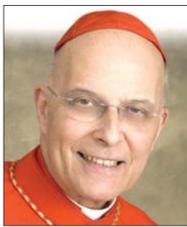


Catholic colleges

Cardinal says universities must teach church's intellectual tradition, page 2.



FaithLife

'Love for the World to See'
400 students attend middle school youth rally, page 3.



www.ErieRCD.org

BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

April 20, 2008

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



St. George

St. Catherine of Siena

April 21	St. Anselm
April 23	St. George, St. Adalbert
April 24	St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen
April 25	St. Mark
April 28	St. Peter Chanel, St. Louis Mary de Montfort
April 29	St. Catherine of Siena
April 30	St. Pius V
May 1	Ascension of the Lord, (Holy Day of Obligation), National Day of Prayer
May 2	St. Athanasius
May 3	St. Philip and St. James

Confirmation schedule

St. Francis, Bradford – Sun., April 20 at 1 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Bernard, Bradford; Our Mother of Perpetual Help, Lewis Run; and St. Francis, Bradford.

St. Boniface, Erie – Tues., April 22 at 7 p.m.

Holy Cross, Fairview – Wed., April 23 at 7 p.m.

Blessed Sacrament, Erie – Thurs., April 24 at 7 p.m.

St. Stephen, Oil City – Fri., April 25 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Oil City; Our Lady Help of Christians, Oil City; St. Joseph, Oil City; St. Stephen, Oil City; St. Venantius, Rouseville; St. Titus, Titusville; and St. Walburga, Titusville.

St. Michael, Greenville – Sat., April 26 at 5:30 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Michael, Greenville, and St. Margaret, Jamestown.

Notre Dame, Hermitage – Thurs., May 1 at 7 p.m.

St. Agatha, Meadville – Fri., May 2 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Agatha, Meadville; St. Brigid, Meadville; St. Mary of Grace, Meadville; and St. Bernadette, Saegertown.

St. Peter Cathedral, Erie – Sat., May 3 at 5:15 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Peter Cathedral, Erie, and Immaculate Conception, Mercer.

Beloved Disciple, Grove City – Sun., May 4 at 10:30 a.m.

St. Anthony, Sharon – Sun., May 4 at 3 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Anthony, Sharon; Holy Trinity, Farrell; St. Adalbert, Farrell; St. Stanislaus Kostka, Sharon; and Our Lady of Fatima, Farrell.

50th anniversary of St. James School, Erie – April 22



St. James School in Erie will honor its 50th anniversary with a Mass on Tuesday, April 22 at 1:15 p.m. Bishop Donald Trautman will be the celebrant. St. James School has offered elementary education grades K-8 since 1957.

Religious scouting awards – April 27

Individual and group badges, patches, honors and awards will be presented to Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and Brownies throughout the Erie Diocese for their achievements in the areas of spiritual growth on Sunday, April 27 at St. Peter Cathedral, Erie, at 2:30 p.m. For more information on scouting in the diocese, visit www.ErieRCD.org/scout.asp and www.ErieRCD.org/gscout.asp.

Transitional deacon ordination – May 3

Seminarian Daniel Hoffman will take another step toward the priesthood when he is ordained into the order of the diaconate by Bishop Donald Trautman on Saturday, May 3 during a 10:30 a.m. Mass at the St. Mark Seminary chapel, 429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie. Hoffman, a third-year seminarian studying at St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, is assigned to Queen of the World Parish in St. Marys. His home parish is Our Lady of Peace in Erie.



Daniel Hoffman

As a transitional deacon, Hoffman will finish his final year of major seminary before he is scheduled for ordination to the priesthood in 2009.

Farrell parishes merging

St. Ann to merge with Our Lady of Fatima by June 1

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

FARRELL — St. Ann Parish in Farrell will merge with neighboring parish Our Lady of Fatima, effective June 1, Bishop Donald Trautman has announced.

After extensive consultation with the Presbyteral Council of the Erie Diocese and the pastors of the Shenango Valley, Bishop Trautman said he has accepted the recommendation to merge St. Ann with Our Lady of Fatima. Bishop Trautman announced the decision personally to approximately 80 parishioners in Farrell on April 9.

The merged parish will be called Our Lady of Fatima-St. Ann Parish.

"I wish to thank those at St. Ann for their love of their parish and their love of the Catholic faith," the bishop said to those gathered. "I'm here to share with you about some pastoral realities. We have to

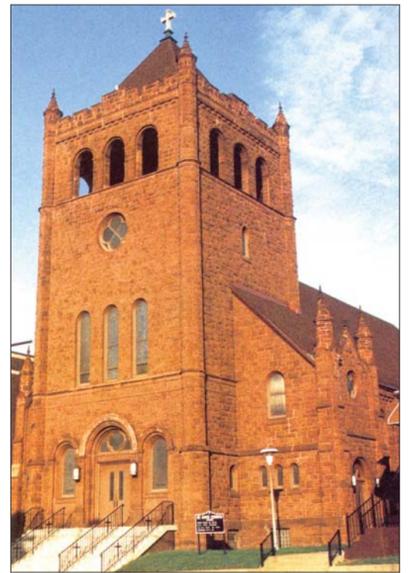
look at some facts about your parish. Your parish has had a glorious past. And even today continues to provide praise and worship to God. But it's not the strong, vibrant parish of the past. We need to recognize that reality and in turn thank God for all the faith and good works of former parishioners and priests who have served."

