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BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

August 21, 2016

DIOCESAN NEWS

Day of Prayer for Peace Sept. 9

The Diocese of Erie will join dioceses across the country in celebrating a Day of Prayer for Peace in Our Communities Sept. 9.

In light of recent incidents of violence and racial tension in cities across the United States, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has invited all dioceses to unite in a day of prayer to promote peace and healing in American society.

More details of diocesan participation in the Day of Prayer for Peace will be published in the next issue of *FaithLife*.

All Tribunal fees waived

The Office of the Tribunal and Matrimonial Concerns of the Diocese of Erie is now waiving all fees, including those related to the annulment process.

In response to Pope Francis' call to offer services free of charge, the Tribunal Office no longer charges fees for marriage dispensations, permissions, or declarations of nullity. The pope expressed this desire last year in his apostolic letter *Mitis Iudex Dominus Iesus*, or "Procedural Changes Regarding Declarations of Nullity."

The Tribunal Office continues to accept voluntary donations to help defray operational costs, but no mandatory fees are now required. Previously, the diocese charged a fee that helped cover Tribunal Office expenses, but never turned couples away who were unable to pay for services.

"This is a small part of a much bigger picture in which Pope Francis is calling the church to renew our ministry to families," said Father Marc Stockton, judicial vicar of the Office of the Tribunal.

Questions may be directed to the Tribunal Office at 814-824-1150.

New marriage rite released

Catholic weddings in the Diocese of Erie and elsewhere will undergo some changes beginning Sept. 8.

This summer, the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments approved the new English translation of the marriage rite. Notable changes:



- Prayers will have a different sound, the result of a different set of translation principles that emphasize more direct translations from the official Latin.
 - The marriage rite title will change from the Rite of Marriage to the Order for Celebrating Matrimony.
 - A penitential rite in which the priest leads the congregation in asking forgiveness for their sins, has been omitted.
 - Singing or saying the "Gloria" ("Glory to God in the highest...") has been added.
 - Additional Scripture readings have been selected for the rite. At least one of the readings chosen must specifically reference marriage. Such readings will be marked with an asterisk or star in the new rite.
 - Hispanic traditions—including an exchange of coins and a blessing and placing of a veil or cord over the couple during the nuptial blessing—are included in the new rite as options.
 - Following the procession, a gathering song is recommended.
 - A sung acclamation has been added to the marriage rite following the vows.
 - A sung canticle or hymn is an option after the exchange of rings.
- "The new edition brings the marriage rite into line with translation principles used for the Roman Missal. The addition of acclamations and new rubrics will encourage greater participation of the people in the marriage rite and emphasize its sacramental nature and Christ's constant presence among us," said Matt Clark, administrator of the Office of Worship for the Diocese of Erie.

Around the Globe



Photo by Anne-Marie Welsh

Erie Bishop Lawrence Persico blesses the Puch Che family on his recent visit to the Archdiocese of Yucatán, Mexico.

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

People from the Diocese of Erie traveled around the globe this summer, finding the Catholic faith fully alive even at what Pope Francis has called "the peripheries."

At the end of July, Bishop Lawrence Persico led a contingent of diocesan staff to the Mission of Friendship in the Archdiocese of Yucatán in Mexico. Half a world away—in Poland—Dr. Keith Taylor, president of Gannon University, joined students, seminarians, and other lay people representing the diocese at World Youth Day.

"It was an encounter. I went to the periphery," Bishop Persico said of his first visit to the Mission of Friendship in Mérida, Yucatán.

Founded by the diocese in 1971, the Mission of Friendship is an outreach that supports people in need in the Archdiocese of Yucatán. Bishop Persico got a first-hand look at all of the programs sponsored by

the Mission of Friendship.

He traveled with members of the diocesan staff, including: Father Christopher Singer, chancellor; Ann Badach, director of Catholic Charities; Indira Suarez, director of the Office of Diocesan and International Missions; and Anne-Marie Welsh, director of the Office of Communications.

They met with many families served by the mission, as well as Archbishop Gustavo Rodriguez Vega, his staff, and Tricia Pipkin, director of the Mission of Friendship.

"The experience deepened my commitment and my support for the mission because I think that the work there is very important," Bishop Persico said.

