

Dance the night away

Dancers are gearing up for a competition at the 20th annual Catholic Charities Ball on May 30. PAGES 1, 3



FaithLife



POPE TWEET

Pope Francis
@Pontifex

"Beware of getting too comfortable! When we are comfortable, it's easy to forget other people."

www.ErieRCD.org

BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

May 17, 2015



Devastation in Nepal. CNS photo

Collection for Nepal

May 16-17

The 7.8-magnitude quake that killed more than 7,000 people in Nepal last month has devastated already poor communities.

Bishop Lawrence Persico has asked all parishes in the Diocese of Erie to take up a special collection for Nepal May 16-17. Funds raised will go directly to Catholic Relief Services, the official international humanitarian agency of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

"Our hearts go out to the many, many people who have lost not only home and livelihood, but also family members and friends," the bishop said in a letter announcing the special collection. "As Catholics, we know that it is not enough simply to have pity for those who are suffering. We are called to prayer and to action by that suffering."

Giving, said Bishop Persico, is "a concrete act of solidarity."

The USCCB already has provided relief to 10,000 families in affected areas. A CRS team is on the ground in Kathmandu, the capital city and one of the most affected areas. One of CRS's local partners, Caritas Nepal, is distributing food and shelter.

Learn more about Catholic relief efforts at www.pacatholic.org.

Gearing up for Charities Ball

FAITHLIFE

Connie Shoop, the official dance instructor for the Diocese of Erie's Catholic Charities Ball, calls out instructions to celebrity dancers gearing up for the May 30 event at the Bayfront Convention Center.

"Don't hang on! Be able to see the bend of your arm! Keep in contact!" Shoop says as the neophytes take a practice spin on the ballroom dance floor at the home of Emmy Nolan in Erie.

This is the eighth year that Shoop has offered her expertise, free of charge, to local celebrities participating in the ball's dance competition. She is happily prepping dancers to do the East Coast swing step to Mark Ronson's "Uptown Funk," featuring Bruno Mars.

"I tell the dancers, 'It's for charity, so have fun,'" says Shoop, who operates Connie's Ballroom Dance in Erie.

This year's honorary chaircouple is Charlie and Annie Rutkowski, while Frank and Mary Therese Riley will receive the Helping Hands Award for their outstanding service to the church and community.

This year's host couple is David and Mary Therese Ciachini.

For more details and photos, go to page 3.

Retreat to a hermitage in the woods

BY ANALIDA BRAEGER
Special to FAITHLIFE

About a year ago, certain events forced me to stop and evaluate my life. Where was I going? What was I doing? Why did I feel so stressed? I realized my life was lacking peace and direction. I knew I needed to recharge, regroup and restart, but I didn't know how.

Finally, I approached a co-worker and jokingly asked, "Hey, do you know of a good monastery where I can go hide out for a weekend?"

To my surprise, she answered: "Oh, yeah. I know just the place you need."

Not only did she tell me about a perfect spot for a weekend retreat, but it was practically in my backyard; a rustic and secluded cabin along East Lake Road in Harborcreek. Owned and operated by the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, the cabin—or hermitage—is one of three located in the woods adjacent to the monastery.

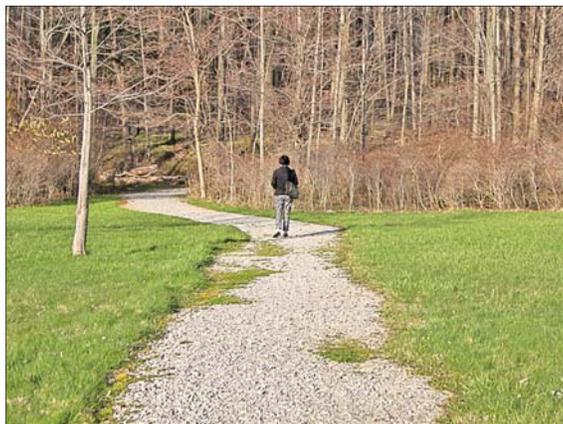
I had driven by the monastery many times, but never knew the hermitages existed. (I guess that's the point of seclusion.) That same day, I called the order's hospitality director, Sister Jean Wolbert, OSB, and reserved one.

