

'Fortnight
for freedom'

Catholics urged to
resist unjust laws,
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FaithLife

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BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

April 22, 2012

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



- April 23 St. George, St. Adalbert
April 24 St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen
April 25 St. Mark
April 28 St. Peter Chanel,
St. Louis Grignion de Montfort
April 29 World Day of Prayer for Vocations
April 30 St. Pius V
May 1 St. Joseph the Worker
May 2 St. Athanasius
May 3 Ss. Philip and James,
National Day of Prayer

Confirmations

Bishop Donald Trautman will visit the following churches to offer the sacrament of confirmation:

St. Michael, Greenville – Sunday, April 22 at 11:30 a.m. Confirmation classes include St. Margaret, Jamestown, and St. Michael, Greenville.

Notre Dame, Hermitage – Sunday, April 22 at 3 p.m.

St. Gregory, North East – Monday, April 23 at 7 p.m.

Holy Rosary, Erie – Thursday, April 26 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Stanislaus, Erie; St. John the Baptist, Erie; Our Mother of Sorrows, Erie; Holy Trinity, Erie; and Holy Rosary, Erie.

St. Joseph, Sharon – Sunday, April 29 at 11 a.m. Confirmation classes include Sacred Heart, Sharon, and St. Joseph, Sharon.

St. Anthony, Sharon – Sunday, April 29 at 2 p.m. Confirmation classes include Our Lady of Fatima, Ann, Farrell; St. Stanislaus Kostka-Holy Trinity, Sharon; St. Adalbert, Farrell; and St. Anthony, Sharon.

St. Philip, Linesville – Monday, April 30 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include Our Lady, Queen of the Americas, Conneaut Lake; St. Peter, Conneautville; and St. Philip, Linesville.

Holy Rosary, Johnsonburg – Friday, May 4 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Anne, Wilcox, and Holy Rosary, Johnsonburg.

Knights of Columbus donate funds for vocations, retired priests



ERIE – The Knights of Columbus recently presented Bishop Donald Trautman and the Diocese of Erie with two checks on behalf of State Deputy George Koch and Central West Regional Chairman Jeff Blaze.

The first check was for \$1,118.79 to support vocations. These funds came from the Knights' label program where each Knight receives address labels in exchange for a donation.

St. Joseph in DuBois recognized as oldest active Lithuanian Catholic parish in U.S.

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

DUBOIS – St. Joseph Parish in DuBois has been recognized as the oldest active Lithuanian Catholic church in the United States.

The finding was published in the January/February issue of *Lithuanian Heritage* magazine.

Writer John Chernoski, an Ohio native now living in Arizona, raised the question about the oldest Lithuanian Catholic church in a 2011 article for *Lithuanian Heritage* titled "The Rise and Decline of Lithuanian Catholic Churches in America." In his latest story, Chernoski goes "Searching for the Oldest Active Lithuanian Catholic Church in

America" and finds it in the southeast corner of the Diocese of Erie.

"There were probably more than 100 Lithuanian Catholic churches in the United States at one time," Chernoski said. "There were plenty through Pennsylvania, near Scranton and Wilkes-Barre, near the urban centers of Connecticut, New York and Chicago. There have been a lot of closures over the years."

Chernoski is a third generation Lithuanian American. He recalls his grandfather speaking English but neither of his grandmothers did.

So how did Chernoski find out St. Joseph in DuBois is the oldest?

"There are different lists and databases out there, but they don't agree with each other," he said.

Rather than looking for the oldest structure, Chernoski said his goal was to find the date of the oldest establishment of a parish.

"It's pretty consistent with the Catholic Church when a parish is established," he



St. Joseph Parish in DuBois

said.

His finding pointed him to DuBois, only by a few months. St. Joseph in DuBois was established in 1893 while St. Joseph in Waterbury, Conn., got started shortly after in 1894.

See ST. JOSEPH, page 3

RUNNIN' REVS

Clergy basketball team uses hoops to highlight priesthood, vocations

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

WARREN – As a priest for more than 30 years, Father Rick Tomasone is quite familiar with his vocation.

