

"To encounter the living God it is necessary to tenderly kiss Jesus' wounds in our hungry, poor, sick and incarcerated brothers and sisters."



## 138-year-old legacy

*Hospital merger promises to keep SSJ spirit alive and well*

Mary Solberg  
 FaithLife

The Sisters of St. Joseph formally relinquished sponsorship of Saint Vincent Health System in Erie this month, but the hospital's chief executives have promised to continue the sisters' 138-year-old legacy of compassionate health care in the Erie community. "We are standing on the shoulders of giants," said Scott Whalen, the president and chief executive officer of Saint Vincent Hospital, which merged

The blended waters of Lake Erie and Pittsburgh's three rivers (Ohio, Monongahela and Allegheny) mark the merger of Saint Vincent Health System and Highmark's Allegheny Health Network.



Photo by Mary Solberg

Sisters of St. Joseph stand before their mission statement in the lobby of Saint Vincent Hospital. Pictured left to right are: Sister Mary Herrmann, president of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania; Sister Catherine Manning and Sister Margaret Ann Hardner, both former CEOs; and Sister Marie Paul Ashworth, an employee for 53 years.

July 1 with Highmark Inc. The former Saint Vincent Health System is now known as Saint Vincent Hospital, one of seven to join the Allegheny Health Network and directly compete with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center health system, which includes UPMC Hamot.

During a July 9 ceremony at Saint Vincent, many Sisters of St. Joseph—including two who had served as longtime chief executive officers—led a symbolic, sometimes tearful, gathering that included old and new administrators, along with more than 100 doctors, nurses, pharmacists and

other staff. "It may be an end to a sponsorship, but not the end to a legacy," Steve Osborn, vice president of quality, told *FaithLife*. "They [the SSJs] set our values and they set our path."

See LEGACY, page 3

## Deaf parishioner in Erie finds faith

FaithLife staff

Up until Susan Bedner was 15, she would sit in the front row at her Catholic church in Staten Island, N.Y., trying to lip read as the pastor spoke at Sunday Mass. She'd do the same at religious education class afterward...always trying to make sense of what people were saying.

Born mostly deaf, Susan was the daughter of a Catholic mother and a Jewish father. Like most of society in the 1960s and 1970s, they did not push their daughter or themselves to learn sign language. And the school system and religious institutions didn't accommodate her either.

So it's little wonder that Susan, who is now 43 and living with her husband and son in Millcreek, never learned much about her Catholic faith or the church as an institution. For example, the nuances of Vatican II and its meaning for the church as a whole escaped her...that is until she met Bishop Emeritus Donald Trautman on June 29 at St. Mark Catholic Center.

"I was nervous; my knees were buckling," Susan said after meeting the bishop during a day of reflection sponsored by Catholic Charities' Ministry with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. "I never knew about Vatican II until now."

In the morning session, Bishop Emeritus Trautman explored three ways by which we meet Jesus: sacred Scriptures, the sacraments and the church. He explored the concept of hope as courage and the Bible as a "sacred library" of poems, stories and history. The afternoon segment included reconciliation as well as discussions on patience and the Blessed Mother as the model of hope.

"As the day goes by, I've learned more of the

See DEAF, page 3

## Special Collection

Aug. 4—Church in Latin America

## Clergy Appointments

The Most Rev. Lawrence Persico, JCL, Bishop of Erie, makes the following clergy appointments:



**Father John F. Bauer**, chaplain, Christ the King Manor, DuBois, with residence at the manor, effective June 27, 2013.

**Father Daniel Prez**, change of residence to St. Andrew Parish, Erie, while continuing as parochial administrator of St. Hippolyte Parish, Frenchtown, and Our Lady of Lourdes Mission Church, Cochranton, effective July 15, 2013.

**Father Thomas More Sikora**, O.S.B., pastor, St. Mary Church, St. Marys, effective July 15, 2013.

**Deacon Chuck Adamczyk**, facilitator, Catholic Chapel Ministry, Millcreek Mall, while continuing as deacon assistant, St. James Parish, Erie, effective June 25, 2013, for a two-year term.

## John Paul II, John XXIII propelled to sainthood

*Local connections to the popes*

Mary Solberg  
 FaithLife

The silver chalice—featuring a large green stone in the middle and grapevines etched around the base—was a gift to Christopher Singer from his grandmother, Dorothy, months before he was ordained to the priesthood in 2003. But before he had a chance to use it for the first time, the young seminarian sent his chalice to the Vatican.