Two months later (alas, even the search for inner peace has to be scheduled), I found myself inside a rustic getaway on a lovely spring afternoon. I left my car in the parking lot behind the monastery, unloaded the trunk, and carried my two bags up the uneven dirt path flanked by towering trees. The walk was short but symbolic. I even had to cross a small bridge. The metaphor was not lost on me: to find inner peace one must leave behind all distractions; one must cross a bridge.

Slowly, I ascended the worn wooden steps to the front porch. A cheery welcome mat with pictures of sunflowers and bird houses greeted me. The only discernible noise came from birds chirping and the sporadic buzz of a beige refrigerator.

The cabin, all 400 square feet, was cozy, simple and welcoming. It was equipped with all the modern amenities: a kitchen with an oven, microwave, pots and pans and silverware; a living room; a bedroom, with linens supplied; a prayer room; and a bathroom. I guess this is a good time to confess that I brought my

RECHARGE REGROUP RESTART



Contributed photos

The path to peace can be found during a stay at one of three hermitages on the grounds of Mount Saint Benedict Monastery in Harborcreek. Here, Analida Braeger, freelance writer, walks toward her favorite weekend getaway.

own feather pillow. Some things I can't give up, not even for a weekend aimed at finding inner peace.

Outside was a faded wooden bench facing a gnarled tree. I emptied my head of all troubling thoughts, concentrating instead on my senses, the earthy smells, the soft breeze, and the sound of silence. For the first time in months, I allowed myself to admire the beauty of God's creation.

I spent an entire weekend without a cell phone, a television or a radio. I read, wrote, took naps, drank hot chocolate and cooked simple meals all in quiet solitude.

I came to realize that what I really needed was simplicity. I reveled

in waking up in the stillness of the woods and making a cup of coffee that I could drink in blissful peace. For the first time in a long time, the coffee was not ready for me when I walked into the kitchen. You guessed it, no programmable appliances in this place.

I have been to the hermitage a total of three times now. I look forward to going there in the same way that others feel awaiting the ar-

rival of an old friend. Every spring, I have it reserved to recharge, regroup and restart.

Analida Braeger works in the Humanities Department at Mercyhurst University. In her spare time, she and her husband, Tom, cook and write a food blog that explores recipes, food, culture, history and languages. Their articles and recipes can be found at www.ethnicspoon.com.

To learn more about these getaways, ask for Sister Jean Wolbert, OSB, at 814-899-0614, ext. 2503, or visit:

www.eriebenedictines.org/listening-point

Path to priesthood



Photo by Anne-Marie Walsh

On the Feast of St. Mark April 25, two men from the Diocese of Erie took another step toward the Catholic priesthood.

David E. Carter, far left, and James P. Power, far right, were ordained deacons during a ceremony in the chapel of St. Mark Seminary in Erie.

They are pictured with Bishop Emeritus Don-

ald W. Trautman and Bishop Lawrence T. Persico.

Currently, the Rev. Mr. Carter is studying at St. Vincent Seminary in Latrobe. His home parish is Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Erie.

The Rev. Mr. Power is studying at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore. His home parish is St. Patrick in Erie.

Spell 'magnolia'

FAITHLIFE

Can you spell "magnolia"?

Sixth-grader Nina Mangini, a student at St. James School, Erie, correctly spelled the name of the flowering plant to win the annual Diocese of Erie Spelling Bee May 5 at St. Mark Catholic Center.

Nina won \$100 for her efforts. Reflecting on what she'll do with the money, Nina thought for a second and said, "I'll probably donate it to some charity or something."

Nina competed against 18 other fourth-through sixth-graders from Catholic schools throughout the diocese. They all had won spelling bees at their respective schools.

"All of these kids won their local bees, so they are all winners already," said Kim Lytle, director of curriculum for the Catholics Schools Office.

Coming in second place was Andrew Kolodychak, a fifth-grader from Our Lady of Peace School, Erie. He won \$75. Third-place honors went to Maria Werner, a sixth-grader from DuBois Central Catholic Middle School, DuBois, who won \$50.



