



MAN TALK

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BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

March 13, 2016

DIOCESAN NEWS

New development director named



Lisa R. Louis

The Diocese of Erie has named Lisa R. Louis, former director of the Regional Cancer Center Foundation in Erie, as its new director of Diocesan Development Services. She also will serve as executive director of The Catholic Foundation.

The cabinet-level position is responsible for leading and managing the overall fund development activities of the diocese. She replaces Emma Lee McCloskey, who retired in 2015.

"The diocese contributes significantly to our region in so many meaningful ways. It will be an honor and a pleasure for me to put my professional skills to work for causes that inspire me personally," Louis said.

She joins the diocese midway through a pastoral planning process that has involved a significant assessment of its parishes and schools.

"I am very pleased to have someone of Lisa's caliber in this position. Her professional background, her understanding of our mission and her enthusiasm for the tasks before us make her an ideal choice for the challenges ahead," Bishop Lawrence Persico said.

As director of Diocesan Development Services and of The Catholic Foundation, Louis will oversee activities of the Office of Stewardship and Annual Giving. Bill Grant will continue as director of the Office of Stewardship and Annual Giving.

Louis also will coordinate the development efforts of the Office of Catholic Charities and the Office of Education.

Scibettas personify 'Helping Hands'



Dr. M. Peter and Ellie Scibetta

Erie philanthropists Dr. M. Peter and Ellie Scibetta will be presented the "Helping Hands Award" at the May 6 Catholic Charities Ball at the Bayfront Convention Center.

"We are very honored to be recognized, but I never really thought too much of the things we did for the Catholic Church. It was just something we wanted to do," says Ellie Scibetta, 79.

Longtime members of St. Peter Cathedral, Erie, the Scibettas have shared their time, energy and financial resources with the church and the community at-large. The former CEO of the Regional Cancer Center, Erie, Dr. Scibetta, 82, is a trustee emeritus at the Cancer Center Foundation and is active with the board of governors of the Erie Philharmonic Orchestra.

Ellie Scibetta currently is a sustaining member of the Erie Women's Fund of the Erie Community Foundation, and serves at the Bishop's Breakfast Program in downtown Erie.

To purchase tickets online for the May 6 Catholic Charities Ball, go to www.ErieRCD.org/charitiesball.asp.

Villa Victors enjoy winning streak

Team is named No. 12 in nation

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

For members of the Villa Maria Academy girls basketball team, regular Friday night pasta dinners during Lent don't include meatballs.

Strict adherence to the Lenten regulation of no meat on Fridays—even during the grueling basketball season—is just one of the many forms of self-discipline that have contributed to the varsity team's national ranking and its long winning streak.

"We follow our Catholic faith," says senior standout Anna Sweny, a Canisius recruit.

She and her teammates pray before and after all games and practices. They attend Mass before every competition, and during the year they regularly come together to do community service projects. All of this bonds the 15 players, creating—not surprisingly—one of the toughest defensive teams in the region and in the country.

USA Today recently ranked the Villa Victors No. 12 in the nation. In December, they won the KSA Events Holiday Basketball Tournament in Orlando, Fla., beating the No. 4 team in the country, the No. 2 team in Missouri, and the No. 5 team in Florida.

"Our defense is something that we hang our hats on. It permeates the whole team," says Doug Chuzie, head coach the past five years.

"The girls have a belief that they can stop the other team."

At press time, Villa had a 26-0 record, having stopped a long line of tough opponents. In February, they won their 20th District 10 championship in program history by beating Mercyhurst Prep at the District 10 Class AAA championship at Erie's Hammermill Center.

That win put them into the state tournament. In the first-round matchup on March 5, they beat Beaver Falls' Blackhawk High School 57-31. At press time, they were scheduled to play again on March 9 in Sharon.

"I don't even know what we're ranked nationally," says senior Jaelyn Kitts. "We're just thinking about the next game. That's all that's on our minds."

It helps that the girls work as a team; one person never takes all the credit or



Photos by Nancy Hillert, Lifelong Photography

Above: Celebrating with their usual enthusiasm after winning the District 10 basketball crown Feb. 27 are Villa Victors Anna Sweny and Jennifer Oduho, both seniors, surrounded by teammates.