"John Paul II had a custom that seminarians studying in Rome could write a letter and ask that their chalices be blessed," recalls Father Singer, who now is chancellor for the Diocese of Erie. "A couple of months later, I got a call that it had been blessed and used by the pope at his morning Mass."

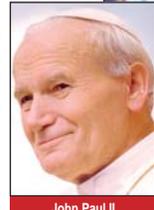
It's a personal connection to John Paul II, who was approved for sainthood July 5.

"It certainly gives the chalice added significance," Father Singer says.

On July 5, Pope Francis cleared the way toward sainthood for John Paul II, whose reign was the second longest in history, and Pope John XXIII, who assembled the historic Second Vatican Council in the 1960s. Both



Photo by Rich Papalia



John Paul II



John XXIII

are expected to be canonized later this year. The canonization cause for John Paul began almost immediately after his death in 2005, and is believed to be one of the quickest saint approvals

in the history of the Catholic Church.

Pope Francis approved John Paul's elevation to sainthood after acknowledging a second miracle attributed to his intercession. And Pope John XXIII was approved for sainthood, even though he is not credited with a second miracle.

The actions surprised and thrilled believers from the diocese—including Father Singer—who either have met or seen the popes now destined for sainthood. "Often we think of saints who had little to do with our lives," says Father Singer, who also saw John Paul II during the 2002 World Youth Day in Toronto. "Most saints lived long ago and in far-away places."

Thirty years ago, during John Paul II's pontificate, Msgr. Joseph Bobal of the Diocese of Erie met the pope while on sabbatical in Rome. He joined other diocesan priests from Erie and throughout the country in a private audience at the Vatican. Msgr. Bobal shook hands with John Paul II and the pope gave him a blessed rosary.

"I knew I was in the presence of a saint then. You just knew," Msgr.

Bobal says. "He had a knack or ability to communicate concern and love."

Today, at age 77, Msgr. Bobal still displays a second miracle attributed to the photograph taken of him with the Polish pope. "I feel I was blessed by him. I know I felt that at the time."

Susan Freeman of Oil City recalls seeing John Paul II along with hundreds of others from the Diocese of Erie who also traveled to Toronto in 2002. She and her husband, Tom, and their four young sons traveled with the Oil City Area Catholic Youth Group.

"Even when he (John Paul II) passed away, he was definitely a saint, but now it's just official," Freeman says. "I felt like he was a walking saint."

Freeman believes she was blessed just being in the pope's presence. Her family is healthy and happy and her four children were educated in Catholic schools on the elementary, high school and college levels.

"Seeing the pope and being in his presence has blessed their lives, even though they may not realize it," Freeman says.

Msgr. Joseph Bobal of Reynoldsville is shown in this 1983 photo at the Vatican. He joined other priests in a private audience with Pope John Paul II.



**Pope calls for repentance over treatment of migrants**

LAMPEDUSA, Italy (CNS)—In his first pastoral visit outside Rome, Pope Francis tossed a wreath of white and yellow flowers into the Mediterranean Sea in memory of the estimated 20,000 African immigrants who have died in the past 25 years trying to reach a new life in Europe.

In his homily at an outdoor Mass, Pope Francis said he decided to visit Lampedusa, a small island with a population of 6,000 and just 70 miles from Tunisia, after seeing newspaper headlines in June describing the drowning of immigrants at sea.

"Who is responsible for the blood of these brothers and sisters of ours?" the pope asked in his homily. "All of us respond: 'It wasn't me. I have nothing to do with it. It was others, certainly not me.'"

Pope Francis said the globalization of the world's economy in many cases has led to "the globalization of indifference."



Pope Francis, standing at a microphone, talks with migrants at the port in Lampedusa, Italy.

**Interfaith collaboration marks border work**

TUCSON, Ariz. (CNS)—Standing up with faith communities in support of migrants who cross the border illegally has long been an interreligious effort in southern Arizona.

During a five-day Social Action Summer Institute at the University of Arizona this summer, Tucson Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas, Archbishop Jose Luis Mascias Salcedo of Hermosillo, Mexico, and current and former leaders of Protestant, Jewish and Episcopal congregations laid out what

motivates their efforts and how their communities take on different aspects of aiding and advocating for immigrants.

