

## A message of hope

Pope Benedict XVI visits Mexico, Cuba, page 2.



# FaithLife

## Academic bingo

Catholic schools of Elk Co. use game to donate to area organizations, page 4.



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BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

April 8, 2012

## Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

### Feast days



Divine Mercy



St. Anselm

April 15 Divine Mercy Sunday

April 21 St. Anselm

### Confirmations

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

**St. Catherine of Siena, DuBois** — Saturday, April 14 at 10 a.m. Confirmation classes include St. Joseph, DuBois; St. Michael the Archangel, DuBois; St. Catherine of Siena, DuBois; and St. Bernard, Falls Creek.

**St. Agatha, Meadville** — Saturday, April 14 at 5 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Bridget, Meadville; St. Mary of Grace, Meadville; and St. Agatha, Meadville.

**St. Boniface, Kersey** — Sunday, April 15 at 1 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Joseph, Force, and St. Boniface, Kersey.

**St. Tobias, Brockway** — Sunday, April 15 at 4 p.m. Confirmation classes include Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sykesville; St. Mary, Reynoldsville; and St. Tobias, Brockway.

**St. Joseph, Warren** — Monday, April 16 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include Holy Redeemer, Warren; St. Joseph, Warren; St. Anthony, Sheffield; and St. Luke, Youngsville.

**Holy Cross, Fairview** — Thursday, April 19 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Lawrence the Martyr, Albion, and Holy Cross, Fairview.

**St. Eulalia, Coudersport** — Friday, April 20 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Gabriel the Archangel, Port Allegany, and St. Eulalia, Coudersport.

**St. Francis of Assisi, Clearfield** — Saturday, April 21 at 10 a.m. Confirmation classes include St. Timothy, Curwensville; St. Bonaventure, Grampian; St. Mary, Frenchville; and St. Francis of Assisi, Clearfield.

**St. Cosmas and Damian, Punxsutawney** — Saturday, April 21 at 4:30 p.m.

**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.

## By his resurrection, Christ gives us a new beginning

An Easter message from Bishop Donald Trautman

dead Jesus was carried into a tomb on Good Friday but walked out alive on Easter Sunday morning.

What does the resurrection mean to us? What does the resurrection say to people struggling to live their faith in a secular society? What does the resurrection say to those bearing the cross of illness or loneliness, financial worry or broken relationships?

By his resurrection, Jesus has taken the trials and tragedies of life and turned them into new hope and life. By his victory on the cross and in the tomb, the risen savior demonstrates that he is the way, the truth and the life. By his resurrection, Christ gives us a new beginning. Jesus reveals the triumph of love over hate, the triumph of mercy over anger and selfishness.

We may not always be optimistic about our life, but we need never be without hope, for Christ has risen and is with us and can change our lives. We must bond with the risen Lord so that we might share in his

victory. Nothing can satisfy our longing for happiness short of the friendship and love of the living Lord.

The proof of Easter is in the changed lives of people from Mary Magdalene and Peter and Paul to Francis of Assisi, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Dorothy Day, Damien of Molokai and countless other disciples. The proof of Easter is in the story of witnesses and martyrs and heroic missionaries and ordinary individuals surrendering themselves to the living Lord each day.

Their lives are made new through the transforming power of the risen Christ. It is the risen Jesus who made the difference. The same risen Lord can make the difference also in our lives.

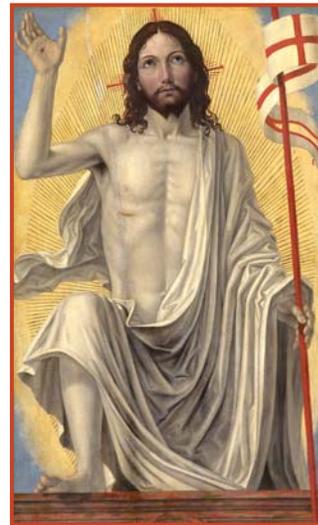
What does the risen Christ mean for us? Easter tells us we cannot live the same as before. Easter is for conversion. Because of the risen Christ we now have new priorities, new hope for handling disappointments and sorrows and crosses. Sinners have a new way of seeking happiness. The empty tomb tells us that we have a new beginning and we have new strength that comes from the risen Lord.

The resurrection proclaims that God has the final word. Good Friday was for a day, but Easter is forever. Amen.