Father Tomasone also knows a thing or two about basketball.

He recently got a chance to showcase his passion for both.

Several years ago, Father Rich Toohey, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Warren, formed a basketball team of priests, deacons and seminarians – dubbed the Runnin' Revs – with the goal of promoting vocations in the Diocese of Erie.

The team has played a number of games over the years against parochial CYO teams of high school students. Each game is followed by prayer, a presentation on the priesthood and sharing of vocation stories by the priests themselves.

The Runnin' Revs played a game March 11 at Westmoreland Elementary Center against the Dynamic Disciples, a team of Warren area teens from the Cool Catholic Youth group coached by Dave Sherman.

"We got crushed," Father Tomasone said. "But I said to a couple of the young guys we were running up the court, 'You know, God's our coach.'"

In addition to Father Tomasone and Father Toohey, the Runnin' Revs team included: Father Steve Schreiber, director of vocations; Father Mike Polinek, parochial vicar.



Father Rich Toohey goes in for a layup.

at St. George Parish in Erie; Father Joseph Campbell, faculty member at Kennedy Catholic High School in Hermitage; Deacon Jeff Swanson from St. Peter Cathedral in Erie; and Joe Caulfield, a seminarian from St. George.

The Dynamic Disciples team included: Colin Fantasy, Nathan O'Brien, Matt Sandberg, Nathan Sandberg and Ryan Shattuck from St. Joseph Parish in Warren and Broc Horn, Colin Shine and Brad Walters from Holy Redeemer Parish in Warren.

After the game, participants and fans helped themselves to refreshments before viewing "Fishers of Men," a 20-minute DVD produced by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to promote vocations to the priesthood. The program includes interviews with priests to find out what encouraged them to consider a religious vocation; what excites and gives them hope about their work; what about their vocation has nurtured their relationships with God; and what they value most about their vocation.

The video was followed by some short talks from the team giving witness to their vocation.

At the beginning of his vocation talk, Father Tomasone – a member of the Warren County Sports Hall of Fame and graduate of Warren Area High School – introduced his parents, Chuck and Alice Tomasone, who were sitting in the bleachers.

He talked about studying for the priesthood in Rome and ending up in St. Peter's Square and watching

See RUNNIN' REVS, page 3

Good Shepherd Sunday



Special collection April 28-29 to aid in care of retired diocesan priests

There are numerous priests who have served, sacrificed and ministered to us and our loved ones during our lifetime. They have celebrated the Mass, baptized our children, been merciful ministers of reconciliation with God, witnessed marriages, anointed our sick and buried our beloved.

Priests of the Diocese of Erie are active in so many aspects of the lives of those in their care, even after retirement.

There are 51 priests in the diocese who have reached retirement age. By their own choice, four of them still have a full-time assignment as a senior associate or temporary parochial administrator.

The Good Shepherd collection is an opportunity to say thanks to our retired diocesan priests for their many years of faithful service. On Good Shepherd Sunday April 28-29, a special collection will be taken up in parishes throughout the diocese to assist with the needs of caring for retired diocesan priests.

"Our retired priests continue to be a gift for us," said Bishop Donald Trautman in a letter to the faithful. "In addition to their constant prayers

Priests in the Diocese of Erie

122 active diocesan priests
12 active outside the diocese
9 exter priests and religious
51 retired diocesan priests
186 total priests

Average age of active priests is 56.2 years
Average years of service for active priests is 28.2 years
*As of March 27

for the Diocese of Erie, so many of them continue to serve and are so very active in 'retirement,' helping at parishes, ministering to the sick in our hospitals and nursing homes and lending support wherever and whenever they can. Truly, these priests continue to pour out their lives for service to Jesus Christ and God's people."

Through the Good Shepherd collection, the diocese has been able to assist retired priests with care and health needs, strengthen the priest retirement fund and assist with the operation of the Bishop Michael J. Murphy Home for Retired Priests.