Archbishop Mascias, in a homily at the opening Mass of the institute, explained how the word "pontiff" or "pontifice" in Spanish has Latin roots in the term "bridge-builder." He called upon the participants to become "pontiffs" between immigrants and the rest of society.

"It is difficult for people to know what to do," he added, saying, "Here they would say, 'Tell people not to come,' while we in Mexico say, 'There's no work here.' Once people have a dream nothing can stop them."

**Costa Rican woman celebrates cure through John Paul II**

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (CNS)—After doctors told Floribeth Mora Diaz that a brain aneurysm left her with days to live, she retreated to her Costa Rican home and prayed to Blessed Pope John Paul II.

From her bedroom in a small town in Costa Rica's Cartago province, Mora said she heard his voice: "Rise! ... Don't be afraid." She got up from her bed, prompting her husband to ask her, "My love, what are you doing here?" As a teary-eyed Mora recalled at a July 3 news conference, she responded to her husband, "I feel better."

That was in May 2011. Doctors could not explain the rapid improvement, and Mora became the second miracle attributed to Blessed John Paul, who died in 2005. The first miracle was a French nun cured of Parkinson's disease the same year. On July 5, Pope Francis signed a decree allowing for the canonization of Blessed John Paul and Blessed John XXIII.



Floribeth Mora Diaz, surrounded by her family, gives testimony to the media about her cure.



**Editor's Notes**

Mary SOLBERG

So you walk into church on Sunday. You sit in the pew near all the "regulars." Everything's status quo: the upbeat entrance hymn, the welcome, the first reading, the second reading. Father proclaims the Gospel, and pauses before beginning a well-crafted homily on resisting temptation. Then...

"Shaft... can ya dig it..." blares from the cell phone in your pocket. "Not me!" you say to yourself as you frantically search for the mute button. "Why did I ever put that song on my ringtones?"

OK, so maybe you haven't experienced this exact scenario, but you've probably been to church at least once when someone's cell phone has interrupted Mass. That's why I took particular interest in a new invention that might help priests stave off unwanted tweets, beeps or buzzes during a homily, and enable parishioners to hush their cell phones automatically.

Quiet Zone Hush is a device that silences all phones that have the app installed. Once out of Quiet Zone range, the user's personal settings are restored. A church only needs to plug the device into a wall and it will do its job at a range of 100 meters. Go to: <http://www.quiet-zone.com>.

Now here's where technology can really help. Parents will take keen interest in a new online safety website offered by the Communications Department of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

The site, activated in June, can be accessed at [www.faihandafety.org](http://www.faihandafety.org). It helps parents understand the online world that their young children are exposed to, giving

tips and suggestions on using technology safely and faithfully.

There's always an interesting story or two at high school graduation parties, right? I heard one that might surprise a few people in the Diocese of Erie.

Aimee Rodak of Edinboro is a wonderful neighbor who told me that she probably is the only female to walk across the stage at a Cathedral Prep graduation and accept a diploma. I didn't believe it until she explained that in 1947 she was allowed to represent her brother, Edward Doucette, who had completed all of his graduation requirements but already was serving in the U.S. Navy.

Aimee, who worked as a librarian and media specialist at Prep from 1975-91, said of her rare moment in Prep history, "I always say I was the only girl to graduate from Prep!"

Eighty-nine-year-old Lucy Fatiga of St. Paul Parish in Erie shared that at least 65 people a day showed up for the St. Anthony novena in June. For a nine-day commitment, that's a lot of people. And Lucy thanks all of those who have been making the novena since 1945.

Much has been reported about the Sisters of St. Joseph relinquishing sponsorship of Saint Vincent Health System this month. I talked to several employees who attended the ceremony July 9 that marked the occasion.

Pharmacist Andrew Grimone and Dr. Sam Vuora both said how much they'll miss the leadership of the sisters. Nurse Jeannette Brocius told me, "It's a sad time. Saint Vincent has been part of their public face for so long, but it's exciting to go forward, too."

Having been raised by the Sisters of St. Joseph, I believe that in 100 years people will be congratulating the sisters again on yet another legacy they built to answer the needs of our community.