Right: Coaches and members of the Villa Maria girls basketball team pose after their win at Erie's Hammermill Center.



"We honestly believe that any of the 15 players can go in and get the job done."

— Anna Sweny

all of the shots. "The pressure is easy to handle because we have such a deep, skilled team," Sweny explains. "You know you're not the only one on the court. We honestly believe that any of the 15 players can go in and get the job done."

Sister Nancy Fischer, SSI, enjoys watching the Victors, especially during the playoffs. As an alumna of Villa, and one of the school's star

basketball players in the late 1960s, she knows what it's like to have undefeated seasons.

"I think the whole city can be proud of what Villa has accomplished," says Sister Nancy, who is a board member of Erie Catholic Preparatory School, which includes Villa and Cathedral Prep. "It's very difficult to go undefeated in any league, but especially at the national level, too."

Mysterious Chalice

Owner of sacred vessel, paten unknown

SARTWELL—Father Thomas Brown is the new caretaker of a refurbished chalice with a mysterious history.

The sacred vessel—standing at 6¼ inches tall with three diamonds—was recently donated for use at Father Brown's three parishes: St. Raphael in Eldred, St. Theresa in Shinglehouse, and St. Mary Mission in Sartwell. Members of the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus Assemblies of Warren and Olean, N.Y., presented the chalice and accompanying paten at a Mass Jan. 17.

Ray Stahl, a permanent deacon from Arcade, N.Y., explained at the Mass that the chalice and paten were given to him by a neighbor in 2013. The neighbor apparently acquired them from a box of items he purchased for \$10 at an estate sale.

At the base of the chalice is the inscription: "Given by Mom and Gram—1974." The 12 Apostles are pictured on the cup. Their rightful owner has never been located.

"It's not from any of our three parishes," Father Brown says. "It's a miracle it wasn't thrown out."

Stahl suggested that the Knights donate the chalice and paten to the parishes. Members of the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus Assemblies had the items refurbished, and Bray Development of Olean, N.Y., owned by Knight Mike Bray, crafted a mahogany box lined with red velvet to carry the sacred pieces.



Father Thomas Brown displays the refurbished paten and chalice donated to his parishes.

—Story and photo contributed by Fran DeLancy

Bishop Persico declares March 13 'Sisters Day' in the Diocese of Erie



This is one of three different billboards that can be seen throughout the area during National Catholic Sisters Week March 8-14.

FAITHLIFE staff report

Bishop Lawrence Persico has declared March 13 "Sisters Day" in the Diocese of Erie, recognizing the contribution of women religious during National Catholic Sisters Week.

He has asked parishes and schools to pray for the estimated 300 active and retired sisters who currently live and work in the 13-county diocese. Sisters have ministered in the diocese since 1852.

"The Church of Erie would not be what it is today without the life and apostolic work of religious women," the bishop said. "I doubt that there is a parish in our diocese that somewhere in its history was not touched by their lives and ministry."

On March 13, Bishop Persico

and Sister Nancy Fischer, vicar for religious, will visit the Erie motherhouses of three major religious communities of women. Six billboards thanking sisters are on display in Erie County, Oil City and Meadville. The billboards were made possible through a National Catholic Sisters Week grant and Lamar Advertising.

"Sisters are not the kind of people seeking recognition, but this is good for the diocese to recognize the sisters who have served our diocese for over 160 years," Sister Nancy said.

The U.S. Catholic Church is celebrating National Catholic Sisters Week through March 14.

The public is invited to an open house March 13 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Community Living Center of the Sisters of St. Joseph, 5031 W. Ridge Road, Erie.

Famed tenor entertains papal crowd

VATICAN CITY—Spanish tenor Plácido Domingo spontaneously sings for the crowd during Pope Francis' general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican March 2.



CNS photo

Newsmakers



Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world
from Catholic News Service

■ Supreme Court hears arguments in Texas abortion case



CNS photo

A pro-life supporter holds a sign in front of the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington March 2.

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in its first abortion case in nine years March 2 in a challenge by Texas abortion clinics to a 2013 state law that requires them to comply with standards of ambulatory surgical centers and their doctors to have admitting privileges at local hospitals.

In 2007, the Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision upheld the federal ban on partial-birth abortion, signed into law in 2003 by President George W. Bush. The law had withstood several court challenges on constitutional grounds before it was upheld.