For more information on the Good Shepherd collection, including a list of retired priests by parish, visit www.ErieRCD.org.

IN THE U.S.

■ Federal appeals panel hears arguments on Defense of Marriage Act

A federal appeals court heard arguments April 4 in two cases related not to the legality of same-sex marriage but to the tax, health and pension benefits of marriage. The cases, which are expected to reach the U.S. Supreme Court, have drawn national attention from Catholic and other religious leaders, who say the Defense of Marriage Act passed by Congress and signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1996 "reflects the unified judgment of Congress and the president on a matter of basic public policy." Judge Joseph Tauro of the U.S. District Court in Boston ruled in 2010 that the law forces Massachusetts to discriminate against same-sex couples who are legally married under state law in order to receive federal funds and unconstitutionally violates the rights of those couples. The Defense of Marriage Act says the federal government defines marriage as a union between one man and one woman and that no state must recognize a same-sex marriage from another state. In February 2011, President Barack Obama instructed the Department of Justice to stop defending the law in pending court cases.

■ Holy Land pilgrimages on rise and could increase during Year of Faith



Christian pilgrims touch the Stone of Unction, which commemorates the anointing of Jesus before his burial, inside the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

Fear of violence in the Middle East has not kept pilgrims away from the Holy Land, according to U.S. Franciscan priests who frequent the sites commemorating the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus. Any hesitancy to visit these places is "overcome by faith and interest," said Franciscan Father Jeremy Harrington, commissary and guardian of the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in Washington. The holy sites, he added, remain safe places to visit despite unrest in the region. Father Harrington also is sure the number of pilgrims will increase during the

AROUND THE WORLD

■ Can business lead to holiness? Promoting virtue in the executive suite

In an effort to help businesses stay strong and healthy and avoid the occupational hazards of greed, overwork and exploitation, the Vatican's justice and peace council has released a handbook for business educators and entrepreneurs. "Vocation of the Business Leader: A Reflection" is a 30-page primer from the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace that spells out the risks of unethical economic strategies and the principles needed for running a sound, moral business. It seeks to make the so-called "divided life" of Catholic employers, who may practice their Christian values at home and church, but not in the company they manage or run. "Dividing the demands of one's faith from one's work business is a fundamental error which contributes to much of the damage done by businesses, including overwork to the detriment of family or spiritual life, an unhealthy attachment to power to the detriment of one's own good and the abuse of economic power in order to make even greater economic gains," the booklet says.

PEOPLE

■ Cuban-born priest renowned for his ministry in U.S. declared venerable

The Vatican has declared as venerable Father Felix Varela, a 19th-century Cuban priest who worked in New York for many years and also lived in Florida. Both the New York and Miami archdioceses, where there are many proponents of Father Varela's sainthood cause, announced the declaration Easter Sunday, April 8. It recognizes the priest lived heroic Christian virtues and is the first official step on the priest's path to sainthood. During Pope Benedict XVI's March 26-28 visit to Cuba, he praised Father Varela as "a shining example" of the contributions a person of faith can make in building a more just society. The March 14 decree from the Congregation for Saints' Causes declaring Father Varela venerable cited the priest's own words at a time of upheaval in Cuba that ultimately led to the nation's independence: "I want to be a soldier of Christ. My purpose is not to kill men, but to save souls." Father Varela died in exile in the United States in 1853.



Father Felix Varela is depicted in an illustration from a U.S. postage stamp issued in his honor in 1997.

Father Varela died in 1853.

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

By the Way...

Overheard during the Easter Vigil regarding the people's responses to the new translation of the *Roman Missal*: "I almost don't remember what we used to say." It's been nearly five months since the first use of the new translation of the missal began on the first Sunday of Advent. Years of planning and months of catechesis have helped make it a positive experience for many.