Mary Solberg is the editor of FaithLife.

E-mail: [msolberg@ErieRCD.org](mailto:msolberg@ErieRCD.org)

Call 814-824-1171

Twitter: [twitter.com/ERIERCDSolberg](http://twitter.com/ERIERCDSolberg)

**'Faith, not fear'**  
Despite violence, group heads to Brazil for WYD

Mary Solberg  
FaithLife

Msgr. Buelte advised those traveling to Brazil this week.

The contingent from the Diocese of Erie felt alarmed by the reports of widespread violence in Brazil since the middle of June. But they're expecting—and praying—for safety in numbers.

"Right now, I'm taking whatever happens in stride," second-year seminarian Kevin Holland, 19, told FaithLife. "I'm hoping and praying that whatever the Vatican and whatever the bishops

say is OK."

World Youth Day organizers, along with the conferences of Catholic bishops in the United States and Brazil, have issued regular statements supporting the continuation of World Youth Day events July 23-28, and have provided safety tips to the estimated 2 million to 3 million visitors expected in Rio de Janeiro.

Holland is one of two seminarians from the Erie Diocese traveling to World Youth Day. The other is Jerry Stumpf, 21, a third-year seminarian who was chosen randomly by organizers in Rio de Janeiro to be among a select group of priests and seminarians invited to the June 27 Mass with Pope Francis at the Cathedral of St. Sebastian.

The other travelers from the Diocese of Erie include Amanda Novosel, 19, and her sister Rebecca Novosel, 20, both from Our Lady Queen of the Americas Parish, Conneaut Lake, Pa.; and their leader, Susan Kline, 52, of Kane, who traveled to World Youth Day in Toronto in 2002. The five have joined another

smaller group from St. Mary's Ryken High School, an independent Catholic college prep school in Leonardtown, Md.

Gloria Dempsey, a Spanish teacher at St. Mary's Ryken, is leading the combined group. She has been in touch with World Youth Day organizers on the ground in Rio and receives regular updates from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Given the occasional eruptions of violence in Brazil, she asked all participants, including those in Erie, whether they still wanted to go.

"Everyone wants to go," Dempsey told FaithLife.

Susan Kline, a member of St. Callistus Parish, Kane, and St. Philip, Linesville, has been in regular contact with her Erie com-

panions. She called their journey "a trip of faith from the get-go." The Erie group was so small that they sometimes ran into roadblocks while planning their flights and accommodations.

Once the Erie group hooked up with Dempsey in Maryland, they were able to get more reasonable group fares. Plus, it's simply safer in a larger group.

"Every problem that we encountered we found a timely solution to it. Right now, I have to go with the knowledge that it is safe [at World Youth Day]," Kline said. "I don't know if it's me or God saying to go, but I think it's going to be OK."

The crime statistics in the city of Rio (more than 1,200 homicides a year) are enough to give anyone pause, but the recent civil unrest over public transportation fare hikes and a myriad of other anti-government complaints have added to the mix. The city of 6.3 million is planning two other major international events (the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 summer Olympics), so it is a potential worldwide stage to showcase internal problems.

Still, Msgr. Buelte believes that a sense of calm will pervade Brazil during World Youth Day 2013. This year's event, he said, will help to quell Brazil's problems, especially since protesters have given verbal support from the Vatican and the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Brazil in their pleas for economic justice.

"World Youth Day has something going for it," he added, "and that is the spirit of peace."



This group will travel July 23-28 to World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Contributed photo/Photo illustration by Rich Papalia

For WYD updates, visit <http://faithlifeblog.wordpress.com>.

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Italy South: Sep. 21-Oct. 3, Oct. 5-17, Oct. 12-24 ...  
Ireland/Scotland: Sep. 14-26, Sep. 28-Oct. 10 ...  
Poland: Sep. 14-25, Oct. 5-16, Oct. 6-17, Oct. 12-23 ...

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# Briefly

## Retirement Office distributes \$23 million

WASHINGTON—The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) distributed \$23 million in financial assistance in June to 439 religious communities to aid in the care of their senior members. The funds were made possible by the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection, which benefits elderly Catholic sisters, brothers and priests in religious orders. Parishioners in the Diocese of Erie gave \$182,685 to the collection last December. That money was given to the national office for distribution. More information is available at [www.retiredreligious.org](http://www.retiredreligious.org).

