

Flooding in Ridgway

On May 21, torrential rains caused flooding at St. Leo School. Students were evacuated, see page 2.



FaithLife

POPE TWEET
Pope Francis
on Twitter @Pontifex



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www.ErieRCD.org

BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

June 15, 2014

A DAY FOR DADS

A father recalls the near death of his baby girl

By Mary Solberg
FaithLife

Six doctors hovered around Jeff Linn's baby girl in the neonatal intensive care unit at Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh. Born only hours before—on Aug. 28, 2010—the infant already had beaten the odds by surviving her traumatic birth. But the situation was still touch-and-go.

Jeff stood nearby, watching the medical team use a small hand pump to push oxygen into his baby's lungs. Then physicians suggested a radical move: an ECMO, a procedure that would circulate blood and reoxygenate it outside of the body while a machine removed carbon dioxide.

"I went to the chapel and prayed," Jeff, 35, recalls today, nearly four years later.

Family and friends back home at St. Michael Parish in Greenville in the Diocese of Erie were praying, too. They started a novena to St. Rita, the patron saint of impossible situations. It couldn't have seemed more impossible at that moment, with Jeff's wife, Kateri, still hospitalized at UPMC Farrell while their firstborn struggled for her life.

Kateri had just undergone an emergency cesarean section after suffering an umbilical cord prolapse, a rare situation when the cord descends before the baby during the birthing process. Once Kateri stabilized, Jeff traveled to Pittsburgh and spent the next three days—around the clock—at Children's Hospital. When the situation seemed most hopeless, the new parents decided to name their daughter Cascia after the city where St. Rita lived in Italy.

Hours passed and prayers to St. Rita continued until Cascia began

to rally on her own, without an ECMO or other significant medical intervention.

"The nurses kept saying she was the miracle-turnaround baby," Jeff says.

Four days after giving birth, Kateri was well enough to travel to Pittsburgh and actually hold her baby. By then, she saw the bond that had developed between her husband and their little girl, who the nurses and Jeff already nicknamed CC.

"As a dad, he is so beautiful," says Kateri, also 35. "There's nothing Jeff doesn't do or won't do for her."

Only weeks before this Father's Day, four-year-old CC took a pur-



ple marker and drew a great big "D" on her leg...for Daddy. She is a typical toddler who suffered no health problems due to her difficult birth.

"She adores Jeff," Kateri says. "He's the one who saw the doctors pumping her chest. He's the one who touched her for the first time and stayed next to her when

she was in the incubator."

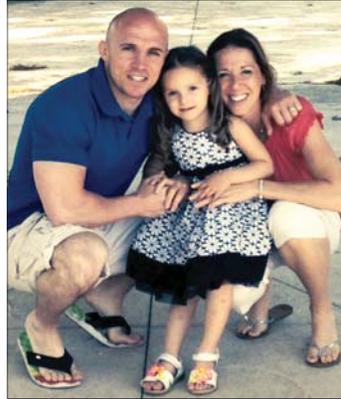
It's a bond that Jeff acknowledges as having changed his life. At the time of Cascia's birth, he was working in the Admissions Office at Thiel College. About five months ago, he was named director of admissions and advancement at Kennedy Catholic High School in Hermitage.

The trauma of Cascia's birth and his wife's frightening experience gave him a deeper appreciation for his faith and the miracle of life, not just on Father's Day, but every day.

"It hits me a lot on random days...just looking at CC and thinking what a miracle we have in front of us," Jeff says. "Your dad is the first guy you love, your first prince, your first protector. It's amazing we were given the gift of her life."

The trust that the Linn's placed in God during Cascia's birth is the same they share now as they await the birth of a second child, due in December. For years, they were too scared to even think about having another baby. Doctors, however, advised them that Kateri has a 6 percent chance of having another cord prolapse, that's the same percentage as the general population.

"This pregnancy, honestly, is a pivotal point. We can move on," Jeff says. "We know God has a plan for us as a family."



Today, Jeff and Kateri Linn hold their healthy daughter, Cascia.