Jason Koshinski

Gannon University will hold its spring commencement May 5 at Tullio Arena in Erie. Bishop Donald Trahan will be the ceremony's keynote speaker. He will also receive an honor from the university—its Ut Diligatis invictus award—which was also bestowed upon Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

A committee of priests has been formed to review and make recommendations on how the Diocese of Erie can mark the *Year of Faith*—Oct. 11, 2012 through Nov. 24, 2013—which coincides with the fifth anniversary of the publication of the Second Vatican Council's *Decree on the Pastoral Work of the Laity* and the 20th anniversary of the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has also released the apostolic letter, "Porta Fidei," which contains recommendations for a variety of celebrations at various levels for the Year of Faith.

St. Mary of Grace Parish in Meadville hosted a parish social ministry conference March 24. The conference began with Mass offered by Father Marc Solomon which was followed by an educational program. More than 10 parishes were represented at the gathering.

"It was an opportunity for our volunteers to reconnect and share ideas," said Erin Landini-Grogan, director of Catholic Charities' Parish Social Ministry.

The conference brought together leaders from a number of Parish Care and Concern programs. On the agenda, volunteers discussed a number of items that can be homemade and sent to missions, particularly in Africa and the Diocese of Erie's Mission of Friendship in Yucatan, Mexico.

Next Sunday, the fourth Sunday of Easter, is also the *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*. The U.S. bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations has an excellent website at www.FORYourVocation.org for discerning men and women, parents, educators and youth leaders.

Last chance to get involved with two diocesan events:

The 17th annual Catholic Charities Ball will be held on Friday, April 27 at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie.

Proceeds benefit families in need throughout the diocese. Tickets are \$85 per person. For tickets, call 814.824.1250 or visit www.ErieRCD.org.

The annual middle school youth rally will be held Sunday, April 29 at St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 E. Grandview Blvd., in Erie. The rally will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. for youth in grades 6, 7 and 8. Visit www.onthevine.us for details, forms and other information.

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

Catholics urged to resist unjust laws, join in 'fortnight for freedom'

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — American Catholics must resist unjust laws "as a duty of citizenship and an obligation of faith," a committee of the U.S. bishops said in a new statement on religious liberty.

Titled "Our First, Most Cherished Liberty," the 12-page statement by the Ad Hoc Committee on Religious Liberty also calls for "a fortnight for freedom" from June 21, the vigil of the feasts of St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More to July 4, U.S. Independence Day.

"This special period of prayer, study, catechesis and public action would emphasize both our Christian and American heritage of liberty," the committee said. "Dioceses and parishes around the country could choose a date in that period for special events that would constitute a great national campaign of teaching and witness for religious liberty."

Pubic April 12, the document was approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Administrative Committee during its March meeting for publication as a committee statement.

The ad hoc committee opened

its statement with several "concrete examples" of recent threats to religious liberty, saying that "this is not a theological or legal dispute without real-world consequences."

Cited first was the Department of Health and Human Services' mandate that most health plans must include contraception, sterilization and some abortion-inducing drugs free of charge, even if the employer is morally opposed to such services.

"In an unprecedented way, the federal government will both force religious institutions to facilitate and fund a product contrary to their own moral teaching and purport to define which religious institutions are 'religious enough' to merit protection of their religious liberty," the statement said. "These features of the 'preventive services' mandate amount to an unjust law."

Among other examples of "religious liberty under attack" the bishops named:



CNS photo

Fireworks light up the sky around the U.S. Capitol and Washington Monument on Independence Day last year. In a new statement released April 12, an ad hoc committee of the U.S. bishops outlined examples of threats to religious liberty and urged Catholics to resist unjust laws. It called for "a fortnight for freedom" from June 21 to July 4 for prayer, study and public action emphasizing the Christian and American heritage of liberty.

■ An attempt by the Connecticut legislature in 2009 to restructure Catholic parishes.

■ Discrimination against Christian students on college campuses.

■ Government actions in

Boston, San Francisco, the District of Columbia and the state of Illinois that have "driven local Catholic Charities out of the business of providing adoption or foster care services" because the agencies would not place children

with same-sex or unmarried heterosexual couples.