## Bishop Emeritus Bosco of Greensburg dies

GREENSBURG—Bishop Emeritus Anthony G. Bosco, who served as bishop of the Diocese of Greensburg for nearly 17 years, died July 2 at his Unity Township home. He was 85. Bishop Lawrence Persico of the Diocese of Erie said Bishop Bosco's passing is a personal loss. "He was a wonderful mentor," Bishop Persico said. "He was an excellent teacher and writer, and made full use of both print and digital communications."

Bishop Emeritus Bosco was active in the media for much of his priesthood, having chaired the U.S. bishops' communication committee.

## NFP Awareness Week July 21-27

"Pro-woman, Pro-man, Pro-child" is this year's theme for National Family Planning Awareness Week as designated by Bishop Lawrence Persico in conjunction with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. NFP is a way of life that incorporates fertility awareness, responsible parenthood and self-mastery into married love.

Barb Burkett, director of the NFP Office in the Diocese of Erie, said this is the first year that the poster of NFP Awareness Week has featured a child, too. "NFP is about family. It's not just the husband and wife, but about children, too," Burkett says.

For information, contact the diocesan NFP office at 814-824-1259, 1-800-374-3723, ext. 259, or [www.ErieRCD.org/nfp.asp](http://www.ErieRCD.org/nfp.asp).

## Get organic produce at the Market Barn

VILLA MARIA, Pa.—The Market Barn at the Villa Maria Farm, operated by the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, is now open, offering a wide variety of seasonal produce, all grown without the use of synthetic fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides.

The farm is located at the Villa Maria Community Center, one mile south of U.S. Route 422 on Evergreen Road, Villa Maria, Pa. Hours are Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 5 p.m.; and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information, call John at 724-964-8920, extension 3385, or e-mail [jmcveira@humilityofmary.org](mailto:jmcveira@humilityofmary.org).

## Prizes galore featured at Oil City festival

OIL CITY—St. Stephen Parish will hold its annual Heritage Festival July 25-27, in conjunction with Oil City's Oil Heritage Festival. Events will include games for adults and children, raffles, concession stands, a bake sale and quilt and basket raffles. A gift auction will feature all-new items.

All events will be held at the parish grounds at the corner of State and Front streets in Oil City. Game booths and concession stands will be open July 25 from 5 to 10 p.m. and on Friday from 6 to 10 p.m. On July 27, the concession stands will open 3 p.m. and games at 4 p.m., each closing at 10 p.m.

For more information, call 814-677-5928 or 814-827-6397.

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## Msgr. Snyder dies in 59th year of priesthood

Msgr. John Raymond Snyder, one of the diocesan priests who attended the final session of Vatican Council II in 1965, died Tuesday, June 25, at the Sisters of Mercy Health Care Center, where he lived for the past three years.

He once said that pastoral work was his first love, but that teaching was a close second. "I don't think a day goes by in a priest's life that he doesn't help somebody," Msgr. Snyder said when he celebrated his golden jubilee as a priest in 2004.

Msgr. Snyder, 86, was born in Erie, Oct. 16, 1926, son of the late John R. and Rosemary Eckl Snyder. He was raised in Ridgway, attended the Ridgway public el-

ementary school and graduated from St. Leo Parish High School. During World War II, he served in the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps.

He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Erie on May 27, 1954, by Auxiliary Bishop Edward P. McManaman.

He was first appointed assistant pastor at St. Michael Parish, Greenville, where he also taught at the parish high school. When the new St. Mark Seminary opened in Erie in 1959, he was



Msgr. John Snyder

named a member of the faculty while serving as an assistant at St. Luke Parish for two years.

He was pastor of St. Raphael Parish, Eldred, with its missions of St. Mary in Sartwell and St. John in Duke Center, from 1969-75.

During his tenure, he renovated both mission churches and St. Raphael Church and rectory. Bishop Alfred Watson appointed him dean of McKean and Potter counties in 1973.

In April 1975, he was appointed pastor of St. Patrick Parish, Franklin, where he remained for 21 years. During his time in Franklin, he renovated the entire parish complex and purchased and renovated a new convent for the Sisters of Mercy.

In 1991, he was named a Prelate of Honor with the title of mon-

signor by Pope John Paul II. He served as a member of the priests' retirement board and the diocesan finance council.