In Poland, World Youth Day attracted hundreds of thousands of youth and adults from around the world, including those from the

SEE MEXICO, POLAND, page 2

Diocese goes to Mexico, Poland



Contributed photo

Taking a selfie in front of a mirrored World Youth Day sign in Poland is Erie resident Diane Gallagher, far right with the cell phone, and, from left: Mike Gallagher, Gabe Gallagher, Casey Corriore, Kristen Corriore, Father Rich Toohy (pastor of St. Joseph, Warren), and Joe Gallagher.



Contributed photo

St. Mark seminarian Kevin Holland, in bright green, organized the Gannon University entourage to World Youth Day in Poland.

Matt Goreczny, Chris Wolfgong and Robert Burneisen, left to right, are founding members of the Pennsylvania chapter of Knights on Bikes.



Photo by Mary Solberg

KNIGHTS on BIKES

Knights of Columbus take faith on the road

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

Don't let the black leather biker vests fool you. Robert Burneisen, Matt Goreczny and Chris Wolfgong wear theirs for inspiration, not intimidation.

Emblazoned on the back of their motorcycle jackets is the bright yellow emblem of the Knights of Columbus, a long-time Catholic-based fraternal organization dedicated to charity and evangelization. The large cross stitched above the logo further cements the spirit of the riders.

"I feel that when I'm out there riding around with this jacket, this is who I am. I'm not a Hells Angel. We're here to do good things, spread the word of Christ," Wolfgong says.

The men are members of

Knights of Columbus Council #385 in Oil City, and are the founding members of the Pennsylvania chapter of Knights on Bikes, an international organization dedicated to improving the image of bikers and promoting safety and Christian values.

Established in the U.S. in 2005, Knights on Bikes currently has chapters in 41 states. Besides the Diocese of Erie, only two other dioceses in Pennsylvania have an active Knights on Bikes group. Members must be Knights of Columbus who are willing to spread the Catholic faith under the motto: "In God we trust and ride."

"In a way, we're fishers of men," says Goreczny, president of the Pennsylvania chapter.

SEE KNIGHTS, page 2



Vatican presents St. Teresa of Kolkata stamp

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican will commemorate the canonization of Blessed Teresa of Kolkata with a special postage stamp, to be released Sept. 2, two days before Pope Francis officially declares her a saint. The Vatican Philatelic and Numismatic Office announced the 95-cent stamp, which features a radiant Mother Teresa in her blue-trimmed, white sari. Overlaid on the design by Patrizio Daniele is another image of her holding the hand of a small child. The philatelic office said it would print and sell a maximum of 150,000 sheets of 10 stamps each.

Newsmakers



Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world from Catholic News Service

■ African National Congress held



CNS photo

Mary Kiganda, right, and Carolyn Ohams, both from the Archdiocese of Washington, sing Aug. 5 during the opening Mass of the Third African National Eucharistic Congress.

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The African family, with its reverence of elders, sense of solidarity and community, and adherence to religious traditions has great gifts that need to be shared, a Louisiana bishop said Aug. 6 in addressing a group of about 300 Catholics who hail from the continent.

Bishop Shelton J. Fabre of Houma-Thibodaux urged those gathered for his keynote address at the Third African National Eucharistic Congress in Washington to hold tight the values from their native homelands, especially values rooted in faith.

"Keep for yourselves the wonderful culture and the beneficial gifts of the African fabric of life," he said.

■ Commission to study women deacons in early church

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis has appointed six men and six women to a commission to study the history of women deacons, particularly their ministry in the early church.

The pope set up the commission at the request of the International Union of Superiors General, the organization for the leaders of women religious orders around the world. Meeting the group in May, Pope Francis said that while his understanding was that the women described as deacons in the New Testament were not ordained as male deacons are today, "it would be useful for the church to clarify this question."

■ U.S. religious sisters ask for civil discourse in politics

SILVER SPRING, Md. (CNS)—More than 5,600 U.S. religious sisters have signed a letter asking for civil discourse in the presidential campaign.

The letter was sent to the candidates of the Democratic, Republican, Green and Libertarian parties as well as their vice presidential running mates and the chairs of their respective parties.

"We simply ask that all who seek to lead refrain from language that disrespects, dehumanizes or demonizes another," the letter stated.

"We pray that all who seek to influence public opinion will be mindful of the common good and respectful of the dignity of each and every person."

The letter was written by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, which represents about 80 percent of the 49,000 women religious in the United States.



Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

A Drowzee has taken up residence outside St. Peter Cathedral in downtown Erie.