— Donald W. Trautman



Bishop Donald Trautman



CNS photo

The resurrection is depicted in "Christ Risen from the Tomb," a painting by Italian Renaissance artist Bergognone. The artwork is from the Samuel H. Kress Collection at the National Gallery of Art in Washington.

## For RCIA candidates, Easter means receiving fullness of faith

By Jason Koshinski  
FaithLife editor

ERIE — During Lent and the Easter seasons, the faithful turn away from sin, begin anew and discover Christ and his church in a new way.

This year, the conversion experience is particularly true for the 64 catechumens and 112 candidates in the Diocese of Erie. After participating in the Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA) at their parishes, they receive the sacraments of initiation—baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist—at the Easter Vigil, April 7.

Those participating in the diocese this year include:

■ 64 catechumens, those seeking baptism and the sacraments of initiation into the church.

■ 79 candidates who are already baptized but seeking membership in the Catholic Church.

■ 33 candidates who are previously baptized Catholics completing the sacraments of initiation—penance, Eucharist and confirmation.

For the past few years, the Catholic Connection Youth Ministries in Erie has been a catalyst for a conversion experience for a number of teens. The tri-parish youth ministry includes teens from Blessed Sacrament, Sacred Heart and St. Andrew parishes.

Last year, 10 youth and one adult became Catholic through the youth ministry's RCIA program. This year, there are five youth and one adult.



Members of the RCIA class and staff from Catholic Connection Youth Ministries, pictured left to right (first row) Jesse Spanogle (youth minister), Vicki Klemm (assistant youth minister), (second row) Tiffani Jones, Abby Beaman, Craig Manley (youth leader), (third row) Don Marteeny, Abby Turner, Betsy Gailey and Charlie Sullivan (youth leader).

"These youth come willingly to us through our program and have asked to become Catholic," said Jesse Spanogle, director of Catholic Connection. "Each situation is unique. They come from different faith backgrounds or none at all. It is amazing to see young people so eager to learn about our faith."

Abby Beaman is one of those ap-

proach my faith, my life."

She then started RCIA classes with several other teens.

"They've definitely helped me along the way," Beaman said. "It's a lot more fun. The experience is richer. I really feel at home and comfortable there."

Beaman and four other youth are furthering their studies and will be confirmed next year. But they plan to attend the Easter Vigil at St. Andrew, which they've designated as their home parish to support Don Marteeny, an adult from the RCIA class who was confirmed.

"It's really encouraging," said Msgr. Richard Sullivan, pastor of St. Andrew. "It's keeping the focus on youth ministry. There's a lot of joy. They'll certainly bring a lot of vibrancy to the Easter Vigil."

Spanogle said community, the sacrament of reconciliation and the Eucharist are the main reasons why the youth have asked for the fullness of the faith.

"Our program has helped young people feel welcomed into our church and find the richness they need to draw closer to Christ," he said.

A team of youth ministers, priests and young people who mentor in the program help the candidates feel welcomed, he said.

"This program developed out of a need and we feel we are answering God's call to these young people," Spanogle said.

## St. Callistus students recognized for rosary project

KANE — Students in the 7th grade religious education class at St. Callistus Parish in Kane were featured in the April/May 2012 issue of *Catechist* magazine, a national publication, for their project on the mysteries of the rosary.

"Realizing that many students memorize prayers but don't think about the meaning of the words, I wanted to try a visualization activity," Catechist Michele Smith said. "I wanted students to understand the meaning of the mysteries—not just say the words. So I decided to have students think of symbols that would represent each mystery."

Students made their symbols out of construction paper and displayed them on poster boards. Students then used posters and handouts to teach the rest of the class about the mystery, the Scripture verse(s), and the meaning of the symbol. Then the posters were displayed in the classroom.

Some symbols the students came up with included a handshake for the visitation, praying hands for the agony in the garden, a cross in the clouds for the ascension and a shell with water drops for the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan.

By choosing their own symbols, Smith



Pictured with their mysteries of the rosary posters and the article in *Catechist* are (left to right) Olivia Blackmore, Alyssa Zampogna, Sarah Carlson, Nicole Buhl, Jennifer Cecchetti, Angela Cecchetti, Laurel West, Marcie Stanish, Frank Truden and Sadie Tunall.

said students better understood the mysteries.

"Because students were actively involved

in the lesson, they now have a unique understanding of the mysteries of the rosary," she said.

## Bishop Trautman celebrates 50th jubilee

ERIE — Bishop Donald Trautman will celebrate the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood with a Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Peter Cathedral.