Photo by Mary Solberg

The top three winners of the annual Diocese of Erie Spelling Bee pose after the 21-round competition in May. Left to right are: Maria Werner, third place; Nina Mangini, first; and Andrew Kolodychak, second place.

Defending the pope

ROME (CNS)—New Swiss Guards march after their swearing-in ceremony at the Vatican May 6. Thirty-two recruits were sworn in on the anniversary of the 1527 attack in which 147 Swiss soldiers died defending the pope.

Pope Francis told Swiss Guards that he should always be armed with a pocket-edition of the Gospel and a rosary.



CNS photo

Newsmakers



Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world

from Catholic News Service

■ Cardinal Dolan calls Catholics and Jews to build unity

NEW YORK (CNS)—Catholics and Jews risk losing their hard-won interfaith amity if they take ecumenism for granted and fail to pass it along to a new generation of seminarians and laity, Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York said in an address May 6 at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

The cardinal spoke about 50 years of substantive interactions that began with *Nostre Aetate* ("In Our Time"), the Second Vatican Council's declaration on relations with non-Christian religions promulgated by Blessed Paul VI in 1965.

He told the audience at the annual John Paul II Center Lecture for Interreligious Understanding that St. John Paul II trusted the Jewish community enough to invite it to become an ally "in the No. 1 priority of his pontificate, to recover the primacy of the spiritual."

The late pope believed, Cardinal Dolan said, that Jews were the church's most natural ally and shared his sense of urgency.

■ Italian nun accompanies displaced South Sudanese

MALAKAL, South Sudan (CNS)—When the shooting stops, it's eerily silent in Malakal. The quarter-million people who once lived here have dispersed to other cities or countries, or to the nearby U.N. base where they live behind barbed wire and heavily armed soldiers, or to simply living in the bush, trying to stay out of the path of the several armed groups ravaging the countryside.

Yet, amid the silence, a small voice once again speaks. The "Voice of Love" radio station is part of the Catholic Radio Network, a group of feisty communicators who

have braved everything from intolerant officials to outright war to keep hope alive in the world's newest nation.

The Malakal station stays on the air because of Italian Comboni Sister Elena Balatti, who refuses to let it be quieted. She has focused on keeping the radio on the air, and when that isn't possible, helps minister to the needs of thousands of people who sought refuge in the town's Catholic cathedral.

"We tried to operate the radio in between one period of fighting and another," she said.

When staffers do broadcast, it's mostly music and programs focused on peace.

"We choose songs of love and peace, music in the languages of this area, convincing people that it's possible to live together without the killing and violence," said Adam Christopher, a staff member.



CNS photo

Comboni Sister Elena Balatti is pictured in an April 10 photo in Malakal, South Sudan, where she directs the embattled "Voice of Love" Catholic radio station.



Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

Jesuit Father Joe Scharf, a priest from the Jesuit Retreat House in Parma, Ohio, came to Erie 21 years ago this month to preside at my wedding.

The night before, at my husband's and my new home, he presented us with a large statue of the Blessed Mother.

"Oh, wait," Father Joe said, pointing to another item in the box. "Look at this! It's a halo that goes on top of her head...and it spins."

My husband, who is Lutheran, admits to not understanding the delight Father Joe and I took at the spinning halo. The statue—painted with stunning blues and a life-like face—was perhaps the most beautiful I had ever seen. And since it was May—the month of Mary—it was all the more meaningful.

The occasion, however, pointed to the distinctly different experience that non-Catholic Christians have with Mary. Of course, we all believe she is the mother of God, but Catholics, in particular, view her as a great intercessor on our behalf before her Son.

Why do Catholics pray to Mary? Why do Catholics call Mary "the mother of God"? Why do Catholics give so much attention to Mary?

These and other questions are addressed in "11 Questions Answered About Mary," an article published May 10, 2015, in *Our Sunday Visitor*. The story can be found by searching "11 questions" at www.osv.com.

• • •

Jean Vanier, the founder of L'Arche, an international network of communities where people with and without intellectual disabilities live and work together as peers, has won the prestigious 2015 Templeton Prize.