Contributed photos

Nearly four years ago, Jeff Linn, pictured at left, stayed in the intensive care unit for days with his baby daughter, Cascia. It was a time of bonding that he'll never forget.

In the picture above, Cascia is shown recovering at Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh shortly after her difficult birth.

Fortnight for Freedom promotes service to needy

The freedom to serve those in need—whether they are sick, poor or even wanting to adopt a child—is at the core of this year's Fortnight for Freedom, observed in dioceses across the country June 21 to July 4.

In its third year, Fortnight for Freedom raises awareness for domestic and international religious freedom concerns.

Its theme this year is "Freedom to Serve." For more information about the 2014 Fortnight for Freedom, go to www.ErieRCD.org/fortnight.asp

"I think this theme really illuminates what's at the core of religious liberty," said Erin Landini-Grogan, director of Parish Social Ministry and Respect Life of Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Erie. "If religious freedom is infringed upon, it directly impacts how we serve the poor and vulnerable."

Among these concerns are the regulations of the health care reform law that require

all organizations that provide employees with health care coverage to also include contraception, sterilization procedures and potentially abortion-causing drugs, all of which violate Catholic Church teaching on the sanctity of human life.

At the end of this month, the U.S. Supreme Court is expected to rule on the Hobby Lobby

and Conestoga Wood Specialties cases that challenge health care law mandate. Fifty non-profit organizations—including 17 individual dioceses and archdioceses (among them Erie)—have filed suit seeking an injunction on the regulations.

This year's Fortnight for Freedom will be celebrated by various parishes in the Diocese of Erie. Activities will include evenings of reflection, speakers, Eucharistic adoration and prayer services. Various Catholic service agencies in the diocese also will provide daily reflections on the diocesan Facebook page and Twitter feed.

Excavation begins for gym, pool expansion

\$10 million gift makes project possible

By David Solberg
FaithLife

Excavation will begin within a week at the site of the \$11.5 million expansion of the Cathedral Prep Events Center in Erie.

Construction crews will dig the earth for a new gymnasium and pool that will be added to the existing Events Center on West 12th Street. When completed in 2015, it will be "the finest facility of

its kind in the area," according to officials of Erie Catholic Preparatory School, which includes Cathedral Prep and Villa Maria Academy.

Father Scott Jabo, president of Erie Catholic Preparatory School, is looking forward to the next step in improving the school's premier athletic facility.

"When we opened [the Events Center] in 2010, we expected more phases," Father Jabo said. "We realized the cost involved, and that we could only



Photo by David Solberg

Father Scott Jabo, president of Erie Catholic Preparatory School, looks all business as he operates a backhoe at the groundbreaking ceremony on May 28.

A look at Cathedral Prep's Events Center expansion:

Gymnasium

- Regulation college-size basketball court with retractable bleachers
- Seating capacity: 1,800
- 3-lane running track overlooking the court



Aquatic Center

- 2 pools: one for competition, with 8 lanes, all deep with diving board. The other is a shallow training pool with three lanes.
- Seating capacity: At least 500
- Fitness room: 4,000 sq. ft. overlooking the pools
- Rambler/Victor retail store
- Locker rooms



TOTAL SPACE:
61,000 sq. ft.

do a portion of it at a time."

But, a \$10 million anonymous donation from a Prep alumnus expedited the expansion to include a 30,000-square-foot natatorium and a 31,000-square-foot gym to be built on either side of the existing Events Center.

"The \$10 million gift was the big impetus to move forward," Father Jabo said.

With construction now expected to proceed swiftly, Prep and Villa leaders will record the progress on social media and at www.prep-villa.com. Visitors to the website will be able to view videos and photographs of the work.

"Alumni are very interested in this, all around the

country," Father Jabo noted.

The expansion is significant for all Catholic students in the Diocese of Erie, too, as they are expected to have access to the new facilities for competitions.

According to Chis Hagerty, director of strategic initiatives for Prep and Villa, the natatorium will especially benefit Catholic elementary schools that currently do not have pools for practice and training.

On May 28, Bishop Lawrence Persico blessed the site during a groundbreaking ceremony. He was joined by numerous school officials, Erie Mayor Joe Sinnott, and students from both Villa Maria and Prep.