Bishop Trautman continued by sharing some compelling facts with parishioners. Church records show a 28-percent decrease in parish families (172 to 130 registered households) since 2003, 56 deaths and only six baptisms. The retirement of Msgr. Charles Murcko, the present pastor, adds an additional burden in that the current priest shortage in the diocese rules out the possibility of a replacement, he said.

"In the last 20 years, from 1987 to 2007, 47 priests have been ordained for service in the 13 counties of our diocese," Bishop Trautman said. "But during that same time, 89 priests have died. This statistic

"In the last five years, I've buried 37 priests and ordained nine. That's a statistic that we have to face. Those are the realities a bishop must consider in the appointment of the ordained to pastorates."

— Bishop Donald Trautman



St. Ann Parish in Farrell

tells us that we have 42 less priests to serve. Presently we have 166 active priests, with 9 above the age

See FARRELL, page 3

Survey assesses Catholics' beliefs, practices on Mass, sacraments

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — As the U.S. Catholic Church prepared to welcome Pope Benedict XVI, a new survey found big differences among Catholics of different generations about the importance of the sacraments in their lives.

Asked which sacrament was most meaningful in their lives, 39 percent of respondents named baptism, 26 percent said marriage and 25 percent named the Eucharist. Among those who said they attended Mass weekly or more often, 52 percent said the Eucharist was most meaningful in their lives.

The study also divided respondents into four generations in relation to the Second Vatican Council: pre-Vatican II, comprised of those born before 1943; Vatican II, born between 1943 and 1960; post-Vatican II, born 1961 to 1981; and millennial Catholics, born after 1981.

While those of the first three generations chose the Eucharist as their most meaningful sacrament, 43 percent of the millennial Catholics said marriage was the sacrament most meaningful to them.

The survey of 1,007 self-identified

adult Catholics was commissioned by the U.S. bishops' Department of Communications and conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University in Washington. A 178-page report on the results was released April 13.

The margin of error for the survey was plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

The survey found that for each succeeding generation the percentage who had made their first Communion and first confession and received the sacrament of confirmation declined.

While 95 percent of Catholics in the pre-Vatican II generation and 91 percent of the Vatican II generation said they had been confirmed, only 79 percent of post-Vatican II Catholics and 69 percent of millennial Catholics said they had received the sacrament of confirmation.

The percentage of Catholics who had made their first Communion ranged from 99 percent of pre-Vatican II Catholics to 85 percent of millennial Catholics. For first confession, the range was from 98 percent of the oldest generation to 84 percent of the youngest generation.

Only 2 percent of Catholics across all generations said they participated

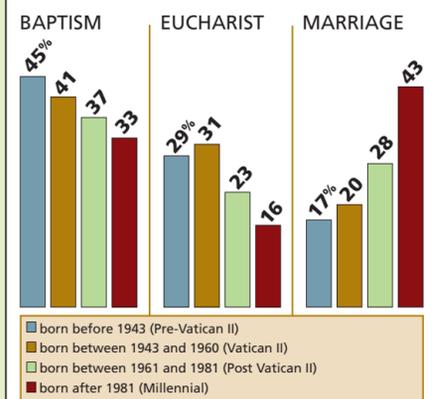
in the sacrament of reconciliation once a month or more, 12 percent said they did several times a year, 12 percent said they did once a year and 45 percent said they never made a sacramental confession.

The CARA report, titled "Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice Among U.S. Catholics," summarized responses to a wide range of questions about Catholics' attitudes toward and participation in the Mass and the sacraments, their knowledge of the Catholic faith, their views on church leadership and teachings, and whether they pray the rosary, carry religious objects or have pictures of Mary hanging in their homes.

Archbishop George H. Niederauer of San Francisco, who authorized

Most Meaningful

Catholics differ by generation on what sacrament is most meaningful to them.



Source: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate

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the study as chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Communications, said the results would offer guidance to church leaders.

"It reveals good will, healthy attitudes toward neighbor and an open-

See SURVEY, page 3

Clergy appointments



Deacon Joseph Lucia, appointed as a member of the Deacon Personnel Board for a term of five years.

Father Shane Mathew, appointed to the faculty of Cathedral Preparatory School, Erie, for a term of five years and to graduate studies at Gannon University. Effective July 1, 2008.

The Most Rev. Donald W. Trautman, STD, SSL, Bishop of Erie, announces the following diocesan appointments:

Father Henry Andrae, appointed pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Sharon, for a term of six years. Effective June 13, 2008.

Msgr. Casimir Bogniak, appointed temporary parochial administrator of St. Bartholomew Parish, Sharpville, effective April 4, 2008.

Deacon Ralph DeCecco, appointed as a member of the Deacon Personnel Board for a term of five years.

Deacon Robert DeNoon, appointed as a member of the Deacon Personnel Board for a term of five years.

Father James Faluszczak, appointed pastor of St. Michael Parish, Emlenton, in addition to responsibilities for the campus ministry at Clarion University, Clarion. Effective May 26, 2008.

Deacon Walter Jones, appointed as a member of the Deacon Personnel Board for a term of five years.