The force behind L'Arche, Vanier came to the diocese in October 1990, when I had the good fortune to speak to him along with Benedictine Sister Anne McCarthy.

During that visit, he wore a blue jacket, corduroys, and a red and green flannel shirt. It befit the unpretentious man that he is. The things he talked about then are chillingly appropriate today.

"You can't ask a country to be nonviolent if it isn't beginning in the home," he told Sister Anne and me. "The danger today is we see nonviolence as only a political reality."

At 86, Vanier lives on the grounds of the original L'Arche community in Troisy-Breuil, north of Paris, and continues to speak on behalf of people with disabilities. He has broadened his focus to nurturing dialogue and unity among Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and other faiths.

When he received the Templeton Prize, Vanier still sounded the same as 30 years ago. "Before being Christians or Jews or Muslims, before being Americans or Russians or Africans, before being generals or priests, rabbis or imams, before having visible or invisible disabilities, we are all human beings with hearts capable of loving."

Previous recipients of the Templeton Prize have included Mother Teresa, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Desmond Tutu.

• • •

Congratulations to 906 students who received undergraduate, master's and doctoral degrees at Erie's Gannon University on May 9. It was a record-breaking number of degrees conferred at Gannon.

This year's commencement speaker was Father Thomas Rosica, CSB, who made his second trip to Erie since 2013.

Father Rosica just completed his tenure as president of Assumption University in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. He was asked by the Vatican in April 2013 to serve as English-language assistant to the Holy See Press Office, relating on a daily basis with English-language media around the world.

Mary Solberg is the editor of *FaithLife*.

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War on Christianity persists in the 21st century



Guest Commentary
Father John Neff



CNS photo

Several people attend a Mass at a church south of Cairo to remember the 21 Christians beheaded by ISIS in February.

Twenty-one men in orange jumpsuits were paraded before cameras in Libya three months ago. Singled out for simply being Christians, their ISIS captors beheaded them, one by one, for no other reason than professing Jesus as Lord.

It seems that the international media already has gone on to cover other news, but the horrific scene on that beach in Libya in February should never disappear from our collective conscience. The threat of terrorism by Islamic extremists—such as ISIS—occurs every day. In other parts of the Middle East and Africa, Christians have been killed, kidnapped or sold into slavery. Some 2,000 Christians were killed in Nigeria alone. What will be the next atrocity?

This war on Christianity is making new martyrs. Granted, most Muslims are not terrorists, but many acts of terrorism today are carried out by those who claim to be following the teachings of Islam which call for a holy *jihad* to be waged against those who think and act differently.

According to CNN, the city of Mosul in Iraq had a Christian population of more than 60,000 before being overtaken by Muslim terrorists. Now, virtually no Christians remain in the city. Before that, in Egypt, many Coptic Catholic churches were attacked, looted and destroyed. The motto of these

terrorists is simple and chillingly to the point: "Convert or die."

This is 21st-century Christian genocide, plain and simple. The cross of Christ is still carried in many parts of the world.

Radical, militant Islam is an oppressive and violent version of one of the world's largest religions. Some believe that "holy *jihad*" is a teaching of the Koran that says Muslims are commanded by Allah to wage war against the "infidel."

Certainly, many—if not most—don't subscribe to this interpretation of the Koran. But those who do are committing unspeakable atrocities against Christians (and fellow Muslims) under the banner of their faith.

These are not crazy people; they're intelligent, functional people on a mission. ISIS and other terrorist groups believe that if they fight for Allah on earth, they will be rewarded in the hereafter.

From a Christian perspective, this threat of evil in all its facets has been with us from the beginning; it continues to this day. It may or may not consist of beheadings, car bombings or drive-by shootings. But the prince of darkness will use whoever and whatever it takes to challenge, confront and even attack a Christian's faith in Jesus Christ.

There is an old English proverb attributed to Sir John Hayward: "There is none so blind as those who will not see. The most deluded people are those who choose to ignore what they already know."

History tells us that we must never close our eyes to the suffering of others, especially innocent men, women and children martyred for their faith.

Father Neff is the pastor of St. Luke Catholic Church, Youngville, and St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Sheffield.