For the uninitiated, the yellow sloth-like creature is one of many virtual monsters people can catch in the popular mobile game Pokémon GO. Since the last issue of FaithLife on July 3, Drowzees, Pidgots, Venonats and an assortment of other wily critters have invaded our world...and our minds.

According to the online DMR Stats/Gadgets, there are about 20 million active daily users of Pokémon GO in the United States. As of Aug. 1, it had been downloaded 100 million times, making it arguably the most popular mobile game in history.

I must admit that I've caught a Drowzee or two. As a mother of teenagers and 20-somethings, it's difficult not to be swept up in the frenzy. My kids have helped me see some of the game's better qualities.

At St. Peter's, like all so-called Pokéstops, players can learn information about the site. Several churches in the Diocese of Erie are



A Drowzee at St. Peter Cathedral.

Pokéstops, and even the Carmelite Monastery on East Gore Road is a Pokémon gym. On occasion, the game has given me the opportunity to take a walk with my boys, something I haven't done in a while.

Like anything, Pokémon GO can be abused or it can provide us with an opportunity. Maybe the next time you see a virtual creature in front of a church, go in and say a little prayer.

Catholic youth in Newman groups throughout the Diocese of Erie do a lot to evangelize.

Phil Scrimenti, an adviser to the Newman club at Allegheny College, traveled to the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in Chicago this summer with students Zach Shomo and Nikki Hawk. They helped make a Polish dinner for a large group of young people gathered to commemorate World Youth Day.

It promises to be a great year for the Allegheny Newman club as it dedicates its new house.

Congratulations to St. Luke School in Erie for being named a runner-up in the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's Great American Cleanup of Pennsylvania video contest.

View the St. Luke video on the Facebook page of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.

Mercy Sister Bernardette Bell of Erie organized a program this summer at St. Catherine Parish in DuBois for about 50 former students of the parish school and friends of the sisters.

DuBois natives who are Sisters of Mercy gathered for a photo with Msgr. Richard Siefert, pastor of St. Catherine. They are Sisters Rita Kartavich, Mary Ann Bader, Catherine Edward Delaney and Teresa Okonski. All attended St. Catherine School.

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Diocese in Mexico, Poland

Continued from page 1

Diocese of Erie. Pope Francis called the event a "prophetic sign for Poland and Europe."

"Precisely in this world at war, we need brotherhood, we need closeness, we need dialogue, and we need friendship. And this is the sign of hope: when there is brotherhood," Pope Francis said.

Dr. Taylor was among 13 people from Gannon University who traveled to World Youth Day. Seminarian Kevin Holland organized the pilgrimage, which included Father Michael Kesicki of Gannon, and two other seminarians: Brandon Fiekles and Waylon Duncan.

Also in Poland were Father Rich Toohy, pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Warren, and a group of about 12 people, including his sister, Diane Gallagher, her husband and new superintendent of Catholic schools, Jim Gallagher, and their three sons: Joe, Gabe and Michael.

"It was incredible. It was profound. We compared the experience to the Transfiguration. It was like being at the mountaintop," Diane Gallagher said.

IMPRESSIONS OF WORLD YOUTH DAY



St. Joseph/Bread of Life parishioners Jim and Diane Gallagher of Erie took their three teenage sons to World Youth Day in Poland. During their trip, they saw Pope Francis, visited many shrines, and even toured the childhood home of St. John Paul II.

Below, the Gallagher boys share their impressions of the experience:

JOE GALLAGHER, junior, McDowell High School, Erie:

"The pope's overall message was hope and how everyone should have a stronger faith. Hopefully, kids can believe in something and not just go around hopeless. They just need to let the Holy Spirit take them and have that fire inside."

GABE GALLAGHER, sophomore, Mercyhurst Prep, Erie:

"We attended the vigil, where over a million people were sleeping out under the stars waiting for the pope. That was really big for me to see all those people sharing the same faith."

MIKE GALLAGHER, eighth-grader, St. George School, Erie:

"Going to see all of the saint shrines and hearing the pope talk just speaks to you. You always hear about this kind of stuff, but you never really get a chance to see it."

Knights on Bikes

Continued from page 1

"It's a visible sign."

Wearing their faith so publicly isn't anything new for Knights, who often don the colorful regalia of the organization at special Masses. Knights on Bikes simply uses motorcycles as another means by which to evangelize.

Gorecny's bright yellow Honda Magna was spotted this past spring by a little boy traveling in a car with his father. Gorecny was wearing his Knights on Bikes vest.