Arrests made in Jesuit kidnapping

ROME—Security forces in Afghanistan arrested a man in connection with the June 2 kidnapping of a Jesuit priest from India.

The arrest June 4 came as security forces continued to search for Jesuit Father Alexis Prem Kumar, who was abducted as he was leaving a school serving children who were recently returned to Afghanistan after living as refugees in Iran or Pakistan, reported the Afghan news agency Khaama Press.

The Rome headquarters of the Jesuit Refugee Service confirmed that Father Kumar, 47, its Afghanistan country director, "was abducted by a group of unidentified men."

"We are in contact with all the relevant authorities and doing everything possible to ensure his safe and speedy return," said Jesuit Father Peter Balles, international director of JRS.

Father Joseph Chinmayan, deputy secretary-general of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India, appealed to the Indian government to quickly seek the Jesuit's release. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the abduction.



CNS photo
Jesuit Father Alexis Prem Kumar

Archbishops wager on NBA finals

MIAMI (CNS)—Miami Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski placed a friendly bet June 4 with San Antonio Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller in the NBA matchup between the Miami Heat and the San Antonio Spurs.

If Miami loses the best-of-seven competition, Archbishop Wenski said he would send the San Antonio archbishop key lime pies, a supply of Cuban coffee, along with a bushel of Florida oranges and grapefruit. The Archdiocese of Miami also will make a donation to San Antonio's Catholic Charities.

If Miami wins, Archbishop Garcia-Siller will make a donation to one of the Archdiocese of Miami's charities.

After the Heat won last year, the Miami Archdiocese received a hearing helping of San Antonio beef brisket that wound up feeding the homeless at Camillus House, a Miami shelter. Miami also was on the winning end when the Heat defeated the Oklahoma City Thunder two years ago.

Pope Francis leads peace summit

ROME—Pope Francis met at the Vatican gardens June 8 with Israeli President Shimon Peres and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas during an "invocation for peace" in the Holy Land.

The meeting came two weeks after the pope's trip to the Middle East, where he encouraged a peaceful resolution to the ongoing strife between Israelis and Palestinians.

"Never will I forget the bereaved families, parents and children, who paid the cost of war," Peres said. "And all my life I shall never stop to act for peace for the generations to come. Let's all of us join hands and make it happen."

According to an official translation of Abbas' prepared Arabic text, the Palestinian president said: "We want peace for us and for our neighbors."

The event, at which Christians, Muslims and Jews prayed in each other's presence, was almost certainly the first of its kind at the Vatican, according to Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, director of the Holy See Press Office. Members of the Palestinian and Israeli delegations and guests of Pope Francis read a selection of Jewish, Christian and Muslim prayers. Each set of prayers praised God for creation, begged forgiveness of sins and asked for peace in the Holy Land.

At the end of the 45-minute ceremony, Pope Francis and the dignitaries took up shovels and added dirt to the base of a newly planted olive tree. They then spent about 15 minutes speaking privately inside the nearby Casina Pio IV, a 16th-century villa that now houses several pontifical academies.



CNS photo
Israeli President Shimon Peres and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas shake hands as Pope Francis looks on at the Vatican Gardens June 8.



Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

In this season of confirmations, it is good to listen to the words of Pope Francis about the Holy Spirit: "The moment we receive him and host him in our heart, the Holy Spirit begins immediately to make us sensitive to his voice and to direct our thoughts, our sentiments and our intentions according to God's heart."

When one of my teenage sons was confirmed this spring, it seemed that he began immediately to be sensitive to his mother's need for an occasional conversation! Unsolicited, Peter gave me a big hug one night... for no apparent reason. I fought the temptation to ask what he wanted. Some would say he's growing up, but I like to think that the Spirit had something to do with it.

If we're conscious of the Spirit's movement within us, we can do so many things for the good of others every day. We can more easily see someone's pain or suffering and reach out despite ourselves and our own issues.

Bobby Wood, who for the past 15 years has taught religious education to special needs students in the Diocese of Erie, knows what it means to spread the Spirit. A retired special education teacher, Bobby meets once a week during the school year with students who, for various reasons, cannot attend regular religious ed classes. It can take several years for these students to complete their preparation for confirmation.