Bishop Trautman will be the celebrant for a public Mass at 5:15 p.m. on Tuesday, April 17 at the cathedral, 10th and Sassafras streets in Erie.

All are invited to attend the public reception at Gannon University's Morosky Center, located directly across Sassafras Street from the cathedral which will be held immediately following the Mass.

The bishop was ordained to the priesthood on April 7, 1962 in Innsbruck, Austria.

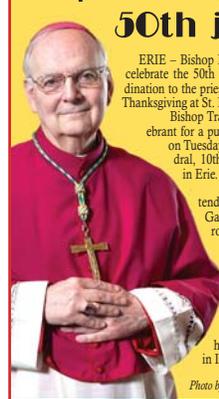


Photo by Mark and Deb Fainstein

## IN THE U.S.

### ■ Courthouses, statehouses sites for religious freedom rallies across U.S.

Tens of thousands of people gathered March 23 in front of U.S. courthouses, state capitols and historic sites to support religious freedom and protest a federal mandate they say violates that freedom by requiring most religious employers to provide no-cost contraceptive coverage even if it is contrary to their beliefs. All of the events, held at noon local time in 143 cities, were part of a nationwide "Stand Up for Religious Freedom" rally organized by the Pro-Life Action League in Chicago and Citizens for a Pro-Life Society, based in Michigan. About 63,000 people participated, according to organizers. The website <http://standupforreligiousfreedom.com> lists the crowd size for all cities. Spokesman Tom Ciesleka said that numbers reported on the website were gathered from local media estimates and, where available, counts verified by local city or park officials. Approximately 140 people attended a rally in Erie at the Erie Federal Courthouse.

### ■ Relics of St. John Neumann visit Washington as one of last four stops

A 15-month "year" celebrating the 200th birthday of St. John Neumann and the anniversary of his ordination as bishop of Philadelphia made a stop in Washington March 28, which would have been the saint's 201st birthday and the 160th anniversary of his episcopal ordination. Relics of St. John Neumann came in a reliquary made specifically for the anniversary to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, where an afternoon of veneration of the relics was bookended by two Masses. St. John Neumann was the first Redemptorist priest sent to America. Born in the modern-day Czech Republic, he was the first American male saint. He also is regarded as the founder of the Catholic parochial school system. St. John Neumann knew four languages before he came to the United States, and learned English, French, Italian and Gaelic to minister to Catholic immigrant populations.



St. John Neumann

## AROUND THE WORLD

### ■ Pope earmarks Holy Thursday collection to aid Syrian refugees

Pope Benedict XVI has decided the collection taken up at his Holy Thursday evening Mass will be used to offer humanitarian aid to Syrian refugees. The Pontifical Mission for Palestine — the Vatican's emergency relief agency for the Middle East — estimates it would cost \$20 million to care for all the Syrian refugees now in Jordan. According to the

mission, the only incoming funds so far have been a half million dollars donated by the Irish government to provide aid for all Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan. Each year, the pope chooses where to send the collection taken up during the Mass of the Lord's Supper at the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the cathedral of the Diocese of Rome.

### ■ Vatican OKs blessing rite for unborn children

Just in time for Mother's Day, U.S. Catholic parishes will be able to celebrate the new Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb. The Vatican has given its approval to publication in English and Spanish of the new rite, which was approved by the U.S. bishops in November 2008, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops announced March 26. The blessing will be printed in both languages in a combined booklet. The blessing was prepared to support parents awaiting the birth of their child, to encourage parish prayers for and recognition of the gift of the child in the womb and to foster respect for human life within society. It can be offered within the context of Mass as well as outside of Mass, and for an individual mother, a couple or a group of expectant parents.

### ■ In World Youth Day message, pope urges young people to find joy in Christ

Pope Benedict XVI called on young people to not pursue power, money and prestige, but to find true joy in Christ and to live a life of generous service to others. In his message for World Youth Day 2012, he told the world's young Catholics to start making the world a better, more just and humane place right now, even while they continue to pursue their studies, talents and interests. The Vatican and most dioceses around the world marked World Youth Day on Palm Sunday, April 1. International celebrations of World Youth Day are normally held every two-three years. In the message, the pope chose the theme from St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians: "Rejoice in the Lord always." The pope said: "Joy is at the heart of the Christian experience." In a world marked by so much sorrow and anxiety, "joy is an important witness to the beauty and reliability of the Christian faith." He told young people to recognize that the many temptations and false promises of modern-day culture veer people away from true and lasting happiness.



