



'Lord, here I am'
Sister Pia Therese, OCD, makes solemn profession as Carmelite, page 2.

FaithLife

Hope & Power
Tour 2009-10

Year-long tour for teens will make 13 stops throughout diocese, page 3.



www.ErieRCD.org

BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

March 29, 2009

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



St. Francis of Paola St. Isidore of Seville

- April 2 St. Francis of Paola (*friar, hermit, founder of Order of Minims*)
- April 4 St. Isidore of Seville (*archbishop, scholar, patron of the Internet*)
- April 5 Palm Sunday
- April 9 Holy Thursday
- April 10 Good Friday
- April 11 Holy Saturday
- April 12 Easter Sunday

Confirmation schedule

Sacred Heart, St. Marys - Saturday, March 28 at 10:30 a.m.

St. Mary, St. Marys - Saturday, March 28 at 1:30 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Mary and Queen of the World, St. Marys.

St. James, Erie - Thursday, April 2 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. James, Erie, and Mount Calvary, Erie.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Erie - Friday, April 3 at 7:30 p.m.

St. George, Erie - Saturday, April 4 at 10:30 a.m.

Lent

For a printable Lenten calendar, visit the Erie Diocese's official Web site at www.ErieRCD.org. Sponsored by Catholic Charities' Office of Parish Social Ministry/Respect Life, the calendar provides a Scripture verse, reflection and activity suggestion for each day of Lent.

The official Lenten regulations from Bishop Donald Trautman are available on the Web site, as well.



Clergy appointments

Father Jason Glover, appointed campus minister at Edinboro University for a term of two years, in addition to primary assignment at Gannon University. Effective March 10, 2009.

Deacon John Mang, appointed deacon assistant at Our Lady of Peace Parish, Erie, for a term of six years. Effective April 5, 2009. Also appointed, along with wife Tammie, coordinator of Engagement Encounter for the diocese for a term of six years.

Father Mark Mastrian, appointed pastor of St. Timothy Parish, Curwensville, and St. Bonaventure Parish, Grampan, for a term of six years. Effective May 22, 2009.

Father Nicholas Rouch, appointed vicar for education for the Diocese of Erie on a full-time status. Effective March 12, 2009.

Destruction of embryonic stem cells immoral, unnecessary

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

On March 9, President Barack Obama signed an executive order overturning limits on federal funding of embryonic stem cell research. The opposition of the Catholic Church to this executive order has been widely misunderstood and misrepresented, and so I would like to present to the people of the Diocese of Erie a brief rationale for the position of the United States' bishops.

Let me be very clear about the fact that the Catholic Church strongly supports stem cell research when those stem cells are obtained through morally acceptable methods. Consequently, the Catholic Church strongly supports the use of adult stem cells and umbilical-cord-blood stem cells in research. These have been shown to offer tremendous promise toward producing cures for spinal cord injuries, corneal damage, heart disease, multiple sclerosis, sickle cell anemia and other diseases. There is no moral objection to this kind of research and therapy when it is conducted with appropriate informed consent, since it involves no harm to human beings at any stage of development. Everyone can and should support it.

On the other hand, the Catholic Church strongly opposes embryonic stem cell research because it encourages the destruction of innocent human life in its embryonic stage, treating vulnerable human beings as mere products to be harvested. Furthermore, recent scientific developments in adult stem cell research have rendered the scientific need to use embryonic stem cells increasingly obsolete. All human life is sacred, and it can never be an acceptable moral principle to treat human life as a commercial product to be harvested for research.

In short, the Catholic Church opposes using what we believe to be immoral scientific research which destroys human embryos, research which is increasingly becoming unnecessary in the first place, since results just as promising are likely to be obtained through morally acceptable means using stem cells obtained from adults and from umbilical cord blood. Tax monies should be used to promote ethically sound research that all persons can support.

Donald W. Trautman
Most Rev. Donald W. Trautman
Bishop of Erie

Villa Maria wins state championship, Kennedy Catholic falls in title game

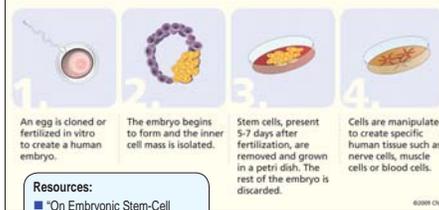


The Villa Maria Academy Lady Vectors beat three-time defending champion York Catholic High School 56-51 in the PIAA Class AA state championship girls' basketball game March 20 at Bryce Jordan Center in State College. It is the first state title in Villa Maria's history. The Lady Vectors finished the season with a record of 27-3.

Since the beginning of the year, Villa Maria was ranked No. 1 in the state. The Kennedy Catholic High School Golden Eagles fell to Girard College 80-70 in the PIAA Class A state championship boys' basketball game March 20, also held in State College. Kennedy Catholic finished the season 26-3.