The 90 minutes of oral arguments March 2 was before a court left with eight members following the Feb. 13 death of Justice Antonin Scalia, who regularly voted to uphold abortion limitations and was expected to have provided the fifth vote in this case to uphold the requirements.

■ Pa. bishop pledges transparency in dealing with child abuse reports

HOLLIDAYSBURG, Pa. (CNS)—Bishop Mark Barchak of Altoona-Johnstown committed the Pennsylvania diocese to be transparent in its efforts related to the sexual abuse of minors by clergy and to make public the names and current status of all priests found to have a credible allegation of abuse against them.

The pledge came during an afternoon news conference March 3 at diocesan offices in Hollidaysburg, two days after a state grand jury issued a report saying that at least 50 priests or religious leaders were involved in the sexual abuse of hundreds of children over several decades and that diocesan leaders prior to Bishop Barchak concealed the abuse to protect the church's image.

The list of priests accused of abuse will be published on the diocesan website, www.ajdiocese.org, Bishop Barchak said.

The bishop apologized to abuse victims, their families, people of the diocese and priests.

Bishop Barchak also said that the diocese will continue sending to law enforcement authorities written reports of allegations it receives of "any type of sexual misconduct involving a minor" by a living or deceased clergyman or religious, "whether or not the victim is now a minor and whether or not the victim or another person already has made the report."

A review of diocesan procedures and policies related to child protection also will begin, he said. Bishop Barchak pledged to "make all changes that should be made."

He also urged people with information about suspected abuse to call the new hotline: 888-538-8541. People also may call Jean Johnstone, the diocese's victim assistance coordinator for additional support at 814-944-9388.

The grand jury report committed Bishop Barchak for cooperating with the state's investigation and offered recommendations for the diocese to consider in its handling of abuse allegations.

Be a follower of Jesus, not just an admirer



Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher who lived from 1813-55, wrote an essay, "Followers, Not Admirers."

His words struck home March 4 with the brutal killing of four nuns and 12 others at a Catholic retirement home in Yemen. The sisters were members of the Missionaries of Charity founded by Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

The murders bring to seven the total number of Missionaries of Charity who *America* magazine says have died as martyrs on the Arabian Peninsula over the past two decades. The four slain sisters were what Kierkegaard describes as "followers," people who didn't just talk about their faith in Jesus. They acted.

"What then, is the difference between an admirer and a follower?" Kierkegaard asks. "A follower is or strives to be what he admires. An admirer, however, keeps himself personally detached."

Indeed, these women were not detached.

According to a spokeswoman for the Missionaries of Charity, the sisters were scheduled to return home but opted, instead, to stay in Yemen, considered to be the poorest country in the Arab world. They were committed to serving the suffering Jesus incarnate in the people of Aden, Yemen, where both Al Qaeda and the Islamic State are now active.

These nuns could have played it safe, like an admirer does. Admirers say they love something, or appreciate someone, but when there is any inconvenience

or trouble or demand, according to Kierkegaard, they retreat.

Followers, on the other hand, try with all their might to reflect what they admire. In the case of the martyred sisters, they reflected Jesus' love.

"It is well known that Christ consistently used the expression 'follower.' He never asks for admirers, worshippers, or adherents. No, he calls disciples. It is not adherents of a teaching but followers of a life Christ is looking for," Kierkegaard says.

Not all of us are called to be martyrs. Not all of us are asked to put our lives on the line in the most dangerous parts of the world. But those who are living this life every day deserve our respect and, dare I say, admiration.

But as we admire them, we ought to do something that actually reflects their drive, their commitment, their love of Christ.

Lent is the perfect time to sift out the admirer in ourselves. When we look at the cross, do we admire what Jesus did for us, but then recoil when we encounter our own suffering? When we hear Christ's instruction to feed the poor and clothe the naked, do we say, "Oh, that sounds good," but then turn a deaf ear to the needs in our own community?

As followers, we need to walk the same journey that Jesus did, however scary and uncomfortable it may be.

If Jesus' footprints led him to talk to prostitutes and tax collectors and outcasts from foreign lands, then we need to stretch our own boundaries and help anyone who may need God's mercy.