That's why this spring was such a celebration for Bobby, who had five students confirmed at a ceremony at Sacred Heart Parish in Erie.

There's a new initiative underway in Pennsylvania that may help people work their way out of poverty.

The House Majority Policy Committee recently commissioned a study to identify barriers facing low-income Pennsylvanians who want to be more self-sufficient. Some of those barriers include lack of child care, the economic downturn, homelessness, mental health issues, hunger and substance abuse.

Amy Hill of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference says the PCC will be closely watching the work of this new initiative, called "Empowering Opportunities: Gateways Out of Poverty."

You can read a commentary by Hill at www.Eriercd.org/readersforum.asp.

Sister Tina Geiger, RSM, and Sister Marian Wehler, OSB, have traveled throughout the diocese giving talks about religious life. These sisters of Catholic Rural Ministry are taking the message on the road, which is a profoundly personal effort.

But with the Internet, there is an increasingly technological way to reach young women interested in joining a religious community. For more than a year now, the Daughters of Charity across the United States have been hosting what they call a "Holy Hangout," an online discussion with members of the community about their lives as women religious, their vows and their daily lives and mission work. Discussions are live streamed at the following site: www.youtube.com/daughtersofcharityus.

On June 6, Bishop Lawrence Persico delivered the homily at the closing Mass for Gannonale in Erie. He expressed his gratitude to Sister Carol Pregno, OLC, provincial of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, whose religious community operated the residential treatment center the past 80 years.

"As we go forward from this time and place," Bishop Persico said, "let us not go with sadness but hope."

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1,000 books lost in flood at St. Leo School

By Mary Solberg
FaithLife

RIDGWAY—In a matter of only an hour, the normally trickling Gallagher Run—which meanders through the property of St. Leo Parish and its school in Ridgway—became a rushing deluge of water.

Heavy rains through the night and morning of May 21 forced the stream to rise about 4 feet higher than usual. Connected to Elk Creek, a major tributary of the Clarion River, Gallagher Run pumped forcefully through town, closing roads and filling basements, including that of St. Leo School on Depot Street.

Only about an hour after arriving for classes that day, children in kindergarten through eighth grade already were being evacuated to the Ridgway firehall. Students didn't return for classes until May 23.

"The chief of police told us that we had to get the kids out now. It just started pouring in everywhere," said Mary Detwiler, principal. "It looked like a river in front of the school."

The school basement houses the library, restrooms, a computer room and a secretary room. All were flooded. About 1,000 books on the bottom shelves of the library



were destroyed, along with all the carpeting. One copier was ruined, but none of the computers sustained damage.

"What a crazy way to end the school year," Detwiler said.

The parish's Catholic Daughters of America began an immediate book drive to replenish the library's inventory. According to Detwiler, many individuals and groups have been donating gently used and new books. And, so far, more than \$9,000 has been sent to the school to offset the high restoration costs.

Many donations have been made by fishermen who participate in the community's annual Fishing Derby on Elk Creek.

"We have quite a bit of donations," Detwiler added. "It gives you goosebumps."



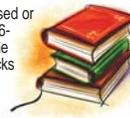
Photos by Sue Landis

Above, Gallagher Run—shown on a typical day—meanders through the properties of St. Leo Church and St. Leo School.

At left, Gallagher Run in Ridgway rises 4 feet above its banks on May 21. Parish secretary Sue Landis took this photo from the parish rectory facing Depot Street.

To make a donation of gently used or new books, contact Jan at 814-776-1352. Drop-offs can be made to the front vestibule of the church. Checks can be made payable to St. Leo School and sent to:

St. Leo School
ATTN: Mary Detwiler
125 Depot St., Ridgway, PA 15853



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News Briefs

Need a getaway with your spouse?

LUDLOW—Need to be alone with your spouse this summer? Try the next Marriage Encounter Weekend July 25-27 at Olmsted Manor in Ludlow, near the Allegheny National Forest.