When Pope Francis tweets, the world listens

ROME (CNS)—According to "Twiplomacy," a study of the Twitter accounts of world leaders and their retweet rates, U.S. President Barack Obama has the most Twitter followers, but Pope Francis' @Pontifex is the most influential Twitter account.

The pope's average "retweet" and "favorite" rate is more than eight times higher than Obama's. By this standard, Pope Francis is by far the most influential "tweep."

Get in on the buzz by following Pope Francis at @Pontifex and the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference at @PACatholic.



CNS photo

Pope Francis must keep up with technology. Here, he launches a smartphone app during an audience with national directors of pontifical mission societies. Holding the iPad for the pope is Oblate Father Andrew Small, national director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States.

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It's time for the Charities Ball

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

This year's celebrity dancers at the Charities Ball are:

- Emily Chiappazzi, executive meetings manager at the Sheraton Erie Bayfront Hotel
- Karen Groshek, advancement specialist/event planner at Mercyhurst Preparatory School, Erie
- Allison Hodas, cash management officer, Erie Bank Florists
- Justin Carter, reporter, WICU-TV 12
- Rick Cole, Rick Cole Physical Therapy
- Father Jason Feigh, campus minister, Cathedral Preparatory School
- Mike Mischler, head football coach, Cathedral Prep.

There is still time to consider attending this year's Charities Ball. Reservations can be made by calling 814-824-1258 or visiting www.ErieRCD.org/charitiesball.asp



above: Connie Shoop, center, of Connie's Ballroom Dance, gives dancing tips to Kathy Wayman and Cindy Gonzales, both at left, and Mike Mischler. at right, above: David and Mary Therese Ciacchini, left, and Annie and Charlie Rutkowski meet near the Bayfront Convention Center in preparation for the May 30 Charities Ball.



Photos by Mary Solberg



at right, bottom: Frank and Mary Therese Riley, this year's recipients of the Helping Hands Award, volunteer at the Bishop's Breakfast Program in downtown Erie.

News Briefs

Evening of prayer and music in DuBois

DuBois—There will be an evening of prayer and music May 17, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at St. Michael the Archangel Church, 15 Robinson St., DuBois. The event will include a homily, Scripture reading, Benediction, and prayers for healing with Deacon Paul Boboige of the Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh. For more information, contact Judy Smart at 814-637-5930 or Rich Kenawell at 814-771-7932.

Sophomores, juniors invited to apply to Gannon's Summer School of Excellence

ERIE—Gannon University's Regional Summer School of Excellence encourages students interested in the sciences and those who would like to study the health effects related to environmental issues to apply for its July 6-17 program.

Students from the tri-state area who are current high school sophomores and juniors may participate in intensive laboratory and field site study in the life sciences. Students work aboard Gannon University's research vessel, the *Enviro-naut*, while studying Lake Erie and Presque Isle Bay. There is no cost to participate; lunches are provided free of charge. Apply by June 8.

For more information, contact Stanley J. Zagorski at 814-871-7641 or email him at zagorski001@gannon.edu. For an application, visit www.gannon.edu/campgannon.

Camp Notre Dame hosts open house

FAIRVIEW—The board of directors, administrators and staff of Camp Notre Dame, 400 Eaton Road, Fairview, invite any interested families to attend an open house on Sunday, May 31, from 1 to 3 p.m.

A Mass will be celebrated in the dining hall at Camp Notre Dame at 12:15 p.m. Learn more about resident and day camping for children ages 4 to 16. Visit www.campnotredame.com for more information.

Knights of Columbus hold 'Measure Up' campaign to benefit people with disabilities

ERIE—For the 37th consecutive year, the Knights of Columbus in Pennsylvania are conducting their spring "Measure Up" campaign to raise funds for state and local chapters of The Arc, a national network of affiliated non-profit organizations for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

To give, send a check made payable to K of C Measure Up, to The Arc, 1062 Brown Ave., Erie, PA 16502. Last year's Measure Up campaign in Pennsylvania netted more than \$150,000. The Knights have raised more than \$5.6 million for The Arc in Pennsylvania over the past 36 years.