Teens gathered at the diocesan high school youth rally at Villa Maria Academy in Erie, Nov. 19.

## By the Way...

Happy Easter!

**Bishop Donald Trautman**, who marks 50 years as a priest this year, will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving on Tuesday, April 17 in honor of the occasion. The public Mass is scheduled for 5:15 p.m. at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie. All are welcome to attend.



Jason Koshinski

The bishop, who studied for the priesthood at the University of Innsbruck in Austria, was ordained April 7, 1962.

The confirmation season in the Diocese of Erie is in full swing. Bishop Trautman's schedule is booked solid from March through June then picks up again in the fall. (A two-week glimpse of the demanding schedule can be found in the Church Calendar on Page 1.) It marks the beginning of another busy time of year during which the bishop will put the bulk of more than 35,000 miles on his car visiting parishes throughout the 13-county diocese.

More than 350 students are already registered for the middle school youth rally on April 29 at St. Mark Catholic Center in Erie. The theme for the rally is "I Have Seen the Lord." (John 20:18) The day will feature faith and fun, with Mass and adoration along with a tug-of-war tournament and extreme obstacle course. Perhaps **Father Steve Schreiber**, director of youth and young adult ministry, will show everyone how it's done on the Velcro sticky wall.

Contact your youth leader, religious education leader or campus minister for registration information. Cost is \$30 and includes all registration fees, food and a rally T-shirt. Visit [www.onthevine.us](http://www.onthevine.us) for details, forms and other information.

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

Enjoy a star-studded Erie version of "Dancing with the Stars." Help Catholic Charities honor **John and Bridget Barber** with the Helping Hands Award for service to their church and community. A silent auction will offer more than 40 packages.

Proceeds benefit families in need throughout the Diocese of Erie. Tickets are \$85 per person. For tickets, call 814.824.1250 or visit [www.ErieRCD.org](http://www.ErieRCD.org).

It seems that **Pope Benedict XVI's** recent trip to Cuba is already bearing fruit. Vatican spokesman **Father Federico Lombardi**, SJ, announced April 2 that Cuban authorities have immediately accepted a request by the pope to **President Raul Castro** to make Good Friday a holiday.

The decision was in effect for the April 6 commemoration of Jesus' Passion and death. Father Lombardi called the decision "a very positive sign."

Jason Koshinski is editor of FaithLife. Contact him at [JKoshinski@ErieRCD.org](mailto:JKoshinski@ErieRCD.org) or 814.824.1171.

## Pope offers message of hope in visit to Mexico, Cuba

By Catholic News Service

HAVANA — Visiting Latin America for the second time in his pontificate, Pope Benedict XVI offered a message of hope for social progress rooted in a revival of Catholic faith during a trip to Mexico and Cuba March 23-28.

The overriding message of the pope's public statements during his three days in Mexico, March 23-26, was that this troubled country, and the region in general, cannot solve their problems — which include poverty, inequality, corruption and violence — by following the prescriptions of secular ideologies. Instead, the pope said, peace and justice in this world require a divinely inspired change in the human heart.

Arriving in Mexico, Pope Benedict said he came as a "pilgrim of faith, of hope and of love," promoting the cause of religious freedom, social progress and the church's charitable works.

Celebrating an outdoor Mass at Guanajuato Bicentennial Park March 25 for an estimated crowd of 640,000, Pope Benedict told a nation and a continent suffering from poverty, corruption and violence, to trust in God and the intercession of Mary to help them bring about a "more just and fra-

ternal society. When addressing the deeper dimension of personal and community life, human strategies will not suffice to save us," the pope said in his homily. "We must have recourse to the one who alone can give life in its fullness, because he is the essence of life and its author."

The pope bade Mexico a warm "adios," emphasizing he meant, "remain with God," concluding a trip marked by outpourings of faith and affection from people in the world's second-most populous Catholic country.

During his four-day trip, Pope Benedict received the keys to the cities of Leon and Guanajuato and met with Mexican President Felipe Calderon. He also greeted Mexicans who lost loved ones to violence.

Pope Benedict began his three days in Cuba with a call for greater freedom and human rights, including increased liberty for the



Pope Benedict XVI meets with Cuba's former President Fidel Castro at the apostolic nunciature in Havana March 28.