Father Matthew Kujawinski, appointed to graduate studies in liturgy at the University of Notre Dame beginning this summer while continuing ministry as parochial vicar at St. Jude Parish, Erie.

Father Jeffrey Lucas, appointed Vice President for Mission and Ministry at Kennedy Catholic High School, Hermitage, for a term of five years with residence at Good Shepherd Church, West Middlesex. Effective June 13, 2008.

Father Regis Meenihan, appointed pastor of St. Columbkille Parish, Stoneboro, for a term of six years. Effective June 13, 2008.

Deacon Eugene Miller, appointed as a member of the Deacon Personnel Board for a term of five years.

Father Chidiebere Evaristus Ogbuagu, appointed parochial vicar of St. Joseph Parish/Bread of Life Community, Erie, and Defender of the Bond for the Marriage Tribunal of the Diocese of Erie for a term of three years. Effective April 1, 2008.

Msgr. Gerald Orbanek, assigned to residency on the campus of Gannon University while continuing as a member of the Gannon faculty. Effective June 13, 2008.

Deacon William Saborsky, appointed co-director of the Deacon Personnel Board for a term of five years.

Father Stephen Schreiber, appointed Associate Director of Vocations for the Diocese of Erie for a term of five years and to residence at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Erie. Effective June 13, 2008.

Deacon William Spoveri, appointed as a member of the Deacon Personnel Board for a term of five years.

Father Stanley Swacha, appointed pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish, Sharon, for a term of six years. Effective June 13, 2008.

Bishop protests Clinton's visit to Mercyhurst

Trautman will not attend college's spring graduation

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

Bishop Donald Trautman will not attend graduation ceremonies at Mercyhurst College this spring in protest of Sen. Hillary Clinton's April 1 visit to the Erie campus.

Bishop Trautman issued a statement on March 31, one day after the Catholic

liberal arts college announced it would host Clinton, who supports abortion rights.

"I am disappointed in Mercyhurst College for not reflecting the pro-life stance of the Catholic Church regarding abortion," the bishop said in his statement. "As tangible expression of my disappointment, I have notified (Mercyhurst President Dr. Thomas) Gamble that I will not be present for Mercyhurst's graduation. I am open to meeting with Dr. Gamble in the future to ascertain how the Catholic identity of Mercyhurst can be better clari-

fied." Dr. Gamble issued a follow-up statement that was published in the Erie Times-News.

"While we respect Bishop Trautman's decision, we are saddened by it and will deeply miss his presence at graduation," Gamble said in his statement. "We look forward to engaging in conversations about the most authentic way for Mercyhurst to meet both its religious and its educational obligations.

"Our mission counsels us to educate our students in an environment where faith and reason flourish together, and toward that end provide opportunities for our students to be well informed politically and religiously," he said.

The college sent invitations to all of the presidential candidates to speak at the school. Clinton accepted the invitation on March 30.

While 2,500 supporters greeted and cheered the senator inside the Mercyhurst Athletic Center, approximately 100 pro-life supporters protested the visit with signs outside the campus's entrance on East 38th Street.



Bishop Donald Trautman



Dr. Thomas Gamble

IN THE U.S.

■ **Catholic Charities USA affiliates nationwide are seeking to establish links between poverty and racism** in hopes of cutting both significantly. In 2007 Catholic Charities adopted a goal of cutting poverty nationwide in half by 2020. This January it released "Poverty and Racism: Overlapping Threats to the Common Good," an issue brief that laid out the framework for establishing links between the two. The initiative got a renewed push from a three-hour electronic town-hall meeting conducted online April 2 with participants from across North America and several other countries. A rebroadcast of the town hall will be made available in next month at www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/liv-ctownhall.



■ **The towering, \$24 million Ave Maria Oratory that is the focal point of Ave Maria University and the town being built around it** was dedicated March 31 as a quasi-parish to provide pastoral care for students, faculty, staff and residents. Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Florida, was main celebrant for a Mass and dedication of the 1,100-seat landmark church building that's 104 feet tall and topped with a 10-foot Celtic cross. Ave Maria is one of the first Catholic universities to open in the United States in 40 years. Multimillionaire



Tom Monaghan, who founded the Domino's Pizza chain, announced plans in 2002 for Ave Maria University and a town of the same name on 5,000 acres east of Naples, about 30 miles from the Gulf Coast. He's now university chancellor. Classes began on the permanent campus this past fall, and construction of the Ave Maria Oratory was completed early this year.

■ **Bishop Joseph A. Galante of Camden, N.J., announced a reconfiguration plan April 3** that will reduce the number of parishes in the diocese from the current 124 to 66 over the next two years. Citing the need to bring new vitality to parish life, Bishop Galante said parishes in the six southern counties of New Jersey would be reconfigured into 38 merged parishes; three parish clusters, involving a total of six parishes; and 22 stand-alone parishes. Bishop Galante said the reconfiguration came in response to population changes, a decline in religious practice, fewer priests available for ministry and the need to advance key pastoral priorities.