Isolating Embryonic Stem Cells

Scientists believe stem cells could repair diseased or injured tissues. The Catholic Church opposes stem-cell research that involves the destruction of human embryos.



Resources:

- "On Embryonic Stem-Cell Research: A Statement of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops" - a seven-page policy document from the U.S. bishops

On the medical advances being made with adult stem cells:

- "Stem-Cell Research: Finding Cures We Can All Live With" - a 16-minute DVD
- "Stem Cells and Hope for Patients," a parish bulletin insert part of the bishops' annual Respect Life observance

Available on the U.S. bishops' Web site at www.usccb.org/prolife/index.shtml.

Cathedral to host Chrim Mass



Chrim oil is used in baptismal anointing, confirmation, priestly and episcopal ordinations and during the dedication of churches. The other holy oils are used in the anointing of the sick and for catechumens.

ERIE — The Chrim Mass, one of the most solemn and significant liturgies on the church calendar, will be celebrated on Monday, April 6 at 5 p.m. at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie.

During the annual Mass, the local bishop will bless the sacred oils used for celebrating the sacraments throughout the diocese for the entire year. They are then brought to each parish.

Also, each priest in the diocese is invited to attend to renew his commitment of service and to receive the support and prayers of the people.

The public is also invited to attend. During the Mass, Bishop

Donald Trautman will bless the oil of catechumens (used for adult catechumens and infants) and the oil of the sick (used in anointing the sick) and consecrate the oil of chrim (used for the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the ordination of priests and for the consecration of altars).

Many of the priests of the diocese will gather to celebrate Mass with the bishop. The emphasis at this Mass is on the sacramental ministry of the priesthood and of the communion of the priests with their bishop in the same priesthood and ministry of Christ. (*Paschales Solemnitates*, 35).

In letter, pope responds to criticisms over Lefebvrite decision

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

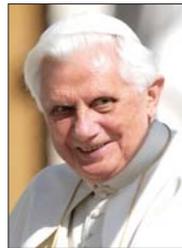
VATICAN CITY — In a letter to the world's bishops, Pope Benedict XVI expressed regret that his lifting of the excommunications of four traditionalist bishops gave rise to a storm of protests and bitterness.

The pope said the controversy over Bishop Richard Williamson's statements denying the extent of the Holocaust was "an unforeseen mishap" — one that could have been anticipated, however, by paying more attention to information easily available on the Internet.

The pope said he was particularly saddened at the reaction of some Catholics who seemed willing to believe he was changing direction on Catholic-Jewish relations and were ready to "attack me with open hostility." He thanked "our Jewish friends" who helped clarify the matter and restore a sense of trust.

The Vatican published the 2,500-word letter in six languages March 12. The Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, called it a "unique, exceptional document" for its direct and personal style, and said it showed the pope had listened carefully to what people were saying.

The pope said he was taking the unusual step of writing to the bishops



In a letter to the world's bishops, Pope Benedict XVI said he felt deep pain over the "hostility and hate" some Catholics directed at him after he allowed four traditionalist bishops, including a Holocaust denier, back into the church.

because the episode had generated "a discussion more heated than any we have seen for a long time," both inside and outside the church.

He said his overture to Bishop Williamson and the other three bishops of the Society of St. Pius X was designed to close a wound and bring unity to the church, by lifting excommunications incurred in 1988 and opening

the way to dialogue with the society.

But when Bishop Williamson's comments about the Holocaust were circulated, "it suddenly appeared as something completely different: as the repudiation of reconciliation between Christians and Jews, and thus as the reversal of what the (Second Vatican) Council had laid down in this regard to guide the church's path," he said.

As a result, he said, "an avalanche of protests was unleashed, whose bitterness laid bare wounds deeper than those of the present moment."

"I was saddened by the fact that even Catholics, who, after all, might have had a better knowledge of the situation, thought they had to attack me with open hostility," he said. "Precisely for this reason I thank all the more our Jewish friends, who quickly helped to clear up the misunderstanding and to restore the atmosphere of friendship and trust," he said.

The pope acknowledged something critics have pointed out: that a simple Internet search would have revealed Bishop Williamson's views on the Holocaust and helped the Vatican anticipate the reaction.

"I have been told that consulting the information available on the Internet would have made it possible to perceive the problem early on. I have learned the lesson that in the future in the Holy See we will have to

pay greater attention to that source of news," he said.

Pope Benedict said he deeply regretted another mistake: that the lifting of the excommunications was not adequately explained and gave rise to misinterpretations about the traditionalist society's status in the church. He emphasized that the removal of the excommunications was a disciplinary measure that affects individuals. But the fact that the Society of St. Pius X has no standing in the church depends on doctrinal reasons, he said.

