive life-long union of one man and one woman joined in an intimate communion of life and love.

Nationwide, activist groups have filed lawsuits asking courts to redefine marriage as something other than a relationship

between one man and one woman. Even though Pennsylvania has a law that defends marriage, it may not be enough to protect what is best for families in Pennsylvania if similar lawsuits are filed here.

The Pennsylvania Catholic Conference joins the Pennsylvania Family Institute, other faith leaders and concerned citizens in support of an amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution to protect and define marriage. The amendment language will say:

"Only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this Commonwealth, and neither the Commonwealth nor any of its political subdivisions shall create or recognize a legal status identical or substantially equivalent to that of marriage for unmarried individuals."



Legislation to start the constitutional amendment process was introduced in January by State Representatives Scott Boyd (R-Lancaster), Daryl Metalfé (R-Butler), Tom Yewcic (D-Cambria, Somerset), Katie True (R-Lancaster) and Teresa Forcier (R-Crawford), and a companion bill was introduced by Senator Bob Regola (R-Westmoreland) in the state Senate.

Proponents believe a Constitutional amendment is

necessary to protect and strengthen Pennsylvania's existing Defense of Marriage Act. Judges in other states have deemed similar laws to be unconstitutional. Supporters believe Pennsylvania voters deserve an opportunity at the ballot box to prevent "activist" courts or local governments from imposing a new definition of traditional marriage.

The marriage protection initiative will protect the definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman and protect the public institution of marriage from any alternative relationships.

Amending the Pennsylvania Constitution is a lengthy and challenging process. The amendment language must first be passed in two consecutive legislative sessions. Then it must be approved by a majority of the

voters on a statewide ballot referendum. Proponents of the marriage protection amendment anticipate the earliest chance for voter referendum is 2007. Supporters of the marriage protection amendment are willing to assume this responsibility so the institution of marriage between one man and one woman alone will be protected and preserved in Pennsylvania.

For more information about the coalition, log on to www.PA4marriage.org. For information about statements from Catholic Bishops, log on to www.pacatholic.org or www.usccb.org.

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

Bishop says poverty revealed by Katrina is everywhere in U.S.

By Peter Finney Jr.
Catholic News Service

NEW ORLEANS — The underlying poverty in New Orleans uncovered for the world's eyes after Hurricane Katrina can serve to raise the awareness of hidden poverty across the U.S., Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, N.Y., said Jan. 19.

As chairman of the bishops' Committee on Catholic Campaign for Human Development, Bishop Hubbard was in town for the release of a national poll on poverty commissioned by CCHD.

He said 75 percent of respondents believe the scope of poverty shown in New Orleans — where those without the means to evacuate before the Category 4 storm were stranded for days in deplorable conditions at emergency shelters — should be used to bring greater attention to poverty throughout the U.S.

CCHD chose New Orleans to launch its 2006 anti-poverty

campaign because the city was hit by the largest natural disaster in U.S. history, which Bishop Hubbard said "turned lives upside down." The agency also announced more than \$500,000 in special grants to organizations helping low-income victims of hurricanes Katrina and Rita to rebuild their lives.

While looking at the images of despairing crowds at the Louisiana Superdome and the convention center in the days after Katrina, Bishop Hubbard said his "first gut reaction" was, "My God, it looks like a Third World country. How could these people have been left behind? Are they being left behind because they were poor?"

Bishop Hubbard said he was pleased to see that 75 percent of respondents to the poll agreed that the plight of the poor in New Orleans should be used as the launching pad for a national campaign to eliminate poverty.

"Hopefully we will be able to not only commit ourselves to

that campaign as an organization of Catholic bishops but also get other religious-affiliated denominations and those in government to understand that we need a partnership today — public and private — to say this intolerable situation must be eliminated," Bishop Hubbard said. There are 37 million Americans living in poverty — one out of every eight U.S. citizens. Bishop Hubbard said that represents 10 percent of all families and nearly 13 million children.

"The tragedy that struck New Orleans may have a silver lining in that it will lead people to once again say, 'This is intolerable in a nation of unparalleled affluence and resources to have 37 million men, women and children who are living below the poverty line,'" the bishop said.

"If we can send men and women to the moon, if we can do experiments extracting dust from the cosmos, then we can do something to eliminate poverty within our midst," he said.