Catholic Church to proclaim the Gospel and serve the Cuban people. Upon his arrival, the pope told the crowd, "I come to Cuba as a pilgrim of charity, to confirm my brothers and sisters in the faith and strengthen them in the hope which is born of the presence of God's love in our lives."

Pope Benedict told Cuban President Raul Castro that Blessed John Paul's 1998 visit inaugurated "a new phase in the relationship in Cuba between church and state in a new spirit of cooperation and trust," but he also said, "many areas remain in which greater progress can and

ought to be made, especially as regards the indispensable public contribution that religion is called to make in the life of society."

The pope also met privately with Castro and asked the Cuban leader for further freedoms for the Catholic Church in Cuba and attention to certain "humanitarian" situations.

Entrusting people to Mary's maternal care is a normal Catholic practice, but when Pope Benedict XVI prayed that Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre would wrap her golden mantle around the people of Cuba, it was particularly poignant. For 400 years, Cubans — believers and nonbelievers alike — have brought their sorrows and joys before the little statue of Mary, and even Cuba's communist rulers have claimed her as a cultural icon of the Cuban struggle for freedom and equality.

When Pope Benedict visited the Virgin's shrine March 27, he joined the thousands of pilgrims marking the 400th anniversary of the discovery of the statue, and he echoed the prayers of many of them for a future marked by less poverty and greater freedom.

"I have entrusted to the mother of God the future of your country, advancing along the ways of renewal and hope, for the greater

good of all Cubans," he said.

Pope Benedict met former Cuban President Fidel Castro in the apostolic nunciature in Havana March 28 and answered the ailing former leader's questions.

The pope said Fidel Castro, who was raised a Catholic, asked about the reasons for the changes in the liturgy after the Second Vatican Council, about the role of the pope and about the pope's thinking

about the larger philosophical questions weighing on the minds of people today. The meeting lasted about 30 minutes.

Preaching at Mass in Havana's Revolution Square, location of the headquarters of Cuba's Communist Party, the pope called for full religious freedom and greater respect for human rights on the island.

"In Cuba steps have been taken to enable the church to carry out her essential mission of expressing the faith openly and publicly,"



the pope said during his homily March 28. "Nonetheless, this must continue forward."

Preparing to leave Cuba, Pope Benedict made his first reference to the U.S. embargo of the island and the embargo's impact on the country's poor.

The Vatican has criticized the U.S. embargo as a measure that has not forced Cuba's communist government to respect human rights, but instead has had a devastating effect on the Cuban people, especially the poor.

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# Briefly

## Divine Mercy services at St. Ann, Erie

ERIE - Our Mother of Sorrows Parish in Erie will hold two Divine Mercy events at St. Ann Church, 10th Street and East Avenue in Erie.

"The Life of St. Maria Faustina Kowalska," a one-hour movie, will be shown on a large projection screen on Wednesday, April 11 beginning at 7 p.m. This is the full story of Helen Kowalska, who became the apostle of Divine Mercy and was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2000.

The movie was filmed in Rome, Krakow, Warsaw, Czestochowa and in her birthplace of Swince. Father Seraphim Michalenko, MIC, vice postulator of her sainthood cause, narrates.

Divine Mercy services will be held at St. Ann Church on Sunday, April 15. Confessions will be heard beginning at 1:45 p.m., the Divine Mercy chaplet and rosary will be recited at 2:30 and Mass is at 3:15. The guest homilist will be Father James McCormick. Preliminary hymns will be sung at 2 p.m. by the Divine Mercy choir.



## SSJs to host Earth Day event

ERIE - The Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania will host Little Acts of Green, an Earth Day event, Sunday, April 22 at 2 p.m. at the Sisters of St. Joseph, 5031 West Ridge Road in Erie.

Little Acts of Green is an eco-friendly event that ties into the national Earth Day 2012 effort, Mobilize the Earth.

The event will include a prayer service and an opportunity for participants to virtually sign (via computer stations that will be available) the St. Francis Pledge, a promise and a commitment by Catholics to live out the faith by protecting God's creation and by advocating on behalf of people in poverty who face the harshest impacts of global climate change.

Participants are asked to bring empty plastic disposable water bottles which will be recycled. Donors will receive a ticket to enter a special prize drawing featuring eco-friendly gifts for each water bottle they bring.

RSVPs are encouraged by calling 814.836.4054.

## Annulment information sessions

Staff members from the Diocesan Tribunal Office will conduct several sessions this spring to explain the process of petitioning for a declaration of nullity (annulment). Those who have been divorced and wish to remarry in the Catholic Church are encouraged to attend.