He underlined what Vatican officials have said in recent weeks, that for the Society of St. Pius X full communion implies acceptance of Vatican II. The pope also asked whether the church could be totally indifferent about a traditionalist society that has 491 priests, 215 seminarians, six seminaries, 88 schools, two university-level institutes, 117 religious brothers, 164 religious sisters and thousands of lay faithful.

"Should we casually let them drift farther from the church?" he said.

Editor's note:
The complete text of Pope Benedict XVI's letter is available at www.vatican.va.





IN THE U.S.

■ **President Barack Obama met for an hour March 17 with Chicago Cardinal Francis George, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the White House and the USCCB announced.** Brief statements issued by the White House and the USCCB said little more than that the two presidents had met for a private afternoon session in the Oval Office. "The president and Cardinal George discussed a wide range of issues, including important opportunities for the government and the Catholic Church to continue their long-standing partnership to tackle some of the nation's most pressing challenges," said the White House statement. The statement from the USCCB said: "Cardinal George and President Obama discussed the Catholic Church in the United States and its relation to the new administration. At the conclusion, Cardinal George expressed his gratitude for the meeting and his hopes that it will foster fruitful dialogue for the sake of the common good," the USCCB statement added.



President Barack Obama



Cardinal Francis George

■ **The possibility the Catholic Church will allow married priests shouldn't be dismissed.** New York Cardinal Edward Egan said March 10 during a radio interview. "It's a perfectly legitimate discussion," he said during a talk radio program in Albany hosted by Fred Dicker. "I think it has to be looked at." Cardinal Egan was in the state capital as part of a legislative lobbying visit. He also discussed various New York legislative issues as well as the broader picture of the church's public policy on topics such as same-sex marriage and access to abortion for minors. When asked about priestly celibacy by Dicker, Cardi-

nal Egan said he thought the subject would be coming up for discussion by the church's hierarchy. "I'm not so sure it wouldn't be a good idea to decide (whether priests can be married) on the basis of geography and culture, not to make an across-the-board determination," the cardinal said. He noted that priests in the Eastern Catholic churches are allowed to be married with "no problem at all."

■ **Even if all of the states in the U.S. legalize same-sex marriage, legal experts and religious leaders at a March 13 forum agreed religions will not be forced to perform gay wedding ceremonies.** One of the biggest misconceptions in the same-sex marriage debate is that religious clergy may be legally required to perform wedding rites for gay couples in a church sanctuary, said a group of legal scholars, religious leaders and advocates and opponents of gay marriage at a discussion on the topic at the Brookings Institution, a Washington think tank. The U.S. Constitution's First Amendment protecting the free exercise of religion makes it unlikely that a church would be coerced by law into performing same-sex wedding rites in its sanctuary, said David Blankenhorn, president of the Institute for American Values.

AROUND THE WORLD

■ **Arriving in Africa, Pope Benedict XVI said the church's message of hope and reconciliation was sorely needed** by a continent suffering disproportionately from poverty, conflict and disease. At a welcoming ceremony March 17 in Yaounde, the pope said he was making his first visit to Africa to respond to the many men and women who "long to hear a word of hope and comfort." In Africa's fight against injustice, he said, the church is their natural ally. "In the face of suffering or violence, poverty or hunger, corruption or abuse of power, a Christian can never remain silent," the pope



said. The pope said he came to Africa as a pastor, not a politician, to a continent where the saving message of the Gospel needs to be "proclaimed loud and clear." The encounter with Christianity, he said, can transform situations of hardship or injustice.

■ **Government officials in Germany, France, Spain, the Netherlands and Belgium publicly criticized Pope Benedict XVI** after newspapers reported that he said the use of condoms could increase the spread of AIDS. On his March 17 flight to Cameroon, Pope Benedict had told reporters, "One cannot overcome the problem with the distribution of condoms. On the contrary, they increase the problem." The pope said the best response to AIDS was educating people in morally responsible sexual behavior and caring for those who are sick. Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, told reporters March 18 that the pope's comments on the plane were in line with the church's basic position on AIDS, which has never had "excessive or absolute trust in condom distribution" as a way to stop the spread of the disease. The church's approach is based largely on education toward sexual responsibility, the spokesman said, and overemphasis on condoms "does not allow for an adequate concentration of attention on this formation and sense of responsibility."

PEOPLE OF FAITH

■ **Sulpician Father Joseph Martin, a noted authority and lecturer on alcoholism** who co-founded Father Martin's Ashley addiction treatment center in Havre de Grace, died March 9. The priest, who was 84 and suffered from heart disease, died at his home in Havre de Grace. Best known for his lectures on alcoholism as a disease, delivered to alcoholics and their families with a charismatic style and sense of humor, Father Martin was credited with saving the lives of thousands of alcoholics and addicts.



Father Joseph Martin

By the Way...



Jason Koshinski

Several Italian dioceses have suggested that their youth fast from texting, at least on Fridays, during Lent. Studies have shown that only in Great Britain and Spain do people send more text messages per capita than in Italy. In February a study of teenagers in Italy's Lombard region concluded that every Italian ages 13-16 sends an average of 47 text messages a day.