Pope Francis always asks the faithful to build bridges instead of walls. Authentic followers cannot do anything less.

The martyrdom of the four Missionaries of Charity, the pope said, is the result of "the globalization of indifference."

To be indifferent means to only be an admirer.

Mary Solberg is the editor of FaithLife.
Email: msolberg@ErieRCD.org
Call 814-924-1171
Twitter: @ERIERCDsolberg

Be in the 'here-and-now' this Lent



Guest Commentary

Sister Rita Panciera, RSM

Lent is a time of transformation. It is a time to deepen our prayer, to live out our baptismal vocation, to be more like Christ in our daily dealings with family, friends—even our "enemies."

If we follow closely the Gospels of the Sundays of Lent, we are brought into the heart of Jesus' teaching about what it means to be his disciple, and to learn the meaning of his invitation to "love one another as I have loved you."

Praying daily with the Gospel of the coming Sunday is a most fruitful Lenten practice that prepares us to celebrate Sunday liturgy throughout the week.

A good method of praying with the Scriptures is sug-

gested to us by St. Ignatius Loyola in his "Spiritual Exercises." He suggests that we imagine ourselves in the scene, observing Jesus, listening to his words, being aware of his loving compassion to everyone he encounters.

For example, the third Sunday of Lent brings to us the familiar story of the Prodigal Son. In our prayer, we live in the shoes of the wayward son, or of the resentful elder brother, or even of the compassionate father. We walk around with them to find where our lives match theirs. What does it feel like to "go home," even with selfish motives like the wayward son? How often do I experience in my own life the resentment and jealousy of the elder brother? In what ways do I see myself embracing a loved one who has injured me in some way?

Praying with the Scriptures in this way brings the scene to the here-and-now as a present-moment event, not only something that happened centuries ago. The value of such reflection helps us to realize that the stories of the Gospels are our stories. We discover that

they are being lived out in my world, in my own heart and spirit, in my life.

The Lenten journey is a path of transformation into who we really are before God: God's beloved one. The unfolding of the Gospels of each Sunday leads us into the heart of Christ's teaching, his compassion, his acceptance of others as they are, his unconditional love of each person he encountered.

There is no better way of knowing Christ more deeply, following him more closely, and loving him more intimately than being with him in his journey through life, from the moment of his conception in Mary's womb to the moment of his glory as the Risen One.

This is the Lenten journey: to live the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, the Christ. The Lenten journey, then, becomes our life journey.

Sister Rita Panciera, RSM, is the director of the House of Prayer in Erie. House of Prayer offers many programs, including spiritual direction, Scripture lessons and prayer groups.

Easter Rising—100 years later

DUBLIN (CNS)—

Traveling to Mass in Dublin on Easter will be more difficult than usual this year because of a massive security cordon surrounding the state's commemoration of the Easter Rising.

This Easter marks the 100th anniversary of the six-day insurrection by Irish rebels against British rule.

"What happened developed out of a huge ferment that included the Gaelic language revival, the ex-

pression of what's sometimes called Anglo-Irish literature, along with both a strong nationalist party under (John) Redmond and, of course, a secret wing, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, that wanted independence by violence," said Irish Father Brendan Purcell of the University of Notre Dame Australia.

The primate of all Ireland, Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh, Northern Ireland, has urged people to redouble "efforts to find safe spaces where we can hear one another's stories and pain, and bolster friendship, justice and peace."



CNS photo

Brian Kiernan, 11, attends a rally with members of the Finglas 1916 Commemoration group in Dublin Jan. 31.

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MAN TALK

Fathers, sons navigate adolescence



Matt Costa, 38, and his son, Matthew, 11, of St. Jude the Apostle Parish, Erie, have a heartfelt dad-son talk.

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

EDINBORO—It wasn't a man-cave—in the strict sense of the term—but the social center at Edinboro's Our Lady of the Lake Parish became a haven Feb. 20 for many fathers and sons.

Twenty-one dads and 23 boys from throughout the Diocese of Erie attended the second annual Calling All Dads event, taking advantage of six hours to wade through the sometimes difficult

waters of adolescence.

Sponsored by the diocesan Natural Family Planning/Chastity Education Office, the event offered an opportunity to discuss growing into manhood and the beauty of married life, improving father-son communication, and listening to God's call.