"The dad told me that his son said, 'Look, there's a biker guy!'" Gorecny says. "The dad said, 'Yeah, but he's a good guy.'"

The Oil City-based group takes monthly rides together and is looking forward to visiting parishes in the Diocese of Erie. Wolfgang, who serves as president of the Erie Diocese chapter, hopes to organize service projects, while reinforcing the Knights' dedication to charity, unity and fraternity.

"We're trying to change the old, negative biker image to something a little more positive," says Wolfgang, who at age 37 is among the youngest



members of the Oil City Knights council.

A retired state police trooper, Burniesen, 53, is vice president of the Knights on Bikes' Pennsylvania chapter and has been a member of the Knights of Columbus for 15 years. The organization, he says, carries moral weight.

"For me, it's a lifestyle," Burniesen says. "Even at work, you take on an ethical role in society. Being a Knight helps you be a Catholic role model."

To learn more about the old, negative biker image of Erie, email Matt Gorecny at mgorecny@comcast.net or call him at 814-657-3609.

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EVENTS

Women invited to support seminary auxiliary

ERIE—The St. Mark Seminary Auxiliary extends an invitation to Catholic women interested in supporting St. Mark Seminary, spiritually and financially. The group meets the second Tuesday of each month, at 7 p.m. in the chapel of St. Mark Seminary. The first meeting is Sept. 13 at 7 p.m. The evening includes Mass and a meeting, with refreshments and an opportunity to meet the seminarians. The auxiliary has one fundraising event: the annual spring card party. Dues are \$5 per year, or \$25 for a lifetime membership. For further information, contact the seminary office at 814-824-1200, Dawn Schaaf at 814-450-6761, or Patricia Straub at 814-520-6477.

St. Teresa Parish to hold Family Fun Day

UNION CITY—St. Teresa Parish in Union City will hold its Family Fun Day Aug. 21 at the Union City Country Club. There will be a golf scramble beginning with a shotgun start at noon. Tickets for Golf Balls from Heaven cost an additional \$10 each. Golf balls drop at 6 p.m. A chicken barbecue dinner is from 4 to 6:30 p.m. Dinner is \$9 for adults; \$4 for children. Take-outs are available at a cost of \$7. Also offered are helicopter rides from 1 to 6 p.m. at a cost of \$35 per person. For more information, call the Union City Country Club at 814-438-2810 or St. Teresa Church at 814-438-2000.

Prep-Villa Kickoff Classic planned Aug. 27

ERIE—This year's Prep-Villa Kickoff Classic will be held Aug. 27 from 7 to 11 p.m. at the Prep Villa Events Center in Erie. Must be 21 to attend. Proceeds benefit all Prep and Villa fall sports teams. The \$15 ticket includes music, food, adult beverages and a \$500 cash raffle. Must be present to win. Tickets may be purchased from a fall athlete or at the Prep or Villa school offices. Limited tickets available at the door.

Series to discuss nonviolence, peace

ERIE—Benedictine Sister Anne McCarthy will offer reflections on "Nonviolence and Just Peace, a Historic New Commitment in the Roman Catholic Church" for the Enrichment Series at Mount St. Benedict Monastery in Erie Aug. 29 at 7 p.m.

Golf tournament to benefit Maria House Project

UNION CITY—The annual Father Peterson Golf Tournament to benefit Maria House Project will be held Sept. 17 beginning at 9 a.m. at Union City Country Club. Msgr. James Peterson founded Maria House in 1971 to reach out to the marginalized on the streets of Erie. Not funded by taxpayer dollars, Maria House serves individuals of any or no denomination. For more information, call 814-438-2810.

Celebrating marriage

FAITHLIFE staff report

Hundreds of years of marriage were collectively celebrated this summer at two separate events sponsored by the Family Life Office of the Diocese of Erie. Seventy couples gathered July 31 at Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Harborcreek, and 58 couples came together Aug. 7 at Queen of the World Parish in St. Marys to mark 25, 50, 60 or more years of marriage. The annual anniversary celebrations include Mass, renewal of vows, and distribution of scrolls to the couples. "We want to express to couples our appreciation for their efforts to love, hope and persevere," said Christine Hess, director of the Family Life Office. Among this year's couples were Arthur and Nancy Kujawinski, parents of Father Matt Kujawinski, pastor of Our Lady of Peace Parish, Erie, who celebrated their 50th anniversary; and Richard and Dorothy Bauer, parents of Sister John Paul Bauer of St. Marys, who marked their 60th anniversary.