■ A New York City rule that bars small church congregations from renting public schools on weekends for worship services, while allowing such rentals by nonreligious groups.

■ Changes in federal contracts for human trafficking grants that require Catholic agencies "to refer for contraceptive and abortion services in violation of Catholic teaching."

The bishops also distinguished between conscientious objection and an unjust law.

"Conscientious objection permits some relief to those who object to a just law for reasons of conscience — conscientious being the most well-known example," the committee said. "An unjust law is 'no law at all.' It cannot be obeyed, and therefore one does not seek relief from it, but rather its repeal."

The statement called on "American foreign policy, as well as the vast international network of Catholic agencies" to make "the promotion of religious liberty an ongoing and urgent priority."

The bishops assigned special responsibility for advancing religious freedom to several groups:

■ Those who hold public office must "protect and defend those fundamental liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights," regardless of their political party.

■ Leaders of Catholic hospitals, universities and social service agencies "who may be forced to choose between the good works we do by faith, and fidelity to that faith itself" were encouraged to "hold firm, to stand fast and to insist upon what belongs to you by right as Catholics and Americans."

■ Priests must offer "a catechesis on religious liberty suited to the souls in your care," a responsibility that is shared with "writers, producers, artists, publishers, filmmakers and bloggers employing all the means of communications."

In addition to the "fortnight for freedom" June 21 to July 4, the bishops designated the feast of Christ the King—Nov. 25 this year—as "a day specifically employed by bishops and priests to preach about religious liberty, both here and abroad."

To read the full text of "Our First, Most Cherished Liberty: A Statement on Religious Liberty," visit the diocesan web site at www.ErieRCD.org.

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Good Shepherd Sunday
We say thanks to our retired diocesan priests for their faithful service. Provide them with the same love and generosity they gave us for generations.

Collection: April 28-29

Briefly

'How to Find True Love,' a program for middle school students at St. George, Erie

ERIE — Generation Life, a group of young people building a culture of life, will present "How to Find True Love," a program for middle school students, on Monday, April 23 at 7 p.m. at St. George Parish, 5145 Peach St. in Erie.

For questions or more information, contact Sister Josephine Vuodi, FSO, at 814.864.0622.

Small faith-sharing communities

The diocesan Office for Small Communities is sponsoring an experience of prayer and reflection for all those involved in parish small communities—facilitators, group members, core teams, etc. The topic will be "Small Christian Communities and the Eucharist: Preparing for Sunday Mass." This time of reflection will assist participants in their understanding of how our gathering in small faith sharing groups deepens our experience of the Sunday liturgy.

The program will be presented at the following locations. Events are scheduled from 7 to 9 p.m. unless otherwise noted:

- Wednesday, April 25 at St. Mary of Grace, Meadville
- Wednesday, May 2 at St. Calixtus, Kane
- Thursday, May 3 at St. Marys Youth Center, St. Marys from 10 a.m. to noon
- Thursday, May 3 at St. Mark, Emporium
- Monday, May 14 at Our Lady of Mercy, Harborcreek
- Saturday, May 19 at St. Joseph, Sharon from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 22 at Notre Dame, Hermitage
- Wednesday, May 23 at St. Mark Catholic Center, Erie

Other sites may be scheduled at the request of a parish. Please contact presenters Sister Nancy Fischer, SSJ, at 814.824.1217 and Kathy Higgins at 724.704.7654.

Ordination of transitional deacon – April 28

A seminarian for the Diocese of Erie will take another step toward priesthood. Bishop Donald Trautman will ordain seminarian David Renne (Ss. Cosmas and Damian Parish, Punxsutawney) into the order of the diaconate during a 10:30 a.m. Mass on Saturday, April 28 at St. Mark Seminary Chapel, 429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie.

Renne is a third year theology student studying for the priesthood at Saint Vincent Seminary in Latrobe.

Erie DAWN art auction

ERIE — Erie DAWN (Dwelling & Advocacy for Women in Need) will host its fourth annual art auction Thursday, May 3 from 5-7:30 p.m. at the Erie Art Museum.