"I think we wouldn't normally talk about puberty, so this gave us a chance to discuss it," said Connor Russell, 12, a student at St. George School, Erie. He and his dad, Matt Cum-



Trevor Atkinson of Queen of the World Parish, St. Marys, enjoys playing a game with other boys and dads who gathered at a diocesan-wide father-son event at Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Edinboro.



Matthew Cummings and his son, Connor, of St. George Parish, Erie, at left, and Joe Sharrow and his son, Ryan, of Queen of the World Parish, St. Marys, right, enjoy making family shields during the father-son event Feb. 20.

mings, 37, wanted to take advantage of the opportunity.

"It is a great day to spend together," Cummings said.

About twice as many fathers and sons attended this year's event than last year's, a fact that encourages Barb Burkett, director of the NFP/CE Office.

"I'm very pleased with the turnout this year," Burkett said. "For many years, mothers at the Mother-Daughter Teas have asked me why we didn't do something for their sons."

So Burkett organized a group

of men—including priests, educators and youth ministers—to present a program that included prayer, games, discussion and the sacrament of reconciliation. Aaron Kerr, a professor of philosophy at Gannon University, Erie, gave one of the presentations.

"It meant a lot to me to do this because I think men in our culture never get a true sense of who they are," Kerr said. "To see men be the primary teachers of their sons is refreshing."

Mike Ahrens, a business-

man and NFP teacher, shared his thoughts on the physical and emotional changes brought by puberty.

"It's better to think about it than not think about it," Ahrens said. "The changes are coming, so boys have to think about how they're going to react to these changes in themselves and others."

Joe Sharrow of Queen of the World Parish, St. Marys, attended with his 12-year-old son, Ryan.

"It really opened my eyes to

see what we can do to show them to hold off [on sexual intimacy] until marriage, especially because of all the social media and pop culture today," Sharrow said.

Fourteen-year-old Marcus Esposito of St. Theresa Parish, Shinglehouse, came with his dad, Rich.

"It helps with better communication," Marcus said. "You learn about their experiences and they learn about our experiences. It's easier to connect."

EVENTS

Mother-Daughter Tea scheduled in Brockway and Erie

ERIE—A Mother-Daughter Tea will be held in two locations in the Diocese of Erie this spring:

- March 13, 1:30 to 4 p.m. at St. Tobias Parish Center, Brockway.
- April 17, 1 to 3:30 p.m. at St. Mark Catholic Church, Erie.

The teas provide an atmosphere in which mothers and daughters can discuss such topics as puberty, responsibility, virtue, marital love and the sacredness of human life. The events are sponsored by the NFP/CE Office, the Office of Education and the Diocese of Erie.

To attend the Brockway event, contact Janet VanEerden at 814-781-1042.

To attend the Erie event, send reservations to Kristen Corriore, 8080 Cherry St. Ext., Erie, PA 16509, or call 814-866-2809. Online reservations also can be made at http://www.ErieRCD.org/nfp_tea.htm.

The cost is \$15 per family. The early bird rate (made two weeks before the event) is \$12.



Our Lady of Mercy Parish to hold mission

HARBORCREEK—Our Lady of Mercy Church, 837 Bartlett Road, Harborcreek, will hold a Lenten parish mission March 13-15 from 7 to 8 p.m. each day. Father Francis Pompei, OFM, of Buffalo, N.Y., will lead the mission. For more information, call 814-899-6132.

'Jesus Christ Superstar' to be presented at H. David Bowes Auditorium this weekend

ERIE—Cathedral Prep and Villa Maria Academy will present Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Jesus Christ Superstar" March 17, 18 and 19 at 7 p.m. and March 20 at 2 p.m. at the H. David Bowes Auditorium at Cathedral Prep, W. 10th and Myrtle streets, Erie.

Ticket prices are \$7 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors. Tickets are available at the door. This production features more than 80 students.

Songfest and spring banquet to be held in April

BROCKWAY—The Diocese of Erie chapter of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians invites musicians, clergy and liturgists to its Songfest and spring banquet April 24 at St. Tobias Church in Brockway. Andrea Baxter, a musician from Lansdale, Pa., will be the guest presenter and will facilitate the program, titled "Vocal Fundamentals and Beyond—Children to Adults—Cantors, Choirs."