Poverty Pulse survey

BY the NUMBERS

2/3 of Americans are concerned that poverty will increase in the U.S. in 2006.

71% said they think there are more poor people today than a year ago.

56% had donated money to organizations that assist the poor.



Graphic by Rich Papalia

This year's survey was designed by the Market Research Bureau and was conducted by the Harris Interactive Service Bureau via online questioning. Participants in the poll were 1,131 members of the general adult population. The margin of error was plus or minus 3 percent.

Swiss Guard celebrates 500 Years

Pope blesses corps on anniversary

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — On the 500th anniversary of the founding of the world's oldest active army, Pope Benedict XVI gave his apostolic blessing to a contingent of Swiss Guards who were lined up in formation in St. Peter's Square.

From his apartment window in the Apostolic Palace Jan. 22, the pope thanked this "well-deserving" corps for its "500 years of service."

He imparted "a heartfelt" apostolic blessing to approximately 70 guards gathered in the square and to former guards who were watching the event from Fribourg, Switzerland, via a live, televised link.

Pope Benedict recalled how on Jan. 22, 1506, "Pope Julius II welcomed and blessed the first contingent of Swiss Guards" that arrived in Rome after the pontiff requested the soldiers come to protect the pope and the Apostolic Palace.

"This is how the Swiss Guards were born," Pope Benedict said.

The pope said his special blessing for the guards was a sign of his "appreciation and recognition" of their service and fidelity.

Earlier Jan. 22, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Vatican secretary of state, celebrated Mass for the Swiss Guards in the Sistine



CNS photo

A Swiss Guard, holding a traditional halberd, looks up as Pope Benedict XVI bestows a special blessing on the Swiss Guards at the Vatican.

Chapel. He highlighted the strength

and generosity shown by the first 150 Swiss soldiers who

Protectors of the Pope

For 500 years the elite Swiss Guard corps has protected the popes and Holy See

<p>THE SOLDIER</p> <p>Recruits Must be single, male Catholics between the ages of 19 and 30 and have... Swiss citizenship Good morals and ethics Swiss military training Professional or high school diploma Height of at least 5 feet, 8 inches</p>	<p>THE UNIFORM</p> <p>Style The dress uniform of the Swiss Guard is made up of the traditional Medici family colors. Although black and gold is often credited with its design, the distinctive uniform was more likely influenced by the paintings of Raffaello.</p> <p>Morion Helmet Worn on solemn occasions, the color of the ostrich-feather plume is an indicator of rank: White for the commander and sergeant major, purple for lieutenants, red for halberdiers and yellow and black on a black morion for the drummers.</p> <p>Arms In the 1500's Swiss soldiers were armed with the halberd and broadsword. Today the Swiss Guard carry the halberd and broadsword, but also train in firearms and often carry a personal firearm when they are with the pope during his foreign visits.</p>
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made the four-month trek from Switzerland to Rome to protect the life and safety of the pope.

He told the guards that "we must cleanse and renew ourselves every day in our service to God and in our fidelity to his holy church."

He added that the Swiss Guards' motto of "Acriter et Fideliter," or courage and fidelity, was "a daily call" to live according to such values.

The Swiss Guards kicked off their jubilee celebrations June 21, the date Pope Julius requested the service of Swiss soldiers,

renowned for their loyalty and bravery. Celebrations and other commemorative events were set to continue throughout 2006, culminating in a contingent of former Swiss Guards marching to Rome from Bellinzona, Switzerland. The guards were to arrive in time to take part in the annual swearing-in ceremony of new guards May 6 in the Vatican.

The Vatican and Switzerland also were planning a series of commemorative stamps and coins to mark the 500th anniversary.

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Knights of Columbus council formed at St. Mark the Evangelist



Knights of Columbus Council No. 13826 at St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Erie, is the newest council formed in the Erie Diocese. Patrick Cagnoli serves as the Grand Knight, and Frank Wargo serves as the Deputy Grand Knight. "We currently have 37 members and are growing," Cagnoli says. Above, Fr. Scott Katren, pastor of St. Mark Parish and council chaplain, poses with the new council after an installation service Nov. 22.