With a theme of "Come Fly With Me," more than 25 one-of-a-kind birdhouse creations will be auctioned off by local artists. Music will be provided by Red Hot Rag Cutters. Cost is \$20 per person.

Tickets, call 814.453.5921, visit www.eriedawn.org or register at www.facebook.com/ErieDAWN.

Erie DAWN is a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Benedictine Sisters of Erie.

35th annual Clearfield rosary march

CLEARFIELD — The 35th annual Clearfield rosary march will be held Sunday, May 6 at 3 p.m. at the Clearfield Fair Grounds.

The rosary march is sponsored by the Clearfield St. Francis Chapter of the World Apostolate of Fatima (The Blue Army). The guest speaker will be Father Ladis Czik.

Father Czik served as the national executive director and vice president of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima, USA (World Apostolate of Fatima) from 2000 to 2003. During that time, he was also the editor of Soul magazine, the official publication of the Blue Army USA. He is a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

For more information about the rosary march, call 814.765.0171.

Tajci concerts in Harborcreek, Erie

Singer/songwriter Tajci will return to the Diocese of Erie for two concerts.

■ Tajci will perform "I Do Believe" Wednesday, May 9 at 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Mercy Parish, 837 Bartlett Road in Harborcreek. The concert is a story of Tajci's personal journey with Scripture passages as milestones that have marked her path. Tajci tells her story of living in Communism, learning about the healing power of music, becoming a teenage pop music superstar and leaving it all behind to find greater purpose in life.

■ Tajci will perform "Let It Be—Mary's Story" Thursday, May 10 at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Parish/Bread of Life Community, 147 W. 24th St. in Erie. The performance presents the story of Jesus through the eyes of Mary.

These events are free. Donations will be accepted. For more information on Tajci or to see and hear her perform, visit www.idobelieve.com.

Preschool Open House

Sunday, April 29
1:00-3:00 pm



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* Sponsored Ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

St. Joseph in DuBois recognized as oldest active Lithuanian Catholic parish in U.S.

ST. JOSEPH, from page 1

Father Michael Urbanis (1915-1968), who came from the Diocese of Cincinnati, Ohio, was also a Lithuanian immigrant. Father Urbanis oversaw the construction of the present church in 1924 and established both a grade school and high school during his long tenure as pastor.

After declaring his findings, Chernoski decided to visit DuBois in September 2011. His visit coincided with a regional meeting of the Knights of Lithuania hosted by Council No. 86 at St. Joseph.

The Knights of Lithuania is an organization of Roman Catholic men and women of Lithuanian ancestry and their spouses in the U.S. A fraternal organization, the Knights aim to keep alive an appreciation of the Lithuanian language, customs and culture while also stressing the importance of Roman Catholic beliefs.

In addition to the presence of the Knights of Lithuania, the Lithuanian flag is displayed at a side altar at St. Joseph. A sign on the front of the church also announces that St. Joseph is a Lithuanian Catholic church.

"DuBois has a very ethnic flavor," Chernoski said. "There's a Polish American club and a Swedish American club. There was a Lithuanian club that closed several years ago, but the building is still there."

Upon further research during his visit to DuBois, Chernoski said he discovered that he was related to Father Urbanis.

"He was my maternal grandmother's first cousin," Chernoski said. "I never knew him, but that was interesting. He's 100 percent Lithuanian. It's unusual in today's Catholic hierarchy for a priest to be a pastor of a parish for 50 years. That's a long time."



Rosemary McClosky, a native of St. Joseph Parish in DuBois, poses with a picture of the school's first class from 1930. McClosky graduated in 1942 and will mark the 70th anniversary of her high school graduating class this year.

Among the characteristics that make up a Lithuanian Catholic parish, Chernoski said two things stand out: The celebration of the feast of St. Casimir (March 4), who was king of Lithuania, and a display of the Lithuanian flag. St. Joseph's celebrates St. Casimir's feast on March 4.