■ **More than 500,000 community service hours have been pledged by Catholic school students** and other Catholic youths in honor of Pope Benedict XVI's 81st birthday. The pope's birthday was April 16, the second day of his six-day visit to the United States. Washington Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl, announced the number of pledged hours March 25 during opening remarks at the National Catholic Educational Association's convention in Indianapolis. The project is called "Birthday Blessings for Pope Benedict XVI: A Gift of Public Service From U.S. Catholic Youth and Students." It



includes service projects conducted between Feb. 25 and May 31. NCEA has established a Web site, <http://ncea.catholic.org>, to help schools, parishes and individuals learn more about the effort and to register their volunteer hours, which must be completed by May 31.

AROUND THE WORLD

■ **The church must bring the "Gospel of mercy" to those involved in abortion and divorce**, showing sensitivity to the inner burdens they bear, Pope Benedict XVI said April 5 in a meeting with participants of an international conference on the aftermath of abortion and divorce. The pope said both practices had created much suffering in modern society, particularly among innocent victims, leaving wounds that affect people's lives permanently. He said abortion in particular produces "devastating consequences" for the woman involved, for the family and for society, helping promote a materialistic mentality that shows contempt for life. "How much selfish complicity often lies at the root of the painful decision that so many women have had to make alone and whose unhealed wound they carry in their souls," he said. The pope said the church's ethical teachings about abortion and divorce are well known. Although they are of a different nature, both acts are considered grave offenses to human dignity and an offense to God, he said.

■ **The U.S.-based Papal Foundation presented Pope Benedict XVI with a check for more than \$7.5 million.** The foundation designated more than \$6.8 million for 105 grants supporting charitable projects and almost \$700,000 for scholarships for priests, religious and laypeople studying at one of the pontifical universities or institutes in Rome. The Papal Foundation was established in 1990 and has given more than \$41 million in grants for the building of churches, seminaries, schools, hospitals and projects for the care of the poor around the world.

By the Way...

With *FaithLife* going to press prior to Pope Benedict XVI's apostolic visit to the United States, look for extensive coverage in our May 4 edition, as well as the July/August issue of *Faith* magazine.



Jason Koshinski

We're interested to hear the stories from our local pilgrims including seminarian Matthew Strickenberger, a second-year theology student from St. Stephen Parish in Oil City studying at St. Mary Seminary and University in Baltimore. Strickenberger was selected to serve at the papal Mass at Yankee Stadium.

Students from St. John-Holy Rosary Eastside Catholic School in Erie were featured in a video that was played for Pope Benedict prior to Mass at Nationals Stadium in Washington. The students showed off their banners greeting the Holy Father. While only 90 seconds was featured on the stadium scoreboard, the entire video can be viewed on the diocesan Web site at www.ErieRCD.org.

If you missed part of the pope's visit, www.uspapalvisit.org has streaming video of most of the events.

For those who may want to commemorate the pope's visit to Washington, www.popevisit2008.com has official souvenirs such as shirts, hats, bumper stickers, coffee mugs and framed art. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of these items will benefit Christ Our Hope Foundation, Inc., the organization supporting the papal visit to Washington.

Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, archbishop emeritus of Washington, will be the keynote speaker at Gannon University's spring commencement on Saturday, May 10. Cardinal McCarrick will receive Gannon's Ut Diligatis Invicem Award and an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree. The ceremony will begin at 2 p.m. at Tullio Arena, 809 French St. in Erie. The event is open to the public. The university's Baccalaureate Mass will be held at 10 a.m. at St. Peter Cathedral.

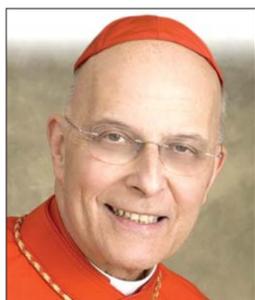
Some of the statistics Bishop Donald Trautman shares in today's story regarding the parish merger in Farrell are a dose of reality regarding the priest shortage in the diocese. Look for more numbers and a special report on the priesthood and parishes in the Erie Diocese in the May/June issue of *Faith*.

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

Cardinal says universities must teach church's intellectual tradition

By Cheryl Collins Valyo
Catholic News Service

PITTSBURGH — In America and the world today, many people perceive religion and intellectual life as adversaries, but a major task of a Catholic university is to counteract this view by revealing the depth and riches of the Catholic intellectual tradition, according to Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago.



Cardinal Francis E. George

Cardinal George, who also is president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, made the comments in a recent address at Duquesne University on "The Importance of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition in the Life of a Catholic University, the Church and Society."

"If anyone thinks (the subject of this lecture is) not ambitious enough, perhaps we could add its importance to the world and eternal life as well. It wouldn't be hubris to do so, because the Catholic intellectual tradition is not only important but crucial at the deepest level in all these dimensions of human life," said Cardinal George.

He was the inaugural speaker for the Richard T. and Marion A. Byrnes lecture series at Duquesne's McNulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts.

"The body of reflections on the truths of our faith represents

the collective wisdom of some very bright and very holy men and women from every part of the world over two millennia," the cardinal said.

"It draws on thousands of years of prior Jewish experience and other cultures in ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, the whole heritage of classical Greece and Rome, the rise and fall of the civilizations of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the scientific revolution, Romanticism, Modernism, and in our own lives, our globalized postmodern culture," said the cardinal.

He spent part of the lecture exploring aspects of the teachings of great theologians and philosophers.

There is "nothing as remotely universal" as the Catholic intellectual tradition, given "its reach into time, into space and into

eternity," he said.