Epiphany celebration held at St. Mark Catholic Center

An Epiphany celebration sponsored by the Catholic Charities Office of Spiritual Ministry with Persons with Disabilities was held Jan. 7 at St. Mark Catholic Center, Erie. More than 85 people attended the event, which included an Epiphany program, music by For Pete's Sake, liturgy celebrated by Fr. George Strohmeier and dinner. Sign language interpretation was provided. Those who attended were given prayer cards that included the Home Blessing of the Magi, which was read during the program. Fr. George encouraged participants to say the prayer at home and to take the blessing he bestowed on them to their homes and bless each room by making the sign of the cross. At right, Fr. George Strohmeier blesses people as they process from the chapel to the cafeteria for dinner.



In first encyclical, Pope Benedict calls for deeper understanding of love

GOD IS LOVE from page 1

must help the needy wherever they are found, and he cited Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta as an example of love in action.

"One does not make the world more human by refusing to act humanely here and now," he said. And charity will always be necessary, even

in the most just society, he said.

In any case, he said, it is an illusion to think that the state can provide for all needs and fully resolve every problem.

"We do not need a state which regulates and controls everything," but a state that

supports initiatives arising from different social forces, he said. The church is one of those forces, he said.

The pope said that those working for Catholic charitable organizations need to be witnesses of the faith as well as professionally competent in humanitarian affairs.

The church's charitable activities, he said, should not be seen as opportunities for proselytism, in the sense of imposing the church's faith on others.

"But this does not mean that charitable activity must somehow leave God and Christ aside," he said. Without

proposing specific guidelines, he added: "A Christian knows when it is time to speak of God and when it is better to say nothing and to let love speak alone."

The pope said that prayer should not be forgotten as the church tries to alleviate the immense needs around the

world.

"People who pray are not wasting their time, even though the situation appears desperate and seems to call for action alone. Piety does not undermine the struggle against the poverty of our neighbors, however extreme," he said.

Vatican officials say Catholic aid not just response to material need

CHARITY from page 1

wrote the encyclical's chapter on Catholic charity out of fear that the church was moving toward becoming a huge charitable organization devoid of faith.

"I do not think the pope thinks that at all," he said.

The pope wanted to strengthen people's understanding of the theology behind Catholic aid work, "which does not mean that without this theological reflection he fears these activities will lose their basis in faith," the archbishop said.

Most Catholics engaged in charity would say they are motivated by their faith, he said, even if they have not worked out a systematic theological explanation for it. However, Archbishop Cordes said, it also is true that Catholics easily can engage in relief and development work without any connection to the church, so they risk losing sight of charity as being primarily a reflection of God's love and a religious obligation.

"Simply, this encyclical opposes a tendency to forget God," he said. "It opposes a tendency that is in all of us, (that of) secularism."

Archbishop Levada said the encyclical is not saying that

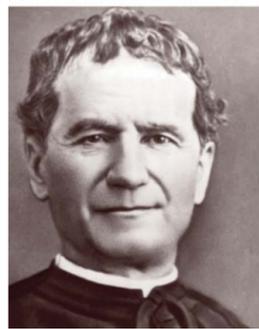
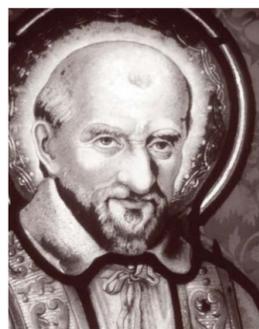
Catholics should not work with others in charitable activities, but it does remind them that by sharing their faith with others "in dialogue — never imposing it" — they contribute to the good of the whole world.

The head of the doctrinal office said the pope wanted to remind Catholics that a Christian life cannot be confined "to the sacristy, that is, a spirituality that thinks it can leave aside the essential commitment of charity of every Christian and of the church as a community."

"In the same way, it wants to present the problem that acting on social concerns can become, for some — including some Christians — just another job in which the connection with the creative love of God vanishes," Archbishop Levada said.

The pope's encyclical also makes a distinction between Catholic social teaching's emphasis on working for political, social and economic justice and the obligation to engage in charity as an act of love for an individual.