Upon retirement from St. Patrick Parish, Franklin, in 1996, he took up residence at Mercy Terrace Apartments in Erie, where he served as chaplain and as weekend assistant at Holy Rosary Parish.

Bishop Lawrence Persico officiated at Msgr. Snyder's funeral Mass on July 2 at St. Patrick Church, Franklin.

Memorials may be made to the following: Sisters of Mercy, 444 East Grandview Blvd., Erie, PA 16504; Mercy Terrace Apartments, 430 East Grandview Blvd., Erie, PA 16504; or to St. Patrick Church, 949 Liberty St., Franklin, PA 16333.

# 138-year-old legacy

LEGACY, from page 1

Bonnie Ruff, a registered nurse at Saint Vincent the past 40 years, said the departure of the sisters in an official capacity is "bittersweet." She started nursing school at the former Saint Vincent Hospital when she was 18 and immediately began working there after graduation.

"They taught me compassion and commitment," Ruff said.

According to Sister Mary Herrmann, president of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania, five Sisters of St. Joseph will continue to work at Saint Vincent. They include: Sister Carol Morehouse, senior vice president of mission integration; Sister Marie Paul Ashworth, equipment coordinator; Saint Vincent engineering; Sister Ann Stephanie Stano, curriculum specialist for the graduate medical education department; and Sister Colette Palmer and Sister Martha Howick, both in pastoral care.

In the merger agreement, the Sisters of St. Joseph will receive \$10 million for giving up corporate sponsorship. Highmark also paid \$5 million for capital projects that support the order's ministries.

Sister Herrmann said the SSSs

are developing a charitable trust to continue their existing and new ministries, which include a broad array of outreach to immigrants and refugees and work in such areas as rural health care and neighborhood development. She declined to elaborate on specific plans.

"There are other ways that health care can be addressed and other needs we would like to respond to," Sister Herrmann said. "It's a letting go; there's a little sadness to that, but it's also exciting because we're also moving on. That's what we do."

At the July 9 ceremony at Saint Vincent, Sisters Margaret Ann Hardner and Catherine Manning, both former CEOs at Saint Vincent, and longtime employee Sister Marie Paul Ashworth presented three books to hospital administrators.

Two of the volumes deal with the history of the religious community and its outreach in the community and the third, "Servant Leadership," explores teamwork and service to others as essential characteristics of successful leaders. John Paul, president of Allegheny Health Network, joined Scott Whalen



Photo by Mary Solberg

Saint Vincent employees and friends join in a blessing at the merger ceremony.

in picking up separate carafes filled with water taken from Lake Erie and Pittsburgh's three rivers. They poured the water into a bowl, signifying the blending of the two hospital systems.

"We take this responsibility seriously," Paul said.

With the ending of the sisters' sponsorship at Saint Vincent, there has been at least one immediate change. Bishop Lawrence Persico of the Diocese of Erie issued a statement that Saint Vincent could no longer be considered a Catholic hospital because there is no guarantee that it will follow directives set forth by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The directives state that Catholic institutions and hospitals

may not promote or condone contraceptive practices or direct sterilization of men or women. "We do not have a guarantee that these procedures will not be condoned or performed," the bishop stated.

Bishop Persico, however, made it clear that Catholics still may decide to use the services of Saint Vincent Hospital, which he said was created through the "heroic" and visionary efforts of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

"I want to thank the sisters for the generosity and vision with which they have met the health care needs of this community for 138 years, and I look forward to their new ministry efforts, based, as always, on the needs of the time in which we live," Bishop Persico said.

# Deaf parishioner in Erie finds faith

DEAF, from page 1

history of the church that I never knew before," Bedner said.

She was joined at the daylong event by her husband, Chris, who is hard of hearing. Both have been actively involved in outreach to the deaf and hard of hearing since moving to Erie from Rochester, N.Y., in 1999. Parishioners at Our Lady of Peace, Erie, they attend a weekly Bible class through the Ministry with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

According to Susan, "I started to learn more and more every day through the deaf ministry class at a friend's house."

From about ages 8 to 15, such education was out of reach to her.



Susan Bedner

Finally, she began attending St. Elizabeth Church in Manhattan, where an interpreter was provided.