"It proposes to unite faith and reason in mutual complementarity," Cardinal George noted.

He said an important task today is to make sure all Catholic undergraduates, whether at a Catholic or secular institution, be exposed to and respectful of the Catholic intellectual tradition.

Today many people think one attends college to prepare for a career, he remarked.

"That is certainly one quite important thing that one does when he or she engages in higher studies. But if that is all that is done, the student will be missing something, and universities themselves run the danger of being reduced to high-class trade schools," Cardinal George said.

"Before, during and after our working lives, we are human beings who must be preparing for

eternal life," he said.

The Catholic intellectual tradition provides a developed body of thought, tested by many different people in a wide variety of circumstances over many centuries, Cardinal George said.

For example, he said, "When we read a great Christian teacher like St. Augustine, especially in his 'Confessions,' we enter into the same process that he went through, slowly coming to understand and internalize the truths of the faith. The Catholic intellectual tradition, almost by definition, is an education in great books and great souls."

In a question-and-answer session after the lecture, he said many Catholic universities, unfortunately, are not succeeding in fostering the tradition, but added, "I have seen it (flourishing) in a good number of places, and it's

Catholic colleges in the Erie Diocese

Gannon University

A four-year diocesan Catholic comprehensive university, Gannon was founded in 1925 by Archbishop John Mark Gannon. Its fall 2007 enrollment included 4,134 students.



Mercyhurst College

A fully accredited, four-year, Catholic comprehensive institution founded in Erie by the Sisters of Mercy in 1926, Mercyhurst has a current enrollment of 3,080.



U.S. Catholic Colleges

- 251** Catholic institutions of higher learning
- oldest** Georgetown University in Washington, founded in 1789 by the Jesuits
- newest** Wyoming Catholic College in Lander, Wyo., founded in 2006
- 686,000** total students enrolled
- Pennsylvania** the state with the most Catholic colleges and universities at 29, followed by New York with 28
- 10** enroll only women



very encouraging."

"Sometimes it's because a university itself encourages it, and sometimes it's because a university doesn't encourage it, and people get curious as to why not," he added.

Cardinal George said conversion can occur on many levels — intellectual, moral and spiritual — but is most likely to be nurtured in an environment in which "young people find a living faith community."

"They're looking for a way of life, and (this is) very attractive because it liberates us," he said. "The church is where you go

when you want to be free. That's a kind of countercultural statement these days but it's true — if the church is what she is supposed to be."

But young people need teachers, he emphasized.

"This is (taking place) not only where you have witnesses, but where you have faculty — even if they are not teaching theology or philosophy — who nonetheless have a grasp of the Catholic intellectual tradition and serve as mentors to young people," Cardinal George said. "That's when you see something very good happening."

FaithLife

The official news bulletin of the Catholic Diocese of Erie

Volume 4, Issue 8

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Member of the Catholic Press Association. Published bi-weekly. Owned and operated by the Bishop of Erie. Subscription \$10/year. For more information, call (814) 824-1161.

The Office of Communications has been serving Catholics in the Diocese of Erie since 1974. Offices are located at St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 East Grandview Blvd., Erie, Pa. Periodical postage paid at Erie, Pa.

Postmaster: Send address changes to FaithLife at St. Mark Catholic Center.

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Catholic Services Appeal parish projects

The 2008 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.



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.

If you haven't yet made a pledge to the CSA, it's not too late. Contact your parish office.

Here's a look at what some parishes are doing with their CSA overage funds:

Clearfield Deanery

- Christ the King, Houtzdale** – Carpet replacement in church
- Holy Trinity, Ramey** – Carpet replacement in church
- Immaculate Conception, Osceola Mills** – Pay off bills
- St. Agnes, Morrisdale** – Repair church roof
- St. Basil the Great, Coalport** – Operations
- St. Bonaventure, Grampian** – Construction of cemetery chapel and church boiler
- St. Francis of Assisi, Clearfield** – Painting church
- St. Mary, Frenchville** – Painting and carpeting of church
- St. Timothy, Curwensville** – Redo church ceiling
- Immaculate Conception mission, Madera** – Fix wall and water leakage
- Ss. Peter & Paul mission, Grassflat** – Repairing and painting bell tower
- Ss. Peter & Paul mission, Hawk Run** – Install railing at church entrance
- St. Severin mission, Drifting** – Help fund installation of new stained glass windows

Briefly

Collection for International Needs — April 26-27

On the weekend of April 26-27, parishes and communities across the diocese will take up the annual Collection for International Needs.

This collection provides direct support to the church in Eastern Europe as well as to Catholic Relief Services, with half of the proceeds going to each.

In Central and Eastern Europe, the proceeds from this collection provide much-needed financial help for seminaries, social service programs, youth ministry, pastoral centers, construction and renovation of churches and evangelization efforts in the media.

Catholic Relief Services is one of the world's largest and most efficient relief organizations, and the proceeds sent to it bring help to those in 99 developing nations who are suffering from drought, war, famine, disease, natural disasters and other hardships.

Parish Care and Concern conference in St. Marys — May 7

Queen of the World Parish in St. Marys will host a Parish Care and Concern conference on Wednesday, May 7 at 7 p.m. to facilitate the growth of the ministry outreach program in the Eastern Vicariate of the Erie Diocese.