St. Joseph's cemetery also has a number of wooden crosses, another indicator of Lithuanian heritage.

"Lithuanian's love wayside crosses," Chernoski said.

Father David Foradori, pastor of both St. Joseph and St. Michael the Archangel parish-

es in DuBois, said the parishioners of St. Joseph both past and present have done well to keep the heritage and faith of the parish alive.

"It's a great thing for history and for the Lithuanians who built up this parish for 125 years," Father Foradori said.

Rosemary McClosky was born and raised in DuBois. She attended school at St. Joseph in 1930, the first year it started.

"The school and I both started at the same time," said McClosky, who now lives in Erie.

Her maiden name is Kvederis, which became Kveder in English. Her late husband's name was originally Maklauskas in Lithuania.

McClosky's parents were born in the U.S. while her grandparents were immigrants.

In June, she will celebrate the 70th anniversary of her high school's graduating class of 1942. The class of 10 included two boys and eight girls in a small classroom setting.

"The nuns taught us," McClosky said. "That was our salvation. It was like being tutored personally. And Father Urbanis was an amazing man. It was just a wonderful way to grow up."

McClosky recalls a good percentage of the hymns at St. Joseph were sung in Lithuanian while she was growing up. She still has the Lithuanian hymnal that one of the nuns gave her. She also performed in plays in Lithuanian about St. Agnes and St. Cecilia.

With numerous closures and mergers to date, Chernoski said he recognizes that many parishes had to close in order for St. Joseph to become the oldest Lithuanian Catholic church in the U.S.

"The bishops have to do what they have to do," he said. "The mission to preserve the ethnic heritage of the parishes is our job. We need to start attending and start contributing. It's up to all of us to rally around St. Joe's."

Clergy basketball team uses hoops to highlight priesthood, vocations

RUNNIN' REVS, from page 1

the white smoke the night Blessed John Paul II was elected pope. He also studied and ministered in the Holy Land, ran a basketball clinic in Brazil and coached Kennedy Catholic High School's girls

basketball team for 16 seasons including a state championship in 2001.

"I grew up on the west side of Warren and was able to experience everything I have because I

said yes to the call of the priesthood," said Father Tomason, who is the president of DuBois Central Catholic Schools and pastor of St. Bernard Parish in Falls Creek.

Guys that are gifted athletically typically have the opinion that their gifts are mutually exclusive from the priesthood, Father Tomason said.

"We all have different gifts in different areas. The priests on this team, even though we're priests we're still athletes. That's part of who we are. And God wants the totality of who we are, even if we're called to the priesthood."

Embracing sports and using the basketball game is another

way to get young people to think about their vocation and for parents to encourage them, Father Tomason said.

"God may be calling," he said. "You have to ask yourself if you're willing to answer."

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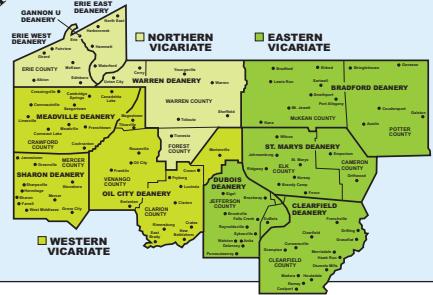
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AROUND the ERIE DIOCESE



Clarion students participate in silent retreat

CLARION — Several students from Clarion University Campus Ministry made a silent retreat during spring break March 9-11 at the Abbey of the Genesee in Piffard, N.Y. Students participated in the Liturgy of the Hours with the monks and other retreatants.

Pictured left to right are Sister Marian Wehler, OSB, Todd Garrett, Lisa Kopczik, guestmaster Father Jerome, campus minister Pam Gent, Jess Lash and Colleen O'Neil.



Blessed Sacrament teacher receives Golden Apple Award

ERIE — Maricarol Schoenfeldt, who teaches 7th and 8th grade science at Blessed Sacrament School in Erie, was presented with the JET-TV/Edinboro University Golden Apple Award March 7.