The registration deadline is July 1, so send in your non-refundable \$75 application fee as soon as possible. For more information or to register, call 814-823-4600 or 412-635-7775. Registration also can be done online at www.YouMarriagesWorthIt.org.

A free-will offering will be accepted at the end of the weekend. Space is limited.

Rummage sale scheduled in Warren

WARREN—The St. Joseph Parish annual rummage sale will be held at the St. Joseph Educational Center, 600 Pennsylvania Ave., West, Warren, June 19 and June 20 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and June 21 from 9 a.m. to noon. June 21 is \$1 per bag day.

Openings still available at Camp Totus Tuus

LINESVILLE—Spots are still available for this summer's premier Catholic camp: Totus Tuus. Anyone entering 9th through 12th grades this fall is encouraged to attend this weeklong Catholic discipleship experience. The name Totus Tuus comes from St. John Paul II's motto, "Totally Yours—to Jesus through Mary."

Camp Totus Tuus will be held June 23-27 at St. Philip Church in Linesville. The cost is \$250, but financial aid may be available. Pastors are encouraged to help cover the cost as an investment in the young church.

To register, go to www.onthevine.us or contact Kathleen Peterson of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry of the Diocese of Erie at 814-824-1218 or kpeterson@ERIECD.org.

'Annie Get Your Gun' production scheduled

ERIE—The 14th annual all-school musical production of "Annie Get Your Gun," sponsored by the St. Boniface Players, will be held July 11, 12, 18 and 19 at 7:30 p.m. and July 13 and 20 at 2 p.m. in Bowers Auditorium at Cathedral Preparatory School in Erie.

The show features area students in grades 3 through college. A full orchestra is also featured with both student and adult musicians.

Tickets are available at the door and cost \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors and \$6 for students. Visit www.stbonifaceplayers.org for more information.



Josh Lapping, Alice Sueglia and Adam Rossi prepare for the upcoming musical production, "Annie Get Your Gun."

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Achievement scholarships awarded

Eight Catholic school students in the Diocese of Erie were awarded scholarships totaling \$20,000 at the Junior Achievement—Northwest Region reception at St. Mark Catholic Center May 20.

"It made us proud to have that many recipients from our diocese," said Kim Lytle, director of curriculum for the Catholic Schools Office.

Bishop Lawrence Persico attended the ceremony, which recognized students for excelling at Junior Achievement classes at their schools. Junior Achievement supplements the regular curriculum and teaches students about financial literacy, entrepreneurship and work readiness. There are 12 schools in the diocese that offer Junior Achievement classes at every grade level.

Six eighth-graders in the diocese were presented the Cardinal Donald Wuerl Scholarship, receiving \$3,000 each. Recipients must plan to attend a Catholic high school and have a grade point average of at least 2.5. They also had to write a personal essay and provide a letter of recommendation. Wuerl Scholarship winners:

- Joseph Campbell
- St. James School, Erie
- Catherine Cerroni
- St. Leo School, Ridgway
- Nathanael Ferrick
- St. Gregory School, North East



Contributed photo

Junior Achievement recipients, left to right, are: Nathanael Ferrick, Catherine Cerroni, Erick Mader, Grace Brigham, Kaitlyn Sekscinski, Alex Welz, Bailey Klein and Joseph Campbell. Standing behind the students, left to right, are: Jim Martin of Northwest Savings Bank, Bishop Lawrence Persico, Ann Scott of Erie Insurance, Teresa Archer of Northwest, and William Hilbert Jr. of Hilbert Family Industries.

- Erick Mader
 - St. Leo School, Ridgway
 - Kaitlyn Sekscinski
 - St. James School, Erie
 - Alex Welz
 - Villa Maria Elementary, Erie
- The winners of the Bishop David Zubik Scholarship, receiving \$1,000 each, were:
- Grace Brigham
 - Villa Maria Academy

- Bailey Klein
 - Cathedral Preparatory School
- The Zubik winners must be current students at a Catholic secondary school and must have participated in a minimum of one volunteer-led Junior Achievement classroom program in the 2012-13 academic year.
- Two principals also were recognized at the Junior Achievement reception:

- Sister Kevin Berdis, principal at Holy Family School, Erie, was honored as Educator of the Year by Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania.
- Veronica Antoske, principal of Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, Erie, was honored as Educator of the Year by Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania in Erie County.