Parish Care and Concern is a model of service in which members of the parish community volunteer for a year at a time to meet some of the social welfare needs of the parish and local community.

Under the direction of volunteer coordinators, parishioners provide services to any needy person irrespective of race, religion or ethnic affiliation.

Services depend on the specific needs of the parish but may include: transportation; visiting the homebound, the lonely, the bereaved or the newcomer; emergency home help; minor repairs; advocating for the disabled; and companion relief for caregivers.

Come and learn about Parish Care and Concern, a model that helps in organizing parish outreach. For more information contact Erin Landini-Grogan at 800.374.3723 Ext. 254 or Lisa Browse at 814.788.5057.

Pa. marriage amendment update

The Pennsylvania Senate Judiciary Committee recently voted 10-4 in favor of SB1250 that would amend the Pennsylvania constitution to read that no other union than a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as marriage or the functional equivalent of marriage by the commonwealth.

The bill is now being considered before the Senate Appropriations Committee before a vote can be scheduled on the Senate floor. The House of Representatives must also pass the bill to complete the first step in amending the state constitution. The measure would then need to pass a second time in the next legislative session before going on the ballot for a voter referendum.

Middle schoolers show their 'Love for the World to See' at youth rally

Hundreds of middle school youth shared the love of their faith with each other, which became "Love for the World to See" on April 5 at the annual Middle School Youth Rally at DuBois Central Catholic School.

More than 350 youth, 80 leaders and 45 youth leaders participated in the rally.

The pre-event began April 4 with an overnight retreat with the leadership team.

The youth were welcomed by a video greeting from Bishop Donald Trautman who was unable to attend due to confirmation commitments.

Singer, songwriter and storyteller Steve Angrisano engaged the audience with his witness. Angrisano also provided music

for the Mass with Father Marc Stockton.

Keynote presenters Chris and Linda Padgett spoke about maintaining chastity in the midst of a culture that encourages otherwise. Originally high school sweethearts, the husband and wife recently published their first book recounting their journey from courtship to marriage.

The youth also created and performed a drama based on 1 Cor. 13, which discusses the meaning of love.

As part of the rally's service project, students signed more than 400 teddy bears attached with Scripture verses. The bears will be taken to several area treatment centers including Abraxas Center, Marienville; Gannondale, Erie; Harborcreek Youth Services, Harborcreek; and Sara Reed Center, Erie.



Newly formed Deacon Personnel Board to help match deacons' skills to ministry

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

The co-directors of the newly formed Deacon Personnel Board in the Erie Diocese say the group will prayerfully discern what are the gifts and talents of the diocese's deacons.

By doing so, they will be able to help Bishop Donald Trautman appoint them to ministries that are personally rewarding and spiritually enriching for both them and the people they serve.

"We're in the process of revising the permanent diaconate formation program," said Msgr. Robert Smith, vicar general and director of the Permanent Diaconate Program for the diocese and co-director of the newly formed Deacon Personnel Board, along with Deacon Bill Saborsky. "In the course of that, we're using the 'National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States.' And in this particular

document, there are a number of suggestions for the formation of the permanent diaconate program, one of which is a deacon personnel board. It's something we've wanted to do for a long time anyway, given the number of our deacons and the various ministries that they serve."

The diocese has 44 permanent deacons with nine more scheduled to be ordained in May.

"We see ourselves as assisting the diaconate program," Saborsky said. "One of our main goals is to provide not only deacons, but also pastors or those who are responsible to work with a deacon, some sort of a ministry profile. What is it that we expect of them? What can they expect? Our job is to develop a profile and work with the deacons in the transition to their parishes."

Msgr. Smith and Deacon Saborsky will also serve on the personnel board, along with Deacons Ralph DeCecco, Robert DeNoon, Walter Jones, Joseph Lucia and Eugene Miller and Bill Sproveri.

Part of its mission will also be

to conduct and go over performance evaluations while being a listening agent and a support for deacons in the everyday administration of their responsibilities.

"Of course, our ultimate service is to the bishop," said Msgr. Smith. "One of the functions of this board will be to make recommendations to him when it's time to make diaconal appointments."

Saborsky added that the board will serve as a confidential forum to look at both the needs of the people in the diocese and the needs of deacons and to meet them in terms of personnel.

"As the program grows, we need to have a structure and a working model in place to help us place them in areas where there is the greatest need," he said. "We want to match deacons and their skill sets with the areas of greatest service to the diocese and the bishop."



Msgr. Robert Smith



Deacon Bill Saborsky

As the board's programs get developed, they'll be introduced to the deacon community, the co-directors said.



For more information about the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program in the Erie Diocese, visit www.ErieRCD.org/diaconate.asp or contact Msgr. Robert Smith, director, at 814.824.1130 or Deacon Ralph DeCecco, director of pastoral formation, at 814.864.0504.

St. Ann to merge with Our Lady of Fatima by June 1

FARRELL from page 1

of 75. We have 17 priests below the age of 40. In the last five years, I've buried 37 priests and ordained nine. That's a statistic that we have to face. Those are the realities a bishop must consider in the appointment of the ordained to pastorates."