The program will begin at 3 p.m. and conclude with a dinner at 5 p.m. Doors will open for registration at 2:30 p.m. Reservations are due

by April 11, and should be sent to Neil Himber, 102 6th St., Youngsville, PA 16371. The cost for the Songfest banquet is \$12 for Erie Chapter NPM members and \$15 for guests. A check must accompany the reservations and may be made out to NPM Erie Diocese Chapter. For more information, contact Bernie Connelly at 814-734-5446.

Make plans to see 'Samson' this spring

LAWRENCE PARK—St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Lawrence Park is hosting a bus trip to see "Samson" at the Sight and Sound Theater in Lancaster, Pa. The trip is April 19-20; the cost is \$290 per person, double occupancy. For more details or to book the trip, contact Marion Armstrong at 814-897-7707.

Mercyhurst Prep to present 'The King and I'

ERIE—Mercyhurst Preparatory School in Erie will present "The King and I" this April. The four showings of the musical will be April 21 at 7 p.m., April 22 at 7 p.m., April 23 at 7:30 p.m., and April 24 at 2 p.m. Admission cost is \$7 for adults, \$6 for seniors, and \$5 for students. Tickets are available at the door. Doors open one hour before each show.

10-day pilgrimage planned to Holy Land

CLARION—Father Monty Sayers, pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish, Clarion, will lead a pilgrimage to the Holy Land Nov. 10-19, 2016. The tour will include sites and shrines in Haifa, Tiberias, Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The cost is \$3,579 (roundtrip air/land from Cleveland is \$2,879 plus \$700 government taxes/airline imposed surcharges). A \$400 deposit is due at registration.

For an itinerary, brochure and more information, contact Father Sayers at 814-226-8433, ext. 102, or at montysayers@hotmail.com.

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For an itinerary, brochure and more information, contact Father Monty: Tel: (814) 226-8433 ext. 102 Email: montysayers@hotmail.com
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Sunday, March 13, 2016
Serving 11am-6pm

Dinner includes savory spaghetti and meatballs with our original, famous authentic Italian sauce! Plus tossed salad, bread with butter and sherbet. Soft drinks and wine available for purchase.

Adult: \$8 • Child 6-12: \$4 • Under 6: FREE
Takeouts available: Please bring own containers.

Theme baskets • 50/\$0 raffle: \$1 each • Bake sale
Chief chefs: Lisa Lopez and Linn Lopez Rater
For info, call 814-456-6256

For Art's Sake Gallery & Frames

The Cat's Meow Village • Custom Framing Original Art • Prints • Gifts
We're the official framer for several area schools.

For Heaven's Sake

Religious Gifts (inside For Art's Sake)
Largest selection of scripture T-shirts and DeColores gifts in the area!

Store open Feb. 6-20 (except Sundays)
Tuesday 10am-4:00 pm, Friday 10am-5:30pm,
Saturday 10am-1:00pm; Palanca pick up for Cursillo on Friday morning at 10am, store will be open at 9:30.
7547 W. Ridge Rd. Fairview, PA 16415
(814) 474-3033 (Cash or check only)

PHOTOS from AROUND the DIOCESE

Email news items to: FaithLife@ErieRCD.org



Pope Francis' message of mercy inspires Mercyhurst student



ERIE—Inspired by the Year of Mercy, Mercyhurst Prep senior Elizabeth Kubaney came up with a project that focused on the corporal work of mercy: clothing the naked. She implemented a three-week winter hat and glove drive to benefit children and youth at the Erie Achievement Center. Kubaney collected more than 200 items for distribution. Pictured in the foreground, from left, are: Elizabeth Kubaney and school receptionist/attendance officer Paula Dworakowski. Standing, from left, are: Adam C. Bratton, director of development at the Achievement Center, and Mercyhurst President Ed Curtin.

Punxy teen earns Eagle Scout rank



PUNXSUTAWNEY—Seventeen-year-old Max Neal, son of Kearney and Mary Neal of Northpoint, Pa., and a member of Boy Scout Troop 245 of Punxsutawney, earned his Eagle Scout rank in January. He is pictured presenting a check for more than \$690 to his pastor, Msgr. Joseph Riccardo of St. Cosmas and Damian Church, Punxsutawney. The check represents what was left from a fundraiser Max held to finance his Eagle Scout project. He dug and created new foundations for 25 headstones in the church cemetery.