Photo by Ray Beind
Bishop Lawrence Persico congratulates Richard and Dorothy Bauer of St. Marys on their 60th wedding anniversary. Looking on is the Bauer's daughter, Sister John Paul Bauer, OSB, at a special Mass Aug. 7 at Queen of the World Church, St. Marys.

OBITUARIES

Sister Rita Groner, OSB

Benedictine devoted life to young children

Benedictine Sister Rita Groner, formerly Sister Germaine, died July 13 at Mount St. Benedict Monastery in Erie following a brief illness. She was 84 and in her 66th year of religious life. Born in Marble, Pa., Sister Rita grew up as a member of St. Michael Parish in Fryburg. She entered the Benedictine Sisters of Erie in 1948, and finished her high school education at St. Benedict Academy, Erie. She took her first vows in 1950, followed by perpetual



Sister Rita Groner, OSB

monastic profession in 1953. Sister Rita held a bachelor's degree in education from Villa Maria College, Erie, and spent 44 years in elementary education. She taught at the following schools in the Diocese of Erie: St. Gregory, North East, Sacred Heart and St. Joseph, Sharon, Immaculate Conception, Clarion, and St. Stephen, Oil City. She also taught summer religious education over the years in Emlenton, Couduersport, Rouseville, Titusville and Oil City. After teaching in diocesan schools, Sister Rita then ministered for 18 years as an assistant teacher and then a teacher aide at St. Benedict Child Development Center, Erie. She became a certified member

of Therapy Dogs United (TDU), a ministry she began in 2008. Together with Sister Carolann McLaughlin, OSB, and their therapy dog, Rusty, Sister Rita visited nursing homes, schools and hospitals. Survivors include members of her Benedictine community; her sisters Helen Strickenberger, Jean Marie Shaffer, Patricia (Jane) Wright and Judith Groner; and many nieces and nephews. Services and a Mass of Christian Burial were held at Mount St. Benedict Monastery. Interment was at Trinity Cemetery. Memorials may be made to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, 6101 East Lake Road, Erie, PA, 16511.

Msgr. Richard J. Sullivan

Msgr. Sullivan taught at Gannon for 38 years

Msgr. Richard J. Sullivan, 84, died July 2 at the Michael J. Murphy Retirement Home for Priests in Erie. He was a priest of the Diocese of Erie for 58 years. Born in Johnstown, Pa., he entered St. Mark Seminary and attended Gannon University, both in Erie. He earned his bachelor's degree from St. Bonaventure University in 1954, while in formation for the priesthood at Christ the King Seminary in Buffalo. He was ordained a priest on May 15, 1958. Msgr. Sullivan began his priestly ministry at Gannon University, working as both a member of the theology faculty and as part of campus ministry. He remained at Gannon until 1996. During that time, he was weekend assistant at Our Lady of Peace Parish, Erie. While at Gannon, he served in a number of other capacities: director of the Pastoral Ministry Graduate Program, director of Gannon's campus ministry, and a member



Msgr. Richard J. Sullivan

of the Gannon Priest Council and Gannon Faculty Senate. He most recently served several terms on Gannon's board of trustees. In recognition of his academic contributions, he was presented the Gannon University Distinguished Faculty Award. For 15 years, Msgr. Sullivan was diocesan director of campus ministry and he served on the Marriage Tribunal. In 1996, he was appointed pastor of St. Andrew Parish, Erie, and remained in that capacity until his retirement in 2012. While pastor, Msgr. Sullivan served on several diocesan boards, including the Presbyteral Council, the Bishop's College of Consultors, and the Clergy Continuing Education Board. He was also a member of the PreCana Board, the Priest Senate and the spiritual direction team at St. Mark Seminary. He was active in civic and community affairs, having served on Erie's Downtown Center City Authority, Erie Draft Counseling Services, Interfaith Clergy Concerns, and CALL. He was a founding member of Big Brothers/Sisters of Erie County. Two area gardens are named in

his honor: the courtyard outside of Gannon's chapel and the garden/courtyard area outside the Annunciation Chapel at St. Andrew Church. In retirement, Msgr. Sullivan assisted with daily Mass five days a week at St. Andrew Church. On weekends, he frequently traveled from parish to parish to assist with Masses. Survivors include five brothers and sisters: Ret. Capt. William K. Sullivan, USN, (Gayle), Peg Woolf (Ronald), Mary Hall (Larry), John Sullivan, and Sister Moira Sullivan, SSJ, many nieces and nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews; his aunt, Mary Penfield of Williamsport, Pa.; several cousins; and a goddaughter, Paige Pilewski of Edinboro. Visiting hours were held at the Francis V. Kloecker Funeral Home, Erie, and at St. Andrew Church. A funeral Mass was held at St. Andrew with Bishop Lawrence Persico as the main celebrant. Burial was at Calvary Cemetery. Memorials may be made to St. Andrew Church, Gannon University's campus ministry, or to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania.