There are also 10 priests who serve outside the diocese, three in the military and two in teaching. The remaining are on sick leave. There are also six religious order priests in the diocese. Seven young men are currently in the diocese's college seminary program, nine are in major seminary and two ordinations are scheduled for June.

Other factors contributing to the merger, Bishop Trautman said, include a demographic

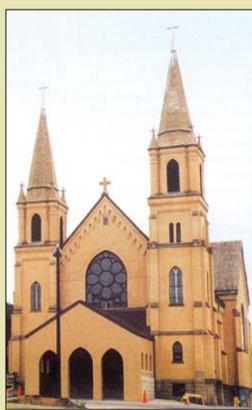
shift in the thinning local population in Farrell, a decrease in parish sustaining funds, major structural and maintenance costs and the proximity of St. Ann to Our Lady of Fatima, which is one block away.

Adding 130 families to the nearly 500 registered at Our Lady of Fatima will help make it a more vibrant parish community, as well, Bishop Trautman said.

Other parishes in Farrell include Holy Trinity with 120 families and St. Adalbert with 345 families.

"We're not abandoning the people at all," he said. "They will still be able to receive the sacraments. We are making good use of stewardship of our funds and also our personnel."

The bishop noted that merging or closing of a parish is part of the life of the church.



Our Lady of Fatima Parish

"In 155 years of the diocese, we've closed 183 parishes," he said. "Some of these were in little mining towns where the

people moved out and the parish closed. This is the life of the church. We go where the people are. It's not a sign of death and dying; it's a sign of life and people going to live elsewhere."

He added that the closing of a parish is a time to give great thanks to God.

"We must be thankful that the parish was founded, that it served the people for so many years, that it brought the Gospel, the teachings of the Lord and the sacraments to the people," he said. "It's a time of thanksgiving. Is there sadness involved? Yes. But more than that I think the emotion should be one of thanks to God for the wonderful service given by the priests and parishioners of a parish for all the years of existence. It's something to be proud of."

Survey assesses beliefs, practices on Mass, sacraments

SURVEY from page 1

ness to the church among young Catholics," he said in a news release. "Yet it also points out a need for greater efforts in education for both adults and young people."

CARA found that 69 percent of pre-Vatican II Catholics strongly agreed with the statement "I am proud to be a Catholic," but that the percentage of those who agreed declined with each succeeding generation. Among Vatican II Catholics, 56 percent strongly agreed, while the numbers were 53 percent for post-Vatican II Catholics and 50 percent for millennial Catholics.

"It's heartening that so many are proud to call themselves Catholic," Archbishop Niederauer said. "The challenge for church leaders is to help them see what Catholicism really means."

When asked whether they agreed with the statement, "In deciding what is morally acceptable, I look to Catholic Church teachings and statements made by the

pope and bishops to form my conscience," the pre-Vatican II Catholics (28 percent) and millennial Catholics (23 percent) were most strongly in agreement.

Only 15 percent of Vatican II Catholics and 14 percent of post-Vatican II Catholics said they strongly agreed with that statement. Millennial Catholics (38 percent) also were the most likely to strongly agree that "I can be a good Catholic without going to Mass every Sunday." Only 31 percent of pre-Vatican II Catholics, 35 percent of Vatican II Catholics and 33 percent of post-Vatican II Catholics strongly agreed.

Nearly a quarter (23 percent) of the Catholics in the survey said they attended Mass at least once a week, a figure CARA said has remained unchanged over the past five years.

Knowledge about the Catholic faith generally was higher among the older generations than the younger ones, but the survey found that knowledge of the Bible

Religious Items

U.S. Catholics who say they...

- 59%** have a statue or picture of Mary in their home
- 32%** wear or carry a crucifix or cross
- 29%** wear or carry a religious medal or pin
- 23%** wear or carry a rosary
- 9%** wear or carry a scapular

Source: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate ©2008 CRS

was higher among younger Catholics than their older counterparts.

Millennial Catholics attending church at least once a month were similar to the pre-Vatican II Catholics in agreeing that "Jesus Christ is really present in the bread and wine of the Eucharist."

The youngest and oldest generations also were more likely than those in the Vatican II and post-Vatican II generations to say that they abstained from meat on Fri-

days during Lent and typically received ashes on Ash Wednesday.

Nearly half of the millennial group (46 percent) said they usually gave up or abstained from something besides meat on Fridays during Lent, compared to 30 percent of the pre-Vatican II generation, 34 percent of the Vatican II group and 38 percent of the post-Vatican II Catholics.

Not surprisingly, CARA found that "frequency of Mass attendance is a strong indicator of the general importance of Catholicism in a person's life and of his or her level of commitment to living out the faith."

"In general, the more frequently one attends Mass, the more frequently he or she participates in other church or religious activities, the greater his or her knowledge about the Catholic faith, the greater his or her awareness of current events in the church, and the greater his or her adherence to church teachings," the report said.

More than four-fifths of U.S. Catholics (82 percent) said they were somewhat or very satisfied with the leadership of Pope Benedict XVI, while 72 percent said they were somewhat or very satisfied with the leadership of the U.S. bishops.