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OBITUARIES

Founder of Community of Anawim dies

FRENCHVILLE—Sister Therese Dush, CA, the founder of the Community of Anawim in the Diocese of Erie, died April 27 at the age of 83.

She truly lived out her motto: "Love can do all things."

She grew up in Irishtown, Pa., and was active in her home parish of St. Bonaventure in Grampan.

At 17, she entered the Sisters of Mercy in the Diocese of Erie, on June 25, 1949. She received a bachelor's degree in elementary education at Mercyhurst University, Erie, and taught at many parish grade schools in the diocese.

She also taught religious education for students at all levels. She went on to obtain a master's degree in administration elementary education. She loved children and young people and impacted the lives of thousands of them through her years as a teacher and grade school principal (St. Catherine School in DuBois, and St. Francis in Clearfield).

Sister Therese had a great love for the

poor. She began missionary outreach to the poor with diocesan youth, first in Kentucky in 1972, and later when she founded Young People Who Care Mission in Clearfield County in 1976. She was the visionary leader of Young People Who Care for nearly 40 years, providing direct service to the poor in their homes.

She expanded its services to include the following: Marian House, an emergency shelter for women and children; two Life Line offices serving the needs of pregnant women and infants; a used clothing outlet; and Bethany Adult and Youth Retreat Centers in Frenchville.

She completed both a master's degree in counseling through Penn State University, and formation in spiritual direction from

the Jesuit Renewal Center in Cincinnati. As a spiritual director and a counselor, she helped transform the lives of many adults in the areas of spiritual and personal growth. Her guidance and inspiration also helped to found the Susquehanna Rural Free Clinic in Frenchville.

She founded the Community of Anawim in 1984, transferring her religious vows to this new community while still remaining closely associated with the Sisters of Mercy.

Survivors include her brother and sister-in-law, Joseph and Anna Dush; and many nieces and nephews.

A Mass of Christian burial was held at Bethany Retreat Center in Frenchville, with Msgr. Charles Kaza as celebrant and Father Jerry Simmons as homilist. Interment followed at the Bethany Retreat Center Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to Young People Who Care Ministries, P.O. Box 129, Frenchville, PA 16836.



Sister Therese Dush, CA

Sister Rita McNulty, SSJ, devoted life to nursing

Sister Rita McNulty, SSJ, formerly Mary Emilie McNulty, died on April 27 in the 62nd year of her religious life. She was 79.

She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph on Aug. 15, 1953, and professed her vows in 1959.

Sister Rita received a bachelor's degree in nursing from Villa Maria College, Erie, a master's in nursing from Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., and a doctorate in nursing practice from Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland.

Her most recent ministry was at Villa Maria School of Nursing, Gannon University, where she held an adjunct faculty position since January 2012. Previously, she was a full-time faculty member at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western. She also worked as a nurse practitioner at Buckeye Health Center and at University Hospitals of Cleveland. Prior to her position at Case, she created a nurse practitioner position at Saint Mary's Home of Erie, where she served for 14 years.

She taught nurse practitioner skills to the nursing faculty at the University of Zimbabwe in Africa for 10 weeks in 1997.

In 1974, she earned nurse practitioner certification at the University of Rochester.

She was the first nurse practitioner in northwestern Pennsylvania. She taught at Niagara University; the University of Pittsburgh, where she also practiced as a nurse practitioner; and the University of Michigan, where she held a joint appointment in the School of Nursing and the School of Medicine. She also taught a School Nurse Practitioner Program at Villa Maria College.

Sister Rita served on the Board of the Ohio Association of Advanced Practice Nurses and was a member of Sigma Theta

Tau International Honor Society of Nurses and its local chapter. She was an active member of several nursing organizations, having been published in numerous nursing journals. She served as a member of Northwest Regional Action Coalition.

Earlier ministry assignments included teaching at Villa Maria College School of Nursing; Spencer Hospital School of Nursing in Meadville; and Villa Maria Elementary School and Holy Rosary School, both in Erie. She also served as a nurse at Spencer Hospital.

Survivors include a brother, John, and his wife, Mary; five nieces and nephews; and many friends.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at the Sisters of St. Joseph Community Living Center. Burial was at Calvary Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Community Support Fund of the Sisters of St. Joseph, 5031 West Ridge Road, Erie, PA 16506-1249.