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PHOTOS from AROUND the DIOCESE

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Bishop blesses sign at St. Augustine Church



AUSTIN—Bishop Lawrence Persico blessed a new sign July 23 at St. Augustine Church in Austin. The sign was donated by Stan Swank, far left, in memory of his parents, Anna and Harold Swank. Located at the entrance to the church, the sign features 24-karat-gold lettering and a stained-glass image of St. Augustine.

Next to Swank is Bishop Lawrence Persico, and at far right is Father Joseph Dougherty, pastor. Bishop Persico celebrated Mass to mark the occasion. Afterward, a reception was held at the residence of Jeff and Ali Valenti in Austin.

Motorcycles blessed at Roar on the Shore and Holy Rosary



Contributed photo

ERIE—Motorcycles abounded this summer at Erie's popular Roar on the Shore event and at Holy Rosary Church, Erie, where parishioners and friends from Holy Rosary and St. John the Baptist Parish gathered for a special blessing.

In the photo, center, Deacon Kyle Seyler stands in the midst of a sea of motorcycles at Roar on the Shore, giving a blessing to one participant. Deacon Seyler and Father John Jacquel, pastor, also met with motorcycle enthusiasts who came to the Holy Rosary parking lot for a blessing. Afterward, the group rode around Presque Isle State Park and stopped for ice cream.

CDA Court #2454 hosts luncheons



CLARION—The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Immaculate Conception Court #2454 of Clarion, hosted three book reviews and luncheons this spring to raise funds for the Clarion Cancer Center and collect non-perishable food items for the Clarion University Food Pantry. This was the seventh year CDA members have hosted the book reviews/luncheons to raise money for local needs. Pictured, from left, are: Karen McDade, regent; Barb Speer, co-chair of the book review; Tracy Myers, nurse manager of the Cancer Center; and Ann Enderle Liska, campus minister at Clarion University of Pennsylvania.

Community dinner organized at Ramey parish

RAMEY—Parishioners at Holy Trinity Parish in Ramey collected cans of food at a community dinner July 9. Guests were encouraged to either leave a can of food at the door or make a monetary donation. All proceeds went to the Houtzdale Food Bank.

Pictured to the right of the Blessed Mother statue is Father Zab Amar, pastor, who is joined by several work crew members who organized the dinner.



St. Gregory School wins for best float



NORTH EAST—St. Gregory School families in North East decorated a float for the community's annual Cherry Festival Parade to honor hometown heroes, including alumni and community supporters of St. Gregory School. Students are pictured with the float, which was awarded first place and received a \$100 gift from the North East Fire Department.

Punxs student is state, national champ



PUNXSUTAWNEY—The Knights of Columbus Council #452 recognized Samantha Griebel, a fourth-grader at St. Cosmas and Damian Parish, Punxsutawney, for her basketball shooting skills over the last year. Grand Knight Frank McSteen presented Samantha with a plaque for going undefeated in both the Knights and the Elks Hoop Shoot competitions. In 2015, she was the state champion in the Knights of Columbus Hoop Shoot competition, then in April 2016, she captured the Elks National Hoop Shoot title in Chicago.

After winning the Elks state championship, she competed against 11 other young girls from all over the United States to become the Elks national champion.

Father Kuzma renews July Fourth tradition at Presque Isle



ERIE—For many years, the House of Prayer in Erie and Marriage Encounter groups gathered at Beach 11 at Presque Isle State Park for a sunrise Mass on Independence Day. Mercy Sister Mary Rita Panciera began the tradition, but it ended nearly 10 years ago. Father John Paul Kuzma, OFM Cap., returned to Erie this summer to continue the tradition with his family and others. "I came here many years as a kid and now I am here as a priest," he said.

Many college students and friends also attended the Mass at Beach 11. Pictured with Father Kuzma are his uncle, Deacon Glenn Kuzma, and Joshua Kuzma.

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