"Until then, there was no in-

terpreter, no note-taking. I was feeling so far behind," Susan said, through the help of her husband, Chris Bedner, who himself did not sign until he and Susan were attending the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Assisting at the event on June 29 were Father Conrad Stachowiak, a priest of the Diocese of Buffalo, and seminarian John

Adams, also of Buffalo, both of whom have ministered to the deaf and hard of hearing.

For more information on Catholic Charities' Ministry with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, contact Michael Adams at 814-824-1257, or e-mail him at [madamus@erieRCD.org](mailto:madamus@erieRCD.org). A Bible study class is offered at a different location every Wednesday from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

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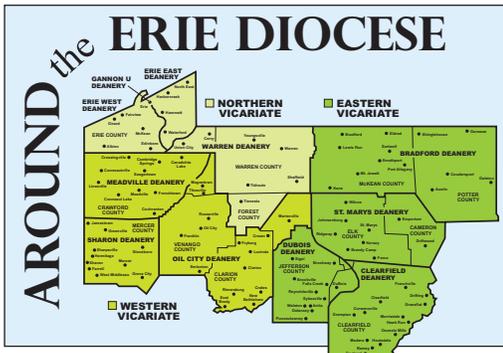
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[www.ErieRCD.org/atd.asp](http://www.ErieRCD.org/atd.asp)

### Bishop, chancellor visit Moshannon Cluster

OSCEOLA MILLS—Bishop Lawrence Persico and Father Chris Singer, chancellor, traveled more than 200 miles on Trinity Sunday, May 26, to celebrate Masses at the parishes of Immaculate Conception in Osceola Mills, St. Agnes in Morrisdale, and St. Peter and Paul in Hawk Run, all in the Central Moshannon Cluster. Pictured with Bishop Persico are 98-year-old parishioner Clara Letrick, left, and parishioner Janet Hauth.



### Veterans recognize Msgr. Charles Kaza

BROCKWAY—Members of American Legion Post 95 of Brockway recently presented a certificate of appreciation to Msgr. Charles Kaza, pastor of St. Tobias Parish, Brockway, vicar general and episcopal vicar of the Eastern Vicariate of the Diocese of Erie. Msgr. Kaza was recognized for his ongoing support of veterans, and for purchasing two 12-by-12-inch blocks for the Brockway American Legion Veteran's Memorial Point Park Wall of Honor. The wall has 396 names of veterans inscribed on it. Pictured left to right are: Rich Moore, Msgr. Kaza, Bob Preston and Dave Benson.



### Immaculate Conception busy with projects

CLARION—Immaculate Conception School in Clarion recently won a national recycling challenge by recycling 490 pounds of cans, the most of any participating school in Pennsylvania. The Can Manufacturers Institute (CMI) awarded Immaculate Conception a \$1,000 prize for its recycling efforts from last November through this past April. Schools were judged on a per capita basis, comparing the number of cans recycled to the number of students participating. Lauren Rice, math teacher and recycling faculty representative, is pictured at right with students Daniel Brooker, Alex Cussins and Alana McMaster.



### Blessed Sacrament School benefits from tax credit

ERIE—Natalie and Kevin Kreidinger, owners of Advanced Cleaning Systems, Erie, participated in the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit that resulted in Blessed Sacrament School getting a \$5,000 tax credit. This is tax money the Kreidingers' business would have had to pay the state. The Kreidingers acquired the OSTC money with the help of Dave Pianta, an accountant and Blessed Sacrament parishioner. The Kreidingers have two children currently attending Blessed Sacrament and three that are alumni. In July 2012, Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett signed the tax code bill that expanded the Educational Tax Credit (ETC) program to include OSTC.



Pictured left to right are: Sheri Kurczewski, former principal; Kevin Kreidinger; Lisa Keating, Blessed Sacrament advancement director, and Natalie Kreidinger.

Students of Immaculate Conception School's third-grade class participated in Drug Abuse Resistance Education, D.A.R.E., an international program that teaches children drug prevention. During the 10-week program, students pledged to not use drugs or join gangs. The class was visited by Officer Neil Kemmer of the Clarion Borough Police, who discussed the danger of drugs, drug abuse and how to deal with drug-related peer pressure. Pictured are Immaculate Conception School's third-graders with Officer Neil Kemmer, left, and Police Chief Mark Hall.



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