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Humane Society thanks kids at St. John Paul II Elementary



HERMITAGE—Catie Williams and Alex Kavanaugh, fifth-graders at St. John Paul II Elementary School in Hermitage, accept a plaque of appreciation from Cheryl Giles of the Mercer County Humane Society. Students raised more than \$1,600 for the care of animals at the Humane Society.

Benedictines honor SafeNet executive director



HARBORCREEK—The Benedictine Sisters of Erie presented their 2016 Prophet of Peace Award Feb. 11 to Linda Lyons King, left, executive director of SafeNet. Pictured making the presentation is Sister Anne Wambach, prioress, who credited King for her work at Erie's only domestic abuse agency.

"I am humbled to receive this honor from a community that I truly admire for their works and commitment to peace and justice," King said.

The Benedictines called King "a courageous advocate for victims of abuse."

Four men accepted as candidates to permanent diaconate



ERIE—The Diocese of Erie formally accepted four men as candidates to the permanent diaconate at a Mass Feb. 6 at St. Mark Catholic Center's chapel. Bishop Lawrence Persico and Bishop Emeritus Donald Trautman presided.

Being accepted as a candidate is an important step in the five-year diaconate process.

Standing in the back, from left, are: Bishop Emeritus Donald Trautman, Bishop Lawrence Persico and Deacon Richard Shewman. In foreground, from left, are: Matthew Ochalek of Holy Rosary Parish, Erie; Martin Aubele of St. Michael Parish, Greenville; Glenn Bailey of All Saints Parish, Waterford, and Randy Kondrick of St. Elizabeth Parish, Corry.

Mardi Gras dinner recognizes artists



WARREN—Members of Holy Redeemer Parish in Warren celebrated Mardi Gras with a pot luck dinner and recognition of 10 artists from the parish community. The painters, ranging in age from 8 to 94, presented a table of their works. Pictured in the front is Marisa Palmieri. In back, from left, are: Marian Aranyos, Patty Reitz, Tom and Cindy Nowacki, Destiny Wynn, Judy Golucci, Tom Zdarko and Mark Davis. Frank Fago, age 94, is not pictured.

Erie area parishes combine for reconciliation retreat



ERIE—Students from St. Boniface, St. Luke and Our Lady of Mount Carmel parishes came together for a first reconciliation retreat, held Feb. 20 at St. Luke Church in Erie.

The students are preparing for the sacrament of reconciliation on March 20.

Students help fire victims



RIDGWAY—A recent fire in Kersey claimed the lives of two people and injured others in the Kline/Wall/Cherry family. Although no members of the family were enrolled at St. Leo School in Ridgway, fifth-graders there held a gift card fundraiser, raising more than \$1,800 in gift cards and cash for the victims.

Pictured in the front row are: David Constantine, Mackenzie Kennedy and Anthony Messineo. In the back are: Josephine Lawrie, Italia Cicione, local businesswoman Brandy Buehler, Cole Piccirillo, Jack Benninger, Joseph Tetis and Noah Armagost.

"In our small, close communities, it just seemed to hit everyone extra hard. All of us have been praying for this family," said Mary Detwiler, principal.

POSITION OPENING **DIOCESE OF ERIE**

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie is seeking a campus minister at Penn State Behrend. This is a full-time, exempt position. The campus minister works with the priest-chaplain(s) assigned by the bishop and reports to the diocesan director of Campus Ministry and the Vicar for Education.

Duties include: liturgical planning, faith formation, pastoral care of students, faculty and staff, RCIA and sacramental preparation, programming, administrative responsibilities, and participation in the campus Office of Student Activities.

For a complete position profile, visit <http://www.ErieRCD.org/employment.asp>. Direct letters of application and résumé to: Rev. Nicholas J. Rouch, Vicar for Education, Diocese of Erie, P.O. Box 10397, Erie, PA 16514-0397 or NRouch@ErieRCD.org. For best consideration, submit applications by March 18, 2016.

POLAND HERITAGE VACATION
with Regina Jaworski
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