Father John Detisch, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Erie, liked the idea so much that he's asked his youth groups to participate. Beginning March 6, the youth groups at Sacred Heart, Blessed Sacrament and St. Andrew parishes in Erie began fasting from text messaging on Fridays. They'll also give their fingers a rest during Holy Week, from Palm Sunday until Easter Sunday.

Jesse Spanogle, director of youth ministry for the three groups, reports that it hasn't been easy, for himself included, as well. "But I think this will help us connect in some real life relationships during the season of Lent," Spanogle said. He noted that not all of the texts are idle chatter. Many of the kids send prayer requests throughout the day. Those are now being sent on Thursdays and Saturdays, unless the request is particularly important. Then they call or e-mail.

Immaculate Conception School in Clarion also has an interesting project going on for Lent. Tina Lowrie, one of the school's secretaries, reports that one of I.C.'s visible observances of Lent taking place throughout the middle school is "tied" to the hallway bulletin board, "We Witness For Jesus." When a student observes a classmate living the Gospel, he or she gives that person a purple ribbon to wear. The idea is not to collect the ribbons but pass them on to others as good deeds are being done throughout the day.

Bishop Edward Kmiec of Buffalo made a pastoral visit to St. Mark Seminary in Erie on St. Patrick's Day, March 17. Bishop Kmiec celebrated Mass for the seminarians, three of whom are from the Diocese of Buffalo.

Kyle Randall, a senior and member of the boys' basketball team at Kennedy Catholic High School in Hermitage, broke the school's all-time scoring record in late January. He topped John Reimold's (1996-2000) mark of 1,621 career points. In February, Randall also broke the school's single-game scoring record by dropping 48 points against Youngstown Cardinal Mooney. Ignatius Press is set to publish "Be a Man" by Father Larry Richards, pastor of St. Joseph Parish of Life Community in Erie. The book will be released on Sept. 8, 2009, the birthday of the Blessed Mother. Father Larry, an in-demand speaker for parish missions and conferences, gives a number of men's retreats throughout the country each year.

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

Cleveland Diocese to have 52 fewer parishes within 15 months

By Dennis Sadowski
Catholic News Service

CLEVELAND — Come June 30, 2010, there will be 52 fewer parishes in the Cleveland Diocese.

Under a program announced March 15 following a two-year planning process, Bishop Richard Lennon said 29 parishes will close and 41 others will merge to form 18 new parishes during the next 15 months.



The realignment will leave the country's 17th largest diocese with 172 parishes serving 753,000 Catholics across eight counties in northeastern Ohio.

All of the closings and mergers affect parishes within blocks of each other. Meeting with reporters, Bishop Lennon called the realignment "a very difficult but necessary step" to carry out the church's mission in northeast Ohio.

He cited the movement of Catholics from urban to outlying suburban and rural areas of the diocese, the declining number of priests in the diocese and falling parish finances as reasons for the realignment. He said population shifts have resulted in two-thirds of Catholics in the diocese

being served by one-third of the parishes.

Bishop Lennon said 42 percent of the diocese's 224 parishes are operating under financial deficits. He also said the diocese has 257 priests in active ministry today compared with 565 in 1970.

"Simply put, the church is being strained in its resources," he said. "We had to face reality and do something."

The population of the city of Cleveland has declined from more than 914,000 in 1950 to an estimated 405,000 according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates. Following a similar trend, the city's Catholic population has fallen from nearly 235,000 in 88 parishes to just under 90,000 in 65 parishes during the same period, diocesan records show. Meanwhile, the Catholic population in Cuyahoga County, where Cleveland is located, has more than tripled from 102,000 to 356,000 since 1950.

"As a result, some of these expanding areas have been underserved by the church, while areas that were previously densely populated by Catholics are no longer vibrant," Bishop Lennon said.

"The fact is to be honest, the church is changing," he explained. "At the same time this really is the occasion for joy because, God willing, it will allow us to build a stronger church to make better use of our resources to achieve vibrancy for every parish throughout our diocese."

The realignment will allow the Catholic Church to "continue to be present where we're really needed," he added.

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'Lord, you have called me, here I am'

Sister Pia Therese, OCD, makes solemn profession as Carmelite

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

ERIE — Sister Pia Therese of Mary the Mother of God, OCD, made her solemn profession and veiling March 21 at Carmel of the Holy Family Monastery in Erie.

Sister Pia Therese is the newest member of the Carmelite Sisters, a cloistered contemplative community of sisters who reside at the monastery, located at 510 E. Gore Road in Erie. The charism, or spiritual focus, of the Carmelite Order is contemplative prayer. The order also has a strong Marian devotion.