DEATH NOTICE

Sister Norbert reached diamond jubilee year

Sister Norbert J. Wiley, 91, of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania, died on June 4 in her 75th year of religious life.

In a recent discussion for the upcoming jubilee edition of *Faithful Servants*, Sister Norbert said she was called to the consecrated life at an early age.

"When I was in third grade, I helped a sister with some small jobs. That was how I began to hear the call to become a sister," Sister Norbert said.

Sister Norbert was born in Erie, April 28, 1923, the daughter of the late Joseph and Olive Biebel Wiley. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from Sacred Heart Parish in Erie on Sept. 8, 1939, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1945.

She spent 12 years at Harborcreek Training School in Harborcreek, where she worked in special education and as the librarian. She acquired a lifelong passion for hockey while attending hockey games with the boys who lived at the school. In 1984, she and another sister

were surprised with a visit from members of the former Erie Blades hockey team. They considered Sister Norbert to be among their best fans. Also, Sister Norbert loved golf. She was on the links well into the evening the day prior to entering the convent.

Sister Norbert taught for many years at St. John, St. Michael, St. Paul and Holy Rosary schools in Erie; St. Agatha and St. Brigid schools in Meadville; St. Francis School in Clearfield; and Holy Rosary School in Johnstown. She served as housemother at the St. Joseph Home for Children in Erie, and was the floor supervisor at St. Mary's Home in Erie for more than 28 years,



Sister Norbert Wiley, 91

from 1977 to 2005. She retired in 2005 and resided at the sisters' Community Living Center in Erie.

Sister Norbert graduated from Villa Maria Academy in Erie in 1940 and continued her education at Villa Maria College, graduating in 1958 with a bachelor's degree in elementary education. She furthered her education at Penn State University and Edinboro University of Pennsylvania.

Besides her parents, she was preceded in death by a brother, Father Joseph Wiley; and two sisters, Kathryn Luber and Audrey Wiley. In addition to members of her religious community, survivors include two nieces, Mary Kay Yochim of Waterford, and Karen Straite of Sparta, and several grandnieces and grandnephews.

Calling hours were held at the Villa Maria 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.

Photographs place 1st, 2nd in national contest

DuBOIS—The top two winners of the Catholic Schools Week National Photo Contest are both freshmen from DuBois Central Catholic High School.

Mark Latuska won first place and Gabrielle Caruso took second place in the competition sponsored by Walsh University in North Canton, Ohio. They competed against more than 300 entries nationwide.

Latuska's photo will be featured in the university's 2015 marketing campaign for the contest. Both he and his school won \$500. Caruso received \$250 for her photo submission.

A panel of judges selected the top three winners nationwide that best embraced the spirit of this year's Catholic Schools Week theme, "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service."

"Out of all of the entries, I'm humbled they picked mine because I put a lot of work and thought into the picture," Latuska said. "It just goes to show that you should always put forth the effort and try something new because you never know what you could gain from it."

Latuska is a member of the DuBois Central Catholic football and basketball teams, and is a member of the Rotary Interact Club.



Contributed photo

DuBois Central Catholic freshmen Mark Latuska and Gabrielle Caruso, pictured in the center, won first- and second-place honors, respectively, in a national photo contest. Standing with them, left to right, are: Dawn Bressler, DCC principal; Msgr. Charles A. Kaza, DCC interim president;

Father Thomas Cebula, Walsh University campus minister for spiritual development; Father Edward Walk, assistant headmaster; Derrick Wyman, Walsh's director of strategic initiatives; and Lisa Blasdel, DCC teacher.

Caruso participates in DCC volleyball, basketball and softball, and is a member of the Future Business Leaders of America, Do Something service club, and Rotary Interact.

Visit www.walsh.edu to see the top winning photos.

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Our Lady of Mount Carmel SUMMER PROGRAM

Looking for a safe and fun atmosphere for your child this summer? Registrations are now being accepted for our Summer Program.