"Christian charitable activity must be independent of parties and ideologies," the pope wrote. "It is not a means of



changing the world ideologically, and it is not at the service of worldly stratagems, but it is a way of making present here and now the love which man always



needs." Cardinal Martino said the pope was calling on individual Christians to let love animate all their activities: within the fami-

In his new encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est (God Is Love)*, Pope Benedict cites several Catholic models of social charity. Among them are clockwise from top, left: St. Vincent de Paul, who devoted 50 years of his life in service to the poor; Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, whose care for the sick and downtrodden in Calcutta, India, led her to establish the Missionaries of Charity, an order that carries on her work around the world; St. Louise de Marillac, whose Sisters of Charity aid the sick and the neglected in the example of St. Vincent de Paul; and St. John Bosco, patron saint of youth best known for his work on behalf of homeless boys.

ly, community, at work, in political choices and in serving others.

While the church is called, especially through its laity, to purify political and economic structures, the church and its organizations do not embrace political parties or ideologies, he said.

Archbishop Levada told

reporters. "The pope also praises new forms of fruitful cooperation between state and church agencies," but he does so insisting that this cooperation calls on Catholics to act with their hearts, "which naturally does not exclude planning, foresight and professionalism. It does, however, exclude ties with all types of ideology."

Bishop Trautman on *God is Love*

BISHOP from page 1

Holy Father points out, that between these forms of love there is a unity.

Specifically, in paragraphs seven and eight on the encyclical, the Holy Father clearly presents the nature of this unity in a way that I do not think that most Christians have previously appreciated. He brings the two types of love together and shows how they support one another. That is an important message for us since the tendency over the years has been to contrast the loves. Now the Holy Father is saying that we should affirm the unity of love and appreciate how the one leads to the other.

For example, we read in paragraph seven: "Eros as a term to indicate 'worldly' love and 'agape,' referring to love grounded in and shaped by faith. ... Yet 'eros' and 'agape' can never be completely separated. The more the two, in their different aspects, find a proper unity in the one reality of love, the more the true nature of love in general is realized."

I think those are powerful words. The Holy Father also uses the image of Jacob's Ladder from the Bible. The

image recalls Jacob's dream in which he saw angels ascending and descending to and from heaven and earth. The Holy Father speaks of ascending and descending love between "eros," which seeks God, and "agape," which passes on the gift received, symbolized in various ways. The image of the ladder stands out in my mind. Maybe that is something we need to understand when we talk about love, that in eros, or erotic love, we are actually seeking out a higher love and that God comes to us with a divine love. We have erotic love, wanting more than ourselves, looking for that ultimate happiness beyond us. But then we meet God, who descends upon us, we find a new love and there find complete fulfillment.

The important thing is the unity between the two types of love that the Holy Father speaks about. Love is truly a single reality even though at certain times one dimension may emerge more clearly.

The Holy Father also discusses marriage. He talks about Adam needing a helper and God giving him a partner. He

says that man longs for his other half and that in response to that longing he strives to possess it and regain his integrity. This is a document I wish all young people and married people would read. I would like to say to them: "It is not beyond you! Don't be scared by the length of the document. You don't need to read it all at once. It is a wonderful reflection on the meaning of love and shows how erotic love and Christian love form a single unity."

For college people, young people and all others who are striving to find the meaning of love in the world, I would heartily recommend this letter by the Holy Father. They see so many images of love, types of love, in our world today. Here is a profound treatment on love which does not disparage human love but rather raises it up to the true love that God has for us.

As we know from media reports, many families and marriages are in trouble today. People are following the erroneous portrayals of love seen so often on television and in the movies. The Christian church has always and continues to

fight this wrong portrayal of erotic love. The popular portrayals will not satisfy. Only the love of God will truly satisfy that human longing. Using the image of the ladder, we see the love of God descends to us, we are loved by God. Only that love can satisfy the soul. Other things may excite us, stimulate us, but will never fulfill us.

Returning to the Old Testament, the prophets Hosea and Ezekiel present some beautiful imagery and metaphors about how even though Israel (representing all of us) has sinned against God's holy love. God forgives us because he loves us so much. We find that forgiveness in Jesus who died on the cross for us.

This encyclical is just so filled with an important message for all of us. I encourage all of our people to read it and ask our parishes to help our people obtain a copy of the text. I wish to thank our Holy Father for his encyclical letter and beg you to read it.

Most Rev. Donald W. Trautman, S.T.D., S.S.L. Bishop of Erie

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