The monastery chapel was filled with family, friends and well wishers. Approximately 20 family members and friends from Sister Pia's former parish, St. Peter Chanel in Hawaiian Gardens, Calif., attended the Mass and ceremony. Members of the parish choir, Mary's Voice, provided music for the liturgy. Sister Pia is also a former choir member.

"Lord, you have called me, here I am,"



Sister Pia Therese of Mary the Mother of God, OCD, greets visitors through the grille at Carmel of the Holy Family Monastery in Erie after her solemn profession and veiling March 21. The grille is designed to separate the outside world from the contemplative prayer life of the cloistered community.

Sister Pia Therese said during her religious profession. Bishop Donald Trautman presided at the

Eucharistic liturgy for the solemn profession and veiling.

"What a great honor and privilege to be chosen and called by Christ," Bishop Trautman said in his homily. "What a glorious blessing to be singled out and selected for a religious vocation."

"Sister Pia, you are greatly loved by Christ. Our secular world does not understand why a woman in the prime of her life would leave the allurements of the world and enter a cloistered monastery. The world does not understand why a woman would want to live the rest of her life behind walls. Our world cannot comprehend why a woman would rise in the night to pray for those who do not pray. Our world cannot fathom why a woman would joyfully do penance for those who sin and wish to do no penance. Our world cannot grasp why a woman would opt for humble work in prayer and solitude and silence."

"What would prompt a person to embrace poverty, chastity and obedience? There is only one answer: the love of God. When you are in love, you can do anything. Love is the essence of cloistered religious life."

During the bestowal of the veil, Bishop Trautman blessed it with holy water before Mother Emmanuel Smith, superior of the community, placed it on the head of Sister Pia.

Percentage of Catholics down but church still largest U.S. denomination

By Chaz Muth
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — A new survey shows the percentage of U.S. residents who identify themselves as Catholics has declined, but Catholicism remains the largest denomination in the country.

Trinity College of Hartford, Conn., released its third American Religious Identification Survey March 9. The survey also found that the U.S. Catholic population has shifted away from the Northeast toward the Southwest, the percentage of Latinos in the U.S. Catholic Church has grown and the number of U.S. residents claiming no religion has increased dramatically.

Most of the Christian population growth came from people who identify themselves only as Christian, evangelical/born again or non-denominational Christian.

Stephen Schneck, director of the Life Cycle Institute at The Catholic University of America in Washington, told Catholic News Service March 10 the biggest surprise in the survey for him was the

surge in the number of Americans who don't identify with any religion.

"As a trend, I think it's accelerating at a faster rate than any of us expected," Schneck said. "To a certain extent, it's a trend we can expect to continue to see happen. The erosion most noticeable is with young people."

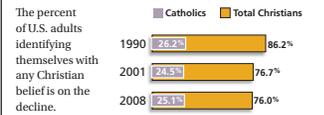
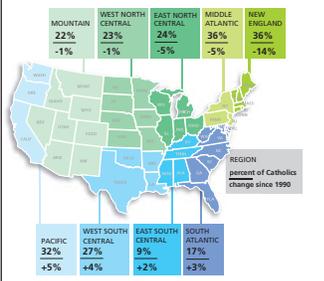
The percentage of Americans who claimed no religion has jumped from 8.2 in 1990, the year of the first American Religious Identification Survey, to 14.2 in 2001, the year of the second one, to 15 in 2008, according to the third survey, which was conducted by Trinity's Program on Public Values between February and November 2008. Surveyors questioned 54,461 U.S. adults in the 48 contiguous states by telephone.

The research methodology was identical to that used for the 1990 and 2001 surveys and questioned the adults in either English or Spanish. The margin of error was less than 0.5 percent.

The percentage of Christians in the U.S. dropped from 86.2 in 1990 to 76.7 in 2001 to 76 in 2008.

Catholic Identification by Region

The percent of U.S. adults identifying themselves as Catholic has decreased in five regions since 1990 and increased in four.



Results based on 220,000 interviews recorded over three surveys. Source: Trinity College (American Religious Identification Survey) ©2009 CNS

Briefly

Catholic Services Appeal parish projects

The 2009 Catholic Services Appeal, "Of One Heart and Mind," supports the Erie Diocese in helping to provide health and social services, education, diocesan administration and pastoral services throughout the 13 counties of northwestern Pennsylvania. While a portion of the financial goal for the appeal benefits the ministries of the diocese, parishes also benefit from the appeal. Each parish is assessed a financial goal. Once a parish reaches its assessment, every dollar pledged over that amount stays within the parish for local projects. Here's a look at what some parishes are doing with their CSA overage funds:



DuBois Deanery

- Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sykesville - Parking lot repair*
- Immaculate Conception, Brookville - Pave parking lot
- St. Anthony, Walton - New church carpet
- St. Bernard, Falls Creek - Boiler for church and repair social hall roof*
- St. Catherine, DuBois - General property maintenance*
- Ss. Cosmas and Damian, Punxsutawney - Ongoing church renovation*
- St. Joseph, DuBois - Church boiler*
- St. Mary, Reynoldsville - No project provided*
- St. Michael the Archangel, DuBois - Permanent stage for annual festival, elevator and handicapped-accessible restroom*
- St. Tobias, Brockway - Renovate religious education center*
- St. Adrian, Delancey - New church boiler
- St. Dominic Mission, Sigel - Pave church driveway
- St. Joseph, Anita - General parish needs

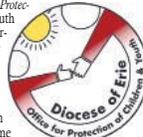
*Parish conducted capital campaign in 2008

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

The Erie Diocese is committed to continuing its work to educate adults, children and youth about the issue of child abuse and to present strategies to help adults create and maintain safe environments and inform children and youth about best practices to keep themselves safe.

The diocese requires that all adults who regularly minister to children and youth have the required background checks done and complete a diocesan in-service about child abuse and the *Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children*. All children and youth in parishes and schools are in-serviced yearly using age-appropriate programs regarding various issues of abuse prevention and Internet safety. Parents receive educational information each year from their parish religious education program or Catholic school about these same issues. More information about all of these efforts can be found at the diocesan Child Protection Web site, www.eriecd.org/protectyouth.htm.

For each week in April and monthly thereafter, the diocesan Office for the Protection of Children and Youth will provide short, informative bulletin announcements in an effort to increase awareness of child protection issues and safe environment strategies to combat the pervasive problem of child abuse. The office will also provide a parent handout for schools and religious education programs and create a specific set of links on its Web site to provide extra information about national efforts to promote Child Abuse Prevention Month.



Women's retreat

The Word of Life Catholic Charismatic Renewal Center is sponsoring a women's retreat on April 3-5 at Family First Sports Park Conference Center in Erie. "A Time of Grace: Listen, God Often Whispers" will be presented by Renee Marazon, author and consultant. Cost for the retreat is \$105, with a \$25 non-refundable deposit due at time of registration. For further information, call 814.824.1286 or register online at www.wordoflifecrc.org.

Gannon University spring open house April 5

ERIE — Prospective students can meet with faculty and administrators, tour the campus and even qualify for scholarship money when Gannon University hosts its annual spring open house on Sunday, April 5. A full day of events and activities is planned for visiting students and their families. For a complete list of activities, visit www.gannon.edu.



Scott Hahn in Grove City April 19

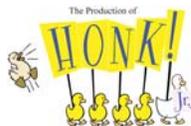
GROVE CITY — Dr. Scott Hahn, noted Scripture scholar, author, educator and director of the St. Paul's Center of Biblical Theology, will speak at two sites on Sunday, April 19 in Grove City. Dr. Hahn will speak at Beloved Disciple Parish at 4 p.m. on "Lord Have Mercy." There will be a dinner with Dr. Hahn at 5:30 p.m. in Grove City College's Old MAP Dining Room. (\$55 per person, includes ticket to evening talk). Later he will speak in Crawford Auditorium at Grove City College at 7:30 p.m. (\$5 per person) on "The Gospel According to Paul." For more information, visit www.beloved-disciple.com or call 724.748.6700.



Scott Hahn

OLP Playhouse presents Honk Jr.

ERIE — The Our Lady of Peace Playhouse presents the production Honk Jr. with music by George Stiles and the book and lyrics by Anthony Drewe. April 17-18 at 7:30 p.m. and April 19 at 2 p.m. All performances will take place at Our Lady of Peace School, 2401 W. 38th St. in Erie.



Hope & Power Tour 2009-10

Year-long tour for teens will make 13 stops throughout diocese

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

The Erie Diocese's Youth and Young Adult Ministry is bringing Hope & Power to a parish near you.

The ministry will sponsor a year-long tour for teens throughout the diocese, with monthly stops hitting all areas.

The first stop on the Hope & Power Tour is Friday, April 3 at Beloved Disciple Parish in Grove City from 7-10 p.m.

"In talking to a number of youth ministers, we've come to the conclusion that it's time to give the youth rallies, as they

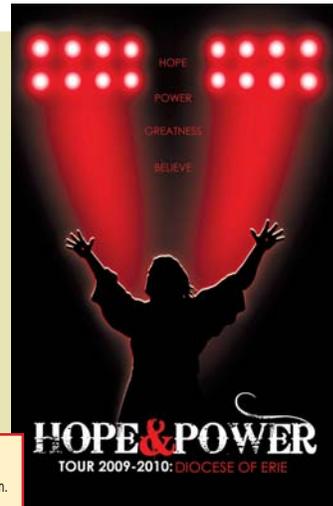
are, a little break and try something new," said Father Steve Schreiber, the diocese's director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry. Instead of larger rallies, Father Schreiber said he envisions having regional retreats and gatherings.