The Golden Apple Award honors area educators who have made a positive impact upon the youth of the community. Students submit a written nomination explaining why they are nominating a teacher. Each week during the school year, JET-TV visits an area school to announce the winner. Every Wednesday, the weekly winner is featured in a special story on Action News24.

Schoenfeldt was nominated by student **Mark Leone**.

"Mrs. Schoenfeldt is my favorite teacher because she makes school more interesting," Leone wrote in his nomination letter. "She even brings animals into school to make school a little



more amusing. I've only been in her class four months and I know it will be a fun year. When she teaches she relates her lessons to some real life stories she shares with us. From what I see five days a week, Mrs. Schoenfeldt loves to teach."

Pictured left to right are Schoenfeldt, Sherri Kurczewski, principal of Blessed Sacrament, and Leone.

Living Stations at St. Bonaventure, Grampian

GRAMPIAN — Religious education students at St. Bonaventure Parish in Grampian participated in the parish's annual presentation of the Living Stations on Good Friday at noon. Each of the students represented a different biblical character present during Christ's Passion and crucifixion. This year, all Grampian area churches were invited to attend this moving reenactment.



RETREAT FOR PRIESTS JUNE 11-JUNE 15, 2012 'WHEN THE CATHOLIC SUN SHINES, THERE'S MUSIC, LAUGHTER AND GOOD RED WINE'

PRESENTED BY: FR. RICHARD GIELOW, C.M.
Fr. Gielow is a priest of the Vincentian DePaul Society for the Missions and Education and was Rector and Principal of St. John Vianney High School Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. He has traveled extensively in his current role as the Director of the Vincentian Parish Mission Center. Fr. Gielow will be speaking on the joys and sorrows of the priesthood and will share what he has learned from priests in his travels across the country.

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All parishes, missions, schools and groups are encouraged to choose a **correspondent** who can regularly e-mail news items to "Around the Erie Diocese" at mailto:FaithLife@ErieRCD.org

Photo Tips

Quick, important tips for taking good digital pictures.
<http://www.ErieRCD.org/faithlife.asp>



Elk County students learn about Divine Mercy

ST. MARYS — Father Anthony Gramlich, MIC, of Stockbridge, Mass., recently visited the students of the Elk County Catholic School System. Father Gramlich was in St. Marys presenting a four-day parish mission on Divine Mercy at Sacred Heart Parish.

He celebrated Mass with the students of St. Marys Catholic Middle School and Elk County Catholic High School and later spoke to them about Divine Mercy and the story St. Faustina. Father Anthony also celebrated Mass with the students of St. Marys Catholic Elementary School and afterward gave the children rosaries, pamphlets and prayer cards instructing them how to pray the Divine Mercy chaplet.

As a token of their thanks, several SMCES students presented



Father Gramlich with a box of chocolates from Goblin Chocolates of St. Marys. Pictured (left to right) with

Father Gramlich are students Grace Keyes, Joseph Wolfe, Anna Keyes, Emily Wolfe, Mark Kraus and Audrey Dornisch.

Passion play at St. Patrick School, Franklin



FRANKLIN — Multigrade classroom teacher Paula Klinger's students performed a Passion play for schoolmates, families and parishioners at St. Patrick School in Franklin just before Easter.

Mgr. John Herbein, pastor, summed up the experience, telling the students this was by far the most moving Passion play he had ever witnessed. The play, set to the music of "Jesus Christ Superstar," "Godspell" and "Johnathan Livingston Seagull," featured 3rd grader Isaak Ghering as Jesus.



Shadow Stations at St. Michael School, Greenville

GREENVILLE — Mary Pat McParland's 4th grade class at St. Michael School in Greenville traditionally performs the Shadow Stations, a moving display of Christ's Passion and death, for the school and parish during Holy Week.

The students perform in the stations as well as narrate them—both shown at right.

The full display can be viewed on the school's website at www.saintmichael1.org under the "SMS in Photos" tab.



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