Please feel free to call the Tribunal at 814.824.1140 with any questions.

The spring sessions, held each evening at 7 p.m., include:

- Tuesday, April 24 at St. Francis of Assisi, Clearfield
- Tuesday, May 1 at St. Bernard, Bradford
- Monday, May 7 at St. Mark, Lawrence Park
- Thursday, May 10 at St. Joseph, Warren
- Tuesday, May 15 at St. Agatha, Meadville

## Scott Hahn to speak in DuBois

DUBOIS - Dr. Scott Hahn, bestselling author and professor of theology and Scripture, will speak at DuBois Area Middle School on Saturday, April 28.

Doors open at 9:30 a.m. with the first talk beginning at 10. Presentation topics include the heavenly liturgy described in the Book of Revelation, Jesus leaving us the Mass and the power of confession.

For tickets or information, contact Tillie at 814.371.4116, Marie at 814.375.4667, Ben and Peggy at 814.781.1633, Bill at 814.371.1765, Coletta at 814.772.3101 or Jeff at 814.541.4913. This event is sponsored by The Holy Family in St. Marys.

## Retreat for women

REYNOLDSVILLE - The Rural House of Mercy in the DuBois Deaneery will offer a retreat for women on Saturday, May 5 from 9:30 a.m. to noon at St. Mary Parish social hall in Reynoldsville.

Sister Teresa Okonski, RSM, will be the presenter. The morning's theme will be "On Being Holy and Just."

If interested, contact the Sisters of Mercy at the Rural House of Mercy in Jefferson County at 814.434.6029 (Sister Trish Tyler, RSM), or 814.746.1455 (Sister Margie Park, RSM) or e-mail ruralhouseofmercy@yahoo.com.

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**Greece/Turkey:** Sept. 8-20 **Tuscany:** April 25-May 06, September 03-14, September 22-October 03

**France:** May 1-13, July 3-15, September 11-23, September 25-October 07, Oct. 09-21, Oct. 23-Nov. 04

**France/Portugal/Spain:** June 30-July 12, Sept. 1-13, Sept. 8-20, Sept. 22-Oct. 4, Oct. 6-18, Oct. 20-Nov. 1

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# DEATH NOTICES

## Sister Ann Prisco, RSM

Sister Ann Prisco, RSM, 79, died March 23, 2012 at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse in Erie. She was in her 62nd year of religious life.

She was born April 12, 1932, in Hornell, N.Y., the daughter of the late Nicholas and Angelina Falco Prisco. Sister Ann entered the Sisters of Mercy from St. Ann Parish in Hornell on July 1, 1950. She received the religious habit in 1951 and was given the name Sister Mary Nicholas, she later returned to her baptismal name,



Sister Ann Prisco, RSM

Ann. Sister Ann professed her final vows August 2, 1956. She celebrated her golden jubilee in 2000 and her diamond in 2010.

She received a bachelor's degree in elementary education

from Mercyhurst College in 1965 and had further studies at St. John's College, Cleveland, and New Platz University, New Platz, N.Y.

During her years of active ministry, Sister Ann was a primary teacher at a number of diocesan schools: St. Titus and St. Walburga, Titusville; St. Michael, Greenville; Immaculate Conception, Brookville; St. Thomas and Damian, Punxsutawney; St. Luke, Erie; St. Thomas, Corry; St. Hedwig and St. Boni-

face, Erie; St. Michael, Fryburg; St. Catherine, DuBois; and St. Justin in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Sister Ann also served as a religious education coordinator and pastoral minister at St. Basil the Great, Coalport, and St. Luke, Erie.

She coordinated the Prayer Shawl Ministry at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse for several years and also was the infirmiry driver for the elderly sisters at the motherhouse.

## Sister Mary Benedict Irish, OSB

Sister Mary Benedict Irish, OSB 98, died March 25, 2012 at Mount St. Benedict Monastery in Erie.

Born in Decatur, Ill., and baptized Ann Katherine, Sister Benedict was one of four children born to Charles and Emma (Bone) Irish.

She entered the Benedictine Sisters of Holy Family Priory, Benet Lake, Wis., on December 8, 1950. She lived as an oblate until beginning her canonical novitiate in 1956 and pronounced her perpetual vows in



Sister Mary Benedict Irish, OSB

1960. In 1986, the Benedictine Sisters of Benet Lake began a merger process with the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, which was completed in 1991.