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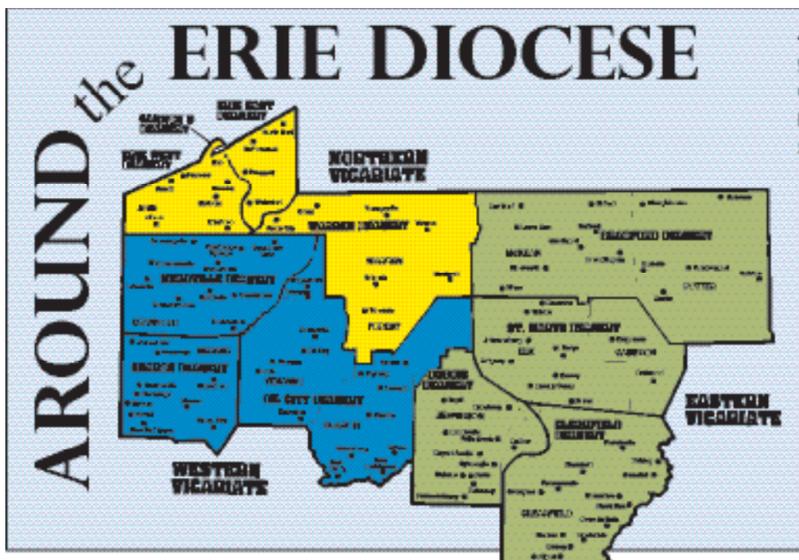
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Visit ErieRCD.org/faithlife.asp to download quick and easy photo tips on a wallet-size card.



St. George boys basketball team parochial champs



ERIE — The St. George boys varsity basketball team finished 2-1 for fifth place in the state CYO boys tournament. The Lancers finished their season as the Erie Parochial League champions and the Erie region overall tournament champion. Pictured from left to right are: (first row) Andrew Amendola, Casey Shelton, Josh Ott, Alex Geanous, Sam

Corritore, Nick Kneidinger, (second row) Mike Covatto, Neil Szoszorek, Conor Colpoys, Tyler Zupan, Matt Hess, Anthony Malone, (third row) assistant coaches John Hess and John Ott, Pat Milkowski, Greg Garmon, Michael Amendola and head coach Mike Colpoys.

Memorial Mass for Bishop Murphy



ERIE — Bishop Donald Trautman celebrated a memorial Mass for the first anniversary of the death of Bishop Michael Murphy on April 3 at St. Mark Seminary chapel. Bishop Murphy, the retired bishop of the Erie Diocese, died April 3, 2007 at

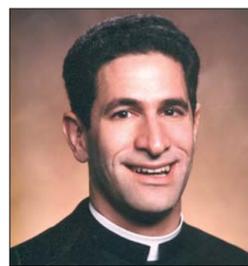
the age of 91. Pictured from left to right are: Father Dan Arnold, Father Bill Sutherland, Bishop Trautman, Father Donald Cooper, Father Nick Rouch and Msgr. Robert Brugger.

Father Timothy Kesicki named provincial of Jesuit Detroit Province

Father Timothy Kesicki, SJ, has been named the next provincial of the Detroit Province of the Society of Jesus and will take office this summer.

Father Kesicki is an Erie native and the brother of Father Michael Kesicki, rector of St. Mark Seminary in Erie.

After attending Catholic schools in Erie, he earned his bachelor's degree in political science from



John Carroll University in University Heights, Ohio. He entered the Society of Jesus at Loyola House Jesuit Novitiate in Berkley, Mich.

After his ordination in 1994, Father Kesicki worked for a year at the Jesuit Refugee Service in Uganda before teaching theology at Loyola High School in Detroit. Since 2000, he has served as the president of St. Ignatius High School in Cleveland.

OLP girls basketball caps successful season



ERIE — The Our Lady of Peace girls varsity basketball team capped a winning season by finishing second in the state CYO girls tournament. The Crusaders were the Erie Parochial League champions and finished as the Erie region overall tournament champion and Erie region AAA tournament champion. Pictured from left to right are:

(first row) Melissa Mischler, Angela Aronica, Alissa Robbins, Maddie Miller, Sarah Kupniewski, Kaitlyn Fromknecht, Cielo Prischak, Brenna Robbins, (second row) Kathryn Batten, Katie Paluh, Monica Main, Nicole Slubowski, Catherine Galleher, Sara Carlucci, Natalie Vitale, (third row) assistant coach Greg Robbins and head coach Tom Laird.

Spelling bee, PJAS and writing contest winners at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, Erie



Seventh and eighth grade students at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in Erie recently competed in the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science competition at Penn State-Behrend. The first-place winners (seated, left to right) were: Heidi Brown, Anthony Wawrzyniak, Matt Jackson, Maria Pregeler, Jordan Vroman, (standing) Megan Natalo, Tim Ring, Owen Beaufort and Allyson Kutz.



Our Lady of Mount Carmel 8th grader Kara Pytlarz, was recently honored by the Zaner-Bloser handwriting company for her handwriting entry in its annual contest. Handwriting experts chose Pytlarz's entry as the best sample in the state. Hers was one of 177,000 entries. Her sample goes on to the national competition later this month, with notification of the winners by May 1.



Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in Erie recently held its annual spelling bee for students in 4th, 5th and 6th grades. Fifth grader Claire Weisenfluh (left) came in first place. Second place went to Elizabeth Rathburn (right). Weisenfluh will go on to the diocesan spelling bee on April 24 at Mercyhurst Prep High School.

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