The idea of having events for teens in different areas turned into the Hope & Power Tour. Tour stops will have a focus on conversion, prayer, penance and the Eucharist, he said.

"Instead of big rallies, we're envisioning events like this and going out to different places throughout the year," Father Schreiber said.

Hope & Power Tour 2009-10

| | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| April 3, 2009 | Beloved Disciple, Grove City | 7-10 p.m. |
| May 13, 2009 | St. Titus, Titusville | 6-9 p.m. |
| June 6, 2009 | St. Raphael, Eldred | 7-10 p.m. |
| July 29, 2009 | St. Joseph Monastery, St. Marys | 7-10 p.m. |
| Aug. 15, 2009 | Good Shepherd, West Middlesex | 7-10 p.m. |
| Sept. 20, 2009 | St. Hippolyte, Frenchtown | 5-8 p.m. |
| Oct. 17, 2009 | Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Erie | 7-10 p.m. |
| Nov. 7, 2009 | St. Francis of Assisi, Clearfield | 7-10 p.m. |
| Dec. 4, 2009 | Blessed Sacrament, Erie | 5-8 p.m. |
| Jan. 10, 2010 | St. John the Baptist, Erie | 6-9 p.m. |
| Feb. 21, 2010 | St. Boniface, Erie | 6-9 p.m. |
| March 3, 2010 | St. Lawrence, Albion | 6-9 p.m. |
| April 11, 2010 | St. Tobias, Brockway | 12-3 p.m. |



Evenings will include exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, talks on conversion, confession and examination of conscience, skits performed by local youth, time for confession, praise and worship, Mass and fellowship.

The name and Scripture reference comes from Ephesians 1: "May (God) give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation ... Having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you ... And what is the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe..."

Lenten activities

Study on Passion narratives

Father Tom Aleksa, senior associate at St. Luke Parish, 421 E. 38th Street in Erie, will present "Death of the Messiah," a study session on the Passion narratives of Holy Week on Tuesday, March 31 from 7-9 p.m. in the St. Luke Mother's Chapel. Father Aleksa will cover some basics on the reading and interpretation of the Scriptures and a comparison of the passion stories in the four Gospels. Open to all ages; participants should bring a Bible.

Living Stations at Gannon

On Tuesday, March 31 from 8-9 p.m., Gannon University's Catholic faith-sharing group, Ichthi, will sponsor the Living Stations of the Cross. The stations will be written, directed and performed by Gannon students and set to contemporary Christian and popular music. Everyone is invited to attend the event at the Mary, Seat of Wisdom Chapel, located on Peach Street between 5th and 6th streets in Erie.

Passion talk

Father Larry Richards, pastor of St. Joseph Parish/Bread

of Life Community in Erie, will present his annual Passion talk on Wednesday, April 8 at 7 p.m. in the church, located at 147 W. 24th St. Eight confessors have committed to hearing confessions following the talk.

Good Friday Pilgrimage for Peace

The 29th annual Good Friday Pilgrimage for Peace, a Lenten tradition of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, will take place on Friday, April 10.

The pilgrimage will begin at St. Peter Cathedral, West 10th and Sassafras streets, Erie, at 10:30 a.m. The procession from station to station is made in silence. Pilgrims will proceed to each station with different themes including hunger, health care, war and violence, immigrants and others.

"As we walk in silence we will be focused on the injustices in the world today, knowing that an injustice to one is an injustice to all," said Sister Marlene Bertke, OSB.

All are invited to the traditional Lenten prayer of Tenebrae in the chapel at Mount St. Benedict Monastery at 9 a.m. Buses will

leave the Mount at 10 a.m. to go to the first station. Cars will accompany the pilgrimage for those who cannot walk the entire route.

For more information, contact Sister Marlene at 814.453.4724 or e-mail benedictine@igc.org.

'Soup, Salad and Soul'

Experience "Soup, Salad and Soul" throughout Lent at St. George, 5145 Peach St. in Erie. Soup, salad, bread and refreshments will be served each Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m. in the school cafeteria, after which will be the opportunity to listen to guest presenters.

March 31: Marriage with Ann Badach, director of the diocesan

Family Life Office.

For more details, visit http://home.catholicweb.com/st_george_church/

Journey with St. Paul

Journey with St. Paul through Lent. A Wednesday evening program at St. Andrew, 1116 W. Seventh St. in Erie, includes Mass at 5:30 p.m., a simple Lenten supper of soup and salad followed by a presentation.

April 1: St. Paul and disciple-skipper (1, 2 Timothy, Titus) with Father Mike DeMartinis.
April 8: St. Paul and grace (Romans, Galatians) with Father DeMartinis.