Sister Benedict celebrated her golden jubilee in 2007.

During her years of ministry at Benet Lake, Sister Benedict worked primarily in daycare, both as a teacher and director, and as a teacher in religious education. She served the community as a member of the formation team, an appointed council member and as liturgist.

Before pursuing her degree, Sister Benedict also gained experience in the operation of a print shop and publication sales facility.

With a bachelor's degree in English literature from Domini-

can College, Orangeburg, N.Y., along with library coursework and a love for reading, Sister Benedict became the priority's librarian. Eventually, she became the librarian at St. Benedict's Abbey of Benet Lake, Wis., a position she held for 17 years. After transferring to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Sister Benedict continued her work as the monastery librarian.

Most recently as an infirmiry resident, Sister Benedict engaged in the ministry of prayer and presence at the monastery.

## Sister Christine Quirk, SSJ

Sister Christine Quirk, SSJ, 86, died March 28, 2012. She was in her 64th year of religious life.

Sister Christine was born in Erie on August 27, 1925, the daughter of the late Johan and Carrie (Mangues) Quirk. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Patrick Parish in Erie on March 19, 1949, professed her final vows in 1954 and celebrated her 60th anniversary of religious life in 2008.

Sister Christine graduated from the Villa Maria Academy in Erie in 1943. She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Villa Maria College, Erie, in 1947 and a master's degree in English from Marquette University in 1959. She further studied English at the University of Michigan. She attended a Japanese cultural exchange program in Omiya, Japan, an American studies program at Eastern Baptist College and studied journalism at the University of Minnesota on a *Wall Street Journal* fellowship.



Sister Christine Quirk, SSJ

Peter grade schools in Erie and at Villa Maria Academy where she also chaired the English Department. She taught at St. Francis High School in Clearfield and chaired its English Department. She was an assistant professor at Villa Maria College and she taught at Bradford Central Christian High School in Bradford and chaired its English Department. Other ministry work includes serving as director of the congregation's junior sisters and assistant director of social and religious programs at St. Joseph

Apartments in Erie. She served as alumnae director at Villa Maria College and Gannon University. She held positions of publication consultant for Saint Mary's Home; manager of Sycamore Gallery, Erie; auditor in the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal;

and director of communications for the Sisters of St. Joseph. She taught English as a Second Language (ESL), a ministry she began through the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network in 2000. She retired from active ministry in the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal; in 2009.

**TURKEY AND HAM DINNER AND QUILT SHOW/SALE**

**Sunday, April 22, 2012**  
Serving 11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
St. Joseph Parish Center, Leavitt

Adults: \$7.50, Children: \$3.50  
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Council #11818 Sacred Heart

**"Knight" Out**

**Saturday, April 21 from 6-11p.m.**  
Sacred Heart Auditorium, 25th and Liberty Streets

Donation: \$10 per person  
Tickets available at the door or in advance at the rectory

For information: Joe Gaeta at (814) 454-1412  
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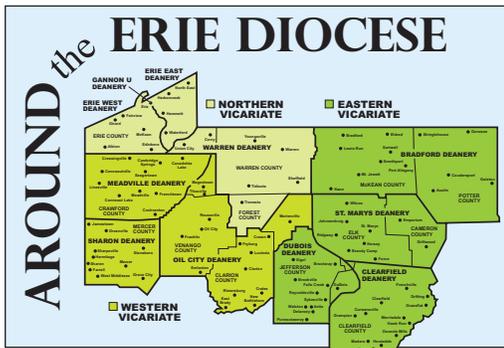
**17TH ANNUAL CATHOLIC CHARITIES BALL**

Erie Bayfront Convention Center  
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**BLESSINGS IN BLOOM**



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>



**Lenten signs and crosses at St. Michael School, Greenville**

GREENVILLE – Students in Emily Zgonc's 5th grade class at St. Michael School in Greenville recently created Lenten signs and crosses made from sticks for a class project.

Pictured left to right are (front row) Caroline Hoovler, Owen Cianci, Carly Fattman, (back row) Alex Harpst, Amy Smith, Cassie Hockett and Leese Groce.



**DuBois Central Catholic Middle School students stage annual Passion play**

DUBOIS – DuBois Central Catholic Middle School's 6th graders staged their annual reenactment of the Stations of the Cross during Holy Week. Creating a Passion play is the final project on their semester study of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Four performances were planned for Holy Week.