Sister Rita McNulty, SSJ

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Law enforcement affirmed, honored at Mass

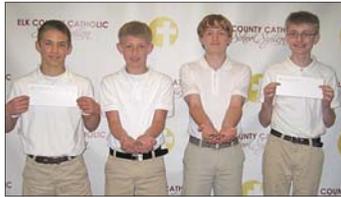
YOUNGSVILLE—About 145 people gathered April 26 at St. Luke Church in Youngsville to honor, affirm and pray for the law enforcement personnel of Warren County. Following Mass, 25 officers (including the district attorney, three police chiefs and the sheriff of Warren County) joined families and loved ones for a meal prepared by the Youngsville Knights of Columbus Council.

Father John Neff, pastor of St. Luke, gave a talk titled, "We're Not in Mayberry Anymore." Each active duty law enforcement officer was called forward by Father Neff and presented with a bronze medallion with the image of St. Michael the Archangel.



Pennies shine bright in St. Marys

ST. MARYS—Eighth-graders at St. Marys Catholic Middle School in St. Marys decided to test how quickly pennies can add up. As a service project, they collected pennies throughout the Lenten season, raising a total of \$200. Half of the funds were donated to the Elliott Wingard family and the other half to the Chloe Frank family. Pictured are students Tyler Dilley, Sam Gregory, Luke Chileski and Isaac Gradl.



The joy of First Holy Communion



SMETHPORT—On May 3, these youngsters received their First Holy Communion at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish in Smethport. Their joy was palpable on a bright, sunny day. Pictured, from left, are: Elizabeth Hungville, Isabella Learn, Gavin McCabe, Carter Himes and Evan Ruffner. A cake reception was held after Mass for the entire parish to celebrate this great event.

Alleluia banner unveiled in Oil City



OIL CITY—Eighth-graders at St. Stephen School in Oil City performed a dance to unveil the Alleluia banner after Easter. Pictured are: Maggie Stack, Taylor Vroman, Katie Anderson, Laney Douglas and Tessa Stack.

Deaf Ministry holds afternoon of reflection



ERIE—The Deaf Ministry of the Diocese of Erie held an afternoon of reflection in April at St. Mark Catholic Center in Erie. The presenter was Greg Baker, who is the Catholic campus minister for Mercyhurst University. The focus of the event was on communication and understanding how the Apostles received the Holy Spirit and were able to speak in foreign languages.

Pictured in the front row, from left, are: interpreter Dom Rios, and Michael Adams of Catholic Charities. In the back row, from left, are: Greg Baker of Mercyhurst, Sue Bedner, Shirley Ferrante, Jeanie Phillips, Susan McLeod, and Catholic Charities intern Brian Kightlinger.

Knights of Columbus donate chalices



GREENVILLE—The 4th Degree of the Knights of Columbus recently donated new chalices to St. Michael Church in Greenville to replace worn out chalices. Pictured, from left, are: Faithful Navigator Sam Genovesi, Joe Presto, Father David Foradori and Pete Longiotti.

St. Luke student recognized at Challenge 24 competition



ERIE—A team of four students and a teacher from St. Luke School in Erie attended the Challenge 24 math competition at Seton Catholic School in Meadville last month. Luke Markiewicz took second place in the tournament in the fifth-grade division.

Kennedy students awarded Emerging Leaders Scholarship



HERMITAGE—Eight students from Kennedy Catholic High School were awarded the Emerging Leaders Scholarship and will attend the Notre Dame Vision Conference for High School Students in July at Notre Dame University in Indiana. Students wrote essays explaining what is challenging about living out and developing their faith and how they hope the upcoming event will help them to grow in faith and leadership. Honored students in the front row, from left, are: Isabelle Morocco, Max Hudson and Hallie Niemi. In the back, from left, are: Kobe Albanese, Liam Wanner, John Cianci, Kendra Kneisl and Catherine Messina.

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School Open House

Sunday May 17

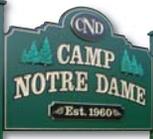
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