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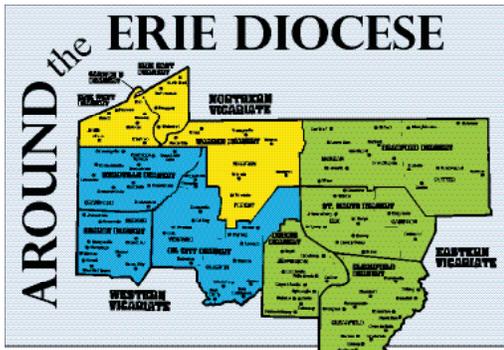
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DuBois Central Catholic sponsors Pink Night for breast cancer awareness

DUBOIS — The Lady Cardinal basketball team at DuBois Central Catholic High School held a Pink Night Feb. 4 for breast cancer awareness. Through several fundraising events, including the sale of raffle tickets, Recognition Hearts where donors could recognize a cancer survivor, pink ribbons showing support for breast cancer research and student-pledged funds from a jeans dress-down day, the team raised \$1,200 for DuBois Regional Medical Center Breast Cancer Services. The school's athletic department also agreed to donate half of the game's admission proceeds to DRMC.



For their JV and varsity games against Brookville, the girls wore pink warm-up shirts that read "Nothing But a Cure" and ribbons. Brookville players also wore pink ribbons on their shirts prior to the game. Cancer survivors were recognized and honored prior to the

games. Sandy Stom of DRMC Breast Care Services spoke with the girls the night of the game and thanked them for their efforts. Stom invited the girls to visit the Breast Care Services section of DRMC to learn more about what they do

there and see how the money they helped raise will be used. Pictured from left to right at the end of the row are team captains Kim Cadori, Megan Thomas and Liz Heasley, all seniors and varsity players at DCC who coordinated the Pink Night event.

St. Julia holds 11th annual sister parish fiesta

ERIE — "Two Families—One Heart" was the theme of the 11th annual fiesta held at St. Julia Parish in Erie on Feb. 22 in support of its sister parish of Santa Ines in Dzitas, Yucatan, Mexico. Festivities included a tuercen dinner, a Mexican auction and pinatas made by the parish youth group.

On each table was a large puzzle piece, which had the name of a person or village of the sister parish. Members of each table signed the puzzle piece, had their photo taken with it and then placed it on a large card for Father Jose, pastor of Santa Ines. When assembled, the pieces formed the shape of a heart. The card read, "Together we are one heart." Each table was then asked to keep that particular person or village in their prayers throughout the year.

Through donations and the auction, approximately \$300 was collected for the soup kitchen at Santa Ines. Admission to the fiesta required the donation of children's T-shirts. Nearly 100 were collected for the parish's friends in Mexico.



OLMC student to participate in National Geographic Bee

ERIE — Emma Weisenfluh, an 8th grader at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in Erie, has qualified to represent her school and participate at the state level of the National Geographic Bee. The state bee will be held on Friday, April 3 at Penn State University. Weisenfluh was among 10 students from grades 4-8 who participated at the school level bee on Jan. 13. As the winner of that level, she took a written test that was submitted to the National Geographic Bee headquarters for scoring. The National Geographic Bee is sponsored by Google and Plum Creek Timber Co.



Notre Dame boys, girls win varsity basketball championships

HERMITAGE — The Notre Dame Vikings beat the Blessed Sacrament Bulldogs 37-30 on March 8 at Mercyhurst Prep High School for the diocesan boys varsity basketball championship.

Pictured, left to right, from Notre Dame are: (front row) Chaz Knott, Blaise Hudson, Alex Talalico, Drew Grabigel, Anthony Cannone, Alonzo Santiago, hall boy Cameron Pica, (standing) Coach Pat Mastrian, Coach Mike Puleo, Patrick Durisko, Calvin Pryts, Vinnie Mastrian, Matt Votino, Deven McLaughlin, Sam Crow and Coach Bob Votino.

Notre Dame also beat Villa Maria Elementary 20-19 on March 15 at Venango Catholic High School in Oil City for the diocesan girls varsity basketball championship.

Pictured, left to right, from Notre Dame are: (front) Nikki Arbanas, Rachel Burns, Shannon Gramley, Brie Dickson, Kelsey George, Stacy Godano, Holly Grober, (middle) Jensen Kirila, (standing) Coach Fred George, Coach Bonnie Dickson, Coach Dave Grober and team mom Jody Arbanas.



St. Francis School helps Read Across America

CLEARFIELD — Pre-school through 8th grade students at St. Francis School in Clearfield joined more than 45 million readers in the company of a good book on March 2 for Read Across America Day. Sponsored by the National Education Association, Read Across America focuses on motivating children to read in addition to helping them master basic skills.

Students were paired with a reading partner and shared their favorite books. The event began with short skits performed by the 8th graders, with Dr. Seuss' *The Four Books and Hop on Pop* acted out for the entire school. The afternoon concluded with cupcakes from *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish* and a free book giveaway for students.



Reading partners at St. Francis School in Clearfield celebrated books on March 2.

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June 15-19, 2009

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