Students offered the Stations four times for audiences including the DCC elementary students and staff, residents of Christ the King Manor and secondary students and staff. They also did a performance for their families and the general public.

Cast members for this year's Passion play at DCC included (left to right): (first row) Alexander



Adamski, Jessica Tomasko, Jeremy Ayrault, Meghan Graeca, Madison Barnett, Madison Nasuti, Matthew Ishman, Brenna Engle, (second row) adviser Star Young, Lauren Usaitis, Alexandra Angheloiu, Sabrina Spencer, Brooke Gornati, Kendra Hindman, Caitlyn Drahushak, Rebecca Liddle, Julie Marchioni, adviser Nicole Snyder, (third row) adviser Michael Micknis, Nick Flasher, Abigail Zeitzer, Thomas Grecco, Brayden Ross, Anthony DePello, Cameron Stom, Carolyn Sette and Cecilia Tomatore.

**Seder meal at Holy Redeemer, Warren**

WARREN – Catechist Arlene Papalia held a Seder meal March 18 for her 8th grade religious education class at Holy Redeemer Parish in Warren.

Seder is the traditional Passover dinner celebrated by the Hebrews since the Exodus. It is the Hebrew Thanksgiving, giving thanks to God for deliverance and redemption. It is also the dinner Jesus ate with his disciples at the Last Supper. The class enjoyed a simple adaptation of the Jewish Passover meal.

Pictured are students along with Msgr. John Lucas, pastor of Holy Redeemer, around the Seder meal table.



**Catholic schools of Elk Co. donate to area organizations**

ST. MARYS – The Catholic school students of Elk County kicked off Catholic Schools Week by giving back to their community through the contribution of several charitable donations.

The participating schools included St. Marys Catholic Elementary and Middle schools and Elk County Catholic High School in St. Marys, St. Boniface School in Kersey and St. Leo School in Ridgeway.

A Mass at Queen of the World Parish in St. Marys was followed by the students in all five schools spending the day together. The day was filled with service-oriented activities, one of which benefited five local organizations.

A game of academic bingo was held, and each student donated \$1 to play. Each organization was designated a collection container and when students won bingo, they received tickets to place in the containers of their choice.



The benefiting non-profits included CAPSEA, the Benedictine Sisters of Elk County, the Salvation Army, the Christian Food Bank and the Elk County Humane Society.

When the final votes were tallied, the Elk County Humane Society was designated the winner as they finished with the most tickets in their container. They

were awarded \$218, and the four other organizations each received \$100.

Pictured left to right are Peyton Stoltz, Alayna Renwick, Father Michael Ferrick, president of the Elk County Catholic School System, Karen Cappiello, representing the Elk County Humane Society, Lexi Knight, Rachel Keller and Logan Hoffman.

**Students at St. Timothy, Curwensville, learn about St. Joseph during retreat**

CURWENSVILLE – The 4th, 5th and 6th grade religious education students of St. Timothy Parish in Curwensville participated in a St. Joseph retreat March 18. The feast of St. Joseph is March 19.

The retreat began with the students viewing a DVD on the life of St. Joseph. Following the movie, they each made a St. Joseph prayer card (as seen on the table in the photo) with their own written prayer to St. Joseph on the back. They then made a lily (the symbol of St. Joseph) and developed their own shields reflecting their personal call to holiness based on the life of St. Joseph.

Pictured left to right are: catechist Doe Augustine, Taylor Welker, Mason Gasper, Jacob Skebo, Hailey Sheeder, Matthew McCracken, Rachel LeGars, Brennan McCracken, Macin Sheeder, catechist Ronda Hamilton, Allison Hoover and Father Mark Mastrian, pastor of St. Timothy.

Also pictured are the completed projects from the St. Joseph retreat, including the prayer cards and shields made by the students.



**Blessed Sacrament students take part in science fair**



ERIE – Joan Blackman's 5th and 6th grade students from Blessed Sacrament School in Erie participated in the diocesan science fair March 22 at Villa Maria Elementary School in Erie.

Pictured left to right are: (first row) Katie Rose, Camdyn Lan-

dahl, Demarko Polk, Ryan Rzepecki, Morgan Byers, (second row) Colin O'Brien, James Colvin, Zachary Bratton, Peter Frisina, Abby Johnson, Kailey Orlando, (third row) Anthony Wiodarczyk, Laura Lintelman, Bella Parks and Tyler Ackman.

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