DATE June 9th to Aug. 15th (closed July 4th)
DAYS Monday-Friday (Wednesday Field Trips)
HOURS 7-5:30 p.m.
NEW THIS YEAR, PRE-SCHOOL Must be age 4 by June 1 AGE Grades K-6
REGISTRATION There is a \$30.00/child, \$40.00/family NON-REFUNDABLE FEE due at the time of registration.
WEEKLY RATES for full week *1-4 days* and 1/2 days MEALS and afternoon snack are provided for the children from June 16th-Aug. 15th during program hours

For more information, contact Susan Rinderle at 814-825-2822 #9 or e-mail srinderle@olmcerie.org.

St. Gregory accredited by Middle States



NORTH EAST—St. Gregory School in North East recently received official K-8 accreditation from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, effective through May 1, 2021. Accreditation affirms that St. Gregory School is effectively advancing the quality of educational experiences and is meeting its responsibilities to the public and profession of education. Pictured, left to right, are: St. Gregory School advisory board members **Rachelle McFeely**, **Nancy Pierce** (principal), **Greg Ferrick**, **John Piper**, **Rick Winschel** and **Joan Vereb**.

Activities held to fight cancer



DuBOIS—DuBois Central Catholic Elementary School recently raised \$2,517 for the American Cancer Society's Relay Recess effort. Students are pictured participating in one of the many activities geared to raise awareness of how a healthy lifestyle can prevent cancer. Classrooms waged a penny war as part of Cancer Awareness Week sponsored in honor of Rita Wray, the school's principal who died of cancer in the fall of 2013.

Mercyhurst Prep sophomores help with retreat



ERIE—Mercyhurst Preparatory School sophomores, pictured wearing their uniforms, recently organized a retreat for eighth-graders from St. Gregory School and St. Boniface School in Erie. The retreat was held at the Mercy Motherhouse in Erie.

Pictured in the front row, seated left to right, are: **Starr Sherred**, **Alex Bowes** and **Joe Wilczynski**. In the middle row, left to right, are: **Sidney Brunner**, **Alex Schwack**, **Julie Wilczynski**, **Annie Montefiore**, **Catherine Duda**, **Elisbeth Mirzner** and **Brooke Lutterbaugh**. Pictured in the back, left to right, are: **Matt Trost**, **Erin Cox**, **Allison Rebich**, **Jay Cooney**, **Adam Beaufort**, **Eric Fulton** and **T.J. Matczak**.

Spring fling among the cherry blossoms in D.C.



WASHINGTON, D.C.—Eighth-graders from Immaculate Conception School in Clarion enjoyed the last of the cherry blossoms during a field trip to Washington, D.C., this spring. Students visited historic landmarks, monuments and museums during their final

class trip. Pictured, left to right, are: **Catherine Buchanan**, **Gabrielle Weaver**, **Alec Shreffler** and **Courtney Reiner**. For more than a year, the students raised funds to finance the trip.

Sisters talk about vocations to religious life

FRANKLIN—Sister Tina Geiger, RSM, and Sister Marian Wehler, OSB, both of Catholic Rural Ministry, have offered a number of presentations on vocations throughout the year.

Standing behind the students at St. Patrick School in Franklin during National Catholic Sisters Week, left to right, are: teacher **Lisa Kashinski**, **Sister Tina**, teachers **Paula Klinger** and **Andree Hugar Sporer**, and **Sister Marian**.



Knights present funds to diocese



ERIE—Pennsylvania's Knights of Columbus recently distributed checks to dioceses across the state, including the Diocese of Erie. Pennsylvania State Warden **George L. Beckes**, left, and Pennsylvania State Advocate-elect **Ken Grugel** presented \$4,942.95 to **Bishop Lawrence Persico** for the needs of religious retirees. The funds were collected through the Pennsylvania Knights of Columbus Christopher Fund.

First reconciliation celebrated in Franklin

FRANKLIN—Msgr. **John Herbin** places a scapular medal around the neck of **Sam Ghering**, a member of the religious education class at St. Patrick Parish, Franklin.

The class participated in first reconciliation this spring.



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